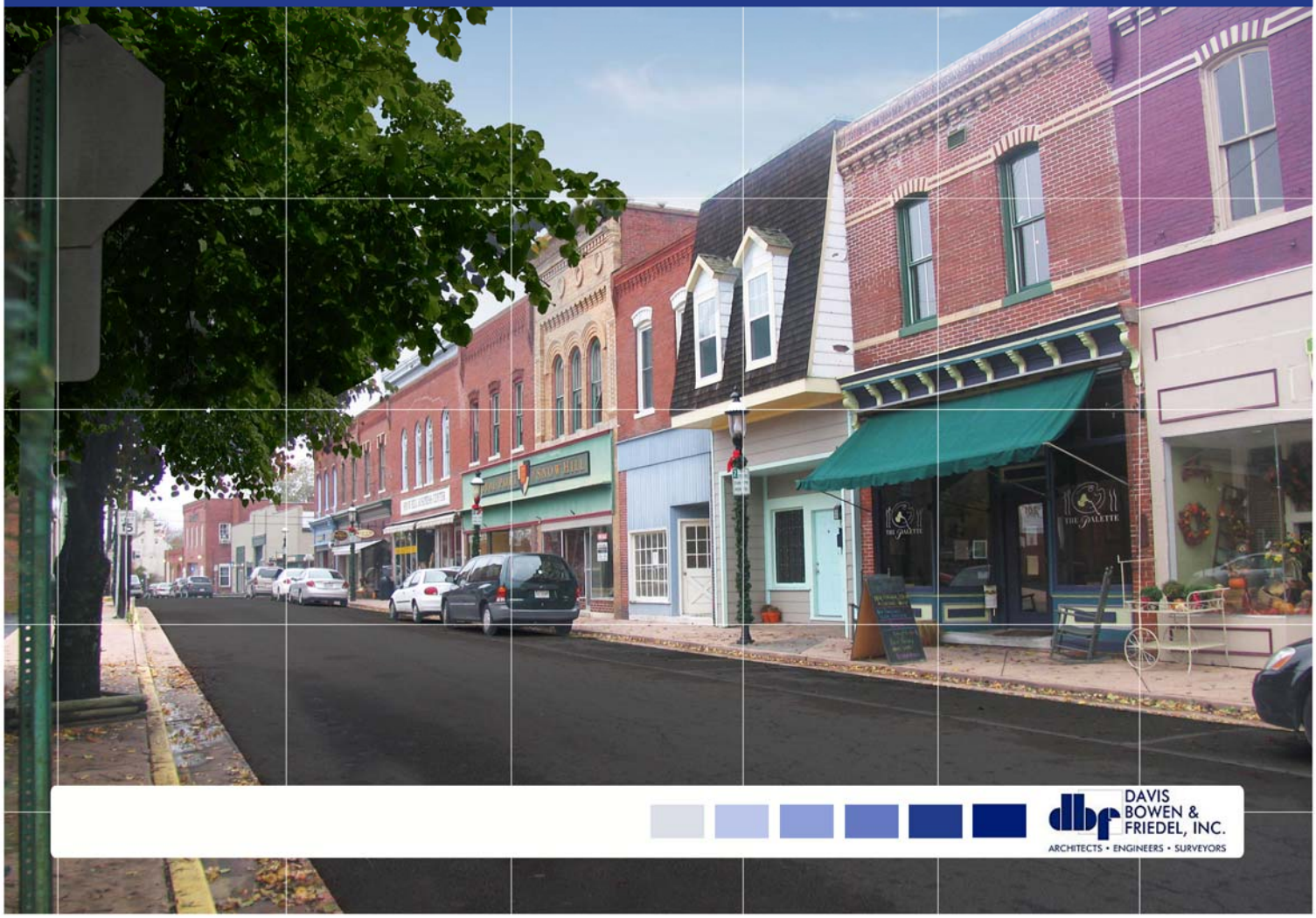
2010
Comprehensive Plan
Town of Snow Hill



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ARCHITECTS • ENGINEERS • SURVEYORS

2010 Town of Snow Hill
Comprehensive Plan

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1

Introduction

Snow Hill's Comprehensive Plan looks at potential growth within the Town through the year 2030. Infrastructure, housing, growth and many other issues are discussed within this plan. The main purpose of this plan is to properly prepare for growth and other issues that the Town will encounter over the next twenty years.

Acknowledgements

The Town would like to thank the Maryland Department of Planning Lower Eastern Shore Regional Office staff for assisting Snow Hill in finding grant monies to retain consultant services. The Worcester County GIS Department provided additional assistance with the map suite and GIS analysis. The Town would also like to acknowledge Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc.'s, planning and engineering staff for assisting in preparing the Town's future growth plan, as well as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Maryland's Coastal Zone Management Program (CZM) for providing the grant funds to prepare the document. Lastly, the Mayor and Council, Town Staff, the Town's Planning Commission and all of those who contributed to directing the future of the community.

Legal Basis for Planning in Maryland

Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland requires municipalities that maintain zoning authority over the jurisdiction to develop a comprehensive plan. Article 66B also requires municipalities to address specific issues within their growth plans. Enacted in 2006, House Bill 1141 further requires municipalities to address the impact projected growth will have on infrastructure, water resources, schools, libraries and public safety. Snow Hill's Comprehensive Growth Plan meets the necessary requirements under Article 66B and House Bill 1141, and further addresses workforce housing in order to be able to participate in the Workforce Housing Grant Program developed under House Bill 1160.

The information below further discusses Maryland's visions and requirements for growth as they relate to Snow Hill.

View on the Pocomoke River from Sturgis Park dock

The State's Twelve Visions for Guiding Future Growth

The following twelve "vision statements" are based on the 1992 Planning Act, and subsequent amendments thereto, and are incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan as fundamental goals which will be achieved through a variety of objectives, policies, principles, recommendations, and implementation techniques.

1. **Quality of Life and Sustainability** - A high quality of life is achieved through universal stewardship of the land, water, and air resulting in sustainable communities and protection of the environment.
2. **Public Participation** - Citizens are active partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives and are sensitive to their responsibilities in achieving community goals.
3. **Growth Areas** - Growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to those centers, or strategically selected new centers.
4. **Community Design** - Compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character and located near transit options is encouraged to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources and preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas, and historical, cultural, and archeological resources.
5. **Infrastructure** - Growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sound manner.
6. **Transportation** - A well-maintained, multimodal transportation system facilitates the safe, convenient, affordable, and efficient movement of people, goods and services within and between population and business centers.
7. **Housing** - A range of housing densities, types, and sizes provide residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes.
8. **Economic Development** - Economic development that promotes employment opportunities for all income levels within the capacity of the State's natural resources, public services, and public facilities is encouraged.
9. **Environmental Protection** - Land and water resources are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems and living resources.
10. **Resource Conservation** - Waterways, open space, natural systems, scenic areas, forests, and agricultural areas are conserved.
11. **Stewardship** - Government, business entities, and residents are responsible for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with resource protection.
12. **Implementation** - Strategies, policies, programs and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, State, and interstate levels to achieve these visions.

1997 Priority Funding Areas Act

The 1997 Priority Funding Areas Act capitalizes on the influence of State expenditures on economic growth and development. This legislation directs State spending to Priority Funding Areas. Priority Funding Areas are existing communities and places where local governments want State investment to support future growth.

Growth-related projects covered by the legislation include most State programs that encourage or support growth and development such as highways, sewer and water construction, economic development assistance, and State leases or construction of new office facilities.

The Priority Funding Areas legislation builds on the foundation created by the Visions that were adopted as State policy in the 1992 Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act and are articulated above as fundamental goals for the Town of Snow Hill. Beginning October 1, 1998, the State of Maryland directed funding for projects that support growth to Priority Funding Areas. Funding for projects in municipalities, other existing communities, industrial areas, and planned growth areas designated by counties receive priority State funding over other projects. Priority Funding Areas are locations where the State and local governments want to target their efforts to encourage and support economic development and new growth.

The Smart Growth Initiative

In addition to the Priority Funding Areas Act, the 1997 General Assembly passed four other pieces of legislation and budget initiatives - Brownfields, Live Near Your Work, Job Creation Tax Credits, and Rural Legacy-known collectively as "Smart Growth."

Smart Growth directs the State to target programs and funding to support established communities and locally designated growth areas, and to protect rural areas. The Priority Funding Areas Act provides a geographic focus for the State's investment in growth-related infrastructure. The remaining four components complement this geographic focus by targeting specific State resources to preserve land outside of Priority Funding Areas, to encourage growth inside Priority Funding Areas, and to ensure that existing communities continue to provide a high quality of life for their residents.

Maryland has adopted the following principles of Smart Growth, which provide guidance for new development, infill development, and redevelopment:

- Mix land uses;
- Take advantage of compact building design;
- Create housing opportunities and choices;
- Create walkable communities;
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place;
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas;
- Provide a variety of transportation options;
- Strengthen and direct development to existing communities;
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective; and
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

Although the 1997 Smart Growth initiative was significant in the State's refusal to fund wasteful sprawl development, it is also only one component in the continuum of Maryland's growth policy development.

House Bill 1141 (Enacted during 2006 Legislative Session)

During the 2006 Maryland Legislative Session, House Bill 1141 was enacted. This is a key planning related law having a direct effect on procedures for annexation and requiring new planning elements within Snow Hill's Comprehensive Plan.

Annexation Procedures

There are two significant changes, with respect to annexation procedures, which affect the Town. The first change is dealing with "the five year rule" and the second change deals with "annexation plans".

The Five Year Rule

There are two changes here. First, the rule would be applied solely based upon zoning. In the past, the five-year rule could be applied whenever a proposed new zoning classification was substantially different from the use envisioned "in the current and duly adopted master plan." Secondly, the reference to the master plan is now gone and the issue becomes the degree of change from the current county zoning classification to the proposed municipal classification following the annexation. When the zoning change is from one residential zone to another," substantially different" now is defined as a density change. The five-year rule will not kick in for a density change unless the proposed zoning is 50% denser. For example, if the current zoning permits 1 unit per acre, the new zoning can be subject to the five year rule if it permits anything more than 1.5 units per acre. As before, a municipality may obtain a waiver from the county to avoid the five-year wait until the new zoning classification applies. This change took effect on October 1, 2006.

Annexation Plans

An annexation plan is required that replaces the "outline" for the extension of services and public facilities prior to the public hearing for an annexation proposal. This section contains no additional language for the content of the annexation plan to be adopted, but does require it to be consistent with the municipal growth element for any annexations that begin after October 1, 2009. The Plan must be provided to the county and the State (the Maryland Department of Planning) at least 30 days prior to the hearing. The requirement for an annexation plan and the requirement that it be provided to the Maryland Department of Planning took effect on October 1, 2006. The requirement for consistency with the Municipal Growth Element of the comprehensive plan takes effect no later than October 1, 2009 (unless extended for up to two six-month periods).

New Planning Elements

The new legislation mentioned above requires two new elements (i.e. chapters) of local comprehensive plans. The first element, the Water Resources Plan Element - is required of all local governments (county and municipal) that exercise planning and zoning authority. The second element, the Municipal Growth Element - is required in municipal comprehensive plans only. Both elements are required to be incorporated into the Town's Comprehensive Plan no later than October 1, 2009 (unless extended for up to two six-month periods).

The Water Resources Plan Element

This new planning element addresses the relationship of planned growth to water resources for both waste disposal and safe drinking water. It will be required of all county and municipal governments in the State. The element must identify drinking water and other water resources adequate for the needs of existing and future development proposed in the land use element of the comprehensive plan. It must also identify suitable receiving waters for both wastewater and storm water management to meet the needs of existing and projected development proposed in the land use element of the comprehensive plan. The Maryland Department of the Environment will provide available data to identify these resources. Resource issues expected to be addressed in these elements include water resource protection areas, groundwater resources, water quality standards and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs).

The Municipal Growth Element

This element requires a municipality to identify areas for future growth consistent with a long-range vision for its future. The growth element will be developed based on consideration of a comprehensive list of factors including population projections, an assessment of land capacity and needs and an assessment of infrastructure and sensitive areas. Completion of the element will guide future annexation proposals and plans after October 2009. Consultation with Worcester County is required, and a joint planning agreement with the county is encouraged.

2009 Maryland General Assembly

The 2009 legislative session saw several bills introduced by the Governor Martin O'Malley that became law. The *Smart, Green and Growing* initiative saw three key planning bills voted into law. These new laws will not affect this version of the Comprehensive Plan, but they will add new visions and provisions for future comprehensive plans. Also, beginning in 2010 municipalities will be required to track the progress of their comprehensive plan and development based on certain measures and markers. Planning Commissioners and Board of Appeals members will also be required to go through a training session to help orient them toward the rules and responsibilities of their position. Below is a brief summary of the three planning bills of the 2009 legislative session.

- Smart and Sustainable Growth Act of 2009 – A bill addressing the *Terrapin Run* decision and implementing a new standard of "consistency" governments must have between their comprehensive plans and development decisions.
- Smart Growth Measures and Markers – Allows the State to create "Smart Growth" standards to measure local government's Smart Growth process.
- Planning Visions – Creates several new State planning visions to help guide comprehensive planning and growth in Maryland.

Snow Hill should work closely with the Maryland Department of Planning and its Planning Commission to monitor the progress of these new laws and their affect on Snow Hill.

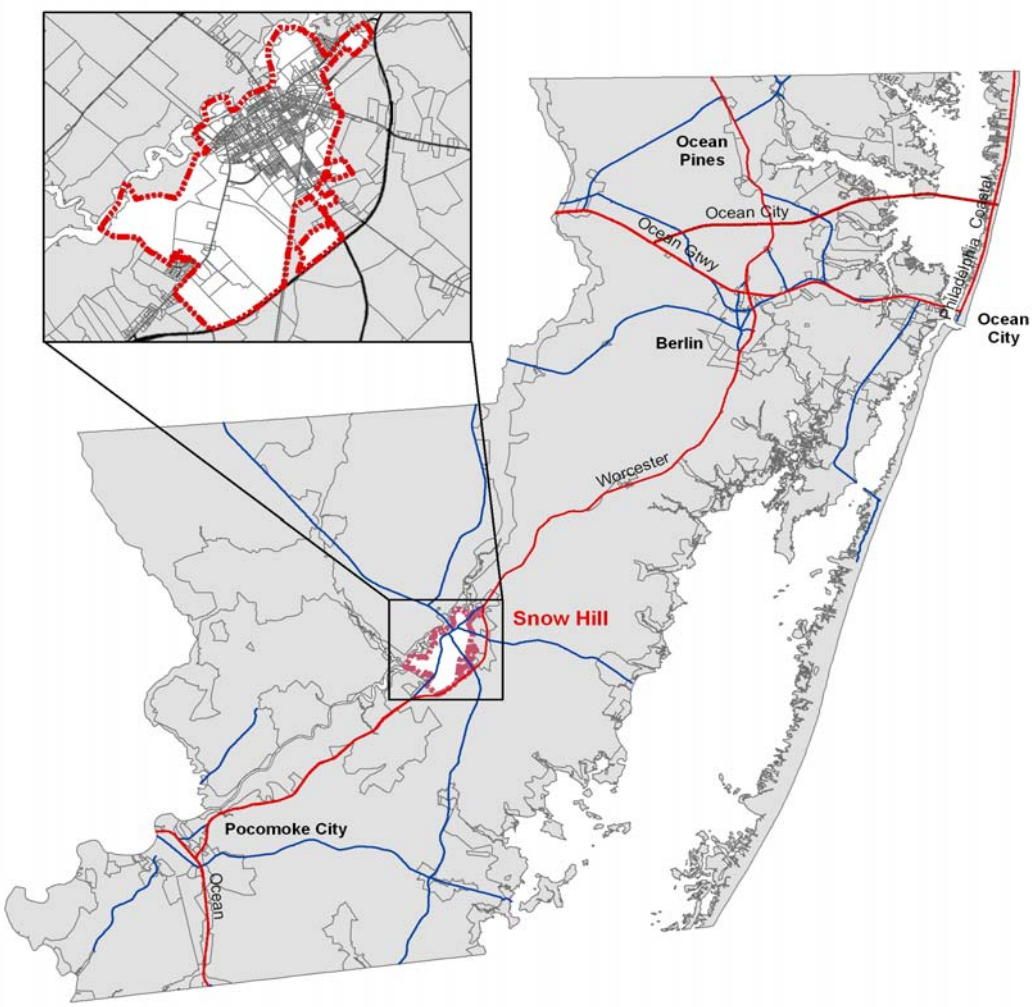
2

Snow Hill's Past & Future Vision

Location

The Town of Snow Hill is located near the center of Worcester County on the east side of the Pocomoke River and 18 miles southeast of Salisbury, 15 miles south of Berlin, and 12 miles north of Pocomoke City. It is situated on uplands ranging from 5 to 40 feet above low tide in the Pocomoke River. Most of the Town is at an elevation of 10 to 20 feet above sea level and rests on slightly rolling, fertile farmlands with extensive forested areas, including some unusual cypress swamps along the Pocomoke River. In March 2006, the Town annexed the Summerfield development containing 966.6 acres, bringing the total area of the Town to 2009.89. Snow Hill is the County seat for Worcester County with most of the County offices headquartered in the Town's central business area.

Figure 2.1
Snow Hill Location Map



History

Snow Hill was chartered in 1642 and mapped in 1686 by a group of Englishmen from Snow Hill, England, a suburb of London. The site for Snow Hill was dictated by a natural landing along the Pocomoke River. For the first two centuries, the river provided its chief means of access and transport to nearby settlements. In 1694, it was designated a Royal Port. First, sailing packets, and then steamboats traded with the settlements around the Chesapeake Bay and with foreign markets. Snow Hill was a port of entry for rum, sugar, molasses, and other commodities, while exporting cypress lumber, shingles, pig iron, and other miscellaneous products. The community of Public Landing along Chincoteague Bay was also a port of entry for trade from Philadelphia, New York, and Boston and from this point the goods were carted overland to Snow Hill, with some goods continuing on ships by way of the Pocomoke River.

The Town itself has an atmosphere of peaceful and comfortable living. Fine old homes line narrow, tree-lined streets with brick walks and several of the oldest homes in the County are located here, dating from the mid to late 1700's. Snow Hill is also the site of the first regularly organized Presbyterian Church (Makemie United) in America, established in 1683 by Francis Makemie. The Town has modern water and sewer systems, gas and electric distribution systems, a fire company, a library, 12 churches, excellent schools, and all the other amenities that make a community desirable.

Snow Hill Fire Department in 1939

Community Participation

In order to develop a vision for the Town's future, direct input from residents and businesses of the Town was sought out. The Town Planner and their consultant met on several occasions to organize previous studies and data, and to develop a game plan for gathering community input. Several public input sessions were held, including a larger meeting discussing several topics in breakout groups and four topical meetings where participants focused their attention on specific matters assigned for that day. Town staff also collaborated in developing a survey that was sent out to all Snow Hill residents and businesses, asking for their opinion on several important matters in the Town. The entire results of the community survey are provided later in Appendix A. Key issues discussed in the various meetings are compiled below.

First Public Forum

On February 17, 2009, over sixty people arrived at the Snow Hill Train Station to discuss the future of the Town. The crowd included a mix of long-time and new residents to Snow Hill, business owners, concerned citizens, community activists, Town staff, and elected and appointed officials. After a brief orientation and questions and answer period, the larger group was split into three smaller groups – all of which discussed the relationship between themselves and the Town. Each group then discussed three separate topics in detail. More detailed summaries, forms and surveys that were used in this process are included in Appendix B.

<u>Key Issues</u>

Below is a list of key issues from the first public forum:

- The Downtown and riverfront areas were discussed as being residents' favorite part of the Town;
- There is a need to expand water and wastewater capacity to accommodate future growth and to keep water and sewer rates low;
- Additional sidewalks are needed for better interconnectivity;
- The need for street repairs was emphasized;
- Economic development efforts should be focused on the downtown area, including the development of new attractions in the area;
- The need for affordable housing was discussed, including the following issues:
    - Encouraging residents to live downtown;
    - Increasing the employment base so more can afford housing;
    - Encouraging the development of lower cost housing.
- Promotion of the Town's natural and cultural resources;
- Promotion of additional retail in Snow Hill;
- Protect "sensitive areas from growth and development;

Four Topical Meetings

The Town scheduled four additional public forums to gain more in-depth input from residents and business owners concerning several important topics. Below is a list of topics that were discussed and dates of the forums. Goals and objectives that were developed from each of the topical discussions are provided below in the goals and objectives subsection of this chapter.

- Transportation/Community Facilities (March 16, 2009)
- Growth/Land Use (March 19, 2009)
- Water Resources/Sensitive Areas/Areas of Critical State Concern (March 21, 2009)
- Objectives/Implementation (March 30, 2009)

Resident Survey Results

Snow Hill staff worked together to develop a community survey that was sent to all residents and businesses in the community. A copy of the community survey and a summary of results is included in Appendix A.

Below is a summary of highlights from the community survey:

- 296 surveys were returned to the Town, nearly a 12% response rate on a population basis. Since one survey was sent out per household, the response rate on a household basis was 27%;
- Although not scientifically reliable, the survey respondents covered a wide range of age groups and geographic areas in the Town;
- 83% of respondents stated the small town character of Snow Hill is important;
- Many stated the Town's development regulations were too restrictive;
- Respondents stated tax breaks should be considered for rehabbing historic properties;
- Most found it was not important to restrict commercial development along U.S. Route 113;
- Speeding cars and drug-related activities were of the utmost public safety concern for Town residents;
- Many would like to see the political structure remain the same, with elected officials working to promote new business and tourism, while preserving the Town's natural resources and cultural heritage.

View on the Pocomoke River

Future Vision

Snow Hill began as a settlement along the Pocomoke River and developed overtime with the river at its heart. Today, Snow Hill remains a community focused around the beauty and recreation of the Pocomoke. Like other communities on the Eastern Shore, one of Snow Hill's challenges is to balance new development pressures while remaining a close knit community with most of its services focused around the historic downtown, and other businesses and industrial districts.

The people of Snow Hill remain steadfast in recognizing its long history and remaining close with their neighbors. While a large subdivision, such as Summerfield, could greatly increase the population of the Town, most current development occurring within the Town is being focused on renovation and rehabilitation. With the possibility looming of developing large commercial uses along the Town's main thoroughfare, residents clearly stated the focus of business and economic development remains on making downtown flourish and keeping the community's character intact.

The cooperative and friendly nature of the community was evident in the discussions to create this plan. Although not everyone agreed on precisely every detail of how to shape Snow Hill, the dedication and pride in the community from the residents was apparent. Members of the community did agree on many issues: the Town wants to keep their small town character while providing additional services and jobs for residents of the Town; affordable and safe housing is necessary to keep the community thriving; the Pocomoke River, the Town's several riverside parks and the downtown should always remain the focus of the community, and; Snow Hill should remain a safe community where children have recreational and employment opportunities to remain in Snow Hill and pass forward the legacy of the Town.

Snow Hill is not without its future concerns. How should the Town balance the need for additional jobs while maintaining the small town character of the community and promoting economic development? What is the best way to promote growth in the Town and still maintain its invaluable natural resources? This Plan hopes to deal with these issues based on the large amount of input and insight provided by the residents and business owners of Snow Hill. The residents of Snow Hill created a great community, prior to the development of any official "Plan". This Plan will provide a path to continue this Town's great tradition.

Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives are guided by the community's input and vision for future growth and the State's "eight visions":

Transportation Goals and Objectives

1. Provide a link for pedestrians between the Town's park system and other community facilities;
2. Focus large truck traffic to areas where roadways are better fit to handle large truck traffic, where feasible;
3. Develop a plan and prioritize the extension of sidewalks and road repairs;
4. Maintain and extend the Town's existing grid system into new growth areas;
5. Work with State Highway Administration (SHA) to develop transportation plans for SHA-controlled roadways within the Town;
6. Maintain the U.S. Business 113 designation and create an interpretive and directional plan to promote downtown services;
7. Follow SHA's Scenic Highway Guidelines for new development along the Blue Crab Scenic Byway.

Community Facilities Goals and Objectives

1. Promote the recreational and environmental importance of the Pocomoke River;
2. Develop additional neighborhood-scale recreational facilities and work with others in the area to utilize existing facilities for the entire community;
3. Provide water and sewer infrastructure to promote growth and redevelopment in the community;
4. Provide additional water and sewer system capacity to accommodate future growth while keeping costs as manageable as possible for residents and businesses;
5. Ensure public safety services are adequately increased to continue providing the same level of service as the Town continues to grow;
6. Utilize the library and local schools as a way to keep the community involved in Snow Hill events and government matters;
7. Develop an education and outreach program to promote the importance of the Pocomoke River as a vital community resource to residents of the Town.

Land Use and Future Growth Goals and Objectives

1. Continue to encourage infill development and redevelopment of the Town's existing neighborhoods;
2. Promote business and residential opportunities downtown, including mixed-uses where possible;
3. Phase future growth as necessary to minimize impacts on infrastructure and community resources;
4. Maintain the character of the community through developing a sound land use pattern based on historic growth patterns of the Town;
5. Recognize the historic significance of Snow Hill's downtown and promote its preservation;
6. Ensure that land use along U.S. Route 113 does not conflict with job creation in the Downtown business district. For instance, hotels without restaurants or eateries, medical parks and similar uses are encouraged in the Highway Commercial area;
7. Continue dialogue with County with regard to development and annexation north of the Pocomoke River and southeast of U.S. Route 113. Possibly use mitigation to develop park on northside with cooperation of Worcester County;
8. Create a land use plan that promotes regional activity in the area; thereby encouraging passersby to utilize Snow Hill's resources.

Sensitive Areas Goals and Objectives

1. Protect the Pocomoke River, as it is considered the most important resource for the Town;
2. When technologically and financially feasible, reduce the impacts of point source and non-point source discharges into the Pocomoke River including long term goal of relocating the wastewater treatment plant;
3. Continue to seek out opportunities to provide additional public access to the Pocomoke River;
4. Develop a water conservation program, including education and outreach to the community in order to emphasize reducing unnecessary water usage and to protect natural resources;
5. Create plan to provide vegetated buffers, preserve natural areas and reduce impervious surfaces in order to reduce nutrient runoff;
6. Develop policies that take into account adverse weather, including flooding and drought scenarios;
7. Develop in environmentally responsible manner in the Critical Area, as required under State law;
8. Recognize and protect the Town's cultural and historically significant resources.

Conclusions

Snow Hill believes it is of the utmost importance to maintain the character of its community and work with residents to utilize its wealth of natural, historic and cultural resources. This Comprehensive Plan provides policies and recommendations for providing practical means to move forward with the vision of the community over the next 20 years. The Town should work with the County and State agencies to bring this plan into fruition. Snow Hill should also continue to seek out community input when possible and provide opportunities to educate the community in maintaining its resources. With hard work and cooperation, Snow Hill can remain a gem of the Eastern Shore for years to come.

3

Snow Hill Today

Social, Economic and Housing Characteristics

Snow Hill Today
Social, Economic and Housing Characteristics

Population Trends

The Town of Snow Hill has experienced an increase in population throughout the last ten decades, showing a 813 person (50.9%) net increase in population from 1900 to 2000. However, trends in total population have also been slightly decreasing, thus moderating the Town's growth. Between 1930 and 1960, Snow Hill experienced its greatest increase in population of 707; approximately 44.0% more than its previous population. The last census in 2000 indicates that the Town is again experiencing a period of increasing population (See Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1).

Figure 3.1
Population Trends 1900-2000
Snow Hill, Maryland

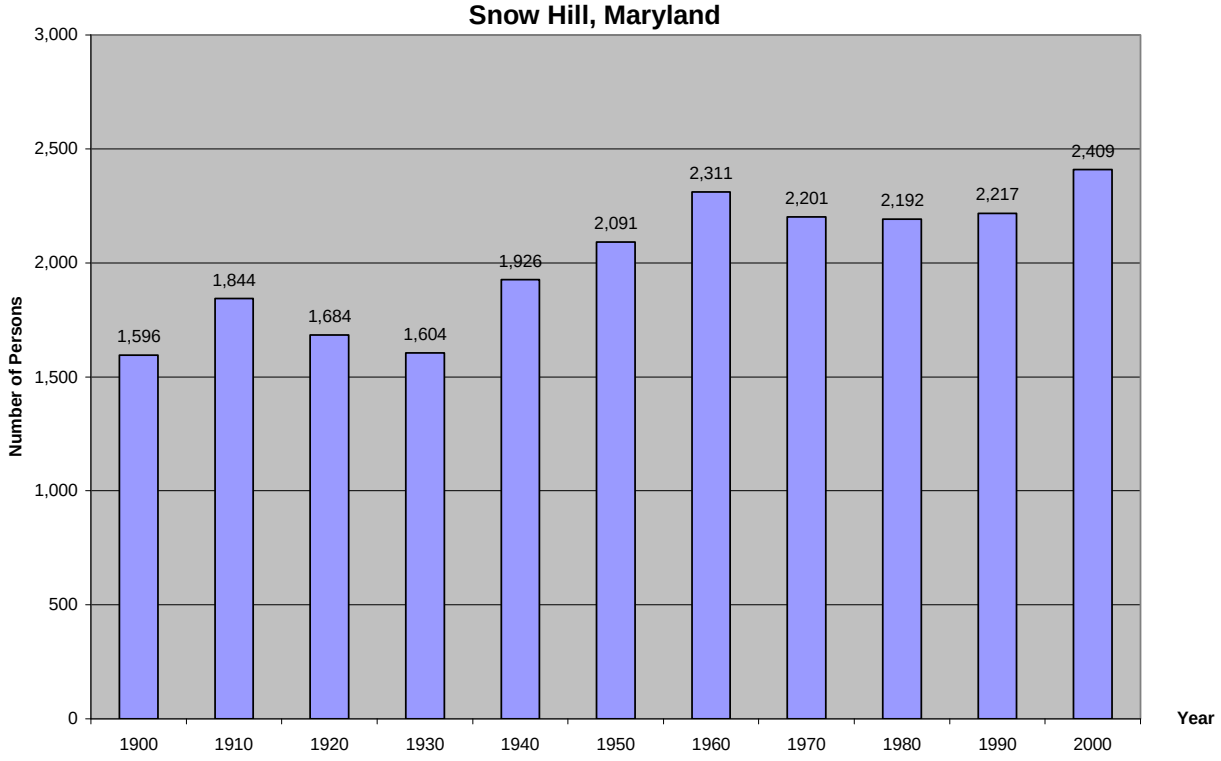


Table 3.1
Population Trends 1900-2000
Snow Hill, Maryland

Year	Population	Change From Previous Decade	Percent Change From Previous Decade
1900	1,596	-	-
1910	1,844	248	15.5%
1920	1,684	-160	-8.7%
1930	1,604	-80	-4.8%
1940	1,926	322	20.1%
1950	2,091	165	8.6%
1960	2,311	220	10.5%
1970	2,201	-110	-4.8%
1980	2,192	-9	-0.4%
1990	2,217	25	1.1%
2000	2,409	192	8.7%

Source: Snow Hill Comprehensive Plan 2004

The 2000 Census population of Snow Hill is 2,409 persons, 192 persons (8.7%) above the 1990 Census count of 2,217. Note that, with the exception of the lack of population data for Pocomoke City in 1950, Snow Hill conforms to the general trend of increasing population among Worcester County municipalities, Worcester County, and the State of Maryland from 1950 to 2000. The percentage of municipal population growth in Worcester County from 1950 to 2000 ranges from 15.2% in Snow Hill up to 481.3% in Ocean City (See Figure 3.2 and Table 3.2).

Until 1970, Snow Hill was the second largest municipality in Worcester County in terms of population. Since 1990 however, it accounts for the smallest portion of Worcester County's total population. This results from the steady increases in population experienced by Berlin (74.5%) and Ocean City (481.3%) between 1950 and 2000.

Figure 3.2
Total Population 1960-2000
Worcester County Municipalities

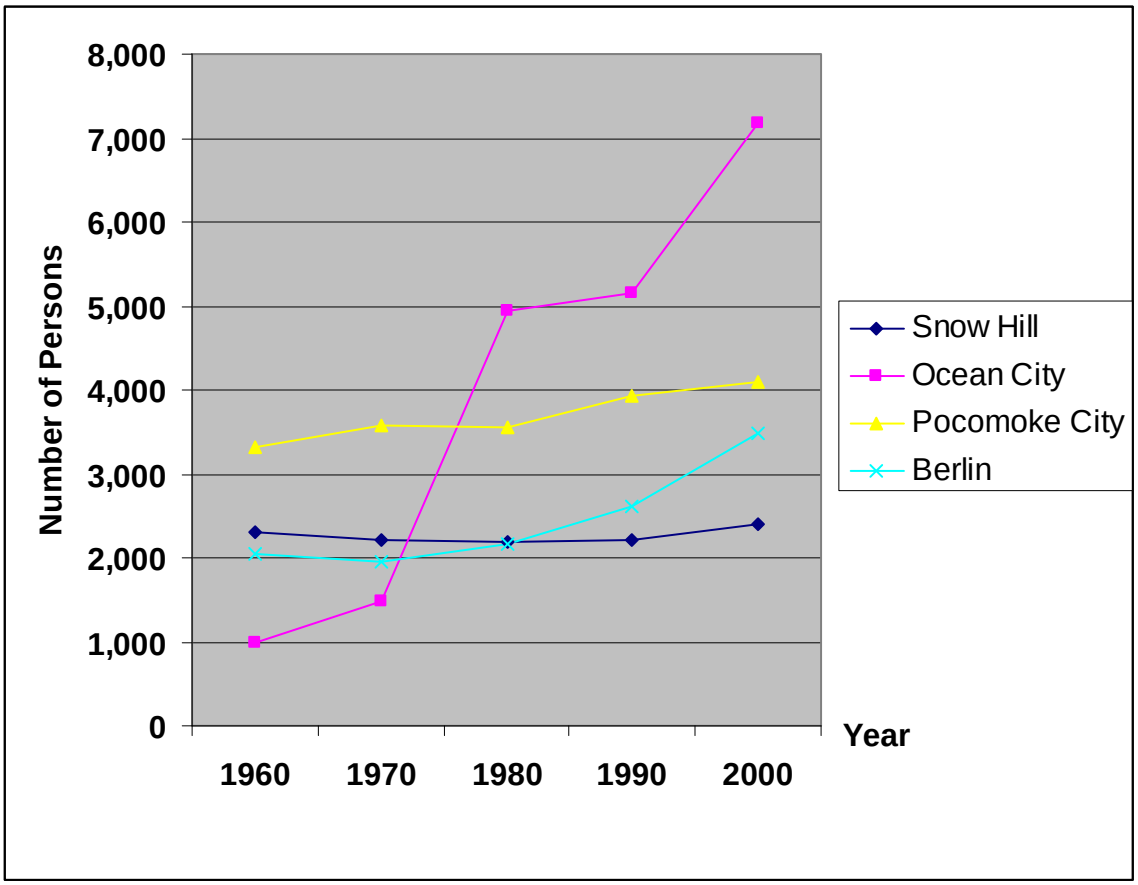


Table 3.2
Total Population 1950-2000
Worcester County, Cities and Towns

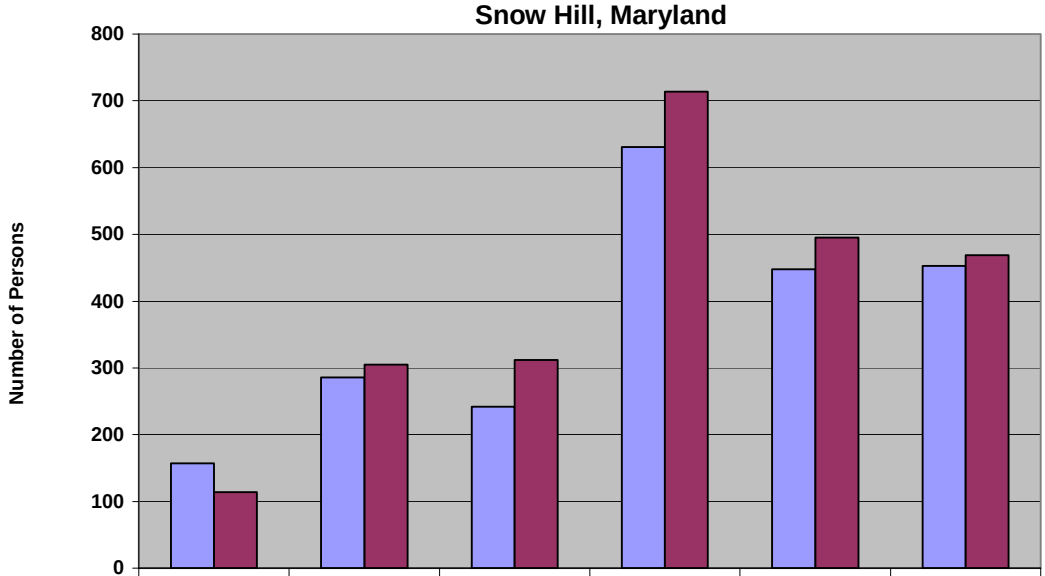
City/Town	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Snow Hill	2,091	2,311	2,201	2,192	2,217	2,409
Ocean City	1,234	983	1,493	4,946	5,146	7,173
Pocomoke City	-	3,329	3,573	3,558	3,922	4,098
Berlin	2,001	2,046	1,942	2,162	2,616	3,491
Worcester County	23,148	23,733	24,442	30,889	35,028	46,543
State of Maryland	2.3 M	3.1 M	3.92 M	4.22 M	4.78 M	5.29 M

Source: MD Office of Planning, Planning Data Services & 2000 Census

Age Composition

The age structure and total population trends are important components of future land use designations for Snow Hill's future needs. Programmers of policies for community facilities, such as schools or services, and providing transportation for persons with limited mobility, rely on age composition data. In addition, key indicators of relative well being, such as employment and housing, are also dependent upon the age structure of the population.

Figure 3.3
Population Change by Age Group 1990-2000
Snow Hill, Maryland



	Under 5	5 to 14	15 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 & Over
1990 Population	157	286	242	631	448	453
2000 Population	114	305	312	714	495	469

Age Group (Years)

In comparison to the State, the County, and other municipalities in Worcester County, Snow Hill possesses a similar proportion of children less than 5 years of age and children 5-17 years of age. The mean proportions of children under 5 and children 5-17 among municipalities in Worcester County are 5.3% and 16.9%, respectively.

Compared to the County's other municipalities, Snow Hill had the second highest proportion of young adults with 9.3%, after Ocean City which leads the way by far with 15.6% (Figure 3.3 and Table 3.3). This shows that in recent years Snow Hill has been a fairly popular choice of residence among the 18-24 years old crowd – which is generally the most mobile population group.

The ratio of persons in the 25 to 44 year old age group (the primary labor force and household forming age group) for Snow Hill is 29.6%, the highest percentage of all municipalities. This is higher than Worcester County at 26.4% and lower than the State of Maryland at 31.4%.

The 45 to 64 year old group comprises 20.5% of the total population in Snow Hill. This proportion lies within the proportions ranging from 19.1% to 28.0% among other municipalities in Worcester County. For the County and State, the percentage of this age group to the total population are 26.9% and 23.1%, respectively, both of which are greater than Snow Hill's proportion of this age group.

During the last 50 years the trend has been for an increasing ratio of people aged 65 and over. In 2000, this age group comprised 19.5% of Snow Hill's population, compared to 20.1% for the County and 11.3% for the State. In other municipalities, this age group ranges from 16.0% in Pocomoke City to 25.2% in Ocean City. When this age group is coupled with the grouping of persons 45 to 64 years, persons 45 years and older accounted for 40% of Snow Hill's population. In Worcester County, the two age groups accounted for 47.0% of the total population and 34.4% Statewide. In other municipalities of the County, the range is from 35.1% in Pocomoke City and 53.2% in Ocean City (See Table 3.3).

Table 3.3
Percent of Population by Age Cohort by Municipality 2000
Worcester County, Maryland

City/Town	<5	5-17	18-24	25-44	45-64	65+	Median Age
Snow Hill	4.7%	16.3%	9.3%	29.6%	20.5%	19.5%	38.8
Ocean City	3.0%	8.3%	15.6%	28.2%	28.0%	25.2%	47.2
Pocomoke City	6.9%	23.6%	7.8%	26.7%	19.1%	16.0%	35.5
Berlin	6.7%	19.4%	7.4%	26.2%	19.9%	20.4%	38.3
Worcester County	4.9%	15.7%	6.2%	26.4%	26.9%	20.1%	43.0
State of Maryland	6.7%	18.9%	8.5%	31.4%	23.1%	11.3%	36.0

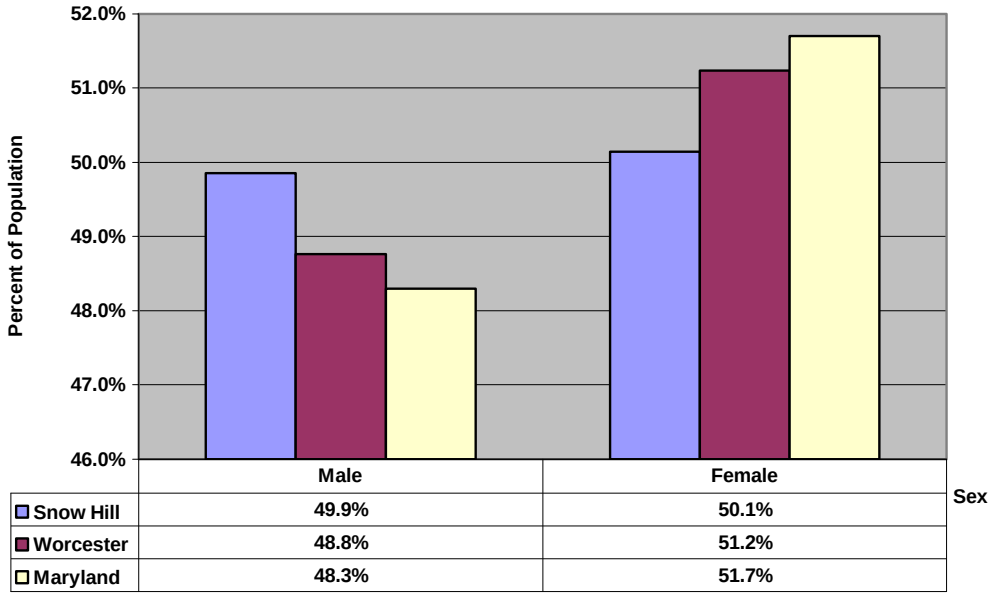
Source: 2000 Census

The median age of Snow Hill is the second highest out of the municipalities in Worcester County. The Town's median is also lower than that of Worcester County's as a whole, but higher than State of Maryland's. In 2000, average median age of the all the municipalities in Worcester County was 40.0 years, while the median age of the residents of Snow Hill was 38.8 years of age; however, the municipal average is slightly skewed by Ocean City's relatively high median age of 47.2 (See Table 3.3).

Sex and Racial Composition

In the 2000 Census, Snow Hill's population was 49.9% male and 50.1% female, which is similar to the County's and State's gender proportions (See Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4
Population Ratio by Sex – Year 2000
Snow Hill, Maryland

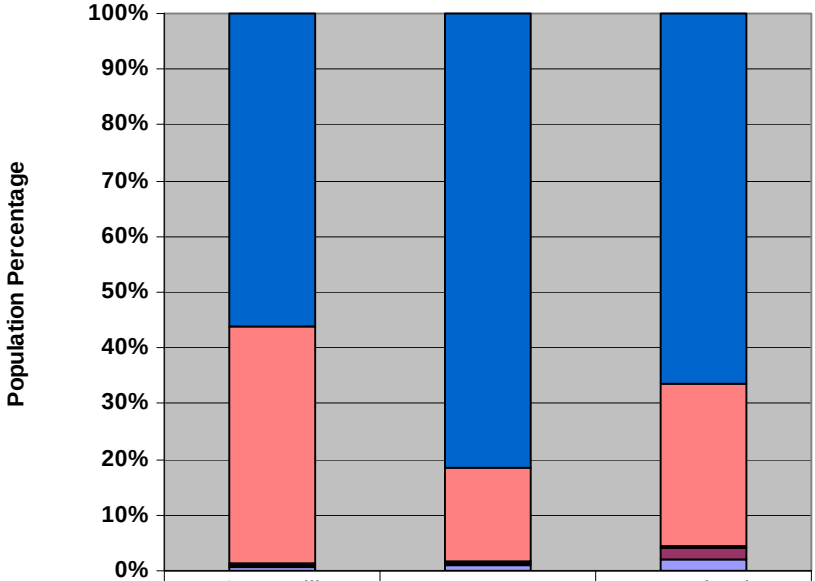


	Male	Female
Snow Hill	49.9%	50.1%
Worcester	48.8%	51.2%
Maryland	48.3%	51.7%

A little over half of Snow Hill's community is white (56%), while the other half consists mainly of a black or African American population (42.3%). The proportion of the black or African American community in Snow Hill is more than double that of Worcester County's (16.7%) and consistently higher than the State's (27.9%) (See Figure 3.5).

Snow Hill residents pausing along Sturgis Park riverfront.

Figure 3.5
Population Ratio by Race – Year 2000
Snow Hill, Maryland



	Snow Hill	Worcester	Maryland
White	56.0%	81.2%	64.0%
Black or African American	42.3%	16.7%	27.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%
Asian	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race	0.4%	0.4%	1.8%
Two or More Races	0.6%	1.0%	2.0%

Education

The proportion of Snow Hill's individuals 3 years or older enrolled in nursery school, preschool, kindergarten and elementary school is generally a little higher than that of the County and State. However, the proportion of persons enrolled in college and graduate school are considerably lower than that of Worcester County and Maryland. The rate of persons enrolled in high school is in between the County's (25.6%) and State's (20.9%). In Snow Hill, 23.8% of persons 25 years and older do not have a high school or equivalent degree compared to 18.3% and 16.2% for Worcester County and Maryland, respectively. Snow Hill does have a higher proportion of high school graduates than the County and State, but a lower portion of higher education degrees (See Table 3.4).

Table 3.4
Educational Statistics 2000
Snow Hill, Maryland

	Snow Hill		Worcester	Maryland
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT				
Population 3 years and over enrolled in school	**567**	**100%**	**9,832**	**1,475,484**
Nursery school, preschool	44	7.8%	6.5%	6.5%
Kindergarten	35	6.2%	5.4%	5.1%
Elementary school (grades 1-8)	305	53.8%	45.4%	43.5%
High school (grades 9-12)	121	21.3%	25.6%	20.9%
College or graduate school	62	10.9%	17.1%	24.0%
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				
Population 25 years and over	**1,673**	**100%**	**34,092**	**3,495,595**
Less than 9th grade	145	8.7%	5.1%	5.1%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	253	15.1%	13.2%	11.1%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	645	38.6%	34.1%	26.7%
Some college, no degree	311	18.6%	20.6%	20.3%
Associate degree	58	3.5%	5.2%	5.3%
Bachelor's degree	147	8.8%	14.6%	18.0%
Graduate or professional degree	114	6.8%	7.1%	13.4%

Source: 2000 Census

Employment and Labor Force Characteristics

According to the 2000 Census, the Town of Snow Hill has a civilian labor force of 1,938 persons over the age of 16. A total of 70 persons of its labor force are unemployed creating a 3.6% unemployment rate; 0.5% lower than that of the County's 4.1% unemployment rate (See Table 3.5). Larger proportions of Snow Hill's labor force are dedicated within the Education, Health, and Social Services, Manufacturing, Retail Trade, and Public Administration employment sectors. Of the Town's 936 workers, 66.2% are within the private wage and salary worker class, while 25.3% work for the government, which is 9.1% more than the average government workers for the entire County (See Table 3.6).

Table 3.5
Industry & Employment Characteristics 2000
Snow Hill, Maryland

	Snow Hill	Percent	Worcester	Maryland
Employment Status:				
Population 16+ years old	**1,938**	**100.0%**	**38,103**	**4,085,942**
Employed Persons	936	48.3%	56.5%	63.8%
Unemployed Persons	70	3.6%	4.1%	3.2%
Not in labor force	932	48.1%	39.3%	32.2%
Armed Forces	0	0.0%	0.1%	0.8%
Industry:				
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, mining	8	0.9%	2.2%	0.6%
Construction	72	7.7%	9.1%	6.9%
Manufacturing	143	15.3%	6.8%	7.3%
Wholesale trade	33	3.5%	3.4%	2.8%
Retail trade	100	10.7%	13.4%	10.5%
Transportation, warehousing, untilities	53	5.7%	3.0%	4.9%
Information	14	1.5%	2.5%	4.0%
Finance, insurance, real estate	41	4.4%	7.9%	7.1%
Professional, scientific, management,	47	5.0%	5.9%	12.4%
Educational, health, social services	211	22.5%	17.2%	20.6%
Arts, entertainment, recreation	82	8.8%	17.7%	6.8%
Other services	35	3.7%	4.6%	5.6%
Public administration	97	10.4%	6.3%	10.5%

Source: 2000 Census

Table 3.6
Class of Worker 2000
Snow Hill, Maryland

	Snow Hill	Percent	Worcester Percent
Employed population	936	48.3%	21,510
Private wage & salary workers	620	66.2%	74.6%
Government workers	237	25.3%	16.2%
Self-employed workers	73	7.8%	8.9%
Unpaid family workers	6	0.6%	0.3%

Source: 2000 Census

Commuting to Work

The majority of workers in Snow Hill used a car, truck or van as their means of transportation to work in 2000. Compared with Worcester County, Snow Hill's residents carpooled and walked twice as much, but there were fewer residents who worked at home. The proportion of public transportation users in Snow Hill mirrors the County's average. The mean travel time to work was 24 minutes for Snow Hill workers, 0.7 minutes more than that of Worcester County workers (see Table 3.7).

Table 3.7
Commuting to Work Statistics 2000
Snow Hill, Maryland

	Snow Hill	Percent	Worcester Percent
Drove Alone	630	69.5%	79.6%
Carpooled	198	21.8%	10.3%
Public Transportation	14	1.5%	1.4%
Walked	41	4.5%	2.5%
Other Means	15	1.7%	1.3%
Worked At Home	9	1.0%	4.9%
Mean Travel Time to Work	24	-	23.3

Source: 2000 Census

Income and Poverty

Median household income for Snow Hill was $10,920 lower than Worcester County in 2000, while the median family income was $8,636 less and the per capita income was $6,945 less than Worcester County (See Tables 3.8 & 3.9). In 2000, the rate of individuals below the poverty line was 15.9% and the rate of families below the poverty line was 14.8%, which is much higher than the County's respective rates of 8.5% and 6.1%. Furthermore, the 15.9% rate of persons below the poverty line is a significant increase from 10.7% in 1989. In 2000, Snow Hill's poverty threshold was $8,959 for unrelated individuals and $11,869 for a family of three.

Table 3.8
Household Income Characteristics 2000
Snow Hill, Maryland

	Snow Hill		Worcester	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Households	**842**	**100%**	**19,706**	100
Less than $10,000	136	16.2%	1,589	8.1
$10,000 to $14,999	66	7.8%	1,283	6.5
$15,000 to $24,999	136	16.2%	2,695	13.7
$25,000 to $34,999	137	16.3%	2,776	14.1
$35,000 to $49,999	129	15.3%	3,798	19.3
$50,000 to $74,999	115	13.7%	3,930	19.9
$75,000 to $99,999	70	8.3%	1,907	9.7
$100,000 to $149,999	45	5.3%	1,060	5.4
$150,000 to $199,999	3	0.4%	301	1.5
$200,000 or more	5	0.6%	367	1.9
Median household income ($)	29,730	(X)	**40,650**	(X)

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 3.9
Family Income Characteristics 2000
Snow Hill, Maryland

	Snow Hill	Percent	Worcester
Families	**539**	**100%**	13,404
Less than $10,000	53	9.8%	4.5%
$10,000 to $14,999	39	7.2%	4.5%
$15,000 to $24,999	67	12.4%	11.1%
$25,000 to $34,999	96	17.8%	12.8%
$35,000 to $49,999	94	17.4%	20.3%
$50,000 to $74,999	89	16.5%	24.2%
$75,000 to $99,999	59	10.9%	11.9%
$100,000 to $149,999	37	6.9%	6.6%
$150,000 to $199,999	5	0.9%	2.0%
$200,000 or more	0	0.0%	2.2%
Median family income	38,657	(X)	$47,293
Per capita income*	15,560	(X)	$22,505
Rate of individuals below the poverty line - 1999	326	15.9	8.5
Rate of families below the poverty line - 1999	80	14.8	6.1

Source: 2000 Census

** **Per capita income** is the mean money income received in 1999 computed for every man, woman, and child in a geographic area. It is derived by dividing the total income of all people 15 years old and over in a geographic area by the total population in that area. Note -- income is not collected for people under 15 years old even though those people are included in the denominator of per capita income. This measure is rounded to the nearest whole dollar.*

Money income includes amounts reported separately for wage or salary income; net self-employment income; interest, dividends, or net rental or royalty income or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); public assistance or welfare payments; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and all other income.

- U.S. Census 2000

Household Type

Snow Hill had 862 households in 2000, which is 7 households less than the 869 households reported in 1990 (See Table 3.10). Of the 862 households, 556 are family households (64.5%). Family households experienced a 9.4% decrease since 1990, while non-family households increased 20.0% from 255 in 1990 to 306 in 2000. Of note, 40.2% of the housing stock was built in 1939 or earlier.

The percent change and the proportions of household type among Snow Hill are very different from those statistics among Worcester County. Indeed, family households in the County experienced the reversed trend and increased 35.5% from 9,797 in 1990 to 13,278 in 2000. In addition, the number of non-family households increased 47.7% from 4,345 in 1990 to 6,416 in 2000 – a percentage change more than double than that of the Town. Household density, or number of persons per household, for Snow Hill was 2.37 persons in 2000; which is very similar to the County's (See Table 3.10).

Table 3.10
Household Characteristics 1990-2000
Snow Hill, Maryland

	Snow Hill			Worcester		
	1990	**2000**	**% Change**	**1990**	**2000**	**% Change**
Family Households	614	556	-9.4%	9,797	13,278	35.5%
Non-Family Households	255	306	20.0%	4,345	6,416	47.7%
Persons Per Household	2.48	2.37	-4.4%	2.44	2.33	-4.5%
Total Households	869	**862**	-0.8%	14,142	19,694	39.3%

Source: 2000 Census

Table 3.10 Definitions

Family Household - households of at least two or more people that are related by birth, marriage or adoption and others who may be unrelated.
Non-family Household - one person households or households with no members related by birth, marriage or adoption.

Also important to the Town is the ratio of renter-occupied housing units to the number of owner-occupied units. Approximately 40% of the Town's households are renter–occupied (2000 U.S. Census). Generally speaking, a greater amount of owner-occupied units brings stability to a community, but can often lead to higher housing prices if there is not a healthy amount of renter-occupied units. The Town will need to take stock of neighborhood issues and promote homeownership in areas where public safety and blight is a concern.

4

Community Facilities

Community Facilities

Community facilities are vitally important to maintaining and increasing the public health, safety and welfare of the residents and visitors of Snow Hill. Community facilities are defined in Article 66B as parks and recreation areas, schools and other educational and cultural facilities, libraries, churches, hospitals, social welfare and medical facilities, institutions, fire stations, police stations, jails, or other public or administrative facilities. Infrastructure such as water supply and sewer systems are also considered community facilities.

As Snow Hill continues to grow, recognition of the importance of community facilities will assist the municipality to effectively handle an increasing number of citizens and businesses. Ensuring that existing and future residents have adequate recreational opportunities, safe drinking water and necessary public safety will enable the Town to promote growth. An accurate inventory of community facilities is necessary to monitor and sustain its development in an environmentally responsible way.

An inventory was conducted of the various community facilities throughout Snow Hill as well as the adequacy and capacity of those facilities. Map 1 is provided indicating the location of community facilities discussed herein. This section then details the state of existing community facilities and documents any current deficiencies or areas where improvement is appropriate. The goals and objectives of this section will focus on the existing conditions of those facilities and the manner in which community facilities can be used to provide increased services to the existing community.

The effects of future growth and its impacts on facilities will not be discussed in this section as those issues are more appropriately discussed in Chapter 6 – Municipal Growth Element and Chapter 7 – Water Resources Element.

Bates Memorial United Methodist Church

Existing Community Facilities

Utilities

Sewerage System

Snow Hill has both sewerage and stormwater systems covering most of its incorporated area. This system also serves the Worcester County Detention Center, Worcester County Health Department, and Worcester County Recreational Center all of which lie outside the corporate limits. The stormwater collection system consists of 15,785 linear feet of storm sewer up to 48 inches in diameter, and 62,000 linear feet of sanitary sewers, excluding house laterals, varying in size from 4 inches to 12 inches. A low pressure force main system serving the properties on the east side of Market Street from Evergreen Terrace to Route 113 was added in 1996.

Prior to September 1983, Snow Hill's wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) used a primary treatment only with a design capacity of 330,000 gallons per day (gpd). The Town now uses a 500,000 gpd WWTP that provides secondary wastewater treatment. The existing wastewater treatment plant has adequate capacity – average daily usage from 2006 – 2008 is 302,000 GPD. Based on the annual usage, the sewerage collection system and wastewater treatment plant are adequate, but deterioration of old mains and root intrusion creates blockages, and increases groundwater infiltration. The Town replaced a portion of the sewerage collection system in 1990, but secondary (biological nutrient removal) and tertiary (enhanced nutrient removal) upgrades are needed at the WWTP facility.

The Town is currently planning to upgrade their WWTP to increase the capacity to meet future growth needs of the Town as well as to provide tertiary treatment. Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc., completed a Feasibility Study in February 2009 detailing recommendations for upgrading the WWTP. The Town Engineer determined that the existing WWTP site can handle a future expansion to 667,000 gpd and possibly 800,000 gpd with relocation of the Public Works facility and a spray irrigation site .

A key factor in the future growth of Snow Hill is the Worcester County Water and Sewer Master Plan. The County's Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan defines geographical areas where water and sewer infrastructure can be extended by the Town and it also provides a timeline for those extensions. The County is currently amending their Water and Sewer Plan and the Town should work closely with Worcester County during this process.

An additional key element is the affect growth will have on the community, and its infrastructure and other utilities. The Municipal Growth Element (Chapter 6) and the Water Resources Element (Chapter 7) further detail the affect of growth on the community and provides recommendations to accommodate that growth.

Water System

The Town of Snow Hill currently operates two water distribution systems simultaneously. The main community system serves the majority of the incorporated area. The Town also owns a non-community water system that services the McDonald's on the East side of Market Street near the US Rt. 113 intersection. All of the potable water supply used for industrial, commercial and residential purposes within the Town of Snow Hill is secured from the Manokin Aquifer. The Town is totally dependent upon this source of water for its continuing development and prosperity.

The community water system consists of one elevated storage tank, a distribution system comprised of approximately 16 miles of cast iron, ductile iron and polyvinylchloride (PVC) pipe varying in size from 1-inch to 8-inch diameter, four 360 foot wells, metered services and over 120 fire hydrants. The non-community system consists of a bank of hydro-pneumatic tanks, small diameter piping and a well. The non-community water system is not capable of providing fire suppression.

Potable water for the Town of Snow Hill's community water system is supplied through three groundwater wells at this time. A review of the metered well production from January 2005 through December 2007 was conducted to identify average and peak system demands. The existing system delivers an average daily production of 271,800 gallons per day (GPD).

Table 4.1
Well Pump Summary

Well No.	Location	Horsepower (HP)	Design Flow (gpm)	Actual Flow(1) (gpm)
MDE #1	Ross Street	60	500	500
MDE #2	Washington Street(2)	50	500	500
MDE #3	Coulbourne Lane	40	300	350
MDE #4	Fire House Well	No Pump		

(1) Actual flow per Town's Water Department in 2008

(2) Equipped with emergency backup power

MDE is currently performing an aquifer study, which began in 2006, and if fully funded should be complete in 2013. The Town should review this study if available upon six year review of this plan.

As previously mentioned, the Town's sole source of water is from groundwater wells located in the Manokin Aquifer. The Manokin Aquifer is a gray, fine to very coarse sand that occasionally contains lignite and peat. This confined aquifer forms the base of the freshwater aquifer system in most areas of the basin. Snow Hill currently uses three wells, summarized in Table 4.1 on previous page, which are operated in a lead/lag configuration. The Town's fourth well located at the firehouse is used only in emergency situations. Wells 1 and 2 are manually alternated, monthly, as the lead wells. Well 3 always operates as the lag pump and only comes on when tank levels drop below a predefined level which is only reached when the lead pump cannot maintain the current demand.

At each well site, the water is treated with Sodium Hypochlorite for disinfection and fluoride before traveling through the distribution system.

Finished water storage is provided in a water system to equalize supply and demand over periods of high consumption and to furnish water for such emergencies as fire fighting and unplanned failures. The Town owns one elevated storage tank that was constructed in the late 1940's - a 200,000 gallon elevated storage tank that is located on Washington Street.

Generally the existing distribution system is adequate for current usage, but the small size of the old water mains restricts flow and reduces availability of equal pressure in some areas of the Town. The Town replaced a portion of the water distribution system in 1990, but further upgrades will be required. To adequately serve an enlarged residential area and increased commercial/industrial demand, the major water system requirement will be for improvements and extensions of the distribution system into incorporated areas and annexed areas.

The available water capacity currently meets the Town's needs. The Washington Street well with emergency backup power can provide up to 720,000 gallons of potable water to the Town residents and businesses (per Ten State Standards). However, it will be necessary to add elevated storage capacity in new service areas. Equipment maintenance and replacement of the pumps and treatment equipment should also be carried out as required. The McDonald's/Duck-In non community system will need permit revision and line improvements if further development occurs on the northeast end of town.

Other Community Facilities

Worcester County Library Branch in Snow Hill

Libraries

The Worcester County Library has a branch located in the Town of Snow Hill that offers a selection of books and other resources. The size of the library collection consists of a total of 235,738 resources including print, audio and video materials, as well as a number of databases. The total staff in Snow Hill consists of 33 employees, including nine librarians.

In 2005, the Worcester County Library in Snow Hill benefited from a total budget of $2,043,660, through (from greatest to least) local, State and Federal funds, and other forms of funding (i.e. donations).

Library Industry Standards

In 1977 the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Education decided to fund the study, *The Process of Standards Development for Community Library Service*. That study, which led to the development of the book, A Planning Process for Public Librarians, discussed the development of universal library standards as follows:

> *The proper arena for planning and evaluating public library services is the library's own community. Since public libraries serve very diverse communities and are primarily funded by local taxes, it is appropriate that they be diverse institutions, planned by local people to meet local needs* – Public Library Association

The Maryland Library Association also believes local communities are the best place to plan and evaluate the quality of library services. Worcester County's library system continues to develop based on local community's needs and concerns. Snow Hill applauds this approach and will continue to work with the library system to address the needs of the community.

Schools

Snow Hill High School

There are four public schools which serve the Snow Hill community and the greater central county area:

- Snow Hill Elementary School;
- Snow Hill High School;
- Snow Hill Middle School; and,
- Cedar Chapel Special School.

Other institutions serving Snow Hill residents:

- Snow Hill Christian Nursery School – Snow Hill Road (Rt. 12)
- Worcester County Developmental Center

These facilities serve residents within the Town limits as well as County residents in nearby areas. A total of 1,142 students were enrolled in these schools in 2009. This is approximately 16% of Worcester County's total student population.

Enrollment in Snow Hill's public schools has modestly fluctuated over the years and has more recently experienced a decrease in students. Indeed, between 1987 and 2003 enrollment grew from 1,218 students to 1,281 students for an increase of 5%, while between 2003 and 2007, enrollment experienced a 3.45% decrease with a 2007 school population of 1,202 students. There were 80 less students enrolled in 2009.

Cedar Chapel Special School provides services for moderate to severely disabled students in the community from ages 3 through 21. Cedar Chapel provides a variety of intensive recreational and vocational training services to help prepare students for employment opportunities and independent living. The school enrolled 51 students in 2009 and plans to maintain consistent enrollment numbers through 2018, per the Worcester County Board of Education (WCBOE) Master Plan. According to the WCBOE Master Plan, enrollment in 2018 is projected to decrease even more, particularly in Snow Hill Middle and High Schools (Table 4.2).

The Board of Education evaluates each facility on yearly basis for the Capital Improvement Plan. Snow Hill High school for instance was scheduled for a renovation and expansion project since it was assessed as lacking suitable classrooms, media center facilities, HVAC technology (Heating-Ventilation and Air Conditioning), and parking lots, as well as creating more appropriate class sizes for all students. However, the County decided to postpone this project until the fall of 2012 (FY 2013) due to financial constraints.

The development of new infill or planned growth may increase enrollment higher than previous growth trends and the future estimates provided by the WCBOE. Potential growth scenarios and the affect of growth on the school system will be further discussed in the Municipal Growth Element.

Table 4.2
Schools in Snow Hill, Maryland

School	Total Size (s.f.)	Total Capacity	2009 %of Capacity	2009 Enrollment	2018 Projected Enrollment	Overall Facility Evaluation
Snow Hill Elementary	40,500	440	78.4	345	350	Excellent
Snow Hill Middle	90,000	770	50.8	391	366	Adequate
Cedar Chapel	17,175	74	68.9	51	48	Excellent
Snow Hill High	70,657	445	79.8	355	340	Inadequate
Total	**218,332**	**1,729**		1,142	1,104	

Source: Worcester County Board of Education

Parks and Recreational Facilities

Snow Hill has approximately 18.25 acres of outdoor recreation and open space areas, maintained and controlled by the Town. J. Walter Smith Park, maintained and controlled by Worcester County, serves residents and is located just east of the Town limits. Local schools and public recreation facilities give Snow Hill over 106 acres of parks and recreational facilities. Table 4.3 summarizes the name and size of parks located within and adjacent to Snow Hill.

Byrd Park

Table 4.3
Parks and Recreation Facilities

Snow Hill Facilities	Acreage
Byrd Park	16.5
Sturgis Memorial Park	1.6
Gateway Park	0.15
Other Facilities	**Acreage**
J. Walter Smith Park	88
Total Acreage:	**106.25**

** Total parks and recreation acreage only includes Town controlled parks and does not include available facilities at the local schools discussed below or the Worcester County Recreation Center on Bay Street just outside the Town limits.*

Byrd Park is a public park of 16.5 acres along the Pocomoke River on the northwest side of Town. The facilities available at Byrd Park include a concession stand, boat launching ramps, picnic facilities/pavilions, public fishing areas, and playground equipment. The Byrd Park Master Plan was prepared in January 2005. Recent improvements include the completion of a new ADA-compliant playground as well as the concession stand which enable it to serve as home of the Worcester County Fair. An island across from Byrd Park, called Goat Island, contains 8.5 acres and is home to a small herd of goats and several peacocks. Byrd Park is the jewel of historic Snow Hill providing an expansive waterfront that serves as both a recreational and social focus for the community.

Sturgis Park was originally dedicated to the memory of James T. Sturgis, former Mayor of Snow Hill. In 2002, it was rededicated to include his wife Francis Scarborough Sturgis, a tireless advocate for the historic, civic and cultural affairs of Snow Hill.

As Snow Hill's second largest park, Sturgis Park is a 1.6 acre track of land adjacent to the Pocomoke River and the Town's central business district. It was developed into a scenic waterfront park with a covered pavilion and promenade. Located in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area, it fulfills a vital part of the recreational needs of the residents. It is frequently used by church groups, families and civic organizations for a variety of functions, including picnics, festivals, and other outdoor events.

Sturgis Park offers docking facilities, electrical access, public bathrooms, and a pump out station for overnight boaters.

Gateway Park is a small riverfront boardwalk and bioretention planting area east of the bridge. This park was created with Federal, State, and local government funds and was the first project of this type to be approved on the Eastern Shore. The National Park Service nationally advertises this site as a Chesapeake Bay Gateways Demonstration Project meant to serve as a model for other jurisdictions to replicate.

Snow Hill High, Middle, and Elementary Schools offer combined facilities including two baseball diamonds, tennis courts, one football field, three gymnasiums, and open space. These facilities are not directly controlled by the Town, but are available for use by residents. In addition, the County developed an 88 acre site (J. Walter Smith Park) for a community park on Bay Street to the east of Town near the intersection of Rt. 113. The facility contains two lighted softball diamonds, a Little League baseball park, tennis courts, basketball courts, shuffle board areas, picnic areas, three soccer fields, children's play area, and parking facilities. The County also developed the Worcester County Recreation Center on Public Landing Road (Bay Street) just outside Snow Hill town limits. This facility provides indoor track (for free), an arena that serves basketball/soccer/volleyball, exercise classes, as well as youth camps and programs.

Snow Hill has access to over 106 acres of local recreation space. Per the standards endorsed by Maryland's Program Open Space, 30 acres of parks and recreational facilities are necessary to accommodate the recreational needs of every 1,000 residents. Based on review of 2000 U.S. Census information and residential building permits from 2000 – 2008, the Town's current population is estimated at 2,515 residents. Per the current population estimates, 75.5 acres of park space is recommended where the Town is providing over 106 acres. The Town's current population is adequately served by existing recreational facilities.

However, to increase the efficiency and use of park space, Snow Hill is planning on establishing a greenway connectivity network that will allow residents to easily access the park facilities and inter-connect as many as possible via greenways, bike/pedestrian paths or sidewalks. Town residents have also discussed the need and potential for a Youth Activities/Recreational Center. These items will be further discussed in the Municipal Growth Element section.

Public Health Services

The Worcester County Health Department is located on Public Landing Road in Snow Hill. The Health Department offers services to all residents of Worcester County regardless of their ability to pay or availability of insurance. Those services include general care, women's care, alcohol and drug dependency counseling to name a few. More information about the Health Department can be found at http://www.worcesterhealth.org/index-hr.php.

The Town currently has two doctors' offices and two dentists' offices serving Town residents. Two hospitals also serve Snow Hill and greater Worcester County for broader health care needs. Atlantic General Hospital (AGH) in Berlin provides services to Worcester County, while Peninsula Regional Medical Center (PRMC) provides more intensive services to Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore and the Eastern Shore of Virginia. More information about both of these institutions can be found at the following websites:

Atlantic General Hospital - http://www.atlanticgeneral.org/
Peninsula Regional Medical Center - http://www.peninsula.org/

Fire Department

Snow Hill and the surrounding community is served by the Snow Hill Volunteer Fire Department (SHVFD). The SHVFD has 66 active members and ten cadets. There are also eight EMS members on staff.

The SHVFD is well-equipped to serve the community with four fire engines, three ambulances, two utility vehicles, a boat and several other pieces of equipment to assist with the department's emergency efforts.

Generally, the SHVFD is sufficiently equipped at this time to handle the needs of the service area. Currently, the SHVFD is looking to replace its rescue vehicle, which is 22 years old, and to add a ladder truck to its inventory. Future growth in the community could affect the SHVFD's ability to serve the surrounding area. Potential future growth needs will be discussed in the Municipal Growth Element.

Old Snow Hill Volunteer Fire Department
(now houses Police Department)

Police Protection

Presently there are seven full time police officers plus the chief and one administrative assistant in the Snow Hill Police Department. This Agency is responsible for all law enforcement responsibilities in the Town. For events and incidents that require additional manpower assistance is available from the Maryland State Police and the Worcester County Sheriff's Office, both of which the Town has an excellent working relationship. Snow Hill is the initial responder for all incidents, however major crimes or ones that would involve an extensive investigation or travel the Worcester County Bureau of Investigation would be requested to respond and assume the investigation with town assistance.

The International Association of Police Chiefs (IAPC) recommends 2.5 officers for every 1,000 residents. Based on Snow Hill's current estimated population, IAPC recommends six officers. Assuming that the population remains at or about the same an additional officer will be needed in 2009 or 2010 to maintain the Town's current level of proactive law enforcement and to efficiently respond to calls for service. Should new development occur through annexation or other means then additional personnel may be necessary to meet the Town's heightened safety standards.

Presently there is the need for four Mobile Data Terminals to replace the present ones which are outdated. The Town of Snow Hill is the only municipality in Worcester County that does not have its own dispatch. The Worcester County Emergency Services is utilized to dispatch calls for service to Town units. Since they are located within the town this does not diminish the efficiency of the operation. However, as the Agency continues to grow there will be a need for access to the CAD files of the 911 Center so that a more effective monitoring of calls for service may be achieved. To accomplish the desired results it will require hard wire from the center to the Police Department. Although no estimates have been obtained it is believed this cost would possibly be in the $50,000.00 range.

There will always be the need to replace patrol vehicles as high mileage is reached and with the increase in manpower it will require increasing the number of units. Presently there is (1) 2001 Crown Victoria Police vehicle, (2) 2006 Crown Victoria Police vehicle, (1) 2008 Crown Victoria Police vehicles and (1) 2009 Crown Victoria Police vehicle. The Department also utilizes (1) 2001 Ford Expedition for extreme weather conditions. Computers, radar units, radios, and weapons will need to be replaced as required.

There is currently a plan which is in the very elementary stages to build a new police station which will be needed in the future due to expected growth. If funding is not adequate or available, a second option would be a renovation of the present structure. The existing building is meeting the Department's present needs and will likely do so for the next five to seven years.

Public Transportation

Shore Transit, Maryland's Eastern Shore bus service, provides public transportation for residents located within Wicomico, Somerset and Worcester Counties. Currently, two bus routes (routes 11 and 21) pass through and pick up commuters at three locations within Snow Hill. Each bus route is scheduled to come by ten times per day and serves destinations such as Salisbury, Pocomoke City and Ocean City. The average cost of a trip is two dollars.

In September 2007, the Maryland Transportation Authority, Shore Transit and its consultant published the *Lower Eastern Shore Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*. The Plan details the various needs Shore Transit has and provides a plan to address those issues. The plan can be found at http://kfhgroup.com/Lower%20Shore%20Final%20Plan-9-19-07.pdf.

The need for more reliable public transportation has been expressed by the Snow Hill community. Availability and accessibility issues should be discussed with Shore Transit and a request should be made to address these issues in any updates to the Plan discussed above. If feasible, Snow Hill should provide resources and guidance to Shore Transit.

Churches and Other Institutions

Residents benefit from a variety of eleven different churches in the Town's vicinity, as well as various civic organizations.

Religious institutions:

- Whatcoat United Methodist Church
- All Hallows Episcopal Church
- Bates Memorial United Methodist Church
- Makemie Memorial Presbyterian Church
- Snow Hill Christian Church Disciples of Christ
- Ebenezer United Methodist Church
- Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church
- New Jerusalem Holy Church
- St. James Holiness Church
- Free Indeed Baptist Ministries
- Snow Hill Deliverance Center

Makemie Memorial Presbyterian Church

Other Religious Institutions just outside Town limits:

- New Collins Temple A.M.E. Church
- Spence Baptist Church
- Snow Hill Church of Christ
- Snow Hill Mennonite Church
- Snow Hill Ministerial Association
- Collins Temple AME Church

Civic organizations:

- American Legion Post 67
- Eastern Star
- Masonic Lodge
- Nelson Holloway V.F.W. Post 10768
- Odd Fellows St. Johns Lodge 3680
- Sinepuxent Masonic Lodge
- Snow Hill Area Chamber of Commerce
- Snow Hill Citizens for Decent Housing
- Snow Hill Fire Department
- Snow Hill Ladies Auxillary
- Snow Hill Lions Club
- Snow Hill Rotary Club
- Snow Hill Alliance of Responsible Progress (SHARP a 501C(4))
- Worcester County Branch of NAACP
- Worcester County Historical Society

Cultural facilities:

- Furnace Town Living Heritage Museum
- Julia A. Purnell Museum
- Mt Zion One Room School House
- Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture (Salisbury University)
- The Pitts Collection (MD Room of Snow Hill Library)

Julia A. Purnell Museum

5

Land Use

The use of land within Snow Hill is the result of many complex social, economic and personal decisions. To be responsive to the ever-changing needs of the community, a local development policy must reflect both broad public interests and private development rights applied in a consistent manner. The following Land Use Policies establish a direction for local efforts to encourage new growth while preserving the physical character of the Town. The policies are based upon a realistic knowledge that the community will be confronted with a variety of development pressures in the future.

Snow Hill is a small, active community with a variety of different land uses scattered throughout the Town. The historic Downtown area includes a mix of residential, commercial and municipal/institutional uses (for both County and Town). Various commercial uses exist throughout the Town, particularly within the downtown area. Light and general industrial uses are primarily concentrated along the railroad tracks in the north-eastern section of Town. A large mix of housing options also exist within the Town, including large estate-style homes, modest single-family homes, townhouses and small apartment buildings.

This section of the plan details the various land uses existing within the current Town boundaries. Proper land use practices will allow Snow Hill to maintain its small-town character while properly managing growth. This plan will focus on maintaining the diversity and balance between residential, commercial and industrial uses while accommodating future growth.

Business establishments in downtown Snow Hill along Green Street

Goals, Objectives and Policies

- Preserve the character of the community;
- Permit residential and commercial mixed uses in the Downtown area while maintaining its historic character;
- Promote proper transitions from industrial uses to residential uses;
- Allow new residential growth as necessary to accommodate an increased workforce, focusing on developing jobs in the community as the main priority;
- Develop "Smart Growth" standards to guide future growth and to incorporate future developments into the existing Town boundaries;
- Support small business in the Downtown area and avoid "Big Box" development;
- Promote business and job opportunities in the U.S. Route 113 Corridor;
- Maintain existing parks and recreational facilities and provide increased recreational opportunities and facilities for the growing community;
- Review and refine the zoning code and other development regulations in order to promote the Comprehensive Plan and the future vision of the citizens of Snow Hill;
- Development along Blue Crab Scenic Byway (US 113 Bus, MD 365, and MD 12) should be distinctly compatible with the existing character of the town;
- Identify areas for future growth that do not create environmental impacts, as discussed in the following sections (and the accompanying maps):
    - Sensitive Areas Element;
    - Floodplain Maps;
    - Critical Area Maps.
- Prohibit strip development along County, State and local roads and streets;
- Consider wind energy and other new technology if viable and not harmful to scenic corridors and historic character of Snow Hill.

Existing Land Uses

The following chart indicates the proportion of each land use as of April 2009. Descriptions of the different land use categories are also provided.

Table 5.1
Existing Land Use Acreages and Proportions of Total Land Uses

Land Use	Area (in acres)	Proportion
Residential	943.22	46.9%
Open Space	660.53	32.9%
Institutional/ Government	145.60	7.2%
Roads, Railroad and Right-of-Ways	86.94	4.3%
Pocomoke River	73.99	3.7%
Commercial	45.96	2.3%
Industrial	35.40	1.8%
Parks and Recreational Facilities	18.25	0.9%
Totals:	**2009.89**	**100.0%**

Residential

Almost half of Snow Hill's land uses consist of residential development (46.0%), though this includes 620 acres (67% of the total) of vacant land planned for the Planned Development District. The majority of single-family homes in Snow Hill are clustered into neighborhoods throughout the Town.

The planned development of the Summerfield Community located at the southwestern portion of Town has not begun its construction stage at the time of Snow Hill's Comprehensive Plan drafting.

Open Space

Open Space is defined as agricultural lands and forested areas located within the Town boundaries. Open Space land uses make up a little over 660 acres, or 32.9% of Snow Hill.

Institutional/Government

"Institutional" land uses include properties where churches, social clubs, schools and other similar developments exist. "Government" land uses are defined as those properties being used for municipal and/or government operations. Those properties considered to be municipal land uses in nature include Town Hall, the Town's wastewater treatment plant, U.S. Post Office, the Snow Hill Volunteer Fire Department, County offices and other similar uses. Snow Hill's institutional/government land uses include a variety of different institutions as discussed in the Community Facilities section and further indicated on the Community Facilities Map (Map 1). Currently, 7.2% of the existing land uses in Snow Hill are considered to be institutional/ governmental.

Pocomoke River

The Pocomoke River is an important resource of the Town. Currently, the Town boundaries include approximately 74 acres of the Pocomoke River.

Roads and Right-of-Ways

Roads and other rights-of-way are estimated based on subtracting the area of all land uses from the total area of the Town. Approximately 87 acres of land within Snow Hill consist of streets and right-of-ways (ROWs), including active railroads and railways no longer in use.

Commercial

Approximately 2.3%, or 45.96 acres, of property within the Town consist of commercial land uses.

Snow Hill's downtown business area accounts for an important part of the Town's economic life. It also constitutes the principal retail trade and service center of central Worcester County, bringing in money and providing employment for many local citizens. However, it is not the largest trade center in the County, due to the locational advantages possessed by Pocomoke City and Berlin. Local commercial trade is dominated by Salisbury, and the Town has a limited trade territory, but its prospects for growth are reasonably good. One main objective of the Plan is to encourage revitalization and possible expansion of the business district. This consists of the downtown shopping district along Market, Green, Washington and adjacent streets. Its special identification and enhancement is of utmost economic importance to the community. It will be zoned primarily for retail shopping, services, and supporting residential, all with high development standards.

General business areas can be found on the fringes of the downtown area. These include drive-in business places of all kinds, restaurants, and places that sell or service business equipment or supplies, machinery or equipment distributors, and many others.

A few highway commercial developments are present in the northeastern part of Snow Hill, along U.S. Route 113. It is very important to avoid the future "stripping" of 113 with highway-oriented businesses and access points that would reduce vehicular safety and detract from the natural physical beauty of the highway corridor.

Industrial

Industrial uses account for 1.8% of the total land area of Snow Hill. Located along the railroad tracks and U.S. Route 113, at the northeast corner of Town, the Town's industrial land includes both light and general industrial activities.

> *Light Industrial:* This category is for light manufacturing, storage, distribution, and similar activities conducted entirely within structures. These uses do not have objectionable operational aspects such as noise, smoke, odors, or hazards from fire. They are appropriate when infrastructure services are in place and nearby activities are protected from the impacts of the operations.
>
> *General Industrial:* This category is for uses which may have objectionable operating characteristics. They are restricted in location because of the potential for adverse impacts on adjacent uses and are usually accompanied by criteria limiting the types of activities permitted; their location with regard to residential areas; and the creation of any noise, smoke, or odor. In addition, the setback of buildings is usually addressed along with adequate provisions for off-street parking and increased buffering and landscaping requirements.

Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreational facilities consist of approximately 18.25 acres. Map 1 — Community Facilities indicate the location of the parks throughout the Town. Most of the in-town facilities are along the Pocomoke River for scenic and recreational purposes. These include Byrd Park, Sturgis Memorial Park and Gateway Park, which are further discussed in Chapter Four – Community Facilities Element. Snow Hill residents also have access to County owned J. Walter Smith Park, a 88 acre park located to the east and outside Town boundaries.

6

Municipal Growth Element

Introduction

The Municipal Growth Element is one of two elements newly required in a municipality's Comprehensive Plan under the House Bill 1141 legislation. This element requires an in depth analysis of the municipality's anticipated growth; starting with examination of past growth trends and patterns. The municipality must then include a projection of future growth in population and estimate land needs based on a capacity analysis of future growth areas. Can future populations be directed to housing options within the existing Town boundary or will expansion be necessary to accommodate predicted growth. This analysis is then used to examine the infrastructure requirements and impact on natural features both within the town and adjacent to the municipality and future growth areas.

Lastly, level-of-service (LOS) standards are suggested for the Town's community facilities. An analysis is then provided to see the affect future growth will have on Snow Hill's facilities in consideration of the LOS standards. Recommendations are provided at the end of this chapter that will help Snow Hill realize its future vision and/or assist the Town in meeting its facility standards.

Historic Growth Patterns

The Town of Snow Hill was established as a Town in October 1686 with the river its chief means of access and transport to nearby settlements. Designated a Royal Port by William and Mary of England in 1694 the Town developed in the standard grid pattern as shown on the Lake, Griffing and Stevenson Atlas of 1877. The grid pattern of development is still encouraged today in both the Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Plan for Snow Hill. The Town saw its greatest population increases in 1910, 1940, 1960 and 2000 when it increased from 2,217 to 2,409. While the Town has experienced little change in its population, the town has seen an increase in residential development primarily in the southeastern portion of the Town on Washington Street and potential growth to the southwest which encompasses Rockwood Development and Summerfield annexation of 2005. While no major commercial growth has occurred within the town we have experienced some growth through the rehabilitation of buildings such as the E. M. Jones/ Gordon building on Washington Street and Royal Plus on Collins and Belt Street.

Development Capacity Analysis

The Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) performed the development capacity analysis with the Town of Snow Hill. This involved collecting, integrating and interpreting data to make it "fit" MDP's growth simulation model. MDP has run the growth model with default assumptions and current Town zoning to obtain preliminary results.

Maryland's local governments committed to performing the Development Capacity Analysis as part of their comprehensive plan updates via the Development Capacity Analysis Local Government MOU (signed by the Maryland Municipal League and Maryland Association of Counties in August 2004) and the Development Capacity Analysis Executive Order (signed byGovernor Ehrlich in August 2004).

These agreements were commitments to implement the recommendations made by the Development Capacity Task Force, which are outlined in their July 2004 report (the full report is available at: http://www.mdp.state.md.us/develop_cap.htm). See the report mentioned above for a full description of the analysis' methodology and its caveats.

This analysis, while not perfect, was endorsed by Maryland's Development Capacity Task Force and many local governments. This analysis estimates the maximum number of dwelling units on a parcel of land based on existing zoning, land use, parcel data, sewer service, and information about un-buildable lands. This analysis does not account for school, road, or sewer capacity. The estimates are focused on the capacity of the land to accommodate future growth.

Background and Trend Data

The 2000 U.S. Census shows Snow Hill's population at 2,409, with an average household size of 2.33. There were 49 new residential building permits approved by the Town between 2000 and 2008, mostly for development in infill areas. Three new residential building permits were issued through March 2009, but were all for infill redevelopment. Based on the number of new residential building permits, and redevelopment of several vacant properties, the current population of Snow Hill is better estimated at 2,515.

In summer 2008, MDP released draft population estimates for Worceter County and its municipalities. According to these estimates, MDP predicted Snow Hill's population in 2005 was 2,536, and for 2010 MDP predicted a population of 2,702. Snow Hill is currently growing at a slower rate than MDP's projections.

However, if Wallops Island develops further into a space port, these projections would likely fall short for planning purposes. The prospect of four hundred jobs would greatly impact the projections for Snow Hill and southern Worcester County.

Population Projections

Per the 2006 Worcester County Comprehensive Plan, the County is directing future populations to its municipalities and urban centers. Assuming that Snow Hill will receive a proportionate share of new growth in the County, the Town can expect to gain 5.2% of the new residents expected to move to Worcester County over the planning period. Worcester County is expected to grow by approximately 18,000 people through the year 2025, and through using the extrapolation method to predict the Town's future population, approximately 932 new residents will move into Snow Hill. An additional 400 households will be needed to accommodate future growth based on these projections.

However, the Town has already approved the development of 300 housing units in the Summerfield Planned Development district and other potential infill development, for a total of 707 homes. This suggests that the Town has a surplus of infill and approved development beyond what past growth trends will indicate is necessary.

There are several other scenarios that indicate growth over the planning horizon could easily exceed the projected and committed housing units. Those scenarios are discussed in the next section.

Other Potential Growth Scenarios

The County's 2006 Comprehensive Plan set Residential Unit Targets (RUTs) - the number of housing units that each municipality would realize as its portion of County growth — through 2025. The County is directing an additional 2,207 units to Snow Hill by 2025. However, slowed growth due to changes in the housing market likely makes the development of 2,207 units by 2025 very unlikely.

The proposed Summerfield Planned Development District could provide much of the housing targeted to the Town in the County's Comprehensive Plan. The Town should be mindful of future residential annexations in order to remain consistent with the County's growth plan. However, the Town currently does not envision future growth beyond the area shown on Map 5 - Growth Areas. This is based on the Town's vision and natural boundaries that logically create an ultimate development boundary for Snow Hill.

The Town will work closely with the County in the future to develop improved population projections for the Town and work to implement Smart Growth principals that will continue to direct future County growth towards its urban centers.

Capacity Analysis

The Maryland Department of Planning and Snow Hill worked together in developing a Development Capacity Analysis (DCA), officially released at the end of 2007. The results of the growth model use the default MDP assumptions of the model and the current zoning of Snow Hill (see attached Appendix A for MDP's methodology and report). Snow Hill may possibly need an additional 400 new households. The Town currently exceeds this need with capacity for an additional 3,668 units as determined by current zoning density. The potential housing capacities for each zoning district are shown in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1
Development Capacity Analysis

Zoning District	Capacity (Number of Potential Units)
R1	3,273*
R2	326
R3	68
RFD	1
Total	**3,668**

Source: Maryland Department of Planning and the Town of Snow Hill
*2,400 units were approved as part of the Summerfield Planned Development District

A total of 3,668 new residential housing units are possible within the Town. This includes 707 potential infill housing units. The Planned Development District has been approved for an additional 2,100 residential units throughout the remaining phases, all within the R1 zoning district. A commercial component to the development would include another 230 equivalent dwelling units for development of commercial, institutional and mixed uses. The results of the capacity analysis show that Snow Hill has enough capacity within its existing boundaries for projected residential growth through 2030 and beyond.

The Town recently completed a feasibility study to determine the capacity of the Wastewater Treatment plant that would be required to serve the Town upon buildout. The feasibility study determined an upgrade was necessary to serve development the Town has committed to serve. The WWTP is currently being designed to allow upgrading in phases in case growth occurs beyond what the Town has committed to for growth.

The affect of future residential growth on the Town of Snow Hill over the planning period, as discussed in this chapter, will be based on approved and committed development of 707 new households. Per the assumptions discussed above, the Town could see an increase of approximately 1,650 persons by the year 2030 - a total population of 4,162.

Acreage Demand for Future Residential Development

Based on the analysis above, no additional lands will need to be annexed to serve the 707 housing units the Town has committed to – growth estimates indicate future housing can be accommodated within the existing Town boundaries. Future development may be necessary to accommodate new growth if population estimates change or planned/committed development does not occur.

It is important to note that the Development Capacity Analysis is a tool used to help estimate the land needed to accommodate future growth, but as a mathematical model, it does not take into consideration local growth management policies. As noted throughout this chapter thus far, past growth trends are not consistent with Worcester County growth scenarios for Snow Hill. Snow Hill may realize growth at a rate much higher than in the past if these other scenarios come true.

Note on Future Development

Map 3 indicates the location of those residentially zoned parcels with potential available residential capacity. The development capacity analysis model does not take into consideration undeveloped or underdeveloped parcels that may not be developed for various reasons, including the land owner's unwillingness to develop, lack of access to the property and changes in future land use. Future growth areas as discussed below take into consideration the possibility that all future residential growth may not be able to be directed back within the existing Town limits due to the possibility that landowners of undeveloped or underdeveloped parcels in residential zoning districts cannot be forced to develop the property to provide future housing for expected residential growth.

Moreover, the Town cannot guarantee complete build out of the Planned Development District based on the current financial market. The Town is providing for some residential growth areas in excess potential infill and approved growth. The additional growth areas are consistent with Town policy that a substantial portion of future growth should not be controlled by a single-owner; this is currently the case with the Summerfield Planned Development District. This policy helps ensure the Town has options for future growth being directed to the Town by the County.

Future Land Uses

Future land use patterns are developed to help direct the types of growth the Town would like to see as development and redevelopment occurs. Future land uses for areas within the existing Town boundaries are shown on Map 4 and future land uses for future growth areas are indicated on Map 5.

Future land uses will need to be implemented through revisions to the Town's zoning code and the official zoning map in order to fulfill the goals of this Plan. Below is a discussion of changes that will be made within the existing community to bring forward the vision of the Town. Later in this chapter, the rationale behind future land uses in future growth areas will be further discussed.

Current Town Boundaries

Existing and future land use within the Town limits does not change greatly from that provided in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan amendment. Vacant parcels that have been approved for residential development will be designated residential. Higher density residential units such as; townhouses, condos and senior living facilities may be encouraged along Route 113 and within the recently annexed and approved Planned Development District. A highway commercial district with limited uses is suggested for the property at the corner of Church Street and Route 113. This highway commercial district would also include the corner of Business Route 113 and U.S. Route 113 that encompasses McDonald's and Duck-In area. All of the aforementioned highway commercial districts would be served by access roads with no direct access on U.S. Route 113. Industrial uses will be encouraged to remain where they currently exist or locate where water and sewer service is available. The town will continue to encourage parks and recreational land uses which serve the community throughout the town's business and residential districts.

Snow Hill is the Worcester County Seat and headquarters to County government offices and as such has seen continued expansion of their facilities. The Government Center is adjacent to the downtown business district and takes up almost two blocks. The center of the downtown is Green Street and Washington Street which provides many businesses to serve the residents such as florists, hairdressers, restaurants, art dealers, massage therapists, banks and book store. The downtown area will continue to promote business with some mixed use along the waterfront.

Future Planning Area

Map 5 indicates the Future Planning Area for the Town. Lands shown as Future Planning Area are part of future growth area and may be annexed and/or at least reviewed between now and the six year review. Should development of these areas become desirable at future date these areas may be considered as amendment to Comprehensive Plan as state law allows.

The Town currently envisions this area as its ultimate growth boundary based on logical and natural boundaries, specifically the Pocomoke River and U.S. Route 113. The Planned Development District will also stand as the Town's ultimate southern boundary at this time, unless failing septic systems require the Town to annex existing properties further south in order to serve them under the Town's central sewer system. Some discussion occurred during the visioning sessions and further growth south was considered and may be added at a later date as the Town grows and progresses. Further expansion southward cannot be justified at this time and should be revisited upon consultation with the County and six-year review of this plan.

Priority Funding Areas

Priority Funding Areas (PFAs) are geographically designated areas where State and Federal monies should be allocated to encourage development and infrastructure projects, with the goal of discouraging sprawl. Counties work with localities to designate PFAs with the State reviewing and either approving or commenting on designated areas.

The entire Town of Snow Hill is located within a priority funding area, although a large portion of the Summerfield Planned Development District is listed as a "State Comment Area". The Town should work with the County and the State to designate all growth areas as PFA areas, without comment. The County's plan to direct growth to Snow Hill and the Town's plans to ensure growth potential is not held by a single-owner should justify these designations.

The current PFA map is included at the end of the Map Suite for reference.

Growth Area Summary

The Town is proposing seven different land uses within its future growth areas, six of which will provide for residential uses. Table 6.2 below indicates the potential number of units based on existing zoning possibilities, acreages and proposed uses for the various growth areas discussed above. Actual residential densities may vary for the different land uses as annexation requests and development proposals are submitted for Town consideration.

Table 6.2
Growth Area Summary

Future Growth Area	Estimated Acreage	Number of Units*	Current Use	Future Use
Residential Growth Areas				
Low Density	60.7	31 (28 existing)	Forested/Single-Family/Municipal	Preservation (Critical Area)/Single-Family/ Municipal
Low to Medium Density	14.6	52	Rural Residential	Single-Family Residential
Medium Density	134.8	629	Agricultural/Rural Residential	Single-Family Residential (attached and detached)
Medium to High Density	38.9	212	Agricultural/Forested	Single-Family/Multi-Family
Mixed Density	165.7	722	Agricultural/Rural Residential	Single-Family/Multi-Family
Mixed Use	33.5	Unknown	Agricultural/Forested	Highway Commercial/ Residential
Totals:	**448.2**	**1646**		
Commercial/Government/Public Use Growth Areas				
Government/Public Use	148.5		Agricultural/Rural Residential	Public Use
Mixed Use	33.5		Agricultural/Forested	Highway Commercial/ Residential
Totals:	**182**			
Total Acreage for all Growth Areas:	**630.2**			

Source: Davis, Bowen and Friedel, Inc.
*Number of Units based on Development Capacity Analysis model and current Town zoning. Estimates are very loosely based and do not represent what could actually be proposed by developers or accepted by the Town.

Growth Demands

The analysis below looks at the affect future growth will have on existing community facilities. The analysis is based on the use of widely accepted level-of-service (LOS) standards. The LOS standards discussed below are only meant to be used as a means of reference to portray the affects of growth. When necessary and possible, solutions will be offered to alleviate degradation of LOS standards.

The analysis assumes it must provide services for the 707 units that it has committed to. Upon six-year review of the plan or planned amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, this section will be reviewed and revised, where necessary.

Public Schools

Though student enrollments for Snow Hill's public schools have decreased over time, future growth will surely increase school populations. The Worcester County Board of Education (WCBOE) has predicted additional decreases in school populations for the several facilities serving Snow Hill through 2017.

Although past population trends may have led the WCBOE to come to this conclusion, it is important to indicate the potential affect residential development could have on the school system. Table 6.3 below provides assumptions for the increase of different aged children that would be attending Snow Hill schools based on increased housing growth. This information should be shared with the WCBOE for consideration in future facility master plans.

Table 6.3

Potential Future Enrollment Increases for School Serving Snow Hill

Student Type	Estimated Students per Household*	707 Households
Elementary (Ages 5 - 10)	0.27	191
Middle (ages 11 - 13)	0.135	95
High (ages 14 - 17)	0.206	145
Total Students:		**431**

Source: Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc.
*Estimated Students per Household provided by the U.S. Homebuilder's Association

Per the calculations provided in Table 6-3, future growth in Snow Hill could put Snow Hill Elementary and Snow Hill High School over capacity. Future growth plans of the Town should be shared with the WCBOE to ensure facilities planning will accommodate future growth.

Parks and Recreation

Town residents were very concerned about maintaining existing parks and recreational space. They also wish to enhance the riverfront and interconnect the town parks and community facilities. As far as the amount of park space available for current and future residents, the Town currently has enough acreage to adequately meet the 30 acres of parks and recreational space for every 1,000 residents. If 1,975 new residents move to Snow Hill over the next 20 years, an additional 59.25 acres of park space will be necessary to accommodate the new growth – for a total of 134.8 acres (106 acres are currently provided). For nearly 1,000 of those residents, expected to live in the Summerfield Planned Development District, recreational amenities will be provided that will offset the deficit. There are currently adequate parks and recreational facilities within the Town to serve its current population and potential infill development

Byrd Park: Byrd Park is one of the most beautiful amenities in Snow Hill but it is underutilized and undervalued. Citizens have expressed the opinion that the park is not well-utilized due to the lack of a consistent police presence. Snow Hill is in the process of completing a bandstand for outdoor performances and relocation of a dog park. The Town should put in sidewalks, clean up shrubby areas, and create parking for the west side of downtown and the museums. The addition of display gardens with perennials, grasses, and Eastern Shore plants will enhance the beauty of the park and make it even more attractive to the citizens and visitors. A successful display garden could be one more element to improve Snow Hill's potential as a visitor destination.

Gateway Park: The Park itself is a wonderful amenity for the Town but the municipal parking lot adjacent to the Park behind Washington Street does not provide a welcoming setting. Improvement of the parking lot would improve physical and visual access to Gateway Park. Improvements should include shade trees, lighting, landscape buffers, re-surfacing as needed, and striping. A permanent "Farmer's Market" structure could be placed in the municipal parking lot. The structure could also be used for picnics, flea markets, and other festival events during the year.

Sturgis Memorial Park: This Park is a good beginning, but there are numerous rundown and worn out details, e.g. signs and display boards, and there is no connection to Byrd Park or the rest of the river. There is an opportunity to provide a ground link from Gateway Park to Byrd Park and future development sites to the west. Any future development or re-use of the property along River Street should be directed toward the goal of improving pedestrian accessibility and generating uses that foster river use activities.

Snow Hill High School Play Field: The play field area associated with the high school may have to be enlarged for both school activities and general recreational purposes as the area's population grows. As development adjacent to the school is proposed, the Town will notify the Board of Education for their input on the possibility of adding recreational space to the school from a proposed development. The Town should also discuss the possibility of allowing Snow Hill residents to utilize school facilities after hours.

Future Greenway Network: The Town is seeking to connect its river-side parks, to the former rail line trail and to other community facilities. The goal is to provide seamless interconnectivity for pedestrian and bicycle use. The Town will study the feasibility of connecting its park facilities at a later date.

Creation of Neighborhood Parks System: During the visioning sessions, participants noted that the Town had ample regional and community parks, but neighborhoods were lacking local parks. New parks and recreational facilities should be small in scale and should be located within existing residential neighborhoods. The Town should also consider partnering with schools, churches and other organizations with privately-owned recreational facilities to allow the entire community to utilize those resources.

Libraries

The Snow Hill library is adequately serving the community at the time of this plan. With the downturn in the economy, more residents have been using the library for its free services – a phenomenon that has occurred at libraries nationally. It is difficult to expand services for increased users when there is less money also at the disposal of the library. At this time, only a small expenditure is earmarked for improving this branch's HVAC system and this is being reconsidered based on the library's budget.

The library may need to expand its services overtime based on future growth in the community. Although there are no plans to do so at this time, the Town should provide this Plan to the library system so future expansion plans based on population growth are noted.

Public Safety and Emergency Services

The Snow Hill Police Department is adequately servicing the community at service levels greater than recommended by the International Association of Police Chiefs (2.5 officers for every 1,000 people). The Town is looking to maintain their existing level of service to the community. As such, the Police Department is looking to hire one new officer in the near future and looking to add an additional three officers through the first phase of the Planned Development District.

The Police Department will need a larger police station to accommodate its new personnel. The hope is to build a new station within the next five to seven years. Planning of this project is in a very preliminary stage as funds are being sought to move further along. Other resources and facilities will also need to be updated as items become outdated or as additional resources are needed to accommodate future growth. Periodically, police vehicles, weapons, radios, computers and other devices will need to be purchased to accommodate additional personnel or to replace older items. The Town is also working with the County's 911 Center to have better access to its CADD files which will provide better call monitoring – a project estimated to cost approximately $50,000.

Snow Hill's Volunteer Fire Department is adequately staffed and maintains the necessary equipment to manage the Town's needs at this time. There are no widely accepted standards for assessing the Department's Level of Service. The Town should provide the Department with information about future growth as annexation requests and development plans are submitted. Developers may need to contribute to the Department in order to ensure its continued adequacy.

Policies and Recommendations

Growth and Development

- Encourage commercial growth in order to provide jobs and services conveniently located for Snow Hill residents;
- Focus on retail growth that will make downtown Snow Hill viable and sustainable;
- Direct future populations into the existing Town boundaries and into areas where residential development has already been approved;
- Discourage residential annexations in order to encourage development and redevelopment trends already occurring within the Town;
- New growth must be supported with adequate infrastructure;
- Provide incentives to bring rental housing up to Town standards.

Schools

- Share the Town's growth plan with the Worcester County Board of Education so proper facilities planning can occur to accommodate planned growth for the Town;
- Review the Board's facility plans and enrollment numbers annually.

Parks and Recreational Facilities

- Enhance parks and recreational facilities per the Town's strategic revitalization plan as discussed above;
- Work to create a greenway system to connect the Town's parks and other community facilities;
- Work with private organizations and the school district to allow public use of privately-owned parks and recreational facilities;
- Work with residential neighborhoods to create small-scale parks for local use.

Public Safety and Emergency Services

- Budget funding for one additional officer in the next year and up to three new officers in the near future as development occurs within the Planned Development District;
- Look for funding to help coordinate the Town's Police Department with the County's 911 Center;
- Continue to monitor growth of the Town and the need for additional resources to maintain the Town's current level of police service.

Libraries

- Snow Hill should share committed and approved development plans with the library so additional resources can be planned for in advance as the Town's population increases.

Intergovernmental Coordination

- Snow Hill and Worcester County should work closely to coordinate policies in the following documents for consistency:
  - County Zoning Code and land development ordinances;
  - County Water and Sewer Master Plan;
  - County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
  - County Comprehensive Plan;

The County should consult closely with Snow Hill if the Residential Unit Target (RUT) figures for Snow Hill are modified. This section and future growth for the Town is partially based on the need to accommodate the County's RUT projections. The Town may need to modify its growth areas or zoning districts in order to meet increased projections.

7

Water Resources Element

Introduction

In 2006, the Maryland Legislature required all counties and municipalities to examine their water resources when predicting future growth. The Water Resources Element requires municipalities to analyze current water supplies, wastewater treatment plant capacity and point source and non-point source loadings. When looking at future growth needs, the Town must address any shortcomings through modifying future land use patterns to eliminate problem areas or provide specific solutions to address any limitations. The following section examines Snow Hill's existing water resources in conjunction with the Town's current development and projected future growth. Where necessary, improvements and alternatives to solve any water resource problems are discussed.

Water Assumptions

Groundwater Sources

The Town of Snow Hill's sole source of potable water is groundwater harvested from the Manokin Aquifer within the Yorktown formation. The aquifer consists of thin to relatively thick sand layers confined by silts and clays located above and below the aquifer. The Manokin aquifer beneath Snow Hill consists of a relatively thick layer of course sands. The composition of the sands within the area allow for large volumes of high quality water to be available for the Town of Snow Hill.

The Town currently uses three different wells within the community water system to supply the public water distribution system. These wells are located at strategic locations within the distribution system. The three wells yield high quality water with little need for treatment. The Town's non-community water system consists of one well located in the Manokin aquifer. The non-community well also produces high quality water. When the Town published the "Annual Drinking Water Quality Report" for 2007, the report stated there were no violations of Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCL).

The Maryland Department of the Environment developed a Source Water Protection Plan in February 2006. The Town should periodically review the Source Water Protection Plan to ensure potential source water contamination causes are being avoided as well as monitoring water quality in the supply wells as necessary. However, there are no water quality issues at this time.

Well Production

Based on the Town's well production data from 2006 through 2008, the Town's Average Daily Flow was approximately 259,000 gallons of water production per day. For planning purposes, the month of maximum use (July) is used to determine the well capacity required. In July 2007, the wells produced approximately 310,550 gallons of water every day. Accounting for infill and lots that have either been approved or are pending approval, the Town estimates future capacity needs for 707 households or Equivalent Dwelling Units (250 GPD/EDU), including 300 EDU's reserved for the Summerfield development and an estimated 246 EDUs of infill. The Town can expect an increase of 176,750 GPD for a future average daily water usage of 435,750 GPD and a maximum daily flow of 522,650 for the year 2030.

The Town of Snow Hill's non-transient non-community water system utilized 1,832 GPD during the month of maximum use. This water system serves the Duck-In, McDonalds and Dollar General currently. However, if the Duck-In is re-developed in the future an increase in water appropriation may be needed.

Water Appropriations & Use Permit

The Town's Water Appropriation and Use Permit (WAUP) for the community water system allows for withdrawal of 550,000 gallons on an average day on an annual basis and up to 750,000 GPD can be withdrawn from the aquifer during the month of maximum use. Based upon the withdrawal limits listed above, an increase in the allowable appropriations permitted by the current WAUP would not be needed in order for the Town to meet future growth needs. The Town should continue to monitor water usage to indicate when an increase in the existing permit may be needed.

The Town's Water Appropriation and Use Permit (WAUP) for the non-transient non-community water system currently allows for withdrawal of 700 gallons on an average day on an annual basis and up to 1,000 GPD can be withdrawn from the aquifer during the month of maximum use. Based upon records from this past year town staff has requested a revision to 1200 gallons on an average day on an annual basis and up to 1,500 gallons drawn during month of maximum use. A thorough analysis of the entire system would be required for any additional tie-ins for new development or re-development.

Water Treatment

The water withdrawn from the Town's wells are high quality and little treatment is required. At each well site, the raw water from the wells are treated before entering into the distribution system. The water treatment process includes chlorine disinfection, fluoride to prevent tooth decay and orthophosphate used to prevent corrosion within the distribution system.

Storage

"Water Storage" is defined by Ten State Standards as the storage held in the elevated storage tanks combined with the production from wells with a back-up power source. Storage for the community system is provided by a 200,000 gallon elevated storage leg tank. The elevated storage tank is supplemented by storage within the Manokin aquifer. The Town currently operates three wells with a combined pumping ability of 1,350 GPM.

Ten States Standards requires that the wells within the system provide maximum daily flow with the largest well out of service. With the largest well out of service (Washington Street) the well production drops to 850 GPM, which is enough to handle future maximum daily flow of 522,650 GPD. In order to plan for possible outages, the Ross Street well is also being equipped with a generator, which will ultimately give the Town approximately 960,000 GPD of available water for use per the *Ten States Standards*.

The Town has a goal of maintaining 50% of its water storage in elevated tanks. This goal is currently being met, but additional elevated water storage may be needed upon further development of the Planned Development District. The Town has already planned the construction of an additional elevated storage tank to serve the Planned Development District at a later date to be determined.

Water Distribution System

The Town of Snow Hill currently operates two water distribution systems simultaneously. The main community system serves the majority of the incorporated area. It is made of approximately 16 miles of cast iron, ductile iron and polyvinylchloride (PVC) pipe varying in size from 1-inch to 8-inch diameter, and is comprised of metered services and over 120 fire hydrants. In May 2008, the Town conducted a water system evaluation to assess pressures and fire flows within the community water system. The water model indicated that the majority of the incorporated Town has adequate fire protection. The majority of areas that had lower fire flows were either on the extremities of the distribution system or in areas where higher flows are needed such as the commercial area North of Market Street and West of Route 12. The areas where pressures and flows need to be raised are in areas where water mains are less than the 6 inches in diameter. The Town should review the Water Model Report and incorporate a Capital Improvements Plan.

The Town also owns a non-community water system that services the McDonald's on the east side of Market Street near the US Rt. 113 intersection. The non-community system consists of a bank of hydro-pneumatic tanks, small diameter piping and a well. The non-community water system is not capable of providing fire suppression.

Water Summary

The Town currently has sufficient water supply capabilities to accommodate the current and 2030 estimated populations. Additional elevated storage and back up power supplies are being recommended for increased integrity of the water system through the year 2030.

Wastewater Assumptions

Wastewater Flows

Between 2006 and 2008 the Snow Hill Wastewater Treatment Plant experienced an average flow of 302,300 GPD. In 2008, the average daily flow was approximately 301,000 GPD.

The Town is currently estimating approximately 707 EDU's or 176,750 GPD for 246 infill lots located within the Town, 300 lots within the Planned Development District and additional approved allocation. The Town experienced a 302,300 GPD flow per day between 2006 and 2008 or approximately 60% of the plant's overall capacity. The Town's average flow from 2006 through 2008 combined with the expected demands by the year 2030 equal approximately 479,050 GPD; 95% of the WWTP's rated capacity.

This analysis does not include capacity for commercial and industrial growth. The Town is upgrading their WWTP to easily increase capacity from 500,000 GPD to 667,000. The increase in capacity will allow for increased commercial and industrial growth within the Town. Substantial upgrades will be required if the plant will need an increased capacity beyond 667,000. All growth should be examined upon six year review of this plan.

Wastewater Treatment

The Town of Snow Hill owns and operates a wastewater treatment facility located off Cypress Lane on the southwest side of Snow Hill's corporate limits. Sewage is treated to a secondary level and discharged into the Pocomoke River. The treatment facility has a 500,000 GPD permitted capacity with 2008 usage averaging approximately 302,300 GPD or 60% of the treatment plant's capacity. Proposed growth will result in an additional average daily wastewater flow of 176,750 GPD. The Town's wastewater treatment plant therefore can accommodate existing and projected growth for the year 2030. Additional WWTP capacity may be required if increased development occurs within the Planned Development District.

Total Maximum Daily Load allocations necessitate that nitrogen and phosphorus levels be reduced. In order to reduce nitrogen and phosphorous to permitted levels, ENR technologies must be incorporated into the treatment system. A study was completed in February 2009 that recommended the necessary upgrades to the Town's wastewater treatment facility required to meet the ENR goals set by the Maryland Department of the Environment. The first phase of the proposed treatment plant is anticipated to be capable of treating between 500,000 GPD and 667,000 GPD. The upgraded WWTP could be expanded to treat an overall capacity of 1.2 MGD with the design and construction of later phases. Snow Hill is anticipated to seek design services associated with the upgrade of the plant in 2009 with the start of construction in 2010.

Nutrient Loads

A Tributary Strategy for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed has become the standard to which cleanup efforts of the Bay are proceeding. This strategy envisions enhanced nutrient removal (ENR) levels of treatment attained by all the major wastewater treatment plants in the State of Maryland discharging into the Chesapeake Bay and its waterways. Currently, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is adding language to the discharge permits such that the annual mass of nitrogen and phosphorous loads is limited at each of the major plants.

Snow Hill's current wastewater treatment plant is not designed to remove nitrogen and phosphorus. The Town discharged an average of 6,436 lbs/year of nitrogen and 1,265 lbs/year of phosphorus between 2006 and 2008. Snow Hill's current discharge permit does not incorporate nutrient limits. Once the Town completes the construction of its planned enhanced nutrient removal treatment plant, the new goals will be 6,091 lbs/year of total nitrogen and 457 lbs/year of phosphorus.

The Town commissioned its consultant to develop a feasibility study to determine whether the WWTP was in a suitable location, whether it could be upgraded to accommodate future growth and whether nutrient loading would meet permitting and suitability standards for the Pocomoke River. The planned ENR upgrades will allow the WWTP to discharge total nitrogen at 4 mg/L for a total of 6,088 lbs/year and 0.3 mg/l of phosphorus for a total of 457 lbs/year of phosphorus at a discharge rate of 500,000 GPD. If the Town determines that a 667,000 GPD treatment plant is needed, the nutrient limits would need to be lowered to 3 mg/l for total nitrogen and 0.225 mg/l of phosphorus. In order to expand the WWTP to 1.2 MGD, discharge methods such as spray irrigation will be necessary to abide by the permitted discharge limits.

At 667,000 GPD, and the nutrient treatment levels discussed above, the Pocomoke River is a suitable receiving water for wastewater discharge. The Pocomoke River is not a suitable receiving water if the WWTP is upgraded to 800,000 GPD or beyond. The WWTP would likely have to be relocated and spray irrigation of the discharge would be required.

Inflow and Infiltration

The Town of Snow Hill is currently performing sewer inspections and repairs in order to reduce inflow and infiltration (I&I) problems and systematically replacing aging sewer mains throughout the wastewater collection system. The repairs to the collection system would ultimately reduce the overall flow to the wastewater treatment facility. Since 2005, the Town has seen an average flow decrease of approximately 50,000 GPD due to drier than normal weather and I&I repairs.

The sewer collection system repairs are being prioritized per the 1999 Wastewater Collection System Report. This section does not take into consideration any further reductions in average daily flows based on I&I repairs besides those reductions which have already taken place. It should be further noted that further reductions in average daily flows are expected if the system undergoes future repairs. The Town should review the I&I every six years to determine what gains are due to weather and what flow decreases can be contributed to repairs within the collection system.

Septic Systems

There are six properties within the Town corporate limits which currently operate on septic systems. When economically feasible, the Town will attempt to convert all private septic systems within the Town to the centralized wastewater system. Additionally, 68 septic systems would be connected to the central sewer system if annexation occurs.

Wastewater Summary

Based on the growth assumptions discussed herein, the Town has the necessary capacity in the WWTP to accommodate future growth, but not TMDL limitations set within the discharge permit. After the treatment plant is upgraded to ENR treatment, the Town will be able to meet the more stringent nitrogen and phosphorus limits. Additional infrastructure improvements will continue to be necessary to provide public sewer service to the designated growth areas and reduce I&I. The Town should also monitor growth toward the end of this planning period to ensure that system capacity is sufficient.

The beauty of the Pocomoke River is a constant reminder of how important it is for the community.

Hypothetical Build-Out Scenario

The following build-out discussion takes into consideration the water needs and wastewater capacity needs the Town will have if all growth areas are fully developed, as well as all properties with development capacity within the existing corporate limits. Please keep in mind that this scenario is not expected to occur within the 2030 planning period.

According to Town's Capacity Management Report, 3,668 additional EDU's would allow for full build-out of the Town's growth areas. Approximately 917,000 GPD of capacity is required for residential growth within the Town's designated water and sewer areas within the Worcester County Water and Sewer Master Plan and areas already approved for residential growth. Including the additional 176,750 GPD by the year 2030 for residential growth and infill, an increase in the WWTP capacity to 1.22 MGD would be necessary to accommodate all future growth within the Town at full build-out.

County Water and Sewer Master Plan

Worcester County is in the process of updating its Water and Sewer Master Plan. Currently, the draft Water and Sewer Master Plan only indicates potential water and sewer service in the old growth area based on the County's 1997 Comprehensive Plan. The County is committed to amending the Water and Sewer Master Plan upon review of the Town's designated growth areas from the County and adoption of the plan by the Town.

The most recent water and sewer maps are included in the appendix.

Stormwater Loading

As part of the Water Resources Element, the Maryland Department of Environment has provided a spreadsheet to estimate the affect future development and land use changes will have on non-point source nutrient runoff, open space and impervious surface. The Town is to create different land use scenarios and use the spreadsheet to calculate the impact of each land use scenario. The Town should select the least impactful land use scenario to guide future development.

The Town of Snow Hill recognizes the importance of its natural resources and the need to preserve the Pocomoke River for future generations. However, the number of land use scenarios is very limited based on existing land uses, historic growth patterns and the vision of the residents in Snow Hill. The Town will look to implement the vision of the Town while providing recommendation to reduce the impact of future development.

This section also looks at TMDLs affecting Snow Hill and high quality Tier II waterways within Worcester County. This section will also discuss potential solutions to reduce nutrient runoff.

Land Use Scenarios

Future Land Uses

Under the future land use scenario, the MDE analysis looks at build out within the existing Town boundaries (not including growth areas) based on the designated future land uses shown on Map 5. Based on the MDE analysis, nitrogen runoff will decrease 556 pounds per year and phosphorous runoff will increase 379 pounds per year. This can be directly attributed to decreasing the amount of agricultural (decrease in nitrogen runoff) and forested lands (increases to nitrogen and phosphorpus runoff) within the Town limits and planned residential development within the Planned Development District and residential infill lots.

Growth Area Development

Under the growth area development scenario, the future land use scenario above is combined with a comparison of existing and future land uses in the entire growth area. Based on the MDE analysis, nitrogen runoff will decrease by 4,216 pounds per year and phosphorous runoff will increase 370 per year based on existing land uses in the Town and in the growth area. This can be directly attributed to decreasing the amount of agricultural land within the Town limits, planned development of residential uses and connecting residential septic users onto the Town's central sewer system.

Non-Point Source Summary

The Town's future development plans will greatly decrease the amount of nitrogen entering the Lower Pocomoke. It is estimated the phosphorous loading will increase, but the actual amount of the increase is negligible. More action can be taken to reduce nutrient runoff through implementation of Best Management Practices, including increased vegetated buffers near the Pocomoke River, as well as ditches and streams flowing into the Pocomoke River.

Open Space and Impervious Surfaces

Impervious spaces will increase based on development in both scenarios. Under the Future Land Use Scenario, impervious surfaces are expected to increase by 238 acres. Based on the Growth Areas Scenario, impervious spaces will increase by an estimated 378 acres.

The Town should consider requiring pervious pavers or increasing required open space for future development to help decrease impervious areas. Requiring "green street" designs and retrofitting the existing stormwater system can also help reduce impervious surfaces with the added benefit of reducing nutrient loads. Snow Hill should consider revisions to their construction guidelines in order to implement some of these tools.

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDLs)

A draft TMDL has been developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for portions of the Lower Pocomoke River under shellfish harvesting restrictions in Accomack County, Virginia. The TMDL sets limits in order to reduce fecal coliform in areas designated by MDE and DEQ as being impaired. The report also recognizes biological, nutrient and sediment impairments in Maryland portions of the Pocomoke; however, those are not addressed in this TMDL.

The draft TMDL for fecal coliform in the Pocomoke River recognizes two main sources as leading to impairment of the waters: agricultural runoff and point source discharge from municipal wastewater treatment facilities. The report notes that non-point source runoff from farms using manure or raising livestock is the largest contributor along the entire river. Municipal wastewater treatment plants are mentioned, but it is noted that the current fecal coliform coming from the facilities is "far below" the allowable permitted totals.

Snow Hill should work to implement stormwater best management practices along the Pocomoke River to help reduce fecal coliform non-point source discharge. The Town should also monitor approval of the TMDL and implementation strategy. Also, the Town should monitor progress of future TMDLs for the Pocomoke River for other impairments discussed above.

Tier II Waterways

Tier II waterways are considered to be waterways high in quality that require special protections. In Worcester County, three waterways have been given Tier II status: Nassawango Creek 2, Nassawango Creek 3 and Dividing Creek 1. Snow Hill is not within a subwatershed affecting these Tier II designated creeks. In the future, Snow Hill should monitor future designations of Tier II waterways to ensure waterways affected by urban runoff or future development in the Town are recognized and measures to maintain high quality waterways are implemented.

Stormwater Act of 2007

Snow Hill and Worcester County are working together to adopt legislation that meets the requirements of the 2007 Stormwater Act and its subsequent regulations. The State is currently reviewing a draft ordinance submitted by Worcester County.

Snow Hill requires developers to manage storm water onsite. The County reviews the developers plans for suitability upon submittal of storm water management plans. Other storm water flows into the Pocomoke River, which is suitable for this purpose at this time. The Town is looking into retrofitting the existing storm sewer system to decrease nutrient runoff, but no funding is available at this time.

Policies and Recommendations

Potable Water

- Growth through 2030 is not expected to cause water usage levels to exceed permitted thresholds. The Town should monitor water usage and request an increase to the permitted thresholds if necessary to meet future needs;
- Review the source water protection plan and implement ordinances to best ensure protection of the Town's source water areas;
- Town should prepare a Water Conservation Plan and be open to new conservation technology that is not harmful to the scenic corridors and historic character of Snow Hill. This could include education and outreach initiatives, water audits, water reuse initiatives and other similar programs;
- Water meters should be periodically inspected to ensure proper water usage is being documented;
- Review the Town's Water Model and implement a capital improvements plan to upgrade water mains in areas to produce adequate fire flows;
- The Town should monitor well production and prepare a well maintenance program to ensure wells operate efficiently;
- It is recommended that the Town perform a long term pump test on existing wells in order to know the accurate pumping capabilities for each well;
- The Town should consider placing generators at all well sites to ensure adequate water production during power outages.

Wastewater Treatment

- Upgrade the wastewater treatment plant to meet the desired effluent TMDL requirements;
- The Town should explore the option of expanding the sewerage system to connect all properties within the Corporate Limits into the centralized wastewater system;
- Explore the opportunity to obtain land for future spray irrigation of the wastewater effluent is necessary to meet TMDL requirements;
- Continue to repair inflow and infiltration problems per the 1999 Wastewater Collection System Report.

Stormwater

- Examine the EPA's approved fecal coliform TMDL and implementation strategy when available;
- Implement stormwater best management practices (BMPs) to reduce non-point source runoff and limit impairment of the Pocomoke River;
- Consider revising the Town's construction standards to implement "green street" design and requiring use of pervious pavers and pavement where possible;
- Monitor Tier II waterway designations to best ensure Snow Hill is meeting high quality water standards;
- Monitor implementation of the Stormwater Act of 2007 and modify the Town's development ordinances and standards as required under the new law.

8

Transportation

Introduction

The movement of people and goods is an important aspect of all growth plans. The Transportation Element examines the existing transportation infrastructure and any deficiencies that may exist. Beyond streets and roads, this element also examines the pedestrian, bicycle and public transportation aspects of the entire transportation system. Next, the relationship between land use, future growth and necessary improvements to the transportation system will be examined. If necessary, improvements to the transportation system will be recommended and funding sources will be discussed.

The Town's transportation system includes roads, trails, public transportation, and the port of Snow Hill along the Pocomoke River. The road system is a combination of State, town and private roadways. The Maryland State Highway Administration plans for and maintains their roadways as outlined in the Maryland Consolidated Transportation Program which sites ongoing and new capital programs to be implemented over a six year period. The local roads are maintained by the Town; planning assistance is provided by an on call engineer service with Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc. as needed.

This Plan will establish policies and strategies to use as a framework for decision making at the State and local level to accommodate local development and travel that benefit's the community. Emphasis will be on managing existing transportation resources while adding new services that facilitate safe streets for driving and alternate travel modes for walking, boating and biking; thereby, developing a coordinated transportation system that enables the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

Goals and Objectives

- Transportation policies will support the proposed land use categories to ensure adequate transportation facilities exist to serve the mobility needs of residents and industry.
- Encourage the development of alternative modes of transportation.
- Promote ADA accessibility; a safe walkable community should be focus of projects by creating a safe harbor for visitors and residents.
- Promote utilization of the former railroad trail and investigate potential for expansion;
- Develop a greenway linkage system to the Town's parks and the former railroad trail for pedestrian and bicycle use;
- Extend the existing street and sidewalk grid system into new development as it occurs and discourage or eliminate the use of cul -de-sacs.
- Water transportation should be encouraged along the Pocomoke River.
- Program funding for expected roadway improvements.
- New public and private funding sources should be investigated for building new roadways, maintaining existing roadways and for the creation of sidewalks and bikeways;
- Monitor the State's Highway Needs Inventory and County plans for road construction and improvements;
- Protect sensitive areas.
- Implement access management strategies, where applicable.
- Limit impervious surfaces where possible, especially in Critical Areas.
- Look at reduced street widths for adoption in Snow Hill's Design and Construction Standards with input and review by the Fire Department.
- Mitigate heavy truck traffic where feasible on major and minor arterial streets.
- Limit conflicting movement on major roadways; reduce access points and require service roads.
- Obtain adequate right-of-way on existing roads for future widening during the development review process.
- Develop a sign ordinance that complements the historic character of Snow Hill and its streetscape.

Roadway System

U.S. Route 113 is the main gateway into Snow Hill from Berlin and areas north, and Pocomoke City and areas south. Route 12 (Snow Hill Road) provides access to Snow Hill from Salisbury to the northwest and to the Virginia State line south of Stockton. Snow Hill's Market Street (formerly known as Maryland Route 394, also named U.S. Route 113 business) is the Town's "Main Street", providing access to downtown shops, parks and municipal offices. Bay Street/Public Landing Road (Maryland Route 365) is the other major route allowing access to Snow Hill from the east.

The major roadways listed above allow people to easily travel into and out of Snow Hill. Three major roadways run north and south though the Town and its "Planning Area": Church Street, Washington Street and Bay Street (Public Landing Road). Most other streets running east and west through town pass through these three roadways. Future development should maintain the grid pattern and connectivity with the roadways discussed in this section.

Snow Hill also has a system of sidewalks allowing pedestrians to move around downtown and through some areas within the residential neighborhoods. A former railroad trail also allows pedestrian travel north and south through the Town and eventually may extend into the Planned Development District. The Town should continue requiring the development of sidewalks, greenways and walking paths where possible.

Functional Classification of Streets

The initial and most essential step in developing a balanced transportation plan that addresses future growth is the classification of the function of streets indicating the service they were designed to provide. Snow Hill's roadway system consists of a combination of "arterials", "collectors" and local streets. Future land uses, including the type, density and intensity, should be focused based in coordination with the classification system – with more intense development and land uses concentrated along higher functioning streets. The Town of Snow Hill has chosen to designate a local road classification system (separate from the Federal Highway Classification System) for the purpose of planning road improvements as shown on Map 6. This will allow the Town of Snow Hill to assign appropriate design standards and consider anticipated levels of service required to serve new development while seeking to maintain the quality of life currently experienced by residents. The various functional classifications are defined below.

Table 8.1 Snow Hill's Functional Classification of Streets	
Functional Classification	**Street Name**
Principal Major Arterials	U.S. Route 113 (Worcester Highway)
Minor Arterials	U. S. Route 113 Business (Market Street) Maryland Route 12 (Snow Hill Road/Church Street) Maryland Route 376 (Bay Street) Washington Street
Major Collectors	Coulbourne Lane Belt Street Federal Street Martin Street.
Minor Collectors	Collins Street Morris Street Ross Street Stevens Street Timmons Street
* Remaining Town streets not listed above are considered "local streets", "cul-de-sacs" or "alleys" under the Town's functional classification system.	

Major Arterials: For major inter-city and intra-city traffic movement with limited access to fronting properties.

U.S. Route 113 should remain a higher speed roadway and thus continue to have limited access to adjacent properties. "Highway commercial" uses (if developed) along U.S. Route 113 should use the proposed collector street (similar in function to Coulbourne Lane) parallel to this arterial to prevent backups and slowdowns. A concept plan for placement of the collector bypass can be seen on the Transportation Map (Map 6).

Minor Arterials: Primary purpose is to move traffic between neighborhoods and parts of the Town and provide access for commercial properties.

Snow Hill recognizes the following as minor arterials: U.S. Route 113 Business (Market Street), Maryland Route 12 (Snow Hill Road/Church Street), Maryland Route 376 (Bay Street), and Washington Street. The Snow Hill Road portion of Route 12 provides inter-city access to Salisbury and the Church Street portion funnels traffic southeast to Worcester Highway – providing access to Berlin and Pocomoke City. Snow Hill Road also provides access to Snow Hill's downtown and is the gateway to the heart of historic Snow Hill. The Town should preserve the streetscape along Route 12 in order to maintain the character of this important gateway. Efforts should also be made to find alternate routes for truck traffic where feasible.

Major Collectors: Connect residential streets and minor arterials through or adjacent to more than one neighborhood and have continuity to arterials.

Coulbourne Lane, Belt Street, Federal Street and Martin Street are major collectors. The Coulbourne Lane roadway is too wide which encourages speeding and contributes to stormwater run-off. The Town needs to re-design this road with parking lane to narrow lanes for residential feel, provide safe-harbor at cross walks, as well as possibly adding a bike lane for safe travel to and from school.

Minor Collectors: Connect residential streets and neighborhood connector streets through or adjacent to more than one neighborhood and have continuity to arterials.

Collins Street, Morris Street, Ross Street, Stevens Street, Timmons Street are considered minor collectors.

Local Streets, Cul-de-Sacs and Alleys: Provides access to residences within a neighborhood, abutting properties, and the rear property line of abutting properties, respectively.

The Town is mostly made up of local streets in a traditional grid system of local streets that lead to the various functioning roadways discussed above. While some cul-de-sacs do exist within the Town, the Town looks to maintain and expand the existing grid system. The Town also utilizes alleys for access to garages and for trash pickup throughout the Town. Alleys are still encouraged to allow for better movement along local streets and to maintain the character of the Town's residential neighborhoods. The town should consider language in the zoning ordinance that requires alleys be maintained by the homeowner's association.

Levels of Service Standards

The ability for a roadway system to carry traffic can be measured quantitatively using Levels-of-Service (LOS) analysis. LOS reflects the analysis of a number of factors affecting the free flow of traffic, including: the degree of congestion, speed and travel time, traffic interruption, freedom to maneuver, safety, driving comfort and convenience. LOS calculations are generally accepted standards and are used in traffic impact analyses to determine the affects new developments have on roadways.

LOS standards and future traffic impacts are directly related to land use. The Town should conduct an overall traffic analysis (study) of current and future transportation network in a comprehensive manner if funds are available.

In other words, the proposed future use of land, including the intensity of the future land use, directly affects the LOS of adjacent roadways and intersections. Traffic impact studies are recommended for large-scale future development to ensure that the LOS does not fall below an acceptable level. The LOS system identifies six traffic condition categories, summarized below.

LOS A – Free flowing traffic where users are virtually unaffected by other vehicles. Typically, this condition results during low volume periods and permits high-speed travel with little or no delay. Maneuverability is nearly unrestricted. LOS A occurs late at night in urban areas and frequently in rural areas.

LOS B – Slightly more congested, with some impingement of maneuverability; two motorists might be forced to drive side by side, limited lane changes. Stable flows but others' presence is noticeable. This LOS is above average and is used as a design standard for rural highways.

LOS C – Is more congested than B, where ability to pass or change lanes is not always assured. Stable flow where individual users begin to be significantly affected by other vehicles in the traffic stream. This LOS C is the standard for "average" urban and suburban conditions and is considered generally acceptable for rural roadways.

LOS D – Stable flow with high vehicle density which has a major effect on individual vehicle speed and maneuverability. Speed and maneuverability are severely restricted. Small increases in vehicle numbers cause unacceptable congestion. Similar to a busy shopping corridor in middle of a weekday, or a functional urban highway during commuting hours: speeds are somewhat reduced, motorists are restricted by other cars and trucks.

LOS E – Operating conditions at or near capacity characterized by unstable flow with minor vehicle volume increase or slight traffic tie-ups (accidents/breakdowns) causing the system to move to LOS F.

LOS F – Forced flow with volumes exceeding capacity, queues form, and excessive congestion results. Gridlock conditions may exist; drivers seek alternative route affecting other roadways.

These levels of service standards are used to assess roadway performance and to conceptually determine impacts to traffic flow resulting from new development. This method should be used to study impacts of large development, as well as multiple developments that may create the need for roadway improvements or involve complex design considerations.

For Snow Hill an acceptable level of service for all roadways would be LOS A, B or C dependent on intended use of the roadway. The Town may employ many techniques in their efforts to ensure these levels of service, including interparcel connectors, service roads and access controls as appropriate or other acceptable methods.

Traffic Volume

Snow Hill's quality of life is measured in part by the level of service provided by its roads since the automobile is still the major means of travel. Snow Hill's major and minor arterials are the primary roads serving the community and therefore monitored by the State Highway Administration. However, due to the fact they are the primary roads for the town they play a vital role in expediting movement in and around Snow Hill. As such the impacts of new development on the traffic flow must be closely considered as the town grows. The Town and State Highway need to work closely encouraging smart growth that promotes compact development that is pedestrian-friendly and facilitates the mobility needs of its residents. To date development in the Town does not seem to be impacting traffic volumes on the state roads. In Table 8-2 below it appears that traffic volume on the State roads through Snow Hill has in fact slightly declined. These traffic volumes will need to be reviewed annually and taken into consideration with new development proposals, so as not to diminish the levels of service currently experienced in Snow Hill.

Table 8.2
State Highway Administration
Annual Average Daily Traffic

Road/Route	2004	2006	2008
Rt. 12 Snow Hill Road (South of Whiton Rd.)	6,150	6,080	5,722
Rt. 113 Bus./ East Market Street	6,350	6,330	5,962
Public Landing Rd. (Rt. 365)	1,250	1,430	1,352
Church Street	1,850	1,820	1,712
Rt. 113 Bus./ West Market Street East of Church Street	5,050	5,160	4,862

Source: MD State Highway Administration Traffic Volume Maps 2004, 2006, and 2008

Highway Needs Inventory

SHA has two projects planned as part of their "primary system" improvements near Snow Hill per the 2006 Highway Needs Inventory (HNI). Both projects involve access control improvements to U.S. Route 113 from Pocomoke City to just south of Berlin. Reconstruction of two lanes will occur on the portion of U.S. Route 113 going from the bypass south to U.S. Route 13 in Pocomoke City. Divided highway reconstruction will occur for portions of U.S. Route 113 north to an area just below Berlin's Town limits.

Snow Hill should monitor updates to the HNI and notify SHA of improvements that are needed along State roadways.

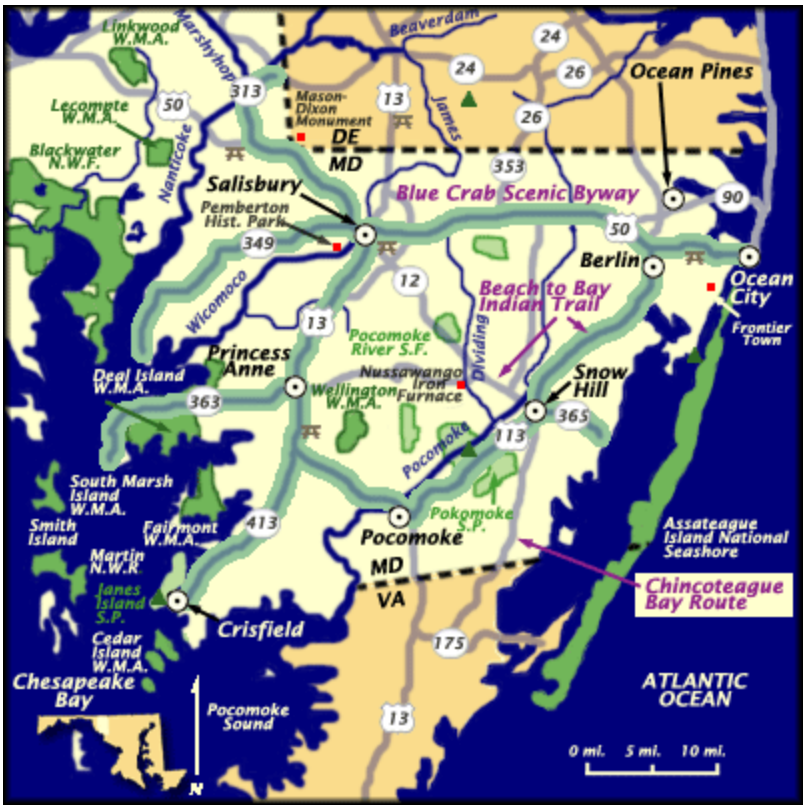
In addition, the Town and SHA are working together on the Market Street (U.S. Route 113 Business) Streetscape Project. This project encompasses the portion of Market Street from Bay Street to Coulbourne Lane and started with efforts to install sidewalks to provide safe harbor to the public between Maple Street and Byrd Park primarily. An analysis of conditions has been prepared by a consultant hired by the Community Design Division and last summer a meeting was held to unveil their recommendations for sidewalk and intersection improvements. There was some opposition to a couple of the consultant's proposals and these issues will hopefully be discussed further this year. The Town hopes to get this project moving again when funding is restored at State Highway to cover planning and design costs.

Blue Crab Scenic Byway

The "Blue Crab Scenic Byway" is a nationally recognized group of several different SHA roadways weaving across the lower Eastern Shore. The roadways provide travel from the Chesapeake Bay to the Maryland Coastal Bays and Atlantic Ocean, passing through multiple Eastern Shore communities that epitomize the culture and history of Maryland.

A major portion of the byway includes U.S. Route 113 from U.S. Route 50 in Berlin to U.S. Route 13 in Pocomoke City. In the Town of Snow Hill, travelers can enjoy Snow Hill on portions of the designated byway along Market Street and eventually to Public Landing via Maryland Route 365. The National Scenic Byways Program discusses the significance of the Blue Crab Scenic Byway and provides a map indicating the entire byway system (Figure 8.2). More information about the byway can be read at the National Scenic Byway's Program website: http://www.byways.org/explore/byways/60591/stories/61044.

Figure 8.1
Map of Blue Crab Scenic Byway



Source: National Scenic Byways Program

National Scenic Byway Program

SHA has issued a guide, *Context Sensitive Solutions for Work on Scenic Byways,* to help maintain the character and cultural aspects of communities located along scenic byways. The goal of the plan is to "identify, preserve, maintain and enhance the features that contribute to a resident's or visitor's special experience when traveling along the byway". The Town should use the guide to help enhance and direct commuters into Snow Hill to experience the parks, restaurants and other cultural amenities.

The guide can be found at http://www.sha.state.md.us/ExploreMD/oed/scenicByways/CSS-3.pdf.

SHA's: *When Main Street is a State Highway Guide*

SHA has developed a guide for "Main Street" Communities to work with SHA to develop corridor and street improvement plans. Snow Hill has four State highways in the Town that are important corridors that provide significance in defining Snow Hill's character. Market Street is Snow Hill's "Main Street" and SHA's guide is most applicable to development and redevelopment along Market Street leading to downtown. The Town should work closely with SHA through the guidance of this award winning plan to implement the scenic corridors and improvements described herein.

The guide can be viewed at:
http://www.sha.state.md.us/businessWithSHA/projects/ohd/Mainstreet/MainStreet.pdf

Alternative Transportation

Pedestrian and Bicycle Paths

Snow Hill's existing grid street system allows for easy access to different neighborhoods and to downtown. However, as shown on Map 6 – Transportation, sidewalks do not exist in many areas outside of downtown. This does not allow pedestrians safe access downtown or throughout the residential neighborhoods and riverside parks. The current town ordinance requires installation of sidewalks as part of building permit process for infill development and new subdivision. The goal should be to have a sidewalk system throughout all residential neighborhoods, leading to downtown. To further the Town's goals of promoting pedestrian traffic, parked vehicles on sidewalks and within crosswalks should be prohibited and the prohibition should be strictly enforced.

An abandoned railroad track was converted into a trail from Belt Street to Church Street as shown on Map 6. The trail crosses through the Town's east side neighborhoods near Bay Street and continues south past the train station on the east side of the Summerfield development. In order to better utilize this trail, sidewalks and signage are needed to safely lead pedestrians and bicyclists to the trail. Also, lighting and other measures should be added to ensure safety for trail users. Sidewalks in proposed Planned Development Districts should also be implemented and lead residents to the trail to allow multiple ways for pedestrians and bicyclists to enjoy the Town.

The greenway linkage system discussed earlier should also be implemented to provide alternative ways of access to the Town's parks, schools, residential neighborhoods and downtown. The Town should work with property owners to phase this project and search for funding for the several phases. For instance, one phase could include linking the parks and river amenities to the former railroad trail and requests could be made for funding from Program Open Space. The next phase could lead pedestrians from downtown and the various residential neighborhoods along Market Street and Church Street to the Town's schools – possibly through using Safe Routes for Schools funding. The actual phases and funding mechanisms should be studied by the Town.

Information concerning Maryland's Program Open Space can be found at:
http://www.dnr.state.md.us/land/pos/index.asp

Information concerning the National Center for Safe Routes to School can be found at:
http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/

Public Transportation

Detailed information concerning public transportation services in Snow Hill can be found in Chapter Four – Community Facilities. The Town should work closely with Shore Transit to provide additional bus stops, if necessary, to accommodate residents in future growth areas as well as Planned Development Districts.

Improvements Plan

This section recognizes the various transportation improvements that will be necessary for Snow Hill over the next 30 years. The improvements are phased into short, intermediate and long range improvements. This list should be updated every six years upon review of the Comprehensive Plan. Also, these projects should be coordinated with a Capital Improvements Plan in order to budget improvements over the ranges discussed below.

It may be necessary to create a Comprehensive Transportation Plan to look at the impact growth will have on the Town over time, instead of using Traffic Impact Analyses as the sole source for determining the impacts of growth.

Short Range (0 to 5 years)

The Town should begin immediately on planning the phasing of sidewalk construction, the greenway linking network and developing a safety plan for the former railroad trail. The Town should then estimate the cost of improvements and begin seeking funding or program funding for the various phases as part of the Capital Improvements Plan.

Many of the town's streets are in need of repair and rehabilitation. The Public Works Office lists in order those most in need each year when preparing their budget. Efforts were being made to do at least one street a year, however budget constraints have limited town plans. The hope is to get back on schedule when the economy allows.

Intermediate Range (5 to 15 years)

More improvements will be required within the Town over the next 5 to 15 years. While many of the local streets will likely maintain their integrity, collectors and arterials in the Town may need some more extensive repairs. Public Works staff should monitor the integrity of the collector systems to ensure any necessary repairs are taken care of proactively; this includes capital improvements budgeting and seeking funding in advance of problems occurring.

All development in designated future growth areas should be required to provide traffic impact statements for new development, indicating the increased impacts each development will create and further taking into consideration other committed development. Any roadways which fall below the required LOS standards should be upgraded where possible at the developer's expense. All transportation improvements should be discussed up front with the land owner as part of the annexation process and should be explicitly written into the annexation agreement.

The Town should continue to pursue relocation of the wastewater treatment plant away from its current location to allow better pedestrian access along the Pocomoke River. Although this may not occur over the next 10 - 15 years due to fiscal cost, plans for it's relocation should be investigated the relocation of this facility in the intermediate planning range.

Long Range (greater than 15 years)

Over the next 30 years, Snow Hill should continue to monitor the HNI and the integrity of existing roadways. Capital improvement programs should continue to focus on inevitable future maintenance so funding is available for repairs prior to a need for repair funding occurring.

State and Local Responsibilities

With the exception of state roadways, existing and future roadways within the corporate limits are the responsibility of the Town of Snow Hill to inspect and maintain. The Town should work closely with the State to discuss any future improvements along the four SHA maintained roadways in Snow Hill. The Town should continue to discuss with the State any future development that will affect the LOS standards of roadways under state jurisdiction.

Financial Impact and Funding Mechanisms

The Town should minimize financial impact by passing the financial burden of creating new infrastructure onto developers. The Town can creatively allow for upgrading existing streets and the development of new streets and infrastructure through properly executed public works agreements.

For the continued maintenance of Town streets, Snow Hill should forecast the budget to anticipate repairs for existing streets and sidewalks based on best practices for age and use standards.

Policies and Recommendations

- Develop a plan for creating a greenway link along the Pocomoke River connecting downtown and the Town's several riverside parks;
- Find funds to develop a Town-wide transportation plan to study the overall impact of growth on the street system, to determine the best place for future connections and comprehensively plan for mitigating development impacts;
- Look to create a linkage parallel to Market Street, connecting to Bay Street, and ultimately to the former railroad trail south into the Planned Development District.
- Require new development to construct sidewalks;
- Continue to enforce the construction of sidewalks through existing neighborhoods through the zoning and subdivision regulations;
- Encourage utilizing the Town's existing grid street system by prohibiting cul-de-sacs except when placed as a temporary measure for future development connections;
- The sidewalk plan should allow safe access to schools on Market Street and Church Street, businesses downtown and to the greenway network;
- Prohibit and strictly enforce rules against parking on sidewalks or within crosswalks.
- Require traffic impact analyses for residential subdivision/ development of major subdivisions and for all new commercial development;
- Create provisions within developers' agreements that require developers to pay for necessary street and sidewalk improvements, but to also seek reimbursement for the proportionate share of future development;
- Prepare an inventory or priority list of roads which need improvement that can be used to plan for needed repairs during budgetary process;
- Seek out additional grant funds where possible for needed improvements and continue utilizing existing funding opportunities;
- Determine what policies and/or steps can be developed to mitigate heavy truck traffic;
- Periodically review the most recent Highway Needs Inventory for the County to see if repairs are forecasted within Snow Hill;
- If necessary, communicate repair needs along roadways under SHA control to be placed on the HNI report.

9

Housing

Introduction

Maryland House Bill 1160 of 2006 established the Workforce Housing Grant Program (WHGP) through the department of Housing and Community Development. The WHGP was set up to create and preserve workforce housing units in local jurisdictions. In order for Snow Hill to qualify for funds available through WHGP, the Town must have adopted a Comprehensive Plan with a Workforce Housing Element that assesses workforce housing needs. The plan must also contain goals, objectives and policies to preserve or develop workforce housing.

However, workforce housing only focuses on affordability for a certain segment of the population; specifically, the need for affordable housing for very low and extremely low-income households is ignored. This element assesses the need for creating or preserving workforce housing and affordable housing for the lower income segments of the population in Snow Hill and offer possible solutions to any affordable housing problems. Although it is possible that Snow Hill may be able to solve any affordable housing issues without participating in the WHGP, the Town is seeking eligibility for program funds should the need exist.

Goals and Objectives

Recent studies have shown that focusing affordable housing programs around median income levels can cause a further shortage of housing for very low and extremely low-income households. Snow Hill has adopted the following goals and objectives to address affordable housing:

- Create affordable housing units and preserve existing affordable housing units;
- Continue to promote redevelopment of existing housing units and residential infill development;
- Address foreclosures and housing abandonment, as well as continuing to work with local law enforcement and code enforcement;
- Ensure rental units are up to Town and State standards;
- Recognize the need for increased policies to develop affordable housing for new residential subdivisions and future subdivisions in the Town's growth areas;
- Promote economic development opportunities within Town to provide residents with nearby jobs and services – less travel helps residents reallocate money toward housing costs;
- Establish a funding source in order to utilize matching grant funds in the WHGP;
- Recognize the need to address lower income households (below 50% of the median household) while encouraging mixed use neighborhoods composed of individuals from all walks of life and economic means;
- Provide outreach programs with citizens in order to address NIMBY ("not-in-my-backyard") issues and with housing developers to address income/profit feasibility (i.e. help developers create affordable housing projects that can be profitable);
- Encourage qualified purchasers and first-time homebuyers into existing housing stock.

2006 House Bill 1160

Workforce Housing Grant Program Definitions and Standards

House Bill 1160 has several definitions that must be discussed in order to determine workforce housing needs in the Town.

1. "Affordable" housing is housing that does not exceed 30% of a household's income;
2. For rental housing, "workforce housing" is housing that is "affordable" for households between 50% and 100% of the area median income";
3. For homeownership housing, "workforce housing" is housing that is affordable for households between 60% and 120% of the area "median income";
4. "Area median income" is defined as the median household income for the area adjusted for household size as published and updated annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Workforce Housing Assessment

The following table shows median household incomes for household sizes between one and eight members in 2008, as published by HUD. The table also indicates the WHGP income standards for workforce rental and homeownership housing for each group.

Table 9.1
WHGP Income Standards

Persons per household	Rental Housing		Homeownership Housing	
	Percentage of median income			
	50%	100%	60%	120%
1 Person	$23,150	$46,300	$27,780	$55,560
2 Person	$26,500	$53,000	$31,800	$63,600
3 Person	$29,800	$59,600	$35,760	$71,520
4 Person	**$33,100**	**$66,200**	**$39,720**	**$79,440**
5 Person	$35,750	$71,500	$42,900	$85,800
6 Person	$38,400	$76,800	$46,080	$92,160
7 Person	$41,050	$82,100	$49,260	$98,520
8 Person	$43,700	$87,400	$52,440	$104,880

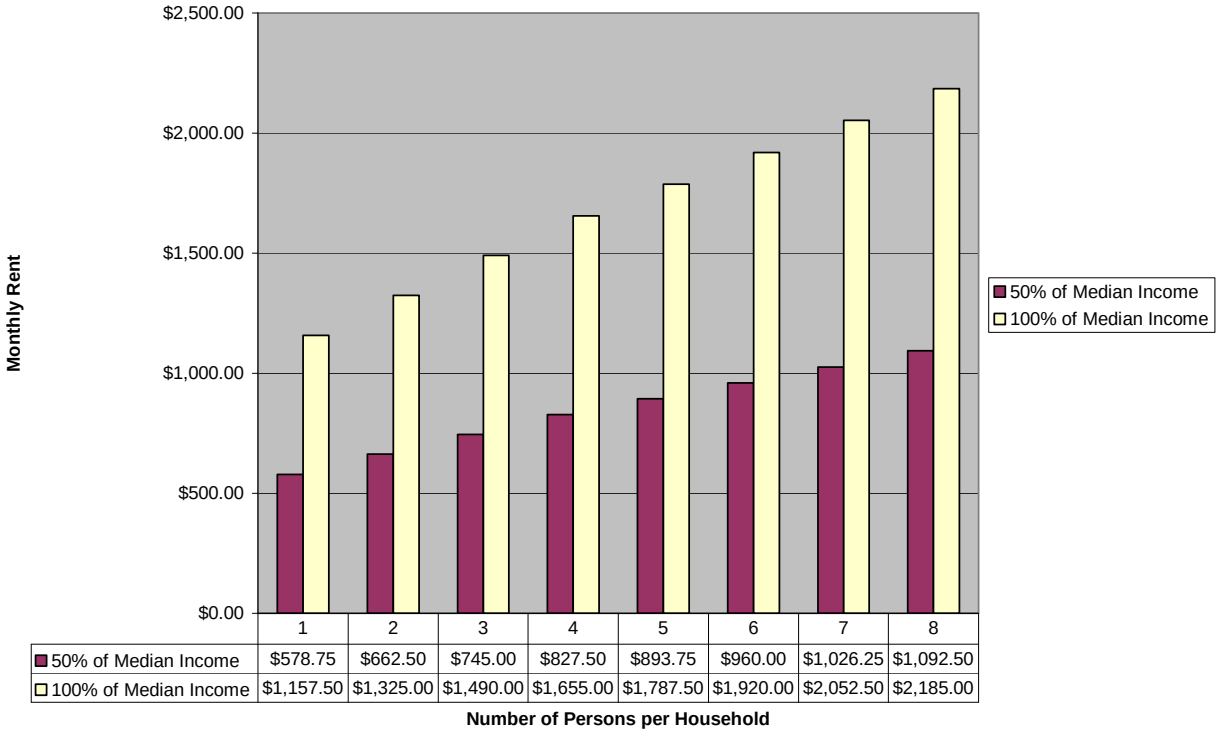
Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2008)

Rental Housing

Figure 9-1 shows the range of WHGP eligible monthly rental payments based on the affordability definition discussed in House Bill 1160. In order for a rental unit to be eligible for WHGP funds, it must fall within the ranges shown within the chart above based on the annual area median income and the number of persons per household.

Currently, 40% of the Town's housing stock consists of rental housing. The Town has a great interest of maintaining rental housing affordability, but also is involved in ensuring the quality of housing stock is at its best. Snow Hill maintains and enforces a rental housing program. The Town will continue to review its outcomes and will make changes where necessary.

Figure 9.1
Affordable Rental Housing Unit Range

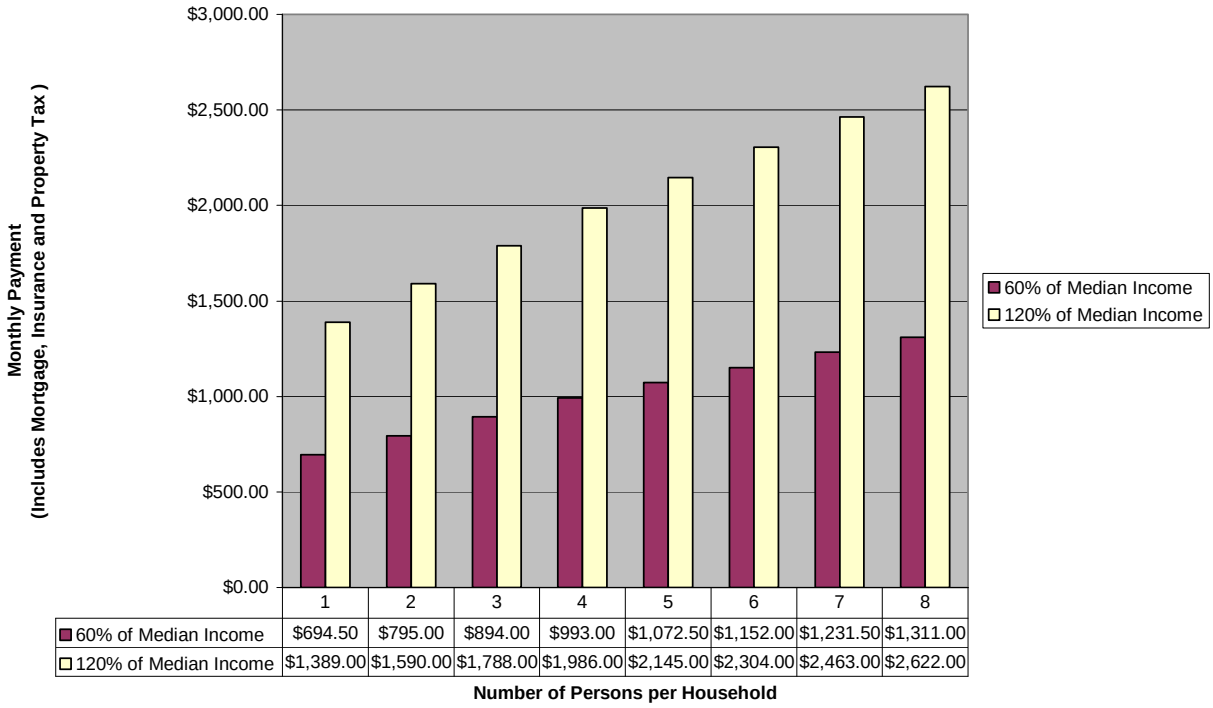


	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
50% of Median Income	$578.75	$662.50	$745.00	$827.50	$893.75	$960.00	$1,026.25	$1,092.50
100% of Median Income	$1,157.50	$1,325.00	$1,490.00	$1,655.00	$1,787.50	$1,920.00	$2,052.50	$2,185.00

Homeownership Housing

The following chart shows the range of WHGP eligible monthly payments based on the affordability definition discussed in House Bill 1160. Monthly payments must include mortgage payments, insurance and property tax in order to be a homeownership unit. Homeownership units that will be developed as part of the WHGP program should consider the cost of insurance and property tax when defining the cost of the unit itself.

Figure 9.2
Amount Available for Homeownership Unit Payments



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
60% of Median Income	$694.50	$795.00	$894.00	$993.00	$1,072.50	$1,152.00	$1,231.50	$1,311.00
120% of Median Income	$1,389.00	$1,590.00	$1,788.00	$1,986.00	$2,145.00	$2,304.00	$2,463.00	$2,622.00

Snow Hill Workforce and Affordable Housing Needs

According to the U.S. Census and HUD statistics, the following is a summary of workforce and affordable housing needs in the Town of Snow Hill:

- 15.9% of the Towns population, according to the U.S. Census, was below the poverty level in 1999;
- Creating and preserving affordable rental units is the best method of addressing lower-income households housing needs. Of the 862 occupied housing units (based on the 2000 U.S. Census), 40% of those units (345 units) were rental units.

Policies and Implementation

Snow Hill should address workforce housing needs regardless of whether or not it will participate in the WHGP. The following policies should be implemented in order to create and maintain a mix of affordable rental and homeownership units for WHGP eligible households and lower-income households:

- Continue to promote redevelopment of the current housing stock and infill development;
- Provide education and outreach to local citizens and developers concerning the need to address housing affordability and how the Town will address the concerns of the citizens.
- Investigate methods available to make infill development affordable.
- Inventory existing housing stock and seek improvements with owner thru incentive based programs and work with landlords to make rentals safe.
- Encourage ownership of existing housing stock.

Snow Hill's Downtown area has the potential for affordable housing development within a mixed use community

10

Sensitive Areas

Sensitive Areas

Introduction

Concern for the conservation and protection of the sensitive natural features of the Town transcends arbitrary boundaries (i.e., the 1,000 foot Critical Area). Issues such as the loss of forested areas and trees, sedimentation of streams and the loss of wildlife habitat are a concern throughout the Town. Many realize that managing growth and development in the Town must be balanced with consideration for the positive contributions that the natural settings of Snow Hill bring to the quality of community life.

As mentioned in Chapter I, the Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act of 1992 added the requirement to Article 66B that the comprehensive plan for Snow Hill contain a Sensitive Areas Element which describes how the jurisdiction will protect the following sensitive areas:

- Streams, wetlands and their buffers;
- 100-year floodplain;
- Habitats of rare, threatened and endangered species;
- Steep slopes and;
- Agricultural and forest lands intended for resource protection or conservation.

Moreover, Snow Hill is rich with historical and culturally sensitive areas. Properties and amenities of historical and cultural significance also must be recognized and preserved. This section examines all of Snow Hill's significant cultural, historical and environmentally sensitive areas.

Goals and Objectives

This Comprehensive Plan is guided by the following sensitive area goals and objectives:

- The Town should enforce its Critical Area law in order to protect the health of the Pocomoke River.
- Development should avoid sensitive areas.
- Flexibility in lot size standards should be used so that developers can protect sensitive areas.
- Review of site plans for proposed development will ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to protect environmentally sensitive areas (including buffers and habitats) and historic/cultural important places both during and after development.
- When it is not possible for development to avoid sensitive areas, such as road crossings over stream corridors, developers will be required to use development techniques that minimize impacts and shall otherwise mitigate adverse impacts.
- In redevelopment of the riverfront areas, buffers will be re-established in natural vegetation, except at precise locations where water access is needed for water-dependent uses.
- Identify streams and wetlands in the area and create vegetated buffers to lower non-point-source runoff.
- Protect existing forested areas.
- Identify and regulate development in wellhead protection and excellent recharge areas.
- Designate and protect places within the Town of historic and/or cultural importance.
- Develop policies to protect important natural, cultural and historic resources.

The need to protect environmentally sensitive areas is based on the concept that these resources are vital to our well-being. Destruction or drastic alteration of these areas can be detrimental to the social and economic welfare of the community by creating flooding, destroying groundwater supplies and the water quality of streams and rivers, wasting important productive lands and resources, and degrading the natural beauty that attracts tourists and new businesses.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area

Snow Hill is located to the south of the Pocomoke River in the central portion of Worcester County. The Pocomoke River is among the many bodies of water which feed into the Chesapeake Bay. In adopting the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Law (Natural Resources Article 8-1801 through 8-1816) the Maryland General Assembly specifically found that there is a critical and substantial State interest in fostering more sensitive development activity along tidal shorelines of the Chesapeake Bay so as to minimize damage to water quality and wildlife habitats. The Critical Area Law required the Town to adopt and implement a "critical area program" consistent with the guidelines established by the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission. Snow Hill Critical Area Ordinance, which was adopted in December 1989, provides special protection measures for all land within 1,000 feet of the Pocomoke River and any tributary streams. A map indicating the Town's Critical Area is provided as Map 8 – Sensitive Areas.

The Town's Critical Area consists of all designations of Critical Areas, from most restricted to least restricted: Intensely Developed Areas (IDA), Limited Development Areas (LDA) and Resource Conservation Areas (RCA). All tidal wetlands within the Town are protected through the Critical Area Program. Approximately 29.6 acres, or roughly 1.3% of the Town, are within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area. Future development activities in the Critical Area are guided by the Snow Hill Critical Area Program, zoning and subdivision ordinances. In 2008, House Bill 1253 was made a law in Maryland which increased regulation in Critical Areas and strengthened enforcement. Snow Hill will need to modify their Critical Area Ordinance to meet the new criteria. A summary of the new Critical Area rules are provided in Appendix C.

Streams, Wetlands and Their Buffers

Streams along the Pocomoke River, including the Nassawango Creek, Purnell Branch, Campground Branch and Dighton Branch are an important component of the Town's undeveloped areas. They have several important functions. These streams intercept stormwater runoff and contribute to the quality of the Town's water resources, overall environmental health, and ecological balance by serving as pathways for transporting sediments and nutrients. The perennial streams and the river shall have a 200-foot buffer. Intermittent streams and their banks are required to have a 25-foot buffer on each side.

Wetlands, both tidal and non-tidal, are particularly important in Snow Hill. They are widespread in the Town and the growth area and deserve particular attention in the development review and long-range planning process. The identification and location of wetlands shall be a required element in all development permitting procedures. Map 9 provides an inventory of wetlands per the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Map 11 further provides the location of hydric soils, which may identify wetlands not found in the DNR inventory. Both maps should be used as a reference tool to see if further investigation of wetlands areas should be performed based on the location of a specific development.

If mitigation and/or preservation are necessary, the Town should refer to Maryland Department of the Environment's *Priority Areas for Wetland Restoration, Preservation and Mitigation* available at:

http://www.mde.state.md.us/Programs/WaterPrograms/Wetlands_Waterways/about_wetlands/prioritizingareas.asp

Floodplains and Floodplain Management

Snow Hill has responsibility under the Flood Control and Watershed Management Act to control floodplain development to protect persons and property from danger and destruction and to preserve the biological values and the environmental quality of the watersheds. In an effort to prevent or minimize flood damage in the future, Snow Hill has adopted a Floodplain Management Ordinance (Ordinance No. 1992-2), in March 1992. The floodplain areas of Snow Hill are identified in the Flood Hazard Boundary Maps developed by the Federal Insurance Administration and the Town participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. A floodplain map is also included as Map 7. All development in the Floodplain District must comply with the Town's Floodplain Management Ordinance.

In the planning area, there are three major floodplain areas:

- Patty's Branch Forest Preserve - The wooded and partly marshy strip is located along Patty's Branch and Purnell Branch, from Route 12 to the Pocomoke River. This strip is crossed by an electric transmission line and the US Rt. 113 bypass. The area is also near the outer limit of the primary sewer service area and the Growth Area.
- North Pocomoke Forest Preserve - This area of cypress swamps and marshes along the river on the north side of Town is recommended for retention as a nature preserve of about 50 acres. It offers a fine example of characteristic Pocomoke River ecology and is valuable for its educational and special recreational uses.
- Dighton Road Forest Preserve - This small area of about 30 acres on the Pocomoke River just below the sewage treatment plant is unsuitable for residential development and should be retained with stream buffer protection.

Snow Hill will continue to rigorously enforce the provisions of its Floodplain Ordinance.

Endangered Species Habitat

DNR prepared Sensitive Species Protection and Resource Areas (SSPRA) for entire State that identifies regions where there might be habitats of threatened or endangered species to aid in streamlining the process of reviewing proposed projects for potential impacts to rare, threatened and endangered species, and other regulated resources within the purview of the Wildlife and Heritage Service. The SSPRA areas in Snow Hill and its planning areas can be viewed on Map 8.

Only current field surveys by qualified biologists can verify the presence or absence of such elements. Therefore, the SSPRA data is meant to be used only for guidance and should not be considered the final authority on the presence or absence of threatened or endangered species or of significant natural communities at any given location. To ensure the protection and continued existence of endangered species in and around the Town's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations should incorporate the protective measures and require sending any projects within mapped SSPRA areas to DNR for additional review and field survey to verify the presence of any of the elements.

Steep Slopes

While no steep slopes were identified in Snow Hill, development is regulated on steep slopes wherever they occur in the Critical Area. This same type of land management practice should also be applied outside of the Critical Area. If a change in condition causes a steep slope to exist, the Town shall address it at that time.

Agricultural and Forested Areas

Snow Hill recognizes the need to protect important environmental and cultural resources, which includes forested and agricultural areas that continue to be important to defining the culture and history of the community. Agricultural areas do exist within and adjacent to the Town, but are confined to small areas and are encouraged to exist outside of the urban area. Moreover, urban development, especially medium to high density residential, and agricultural uses are incompatible. The Town's zoning code does not recognize an agricultural zoning district and there are no plans to create such a zone. The Town will utilize this plan to direct growth to appropriate places in and around Snow Hill in order to preserve agricultural uses by reducing sprawl. This is consistent with the desires of the community and the State's 12 visions for growth.

The Town highly encourages the protection of forested lands on development sites. Success stories have been seen throughout the Town on developments in Critical Areas and in the development plans for the Summerfield Annexation. The Town has adopted the State's Forest Conservation law by reference. Worcester County currently performs Forest Conservation compliance review for the Town and Snow Hill staff enforces County determinations. The Town plans to continue using this method for Forest Conservation as well as the annexation process to preserve forests.

Historical and Culturally Sensitive Areas

Snow Hill dates back more than 300 years and once a Royal Port of Entry and has served as Worcester County seat ince 1742. Remnants of the residential area can be traced back to the 18th century. To preserve this history, the Snow Hill Historic District, which includes approximately 80% of the town, was created in 2002 with 4 goals.

1. Preserve structures, sites and neighborhoods, together with their appurtenances and environmental settings, of historic and architectural significance.
2. Enhance the quality of life and to safeguard the historical and cultural heritage of Snow Hill by preserving these sites and structures.
3. Strengthen the local economy and to stabilize and improve property values of such sites and structures.
4. Foster civic beauty and to promote the appreciation of such sites and structures for the education and welfare of the residents of Snow Hill and Worcester County.

Projects involving structures in the Historic District require a certificate of appropriateness from the Historic District Commission before beginning. This Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of the Historic District and of the HDC and its mission. The following programs are available to help Snow Hill further their preservation goals.

Inventory

The Town should first develop criteria for identifying significant historic structures and sites within the corporate limits. Once criteria are created and sites are identified, there are a number of actions the Town can take to ensure that these cultural resources are preserved for future generations. Currently there are 96 sites, including the Snow Hill Historic District and the Purnell Museum, within Snow Hill that are registered with the Maryland Historical Trust.

Annual Blessing of the Combines

Protection and Preservation Programs

A number of programs exist that provide assistance in protection or preservation, offer tax benefits, providing professional historical/ architectural consulting, and so forth. More detailed information on programs including the National Historic Landmark, National Register of Historic Places, Conservation and Preservation Easements and Historic Overlay Districts can be found from various historic preservation organizations such as the Maryland Historical Trust, Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions and Preservation Maryland.

National Register of Historic Places

In 1966, the Historic Preservation Act established the National Register of Historic Places as the Federal Government's official list of properties, including districts significant in American history and culture. In Maryland, the Register is administered by the Maryland Historical Trust. Some benefits resulting from a listing in the National Register include the following:

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

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

The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) is an agency of the Maryland Department of Planning and the State Historic Preservation Office. The MHT surveys historic buildings, structures and archaeological sites to determine eligibility of being listed on the State register. As with being on the National Register of Historic Places, listing does not limit or regulate the property owner on what can or cannot be done with the property. In order to be considered for listing on the National Register or having an easement on the property to be accepted by the MHT, the site usually must first be listed on the Maryland Historical Trust Register. The MHT administers the following three programs related to research, survey and registration:

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties – a broad-based catalog of historic resources throughout the state. The inventory consists of written, photographic, cartographic and other graphic documentation of over 140,000 historic districts, buildings, structures and sites that serve as a physical record of Maryland history. The inventory is constantly expanding through contributions from the Trust's Statewide Architectural Survey Program, which works with county and local governments and other institutions to identify and document historic resources. Listing in the inventory does not limit or regulate the property owner in what can or cannot be done with the property.

Maryland Register of Historic Places – consists of those Maryland resources listed in the National Register and those that the MHT Director determines are significant to the prehistory or history, upland and underwater archeology, architecture, engineering or culture of Maryland and therefore are eligible for listing in the National Register.

National Register of Historic Places – recognizes districts, buildings, structures, objects and sites for the significance in American history, archeology, architecture, engineering, or culture, and identifies them as worthy of preservation. Listing in the National Register honors the property by recognizing its importance to its community, State, or to the Nation and confers a measure of protection from harm by Federal activities. Federal agencies whose projects affect a property listed in or determined eligible for the National Register must give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on the project and its effects on the property. Listing or eligibility for listing in the National Register is a prerequisite for receiving MHT capital grants, easement donation and eligibility for commercial and residential tax credits at the state and federal level.

The MHT administers Maryland state income tax credits for rehabilitation projects on both commercial and residential properties. The MHT also administers Federal rehabilitation tax credits for commercial properties in coordination with the National Park Service. In addition, the MHT offers non-capital grants that can be used for survey and inventory projects, design guidelines and technical assistance for creating and administering a local historic district.

There are currently over 96 properties registered with the Maryland Historical Trust. A list of those properties can be found at: http://www.mdihp.net/cfm/index.cfm

Current Historic Preservation Efforts in Snow Hill

The Town currently has an adopted Historic District and regulations to help recognize and preserve important historic structure in the Town. In 2008, the Town hired a consultant to assist in strengthening the historic district guidelines. The draft guidelines focus on retaining and repairing existing structures and to avoid demolition and replacement of materials, whenever possible. The goal is to adopt the Historic District guidelines by early 2010 and begin using the principles immediately.

Other Potential Preservation Solutions

The following are additional tools to help the Town in meeting their historic preservation goals.

National Register of Historic Places - The Town should inventory properties within the Town boundary for age, integrity and historical significance. Then apply for inclusion on the National Register. The Town would benefit from opportunities for federal preservation grants, federal investment tax credits, preservation easements to nonprofit organizations, etc. The designation does not restrict private property owners with regard to use, treatment, transfer or disposition of property.

Maryland Historic Preservation Easement - A state-held historic preservation easement monitored by the MHT is an excellent means of perpetually preserving a historical structure and property for future generations. Such easements run with the land and transfer to future owners. The benefits for a property owner to donate his land to MHT may include income, estate, inheritance, gift and property tax benefits. In exchange, the owner gives the MHT the right to review and approve proposed alterations on the property. The MHT will only accept easements on properties it determines to be eligible for listing in the National Register.

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

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

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

Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area

The Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area was developed to preserve the culture of the Lower Shore, as well as to encourage economic development, tourism and stewardship of its environmental resources. The Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area Tourism Management Plan was adopted in 2002 and recognizes Snow Hill as epitomizing important Lower Shore culture and environmental features.

The Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area Tourism Management Plan, dated June 2002, and as may be amended from time to time in the future, is hereby incorporated, by reference, in the Town of Snow Hill Comprehensive Plan.

The Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area Tourism Management Plan can be found online at:
http://www.skipjack.net/le_shore/heritage/pages/lesha_mgmt.html

Policies and Recommendations

- Revise the Town's Critical Area law to recognize the new rules adopted under House Bill 1253.
- Implement policies to promote natural resource conservation:
    - Require a 25 foot buffer along streams to reduce the adverse affects of runoff into the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area;
    - Require a 25 foot buffer around non-tidal wetlands and 100 foot buffer around wetlands of Special State Concern;
    - Require all development to investigate areas that may contain sensitive, rare, threatened or endangered species prior to building;
    - Provide mechanisms for recognizing and maintaining historical properties:
    - Encourage mixed use in the Downtown area to increase pedestrian activity and promote the restoration and uses of historic buildings;
    - Create criteria to identify historic properties of significant importance within the Town;
    - Expand the district as necessary to protect historic structures;
    - Regulate development and redevelopment within the Historic District using the new adopted guidelines when available;
    - Search for grant funding and incentives to maintain historic sites;
    - Seek grant funding to inventory properties for National Register designation;
    - Promote educational and cultural opportunities to residents of the Town.

11

Mineral Resources

Mineral Resources

The Mineral Resource Element identifies lands that should be kept in their undeveloped state until it can be used to provide a continuous supply of minerals. To address possible mining land uses within Snow Hill, the Town must devise a plan to balance mining activities with existing land uses, and after mining activity has ceased, to reintegrate the property into the fabric of the community. This chapter discusses the mineral resources available in Snow Hill, the feasibility of mining those areas, and outlines policies and recommendations to regulate mining land uses within the Town.

Goals and Objectives

- Maintain the residential character of the Town;
- Protect groundwater resources;
- Require existing land uses and proposed mining activities to be compatible;
- Allow surface mining activities, where possible and if necessary;
- Review updated reports concerning the mining of construction sand and gravel to ensure mineral resources are not scarce;
- Ensure parks and recreational facilities will not be affected by surface mining activities.

Mineral Resources

The United States Geological Survey and the Maryland Geological Survey's Lithogeographical Map of Near-Surface Rock types developed in 2001 indicates the Eastern Shore of Maryland consists of "unconsolidated sediments and soils of high porosity". In Wicomico County and the Snow Hill area, the Lithogeographical Map shows the available minerals consist of "quartz, silt, sand and gravel; weathered residuum from which iron and carbonate have been removed". However, the Lithogeographical Map also details high-carbon soils existing in the eastern areas of Snow Hill. High-carbon soils have the potential to be used as construction sand and gravel, which is the major mining industry on the Eastern Shore, where mining sites are currently in plentiful supply. Yet, since these resources are also located near the sensitive areas described in Chapter Ten, the Town should consider limiting the development of mining activities in the vicinity.

Mining Industry in Worcester County

In 2004, the Maryland Department of the Environment, in coordination with the United States Geological Survey, published a report titled "The Mineral Industry of Maryland." The central lands of Worcester County were identified as a major producing area of construction sand and gravel. Between 2002 and 2004, construction sand and gravel was mined at a consistent rate (between 11,800 and 12,700 metric tons). At the time of the report, the State had no plans to grant any new surface mining permits on the Eastern Shore. This point suggests that the surface mining industry in Maryland and its Eastern Shore provide an adequate supply of construction sand and gravel and that as of 2004 there has been no further demand for mining sites.

Construction Sand and Gravel Mining Activities in Snow Hill

Per the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), two construction sand and gravel facilities are located near the Town. Both mines received water discharge permits and both permits are currently expired. If the Town allows construction sand and gravel mining within the Town, the State and Federal permitting protocol should be added to the language of the zoning ordinance for the district.

Wellhead Protection Areas

Maryland Department of the Environment has designated three areas around Snow Hill's wells as wellhead protection areas (WHPA), per the 2006 *Source Water Protection Plan for Worcester County*. However, the Plan states that, generally speaking, land contamination is not likely to occur in confined aquifers. The Town's three wells all use the Manokin Aquifer for its water source, which is a confined aquifer. Although Snow Hill's WHPAs do not affect the development of new construction sand and gravel facilities, surrounding land uses and the abundance of construction sand and gravel elsewhere on the Eastern Shore should. Existing land uses are discussed below.

Land Use Compatibility

High-carbon soils, which are the most feasible for surface mining of construction sand and gravel, exist around Snow Hill along the Pocomoke River. However, those sites are also home to many sensitive areas discussed in Chapter Ten. Although not prohibited, construction sand and gravel mines are highly discouraged in the Critical Area. Moreover, most of the area along the Pocomoke River is developed or part of the Town's park system. Where new mining facilities could be located (where construction sand and gravel exist), they would not be compatible with existing development in the Town.

Conclusions

The State has reported that throughout Maryland and its Eastern Shore the mining of construction sand and gravel has not increased and supplies of these minerals meet current demand. Within Snow Hill's planning area, there are a few locations where suitable minerals exist; however mining activities should be discouraged unless adequate demand for construction sand and gravel is presented and all environmental regulations are addressed.

Policies and Recommendations

The Town's zoning ordinance should be amended to allow mining activities as a conditional use in non-residential districts and, at a minimum, require the following conditions if mining activities are approved:

- Show that mining activities are necessary due to a lack of available construction sand and gravel;
- Indicate the location and types of projects construction sand will be used for;
- Mining activities should be compatible with surrounding land uses;
- Require extensive setbacks, landscaping and buffering be provided where necessary;
- Require a timeline indicating when mineral supplies will be exhausted;
- Provide a copy of all necessary Federal, State and local permits to the Town;
- Conduct well testing to ensure that there is no adverse breaching of the confining beds of underlying aquifers;
- Require the owners, and subsequent owners of the land parcel used for mining activities, to provide a plan for cleanup and site conversion into a compatible land use and to create an aesthetically pleasing site after mineral resources are exhausted;
- Operators of mining activities shall be fully responsible for all activities that damage roadways, infrastructure or other Town property;
- Determine which governmental entity will regulate and enforce this mining land use ordinance.

12

Plan Implementation

Plan Implementation

The following is a summary of policies and recommendations from the several chapters that will need to be implemented in order to help Snow Hill realize its growth, development and land use vision.

Land Use Policies and Recommendations

- Preserve the character of the community;
- Permit residential and commercial mixed uses in the Downtown area while maintaining its historic character;
- Promote proper transitions from industrial uses to residential uses;
- Allow new residential growth as necessary to accommodate an increased workforce, focusing on developing jobs in the community as the main priority;
- Develop "Smart Growth" standards to guide future growth and to incorporate future developments into the existing Town boundaries;
- Support small business in the Downtown area and avoid "Big Box" development;
- Promote business and job opportunities in the U.S. Route 113 Corridor;
- Maintain existing parks and recreational facilities and provide increased recreational opportunities and facilities for the growing community;
- Review and refine the zoning code and other development regulations in order to promote the Comprehensive Plan and the future vision of the citizens of Snow Hill;
- Development along Blue Crab Scenic Byway (US 113 Bus, MD 365, and MD 12) should be distinctly compatible with the existing character of the town.
- Identify areas for future growth that do not create environmental impacts, as discussed in the following sections (and the accompanying maps):
  - Sensitive Areas Element;
  - Floodplain Maps;
  - Critical Area Maps.

Municipal Growth Element Policies and Recommendations

Growth and Development

- Encourage commercial growth in order to provide jobs and services conveniently located for Snow Hill residents;
- Focus on retail growth that will make downtown Snow Hill viable and sustainable;
- Direct future populations into the existing Town boundaries and into areas where residential development has already been approved;
- Discourage residential annexations in order to encourage redevelopment trends already occurring within the Town;
- New growth must be supported with adequate infrastructure;
- Provide incentives to bring rental housing up to Town standards.

Schools

- Share the Town's growth plan with the Worcester County Board of Education so proper facilities planning can occur to accommodate planned growth for the Town;
- Review the Board's facility plans and enrollment numbers annually.

Parks and Recreational Facilities

- Enhance parks and recreational facilities per the Town's strategic revitalization plan as discussed above;
- Work to create a greenway system to connect the Town's parks and other community facilities (Figure 6-4);
- Work with private organizations and the school district to allow public use of privately-owned parks and recreational facilities;
- Work with residential neighborhoods to create small-scale parks for local use.

Public Safety and Emergency Services

- Budget funding for one additional officer in the next year and up to three new officers in the near future as development occurs within the Summerfield development;
- Look for funding to help coordinate the Town's Police Department with the County's 911 Center;
- Continue to monitor growth of the Town and the need for additional resources to maintain the Town's current level of police service.

Libraries

- Snow Hill should share committed and approved development plans with the library so additional resources can be planned for in advance as the Town's population increases.

Intergovernmental Coordination

- Snow Hill and Worcester County should work closely to coordinate policies in the following documents for consistency:
    - County Zoning Code and land development ordinances;
    - County Water and Sewer Master Plan;
    - County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
    - County Comprehensive Plan.

The County should consult closely with Snow Hill if the Residential Unit Target (RUT) figures for Snow Hill are modified. This section and future growth for the Town is partially based on the need to accommodate the County's RUT projections. The Town may need to modify its growth areas or zoning districts in order to meet increased projections.

Water Resource Policies and Recommendations

Potable Water

- Growth through 2030 is not expected to cause water usage levels to exceed permitted thresholds. The Town should monitor water usage and request an increase to the permitted thresholds if necessary to meet future needs;
- Review the source water protection plan and implement ordinances to best ensure protection of the Town's source water areas;
- The Town should create an education and outreach program to provide residents and businesses with information concerning water conservation techniques in order to conserve water resources;
- Water meters should be periodically inspected to ensure proper water usage is being documented;
- Review the Town's Water Model and implement a capital improvements plan to upgrade water mains in areas to produce adequate fire flows;
- The Town should monitor well production and prepare a well maintenance program to ensure wells operate efficiently;
- It is recommended that the Town perform a long term pump test on existing wells in order to know the accurate pumping capabilities for each well;
- The Town should consider placing generators at all well sites to ensure adequate water production during power outages.

Wastewater Treatment

- Upgrade the wastewater treatment plant to meet the permitted effluent requirements;
- The Town should explore the option of expanding the sewerage system to connect all properties within the Corporate Limits into the centralized wastewater system;
- Explore the opportunity to obtain land for future spray irrigation of the wastewater effluent is necessary to meet TMDL requirements;
- Continue to repair inflow and infiltration problems per the 1999 Wastewater Collection System Report.

Stormwater

- Examine the EPA's approved fecal coliform TMDL and implementation strategy when available;
- Implement stormwater best management practices (BMPs) to reduce non-point source runoff and limit impairment of the Pocomoke River;
- Consider revising the Town's construction standards to implement "green street" design and requiring use of pervious pavers and pavement where possible;
- Monitor Tier II waterway designations to best ensure Snow Hill is meeting high quality water standards;
- Monitor implementation of the Stormwater Act of 2007 and modify the Town's development ordinances and standards as required under the new law.

Mineral Resources Policies and Recommendations

The Town's zoning ordinance should be amended to allow mining activities as a conditional use in non-residential districts and, at a minimum, require the following conditions if mining activities are approved:

- Show that mining activities are necessary due to a lack of available construction sand and gravel;
- Indicate the location and types of projects construction sand will be used for;
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- Require the owners, and subsequent owners of the land parcel used for mining activities, to provide a plan for cleanup and site conversion into a compatible land use and to create an aesthetically pleasing site after mineral resources are exhausted;
- Operators of mining activities shall be fully responsible for all activities that damage roadways, infrastructure or other Town property;
- Determine which governmental entity will regulate and enforce this mining land use ordinance.

Additional Policies and Recommendations

- Design Guidelines – Snow Hill is interested in adopting design guidelines to help maintain architectural standards in the following areas:
  - Commercial Design Standards (outside of historic area)
  - Blue Crab Scenic Byway architectural guidelines to maintain the historic importance of the highway
  - General architecture of the Town currently
- Development of a capital improvements plan
- Continue to work with Snow Hill Alliance for Responsible Progress (SHARP) in prioritizing and implementing the Strategic Revitalization Plan.
- Focus on the redevelopment and preservation of Bank Street, recognizing its importance and connecting residents to the waterfront;
- Develop an "annual plan of action" to review issues in the Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Revitalization Plan and continue implementation of the various sections.

Housing Policies and Recommendations

Snow Hill should address workforce housing needs regardless of whether or not it will participate in the WHGP. The following policies should be implemented in order to create and maintain a mix of affordable rental and homeownership units for WHGP eligible households and lower-income households.

- Continue to promote redevelopment of the current housing stock and infill development;
- Provide education and outreach to local citizens and developers concerning the need to address housing affordability and how the Town will address the concerns of the citizens;
- Investigate methods available to make infill development affordable;
- Inventory existing housing stock and seek improvements with owner through incentive based programs and work with landlords to make rentals safe;
- Encourage ownership of existing housing stock.

Sensitive Areas Policies and Recommendations

- Revise the Town's Critical Area law to recognize the new rules adopted under House Bill 1253.
- Implement policies to promote natural resource conservation:
  - Require a 25 foot buffer along streams to reduce the adverse affects of runoff into the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area;
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  - Require all development to investigate areas that may contain sensitive, rare, threatened or endangered species prior to building;
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  - Create criteria to identify historic properties of significant importance within the Town;
  - Expand the district as necessary to protect historic structures;
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