Town of Charlestown, Maryland

2025 Comprehensive Plan

MARCH 2025

FINAL DRAFT - MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING REVIEW

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Part 1: Planning Context

A comprehensive plan is an official statement of a local government, setting forth policies concerning future growth, development, resiliency, land conservation, and public investments in facilities and infrastructure. As a policy document, it is general, comprehensive, and long-range in nature. It is general in that it summarizes policies and proposals but does not establish detailed regulations or direct actions on specific properties. It is comprehensive in that it encompasses the entire geography of the jurisdiction (and potential growth areas, if applicable). It is long-range in that it looks beyond current day-to-day municipal issues and focuses on managing growth and addressing problems over the next twenty years and beyond.

1.1 The Legal Basis for Comprehensive Planning

In Maryland, comprehensive planning is governed by the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland which provides the legislative authority for the Town's planning and zoning powers. Article 3-102 sets forth the minimum requirements for a municipal comprehensive plan which shall include the following elements:

- Goals and objectives
- Land use
- Municipal growth
- Areas of critical state concern
- Development regulations
- Mineral resources
- Sensitive areas and conservation elements
- Community facilities
- Water resources
- Transportation
- Housing

The comprehensive plan is developed through a specific process that includes technical analysis, community participation, consultation with county and state governments, and adoption by the Town Commissioners. For efficiency purposes given the size and scale of Charlestown, some elements are combined in this plan.[1]

Once adopted, the comprehensive plan becomes the basis for specific actions, programs, and legislation. It is a guide to make development and investment decisions based on reasoned and adopted policies rather than on the merits of individual proposals. This document provides the basis for making changes to zoning, subdivision, and other regulations that govern land use and infrastructure development in Charlestown.

[1] Although there are two small parcels within town boundaries that are owned by extraction companies, the town does not permit mining in any zone. A mineral resources element is not included.

1.2 Our Shared Planning Values

Maryland's 2009 Planning Vision Law identifies 12 visions, all of which are supported by Charlestown's comprehensive plan:

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. **Potential Growth Areas:** Growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to these centers, or strategically selected new centers.
4. **Community Design:** Compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character and located near available or planned transit options is encouraged to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources and preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreation areas, and historic, 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 sustainable 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 provides residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes.
8. **Economic Development**: Economic development and natural resource-based businesses that promote employment opportunities for all income levels within the capacity of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities are encouraged.
9. **Environmental Protection:** Land and water resources, including the Chesapeake and costal bays are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems, and living resources.
10. **Resource Conservation:** Waterways, forests, agricultural areas, open space, natural systems, and scenic 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.

1.3 Charlestown Today

Charlestown, Maryland, is a charming waterfront town of about 1,500 population nestled along the north bank of the North East River in Cecil County. Founded in 1742, it is one of Maryland's oldest towns and boasts a rich colonial history. Once a bustling colonial port, Charlestown today is known for its scenic views, historic homes, and a relaxed, small-town atmosphere. Charlestown is regarded by its residents as having a high quality of life, secluded from the fast pace of suburbanization, and excellent natural resources to be preserved and protected. The town faces the pressure of aging infrastructure, is concerned about the future capacity of its water system, and is anxious of the rising North East River tides and the Town's ability to prevent nuisance flooding from becoming recurring damaging flooding.

Governance

Charlestown is governed by an elected, five-member Board of Town Commissioners. By its Municipal Charter, the town commissioners have the power to pass all such ordinances not contrary to the Constitution and laws of the State of Maryland government of the town "… for the protection and preservation of the town's property, rights, and privileges; for the preservation of peace and good order; for securing persons and property from violence, danger, or destruction; and for the protection and promotion of the health, safety, comfort, convenience, welfare, and happiness of the residents of the town and visitors thereto and sojourners therein." Town staff are the Town Administrator, Assistant Administrator, Town Clerk, Accountant, and the Director of Public Works and two operations staff.

Municipal Finance

In FY 2025, the Town's general fund operating budget is $1.833 million of which property and income taxes make up approximately 52% of general fund revenues; and intergovernmental transfers (highway user revenues, water/sewer enterprise, and county tax differential, etc.) account for approximately 25% of general fund revenue.

Town expenditures are more difficult to track because salaries, benefits, and taxes are combined as "general government" expenditures rather than associated with a specific service. That said, the Town's primary service expenditures relate to parks and piers; street maintenance; and solid waste and recycling. The water system (wells, storage tank, mains and distribution lines) have an enterprise fund. The wastewater collection system is owned by the Town but treatment is provided by Cecil County.

The Town's current revenue sources do not allow much capacity to deliver new services or capital projects without grants or loans from state and federal agencies. Even with grants, identifying the matching funds can be challenging. The Town will need to confront its revenue outlook if action is to be taken on many items in this plan.

Figure 1. Charlestown FY 2025 Budget

General Fund Revenue		
Property Taxes	$	718,000
Income Taxes	$	169,125
Overhead Allocations	$	507,932
Highway User Revenues	$	120,999
Piers & Parks	$	157,304
All Other Sources	$	159,833
TOTAL	**$**	**1,833,1G3**

General Fund Expenses		
Streets	$	355,371
Piers & Parks	$	234,568
Trash & Recycling	$	264,000
General Government	$	821,123
All Other	$	158,131
TOTAL	**$**	**1,833,1G3**

Utility Fund Revenue		
User Fees	$	540,000
Tower Rental	$	90,000
Interest Income	$	80,000
All Other Sources	$	33,450.00
TOTAL	**$**	**743,450**

Utility Fund Expenses		
General	$	615,300
Sewer	$	1,350
Water	$	72,300
Debt Service	$	54,500
TOTAL	**$**	**743,450**

Demographics[2]

The Census Bureau's 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) Charlestown population estimate is 1,530. When the last Comprehensive Plan was prepared in 2008, Charlestown's population was 1,089. At the 2020 Census, population was recorded at 1,496 – a 34% increase. The population is 94 % White/Non-Hispanic; and the median age in Charlestown is 35.3 years which is lower than the State of Maryland's median age of 39 years and Cecil County's median age of 41 years. The median household income is approximately $103,098, approximately 39% of residents have achieved a bachelor's degree or higher, and the labor force participation rate is nearly 60%.

Housing

Charlestown has 866 housing units, of which the 2018 – 2022 ACS indicates that 85% are occupied. More than 90% of units are single-family homes and the home ownership rate is approaching 80%. Of the 866 total housing units, approximately half were built between 1990 and 2019. Most of these units are in Cool Springs and other subdivisions west of MD 7 and sit on one-quarter acre lots in traditional suburban design. East of MD 7, suburban ranchers and split-level houses are the norm away from the North East river; there are twenty historic residences within the National Register Charlestown Historic District. Approximately 25 residences have direct access to the North East River. The average household size is 2.8 persons. There are no multi-family buildings of more than four units and the median gross rent/mortgage is $1,390.

[2] A significant challenge in reviewing demographic information for small communities is the large Margin of Error for small area cross-tabulations.

Economy & Industry

There are no major employers located within Charlestown other than marina, retail and food service. Charlestown is a small waterfront town with four marinas, a general store, two restaurants, an elementary school, and Post Office. Charlestown's historic charm and waterfront draws tourists and water enthusiasts, however accommodations are limited to private rentals, such as AirBNB (18 listings) and VRBO (14 listings) rentals. Although "work from home" has increased since the pandemic, the average commute to work for a Charlestown resident is 33 minutes. Of Charlestown's working age residents, 24% work in public administration followed by 18% in educational, health, and social services.

Environmental Resources[3]

Charlestown is situated on the banks of the North East River, a tributary of the Chesapeake Bay. Charlestown's historic identity and present-day charm are intertwined with its natural setting and its roots as a rural, waterfront community. The conservation and protection of key natural resources and sensitive areas is crucial to preserving the character of Charlestown. Among the most critical and relevant environmental resources to this plan are:

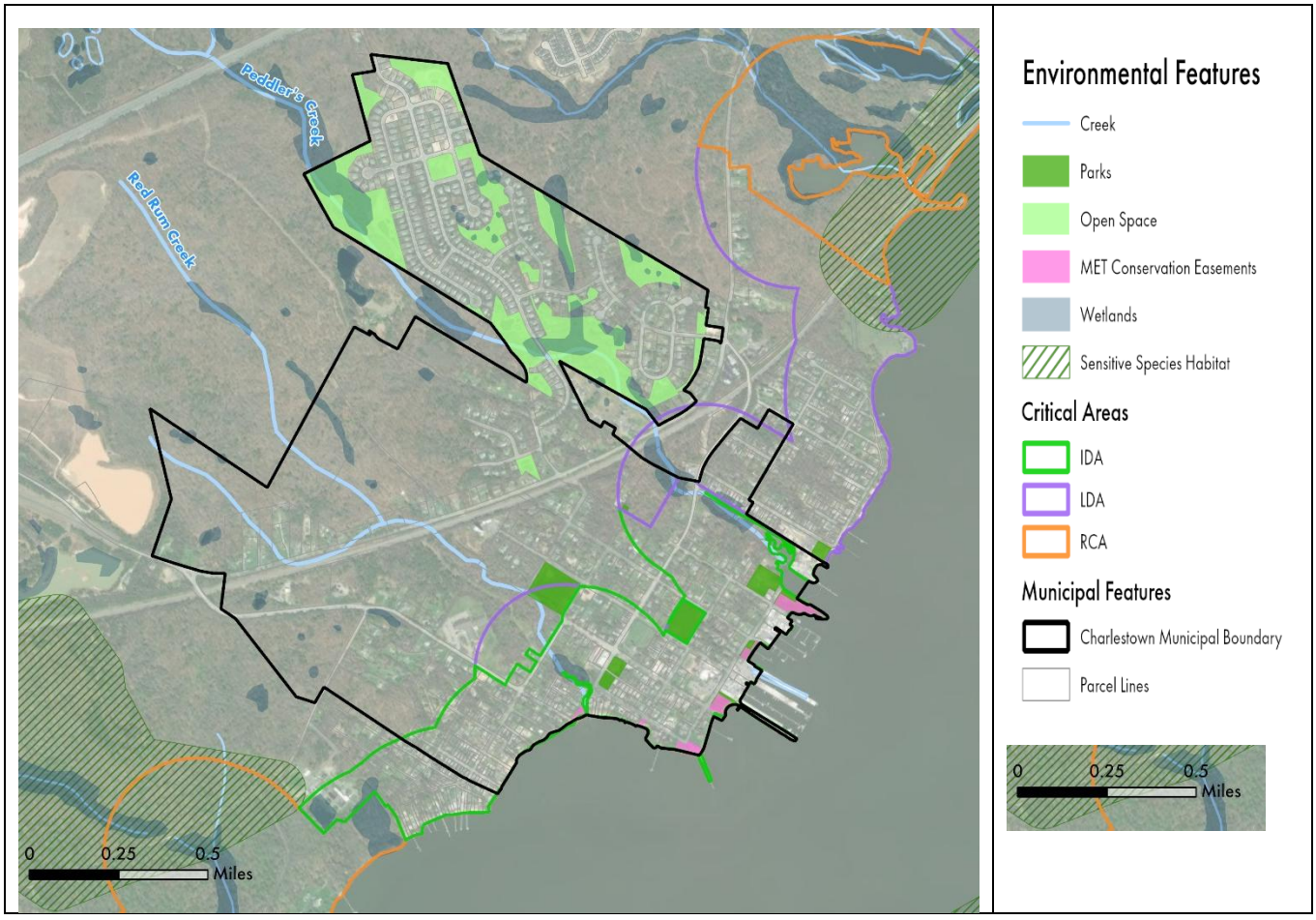
- **Two of the six major creeks flowing into the North East River: Red Rum Creek** located in the south part of town from within the quarry property to MD 7 and Amtrak, then crossing under Cecil Street before it flows into the river; and **Peddler's Run Creek Run,** which runs from west of US 40 in the Principio Business Park along a path just south of the Cool Springs subdivision then under MD 7 and Amtrak before flowing to the river south of Louisa Lane and Edgewater Avenue. Residents report significant rainfalls causes these creeks to periodically flood, which results in erosion and sediment deposition where they empty into the North East River, at Town parks and public swimming beaches.
- **Palustrine and Estuarine system wetlands** surrounding creeks in certain areas and along the North East River. Estuarine system wetlands are tidal wetlands and include deep water tidal habitats and adjacent tidal wetlands and are often partially surrounded by land. Palustrine system wetlands are non-tidal wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, plants and undergrowth with low salinity and shallow depths (less than 6 feet). Estuarine wetlands can be found along the southern end of the Charlestown Manor subdivision along Red Rum Creek. Palustrine wetlands are widely scattered in areas within the Town and along its edges, however a number are concentrated in the Trinity Woods subdivision. Palustrine wetlands that border tidal wetlands (as they do at the southern end of the Charlestown Manor subdivision) are of moderate to high significance for serving to temporarily hold coastal surge flood waters and to temporarily store water during storm events.

- [3] Source data is primarily from Department of Natural Resources' MERLIN (Maryland's Environmental Resource C Land Information Network) system.

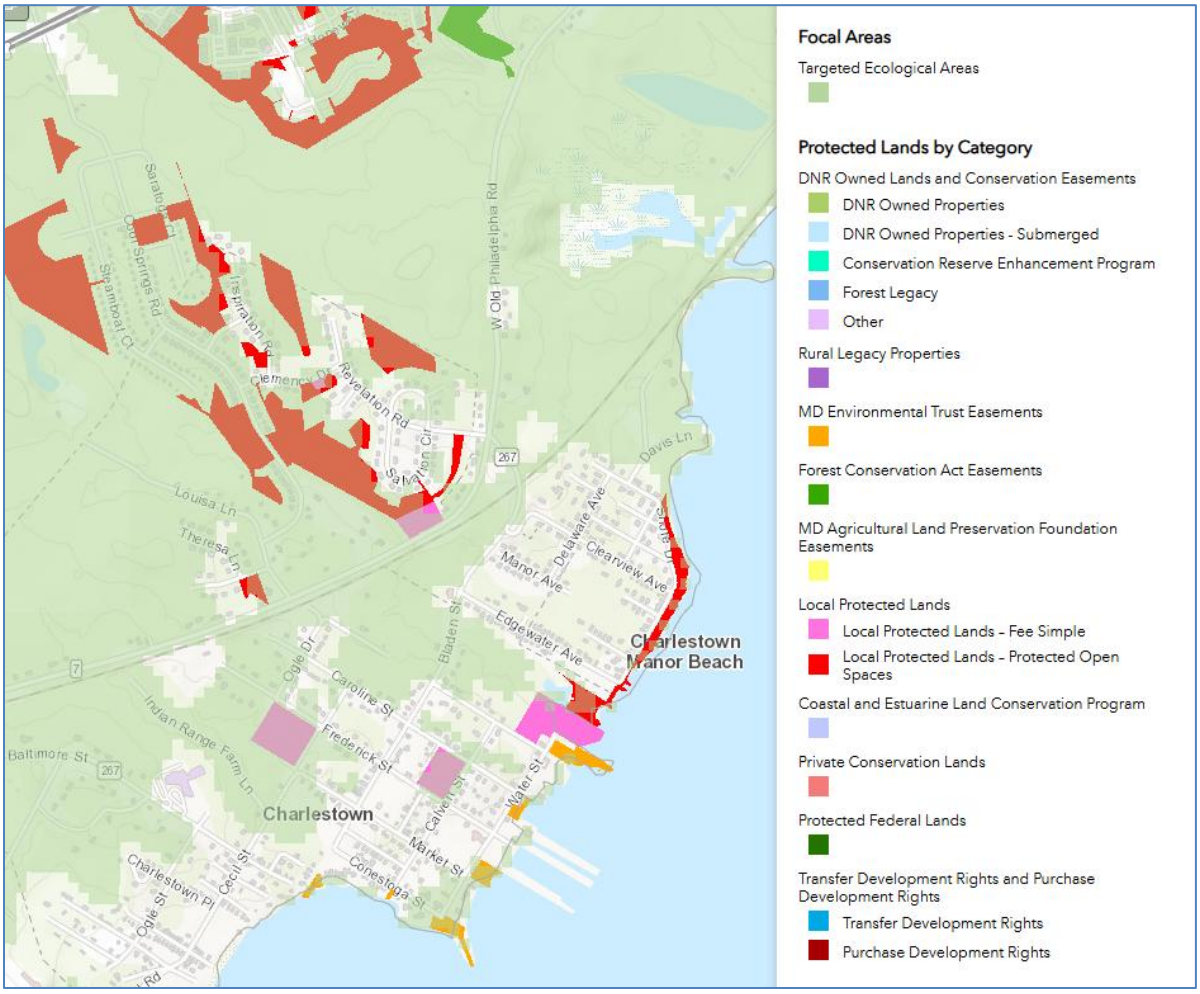
- **Large areas of forested land** can be found throughout Charlestown, particularly in the areas located in the western and northern sections of the Town forming a “greenbelt”. Large, forested tracts continue out past the perimeters of these areas. Smaller pockets of wooded areas lie adjacent to and between residential neighborhoods, and street trees can be found in the more densely populated areas of the Town and along the waterfront.

Taken together the above environmental resources form the Town’s and County’s Green Infrastructure Network (https://geodata.md.gov/greenprint/) – interconnected lands that provide the bulk of the State's ecosystem services, such as cleaning the air, filtering water, storing and cycling nutrients, conserving soils, regulating climate, and maintaining hydrologic function. These lands also provide habitat for native plants and animals, some of which are considered rare, threatened, or endangered, and they can be found in parks, conservation easements, other protected lands, and private properties. The green infrastructure network serves a purpose of critical importance for community resilience, including protection of the Town’s potable well-water supply, stormwater management, flood control, public recreation, and protection of the Town’s identity and quality of life (see Maps 1 and 2).

Map 2 Environmental Features



Map 2 Green Infrastructure Network

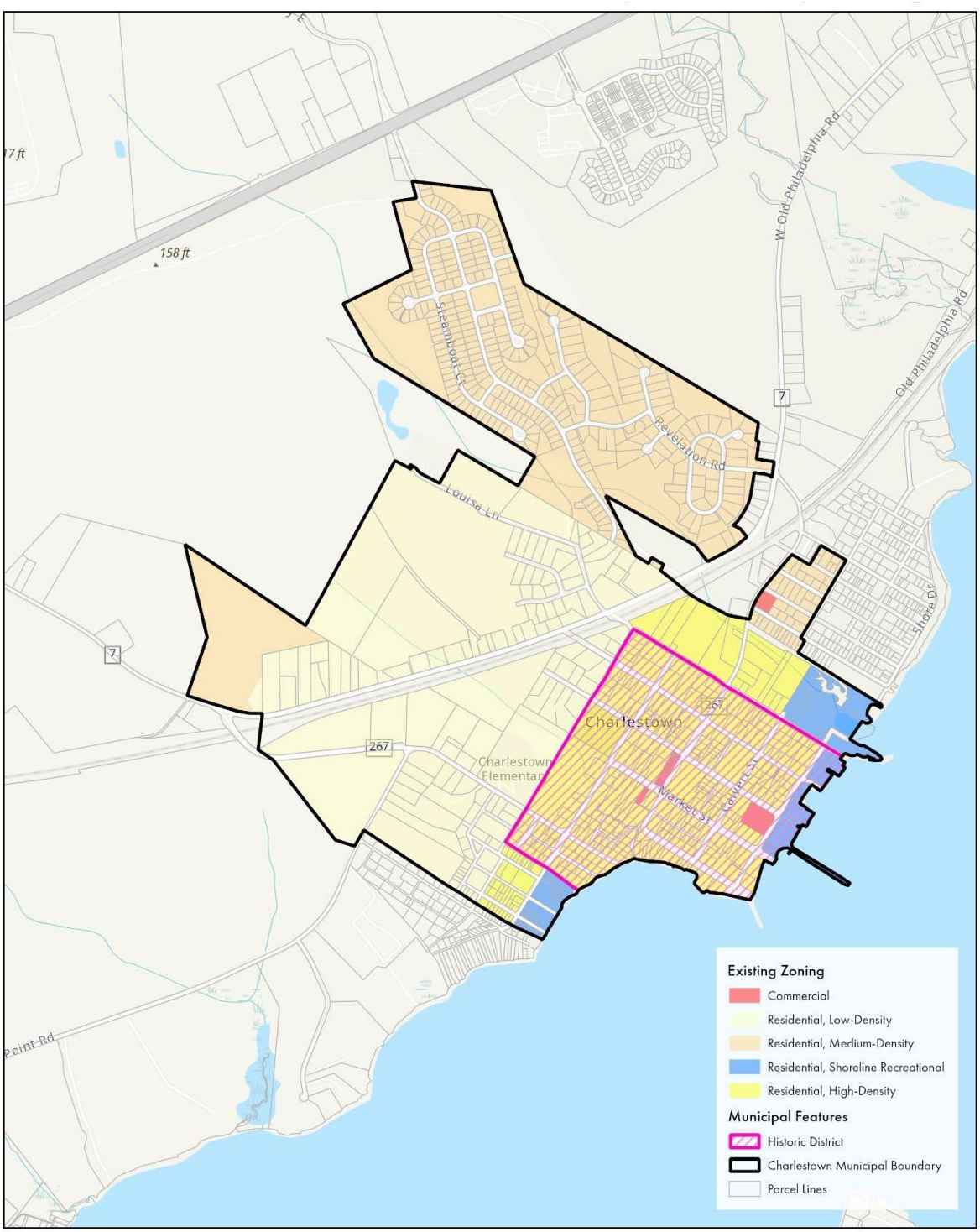


Land Use & Zoning

Charlestown's land use is characterized by its historic town center, waterfront, and residential development. The largest land use category, single family residential, totals over 260 acres and accounts for slightly more than a third of the existing land use (35%). Other prominent land uses include vacant land and open space. Commercial land use comprises less than one per cent of the town's total land and is located within the historic town center.

The land use plan is put into effect through the zoning code that details what can be built on a piece of land and where it can be built. The zoning code specifies regulations including, but not limited to the minimum size of lots, the size of buildings on those lots, building styles or materials that may or may not be used, and how access and parking is available for each property. Further, the zoning code is supported by a subdivision ordinance which provides additional standards when smaller lots are created within a large parcel such as the amount of open space required (which may include or be in addition to areas regulated by natural resource conservation laws), street patterns and classifications. The town's current zoning is depicted in Map 3.

Map 3. Existing Zoning



Transportation

Primary highway access to Charlestown is via MD Route 7, which connects to Route 40 to the east and west of the Town. Access to Interstate 95 requires travel on US 40 to either Perryville (MD 222) or North East (MD 272). A new interchange to I-95 is under construction at Belvidere Road approximately one-half mile from the southern leg of MD 7 at US 40. The need for this interchange is driven by significant growth in the warehouse and logistics sector on the west side of US 40 and sand and gravel production on the east side of US 40.

Charlestown is bifurcated by MD Route 7 which is posted for 40 mph through town limits. According to the State Highway Administration, average daily traffic along MD 7 through Charlestown is approximately 2,500 vehicles per day with trips roughly evenly distributed northbound and southbound.[4] Review of safety data indicates that there has been one fatality along MD 7 since 2018 in the vicinity of Charlestown, near Wells Camp Road. Maryland State Police data indicates that several single-vehicle crashes have occurred in this vicinity resulting in driver or passenger injury.[5]

Within the core of Charlestown, roads are very low volume with less than 1,000 vehicles per day except Baltimore Street (MD 267) which exceeds 1,000 vehicles on days when school is in session. East of MD 7, Charlestown's streets form a grid network; west of MD 7 streets are curvilinear in a suburban fashion. Sidewalks are present in Cool Springs and Trinity Woods subdivisions west of MD 7, and along Baltimore and Bladen Streets (MD 267) but absent elsewhere throughout the "old town" other than some limited asphalt pathways. The Town owns three parking lots, two of which are located at Avalon Park, and a third is at Veteran's Park. The parking lots are used primarily during the summer by visitors and boaters and during special events.

There is no regular transit service, only Dial-a-Ride run by Cecil County. The nearest rail transit is at the Perryville MARC station or the Newark Delaware AMTRAK and SEPTA station. Map 4 indicates the Town's major streets and State highways.

Map 4 Regional Highways

[4] Internet Traffic Monitoring System (I-TMS) (maryland.gov)

[5] Maryland Crash Data 2024-Present

Community Services & Facilities

In Maryland, most core governmental services are provided at the county level including schools and libraries; police, fire, and emergency services; licensing, building permits and inspections. In Charlestown,

- law enforcement services are provided by the Cecil County Sheriff's Office and the Maryland State Police.
- fire and emergency services are provided by the Charlestown Volunteer Fire Company.
- students attend Charlestown Elementary School, Perryville Middle School, and Perryville High School
- Cecil County Department of Land Use and Development Services reviews building plans, issues building permits, and conducts building inspections on behalf of the town.
- Health and human services are provided by the Cecil County Health Department and the Cecil County Department of Community Services

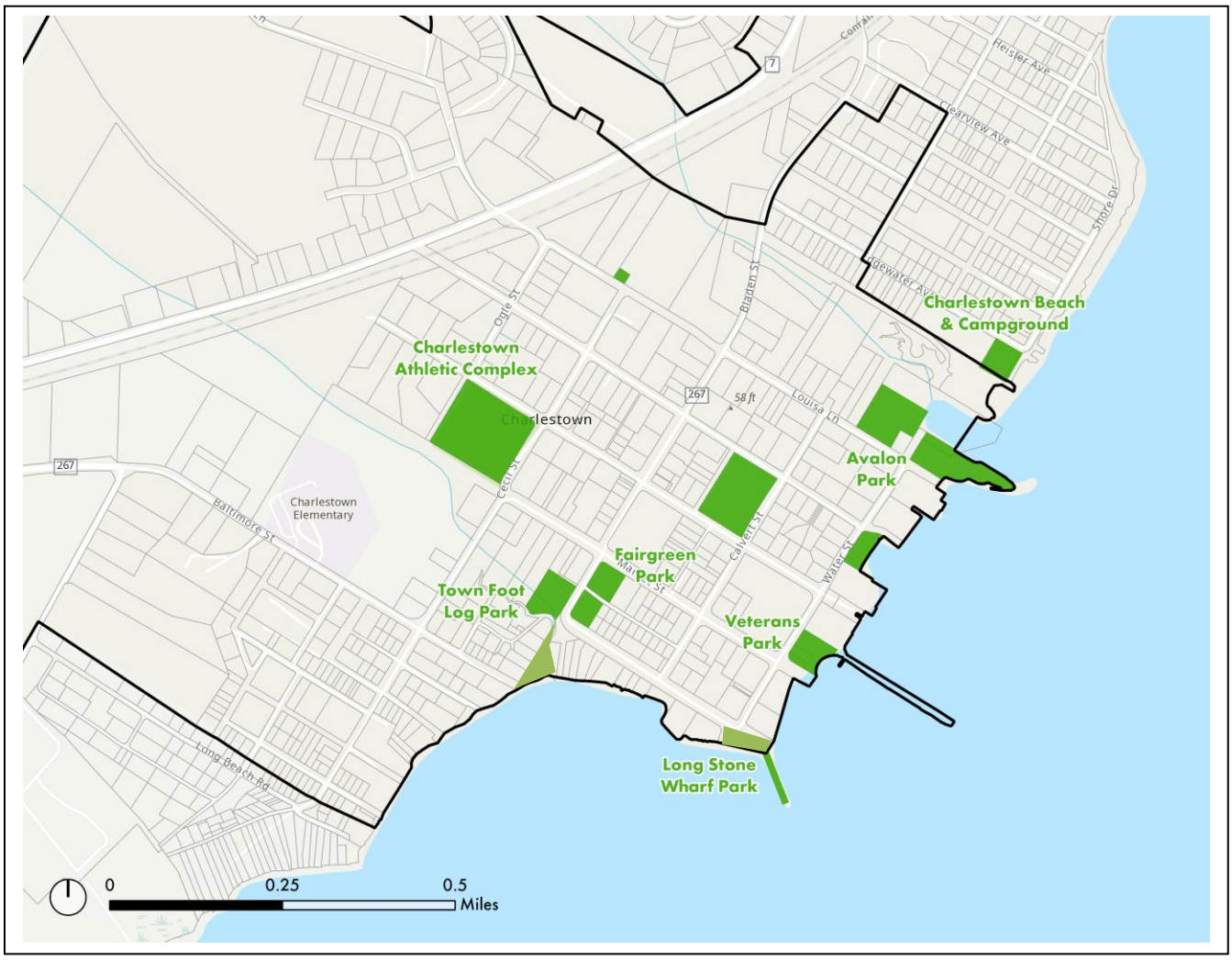
Charlestown provides services such as parks and recreation; civic and tourism promotion; solid waste removal and recycling; public drinking water, stormwater management, and, planning, zoning, and economic development.

The Town has invested significantly in its parks, beaches, and piers which are a significant amenity for the community:

- **Athletic Complex:** Located on Frederick Street, this complex contains a ball field, basketball and pickleball/tennis courts, skate park, and walking trail. Parking is available adjacent to the skate park. The use of this park is on a first- come- first served basis and there is no reservation policy.
- **Avalon Park:** This park is located at the intersection of Water Street and Louisa Lane. With a newly built stage, this park is available for rent for concerts, weddings and other community events.
- **Fair Green Park G Playground:** This park, located behind Town Hall, is geared toward the young children of the Town. It offers a large swing set, many slides, monkey bars, and a ship-themed play area. Also offered are picnic tables and a covered pavilion.
- **Foot Log Park:** This park is at the corner of Bladen and Conestoga Streets and provides access to the beach area by footbridge.
- **Long Point Park** is at the corner of Water and Conestoga streets. The flag pole located on this site is a reproduction of a ship's mast, complete with crow's nest.
- **Stone Wharf** is a reproduction built on the cribbing of the original wharf which was established to provide a port at the head of the Chesapeake Bay.

- **Veteran's Park** is located at the corner of Market Street and Water Street and includes a beach, pavilion, and public restroom.
- The **municipal boat pier** has approximately 40 slips available for rent. The pier is open from mid-March to mid-November.
- The **public boat ramp**, located at the intersection of Water and Market Streets, is open year-round.
- **Sandy Beach** is located at the intersection of Calvert and Conestoga Streets and offers views of the Elk Neck Peninsula and North East River.

Map 5 Charlestown Parks



Part 2: The Plan for Charlestown

The next 15 – 20 years, to 2040, present both opportunities and challenges for Charlestown both rare environmental events and most of which are routine matters common to many municipalities in the region; however, underlying the opportunities and challenges is a general sense that Charlestown is a great place to live, raise a family, and welcome visitors.

There are two primary challenges in Charlestown. First, is the impact of increasingly frequent and intense storms and higher North East River tides which overwhelm the natural and manmade drainage systems causing localized flooding threatening life and property in Charlestown. Second, is the capacity of the town to address those conditions which may exist at a scale beyond the Town's present resources. At a more routine level, residents identify a lack of parking at times of high visitation; sufficiency and functionality concerns about town infrastructure, including the marinas and piers; and the upkeep of some private properties.

To the positive, residents see opportunities to build on the Town's strengths: access to the North East River; the history and charm of the community; and local parks and recreational resources. Residents believe that there may be some limited opportunities for community- oriented commercial development (ice cream shops, small restaurant/coffee house, antiques stores, etc.) if the town can attract more visitors and residents. There is a willingness to consider new approaches to land use policy that would result in a more diverse array of housing options. If successful, taking advantage of these opportunities will grow the town's tax base and allow for additional investments to address concerns such as the drainage system.

About the Charlestown Plan

Members of the Town Commission, Planning Commission, town staff, and residents at-large participated in crafting this plan in 2024 and 2025. This plan is reflective of townspeople themselves and their views – modest, easygoing, and generally satisfied with the quality of life in Charlestown. The last comprehensive plan adopted by the Town Council (circa 2008) was 195 pages long with considerable detail about aquifers and air quality; grand concepts linked to "civic architecture," "placemaking" and "heritage preservation"; and 29 objectives with few specifics on how to achieve them.

In developing this comprehensive plan, the town sought a document that is appropriately scaled to Charlestown's resources and capacity to deliver, including with specific "to do" projects and actions, even if all the details were not provided,

2.1 Land Use & Development Regulations

The core function of a comprehensive plan in Maryland is to guide land use and development and to ensure that there is adequate infrastructure to support present needs, and future growth should it arise. The regulation of land use is:

- critical to achieving or maintaining the community attributes that make a town a healthy and desirable place to live, work, and play.
- a tool to advance policy goals such as housing diversity, environmental protection and resilience, and walkability.
- foundational to a town's fiscal outlook as a diverse and growing tax base can more readily withstand adverse economic forces and can support the types of services desired by residents from its municipal government.

This plan maintains the "bones" of Charlestown's land uses which result in primarily one- and two-story single-family detached residential dwellings and ample open space, while allowing for some greater density with different dwelling types, and more opportunities for community-scale commercial development. Greater detail on the proposed land use changes will be enacted through amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. The proposed changes will strengthen the Town's tax base, allow population growth to increase the market for potential commercial development, and can be implemented in ways that protect natural resources.

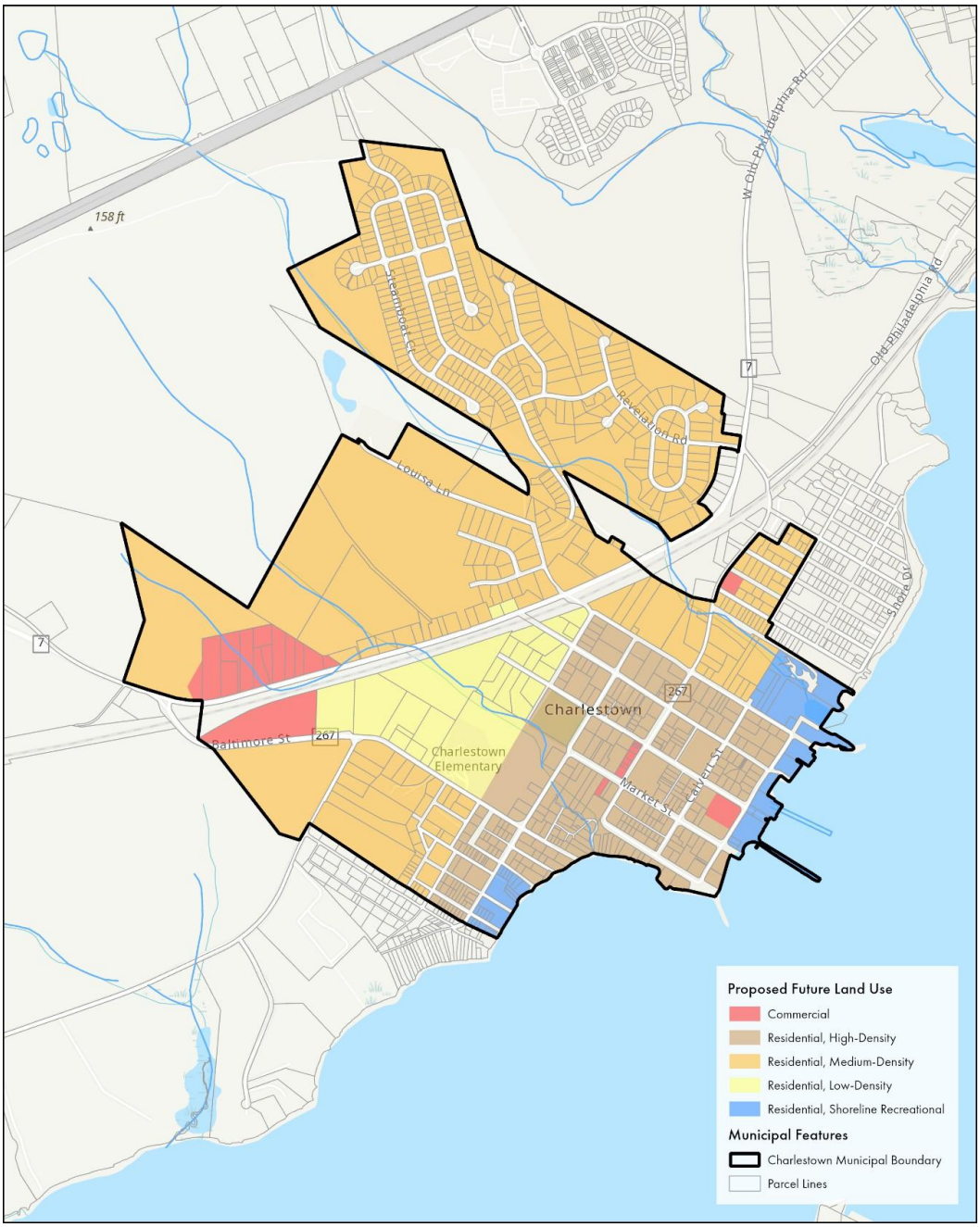
***Goal #1: Promote compatible and efficient land use that preserves the historic qualities of "old town" Charlestown while encouraging infill and redevelopment to position Charlestown as a place for commerce, recreation, and tourism*.**

- Review the boundaries of the Charlestown Historic District, define what are the most significant remaining structures, properties, and areas, and update the zoning code to help preserve them.
- Expand allowable housing types permitted (with conditions) within the Historic District and other zones so that residential and mixed-use redevelopment and infill opportunities are viable in the Town center.
- Expand allowable housing types in lower-density residential areas, specifically for those parcels south/east of MD 7 that are adjacent / walkable to the town center.
- Review State Law and update Town codes to remain consistent.

- Refine development standards to allow for moderate density residential development. This may include adjustments such as smaller lot sizes, higher coverage rates, and smaller setbacks, etc.
- Establish appropriate design standards that will facilitate housing and commercial development.

Map 6, below, illustrates proposed future land uses. The only large difference compared to Map 3, Zoning, is the Commercial area at the west end of Town.

Map 6. Proposed Future Land Use

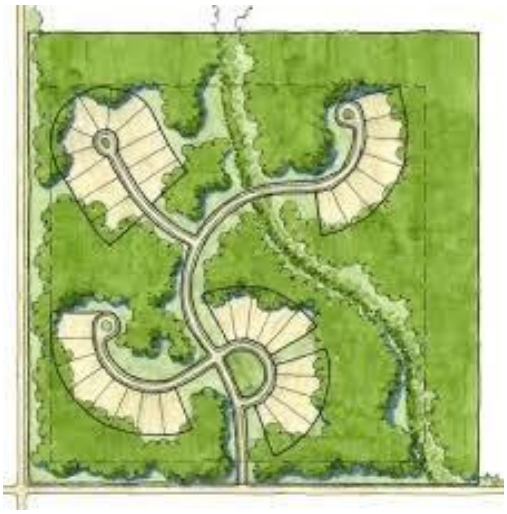


Goal #2: **Increase allowable density west of MD 7 with natural resource protection condition to foster environmental resiliency.**

- Encourage cluster development to minimize environmental impacts.

Figure 2. Duplex units such as those shown above fit the style and aesthetic pattern of single family homes in Charlestown.

Figure 3. Cluster development encourages developers to maintain environmental features rather than clearcutting the forest.



Goal #3: Promote development that diversifies the tax base and provides economic opportunity.

- Allow for limited community-scale commercial and mixed-use development along MD 7.
- Encourage development of a small commercial main street along lower Market Street and portions of Water Street. Frontage standards should be used to encourage lively street activity and height limitations enacted to preserve the viewshed to the North East River.

Goal #4: Update the zoning code to reflect modern and flexible code drafting practices.

- Implement a table of permitted uses to simplify the zoning code and provide convenience for the public and prospective developers as to permissible uses in each zone.
- Establish authority for planned unit development overlays on parcels (or groups of parcels to be subdivided) which are greater than 10 acres. This flexible zoning tool allows developers of large parcels to provide a mix of housing types and greater densities in exchange for specific benefits to the town such as environmental conservation or recreational facilities.

Goal #5: Preserve open space, protect environmental resources, and foster natural resiliency

- Establish authority requiring natural resource protection to ensure the town's goals of flood management, resiliency, and public safety are being met.
- Update the zoning code to prohibit mining, quarrying, and mineral resource extraction in Charlestown.

2.2 Municipal Growth

In Maryland, the term "municipal growth" relates to areas outside of the town's boundaries which may be annexed into the town.[6] However, a municipal growth map and associated policies are not intended as an affirmative statement that the town intends to grow; rather they are intended to shape where and how the town may grow and under what conditions. Additionally, some state investments (for example, loans or grants for water or sewer facilities, new roads, and new schools) are tied to the formal designation of municipal growth areas in a comprehensive plan. Growth areas are then designated "priority funding areas" for the purpose of accessing such funds.

The 2008 municipal growth plan included more than 1,300 acres – ten times the size of the historic core of Charlestown and nearly twice the size of the total land area of the town. Much of the then-proposed municipal growth area was from the active quarries to the south and west of Charlestown which are part of the Cecil County mineral extraction district. In 2008, the rationale for including the quarries was to accommodate post-mining development. The plan did not describe a vision for the properties nor anticipated land uses or development parameters. The Town should continue to monitor the potential for development in the area of the quarries and maintain the designation as "potential growth area."

GOAL #1: Consider extending the municipal growth area to include the existing unincorporated communities of Holloway Beach and Charlestown Manor.

Holloway Beach is an existing 25-acre/108-lot Cecil County subdivision located southwest of Town. As of 2023, it appears that approximately 20 lots were vacant. Charlestown Manor is an existing 45-acre/182-lot Cecil County subdivision located northeast of Town. As of 2023, it appears that there are approximately 40 undeveloped lots. The purpose of this action would be to upgrade the areas in terms of infrastructure and community maintenance. In 2024, the County included the extension of sewer service to Holloway Beach in its capital budget this will have a meaningful impact on water quality in the North East River. The same improvements would benefit Charlestown Manor.

GOAL #2: Consider extending the municipal boundary north from Cool Springs Road to US 40 for limited purposes.

The purpose of this action is to give the town a "seat at the table" for development that may occur along US 40, as well as to facilitate the eventual connection of Cool Springs Road to US 40. This may also open limited opportunity for commercial development to strengthen the Town's tax base, as well as improve emergency response times into the Cool Spring community.

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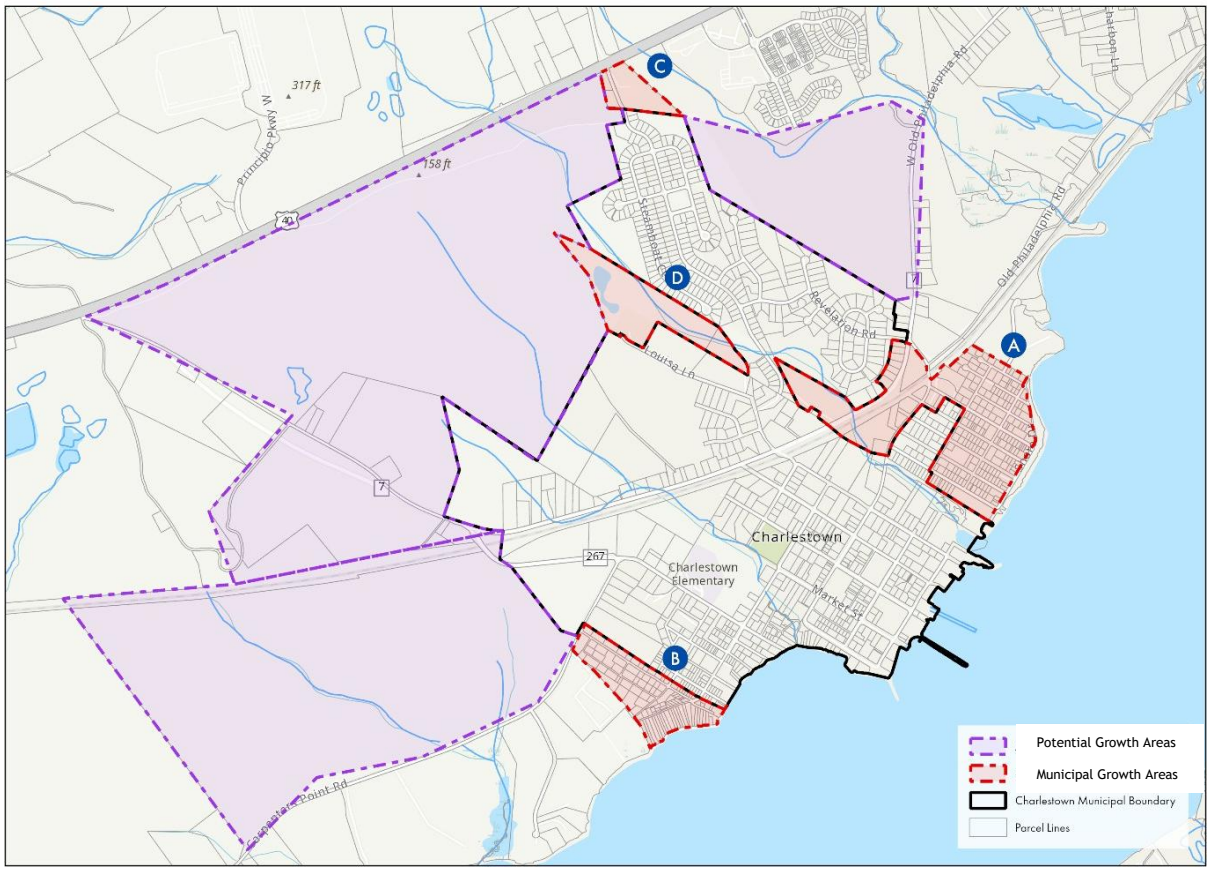
[6] The term "annexation" has a specific legal meaning and process defined in state law and is not further used in this comprehensive plan. Rather, the term "potential growth areas" is used to describe areas outside of municipal limits.

GOAL #3 Establish a resilient greenbelt around Charlestown.

Working with Cecil County, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and other experts, the Town should explore opportunities to participate and/or control existing and future uses in the Potential Growth Areas shown in Map 7. For example, establishing conservation easements around stream buffers can foster resiliency, helping to protect the Town's drinking water supply, and reduce flooding downstream in Red Rum and Peddler's Run Creeks.

Map 7. Municipal Growth and Potential Growth Areas



Fiscal and Service Impacts of Expanding the Municipal Growth Boundary

Because Holloway Beach and Charlestown Manor are already developed communities, the external impacts (schools, libraries, police/fire/emergency services, etc.) of annexation are unlikely to change unless there is redevelopment of the properties. As to internal effects on town expenses, the impact would be minimal if not proportional to the local tax revenue that would be generated on an operating fund basis.

If the residents of Holloway Beach and/or Charlestown Manor determine it is in their interest to come within the municipal boundaries of Charlestown, the town will need to develop a plan for bringing infrastructure to a state of good repair within a reasonable period. The costs of such a plan should not be borne by existing residents.

2.3 Housing

While Charlestown has a very stable housing market defined by high rates of home ownership, Charlestown still faces housing risks. Specifically, with over 90 % of Charlestown's housing stock comprised of single-family homes, there is a lack of housing diversity for people with different needs and at different income levels, whether they are families, singles, couples, seniors, or people with disabilities. The number of available rental units is small and the estimated Charlestown 2018 – 2022 ACS median rent of $1,390 is higher than that of other municipalities in Cecil County: Cecilton ($810), Chesapeake City ($929), Elkton ($1,287), North East ($1,158), Perryville ($1,056), Port Deposit ($1,067), and Rising Sun ($1,133). Further, Charlestown lacks dedicated housing for seniors, such as a senior community or assisted living facility.

In addition to these risks, 15 percent of homes in Charlestown are classified as vacant "usual residence elsewhere" indicating they are vacation homes or short-term rentals. Year-round vacant homes are a type of blight that can lead to declining property values and neighborhood disinvestment. Lastly, over 20 percent of Charlestown's housing stock was built before 1939. Housing stock that is old presents health and safety concerns and has a higher likelihood of systems and weatherization failure.

Through this plan, its goals and actions, the Town acknowledges its responsibility to affirmatively further fair housing through meaningful actions to overcome patterns of segregation, promote fair housing choice, eliminate disparities in opportunities, and foster inclusive communities free from discrimination.

Goal #1. Allow for a range of housing densities, types, and sizes to provide residential options for residents of all ages and incomes.

- Expand housing types permitted in low-density residential and refine development standards to allow smaller lot sizes, higher coverage, smaller setbacks, etc. to promote a diversity of housing options.
- Update the zoning code to allow for modular and manufactured housing per State Law and accessory dwelling units (ADUs).
- Proactively seek out partnerships with non-profit housing developers to evaluate opportunities for new senior and workforce-accessible housing.

Goal #2. Balance historic preservation while encouraging compatible residential and mixed-use development in old town.

- Review the boundaries of the Charlestown Historic District, define what are the significant structures, properties, and areas and update the zoning code accordingly.
- Expand housing types permitted within the historic district so that residential and mixed-use redevelopment and infill opportunities are viable in the town center.
- Enact reasonable standards related to design, density, and historic preservation to ensure compatibility among existing historic properties and new development.

Goal #3. Promote revitalization of vacant, underutilized and abandoned properties in Charlestown and immediately adjacent communities.

- Encourage community outreach and partnerships for housing preservation such as Habitat for Humanity and Volunteers for America.
- Seek state funding for grants to support weatherization and other "healthy homes" initiatives for lower-income property owners.
- Seek state funding through the façade improvement program.

2.4 Transportation

The historic core of Charlestown was developed on a grid system with narrow streets; they tend to be low volume and low speed. Walking tends to be comfortable in most locations. Parking is an issue during the warm weather months, but more of a nuisance than a pressing concern. It is MD 7, a state highway, that divides historic Charlestown from its newer subdivisions that is both an area of concern and an opportunity for improvement. The Town must also be mindful of maintaining its existing transportation assets in the face of water- related challenges.

Goal #1: Maintain roads and other assets in a state of good repair.

- The town should conduct an asset condition inventory for its roads, bridges, culverts, parking lots, and pathways. Understanding the present condition of assets is important to proper budgeting for proactive maintenance and repair, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, when necessary.
- The town should establish a routine cycle of maintenance based on the inventory outcomes and future risks related to storm surge and poor drainage.
- Ensure all roads are constructed according to Town standards.

Goal #2: Improve non-vehicular mobility.

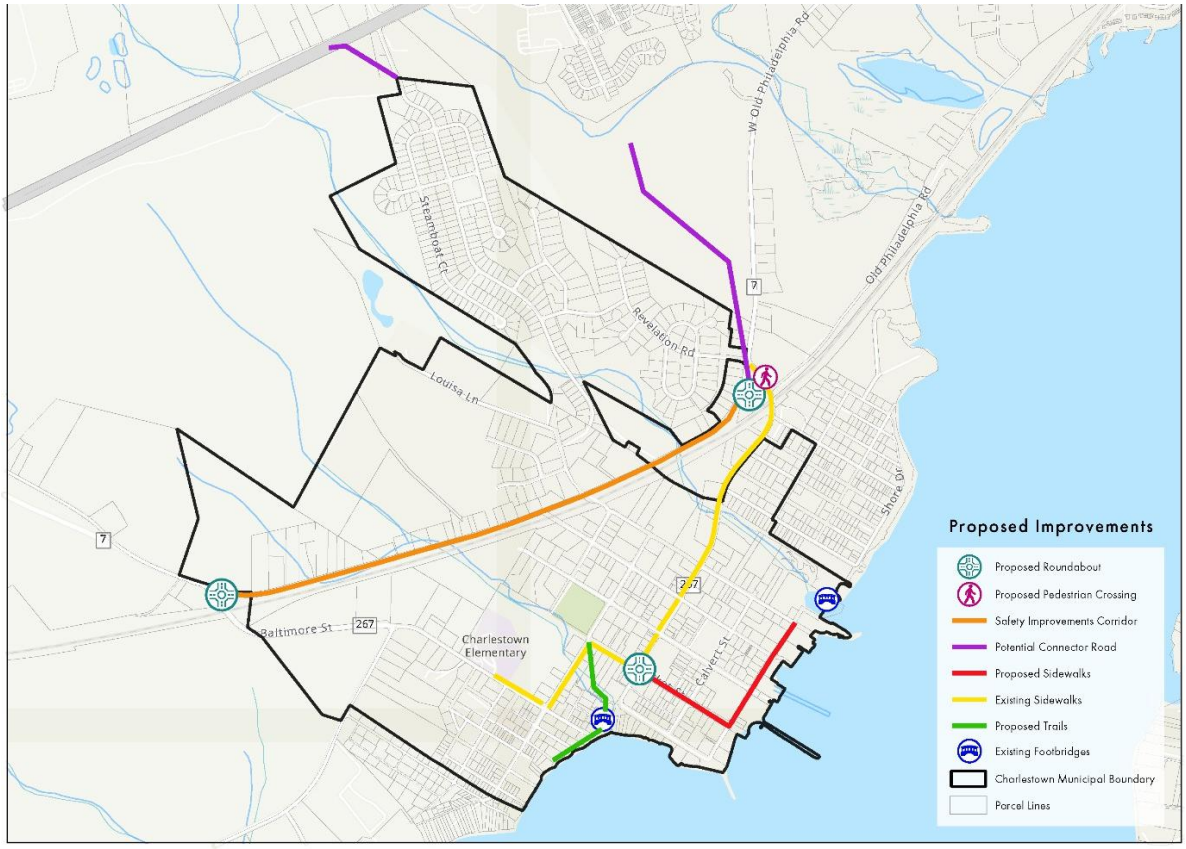
Residents have expressed both a need for and concern regarding additional parking to serve residents and visitors. The town should resist efforts to construct new parking lots as adding new impervious surfaces increases flood potential and harms water quality. Instead, the Town should pursue alternative solutions that reduce driving from one location to another within town and mitigate peak parking demand such as:

- **Selectively add and improve sidewalks.** Most streets in Charlestown's core lack sidewalks: they are also narrow which limits traffic speed and volume. It is not uncomfortable to walk alongside traffic on most of the local/neighborhood streets. Adding or even widening sidewalks is a costly endeavor and would require additional right of way to be acquired from property owners; increase pervious areas and stormwater runoff. Sidewalks should be selectively added in Charlestown where they will be actively used and provide access to important destinations. There are also several prominent gaps in the existing sidewalk network which should be filled. The Town should consider MD 7 from Louisa Lane to Bladen Street and Water Street from Louisa Lane to Conestoga Street as priority locations for sidewalk construction. This request should be made to the State Highway Administration as part of the annual consultation process for the Consolidated Transportation Program.
- **Add natural surface trails and footbridges to improve waterfront connectivity.** Several locations along the waterfront are not connected and require pedestrians to either travel across private property or take a circuitous route to their destination. A more connected waterfront would include a pathway from Baltimore Street to the footbridge over Red Rum Creek and Conestoga Street.

Goal #3: Manage access and improve safety along MD 7

- Advocate for low-cost safety measures such as edge and centerline rumble strips, guardrails, and raised pavement markings along MD7 between Wells Camp Road and Baltimore Street.
- At either end of MD 267, the town should advocate for study of roundabouts, signalized crosswalks, or other street feature to slow traffic as it comes through town. This would also provide a gateway feature marking arrival in Charlestown.
- Limit the number of access points to new development via MD 7 by requiring connections between subdivisions.
- If Cool Springs or an adjacent property is further developed, the town should advocate the connection to US 40 be completed as a condition of such development. At present there is a gap of approximately 400' between the northern end of Cool Spring Road and US 40; this gap is a function of property that could not be purchased by the developer of Cool Springs when the subdivision was first constructed.
- The Town should monitor further development of the Charlestown Crossing subdivision. At present, the only access to Charlestown Crossing is via US 40. Even though Charlestown Crossing is not within the municipal limits of Charlestown, the Town should consider whether, and if so under what conditions, it would support extension of Charlestown Crossing Boulevard to MD 7. Such conditions may include the MD 7 safety improvements described above.

Map 7. Proposed Improvements



2.5 Community Facilities and Services

Residents perceive that the town is managed efficiently and provides appropriate services for the taxes paid. Many of the goals contained in this comprehensive plan would be implemented through potentially expensive projects that exceed the Town's current resources. While there is some appetite for measures to increase town revenues, the approach should be measured and tied to specific projects and outcomes. Cost containment and efficiency strategies must be prioritized and demonstrated such that the operating budget rises at or below the rate of inflation. This will allow revenues from new development to be used to finance capital spending priorities.

Additional community services and facilities priorities relate to emergency operations; the physical condition and constraints of Town Hall; parks and open spaces, beaches, marina and piers; and the need for improved internet services in the community.

Goal #1 – Establish a Capital Improvement Program and Identify Revenues to Support its Implementation

Priority projects for the capital improvement program would include upgrade and expansion of town hall; stormwater management facilities including upgrades to the existing collection system; water and wastewater infrastructure, and additional facilities for parks and recreation.

Goal #2 – Improve energy resilience of the power supply and distribution network.

The Town is concerned that powerful weather events have a disproportionate impact on its residents because there is little redundancy in the power system. The Town should work with Delmarva Power to identify actions that can be taken by each party to improve resilience of the power system.

Goal #3 – Actively pursue broadband internet access for Charlestown.

There is currently no fiber optic service available in Charlestown. The lack of high-speed internet limits the ability of residents to work from home, access telemedicine, and enjoy social activities which are now commonly available online. Extending broadband service to rural areas and small towns like Charlestown and most other municipalities in Cecil County is costly and requires investment through public programs.

Goal #4 -Coordinate emergency response plans and preparedness efforts for a unified approach with the Cecil County Department of Emergency Services.

The Charlestown Fire Company is located at Bladen and Market Streets. The Town has and should continue to provide financial support to the company and work with the company and Cecil County to evaluate emergency preparedness and conduct emergency response training on a regular basis.

2.6 Water Resources

The Water Resources Element is a requirement for all local comprehensive plans in Maryland designed to ensure that local growth and development plans incorporate an analysis of the limitations and constraints of water resources, and water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure when examining existing and proposed land uses. MDE revised guidance regarding the elements of the WRE includes both receiving water protection strategies as well as the integration of climate change considerations into drinking water, wastewater and stormwater assessments of the WRE. The purpose of the WRE is to provide planning strategies and recommendations for water resources based on an analysis of growth and development trends that consider changes in existing and proposed land use and protect human safety and infrastructure from flooding or other impacts.

2.6.1 Drinking Water System

The Charlestown water system is currently comprised of two wells which are used to provide primary water supply. As of 2022, a third well is currently offline and the well pump removed. The Town's water supply is treated for iron removal, pH adjustment, and disinfection. Construction details for all three wells, obtained from well permits filed with Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Charlestown Water Supply Wells

Classification	**Athletic Field Well**	**Cecil Street Well**	**Water Tank Well (offline)**
Well Permit No.	CE88-1910	CE88-2612	CE88-1959
Year Drilled	1991	1992	1991
Well Diameter	6-inch	6-inch	6-inch
Total Depth	132 feet	144 feet	99 feet
Screen Interval	100'-132'	118'-143'	79'-99'
Reported Capacity	100 gpm	100 gpm	85 gpm

The town has a 500,000-gallon elevated storage tank that provides storage capacity for the water system at the required volume for equalization, emergency storage, and fire flow storage. Equalization of the flow into the distribution system allows the water supply system to be designed for maximum day demand rather than maximum hour demand and allows water levels to rise and fall daily to encourage mixing the storage contents and controlling the water age. The water tank also provides fire flow storage for a fire event requiring 1,200 gallons per minute (gpm) and lasting two hours, which equates to 144,000 gallons. The emergency

storage volume in the water tank helps to maintain the necessary supply and pressure in the distribution system in instances such as a power outage that prevents the wells from producing water, well failures or a break in a primary transmission line.

Groundwater Appropriation Permit

MDE issues ground water appropriation permits (GAPs) with required average and maximum daily flow capacities for municipal water systems. The current Groundwater Appropriation Permit (GAP) (CE1988G087 /05) for the Town of Charlestown was issued in September 2017 and expires on August 31, 2029. The permit allows a daily average withdrawal of 207,000 gallons per day (gpd) on a yearly basis and 300,000 gpd during maximum use.

Projected Water Demand

The 2022 Water System Planning Report indicates that water demand has risen significantly when compared to numbers reported in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. The increase in growth since the last plan is reflected in the change in annual demand. A review of the demand for a 12-month period (June 2022 – June 2023) indicates that the average daily demand has increased to 102,022 gpd, up from the 90,000 gallons per day reported in 2008. The Town's annual water use has also increased from an average of 32.75 million gallons per year (2003 – 2007) to approximately 37.2 million gallons in the 12-month period recently examined.

Future demand on the water system is calculated using a per-household water usage multiplier of 250 gpd (MDE estimate of single-family household daily water usage). Water demand is based on existing dwelling units and potential development units, either through infill development of vacant and underutilized lots within the current municipal boundary or through annexation. Table 3 shows population projections for Charlestown through 2040 used in the 2019 Cecil County Water and Sewer Plan and the population estimate for the Town assuming full development of parcels within existing municipal boundaries. Given the town's 2023 population estimate is about 1,500, these projections are probably low.

Table 3. Population Projections

Reference	**2017**	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**
2019 Cecil County Water and Sewer Plan	1,196	1,260	1,583	1,844

The report found that the current town water supply would be adequate to meet the future water demand based on known development potential and miscellaneous infill development within the current town limits. The capacity of the Town's water supply system with the best well out of service is currently 144,000 gpd and estimates of water demand from existing and future additional demand would equal approximately 139,250 gpd.

The town water storage tank provides the required volume for equalization, emergency storage, and fire flow volume and pressure. Analysis of the town storage tank which also provides the required volume for equalization, emergency storage, and fire flow storage in the Town's water system. This scenario assumes full tank storage, but the actual levels in the tank can fluctuate based on water demand, the operations of the well pumps, and if water is required for firefighting operations or other emergency services. Table 4 shows that at full buildout the available capacity exceeds the requirement to provide 24 hour emergency storage. The maximum with existing tank column illustrates that to meet water storage requirements, the maximum number of EDUs that the Town can handle on the existing tank is 903, which is 77 EDU's less than the projected full build out of the growth area.

Table 4. Water Supply Future with Infill Development

	Existing System	Future with infill	Maximum with Existing Tank
Total Storage Tank Capacity (gallons)	415,000	415,000	415,000
Fire Flow Storage (1,200 gpm for 2 hours) (gallons)	144,000	144,000	144,000
Demand (EDU)	408	557	**G03**
One Day Emergency Storage - current (gallons)	102,000	139,250	225,750
Operational Capacity = 20% current demand (gallons)	20,400	27,850	45,150
Available Capacity (gallons)	148,600	103,900	100
Total Emergency Storage (hours)	**5G**	**42**	**24**

GOAL #1: Preserve and protect existing water supply to meet future demand.

- Identify water source options to maintain sustainable supply to the Town.
- Complete water system master plan to identify improvements needed to support potential growth. A review of existing facilities and infrastructure can help to determine if the system is capable of handling increased flows.
- Coordinate with Maryland's Intended Use Plan and investigate capital improvement funding from various sources.

2.6.2 Wastewater Treatment and Conveyance

Charlestown owns the wastewater/sewer collection system, force main, and three pumping stations, while Cecil County operates sewer service on Charlestown's behalf. The County owns and operates the Seneca Point Wastewater Treatment Plant (SPWWTP) that serves Charlestown and surrounding areas.

The SPWWTP plant was upgraded to Enhanced Nutrient Removal in 2016 and has a design capacity of 2.0 mgd , an annual average daily flow of about 1.27 mgd, and Maryland Department of the Environment conditional authorization for a three-step increase in the plant's design flow to 3.7 mgd. Given these data, there is adequate treatment capacity to accommodate Charlestown growth assuming coordination with Cecil County to allocate capacity to Charlestown. Charlestown owns and maintains the wastewater/sewer collection system that was installed in the early 1990's.

GOAL #2: Maintain the wastewater collection system in good repair.

- Perform inflow and infiltration analysis to identify sewer system maintenance needs.
- Assess and upgrade wastewater facilities for climate change resilience.
- Implement flood protection measures for wastewater infrastructure.

2.6.3 Stormwater Management and Resiliency

Charlestown's location along the north bank of the North East River means that the effect of changes to water levels and tidal influences need to be considered in all aspects of Town managements and operations. The FEMA-designated flood zones; private and public property and structures; and shorelines, wetlands, estuaries within and adjacent to the Town are key resiliency factors in protecting the citizens of Charlestown from rising river levels and extreme weather events. Those impacts may include shoreline erosion, deterioration of tidal

wetlands, rising groundwater, nuisance flooding, and flooding from storm surge. Climactic changes are already impacting surface waters and groundwater through alterations in precipitation patterns, increased and more frequent severe storm events and tidal events, and sea level rise and associated flooding. These changes can increase nutrient and sediment levels in runoff, creeks, the North East River leading to the Chesapeake Bay and reduce the effectiveness of stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP), retention and infiltration, dams, and conveyance systems.

The State of Maryland recently issued guidance on incorporating climate change considerations to water quantity and quality into the Water Resource Elements (WRE) and related local planning and zoning decisions to ensure consistency with Maryland's water resources program to enable greater resiliency. Resilience in the case of the WRE means providing local plans with an ability to adapt to changing conditions and mitigate or rapidly recover from unanticipated disruptions from climate change, sea level rise, erosion, and subsidence.

The Elk and Northeast Rivers Watershed Association (ENERWA) samples water quality at three locations in Charlestown, following the sampling and analysis protocols developed by the Mid-Atlantic Tributary Assessment Coalition. The tidal water location at Long Point Park has documented a lower grade for water clarity, but higher grade for nitrogen and phosphorus levels. Similarly, the upstream locations at MD 267 at Red Rum and Peddler's Run Creeks, has documented a lower grade for water conductivity, but higher grade for nitrogen and phosphorus levels.

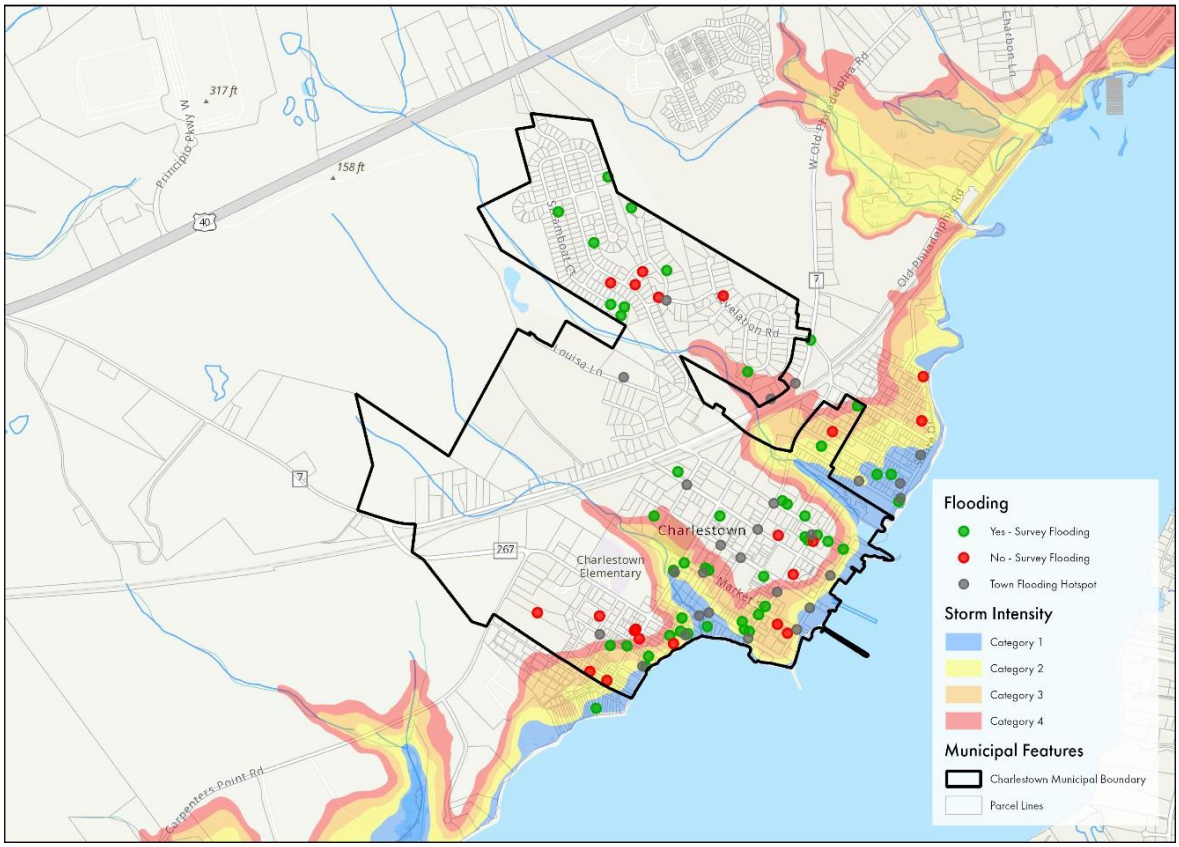
Charlestown completed and adopted a Watershed Master Plan (WMP) in 2024 to respond to current and future threats of recurring stormwater-related flooding along streams and rivers. The plan uses local geography and current and future anticipated development to identify locations most in danger of excessive flooding and threats to human health and safety. The plan is designed to "look ahead" to anticipate the effects of climate change and its impact on the community's sustainability and desired growth.

The Charlestown WMP includes a hydrologic and hydraulic (HCH) analysis that provides the Town of Charlestown with a better understanding of the flood hazards within the identified study area boundary, as well as the Town itself. A combination of stakeholder input and flood simulation modeling was used to develop mitigation strategies using a variety of metrics including but not limited to the degree of flood threat, critical infrastructure impacts, town access, project co-benefits, design/construction requirements, public acceptance, and permitting requirements.

FEMA Flood Insurance Risk Mapping and watershed modeling were used to evaluate storm surge combined with rain events vulnerability. As shown in Map 8, the Red Rum and Peddlers Run creeks are low-lying channels that would flood significantly inland with the highest intensity storms. The simulations, along with Maryland's 2018 Sea Level Projections Guide, were used to identify specific locations for stormwater BMP's that can reduce recurring and future flooding. Analysis using a variety of models and rainfall/flooding simulations indicates the stormwater and coastal flood risks within the

Town and where mitigation strategies may be deployed to reduce risk to human safety and infrastructure. The WPM identified locations and recommended BMPs to minimize stormwater impacts throughout the town, with a focus on the areas where the two creeks meet the North East River.

Map 8. *Storm Surge Vulnerability and Community Flooding Concerns*



(Source: Dewberry Engineers, Inc)

The Watershed Master Plan includes action items to help protect, restore, and manage Charlestown's watershed and its associated natural resources. The strategies are organized around five areas (regulatory changes, restoration efforts, maintenance needs, education efforts, and planning and programmatic changes). The mitigation strategies are designed to help alleviate flooding concerns in the town by providing additional storage capacity for rainfall and helping with incidents of storm surge. In addition, Charlestown utilizes Cecil County's Stormwater Management Ordinance as the basis for their stormwater management requirements, albeit with more stringent requirements on quantity control of runoff.

Goal #3: Improve maintenance and operational capacity to support the stormwater system.

- Conduct regular maintenance of existing drainage and stormwater control systems, and ensure the town has an ongoing operational system in place to provide necessary maintenance for any structural stormwater management practices, including the projects noted in the Watershed Master Plan.
- Prioritize capital improvements for inadequate stormwater drainage systems along Town roads in traditionally underserved neighborhoods, such as Holloway Beach.
- Document nuisance flooding locations capturing depth, extent, and duration, and track damages and repair costs.

Goal #4: Use existing facilities and material to mitigate flooding.

- Design ways for existing open space areas to better address flood hazards, such as holding water and collecting sediment and debris, and in the process, create local demonstration projects.
- Retrofit existing stormwater treatment facilities to capture more runoff and provide additional water retention to reduce flooding.
- Reuse dredge material from the marina for living shoreline projects and determine candidate sites. Since the marina and channel are dredged every 3 to 5 years, it is beneficial to use that material (as allowed by the State) to develop or enhance areas subject to shoreline erosion. The state has several programs (Living Shorelines program, the Waterways Improvement Fund, and the Community Resilience Grant Program) that can be used to fund these efforts.

Goal #5: Update stormwater-related regulations

- Develop regulations for FEMA's 500-year floodplain, MDE's Climate Ready Action Boundaries, or WMP flooding scenarios, and determine the base flood elevations.
- Create incentives for private property owners to install BMP's.

Goal #6: Develop a Stormwater Utility Enterprise Fund

- Develop a stormwater utility enterprise fund and fee to help pay for the ongoing improvement and maintenance of the Town's stormwater management and drainage system. In doing so, the Town should consider the following:
    - Locally the Town of North East approved a stormwater utility in 2019 to help cover costs for stormwater management. Throughout Maryland, other towns such as Rockville, Gaithersburg and Salisbury also have stormwater utilities. The town should consult with these entities for lessons learned on implementation.
    - Many utility programs charge a per parcel fee to cover administrative costs plus a flat fee for single family residential properties and a per equivalent residential unit (ERU) for non-single family residential properties.
    - The fees from the utility could be used to fund watershed and stormwater management efforts including land acquisition, implementation of practices (design and construction), maintenance of the storm drainage system, and educational efforts.
    - An increase in other utility fees may be an option for funding for the stormwater system if a utility is not selected as an option. A rise in water and sewer rates could provide additional revenue that could be directed to projects to address stormwater and flooding concerns.
    - Offer credits that reduce stormwater fees for landowners who voluntarily install runoff control practices. The Town can determine a list of approved practices and the level of credit, as well as ongoing maintenance/inspection requirements to maintain the credit. Examples may include installing a rain barrel, installing pervious pavement, removing impervious surfaces, or planting trees.

Part 3. Implementation Plan

The successful realization of this comprehensive town plan relies on a strategic and coordinated approach to implementation. Part 3 outlines the key actions, responsible entities, funding mechanisms, and timelines necessary to bring the plan's vision to life. By integrating policies, infrastructure projects, and community initiatives, the town can ensure sustainable growth, economic vitality, and an enhanced quality of life for residents. Clear benchmarks and periodic reviews will help track progress and adapt to evolving needs, ensuring that development aligns with long-term goals.

Given the limited scope of the Charlestown's sources of regular revenue, the most difficult implementation aspect may well be funding the projects. Any town basically has ten options to secure funds for major capital projects. They are:

1. Increase property tax rate and/or assessments increase,
2. Grow the tax base with new development and growing valuations,
3. Secure grants with low local match requirements,
4. Borrow at nominal interest rate with possible loan forgiveness,
5. Enact, increase, and improve collection of service and user fees,
6. Enact new taxes, preferably avoiding impacting current residents,
7. Reduce current services, staffing, contractor, and other recurring expenses,
8. Pay off existing debt which frees up the previous debt payment,
9. Sell unused assets such as vacant land, and/or
10. Sell and lease back public facilities.

Choosing which implementation actions and its funding option is the role of the Town's elected officials, staff, and consultants and should be reflected in a capital improvement program (CIP).

The Implementation Plan is shown as Table 5 on the following pages .

	TABLE 5. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN					
Element	**Goal**	**Action**	**Policy/Code**	**Operational**	**Capital Project**	**Lead Official**
Land Use & Development Regulations	GOAL # 1 Promote compatible and efficient land use that preserves the historic qualities of "old town" Charlestown while encouraging infill and redevelopment to position Charlestown as a place for commerce, recreation, and tourism.	Review the boundaries of the Charlestown Historic District, define what are the most significant structures, properties, and areas and update the zoning to help preserve them.	x			Planning Commission
		Expand allowable housing types (with conditions) with the Historic District and other zones so that residential and mixed-use redevelopment and infill opportunities are viable in the Town center.	x			
			x			
		Expand allowable housing types in lower-density residential areas, specifically for those parcels south/east of MD 7 that are adjacent / walkable to the town center.	x			
		Review State Law and update Town codes to remain consistent.	x			
		Refine development standards to allow for moderate density residential development. This may include adjustments such as smaller lot sizes, higher coverage rates, and smaller setbacks, etc.	x			
		Establish appropriate design standards that will facilitate housing and commercial development.	x			
	GOAL #2 Increase allowable density west of MD 7 with natural resource protection conditions.	Encourage cluster development to minimize environmental impacts.	x			Planning Commission
	GOAL #3 Promote development that diversifies the tax base and provides economic opportunity.	Allow for limited community-scale commercial development along MD 7	x			Planning Commission
		Encourage development of a small commercial main street along lower Market Street and portions of Water Street. Frontage standards should be used to encourage lively street activity and height limitations enacted to preserve the viewshed to the North East River.	x			Planning Commission

	TABLE 5. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN					
Element	**Goal**	**Action**	**Policy/Code**	**Operational**	**Capital Project**	**Lead Official**
Land Use & Development Regulations	GOAL # 4 Update the zoning code to reflect modern and flexible code drafting practices.	Implement a table of permitted uses to simplify the zoning code and provide convenience for the public and prospective developers as to permissible uses in each zone.	x			Planning Commission
		Establish authority for planned unit development overlays on parcels (or groups of parcels to be subdivided) which are greater than 10 acres. This flexible zoning tool allows developers of large parcels to provide a mix of housing types and greater densities in exchange for specific benefits to the town such as environmental conservation or recreational facilities.	x			Planning Commission
	GOAL # 5 Preserve open space and protect environmental resources	Establish authority requiring natural resource protection to ensure the town's goals of flood management, resiliency, and public safety are being met.	x			Planning Commission
		Update the zoning code to prohibit mining, quarrying, and mineral resource extraction in Charlestown.	x		x	Planning Commission

Element	Goal	Action	Policy/Code	Operational	Capital Project	Lead Official
Municipal Growth	Goal #1 Consider extending the municipal growth area to include the existing unincorporated communities of Holloway Beach and Charlestown Manor.		x			Town Commission
	Goal #2 Consider extending the municipal boundary north from Cool Springs Road to US 40 for limited purposes.		x			Town Commission
	Goal #3 Establish a resilient greenbelt around Charlestown.				x	Town Administrator
Housing	GOAL #1 Allow for a range of housing densities, types, and sizes to provide residential options for residents of all ages and incomes.	Expand housing types permitted in low-density residential and refine development standards to allow smaller lot sizes, higher coverage, smaller setbacks, etc. to promote a diversity of housing options.	x			Planning Commission
		Update the zoning code to allow for modular and manufactured housing per State Law and accessory dwelling units (ADUs).	x			Planning Commission
		Proactively seek out partnerships with non-profit housing developers to evaluate opportunities for new senior and workforce-accessible housing.			x	Town Administrator
	GOAL #2 Balance historic preservation while encouraging compatible residential and mixed-use development in old town.	Review the boundaries of the Charlestown Historic District, define what are the significant structures, properties, and areas and update the zoning code accordingly.	x			Historic District Commission/ Planning Commission
		Expand housing types permitted within the historic district so that residential and mixed-use redevelopment and infill opportunities are viable in the town center.	x			Planning Commission
		Enact reasonable standards related to design, density, and historic preservation to ensure compatibility among existing historic properties and new development.	x			Planning Commission

Element	Goal	Action	Policy/Code	Operational	Capital Project	Lead Official
	GOAL #3 Promote revitalization of vacant, underutilized and abandoned properties in Charlestown and immediately adjacent communities.	Encourage community outreach and partnerships for housing preservation such as Habitat for Humanity and Volunteers for America.		x		Town Administrator
		Seek state funding for grants to support weatherization and other "healthy homes" initiatives for lower-income property owners.		x		Town Administrator
		Seek state funding through the façade improvement program.		x		Town Administrator
Transpor-tation	GOAL #1 Maintain roads and other assets in a state of good repair.	The town should conduct an asset condition inventory for its roads, bridges, culverts, parking lots, and pathways. Understanding the present condition of assets is important to proper budgeting for proactive maintenance and repair, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, when necessary.		x		Public Works Director
		The town should establish a routine cycle of maintenance based on the inventory outcomes and future risks related to storm surge and poor drainage.		x		Public Works Director
		Ensure all roads are constructed according to Town standards.	x			Public Works Director
	GOAL #2 Improve non-vehicular mobility	Selectively add and improve sidewalks.		x		Public Works Director
		Add natural surface trails and footbridges to improve waterfront connectivity.			x	Public Works Director
	GOAL #3 Manage access and improve safety along MD 7	Advocate for low-cost safety measures such as edge and centerline rumble strips, guardrails, and raised pavement markings along MD7 between Wells Camp Road and Baltimore Street.	x			Town Commission
		At either end of MD 267, the town should advocate for study of roundabouts, signalized crosswalks, or other street feature to slow traffic as it comes through town. This would also provide a gateway	x			Town Commission

Element	Goal	Action	Policy/Code	Operational	Capital Project	Lead Official
	GOAL #3 Manage access and improve safety along MD 7 (continued)	feature marking arrival in Charlestown.				
		Limit the number of access points to new development via MD 7 by requiring connections between subdivisions.	x			Planning Commission
		If Cool Springs or an adjacent property is further developed, the town should advocate the connection to US 40 be completed as a condition of such development. At present there is a gap of approximately 400' between the northern end of Cool Spring Road and US 40; this gap is a function of property that could not be purchased by the developer of Cool Springs when the subdivision was first constructed.	x			Planning Commission
		The Town should monitor further development of the Charlestown Crossing subdivision. At present, the only access to Charlestown Crossing is via US 40. Even though Charlestown Crossing is not within the municipal limits of Charlestown, the Town should consider whether, and if so under what conditions, it would support extension of Charlestown Crossing Boulevard to MD 7. Such conditions may include the MD 7 safety improvements described above.	x			Planning Commission
Community Services & Facilities	GOAL #1 Establish a Capital Improvement Program and Identify Revenues to Support its Implementation				x	Town Commission
	GOAL #2 Improve energy resilience of the power supply and distribution network.			x		Town Administrator
	GOAL #3 Actively pursue broadband internet access for Charlestown.			x		Town Administrator
	GOAL #4 Coordinate emergency response plans and preparedness efforts for a unified approach with the County Emergency Services.			x		Town Administrator

Element	Goal	Action	Policy/Code	Operational	Capital Project	Lead Official
Water Resources	GOAL #1 Preserve and protect existing water supply to meet infill development demand	Identify water source options to maintain sustainable supply to the Town.		x		Public Works Director
		Complete water system master plan to identify improvements needed to support potential growth. A review of existing facilities and infrastructure can help to determine if the system is capable of handling increased flows.		x		Planning Commission
		Coordinate with Maryland's Intended Use Plan, and investigate capital improvement funding from various sources.		x		Public Works Director
	GOAL #2 Maintain the sewerage system in good repair.	Perform inflow and infiltration analysis to identify maintenance needs of the sewer system.		x		Public Works Director
		Assess and upgrade wastewater facilities for climate resilience.			x	Public Works Director
		Implement flood protection measures for wastewater infrastructure.			x	Public Works Director
	GOAL #3 Improve maintenance and operational capacity to support the stormwater system.	Conduct regular maintenance of existing drainage and stormwater control systems, and ensure the town has an ongoing operational system in place to provide necessary maintenance for any structural stormwater management practices, including the projects noted in the Watershed Master Plan.		x		Public Works Director
		Prioritize capital improvements for inadequate stormwater drainage systems along Town roads in traditionally underserved neighborhoods, such as Holloway Beach.		x		Public Works Director
		Document nuisance flooding locations capturing depth, extent, and duration, and track damages and repair costs.		x		Public Works Director
		Design ways for existing open space areas to better address flood hazards, such as holding water and collecting sediment and debris, and in the process, create local demonstration projects.			x	Public Works Director

	GOAL #4 Use existing facilities and material to mitigate flooding	Retrofit existing stormwater treatment facilities to capture more runoff and provide additional water retention to reduce flooding.			x	Public Works Director
		Reuse dredge material from the marina for living shoreline projects and determine candidate sites. Since the marina and channel are dredged every 3 to 5 years, it is beneficial to use that material (as allowed by the State) to develop or enhance areas subject to shoreline erosion. The state has several programs (Living Shorelines program, the Waterways Improvement Fund, and the Community Resilience Grant Program) that can be used to fund these efforts.			x	Public Works Director
	GOAL #5 Update stormwater-related regulations	Develop regulations for FEMA's 500-year floodplain, MDE's Climate Ready Action Boundaries, or WMP flooding scenarios, and determine the base flood elevations	x			Planning Commission
		Create incentives for private property owners to install BMP's	x			Planning Commission
	GOAL #6 Develop a Stormwater Utility Enterprise Fund	Develop a stormwater utility enterprise fund and fee to help pay for the ongoing improvement and maintenance of the Town's stormwater management and drainage system.	x			Town Commission