



### **Hospitality Industry Economy**

Queen Anne's County's rich natural resources and colonial history provide the backbone for the hospitality industry, a major contributor to the County's economy. The County boasts a well developed system of parks, trails, and waterways that make it a year round destination for outdoor enthusiasts. Historic and cultural attractions include artisan festivals and shows, tours of historic homes, and museums that showcase the rural lifestyle and the Chesapeake Bay.

The County has become a popular destination for weddings and other special events as well as a destination for group tours. The hospitality industry is concentrated mainly in the areas of Kent Island and the Kent Narrows along the US 50/301 corridor where the majority of the County's accommodations, retail centers, and dining establishments are located. The Chesapeake Exploration Center, in Chester, serves as the main visitor information center for the County. This facility is also home to the Museum of Chesapeake Life, featuring an interactive exhibit entitled "Our Chesapeake Legacy" that showcases the natural and cultural heritage of the Eastern Shore.

### **Section 6.2 Vision, Overarching Goals & Guiding Principles**

The visions of Article 66B relevant to business development and tourism are briefly described as follows:

- **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.
- **Planning Areas (formerly known as Growth Areas)** – Growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to these centers or strategically selected new centers.
- **Infrastructure** – Growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sustainable manner.
- **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.
- **Environmental Protection** – Land and water resources, including the Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Bays, are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems and living resources.
- **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.



### Section 6.2.1 Overarching Goals - Business Development & Tourism Vision

The **Theme** for the Economic Development & Tourism Element is to create a balance between the need for job creation and expansion of the tax base to support County residents and the responsibility for protecting the natural environment. This **theme** is supported by several overarching goals.

#### Overarching goals:

- *Preserve and support traditional economic development.*
  - *Existing industries and businesses.*
  - *Agriculture and natural resource based industries such as maritime, forestry, hunting and fishing.*
- *Create business/technology parks.*
  - *Focus business growth and expansion efforts on targeted business sectors that complement the existing business base, such as, but not limited to, technology based industries.*
  - *Establish policies and programs for business recruitment.*
- *Develop a 10-year economic development & tourism strategy.*
  - *Serve as a regional business advocate.*
  - *Enhance awareness of economic development opportunities.*
  - *Create a quality database of economic development and tourism information.*
  - *Promote a growing hospitality industry.*
  - *Support the expansion of telecommunication infrastructure and enhance telecommuting opportunities.*
- *Commit to providing an educated workforce.*
  - *Create business opportunities that offer career tracking and sustainable employment.*

The **VISION** is that Life in Queen Anne's County will offer a variety of opportunities for family living, business development and employment with an economic balance between residential and non-residential land uses.

- *Economic prosperity will be achieved through a mix of commercial, industrial, maritime, agricultural and tourism endeavors, each undertaken with sensitivity to the natural environment.*
- *The high quality of life expected by residents will be realized through attracting and retaining businesses that encourage agriculture, seafood and maritime industries, tourism and outdoor sports, small businesses and high-tech enterprises.*
- *Our rural character will be maintained by directing housing and business growth to existing communities allowing the preservation of agriculture, trees, parks, open space and environmentally sensitive and natural areas consistent with other Plan Elements.*