Town Council
AGENDA

Monday, March 16, 2026 - 4:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

4:30 PM Workshop: Code Revisions.

Chapters 9 through 15.

5:30 PM: Call to Order by President Abbatiello.

Closed Session Statement from March 2, 2026 meeting.

Opening remarks and Pledge of Allegiance by Rev. Davis.

Approval of Minutes.

Minutes from the March 2, 2026 Audit Review meeting.

Minutes from the March 2, 2026 Regular Meeting.

Minutes from the March 2, 2026 Closed Session.

Municipal Official Items.

Items by Mayor Cook.

Items by Town Manager

Public Assembly Event: Sign Wave Rally/No Kings - March 28, 2026

Public Assembly Event: Easter Bunny Egg Hunt - April 4, 2026

Public Assembly Event: Delmarva Pride Festival - June 13, 2026.

Matt Provencher to present Disc Golf in Easton.

Approval of Pleasants Construction, Inc. Storm Drain Lining proposal for S. Washington Street at Papermill.

Items by Town Attorney.

Request to set Public Hearing for Comprehensive Plan Adoption or Modification..

Review of Invoices.

Invoices from February 1, 2026 to February 28, 2026 totaling $1,410,526.16.

Public Participation/Comments.

Committee Reports by Members of the Council

Items by Members of the Council:

Adjournment.

The public can access the meeting as follows:
https://www.eastonmd.gov/129/Agendas-Minutes

If you are an Easton Velocity Cable TV subscriber, you can view the meeting live on Channel 98.

Please note: There is a possibility of all or part of the meeting may be held in Closed Session.

CHAPTER 9 – FIRE PREVENTION

Article I. In General

§ 9-1. Intent of Cchapter; Sstandards.
§ 9-2. "Approved" Ddefined.
~~§ 9-3. Authority to enter premises.~~
~~§ 9-4. Inspection of premises.~~
§ 9-35. Power of Iinspector to Oorder Ffire Hhazards Rremoved or rRemedied.
§ 9-46. Compliance with Oorder~~; appeal~~.
§ 9-57. Fire Rrecords.
§ 9-68. Taking Ffire Aapparatus Bbeyond Ttown Llimits.
§ 9-79. Speeding Llimitations – Suspension; Aappeal.
§ 9-810. Resisting or Iimpeding Ffiremen Pprohibited.

Article II. General Precautions Against Fire

§ 9-911. False Aalarms and Ffalse Iinformation.
§ 9-102. Tampering with Ffire Hhydrants.
§ 9-113. Burning Ceombustible Mmaterials; Fire Pits.
§ 9-124. Hot Aashes.
§ 9-135. Stoves and Hheating Ddevices; Iinstallation.
§ 9-146. Storage of Ooily Wwaste and Rrags.
§ 9-157. Accumulation of Rrubbish.
§ 9-168. Obstruction of Eexits.
§ 9-179. Closing Ffire-Ddoors and Wwindows.
§ 9-18~~20~~. Storage of Mmatches.
§ 9-19~~21~~. Bonfires.

Article III. Dry Cleaning Establishments

§ 9-202. Requirements for Ooperation and Mmaintenance.

Article IV. Explosives, Firearms & Similar Devices

§ 9-213. Definitions.
§ 9-224. Manufacturing Pprohibited.
§ 9-235. Discharge of Ffireworks, Ffirearms, Bbows, and Ssimilar Ddevices Pprohibited.
§ 9-246. Storage of Eexplosives.
§ 9-257. Transportation of Eexplosives – Ppublic Ceonveyances.
§ 9-268. Same – Regulation of Vvehicles.
§ 9-279. Discharge of Eexplosives.

Article V. Flammable Liquids

§ 9-2830. Hazardous Hheating and Llighting Aappliances.
§ 9-2931. Restrictions on Sstorage and Uuse.
~~§ 9-32. Appeal.~~
§ 9-303. Extinguishers Rrequired.
§ 9-314. Smoking Pprohibited.

Article VI. Nitrocellulose Motion Picture Film
§ 9-325. Storage of Ffilm.
§ 9-336. Smoking Pprohibited.

Article VII. Oil Burning Equipment
§ 9-347. Definitions.
§ 9-358. Permit Rrequired.
§ 9-36. Certificate of Approval for Oil Burning Equipment.
§ 9-3740. Fuel Ooil.
§ 9-3841. Use on Nnon-Aautomatic Bburner Llimited.
§ 9-3942. Gravity Ffeed to Bburner.
§ 9-403. Pressure Ttank Ffeed.
§ 9-414. Installation of uUnderground Ttanks.
§ 9-425. Installation of Ttanks Iinside Bbuildings.
§ 9-46. Reserved.
§ 9-437. Tank Vvents.
§ 9-448. Tank Ffill and Ooverflow pipes.
§ 9-459. Oil Ggauging.
§ 9-4650. Oil Ppumps.
§ 9-4751. Piping.
§ 9-4852. Valves.
§ 9-4953. Preheating of Ooil.
§ 9-504. Oil Bburner Ccontrols.
§ 9-515. Electric Wwiring and Eequipment.
§ 9-526. Installation of Bburners.
§ 9-537. Modification of Rrequirements in Uunusual Ccircumstances.

Article VIII. Garages
§ 9-54. Garages in General.
§ 9-558. Basement Ggarages – Ventilation.
§ 9-569. Repair Wwork.
§ 9-5760. Cleaning with Fflammable Lliquids.
§ 9-5861. Gasoline Sstorage.
§ 9-5962. Handling of Ggasoline and Ooils.
§ 9-603. Extinguishers Rrequired.
§ 9-614. Garage Mmaintenance.

~~**Article IX. Shopping Centers**~~
~~§ 9-65. Identification of Rear Entrances.~~

Article IX. Security Lock Boxes
§ 9-6222. Key Lock Box System.

Article XI. Maryland State Fire Prevention Code
§ 9-635. Maryland State Fire Prevention Code Applicable to Single Family and Two Family Dwellings.

§ 9-646. New Construction.
§ 9-657. Existing Dwelling.
§ 9-668. Maintenance.
§ 9-679. Enforcement.

Article I. In General

Section 9-1. Intent of Cchapter; Sstandards.
The intent of this chapter is to safeguard and restrict the storage, handling and use of dangerous and hazardous materials to a reasonable degree with respect to injury to persons and destruction of property. Installation, construction and safeguards shall be provided in a standard modern and approved manner. ~~Compliance with the Standards of the American Insurance Association (1956 Edition), shall be prima facie evidence of such approved manner. The town clerk shall maintain a public file of the Standards of the American Insurance Association (1956 Edition), which shall be deemed as requirements to this chapter only insofar as they can be applied to each particular installation for which a permit is required.~~ (Ordinance 519 aka E-34, effective 5/7/1967)

Section 9-2. "Approved" Ddefined.
"Approved" when applied to materials, types of construction and appliances, means acceptable to the building inspector by reason of having been tested and examined by him or by some recognized testing laboratory and found to be properly safeguarded against fire hazard. (Ordinance 519 aka E-34, effective 5/7/1967)

~~**Section 9-3. Authority to enter premises.**~~
~~The chief of the fire department or any member of the fire department designated by him as an inspector may at all reasonable times enter any building or premises for the purpose of making any inspection which under the provisions of this chapter he or they may deem necessary to be made. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)~~

~~**Section 9-4. Inspection of premises.**~~
~~It shall be the duty of the chief of the fire department to inspect or cause to be inspected by fire department officers or members, as often as may be necessary, but not less than twice a year, all buildings, premises and thoroughfares, for the purpose of ascertaining and causing to be corrected any conditions liable to cause fire, or any violations of the provisions or intent of any ordinance affecting the fire hazard. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)~~

Section 9-35. Power of iInspector to Oorder Ffire Hhazards Rremoved or Rremedied.
Whenever ~~any officer or member of the fire department~~the Code Official of the Town of Easton shall find in any building or upon any premises or other place, combustible or explosive matter or dangerous accumulation of rubbish or unnecessary accumulation of waste paper, boxes, shavings or any highly flammable materials, which is so situated as to endanger lives or property, or whenever he shall find obstructions to or on fire escapes, stairs, passageways, doors or windows, liable to interfere with the operation of the fire department or egress of occupants in case of fire, the Code Official~~he~~ shall order the same to be removed or remedied. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-~~4~~6. Compliance with O~~o~~rder.~~; appeal~~.
Such order as provided in section 9-~~3~~5 shall forthwith be complied with by the owner or occupant of such premises or buildings, ~~subject to appeal within twenty-four hours to the fire board, whose decision shall be final.~~ Any owner or occupant failing to comply with such order ~~within ten days after said appeal shall have been determined, or if no appeal is taken, then~~ within ten days after the service of the said order, shall be ~~liable to a penalty~~guilty of a municipal infraction provided in this Code. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-~~5~~7. Fire R~~r~~ecords.
The ~~c~~Chief of the F~~f~~ire D~~d~~epartment shall keep a record of all fires and of all facts concerning the same, including statistics as to the extent of such fires and damage caused thereby. ~~Such record shall be made daily from the reports made by the inspectors under the provisions of this chapter.~~ All such records shall be public. (Ordinance 519 aka E-34, effective 5/7/1967)

Section 9-~~6~~8. Taking ~~f~~Fire A~~a~~pparatus B~~b~~eyond T~~t~~own L~~l~~imits
None of the fire-~~-~~fighting equipment belonging to the T~~t~~own shall be removed from within the legal boundaries of the T~~t~~own for any purpose other than for ~~fires~~ emergency responses~~in places having a standard water system for fighting fires~~, without specific permission having been granted to the F~~f~~ire C~~e~~hief or to the first assistant chief by the M~~m~~ayor or the acting mayor, or by two members of the F~~f~~ire B~~b~~oard; provided, however, that in every case there shall be left at all times within the corporate limits at least two motorized pumpers. (Ordinance 4 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-~~7~~9. Speeding L~~l~~imitations - Suspension; A~~a~~ppeal.
It shall be unlawful to drive any fire-~~-~~fighting equipment on any of the streets of the T~~t~~own in a reckless manner or at a rate of speed in excess of that rate prescribed by State law for emergency vehicles. Drivers operating fire-~~-~~fighting equipment belonging to the T~~t~~own are subject to suspension of the right of such operation, if after having been given the opportunity of a hearing before the F~~f~~ire B~~b~~oard, said B~~b~~oard shall decide by majority vote that the driver so heard is guilty of such violation. Any driver so suspended shall have the right of appeal to the ~~c~~Town Council, whose decision shall be final. (Ordinance 4 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-~~8~~10. Resisting or I~~i~~mpeding F~~f~~ire~~men~~fighters P~~p~~rohibited.
The F~~f~~ire D~~d~~epartment shall have the management of all fires and no person shall resist, impede, obstruct or interfere with the movement of the C~~e~~hief of the F~~f~~ire D~~d~~epartment or his or her assistants or any ~~firemen~~ firefighters in the execution of their duty, and no person shall refuse to obey any order lawfully given by any officer of the F~~f~~ire D~~d~~epartment at any fire. (Ordinance 519 aka E-34, effective 5/7/1967)

Article II. General P~~p~~recautions A~~a~~gainst F~~f~~ire

Section 9-~~9~~11. False A~~a~~larms and F~~f~~alse I~~i~~nformation.
It shall be unlawful for any person knowingly to g~~f~~ive a false alarm of fire in the T~~t~~own, or knowingly to proclaim that any fire is extinguished or out when such is not the case. (Ordinance 519 aka E-34, effective 5/7/1967)

Section. 9-102. Tampering with Ffire Hhydrants.
It shall be unlawful for any person other than a member of an organized fire department or any employee of the Ttown or of the Easton Utilities Commission to open or operate any of the fire hydrants in the Ttown, and such opening or operation shall be allowable only in line of official duty~~, and with standard wrench for such purpose~~. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-113. Burning Ceombustible Mmaterials; Fire Pits.
(A).~~(a)~~ It shall be unlawful for any person to burn trash, leaves, lumber, straw, grass or other combustible material within the Town limits except in a furnace, stove or built-in incinerator. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

(B~~b~~). Outdoor fire pits shall be permitted on private property provided the following terms and conditions are adhered to:

(i~~1~~) There is no applicable burn ban in effect.

(ii~~2~~) The fire pit is made of steel, brick or masonry material.

(iii~~3~~) An officer or fire fighter called to the property is confident that the fire is or will stay contained to a fire pit. No fire of ~~of~~ any kind is allowed if it constitutes a hazard or a danger to public safety.

(iv~~4~~) The fire pit is constantly attended to by a responsible adult. A fire extinguisher, dirt, sand, water barrel, or a garden hose is readily available.

(v~~5~~) The material being burned is natural, i.e. wood or kindling. The burning of household rubbish, construction debris, grass clippings and/or leaves is prohibited.

(vi~~6~~) The fire pit is not closer than 15 feet in all directions from any structure or combustible object.

(vii~~7~~) The flames are not higher than two (2) feet.

(viii~~8~~) The responsible adult ensures that the fire will be completely extinguished at the end of use.

Section 9-124. Hot Aashes.
It shall be unlawful for any person to place hot ashes in any wooden box, barrel or container or on any wooden floor within the corporate limits of the Ttown. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-135. Stoves and Hheating Ddevices; Iinstallation.
Stoves, ranges, furnaces and other heating devices and their connecting pipes shall be so installed as to comply with usually accepted rules of safety as interpreted by the ~~b~~Building ~~i~~Inspector or by the ~~e~~Chief of the Ff~~f~~ire Dd~~e~~partment; provided, however, that no such heating device, connecting flue, or smoke pipe shall be installed or erected in violation of any requirement or rule contained in the building code of the Ttown. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-146. Storage of Ooily Wwaste and Rrags.
It shall be unlawful for any person to keep or permit to be kept any oil waste or oily rags unless such waste or rags shall be kept in a metal can with a self-closing cover which can is standing on metal legs. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-157. Accumulation of Rrubbish.
It shall be unlawful for any person to permit on his premises any dangerous accumulation of rubbish, waste paper, boxes, shavings or other flammable or combustible material which is so situated as to endanger person and property. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-168. Obstruction of Eexits.
It shall be unlawful for any person to permit on his premises any condition which shall obstruct or restrict the free use of fire escapes, stairs, passageways, doors or windows for egress of occupants in case of fire. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-179. Closing Ffire-Ddoors and Wwindows.
Fire doors, fire shutters and fire windows on exterior openings, when not required to be open, shall be closed by the occupant or occupants of the building having the use or control of them. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-1820. Storage of Mmatches.
Matches stored in mercantile establishments shall be in covered, metal-lined bins. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

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Section 9-1921. Bonfires.
No person shall make or assist in making any bonfire in or upon any public street or place within the Ttown without the written permission of the Ffire Cchief. (1967 Code by Ordinance 519 aka E-34 effective 5/7/1967)

Article III. Dry Cleaning Establishments.

Section 9-202. Requirements for Ooperation and Mmaintenance.
The operation and maintenance of dry-cleaning establishments shall conform to the published requirements of the National Fire Protection Agency Code ("NFPA") 1, NFPA 30, NFPA 32, and NFPA 101 codes. ~~American Insurance Association (1956 Edition). A copy of these requirements shall be on public file in the town clerk's office.~~ (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

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Article IV. Explosives, Firearms and Similar Devices.

Section 9-213. ~~Definitions~~General Provisions.
"Explosive" or "explosives" and "Fireworks", whenever used in this chapter, shall have the meanings provided in NFPA 1 and shall be governed by the provisions contained in NFPA 1, NFPA 495, NFPA 1123, NFPA 1124, NFPA 1126, and NFPA 400. ~~shall mean any chemical compound, mixture, or device, the primary or common purpose of which is to function by explosion. The term "explosive" includes all materials classified as Class A, Class B or Class C~~

~~explosives by Interstate Commerce Commission Regulations, and includes, but is not limited to, dynamite, blackpowder, pellet powders, initiating explosives, blasting caps, electric blasting caps, safety fuse, fuse igniters, fuse lighters, squibs, cordeau detonant fuse, instantaneous fuse, igniter cord and igniters, small arms ammunition, small arms ammunition primers, smokeless propellant, cartridges for propellant-actuated power devices and cartridges for industrial guns, and pyrotechnics.~~

~~"Fireworks", wherever used in this chapter shall mean and include any combustible or explosive composition, or any substance or combination of substances, or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or an audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration or detonation, and shall include blank cartridges, toy pistols, toy cannons, toy canes or toy guns in which explosives are used, they type of balloons which require fire underneath to propel the same, firecrackers, torpedoes, skyrockets, Roman candles, Daygo bombs, sparklers, or other devices of like construction and any devices containing any explosive or flammable compound or any tablets or other devices containing any explosive substance, except that the term "fireworks" shall not include auto flares, paper caps containing not in excess of an average of twenty-five hundredths of a grain of explosive content per cap manufactured in accordance with the Interstate Commerce Commission Regulations for packing and shipping as provided therein, and toy pistols, toy canes, toy guns, or other devices for use of such caps, the sale and use of which shall be permitted at all times.~~

"Magazine" shall mean any building or structure approved for the storage of explosives.

(1967 Code by Ordinance 519 aka E-34 effective 5/7/1967)

Section 9-224. Manufacturing P~~p~~rohibited.
The manufacture of explosives and fireworks is prohibited. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-235. Discharge of F~~f~~ireworks, F~~f~~irearms, B~~b~~ows, and S~~s~~imilar D~~d~~evices P~~p~~rohibited.
It shall be unlawful for any unauthorized person to shoot or discharge any gun, pistol, sling shot, squib, rocket, firecracker or mixture of gunpowder or other fireworks, or to use any bow, crossbow, or similar device within the corporate limits of the T~~t~~own. (Ordinance 129 effective 3/23/1987, historical reference 5)

Section 9-246. Storage of E~~e~~xplosives.
(a) Magazines containing explosives shall be located at distances from neighboring buildings, highways and railroad in conformity with the American Quantity and Distance Table.

(b) Blasting caps or detonators of any kind shall not be placed or kept in the same magazine with other explosives.

(c) Magazines shall be kept locked except when being inspected or when explosives are being placed therein or removed there from.

(d) Magazines shall be kept clean and free from grit, rubbish and empty packages.

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(Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

(e) Magazines shall be made of fireproof material or wood covered with sheet iron and shall be conspicuously marked "Magazine - Explosives." (Ordinance 519 aka E-34 effective 5/7/1967)

Section 9-257. Transportation of Eexplosives - Ppublic Ceonveyances.
Explosives shall not be transported or carried on and in any conveyance carrying passengers for hire. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-268. Same - Regulation of Vvehicles.
Every vehicle, while carrying explosives, shall display the word "EXPLOSIVES" painted on or attached to the rear and sides of such vehicle in letters at least four (4) inches in height.

(a) No person in charge of a vehicle containing such explosive shall smoke in, near, or upon such vehicle; drive, load or unload the vehicle while intoxicated; drive load or unload such vehicle in careless or reckless manner.

(b) No person shall place or carry, or cause to be placed or carried, in the bed or body of any vehicle containing such explosives, any metal tool or other piece of metal or any matches.

(c) No person shall place or carry or cause to be placed or carried, in any vehicle containing explosives, any exploders, detonators, blasting caps or other similar explosive material.

(Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-279. Discharge of Eexplosives.
No person shall discharge any explosives, except construction devices such as explosive rivets and explosive-driven pins or studs. (Ordinance 519 aka E-34 effective 5/7/1967)

Article V. Flammable Lliquids.

Section 9-2830. Hazardous Hheating and Llighting Aappliances.
The Cehief of the Ffire Ddepartment may prohibit the sale or use of any heating or lighting appliance using flammable liquids, which has not been tested by Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., or some other competent authority, and found to be properly safeguarded against fire hazard. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-2931. Restrictions on Sstorage and Uuse.
Provisions pertaining to flammable liquids shall be governed by NFPA 1 and NFPA 30~~The chief of the fire department shall prohibit, except as may otherwise specifically be provided herein, the storage or use of any flammable and/or explosive liquid, material or substance whenever, in his opinion, the storage or use of same shall constitute or create a menace, actual or potential, to the safety of the lives or property of the citizens of the town. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)~~

~~**Section 9-32. Appeal**~~

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~~Appeal from any decision of the chief of the fire department in connection with this article may be made to the fire board. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)~~

Section 9-3~~0~~3. Extinguishers R~~r~~equired.
Where flammable liquids are kept, used or handled, a quantity of loose non-combustible absorbents, such as dry sand or ashes, together with pails or scoops, and chemical extinguishers or other extinguishing devices or material shall be provided in such kind or quantities as may be directed by the Cehief of the F~~f~~ire D~~d~~epartment. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-3~~1~~4. Smoking P~~p~~rohibited.
Smoking or the carrying of matches or other smoking material in rooms where flammable liquids are handled is prohibited. Suitable "NO SMOKING" signs shall be displayed. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941).

Article VI. Nitrocellulose M~~m~~otion P~~p~~icture F~~f~~ilm

Section 9-3~~2~~5. Storage of F~~f~~ilm.
The storage or keeping on hand of nitrocellulose motion picture film, and the enclosures or booths for the operation of projectors for such film, shall be based upon compliance with NFPA 1 and NFPA 40. ~~the regulations of the American Insurance Association (1956 Edition).~~ (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-3~~3~~6. Smoking P~~p~~rohibited.
Smoking or the carrying of a lighted pipe, cigar, cigarette or other form of smoking material in rooms where film is stored or handled is prohibited. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Article VII. Oil B~~b~~urning E~~e~~quipment

Section 9-3~~4~~7. ~~Definitions.~~General Provisions
For the purpose of this article:

"Oil burners" ~~shall mean any device designed to burn fuel oil having a flash point of 100 Deg. F. or higher, as determined by the Tag Closed Tester in accordance with the method of test adopted by the American Society for Testing Materials (A.S.T.M. Designation D56-21), and having a fuel tank or container with a capacity of more than five gallons connected thereto.~~and

"Oil burning equipment" shall ~~include oil burners and all tanks, piping, pumps, control devices and accessories connected to the burners.~~have the definitions as provided in NFPA 1 and shall be governed by the provisions contained in NFPA 1, NFPA 31, and the International Mechanical Code 2021 ("IMC") as adopted by the Town in § 6-16 of the Town Code.

(Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-3~~5~~8. Permit R~~r~~equired.

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to install any oil burning equipment unless they shall have been issued on oil burner installation permit for each separate installation. (Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Sec. 9-369. Certificate of Aapproval for Ooil Bburning Eequipment.

(a) Application for certificates of approval shall be made in writing to the Ttown in such form and detail as it shall prescribe.

(b) No certificate of approval shall be issued for any kind of oil burning equipment which has not been tested and examined by the Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., and bears their label of approval.

(c) Certificates of approval may be revoked by the Ttown, after a hearing, for willful violation of the provisions of this article over which the holder of the certificate of approval has direct control.

(Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-3740. Fuel Ooil.
The grade of fuel oil used with any burner shall be one which tests and experience have shown to be suitable for use with that burner. The oil shall have a flash point not less than 100 Def. F. determined as specified in section 9-37 and shall be free from acid, grit, and fibrous or other foreign matter likely to clog or injure the burners or valves. (Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-3841. Use on Nnon-Aautomatic Bburner Llimited.
Oil burners which are not equipped with automatic means for preventing abnormal discharge of oil at the burner, shall not be installed or operated in any location where a competent attendant will not be constantly on duty in the room where the burner is located while the burner is in operation. (Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-3942. Gravity Ffeed to Bburner.
(a) When to be used: Gravity feed shall be used only with burners arranged to prevent abnormal discharge of oil at the burner by automatic means specifically approved for the burner with which it is used.

(b) Supply tanks: Gravity supply tanks shall not exceed 275 gallons individual capacity. Where more than one gravity supply tank is used, such tanks shall be connected to the feed pipe leading to the burner in such a way that only one tank can discharge its contents at a time.

(c) Level valve: Where oil is supplied to the burner by gravity and a constant level device is not incorporated in the burner assembly or in an auxiliary tank used in connection with an automatic pump, an approved constant level device shall be installed in the oil feed line at the gravity tank or as close thereto as practicable. The vent opening of such constant level device shall be connected by piping or tubing to the gravity tank vent pipe.

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(Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-403. Pressure Ttank Ffeed.
Pressure tank feed shall be used only with burners arranged to prevent abnormal discharge of oil at the burner by automatic means specifically approved for the burner with which it is used. Pressure tanks shall not exceed a capacity of sixty gallons and shall not be operated at pressures exceeding fifty pounds per square inch. They shall be equipped with a reliable pressure gauge, and with an automatic relief valve piped to discharge outside of buildings. (Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-414. Installation of Uunderground Ttanks.
(a) Underground tanks shall be so buried as to have a cover of earth not less than 2 feet thick or shall be covered with not less than 1 foot of earth on top of which shall be placed a slab of reinforced concrete not less than 4 inches thick. The slab shall be set on a firm, well tamped earth foundation and shall extend at least 1 foot beyond the tank in all directions. Where tanks are buried underneath buildings such a concrete slab shall be provided in every instance.

(b) Underground tanks shall be set on a firm foundation and surrounded with soft earth or sand well tamped in place. Where necessary to prevent floating, they shall be securely anchored or weighted.

(Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-425. Installation of Ttanks Iinside Bbuildings.
(a) Oil supply tanks larger than 60 gallons capacity shall not be located in buildings above the lowest story, cellar or basement.

(b) Unenclosed inside storage tanks and auxiliary tanks shall not be located within 4 feet, horizontally, of any fire or flame.

(c) Inside storage and auxiliary tanks shall be securely supported by substantial incombustible supports to prevent settling, sliding or lifting.

(d) Oil supply tanks located inside buildings shall not exceed 275 gallons individual capacity or 550 gallons aggregate capacity (in one building) unless installed in an enclosure or casing constructed as follows:

The walls of the enclosure shall be constructed of reinforced concrete at least 6 inches thick or of brick at least 8 inches thick, and shall be bonded to the floor. The space between the tank and the enclosure shall be completely filled with sand or well tamped earth. Where the floor or other construction immediately above the tank is of fire-resistive construction capable of safely sustaining a load of 150 pounds per square foot, the walls of the enclosure shall be carried to a height not less than 1 foot above the tank and the space filled with sand or well tamped earth to the top; otherwise the enclosure shall have a top of reinforced concrete at least five inches thick or of equivalent construction.

Instead of an enclosure as above described the tank may be encased in reinforced concrete not less than 6 inches in thickness, applied directly to the tank so as to completely eliminate any air space.

(e) In ordinary buildings the nominal gross capacity of tanks shall not exceed 5,000 gallons.

~~**Section 9-46. Reserved.**~~

Section 9-437. Tank Vvents.
(a) Storage tanks shall (except for hydraulic or inert gas systems) be equipped with an open vent or an approved automatically operated vent, arranged to discharge to the open air. Vent openings and vent pipes shall be of ample size to prevent abnormal pressure in the tank during filling but no smaller than 1 inch pipe size.

(b) Vent pipes shall be arranged to drain to the tank. The lower end of the vent pipe shall not extend through the top into the tank for a distance of more than one inch.

(c) Vent pipes shall terminate outside of buildings at a point not less than 2 feet measured vertically or horizontally from any window or other building opening. Outer ends of vent pipes shall be provided with a weather-proof hood. Vent pipes of tanks containing heaters shall be extended to such a height that oil vapors discharging from the vent will be readily diffused without danger of ignition.

(d) Vent pipes shall not be cross-connected with fill pipes or return lines from burners.

(Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-448. Tank Ffill and Ooverflow Ppipes.
(a) Underground tanks and storage tanks inside buildings shall be filled only through fill pipes terminating outside of buildings at a point at least 5 feet from any building opening at the same or lower level. Fill terminals shall be closed tight, when not in use, by a metal cover designed to prevent tampering.

(b) Auxiliary tanks shall be filled by pumping from storage tanks.

(c) Auxiliary tanks other than vacuum tanks shall be equipped with an overflow pipe draining to the storage tank, at least one size larger than the supply pipe.

(d) Overflow pipes of auxiliary gravity tanks shall have no valves or obstructions. Overflow pipes of auxiliary pressure tanks shall be provided with interconnected valves or other means for automatically venting the tank during filling. (Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-459. Oil Ggauging.
(a) All tanks in which a constant oil level is not maintained by an automatic pump shall be equipped with an approved method of determining the oil level.

(b) Test wells shall not be installed inside buildings and where permitted for outside services shall be closed tight, when not in use, by a metal cover designed to prevent tampering.

(c) Gauging devices such as liquid level indicators or signals shall be installed so that oil or vapor will not be discharged into the building from the fuel supply system. (Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-4650. Oil Ppumps.
(a) Oil pumps shall be of a type approved by Underwriters' Laboratory, Inc., secure against leaks, and shall be rigidly fastened in place.

(b) Automatic pumps not an integral part of the burner shall be arranged to stop automatically in case of total breakage of the supply line to the burner. (Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-4751. Piping.
(a) All piping shall be standard full weight wrought iron, steel or brass pipe with standard fittings or approved brass or copper tubing with approved fittings, except that approved flexible metal hose may be used for reducing the effects of jarring and vibration or where rigid connections are impracticable.

(b) Pipe used in the installation of domestic and industrial type burners shall not be smaller than 1/2 inch iron pipe size. Copper or brass tubing shall not be smaller in size than 1/2 inch O.D. for outside tank installations, nor less than 3/8 inch O.D. for inside tank installation. Flexible metal hose shall be installed strictly in accordance with the limitations of its approval.

(c) Piping shall be rigidly secured in place and protected from injury in a workmanlike manner, and where necessary, shall be protected against corrosion. Where practicable, oil piping shall be buried underground or in a concrete floor or placed in a metal-covered pipe trench.

(d) Pipe joints and connections shall be made tight in a workmanlike manner. Unions and tubing fittings shall be approved type. Unions requiring gaskets or packing, and right and left couplings shall not be used in oil lines.

(e) Proper allowance shall be made for expansion, contraction, jarring and vibration. Pipe lines, other than tubing, connected to underground tanks, except fill lines and test wells, shall be provided with double swing joints arranged to permit the tank to settle without impairing the efficiency of the pipe connections.

(f) Openings for pipes through outside walls below the ground level shall be made water tight.

(g) Oil supply lines to burners shall be provided with approved strainers.

(Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-4852. Valves.

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(a) Readily accessible shut-off valves of approved type shall be installed in oil supply lines close to gravity and pressure supply tanks. Shut-off valves of approved type shall be installed on each side of oil strainers which are not a part of the oil burner unit and on the discharge and suction side of oil pumps which pump directly to the burner but which are not a part of the burner unit.

(b) Where a shut-off valve is installed in the discharge line of an oil pump, an approved pressure relief valve shall be connected into the discharge line between the pump and the shut-off valve and arranged to return surplus oil to the storage tank or to by-pass it around the pump.

(c) Control valves shall be provided with stuffing box of liberal size, containing a removable cupped bland designed to compress the packing against the valve stem and arranged so as to facilitate removal. Valves shall be designed to close against the supply, and to prevent withdrawal of stem by continued operation of the handwheel. Packing affected by the oil or by heat shall not be used.

(Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-4953. Preheating of Ooil.
Preheating of oil, where necessary, shall be done by steam, hot water or approved electric heaters. Heaters shall be substantially constructed with all joints made oil tight. Thermometers shall be installed at suitable locations to indicate the temperature of the heated oil. Heaters shall be by-passed or provided with suitable means to prevent abnormal pressure. (Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-504. Oil Bburner Ccontrols.
(a) Oil burning equipment shall be provided with some means for manually stopping the flow of oil to the burner, from a conveniently located point at a safe distance from the burner. With electrically driven equipment this may be accomplished by a switch in the motor supply circuit, placed near the entrance to the room where the burner is located. A quick-closing valve in the oil supply line may also be used.

(b) Automatically operated oil burners used in connection with hot water, steam or warm air heating systems shall be equipped with approved automatic devices to shut down the burner in the event of undue pressure in a steam boiler or overheating within a hot water boiler or warm air furnace.

(c) Automatically operated oil burners used in connection with steam heating systems shall be equipped with approved automatic devices to prevent the operation of the burner at all times when there is not sufficient water in the boiler.

(d) In systems where steam or air is used for atomizing the oil, the equipment shall be so arranged that in case of interruption of the atomizing supply, the oil supply will be immediately shut off.

(Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-5153. Electric Wwiring and Eequipment.
Electric wiring and equipment used in connection with oil burning equipment shall be installed in accordance with the National Electric Code. (Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-526. Installation of Bburners.
(a) Oil burners shall be securely installed in a workmanlike manner, in accordance with the instructions of the manufacturer, by qualified mechanics experienced in making such installations.

(b) All furnaces containing oil burner installation shall be set on a metal, concrete or other approved non-combustible and rigid foundation. Such foundation shall not rest on or be joined to any wood or other combustible material.

(c) Said furnaces shall be so installed as to be separated on all sides by not less than 12 inches of air space from all wood or other combustible material, and furnace and smoke pipe shall be so set as to be at least two feet from overhead joists, and to the under side of said joists shall be fastened a solid asbestos sheet of 1/8 inch thickness extending not less than 12 inches on either side of smoke pipe.

(d) Where oil burners are installed in furnaces or originally designed for solid fuel, the ash door of the furnace shall be removed or bottom ventilation otherwise provided to prevent the accumulation of vapors in the ash pit, unless the burner is of a type which mechanically purges the ash pit.

(e) Boilers and furnaces in which oil burners are installed shall be connected to flues having sufficient draft at all times to assure safe operation of the burner; a suitable draft regulating device shall be installed where necessary to prevent excessive draft. Smoke pipe dampers, if any, shall be such that they cannot close off more than 80 percent of the internal cross section area of the smoke pipe.

(f) Rooms in which oil burners are located shall be provided with adequate ventilation to assure continuous complete combustion of the oil.

(g) Contractors installing industrial oil burning systems shall furnish diagrams showing the main oil lines and controlling valves, one of which shall be posted near the oil burning equipment and another at some point which will be accessible in case of fire at the burners.

(Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-537. Modifications of Rrequirements in Uunusual Ceircumstances.
Where the circumstances or conditions of any particular installation are unusual and such as to render the strict application of this article impracticable, the Ttown may permit such modifications as will provide a substantially equivalent degree of safety. (Ordinance 13 effective 1/1/1941)

Article VIII. Garages.

Section 9-54. Garages in General
Garages shall be governed by the provisions of NFPA 1, NFPA 30, and NFPA 88.

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Section 9-558. Basement Ggarages - Ventilation.
Basements used as public garages shall be continuously ventilated by mechanical ventilating systems so designed as to assure suitable dilution and removal of gasoline vapors and motor exhaust fumes. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-569. Repair Www~~o~~rk.
Carbon and lead burning, welding and other processes involving direct application of flame shall be carried on in the open air not less than ten (10) feet from any building or in a special room separated from the rest of the garage by two (2) hour partitions. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-5760. Cleaning with F~~f~~lammable L~~l~~iquids.
Volatile flammable liquids shall not be used for cleaning purposes in a garage unless in a special closed machine of approved type or in a special room separated from the rest of the garage by two (2) hour partitions. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941.)

Section 9-5861. Gasoline S~~s~~torage.
Exclusive of that in the tanks of vehicles, gasoline shall be kept at a public garage only in underground tanks, in approved safety cans, or in approved portable wheeled tanks not exceeding a capacity of sixty (60) gallons each. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-5962. Handling of Ggasoline and O~~o~~ils.
The tanks of vehicles shall be filled directly through hose from pumps attached to portable tanks or to permanent filling stations connected to underground storage tanks. Gasoline shall not be handled in any open container.

Gasoline and other volatile flammable liquids shall not be allowed to run upon the floor or to fall or pass into the drainage system of the premises. Self-closing metal cans shall be used for all oily waste or wasted oils. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Contents of oil separators or traps or floor drainage systems shall be collected at frequent intervals and removed from the premises. (1967 Code by Ordinance 519 aka E-34 effective 5/7/1967)

Section 9-603. Extinguishers R~~r~~equired.
In every public garage two or more approved chemical fire extinguishers and four or more pails of sand shall be kept convenient for quick use in case of fire. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

Section 9-614. Garage M~~m~~aintenance.
Garages shall be swept frequently and kept clean. (Ordinance 5 effective 1/1/1941)

~~**Article IX. Shopping Centers.**~~

~~**Section 9-65 Identification of Rear Entrances.**~~

~~Any office, business or store located in a shopping center shall, in addition to identifying its front entrance, identify all of its rear entrances by posting a permanent sign on or near each rear entrance. Letters on such signs shall be not less than three (3) inches nor greater than four (4) inches in height. Any sign which may be used to comply with this ordinance shall comply with the requirements of Section 606 of the Easton Zoning Ordinance; provided, however, that such sign placed by the rear entrance of an office, business or store shall not be counted or applied towards the number of signs any such office, business or store may be entitled to have under the Easton Zoning Ordinance. (Ordinance 217 effective 2/10/1992, historical reference 215)~~

Article IX. Security Lock Boxes.

Section 9-6222 Key Lock Box System

(A~~a~~) The following structures shall be equipped with a key lock box at or near the main entrance or such other location required by the Chief of the Easton Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. or his or her designee:

(i~~1~~) Commercial or industrial structures protected by an automatic alarm system or automatic suppression system, or such structures that are secured in a manner that restricts access during an emergency;

(ii~~2~~) Multi-family residential structures that have restricted access through locked doors and have common corridor for access to the living units;

(iii~~3~~) Governmental structures and nursing care facilities.

(B~~b~~) All newly constructed structures which are subject to this section shall have the key lock box installed and operational prior to the issuance of an occupancy permit. All structures in existence on the effective date of this section and subject to this section shall have one year from the effective date of this section to have a key lock box installed and operational.

(C~~c~~) The Fire Chief shall designate the type of key lock box system to be implemented within the Town and shall have the authority to require all structures to use the designated system.

(D~~d~~) The owner or operator of a structure required to have a key lock box shall, at all times, keep a key in the lock box that will allow for access to the structure.

(E~~e~~) The Fire Chief shall be authorized to implement rules and regulations for the use of the lock box system.

(F~~f~~) No Person other than the Fire Chief or his or her designee shall have access to the master key for the lock box system.

(G~~g~~) Any person who owns or operates a structure which is subject to this section who violates the~~re~~ terms hereof shall be guilty of a municipal infraction and shall be subject to the penalties set forth in section 1-8 of the Code for any violation of this section, provided that the minimum fine for a conviction for a violation of this section shall be $100.00. Any person found guilty

shall also be subject to an abatement order or similar remedial order for a court having jurisdiction over the enforcement proceeding. Each day of violation shall constitute a separate offence.

(Ordinance 477, effective 11/3/2004)

Article X~~I~~. Maryland State Fire Prevention Code.

§ 9-6~~35~~. Maryland State Fire Prevention Code Applicable To Single Family and Two-Family Dwellings.
The provisions of the Maryland State Fire Prevention Code, authorized by Maryland Annotated Code Public Safety Article Section 6-206 and as published in the Code of Maryland Regulations Title 29.06.01 et seq., as the same may be from time to time amended, shall apply to all single family and two-family dwellings within the Town. (Ordinance 517 effective 10/7/2007)

§ 9-6~~46~~. New Construction
All single family and two-family dwellings constructed pursuant to a building permit issued after the effective date of this ordinance (October 7, 2007) shall comply with the provisions of the Maryland State Fire Prevention Code, authorized by Maryland Annotated Code Public Safety Article Section 6-201 and as published in the Code of Maryland Regulations Title 29.06.01 et seq., as the same may be from time to time amended. (Ordinance 517 effective 10/7/2007)

§ 9-6~~57~~. Existing Dwelling
Regardless of the time of construction, if an existing single family or two-family dwelling is destroyed or demolished, any replacement dwelling(s) shall conform to the State Fire Prevention Code." (Ordinance 519 effective 12/23/2007)

§ 9-6~~68~~. Maintenance
Any interior automatic fire sprinkler system installed in a single or two-family dwelling in the Town shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the most recent versions of Standard 13D, " Installation of Sprinkler Systems in One and Two-Family Dwellings and Manufactured Homes", as promogulated by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and as modified and adopted by the Maryland State Fire Prevention Code. (Ordinance 517 effective 10/7/2007)

§ 9-6~~79~~. Enforcement
To the extent permitted by law, the provisions of this article may be enforced by either the Town Code Enforcement Official or the State Fire Marshal, or their respective designees. (Ordinance 517 effective 10/7/2007)

CHAPTER 9A – FLOOD PLAIN MANAGEMENT

Not proposed to be updated

CHAPTER 10 FOOD AND FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

Article I Sidewalk Cafes
§ 10-1. Definitions.
§ 10-2. Applicability; Other Town Ordinances.
§ 10-3. Permit.
§ 10-4. Standards.
§ 10-5. Hour of Oeperation.
§ 10-6. Alcoholic Beverages.
§ 10-7. Furniture.
§ 10-8. Insurance and Indemnification.
§ 10-9. Prohibitions.
§ 10-10. Violation.

Article I Sidewalk Cafes

Section 10-1 Definitions

For the purpose of this chapter:

(A1) "Sidewalk Café" means any area situated on a public sidewalk where food, refreshments, and alcoholic beverages are sold by a restaurant, delicatessen, ice cream shop or coffee shop (hereinafter "operating establishments") for public consumption at tables or counters located on the public sidewalk fronting the operating establishment. Sidewalk cafe and operating establishment shall also include areas on public sidewalks in front of retail and service establishments even if food, refreshments, or beverages are not sold at the establishment.

(B2) "Street fixtures" means a physical object located within a public sidewalk. Examples of street fixtures are streetlights, trees and any surrounding landscaped area, planters, benches, signs and parking meters.

(3C) "Sidewalk" shall include the adjoining parking and/or street if the street is temporarily closed.

(Ordinance 474 effective 9/30/2004, Ordinance 765 effective 9/5/2021)

Section 10-2. Applicability; Other Town Ordinances.

Sidewalk cafes shall operate only as authorized pursuant to this chapter. The provisions of this chapter shall apply to sidewalk cafes even if the adjacent street is temporarily closed. This chapter does not apply to food and beverage concessions permitted by the Town in conjunction with festivals and other public events. The provisions of Section 18-10 of the Town Code pertaining to the consumption of alcoholic beverages in public places shall not apply to sidewalk cafes which are authorized by this chapter. (Ordinance 474 effective 9/30/2004)

Section 10-3 Permit.

(A1) An application for a sidewalk café permit shall be made to the ~~Town Clerk on forms provided by the Town Clerk~~Planning & Zoning Department on forms provided. The application

shall include a scale drawing depicting the sidewalk abutting the business, the location of all street fixtures and the locations of the proposed tables and chairs. The application shall be made by the operating establishment.

(B~~2~~) A sidewalk café permit shall be for one year from July 1st in each year until the following June 30th. The holder of the permit shall pay an annual fee as established by resolution of the Town Council. The annual fee shall be paid with the original permit application and with any request for renewal of the permit. Until such time as a separate fee is established by the Town Council, the annual fee shall be two hundred dollars.

(C~~3~~) A sidewalk café permit shall specify the location of tables and chairs, whether or not tables and chairs must be removed at the close of business and other conditions consistent with this chapter to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

(Ordinance 474 effective 9/30/2004)

Section 10-4 Standards

(A~~1~~) No part of a sidewalk café area shall encroach upon any part of the sidewalk frontage of any adjacent premises, right-of way or alley, except that a sidewalk cafe area may encroach upon the frontage of adjacent premises if the express written consent of the owner of the adjacent premises is provided to the Town, and the Town approves the request.

(B~~2~~) A Sidewalk Café must leave a minimum six-foot unobstructed passageway for pedestrians along the length of the café unless the adjacent parking and/or street is temporarily closed. The passageway shall be measured fro~~o~~m the outer edge of the chair or table to the inner edge of any street fixture on the sidewalk in front of the operating establishment. For operating establishments adjacent to sidewalks less than ten feet wide at the location of the proposed sidewalk café, the Town, with the consent of the Town Engineer, may reduce the obstructed passageway to not less than that required by federal or state law or regulation or four feet in width, whichever is greater.

(C~~3~~) A sidewalk café shall comply with all building, health, safety, fire, zoning and environmental standards applicable to such uses.

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(D~~4~~) If the adjacent street and/or parking is temporarily closed, the sidewalk cafe area may be expanded onto additional sections of the sidewalk and the adjacent street/parking as approved by the Town.

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(Ordinance 474 effective 9/30/2004, Ordinance 765 effective 9/5/2021)

Section 10-5 Hour of O~~o~~peration.

Service at a sidewalk café shall end by 11:00 PM. The café area shall be cleared of all other furniture (except any furniture approved to remain in the café area overnight pursuant to the permit), debris and obstructions to the sidewalk no later than midnight. (Ordinance 474 effective 9/30/2004)

Section 10-6 Alcoholic Beverages.
An operating establishment shall not sell, serve, or allow consumption of alcoholic beverages on its sidewalk café without obtaining the required license from the ~~alcoholic beverage control~~ Talbot County Liquor ~~b~~Board. Alcoholic beverages shall be served on the sidewalk café only in conjunction with the service of food. Notwithstanding any ~~contrary of~~ different hours of operation in its alcoholic beverage license, an operating establishment shall not sell, serve of allow consumption of alcoholic beverages on its sidewalk café after the sidewalk café's closing time. (Ordinance 474 effective 9/30/2004)

Section 10-7 Furniture.
Except as explicitly stated in the permit, all sidewalk café furniture shall be readily moveable and shall be stored indoors when not in use. No permanent structures or improvements shall be installed on any sidewalk or other public property. (Ordinance 474 effective 9/30/2004)

Section 10-8 Insurance and Indemnification.
The holder of a sidewalk café permit shall fully insure, indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Town of Easton and in their capacity as such, the officers, agents, and employees thereof from and against any and all claims and damages in any w~~h~~ay arising out of or through the acts or omissions of the permit holder or its employees in the construction, operation, maintenance, use, placement or condition of the sidewalk café. An applicant for sidewalk café shall provide proof of such insurance before a permit may be issued or renewed under this chapter. (Ordinance 474 effective 9/30/2004)

Section 10-9 Prohibitions.
The following are prohibited in the café area: cooking of food; unshielded trash or refuse storage; advertisements (exclusive of menus intended to be read from café); outdoor entertainment, music speakers, or public address systems without an approved Public Assembly Permit. (Ordinance 474 effective 9/30/2004; Ordinance 765 effective 9/5/2021)

Section 10-10 Violations.
The provisions of this chapter shall be enforced by the Town's code enforcement officials. A person who continues to violate this chapter after written request to take corrective action is guilty of a municipal infraction ~~and shall be fined one hundred dollars for the first offense and two hundred dollars for each subsequent offense plus costs~~. In addition, the Town Council may revoke or suspend a permit issued pursuant to this chapter upon a second or subsequent infraction under this section in any twelve ~~-~~month period. (Ordinance 474 effective 9/30/2004)

CHAPTER 11 – MINIMUM PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

§ 11-1. Chapter Title.
§ 11-2. General References.

Article I. Property Maintenance Code
§ 11-3. Adoption of Standards.
§ 11-4. State of Maryland – Minimum Livability Code.
§ 11-5. Incorporation by Reference.
§ 11-6. Administrative Waivers.
§ 11-7. Reserved.

Article II. ~~Garbage and~~ Refuse and Recycling.
§ 11-8. Definitions.
§ 11-9. Receptacles Rrequired – Specifications.
§ 11-10. ~~Papers, magazines or other light materials~~Ineligible Household Waste.
§ 11-11. Receptacle – Sanitary Ceondition.
§ 11-12. Precollection Ppractices.
§ 11-13. Accumulation of Rrefuse and/or Rrecyclable Mmaterials.
§ 11-14. Depositing in Ppublic Pplaces Pprohibited.
§ 11-15. Burning Mmatter Lliable to Cease Nnauseating Ssmoke or Vvapor.
§ 11-16. Periodic Iinspection of Ppremises.
§ 11-17. ~~Garbage, Refuse, and Recyclable Materials – Administrative History~~. Unlawful Activities
§ 11-18. ~~Unlawful activities~~. Violations and Penalties
§ 11-19. ~~Violations and penalties~~. Garbage, Refuse, and Recyclable Materials – Administrative History

Article III. Refuse and Recycling Disposal Charges
§ 11-20. Refuse Ddisposal Ffee Iimposed.
§ 11-21. Refuse Ddisposal Ffee for Ssingle Ffamily Pproperties.
§ 11-22. Refuse Ddisposal Ffee for Mmulti-Ffamily Pproperties.
§ 11-23. Refuse Ddisposal Ffee for Ceommercial and Iindustrial Pproperties.
§ 11-24. Adjustments to Rrefuse Ddisposal Ffee for Ceommercial and Iindustrial Pproperties.
§ 11-25. Recycling.
§ 11-26. Bulk Refuse Fee.
§ 11-276. Manner of Ceollection; Ppersonal Ooobligation of Ppproperty Ooowner; Uunpaid Rrefuse Ddisposal Ffee or Rrecycling Ffee to Ceonstitute Lliien on Rreal Pproperty.
§ 11-287. Appeal from Ddetermination of the Town Engineer ~~or the designee of the Town Manager~~.
§ 11-298. Refuse Disposal Charges and Recycling Charges – Administrative History.

Article I. Property Maintenance Code

§ 11-3. Adoption of Standards.

The International Property Maintenance Code, as published by the International Code Council, is hereby adopted as the minimum standard for property maintenance in the Town of Easton, Maryland. (Ordinance 628 effective October 7th 2013, historical reference 301, 371, 404, 449 and 526)

§ 11-4. State of Maryland – Minimum Livability Code.
The Code of Maryland Regulations, COMAR 05.02.03.03(2) states that the provisions of the Minimum Livability Code found therein do not apply to housing located in a political subdivision that has adopted a local housing code containing provisions that substantially conform to the provisions of COMAR 05.02.03; and

The Minimum Property Maintenance Code set forth herein substantially conforms to those provisions, and it is therefore intended that the adoption of this code shall have the effect of making COMAR 05.02.03 inapplicable in the Town of Easton, except to the extent that the application of those regulations would be more restrictive than the provisions of this code. (Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008)

§ 11-5 Incorporation by Reference.

§ 11-5.1 International Property Maintenance Code 2012~~09~~.
The International Property Maintenance Code 2012~~09~~ second printing, with the modifications found in §11-5.2 of this article ***and including the State modifications provided in COMAR 09.12.54***, are incorporated by reference. (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 19, 58, 81, 153, 301, 371, 404, 449 and 526)

§ 11-5.2 International Property Maintenance Code 2012~~09~~ Amendments.
Amendments for the International Property Maintenance Code 2012~~09~~ are as follows: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010)

§ 11-5.2.1 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Delete Section 101.1 Title and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 58, 301, 404, 449 and 526)

> 101.1 Title. The International Property Maintenance Code 2012~~09~~ shall be known and may be cited as the Town of Easton, Property Maintenance Code. It is referenced within as this code.

§ 11-5.2.2 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Add Section 101.1 Additional Scope. (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010)

> 101.2.1 Additional Scope. In addition to any fire safety requirements contained in the International Property Maintenance Code, the State fire safety laws, Public Safety Article, Title 9, Annotated Code of Maryland, and the State Fire Prevention Code, COMAR 29.06.01, may contain additional fire safety requirements. The State Fire Prevention Code is enforced by the State Fire Marshal or authorized fire official.

§ 11-5.2.3 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.

Delete Section 102.3 Application of other codes and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 526)

102.3 Application of other codes. Application of other codes for repairs, additions or alterations to a structure, or changes of occupancy, shall be done in accordance with the procedures and provisions of the International Building Code, International Residential Code and the International Existing Buildings Code. Nothing in this code shall be construed to cancel, modify or set aside any provision of the Town of Easton Building Code and or Zoning Ordinance.

§ 11-5.2.4 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Delete Section 102.6 Historic Buildings and replace with the following: (Ordinance 634 effective, historical reference 526 and 569)

102.6 Historic structures. Except as provided in 102.6.1 below, the provisions of this code shall not be mandatory for existing structures designated as historic when such structures are judged by the code official to be safe and in the public interest of health, safety and welfare.

102.6.1 Exteriors. The provisions regarding exteriors including, but not limited to Chapter 1 and Chapter 3 specifically sections 108, 109, 301, 302, 303, 304, 306, 307.2, 308, and 309 shall apply to all historical property, to maintain the historic value of the structure and premise.

102.6.2 Maryland Building Rehabilitation Code. The provisions of the Maryland Building Rehabilitation Code (MBRC) shall apply to all historic structures that undergo repair, alteration, addition, change of occupancy, and/or relocation, as those terms are defined in §12-1001 of the Public Safety Article of the Maryland Annotated Code and the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 05.16.01 or corresponding future provisions thereof.

102.6.3 Historic District Commission. All notices and orders, that require building applications and permits, will require the property owner to appear before the Historic District Commission.

§ 11-5.2.5 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Delete Section 103 Department of Property Maintenance Inspection, and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 58, 301, 404, 449 and 526)

SECTION 103 OFFICE OF CODE ENFORCEMENT

103.1 General. The office of Code Enforcement shall be responsible for the enforcement of the provisions of this code. The official in charge thereof shall be known as the code official.

103.2 Liability. The Code Enforcement official, officers or employees charged with the enforcement of this code, while acting for the jurisdiction, shall not thereby be rendered liable personally, and is hereby relieved from all personal liability for any damage accruing to

persons or property as a result of an act required or permitted in the discharge of official duties.

103.3 Fees. The fees for activities and services performed by the office of Code Enforcement in carrying out its responsibilities under this code shall be in accordance with the adopted Schedule of Fees as established by the Town Council, which may be revised from time to time by resolution of the Town Council.

§ 11-5.2.6 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Delete Section 104.6 Department records and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 526)

104.6 Office records. The code official shall keep official records of all business and activities of the office specified in the provisions of this code. Such records shall be retained in the official records for the period required for retention of public record.

§ 11-5.2.7 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Delete Section 106.3 Prosecution of violation and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 526)

106.3 Prosecution of violation. Any person failing to comply with a notice of violation or order served in accordance with Section 107 shall be deemed guilty of a municipal infraction and shall be subjected to the penalties set forth in Section 1-8 of the Easton Town Code, and the violation shall be deemed a strict liability offense. If the notice of violation is not complied with, the code official shall institute the appropriate proceeding at law or in equity to restrain, correct or abate such violation, or to require the removal or termination of the unlawful occupancy of the structure in violation of the provisions of this code or of the order or direction made pursuant thereto. Any action taken by the Town of Easton on such premises shall be charged against the real estate upon which the structure is located and shall be a lien upon such real estate collectible in the same manner in which real estate taxes are collected, or the Town may collect it by such other action at law as they deem appropriate.

§ 11-5.2.8 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Delete Section 106.4 Violation penalties and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 19, 58, 301, 404, 449 and 526)

106.4 Violation penalties. Any person, who shall violate a provision of this code, or fail to comply therewith, or with any of the requirements thereof, shall be guilty of a municipal infraction and shall be subjected to the penalties set forth in Section 1-8 of the Easton Town Code. Each day that a violation continues after due notice has been served shall be deemed a separate offense.

§ 11-5.2.9 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Delete Section 106.5 Abatement of violation and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 526)

106.5 Abatement of violation. The imposition of the penalties herein prescribed shall not preclude the Easton Town Council from instituting appropriate action to restrain, correct or abate a violation, or to prevent illegal occupancy of a building, structure or premises, or to stop an illegal act, conduct, business or utilization of the building, structure or premises.

§ 11-5.2.10 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Delete Section 108.2 Closing of vacant structures and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010)

108.2 Closing of vacant structures. If the structure is vacant and unfit for human habitation and occupancy, and is not in danger of structural collapse, the code official is authorized to post a placard of condemnation on the premises and order the structure closed up so as not to be an attractive nuisance. Upon failure of the owner to close up the premises within the time specified in the order, the code official shall cause the premises to be closed and secured through any available public agency or by contract or arrangement by private persons and the cost thereof shall be charged against the real estate upon which the structure is located and shall be a lien upon such real estate and collectible in the same manner in which real estate taxes are collected, or the Town may collect it by such other action at law as they deem appropriate.

§ 11-5.2.11 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Delete Section 109.3 Closing streets and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 526)

109.3 Closing streets. When necessary for public safety, the office of Code Enforcement shall temporarily close structures and close, or order the Easton Police Department to close, sidewalks, streets, public ways and places adjacent to unsafe structures, and prohibit the same from being utilized.

§ 11-5.2.12 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Delete Section 109.5 Cost of emergency repairs and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 526)

109.5 Costs of emergency repairs. Costs incurred in the performance of emergency work shall be paid by the Town of Easton. The cost of such emergency repairs shall be charged against the real estate upon which the structure is located and shall be a lien upon such real estate collectible in the same manner in which real estate taxes are collected, or the Town may collect it by such other action at law as they deem appropriate.

§ 11-5.2.13 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Delete Section 110.3 Failure to comply and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010)

110.3 Failure to comply. If the owner of a premises fails to comply with a demolition order within the time prescribed, the code official shall cause the structure to be demolished and removed, either through an available public agency or by contract or arrangement with private

persons, and the cost of such demolition and removal shall be charged against the real estate upon which the structure is located and shall be a lien upon such real estate collectible in the same manner in which real estate taxes are collected, or the Town may collect it by such other action at law as they deem appropriate.

§ 11-5.2.14 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Delete Section 110.4 Salvaged materials. (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 526)

§ 11-5.2.15 Chapter 1. Scope and Administration.
Delete Section 111 Means of Appeals. (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 526)

§ 11-5.2.16 Chapter 2. Definitions.
Delete Section 201.3 Terms defined in other codes and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 526)

201.3 Terms defined in other codes. Where terms are not defined in this code, and are defined in the International; Building, Residential, Existing Building, Plumbing, Fuel Gas, Mechanical Codes or the National Electrical Code, such terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them as stated in those codes.

§ 11-5.2.17 Chapter 2. Definitions.
Amend Section 202 General definitions and add the following definitions: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 58, 404, 449 and 526)

CELLAR. That portion of a building that is partly or completely below grade, that is not suitable as living space and is usually used for storage

MULTI-FAMILY DWELLING. Multi-family dwelling is any dwelling or part thereof containing three or more dwelling units.

WELFARE. Concerns welfare of the community, or an individual. Any violation or condition that could adversely affect property values or the quality of living in the community.

§ 11-5.2.18 Chapter 3. General Regulations.
Add Section 301.2.1 Transfer of responsibility: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 58 and 526)

301.2.1 Transfer of responsibility. A contract effective as between owner and operator, operator and occupant or owner and occupant, with regard to compliance hereunder shall not relieve any party of their direct responsibility under this code.

§ 11-5.2.19 Chapter 3. General Regulations.
Delete Section 302.2 Grading and drainage and its exception and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 404, 449 and 526)

302.2 Grading and drainage. All premises shall be graded and maintained to prevent the erosion of soil and to prevent the accumulation of water thereon, or within any structure located thereon.

Exception: Approved retention areas and reservoirs.

§ 11-5.2.20 Chapter 3. General Regulations.
Delete Section 302.4 Weeds and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 81, 153 and 526)

302.4 Weeds. All premises, exterior property and any space abutting the same between the property line and the curb or edge of pavement, shall be maintained free from weeds or plant growth in excess of 10 inches in height. All invasive plants are prohibited. Weeds shall be defined as all grasses, annual plants and vegetation, other than trees or shrubs.

Exceptions:

1. **Cultivated Flower Beds**, provided they are properly ~~tended~~maintained and kept free of invasive plants and weeds.

2. **Vegetable Gardens**, provided they are properly ~~tended~~maintained and kept free of invasive plants and weeds.

3. **Forests**, provided they are maintained free of invasive plants.

4. **Meadows**, including naturalized areas, pollinator gardens, native plant gardens, and rain gardens provided that: ~~provided they are mowed around the perimeter in accordance with 302.4. and~~

~~5. 1/3 is mowed in strips annually to prevent woody growth.~~
a. No portion extends into a public right-of-way;
b. The area is set back at least ten (10) feet from any adjacent property line;
c. The area is clearly delineated from maintained lawn by edging, fencing, a mowing strip, or other visible border; and
d. The area is maintained free of invasive plants and prohibited noxious weeds.

~~6~~5. **Agricultural Fields**, ~~-~~provided they are seasonally harvested ~~seasonally~~and maintained with a mowed perimeter. Any portion located

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between the property line and the curb or edge of pavement shall be kept mowed in accordance with this section.

67. **Shoreline Buffers**, ~~provided they are properly tended~~including those regulated under the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area provisions of State law, shall remain in their natural state and shall not be cleared, cut, mowed, or otherwise disturbed except as expressly authorized by applicable State or federal law. Nothing in this section shall be construed to permit or authorize the disturbance, clearing, or modification of any regulated shoreline buffer.

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302.4.1 Weeds maintenance; duty to remove. The owner or agent shall have the duty to control such weeds and eliminate such invasive plants.

302.4.2 Failure to remove weeds. In the event that any owner or agent having charge of a property shall fail, for a period of five (5) days after written notice, to keep the premises clear of weeds and invasive plants, the office of Code Enforcement shall have authority to have the condition remedied by; any duly authorized employee of the Town of Easton or contractor hired by the Town of Easton and shall be authorized to enter upon the property in violation and control such weeds and eliminate such invasive plants thereon. Any cost or expense incurred by the town shall be paid by the owner or agent responsible for the property, or shall constitute a lien upon the real property where the work is done collectible in the same manner in which real estate taxes are collected, or the Town may collect it by such other action at law as they deem appropriate.

§ 11-5.2.21 Chapter 3. General Regulations.
Delete Section 302.8 Motor vehicles and its exception and replace with the following:
(Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 404, 449 and 526)

302.8 Motor vehicles. Except as provided for in other regulations, not more than one currently unregistered or uninspected motor vehicle shall be parked, kept or stored on any premises. All unregistered vehicles must be covered with a car cover designed for such purposes and must be parked on an improved surface; i.e. pavement, gravel, or concrete driveway or parking area.

Exceptions: Automotive Factories, Automotive Sales and Motor Vehicle Repair Garages provided the motor vehicles are parked on an improved surface; i.e. pavement, gravel, or concrete driveway or parking area.

302.8.1 Major overhaul, bodywork and painting. No vehicles shall at any time be in a state of major overhaul (disassembly and or disrepair), or in the process of body work (being stripped and or dismantled). Panting of vehicles is prohibited unless conducted inside an approved spray booth.

Exception: A vehicle of any type is permitted to undergo major overhaul, including body work, provided that such work is performed inside a structure or similarly enclosed area designed and approved for such purpose.

§ 11-5.2.22 Chapter 3. General Regulations.
Delete Section 304.3 Premises identification and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 449 and 526)

304.3 Premises identification. Buildings shall have approved address numbers placed in a position to be plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting the property. These numbers shall contrast with their background. Address numbers shall be arabic numerals or alphabet letters. Numbers shall be a minimum of 3 inches high with a minimum stroke width of 0.375 inch. Rear entrance identification shall be provided on all non-residential structures.

§ 11-5.2.23 Chapter 3. General Regulations.
Delete Section 304.6 Exterior walls and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 58, 404, 449 and 526)

304.6 Exterior walls. All exterior walls shall be free from holes, breaks, loose or rotting materials; and maintained (clean), weatherproof and properly surface coated to prevent deterioration.

§ 11-5.2.24 Chapter 3. General Regulations.
Move Section 304.12 Handrails and guards to a new section as follows: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010)

307.2 Loads and Maintenance. Every handrail and guard shall be firmly fastened and capable of supporting the loads as prescribed in the International Building and Residential Codes and shall be maintained in good condition.

§ 11-5.2.25 Chapter 3. General Regulations.
Delete 304.13 Windows, skylight and door frames and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 58, 404, 449 and 526)

304.13 Window, skylight, door and their frames. Every window, skylight, door and their frame(s) shall be kept in sound condition, good repair and weather tight.

§ 11-5.2.26 Chapter 3. General Regulations.
Delete Section 304.14 Insect screens and its exception and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 449 and 526)

304.14 Insect screens. During the period from April 1 to November 1, every door, window and other outside opening required for ventilation of habitable rooms, food preparation areas, food service areas or any areas where products to be included or utilized in food for human consumption are processed, manufactured, packaged or stored shall be supplied with approved tightly fitting screens of not less than 16 mesh per inch (16 mesh per 25 mm), and

every screen door used for insect control shall have a self-closing device in good working condition.

Exception: Screens shall not be required where other approved means, such as air curtains or insect repellent fans, are employed.

§ 11-5.2.27 Chapter 3. General Regulations.
Delete Section 305.6 Interior doors and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 526)

305.6 Interior doors. Every interior door shall fit reasonably well within its frame and shall be capable of being opened and closed by being properly and securely attached to jambs, headers or tracks as intended by the manufacturer of the attachment hardware. Keyed locksets are prohibited on sleeping spaces within any single dwelling unit, for one and two families unless approved by the office of Code Enforcement as a Rooming House or Unit.

§ 11-5.2.28 Chapter 3. General Regulations.
Add Section 305.7 Utilities: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 58 and 526)

305.7 Utilities. No owner, operator or occupant shall cause any service equipment or utility which is required by this code to be removed, shut off or discontinued for any occupied structure, except for such temporary interruption as may be necessary while actual repairs or alterations are in progress, or during temporary emergencies.

§ 11-5.2.29 Chapter 3. General Regulations.
Delete Section 307.1 Handrails and guardrails and its exception and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010)

307.1 General. Every exterior and interior stairway having more than three risers shall have a handrail on one side of the stairway and every open portion of a stair, landing, balcony, porch, deck, ramp or other walking surface which is more than 30 inches (762 mm) above the floor or grade below shall have guards. Handrails shall not be less than 34 inches (762 mm) high or more than 38 inches (1067 mm) high measured vertically above the nosing of the tread or above the finished floor of the landing or walking surfaces. Guards shall not be less than 36 inches (762 mm) high above the floor of the landing, balcony, porch, deck, or ramp or other walking surface.

Exception: Guards shall not be required where exempted by the adopted building code.

§ 11-5.2.30 Chapter 3. General Regulations.
Delete Section 308.2.2 Refrigerators and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 526)

308.2.2 Refrigerators. Refrigerators and similar equipment not in operation shall not be discarded or abandoned on premises. Disposal of this equipment shall include the removal of the doors prior to placing such item for disposal outside the structure.

§ 11-5.2.31 Chapter 4. Light, Ventilation and Occupancy Limitations.
Delete Section 402.1 Habitable spaces and its exception and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 58 and 526)

402.1 Habitable spaces. Every habitable space shall have at least one window of approved size facing directly to the outdoors or to a court. The minimum total glazed area for every habitable space shall be 8 percent of the floor area of such room. Wherever walls or other portions of a structure face a window of any room and such obstructions are located less than 3 feet (914 mm) from the window and extend to a level above that of the ceiling of the room, such window shall not be deemed to face directly to the outdoors nor to a court and shall not be included as contributing to the required minimum total window area for the room.

Exception 1: Where natural light for rooms or spaces without exterior glazing areas is provided through an adjoining room, the unobstructed opening to the adjoining room shall be at least 8 percent of the floor area of the interior room or space, but not less than 25 square feet (2.33 m2). The exterior glazing area shall be based on the total floor area being served.

Exception 2: A skylight-type window shall be considered as a window for natural light for rooms or spaces other than living, sleeping or cooking.

§ 11-5.2.32 Chapter 4. Light, Ventilation and Occupancy Limitations.
Delete Section 403.1 Habitable spaces and its exception and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 58 and 526)

403.1 Habitable spaces, common halls and stairways. Every habitable space shall have at least one open able window. The total open able area of the window in every room shall be equal to at least 45 percent of the minimum glazed area required in Section 402.1. Common halls and stairways in every two-family dwelling, multi-family dwelling and rooming house shall be adequately ventilated.

Exception: Where rooms and spaces without openings to the outdoors are ventilated through an adjoining room, the unobstructed opening to the adjoining room shall be at least 8 percent of the floor area of the interior room or space, but not less than 25 square feet (2.33 m2). The ventilation openings to the outdoors shall be based on a total floor area being ventilated.

§ 11-5.2.33 Chapter 4. Light, Ventilation and Occupancy Limitations.
Delete Section 404.4 Bedroom and living room requirements and its subsections 404.4.1 thru 404.4.5 and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 58 and 526)

404.4 Habitable space requirements. Every habitable space shall comply with the requirements of Sections 404.4.1 through 404.4.6.

404.4.1 Habitable area. Every dwelling unit shall contain at least 190 square feet of habitable floor area for the first occupant, and at least 100 square feet of additional habitable floor area for each additional occupant.

404.4.2 Habitable living and sleeping spaces. Every living space shall contain at least 120 square feet (11.2 m2) and every sleeping space shall contain at least 70 square feet and every space occupied for sleeping purposes by more than one occupant shall contain at least 50 square feet of floor area for each occupant.

404.4.3 Access from sleeping spaces. Sleeping spaces shall not constitute the only means of access to other sleeping spaces or other habitable spaces and shall not serve as the only means of egress from other habitable spaces.

Exception: Units that contain fewer than two sleeping spaces.

404.4.4 Water closet accessibility. Every sleeping space shall have access to at least one water closet and one lavatory without passing through another sleeping space. Every sleeping space in a dwelling unit shall have access to at least one water closet and lavatory located in the same story as the sleeping spaces or an adjacent story without going outside the dwelling.

404.4.5 Prohibited occupancy. Eating, cooking and non-habitable spaces shall not be used for sleeping purposes. Cellars and basements shall not be used for habitable space.

Exception: No basement shall be used for habitable space unless:

1. The floors and walls are substantially watertight.

2. The total light, ventilation and occupancy limitations are in accordance with this chapter. 3. The required minimum window area of every habitable space is entirely above the grade of the ground adjoining such window area, not including stairwells or access ways.

404.4.6 Other requirements. Habitable space shall comply with the applicable provisions of this code including, but not limited to, the light, ventilation, room area, ceiling height and room width requirements of this chapter; the plumbing facilities and water-heating facilities requirements of Chapter 5; the heating facilities and electrical receptacle requirements of Chapter 6; and the smoke detector and emergency escape requirements of Chapter 7.

§ 11-5.2.34 Chapter 4. Light, Ventilation and Occupancy Limitations.
Add Section 404.5.1 Notice of maximum occupancy: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 58 and 526)

404.5.1 Notice of maximum occupancy. Every owner or operator shall advise the occupant in writing either by insertion in the lease between the parties or otherwise of the maximum number of occupants permitted in the occupied premises under the provisions herein.

§ 11-5.2.35 Chapter 4. Light, Ventilation and Occupancy Limitations.
Add Section 404.7.1 Cooking equipment: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 58 and 526)

404.7.1 Cooking equipment. Every piece of cooking equipment shall be so constructed and installed that it will function safely and effectively and shall be maintained in sound working condition.

§ 11-5.2.36 Chapter 4. Light, Ventilation and Occupancy Limitations.
Add Section 404.7.2 Portable cooking equipment: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 58 and 526)

404.7.2 Portable cooking equipment. Portable cooking equipment employing flame and cooking equipment using gasoline or kerosene as fuel for cooking are prohibited.

§ 11-5.2.37 Chapter 5. Plumbing Facilities and Fixture Requirements.
Add Section 502.1.1 Two family dwellings and subsections 502.1.1.1 thru 502.1.1.3: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 19, 58 and 526)

502.1.1 Two family dwellings. The occupants may share a single water closet, lavatory, bathtub or shower provided:

502.1.1.1 Neither of the two dwelling units contains more than two habitable spaces; however, for the purpose of this subsection, a kitchen with not more than 60 square feet of floor area is not counted as a habitable space.

502.1.1.2 The habitable space of each of such dwelling units aggregates not more than 250 square feet.

502.1.1.3 The water closet, lavatory and bathtub or shower are within a room, separate from the habitable rooms, which affords privacy and which is accessible to the occupants of each dwelling unit without going through the dwelling unit of another person or outside the dwelling.

§ 11-5.2.38 Chapter 5. Plumbing Facilities and Fixture Requirements.
Delete Section 502.2 Rooming houses and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 19 and 526)

502.2 Rooming houses. At least one water closet, lavatory and bathtub or shower shall be supplied for each four rooming units and or each six occupants. In a rooming house in which rooms are let only to males, flush urinals may be substituted in accordance with the International Plumbing Code. No such facilities located in a basement or cellar shall count in

computing the number of facilities required by this subsection except when approved by the Building Inspection Division.

§ 11-5.2.39 Chapter 6. Mechanical and Electrical Requirements.
Delete Section 602.2 Residential occupancies and its exception and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 526)

602.2 Residential occupancies. Dwellings shall be provided with heating facilities capable of maintaining a room temperature of 70°F in all habitable rooms, bathrooms and toilet rooms based on the winter outdoor design temperature of 10°F. Cooking appliances shall not be used to provide space heating to meet the requirements of this section. Gas heaters and portable heating equipment employing a flame and heating equipment using gasoline or kerosene do not meet the standards of this chapter and are prohibited.

§ 11-5.2.40 Chapter 6. Mechanical and Electrical Requirements.
Delete Section 602.3 Heat supply and its exceptions and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 301, 404, 449 and 526)

602.3 Heat supply. Every owner and operator of any building who rents, leases or lets one or more dwelling units or sleeping units on terms, either expressed or implied, to furnish heat to the occupants thereof shall supply heat during the period from September 1 to May 1 to maintain a temperature of not less than 70°F in all habitable rooms, bathrooms, and toilet rooms.

Exceptions: When the outdoor temperature is below the winter outdoor design temperature for the locality, maintenance of the minimum room temperature shall not be required provided that the heating system is operating at its full design capacity. The winter outdoor design temperature of 10°F.

§ 11-5.2.41 Chapter 6. Mechanical and Electrical Requirements.
Delete Section 602.4 Occupied work spaces and its exceptions and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 404, 449 and 526)

602.4 Occupiable work spaces. Indoor occupiable work spaces shall be supplied with heat during the period from September 1 to May 1 to maintain a temperature of not less than 70°F during the period the spaces are occupied.

Exceptions:

1. Processing, storage and operation areas that require cooling or special temperature conditions.

2. Areas in which persons are primarily engaged in vigorous physical activities.

§ 11-5.2.42 Chapter 6. Mechanical and Electrical Requirements.
Add Section 605.4

Site lighting: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 371 and 526)

605.4 Site lighting. All exterior sidewalks, walkways, stairs, driveways, parking areas and similar areas shall be illuminated at night to a minimum level of 2 lux (0.2 foot candles) on pavement or other surface area. Tests for proper illumination shall be conducted in accordance with standards established by the Illuminating Engineering Society. This subsection shall not apply to one and two-family dwellings

§ 11-5.2.43 Chapter 7. Fire Safety Requirements.
Delete Section 702.1 General and replace with the following: (Ordinance 628 effective October 7th 2013, historical reference 526 and 569)

702.1 General. A safe, continuous and unobstructed path of travel shall be provided from any point in a building or structure to the public way. Means of egress shall comply with the International Building and Residential Codes except as provided herein.

702.1.1 Stairway. Stairways in one and two family dwellings constructed prior to February 27th 1984, shall be permitted to continue without change, provided they meet all of the following provisions;

1. Stairways shall not be less than 27 inches (914 mm) in clear width
2. The minimum headroom in all parts of the stairway shall not be less than 6 feet 8 inches (2032 mm) measured vertically from the sloped line adjoining the tread nosing or from the floor surface of the landing or platform on that portion of the stairway
3. Vertical rise of the stairway shall not be greater than 12 feet (3658 mm)
4. The maximum riser height shall be 8-1/4 inches (210 mm)
5. The minimum tread depth shall be 9 inches (229 mm)

§ 11-5.2.44 Chapter 7. Fire Safety Requirements.
Delete Section 702.2 Aisles and replace with the following: (Ordinance 569 effective March 22nd 2010, historical reference 526)

702.2 Aisles. The required width of aisles in accordance with the International Building Code shall be unobstructed.

§ 11-5.2.45 Chapter 7. Fire Safety Requirements.
Delete Section 702.4 Emergency Escape Openings and replace with the following: (Ordinance 628 effective October 7th 2013)

702.4 Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings. Required emergency escape and rescue openings shall be maintained in accordance with the International Building and Residential Code. The following exceptions for one and two family dwellings shall be permitted to continue without change.

Exceptions.

1. Openings constructed prior to February 27th 1984 which have not undergone any alteration, renovation or construction project.

2. Basements constructed prior to October 1st 2009 that do not contain sleeping spaces.

3. Basements used only to house mechanical equipment and not exceeding a total floor area of 200 square feet (18.58 m2).

4. Habitable attics constructed prior to March 22nd 2010 that do not contain sleeping spaces.
5. 702.4.1 Replacement Windows. Openings in one and two family dwellings constructed prior to February 27, 1984 shall be subject to the following:

702.4.1.1 Operating style. Replacement windows are permitted to be of the same operating style as the existing window or a style that provides for an equal or greater window opening area than the existing window.

702.4.1.2 Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings. Where windows are required to be emergency escape and rescue openings, replacement windows shall be exempt from the net clear opening dimension obtainable by the normal operation, minimum sill height and window wells, provided the replacement window meets all of the following conditions:

1. The replacement window is the manufacturer's largest standard size window that will fit within the existing frame or existing rough opening; and

2. The minimum net clear opening of the frame provides 5.0 square feet (0.465 m2) on the grade floor and 5.7 square feet (0.530 m2) for all other levels; and

3. The replacement of the window is not part of a change of use or occupancy.

§ 11-5.2.46 Chapter 7. Fire Safety Requirements.
Delete Section 704.1 General and replace with the following: (Ordinance 628 effective October 7th 2013, historical reference 526 and 569)

704.1 General. All systems, devices and equipment to detect a fire, actuate an alarm, or suppress or control a fire or any combination thereof shall be maintained in an operable condition at all times in accordance with the International Building or Residential Codes.

§ 11-5.2.48 Chapter 7. Fire Safety Requirements.
Delete Section 704.2 Smoke alarms and replace with the following: (Ordinance 628 effective October 7th 2013, historical reference 526 and 569)

704.2 Smoke alarms. Single or multiple-station smoke alarms shall be installed and maintained in Groups R-2, R-3, R-4 and in dwellings not regulated in Group R occupancies, regardless of occupant load at all of the following locations:

1. On the ceiling or wall outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms.

2. In each room used for sleeping purposes.

3. In each story within a dwelling unit, including basements and cellars but not including crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics. In dwellings or dwelling units with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level provided that the lower level is less than one full story below the upper level.

Single or multiple-station smoke alarms shall be installed in other groups in accordance with the International Building Code.

§ 11-5.2.49 Appendix A. Boarding Standard.
Delete Appendix A Boarding Standard. (Ordinance 628 effective October 7th 2013, historical reference 569)

§ 11-6 Administrative Waivers. (Ordinance 627 effective October 7th 2013)

§ 11-6.1 Administrative Waiver Process.
The Code Official may grant administrative waivers of the provisions of the minimum standards for property maintenance in the Town of Easton, Maryland, subject to the limitations provided in § 11-6.3, if the following are satisfied:

Application for an administrative waiver is applied for by the property owner in the approved form;

Adequate written notice of the waiver application is afforded to the tenant of the unit and a copy shall be provided to the Code Official.

The tenant is afforded an opportunity to comment on the application either in writing or in person;

and

The waiver would not threaten the health or safety of a tenant.

§ 11-6.1.1 Administrative Waiver Fee.

There shall be no fee assessed for the filing of an administrative waiver with the Code Official for properties which are appropriately licensed at the time of application. A fee may be applicable to any administrative waiver application for property owners who have, in the twelve (12) month period immediately preceding the administrative waiver request, operated a rental property without the required rental license and whose property was the subject of any action by any department of the Town of Easton to cause the previously unlicensed property to become properly licensed. The Town Council may establish the fee by resolution as part of the Town's Schedule of Fees.

§ 11-6.2 Duration of Waiver.
Any administrative waiver granted pursuant to this § 11-6 shall be valid for the duration of the tenancy during which it was granted and for the owner for which it was granted. The administrative waiver shall be continued for future tenancies if the tenant executes a written document evidencing that he or she has been notified of the administrative waiver and does not object to the continuation of the administrative waiver. If the tenant does object to the continuation of the waiver, then the Code Official shall afford the tenant the opportunity to be heard and decide the administrative waiver on its merits. It shall be the responsibility of the property owner to notify each new tenant of the administrative waiver and provide a copy to the Code Official. It shall also be the responsibility of the property owner to notify the Town of a change in tenancy or a change in ownership. In addition, each year, the property owner shall include the name, contact information, and waiver form for the then current tenant with the rental application for that particular unit.

§ 11-6.3 Limitations on Waivers.
Administrative Waivers for ceiling heights, stairways and hardship shall be subject to the following limitations and provisions:

§ 11-6.3.1 Minimum Ceiling Height – Administrative Waiver.
The Code Official may grant an administrative waiver for one and two family dwellings to allow ceilings constructed prior to January 21st 1963, to continue without change provided they meet all of the following provisions;

1. Having a minimum floor area, with a clear ceiling height between 6 feet 8 inches (2032 mm) and 7 feet (2134 mm) in accordance with the following table.

Table: Minimum Area Requirements for Administrative Waivers

		Minimum Area in Square Feet		
Space	Ceiling Type			
		1-2 Occupants	3-5 Occupants	6 or more Occupants
Living	Flat or Sloped	120	120	150
Dining		70	80	100
Kitchen		70	80	100
Bedroom		70 or 100	150, 200 or 250	300*

For SI: 1 square foot = 0.093 m2

Maximum occupants per bedroom shall be limited to six

2. Beams, girders, ducts and similar obstructions do not project below 6 feet 8 inches (2032 mm).

3. Functioning hard wired or sealed long lasting battery operated smoke detectors are supplied in each area.

4. Carbon monoxide detectors are supplied in each area, if fuel-fired appliances are installed in the dwelling and/or if there is an attached garage.

5. Code compliant emergency escape and rescue openings are provided if the area is for sleeping.

§ 11-6.3.2 Stairway – Administrative Waiver.
The Code Official may grant an administrative waiver for one and two family dwellings to allow stairways constructed prior to February 27th 1984, to continue without change, provided they meet all of the following provisions;

1. Sufficient width and height exist for a person to traverse the means of egress
2. The stairway has dimensional uniformity in the treads and risers along the walk line
3. Adequate hand and guard rails are provided
4. The stairway does not constitute a distinct hazard to life.

§ 11-6.3.3 Hardship – Administrative Waiver.
In addition to the waivers provided in sections 11-6.3.1 and 11-6.3.2, the Code Official may grant an administrative waiver for one and two family dwellings of Sections 303.2, 307, 402.1, 402.2, 403.1, 404.2, 404.4.1, 404.4.3, 404.6, and 702.4 of the Minimum Livability Code if a literal enforcement of the provisions of the minimum livability code would result in hardship to the property owner. A waiver under this section may only be granted to the extent necessary to remove the hardship and if the Code Official finds that at least one of the following circumstances exist:

1. The safety protections provided by the particular section at issue are adequately satisfied by other means; or
2. The alterations or repairs required by the code are technically infeasible; or
3. The costs to make the alteration or repair required are disproportionate to the assessed,

appraised or calculated value of the dwelling; or

4. The increase in safety protections provided are minor when compared to the feasibility or costs to make the alteration.

§11-6.4 Additional Waiver Provisions.

§11-6.4.1 Conditions.
The Code Official may impose such conditions on the granting of a waiver as he or she deems necessary to protect the health and safety of the tenant.

§11-6.4.2 Alterations and Renovations.
Any alterations or renovations shall first comply with the provisions of the Maryland Building Rehabilitation Code. Alterations and renovations that do not comply with the Maryland Building Rehabilitation Code and the minimum livability code shall not be initiated.

§11-6.4.3 Board of Appeals.
If the Code Official elects not to grant a waiver of the provisions for minimum ceiling height, stairways or hardship, then the property owner may apply for a waiver to the Board of Appeals pursuant to § 2-26.2 of the Town Code. The fee, if any, for filing with the Board of Appeals shall be established in the Schedule of Fees. The Board of Appeals shall have the power to grant a waiver for the ceiling height, stairways and hardships that comply with the provisions and requirements of § 11-6 of the Town Code and subject to the limitations set forth in § 11-6.3. For the purpose of waiver applications, the Board of Appeals shall have two additional members (for a total of five). Such additional members shall be Town residents appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Town Council. The additional members shall be appointed for terms of three years each. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment for the unexpired term.

§ 11-7 Reserved.

Article II. ~~Garbage and~~ Refuse and Recycling.

§ 11-8 Definitions.
For purpose of this Article II and III of this Chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following definitions shall apply.

Ashes. The residue from the burning of wood, coal, coke, or other combustible materials.

Bulk Refuse. Relatively large rubbish items that do not fit in Town provided tipper cans.

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Garbage. Unwanted organic refuse, largely foods, either unconsumed or spoiled, (excepting ensilage in silos or properly drained stacks) organic wastes from the processing of foods containing natural moisture and a minimum of free liquids.

Ineligible Household Waste. Waste note eligible for Town pickup that requires unique handling, tracking, or disposal methods because they may be toxic, ignitable, corrosive or reactive.

Recyclable Materials. Any and all materials that can be separated, collected, processed and returned to the manufacturing stream in the form of raw materials or products. The Town shall designate those items that are suitable for collection by the Town and/or its subcontractor.

Refuse. All non-hazardous solid waste eligible for Town pickup ~~and~~ includinges garbage and ~~,~~ rubbish~~, and ashes~~.

Waste. All unwanted materials, including liquid and solid waste materials.

(Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012, historical reference 37 and 526)

§ 11-9. Receptacles R~~r~~equired - Specifications.
The following shall be deemed approved receptacles that will be emptied and returned to the premises.

~~(A) For ashes. Ashes shall be placed until collected in metal, water-tight containers equipped with handles and a tight fitting metal cover, with a capacity of not less than 15 nor more than 26 gallons.~~

(A~~B~~) For ~~garbage and~~ refuse. All ~~garbage and~~ refuse shall be placed and stored until collected in ~~rust-resistant, tight, non-absorbent and easily washable receptacles which are covered with close-fitting lids. These receptacles must be of adequate capacity and must be provided in sufficient number to hold all garbage and refuse that accumulates between collections.~~Town approved receptacles, unless it is part of a bulk refuse pickup.

~~(C) For rubbish. All rubbish, except for large articles, shall be stored in containers suitable for collection purposes. (~~

(B~~D~~) For recycling. Recyclable materials shall be placed in ~~any bin, box, container, structure or device designated and authorized by the Town as suitable for collection.~~Town approved receptacles.

(C). Special exceptions for refuse and recycling receptacles for unique situations may be approved by the Town Engineer.

(Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012, historical reference 8, 37 and 526)

§ 11-10. ~~Papers, magazines or other light materials.~~ Ineligible Household Waste.
~~Papers, magazines, or other light materials liable to be blown about shall be bundled, tied, sacked, or otherwise properly secured and they shall be so packed that they can be easily handled by collectors. (Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008, historical reference 519 aka E-34)~~

Ineligible household waste includes, but is not limited to ashes, household hazardous waste (flammable, toxic, corrosive, or reactive materials including paints, cleaners, pesticides, pool chemicals, and medications), automotive products (used motor oil, antifreeze, car batteries, and tires), electronic waste (computers, televisions, printers, and similar electronics), and construction and demolition debris (lumber, carpet, brick, stone, and drywall, especially from contractor work).

§ 11-11. Receptacles - Sanitary Ce~~e~~ondition.
All receptacles shall be washed occasionally and treated with a disinfectant if necessary to prevent a nuisance. (Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008, historical reference 37)

§ 11-12. Precollection Pp~~p~~ractices.
~~(A) Garbage, ashes and rubbish shall each be placed and maintained in separate containers.~~

~~(B) All ashes shall be cool and kept dry.~~

~~(C)~~ (A) All recyclable materials must be separated from all other garbage and refuse and placed in Town designated recycling receptacles. There shall be no food residue in recyclables.

(B) All receptacles shall be brought to a public street for collection. Town employees will not enter private property for collection.

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(Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012, historical reference 526)

§ 11-13. Accumulation of R~~r~~efuse and/or R~~r~~ecyclable M~~m~~aterials.
No refuse and/or recyclable materials shall be allowed to accumulate on any premise or vacant lot except in approved containers, and then only for the purpose of being collected. (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012, historical reference 37 and 526)

§ 11-14. Depositing in Pp~~p~~ublic Pp~~p~~laces Pp~~p~~rohibited.
No house refuse, rubbish, filth, offal, garbage, dead animal or part thereof, decaying vegetable matter or organic waste substance of any kind shall be deposited on any street or public place within the corporate limits of the T~~t~~own. (Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008, historical reference 37, 519 aka E-34)

§ 11-15. Burning M~~m~~atter L~~l~~iable to Ce~~e~~ause N~~n~~auseating S~~s~~moke or V~~v~~apor.
No dead animals, garbage, offal, or putrescible matter or any kind or any other matter liable to produce nauseating or offensive smoke or vapors of any kind shall be burned within the T~~t~~own limits except in approved devices. (Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008, historical reference 519 aka E-34)

§ 11-16. Periodic I~~i~~nspection of Pp~~p~~remises.
All premises within the corporate limits of the T~~t~~own shall be inspected periodically for compliance with the requirements of this chapter by the ~~Building~~ Code Enforcement Department. (Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008, historical reference 37)

~~§ 11-16.1.~~(A) Control of R~~r~~ubbish, R~~r~~efuse, G~~g~~arbage, R~~r~~ecyclable M~~m~~aterials and W~~w~~aste. If the ~~Building~~ Code Enforcement Department determines that ~~garbage,~~ refuse, ~~rubbish,~~ recyclable materials or other waste has accumulated on private property within the T~~t~~own to such an extent that the accumulation presents an immediate threat to the public health, safety, or welfare, the ~~Building~~ Code Enforcement Department shall order, by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested, the owner of the property to remove all such ~~rubbish, garbage,~~ refuse, recyclable materials and other waste within five days of the date of the order. If, after the expiration of the five-day period, the refuse, ~~garbage, rubbish,~~ recyclable materials and other waste is not removed from the property, the Code Enforcement~~Building~~ Department shall arrange for the removal of the material by employees of the T~~t~~own or by other persons. Any cost or expense incurred thereby shall be payable by the property owner and shall constitute a lien upon the real property where the work is done. (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012, historical reference 94 and 526)

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~~§ 11-16.2.~~(B) Setting O~~o~~ut ~~rubbish, waste~~ Refuse or R~~r~~ecyclable M~~m~~aterials for C~~c~~ollection. No refuse~~, waste,~~ or recyclable materials shall be set out for collection prior to 5:00 p.m. on the day preceding the regular collection day for such refuse ~~, waste~~ or recyclable materials. (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012, historical reference 8, 208 and 526)

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(C) Bringing Receptacles Back from Curb.
After refuse collection and/or recycling services have been provided, refuse receptacles and/or recycling receptacles shall be removed from the curb and returned to the residence by 11:00 p.m. on service day.

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§ 11-17. Unlawful activities.
(A) It shall be unlawful for any person to disturb any refuse and/or recycling receptacles or to remove their covers or any contents thereof, except the occupants of the premises on which the receptacles are placed or their duly authorized agents or the duly authorized employees or agents of the Town of Easton.

(B) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to place refuse and/or recyclable materials on the property of another, except for designated public receptacles.

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(C) It shall be unlawful for a person who is neither a Town resident nor a Town business owner to place their refuse and/or recycling for collection in the Town incorporated limits.

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(Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012)
~~**Garbage, Refuse, and Recyclable Materials – Administrative History.**~~
~~Ordinance Number 589 passed by the Town of Easton Council on 2/22/2012~~

~~Ordinance Number 526 passed by the Town of Easton Council on 3/3/2008~~

~~Ordinance Number 208 passed by the Town of Easton Council on 11/7/1991~~

~~Ordinance Number 94, passed by the Town of Easton Council on 7/21/80~~

~~Ordinance Number 37, Liber No. 7 passed by the Town of Easton Council on 11/20/1951 Code 1941 Article IV • 26~~

§ 11-18. Violations and penalties.

Any person, firm or corporation violating any of the provisions of Article II or III of this Chapter shall be guilty of a municipal infraction. (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012)

~~**Unlawful activities.**~~

~~(A) It shall be unlawful for any person to disturb any refuse and/or recycling receptacles or to remove their covers or any contents thereof, except the occupants of the premises on which the receptacles are placed or their duly authorized agents or the duly authorized employees or agents of the Town of Easton.~~

~~(B) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to place refuse and/or recyclable materials on the property of another.~~

~~(C) It shall be unlawful for a person who is neither a Town resident nor a Town business owner to place their refuse and/or recycling for collection in the Town incorporated limits.~~

~~(Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012)~~

§ 11-19. ~~Garbage, Refuse, and Recyclable Materials – Administrative History.~~

Ordinance Number 589 passed by the ~~Town of~~ Easton Town Council on 2/22/2012

Ordinance Number 526 passed by the ~~Town of~~ Easton Town Council on 3/3/2008

Ordinance Number 208 passed by the ~~Town of~~ Easton Town Council on 11/7/1991

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Ordinance Number 37, Liber No. 7 passed by the ~~Town of~~ Easton Town Council on 11/20/1951 Code 1941 Article IV • 26

~~**Violations and penalties.**~~

~~Any person, firm or corporation violating any of the provisions of Article II or III of this Chapter shall be guilty of a municipal infraction. (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012)~~

Article III. Refuse and Recycling Disposal Charges

§ 11-20. Refuse D~~d~~isposal F~~f~~ee I~~i~~mposed.

The Town of Easton shall impose a fee upon all properties from which refuse is collected by the Town for disposal. The amount of the fee for each property shall be set by Resolution of the Town Council~~ and shall be used to offset the costs of disposing of refuse at the Mid-Shore Regional Landfill, or at such other facilities as the Town may dispose of refuse in the future and any administrative and other costs and fees associated with refuse collection. All monies raised by the fees shall be accounted for separately by the Finance Officer and shall be used only for the purposes of paying tipping fees or similar charges imposed by the Mid-Shore Regional Landfill or other landfill utilized by the Town and any administrative and other costs and fees associated~~

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~~with refuse collection. If the imposition of the fees provided for herein results in a surplus in a given year, the surplus shall be accumulated and used to reduce the amount of the fees imposed in future years~~. (Ordinance 760 effective 5/30/21, Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012, historical reference 200, 293 and 256)

§ 11-21. Refuse Ddisposal Ffee for Ssingle-Ffamily Pproperties.
An annual refuse disposal fee is imposed against each property in the Town improved by a single-family dwelling. The annual fee shall be set by Resolution of the Town Council. For the purpose of this section, "single-family" includes townhouses and duplexes if they have Town collection. (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012, historical reference 200 and 526)

§ 11-22. Refuse Ddisposal Ffee for Mmulti-Ffamily Pproperties.
An annual refuse disposal fee is imposed against each property in the Town of Easton improved by ~~for~~ multi-family housing projects where the Town collects and disposes of refuse for the occupants of the property. The annual fee shall be calculated according to the number of dwelling units located upon the property. The term "multi-family housing" includes, but is not limited to residential condominiums and, apartment complexes ~~and duplexes~~. The annual fee per dwelling unit shall be set by Resolution of the Town Council. (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012, historical reference 200 and 526)

§ 11-23. Refuse Ddisposal Ffee for Ceommercial and Iindustrial Pproperties.
An annual refuse disposal fee is imposed against all properties in the Town improved~~used~~ for ~~industrial or~~ commercial or industrial purposes where the Town collects and disposes of refuse for the ~~occupants of the~~ property. Mixed use properties that have residential, as well as commercial or industrial uses shall be pay the fee for commercial and/or industrial properties. The annual fee for commercial and industrial properties shall be set by Resolution of the Town Council. ~~The refuse disposal fee for commercial and industrial properties shall be calculated by the volume of refuse generated annually be businesses located upon the property and a commercial property shall be the "commercial refuse unit" which shall equal one hundred and four (104) cubic yards of uncompressed refuse per year. The annual fee per commercial refuse unit shall be set by Resolution of the Town Council.~~ (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012, historical reference 200 and 526)

§ 11-24. Adjustments to Rrefuse Ddisposal Ffee for Ceommercial and Iindustrial Pproperties.
The Town Engineer ~~or the staff member designated by the Town Manager~~ shall have the authority to determine how many commercial refuse units should be charged to each commercial or industrial property. The basic rate shall be one (1) commercial refuse unit per property. In the event that the amount of refuse generated by a commercial or industrial property exceeds one (1) commercial refuse unit, the Town Engineer ~~or the designee of the Town Manager~~ may increase the number of commercial refuse units attributed to the property. (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012, historical reference 200 and 526)

§11-25. Recycling.
All property owners and residents of the Town must recycle and all recyclable materials must be separated from all other refuse and placed at the curb on the designated collection day.

(A) Residential. An annual recycling fee is imposed against all properties in the Town improved by a single- -family dwelling and/or multi-family housing. ~~The term "multi-family housing" includes, but is not limited to residential condominiums, apartment complexes and duplexes.~~ The annual fee per dwelling unit shall be set by Resolution of the Town Council. It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, business, or company not authorized by the Town to collect recyclable materials from single- -family dwellings and/or multi-family housing. (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012)

~~**§11-25 (a) Recycling Transitional Provisions**~~

~~Any property which would have an annual recycling fee assessed pursuant to §11-25 which has a contract with a recycling contractor at the time of adoption of §11-25, may file a request for automatic abatement of the annual recycling fee with the Finance Officer within a period of six months following adoption although no automatic abatement shall be allowed after the first full fiscal year following the date of adoption of §11-25. Any such request shall be in writing on forms prescribed by the Finance Officer and must include a copy of the contract with that recycling contractor. Additionally, that contract must be valid until at least December 31, 2012 in order to be eligible for the automatic abatement of the annual recycling fee. No automatic abatement of the annual recycling fee will be authorized or allowed by the Finance Officer effective with the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2013. (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012)~~

~~**§11-25 (b) Commercial Property Recycling**~~

(B) The Town Council may assess an annual recycling fee on any commercial property which is served by the Town of Easton Department of Public Works ~~Department~~ for Municipal Solid Waste collection if the Town of Easton, or the authorized subcontractor thereof, is actually engaged in the recycling of recyclable material pursuant to the applicable standards of the Department of Public Works ~~Department~~. The annual fee for any commercial property will be set by Resolution of the Town Council. Any commercial property for which the annual recycling fee is assessed must separate all recyclable materials from all other refuse and place the recyclable material for collection in a manner prescribed by the Town of Easton Department of Public Works ~~Department~~. No annual recycling fee shall be assessed or collected by the Town of Easton on any commercial property for which the Town of Easton, or it~~'~~s authorized subcontractors do not perform recycling activities. (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012)

§11-26. Bulk Refuse Fee.

The Town may charge a fee for bulk refuse pickup. Such fee shall be set by Resolution of the Town Council.

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§ 11-2~~7~~6. Manner of C~~c~~ollection; P~~p~~ersonal O~~o~~bligation of P~~p~~roperty O~~o~~wner; U~~u~~npaid R~~r~~efuse D~~d~~isposal F~~f~~ee or R~~r~~ecycling F~~f~~ee to C~~c~~onstitute L~~l~~ien on R~~r~~eal P~~p~~roperty.

The refuse disposal fee and recycling fee shall be billed to the owner of each parcel of real property within the Town ~~as~~ to which the fee is applicable on an annual basis. The refuse disposal fee and recycling fee shall be due and payable thirty (30) days after the date of mailing of the statement to the owner of the property. An unpaid, overdue refuse disposal fee and/or recycling fee shall bear interest at the rate of one and one-half per cent per month until paid. An unpaid refuse disposal fee and/or recycling fee shall constitute a personal obligation of a property

owner and shall be a lien against all real and personal property of the owner located within the Town, collectible in the same manner as real estate taxes. (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012, historical reference 200 and 526)

§ 11-287. Appeal from Ddetermination of the Town Engineer ~~or the designee of the Town Manager~~.

Any property owner who believes that the Town Engineer ~~or the designee of the Town Manager~~ has erred in the interpretation or application of the provisions of this Article in determining:

(A~~1~~) Whether a refuse disposal fee and/or recycling fee should be charged against the property; or

(B~~2~~) The amount of such fee may request a review of such determination by the Town Engineer ~~or the designee of the Town Manager~~. The Town Engineer ~~or designee~~ shall review the matter, adjust the fee if he or she believes an adjustment is appropriate, and issue a written response to the property owner. If the property owner is not satisfied by the Town Engineer's ~~or designee's~~ determination, he or she may appeal the determination to ~~Town Council~~the Mayor. Any such appeal must be filed with the Town Office not less than thirty (30) days after the date of the determination by the Town Engineer ~~or designee. Upon receipt of a notice of appeal, the Town Council shall schedule a hearing upon the appeal and shall provide all interested parties with an opportunity to be heard. The Town Council shall issue a written determination of the issue or issues raised by the appeal. The written determination may take the form of an excerpt of the Town Council's minutes. Any party to the appeal before the Town Council may appeal the decision of the Town Council to the Circuit Court for Talbot County in the manner provided by the Maryland Rules of Civil Procedure for administrative appeals.~~ (Ordinance 589 effective 3/13/2012, historical reference 200 and 526)

§ 11-298. Refuse Disposal Charges and Recycling Charges – Administrative History.

Ordinance Number 760 passed by the Easton Town Council on 5/3/21.

Ordinance Number 589 passed by the ~~Town of~~ Easton Town Council on 2/22/2012.

Ordinance Number 526 passed by the ~~Town of~~ Easton Town Council on 3/3/2008.

Ordinance Number 502 passed by the ~~Town of~~ Easton Town Council on 6/19/2006.

Ordinance Number 293 passed by the ~~Town of~~ Easton Town Council on 2/1/1995.

Ordinance Number 200, passed by the ~~Town of~~ Easton Town Council on 6/27/1991.

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CHAPTER 12 – RESERVED

CHAPTER 13 – HOUSING

Chapter 13 Housing
§ 13-1. Chapter Title.
§ 13-2. General References.

Article I. Affordable Housing Fund
§ 13-3. Establishment.
§ 13-4 Source of Revenue.
§ 13-5. Administration.
§ 13-6. Administration Expenses.
§ 13-7. Use of the Easton Affordable Housing Fund.
§ 13-8. Designation of Administrator; Appointment; Terms.
§ 13-9. Other Duties of the Administrator.
§ 13-10. Affordable Housing Fund - Administrative History.

Article II. Notice and Property Affidavit
§ 13-11. Notice.
§ 13-12. Property Affidavit.
§ 13-13. Failure to Comply.

Article III. Registration of Non-Owner Occupied...
§ 13-14. Registration.

§ 13-1. Chapter Title.
That this chapter shall be known and may be cited as "Housing" of the Town of Easton, Maryland.

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§ 13-2. General References. Reserved for the future references to the Code of the Town of Easton and the Code of Maryland Regulations.

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Article I. Affordable Housing Fund

§ 13-3. Establishment.
The Easton Affordable Housing Fund is hereby established as a separate segregated account under the name of the Easton Affordable Housing Fund, held by the Town to address the purposes set forth in this Ordinance. (Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008, historical reference 483)

§ 13-4. Source of Revenue.
The Easton Affordable Housing Fund shall be funded through revenues derived from the collection of payments in lieu of construction of affordable housing units including incremental units as provided for elsewhere in this chapter, from repayment of funds loaned from this fund, from commercial linkage fees provided for elsewhere in this chapter, from gifts, donations or grants, from interest earned by this fund, and from appropriations from the General Fund or other

funds, as the Council may from time to time establish or approve. (Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008, historical reference 483)

§ 13-5. Administration.

(A).~~a.~~ The Administrator shall be a Board designated as the "Easton Affordable Housing Board." The board shall consist of ~~eight~~seven ~~persons~~ members and one alternate member appointed by the Mayor, subject to the advice and consent of the Council. The membership of the board shall reflect the economic and ethnic composition of the Town and shall include persons with specific expertise with regard to housing issues. At least three of the members of the board shall be residents of the Town. Members of the board shall serve terms of three years. The initial terms shall be staggered so as to provide for continuity of membership. Members are eligible for reappointment. On an annual basis, the board shall select one of its members to serve as chair. The Mayor, subject to the advice and consent of the Council, shall appoint one (1) alternate member for the Easton Affordable Housing Board, who shall be empowered to sit with the Board in the absence of any member of the Board.

(Ordinance 742 effective 9/25/2019)

(B).~~b.~~ The Administrator shall hold and account for the Easton Affordable Housing Fund. The Town Council may utilize a separate, independent entity to invest the proceeds of the Affordable Housing Fund. The investment of the Easton Affordable Housing Fund shall be in accordance with the Town's investment policies. It is the intention of the Town Council that the Affordable Housing Fund be a dedicated fund for the purposes set out herein. Therefore, any assets remaining in the Affordable Housing Fund at the end of any fiscal year shall be carried into the next fiscal year, including all interest and income earned, as well as any repayments or forfeitures of loans and/or grants.

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(Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008, historical reference 483)

§ 13-6. Administration Expenses.

Administrative costs of the Easton Affordable Housing Fund may be paid from the annual housing fund assets or from other revenue sources as designated by the Town Council as part of the annual budget process. (Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008, historical reference 483)

§ 13-7. Use of the Easton Affordable Housing Fund.

The Easton Affordable Housing Fund shall be used to increase affordable housing opportunities for residents of the Town. These activities may include, but are not limited to, the following purposes: to acquire or construct rental or owner-occupied dwelling units for persons of low to moderate income; to repair or rehabilitate existing rental or owner-occupied housing; to preserve housing opportunities for persons of low and moderate incomes, including home repair grants or loans and grants or loans to make homes accessible to individuals with disabilities; to sponsor programs to prevent homelessness; to provide funds to match other local, State or federal housing assistance programs; to provide settlement costs, down payment and loan write down assistance for qualified homeowners within the Town; to provide counseling and education as to affordable housing options for Town residents; and to pay the actual staffing and operational

costs associated with the activities of the Affordable Housing Fund. (Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008, historical reference 483)

§ 13-8. Designation of Administrator; Appointment; Terms.
(A).~~a.~~ The Administrator shall be a Board designated as the "Easton Affordable Housing Board." The board shall consist of seven persons and one alternative member appointed by the Mayor, subject to the advice and consent of the Council. The membership of the board shall reflect the economic and ethnic composition of the Town and shall include persons with specific expertise with regard to housing issues. At least three of the members of the board shall be residents of the Town. Members of the board shall serve terms of three years. The initial terms shall be staggered so as to provide for continuity of membership. Members are eligible for reappointment. On an annual basis, the board shall select one of its members to serve as chair.

(B).~~b.~~ The Town Clerk shall serve as temporary Administrator of the Fund until the members of the Board are appointed. If at any time in the future, due to the death or resignation of a majority of its members, the Board is unable to discharge its duties; the Town Clerk shall serve as temporary Administrator until the Board is able to resume its functions.

(Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008, historical reference 483)

§ 13-9. Other Duties of the Administrator.
The Administrator shall:

(A).~~a.~~ Develop an annual or biennial plan for using the assets of the Affordable Housing Fund to increase housing opportunities within the Town which plan shall be submitted to the Mayor and Town Council for its approval by resolution;

(B).~~b.~~ Once the plan has been approved, to disburse funds from the Affordable Housing Fund in accordance with the plan;

(C).~~c.~~ Periodically to revise the plan on at least a biennial basis;

(D).~~d.~~ Recommend to the Mayor and Council qualified, independent entities to receive and process applications for funding on behalf of the Administrator; to assist in the formulation of the plan or to otherwise assist in the administration of the Affordable Housing Fund;

(E). Reconcile the Easton Affordable Housing Fund on at least a semi-annual basis; ~~and~~

(F).~~e.~~ Perform such other duties as the Mayor and Council may direct by resolution.

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(Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008, historical reference 483)

§ 13-10. Affordable Housing Fund - Administrative History.
Ordinance Number 483 passed by the Town of Easton Council on 4/18/2005, Established an Affordable Housing Fund. (Ordinance 526 effective 3/24/2008, historical reference 483)

Article II. Notice and Property Affidavit

§ 13-11. Notice.
A notice in substantially the form set forth in Exhibit A shall be included with all real estate contracts involving property located in the Town of Easton. (Ordinance 629 effective October 7th 2013)

§ 13-12. Property Affidavit.
Upon any transfer of real property by any means, the grantee shall sign a Property Affidavit that shall be substantially the form set forth in Exhibit B. Within 15 days of property transfer, such form shall be delivered to the Town of Easton office. (Ordinance 629 effective October 7th 2013)

§ 13-13. Failure to Comply.
Failure to comply with § 13-11 or 13-12 above regarding the Notice and Property Affidavit Form shall not prevent the recording of any documents, nor shall it have any effect on the title to real estate property or any deed, mortgage or deed of trust concerning said property. (Ordinance 629 effective October 7th 2013)

Article III. Registration of Non-Owner Occupied Residential Property

§ 13-14. Registration.
The owners of all non-owner occupied residential property within the Town of Easton shall be required to fill out a Property Affidavit similar to the one provided for in §13-12 on an annual basis as a mechanism to register the actual use of the property. No fee shall be required as part of the registration. (Ordinance 680 effective September 27th 2016)

CHAPTER 14 – LICENSES AND PERMITS

§ 14-1. Chapter Title.
§ 14-2. General References.

Article I. License Administration
§ 14-3. License Required.
§ 14-4. License Issuance.
§ 14-5. License Fees.
§ 14-6 Display of License.
§ 14-7. Transferability.
§ 14-8. License Period and Renewal.
§ 14-9. Notice of Violations.
§ 14-10. Penalties for Violation.
§ 14-11. Correction of Violation.
§ 14-12. Suspension, Revocation and Appeals.
§ 14-13. License Administrative History

Article II. Housing License
§ 14-14. Housing License.
§ 14-15. License Application.
§ 14-16. Rental Housing License.
§ 14-17. Dwelling.
§ 14-18. Rental Housing License – Administration.
§ 14-19. Additional Provisions for Short Term Housing.
§ 14-20. Rental Housing License - Administrative History

Article III. Electrical License
§ 14-21. Electrical Services.
§ 14-22. Electrical License – Board of Electrical Examiners of Talbot County.
~~§ 14-23. Electrical License – Administration.~~
§ 14-234. Electrical License - Administrative History.

Article IV. Plumbing License
§ 14-245. Plumbing Work - Licensed Plumber Required.
§ 14-256. Plumbing License - Application; Fees.
§ 14-267. Plumbing Bond; Indemnification of Town.
§ 14-278. Compliance with Code.
§ 14-289. Plumbing License – Administration.

Article V. Gas Fitters License
§ 14-29.30 Installation - Registration Required.
§ 14-30.1 Information for Registration.
§ 14-312. Gas Fitters License – Administration.

§ 14-1. Chapter Title.
That this chapter shall be known and may be cited as "Licenses" of the Town of Easton, Maryland. (Ordinance 536 effective October 14th 2008)

§ 14-2. General References.
That this chapter shall reference General Provisions – Chapter 1, Animals and Foul – Chapter 4, Bicycles and Similar Devices – Chapter 5, Offenses – Miscellaneous – Chapter 18, Peddlers – Chapter 19, Pinball Machines – Chapter 19A, Plumbing – Chapter 20, Solid Fuel – Chapter 23, and Zoning – Chapter 28 of the Code of the Town of Easton. (Ordinance 536 effective October 14th 2008, historical reference 9)

Article I. License Administration

§ 14-3. License required.
No person, firm or corporation shall engage in any occupation or business subject to a license fee under this Code without having first taken out a proper license. (Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008, historical reference 9)

§ 14-4. License Issuance.
All licenses shall be prepared and issued by the Ttown ~~clerk~~ unless otherwise specifically provided. (Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008, historical reference 9)

§ 14-5. License Fees.
No license shall be issued by the Town until the fee required therefore has been paid by the applicant. The Town Council is hereby authorized to enact a resolution establishing a fee schedule for fees pertaining to the administration of this chapter. ~~Any unpaid license fee shall be subject to interest and penalties as periodically established by the Town Council for unpaid sums due to the Town of Easton.~~ (Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008, historical reference 9, 519 aka E-34)

§ 14-6 Display of License.
Licenses issued under this C~~c~~hapter shall be available at reasonable times for examination by an authorized agent of the Town of Easton. (Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008)

§ 14-7. Transferability.
Except as otherwise provided in this Code or the ordinance or statute under which it is issued, no license issued by the Ttown ~~clerk~~ shall be transferable. (Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008, historical reference 519 aka E-34)

§ 14-8. License Period and Renewal.
The license year shall begin on the first day of April of each and every year. All licenses issued under the provisions of this Chapter shall expire on the last day of March, following the date of issue, but if the licensee shall be in default because of any violation of the provision of this Code, the License shall forthwith cease and terminate, and the fee for any unexpired portion of the term thereof shall be forfeited to the Town. Application for renewals shall be made at least sixty (60) days prior to the expiration date. (Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008, historical reference 9)

§ 14-9. Notice of Violations.
Whenever the Town of Easton determines that there has been a violation of this chapter or has grounds to believe that a violation has occurred, notice shall be given, providing written notification of the violation.

The notice shall contain an order for correction and a time period within which the violation is to be corrected. Noncompliance shall result in penalties and or revocation of license. (Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008)

§ 14-10. Penalties for Violation.
Any person, who shall violate a provision of this Cehapter, or fail to comply therewith, or with any of the requirements thereof, shall be guilty of a municipal infraction and shall be subjected to the penalties set forth in Section 1-8 of the Easton Town Code. Each day that a violation continues after due notice has been served shall be deemed a separate offense. (Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008, historical reference 9)

§ 14-11. Correction of Vviolation.
The imposition of the penalties herein prescribed shall not preclude the Easton Town Counceil from instituting appropriate action; to restrain, correct or abate a violation, or to stop an illegal act, conduct, or business, or to prevent illegal occupancy or utilization of a building, structure or premises. (Ordinance 536 effective 10- 14-2008)

§ 14-12. Suspension, Revocation and Appeals.

§ 14-12.1. Violation Basis.
The Town of Easton shall, in writing, suspend or revoke a license issued under the provisions of this Cehapter; if a license holder, after the passage of the time period ordered by the notice described in the section for Notice of Violations, fails to eliminate the violation. Suspension or revocation of a license shall be in addition to, and not in substitution for, such other penalties as may be provided for said violations elsewhere in the Town Charter and Code or by State law. (Ordinance 680 effective 9-27-2016, historical reference 519 aka E-34 and 536)

§ 14-12.2. Complaiiant Basis.
Any license or permit issued by the Town may be suspended by the Town upon proper complaint and sufficient evidence to sustain such compliant and after the permittee or license has an opportunity to present evidence. Notice of such suspension shall be promptly communicated to the holder of such license or permit by mailing such notice to the applicant at the address set out in the application for such license or permit. (Ordinance 680 effective 9-27-2016, historical reference 519 aka E-34 and 536)

§ 14-12.3. Appeals.

The Bboard of Appeals shall hear and decide appeals of suspensions or revocations made pursuant to this Cehapter. Such appeals shall be filled within thirty (30) days of such suspension or revocation by filing a notice of appeal with the Board of Appeals and specifying the grounds for the appeal. For the purposes of this chapter, the Board of Appeals established in the Town of Easton Zoning Ordinance. All provisions governing the Board of Appeals with respect to members, provisions of alternates, quorum, procedures, chairman, term of office, etc. shall be applicable to appeals from this chapter. (Ordinance 680 effective 9-27-2016)

§ 14-13. License Administrative History
Ordinance Number 9, passed by the Town of Easton Council on 12/11/1940, establishing license requirement.

Ordinance Number 519 (E-34), passed by the Town of Easton Council on 4/17/1967, Adopting The Code of the Town of Easton, 1967 (Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008)

Article II. Housing License

§ 14-14. Housing License.
It shall be unlawful for any person to let for occupancy or allow the occupancy of any dwelling, dwelling unit, rooming unit or part thereof, whether for use on a nightly, weekly, monthly, or yearly basis, within the Town of Easton without having first obtained a license for said unit as hereinafter provided.

§ 14-14.1 Special Provisions for Immediate Family Member:
When a dwelling, dwelling unit, rooming unit, or part thereof is occupied by an immediate family member of the owner or the owner's spouse (parents, children, grandparents, grandchildren, sibling, aunt, uncle, or first cousins. Includes: adopted, half, and step family members), a rental license shall not be required. The Code Official shall determine the appropriate information required in order to determine compliance with this section.

§ 14-14.2 Exceptions:
The requirement for a license shall not apply to the following uses as those uses are defined in the Town's Zoning Ordinance, which is Chapter 28 of the Town Code: Assisted Living Facilities, Bed and Breakfast Inns, Homeless Shelters, Hospice facilities, Hotels, Motels, Nursing Homes, Overnight Care Facilities, Patient Hostels, and similar uses.

§ 14-14.3 Exception for Owner Occupied:
The requirement for a license shall not apply to occupancy of a dwelling, dwelling unit, or rooming unit occupied solely by the owner as the owner's primary residence or as a secondary/vacation home, including invitees and guests during the owner's occupancy, provided that there is no tenancy, soliciting or advertising for the purpose of Short--Term Housing.

(Ordinance 523 effective 3/28/2008, Ordinance 536 effective 10/14/2008 Ordinance 680 effective 9/27/2016, historical reference 301, 518)

§ 14-15. License Application.
The legal owner of record shall make written application to the Town of Easton for a rental unit license upon such form or forms as the Town shall from time to time designate. Such application shall be submitted together with a non-refundable rental license fee. Upon receipt of a completed application for a license, the Code Enforcement Office is authorized to examine or cause to be examined buildings, structures and sites for which an application has been filed. A rental license application may be denied by the Code Enforcement Office if the premises, dwelling, dwelling unit or rooming unit, thereof is not in conformance with the Minimum Property Maintenance Standards or the Building Code under which the structure was constructed. (Ordinance 523 effective 3/28/2008 and Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008, historical reference 301, 518)

§14-16. Rental Housing License.
The Code Enforcement Office upon review and approval of an application, shall issue a non-transferable "Rental Housing License" indicating that a license has been duly issued for the premises, dwelling, dwelling unit or rooming unit, accompanied by a Certificate of Occupancy which shall expire at the same time as the license. A certificate of occupancy shall contain the following: (Ordinance523effective3/28/2008and Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008, historical reference 301, 518)

1. The rental housing license number.
2. The name and address of the owner.
3. The number of rental units licensed.
4. The address of the structure.
5. The edition of the International Property Maintenance Code governing inspections.
6. The use and occupancy classification, as available.
7. The type of construction, as available.
8. The maximum occupant load, as available.
9. The presence of an automatic sprinkler system.
10. Any special stipulations and conditions.
11. The name of the building official.
12. The expiration date.

§ 14-17. Dwelling.
Dwelling Unit and Rooming Unit Inspection. All Rental Housing Licenses shall be subject to periodic inspection by the Code Enforcement Office, to determine if they are in conformance

with the Minimum Property Maintenance Standards or the Building Code under which the structure was constructed. Permission for such inspections, without the necessity for obtaining any further permission or judicial warrant, is a condition of any license. Each unit shall be inspected at least one time during the license period or as the Code Enforcement Office deems necessary. Failure to allow entry for an inspection or to forbid entry for such inspection shall constitute a violation of the provisions of this article. Fees for inspections shall be set forth in the schedule of fees adopted by the Town Council.

Exception: The Code Enforcement Office may elect to utilize a statically valid random sample for multi-unit properties with more than thirty (30) units which have full time management on site as long as the sampling is designed with a 95% probability that significant violations, as defined by the Code Enforcement Office, would be detected if present. When the statistically valid random sample for multi-unit properties with more than thirty (30) units is elected by the Code Enforcement Office and significant violations, as defined by the Code Enforcement Office, are detected, the Code Enforcement Office is authorized to perform any additional inspections deemed necessary by that department.

(Ordinance 523 effective 3/28/2008 and Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008, historical reference 301, 518)

§ 14-18. Rental Housing License – Administration.
All rental housing licenses are regulated by the License Administration under Article I of Chapter 14 and Article 1 of Chapter 11. (Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008, historical reference 301, 518)

§ 14-18.1 Rental Housing Re-inspection.
The Code Enforcement Office shall re-inspect the premises on the last day of the time period to confirm that the violations have been corrected. Noncompliance shall result in additional re-inspections fees, penalties and or revocation of license. (Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008, historical reference 301, 518)

§ 14-19. Additional provisions for Short Term Housing.
All occupancies made for a period of less than four (4) months shall be subject to the following additional provisions:

§ 14-19.1 Principal Residence.
The structure in which the Short--Term housing takes place shall be the principal residence of the owner of the property, or an outbuilding located on the same property provided said outbuilding satisfies all Building, Fire, and Safety Codes and Regulations for use in this manner. (Ordinance 680 effective 9/27/2016)

§ 14-19.1.1 Contact Information.
The owner shall provide personal contact information (name, address, telephone number and e-mail address) to be contacted 24 hours a day for any complaints or problems. If the owner of the property does not remain in Talbot County during the rental period, the owner must provide contact information for an agent that can be contacted 24 hours a day

regarding any problems or issues. The named agent must have a principal residence within Talbot County. (Ordinance 680 effective 9/27/2016)

§ 14-19.1.2 Contact Information
Availability. Upon request by any neighbor or other person who may be affected by the short-term housing, the Code Enforcement Office may provide the property owner's and/or agent's name and contact information. (Ordinance 680 effective 9/27/2016)

§ 14-19.1.3 Notification.
In addition to providing the information to the Town of Easton, the owner shall provide the contact information to all properties within 400 feet of the owner's property by certified mail, return receipt requested, and regular mail on at least an annual basis. (Ordinance 680 effective 9/27/2016)

§ 14-19.1.4 Notification Information.
The property owner or agent shall provide proof of the notifications to the Code Enforcement Office with their housing license application. (Ordinance 680 effective 9/27/2016)

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§ 14-19.2 One Occupancy.
Multiple occupancies of the same property at the same time shall be prohibited. Only one lease of the property shall be permitted at any one time. (Ordinance 680 effective 9/27/2016)

§ 14-19.3 No Commercial Food Sales.
There shall be no commercial food sales or preparation. Meals provided by the owner for guests shall be limited to continental breakfast items. Nothing herein shall limit the guests' ability to prepare their own food on the property. (Ordinance 680 effective 9/27/2016)

§ 14-19.4 Insurance.
The property owner shall maintain property and liability insurance with an insurer who is aware of the owner's short-term housing exposure and that will respond in the event of a covered loss with liability limits of at least Five Hundred Thousand Dollars ($500,000.00) and shall provide proof of said insurance at the time of application for a license. (Ordinance 680 effective 9/27/2016)

§ 14-19.5 Accommodations Tax.
Short-Term Housing shall be required to pay all applicable Accommodations Taxes. (Ordinance 680 effective 9/27/2016)

§ 14-20. Rental Housing License - Administrative History
Ordinance Number 309, passed by the Town of Easton Council on 4/17/1995, establishing a Rental Housing Licensing and Inspection Program.

Ordinance Number 444, passed by the Town of Easton Council on 5/20/2002, amending Section 13A-5 License Renewal.

Ordinance Number 518, no action taken, Updating Rental Housing Licensing

Ordinance Number 523, passed by the Town of Easton Council on 4/7/2008, updating the Rental Housing Licensing and Inspection Program.

(Ordinance 536 effective 10-14-2008)

Article III. Electrical License

§ 14-21. Electrical Services.
It shall be unlawful for any person to provide, attempt to provide or offer to provide electrical services, within the Town of Easton without having ~~complied with one of the provisions hereinafter provided:~~obtained a license and registration as provided in Title 6 of the Business Occupations and Professions Article of the Maryland Annotated Code and Chapter 56 of the Talbot County Code, subject to the exceptions listed in §56-10 of the Talbot County Code.
(Ordinance 547 effective July 1st 2009)

~~**§ 14-21.1 Talbot County Electricians:**~~
~~Any person who holds a current license issued by the Board of Electrical Examiners of Talbot County as a "Master Electrician", "Electrician General", or an "Electrician Limited" may provide services, as allowed by the license, in the Town of Easton, so long as such license is maintained current.~~

~~Inclusion: While a Talbot County license is in effect, it authorizes the licensee to provide electrical services and any person listed as an employee if: the employee provides electrical services while under the control and supervision of the licensee; and the licensee is responsible for the electrical services that the individual provides.~~

~~(Ordinance 547 effective July 1st 2009)~~

~~**§ 14-21.2 Public Utility Company:**~~
~~A public utility company, shall not require a license, while the company is engaging in the business of providing electrical services to a facility of the company that: is regulated by the Public Service Commission; and is located on any premises, roadway, or right-of-way in which the company has a lawful interest.~~

~~Inclusion: An employee of a public utility company shall not require a license, while the employee provides electrical services to a facility of the company that: is regulated by the Public Service Commission; and is located on any premises, roadway, or right-of-way in which the company has a lawful interest.~~

~~(Ordinance 547 effective July 1st 2009)~~

~~**§ 14-21.3 Property Maintenance Employee:**~~

~~An employee of a private company shall not require a license, while engaged in maintenance and repairs of electrical equipment on the premises of their employer. (Ordinance 547 effective July 1st 2009)~~

~~**§ 14-21.4 Property Owner:**~~
~~Any person performing electrical work in a single-family dwelling provided that person is a bona fide owner and said owner personally purchases and installs all equipment and materials in connection with the installation therewith, shall not require a license. (Ordinance 547 effective July 1st 2009)~~

§ 14-22. Electrical License – Board of Electrical Examiners of Talbot County.
The Town authorizes and designates the Board of Electrical Examiners of Talbot County to be the Board of Electrical Examiners of the Town of Easton and ~~enables~~ empowers the B~~b~~oard with the following authorities: (Ordinance 547 effective July 1st 2009)

§ 14-22.1 Talbot County Provisions.
The provisions governing the Board of Electrical Examiners of Talbot County with respect to: members, provisions for alternates, quorum, procedure, chairman, term of office, appeals, and like matters, as prescribed in, Electrical Standards Chapter 56, of the Talbot County Code, shall be within the authority of the B~~b~~oard. (Ordinance 547 effective July 1st 2009)

§ 14-22.2 Town of Easton Provisions.
The B~~b~~oard shall have the authority to assess violations and penalties as prescribed in, General Provisions Chapter 1, Building Codes and Department Chapter 6 and Licenses Chapter 14 of the Town of Easton Code. (Ordinance 547 effective July 1st 2009)

§ 14-22.3 Appeals of the Town of Easton Electrical Code.
The B~~b~~oard shall have the authority to hear and decide on all appeals of orders, decisions or determinations relative to the application and interpretation of the Town of Easton's Electrical Code and Electrical Licensing. (Ordinance 547 effective July 1st 2009)

§ 14-22.3.1 Town of Easton Reporting.
The Town of Easton shall report to the B~~b~~oard upon any modification to its local codes or upon the adoption of updated versions of its local codes. Upon any violation of the Town of Easton's Electrical Code and Electrical Licensing the Town of Easton shall inform the B~~b~~oard of the violation; location and responsible parties. (Ordinance 547 effective July 1st 2009)

~~**§ 14-23. Electrical License – Administration.**~~
~~All electrical licenses are regulated by the License Administration under Article I of Chapter 14. (Ordinance 547 effective July 1st 2009)~~

§ 14-234. Electrical License - Administrative History.
Ordinance Number 16 passed by the Town of Easton Council on 2/1/1941, establishing a section for an Electrical Code.

Ordinance Number 90 passed by the Town of Easton Council on 2/18/1980, amending Section 21 of Chapter 6: Building Code for Electrical Installations.

Ordinance Number 115, passed by the Town of Easton Council on 2/6/1984, repealed Section 21 of Chapter 6 Building Code on 2/27/1984.

(Ordinance 547 effective July 1st 2009)

Article IV. Plumbing License

§ 14-245. Plumbing Work - Licensed Plumber Required.
All plumbing work in the Town shall be done by or under the personal supervision of a licensed plumber of the State of Maryland who shall, in addition, be licensed by the Town. (Ordinance 605 effective July 1st 2012 and Ordinance 12 effective 1/1/1941)

§ 14-256. Plumbing License - Application; Fees.
Each application for a plumber's license from the Town of Easton shall be made upon a form obtained from the Town ~~Clerk~~ who shall, if the qualifications set forth in this chapter are complied with, and upon receipt of payment of a fee, issue said license. No license shall be issued for less than a full year's fee. (Ordinance 605 effective July 1st 2012, Ordinance 104 effective 3/15/1982 and Ordinance 12 effective 1/1/1941)

§ 14-267. Plumbing Bond; Indemnification of Town.
Every person, firm or corporation applying for a license to carry on the business of plumbing in the Town shall file a certificate of liability insurance or furnish a bond in the sum of One ~~O~~ne Million ~~D~~dollars ($1,000,000.00) per occurrence or accident, whereby the applicant shall indemnify and save harmless the Town from all suits and actions brought against the Town or any officer of the Town for any injury or damage received or sustained by any person in consequence of or resulting from any negligence of work performed by, or materials used by, said applicant, their servants or agents. (Ordinance 605 effective July 1st 2012, Ordinance 12 effective 1/1/1941 and 1967 Code by Ordinance 519 aka E-34 effective 5/7/1967)

§ 14-278. Compliance with Code.
Every plumber licensed by the Town shall comply with the provisions of this Code in all plumbing done within the limits of the Town. (Ordinance 605 effective July 1st 2012 and Ordinance 12 effective 1/1/1941)

§ 14-289. Plumbing License – Administration.
All plumbing licenses are regulated by the License Administration under Article I of Chapter 14. (Ordinance 605 effective July 1st 2012)

Article V. Gas Fitters License

§ 14-29.30 Installation - Registration Required.
All persons, firms or corporations who install any gas piping or appliance or other installation for use in connection with tank gas, bottled gas, or any other container used in dispensing any form

of liquefied petroleum gas within the corporate limits of the Town shall register with said Town or its designated agent. (Ordinance 603 effective July 1st 2012 and Ordinance 54 effective March 15th 1962, historical reference 21)

§ 14-30.~~1~~ Information for Registration.
Registration shall cover the following information which shall be always kept current: (Ordinance 603 effective July 1st 2012 and Ordinance 54 effective March 15th 1962, historical reference 21)

§ 14-30~~1~~.1 Individuals. Must file the following information:
The name and address of the person or persons owning and operating the business, the name under which the business, trades if different from that of its individual owner, and the name of the proper person to be contacted with regard to any matters in connection with any gas installations made within the corporate limits of the Town. (Ordinance 603 effective July 1st 2012 and Ordinance 54 effective March 15th 1962, historical reference 21)

§ 14-30~~1~~.2 Corporation. Must file the following information:
The proper legal name of the corporation, the State of incorporation, the address of its principal office, the name and address of its president, the name and address of its resident agent within the State of Maryland, the name and address of its local manager and a corporate authorization permitting civil suits or criminal proceedings filed on behalf of the Town to be served upon said local manager, or any other person whom the corporation may wish to designate, and the name and address of the proper person to be notified in the event of any emergency involving any of the company's equipment or installations (Ordinance 603 effective July 1st 2012 and Ordinance 54 effective March 15th 1962)

§ 14-312~~.~~. Gas Fitters License – Administration.
All gas fitters licenses are regulated by the License Administration under Article I of Chapter 14. (Ordinance 603 effective July 1st 2012)

CHAPTER 15 – RESERVED

Closed Session Summary

(To be included in the minutes in the next open meeting)

The Easton Town Council met in closed session on Monday, March 2, 2026 at 6:38 p.m. in the Easton Town Council Chambers.

The purpose of the closed session was:

General Provisions Article § 3-305(b) (4) to consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State;

Upon motion by Mr. Rankin, seconded by Ms. Curry and carried unanimously, the meeting was convened into Closed Session.

The following individuals were present: Mayor Megan Cook, Council President, Don Abbatiello, Council members Rev. Davis, Maureen Curry, Dr. David Montgomery, and Robert Rankin, Town Clerk, Kathy Ruf, Town Attorney Sharon VanEmburgh, Town Manager, and Andy Kitzrow.

The Town Council discussed business expansion opportunities in Easton. No action was taken by the Town Council.

The meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

EASTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

"With Pride We Serve"

UPCOMING PUBLIC ASSEMBLY EVENT

TO: Mayor Cook and Andy Kitzrow

DATE: March 10, 2026

PREPRARED BY: 1st Sgt. Patrick Sally 0135

EVENT: Sign Wave Rally / No Kings

APPLICANT: Michelle Dappert / Rick Hughes

LOCATION: Sidewalk next to Wa-Wa at the corner of Ocean Gateway and Dover Rd.

DATE/TIME: March 28, 2026 11am to 1pm

ATTENDANCE: 500 to 1,000 participants

PURPOSE: Sign wave Rally for Public Awareness

REQUEST: They will be advised to stay off the roadway and to not obstruct traffic in any way.

EPD CONCERNS: Public Safety for the participants and the general public

APPROXIMATE COST: $800.00 in officer overtime (Waived) for 4 officers

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

EASTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

"With Pride We Serve"

UPCOMING PUBLIC ASSEMBLY EVENT

TO: Mayor Cook and Andy Kitzrow
DATE: March 11, 2026
PREPRARED BY: 1st Sgt. Patrick Sally 0135

EVENT: Easter Bunny Egg Hunt

APPLICANT: Holly DeKarske

LOCATION: Circuit Court back grass area and part of the library

DATE/TIME: April 04, 2026 9am to 11am

ATTENDANCE: 400

PURPOSE: Community Outreach Easter Egg Hunt for children from the area

DETAILS:

- Free public event

SPECIAL REQUESTS:

- Street Closure: West St. from Dover St. to Federal St.

EPD CONCERNS:

- None

APPROXIMATE COST:

- No cost. Closure by on duty personnel

RECOMMENDATIONS: Approve

EASTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

"With Pride We Serve"

UPCOMING PUBLIC ASSEMBLY EVENT

TO: Mayor Cook and Andy Kitzrow
DATE: March 4, 2026
PREPRARED BY: 1st Sgt. Patrick Sally 0135

EVENT: Pride Festival

APPLICANT: Kyle O'Donnell – Delmarva Pride Center

LOCATION: Harrison Street – From Dover to South Streets, Lot 1

DATE/TIME: June 13, 2026 11am – 4pm

ATTENDANCE: 4,000

PURPOSE: Festival

DETAILS:

- Food truck vendors set up throughout the venue
- Vendor and activity tents set up along Harrison Street
- There will only be one small stage setup for live, local music on Harrison Street just south of the Dover Street intersection.
- Trash pickup and street sweeping to be completed by festival coordinators
- Applicant to obtain permission for use of Waterfowl Building and Ashley Insurance Lot.

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SPECIAL REQUESTS:

- Street Closures –
    - Harrison Street from Dover to South Street
    - Glenwood Extended from rear entrance to Shore Bank to Harrison Street
    - South Lane from Harrison Street to Talbot Lane

- Roads closed to allow set up 90 minutes before the event (9:30AM) and 60 minutes after event concludes for clean-up (roads open at 5:00pm)

- Lot 1 in its entirety.
- Have 6 portable restrooms set up at Town Parking Lot #1

EPD CONCERNS:

- Blocking vehicles/barriers will be needed at 4 road closure points.

APPROXIMATE COST: $1,755.00

3 overtime officers to assist Sgt. Coxon with the event for 9 hours.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend Approval

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
9030 Mistletoe Drive
Easton, MD 21601
410-822-0513
www.EastonMD.gov

DATE: **March 9, 2026**

TO: **Andy Kitzrow - Town Manager**
CC: **Kody Cario - Assistant Director of Public Works**

FROM: **Rick Van Emburgh – Town Engineer**

SUBJECT: **Stormdrain Lining - S Washington Street at Papermill**

The Town of Easton FY26 Budget includes $160,000 for Stormdrain Lining at S Washington Street near Papermill Branch and the Rail Trail (Project # 22-22).

Pleasants Construction, Inc. conducted a site visit and provided a proposal to line the requested 245 linear feet of 48 inch diameter CMP (Corrugated Metal Pipe) for the amount of $109,572.95 using the County of Fairfax, Virginia standard contract.

The Town of Easton Procurement Policy requires contracts of $50,000 and above to be approved by Town Council. Public Bidding is not required when the Town receives a contract price negotiated by the State, County, or other governmental entity pursuant to a valid contract.

We have worked with Pleasants Construction, Inc. on other stormdrain lining projects and have been satisfied with their work.

In conclusion, I recommend the Town Council award the project to Pleasants Construction, Inc. for the amount of $109,572.95. I also recommend the Town Council approve spending the remaining Project Budget on additional work with the unit costs outlined in the contract as needed.

PLEASANTS CONSTRUCTION, INC.
24024 FREDERICK ROAD CLARKSBURG, MARYLAND 20871 301-428-0800 FAX:301-428-3922

Date: 2/10/2026

Kody Cario
Town of Easton
14 S. Harrison Street
Easton, MD 21601
410-463-6219

RE: **R26-012 - Easton Storm Drain Lining** **MH to Outfall** Blanket Purchase Order #8500632183

We are pleased to submit the following proposal to furnish labor, equipment, and material, complete in accordance with the plans, specifications and conditions herein: *Per information provided below by Fairfax County and in accordance with the Bid Documents for Contract Number: 4400011346*

Ovality From Fairfax	Design Thick Minimum	Ordered Thickness	Measured Length	Measured Depth	Estimated Cure Time	Protruding Taps	Lateral Reinstatements	Diameter to Be lined
5%	10.95	11.375mm	245	4	3.5 HR	2	2	48

U.V. CIPP Lining for Fairfax County SWM Contract Includes:

R26-012 - Easton Storm Drain Lining
MH to Outfall

	Task		Unit	Total this Job	Unit Price	Total Price
1	Traffic Control	**Signs and Cones**	EA	1	$ **500.00**	$ 500.00
2	Hydro Jet	**Initial Set up**	EA	1	$ **1,200.00**	$ 1,200.00
3	Hydro Jet Cleaning of Culverts***		LF	245	$ **8.00**	$ 1,960.00
4	CCTV Insp.	**Initial Set up**	EA	1	$ **900.00**	$ 900.00
5	CCTV footage	**Pre CCTV 42-60 inch**	LF	245	$ **7.00**	$ 1,715.00
6	Pipe Lining	**48" 11.375mm**	LF	245	$ **411.41**	$ 100,795.45
7	Post CCTV	**Post CCTV 42-60 inch**	LF	245	$ **4.50**	$ 1,102.50
8	Trim Protruding Taps****		EA	2	$ **400.00**	$ 800.00
9	Lateral Reinstatements		EA	2	$ **300.00**	$ 600.00
Price Complete			**L.S**			**$ 109,572.95**

*****Assumes access to both ends of pipe to be lined**
*****Town to provide use of hydrants for water**
*****Town to bushhog a path to the DS outfall**
*****No Parking cones in the apartment parking lot**
*****County to notify residents of work within property.**

Acceptance:
All work on this contract will be completed in accordance with the aforementioned Bid Documents and Memorandum of Negotiation for RFP2000003478 **(Contract Number: 4400011346**) between Pleasants Construction, Inc. and Fairfax County.

If the above meets with your approval, please sign and return this proposal to the attention of Stephen Thomas via email to sthomas@pleasantsconstruction.com. A fully executed copy will be returned for your files.

PLEASANTS CONSTRUCTION, INC. **Town of Easton**

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County of Fairfax, Virginia

NOTICE OF AWARD

Date: 2022 June 10 | 08:24:14 EDT

CONTRACT TITLE: Storm Drainage System Rehabilitation

SOLICITATION NUMBER: RFP 2000003478

CONTRACT NUMBER: **4400011346**

NIGP CODE: **91378**

CONTRACT PERIOD: July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2024

RENEWAL: Three (3) one-year renewals

CONTRACTOR:
Pleasants Construction, Inc.
24024 Frederick Rd.
Clarksburg, MD 20871

SUPPLIER CODE:
1500057917

Contact: Brian Lippy
E-mail: blippy@pleasantsconstruction.com
Phone: 301-428-0800

TERMS: Net 30 days

FOB: Destination

PRICES: See Attached Pricing Schedule

DPMM CONTACT: Nicole Cifci, CPPB, VCA, Contract Specialist II
Telephone: 703-324-2854
E-mail: Nicole.Cifci@FairfaxCounty.gov

ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS:
Any County Department and Fairfax County Schools may enter into FOCUS a shopping cart indicating the item required, the quantity, the payment terms and the delivery date. The purchase order must be annotated with the contract number. Requests exceeding the small purchase threshold ($10k) will be routed to DPMM and a purchase order will be executed.

DocuSigned by:
Nicole Cifci
C42AFD859238483...

Nicole Cifci, CPPB, VCA
Contract Specialist II

DISTRIBUTION:
Dept. of Finance – Accounts Payable/e
DPWES - MSMD– Michael Dreher/e
DPMM Supplier Diversity/e
Contract Specialist – Nicole Cifci
Assistant Contract Specialist – Team 2

Department of Procurement & Material Management
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 427
Fairfax, VA 22035-0013
Website: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/procurement
Phone (703) 324-3201, **TTY:** 711, **Fax:** (703) 324-3228

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PRICING

Testing		
Short Term Flexural - ASTM D-790	INCLUDED	***/ea***
Short Term Tensile - ASTM D-638	INCLUDED	***/ea***
Thickness - ASTM D-3567 (a thickness test may be required per location)	INCLUDED	***/ea***
Long Term Flexural - ASTM D- 2990	INCLUDED	***/ea***
Traffic Control		
Signs and Cones	$ 500.00	***/day***
Flagging Operations	$ 1,500.00	***/day***
Hydro Jet Cleaning of Culverts		
Initial Set Up and Removal	$ 1,200.00	***/ea***
Hydro Jet Cleaning of Culverts	$ 8.00	***/lf***
CCTV Inspection		
Initial Set up	$ 900.00	***/ea***
CCTV for Pre-Rehab of Culverts		
Pre-CCTV 6" - 21"	$ 2.75	***/lf***
Pre-CCTV 24" - 36"	$ 4.50	***/lf***
Pre-CCTV 42" - 60"	$ 7.00	***/lf***
Pre-CCTV 66" - 78"	$ 10.00	***/lf***
CCTV for Post-Rehab of Culverts		
Post-CCTV 6" - 21"	$ 1.50	***/lf***
Post-CCTV 24" - 36"	$ 2.50	***/lf***
Post-CCTV 42" - 60"	$ 4.50	***/lf***
Post-CCTV 66" - 78"	$ 7.00	***/lf***

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PRICING

***Cured-in-Place lining is calculated at an average of 105 lf per run based on the specifications.*		
Lining Pipe w/ U.V. Cured CIPP Liner		
12" Pipe		
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4.375mm Liner Thickness	$ 86.05	***/LF***
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9.625mm Liner Thickness	$ 151.43	***/LF***
21" Pipe		
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10.5mm Liner Thickness	$ 178.06	***/LF***

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PRICING

54" Pipe - continued		
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PRICING

84" Pipe - (OBIC SPRAY LINER) *150 mils of OBIC 1200c Armor*	$ 1,931.86	***/LF***
Trim Protruding Services		
Trim Protuding services 4" - 8"	$ 400.00	***/ea***
Lateral Reinstatements		
Reinstate 4" - 8" laterals after lining	$ 300.00	***/ea***
Manhole Rehab - 500 VF - OBIC SPRAY		
OBIC Armor 5000 Structural Spray Liner – 4’ diameter	$ 434.14	***/VF***
OBIC Armor 1000 Multi-Layer Spray Liner – 4’ diameter	$ 441.14	***/VF***
*Includes up to 5 gallons of Grout		
OBIC Armor 5000 Structural Spray Liner – 5’ diameter	$ 451.71	***/VF***
OBIC Armor 1000 Multi-Layer Spray Liner – 5’ diameter	$ 452.90	***/VF***
OBIC Armor 5000 Structural Spray Liner – larger than 5’ diameter and/or other structures	$ 28.77	***/SF***
OBIC Armor 1000 Multi-Layer Spray Liner – larger than 5’ diameter and/or other structures	$ 28.85	***/SF***

Town of Easton 2026 Comprehensive Plan



February 19, 2026

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION **1**

a. Purpose and Legal Framework 1

b. Planning Background, Scope and Use of this Plan 4

c. Easton's Role and Identity 4

d. Foundations and Data Sources 5

e. Planning Process and Public Engagement 7

f. Vision 10

2. LAND USE **12**

a. Purpose 12

b. Land Use Goals, Issues and Policy Considerations 17

c. Zoning And Community Character 24

d. Future Land Use Framework 26

e. Special Districts and Place Types 28

f. Goals and Objectives 29

3. PLACE (COMMUNITY CHARACTER) **32**

a. Purpose 32

b. Historic and Cultural resources 32

c. Contemporary Architecture 37

d. Civic Architecture and the Public Realm 38

e. The Case for Traditional Neighborhood Zoning 38

f. The Role of Major Retail in Easton in 2025 41

g. Town Gateways and Corridors 43

k. Goals and Objectives 44

4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT **48**

a. Purpose 48

b. Business Development 51

c. Tourism and Downtown 51

d. Commercial Redevelopment 52

e. Community Development 53
f. Goals and Objectives 53
5. HOUSING 55
a. Purpose 55
b. Housing Issues and Policy Considerations 56
c. Existing Housing Programs 59
d. Housing Affordability 63
e. Fair Housing 70
f. Potential New Housing Programs / Policies 71
g. Goals and Objectives 73
6. TRANSPORTATION 75
a. Purpose 75
b. Transportation Issues and Policy Considerations 75
c. Organizational Framework 76
d. Integration of Land Use and Transportation Planning 76
e. Complete Networks 77
f. Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) 80
g. Road System 80
h. Complete Streets 83
i. Airport 83
j. Port 86
k. Rail 87
l. Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan 87
m. Public Transportation 91
n. Transportation Map and Proposed Improvements 91
o. Goals and Objectives 97
7. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES 103
a. Purpose 103
b. Utilities 104
c. Solid Waste 106
d. Medical and Hospital Facilities 106

e. Public Schools 108
f. Libraries 109
g. Community Centers 110
h. Public Safety 111
i. Goals and Objectives 113
8. PARKS 116
a. Purpose 116
b. Existing Parks 116
c. Future Parks 121
d. Connectivity and Green Infrastructure 123
e. Goals and Objectives 125
9. ECOLOGY 126
a. Purpose 126
b. Water Resources 126
c. Water Source Protection 129
d. Stormwater Management & Point & Nonpoint Source Loading Status and Remediation 130
e. Mineral Resources 135
f. Biodiversity 136
g. Goals and Objectives 137
10 SUSTAINABILITY 140
a. Purpose 140
b. Climate Change 143
c. Mitigation Strategies 144
d. Adaptation Strategies 145
e. Sustainable Built Environment 148
f. Food Security 149
g. Financial Sustainability 149
h. Social Sustainability 158
h. Goals and Objectives 159
11 MUNICIPAL GROWTH 161
a. Purpose 161

b. Growth Rate Discussion 162
c. Existing Growth Capacity (Infill and Redevelopment) 168
d. Future Growth Areas and Annexation 172
e. Smart Growth and Land Preservation 175
f. Public Services and Infrastructure Needs 176
g. Service Adequacy Considerations 179
h. Water Supply 181
i. Recreation 183
j. Financing Mechanisms 184
k. Rural Buffers and Transition Areas 186
l. Burden on Services for Areas Outside of Town but Under Town's Responsibility 188
m. Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 188
n. Protection of Sensitive Areas 190
o. A Growth Management Strategy for Easton 191
p. Goals and Objectives 198

12 Implementation 200

a. Introduction 200
b. 2025 - 2035 Growth Strategy 200
c. Achieving the Vision 201
d. Goals and Objectives 212

13 Appendices 215

a. Appendix 1 - Historical Development & Growth Dynamics 216
b. Appendix 2 - Public Survey Results 223
c. Appendix 3 - Historic Annexation List 255
d. Appendix 4 - Nutrient Loading Analysis Summary 260
e. Appendix 5 - Planned Water & Wastewater Capital Projects 264

1. INTRODUCTION

> ***"Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work..."***
> ***— Daniel Burnham***

Envisioning the future and identifying the steps necessary to achieve it is essential in long range planning, particularly the establishment of a community's Comprehensive Plan. That Plan will have a greater chance of being realized if it is prepared with wide scale and broad-based input from community members. It is our framework for this Comprehensive Plan update.

Those interested in the evolution of the Planning process in Easton, the different techniques used in Comprehensive Plan Updates, and how our philosophy was shaped by, and aligned with, policies at the State level, including those advocating for Smart Growth, are encouraged to review the archive of Comprehensive Plans maintained on the Town of Easton Planning Department's web page (see https://eastonmd.gov/186/Comprehensive-Plan).

A. Purpose and Legal Framework

The Land Use Article of the Maryland Annotated Code delegates planning and land use regulatory powers to the Town of Easton. When these powers are exercised, they must be exercised in accordance with the applicable provisions of the statute. Accordingly, this Comprehensive Plan for Easton is prepared in compliance with Sections 3.05, 3.06, 3.07, and 3.08 of the statute. Sections 3.05 and 3.06 address the Plan's content and organization, and Sections 3.07 and 3.08 address procedures for the Plan's review and adoption.

The Easton Comprehensive Plan serves as the Town's foundational document for land use policy, infrastructure planning, and long-range civic investment. This document fulfills the requirements of the Maryland Land Use Article (§3-201 et seq.), which mandates that municipalities prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan to guide the coordinated and efficient development of their jurisdiction.

In April 2025, Maryland enacted new legislation creating 8 Sustainable Growth Planning Principles, modernizing and replacing the former 12 Planning Visions. These new principles reflect the State's

shift from Smart Growth to Sustainable Growth to achieve more balanced land use and development. Sustainable Growth focuses on policies addressing economic, social, and environmental factors for both current and future generations. These eight Planning Principles are designed to make sustainable growth policies simpler, clearer, and easier for everyone involved in planning and development to use effectively.



The new Planning Principles are summarized below:

Maryland's Planning Principles

1. **Land:** Optimize productivity of **working landscapes**, including **farms** and **forests**, and **fisheries**, and prioritize **development within population centers** that are in proximity to existing infrastructure and facilities.
2. **Transportation:** Prioritize transportation networks that create **energy efficient**, **affordable**, and **reliable access** to jobs, housing, and services.
3. **Housing:** Enable a mix of **quality housing types** and **affordability** options to accommodate all who want to live in the state.
4. **Economy:** Allow for **adaptive reuse**, **mixed–use**, and **context appropriate** new development that responds to changing markets and innovations.
5. **Equity:** Engage **all sectors of the community** in plan development to ensure **diverse voices** are heard and the needs of **underserved populations** are prioritized.

6. **Resilience:** Integrate resiliency measures that will **minimize** the **impacts** of rapid and unexpected **natural– and human–caused threats** on communities.
7. **Place:** Provide for **public spaces** that encourage **social interaction** and value **cultural**, **historical**, and **natural resources**.
8. **Ecology:** Protect and restore **sensitive ecological systems** and conserve **natural resources**, including forests, agricultural areas, and waterways.

These Principles ensure that local planning efforts align with State funding, capital improvement programs, and resource conservation policies. The Plan is also designed to coordinate with Talbot County's planning framework.

The 2026 Easton Comprehensive Plan establishes Town policies relative to the most desirable development patterns for present-day Easton as well as the Easton of the future, including potential growth areas for the Town. It identifies areas for living and working activities and related services that are required to assure a quality environment for all residents. Implementation proposals are included as methods for coordinating public and private development activities. Together these influence Town development form and function. Attention is also given to the Town's role in the development of Talbot County.

The Town Council is responsible under Maryland law for adopting the Plan. The Town Planning Commission is responsible for drafting the Plan and thereafter for general administration and enforcement of the Plan. All development proposals are reviewed for conformance to basic policies and programs identified by the Plan.

Additionally, after adoption, a Comprehensive Plan serves as:

- A unified statement of desirable development policies.
- A framework within which development issues can be evaluated and public policy effectuated consistent with the Town's long-range growth and development goals and objectives.
- An information document for local elected officials, citizens, developers and special interest groups concerning critical development issues and policies.

Easton's Comprehensive Plan is a cornerstone of the complex process of guiding future development in the interest of the public. Adoption of the Plan constitutes an important step in

directing development in a manner that maintains and enhances Easton's special and unique sense of place.

B. Planning Background, Scope and Use of this Plan

Easton's modern planning era began with the 1997 Comprehensive Plan, which was developed in response to community concerns about uncoordinated growth, loss of open space, and weakening of traditional neighborhood character. That Plan introduced a new framework based on community identity, compact form, and public participation.

The 2010 Plan built upon that foundation, introducing five core growth strategies: contain sprawl, increase density, build neighborhoods, improve design, and manage growth rate. These strategies guided the Town's zoning reforms and capital improvement priorities for more than a decade.

This 2026 Plan affirms those guiding principles and introduces a sixth strategy: encourage more sustainable development patterns. This addition reflects emerging concerns about climate change, infrastructure efficiency, fiscal resilience, and equitable access to housing and opportunity. Looking back over the past decades of the modern planning process, most of the overarching themes of this 2026 Plan originally appeared in the one that was adopted in 1997.

This Plan provides a policy framework to guide Easton's development through 2035. It is organized into thematic chapters covering land use, community character, infrastructure and services, environmental stewardship, housing, transportation, municipal growth, and implementation. Each chapter includes guiding principles, context, objectives, and recommendations.

The Comprehensive Plan is used by the Planning Commission, Town Council, staff, and the public to guide development review, budget decisions, capital investments, and updates to zoning and subdivision ordinances. It is also used by State and regional agencies in assessing funding eligibility and regulatory compliance. The Plan is intended to be updated as needed to remain current with demographic trends, regulatory changes, and community priorities.

C. Easton's Role and Identity

Easton is the economic, governmental, and cultural center of Talbot County and Maryland's Mid-Shore region. As the County seat, it houses the region's major hospital, courthouse, library, and other key institutions. Easton supports a population of a little over 17,000 residents, with services that extend to tens of thousands more from the surrounding area.

Easton is frequently recognized as one of the best small towns in America. The Town is defined by its walkable historic downtown, traditional neighborhoods, and compact form. Its character is shaped by architectural continuity, preserved open space, and a strong civic tradition. Easton is situated at the crossroads of U.S. Route 50 and Maryland Route 322, giving it strategic access to the Chesapeake Bay, Annapolis, Washington, and Baltimore. Its rural setting and cultural amenities make it both a desirable place to live and a key regional destination. Easton's growth over the past century reflects its increasing role as a regional center and its attractiveness as a place to live and invest.

For an overview of Easton's historical development and growth dynamics, and that of the region, see Appendix 1.

D. Foundations and Data Sources

This Plan is based on a range of data, analysis tools, and prior studies that provide a foundation for its goals and recommendations. Sources include the U.S. Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning, Talbot County Geographic Information Systems (GIS), local infrastructure capacity studies, and Easton's building permit and land use data. The Plan also incorporates fiscal analysis tools such as Urban3 value-per-acre assessments to evaluate development patterns.

Taken together, these tools provide a comprehensive and evidence-based foundation for land use policy, infrastructure planning, and growth management.

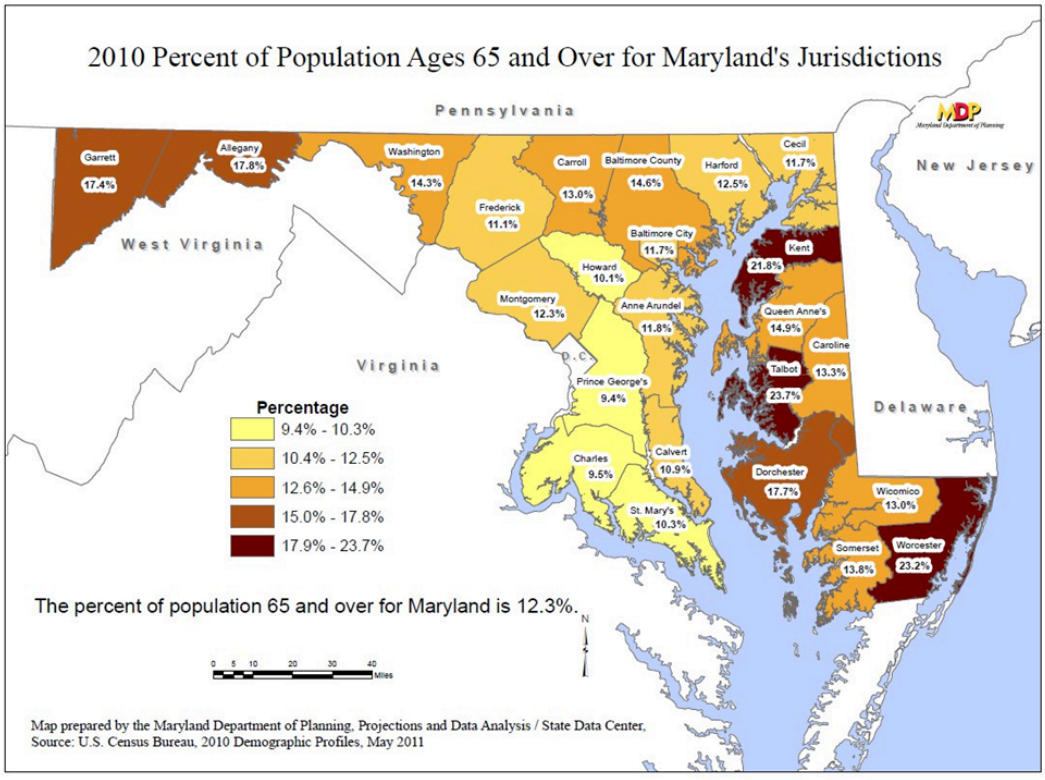
One demographic change evident in (although not unique to) Easton is the growth of the Hispanic population. The chart below shows how these components of Easton's population have changed since 1990 when Hispanics were first reported separately. Particularly noteworthy is the absolute growth in the Hispanic population as evidenced by the fact that while the total African American population has been stable since 1990, the percentage that this number represents of the total Town population has shrunk considerably. Conversely the Hispanic population growth has been dramatic both in absolute numbers and as a percentage of the Town's overall population (from 0.4% to 14.4%).

Year	Total Population	African American	African American %	Hispanic or Latino	Hispanic or Latino %
1990	9,372	2,521	26.9%	337	0.4%
2000	11,708	2,746	23.5%	404	3.5%
2010	15,9945	2,742	17.2%	1,570	9.8%
2020	17,101	2,467	14.4%	2,454	14.4%

TABLE 1 AFRICAN AMERICAN AND HISPANIC POPULATION CHANGE, 1990-2020

SOURCE : US Decennial Census for Year identified

Easton and Talbot County have a high concentration of people over age 65. In 2010 Maryland Department of Planning produced the following map illustrating this:



Map 1: Maryland Senior Population by County

American Communities Survey data for 2021 indicates that senior citizens remain a significant portion of the local population. It found that while the state percentage of the population that was 65 or over in 2021 was 16.3%, Talbot County's was 29.9% and the Town of Easton's was 24.9%.

E. Planning Process and Public Engagement

Work on this Comprehensive Plan update began in 2021 with a review of the 2010 Plan's implementation outcomes. Through 2022, 2023 and 2024, Town staff and consultants gathered data, conducted mapping and zoning analysis, and assessed growth capacity. Community engagement began in 2023 and continued into 2025, including public open houses, stakeholder workshops, online surveys, and formal public hearings.

Since 1997, each subsequent update of the Comprehensive Plan has continued to refine the Town's growth strategy, summarized in the 2010 Plan as:

- Contain Sprawl within an Urban Growth Boundary
- Increase Density
- Build Neighborhoods
- Improve Design
- Manage the Rate of Growth

The 2026 Plan adds a sixth component to this Growth Management Strategy:

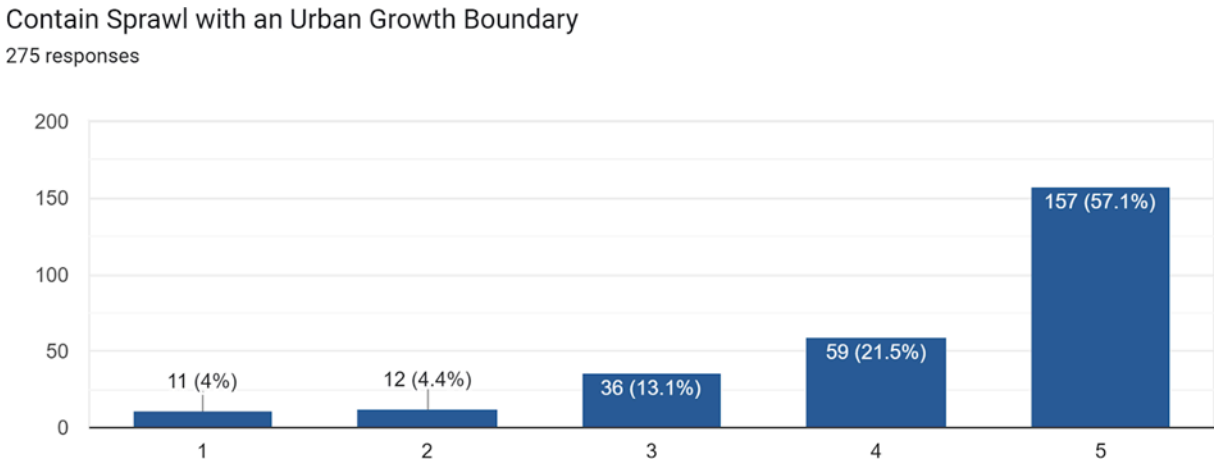
- Encourage More Sustainable Development Patterns

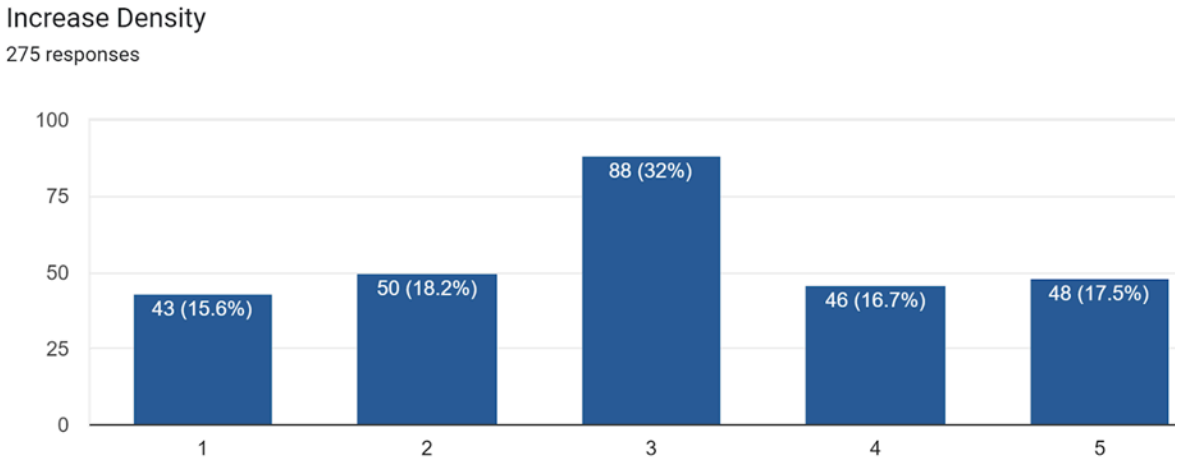
Key themes identified through public input included the need for workforce housing, reinvestment in the downtown core, traffic and multimodal transportation improvements, protection of neighborhood character, and preservation of Easton's agricultural and open space edges. The Planning Commission oversaw the process and incorporated community feedback into all major chapters and policy recommendations.

Community Feedback Process Highlights

The community input phase of this Plan Update asked the public about the continued relevance or appropriateness of each component of the Growth Management strategy. The results were clear: each received something between moderate to very strong support for continuing to be included in the next Planning Period (2026-2036). As a result, this Plan Update begins with the premise that

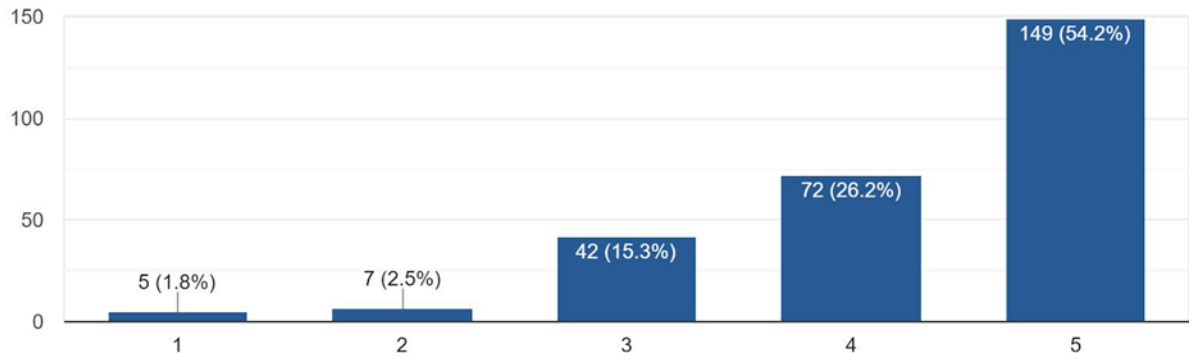
there is no desire to throw any of these strategies out. Rather, the objective is to build on these ideas, refine and improve them where possible, and update them based on new information or issues where necessary. In a nutshell, this is the context and spirit of this Plan update. The results of the questions about Town's Growth Management strategy are summarized in the following charts (for each response, 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree):





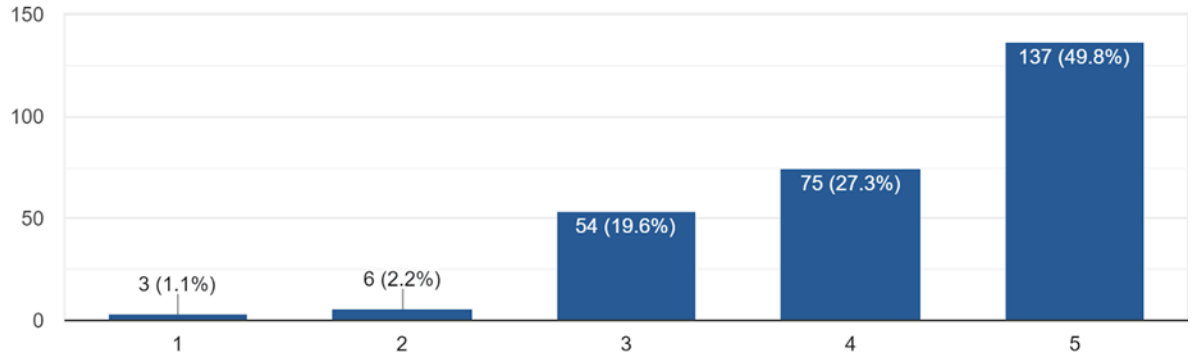
Build Neighborhoods (as opposed to Subdivisions)

275 responses



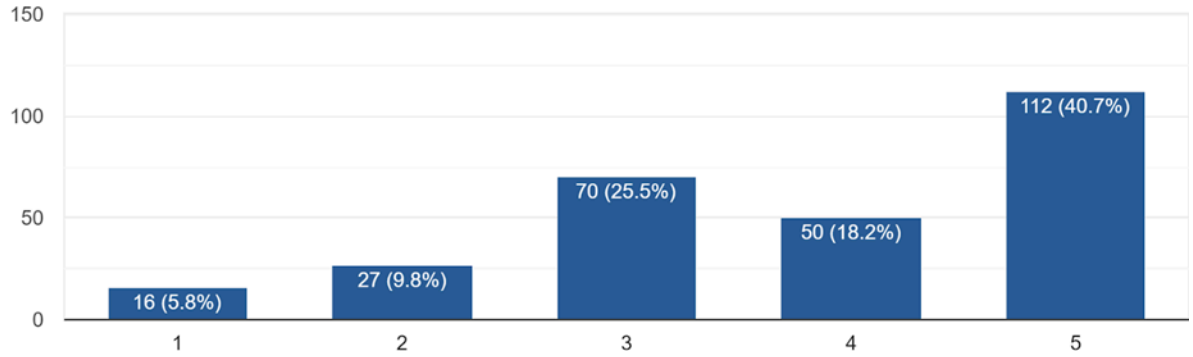
Improve Design

275 responses



Restrict Rate of Growth

275 responses



Detailed survey results from the public outreach program are provided in Appendix 2.

F. VISION

This Plan's Vision for the future of Easton can be summarized as "A Return to our Roots." This suggests that we desire the future growth and development of our Town to occur in a more Traditional sense, not in the modern constructs of suburbia. Furthermore, we envision our Town to continue to function as the main population center of Talbot County and one of the major Towns on the mid-Shore, along with Cambridge, Denton, Salisbury, Centreville, and Chestertown. We will be a significant place of employment, entertainment and shopping, but on our scale, not that of National Retailers. We have no desire to become THE major shopping destination for the region stretching from the Bay Bridge to Chestertown, to Salisbury and the Delaware State line. We are happy to be THE destination for the citizens of Talbot County and one of several options for people in the region described above, but nothing grander than that.

The "Return to our Roots" theme stems from our desire to develop much more like we did from our earliest days until the beginning of the Post World War II era than from the 1940's through roughly the present. We want the same kind of density, mix of land uses, and general character of the earlier days and we want to move away from homogenous uses, cookie-cutter, mass produced looking subdivisions, strip development along our highways, and the general "looks like anywhere Suburban America". We want to be urban, not suburban, although urban on an Eastern Shore of Maryland scale. To that end, this chapter is the perfect companion to Place Element, where this whole theme is discussed in greater detail.

This Vision and theme is the same as that set forth in the 2010 Plan. Considering that in terms of the growth of the Town, little changed from 2010 to today, this makes sense. Specifically, in 2025, just as in 2010, Easton finds itself in a period of slow growth, with a housing affordability problem, and with public support for our overall growth strategy. In some ways though, it will be more challenging to implement this strategy, given that there are at least a few factors that are different in 2026 than they were in 2010. These differences include the increased severity of the housing affordability issue, and recent purchases of large parcels of land by the Town of Easton and Talbot County, which while advancing land preservation/parks and open space goals, also remove hundreds of acres of land from consideration of potential new housing.

Lastly, there is the existence of the Lakeside at Trappe subdivision located a mere five minutes from our southernmost Town boundary. In 2010, and really for decades, Easton has been "the only game in town" in terms of residential development. Now, there is significant "competition" in the form of this 2,000 unit subdivision. How that affects the absorption rate of home sales (and prices) in

Easton is unknown at this point, but potentially a significant factor in both our growth strategy and housing affordability during this planning period.

2. LAND USE

> TO HAVE GOOD FARMING OR GOOD LAND USE OF ANY KIND, YOU HAVE GOT TO HAVE LIMITS.
>
> — Wendell Berry

A. PURPOSE

At its heart, a Comprehensive Plan remains first and foremost a land use plan. This Land Use Element provides the foundation upon which later plan elements are based. It is the blueprint for the future development of the Town. Together with the Municipal Growth Element, the Land Use Element outlines policies for the orderly and planned development of the Town.

The use of land within the Town is the result of many physical, economic and social forces. The Land Use Element reflects an attempt by the Town to equitably balance the attainment of Town goals and objectives for development with private property rights and interests. The Land Use Element addresses issues and identifies Town policies relative to residential, commercial, and industrial development as well as the provision of lands for parks and open spaces. It analyzes the appropriate mix of uses in the short and long term given projected growth. It will address reversing and rectifying what are now viewed as poor land use decisions (made not just in Easton but throughout the nation) that were made in the past, primarily since the late 1940's. In short, it lays the groundwork that will be repeated throughout the Plan for ensuring that future growth is not in the form of auto-centric, isolated, suburban style subdivisions but rather takes the form of multi-use, integrated, and connected neighborhoods.

At its founding in 1710, Easton was located at the headwaters of the Tred Avon River. Current visitors to Easton may well be confused by that statement and wonder why the Town moved from that location. Actually the Town did not move. Rather, the river changed. It does still exist in this area, but has been reduced to a stream that has been enclosed in culverts in the vicinity of Talbottown Shopping Center and the Easton Utilities Electric Generating Plant.

Directing growth is a critical task facing local governments throughout the country today. Many communities view growth as essential to their economic health. Communities without growth may be forced to continually raise taxes on existing residents and businesses since the tax base does not expand. On the other hand, unchecked, unmanaged growth can also cause many problems.

Achieving the right balance of land uses is critical in avoiding these problems. For example, a community that focuses primarily on residential growth may become a bedroom community where the residents are forced to travel to other places for everything from work to shopping. A community with an overabundance of commercial development invites traffic congestion. And unless the community has adequate design standards, whatever development occurs may not be aesthetically pleasing.

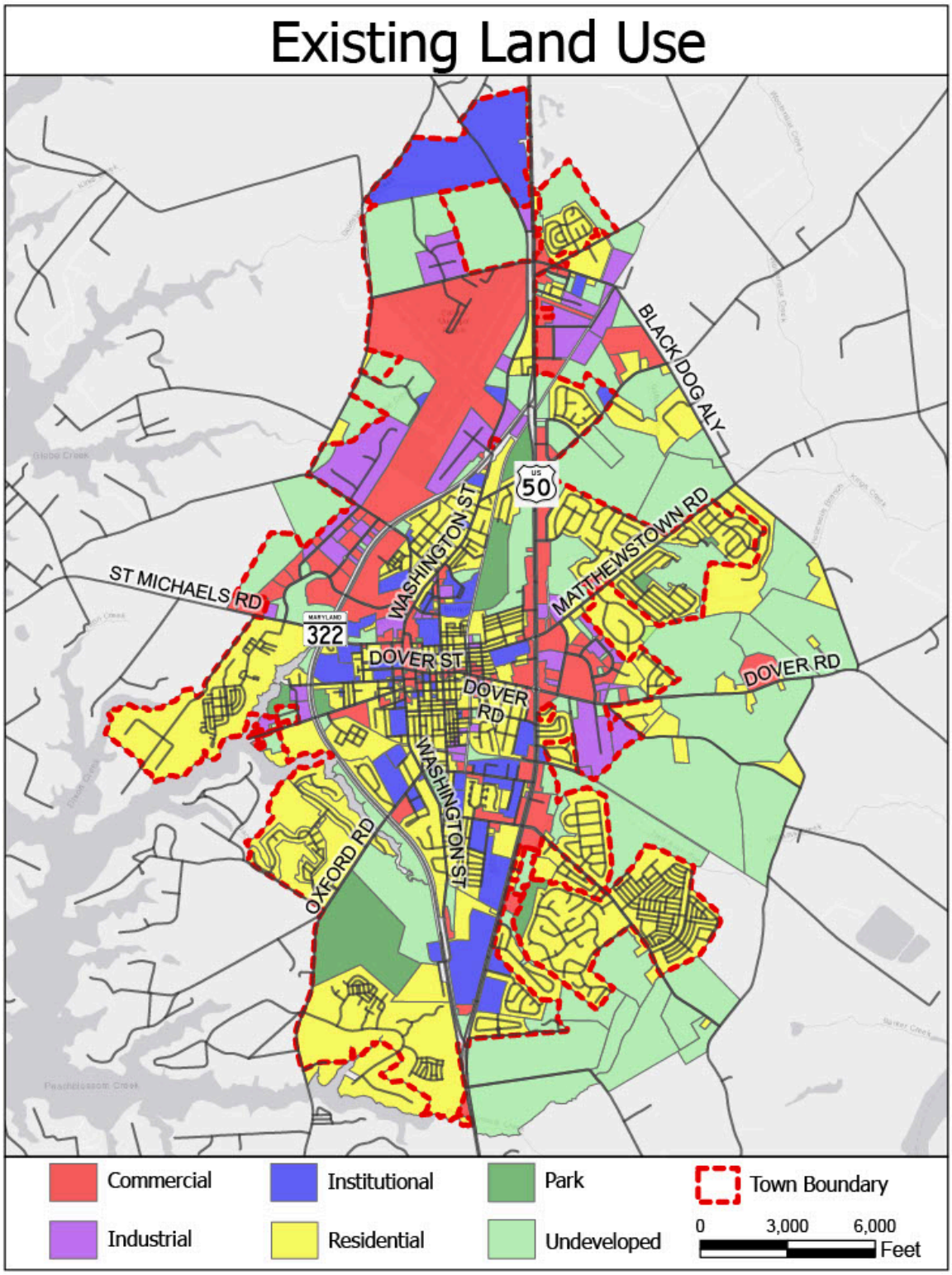
Further, as part of Talbot County, Easton has been designated as a growth area so that the rural nature of the County can be protected and preserved through restrictive zoning.

i. Existing Land Use Patterns

Easton's current land use pattern reflects both its historic compact form and the evolution of development along its edges. The older parts of town feature walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods with civic, institutional, and small-scale commercial uses integrated into the residential fabric. These areas, such as the downtown core and nearby traditional neighborhoods, exemplify the kind of development the Town aims to preserve and replicate.

In contrast, the newer areas along the Town's fringe exhibit more suburban, automobile-oriented patterns. These include large-footprint retail, isolated office or institutional campuses, and conventional subdivisions with limited street connectivity. In some cases, land use and zoning remain mismatched, and legacy industrial or underused commercial areas present opportunities for reinvestment.

Map 2 Existing Land Use Map



Map 3 is an insert showing graphically the growth of the Town over time. This map was first included in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan and has been updated to show changes over time. In many ways the most interesting aspect of this information may be what has occurred since 2004. In short, we followed our Plan. There were only three annexations approved during the 2004 - 2010 Planning period. The same information listing every Annexation throughout the Town's history is included in Appendix 3.

Two of these were shown as Priority 1 Growth Areas in the 2004 Plan. The third was not, but there was a Comprehensive Plan Amendment approved to make it a Priority 1 Area. There have been 11 Annexations throughout the current Planning Period, but it is important to note that it has been 13 years rather than the previously mandated six years as a result of the amendment to that provision of the State Land Use Article. Notably, all eleven annexed properties were indicated as Priority 1 Growth Areas in the 2010 Plan.

One other annexation was reviewed in the 2004 - 2010 Planning Period, but it was rejected because the Plan indicated the area as a Priority 3 Growth Area, therefore it was determined by both the Planning Commission and the Town Council to be inconsistent with the Plan. Lastly, one Annexation request was also denied in the most recent Planning Period. That one was for a Priority 1 designated area, but it was denied over concerns centered around unknown impacts (primarily, traffic) that might occur with future development/redevelopment of the properties in question.



Map 3 - Historic Annexations

B. Land Use Goals, Issues and Policy Considerations

Easton's land use strategy is grounded in a practical understanding of land availability, infrastructure capacity, and fiscal impacts. With limited undeveloped space remaining within Town boundaries, strategic infill and redevelopment are essential to future growth. The Town's land use goals remain consistent with the core principles outlined in the 1997 and 2010 Comprehensive Plans: preserving neighborhood character, maintaining a compact development pattern, and focusing growth within a defined boundary supported by infrastructure and public services.

The foundation for future land use decisions begins with understanding current land use patterns. A key indicator is shown in the table below, which presents the acreage of each zoning district established under the 2021 Zoning Ordinance, along with estimated amounts of unimproved land within each district.

Table 2 AVAILABLE LAND BY ZONING CLASSIFICATION			
Zoning	Total Acreage	Estimated Unimproved Acreage **	Percentage of Total Town Area
A-1	65	24	
R-10A	2199	107	
R-10M	117	62	
R-7A	332	6	
Total Residential	**2713**	**199**	**41.18%**
CBD	131	3	
CG	391	33	
CL	153	122	
Total Commercial	**675**	**158**	**10.25%**
BC	502	113	
I	815	45	
Total Industrial	**1317**	**158**	**19.99%**
PUD	1373	217	
HC	100	0	
RH	233	233	
G/I	101	0	
MXW	76	17	
Total Floating, Mixed-Use & Governmental/Institutional Districts	1883	467	28.58%
Total all Districts	6588	1,398	

** Not all unimproved acreage is conducive to development, i.e. environmental factors, open space, etc.

Source: Estimates originally prepared by Brent Spicer, Easton Utilities Commission, on January 3, 1994, and updated to include new annexations and rezonings. Estimates of unimproved acreage prepared by Current Planner Zach Smith on September 23, 2009. Updated for this Plan by Nicholas Johnson on March 17, 2023.

Achieving a healthy, vibrant community depends on balance—and the first step is assessing whether Easton's current land use is already out of balance. Table 7 highlights a key issue: the limited supply of unimproved land within Town limits. This constraint means future growth must

be met through annexation in designated Future Growth Areas, redevelopment within the existing boundary, or both.

Buildout analysis confirms that under current zoning, Easton can accommodate only modest additional residential and nonresidential development without annexation. As such, policies that promote higher density, infill, and redevelopment are essential. In areas where infrastructure exists but capacity is limited, targeted investment in water, sewer, and transportation systems will be necessary. Growth must occur where public systems can support it efficiently and where the design enhances walkability, access to services, and long-term fiscal sustainability.

The 2026 Plan emphasizes that sustainable land use planning is not only about where growth happens, but how. The Future Land Use Map and supporting policies direct development to areas already served by public infrastructure while discouraging inefficient sprawl that burdens the community with long-term maintenance costs.

Each land use category in the Plan reflects both function (e.g., residential, commercial, open space) and expectations for form, intensity, and infrastructure compatibility. These categories aim to reinforce planning goals while allowing flexibility for context-sensitive design and public input during development review.

While the 2004 Plan explored the ideal mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses, the 2010 Plan omitted that discussion, acknowledging the subjectivity of such targets. The original intent was never to cap any land use type, but rather to flag imbalances. At the time, it was clear—both from data and public input—that Easton had significantly more commercial development than typical for a town its size.

Public input for the 2026 Plan suggests that imbalance persists, likely worsened by the national decline of traditional retail and the accelerated shift to online shopping during the COVID-19 pandemic. Addressing this imbalance will require thoughtful land use strategies that reflect modern economic trends while supporting a more diversified, resilient community fabric.

i. Retail Uses

Public input for this Plan revealed what seems at first to be a contradiction: while Easton is perceived as over-commercialized, many residents also expressed a desire for more variety in retail and food establishments. This apparent conflict begins to make sense when we examine Easton's

commercial landscape by subcategory. Not all retail is equal, and the perception of over-commercialization is likely tied to certain types of retail, not the concept itself.

Easton's retail environment can be broadly grouped into four categories: Neighborhood Retail, Regional Retail, Transient-Oriented Retail, and Downtown Retail. Each plays a distinct role in the Town's land use future.

- Neighborhood Retail
    - This type of small-scale, walkable retail is nearly absent outside the Town Center.
    - Most older neighborhoods in Easton are exclusively residential in nature and overwhelmingly single family detached in type. Where appropriate, a mechanism should exist to at least allow the consideration of small, limited-scale neighborhood-serving shops to reinforce a sense of place and reduce car dependence in these communities.
    - New residential developments should integrate, or at least accommodate, neighborhood-scale commercial uses—small retail nodes at the intersection of well-defined neighborhoods.
    - Planning must ensure such retail remains neighborhood-serving in scale and does not evolve into broader commercial centers. Properly located and scaled, neighborhood retail can reduce local traffic rather than increase it.
- Regional Retail
    - This is the dominant retail form in Easton and the primary contributor to its unusually high per capita retail space—estimated at 80 square feet per person, roughly double the level recommended in the 2004 Plan.
    - It is also the most frequently cited concern in public feedback about over-commercialization.
    - Future regional retail development will be limited to:
        - Undeveloped commercially zoned land,
        - Redevelopment of existing shopping centers.

    - No expansion of regional retail areas is proposed in the Future Land Use Map.
    - Any new regional retail must comply with strict design standards. Done well, it can reinforce local character; done poorly, it risks making Easton indistinguishable from "Anywhere, USA."
- Transient-Oriented Retail
    - This category includes gas stations, fast food, and quick-service retail that serve through-traffic as well as residents.
    - While new growth opportunities are limited, redevelopment potential is strong—especially along Route 50.
    - This retail type is valued by residents and workers for its convenience (e.g., lunch spots, fuel).
    - Like regional retail, it requires careful design regulation to improve Easton's visual character and avoid corridor sprawl.
    - Future expansion will focus on:
        - Improving undeveloped commercial sites near the Town's northern edge,
        - Redevelopment along the Route 50 corridor.
- Downtown (Town Center)
    - Easton's Downtown is the heart of the community, with its historic buildings, government offices, the courthouse (dating to 1794), the Avalon Theatre, museums, restaurants, inns, and specialty shops.
    - While space for new development is limited, there are opportunities for targeted redevelopment and infill.
    - A Plan for Downtown Redevelopment and Infill, adopted in 2009, guides this work and is discussed further in the Economic Development chapter.
    - Preserving and strengthening existing businesses will be key to keeping Downtown vibrant and maintaining Easton's unique character.

Easton's perceived over-commercialization stems largely from an oversupply of regional-scale retail. At the same time, residents are asking for more neighborhood-serving, diverse, and vibrant commercial experiences, especially in underserved parts of town. Future land use policy should support a balanced commercial mix, regulate scale and design, and encourage development that reinforces neighborhood identity and local character.

Table 2 summarizes these commercial retail types. For purposes of comparison, "Neighborhood" aligns with the category described above, while "Community" and "Regional" fall under the broader discussion of regional retail.

	Neighborhood	Community	Regional
Location	- within convenient walking distance of residential areas - intersections of collector and secondary roads	- intersection of major roads and expressways	- intersections of expressways
Service Radius	0.5 mile	2 miles	4 miles (urban setting) 8-10 miles (suburban) 15+ miles (rural area)
Catchment Area	5 - 10 minute travel	10 - 20 minute travel	30 - 60 minute travel

Population Served	4,000 – 10,000	35,000 – 50,000	Over 150,000
Max. Desirable Size for Shopping Centers	1 acre/1000 served	0.75 acres/1000	0.67 acres/1000
Total Size	4 - 8 acres	10 - 30 acres	40 - 100 acres
Avg. Gross Floor Area	30,000 - 75,000 sq. ft.	100,000 -250,000 sq. ft.	400,000 - 1,000,000
Number of Stores for Shopping Center	5 - 20	15 - 40	40 - 80

Table 3: Shopping Center Characteristics by Type
Source: Adapted from Urban Land Institute (1982); Lynch and Hack (1984); Leung (1989)

ii. Residential Uses

Residential Land Uses are generally not described in terms of a ratio. In fact, to the contrary, the needs of the other land uses are often projected based on ratios involving the number of residential

units (or population) in the community. The discussion about residential land uses tends to focus more on the arrangement, appearance, variety, and density of this land use. That is discussed thoroughly in the Place and Housing Elements. Suffice it to say that we continue to see things changing for this land use. We do not envision the future of Easton as a series of disconnected, isolated, monotonous subdivisions. Rather we want to see a seamless, attractive, interesting, Sustainable Growth inspired Easton; one Easton, not a collection of suburban residential enclaves.

iii. Industrial

The discussion in the 2004 Plan did not talk about a ratio of industrial land acreage or square footage to residential units, but rather talked about jobs to housing ratio. For this land use, the 2004 Plan concluded that there were more jobs in Easton than the population would suggest is necessary. However, as the 2010 Plan noted, there were a number of factors that skewed this estimate. These included:

- a large proportion of Easton's population is retired - there are a lot of dwelling units for which no jobs are necessary
- a shifting in the focus of jobs away from the manufacturing and traditional "industrial" type jobs towards service-oriented jobs
- tourism has become more important in Easton and more jobs are found in the food and hospitality sectors of the job market
- Easton is the governmental center of Talbot County – this results in many government jobs, as well as jobs in allied professions such as legal, real estate, accounting, surveying and engineering, etc.
- As the largest community on the Mid-Shore, Easton is a hub for medical services, entertainment, retail, etc.
- Easton serves as an employment hub for a much larger area than Talbot County

The 2010 Plan stated "It is clear that there has been a gradual erosion of the availability of this[industrially-zoned] land for classic industrial uses by allowing more and more commercial and service uses." Changes were made to the Town's Zoning Regulations in recognition of this issue. Also, a partially developed Industrial Park (Talbot Commerce Park) was annexed into Town in this Planning period, to provide Town infrastructure, which has accelerated its build-out. Finally, in response to this diminishing supply of industrial property, the Town obtained a US Department of

Commerce grant to extend and install utilities to the Town-owned Mistletoe Hall property, facilitating its development as a Commerce and Business Park.

Many of the jobs in Easton are filled by residents of jurisdictions other than Easton, impacting our transportation system. The other side of the coin of having so many people commuting into Easton for work is the fact that many Easton residents are commuting out of town to work. Thus, jobs which better meet the needs of Easton residents would be of great benefit in reducing traffic and the associated environmental impacts. For this reason specifically there are industrial areas proposed on the eastern side of Town for development in the long-range planning period.

The benefits of mixed land uses will be a recurring theme throughout this Plan, particularly in the Place and Transportation Elements. In short, mixed uses:

- Increase housing options for more diverse household types.
- Provide more transportation options.
- Reduce automobile dependence.
- Create a truer sense of place than single-use suburban style development.
- Activates urban areas throughout more times of the day.
- Provide greater opportunity for social interaction.
- Reduce a community's carbon footprint by encouraging walking and biking as an alternative to automobile use.
- Increase the safety of the neighborhood by putting more eyes on the street.

The 2026 Plan adds greater emphasis on sustainability, fiscal efficiency, and redevelopment. Land use policy is increasingly tied to infrastructure investment, public space, transportation networks, and economic productivity. New fiscal tools, including value-per-acre modeling, help the Town assess where land use patterns generate long-term public value relative to cost.

C. Zoning And Community Character

i. Rethinking Zoning and the Built Environment

Much has been written in recent years about the "sins" of modern planning and the failures of the built environment in many American communities. Movements like Smart Growth, New Urbanism,

and Neo-Traditional Planning emerged in response to development patterns that sacrificed livability, character, and sustainability in favor of automobile-dependent sprawl.

Sprawl has been characterized by low-density, single-use development; monotonous subdivisions; congested roads; and the loss of farmland and forests. These patterns stand in stark contrast to the compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods this Plan seeks to promote.

1. *How Did We Get Here?*

A major reason for these outcomes lies in the very tools used to regulate growth—most notably, zoning. While zoning was originally intended to protect public health and safety—such as separating housing from noxious uses—it has evolved into a rigid system that over-segregates land uses and suppresses the integrated, mixed-use development patterns of traditional towns.

The roots of zoning date back to 1867 in San Francisco, with broader adoption following the landmark 1926 Supreme Court decision in Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co., which upheld the constitutionality of zoning. Since then, the tool has become ubiquitous—but not without consequences.

In Easton, as in many places, zoning has too often discouraged the very types of communities we value. Wide separation of uses, minimum lot sizes, and restrictive codes have made car-dependent subdivisions the default. The time has come to rethink this model.

2. *Is It Time to Abandon Zoning?*

Not entirely. Zoning still has a role in protecting residents from heavy industry and incompatible land uses. However, Easton should reform its Zoning Ordinance to encourage mixed-use, walkable, and human-scaled neighborhoods—especially in undeveloped areas within the Town's Growth Area.

For example, commercial uses and workplaces that are compatible with nearby housing should not be excluded. Residential densities should be increased and minimum lot sizes reduced to support more efficient and livable neighborhoods. At a minimum, new development should meet the State's Smart Growth Priority Funding Area threshold of 3.5 units per acre (net)—with higher densities encouraged in appropriate areas.

3. *Value-per-acre modeling*

In 2024, the Planning/Economic Development Firm Urban3 modelled the fiscal impacts of land uses on the Eastern Shore in general, and then in Talbot County specifically. The basis of Urban3's

methodology involves examining "value per acre" for the area being analyzed. The findings of this effort are summarized more thoroughly in the Sustainability Chapter of this Plan. A full copy of the report can also be found on the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy's website, at: https://www.eslc.org/urban3/. From a Land Use perspective, suffice it to say that the Urban3 study suggests that the fiscal sustainability of development patterns is yet another reason to support future development of a Traditional Neighborhood form as opposed to the suburban archetype that has become more prevalent over the course of the past five or six decades.

D. Future Land Use Framework

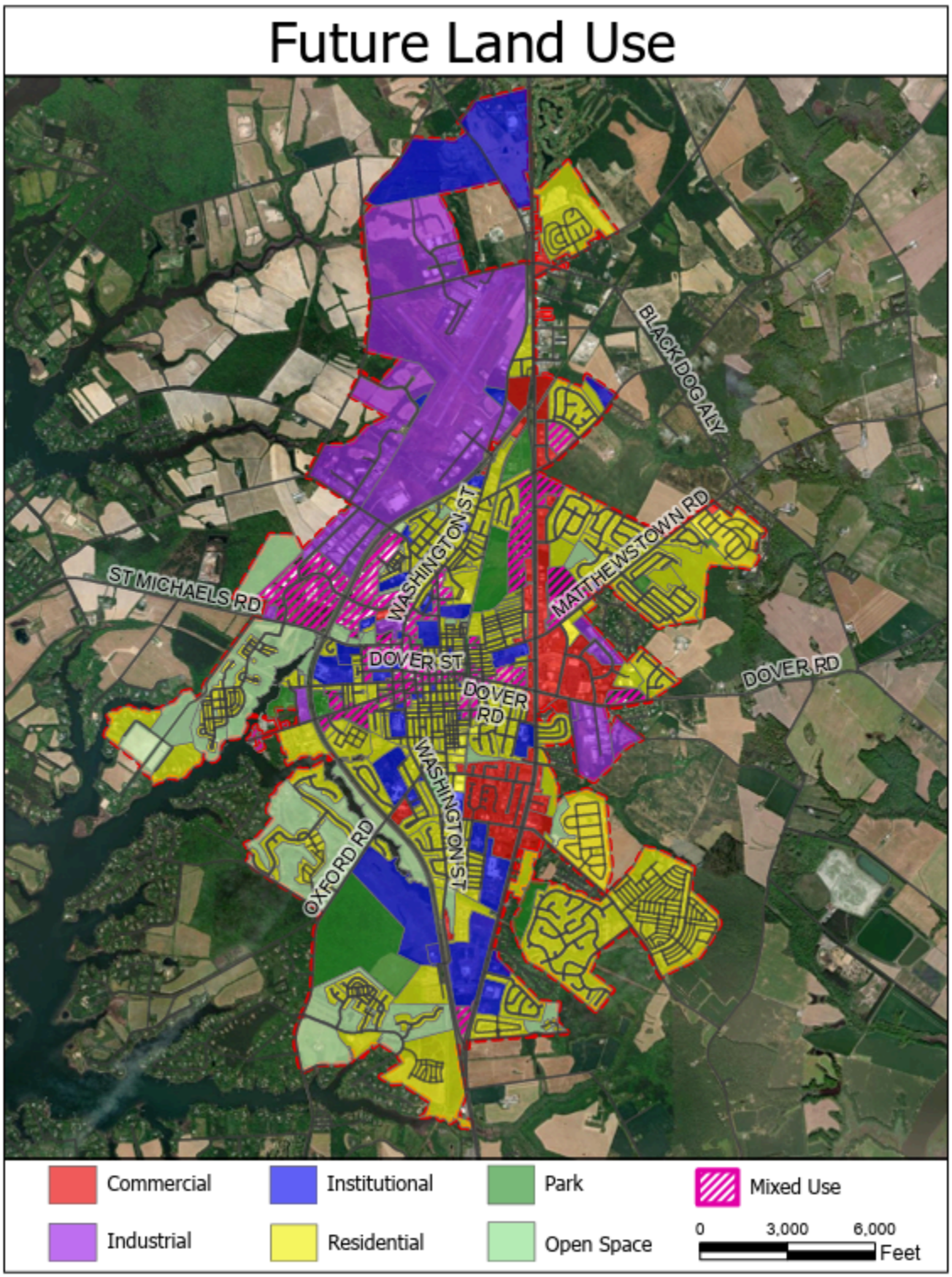
This Plan organizes Easton's future growth into a series of land use categories that describe the general pattern, scale, and intent for development. These categories guide zoning decisions and help ensure that growth occurs in appropriate locations and forms. While this Plan is not a zoning map, it provides the foundation for future amendments to the Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations.

Future land use designations are not intended to be parcel-specific or regulatory. Rather, they provide a generalized vision for how areas of the Town should evolve over time. Zoning changes and site plan approvals will be guided by these designations but must also consider compatibility, capacity, and design quality.

The Future Land Use Map contained and described more thoroughly in the Implementation Element, provides a graphic representation of the desired pattern of land uses within the Town.

The Future Land Use Map identifies where residential, commercial, mixed-use, open space, and institutional development is anticipated. These areas are tied to infrastructure readiness, access to services, and their ability to support complete neighborhoods.

Map 4 - Future Land Use



There is one proposed addition to the overall limits of the Town's Future Growth Area. During the course of the past planning cycle, it has become increasingly apparent that there would be advantages to having the Town-owned property that is the site of our Wastewater Treatment Facility to be located within Town Boundaries. This would require Annexation and in order for any future Annexation to be consistent with this Plan, the land for said annexation needs to be included in our Future Growth Area. Thus, this Plan proposes to expand the Growth Boundary to the east from its present limit to the WWTP site. The only additional land besides the WWTP that would be brought into the Growth Area as a result of this change would be Seth Forest and the bed of Chesapeake Avenue as it passes along the southern border of the property. Given that these properties are State-owned and Town-owned, and the purpose for which each is used, there is essentially no possibility that such an action would increase the development potential of the Future Growth Area.

See Table 2 on page 18 for detailed definitions and acreage summaries by zoning category.

E. Special Districts and Place Types

The Future Land Use Framework includes several key districts that serve as focal points for the Town's identity and growth strategy. These include:

- Downtown Easton – walkable, civic and cultural hub with mixed-use development.
- East End/Dover Road Corridor – commercial node with opportunities for infill and street-front redesign.
- Port Street Corridor – targeted for redevelopment with housing, employment, and civic amenities.
- Hospital District – medical and institutional anchor, with supportive residential and commercial uses.
- Poplar Hill Farm - 120 acre parcel purchased by Talbot County in 2025. Formerly viewed as a key site for future growth, it is designated for Institutional use, reflecting its ownership by the County. This could mean a host of things, including active or passive parks and/or new County government facilities. It is also large enough that a portion could be subdivided and sold for private development to raise funds for the governmental use of the bulk of the property. If so, the appropriate use in this location would be residential, although a very small-scale commercial or mixed-use component to serve the numerous strictly residential developments in

the area (e.g., Cooke's Hope, Thread Haven, and now, effectively (with the closure of the restaurant and Club House), Easton Club.

These districts will benefit from targeted planning efforts, including small area plans, design guidelines, and infrastructure investments.

Of particular importance this planning cycle is the Hospital District and actually, there are two. One is the location of the current hospital and the second is the location of the new facility now under active construction. The Hospital relocation and expansion to the northern end of the Town's Growth Area requires special consideration of a number of factors or issues, including:

- What is the most appropriate reuse/redevelopment of the current hospital site?
- What is the likely future for the various medical facilities located on Dutchman's Lane and Idelwild Avenue? Do they eventually relocate closer to the new facility? If so, when is this likely to occur? What then is the most appropriate use/reuse of these facilities?
- The new hospital site is remote from the rest of Town and surrounded by undeveloped land, an industrial park, and the Talbot Community Center and associated recreational facilities. Given this, what is the most appropriate land use for the unimproved parcels surrounding and in close proximity to the new hospital? How can the new hospital be better connected and integrated with the bulk of the Town of Easton?

F. Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives guide Easton's future land use policy. These reflect the vision and values adopted in the 2026 Plan and build on the foundations established in 2010 and earlier.

Goal #1: Limit the geographic outward expansion of Easton.

Objectives:

- Reaffirm the current Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and use it to guide annexation and utility extensions.
- Coordinate with Talbot County and various land preservation and environmentally-aligned organizations to secure easements and other long-term protection devices on properties along and in close proximity to the Urban Growth Boundary on the County side of the line.
- Establish annexation policies that include criteria for development readiness, consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, and expected phasing or pacing of growth.

- Explore incentive annexation to gain control of land on the town's border that might have previously been developed under Talbot County rules and regulations to facilitate more appropriate redevelopment or expansion on such parcels.
- Slow the demand for more land by increasing the density of future residential areas. At a minimum, the State of Maryland's minimum acceptable density for qualification as a Priority Funding Area of 3.5 units (net) per acre should be achieved in these developments.
- Consider adoption of an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) if the rate of growth is exceeding the current or planned capacity for specific types of infrastructure.
- Follow a Capital Improvement Program which will allow the Town to provide a rational basis for implementing improvements and increase funding opportunities, in a planned manner to locations where growth may be prioritized.

Goal #2: Make Easton more walkable and connected / achieve a more balanced and integrated mix of uses.

Objectives:

- Encourage development patterns that promote walkability, including higher densities, mixed-use areas, and traditional neighborhood form.
- Support neighborhood-scale commercial development and live/work spaces that reduce the need for automobile trips.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and ensure it is included in all new development and redevelopment projects.
- Encourage connections between neighborhoods and commercial areas through a fine-grained street network and active transportation routes.
- Consider allowing diversification of land uses within older, developed subdivisions through the addition of small, neighborhood-scale retail, civic and open space elements to existing residential subdivisions.
- Amend the Town's Zoning Ordinance to change the focus from regulation by building use, to building type and site impact.
- Simplify the process for developers to achieve the Town's objectives

Goal #3: Use land efficiently and sustainably.

Objectives:

- Prioritize infill and redevelopment of vacant or underutilized sites within the Town's boundary.
- Balance new development with infrastructure capacity, using water, sewer, transportation, and stormwater data to guide land use decisions.
- Use fiscal modeling tools, such as value-per-acre assessments, to evaluate the long-term sustainability of proposed land use changes.
- Discourage low-density development at the fringe of Town that generates higher infrastructure costs and undermines compact growth goals.
- Explore options to expedite permit approvals for permitted uses if extraordinary design improvements are included.

3. PLACE (COMMUNITY CHARACTER)

"We shape our buildings and afterward our buildings shape us."

– Winston Churchill

A. Purpose

Improving the quality of Easton's built environment has been a central goal since the Town adopted Vision-based Planning in the 1997 Comprehensive Plan. Since then, the Town has taken multiple steps to elevate development standards. It added site planning and architectural requirements for specific uses, upgraded landscaping standards, overhauled sign regulations—cutting freestanding sign height in half—and imposed size and strict design limits on big-box retail and shopping centers. Town officials also began opposing formulaic "corporate-franchise architecture," as recommended in the 1997 Plan.

The 2004 Plan reaffirmed the need for higher design standards and extended the focus from commercial to residential development, culminating in the adoption of Design Guidelines for New Construction. The 2010 Plan updated Easton's design principles, revising several and adding one new principle based on observed development trends. This Plan continues that process, proposing additional refinements based on the past 15 years of experience and public feedback.

This chapter also revisits the topic of big-box retail—a longstanding concern since the 1997 Plan, which was amended in 2000 to address the issue directly. It further explores how zoning shapes Easton's character and proposes ways to modernize outdated zoning and subdivision tools. In particular, it revives the concept of "Traditional Neighborhood Development "—first proposed in 2004 but not pursued in 2010—as a viable framework for future growth areas. Finally, it expands the Town's Growth Management Policy to emphasize the importance of both infill and redevelopment, with new recommendations to ensure compatibility with existing neighborhoods.

B. Historic and Cultural resources

The History of the Town is chronicled in the Background Chapter of this Plan. An important part of what makes Easton so unique and so special is the number and quality of historic buildings and settings. This subsection talks about the importance of these historic and cultural resources and makes recommendations for how they can further be protected.

The history of Easton can be seen in its historic buildings and neighborhoods which date back over several centuries. Physical reminders of early history give depth and richness to the Town, to past events and to people's lives. Easton has a substantial and well-documented stock of historic structures, streetscapes, sites, and settings. Some 944 parcels in the Historic District have been surveyed and documented.

Preservation and rehabilitation of these structures and streetscapes enhances the historic character of the town, stabilizes neighborhoods, protects property values, and attracts visitors to Easton. Continued historic preservation will provide Easton with a number of aesthetic and economic benefits, including:

- Promotion of a strong sense of community pride and tradition;
- Community revitalization through the restoration and adaptive reuse of older structures;
- Increased property values and tax revenues as a result of renovation and restoration; and
- Increased revenues from tourism activities generated by an interest in historic buildings and sites.

In a way that's more difficult to quantify, historic preservation allows the legacy of the past to be protected and remembered; it allows for the past to be integrated with the present and reminds us that the old has a useful place alongside the new.

Easton recognizes the importance of its historic resources and supports and encourages preservation and rehabilitation efforts by private owners, nonprofits and local government**s**. Private houses and public buildings are often carefully restored. New uses are found for historic buildings which no longer serve their original functions. The preservation of historic buildings and structures includes consideration of the integrity of the location, neighborhood, design, setting, materials and workmanship. As more and more focus for future growth is on infill and redevelopment opportunities, such adaptive reuse of historic buildings will become increasingly prevalent and important to maintaining the historic charm and authenticity of the Town in general, and the historic district specifically.

The “Stories of the Chesapeake” Certified Heritage Area encompasses heritage sites and places in Talbot and adjacent counties which were designated a certified heritage area by the Maryland Heritage Area Authority on April 20, 2005. This program recognizes Easton as offering a number of heritage resources of importance to the region.

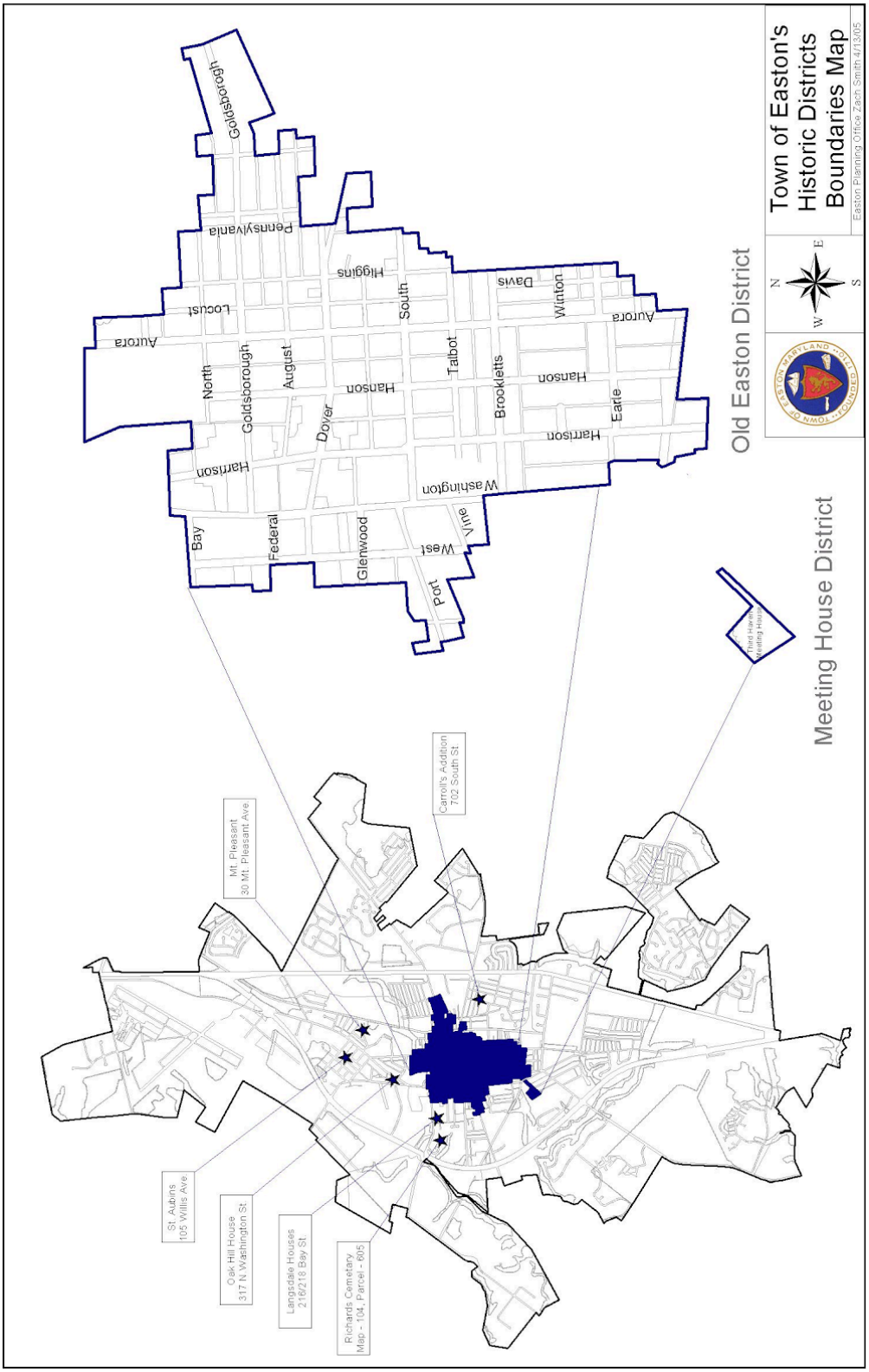
Easton is also a “Targeted Investment Zone”, a state designation that permits the town to get state financial support for a certified heritage area.

National Register Historic District

The National Register of Historic Places, an inventory of historic resources, is maintained by the National Park Service. Listing in the National Register provides recognition to sites, buildings, structures, objects, and districts that are significant to American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture. An Easton National Register Historic District was surveyed, nominated, and approved in 1980. In addition to providing recognition of significance, listing in the National Register mandates consideration in the planning of any federal or federally-assisted project and provides eligibility for federal and state tax credits for historic preservation projects.

Easton Historic District

The Town has a Historic District Commission and has two museums, (the Academy Art Museum and the Historical Society of Talbot County Museum). It also has the historic Avalon Theatre where many cultural and community events take place**.** The Easton Historic District was created in the late 70s and expanded in 2005. The seven-member Historic District Commission is composed of volunteer citizens with interest or specific expertise in historic preservation and appointed to three-year terms by the Mayor. The Commission reviews proposed exterior changes to any site, structure, or appurtenance in the defined district, according to an approved and published set of guidelines, which were recently updated by the Commission. In addition to the review of proposed projects, inclusion in the Historic District also provides eligibility for a state historic preservation tax credit to property owners who undertake historic preservation projects, whether or not the property produces income.



Map 5 : Easton Historic District













Easton's Historic District includes buildings encompassing a wide spectrum of type and use, including commercial (Washington Street, upper left), institutional (Christ Church, upper right and Talbot County Court House, middle right), and residential structures (middle left and bottom right and left.

Gentrification

A specific issue that requires special attention in the Historic District in general and in the Hill neighborhood specifically, is gentrification. The Hill is a small neighborhood within the Historic District. Its significance can not be overstated and is perhaps best described on the Historical Marker recently placed near the Rail-Trail and Dover Street intersection. It states:

"Founded in 1788, the Hill is one of the oldest free African American neighborhoods in the U.S. still in existence today. Many African Americans in Easton and Talbot County were free from slavery long before the Civil War ended. Free people of color lived alongside white neighbors, working as merchants, sailors, carpenters, midwives and farm laborers. They worked to buy freedom for their relatives while pursuing full equality and liberty for themselves."

Unfortunately, The Hill also happens to contain many of the structures most in need of repair/rehabilitation in Easton. Public and private efforts are ongoing to make such repairs. While this is undoubtedly a positive trend, it comes with the risk of gentrification - that rising housing prices resulting from these improvements (as well as the associated increased property tax bill as a result of rising property values) will necessitate some long-time residents (perhaps multigenerational) having to relocate. Property values may further be impacted by redevelopment of the adjacent industrial areas along the Rail Trail; though an important strategy for sustainable infill development the magnet effect of new infrastructure, housing, and amenities cannot be ignored. The Town should explore programs and partnerships that promote housing tenure and affordability to protect this significant cultural cornerstone.

C. Contemporary Architectural Standards

Though it is important to show reverence and recognition of Easton's historic development in contemporary projects, it should not be misconstrued as a desire to see historic architecture emulated without intention throughout the town. Rather, today's designs - regardless of location - should contribute to the ongoing history of Easton in recognition that our current time will one day similarly be considered a historic period. Easton's streetscapes should thus feature a variety of creative designs that, regardless of their time period, are built 'in conversation' with their neighbors. Put simply, contemporary designs should have identity and intention. Designs should:

- Strive to create place-based spaces and interesting, human-focused environments
- Provide physical and social connections to the community, respecting historical context
- Recognize landmarks and natural features as important determinants of design
- Utilize design approaches such as color, texture, massing, richness of materials and finishes, scale, proportion, and rhythm to create unique places
- Illicit curiosity and emotional responses that the community will treasure
- Serve as an investment in the Easton community and its culture

D. Civic Architecture and the Public Realm

As a member of the community itself, the government should embody the same standards of architectural excellence that we expect of the public. Civic buildings—such as schools, libraries, churches, and public offices—anchor neighborhoods and contribute significantly to Easton's visual character. These structures should be architecturally prominent and well-integrated into the street network. Design of new civic buildings must reflect their role as public landmarks.

Similarly, the quality of the public realm—sidewalks, plazas, parks, signage, and street trees—greatly affects how the Town is experienced. These spaces must be maintained, connected, and appropriately designed for their surroundings.

E. The Case for Traditional Neighborhood Zoning

Though the role of architecture cannot be understated in the broad appeal of Easton's downtown, it is equally important to recognize how the structure of the town core promotes its charm and value. Easton's older neighborhoods, especially those surrounding Downtown, are defined by connected streets, narrow lots, modest setbacks, front porches, and architectural variety. These walkable patterns support interaction and resilience. New development should extend this structure through compatible lot dimensions, public space orientation, and housing diversity.

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan outlined a model for a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) District, designed to encourage the kinds of mixed-use, compact neighborhoods Easton values. That proposal was ultimately rejected—not due to disagreement with its content, but because it removed the Town Council and public hearing from the review process. This created

opposition, despite the fact that the standards themselves reflected the community's vision. At present, creating these types of neighborhoods requires use of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process, which developers tend to avoid due to its complexity, cost, and unpredictability. Instead, the easier path—conventional subdivision and site plan review—too often yields suburban-style sprawl. This mismatch has led to a system where the easiest projects to approve are those the community least desires, while more thoughtful, desirable development faces the highest barriers.

In the wake of the TND District's defeat, some elements were integrated into Easton's base zoning and subdivision regulations—such as anti-monotony standards and greater lot design flexibility. Still, nearly two decades later, the limitations of the current approach remain apparent.

The Planning Commission now recommends revisiting this issue and reintroducing a TND District or alternative "by-right" option with clear design standards. The goal is to reverse the regulatory imbalance, making it easier—not harder—for developers to build the types of neighborhoods Easton wants.

3.E.1 Model Code for Traditional Neighborhood Development

Traditional Neighborhood Development Zone	
Minimum Lot size:	5,000 sq. ft. single-family detached
	3,000 sq. ft. single-family attached
Maximum Lot size:	12,500 sq. ft. single-family detached
	7,500 sq. ft. single family attached
Minimum Setback:	5’ (0’ for commercial uses)
Maximum Setback:	15’ (10’ for commercial)
Maximum Block Length:	480’
Density (per net acre):	Minimum - 4.0 du/ac
	Maximum – 12 du/ac
All subdivisions shall include a variety of housing types, open space, civic space, office or industrial, and neighborhood commercial space in accordance with the following schedule. At least 3 of the 5 land uses shall be provided at the ratio specified:	
Land Use	**Ratio**
Residential - Middle Housing	A minimum of 10% of the units proposed
Common Open Space	35% including a minimum of 1200 sq. ft. per dwelling unit for parks
Neighborhood Commercial	Minimum: 26 square feet gfa per dwelling unit (See Table 9 in Land Use Chapter for characteristics of Neighborhood Commercial)
	Maximum: 52 square feet gfa per dwelling unit
Civic Space	300 square feet per dwelling unit
Office or Industrial	187.5 square feet gfa per dwelling unit

Traditional Neighborhood Development Zone
Subdivisions prepared in accordance with these standards shall be processed per the Town of Easton Subdivision Regulations. Subdivisions with single-family detached residential plus only two of the land use elements at the ratio outlined above (or with three or more of the land uses but at less than the prescribed ratio) may be approved by the Easton Town Council via the PUD process. Subdivisions with single-family detached residential and only one or none of the additional land use elements shall be prohibited. Renderings or conceptual architectural elevations shall be provided for each building type in the neighborhood and shall be subject to approval by the Planning Commission. Neighborhoods should reflect architectural diversity. For all intents and purposes, they should appear as if multiple builders constructed them, whether or not this is in fact the case. A minimum of 75% of the lots shall have access via an alley. Garages on lots with alleys shall be detached or rear/side-accessed attached. Lots without alleys shall minimize the impact of garages by locating them behind the front plane of the house, or if in front of the house, accessed from the side.

Table 4: Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) Zoning District Parameters

The potential new TND Zoning District described above is primarily envisioned as applicable for the build-out of our Future Growth Area. However, a significant focus of this Plan is on directing growth for the next ten years to existing neighborhoods in the form of Infill Development, Redevelopment, and Adaptive Reuse. Development of this nature will likely require an approach other than TND.

One possible alternate regulatory approach that received public support during the public review and comment process was the use of Form-Based Codes (FBCs). FBCs-stand in contrast to traditional or Euclidean Zoning in that they emphasize the design/form of buildings and their relationship to the public realm much more so than the use of the property. The book **Form-Based Codes** describes them as "A method of regulating development to achieve a specific urban form. Form-Based Codes create a predictable public realm primarily by controlling physical form, with a lesser focus on land use, through city or county regulation."

Whatever option the Town ultimately pursues to implement in this Plan following its adoption, one thing is clear: a new approach to land development regulation will be necessary to create the future Easton that this Plan envisions. Such a new Code(s) should address the following objectives:

- Permitting a variety of housing types and appropriate densities to improve missing middle options and housing affordability.
- Harmoniously blend multi-family and middle housing within residential and commercial blocks.
- Soften the impact of large-scale retail in commercial corridors through better design and pedestrian-oriented placement.
- Ensure building scale, massing, and placement create a walkable, inviting streetscape
- Design streets and sidewalks as safe, functional spaces for all users - bicyclists, pedestrians, vehicles, and transit.

- Promote development patterns that are environmentally resilient and fiscally sustainable.

In order to best facilitate the future Easton that this Plan describes, the Town commits to initiating the study of FBCs and other alternative regulatory frameworks within two years of the adoption of this Plan by the Town Council.

F. The Role of Major Retail in Easton in 2025

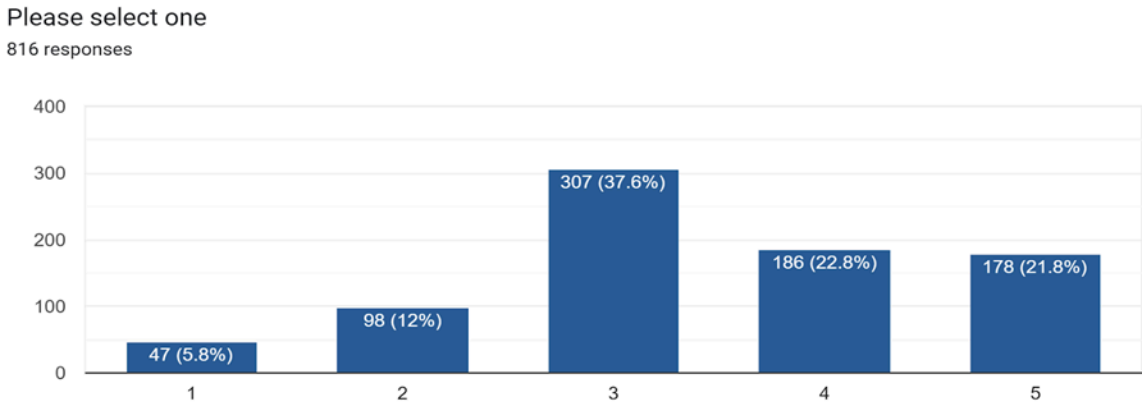
Easton has a long and complex history with major retail development. In 2000, the Town imposed a temporary moratorium after receiving applications for over 766,000 square feet of proposed major retail space. This pause led to amendments to the 1997 Comprehensive Plan and significant changes to the Zoning Ordinance. The Ordinance defined "Major Retail" as any single-use retail establishment with 25,000 square feet or more of gross floor area, and created a new Planned Major Retail floating zone to regulate such uses. Projects over 65,000 square feet were prohibited. Stringent design standards were also added for major retail and shopping centers.

The 65,000-square-foot cap was a compromise. Some residents and stakeholders argued it was too restrictive, while others believed it was too permissive. At the time, the Giant grocery store and the original Lowe's (now Kohl's) were roughly this size, helping to define the threshold.

The role of large-scale retail continued to generate debate through the 2004 and 2010 Comprehensive Plans. Public input collected during these updates revealed a consistent preference for limiting major retail in Easton. In a 2000–2001 survey, nearly half of respondents said such uses should "never" be added. In 2010, more than a third felt the Town already had too many shopping centers, and over 65% supported holding firm on design standards, even if it meant losing a preferred retailer.

Based on this sustained feedback, the 2004 Plan removed the hard cap on square footage but maintained a regulatory threshold at 25,000 square feet, requiring all larger projects to undergo case-by-case review through the Planned Major Retail process. The intent was to retain flexibility while emphasizing design, compatibility, and the broader land use context.

The 2026 Plan again solicited public input, and responses were largely consistent with previous surveys. A strong majority said Easton has "about the right amount" of regional-scale retail, with twice as many respondents saying there is too much rather than too little. Support remains high for prioritizing Downtown Easton over other commercial areas, and for maintaining high design standards.



Given these findings, the Town recommends no major changes to the Town's retail policies. Major retail uses will continue to play a limited role, and new or expanded projects will only be encouraged under specific conditions:

- Priority should be given to redevelopment or redesign of existing shopping centers, especially where projects result in improved site design, circulation, or conversion to mixed-use.
- Regional retail should serve primarily Talbot County, and secondarily nearby areas in Caroline, Dorchester, and Queen Anne's Counties. Easton does not aim to become a regional shopping hub for a wider area.
- Applicants proposing relocation or replacement of an existing major retail store must submit a detailed reuse plan for the vacated site.

Easton's approach to major retail has consistently reflected community values: a desire for design quality, modest scale, and economic alignment with the Town's role as a local, not regional, retail center.

G. Town Gateways and Corridors

Visitors arriving in Easton form impressions of the Town based on its major corridors. These include U.S. Route 50, MD 322, Washington Street, and Port Street. The design and appearance of these areas—buildings, signage, landscaping, and public infrastructure—play a central role in shaping Easton's identity.

Significant improvements have been made to some corridors through site plan negotiation and design review. revised layouts, upgraded materials, and improved orientation. However, many areas still require reinvestment. The new ARC of the Chesapeake and Doverbrook Apartments, for example, exhibit exemplary additions to two major town corridors. Going forward, the Town will adopt corridor-specific standards and explore overlay zones to guide incremental upgrades. Figure 1 below is copied from the Draft East End Small Area Plan and depicts how a portion of Dover Road could be redeveloped in a way that is generally more consistent with the principles of this Plan, and which could visually (and, presumably, economically) enhance this major corridor.



Figure 1: Potential Dover Road and Rail Trail Redevelopment

H. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Encourage mixed-use, traditional neighborhoods over single-use subdivisions

Objectives:

- Reintroduce the proposed Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) Zoning District as the default zoning for undeveloped and annexed land in Easton.
- Continue reviewing and updating the design and anti-monotony standards first adopted in 2006.

- Restructure the development review process to streamline approvals for traditional neighborhood developments while increasing scrutiny and difficulty for conventional suburban subdivisions.
- Explore the potential regulatory reforms necessary to produce the type of development envisioned by this Plan in conjunction with the next comprehensive review of the Town's Zoning Code.

Goal #2: Improve the appearance of existing development

Objectives:

- Partner with the State Highway Administration to enhance landscaping along state highways, especially the Route 50 corridor.
- Use the Forest Conservation Account to retrofit landscaping in older streetscapes where plantings are sparse or missing.
- Require any renovation or change-of-use project needing site plan approval, a PUD amendment, special exception, or variance to fully comply with current design standards—no grandfathering of outdated designs.
- Require new landscaping or improvements along U.S. Route 50 for all adjacent new development or redevelopment.
- Enforce requirements for landscaping and maintenance associated with approved development projects.
- Refine and work with Design Standards that ensure that Easton stands out as a unique place rather than looking like "Anyplace USA."

Goal #3: Raise the design quality of all new development

Objectives:

- Fully apply Easton's recommended Design Principles to all new development.
- Prohibit new construction that relies on corporate franchise architecture.
- Adopt comprehensive design standards for all new development, including residential projects and infill/redevelopment.
- Review and update the Design Guidelines for New Construction outside the Historic District.

- Strengthen landscape standards, emphasizing native species and improved screening of unattractive site features.

Goal #4: Promote infill and redevelopment

Objectives:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Zoning Code's Planned Redevelopment Overlay District—including its boundaries, standards, and process—to determine whether it offers sufficient incentives.
- Identify and pursue non-zoning-based incentives, in partnership with relevant agencies, to support infill and redevelopment.
- Prepare Small Area Plans for Easton neighborhoods to tailor redevelopment strategies to local needs and conditions.

Goal #5: Encourage continued restoration, adaptive rehabilitation and preservation of historic structures, sites, streetscapes, and settings and encourage compatible infill in the Historic District.

Objectives:

- Educate residents/realtors and property owners about the benefits, boundaries and requirements of the Historic District review process and design standards and about the availability of state and federal tax credits for historic preservation projects.
- Establish a Local Tax Incentive program in Easton that encourages historic property owners to rehabilitate their property. This local tax incentive will complement existing state and federal tax incentives that encourage historic rehabilitation/restoration. Some 19 counties and municipalities in Maryland already have some form of local tax incentive.
- Encourage a "Rebuilding Together" chapter in Easton or Talbot County. This is a national organization whose objective is no cost repairs to homes of low income, over 60 home owners.
- Modify the Historic Commission's Guidelines by adding specific guidance and criteria for adaptive reuse projects.

Goal #6: Continue to support the Easton Historic District.

Objectives:

- Ensure consistent enforcement of Easton's Historic District by utilizing the services of various staffs within the town administration. A consistently enforced historic district is the most effective historic district for fostering investment and economic development.
- Provide in-service training for the staff and Historic District Commission members.
- Investigate Certified Local Government status with the Maryland Historical Trust to provide eligibility for grants for continuing education for staff and members of the Historic District Commission, as well as other projects.
- Investigate a project to resurvey the Historic District. A new survey will update information contained in the original National Register nomination and facilitate enhanced processing of applications. Such a survey could also lead to a new nomination to expand the National Register District, including neighborhoods that did not meet the criteria for listing in 1980, but now may nearly three decades later. Such a project could be supported by grant funding and could potentially be done under the auspices of a partner organization.

4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

THE ULTIMATE RESOURCE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS PEOPLE. IT IS PEOPLE, NOT CAPITAL OR RAW MATERIALS THAT DEVELOP AN ECONOMY.

PETER DRUCKER

A. PURPOSE

Economic and community development are vital to the health of a town because they foster sustainable growth, improve quality of life, and strengthen its position as a desirable place to live and visit.

The nonprofit Easton Economic Development Corporation (Easton EDC) provides economic and community development services to the Town of Easton. The Easton EDC also manages the Main Street District and Arts & Entertainment Districts, as well as the Easton Visitor Center. A Board of Directors has been established, with representatives from the community, the Mayor of the Town of Easton and one designated Councilmember.

In 2025, the Easton EDC adopted a forward-looking Strategic Plan that identifies four key Strategic Priorities aimed at fostering sustainable growth, improving quality of life, and strengthening Easton's position as a premier destination on Maryland's Eastern Shore. This Comprehensive Plan is aligned with those priorities and incorporates them into Easton's long-term development framework.

In addition, this Plan recognizes that Easton's economic development strategy must reflect regional collaboration. Therefore, it integrates the priorities and initiatives of both the Talbot County Department of Economic Development and Tourism and the Mid-Shore Regional Council. This collaborative approach ensures that local efforts are supported by broader regional initiatives and that resources are coordinated for maximum impact.

As in many Comprehensive Plans, economic development analysis often depends heavily on quantitative data such as tables and charts. While this Plan minimizes the overuse of such tools, essential insights are drawn from Census data (see Tables 5 and 6). Key findings include:

- Income levels in Easton are below those of Talbot County and the State of Maryland, with a corresponding higher rate of poverty.
- Educational attainment in Easton lags behind both the county and state, especially in the percentage of residents with bachelor's degrees or higher.
- Easton has an aging population, with a significantly higher percentage of residents aged 65 and older compared to state averages.

- Commute times in Easton are slightly shorter than regional and state averages, reflecting local employment opportunities.
- The homeownership rate in Easton is lower than Talbot County and the State, which may reflect affordability challenges or housing stock limitations.

Table 5 - Select Economic Characteristics Source: 2020 Census, U.S. Census Bureau	EASTON	TALBOT CO.	MARYLAND
PER CAPITA INCOME (2022 dollars)	$43,844	$52,555	$49,865
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2022 dollars)	$75,198	$81,667	$98,461
PERSONS IN POVERTY, PERCENT	11.5%	10.2%	9.6%
IN CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE, TOTAL, PERCENT OF POPULATION AGE 16+, 2018-2022	58.3%	55.7%	66.6%
IN CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE, FEMALE, PERCENT OF POPULATION AGE 16+, 2018-2022	51.3%	49.5%	62.7%
TOTAL RETAILSALES,2017 ($1,000)	$598,129	$716,678	$84,966,185
TOTAL RETAIL SALES PER CAPITA, 2022	$45,801	$25,278	$18,691
MEAN TRAVEL TIME TO WORK (MINUTES), WORKERS AGE 16+, 2018-2022	24.9	26.4	32.0
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE OR HIGHER, PERCENT OF PERSONS AGE 25+, 2018-2022	90.1%	92.2%	91.0%
BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER, PERCENT OF PERSONS AGE 25+, 2018-2022	39.3%	41.5%	42.2%
ALL EMPLOYER FIRMS, REFERENCE YEAR 2022	813	1,403	104,151

Table 6 below provides a broader comparison of Easton, Talbot County, and the State of Maryland in a number of economic and non-economic characteristics.

Table 6 - Comparison of Easton, Talbot County and State of Maryland in Selected Demographic Characteristics from the 2020 Census (and 2023 ACS)			
Subject	Easton	Talbot County	Maryland
Total Population	17,101	37,526	6,177,224
% Female	53.6%	52.2%	51.4%
Median Age			
% < 18	21.8%	18.3%	22.0%
% 65+	26.8%	30.5%	17.3%
% White	69.9%	82.1%	57.2%
% Black or African American	16.1%	12.9%	31.6%
Total Households	7,195	16,270	2,318,124
Average Household Size	2.32	2.29	2.60
Total Housing Units	Not Reported	19,861	2,572,412
% Owner-occupied	58.9%	72.9%	67.5%
Median value of owner-occupied homes	$328,000	$382,000	$380,500
Growth Rate (%) in 90's	24.9%	10.7%	10.8%
Growth Rate (%) in 00's	36.2%	11.7%	9.0%
Growth Rate (%) in 10,s	7.2%	-0.7%	7.0%

B. Business Development

A diverse and resilient business mix is essential to the sustainability of Easton's economy. Overdependence on a single sector can expose the Town to economic fluctuations and job losses. Easton's strategy emphasizes resilience by investing in workforce development, nurturing entrepreneurship, and supporting both legacy businesses and emerging industries.

The Easton EDC Strategic Plan (FY 2026–2028) underscores the importance of business retention, expansion, and recruitment—particularly for high-wage industries.

Initiatives include:

- Facilitating leadership forums and industry roundtables to identify infrastructure needs, workforce trends, and business challenges.
- Developing an Easton Business Recruitment Packet that highlights incentives, infrastructure, real estate opportunities, and the benefits of Easton's location and community character.
- Marketing key sites like Mistletoe Hall and other strategic locations for development, ensuring readiness for new investment.
- Partnering with the Town of Easton, Talbot County, and local institutions to coordinate incentives and implement joint marketing campaigns.
- Promoting infill development and redevelopment—particularly projects that support affordable workforce housing in proximity to job centers.
- Diversifying funding streams by pursuing federal, state, and philanthropic grants as well as private sponsorships and innovative funding models.

C. Tourism and Downtown

Tourism remains a cornerstone of Easton's economy—contributing not only through visitor spending but also by enhancing the Town's visibility and quality of life. As a year-round destination with a thriving cultural and culinary scene, Easton has the opportunity to further develop its tourism sector in strategic and sustainable ways.

The Easton EDC has identified several priorities to strengthen Easton's brand as the Eastern Shore's premier destination:

- Create a data-informed tourism marketing strategy that targets regional and national audiences, tailored to Easton's unique offerings.
- Enhance the visual appeal and accessibility of Downtown Easton with improved signage, plantings, banners, and public art.
- Activate the Easton Visitor Center as an educational and experiential hub for tourists and residents alike.

- Collaborate with surrounding jurisdictions (e.g., St. Michaels, Oxford, Talbot County) to launch joint tourism campaigns and shared event calendars.
- Support authentic local experiences and signature events that highlight Easton's history, arts, food culture, and community spirit.

D. Commercial Redevelopment

Easton is at a point where a number of our shopping centers are for one reason or another, viewed as prime candidates for redevelopment. Such reasons include age of the center, maintenance challenges, tenant mix, or overall utility of the center. Potential redevelopment could be as simple as facade upgrades, new color schemes, updated signage, etc., to complete demolition and reconstruction. This redevelopment could bring Easton numerous economic benefits including new business establishments, additional jobs, and additional revenue. Furthermore, it could add future opportunities for mixed use residential offerings as well as beautify many older sites around town. Potential candidates for such upgrades include:

- Easton Plaza (site of Bowling Alley and Amish Farmer's Market). With abundant parking located between Marlboro Avenue and the buildings in this shopping center, there are a variety of options to add or relocate buildings closer to Marlboro. This would dramatically improve the streetscape and move from an older suburban shopping center form of development towards a more traditional Town-center pattern, which could also shift the perception of Marlboro from a separate and distinct shopping corridor to more of an extension of Downtown.
- Chesapeake Village (site of Ruby's Cake Shop and Domino's Pizza). This small neighborhood shopping center is located uniquely where Dover Road and Dover Street separate and form the triangular park adjacent to the Rail Trail, where Easton's community Christmas Tree resides. The East End Small Area Plan that is being developed concurrently with this Comprehensive Plan devotes a fair amount of attention to this park and envisions an upgrade and/or expansion of it. A potential redevelopment of the shopping center could enhance the utility of both the center and the park, to the benefit of each as well as to the East End neighborhood and Dover Road corridor.
- Easton Marketplace (site of Kohl's and Lowe's). Although a relatively new shopping center, the recent closing of the Ruby Tuesday's restaurant, the existence of a remaining pad site (to the east of Aspen Dental) and the abundance of parking (particularly between Kohl's and

Marlboro) there would seem to be ample opportunities to add new tenants to this center through a combination of adaptive reuse of buildings and new construction.

E. Community Development

A successful economic development strategy must also build community wealth and pride. The Easton EDC Strategic Plan recognizes that broad resident engagement and civic participation are essential to long-term prosperity. Priorities in community development include:

- Expand outreach and transparency through newsletters, public presentations, and direct engagement with neighborhood groups, clubs, and schools.
- Launch a formal volunteer program with training, leadership opportunities, and recognition efforts to build local ownership and capacity.
- Host a calendar of inclusive events that reflect Easton's cultural richness and foster community connectedness.
- Evaluate civic engagement and quality of life through periodic surveys, helping to align future investments with public needs and values.

F. Goals and Objectives

GOAL #1: Nurture a healthy and diverse local economy in Easton.

Objectives:

- Conduct leadership forums and focus groups with local industries to guide economic strategies
- Market and support strategic sites like Mistletoe Hall
- Develop a comprehensive business attraction and retention strategy in coordination with Easton EDC
- Prioritize redevelopment projects that support workforce housing
- Expand grant writing capacity and partnerships to fund economic initiatives

GOAL#2: Maintain and recreate a vital Downtown.

Objectives:

- Increase awareness, usage and value of the Easton Visitor Center
- Improve visitor wayfinding, visual appeal, and access to downtown attractions coordinating with Easton EDC to market downtown events and tourism opportunities

GOAL #3: Engage the community in Easton's economic future.

Objectives:

- Seek community input via community charrettes
- Community outreach and communication via in-person presentations, and print and electronic media
- Launch a town-wide volunteer program
- Use placemaking surveys to assess civic engagement and guide future priorities

5. HOUSING

HOME IS THE NICEST WORD THERE IS – LAURA INGALLS WILDER

A. PURPOSE

Providing safe, decent, and sanitary housing for all residents is essential. When a community neglects this, housing conditions deteriorate, businesses may close, and the overall appearance of communities can fuel a growing sense of despair. Easton offers a wide range of housing types, from colonial era to nineteenth-century homes near Downtown to public housing such as Graham's Place and the recently rebuilt Doverbrook apartments, as well as subdivisions such as Cooke's Hope, Easton Village, Hunters Mill and Mulberry Station. Today, even more than housing quality, the rapidly rising cost of housing has become a hot button issue for both residents, employers and commuters.

Housing first became an element of Easton's Comprehensive Plan in 2004. It is now a mandatory element of Maryland comprehensive plans rather than an optional element. Many of the issues, other than rapidly rising housing costs, associated with this Element remain essentially the same today in 2026 as they were in 2004.

State law now specifies what this element must address:

(a)

(1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) "Affirmatively further fair housing" has the meaning stated in § 2-401 of the Housing and Community Development Article.

(3) "Area median income" has the meaning stated in § 4-1801 of the Housing and Community Development Article

(4) "Low-income housing" means housing that is affordable for a household with an aggregate annual income that is below 60% of the area median income.

(5) "Workforce housing" has the meaning stated in § 4-1801 of the Housing and Community Development Article.

(b) A housing element may include goals, objectives, policies, plans, and standards.

(c) A housing element shall address the need for affordable housing within the local jurisdiction, including:

(1) workforce housing; and

(2) low-income housing. (d)

(1) Local jurisdictions have a duty to affirmatively further fair housing through their housing and urban development programs.

(2) The housing element of a comprehensive plan that is enacted or amended on or after January 1, 2023, shall include an assessment of fair housing to ensure that the local jurisdiction is affirmatively furthering fair housing.

(3) On request of a local jurisdiction, the Department of Planning, in consultation with the Department of Housing and Community Development, shall provide technical assistance for the purpose of developing the housing element of the comprehensive plan.

(4) This subsection does not require a local jurisdiction to take, or prohibit a local jurisdiction from taking, a specific action to affirmatively further fair housing.

(Md. Code, LU § 3-114)

B. Housing Issues and Policy Considerations

Easton has many housing issues, but they can all be generally categorized as one of three problems: housing cost, housing quality, and housing availability. To some extent these problems are interrelated.

Housing affordability has become so significant an issue that the Town formed an ad hoc Attainable Housing Task Force to examine the problem and make recommendations to address it. The Task Force worked on the issues during this Comp Plan update process and produced a draft report in May of 2024. The Final Report was presented to the Town Council at two Workshops in November and December of 2025. The Report's Executive Summary includes the following:

The Housing Task Force Final Report provides an analysis of Easton's housing landscape, demographic shifts, economic trends, and affordability challenges. The report also expands on the demographic, market, and workforce overview briefly provided to the Task Force at their May 23, 2024 meeting. Any data-driven insights provided herein are intended to inform

housing policies and initiatives recommended by the Attainable Housing Task Force. aimed at ensuring equitable and sustainable housing opportunities.

Key Findings

1. *Population Growth & Demographics*

    - *Easton experienced rapid population growth between 1980 and 2010, but growth rates have slowed significantly since 2010.*
    - *The town's population is aging, with a 42% increase in residents aged 55+ since 2000, while the percentage of younger adults (25-44) has declined by 40%.*
    - *The Hispanic population has grown significantly, increasing from 3.5% of the total population in 2000 to 14% in 2020, while the Black population's share has declined.*

2. *Housing Market Trends*

    - *Since 2000, single-family detached homes have dominated new housing developments, limiting the availability of more affordable housing types such as townhomes and multi-family units.*
    - *Home prices have risen sharply, with Easton's median home value increasing by 131% since 2000.*
    - *Rental costs have also increased, with median rents in 2025 exceeding the affordability threshold for households earning less than 100% of Easton's Area Median Income (AMI).*

3. *Affordability Challenges*

    - *Homeownership is increasingly out of reach for middle-income families, with the home price-to-income ratio rising from 3.03 in 2000 to 4.4 in 2024, indicating a decline in affordability.*
    - *Over 50% of renters in Easton are cost-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing.*
    - *Racial disparities persist, with Hispanic and Black households facing the greatest housing cost burdens and lowest homeownership rates.*

4. *Economic & Employment Factors*

- *Job growth in Talbot County has remained stagnant since 2000, increasing at an annual rate of just 0.18%.*
- *The local economy has shifted toward lower-paying service jobs, making it harder for workers to afford housing in Easton.*
- *A significant portion (42%) of the workforce commutes from neighboring counties, highlighting the disconnect between housing costs and local wages.*

Easton faces significant housing challenges, particularly in affordability, supply diversity, and demographic shifts. Without strategic interventions, rising housing costs and demographic imbalances could threaten the town's long-term economic sustainability and community inclusivity. This report serves as a foundation for developing policies that ensure a balanced, affordable, and thriving housing market for all residents.

Easton risks becoming a place where those who work here can no longer afford to live. This challenge will only grow if the Town's tourism and hospitality sectors expand as expected. A lack of affordable housing already affects essential workers — cashiers, restaurant staff, government employees, teachers, nurses, emergency responders, elder care aides — who increasingly find Easton out of reach.

This has broad implications for Easton's future. Economically segregated communities weaken social and cultural cohesion. They also burden the transportation system. As workers seek housing in neighboring counties like Dorchester and Caroline, they become commuters, adding to traffic congestion. The Town also faces economic and workforce risks if these workers eventually take jobs closer to home.

Easton has long recognized the importance of housing quality. The Town enforces the International Building Code and staffs a Building Department that includes a Building Official (who conducts plan reviews), two field inspectors, a rental housing/property maintenance inspector, and a secretary.

To maintain livability in rental housing—especially older units—Easton launched its Rental Housing Inspection Program in 1995. The program requires landlords to obtain licenses and submit to regular inspections. It was comprehensively reviewed and updated in 2008 to strengthen its effectiveness.

c. Existing Housing Programs

In Easton, housing is primarily provided by the private sector. However, a few public and nonprofit programs offer limited affordable housing, including efforts by the Housing Commission of Talbot County, subsidized private developments like Chatham Village Apartments, and homes built by Habitat for Humanity of Choptank, Inc.

The Housing Commission of Talbot (Formerly the Easton Housing Authority) recently converted their portfolio from public housing to a voucher based program. As a result, they do not own any more public housing. Instead, they have an inventory of 79 voucher based units in Easton. They administer 159 Housing Choice Vouchers. They also have 9 units of net-zero housing on Port Street (Nicholas Landing), 12 units of affordable housing on Pleasant Alley and 4 duplex units on Port. Street.

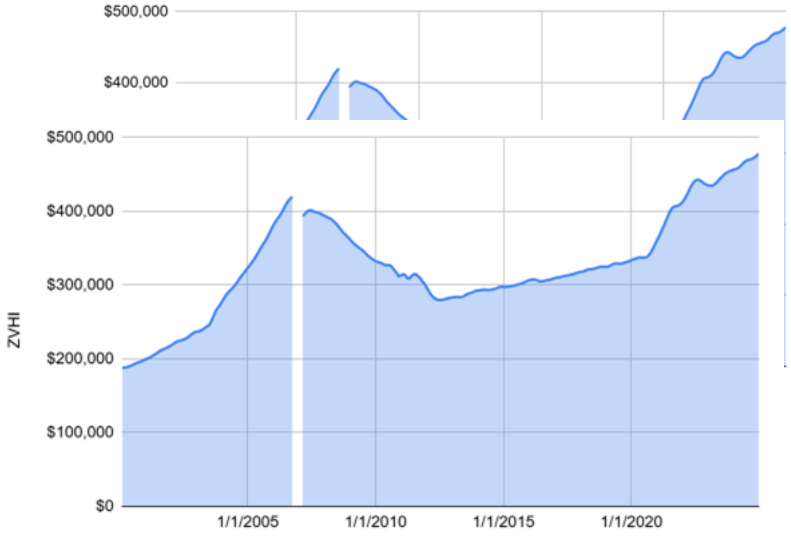
Habitat for Humanity of Choptank, Inc. has built more than 25 homes in Easton using its volunteer-driven model. Future homeowners contribute substantial "sweat equity" during construction and later assist other Habitat families. With donated or discounted land and no labor costs, overall housing costs are kept low. And, the Town Council has expanded affordable housing by requiring developers of discretionary projects—like annexations or PUDs—to include on- or off-site affordable units or contribute to the Town's Affordable Housing fund as a condition of approval.

A key step in addressing housing issues was the creation of the Easton Affordable Housing Board in 2005. Appointed by the Town, the Board develops policies and criteria for affordable housing and oversees units acquired by the Town through development approvals. Early efforts focused on establishing guidelines and a selection process for purchasing these units. A more recent Program that has proven to be successful is the Board's Renovation Program. Through this program, homeowners may apply for a grant, no interest deferred loan or low interest loan depending on their income, for approved renovations to improve the energy efficiency, safety, and livability of their home. This helps homeowners with these costs, which in turn help lower monthly utility bills, and allows them to remain in their homes longer.

i. Local Housing Costs and Issues

The full Attainable Housing Task Force Report contains detailed information on local and regional housing costs and affordability data. Highlights are presented in sections which follow.

Figure 33: Talbot County ZHVI, 2000 - 2024

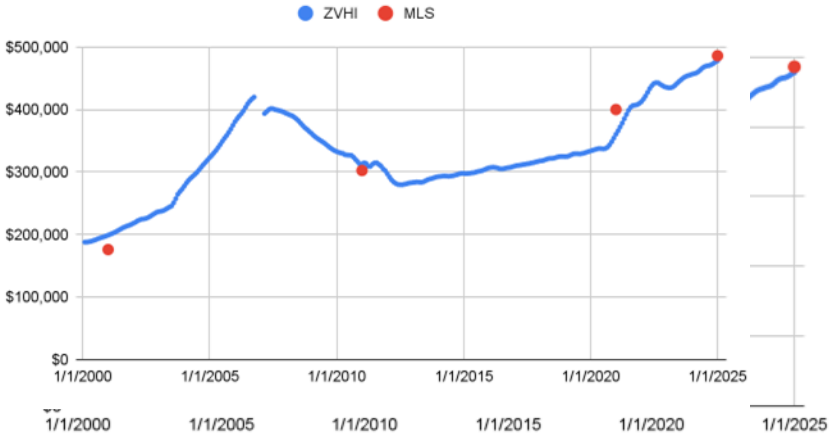


The **Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI) for Talbot County** reflects the general direction of home values in our community since the year 2000.Nationally, home prices peaked in September 2006, then began to decline later that year and into 2007. By 2008, the housing market had collapsed, triggering a broader financial crisis known as the Great Recession (2007–2009). The market hit bottom in 2012, followed by a slow recovery through 2016.

Talbot County followed a similar trend. As shown above, the Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI) peaked at $420,000 in September 2006, then fell 21% by 2009. It bottomed out at $280,000 in September 2012. From there, values steadily rose, reaching $334,000 by the end of 2019—a 19% increase. Between 2015 and 2019, the ZHVI grew at an average annual rate of 2.4%. Beginning in 2020, home values surged 43%, reaching $478,000 by the end of 2024 — an average yearly increase of about 9%. It is important to note that while the ZHVI offers a helpful snapshot of housing trends in Talbot County, it is not a replacement for professional appraisals.

This report analyzed median home sale prices in Talbot County for 2000, 2010, 2020, and 2024 using Bright MLS data from the Mid-Shore Board of Realtors. Figure 34 compares these values with the ZHVI, showing both followed similar trends over time. Percentage differences between the two sources, ranging from 13% in 2000 to just 2% in 2024, with an average gap of 7%. Both

Figure 34: Talbot County ZVHI versus MLS



ZHVI and MLS offer reliable insights into long-term housing trends.

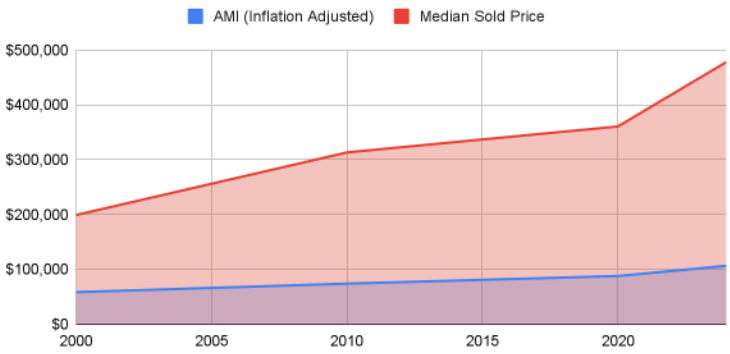
In summary, the high cost of single-family detached homes in Easton poses significant affordability challenges — particularly for first-time buyers and workers in lower-wage professions with limited income growth potential.

ii. Housing Costs and Income

In 2024, Talbot County's Annual Median Income (AMI) was $106,500. The Easton Affordable Housing Board adjusts this figure annually to better reflect local incomes; in 2020, Easton's AMI was $98,065. Given the small gap between the two, Talbot County's home price-to-income ratio serves as a useful affordability metric for Easton. Based on MSBR data, the 2024 ratio was 4.4, meaning it takes 4.4 years of median income to purchase a median-priced home. This marks a sharp decline in affordability from 2000, when the ratio was 3.03. Even after the Great Recession, the ratio climbed to 4.12, showing a continued trend toward less affordable housing.

Another key measure of affordability is how income growth compares to rising home prices over time. In Talbot County between 2000 and 2010, home prices grew much faster than incomes, leading to a sharp decline in affordability, likely driven by the housing boom before the Great Recession. From 2010 to 2020, growth slowed, and income slightly outpaced home prices, reflecting post-recession recovery and a cooler housing market. However, from 2000 to 2024 overall, home prices once again outpaced income growth, signaling a renewed affordability gap similar to the early 2000s.

Figure 38: Talbot County AMI (Inflation Adjusted) and ZHVI

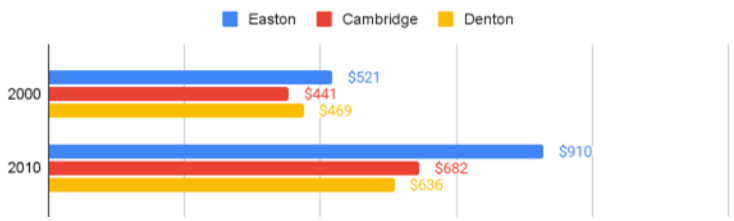


Sources: HUD Income Limits and Zillow Research

iii. Rental Market

In Easton, 40% of households are renters, a five-point drop since 2010. The current rental vacancy rate is 5.3%, significantly higher than the 1.4% homeowner vacancy rate. In 2010, those rates were 4.8% and 5.2%, respectively. The sharp decline in homeowner vacancies reflects a tight housing market, likely

Figure 39: Median Gross Rent, 2000 - 2023



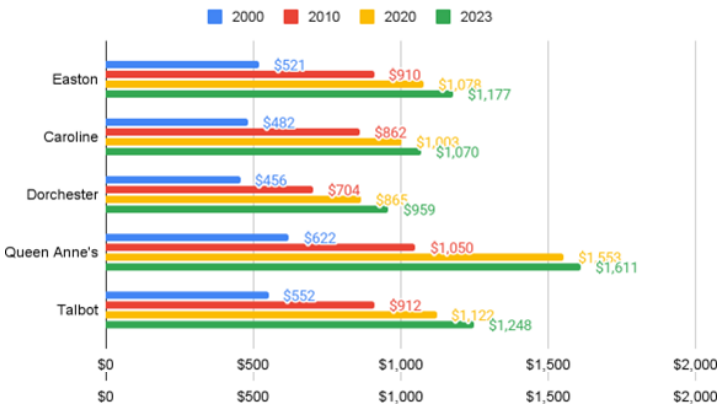
driven by strong demand for higher-end homes and a limited supply of affordable, diverse options. Demographic shifts may also play a role: older adults—more likely to own homes—are staying in place, while younger adults face growing barriers to homeownership, contributing to reduced turnover and tighter supply.

The rental vacancy rate, at 5.3%, falls within the healthy range of 5–7%, suggesting a balanced rental market with more unit availability compared to the much tighter for-sale housing market.

The recent uptick in planned multi-family residential development may help counter rising prices in both the ownership and rental markets. Contributing factors include slower housing absorption since 2010, a tight ownership market, and a shift toward higher-priced inventory. Multi-family units offer more affordable alternatives for households priced out of homeownership and expand the rental supply—helping to stabilize or even reduce rents and improve affordability for renters.

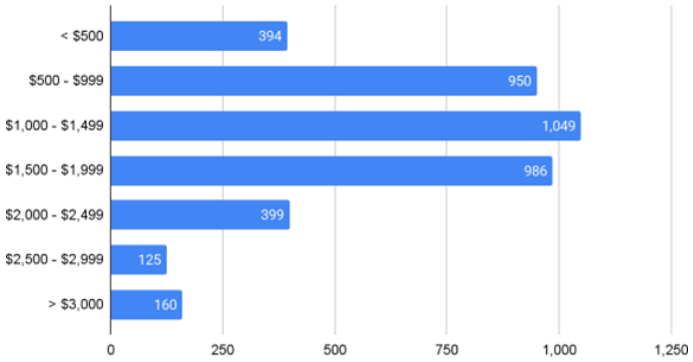
Since 2000, Easton's median gross rent has consistently exceeded those of nearby Denton and Cambridge, reflecting its status as a more premium rental market. The most significant increase occurred between 2000 and 2010, when median rents rose by 74%. During that time, 92% of new housing construction was single-family detached or attached units—limiting rental supply amid growing demand. Although the sharpest rise happened in that decade, rents have continued to climb steadily through 2023.

Figure 40: Median Gross Rent, Easton Versus Counties, 2023



Compared to surrounding counties, Easton's median rent is 94% of Talbot County's but only 73% of Queen Anne's. When rents are broken down by price range, there's a clear shortage of units affordable to extremely low-income households—those earning under $25,000 annually. This gap particularly affects individuals at risk of homelessness or in need of transitional housing. However, there is a relatively strong supply of units in the

Figure 41: Easton Gross Rent and Number of Units, 2023



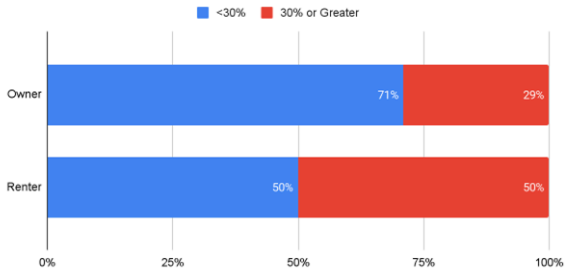
$500–$999 range, which remain affordable for households earning up to about $45,000 per year.

D. Housing Affordability

i. Cost Burdened Households

Cost-burdened households are those spending more than 30% of their gross income on housing. This strain often forces families to choose between housing and essentials like food, healthcare, transportation, or savings—undermining their overall well-being.

Figure 42: Easton Cost Burdened Households by Tenure, 2023, ACS 5-Year Estimates



According to 2023 ACS data, half of Easton homeowners with a mortgage pay $2,000 or more per month in housing costs. Yet only 29% are considered cost-burdened—spending over 30% of their income on housing. This indicates a relatively high income level or greater affordability tolerance among homeowners in Easton.

This also highlights that housing costs in Easton are relatively high, even for middle-income households. At 80% of Easton's 2024 AMI ($98,065), a household should spend no more than $1,961 per month on housing to stay below the cost-burdened threshold. Many homeowners exceed this amount yet still fall just under the 30% limit, indicating that even middle-income families are feeling pressure. In fact, ACS data shows that 62% of owner-occupied households earning under $75,000 are cost-burdened, compared to just 9% of those earning $75,000 or more—underscoring the growing affordability gap.

While middle-income homeowners face growing pressure in Easton's housing market, the situation is even more severe for renters — particularly those with lower incomes. In 2023, 50% of renters were cost-burdened, compared to 29% of homeowners. This sharp disparity underscores the greater affordability challenges renters face by spending a disproportionate share of their income on housing. The result is increased financial instability, housing insecurity, and strain on overall well-being.

ii. Affordable Home Price

According to HUD's FY 2024 Income Limits Summary, Talbot County's Median Family Income (MFI) for a family of four is $106,500—11% above the average for Maryland's Eastern Shore (excluding Cecil County) and the third highest in the region, following Queen Anne's and Kent counties.

Talbot County's MFI has grown steadily since 1990, reflecting long-term economic progress. The sharpest increase occurred between 1990 and 2000, with a 65% gain. Overall, from 1990 to 2024, the MFI has risen by 203%. The current MFI is based on the 2018–2022 ACS 5-year estimate of $100,321, adjusted for inflation using Congressional Budget Office projections and rounded to the nearest $100.

HUD uses MFI to establish income thresholds by household size, categorizing households as Extremely Low, Very Low, or Low Income. These thresholds determine eligibility for a range of housing assistance programs, including Public Housing, Section 8 vouchers and project-based assistance, Section 202 housing for older adults, and Section 811 housing for people with disabilities.

In Easton, the Affordable Housing Board adjusts the County's MFI to better reflect local economic conditions. For FY 2024, Easton's adjusted MFI is $98,065. This figure is used to set eligibility and affordability standards for Town housing programs.

Based on this adjusted MFI, a four-person household earning \$98,065 per year can afford a home priced at approximately $277,000—assuming 35% of gross income is spent on housing costs. This estimate factors in mortgage principal and interest, property taxes, homeowners insurance, private mortgage insurance (PMI), and HOA dues, based on a 5% down payment and a 6.95% 30-year fixed interest rate. It should be noted that this figure differs from the 30% used by the Town's affordable Housing Board. That is because this calculation is based on the following definition: "Affordable Owner Expense: Housing cost that does not exceed one-twelfth of 35% of 100% of the Easton Area Median Income, adjusted for household size to include Principal and Interest, Taxes, and Property Insurance (PITI); Private Mortgage Insurance (PMI); and Homeowner Association dues." The calculation above assumes $200 monthly for both HOA dues and property insurance, and applies a property tax rate of 1.29% per $100 of assessed value, based on a 3-year trailing average ZHVI of $419,647.

In contrast, the median home price in Easton in 2024 was $450,000, according to MarketStats by Showing Time (Mid-Shore Board of Realtors)—38% above what a median-income household can

afford. Even the average price for an attached home, such as a townhome, exceeds affordability by 21%. A household would need to earn approximately $137,000, or 140% of Easton's adjusted AMI, to afford a home priced at $420,000.

These figures highlight the growing gap between incomes and home prices—and the pressing need for more affordable housing options in Easton.

iii. Affordable Rental Price

HUD calculates Fair Market Rents (FMRs) to establish payment standards for rental assistance programs such as the Housing Choice Voucher Program. For FY 2025 in Talbot County, FMRs are based on average gross rents from the 2018–2022 ACS, adjusted for inflation and local market conditions. If the calculated value falls below the Maryland state minimum, HUD raises it accordingly. Bedroom-specific ratios are then applied to the adjusted two-bedroom rent to determine FMRs for other unit sizes. These figures are listed in Table 7 below.

FY 2024 Income Limit Area	Median Family Income Click for More Detail	FY 2024 Income Limit Category	Persons in Family							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Talbot County, MD	$106,500	Very Low (50%) Income Limits ($) Click for More Detail	37,300	42,600	47,950	**53,250**	57,550	61,800	66,050	70,300
		Extremely Low Income Limits ($)* Click for More Detail	22,400	25,600	28,800	**31,950**	36,580	41,960	47,340	52,720
		Low (80%) Income Limits ($) Click for More Detail	59,650	68,200	76,700	**85,200**	92,050	98,850	105,650	112,500

Table 7: HUD FY 2024 Income Limits Summary

A renter household is considered cost-burdened if it spends more than 30% of gross income on rent. For a four-person household earning 60% of Easton's adjusted AMI ($58,839), affordable rent—net of a $100 monthly utility allowance—is approximately $1,371 for a three-bedroom unit.

As of March 2025, Zumper reports the average rent for a three-bedroom in Easton is $2,400, a 10% increase over the previous year. About 75% of rents fall between $1,501 and $3,000. The median rent for a two-bedroom is $2,499, and across all unit types, the median monthly rent is $2,549—27% higher than the national average. For apartments specifically, the average rent is $2,699, with two-bedroom apartments averaging $2,044.

As shown in Table 8, a four-person household earning 60% of Easton's AMI cannot afford a one-, two-, or three-bedroom rental in Easton without being cost-burdened. To afford the median rent of $2,525, a household would require a significantly higher income.

	Efficiency	One-Bedroom	Two-Bedroom	Three-Bedroom	Four-Bedroom
FY 2025 FMR	$1,210	$1,257	$1,392	$1,951	$2,338

Table 8: FY 2025 FMRs by Unit Bedrooms

iv. Exclusionary Zoning and Its Impact on Housing Choice and Affordability

Exclusionary zoning refers to land-use regulations that limit the types of housing allowed in certain areas—often under the guise of preserving neighborhood character or managing growth. Common tools include minimum lot sizes, building height limits, and restrictions on multi-family housing. While these regulations may be well-intentioned, their effect is often to increase housing costs and limit access for lower-income individuals and families.

Consider a half-acre lot zoned for single-family homes with minimum lot size requirements. A developer purchasing this lot might theoretically choose among three options:

- A modest 1,200 sq. ft. starter home suited for first-time buyers or downsizing retirees;
- Seven attached townhomes that could offer more affordable ownership options; or
- A large, upscale single-family home marketed to affluent buyers.

However, existing zoning likely prohibits higher-density development—such as townhomes—through restrictions on lot coverage, density, or allowed housing types. As a result, the developer, constrained by regulations and seeking to maximize profit, will almost certainly choose to build a large luxury home. Although each townhome would yield a smaller individual profit, the combined revenue from multiple units would exceed that of a single high-end home. But zoning doesn't allow this option.

This disconnect highlights a broader issue: the housing a community builds isn't always the housing it needs. While there is demand for large homes in Easton and Talbot County, there is also unmet

demand from essential workers, young professionals, growing families, and older adults seeking more manageable living spaces. These groups benefit from a mix of housing types—if zoning allows them. The challenge lies in enabling diverse housing choices that still respect the character and scale of existing neighborhoods.

In unincorporated Talbot County, the situation is more restrictive. The County's Comprehensive Plan prioritizes preserving shoreline, waterways, and farmland—important goals—but pursues them in part by limiting the extension of sewer systems outside designated growth areas and by maintaining exclusionary land-use policies.

County zoning regulations prohibit most housing types other than single-family detached homes, often on large lots with low height and coverage limits. These low-density rules restrict supply, inflate land and construction costs, and make development of affordable units unfeasible.

The result is a development pattern that supports only high-end housing, effectively pricing out lower- and middle-income residents. This drives housing segregation based on income—and, as shown in Figures 47, 48, and 49, such segregation often correlates with racial, generational, and workforce disparities.

Figure 47: Talbot County Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units in 2020 by Census Tract

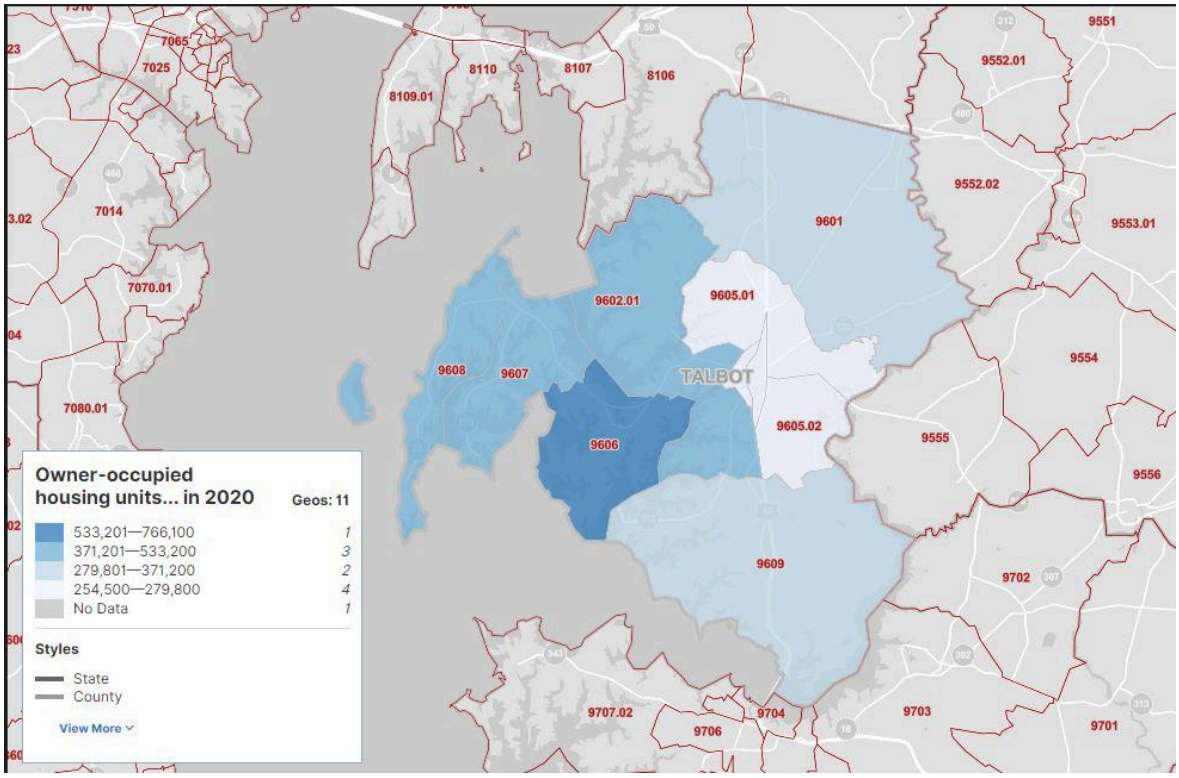


Figure 48: Talbot County Black Population by Census Tract

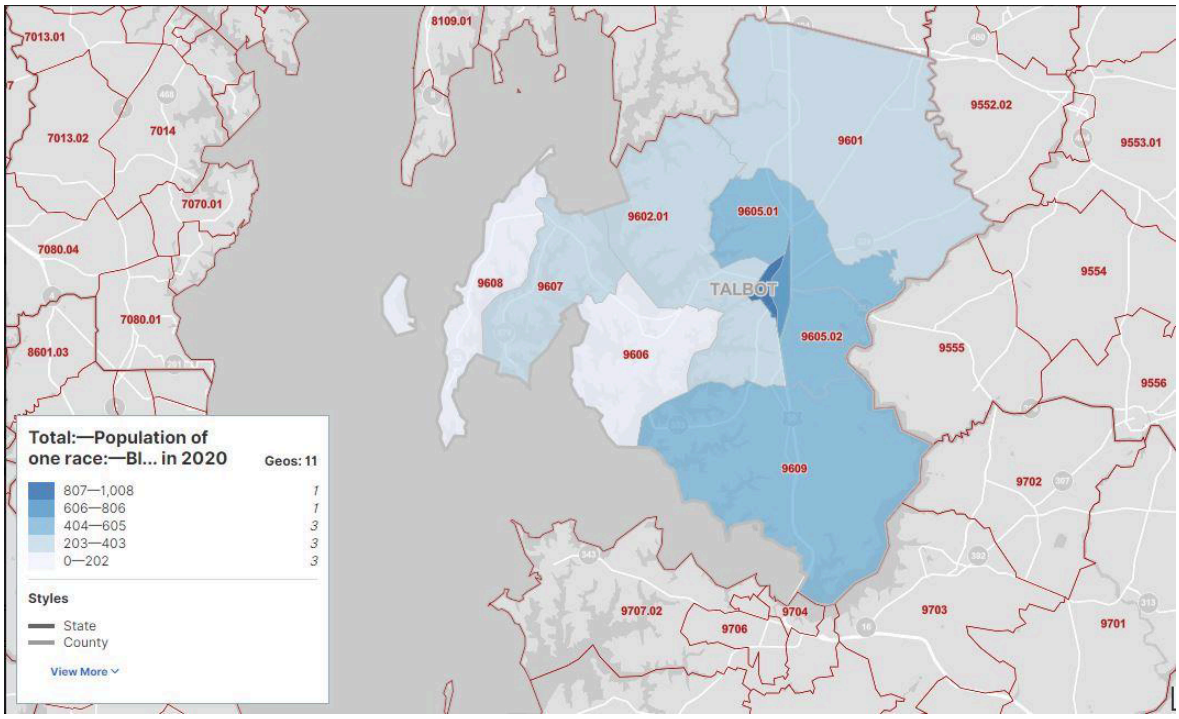
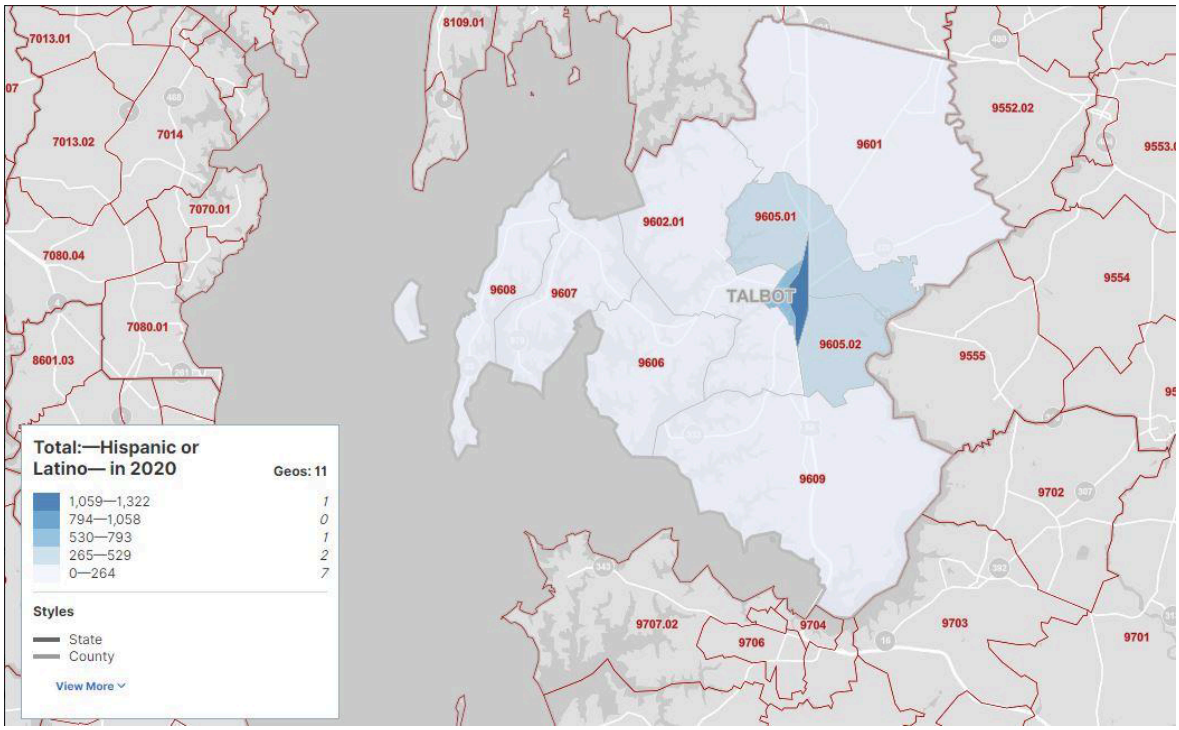


Figure 49: Talbot County Hispanic Population by Census Tract



E. Fair Housing

In 2021, the Maryland Land Use Article was amended to require that all comprehensive plans include a "Fair Housing Assessment" to ensure that they "affirmatively further fair housing." This refers to the obligation to prevent housing discrimination and proactively address segregation and other barriers that limit housing access based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, familial status, or disability. As defined in Section 2-401 of the Housing and Community Development Article, this includes taking active steps to create inclusive communities where housing opportunity is not restricted by these characteristics.

The Housing Goals and Objectives at the end of this chapter include recommended actions to meet this requirement. These focus on preserving Easton's existing affordable housing, increasing the supply of new housing, and preventing the displacement of low- and moderate-income households.

The Town of Easton is committed to fostering an inclusive and equitable community where all residents have fair access to housing opportunities. This commitment is central to our vision of a vibrant, diverse, and thriving town.

In line with the Federal Fair Housing Act, the Maryland Fair Housing Act, and applicable local ordinances, Easton prohibits housing discrimination based on:

- Race (including associated traits like hair texture and protective hairstyles)
- Color
- Religion
- Sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity)
- Familial status (including families with children, pregnant individuals, and legal custodians of children under 18)
- National origin
- Disability (physical or mental)
- Marital status
- Source of income
- Military status

The Town will actively work to eliminate discriminatory practices, support diverse neighborhoods, and ensure that all residents can find housing that meets their needs. Fair and equal treatment will continue to be integrated into our planning, policymaking, and community development efforts.

F. Potential New Housing Programs / Policies

Easton faces two distinct housing challenges. The first is a shortage of housing for low- and extremely low-income individuals and families. These housing needs often intersect with broader social and familial challenges, making them persistent. Despite this, the Town must continue—and expand—efforts to provide housing for this group. The Housing Authority of Talbot County remains the primary provider, but the Town should also support groups like Habitat for Humanity of Choptank and similar organizations that offer safe, decent, affordable homes.

One approach worth revisiting is a local Self-Help Housing Program, modeled after a successful initiative on the lower Eastern Shore led by former Delegate Rudy Cane. Similar to Habitat's model, the USDA-supported program enables very low- and low-income families to build their own homes together under supervision, contributing a set share of labor (typically 65%). This reduces costs

and makes homeownership feasible. Easton previously sought funding for this program through the Community Legacy Program, but the request was denied. Renewed efforts could help bring it to fruition.

The second housing issue is the lack of inventory for first-time and move-up homebuyers. Easton's recent residential developments increasingly target high-income buyers, leaving fewer options for moderate-income households. This growing gap in the market reduces opportunities for economic mobility and long-term community diversity.

Worsening this situation is the geographic segregation of housing by income. Easton is evolving into a town of income-stratified neighborhoods—very low-income households in one area, working-class residents in another, and wealthier residents elsewhere. This kind of separation undermines community cohesion, as discussed in the Community Character Element.

One solution is to require all new residential developments to include a set percentage of homes at varied price points. A notable precedent was set in the Easton Village on the Tred Avon project, which originally committed 10% of both attached and detached units as affordable housing. These units were to be integrated into the community, indistinguishable from market-rate homes, and subject to resale restrictions to maintain affordability. However, the financial burden of real estate taxes and HOA fees eventually led the developer to substitute in-lieu contributions to the Town's Affordable Housing Fund.

Developers have also met affordable housing obligations by building units off-site or contributing to the Fund. While this has provided some affordable homes, it has diluted the original goal of integrating housing types within neighborhoods.

To create a more consistent and equitable approach, the Town's Affordable Housing Board proposed an Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance, an idea first supported in the 2010 Plan. Since then, the concept has been studied by the Board and the Attainable Housing Task Force, leading to a proposed ordinance presented to the Town Council in early 2025 and currently (October 2025) pending potential action.

Additional housing policy options under consideration include:

- Expanding "Missing Middle" housing types to offer more varied and affordable units.
- Creating Traditional Neighborhood Zoning that allows smaller lots, mixed uses, and compact, walkable development by-right.

- Modifying the development review process to streamline approvals for projects that align with the Town's affordable housing goals.

These initiatives aim to address both affordability and equity while supporting a more integrated, inclusive housing market in Easton.

G. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Ensure that housing in Easton is safe, sanitary, structurally sound, and enhances neighborhood character.

Objectives:

- Maintain strong funding, staffing, and training for the Town's Building Inspection Department, and expand the Rental Housing Inspection Program.
- Collaborate with state, county, and nonprofit partners to direct housing rehabilitation funds to eligible low- and moderate-income households.
- Implement design standards that promote a mix of housing types and visually integrate affordable housing into the community.
- Encourage development patterns that support neighborhood identity, walkability, transit access, and efficient use of infrastructure.
- Preserve natural features and community character through thoughtful open space design, landscaping, and environmental protections.

Goal #2: Expand the supply of low-income housing in Easton.

Objectives:

- Support the Housing Authority of Talbot County and Easton Affordable Housing Board in creating both rental and ownership opportunities for low-income households.
- Amend the Zoning Ordinance to encourage private-sector apartment development and allow flexible reuse of existing or historic structures.
- Partner with Habitat for Humanity of Choptank and similar groups to identify and secure sites for new affordable homes.

- Launch a Town-led Self-Help Housing Program to assist low-income families in building their own homes.

6. TRANSPORTATION

> "Our decisions about transportation determine much more than where roads or bridges or tunnels or rail lines will be built. They determine the connections and barriers that people will encounter in their daily lives — and thus how hard or easy it will be for people to get where they need and want to go" — Elijah Cummings

A. Purpose

Transportation is a primary driver of land use—and Easton is no exception. The earliest settlements in Talbot County were located near navigable waters out of necessity. Easton's industrial buildings, now seemingly out of place, were originally located along a rail line that served the area starting in the mid-1800s. More recently, the Town's expansion to the east has been shaped by proximity to U.S. Route 50, a major regional highway.

The link between transportation and development is deeply rooted in human history, with communities forming along coasts, rivers, and trade routes. In the modern era, particularly following World War II, American transportation planning has focused overwhelmingly on accommodating private automobiles. This auto-centric approach has brought convenience but also a host of unintended consequences—environmental degradation, social inequities, and inefficient land use patterns.

The Transportation Chapter aims to:

- Reinforce the Town Council's strategic commitments to mobility, access, and connectivity.
- Update goals, policies, and strategies to support multimodal improvements across Easton and its growth area.
- Advance a "Complete Networks" approach—one that tracks and improves transportation options across all modes, with an emphasis on safety, connectivity, and equity.

B. Transportation Issues and Policy Considerations

Easton recognizes the need to rebalance its transportation system by supporting a multimodal network that includes walking, bicycling, transit, air travel, and automobiles. A diverse and well-integrated transportation system allows people of all ages, abilities, and incomes to travel

safely and efficiently. It also supports economic development, environmental sustainability, and a high quality of life.

C. Organizational Framework

The goals and policies in this chapter are organized into five key areas:

1. Integration of Land Use and Transportation Planning
2. Complete Networks
3. Non-Motorized Transportation
4. Single-Occupancy Vehicles
5. Transportation Planning Requirements

These areas are guided by six core themes that emphasize the interdependence of transportation, land use, the environment, and social equity. These themes build upon and reinforce the broader goals of this Comprehensive Plan:

1. Limit sprawl by coordinating land use and transportation planning.
2. Provide safe, sustainable, and well-connected mobility options for all users.
3. Expand infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists, and shared modes of transportation.
4. Reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles (SOV).
5. Maintain and improve roads, trails, and other key infrastructure.
6. Prioritize equity in transportation planning and project implementation.

These themes and their related policy areas will be explored in greater depth in the following sections.

D. Integration of Land Use and Transportation Planning

As the primary population, employment, and service center in Talbot County, Easton serves not only its 18,000 residents but also thousands of county and regional residents who rely on the Town for work, shopping, and daily activities. This results in a transportation network that must accommodate significant regional demand, much of it originating outside the Town's corporate limits.

The affordability of housing in surrounding areas, combined with personal preference and regional employment dynamics, means that many people choose to live outside of Easton but commute in. According to 2020 U.S. Census data, only about 3,200 of the Town's 11,860 workers lived in Easton. More than 8,600 commuted in from elsewhere. At the same time, over 2,400 Easton residents commuted out of town for work. The 2022 update showed that out of 12,232 workers in Easton, 9,190 were inbound commuters and 2,322 were outbound. In total, more than 11,000 people commute into or out of Easton each workday, underscoring the Town's regional significance and the burden on its transportation infrastructure.

This level of regional traffic presents clear challenges. Easton's planning efforts must manage congestion while also promoting land use patterns that support infill development, maintain a compact urban form, and encourage transportation alternatives to the private automobile.

Higher residential densities, such as those already found in parts of Easton, create opportunities for more efficient transportation options—like public transit, walking, and bicycling. These modes become more cost-effective and feasible as density increases. For this reason, Easton must continue to align its land use and transportation policies to:

- Support compact, higher-density development in and near employment and service centers.
- Encourage infill and redevelopment in walkable, connected neighborhoods.
- Incentivize development patterns that reduce reliance on car travel.

A more integrated approach to land use and transportation planning will help Easton accommodate regional demand while preserving the Town's form, character, and quality of life.

E. Complete Networks

Easton's transportation planning strategy prioritizes a Complete Networks approach—addressing the needs of all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and transit riders—rather than focusing solely on automobiles. This approach builds on the principles of the Complete Streets movement but expands them with annual progress tracking, system-wide assessments, and a commitment to equity and accessibility across modes.



While transit options in Talbot County remain limited, Easton must plan for future multimodal infrastructure, including the potential expansion of transit services as the Town grows. Complete Networks planning also supports Easton's goals for compact, walkable neighborhoods and reduces the demand for continuous road expansion by offering viable alternatives to the single-occupancy vehicle (SOV).

The Town aims to produce an annual inventory and performance assessment for each modal system—pedestrian, bicycle, vehicle, and transit—while also reporting on system-wide progress and needs. These assessments help guide investment priorities and align infrastructure improvements with development goals.

i. Non-Motorized Transportation

A key component of Easton's Complete Networks strategy is the continued development of safe, convenient infrastructure for pedestrians and bicyclists. This includes constructing new sidewalks, crosswalks, and bikeways, as well as integrating these elements into all new public and private street projects.

The Easton Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (originally included in the 2010 Plan and intended to be updated following this Plan's adoption) serves as the blueprint for this effort. It identifies:

- A Primary Pedestrian Network with recommended sidewalk and intersection projects prioritized by need and feasibility.
- A Primary Bicycle Network and recommended bikeway projects prioritized similarly.

These plans are considered an extension of the Plan. Their implementation is essential to enhancing non-automotive mobility in Town and promoting active transportation options.

ii. Transit and Single-Occupancy Vehicles

The Town continues to improve conditions for walking and biking while encouraging fewer vehicle trips, particularly those made by single occupants. This does not imply eliminating private vehicles—Easton will continue to support a well-functioning road network—but recognizes that auto-centric development is not sustainable for the long term.

Census data shows Easton's transportation network is heavily impacted by regional inflows and outflows of workers, shoppers, and service users. In this context, the construction of pedestrian and

bicycle infrastructure serves not only Easton residents but the broader regional community by reducing congestion and expanding travel choices.

Although private vehicles will remain the dominant mode for most regional users over the next two decades, technological shifts—such as car- and ride-sharing, remote work, and autonomous vehicles—are reshaping the transportation landscape. Easton will continue to monitor and adapt to these changes while maintaining a strong emphasis on walkable, connected, and multimodal planning.

Recognizing that congestion during peak periods is unavoidable in certain corridors, Easton is no longer planning to "build its way out" through continuous widening of roads and intersections. Instead, the Town prioritizes improvements that enhance transportation options, increase efficiency, and create safe, comfortable streets for all users.

iii. Maintaining and Improving Infrastructure

Easton integrates transportation planning with infrastructure investment to maximize cost-efficiency. When utilities such as water, sewer, or stormwater systems require upgrades, the Town seeks to coordinate these projects with transportation improvements—such as adding bikeways or sidewalks identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

For example:

- Asphalt resurfacing triggers sidewalk and curb ramp upgrades under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Road repaving can be paired with re-striping to add bike lanes.
- Utility corridor improvements may coincide with placemaking initiatives if funding is aligned.

In many cases, improvements can be funded through non-transportation sources (e.g., utility capital budgets), allowing the Town to expand multimodal infrastructure without drawing exclusively on transportation funds.

Private development also plays a role. All new development and redevelopment projects are required to contribute to the cost and construction of infrastructure needed to support growth. These projects are reviewed for compliance with local and state transportation standards and must address connectivity, safety, and overall network performance.

F. Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA)

Under the Town's Development Regulations, a Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) is required for certain development projects expected to generate significant traffic or those located near intersections where safety and congestion are already concerns. The TIA evaluates and identifies deficiencies and recommends mitigation strategies if needed. The TIA process begins with a scoping phase prior to the formal submission of a traffic study where the Town and the applicant agree upon the methodologies based on the intensity of the proposal. The study evaluates the project's impact on the surrounding network, identifies deficiencies, and recommends mitigation strategies. When applicable, additional requirements may be imposed by MDOT.

Just as a comprehensive street network is necessary for efficient and safe vehicular flow at an acceptable standard, it must also serve bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders. To encourage alternative modes of transportation and ensure mobility for all users, the Town envisions expanding the scope of TIAs to include a multi-modal impact analysis where pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders are treated as equal traffic. Future TIAs will be aligned with the Town's anticipated Complete Streets classification system. This ensures that the impact analysis accounts for all modes of travel, not just traffic counts and the infrastructure design identifies the specific types of bicycle and pedestrian facilities appropriate for the street's classification.

To support the Town's goals for a seamless network all new development abutting substandard public streets is required to upgrade adjacent street segments to current multimodal standards where feasible. These standards ensure that as Easton grows, its transportation infrastructure is safe, accessible, and multimodal, and fiscally sustainable by requiring development to contribute its fair share to the public realm.

G. Road System

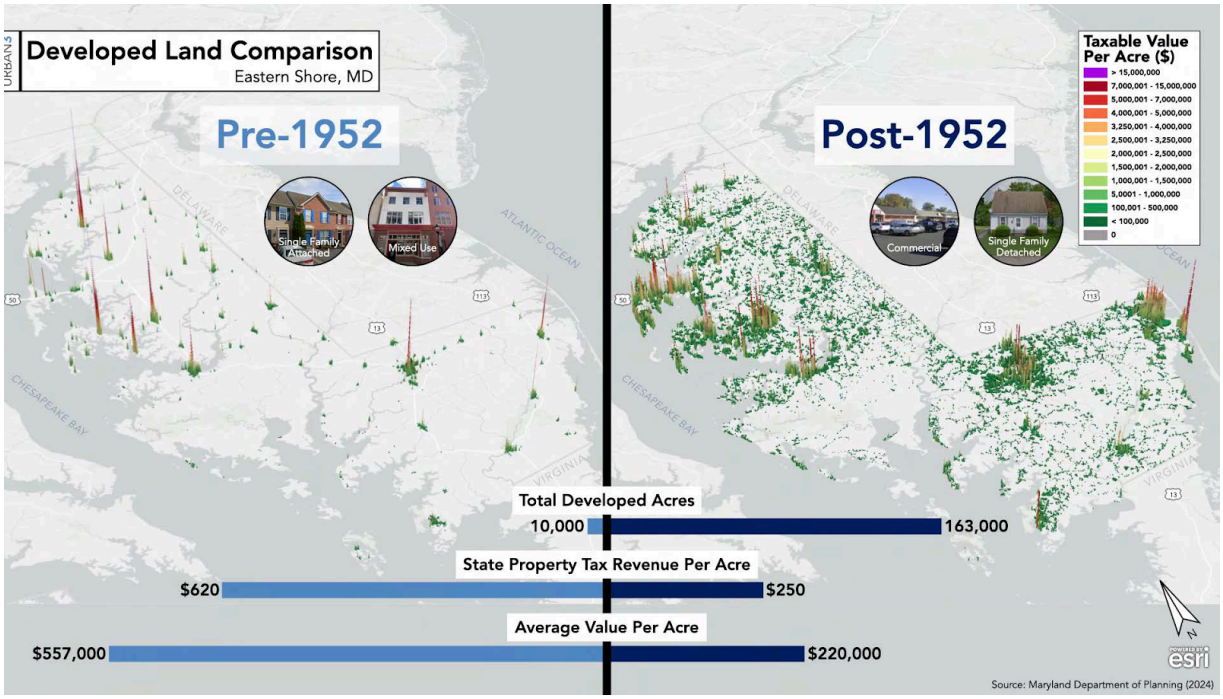
U.S. Route 50 has been the single most influential force shaping Easton's growth and development patterns over the past several decades—particularly commercial growth. The opening of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge in 1952 gave millions of Western Shore residents direct access to the Eastern Shore, driving a surge in beach traffic. Entrepreneurs responded by developing fast-food restaurants, gas stations, and other roadside services along Route 50 to attract these pass-through travelers.

Route 50 also fundamentally altered development patterns in Easton. What began as growth along a bypass corridor eventually drew more commercial uses toward it, with residential development

filling in between the highway and the historic core. Most of this post-1950s growth was auto-oriented and single-use in nature, diverging from traditional neighborhood design.

A fiscal analysis by Urban3 (see Figure 2) highlights key differences between pre- and post-1952 development. First, relatively little land was developed before the Bay Bridge opened. Second, land developed prior to 1952 consistently generates significantly higher fiscal value per acre than post-bridge development. Together, these trends reinforce the link between infrastructure and land use patterns, and the higher fiscal return of compact, traditional development over suburban sprawl.

FIGURE 2 - Taxable Value per Acre on the Eastern Shore pre and post Bay Bridge



While Route 50 has benefited many businesses, its impacts are mixed. Excessive access points and the highway's attempt to function both as a high-speed regional corridor and as a local service road have created serious traffic congestion, safety concerns, and neighborhood disruption.

i. Route 50: Fixes and Futures

Easton's residents overwhelmingly oppose rerouting Route 50 onto the Easton Parkway—a position consistently confirmed in every Comprehensive Plan survey since the 1990s. The Parkway was built in the 1960s to serve west Talbot residents by providing north-south mobility around Easton, not through it. Converting it into a new Route 50 would undermine this function, add signalized

intersections, and risk significant environmental impacts—particularly near MD 33 and MD 333. The Parkway cannot and should not serve as a high-capacity bypass.

Instead, the most favored long-term solution remains a new, limited-access bypass located well east of Easton—similar in scope to the Salisbury Bypass. This would alleviate congestion within Town, reduce through-traffic delays, and provide an opportunity to repurpose the existing Route 50 corridor as a local "Business 50." That transformation would allow for street narrowing, improved safety, and redevelopment of the corridor into a more attractive, multi-modal gateway.

Until such a bypass becomes feasible, the Town will continue to work with the State Highway Administration (SHA) to improve the existing Route 50 corridor through landscaping, intersection upgrades, and access management.

ii. East–West Access

A long-standing problem in Easton is the lack of effective east–west connectivity. The Parkway helps bypass downtown for north–south traffic, but offers little help to those moving across Town between neighborhoods on either side of Route 50. As a result, east–west travel often funnels through residential streets, creating congestion, cut-through traffic, and neighborhood complaints.

Some improvements have been made—such as traffic signal synchronization along Route 50—but larger solutions are needed. One promising idea is to relocate MD 309 so it connects with Route 50 at the point where the former railroad crosses. From there, it could run along the rail corridor before rejoining its existing alignment. This would not only improve east–west connectivity but also eliminate the problematic intersection near the airport, where a grade-separated interchange would conflict with flight paths. The concept, originally proposed by SHA, has support from local and regional officials and should be advanced.

iii. Planning and Coordination

Planning for future road improvements is complex and expensive—especially when multiple jurisdictions are involved. Within Easton's limits, roads are managed by the Town, Talbot County, and the State of Maryland, each with different objectives. For example, the State's priority for Route 50 is efficient regional travel, while Easton and the County prioritize local mobility and safety. Effective intergovernmental coordination is essential to reconcile these priorities and deliver meaningful improvements.

It's also important to recognize that Route 50 is now a major freight corridor. A 2022 State of Maryland report on the Rural Opportunities to Use Traffic Technology Enhancements (ROUTE) initiative noted that Route 50 carries over 10,000 trucks per day and supports $14 billion in annual commodity flow. Freight delays exceed 107,000 hours annually, costing roughly $51 million in lost time and fuel. The corridor is critical for agriculture, tourism, supply chains, and national security assets such as Wallops Island.

Going forward, Easton must continue advocating for road improvements that balance local mobility, regional freight needs, and safety—while staying focused on long-term goals to reduce auto dependency and enhance quality of life through better multimodal transportation options.

H. Complete Streets

Easton is in the process of developing a Complete Streets framework to ensure the design and operation of streets safely accommodates all users—pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, motorists—regardless of age or ability. This approach reflects a shift away from traditional car-centric design toward one that balances the needs of all travel modes and emphasizes safety, accessibility, and community character.

Complete Streets prioritize local needs and neighborhood scale, rather than solely focusing on the rapid movement of through-traffic. Features may include sidewalks, bike lanes, bus stops, safe pedestrian crossings, median islands, curb extensions, traffic calming measures, and green stormwater infrastructure. When designed well, Complete Streets promote safer travel, improved mobility, public health, and placemaking—all critical to Easton's long-term livability.

In January 2025, the Town of Easton initiated its formal Complete Streets planning process by contracting with the transportation engineering firm Wallace Montgomery (WM). This first phase of work lays the foundation for a long-term shift in how Easton designs, prioritizes, and evaluates street infrastructure. The overall Complete Streets planning effort is anticipated to span several years and phases of development and implementation.

I. Airport

Easton is uniquely served by a general aviation airport within its town limits. Easton Airport (Newnam Field – ESN), located just west of MD Route 662 and south of Airport Road, is owned and operated by Talbot County. The facility is managed by an Airport Manager under the direction of the County Council, with input from a five-member Airport Advisory Board.

Designated in the FAA's National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS), Easton Airport is eligible for federal funding. As a general aviation facility, it supports a range of private, corporate, and public service aviation needs. It features two intersecting paved runways:

- Runway 04/22: 5,500 feet long
- Runway 15/33: 4,000 feet long

Both have full parallel taxiways and instrument approaches. An FAA contract air traffic control tower operates on-site.

The airport supports approximately 220 based aircraft, including single- and multi-engine planes, jets, helicopters, and gliders. Four Fixed Base Operators (FBOs)—Easton Jet Service, Maryland Air, NexGen Flight Solutions, and Trident Aviation—offer a wide array of services, including:

- Aircraft fueling (100LL and Jet A)
- Aircraft parking (tie-downs, T-hangars)
- Air charter services
- Rental cars, hangar space, and catering
- Flight planning tools, weather centers, and a public café
- Meeting space and fitness amenities

Additional aviation-related businesses offer aircraft repair, sales, and unique experiences such as biplane rides through Aloft Biplane Rides. Flight instruction and rentals are provided by Trident Aviation and Easton Aviation.

The airport also plays a key public safety role. The Maryland State Police base a medevac helicopter at the site for emergency medical transport, search and rescue, and law enforcement missions. Talbot County EMS operates five Advanced Life Support units from the airport, improving response times and access to critical care.

i. Operational Statistics

Easton Airport (ESN) ranks among the top three busiest general aviation airports in Maryland, reflecting its critical role in the region's transportation and economic systems. According to the Maryland Aviation Administration and recent reports, ESN supports a high volume of aircraft activity and contributes significantly to the local economy.

Based Aircraft (2023)

- Single-engine aircraft: 143
- Multi-engine aircraft: 24
- Corporate jets: 20
- Helicopters: 3
- Total: 190 based aircraft

Annual Aircraft Operations (2023)

- Local general aviation: 44%
- Transient general aviation: 31%
- Military: 20%
- Air taxi: 5%
- Total operations: 73,543 annually

ii. Economic Impact

A 2023 statewide study of airport economic impacts found that Easton Airport generated:

- 542 total jobs
- $36.9 million in personal income
- $11.3 million in state and local tax revenue
- $91.4 million in total business revenue

These numbers demonstrate that the airport is not only a transportation asset but a major economic driver for Talbot County and the broader Mid-Shore region.

iii. Land Use Compatibility and Community Impacts

As the airport has grown in operations and prominence, conflicts with adjacent residential neighborhoods have also increased—most notably related to noise, traffic, and the perception of encroachment. In response, Talbot County has enacted zoning measures and acquired avigation easements on surrounding properties to limit incompatible uses and protect aviation operations.

The County plans to continue securing such easements to preserve the airport's long-term functionality.

On the Town side, while the land immediately surrounding the airport is zoned for industrial uses—which is generally compatible with aviation—there are currently no special airport-related zoning protections in place. The Town may consider revising its zoning ordinance in the future to incorporate airport overlay or compatibility districts to better manage potential land use conflicts, particularly in areas close to approach and departure paths.

Within Easton's jurisdiction, the primary concern is not safety but nuisance—especially in the North Easton neighborhoods and adjacent unincorporated County lands. Aircraft noise, fumes, and vibrations are ongoing quality-of-life issues for nearby residents. A balanced approach is needed: residents should acknowledge the presence of a long-standing regional airport, while the airport should seek to channel expansion and high-impact operations toward non-residential, industrial, and undeveloped land to mitigate disturbances.

iv. Mission and Outlook

The airport's mission emphasizes service, safety, and community responsibility:

> *Talbot County's Easton Airport is and will remain the Mid-Shore's premier non-commercial general aviation airport, providing outstanding service and support for private, corporate, and government tenants, transient aircraft users, and the Talbot County community at large. It will be a good neighbor by being sensitive to environmental concerns and will support education, emergency services, medical evacuation, and law enforcement activities. The airport will prioritize safety and security while aligning with the goals of the County's Comprehensive Plan.*

The Town of Easton supports the continued operation and thoughtful growth of Easton Airport and recognizes its importance for economic development, public safety, and regional mobility. However, the Town also emphasizes the importance of equitable land use planning to minimize impacts on residential communities and ensure long-term compatibility between aviation operations and surrounding neighborhoods.

J. Port

Port facilities for the Town of Easton are located at Easton Point, a triangular peninsula bordered on two sides by the Tred Avon River. The area commonly referred to as Easton Point extends inland to

the Easton Parkway, although much of the land remains outside the corporate limits of the Town. The only parcels within Town boundaries include the former Public Works yard (now repurposed as a Waterfront Park), the Talbot County Public Works and Emergency Management offices, the Londonderry Retirement Community, and a few small intervening parcels.

The current mix of land uses at Easton Point is varied. At the tip of the peninsula is a small marina and a heavily used public boat ramp. There are also several industrial users that rely on river access for the delivery of bulk materials. Along the corridor closer to the Parkway are the County's Public Works facility (now in the process of relocating) and the Londonderry senior living complex. Other intervening parcels include low-density residential properties and aging infrastructure, including the old Town Public Works yard.

The long-term future of Easton Point remains uncertain. The area has been widely recognized for its redevelopment potential, given its waterfront access and proximity to downtown. Many stakeholders envision a shift away from heavy industrial use toward a more mixed-use, recreational, and residential vision. This could include expanded marina facilities, improved public waterfront access, parks and open space, and higher-density residential and commercial development.

This vision was further articulated in the Easton Point/Port Street Small Area Plan, referenced in the Implementation Chapter. That plan sets forth a framework for potential annexation, infrastructure improvements, and land use changes, should redevelopment opportunities materialize in the future.

K. Rail

Rail service to Easton and the broader Talbot County area has been discontinued for many years. Most of the former rail rights-of-way have either been retained by the Maryland State Rail Administration or reverted to private ownership. As a result, the restoration of freight or passenger rail service is not anticipated during this planning period; however, old rail beds serve as good bones for the Town's Bicycle and Pedestrian network, which is exploited below.

L. Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan

Too often, transportation planning focuses narrowly on roadways, with minimal attention to non-automobile modes. Walking—our most basic form of transportation—is frequently overlooked, along with the infrastructure that supports it. Easton is actively working to change that. As part of

the Town's broader "Complete Streets initiative" pedestrian and bicycle networks are now a central focus of infrastructure planning and investment.

In Easton's older neighborhoods, sidewalks have long been a defining feature. In recent years, many of these areas have benefited from targeted sidewalk upgrades and streetscape enhancements. Since the early 1980s, the Planning and Zoning Commission has required sidewalks in all new subdivisions. However, some neighborhoods developed in the 1950s through 1970s lack this infrastructure entirely, forcing pedestrians to share roadways with vehicles—a significant safety concern. These areas are now priorities for retroactive sidewalk installation.

i. Bicycle Infrastructure

Bicycle travel is also receiving greater attention in Easton's transportation framework. Bicycling offers a low-cost, sustainable transportation option and is increasingly eligible for federal and state infrastructure funding. Projects such as bike lanes and multi-use trails are particularly well-suited to Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) grants and Maryland's transportation funding programs, which now require comprehensive plans to address pedestrian and bicycle mobility.



Map 6: Proposed Bicycle Network

M. Public Transportation

The Town of Easton currently does not operate its own public transportation system, and no municipal transit services are expected to be introduced during the current planning horizon. However, residents and workers do have access to Delmarva Community Transit (DCT), a regional transit service operated by Delmarva Community Services, to which the Town contributes annually.

DCT provides two fixed routes through Easton—Route C and Route D—operating from 7:15 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. A St. Michaels Shuttle also runs from 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Fiscal Year 2023 ridership was:

- Route C: 8,337 riders
- Route D: 5,868 riders
- St. Michaels Shuttle: 6,030 riders

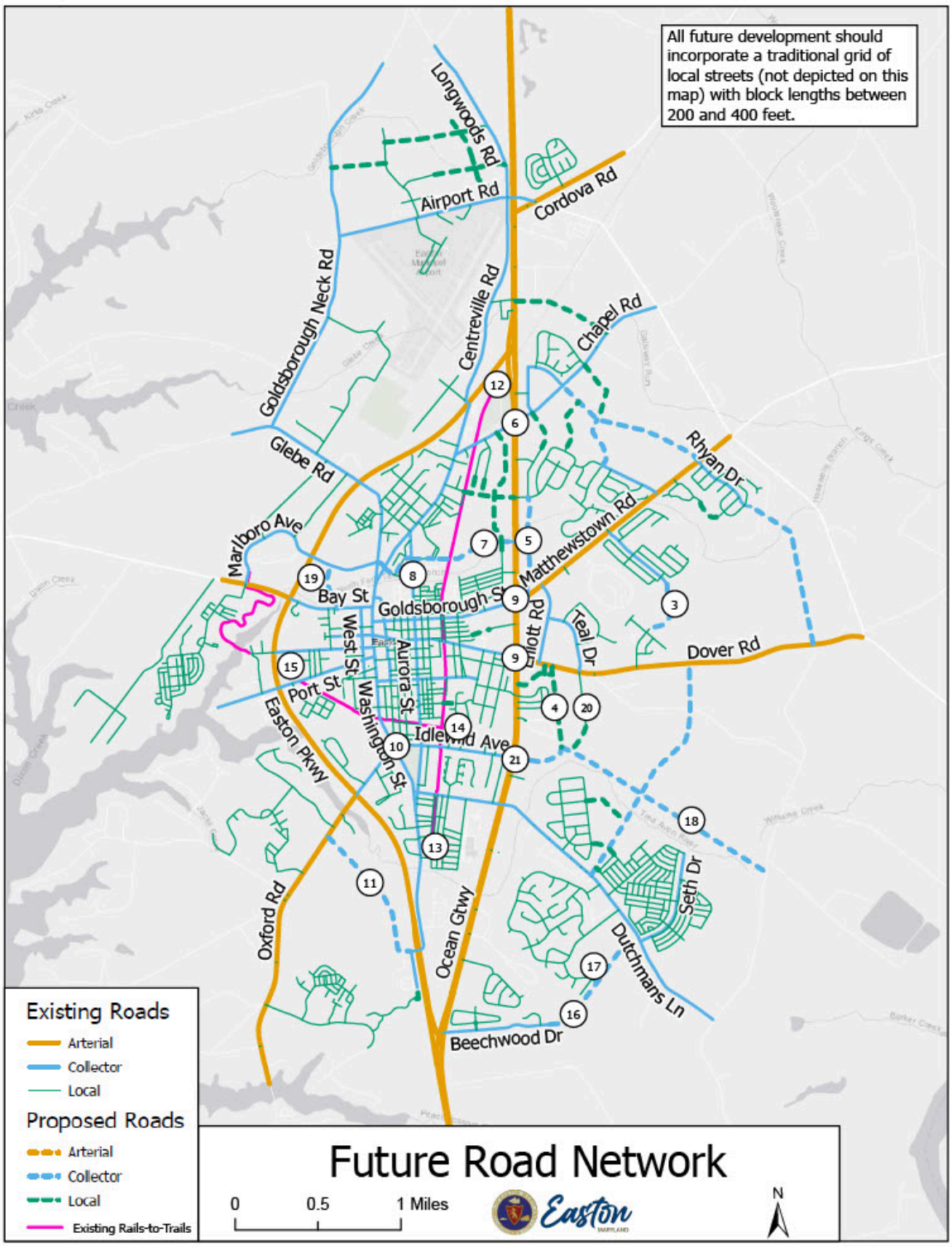
While ridership has declined since 2010 (particularly on Route C), public transit remains a vital service for many residents, including seniors, workers, and individuals without access to a car.

Looking ahead, the Town remains open to exploring expanded transit options, including potential service increases from DCT or other providers. As part of the State Agency review process associated with the Draft of this Plan, Maryland Transportation officials commented that many communities of about the same population as Easton have been able to maintain a circulator bus system. This is something we should explore further during this Planning period as, among other benefits, this is potentially one way in which the disparate parts of Easton can be brought closer together (and, in a relatively sustainable manner).

Easton should also begin discussions with State transportation agencies regarding travel demand management strategies, such as official Park-and-Ride facilities. Currently, some residents are informally using business parking lots for commuter parking—an indicator of unmet demand that may justify the creation of designated facilities. It is also important to remember that while not every project is appropriate for construction of a new road, all are important for consideration of expanded or enhanced connectivity. A prominent example of such projects is the new Hospital. This facility would seem to be a logical candidate for a transit stop given its role as an important community service, as well as major employer. At a minimum, any hospital employees who currently walk to the existing site on South Washington Street will need a new transit option to get to work at the new location.

N. Transportation Map and Proposed Improvements

The Transportation Map illustrates key proposed enhancements to Easton's multimodal transportation network. These improvements, summarized below, are conceptual at this stage—exact designs, funding mechanisms, and construction timelines are largely undefined. Most projects are expected to be completed in conjunction with adjacent property development or funded through the Town's impact fees or a combination of Town, County, or State resources. These proposals are also subject to revision as the Complete Streets Study is finalized.



Future Map 7: Road Network

1. Grade-Separated Crossing of Route 50

One of Easton's highest priorities is addressing local traffic delays caused by congestion on US Route 50. A grade-separated crossing would significantly improve east-west connectivity.

2. East Side Residential Collector Grid

Replacing a single collector route previously proposed in the 2004 Plan, the Town now supports a grid network of local streets on the eastern side of Easton. This approach—mirroring the traditional street grid of the historic town center—supports connectivity and disperses traffic flow. The Complete Streets Study will further evaluate this concept.

3. June Way Extension

This project would extend June Way from Waylands Subdivision south to connect with Fisher Range Road, eventually forming part of the East Side Collector Grid mentioned above.

4. Clifton Road Improvements

Clifton Road would be extended to connect Dover Road and Chesapeake Avenue, offering residents of North, Middle, and South Clifton an alternative route that avoids Route 50.

5. East Side Route 50 Service Road

A new service road behind businesses along the east side of Route 50 (between Matthewstown and Chapel Roads) would allow internal circulation without repeated entries onto Route 50, relieving traffic congestion and improving safety.

6. Chapel Road/Route 50 Intersection Improvements

This busy intersection will require capacity enhancements to accommodate future development, including Easton Commons and surrounding parcels. Recent upgrades have included signal rephasing; further improvements are expected based on evolving traffic conditions.

7. Norris Taylor Drive

This new signalized access road, developed with the Royal Farms and Burger King projects, improves circulation on the west side and enhances access to John F. Ford Park. It may support a future West Side Service Road extending Calvert Street north to Chapel Road through the RTC property.

8. East-West Connector

This long-standing proposal envisions connecting Marlboro Avenue with Creamery Lane, Aurora Park Drive, Magnolia Street, and eventually Route 50 via the RTC property. Portions of the route could continue across Route 50 to Elliott Road and Mulberry Drive. Phased implementation is expected, using impact fees and potentially beginning with pedestrian or bicycle improvements before full street construction.

9. Route 50 Intersection Upgrades (Goldsborough and Dover Streets)

These intersections continue to rank among the worst in Easton in terms of congestion and delay. Improvements are essential even if the East-West Connector is completed. Dedicated turn lanes and expanded capacity should be explored, and additional right-of-way acquisition may be necessary.

10. "Five Corners" Intersection

This unusual convergence of five roads (Washington, Harrison, Idlewild, Peachblossom) near Idlewild Park is a persistent congestion point. A roundabout is under consideration, along with a new smart signal system designed to improve flow and reduce delays in the near term.

11. Tristan Drive to Oxford Road Connector

This proposed route would connect Tristan Drive with MD Route 33 (Oxford Road), creating a new east-west corridor and reducing pressure on the existing Parkway/Oxford Road intersection. Coordination with Talbot County is needed, especially in light of the County's recent acquisition of the adjacent Poplar Hill Farm property. Given current ownership of the property by Talbot County, it is anticipated that this road will primarily serve as access to parking for the Town's Woodland Park located on an adjacent parcel.

12–15. Rails-to-Trails System Extensions

Significant trail system expansions are proposed in all directions:

12. Northward, across Route 50, following the historic railbed.
13. Southward, across Easton Parkway to link with other trail systems.
14. Eastward, along Chesapeake Avenue.
15. Westward utilizing the pedestrian bridge over the Tred Avon River funded by Easton Village developers and potentially on towards St. Michael's.

Segments of these trail extensions have already been completed in recent years, and the Town intends to continue these enhancements as opportunities arise.

(16) Beechwood Drive Extension

This proposed extension involves the segment of Beechwood Drive located adjacent to the Lakelands project. It would connect the current dead end to Dutchman's Lane, just east of Easton Club East. Where feasible, this extension should include a multi-use trail to enhance non-motorized mobility.

(17) Hemlock Lane Extension

Hemlock Lane currently terminates within The Woods at Stoney Ridge subdivision. This proposal would extend the roadway eastward to connect with the proposed Beechwood Drive Extension, forming part of the broader East Side Residential Collector Grid. This grid system, which prioritizes multiple interconnected local streets rather than single large collectors, is intended to improve east side circulation while discouraging excessive cut-through traffic.

(18) Chesapeake Avenue Corridor

A public right-of-way for Chesapeake Avenue already exists and offers a significant opportunity to provide east–west access across a largely undeveloped area between Dutchman's Lane and Chilcutt Road. In the short term, construction of a pedestrian/bike trail along this corridor would benefit nearby neighborhoods. As development occurs, additional right-of-way acquisition should allow for a co-located roadway that could ultimately intersect Route 50 at or north of Idlewild Avenue. This extended Idlewild could then serve as the new vehicular connection, while Chesapeake Avenue would support a grade-separated pedestrian and bicycle crossing.

(19) Bay Street to Marlboro Avenue Connector

This proposal would formalize an existing informal connection currently used by drivers via a network of parking lots and private drives. The connector would provide improved access to Talbot County government offices located in the Bay Street Condominiums. While not a major traffic route, this connector would improve circulation and reduce confusion for local traffic and visitors.

(20) Industrial Park Road Extension

Industrial Park Road currently serves the Clifton Industrial Park, annexed into Easton in 2007. This extension would push the road southward to meet the proposed Chesapeake Avenue alignment. Once built, it would create a valuable north-south connection for residents of Stoney Ridge, Easton Club East, and future neighborhoods, offering an alternate path to Dover Road via a signalized intersection at Teal Drive.

(21) Idlewild Avenue Extension

Idlewild Avenue currently terminates at US Route 50. This proposed extension would continue Idlewild across Route 50, ideally via a grade-separated crossing, to meet the proposed Chesapeake Avenue corridor. Such a connection would relieve pressure on nearby intersections at Dutchman's Lane and Dover Road, improve east-west connectivity for vehicles, and provide opportunities to separate pedestrian and bicycle movements from highway traffic.

O. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Provide a Functional and Efficient Road Network.

Objectives:.

- Maximize the capacity, safety, and efficiency of the existing street and highway system.
- Improve access to, and movement within, the Central Business District.
- Improve the Route 50 circulation system, focusing on separating through and local traffic.
- Consolidate driveway access points on Route 50 and develop an intersection control plan to reduce left turns.
- Build a connected network of local roadways to support existing communities and planned development, while reducing local reliance on Route 50.
- Develop a Small Area Design/Transportation Plan to evaluate optimal street and trail networks on Easton's east side and Growth Area.
- Discourage strip development and promote clustering of development at designated nodes along Route 50.
- Improve east-west access throughout the Town, including at Goldsborough and Dover intersections.

- Require gridded street systems in new development with provisions for pedestrians and bicycles.
- Where feasible, retrofit existing subdivisions to create new road connections and improve connectivity.
- Work to reduce the growth of commercial access points on Route 50.
- Coordinate closely with SHA on improvements to all streets that intersect Route 50.
- Improve the appearance and function of Route 50 frontage areas; prioritize solutions that enhance the existing corridor rather than shifting traffic to Easton Parkway.
- Support long-term efforts to construct a Route 50 bypass east of Town, paired with converting the existing Route 50 to a multimodal boulevard.
- Enhance public transportation options and services.
- Evaluate feasibility and location of a formal park-and-ride lot in Easton.

Goal #2: Expand the Town's Trail System and Support Active Transportation.

Objectives:

- Collaborate with MDOT to pursue funding and design for a grade-separated pedestrian and bicycle crossing of Route 50 at Chesapeake Avenue.
- Implement the goals and recommendations of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
- Coordinate trail improvements and connectivity with Talbot County and regional partners.
- Include safe and effective crosswalks as part of all major intersection improvements on Route 50 and Easton Parkway.

Goal#3: Manage Airport Growth While Minimizing Community Impacts.

Objectives:

- Guide land use near the airport to avoid incompatible development that could restrict future airport operations.
- Coordinate with Easton Airport officials to review and refine policies aimed at mitigating noise and other impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.

Goal #4: Link Land Use and Transportation to Support Smarter Growth.

Objectives:

- Use this Comprehensive Plan, Small Area Plans, and mixed-use districts to incentivize infill and prioritize multimodal transportation.
- Build a Transportation Network Model and develop a Comprehensive Transportation Plan as an adjunct to this Comprehensive Plan.
- Promote compact land use patterns and higher-density development near transit corridors.
- Acknowledge that congestion may occur in denser areas, but prioritize safety, connectivity, and multimodal access over capacity expansion.
- Develop a strategic transit plan linking key destinations such as employment centers, schools, parks, and shopping.
- Encourage active transportation over driving to improve health and reduce environmental impacts.
- Support transit-oriented development (TOD) along primary transit routes by:
    - Identifying zoning, densities, and land use patterns;
    - Requiring design review for all new development;
    - Promoting mixed-use development and discouraging auto-oriented uses;
    - Encouraging development patterns which reduce on-site parking requirements and encourage shared parking; and
    - Requiring bicycle parking for new development.
- Coordinate TOD efforts with transit providers to maintain or enhance service levels.
- Collaborate with Talbot County on unified multimodal infrastructure standards for the Easton Growth Area.
- Require Multimodal Traffic Impact Studies to consider nearby transportation corridors and intersections, not just those within and immediately adjacent to proposed projects.

Goal #5: Provide Safe, Well-Connected, and Sustainable Transportation Options.

Objectives:

- Fill missing gaps in the multimodal transportation network for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, freight, and private vehicles.
- Design transportation improvements that prioritize safety for vulnerable users.
- Ensure mobility options for people with special transportation needs, including children, seniors, low-income populations, and persons with disabilities.
- Expand the required scope of Traffic Impact Studies to include an analysis and discussion of the impacts of proposed projects on all modes of transportation so that our transportation network becomes truly multimodal.

Goal #6: Increase Infrastructure for Non-SOV Travel.

Objectives:

- Integrate Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan recommendations into public street improvements where feasible.
- Require all new development to build sidewalks along public streets per Town standards, with separation from traffic where possible.
- Accommodate bicyclists on arterial streets identified in the Master Plan, constructed with permeable materials where feasible.
- Establish an administrative waiver process for cases where required improvements would serve no clear public purpose.
- Prioritize Safe Routes to School through coordination with Talbot County Public Schools.
- Provide incentives for private development to construct sidewalk and bikeway infrastructure.
- Use Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies to improve efficiency and safety.
    - TDM Actions:
        - Educate the public about walking and biking options.
        - Implement compact, transit-supportive development strategies.

        - Track and report progress toward shifting mode share away from SOVs.
        - Require Commute Trip Reduction programs for large developments.
        - Support carpooling and ridesharing initiatives.
        - Reform parking standards to improve pedestrian environments.

    - TSM Actions:
        - Complete bike and pedestrian networks to improve public health and reduce emissions.
        - Explore bike share programs and local connectivity improvements.
        - Identify and pursue funding sources to implement multimodal improvements.

Goal#7: Reduce Reliance on Single-Occupancy Vehicles (SOVs).

Objectives:

- Decrease SOV trips while encouraging trips made by walking, biking, transit, and ridesharing.
- Track transportation mode share using standardized Census data and report five-year averages annually.
- Work with County and State partners to develop a local Commute Trip Reduction program.
- Advocate for stronger MDOT support of sidewalk, bikeway, and transit investments—particularly along state highways serving Easton.

Goal #8: Maintain and Improve Streets, Trails, and Related Infrastructure.

Objectives:

- Use Complete Street standards to ensure transportation concurrency for new development, avoiding unnecessary road widening for vehicle traffic.
- Allocate sufficient funding for maintenance of sidewalk, bikeway, and roadway systems.

- Design and construct transportation facilities to avoid or mitigate environmental impacts, consistent with Critical Areas Ordinance requirements.
- Develop improved metrics for analyzing new vehicle traffic impacts on pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit service.
- Apply multimodal street design standards to all new development.
- Request County and State highway projects to include pedestrian and bike safety improvements.
- Retrofit existing streets with green infrastructure and traffic calming where appropriate.

Goal #9: Address Transportation Equity in All Projects.

Objectives:

- Provide equitable access to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure through inclusive public engagement and targeted capital investment.
- Invest in underserved neighborhoods to expand pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Ensure all residents—regardless of age, income, race, or ability—have opportunities to participate in and benefit from transportation investments.
- Develop outreach materials in multiple formats and languages to engage all segments of the Easton community.

7. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

"Investment in infrastructure is a long term requirement for growth and a long term factor that will make growth sustainable."

Chanda Kochhar

A. Purpose

Community Facilities and Services form the backbone of Easton's infrastructure and quality of life. This chapter addresses the key public services and utilities that support daily living, guide development, and ensure public health and safety. These include water and sewer services, solid waste management, police, fire and rescue, and other essential facilities.

The chapter provides a concise overview of the facilities currently serving Easton, along with a discussion of future needs based on projected growth. It incorporates community input gathered during the Plan Update process and outlines goals and objectives to ensure that Easton's public services keep pace with development.

While newer elements such as Water Resources and Municipal Growth may overlap with topics in this chapter, the Comprehensive Plan ensures all statutory requirements are addressed—even if they appear in separate chapters. For Community Facilities, the State of Maryland provides the following guidance:

Maryland Statutory Requirements

A Community Facilities Element must:

(a) Project the most appropriate and desirable patterns for the location, character, and extent of public and semi-public buildings, land, and facilities—on a schedule that extends as far into the future as is reasonable.

B. It may also include planning for:

- Places of worship
- Fire stations
- Hospitals

- Institutions
- Jails
- Libraries
- Parks and recreation areas
- Police stations
- Schools and educational facilities
- Cultural facilities
- Social welfare and medical facilities
- Other public offices or administrative buildings

Some of these topics are addressed in this chapter; others appear in separate sections of the Plan. Regardless of where they are discussed, their evaluation is consistent with Easton's population projections, growth policies, and infrastructure strategies.

Easton's public services and utilities play a critical role in the Town's physical, economic, and social development. Continued growth—especially in key economic sectors—depends on the capacity of public and private utility systems to meet the needs of both current and future residents. A core goal of the Town is to maintain and expand community facilities and services that protect public health and safety while enhancing quality of life. This must be done within the Town's fiscal limits and in coordination with its broader growth management goals. As the region's commercial and employment hub, Easton must also account for service demands generated by surrounding communities—not just those of Town residents.

B. Utilities

Easton's utility systems are primarily managed by Easton Utilities, a municipally owned entity responsible for electricity, water, sewer, natural gas, and broadband services. Established in 1923, Easton remains the only municipality in Maryland to own and operate all its utilities—a structure that continues to offer local control, operational efficiency, and responsive service.

Easton Utilities is governed by a three-member Easton Utilities Commission. Two commissioners must be residents of Easton; the third must reside within the electric service area. All are appointed

by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the Town Council. A full-time President/CEO manages day-to-day operations and implements Commission policies.

i. Electricity

Electric service in Easton is provided by Easton Utilities to over 11,000 customers within a 54-square-mile service territory. Electricity is sourced both from onsite generation facilities and from the PJM Interconnection, a regional transmission organization. This allows Easton Utilities to choose the most economical and reliable power source on an hourly basis. The Town's installed generation capacity is 66 megawatts—more than sufficient to meet current demand.

Historically, Easton Utilities was the sole electricity provider. However, recent annexations have brought some areas into service territories of Choptank Electric Cooperative and Delmarva Power & Light. As annexation continues, coordination among these providers will become increasingly important. Service area transfers may be necessary to ensure consistent, efficient service and to avoid overlapping service in single developments. These boundary adjustments require mutual agreement among the utilities involved.

ii. Water and Sewer

Easton Utilities also manages the Town's water and wastewater systems. Water is drawn from deep freshwater aquifers via a network of wells, while sewer service is provided through a system first constructed in 1911.

The Town's original wastewater treatment plant was built in 1938 along the Choptank River. A major upgrade occurred in 1988 with the introduction of an Overland Flow Treatment system—then the fifth largest in the country. In 2007, Easton brought online a new enhanced nutrient removal (ENR) facility, with sufficient capacity to meet projected needs through 2051 (as detailed in the Municipal Growth and Water Resources Elements). Additional information regarding water and wastewater system capacity status, as well as projections of the adequacy of these systems, may be found in Sections 9B and 11G and H of this Plan.

All new water and sewer extensions must align with the Talbot County Water and Sewer Plan and are funded entirely by the developer. Service is only extended to properties within Easton's corporate limits. Decisions to annex land should weigh the long-term financial, infrastructure, and planning implications of extending water and sewer services.

iii. Natural Gas

Easton's Gas Department, acquired in 1923, is the only municipally owned gas utility in Maryland. The original coal-based system was replaced in 1966 with a natural gas supply via Eastern Shore Natural Gas Company. Gas is piped in from the Federalsburg area and distributed to over 4,500 customers through 100 miles of steel and plastic mains. The system delivers approximately 525 million cubic feet of gas annually within an 8.5-square-mile service area.

iv. Internet and Broadband

Easton Velocity, a division of Easton Utilities, provides high-speed broadband, cable, and phone service. Its hybrid fiber-coaxial and expanding fiber-to-the-premises network offers advanced connectivity options, including commercial service packages of up to 10 gigabits per second.

Easton Velocity plays a central role in supporting digital equity, remote work, telehealth, education, and economic growth. As a publicly owned service, it offers competitive pricing, reliable local support, and infrastructure investment aligned with Easton’s long-term goals for connectivity and community development.

c. Solid Waste

Solid waste collection in Easton is provided by the Town. Since 2011, waste has been hauled to the Mid-Shore Regional Landfill in Caroline County, replacing the former site on Barkers Landing Road. To offset disposal costs, Easton implemented a residential disposal fee in 1993 to cover landfill tipping charges.

Recycling services include both curbside collection for residents and drop-off containers ("igloos") located at the former landfill site and other convenient locations around Town. These services are essential to managing Easton’s waste stream and reducing landfill dependency.

d. Medical and Hospital Facilities

Hospital services in Easton are provided by the University of Maryland Shore Medical Center (UMSMC). As one of the Town’s most critical institutions, the hospital has a twofold impact: it provides essential healthcare services and serves as a major employer and economic engine. However, its physical presence within a residential neighborhood has also created longstanding land use challenges.

As the hospital has expanded over time, it has outgrown its original site and now occupies multiple properties within the Idlewild Avenue and Dutchman's Lane corridor. This fragmentation has led to conflicts with nearby residents, including increased traffic, parking demand, and the encroachment of institutional uses into residential areas. While coordination with the Town has mitigated some impacts, the fundamental land constraints remain unresolved.

In response, the University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS) identified a new site for a regional medical facility near the Talbot County Community Center, just outside the current Town boundary and adjacent to the Easton Airport. Originally proposed in 2008, the project was delayed but has now received local and State approvals to move forward.

This long-anticipated facility represents a major investment in the health and wellbeing of Easton and the broader Mid-Shore region. Beyond patient care, it promises to attract additional medical offices, labs, rehabilitation centers, and support services—strengthening Easton's role as a regional hub for healthcare.

Key planning considerations remain:

- Development in the areas surrounding the new hospital site
    - To include an examination of issues such as the appropriateness of the existing zoning for adjacent areas / connectivity to other parts of town / airport issues / traffic, etc.
- Future of the current hospital site:
    - The existing facility and surrounding medical corridor are strong candidates for a future Small Area Plan, which should guide redevelopment and potential land use changes.
- Relocation of support services:
    - The shift of medical offices and clinics toward the new hospital may leave Idlewild and Dutchman's Lane with underutilized or outdated facilities.
- Housing for healthcare workers:
    - As noted in the Housing chapter, access to affordable housing is a pressing issue for Easton's workforce—including those in the healthcare sector. Enabling more

workers to live in Town can ease commuting pressures, support recruitment and retention, and improve emergency staffing capacity.

- As the new regional hospital becomes reality, Easton must plan thoughtfully for the transition—not just for the facility itself, but for the neighborhoods, services, and workforce it affects.

E. Public Schools

Public Schools in Talbot County are funded and administered by the County government. The Town has two "roles" in this process. First, as the major population center in Talbot County, we are a significant source of students attending public schools. Second, three of the County's public schools, plus the Board of Education Main Offices, are located within the Town's jurisdiction.

Although the Town has no role in terms of providing public school service, we work cooperatively with the County to supply them with the most updated demographic information for their use in preparing the Annual Educational Facilities Master Plan. The 2025 version of this document,describes the state of, and outlook for, the Easton schools, including the impact of the The Blueprint for Maryland's Future and can be viewed at the Talbot County Public School's website: https://www.talbotschools.org/documents/about/admin-services/plant-operations/779051

Looking ahead as far as it does (i.e. ten years), the Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) indicates that the Talbot County Public School system can accommodate expected growth in Easton, albeit barely, at the middle and high schools, and the just constructed elementary school would require additional capacity either through a physical addition or through redistricting.. Unanticipated growth would pose even more problems, depending on the nature of any such residential developments. The Educational Master Plan notes that there are a number of residential developments planned in the Easton area, but that these are primarily planned to target the high-end or age-restricted markets. Age-restricted developments obviously impose very little demand on public school systems as there are few, if any, children in these types of projects. High-end projects may very well have children living in the development, but oftentimes these children attend one of Easton's private schools, thus the impact of these developments on the public school system is also diminished. Enrollment at non-public schools in Talbot County now totals approximately 932 students, which is 17.1% of the total K-12 student enrollment in the County. This takes substantial pressure off of public school utilization but may bear watching as if the economic situation deteriorates these students represent potential new impacts on the public school system if

their parents, by choice or necessity, switch from private to public school education for their children.

History suggests that the impact on Easton's public schools may not even be as much as described in the EFMP. This conclusion is arrived at by looking at Easton's change in population and public-school enrollment in the years 2000 and 2020. In 2000, Easton had a total population of 11,708, with a public-school enrollment of 2,892. By 2020, these numbers had grown to 17,101 and 3,072 respectively. That is a difference of 180 additional students enrolled in Easton's public schools from an overall population increase of 5,393. Looking ahead to the total buildout of the 2023 Town boundaries (an estimated 6,752 new people), if the same ratio of student population: total population can be assumed, this increase of 6,752 people would yield just 225 new students in Easton's public schools.

The counterpoint to this though may come from the changing demographics noted in the EFMP. Specifically, it noted the growth of the Hispanic student population in Talbot County's Public Schools. This mirrors the increase in the overall Hispanic population in Easton, which, as noted in the Plan Background Chapter, has grown from 3.5% of Easton's population in 2000, to 14.4% in 2020.

F. Libraries

Library service in Talbot County is provided by the Talbot County Free Library (TCFL), the main branch of which is in Easton at the corner of Dover and West Streets. In addition to the traditional library resources provided here, the Easton branch is an important community resource, providing a series of community events, study rooms, and a moderately sized meeting room. According to the Library's website, the TCFL receives 76% of its funding from Talbot County and other local governments, 12% from grants and friends support, 6% from the State of Maryland, and the balance from TCFL Foundation and Donations.

The FY 2022 TCFL Annual Report includes the following statistics (NOTE: these figures are for the full system, not just the Easton Branch):

- 23,528 Library Card Holders
- 84,608 physical visits
- 14,179 reference questions answered

- 7,701 computer users
- 13,982 Wi-Fi users
- 383,411 Virtual Library Visits
- 970 Uses of the Meeting and Study Rooms by Outside Organizations
- 125,172 physical volumes
- >1,000,000 virtual volumes
- 405 Adult, Teen & Children's Programs with total attendance of 16,831

The TCFL has developed a Strategic Plan through the year 2025 is provided and available for review at: https://www.tcfl.org/about/?content=strategicplan. All told, TCFL is a valuable and multifaceted community resource.

G. Community Centers

Public buildings shape a community's sense of identity and permanence. As noted by Ed McMahon of the Conservation Fund—who spoke in Easton during a past Comprehensive Plan Visioning session—governments should set the tone for quality development through their own civic architecture. In "Better Models for Development in Virginia", McMahon wrote:

> *"Public buildings and spaces create identity and a sense of place. They give communities something to remember and admire... Public buildings with civic stature, quality materials, and prominent settings project a sense of permanence and human scale that expresses the dignity and importance of public institutions."*

Historically, town halls, courthouses, libraries, and schools were among a community's most attractive and prominent buildings. Over time, however, this standard has too often eroded, with newer public facilities resembling warehouses or being sited along strip corridors outside town centers.

Easton has largely resisted this trend. Most of its key public buildings remain downtown, including some notable examples of quality civic architecture. That said, the Town has come close to losing this pattern. In recent decades, Talbot County has considered bids for new administrative office sites outside the town center, and the U.S. Postal Service nearly relocated its facility before ultimately opting to renovate in place.

A major success story is the Easton Utilities Commission's Customer Service Center, completed in 2000. This landmark project is a model of context-sensitive, high-quality design that fits seamlessly into the historic fabric of downtown. It exemplifies how civic buildings can reinforce community character and contribute to the vitality of Easton's core.



The Easton Utilities Commission's Customer Service Center

Looking ahead, Easton may soon need to expand or replace its Town Office at 14 South Harrison Street. While the current building—a former firehouse and police station—is a strong example of adaptive reuse, it may no longer provide sufficient space for staff and operations. Should a new Town Office be required, the Town should follow the precedent set by the Easton Utilities building: locate it in the downtown core and ensure it reflects a high standard of civic design that instills community pride.

H. Public Safety

Many issues related to public safety fall within the realm of a community's overall quality of life that is the subject of the Community Character Chapter. As a part of this Element, it is appropriate to

address issues such as the adequacy of existing police services, the expected future needs of the police force, and the need for new offices, substations, etc. The 1997 Comprehensive Plan quoted the International City Managers Association's recommended ratio of 1.75 police personnel per 1,000 people served. That standard was the subject of criticism from previous Police Chiefs. Therefore the 2004 Plan utilized a different standard, that of the International Center of Prevention of Crime, which finds that the national average across the U.S. is 3.36 officers per thousand people served.

With 48 sworn officers in a Town of approximately 17,100, Easton falls between the two referenced guidelines. There are some factors in Easton that suggest being towards the upper end of the recommended range is appropriate. First, Easton is a regional center for employment, entertainment and commerce. Thus, the population served is much higher than simply the resident population of the Town. Second, Easton's citizens have repeatedly called for strong and active community policing. Finally, Easton is subject to extremely heavy volumes of seasonal traffic traveling between Ocean City and the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area and Easton itself has a modest tourism industry. Factors such as these place a stronger demand on police resources than may normally be found in another municipality of a similar size.

Considering the above, we believe police staffing is adequate for the present time and growth in the number of sworn officers along the rates that Easton has recently experienced should be adequate for the future.

The Easton Volunteer Fire Department provides fire protection in the Town of Easton and the surrounding County area. The department is an all-volunteer organization with financial support from the Town and County. The Fire Department discontinued providing ambulance service as of December 1, 2002. The ambulance equipment and supplies were sold to Talbot County. The County is now the primary provider of emergency services throughout the County including the Fire Department's service area. There is a State Fire Marshal responsible for Fire Code enforcement in the Town and County.

Fire Protection services should be expanded throughout the Plan period as the Town and County's population continues to increase. As a result of growth in and around the Town a new fire substation was constructed on Matthewstown Road on the lot of the Town's water tower. This location offers better access to US Route 50 and is located in proximity to development activity. One of the consequences of uncontrolled growth, either in terms of rate or location, is the increased potential that Easton would have to move from an all-volunteer Fire Department to a paid

department in order to continue to provide acceptable coverage. This would have negative impacts both in terms of the loss of the community spirit that is engendered by the Volunteer Fire Department as well as financial implications, including possible (if not probable) tax increases.

Advanced Life Support (ALS) services have been established in Talbot County. ALS provides 24-hour emergency response by trained paramedics and cardiac rescue technicians. ALS services are provided by volunteer and paid staff. Funding for ALS is derived from the County, fundraising activities and private donations. ALS service has also been experiencing difficulty in securing funds for equipment needs related to an increasing number of calls.

In assessing the adequacy of fire and emergency management services for Easton's future, it is necessary to look at more than just population projections. Traffic projections, particularly for US Route 50, have a great influence on both the number of accidents that on that highway as it traverses our Town as well as the ease (i.e. speed) with which emergency responders can reach their destinations.

The form of development is also extremely important when it comes to emergency response time. Studies show that emergency responders can cover more households within a given response time in neighborhoods with a more traditional style of development (i.e. multiple connections). This means that response time from a given fire/rescue station is lower when the community is predominantly built in this form of development. On a larger scale, it also means that the need for additional substations is lessened when the community is built in the traditional pattern as opposed to a suburban style of development.

I. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Deliver High-Quality Community Facilities and Services. Continue to provide well-maintained, reliable public facilities and services to support health, safety, and quality of life for all who live, work, or visit Easton.

Objectives:

- Ensure that the cost of facilities and services is shared equitably among the Town, developers, and end users.
- Require developers to upgrade any deficient facilities serving annexed areas to Town standards, based on proportional impact.

- Mandate that all users contribute their fair share toward capital improvements through existing and future funding tools.
- Align the provision of services with the Town's adopted growth management policies.
- Deliver services and facilities equitably across all neighborhoods and businesses.
- Require all development to pay for necessary infrastructure extensions, using the Impact Fee Ordinance and any new mechanisms adopted.
- Promote orderly, staged growth by targeting utility extensions to priority areas and enabling cost recapture from future development.
- Encourage the establishment of a general or specialized satellite college campus in Easton.

Goal 2: Coordinate Town Services with Other Agencies. Improve collaboration with county and regional agencies to ensure consistent and efficient delivery of services.

Objectives:

- Work with Talbot County to update the Master Water and Sewer Plan to reflect service-ready projects within Easton's growth areas.
- Support Easton Utilities in coordinating electric service boundaries with Delmarva Power and Choptank Electric to avoid service overlap.
- Continue using a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to align Town projects with those of partner agencies.

Goal 3: Set a High Standard for Public Buildings. Ensure public facilities reflect the civic identity and long-term investment of the community.

Objectives:

- Construct buildings using high-quality materials and timeless architectural design.
- Design public facilities with adequate space and capacity for future expansion.
- Prioritize siting public buildings in or near downtown Easton, except for small neighborhood-specific facilities.
- Advocate for Talbot County to also locate its public facilities near the Town Center.

- Assess the need for a new or expanded Town Office to meet growing operational needs.

8. PARKS

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul."

- John Muir

A. Purpose

One of the most critical components in maintaining and enhancing a community's quality of life is its system of parks, recreation, and open space. The careful location of parks and open space areas and preservation of the Town's natural resources as a complement to existing development can be a useful tool in guiding the Town's development into a logical, orderly and environmentally sensitive pattern. In addition to recreational and aesthetic benefits, open spaces provide a framework for various land uses. Properly located, they become boundaries and buffers between conflicting uses of land and a nucleus for building neighborhood areas. Natural features can be preserved as valuable scenic and environmental attributes of the Town. A park system and recreational program can also go a long way toward resolving the age-old problem of a community offering nothing for young people "to do."

This chapter examines the current state of Easton's Parks and Recreation system and proposes methods by which it might be improved. It also calls for the advancement of a Town-wide system of “green infrastructure.” This refers to the parks and open space areas, as well as the paths and corridors that link these areas. It also proposes areas for new parks to be developed in the future as the Growth Area becomes developed.

B. Existing Parks

The Municipal Growth Element analyzed the adequacy of the Town’s overall parks from an acres per capita perspective, based on a State-suggested ratio. It found that the current park system meets this standard and that we would continue to exceed the threshold throughout the buildout of the Growth Area by merely relying upon the open space requirements of the Town’s Subdivision Regulations. This chapter looks more closely at the state of Easton’s Parks and Recreation system overall and makes recommendations for improving and enhancing it so as to further sustain and improve the quality of life for Town residents and visitors.

Easton's park system has grown from 14 to 30 parks since 1997—more than doubling in number and expanding the footprint of public space from 236 to 458 acres. Table 8 represents an inventory of existing Town parks and open space areas. One of the most notable points is that there are a fairly large number of parks (30) in Easton. This is even more significant in that when this Table was originally created for the 1997 Plan, there were 14 entries on this Table. Clearly the expansion and development of our Park system has been a significant achievement over the last three decades. Such improvements include enhancements at Idlewild and Moton Parks, two Rail-Trail extensions, the addition of Easton Point Park, and the development of North Easton Park into a first class sports complex, to the degree that it has since hosted a number of State and Regional Championship Tournaments. More recently, even during the drafting of this Plan, the Town has opened its first Dog Park in Downtown (Brewers Lane), opened a new Skate Park/Pump Track at the North Easton Sports Complex, and acquired, Easton Woodland Park, a large (197 acres) tract of land dominated by mature forest that will preserve this land for passive recreation.

Table 8: Easton Park Inventory

TYPES AND AREAS	SIZE (ACRES)	OWNERSHIP	FACILITIES
Passive Parks			
Train Station Park 46 Pennsylvania Avenue	0.540	Town	Drinking fountain Benches
Memorial Walk 100 W. Dover Street	1.07	Town	Memorial Bricks
Thompson Park 30 W. Dover Street	0.316	Town	Benches Fountain
Easton Woodland Park	197	Town	Planned trails and conservation area.
Neighborhood Parks			
Hunters Mill Park 8633 Camac Street	1.78	Town	Playground/Benches
Ian "Mac" Morrell Park (Chapel East) 29452 Zinnia Court	1.9	Town	Playground/Pavilion
Matthewstown Run Park 29650 Aldan Street	4.11	Town	Playground Picnic Area and Table Baseball/Softball Field Open Space Little Free Library
Stoney Ridge Park 29288 Corbin Parkway	19.8	Town	Playground/Picnic Area Open Space/Benches
Golton Park 29416 Golton Drive	0.791	Town	Playground

Table 8: Easton Park Inventory			
TYPES AND AREAS	**SIZE (ACRES)**	**OWNERSHIP**	**FACILITIES**
Mulberry Station Park 8764 Mulberry Drive	3.169	Town	Playground Open Space Benches
Spur Lane Park 8688 Spur Lane	0.783	Town	Open Space
Waylands Park 29667 Penny Lane	0.859	Town	Playground Picnic Area Benches
Brettridge Park 29593 Country Lane Way	2.76	Town	Open Space
Vickers Park (Easton Village)	8.839	Town	Canoe/Kayak Launch Bocce Ball Area Pavilion
Community Parks			
Idlewild Park 116 Idlewild Avenue	12.0	Town	Restrooms AED station Softball Fields Track Picnic Area, Barbecue Grills & Tables Tennis Courts Basketball Court Football Field Playground Children's Park Area Ornamental Fountain/Garden Areas Gazebo/Pavilion Little Free Library
Moton Park 501 Port Street	12.2	Town	Restrooms Track Picnic Tables, Barbecue Grills & Pavilion Playground Basketball Court Soccer Field Volleyball Area Benches Little Free Library
Easton Point Park 672 W. Glenwood Avenue 801 Port Street	13.021	Town	Kayak launch Boat Ramp and associated parking Drinking Fountains Benches

Table 8: Easton Park Inventory			
TYPES AND AREAS	**SIZE (ACRES)**	**OWNERSHIP**	**FACILITIES**
John F. Ford Park 100 Plum Street	58.0	Town	Restrooms AED station Playground Track Exercise Stations / Equipment Open Space Drinking Fountains
Rails-To-Trails	2.75 miles (north/south) 0.90 miles (east/west)	Town	Drinking fountains Walking/Bicycling Path Benches Frederick Douglass Mural
Special Areas			
A James Clark North Easton Sports Complex 1078 N. Washington Street	26.2	Town	Restrooms AED stations Concession stands (4) Baseball Fields Playgrounds (4) Football/Soccer/Lacrosse/Field Hockey Fields Field Lights Picnic Area Gazebo/Pavilion Batting Cages Bounce Back Wall Skate Park/Pump Track
Easton Dog Park 109 Brewers Lane	0.507	Town	Restrooms Gated Small & Large Areas for off-leash play Drinking Fountains Benches
Others			
YMCA of the Chesapeake (Main Facility)	10.0	Quasi-Public	Indoor Facilities* (9) Tennis Courts (6) Pickleball Courts Deck Tennis
YMCA of the Chesapeake (Lynn Rich Tennis Center)		Quasi-Public	Indoor Facilities* (4) Indoor Tennis/Pickleball Courts (3) Outdoor Tennis Courts
George P. Murphy Swimming Pool	2.8	County	Outdoor Swimming Pool
VFW	5.0	Quasi-Public	Baseball Field* Open Space Fields
The Elks	13.2	Quasi-Public	Athletic Fields*

Table 8: Easton Park Inventory			
TYPES AND AREAS	**SIZE (ACRES)**	**OWNERSHIP**	**FACILITIES**
Talbot County Community Center	51	County	Indoor Facilities: Ice Rink Curling Rink Basketball Courts Pickleball Courts Volleyball Courts Athletic Fields Playgrounds Concession Area Pavillion
Easton Point Landing	0.50	County	Boat Ramp Pier Fishing/Crabbing
Mount Pleasant	6.46	County	Open Space Fields
Easton Village Trail	1.02 miles (including pedestrian bridge to Easton Point)	Town	Walking Trail

Source: Town of Easton Parks & Recreation Annual Plan, 2024 & Easton Comprehensive Development Plan, 2010.

Multiple entities are responsible in some way for Easton's overall Park System. The Planning and Zoning Commission obtains land for parks through the subdivision process as one of the requirements for subdivision is the provision of 1,200 square feet of parkland per dwelling unit. The Commission also is involved in the specifics of where the parks should be located, how many there should be, etc… for a subdivision during the review process.

Once the land is obtained, it becomes the responsibility of the Easton Park Advisory Board to recommend how that parkland should be improved. This group operates with the assistance of a full-time Parks and Recreation Director who also is responsible for Easton's parks and recreation plans, programs and activities.

The ongoing maintenance of Town parks is the responsibility of the Department of Public Works, providing trash pick-up, grass cutting, landscaping, and installation and maintenance of equipment, furniture, etc. With a growing system of parks, this area of responsibility grows proportionally as well.

The Mayor and Town Council have the important role of prioritizing the development of the Town's park system, primarily through the budget process. They determine which improvements are implemented (and when) and occasionally also approve funds for the acquisition of park land. These tend to be the larger, regional-scale parks as opposed to the smaller neighborhood parks that are more customarily obtained by the Planning and Zoning Commission through the subdivision process.

Finally, Town of Easton, Talbot County Parks and Recreation, along with other towns and entities in the County, work collaboratively on issues of mutual interest and concern. This includes coordinating programs, activities and events; and, formulating plans and policies for public recreation and for the acquisition and preservation of land for public recreation and open space. Easton participates day-to-day via its partnership and ongoing communications with the County Parks and Recreation Director. In addition, a member of the Easton Parks Advisory Board represents Easton on the Talbot County Parks Advisory Board and provides direct linkage between the Town and County as it relates to parks and recreation.

c. Future Parks

One area in which it is crucial for the Planning Commission and Park Board to work together is the planning for future park sites. The Park Board is more acutely aware of specific demands and needs in terms of our overall park system. By being aware of such needs, the Planning Commission can be proactive in addressing them through the park dedication requirements of the Subdivision process. Furthermore, special needs (e.g., a new regional-scale park) can be considered by both the Planning Commission and Town Council during the review of discretionary approvals, such as Planned Unit Developments and Annexations.

Previous iterations of The Comprehensive Plan have made a number of recommendations regarding future parks, many of which have come to fruition. Such parks included the original Rail-Trail, the expanded Rail-Trail, the development of the John F. Ford Park, and a Waterfront Park on Easton Point.

Key priorities over the course of this 2026 Plan's time span include the following:

- Build-out Easton Woodland Park, including a multi-modal accessway, parking area, conservation area, trails, and restrooms.

- Continue build-out of Easton Point Park as described in the Port Street Small Area Plan. Additional amenities to include: a new boat ramp, living shoreline, boardwalk/promenade, and parking area.
- Perpetual upgrades to existing Town parks (i.e., programs, grounds, and amenities) to enhance user experiences and increase utilization rates.
- Extension of the rail trail through Moton Park, across Rt. 322 (Easton Parkway) at Glenwood Ave., and connecting to the bridge over the Tred Avon River at Easton Point Park and Easton Village.
- Seek funding for the extension of the rail trail crossing Route 50 to the east side of Town in the vicinity of Chesapeake Ave. {It is hoped that future rail trail extensions will eventually connect to a wider-scale County-initiated Trail System.}
- Consider creating an active community-sized park on the east side of Route 50. Explore the possibilities of requiring future developers to build or fund such a park.
- Seek funding and location for construction of a new indoor sports facility. A project of this scope and scale will likely require a location that is along or easily accessible to a major transportation corridor. Possibilities include a portion of the John F. Ford Park and/or the adjoining property to the east, or (depending on the interest of Talbot County) the Talbot Community Center site or the property the County purchased in 2024, formerly known as the Poplar Hill Farm.

The following suggestions from previous Plans have not been achieved but are still relevant today:

- The Town should work with the State of Maryland to promote and help ensure the preservation of Seth Forest. The Town should also ask the State to consider the possibility of making this property more usable by enhancing forest trails.
- (Not depicted on Future Land Use Map) In the long-range planning period (i.e. Year 2035) a new Community Park, on the scale of Idlewild or Moton, should be considered on the eastern side of Town, east of U.S. Route 50. This is the portion of Town anticipated to accommodate the majority of future growth and as such, a community park may be warranted. Furthermore, this area may not necessarily be provided by any one development. As an alternative, the area for the park might be pieced together by adjoining subdivisions (i.e., Hunter's Mill Playground and Gannon Range open space). Such a park

should be a consideration during the review of any development proposals on the east side of Town.

As pointed out in the Municipal Growth Element of this Plan, State guidelines for parkland indicate that the park needs of the existing Town population are above State guidelines and that the land needed to satisfy the needs of the potential future population of the Town should be met via the subdivision process. In addition, more recreational land lies immediately adjacent to the current Town boundaries at the previously mentioned Seth Forest and a public golf course (Hog Neck). These two areas represent an additional 121 acres at the Seth Demonstration Forest and 265 acres at Hog Neck Golf Course.

D. Connectivity and Green Infrastructure

The concept of green infrastructure was first introduced to the Easton Comprehensive Plan in 2004 when the term was still relatively new in the field of planning. It refers to the system of parks and open spaces in a community, as well as the linkages or connections between these areas. A community's green infrastructure is important because just as the more commonly known infrastructure (i.e. roads, water, sewer, etc…) is essential to support a community's physical development, so too a community's green infrastructure supports its ecological functions. It also is important for making communities more livable.

The Conservation Fund defines green infrastructure as "the Nation's natural life support system - a strategically planned and managed network of wilderness, parks, greenways, conservation easements, and working lands with conservation value that supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, and contributes to the health and quality of life for America's communities and people."

There are numerous benefits provided by a system of green infrastructure. These include both ecological and economic benefits. From an ecological perspective the benefits include:

- Ensuring plant and animal biodiversity.
    - Creating pathways to allow for interchange between native plant and animal communities.
    - Maintaining the health of native ecosystems and landscapes by sustaining their physical, chemical, and biological processes.

- Filtering pollutants from air, water, and soil.
    - Helping to cool streams and soil through shading.
    - Buffering developed areas from floodwaters.

The economic benefits include:

- Increasing property values as homes located near parks and greenways sell for more than those that are not.
- Raising the community's quality of life.
    - Communities that have planned systems of open space, including greenways, parks and trails, generally develop the reputation of being desirable places to live.
    - Seattle, Washington, Boulder, Colorado, Portland, Oregon and Raleigh North Carolina are examples of such places.
- Attracting businesses.
    - The communities cited above, not coincidentally, also have had great success in attracting new businesses as oftentimes a community's quality of life is a key factor for businesses when deciding where to relocate or open a new business.
    - Increasing tourism and tourism-based businesses.
- Attracting environmentally sensitive development and developers specializing in that niche.

Given these benefits, as well as the existing skeletal system of green infrastructure, it seems like a "no-brainer" for Easton to develop a more formal and planned green infrastructure system. Such a system will also further sustainability goals discussed in more detail in the Sustainability chapter of this Plan. Elements of this Green Infrastructure system are discussed in the Economic Development Chapter of this Plan where the AKRF Plan for the redevelopment of Downtown Easton is described. Two of the more significant projects proposed in that plan involve the day-lighting of Tanyard Branch and the development of a "green ring" of heavily treed streets and open spaces around downtown.

E. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Meet the park and recreational demands of all of Easton's citizens.

Objectives:

- Continue to study and monitor the demand for various park and recreation uses (above and beyond National Standards, which the Town largely meets).
- Coordinate the work of the Planning and Zoning Commission, Park and Recreation Advisory Board, and Town Council in acquiring and planning parks.
- Coordinate park planning, programs, and activities with Talbot County Parks and Recreation and other local organizations (i.e., schools and YMCA) to prevent duplication of amenities/services, pool resources and ensure that between the various entities, all of Easton's recreational needs are satisfied.
- Seek funding to finish the design and buildout of an eastward expansion of the Rail-Trail in the right-of-way for Chesapeake Avenue, including a grade-separated bicycle/pedestrian crossing of Route 50, and require future developers of land bordering Chesapeake Avenue to build (or fund) a Rail-Trail in right-of-way.
- Seek funding opportunities to continually build-out and upgrade various Town parks, particularly Easton Woodland Park and Easton Point Park.
- Seek funding opportunities to locate and build an indoor sports facility.
- Revise the Town's Subdivision Regulations to better define what does and does not count as meeting parks and/or open space requirements associated with conventional subdivisions.

Goal #2: Provide a system of green infrastructure (see Future Land Use Map).

Objectives:

- Identify appropriate open space areas to serve as green centers or anchors and connect them through a series of pathways and green corridors.
- Plan future parks, open spaces and corridors in a manner that compliments and helps to build a green infrastructure system.
- Encourage green space connectivity and access.

9. ECOLOGY

THE MORE CLEARLY WE CAN FOCUS OUR ATTENTION ON THE WONDERS AND REALITIES OF THE UNIVERSE ABOUT US, THE LESS TASTE WE SHALL HAVE FOR DESTRUCTION.

- RACHEL CARSON

A. PURPOSE

The Ecology Element integrates water resources, mineral resources, and biodiversity considerations into Easton's Comprehensive Plan. This section fulfills state requirements under HB 1141, which added the Municipal Growth and Water Resources Elements to comprehensive plans, ensuring the Town has adequate water supply, wastewater capacity, and stormwater management to meet current and projected needs.

B. WATER RESOURCES

House Bill 1141 (HB 1141), first implemented with Easton's 2010 Comprehensive Plan, introduced two new required plan elements: the Municipal Growth Element and the Water Resources Element. This chapter addresses the latter, which ensures that Easton can meet projected population needs with adequate water supply, wastewater capacity, and stormwater management—while protecting the capacity of local waterways to assimilate stormwater from both point and non-point sources.

As noted in the Municipal Growth Element, three required elements—Municipal Growth, Water Resources, and Community Facilities and Services—address water, sewer, and stormwater issues, with related considerations also appearing in the Land Use Element. While some overlap is inevitable, the Water Resources Element is more narrowly focused on three core questions:

1. Is there sufficient water supply to meet current and future needs?
2. Is there sufficient wastewater and septic capacity to meet current and future needs?
3. What impacts, if any, will meeting these needs have on water resources?

Although this analysis parallels that in the Municipal Growth Element, the Water Resources Element provides more detailed evaluation specific to water, wastewater, and stormwater systems.

Town Service Policy

A longstanding policy governs Easton's approach: municipal water and wastewater services are not extended beyond Town boundaries. Developers seeking these services must annex into the Town, and all development within Town limits is required to connect to the municipal system. As a result, private wells and septic systems are rare inside Town boundaries.

Two exceptions exist:

1. Ratcliffe Farm Subdivision – A 15-lot, large-lot waterfront subdivision permitted to use private wells and septic systems.
2. Existing Annexed Properties – Fewer than a dozen homes annexed into Town while served by private wells and septic systems; these may remain as such until a connection to municipal service becomes necessary.

Because service areas align almost exactly with Town boundaries, this Plan does not include a separate water and wastewater service area map. The only current exceptions to the policy of not serving properties beyond Town limits are:

- The North and South Clifton subdivision (off Route 50)
- One property on St. Michael's Road that receives municipal water but not wastewater service.

Water Supply and System

As described in the Community Facilities and Services Chapter, Public water service in Easton is provided by the Easton Utilities Commission (EUC), a public utility organized and existing under the Charter of the Town of Easton. Since 1914, EUC has supplied clean, reliable drinking water to residents, operating under rigorous monitoring and quality control by certified staff.

EUC currently serves over 7,000 customers through 122 miles of water mains and 788 fire hydrants. Water is drawn from five deep wells—three tapping the Magothy Aquifer (1,000 feet) and two tapping the Upper Patapsco Aquifer (1,200 feet) that feed a modern treatment facility on Glebe Road. The system's two elevated storage tanks each hold 1 million gallons, providing fire protection, consistent pressure, and sufficient reserve for future needs.

The Municipal Growth Element projects a system expansion—adding a new production well—around 2043 to meet a maximum daily demand exceeding 4.0 MGD. Given the Town's

build-out is expected beyond 2040, only modest upgrades should be needed thereafter, with ample time for planning and funding.

Wastewater Service and Capacity

Wastewater treatment for the Town is provided by the Easton Utilities Commission (EUC) at the municipal wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). The plant operates under a Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) discharge permit and is designed to meet Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) standards, significantly reducing nitrogen and phosphorus levels before effluent is discharged to local waterways.

The wastewater system includes a 4.0 MGD Enhanced Nutrient Removal facility completed in 2007. Current use is 2.3663 MGD (59% capacity). At projected 1.75% annual growth, capacity will be reached in 2055, or 2051 (four years sooner) with the planned regional hospital fully operational by 2035 (5% of capacity). Capacity expansion planning will begin once flows exceed 3.20 MGD (anticipated in 2031). Since this is modestly higher growth rate than this Plan anticipates, it should be even longer before these various thresholds are realized.

Current Capacity:

- Design Capacity: 4.0 million gallons per day (MGD)
- Current Average Flow: Approximately 2.4 MGD (59% of permitted capacity)

Future Capacity Planning:

The Municipal Growth Element projects that Easton's build-out will occur beyond 2040. Given current flow levels and the planned improvements to plant efficiency, no major capacity expansions are anticipated in the near term. However, long-term planning includes:

- Evaluating potential upgrades to accommodate higher peak flows.
- Exploring advanced treatment technologies to further reduce nutrient discharges.
- Coordinating with MDE to ensure discharge limits remain protective of downstream water quality.

Septic System Policy:

As noted earlier, Easton maintains a strict policy prohibiting private septic systems within the Town except for a small number of grandfathered properties. This policy ensures wastewater is treated at the municipal WWTP, where nutrient removal can be managed and monitored.

c. Water Source Protection

One required component of the Water Resources Element is to assess current and future water sources and outline strategies to prevent pollution or over-allocation. For Easton, this is challenging because:

- Water sources lie outside Town jurisdiction.
- Aquifers are shared regionally with other high-demand users.

Talbot County's Draft Water Resource Element summarizes the issue:

- Aquifer Dependence and Stress: Most public and private systems draw from confined aquifers (notably the Aquia and Piney Point) used widely across the Eastern Shore. USGS reports water-level declines of tens to hundreds of feet, raising concerns about long-term supply.
- Recharge Limitations: Many aquifer recharge zones lie outside the Eastern Shore, limiting local replenishment.
- Surface–Groundwater Connection: Large withdrawals can reduce base flows in streams and rivers, affecting both water quantity and quality.
- Data Gaps: There is no comprehensive regional analysis of cumulative groundwater demand. Project-level studies fail to capture broader impacts.
- Coastal Plain Study: MDE, MGS, and USGS are working on a Coastal Plain Aquifer Study to better assess supply and sustainability. Until completed, accurate yield estimates remain elusive.

Planning Assumptions

In the absence of definitive aquifer capacity studies, this Plan assumes the MDE-issued groundwater permit for EUC represents the maximum safe yield of the system. This approach ensures that

permitted withdrawal limits are treated as the threshold for sustainable water use until better regional data is available.

D. Stormwater Management and Point and Nonpoint Source Loading Status and Remediation

The Town's stormwater management program is designed to meet the requirements of Maryland's Stormwater Management Act of 2007 and to comply with the State's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements. These regulations emphasize Environmental Site Design (ESD) practices, which reduce runoff by mimicking natural hydrology.

Key strategies include:

- Installing bioretention cells, rain gardens, and permeable pavement.
- Preserving and restoring natural drainage features and non-tidal wetlands.
- Requiring new developments to meet stricter post-construction stormwater quality and quantity standards.
- Encouraging retrofits in older developed areas to reduce nutrient and sediment loads.

Recent and proposed projects include a regional sediment pond, inlet filter bags, constructed wetlands, and BMP retrofits. Easton applies Chesapeake Bay Critical Area pollutant reduction standards Town-wide, targeting both new development and redevelopment to reduce nutrient loads. Future development in Easton's growth areas will be required to integrate ESD techniques early in site planning, ensuring stormwater is managed at the source.

Easton's Stormwater Management Ordinance regulates runoff to reduce flooding, erosion, and water quality impacts. New development and most redevelopment must implement stormwater controls per the State Design Manual. Special standards apply in the Tanyard Branch watershed, which drains to impaired waters in the Choptank River system. Easton's Stormwater Management Ordinance was created to protect public health, safety, and welfare by establishing requirements and procedures to manage the negative impacts of increased stormwater runoff. The goal is to:

- Minimize damage to public and private property
- Reduce the environmental effects of development
- Control stream channel erosion

- Reduce local flooding
- Maintain pre-development runoff conditions as closely as possible after development

These measures aim to safeguard the community and environment by managing stormwater runoff effectively.

The Stormwater Management Ordinance is summarized below:

Scope

No land development for residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional purposes is allowed without implementing stormwater management measures to control runoff. These measures must align with the Design Manual and be constructed according to an approved plan for new developments or redevelopment policies.

Exemptions

The following activities are exempt from stormwater management requirements:

- *Agricultural land management activities*
- *Additions or modifications to existing single-family homes (under certain conditions)*
- *Developments disturbing less than 5,000 square feet*
- *Land developments regulated by specific state laws*
- *The Town Engineer may require stormwater controls in cases of cumulative effects from previous exemptions.*

Waivers / Watershed Management Plans

Stormwater management waivers may be granted under certain conditions:

- *For projects in areas with developed watershed management plans*
- *For projects with direct discharges to tidal waters that do not increase stormwater discharge by over 10% for 2-year and 10-year storms*
- *If stormwater will be handled by an existing regional facility designed for such loads*

Qualitative control waivers apply to in-fill development or redevelopment where stormwater management is not feasible, or under specific site conditions.

Redevelopment

Redevelopment projects are exempt from certain volume requirements if they do not increase stormwater discharge. However, they must reduce site impervious areas by at least 20%, or implement stormwater practices to manage that area. If reducing impervious areas is not possible, off-site BMPs or other alternatives may be considered.

Variance

A variance from stormwater management requirements may be granted by the Town Engineer in cases of exceptional circumstances, where strict adherence would result in unnecessary hardship.

The full ordinance can be accessed here:
https://eastonmd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/86/Stormwater-Management-Ordinance-PDF

The State's updated Stormwater Management Design Manual will require Easton to amend its Stormwater Management Ordinance, with significant changes likely to focus on the waiver provisions.

Stormwater in Easton contributes both point and non-point source loads to local waterways. The Town's system collects, filters, and conveys runoff to the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) on the Choptank River. Runoff that bypasses the system flows into the Choptank or Miles River watersheds—Easton lies within three 8-digit watersheds: Miles, Upper Choptank, and Lower Choptank. All are nutrient-impaired per the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), with the Lower Choptank having an established Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) limit.

Although no TMDL implementation plan currently applies directly to Easton, the Town enforces the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area's 10% pollutant reduction standard townwide. This ensures that new development improves water quality relative to pre-existing conditions, though older developed areas remain problem zones. Much of the older development drains into Tanyard Branch, a tributary of the Tred Avon River, via storm drains installed around 1905.

Tanyard Branch Focus Area

A large portion of Easton drains into Tanyard Branch, making it a priority for enhanced stormwater management:

- Development in the basin must limit post-development runoff rates to pre-development rates for both 2-year and 10-year storm events.
- Alternatively, developers may fund or construct equivalent watershed improvements.
- Waivers are granted only if impacts are negligible, as determined by the Town Engineer.

The Town, in partnership with Talbot County, is implementing several grant-funded projects along Tanyard Branch, including:

- A regional sediment pond and inlet filter bags to capture litter.
- A constructed wetland at Easton Utilities' administration site.
- A replacement conveyance system with sediment removal devices and subsurface BMPs, aligned with the Rails-to-Trails network.

Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Capacity

Talbot County's Water Resources Element projects that Easton's WWTP has sufficient nitrogen and phosphorus discharge capacity to support growth through 2030 and beyond. Projections (assuming 1% annual growth) indicate available capacity in 2030 of:

- **Nitrogen (TN)**: 21,314 lbs/year
- **Phosphorus (TP)**: 913 lbs/year

Fertilizer and Nutrient Sources

While agriculture within Town limits is minimal, farmland in the Future Growth Area is a potential nutrient source. Upon annexation and development, nutrient loads from farming are expected to decrease. However, lawn fertilizers in developed areas—both existing neighborhoods and future subdivisions—remain a concern. Maryland now requires retail sale of only non-phosphorus lawn fertilizers, which should help mitigate impacts.

Nutrient Loading Scenarios

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Nutrient Loading Spreadsheet was used to model three future growth scenarios:

Scenario	Growth Rate & Horizon	Development Pattern	Notes
Build-Out / 3% Growth	30 years	High greenfield conversion	Represents maximum foreseeable growth
Scenario 2	1% growth / 30 years	75% infill, 25% greenfield	Planning Commission's preferred pattern
Scenario 3	1% growth / 30 years	50% infill, 50% greenfield	More greenfield development than Scenario 2

Results show that higher infill development reduces nutrient loading, while higher greenfield shares increase agricultural conversion impacts.

Stormwater runoff is a major nonpoint source of nutrient and sediment pollution. In Easton, impervious surfaces such as roads, parking lots, and rooftops prevent water from soaking into the ground, increasing runoff volume and pollutant transport to local streams and rivers.

Nutrient Loading Analysis

Nutrient loading analysis evaluates the impact of projected land use changes on nitrogen and phosphorus levels in Easton's waterways. Using land use, septic, and best management practice (BMP) scenarios, the Town assessed potential nutrient contributions from both nonpoint sources (NPS), such as stormwater runoff and agriculture, and point sources (PS), such as wastewater treatment facilities.

The table below summarizes the modeled nitrogen and phosphorus loads, as well as impervious cover, for each scenario. The baseline (2007 LU, 2007 BMPs) reflects existing conditions at the start of the study period, while the remaining scenarios represent alternative build-out and management strategies.

Scenario	Total Nitrogen Load (lbs/yr)	Total Phosphorus Load (lbs/yr)	Impervious Cover (acres)
2007 LU, 2007 BMPs	102010	9353	0
2007 LU, Trib Strat BMPs	102010	9353	1865
Scenario 1 (3% Growth)	109158	10015	3497
Scenario 2 (1% Growth: 75% Infill, 25% Greenfield)	97205	9531	2449
Scenario 3 (1% Growth: 50% Infill, 50% Greenfield)	96852	9521	2485

Key Findings

- **Nitrogen Loads:**
    - Scenario 1, with full build-out and targeted BMPs, results in the highest total nitrogen load, exceeding baseline levels. Scenarios 2 and 3, which assume more balanced growth and mitigation, show slightly lower total nitrogen loads.

- **Phosphorus Loads**:
    - Variations between scenarios are relatively small, with only modest reductions achieved through BMPs.
- **Impervious Cover:**
    - Scenarios with higher-density development produce more impervious cover, influencing stormwater runoff volumes and pollutant transport.

The results emphasize that growth patterns and BMP implementation both directly affect nutrient loads. Compact development combined with effective stormwater management and agricultural BMPs can help limit nutrient increases.

E. Critical Areas

The Town of Easton does not have a significant amount of waterfront within our corporate limits. Furthermore, in recognition of the environmental benefits as well as to comply with regulations, the Town now prohibits the establishment of private lots within the Critical Area Buffer. Such areas must be a separate lot maintained in Town ownership or controlled by a conservation-minded not-for-profit organization.

The State of Maryland and local governments restrict development within the Critical Area, primarily through enhanced stormwater management and nutrient reduction requirements. Development in the Critical Area is not strictly prohibited, but is allowed on a limited basis depending on the development intensity of the site. The vast majority of Critical Area lands are classified as Resource Conservation Areas and are permitted to develop at a residential density of 1 dwelling unit per 20 acres. More intense development is possible in Limited Development Areas or Intensely Developed areas. Additionally, Critical Area regulations provide a mechanism for properties to be reclassified, either from RCA to LDA or IDA or from LDA to IDA, via a process known as Growth Allocation.

When the Critical Area law was enacted, each affected jurisdiction received an amount (or "pot") of Growth Allocation available to them based on the amount of shoreline within the jurisdiction. Since Easton had an even smaller amount of waterfrontage at that time, we received a relatively modest amount of Growth Allocation and it has essentially been used, largely due to having to use much of it to accommodate the Easton Club Development after originally been told that its development was "grandfathered" and thus not cost us acreage from our available growth allocation.

As a result, today Easton must rely on Talbot County granting Growth Allocation to Easton from its overall pot in order to approve a project that is essentially at a density of greater than 1 unit per 20 acres (or is a non-residential or mixed-use project). This presents something of a conundrum whereby on the one hand, Easton has utilized all of its growth allocation and must depend on the

largesse of Talbot County in order for development projects to advance. On the other hand, Talbot County has an abundance of Growth Allocation and from a sustainability and environmental perspective, the application of growth allocation ought to occur within municipalities, on state-of-the-art wastewater treatment systems and where the Buffer is protected to a larger degree than regulations require by not being permitted on private property.

F. Mineral Resources

Eastern portions of Easton and future growth areas overlay sand and gravel deposits. Extraction is not appropriate in developed areas but may be considered in undeveloped growth areas as an initial site preparation step. Continuous operations are discouraged. Developers must maintain adequate topsoil on building lots to support landscaping and avoid post-construction soil degradation.

This element serves three purposes:

- Identify undeveloped land that should remain in reserve for potential mineral extraction.
- Recommend appropriate uses for such land after extraction.
- Establish policies and regulations that balance mineral extraction with other land uses and prevent its preemption where feasible.

Historically, Easton's Comprehensive Plans have given little attention to mineral resources. The 1989 Plan noted that surface mining does not occur in Town and claimed no potential resources exist—a statement now known to be only partially true.

Mapping in the 2005 Talbot County Comprehensive Plan (Map 8-1) identifies sand and gravel–bearing units across much of eastern Talbot County. The western edge of this deposit zone runs through Easton, meaning roughly one-third to one-half of the Town—and all eastern future growth areas—lie over potential sand and gravel reserves.

While extraction will not be allowed in already developed areas, it may be appropriate in undeveloped growth areas within or adjacent to Town. Where feasible, sand and gravel should be removed early in the development process, prior to construction, to make efficient use of resources. However, ongoing extraction operations are incompatible with the Town's land use goals and will not be permitted.

A related concern is the stripping and sale of topsoil prior to development. Without replacement, new property owners inherit compacted, poor-quality soil unsuitable for lawns, gardens, or landscaping. To prevent this, developers must finish lots with sufficient topsoil depth to support

healthy vegetation. If replacement proves too costly, the intent is to discourage its removal in the first place.

G. Biodiversity

Easton is located on the Delmarva Peninsula, an expansive coastal plain region situated between two large estuaries and the Atlantic Ocean. Despite its proximity to several large metropolitan areas, this unique geography and a rich tradition of land preservation have made Delmarva's mix of upland and wetland ecosystems a critical stronghold for the Mid-Atlantic's native and migratory species. Though much of the work to be done in conserving the region's biodiversity lies in protecting and restoring habitats outside of developed areas around regional wildlife hubs and corridors, municipalities also have a role to play in promoting beneficial species and mitigating human impacts to wildlife that do not recognize political boundaries.

Vegetation is a crucial component of habitat viability, with native plants providing both shelter and forage for species in town. Unfortunately, Easton's native species have been underserved by exotic ornamental landscaping typically provided with suburban development, such as the invasive Bradford pear. Modern standards for landscaping have effectively changed this trend with new developments, though ongoing efforts will be needed to replace dying and nuisance street trees with beneficial native varieties.

Quality habitat should be considered not only on a site-by-site basis, but as a holistic network of green infrastructure to allow safe passage of sensitive species throughout the town. Forest conservation regulations protect substantial forest tracts needed by Delmarva Fox Squirrel and Forest Interior Dwelling Species of birds. In conjunction with vegetative buffers along water bodies, they provide the basis for municipal-scale hubs and corridors. By thoughtfully designing our open spaces, buffer yard landscaping, and trail corridors to minimize gaps between habitats similar to pedestrian crossings, Easton can build a robust network of wildlife mobility.

Because wildlife are not confined to the natural areas of the town, though, the built environment should similarly consider its impacts. Both native and migratory birds are particularly sensitive to two mainstays of municipal development: glass and light. Light pollution disorients birds, and their inability to see standard glass windows leads to deadly flight collisions. Frequent testimony from citizens at hearings for site plan and architecture review echo this concern. To this end, we recognize the need for updated architectural and lighting standards to protect birds. Notably, glass

should be treated with etchings or glazings that are safely visible mid-flight, and outdoor lighting should be shielded, downward-facing, and low-intensity.

The built environment should also be limited and designed with respect to identified populations of sensitive species in the area. Easton is home to colonies of roof-nesting Least Terns, with zones around identified locations such as Easton High School, the US Post Office Sorting Center, and Giant supermarket subject to development and maintenance restrictions in accordance with state guidelines. Further, two historic waterfowl concentration areas can be found at Papermill Pond and a portion of Peachblossom Creek; developments in proximity to these areas should provide substantial buffers for both resident and migratory species.

H. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Protect and Sustain Easton's Water Resources.

Objectives:

- Maintain a reliable, high-quality public water supply to meet current and future needs.
- Coordinate with Easton Utilities, MDE, and regional partners to safeguard aquifers from contamination and over-allocation.
- Limit water and wastewater service to properties within Town boundaries, requiring annexation for new connections.
- Ensure all development connects to the municipal system; phase out private wells and septic systems as feasible.

Goal #2: Ensure Adequate Wastewater Treatment Capacity.

Objectives:

- Maintain treatment plant performance to meet nutrient discharge limits and accommodate projected growth.
- Implement infrastructure upgrades in line with long-term capacity needs identified in the Water Resources and Municipal Growth Elements.
- Support measures that reduce nutrient loads from septic systems within current and future growth areas.

Goal #3: Manage Stormwater to Protect Water Quality.

Objectives:

- Enforce updated stormwater management standards consistent with the State's Design Manual.
- Apply enhanced stormwater requirements in sensitive basins, especially Tanyard Branch.
- Reduce point and nonpoint source pollutant loads through BMPs, retrofits, and grant-funded improvements.
- Promote natural filtration and green infrastructure in public projects and private development.

Goal #4: Protect and Wisely Use Mineral Resources.

Objectives:

- Identify and safeguard potential sand and gravel deposits in future growth areas for possible extraction prior to development.
- Prohibit ongoing extraction operations in developed areas or where incompatible with surrounding uses.
- Require developers to maintain or restore topsoil depth to support healthy landscaping and prevent long-term soil degradation.

Goal #5: Reduce Nutrient Loading to Local Watersheds.

Objectives:

- Implement land use strategies that reduce nitrogen and phosphorus runoff from development and agriculture.
- Prioritize infill and redevelopment to minimize conversion of farmland and forest.
- Support public education on responsible fertilizer use and promote non-phosphorus lawn products.
- Coordinate with County and State agencies to track and meet TMDL and Chesapeake Bay pollutant reduction goals.

Goal #6: Protect and enhance Easton's biodiversity by conserving habitats, promoting native species, and reducing human impacts on wildlife.

Objectives:

- Preserve and restore key habitats, especially forest tracts, wetlands, and wildlife corridors.
- Prioritize native vegetation in landscaping and replace invasive or nuisance species with beneficial varieties.
- Design open spaces, buffers, and trails to create continuous networks for wildlife movement.
- Implement bird-safe building and lighting standards to reduce collisions and light pollution.
- Limit and carefully design development near sensitive species habitats, including Least Tern colonies and historic waterfowl areas, with appropriate buffers and restrictions.
- Develop an Urban Forestry Plan to expand the Town's tree canopy.

10 SUSTAINABILITY

"Sustainability is a journey, not a destination. We must constantly strive to do better, to be better stewards of the earth and all its inhabitants"

— Unknown

A. Purpose

Sustainable development has been defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The American Society of Landscape Architects makes the following points about sustainable (urban) development:

> *Urban development should be guided by a sustainable planning and management vision that promotes interconnected green space, a multi-modal transportation system, and mixed-use development. Diverse public and private partnerships should be used to create sustainable and livable communities that protect historic, cultural, and environmental resources. In addition, policymakers, regulators and developers should support sustainable site planning and construction techniques that reduce pollution and create a balance between built and natural systems.*
>
> *New sustainable urban developments or re-developments should provide a variety of commercial, institutional, educational uses as well as housing styles, sizes and prices. The provision of sidewalks, trails, and private streets, connected to transit stops and an interconnected street network within these mixed-use developments provides mobility options and helps reduce pollution by reducing vehicle trips.*
>
> *Walking, bicycling, and other mobility options should be encouraged throughout the urban mixed-use core and mixed-use neighborhoods with easily accessed and well-defined centers and edges.*

Fortunately the itemized list of characteristics or outcomes of sustainable urban development in the description above are all perfectly consistent with the Vision of the future Easton that this Plan contemplates. Furthermore, while the idea of tackling global climate change may seem daunting, if not impossible, the actions described above are do-able. In fact, in Easton we have been moving in

such a direction for the past several decades. This merely presents one more reason to continue to pursue such a vision.

The Brundtland Commission of the United Nations (1987) published the report, “Our Common Future” and defined sustainable development, as repeated in the intro to this chapter, as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Since then, the definition of sustainability has expanded to include balance and coordination among the “Three E’s” of environment, economy, and equity as well as development that minimizes the negative impact on the environment and other systems.

Many issues or aspects of sustainability are far beyond the scope of the Town of Easton to address. Actions needed to address climate change, for example, have been subject to International Treaties and will require global support and cooperation in order to make meaningful progress. However, there are actions that Easton can take to anticipate and accommodate the effects of climate change and there are a number of other issues besides climate change that determine just how sustainable our future community will be.

During the Public Input phase of this Plan Update, the scope of possible sustainability issues was evident from the feedback we received. In particular, one exercise invited citizens to “use sticky dots to indicate which of the following issues/items are important to you and should be addressed in the Town’s updated Comprehensive Plan under the heading of Climate Change and Sustainability.” Table 13 below summarizes the responses from this exercise.

TABLE 13 SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THIS PLAN

Issue	# of Dots Placed in Support of Addressing the Issue	Comments
Air Temperature that is projected to rise by 2.5 degrees above normal average by 2050 (NOAA data)	12	
Allowing for more live/work or mixed-use units in Town	25	
Allowing small farms in town for local food production	21	
Bicycle safety, e.g., bike lanes and trails	30	
Clean Rivers and Streams	37	

Connecting new neighborhoods to existing neighborhoods to improve walkability	21	
Converting the Town's vehicle fleet to Low Emission Vehicles	23	
Electric Vehicle charging station availability	23	
Food stores that are walkable for in-town residents	40	
Maintenance of town amenities, like parks, street trees, public bathrooms, etc.	29	
Pedestrian safety, e.g., sidewalks and road crossings	29	
Precipitation (annual rain volume) that has been above average for the last 26 years and is continuing to rise, with storms increasing in volume and severity	22	A commenter added: "Reason to keep waterfront as a public park and not build housing and boat ramps for the wealthy."
Public Access to waterfront for a variety of uses	37	
Raising the tax rate to increase funding for public education	21	Commenter added, "Please think of ;less advantaged people." Should be noted that school funding is a County, not Town, responsibility.
Relative sea level rise that is projected to be between 1 and 2 feet by 2050 (NOAA data)	23	
Safer access across Route 50	27	
Street trees for cooling, shade, water retention, and beautification	40	
Incentives for Green Building and Solar/Renewable Energy	24	Item written in by citizen
Services during extreme events	7	Item written in by citizen
Composting option	16	Item written in by citizen
Solar Panels over big parking lots and big rooftops of commercial and residential buildings	11	Item written in by citizen
Community Garden	1	Item written in by citizen
Renewable Energy Sources for Easton Power	16	Item written in by citizen
More pollinator-friendly solar	2	Item written in by citizen

The range of responses and level of concurrence with many of the options as expressed via this exercise was impressive and suggests there may well be community support for a more sustainable future Easton. While the responses are varied by subject, there are at least a few general themes that can be summarized as follows:

- Plan for, and mitigate, the impacts of climate change.
- Facilitate a more sustainable built environment.
- Protect the environment.
- Renewable Energy options
- Food Security

The balance of this chapter will discuss Sustainability in each of these five categories.

B. Climate Change

In the 2022 Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Report, "Planning for Climate Mitigation and Adaptation," the authors note that the United States is facing a number of "existential threats" but notes that only one of them - climate change - has the potential to "destroy human livability of the entire planet." According to the former President of the American Planning Association, Leo Asuncion, Jr., in a 2021 statement on the UN Climate Change Conference, "Now is an essential moment where global commitments, national policies, and local planning must all work together to meet the demands of confronting and combating climate change and its impacts on people, places, and our planet." (emphasis added)

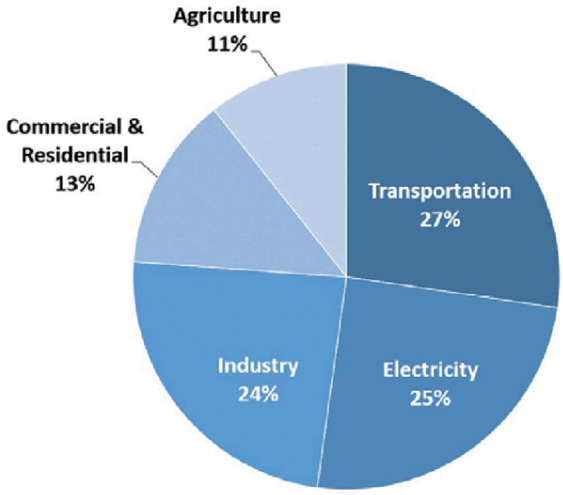
The same PAS Report goes on to state that an effective response to the global challenge that is climate change will require fundamental and systemic changes to the built environment and "inevitably must be addressed policy by policy and project by project in our local communities." Ultimately, local governments need to shift to, and embrace the concept of, sustainable development in order to make a difference.

In general terms, planning responses to climate change fall into two categories: mitigation planning and adaptation planning. Mitigation planning involves planning for and taking actions that reduce the levels of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in the atmosphere or enhance carbon sinks (i.e. things that absorb more GHGs than they emit). Climate adaptation planning involves actions that reduce the vulnerability of people, places, and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change. The

most effective approach will inevitably utilize both mitigation and adaptation techniques and strategies.

c. Mitigation Strategies

The sources of US GHG emissions, by sector, are shown in the following chart:



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2022). Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-2020

The largest share is represented by the Transportation Sector, which covers all journeys by road, rail, water and air. This sector generated 29% of US GHG in 2019. Of the total GHG emitted from this sector, 58% of them are generated from the fossil fuels burnt for light-duty vehicles (i.e., cars, pickup trucks, sport utility vehicles (SUVs), vans, and minivans), with an additional 24% from medium and heavy duty trucks. The good news on this front is that there are actions that can be taken from a planning perspective to drive these numbers down. These range from site-specific actions, such as providing adequate infrastructure for charging electric vehicles, to bigger-picture and philosophical changes, such as planning for future growth that is less automobile dependent by incentivizing new growth that occurs in the form of compact, walkable, mixed-use communities that provide a variety of housing choices and offer services within easy walking distance of neighborhoods.

While the Transportation sector is the one most directly related to planning, in terms of the possibility to reduce GHG emissions, it is not the only one. To that point, the following are potential mitigation strategies that communities can implement that more broadly can reduce GHG emissions:

- Increasing the use of renewable energy and access to alternative fuels.
- Providing options for active transportation.
- Designing energy-efficient buildings and resilient infrastructure.
- .Protecting and enhancing natural systems and water resources.
- Maximizing co-benefits of ecosystem services and green infrastructure solutions.
- Purchasing climate-friendly products.
- Educating the public on socioeconomic and public health impacts of climate change.

The energy supplier to the vast majority of Easton properties is the Easton Utilities Commission (EUC). Broadly speaking, EUC is pursuing a number of sustainable goals and objectives. Notably, this includes their "Sustainability Campus." Of note to the topic of renewable energy, the EUC Sustainability Campus includes a solar array, described by EUC as:

> *Perhaps the biggest effort to offset greenhouse gas emissions was the installation of the 2MW solar field at Easton's Sustainability Campus located adjacent to the wastewater treatment facility. The array generates more than enough electricity to power the entire treatment plant. On average, 20% of the electricity generated by the panels is fed back onto the local electric grid. Commissioned in 2017, the nearly 10-acre site was constructed for a total of $4 million. Through a grant by Maryland Department of the Environment, 75% of the construction costs were covered, making Easton Utilities' total investment $1 million. This partnership allowed the project to be both cost and environmentally effective, benefiting the community by avoiding almost 1,672 metric tons of CO_2e emissions per year.*

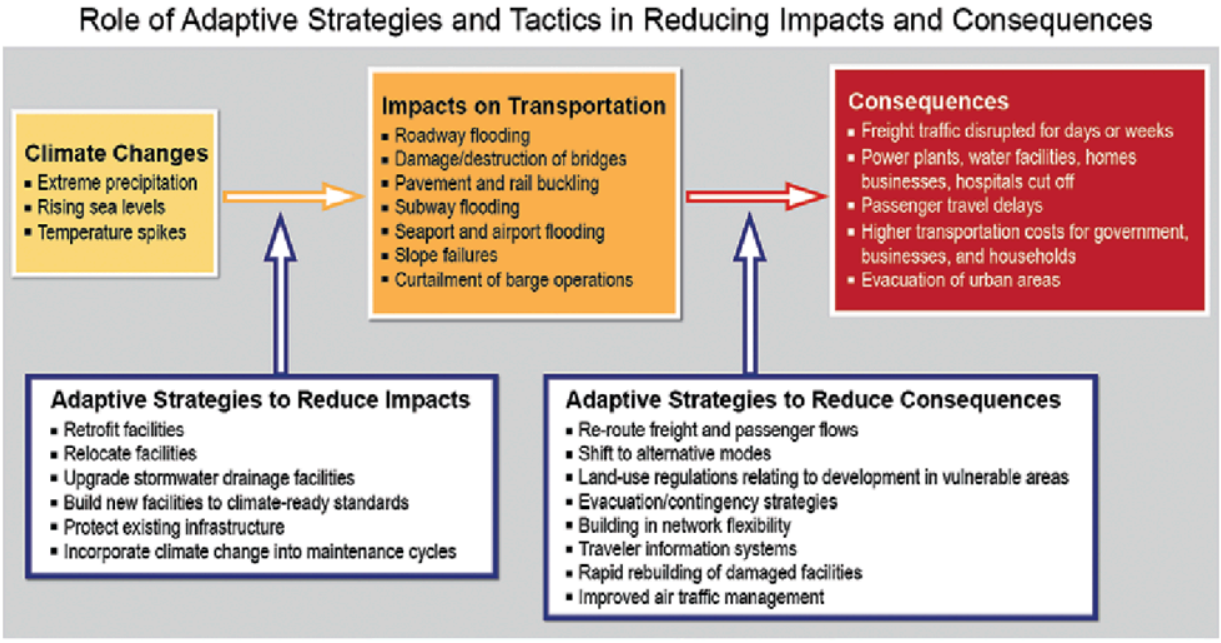
The Town should continue to support EUC's sustainability and renewable energy initiatives. Beyond that, we can and should explore options for additional solar arrays. In the context of a growing town like Easton, this can be a challenge since arrays can consume large amounts of land. However, there may be opportunities to co-locate panels on the roofs of large buildings or in large surface parking lots.

D. Adaptation Strategies

The risks posed by climate change include rising sea levels and storm surges, heat stress, extreme precipitation, inland and coastal flooding, drought, increased aridity, water scarcity, and air pollution, all of which will have negative impacts on an individual's health, livelihoods, and assets, as

well as the community's economy and ecosystems. Adaptation strategies are essential to reducing vulnerability to both the likely everyday, as well as the more extreme or dangerous, outcomes of climate change.

The following flowchart depicts the multiple impacts of climate change on Transportation, the consequences of those impacts, and some adaptation strategies that can be employed (both to reduce impacts and to reduce consequences):



The area where adaptation policies can most directly be impacted by Comprehensive Planning is the general area of land use. This is especially the case when contemplating future growth areas. Preventing future development from occurring in vulnerable locations, such as along waterways, in floodplains, or non-tidal wetlands, is an easy proactive approach to climate change adaptation. It is coincidentally consistent with the essence of this Plan. This is important because as the previously referenced PAS Report notes, comprehensive land use planning that anticipates likely climate impacts can accomplish the following community-wide goals:

- Encouraging coordinated transportation and housing investments, so that people can afford to live in safe conditions with transportation choice in case of emergency.
- Promoting green infrastructure and sound watershed management, which can reduce stormwater runoff, mitigate the urban heat island effect, and improve public health.

- Rehabilitating wetland riparian or estuarine habitats that provide natural ecosystem services, such as flood protection.
- Reducing the long-term cost of development by building in areas that are less vulnerable to climate impacts and costs.

Impacts can also be made at the individual building level. For example, increased frequency and severity of heat waves pose additional risks for occupants of homes without cooling methods. Very young children, the elderly (who represent a high percentage of Easton's population), and those with infirmities are most susceptible to heat strokes and other health risks associated with extreme heat. High-performance green buildings can have both mitigation and adaptation co-benefits. Adaptation practices are ideally implemented at the time of construction, but mitigation to existing buildings can occur in the form of retrofitting existing homes and buildings with additions such as green roofs or sun shading, water storage space, and smart ventilation.

Finally, it is important to note that although there are specific actions that a community may pursue in the realm of climate adaptation, monitoring and evaluation of adaptation policies and actions can be challenging for a number of reasons. The Planning for Climate Mitigation and Adaptation PAS Report, lists the following cautions with regards to monitoring adaptation:

MEASURING ADAPTATION

Monitoring and evaluating adaptation can be challenging for the following reasons (CAP and ICLEI 2015):

- **Adaptation is not an objective or an endpoint.** Adaptation is a process of continual adjustment, and there is no clear measure or benchmark that signals that an adaptation measure is "successful." Often adaptation evaluation relies on proxy measures that relate to the achievement of broader societal and environmental aims.
- **Uncertainty is inherent in virtually all monitoring and evaluation processes.** With many climate trends not yet clear, planners need to plan for a range of possible scenarios. For example, uncertainty regarding the rate and extent of sea level rise is critical to adaptation planners in coastal areas, but equally uncertain are issues of population growth and aging infrastructure.
- **Adaptation is evaluated by measuring avoided impacts.** Adaptation efforts are designed to reduce adverse impacts of climate change. In the absence of that impact taking place, it can be challenging to measure how much worse the situation would have been without the intervention.
- **Evaluating adaptation entails tracking towards a "moving target."** In monitoring climate change, natural and socioecological systems undergo continuous change over time and so the use of a fixed baseline may lose some validity. With this consistent variability, baseline data may not always provide a solid reference point.
- **Adaptation requires long time horizons.** Because adaptation activities tend to have long time frames and unclear endpoints that are liable to change over time, it can be difficult to measure them within traditional five-year government planning cycles or political mandates.
- **Adaptation spans multiple scales and sectors.** Adaptation encompasses diverse programming strategies, populations, and locales. While it is predominantly a local process, progress towards it is often examined at much higher levels, and often at a sector scale. It can be very difficult to compare or aggregate results in an effective way because of the eclectic range of sectors, the varying availability of data, and different site contexts.
- **There is no one set of indicators or monitoring and evaluation approaches.** As adaptation is a process rather than an outcome, individual indicators for climate adaptation may not necessarily exist as "good" climate adaptation indicators. In addition, as adaptation cuts across contexts, scales, and sectors, no universal set of indicators will fit these divergent contexts.
- **Assessing the effectiveness and adequacy of adaptation is both complex and challenging.** It demands a practical, replicable approach that provides meaningful, quantifiable information. Recognizing that building resilience is a moving goal in a changing climate, measuring adaptation effectiveness should also be flexible and adaptable to a wide range of contexts and be able to catalyze learning at a variety of spatial and temporal scales (Craft and Fisher 2016).

E. Sustainable Built Environment

The aspect of sustainability that is most directly relevant to a Comprehensive Plan, and which is addressed throughout this Plan, is that of the built environment. This includes planning-related areas such as encouraging more energy efficient buildings, to fundamental principles of land use planning such as prescribing a future development pattern that is more sustainable than that which has occurred in the last half-century or so.

With regards to future development patterns, the measure of success will overwhelmingly come from what happens in our Future Growth Area. Accommodating more growth in the form of Infill and Redevelopment of the existing Town boundaries will help achieve this goal, but given the nature of this type of development, the stage has essentially already been set.

Infill/Redevelopment will be more sustainable in that such development is generally more accommodating of active modes of transportation and is closer to the shopping and services that residents need, thus facilitating such active transportation. However, barring a fundamental (and very large) change in the scope and nature of density of development in the vicinity of Downtown, and despite strong public support for focusing future growth on this aspect, there is a limit to how much can be accommodated in this manner. Eventually, and likely sooner rather than later, the overwhelming majority of growth will occur in what are now "greenfields" in our Future Growth Area. Improving sustainability of the development of these areas will largely dictate Easton's overall success (or lack thereof) in improving the sustainability of the Town as a whole.

The elements that will lead to a more sustainable form of development in the future are covered throughout this Plan, so they will not be discussed in detail here. In particular the Implementation Chapter discusses in detail recommended options for achieving this goal. For the purposes of this chapter, simply listing the options to improve the sustainability of future greenfield development will suffice, and they include:

- Permitting/encouraging/requiring mixed-use development.
- Facilitating residential development at a higher density and with a wider variety of housing options.
- Maximizing connectivity to other future development.
- Providing, where possible, connectivity to existing development.
- Facilitating and accommodating active modes of transportation.

F. Food Security

The UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) describes a sustainable food system as "a food system that delivers food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised. This means that:

- It is profitable throughout (economic sustainability);
- It has broad-based benefits for society (social sustainability); and
- It has a positive or neutral impact on the natural environment (environmental sustainability)."

As a growing and vibrant Town, there is little actual agricultural activity occurring within the corporate limits of Easton. However, land that is annexed into Town is often agricultural and sometimes remains as such for several years. There is certainly nothing wrong with this practice of allowing farming as essentially a temporary or interim use until landowner/developer motivation and/or market forces dictate that it is time for the property to develop. Furthermore, the Town envisions the Talbot County side of our Growth Boundary to consist of farms and forests and supports their efforts to permanently preserve these areas.

On a smaller scale, within the Town limits sustainable food systems can be supported through gardens. These can be located on private property for the use and enjoyment of the resident of the property, or in the form of a community garden. One such community garden exists in the East End Neighborhood of Easton, just outside of Downtown (see picture below). This option is especially appropriate in the more densely developed sections of Town where land may be too scarce for individual private gardens.



G. Financial Sustainability

Beyond these environmental and general quality of life aspects of sustainability, future development patterns have even more diverse sustainability implications. One such aspect is the financial sustainability of such development, and ultimately the Town as a whole. In short, there are a

multitude of potential development scenarios possible for any given parcel of land in the Growth Area. Some will result in significant revenue for the Town, but might also impose large new costs. Others may not cost that much to serve, but may also contribute very little in the way of new revenue. From the perspective of financial sustainability, development that justifies its cost by providing a net positive fiscal impact to the Town ought to be prioritized over that which will ultimately be a net drain on Town resources.

Although it can certainly vary depending on the local government's tax structure and policies, residential development in general, and specifically single-use, low-density residential development, tends to cost local governments more to serve than it produces in new tax revenue. On the other hand, mixed-use and non-residential development can be cash flow positive for local governments. One way to view/measure such impacts is on a value per acre (VPA) basis. An assessment of Easton's VPA was conducted in 2024 by the firm Urban3 and its results are summarized in the Land Use Chapter of this Plan.

Value-per-acre modeling

In 2024, the Planning/Economic Development Firm Urban3 modelled the fiscal impacts of land uses on the Eastern Shore in general, and then in Talbot County specifically. The basis of Urban3's methodology involves examining "value per acre" for the area being analyzed. The following is excerpted from the Urban3 study for Talbot County.

Highlights from the Urban3 study for Talbot County include:

- Mixed use projects provide the highest property value per acre
- Higher density development is significantly more productive than less dense land uses
- Understanding how different land uses affect property tax revenue will allow Easton to make informed development decisions that maximize revenue productivity that can then be used in providing services such as public safety and continuing economic development
- Using the Value Per Acre (VPA) model allows communities to link fiscally productive areas with their associated land use types
- Using a moderate to high productivity sample development, such as mixed use commercial or missing middle housing types, as an example for how to build in the future can guide community conversation, vision, processes, and future regulations

- Urban3 has seen that funding for infrastructure systems(roads, sewer, water, stormwater) is insufficient in covering the lifecycle expenses for these systems. Certain users of these systems may not be paying for the true cost of what it takes to serve them (meaning other users are subsidizing them). Adjust fees, with geography in mind, to adequately cover the costs of operation and maintenance or encourage infill development rather than servicing new areas.

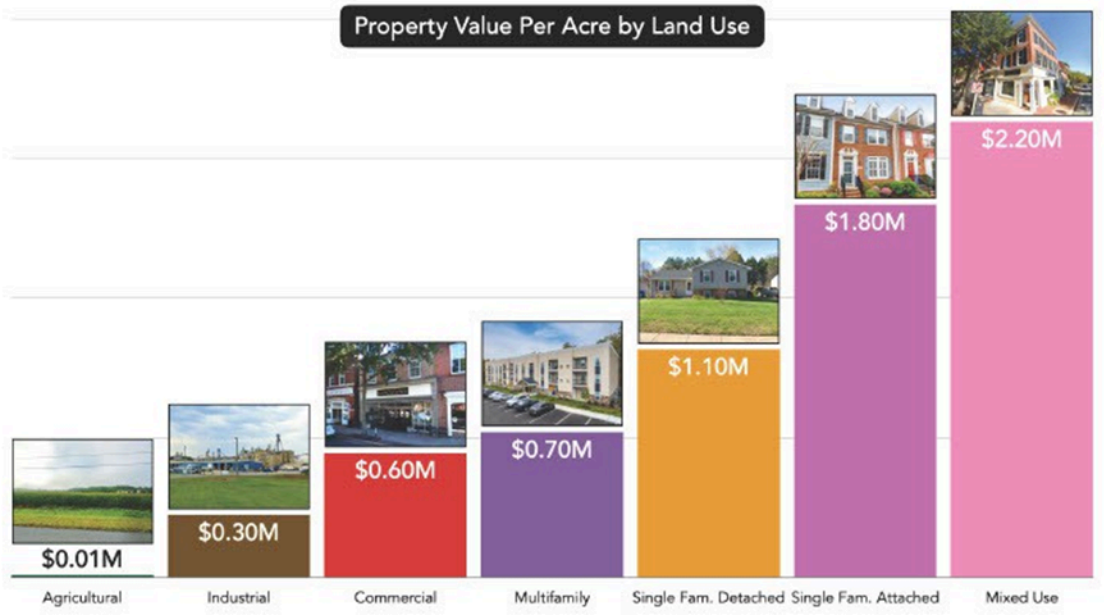


Figure 8. Comparison of values per acre by land use in Easton
Source: Maryland Department of Planning (2024), Google Maps



Figure 9. Comparing value vs. dwelling units on a per acre basis for nine example properties in Easton
Source: Maryland Department of Planning (2024), Google Maps

Urban3 modeling has helped the Town evaluate where existing development patterns provide strong return on public investment. Compact, walkable neighborhoods generate more tax revenue

per acre and require less infrastructure to support than low-density fringe development. This analysis supports land use decisions that promote long-term sustainability.

As Easton grows, the town can shape its development and financial outcomes. Urban3 created three growth projection scenarios for Poplar Hill, Four Seasons, and Gannon Range, using existing land use values and building types (see Figure 14) applied to site plans from Easton (Figure 15).



Figure 14. Example properties used in projections scenarios for the Town of Easton *Source: Maryland Department of Planning (2024), Google Maps*

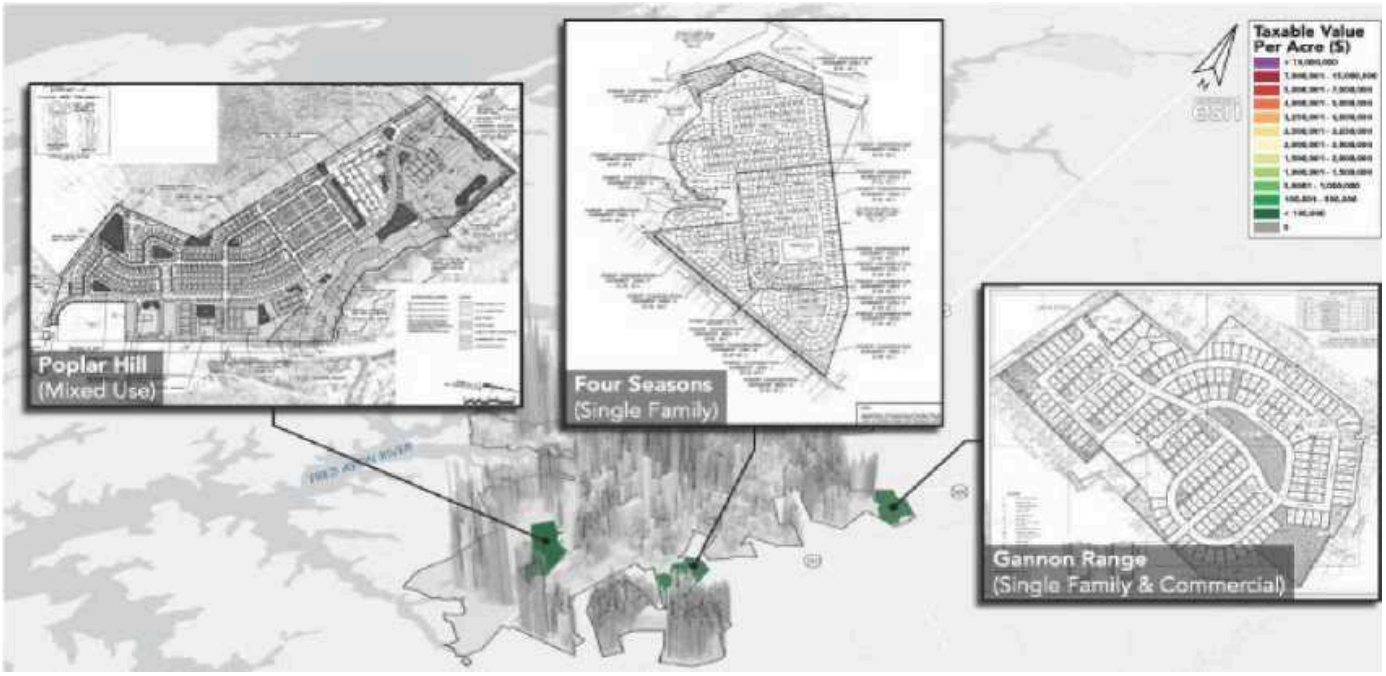


Figure 15. Example site plans used for projections scenarios for the Town of Easton Source: *Maryland Department of Planning (2024), Google Maps*

Figure 16 analyzes the Four Seasons site for potential single family residential development, comparing attached and detached building types. If developed as single family attached units like those on Jasper Lane, the site's taxable value could increase by 743 times. In contrast, traditional single family detached homes would yield a smaller increase. Building type and development pattern should be considered to maximize property tax revenue for Easton.

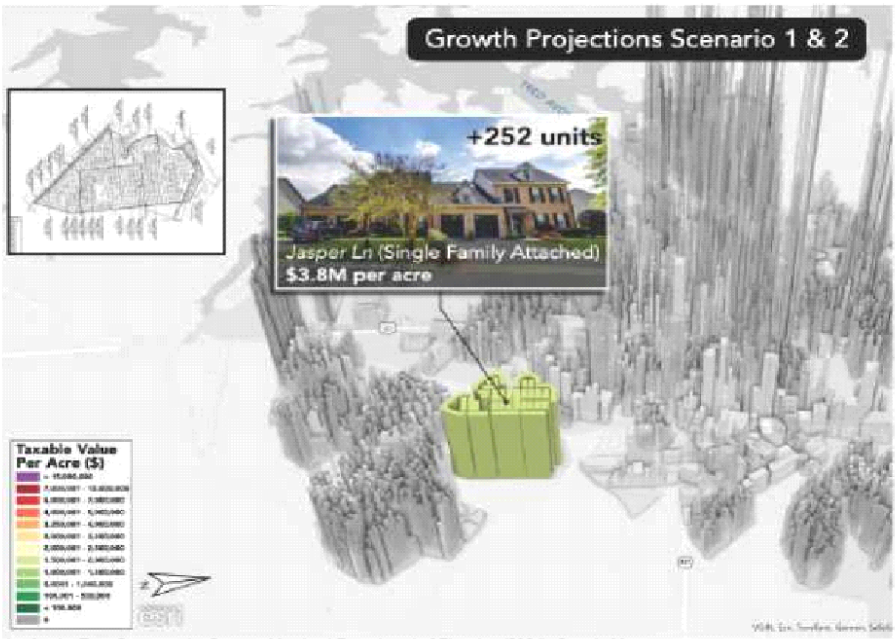


Figure 16. Two growth projections scenarios for the Four Seasons site Source: *Maryland Department of Planning (2024), Google Maps*

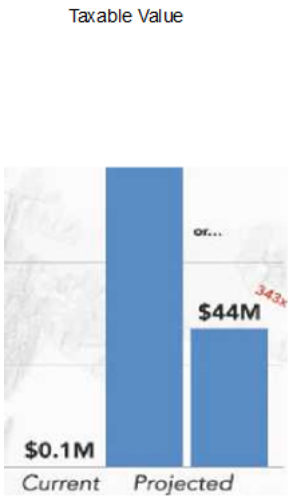


Figure 17 presents a summary of scenario projections for each site, including development type and potential property tax revenue for Easton. Although Poplar Hill (now owned by Talbot County) may not develop as planned, its scenario provides a model for future mixed-use developments in Easton.



Figure 17. Summary of all projections scenarios at the three sample sites in Easton
Source: Maryland Department of Planning (2024), Google Maps

Key Takeaways

- How can Value Per Acre (VPA) be increased?
    - Understand Current Revenue and Spending Patterns
        - Urban3's analysis examines how land use is related to economic cash flow in the Town of Easton and its operational capacity. Identifying the effects of various land uses on property tax revenue provides information for development decisions aimed at increasing revenue productivity that supports public services such as safety and economic initiatives.
    - Repeat What Works
        - Reviewing the Value Per Acre (VPA) model enables communities to link fiscally productive areas with certain land use types. Using examples from moderately to highly productive developments, such as mixed-use commercial properties or missing middle housing, may serve as reference points for future community planning, discussions, procedures, and regulations.
    - Increase Density Incrementally

        - Permitting higher density offers a straightforward method to increase VPA, as raising the value relative to acreage results in a higher value per acre. Adding one or two stories to structures can significantly affect productivity. Typically, density modifications are implemented through changes in land development regulations, which may prompt differing opinions.
        - As Easton develops further, the town will have the opportunity to decide on the direction of growth and its financial outcomes. Utilizing Urban3's analysis, Easton can identify and apply productive land use patterns and building types.

- How can VPA be increased and costs reduced?
    - Understand the Cost to Maintain Infrastructure Systems
        - Urban3's observations indicate that funding for infrastructure systems (including roads, sewer, water, and stormwater) often does not cover their full lifecycle expenses.
        - Some users might not be bearing the entire cost required for their services, resulting in cross-subsidization.
        - Adjusting fees geographically may help ensure coverage of operation and maintenance costs or promote infill development over expansion into new areas.

The Eastern Shore Land Conservancy maintains a resource page on the work of Urban 3 on the Eastern Shore. For additional information on the Urban3 Analysis, please see ESLC's website at: https://www.eslc.org/urban3/

Although it can certainly vary depending on the local government's tax structure and policies, residential development in general, and specifically single-use, low-density residential development, tends to cost local governments more to serve than it produces in new tax revenue. On the other hand, mixed-use and non-residential development can be cash flow positive for local governments. One way to view/measure such impacts is on a value per acre (VPA) basis. An assessment of Easton's VPA was conducted in 2024 by the firm Urban3 and its results are summarized in the Land Use Chapter of this Plan.

H. Social Sustainability

Another aspect of sustainability that can be affected by development patterns is that of social/cultural equity. Social equity in development patterns refers to ensuring fair and just distribution of resources, opportunities, and public services across all segments of a community. It involves addressing disparities in access to things like housing, healthcare, education, transportation, and employment, aiming to prevent certain groups from being left behind.

Consideration of social equity in planning and future land use patterns is important for a number of reasons, including the following:

- Reduced Poverty and Inequality - By addressing the root causes of poverty and inequality, social equity contributes to a more just and prosperous community.
- Increased Social Cohesion - When people feel that they have equal opportunities and access to resources, it fosters a sense of community and belonging.
- Greater Resilience - Equitable communities are better equipped to withstand economic and environmental shocks.
- Sustainable Development - Social Equity is an essential component of sustainable development, ensuring that progress benefits all members of society, both present and future.

The Town of Easton is committed to ensuring equitable access to transportation facilities and services for all residents, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, income, or ability. This commitment is formalized through the Title VI Annual Update Accomplishment Report, prepared by the Department of Public Works and submitted to the Mayor each year. The report outlines actions taken to comply with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P.L. 100.259).

The Town's Title VI policy affirms that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. The report includes a policy statement reaffirming the Town's dedication to non-discrimination and its responsibility to uphold these standards across all departments, programs, and projects.

Environmental justice principles are embedded into the Town's multimodal transportation planning. In particular:

- The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan weighted social equity factors—including proximity to low-income housing, access to social services, and connectivity to transit—when evaluating and prioritizing projects.
- Transit planning emphasizes improved service for historically underserved and transportation-disadvantaged populations.

Through these practices, Easton ensures that investments in infrastructure contribute to more equitable mobility, safety, and access for all residents.

I. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Address Climate Change through Mitigation and Adaptation.

Objectives:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through compact, walkable, mixed-use development.
- Expand renewable energy production and EV charging infrastructure.
- Improve building energy efficiency and resilient design.
- Protect and restore natural systems that act as carbon sinks.
- Prevent development in vulnerable areas such as floodplains and wetlands.
- Integrate green infrastructure to manage stormwater and heat impacts.
- Retrofit buildings to withstand extreme weather and reduce energy demand.

Goal #2: Promote a Sustainable Built Environment.

Objectives:

- Focus growth in infill and redevelopment areas before greenfields.
- Require mixed-use, higher-density neighborhoods with diverse housing types.
- Ensure new growth is connected to existing development and supports active transportation.

- Maximize street and trail connectivity in all new projects.
- Utilize the Town's Forest Conservation Account and other sources to add landscaping along heavily traveled corridors.

Goal #3: Support Food Security.

Objectives:

- Preserve farmland and forests within the Growth Boundary.
- Allow interim agricultural use on undeveloped annexed land.
- Encourage private and community gardens, especially in denser neighborhoods.

Goal #4: Ensure Financial Sustainability of Development.

Objectives:

- Prioritize projects with a positive net fiscal impact.
- Promote land uses with high value per acre (VPA).
- Encourage mixed-use and higher-density development to reduce service costs.
- Adjust fees to reflect the true cost of infrastructure and services.

Goal #5: Advance Social Sustainability and Equity.

Objectives:

- Ensure equitable access to housing, transportation, and public services.
- Apply Title VI and environmental justice principles to all Town programs.
- Prioritize infrastructure investments in underserved neighborhoods.
- Include equity considerations in project evaluation and planning.

11 MUNICIPAL GROWTH

"If you don't know where you are going, you might end up someplace else."
— Casey Stengel

A. PURPOSE

The Municipal Growth Element (MGE) outlines how the Town of Easton will manage future physical expansion in a coordinated, efficient, and sustainable manner. It identifies areas for potential annexation and development, explains rationale and reasoning behind future growth, and assesses whether the Town has the necessary infrastructure and services to support that growth.

This chapter fulfills the requirements of Maryland's House Bill 1141 (2006), which amended the Land Use Article to require a comprehensive growth strategy as part of every municipal plan. It integrates Easton's growth management approach with the broader land use policies set forth in this Comprehensive Plan.

The Maryland Land Use Article requires this element to address the following:

1. Areas anticipated for future growth outside the current municipal limits;
2. Historic growth patterns of the Town;
3. Development capacity within current Town boundaries, including infill and redevelopment potential;
4. Additional land needed to accommodate projected demand at densities aligned with long-term policy;
5. Infrastructure and services required to support growth in new areas, including:
    a. Public schools (meeting State-rated capacity standards);
    b. Libraries;
    c. Public safety and emergency medical services;
    d. Water and sewer systems;
    e. Stormwater management (to protect water quality);

f. Recreational facilities;

6. Anticipated financing strategies for public services and infrastructure;
7. Rural buffers and transition zones;
8. Impacts on services and infrastructure that the Town may need to provide for growth just outside its boundaries;
9. Measures to protect sensitive environmental areas affected by new development;
10. Population growth projections; and
11. A vision for Easton's future character and how long-term growth policy supports it.

This 2025 update builds on the Municipal Growth Element introduced in 2010, incorporating new data, insights from recent growth patterns, and the updated priorities of this Plan.

B. Growth Rate Discussion

The pace of Easton's growth has been a recurring point of debate in the last three Comprehensive Plan updates. Historically, the Town relied on the free market to determine growth. However, in the 2010 Plan, the Planning Commission concluded that continued growth at the historic rate of around 3% annually threatened the Town's traditional character and made it harder to address key challenges such as traffic congestion and environmental impacts. That Plan established a preferred target of 1% annual growth, supported by an Annexation Policy designed to limit rapid expansion through controlled Priority Growth Areas.

This 2026 Plan renews this approach. It is, however, important to clarify what is intended by the establishment of a 1% annual growth rate as our target. This Plan is not concerned with limiting growth solely for the sake of doing so. Rather, we recognize that there is an amount or pace of growth at which the negative characteristics of development become difficult-to-impossible to keep up with. 1% may not necessarily represent that threshold, but it can serve as a checkpoint such that if/when we exceed such growth, we can and should assess how well we are (or are not) managing those negative characteristics, such as traffic, environmental impacts, infrastructure and service capacities and the like. This calls for active monitoring to ensure growth occurs at a pace that Town infrastructure and services can accommodate without undue strain, and may include recommendations for pursuing what, if any, measures are necessary to slow future growth.

Historic Growth Patterns

From its incorporation in 1710 through 1917, Easton remained a small, compact town. By 1965, it had grown primarily in a north–south direction but was still bounded by US Route 50 and the future MD Route 322 (Easton Parkway). Expansion beyond these limits began in 1966 and accelerated in the 1970s after full annexation of the Parkway/Route 50 corridor.

Maps illustrate this outward spread, but they don't show an equally important change—the shift in development form. Like much of the country, Easton moved away from walkable, compact, traditional patterns toward a more suburban, auto-oriented layout. Reversing this trend has been a consistent focus of recent Comprehensive Plans and remains a central objective of this Plan, as discussed further in the Place Element. A map showing Easton's corporate limits at various points in time was shown in 3.1,XX, Existing Land Use Patterns.

While annexations expanded the Town's footprint (see Appendix 3 for a list of annexations), the form of development shifted from walkable, compact patterns to more suburban, auto-oriented layouts. Recent Comprehensive Plans have sought to reverse this trend, emphasizing a return to traditional, connected urban forms.

Population Projections

Population growth trends are detailed in the Plan Background Chapter. With the Growth Boundary in place, the Town's ultimate population is largely predictable, assuming current patterns of density, residential/non-residential balance, and household size. Based on the adopted Growth Boundary and current assumptions about density, land use mix, and household size (2.19 persons per household, 2020 Census), Easton's ultimate buildout capacity is estimated at 17,594 dwelling units, or 38,531 residents.

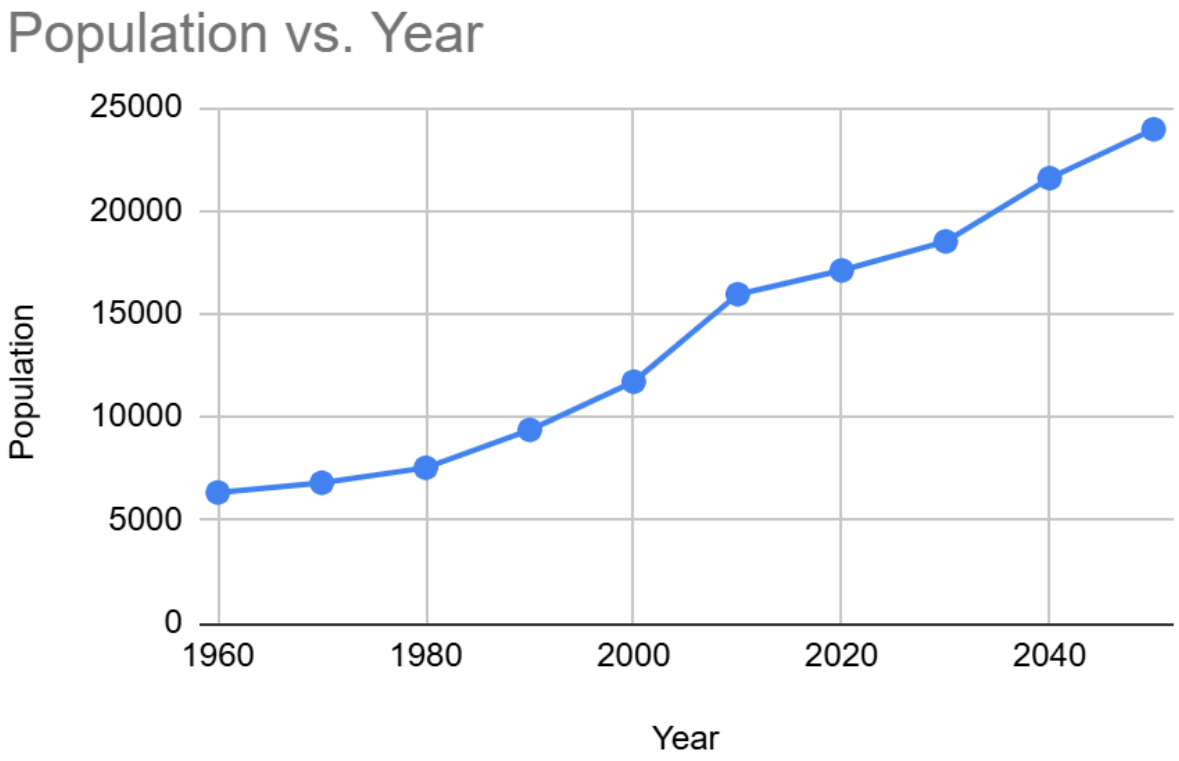
The timing of reaching that capacity depends on growth rates:

- At 3% annually, (the figure used in the 2004 Plan) buildout would occur in about 27 years (2052).
- At 1% annually, (the figure identified as a preferred target in the 2010 Plan) buildout would occur in approximately 80 years (2105)
- At a 1.75% rate, buildout would take closer to 45 years (2070).

The likely population growth rate depends on a host of factors. However, it can be useful to look back at historic growth in order to look forward to project such growth. The following table and

chart were prepared with the assistance of Google Sheets , using growth in the Town from 1960 through 2020 to project the future growth of the Town through 2050, using linear regression analysis provided via the FORECAST function in Sheets. Such growth would correspond to a 1.12% annual growth rate over the 30 year period from 2020-2050, and a 1.5% average annual growth rate for the 90 year period (1960-2050).

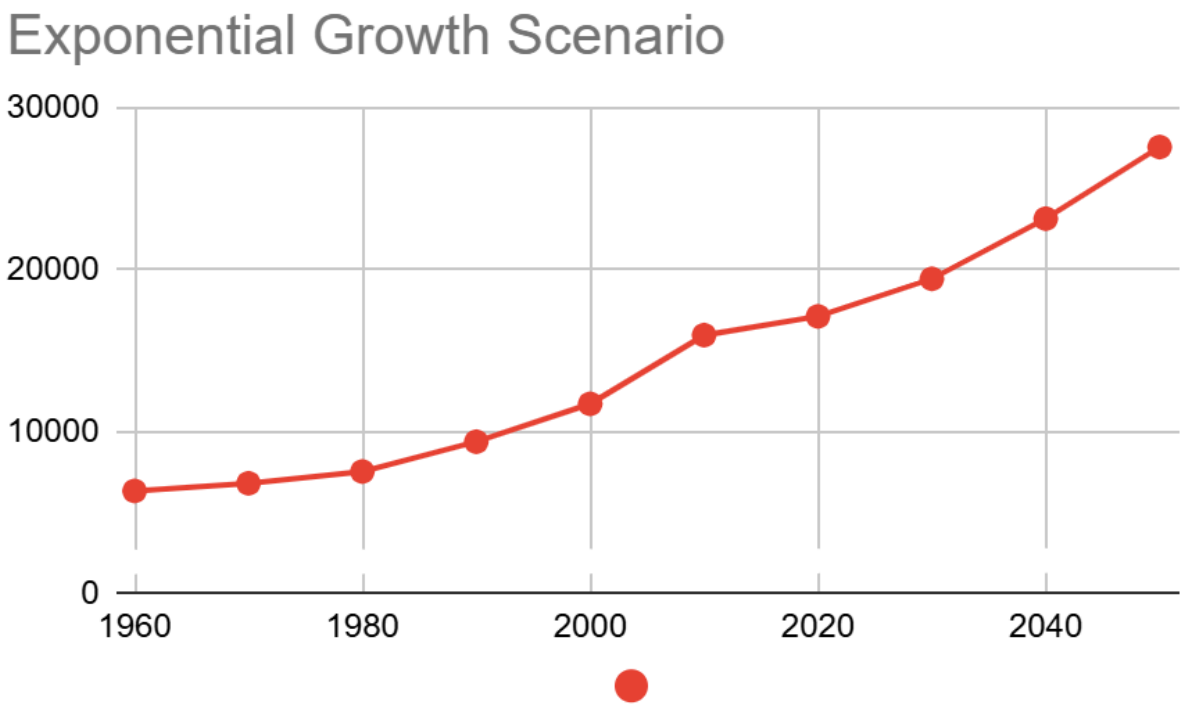
Year	Population
1960	6337
1970	6809
1980	7536
1990	9372
2000	11708
2010	15945
2020	17101
2030	18506
2040	21572
2050	23940



The Forecast function predicts a future value based on existing values using linear regression to project future data points along a line that best fits the historical data. It can be used to forecast sales, plan a budget, or predict future trends or short-term increases or decreases. Linear forecasting is suitable for stable environments where predictable, incremental changes occur, whereas exponential forecasting is better for rapidly expanding or contracting trends driven by compounding factors. Linear regression should be used cautiously when used for population projections because population growth is often more complex. Still, when limited to a short-term projection and with so many unknown variables (e.g., which direction and by how much interest rates will change, the impact of Lakeside at Trappe on the Easton housing market, the impact of the last of the Baby Boomer generation reaching retirement age, etc.), looking to the past to make predictions about future growth seems reasonable.

The Sheets GROWTH function is similar to FORECAST with the notable difference that it projects exponential growth. It's used for forecasting data that follows an accelerating pattern, such as sales, population, or investment growth, by calculating y-values for a specified exponential curve. Using this function to project Easton's future growth, yields the following:

Year	Population
1960	6,337
1970	6,809
1980	7,536
1990	9,372
2000	11,708
2010	15,945
2020	17,101
2030	19,416
2040	23,125
2050	27,543



This model predicts a 1.6% average annual growth rate for the future 30 year period (vs. 1.12% via the linear model).

This Plan proposes a revision to the way it uses growth rates. After a decade where the average annual growth rate has dropped to 0.7%, the concept of aiming for a "targeted" or "preferred" growth rate for the Planning period has been dropped. Instead, the directive relative to our Growth Rate is not so much an attempt to limit (or increase) any particular rate, but rather to consistently monitor the rate/amount of growth we are experiencing so that whatever growth that does occur, is at a rate that does not overly tax the Town's infrastructure and services. We believe that, for this Planning period at least, this can best be addressed by adhering to an Annexation Policy that does not allow for an exceedingly high rate of growth, which would be one characterized as significantly at variance with the 1.12% projected growth for several years. This can be monitored through observation of the number of dwelling units approved annually. This monitoring should be a key characteristic of the Planning Commission's Annual Reporting responsibilities. Beyond reporting though, effective growth management requires an assessment of the data. A sustained observed significant deviation from the targeted rate of growth of 1% annually may necessitate actions to either encourage (if a prolonged period of slow or negative growth is observed) or limit (if

expected growth is observed to have been exceeded) future growth from that point in time. This becomes especially critical if observations suggest that Easton's population is, in fact, behaving more like the exponential (GROWTH) model as opposed to the linear (FORECAST) model.

An important aspect to consider when contemplating future growth rates is the number of units approved but not yet built, sometimes referred to as the "development pipeline." As of May 12, 2025, that number stood at 843. While that basic total number is important to know (and, obviously, readily observed), what is more difficult to predict is when those units will be built, referred to as the "absorption rate." A myriad of factors influence the absorption rate, including: the number of different projects represented by the total number of units, the types of units, the demand for those units, interest rates, price points,, competition in the region, and so on.

The pipeline and absorption rate are important because they can further support the policy to strictly limit annexation, particularly annexation for residential purposes. That is borne out by the calculation of the number of dwelling units that the historic 1.12% growth rate would yield over the 10 year planning period. This number is approximately 875 units. Thus, with 843 units already in the development pipeline, assuming they could be built in this planning period (and not accounting for factors such as the relative demand for certain housing types, locations, etc.), the housing that would be required to correspond to 1.12% annual growth can be completely met by the buildout of existing approved projects plus a small handful of additional units. Essentially, the pipeline inventory is such that it could supply the housing associated with the projected growth of the next 10 year planning period. This is even more likely given that we are targeting a 1% annual rate of growth.

c. Existing Growth Capacity (Infill and Redevelopment)

Easton's current boundaries contain enough developable land to meet much of the projected residential and nonresidential growth for the next 20 years. However, demand—especially for mixed-use and employment-related space—may eventually outpace this capacity. Managing growth will require annexations that are carefully aligned with the Plan's land use vision, infrastructure capabilities, and fiscal priorities.

A recent requirement for Comprehensive Plans is to estimate the capacity for residential development within existing Town boundaries. This analysis considers three categories: undeveloped land, infill parcels, and sites with potential for redevelopment.

To complete this assessment, several assumptions were applied:

- Urban density baseline: Future development is assumed to occur at higher densities than in recent years, with a minimum of 3.5 dwelling units per acre—the threshold for designation as a Priority Funding Area (PFA).
- State guidance: Methodology follows the Maryland Department of Planning's Models and Guidelines publication Estimating Residential Development Capacity.
- Local experience: Assumptions are informed by Easton's past development review processes.

The following table details the step-by-step calculation of estimated residential development capacity within current Town limits.

Table 9 Development Capacity within Easton 2025 Town Limits

	Category	Details	Estimated Units
0	Priority Development Areas (per 2010 Plan)	Includes Areas 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 * total estimated units: 644	644
1	Other Parcels with Infill Potential	Unimproved parcels ≥ 1 acre, PR District parcels, and <1 acre parcels * total: 512	512
2	Approved or Pending Projects	Under Construction (189) + Under Review (415) = 604	604
3	Downtown Residential Development Potential	Per AKRF study = 100 units	100
4	Redevelopment Potential	Parcels w/ improvements <$50k; net new units (9) + figures from the Redevelopment Target Areas table below (875) = 884	884
5	TOTAL Infill/Redevelopment/Build-out Potential (as of June 11, 2024)		2744

**** Area 2 corresponds to the site of the Four Seasons project (252 units).***

Area 3 is the Poplar Hill property (now owned by Talbot County and assumes no future residential units.

Area 4 is Ashby Commons (Now essentially built out so assumes no new units).

Area 7 is the "Alvin Lapides Property" (Estimated 60 units).

Area 8 is Easton Point (Estimated 332 units per Port Street Small Area Plan).

Table 10 Redevelopment Target Areas		
Project/Area	Acres	Potential Residential Units (acres x 30 du/ac x 0.75)
Hospital	14.84	334
Easton Plaza (Parking lot)	12.456	280
Perdue - Brookletts	6.548	147
Brookletts Building	1.787	40
Perdue - Maryland Ave	2.36	53
Safeway	1.46	21 (net, after deducting 12 units already included in the AKRF Study)

NOTE: The units for the Perdue sites and Safeway are based on approved projects.

Our best estimate is that Easton can accommodate approximately 2,744 additional dwelling units within existing Town limits—without annexing new residential land (except for portions of Easton Point noted in Area 8).

This does not mean all 2,744 units will necessarily be built before new land is needed. Several factors will reduce the actual yield:

- Environmental constraints may limit development on some parcels, even if they appear suitable on paper.
- Unwilling landowners may choose not to develop in the near term.
- Market pressures could drive the need to open growth areas earlier, particularly if restricted supply inflates housing prices and worsens Easton's affordability challenges.

While the current Planning period does not require new annexation for residential growth, the Town must remain prepared to expand strategically when capacity within the boundary becomes constrained.

The 2,744-unit estimate represents a modest increase from the 2,492 units projected in the 2010 Plan. The gain is primarily due to:

- Adding Easton Point (Area 8) as a Priority Development Area.
- A more refined redevelopment analysis, incorporating specific high-potential properties.

This gain was partially offset by the removal of Area 3 (Hospital-owned Oxford Road site) following its purchase by Talbot County.

At the targeted growth rate of 1.75% annually, the existing capacity could accommodate roughly 18 years of growth—far exceeding the 516 new units added between 2010 and 2020. This suggests that the existing Town limits are sufficient for the next decade.

However, capacity estimates are theoretical. Real-world constraints—such as lower-than-maximum densities, redevelopment challenges, and political or economic barriers—mean the actual buildout may be lower. Housing affordability in Easton is already strained, and increasing supply remains a key strategy for addressing it.

Additionally, this analysis does not include potential policy-driven increases in capacity. For example, allowing multifamily development in General Commercial and Limited Commercial zones could yield up to 1,240 additional units on the 155 currently unimproved acres in those districts (at 8 du/ac), excluding further redevelopment potential on improved parcels.

Infill and Redevelopment as Growth Strategies

The 2010 Comprehensive Plan estimated that Easton could accommodate roughly 2,500 new housing units through infill development and redevelopment—growth that could occur without annexing additional land.

Pursuing this strategy offers multiple benefits:

- Preserves open space by reducing pressure to convert greenfields.
- Improves mobility for residents who do not or cannot drive, by placing more housing near services and transit.
- Lowers infrastructure costs since extending services within town is typically less expensive than building new systems for outlying areas.
- Expands housing variety, especially smaller, lower-maintenance units that appeal to smaller households and lower-income residents.
- Enhances neighborhood vitality by encouraging reinvestment and adding new amenities.
- Supports environmental goals through energy conservation and reduced land consumption.
- Aligns with Maryland Smart Growth policies, reinforcing sustainable development within existing town boundaries.

Compatibility Considerations for Infill

While infill and redevelopment bring clear benefits, they must be managed carefully. These projects are typically surrounded by existing neighborhoods and must be designed to complement them. The following principles should guide infill and redevelopment:

- Ensure compatible housing types with the surrounding neighborhood.
- Incorporate traffic calming measures where appropriate.
- Adopt design guidelines to promote visual and functional compatibility.
- Maintain a continuous pedestrian network for walkability.
- Support neighborhood-scale commercial uses, where appropriate, to provide walkable access to basic services.
- Address parking creatively, considering nearby on-street spaces, public lots, and shared-parking arrangements instead of relying solely on private lots.

Realistic Limits and Strategic Focus

During the public engagement process for this Plan update, many residents expressed strong support for infill and redevelopment as preferred growth strategies. While this is consistent with sustainability goals, the supply of vacant land within the built-up areas of Easton is limited. Achieving significant new growth solely through infill would require a level of intensity that could fundamentally alter the character of established neighborhoods.

A more realistic approach is to:

- Promote targeted infill and redevelopment in and around Easton's historic core.
- Support adaptive reuse of existing buildings where feasible.
- Encourage denser, walkable development in suitable infill areas outside the historic core but within the 2025 Town Boundary.

This strategy balances growth, preservation, and community character while maximizing Easton's capacity to grow without unnecessary outward expansion.

D. Future Growth Areas and Annexation

As noted previously, Easton's longstanding policy is that municipal services, including water and sewer, are extended only to properties within the corporate limits. This policy encourages annexation prior to development and reinforces a compact growth pattern. The Town does not support extension of services to development in the County. Growth is to occur at the edges of Easton in a contiguous fashion, coordinated with infrastructure capacity and consistent with community character

The area between the April 2004 Town boundary and the established Growth Boundary became Easton's designated Future Growth Area. The 2004 Plan divided this area into three sequential priority levels for annexation, ranging from near-term to long-range.

The 2010 Plan retained this three-tiered system:

- Priority 1 – Boundary Refinement Areas: Mostly already developed under Talbot County jurisdiction, suitable for annexation to correct boundary irregularities
- Priority 2 – Intermediate Growth Areas and
- Priority 3 – Long-Range Growth Areas: Not expected to be needed for development during that planning period

Much of the Boundary Refinement Area was already built out under County zoning and septic system regulations. Annexation of these areas has generally been driven by the desire for Town water or sewer service, with limited potential for new development except for redevelopment or moderate intensification. Although the 2010 Plan map showed about 1,200 acres in this category, much of it was not actually available for new growth.

Shift in Approach for 2026

In place of the tiered priority framework, this Plan adopts Annexation Policies that evaluate proposals based on merit rather than preset classifications. This approach allows for more flexible, needs-based decision-making.

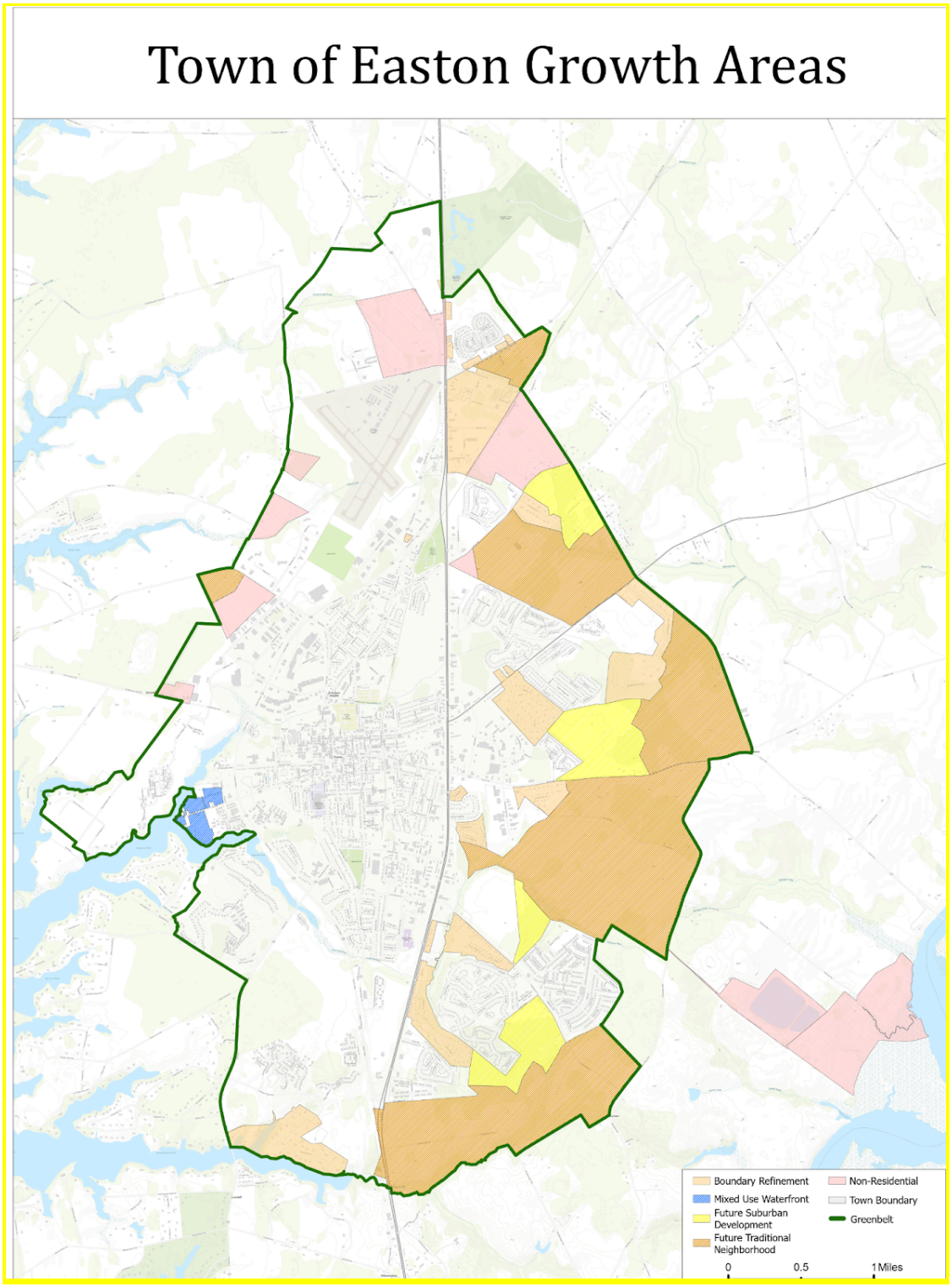
While Annexation is not viewed as necessary during the Planning Period, those Annexation proposals that are submitted will be assessed on whether they:

- Fill a geographic or infrastructure gap in the Town boundary.
- Can be efficiently served with water, sewer, and other public services.

- Address identified needs for land use, housing, or public facilities as outlined in this Plan.
- Align with the character, scale, and infrastructure pattern of adjacent neighborhoods.
- Provide benefits that outweigh potential negative impacts (e.g., traffic, demand on services, etc.)

This policy-driven approach maintains growth management objectives while allowing the Town to respond to changing conditions and emerging opportunities.

Map 8: Growth Areas



As mentioned in the Land Use Element, this Plan proposes one adjustment to the Growth Boundary, to bring the Town's Wastewater Treatment Plan within the Growth Boundary, rather than in the

Greenbelt (or beyond). Such an action would facilitate an Annexation in the future, bringing a Town-owned facility within Town limits. This has advantages from an administration standpoint. It also potentially opens up additional avenues for State funding in the future, to the extent that such finding is restricted to being spent within Priority Funding Areas.

E. Smart Growth and Land Preservation

Easton's growth policies are designed to complement Talbot County's efforts to preserve agricultural land, protect water resources, and guide growth to appropriate locations. The Town and County will continue to collaborate on shared planning tools, greenbelt preservation strategies, and infrastructure coordination to prevent sprawl and leapfrog development.

Growth must align with infrastructure capacity and public investment planning. The Town will use annexation agreements to secure developer-funded infrastructure where needed, and will coordinate with Easton Utilities, the MDE, and other agencies to ensure adequate facilities for new development. Future annexations must demonstrate readiness and fiscal viability.

With the adoption of the Urban Growth Boundary in the 2004 Plan—reaffirmed in the 2010 Plan—the question of how much land is available for development is no longer open-ended. Regardless of market demand, the Town now has a finite, fixed supply of land for future growth.

However, because this Plan looks forward over a 30-year horizon, it is important to assess whether that supply will be exhausted within the planning period or whether growth areas will remain available at the end of that timeframe. To do so, we apply a process similar to the analysis used to estimate development potential within the current Town boundaries, using the same assumptions and methodology to project build-out conditions in the designated Growth Areas.

To do so, an exercise similar to that performed to assess the development potential of land within the existing Town boundary will be conducted as follows:

Total acreage of Future Growth Area = 3,880 acres

Less acreage already developed and/or non-residential – 1,300

= 2,580 acres x 3.5 du/ac x 0.75 (underbuild factor) = 6,773 du's

This exercise indicates that the Growth Area has the potential to accommodate 6,773 new residential units. This information can be combined with other calculations already made to give us more useful information, such as:

A. Residential Build-out Potential of Existing Town = 2,744 units

B. Additional Residential Unit Potential in Growth Area = 6,773 units

C. Existing Units in Growth Area = 727 units

D. Potential Residential Capacity of Growth Area (B + C) = 7,500 units

E. Total Potential New Units in Easton (A + B) = 9,517 units

F. Existing Units in Easton = 7,350 units

G. Total Residential Build-out (E + F + C) = 17,594 units

H. Estimated Population at Build-out (17,594 x 2.19) = 38,531 persons

Without the confinement of the Growth Boundary, if we grow even at the maximum targeted 1.75% average annual compound rate, in 2070, Easton would, all other things being equal, have reached approximately the 17,594 dwelling units representing our residential build-out capacity. At the 1.12% we have grown at on an annual basis for the past 60 years, it will take approximately 72 years to reach this built-out state. For the purposes of the statutory requirement of projecting a ten-year build-out capacity, Easton certainly has no issues in this regard.

F. Public Services and Infrastructure Needs

This section was first introduced in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan to address the projected impacts of growth on a broad range of public services and infrastructure. In earlier Plans, many of these topics were covered under the Community Facilities and Services element, while others—typically managed at the County level—were not addressed at all. Beginning with the 2010 update, the Town incorporated these areas into its planning framework, evaluating how anticipated growth will affect key services. This Plan continues that approach, updating each subsection with current data, trends, and policy considerations.

Public Schools

Public schools in Talbot County are funded and administered by the County government. The Town of Easton plays two key roles in this system:

- Population Source – As the County's major population center, Easton generates a substantial share of the student population.
- Facility Host – Three of the County's public schools, plus the Board of Education's main offices, are located within the Town.

As described in Section 7.E of this Plan, although the Town does not operate schools, it works closely with the County to share updated demographic data for use in preparing the Annual Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP).

Capacity Outlook:

The EFMP projects that the County school system can accommodate anticipated growth in Easton over the next decade, though capacity will be tight at the middle and high school levels. The newly constructed elementary school will also require either a physical addition or redistricting to meet demand. Unexpected surges in population could create additional strain, depending on the nature of residential growth.

Development Mix:

Most residential projects in the development pipeline are either high-end or age-restricted communities:

- Age-restricted housing generates little to no public school enrollment.
- High-end housing may have children, but many attend private schools.

As of 2022, 17.1% of Talbot County's K–12 students (about 932 students) are enrolled in private schools. This significantly reduces public school utilization; however, an economic downturn could shift many of these students into the public system, increasing demand.

Historic Enrollment Trends:

Between 2000 and 2020, Easton's population grew from 11,708 to 17,101—a gain of 5,393 people—while public school enrollment increased by only 180 students (from 2,892 to 3,072). Based on this ratio, the projected population growth from build-out within the 2023 Town boundaries (an additional 6,752 people) would yield roughly 225 new students in public schools.

Demographic Factors:

One factor that could alter this pattern is the changing composition of the Town's population. The EFMP notes a growing Hispanic student population, paralleling Easton's broader demographic

shift—from 3.5% Hispanic in 2000 to 14.4% in 2020—which may influence future enrollment patterns.

Libraries

The state of library service in Talbot County is described in Section 7.F of this Plan. In terms of future needs, the American Planning Association suggests a ratio of 0.6 to 0.65 square feet of library space per capita. According to the MD Department of Assessment and Taxation, the TCFL is 28,174 square feet in size. This would satisfy the needs of a population of approximately 45,000. That is well in excess of even the ultimate build-out population for Easton, and while the library serves residents beyond Easton, they also have branch facilities beyond Easton. There clearly are no growth-related implications for library services during this Planning Period.

Public Safety

As described in Section 7.H, public safety in Easton encompasses police, fire protection, and emergency medical services. This subsection focuses on service adequacy, anticipated needs, and facility requirements.

Police Services

The 1997 Comprehensive Plan referenced the International City Managers Association (ICMA) standard of 1.75 police personnel per 1,000 residents. The 2004 Plan update the Town used the International Center for Prevention of Crime benchmark—3.36 officers per 1,000 residents—reflecting the U.S. national average.

With 48 sworn officers serving a population of approximately 17,101 (2020), Easton falls between the two referenced guidelines. The ICPC suggests we need 57 officers, while the ICMA pegs the number at 30. Local conditions justify staffing at the higher end of the range:

- Easton functions as a regional hub for employment, commerce, and entertainment, serving a population well beyond Town residents.
- Residents value strong community policing.
- Seasonal traffic between Ocean City and the Baltimore–Washington area, along with modest local tourism, creates higher service demands.

Given current trends, existing staffing levels are considered adequate, and gradual increases proportional to growth should meet future needs.

Fire Protection

The Easton Volunteer Fire Department serves the Town and surrounding areas, funded jointly by the Town and County. In 2002, ambulance service transitioned to Talbot County, which now operates the countywide emergency medical system. Fire Code enforcement is the responsibility of the Maryland State Fire Marshal.

Growth in and around Easton prompted the construction of a new fire substation on Matthewstown Road, providing better access to US Route 50 and proximity to new development. Uncontrolled growth—either in pace or location—could require transitioning from an all-volunteer to a paid department, with both fiscal and community impacts, including likely tax increases.

Emergency Medical Services

Advanced Life Support (ALS) operates countywide with volunteer and paid staff, funded by the County, fundraising, and donations. While 24-hour service is available, ALS faces equipment funding challenges due to increasing call volumes.

G. Service Adequacy Considerations

Evaluating future public safety needs involves more than population forecasts. Key factors include:

- Traffic volumes: Higher traffic on US Route 50 increases accident rates and can slow emergency response.
- Development patterns: Traditional, well-connected street networks reduce response times and the need for additional substations, while suburban patterns with limited access points can strain resources.

Water and Sewerage Facilities

The adequacy of Easton's water and wastewater systems through 2040 is detailed in the Community Facilities and Services and Water Resources elements of this Plan. For the purposes of this Municipal Growth Element, the focus is on capacity and improvements required to serve future growth identified in this Plan.

Growth Projections and Service Demand

The Future Land Area Needed to Satisfy Demand analysis projects approximately:

- 6,800 new dwelling units in growth areas outside the Town limits (6,773 calculated)

- 3,100 new units within existing Town limits (3,083 calculated)
- 727 existing units outside the Town but within the Growth Area

Service capacity planning must account for both residential and non-residential demand, which varies greatly by use type. While residential water and wastewater usage is predictable, non-residential uses—especially industrial operations—can create disproportionate demand.

Wastewater

The Easton Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF), brought online in 2007, has a treatment capacity of 4.0 million gallons per day (MGD). As of December 31, 2023, average daily flow was 2.463 MGD.

- Projected Capacity Limit: At a 1.75% annual growth rate, the WWTF is projected to exceed capacity in 2054. Growth at a 1.0% annual rate adds approximately 20 years until capacity is reached.
- Expansion Capability: The WWTF site has sufficient space for capacity expansion, anticipated to be modest in scale.
- Hospital Impact: The planned regional hospital will add 0.101 MGD in Phase 1 and up to 0.2 MGD at full buildout—approximately 5% of current capacity. This could advance the need for expansion by two years (from 2051 to 2049).
- The Easton Utilities Tariff requires that all new connections to the system pay a water and wastewater capital charge. In addition to the capital charge, developers are required to construct certain sections of distribution and collection systems.

The Wastewater Master Plan (update in progress) confirms nutrient removal capacity is adequate to support planned 1.75% growth through 2045 and beyond. However, the following components will require upgrades once flows exceed 4.0 MGD:

- Headworks
- Flow Equalization
- Secondary Clarifiers
- UV Disinfection

- Post-Aeration

H. Water Supply

Easton is currently served by five production wells providing a total production capacity of 4.0 MGD (including redundancy for the largest well out of service). A new well received federal grant funding in 2026 and will be constructed by the US Army Corps of Engineers and turned over to Easton Utilities, it is anticipated that the well will be constructed in FY27.

- Current Use: Average daily flow is 1.90 MGD, with a maximum day demand of 3.36 MGD.
- Future Needs: The Water Master Plan projects the need for a new well in 2043 and a new 1.0 million-gallon storage tank in 2051 to serve the Growth Area.
- CIP Coordination: The Capital Improvement Plan is updated annually to prioritize and fund system upgrades.

Planning and Coordination

Both the Water Master Plan and Wastewater Master Plan are being updated to ensure Easton Utilities can meet service needs for the full Growth Area. Strategic capital improvements, coordinated with growth patterns, will ensure the Town can:

- Maintain service reliability
- Meet nutrient reduction requirements
- Serve new residential, commercial, and institutional development efficiently

Charts summarizing planned water and wastewater capital projects are included in Appendix 5.

Stormwater Management Systems

A full discussion of stormwater management policies, regulations, and watershed impacts is provided in the Water Resources Element of this Plan. As in many older communities, Easton's stormwater infrastructure reflects a wide range of standards, depending on the era in which different areas were developed. Earlier development often occurred before modern stormwater standards were in place, resulting in inconsistent performance across the Town.

Today, all development in Easton must comply with the Stormwater Management Ordinance, which regulates both the quantity and quality of runoff.

- Quantity Standard: Post-development runoff may not exceed pre-development levels.
- Quality Standard: Easton applies the 10% pollutant reduction standard from the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program to all land within Town limits, not just Critical Area properties.

The Town also encourages innovative, low-impact development practices. Bio-retention, rain gardens, and other green infrastructure are increasingly required in major projects, such as Lowe's and Waterside Village.

Challenges in Older Developed Areas

The greatest stormwater challenges occur in long-established neighborhoods built before current regulations. In these areas, the Town pursues retrofit projects to improve performance and water quality. These efforts are carried out through:

- Private Development Requirements – Requiring adjacent redevelopment projects to address existing stormwater issues.
- Town-Led Retrofits – Initiating capital projects to upgrade systems in older neighborhoods.
- Partnership Projects – Working with environmental organizations and Talbot County to secure grant funding for targeted improvements.

A recent example is the Tanyard Branch Retrofit Project, which includes construction of a sediment pond on the Town-owned RTC Park parcel. This project will:

- Improve water quality entering the Tred Avon River headwaters
- Reduce localized flooding in historically flood-prone neighborhoods

Future Capacity

Stormwater management is not expected to be a limiting factor for Easton's future growth, provided:

1. New development continues to meet State and local standards
2. Redevelopment incorporates modern stormwater techniques and is coordinated with adjacent new development

3. Strategic retrofits in older areas are implemented as funding becomes available

Through continued regulatory enforcement, proactive retrofitting, and intergovernmental collaboration, Easton can ensure stormwater systems support both water quality and quantity goals and planned growth.

I. Recreation

A full assessment of Easton's park system is provided in the Parks and Recreation Element of this Plan. In the Municipal Growth Element, the focus is on parkland needs generated by future growth—both within the existing Town boundaries and in the eventual build-out of the Growth Area.

Until 2022, the State of Maryland recommended parkland be provided at a ratio of 30 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, with half under municipal ownership. Based on this standard:

- Current (2020 Census) Population – 17,101 → 513 acres needed (257 acres Town-owned)
- Build-out of Existing Town Limits → 716 acres needed (358 acres Town-owned)
- Full Build-out Including Growth Area → 1,178 acres needed (589 acres Town-owned)

As of February 14, 2024, Easton contains an estimated 910.45 acres of parks and open space (plus Hyde Park, Elliott Road Apartments, and Vickers Park). This meets current needs and will remain sufficient to accommodate the build-out of existing Town boundaries without acquiring additional parkland.

In 2022, local jurisdictions (through the County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plans) were allowed to define their own criteria for determining if they are meeting their acquisition goals. The 2022 Talbot County LPPRP includes the following park equity analysis for the Town of Easton:

> *Easton is the County's largest municipal area with 44.2% of the population living within its boundaries. Based on the State equity layers of concentrations of children and older adults, and households with income levels below the poverty threshold, there is one area of Easton that is considered Medium High Need. Within this area, there are well distributed park locations which offer a variety of amenities and features.. Other areas of Medium to Medium-Low need also have access to parks within a ½ mile radius. Overall, Easton's network of parks provides equitable access to parks and open*

space for its residents ,particularly within the population centers where need is higher, there are few barriers to access. These parks provide access to sports fields, playgrounds,and a public swimming pool. Consideration should be given to other factors which could pose barriers including walkable routes to parks. The town is currently involved in developing a master plan of walking trails that will connect more areas of the town and increase access to parks and open spaces. Easton''s Rail to Trail also provides access between the population centers and the town's sports field complex located on the western edge of the town.

Future Needs for Growth Area Build-Out

The Town's subdivision regulations—requiring developers to provide 35% of site area as common open space and 1,200 square feet per dwelling unit for parks/playgrounds—are expected to meet the Town's Parks and Recreation needs for the Growth Area.

Considerations Beyond Acreage Standards

While Easton meets—and is projected to continue meeting—State parkland standards, certain factors may require additional planning and land dedication:

- Geographic Distribution: A regional-scale park may be desirable on the east side of Town to create equitable access.
- Specialized Facilities: Demand for organized sports fields exceeds what the per-capita standard assumes, as Easton serves as the County seat and a regional recreation hub.

Adjacent Recreational Assets

Easton also benefits from two large recreational sites just outside the Growth Boundary, which functionally serve Town residents:

- Seth State Demonstration Forest – 124.5 acres
- Hog Neck Golf Course – 275.9 acres

These assets, though not within Town limits, help meet broader recreational needs and relieve some future demand pressures.

J. Financing Mechanisms

Easton's current analysis shows that existing and planned infrastructure can accommodate the projected 2,500 new homes within current Town boundaries, as well as portions of the Future Growth Areas identified for potential annexation. All new development requires basic infrastructure, including:

- Water and sewer service
- Stormwater management
- Roads and transportation access
- Parks and playgrounds

Consistent with current practice, the Town should require developers to fund the infrastructure necessary to serve their projects. Additional long-term needs to support planned growth include:

- Water system upgrades
- Wastewater treatment capacity expansion
- Police staffing increases
- New or expanded parks and recreation facilities
- Public safety enhancements, including new equipment, personnel, and facilities

Leveraging External Funding

State and County financial assistance should be pursued to upgrade infrastructure in redevelopment areas. Programs such as Community Legacy can support street and streetscape improvements, while Neighborhood Conservation programs can help modernize infrastructure to facilitate reinvestment. Cooperative use of Program Open Space and the Maryland Municipal Parks Program can offset park acquisition costs beyond those secured through the development review process.

Annexation as a Tool

The annexation process—being a discretionary legislative action—provides an opportunity to secure land for parks, public facilities, and other community amenities through annexation agreements. This should remain a standard practice for strategically expanding community assets alongside growth.

Impact Fees

Both Talbot County and the Town of Easton have enacted Impact Fee Ordinances since adoption of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. Easton's fees fund parks and recreation, municipal facilities, transportation, police, and fire services needed for new development. Talbot County's fees apply countywide and support library, parks and recreation, public school, community college, general government, and transportation services. Maintaining these mechanisms ensures that the cost of growth is borne by new development rather than existing taxpayers.

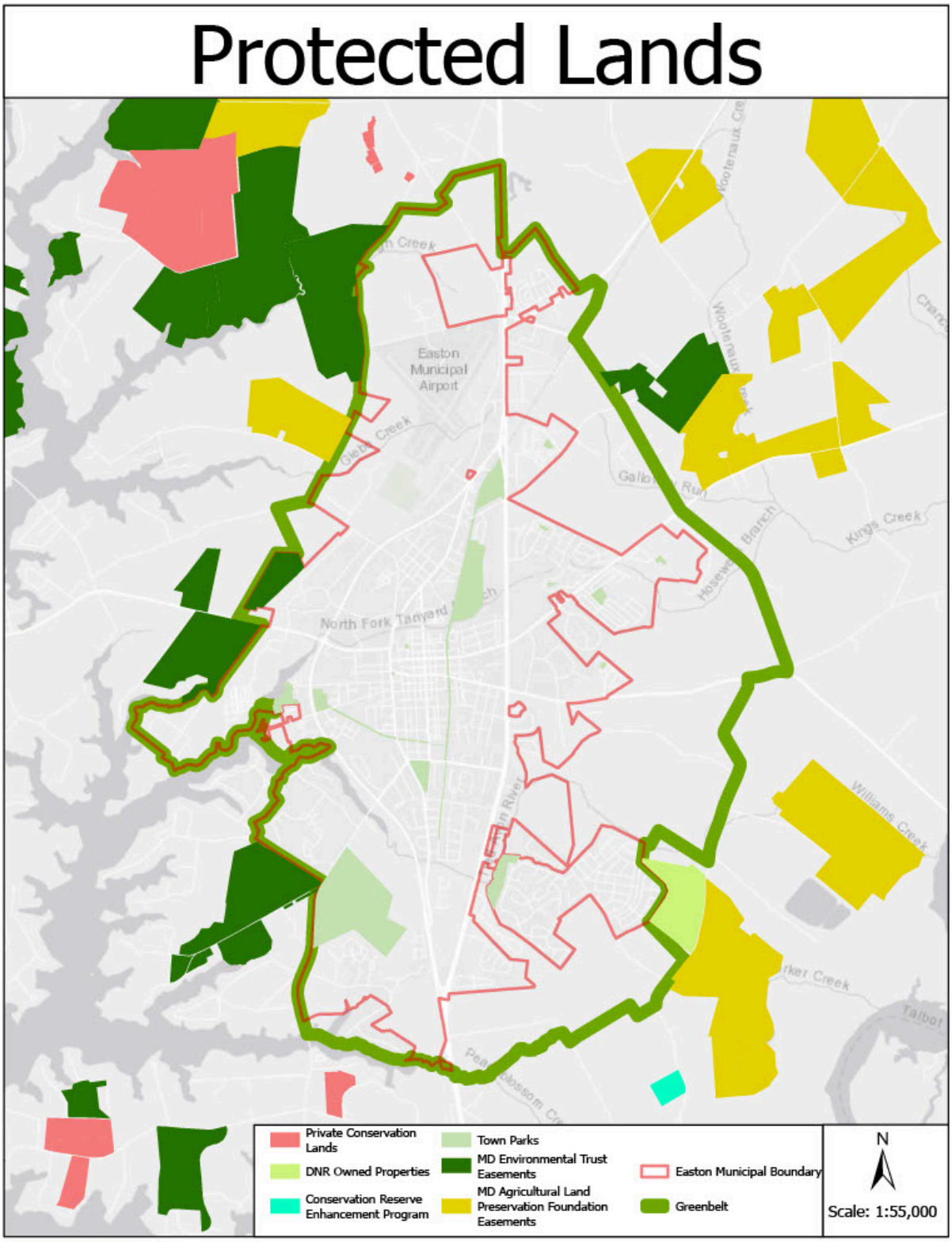
K. Rural Buffers and Transition Areas

Both the Town of Easton Comprehensive Plan and the Talbot County Comprehensive Plan designate a Growth Area surrounding the Town's municipal boundaries, with a greenbelt located immediately outside this area on the County side. The greenbelt works in concert with the Urban Growth Boundary to prevent outward sprawl into rural parts of the County.

An Urban Growth Boundary functions as the opposite of sprawl—establishing a clear, permanent edge between the built environment and the countryside. At full build-out, this boundary will create a distinct transition between "in Town" and "in the country," avoiding a blurred, low-density suburban fringe.

The Town partners with Talbot County and with agricultural and forest preservation organizations to maintain and protect the greenbelt. A significant portion of this land is already preserved, as shown on Map 8: Protected Lands in and Around Easton's Greenbelt.

Map 9: Protected Lands



L. Burden on Services for Areas Outside of Town but Under Town's Responsibility

Currently, Easton does not provide municipal services or infrastructure outside its corporate boundaries, with the exception of fire and rescue services. These services are delivered by a volunteer organization rather than the Town itself.

As noted earlier in this chapter, the form and pace of development directly influence the demands placed on fire and rescue resources. Uncontrolled, low-density growth greatly increases the likelihood that Easton would need to transition from a volunteer fire department to a paid service—bringing significant financial and staffing implications. In contrast, managed growth in a compact, traditional, urban-scale pattern helps preserve the viability of a volunteer-based system.

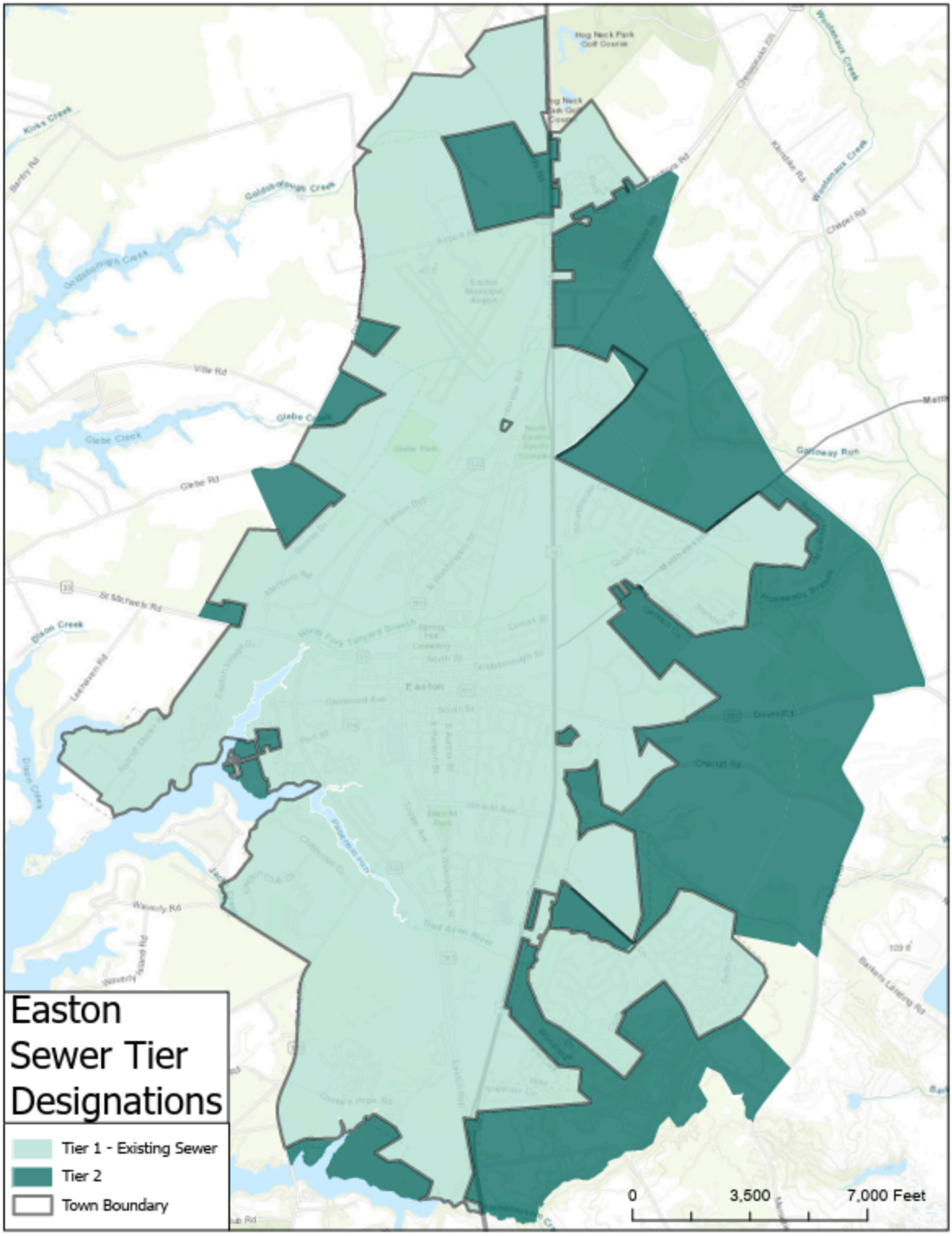
M. Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012

In 2012, the Maryland General Assembly enacted the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act, requiring all jurisdictions to map existing and planned sewer service areas and classify them into service tiers.

For Easton, this process was straightforward. The Town Council adopted its Tier Map in December 2012, designating three categories:

- Tier I – Existing sewer service.
- Tier II – Planned for sewer service within the Municipal or Growth Area.
- Tier IIA – Municipal or Growth Area, not yet included in the County Water and Sewer Master Plan.

This Tier Map was incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan in 2016 and is shown as Map 10 below:



Map 10: Easton Sewer Tier Designations

N. Protection of Sensitive Areas

The Town of Easton prioritizes identifying sensitive environmental areas early in the development review process so they can be avoided, protected, or enhanced. The same standards will apply to any future development within the Growth Area.

- Streams and Buffers – A 100-foot buffer is required from perennial streams (50 feet for intermittent streams) to protect water quality and habitat.
- 100-Year Floodplain – While Easton contains few floodplain areas, they are regulated under the Town's Floodplain Ordinance, which is consistent with both the National Model Floodplain Ordinance and the National Flood Insurance Program. Given the limited size of these areas, most sites allow development to be located outside the floodplain.
- Habitats of Threatened and Endangered Species – These areas are identified as early as possible in the review process. Site plans are adjusted as needed to provide maximum protection. For properties outside the current Town limits, identification should occur during the annexation stage.
- Steep Slopes – Rare in Easton. Most occur within stream buffers or the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area and are already protected.
- Agricultural and Forest Lands for Resource Protection or Conservation – While agriculture is not prohibited in Easton, growth will inevitably convert much of the agricultural land in the Growth Area to development. The Town does not actively preserve farmland, but does maintain a strong commitment to forest conservation.

Easton's Forest Conservation Program ensures valuable forest resources are protected, particularly those along streams or associated with non-tidal wetlands. Regulations now require such protected lands—whether forest, wetland, or buffer—not to be located on individual private lots. Instead, they must be placed in separate parcels held by the Town, a homeowners' association, or a conservation entity.

In developing the Growth Area, the Town will maintain these policies and look for opportunities to expand protected forest lands. A notable example is the Seth Demonstration Forest, part of Easton's Greenbelt. It borders Easton Club East and undeveloped land to the north, where a future large-scale park is envisioned. Forest Conservation areas in Easton Club East connect directly to

Seth Forest, creating an expanded and more cohesive forest area. Future enhancements could include additional forest preservation, tree planting, and amenities such as a woodland garden.

o. A Growth Management Strategy for Easton

The Implementation Chapter of this Plan summarizes the Growth Strategy for 2025-2035 and notes that it will largely be accomplished through, generally speaking, six major initiatives that are envisioned to advance the Vision of this Plan. This Municipal Growth Element seems an appropriate place to first summarize the overall factors shaping our evolving growth management strategy.

In contemplating a growth management strategy for Easton, it is necessary to first consider what the community feels is undesirable with the current state of growth and development. In doing so, it is apparent that there are many great aspects to the Town. What drives the desire for a growth management strategy is the recognition of trends contrary to these aspects. These include:

- Development that is too wasteful. Density in the older, historic parts of Easton is two to three times as dense as that found in many of the subdivisions of the last 40 to 50 years and yet, these older historic parts of Easton are consistently identified through public input as the best parts of Easton.
- Commercial development that is too ubiquitous. That is to say, it is virtually indistinguishable from that in any other community.
- Growth that is spreading outward too quickly. There is concern amongst many residents that Easton is spreading too far, too fast. Much of this problem relates to the first point above. That is, since density is so low in Easton, more and more land is necessary to accommodate even a constant rate of growth. To this point, public input in the early stages of this Plan's preparation indicated a clear and strong preference for accommodating the majority of growth during this Planning cycle in the form of Infill, Redevelopment, and Adaptive Reuse rather than on newly annexed Farmland and Forests.
- The construction of single-use subdivisions rather than neighborhoods. Again, this causes a need for more land and also necessitates increased automobile usage.

With this as the backdrop, the following Growth Management Strategy for Easton is proposed. It is identical to that which was first proposed in the 2010 Plan, with one notable addition and a modification.

Contain Sprawl with an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)

The first step in Easton's proposed Growth Management Strategy is designed to contain the seemingly endless outward expansion of the Town. This is accomplished through the establishment of an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), as first implemented in the 2004 Plan Update. An UGB is essentially "a line in the sand." On the Town side of this line, town-scale development will occur. On the other side of the line, development is much less dense. In Easton and Talbot County's case, the difference will be even more dramatic because both jurisdictions are proposing that the UGB be bounded on the County side of the line by a greenbelt. This would be a green ring surrounding the future ultimate Town limits consisting of forests, wetlands, and farms. This greenbelt would become a top priority area for land preservation programs and initiatives at the County level.

The UGB is depicted on the Growth Area and Future Land Use Maps. It has been sized to correspond to the size of a community that we ultimately feel comfortable with in terms of the ability of Easton to maintain its charm and quality of life. What this translates into in terms of future populations depends on the density of development within the UGB as well as how successful we are in terms of encouraging revitalization and infill redevelopment. What this population is or when we achieve it is less important than ensuring that when we get there, Easton is the kind of place that current and future residents will be proud to call home.

The location of the UGB was based upon consultation with the Talbot County Planning Commission, current development trends, anticipated trends due to goals and objectives suggested in this Plan and logical boundaries established by property lines, roadways and natural features. Thus while it is viewed as a permanent dividing line demarcating urban and rural development, the precise location of the UGB will be examined again in 10 years as part of the next Comprehensive Plan update, just as it has been in association with this Plan revision.

This 2010 Plan Update proposed no changes to the UGB and this Update does not as well. It has, in fact, remained unchanged since the adoption of the 2004 Plan with one exception. That was the expansion of the growth area (and thus the Growth Boundary and Green Belt) to accommodate the site of the proposed future Hospital and the Talbot Community Center.

While the establishment of an Urban Growth Boundary and Green Belt can achieve the objective of containing the outward expansion of the Town's urban footprint, the character of Easton of the future could still be a wide variety of things, depending on what is allowed or encouraged to happen on the in-Town side of the boundary. Filling in the growth area with single-family detached homes at the 2.0 du/ac or so density of many of the subdivisions built since 1980 would be an inefficient,

unsustainable use of this land. On the other hand, dramatically increasing density in the name of greater sustainability could also lead to a future Easton that would be out of the expressed desired character for our community.

Increase Density

Perhaps the most readily apparent difference between the Downtown area that so many people love and hope to see replicated and the newer "suburban" scale development that has occurred more recently, is the density of these two types of development. Accomplishing the first step in the Growth Management Strategy, establishing an Urban Growth Boundary, will accomplish little if within its borders development continues at a scope and scale such as we have seen for much of the last 30-50 years.

The most telling indictment of Easton's recent densities is the fact that in and of themselves, they would not even come close to qualifying as Priority Funding Areas under the terms of the State's guidelines. The minimum density necessary to qualify as such is 3.5 dwelling units per acre (net). Easton's more recent developments have a density of just less than 2 dwelling units per acre. This has a number of implications, including promoting the suburban style of development that is generally disparaged throughout this Plan, representing a wasteful use of land, and inefficiently serving the resulting homes with various utilities and public services.

In order to reverse this trend, a previous Plan proposed the creation of a new zoning district that would be assigned to all future residential areas. The Plan even suggested the development standards for this new district. As described in a previous chapter of this Plan, this new Traditional Neighborhood Zoning District was proposed but never adopted by the Town Council. Instead, changes were made to the existing R-10A and R-7A zoning districts as well as to the Subdivision Regulations, in an attempt to get some of the suggested changes added to our existing development standards. In an effort to increase the likelihood that future development patterns are more traditional and less suburban, the TND concept has been reintroduced in this Plan Update, as described in the Place Chapter.

Build Neighborhoods

This concept has been a recurring theme throughout this Comprehensive Plan. It was discussed extensively in the Place chapter and touched upon in several other places. The key is to ensure that this approach is the easiest one under which to develop and that the more recently commonplace

suburban type of development is the difficult method that would only be approved under truly unique and extenuating circumstances.

Assuming these changes in future development patterns can be achieved, only part of the problem will be addressed. Easton will still ultimately be left with a suburban-style middle surrounding a truly traditionally developed core with a neo-traditional style collection of neighborhoods on the periphery. Undoubtedly, the biggest challenge facing the Town is in creating ways to "retrofit" the suburban-style subdivisions to make them denser, more connected, and more mixed use. This will be difficult and ultimately may never be fully achieved, but some things can be done to improve the situation, and some were implemented following the original suggestion for such changes in the 2004 Plan. These include:

- Permit additions to be made to single-family houses to create granny flats or duplexes as an outright permitted use. This change was made to the Ordinance, but little development activity of this type has occurred.
- Effectively narrow streets by striping or using a textured surface to create a pedestrian/bicycle lane. This concept was illustrated in the Quality Community Survey and the results were striking. The image of the existing wide street (in this case, Corbin Parkway) received a -1.7 rating. The computer-simulated image with a textured bike lane on both sides of the street received a +2.5 rating. This has not been accomplished, although the concept has been discussed for possible implementation at another location. Furthermore, over the course of the past year, the Town's Engineering Department has begun striping some of our major in-Town roads to better define parking and traffic lanes and to "calm" traffic. Aurora Street and Brooklets Avenue serve as two examples where this has been accomplished.





Corbin Parkway Existing Situation *Corbin Parkway "calmed" with paving*

- Permit more neighborhood scale commercial uses by special exception in residential zoning districts. This has recently been accomplished for offices, which are allowed by Special Exception in the R-10A and R-7A Zoning Districts. A number of supplemental standards apply in order to assure that the neighborhood is not adversely impacted. Similar standards can and should be added for whatever other commercial uses might be permitted in the suburban-style subdivisions (since hopefully the newer developments will be mixed-use in nature to some degree). There has been no further progress on this recommendation beyond the limited office uses that are allowed as discussed above.
- Budget for and strategically purchase houses as they become available in order to demolish them and redevelop the sites for civic or park use. This has not been accomplished or even discussed since the last Plan. The current economic climate makes it difficult for the Town to consider such investments, even though more opportunities exist to purchase such properties at reasonable prices in such times. Going forward this is a concept that should at least be discussed for possible implementation.
- Allow for residential uses more generally in commercial zoning districts. When discussing the encouragement of mixed uses, the notion of allowing commercial uses in residential developments is often raised. However, it may be more feasible to add residential uses to commercial areas. Allowing multi-family housing in commercial zoning districts seems particularly appropriate given two recent apartment projects, on Brant Court and Elliott Road, in a shopping center/industrial park and along a commercial corridor, respectively.
- Explore options for the development of vacant land adjacent to "suburban" style subdivisions. In such scenarios requiring a TND style development may not always be

compatible with the adjacent suburban form of development. In such locations, something that can serve as a transition between these two types of development is appropriate. They may, for example, contain some of the lower unit count middle housing types but not, perhaps, the higher unit counts or at the overall density we anticipate in the TND form of development.

Improve Design

The steps outlined above will go a long way towards making Easton a better place to live. The establishment of a UGB will contain the outward spread of development and the establishment of a greenbelt in the County adjacent to this UGB will offer some permanence to this limit. Increasing the density within the Town will improve the appearance and function of neighborhoods as well as decrease development pressures on other areas in and around the Town, not yet as ready to be developed. Building neighborhoods rather than subdivisions or developments will dramatically improve the livability of Easton and will decrease traffic by offering more goods and services within walking distance of where people live. Still, with all these changes, the Town will not generate a "sense of place" feeling unless improvements are made to the way the built environment looks.

This issue was discussed extensively in the Place chapter of this Plan and recommended Design Principles for 2025 found in the Implementation Chapter is primarily intended to address this issue, so there is little need to repeat that material here.

The challenge of this Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that this effort to achieve improved design continues, in fact advances even more, rather than retreats. In order to accomplish this, the following recommendations are offered:

- Vigorously and consistently promote and require compliance with the "Design Principles for Easton" as described in the Community Character Element.
- Update/Create Design Guidelines for various types of development (including residential).
- Utilize Forest Conservation monies and off-site plantings to enhance sparsely landscaped areas along Route 50 and the Easton Parkway.
- Develop a Tree or Urban Forestry Plan outlining areas proposed for new tree plantings, identifying sites/locations suitable as receiving areas for off-site planting that developers cannot accommodate on their properties, and establishing priorities and tools for establishing the "Green Ring" around downtown called for in the AKRF Downtown Study.

- Accept (if not solicit) annexation requests from those businesses located on Route 50 north of the current Town Boundary and require conformance with the Town's architectural, signage, and landscaping requirements as a condition of annexation, in order to improve this key visual gateway into Town.

Plan in Accordance with the Rate of Growth

The issue of actively and purposely controlling Easton's rate of growth has been the subject of a great deal of debate for each of the last three Comprehensive Plan Updates, including this one. Historically the Planning Commission and Town Council have elected to allow the free market to determine Easton's growth rate. However, in the 2010 Plan the Planning Commission decided that indeed the dominant theme of that Plan to retain and/or return to an older way of doing things in Easton was endangered by a continued rate of growth in the range that we had experienced in the previous 20 years or so. The fear was that at 3% growth (or more) development pressures are so great that it becomes more and more difficult to achieve all the goals relative to the type and form of development we want to see. Furthermore, growth at such a rate makes some of our most challenging problems, such as improving traffic conditions, or lessening our impact on the environment, even more difficult to achieve. As a result, the Planning Commission and Town Council ultimately enacted a Plan which identified a preference for a 1% annual rate of growth.

They also recognized that by merely stating that we want to achieve growth closer to our long-term average of 1%, absolutely nothing changes to make that happen. The Commission and Town Council discussed this issue at great length and ultimately decided that, for that Planning period, the issue should most appropriately be addressed by adhering to an Annexation Policy that does not allow for an exceedingly high rate of growth. The Priority Growth Areas were viewed as suited to do this. The only potential shortcoming of this policy is the rate at which infill/build-out occurs. For this reason, the staff was directed to explore policies and tools which could achieve a specified targeted growth rate, in the event that growth gets out of control.

This Plan proposes revisions to this policy. First, after a decade where the average annual growth rate has dropped to 0.7%, the concept of aiming for a "targeted" or "preferred" growth rate for the Planning period has been dropped. Instead, the directive relative to our Growth Rate is not so much an attempt to limit (or increase) any particular rate, but rather to consistently monitor the rate/amount of growth we are experiencing so that whatever growth that does occur, is at a rate that does not overly tax the Town's infrastructure and services. Such a rate of growth is believed to be in accordance with the long-term compound rate of 1.12% and therefore an annual rate of 1% is

reaffirmed as the appropriate target for establishing the threshold at which the Town would be alerted to take a close look at the impacts of growth at that time and investigate, if deemed necessary, legal policy and regulatory remedies to safeguard against the effects of the externalities of an unsustainable rate of growth .

Encourage More Sustainable Development Patterns

The one addition to the Town's overall growth management policy presented in this update is to encourage more sustainable development patterns. As discussed in the Sustainability Chapter, this should be considered broadly to include environmental and economic sustainability. It should also be noted that a more sustainable Easton helps to achieve a more sustainable Talbot County. For example, Easton functioning as a growth center improves the chances of Talbot County successfully avoiding sprawling development throughout unincorporated parts of the County and enhances the likelihood of successful agricultural preservation.

Environmental sustainability can be advanced by such actions as protecting and enhancing natural features of proposed development sites and planning for development with sea-level rise in mind. Development with a mix of uses and which accommodates multiple modes of transportation can also enhance environmental sustainability by decreasing vehicle miles travelled, thereby improving air quality (in addition to the overall transportation system benefits).

Economic sustainability can be thought of in at least a couple of different ways. One is the cost to serve new development. By this measure, infill and redevelopment is clearly preferred over new "greenfield" development and new greenfield development that is more compact and more proximate to existing development is preferred over more sprawling and isolated projects.

Another way to consider economic sustainability is the net fiscal benefit to the Town. That is, what forms or types of development provide more to the Town in terms of new revenue, after factoring in the cost to provide services to those same developments?

P. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Support Compact, Contiguous Growth that Strengthens Easton's Form: Easton will grow in a manner that preserves its cohesive urban structure, avoiding scattered or inefficient development patterns.

Objectives:

- Use annexation to close gaps in the Town boundary and reinforce logical development edges.
- Require new development to extend existing street and utility networks in a coordinated manner.
- Prevent leapfrog development that bypasses undeveloped land adjacent to the Town.

Goal #2: Align Growth with Available and Planned Infrastructure: Growth will occur where infrastructure capacity is sufficient or can be provided efficiently, ensuring fiscal responsibility and service quality.

Objectives:

- Evaluate annexation and development proposals for their impact on water, sewer, stormwater, transportation, and public facilities.
- Coordinate annexations with the Town's Capital Improvement Plan and Easton Utilities' investment schedules.
- Require that necessary infrastructure be in place or fully funded prior to development approval.
- Monitor the rate of growth to minimize the likelihood of developing more rapidly than the Town's infrastructure can accommodate.

Goal #3: Leverage Annexation to Advance Public Benefit: Annexation will be used as a tool to secure public amenities and community enhancements alongside private development.

Objectives:

- Require annexation agreements to dedicate land for parks, greenways, trails, and public facilities.
- Negotiate for developer contributions toward infrastructure, open space, and civic uses.
- Ensure new development reflects the Town's design standards and community character goals.

Goal #4: Coordinate with Talbot County to Preserve Rural Lands and Guide Growth: Town and County will work together to maintain the Urban Growth Boundary, protect the surrounding greenbelt, and promote efficient land use.

Objectives:

- Continue joint planning efforts to manage the interface between Town and County land uses.
- Support agricultural and forest land preservation tools to maintain a distinct edge between urban and rural areas.
- Align growth management policies to prevent sprawl and ensure coordinated service delivery.

12 IMPLEMENTATION

"A plan without action is not a plan. It's a speech."

~ T. Boone Pickens

A. INTRODUCTION

The quote cited above all speaks to the necessity to link planning with action. The bulk of this Plan frames the context of the present day and outlines the Plan for the future. If the Plan is to avoid the fate of "sitting on the shelf and gathering dust", this final chapter on Implementation will likely be largely responsible.

This 200+ page document is the result of years of extensive public input and contains one Town-wide Vision, dozens of goals, hundreds of Objectives, and numerous explicit and implicit additional strategies and policy considerations. The sheer breadth and length of any comprehensive plan can make it difficult to execute; therefore, this Implementation Chapter focuses on six Major Initiatives to focus on over the next ten years, that touch on many of the goals of this plan and that if achieved, will place us firmly on track to realize the vision for Easton in 2035 and beyond.

The Implementation chapter turns the vision of the Comprehensive Plan into action. It identifies tools, responsible parties, and timeframes needed to move from policy to practice. Implementation depends on both long-term commitment and consistent coordination across public and private stakeholders. This chapter offers a framework to guide that work.

B. 2026 - 2036 GROWTH STRATEGY

Throughout the course of developing this Plan, the Planning Commission has grappled with the question of what the appropriate strategy should be for accommodating the expected growth during the life of this Plan. The rationale for targeting 1.75% growth rather than 1% has previously been discussed. In short, this was picked for a number of reasons including an expectation that there is some demand in our housing market that will naturally result in more growth, that 1.75% corresponds to a rate that the Town can comfortably handle in terms of administrative processing, and the Town's infrastructure is more than adequate to accommodate such growth. A 1% rate of growth, however, remains a key component of the Town's growth management strategy as it is

suggested that it corresponds to a rate of growth with which the possibility of significant negative impacts associated with that growth warrant special observation to safeguard against their coming to fruition.

Another aspect of growth is where it will occur. This Plan has described the options for future growth in terms of inward-looking options (i.e., Infill Development, Redevelopment, and Adaptive Reuse) or the more outward-focused options of annexing more of the Future Growth Area to accommodate future "Greenfield" development applications. The question of how much of our growth should come from these options during this Planning period was a focus of the public input phase, where an overwhelming preference for Infill/Redevelopment options was expressed. The Municipal Growth Element of this Plan estimates that 2,745 additional housing units can be constructed within the existing Town limits of Easton. These would all be considered of the inward-focused type of development.

Given this convergence of a preference for Infill/Redevelopment and the ability to accommodate the residential growth needs of this 10 year Planning cycle, the Planning Commission has determined that it is both possible and appropriate to not prioritize annexation of additional lands for residential development until at least the next Comprehensive Plan Update.

This statement is made with a number of caveats. One, it assumes that development in the pipeline proceeds through to project completion. Two, it assumes that there will be sufficient landowners willing to develop or redevelop their properties to accommodate the remaining projected growth for the next 10 years. Finally, it does not preclude new annexation. Boundary refinement annexations should be welcomed at any time, as should property identified in adopted Town Small Area Plans (e.g., Easton Point) and proposed for development consistent with those Plans. Non-residential annexations are also not expected to be necessary during the Planning Period, although Annexations proposed for the purpose of new job creation (i.e., Industrial projects) might reasonably be considered one of the "extraordinary circumstances" warranting an exception to this policy.

Lastly, it does not definitively preclude annexing new land for residential development. It does, however, suggest that doing so would be limited strictly to development proposals of extraordinary quality that have minimal adverse impacts to the environment or the Town's fiscal sustainability, and that adequately address the aforementioned annexation policies.

C. Achieving the Vision

This Comprehensive Plan for Easton lays out a future that accommodates significant growth, but does so in a manner with which we are comfortable. It acknowledges mistakes of the past, specifically in decreasing density beginning in about the 1950's and allowing a suburban-style of development to take root in Easton in the 1970's and 80's. It calls for a marked departure from these mistakes and a return to the traditional small-Town Eastern Shore style of development that shaped this community for 250 years.

Easton is not a suburban community like those found on Maryland's Western Shore or in numerous other metropolitan areas. We are a small but growing community in the heart of a rural, agricultural and maritime region. Ubiquitous power centers and strip shopping centers are not part of what we are about. Neither are cul-de-sacs, disconnected streets and subdivisions that might as well be gated because they are so isolated. Clearly Easton has some of these types of development and the people who live, work, or shop there are no less valued members of our community than anyone else. We simply have decided such developments are an inappropriate form of development going forward in Easton.

In order to achieve the Vision laid out in this Plan, much help will be required. Fortunately Easton is blessed with a well-educated and involved citizenry. The level of involvement of many of these citizens throughout the process of preparing this and previous Plans has been described elsewhere in this document. In order to make the Easton we have all said we want, these same people and more must continue with this same level of commitment, interest and caring for our community. The authors of this Plan will eventually become less active and ultimately pass away, but the Vision we have created and the policies set forth herein will share this community well beyond our years here. If we want our children and our grandchildren to care about Easton as much as we all do, we need to maintain the passion and commitment to this Plan and its Vision.

By the same token, the Town should be as clear as possible to those seeking to move to Easton in the future about the kinds of things we envision. Ultimately the final responsibility lies with those contemplating a move here, but the Town can help make our goals, policies, and plans more clearly known so that this decision about whether to locate to Easton is as informed as possible. We should strive to communicate in as many means and mediums as possible. Our website should be easily navigable and up-to-date and we should look into means of communicating that are just now exploding in other realms, such as blogging, podcasts, streaming audio (or video) of meetings, social

networking sites, etc., so that all existing and future residents have the greatest possible opportunity to participate in shaping our community in the future.

MAJOR INITIATIVES

In order to realize the Vision of this Plan for Easton in the year 2035 and beyond, a myriad of actions are necessary. However, significant progress towards that future can be made through a combination of actions, policies, etc., that can be combined and categorized into six major initiatives. These initiatives are:

1. **Zoning Reform**
2. **Complete Streets**
3. **Improve Design**
4. **Promote Infill and Redevelopment**
5. **Manage Growth by Annexation**
6. **Small Area Planning**

ZONING REFORM

Every Comprehensive Plan is (or should be) followed up with a comprehensive review and, as necessary, update to the jurisdiction's Zoning laws. Zoning reform takes this exercise to another level, by critically examining the Zoning Code to identify obstacles to the creation of the development patterns and building types that the community desires.

Such an effort is undertaken in recognition that while it is important to describe the type of built-environment the community aspires to, if the zoning laws do not allow for such patterns to actually be built, then it is very unlikely that anything will change before it is time to draft the next Comprehensive Plan.

Zoning Reform in Easton will likely involve looking, at a minimum, at the aspects of our Zoning Code:

- The creation of the Traditional Neighborhood Development zoning district that was described in the Place Chapter.

- The allowance of mixed-use buildings and developments in a wider variety of circumstances and via simpler review processes.
- The inclusion of standards to create a more walkable Easton.
- The refinement of public input opportunities associated with development projects so that it occurs earlier in the process, before significant engineering, design, and survey costs are incurred by the developer. Genuine neighborhood participation at this stage of the development process should give neighbors a greater chance to shape their community. For developers who are authentically engaged in such a process, it can also help them identify, early in the process, the scope and character of development that is appropriate for the neighborhood and can increase the level of public support for the project when it is officially submitted for review.
- Providing for a wide-spectrum of housing options, reflecting the variety of housing needs in Easton. In addition, this will also involve examining the development standards associated with each housing type to ensure that they accommodate the housing types with which they are associated.
- Introducing requirements to ensure that development is financially sustainable and will ultimately contribute more in taxes and revenue to the Town than it costs taxpayers to serve the project.

Complete Streets

Complete streets were defined and described in the Transportation Element. A description of Easton's Complete Street's early efforts was also included. If the effort is continued it will lead to, at least, the following changes:

- A transportation system that better accommodates all modes of transport, not primarily (or solely) the automobile.
- A better connected community, leading to easier social interaction, more travel options, and better emergency services response times.
- New (and retrofitted) roads that are designed appropriate to their context and purpose.
- Prioritizing safety over speed.
- Enhancing the appearance of neighborhoods thereby leading to increased property values.

- Improved public health as it becomes easier and safer to walk in neighborhoods.

IMPROVE DESIGN

A common and recurring theme throughout this Plan is the desire to improve various aspects of the built environment in Easton. This is so much the case that we created a chapter, Place, that largely addresses this issue. We also place a great deal of emphasis on the Design Principles for Easton section of that chapter. Design issues cover a vast spectrum, from site details such as signage and landscaping to Town-scale issues such as the character of neighborhoods that are allowed to be built in the future. Some of the issues and actions that improving design might involve include:

- Requiring developers to more genuinely address and adhere to the Design Principles for Easton.
- Updating Design Guidelines, especially for properties outside the Historic District.
- Examining design-related supplemental standards of the Zoning Code to ensure that they remain relevant to 2025 development practices and considering appropriate additions to the list of such requirements.
- Evaluating our Landscaping and Signage standards to ensure that they contribute to the design standards envisioned for new development in Easton.

2026 Design Principles for Easton

Development in Easton often exceeds by-right zoning, requiring Town staff, boards, commissions, and the Council to review proposals against the Comprehensive Plan. Though this open-ended approach to development review provides flexibility in evaluating an application, its breadth can obscure expectations for applicants and disempower approving bodies in their decision-making and lead to conflicting interpretations of the Plan.

To provide clarity, past Plans introduced Design Principles—a framework for applicants and reviewers. Previously located in the Community Character chapter, they now span the entire Plan and are included here in the Implementation chapter, reflecting their importance as an evaluation tool. They are not ranked by priority but organized for coherence.

Principle 1: Neighborhoods Are Places to Live, Not Just Sleep

In keeping with the objectives of the Plan pertaining to community character, fiscal sustainability, and parks, projects in Easton should provide an integrated mix of uses in a return to a pattern of Traditional Neighborhood Development. Characteristics include:

- Neighborhoods should reflect Traditional Neighborhood Development, where homes, destinations, and public spaces are interwoven.
- Provide non-residential uses at or near the neighborhood center.
- Scale these uses to meet community needs, including nearby areas lacking amenities.
- Design shops, cafés, or civic spaces as welcoming "third places" for the public, not private perks.
- Open spaces should be accessible, generous, and encourage active living.
- Avoid: highway strip centers, large retail with housing tucked behind, or isolated "leftover" open space without purpose.

Principle 2: Streets are for People, not just Automobiles

Many problems with contemporary development stem from automobile dependence, which produces sprawl, isolation, and fiscal strain. This principle advances the Plan's Transportation, Ecology, and Sustainability goals by emphasizing development patterns that serve people first, not cars. Projects should therefore follow these design standards:

- Streets should function as Complete Streets, safe for walkers and cyclists as well as drivers.
- Traffic calming should be built into design, slowing drivers naturally.
- Arterials should minimize driveways to protect traffic flow and safety.
- Parking should be secondary: placed behind buildings, reduced in scale, and balanced with bicycle parking.
- Subdivisions should include alleys for service access.
- Developments should be walkable and oriented toward existing pedestrian corridors.
- Build at densities that can eventually support transit.
- Avoid: disconnected sidewalks, front-dominant garages, parking lots lining the street, or arterial-width streets in neighborhoods.

Principle 3: Neighborhoods Should Connect

Neighborhoods should be linked to surrounding areas wherever possible. Strong connections create resilient traffic networks with multiple routes for daily travel and emergency access. They also expand opportunities for residents to reach jobs and retail, supporting Easton's economic

development goals and fostering a stronger sense of community across town. New developments should be evaluated with these considerations in mind:

- Provide multiple points of access for all modes.
- Use grid-like street patterns where conditions allow.
- Link to adjacent existing and future developments and continue the grid pattern.
- Connect open spaces into the broader green infrastructure system.

Principle 4: Neighborhoods Should Offer Diverse Housing

This principle supports the Plan's Housing objectives. Beyond the socioeconomic benefits of attainable housing, it seeks to create streetscapes that echo Easton's historic pattern of incremental, varied development. Projects should be evaluated on how well they integrate a mix of uses and provide housing in a wide range of forms, types, sizes, and price points within the same neighborhood. Evaluating whether a project meets this principle should consider:

- Affordable units should blend in design with their neighbors.
- Prominent facades should mix housing types, sizes, and styles.
- Provide unit types and prices not already met in nearby areas.
- Adaptive reuse of underused non-residential buildings for housing is encouraged.
- Avoid: monotonous typologies, segregation of unit types, projects offering only single-family and apartments, townhomes without variation, or price ranges excluding households below 100% of AMI.

Principle 5: Environment Should Shape Design

Consistent with Smart Growth principles, focusing development within Town limits reduces pressure on surrounding farmland, habitats, and sensitive environmental areas. Even so, Easton still has a responsibility to mitigate impacts inside its boundaries. Development should work with—rather than against—the environmental realities of each site. In line with the Plan's Ecology and Sustainability goals, proposals should be evaluated against the following criteria:

- Greenfield development must justify the conversion of valuable land.
- Prioritize brownfield redevelopment and adaptive reuse.
- Preserve and integrate topography, streams, and natural features into site design.
- Use existing vegetation and supplement with native species.
- Design lighting and buildings to reduce bird strikes.

- Require energy-efficient, durable building practices.
- Address flooding, heat, and other climate-related risks.
- Improve stormwater runoff quality.

Principle 6: Development Should Be Fiscally Sustainable

Land is a limited resource, and its conversion carries unavoidable environmental costs. Developments should therefore demonstrate long-term value to the community, measured against the expense of maintaining infrastructure and services. This principle reflects a Smart Growth approach to infrastructure planning and supports development patterns identified through Easton's Value Per Acre analysis as fiscally beneficial to the Town. In line with the Land Use, Community Facilities, and Sustainability elements of the Plan, applications should be evaluated using the following considerations:

- Projects must balance the cost of infrastructure and services with long-term community benefit.
- Require fiscal impact studies for major subdivisions and greenfield projects.
- Encourage infill and adaptive reuse.
- Size parking appropriately based on demands and redevelop underused lots.
- Avoid: sprawling low-density projects, leapfrog growth, unfunded infrastructure obligations, or excessive parking.

Principle 7: Easton Is a Unique Place

Easton's rich history and its incremental, individualized development pattern are worth protecting and should guide modern projects. The goal is not to replicate the historic district's aesthetic, but to honor Easton's identity by creating distinctive, memorable places that inspire pride and curiosity. Applicants should therefore consider:

- New development should honor Easton's legacy while adding something distinct and lasting.
- Create designs that are modern yet harmonious with surrounding character.
- Restore and adaptively reuse historic structures where possible.
- Preserve historic or unique site features.
- Design open spaces to be engaging and interactive.
- Use multiple builders in large projects to encourage variety.
- Employ repetition only when purposeful and expressive.
- Keep signage informative, not overwhelming.

- Avoid: template-based developments, strip retail, brand-driven architecture, cheap historic imitations, or redevelopment that displaces existing communities.

In short, developers should create places that reflect Easton's present moment—unique spaces the community will value and remember, just as we now recognize and treasure our historic downtown and neighborhoods.

Principle 8: Be a Good Neighbor

No property in Easton exists in isolation. Land use and development decisions should be made with respect for the people who live, work, and play nearby. Easton residents value collaborative placemaking, which—when used constructively—can produce stronger designs and more positive outcomes. Beyond process, sites should be developed with courtesy toward neighbors and awareness of potential impacts. In this spirit of community-oriented development, evaluators should expect:

- Development should contribute positively to its surroundings and foster community.
- Engage neighbors early, especially for large projects.
- Align projects with small area plans and charrette outcomes.
- Include improvements and amenities that benefit both project residents and the broader community.
- Use open space to buffer incompatible uses.
- Minimize noise, light, and other negative impacts.
- This principle is not a tool for blocking density or innovation but a reminder of the value of collaboration and mutual respect.

This principle is not meant to block higher densities or innovative designs. Instead, it should foster frank dialogue among community members about their goals and needs.

PROMOTE INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT

The public clearly stated, and the Planning Commission strongly agrees, that the bulk of new growth over the upcoming planning period can and should be accommodated through infill and redevelopment. Specific actions to advance this initiative may include:

- Reimagining the Planned Redevelopment Overlay District to ensure that it both enables the type of redevelopment desired and does so in a manner that is minimally disruptive to surrounding neighborhoods.

- Encourages Brownfield redevelopment both through the land use/zoning aspect of ensuring that the desirable reuse is permitted (or at least possible) and through the financial feasibility aspect by working with developers to identify potential funding sources.
- Working with owners of outdated strip shopping centers to facilitate their redevelopment consistent with the Vision of this Plan.
- Adopting a Small Area Plan for the site of the current hospital and working with the eventual new property-owner to facilitate the ideas/desires expressed in that Plan.

MANAGE GROWTH BY ANNEXATION

The flip side to encouraging the bulk of growth over the next ten years to occur in the form of infill and redevelopment is the discouragement of growth through annexation. As indicated throughout this Plan, we believe that it is entirely possible to accommodate all anticipated residential growth for the next ten years without having to annex new lands into the Town. We further believe that this should be the Town's policy for the next ten years. However, there are a number of mitigating factors that suggest it would be unwise to absolutely preclude the possibility of annexations. Such factors include:

- Owners of logical infill or redevelopment sites may, for whatever reason, not be interested in the development/redevelopment of their properties.
- It may be desirable to annex land within the growth area in order to also annex a longstanding County subdivision (e.g., Crofton, Old Beechwood, Old Stoney Ridge) and not violate State Annexation law regarding contiguity or the creation of enclaves of non-municipal land surrounded by municipal land.
- Some limited annexation is actually called for in official Town Small Area Plans (portions of Easton Point in the Port Street Small Area Plan, for example).

Given that Annexation is a legislatively discretionary action of the Town Council, this can be accomplished through the development of, and adherence to, a set of appropriate annexation policies. To that end, the following policies are suggested as appropriate for Easton during this planning period, in the event that the Town Council is of a mind to entertain a potential Annexation request:

- Proximity to Town Boundaries should be a significant consideration. Any area annexed must be adjacent to the Town, preferably for a considerable distance and on more than one side. The higher the degree of contiguity, the higher the preference should be given to the parcel.
- Land on which a future amenity or public facility is identified (in this Plan, a Small Area Plan, or functional Plan such as EUCs Water & Wastewater Master Plan or the soon-to-be completed Town Complete Streets Plan) should be given favorable consideration. This is especially true when the need for such amenity or facility is significant and/or imminent.
- Developers/Landowners who propose to provide land for amenities or public facilities which are specified in the Plan or in other Town Plans as being needed, but have no specific location attached thereto, should be afforded favorable consideration.
- Land that facilitates the annexation of long-standing enclave Boundary Refinement Area, if applicable, should be given strong preference over other areas.
- Annexations which include an affordable housing component should take precedence over those that do not.
- Proposed annexations should include aspects that provide some form of benefit to the Town. This could take the form of job creation, a demonstrable positive fiscal impact or the provision of the regional-scale park on the east side of Town mentioned elsewhere in this Plan.
- Annexations must propose to minimize harm to sensitive environmental features, which should be protected and enhanced rather than ignored or eliminated.
- Projects which propose to develop pursuant to the Traditional Neighborhood style of development or serve as a transition between existing suburban development and future Traditional development should be prioritized over additional strictly suburban development.
- Projects that “align” with Town infrastructure with regards to timing, location, etc., should be given priority over more isolated and remote projects.
- Projects that propose to provide Capital Improvements for a future multi-modal transportation system should take precedence over those that do not.

- Annexation of Town-owned properties, or requests initiated by the Town, should be considered favorably, provided they are consistent with the goals and objectives of this Plan.

Annexations should be the exception rather than the rule during the 2025-2035 plan cycle and no exception should be made unless the proposed annexation is consistent with these policies and clearly demonstrates that if approved, the Annexation will have a net positive fiscal impact on the Town.. Furthermore, satisfying some or even all of the criteria above does not guarantee that the request will be approved as Annexation remains a discretionary power of the Town Council nor does it ensure a favorable recommendation from the Planning Commission.

SMALL AREA PLANNING

Small Area Plans have been utilized in Easton for decades. These Plans function as an extension of the Comprehensive Plan. Because they focus on a smaller geographic area, more specific recommendations can often be made than in the overall Comprehensive Plan, sometimes right down to the parcel-specific level. Currently we have three active Small Area Plans. The most recent is the Port Street/Easton Point Plan. Although little development activity has occurred since that Plan was adopted, it was not so long ago as to be considered irrelevant. Furthermore, the Vision it advances is still considered appropriate and desirable for the area.

The other two adopted Small Area Plans are those for the Downtown or Town Center and the East End. These are both somewhat more dated. The East End Plan is in the process of being significantly revised. Given the passage of time and the changes that have occurred in Downtown Easton since that Plan was adopted, it seems appropriate to begin planning and budgeting for a replacement of it during this upcoming planning period.

Given the growth dynamics in the Town and our Future Growth Areas, a number of candidates for Small Area Plans come to mind for future planning. These include:

- The site of the current hospital and its immediate surroundings.
- The general area of the new hospital.
- Idlewild and Dutchman's corridors (where so many medical offices are located and which may potentially relocate closer to the new hospital).
- Marlboro Avenue Corridor (potential redevelopment).
- Route 50 Corridor (redevelopment, design and access improvements).

- Future Growth Areas (a closer examination of discrete subsection of the growth area to consider more detailed land use suggestions).

D. Goals and Objectives

GOAL #1: Ensure that future development, proposed development related programs and redevelopment projects are implemented consistent with the spirit of this Comprehensive Plan generally, and are evaluated for consistency with the 2026 Design Principles for Easton specifically.

OBJECTIVES:

- Provide an analysis of the implementation progress of the Comprehensive Plan's Goals and Objectives each July as part of the Annual Report of the Easton Planning & Zoning Commission.
- Audit the Town's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to insure that future growth of the Town occurs in a system of neighborhoods rather than a collection of single-use, suburban style subdivisions, and that sufficient tools exist to facilitate Infill, Redevelopment and Adaptive Reuse of buildings.
- Develop, evaluate and refine Design Standards for all types of development in all parts of Town.
- Work with various local groups in order to prepare Small Area Plans similar to that done by the East Side neighborhood several years ago. Where the institutional capacity exists, these neighborhood plans can be largely prepared by the neighborhood groups themselves.

GOAL #2: Realize the benefits of revitalization through focusing on Smart Growth in order to make our older neighborhoods more affordable, more attractive, more varied, walkable, safer and healthier, utilizing existing infrastructure.

OBJECTIVES:

- Target public investment in infrastructure and infrastructure upgrades to already developed areas since opportunities to acquire such infrastructure from new development are rare.
- Support efforts to revitalize neighborhoods through infrastructure grants, housing rehabilitation loans and programs, environmental clean-ups, etc.

- Establish policy that builds on the strengths of existing housing stock, thus preserving Easton's history and sense of place

GOAL #3: Research and, where appropriate, enact policies and measures that enable implementation of the Vision and spirit of this Comprehensive Plan.

OBJECTIVES:

- Research the legality of various methods of limiting growth to achieve an annual growth rate of no more than 1% per year.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of existing rules and regulations in achieving the design goals and principles of this Plan.

GOAL #4: Coordinate planning efforts for areas and issues of mutual concern to the Town of Easton and Talbot County.

OBJECTIVES:

- Work with County Planning officials to ensure that areas designated for future growth of the Town are treated similarly by the Plans of both jurisdictions.
- Continue to work cooperatively with Talbot County to determine the feasibility and practicality of an Inter-jurisdictional Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program, should the Talbot County TDR ever be revived.

GOAL#5: Facilitate an informed and involved citizenry.

OBJECTIVES:

- Investigate methods to ensure that significant future projects (e.g. roads, community facilities, parks, etc.) are known by prospective homebuyers prior to the finalization of the sales process.
- Explore more and innovative ways to inform and involve the general public in planning issues.
- Create a Citizen's Planners Academy to inform and educate interested members of the public about planning and planning issues and provide a pathway to increased civic involvement through membership on various

13 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH DYNAMICS

Historical Regional Population Growth

	Easton	Talbot County	Eastern Shore
1960 Population	6,337	21,578	243,570
Easton %	100	29.4	2.6
1970 Population	6,809	23,682	258,329
Easton %	100	28.8	2.6
1980 Population	7,536	25,604	296,620
Easton %	100	29.4	2.5
1990 Population	9,372	30,549	343,769
Easton %	100	30.7	2.7
2000 Population	11,708	33,812	395,903
Easton %	100	34.6	3.0
2010 Population	15,945	37,782	449,226
Easton %	100	42.2	3.5
2020 Population	17,101	37,526	456,815
Easton %	100	45.6	3.7

Compound Annual Growth Rates, 1960-2020:	2000-2020
Easton: 1.67%	1.91%
Talbot County: 0.93%	0.52%
Eastern Shore: 1.05%	0.72%

Absolute Growth 1960-2020:	2000-2020
Easton: 10,764 (170%)	5,393 (46.1%)
Talbot County: 15,948 (73.9%)	3,714 (11.0%)
Eastern Shore: 213,245 (87.5%)	60,912 (15.4%)

Population Growth, Easton and Selected Communities (2000-2024)

	2020 Census	2022 ACS	2010 Census	% Change 2010-2020	% Change 2020-2022
EASTON	17,101	17,342	15,945	7.2%	1.4%
Centreville	4,724	4,700	4,285	10.3%	-0.5%
Cambridge	13,096	13,058	12,326	6.2%	-0.3%
Hurlock	2,070	2,284	2,092	-1.1%	10.3%
Denton	4,848	4,836	4,418	9.7%	-0.2%
St. Michaels	1,049	1,523	1,029	1.9%	45.2%

*- 2020 figure is from the Decennial US Census and is as of 8/1/2020

2022 figure is an estimate from the American Communities Survey (a US Census product) and is as of 7/1/22)

2010 figure is from the Decennial Census and is as of 4/1/2010

TOWN OF EASTON HISTORIC POPULATION

YEAR	POPULATION
1800	1,000
1810	NA
1820	NA
1830	NA
1840	1,358
1850	1,413
1860	NA
1870	NA
1880	3,005
1890	NA
1900	3,074
1910	3,100
1920	3,400
1930	4,092
1940	4,536
1950	4,836
1960	6,337
1970	6,809
1980	7,536
1990	9,372
2000	11,708
2010	15,945
2020	17,101

HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISTRIBUTION, 2020 (in 2021 inflation-adjusted dollars)		
Income Category	Number of Households	Percent
Less than $10,000	289	4.1%
$10,000 - $14,999	248	3.5%
$15,000 - $19,999	385	5.59%
$20,000 - $24,999	300	4.3%
$25,000 - $29,999	327	4.7%
$30,000 - $34,999	208	3.0%
$35,000 - $39,999	188	2.7%
$40,000 - $44,999	221	3.2%
$45,000 – $49,999	232	3.3%
$50,000 - $59,999	527	7.5%
$60,000 - $74,999	656	9.4%
$75,000 - $99,999	1,051	15%
$100,000 - $124,999	842	12%
$125,000 - $149,999	374	5.3%
$150,000 - $199,999	518	7.4%
$200,000 or more	648	9.2%
Median Household Income = $72,771	Per Capita Income = $40,265	Persons in Poverty = 9.8%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, American Communities Survey

Table 5 Median Household Income			
	Easton	Talbot County	Maryland
1999	$36,464	$43,532	$52,868
2007	$46,378	$56,057	$68,080
2022	$72,771	$79,349	$91,431

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, American Communities Survey

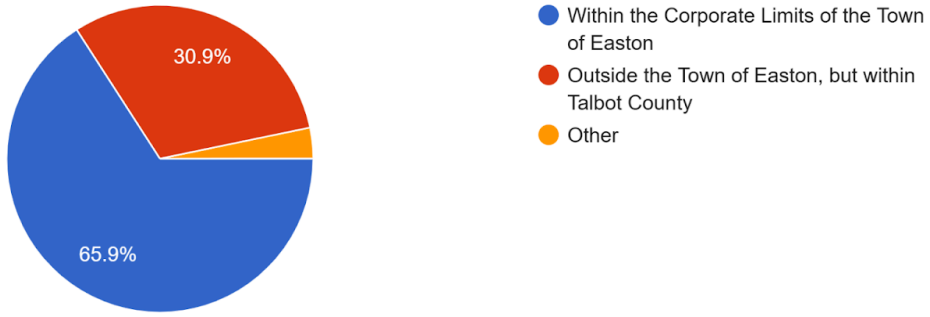
APPENDIX 2 - PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

Survey #1 - Big Picture Issues

1 Where do you live?

Please select one*

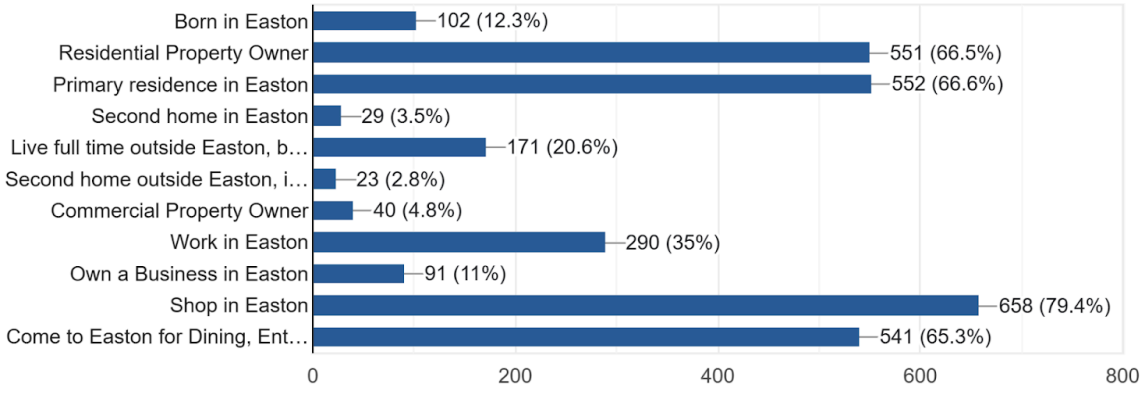
829 responses



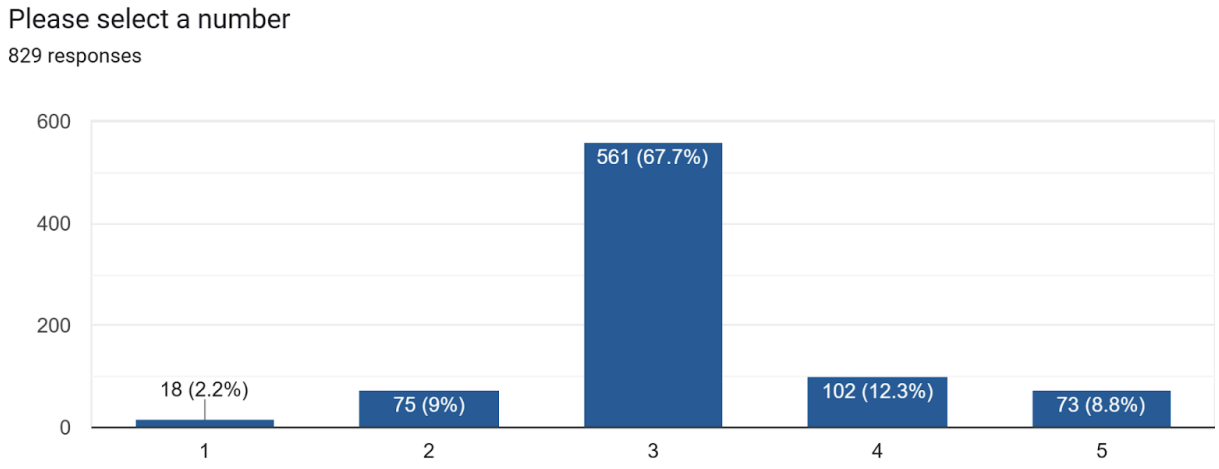
2. Interest in Easton?

Please select all that apply

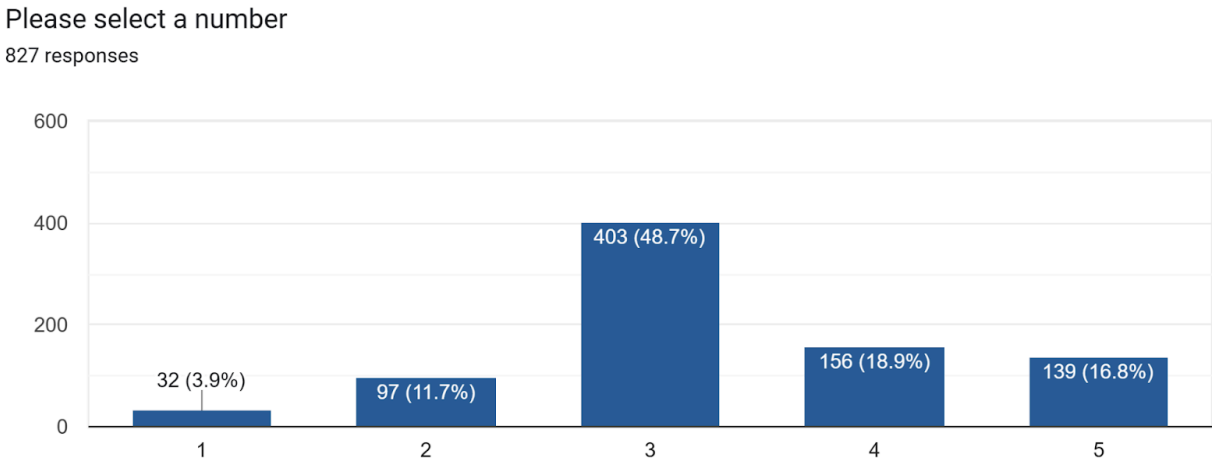
829 responses



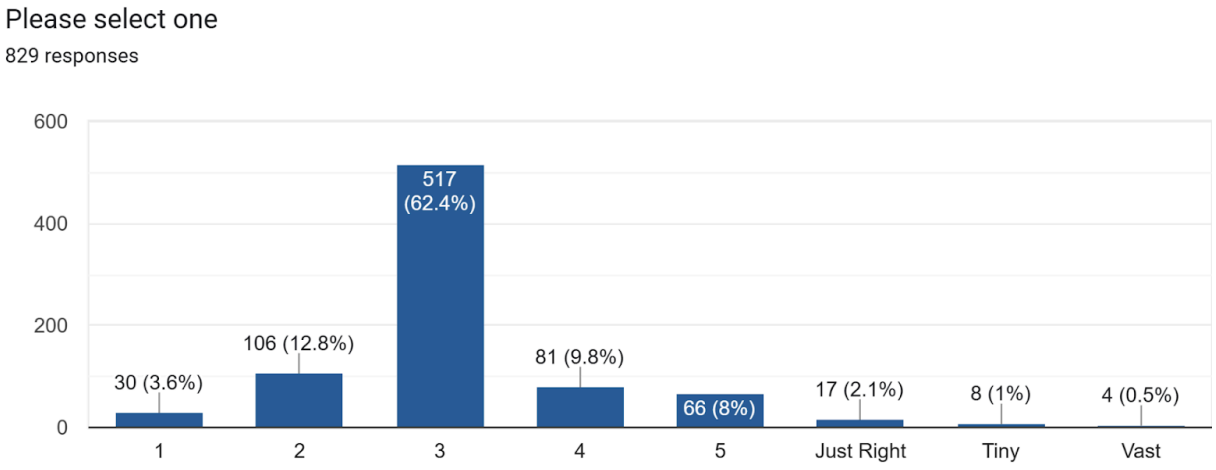
3. Easton's population is (From 1 = Too Small to 5 = Too Large)



4. Easton's Rate of Growth is (From 1 = Too slowly to 5 = Too Rapidly)



5. The geographic size of the Town is (1 = Too small to 5 = Too Large)



6. Percentage of Future Growth that should be Infill/redevelopment vs. new Greenfield Development

Top 5 Responses:

80/20 Infill (119)

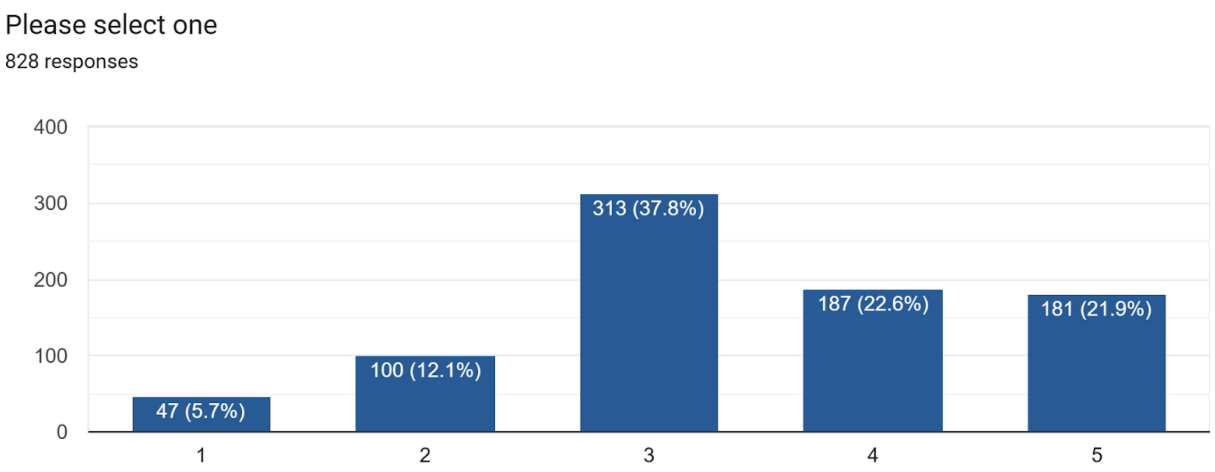
50/50 (83)

100% Infill (67)

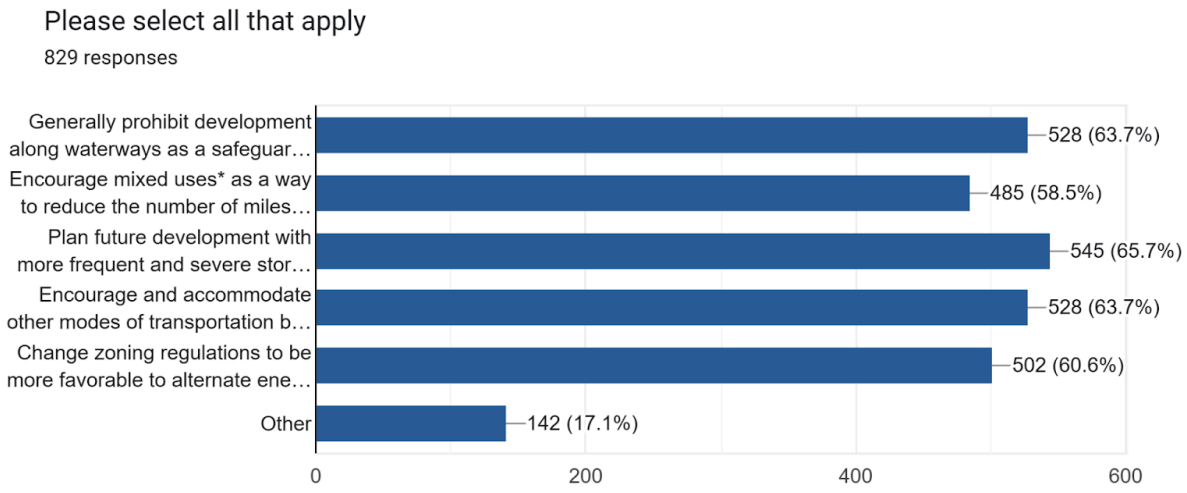
75/25 (52)

90/10 and 70/30 (42 each)

7. Amount of Regional-Scale Retail Shopping in Easton (* - In Easton, this has generally come to refer to shopping centers and/or single retail stores in excess of 65,000 square feet of floor space (roughly the size of our Giant or BJ's, for example) is (1 = Too little to 5 = Too Much):



8. Which of the following should be policies of the Town in light of Climate Change Impacts:



9. Your one "audacious" idea to improve Easton:

Some of the most commonly recurring responses included:

- **Boathouse**
- **Public Waterfront**
- **Affordable Housing**
- **Develop Port Street/Waterfront**
- **Keep Easton small/unique/historic**
- **More Downtown parking/parking garage**
- **Control/Limit Growth**
- **Redevelop/Reuse old/vacant buildings**

10. One Thing missing in Easton that you would like to see added in next 10 years:

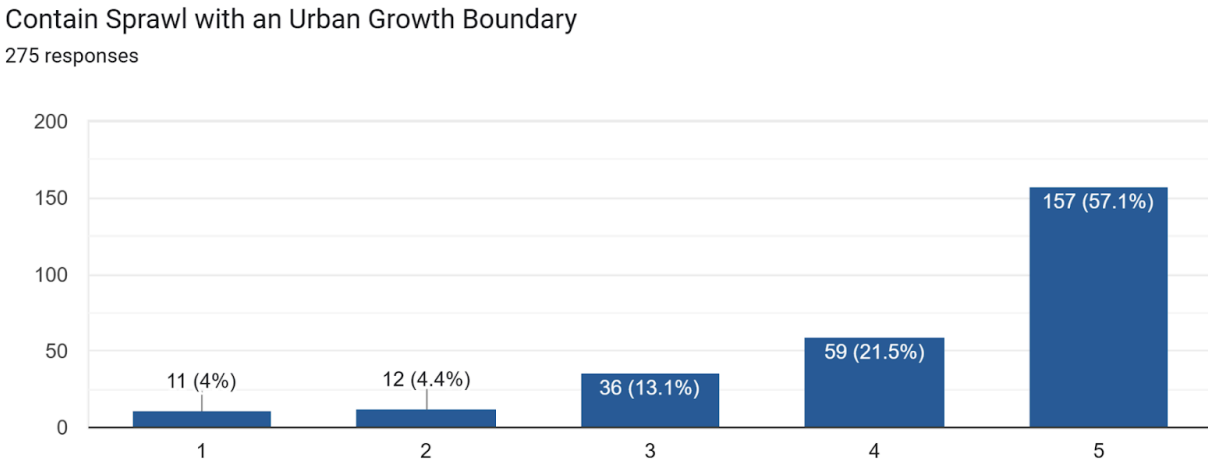
Most frequently noted suggestions were:

- **Trader Joe's (Far and away the most common response)**
- **Public Waterfront**

- **Home Depot**
- **Steakhouse**
- **Costco**
- **Brewery**
- **Downtown Grocery Store**

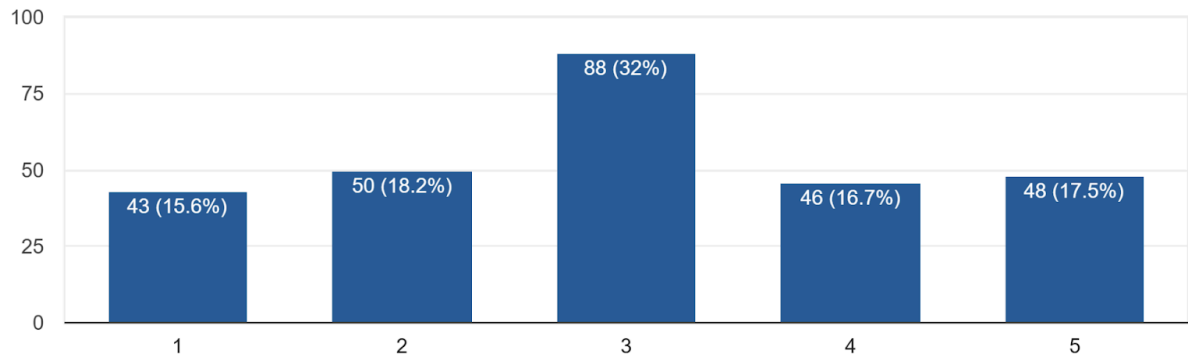
Survey # 2 - Quality of Life Issues

1. **How important is it to maintain each of the components of the overall Town Growth Strategy as stated in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan (1 = strongly disagree with the component to 5= strongly agree with the component):**



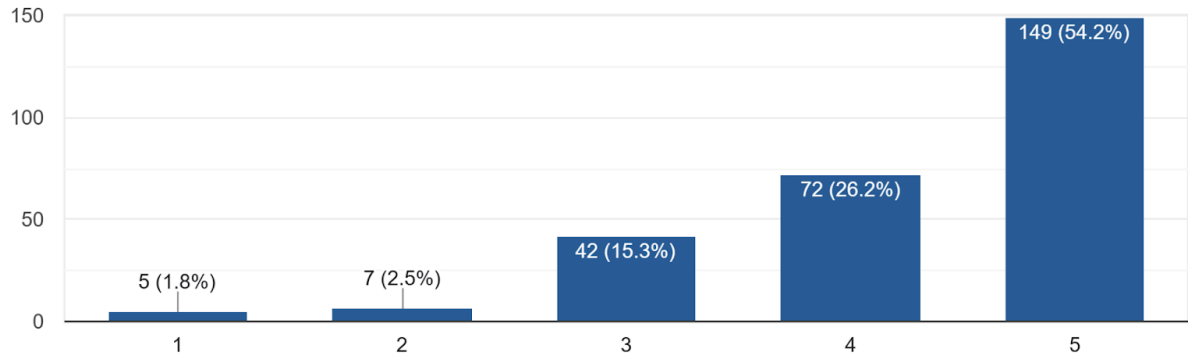
Increase Density

275 responses



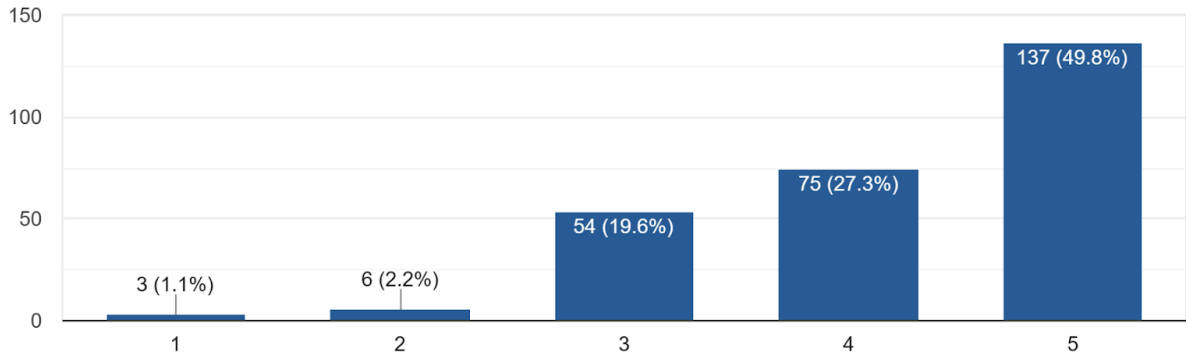
Build Neighborhoods (as opposed to Subdivisions)

275 responses



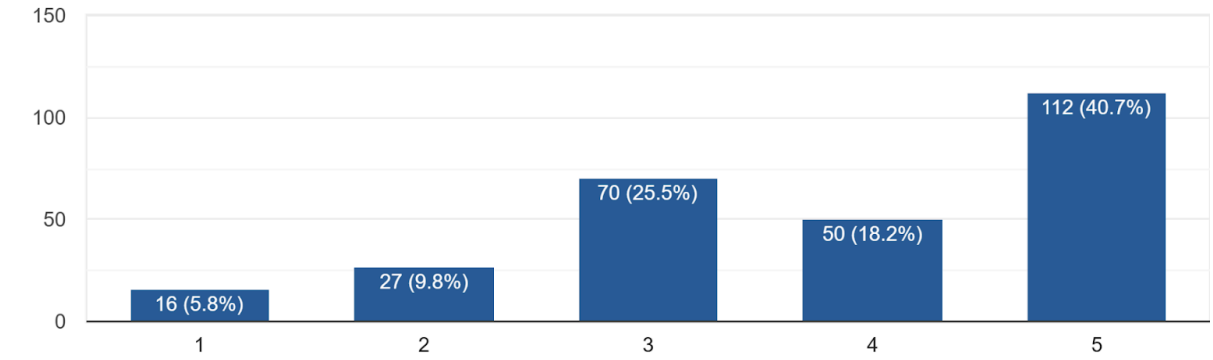
Improve Design

275 responses



Restrict Rate of Growth

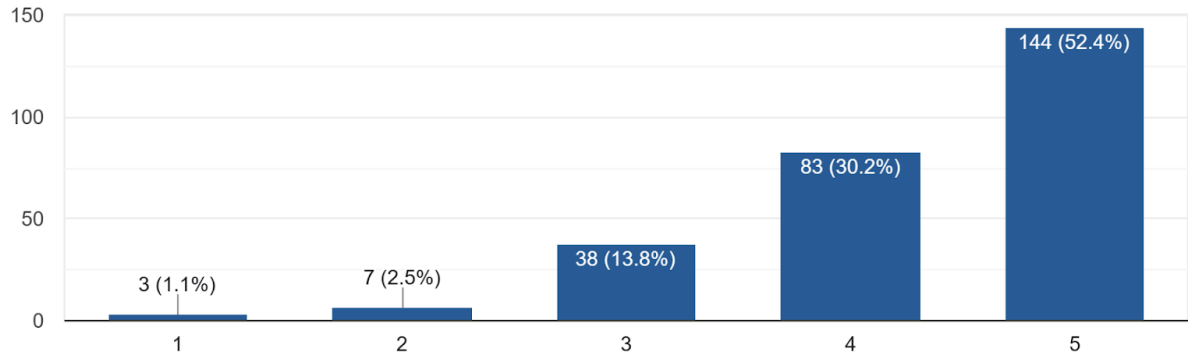
275 responses



2. Please consider each of the following factors often associated with a community's quality of life and indicate the degree to which you think each factor affects current residents in terms of a decision to potentially locate here:

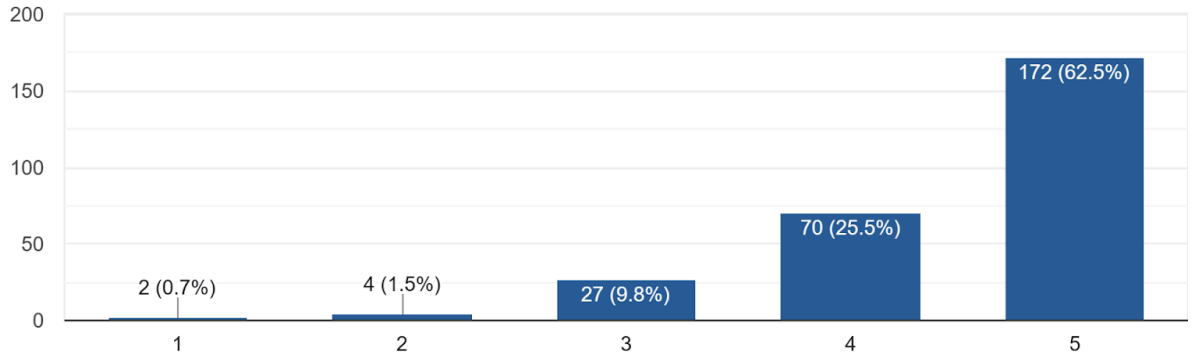
Parks

275 responses



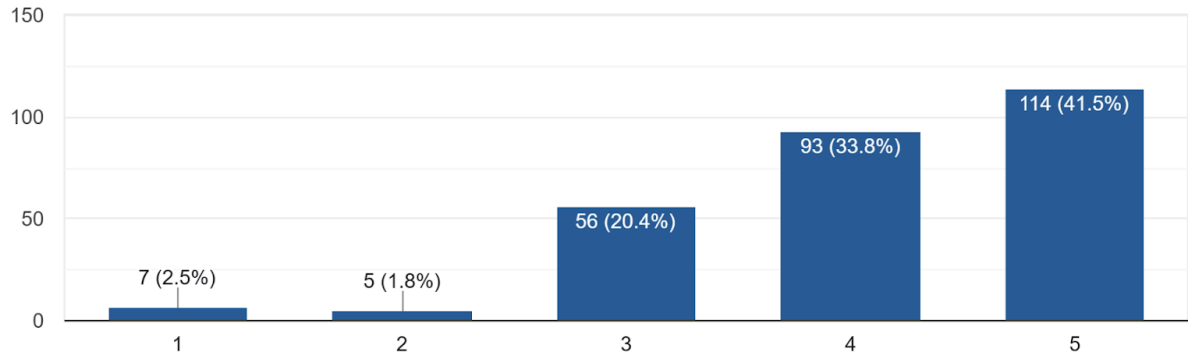
Walkability

275 responses



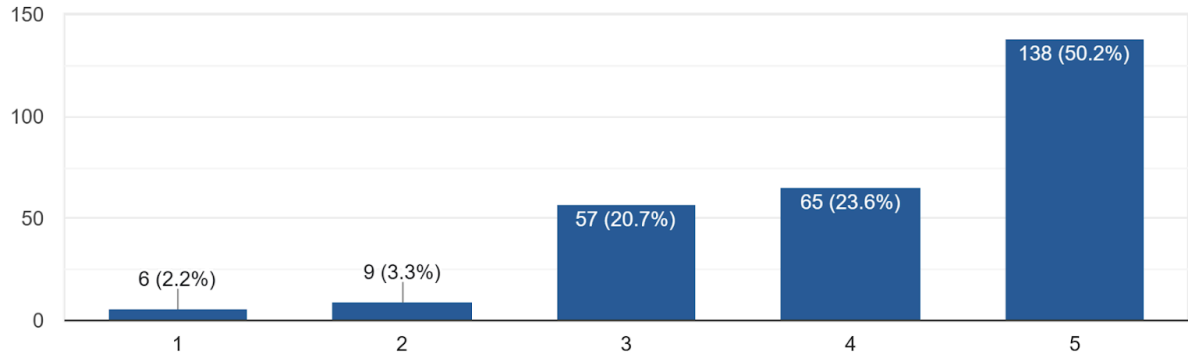
Housing Variety

275 responses



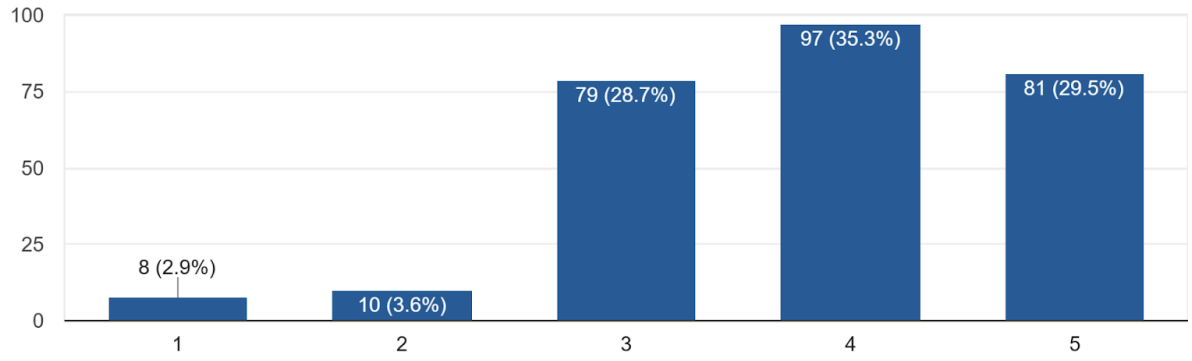
Housing Affordability

275 responses



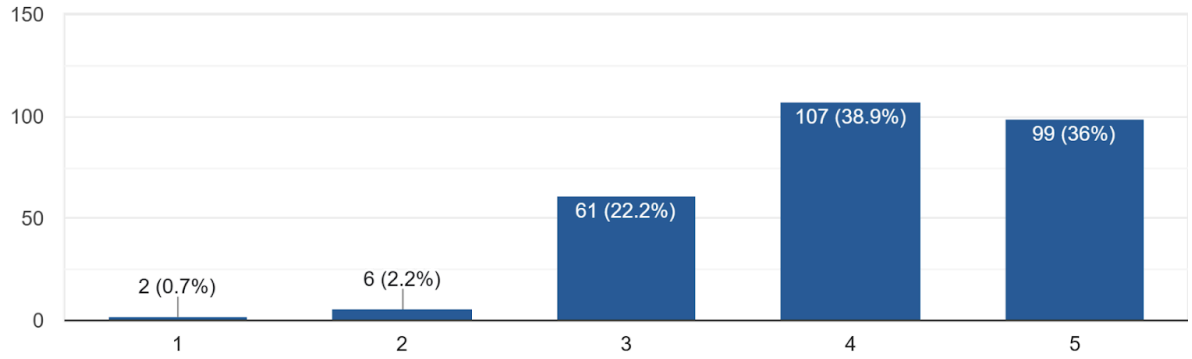
Shopping Options

275 responses



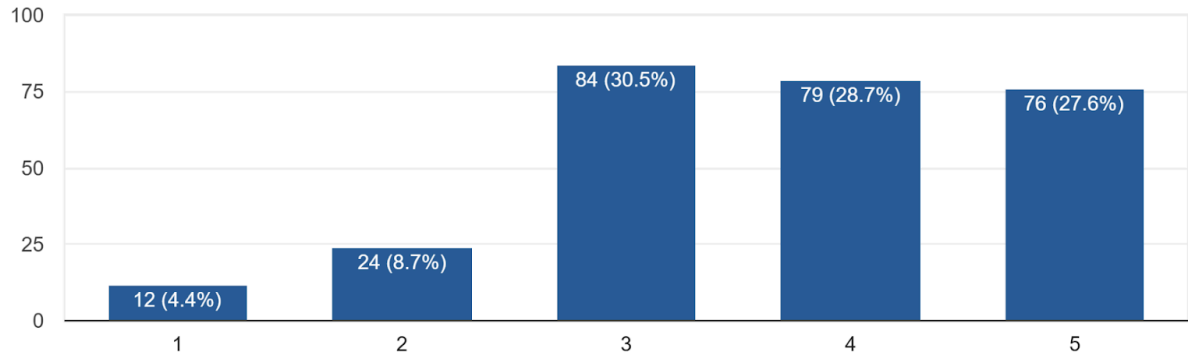
Dining Options

275 responses



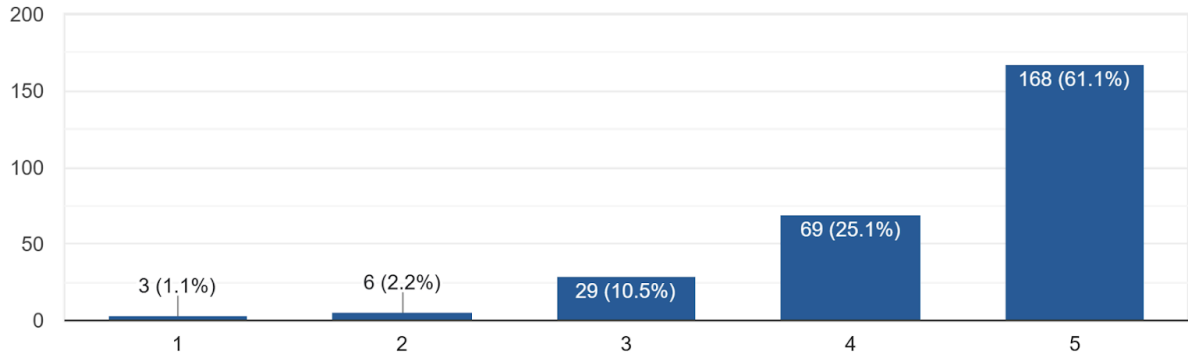
Transportation Option

275 responses



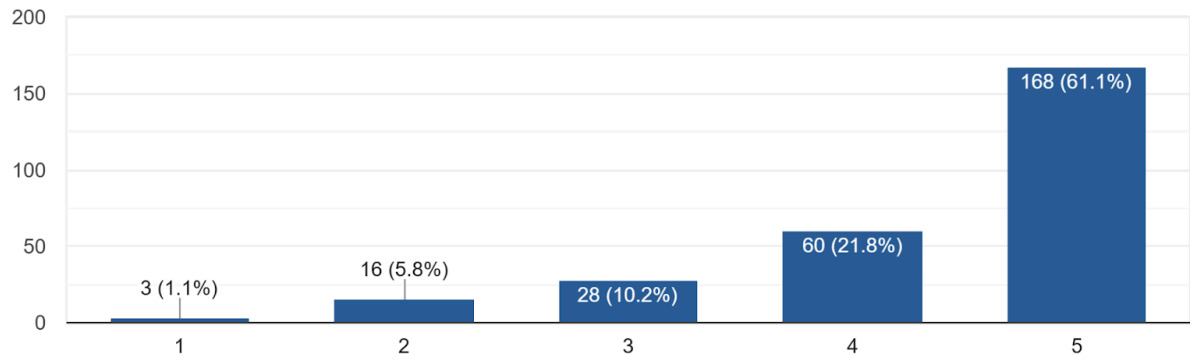
Downtown

275 responses



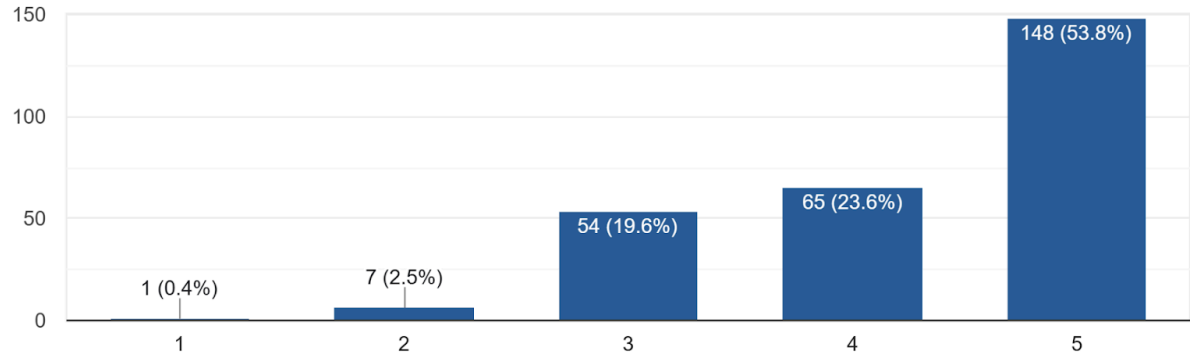
Historic Character

275 responses



Job Opportunities

275 responses



3. **Please name one thing that the Town should strive to add or improve in order to enhance the quality of life of our existing residents:**

   The five responses most frequently mentioned were:

   - **Affordable Housing**
   - **Grocery Store Downtown**

- **Public Waterfront**
- **Parking (Downtown)**
- **Walkability**

4. **What is the most important asset/resource/amenity for the Town to protect or enhance as we contemplate the future of our community?**

   The top three responses were:

   - **Downtown Charm/Vibrancy/Character**
   - **Green Spaces/Parks**
   - **Historic Character**

5. **Places most likely to show someone who has never been to Easton before:**

   Virtually every response included Downtown in general and/or a specific business or institution Downtown.

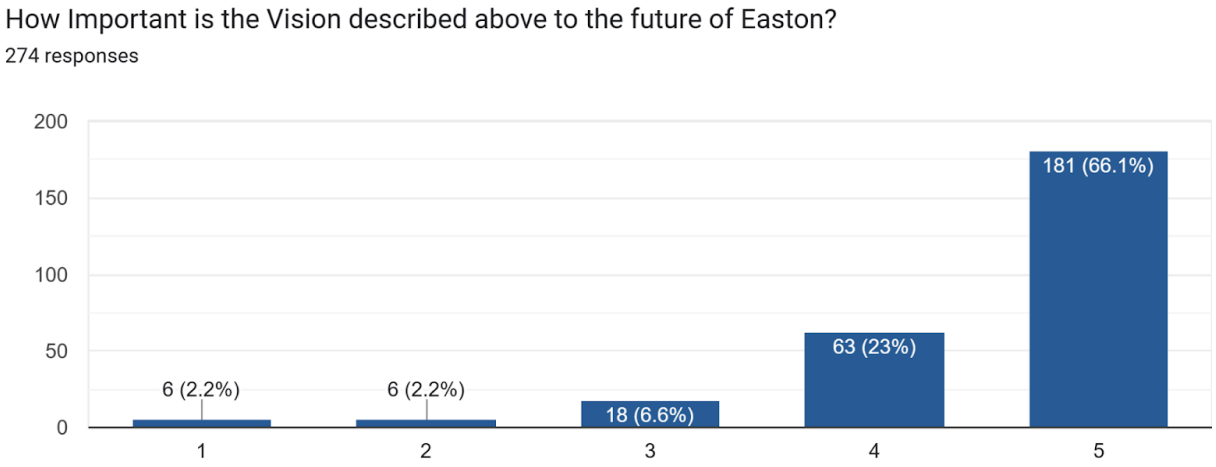
6. **Where would you avoid showing these visitors?:**

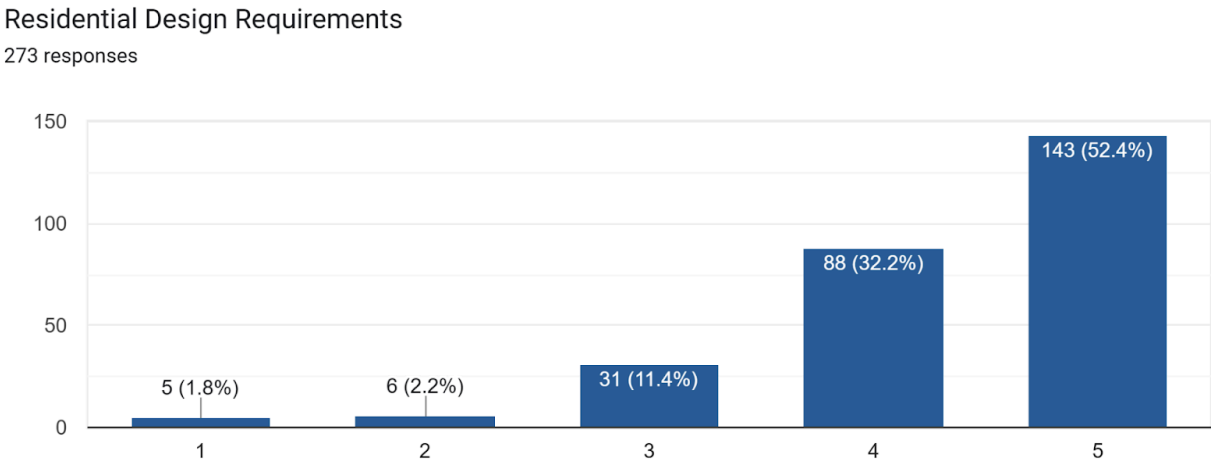
   Frequently recurring responses included:

   - **Nothing/Nowhere**
   - **Big Boxes**
   - **Route 50**
   - **Port Street**

7. **The current Comprehensive Plan talks a lot about the desire for Easton to avoid monotonous, cookie-cutter, "Anyplace USA" (Suburban-Style) housing developments. Please indicate how important you think this Vision is for the future of Easton and then the importance of each of the following policies in**

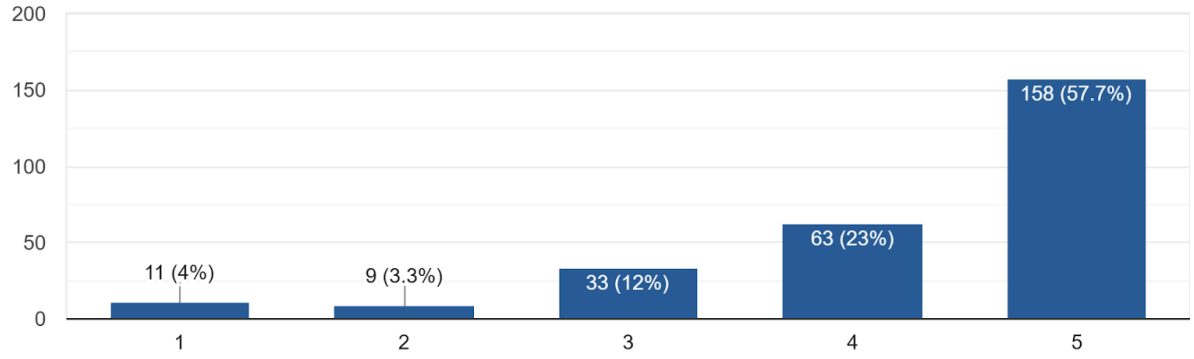
achieving this goal:





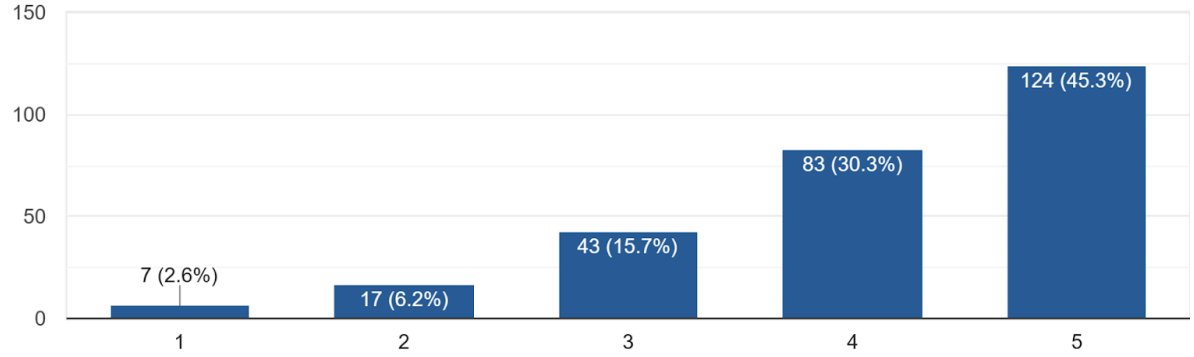
Standards to prohibit the construction of identical, or practically identical, homes within close proximity of one another

274 responses



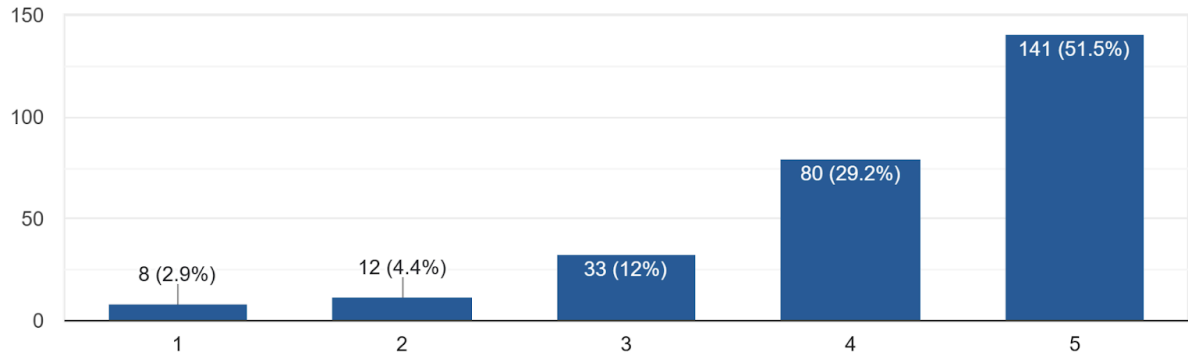
A variety of lot sizes in new subdivisions

274 responses



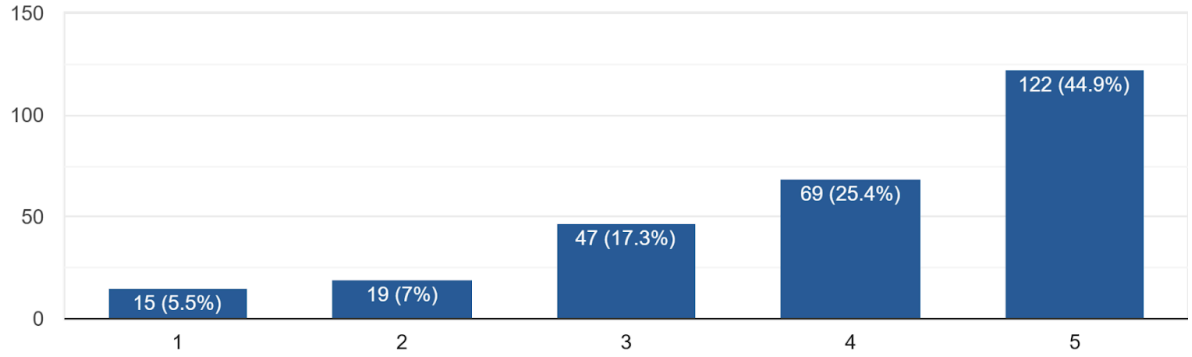
A variety of housing type in new subdivisions

274 responses



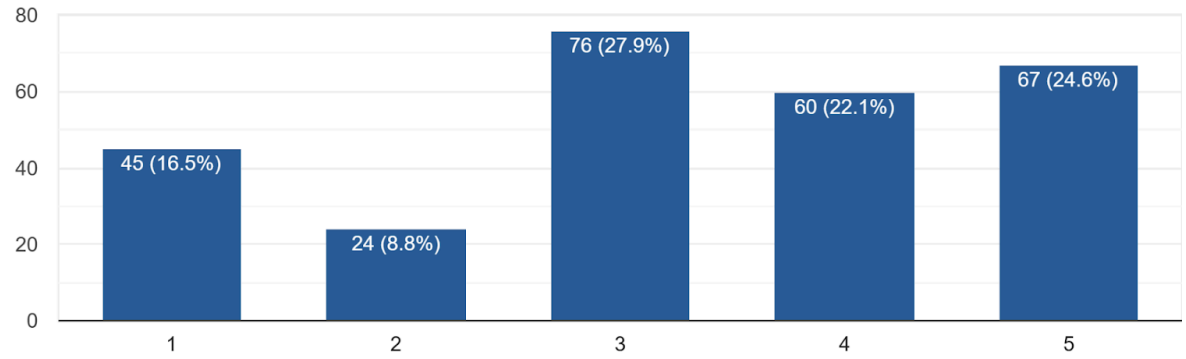
Mixed uses to allow cultural/institutional uses and neighborhood-scale commercial uses in addition to housing

272 responses



A requirement for the majority of new houses to be accessed via an alley

272 responses

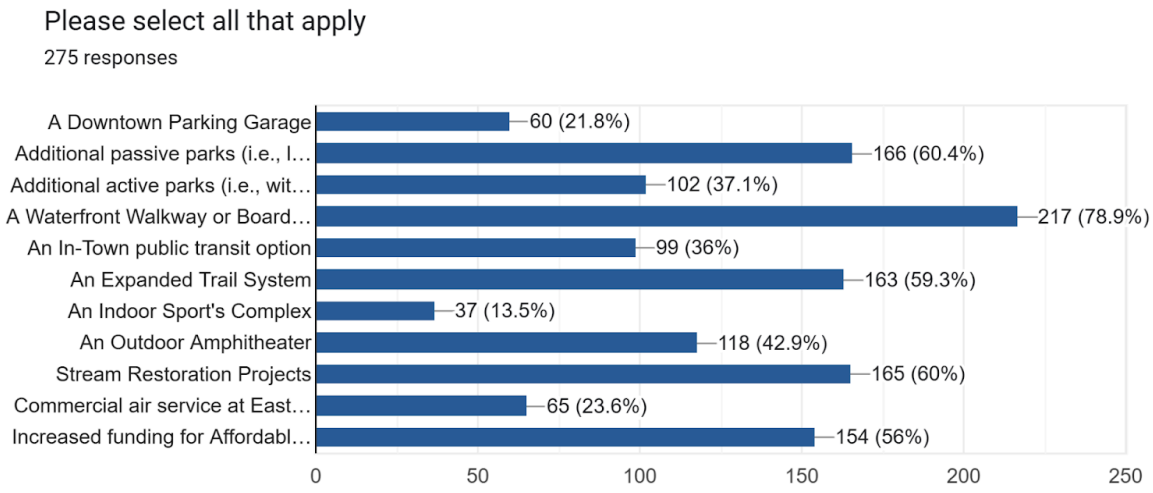


8. How should the current hospital site be redeveloped/reused?

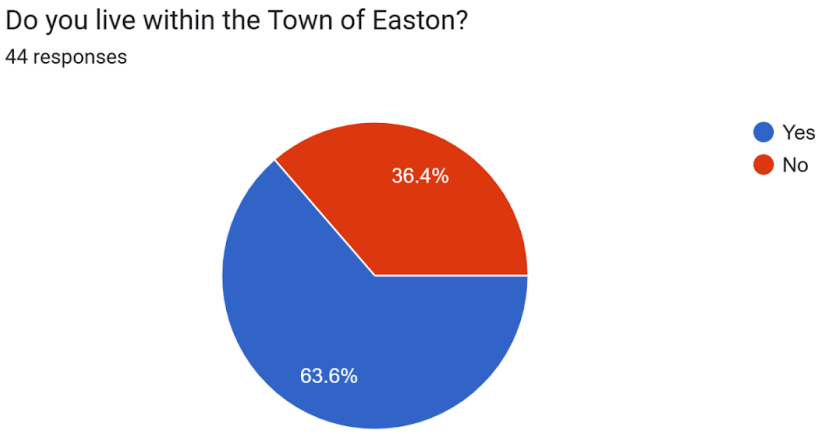
Top Responses were:

- Affordable Housing
- Housing (in general)
- College
- Medical Use
- Mixed-use
- Park/Open Space

9. Which of the following would you support even if it meant a tax increase?:

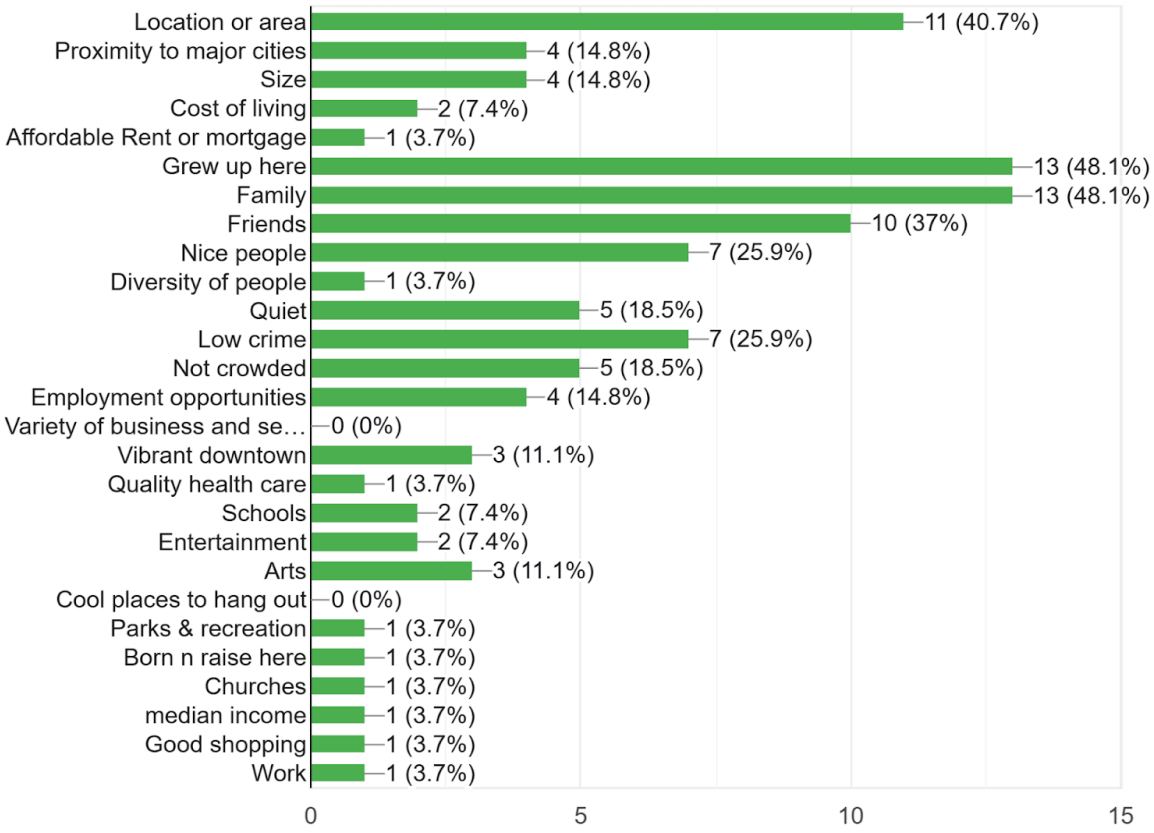


Survey #3 - Quality of Life (More Questions)



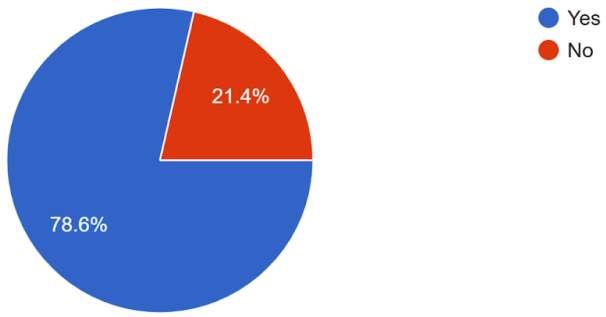
Why did you choose to live here?

27 responses



Do you work in Easton?

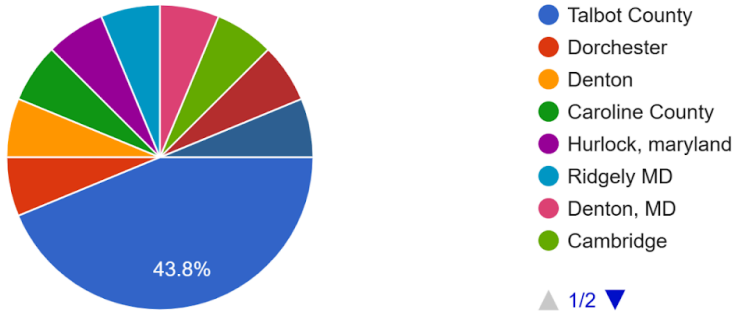
28 responses



For non-Easton residents:

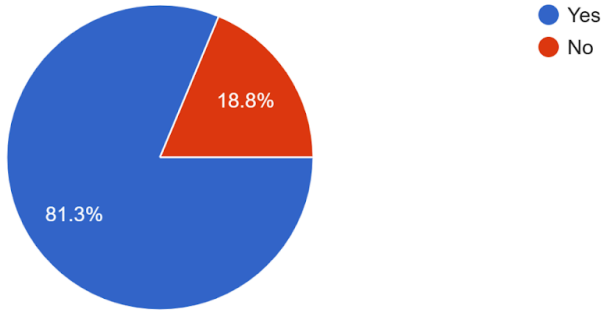
Where do you live? (If other please include Town and State)

16 responses



Do you work in Easton?

16 responses



Would you consider living in Easton? Why or why not?

Yes

Wish I could afford it. Lived here my whole life and was pushed our due to rent.

Yes. If there wasn't a housing challenge.

yes if i could find something comparable to my house and affordable

Yes, only if there was affordable housing.

Couldn't afford to

Yes.

I would love to but I cannot afford to live in Easton

Ehhh most likely not. Stict ordinances, expensive housing.

Yes, because Easton has more entertainment and a community more involved than surrounding counties.

No, too much crime and too expensive

Yes. Lived in town limits for 25 years and wouid moved back.

No, it's very stuffy. I used to live in Easton but moved to Cambridge because there are more young people and town activities, as well as better access to the water for people who don't own waterfront estates.

No, because I have retired.

Yes because of the vibe of the town, especially downtown

What type of business or entertainment option would you like to see that isn't here right now?

AI summarized responses:

- **Entertainment: Many responses requested more entertainment options such as arcades, mini-golf, larger music/theater venues, comedy clubs, and indoor sports facilities, including an ice rink. There was also interest in adult-focused entertainment like adult arcades and safer bars/nightlife.**

- **Restaurants & Food Options: Respondents expressed a desire for a wider variety of restaurants, including specific chains like Shake Shack, Five Guys, Mod Pizza, Texas Roadhouse, Buffalo Wild Wings, and Trader Joe's. They also requested more diverse dining options (e.g., Greek, Mediterranean, African, Dominican/Puerto Rican, Thai, gastropub, lobster house), a bakery, and more affordable local restaurants.**

- **Retail & Services: Suggestions included a bigger Walmart, Costco, Home Depot, chocolate**

shop, beauty and wellness spas, tattoo shops, and a cat petting business.

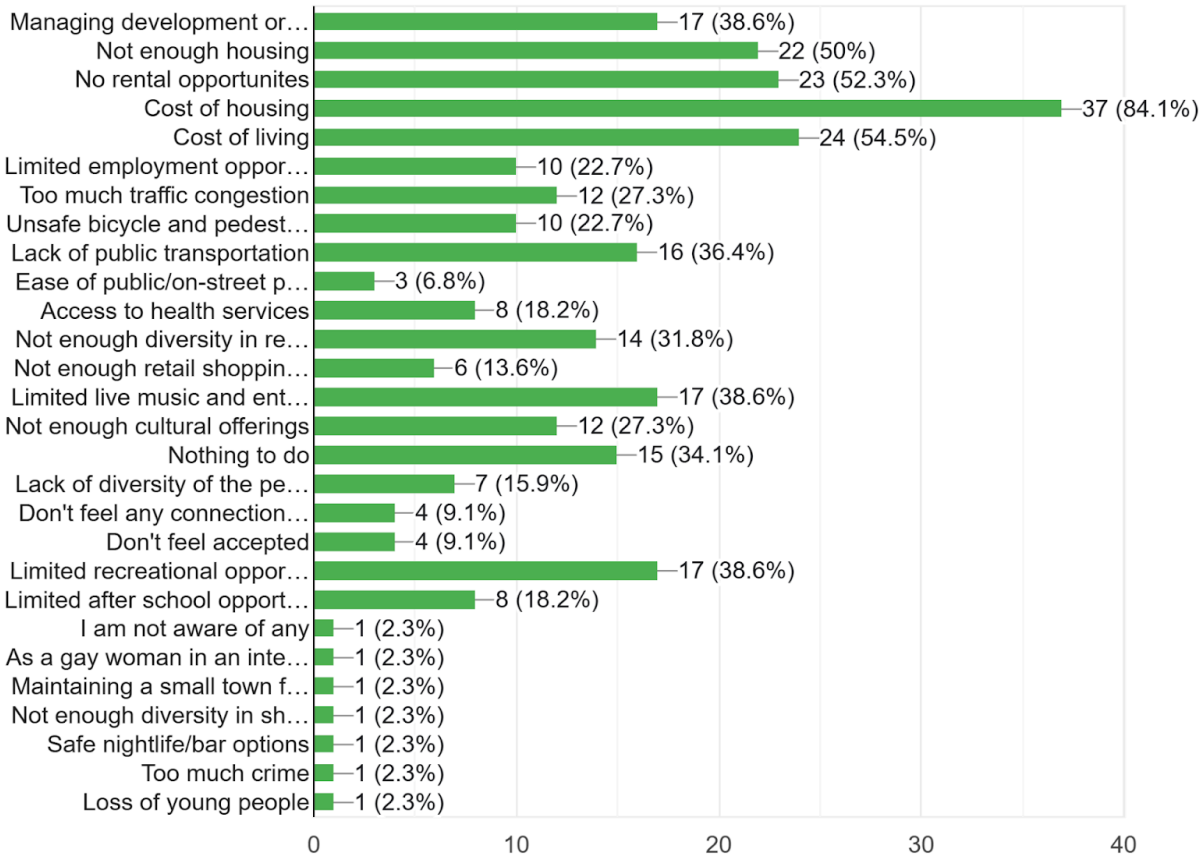
- **Community Amenities & Infrastructure: Several responses highlighted the need for more activities for youth and teens, a splash pad park, bike lanes, a bus system, and public transportation to locations like DC. There was also a request for a place of worship not Christian related.**
- **Other: A few respondents mentioned a gun range, a brewery, or indicated that they already have what they need in Easton.**

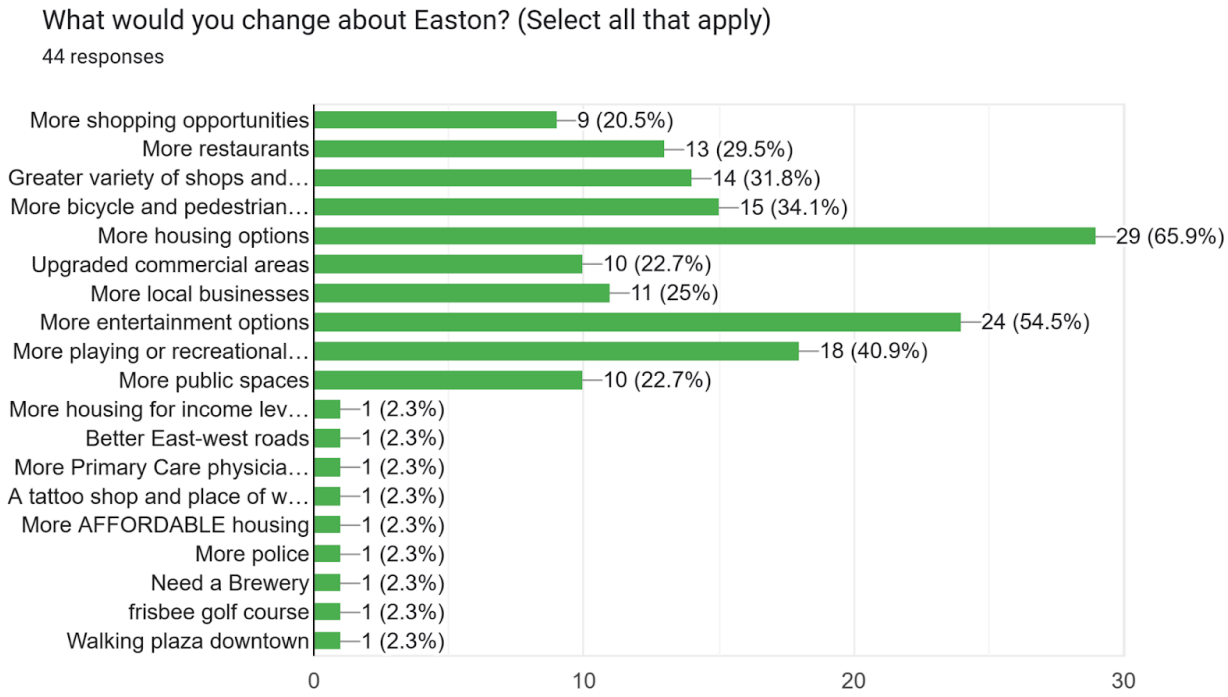
What words describe your impression of Easton?

- Town Atmosphere: Many described Easton as charming, quaint, small, and quiet, with a peaceful, friendly, and laid-back vibe.
- Demographics & Lifestyle: Several responses noted Easton as a retirement community geared towards retirees and wealthy members, with a "rich white people" or "preppy" impression.
- Amenities & Walkability: Some respondents highlighted cosmopolitan amenities, walkability, and a sense of safety.
- Perceived Issues: A few responses mentioned high prices, a perception of being crime-ridden and run down, or being "unduly self satisfied."
- Overall Impression: Easton was broadly seen as a nice, beautiful, and enjoyable town, with some calling it "perfect" or stating "everything works."

Do you know of any issues that Easton is facing? (Select all that apply)

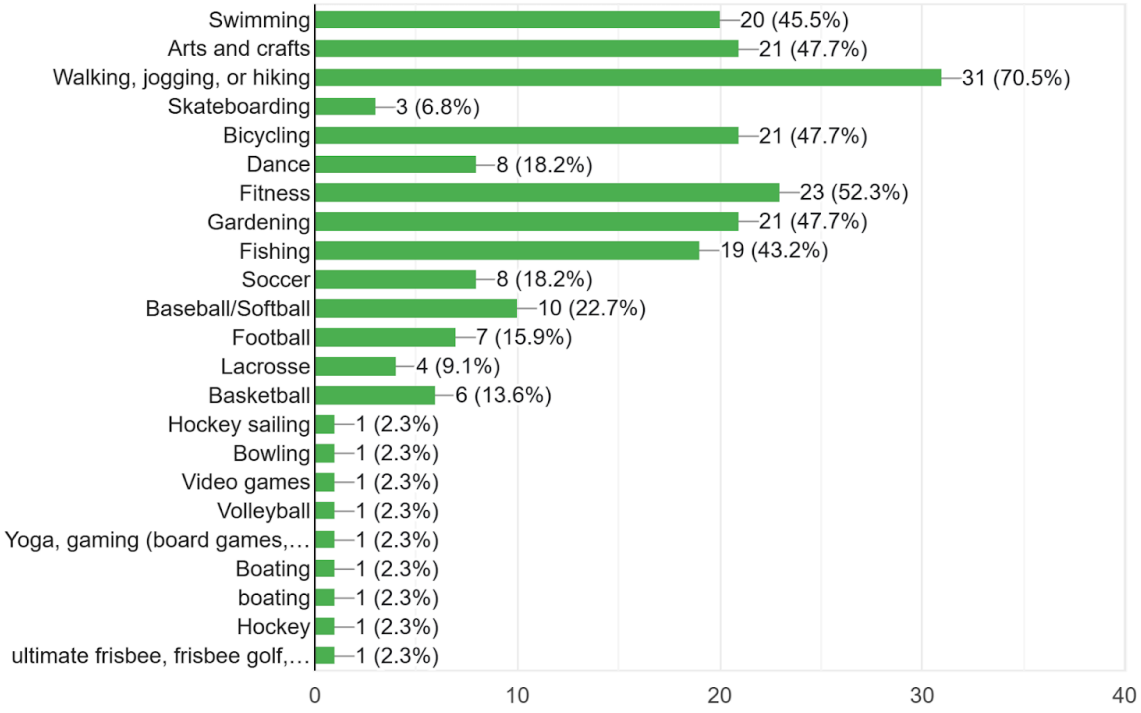
44 responses




What would you change about Easton? (Select all that apply)
44 responses
More shopping opportunities
9 (20.5%)
More restaurants
13 (29.5%)
Greater variety of shops and…
14 (31.8%)
More bicycle and pedestrian…
15 (34.1%)
More housing options
29 (65.9%)
Upgraded commercial areas
10 (22.7%)
More local businesses
11 (25%)
More entertainment options
24 (54.5%)
More playing or recreational…
18 (40.9%)
More public spaces
10 (22.7%)
More housing for income lev…
1 (2.3%)
Better East-west roads
1 (2.3%)
More Primary Care physicia…
1 (2.3%)
A tattoo shop and place of w…
1 (2.3%)
More AFFORDABLE housing
1 (2.3%)
More police
1 (2.3%)
Need a Brewery
1 (2.3%)
frisbee golf course
1 (2.3%)
Walking plaza downtown
1 (2.3%)
0
10
20
30

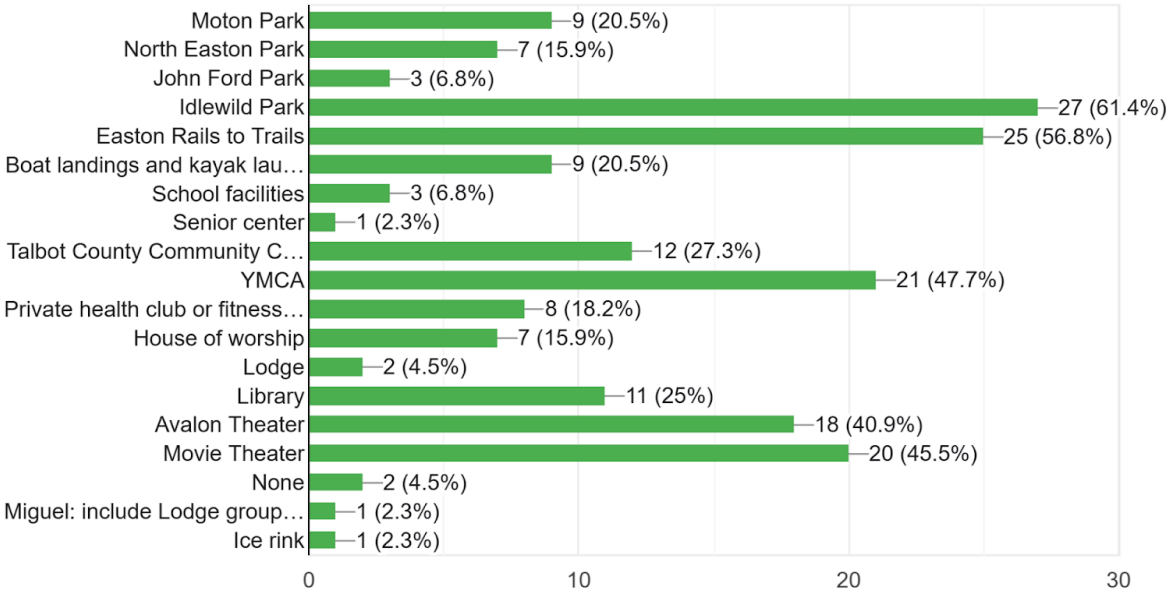
What type of leisure activities do members of your household participate in? (Select all that apply)

44 responses



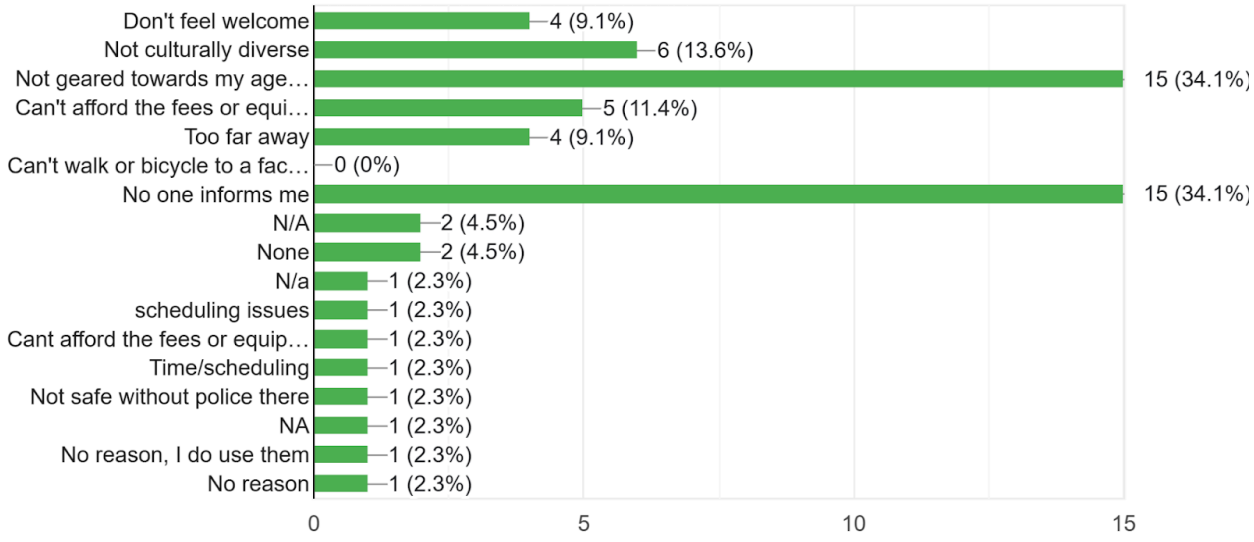
What Parks, Recreation and Cultural Facilities does your household primary use in Easton or Talbot County? (Select all that apply)

44 responses



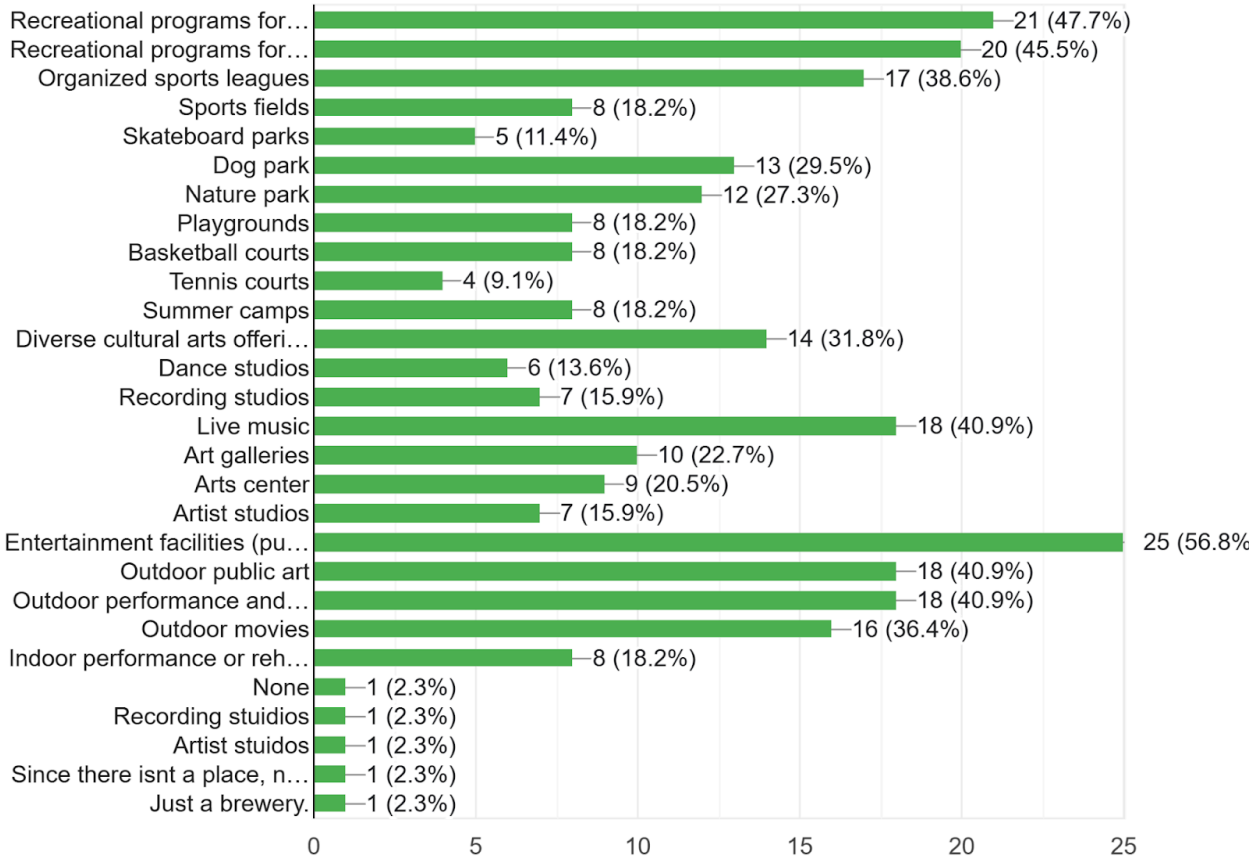
Is there any reason that keeps you from participating in Easton's parks, recreation and cultural facilities? (Select all that apply)

44 responses



What types of facilities or activities would you and your household like to see more of in Easton? (Select all that apply)

44 responses



APPENDIX 3 - HISTORIC ANNEXATION LIST

HISTORICAL ANNEXATIONS

NO.	DATE	ANNEXATION	AREA (AC)	TOTAL (CUM.)	SQ. MILE (CUM.)
1	3/12/1786	1785 John Needles Survey	94.500	94.500	0.14766
2	Nov. 1806	John M. G. Emory Survey	24.200	118.700	0.18547
3	1/26/1880	J. M. Tharp Survey	186.300	305.000	0.47656
4	1916	Kastenhuber Survey	195.352	500.352	0.78180
5	1927	Community Park	45.00	545.352	0.85211
6	June 1951	Wm. H. Corkran Survey	445.339	990.691	1.54795
7	2/02/1961	Hughlett Street	4.551	995.691	1.55507
8	6/02/1961	Part of Marlboro	20.000	1015.242	1.58632
9	7/05/1962	Easton Motels – Rte 50	2.400	1017.642	1.59007
10	5/02/1963	Marlboro	17.618	1035.260	1.61759
11	2/17/1965	Brookwood	3.502	1038.762	1.62307
12	4/29/1965	Mecklenburg	101.524	1140.286	1.78170
13	8/20/1965	Third Haven Heights	12.065	1152.351	1.80055
14	9/02/1965	Applewood Court	6.288	1158.639	1.81037
15	12/03/1965	North Glenwood	10.020	1168.659	1.82603
16	6/02/1966	Hallowell	16.431	1185.090	1.85170
17	6/30/1966	The Easton Parkway	164.694	1349.784	2.10904
18	6/30/1966	Maryland National Bank	4.673	1354.457	2.11634
19	6/30/1966	Frankford	214.196	1568.653	2.45102

18	6/30/1966	Maryland National Bank	4.673	1354.457	2.11634
20	12/01/1966	Pennsfield	176.840	1745.493	2.72733
21	3/02/1967	Witt Woodland	198.889	1944.382	3.03810
22	6/02/1967	Mulberry Hill	385.948	2330.330	3.64114
23	10/21/1967	Glenwood Heights	136.404	2466.734	3.85427
24	8/02/1968	Trippe Avenue	12.528	2479.262	3.87385
25	10/30/1969	Maryland State Police	8.630	2487.892	3.88733
26	10/01/1970	Airport Industrial Park	241.786	2729.678	4.26512
27	12/03/1970	Idlewild Lots	4.049	2733.727	4.27145
28	4/30/1970	North Clifton	5.549	2739.276	4.28012
29	11/04/1971	Carroll's Addition	24.547	2763.823	4.31847
30	6/01/1972	Golt Farm	129.354	2893.177	4.52059
31	4/05/1973	Idlewild Lots	5.740	2898.917	4.52956
32	4/19/1973	South Beechwood	36.546	2935.463	4.58666
33	11/01/1974	West Galloway	15.529	2950.992	4.61093
34	1/02/1975	Poplar Hill	174.358	3125.350	4.88336
35	6/05/1975	Central Clifton	24.189	3149.539	4.92115
36	7/02/1976	North Clifton	30.703	3180.242	4.96913
37	7/23/1976	Stoney Ridge Farm	222.976	3403.218	5.31753
38	10/01/1976	Reward Farm	110.705	3513.923	5.49050
39	11/05/1976	Ashby Woodland	43.338	3557.261	5.55822
40	2/03/1978	Elliott Road	5.993	3563.254	5.56758
41	3/02/1978	Idlewild Farm	128.626	3691.880	5.76856
42	1/18/1979	Easton Airport	595.809	4287.689	6.69951
43	4/02/1981	Woodland Farm	309.686	4597.375	7.18340
44	3/03/1983	Lutheran Church – Rte 50	6.006	4603.381	7.19278
45	9/18/1986	Craft Farm	102.670	4706.051	7.35320
46	12/05/1986	Mulberry Hill/W. Galloway	233.844	4939.895	7.71859
47	7/02/1987	William Favinger	10.260	4950.155	7.73462
48	3/03/1988	John O. Brooks	31.551	4981.706	7.78392
49	5/23/1989	County Roads Facility	6.080	4987.786	7.79342

18	6/30/1966	Maryland National Bank	4.673	1354.457	2.11634
50	4/06/1990	Londonderry	25.430	5013.216	7.83315
51	1/13/1991	Ewing – Dover Rd.	2.130	5015.346	7.83648
52	2/17/1991	RGA/Davis – Denton Rd.	27.900	5043.246	7.88007
53	5/03/1991	Dudrow (N. Glenwood)	187.850	5231.096	8.17359
54	6/18/1992	Ward/Benhoff – Dover Rd.	13.595	5244.691	8.19483

55	8/16/1993	Lyon's Farm	217.100	5461.791	8.53405
56	3/18/1995	Cooke's Hope	162.365	5624.156	8.78774
57	10/23/1995	Public Works Facility	15.451	5639.607	8.81189
58	2/03/1996	Swann Farm	80.540	5720.147	8.93773
59	7/24/1996	Celeste Industries (Jettison)	-16.322	5703.825	8.91223
60	11/24/1996	Swann Haven L.P.	30.442	5734.267	8.95979
61	11/24/1996	Wickersham Farm	162.570	5896.837	9.21381
62	5/30/1997	Talbot Bible Church	10.361	5907.198	9.23000
63	12/07/1998	Trippe's Creek/Cheston L.P.	217.851	6125.049	9.57039
64	1/18/1999	Charles O. Parks	7.598	6132.647	9.58226
65	4/17/1999	Swann Haven L.P.	75.743	6208.390	9.70061
66	6/25/1999	Ratcliffe Manor	386.440	6594.830	10.30442
67	4/30/2000	Ratcliffe Manor Lane	3.176	6598.006	10.30939
68	8/26/2001	Town Properties (4)	7.926	6605.932	10.32177
69	10/15/2001	Swann Farm	79.014	6684.946	10.44523
70	7/26/2002	Hoffman	52.291	6737.237	10.52693
71	7/26/2002	UP Associates	23.084	6760.321	10.56300
72	7/3/2003	Kennedy Street	26.866	6787.187	10.60498
73	6/11/2005	West Glenwood	30.192	6817.379	10.65216
74	5/15/2006	Londonderry	13.492	6830.871	10.67324
75	8/03/2007	Clifton Industrial Park	35.41	6866.281	10.72856
76	8/11/2011	Hyde Park	117.994	6984.275	10.91293
77	7/1/2012	Spring	17.170	7001.445	10.93976
78	10/5/2012	McNeal	2.469	7003.914	10.94362
79	10/20/2014	Talbot Commerce Park	125.057	7128.971	11.13902
80	3/2/2015	Aphena	22.136	7151.107	11.17360
81	8/19/2017	Easton Point (multiple properties)	6.533	7157.640	11.18381
82	9/22/2017	Celeste	4.446	7162.086	11.19076
83	10/2/2017	J. D. Oliver	3.960	7166.046	11.19695
84	8/3/2020	Dutchman's Lane	7.681	7173.727	11.20895
85	5/3/2021	Harrison	1.637	7175.364	11.21151
86	7/20/2023	Town Properties (2)	4.899	7180.263	11.21916

APPENDIX 4 - SUMMARY OF NUTRIENT LOADING ANALYSIS

Nutrient Loading Analysis Spreadsheet - Summary Results

Land Use and Septic Systems (See Scenario Descriptions Below)

		2007 LU, 2007 BMPs (Acres)	2007 LU, Trib Strat BMPs (Acres)	Scenario 1 Trib Strat BMPs (Acres)	Scenario 2 Trib Strat BMPs (Acres)	Scenario 3 Trib Strat BMPs (Acres)
Development		0	3,818	8,246	5,252	5,382
Agriculture		0	4,927	279	3,274	3,143
Forest		0	1,813	1,813	1,813	1,813
Water		0	112	112	112	112
Other		0	684	904	904	904
Total Area		0	11,354	11,354	11,355	11,354

Residential Septic (EDUs)		0	557	56	269	269
Non-Residential Septic (EDUs)		0	375	38	188	188

Total Nitrogen Loading

		2007 LU, 2007 BMPs	2007 LU, Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 1 Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 2 Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 3 Trib Strat BMPs
		(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)
Development NPS		0	22,900	49,572	31,535	32,322
Agriculture NPS		0	42,567	2,441	28,178	27,038
Forest NPS		0	2,507	2,507	2,507	2,507
Other Terrestrial NPS		0	4,145	5,473	5,473	5,473
Total Terrestrial Load		**0**	**72,119**	**59,992**	**67,692**	**67,339**
Residential Septic (EDUs)		0	4,912	348	1,677	1,677
Non-Residential Septic (EDUs)		0	1,180	89	421	421
Total Septic Load		**0**	**6,092**	**436**	**2,098**	**2,098**
Total NPS Nitrogen Load		**0**	**78,210**	**60,429**	**69,790**	**69,437**
Total PS Load		**0**	**23,800**	**48,729**	**27,415**	**27,415**
Total Nitrogen Load (NPS+PS)		**0**	**102,010**	**109,158**	**97,205**	**96,852**

Total Phosphorus Loading

		2007 LU, 2007 BMPs	2007 LU, Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 1 Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 2 Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 3 Trib Strat BMPs
		(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)
Development NPS		0	2,441	5,451	3,414	3,507
Agriculture NPS		0	3,977	224	2,690	2,588
Forest NPS		0	34	34	34	34
Other Terrestrial NPS		0	500	651	651	651
Total Terrestrial Load		**0**	**6,953**	**6,360**	**6,789**	**6,779**
Total PS Load		**0**	**2,400**	**3,655**	**2,742**	**2,742**
Total Phosphorus Load (NPS+PS)		**0**	**9,353**	**10,015**	**9,531**	**9,521**

Impervious Cover and Open Space

		2007 LU, 2007 BMPs	2007 LU, Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 1 Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 2 Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 3 Trib Strat BMPs
Total Impervious Cover		0	1,865	3,497	2,449	2,485
Agriculture		0	4,927	279	3,274	3,143
Forest		0	1,705	1,705	1,705	1,705

Scenario Description	Scenario List
Year 2007 with 2007 Level of BMP Implementation	2007 LU, 2007 BMPs
Year 2007 with TS BMP Implementation	2007 LU, Trib Strat BMPs
Scenario 1 Build-out (or 3% Growth 2040)	Scenario 1
Scenario 2 - 2040 1% Growth, 75% infill, 25% greenfield	Scenario 2
Scenario 3 - 2040 1% Growth, 50% infill, 50% greenfield	Scenario 3

APPENDIX 5 - PLANNED WATER AND WASTEWATER CAPITAL PROJECTS

EASTON WATER SYSTEM CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS		
PROJECT DESCRIPTION	**PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR**	**COMMENTS**
New Water Services & Meters	FY2026	$304,000
Replace Hydrants	FY2026	$40,000
Replace Valves	FY2026	$90,000
Easton Watermain Replacement Judas St. & Port St.	FY2026	$1,051,000
Looping Water Mains/Blow-offs	FY2026	$32,000
SCADA, PLC & Security Upgrades	FY2026	$60,000
Well No. 12 Security Fence	FY2026	$16,000
Corrosion Inhibitor - Sequestering Agent	FY2026-2027	$88,000
Well No. 12 – Replacement of Pump and Column Pipe	FY2027	$250,000
Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements	FY2027	$1,167,000
New Water Treatment Plant (Commerce Drive)	FY2027-2028	$12,000,000
UMMS Water Main Extension	FY2027-2028	$3,433,000
Hydrant Rehab & Storz Connect.	FY2027-2028	$836,000
New Well No. 14	FY2027-2028	$2,625,000
Looping Water Mains/Blow-offs	FY2027-2031	$173,000
New Water Services	FY2027-2031	$175,000
New Water Meters	FY2027-2031	$1,370,000
Replace Hydrants	FY2027-2031	$215,000
SCADA, PLC & Security Upgrades	FY2027-2031	$132,000
UMMS Water Tank	FY2028	$3,124,000
Well No. 6 – Replacement of Pump and Column Pipe	FY2028	$130,000
Well No. 8 – Replacement of Pump and Column Pipe	FY2028	$130,000
Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements	FY2028	$1,167,000
Matthewstown Tank Refurbishment or Demo	FY2029	$500,000
Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements	FY2029	$1,228,000
Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements	FY2030	$1,157,000
Well No. 7 – Replacement of Pump and Column Pipe	FY2031	$140,000

Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements	FY2031	$1,290,000

EASTON SEWER SYSTEM

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR	COMMENTS
Windmill Pump Station and Force Main Replacement	FY2026	$9,809,000
Windmill Interceptor Sewer Refurbishment	FY2026	$1,900,000
Clifton Pump Station – Refurbish Pumps, Grinders, Replace ATS, VFDs, Relocate Bypass Piping	FY2026-2027	$234,500
Calvert Pump Station – Refurbish Pumps, Grinders, Replace ATS, VFDs	FY2026-2027	$200,000
SCADA, PLC & Security Upgrades	FY2026-2031	$191,500
New Wastewater Laterals	FY2026-FY2031	$371,00
WWTF - Bio. Reactor #2 Refurb.	FY2027	$481,000
WWTF - Secondary Clarifiers #1 & #2 Refurbishment	FY2027	$580,000
WWTF - Tertiary Treatment Sand Filter Refurbishment	FY2027	$938,000
WWTF - Primary & Secondary Lagoon Flow Control Refurbishment	FY2027	$614,000
Calvert Pump Station – Replace Pumps, Refurbish Grinders	FY2027	$200.000
WWTF - Influent Box and Headworks – Gates and Actuators	FY2027	$263,000
Wastewater Pumps Station – Generator Replacement	FY2027	$42,000
Sewer Main Replacement – Arcadia St	FY2027	$200,000
UMMS Pump Station & Forcemain	FY2027	$12,100,000
South Pump Station – Refurbish Pumps, Grinders, Replace VFDs, ATS	FY2027-2028	$125,500
WWTF - Influent Box and Headworks – Fine Screens Rehab	FY2028	$110,500
WWTF - Sludge Dryer Design & Replacement	FY2027-2028	$8,900,000
North Pump Station – Refurbish Pumps, Grinders, Replace VFDs,	FY2028-2029	$143,000
WWTF – Lagoon Diversion Structure Corrosion Control	FY2029	$45,000
WWTF - Bio. Reactor #1 Refurb.	FY2031	$500,000
Easton I&I Mitigation Project – Refurbish Manholes & Sewer Mains	FY2027 through FY2034	$11,900,000

Town of Easton 2026 Comprehensive Plan

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~~Draft~~



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February 19, 2026 ~~October 8, 2025~~

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION **1**

a. Purpose and Legal Framework 1

b. Planning Background, Scope and Use of this Plan 4

c. Easton's Role and Identity 4

d. Foundations and Data Sources 5

e. Planning Process and Public Engagement 7

f. Vision 10

2. LAND USE **12**

a. Purpose 12

b. Land Use Goals, Issues and Policy Considerations 17

c. Zoning And Community Character 24

d. Future Land Use Framework 26

e. Special Districts and Place Types 28

f. Goals and Objectives 29

3. PLACE (COMMUNITY CHARACTER) **32**

a. Purpose 32

b. Historic and Cultural resources 32

c. Contemporary Architecture 37

d. Civic Architecture and the Public Realm 38

e. The Case for Traditional Neighborhood Zoning 38

f. The Role of Major Retail in Easton in 2025 41

g. Town Gateways and Corridors 43

k. Goals and Objectives 44

4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT **48**

a. Purpose 48

b. Business Development 51

c. Tourism and Downtown 51

d. Commercial Redevelopment 52

e. Community Development 53
f. Goals and Objectives 53
5. HOUSING 55
a. Purpose 55
b. Housing Issues and Policy Considerations 56
c. Existing Housing Programs 59
d. Housing Affordability 63
e. Fair Housing 70
f. Potential New Housing Programs / Policies 71
g. Goals and Objectives 73
6. TRANSPORTATION 75
a. Purpose 75
b. Transportation Issues and Policy Considerations 75
c. Organizational Framework 76
d. Integration of Land Use and Transportation Planning 76
e. Complete Networks 77
f. Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) 80
g. Road System 80
h. Complete Streets 83
i. Airport 83
j. Port 86
k. Rail 87
l. Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan 87
m. Public Transportation 91
n. Transportation Map and Proposed Improvements 91
o. Goals and Objectives 97
7. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES 103
a. Purpose 103
b. Utilities 104
c. Solid Waste 106
d. Medical and Hospital Facilities 106

e. Public Schools 108
f. Libraries 109
g. Community Centers 110
h. Public Safety 111
i. Goals and Objectives 113
8. PARKS 116
a. Purpose 116
b. Existing Parks 116
c. Future Parks 121
d. Connectivity and Green Infrastructure 123
e. Goals and Objectives 125
9. ECOLOGY 126
a. Purpose 126
b. Water Resources 126
c. Water Source Protection 129
d. Stormwater Management & Point & Nonpoint Source Loading Status and Remediation 130
e. Mineral Resources 135
f. Biodiversity 136
g. Goals and Objectives 137
10 SUSTAINABILITY 140
a. Purpose 140
b. Climate Change 143
c. Mitigation Strategies 144
d. Adaptation Strategies 145
e. Sustainable Built Environment 148
f. Food Security 149
g. Financial Sustainability 149
h. Social Sustainability 158
h. Goals and Objectives 159
11 MUNICIPAL GROWTH 161
a. Purpose 161

b. Growth Rate Discussion 162
c. Existing Growth Capacity (Infill and Redevelopment) 168
d. Future Growth Areas and Annexation 172
e. Smart Growth and Land Preservation 175
f. Public Services and Infrastructure Needs 176
g. Service Adequacy Considerations 179
h. Water Supply 181
i. Recreation 183
j. Financing Mechanisms 184
k. Rural Buffers and Transition Areas 186
l. Burden on Services for Areas Outside of Town but Under Town's Responsibility 188
m. Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 188
n. Protection of Sensitive Areas 190
o. A Growth Management Strategy for Easton 191
p. Goals and Objectives 198

12 Implementation 200

a. Introduction 200
b. 2025 - 2035 Growth Strategy 200
c. Achieving the Vision 201
d. Goals and Objectives 212

13 Appendices 215

a. Appendix 1 - Historical Development & Growth Dynamics 216
b. Appendix 2 - Public Survey Results 223
c. Appendix 3 - Historic Annexation List 255
d. Appendix 4 - Nutrient Loading Analysis Summary 260
e. Appendix 5 - Planned Water & Wastewater Capital Projects 264

1. INTRODUCTION

> ***"Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work..."***
> ***— Daniel Burnham***

Envisioning the future and identifying the steps necessary to achieve it is essential in long range planning, particularly the establishment of a community's Comprehensive Plan. That Plan will have a greater chance of being realized if it is prepared with wide scale and broad-based input from community members. It is our framework for this Comprehensive Plan update.

Those interested in the evolution of the Planning process in Easton, the different techniques used in Comprehensive Plan Updates, and how our philosophy was shaped by, and aligned with, policies at the State level, including those advocating for Smart Growth, are encouraged to review the archive of Comprehensive Plans maintained on the Town of Easton Planning Department's web page (see https://eastonmd.gov/186/Comprehensive-Plan).

A. Purpose and Legal Framework

The Land Use Article of the Maryland Annotated Code delegates planning and land use regulatory powers to the Town of Easton. When these powers are exercised, they must be exercised in accordance with the applicable provisions of the statute. Accordingly, this Comprehensive Plan for Easton is prepared in compliance with Sections 3.05, 3.06, 3.07, and 3.08 of the statute. Sections 3.05 and 3.06 address the Plan's content and organization, and Sections 3.07 and 3.08 address procedures for the Plan's review and adoption.

The Easton Comprehensive Plan serves as the Town's foundational document for land use policy, infrastructure planning, and long-range civic investment. This document fulfills the requirements of the Maryland Land Use Article (§3-201 et seq.), which mandates that municipalities prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan to guide the coordinated and efficient development of their jurisdiction.

In April 2025, Maryland enacted new legislation creating 8 Sustainable Growth Planning Principles, modernizing and replacing the former 12 Planning Visions. These new principles reflect the State's

shift from Smart Growth to Sustainable Growth to achieve more balanced land use and development. Sustainable Growth focuses on policies addressing economic, social, and environmental factors for both current and future generations. These eight Planning Principles are designed to make sustainable growth policies simpler, clearer, and easier for everyone involved in planning and development to use effectively.



The new Planning Principles are summarized below:

Maryland's Planning Principles

1. **Land:** Optimize productivity of **working landscapes**, including **farms** and **forests**, and **fisheries**, and prioritize **development within population centers** that are in proximity to existing infrastructure and facilities.
2. **Transportation:** Prioritize transportation networks that create **energy efficient**, **affordable**, and **reliable access** to jobs, housing, and services.
3. **Housing:** Enable a mix of **quality housing types** and **affordability** options to accommodate all who want to live in the state.
4. **Economy:** Allow for **adaptive reuse**, **mixed–use**, and **context appropriate** new development that responds to changing markets and innovations.
5. **Equity:** Engage **all sectors of the community** in plan development to ensure **diverse voices** are heard and the needs of **underserved populations** are prioritized.

6. **Resilience:** Integrate resiliency measures that will **minimize** the **impacts** of rapid and unexpected **natural– and human–caused threats** on communities.
7. **Place:** Provide for **public spaces** that encourage **social interaction** and value **cultural**, **historical**, and **natural resources**.
8. **Ecology:** Protect and restore **sensitive ecological systems** and conserve **natural resources**, including forests, agricultural areas, and waterways.

These Principles ensure that local planning efforts align with State funding, capital improvement programs, and resource conservation policies. The Plan is also designed to coordinate with Talbot County's planning framework.

The 2026~~5~~ Easton Comprehensive Plan establishes Town policies relative to the most desirable development patterns for present-day Easton as well as the Easton of the future, including potential growth areas for the Town. It identifies areas for living and working activities and related services that are required to assure a quality environment for all residents. Implementation proposals are included as methods for coordinating public and private development activities. Together these influence Town development form and function. Attention is also given to the Town's role in the development of Talbot County.

The Town Council is responsible under Maryland law for adopting the Plan. The Town Planning Commission is responsible for drafting the Plan and thereafter for general administration and enforcement of the Plan. All development proposals are reviewed for conformance to basic policies and programs identified by the Plan.

Additionally, after adoption, a Comprehensive Plan serves as:

- A unified statement of desirable development policies.
- A framework within which development issues can be evaluated and public policy effectuated consistent with the Town's long-range growth and development goals and objectives.
- An information document for local elected officials, citizens, developers and special interest groups concerning critical development issues and policies.

Easton's Comprehensive Plan is a cornerstone of the complex process of guiding future development in the interest of the public. Adoption of the Plan constitutes an important step in

directing development in a manner that maintains and enhances Easton's special and unique sense of place.

B. Planning Background, Scope and Use of this Plan

Easton's modern planning era began with the 1997 Comprehensive Plan, which was developed in response to community concerns about uncoordinated growth, loss of open space, and weakening of traditional neighborhood character. That Plan introduced a new framework based on community identity, compact form, and public participation.

The 2010 Plan built upon that foundation, introducing five core growth strategies: contain sprawl, increase density, build neighborhoods, improve design, and manage growth rate. These strategies guided the Town's zoning reforms and capital improvement priorities for more than a decade.

This 2026 Plan~~2025 Plan~~ affirms those guiding principles and introduces a sixth strategy: encourage more sustainable development patterns. This addition reflects emerging concerns about climate change, infrastructure efficiency, fiscal resilience, and equitable access to housing and opportunity. Looking back over the past decades of the modern planning process, most of the overarching themes of this 2026 Plan~~2025 Plan~~ originally appeared in the one that was adopted in 1997.

This Plan provides a policy framework to guide Easton's development through 2035. It is organized into thematic chapters covering land use, community character, infrastructure and services, environmental stewardship, housing, transportation, municipal growth, and implementation. Each chapter includes guiding principles, context, objectives, and recommendations.

The Comprehensive Plan is used by the Planning Commission, Town Council, staff, and the public to guide development review, budget decisions, capital investments, and updates to zoning and subdivision ordinances. It is also used by State and regional agencies in assessing funding eligibility and regulatory compliance. The Plan is intended to be updated as needed to remain current with demographic trends, regulatory changes, and community priorities.

C. Easton's Role and Identity

Easton is the economic, governmental, and cultural center of Talbot County and Maryland's Mid-Shore region. As the County seat, it houses the region's major hospital, courthouse, library, and other key institutions. Easton supports a population of a little over 17,000 residents, with services that extend to tens of thousands more from the surrounding area.

Easton is frequently recognized as one of the best small towns in America. The Town is defined by its walkable historic downtown, traditional neighborhoods, and compact form. Its character is shaped by architectural continuity, preserved open space, and a strong civic tradition. Easton is situated at the crossroads of U.S. Route 50 and Maryland Route 322, giving it strategic access to the Chesapeake Bay, Annapolis, Washington, and Baltimore. Its rural setting and cultural amenities make it both a desirable place to live and a key regional destination. Easton's growth over the past century reflects its increasing role as a regional center and its attractiveness as a place to live and invest.

For an overview of Easton's historical development and growth dynamics, and that of the region, see Appendix 1.

D. Foundations and Data Sources

This Plan is based on a range of data, analysis tools, and prior studies that provide a foundation for its goals and recommendations. Sources include the U.S. Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning, Talbot County Geographic Information Systems (GIS), local infrastructure capacity studies, and Easton's building permit and land use data. The Plan also incorporates fiscal analysis tools such as Urban3 value-per-acre assessments to evaluate development patterns.

Taken together, these tools provide a comprehensive and evidence-based foundation for land use policy, infrastructure planning, and growth management.

One demographic change evident in (although not unique to) Easton is the growth of the Hispanic population~~, which mirrors the decline in African-American population~~. The chart below shows how these components of Easton's population have changed since 1990 when Hispanics were first reported separately. Particularly noteworthy is the absolute growth in the Hispanic population as evidenced by the fact that while the total African American population has been ~~very steady~~ stable since 1990, the percentage that this number represents of the total Town population has shrunk considerably. Conversely the Hispanic population growth has been dramatic both in absolute numbers and as a percentage of the Town's overall population (from 0.4% to 14.4%).

¶

¶

Year	Total Population	African American	African American %	Hispanic or Latino	Hispanic or Latino %
1990	9,372	2,521	26.9%	337	0.4%
2000	11,708	2,746	23.5%	404	3.5%
2010	15,9945	2,742	17.2%	1,570	9.8%
2020	17,101	2,467	14.4%	2,454	14.4%

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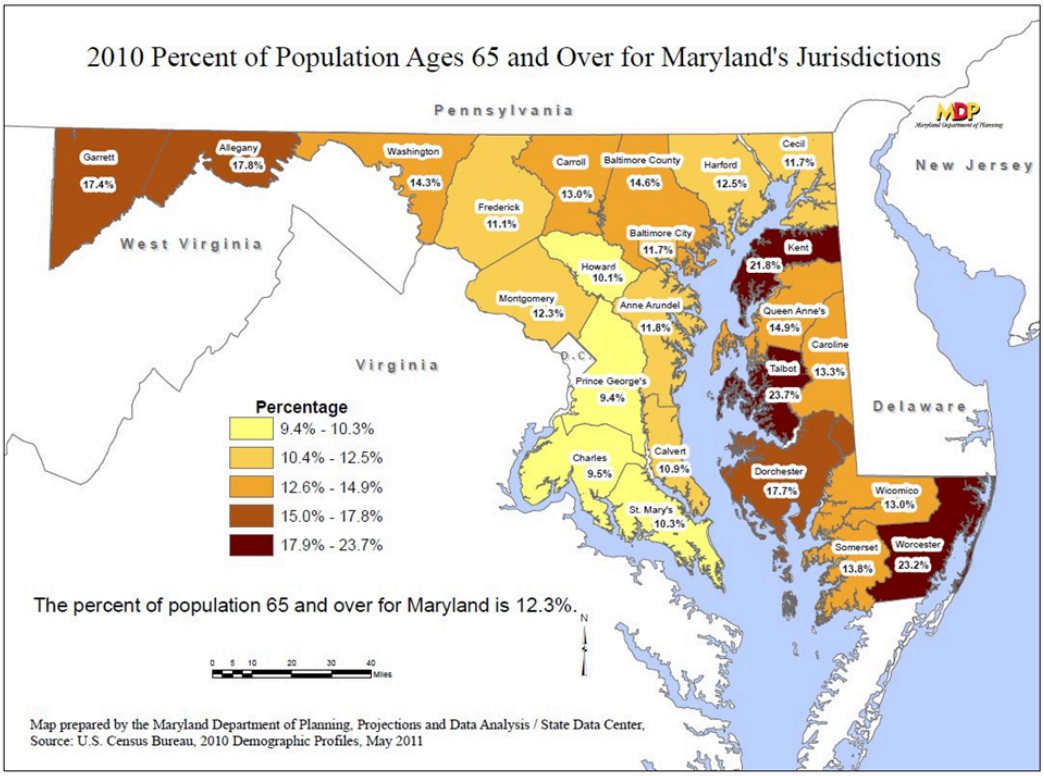
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YEAR¶	% AFRICAN-AMERICAN ¶	% HISPANIC¶
1990¶	26.9%¶	0.4%¶
2000¶	23.5%¶	3.5%¶
2010¶	17.2%¶	9.8%¶
2020¶	14.7%¶	14.4%¶

TABLE 1 AFRICAN AMERICAN AND HISPANIC POPULATION CHANGE, 1990-2020

SOURCE : US Decennial Census for Year identified

Easton and Talbot County have a high concentration of people over age 65. In 2010 Maryland Department of Planning produced the following map illustrating this:



Map 1: Maryland Senior Population by County

American Communities Survey data for 2021 indicates that senior citizens remain a significant portion of the local population. It found that while the state percentage of the population that was 65 or over in 2021 was 16.3%, Talbot County's was 29.9% and the Town of Easton's was 24.9%.

E. Planning Process and Public Engagement

Work on this Comprehensive Plan update began in 2021 with a review of the 2010 Plan's implementation outcomes. Through 2022, 2023 and 2024, Town staff and consultants gathered data, conducted mapping and zoning analysis, and assessed growth capacity. Community engagement began in 2023 and continued into 20254, including public open houses, stakeholder workshops, online surveys, and formal public hearings.

Since 1997, each subsequent update of the Comprehensive Plan has continued to refine the Town's growth strategy, summarized in the 2010 Plan as:

- Contain Sprawl within an Urban Growth Boundary

- Increase Density
- Build Neighborhoods
- Improve Design
- Manage the Rate of Growth

The 2026 Plan~~2025 Plan~~ adds a sixth component to this Growth Management Strategy:

- Encourage More Sustainable Development Patterns

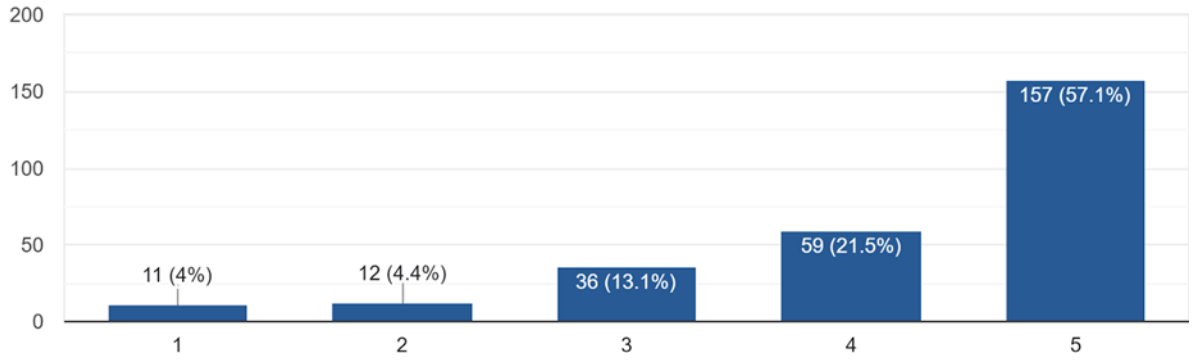
Key themes identified through public input included the need for workforce housing, reinvestment in the downtown core, traffic and multimodal transportation improvements, protection of neighborhood character, and preservation of Easton's agricultural and open space edges. The Planning Commission oversaw the process and incorporated community feedback into all major chapters and policy recommendations.

Community Feedback Process Highlights

The community input phase of this Plan Update asked the public about the continued relevance or appropriateness of each component of the Growth Management strategy. The results were clear: each received something between moderate to very strong support for continuing to be included in the next Planning Period (20265-20365). As a result, this Plan Update begins with the premise that there is no desire to throw any of these strategies out. Rather, the objective is to build on these ideas, refine and improve them where possible, and update them based on new information or issues where necessary. In a nutshell, this is the context and spirit of this Plan update. The results of the questions about Town's Growth Management strategy are summarized in the following charts (for each response, 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree):

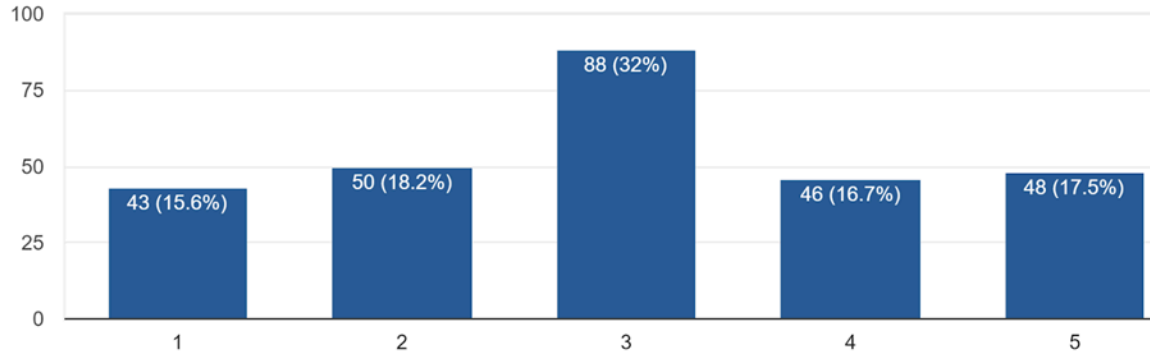
Contain Sprawl with an Urban Growth Boundary

275 responses



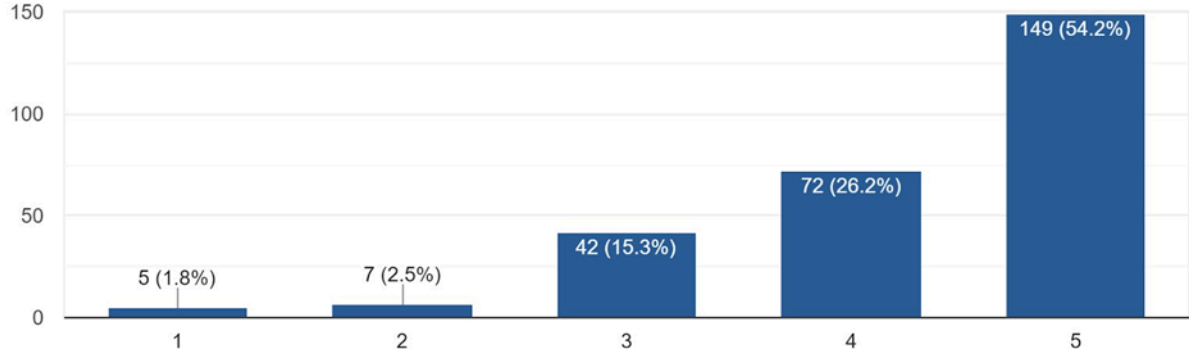
Increase Density

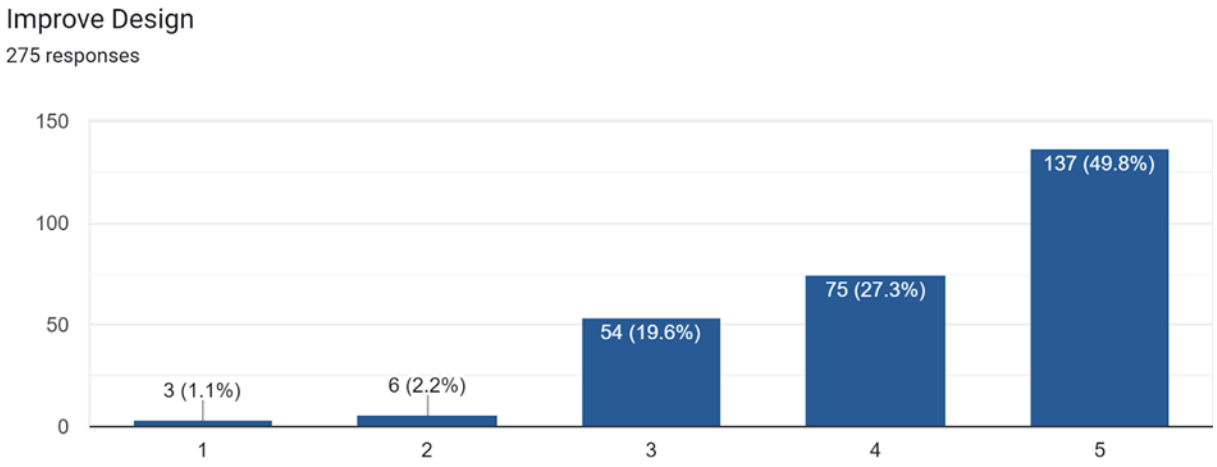
275 responses

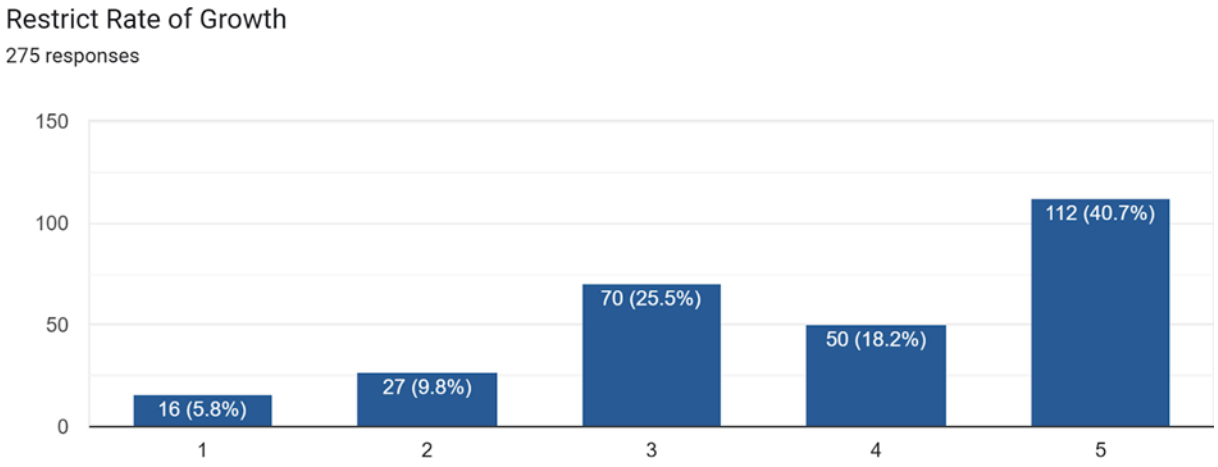


Build Neighborhoods (as opposed to Subdivisions)

275 responses







Detailed survey results from the public outreach program are provided in Appendix 2.

F. Vision

This Plan's Vision for the future of Easton can be summarized as "A Return to our Roots." This suggests that we desire the future growth and development of our Town to occur in a more Traditional sense, not in the modern constructs of suburbia. Furthermore, we envision our Town to continue to function as the main population center of Talbot County and one of the major Towns on the mid-Shore, along with Cambridge, Denton, Salisbury, Centreville, and Chestertown. We will be a significant place of employment, entertainment and shopping, but on our scale, not that of National Retailers. We have no desire to become THE major shopping destination for the region stretching from the Bay Bridge to Chestertown, to Salisbury and the Delaware State line. We are happy to be

THE destination for the citizens of Talbot County and one of several options for people in the region described above, but nothing grander than that.

The “Return to our Roots” theme stems from our desire to develop much more like we did from our earliest days until the beginning of the Post World War II era than from the 1940’s through roughly the present. We want the same kind of density, mix of land uses, and general character of the earlier days and we want to move away from homogenous uses, cookie-cutter, mass produced looking subdivisions, strip development along our highways, and the general “looks like anywhere Suburban America”. We want to be urban, not suburban, although urban on an Eastern Shore of Maryland scale. To that end, this chapter is the perfect companion to Place Element, where this whole theme is discussed in greater detail.

This Vision and theme is the same as that set forth in the 2010 Plan. Considering that in terms of the growth of the Town, little changed from 2010 to today, this makes sense. Specifically, in 2025, just as in 2010, Easton finds itself in a period of slow growth, with a housing affordability problem, and with public support for our overall growth strategy. In some ways though, it will be more challenging to implement this strategy, given that there are at least a few factors that are different in 2026~~5~~ than they were in 2010. These differences include the increased severity of the housing affordability issue, and recent purchases of large parcels of land by the Town of Easton and Talbot County, which while advancing land preservation/parks and open space goals, also remove hundreds of acres of land from consideration of potential new housing.

Lastly, there is the existence of the Lakeside at Trappe subdivision located a mere five minutes from our southernmost Town boundary. In 2010, and really for decades, Easton has been “the only game in town” in terms of residential development. Now, there is significant “competition” in the form of this 2,000 unit subdivision. How that affects the absorption rate of home sales (and prices) in Easton is unknown at this point, but potentially a significant factor in both our growth strategy and housing affordability during this planning period.

2. LAND USE

> TO HAVE GOOD FARMING OR GOOD LAND USE OF ANY KIND, YOU HAVE GOT TO HAVE LIMITS.
>
> — Wendell Berry

A. PURPOSE

At its heart, a Comprehensive Plan remains first and foremost a land use plan. This Land Use Element provides the foundation upon which later plan elements are based. It is the blueprint for the future development of the Town. Together with the Municipal Growth Element, the Land Use Element outlines policies for the orderly and planned development of the Town.

The use of land within the Town is the result of many physical, economic and social forces. The Land Use Element reflects an attempt by the Town to equitably balance the attainment of Town goals and objectives for development with private property rights and interests. The Land Use Element addresses issues and identifies Town policies relative to residential, commercial, and industrial development as well as the provision of lands for parks and open spaces. It analyzes the appropriate mix of uses in the short and long term given projected growth. It will address reversing and rectifying what are now viewed as poor land use decisions (made not just in Easton but throughout the nation) that were made in the past, primarily since the late 1940's. In short, it lays the groundwork that will be repeated throughout the Plan for ensuring that future growth is not in the form of auto-centric, isolated, suburban style subdivisions but rather takes the form of multi-use, integrated, and connected neighborhoods.

At its founding in 1710, Easton was located at the headwaters of the Tred Avon River. Current visitors to Easton may well be confused by that statement and wonder why the Town moved from that location. Actually the Town did not move. Rather, the river changed. It does still exist in this area, but has been reduced to a stream that has been enclosed in culverts in the vicinity of Talbottown Shopping Center and the Easton Utilities Electric Generating Plant.

Directing growth is a critical task facing local governments throughout the country today. Many communities view growth as essential to their economic health. Communities without growth may be forced to continually raise taxes on existing residents and businesses since the tax base does not expand. On the other hand, unchecked, unmanaged growth can also cause many problems.

Achieving the right balance of land uses is critical in avoiding these problems. For example, a community that focuses primarily on residential growth may become a bedroom community where the residents are forced to travel to other places for everything from work to shopping. A community with an overabundance of commercial development invites traffic congestion. And unless the community has adequate design standards, whatever development occurs may not be aesthetically pleasing.

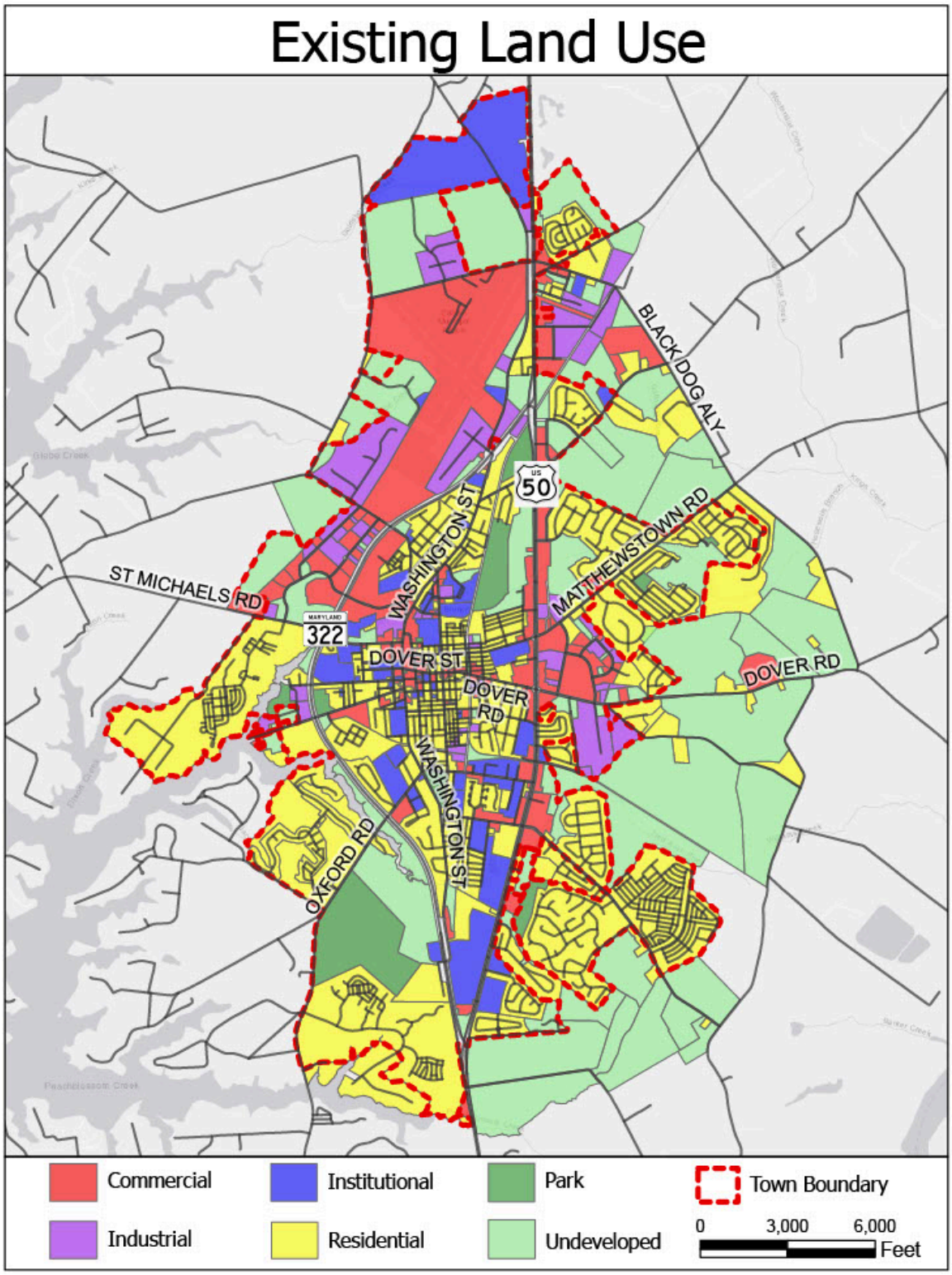
Further, as part of Talbot County, Easton has been designated as a growth area so that the rural nature of the County can be protected and preserved through restrictive zoning.

i. Existing Land Use Patterns

Easton's current land use pattern reflects both its historic compact form and the evolution of development along its edges. The older parts of town feature walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods with civic, institutional, and small-scale commercial uses integrated into the residential fabric. These areas, such as the downtown core and nearby traditional neighborhoods, exemplify the kind of development the Town aims to preserve and replicate.

In contrast, the newer areas along the Town's fringe exhibit more suburban, automobile-oriented patterns. These include large-footprint retail, isolated office or institutional campuses, and conventional subdivisions with limited street connectivity. In some cases, land use and zoning remain mismatched, and legacy industrial or underused commercial areas present opportunities for reinvestment.

Map 2 Existing Land Use Map



Map 3 is an insert showing graphically the growth of the Town over time. This map was first included in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan and has been updated to show changes over time. In many ways the most interesting aspect of this information may be what has occurred since 2004. In short, we followed our Plan. There were only three annexations approved during the 2004 - 2010 Planning period. The same information listing every Annexation throughout the Town's history is included in Appendix 3.

Two of these were shown as Priority 1 Growth Areas in the 2004 Plan. The third was not, but there was a Comprehensive Plan Amendment approved to make it a Priority 1 Area. There have been 11 Annexations throughout the current Planning Period, but it is important to note that it has been 13 years rather than the previously mandated six years as a result of the amendment to that provision of the State Land Use Article. Notably, all eleven annexed properties were indicated as Priority 1 Growth Areas in the 2010 Plan.

One other annexation was reviewed in the 2004 - 2010 Planning Period, but it was rejected because the Plan indicated the area as a Priority 3 Growth Area, therefore it was determined by both the Planning Commission and the Town Council to be inconsistent with the Plan. Lastly, one Annexation request was also denied in the most recent Planning Period. That one was for a Priority 1 designated area, but it was denied over concerns centered around unknown impacts (primarily, traffic) that might occur with future development/redevelopment of the properties in question.



Map 3 - Historic Annexations

B. Land Use Goals, Issues and Policy Considerations

Easton's land use strategy is grounded in a practical understanding of land availability, infrastructure capacity, and fiscal impacts. With limited undeveloped space remaining within Town boundaries, strategic infill and redevelopment are essential to future growth. The Town's land use goals remain consistent with the core principles outlined in the 1997 and 2010 Comprehensive Plans: preserving neighborhood character, maintaining a compact development pattern, and focusing growth within a defined boundary supported by infrastructure and public services.

The foundation for future land use decisions begins with understanding current land use patterns. A key indicator is shown in the table below, which presents the acreage of each zoning district established under the 2021 Zoning Ordinance, along with estimated amounts of unimproved land within each district.

Table 2 AVAILABLE LAND BY ZONING CLASSIFICATION			
Zoning	Total Acreage	Estimated Unimproved Acreage **	Percentage of Total Town Area
A-1	65	24	
R-10A	2199	107	
R-10M	117	62	
R-7A	332	6	
Total Residential	**2713**	**199**	**41.18%**
CBD	131	3	
CG	391	33	
CL	153	122	
Total Commercial	**675**	**158**	**10.25%**
BC	502	113	
I	815	45	
Total Industrial	**1317**	**158**	**19.99%**
PUD	1373	217	
HC	100	0	
RH	233	233	
G/I	101	0	
MXW	76	17	
Total Floating, Mixed-Use & Governmental/Institutional Districts	1883	467	28.58%
Total all Districts	6588	1,398	

** Not all unimproved acreage is conducive to development, i.e. environmental factors, open space, etc.

Source: Estimates originally prepared by Brent Spicer, Easton Utilities Commission, on January 3, 1994, and updated to include new annexations and rezonings. Estimates of unimproved acreage prepared by Current Planner Zach Smith on September 23, 2009. Updated for this Plan by Nicholas Johnson on March 17, 2023.

Achieving a healthy, vibrant community depends on balance—and the first step is assessing whether Easton's current land use is already out of balance. Table 7 highlights a key issue: the limited supply of unimproved land within Town limits. This constraint means future growth must

be met through annexation in designated Future Growth Areas, redevelopment within the existing boundary, or both.

Buildout analysis confirms that under current zoning, Easton can accommodate only modest additional residential and nonresidential development without annexation. As such, policies that promote higher density, infill, and redevelopment are essential. In areas where infrastructure exists but capacity is limited, targeted investment in water, sewer, and transportation systems will be necessary. Growth must occur where public systems can support it efficiently and where the design enhances walkability, access to services, and long-term fiscal sustainability.

The 2026 Plan~~2025 Plan~~ emphasizes that sustainable land use planning is not only about where growth happens, but how. The Future Land Use Map and supporting policies direct development to areas already served by public infrastructure while discouraging inefficient sprawl that burdens the community with long-term maintenance costs.

Each land use category in the Plan reflects both function (e.g., residential, commercial, open space) and expectations for form, intensity, and infrastructure compatibility. These categories aim to reinforce planning goals while allowing flexibility for context-sensitive design and public input during development review.

While the 2004 Plan explored the ideal mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses, the 2010 Plan omitted that discussion, acknowledging the subjectivity of such targets. The original intent was never to cap any land use type, but rather to flag imbalances. At the time, it was clear—both from data and public input—that Easton had significantly more commercial development than typical for a town its size.

Public input for the 2026 Plan~~2025 Plan~~ suggests that imbalance persists, likely worsened by the national decline of traditional retail and the accelerated shift to online shopping during the COVID-19 pandemic. Addressing this imbalance will require thoughtful land use strategies that reflect modern economic trends while supporting a more diversified, resilient community fabric.

i. Retail Uses

Public input for this Plan revealed what seems at first to be a contradiction: while Easton is perceived as over-commercialized, many residents also expressed a desire for more variety in retail and food establishments. This apparent conflict begins to make sense when we examine Easton's

commercial landscape by subcategory. Not all retail is equal, and the perception of over-commercialization is likely tied to certain types of retail, not the concept itself.

Easton's retail environment can be broadly grouped into four categories: Neighborhood Retail, Regional Retail, Transient-Oriented Retail, and Downtown Retail. Each plays a distinct role in the Town's land use future.

- Neighborhood Retail
    - This type of small-scale, walkable retail is nearly absent outside the Town Center.
    - Most o~~O~~lder neighborhoods in Easton are exclusively residential in nature and overwhelmingly single family detached in type. Where appropriate, a mechanism should exist to at least allow the consideration of small, limited-scale, ~~be retrofitted to include~~ neighborhood-serving shops to reinforce a sense of place and reduce car dependence in these communities.
    - New residential developments should integrate, or at least accommodate, neighborhood-scale commercial uses—small retail nodes at the intersection of well-defined neighborhoods.
    - Planning must ensure such retail remains neighborhood-serving in scale and does not evolve into broader commercial centers. Properly located and scaled, neighborhood retail can reduce local traffic rather than increase it.
- Regional Retail
    - This is the dominant retail form in Easton and the primary contributor to its unusually high per capita retail space—estimated at 80 square feet per person, roughly double the level recommended in the 2004 Plan.
    - It is also the most frequently cited concern in public feedback about over-commercialization.
    - Future regional retail development will be limited to:
        - Undeveloped commercially zoned land,
        - Redevelopment of existing shopping centers.

    - No expansion of regional retail areas is proposed in the Future Land Use Map.
    - Any new regional retail must comply with strict design standards. Done well, it can reinforce local character; done poorly, it risks making Easton indistinguishable from "Anywhere, USA."
- Transient-Oriented Retail
    - This category includes gas stations, fast food, and quick-service retail that serve through-traffic as well as residents.
    - While new growth opportunities are limited, redevelopment potential is strong—especially along Route 50.
    - This retail type is valued by residents and workers for its convenience (e.g., lunch spots, fuel).
    - Like regional retail, it requires careful design regulation to improve Easton's visual character and avoid corridor sprawl.
    - Future expansion will focus on:
        - Improving undeveloped commercial sites near the Town's northern edge,
        - Redevelopment along the Route 50 corridor.
- Downtown (Town Center)
    - Easton's Downtown is the heart of the community, with its historic buildings, government offices, the courthouse (dating to 1794), the Avalon Theatre, museums, restaurants, inns, and specialty shops.
    - While space for new development is limited, there are opportunities for targeted redevelopment and infill.
    - A Plan for Downtown Redevelopment and Infill, adopted in 2009, guides this work and is discussed further in the Economic Development chapter.
    - Preserving and strengthening existing businesses will be key to keeping Downtown vibrant and maintaining Easton's unique character.

Easton's perceived over-commercialization stems largely from an oversupply of regional-scale retail. At the same time, residents are asking for more neighborhood-serving, diverse, and vibrant commercial experiences, especially in underserved parts of town. Future land use policy should support a balanced commercial mix, regulate scale and design, and encourage development that reinforces neighborhood identity and local character.

Table 2 summarizes these commercial retail types. For purposes of comparison, "Neighborhood" aligns with the category described above, while "Community" and "Regional" fall under the broader discussion of regional retail.

	Neighborhood	Community	Regional
Location	- within convenient walking distance of residential areas - intersections of collector and secondary roads	- intersection of major roads and expressways	- intersections of expressways
Service Radius	0.5 mile	2 miles	4 miles (urban setting) 8-10 miles (suburban) 15+ miles (rural area)
Catchment Area	5 - 10 minute travel	10 - 20 minute travel	30 - 60 minute travel

Population Served	4,000 – 10,000	35,000 – 50,000	Over 150,000
Max. Desirable Size for Shopping Centers	1 acre/1000 served	0.75 acres/1000	0.67 acres/1000
Total Size	4 - 8 acres	10 - 30 acres	40 - 100 acres
Avg. Gross Floor Area	30,000 - 75,000 sq. ft.	100,000 -250,000 sq. ft.	400,000 - 1,000,000
Number of Stores for Shopping Center	5 - 20	15 - 40	40 - 80

Table 3: Shopping Center Characteristics by Type
Source: Adapted from Urban Land Institute (1982); Lynch and Hack (1984); Leung (1989)

ii. Residential Uses

Residential Land Uses are generally not described in terms of a ratio. In fact, to the contrary, the needs of the other land uses are often projected based on ratios involving the number of residential

units (or population) in the community. The discussion about residential land uses tends to focus more on the arrangement, appearance, variety, and density of this land use. That is discussed thoroughly in the Place and Housing Elements. Suffice it to say that we continue to see things changing for this land use. We do not envision the future of Easton as a series of disconnected, isolated, monotonous subdivisions. Rather we want to see a seamless, attractive, interesting, Sustainable Growth inspired Easton; one Easton, not a collection of suburban residential enclaves.

iii. Industrial

The discussion in the 2004 Plan did not talk about a ratio of industrial land acreage or square footage to residential units, but rather talked about jobs to housing ratio. For this land use, the 2004 Plan concluded that there were more jobs in Easton than the population would suggest is necessary. However, as the 2010 Plan noted, there were a number of factors that skewed this estimate. These included:

- a large proportion of Easton's population is retired - there are a lot of dwelling units for which no jobs are necessary
- a shifting in the focus of jobs away from the manufacturing and traditional "industrial" type jobs towards service-oriented jobs
- tourism has become more important in Easton and more jobs are found in the food and hospitality sectors of the job market
- Easton is the governmental center of Talbot County – this results in many government jobs, as well as jobs in allied professions such as legal, real estate, accounting, surveying and engineering, etc.
- As the largest community on the Mid-Shore, Easton is a hub for medical services, entertainment, retail, etc.
- Easton serves as an employment hub for a much larger area than Talbot County

The 2010 Plan stated "It is clear that there has been a gradual erosion of the availability of this[industrially-zoned] land for classic industrial uses by allowing more and more commercial and service uses." Changes were made to the Town's Zoning Regulations in recognition of this issue. Also, a partially developed Industrial Park (Talbot Commerce Park) was annexed into Town in this Planning period, to provide Town infrastructure, which has accelerated its build-out. Finally, in response to this diminishing supply of industrial property, the Town obtained a US Department of

Commerce grant to extend and install utilities to the Town-owned Mistletoe Hall property, facilitating its development as a Commerce and Business Park.

Many of the jobs in Easton are filled by residents of jurisdictions other than Easton, impacting our transportation system. The other side of the coin of having so many people commuting into Easton for work is the fact that many Easton residents are commuting out of town to work. Thus, jobs which better meet the needs of Easton residents would be of great benefit in reducing traffic and the associated environmental impacts. For this reason specifically there are industrial areas proposed on the eastern side of Town for development in the long-range planning period.

The benefits of mixed land uses will be a recurring theme throughout this Plan, particularly in the Place and Transportation Elements. In short, mixed uses:

- Increase housing options for more diverse household types.
- Provide more transportation options.
- Reduce automobile dependence.
- Create a truer sense of place than single-use suburban style development.
- Activates urban areas throughout more times of the day.
- Provide greater opportunity for social interaction.
- Reduce a community's carbon footprint by encouraging walking and biking as an alternative to automobile use.
- Increase the safety of the neighborhood by putting more eyes on the street.

The 2026 Plan~~2025 Plan~~ adds greater emphasis on sustainability, fiscal efficiency, and redevelopment. Land use policy is increasingly tied to infrastructure investment, public space, transportation networks, and economic productivity. New fiscal tools, including value-per-acre modeling, help the Town assess where land use patterns generate long-term public value relative to cost.

C. Zoning And Community Character

i. Rethinking Zoning and the Built Environment

Much has been written in recent years about the "sins" of modern planning and the failures of the built environment in many American communities. Movements like Smart Growth, New Urbanism, and Neo-Traditional Planning emerged in response to development patterns that sacrificed livability, character, and sustainability in favor of automobile-dependent sprawl.

Sprawl has been characterized by low-density, single-use development; monotonous subdivisions; congested roads; and the loss of farmland and forests. These patterns stand in stark contrast to the compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods this Plan seeks to promote.

1. *How Did We Get Here?*

A major reason for these outcomes lies in the very tools used to regulate growth—most notably, zoning. While zoning was originally intended to protect public health and safety—such as separating housing from noxious uses—it has evolved into a rigid system that over-segregates land uses and suppresses the integrated, mixed-use development patterns of traditional towns.

The roots of zoning date back to 1867 in San Francisco, with broader adoption following the landmark 1926 Supreme Court decision in Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co., which upheld the constitutionality of zoning. Since then, the tool has become ubiquitous—but not without consequences.

In Easton, as in many places, zoning has too often discouraged the very types of communities we value. Wide separation of uses, minimum lot sizes, and restrictive codes have made car-dependent subdivisions the default. The time has come to rethink this model.

2. *Is It Time to Abandon Zoning?*

Not entirely. Zoning still has a role in protecting residents from heavy industry and incompatible land uses. However, Easton should reform its Zoning Ordinance to encourage mixed-use, walkable, and human-scaled neighborhoods—especially in undeveloped areas within the Town's Growth Area.

For example, commercial uses and workplaces that are compatible with nearby housing should not be excluded. Residential densities should be increased and minimum lot sizes reduced to support more efficient and livable neighborhoods. At a minimum, new development should meet the State's

Smart Growth Priority Funding Area threshold of 3.5 units per acre (net)—with higher densities encouraged in appropriate areas.

3. *Value-per-acre modeling*

In 2024, the Planning/Economic Development Firm Urban3 modelled the fiscal impacts of land uses on the Eastern Shore in general, and then in Talbot County specifically. The basis of Urban3's methodology involves examining "value per acre" for the area being analyzed. The findings of this effort are summarized more thoroughly in the Sustainability Chapter of this Plan. A full copy of the report can also be found on the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy's website, at: https://www.eslc.org/urban3/. From a Land Use perspective, suffice it to say that the Urban3 study suggests that the fiscal sustainability of development patterns is yet another reason to support future development of a Traditional Neighborhood form as opposed to the suburban archetype that has become more prevalent over the course of the past five or six decades.

D. Future Land Use Framework

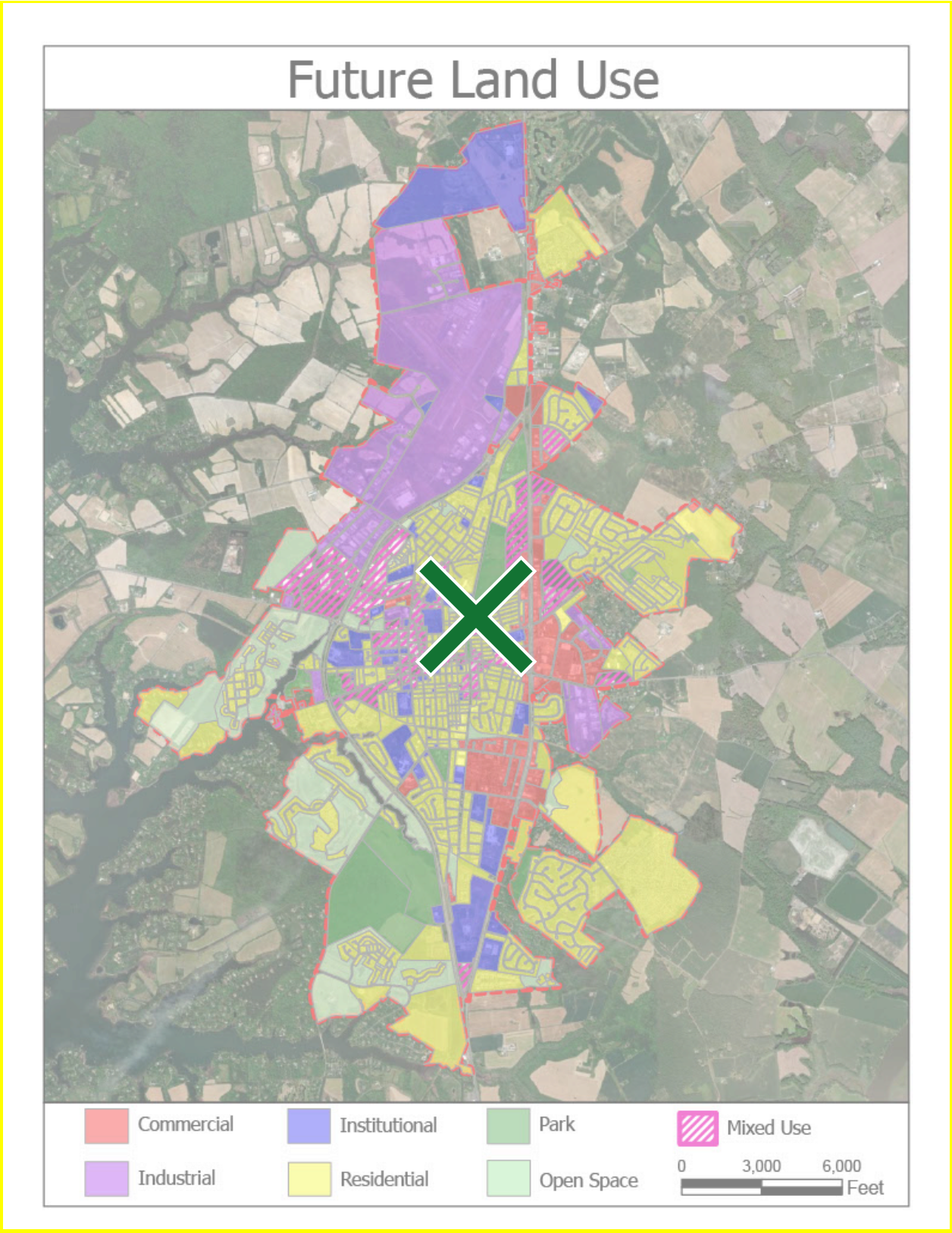
This Plan organizes Easton's future growth into a series of land use categories that describe the general pattern, scale, and intent for development. These categories guide zoning decisions and help ensure that growth occurs in appropriate locations and forms. While this Plan is not a zoning map, it provides the foundation for future amendments to the Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations.

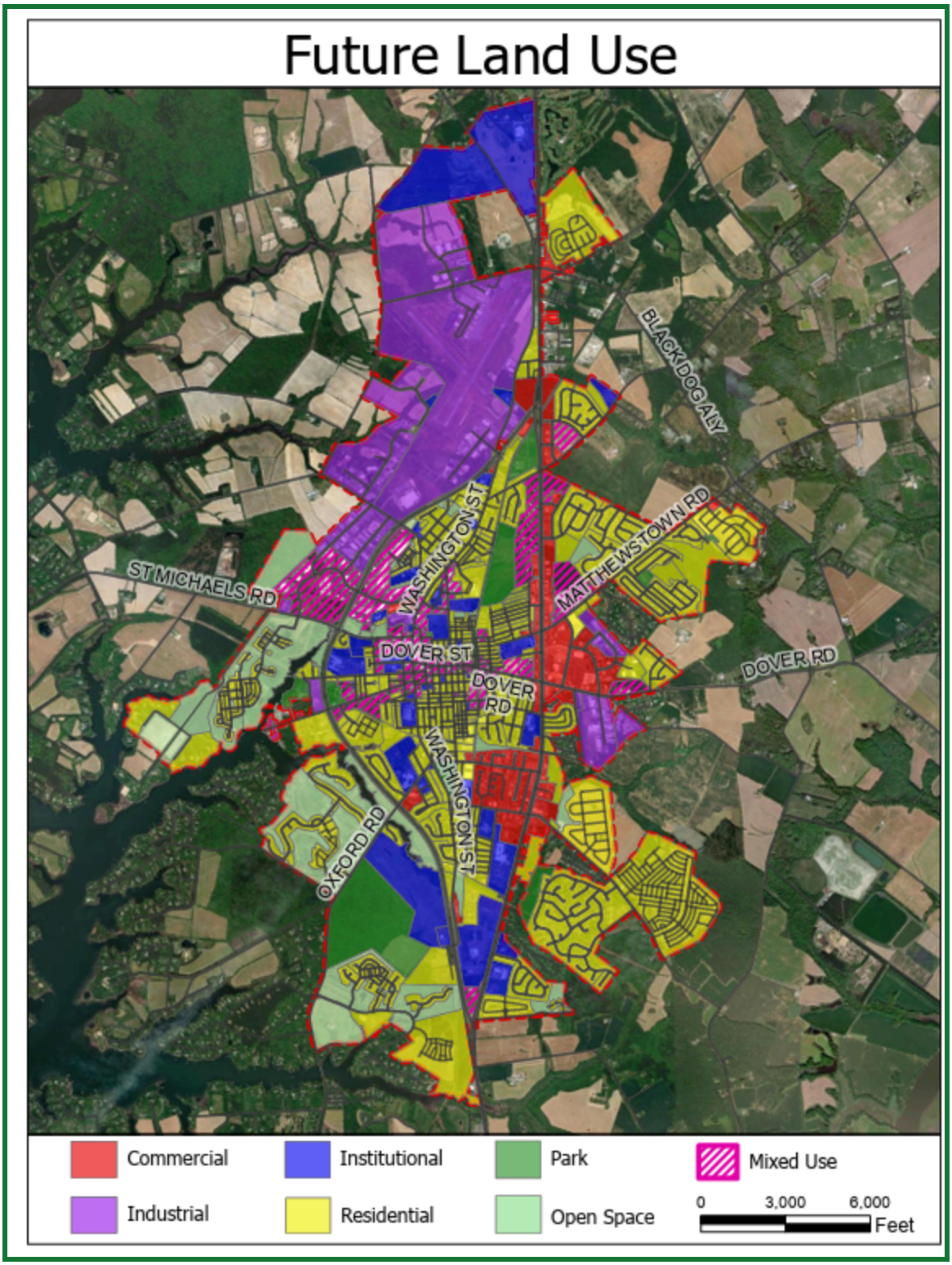
Future land use designations are not intended to be parcel-specific or regulatory. Rather, they provide a generalized vision for how areas of the Town should evolve over time. Zoning changes and site plan approvals will be guided by these designations but must also consider compatibility, capacity, and design quality.

The Future Land Use Map contained and described more thoroughly in the Implementation Element, provides a graphic representation of the desired pattern of land uses within the Town.

The Future Land Use Map identifies where residential, commercial, mixed-use, open space, and institutional development is anticipated. These areas are tied to infrastructure readiness, access to services, and their ability to support complete neighborhoods.

Map 4 - Future Land Use





There is one proposed addition to the overall limits of the Town's Future Growth Area. During the course of the past planning cycle, it has become increasingly apparent that there would be advantages to having the Town-owned property that is the site of our Wastewater Treatment

Facility to be located within Town Boundaries. This would require Annexation and in order for any future Annexation to be consistent with this Plan, the land for said annexation needs to be included in our Future Growth Area. Thus, this Plan proposes to expand the Growth Boundary to the east from its present limit to the WWTP site. The only additional land besides the WWTP that would be brought into the Growth Area as a result of this change would be Seth Forest and the bed of Chesapeake Avenue as it passes along the southern border of the property. Given that these properties are State-owned and Town-owned, and the purpose for which each is used, there is essentially no possibility that such an action would increase the development potential of the Future Growth Area.

See Table 2 on page 18 for detailed definitions and acreage summaries by zoning category.

E. Special Districts and Place Types

The Future Land Use Framework includes several key districts that serve as focal points for the Town's identity and growth strategy. These include:

- Downtown Easton – walkable, civic and cultural hub with mixed-use development.
- East End/Dover Road Corridor~~Gateway~~ – commercial node with opportunities for infill and street-front redesign.
- Port Street Corridor – targeted for redevelopment with housing, employment, and civic amenities.
- Hospital District – medical and institutional anchor, with supportive residential and commercial uses.

- Poplar Hill Farm - 120 acre parcel purchased by Talbot County in 2025. Formerly viewed as a key site for future growth, it is designated for Institutional use, reflecting its ownership by the County. This could mean a host of things, including active or passive parks and/or new County government facilities. It is also large enough that a portion could be subdivided and sold for private development to raise funds for the governmental use of the bulk of the property. If so, the appropriate use in this location would be residential, although a very small-scale commercial or mixed-use component to serve the numerous strictly residential developments in

the area (e.g., Cooke's Hope, Thread Haven, and now, effectively (with the closure of the restaurant and Club House), Easton Club.

These districts will benefit from targeted planning efforts, including small area plans, design guidelines, and infrastructure investments.

Of particular importance this planning cycle is the Hospital District and actually, there are two. One is the location of the current hospital and the second is the location of the new facility now under active construction. The Hospital relocation and expansion to the northern end of the Town's Growth Area requires special consideration of a number of factors or issues, including:

- What is the most appropriate reuse/redevelopment of the current hospital site?
- What is the likely future for the various medical facilities located on Dutchman's Lane and Idelwild Avenue? Do they eventually relocate closer to the new facility? If so, when is this likely to occur? What then is the most appropriate use/reuse of these facilities?
- The new hospital site is remote from the rest of Town and surrounded by undeveloped land, an industrial park, and the Talbot Community Center and associated recreational facilities. Given this, what is the most appropriate land use for the unimproved parcels surrounding and in close proximity to the new hospital? How can the new hospital be better connected and integrated with the bulk of the Town of Easton?

F. Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives guide Easton's future land use policy. These reflect the vision and values adopted in the 2026 Plan~~2025 Plan~~ and build on the foundations established in 2010 and earlier.

Goal #1: Limit the geographic outward expansion of Easton.

Objectives:

- Reaffirm the current Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and use it to guide annexation and utility extensions.
- Coordinate with Talbot County and various land preservation and environmentally-aligned organizations to secure easements and other long-term protection devices on properties along and in close proximity to the Urban Growth Boundary on the County side of the line.

- Establish annexation policies that include criteria for development readiness, consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, and expected phasing or pacing of growth.
- Explore incentive annexation to gain control of land on the town's border that might have previously been developed under Talbot County rules and regulations to facilitate more appropriate redevelopment or expansion on such parcels.
- Slow the demand for more land by increasing the density of future residential areas. At a minimum, the State of Maryland's minimum acceptable density for qualification as a Priority Funding Area of 3.5 units (net) per acre should be achieved in these developments.
- Consider adoption of an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) if the rate of growth is exceeding the current or planned capacity for specific types of infrastructure.
- Follow a Capital Improvement Program which will allow the Town to provide a rational basis for implementing improvements and increase funding opportunities, in a planned manner to locations where growth may be prioritized.

Goal #2: Make Easton more walkable and connected / achieve a more balanced and integrated mix of uses.

Objectives:

- Encourage development patterns that promote walkability, including higher densities, mixed-use areas, and traditional neighborhood form.
- Support neighborhood-scale commercial development and live/work spaces that reduce the need for automobile trips.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and ensure it is included in all new development and redevelopment projects.
- Encourage connections between neighborhoods and commercial areas through a fine-grained street network and active transportation routes.
- ~~"Retro-fit"~~ Consider allowing diversification of land uses within older, developed subdivisions ~~in~~~~subdivisions within~~ through the ~~Town by~~ addition ~~addion~~ of ~~ng~~ small, neighborhood-scale retail, civic and open space elements to existing residential subdivisions.

- Amend the Town's Zoning Ordinance to change the focus from regulation by building use, to building type and site impact.
- Simplify the process for developers to achieve the Town's objectives

Goal #3: Use land efficiently and sustainably.

Objectives:

- Prioritize infill and redevelopment of vacant or underutilized sites within the Town's boundary.
- Balance new development with infrastructure capacity, using water, sewer, transportation, and stormwater data to guide land use decisions.
- Use fiscal modeling tools, such as value-per-acre assessments, to evaluate the long-term sustainability of proposed land use changes.
- Discourage low-density development at the fringe of Town that generates higher infrastructure costs and undermines compact growth goals.
- Explore options to expedite permit approvals for permitted uses if extraordinary design improvements are included.

3. PLACE (COMMUNITY CHARACTER)

"We shape our buildings and afterward our buildings shape us."

– Winston Churchill

A. Purpose

Improving the quality of Easton's built environment has been a central goal since the Town adopted Vision-based Planning in the 1997 Comprehensive Plan. Since then, the Town has taken multiple steps to elevate development standards. It added site planning and architectural requirements for specific uses, upgraded landscaping standards, overhauled sign regulations—cutting freestanding sign height in half—and imposed size and strict design limits on big-box retail and shopping centers. Town officials also began opposing formulaic "corporate-franchise architecture," as recommended in the 1997 Plan.

The 2004 Plan reaffirmed the need for higher design standards and extended the focus from commercial to residential development, culminating in the adoption of Design Guidelines for New Construction. The 2010 Plan updated Easton's design principles, revising several and adding one new principle based on observed development trends. This Plan continues that process, proposing additional refinements based on the past 15 years of experience and public feedback.

This chapter also revisits the topic of big-box retail—a longstanding concern since the 1997 Plan, which was amended in 2000 to address the issue directly. It further explores how zoning shapes Easton's character and proposes ways to modernize outdated zoning and subdivision tools. In particular, it revives the concept of "Traditional Neighborhood Development "—first proposed in 2004 but not pursued in 2010—as a viable framework for future growth areas. Finally, it expands the Town's Growth Management Policy to emphasize the importance of both infill and redevelopment, with new recommendations to ensure compatibility with existing neighborhoods.

B. Historic and Cultural resources

The History of the Town is chronicled in the Background Chapter of this Plan. An important part of what makes Easton so unique and so special is the number and quality of historic buildings and settings. This subsection talks about the importance of these historic and cultural resources and makes recommendations for how they can further be protected.

The history of Easton can be seen in its historic buildings and neighborhoods which date back over several centuries. Physical reminders of early history give depth and richness to the Town, to past events and to people's lives. Easton has a substantial and well-documented stock of historic structures, streetscapes, sites, and settings. Some 944 parcels in the Historic District have been surveyed and documented.

Preservation and rehabilitation of these structures and streetscapes enhances the historic character of the town, stabilizes neighborhoods, protects property values, and attracts visitors to Easton. Continued historic preservation will provide Easton with a number of aesthetic and economic benefits, including:

- Promotion of a strong sense of community pride and tradition;
- Community revitalization through the restoration and adaptive reuse of older structures;
- Increased property values and tax revenues as a result of renovation and restoration; and
- Increased revenues from tourism activities generated by an interest in historic buildings and sites.

In a way that's more difficult to quantify, historic preservation allows the legacy of the past to be protected and remembered; it allows for the past to be integrated with the present and reminds us that the old has a useful place alongside the new.

Easton recognizes the importance of its historic resources and supports and encourages preservation and rehabilitation efforts by private owners, nonprofits and local government**s**. Private houses and public buildings are often carefully restored. New uses are found for historic buildings which no longer serve their original functions. The preservation of historic buildings and structures includes consideration of the integrity of the location, neighborhood, design, setting, materials and workmanship. As more and more focus for future growth is on infill and redevelopment opportunities, such adaptive reuse of historic buildings will become increasingly prevalent and important to maintaining the historic charm and authenticity of the Town in general, and the historic district specifically.

The “Stories of the Chesapeake” Certified Heritage Area encompasses heritage sites and places in Talbot and adjacent counties which were designated a certified heritage area by the Maryland Heritage Area Authority on April 20, 2005. This program recognizes Easton as offering a number of heritage resources of importance to the region.

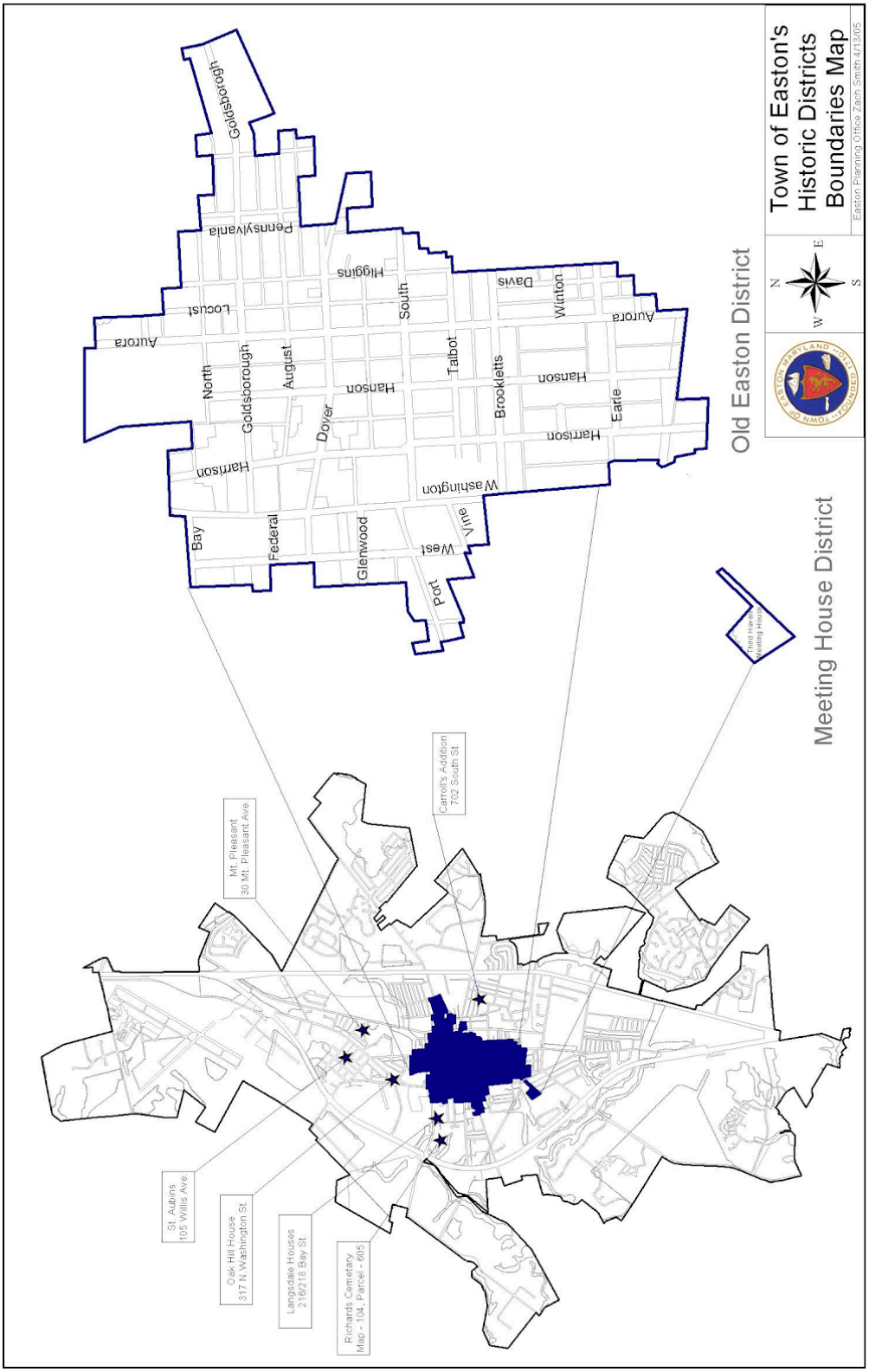
Easton is also a “Targeted Investment Zone”, a state designation that permits the town to get state financial support for a certified heritage area.

National Register Historic District

The National Register of Historic Places, an inventory of historic resources, is maintained by the National Park Service. Listing in the National Register provides recognition to sites, buildings, structures, objects, and districts that are significant to American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture. An Easton National Register Historic District was surveyed, nominated, and approved in 1980. In addition to providing recognition of significance, listing in the National Register mandates consideration in the planning of any federal or federally-assisted project and provides eligibility for federal and state tax credits for historic preservation projects.

Easton Historic District

The Town has a Historic District Commission and has two museums, (the Academy Art Museum and the Historical Society of Talbot County Museum). It also has the historic Avalon Theatre where many cultural and community events take place**.** The Easton Historic District was created in the late 70s and expanded in 2005. The seven-member Historic District Commission is composed of volunteer citizens with interest or specific expertise in historic preservation and appointed to three-year terms by the Mayor. The Commission reviews proposed exterior changes to any site, structure, or appurtenance in the defined district, according to an approved and published set of guidelines, which were recently updated by the Commission. In addition to the review of proposed projects, inclusion in the Historic District also provides eligibility for a state historic preservation tax credit to property owners who undertake historic preservation projects, whether or not the property produces income.



Map 5 : Easton Historic District













Easton's Historic District includes buildings encompassing a wide spectrum of type and use, including commercial (Washington Street, upper left), institutional (Christ Church, upper right and Talbot County Court House, middle right), and residential structures (middle left and bottom right and left.

Gentrification

A specific issue that requires special attention in the Historic District in general and in the Hill neighborhood specifically, is gentrification. The Hill is a small neighborhood within the Historic District. Its significance can not be overstated and is perhaps best described on the Historical Marker recently placed near the Rail-Trail and Dover Street intersection. It states:

"Founded in 1788, the Hill is one of the oldest free African American neighborhoods in the U.S. still in existence today. Many African Americans in Easton and Talbot County were free from slavery long before the Civil War ended. Free people of color lived alongside white neighbors, working as merchants, sailors, carpenters, midwives and farm laborers. They worked to buy freedom for their relatives while pursuing full equality and liberty for themselves."

Unfortunately, The Hill also happens to contain many of the structures most in need of repair/rehabilitation in Easton. Public and private efforts are ongoing to make such repairs. While this is undoubtedly a positive trend, it comes with the risk of gentrification - that rising housing prices resulting from these improvements (as well as the associated increased property tax bill as a result of rising property values) will necessitate some long-time residents (perhaps multigenerational) having to relocate. Property values may further be impacted by redevelopment of the adjacent industrial areas along the Rail Trail; though an important strategy for sustainable infill development the magnet effect of new infrastructure, housing, and amenities cannot be ignored. The Town should explore programs and partnerships that promote housing tenure and affordability to protect this significant cultural cornerstone.

C. Contemporary Architectural Standards

Though it is important to show reverence and recognition of Easton's historic development in contemporary projects, it should not be misconstrued as a desire to see historic architecture emulated without intention throughout the town. Rather, today's designs - regardless of location - should contribute to the ongoing history of Easton in recognition that our current time will one day similarly be considered a historic period. Easton's streetscapes should thus feature a variety of creative designs that, regardless of their time period, are built 'in conversation' with their neighbors. Put simply, contemporary designs should have identity and intention. Designs should:

- Strive to create place-based spaces and interesting, human-focused environments
- Provide physical and social connections to the community, respecting historical context
- Recognize landmarks and natural features as important determinants of design
- Utilize design approaches such as color, texture, massing, richness of materials and finishes, scale, proportion, and rhythm to create unique places
- Illicit curiosity and emotional responses that the community will treasure
- Serve as an investment in the Easton community and its culture

D. Civic Architecture and the Public Realm

As a member of the community itself, the government should embody the same standards of architectural excellence that we expect of the public. Civic buildings—such as schools, libraries, churches, and public offices—anchor neighborhoods and contribute significantly to Easton's visual character. These structures should be architecturally prominent and well-integrated into the street network. Design of new civic buildings must reflect their role as public landmarks.

Similarly, the quality of the public realm—sidewalks, plazas, parks, signage, and street trees—greatly affects how the Town is experienced. These spaces must be maintained, connected, and appropriately designed for their surroundings.

E. The Case for Traditional Neighborhood Zoning

Though the role of architecture cannot be understated in the broad appeal of Easton's downtown, it is equally important to recognize how the structure of the town core promotes its charm and value. Easton's older neighborhoods, especially those surrounding Downtown, are defined by connected streets, narrow lots, modest setbacks, front porches, and architectural variety. These walkable patterns support interaction and resilience. New development should extend this structure through compatible lot dimensions, public space orientation, and housing diversity.

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan outlined a model for a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) District, designed to encourage the kinds of mixed-use, compact neighborhoods Easton values. That proposal was ultimately rejected—not due to disagreement with its content, but because it removed the Town Council and public hearing from the review process. This created

opposition, despite the fact that the standards themselves reflected the community's vision. At present, creating these types of neighborhoods requires use of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process, which developers tend to avoid due to its complexity, cost, and unpredictability. Instead, the easier path—conventional subdivision and site plan review—too often yields suburban-style sprawl. This mismatch has led to a system where the easiest projects to approve are those the community least desires, while more thoughtful, desirable development faces the highest barriers.

In the wake of the TND District's defeat, some elements were integrated into Easton's base zoning and subdivision regulations—such as anti-monotony standards and greater lot design flexibility. Still, nearly two decades later, the limitations of the current approach remain apparent.

The Planning Commission now recommends revisiting this issue and reintroducing a TND District or alternative "by-right" option with clear design standards. The goal is to reverse the regulatory imbalance, making it easier—not harder—for developers to build the types of neighborhoods Easton wants.

3.E.1 Model Code for Traditional Neighborhood Development

Traditional Neighborhood Development Zone	
Minimum Lot size:	5,000 sq. ft. single-family detached
	3,000 sq. ft. single-family attached
Maximum Lot size:	12,500 sq. ft. single-family detached
	7,500 sq. ft. single family attached
Minimum Setback:	5’ (0’ for commercial uses)
Maximum Setback:	15’ (10’ for commercial)
Maximum Block Length:	480’
Density (per net acre):	Minimum - 4.0 du/ac
	Maximum – 12 du/ac
All subdivisions shall include a variety of housing types, open space, civic space, office or industrial, and neighborhood commercial space in accordance with the following schedule. At least 3 of the 5 land uses shall be provided at the ratio specified:	
Land Use	**Ratio**
Residential - Middle Housing	A minimum of 10% of the units proposed
Common Open Space	35% including a minimum of 1200 sq. ft. per dwelling unit for parks
Neighborhood Commercial	Minimum: 26 square feet gfa per dwelling unit (See Table 9 in Land Use Chapter for characteristics of Neighborhood Commercial)
	Maximum: 52 square feet gfa per dwelling unit
Civic Space	300 square feet per dwelling unit
Office or Industrial	187.5 square feet gfa per dwelling unit

Traditional Neighborhood Development Zone
Subdivisions prepared in accordance with these standards shall be processed per the Town of Easton Subdivision Regulations. Subdivisions with single-family detached residential plus only two of the land use elements at the ratio outlined above (or with three or more of the land uses but at less than the prescribed ratio) may be approved by the Easton Town Council via the PUD process. Subdivisions with single-family detached residential and only one or none of the additional land use elements shall be prohibited. Renderings or conceptual architectural elevations shall be provided for each building type in the neighborhood and shall be subject to approval by the Planning Commission. Neighborhoods should reflect architectural diversity. For all intents and purposes, they should appear as if multiple builders constructed them, whether or not this is in fact the case. A minimum of 75% of the lots shall have access via an alley. Garages on lots with alleys shall be detached or rear/side-accessed attached. Lots without alleys shall minimize the impact of garages by locating them behind the front plane of the house, or if in front of the house, accessed from the side.

Table 4: Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) Zoning District Parameters

The potential new TND Zoning District described above is primarily envisioned as applicable for the build-out of our Future Growth Area. However, a significant focus of this Plan is on directing growth for the next ten years to existing neighborhoods in the form of Infill Development, Redevelopment, and Adaptive Reuse. Development of this nature will likely require an approach other than TND.

One possible ~~such~~ alternate regulatory approach that received public support ~~throughout~~ during the public review and comment process was ~~that~~ the use of Form-Based Codes (FBCs). FBCs ~~are a regulatory approach that its advocates suggest are a powerful tool to effect changes to the way in which communities are built. They~~ stand in contrast to traditional or Euclidean Zoning in that they emphasize the design/form of buildings and their relationship to the public realm much more so than the use of the property. The book **Form-Based Codes** describes them as "A method of regulating development to achieve a specific urban form. Form-Based Codes create a predictable public realm primarily by controlling physical form, with a lesser focus on land use, through city or county regulation."

Whatever option the Town ultimately pursues to implement in this Plan following its adoption, one thing is clear: a new approach to land development regulation will be necessary to create the future Easton that this Plan envisions. Such a new Code(s) should address the following objectives:

- Permitting a variety of housing types and appropriate densities to improve missing middle options and housing affordability.
- Harmoniously blend multi-family and middle housing within residential and commercial blocks.
- Soften the impact of large-scale retail in commercial corridors through better design and pedestrian-oriented placement.
- Ensure building scale, massing, and placement create a walkable, inviting streetscape

- Design streets and sidewalks as safe, functional spaces for all users - bicyclists, pedestrians, vehicles, and transit.
- Promote development patterns that are environmentally resilient and fiscally sustainable.

In order to best facilitate the future Easton that this Plan describes, the Town commits to ~~studying~~ initiating the study of FBCs and ~~any~~ other alternative regulatory frameworks within two years of the adoption of this Plan by the Town Council.

F. The Role of Major Retail in Easton in 2025

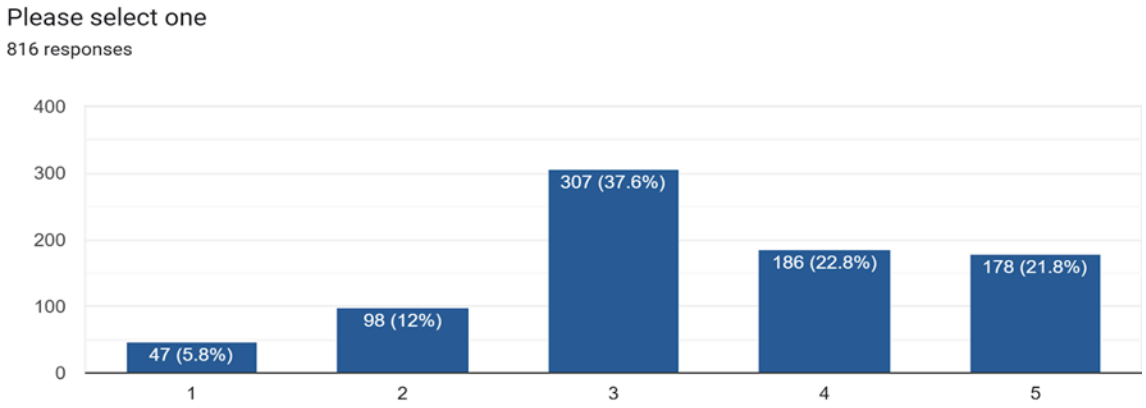
Easton has a long and complex history with major retail development. In 2000, the Town imposed a temporary moratorium after receiving applications for over 766,000 square feet of proposed major retail space. This pause led to amendments to the 1997 Comprehensive Plan and significant changes to the Zoning Ordinance. The Ordinance defined "Major Retail" as any single-use retail establishment with 25,000 square feet or more of gross floor area, and created a new Planned Major Retail floating zone to regulate such uses. Projects over 65,000 square feet were prohibited. Stringent design standards were also added for major retail and shopping centers.

The 65,000-square-foot cap was a compromise. Some residents and stakeholders argued it was too restrictive, while others believed it was too permissive. At the time, the Giant grocery store and the original Lowe's (now Kohl's) were roughly this size, helping to define the threshold.

The role of large-scale retail continued to generate debate through the 2004 and 2010 Comprehensive Plans. Public input collected during these updates revealed a consistent preference for limiting major retail in Easton. In a 2000–2001 survey, nearly half of respondents said such uses should "never" be added. In 2010, more than a third felt the Town already had too many shopping centers, and over 65% supported holding firm on design standards, even if it meant losing a preferred retailer.

Based on this sustained feedback, the 2004 Plan removed the hard cap on square footage but maintained a regulatory threshold at 25,000 square feet, requiring all larger projects to undergo case-by-case review through the Planned Major Retail process. The intent was to retain flexibility while emphasizing design, compatibility, and the broader land use context.

The 2026 Plan~~2025 Plan~~ again solicited public input, and responses were largely consistent with previous surveys. A strong majority said Easton has "about the right amount" of regional-scale retail, with twice as many respondents saying there is too much rather than too little. Support remains high for prioritizing Downtown Easton over other commercial areas, and for maintaining high design standards.



Given these findings, the Town recommends no major changes to the Town's retail policies. Major retail uses will continue to play a limited role, and new or expanded projects will only be encouraged under specific conditions:

- Priority should be given to redevelopment or redesign of existing shopping centers, especially where projects result in improved site design, circulation, or conversion to mixed-use.
- Regional retail should serve primarily Talbot County, and secondarily nearby areas in Caroline, Dorchester, and Queen Anne's Counties. Easton does not aim to become a regional shopping hub for a wider area.
- Applicants proposing relocation or replacement of an existing major retail store must submit a detailed reuse plan for the vacated site.

Easton's approach to major retail has consistently reflected community values: a desire for design quality, modest scale, and economic alignment with the Town's role as a local, not regional, retail center.

G. Town Gateways and Corridors

Visitors arriving in Easton form impressions of the Town based on its major corridors. These include U.S. Route 50, MD 322, Washington Street, and Port Street. The design and appearance of these areas—buildings, signage, landscaping, and public infrastructure—play a central role in shaping Easton's identity.

Significant improvements have been made to some corridors through site plan negotiation and design review. revised layouts, upgraded materials, and improved orientation. However, many areas still require reinvestment. The new ARC of the Chesapeake and Doverbrook Apartments, for example, exhibit exemplary additions to two major town corridors. Going forward, the Town will adopt corridor-specific standards and explore overlay zones to guide incremental upgrades. Figure 1 below is copied from the Draft East End Small Area Plan and depicts how a portion of Dover Road could be redeveloped in a way that is generally more consistent with the principles of this Plan, and which could visually (and, presumably, economically) enhance this major corridor.



Figure 1: Potential Dover Road and Rail Trail Redevelopment

H. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Encourage mixed-use, traditional neighborhoods over single-use subdivisions

Objectives:

- Reintroduce the proposed Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) Zoning District as the default zoning for undeveloped and annexed land in Easton.
- Continue reviewing and updating the design and anti-monotony standards first adopted in 2006.

- Restructure the development review process to streamline approvals for traditional neighborhood developments while increasing scrutiny and difficulty for conventional suburban subdivisions.
- Explore the potential regulatory reforms necessary to produce the type of development envisioned by this Plan in conjunction with the next comprehensive review of the Town's Zoning Code.

Goal #2: Improve the appearance of existing development

Objectives:

- Partner with the State Highway Administration to enhance landscaping along state highways, especially the Route 50 corridor.
- Use the Forest Conservation Account to retrofit landscaping in older streetscapes where plantings are sparse or missing.
- Require any renovation or change-of-use project needing site plan approval, a PUD amendment, special exception, or variance to fully comply with current design standards—no grandfathering of outdated designs.
- Require new landscaping or improvements along U.S. Route 50 for all adjacent new development or redevelopment.
- Enforce requirements for landscaping and maintenance associated with approved development projects.
- Refine and work with Design Standards that ensure that Easton stands out as a unique place rather than looking like "Anyplace USA."

Goal #3: Raise the design quality of all new development

Objectives:

- Fully apply Easton's recommended Design Principles to all new development.
- Prohibit new construction that relies on corporate franchise architecture.
- Adopt comprehensive design standards for all new development, including residential projects and infill/redevelopment.
- Review and update the Design Guidelines for New Construction outside the Historic District.

- Strengthen landscape standards, emphasizing native species and improved screening of unattractive site features.

Goal #4: Promote infill and redevelopment

Objectives:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Zoning Code's Planned Redevelopment Overlay District—including its boundaries, standards, and process—to determine whether it offers sufficient incentives.
- Identify and pursue non-zoning-based incentives, in partnership with relevant agencies, to support infill and redevelopment.
- Prepare Small Area Plans for Easton neighborhoods to tailor redevelopment strategies to local needs and conditions.

Goal #5: Encourage continued restoration, adaptive rehabilitation and preservation of historic structures, sites, streetscapes, and settings and encourage compatible infill in the Historic District.

Objectives:

- Educate residents/realtors and property owners about the benefits, boundaries and requirements of the Historic District review process and design standards and about the availability of state and federal tax credits for historic preservation projects.
- Establish a Local Tax Incentive program in Easton that encourages historic property owners to rehabilitate their property. This local tax incentive will complement existing state and federal tax incentives that encourage historic rehabilitation/restoration. Some 19 counties and municipalities in Maryland already have some form of local tax incentive.
- Encourage a "Rebuilding Together" chapter in Easton or Talbot County. This is a national organization whose objective is no cost repairs to homes of low income, over 60 home owners.
- Modify the Historic Commission's Guidelines by adding specific guidance and criteria for adaptive reuse projects.

Goal #6: Continue to support the Easton Historic District.

Objectives:

- Ensure consistent enforcement of Easton's Historic District by utilizing the services of various staffs within the town administration. A consistently enforced historic district is the most effective historic district for fostering investment and economic development.
- Provide in-service training for the staff and Historic District Commission members.
- Investigate Certified Local Government status with the Maryland Historical Trust to provide eligibility for grants for continuing education for staff and members of the Historic District Commission, as well as other projects.
- Investigate a project to resurvey the Historic District. A new survey will update information contained in the original National Register nomination and facilitate enhanced processing of applications. Such a survey could also lead to a new nomination to expand the National Register District, including neighborhoods that did not meet the criteria for listing in 1980, but now may nearly three decades later. Such a project could be supported by grant funding and could potentially be done under the auspices of a partner organization.

4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

THE ULTIMATE RESOURCE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS PEOPLE. IT IS PEOPLE, NOT CAPITAL OR RAW MATERIALS THAT DEVELOP AN ECONOMY.

PETER DRUCKER

A. PURPOSE

Economic and community development are vital to the health of a town because they foster sustainable growth, improve quality of life, and strengthen its position as a desirable place to live and visit.

The nonprofit Easton Economic Development Corporation (Easton EDC) provides economic and community development services to the Town of Easton. The Easton EDC also manages the Main Street District and Arts & Entertainment Districts, as well as the Easton Visitor Center. A Board of Directors has been established, with representatives from the community, the Mayor of the Town of Easton and one designated Councilmember.

In 2025, the Easton EDC adopted a forward-looking Strategic Plan that identifies four key Strategic Priorities aimed at fostering sustainable growth, improving quality of life, and strengthening Easton's position as a premier destination on Maryland's Eastern Shore. This Comprehensive Plan is aligned with those priorities and incorporates them into Easton's long-term development framework.

In addition, this Plan recognizes that Easton's economic development strategy must reflect regional collaboration. Therefore, it integrates the priorities and initiatives of both the Talbot County Department of Economic Development and Tourism and the Mid-Shore Regional Council. This collaborative approach ensures that local efforts are supported by broader regional initiatives and that resources are coordinated for maximum impact.

As in many Comprehensive Plans, economic development analysis often depends heavily on quantitative data such as tables and charts. While this Plan minimizes the overuse of such tools, essential insights are drawn from Census data (see Tables 5 and 6). Key findings include:

- Income levels in Easton are below those of Talbot County and the State of Maryland, with a corresponding higher rate of poverty.
- Educational attainment in Easton lags behind both the county and state, especially in the percentage of residents with bachelor's degrees or higher.
- Easton has an aging population, with a significantly higher percentage of residents aged 65 and older compared to state averages.

- Commute times in Easton are slightly shorter than regional and state averages, reflecting local employment opportunities.
- The homeownership rate in Easton is lower than Talbot County and the State, which may reflect affordability challenges or housing stock limitations.

Table 5 - Select Economic Characteristics Source: 2020 Census, U.S. Census Bureau	EASTON	TALBOT CO.	MARYLAND
PER CAPITA INCOME (2022 dollars)	$43,844	$52,555	$49,865
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2022 dollars)	$75,198	$81,667	$98,461
PERSONS IN POVERTY, PERCENT	11.5%	10.2%	9.6%
IN CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE, TOTAL, PERCENT OF POPULATION AGE 16+, 2018-2022	58.3%	55.7%	66.6%
IN CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE, FEMALE, PERCENT OF POPULATION AGE 16+, 2018-2022	51.3%	49.5%	62.7%
TOTAL RETAILSALES,2017 ($1,000)	$598,129	$716,678	$84,966,185
TOTAL RETAIL SALES PER CAPITA, 2022	$45,801	$25,278	$18,691
MEAN TRAVEL TIME TO WORK (MINUTES), WORKERS AGE 16+, 2018-2022	24.9	26.4	32.0
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE OR HIGHER, PERCENT OF PERSONS AGE 25+, 2018-2022	90.1%	92.2%	91.0%
BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER, PERCENT OF PERSONS AGE 25+, 2018-2022	39.3%	41.5%	42.2%
ALL EMPLOYER FIRMS, REFERENCE YEAR 2022	813	1,403	104,151

Table 6 below provides a broader comparison of Easton, Talbot County, and the State of Maryland in a number of economic and non-economic characteristics.

Table 6 - Comparison of Easton, Talbot County and State of Maryland in Selected Demographic Characteristics from the 2020 Census (and 2023 ACS)			
Subject	Easton	Talbot County	Maryland
Total Population	17,101	37,526	6,177,224
% Female	53.6%	52.2%	51.4%
Median Age			
% < 18	21.8%	18.3%	22.0%
% 65+	26.8%	30.5%	17.3%
% White	69.9%	82.1%	57.2%
% Black or African American	16.1%	12.9%	31.6%
Total Households	7,195	16,270	2,318,124
Average Household Size	2.32	2.29	2.60
Total Housing Units	Not Reported	19,861	2,572,412
% Owner-occupied	58.9%	72.9%	67.5%
Median value of owner-occupied homes	$328,000	$382,000	$380,500
Growth Rate (%) in 90's	24.9%	10.7%	10.8%
Growth Rate (%) in 00's	36.2%	11.7%	9.0%
Growth Rate (%) in 10,s	7.2%	-0.7%	7.0%

B. Business Development

A diverse and resilient business mix is essential to the sustainability of Easton's economy. Overdependence on a single sector can expose the Town to economic fluctuations and job losses. Easton's strategy emphasizes resilience by investing in workforce development, nurturing entrepreneurship, and supporting both legacy businesses and emerging industries.

The Easton EDC Strategic Plan (FY 2026–2028) underscores the importance of business retention, expansion, and recruitment—particularly for high-wage industries.

Initiatives include:

- Facilitating leadership forums and industry roundtables to identify infrastructure needs, workforce trends, and business challenges.
- Developing an Easton Business Recruitment Packet that highlights incentives, infrastructure, real estate opportunities, and the benefits of Easton's location and community character.
- Marketing key sites like Mistletoe Hall and other strategic locations for development, ensuring readiness for new investment.
- Partnering with the Town of Easton, Talbot County, and local institutions to coordinate incentives and implement joint marketing campaigns.
- Promoting infill development and redevelopment—particularly projects that support affordable workforce housing in proximity to job centers.
- Diversifying funding streams by pursuing federal, state, and philanthropic grants as well as private sponsorships and innovative funding models.

C. Tourism and Downtown

Tourism remains a cornerstone of Easton's economy—contributing not only through visitor spending but also by enhancing the Town's visibility and quality of life. As a year-round destination with a thriving cultural and culinary scene, Easton has the opportunity to further develop its tourism sector in strategic and sustainable ways.

The Easton EDC has identified several priorities to strengthen Easton's brand as the Eastern Shore's premier destination:

- Create a data-informed tourism marketing strategy that targets regional and national audiences, tailored to Easton's unique offerings.
- Enhance the visual appeal and accessibility of Downtown Easton with improved signage, plantings, banners, and public art.
- Activate the Easton Visitor Center as an educational and experiential hub for tourists and residents alike.

- Collaborate with surrounding jurisdictions (e.g., St. Michaels, Oxford, Talbot County) to launch joint tourism campaigns and shared event calendars.
- Support authentic local experiences and signature events that highlight Easton's history, arts, food culture, and community spirit.

D. Commercial Redevelopment

Easton is at a point where a number of our shopping centers are for one reason or another, viewed as prime candidates for redevelopment. Such reasons include age of the center, maintenance challenges, tenant mix, or overall utility of the center. Potential redevelopment could be as simple as facade upgrades, new color schemes, updated signage, etc., to complete demolition and reconstruction. This redevelopment could bring Easton numerous economic benefits including new business establishments, additional jobs, and additional revenue. Furthermore, it could add future opportunities for mixed use residential offerings as well as beautify many older sites around town. Potential candidates for such upgrades include:

- Easton Plaza (site of Bowling Alley and Amish Farmer's Market). With abundant parking located between Marlboro Avenue and the buildings in this shopping center, there are a variety of options to add or relocate buildings closer to Marlboro. This would dramatically improve the streetscape and move from an older suburban shopping center form of development towards a more traditional Town-center pattern, which could also shift the perception of Marlboro from a separate and distinct shopping corridor to more of an extension of Downtown.
- Chesapeake Village (site of Ruby's Cake Shop and Domino's Pizza). This small neighborhood shopping center is located uniquely where Dover Road and Dover Street separate and form the triangular park adjacent to the Rail Trail, where Easton's community Christmas Tree resides. The East End Small Area Plan that is being developed concurrently with this Comprehensive Plan devotes a fair amount of attention to this park and envisions an upgrade and/or expansion of it. A potential redevelopment of the shopping center could enhance the utility of both the center and the park, to the benefit of each as well as to the East End neighborhood and Dover Road corridor.
- Easton Marketplace (site of Kohl's and Lowe's). Although a relatively new shopping center, the recent closing of the Ruby Tuesday's restaurant, the existence of a remaining pad site (to the east of Aspen Dental) and the abundance of parking (particularly between Kohl's and

Marlboro) there would seem to be ample opportunities to add new tenants to this center through a combination of adaptive reuse of buildings and new construction.

E. Community Development

A successful economic development strategy must also build community wealth and pride. The Easton EDC Strategic Plan recognizes that broad resident engagement and civic participation are essential to long-term prosperity. Priorities in community development include:

- Expand outreach and transparency through newsletters, public presentations, and direct engagement with neighborhood groups, clubs, and schools.
- Launch a formal volunteer program with training, leadership opportunities, and recognition efforts to build local ownership and capacity.
- Host a calendar of inclusive events that reflect Easton's cultural richness and foster community connectedness.
- Evaluate civic engagement and quality of life through periodic surveys, helping to align future investments with public needs and values.

F. Goals and Objectives

GOAL #1: Nurture a healthy and diverse local economy in Easton.

Objectives:

- Conduct leadership forums and focus groups with local industries to guide economic strategies
- Market and support strategic sites like Mistletoe Hall
- Develop a comprehensive business attraction and retention strategy in coordination with Easton EDC
- Prioritize redevelopment projects that support workforce housing
- Expand grant writing capacity and partnerships to fund economic initiatives

GOAL#2: Maintain and recreate a vital Downtown.

Objectives:

- Increase awareness, usage and value of the Easton Visitor Center
- Improve visitor wayfinding, visual appeal, and access to downtown attractions coordinating with Easton EDC to market downtown events and tourism opportunities

GOAL #3: Engage the community in Easton's economic future.

Objectives:

- Seek community input via community charrettes
- Community outreach and communication via in-person presentations, and print and electronic media
- Launch a town-wide volunteer program
- Use placemaking surveys to assess civic engagement and guide future priorities

5. HOUSING

HOME IS THE NICEST WORD THERE IS – LAURA INGALLS WILDER

A. PURPOSE

Providing safe, decent, and sanitary housing for all residents is essential. When a community neglects this, housing conditions deteriorate, businesses may close, and the overall appearance of communities can fuel a growing sense of despair. Easton offers a wide range of housing types, from colonial era to nineteenth-century homes near Downtown to public housing such as Graham's Place and the recently rebuilt Doverbrook apartments, as well as subdivisions such as Cooke's Hope, Easton Village, Hunters Mill and Mulberry Station. Today, even more than housing quality, the rapidly rising cost of housing has become a hot button issue for both residents, employers and commuters.

Housing first became an element of Easton's Comprehensive Plan in 2004. It is now a mandatory element of Maryland comprehensive plans rather than an optional element. Many of the issues, other than rapidly rising housing costs, associated with this Element remain essentially the same today in 2026~~5~~ as they were in 2004.

State law now specifies what this element must address:

(a)

(1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) "Affirmatively further fair housing" has the meaning stated in § 2-401 of the Housing and Community Development Article.

(3) "Area median income" has the meaning stated in § 4-1801 of the Housing and Community Development Article

(4) "Low-income housing" means housing that is affordable for a household with an aggregate annual income that is below 60% of the area median income.

(5) "Workforce housing" has the meaning stated in § 4-1801 of the Housing and Community Development Article.

(b) A housing element may include goals, objectives, policies, plans, and standards.

(c) A housing element shall address the need for affordable housing within the local jurisdiction, including:

(1) workforce housing; and

(2) low-income housing. (d)

(1) Local jurisdictions have a duty to affirmatively further fair housing through their housing and urban development programs.

(2) The housing element of a comprehensive plan that is enacted or amended on or after January 1, 2023, shall include an assessment of fair housing to ensure that the local jurisdiction is affirmatively furthering fair housing.

(3) On request of a local jurisdiction, the Department of Planning, in consultation with the Department of Housing and Community Development, shall provide technical assistance for the purpose of developing the housing element of the comprehensive plan.

(4) This subsection does not require a local jurisdiction to take, or prohibit a local jurisdiction from taking, a specific action to affirmatively further fair housing.

(Md. Code, LU § 3-114)

B. Housing Issues and Policy Considerations

Easton has many housing issues, but they can all be generally categorized as one of three problems: housing cost, housing quality, and housing availability. To some extent these problems are interrelated.

Housing affordability has become so significant an issue that the Town formed an ad hoc Attainable Housing Task Force to examine the problem and make recommendations to address it. The Task Force worked on the issues during this Comp Plan update process and produced a draft report in May of 2024. ~~The Full Final Report can be accessed on the Town's website at: eastonmd.gov/xxxxxxxxx.~~ The Final Report was presented to the Town Council at two Workshops in November and December of 2025. ~~As of the date of this Plan, the Council was still deliberating the appropriate course of action for addressing the various recommendations of the Report~~.The ~~Draft~~ Report's Executive Summary includes the following:

The Housing Task Force Final Report provides an analysis of Easton's housing landscape, demographic shifts, economic trends, and affordability challenges. The report also expands on the demographic, market, and workforce overview briefly provided to the Task Force at their May 23, 2024 meeting. Any data-driven insights provided herein are intended to inform housing policies and initiatives recommended by the Attainable Housing Task Force. aimed at ensuring equitable and sustainable housing opportunities.

Key Findings

1. *Population Growth & Demographics*
    - *Easton experienced rapid population growth between 1980 and 2010, but growth rates have slowed significantly since 2010.*
    - *The town's population is aging, with a 42% increase in residents aged 55+ since 2000, while the percentage of younger adults (25-44) has declined by 40%.*
    - *The Hispanic population has grown significantly, increasing from 3.5% of the total population in 2000 to 14% in 2020, while the Black population's share has declined.*
2. *Housing Market Trends*
    - *Since 2000, single-family detached homes have dominated new housing developments, limiting the availability of more affordable housing types such as townhomes and multi-family units.*
    - *Home prices have risen sharply, with Easton's median home value increasing by 131% since 2000.*
    - *Rental costs have also increased, with median rents in 2025 exceeding the affordability threshold for households earning less than 100% of Easton's Area Median Income (AMI).*
3. *Affordability Challenges*
    - *Homeownership is increasingly out of reach for middle-income families, with the home price-to-income ratio rising from 3.03 in 2000 to 4.4 in 2024, indicating a decline in affordability.*

- *Over 50% of renters in Easton are cost-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing.*
- *Racial disparities persist, with Hispanic and Black households facing the greatest housing cost burdens and lowest homeownership rates.*

4. *Economic & Employment Factors*

- *Job growth in Talbot County has remained stagnant since 2000, increasing at an annual rate of just 0.18%.*
- *The local economy has shifted toward lower-paying service jobs, making it harder for workers to afford housing in Easton.*
- *A significant portion (42%) of the workforce commutes from neighboring counties, highlighting the disconnect between housing costs and local wages.*

Easton faces significant housing challenges, particularly in affordability, supply diversity, and demographic shifts. Without strategic interventions, rising housing costs and demographic imbalances could threaten the town's long-term economic sustainability and community inclusivity. This report serves as a foundation for developing policies that ensure a balanced, affordable, and thriving housing market for all residents.

Easton risks becoming a place where those who work here can no longer afford to live. This challenge will only grow if the Town's tourism and hospitality sectors expand as expected. A lack of affordable housing already affects essential workers — cashiers, restaurant staff, government employees, teachers, nurses, emergency responders, elder care aides — who increasingly find Easton out of reach.

This has broad implications for Easton's future. Economically segregated communities weaken social and cultural cohesion. They also burden the transportation system. As workers seek housing in neighboring counties like Dorchester and Caroline, they become commuters, adding to traffic congestion. The Town also faces economic and workforce risks if these workers eventually take jobs closer to home.

Easton has long recognized the importance of housing quality. The Town enforces the International Building Code and staffs a Building Department that includes a Building Official (who conducts plan reviews), two field inspectors, a rental housing/property maintenance inspector, and a secretary.

To maintain livability in rental housing—especially older units—Easton launched its Rental Housing Inspection Program in 1995. The program requires landlords to obtain licenses and submit to regular inspections. It was comprehensively reviewed and updated in 2008 to strengthen its effectiveness.

c. Existing Housing Programs

In Easton, housing is primarily provided by the private sector. However, a few public and nonprofit programs offer limited affordable housing, including efforts by the Housing Commission of Talbot County, subsidized private developments like Chatham Village Apartments, and homes built by Habitat for Humanity of Choptank, Inc.

The Housing Commission of Talbot (Formerly the Easton Housing Authority) recently converted their portfolio from public housing to a voucher based program. As a result, they do not own any more public housing. Instead, they have an inventory of 79 voucher based units in Easton. They administer 159 Housing Choice Vouchers. They also have 9 units of net-zero housing on Port Street (Nicholas Landing), 12 units of affordable housing on Pleasant Alley and 4 duplex units on Port. Street.

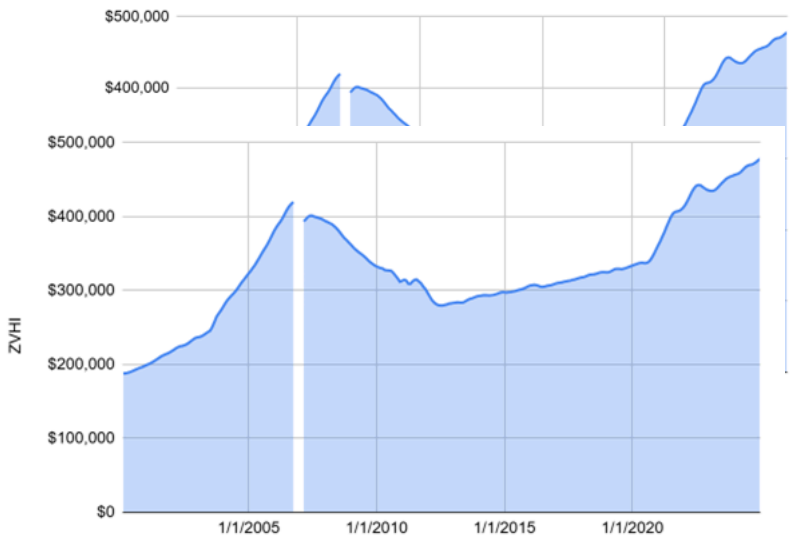
Habitat for Humanity of Choptank, Inc. has built more than 25 homes in Easton using its volunteer-driven model. Future homeowners contribute substantial "sweat equity" during construction and later assist other Habitat families. With donated or discounted land and no labor costs, overall housing costs are kept low. And, the Town Council has expanded affordable housing by requiring developers of discretionary projects—like annexations or PUDs—to include on- or off-site affordable units or contribute to the Town's Affordable Housing fund as a condition of approval.

A key step in addressing housing issues was the creation of the Easton Affordable Housing Board in 2005. Appointed by the Town, the Board develops policies and criteria for affordable housing and oversees units acquired by the Town through development approvals. Early efforts focused on establishing guidelines and a selection process for purchasing these units. A more recent Program that has proven to be successful is the Board's Renovation Program. Through this program, homeowners may apply for a grant, no interest deferred loan or low interest loan depending on their income, for approved renovations to improve the energy efficiency, safety, and livability of their home. This helps homeowners with these costs, which in turn help lower monthly utility bills, and allows them to remain in their homes longer.

i. Local Housing Costs and Issues

The full Attainable Housing Task Force Report contains detailed information on local and regional housing costs and affordability data. Highlights are presented in sections which follow.

Figure 33: Talbot County ZHVI, 2000 - 2024

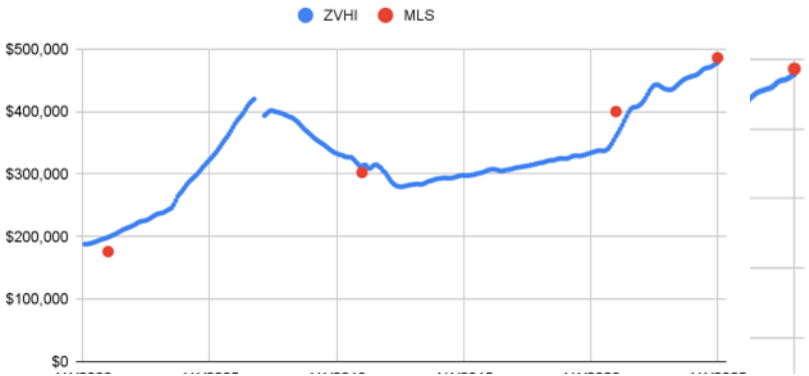


The **Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI) for Talbot County** reflects the general direction of home values in our community since the year 2000.Nationally, home prices peaked in September 2006, then began to decline later that year and into 2007. By 2008, the housing market had collapsed, triggering a broader financial crisis known as the Great Recession (2007–2009). The market hit bottom in 2012, followed by a slow recovery through 2016.

Talbot County followed a similar trend. As shown above, the Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI) peaked at $420,000 in September 2006, then fell 21% by 2009. It bottomed out at $280,000 in September 2012. From there, values steadily rose, reaching $334,000 by the end of 2019—a 19% increase. Between 2015 and 2019, the ZHVI grew at an average annual rate of 2.4%. Beginning in 2020, home values surged 43%, reaching $478,000 by the end of 2024 — an average yearly increase of about 9%. It is important to note that while the ZHVI offers a helpful snapshot of housing trends in Talbot County, it is not a replacement for professional appraisals.

This report analyzed median home sale prices in Talbot County for 2000, 2010, 2020, and 2024 using Bright MLS data from the Mid-Shore Board of Realtors. Figure 34 compares these values with the ZHVI, showing both followed similar trends

Figure 34: Talbot County ZVHI versus MLS



over time. Percentage differences between the two sources, ranging from 13% in 2000 to just 2% in 2024, with an average gap of 7%. Both ZHVI and MLS offer reliable insights into long-term housing trends.

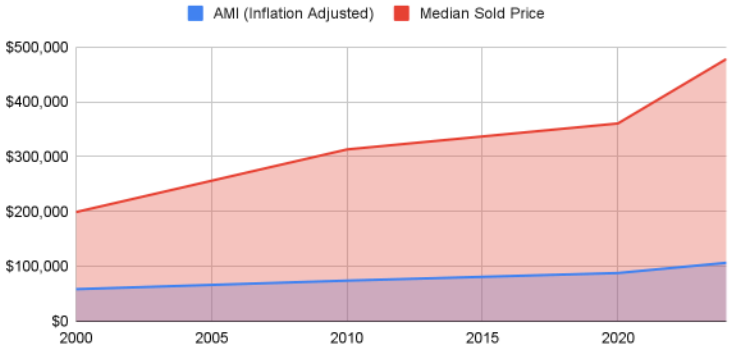
In summary, the high cost of single-family detached homes in Easton poses significant affordability challenges — particularly for first-time buyers and workers in lower-wage professions with limited income growth potential.

ii. Housing Costs and Income

In 2024, Talbot County's Annual Median Income (AMI) was $106,500. The Easton Affordable Housing Board adjusts this figure annually to better reflect local incomes; in 2020, Easton's AMI was $98,065. Given the small gap between the two, Talbot County's home price-to-income ratio serves as a useful affordability metric for Easton. Based on MSBR data, the 2024 ratio was 4.4, meaning it takes 4.4 years of median income to purchase a median-priced home. This marks a sharp decline in affordability from 2000, when the ratio was 3.03. Even after the Great Recession, the ratio climbed to 4.12, showing a continued trend toward less affordable housing.

Another key measure of affordability is how income growth compares to rising home prices over time. In Talbot County between 2000 and 2010, home prices grew much faster than incomes, leading to a sharp decline in affordability, likely driven by the housing boom before the Great Recession. From 2010 to 2020, growth slowed, and income slightly outpaced home prices, reflecting post-recession recovery and a cooler housing market. However, from 2000 to 2024 overall, home prices once again outpaced income growth, signaling a renewed affordability gap similar to the early 2000s.

Figure 38: Talbot County AMI (Inflation Adjusted) and ZHVI

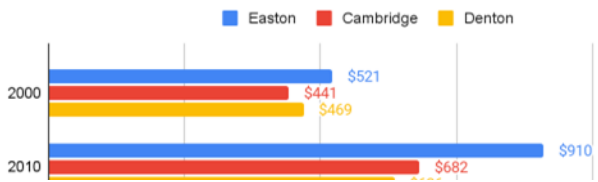


Sources: HUD Income Limits and Zillow Research

iii. Rental Market

In Easton, 40% of households are renters, a five-point drop since 2010. The current rental vacancy rate is 5.3%, significantly higher than the 1.4% homeowner vacancy rate. In 2010, those rates were 4.8% and 5.2%, respectively. The

Figure 39: Median Gross Rent, 2000 - 2023



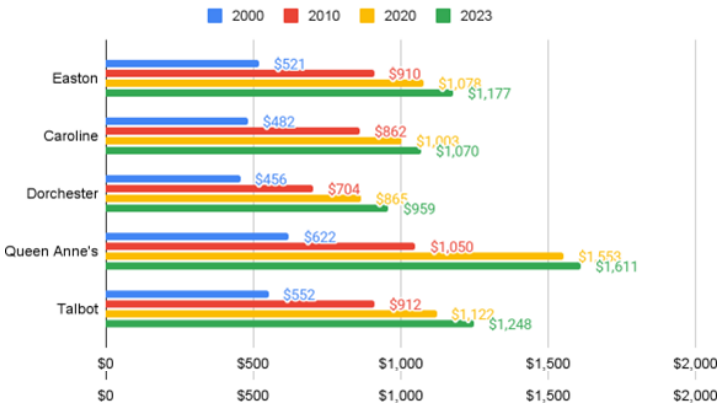
sharp decline in homeowner vacancies reflects a tight housing market, likely driven by strong demand for higher-end homes and a limited supply of affordable, diverse options. Demographic shifts may also play a role: older adults—more likely to own homes—are staying in place, while younger adults face growing barriers to homeownership, contributing to reduced turnover and tighter supply.

The rental vacancy rate, at 5.3%, falls within the healthy range of 5–7%, suggesting a balanced rental market with more unit availability compared to the much tighter for-sale housing market.

The recent uptick in planned multi-family residential development may help counter rising prices in both the ownership and rental markets. Contributing factors include slower housing absorption since 2010, a tight ownership market, and a shift toward higher-priced inventory. Multi-family units offer more affordable alternatives for households priced out of homeownership and expand the rental supply—helping to stabilize or even reduce rents and improve affordability for renters.

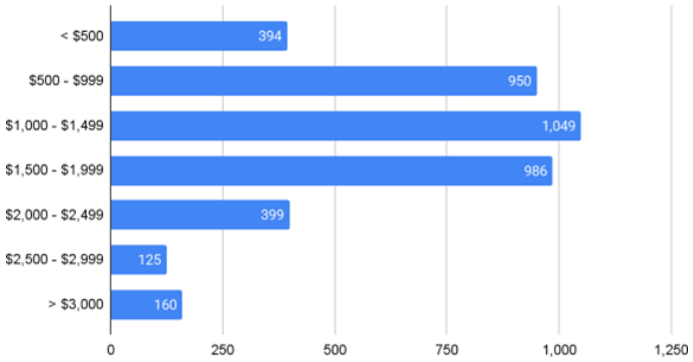
Since 2000, Easton's median gross rent has consistently exceeded those of nearby Denton and Cambridge, reflecting its status as a more premium rental market. The most significant increase occurred between 2000 and 2010, when median rents rose by 74%. During that time, 92% of new housing construction was single-family detached or attached units—limiting rental supply amid growing demand. Although the sharpest rise happened in that decade, rents have continued to climb steadily through 2023.

Figure 40: Median Gross Rent, Easton Versus Counties, 2023



Compared to surrounding counties, Easton's median rent is 94% of Talbot County's but only 73% of Queen Anne's. When rents are broken down by price range, there's a clear shortage of units affordable to extremely low-income households—those earning under $25,000 annually. This gap particularly affects individuals at risk of homelessness or in need of transitional housing. However, there is a relatively strong supply of units in the

Figure 41: Easton Gross Rent and Number of Units, 2023



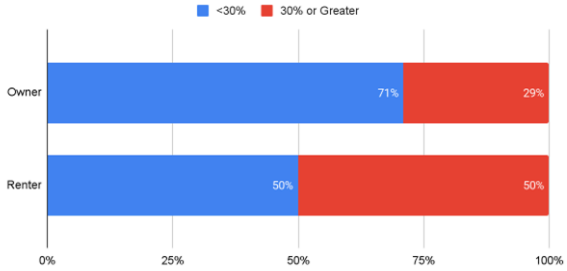
$500–$999 range, which remain affordable for households earning up to about $45,000 per year.

D. Housing Affordability

i. Cost Burdened Households

Cost-burdened households are those spending more than 30% of their gross income on housing. This strain often forces families to choose between housing and essentials like food, healthcare, transportation, or savings—undermining their overall well-being.

Figure 42: Easton Cost Burdened Households by Tenure, 2023, ACS 5-Year Estimates



According to 2023 ACS data, half of Easton homeowners with a mortgage pay $2,000 or more per month in housing costs. Yet only 29% are considered cost-burdened—spending over 30% of their income on housing. This indicates a relatively high income level or greater affordability tolerance among homeowners in Easton.

This also highlights that housing costs in Easton are relatively high, even for middle-income households. At 80% of Easton's 2024 AMI ($98,065), a household should spend no more than $1,961 per month on housing to stay below the cost-burdened threshold. Many homeowners exceed this amount yet still fall just under the 30% limit, indicating that even middle-income families are feeling pressure. In fact, ACS data shows that 62% of owner-occupied households earning under $75,000 are cost-burdened, compared to just 9% of those earning $75,000 or more—underscoring the growing affordability gap.

While middle-income homeowners face growing pressure in Easton's housing market, the situation is even more severe for renters — particularly those with lower incomes. In 2023, 50% of renters were cost-burdened, compared to 29% of homeowners. This sharp disparity underscores the greater affordability challenges renters face by spending a disproportionate share of their income on housing. The result is increased financial instability, housing insecurity, and strain on overall well-being.

ii. Affordable Home Price

According to HUD's FY 2024 Income Limits Summary, Talbot County's Median Family Income (MFI) for a family of four is $106,500—11% above the average for Maryland's Eastern Shore (excluding Cecil County) and the third highest in the region, following Queen Anne's and Kent counties.

Talbot County's MFI has grown steadily since 1990, reflecting long-term economic progress. The sharpest increase occurred between 1990 and 2000, with a 65% gain. Overall, from 1990 to 2024, the MFI has risen by 203%. The current MFI is based on the 2018–2022 ACS 5-year estimate of $100,321, adjusted for inflation using Congressional Budget Office projections and rounded to the nearest $100.

HUD uses MFI to establish income thresholds by household size, categorizing households as Extremely Low, Very Low, or Low Income. These thresholds determine eligibility for a range of housing assistance programs, including Public Housing, Section 8 vouchers and project-based assistance, Section 202 housing for older adults, and Section 811 housing for people with disabilities.

In Easton, the Affordable Housing Board adjusts the County's MFI to better reflect local economic conditions. For FY 2024, Easton's adjusted MFI is $98,065. This figure is used to set eligibility and affordability standards for Town housing programs.

Based on this adjusted MFI, a four-person household earning \$98,065 per year can afford a home priced at approximately $277,000—assuming 35% of gross income is spent on housing costs. This estimate factors in mortgage principal and interest, property taxes, homeowners insurance, private mortgage insurance (PMI), and HOA dues, based on a 5% down payment and a 6.95% 30-year fixed interest rate. It should be noted that this figure differs from the 30% used by the Town's affordable Housing Board. That is because this calculation is based on the following definition: "Affordable Owner Expense: Housing cost that does not exceed one-twelfth of 35% of 100% of the Easton Area Median Income, adjusted for household size to include Principal and Interest, Taxes, and Property Insurance (PITI); Private Mortgage Insurance (PMI); and Homeowner Association dues." The calculation above assumes $200 monthly for both HOA dues and property insurance, and applies a property tax rate of 1.29% per $100 of assessed value, based on a 3-year trailing average ZHVI of $419,647.

In contrast, the median home price in Easton in 2024 was $450,000, according to MarketStats by Showing Time (Mid-Shore Board of Realtors)—38% above what a median-income household can

afford. Even the average price for an attached home, such as a townhome, exceeds affordability by 21%. A household would need to earn approximately $137,000, or 140% of Easton's adjusted AMI, to afford a home priced at $420,000.

These figures highlight the growing gap between incomes and home prices—and the pressing need for more affordable housing options in Easton.

iii. Affordable Rental Price

HUD calculates Fair Market Rents (FMRs) to establish payment standards for rental assistance programs such as the Housing Choice Voucher Program. For FY 2025 in Talbot County, FMRs are based on average gross rents from the 2018–2022 ACS, adjusted for inflation and local market conditions. If the calculated value falls below the Maryland state minimum, HUD raises it accordingly. Bedroom-specific ratios are then applied to the adjusted two-bedroom rent to determine FMRs for other unit sizes. These figures are listed in Table 7 below.

FY 2024 Income Limit Area	Median Family Income Click for More Detail	FY 2024 Income Limit Category	Persons in Family							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Talbot County, MD	$106,500	Very Low (50%) Income Limits ($) Click for More Detail	37,300	42,600	47,950	**53,250**	57,550	61,800	66,050	70,300
		Extremely Low Income Limits ($)* Click for More Detail	22,400	25,600	28,800	**31,950**	36,580	41,960	47,340	52,720
		Low (80%) Income Limits ($) Click for More Detail	59,650	68,200	76,700	**85,200**	92,050	98,850	105,650	112,500

Table 7: HUD FY 2024 Income Limits Summary

A renter household is considered cost-burdened if it spends more than 30% of gross income on rent. For a four-person household earning 60% of Easton's adjusted AMI ($58,839), affordable rent—net of a $100 monthly utility allowance—is approximately $1,371 for a three-bedroom unit.

As of March 2025, Zumper reports the average rent for a three-bedroom in Easton is $2,400, a 10% increase over the previous year. About 75% of rents fall between $1,501 and $3,000. The median rent for a two-bedroom is $2,499, and across all unit types, the median monthly rent is $2,549—27% higher than the national average. For apartments specifically, the average rent is $2,699, with two-bedroom apartments averaging $2,044.

As shown in Table 8, a four-person household earning 60% of Easton's AMI cannot afford a one-, two-, or three-bedroom rental in Easton without being cost-burdened. To afford the median rent of $2,525, a household would require a significantly higher income.

	Efficiency	One-Bedroom	Two-Bedroom	Three-Bedroom	Four-Bedroom
FY 2025 FMR	$1,210	$1,257	$1,392	$1,951	$2,338

Table 8: FY 2025 FMRs by Unit Bedrooms

iv. Exclusionary Zoning and Its Impact on Housing Choice and Affordability

Exclusionary zoning refers to land-use regulations that limit the types of housing allowed in certain areas—often under the guise of preserving neighborhood character or managing growth. Common tools include minimum lot sizes, building height limits, and restrictions on multi-family housing. While these regulations may be well-intentioned, their effect is often to increase housing costs and limit access for lower-income individuals and families.

Consider a half-acre lot zoned for single-family homes with minimum lot size requirements. A developer purchasing this lot might theoretically choose among three options:

- A modest 1,200 sq. ft. starter home suited for first-time buyers or downsizing retirees;
- Seven attached townhomes that could offer more affordable ownership options; or
- A large, upscale single-family home marketed to affluent buyers.

However, existing zoning likely prohibits higher-density development—such as townhomes—through restrictions on lot coverage, density, or allowed housing types. As a result, the developer, constrained by regulations and seeking to maximize profit, will almost certainly choose to build a large luxury home. Although each townhome would yield a smaller individual profit, the combined revenue from multiple units would exceed that of a single high-end home. But zoning doesn't allow this option.

This disconnect highlights a broader issue: the housing a community builds isn't always the housing it needs. While there is demand for large homes in Easton and Talbot County, there is also unmet

demand from essential workers, young professionals, growing families, and older adults seeking more manageable living spaces. These groups benefit from a mix of housing types—if zoning allows them. The challenge lies in enabling diverse housing choices that still respect the character and scale of existing neighborhoods.

In unincorporated Talbot County, the situation is more restrictive. The County's Comprehensive Plan prioritizes preserving shoreline, waterways, and farmland—important goals—but pursues them in part by limiting the extension of sewer systems outside designated growth areas and by maintaining exclusionary land-use policies.

County zoning regulations prohibit most housing types other than single-family detached homes, often on large lots with low height and coverage limits. These low-density rules restrict supply, inflate land and construction costs, and make development of affordable units unfeasible.

The result is a development pattern that supports only high-end housing, effectively pricing out lower- and middle-income residents. This drives housing segregation based on income—and, as shown in Figures 47, 48, and 49, such segregation often correlates with racial, generational, and workforce disparities.

Figure 47: Talbot County Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units in 2020 by Census Tract

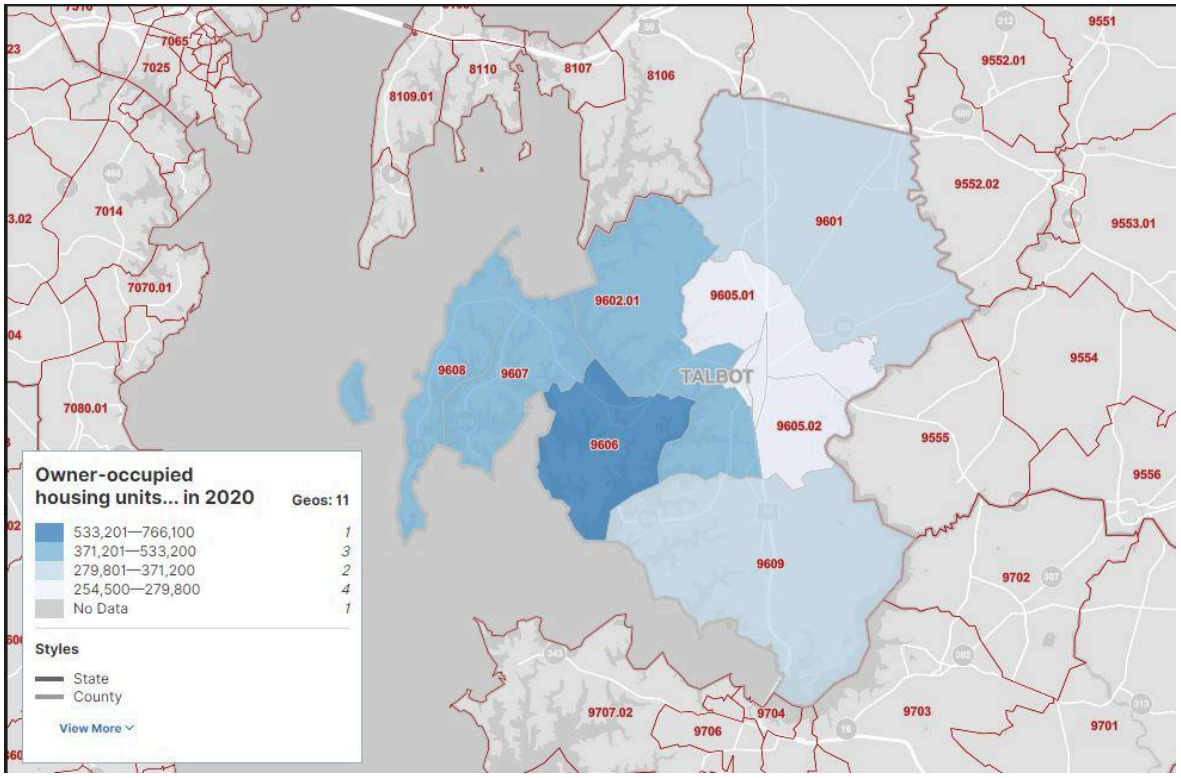


Figure 48: Talbot County Black Population by Census Tract

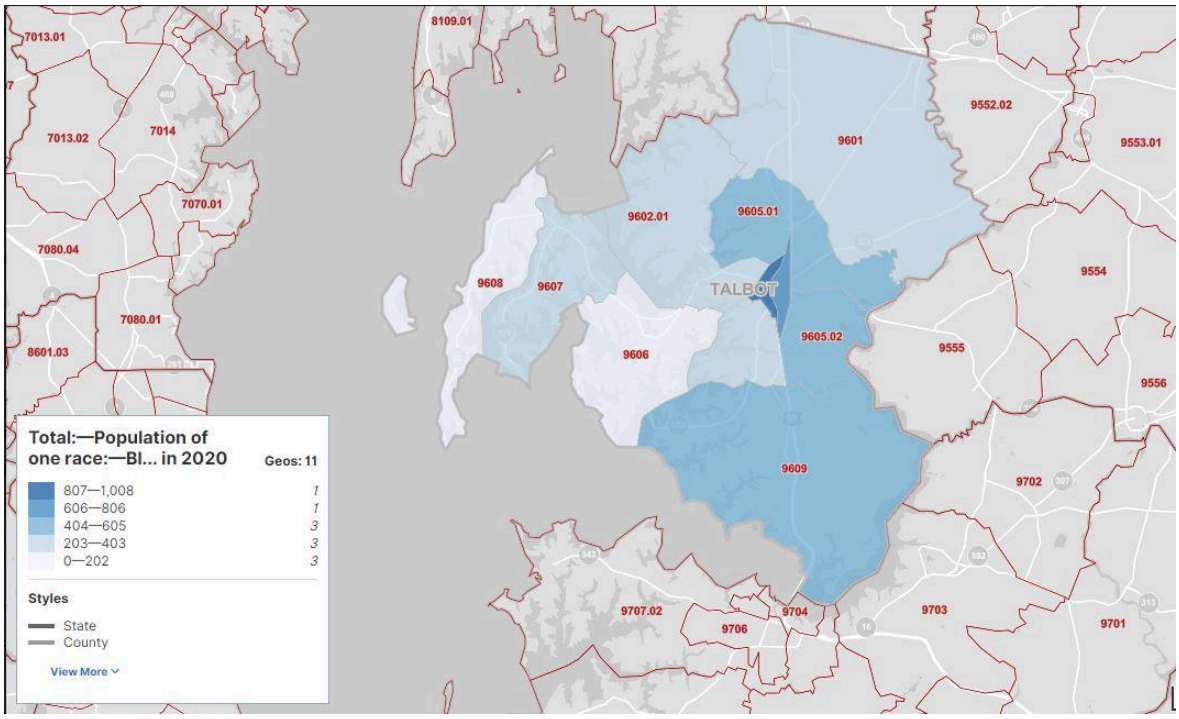
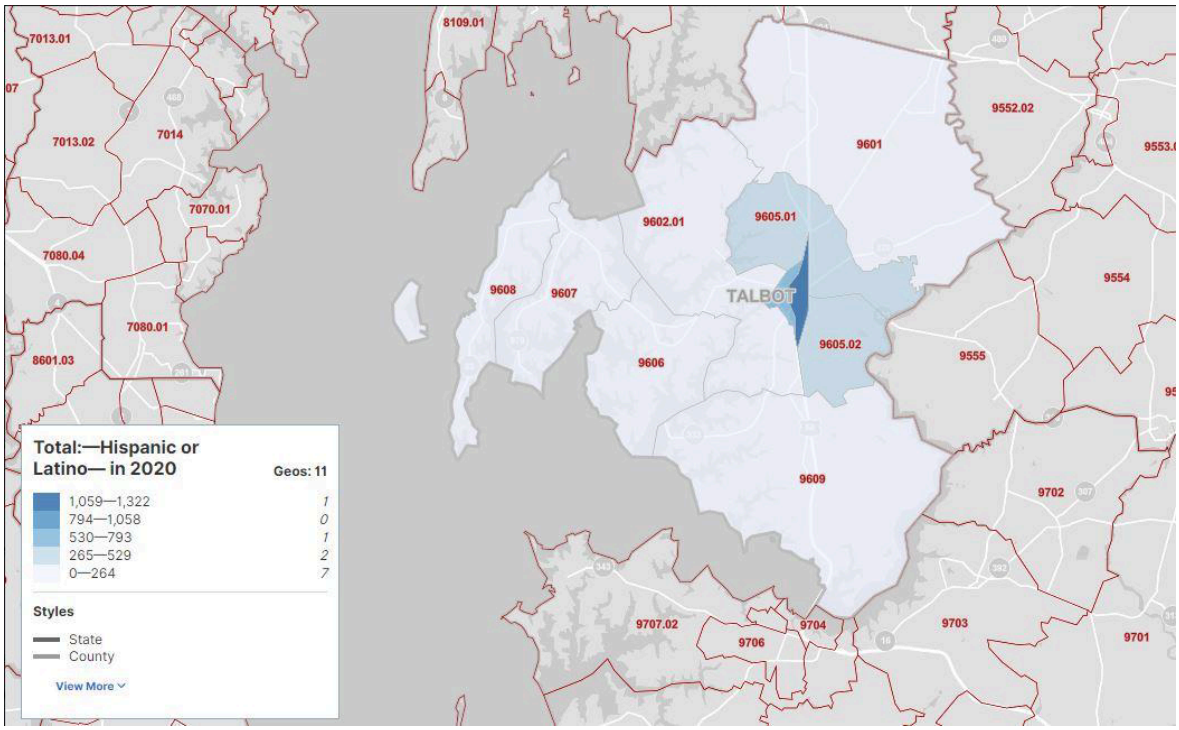


Figure 49: Talbot County Hispanic Population by Census Tract



E. Fair Housing

In 2021, the Maryland Land Use Article was amended to require that all comprehensive plans include a "Fair Housing Assessment" to ensure that they "affirmatively further fair housing." This refers to the obligation to prevent housing discrimination and proactively address segregation and other barriers that limit housing access based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, familial status, or disability. As defined in Section 2-401 of the Housing and Community Development Article, this includes taking active steps to create inclusive communities where housing opportunity is not restricted by these characteristics.

The Housing Goals and Objectives at the end of this chapter include recommended actions to meet this requirement. These focus on preserving Easton's existing affordable housing, increasing the supply of new housing, and preventing the displacement of low- and moderate-income households.

The Town of Easton is committed to fostering an inclusive and equitable community where all residents have fair access to housing opportunities. This commitment is central to our vision of a vibrant, diverse, and thriving town.

In line with the Federal Fair Housing Act, the Maryland Fair Housing Act, and applicable local ordinances, Easton prohibits housing discrimination based on:

- Race (including associated traits like hair texture and protective hairstyles)
- Color
- Religion
- Sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity)
- Familial status (including families with children, pregnant individuals, and legal custodians of children under 18)
- National origin
- Disability (physical or mental)
- Marital status
- Source of income
- Military status

The Town will actively work to eliminate discriminatory practices, support diverse neighborhoods, and ensure that all residents can find housing that meets their needs. Fair and equal treatment will continue to be integrated into our planning, policymaking, and community development efforts.

F. Potential New Housing Programs / Policies

Easton faces two distinct housing challenges. The first is a shortage of housing for low- and extremely low-income individuals and families. These housing needs often intersect with broader social and familial challenges, making them persistent. Despite this, the Town must continue—and expand—efforts to provide housing for this group. The Housing Authority of Talbot County remains the primary provider, but the Town should also support groups like Habitat for Humanity of Choptank and similar organizations that offer safe, decent, affordable homes.

One approach worth revisiting is a local Self-Help Housing Program, modeled after a successful initiative on the lower Eastern Shore led by former Delegate Rudy Cane. Similar to Habitat's model, the USDA-supported program enables very low- and low-income families to build their own homes together under supervision, contributing a set share of labor (typically 65%). This reduces costs

and makes homeownership feasible. Easton previously sought funding for this program through the Community Legacy Program, but the request was denied. Renewed efforts could help bring it to fruition.

The second housing issue is the lack of inventory for first-time and move-up homebuyers. Easton's recent residential developments increasingly target high-income buyers, leaving fewer options for moderate-income households. This growing gap in the market reduces opportunities for economic mobility and long-term community diversity.

Worsening this situation is the geographic segregation of housing by income. Easton is evolving into a town of income-stratified neighborhoods—very low-income households in one area, working-class residents in another, and wealthier residents elsewhere. This kind of separation undermines community cohesion, as discussed in the Community Character Element.

One solution is to require all new residential developments to include a set percentage of homes at varied price points. A notable precedent was set in the Easton Village on the Tred Avon project, which originally committed 10% of both attached and detached units as affordable housing. These units were to be integrated into the community, indistinguishable from market-rate homes, and subject to resale restrictions to maintain affordability. However, the financial burden of real estate taxes and HOA fees eventually led the developer to substitute in-lieu contributions to the Town's Affordable Housing Fund.

Developers have also met affordable housing obligations by building units off-site or contributing to the Fund. While this has provided some affordable homes, it has diluted the original goal of integrating housing types within neighborhoods.

To create a more consistent and equitable approach, the Town's Affordable Housing Board proposed an Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance, an idea first supported in the 2010 Plan. Since then, the concept has been studied by the Board and the Attainable Housing Task Force, leading to a proposed ordinance presented to the Town Council in early 2025 and currently (October 2025) pending potential action.

Additional housing policy options under consideration include:

- Expanding "Missing Middle" housing types to offer more varied and affordable units.
- Creating Traditional Neighborhood Zoning that allows smaller lots, mixed uses, and compact, walkable development by-right.

- Modifying the development review process to streamline approvals for projects that align with the Town's affordable housing goals.

These initiatives aim to address both affordability and equity while supporting a more integrated, inclusive housing market in Easton.

G. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Ensure that housing in Easton is safe, sanitary, structurally sound, and enhances neighborhood character.

Objectives:

- Maintain strong funding, staffing, and training for the Town's Building Inspection Department, and expand the Rental Housing Inspection Program.
- Collaborate with state, county, and nonprofit partners to direct housing rehabilitation funds to eligible low- and moderate-income households.
- Implement design standards that promote a mix of housing types and visually integrate affordable housing into the community.
- Encourage development patterns that support neighborhood identity, walkability, transit access, and efficient use of infrastructure.
- Preserve natural features and community character through thoughtful open space design, landscaping, and environmental protections.

Goal #2: Expand the supply of low-income housing in Easton.

Objectives:

- Support the Housing Authority of Talbot County and Easton Affordable Housing Board in creating both rental and ownership opportunities for low-income households.
- Amend the Zoning Ordinance to encourage private-sector apartment development and allow flexible reuse of existing or historic structures.
- Partner with Habitat for Humanity of Choptank and similar groups to identify and secure sites for new affordable homes.

- Launch a Town-led Self-Help Housing Program to assist low-income families in building their own homes.

6. TRANSPORTATION

> "Our decisions about transportation determine much more than where roads or bridges or tunnels or rail lines will be built. They determine the connections and barriers that people will encounter in their daily lives — and thus how hard or easy it will be for people to get where they need and want to go" — Elijah Cummings

A. Purpose

Transportation is a primary driver of land use—and Easton is no exception. The earliest settlements in Talbot County were located near navigable waters out of necessity. Easton's industrial buildings, now seemingly out of place, were originally located along a rail line that served the area starting in the mid-1800s. More recently, the Town's expansion to the east has been shaped by proximity to U.S. Route 50, a major regional highway.

The link between transportation and development is deeply rooted in human history, with communities forming along coasts, rivers, and trade routes. In the modern era, particularly following World War II, American transportation planning has focused overwhelmingly on accommodating private automobiles. This auto-centric approach has brought convenience but also a host of unintended consequences—environmental degradation, social inequities, and inefficient land use patterns.

The Transportation Chapter aims to:

- Reinforce the Town Council's strategic commitments to mobility, access, and connectivity.
- Update goals, policies, and strategies to support multimodal improvements across Easton and its growth area.
- Advance a "Complete Networks" approach—one that tracks and improves transportation options across all modes, with an emphasis on safety, connectivity, and equity.

B. Transportation Issues and Policy Considerations

Easton recognizes the need to rebalance its transportation system by supporting a multimodal network that includes walking, bicycling, transit, air travel, and automobiles. A diverse and well-integrated transportation system allows people of all ages, abilities, and incomes to travel

safely and efficiently. It also supports economic development, environmental sustainability, and a high quality of life.

C. Organizational Framework

The goals and policies in this chapter are organized into five key areas:

1. Integration of Land Use and Transportation Planning
2. Complete Networks
3. Non-Motorized Transportation
4. Single-Occupancy Vehicles
5. Transportation Planning Requirements

These areas are guided by six core themes that emphasize the interdependence of transportation, land use, the environment, and social equity. These themes build upon and reinforce the broader goals of this Comprehensive Plan:

1. Limit sprawl by coordinating land use and transportation planning.
2. Provide safe, sustainable, and well-connected mobility options for all users.
3. Expand infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists, and shared modes of transportation.
4. Reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles (SOV).
5. Maintain and improve roads, trails, and other key infrastructure.
6. Prioritize equity in transportation planning and project implementation.

These themes and their related policy areas will be explored in greater depth in the following sections.

D. Integration of Land Use and Transportation Planning

As the primary population, employment, and service center in Talbot County, Easton serves not only its 18,000 residents but also thousands of county and regional residents who rely on the Town for work, shopping, and daily activities. This results in a transportation network that must accommodate significant regional demand, much of it originating outside the Town's corporate limits.

The affordability of housing in surrounding areas, combined with personal preference and regional employment dynamics, means that many people choose to live outside of Easton but commute in. According to 2020 U.S. Census data, only about 3,200 of the Town's 11,860 workers lived in Easton. More than 8,600 commuted in from elsewhere. At the same time, over 2,400 Easton residents commuted out of town for work. The 2022 update showed that out of 12,232 workers in Easton, 9,190 were inbound commuters and 2,322 were outbound. In total, more than 11,000 people commute into or out of Easton each workday, underscoring the Town's regional significance and the burden on its transportation infrastructure.

This level of regional traffic presents clear challenges. Easton's planning efforts must manage congestion while also promoting land use patterns that support infill development, maintain a compact urban form, and encourage transportation alternatives to the private automobile.

Higher residential densities, such as those already found in parts of Easton, create opportunities for more efficient transportation options—like public transit, walking, and bicycling. These modes become more cost-effective and feasible as density increases. For this reason, Easton must continue to align its land use and transportation policies to:

- Support compact, higher-density development in and near employment and service centers.
- Encourage infill and redevelopment in walkable, connected neighborhoods.
- Incentivize development patterns that reduce reliance on car travel.

A more integrated approach to land use and transportation planning will help Easton accommodate regional demand while preserving the Town's form, character, and quality of life.

E. Complete Networks

Easton's transportation planning strategy prioritizes a Complete Networks approach—addressing the needs of all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and transit riders—rather than focusing solely on automobiles. This approach builds on the principles of the Complete Streets movement but expands them with annual progress tracking, system-wide assessments, and a commitment to equity and accessibility across modes.



While transit options in Talbot County remain limited, Easton must plan for future multimodal infrastructure, including the potential expansion of transit services as the Town grows. Complete Networks planning also supports Easton's goals for compact, walkable neighborhoods and reduces the demand for continuous road expansion by offering viable alternatives to the single-occupancy vehicle (SOV).

The Town aims to produce an annual inventory and performance assessment for each modal system—pedestrian, bicycle, vehicle, and transit—while also reporting on system-wide progress and needs. These assessments help guide investment priorities and align infrastructure improvements with development goals.

i. Non-Motorized Transportation

A key component of Easton's Complete Networks strategy is the continued development of safe, convenient infrastructure for pedestrians and bicyclists. This includes constructing new sidewalks, crosswalks, and bikeways, as well as integrating these elements into all new public and private street projects.

The Easton Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (originally included in the 2010 Plan and intended to be updated following this Plan's adoption) serves as the blueprint for this effort. It identifies:

- A Primary Pedestrian Network with recommended sidewalk and intersection projects prioritized by need and feasibility.
- A Primary Bicycle Network and recommended bikeway projects prioritized similarly.

These plans are considered an extension of the Plan. Their implementation is essential to enhancing non-automotive mobility in Town and promoting active transportation options.

ii. Transit and Single-Occupancy Vehicles

The Town continues to improve conditions for walking and biking while encouraging fewer vehicle trips, particularly those made by single occupants. This does not imply eliminating private vehicles—Easton will continue to support a well-functioning road network—but recognizes that auto-centric development is not sustainable for the long term.

Census data shows Easton's transportation network is heavily impacted by regional inflows and outflows of workers, shoppers, and service users. In this context, the construction of pedestrian and

bicycle infrastructure serves not only Easton residents but the broader regional community by reducing congestion and expanding travel choices.

Although private vehicles will remain the dominant mode for most regional users over the next two decades, technological shifts—such as car- and ride-sharing, remote work, and autonomous vehicles—are reshaping the transportation landscape. Easton will continue to monitor and adapt to these changes while maintaining a strong emphasis on walkable, connected, and multimodal planning.

Recognizing that congestion during peak periods is unavoidable in certain corridors, Easton is no longer planning to "build its way out" through continuous widening of roads and intersections. Instead, the Town prioritizes improvements that enhance transportation options, increase efficiency, and create safe, comfortable streets for all users.

iii. Maintaining and Improving Infrastructure

Easton integrates transportation planning with infrastructure investment to maximize cost-efficiency. When utilities such as water, sewer, or stormwater systems require upgrades, the Town seeks to coordinate these projects with transportation improvements—such as adding bikeways or sidewalks identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

For example:

- Asphalt resurfacing triggers sidewalk and curb ramp upgrades under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Road repaving can be paired with re-striping to add bike lanes.
- Utility corridor improvements may coincide with placemaking initiatives if funding is aligned.

In many cases, improvements can be funded through non-transportation sources (e.g., utility capital budgets), allowing the Town to expand multimodal infrastructure without drawing exclusively on transportation funds.

Private development also plays a role. All new development and redevelopment projects are required to contribute to the cost and construction of infrastructure needed to support growth. These projects are reviewed for compliance with local and state transportation standards and must address connectivity, safety, and overall network performance.

F. Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA)

Under the Town's Development Regulations, a Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) is required for certain development projects expected to generate significant traffic or those located near intersections where safety and congestion are already concerns. The TIA evaluates and identifies deficiencies and recommends mitigation strategies if needed. The TIA process begins with a scoping phase prior to the formal submission of a traffic study where the Town and the applicant agree upon the methodologies based on the intensity of the proposal.~~,which are generally speaking those expected to generate significant~~ The study evaluates the project's impact on the surrounding network, identifies deficiencies, and recommends mitigation strategies. When applicable, additional requirements may be imposed by MDOT. ~~or for projects located near signalized intersections where traffic congestion or public safety concerns already exist.~~

¶

~~The TIA evaluates the likely impacts of a proposed development on the surrounding transportation network, identifies deficiencies, and recommends mitigation strategies if needed. Off-site mitigation measures—where necessary—must comply with relevant state regulations, including the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).~~

¶

Just as a comprehensive street network is necessary for efficient and safe vehicular flow at an acceptable standard, it must also serve bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders. To encourage alternative modes of transportation and ensure mobility for all users, the Town envisions~~ In the future, the Town envisions~~ expanding the scope of TIAs to include a multi-modal impact analysis where pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders are treated as equal traffic. Future TIAs will be aligned with the Town's anticipated Complete Streets classification system. This ensures that the impact analysis accounts for all modes of travel, not just traffic counts and the infrastructure design identifies the specific types of bicycle and pedestrian facilities appropriate for the street's classification. ~~an analysis of impacts on all modes of transportation, consistent with expected Complete Street standards and policies~~.

¶

To support the Town's goals for a seamless network ~~Complete Street Nnetworks goals~~, all new development abutting substandard public streets is required to upgrade adjacent street segments to current ~~Easton~~ multimodal ~~street~~ standards where feasible. These standards ensure that as Easton

grows, its transportation infrastructure is safe, accessible, and multimodal, and fiscally sustainable by requiring development to contribute its fair share to the public realm.

¶

~~Requirements vary by street type:~~

~~• Residential streets in new subdivisions must include concrete curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, unless a specific exemption is granted.~~

~~• Arterial streets adjacent to new development must be improved for multimodal use.~~

¶

~~These standards ensure that as Easton grows, its transportation infrastructure supports safe, accessible, and multimodal travel options for all users.~~

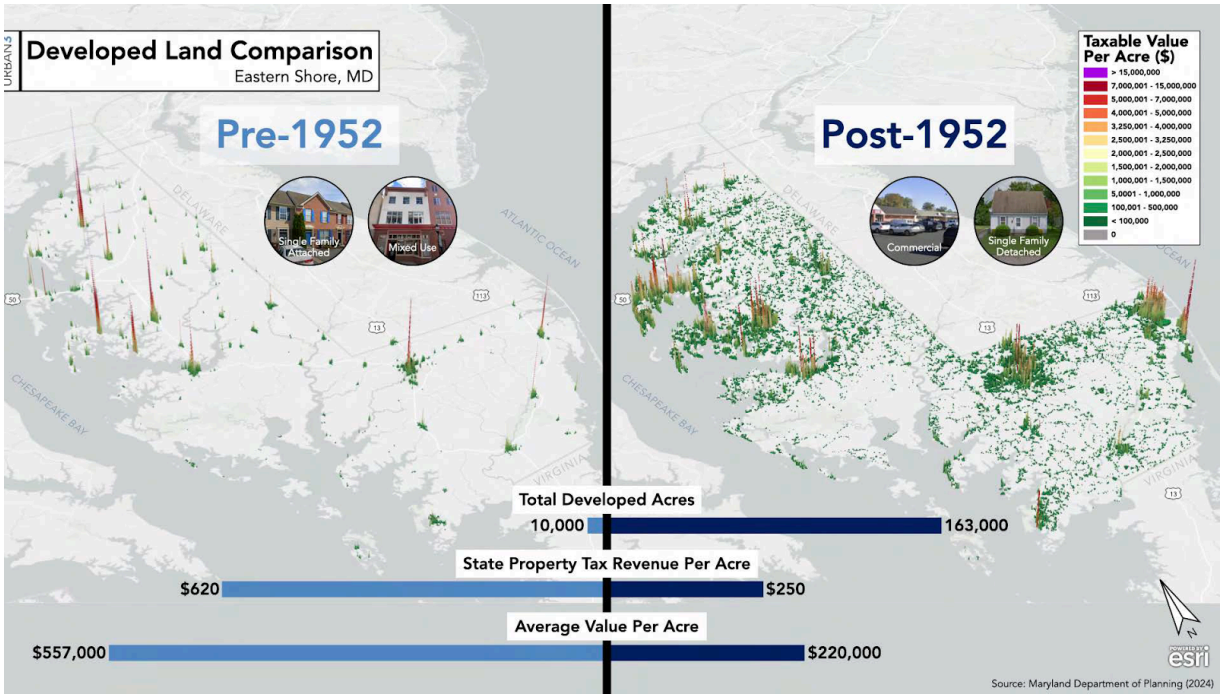
G. Road System

U.S. Route 50 has been the single most influential force shaping Easton's growth and development patterns over the past several decades—particularly commercial growth. The opening of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge in 1952 gave millions of Western Shore residents direct access to the Eastern Shore, driving a surge in beach traffic. Entrepreneurs responded by developing fast-food restaurants, gas stations, and other roadside services along Route 50 to attract these pass-through travelers.

Route 50 also fundamentally altered development patterns in Easton. What began as growth along a bypass corridor eventually drew more commercial uses toward it, with residential development filling in between the highway and the historic core. Most of this post-1950s growth was auto-oriented and single-use in nature, diverging from traditional neighborhood design.

A fiscal analysis by Urban3 (see Figure 2) highlights key differences between pre- and post-1952 development. First, relatively little land was developed before the Bay Bridge opened. Second, land developed prior to 1952 consistently generates significantly higher fiscal value per acre than post-bridge development. Together, these trends reinforce the link between infrastructure and land use patterns, and the higher fiscal return of compact, traditional development over suburban sprawl.

FIGURE 2 - Taxable Value per Acre on the Eastern Shore pre and post Bay Bridge



While Route 50 has benefited many businesses, its impacts are mixed. Excessive access points and the highway's attempt to function both as a high-speed regional corridor and as a local service road have created serious traffic congestion, safety concerns, and neighborhood disruption.

i. Route 50: Fixes and Futures

Easton's residents overwhelmingly oppose rerouting Route 50 onto the Easton Parkway—a position consistently confirmed in every Comprehensive Plan survey since the 1990s. The Parkway was built in the 1960s to serve west Talbot residents by providing north-south mobility around Easton, not through it. Converting it into a new Route 50 would undermine this function, add signalized intersections, and risk significant environmental impacts—particularly near MD 33 and MD 333. The Parkway cannot and should not serve as a high-capacity bypass.

Instead, the most favored long-term solution remains a new, limited-access bypass located well east of Easton—similar in scope to the Salisbury Bypass. This would alleviate congestion within Town, reduce through-traffic delays, and provide an opportunity to repurpose the existing Route 50 corridor as a local "Business 50." That transformation would allow for street narrowing, improved safety, and redevelopment of the corridor into a more attractive, multi-modal gateway.

Until such a bypass becomes feasible, the Town will continue to work with the State Highway Administration (SHA) to improve the existing Route 50 corridor through landscaping, intersection upgrades, and access management.

ii. East–West Access

A long-standing problem in Easton is the lack of effective east–west connectivity. The Parkway helps bypass downtown for north–south traffic, but offers little help to those moving across Town between neighborhoods on either side of Route 50. As a result, east–west travel often funnels through residential streets, creating congestion, cut-through traffic, and neighborhood complaints.

Some improvements have been made—such as traffic signal synchronization along Route 50—but larger solutions are needed. One promising idea is to relocate MD 309 so it connects with Route 50 at the point where the former railroad crosses. From there, it could run along the rail corridor before rejoining its existing alignment. This would not only improve east–west connectivity but also eliminate the problematic intersection near the airport, where a grade-separated interchange would conflict with flight paths. The concept, originally proposed by SHA, has support from local and regional officials and should be advanced.

iii. Planning and Coordination

Planning for future road improvements is complex and expensive—especially when multiple jurisdictions are involved. Within Easton's limits, roads are managed by the Town, Talbot County, and the State of Maryland, each with different objectives. For example, the State's priority for Route 50 is efficient regional travel, while Easton and the County prioritize local mobility and safety. Effective intergovernmental coordination is essential to reconcile these priorities and deliver meaningful improvements.

It's also important to recognize that Route 50 is now a major freight corridor. A 2022 State of Maryland report on the Rural Opportunities to Use Traffic Technology Enhancements (ROUTE) initiative noted that Route 50 carries over 10,000 trucks per day and supports $14 billion in annual commodity flow. Freight delays exceed 107,000 hours annually, costing roughly $51 million in lost time and fuel. The corridor is critical for agriculture, tourism, supply chains, and national security assets such as Wallops Island.

Going forward, Easton must continue advocating for road improvements that balance local mobility, regional freight needs, and safety—while staying focused on long-term goals to reduce auto dependency and enhance quality of life through better multimodal transportation options.

H. Complete Streets

Easton is in the process of developing a Complete Streets framework to ensure the design and operation of streets safely accommodates all users—pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, motorists—regardless of age or ability. This approach reflects a shift away from traditional car-centric design toward one that balances the needs of all travel modes and emphasizes safety, accessibility, and community character.

Complete Streets prioritize local needs and neighborhood scale, rather than solely focusing on the rapid movement of through-traffic. Features may include sidewalks, bike lanes, bus stops, safe pedestrian crossings, median islands, curb extensions, traffic calming measures, and green stormwater infrastructure. When designed well, Complete Streets promote safer travel, improved mobility, public health, and placemaking—all critical to Easton's long-term livability.

In January 2025, the Town of Easton initiated its formal Complete Streets planning process by contracting with the transportation engineering firm Wallace Montgomery (WM). This first phase of work lays the foundation for a long-term shift in how Easton designs, prioritizes, and evaluates street infrastructure. The overall Complete Streets planning effort is anticipated to span several years and phases of development and implementation.

I. Airport

Easton is uniquely served by a general aviation airport within its town limits. Easton Airport (Newnam Field – ESN), located just west of MD Route 662 and south of Airport Road, is owned and operated by Talbot County. The facility is managed by an Airport Manager under the direction of the County Council, with input from a five-member Airport Advisory Board.

Designated in the FAA's National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS), Easton Airport is eligible for federal funding. As a general aviation facility, it supports a range of private, corporate, and public service aviation needs. It features two intersecting paved runways:

- Runway 04/22: 5,500 feet long
- Runway 15/33: 4,000 feet long

Both have full parallel taxiways and instrument approaches. An FAA contract air traffic control tower operates on-site.

The airport supports approximately 220 based aircraft, including single- and multi-engine planes, jets, helicopters, and gliders. Four Fixed Base Operators (FBOs)—Easton Jet Service, Maryland Air, NexGen Flight Solutions, and Trident Aviation—offer a wide array of services, including:

- Aircraft fueling (100LL and Jet A)
- Aircraft parking (tie-downs, T-hangars)
- Air charter services
- Rental cars, hangar space, and catering
- Flight planning tools, weather centers, and a public café
- Meeting space and fitness amenities

Additional aviation-related businesses offer aircraft repair, sales, and unique experiences such as biplane rides through Aloft Biplane Rides. Flight instruction and rentals are provided by Trident Aviation and Easton Aviation.

The airport also plays a key public safety role. The Maryland State Police base a medevac helicopter at the site for emergency medical transport, search and rescue, and law enforcement missions. Talbot County EMS operates five Advanced Life Support units from the airport, improving response times and access to critical care.

i. Operational Statistics

Easton Airport (ESN) ranks among the top three busiest general aviation airports in Maryland, reflecting its critical role in the region's transportation and economic systems. According to the Maryland Aviation Administration and recent reports, ESN supports a high volume of aircraft activity and contributes significantly to the local economy.

Based Aircraft (2023)

- Single-engine aircraft: 143
- Multi-engine aircraft: 24
- Corporate jets: 20
- Helicopters: 3
- Total: 190 based aircraft

Annual Aircraft Operations (2023)

- Local general aviation: 44%
- Transient general aviation: 31%
- Military: 20%
- Air taxi: 5%
- Total operations: 73,543 annually

ii. Economic Impact

A 2023 statewide study of airport economic impacts found that Easton Airport generated:

- 542 total jobs
- $36.9 million in personal income
- $11.3 million in state and local tax revenue
- $91.4 million in total business revenue

These numbers demonstrate that the airport is not only a transportation asset but a major economic driver for Talbot County and the broader Mid-Shore region.

iii. Land Use Compatibility and Community Impacts

As the airport has grown in operations and prominence, conflicts with adjacent residential neighborhoods have also increased—most notably related to noise, traffic, and the perception of encroachment. In response, Talbot County has enacted zoning measures and acquired avigation easements on surrounding properties to limit incompatible uses and protect aviation operations. The County plans to continue securing such easements to preserve the airport's long-term functionality.

On the Town side, while the land immediately surrounding the airport is zoned for industrial uses—which is generally compatible with aviation—there are currently no special airport-related zoning protections in place. The Town may consider revising its zoning ordinance in the future to incorporate airport overlay or compatibility districts to better manage potential land use conflicts, particularly in areas close to approach and departure paths.

Within Easton's jurisdiction, the primary concern is not safety but nuisance—especially in the North Easton neighborhoods and adjacent unincorporated County lands. Aircraft noise, fumes, and vibrations are ongoing quality-of-life issues for nearby residents. A balanced approach is needed: residents should acknowledge the presence of a long-standing regional airport, while the airport should seek to channel expansion and high-impact operations toward non-residential, industrial, and undeveloped land to mitigate disturbances.

iv. Mission and Outlook

The airport's mission emphasizes service, safety, and community responsibility:

> *Talbot County's Easton Airport is and will remain the Mid-Shore's premier non-commercial general aviation airport, providing outstanding service and support for private, corporate, and government tenants, transient aircraft users, and the Talbot County community at large. It will be a good neighbor by being sensitive to environmental concerns and will support education, emergency services, medical evacuation, and law enforcement activities. The airport will prioritize safety and security while aligning with the goals of the County's Comprehensive Plan.*

The Town of Easton supports the continued operation and thoughtful growth of Easton Airport and recognizes its importance for economic development, public safety, and regional mobility. However, the Town also emphasizes the importance of equitable land use planning to minimize impacts on residential communities and ensure long-term compatibility between aviation operations and surrounding neighborhoods.

j. Port

Port facilities for the Town of Easton are located at Easton Point, a triangular peninsula bordered on two sides by the Tred Avon River. The area commonly referred to as Easton Point extends inland to the Easton Parkway, although much of the land remains outside the corporate limits of the Town. The only parcels within Town boundaries include the former Public Works yard (now repurposed as a Waterfront Park), the Talbot County Public Works and Emergency Management offices, the Londonderry Retirement Community, and a few small intervening parcels.

The current mix of land uses at Easton Point is varied. At the tip of the peninsula is a small marina and a heavily used public boat ramp. There are also several industrial users that rely on river access for the delivery of bulk materials. Along the corridor closer to the Parkway are the County's Public

Works facility (now in the process of relocating) and the Londonderry senior living complex. Other intervening parcels include low-density residential properties and aging infrastructure, including the old Town Public Works yard.

The long-term future of Easton Point remains uncertain. The area has been widely recognized for its redevelopment potential, given its waterfront access and proximity to downtown. Many stakeholders envision a shift away from heavy industrial use toward a more mixed-use, recreational, and residential vision. This could include expanded marina facilities, improved public waterfront access, parks and open space, and higher-density residential and commercial development.

This vision was further articulated in the Easton Point/Port Street Small Area Plan, referenced in the Implementation Chapter. That plan sets forth a framework for potential annexation, infrastructure improvements, and land use changes, should redevelopment opportunities materialize in the future.

K. Rail

Rail service to Easton and the broader Talbot County area has been discontinued for many years. Most of the former rail rights-of-way have either been retained by the Maryland State Rail Administration or reverted to private ownership. As a result, the restoration of freight or passenger rail service is not anticipated during this planning period; however, old rail beds serve as good bones for the Town's Bicycle and Pedestrian network, which is exploited below.

L. Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan

Too often, transportation planning focuses narrowly on roadways, with minimal attention to non-automobile modes. Walking—our most basic form of transportation—is frequently overlooked, along with the infrastructure that supports it. Easton is actively working to change that. As part of the Town's broader "Complete Streets initiative" pedestrian and bicycle networks are now a central focus of infrastructure planning and investment.

In Easton's older neighborhoods, sidewalks have long been a defining feature. In recent years, many of these areas have benefited from targeted sidewalk upgrades and streetscape enhancements. Since the early 1980s, the Planning and Zoning Commission has required sidewalks in all new subdivisions. However, some neighborhoods developed in the 1950s through 1970s lack this infrastructure entirely, forcing pedestrians to share roadways with vehicles—a significant safety concern. These areas are now priorities for retroactive sidewalk installation.

i. Bicycle Infrastructure

Bicycle travel is also receiving greater attention in Easton's transportation framework. Bicycling offers a low-cost, sustainable transportation option and is increasingly eligible for federal and state infrastructure funding. Projects such as bike lanes and multi-use trails are particularly well-suited to Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) grants and Maryland's transportation funding programs, which now require comprehensive plans to address pedestrian and bicycle mobility.



Map 6: Proposed Bicycle Network

M. Public Transportation

The Town of Easton currently does not operate its own public transportation system, and no municipal transit services are expected to be introduced during the current planning horizon. However, residents and workers do have access to Delmarva Community Transit (DCT), a regional transit service operated by Delmarva Community Services, to which the Town contributes annually.

DCT provides two fixed routes through Easton—Route C and Route D—operating from 7:15 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. A St. Michaels Shuttle also runs from 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Fiscal Year 2023 ridership was:

- Route C: 8,337 riders
- Route D: 5,868 riders
- St. Michaels Shuttle: 6,030 riders

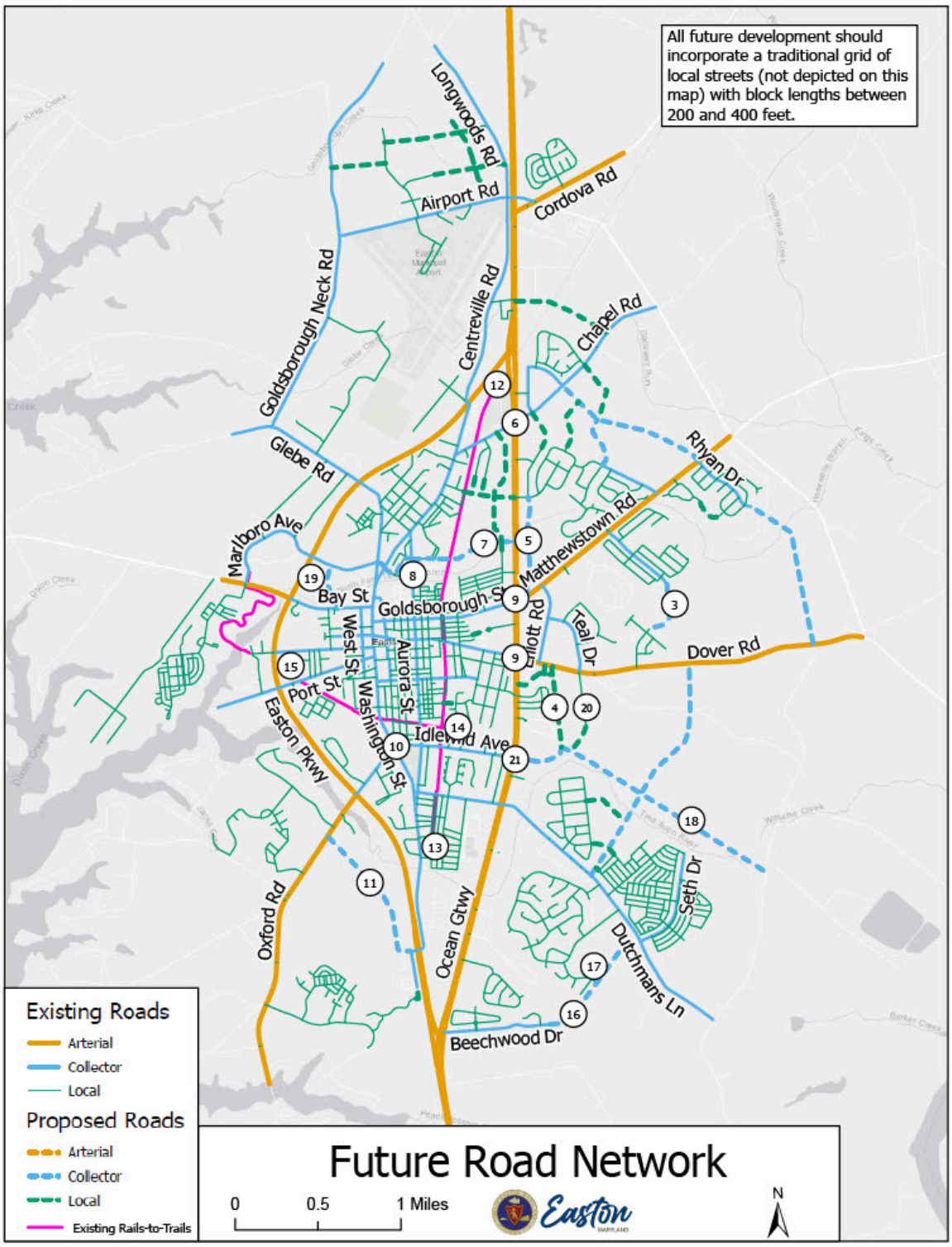
While ridership has declined since 2010 (particularly on Route C), public transit remains a vital service for many residents, including seniors, workers, and individuals without access to a car.

Looking ahead, the Town remains open to exploring expanded transit options, including potential service increases from DCT or other providers. As part of the State Agency review process associated with the Draft of this Plan, Maryland Transportation officials commented that many communities of about the same population as Easton have been able to maintain a circulator bus system. This is something we should explore further during this Planning period as, among other benefits, this is potentially one way in which the disparate parts of Easton can be brought closer together (and, in a relatively sustainable manner).

Easton should also begin discussions with State transportation agencies regarding travel demand management strategies, such as official Park-and-Ride facilities. Currently, some residents are informally using business parking lots for commuter parking—an indicator of unmet demand that may justify the creation of designated facilities. It is also important to remember that while not every project is appropriate for construction of a new road, all are important for consideration of expanded or enhanced connectivity. A prominent example of such projects is the new Hospital. This facility would seem to be a logical candidate for a transit stop given its role as an important community service, as well as major employer. At a minimum, any hospital employees who currently walk to the existing site on South Washington Street will need a new transit option to get to work at the new location.

N. Transportation Map and Proposed Improvements

The Transportation Map illustrates key proposed enhancements to Easton's multimodal transportation network. These improvements, summarized below, are conceptual at this stage—exact designs, funding mechanisms, and construction timelines are largely undefined. Most projects are expected to be completed in conjunction with adjacent property development or funded through the Town's impact fees or a combination of Town, County, or State resources. These proposals are also subject to revision as the Complete Streets Study is finalized.



Future Map 7: Road Network

1. Grade-Separated Crossing of Route 50

One of Easton's highest priorities is addressing local traffic delays caused by congestion on US Route 50. A grade-separated crossing would significantly improve east-west connectivity.

2. East Side Residential Collector Grid

Replacing a single collector route previously proposed in the 2004 Plan, the Town now supports a grid network of local streets on the eastern side of Easton. This approach—mirroring the traditional street grid of the historic town center—supports connectivity and disperses traffic flow. The Complete Streets Study will further evaluate this concept.

3. June Way Extension

This project would extend June Way from Waylands Subdivision south to connect with Fisher Range Road, eventually forming part of the East Side Collector Grid mentioned above.

4. Clifton Road Improvements

Clifton Road would be extended to connect Dover Road and Chesapeake Avenue, offering residents of North, Middle, and South Clifton an alternative route that avoids Route 50.

5. East Side Route 50 Service Road

A new service road behind businesses along the east side of Route 50 (between Matthewstown and Chapel Roads) would allow internal circulation without repeated entries onto Route 50, relieving traffic congestion and improving safety.

6. Chapel Road/Route 50 Intersection Improvements

This busy intersection will require capacity enhancements to accommodate future development, including Easton Commons and surrounding parcels. Recent upgrades have included signal rephasing; further improvements are expected based on evolving traffic conditions.

7. Norris Taylor Drive

This new signalized access road, developed with the Royal Farms and Burger King projects, improves circulation on the west side and enhances access to John F. Ford Park. It may support a future West Side Service Road extending Calvert Street north to Chapel Road through the RTC property.

8. East-West Connector

This long-standing proposal envisions connecting Marlboro Avenue with Creamery Lane, Aurora Park Drive, Magnolia Street, and eventually Route 50 via the RTC property. Portions of the route could continue across Route 50 to Elliott Road and Mulberry Drive. Phased implementation is expected, using impact fees and potentially beginning with pedestrian or bicycle improvements before full street construction.

9. Route 50 Intersection Upgrades (Goldsborough and Dover Streets)

These intersections continue to rank among the worst in Easton in terms of congestion and delay. Improvements are essential even if the East-West Connector is completed. Dedicated turn lanes and expanded capacity should be explored, and additional right-of-way acquisition may be necessary.

10. "Five Corners" Intersection

This unusual convergence of five roads (Washington, Harrison, Idlewild, Peachblossom) near Idlewild Park is a persistent congestion point. A roundabout is under consideration, along with a new smart signal system designed to improve flow and reduce delays in the near term.

11. Tristan Drive to Oxford Road Connector

This proposed route would connect Tristan Drive with MD Route 33 (Oxford Road), creating a new east-west corridor and reducing pressure on the existing Parkway/Oxford Road intersection. Coordination with Talbot County is needed, especially in light of the County's recent acquisition of the adjacent Poplar Hill Farm property. Given current ownership of the property by Talbot County, it is anticipated that this road will primarily serve as access to parking for the Town's Woodland Park located on an adjacent parcel.

12–15. Rails-to-Trails System Extensions

Significant trail system expansions are proposed in all directions:

12. Northward, across Route 50, following the historic railbed.
13. Southward, across Easton Parkway to link with ~~the Cooke's Hope~~ other trail systems.
14. Eastward, along Chesapeake Avenue.
15. Westward utilizing the pedestrian bridge over the Tred Avon River funded by Easton Village developers and potentially on towards St. Michael's.

Segments of these trail extensions have already been completed in recent years, and the Town intends to continue these enhancements as opportunities arise.

(16) Beechwood Drive Extension

This proposed extension involves the segment of Beechwood Drive located adjacent to the Lakelands project. It would connect the current dead end to Dutchman's Lane, just east of Easton Club East. Where feasible, this extension should include a multi-use trail to enhance non-motorized mobility.

(17) Hemlock Lane Extension

Hemlock Lane currently terminates within The Woods at Stoney Ridge subdivision. This proposal would extend the roadway eastward to connect with the proposed Beechwood Drive Extension, forming part of the broader East Side Residential Collector Grid. This grid system, which prioritizes multiple interconnected local streets rather than single large collectors, is intended to improve east side circulation while discouraging excessive cut-through traffic.

(18) Chesapeake Avenue Corridor

A public right-of-way for Chesapeake Avenue already exists and offers a significant opportunity to provide east–west access across a largely undeveloped area between Dutchman's Lane and Chilcutt Road. In the short term, construction of a pedestrian/bike trail along this corridor would benefit nearby neighborhoods. As development occurs, additional right-of-way acquisition should allow for a co-located roadway that could ultimately intersect Route 50 at or north of Idlewild Avenue. This extended Idlewild could then serve as the new vehicular connection, while Chesapeake Avenue would support a grade-separated pedestrian and bicycle crossing.

(19) Bay Street to Marlboro Avenue Connector

This proposal would formalize an existing informal connection currently used by drivers via a network of parking lots and private drives. The connector would provide improved access to Talbot County government offices located in the Bay Street Condominiums. While not a major traffic route, this connector would improve circulation and reduce confusion for local traffic and visitors.

(20) Industrial Park Road Extension

Industrial Park Road currently serves the Clifton Industrial Park, annexed into Easton in 2007. This extension would push the road southward to meet the proposed Chesapeake Avenue alignment. Once built, it would create a valuable north-south connection for residents of Stoney Ridge, Easton Club East, and future neighborhoods, offering an alternate path to Dover Road via a signalized intersection at Teal Drive.

(21) Idlewild Avenue Extension

Idlewild Avenue currently terminates at US Route 50. This proposed extension would continue Idlewild across Route 50, ideally via a grade-separated crossing, to meet the proposed Chesapeake Avenue corridor. Such a connection would relieve pressure on nearby intersections at Dutchman's Lane and Dover Road, improve east-west connectivity for vehicles, and provide opportunities to separate pedestrian and bicycle movements from highway traffic.

O. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Provide a Functional and Efficient Road Network.

Objectives:.

- Maximize the capacity, safety, and efficiency of the existing street and highway system.
- Improve access to, and movement within, the Central Business District.
- Improve the Route 50 circulation system, focusing on separating through and local traffic.
- Consolidate driveway access points on Route 50 and develop an intersection control plan to reduce left turns.
- Build a connected network of local roadways to support existing communities and planned development, while reducing local reliance on Route 50.
- Develop a Small Area Design/Transportation Plan to evaluate optimal street and trail networks on Easton's east side and Growth Area.
- Discourage strip development and promote clustering of development at designated nodes along Route 50.
- Improve east-west access throughout the Town, including at Goldsborough and Dover intersections.

- Require gridded street systems in new development with provisions for pedestrians and bicycles.
- Where feasible, retrofit existing subdivisions to create new road connections and improve connectivity.
- Work to reduce the growth of commercial access points on Route 50.
- Coordinate closely with SHA on improvements to all streets that intersect Route 50.
- Improve the appearance and function of Route 50 frontage areas; prioritize solutions that enhance the existing corridor rather than shifting traffic to Easton Parkway.
- Support long-term efforts to construct a Route 50 bypass east of Town, paired with converting the existing Route 50 to a multimodal boulevard.
- Enhance public transportation options and services.
- Evaluate feasibility and location of a formal park-and-ride lot in Easton.

Goal #2: Expand the Town's Trail System and Support Active Transportation.

Objectives:

- Collaborate with MDOT to pursue funding and design for a grade-separated pedestrian and bicycle crossing of Route 50 at Chesapeake Avenue.
- Implement the goals and recommendations of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
- Coordinate trail improvements and connectivity with Talbot County and regional partners.
- Include safe and effective crosswalks as part of all major intersection improvements on Route 50 and Easton Parkway.

Goal#3: Manage Airport Growth While Minimizing Community Impacts.

Objectives:

- Guide land use near the airport to avoid incompatible development that could restrict future airport operations.
- Coordinate with Easton Airport officials to review and refine policies aimed at mitigating noise and other impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.

Goal #4: Link Land Use and Transportation to Support Smarter Growth.

Objectives:

- Use this Comprehensive Plan, Small Area Plans, and mixed-use districts to incentivize infill and prioritize multimodal transportation.
- ~~Pursue the necessary steps to b~~Build a Transportation Network Model and develop a Comprehensive Transportation Plan as an adjunct to this Comprehensive Plan.
- Promote compact land use patterns and higher-density development near transit corridors.
- Acknowledge that congestion may occur in denser areas, but prioritize safety, connectivity, and multimodal access over capacity expansion.
- Develop a strategic transit plan linking key destinations such as employment centers, schools, parks, and shopping.
- Encourage active transportation over driving to improve health and reduce environmental impacts.
- Support transit-oriented development (TOD) along primary transit routes by:
    - Identifying zoning, densities, and land use patterns;
    - Requiring design review for all new development;
    - Promoting mixed-use development and discouraging auto-oriented uses;
    - Encouraging development patterns which reduce on-site parking requirements and encourage shared parking; and
    - Requiring bicycle parking for new development.
- Coordinate TOD efforts with transit providers to maintain or enhance service levels.
- Collaborate with Talbot County on unified multimodal infrastructure standards for the Easton Growth Area.
- Require Multimodal Traffic Impact Studies to consider nearby transportation corridors and intersections, not just those within and immediately adjacent to proposed projects.

Goal #5: Provide Safe, Well-Connected, and Sustainable Transportation Options.

Objectives:

- Fill missing gaps in the multimodal transportation network for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, freight, and private vehicles.
- Design transportation improvements that prioritize safety for vulnerable users.
- Ensure mobility options for people with special transportation needs, including children, seniors, low-income populations, and persons with disabilities.
- Expand the required scope of Traffic Impact Studies to include an analysis and discussion of the impacts of proposed projects on all modes of transportation so that our transportation network becomes truly multimodal.

Goal #6: Increase Infrastructure for Non-SOV Travel.

Objectives:

- Integrate Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan recommendations into public street improvements where feasible.
- Require all new development to build sidewalks along public streets per Town standards, with separation from traffic where possible.
- Accommodate bicyclists on arterial streets identified in the Master Plan, constructed with permeable materials where feasible.
- Establish an administrative waiver process for cases where required improvements would serve no clear public purpose.
- Prioritize Safe Routes to School through coordination with Talbot County Public Schools.
- Provide incentives for private development to construct sidewalk and bikeway infrastructure.
- Use Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies to improve efficiency and safety.
    - TDM Actions:
        - Educate the public about walking and biking options.
        - Implement compact, transit-supportive development strategies.

        - Track and report progress toward shifting mode share away from SOVs.
        - Require Commute Trip Reduction programs for large developments.
        - Support carpooling and ridesharing initiatives.
        - Reform parking standards to improve pedestrian environments.

    - TSM Actions:
        - Complete bike and pedestrian networks to improve public health and reduce emissions.
        - Explore bike share programs and local connectivity improvements.
        - Identify and pursue funding sources to implement multimodal improvements.

Goal#7: Reduce Reliance on Single-Occupancy Vehicles (SOVs).

Objectives:

- Decrease SOV trips while encouraging trips made by walking, biking, transit, and ridesharing.
- Track transportation mode share using standardized Census data and report five-year averages annually.
- Work with County and State partners to develop a local Commute Trip Reduction program.
- Advocate for stronger MDOT support of sidewalk, bikeway, and transit investments—particularly along state highways serving Easton.

Goal #8: Maintain and Improve Streets, Trails, and Related Infrastructure.

Objectives:

- Use Complete Street standards to ensure transportation concurrency for new development, avoiding unnecessary road widening for vehicle traffic.
- Allocate sufficient funding for maintenance of sidewalk, bikeway, and roadway systems.

- Design and construct transportation facilities to avoid or mitigate environmental impacts, consistent with Critical Areas Ordinance requirements.
- Develop improved metrics for analyzing new vehicle traffic impacts on pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit service.
- Apply multimodal street design standards to all new development.
- Request County and State highway projects to include pedestrian and bike safety improvements.
- Retrofit existing streets with green infrastructure and traffic calming where appropriate.

Goal #9: Address Transportation Equity in All Projects.

Objectives:

- Provide equitable access to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure through inclusive public engagement and targeted capital investment.
- Invest in underserved neighborhoods to expand pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Ensure all residents—regardless of age, income, race, or ability—have opportunities to participate in and benefit from transportation investments.
- Develop outreach materials in multiple formats and languages to engage all segments of the Easton community.

7. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

"Investment in infrastructure is a long term requirement for growth and a long term factor that will make growth sustainable."

Chanda Kochhar

A. Purpose

Community Facilities and Services form the backbone of Easton's infrastructure and quality of life. This chapter addresses the key public services and utilities that support daily living, guide development, and ensure public health and safety. These include water and sewer services, solid waste management, police, fire and rescue, and other essential facilities.

The chapter provides a concise overview of the facilities currently serving Easton, along with a discussion of future needs based on projected growth. It incorporates community input gathered during the Plan Update process and outlines goals and objectives to ensure that Easton's public services keep pace with development.

While newer elements such as Water Resources and Municipal Growth may overlap with topics in this chapter, the Comprehensive Plan ensures all statutory requirements are addressed—even if they appear in separate chapters. For Community Facilities, the State of Maryland provides the following guidance:

Maryland Statutory Requirements

A Community Facilities Element must:

(a) Project the most appropriate and desirable patterns for the location, character, and extent of public and semi-public buildings, land, and facilities—on a schedule that extends as far into the future as is reasonable.

B. It may also include planning for:

- Places of worship
- Fire stations
- Hospitals

- Institutions
- Jails
- Libraries
- Parks and recreation areas
- Police stations
- Schools and educational facilities
- Cultural facilities
- Social welfare and medical facilities
- Other public offices or administrative buildings

Some of these topics are addressed in this chapter; others appear in separate sections of the Plan. Regardless of where they are discussed, their evaluation is consistent with Easton's population projections, growth policies, and infrastructure strategies.

Easton's public services and utilities play a critical role in the Town's physical, economic, and social development. Continued growth—especially in key economic sectors—depends on the capacity of public and private utility systems to meet the needs of both current and future residents. A core goal of the Town is to maintain and expand community facilities and services that protect public health and safety while enhancing quality of life. This must be done within the Town's fiscal limits and in coordination with its broader growth management goals. As the region's commercial and employment hub, Easton must also account for service demands generated by surrounding communities—not just those of Town residents.

B. Utilities

Easton's utility systems are primarily managed by Easton Utilities, a municipally owned entity responsible for electricity, water, sewer, natural gas, and broadband services. Established in 1923, Easton remains the only municipality in Maryland to own and operate all its utilities—a structure that continues to offer local control, operational efficiency, and responsive service.

Easton Utilities is governed by a three-member Easton Utilities Commission. Two commissioners must be residents of Easton; the third must reside within the electric service area. All are appointed

by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the Town Council. A full-time President/CEO manages day-to-day operations and implements Commission policies.

i. Electricity

Electric service in Easton is provided by Easton Utilities to over 11,000 customers within a 54-square-mile service territory. Electricity is sourced both from onsite generation facilities and from the PJM Interconnection, a regional transmission organization. This allows Easton Utilities to choose the most economical and reliable power source on an hourly basis. The Town's installed generation capacity is 66 megawatts—more than sufficient to meet current demand.

Historically, Easton Utilities was the sole electricity provider. However, recent annexations have brought some areas into service territories of Choptank Electric Cooperative and Delmarva Power & Light. As annexation continues, coordination among these providers will become increasingly important. Service area transfers may be necessary to ensure consistent, efficient service and to avoid overlapping service in single developments. These boundary adjustments require mutual agreement among the utilities involved.

ii. Water and Sewer

Easton Utilities also manages the Town's water and wastewater systems. Water is drawn from deep freshwater aquifers via a network of wells, while sewer service is provided through a system first constructed in 1911.

The Town's original wastewater treatment plant was built in 1938 along the Choptank River. A major upgrade occurred in 1988 with the introduction of an Overland Flow Treatment system—then the fifth largest in the country. In 2007, Easton brought online a new enhanced nutrient removal (ENR) facility, with sufficient capacity to meet projected needs through 2051 (as detailed in the Municipal Growth and Water Resources Elements). Additional information regarding water and wastewater system capacity status, as well as projections of the adequacy of these systems, may be found in Sections 9B and 11G and H of this Plan.

All new water and sewer extensions must align with the Talbot County Water and Sewer Plan and are funded entirely by the developer. Service is only extended to properties within Easton's corporate limits. Decisions to annex land should weigh the long-term financial, infrastructure, and planning implications of extending water and sewer services.

iii. Natural Gas

Easton's Gas Department, acquired in 1923, is the only municipally owned gas utility in Maryland. The original coal-based system was replaced in 1966 with a natural gas supply via Eastern Shore Natural Gas Company. Gas is piped in from the Federalsburg area and distributed to over 4,500 customers through 100 miles of steel and plastic mains. The system delivers approximately 525 million cubic feet of gas annually within an 8.5-square-mile service area.

iv. Internet and Broadband

Easton Velocity, a division of Easton Utilities, provides high-speed broadband, cable, and phone service. Its hybrid fiber-coaxial and expanding fiber-to-the-premises network offers advanced connectivity options, including commercial service packages of up to 10 gigabits per second.

Easton Velocity plays a central role in supporting digital equity, remote work, telehealth, education, and economic growth. As a publicly owned service, it offers competitive pricing, reliable local support, and infrastructure investment aligned with Easton's long-term goals for connectivity and community development.

c. Solid Waste

Solid waste collection in Easton is provided by the Town. Since 2011, waste has been hauled to the Mid-Shore Regional Landfill in Caroline County, replacing the former site on Barkers Landing Road. To offset disposal costs, Easton implemented a residential disposal fee in 1993 to cover landfill tipping charges.

Recycling services include both curbside collection for residents and drop-off containers ("igloos") located at the former landfill site and other convenient locations around Town. These services are essential to managing Easton's waste stream and reducing landfill dependency.

d. Medical and Hospital Facilities

Hospital services in Easton are provided by the University of Maryland Shore Medical Center (UMSMC). As one of the Town's most critical institutions, the hospital has a twofold impact: it provides essential healthcare services and serves as a major employer and economic engine. However, its physical presence within a residential neighborhood has also created longstanding land use challenges.

As the hospital has expanded over time, it has outgrown its original site and now occupies multiple properties within the Idlewild Avenue and Dutchman's Lane corridor. This fragmentation has led to conflicts with nearby residents, including increased traffic, parking demand, and the encroachment of institutional uses into residential areas. While coordination with the Town has mitigated some impacts, the fundamental land constraints remain unresolved.

In response, the University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS) identified a new site for a regional medical facility near the Talbot County Community Center, just outside the current Town boundary and adjacent to the Easton Airport. Originally proposed in 2008, the project was delayed but has now received local and State approvals to move forward.

This long-anticipated facility represents a major investment in the health and wellbeing of Easton and the broader Mid-Shore region. Beyond patient care, it promises to attract additional medical offices, labs, rehabilitation centers, and support services—strengthening Easton's role as a regional hub for healthcare.

Key planning considerations remain:

- Development in the areas surrounding the new hospital site
    - To include an examination of issues such as the appropriateness of the existing zoning for adjacent areas / connectivity to other parts of town / airport issues / traffic, etc.
- Future of the current hospital site:
    - The existing facility and surrounding medical corridor are strong candidates for a future Small Area Plan, which should guide redevelopment and potential land use changes.
- Relocation of support services:
    - The shift of medical offices and clinics toward the new hospital may leave Idlewild and Dutchman's Lane with underutilized or outdated facilities.
- Housing for healthcare workers:
    - As noted in the Housing chapter, access to affordable housing is a pressing issue for Easton's workforce—including those in the healthcare sector. Enabling more

workers to live in Town can ease commuting pressures, support recruitment and retention, and improve emergency staffing capacity.

- As the new regional hospital becomes reality, Easton must plan thoughtfully for the transition—not just for the facility itself, but for the neighborhoods, services, and workforce it affects.

E. Public Schools

Public Schools in Talbot County are funded and administered by the County government. The Town has two "roles" in this process. First, as the major population center in Talbot County, we are a significant source of students attending public schools. Second, three of the County's public schools, plus the Board of Education Main Offices, are located within the Town's jurisdiction.

Although the Town has no role in terms of providing public school service, we work cooperatively with the County to supply them with the most updated demographic information for their use in preparing the Annual Educational Facilities Master Plan. The 2025 version of this document,describes the state of, and outlook for, the Easton schools, including the impact of the The Blueprint for Maryland's Future and can be viewed at the Talbot County Public School's website: https://www.talbotschools.org/documents/about/admin-services/plant-operations/779051

Looking ahead as far as it does (i.e. ten years), the Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) indicates that the Talbot County Public School system can accommodate expected growth in Easton, albeit barely, at the middle and high schools, and the just constructed elementary school would require additional capacity either through a physical addition or through redistricting.. Unanticipated growth would pose even more problems, depending on the nature of any such residential developments. The Educational Master Plan notes that there are a number of residential developments planned in the Easton area, but that these are primarily planned to target the high-end or age-restricted markets. Age-restricted developments obviously impose very little demand on public school systems as there are few, if any, children in these types of projects. High-end projects may very well have children living in the development, but oftentimes these children attend one of Easton's private schools, thus the impact of these developments on the public school system is also diminished. Enrollment at non-public schools in Talbot County now totals approximately 932 students, which is 17.1% of the total K-12 student enrollment in the County. This takes substantial pressure off of public school utilization but may bear watching as if the economic situation deteriorates these students represent potential new impacts on the public school system if

their parents, by choice or necessity, switch from private to public school education for their children.

History suggests that the impact on Easton's public schools may not even be as much as described in the EFMP. This conclusion is arrived at by looking at Easton's change in population and public-school enrollment in the years 2000 and 2020. In 2000, Easton had a total population of 11,708, with a public-school enrollment of 2,892. By 2020, these numbers had grown to 17,101 and 3,072 respectively. That is a difference of 180 additional students enrolled in Easton's public schools from an overall population increase of 5,393. Looking ahead to the total buildout of the 2023 Town boundaries (an estimated 6,752 new people), if the same ratio of student population: total population can be assumed, this increase of 6,752 people would yield just 225 new students in Easton's public schools.

The counterpoint to this though may come from the changing demographics noted in the EFMP. Specifically, it noted the growth of the Hispanic student population in Talbot County's Public Schools. This mirrors the increase in the overall Hispanic population in Easton, which, as noted in the Plan Background Chapter, has grown from 3.5% of Easton's population in 2000, to 14.4% in 2020.

F. Libraries

Library service in Talbot County is provided by the Talbot County Free Library (TCFL), the main branch of which is in Easton at the corner of Dover and West Streets. In addition to the traditional library resources provided here, the Easton branch is an important community resource, providing a series of community events, study rooms, and a moderately sized meeting room. According to the Library's website, the TCFL receives 76% of its funding from Talbot County and other local governments, 12% from grants and friends support, 6% from the State of Maryland, and the balance from TCFL Foundation and Donations.

The FY 2022 TCFL Annual Report includes the following statistics (NOTE: these figures are for the full system, not just the Easton Branch):

- 23,528 Library Card Holders
- 84,608 physical visits
- 14,179 reference questions answered

- 7,701 computer users
- 13,982 Wi-Fi users
- 383,411 Virtual Library Visits
- 970 Uses of the Meeting and Study Rooms by Outside Organizations
- 125,172 physical volumes
- >1,000,000 virtual volumes
- 405 Adult, Teen & Children's Programs with total attendance of 16,831

The TCFL has developed a Strategic Plan through the year 2025 is provided and available for review at: https://www.tcfl.org/about/?content=strategicplan. All told, TCFL is a valuable and multifaceted community resource.

G. Community Centers

Public buildings shape a community's sense of identity and permanence. As noted by Ed McMahon of the Conservation Fund—who spoke in Easton during a past Comprehensive Plan Visioning session—governments should set the tone for quality development through their own civic architecture. In "Better Models for Development in Virginia", McMahon wrote:

> *"Public buildings and spaces create identity and a sense of place. They give communities something to remember and admire... Public buildings with civic stature, quality materials, and prominent settings project a sense of permanence and human scale that expresses the dignity and importance of public institutions."*

Historically, town halls, courthouses, libraries, and schools were among a community's most attractive and prominent buildings. Over time, however, this standard has too often eroded, with newer public facilities resembling warehouses or being sited along strip corridors outside town centers.

Easton has largely resisted this trend. Most of its key public buildings remain downtown, including some notable examples of quality civic architecture. That said, the Town has come close to losing this pattern. In recent decades, Talbot County has considered bids for new administrative office sites outside the town center, and the U.S. Postal Service nearly relocated its facility before ultimately opting to renovate in place.

A major success story is the Easton Utilities Commission's Customer Service Center, completed in 2000. This landmark project is a model of context-sensitive, high-quality design that fits seamlessly into the historic fabric of downtown. It exemplifies how civic buildings can reinforce community character and contribute to the vitality of Easton's core.



The Easton Utilities Commission's Customer Service Center

Looking ahead, Easton may soon need to expand or replace its Town Office at 14 South Harrison Street. While the current building—a former firehouse and police station—is a strong example of adaptive reuse, it may no longer provide sufficient space for staff and operations. Should a new Town Office be required, the Town should follow the precedent set by the Easton Utilities building: locate it in the downtown core and ensure it reflects a high standard of civic design that instills community pride.

H. Public Safety

Many issues related to public safety fall within the realm of a community's overall quality of life that is the subject of the Community Character Chapter. As a part of this Element, it is appropriate to

address issues such as the adequacy of existing police services, the expected future needs of the police force, and the need for new offices, substations, etc. The 1997 Comprehensive Plan quoted the International City Managers Association's recommended ratio of 1.75 police personnel per 1,000 people served. That standard was the subject of criticism from previous Police Chiefs. Therefore the 2004 Plan utilized a different standard, that of the International Center of Prevention of Crime, which finds that the national average across the U.S. is 3.36 officers per thousand people served.

With 48 sworn officers in a Town of approximately 17,100, Easton falls between the two referenced guidelines. There are some factors in Easton that suggest being towards the upper end of the recommended range is appropriate. First, Easton is a regional center for employment, entertainment and commerce. Thus, the population served is much higher than simply the resident population of the Town. Second, Easton's citizens have repeatedly called for strong and active community policing. Finally, Easton is subject to extremely heavy volumes of seasonal traffic traveling between Ocean City and the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area and Easton itself has a modest tourism industry. Factors such as these place a stronger demand on police resources than may normally be found in another municipality of a similar size.

Considering the above, we believe police staffing is adequate for the present time and growth in the number of sworn officers along the rates that Easton has recently experienced should be adequate for the future.

The Easton Volunteer Fire Department provides fire protection in the Town of Easton and the surrounding County area. The department is an all-volunteer organization with financial support from the Town and County. The Fire Department discontinued providing ambulance service as of December 1, 2002. The ambulance equipment and supplies were sold to Talbot County. The County is now the primary provider of emergency services throughout the County including the Fire Department's service area. There is a State Fire Marshal responsible for Fire Code enforcement in the Town and County.

Fire Protection services should be expanded throughout the Plan period as the Town and County's population continues to increase. As a result of growth in and around the Town a new fire substation was constructed on Matthewstown Road on the lot of the Town's water tower. This location offers better access to US Route 50 and is located in proximity to development activity. One of the consequences of uncontrolled growth, either in terms of rate or location, is the increased potential that Easton would have to move from an all-volunteer Fire Department to a paid

department in order to continue to provide acceptable coverage. This would have negative impacts both in terms of the loss of the community spirit that is engendered by the Volunteer Fire Department as well as financial implications, including possible (if not probable) tax increases.

Advanced Life Support (ALS) services have been established in Talbot County. ALS provides 24-hour emergency response by trained paramedics and cardiac rescue technicians. ALS services are provided by volunteer and paid staff. Funding for ALS is derived from the County, fundraising activities and private donations. ALS service has also been experiencing difficulty in securing funds for equipment needs related to an increasing number of calls.

In assessing the adequacy of fire and emergency management services for Easton's future, it is necessary to look at more than just population projections. Traffic projections, particularly for US Route 50, have a great influence on both the number of accidents that on that highway as it traverses our Town as well as the ease (i.e. speed) with which emergency responders can reach their destinations.

The form of development is also extremely important when it comes to emergency response time. Studies show that emergency responders can cover more households within a given response time in neighborhoods with a more traditional style of development (i.e. multiple connections). This means that response time from a given fire/rescue station is lower when the community is predominantly built in this form of development. On a larger scale, it also means that the need for additional substations is lessened when the community is built in the traditional pattern as opposed to a suburban style of development.

I. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Deliver High-Quality Community Facilities and Services. Continue to provide well-maintained, reliable public facilities and services to support health, safety, and quality of life for all who live, work, or visit Easton.

Objectives:

- Ensure that the cost of facilities and services is shared equitably among the Town, developers, and end users.
- Require developers to upgrade any deficient facilities serving annexed areas to Town standards, based on proportional impact.

- Mandate that all users contribute their fair share toward capital improvements through existing and future funding tools.
- Align the provision of services with the Town's adopted growth management policies.
- Deliver services and facilities equitably across all neighborhoods and businesses.
- Require all development to pay for necessary infrastructure extensions, using the Impact Fee Ordinance and any new mechanisms adopted.
- Promote orderly, staged growth by targeting utility extensions to priority areas and enabling cost recapture from future development.
- Encourage the establishment of a general or specialized satellite college campus in Easton.

Goal 2: Coordinate Town Services with Other Agencies. Improve collaboration with county and regional agencies to ensure consistent and efficient delivery of services.

Objectives:

- Work with Talbot County to update the Master Water and Sewer Plan to reflect service-ready projects within Easton's growth areas.
- Support Easton Utilities in coordinating electric service boundaries with Delmarva Power and Choptank Electric to avoid service overlap.
- Continue using a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to align Town projects with those of partner agencies.

Goal 3: Set a High Standard for Public Buildings. Ensure public facilities reflect the civic identity and long-term investment of the community.

Objectives:

- Construct buildings using high-quality materials and timeless architectural design.
- Design public facilities with adequate space and capacity for future expansion.
- Prioritize siting public buildings in or near downtown Easton, except for small neighborhood-specific facilities.
- Advocate for Talbot County to also locate its public facilities near the Town Center.

- Assess the need for a new or expanded Town Office to meet growing operational needs.

8. PARKS

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul."

- John Muir

A. Purpose

One of the most critical components in maintaining and enhancing a community's quality of life is its system of parks, recreation, and open space. The careful location of parks and open space areas and preservation of the Town's natural resources as a complement to existing development can be a useful tool in guiding the Town's development into a logical, orderly and environmentally sensitive pattern. In addition to recreational and aesthetic benefits, open spaces provide a framework for various land uses. Properly located, they become boundaries and buffers between conflicting uses of land and a nucleus for building neighborhood areas. Natural features can be preserved as valuable scenic and environmental attributes of the Town. A park system and recreational program can also go a long way toward resolving the age-old problem of a community offering nothing for young people "to do."

This chapter examines the current state of Easton's Parks and Recreation system and proposes methods by which it might be improved. It also calls for the advancement of a Town-wide system of “green infrastructure.” This refers to the parks and open space areas, as well as the paths and corridors that link these areas. It also proposes areas for new parks to be developed in the future as the Growth Area becomes developed.

B. Existing Parks

The Municipal Growth Element analyzed the adequacy of the Town’s overall parks from an acres per capita perspective, based on a State-suggested ratio. It found that the current park system meets this standard and that we would continue to exceed the threshold throughout the buildout of the Growth Area by merely relying upon the open space requirements of the Town’s Subdivision Regulations. This chapter looks more closely at the state of Easton’s Parks and Recreation system overall and makes recommendations for improving and enhancing it so as to further sustain and improve the quality of life for Town residents and visitors.

Easton's park system has grown from 14 to 30 parks since 1997—more than doubling in number and expanding the footprint of public space from 236 to 458 acres. Table 8 represents an inventory of existing Town parks and open space areas. One of the most notable points is that there are a fairly large number of parks (30) in Easton. This is even more significant in that when this Table was originally created for the 1997 Plan, there were 14 entries on this Table. Clearly the expansion and development of our Park system has been a significant achievement over the last three decades. Such improvements include enhancements at Idlewild and Moton Parks, two Rail-Trail extensions, the addition of Easton Point Park, and the development of North Easton Park into a first class sports complex, to the degree that it has since hosted a number of State and Regional Championship Tournaments. More recently, even during the drafting of this Plan, the Town has opened its first Dog Park in Downtown (Brewers Lane), opened a new Skate Park/Pump Track at the North Easton Sports Complex, and acquired, Easton Woodland Park, a large (197 acres) tract of land dominated by mature forest that will preserve this land for passive recreation.

Table 8: Easton Park Inventory

TYPES AND AREAS	SIZE (ACRES)	OWNERSHIP	FACILITIES
Passive Parks			
Train Station Park 46 Pennsylvania Avenue	0.540	Town	Drinking fountain Benches
Memorial Walk 100 W. Dover Street	1.07	Town	Memorial Bricks
Thompson Park 30 W. Dover Street	0.316	Town	Benches Fountain
Easton Woodland Park	197	Town	Planned trails and conservation area.
Neighborhood Parks			
Hunters Mill Park 8633 Camac Street	1.78	Town	Playground/Benches
Ian "Mac" Morrell Park (Chapel East) 29452 Zinnia Court	1.9	Town	Playground/Pavilion
Matthewstown Run Park 29650 Aldan Street	4.11	Town	Playground Picnic Area and Table Baseball/Softball Field Open Space Little Free Library
Stoney Ridge Park 29288 Corbin Parkway	19.8	Town	Playground/Picnic Area Open Space/Benches
Golton Park 29416 Golton Drive	0.791	Town	Playground

Table 8: Easton Park Inventory			
TYPES AND AREAS	**SIZE (ACRES)**	**OWNERSHIP**	**FACILITIES**
Mulberry Station Park 8764 Mulberry Drive	3.169	Town	Playground Open Space Benches
Spur Lane Park 8688 Spur Lane	0.783	Town	Open Space
Waylands Park 29667 Penny Lane	0.859	Town	Playground Picnic Area Benches
Brettridge Park 29593 Country Lane Way	2.76	Town	Open Space
Vickers Park (Easton Village)	8.839	Town	Canoe/Kayak Launch Bocce Ball Area Pavilion
Community Parks			
Idlewild Park 116 Idlewild Avenue	12.0	Town	Restrooms AED station Softball Fields Track Picnic Area, Barbecue Grills & Tables Tennis Courts Basketball Court Football Field Playground Children's Park Area Ornamental Fountain/Garden Areas Gazebo/Pavilion Little Free Library
Moton Park 501 Port Street	12.2	Town	Restrooms Track Picnic Tables, Barbecue Grills & Pavilion Playground Basketball Court Soccer Field Volleyball Area Benches Little Free Library
Easton Point Park 672 W. Glenwood Avenue 801 Port Street	13.021	Town	Kayak launch Boat Ramp and associated parking Drinking Fountains Benches

Table 8: Easton Park Inventory			
TYPES AND AREAS	**SIZE (ACRES)**	**OWNERSHIP**	**FACILITIES**
John F. Ford Park 100 Plum Street	58.0	Town	Restrooms AED station Playground Track Exercise Stations / Equipment Open Space Drinking Fountains
Rails-To-Trails	2.75 miles (north/south) 0.90 miles (east/west)	Town	Drinking fountains Walking/Bicycling Path Benches Frederick Douglass Mural
Special Areas			
A James Clark North Easton Sports Complex 1078 N. Washington Street	26.2	Town	Restrooms AED stations Concession stands (4) Baseball Fields Playgrounds (4) Football/Soccer/Lacrosse/Field Hockey Fields Field Lights Picnic Area Gazebo/Pavilion Batting Cages Bounce Back Wall Skate Park/Pump Track
Easton Dog Park 109 Brewers Lane	0.507	Town	Restrooms Gated Small & Large Areas for off-leash play Drinking Fountains Benches
Others			
YMCA of the Chesapeake (Main Facility)	10.0	Quasi-Public	Indoor Facilities* (9) Tennis Courts (6) Pickleball Courts Deck Tennis
YMCA of the Chesapeake (Lynn Rich Tennis Center)		Quasi-Public	Indoor Facilities* (4) Indoor Tennis/Pickleball Courts (3) Outdoor Tennis Courts
George P. Murphy Swimming Pool	2.8	County	Outdoor Swimming Pool
VFW	5.0	Quasi-Public	Baseball Field* Open Space Fields
The Elks	13.2	Quasi-Public	Athletic Fields*

Table 8: Easton Park Inventory			
TYPES AND AREAS	**SIZE (ACRES)**	**OWNERSHIP**	**FACILITIES**
Talbot County Community Center	51	County	Indoor Facilities: Ice Rink Curling Rink Basketball Courts Pickleball Courts Volleyball Courts Athletic Fields Playgrounds Concession Area Pavillion
Easton Point Landing	0.50	County	Boat Ramp Pier Fishing/Crabbing
Mount Pleasant	6.46	County	Open Space Fields
Easton Village Trail	1.02 miles (including pedestrian bridge to Easton Point)	Town	Walking Trail

Source: Town of Easton Parks & Recreation Annual Plan, 2024 & Easton Comprehensive Development Plan, 2010.

Multiple entities are responsible in some way for Easton's overall Park System. The Planning and Zoning Commission obtains land for parks through the subdivision process as one of the requirements for subdivision is the provision of 1,200 square feet of parkland per dwelling unit. The Commission also is involved in the specifics of where the parks should be located, how many there should be, etc… for a subdivision during the review process.

Once the land is obtained, it becomes the responsibility of the Easton Park Advisory Board to recommend how that parkland should be improved. This group operates with the assistance of a full-time Parks and Recreation Director who also is responsible for Easton's parks and recreation plans, programs and activities.

The ongoing maintenance of Town parks is the responsibility of the Department of Public Works, providing trash pick-up, grass cutting, landscaping, and installation and maintenance of equipment, furniture, etc. With a growing system of parks, this area of responsibility grows proportionally as well.

The Mayor and Town Council have the important role of prioritizing the development of the Town's park system, primarily through the budget process. They determine which improvements are implemented (and when) and occasionally also approve funds for the acquisition of park land. These tend to be the larger, regional-scale parks as opposed to the smaller neighborhood parks that are more customarily obtained by the Planning and Zoning Commission through the subdivision process.

Finally, Town of Easton, Talbot County Parks and Recreation, along with other towns and entities in the County, work collaboratively on issues of mutual interest and concern. This includes coordinating programs, activities and events; and, formulating plans and policies for public recreation and for the acquisition and preservation of land for public recreation and open space. Easton participates day-to-day via its partnership and ongoing communications with the County Parks and Recreation Director. In addition, a member of the Easton Parks Advisory Board represents Easton on the Talbot County Parks Advisory Board and provides direct linkage between the Town and County as it relates to parks and recreation.

c. Future Parks

One area in which it is crucial for the Planning Commission and Park Board to work together is the planning for future park sites. The Park Board is more acutely aware of specific demands and needs in terms of our overall park system. By being aware of such needs, the Planning Commission can be proactive in addressing them through the park dedication requirements of the Subdivision process. Furthermore, special needs (e.g., a new regional-scale park) can be considered by both the Planning Commission and Town Council during the review of discretionary approvals, such as Planned Unit Developments and Annexations.

Previous iterations of The Comprehensive Plan have made a number of recommendations regarding future parks, many of which have come to fruition. Such parks included the original Rail-Trail, the expanded Rail-Trail, the development of the John F. Ford Park, and a Waterfront Park on Easton Point.

Key priorities over the course of this 2026 Plan~~2025 Plan~~'s time span include the following:

- Build-out Easton Woodland Park, including a multi-modal accessway, parking area, conservation area, trails, and restrooms.

- Continue build-out of Easton Point Park as described in the Port Street Small Area Plan. Additional amenities to include: a new boat ramp, living shoreline, boardwalk/promenade, and parking area.
- Perpetual upgrades to existing Town parks (i.e., programs, grounds, and amenities) to enhance user experiences and increase utilization rates.
- Extension of the rail trail through Moton Park, across Rt. 322 (Easton Parkway) at Glenwood Ave., and connecting to the bridge over the Tred Avon River at Easton Point Park and Easton Village.
- Seek funding for the extension of the rail trail crossing Route 50 to the east side of Town in the vicinity of Chesapeake Ave. {It is hoped that future rail trail extensions will eventually connect to a wider-scale County-initiated Trail System.}
- Consider creating an active community-sized park on the east side of Route 50. Explore the possibilities of requiring future developers to build or fund such a park.
- Seek funding and location for construction of a new indoor sports facility. A project of this scope and scale will likely require a location that is along or easily accessible to a major transportation corridor. Possibilities include a portion of the John F. Ford Park and/or the adjoining property to the east, or (depending on the interest of Talbot County) the Talbot Community Center site or the property the County purchased in 2024, formerly known as the Poplar Hill Farm.

The following suggestions from previous Plans have not been achieved but are still relevant today:

- The Town should work with the State of Maryland to promote and help ensure the preservation of Seth Forest. The Town should also ask the State to consider the possibility of making this property more usable by enhancing forest trails.
- (Not depicted on Future Land Use Map) In the long-range planning period (i.e. Year 2035) a new Community Park, on the scale of Idlewild or Moton, should be considered on the eastern side of Town, east of U.S. Route 50. This is the portion of Town anticipated to accommodate the majority of future growth and as such, a community park may be warranted. Furthermore, this area may not necessarily be provided by any one development. As an alternative, the area for the park might be pieced together by adjoining subdivisions (i.e., Hunter's Mill Playground and Gannon Range open space). Such a park

should be a consideration during the review of any development proposals on the east side of Town.

As pointed out in the Municipal Growth Element of this Plan, State guidelines for parkland indicate that the park needs of the existing Town population are above State guidelines and that the land needed to satisfy the needs of the potential future population of the Town should be met via the subdivision process. In addition, more recreational land lies immediately adjacent to the current Town boundaries at the previously mentioned Seth Forest and a public golf course (Hog Neck). These two areas represent an additional 121 acres at the Seth Demonstration Forest and 265 acres at Hog Neck Golf Course.

D. Connectivity and Green Infrastructure

The concept of green infrastructure was first introduced to the Easton Comprehensive Plan in 2004 when the term was still relatively new in the field of planning. It refers to the system of parks and open spaces in a community, as well as the linkages or connections between these areas. A community's green infrastructure is important because just as the more commonly known infrastructure (i.e. roads, water, sewer, etc…) is essential to support a community's physical development, so too a community's green infrastructure supports its ecological functions. It also is important for making communities more livable.

The Conservation Fund defines green infrastructure as "the Nation's natural life support system - a strategically planned and managed network of wilderness, parks, greenways, conservation easements, and working lands with conservation value that supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, and contributes to the health and quality of life for America's communities and people."

There are numerous benefits provided by a system of green infrastructure. These include both ecological and economic benefits. From an ecological perspective the benefits include:

- Ensuring plant and animal biodiversity.
    - Creating pathways to allow for interchange between native plant and animal communities.
    - Maintaining the health of native ecosystems and landscapes by sustaining their physical, chemical, and biological processes.

- Filtering pollutants from air, water, and soil.
    - Helping to cool streams and soil through shading.
    - Buffering developed areas from floodwaters.

The economic benefits include:

- Increasing property values as homes located near parks and greenways sell for more than those that are not.
- Raising the community's quality of life.
    - Communities that have planned systems of open space, including greenways, parks and trails, generally develop the reputation of being desirable places to live.
    - Seattle, Washington, Boulder, Colorado, Portland, Oregon and Raleigh North Carolina are examples of such places.
- Attracting businesses.
    - The communities cited above, not coincidentally, also have had great success in attracting new businesses as oftentimes a community's quality of life is a key factor for businesses when deciding where to relocate or open a new business.
    - Increasing tourism and tourism-based businesses.
- Attracting environmentally sensitive development and developers specializing in that niche.

Given these benefits, as well as the existing skeletal system of green infrastructure, it seems like a "no-brainer" for Easton to develop a more formal and planned green infrastructure system. Such a system will also further sustainability goals discussed in more detail in the Sustainability chapter of this Plan. Elements of this Green Infrastructure system are discussed in the Economic Development Chapter of this Plan where the AKRF Plan for the redevelopment of Downtown Easton is described. Two of the more significant projects proposed in that plan involve the day-lighting of Tanyard Branch and the development of a "green ring" of heavily treed streets and open spaces around downtown.

E. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Meet the park and recreational demands of all of Easton's citizens.

Objectives:

- Continue to study and monitor the demand for various park and recreation uses (above and beyond National Standards, which the Town largely meets).
- Coordinate the work of the Planning and Zoning Commission, Park and Recreation Advisory Board, and Town Council in acquiring and planning parks.
- Coordinate park planning, programs, and activities with Talbot County Parks and Recreation and other local organizations (i.e., schools and YMCA) to prevent duplication of amenities/services, pool resources and ensure that between the various entities, all of Easton's recreational needs are satisfied.
- Seek funding to finish the design and buildout of an eastward expansion of the Rail-Trail in the right-of-way for Chesapeake Avenue, including a grade-separated bicycle/pedestrian crossing of Route 50, and require future developers of land bordering Chesapeake Avenue to build (or fund) a Rail-Trail in right-of-way.
- Seek funding opportunities to continually build-out and upgrade various Town parks, particularly Easton Woodland Park and Easton Point Park.
- Seek funding opportunities to locate and build an indoor sports facility.
- Revise the Town's Subdivision Regulations to better define what does and does not count as meeting parks and/or open space requirements associated with conventional subdivisions.

Goal #2: Provide a system of green infrastructure (see Future Land Use Map).

Objectives:

- Identify appropriate open space areas to serve as green centers or anchors and connect them through a series of pathways and green corridors.
- Plan future parks, open spaces and corridors in a manner that compliments and helps to build a green infrastructure system.
- Encourage green space connectivity and access.

9. ECOLOGY

THE MORE CLEARLY WE CAN FOCUS OUR ATTENTION ON THE WONDERS AND REALITIES OF THE UNIVERSE ABOUT US, THE LESS TASTE WE SHALL HAVE FOR DESTRUCTION.

- RACHEL CARSON

A. PURPOSE

The Ecology Element integrates water resources, mineral resources, and biodiversity considerations into Easton's Comprehensive Plan. This section fulfills state requirements under HB 1141, which added the Municipal Growth and Water Resources Elements to comprehensive plans, ensuring the Town has adequate water supply, wastewater capacity, and stormwater management to meet current and projected needs.

B. WATER RESOURCES

House Bill 1141 (HB 1141), first implemented with Easton's 2010 Comprehensive Plan, introduced two new required plan elements: the Municipal Growth Element and the Water Resources Element. This chapter addresses the latter, which ensures that Easton can meet projected population needs with adequate water supply, wastewater capacity, and stormwater management—while protecting the capacity of local waterways to assimilate stormwater from both point and non-point sources.

As noted in the Municipal Growth Element, three required elements—Municipal Growth, Water Resources, and Community Facilities and Services—address water, sewer, and stormwater issues, with related considerations also appearing in the Land Use Element. While some overlap is inevitable, the Water Resources Element is more narrowly focused on three core questions:

1. Is there sufficient water supply to meet current and future needs?
2. Is there sufficient wastewater and septic capacity to meet current and future needs?
3. What impacts, if any, will meeting these needs have on water resources?

Although this analysis parallels that in the Municipal Growth Element, the Water Resources Element provides more detailed evaluation specific to water, wastewater, and stormwater systems.

Town Service Policy

A longstanding policy governs Easton's approach: municipal water and wastewater services are not extended beyond Town boundaries. Developers seeking these services must annex into the Town, and all development within Town limits is required to connect to the municipal system. As a result, private wells and septic systems are rare inside Town boundaries.

Two exceptions exist:

1. Ratcliffe Farm Subdivision – A 15-lot, large-lot waterfront subdivision permitted to use private wells and septic systems.
2. Existing Annexed Properties – Fewer than a dozen homes annexed into Town while served by private wells and septic systems; these may remain as such until a connection to municipal service becomes necessary.

Because service areas align almost exactly with Town boundaries, this Plan does not include a separate water and wastewater service area map. The only current exceptions to the policy of not serving properties beyond Town limits are:

- TheNorth and South Clifton subdivision (off Route 50)
- One property on St. Michael's Road that receives municipal water but not wastewater service.

Water Supply and System

As described in the Community Facilities and Services Chapter, Public water service in Easton is provided by the Easton Utilities Commission (EUC), a public utility organized and existing under the Charter of the Town of Easton. Since 1914, EUC has supplied clean, reliable drinking water to residents, operating under rigorous monitoring and quality control by certified staff.

EUC currently serves over 7,000 customers through 122 miles of water mains and 788 fire hydrants. Water is drawn from five deep wells—three tapping the Magothy Aquifer (1,000 feet) and two tapping the Upper Patapsco Aquifer (1,200 feet) that feed a modern treatment facility on Glebe Road. The system's two elevated storage tanks each hold 1 million gallons, providing fire protection, consistent pressure, and sufficient reserve for future needs.

The Municipal Growth Element projects a system expansion—adding a new production well—around 2043 to meet a maximum daily demand exceeding 4.0 MGD. Given the Town's

build-out is expected beyond 2040, only modest upgrades should be needed thereafter, with ample time for planning and funding.

Wastewater Service and Capacity

Wastewater treatment for the Town is provided by the Easton Utilities Commission (EUC) at the municipal wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). The plant operates under a Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) discharge permit and is designed to meet Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) standards, significantly reducing nitrogen and phosphorus levels before effluent is discharged to local waterways.

The wastewater system includes a 4.0 MGD Enhanced Nutrient Removal facility completed in 2007. Current use is 2.3663 MGD (59% capacity). At projected 1.75% annual growth, capacity will be reached in 2055, or 2051 (four years sooner) with the planned regional hospital fully operational by 2035 (5% of capacity). Capacity expansion planning will begin once flows exceed 3.20 MGD (anticipated in 2031). Since this is modestly higher growth rate than this Plan anticipates, it should be even longer before these various thresholds are realized.

Current Capacity:

- Design Capacity: 4.0 million gallons per day (MGD)
- Current Average Flow: Approximately 2.4 MGD (59% of permitted capacity)

Future Capacity Planning:

The Municipal Growth Element projects that Easton's build-out will occur beyond 2040. Given current flow levels and the planned improvements to plant efficiency, no major capacity expansions are anticipated in the near term. However, long-term planning includes:

- Evaluating potential upgrades to accommodate higher peak flows.
- Exploring advanced treatment technologies to further reduce nutrient discharges.
- Coordinating with MDE to ensure discharge limits remain protective of downstream water quality.

Septic System Policy:

As noted earlier, Easton maintains a strict policy prohibiting private septic systems within the Town except for a small number of grandfathered properties. This policy ensures wastewater is treated at the municipal WWTP, where nutrient removal can be managed and monitored.

c. Water Source Protection

One required component of the Water Resources Element is to assess current and future water sources and outline strategies to prevent pollution or over-allocation. For Easton, this is challenging because:

- Water sources lie outside Town jurisdiction.
- Aquifers are shared regionally with other high-demand users.

Talbot County's Draft Water Resource Element summarizes the issue:

- Aquifer Dependence and Stress: Most public and private systems draw from confined aquifers (notably the Aquia and Piney Point) used widely across the Eastern Shore. USGS reports water-level declines of tens to hundreds of feet, raising concerns about long-term supply.
- Recharge Limitations: Many aquifer recharge zones lie outside the Eastern Shore, limiting local replenishment.
- Surface–Groundwater Connection: Large withdrawals can reduce base flows in streams and rivers, affecting both water quantity and quality.
- Data Gaps: There is no comprehensive regional analysis of cumulative groundwater demand. Project-level studies fail to capture broader impacts.
- Coastal Plain Study: MDE, MGS, and USGS are working on a Coastal Plain Aquifer Study to better assess supply and sustainability. Until completed, accurate yield estimates remain elusive.

Planning Assumptions

In the absence of definitive aquifer capacity studies, this Plan assumes the MDE-issued groundwater permit for EUC represents the maximum safe yield of the system. This approach ensures that

permitted withdrawal limits are treated as the threshold for sustainable water use until better regional data is available.

D. Stormwater Management and Point and Nonpoint Source Loading Status and Remediation

The Town's stormwater management program is designed to meet the requirements of Maryland's Stormwater Management Act of 2007 and to comply with the State's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements. These regulations emphasize Environmental Site Design (ESD) practices, which reduce runoff by mimicking natural hydrology.

Key strategies include:

- Installing bioretention cells, rain gardens, and permeable pavement.
- Preserving and restoring natural drainage features and non-tidal wetlands.
- Requiring new developments to meet stricter post-construction stormwater quality and quantity standards.
- Encouraging retrofits in older developed areas to reduce nutrient and sediment loads.

Recent and proposed projects include a regional sediment pond, inlet filter bags, constructed wetlands, and BMP retrofits. Easton applies Chesapeake Bay Critical Area pollutant reduction standards Town-wide, targeting both new development and redevelopment to reduce nutrient loads. Future development in Easton's growth areas will be required to integrate ESD techniques early in site planning, ensuring stormwater is managed at the source.

Easton's Stormwater Management Ordinance regulates runoff to reduce flooding, erosion, and water quality impacts. New development and most redevelopment must implement stormwater controls per the State Design Manual. Special standards apply in the Tanyard Branch watershed, which drains to impaired waters in the Choptank River system. Easton's Stormwater Management Ordinance was created to protect public health, safety, and welfare by establishing requirements and procedures to manage the negative impacts of increased stormwater runoff. The goal is to:

- Minimize damage to public and private property
- Reduce the environmental effects of development
- Control stream channel erosion

- Reduce local flooding
- Maintain pre-development runoff conditions as closely as possible after development

These measures aim to safeguard the community and environment by managing stormwater runoff effectively.

The Stormwater Management Ordinance is summarized below:

Scope

No land development for residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional purposes is allowed without implementing stormwater management measures to control runoff. These measures must align with the Design Manual and be constructed according to an approved plan for new developments or redevelopment policies.

Exemptions

The following activities are exempt from stormwater management requirements:

- *Agricultural land management activities*
- *Additions or modifications to existing single-family homes (under certain conditions)*
- *Developments disturbing less than 5,000 square feet*
- *Land developments regulated by specific state laws*
- *The Town Engineer may require stormwater controls in cases of cumulative effects from previous exemptions.*

Waivers / Watershed Management Plans

Stormwater management waivers may be granted under certain conditions:

- *For projects in areas with developed watershed management plans*
- *For projects with direct discharges to tidal waters that do not increase stormwater discharge by over 10% for 2-year and 10-year storms*
- *If stormwater will be handled by an existing regional facility designed for such loads*

Qualitative control waivers apply to in-fill development or redevelopment where stormwater management is not feasible, or under specific site conditions.

Redevelopment

Redevelopment projects are exempt from certain volume requirements if they do not increase stormwater discharge. However, they must reduce site impervious areas by at least 20%, or implement stormwater practices to manage that area. If reducing impervious areas is not possible, off-site BMPs or other alternatives may be considered.

Variance

A variance from stormwater management requirements may be granted by the Town Engineer in cases of exceptional circumstances, where strict adherence would result in unnecessary hardship.

The full ordinance can be accessed here:
https://eastonmd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/86/Stormwater-Management-Ordinance-PDF

The State's updated Stormwater Management Design Manual will require Easton to amend its Stormwater Management Ordinance, with significant changes likely to focus on the waiver provisions.

Stormwater in Easton contributes both point and non-point source loads to local waterways. The Town's system collects, filters, and conveys runoff to the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) on the Choptank River. Runoff that bypasses the system flows into the Choptank or Miles River watersheds—Easton lies within three 8-digit watersheds: Miles, Upper Choptank, and Lower Choptank. All are nutrient-impaired per the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), with the Lower Choptank having an established Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) limit.

Although no TMDL implementation plan currently applies directly to Easton, the Town enforces the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area's 10% pollutant reduction standard townwide. This ensures that new development improves water quality relative to pre-existing conditions, though older developed areas remain problem zones. Much of the older development drains into Tanyard Branch, a tributary of the Tred Avon River, via storm drains installed around 1905.

Tanyard Branch Focus Area

A large portion of Easton drains into Tanyard Branch, making it a priority for enhanced stormwater management:

- Development in the basin must limit post-development runoff rates to pre-development rates for both 2-year and 10-year storm events.
- Alternatively, developers may fund or construct equivalent watershed improvements.
- Waivers are granted only if impacts are negligible, as determined by the Town Engineer.

The Town, in partnership with Talbot County, is implementing several grant-funded projects along Tanyard Branch, including:

- A regional sediment pond and inlet filter bags to capture litter.
- A constructed wetland at Easton Utilities' administration site.
- A replacement conveyance system with sediment removal devices and subsurface BMPs, aligned with the Rails-to-Trails network.

Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Capacity

Talbot County's Water Resources Element projects that Easton's WWTP has sufficient nitrogen and phosphorus discharge capacity to support growth through 2030 and beyond. Projections (assuming 1% annual growth) indicate available capacity in 2030 of:

- **Nitrogen (TN)**: 21,314 lbs/year
- **Phosphorus (TP)**: 913 lbs/year

Fertilizer and Nutrient Sources

While agriculture within Town limits is minimal, farmland in the Future Growth Area is a potential nutrient source. Upon annexation and development, nutrient loads from farming are expected to decrease. However, lawn fertilizers in developed areas—both existing neighborhoods and future subdivisions—remain a concern. Maryland now requires retail sale of only non-phosphorus lawn fertilizers, which should help mitigate impacts.

Nutrient Loading Scenarios

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Nutrient Loading Spreadsheet was used to model three future growth scenarios:

Scenario	Growth Rate & Horizon	Development Pattern	Notes
Build-Out / 3% Growth	30 years	High greenfield conversion	Represents maximum foreseeable growth
Scenario 2	1% growth / 30 years	75% infill, 25% greenfield	Planning Commission's preferred pattern
Scenario 3	1% growth / 30 years	50% infill, 50% greenfield	More greenfield development than Scenario 2

Results show that higher infill development reduces nutrient loading, while higher greenfield shares increase agricultural conversion impacts.

Stormwater runoff is a major nonpoint source of nutrient and sediment pollution. In Easton, impervious surfaces such as roads, parking lots, and rooftops prevent water from soaking into the ground, increasing runoff volume and pollutant transport to local streams and rivers.

Nutrient Loading Analysis

Nutrient loading analysis evaluates the impact of projected land use changes on nitrogen and phosphorus levels in Easton's waterways. Using land use, septic, and best management practice (BMP) scenarios, the Town assessed potential nutrient contributions from both nonpoint sources (NPS), such as stormwater runoff and agriculture, and point sources (PS), such as wastewater treatment facilities.

The table below summarizes the modeled nitrogen and phosphorus loads, as well as impervious cover, for each scenario. The baseline (2007 LU, 2007 BMPs) reflects existing conditions at the start of the study period, while the remaining scenarios represent alternative build-out and management strategies.

Scenario	Total Nitrogen Load (lbs/yr)	Total Phosphorus Load (lbs/yr)	Impervious Cover (acres)
2007 LU, 2007 BMPs	102010	9353	0
2007 LU, Trib Strat BMPs	102010	9353	1865
Scenario 1 (3% Growth)	109158	10015	3497
Scenario 2 (1% Growth: 75% Infill, 25% Greenfield)	97205	9531	2449
Scenario 3 (1% Growth: 50% Infill, 50% Greenfield)	96852	9521	2485

Key Findings

- **Nitrogen Loads:**
    - Scenario 1, with full build-out and targeted BMPs, results in the highest total nitrogen load, exceeding baseline levels. Scenarios 2 and 3, which assume more balanced growth and mitigation, show slightly lower total nitrogen loads.

- **Phosphorus Loads**:
    - Variations between scenarios are relatively small, with only modest reductions achieved through BMPs.
- **Impervious Cover:**
    - Scenarios with higher-density development produce more impervious cover, influencing stormwater runoff volumes and pollutant transport.

The results emphasize that growth patterns and BMP implementation both directly affect nutrient loads. Compact development combined with effective stormwater management and agricultural BMPs can help limit nutrient increases.

E. Critical Areas

The Town of Easton ~~is somewhat unique among Maryland municipalities in that we do~~ does not have a significant amount of waterfront within our corporate limits. Furthermore, in recognition of the environmental benefits as well as to comply with regulations ~~regulatory enforcement~~, the Town now prohibits the establishment of private lots within the Critical Area Buffer. ~~Rather, s~~Such areas must be a separate lot maintained in Town ownership or controlled by a conservation-minded not-for-profit organization.

The State of Maryland and local governments restrict development within the Critical Area, primarily through enhanced stormwater management and nutrient reduction requirements. Development in the Critical Area is not strictly prohibited, but is allowed on a limited basis depending on the development intensity of the site. The vast majority of Critical Area lands are classified as Resource Conservation Areas and are permitted to develop at a residential density of 1 dwelling unit per 20 acres. More intense development is possible in Limited Development Areas or Intensely Developed areas. Additionally, Critical Area regulations provide a mechanism for properties to be reclassified, either from RCA to LDA or IDA or from LDA to IDA, via a process known as Growth Allocation.

When the Critical Area law was enacted, each affected jurisdiction received an amount (or "pot") of Growth Allocation available to them based on the amount of shoreline within the jurisdiction. Since Easton had an even smaller amount of waterfrontage at that time, we received a relatively modest amount of Growth Allocation and it has essentially been used, largely due to having to use much of it to accommodate the Easton Club Development after originally been told that its development was "grandfathered" and thus not cost us acreage from our available growth allocation.

As a result, today Easton must rely on Talbot County granting Growth Allocation to Easton from its overall pot in order to approve a project that is essentially at a density of greater than 1 unit per 20 acres (or is a non-residential or mixed-use project). This presents something of a conundrum

whereby on the one hand, Easton has utilized all of its growth allocation and must depend on the largesse of Talbot County in order for development projects to advance. On the other hand, Talbot County has an abundance of Growth Allocation and from a sustainability and environmental perspective, the application of growth allocation ought to occur within municipalities, on state-of-the-art wastewater treatment systems and where the Buffer is protected to a larger degree than regulations require by not being permitted on private property.

F. Mineral Resources

Eastern portions of Easton and future growth areas overlay sand and gravel deposits. Extraction is not appropriate in developed areas but may be considered in undeveloped growth areas as an initial site preparation step. Continuous operations are discouraged. Developers must maintain adequate topsoil on building lots to support landscaping and avoid post-construction soil degradation.

This element serves three purposes:

- Identify undeveloped land that should remain in reserve for potential mineral extraction.
- Recommend appropriate uses for such land after extraction.
- Establish policies and regulations that balance mineral extraction with other land uses and prevent its preemption where feasible.

Historically, Easton's Comprehensive Plans have given little attention to mineral resources. The 1989 Plan noted that surface mining does not occur in Town and claimed no potential resources exist—a statement now known to be only partially true.

Mapping in the 2005 Talbot County Comprehensive Plan (Map 8-1) identifies sand and gravel–bearing units across much of eastern Talbot County. The western edge of this deposit zone runs through Easton, meaning roughly one-third to one-half of the Town—and all eastern future growth areas—lie over potential sand and gravel reserves.

While extraction will not be allowed in already developed areas, it may be appropriate in undeveloped growth areas within or adjacent to Town. Where feasible, sand and gravel should be removed early in the development process, prior to construction, to make efficient use of resources. However, ongoing extraction operations are incompatible with the Town's land use goals and will not be permitted.

A related concern is the stripping and sale of topsoil prior to development. Without replacement, new property owners inherit compacted, poor-quality soil unsuitable for lawns, gardens, or

landscaping. To prevent this, developers must finish lots with sufficient topsoil depth to support healthy vegetation. If replacement proves too costly, the intent is to discourage its removal in the first place.

G. Biodiversity

Easton is located on the Delmarva Peninsula, an expansive coastal plain region situated between two large estuaries and the Atlantic Ocean. Despite its proximity to several large metropolitan areas, this unique geography and a rich tradition of land preservation have made Delmarva's mix of upland and wetland ecosystems a critical stronghold for the Mid-Atlantic's native and migratory species. Though much of the work to be done in conserving the region's biodiversity lies in protecting and restoring habitats outside of developed areas around regional wildlife hubs and corridors, municipalities also have a role to play in promoting beneficial species and mitigating human impacts to wildlife that do not recognize political boundaries.

Vegetation is a crucial component of habitat viability, with native plants providing both shelter and forage for species in town. Unfortunately, Easton's native species have been underserved by exotic ornamental landscaping typically provided with suburban development, such as the invasive Bradford pear. Modern standards for landscaping have effectively changed this trend with new developments, though ongoing efforts will be needed to replace dying and nuisance street trees with beneficial native varieties.

Quality habitat should be considered not only on a site-by-site basis, but as a holistic network of green infrastructure to allow safe passage of sensitive species throughout the town. Forest conservation regulations protect substantial forest tracts needed by Delmarva Fox Squirrel and Forest Interior Dwelling Species of birds. In conjunction with vegetative buffers along water bodies, they provide the basis for municipal-scale hubs and corridors. By thoughtfully designing our open spaces, buffer yard landscaping, and trail corridors to minimize gaps between habitats similar to pedestrian crossings, Easton can build a robust network of wildlife mobility.

Because wildlife are not confined to the natural areas of the town, though, the built environment should similarly consider its impacts. Both native and migratory birds are particularly sensitive to two mainstays of municipal development: glass and light. Light pollution disorients birds, and their inability to see standard glass windows leads to deadly flight collisions. Frequent testimony from citizens at hearings for site plan and architecture review echo this concern. To this end, we recognize the need for updated architectural and lighting standards to protect birds. Notably, glass

should be treated with etchings or glazings that are safely visible mid-flight, and outdoor lighting should be shielded, downward-facing, and low-intensity.

The built environment should also be limited and designed with respect to identified populations of sensitive species in the area. Easton is home to colonies of roof-nesting Least Terns, with zones around identified locations such as Easton High School, the US Post Office Sorting Center, and Giant supermarket subject to development and maintenance restrictions in accordance with state guidelines. Further, two historic waterfowl concentration areas can be found at Papermill Pond and a portion of Peachblossom Creek; developments in proximity to these areas should provide substantial buffers for both resident and migratory species.

H. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Protect and Sustain Easton's Water Resources.

Objectives:

- Maintain a reliable, high-quality public water supply to meet current and future needs.
- Coordinate with Easton Utilities, MDE, and regional partners to safeguard aquifers from contamination and over-allocation.
- Limit water and wastewater service to properties within Town boundaries, requiring annexation for new connections.
- Ensure all development connects to the municipal system; phase out private wells and septic systems as feasible.

Goal #2: Ensure Adequate Wastewater Treatment Capacity.

Objectives:

- Maintain treatment plant performance to meet nutrient discharge limits and accommodate projected growth.
- Implement infrastructure upgrades in line with long-term capacity needs identified in the Water Resources and Municipal Growth Elements.
- Support measures that reduce nutrient loads from septic systems within current and future growth areas.

Goal #3: Manage Stormwater to Protect Water Quality.

Objectives:

- Enforce updated stormwater management standards consistent with the State's Design Manual.
- Apply enhanced stormwater requirements in sensitive basins, especially Tanyard Branch.
- Reduce point and nonpoint source pollutant loads through BMPs, retrofits, and grant-funded improvements.
- Promote natural filtration and green infrastructure in public projects and private development.

Goal #4: Protect and Wisely Use Mineral Resources.

Objectives:

- Identify and safeguard potential sand and gravel deposits in future growth areas for possible extraction prior to development.
- Prohibit ongoing extraction operations in developed areas or where incompatible with surrounding uses.
- Require developers to maintain or restore topsoil depth to support healthy landscaping and prevent long-term soil degradation.

Goal #5: Reduce Nutrient Loading to Local Watersheds.

Objectives:

- Implement land use strategies that reduce nitrogen and phosphorus runoff from development and agriculture.
- Prioritize infill and redevelopment to minimize conversion of farmland and forest.
- Support public education on responsible fertilizer use and promote non-phosphorus lawn products.
- Coordinate with County and State agencies to track and meet TMDL and Chesapeake Bay pollutant reduction goals.

Goal #6: Protect and enhance Easton's biodiversity by conserving habitats, promoting native species, and reducing human impacts on wildlife.

Objectives:

- Preserve and restore key habitats, especially forest tracts, wetlands, and wildlife corridors.
- Prioritize native vegetation in landscaping and replace invasive or nuisance species with beneficial varieties.
- Design open spaces, buffers, and trails to create continuous networks for wildlife movement.
- Implement bird-safe building and lighting standards to reduce collisions and light pollution.
- Limit and carefully design development near sensitive species habitats, including Least Tern colonies and historic waterfowl areas, with appropriate buffers and restrictions.
- Develop an Urban Forestry Plan to expand the Town's tree canopy.

10 SUSTAINABILITY

> "Sustainability is a journey, not a destination. We must constantly strive to do better, to be better stewards of the earth and all its inhabitants"
>
> — Unknown

A. Purpose

Sustainable development has been defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The American Society of Landscape Architects makes the following points about sustainable (urban) development:

> *Urban development should be guided by a sustainable planning and management vision that promotes interconnected green space, a multi-modal transportation system, and mixed-use development. Diverse public and private partnerships should be used to create sustainable and livable communities that protect historic, cultural, and environmental resources. In addition, policymakers, regulators and developers should support sustainable site planning and construction techniques that reduce pollution and create a balance between built and natural systems.*
>
> *New sustainable urban developments or re-developments should provide a variety of commercial, institutional, educational uses as well as housing styles, sizes and prices. The provision of sidewalks, trails, and private streets, connected to transit stops and an interconnected street network within these mixed-use developments provides mobility options and helps reduce pollution by reducing vehicle trips.*
>
> *Walking, bicycling, and other mobility options should be encouraged throughout the urban mixed-use core and mixed-use neighborhoods with easily accessed and well-defined centers and edges.*

Fortunately the itemized list of characteristics or outcomes of sustainable urban development in the description above are all perfectly consistent with the Vision of the future Easton that this Plan contemplates. Furthermore, while the idea of tackling global climate change may seem daunting, if not impossible, the actions described above are do-able. In fact, in Easton we have been moving in

such a direction for the past several decades. This merely presents one more reason to continue to pursue such a vision.

The Brundtland Commission of the United Nations (1987) published the report, "Our Common Future" and defined sustainable development, as repeated in the intro to this chapter, as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Since then, the definition of sustainability has expanded to include balance and coordination among the "Three E's" of environment, economy, and equity as well as development that minimizes the negative impact on the environment and other systems.

Many issues or aspects of sustainability are far beyond the scope of the Town of Easton to address. Actions needed to address climate change, for example, have been subject to International Treaties and will require global support and cooperation in order to make meaningful progress. However, there are actions that Easton can take to anticipate and accommodate the effects of climate change and there are a number of other issues besides climate change that determine just how sustainable our future community will be.

During the Public Input phase of this Plan Update, the scope of possible sustainability issues was evident from the feedback we received. In particular, one exercise invited citizens to "use sticky dots to indicate which of the following issues/items are important to you and should be addressed in the Town's updated Comprehensive Plan under the heading of Climate Change and Sustainability." Table 13 below summarizes the responses from this exercise.

TABLE 13 SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THIS PLAN

Issue	# of Dots Placed in Support of Addressing the Issue	Comments
Air Temperature that is projected to rise by 2.5 degrees above normal average by 2050 (NOAA data)	12	
Allowing for more live/work or mixed-use units in Town	25	
Allowing small farms in town for local food production	21	
Bicycle safety, e.g., bike lanes and trails	30	
Clean Rivers and Streams	37	

Connecting new neighborhoods to existing neighborhoods to improve walkability	21	
Converting the Town's vehicle fleet to Low Emission Vehicles	23	
Electric Vehicle charging station availability	23	
Food stores that are walkable for in-town residents	40	
Maintenance of town amenities, like parks, street trees, public bathrooms, etc.	29	
Pedestrian safety, e.g., sidewalks and road crossings	29	
Precipitation (annual rain volume) that has been above average for the last 26 years and is continuing to rise, with storms increasing in volume and severity	22	A commenter added: "Reason to keep waterfront as a public park and not build housing and boat ramps for the wealthy."
Public Access to waterfront for a variety of uses	37	
Raising the tax rate to increase funding for public education	21	Commenter added, "Please think of ;less advantaged people." Should be noted that school funding is a County, not Town, responsibility.
Relative sea level rise that is projected to be between 1 and 2 feet by 2050 (NOAA data)	23	
Safer access across Route 50	27	
Street trees for cooling, shade, water retention, and beautification	40	
Incentives for Green Building and Solar/Renewable Energy	24	Item written in by citizen
Services during extreme events	7	Item written in by citizen
Composting option	16	Item written in by citizen
Solar Panels over big parking lots and big rooftops of commercial and residential buildings	11	Item written in by citizen
Community Garden	1	Item written in by citizen
Renewable Energy Sources for Easton Power	16	Item written in by citizen
More pollinator-friendly solar	2	Item written in by citizen

The range of responses and level of concurrence with many of the options as expressed via this exercise was impressive and suggests there may well be community support for a more sustainable future Easton. While the responses are varied by subject, there are at least a few general themes that can be summarized as follows:

- Plan for, and mitigate, the impacts of climate change.
- Facilitate a more sustainable built environment.
- Protect the environment.
- Renewable Energy options
- Food Security

The balance of this chapter will discuss Sustainability in each of these five categories.

B. Climate Change

In the 2022 Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Report, "Planning for Climate Mitigation and Adaptation," the authors note that the United States is facing a number of "existential threats" but notes that only one of them - climate change - has the potential to "destroy human livability of the entire planet." According to the former President of the American Planning Association, Leo Asuncion, Jr., in a 2021 statement on the UN Climate Change Conference, "Now is an essential moment where global commitments, national policies, and local planning must all work together to meet the demands of confronting and combating climate change and its impacts on people, places, and our planet." (emphasis added)

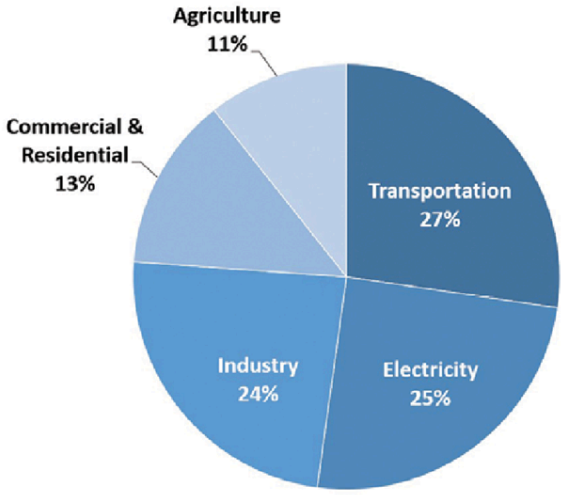
The same PAS Report goes on to state that an effective response to the global challenge that is climate change will require fundamental and systemic changes to the built environment and "inevitably must be addressed policy by policy and project by project in our local communities." Ultimately, local governments need to shift to, and embrace the concept of, sustainable development in order to make a difference.

In general terms, planning responses to climate change fall into two categories: mitigation planning and adaptation planning. Mitigation planning involves planning for and taking actions that reduce the levels of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in the atmosphere or enhance carbon sinks (i.e. things that absorb more GHGs than they emit). Climate adaptation planning involves actions that reduce the vulnerability of people, places, and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change. The

most effective approach will inevitably utilize both mitigation and adaptation techniques and strategies.

c. Mitigation Strategies

The sources of US GHG emissions, by sector, are shown in the following chart:



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2022). Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-2020

The largest share is represented by the Transportation Sector, which covers all journeys by road, rail, water and air. This sector generated 29% of US GHG in 2019. Of the total GHG emitted from this sector, 58% of them are generated from the fossil fuels burnt for light-duty vehicles (i.e., cars, pickup trucks, sport utility vehicles (SUVs), vans, and minivans), with an additional 24% from medium and heavy duty trucks. The good news on this front is that there are actions that can be taken from a planning perspective to drive these numbers down. These range from site-specific actions, such as providing adequate infrastructure for charging electric vehicles, to bigger-picture and philosophical changes, such as planning for future growth that is less automobile dependent by incentivizing new growth that occurs in the form of compact, walkable, mixed-use communities that provide a variety of housing choices and offer services within easy walking distance of neighborhoods.

While the Transportation sector is the one most directly related to planning, in terms of the possibility to reduce GHG emissions, it is not the only one. To that point, the following are potential mitigation strategies that communities can implement that more broadly can reduce GHG emissions:

- Increasing the use of renewable energy and access to alternative fuels.
- Providing options for active transportation.
- Designing energy-efficient buildings and resilient infrastructure.
- .Protecting and enhancing natural systems and water resources.
- Maximizing co-benefits of ecosystem services and green infrastructure solutions.
- Purchasing climate-friendly products.
- Educating the public on socioeconomic and public health impacts of climate change.

The energy supplier to the vast majority of Easton properties is the Easton Utilities Commission (EUC). Broadly speaking, EUC is pursuing a number of sustainable goals and objectives. Notably, this includes their "Sustainability Campus." Of note to the topic of renewable energy, the EUC Sustainability Campus includes a solar array, described by EUC as:

> *Perhaps the biggest effort to offset greenhouse gas emissions was the installation of the 2MW solar field at Easton's Sustainability Campus located adjacent to the wastewater treatment facility. The array generates more than enough electricity to power the entire treatment plant. On average, 20% of the electricity generated by the panels is fed back onto the local electric grid. Commissioned in 2017, the nearly 10-acre site was constructed for a total of $4 million. Through a grant by Maryland Department of the Environment, 75% of the construction costs were covered, making Easton Utilities' total investment $1 million. This partnership allowed the project to be both cost and environmentally effective, benefiting the community by avoiding almost 1,672 metric tons of CO_2e emissions per year.*

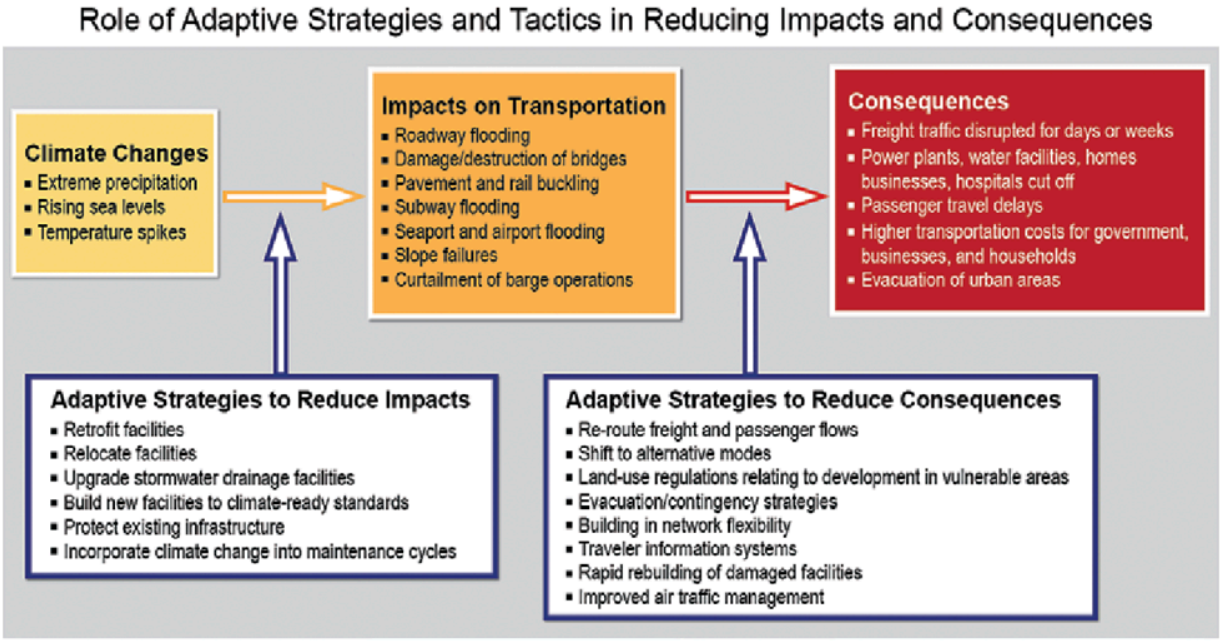
The Town should continue to support EUC's sustainability and renewable energy initiatives. Beyond that, we can and should explore options for additional solar arrays. In the context of a growing town like Easton, this can be a challenge since arrays can consume large amounts of land. However, there may be opportunities to co-locate panels on the roofs of large buildings or in large surface parking lots.

D. Adaptation Strategies

The risks posed by climate change include rising sea levels and storm surges, heat stress, extreme precipitation, inland and coastal flooding, drought, increased aridity, water scarcity, and air pollution, all of which will have negative impacts on an individual's health, livelihoods, and assets, as

well as the community's economy and ecosystems. Adaptation strategies are essential to reducing vulnerability to both the likely everyday, as well as the more extreme or dangerous, outcomes of climate change.

The following flowchart depicts the multiple impacts of climate change on Transportation, the consequences of those impacts, and some adaptation strategies that can be employed (both to reduce impacts and to reduce consequences):



The area where adaptation policies can most directly be impacted by Comprehensive Planning is the general area of land use. This is especially the case when contemplating future growth areas. Preventing future development from occurring in vulnerable locations, such as along waterways, in floodplains, or non-tidal wetlands, is an easy proactive approach to climate change adaptation. It is coincidentally consistent with the essence of this Plan. This is important because as the previously referenced PAS Report notes, comprehensive land use planning that anticipates likely climate impacts can accomplish the following community-wide goals:

- Encouraging coordinated transportation and housing investments, so that people can afford to live in safe conditions with transportation choice in case of emergency.
- Promoting green infrastructure and sound watershed management, which can reduce stormwater runoff, mitigate the urban heat island effect, and improve public health.

- Rehabilitating wetland riparian or estuarine habitats that provide natural ecosystem services, such as flood protection.
- Reducing the long-term cost of development by building in areas that are less vulnerable to climate impacts and costs.

Impacts can also be made at the individual building level. For example, increased frequency and severity of heat waves pose additional risks for occupants of homes without cooling methods. Very young children, the elderly (who represent a high percentage of Easton's population), and those with infirmities are most susceptible to heat strokes and other health risks associated with extreme heat. High-performance green buildings can have both mitigation and adaptation co-benefits. Adaptation practices are ideally implemented at the time of construction, but mitigation to existing buildings can occur in the form of retrofitting existing homes and buildings with additions such as green roofs or sun shading, water storage space, and smart ventilation.

Finally, it is important to note that although there are specific actions that a community may pursue in the realm of climate adaptation, monitoring and evaluation of adaptation policies and actions can be challenging for a number of reasons. The Planning for Climate Mitigation and Adaptation PAS Report, lists the following cautions with regards to monitoring adaptation:

MEASURING ADAPTATION

Monitoring and evaluating adaptation can be challenging for the following reasons (CAP and ICLEI 2015):

- **Adaptation is not an objective or an endpoint.** Adaptation is a process of continual adjustment, and there is no clear measure or benchmark that signals that an adaptation measure is "successful." Often adaptation evaluation relies on proxy measures that relate to the achievement of broader societal and environmental aims.
- **Uncertainty is inherent in virtually all monitoring and evaluation processes.** With many climate trends not yet clear, planners need to plan for a range of possible scenarios. For example, uncertainty regarding the rate and extent of sea level rise is critical to adaptation planners in coastal areas, but equally uncertain are issues of population growth and aging infrastructure.
- **Adaptation is evaluated by measuring avoided impacts.** Adaptation efforts are designed to reduce adverse impacts of climate change. In the absence of that impact taking place, it can be challenging to measure how much worse the situation would have been without the intervention.
- **Evaluating adaptation entails tracking towards a "moving target."** In monitoring climate change, natural and socioecological systems undergo continuous change over time and so the use of a fixed baseline may lose some validity. With this consistent variability, baseline data may not always provide a solid reference point.
- **Adaptation requires long time horizons.** Because adaptation activities tend to have long time frames and unclear endpoints that are liable to change over time, it can be difficult to measure them within traditional five-year government planning cycles or political mandates.
- **Adaptation spans multiple scales and sectors.** Adaptation encompasses diverse programming strategies, populations, and locales. While it is predominantly a local process, progress towards it is often examined at much higher levels, and often at a sector scale. It can be very difficult to compare or aggregate results in an effective way because of the eclectic range of sectors, the varying availability of data, and different site contexts.
- **There is no one set of indicators or monitoring and evaluation approaches.** As adaptation is a process rather than an outcome, individual indicators for climate adaptation may not necessarily exist as "good" climate adaptation indicators. In addition, as adaptation cuts across contexts, scales, and sectors, no universal set of indicators will fit these divergent contexts.
- **Assessing the effectiveness and adequacy of adaptation is both complex and challenging.** It demands a practical, replicable approach that provides meaningful, quantifiable information. Recognizing that building resilience is a moving goal in a changing climate, measuring adaptation effectiveness should also be flexible and adaptable to a wide range of contexts and be able to catalyze learning at a variety of spatial and temporal scales (Craft and Fisher 2016).

E. Sustainable Built Environment

The aspect of sustainability that is most directly relevant to a Comprehensive Plan, and which is addressed throughout this Plan, is that of the built environment. This includes planning-related areas such as encouraging more energy efficient buildings, to fundamental principles of land use planning such as prescribing a future development pattern that is more sustainable than that which has occurred in the last half-century or so.

With regards to future development patterns, the measure of success will overwhelmingly come from what happens in our Future Growth Area. Accommodating more growth in the form of Infill and Redevelopment of the existing Town boundaries will help achieve this goal, but given the nature of this type of development, the stage has essentially already been set.

Infill/Redevelopment will be more sustainable in that such development is generally more accommodating of active modes of transportation and is closer to the shopping and services that residents need, thus facilitating such active transportation. However, barring a fundamental (and very large) change in the scope and nature of density of development in the vicinity of Downtown, and despite strong public support for focusing future growth on this aspect, there is a limit to how much can be accommodated in this manner. Eventually, and likely sooner rather than later, the overwhelming majority of growth will occur in what are now "greenfields" in our Future Growth Area. Improving sustainability of the development of these areas will largely dictate Easton's overall success (or lack thereof) in improving the sustainability of the Town as a whole.

The elements that will lead to a more sustainable form of development in the future are covered throughout this Plan, so they will not be discussed in detail here. In particular the Implementation Chapter discusses in detail recommended options for achieving this goal. For the purposes of this chapter, simply listing the options to improve the sustainability of future greenfield development will suffice, and they include:

- Permitting/encouraging/requiring mixed-use development.
- Facilitating residential development at a higher density and with a wider variety of housing options.
- Maximizing connectivity to other future development.
- Providing, where possible, connectivity to existing development.
- Facilitating and accommodating active modes of transportation.

F. Food Security

The UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) describes a sustainable food system as "a food system that delivers food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised. This means that:

- It is profitable throughout (economic sustainability);
- It has broad-based benefits for society (social sustainability); and
- It has a positive or neutral impact on the natural environment (environmental sustainability)."

As a growing and vibrant Town, there is little actual agricultural activity occurring within the corporate limits of Easton. However, land that is annexed into Town is often agricultural and sometimes remains as such for several years. There is certainly nothing wrong with this practice of allowing farming as essentially a temporary or interim use until landowner/developer motivation and/or market forces dictate that it is time for the property to develop. Furthermore, the Town envisions the Talbot County side of our Growth Boundary to consist of farms and forests and supports their efforts to permanently preserve these areas.

On a smaller scale, within the Town limits sustainable food systems can be supported through gardens. These can be located on private property for the use and enjoyment of the resident of the property, or in the form of a community garden. One such community garden exists in the East End Neighborhood of Easton, just outside of Downtown (see picture below). This option is especially appropriate in the more densely developed sections of Town where land may be too scarce for individual private gardens.



G. Financial Sustainability

Beyond these environmental and general quality of life aspects of sustainability, future development patterns have even more diverse sustainability implications. One such aspect is the financial sustainability of such development, and ultimately the Town as a whole. In short, there are a

multitude of potential development scenarios possible for any given parcel of land in the Growth Area. Some will result in significant revenue for the Town, but might also impose large new costs. Others may not cost that much to serve, but may also contribute very little in the way of new revenue. From the perspective of financial sustainability, development that justifies its cost by providing a net positive fiscal impact to the Town ought to be prioritized over that which will ultimately be a net drain on Town resources.

Although it can certainly vary depending on the local government's tax structure and policies, residential development in general, and specifically single-use, low-density residential development, tends to cost local governments more to serve than it produces in new tax revenue. On the other hand, mixed-use and non-residential development can be cash flow positive for local governments. One way to view/measure such impacts is on a value per acre (VPA) basis. An assessment of Easton's VPA was conducted in 2024 by the firm Urban3 and its results are summarized in the Land Use Chapter of this Plan.

Value-per-acre modeling

In 2024, the Planning/Economic Development Firm Urban3 modelled the fiscal impacts of land uses on the Eastern Shore in general, and then in Talbot County specifically. The basis of Urban3's methodology involves examining "value per acre" for the area being analyzed. The following is excerpted from the Urban3 study for Talbot County.

Highlights from the Urban3 study for Talbot County include:

- Mixed use projects provide the highest property value per acre
- Higher density development is significantly more productive than less dense land uses
- Understanding how different land uses affect property tax revenue will allow Easton to make informed development decisions that maximize revenue productivity that can then be used in providing services such as public safety and continuing economic development
- Using the Value Per Acre (VPA) model allows communities to link fiscally productive areas with their associated land use types
- Using a moderate to high productivity sample development, such as mixed use commercial or missing middle housing types, as an example for how to build in the future can guide community conversation, vision, processes, and future regulations

- Urban3 has seen that funding for infrastructure systems(roads, sewer, water, stormwater) is insufficient in covering the lifecycle expenses for these systems. Certain users of these systems may not be paying for the true cost of what it takes to serve them (meaning other users are subsidizing them). Adjust fees, with geography in mind, to adequately cover the costs of operation and maintenance or encourage infill development rather than servicing new areas.



Figure 8. Comparison of values per acre by land use in Easton
Source: Maryland Department of Planning (2024), Google Maps



Figure 9. Comparing value vs. dwelling units on a per acre basis for nine example properties in Easton
Source: Maryland Department of Planning (2024), Google Maps

Urban3 modeling has helped the Town evaluate where existing development patterns provide strong return on public investment. Compact, walkable neighborhoods generate more tax revenue

per acre and require less infrastructure to support than low-density fringe development. This analysis supports land use decisions that promote long-term sustainability.

As Easton grows, the town can shape its development and financial outcomes. Urban3 created three growth projection scenarios for Poplar Hill, Four Seasons, and Gannon Range, using existing land use values and building types (see Figure 14) applied to site plans from Easton (Figure 15).



Figure 14. Example properties used in projections scenarios for the Town of Easton *Source: Maryland Department of Planning (2024), Google Maps*

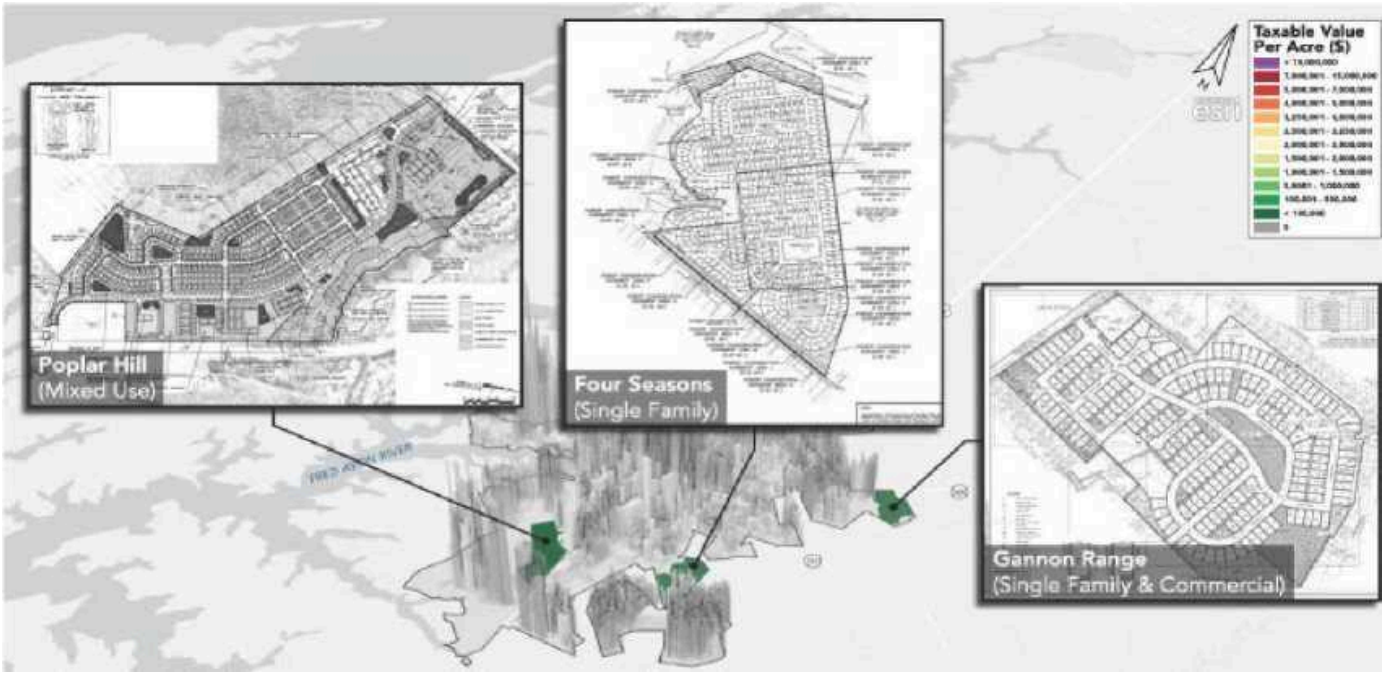


Figure 15. Example site plans used for projections scenarios for the Town of Easton Source: *Maryland Department of Planning (2024), Google Maps*

Figure 16 analyzes the Four Seasons site for potential single family residential development, comparing attached and detached building types. If developed as single family attached units like those on Jasper Lane, the site's taxable value could increase by 743 times. In contrast, traditional single family detached homes would yield a smaller increase. Building type and development pattern should be considered to maximize property tax revenue for Easton.

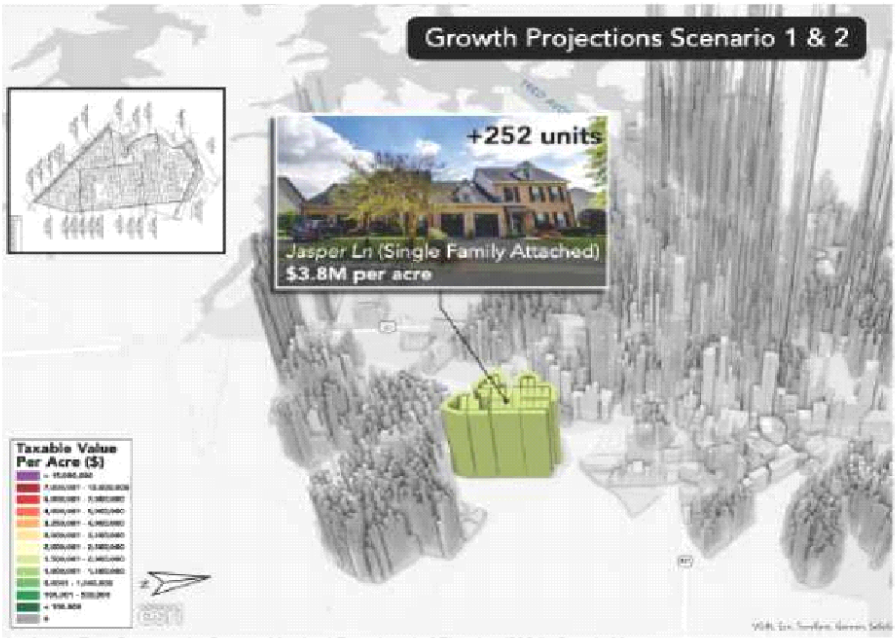


Figure 16. Two growth projections scenarios for the Four Seasons site Source: *Maryland Department of Planning (2024), Google Maps*

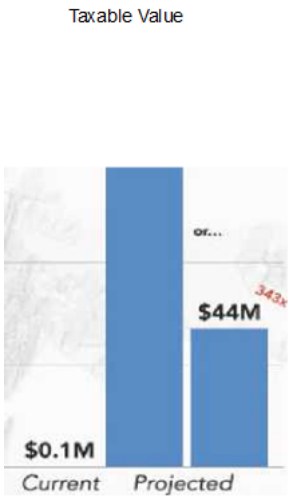


Figure 17 presents a summary of scenario projections for each site, including development type and potential property tax revenue for Easton. Although Poplar Hill (now owned by Talbot County) may not develop as planned, its scenario provides a model for future mixed-use developments in Easton.



Figure 17. Summary of all projections scenarios at the three sample sites in Easton
Source: Maryland Department of Planning (2024), Google Maps

Key Takeaways

- How can Value Per Acre (VPA) be increased?
    - Understand Current Revenue and Spending Patterns
        - Urban3's analysis examines how land use is related to economic cash flow in the Town of Easton and its operational capacity. Identifying the effects of various land uses on property tax revenue provides information for development decisions aimed at increasing revenue productivity that supports public services such as safety and economic initiatives.
    - Repeat What Works
        - Reviewing the Value Per Acre (VPA) model enables communities to link fiscally productive areas with certain land use types. Using examples from moderately to highly productive developments, such as mixed-use commercial properties or missing middle housing, may serve as reference points for future community planning, discussions, procedures, and regulations.
    - Increase Density Incrementally

        - Permitting higher density offers a straightforward method to increase VPA, as raising the value relative to acreage results in a higher value per acre. Adding one or two stories to structures can significantly affect productivity. Typically, density modifications are implemented through changes in land development regulations, which may prompt differing opinions.
        - As Easton develops further, the town will have the opportunity to decide on the direction of growth and its financial outcomes. Utilizing Urban3's analysis, Easton can identify and apply productive land use patterns and building types.

- How can VPA be increased and costs reduced?
    - Understand the Cost to Maintain Infrastructure Systems
        - Urban3's observations indicate that funding for infrastructure systems (including roads, sewer, water, and stormwater) often does not cover their full lifecycle expenses.
        - Some users might not be bearing the entire cost required for their services, resulting in cross-subsidization.
        - Adjusting fees geographically may help ensure coverage of operation and maintenance costs or promote infill development over expansion into new areas.

The Eastern Shore Land Conservancy maintains a resource page on the work of Urban 3 on the Eastern Shore. For additional information on the Urban3 Analysis, please see ESLC's website at: https://www.eslc.org/urban3/

Although it can certainly vary depending on the local government's tax structure and policies, residential development in general, and specifically single-use, low-density residential development, tends to cost local governments more to serve than it produces in new tax revenue. On the other hand, mixed-use and non-residential development can be cash flow positive for local governments. One way to view/measure such impacts is on a value per acre (VPA) basis. An assessment of Easton's VPA was conducted in 2024 by the firm Urban3 and its results are summarized in the Land Use Chapter of this Plan.

H. Social Sustainability

Another aspect of sustainability that can be affected by development patterns is that of social/cultural equity. Social equity in development patterns refers to ensuring fair and just distribution of resources, opportunities, and public services across all segments of a community. It involves addressing disparities in access to things like housing, healthcare, education, transportation, and employment, aiming to prevent certain groups from being left behind.

Consideration of social equity in planning and future land use patterns is important for a number of reasons, including the following:

- Reduced Poverty and Inequality - By addressing the root causes of poverty and inequality, social equity contributes to a more just and prosperous community.
- Increased Social Cohesion - When people feel that they have equal opportunities and access to resources, it fosters a sense of community and belonging.
- Greater Resilience - Equitable communities are better equipped to withstand economic and environmental shocks.
- Sustainable Development - Social Equity is an essential component of sustainable development, ensuring that progress benefits all members of society, both present and future.

The Town of Easton is committed to ensuring equitable access to transportation facilities and services for all residents, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, income, or ability. This commitment is formalized through the Title VI Annual Update Accomplishment Report, prepared by the Department of Public Works and submitted to the Mayor each year. The report outlines actions taken to comply with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P.L. 100.259).

The Town's Title VI policy affirms that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. The report includes a policy statement reaffirming the Town's dedication to non-discrimination and its responsibility to uphold these standards across all departments, programs, and projects.

Environmental justice principles are embedded into the Town's multimodal transportation planning. In particular:

- The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan weighted social equity factors—including proximity to low-income housing, access to social services, and connectivity to transit—when evaluating and prioritizing projects.
- Transit planning emphasizes improved service for historically underserved and transportation-disadvantaged populations.

Through these practices, Easton ensures that investments in infrastructure contribute to more equitable mobility, safety, and access for all residents.

I. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Address Climate Change through Mitigation and Adaptation.

Objectives:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through compact, walkable, mixed-use development.
- Expand renewable energy production and EV charging infrastructure.
- Improve building energy efficiency and resilient design.
- Protect and restore natural systems that act as carbon sinks.
- Prevent development in vulnerable areas such as floodplains and wetlands.
- Integrate green infrastructure to manage stormwater and heat impacts.
- Retrofit buildings to withstand extreme weather and reduce energy demand.

Goal #2: Promote a Sustainable Built Environment.

Objectives:

- Focus growth in infill and redevelopment areas before greenfields.
- Require mixed-use, higher-density neighborhoods with diverse housing types.
- Ensure new growth is connected to existing development and supports active transportation.

- Maximize street and trail connectivity in all new projects.
- Utilize the Town's Forest Conservation Account and other sources to add landscaping along heavily traveled corridors.

Goal #3: Support Food Security.

Objectives:

- Preserve farmland and forests within the Growth Boundary.
- Allow interim agricultural use on undeveloped annexed land.
- Encourage private and community gardens, especially in denser neighborhoods.

Goal #4: Ensure Financial Sustainability of Development.

Objectives:

- Prioritize projects with a positive net fiscal impact.
- Promote land uses with high value per acre (VPA).
- Encourage mixed-use and higher-density development to reduce service costs.
- Adjust fees to reflect the true cost of infrastructure and services.

Goal #5: Advance Social Sustainability and Equity.

Objectives:

- Ensure equitable access to housing, transportation, and public services.
- Apply Title VI and environmental justice principles to all Town programs.
- Prioritize infrastructure investments in underserved neighborhoods.
- Include equity considerations in project evaluation and planning.

11 MUNICIPAL GROWTH

"If you don't know where you are going, you might end up someplace else."
— Casey Stengel

A. PURPOSE

The Municipal Growth Element (MGE) outlines how the Town of Easton will manage future physical expansion in a coordinated, efficient, and sustainable manner. It identifies areas for potential annexation and development, explains rationale and reasoning behind future growth, and assesses whether the Town has the necessary infrastructure and services to support that growth.

This chapter fulfills the requirements of Maryland's House Bill 1141 (2006), which amended the Land Use Article to require a comprehensive growth strategy as part of every municipal plan. It integrates Easton's growth management approach with the broader land use policies set forth in this Comprehensive Plan.

The Maryland Land Use Article requires this element to address the following:

1. Areas anticipated for future growth outside the current municipal limits;
2. Historic growth patterns of the Town;
3. Development capacity within current Town boundaries, including infill and redevelopment potential;
4. Additional land needed to accommodate projected demand at densities aligned with long-term policy;
5. Infrastructure and services required to support growth in new areas, including:
    a. Public schools (meeting State-rated capacity standards);
    b. Libraries;
    c. Public safety and emergency medical services;
    d. Water and sewer systems;
    e. Stormwater management (to protect water quality);

f. Recreational facilities;

6. Anticipated financing strategies for public services and infrastructure;
7. Rural buffers and transition zones;
8. Impacts on services and infrastructure that the Town may need to provide for growth just outside its boundaries;
9. Measures to protect sensitive environmental areas affected by new development;
10. Population growth projections; and
11. A vision for Easton's future character and how long-term growth policy supports it.

This 2025 update builds on the Municipal Growth Element introduced in 2010, incorporating new data, insights from recent growth patterns, and the updated priorities of this Plan.

B. Growth Rate Discussion

The pace of Easton's growth has been a recurring point of debate in the last three Comprehensive Plan updates. Historically, the Town relied on the free market to determine growth. However, in the 2010 Plan, the Planning Commission concluded that continued growth at the historic rate of around 3% annually threatened the Town's traditional character and made it harder to address key challenges such as traffic congestion and environmental impacts. That Plan established a preferred target of 1% annual growth, supported by an Annexation Policy designed to limit rapid expansion through controlled Priority Growth Areas.

This~~e~~ 2026 Plan~~2025 Plan~~ renews~~takes a different~~ this approach. It is, however, important to clarify what is intended by the establishment of a 1% annual growth rate as our target. This Plan is not concerned with limiting growth solely for the sake of doing so. Rather, we recognize that there is an amount or pace of growth at which the negative characteristics of development become difficult-to-impossible to keep up with. 1% may not necessarily represent that threshold, but it can serve as a checkpoint such that if/when we exceed such growth, we can and should assess how well we are (or are not) managing those negative characteristics, such as traffic, environmental impacts, infrastructure and service capacities and the like. ~~After a decade in which annual growth averaged only 0.7%, the Plan no longer sets a fixed "preferred" rate. Instead, it~~ This calls for active monitoring to ensure growth occurs at a pace that Town infrastructure and services can

accommodate without undue strain, and may include recommendations for pursuing what, if any, measures are necessary to slow future growth..

Historic Growth Patterns

From its incorporation in 1710 through 1917, Easton remained a small, compact town. By 1965, it had grown primarily in a north–south direction but was still bounded by US Route 50 and the future MD Route 322 (Easton Parkway). Expansion beyond these limits began in 1966 and accelerated in the 1970s after full annexation of the Parkway/Route 50 corridor.

Maps illustrate this outward spread, but they don't show an equally important change—the shift in development form. Like much of the country, Easton moved away from walkable, compact, traditional patterns toward a more suburban, auto-oriented layout. Reversing this trend has been a consistent focus of recent Comprehensive Plans and remains a central objective of this Plan, as discussed further in the Place Element. A map showing Easton's corporate limits at various points in time was shown in 3.1,XX, Existing Land Use Patterns.

While annexations expanded the Town's footprint (see Appendix 3 for a list of annexations), the form of development shifted from walkable, compact patterns to more suburban, auto-oriented layouts. Recent Comprehensive Plans have sought to reverse this trend, emphasizing a return to traditional, connected urban forms.

Population Projections

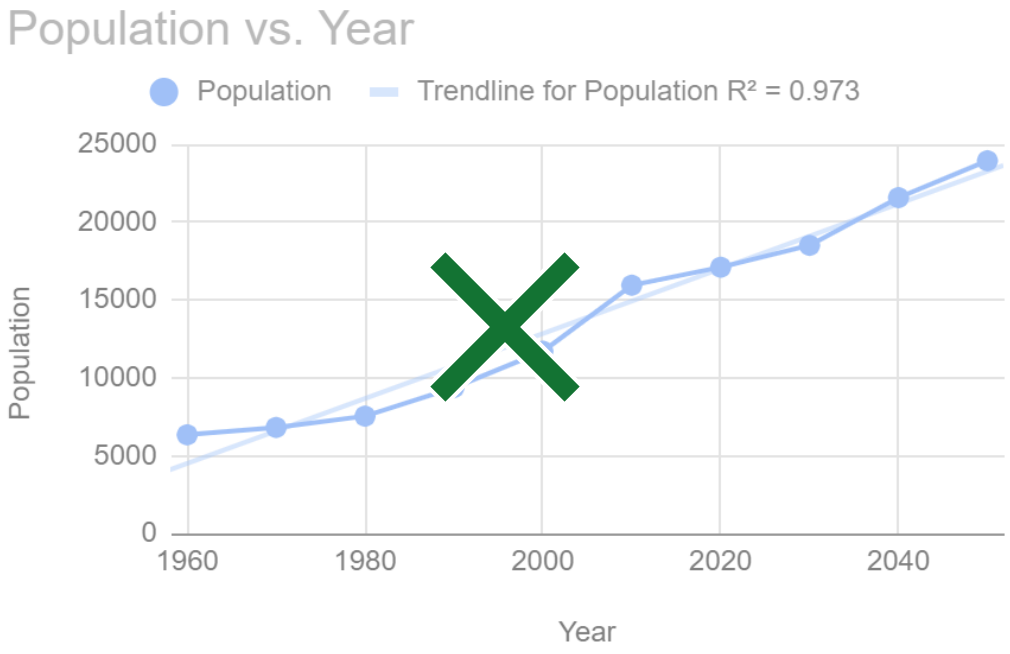
Population growth trends are detailed in the Plan Background Chapter. With the Growth Boundary in place, the Town's ultimate population is largely predictable, assuming current patterns of density, residential/non-residential balance, and household size. Based on the adopted Growth Boundary and current assumptions about density, land use mix, and household size (2.19 persons per household, 2020 Census), Easton's ultimate buildout capacity is estimated at 17,594 dwelling units, or 38,531 residents.

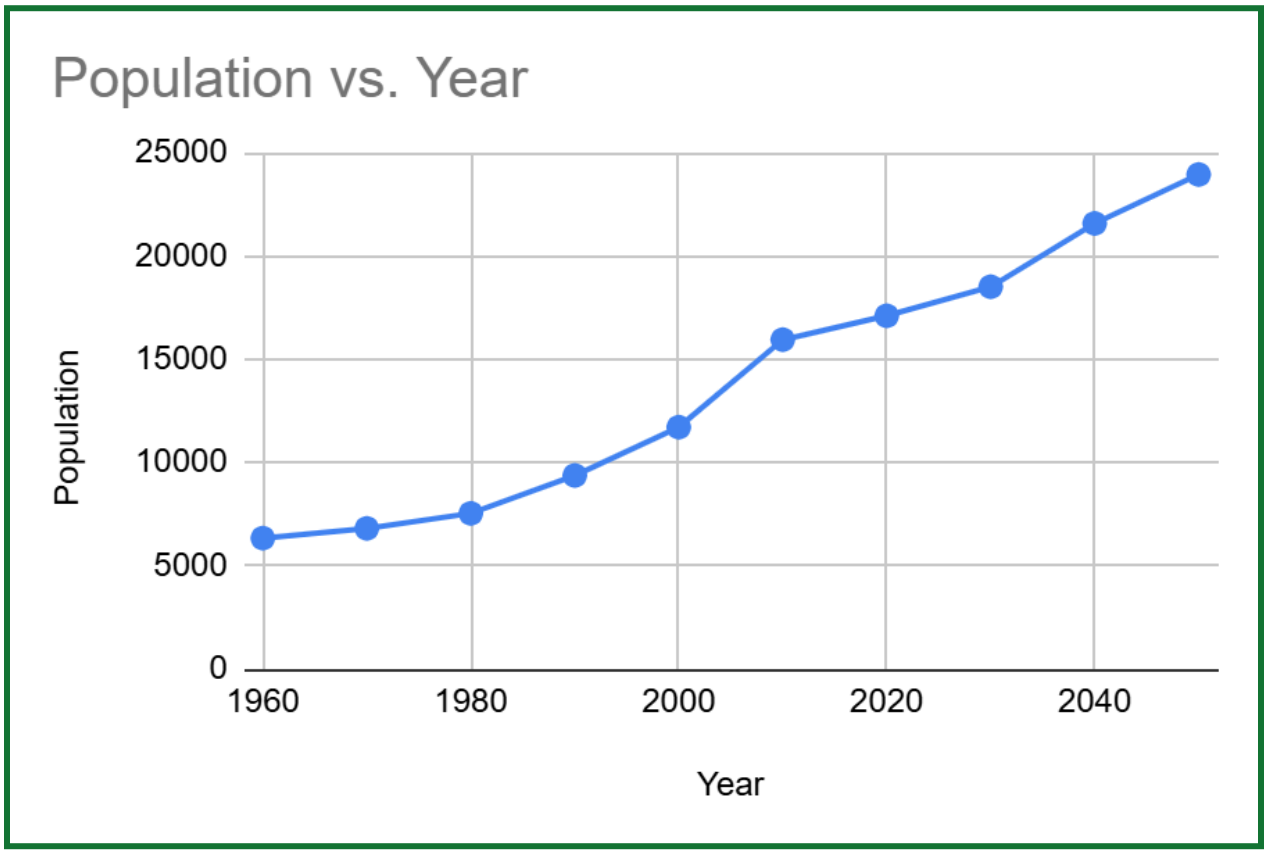
The timing of reaching that capacity depends on growth rates:

- At 3% annually, (the figure used in the 2004 Plan) buildout would occur in about 27 years (2052).
- At 1% annually, (the figure identified as a preferred target in the 2010 Plan) buildout would occur in approximately 80 years (2105)
- At a 1.75% rate, buildout would take closer to 45 years (2070).

The likely population growth rate depends on a host of factors. However, it can be useful to look back at historic growth in order to look forward to project such growth. The following table and chart were prepared with the assistance of Google Sheets , using growth in the Town from 1960 through 2020 to project the future growth of the Town through 2050, using linear regression analysis provided via the FORECAST function in Sheets. Such growth would correspond to a 1.12% annual growth rate over the 30 year period from 2020-2050, and a 1.5% average annual growth rate for the 90 year period (1960-2050).

Year	Population
1960	6337
1970	6809
1980	7536
1990	9372
2000	11708
2010	15945
2020	17101
2030	18506
2040	21572
2050	23940

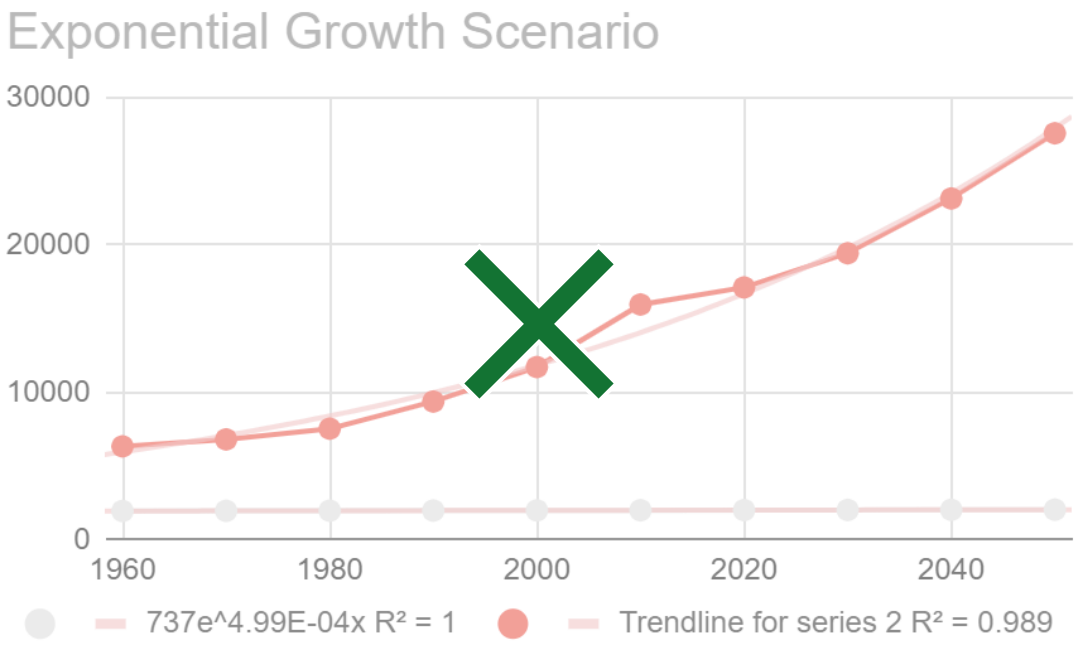

Population vs. Year
Population
Trendline for Population R² = 0.973
25000
20000
15000
10000
5000
0
Population
1960
1980
2000
2020
2040
Year

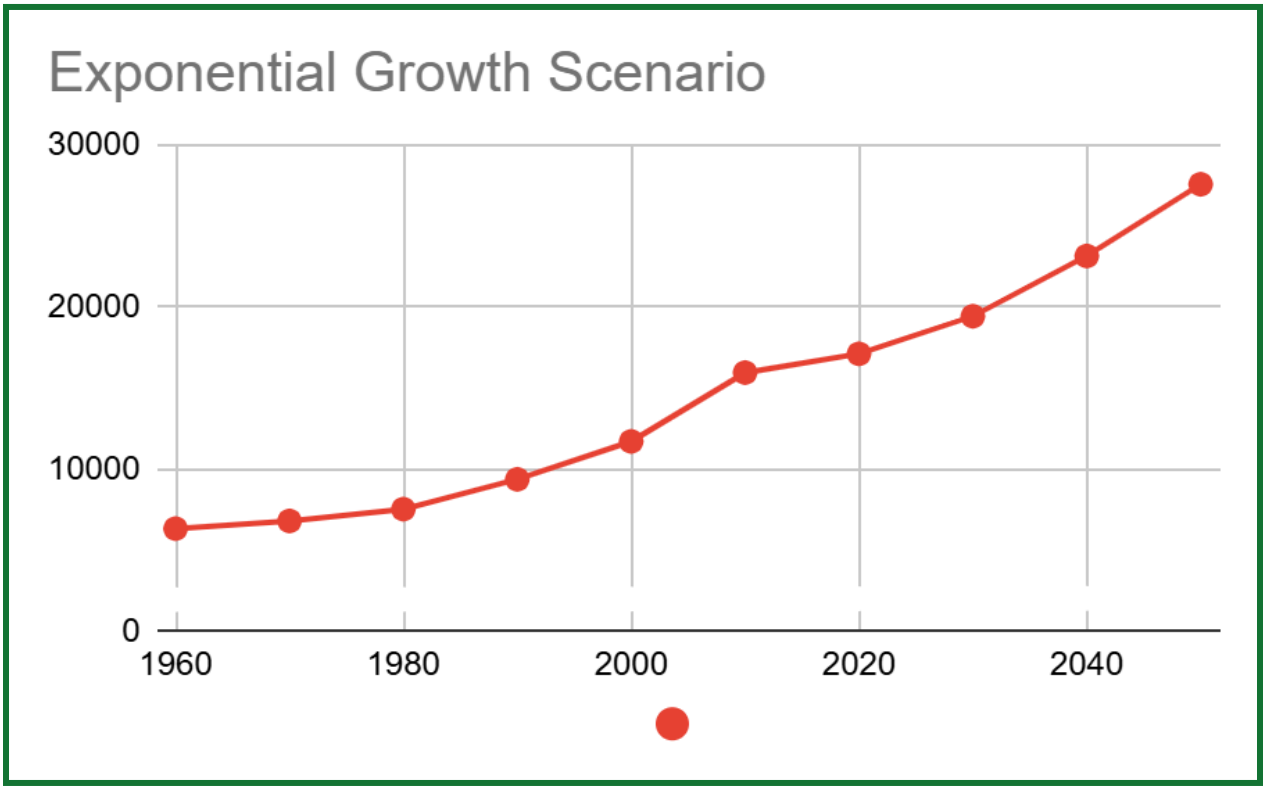

Population vs. Year
25000
20000
15000
10000
5000
0
Population
1960
1980
2000
2020
2040
Year

The Forecast function predicts a future value based on existing values using linear regression to project future data points along a line that best fits the historical data. It can be used to forecast sales, plan a budget, or predict future trends or short-term increases or decreases. Linear forecasting is suitable for stable environments where predictable, incremental changes occur, whereas exponential forecasting is better for rapidly expanding or contracting trends driven by compounding factors. Linear regression should be used cautiously when used for population projections because population growth is often more complex. Still, when limited to a short-term projection and with so many unknown variables (e.g., which direction and by how much interest rates will change, the impact of Lakeside at Trappe on the Easton housing market, the impact of the last of the Baby Boomer generation reaching retirement age, etc.), looking to the past to make predictions about future growth seems reasonable. ~~Further, the R-squared value of 0.973 suggests a formula that is extremely effective at predicting outcomes.~~

The Sheets GROWTH function is similar to FORECAST with the notable difference that it projects exponential growth. It's used for forecasting data that follows an accelerating pattern, such as sales, population, or investment growth, by calculating y-values for a specified exponential curve. Using this function to project Easton's future growth, yields the following:

Year	Population
1960	6,337
1970	6,809
1980	7,536
1990	9,372
2000	11,708
2010	15,945
2020	17,101
2030	19,416
2040	23,125
2050	27,543


Exponential Growth Scenario
30000
20000
10000
0
1960
1980
2000
2020
2040
737e^4.99E-04x R² = 1
Trendline for series 2 R² = 0.989


Exponential Growth Scenario
30000
20000
10000
0
1960
1980
2000
2020
2040

This model predicts a 1.6% average annual growth rate for the future 30 year period (vs. 1.12% via the linear model).

~~The Planning Commission views 1.75% as the maximum sustainable rate at this time. This is considered high enough to support continued vitality but low enough to avoid overburdening infrastructure.~~

This Plan proposes a revision to the way it uses growth rates. After a decade where the average annual growth rate has dropped to 0.7%, the concept of aiming for a "targeted" or "preferred" growth rate for the Planning period has been dropped. Instead, the directive relative to our Growth Rate is not so much an attempt to limit (or increase) any particular rate, but rather to consistently monitor the rate/amount of growth we are experiencing so that whatever growth that does occur, is at a rate that does not overly tax the Town's infrastructure and services. We believe that, for this Planning period at least, this can best be addressed by adhering to an Annexation Policy that does not allow for an exceedingly high rate of growth, which would be one characterized as significantly at variance with the 1.12% projected growth for several years. This can be monitored through observation of the number of dwelling units approved annually. This monitoring should be a key characteristic of the Planning Commission's Annual Reporting responsibilities. Beyond reporting though, effective growth management requires an assessment of the data. A sustained observed significant deviation from the targeted~~from expected targeted~~ rate~~s~~ of growth of 1% annually may necessitate actions to either encourage (if a prolonged period of slow or negative growth is observed) or limit (if expected growth is observed to have been exceeded) future growth from that point in time. This becomes especially critical if observations suggest that Easton's population is, in fact, behaving more like the exponential (GROWTH) model as opposed to the linear (FORECAST) model.

An important aspect to consider when contemplating future growth rates is the number of units approved but not yet built, sometimes referred to as the "development pipeline." As of May 12, 2025, that number stood at 843. While that basic total number is important to know (and, obviously, readily observed), what is more difficult to predict is when those units will be built, referred to as the "absorption rate." A myriad of factors influence the absorption rate, including: the number of different projects represented by the total number of units, the types of units, the demand for those units, interest rates, price points,, competition in the region, and so on.

The pipeline and absorption rate are important because they can further support the policy to strictly limit annexation, particularly annexation for residential purposes. That is borne out by the

calculation of the number of dwelling units that the historic 1.12% ~~expected~~ growth rate would yield over the 10 year planning period. This number is approximately 875 units. Thus, with 843 units already in the development pipeline, assuming they could be built in this planning period (and not accounting for factors such as the relative demand for certain housing types, locations, etc.), the housing that would be required to correspond to 1.12% annual growth can be completely met by the buildout of existing approved projects plus a small handful of additional units. Essentially, the pipeline inventory is such that it could supply the housing associated with the projected growth of the next 10 year planning period. This is even more likely given that we are targeting a 1% annual rate of growth.

c. Existing Growth Capacity (Infill and Redevelopment)

Easton's current boundaries contain enough developable land to meet much of the projected residential and nonresidential growth for the next 20 years. However, demand—especially for mixed-use and employment-related space—may eventually outpace this capacity. Managing growth will require annexations that are carefully aligned with the Plan's land use vision, infrastructure capabilities, and fiscal priorities.

A recent requirement for Comprehensive Plans is to estimate the capacity for residential development within existing Town boundaries. This analysis considers three categories: undeveloped land, infill parcels, and sites with potential for redevelopment.

To complete this assessment, several assumptions were applied:

- Urban density baseline: Future development is assumed to occur at higher densities than in recent years, with a minimum of 3.5 dwelling units per acre—the threshold for designation as a Priority Funding Area (PFA).
- State guidance: Methodology follows the Maryland Department of Planning's Models and Guidelines publication Estimating Residential Development Capacity.
- Local experience: Assumptions are informed by Easton's past development review processes.

The following table details the step-by-step calculation of estimated residential development capacity within current Town limits.

Table 9 Development Capacity within Easton 2025 Town Limits			
	Category	Details	Estimated Units
0	Priority Development Areas (per 2010 Plan)	Includes Areas 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 * total estimated units: 644	644
1	Other Parcels with Infill Potential	Unimproved parcels ≥ 1 acre, PR District parcels, and <1 acre parcels * total: 512	512
2	Approved or Pending Projects	Under Construction (189) + Under Review (415) = 604	604
3	Downtown Residential Development Potential	Per AKRF study = 100 units	100
4	Redevelopment Potential	Parcels w/ improvements <$50k; net new units (9) + figures from the Redevelopment Target Areas table below (875) = 884	884
5	TOTAL Infill/Redevelopment/Build-out Potential (as of June 11, 2024)		2744

**** Area 2 corresponds to the site of the Four Seasons project (252 units).***

Area 3 is the Poplar Hill property (now owned by Talbot County and assumes no future residential units.

Area 4 is Ashby Commons (Now essentially built out so assumes no new units).

Area 7 is the "Alvin Lapides Property" (Estimated 60 units).

Area 8 is Easton Point (Estimated 332 units per Port Street Small Area Plan).

Table 10 Redevelopment Target Areas		
Project/Area	Acres	Potential Residential Units (acres x 30 du/ac x 0.75)
Hospital	14.84	334
Easton Plaza (Parking lot)	12.456	280
Perdue - Brookletts	6.548	147
Brookletts Building	1.787	40
Perdue - Maryland Ave	2.36	53
Safeway	1.46	21 (net, after deducting 12 units already

		included in the AKRF Study)

NOTE: The units for the Perdue sites and Safeway are based on approved projects.

Our best estimate is that Easton can accommodate approximately 2,744 additional dwelling units within existing Town limits—without annexing new residential land (except for portions of Easton Point noted in Area 8).

This does not mean all 2,744 units will necessarily be built before new land is needed. Several factors will reduce the actual yield:

- Environmental constraints may limit development on some parcels, even if they appear suitable on paper.
- Unwilling landowners may choose not to develop in the near term.
- Market pressures could drive the need to open growth areas earlier, particularly if restricted supply inflates housing prices and worsens Easton's affordability challenges.

While the current Planning period does not require new annexation for residential growth, the Town must remain prepared to expand strategically when capacity within the boundary becomes constrained.

The 2,744-unit estimate represents a modest increase from the 2,492 units projected in the 2010 Plan. The gain is primarily due to:

- Adding Easton Point (Area 8) as a Priority Development Area.
- A more refined redevelopment analysis, incorporating specific high-potential properties.

This gain was partially offset by the removal of Area 3 (Hospital-owned Oxford Road site) following its purchase by Talbot County.

At the targeted growth rate of 1.75% annually, the existing capacity could accommodate roughly 18 years of growth—far exceeding the 516 new units added between 2010 and 2020. This suggests that the existing Town limits are sufficient for the next decade.

However, capacity estimates are theoretical. Real-world constraints—such as lower-than-maximum densities, redevelopment challenges, and political or economic barriers—mean the actual buildout may be lower. Housing affordability in Easton is already strained, and increasing supply remains a key strategy for addressing it.

Additionally, this analysis does not include potential policy-driven increases in capacity. For example, allowing multifamily development in General Commercial and Limited Commercial zones could yield up to 1,240 additional units on the 155 currently unimproved acres in those districts (at 8 du/ac), excluding further redevelopment potential on improved parcels.

Infill and Redevelopment as Growth Strategies

The 2010 Comprehensive Plan estimated that Easton could accommodate roughly 2,500 new housing units through infill development and redevelopment—growth that could occur without annexing additional land.

Pursuing this strategy offers multiple benefits:

- Preserves open space by reducing pressure to convert greenfields.
- Improves mobility for residents who do not or cannot drive, by placing more housing near services and transit.
- Lowers infrastructure costs since extending services within town is typically less expensive than building new systems for outlying areas.
- Expands housing variety, especially smaller, lower-maintenance units that appeal to smaller households and lower-income residents.
- Enhances neighborhood vitality by encouraging reinvestment and adding new amenities.
- Supports environmental goals through energy conservation and reduced land consumption.
- Aligns with Maryland Smart Growth policies, reinforcing sustainable development within existing town boundaries.

Compatibility Considerations for Infill

While infill and redevelopment bring clear benefits, they must be managed carefully. These projects are typically surrounded by existing neighborhoods and must be designed to complement them. The following principles should guide infill and redevelopment:

- Ensure compatible housing types with the surrounding neighborhood.
- Incorporate traffic calming measures where appropriate.
- Adopt design guidelines to promote visual and functional compatibility.

- Maintain a continuous pedestrian network for walkability.
- Support neighborhood-scale commercial uses, where appropriate, to provide walkable access to basic services.
- Address parking creatively, considering nearby on-street spaces, public lots, and shared-parking arrangements instead of relying solely on private lots.

Realistic Limits and Strategic Focus

During the public engagement process for this Plan update, many residents expressed strong support for infill and redevelopment as preferred growth strategies. While this is consistent with sustainability goals, the supply of vacant land within the built-up areas of Easton is limited. Achieving significant new growth solely through infill would require a level of intensity that could fundamentally alter the character of established neighborhoods.

A more realistic approach is to:

- Promote targeted infill and redevelopment in and around Easton's historic core.
- Support adaptive reuse of existing buildings where feasible.
- Encourage denser, walkable development in suitable infill areas outside the historic core but within the 2025 Town Boundary.

This strategy balances growth, preservation, and community character while maximizing Easton's capacity to grow without unnecessary outward expansion.

D. Future Growth Areas and Annexation

As noted previously, Easton's longstanding policy is that municipal services, including water and sewer, are extended only to properties within the corporate limits. This policy encourages annexation prior to development and reinforces a compact growth pattern. The Town does not support extension of services to development in the County. Growth is to occur at the edges of Easton in a contiguous fashion, coordinated with infrastructure capacity and consistent with community character

The area between the April 2004 Town boundary and the established Growth Boundary became Easton's designated Future Growth Area. The 2004 Plan divided this area into three sequential priority levels for annexation, ranging from near-term to long-range.

The 2010 Plan retained this three-tiered system:

- Priority 1 – Boundary Refinement Areas: Mostly already developed under Talbot County jurisdiction, suitable for annexation to correct boundary irregularities
- Priority 2 – Intermediate Growth Areas and
- Priority 3 – Long-Range Growth Areas: Not expected to be needed for development during that planning period

Much of the Boundary Refinement Area was already built out under County zoning and septic system regulations. Annexation of these areas has generally been driven by the desire for Town water or sewer service, with limited potential for new development except for redevelopment or moderate intensification. Although the 2010 Plan map showed about 1,200 acres in this category, much of it was not actually available for new growth.

Shift in Approach for 2026~~5~~

In place of the tiered priority framework, this Plan adopts Annexation Policies that evaluate proposals based on merit rather than preset classifications. This approach allows for more flexible, needs-based decision-making.

While Annexation is not viewed as necessary during the Planning Period, those Annexation proposals that are submitted will be assessed on whether they:

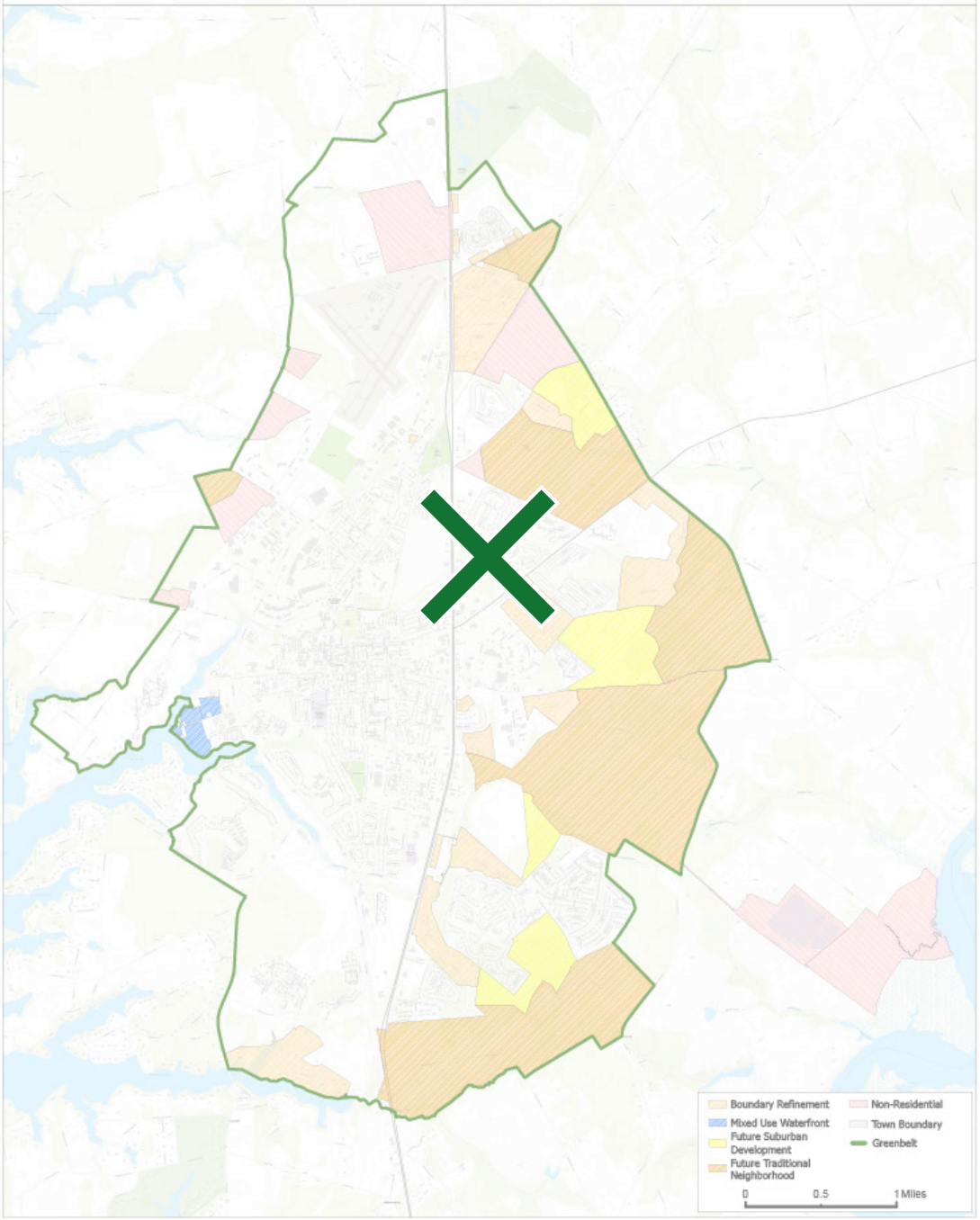
- Fill a geographic or infrastructure gap in the Town boundary.
- Can be efficiently served with water, sewer, and other public services.
- Address identified needs for land use, housing, or public facilities as outlined in this Plan.
- Align with the character, scale, and infrastructure pattern of adjacent neighborhoods.
- Provide benefits that outweigh potential negative impacts (e.g., traffic, demand on services, etc.)

This policy-driven approach maintains growth management objectives while allowing the Town to respond to changing conditions and emerging opportunities.

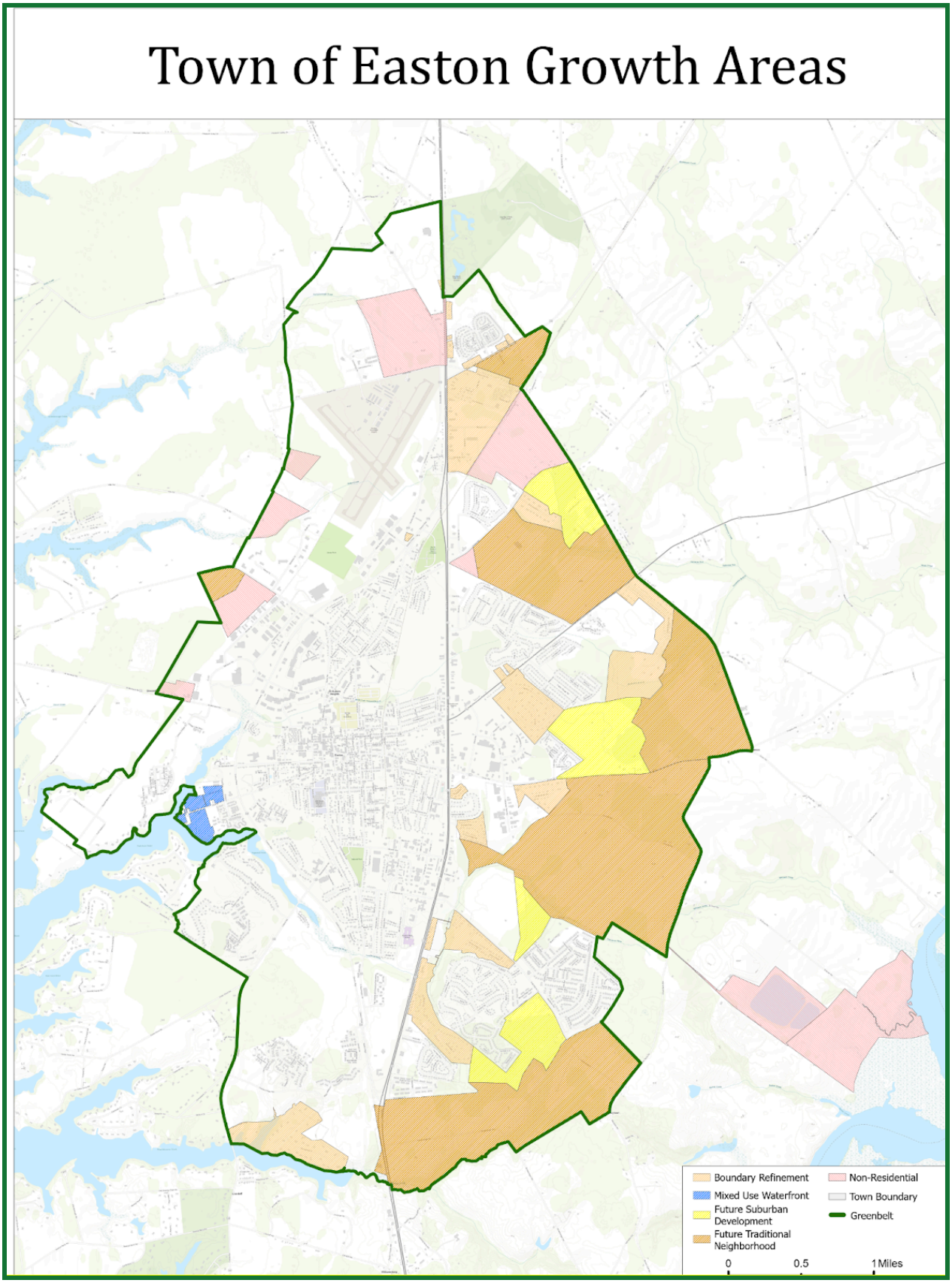
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Map 8: Growth Areas

Town of Easton Growth Areas



Town of Easton Growth Areas



As mentioned in the Land Use Element, this Plan proposes one adjustment to the Growth Boundary, to bring the Town's Wastewater Treatment Plan within the Growth Boundary, rather than in the Greenbelt (or beyond). Such an action would facilitate an Annexation in the future, bringing a Town-owned facility within Town limits. This has advantages from an administration standpoint. It also potentially opens up additional avenues for State funding in the future, to the extent that such finding is restricted to being spent within Priority Funding Areas.

E. Smart Growth and Land Preservation

Easton's growth policies are designed to complement Talbot County's efforts to preserve agricultural land, protect water resources, and guide growth to appropriate locations. The Town and County will continue to collaborate on shared planning tools, greenbelt preservation strategies, and infrastructure coordination to prevent sprawl and leapfrog development.

Growth must align with infrastructure capacity and public investment planning. The Town will use annexation agreements to secure developer-funded infrastructure where needed, and will coordinate with Easton Utilities, the MDE, and other agencies to ensure adequate facilities for new development. Future annexations must demonstrate readiness and fiscal viability.

With the adoption of the Urban Growth Boundary in the 2004 Plan—reaffirmed in the 2010 Plan—the question of how much land is available for development is no longer open-ended. Regardless of market demand, the Town now has a finite, fixed supply of land for future growth.

However, because this Plan looks forward over a 30-year horizon, it is important to assess whether that supply will be exhausted within the planning period or whether growth areas will remain available at the end of that timeframe. To do so, we apply a process similar to the analysis used to estimate development potential within the current Town boundaries, using the same assumptions and methodology to project build-out conditions in the designated Growth Areas.

To do so, an exercise similar to that performed to assess the development potential of land within the existing Town boundary will be conducted as follows:

Total acreage of Future Growth Area = 3,880 acres

Less acreage already developed and/or non-residential – 1,300

= 2,580 acres x 3.5 du/ac x 0.75 (underbuild factor) = 6,773 du's

This exercise indicates that the Growth Area has the potential to accommodate 6,773 new residential units. This information can be combined with other calculations already made to give us more useful information, such as:

A. Residential Build-out Potential of Existing Town = 2,744 units
B. Additional Residential Unit Potential in Growth Area = 6,773 units
C. Existing Units in Growth Area = 727 units
D. Potential Residential Capacity of Growth Area (B + C) = 7,500 units
E. Total Potential New Units in Easton (A + B) = 9,517 units
F. Existing Units in Easton = 7,350 units
G. Total Residential Build-out (E + F + C) = 17,594 units
H. Estimated Population at Build-out (17,594 x 2.19) = 38,531 persons

Without the confinement of the Growth Boundary, if we grow even at the maximum targeted 1.75% average annual compound rate, in 2070, Easton would, all other things being equal, have reached approximately the 17,594 dwelling units representing our residential build-out capacity. At the 1.12% we have grown at on an annual basis for the past 60 years, it will take approximately 72 years to reach this built-out state. For the purposes of the statutory requirement of projecting a ten-year build-out capacity, Easton certainly has no issues in this regard.

F. Public Services and Infrastructure Needs

This section was first introduced in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan to address the projected impacts of growth on a broad range of public services and infrastructure. In earlier Plans, many of these topics were covered under the Community Facilities and Services element, while others—typically managed at the County level—were not addressed at all. Beginning with the 2010 update, the Town

incorporated these areas into its planning framework, evaluating how anticipated growth will affect key services. This Plan continues that approach, updating each subsection with current data, trends, and policy considerations.

Public Schools

Public schools in Talbot County are funded and administered by the County government. The Town of Easton plays two key roles in this system:

- Population Source – As the County's major population center, Easton generates a substantial share of the student population.
- Facility Host – Three of the County's public schools, plus the Board of Education's main offices, are located within the Town.

As described in Section 7.E of this Plan, although the Town does not operate schools, it works closely with the County to share updated demographic data for use in preparing the Annual Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP).

Capacity Outlook:

The EFMP projects that the County school system can accommodate anticipated growth in Easton over the next decade, though capacity will be tight at the middle and high school levels. The newly constructed elementary school will also require either a physical addition or redistricting to meet demand. Unexpected surges in population could create additional strain, depending on the nature of residential growth.

Development Mix:

Most residential projects in the development pipeline are either high-end or age-restricted communities:

- Age-restricted housing generates little to no public school enrollment.
- High-end housing may have children, but many attend private schools.

As of 2022, 17.1% of Talbot County's K–12 students (about 932 students) are enrolled in private schools. This significantly reduces public school utilization; however, an economic downturn could shift many of these students into the public system, increasing demand.

Historic Enrollment Trends:

Between 2000 and 2020, Easton's population grew from 11,708 to 17,101—a gain of 5,393 people—while public school enrollment increased by only 180 students (from 2,892 to 3,072). Based on this ratio, the projected population growth from build-out within the 2023 Town boundaries (an additional 6,752 people) would yield roughly 225 new students in public schools.

Demographic Factors:

One factor that could alter this pattern is the changing composition of the Town's population. The EFMP notes a growing Hispanic student population, paralleling Easton's broader demographic shift—from 3.5% Hispanic in 2000 to 14.4% in 2020—which may influence future enrollment patterns.

Libraries

The state of library service in Talbot County is described in Section 7.F of this Plan. In terms of future needs, the American Planning Association suggests a ratio of 0.6 to 0.65 square feet of library space per capita. According to the MD Department of Assessment and Taxation, the TCFL is 28,174 square feet in size. This would satisfy the needs of a population of approximately 45,000. That is well in excess of even the ultimate build-out population for Easton, and while the library serves residents beyond Easton, they also have branch facilities beyond Easton. There clearly are no growth-related implications for library services during this Planning Period.

Public Safety

As described in Section 7.H, public safety in Easton encompasses police, fire protection, and emergency medical services. This subsection focuses on service adequacy, anticipated needs, and facility requirements.

Police Services

The 1997 Comprehensive Plan referenced the International City Managers Association (ICMA) standard of 1.75 police personnel per 1,000 residents. The 2004 Plan update the Town used the International Center for Prevention of Crime benchmark—3.36 officers per 1,000 residents—reflecting the U.S. national average.

With 48 sworn officers serving a population of approximately 17,101 (2020), Easton falls between the two referenced guidelines. The ICPC suggests we need 57 officers, while the ICMA pegs the number at 30. Local conditions justify staffing at the higher end of the range:

- Easton functions as a regional hub for employment, commerce, and entertainment, serving a population well beyond Town residents.
- Residents value strong community policing.
- Seasonal traffic between Ocean City and the Baltimore–Washington area, along with modest local tourism, creates higher service demands.

Given current trends, existing staffing levels are considered adequate, and gradual increases proportional to growth should meet future needs.

Fire Protection

The Easton Volunteer Fire Department serves the Town and surrounding areas, funded jointly by the Town and County. In 2002, ambulance service transitioned to Talbot County, which now operates the countywide emergency medical system. Fire Code enforcement is the responsibility of the Maryland State Fire Marshal.

Growth in and around Easton prompted the construction of a new fire substation on Matthewstown Road, providing better access to US Route 50 and proximity to new development. Uncontrolled growth—either in pace or location—could require transitioning from an all-volunteer to a paid department, with both fiscal and community impacts, including likely tax increases.

Emergency Medical Services

Advanced Life Support (ALS) operates countywide with volunteer and paid staff, funded by the County, fundraising, and donations. While 24-hour service is available, ALS faces equipment funding challenges due to increasing call volumes.

G. Service Adequacy Considerations

Evaluating future public safety needs involves more than population forecasts. Key factors include:

- Traffic volumes: Higher traffic on US Route 50 increases accident rates and can slow emergency response.
- Development patterns: Traditional, well-connected street networks reduce response times and the need for additional substations, while suburban patterns with limited access points can strain resources.

Water and Sewerage Facilities

The adequacy of Easton's water and wastewater systems through 2040 is detailed in the Community Facilities and Services and Water Resources elements of this Plan. For the purposes of this Municipal Growth Element, the focus is on capacity and improvements required to serve future growth identified in this Plan.

Growth Projections and Service Demand

The Future Land Area Needed to Satisfy Demand analysis projects approximately:

- 6,800 new dwelling units in growth areas outside the Town limits (6,773 calculated)
- 3,100 new units within existing Town limits (3,083 calculated)
- 727 existing units outside the Town but within the Growth Area

Service capacity planning must account for both residential and non-residential demand, which varies greatly by use type. While residential water and wastewater usage is predictable, non-residential uses—especially industrial operations—can create disproportionate demand.

Wastewater

The Easton Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF), brought online in 2007, has a treatment capacity of 4.0 million gallons per day (MGD). As of December 31, 2023, average daily flow was 2.463 MGD.

- Projected Capacity Limit: At a 1.75% annual growth rate, the WWTF is projected to exceed capacity in 2054. Growth at a 1.0% annual rate adds approximately 20 years until capacity is reached.
- Expansion Capability: The WWTF site has sufficient space for capacity expansion, anticipated to be modest in scale.
- Hospital Impact: The planned regional hospital will add 0.101 MGD in Phase 1 and up to 0.2 MGD at full buildout—approximately 5% of current capacity. This could advance the need for expansion by two years (from 2051 to 2049).
- The Easton Utilities Tariff requires that all new connections to the system pay a water and wastewater capital charge. In addition to the capital charge, developers are required to construct certain sections of distribution and collection systems.

The Wastewater Master Plan (update in progress) confirms nutrient removal capacity is adequate to support planned 1.75% growth through 2045 and beyond. However, the following components will require upgrades once flows exceed 4.0 MGD:

- Headworks
- Flow Equalization
- Secondary Clarifiers
- UV Disinfection
- Post-Aeration

H. Water Supply

Easton is currently served by five production wells~~wells, with a new well planned for FY25~~, providing a total production capacity of 4.0 MGD (including redundancy for the largest well out of service). A new well received federal grant funding in 2026 and will be constructed by the US Army Corps of Engineers and turned over to Easton Utilities, it is anticipated that the well will be constructed in FY27.

- Current Use: Average daily flow is 1.90 MGD, with a maximum day demand of 3.36 MGD.
- Future Needs: The Water Master Plan projects the need for a new well in 2043 and a new 1.0 million-gallon storage tank in 2051 to serve the Growth Area.
- CIP Coordination: The Capital Improvement Plan is updated annually to prioritize and fund system upgrades.

Planning and Coordination

Both the Water Master Plan and Wastewater Master Plan are being updated to ensure Easton Utilities can meet service needs for the full Growth Area. Strategic capital improvements, coordinated with growth patterns, will ensure the Town can:

- Maintain service reliability
- Meet nutrient reduction requirements
- Serve new residential, commercial, and institutional development efficiently

Charts summarizing planned water and wastewater capital projects are included in Appendix 5.

Stormwater Management Systems

A full discussion of stormwater management policies, regulations, and watershed impacts is provided in the Water Resources Element of this Plan. As in many older communities, Easton's stormwater infrastructure reflects a wide range of standards, depending on the era in which different areas were developed. Earlier development often occurred before modern stormwater standards were in place, resulting in inconsistent performance across the Town.

Today, all development in Easton must comply with the Stormwater Management Ordinance, which regulates both the quantity and quality of runoff.

- Quantity Standard: Post-development runoff may not exceed pre-development levels.
- Quality Standard: Easton applies the 10% pollutant reduction standard from the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program to all land within Town limits, not just Critical Area properties.

The Town also encourages innovative, low-impact development practices. Bio-retention, rain gardens, and other green infrastructure are increasingly required in major projects, such as Lowe's and Waterside Village.

Challenges in Older Developed Areas

The greatest stormwater challenges occur in long-established neighborhoods built before current regulations. In these areas, the Town pursues retrofit projects to improve performance and water quality. These efforts are carried out through:

- Private Development Requirements – Requiring adjacent redevelopment projects to address existing stormwater issues.
- Town-Led Retrofits – Initiating capital projects to upgrade systems in older neighborhoods.
- Partnership Projects – Working with environmental organizations and Talbot County to secure grant funding for targeted improvements.

A recent example is the Tanyard Branch Retrofit Project, which includes construction of a sediment pond on the Town-owned RTC Park parcel. This project will:

- Improve water quality entering the Tred Avon River headwaters

- Reduce localized flooding in historically flood-prone neighborhoods

Future Capacity

Stormwater management is not expected to be a limiting factor for Easton's future growth, provided:

1. New development continues to meet State and local standards
2. Redevelopment incorporates modern stormwater techniques and is coordinated with adjacent new development
3. Strategic retrofits in older areas are implemented as funding becomes available

Through continued regulatory enforcement, proactive retrofitting, and intergovernmental collaboration, Easton can ensure stormwater systems support both water quality and quantity goals and planned growth.

I. Recreation

A full assessment of Easton's park system is provided in the Parks and Recreation Element of this Plan. In the Municipal Growth Element, the focus is on parkland needs generated by future growth—both within the existing Town boundaries and in the eventual build-out of the Growth Area.

Until 2022, t~~T~~he State of Maryland recommended~~s~~ parkland be provided at a ratio of 30 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, with half under municipal ownership. Based on this standard:

- Current (2020 Census) Population – 17,101 → 513 acres needed (257 acres Town-owned)
- Build-out of Existing Town Limits → 716 acres needed (358 acres Town-owned)
- Full Build-out Including Growth Area → 1,178 acres needed (589 acres Town-owned)

As of February 14, 2024, Easton contains an estimated 910.45 acres of parks and open space (plus Hyde Park, Elliott Road Apartments, and Vickers Park). This meets current needs and will remain sufficient to accommodate the build-out of existing Town boundaries without acquiring additional parkland.

In 2022, local jurisdictions (through the County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plans) were allowed to define their own criteria for determining if they are meeting their acquisition

goals. The 2022 Talbot County LPPRP includes the following park equity analysis for the Town of Easton:

> *Easton is the County's largest municipal area with 44.2% of the population living within its boundaries. Based on the State equity layers of concentrations of children and older adults, and households with income levels below the poverty threshold, there is one area of Easton that is considered Medium High Need. Within this area, there are well distributed park locations which offer a variety of amenities and features.. Other areas of Medium to Medium-Low need also have access to parks within a ½ mile radius. Overall, Easton's network of parks provides equitable access to parks and open space for its residents ,particularly within the population centers where need is higher, there are few barriers to access. These parks provide access to sports fields, playgrounds,and a public swimming pool. Consideration should be given to other factors which could pose barriers including walkable routes to parks. The town is currently involved in developing a master plan of walking trails that will connect more areas of the town and increase access to parks and open spaces. Easton"s Rail to Trail also provides access between the population centers and the town's sports field complex located on the western edge of the town.*

Future Needs for Growth Area Build-Out

~~Full build-out of the Future Growth Area would require approximately 268 additional acres of parks and open space.~~ The Town's subdivision regulations—requiring developers to provide 35% of site area as common open space and 1,200 square feet per dwelling unit for parks/playgrounds—are expected to meet th~~i~~e Town's Parks and Recreation needs for the Growth Area~~s need. The 9,400 new units projected at ultimate build-out would generate approximately 259 acres of dedicated park space, nearly satisfying the State's standard for the entire growth horizon~~.

Considerations Beyond Acreage Standards

While Easton meets—and is projected to continue meeting—State parkland standards, certain factors may require additional planning and land dedication:

- Geographic Distribution: A regional-scale park ~~is needed~~ may be desirable on the east side of Town to ~~ensure~~ create equitable access.

- Specialized Facilities: Demand for organized sports fields exceeds what the per-capita standard assumes, as Easton serves as the County seat and a regional recreation hub.

Adjacent Recreational Assets

Easton also benefits from two large recreational sites just outside the Growth Boundary, which functionally serve Town residents:

- Seth State Demonstration Forest – 124.5 acres
- Hog Neck Golf Course – 275.9 acres

These assets, though not within Town limits, help meet broader recreational needs and relieve some future demand pressures.

J. Financing Mechanisms

Easton's current analysis shows that existing and planned infrastructure can accommodate the projected 2,500 new homes within current Town boundaries, as well as portions of the Future Growth Areas identified for potential annexation. All new development requires basic infrastructure, including:

- Water and sewer service
- Stormwater management
- Roads and transportation access
- Parks and playgrounds

Consistent with current practice, the Town should require developers to fund the infrastructure necessary to serve their projects. Additional long-term needs to support planned growth include:

- Water system upgrades
- Wastewater treatment capacity expansion
- Police staffing increases
- New or expanded parks and recreation facilities
- Public safety enhancements, including new equipment, personnel, and facilities

Leveraging External Funding

State and County financial assistance should be pursued to upgrade infrastructure in redevelopment areas. Programs such as Community Legacy can support street and streetscape improvements, while Neighborhood Conservation programs can help modernize infrastructure to facilitate reinvestment. Cooperative use of Program Open Space and the Maryland Municipal Parks Program can offset park acquisition costs beyond those secured through the development review process.

Annexation as a Tool

The annexation process—being a discretionary legislative action—provides an opportunity to secure land for parks, public facilities, and other community amenities through annexation agreements. This should remain a standard practice for strategically expanding community assets alongside growth.

Impact Fees

Both Talbot County and the Town of Easton have enacted Impact Fee Ordinances since adoption of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. Easton's fees fund parks and recreation, municipal facilities, transportation, police, and fire services needed for new development. Talbot County's fees apply countywide and support library, parks and recreation, public school, community college, general government, and transportation services. Maintaining these mechanisms ensures that the cost of growth is borne by new development rather than existing taxpayers.

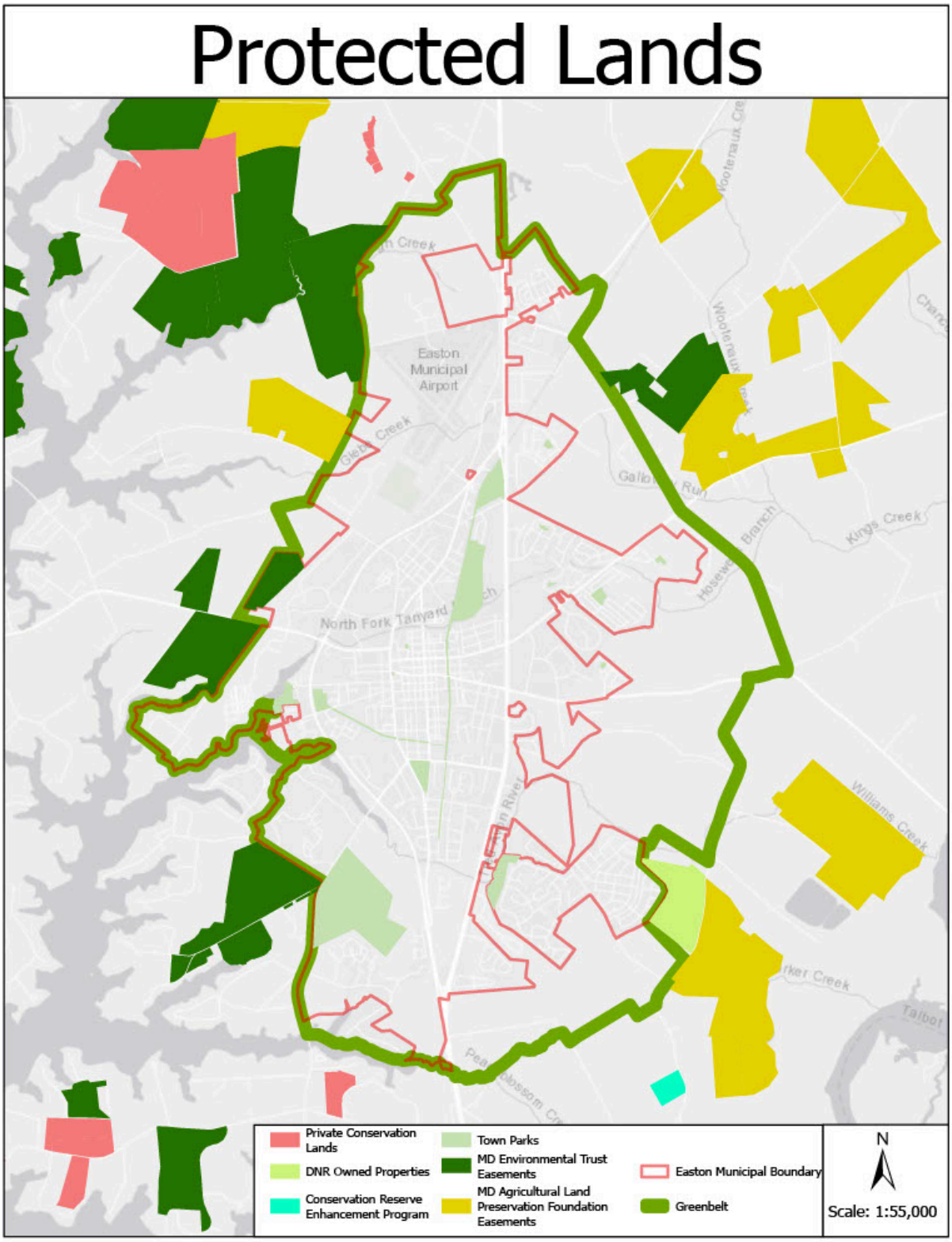
K. Rural Buffers and Transition Areas

Both the Town of Easton Comprehensive Plan and the Talbot County Comprehensive Plan designate a Growth Area surrounding the Town's municipal boundaries, with a greenbelt located immediately outside this area on the County side. The greenbelt works in concert with the Urban Growth Boundary to prevent outward sprawl into rural parts of the County.

An Urban Growth Boundary functions as the opposite of sprawl—establishing a clear, permanent edge between the built environment and the countryside. At full build-out, this boundary will create a distinct transition between "in Town" and "in the country," avoiding a blurred, low-density suburban fringe.

The Town partners with Talbot County and with agricultural and forest preservation organizations to maintain and protect the greenbelt. A significant portion of this land is already preserved, as shown on Map 8: Protected Lands in and Around Easton's Greenbelt.

Map 9: Protected Lands



L. Burden on Services for Areas Outside of Town but Under Town's Responsibility

Currently, Easton does not provide municipal services or infrastructure outside its corporate boundaries, with the exception of fire and rescue services. These services are delivered by a volunteer organization rather than the Town itself.

As noted earlier in this chapter, the form and pace of development directly influence the demands placed on fire and rescue resources. Uncontrolled, low-density growth greatly increases the likelihood that Easton would need to transition from a volunteer fire department to a paid service—bringing significant financial and staffing implications. In contrast, managed growth in a compact, traditional, urban-scale pattern helps preserve the viability of a volunteer-based system.

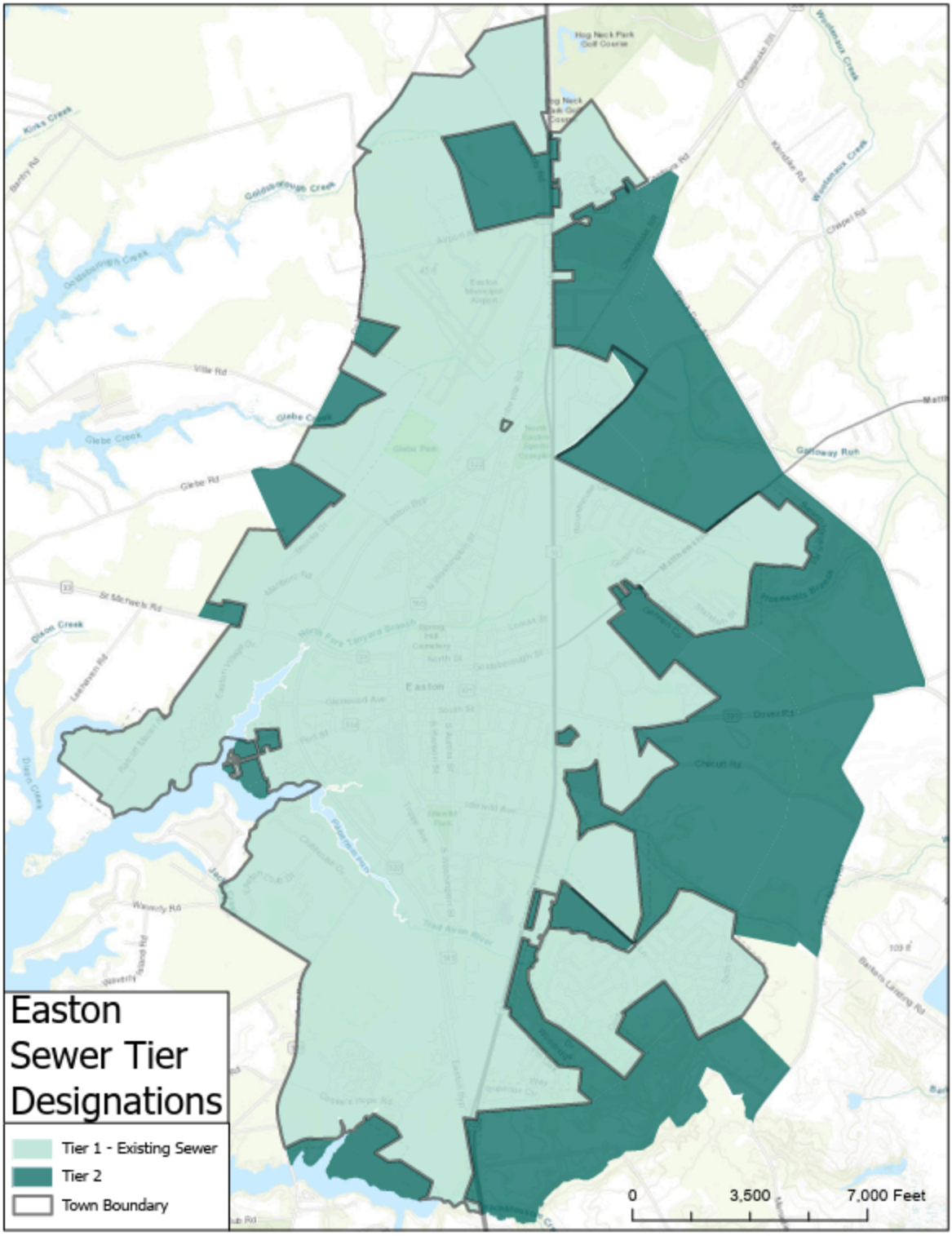
M. Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012

In 2012, the Maryland General Assembly enacted the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act, requiring all jurisdictions to map existing and planned sewer service areas and classify them into service tiers.

For Easton, this process was straightforward. The Town Council adopted its Tier Map in December 2012, designating three categories:

- Tier I – Existing sewer service.
- Tier II – Planned for sewer service within the Municipal or Growth Area.
- Tier IIA – Municipal or Growth Area, not yet included in the County Water and Sewer Master Plan.

This Tier Map was incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan in 2016 and is shown as Map 10 below:



Map 10: Easton Sewer Tier Designations

N. Protection of Sensitive Areas

The Town of Easton prioritizes identifying sensitive environmental areas early in the development review process so they can be avoided, protected, or enhanced. The same standards will apply to any future development within the Growth Area.

- Streams and Buffers – A 100-foot buffer is required from perennial streams (50 feet for intermittent streams) to protect water quality and habitat.
- 100-Year Floodplain – While Easton contains few floodplain areas, they are regulated under the Town's Floodplain Ordinance, which is consistent with both the National Model Floodplain Ordinance and the National Flood Insurance Program. Given the limited size of these areas, most sites allow development to be located outside the floodplain.
- Habitats of Threatened and Endangered Species – These areas are identified as early as possible in the review process. Site plans are adjusted as needed to provide maximum protection. For properties outside the current Town limits, identification should occur during the annexation stage.
- Steep Slopes – Rare in Easton. Most occur within stream buffers or the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area and are already protected.
- Agricultural and Forest Lands for Resource Protection or Conservation – While agriculture is not prohibited in Easton, growth will inevitably convert much of the agricultural land in the Growth Area to development. The Town does not actively preserve farmland, but does maintain a strong commitment to forest conservation.

Easton's Forest Conservation Program ensures valuable forest resources are protected, particularly those along streams or associated with non-tidal wetlands. Regulations now require such protected lands—whether forest, wetland, or buffer—not to be located on individual private lots. Instead, they must be placed in separate parcels held by the Town, a homeowners' association, or a conservation entity.

In developing the Growth Area, the Town will maintain these policies and look for opportunities to expand protected forest lands. A notable example is the Seth Demonstration Forest, part of Easton's Greenbelt. It borders Easton Club East and undeveloped land to the north, where a future large-scale park is envisioned. Forest Conservation areas in Easton Club East connect directly to

Seth Forest, creating an expanded and more cohesive forest area. Future enhancements could include additional forest preservation, tree planting, and amenities such as a woodland garden.

O. A Growth Management Strategy for Easton

The Implementation Chapter of this Plan summarizes the Growth Strategy for 2025-2035 and notes that it will largely be accomplished through, generally speaking, six major initiatives that are envisioned to advance the Vision of this Plan. This Municipal Growth Element seems an appropriate place to first summarize the overall factors shaping our evolving growth management strategy.

In contemplating a growth management strategy for Easton, it is necessary to first consider what the community feels is undesirable with the current state of growth and development. In doing so, it is apparent that there are many great aspects to the Town. What drives the desire for a growth management strategy is the recognition of trends contrary to these aspects. These include:

- Development that is too wasteful. Density in the older, historic parts of Easton is two to three times as dense as that found in many of the subdivisions of the last 40 to 50 years and yet, these older historic parts of Easton are consistently identified through public input as the best parts of Easton.
- Commercial development that is too ubiquitous. That is to say, it is virtually indistinguishable from that in any other community.
- Growth that is spreading outward too quickly. There is concern amongst many residents that Easton is spreading too far, too fast. Much of this problem relates to the first point above. That is, since density is so low in Easton, more and more land is necessary to accommodate even a constant rate of growth. To this point, public input in the early stages of this Plan's preparation indicated a clear and strong preference for accommodating the majority of growth during this Planning cycle in the form of Infill, Redevelopment, and Adaptive Reuse rather than on newly annexed Farmland and Forests.
- The construction of single-use subdivisions rather than neighborhoods. Again, this causes a need for more land and also necessitates increased automobile usage.

With this as the backdrop, the following Growth Management Strategy for Easton is proposed. It is identical to that which was first proposed in the 2010 Plan, with one notable addition and a modification.

Contain Sprawl with an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)

The first step in Easton's proposed Growth Management Strategy is designed to contain the seemingly endless outward expansion of the Town. This is accomplished through the establishment of an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), as first implemented in the 2004 Plan Update. An UGB is essentially "a line in the sand." On the Town side of this line, town-scale development will occur. On the other side of the line, development is much less dense. In Easton and Talbot County's case, the difference will be even more dramatic because both jurisdictions are proposing that the UGB be bounded on the County side of the line by a greenbelt. This would be a green ring surrounding the future ultimate Town limits consisting of forests, wetlands, and farms. This greenbelt would become a top priority area for land preservation programs and initiatives at the County level.

The UGB is depicted on the Growth Area and Future Land Use Maps. It has been sized to correspond to the size of a community that we ultimately feel comfortable with in terms of the ability of Easton to maintain its charm and quality of life. What this translates into in terms of future populations depends on the density of development within the UGB as well as how successful we are in terms of encouraging revitalization and infill redevelopment. What this population is or when we achieve it is less important than ensuring that when we get there, Easton is the kind of place that current and future residents will be proud to call home.

The location of the UGB was based upon consultation with the Talbot County Planning Commission, current development trends, anticipated trends due to goals and objectives suggested in this Plan and logical boundaries established by property lines, roadways and natural features. Thus while it is viewed as a permanent dividing line demarcating urban and rural development, the precise location of the UGB will be examined again in 10 years as part of the next Comprehensive Plan update, just as it has been in association with this Plan revision.

This 2010 Plan Update proposed no changes to the UGB and this Update does not as well. It has, in fact, remained unchanged since the adoption of the 2004 Plan with one exception. That was the expansion of the growth area (and thus the Growth Boundary and Green Belt) to accommodate the site of the proposed future Hospital and the Talbot Community Center.

While the establishment of an Urban Growth Boundary and Green Belt can achieve the objective of containing the outward expansion of the Town's urban footprint, the character of Easton of the future could still be a wide variety of things, depending on what is allowed or encouraged to happen on the in-Town side of the boundary. Filling in the growth area with single-family detached homes at the 2.0 du/ac or so density of many of the subdivisions built since 1980 would be an inefficient,

unsustainable use of this land. On the other hand, dramatically increasing density in the name of greater sustainability could also lead to a future Easton that would be out of the expressed desired character for our community.

Increase Density

Perhaps the most readily apparent difference between the Downtown area that so many people love and hope to see replicated and the newer "suburban" scale development that has occurred more recently, is the density of these two types of development. Accomplishing the first step in the Growth Management Strategy, establishing an Urban Growth Boundary, will accomplish little if within its borders development continues at a scope and scale such as we have seen for much of the last 30-50 years.

The most telling indictment of Easton's recent densities is the fact that in and of themselves, they would not even come close to qualifying as Priority Funding Areas under the terms of the State's guidelines. The minimum density necessary to qualify as such is 3.5 dwelling units per acre (net). Easton's more recent developments have a density of just less than 2 dwelling units per acre. This has a number of implications, including promoting the suburban style of development that is generally disparaged throughout this Plan, representing a wasteful use of land, and inefficiently serving the resulting homes with various utilities and public services.

In order to reverse this trend, a previous Plan proposed the creation of a new zoning district that would be assigned to all future residential areas. The Plan even suggested the development standards for this new district. As described in a previous chapter of this Plan, this new Traditional Neighborhood Zoning District was proposed but never adopted by the Town Council. Instead, changes were made to the existing R-10A and R-7A zoning districts as well as to the Subdivision Regulations, in an attempt to get some of the suggested changes added to our existing development standards. In an effort to increase the likelihood that future development patterns are more traditional and less suburban, the TND concept has been reintroduced in this Plan Update, as described in the Place Chapter.

Build Neighborhoods

This concept has been a recurring theme throughout this Comprehensive Plan. It was discussed extensively in the Place chapter and touched upon in several other places. The key is to ensure that this approach is the easiest one under which to develop and that the more recently commonplace

suburban type of development is the difficult method that would only be approved under truly unique and extenuating circumstances.

Assuming these changes in future development patterns can be achieved, only part of the problem will be addressed. Easton will still ultimately be left with a suburban-style middle surrounding a truly traditionally developed core with a neo-traditional style collection of neighborhoods on the periphery. Undoubtedly, the biggest challenge facing the Town is in creating ways to "retrofit" the suburban-style subdivisions to make them denser, more connected, and more mixed use. This will be difficult and ultimately may never be fully achieved, but some things can be done to improve the situation, and some were implemented following the original suggestion for such changes in the 2004 Plan. These include:

- Permit additions to be made to single-family houses to create granny flats or duplexes as an outright permitted use. This change was made to the Ordinance, but little development activity of this type has occurred.
- Effectively narrow streets by striping or using a textured surface to create a pedestrian/bicycle lane. This concept was illustrated in the Quality Community Survey and the results were striking. The image of the existing wide street (in this case, Corbin Parkway) received a -1.7 rating. The computer-simulated image with a textured bike lane on both sides of the street received a +2.5 rating. This has not been accomplished, although the concept has been discussed for possible implementation at another location. Furthermore, over the course of the past year, the Town's Engineering Department has begun striping some of our major in-Town roads to better define parking and traffic lanes and to "calm" traffic. Aurora Street and Brooklets Avenue serve as two examples where this has been accomplished.





Corbin Parkway Existing Situation *Corbin Parkway "calmed" with paving*

- Permit more neighborhood scale commercial uses by special exception in residential zoning districts. This has recently been accomplished for offices, which are allowed by Special Exception in the R-10A and R-7A Zoning Districts. A number of supplemental standards apply in order to assure that the neighborhood is not adversely impacted. Similar standards can and should be added for whatever other commercial uses might be permitted in the suburban-style subdivisions (since hopefully the newer developments will be mixed-use in nature to some degree). There has been no further progress on this recommendation beyond the limited office uses that are allowed as discussed above.
- Budget for and strategically purchase houses as they become available in order to demolish them and redevelop the sites for civic or park use. This has not been accomplished or even discussed since the last Plan. The current economic climate makes it difficult for the Town to consider such investments, even though more opportunities exist to purchase such properties at reasonable prices in such times. Going forward this is a concept that should at least be discussed for possible implementation.
- Allow for residential uses more generally in commercial zoning districts. When discussing the encouragement of mixed uses, the notion of allowing commercial uses in residential developments is often raised. However, it may be more feasible to add residential uses to commercial areas. Allowing multi-family housing in commercial zoning districts seems particularly appropriate given two recent apartment projects, on Brant Court and Elliott Road, in a shopping center/industrial park and along a commercial corridor, respectively.
- Explore options for the development of vacant land adjacent to "suburban" style subdivisions. In such scenarios requiring a TND style development may not always be

compatible with the adjacent suburban form of development. In such locations, something that can serve as a transition between these two types of development is appropriate. They may, for example, contain some of the lower unit count middle housing types but not, perhaps, the higher unit counts or at the overall density we anticipate in the TND form of development.

Improve Design

The steps outlined above will go a long way towards making Easton a better place to live. The establishment of a UGB will contain the outward spread of development and the establishment of a greenbelt in the County adjacent to this UGB will offer some permanence to this limit. Increasing the density within the Town will improve the appearance and function of neighborhoods as well as decrease development pressures on other areas in and around the Town, not yet as ready to be developed. Building neighborhoods rather than subdivisions or developments will dramatically improve the livability of Easton and will decrease traffic by offering more goods and services within walking distance of where people live. Still, with all these changes, the Town will not generate a "sense of place" feeling unless improvements are made to the way the built environment looks.

This issue was discussed extensively in the Place chapter of this Plan and recommended Design Principles for 2025 found in the Implementation Chapter is primarily intended to address this issue, so there is little need to repeat that material here.

The challenge of this Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that this effort to achieve improved design continues, in fact advances even more, rather than retreats. In order to accomplish this, the following recommendations are offered:

- Vigorously and consistently promote and require compliance with the "Design Principles for Easton" as described in the Community Character Element.
- Update/Create Design Guidelines for various types of development (including residential).
- Utilize Forest Conservation monies and off-site plantings to enhance sparsely landscaped areas along Route 50 and the Easton Parkway.
- Develop a Tree or Urban Forestry Plan outlining areas proposed for new tree plantings, identifying sites/locations suitable as receiving areas for off-site planting that developers cannot accommodate on their properties, and establishing priorities and tools for establishing the "Green Ring" around downtown called for in the AKRF Downtown Study.

- Accept (if not solicit) annexation requests from those businesses located on Route 50 north of the current Town Boundary and require conformance with the Town's architectural, signage, and landscaping requirements as a condition of annexation, in order to improve this key visual gateway into Town.

Plan in Accordance with the Rate of Growth

The issue of actively and purposely controlling Easton's rate of growth has been the subject of a great deal of debate for each of the last three Comprehensive Plan Updates, including this one. Historically the Planning Commission and Town Council have elected to allow the free market to determine Easton's growth rate. However, in the 2010 Plan the Planning Commission decided that indeed the dominant theme of that Plan to retain and/or return to an older way of doing things in Easton was endangered by a continued rate of growth in the range that we had experienced in the previous 20 years or so. The fear was that at 3% growth (or more) development pressures are so great that it becomes more and more difficult to achieve all the goals relative to the type and form of development we want to see. Furthermore, growth at such a rate makes some of our most challenging problems, such as improving traffic conditions, or lessening our impact on the environment, even more difficult to achieve. As a result, the Planning Commission and Town Council ultimately enacted a Plan which identified a preference for a 1% annual rate of growth.

They also recognized that by merely stating that we want to achieve growth closer to our long-term average of 1%, absolutely nothing changes to make that happen. The Commission and Town Council discussed this issue at great length and ultimately decided that, for that Planning period, the issue should most appropriately be addressed by adhering to an Annexation Policy that does not allow for an exceedingly high rate of growth. The Priority Growth Areas were viewed as suited to do this. The only potential shortcoming of this policy is the rate at which infill/build-out occurs. For this reason, the staff was directed to explore policies and tools which could achieve a specified targeted growth rate, in the event that growth gets out of control.

This Plan proposes revisions to this policy. First, after a decade where the average annual growth rate has dropped to 0.7%, the concept of aiming for a "targeted" or "preferred" growth rate for the Planning period has been dropped. Instead, the directive relative to our Growth Rate is not so much an attempt to limit (or increase) any particular rate, but rather to consistently monitor the rate/amount of growth we are experiencing so that whatever growth that does occur, is at a rate that does not overly tax the Town's infrastructure and services. Such a rate of growth is believed to be in accordance with the long-term compound rate of 1.12% and therefore an annual rate of 1% is

reaffirmed as the appropriate target for establishing the threshold at which the Town would be alerted to take a close look at the impacts of growth at that time and investigate, if deemed necessary, legal policy and regulatory remedies to safeguard against the effects of the externalities of an unsustainable rate of growth .

Encourage More Sustainable Development Patterns

The one addition to the Town's overall growth management policy presented in this update is to encourage more sustainable development patterns. As discussed in the Sustainability Chapter, this should be considered broadly to include environmental and economic sustainability. It should also be noted that a more sustainable Easton helps to achieve a more sustainable Talbot County. For example, Easton functioning as a growth center improves the chances of Talbot County successfully avoiding sprawling development throughout unincorporated parts of the County and enhances the likelihood of successful agricultural preservation.

Environmental sustainability can be advanced by such actions as protecting and enhancing natural features of proposed development sites and planning for development with sea-level rise in mind. Development with a mix of uses and which accommodates multiple modes of transportation can also enhance environmental sustainability by decreasing vehicle miles travelled, thereby improving air quality (in addition to the overall transportation system benefits).

Economic sustainability can be thought of in at least a couple of different ways. One is the cost to serve new development. By this measure, infill and redevelopment is clearly preferred over new "greenfield" development and new greenfield development that is more compact and more proximate to existing development is preferred over more sprawling and isolated projects.

Another way to consider economic sustainability is the net fiscal benefit to the Town. That is, what forms or types of development provide more to the Town in terms of new revenue, after factoring in the cost to provide services to those same developments?

P. Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Support Compact, Contiguous Growth that Strengthens Easton's Form: Easton will grow in a manner that preserves its cohesive urban structure, avoiding scattered or inefficient development patterns.

Objectives:

- Use annexation to close gaps in the Town boundary and reinforce logical development edges.
- Require new development to extend existing street and utility networks in a coordinated manner.
- Prevent leapfrog development that bypasses undeveloped land adjacent to the Town.

Goal #2: Align Growth with Available and Planned Infrastructure: Growth will occur where infrastructure capacity is sufficient or can be provided efficiently, ensuring fiscal responsibility and service quality.

Objectives:

- Evaluate annexation and development proposals for their impact on water, sewer, stormwater, transportation, and public facilities.
- Coordinate annexations with the Town's Capital Improvement Plan and Easton Utilities' investment schedules.
- Require that necessary infrastructure be in place or fully funded prior to development approval.
- Monitor the rate of growth to minimize the likelihood of developing more rapidly than the Town's infrastructure can accommodate.

Goal #3: Leverage Annexation to Advance Public Benefit: Annexation will be used as a tool to secure public amenities and community enhancements alongside private development.

Objectives:

- Require annexation agreements to dedicate land for parks, greenways, trails, and public facilities.
- Negotiate for developer contributions toward infrastructure, open space, and civic uses.
- Ensure new development reflects the Town's design standards and community character goals.

Goal #4: Coordinate with Talbot County to Preserve Rural Lands and Guide Growth: Town and County will work together to maintain the Urban Growth Boundary, protect the surrounding greenbelt, and promote efficient land use.

Objectives:

- Continue joint planning efforts to manage the interface between Town and County land uses.
- Support agricultural and forest land preservation tools to maintain a distinct edge between urban and rural areas.
- Align growth management policies to prevent sprawl and ensure coordinated service delivery.

12 IMPLEMENTATION

"A plan without action is not a plan. It's a speech."

~ T. Boone Pickens

A. INTRODUCTION

The quote cited above all speaks to the necessity to link planning with action. The bulk of this Plan frames the context of the present day and outlines the Plan for the future. If the Plan is to avoid the fate of "sitting on the shelf and gathering dust", this final chapter on Implementation will likely be largely responsible.

This 200+ page document is the result of years of extensive public input and contains one Town-wide Vision, dozens of goals, hundreds of Objectives, and numerous explicit and implicit additional strategies and policy considerations. The sheer breadth and length of any comprehensive plan can make it difficult to execute; therefore, this Implementation Chapter focuses on six Major Initiatives to focus on over the next ten years, that touch on many of the goals of this plan and that if achieved, will place us firmly on track to realize the vision for Easton in 2035 and beyond.

The Implementation chapter turns the vision of the Comprehensive Plan into action. It identifies tools, responsible parties, and timeframes needed to move from policy to practice. Implementation depends on both long-term commitment and consistent coordination across public and private stakeholders. This chapter offers a framework to guide that work.

B. 2026~~5~~ - 203~~6~~5 GROWTH STRATEGY

Throughout the course of developing this Plan, the Planning Commission has grappled with the question of what the appropriate strategy should be for accommodating the expected growth during the life of this Plan. The rationale for targeting 1.75% growth rather than 1% has previously been discussed. In short, this was picked for a number of reasons including an expectation that there is some demand in our housing market that will naturally result in more growth, that 1.75% corresponds to a rate that the Town can comfortably handle in terms of administrative processing, and the Town's infrastructure is more than adequate to accommodate such growth. A 1% rate of growth, however, remains a key component of the Town's growth management strategy as it is

suggested that it corresponds to a rate of growth with which the possibility of significant negative impacts associated with that growth warrant special observation to safeguard against their coming to fruition.

Another aspect of growth is where it will occur. This Plan has described the options for future growth in terms of inward-looking options (i.e., Infill Development, Redevelopment, and Adaptive Reuse) or the more outward-focused options of annexing more of the Future Growth Area to accommodate future "Greenfield" development applications. The question of how much of our growth should come from these options during this Planning period was a focus of the public input phase, where an overwhelming preference for Infill/Redevelopment options was expressed. The Municipal Growth Element of this Plan estimates that 2,745 additional housing units can be constructed within the existing Town limits of Easton. These would all be considered of the inward-focused type of development.

Given this convergence of a preference for Infill/Redevelopment and the ability to accommodate the residential growth needs of this 10 year Planning cycle, the Planning Commission has determined that it is both possible and appropriate to not prioritize annexation of additional lands for residential development until at least the next Comprehensive Plan Update.

This statement is made with a number of caveats. One, it assumes that development in the pipeline proceeds through to project completion. Two, it assumes that there will be sufficient landowners willing to develop or redevelop their properties to accommodate the remaining projected growth for the next 10 years. Finally, it does not preclude new annexation. Boundary refinement annexations should be welcomed at any time, as should property identified in adopted Town Small Area Plans (e.g., Easton Point) and proposed for development consistent with those Plans. Non-residential annexations are also not expected to be necessary during the Planning Period, although Annexations proposed for the purpose of new job creation (i.e., Industrial projects) might reasonably be considered one of the "extraordinary circumstances" warranting an exception to this policy.

Lastly, it does not definitively preclude annexing new land for residential development. It does, however, suggest that doing so would be limited strictly to development proposals of extraordinary quality that have minimal adverse impacts to the environment or the Town's fiscal sustainability, and that adequately address the aforementioned annexation policies.

C. Achieving the Vision

This Comprehensive Plan for Easton lays out a future that accommodates significant growth, but does so in a manner with which we are comfortable. It acknowledges mistakes of the past, specifically in decreasing density beginning in about the 1950's and allowing a suburban-style of development to take root in Easton in the 1970's and 80's. It calls for a marked departure from these mistakes and a return to the traditional small-Town Eastern Shore style of development that shaped this community for 250 years.

Easton is not a suburban community like those found on Maryland's Western Shore or in numerous other metropolitan areas. We are a small but growing community in the heart of a rural, agricultural and maritime region. Ubiquitous power centers and strip shopping centers are not part of what we are about. Neither are cul-de-sacs, disconnected streets and subdivisions that might as well be gated because they are so isolated. Clearly Easton has some of these types of development and the people who live, work, or shop there are no less valued members of our community than anyone else. We simply have decided such developments are an inappropriate form of development going forward in Easton. ~~Those considering Easton as a future home that desire such a community should frankly look elsewhere, as such development will be discouraged, if not prohibited, in the future and we will be looking to "retrofit" those parts of our Town that are suburban in nature to a more urban scale, albeit in a Small Town context.~~

In order to achieve the Vision laid out in this Plan, much help will be required. Fortunately Easton is blessed with a well-educated and involved citizenry. The level of involvement of many of these citizens throughout the process of preparing this and previous Plans has been described elsewhere in this document. In order to make the Easton we have all said we want, these same people and more must continue with this same level of commitment, interest and caring for our community. The authors of this Plan will eventually become less active and ultimately pass away, but the Vision we have created and the policies set forth herein will share this community well beyond our years here. If we want our children and our grandchildren to care about Easton as much as we all do, we need to maintain the passion and commitment to this Plan and its Vision.

By the same token, the Town should be as clear as possible to those seeking to move to Easton in the future about the kinds of things we envision. Ultimately the final responsibility lies with those contemplating a move here, but the Town can help make our goals, policies, and plans more clearly known so that this decision about whether to locate to Easton is as informed as possible. We should strive to communicate in as many means and mediums as possible. Our website should be easily

navigable and up-to-date and we should look into means of communicating that are just now exploding in other realms, such as blogging, podcasts, streaming audio (or video) of meetings, social networking sites, etc., so that all existing and future residents have the greatest possible opportunity to participate in shaping our community in the future.

MAJOR INITIATIVES

In order to realize the Vision of this Plan for Easton in the year 2035 and beyond, a myriad of actions are necessary. However, significant progress towards that future can be made through a combination of actions, policies, etc., that can be combined and categorized into six major initiatives. These initiatives are:

1. **Zoning Reform**
2. **Complete Streets**
3. **Improve Design**
4. **Promote Infill and Redevelopment**
5. **Manage Growth by Annexation**
6. **Small Area Planning**

ZONING REFORM

Every Comprehensive Plan is (or should be) followed up with a comprehensive review and, as necessary, update to the jurisdiction's Zoning laws. Zoning reform takes this exercise to another level, by critically examining the Zoning Code to identify obstacles to the creation of the development patterns and building types that the community desires.

Such an effort is undertaken in recognition that while it is important to describe the type of built-environment the community aspires to, if the zoning laws do not allow for such patterns to actually be built, then it is very unlikely that anything will change before it is time to draft the next Comprehensive Plan.

Zoning Reform in Easton will likely involve looking, at a minimum, at the aspects of our Zoning Code:

- The creation of the Traditional Neighborhood Development zoning district that was described in the Place Chapter.
- The allowance of mixed-use buildings and developments in a wider variety of circumstances and via simpler review processes.
- The inclusion of standards to create a more walkable Easton.
- The refinement of public input opportunities associated with development projects so that it occurs earlier in the process, before significant engineering, design, and survey costs are incurred by the developer. Genuine neighborhood participation at this stage of the development process should give neighbors a greater chance to shape their community. For developers who are authentically engaged in such a process, it can also help them identify, early in the process, the scope and character of development that is appropriate for the neighborhood and can increase the level of public support for the project when it is officially submitted for review.
- Providing for a wide-spectrum of housing options, reflecting the variety of housing needs in Easton. In addition, this will also involve examining the development standards associated with each housing type to ensure that they accommodate the housing types with which they are associated.
- Introducing requirements to ensure that development is financially sustainable and will ultimately contribute more in taxes and revenue to the Town than it costs taxpayers to serve the project.

Complete Streets

Complete streets were defined and described in the Transportation Element. A description of Easton's Complete Street's early efforts was also included. If the effort is continued it will lead to, at least, the following changes:

- A transportation system that better accommodates all modes of transport, not primarily (or solely) the automobile.
- A better connected community, leading to easier social interaction, more travel options, and better emergency services response times.
- New (and retrofitted) roads that are designed appropriate to their context and purpose.

- Prioritizing safety over speed.
- Enhancing the appearance of neighborhoods thereby leading to increased property values.
- Improved public health as it becomes easier and safer to walk in neighborhoods.

IMPROVE DESIGN

A common and recurring theme throughout this Plan is the desire to improve various aspects of the built environment in Easton. This is so much the case that we created a chapter, Place, that largely addresses this issue. We also place a great deal of emphasis on the Design Principles for Easton section of that chapter. Design issues cover a vast spectrum, from site details such as signage and landscaping to Town-scale issues such as the character of neighborhoods that are allowed to be built in the future. Some of the issues and actions that improving design might involve include:

- Requiring developers to more genuinely address and adhere to the Design Principles for Easton.
- Updating Design Guidelines, especially for properties outside the Historic District.
- Examining design-related supplemental standards of the Zoning Code to ensure that they remain relevant to 2025 development practices and considering appropriate additions to the list of such requirements.
- Evaluating our Landscaping and Signage standards to ensure that they contribute to the design standards envisioned for new development in Easton.

20265 Design Principles for Easton

Development in Easton often exceeds by-right zoning, requiring Town staff, boards, commissions, and the Council to review proposals against the Comprehensive Plan. Though this open-ended approach to development review provides flexibility in evaluating an application, its breadth can obscure expectations for applicants and disempower approving bodies in their decision-making and lead to conflicting interpretations of the Plan.

To provide clarity, past Plans introduced Design Principles—a framework for applicants and reviewers. Previously located in the Community Character chapter, they now span the entire Plan and are included here in the Implementation chapter, reflecting their importance as an evaluation tool. They are not ranked by priority but organized for coherence.

Principle 1: Neighborhoods Are Places to Live, Not Just Sleep

In keeping with the objectives of the Plan pertaining to community character, fiscal sustainability, and parks, projects in Easton should provide an integrated mix of uses in a return to a pattern of Traditional Neighborhood Development. Characteristics include:

- Neighborhoods should reflect Traditional Neighborhood Development, where homes, destinations, and public spaces are interwoven.
- Provide non-residential uses at or near the neighborhood center.
- Scale these uses to meet community needs, including nearby areas lacking amenities.
- Design shops, cafés, or civic spaces as welcoming "third places" for the public, not private perks.
- Open spaces should be accessible, generous, and encourage active living.
- Avoid: highway strip centers, large retail with housing tucked behind, or isolated "leftover" open space without purpose.

Principle 2: Streets are for People, not just Automobiles

Many problems with contemporary development stem from automobile dependence, which produces sprawl, isolation, and fiscal strain. This principle advances the Plan's Transportation, Ecology, and Sustainability goals by emphasizing development patterns that serve people first, not cars. Projects should therefore follow these design standards:

- Streets should function as Complete Streets, safe for walkers and cyclists as well as drivers.
- Traffic calming should be built into design, slowing drivers naturally.
- Arterials should minimize driveways to protect traffic flow and safety.
- Parking should be secondary: placed behind buildings, reduced in scale, and balanced with bicycle parking.
- Subdivisions should include alleys for service access.
- Developments should be walkable and oriented toward existing pedestrian corridors.
- Build at densities that can eventually support transit.
- Avoid: disconnected sidewalks, front-dominant garages, parking lots lining the street, or arterial-width streets in neighborhoods.

Principle 3: Neighborhoods Should Connect

Neighborhoods should be linked to surrounding areas wherever possible. Strong connections create resilient traffic networks with multiple routes for daily travel and emergency access. They also expand opportunities for residents to reach jobs and retail, supporting Easton's economic

development goals and fostering a stronger sense of community across town. New developments should be evaluated with these considerations in mind:

- Provide multiple points of access for all modes.
- Use grid-like street patterns where conditions allow.
- Link to adjacent existing and future developments and continue the grid pattern.
- Connect open spaces into the broader green infrastructure system.

Principle 4: Neighborhoods Should Offer Diverse Housing

This principle supports the Plan's Housing objectives. Beyond the socioeconomic benefits of attainable housing, it seeks to create streetscapes that echo Easton's historic pattern of incremental, varied development. Projects should be evaluated on how well they integrate a mix of uses and provide housing in a wide range of forms, types, sizes, and price points within the same neighborhood. Evaluating whether a project meets this principle should consider:

- Affordable units should blend in design with their neighbors.
- Prominent facades should mix housing types, sizes, and styles.
- Provide unit types and prices not already met in nearby areas.
- Adaptive reuse of underused non-residential buildings for housing is encouraged.
- Avoid: monotonous typologies, segregation of unit types, projects offering only single-family and apartments, townhomes without variation, or price ranges excluding households below 100% of AMI.

Principle 5: Environment Should Shape Design

Consistent with Smart Growth principles, focusing development within Town limits reduces pressure on surrounding farmland, habitats, and sensitive environmental areas. Even so, Easton still has a responsibility to mitigate impacts inside its boundaries. Development should work with—rather than against—the environmental realities of each site. In line with the Plan's Ecology and Sustainability goals, proposals should be evaluated against the following criteria:

- Greenfield development must justify the conversion of valuable land.
- Prioritize brownfield redevelopment and adaptive reuse.
- Preserve and integrate topography, streams, and natural features into site design.
- Use existing vegetation and supplement with native species.
- Design lighting and buildings to reduce bird strikes.

- Require energy-efficient, durable building practices.
- Address flooding, heat, and other climate-related risks.
- Improve stormwater runoff quality.

Principle 6: Development Should Be Fiscally Sustainable

Land is a limited resource, and its conversion carries unavoidable environmental costs. Developments should therefore demonstrate long-term value to the community, measured against the expense of maintaining infrastructure and services. This principle reflects a Smart Growth approach to infrastructure planning and supports development patterns identified through Easton's Value Per Acre analysis as fiscally beneficial to the Town. In line with the Land Use, Community Facilities, and Sustainability elements of the Plan, applications should be evaluated using the following considerations:

- Projects must balance the cost of infrastructure and services with long-term community benefit.
- Require fiscal impact studies for major subdivisions and greenfield projects.
- Encourage infill and adaptive reuse.
- Size parking appropriately based on demands and redevelop underused lots.
- Avoid: sprawling low-density projects, leapfrog growth, unfunded infrastructure obligations, or excessive parking.

Principle 7: Easton Is a Unique Place

Easton's rich history and its incremental, individualized development pattern are worth protecting and should guide modern projects. The goal is not to replicate the historic district's aesthetic, but to honor Easton's identity by creating distinctive, memorable places that inspire pride and curiosity. Applicants should therefore consider:

- New development should honor Easton's legacy while adding something distinct and lasting.
- Create designs that are modern yet harmonious with surrounding character.
- Restore and adaptively reuse historic structures where possible.
- Preserve historic or unique site features.
- Design open spaces to be engaging and interactive.
- Use multiple builders in large projects to encourage variety.
- Employ repetition only when purposeful and expressive.
- Keep signage informative, not overwhelming.

- Avoid: template-based developments, strip retail, brand-driven architecture, cheap historic imitations, or redevelopment that displaces existing communities.

In short, developers should create places that reflect Easton's present moment—unique spaces the community will value and remember, just as we now recognize and treasure our historic downtown and neighborhoods.

Principle 8: Be a Good Neighbor

No property in Easton exists in isolation. Land use and development decisions should be made with respect for the people who live, work, and play nearby. Easton residents value collaborative placemaking, which—when used constructively—can produce stronger designs and more positive outcomes. Beyond process, sites should be developed with courtesy toward neighbors and awareness of potential impacts. In this spirit of community-oriented development, evaluators should expect:

- Development should contribute positively to its surroundings and foster community.
- Engage neighbors early, especially for large projects.
- Align projects with small area plans and charrette outcomes.
- Include improvements and amenities that benefit both project residents and the broader community.
- Use open space to buffer incompatible uses.
- Minimize noise, light, and other negative impacts.
- This principle is not a tool for blocking density or innovation but a reminder of the value of collaboration and mutual respect.

~~This principle is not meant to block higher densities or innovative designs. Instead, it should foster frank dialogue among community members about their goals and needs.~~¶

PROMOTE INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT

The public clearly stated, and the Planning Commission strongly agrees, that the bulk of new growth over the upcoming planning period can and should be accommodated through infill and redevelopment. Specific actions to advance this initiative may include:

- Reimagining the Planned Redevelopment Overlay District to ensure that it both enables the type of redevelopment desired and does so in a manner that is minimally disruptive to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Encourages Brownfield redevelopment both through the land use/zoning aspect of ensuring that the desirable reuse is permitted (or at least possible) and through the financial feasibility aspect by working with developers to identify potential funding sources.
- Working with owners of outdated strip shopping centers to facilitate their redevelopment consistent with the Vision of this Plan.
- Adopting a Small Area Plan for the site of the current hospital and working with the eventual new property-owner to facilitate the ideas/desires expressed in that Plan.

MANAGE GROWTH BY ANNEXATION

The flip side to encouraging the bulk of growth over the next ten years to occur in the form of infill and redevelopment is the discouragement of growth through annexation. As indicated throughout this Plan, we believe that it is entirely possible to accommodate all anticipated residential growth for the next ten years without having to annex new lands into the Town. We further believe that this should be the Town's policy for the next ten years. However, there are a number of mitigating factors that suggest it would be unwise to absolutely preclude the possibility of annexations. Such factors include:

- Owners of logical infill or redevelopment sites may, for whatever reason, not be interested in the development/redevelopment of their properties.
- It may be desirable to annex land within the growth area in order to also annex a longstanding County subdivision (e.g., Crofton, Old Beechwood, Old Stoney Ridge) and not violate State Annexation law regarding contiguity or the creation of enclaves of non-municipal land surrounded by municipal land.
- Some limited annexation is actually called for in official Town Small Area Plans (portions of Easton Point in the Port Street Small Area Plan, for example).

Given that Annexation is a legislatively discretionary action of the Town Council, this can be accomplished through the development of, and adherence to, a set of appropriate annexation policies. To that end, the following policies are suggested as appropriate for Easton during this

planning period, in the event that the Town Council is of a mind to entertain a potential Annexation request:

- Proximity to Town Boundaries should be a significant consideration. Any area annexed must be adjacent to the Town, preferably for a considerable distance and on more than one side. The higher the degree of contiguity, the higher the preference should be given to the parcel.
- Land on which a future amenity or public facility is identified (in this Plan, a Small Area Plan, or functional Plan such as EUCs Water & Wastewater Master Plan or the soon-to-be completed Town Complete Streets Plan) should be given favorable consideration. This is especially true when the need for such amenity or facility is significant and/or imminent.
- Developers/Landowners who propose to provide land for amenities or public facilities which are specified in the Plan or in other Town Plans as being needed, but have no specific location attached thereto, should be afforded favorable consideration.
- Land that facilitates the annexation of long-standing enclave ~~Priority 1 Areas~~ Boundary Refinement Area, if applicable, should be given strong preference over other areas.
- Annexations which include an affordable housing component should take precedence over those that do not.
- Proposed annexations should include aspects that provide some form of benefit to the Town. This could take the form of job creation, a demonstrable positive fiscal impact or the provision of the regional-scale park on the east side of Town mentioned elsewhere in this Plan.
- Annexations must propose to minimize harm to sensitive environmental features, which should be protected and enhanced rather than ignored or eliminated.
- Projects which propose to develop pursuant to the Traditional Neighborhood style of development or serve as a transition between existing suburban development and future Traditional development should be prioritized over additional strictly suburban development.
- Projects that “align” with Town infrastructure with regards to timing, location, etc., should be given priority over more isolated and remote projects.

- Projects that propose to provide Capital Improvements for a future multi-modal transportation system should take precedence over those that do not.
- Annexation of Town-owned properties, or requests initiated by the Town, should be considered favorably, provided they are consistent with the goals and objectives of this Plan.

Annexations should be the exception rather than the rule during the 2025-2035 plan cycle and no exception should be made unless the proposed annexation is consistent with these policies and clearly demonstrates that if approved, the Annexation will have a net positive fiscal impact on the Town.. Furthermore, ~~prospective developers should understand that~~ satisfying some or even all of the criteria above does not guarantee that the request will be approved as Annexation remains a discretionary power of the Town Council nor does it ensure a favorable recommendation from the Planning Commission.

SMALL AREA PLANNING

Small Area Plans have been utilized in Easton for decades. These Plans function as an extension of the Comprehensive Plan. Because they focus on a smaller geographic area, more specific recommendations can often be made than in the overall Comprehensive Plan, sometimes right down to the parcel-specific level. Currently we have three active Small Area Plans. The most recent is the Port Street/Easton Point Plan. Although little development activity has occurred since that Plan was adopted, it was not so long ago as to be considered irrelevant. Furthermore, the Vision it advances is still considered appropriate and desirable for the area.

The other two adopted Small Area Plans are those for the Downtown or Town Center and the East End. These are both somewhat more dated. The East End Plan is in the process of being significantly revised. Given the passage of time and the changes that have occurred in Downtown Easton since that Plan was adopted, it seems appropriate to begin planning and budgeting for a replacement of it during this upcoming planning period.

Given the growth dynamics in the Town and our Future Growth Areas, a number of candidates for Small Area Plans come to mind for future planning. These include:

- The site of the current hospital and its immediate surroundings.
- The general area of the new hospital.

- Idlewild and Dutchman's corridors (where so many medical offices are located and which may potentially relocate closer to the new hospital).
- Marlboro Avenue Corridor (potential redevelopment).
- Route 50 Corridor (redevelopment, design and access improvements).
- Future Growth Areas (a closer examination of discrete subsection of the growth area to consider more detailed land use suggestions).

D. Goals and Objectives

GOAL #1: Ensure that future development, proposed development related programs and redevelopment projects are implemented consistent with the spirit of this Comprehensive Plan generally, and are evaluated for consistency with the 2026~~5~~ Design Principles for Easton specifically.

OBJECTIVES:

- Provide an analysis of the implementation progress of the Comprehensive Plan's Goals and Objectives each July as part of the Annual Report of the Easton Planning & Zoning Commission.
- Audit the Town's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to insure that future growth of the Town occurs in a system of neighborhoods rather than a collection of single-use, suburban style subdivisions, and that sufficient tools exist to facilitate Infill, Redevelopment and Adaptive Reuse of buildings.
- Develop, evaluate and refine Design Standards for all types of development in all parts of Town.
- Work with various local groups in order to prepare Small Area Plans similar to that done by the East Side neighborhood several years ago. Where the institutional capacity exists, these neighborhood plans can be largely prepared by the neighborhood groups themselves.

GOAL #2: Realize the benefits of revitalization through focusing on Smart Growth in order to make our older neighborhoods more affordable, more attractive, more varied, walkable, safer and healthier, utilizing existing infrastructure.

OBJECTIVES:

- Target public investment in infrastructure and infrastructure upgrades to already developed areas since opportunities to acquire such infrastructure from new development are rare.
- Support efforts to revitalize neighborhoods through infrastructure grants, housing rehabilitation loans and programs, environmental clean-ups, etc.
- Establish policy that builds on the strengths of existing housing stock, thus preserving Easton's history and sense of place

GOAL #3: Research and, where appropriate, enact policies and measures that enable implementation of the Vision and spirit of this Comprehensive Plan.

OBJECTIVES:

- Research the legality of various methods of limiting growth to achieve an annual growth rate of no more than 1.~~12~~% per year.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of existing rules and regulations in achieving the design goals and principles of this Plan.

GOAL #4: Coordinate planning efforts for areas and issues of mutual concern to the Town of Easton and Talbot County.

OBJECTIVES:

- Work with County Planning officials to ensure that areas designated for future growth of the Town are treated similarly by the Plans of both jurisdictions.
- Continue to work cooperatively with Talbot County to determine the feasibility and practicality of an Inter-jurisdictional Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program, should the Talbot County TDR ever be revived.

GOAL#5: Facilitate an informed and involved citizenry.

OBJECTIVES:

- Investigate methods to ensure that significant future projects (e.g. roads, community facilities, parks, etc.) are known by prospective homebuyers prior to the finalization of the sales process.
- Explore more and innovative ways to inform and involve the general public in planning issues.

- Create a Citizen's Planners Academy to inform and educate interested members of the public about planning and planning issues and provide a pathway to increased civic involvement through membership on various

13 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH DYNAMICS

Historical Regional Population Growth

	Easton	Talbot County	Eastern Shore
1960 Population	6,337	21,578	243,570
Easton %	100	29.4	2.6
1970 Population	6,809	23,682	258,329
Easton %	100	28.8	2.6
1980 Population	7,536	25,604	296,620
Easton %	100	29.4	2.5
1990 Population	9,372	30,549	343,769
Easton %	100	30.7	2.7
2000 Population	11,708	33,812	395,903
Easton %	100	34.6	3.0
2010 Population	15,945	37,782	449,226
Easton %	100	42.2	3.5
2020 Population	17,101	37,526	456,815
Easton %	100	45.6	3.7

Compound Annual Growth Rates, 1960-2020:	2000-2020
Easton: 1.67%	1.91%
Talbot County: 0.93%	0.52%
Eastern Shore: 1.05%	0.72%

Absolute Growth 1960-2020:	2000-2020
Easton: 10,764 (170%)	5,393 (46.1%)
Talbot County: 15,948 (73.9%)	3,714 (11.0%)
Eastern Shore: 213,245 (87.5%)	60,912 (15.4%)

Population Growth, Easton and Selected Communities (2000-2024)

	2020 Census	2022 ACS	2010 Census	% Change 2010-2020	% Change 2020-2022
EASTON	17,101	17,342	15,945	7.2%	1.4%
Centreville	4,724	4,700	4,285	10.3%	-0.5%
Cambridge	13,096	13,058	12,326	6.2%	-0.3%
Hurlock	2,070	2,284	2,092	-1.1%	10.3%
Denton	4,848	4,836	4,418	9.7%	-0.2%
St. Michaels	1,049	1,523	1,029	1.9%	45.2%

*- 2020 figure is from the Decennial US Census and is as of 8/1/2020

2022 figure is an estimate from the American Communities Survey (a US Census product) and is as of 7/1/22)

2010 figure is from the Decennial Census and is as of 4/1/2010

TOWN OF EASTON HISTORIC POPULATION

YEAR	POPULATION
1800	1,000
1810	NA
1820	NA
1830	NA
1840	1,358
1850	1,413
1860	NA
1870	NA
1880	3,005
1890	NA
1900	3,074
1910	3,100
1920	3,400
1930	4,092
1940	4,536
1950	4,836
1960	6,337
1970	6,809
1980	7,536
1990	9,372
2000	11,708
2010	15,945
2020	17,101

HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISTRIBUTION, 2020 (in 2021 inflation-adjusted dollars)		
Income Category	Number of Households	Percent
Less than $10,000	289	4.1%
$10,000 - $14,999	248	3.5%
$15,000 - $19,999	385	5.59%
$20,000 - $24,999	300	4.3%
$25,000 - $29,999	327	4.7%
$30,000 - $34,999	208	3.0%
$35,000 - $39,999	188	2.7%
$40,000 - $44,999	221	3.2%
$45,000 – $49,999	232	3.3%
$50,000 - $59,999	527	7.5%
$60,000 - $74,999	656	9.4%
$75,000 - $99,999	1,051	15%
$100,000 - $124,999	842	12%
$125,000 - $149,999	374	5.3%
$150,000 - $199,999	518	7.4%
$200,000 or more	648	9.2%
Median Household Income = $72,771	Per Capita Income = $40,265	Persons in Poverty = 9.8%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, American Communities Survey

Table 5 Median Household Income			
	Easton	Talbot County	Maryland
1999	$36,464	$43,532	$52,868
2007	$46,378	$56,057	$68,080
2022	$72,771	$79,349	$91,431

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, American Communities Survey

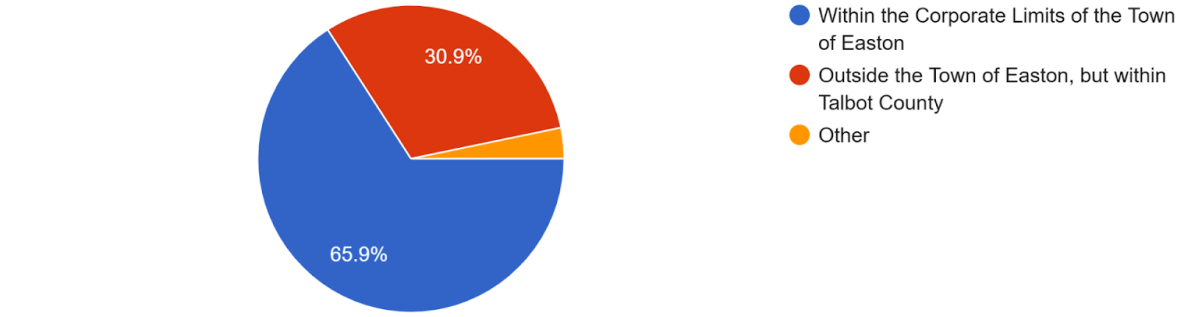
APPENDIX 2 - PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

Survey #1 - Big Picture Issues

1 Where do you live?

Please select one*

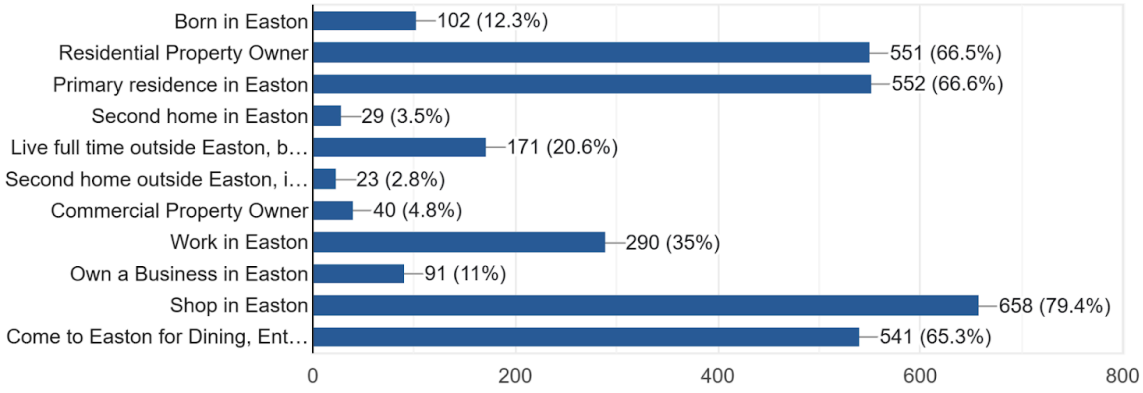
829 responses



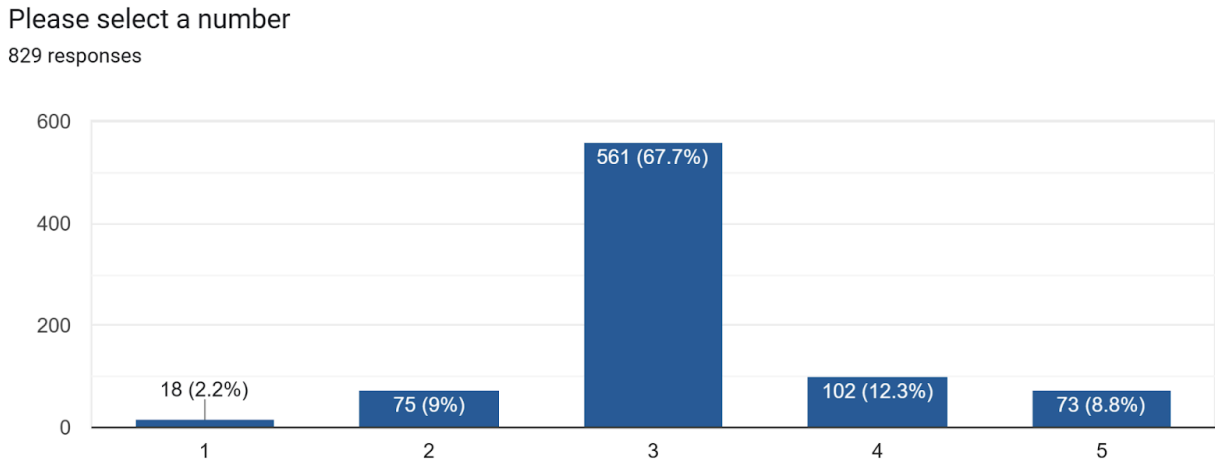
2. Interest in Easton?

Please select all that apply

829 responses



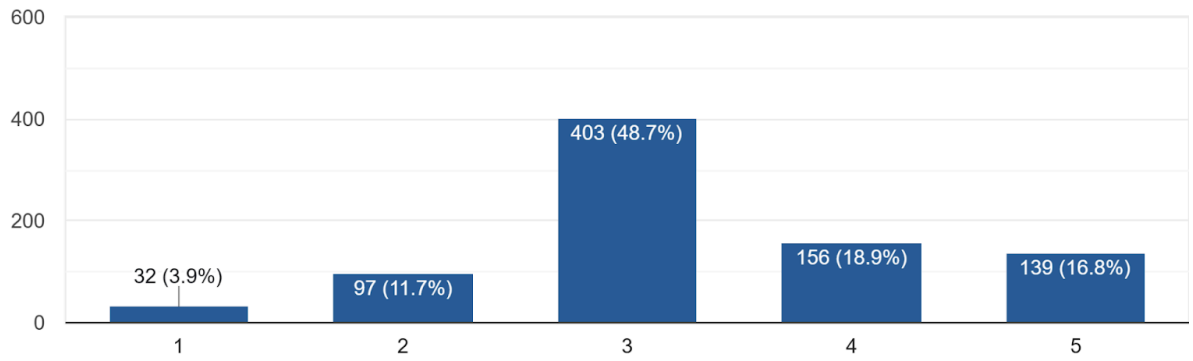
3. Easton's population is (From 1 = Too Small to 5 = Too Large)



4. Easton's Rate of Growth is (From 1 = Too slowly to 5 = Too Rapidly)

Please select a number

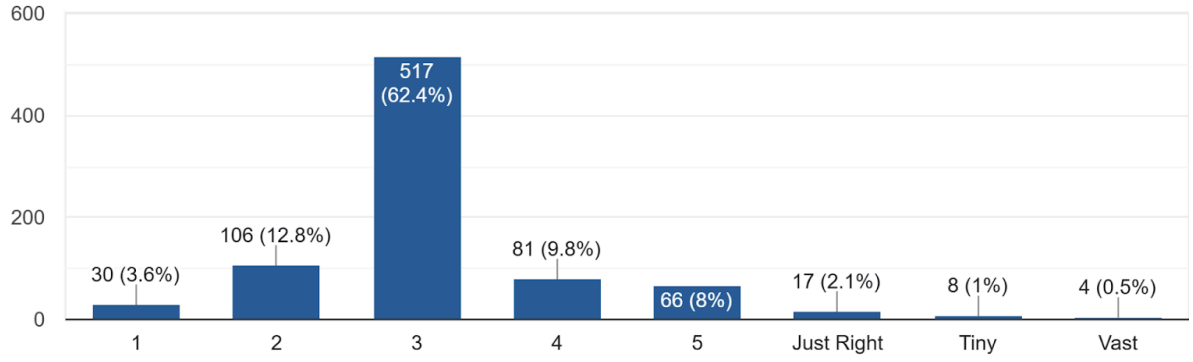
827 responses



5. The geographic size of the Town is (1 = Too small to 5 = Too Large)

Please select one

829 responses



6. Percentage of Future Growth that should be Infill/redevelopment vs. new Greenfield Development

Top 5 Responses:

80/20 Infill (119)

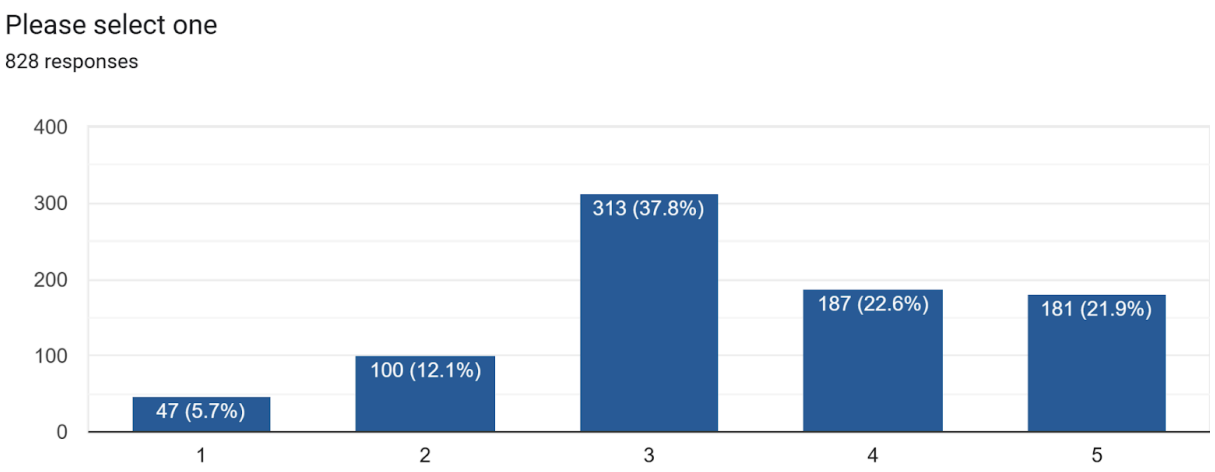
50/50 (83)

100% Infill (67)

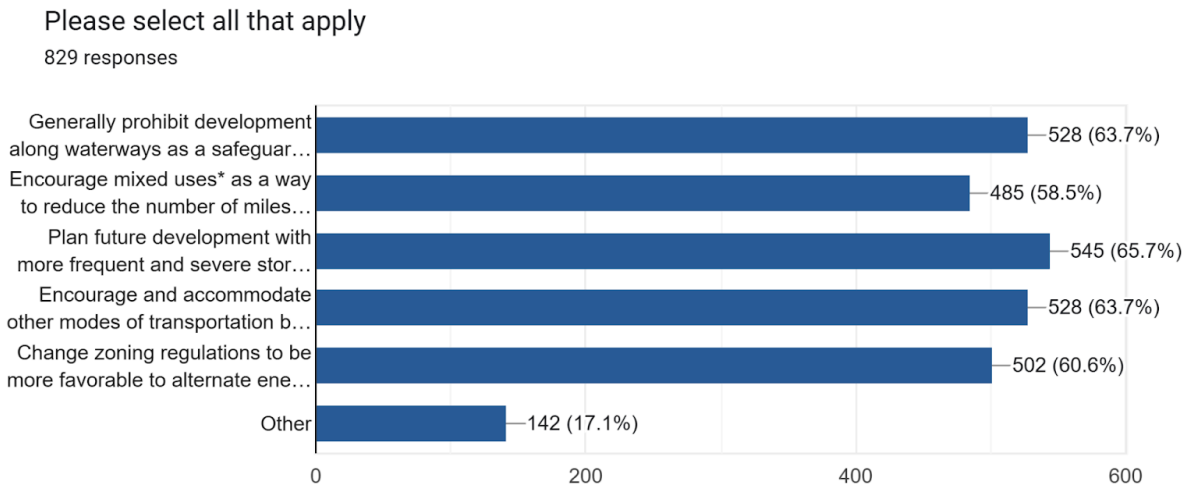
75/25 (52)

90/10 and 70/30 (42 each)

7. Amount of Regional-Scale Retail Shopping in Easton (* - In Easton, this has generally come to refer to shopping centers and/or single retail stores in excess of 65,000 square feet of floor space (roughly the size of our Giant or BJ's, for example) is (1 = Too little to 5 = Too Much):



8. Which of the following should be policies of the Town in light of Climate Change Impacts:



9. Your one "audacious" idea to improve Easton:

Some of the most commonly recurring responses included:

- **Boathouse**
- **Public Waterfront**
- **Affordable Housing**
- **Develop Port Street/Waterfront**
- **Keep Easton small/unique/historic**
- **More Downtown parking/parking garage**
- **Control/Limit Growth**
- **Redevelop/Reuse old/vacant buildings**

10. One Thing missing in Easton that you would like to see added in next 10 years:

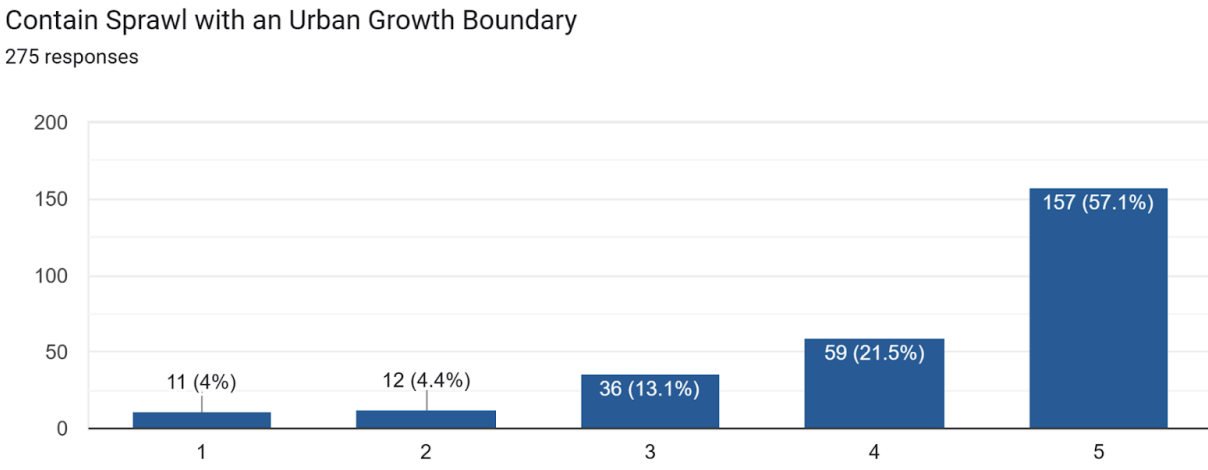
Most frequently noted suggestions were:

- **Trader Joe's (Far and away the most common response)**
- **Public Waterfront**

- **Home Depot**
- **Steakhouse**
- **Costco**
- **Brewery**
- **Downtown Grocery Store**

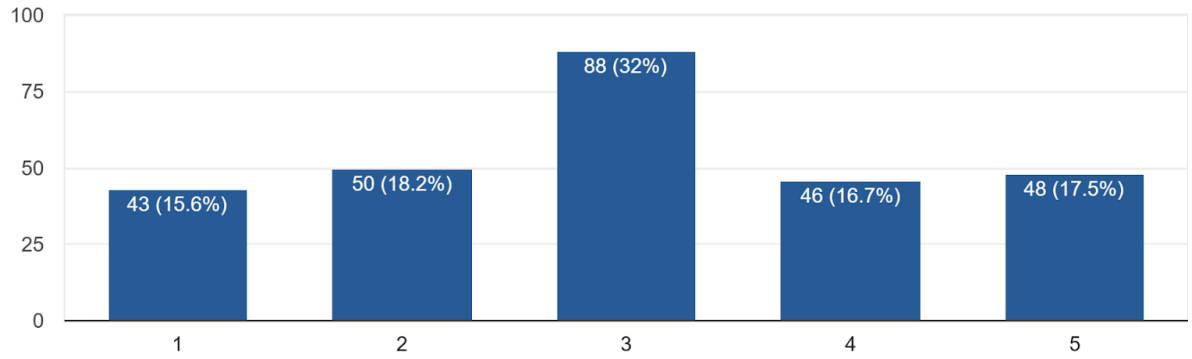
Survey # 2 - Quality of Life Issues

1. **How important is it to maintain each of the components of the overall Town Growth Strategy as stated in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan (1 = strongly disagree with the component to 5= strongly agree with the component):**



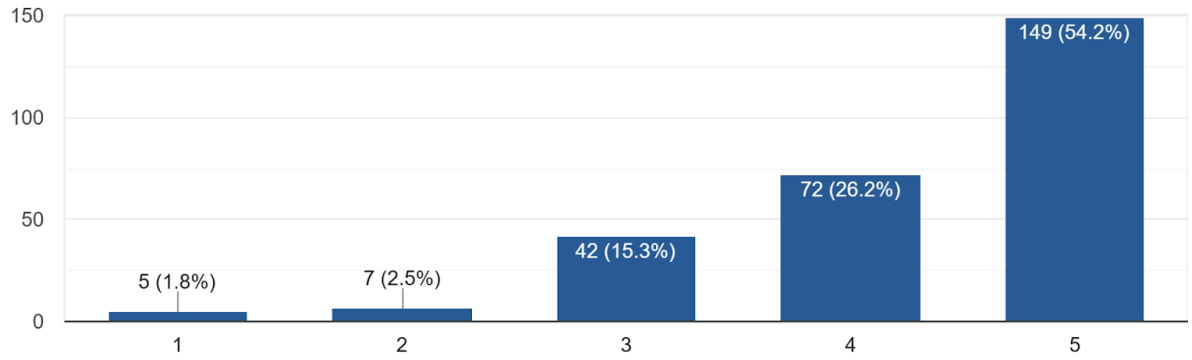
Increase Density

275 responses



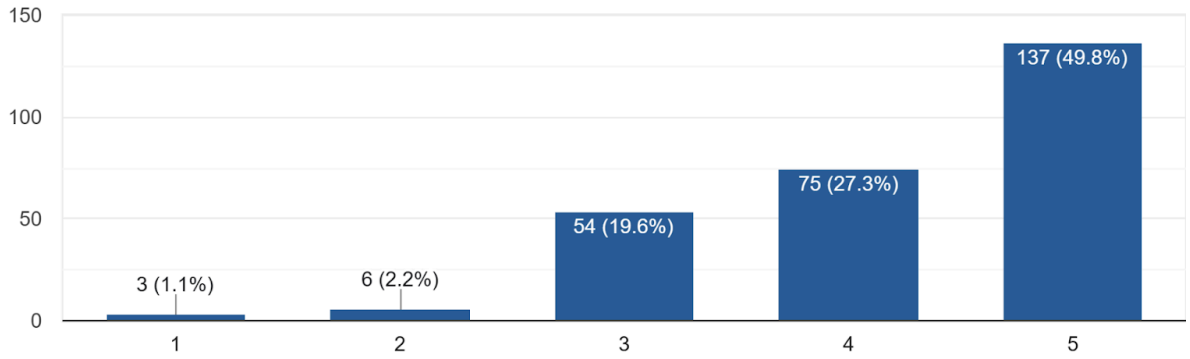
Build Neighborhoods (as opposed to Subdivisions)

275 responses



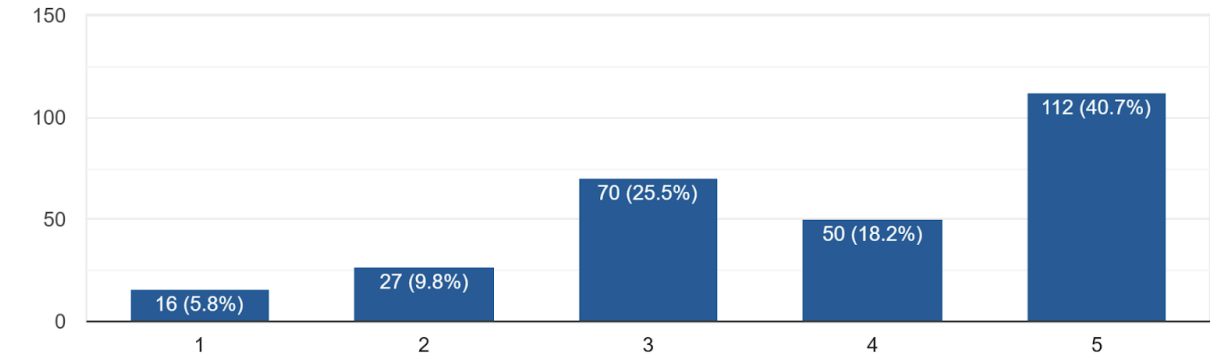
Improve Design

275 responses



Restrict Rate of Growth

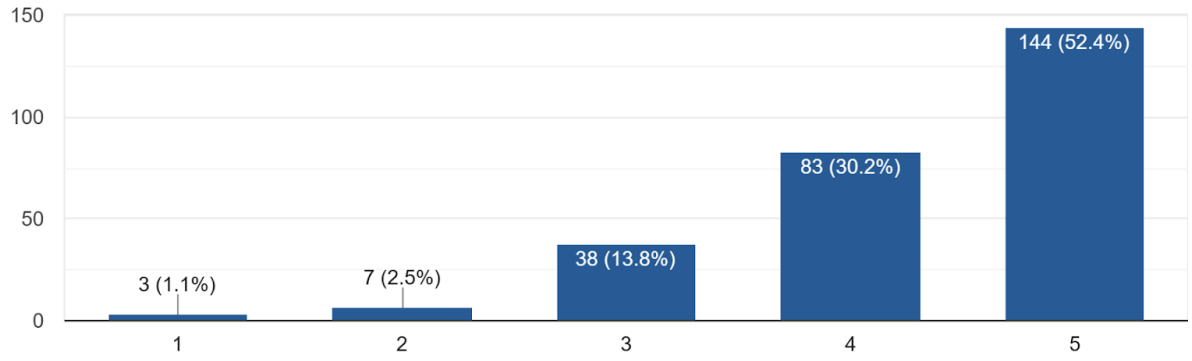
275 responses



2. Please consider each of the following factors often associated with a community's quality of life and indicate the degree to which you think each factor affects current residents in terms of a decision to potentially locate here:

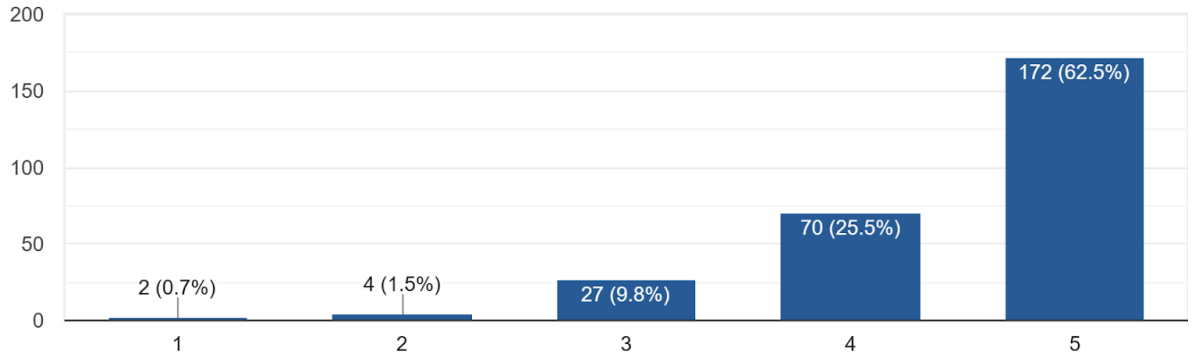
Parks

275 responses



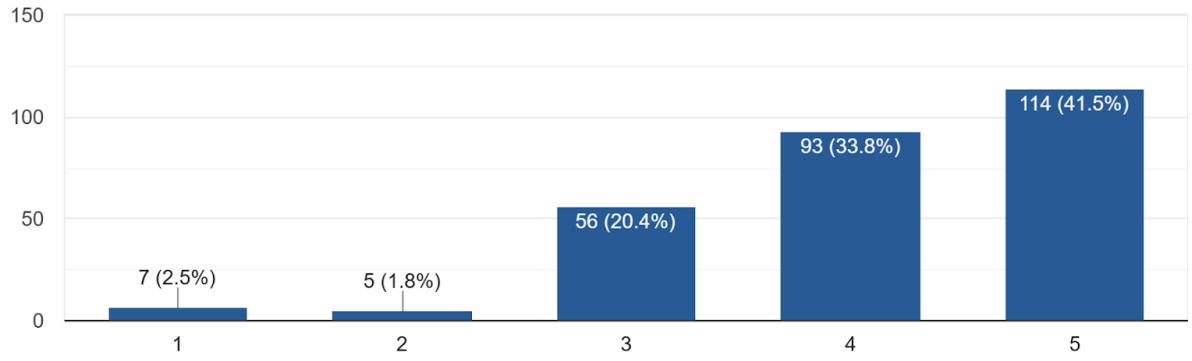
Walkability

275 responses



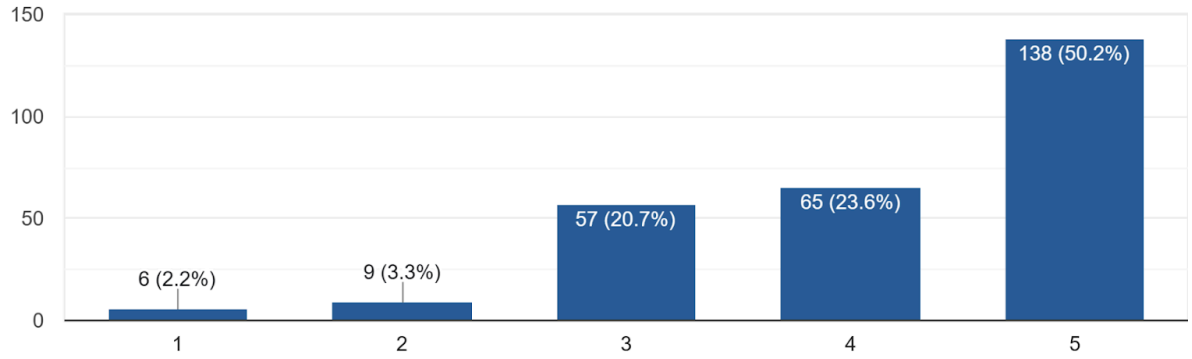
Housing Variety

275 responses



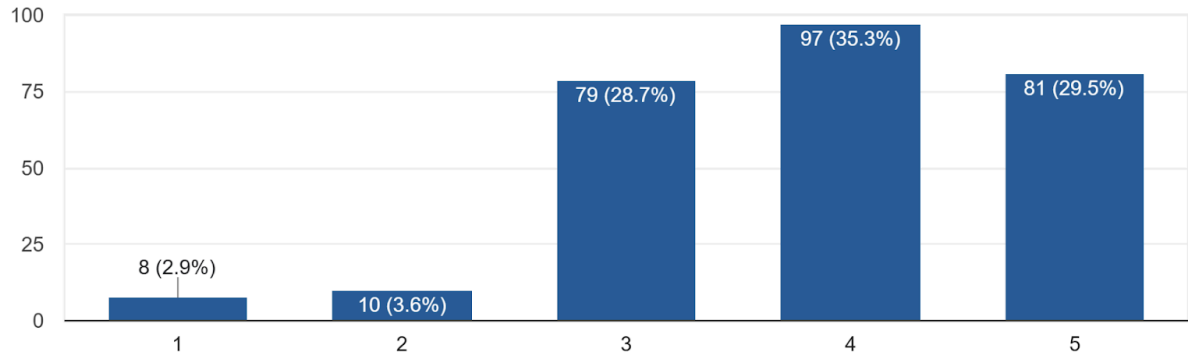
Housing Affordability

275 responses



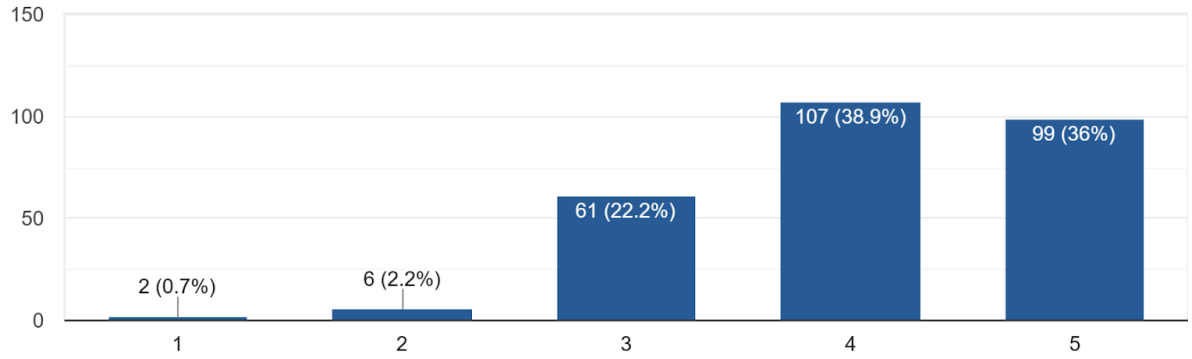
Shopping Options

275 responses



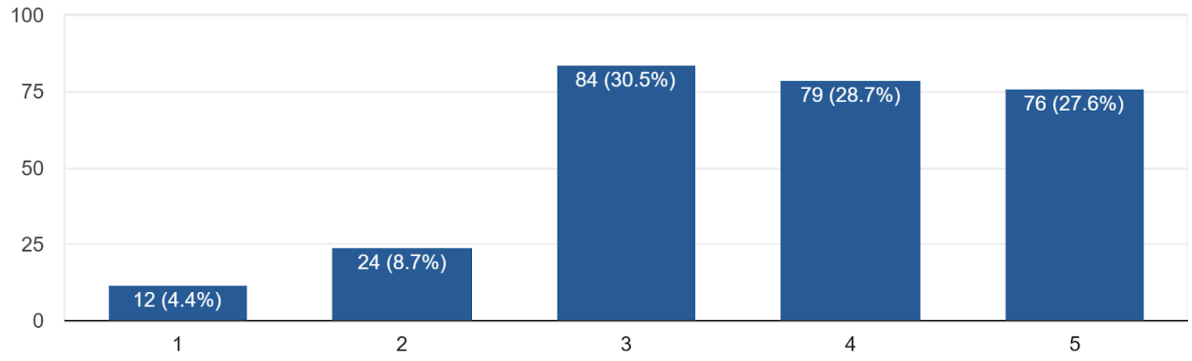
Dining Options

275 responses



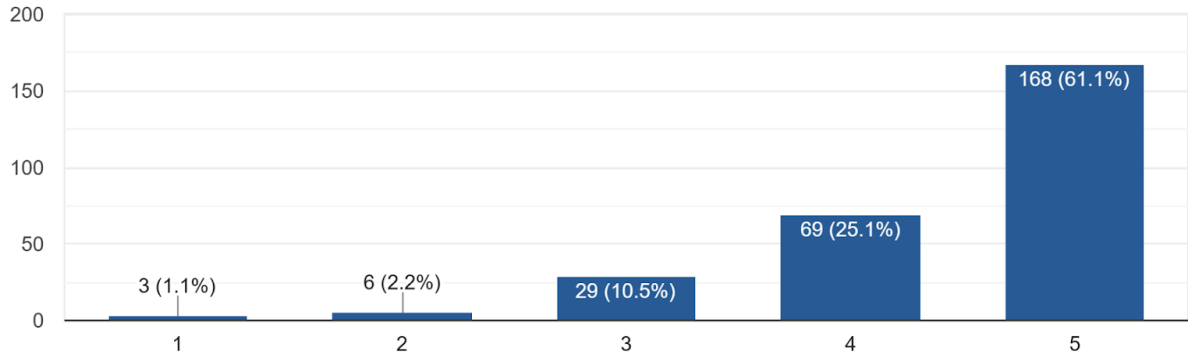
Transportation Option

275 responses



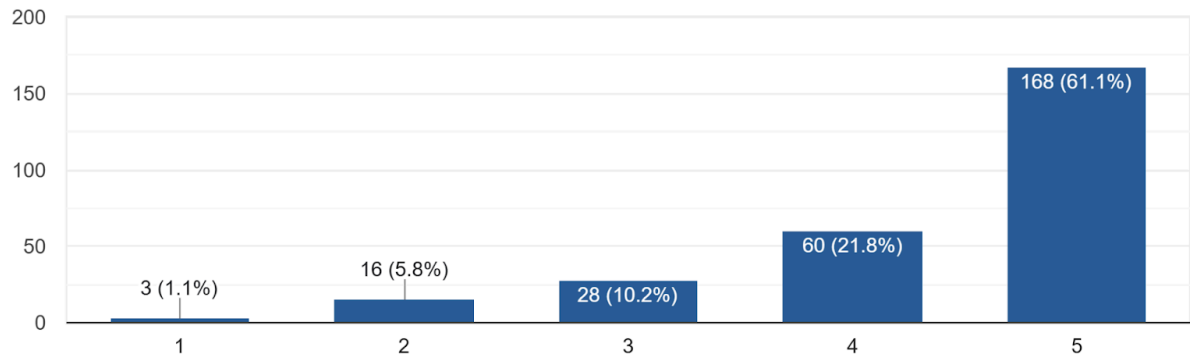
Downtown

275 responses



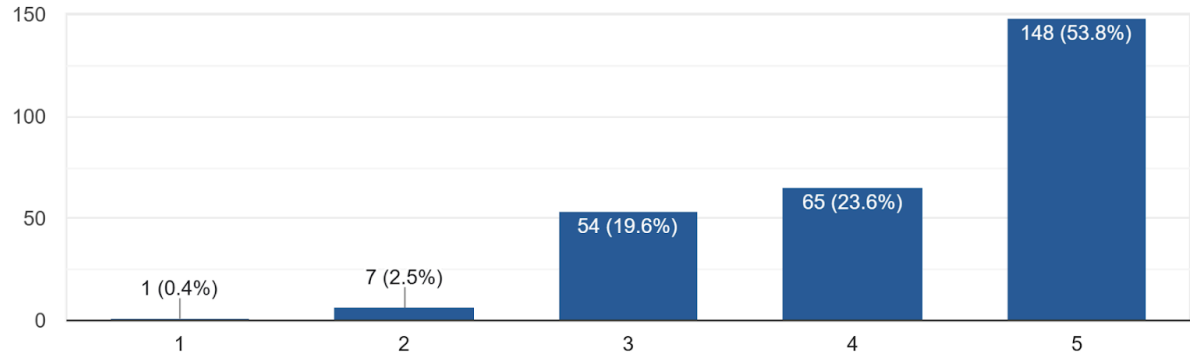
Historic Character

275 responses



Job Opportunities

275 responses



3. **Please name one thing that the Town should strive to add or improve in order to enhance the quality of life of our existing residents:**

   The five responses most frequently mentioned were:

   - **Affordable Housing**
   - **Grocery Store Downtown**

- **Public Waterfront**
- **Parking (Downtown)**
- **Walkability**

4. **What is the most important asset/resource/amenity for the Town to protect or enhance as we contemplate the future of our community?**

   The top three responses were:

   - **Downtown Charm/Vibrancy/Character**
   - **Green Spaces/Parks**
   - **Historic Character**

5. **Places most likely to show someone who has never been to Easton before:**

   Virtually every response included Downtown in general and/or a specific business or institution Downtown.

6. **Where would you avoid showing these visitors?:**

   Frequently recurring responses included:

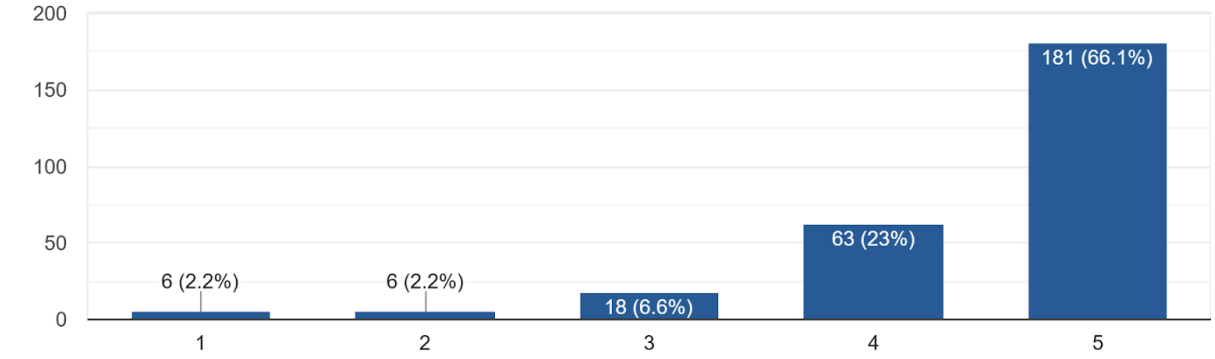
   - **Nothing/Nowhere**
   - **Big Boxes**
   - **Route 50**
   - **Port Street**

7. **The current Comprehensive Plan talks a lot about the desire for Easton to avoid monotonous, cookie-cutter, "Anyplace USA" (Suburban-Style) housing developments. Please indicate how important you think this Vision is for the future of Easton and then the importance of each of the following policies in**

achieving this goal:

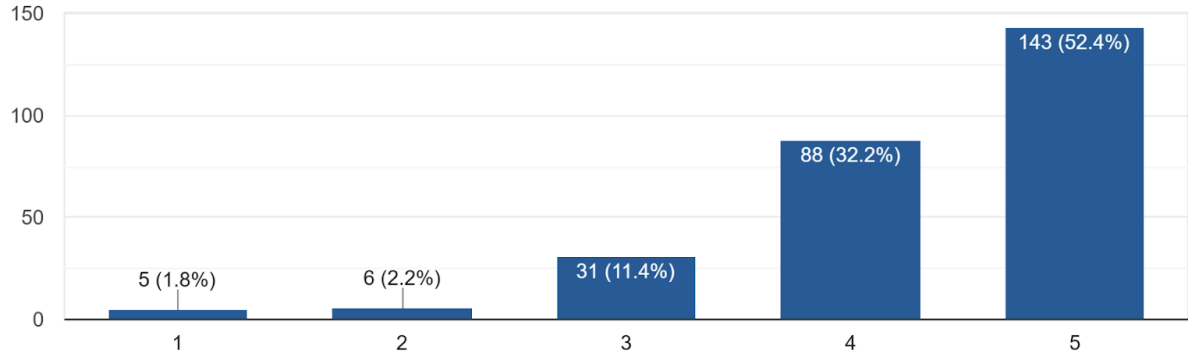
How Important is the Vision described above to the future of Easton?

274 responses



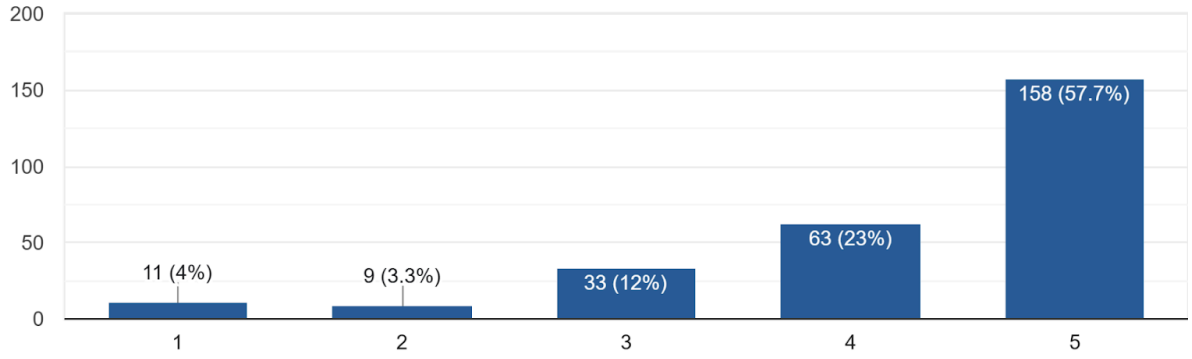
Residential Design Requirements

273 responses



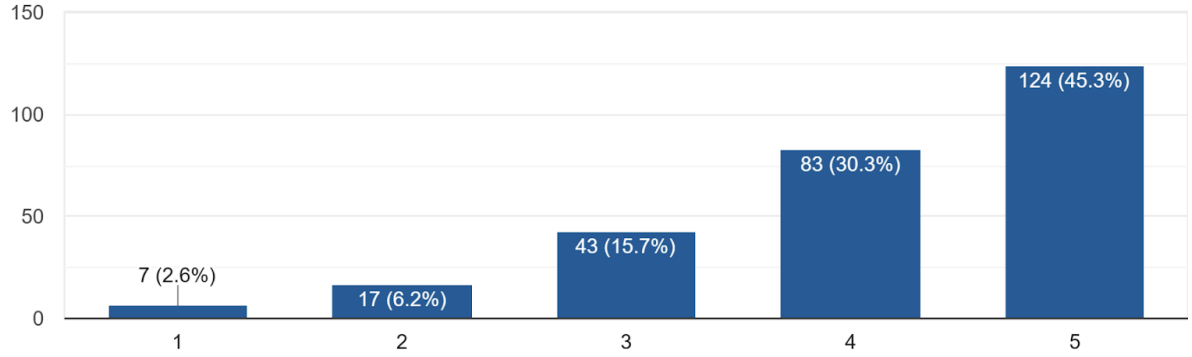
Standards to prohibit the construction of identical, or practically identical, homes within close proximity of one another

274 responses



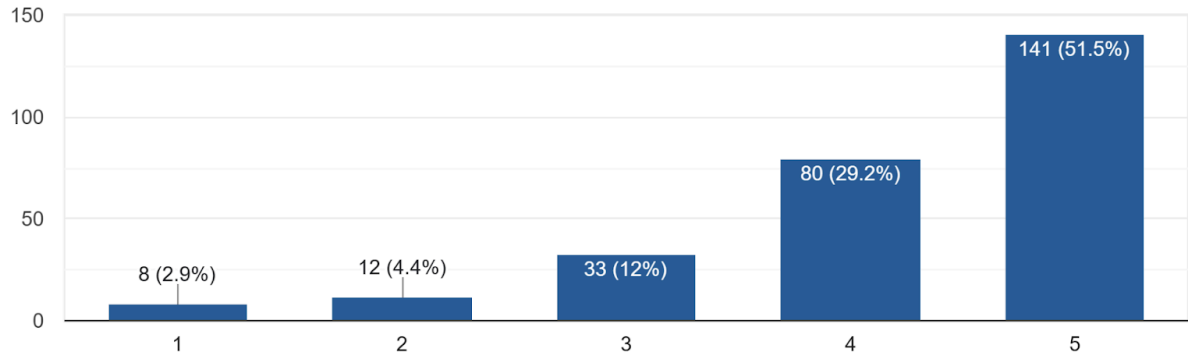
A variety of lot sizes in new subdivisions

274 responses



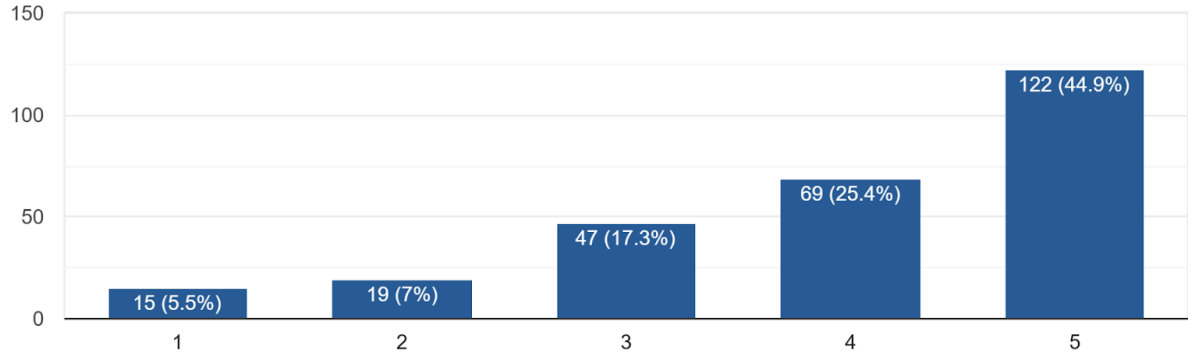
A variety of housing type in new subdivisions

274 responses



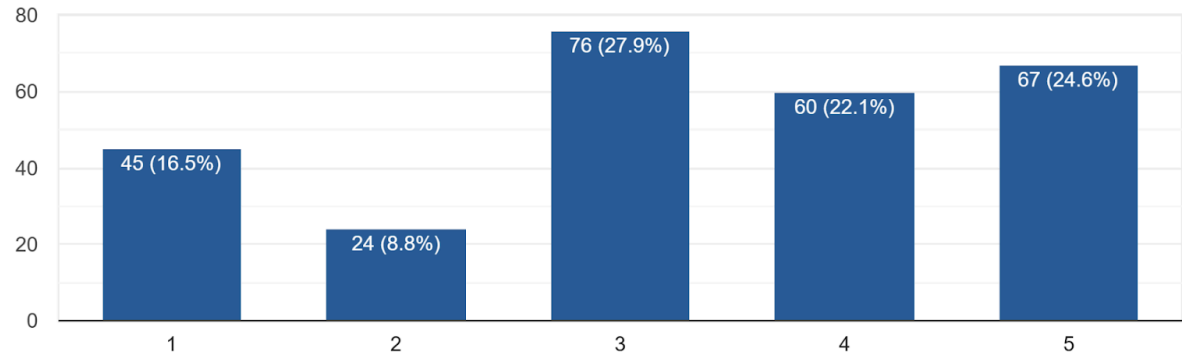
Mixed uses to allow cultural/institutional uses and neighborhood-scale commercial uses in addition to housing

272 responses



A requirement for the majority of new houses to be accessed via an alley

272 responses

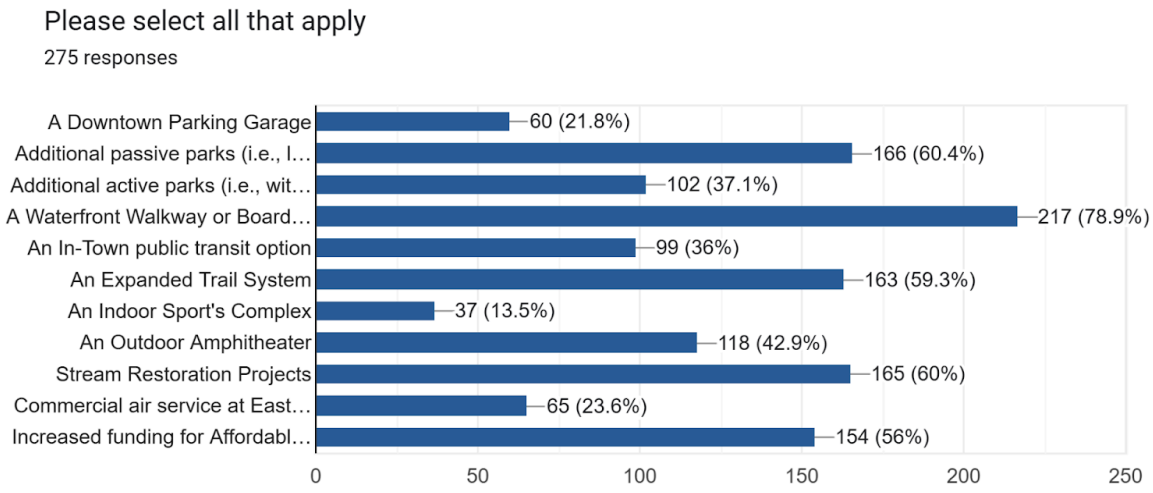


8. How should the current hospital site be redeveloped/reused?

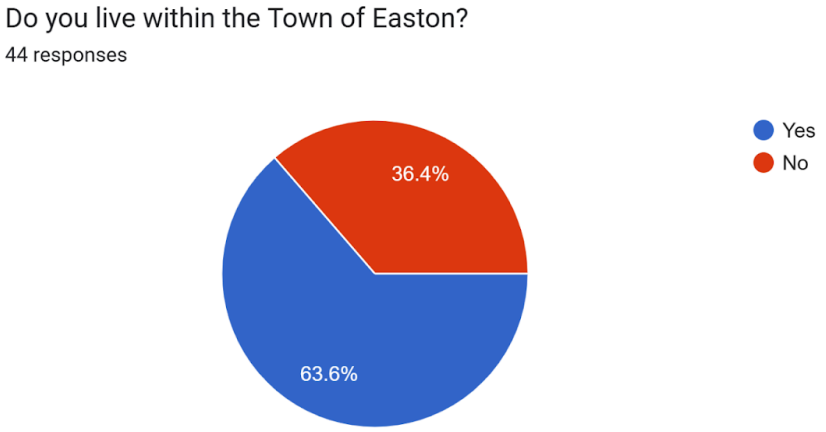
Top Responses were:

- **Affordable Housing**
- **Housing (in general)**
- **College**
- **Medical Use**
- **Mixed-use**
- **Park/Open Space**

9. Which of the following would you support even if it meant a tax increase?:

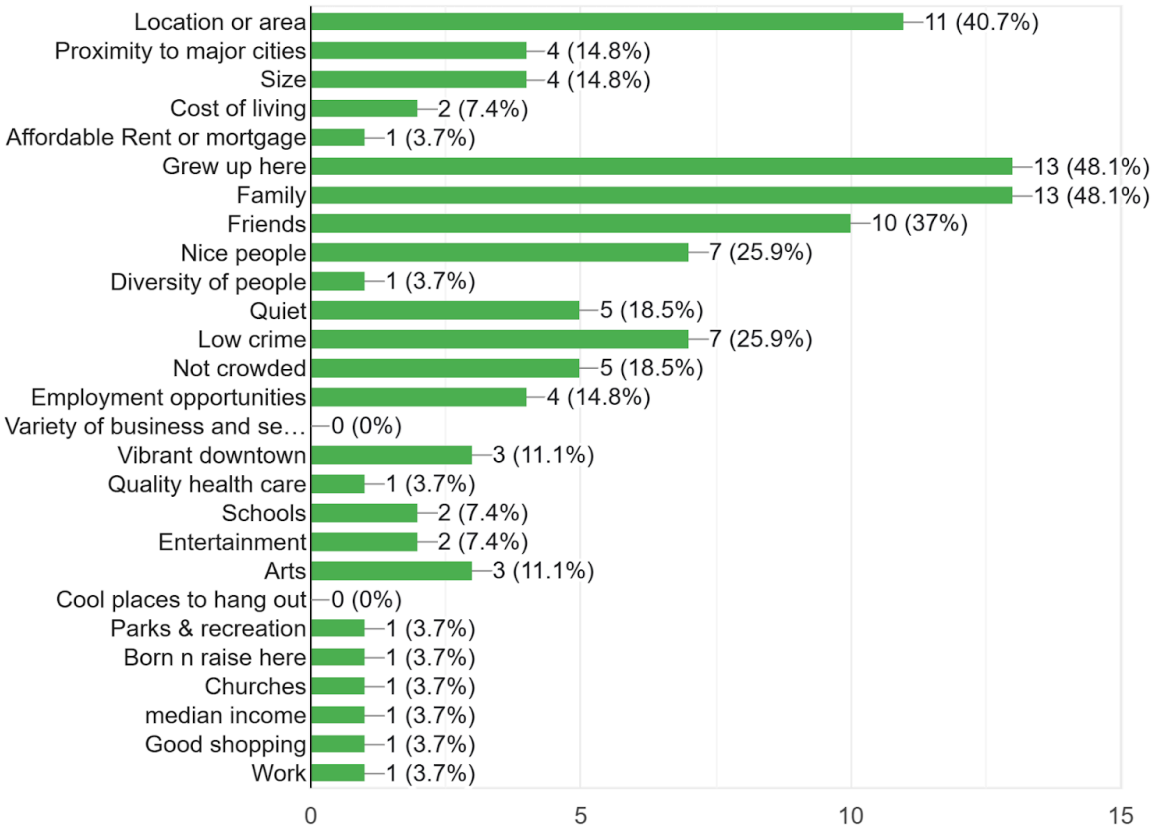


Survey #3 - Quality of Life (More Questions)



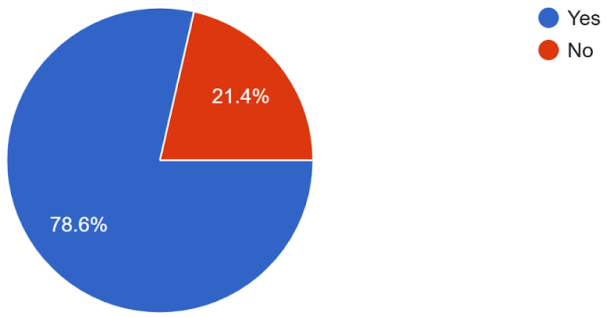
Why did you choose to live here?

27 responses



Do you work in Easton?

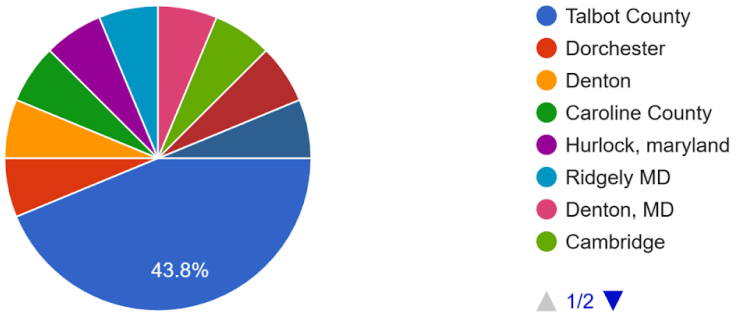
28 responses



For non-Easton residents:

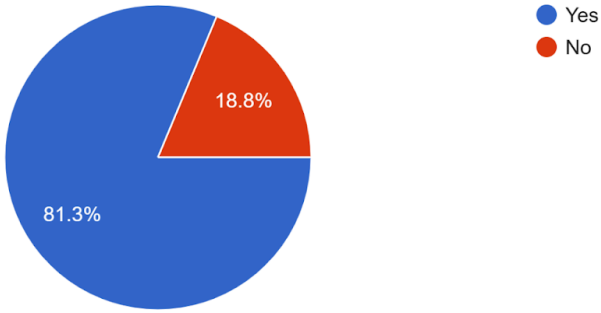
Where do you live? (If other please include Town and State)

16 responses



Do you work in Easton?

16 responses



Would you consider living in Easton? Why or why not?

Yes

Wish I could afford it. Lived here my whole life and was pushed our due to rent.

Yes. If there wasn't a housing challenge.

yes if i could find something comparable to my house and affordable

Yes, only if there was affordable housing.

Couldn't afford to

Yes.

I would love to but I cannot afford to live in Easton

Ehhh most likely not. Stict ordinances, expensive housing.

Yes, because Easton has more entertainment and a community more involved than surrounding counties.

No, too much crime and too expensive

Yes. Lived in town limits for 25 years and wouid moved back.

No, it's very stuffy. I used to live in Easton but moved to Cambridge because there are more young people and town activities, as well as better access to the water for people who don't own waterfront estates.

No, because I have retired.

Yes because of the vibe of the town, especially downtown

What type of business or entertainment option would you like to see that isn't here right now?

AI summarized responses:

- **Entertainment: Many responses requested more entertainment options such as arcades, mini-golf, larger music/theater venues, comedy clubs, and indoor sports facilities, including an ice rink. There was also interest in adult-focused entertainment like adult arcades and safer bars/nightlife.**
- **Restaurants & Food Options: Respondents expressed a desire for a wider variety of restaurants, including specific chains like Shake Shack, Five Guys, Mod Pizza, Texas Roadhouse, Buffalo Wild Wings, and Trader Joe's. They also requested more diverse dining options (e.g., Greek, Mediterranean, African, Dominican/Puerto Rican, Thai, gastropub, lobster house), a bakery, and more affordable local restaurants.**
- **Retail & Services: Suggestions included a bigger Walmart, Costco, Home Depot, chocolate**

shop, beauty and wellness spas, tattoo shops, and a cat petting business.

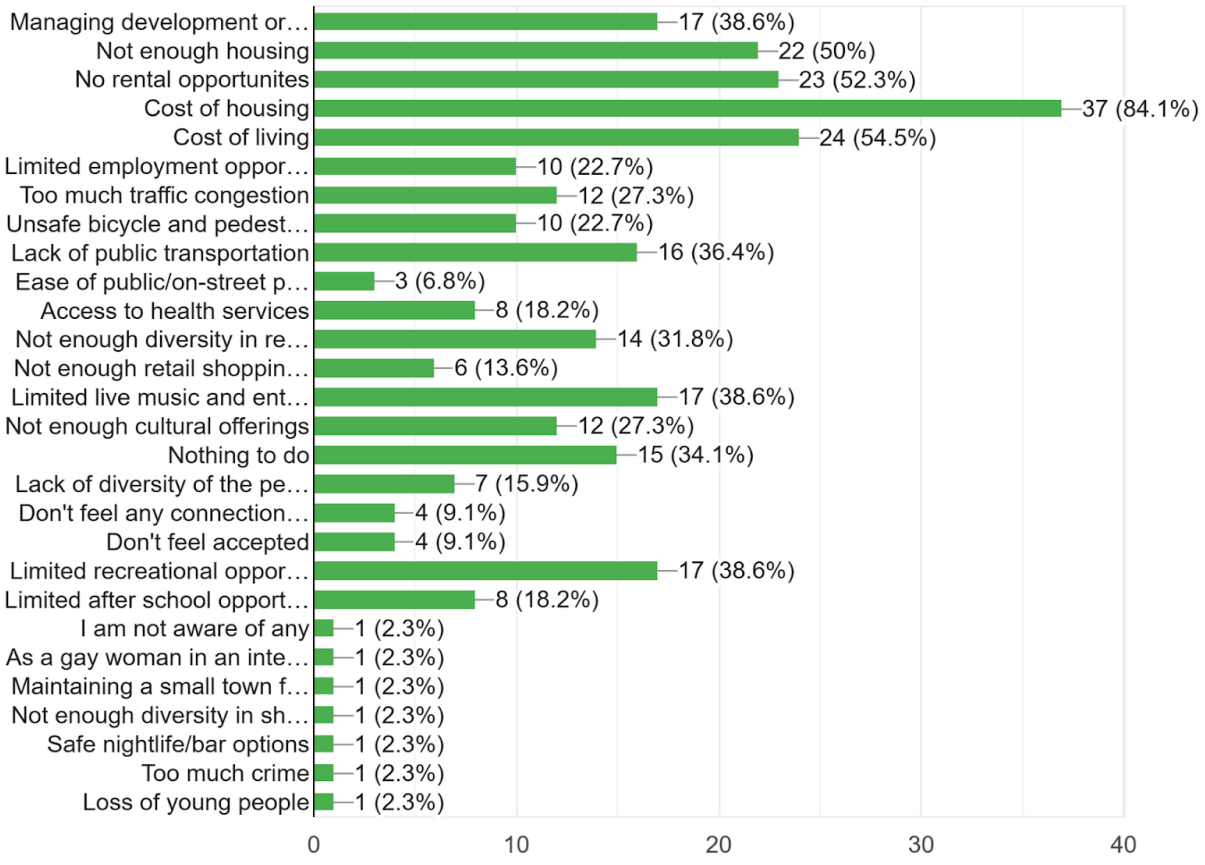
- **Community Amenities & Infrastructure: Several responses highlighted the need for more activities for youth and teens, a splash pad park, bike lanes, a bus system, and public transportation to locations like DC. There was also a request for a place of worship not Christian related.**
- **Other: A few respondents mentioned a gun range, a brewery, or indicated that they already have what they need in Easton.**

What words describe your impression of Easton?

- Town Atmosphere: Many described Easton as charming, quaint, small, and quiet, with a peaceful, friendly, and laid-back vibe.
- Demographics & Lifestyle: Several responses noted Easton as a retirement community geared towards retirees and wealthy members, with a "rich white people" or "preppy" impression.
- Amenities & Walkability: Some respondents highlighted cosmopolitan amenities, walkability, and a sense of safety.
- Perceived Issues: A few responses mentioned high prices, a perception of being crime-ridden and run down, or being "unduly self satisfied."
- Overall Impression: Easton was broadly seen as a nice, beautiful, and enjoyable town, with some calling it "perfect" or stating "everything works."

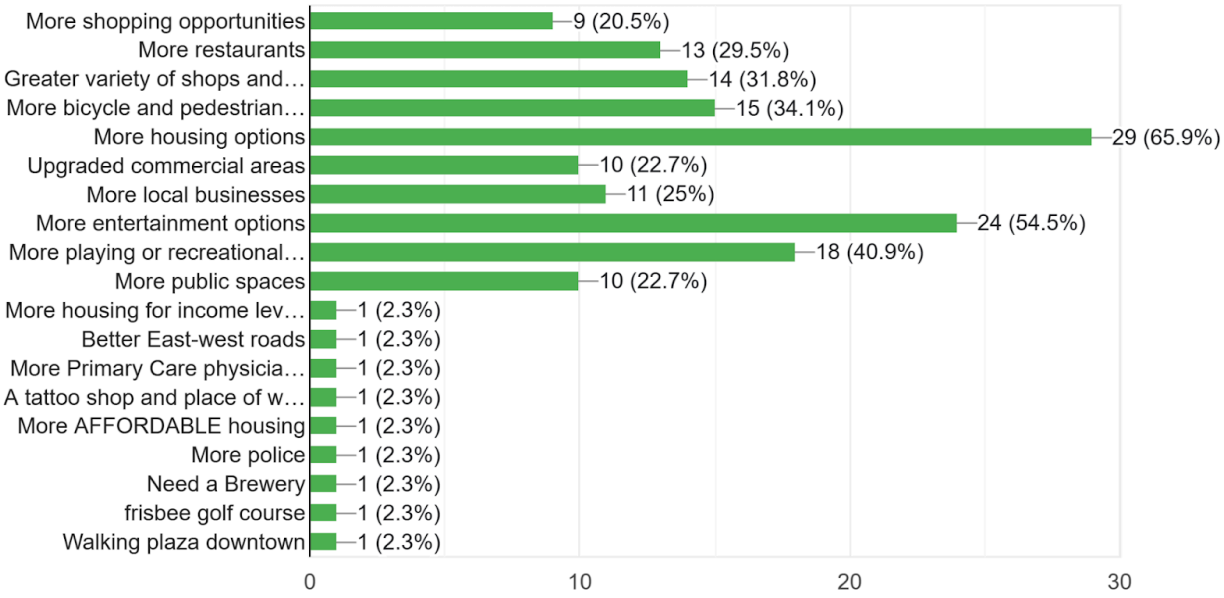
Do you know of any issues that Easton is facing? (Select all that apply)

44 responses



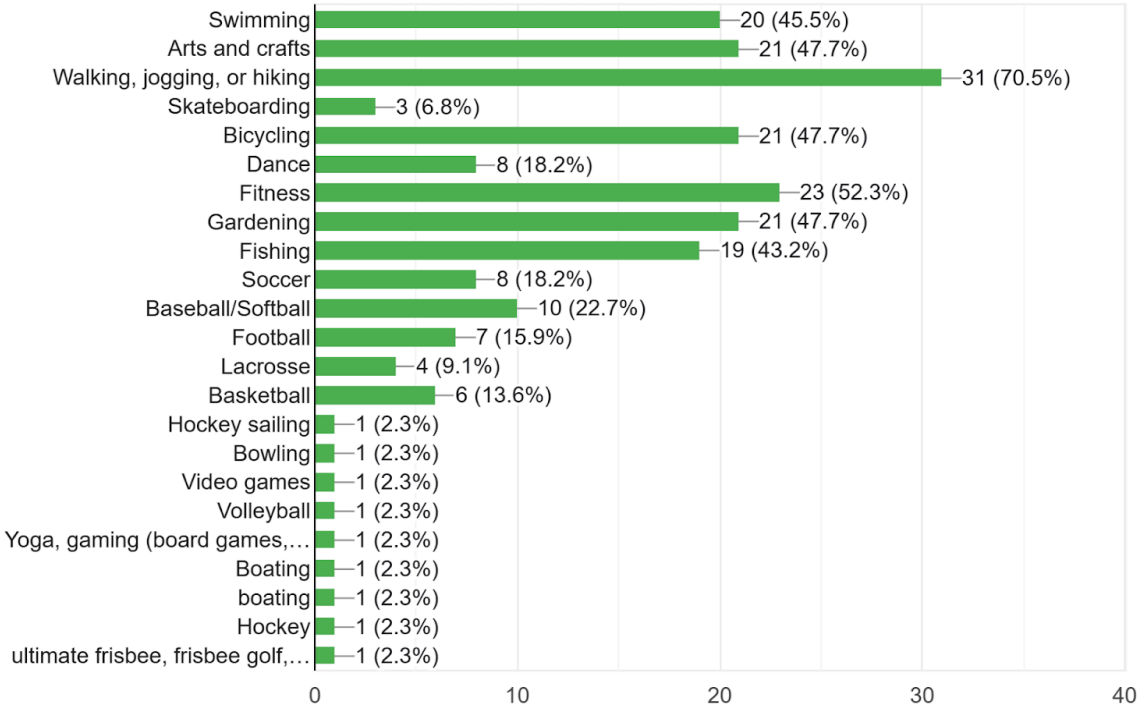
What would you change about Easton? (Select all that apply)

44 responses



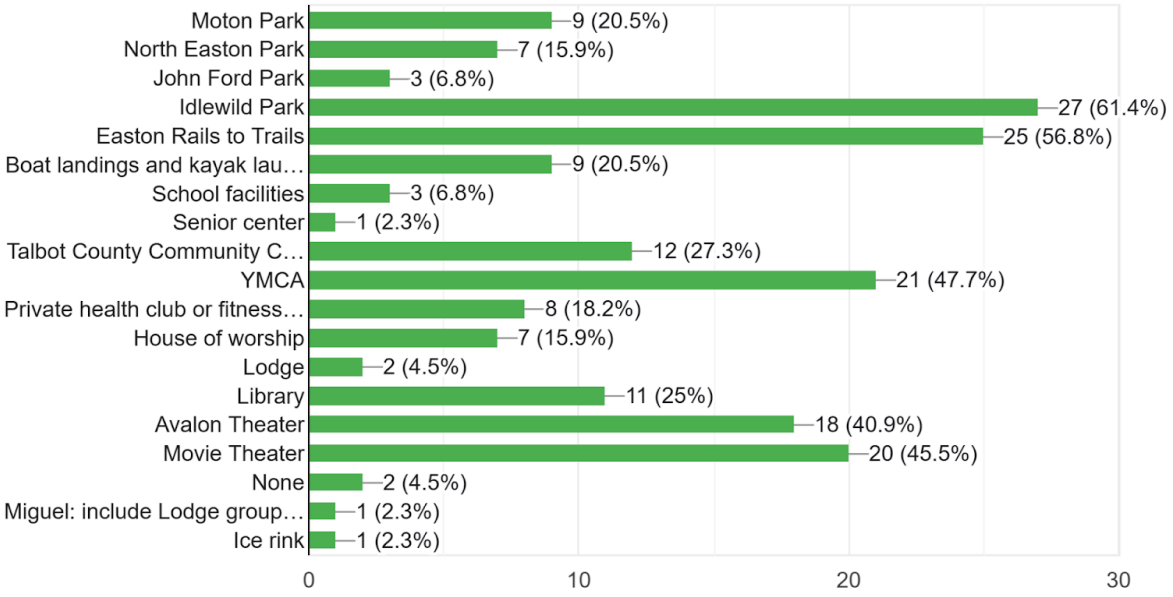
What type of leisure activities do members of your household participate in? (Select all that apply)

44 responses



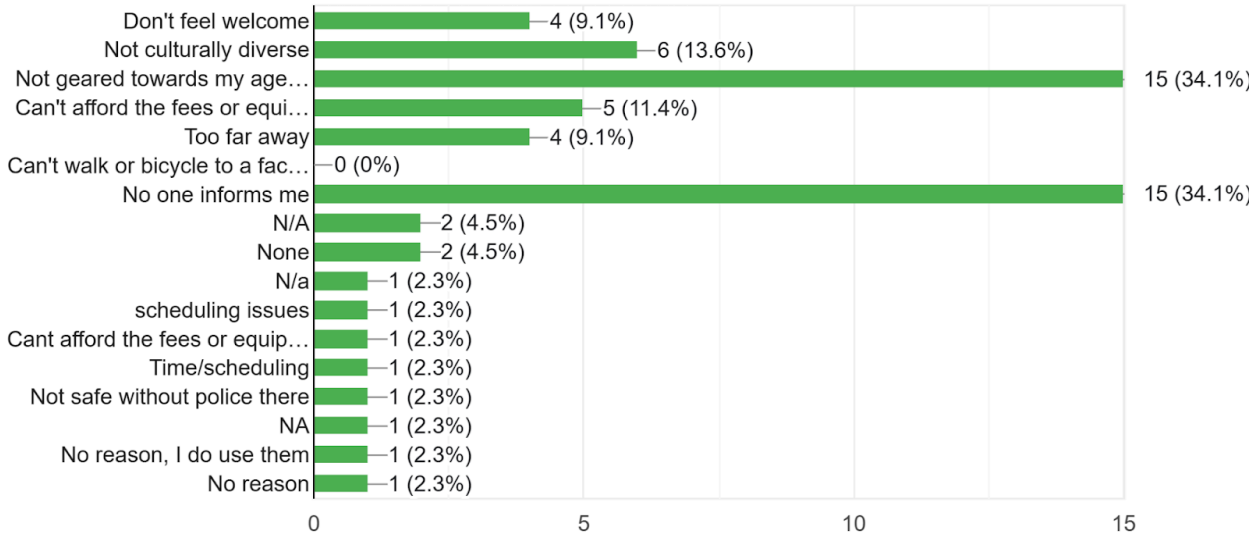
What Parks, Recreation and Cultural Facilities does your household primary use in Easton or Talbot County? (Select all that apply)

44 responses



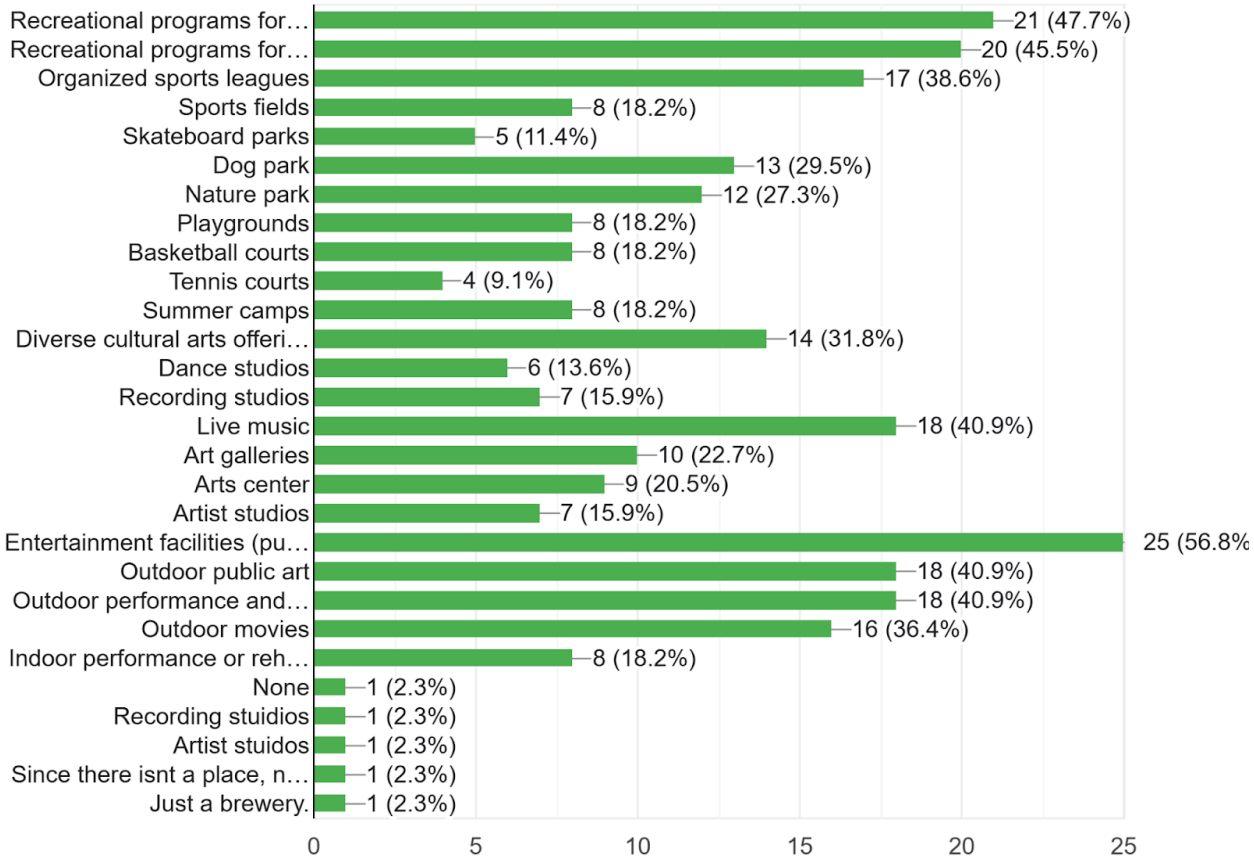
Is there any reason that keeps you from participating in Easton's parks, recreation and cultural facilities? (Select all that apply)

44 responses



What types of facilities or activities would you and your household like to see more of in Easton? (Select all that apply)

44 responses



APPENDIX 3 - HISTORIC ANNEXATION LIST

HISTORICAL ANNEXATIONS

NO.	DATE	ANNEXATION	AREA (AC)	TOTAL (CUM.)	SQ. MILE (CUM.)
1	3/12/1786	1785 John Needles Survey	94.500	94.500	0.14766
2	Nov. 1806	John M. G. Emory Survey	24.200	118.700	0.18547
3	1/26/1880	J. M. Tharp Survey	186.300	305.000	0.47656
4	1916	Kastenhuber Survey	195.352	500.352	0.78180
5	1927	Community Park	45.00	545.352	0.85211
6	June 1951	Wm. H. Corkran Survey	445.339	990.691	1.54795
7	2/02/1961	Hughlett Street	4.551	995.691	1.55507
8	6/02/1961	Part of Marlboro	20.000	1015.242	1.58632
9	7/05/1962	Easton Motels – Rte 50	2.400	1017.642	1.59007
10	5/02/1963	Marlboro	17.618	1035.260	1.61759
11	2/17/1965	Brookwood	3.502	1038.762	1.62307
12	4/29/1965	Mecklenburg	101.524	1140.286	1.78170
13	8/20/1965	Third Haven Heights	12.065	1152.351	1.80055
14	9/02/1965	Applewood Court	6.288	1158.639	1.81037
15	12/03/1965	North Glenwood	10.020	1168.659	1.82603
16	6/02/1966	Hallowell	16.431	1185.090	1.85170
17	6/30/1966	The Easton Parkway	164.694	1349.784	2.10904
18	6/30/1966	Maryland National Bank	4.673	1354.457	2.11634
19	6/30/1966	Frankford	214.196	1568.653	2.45102

18	6/30/1966	Maryland National Bank	4.673	1354.457	2.11634
20	12/01/1966	Pennsfield	176.840	1745.493	2.72733
21	3/02/1967	Witt Woodland	198.889	1944.382	3.03810
22	6/02/1967	Mulberry Hill	385.948	2330.330	3.64114
23	10/21/1967	Glenwood Heights	136.404	2466.734	3.85427
24	8/02/1968	Trippe Avenue	12.528	2479.262	3.87385
25	10/30/1969	Maryland State Police	8.630	2487.892	3.88733
26	10/01/1970	Airport Industrial Park	241.786	2729.678	4.26512
27	12/03/1970	Idlewild Lots	4.049	2733.727	4.27145
28	4/30/1970	North Clifton	5.549	2739.276	4.28012
29	11/04/1971	Carroll's Addition	24.547	2763.823	4.31847
30	6/01/1972	Golt Farm	129.354	2893.177	4.52059
31	4/05/1973	Idlewild Lots	5.740	2898.917	4.52956
32	4/19/1973	South Beechwood	36.546	2935.463	4.58666
33	11/01/1974	West Galloway	15.529	2950.992	4.61093
34	1/02/1975	Poplar Hill	174.358	3125.350	4.88336
35	6/05/1975	Central Clifton	24.189	3149.539	4.92115
36	7/02/1976	North Clifton	30.703	3180.242	4.96913
37	7/23/1976	Stoney Ridge Farm	222.976	3403.218	5.31753
38	10/01/1976	Reward Farm	110.705	3513.923	5.49050
39	11/05/1976	Ashby Woodland	43.338	3557.261	5.55822
40	2/03/1978	Elliott Road	5.993	3563.254	5.56758
41	3/02/1978	Idlewild Farm	128.626	3691.880	5.76856
42	1/18/1979	Easton Airport	595.809	4287.689	6.69951
43	4/02/1981	Woodland Farm	309.686	4597.375	7.18340
44	3/03/1983	Lutheran Church – Rte 50	6.006	4603.381	7.19278
45	9/18/1986	Craft Farm	102.670	4706.051	7.35320
46	12/05/1986	Mulberry Hill/W. Galloway	233.844	4939.895	7.71859
47	7/02/1987	William Favinger	10.260	4950.155	7.73462
48	3/03/1988	John O. Brooks	31.551	4981.706	7.78392
49	5/23/1989	County Roads Facility	6.080	4987.786	7.79342

18	6/30/1966	Maryland National Bank	4.673	1354.457	2.11634
50	4/06/1990	Londonderry	25.430	5013.216	7.83315
51	1/13/1991	Ewing – Dover Rd.	2.130	5015.346	7.83648
52	2/17/1991	RGA/Davis – Denton Rd.	27.900	5043.246	7.88007
53	5/03/1991	Dudrow (N. Glenwood)	187.850	5231.096	8.17359
54	6/18/1992	Ward/Benhoff – Dover Rd.	13.595	5244.691	8.19483

55	8/16/1993	Lyon's Farm	217.100	5461.791	8.53405
56	3/18/1995	Cooke's Hope	162.365	5624.156	8.78774
57	10/23/1995	Public Works Facility	15.451	5639.607	8.81189
58	2/03/1996	Swann Farm	80.540	5720.147	8.93773
59	7/24/1996	Celeste Industries (Jettison)	-16.322	5703.825	8.91223
60	11/24/1996	Swann Haven L.P.	30.442	5734.267	8.95979
61	11/24/1996	Wickersham Farm	162.570	5896.837	9.21381
62	5/30/1997	Talbot Bible Church	10.361	5907.198	9.23000
63	12/07/1998	Trippe's Creek/Cheston L.P.	217.851	6125.049	9.57039
64	1/18/1999	Charles O. Parks	7.598	6132.647	9.58226
65	4/17/1999	Swann Haven L.P.	75.743	6208.390	9.70061
66	6/25/1999	Ratcliffe Manor	386.440	6594.830	10.30442
67	4/30/2000	Ratcliffe Manor Lane	3.176	6598.006	10.30939
68	8/26/2001	Town Properties (4)	7.926	6605.932	10.32177
69	10/15/2001	Swann Farm	79.014	6684.946	10.44523
70	7/26/2002	Hoffman	52.291	6737.237	10.52693
71	7/26/2002	UP Associates	23.084	6760.321	10.56300
72	7/3/2003	Kennedy Street	26.866	6787.187	10.60498
73	6/11/2005	West Glenwood	30.192	6817.379	10.65216
74	5/15/2006	Londonderry	13.492	6830.871	10.67324
75	8/03/2007	Clifton Industrial Park	35.41	6866.281	10.72856
76	8/11/2011	Hyde Park	117.994	6984.275	10.91293
77	7/1/2012	Spring	17.170	7001.445	10.93976
78	10/5/2012	McNeal	2.469	7003.914	10.94362
79	10/20/2014	Talbot Commerce Park	125.057	7128.971	11.13902
80	3/2/2015	Aphena	22.136	7151.107	11.17360
81	8/19/2017	Easton Point (multiple properties)	6.533	7157.640	11.18381
82	9/22/2017	Celeste	4.446	7162.086	11.19076
83	10/2/2017	J. D. Oliver	3.960	7166.046	11.19695
84	8/3/2020	Dutchman's Lane	7.681	7173.727	11.20895
85	5/3/2021	Harrison	1.637	7175.364	11.21151
86	7/20/2023	Town Properties (2)	4.899	7180.263	11.21916

APPENDIX 4 - SUMMARY OF NUTRIENT LOADING ANALYSIS

Nutrient Loading Analysis Spreadsheet - Summary Results

Land Use and Septic Systems (See Scenario Descriptions Below)

		2007 LU, 2007 BMPs (Acres)	2007 LU, Trib Strat BMPs (Acres)	Scenario 1 Trib Strat BMPs (Acres)	Scenario 2 Trib Strat BMPs (Acres)	Scenario 3 Trib Strat BMPs (Acres)
Development		0	3,818	8,246	5,252	5,382
Agriculture		0	4,927	279	3,274	3,143
Forest		0	1,813	1,813	1,813	1,813
Water		0	112	112	112	112
Other		0	684	904	904	904
Total Area		0	11,354	11,354	11,355	11,354

Residential Septic (EDUs)		0	557	56	269	269
Non-Residential Septic (EDUs)		0	375	38	188	188

Total Nitrogen Loading

		2007 LU, 2007 BMPs	2007 LU, Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 1 Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 2 Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 3 Trib Strat BMPs
		(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)
Development NPS		0	22,900	49,572	31,535	32,322
Agriculture NPS		0	42,567	2,441	28,178	27,038
Forest NPS		0	2,507	2,507	2,507	2,507
Other Terrestrial NPS		0	4,145	5,473	5,473	5,473
Total Terrestrial Load		**0**	**72,119**	**59,992**	**67,692**	**67,339**
Residential Septic (EDUs)		0	4,912	348	1,677	1,677
Non-Residential Septic (EDUs)		0	1,180	89	421	421
Total Septic Load		**0**	**6,092**	**436**	**2,098**	**2,098**
Total NPS Nitrogen Load		**0**	**78,210**	**60,429**	**69,790**	**69,437**
Total PS Load		**0**	**23,800**	**48,729**	**27,415**	**27,415**
Total Nitrogen Load (NPS+PS)		**0**	**102,010**	**109,158**	**97,205**	**96,852**

Total Phosphorus Loading

		2007 LU, 2007 BMPs	2007 LU, Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 1 Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 2 Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 3 Trib Strat BMPs
		(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)	(Lbs/Yr)
Development NPS		0	2,441	5,451	3,414	3,507
Agriculture NPS		0	3,977	224	2,690	2,588
Forest NPS		0	34	34	34	34
Other Terrestrial NPS		0	500	651	651	651
Total Terrestrial Load		**0**	**6,953**	**6,360**	**6,789**	**6,779**
Total PS Load		**0**	**2,400**	**3,655**	**2,742**	**2,742**
Total Phosphorus Load (NPS+PS)		**0**	**9,353**	**10,015**	**9,531**	**9,521**

Impervious Cover and Open Space

		2007 LU, 2007 BMPs	2007 LU, Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 1 Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 2 Trib Strat BMPs	Scenario 3 Trib Strat BMPs
Total Impervious Cover		0	1,865	3,497	2,449	2,485
Agriculture		0	4,927	279	3,274	3,143
Forest		0	1,705	1,705	1,705	1,705

Scenario Description	Scenario List
Year 2007 with 2007 Level of BMP Implementation	2007 LU, 2007 BMPs
Year 2007 with TS BMP Implementation	2007 LU, Trib Strat BMPs
Scenario 1 Build-out (or 3% Growth 2040)	Scenario 1
Scenario 2 - 2040 1% Growth, 75% infill, 25% greenfield	Scenario 2
Scenario 3 - 2040 1% Growth, 50% infill, 50% greenfield	Scenario 3

APPENDIX 5 - PLANNED WATER AND WASTEWATER CAPITAL PROJECTS

EASTON WATER SYSTEM CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS		
PROJECT DESCRIPTION	**PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR**	**COMMENTS**
New Water Services & Meters	FY2026	$304,000
Replace Hydrants	FY2026	$40,000
Replace Valves	FY2026	$90,000
Easton Watermain Replacement Judas St. & Port St.	FY2026	$1,051,000
Looping Water Mains/Blow-offs	FY2026	$32,000
SCADA, PLC & Security Upgrades	FY2026	$60,000
Well No. 12 Security Fence	FY2026	$16,000
Corrosion Inhibitor - Sequestering Agent	FY2026-2027	$88,000
Well No. 12 – Replacement of Pump and Column Pipe	FY2027	$250,000
Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements	FY2027	$1,167,000
New Water Treatment Plant (Commerce Drive)	FY2027-2028	$12,000,000
UMMS Water Main Extension	FY2027-2028	$3,433,000
Hydrant Rehab & Storz Connect.	FY2027-2028	$836,000
New Well No. 14	FY2027-2028	$2,625,000
Looping Water Mains/Blow-offs	FY2027-2031	$173,000
New Water Services	FY2027-2031	$175,000
New Water Meters	FY2027-2031	$1,370,000
Replace Hydrants	FY2027-2031	$215,000
SCADA, PLC & Security Upgrades	FY2027-2031	$132,000
UMMS Water Tank	FY2028	$3,124,000
Well No. 6 – Replacement of Pump and Column Pipe	FY2028	$130,000
Well No. 8 – Replacement of Pump and Column Pipe	FY2028	$130,000
Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements	FY2028	$1,167,000
Matthewstown Tank Refurbishment or Demo	FY2029	$500,000
Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements	FY2029	$1,228,000
Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements	FY2030	$1,157,000
Well No. 7 – Replacement of Pump and Column Pipe	FY2031	$140,000

Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements	FY2031	$1,290,000

~~Easton Water System~~
~~Capital Improvement Plan~~

~~Project Description~~	~~Proposed Fiscal Year (FY)~~	~~Estimated Cost~~
~~New Well No. 14 (Magothy Aquifer)~~	~~FY2023/2024~~	~~$1,725,000~~
~~New Water Treatment Plant (Commerce Drive)~~		
~~Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements~~	~~FY2024~~	~~$1,000,000~~
~~Matthewstown Tank – Cleaning & Painting~~	~~FY2024~~	~~$500,000~~
~~Looping Water Mains~~	~~FY2024~~	~~$250,000~~
~~Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements~~		
~~Looping Water Mains~~	~~FY2025~~	~~$250,000~~
~~Well No. 12 – Replacement of Pump and Column Pipe~~		
~~Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements~~	~~FY2026~~	~~$1,000,000~~
~~Looping Water Mains~~	~~FY2026~~	~~$250,000~~
~~Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements~~		
~~Looping Water Mains~~	~~FY2027~~	~~$250,000~~
~~Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacement~~		
~~Well No. 8 – Replacement of Pump and Column Pipe~~	~~FY2028~~	~~$130,000~~
~~Looping Water Mains~~	~~FY2028~~	~~$250,000~~

~~Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements~~		
~~Looping Water Mains~~	~~FY2029~~	~~$250,000~~
~~Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements~~		
~~Looping Water Mains~~	~~FY2030~~	~~$250,000~~
~~Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements~~		
~~Looping Water Mains~~	~~FY2031~~	~~$250,000~~
~~Well No. 7 – Replacement of Pump and Column Pipe~~		
~~Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements~~	~~FY2032~~	~~$1,000,000~~
~~Looping Water Mains~~	~~FY2032~~	~~$250,000~~
~~Cast Iron Water Main and Valve Replacements~~		
~~Looping Water Mains~~	~~FY2033~~	~~$250,000~~

EASTON SEWER SYSTEM CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS		
PROJECT DESCRIPTION	**PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR**	**COMMENTS**
Windmill Pump Station and Force Main Replacement	FY2026	$9,809,000
Windmill Interceptor Sewer Refurbishment	FY2026	$1,900,000
Clifton Pump Station – Refurbish Pumps, Grinders, Replace ATS, VFDs, Relocate Bypass Piping	FY2026-2027	$234,500
Calvert Pump Station – Refurbish Pumps, Grinders, Replace ATS, VFDs	FY2026-2027	$200,000
SCADA, PLC & Security Upgrades	FY2026-2031	$191,500
New Wastewater Laterals	FY2026-FY2031	$371,00
WWTF - Bio. Reactor #2 Refurb.	FY2027	$481,000
WWTF - Secondary Clarifiers #1 & #2 Refurbishment	FY2027	$580,000
WWTF - Tertiary Treatment Sand Filter Refurbishment	FY2027	$938,000
WWTF - Primary & Secondary Lagoon Flow Control Refurbishment	FY2027	$614,000
Calvert Pump Station – Replace Pumps, Refurbish Grinders	FY2027	$200.000
WWTF - Influent Box and Headworks – Gates and Actuators	FY2027	$263,000
Wastewater Pumps Station – Generator Replacement	FY2027	$42,000
Sewer Main Replacement – Arcadia St	FY2027	$200,000
UMMS Pump Station & Forcemain	FY2027	$12,100,000
South Pump Station – Refurbish Pumps, Grinders, Replace VFDs, ATS	FY2027-2028	$125,500
WWTF - Influent Box and Headworks – Fine Screens Rehab	FY2028	$110,500
WWTF - Sludge Dryer Design & Replacement	FY2027-2028	$8,900,000
North Pump Station – Refurbish Pumps, Grinders, Replace VFDs,	FY2028-2029	$143,000
WWTF – Lagoon Diversion Structure Corrosion Control	FY2029	$45,000
WWTF - Bio. Reactor #1 Refurb.	FY2031	$500,000

Easton I&I Mitigation Project – Refurbish Manholes & Sewer Mains	FY2027 through FY2034	$11,900,000

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EASTON WASTEWATER SYSTEM ¶

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS¶

PROJECT DESCRIPTION ¶	**PROPOSED ¶** **FISCAL YEAR¶**	**COMMENTS¶**
Windmill Pump Station Replacement ¶	FY2024 ¶	$2,800,000.¶

Windmill Force Main Replacement ¶	FY2024 ¶	$2,418,000. ¶
Sewer Main and Manhole Refurbishment¶	¶	¶
Calvert Pump Station Refurbishment ¶	FY2024¶	$165,000¶
WWTF Engineering for Larger Capacity Sludge Dryer ¶	¶	¶
Sewer Main and Manhole Refurbishment¶	FY2025 ¶	$1,000,000.¶
WWTF Reactor #2- Aerator #503 & #504 Gearbox & Motor Rebuilds, and Repainting Aerator Paddles¶	FY2025¶	$290,000.¶
Sewer Main and Manhole Refurbishment¶	FY2026 ¶	$1,000,000.¶
WWTF Clarifiers #1 & #2 Gearbox Replacement and Painting of Skimming Arms, Scapes, and Structure¶	FY2026¶	$540,000.¶
WWTF UV System Replacement ¶	FY2026¶	$325,000. ¶
WWTF Sludge Dryer Replacement ¶	FY2026 & 2027 ¶	$7,400,000.¶
Sewer Main and Manhole Refurbishment¶	FY2027 ¶	$1,000,000.¶
Sewer Main and Manhole Refurbishment¶	FY2028 ¶	$1,000,000.¶
Sewer Main and Manhole Refurbishment¶	FY2029 ¶	$1,000,000.¶
Sewer Main and Manhole Refurbishment¶	FY2030 ¶	$1,000,000.¶
WWTF Reactor #1- Aerator #501 & #502 Gearbox & Motor Rebuilds, and Repainting Aerator Paddles¶	FY2030¶	$290,000.¶

~~Sewer Main and Manhole Refurbishment~~	~~FY2030~~	~~$1,000,000.~~
~~Sewer Main and Manhole Refurbishment~~	~~FY2031~~	~~$1,000,000.~~
~~Sewer Main and Manhole Refurbishment~~	~~FY2032~~	~~$1,000,000.~~

March 6, 2026

Mayor and Town Council
14 South Harrison Street
Easton, MD 21601

RE: TOWN OF EASTON 2026 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Dear Council Members & Mayor Cook:

The Easton Planning and Zoning Commission recently concluded our work to update the Town's Comprehensive Plan. This effort included a significant public engagement phase followed by the drafting and review of multiple iterations of the Plan. The process culminated with a Public Hearing on December 9, 2025, followed by a final round of workshops and revisions, and ultimately approval of a new Plan at our regular monthly meeting of February 19, 2026.

In accordance with the provisions of the Maryland Land Use Article, we hereby transmit the Plan to you for consideration and final action. We recommend that the action you take be the formal adoption of the Plan.

We believe our new Plan builds on the foundation of sound growth management as espoused in the current Comprehensive Plan but makes it even better by adding clarity to a number of issues, introducing a new chapter on Sustainability to address the long-term protection of the Town's environmental and fiscal resources, and does so in a format that is significantly more concise than the Plan it replaces. Our hope is that this makes the document not only clearer, but also more accessible to our citizens.

In addition to a copy of the approved Plan, we have attached a copy of the Resolution we passed to memorialize our action. It was approved unanimously by the Commission (by a vote of 4-0 with one member absent).

If you have any questions concerning this recommendation, or anything contained in the Plan, please do not hesitate to contact me or either the Director of Planning and Zoning, the Town Planner or the Town Attorney, all of whom were involved throughout the update process and can speak to our actions in this matter.

Regards,



Easton Planning and Zoning Commission
Philip Toussaint, Chair

PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NUMBER 26-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE EASTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION APPROVING THE TOWN OF EASTON 2026 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND RECOMMENDING ITS ADOPTION BY THE EASTON TOWN COUNCIL

Introduced By: Vice-Chair Ports

WHEREAS, the Town of Easton is authorized and required by the provisions of the Land Use Article of the Maryland Annotated Code § 3-202 to make and approve a comprehensive plan for the purposes of assuring the orderly development of the Town and for the other purposes as set forth in §§ 3-201 – 3-206 thereof. The Town of Easton most recently adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 2010; AND

WHEREAS, The Town of Easton Planning and Zoning Commission and the Easton Town Council have conducted numerous public meetings, culminating in the Planning Commission's Public Hearing of December 9, 2025, on the proposed Comprehensive Plan and it appears to the members of the Planning Commission that approval of the Comprehensive Plan by the Planning and Zoning Commission will inure to the benefit of the Town of Easton.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Easton Planning and Zoning Commission that:

1. The Comprehensive Plan entitled "Town of Easton 2026 Comprehensive Plan" is hereby approved as the Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Easton. A photocopy of the Comprehensive Plan shall be maintained by the Town Clerk as part of the official records of the Town.

2. The Easton Planning and Zoning Commission shall transmit this approved Plan to the Easton Mayor and Town Council with a recommendation to adopt this Plan, in whole, as the official Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Easton.

3. This Resolution shall become effective on: 2/11/2026

McAndrews	- Absent
Klein	- Yes
Ports	- Yes
Ryall	- Yes
Toussaint	- Yes

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was passed by a yea and nay vote of the Commission this 19th day of February 2026.

Philip Toussaint, Chair

Signed by the Planning Commission Chair this 6th day of March 2026.

Samantha Smith, Administrative Specialist

APPROVED

Selection Criteria:

From Date . . . . : 02/01/2026

To Date . . . . . : 02/28/2026

or

From Period . . . :

To Period . . . . :

Bank Code . . . . : 00

Page Break by Fund: Y
Include Vendor No.: Y
Print Recap Only .: N

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/04/2026	89883	2292	A-1 SANITATION SERVICE	480726	TOILET RENTAL/RANGE	001-2020-520.30-44		7/2026	238.00
								Total	238.00
02/04/2026	89884	2689	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	1N9M-KTY6-1F6W	INFRARED RED TRACK'G LGHT	001-2020-520.30-35		7/2026	485.01
				1TPF-XMQK-3THG	DRONE EQUIPMENT	001-2020-520.30-52		7/2026	139.51
				1WVH-RJ67-F6G3	OFFICE SUPPLIES	001-1075-510.30-51		7/2026	66.62
								Total	691.14
02/04/2026	89885	2942	AMERICAN TEST CENTER	2260021	5 YR FIRE TRUCK INSPECT'N	001-2110-521.30-56		7/2026	1,100.00
				2260075	LADDER TEST	001-2110-521.30-46		7/2026	52.00
								Total	1,152.00
02/04/2026	89886	2806	BACKTOWN AUTOMOTIVE/ACC	481	ENG 68 REPAIR	001-2110-521.30-46		7/2026	646.79
								Total	646.79
02/04/2026	89887	2383	BROWN, FRANKLIN O	1/31/2026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		7/2026	180.00
								Total	180.00
02/04/2026	89888	2950	CANON U.S.A. INC	6012965536	1636362/COPIER MAINT	001-2010-520.30-46		6/2026	37.34
								Total	37.34
02/04/2026	89889	6	CARTER MACHINERY COMPAN	6695071	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-3045-530.30-56		7/2026	95.32
								Total	95.32
02/04/2026	89890	943	COMMUNITY ANIMAL HOSPIT	284223	K-9 EXAM/MURPH	001-2020-520.30-49		7/2026	352.00
								Total	352.00
02/04/2026	89891	2760	COOK, DORSEY D	1/31/2026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		7/2026	270.00
								Total	270.00
02/04/2026	89892	2857	CULLINGS, ANTHONY R	1/31/2026	RENTAL CAR/TRAINING	001-2020-520.30-33		7/2026	399.16
								Total	399.16
02/04/2026	89893	129	DEPENDABLE SSR LLC	2538	BRUSH	001-3045-530.30-34		7/2026	147.83
								Total	147.83
02/04/2026	89895	146	E D SUPPLY CO INC	6675-1501558	REPLACE GFCI	001-1400-514.30-52		7/2026	112.54
								Total	112.54
02/04/2026	89896	2680	EASTERN SHORE AUTO PART	578121		001-3045-530.30-56		7/2026	42.38
				578171	NUTS & BOLTS	001-3025-530.30-52		7/2026	1,099.84
				578224	NUTS, BOLTS & PINS	001-3025-530.30-52		7/2026	236.00
				578279	HITCH PINS	001-3025-530.30-52		7/2026	28.32
				578320		001-3025-530.30-56		7/2026	74.66
				578461	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		7/2026	64.92
				578568	T-26	001-3045-530.30-56		7/2026	79.72
								Total	1,625.84
02/04/2026	89897	1000	EASTERN SHORE COFFEE &	833470		001-3045-530.30-52		7/2026	63.04
								Total	63.04
02/04/2026	89898	2593	EASTON TRUCK CENTER	84861AUP	SEAT SWITCH/SWEEPER/SW-1	001-3025-530.30-56		7/2026	59.50
				85203AUP	T-12	001-3045-530.30-56		7/2026	366.96

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/04/2026	89898	2593	EASTON TRUCK CENTER	85295AUP	T-24	001-3045-530.30-56		7/2026	44.59
								Total	471.05
02/04/2026	89899	171	EASTON VOL FIRE DEPT IN	01302026	ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION	001-2110-521.30-49		7/2026	5,000.00
								Total	5,000.00
02/04/2026	89900	9999999	EGLSEDER WEALTH MANAGEM	000109309	TAX REFUNDS	001-0000-201.00-00		8/2026	259.74
								Total	259.74
02/04/2026	89901	179	EWING INC, PAUL T	549827A-IN	SAFETY BOOTS/M DVENAS	001-3040-530.30-37		7/2026	100.00
				549859-INN	ICE MELT/SIDEWALKS	001-3045-530.30-52		7/2026	2,205.00
								Total	2,305.00
02/04/2026	89902	2463	FIDELITY POWER SYSTEMS	FPS0116586	OIL COOLER REPLCMNT/EPD	001-1400-514.30-46		7/2026	2,970.00
								Total	2,970.00
02/04/2026	89903	2228	FIRST STATE INSPECTION	314184	INSPECTION AGENCY/ELEC	001-2210-522.30-34		7/2026	4,400.00
								Total	4,400.00
02/04/2026	89905	9999999	FREDERICA SHIREY	000105250	TAX REFUNDS	001-0000-201.00-00		8/2026	484.64
								Total	484.64
02/04/2026	89907	3225	HARTFORD, THE	625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-1010-510.10-23		7/2026	58.81
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-1050-510.10-23		7/2026	48.85
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-1060-510.10-23		7/2026	11.60
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-1065-510.10-23		7/2026	95.74
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-1070-510.10-23		7/2026	203.74
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-1075-510.10-23		7/2026	94.60
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-1200-512.10-23		7/2026	247.54
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-1310-513.10-23		7/2026	190.87
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-1400-514.10-23		7/2026	112.93
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-2010-520.10-23		7/2026	388.67
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-2020-520.10-23		7/2026	1,351.01
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-2040-520.10-23		7/2026	393.44
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-2210-522.10-23		7/2026	202.21
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-2220-522.10-23		7/2026	49.97
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-2310-523.10-23		7/2026	293.75
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-3010-530.10-23		7/2026	217.05
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-3025-530.10-23		7/2026	269.90
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-3035-530.10-23		7/2026	59.14
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-3040-530.10-23		7/2026	250.22
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-3045-530.10-23		7/2026	259.74
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-4010-540.10-23		7/2026	32.61
				625269999882	01/01-01/31/2026	001-7020-570.10-23		7/2026	261.11
								Total	5,093.50
02/04/2026	89908	2063	HERTRICH FORD OF EASTON	5059849	T-22	001-3040-530.30-56		7/2026	1,238.86
				6121537	CAR 107	001-2020-520.30-56		6/2026	424.90
								Total	1,663.76
02/04/2026	89909	239	HOPKINS SALES CO INC	511190	RETIREMENT PRTY SUPPLIES	001-1060-510.10-26		7/2026	31.20
								Total	31.20

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/04/2026	89910	3522	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	AB5-12-325		001-2010-520.30-46		6/2026	14.00
								Total	14.00
02/04/2026	89911	3094	J & A BOTTLELESS WATER	73181	WATER COOLER RENTAL/QTRLY	001-2010-520.30-52		7/2026	93.00
								Total	93.00
02/04/2026	89912	1141	KELLNER, ERIC M	031925	REIMB. LUNCH - TRAINING	001-2020-520.30-40		8/2026	66.02
								Total	66.02
02/04/2026	89913	3575	KOSKA, IAN	01312026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		7/2026	180.00
								Total	180.00
02/04/2026	89914	3582	LAWSON, SHEILA	01282026	MAILBOX REPLCMNT/SNOW DAM	001-3040-530.30-49		7/2026	159.31
								Total	159.31
02/04/2026	89915	3583	LEATHERBERRY JR, WILLIA	02032026	DEATH BEN WM LEATHERBERRY	001-7030-570.30-45		8/2026	7,500.00
								Total	7,500.00
02/04/2026	89916	9999999	MACLEOD LAW GROUP LLC	000117978	TAX REFUNDS	001-0000-201.00-00		8/2026	10,807.51
								Total	10,807.51
02/04/2026	89917	322	MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL	338851	01/02-01/15/2026	001-3025-530.30-34	20-44	7/2026	31,652.19
								Total	31,652.19
02/04/2026	89918	2781	MARYLAND TRANSPORTATION	B1531147877400	TOLL	001-3045-530.30-56		7/2026	18.00
								Total	18.00
02/04/2026	89919	2205	MATHESON TRI-GAS INC	0032684915	SHOP	001-3025-530.30-56		7/2026	89.54
								Total	89.54
02/04/2026	89920	2533	MCI	01112026	2DG78570/4107703280	001-2010-520.30-41		7/2026	36.67
								Total	36.67
02/04/2026	89921	2379	MIDATLANTIC TIRE PROS	89321	CAR 901/NEW TIRE	001-2020-520.30-56		7/2026	314.57
								Total	314.57
02/04/2026	89922	3432	MILES, BRANDON R	121624	REIMB. SAFETY BOOTS	001-3040-530.30-37		8/2026	100.00
								Total	100.00
02/04/2026	89923	2710	MORGAN STANLEY	01272026	LOSAP BUDGET	001-2110-521.10-26		7/2026	106,136.00
								Total	106,136.00
02/04/2026	89924	9999999	NOVA SIXA LLC	000117978	TAX REFUNDS	001-0000-201.00-00		8/2026	4,352.61
								Total	4,352.61
02/04/2026	89925	372	P & M HYDRAULICS INC	52948		001-3045-530.30-56		7/2026	194.68
								Total	194.68
02/04/2026	89927	9999999	PENNYWORTH II LLC	000112618	TAX REFUNDS	001-0000-201.00-00		8/2026	33.38
								Total	33.38
02/04/2026	89928	3262	PEPUP	8355779	PROPANE	001-2110-521.30-43		7/2026	1,143.41
								Total	1,143.41

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/04/2026	89930	3574	PYE-BARKER FIRE & SAFET	7565548	ACCESS CONTROL 1/1-3/31	001-1400-514.30-46		7/2026	1,480.50
				7678567	REPLCMNT CONTROL BOARD	001-1070-510.30-46		7/2026	700.22
								Total	2,180.72
02/04/2026	89932	3394	RMS FITNESS	118131	EQUIPMENT SERVICES	001-2020-520.30-35		7/2026	280.00
								Total	280.00
02/04/2026	89934	448	SHERWIN-WILLIAMS CO, TH	41562149280126	PAINT	001-3045-530.30-56		7/2026	3,452.00
								Total	3,452.00
02/04/2026	89935	3584	SUSTAINOVATION LLC	20260129	50% OF TRAINING COST	001-1065-510.30-34		7/2026	3,825.00
								Total	3,825.00
02/04/2026	89936	3530	UNIFIRST FIRST AID & SA	J727360	FIRST AID SUPPLIES	001-3040-530.30-34		7/2026	102.55
								Total	102.55
02/04/2026	89937	2251	VERIZON	000012685300	151869058000170	001-2110-521.30-41		7/2026	1,527.97
								Total	1,527.97
02/04/2026	89938	2536	VFIS	386550133	INSURANCE	001-2110-521.30-38		7/2026	1,243.00
				387111133	INSURANCE	001-2110-521.30-45		7/2026	188.00
								Total	1,431.00
02/04/2026	89939	3333	WISE, TYRRELL	01312026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		7/2026	225.00
								Total	225.00
02/04/2026	89940	1975	WITMER PUBLIC SAFETY GR	INV818185	ENG 68 ELECTRICAL BOXES	001-2110-521.30-46		7/2026	89.00
								Total	89.00
02/04/2026	89941	1220	XEROX CORPORATION	024950010		001-2010-520.30-46		7/2026	9.42
				025004904	JAN '26 COPIER MAINT	001-2210-522.30-46		8/2026	167.49
								Total	176.91
02/04/2026	89942	9999999	3M COMPANY	000202329	TAX REFUNDS	001-0000-201.00-00		8/2026	129.22
								Total	129.22
02/12/2026	89943	2923	ACME AUTO LEASING LLC	26015018T	TOLL VIOLATION/FORD F150	001-2040-520.30-56		7/2026	4.00
				26020285	LEASED VEHICLES	001-2040-520.30-44		8/2026	625.00
				26020288	LEASED VEHICLES	001-2040-520.30-44		8/2026	1,520.00
								Total	2,149.00
02/12/2026	89944	2689	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	1HDW-3WTT-1VFC	KEY BOARD & MOUSE PAD	001-3040-530.30-52		7/2026	56.94
				1JLP-GY37-Q9NV	CHARGER FOR RADIO	001-3040-530.30-52		7/2026	75.44
				1XR7-V73R-6KYY	OFFSITE MEETING SUPPLIES	001-1075-510.30-51		8/2026	42.32
				17QF-91V3-3GJL	COAT RACK	001-1200-512.30-35		7/2026	31.98
								Total	206.68
02/12/2026	89945	3259	AMAZON WEB SERVICES INC	2485743929	WEB SERVICES	001-1070-510.30-34		7/2026	1,350.69
								Total	1,350.69
02/12/2026	89946	2877	AMERICAN PUBLIC SAFETY	SI-122804	PO#15357	001-2020-520.30-37		7/2026	1,159.50
								Total	1,159.50

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/12/2026	89947	98	APG MEDIA OF CHESAPEAKE	3095465	TAYLOR ANNEXATION/HEARING	001-1050-510.30-48	AN0021	7/2026	3,850.00
				3097063	ORDINANCE 850	001-1050-510.30-48		7/2026	65.63
				3097065	ORDINANCE 851	001-1050-510.30-48		7/2026	65.63
				3097574	EAST END PLAN COMM HEAR'G	001-1310-513.30-48		7/2026	242.25
				3097939	TAYLOR ANNEXATION/HEARING	001-1050-510.30-48	AN0021	7/2026	456.00
				3098318	APPL SE/FEB '26 BO2A	001-1310-513.30-48		7/2026	156.75
								Total	4,836.26
02/12/2026	89948	2846	BARCO PRODUCTS	INVRC036764	BASES FOR TRASH CANS	001-3035-530.30-35		7/2026	208.40
				INVRC036772	LINERS FOR TRASH CANS	001-3035-530.30-52		7/2026	743.19
								Total	951.59
02/12/2026	89949	2517	BAYSIDE FIRE & SECURITY	13599	ANNUAL SPRINKLER INSPEC'N	001-1400-514.30-46		7/2026	415.00
								Total	415.00
02/12/2026	89950	2790	BLUE TECH LLC	3872	INSTALLED RADAR UNIT	001-2020-520.30-56		7/2026	274.00
								Total	274.00
02/12/2026	89952	2383	BROWN, FRANKLIN O	02072026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		8/2026	180.00
								Total	180.00
02/12/2026	89953	3263	CAREFLEX LLC	2601-11727	HEALTH SAVING ACCT	001-1075-510.30-34		7/2026	223.25
								Total	223.25
02/12/2026	89954	2939	CARRION ELECTRIC	17756	REPAIR BAY LIGHT/EPD	001-1400-514.30-46		8/2026	480.80
								Total	480.80
02/12/2026	89955	6	CARTER MACHINERY COMPAN	6718131		001-3045-530.30-56		7/2026	1,374.46
				6739162		001-3045-530.30-56		8/2026	199.20
				6742577		001-3045-530.30-56		8/2026	106.40
								Total	1,680.06
02/12/2026	89956	943	COMMUNITY ANIMAL HOSPIT	284729	K9 MEDS/KNOX	001-2020-520.30-49		7/2026	86.00
								Total	86.00
02/12/2026	89957	1929	CONSUMER PROTECTION DIV	02112026	JAN '26 HOME BLDR FUND	001-0000-201.03-00		8/2026	250.00
								Total	250.00
02/12/2026	89958	1224	DEAN'S JANITORIAL SERVI	26125	JANITORIAL PW	001-1400-514.30-34		8/2026	580.80
								Total	580.80
02/12/2026	89959	2975	DELAWARE ELEVATOR SERVI	458766	TOWN HALL/ELEVATOR MAINT	001-1400-514.30-46		8/2026	144.00
								Total	144.00
02/12/2026	89960	146	E D SUPPLY CO INC	6675-1502964	EPD	001-1400-514.30-52		8/2026	90.24
								Total	90.24
02/12/2026	89961	2680	EASTERN SHORE AUTO PART	578664	T-34	001-3045-530.30-56		7/2026	99.90
				578704	BATTERY/EPD	001-2040-520.30-56		7/2026	208.22
				578706	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		7/2026	24.40
				578707	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		7/2026	127.08
				578838		001-3040-530.30-56		8/2026	117.55
				578894		001-3025-530.30-52		8/2026	5.68

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/12/2026	89961	2680	EASTERN SHORE AUTO PART	578909		001-3045-530.30-52		8/2026	86.08
				578941	T-42	001-3040-530.30-56		8/2026	152.04
				579069	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	53.41
				579077	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	14.56
								Total	888.92
02/12/2026	89962	162	EASTON HARDWARE INC	01312026		001-1400-514.30-35		7/2026	245.26
				01312026		001-1400-514.30-50		7/2026	32.94
				01312026		001-1400-514.30-52		7/2026	6.30
				01312026		001-3025-530.30-52		7/2026	10.80
				01312026		001-3025-530.30-56		7/2026	185.33
				01312026		001-3035-530.30-35		7/2026	767.99
				01312026		001-3035-530.30-52		7/2026	179.21
				01312026	TOOL RETURN	001-3035-530.30-55		7/2026	440.00-
				01312026		001-3040-530.30-52		7/2026	60.75
				01312026		001-3045-530.30-52		7/2026	463.59
								Total	1,512.17
02/12/2026	89963	2593	EASTON TRUCK CENTER	85491AUP	T-38	001-3040-530.30-56		7/2026	179.10
				85525AUP	T-12	001-3045-530.30-56		8/2026	175.42
				85568AUP	T-38	001-3040-530.30-56		8/2026	2.98
				85677AUP	T-8	001-3045-530.30-56		8/2026	300.65
								Total	658.15
02/12/2026	89965	170	EASTON UTILITIES	01232025/101086	9030 BRYAN DR	001-3010-530.30-43		7/2026	260.20
				01232025/102086	9135 MISTLETOE DR LOT 6B	001-1400-514.30-43	19-90	7/2026	56.32
				01232025/102102	9135 MISTLETOE DR LOT 6C	001-1400-514.30-43	19-90	7/2026	44.82
				01232025/102127	9135 MISTLETOE DR LOT 7A	001-1400-514.30-43	19-90	7/2026	44.82
				01232025/102170	9135 MISTLETOE DR LOT 7B	001-1400-514.30-43	19-90	7/2026	11.00
				01232025/102201	9135 MISTLETOE DR LOT 7C	001-1400-514.30-43	19-90	7/2026	11.00
				01232025/107143	46 PENNSYLVANIA AVE	001-1400-514.30-43		7/2026	378.56
				01232025/109462	1078 N WASHINGTON ST	001-4010-540.30-43		7/2026	977.22
				01232025/111116	9030 BRYAN DR	001-3010-530.30-43		7/2026	3,611.23
				01232025/111705	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1400-514.30-43		7/2026	190.00
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1010-510.30-41		7/2026	74.38
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1050-510.30-41		7/2026	99.18
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1060-510.30-41		7/2026	123.97
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1065-510.30-41		7/2026	148.77
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1070-510.30-41		7/2026	123.97
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1075-510.30-41		7/2026	123.97
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1200-512.30-41		7/2026	297.53
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1310-513.30-41		7/2026	198.36
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1400-514.30-43		7/2026	3,227.09
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-2210-522.30-41		7/2026	297.53
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-2220-522.30-41		7/2026	148.77
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-2310-523.30-41		7/2026	297.53
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-3010-530.30-41		7/2026	297.53
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-3040-530.30-43		7/2026	11,876.13
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-4010-540.30-41		7/2026	74.38
				01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-6000-560.30-41		7/2026	173.56
				01232025/119999	105 BREWERS LN	001-4010-540.30-43		7/2026	335.96
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1010-510.30-41		7/2026	74.36
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1050-510.30-41		7/2026	99.15

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02/12/2026	89965	170	EASTON UTILITIES	12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1060-510.30-41		7/2026	123.94
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1065-510.30-41		7/2026	148.73
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1070-510.30-41		7/2026	123.94
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1075-510.30-41		7/2026	123.94
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1200-512.30-41		7/2026	297.46
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1310-513.30-41		7/2026	198.30
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-1400-514.30-43		7/2026	2,543.85
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-2210-522.30-41		7/2026	297.46
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-2220-522.30-41		7/2026	148.73
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-2310-523.30-41		7/2026	297.46
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-3010-530.30-41		7/2026	297.46
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-3040-530.30-43		7/2026	11,049.38
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-4010-540.30-41		7/2026	74.36
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	001-6000-560.30-41		7/2026	173.52
				1232026/102492	EPD/106 W DOVER ST	001-2010-520.30-41		7/2026	2,112.82
				1232026/102492	EPD/106 W DOVER ST	001-2010-520.30-43		7/2026	10,733.00
				1232026/112182	EVFD/315 LEONARD RIECK DR	001-2110-521.30-43		7/2026	5,244.99
								Total	57,666.63
02/12/2026	89966	2004	ELITE K-9 INC	518092A	PO#15355	001-2020-520.30-52		7/2026	658.95
								Total	658.95
02/12/2026	89967	181	EWING DIETZ FOUNTAIN &	366		001-1010-510.30-31		7/2026	2,890.50
				366		001-1050-510.30-31		7/2026	164.00
				366		001-1060-510.30-31		7/2026	697.00
				366		001-1065-510.30-31		7/2026	512.50
				366		001-1075-510.30-31		7/2026	471.50
				366		001-1200-512.30-31		7/2026	205.00
				366		001-1310-513.30-31		7/2026	2,742.50
				366		001-1330-513.30-31		7/2026	452.50
				366		001-2010-520.30-31		7/2026	143.50
				366		001-2310-523.30-31		7/2026	1,066.00
				366		001-4010-540.30-31		7/2026	225.50
				366		001-6000-560.30-31		7/2026	61.50
				4	TAYLOR ANNEXATION	001-1310-513.30-31		7/2026	280.00
								Total	9,912.00
02/12/2026	89969	3504	FORD MOTOR CREDIT COMPA	1782442	LEASE VEHICLES	001-8010-580.70-71		7/2026	2,551.57
								Total	2,551.57
02/12/2026	89971	1269	FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLI	02082026	JAN '26 LODGE DUES	001-0000-217.17-00		8/2026	2,625.00
								Total	2,625.00
02/12/2026	89972	2930	GOOD LIFE LAWN CARE/LAN	9164	SNOW REMOVAL	001-3045-530.30-34		7/2026	20,300.00
								Total	20,300.00
02/12/2026	89973	514	GRAINGER	9793458317	COLD PATCH	001-3045-530.30-52		8/2026	1,235.20
								Total	1,235.20
02/12/2026	89974	2313	GUN SHOP, THE	53082	PO#15350	001-2020-520.30-52		7/2026	2,066.24
				53085	PO#15349	001-2010-520.30-52		7/2026	625.76
				53087	PO#15352	001-2040-520.30-52		7/2026	1,186.82
				53090	PO#15351	001-2040-520.30-52		7/2026	7,114.35

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
								Total	10,993.17
02/12/2026	89975	3225	HARTFORD, THE	625269861676		001-1010-510.10-23		8/2026	58.81
				625269861676		001-1050-510.10-23		8/2026	39.44
				625269861676		001-1060-510.10-23		8/2026	11.60
				625269861676		001-1065-510.10-23		8/2026	95.74
				625269861676		001-1070-510.10-23		8/2026	97.04
				625269861676		001-1075-510.10-23		8/2026	94.60
				625269861676		001-1200-512.10-23		8/2026	264.94
				625269861676		001-1310-513.10-23		8/2026	190.87
				625269861676		001-1400-514.10-23		8/2026	112.93
				625269861676		001-2010-520.10-23		8/2026	388.67
				625269861676		001-2020-520.10-23		8/2026	1,347.91
				625269861676		001-2040-520.10-23		8/2026	393.47
				625269861676		001-2210-522.10-23		8/2026	230.75
				625269861676		001-2220-522.10-23		8/2026	49.97
				625269861676		001-2310-523.10-23		8/2026	293.75
				625269861676		001-3010-530.10-23		8/2026	217.05
				625269861676		001-3025-530.10-23		8/2026	280.57
				625269861676		001-3035-530.10-23		8/2026	59.14
				625269861676		001-3040-530.10-23		8/2026	250.22
				625269861676		001-3045-530.10-23		8/2026	259.74
				625269861676		001-4010-540.10-23		8/2026	32.61
				625269861676		001-7020-570.10-23		8/2026	270.01
								Total	5,039.83
02/12/2026	89976	2063	HERTRICH FORD OF EASTON	5059695	EPD 900	001-2020-520.30-56		7/2026	23.88
				5059899	EPD 407	001-2020-520.30-56		8/2026	255.20
				5059909	EPD 407	001-2040-520.30-56		8/2026	75.38
								Total	354.46
02/12/2026	89977	239	HOPKINS SALES CO INC	511437		001-1400-514.30-52		8/2026	24.57
				511447		001-1400-514.30-52		8/2026	59.92
								Total	84.49
02/12/2026	89978	3125	HOWARD UNIFORM COMPANY	315390-02/15319	EPD UNIFORMS	001-2020-520.30-37		8/2026	1,782.60
								Total	1,782.60
02/12/2026	89980	18	JOHNSON CONTROLS SECURI	42054598	DIST CRT/MONITORING CHRGS	001-1400-514.30-46		7/2026	330.39
								Total	330.39
02/12/2026	89981	9999999	Kangde Xin America LLC	000201839	TAX REFUNDS	001-0000-201.00-00		8/2026	2,864.81
								Total	2,864.81
02/12/2026	89982	3575	KOSKA, IAN	02072026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		8/2026	180.00
								Total	180.00
02/12/2026	89983	9999999	LEWIS' AUTO BODY SHOP L	000200379	TAX REFUNDS	001-0000-201.00-00		8/2026	1,469.52
								Total	1,469.52
02/12/2026	89984	278	LOWE'S	88456/045765 9		001-2020-520.30-52		7/2026	38.40
								Total	38.40

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/12/2026	89985	3459	MANN, VALERIE J	01242026	QRTLY REPORTS GOCPP GRNTS	001-1065-510.30-34		7/2026	340.00
								Total	340.00
02/12/2026	89986	3327	MARYLAND DEPT OF BUDGET	01312026/950052		001-1010-510.10-23		7/2026	4,941.87
				01312026/950052		001-1050-510.10-23		7/2026	1,995.67
				01312026/950052		001-1060-510.10-23		7/2026	2,636.72
				01312026/950052		001-1065-510.10-23		7/2026	5,007.24
				01312026/950052		001-1070-510.10-23		7/2026	2,655.20
				01312026/950052		001-1075-510.10-23		7/2026	3,803.39
				01312026/950052		001-1200-512.10-23		7/2026	8,857.21
				01312026/950052		001-1310-513.10-23		7/2026	6,772.07
				01312026/950052		001-1400-514.10-23		7/2026	5,743.40
				01312026/950052		001-2010-520.10-23		7/2026	13,518.69
				01312026/950052		001-2020-520.10-23		7/2026	43,647.40
				01312026/950052		001-2040-520.10-23		7/2026	8,914.86
				01312026/950052		001-2210-522.10-23		7/2026	10,583.52
				01312026/950052		001-2220-522.10-23		7/2026	3,742.20
				01312026/950052		001-2310-523.10-23		7/2026	15,255.87
				01312026/950052		001-3010-530.10-23		7/2026	5,732.20
				01312026/950052		001-3025-530.10-23		7/2026	22,106.99
				01312026/950052		001-3035-530.10-23		7/2026	4,208.93
				01312026/950052		001-3040-530.10-23		7/2026	12,943.14
				01312026/950052		001-3045-530.10-23		7/2026	12,495.57
				01312026/950052		001-4010-540.10-23		7/2026	2,009.20
				01312026/950052		001-7020-570.10-23		7/2026	270,696.02
								Total	468,267.36
02/12/2026	89987	322	MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL	338903	LANDFILL FEES	001-3025-530.30-34		8/2026	19,726.48
								Total	19,726.48
02/12/2026	89988	2686	MCCOY, NATHAN	02072026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		8/2026	180.00
								Total	180.00
02/12/2026	89989	2533	MCI	11926/2DG77415		001-2010-520.30-41		7/2026	37.11
								Total	37.11
02/12/2026	89990	1178	MID-ATLANTIC SALT LLC	0033204-IN	BULK ICING SALT	001-3045-530.30-52		7/2026	3,664.32
								Total	3,664.32
02/12/2026	89991	333	MID-ATLANTIC WASTE SYST	PSO051395	T-4 HYD LEAK	001-3025-530.30-56		7/2026	443.68
				PSO051525	CONTROL/PLOW	001-3040-530.30-56		7/2026	183.32
								Total	627.00
02/12/2026	89992	3585	MURPHY, HARRY	01292026	REIMB GIFT SUPPLIES	001-3045-530.30-52		7/2026	42.69
								Total	42.69
02/12/2026	89993	2135	PATCHETT'S PREVENTION S	16869	ANNUAL FIRE EXT'G INSPECT	001-1400-514.30-46		8/2026	80.00
								Total	80.00
02/12/2026	89994	9999999	PERSONNEL RESOURCES GRO	000201479	TAX REFUNDS	001-0000-201.00-00		8/2026	61.62
								Total	61.62
02/12/2026	89995	2461	PETERBILT STORE - DELAW	15P259944	T-13/HEATED MIRROR	001-3040-530.30-56		5/2026	38.27

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/12/2026	89995	2461	PETERBILT STORE - DELAW	15P260132	T-17/INV#15P257364	001-3025-530.30-56		5/2026	349.05-
				15P263760	WIPER SWITCH	001-3040-530.30-56		7/2026	533.03
				15P263778	T-1	001-3025-530.30-56		7/2026	524.20
								Total	746.45
02/12/2026	89996	3507	PREMIER SERVICE GROUP L	1144	STORM DRAIN INSPECTION	001-3045-530.30-34		7/2026	570.00
								Total	570.00
02/12/2026	89997	2901	QUADIENT FINANCE USA IN	31252066/**4595	POSTAGE	001-1400-514.30-41		7/2026	1,000.00
								Total	1,000.00
02/12/2026	89998	825	R C HOLLOWAY CO	553075	CORE CREDIT	001-3025-530.30-56		7/2026	89.73-
				553995	EPD TK#400	001-2040-520.30-56		7/2026	246.73
				554088	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	228.24
				554089	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	158.82
								Total	544.06
02/12/2026	90000	1029	SHORE JANITORIAL SERVIC	0608	JANITORIAL	001-1400-514.30-46		7/2026	3,200.00
								Total	3,200.00
02/12/2026	90001	3160	SHORE LEADERSHIP	2026-20	SHORE LEADERSHIP/T NEWCMB	001-1075-510.30-33		7/2026	3,050.00
								Total	3,050.00
02/12/2026	90002	2513	SITEONE LANDSCAPE SUPPL	162035236-001	DRAINAGE PROJ/EASTON CLUB	001-3035-530.30-52		8/2026	1,823.83
								Total	1,823.83
02/12/2026	90003	461	SPURRY'S TIRE SERVICE I	00151630	NEW TIRES	001-2020-520.30-56		7/2026	1,237.96
								Total	1,237.96
02/12/2026	90004	1565	STAPLES	6046028278		001-2220-522.30-51		7/2026	38.21
				6046028280		001-1200-512.30-52		7/2026	59.53
				6046028280		001-2220-522.30-52		7/2026	61.79
				6046028281		001-1070-510.30-51		7/2026	44.99
				6046028281		001-1400-514.30-52		7/2026	27.27
				6046028283		001-2310-523.30-51		7/2026	5.30
				6046028283		001-3010-530.30-51		7/2026	28.59
				6046028283		001-4010-540.30-51		7/2026	16.12
				6046028284		001-1050-510.30-52		7/2026	6.63
				6046028284		001-1200-512.30-51		7/2026	98.02
				6046028284		001-2210-522.30-51		7/2026	39.49
				6046028284		001-3010-530.30-51		7/2026	23.61
								Total	449.55
02/12/2026	90005	1390	SUPERION LLC	456918		001-1070-510.30-34		8/2026	14,920.23
								Total	14,920.23
02/12/2026	90006	2445	TMDE CALIBRATION LABS I	55572	RADAR REPAIRS	001-2020-520.30-46		7/2026	254.23
								Total	254.23
02/12/2026	90007	2614	UNIFIRST CORPORATION	1430220475	UNIFORMS	001-3025-530.30-36		7/2026	120.98
				1430220492	UNIFORMS	001-3010-530.30-36		7/2026	47.79
				1430220496	UNIFORMS	001-3045-530.30-36		7/2026	112.57
				1430220503	UNIFORMS	001-3010-530.30-36		7/2026	29.99

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/12/2026	90007	2614	UNIFIRST CORPORATION	1430220626	UNIFORMS	001-3040-530.30-36		7/2026	217.78
				1430221562	UNIFORMS	001-3025-530.30-36		8/2026	120.98
				1430221570	UNIFORMS	001-3040-530.30-36		8/2026	217.78
				1430221571	UNIFORMS	001-3010-530.30-36		8/2026	47.79
				1430221575	UNIFORMS	001-3045-530.30-36		8/2026	112.57
								Total	1,028.23
02/12/2026	90008	2251	VERIZON	000012682713	650-008-121-0001-66	001-2010-520.30-41		7/2026	1,153.04
								Total	1,153.04
02/12/2026	90009	1011	VERIZON - RPC	6133773158	642460578-00001	001-1070-510.30-41		7/2026	51.94
								Total	51.94
02/12/2026	90010	2423	VERIZON BUSINESS	6134244425	242257038-00001	001-2010-520.30-41		7/2026	4,405.31
								Total	4,405.31
02/12/2026	90011	3588	WHITBY, MICHAEL	02062026	SAFETY BOOTS	001-3025-530.30-36		8/2026	84.24
								Total	84.24
02/12/2026	90012	3333	WISE, TYRRELL	02072026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		8/2026	180.00
								Total	180.00
02/12/2026	90013	1220	XEROX CORPORATION	025004902	726213150/TOWN ADM	001-1200-512.30-46		7/2026	180.67
				025004903	726213150/PLAN'G & ZON'G	001-1310-513.30-46		7/2026	145.87
				025004905	726406119/EPD	001-2010-520.30-46		7/2026	144.71
				025004914	726785017/ENG DEPT	001-2310-523.30-44		7/2026	206.33
								Total	677.58
02/18/2026	90014	2689	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	1F6F-FWC3-3L66	INSPECTION TOOLS	001-2210-522.30-52		8/2026	112.44
								Total	112.44
02/18/2026	90015	98	APG MEDIA OF CHESAPEAKE	01312026	EPD/ADS	001-2010-520.30-48		7/2026	3,315.00
								Total	3,315.00
02/18/2026	90016	3592	AT&T	601655	DOWNLOAD FOR CASE	001-2040-520.30-52		7/2026	70.00
				604177	DOWNLOAD FOR CASE	001-2040-520.30-52		7/2026	95.00
								Total	165.00
02/18/2026	90017	1609	ATLANTIC TRACTOR	P50263	SKID STEER	001-3040-530.30-56		8/2026	928.81
								Total	928.81
02/18/2026	90018	2806	BACKTOWN AUTOMOTIVE/ACC	175	9/30/25 INV/T-19	001-3040-530.30-56		7/2026	129.78
								Total	129.78
02/18/2026	90020	2383	BROWN, FRANKLIN O	02142026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		8/2026	225.00
								Total	225.00
02/18/2026	90021	3523	CALLAHAN SIGNS	2807	DOOR SEALS	001-3045-530.30-56		8/2026	170.00
								Total	170.00
02/18/2026	90022	2921	CANON FINANCIAL SERVICE	42547400	COPIER LEASE/EPD	001-2010-520.30-46		7/2026	144.69
								Total	144.69

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/18/2026	90023	3079	CARROLL INDEPENDENT FUE	120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-1065-510.30-55		7/2026	57.37
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-1310-513.30-55		7/2026	34.69
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-1400-514.30-55		7/2026	153.30
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-2010-520.30-55		7/2026	211.71
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-2020-520.30-55		7/2026	3,243.81
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-2040-520.30-55		7/2026	426.04
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-2210-522.30-55		7/2026	240.50
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-2220-522.30-55		7/2026	35.52
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-2310-523.30-55		7/2026	282.04
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-3010-530.30-55		7/2026	151.45
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-3025-530.30-55		7/2026	3,420.34
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-3035-530.30-55		7/2026	235.68
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-3040-530.30-55		7/2026	2,119.80
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-3045-530.30-55		7/2026	2,298.02
				120232-1471976	12/1-12/15	001-4010-540.30-55		7/2026	28.63
				120444-1487776	12/16-12/31	001-1065-510.30-55		7/2026	22.73
				120444-1487776	12/16-12/31	001-1400-514.30-55		7/2026	59.04
				120444-1487776	12/16-12/31	001-2010-520.30-55		7/2026	177.40
				120444-1487776	12/16-12/31	001-2020-520.30-55		7/2026	2,550.92
				120444-1487776	12/16-12/31	001-2040-520.30-55		7/2026	245.52
				120444-1487776	12/16-12/31	001-2210-522.30-55		7/2026	146.64
				120444-1487776	12/16-12/31	001-2310-523.30-55		7/2026	226.10
				120444-1487776	12/16-12/31	001-3010-530.30-55		7/2026	55.18
				120444-1487776	12/16-12/31	001-3025-530.30-55		7/2026	2,765.74
				120444-1487776	12/16-12/31	001-3035-530.30-55		7/2026	110.98
				120444-1487776	12/16-12/31	001-3040-530.30-55		7/2026	1,196.57
				120444-1487776	12/16-12/31	001-3045-530.30-55		7/2026	1,932.84
								Total	22,428.56
02/18/2026	90024	6	CARTER MACHINERY COMPAN	6745850	CAT MINI 2	001-3045-530.30-56		8/2026	98.24
				6752298	T-33	001-3045-530.30-56		8/2026	1,453.76
								Total	1,552.00
02/18/2026	90025	1059	CHOPTANK ELECTRIC COOPE	02032026	12/20-1/20 MULTIPLE ACCTS	001-3040-530.30-43		7/2026	1,113.00
				02062026	12/27-1/27 MULTIPLE ACCTS	001-3040-530.30-43		7/2026	591.46
								Total	1,704.46
02/18/2026	90026	1603	CINTAS FIRST AID & SAFE	5316514003	RESTOCK MEDICINE CABINET	001-2010-520.30-52		8/2026	183.15
								Total	183.15
02/18/2026	90027	3576	DASHIELL, KEMA	0214202603	TYBL OFFICAL	001-4010-540.30-34		8/2026	270.00
								Total	270.00
02/18/2026	90028	1224	DEAN'S JANITORIAL SERVI	26088	JANITORIAL SVCS/PARKS	001-1400-514.30-34		7/2026	759.34
				26142	JANITORIAL SVCS	001-1400-514.30-34		7/2026	1,870.00
								Total	2,629.34
02/18/2026	90029	3006	DELMARVA DOCUMENT SOLUT	INV16645	PRINTING CHARGE	001-3010-530.30-46		7/2026	179.83
								Total	179.83
02/18/2026	90031	3422	DIEM, LAURA	02132026	PETTY CASH REIMB/MTG/KRUF	001-1060-510.30-39		8/2026	113.00
				02132026	PETTY CASH REIMB/RECORD'G	001-1310-513.30-49		8/2026	60.00
				02132026	PETTY CASH REIMB/RECORD'G	001-2310-523.30-49		8/2026	480.00

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/18/2026	90031	3422	DIEM, LAURA	02132026	PETTY CASH REIMB/PW/POSTG	001-3010-530.30-51		8/2026	20.63
								Total	673.63
02/18/2026	90033	2680	EASTERN SHORE AUTO PART	579113	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	14.00
				579173	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	92.46
				579182	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	70.89
				579185	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	675.00
				579270	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	90.90
				579523	OIL FILTERS	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	55.62
								Total	998.87
02/18/2026	90035	2848	ENTERPRISE FM TRUST	428429B-020426	VEHICLE LEASING	001-3010-530.30-44		8/2026	24,220.36
								Total	24,220.36
02/18/2026	90036	179	EWING INC, PAUL T	549931-IN	ICE MELT/SIDEWALKS	001-3045-530.30-52		8/2026	1,200.50
				549985-IN	BROOM	001-3045-530.30-52		8/2026	57.50
								Total	1,258.00
02/18/2026	90037	3219	FACTORY MOTOR PARTS CO	342-028047	T-13	001-3040-530.30-56		8/2026	21.92
								Total	21.92
02/18/2026	90038	3504	FORD MOTOR CREDIT COMPA	1782698	LEASED VEHICLES/EPD	001-8010-580.70-71		8/2026	2,551.57
								Total	2,551.57
02/18/2026	90042	206	GALLS LLC	33680470	BOOTS/A OSTROWSKI	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	171.46
				33680472	BOOTS/G LARRIMORE JR	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	171.46
				33680515	BOOTS/H HANSON	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	188.50
				33680993	BOOTS/N SOVA	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	171.46
				33691326	BOOTS/M HROBAR	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	188.45
				33691338	BOOTS/P SALLY	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	141.74
				33692486	BOOTS/C BLAND	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	95.00
				33692741	BOOTS/J TURNER	001-2020-520.30-37	26-27	7/2026	171.50
				33692769	BOOTS/C V-TRAMS	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	107.71
				33693298	BOOTS/J SCHINAULT	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	171.46
				33696996	BOOTS/J REIBLY	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	145.96
				33704633	BOOTS/N LANGE	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	171.46
				33704664	BOOTS/T BECKETT	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	167.25
				33708852	BOOTS/C WOODARD	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	138.35
				33708868	BOOTS/G HALL	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	171.50
				33709193	BOOTS/C DOYLE	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	128.96
				33709214	BOOTS/A SALDANA	001-2020-520.30-37	26-27	7/2026	158.74
				33714417	BOOTS/B BARSTAR	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	103.50
				33722334	BOOTS/B CARROLL	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	163.00
				33741669	BOOTS/S FINCH JR	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	200.00
				33741708	BOOTS/A CULLINGS	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	196.96
				33741745	BOOTS/C MUELLER	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	200.00
				33741752	BOOTS/C WESTERFIELD	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	196.96
				33741754	BOOTS/K HARDY	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	196.96
				33748636	BOOTS/N EVERNGAM	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	200.00
				33755371	BOOTS/M BALTAZAR	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	95.00
				33768119	BOOTS/A ROBERTS	001-2020-520.30-37	26-27	7/2026	179.96
				33768163	BOOTS/C WALTERS-PARKER	001-2020-520.30-37	26-27	7/2026	200.00
				33768180	BOOTS/E KELLNER	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	188.45

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/18/2026	90042	206	GALLS LLC	33768181	BOOTS/J MERRICK	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	154.46
				33768290	BOOTS/G WRIGHT	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	162.99
				33769297	BOOTS/A ORRISON	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	129.00
				33776842	BOOTS/M COXON	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	111.95
				33781117	BOOTS/J KELLNER	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	141.74
				33781181	BOOTS/C PROCTOR	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	146.00
				33781253	BOOTS/D READING	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	146.00
				33781825	BOOTS/M SCHINAULT	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	137.49
				33825989	RETURN LABEL/M HROBAR	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	7.99
				33827364	CREDIT/RET'N/M HROBAR	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	178.45-
				33840052	BOOTS/A LOWREY	001-2010-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	200.00
				33853023	RETURN LABEL/M BALTAZAR	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	7.99
				33853411	BOOTS/H GALAN	001-2020-520.30-37	26-27	7/2026	200.00
				33853429	BOOTS/F CREEGAN	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	200.00
				33854852	CREDIT/M BALTAZAR	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	85.00-
				33868237	RETURN LABEL/N LANGE	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	7.99
				33869158	BOOTS/N LANGE	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	161.46-
				33926931	BOOTS/N LANGE	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	171.46
				33966329	BOOTS/M BALTAZAR	001-2020-520.30-37	26-27	7/2026	107.71
				34019299	RETURN LABEL/F CREEGAN	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	7.99
				34020550	CREDIT/F CREEGAN	001-2020-520.30-37	26-29	7/2026	185.00-
								Total	6,212.60
02/18/2026	90043	226	HEALTH ENHANCEMENT CENT	64704	DRUG TESTING	001-2010-520.30-31		7/2026	232.00
				64705	DRUG TESTING	001-3025-530.30-31		7/2026	58.00
								Total	290.00
02/18/2026	90044	2063	HERTRICH FORD OF EASTON	5059926	EPD 407	001-2040-520.30-56		8/2026	160.00
				5059935	EPD 400	001-2040-520.30-56		8/2026	39.00
				6122463/3	T-63	001-2040-520.30-56		8/2026	1,323.79
								Total	1,522.79
02/18/2026	90045	237	HOME PARAMOUNT PEST CON	20263845	PEST SVCS/VC	001-1400-514.30-46		8/2026	36.00
				20263846	PEST SVCS/TOWN OFFICE	001-1400-514.30-46		8/2026	33.00
				20263847	PEST SVCS/PW	001-1400-514.30-46		8/2026	38.00
				20265152	PEST SVCS/EPD	001-1400-514.30-46		8/2026	260.00
				20265176	PEST SVCS/RR	001-1400-514.30-46		8/2026	33.00
								Total	400.00
02/18/2026	90046	239	HOPKINS SALES CO INC	511596	JANITORIAL SUPPLIES	001-1400-514.30-52		8/2026	350.22
				511646		001-3025-530.30-52		8/2026	88.00
				511646		001-3040-530.30-52		8/2026	88.00
				511646		001-3045-530.30-52		8/2026	88.00
								Total	614.22
02/18/2026	90047	3226	KCI TECHNOLOGIES INC	10-ARIV1034137	INSPECTION SVCS/UMMS	001-2310-523.30-31	IN2503	7/2026	16,032.00
				12-ARIV1034135	INSPECTION SVCS/FOUR SEAS	001-2310-523.30-31	IN2502	7/2026	19,824.00
				12-ARIV1034136	INSPT'N SVCS/GANNON RNGE	001-2310-523.30-31	IN2501	7/2026	9,216.00
				2-ARIV1052035	INSPECT SVCS/GANNON RNGE	001-2310-523.30-31	IN2501	8/2026	25,632.00
				2-ARIV1052036	INSPECTION SVCS/FOUR SEAS	001-2310-523.30-31	IN2502	8/2026	8,784.00
				2-ARIV1052037	INSPECTION SVCS/SILO CRT	001-2310-523.30-31	IN2504	8/2026	6,240.00
								Total	85,728.00

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02/18/2026	90048	1167	LARRIMORE JR, GEORGE T	02132026	CRITICAL INCIDENT TRAIN'G	001-2020-520.30-40		8/2026	147.76
								Total	147.76
02/18/2026	90049	278	LOWE'S	01252026		001-1400-514.30-35		7/2026	37.98
				01252026		001-1400-514.30-50		7/2026	594.00
				01252026		001-1400-514.30-52		7/2026	3.69
				01252026		001-3025-530.30-52		7/2026	157.71
				01252026		001-3035-530.30-52		7/2026	287.27
				01252026		001-3040-530.30-52		7/2026	389.87
				01252026		001-3045-530.30-52		7/2026	1,056.76
								Total	2,527.28
02/18/2026	90050	333	MID-ATLANTIC WASTE SYST	PSO05069	SW 1 & SW 2/STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	2,033.13
				01292026	SALT BOX/T-25	001-3040-530.30-52		7/2026	1,108.34
								Total	3,141.47
02/18/2026	90051	1213	MML POLICE EXECUTIVE AS	02172026	2026 TRAIN'G CONF REGISTR	001-2010-520.30-33		8/2026	185.00
				02172026	2026 ANNUAL DUES/A LOWREY	001-2010-520.30-54		8/2026	150.00
								Total	335.00
02/18/2026	90052	1978	ORRISON, ALLEN K	02062026	ACTIVE SHOOTER TRAIN'G	001-2020-520.30-40		8/2026	226.06
								Total	226.06
02/18/2026	90053	2771	PENINSULA PRESSURE SYST	02062026	HIGH PRESSURE WASHER	001-3045-530.30-34		8/2026	348.36
								Total	348.36
02/18/2026	90054	2461	PETERBILT STORE - DELAW	15W177999	T-33	001-3040-530.30-56		8/2026	1,350.43
								Total	1,350.43
02/18/2026	90055	2109	PLUGGE, JESSICA H	01312026	PETTY CASH REIMB	001-2010-520.30-41		7/2026	20.00
				01312026	PETTY CASH REIMB	001-2020-520.30-37	26-31	7/2026	27.50
				01312026	PETTY CASH REIMB	001-2040-520.30-37		7/2026	14.00
				01312026	PETTY CASH REIMB	001-2040-520.30-52		7/2026	28.62
								Total	90.12
02/18/2026	90056	3578	POO FREE PARKS	PFP3098	DOG STATION BAGS	001-3035-530.30-52		7/2026	699.95
								Total	699.95
02/18/2026	90057	825	R C HOLLOWAY CO	554087	BATTERY CORE RETURN	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	11.00-
				554370	BATTERY FOR T-42	001-3040-530.30-56		8/2026	235.52
								Total	224.52
02/18/2026	90058	3062	ROY BRADSHAW BODY SHOP	0008771	TOW T-33 TO PETE STORE DE	001-3040-530.30-34		8/2026	450.00
								Total	450.00
02/18/2026	90059	1169	SALLY, PATRICK M	02062026	TRAIN'G	001-2020-520.30-40		8/2026	127.30
								Total	127.30
02/18/2026	90060	448	SHERWIN-WILLIAMS CO, TH	23808109500226	PAINT SUPPLIES/IDLEWLD PK	001-3035-530.30-52		8/2026	292.13
				23865109500226	TH/1ST FL/PAINT	001-1400-514.30-50		8/2026	133.83
				46033149280226	TH/DOOR REFINISH	001-1400-514.30-52		8/2026	33.47
								Total	459.43

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/18/2026	90061	3236	SMITH & DOWNEY	110643/10/1/25		001-1065-510.30-31		7/2026	100.00
								Total	100.00
02/18/2026	90062	1565	STAPLES	6053856072	WALL CALENDAR	001-4010-540.30-51		7/2026	17.99
				6053856073	POWER STRIP	001-2310-523.30-35		7/2026	41.99
				6053856074	SUPPLIES	001-4010-540.30-51		7/2026	37.74
				6053856075	OFFICE SUPPLIES	001-1200-512.30-51		7/2026	14.67
				6053856075	OFFICE SUPPLIES	001-2310-523.30-51		7/2026	64.21
				6053856076	OFFICE SUPPLIES	001-3010-530.30-52		7/2026	58.64
				6053856077	SUPPLIES	001-2210-522.30-52		7/2026	28.16
				6053856077	SUPPLIES	001-3010-530.30-51		7/2026	38.88
				6053856078	TONER & SUGAR	001-1200-512.30-51		7/2026	256.28
				6053856078	TONER & SUGAR	001-1400-514.30-52		7/2026	7.90
				6053856080	SUPPLIES	001-1200-512.30-51		7/2026	118.47
				6053856080	SUPPLIES	001-2210-522.30-51		7/2026	144.03
				6053856082	OFFICE SUPPLIES	001-2010-520.30-52		7/2026	103.26
				6053856082	OFFICE SUPPLIES	001-2020-520.30-33		7/2026	39.23
				6053856082	OFFICE SUPPLIES	001-2020-520.30-52		7/2026	385.48
				6053856082	OFFICE SUPPLIES	001-2040-520.30-52		7/2026	55.80
				6053856083	SUPPLIES	001-1400-514.30-52		7/2026	7.66
				6053856083	SUPPLIES	001-4010-540.30-52		7/2026	13.50
				6053856084	OFFICE SUPPLIES	001-2310-523.30-35		7/2026	12.13
				6053856090	SUPPLIES	001-2210-522.30-51		7/2026	3.57
								Total	1,449.59
02/18/2026	90063	2998	TALBOT COUNTY REPURPOSI	26-12565		001-3045-530.30-34		7/2026	40.00
								Total	40.00
02/18/2026	90065	2614	UNIFIRST CORPORATION	1430221576	UNIFORMS	001-3010-530.30-36		8/2026	27.11
								Total	27.11
02/18/2026	90066	2251	VERIZON	02012026	555661494000167	001-1200-512.30-41		8/2026	205.16
				02012026	555661494000167	001-2010-520.30-41		8/2026	74.00
				02012026	555661494000167	001-2210-522.30-41		8/2026	76.17
				02012026	555661494000167	001-3010-530.30-41		8/2026	72.14
								Total	427.47
02/18/2026	90067	1011	VERIZON - RPC	6133956453		001-1010-510.30-41		7/2026	170.88
				6133956453		001-1050-510.30-41		7/2026	45.47
				6133956453		001-1060-510.30-41		7/2026	42.72
				6133956453		001-1070-510.30-41		7/2026	230.89
				6133956453		001-1075-510.30-41		7/2026	42.72
				6133956453		001-1310-513.30-41		7/2026	42.72
				6133956453		001-1400-514.30-41		7/2026	85.44
				6133956453		001-2210-522.30-41		7/2026	152.43
				6133956453		001-2220-522.30-41		7/2026	42.72
				6133956453		001-2310-523.30-41		7/2026	235.89
				6133956453		001-3010-530.30-41		7/2026	642.74
				6133956453		001-3040-530.30-41		7/2026	85.44
				6133956453		001-4010-540.30-41		7/2026	180.88
								Total	2,000.94
02/18/2026	90068	2423	VERIZON BUSINESS	64181682	Y2751892	001-2010-520.30-41		8/2026	40.82

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
								Total	40.82
02/18/2026	90069	940	WARREN'S WOOD WORKS INC	743931	BOARDS ON TRUCKS	001-3040-530.30-52		8/2026	52.36
								Total	52.36
02/18/2026	90070	3333	WISE, TYRRELL	02142026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		8/2026	270.00
								Total	270.00
02/18/2026	90071	3501	YOUNG, MICHAEL	02092026	SAFETY BOOTS	001-3010-530.30-37		8/2026	95.00
								Total	95.00
02/25/2026	90072	9999999	ALBRIGHT SPORTS, LTD.	000109174	TAX REFUNDS	001-0000-201.00-00		8/2026	38.48
								Total	38.48
02/25/2026	90073	2689	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	1KRG-WF1X-C17Q	CONCRETE VIBRATOR	001-3045-530.30-52		8/2026	104.49
				1MV6-3D4P-Q4H1		001-1200-512.30-52		8/2026	49.75
				1MV6-3D4P-Q4H1	EXCAVATOR THROTTLE CABLE	001-3045-530.30-56		8/2026	20.99
				1TYT-9FRN-CF3N	WIRELESS KEYBOARD,MOUSE	001-3025-530.30-52		8/2026	45.48
				13TJ-NJNM-W9M3	HEADSET/COLIN	001-2310-523.30-51		8/2026	37.90
				16MG-MY3W-7KQW	RUNNING BOARD SIDE STEPS	001-3045-530.30-52		8/2026	293.98
				19R4-6K41-C3QC	ENGINEER SCALE RULER	001-3045-530.30-52		8/2026	44.22
								Total	596.81
02/25/2026	90074	2806	BACKTOWN AUTOMOTIVE/ACC	468	ENG 68 REPAIR	001-2110-521.30-56		7/2026	387.66
								Total	387.66
02/25/2026	90075	2517	BAYSIDE FIRE & SECURITY	14071	SPRINKLERS REPLACED	001-1400-514.30-46		8/2026	3,340.00
								Total	3,340.00
02/25/2026	90076	3419	BECKER MORGAN GROUP INC	2024213.00-13	INSPECTIONS/STRUCTURAL	001-2210-522.30-34	IN2503	8/2026	3,578.37
								Total	3,578.37
02/25/2026	90077	3406	BRADY INDUSTRIES	11257690	TOWELS	001-2110-521.30-52		8/2026	324.00
								Total	324.00
02/25/2026	90078	3079	CARROLL INDEPENDENT FUE	120655-1501358	FUEL USAGE	001-1065-510.30-55		7/2026	23.27
				120655-1501358	FUEL USAGE	001-1400-514.30-55		7/2026	80.17
				120655-1501358	FUEL USAGE	001-2010-520.30-55		7/2026	76.32
				120655-1501358	FUEL USAGE	001-2020-520.30-55		7/2026	2,727.80
				120655-1501358	FUEL USAGE	001-2040-520.30-55		7/2026	323.41
				120655-1501358	FUEL USAGE	001-2210-522.30-55		7/2026	124.66
				120655-1501358	FUEL USAGE	001-2220-522.30-55		7/2026	34.69
				120655-1501358	FUEL USAGE	001-2310-523.30-55		7/2026	220.94
				120655-1501358	FUEL USAGE	001-3010-530.30-55		7/2026	41.61
				120655-1501358	FUEL USAGE	001-3025-530.30-55		7/2026	3,333.13
				120655-1501358	FUEL USAGE	001-3035-530.30-55		7/2026	173.43
				120655-1501358	FUEL USAGE	001-3040-530.30-55		7/2026	1,935.00
				120655-1501358	FUEL USAGE	001-3045-530.30-55		7/2026	1,949.72
				1506478	FUEL REPAIRS	001-3040-530.30-55		7/2026	422.53
				1506479	FUEL PUMP REPAIRS	001-3040-530.30-55		7/2026	403.15
				1521914	FUEL REPAIRS	001-3040-530.30-55		7/2026	625.00
								Total	12,494.83

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02/25/2026	90079	2735	CHOPTANK SUPPLY INC	2601-137509	SALT SPREADER	001-3040-530.30-52	EM2601	7/2026	339.00
				2602-139899	SOD CUTTER RENTAL	001-3040-530.30-44		8/2026	330.00
								Total	669.00
02/25/2026	90080	2874	CUSTIS JR, WILLIAM L	02212026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		8/2026	225.00
								Total	225.00
02/25/2026	90081	3456	DDAGER CONSULTING LLC	02242026	3/29-4/1/2026 CYCLIST TRN	001-2020-520.30-33		8/2026	2,950.00
								Total	2,950.00
02/25/2026	90082	3006	DELMARVA DOCUMENT SOLUT	INV16917	COPIER CONTRACT	001-1050-510.30-35		8/2026	9.19
								Total	9.19
02/25/2026	90083	129	DEPENDABLE SSR LLC	2561	CONCRETE/BRUSH	001-3045-530.30-34		8/2026	1,162.74
								Total	1,162.74
02/25/2026	90085	2680	EASTERN SHORE AUTO PART	579345	CREDIT	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	693.87-
				579612	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	25.14
				579615	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	587.80
				579785	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	66.46
				579798		001-3010-530.30-35		8/2026	270.88
								Total	256.41
02/25/2026	90086	1000	EASTERN SHORE COFFEE &	878523	WATER COOLER	001-3025-530.30-52		7/2026	8.95
								Total	8.95
02/25/2026	90087	2593	EASTON TRUCK CENTER	85985AUP	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	32.00
								Total	32.00
02/25/2026	90088	170	EASTON UTILITIES	02092026/104172		001-2010-520.30-43		8/2026	709.01
				02092026/106026		001-2110-521.30-43		8/2026	436.43
				02092026/108041		001-4010-540.30-43		8/2026	7.42
				02092026/110908		001-2110-521.30-43		8/2026	344.71
				02092026/113684		001-4010-540.30-43		8/2026	390.83
				02162026/120699		001-4010-540.30-43		8/2026	99.95
								Total	1,988.35
02/25/2026	90089	179	EWING INC, PAUL T	549968-IN		001-3045-530.30-52		8/2026	1,200.50
								Total	1,200.50
02/25/2026	90090	3176	FARR, RICHARD D	2202026	AIRLINE TKTS/ADP CONF	001-1075-510.30-40		8/2026	1,767.22
								Total	1,767.22
02/25/2026	90091	2463	FIDELITY POWER SYSTEMS	FPS0117281	PW	001-1400-514.30-46		8/2026	730.00
				FPS0117305	EPD	001-1400-514.30-46		8/2026	1,490.30
				FPS0117307	PW	001-1400-514.30-46		8/2026	1,858.64
								Total	4,078.94
02/25/2026	90092	2322	FINK WHITTEN & ASSOCIAT	12-6707	PLAT REVIEW	001-2310-523.30-31		8/2026	200.00
								Total	200.00
02/25/2026	90093	3420	GIPE ASSOCIATES INC	44617	HOSPITAL/HVAC INSPECTIONS	001-2210-522.30-34	IN2503	7/2026	1,015.00
								Total	1,015.00

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02/25/2026	90094	3121	GRIFFITH ENERGY SVCS IN	3415/7562578	CARDLOCK	001-2110-521.30-55		8/2026	952.51
				59687/7536862	STATION 60	001-2110-521.30-55		8/2026	1,712.43
								Total	2,664.94
02/25/2026	90095	2031	HENCKEL, FREDERICK	02252026	SNOW PLOWING ASSISTANTS	001-3045-530.30-34		8/2026	1,300.00
								Total	1,300.00
02/25/2026	90096	2063	HERTRICH FORD OF EASTON	5059995	T-73	001-3035-530.30-56		8/2026	343.38
								Total	343.38
02/25/2026	90097	2571	HILYARD'S BUSINESS SOLU	INV359020	COPIER	001-2220-522.30-46		8/2026	62.75
				INV359020	COPIER	001-4010-540.30-46		8/2026	62.74
								Total	125.49
02/25/2026	90098	239	HOPKINS SALES CO INC	511911	JANITOR SUPPLIES	001-2110-521.30-52		8/2026	188.79
				512038	FLOOR CLEANER	001-2110-521.30-52		8/2026	13.85
								Total	202.64
02/25/2026	90099	2876	IIMC INTERNATIONAL INS	02192026	MEMBERSHIP DUES #38539	001-1050-510.30-54		8/2026	220.00
								Total	220.00
02/25/2026	90100	2679	JAMES, TEDDY	02212026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		8/2026	180.00
								Total	180.00
02/25/2026	90101	3163	JOHN E REID & ASSOCIATE	6YRL1IH8-0001	TRAINING	001-2040-520.30-33		8/2026	655.00
								Total	655.00
02/25/2026	90102	3575	KOSKA, IAN	02212026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		8/2026	180.00
								Total	180.00
02/25/2026	90103	322	MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL	338952	LANDFILL FEES	001-3025-530.30-34		8/2026	23,903.64
				618356	LANDFILL FEES	001-3025-530.30-34		8/2026	1,381.40
								Total	25,285.04
02/25/2026	90104	1489	MARYLAND INDUSTRIAL TRU	P21382	TAILGATE LOCK PADS T-5	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	150.16
								Total	150.16
02/25/2026	90105	2781	MARYLAND TRANSPORTATION	B1531147965880	TOLLS	001-3025-530.30-52		8/2026	6.00
								Total	6.00
02/25/2026	90106	333	MID-ATLANTIC WASTE SYST	PSO052303-1	T-24	001-3040-530.30-56		8/2026	324.29
								Total	324.29
02/25/2026	90107	2849	MID-SHORE FIRE SERVICE	INV-1973	AT-61	001-2110-521.30-56		7/2026	1,901.02
				INV-2017	E-68 REPAIR	001-2110-521.30-56		8/2026	332.65
				INV-2018	AT-61	001-2110-521.30-56		8/2026	312.50
								Total	2,546.17
02/25/2026	90108	2963	NATIONAL HVAC SERVICE	SF-P17867	CIRCULATOR REPLACEMENT TH	001-1400-514.30-46		7/2026	1,023.00
				SRVCE232671	DIAG COOLING	001-1400-514.30-46		7/2026	380.00
								Total	1,403.00
02/25/2026	90110	3221	PA TURNPIKE	MD-09422LG	17958696	001-2210-522.30-40		7/2026	5.00

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
								Total	5.00
02/25/2026	90111	3262	PEPUP	8398465	PROPANE	001-2110-521.30-43		8/2026	1,395.79
								Total	1,395.79
02/25/2026	90112	389	PIERSON COMFORT GROUP L	QB7595	PORTA POTS	001-3035-530.30-34		7/2026	285.00
								Total	285.00
02/25/2026	90113	2216	QUADIENT LEASING USA IN	Q2219072	POSTAGE MACHINE LEASE ADM	001-1200-512.30-46		8/2026	479.97
								Total	479.97
02/25/2026	90114	825	R C HOLLOWAY CO	552783	CREDIT REC'VD 1/13	001-3035-530.30-56		7/2026	89.73
				554725	FLOOR SCRAPPER EFD	001-2110-521.30-56		8/2026	337.84
								Total	427.57
02/25/2026	90117	9999999	RYAN LLC PAYING FOR L3	000201802	TAX REFUNDS	001-0000-201.00-00		8/2026	25.48
								Total	25.48
02/25/2026	90118	3324	SAFEHOUSE LLC	54406	ANNUAL ALARM MONITORING	001-3010-530.30-54		8/2026	360.00
								Total	360.00
02/25/2026	90119	448	SHERWIN-WILLIAMS CO, TH	26702109500226		001-1400-514.30-50		8/2026	38.74
				48419149280226		001-1400-514.30-50		8/2026	11.47
								Total	50.21
02/25/2026	90120	461	SPURRY'S TIRE SERVICE I	00152659	T-14/LEFT FRONT TIRE	001-3045-530.30-56		8/2026	397.49
								Total	397.49
02/25/2026	90121	2614	UNIFIRST CORPORATION	1430216515	1323119	001-3045-530.30-36		7/2026	112.57
				1430222467	UNIFORMS	001-3025-530.30-36		8/2026	120.98
				1430222491	UNIFORMS	001-3040-530.30-36		8/2026	216.18
				1430222495	UNIFORMS	001-3010-530.30-36		8/2026	47.79
				1430222506	UNIFORMS	001-3045-530.30-36		8/2026	112.57
				1430222513	UNIFORMS	001-3010-530.30-36		8/2026	17.06
				1430223547	UNIFORMS	001-3025-530.30-36		8/2026	138.98
				1430223562	UNIFORMS	001-3040-530.30-36		8/2026	235.89
				1430223567	UNIFORMS	001-3010-530.30-36		8/2026	47.79
				1430223570	UNIFORMS	001-3045-530.30-36		8/2026	112.57
				1430223572	UNIFORMS	001-3010-530.30-36		8/2026	22.06
								Total	1,184.44
02/25/2026	90122	2067	UTILITY EASTERN SHORE T	UP9943	STOCK	001-3025-530.30-56		8/2026	5.35
								Total	5.35
02/25/2026	90124	3333	WISE, TYRRELL	02212026	TYBL OFFICIAL	001-4010-540.30-34		8/2026	225.00
								Total	225.00
02/25/2026	90125	1975	WITMER PUBLIC SAFETY GR	INV832770	ENG 68/JUNCTION BOXES	001-2110-521.30-56		8/2026	1,368.00
								Total	1,368.00
						217 Checks	** Fund Total		1,120,987.36

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/04/2026	89904	3508	FOUNDATION OF HOPE INC	REIMB #3	DHCD GRANT SDF-2025	120-5000-550.30-49	GS2501	8/2026	2,919.00
								Total	2,919.00
02/12/2026	89967	181	EWING DIETZ FOUNTAIN &	366		120-5000-550.30-34	TC0601	7/2026	102.50
								Total	102.50
02/18/2026	90034	170	EASTON UTILITIES	1282026/121279		120-5000-550.30-43		7/2026	89.57
								Total	89.57
						3 Checks	** Fund Total		3,111.07

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/18/2026	90019	1365	BAY VANGUARD BANK	02172026	IMPACT FEES/MUNICIPAL FAC	175-0000-101.80-01		8/2026	17,450.12
				02172026	IMPACT FEES/POLICE SVCS	175-0000-101.80-02		8/2026	12,365.96
				02172026	IMPACT FEES/PARKS & REC	175-0000-101.80-03		8/2026	124,633.65
				02172026	IMPACT FEES/TRANSPORTAION	175-0000-101.80-04		8/2026	42,839.70
				02172026	IMPACT FEES/STORMWATER	175-0000-101.80-06		8/2026	9,191.72
								Total	206,481.15
						1 Checks	** Fund Total		206,481.15

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/04/2026	89894	2189	DPC EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT	251634B	LIGHT UPGRADE FOR AT-61	390-2110-521.60-64	26-11	7/2026	21,391.02
								Total	21,391.02
02/04/2026	89906	2794	GILLESPIE PRECAST LLC	137112	INLET STRUCTURE	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP011	7/2026	7,592.80
								Total	7,592.80
02/04/2026	89926	2702	PATUXENT MATERIALS INC	317893	BACKFILL AGGREGATE	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP011	7/2026	407.96
				318698	BACKFILL AGGREGATE	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP011	7/2026	779.73
								Total	1,187.69
02/04/2026	89929	2497	POTOMAC VALLEY BRICK &	30001674	BRICK POLYSAND	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP209	7/2026	49.72
								Total	49.72
02/04/2026	89931	3005	RELIABLE CONCRETE SERVI	1917	CONCRETE FINISHING	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP209	7/2026	2,963.25
								Total	2,963.25
02/04/2026	89933	2879	SCHUSTER CONCRETE READY	659018		390-2310-523.60-63	ARP209	6/2026	1,875.45
				661848	CONCRETE FOR ADA RAMPS	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP209	7/2026	849.00
								Total	2,724.45
02/12/2026	89951	59	BRAMBLE INC, DAVID A	34502	COLD PATCH	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP011	7/2026	1,320.00
								Total	1,320.00
02/12/2026	89962	162	EASTON HARDWARE INC	01312026		390-2310-523.60-63	ARP011	7/2026	120.94
								Total	120.94
02/12/2026	89968	179	EWING INC, PAUL T	549821-IN	AGGREGATE	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP011	7/2026	317.21
				549982-IN	TRUNCATED DOMES	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP209	8/2026	1,347.50
								Total	1,664.71
02/12/2026	89970	3586	FORTILINE, INC	7238509	STORMDRAIN PIPE/EAST AVE	390-2310-523.60-63	21-19	7/2026	13,283.20
								Total	13,283.20
02/12/2026	89999	2879	SCHUSTER CONCRETE READY	661156	CONCRETE	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP209	7/2026	1,779.75
				661277	CONCRETE	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP209	7/2026	1,016.25
								Total	2,796.00
02/18/2026	90030	3591	DELMARVA POWER & LIGHT	02102026	APPLICATION FEE	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP323	8/2026	1,500.00
								Total	1,500.00
02/18/2026	90032	146	E D SUPPLY CO INC	6675-1503684	CONDUIT	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP209	8/2026	231.15
				6675-1503792		390-2310-523.60-63	ARP209	8/2026	37.44
				6675-1505918	STREET LIGHT CONDUIT	390-2310-523.60-63	26-16	8/2026	196.64
								Total	465.23
02/18/2026	90049	278	LOWE'S	01252026		390-2310-523.60-63	ARP011	7/2026	426.01
								Total	426.01
02/18/2026	90063	2998	TALBOT COUNTY REPURPOSI	26-12565		390-2310-523.60-63	ARP011	7/2026	612.00
								Total	612.00
02/18/2026	90064	3118	TOWN & COUNTRY ROOFING/	0423	CONTRACT/2ND OF 3/ROOF	390-1400-514.60-62	26-24	8/2026	10,843.00
								Total	10,843.00

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/25/2026	90084	146	E D SUPPLY CO INC	6675-1505155	CONDUIT	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP209	8/2026	213.10
								Total	213.10
02/25/2026	90089	179	EWING INC, PAUL T	549982-IN	TRUNCATED DOMES	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP209	8/2026	1,347.50
								Total	1,347.50
02/25/2026	90109	2404	NORTHEASTERN SUPPLY INC	4793870	CAUTION TAPE/PVC CEMENT	390-2310-523.60-63	26-16	8/2026	46.28
								Total	46.28
02/25/2026	90116	3005	RELIABLE CONCRETE SERVI	1925	CONCRETE FINISHING SVC	390-2310-523.60-63	ARP209	8/2026	2,310.00
								Total	2,310.00
					20 Checks	** Fund Total			72,856.90

CHECK DATE	CHECK NUMBER	VENDOR	NAME	INVOICE	DESCRIPTION	G/L NUMBER	PROJECT	PERIOD/ YEAR	AMOUNT
02/12/2026	89965	170	EASTON UTILITIES	01232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	601-6000-560.30-43	EDMY01	7/2026	2,236.50
				12232025/111745	14 S HARRISON ST	601-6000-560.30-43	EDMY01	7/2026	2,070.75
								Total	4,307.25
02/12/2026	89979	2609	IRVIN HAYES PLUMBING &	3582	EMERG WORK/REPL HOT WATER	601-0000-162.00-00		7/2026	607.43
								Total	607.43
02/12/2026	89980	18	JOHNSON CONTROLS SECURI	41999664	DIST CRT	601-0000-162.00-00		7/2026	1,400.00
								Total	1,400.00
02/25/2026	90115	3540	RANDY ARNESEN TERMITE &	106045	PEST CONTROL	601-0000-162.00-00	EDMY01	8/2026	70.00
								Total	70.00
02/25/2026	90123	3465	WATER TESTING LABS OF M	2975	DC H3O TEST	601-0000-162.00-00	EDMY01	8/2026	705.00
								Total	705.00
						5 Checks	** Fund Total		7,089.68
						246 Checks	*** Bank Total		1,410,526.16
						246 Checks	**** Grand Total		1,410,526.16

BANK	NAME	FUND		AMOUNT	
00	SHORE UNITED BANK	001	GENERAL FUND	1,120,987.36	
		120	CDBG	3,111.07	
		175	INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMNT	206,481.15	
		390	CAPITAL EQUIPMENT FUND	72,856.90	
		601	LAND ENTERPRISE	7,089.68	
			Total	1,410,526.16	*
			Grand Total	1,410,526.16	*