

# THE TOWN OF RIDGELY 2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



SEPTEMBER 2009 – FINAL PLAN VERSION

# THE TOWN OF RIDGELY 2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



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In Coordination with the Ridgely Planning Commission

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# Introduction Introduction

The *2009 Ridgely Comprehensive Land Use Plan* (Comprehensive Plan) includes revisions to the 1997 *Ridgely Comprehensive Plan* as well as additions to meet applicable State laws. While this Plan is intended to describe growth policies for the Town, there are aspects of growth that relate to neighboring areas outside municipal boundaries. Therefore, abstracts from plans developed by Caroline County, Maryland also are included.

## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The “Purpose” of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a series of goals, objectives, and practical implementation recommendations to manage and direct growth and development in Ridgely.

## BACKGROUND

The Comprehensive Plan is the effort of the Ridgely Planning Commission and Town Commissioners to ensure that the municipality’s positive traits are preserved and enhanced for residents and visitors alike. This Plan serves as a guide for making decisions regarding land use and growth management. The Comprehensive Plan review and update has been a group effort on behalf of the citizens of Ridgely and its government. The Plan is not intended to be a static document. It should be reviewed and updated periodically (every five or six years) to reflect new development trends, shifts in the economy, or changes in the community's goals and objectives.

## VISION STATEMENT

*“Ridgely will provide appropriate opportunities for employment within the community, while preserving the Village of Ridgely as an attractive rural community that encourages growth and development appropriate both in scale and scope with the existing community.”*

Comprehensive planning and land-use regulation in Ridgely is an activity that the citizens of Town have undertaken and encourage because they value the type of community that Ridgely represents. The citizens of Ridgely wish to preserve that community for themselves and for their children. They also want to encourage others to come into their community to share their pleasure and responsibilities as citizens.

Central to the current appearance and quality of life benefits is the the historic core of Ridgely, which is often referred to as the “Village of Ridgely” local residents. This includes a strong belief in the village atmosphere of the Town as the value of living in a small rural community surrounded by scenic agriculture and historic sites and structures. Accordingly, this Plan has been prepared to help ensure that the “Village of Ridgely” continues to prosper and remains a viable entity within the larger bounds of the Town’s corporate limits.

In order to fulfill the Vision Statement, a set of goals, objectives, and recommendations have been developed to guide and manage Ridgely in a manner appropriate with the vision for the community. These goals are based on the desire to maintain the community and promote orderly growth. They also are based on the visions for growth management as developed by the State of Maryland, which encourages the revitalization of traditional communities such as Ridgely, while encouraging appropriate new development.

## WHAT WILL RIDGELY LOOK LIKE IN 2020?

The Comprehensive Plan is the future vision of Ridgely, in the context of its past, present, and potential future. The Plan contains practical and realistic recommendations for bringing the Town's vision into reality. The ideas behind the Plan are a distillation of the community's desires. The Comprehensive Plan seeks to create a better fit with development codes and the realities of "what's on the ground" to create more flexibility. The effect is to produce a simple plan, regulations, and processes to address land use and growth management.

What Ridgely will look like in the future depends on the community's vision as expressed in the Plan. It also depends on how effective that vision is translated into the regulatory process (implementation). It is the goal of this planning process to provide recommendations that begin to address the Town's implementation program. This includes the sufficiency of existing regulations, processes, and procedures. It also includes staffing and funding limitations, infrastructure, administration, and resource management.

The Comprehensive Plan will assist to prioritize strategies and actions to capitalize on structural strengths, mitigate conflicts, and develop effective regulations and procedures. A comprehensive plan is only as good as the ability to implement its goals and objectives. The vision of this Comprehensive Plan is to promote growth consistent with the traditions and history of the Town of Ridgely, Maryland.

## DEVELOPING THE RIDGELY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a series of goals, objectives, and recommendations to manage and direct growth and development in Ridgely. The Comprehensive Plan is the result of Planning Commission and Town Commissioner efforts to understand the current condition of the Town, its historical growth patterns, and recent developments. These have all combined to create its present appearance and condition.

Once adopted, it becomes the basis for the preparation of specific policies, programs, and legislation, such as zoning and subdivision regulations, to implement the policies set forth in the Plan. Developing a Comprehensive Plan is the first step in a process that defines Town policies for future legislative action, including and most importantly, the development of laws. As a policy document, it is general in nature "a big picture process:" It encompasses the entire geographic area of the Town, including all functional elements that bear upon its physical development, such as

transportation, land use, and community facilities. The Comprehensive Plan also summarizes Ridgely’s policies but does not establish detailed regulations. As a policy manual, the Comprehensive Plan reflects the laws and regulations of the State of Maryland and its various regulatory agencies. In addition, growth near Ridgely is heavily influenced by decisions made by the local government of Caroline County, Maryland and the general and specific topography and geography of the region.

## COMPONENTS OF A GROWTH MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Comprehensive Plan provides the basic framework and direction for all components of what may be considered the Town’s planning program. The Comprehensive Plan is not a “stand-alone” document but is supported and, in turn, supports related planning and zoning program documents such as the following:

- Ridgely Zoning Ordinance;
- Ridgely Subdivision Regulations;
- Ridgely Capital Improvements Plan & Budget-CIP;
- Ridgely Water & Sewer Facilities Plans; and
- Ridgely Design Guidelines.

## MARYLAND PLANNING LAWS AND POLICIES

### ARTICLE 66B – PLANNING & ZONING ENABLING ACT

*Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland* is the Planning and Zoning enabling legislation from which the Town of Ridgely derives its powers to regulate land use. Section 3.05 of the Article sets forth the minimum requirements for a comprehensive plan which shall include, among other things:

- A statement of goals and objectives, principles, policies, and standards;
- A land use plan element;
- A transportation plan element;
- A community facilities plan element;
- A mineral resources plan element, if current geological information is available;
- An element that addresses land development regulations to implement the plan;
- An element containing the planning commission's recommendations for land development regulations to implement the plan; and
- Other elements deemed appropriate, such as a community renewal section, housing, conservation, natural resources, heritage preservation, etc. at the discretion of the commission.

The context for planning in the Town of Ridgely must account for the growth management policies established by the State of Maryland in the Planning and Zoning Act. These policies or State "visions" include the following:

### **MARYLAND ARTICLE 66B**

Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland: *Planning & Zoning Enabling Act* is the State's preeminent planning law, providing jurisdictions power over local land use and growth management decisions.

1. Development is concentrated in suitable areas;
2. Sensitive areas are protected;
3. In rural areas, growth is directed to existing population centers and resources are protected;
4. Stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and the land is a universal ethic;
5. Conservation of resources, including a reduction in resource consumption;
6. Economic growth is encouraged and regulatory mechanisms are streamlined;
7. Adequate public facilities and infrastructure under the control of the county or municipal corporation are available or planned in areas where growth is to occur; and
8. Funding mechanisms are addressed to achieve these "Visions."

As the State's pre-eminent growth management law, Article 66B requires that county and municipal plans be coordinated. Each county and municipality within Maryland is required to update their comprehensive land use plans and implementing provisions every six (6) years. This Comprehensive Plan has been prepared to meet the State's eight visions.

### **MARYLAND ECONOMIC GROWTH, RESOURCE PROTECTION & PLANNING ACT OF 1992**

The *Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act of 1992* added the requirement that a comprehensive plan must contain a Sensitive Areas Element, which describes how the jurisdiction will protect the following:

- Streams and stream buffers;
- 100-year floodplains;
- Endangered species habitats;
- Nontidal wetland;
- Steep slopes; and
- Other sensitive areas a jurisdiction wants to protect from the adverse impacts of development.

## NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION & SMART GROWTH AREAS ACT OF 1997



In 1997, the Maryland General Assembly enacted the *Neighborhood Conservation and Smart Growth Areas Act* (Smart Growth). The intent of the legislation is to marshal the State's financial resources to support growth in Maryland's communities and limit development in agricultural and other resource conservation areas. At the heart of the Smart Growth concept are the "Priority Funding Areas" (PFA's), which represent local growth areas for targeted State funding. PFA's include municipalities, rural villages, communities, industrial areas, and planned growth areas to be served by public water and sewerage.

### PRIORITY FUNDING AREAS – PFA'S

Lands within "Growth Areas" may be designated as a PFA provided sewer service is planned in a 10 year period and included in the *Caroline County Water & Sewerage Plan*, provided such designation is a long-term and planned development policy reflected in the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

The 8<sup>th</sup> "Vision" of Article 66B creates consistency between the Planning and Zoning Enabling Act and Smart Growth by requiring adequate public infrastructure for State funding. Plans must show designated "Growth Areas" including areas planned for annexation by municipalities. Lands within local growth boundaries may be designated as a Priority Funding Area (PFA) provided sewer service is planned in a 10-Year Water and Sewerage Plan and provided such designation is a long-term and planned development policy that promotes efficient land use and public infrastructure. Plans must include areas considered as PFA's, such as planned water and sewerage service areas, residential development areas, industrial development areas, economic development areas, and parks.

## MARYLAND STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE

Maryland has procedures to ensure that public infrastructure improvements are consistent with growth policies, as defined in the law. The Planning and Zoning Enabling Act stipulates that a local government "may not approve a local construction project involving the use of State funds, grants, loans, loan guaranties, or insurance, unless the project is consistent with the State's "Visions."

The Maryland State Finance and Procurement Article links the concept of Priority Funding Areas to State financial assistance funding for infrastructure and other related projects. Under Title 5; Subtitle 7B-03 of the State Finance and Procurement Article, funding for growth-related projects will be provided by the State "...only if the project serves to maintain the character of the community and does not serve to increase the growth capacity of the community except for limited peripheral or in-fill development."<sup>1</sup> The law continues by stating that "...if an existing community receives a public or community sewer system, an area beyond the periphery of the developed

<sup>1</sup> *State Finance & Procurement Article*; Title 5, Subtitle 7B-03.

portion of the existing community may be designated as a priority funding area, if the development has a permitted average density of at least 3.5 units per acre and is served by a public or community sewer system.”<sup>2</sup>

Ridgely’s corporate boundaries as of 1997 are considered a State “Certified” Priority Funding Area, according to Maryland Department of Planning data. In addition, the newly annexed properties that constitute the Ridgely Airport and Business Technology Park also are considered “Certified” Priority Funding Areas by the State. Under Title 5; Subtitle 7B-03, “An area, other than an existing community (Town etc.), may be designated as a priority funding area if the area is within a locally designated growth area of the local government and is planned to be served under the approved 10-year water and sewer plan.”

### **MARYLAND HOUSE BILL 1141**

In 2006, the Maryland State Legislature passed House Bill 1141 (HB 1141), which provides for Amendments to Article 66B: “Planning & Zoning Enabling Act” and Article 23A: “Municipal Annexation Act” of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Amendments include provisions for the inclusion of a “Water Resources Element” and “Municipal Growth Element” in local comprehensive plans.

**HOUSE BILL 1141**

HB 1141 requires a “Municipal Growth Element” and a “Water Resources Element” for all comprehensive plans. HB 1141 strongly encourages inter-jurisdictional coordination and cooperation with the County and State for effective growth management.

Municipal and County coordination was a much debated topic in the 2006 Maryland General Assembly session. HB 1141 establishes additional substantive and procedural requirements for municipalities preparing comprehensive plans. This includes inter-governmental coordination for land use and growth management planning.

Information developed under the provisions of HB 1141 will be reviewed and evaluated by State agencies including the Maryland Departments of the Environment, Natural Resources, and Planning. Some provisions of the Bill are not effective until October 2009. Substantive procedural requirements include the following:

- The Town must include in its Comprehensive Plan a “Municipal Growth Element” that specifies where Ridgely intends to grow, if at all, outside its existing corporate limits. It also must discuss how the Town intends to address services, infrastructure, and environmental protection needs for the Growth Area.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



- The Town must develop the “Municipal Growth Element” in coordination with Caroline County. Prior to approving a Growth Element, the Town must provide a copy to the County, accept comments from the County, meet and confer with the County, and, on request from either entity, engage in mediation to facilitate the Growth Element.
- The Town and County must include in their respective comprehensive plans a “Water Resource Plan Element” that identifies drinking water and other water resources to meet current and future demands. It also must identify suitable water and land areas to receive stormwater and wastewater derived from development.
- In order for land annexed after September 2006 to qualify for State assistance as a Priority Funding Area-PFA, the Town must complete an analysis of land capacity available for development. This includes infill and redevelopment. It also includes an analysis of land as needed to satisfy demand for development.
- House Bill 1141 gives affected local governments until October 1, 2009 to update their comprehensive plans to include the Water Resources Element, now required by existing law. There is the possibility of one to two six month extensions for good cause. Local governments that have not updated their plans by that time may not change the zoning classification of a property until their updates are complete.
- The Town must develop and share with other planning agencies an “Annexation Plan” that is consistent with its Growth Element in the Comprehensive Plan.

HB 1141 requires the Maryland Department of the Environment-MDE to provide technical assistance to local governments regarding the development of a Water Resources Element. The Maryland Department of Planning-MDP also is required to provide technical assistance to a municipality regarding the “Municipal Growth Element.” MDP encourages municipalities and counties to participate in joint planning processes and agreements.

HB1141 changes the current “5-Year Rule.” In the past, the “5-Year Rule” would allow a County to delay municipal zoning on a newly annexed area. Under HB 1141, if land uses under a proposed municipal zoning for an annexed area are substantially different from the land uses specified for the area in a county comprehensive plan, mitigation may be required (if the county fails to approve the change). The new standard under HB 1141 will be to determine whether a substantial difference exists between the land uses and densities permitted under proposed town zoning and the land uses for an annexed area, including densities, permitted under the current county zoning. The mandates of HB 1141 indicate a strong need to coordinate new growth closely with the County and State.

## SMART, GREEN, AND GROWING – SMART AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH ACT OF 2009

During the 2009 legislative session of the Maryland General Assembly, major amendments were enacted to Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland as well as the State Finance and Procurement Article. These combined amendments, known as the *Smart and Sustainable Growth Act of 2009*, represent substantive changes to the State’s planning and zoning enabling laws:

**Updates to the State’s Eight Visions:** In 2009, the Eight Visions espoused in Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland have been expanded to include the following additional visions listed below. These visions also are included in the State Finance and Procurement Article (State Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Policy).

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

12. **Implementation:** Strategies, policies, programs, and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, state, and interstate levels to achieve these visions.

**Priority Funding Areas:** The Smart and Sustainable Growth Act of 2009 affects Priority Funding Areas (PFA's) in regards to public land, adequate public facilities, and transfer of development rights. Changes to State laws discuss restrictions, moratoriums, or other capacity limitations imposed on development as a result of a local ordinance or law. These restrictions must be reported to the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) every 2 years by the local jurisdiction, based on specific criteria. In turn, MDP must prepare a report regarding the statewide impacts of adequate public facilities every 2 years. Transfer of development rights language has been expanded to include transfers in PFA's. The purpose is to assist local governments in the purchase of land for a public facility. Public facilities include recreational, transportation, and educational. Proceeds from any sale must be used to assist in purchasing a public site or constructing a public facility.

**Reporting Requirements:** The Smart and Sustainable Growth Act of 2009 establishes annual reporting criteria for local governments so the State Department of Planning in coordination with the national Center for Smart Growth can build the necessary data to analyze growth trends and impacts statewide over time. Measures and indicators for reporting include the following textual and mapped information, which will be determined by MDP:

- The amount and share of growth being located inside and outside PFA's;
- The net density of growth in these areas;
- The creation of new lots and the issuance of residential and commercial building permits in these areas;
- The development capacity analysis (updated every 3 years or when significant change occurs in land use/zoning);
- The number of acre preserved with local agricultural land preservation funding (if applicable); and
- Other information on achieving statewide goals under revised state laws.

County and municipal corporations that issue less than 50 building permits per year for new residential units are exempt from the stipulated measures and indicators. However, annual reporting is still expected by a local jurisdiction, whereby the jurisdiction must prove that less than 50 building permits were issued on any given year. Jurisdictions are required to submit their respective reports by July 1, 2010.

**Comprehensive Plan Clarification:** The Smart and Sustainable Growth Act of 2009 seeks to clarify the role of the comprehensive plan and the adoption of ordinances and regulations in relation to said comprehensive planning. Declaring the intent of the Maryland General Assembly, the purpose is to create consistency with comprehensive plans, which "...should be followed as closely as possible while not being elevated to the status of an ordinance and that deviations from the plan

should be rare.” Legislative intent also seeks to encourage the development of ordinances and regulations that apply to locally designated PFA’s, promoting mixed uses, sustainable design and development, and incentive based processes consistent with the new visions of the Act enumerated above.

The Smart and Sustainable Growth Act of 2009 requires all local jurisdictions to enact a land use plan and educate planning commission and board of zoning appeals members regarding the planning process. The education course is to be developed by MDP. It also highlights the important role played by citizens that assist in the comprehensive planning process for their respective communities. According to the amendment, “citizens invest countless hours in determining the future direction of their jurisdiction through local comprehensive plans...and...the people of Maryland are best served if land use decisions are consistent with locally adopted comprehensive plans.”

## COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING FOR RIDGELY

Comprehensive planning and land-use regulation in Ridgely takes its authority from Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland, as discussed above, and from the Charter of Ridgely. Both documents enable the Town Commission to create plans, prepare zoning regulations, and control the Town’s growth and development.



Although, the universal opinion in Ridgely has been to preserve the scale and amenities of the village, Town residents have also demonstrated that they are interested in orderly growth and development on an appropriate scale. Much of the land in Ridgely is open space or agricultural land. The retention of this land for agricultural use, along with the agricultural land surrounding municipal boundaries is important. However when that land is developed and changed from its current use, the goal is for that land to be converted to residential use or for recreational or cultural use to the benefit of Ridgely. This is especially important for agricultural land and open space that immediately surrounds the Town but is located and managed by Caroline County and not by the Town of Ridgely.

Laws, regulations, and policies set by the State of Maryland are designed to encourage residential growth around existing communities that have sufficient infrastructure to service new development. Ridgely is one of those communities with sufficient water and sewer capacity to accommodate new development. The planned increases for Ridgely and its population constitute “good planning,” which has been encouraged by both Caroline County and the State of Maryland.

It is important that Ridgely influences and exercises control over the type of development that may occur around its borders. The most important mechanism that Ridgely has to influence events and building in its immediate environs is to strictly and properly control its water and sewer capacity. This will ensure that areas are provided Town water and sewer service, which will be compatible with the growth policies developed as a result of this Plan.

## THE PURPOSE OF THE RIDGELY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Ridgely recognizes the reality of growth concluding the concept that “standing still or going backward is not a real option.” In this regard, a proactive approach was chosen, while also highlighting the need to preserve the Town’s distinctive character and resources. As the Town grows, demands for its services and assistance also will grow. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes this reality and incorporates a number of actions for the Town Commission and for the Planning Commission to undertake in the near future. Among these initiatives are:

1. Develop a capital improvements plan to ensure that Ridgely needs and infrastructure are adequately maintained and capable of supporting the Town’s requirements;
2. Initiate comprehensive rezoning of the entire community, based upon the contents of this Plan.
3. Develop subdivision regulations for future growth that will allow for the orderly development of open space within the Town and protect the Village of Ridgely;
4. Continue to encourage the revitalization of the older residential neighborhoods and the Central Business District (CBD);
5. Ensure the preservation and rehabilitation of the Town’s many older and historic buildings, in accordance with Design Standards.
6. Provide opportunities for new industrial and commercial growth in appropriate areas;
7. Maintain design standards and goals for all new nonresidential construction and alteration;
8. Provide recreational opportunities for all segments of Ridgely’s population; and
9. Ensure the cooperation among all levels of government that directly impacts on the lives of the residents of Ridgely.

The 2009 *Ridgely Comprehensive Plan* includes many suggestions and recommendations for action on the part of the Planning Commission, the Town Commission, as well as the citizens of Ridgely. As with any plan, it is only as good as its implementation on the part of the government and its citizens. If the goals of this Plan are to succeed, the Town must incorporate the recommendations of the Plan into actions; either by ordinance or by resolution. Among the Town’s priorities is the review and update of the *Ridgely Zoning Ordinance*, *Ridgely Subdivision Regulations*, and *Ridgely Design Guidelines* to ensure the protection of the “Village of Ridgely” through the creation of effective controls for the growth and revitalization of the community.

# Chapter 1 Existing Conditions

“Existing Conditions” describes past and present demographic trends and patterns for the Town of Ridgely in Caroline County, Maryland. This includes social demographics, such as population growth and housing characteristics. It also includes economic demographics such as income and poverty characteristics.

## POPULATION GROWTH

The population of Ridgely remained fairly stable throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century until the 1990s, when it began to increase sharply. The Town’s earlier growth remained insubstantial from decade to decade prior to 1990, sometimes only varying by 50 people or less. However, between 1990 and 2000, the U.S. Census recorded an approximate 31% increase in population, bringing the total from 1,034 to 1,352 residents as shown in Table 1-1. This increase was largely due to new development and housing construction in the Town.

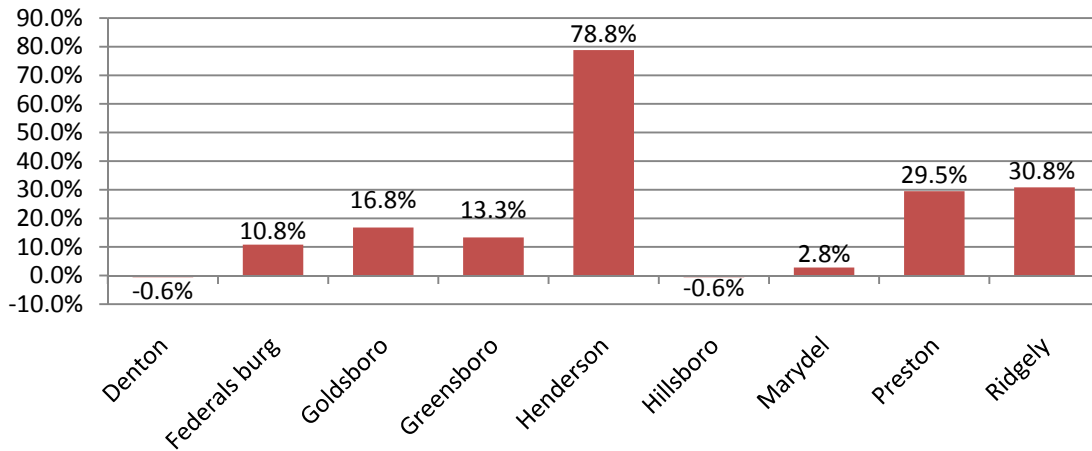
Classification	1990 Population	2000 Population	% Change 1990-2000	2005 Population	% Change 2000-2005	2006 Population*	% Change 2005-2006
<b>Caroline County</b>	<b>27,035</b>	<b>29,772</b>	<b>10.1%</b>	<b>31,805</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>32,617</b>	<b>2.6%</b>
Denton	2,977	2,960	-0.6%	3,280	10.8%	3,552	8.3%
Federalsburg	2,365	2,620	10.8%	2,635	0.6%	2,649	0.5%
Goldsboro	185	216	16.8%	210	-2.8%	209	-0.5%
Greensboro	1,441	1,632	13.3%	1,951	19.5%	1,958	0.4%
Henderson	66	118	78.8%	121	2.5%	122	0.8%
Hillsboro	164	163	-0.6%	158	-3.1%	158	0.0%
Marydel	143	147	2.8%	143	-2.7%	143	0.0%
Preston	437	566	29.5%	582	2.8%	644	10.7%
<b>Ridgely</b>	<b>1,034</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>30.8%</b>	<b>1,364</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>1,485</b>	<b>8.9%</b>

\*Maryland Department of Planning Estimate  
Sources: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census; MD Department of Planning 2006 Municipal Population Estimates

As shown in Figure 1-1 below, a comparison of the 1990-2000 population increase in municipalities for Caroline County reveals a significant increase in a number of towns, most notably Henderson, Preston, and Ridgely, where the population grew by 30%. Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) municipal population estimates reflect an average annual growth rate for Ridgely of 1.5% between 2000 and 2006.

While the growth of Ridgely during the 1990s seemed to be part of a County-wide trend for municipalities at the time, the additional growth estimated by MDP for 2005-2006 is only evident in Denton, Preston, and Ridgely, which indicates that these towns are still experiencing significant growth.

**FIGURE 1-1: Population Change 1990-2000 Caroline County Municipalities**



As shown in Table 1-2, percentages of growth derived from MDP’s annual population estimates for Ridgely for the period from July 1, 2000 to July 1, 2006 vary from a low of -1.2% for 2003 -2004 to a high of 8.9% from 2005 - 2006. Based on these MDP estimates, the average annual percentage of growth for the Town of Ridgely for that period was 1.5%. This was the fourth highest growth rate of the County’s nine municipalities.

**TABLE 1-2: ANNUAL MUNICIPAL GROWTH 2000 – 2006 (CAROLINE COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES)**

Classification	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	Avg. Annual Growth
Denton	-0.2%	0.6%	0.8%	3.1%	4.1%	8.3%	2.8%
Federalsburg	-0.7%	-0.3%	0.8%	-1.0%	0.7%	0.5%	0.0%
Goldsboro	-0.9%	-0.5%	0.0%	-1.4%	0.0%	-0.5%	-0.5%
Greensboro	-0.1%	0.7%	3.9%	2.4%	11.0%	0.4%	3.0%
Henderson	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%	0.6%
Hillsboro	-1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	-1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.5%
Marydel	-0.7%	-0.7%	0.0%	-1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.5%
Preston	-0.4%	0.7%	1.9%	-1.2%	1.7%	10.7%	2.2%
<b>Ridgely</b>	<b>-0.7%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>-1.2%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>8.9%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>

Source: Maryland Department of Planning Municipal Population Estimates

# POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

## AGE & GENDER

As shown in Table 1-3, the median age in Ridgely is 32.6 years of age, the approximate middle of the range of median ages for Caroline County municipalities. There are more people between the ages of 25 and 44 years old (the prime workforce age range) and under 18 (school-age children) in Ridgely than there are in any other age groups. Ridgely has one of the lowest percentages of people aged 65 and older in the County (10.8%). Women outnumber men in the Town by a little more than 10 percent.

**TABLE 1-3: AGE COMPARISONS**

Classification	Total Pop.	Percent of total population					Median age (years)	Males per 100 females	
		Under 18 years	18 to 24 years	25 to 44 years	45 to 64 years	65 yrs & over		All ages	18 yrs and over
Denton	2,960	23.3	8.3	26.8	19.6	22	38.9	87.3	80.4
Federalsburg	2,620	30.8	9.7	26	19.4	14.2	33.2	81.8	74.9
Goldsboro	216	31.5	5.6	31	21.3	10.6	32	98.2	102.7
Greensboro	1,632	32.4	9.4	29.4	16.5	12.3	31.1	85	80.8
Henderson	118	31.4	11	31.4	17.8	8.5	31	96.7	92.9
Hillsboro	163	20.9	9.8	33.1	23.3	12.9	36.8	94	87
Marydel	147	28.6	12.2	31.3	18.4	9.5	31.5	116.2	133.3
Preston	566	25.3	4.9	38.2	17.1	14.5	35.6	101.4	93.2
<b>Ridgely</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>30.4</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>31.1</b>	<b>19.6</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>32.6</b>	<b>89.6</b>	<b>87.1</b>

\*Source: 2000 U.S. Census

## HOUSEHOLDS

As shown in Table 1-4, approximately, 68% of the 513 households in Ridgely are family households. Of those, about 40% have children under 18 living in the home. Half of all family households are married couples with families; 15% of family households are headed by females with no husband in the home. Of non-family households, 27% are householders living alone, and about 11% of those are people aged 65 and older. The average household size in Ridgely is 2.63 people; the average family household is 3.21 people.



**TABLE 1-4: COMPARISONS OF HOUSEHOLDS & FAMILIES**

Classification	Total Households	Percent of total households							Average Pop.	
		Family households				Nonfamily households			Per Household	Per Family
		Total	With own children under 18 yrs	Type of family		Total	Householder living alone			
				Married couple family	Female Household no husband present		Total	65 yrs and over		
Denton	1,140	61%	31%	38%	18%	39%	34%	15%		
Federalsburg	1,045	68%	37%	38%	25%	32%	27%	14%	25%	30%
Goldsboro	77	77%	38%	55%	13%	23%	21%	78%	28%	32%
Greensboro	616	66%	41%	42%	20%	34%	29%	14%	26%	33%
Henderson	42	69%	41%	41%	24%	31%	21%	48%	28%	33%
Hillsboro	71	63%	30%	52%	85%	37%	30%	11%	23%	27%
Marydel	47	70%	38%	49%	17%	30%	26%	85%	30%	34%
Preston	225	75%	32%	62%	98%	25%	20%	71%	25%	29%
<b>Ridgely</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>32%</b>

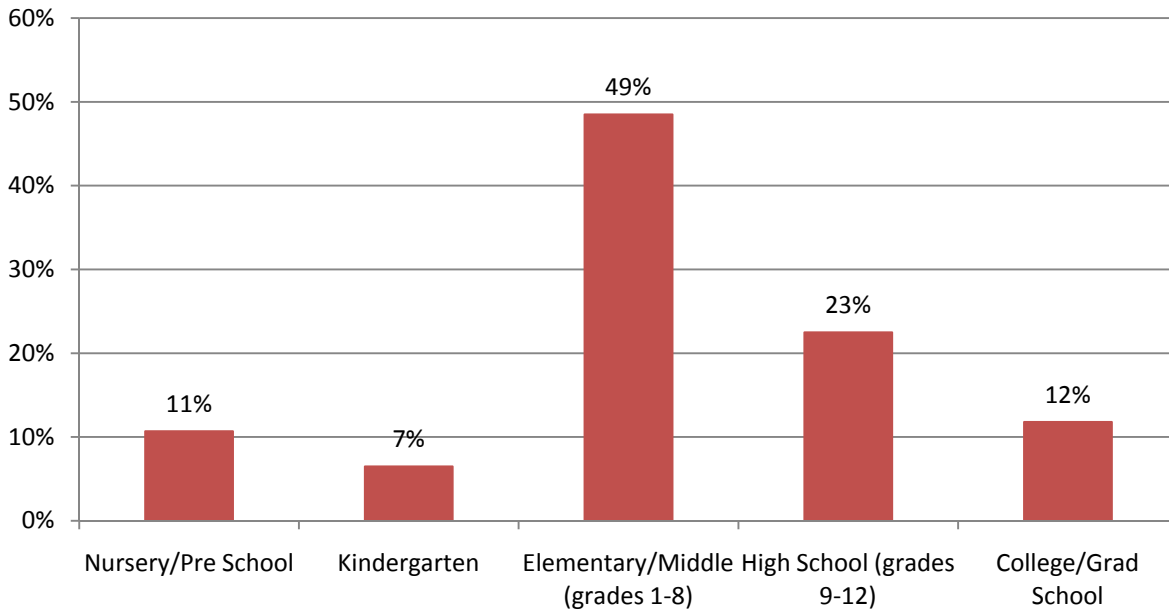
\*Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Note: The U.S. Census defines a family as a householder and one or more other people living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. All people in a household who are related to the householder are regarded as members of his or her family. A household can contain only one family for purposes of census tabulations. Not all households contain families since a household may be a group of unrelated people or one person living alone. Families are classified by type as either a "married-couple family" or an "other family" according to the presence of a spouse. "Other family" is further broken out according to the sex of the householder. The data on family type are based on answers to questions on sex and relationship that were asked on a 100-percent basis. A married-couple family is a family in which the householder and his or her spouse are enumerated as members of the same household.

## EDUCATION

As indicated in Figure 1-2, one quarter (1/4) of the population of Ridgely (338 people, aged 3 years and older) attends school. Nearly half of them (49%) are enrolled in elementary school. Children attending high school account for 23% of all enrollments; the percentages of students attending nursery/preschool (11%) and students attending college/graduate school (12%) are almost equal. Kindergartners comprise the remainder of school enrollments.

**FIGURE 1-2: School Enrollment**



As shown in Table 1-5, 9% of the population aged 25 years and older has less than a ninth grade education. Nearly 70% of this age group has at least a high school diploma. Among 25 to 34 year olds in Ridgely, about 7% have a bachelor’s degree or higher. Of the nine municipalities in Caroline County, only five have a percentage of 25 to 34 year olds who hold college degrees.

**TABLE 1-5: SCHOOL ENROLLMENT & EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

Classification	Population 16 to 19 yrs - % not enrolled in school and not a high school graduate	Population 18 to 24 yrs--% enrolled in college or graduate school	Population 25 years and over		
			Percent with less than a 9 <sup>th</sup> grade education	Percent high school graduate	Percent with bachelor’s degree or higher
Denton	9.8	13.4	8.9	22.3	17.4
Federsburg	10.5	10.2	11.1	2.6	5.2
Goldsboro	75	13.3	10.8	0	0.6
Greensboro	3	12.7	8.5	8.2	9.2
Henderson	40	0	5.4	0	2.7
Hillsboro	0	18.8	2.7	0	9
Marydel	0	20	30.1	0	0
Preston	23.8	18.5	2.9	21.8	19.2
<b>Ridgely</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>10.4</b>

\*Source: 2000 U.S. Census

## EMPLOYMENT

As shown in Table 1-6, about 70% of the population aged 16 and older is in Ridgely's labor force. Females account for 60% of the total labor force, and of those women, about 68% have children under the age of six. The average commute time for workers is 32.3 minutes. About 16% of the workforce commutes to work in carpools. No one uses public transportation as a means of commuting. A little more than half of all workers commute to jobs outside of Caroline County.

**TABLE 1-6: COMPARISON OF EMPLOYMENT STATUS & COMMUTING TO WORK**

Classification	Population 16 years and over % in labor force			Civilian labor force Percent un employed	Own children % with all parents in family in labor force		Workers 16 years and over			
	Total	Female			Under 6 years	6 to 17 years	% in carpools	% using public trans.	Who did not work at home-Mean travel time to work (minutes)	% worked outside county of residence
		Total	With own children under 6 years							
Denton	53.4	53.6	82.9	4.3	78	79.9				
Federalsburg	59.1	52.8	72.1	5.2	71.6	71.6	22.4	0.5	25	44
Goldsboro	71.6	58.4	94.4	0	96.8	65.8	10.7	1.7	42.5	69.4
Greensboro	64.9	60.7	74.5	6.6	67.2	71.9	19.4	0.3	29.2	55.6
Henderson	66.3	52.9	50	6.3	66.7	88.9	13.6	0	29.7	50.8
Hillsboro	73.7	62.3	80	4.2	66.7	70.6	21.7	0	28.5	78.3
Marydel	60	56.1	66.7	5.8	70.6	53.3	0	0	25.8	79.1
Preston	72.3	65.9	64.1	2.3	73.1	70.8	11.6	0	28.2	64.3
<b>Ridgely</b>	<b>68.5</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>67.7</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>59.4</b>	<b>70.5</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>52.2</b>

\*Source: 2000 U. S. Census

As shown in Table 1-7, nearly a quarter (24.7%) of Ridgely's workforce is employed in sales and office occupations. The next largest percentage of the workforce (23.4%) is employed in production, transportation, or material moving occupations. Equal percentages of workers (17.1%) are employed in management/professional occupations and construction/extraction/maintenance occupations. Some 16% of the labor force is employed by local, state, or federal government, the third highest percentage of government workers of all Caroline County municipalities. Less than 2% of the working population is employed in the agricultural/forestry/fishing/hunting industries. As of 2000, Ridgely had the highest unemployment rate of all Caroline County municipalities at nearly 9%.

**TABLE 1-7: OCCUPATION, INDUSTRY, & CLASS OF WORKER**

Classification	Percent distribution by occupation						% in selected industries		% gov't workers - local state, federal
	Management professional, & related	Service occupations	Sales & office occupations	Farming, fishing & forestry occupations	Construction, extraction, & maintenance occupations	Production, transportation & material moving occupations	Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting	Manufacturing	
Denton	35.5	18.6	24.4	0.5	9.4	11.5	0.5	12.1	20.7
Federalsburg	11	15.8	31.1	0.8	11.9	29.5	2.1	23.5	12.4
Goldsboro	13.7	16.8	19.8	0	25.2	24.4	2.3	15.3	7.6
Greensboro	19.5	17.4	24	1.3	16.5	21.2	0.7	15.8	14.5
Henderson	13.6	23.7	16.9	0	16.9	28.8	0	10.2	3.4
Hillsboro	12	17.4	31.5	0	14.1	25	0	4.3	3.3
Marydel	10.2	20.4	20.4	0	14.3	34.7	4.1	26.5	2
Preston	28	11.5	35.8	0	8.4	16.2	1	8.8	17.9
<b>Ridgely</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>24.7</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>16</b>

\*Source: 2000 U. S. Census

## INCOME & POVERTY

### INCOME & POVERTY INDEX

In 1999, Ridgely’s “Median Household Income” was the second highest of all Caroline County municipalities at \$35,750. “Median Family Income” was the third highest of all County municipalities at \$38,929. Ridgely ranked in the middle of all County municipalities for per capita income, which was approximately \$15,581. Although women outnumbered men in the workforce, men out-earned women by about 38%.

**FIGURE 1-3: Income Characteristics**



Although Ridgely’s median income is higher than most Caroline County municipalities, evidence exists that a sizeable portion of the population is experiencing some level of economic hardship. Nearly half of the students who attended Ridgely Elementary School (44%) and Lockerman Middle School (45%) are eligible for the school’s free lunch program, compared to the State average of 32%.

<b>1999 Income</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Less than \$35,000	49%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	21.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	18.2%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	4.6%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.5%
*Source: 2000 U.S. Census	

As shown in Table 1-8, according to the 2000 U.S. Census, nearly half (49%) of all households in Ridgely earned less than the Town’s median income in 1999 (\$35,750) and a little over 11% of the total population of Ridgely is living below the poverty level. This is slightly more than the percentage of people, some 10.2%, living below the poverty level in the County (see Comparison of Income & Poverty Table below).

As shown in Table 1-9, among families, almost 8% are living on incomes below the poverty level, compared to 9% for the County. Of the population in Ridgely, for whom poverty status was determined, 15% were over the age of 65 and 12% were under the age of 18. Both of these age groups rely more heavily on public assistance programs for food, housing, and healthcare because age prevents a large percentage of them from earning incomes (see U.S. Census 1999 Poverty Thresholds Table below).

<b>Size of Family Unit</b>	<b>Poverty Threshold</b>	<b>Size of Family Unit</b>	<b>Poverty Threshold</b>
One Person (unrelated individual)	\$8,501	Four people	\$17,029
Under 65 yrs old	\$8,667	Five people	\$20,127
65 yrs and older	\$7,990	Six people	\$22,727
Two People	\$10,869	Seven people	\$25,912
Householder under 65	\$11,214	Eight people	\$28,967
Householder 65 and older	\$10,075	Nine people or more	\$34,417
Three people	\$13,290	N/A	N/A
Source: 2000 U.S. Census			

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines "very low-income" families as those earning 50% of the median family income for an area. "Low-income," as defined by HUD, is 80% of the median family income for an area. The 2000 median family income for Ridgely was \$38,929. Of the 351 family households in Ridgely, 9% met the HUD definition of very low income and an additional 9% met the definition of low income.

Poverty and low income affect more than 20% of all people living in Ridgely and almost 20% of all families. As a result, these individuals and families are dependent to some extent on federal, state, or local assistance to meet the costs of housing, energy costs, health care, and food. The Department of Social Services in Caroline County provides most of the programs available to Ridgely residents including home energy cost assistance, food stamps, emergency food and housing assistance, Section 8 housing,

and welfare-to-work programs. In 1999, according to the U.S. Census, only 23 of Ridgely’s 517 households (approximately 5%) were receiving public assistance income.

**TABLE 1-10: COMPARISON OF INCOME & POVERTY**

Classification	Median income in 1999 (dollars)		Per capita income in 1999	Median earnings in 1999 of full-time, year-round workers		Income in 1999 below poverty level			
	Households	Families		Male	Female	Percent of population for whom poverty status is determined			Percent of families
						All ages	Related children under 18 yrs	65 yrs and over	
Denton	\$34,936	\$42,583	\$18,631	\$27,475	\$20,504	8.1	7.4	7.6	6.6
Federalsburg	\$24,266	\$32,059	\$13,878	\$28,438	\$21,296	25.3	35.2	18.2	21
Goldsboro	\$39,500	\$38,750	\$14,548	\$27,083	\$23,750	9.6	21.7	0	5.1
Greensboro	\$31,397	\$36,083	\$13,787	\$27,092	\$20,729	16.5	21.6	17.1	15.6
Henderson	\$32,500	\$33,125	\$11,678	\$30,625	\$21,875	14.2	15.2	16.7	16.1
Hillsboro	\$29,583	\$35,500	\$16,318	\$29,167	\$20,000	9.5	0	11.1	0
Marydel	\$25,250	\$26,500	\$12,379	\$22,083	\$12,083	16.5	24.2	0	20.8
Preston	\$48,125	\$53,365	\$20,617	\$37,083	\$23,182	4.9	7.9	5.2	3.6
<b>Ridgely</b>	<b>\$35,750</b>	<b>\$38,929</b>	<b>\$15,581</b>	<b>\$27,356</b>	<b>\$19,844</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>7.8</b>

\*Source: 2000 U.S. Census

## HOUSING

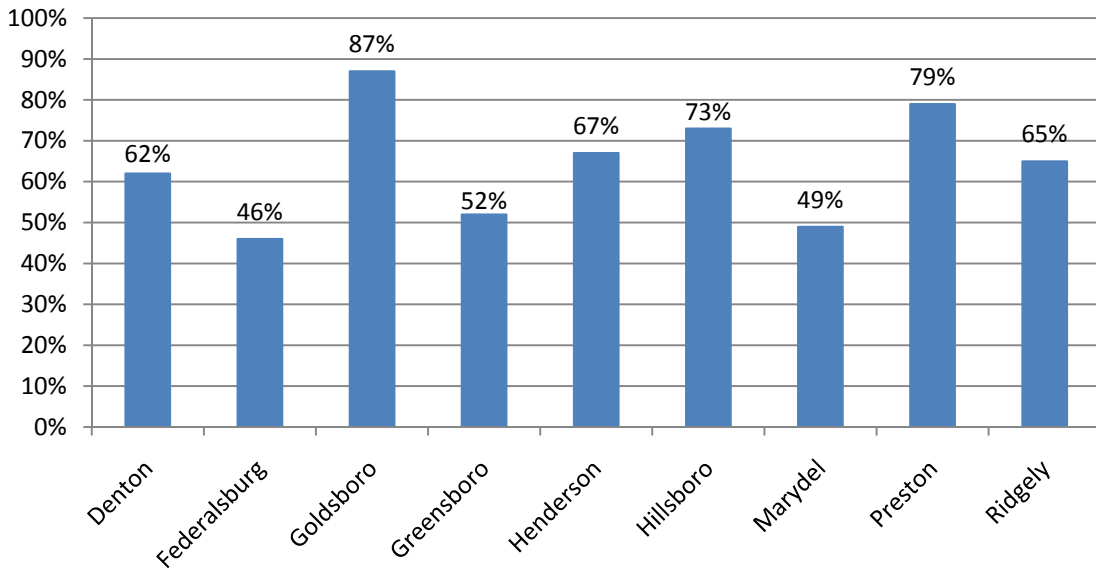
According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Ridgely and Preston are the only municipalities in the County that have no mobile homes in their housing stock. Five of Ridgely’s housing units did not have complete plumbing facilities. Nearly a third (32%) of Ridgely’s housing stock was built before 1939. Some 29% were built between 1990 and 2000. The median number of rooms in all Ridgely housing units was 5.4.

Compared to other County municipalities and to the County itself, Ridgely has a significantly higher number of single family homes as a percentage of total housing stock. Approximately 65% of the residents of Ridgely own their own homes. The average household size of these home-owner occupied units is 2.57 persons. The average household size of renter-occupied units is 2.88 persons.

Of the 549 units that comprised Ridgely’s housing stock in 2000:

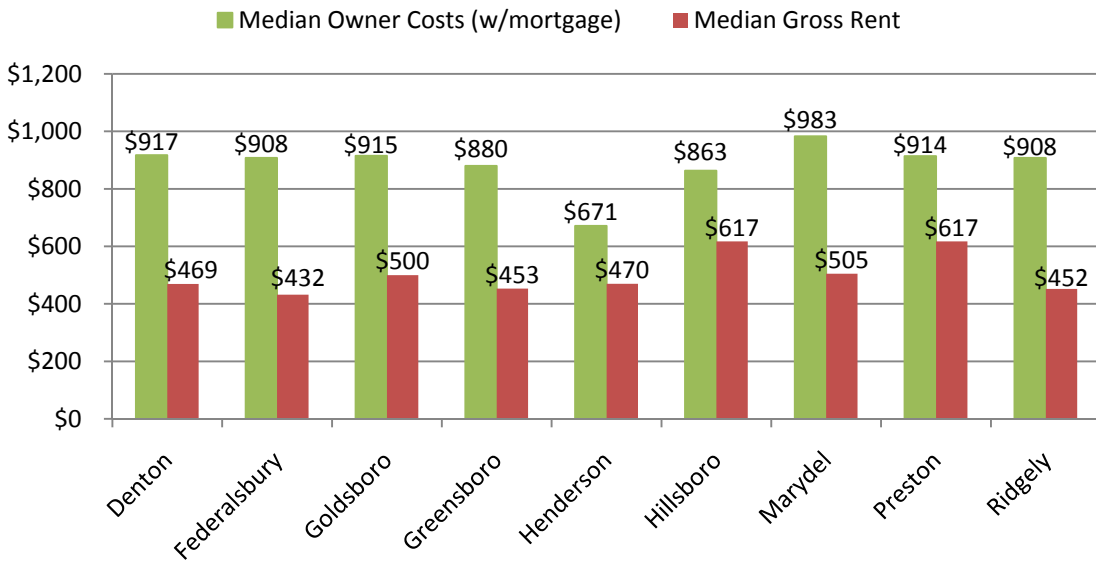
- 422 (77%) were single family homes;
- 30 (6%) were duplexes;
- 64 (12%) were 3-4 unit multi-family dwellings;
- 27 (5%) were 5-9 unit multi-family dwellings;
- 6 (1%) were 10-19 unit multi-family dwellings;
- 1 (0.2%) was a 20 unit multi-family dwelling; and
- None were mobile homes.

**FIGURE 1-4: Percentage of Residents Who Own Their Homes**



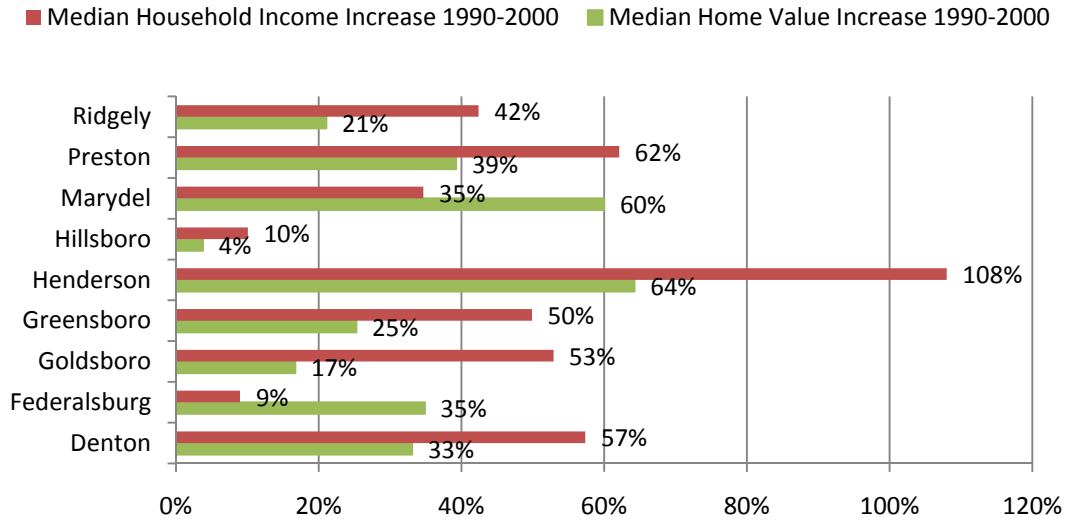
Median monthly owner cost (w/mortgage), for housing in Ridgely, is double the Town’s median gross rent. This disparity between owner and renter housing costs is true in all Caroline County municipalities, ranging from a very wide gap in Federalsburg, where owner costs are more than double renter costs, to a somewhat narrower gap in Hillsboro, where owner costs are 40% higher than renter costs. Ridgely’s owner/renter housing cost gap is second only to Federalsburg’s.

**FIGURE 1-5: Owner Costs & Gross Rents**



Between the 1990 and the 2000 U.S. Census, median household income in Ridgely increased by 42%, while median home value increased by only half that much (21%). This trend existed in most of the towns in the County, where new residential development has occurred at a slower pace than other areas of the Eastern Shore. Data collected on housing affordability indicates a significant percentage of Ridgely’s population, including renters and homeowners, cannot afford the cost of housing.

**FIGURE 1-6: Household & Home Income Increase**



While the decade between 1990 and 2000 saw a sizeable increase in median household income in Ridgely, there are still a large percentage of households struggling to meet housing costs. The availability of affordably priced homes and rental housing is key to serving the needs of both first-time

home buyers and low to median income households, who make up 68% of the Town’s population. A look at the statistics on owner and renter costs, as percentages of household income, reveals that a significant percentage of households, not just low-income households, struggle to meet housing costs.

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines "very low-income" families as those earning 50% of the median family income for an area. "Low-income," as defined by HUD, is 80% of the median family income for an area. The 2000 median family income for Ridgely was \$38,929. Of the 351 family households in Ridgely, 9% met the HUD definition of very low income and an additional 9% met the definition of low income. Poverty and low income affect more than 20% of all people living in Ridgely and almost 20% of all families.

HUD also defines affordable housing as housing that costs 30% or less of the worker’s wage. HUD determines that a household has a "housing cost burden" if it spends 30% or more of its income on housing. A household has a "severe housing cost burden" if it spends 50% or more of its income on housing. The housing cost burden combines renter and owner occupied housing statistics.

**TABLE 1-11: 1999 MONTHLY OWNER COSTS - % OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

Costs	Percent of Households
30 to 34 percent of income	7.1%
35 percent or more of income	19.3%
1999 GROSS RENT AS A % OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME	
Costs	Percent of Households
30 to 34 percent of income	6.7%
35 percent or more of income	18.4%
Source: U.S. Census	



Owner housing costs consist of payments for mortgages, deeds of trust, contracts to purchase, or similar debts on the property; real estate taxes; fire, hazard, and flood insurance on the property; utilities; and fuels. Where applicable, owner costs also include monthly condominium fees. Renter calculations use gross rent, which is the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, water and sewer) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.). Household income is the total pre-tax income of the householder and all other individuals at least 15 years old in the household.

Using the HUD definition of affordable housing, more than a quarter (26.4%) of the homeowners and 25% of the renter households in Ridgely are cost burdened. This means, they are spending 30% or more of their income on housing. Including renters and homeowners, more than half of all households in the Town are experiencing housing cost burdens. This means that more than half of the households in Ridgely cannot afford -- using the HUD definition of affordability -- the housing they currently occupy. To appreciate the full impact of this data, bear in mind that household incomes include incomes from multiple wage earners, people working two jobs, income subsidies, etc. The problem of housing affordability in Ridgely is not just a problem affecting the poorest families; it also impacts working families with secure jobs and multiple incomes.

## ECONOMICS

As of 2000, Ridgely had the highest unemployment rate of all Caroline County municipalities, at nearly 9%. Currently, efforts are under way to lower the number of unemployed in Caroline County, which will likely have a positive effect on the unemployment rate in Ridgely.

In 2004, "One Maryland" provided \$1.5 million to Caroline County for the acquisition of land and the development of the Mid-Shore Regional Business and Technology Park to be located in Ridgely. In July of 2007, the Maryland Board of Public Works approved an additional \$1 million in funding for site development. The business park, a cooperative effort between the federal Economic Development Administration (DBED), the State of Maryland, Caroline County, and the Town of Ridgely, is an integral part of the County's strategy for attracting technology companies that provide higher wage jobs. The most recent funding, made possible through DBED's Maryland Economic Development Assistance Fund (MEDAF), consists of a \$1 million loan, which will be used in conjunction with federal funds for infrastructure improvements including water and sewer to the site.

The business park will be constructed in multiple phases. Phase I will create office and retail/commercial space, a parking area and approximately 25 developed acres. The overall site layout has been designed to create a campus-like setting. The ultimate goal is to accommodate 500,000 square feet of office/commercial space. The park is located approximately one half mile north of Ridgely, adjacent to the Ridgely Airport, which is also being expanded (3,500 foot paved runway being lengthened to 5,000 feet) as part of the plan to attract technology companies to the area.

In addition to participating in the development of the business park, the Town is spearheading its own economic development/revitalization program, which includes attracting tenants to a new shopping center and the relocation of several new businesses to the Town. Existing businesses, such as the Ridgely Pharmacy on Bell Street, are also participating in the program by renovating and redeveloping older structures in the Town. The effort is being led by the Ridgely Economic Development Commission (EDC), formed in early 2007. The Ridgely EDC is working with State and County economic development experts on how to operate and provide economic development assistance to new businesses coming into the Town, and has established the beginning of a Ridgely EDC Local Revolving Loan Program to assist local start-up business efforts.

## Chapter 2 Land Use & Growth Management

The “Land Use Plan” is a primary component of the 2009 *Ridgely Comprehensive Plan*, describing preferred land use characteristics. It defines land use planning areas that provide a basis for decisions concerning the location and capacity of public facilities and transportation system improvements. It also reflects community perceptions concerning such things as quality of life and community character.

The Land Use Plan begins with a discussion of existing land use, a major determinant of future land use patterns. Following is a description of land use “Planning Areas,” which represent the mix of expected land use types and their geographic locations in Ridgely. These Planning Areas provide the policy basis for development regulations, discussed in the “Implementation Chapter.”

The Land Use Plan has been developed with consideration for capacity limitations and potential impacts of land use policies on the fiscal and physical resources of the Town and surrounding areas. It is a continuation of the planning and refinement of the Town’s thoughts about how land should be treated. Intended as a policy tool for sound fiscal and environmental planning, the Land Use Plan directs growth and development to areas with existing or planned infrastructure and accounts for the need to manage the impacts of growth and development on existing Town residents, water quality, resources, and environmentally sensitive areas.

### GOAL & OBJECTIVES

#### **GOAL:**

Preserve the small town atmosphere and qualities that make Ridgely a desirable place to live and work.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

Preserve Town character and residential neighborhoods and ensure that new development is consistent with existing character.

Improve property values and the climate for new investment and reinvestment by addressing key infrastructure issues, such as water and sewer, roads and streets, and other capital projects.

Protect sensitive environmental areas and landmark historic sites and structures.

Encourage the restoration, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

Expand the tax base by encouraging appropriate infill and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties.

Encourage the development of new well designed and properly located commercial and industrial facilities and promote the maintenance and revitalization of existing commercial and industrial uses.

Maintain and create desirable residential environments based on “Smart Neighborhood” principles.

Ensure new development is consistent with overall growth objectives by adopting appropriate development codes/standards and ensuring that all new development is appropriate in scale and size.

Improve coordination between Ridgely and Caroline County to promote inter-jurisdictional coordination and cooperation, as required by State law.

Ensure that residents and businesses have adequate public services and facilities to protect the health, safety, and welfare for an attractive live/work environment.

## BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a series of goals and objectives to manage and direct growth and development in Ridgely, Maryland. To some degree, Ridgely's objectives for economic development, natural resource protection, mobility, community facilities, housing, and community character are all reflected in the Land Use Plan. The fundamental land use policy



framework outlined in this Chapter will help determine the Town's growth and development patterns as well as the quality of life for existing and future residents.

The Comprehensive Plan is the result of citizen input and discussion on the current condition of Ridgely. It reflects the community's desire to maintain its village atmosphere, while allowing for controlled growth and development. As a policy manual, the Comprehensive Plan is designed to be a guide. It is used in conjunction with associated documents such as the *Town of Ridgely Zoning Ordinance*, *Subdivision Regulations*, *Design Guidelines* and other municipal rules and regulations passed by the Town Commission. In addition to these locally based guidelines and regulations, growth and development within the municipal boundaries of Ridgely also are guided by the laws and regulations of the State of Maryland and, to a lesser extent, Caroline County.

Although Ridgely is a well-established community, there are significant amounts of open space within its municipal borders. At some point in time, Ridgely expects that farmland within the Town's municipal boundaries will be converted to lots for residential development. The timing of that conversion will be dependent on the availability of water and sewer, other necessary infrastructure, as well as market demand for housing.

## EXISTING LAND USE

Shown on Map 2-1 below, the 2006 Maryland Property View (MPV), as prepared by the Maryland Departments of Planning (MDP) and Taxation & Assessments, provides several land use categories for State data in Ridgely. According to the MPV, the corporate limits of Ridgely encompass approximately 1,193 total acres. Two (2) land use categories, "Residential and Agriculture," account for 71% of the existing land use in the Town.

TABLE 2-1: RIDGELY EXISTING LAND USE (MPV 2006)		
Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total
Residential	301	25%
Multi-Family	2	1%
Commercial/Residential	1	1%
Commercial	54	5%
Industrial	47	4%
Exempt	21	2%
Exempt/Commercial	216	19%
Agriculture	491	43%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,133</b>	<b>100%</b>
Peter Johnston & Associates		

**1) Residential Uses**

As of 2008, most of Ridgely’s residential units are located in the “Old Town” portion of the municipality, totaling 301 acres. Old Town Ridgely is located on both sides of Central Avenue (MD Rt. 312) and is bounded by Railroad Street to the north, Sunset Boulevard to the west, Sunrise Avenue to the east, and MD Rt. 480 to the south. The average lot size in Old Town is approximately a quarter of an acre. As a measure of efficiency, most of the Town’s residential units have been accommodated on approximately 25% of the municipality’s total land area.

Newer residential development in the Town, such as Lister Estates and modern developments located to the north and south of Old Town have a slightly larger average lot size. “Multi-Family Residential” uses occupy only 2 acres of land, located in Old Town Ridgely. This includes condominiums and apartments.

**2) Commercial & Industrial**

Commercial land uses total approximately 54 acres or 5% of Ridgely’s total area. Industrial uses total 47 acres, approximately 4% of Ridgely’s total land area. Commercial-Residential land uses total only 1 acre. Commercial uses include the historic Central Business District (CBD). In addition, concentrated commercial and industrial land uses are located along MD Rt. 480 to the south of Old Town, Railroad Street, as well as along Sunset Boulevard, Cow Barn Road, and First Street (extended). This includes Hanover Foods, a local canning company, which utilizes a land application site within the Town for the dispersion of effluent generated from industrial operations.

**3) Institutional Uses**

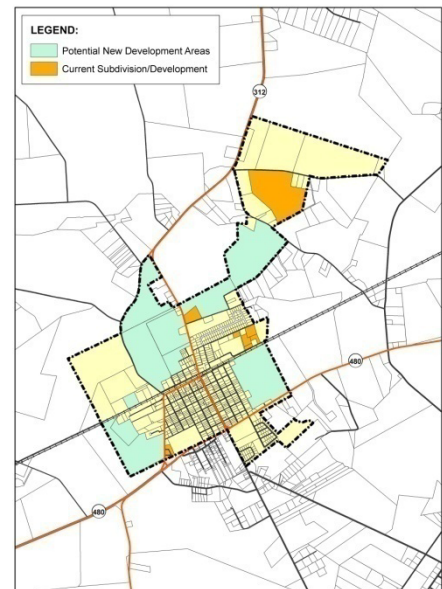
“Exempt and Exempt Commercial” uses are one of the largest land use categories in Town at 237 acres or 21%. These land uses are typically public or semi-public entities, such as non-profits and government institutions etc. that have a unique tax status in the State. Public institutions, exempt and exempt-commercial land uses, include the Ridgely Airport and portions of the Business Technology Park site, Town Hall, the Fire Department, the Police Station, the Public Works garage, Fire Department and many local churches.

In addition, other lands are utilized for public use in Ridgely including parks, streets, roads, right-of-ways, rail road lines, collection systems, pump stations, and the wastewater treatment site and spray irrigation lands. The largest institutional use is the Ridgely Elementary School, a Caroline County Board of Education property, which is located on 15 acres adjacent to Central Avenue. The educational site contains public recreation facilities including ball fields and a tot lot.

Parks and open space are abundant in Ridgely. Currently, there are three (3) parks located in the Town: 1) the Ridgely Athletic Complex; 2) Martin Sutton Memorial Park; 3) and Railroad Park. The Athletic Complex is a 35 acre site with facilities developed in 1999. Martin Sutton Park is a 24 acre neighborhood park that includes recreation facilities for baseball, softball, basketball, volleyball, soccer, tennis, skateboarding, and picnicking. It also includes trails for walking, jogging, and cycling. Railroad Park is the smallest park in Ridgely at one-third an acre. It is located along the old railroad line, which is now being formed as a “Rails-to Trails Greenway.” The Greenway eventually will connect to Tuckahoe State Park and Adkins Arboretum. Tuckahoe is a 3,800 acre State Park located near Ridgely. It includes a 60 acre lake for boating and fishing as well as picnic areas and a tot lot. Adkins Arboretum is located in the State Park.

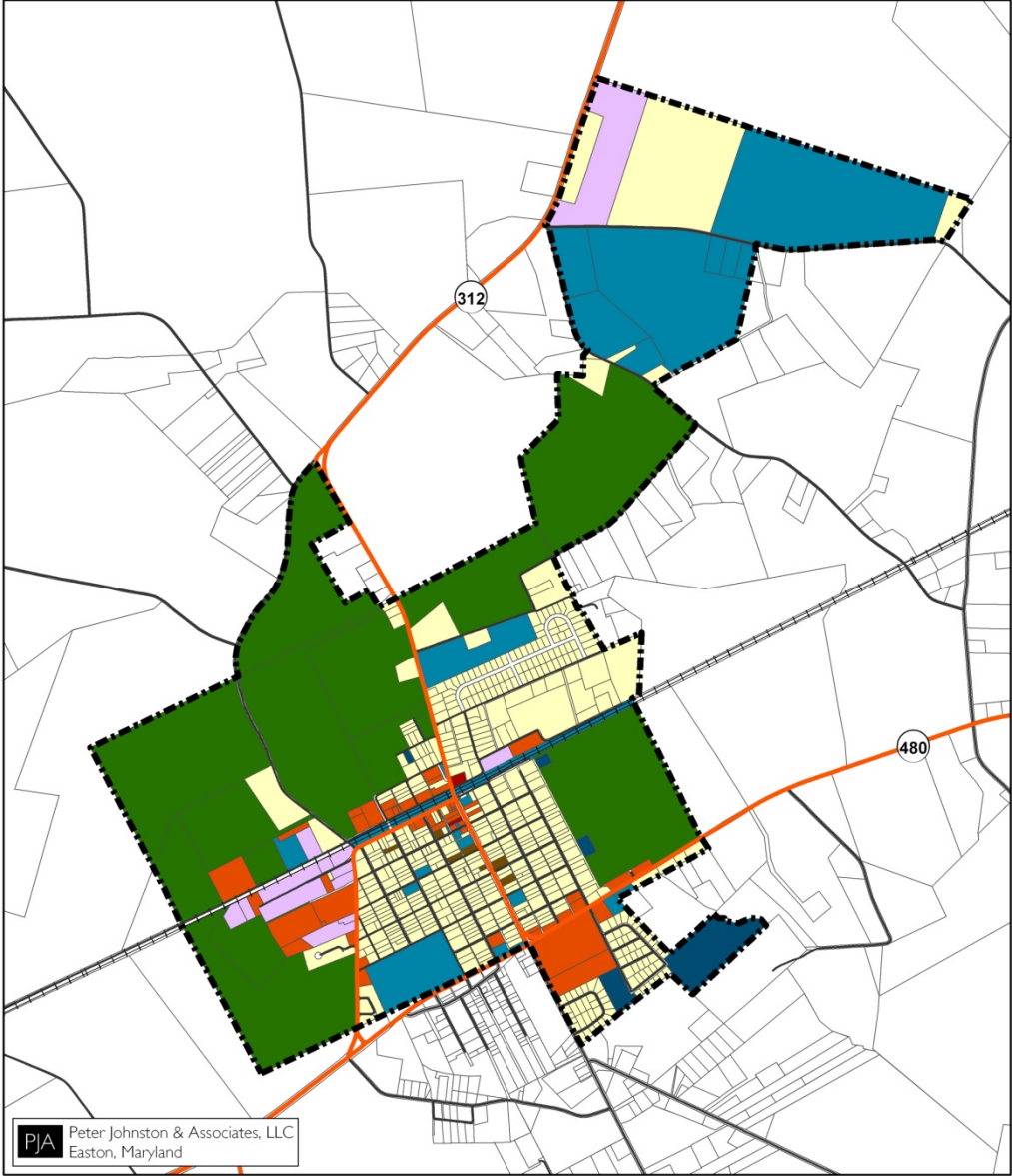
#### 4) Agricultural Uses

Agricultural uses in Town are the largest land use category totaling approximately 491 acres, some 43% of the Town’s land area total of 1,133 acres. As of 2008, several parcels indicated as agricultural land uses in the 2006 MPV are cited as potential new development areas for Ridgely (shown in teal green). These areas total approximately 387 acres. Potential development areas, currently being used for agriculture, are vacant farmland within the Town. These areas constitute large infill properties. Current planned developments include the Ridgely Business & Technology Park site, a joint Caroline County and Ridgely economic development initiative, as well as several smaller parcels in Town.



**FIGURE 2-1:** Ridgely Land Use 2006 MPV; Planned Development & Potential Future Development Areas.

MAP 2-1: EXISTING LAND USE



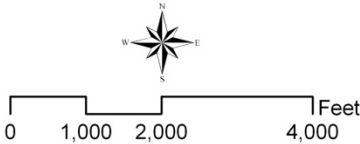
**LEGEND:**

- Ridgely Corporate Boundary
- State Roads
- Local Roads & Streets
- +—+ Railroad Line
- Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Exempt
- Exempt Commercial
- Agriculture

**EXISTING LAND USE - 2006 MARYLAND PROPERTY VIEW**

- 1) Residential - 301 Acres
- 2) Multi-Family Residential - 2 Acres
- 3) Commercial Residential - 1 Acre
- 4) Commercial - 54 Acres
- 5) Industrial - 47 Acres
- 6) Exempt - 21 Acres
- 7) Exempt Commercial - 216 Acres
- 8) Agriculture - 491 Acres

TOTAL ACREAGE = 1,133 ACRES



PJA Peter Johnston & Associates, LLC  
Easton, Maryland

## THE RIDGELY LAND USE PLAN

The village scale and character of Ridgely (Old Town) is that part of the historic community that developed along the railroad tracks and Central Avenue during the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The existing architectural and landscape character of the Old Town is an important and valuable asset. Beyond the need to effectively manage new growth and development outside of the existing Old Town, there is a need to manage the use of the existing building stock and the available buildable lots within the Old Town. Therefore, appropriate growth management techniques in the Town Center, Central Business District, and Neighborhood Conservation Planning Areas are vital. This includes the concepts of adaptive reuse, context sensitive infill and redevelopment, and design guidance.



This Comprehensive Plan seeks to encourage the preservation of the existing architecture and village scale of Ridgely. To accomplish the goals of the Plan, and the wishes and desires of the citizens of Ridgely, growth of the community should not be harmful to the use and the patterns that have been long established. Central to the management of growth is the concept of the village and preserving its character and integrity. Accordingly, this Comprehensive Plan is to be used by the Town Commission, the Planning Commission, private property owners, developers, and citizens to ensure that the values and goals within it are expressed, while this Plan is in effect.

### FUTURE LAND USES

As shown on Map 2-2, the Town of Ridgely has been divided into eight (8) primary planning areas as well as three (3) secondary, but equally important, planning areas. Secondary planning areas overlay the Primary Planning Areas, providing further detail regarding land use. These are administrative areas and will enable the Planning Commission and the Town Commission to develop regulations and encouragements to properly manage growth and protect the environment. It is expected that each Planning Area will contain similar building types and functions by design. However, there will be some variation in uses within each area.



TABLE 2-2: RIDGELY FUTURE LAND USE		
Primary Land Use Categories	Acres	Percent of Total
1) Town Center - TC	25	2%
2) Central Business District - CBD	27	2%
3) Neighborhood Conservation - NC	180	16%
4) Highway Commercial - HC	28	2%
5) Business Employment – BE	301	27%
6) Public/Semi-Public - PS	171	16%
7) Planned Development - PD	401	35%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,133</b>	<b>100%</b>
*Secondary Land Use Categories	Acres	Percent of Total
1) Neighborhood Redevelopment Areas	56	40%
2) Parks & Open Space	34	23%
3) Conservation Corridor	51	37%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>100%</b>
Peter Johnston & Associates		
*Note: Secondary Planning Areas are overlays to existing Primary Planning Areas.		

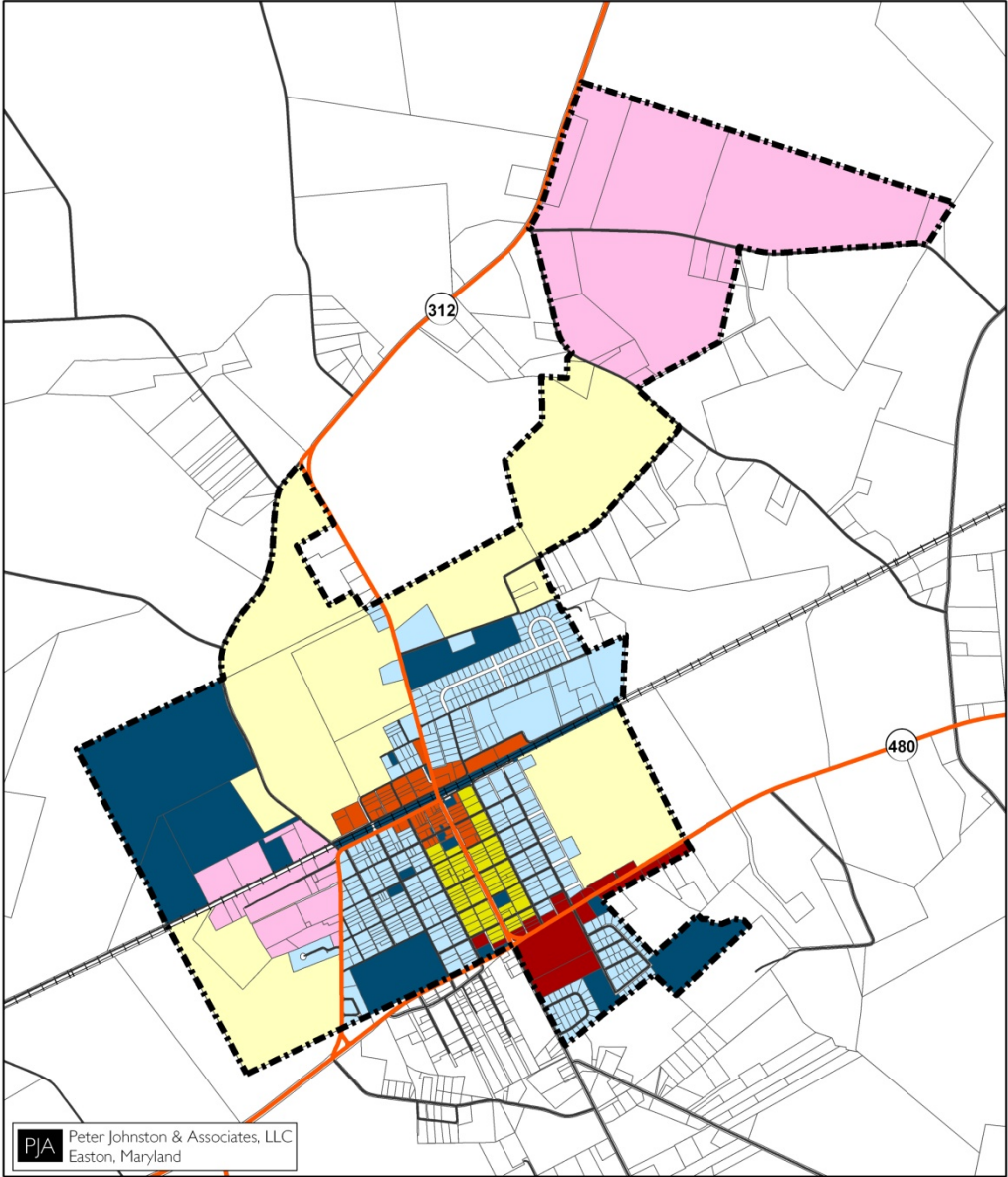
**PRIMARY PLANNING AREAS**

Ridgely Primary Planning Areas include the following:

1. Town Center;
2. Central Business District;
3. Neighborhood Conservation;
4. Highway Commercial;
5. Business Employment;
6. Public/Semi-Public;
7. Planned Development; and
8. Roads/Infrastructure.

Primary Planning Areas represent the base and preferred land uses for each area. These areas were designed to provide flexibility to the Ridgely Planning Commission and Town Commissioners to address natural, social, and economic changes occurring in the Town. Regulatory updates should ensure that Town ordinances assist in achieving the underlying policy principles expressed in the Ridgely Land Use Plan for each Planning Area.

**MAP 2-2: LAND USE PLAN**



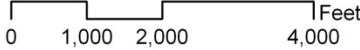
**LEGEND:**

- Ridgely Corporate Boundary
- State Roads
- Local Roads & Streets
- ⊢⊢⊢ Railroad Line
- Public & Semi-Public
- Town Center
- Central Business District
- Neighborhood Conservation
- Highway Commercial
- Business Employment
- Planned Development

**RIDGELY PRIMARY LAND USE PLANNING AREAS**

- 1) Town Center - 25 Acres
- 2) Central Business District - 27 Acres
- 3) Neighborhood Conservation - 180 Acres
- 4) Highway Commercial - 28 Acres
- 5) Business Employment - 301 Acres
- 6) Public/Semi-Public - 171 Acres
- 7) Planned Development - 401 Acres

**TOTAL ACREAGE = 1,133 ACRES**



PJA Peter Johnston & Associates, LLC  
Easton, Maryland

## 1) Town Center Planning Area (TC)

The historic Town Center Planning Area (TC) is located in the heart of Ridgely. Many of the Town’s “Landmark Historic Sites and Structures” are located in this Planning Area (see the Heritage Preservation Chapter). It is Ridgely’s intent to promote the Town Center as the primary location for community activity and to strengthen its role as a major determinant of the Town’s identity.

**Description:** The Town Center encompasses approximately 25 acres, located along Central Avenue (Main Street – MD Rt. 312). It includes a mix of residential, public, and semi-public uses. Residential buildings are mostly older frame buildings that predate 1940 and many were constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Originally built as single-family homes, a significant number have been converted to multi-family housing. The larger homes along Central Avenue were among the first divided into apartments but multi-family dwellings can be found throughout the Planning Area. There is very little open space within the Town Center.

**Objectives:** Ridgely’s land use objectives for the Town Center Planning Area are to:

- Maintain the existing character of this residential neighborhood.
- Allow for appropriate infill and redevelopment that reflects the site development and architectural characteristics of the Planning Area.
- Require the scale and appearance of new residential structures to strongly reflect the small town rural and historic atmosphere of Ridgely.
- Direct Town revitalization efforts to the downtown area.
- Create a pedestrian friendly environment with adequate public parking to support nearby local businesses, residents, and civic uses.
- Encourage the preservation of Landmark Historic Sites and Structures.

The Town will accomplish the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan by encouraging an appropriate mix of residential and public/semi-public uses of a scale and intensity consistent with the Planning Area’s historic character. Development standards should encourage infill and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized sites to maintain an attractive diversity but at the same time ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses, particularly architectural design. This includes utilizing the concept of context sensitive infill and redevelopment. Infill and redevelopment standards will be prepared mindful of the need to find an appropriate balance between historic preservation and sustainable energy and environmental protection policies.

## 2) Central Business District Planning Area (CBD)

The Central Business District Planning Area (CBD) is Ridgely’s traditional and historic business district. It defines an area critical to the economic health and prosperity of the Town. In addition, it is a primary attraction for visitors and tourists, providing an important economic component of the Town’s tax base. The objective for this Planning Area is to maintain and enhance the area as a pedestrian oriented shopping and service district with a mix of residential and low-intensity service oriented commercial uses.

The CBD plays an important role in the community including the following:

- ❖ Provides an employment center;
- ❖ Strongly influences the Town's image and identity;
- ❖ Represents an important part of the historic core of the community;
- ❖ Provides key visitor attractions; and
- ❖ Provides public space where residents and visitors can congregate or be part of parades, special events, and celebrations that reinforce a sense of community.

**Description:** The Central Business District is approximately 27 acres and is located along Central Avenue from near 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to Oak Street. It extends along Railroad Avenue and Bell Street to Maryland Avenue. It is designed to accommodate residential uses and facilitate low intensity service based commercial uses. Located adjacent to the Town Center, it contains small service-scale commercial land uses such as restaurants and small professional businesses. The Town Hall, Police Station, and Town Commons (Railroad Park) are located in this Planning Area.

**Objectives:** Ridgely's land use objectives for the Central Business District Planning Area are to:

- Focus business development in the centralized downtown area.
- Allow for appropriate infill and redevelopment that reflects the site development and architectural characteristics of the Planning Area.
- Require the scale and appearance of businesses to strongly reflect the small town rural and historic atmosphere of Ridgely.
- Direct Town revitalization efforts to the CBD.
- Create a pedestrian friendly environment with adequate public parking to support local businesses and civic uses.
- Encourage the preservation of Landmark Historic Sites and Structures.

The Town will accomplish the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan by encouraging an appropriate mix of residential, neighborhood-commercial, and public/semi-public uses of a scale and intensity consistent with the existing historic character of the CBD. Much like a traditional main street, this includes the promotion of multi-use structures, whereby commercial uses are permitted on the first floor and residential units are permitted on second and third floors.

### 3) Neighborhood Conservation Planning Area (NC)

The Neighborhood Conservation Planning Area (NC) is located in portions of Ridgely, where single-family residential development patterns are generally established or where services and facilities will be adequate for the anticipated population. Secondary historic sites and structures are located in parts of this Planning Area. Historic preservation in Neighborhood Conservation areas is equally important as it is in the Town Center. The Neighborhood Conservation Planning Area promotes localized community activities and is a major component of the Town's identity.

**Description:** The Neighborhood Conservation Planning Area encompasses approximately 180 acres and constitutes existing residential neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are characterized primarily by detached single-family dwellings. It also includes recently approved subdivisions such as Lister Estates, near the Ridgely Elementary School. Ridgely wants to protect existing stable residential neighborhoods. This includes maintaining property values and intact neighborhoods, while also encouraging context sensitive infill and redevelopment that can take advantage of existing public investment in infrastructure.

**Objectives:** Ridgely's land use objectives for the Neighborhood Conservation Planning Area are to:

- Maintain the existing character of these residential neighborhoods.
- Maintain property values and stability.
- Ensure appropriate transportation and pedestrian linkages to other parts of Town.
- Allow for appropriate infill and redevelopment that reflects the site development and architectural characteristics of the Planning Area.
- Encourage the preservation of Landmark Historic Sites and Structures.

#### **4) Highway Commercial Planning Area (HC)**

The Highway Commercial Planning Area (HC) is not considered a traditional highway commercial service area but a specific destination use. This includes business employment and/or access oriented services, such as banking. It contains existing businesses. However, several vacant and underutilized properties are located in this Planning Area.

**Description:** The Highway Commercial Planning Area encompasses approximately 28 acres. This Planning Area is characterized by existing commercial service providers and employment uses. It is located along MD Route 480, a primary arterial for the Town, with commercial uses on both sides of the highway. It also intersects with Maryland Route 312 (Central Avenue), Maple Avenue, and Sunrise Avenue.

**Objectives:** Ridgely's land use objectives for the Highway Commercial Planning Area are to:

- Support and promote economic development and business/employment uses in Ridgely.
- Ensure safety and minimize land use conflicts with neighboring residential areas.
- Ensure appropriate transportation linkages as well as good access and circulation.
- Encourage appropriate infill and redevelopment of commercial sites.
- Streamline the development review process and create flexible regulatory mechanisms to promote economic development.
- Develop design standards/guidelines for landscaping (buffers), lighting, signage, and architecture.

#### **5) Business Employment Planning Area (BE)**

The Business Employment Planning Area (BE) consists of traditional commercial and industrial operations that have historically existed in Ridgely. These traditional industries are located along West Bell Street and near the intersection of Cow Barn Road. Another larger Business Employment Area, located to the north of

Town, is the Ridgely Airport and Business Technology Park sites. This area represents an opportunity for the Town to capitalize on significant local, state, and federal investment for planned commercial/industrial development.

**Description:** The Business Employment Planning Area consists of approximately 301 acres. It is located along West Bell Street, west of Sunset Boulevard, and near the intersection with Cow Barn Road. The Planning Area includes the industrial area along West Bell Street and Sunset Boulevard. Mixed use is encouraged for this area including commercial, industrial, and public community facilities/services. In addition, a large portion of this Planning Area is located along MD. Rt. 312, intersecting Seward and Hog Lot Roads in Caroline County. This area includes the Ridgely Airport and the joint Caroline County and Ridgely Business Technology Park. The Business Technology Park is situated on a 92 acre site adjacent to the Airport. It is a planned commercial/industrial development site.

**Objectives:** Ridgely’s objectives for the Business Employment Planning Area are to:

- Expand local employment opportunities so that Town residents may live and work in Ridgely.
- Increase the Town’s commercial and industrial assessable tax base.
- Work with Caroline County, the State of Maryland, and the federal government to achieve economic development objectives by providing commercial and industrial land.

## 6) Public/Semi-Public Planning Area (PS)

Public and Semi-Public (PS) properties are dispersed throughout Ridgely. These properties include the following:

- Caroline County Humane Society;
- Ridgely Elementary School;
- Ridgely Town Hall and other structures owned by the Town;
- Lands owned by the Ridgely Volunteer Fire Department and other non-profit community organizations;
- Portions of the Town’s wastewater treatment site (lands for spray irrigation);
- The railroad right-of-way (greenway trail system);
- Several local parks;
- Town churches;
- Environmentally sensitive lands and scattered vacant lots.

Other public land that is not included in this Planning Area is State, County, and Town road networks, street rights-of-way, sidewalks, and parking areas. These areas are characterized as infrastructure under the Secondary Planning Area category discussed below.

**Description:** The Public/Semi-Public Planning Area totals approximately 171 acres. Properties are used for either the enjoyment of Ridgely residents, infrastructure purposes, or the protection of sensitive areas. This includes properties located along Cow Barn Road, Bell Street, and Railroad Street. It also includes properties located along MD Rt. 480, Central Avenue, and Ridge Avenue. Characteristics include:

- ❖ The Greenway trail segments in Town (railroad lands);
- ❖ Lands used for private or public wastewater spray application (Hanover Foods/Town of Ridgely);
- ❖ Stormwater management areas and other open spaces;
- ❖ Parks and recreation sites; and
- ❖ Sensitive environmental areas owned by the public.

**Objectives:** Ridgely’s land use objectives for the Town Expansion Planning Area are to:

- Ensure the public health, safety, and welfare.
- Provide public areas and access for active and passive recreation.
- Protect sensitive environmental areas.
- Ensure publically owned lands are used in a manner that best serves the needs of Ridgely residents.

## **7) Planned Development Planning Area (PD)**

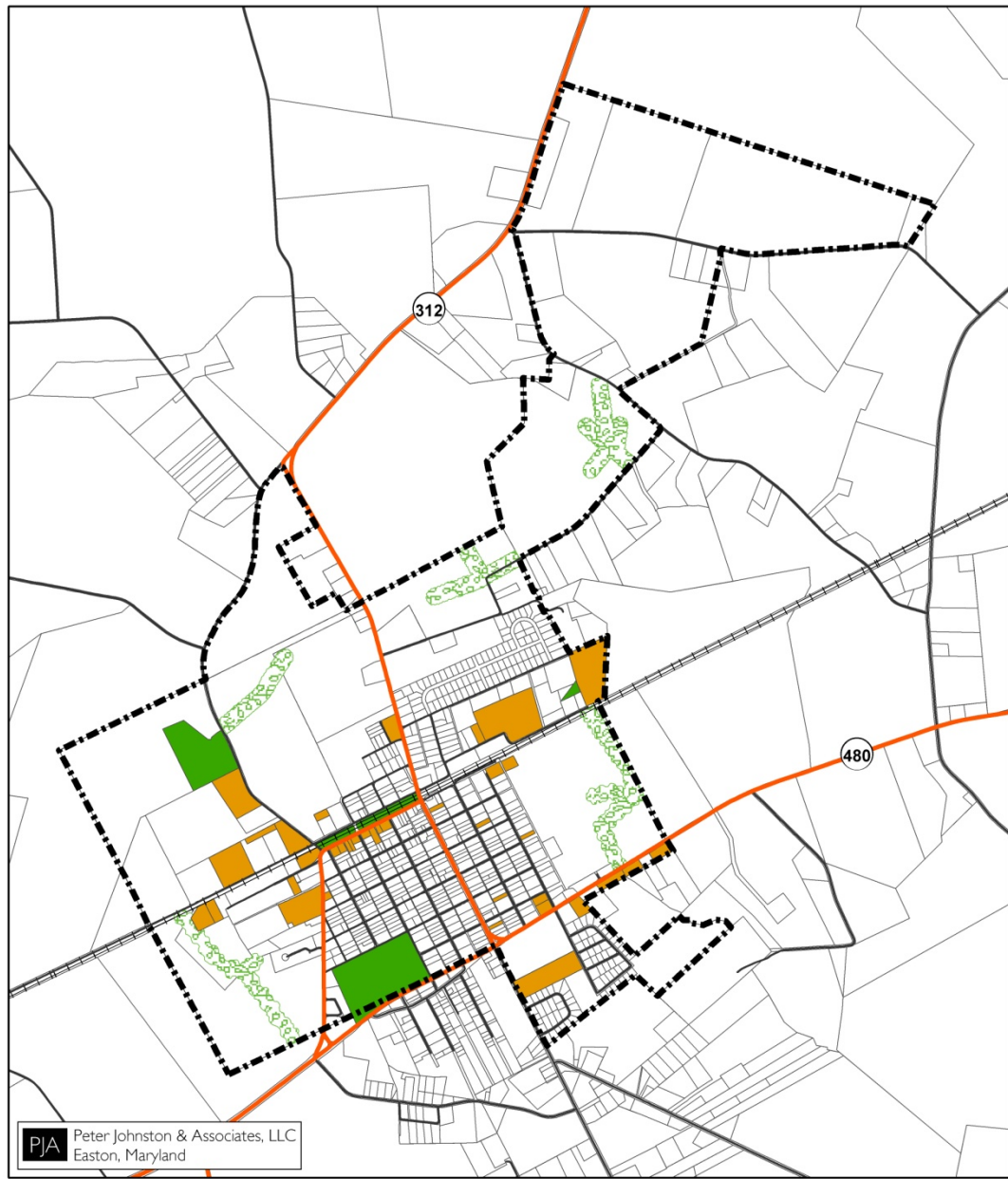
The Planned Development Planning Area (PD) includes lands that are candidate sites for planned development or redevelopment (i.e. those properties large enough to support planned development/redevelopment). This includes various large parcels throughout Town, some of which are currently used for agricultural purposes.

**Description:** The Planned Development Planning Area is approximately 401 acres, located in various key regions of the Town. These areas are located at the fringe areas of Ridgely but are connected to the Town Center and Neighborhood Conservation Areas. The Planning Area represents the largest infill areas within the existing Town. The Planning Area contains fairly extensive developable and unconstrained land. Once developed, this Planning Area has the potential to greatly impact the existing character of the Town. Development of these properties will substantially increase the number of dwelling units and population in Ridgely. In addition, impacts on Town services and facilities are substantial.

**Objectives:** Ridgely’s land use objectives for the Planned Development Planning Area are to:

- Maintain the existing character of the Town by ensuring that design is compatible with surrounding historic residential neighborhoods.
- Require the scale and appearance of new residential structures to strongly reflect the small town rural and historic atmosphere of Ridgely.
- Require the scale and appearance of new commercial structures to strongly reflect the small town rural and historic atmosphere of Ridgely.
- Create connectivity for transportation and pedestrian linkages.
- Create a pedestrian friendly environment with adequate public parking to support nearby local businesses, residents, and civic uses.
- Encourage the preservation of Landmark Historic Sites and Structures by appropriate means, even when doing so requires modifying other land use objectives set forth in this statement of objectives.

## MAP 2-3: LAND USE PLAN SECONDARY PLANNING AREAS



### LEGEND:

-  Ridgely Corporate Boundary
-  State Roads
-  Local Roads & Streets
-  Railroad Line
-  Neighborhood Redevelopment
-  Conservation Corridor
-  Parks & Open Space

### RIDGELY SECONDARY LAND USE PLANNING AREAS

- 1) Neighborhood Redevelopment Areas - 56 Acres
- 2) Parks & Open Space - 34 Acres
- 3) Conservation Corridor - 51 Acres

**TOTAL ACREAGE = 141 ACRES**



## SECONDARY PLANNING AREAS

Ridgely Secondary Planning Areas include the following:

1. Neighborhood Redevelopment Areas;
2. Parks and Open Space;
3. Conservation Corridor; and
4. Infrastructure.

“Secondary Planning Areas” overlay the Primary Planning Areas and provide further detail regarding preferred land uses. These areas represent public amenities or provide for specific public purposes such as environmental protections, transportation, community meeting and gathering places, passive and active recreation, and the enhancement of the Town’s urban fabric or setting.

### **1) Neighborhood Redevelopment Planning Area (NRP)**

The Neighborhood Redevelopment Planning Area (NRP) totals 56 acres and includes smaller vacant and underutilized properties throughout Town that are candidate sites for infill and redevelopment, depending on the availability of public infrastructure such as water and sewer. This Planning Area also includes targeted areas for neighborhood revitalization efforts. The purpose for this Planning Area is to protect existing residential property values, while at the same time identifying areas where the Town will promote more extensive infill and redevelopment projects. Development regulations and standards should be most flexible in this Planning Area so as to encourage appropriate infill and redevelopment.

### **2) Parks & Open Space Planning Area (POS)**

The Parks and Open Space Planning Area (POS) is approximately 34 acres. It includes the Ridgely Athletic Complex; Martin Sutton Memorial Park; and Railroad Park. It also includes the “Rails-to Trails Greenway” and other smaller open space areas within the Town. The Town’s objective for these lands is to ensure they are used in manners that best serve the needs of Ridgely residents.

### **3) Conservation Planning Area (CP)**

The Conservation Planning Area (CP) is approximately 51 acres of land in dispersed areas of the Town. These are stream corridors, which are categorized as drainage ditches. “Public Tax Drainage Ditches” provide drainage and flood control, significantly impacting water quality in the region. Currently, ditches are managed by a Public Drainage Association, which is regulated by Article 25 of the Maryland Drainage Law. PDA’s are assisted by the Caroline County Soil Conservation District, Maryland Department of Agriculture, and Department of Natural Resources. Ditches are inspected annually and after severe storm events.

In 2000, the Maryland Public Drainage Taskforce, in its report to the Chesapeake Bay Cabinet, issued recommendations for public drainage systems for development and watershed planning. The recommendations include developing site-specific plans to slow the rate of water flow, improve habitat, and apply best management practices (BMPs). Recommendations also include the development of regulatory policies that direct the burden of costs required for altering public drainage (e.g., structural and non-structural stormwater features located up-stream or downstream of development) to the developers of property to be drained.<sup>1</sup>

The Town's objectives for the Conservation Corridor are to:

- Protect and restore sensitive and natural resource areas, such as contiguous and interior forests, environmentally sensitive areas, and intact stream buffers;
- Maintain existing forest cover (no net loss policy for forest); and
- Where necessary, enhance stream and wetland buffers for their value as water quality protection measures.

This Planning Area forms a 100' buffer around primary drainage ways in the Town. When considering the development potential of a site, Conservation Areas should not be treated in the same way as other areas. Areas with little or no sensitive environmental features or habitat value, and that are not part of significant drainage corridors, have a greater capacity to support development with less impacts to the local environment. The development process should reflect the notion of "carrying capacity", that is the level of development a site can support given natural resource limits. Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL's), discussed in the Water Resources Element, are an example of the measures of "carrying capacity" for the region's waterways. Conservation Areas are indicators of the carrying capacity for portions of the Town.

Town Development regulations should reflect a site's inherent limitations prior to development. For this reason Conservation Areas should be eliminated or significantly discounted for the purposes of calculating allowable development (e.g., density or floor area). Mandatory buffer requirements and enhancement for Conservation Areas are recommended. Other sensitive areas in Ridgely including wetlands, hydric soils, and sensitive species habitats, must be protected.

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<sup>1</sup> *Moving Water*, A Report to the Chesapeake Bay Cabinet by the Public Drainage Task Force, Washington College and the Institute for Governmental Service UMCP, October 2000.

## IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Descriptions and other details regarding implementation are contained in Chapter 9 of this Comprehensive Plan.

### GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

**RECOMMENDATION #1:** Ensure that Ridgely’s plans and ordinances conform with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION #2:** Ensure that all development and redevelopment is compatible with the existing character of Ridgely and encourage the revitalization and continued improvement of the Town with a special emphasis on the Town Center, Central Business District, and Neighborhood Conservation areas. To accomplish this goal, the Town Commissioners should specifically identify future revitalization areas. In addition, the Town should review the Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map, and Subdivision Regulations to integrate safeguards for community character.



**FIGURE 2-2:** The “Town Center” of Ridgely is an important asset both economically and socially. It contains a mix of land uses that includes public, commercial, and residential spaces, promoting a cohesive and self-contained community.

**RECOMMENDATION #3:** Promote sensitive area protection and ensure that development employs best management practices to minimize adverse impacts on water quality and habitat.

**RECOMMENDATION #4:** Promote inter-jurisdictional coordination and future cooperative planning and zoning efforts with Caroline County:

- Work with the Caroline County Council of Governments (COG), which provides Ridgely a forum to discuss issues and opportunities with County officials. In addition, the County and Ridgely Planning Commissions should meet annually or periodically to discuss planning issues of mutual interest.
- Encourage Caroline County to refer plans of proposed development, zoning changes, and subdivisions located within two miles of the Town to Ridgely officials for review and comment.
- Work with Caroline County to ensure the adequacy of public facilities provided and that any new development adjacent to Ridgely minimizes impacts on the rural character surrounding the community.

**RECOMMENDATION #5:** Encourage the continuation of agricultural uses adjacent to Ridgely to maintain the rural character of the community, where appropriate.

**RECOMMENDATION #6:** Encourage the redevelopment and re-use of vacant buildings insuring compatibility with surrounding residential neighborhoods.

**RECOMMENDATION #7:** Encourage “Community Character Policies” that include the following design principles:

- Establish architectural guidelines as well as yard setbacks, bulk standards, and height restrictions to retain or promote desirable community character;
- Retain or create site designs for a pedestrian-friendly community, which shall be encouraged and facilitated;
- Insure development retains the pattern, scale, and character of the surrounding neighborhood;
- Insure the review of development proposals to place priority on the protection of historic and culturally significant buildings, monuments, and spaces contributing to the Town’s character; and
- Maintain connections to the rural landscape by encouraging the protection of farms and forested areas outside the Town boundary in the Ridgely Greenbelt.

**RECOMMENDATION #8:** Continue to prepare a Planning Commission Annual Report in accordance with Section 3.09 of Article 66B to monitor plan implementation.

**RECOMMENDATION #9:** Consider detailed planning initiatives prior to regulatory updates and revisions, such as a strategic revitalization plan for Ridgely, to more clearly define Town goals and solicit broader public involvement in the development of action strategies to address community needs and desires.

**RECOMMENDATION #10:** Review, update, and revise Ridgely’s Design Guidelines, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision Regulations consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

## **SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations**

**RECOMMENDATION #1:** Update the Town’s regulations consistent with the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan including creating new zoning provisions to implement the Land Use Plan and adopting a new official zoning map, which include the digitization of the Ridgely Zoning Map in the Town’s Geographic Information System-GIS.

**RECOMMENDATION #2:** Review, update, and revise (if required) special planning districts such as overlay and floating zones to encourage and facilitate context sensitive infill and redevelopment with an emphasis on appropriate design.

**RECOMMENDATION #3:** Establish development standards and guidance for infill, redevelopment, and new development that ensures compliance with the Town’s design guidelines.

**RECOMMENDATION #4:** Promote the upkeep and maintenance of existing buildings by adopting and enforcing a building code, livability code, nuisance ordinance, and related items to improve and maintain the Town.

**RECOMMENDATION #5:** Ensure that the approval of land subdivision, rezoning, special exceptions, variances, and capital expenditures are consistent with the Ridgely Comprehensive Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION #6:** Revise current development review processes. For other than permitted uses requiring a building permit, require all applicants to first submit a concept plan, including proposed building types and typical building elevations. Periodically update the development review and approval process to ensure that reviews can be carried out in a timely fashion and ensure appropriate decisions are made with regard to plan review and approvals required for projects.

**RECOMMENDATION #7:** Where possible, streamline current regulations and create flexible processes/procedures to promote investment and reinvestment in existing properties and promote context sensitive design for infill and redevelopment.

**RECOMMENDATION #8:** Establish development standards that are consistent with the existing lot and development pattern in surrounding neighborhoods and encourage the adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

**RECOMMENDATION #9:** Adopt or update zoning review fees that cover the cost of Town review, including the cost of any professional assistance the Planning Commission or Town Commissioners may need to adequately evaluate the merits of a proposed development.

**RECOMMENDATION #10:** Update the *Ridgely Design Guidelines* and the *Ridgely Zoning Ordinance* based on the following basic design principles:

- Neighborhoods are compact, identifiable, and their boundaries are visually discernible;
- Neighborhoods are linear (cross-roads or grid patterned), with variations to enhance views and landmarks;
- Neighborhoods are visually coherent and character is established through consistent rules of organization and architecture;
- Street corridors are visually bounded and intimate in feeling. Street trees, sidewalks, and front yard design elements create visual layers and contribute to the intimacy of streetscape;
- Street blocks help describe component neighborhoods, suggesting the role of the street as a channel for neighborly interaction;
- Neighborhoods accommodate a mix of uses, where appropriate, even at the “town” scale;
- Parking is accommodated through a mix of on-street and unobtrusive off-street strategies. Large-scale parking lots are avoided, and older lots are redesigned into smaller landscaped segments;
- Most important, neighborhoods and their setting convey a strong “sense of place”;
- Landmark historic sites and structures are protected.

**RECOMMENDATION #11:** Establish protection standards for “Sensitive Areas.”

**RECOMMENDATION #12:** Ensure appropriate provisions to address flooding and stormwater management and encourage the use of innovative low impact stormwater management techniques, when feasible.

**RECOMMENDATION #13:** Eliminate the conversion of single-family homes to multi-family units by adopting a strong land use plan and implementing regulations that clearly differentiate housing types and densities.

**RECOMMENDATION #14:** Update the Planned Unit Development and Neighborhood Revitalization provisions of the Zoning Ordinance to reflect infrastructure limitations and to enhance process, procedure, and design.

**RECOMMENDATION #15:** For the Ridgely Zoning Ordinance: develop a Table of Permitted Uses and Subdivision Checklist; examine height, area, and bulk requirements to create consistency with the Comprehensive Plan; improve sensitive areas protection and landscaping standards; and include reference tables for lot size and setback requirements.

**RECOMMENDATION #16:** Update the Town's Subdivision Regulations consistent with the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION #17:** Work with Caroline County to encourage strong land use controls on rural lands adjacent to Ridgely within the Growth Area and coordinate with the County in the review of development proposals near the Town.

# Chapter 3 Municipal Growth

The purpose of the Ridgely Comprehensive Plan’s “Municipal Growth Element” is to examine the interrelationships among land use, population growth, impacts on public facilities and services, and water and sewer issues associated with the Town’s projected growth. With a better understanding of the multi-dimensional impacts of land use and population change Ridgely officials will have a stronger basis for setting land use and growth management policies in the future.

## BACKGROUND

Ridgely is located on Maryland’s Eastern Shore in the western portion of Caroline County, Maryland. Caroline County borders Dorchester, Queen Anne’s, and Talbot Counties in Maryland. Caroline County also borders Kent and Sussex Counties in Delaware.

## LOCATION & CHARACTERISTICS

Ridgely is a small town in an ideal rural setting with picturesque farms and plentiful heritage and natural resources. The Upper Choptank River and Tuckahoe Creek are the nearest tributaries, located two and three miles for the Town respectively.

Major arterials for the region include Maryland Route 404 (MD Rt. 404 – Shore Highway), U.S. Route 50, and U.S. Route 13 in Delaware. Ridgely is primarily served by MD Rt. 404 and U.S. Rt. 50. State roads, which link to these primary arterials, include Maryland Routes 480 and 312. Urban areas near Ridgely are Dover, Delaware; Annapolis, Maryland; Baltimore City, Maryland; and the District of Columbia (Washington DC). Other nearby metropolitan areas includes Wilmington, Delaware; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and New York, New York. The nearest metropolitan areas are Annapolis, Maryland and Dover, Delaware.

### GOAL & OBJECTIVES

#### **GOAL:**

Determine the future pattern of growth and development in Ridgely and address associated impacts on facilities, services, and infrastructure.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

Perform a detailed impact analysis of new growth and development on Town services, facilities, and infrastructure.

Address potential impacts of growth and development in the Town’s Capital Improvements Program (CIP), which should be updated annually.

Initiate a Master Planning Program for Town infill (Planned Development Areas) and growth areas to define Town expectations for new development.

Improve inter-jurisdictional initiatives with Caroline County to coordinate growth and development for effective growth management.

Update Town policies, processes, and regulations to address infill and redevelopment issues and opportunities including updating the Town’s design guidelines.

Approximate travel times and distances to nearby large metropolitan centers are as follows:

- Dover, Delaware is 47 minutes and 31 miles;
- Annapolis, Maryland is 51 minutes and 41 miles;
- Baltimore City, Maryland is 1 hour and 19 minutes and 67 miles;
- Washington DC is 1 hour and 26 minutes and 70 miles;
- Wilmington, Delaware is 1 hour and 26 minutes and 71 miles;
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is 2 hours and 102 miles; and
- New York, New York is 3 hours and 26 minutes and 188 miles.



Source: MapQuest

## LAND USE PLANNING

The Ridgely Study Area is listed as a designated Growth Area for Caroline County (Map 3-1) in the “draft” *West Caroline County Comprehensive Plan*. Ridgely is located in a Caroline County agricultural preservation corridor. Predominant land uses include agriculture, forestry, low density residential development, and surface mining (sand and gravel).

The future Caroline County Landfill site is located approximately one third of a mile from the Town (see Figure 3-2). Scattered low density rural residential development is found to the north and south of Town (see Figure 3-3). Ridgely is a designated Priority Funding Area (PFA) in the State of Maryland.

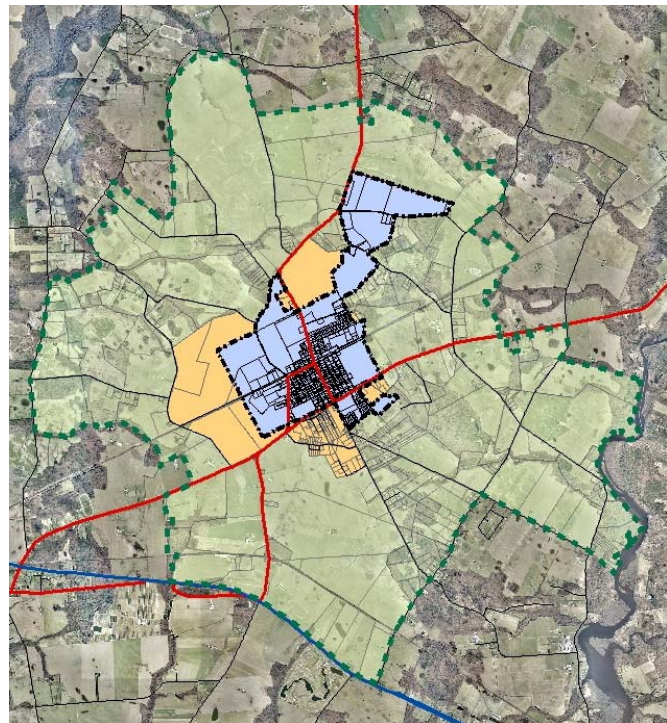
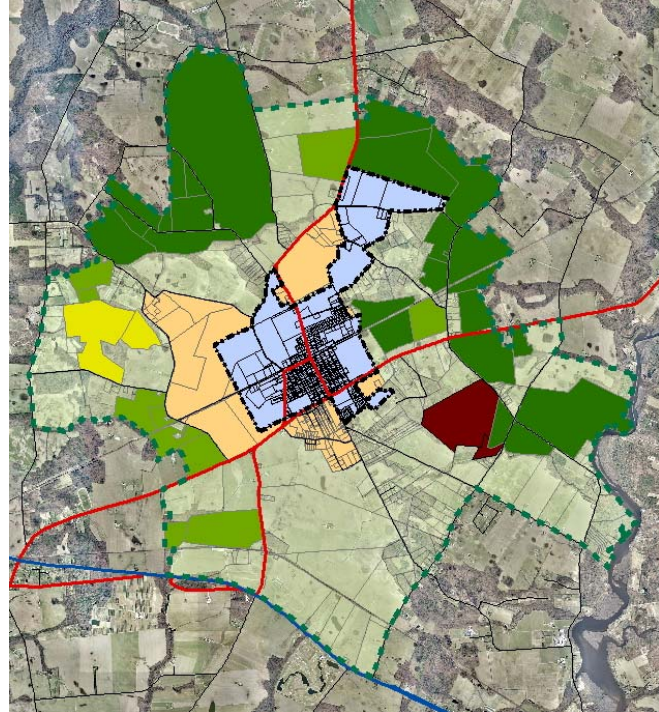


FIGURE 3-1: Figure 3-1 depicts the Ridgely Study Area, as analyzed in the 2009 *Ridgely Comprehensive Plan*, including the Town and its Growth Area and Greenbelt.



The recently completed West County Plan was prepared by the Caroline County Department of Planning, Codes, & Engineering Administration in coordination with the West Caroline County Ad Hoc Committee, the Towns of Denton, Hillsboro, and Ridgely, and the Caroline County Planning Commission. According to the draft West County Plan, the predominant future land use planned for the study area surrounding Ridgely (see Map 3-1) includes the following six (6) land use planning areas:

1. Municipal Growth Area;
2. Greenbelt (including Preservation/Conservation Land);
3. Rural Residential;
4. Commercial;
5. Institutional; and
6. Industrial.



**FIGURE 3-2:** Figure 3-2 depicts land uses from the *West Caroline County Comprehensive Plan*, prepared by Caroline County, for the Ridgely region. It includes preservation and conservation lands (green/yellow); the Ridgely Growth Area (orange); and the future Landfill site (dark red).

**Municipal Growth Area:** “Municipal Growth Areas” are planning areas located around municipalities and “are designed to provide Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB’s) for towns.”<sup>1</sup> The Ridgely Growth Area is 916 acres. These are growth areas negotiated with Town representatives during the preparation of the West County Plan.

Growth Areas are designated regions for major capital improvements and may “constitute future PFA’s...in compliance with State laws.”<sup>2</sup> This planning area acknowledges the need for improved County and Town coordination for growth management with the understanding that towns are the most appropriate areas to provide public infrastructure to accommodate development.

**Greenbelt:** The “Greenbelt” surrounding the Town is approximately 8,001 acres. The Greenbelt is intended to provide a “ring of protected lands to define an urban/rural edge.”<sup>3</sup> Planned land uses in the Greenbelt include agricultural, open space, surface mining, natural resource utilization, and low density rural residential. Land within the Greenbelt is categorized as a Caroline County “Priority Agricultural Preservation Area” by the Caroline Department of Planning & Codes Administration. Preservation and conservation funding for agriculture and natural resources will be concentrated in County Greenbelts. Approximately 3,443 acres are currently preserved in the Ridgely Greenbelt as of 2006.

<sup>1</sup> 2007 “Draft” *West Caroline County Comprehensive Plan*. Prepared by the Caroline County Department of Planning & Codes Administration, the Caroline County Planning Commission, and the West County Comprehensive Plan Ad Hoc Committee. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 12.

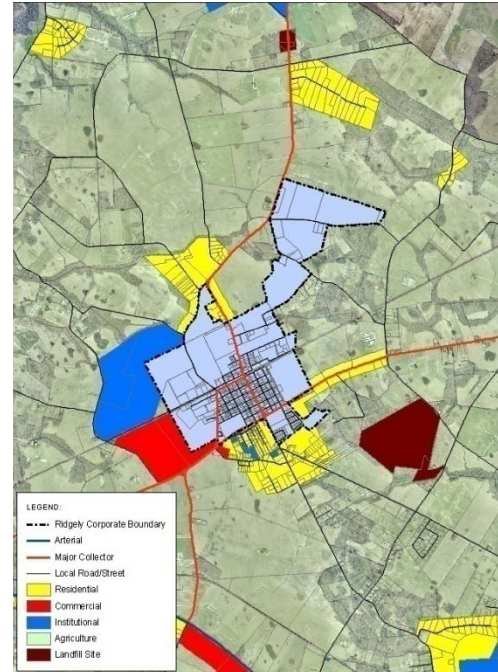
<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 13.

**Rural Residential:** “Rural Residential” includes existing low density residential uses lots that have resulted from prior subdivision activity.

**Commercial:** “Commercial” areas include existing commercial uses. The West County Plan calls for the elimination of the County’s “Highway Commercial” zoning district. In addition, the Plan calls for limiting intense commercial uses in rural areas, with the exception of those uses that directly support agriculture and/or natural resource industries.<sup>4</sup>

**Institutional:** Institutional uses include Tuckahoe State Park (Maryland Department of Natural Resources), Adkins Arboretum, and the Ridgely wastewater treatment and spray irrigation site, which is currently located in the County.

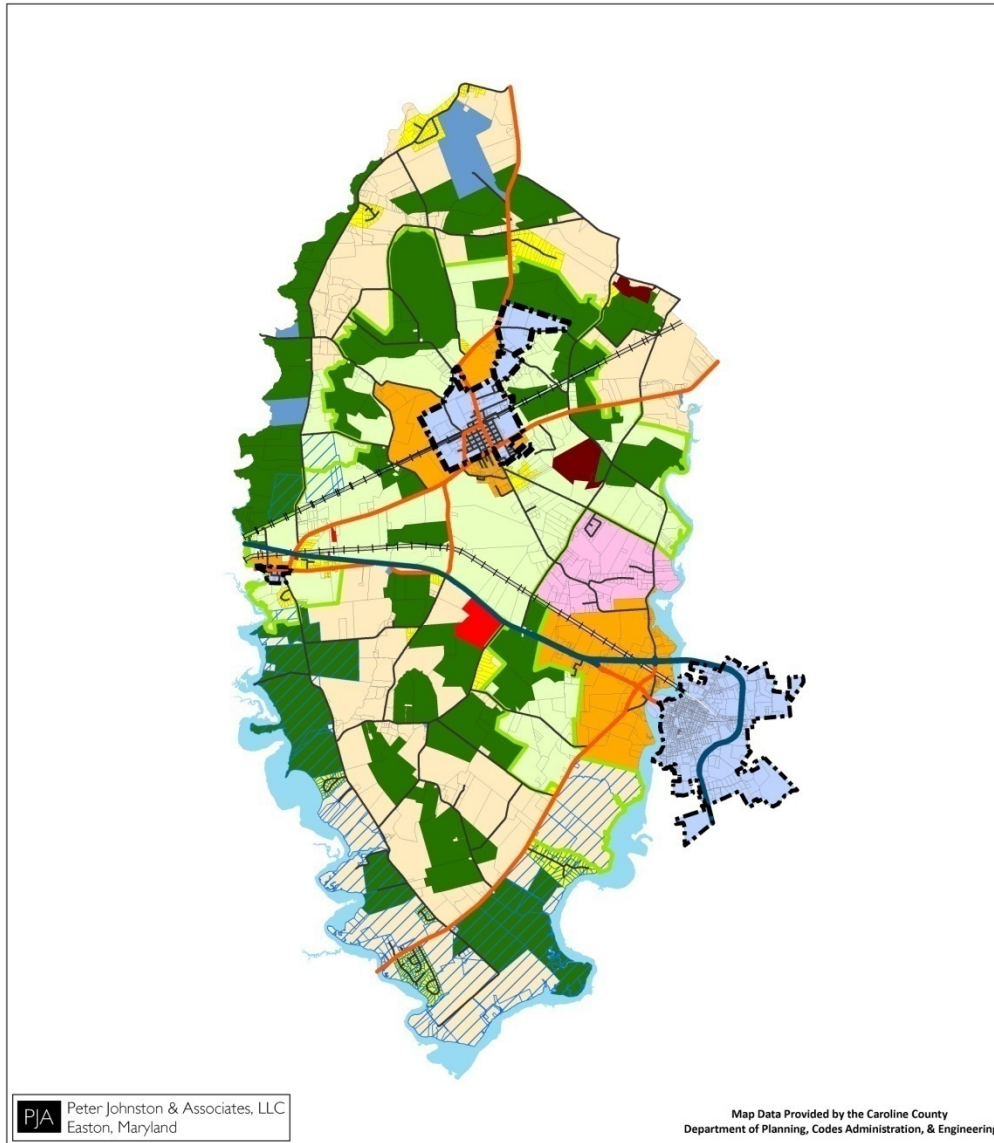
**Industrial:** The West County Plan includes scattered existing industrial sites located in rural areas of the County. The future Caroline County Landfill Site, located near Ridgely, is designated as an industrial area in the West County Plan. The largest County industrial area near Ridgely is a nursery located adjacent to the existing Town within the defined Ridgely Inter-Jurisdictional Growth Area (Phyto-Ecology).



**FIGURE 3-3:** Figure 3-3 depicts Caroline County zoning districts in the Ridgely region.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

## MAP 3-1: LAND USE PLAN WEST CAROLINE COUNTY



**Map and statistics as shown in the West Caroline County Comprehensive Plan:**

Incorporated Areas - 1,382 acres (3%);  
Unincorporated Areas - 42,228 acres (97%)

**2005 LAND USE**

Residential - 1,993 acres (5%)  
Commercial - 556 acres (1%)  
Industrial - 352 acres (1%)  
Institutional - 1,146 acres (3%)  
Preservation/Conservation Land - 2,624 acres (6%)  
Rural Conservation Area - 36,362 acres (83%)  
TDR Receiving Area - 1,257 acres (3%)

**2005 LAND USE PLANNING AREAS**

Growth Areas - 3,236 acres (7%)  
Greenbelt - 13,684 acres (31%)  
Rural Legacy Planning Area - 7,191 acres (17%)  
Rural Villages - 454 acres (1%)

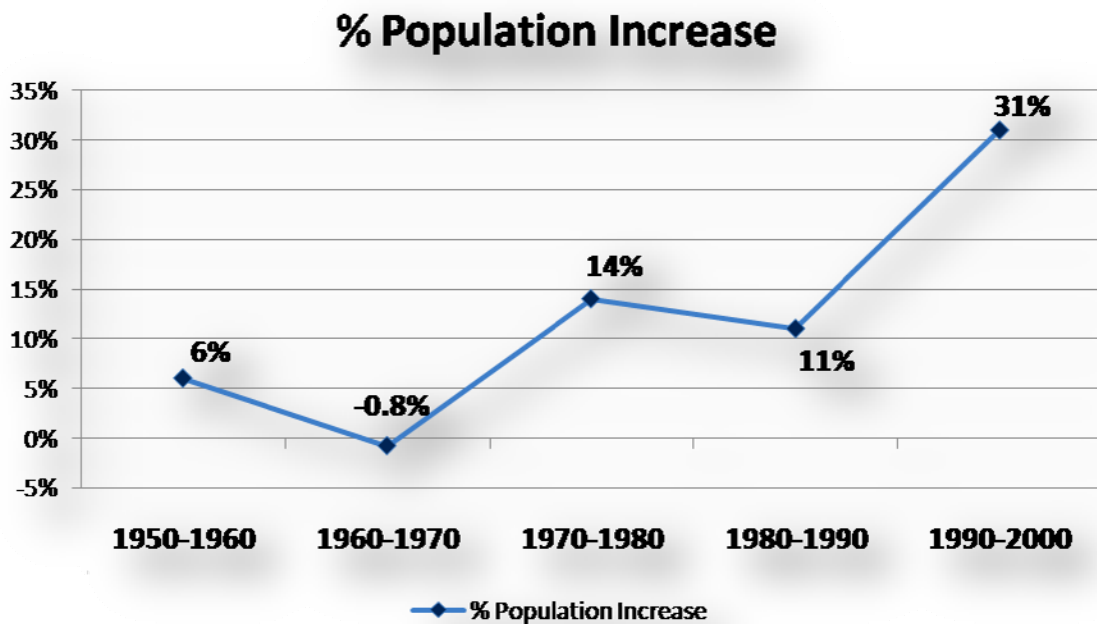
## GROWTH TRENDS & PATTERNS

From 1950 to 2000, Ridgely’s population increased by 518 residents (see Table 3-1). Ridgely population ranged from 4% to 5% of Caroline County’s overall population during this period.

Classification	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Caroline County	18,234	19,426	19,781	23,143	27,035	29,772
<b>Ridgely</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>886</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>1,034</b>	<b>1,352</b>
% of County Population	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	5%

Source: Maryland Department of Planning, 2007: 1990-2000 U.S. Census – Historic Census Data.

The years 1950 to 1970 witnessed a large decrease in Ridgely’s population (7%), culminating in a negative population loss between 1960 and 1970 of approximately 1% (see chart below). From 1970 through 1980, Ridgely experienced a population increase of 14%. From 1980 to 1990, Town population declined slightly (3%). From 1990 to 2000, Ridgely witnessed a significant population increase of approximately 31%.



It is important to note that the population in Ridgely has steadily increased in the last 16 years (1990 to 2006). State figures based on U.S. Census data indicate a 44% increase in the Town’s population from 1990 to 2006 (see Table 3-2). This is approximately a 2.7% annual growth rate.

As of 2005, the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) estimated Ridgely’s population at 1,485 making it the 4<sup>th</sup> largest municipality in Caroline County.

TABLE 3-2: POPULATION BY MUNICIPALITY – CAROLINE COUNTY					
Classification	1990	2000	2005	2006	% Change 1990-2006
<b>Caroline County</b>	<b>27,035</b>	<b>29,772</b>	<b>31,805</b>	<b>32,617</b>	<b>21%</b>
Classification	1990	2000	2005	2006	% Change 1990-2006
Denton	2,977	2,960	3,280	3,552	20%
Federalsburg	2,365	2,620	2,635	2,649	12%
Goldsboro	185	216	210	209	13%
Greensboro	1,441	1,632	1,951	1,958	36%
Henderson	66	118	121	122	85%
Hillsboro	64	163	158	158	147%
Marydel	143	147	143	143	0%
Preston	437	566	582	644	47%
<b>Ridgely</b>	<b>1,034</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>1,364</b>	<b>1,485</b>	<b>44%</b>
Templeville	66	80	81	82	24%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,778</b>	<b>9,854</b>	<b>10,525</b>	<b>11,002</b>	<b>25%</b>

Source: Maryland Department of Planning, 2007: 1990-2000 U.S. Census – 2005 Data

## FUTURE POPULATION GROWTH

Ridgely’s future population projections through 2030 are shown in Table 3-3 below. Population growth for the Town from 2000 to 2030 is projected to increase by approximately 27%. The projected annual average growth rate between 2000 and 2030 will be approximately 1.35%.

**Assumptions:** Population and dwelling unit (DU) projections are based on the following assumptions, referenced in the Growth Plan section of this chapter:

- New planned developments, vacant land, and underutilized land total approximately 496 acres and 1,250 potential DU’s (total infill and redevelopment potential in Ridgely - see Tables 3-5).
- Residential planned developments (approved subdivisions), totaling 48 DU’s, are currently where development is expected by 2030 (see Map 3-2).
- Total residential development during the planning period from 2000 to 2030 is expected to be approximately 150 DU’s.
- Population projections assume average household size will be commensurate with U.S. Census 2000 statistics for Ridgely at 2.46 persons per household.
- Population projections for planned developments and other residential infill and redevelopment total an additional 368 people from 2000 to 2030.
- Population projections from 2000 to 2030 assume that Ridgely’s population will be 4% of Caroline County’s total population.
- Infill and redevelopment potential (other vacant and underutilized land for residential development) is estimated at 1,100 additional DU’s. The development of other residential infill and redevelopment units depends on infrastructure upgrades and additional Town water/sewer capacity (see Map 3-2).

- No additional residential units are anticipated to be added to Ridgely as a result of new annexations within the next six years.

**TABLE 3-3: POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR CAROLINE COUNTY AND RIDGELY (2000-2030)**

Classification	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Change	Percent	Annual
<b>Caroline County</b>	29,772	34,200	37,300	40,750	44,000	47,150	17,378	58%	1.9%
<b>Ridgely</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>1,424</b>	<b>1,498</b>	<b>1,572</b>	<b>1,646</b>	<b>1,720</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>1.35%</b>
Dwelling Units	549	579	609	639	669	699	150	N/A	N/A
% of County Population	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	N/A	N/A	N/A

Sources: Maryland Department of Planning; U.S. Census; Peter Johnston & Associates

### ADDITIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING GROWTH

The nature and scope of growth in Caroline County and its towns has changed in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century from a predominately rural area to increasing suburban development. Long-term impacts could include social, economic, and political changes for the County and its towns. From a broad perspective, growth in Caroline County and Ridgely may be caused by a myriad of factors including:

- ❖ National demographic trends, particularly the retirement of the “Baby Boomer” generation;
- ❖ Market trends for homes, low interest rates, high value housing in other areas of the Mid-Atlantic region;
- ❖ Recent economic fluctuations caused by the 2008 economic crisis in the United States including a significant downturn in the housing market nationwide, which may impact new development; and
- ❖ Location in relation to major urban areas in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia (Mid-Atlantic States).

In addition, a number of local factors also may be contributing to growth including:

- ❖ Lower cost housing and land on the Eastern Shore;
- ❖ “Quality of Life” for the Eastern Shore region of Maryland;
- ❖ Abundance of historical, cultural, natural, and scenic resources and public amenities, particularly the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.
- ❖ Water and sewer capacity in municipalities; and
- ❖ Economic shifts as the region moves toward a service based economy.

In the past, growth in Caroline County was primarily rural residential development on private well and septic systems. Most of the new growth in the County is occurring in municipal areas where development can access public infrastructure and services. Other regional infrastructure enhancements, such as the dualization of MD Route 404, which connects U.S. Routes 50 and 13, may increase future development in Caroline County and its towns as access from urban areas is improved.

It is noteworthy to consider growth in the neighboring State of Delaware, particularly Kent, New Castle, and Sussex Counties. It also is reasonable to assume that increased growth in Delaware will affect Caroline County and the Town of Ridgely, whether it is increased development activity within the Town or the County.

In regards to Ridgely, Kent County, Delaware is the closest and most convenient with an approximate 30 minute drive time. In 2000, the population of Kent County was 126,697. As indicated by the Delaware Population Consortium in the *Kent County, Delaware Comprehensive Plan*, the County’s population is projected to grow at a rate of over 1.5% per year through 2020, increasing to 164,706 people.

New Castle County is the largest county in the State of Delaware with a 2006 population of 525,587 people. In addition, the Wilmington Metropolitan Service Area is within commuting distance to Caroline County and Ridgely (approximately 1 hour and 26 minutes). According to the *2003 Sussex County, Delaware Comprehensive Plan*, the County’s population was 156,638 persons in 2000. County population is projected to increase to 218,547 persons by 2020.

## GROWTH PLAN (INFILL & REDEVELOPMENT)

Recent planned developments in Ridgely total approximately 48 dwelling units (DU’s) as shown in Table 3-4. These planned residential developments are expected to commence construction and be completely built-out within the next 10 to 15 years, subject to infrastructure availability. The two largest potential developments are the Ridgeway Estates and Walnut Farms (36 DU’s total).

TABLE 3-4: PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS - RIDGELY	
Planned Developments	Number of Lots/Units (Est.)
Elliot Subdivision	1
Ridgeway Estates (Lister House)	16
Sebasco Unit	1
Walnut Farms	20
Walnut Street	3
Weese Project	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48</b>
Peter Johnston & Associates Includes approved/unimproved subdivisions and approved master concept plans from the Town of Ridgely Municipal Government.	

## RESIDENTIAL INFILL & REDEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Table 3-5 shows the potential dwelling units associated with the planned developments shown in Table 3-4 above as well as other vacant and underutilized land within Ridgely (see Map 3-2). Total infill and redevelopment potential for the build-out of the corporate area is estimated to be 1,250 total dwelling units (DU’s).

TABLE 3-5: RESIDENTIAL INFILL & REDEVELOPMENT LAND – RIDGELY		
Classification	Acres	Potential Residential DU’s
Planned Developments*	17	48
Vacant Land	409	996
Underutilized Land	70	206
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>1,250</b>
Peter Johnston & Associates *Includes approved/unimproved subdivisions.		

The potential DU yield for infill and redevelopment is based on a “Development Pattern Analysis” (see Appendix B for a detailed description). Yield was determined by first identifying the characteristics of recent planned developments as well as vacant and underutilized parcels using 2006 Maryland Property View data (MPV), verified by 2003 aerial photography for Caroline County.

### NON-RESIDENTIAL INFILL & REDEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Non-residential infill and redevelopment capacity includes commercial and industrial areas. The potential yield for commercial and industrial infill and redevelopment is based on a “Development Pattern Analysis” (see Appendix B for a detailed description). Ridgely has reserved 11,000 gallons per day (gpd) of water and sewer capacity for commercial projects, which has been factored into the evaluation of growth impacts in the planning period from 2000 to 2030.<sup>5</sup>

#### Ridgely Business Technology Park

Ridgely is cooperating with Caroline County in the development of a Business & Technology Park located in the northeast portion of the Town (see Figure 3-4). The Business & Technology Park is one phase of a larger effort to construct a technology business center in Caroline County linked to the neighboring Ridgely Airport. Combined these two sites provide a major transportation hub and modern employment center for the County. Both of these sites were annexed by the Town in 2005. The Business & Technology Park site totals approximately 95 acres with the potential for 18 commercial units at build-out, according to the current concept plan.



**FIGURE 3-4:** The Ridgely Airport and Business & Technology Park are important economic development initiatives for the Town and County.

As described in “Appendix B: Development Pattern Analysis,” utilizing a ratio for projected commercial water and sewer demand (200 gpd per 1,000 square feet of floor area), the Business & Technology Park will require 50,530 gallons per day (gpd) of water and sewer at total build out. Ridgely has reserved 9,000 gpd of wastewater for Phase I of Business & Technology Park from the existing water and sewer system.<sup>6</sup>

#### Ridgely Office Industrial Building & Brodie Shopping Center

The Ridgely Office Industrial Building is a commercial redevelopment project for the New Roads Commercial Building on Railroad Avenue in the Central Business District. The building is being converted for shops and other small commercial operations as leased space. The Brodie Shopping Center is located along Md. Rt. 480. Ridgely has reserved 2,000 gpd from the existing water and sewer system for the Shopping Center.

<sup>5</sup> Town of Ridgely Wastewater Capacity Management Plan. October 1, 2008. Capacity/Flow/Remaining Capacity.

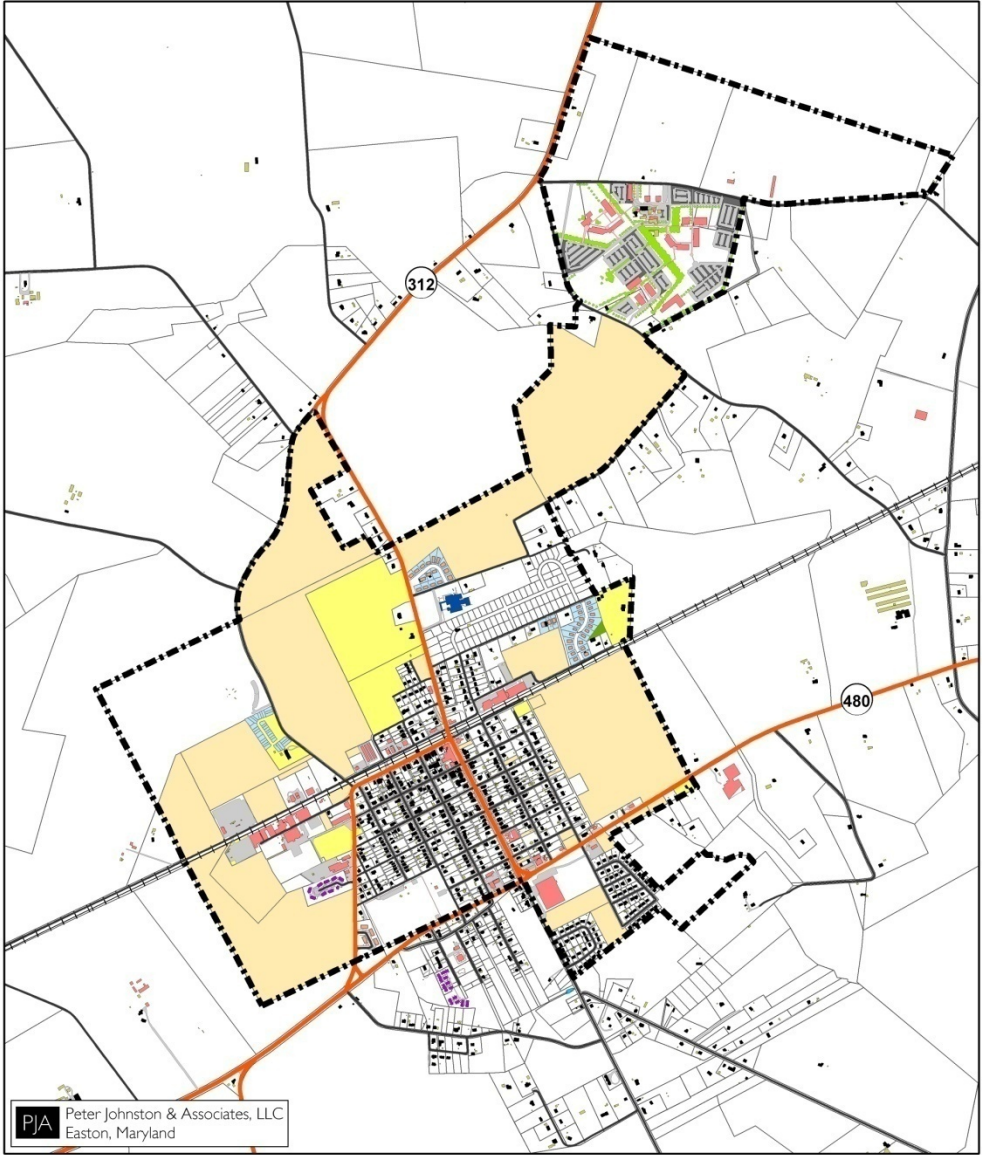
<sup>6</sup> Ibid.



### **Other Commercial/Industrial Infill and Redevelopment**

In addition to the planned Ridgely Business & Technology Park, other commercial infill and redevelopment sites exist in the Town. Total “other” commercial infill and redevelopment is approximately 5 acres with seven (7) potential commercial units (CU’s). Total industrial infill and redevelopment is approximately 28 acres with twelve (12) potential industrial units (IU’s). Other commercial/industrial infill and redevelopment areas will require an additional 28,506 gpd of water and sewer at total build-out.

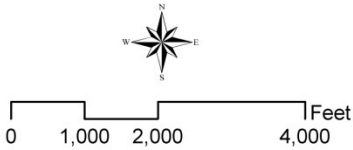
**MAP 3-2: MUNICIPAL GROWTH PLAN  
INFILL & REDEVELOPMENT LAND**



**LEGEND:**

- Ridgely Corporate Boundary
- State Roads
- Local Roads & Streets
- ⊢ Railroad Line
- Orange Potential Dwelling Units
- Black Dwellings
- Red Commercial Buildings
- Purple Apartments
- Green Out Buildings
- Cyan Church/Public
- Blue Public/Semi-Public Buildings
- Pink Sidewalks
- Grey Impervious Surface
- Dark Green New Subdivisions - Open Space
- Light Blue New Subdivisions - Lots
- Yellow Underutilized Land
- Light Orange Vacant Land

PJA Peter Johnston & Associates, LLC  
Easton, Maryland



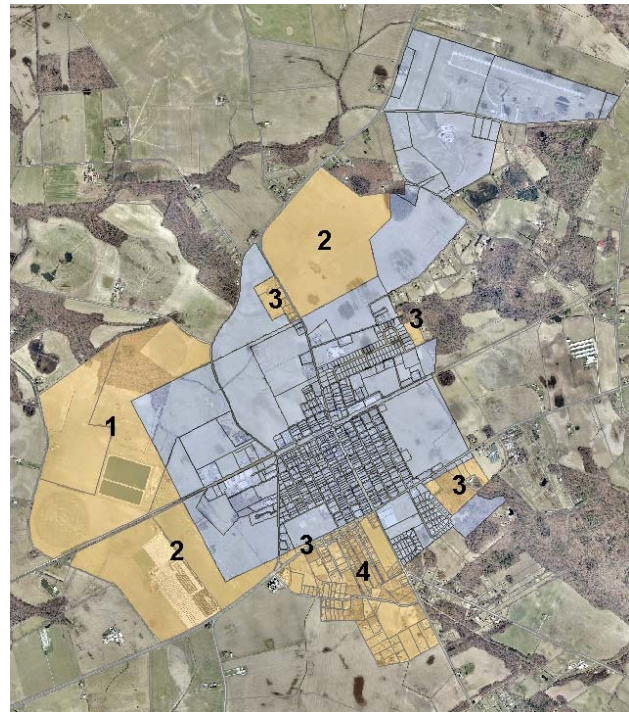
## GROWTH & ANNEXATION AREA PLAN

The Ridgely Growth & Annexation Area, as shown on Map 3-3 and Figure 3-5, represents the Town's long range growth expectations. A Growth Area for Ridgely was first defined in the *West Caroline County Comprehensive Plan*. The Ridgely Growth Area has been further refined during this comprehensive planning process to reflect current Town goals in relation to annexation, growth, and future development beyond Ridgely's current corporate boundaries. The 2009 Ridgely Growth Area totals approximately 824 acres.

### GROWTH & ANNEXATION AREAS

The Ridgely Growth and Annexation Area include four distinct area types, described as follows:

1. Annexation Area 1: Ridgely Wastewater Treatment and Spray Application Site (WWTP).
2. Annexation Area 2: Large vacant parcels for future residential, commercial, and/or mixed use development as Planned Neighborhood Developments.
3. Annexation Area 3: Several small and medium sized parcels to clarify corporate boundaries.
4. Annexation Area 4: Caroline County rural village of Trinity Boonsboro.



**FIGURE 3-5:** The Ridgely Growth & Annexation Area totals 824 acres. Areas are numbered in the Figure, depicting each distinct area and its general location.

**Annexation Area 1:** Annexation Area 1, owned by the Town, includes the Ridgely WWTP (208 acres). This area is a priority annexation area and will continue to be used for wastewater treatment and spray application. Additional agricultural properties are located in this area, which could be used for future spray irrigation expansion. Annexation of the WWTP may occur within the planning period 2000 to 2030. Residential development on this site is not anticipated;

**Annexation Area 2:** Annexation Area 2 includes several large areas east and north of Town consisting of three (3) parcels totaling 320 acres. Annexation plans for Ridgely acknowledge these properties as substantial future growth areas for planned mix-use development. Annexation of this area is not anticipated within the planning period of this comprehensive plan update (next 6 years).

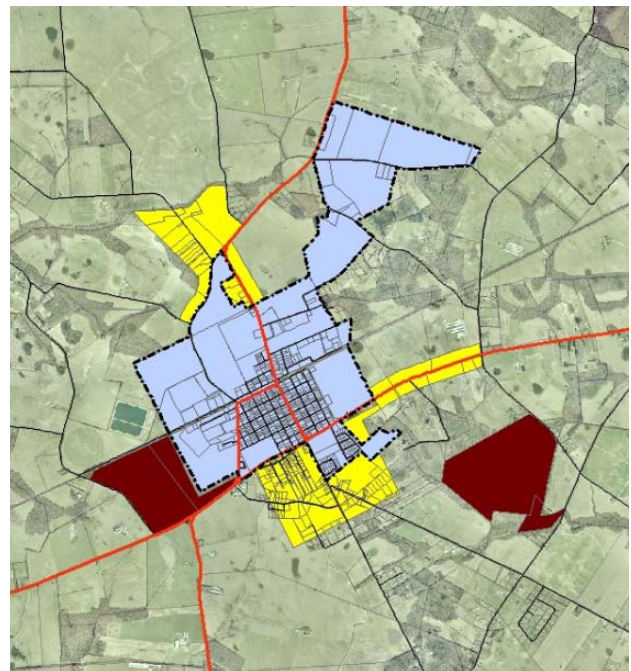
**Annexation Area 3:** Annexation Area 3 represents properties where annexations would clarify boundaries, prevent "enclaves," and/or extend services to specific areas. Annexation Area 3 consists of several small and medium sized parcels totaling approximately 145 acres with limited development potential. This area includes a mix of existing agricultural, residential, and commercial land uses.

Properties may be annexed on a “case-by-case” basis. Town infrastructure services will not be extended unless annexation occurs. Impacts associated with these annexations are minimal.

**Annexation Area 4:** Annexation Area 4 includes Trinity Boonsboro (152 parcels/151 acres), an existing residential subdivision in Caroline County located south of Ridgely and adjacent to the Town. The rural village has been identified by the County as a “failing septic system” area requiring public infrastructure (water and sewer). Annexation of the rural village of Trinity Boonsboro is not anticipated in the planning period. The annexation of Trinity Boonsboro will require intensive inter-jurisdictional coordination and cooperation with Caroline County including planning for public facilities and services, cost sharing for public infrastructure provisions/improvements, and a detailed housing and revitalization program.

### ANNEXATION: RURAL/URBAN TRANSITION AREAS

Figure 3-6 shows areas that the Town would like the County to consider as rural/urban transition areas. The Town will work with the County to determine zoning appropriate to a rural/urban transition area. This includes inter-jurisdictional discussion for a potential change of zoning or application of transitional zoning to ensure municipal annexation in the future, which is consistent with the Town and County Comprehensive Plans. Of particular concern to Town officials are those areas zoned R-1 and R-2 residential areas as well as I-2 in the County. These areas permit low-density strip residential and commercial development, located at the gateways to the Town.



**FIGURE 3-6:** Figure 3-6 depicts Caroline County Zoning Districts for consideration as rural/urban transition areas, which include Residential: R1 and R2 (yellow) and Industrial: I-2 (red).

### ANNEXATION TIMELINE

With the exception of “Annexation Area 1” and annexation of several small parcels to clarify Town corporate boundaries, annexation of other properties in the Growth Area is not anticipated within the next 6 years. Ridgely does however anticipate annexation and development in the future. The Town’s reasons for planning future annexations include:

- Protecting Ridgely’s unique identity by controlling the quality of development occurring in and around the Town;
- Requiring development site design that focuses on “place-making” principles;
- Efficient use of land resource by ensuring Smart Growth densities for new development;
- Requiring appropriate stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP’s) to enhance and protect water quality in potential receiving waters (Environmental Site Design);
- Addressing potential health and water quality issues associated with failing septic systems in

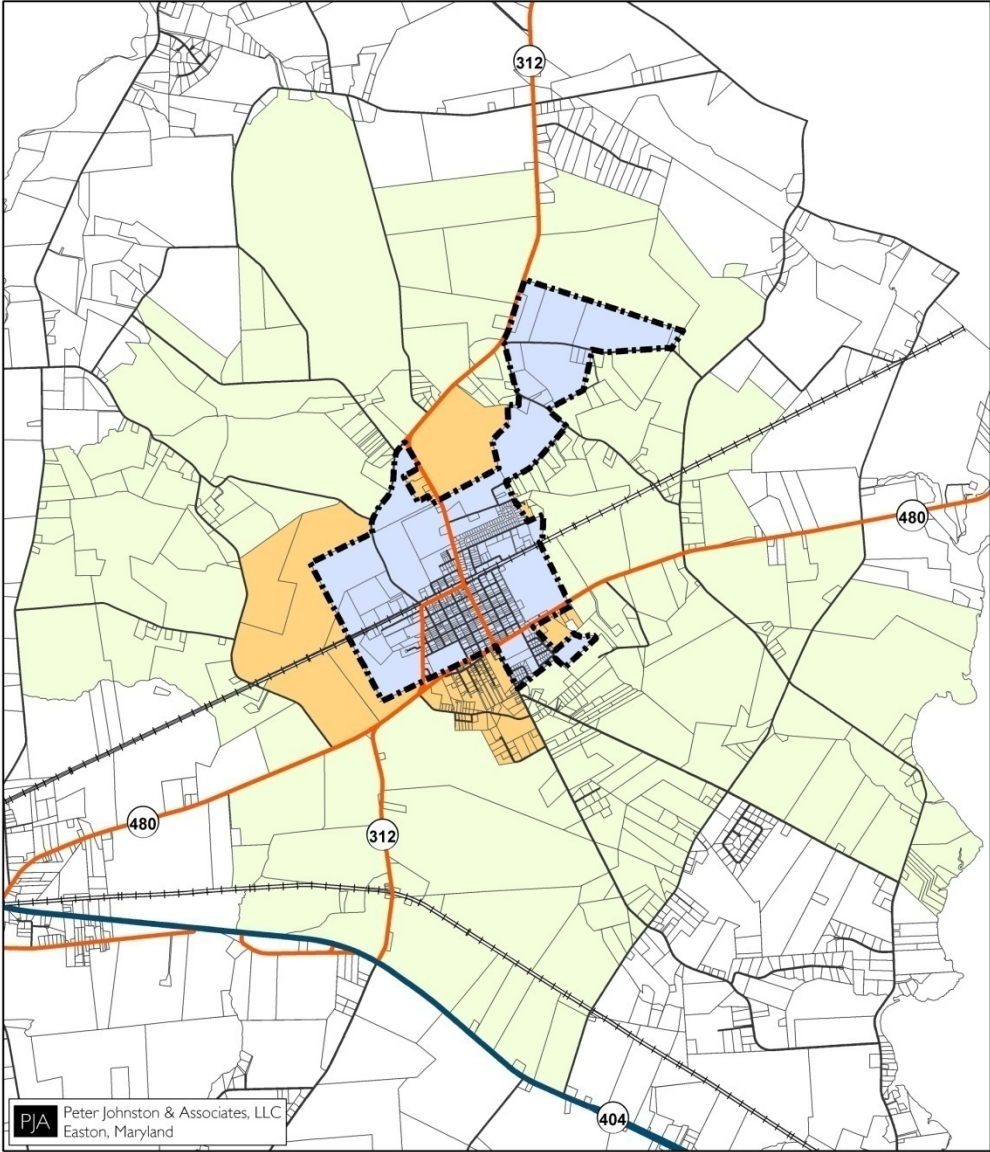
- coordination with Caroline County, if applicable; and
- Ensuring appropriate expansion of wastewater treatment and spray irrigation systems to accommodate new development.

## ANNEXATION POLICIES

The Comprehensive Plan maps a proposed Growth and Annexation Area for Ridgely. Properties located within this Growth Area are eligible for annexation. Prior to annexing any land areas not included in the Growth and Annexation Area Plan, the Town will first consider appropriate amendments to this Comprehensive Plan (including the Municipal Growth and Water Resources Elements). Ridgely will follow the procedural requirements for comprehensive plan amendments and annexation established in State law (Articles 66B and 23A). This will ensure that: 1) the proposed annexation is consistent with the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan; 2) appropriate consideration has been given to the adequacy of public facilities and services; and 3) County and State agencies are afforded an opportunity to comment on the proceedings. In addition, the following annexation policies will apply to future annexations:

1. Proposed annexation areas will be economically self-sufficient and will not result in larger municipal expenditures than anticipated revenues, which would indirectly burden existing Town residents with the costs of services or facilities to support the area annexed.
2. The costs of providing roads, utilities, parks, other community services will be borne by those people gaining the most value from such facilities through either income, profits, or participation.
3. Specific conditions of annexation will be made legally binding in an executed annexation agreement. Such agreements will address, among other things, consistency with the goals, objectives and recommendations contained in the *Ridgely Comprehensive Plan*, zoning and development expectations, responsibility for appropriate studies, and preliminary agreements concerning responsibilities for the cost of facilities and services provided by the Town. These preliminary agreements may be further revised in a Developers Rights and Responsibility Agreement (DRRA).
4. For annexations involving larger parcels of land, the Town may require appropriate impact studies, including a fiscal impact study and an environmental impact assessment that addresses the potential impact of the proposed annexation and planned development on the environment of the site and surrounding area.
5. If necessary, applicants for annexation shall pay the cost of completing all studies related to expanding capacity in existing public facilities and/or services.

**MAP 3-3: MUNICIPAL GROWTH PLAN  
GROWTH & ANNEXATION PLAN**



**LEGEND**

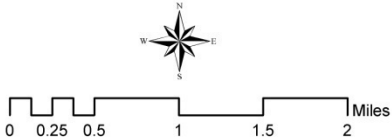
- Ridgely Corporate Boundary
- Shore Highway
- State Roads
- Local Roads & Streets
- +—+ Railroad Line
- Ridgely Growth Area
- Ridgely Greenbelt
- Town of Ridgely

**GROWTH & ANNEXATION LAND**

Annexation Area 1 = 208 acres  
 Annexation Area 2 = 320 acres  
 Annexation Area 3 = 145 acres  
 Annexation Area 4 = 151 acres

**TOTAL = 824 acres**

*\*Note: See Comprehensive Plan for details regarding Annexation Areas.*



## IMPACTS OF GROWTH

Population growth will have impacts on public services and facilities provided by Ridgely and Caroline County. Table 3-6 summarizes the estimated potential impacts on public facilities and services associated with planned developments, residential infill and redevelopment areas, and commercial infill and redevelopment during the planning period from 2000 to 2030. Impacts project dwelling units, population increases, sewer and water demand, as well as other public facilities and services such as schools, libraries, police, recreation land demand, and fire and rescue (emergency services).

**Assumptions:** Impact projections for Ridgely growth utilize the following sources:

- Future population and dwelling unit projections from 2000 to 2030, as described in this chapter;
- Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) multipliers for water and wastewater “Water & Wastewater Capacity Management Plans” (250 gallons per day of water and sewer per DU);
- Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) multipliers for school enrollment and recreation land;
- Multipliers for Municipal Administrative Space based on current space per thousand people;
- American Library Association (library facility square footage multiplier);
- International Association of Police Chiefs and other organizations (personnel multiplier);
- International City Council Management Association (fire personnel multiplier); and
- National Planning Standard (fire facility square footage multiplier).

TABLE 3-6: IMPACTS OF RIDGELY GROWTH ON PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES INFILL & REDEVELOPMENT FOR THE PLANNING PERIOD 2000 - 2030	
Classification	Infill/Redevelopment Areas
<b>Total Dwelling Units</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Population</b>	<b>368</b>
- Additional Sewer Design Capacity Required (gallons per day - gpd)	37,500
- Additional Water Design Capacity Required (gallons per day - gpd)	37,500
- Non-Residential Sewer/Water Design Capacity Required (gallons per day - gpd)	11,000
<b>*Total Sewer and Water (including non-residential infill/redevelopment)</b>	<b>48,500</b>
<b>School (new students)</b>	<b>71</b>
- High School	23
- Middle School	16
- Elementary School	32
<b>Municipal Administrative Space (gross floor area – gfa)</b>	<b>1,472</b>
<b>Library (gross floor area - gfa)</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Police (personnel)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Recreation Land (acres)</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Fire &amp; Rescue (Emergency Services)</b>	
- Personnel	1
- Facilities (gross floor area - gfa)	294
Peter Johnston & Associates	
*Note: Impact projections assume approximately 150 dwelling units for the planning period from 2000 to 2030. Impact projections also assume an additional 11,000 gallons per day (gpd) of water and sewer for commercial infill and redevelopment projects.	

## IMPLICATIONS OF GROWTH

The most significant implications of Ridgely's "Growth Plan" are impacts on school facilities and water and wastewater demand. Future large-scale developments with significant potential impacts will be required to conduct a fiscal impact analysis to determine if revenues will cover the cost of public services and facilities. If a shortfall is determined, the Town will require a Developers Rights and Responsibilities Agreement that includes offsetting fees or enacting impact fees.

**Public Schools:** The projected impact of Ridgely's population growth on schools is approximately 71 new students: 32 elementary school students; 16 middle school students; and 23 high school students.

**Library:** Residents of Ridgely are located within an easy drive of two branches of the Caroline County Public Library: Denton Public Library and the Greensboro Public Library. County library expansions and renovations are funded through the Caroline County Fiscal Year Capital Budget. Projected impacts indicate that an additional 37 square feet of library space will be needed to accommodate the residential growth projected for Ridgely. The combined facilities of Denton and Greensboro public libraries should adequately serve these needs.

**Recreation Land:** Ridgely already has 52.3 acres of park and recreation land, which are dedicated public parks serving the existing population. Projected impacts indicate an additional 11 acres is needed.

**Public Safety:** Fire and emergency medical services are provided to Ridgely residents through the Caroline County Department of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), which supplies EMS to Caroline County towns and oversees municipal volunteer fire departments (including the Ridgely Volunteer Fire Department). Police protection in Ridgely is provided by a Town Police Force, the Caroline County Sheriff's Department, and the Maryland State Police.

Police and emergency services will be impacted to a moderate degree as a result of the projected increase in Ridgely's population. Based on industry standards for calculating staffing levels of emergency services personnel, one additional police personnel and one additional fire/rescue personnel will be needed to serve the projected increase in population. Fire and rescue services also will need an additional 294 square feet of building space. This need can be fulfilled with the construction of a new Ridgely Fire Hall/Station within the Town.

**Town Administrative Offices:** Ridgely recognizes that any gain in population will require an equivalent increase in municipal meeting space, Town administrative staff, and municipal services (street repairs, trash collection, etc.). The Town currently provides approximately 4,000 square feet of administrative office space per 1,000 people.<sup>7</sup> If this level of service is to be maintained through the planning period (2000 to 2030), an additional 1,472 square feet of administrative office space is needed.

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<sup>7</sup> 2006 Maryland Property View. United States Census Bureau: U.S. Census 2000.



**Water and Sewer:** According to the Town’s January 1, 2008 Status Report “Wastewater Treatment Plant Allocation Capacity Management Plan,” the Ridgely WWTP has an existing design capacity of 200,000 gpd with a current flow of 124,667 gpd (2005 – 2007). Remaining capacity in the plant is limited and planning for upgrades should be undertaken.

Sewerage capacity exists in the Ridgely WWTP but not enough to serve all residential infill and redevelopment within the Town’s corporate boundaries as well as non-residential infill and redevelopment (commercial/industrial). Sewer demand is estimated to increase by an additional 48,500 gpd. Water demand also will increase by 48,500 gpd.

Water system upgrades are planned for Ridgely including a new well and water tower in 2009/2010. Total wastewater capacity required to serve development in the planning period is approximately 173,167 gpd. Current design capacity for the Town’s wastewater system is adequate to serve projected development to 2030. The existing design capacity for the WWTP is 200,000 gpd. Future infill and redevelopment beyond 2030 will require additional capacity as noted in Tables 3-6 and 3-7. Capacity for future commercial and industrial development must also be factored into the Town’s allocation process.

#### **POTENTIAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH ADDITIONAL INFILL & REDEVELOPMENT LAND**

Table 3-7 provides potential impacts from additional infill and redevelopment associated with the full build-out to the Town’s development capacity. This includes an additional 1,100 residential infill and redevelopment units with a projected population of 2,706 new residents. It also includes limited non-residential infill and redevelopment sites (commercial and industrial). Additional infill and redevelopment, including residential and non-residential units, is not anticipated during the planning period from 2000 to 2030.

Substantial impacts from Ridgely infill and redevelopment land will be experienced by Caroline County. For example, to accommodate infill and redevelopment growth, an expansion of school facilities will be required at all levels (see discussion of rated school capacity in the Community Facilities chapter). It also will require increases in personnel for police and fire and rescue (emergency services). Emergency services include additional square footage for facilities.

Impacts to the Town include the need for additional water and sewer capacity to meet projected demand. In all likelihood, the Town will be required advance waste water treatment levels to Enhanced Nutrient Removal.

**TABLE 3-7: IMPACTS OF RIDGELY GROWTH ON PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES  
POTENTIAL INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT BEYOND 2030**

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Remaining Infill/Redevelopment Areas</b>
<b>*Total Dwelling Units</b>	<b>1,100</b>
<b>Population</b>	<b>2,706</b>
- Additional Sewer Design Capacity Required (gallons per day - gpd)	275,000
- Additional Water Design Capacity Required (gallons per day - gpd)	275,000
- Non-Residential Sewer/Water Design Capacity Required (gallons per day - gpd)	28,506
<b>*Total Sewer and Water (including non-residential infill/redevelopment)</b>	<b>303,506</b>
<b>School (new students)</b>	<b>524</b>
- High School	169
- Middle School	118
- Elementary School	237
<b>Municipal Administrative Space (gross floor area – gfa)</b>	<b>10,824</b>
<b>Library (gross floor area - gfa)</b>	<b>271</b>
<b>Police (personnel)</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Recreation Land (acres)</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Fire &amp; Rescue (Emergency Services)</b>	
- Personnel	4
- Facilities (gross floor area - gfa)	2,165

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\*Note: Impact projections assume approximately 691 total dwelling units from other residential infill and redevelopment sites in Ridgely after 2030. Also assumes approximately 19 commercial and industrial units anticipated after 2030 (28,506 gpd water/sewer), depending on the availability of infrastructure.

### POTENTIAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GROWTH & ANNEXATION AREA

Annexation of Ridgely Growth Areas, with the exception of the Ridgely wastewater treatment site, is not anticipated within the planning period 2000 to 2030. The Ridgely Growth Area is approximately 824 acres of which 320 acres form the core area anticipated for future residential and/or mixed use development (Annexation Area 2). Annexation Area 2 was used to estimate potential impacts from new residential development.

**Assumptions:** Impact projections for the Ridgely Growth Area are largely confined to Annexation Area 2, large vacant parcels where future residential and/or mixed use development is anticipated. The potential impacts associated with annexation and development of the Growth Area was calculated based on three potential development scenarios:

- Scenario 1: Based on standard zoning for the Ridgely R-3 Residential Zoning District, Scenario 1 assumes an average gross density of 2 dwelling units per acre.
- Scenario 2: Based on Maryland Smart Growth objectives, Scenario 2 assumes an average gross density of 3.5 dwelling units per acre.
- Scenario 3: Based on development standards that will permit maximum dwelling units per acre in planned mixed-use communities, Scenario 3 assumes an average gross density of 5.0 dwelling units per acre.

As shown in Table 3-8, impacts associated with the build-out of the Growth Area are based on a potential range of dwelling units (development capacity) from 640 to 1,600. Population is estimated to range from 1,574 to 3,936 new Town residents.

<b>TABLE 3-8: IMPACTS OF RIDGELY GROWTH ON PUBLIC FACILITIES &amp; SERVICES (GROWTH AREA)</b>			
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Scenario 1</b>	<b>Scenario 2</b>	<b>Scenario 3</b>
<b>Gross Dwelling Units (Annexation Area 2)</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>1,120</b>	<b>1,600</b>
<b>Population</b>	<b>1,574</b>	<b>2,755</b>	<b>3,936</b>
<b>Additional Sewer Design Capacity (GPD)</b>	<b>160,000</b>	<b>280,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>
<b>Additional Water Design Capacity (GPD)</b>	<b>160,000</b>	<b>280,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>762</b>
- High School	99	172	247
- Middle School	68	120	171
- Elementary School	138	241	344
<b>Municipal Administrative Space (gross floor area – gfa)</b>	<b>6,296</b>	<b>11,020</b>	<b>15,744</b>
<b>LIBRARY (floor area)</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>394</b>
<b>POLICE (personnel)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>RECREATION LAND (acres)</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>FIRE &amp; RESCUE</b>			
- Personnel	3	4	6
- Facilities	1,259	2,204	3,149
Peter Johnston & Associates			

Scenario 2 is most reflective of how the properties may be developed given past development trends. Scenarios 2 and 3 are based on the belief that in order for the County and Town to make the most efficient use of existing and planned water and sewer facilities, while at the same time addressing resource protection and water quality requirements, development regulations will need to require compact mixed-use communities.

Accommodating the growth implied in any scenario will require expansion of school facilities at all levels. It also will require increases in personnel for police and fire and rescue (emergency services). Emergency services include additional square footage for facilities. Water and sewer demand will increase significantly. Development of the Ridgely Growth Area will require another substantial upgrade to the Town’s water and wastewater systems.

### **INTER-JURISDICTIONAL COORDINATION**

The *Ridgely Comprehensive Plan* highlights the need for increased inter-jurisdictional coordination with Caroline County. From Ridgely’s perspective, the substantive issues related to Caroline County include the following:

- The Caroline County Landfill, located near Ridgely in the Study Area on Holly Road, will impact Town infrastructure and quality of life for residents. Caroline County and Ridgely should work closely to address perceived impacts and mitigate conflicts with landfill operations.

- The County region surrounding Ridgely is rich in mineral resource (sand and gravel deposits). Caroline County should identify areas where mineral extraction will be permitted in coordination with the nearby municipalities. Locating mineral resource extraction districts, as recommended in the *West Caroline County Comprehensive Plan*, should take into account municipal gateways and surrounding scenic viewsheds. In addition, the County should develop comprehensive and up-to-date regulations governing surface mining activities to ensure mitigation and appropriate post mining uses, which can include residential development.
- Peripheral development in Caroline County, within the Ridgely Growth Area, is a concern of Town officials. The Town believes that new development in and around the Town should be consistent with Maryland Smart Growth principles and sound place-making practices. Caroline County should work closely with the Town to address potential pre-development issues and ensure that land designated as a future municipal growth area or greenbelt be protected from incompatible development.
- Caroline County has indicated in the *West Caroline County Comprehensive Plan*, a desire to have Trinity Boonsboro annexed by Ridgely and provided with water and sewer infrastructure. Ridgely concurs that annexation and water and sewer provisions will assist overall County water quality and quality of life objectives. However, the Town wishes to note that Trinity Boonsboro is a County subdivision and the Town is not responsible for the failing septic systems in this area. Future annexation of Trinity Boonsboro will require a detailed and coordinated County/Town effort. This includes acceptance of Caroline County's responsibility to provide sanitary, safe, and healthy conditions for residents through cost sharing initiatives with the Town to improve conditions.
- Ridgely and Caroline County will have to work together, along with other jurisdictions in the Choptank River Basin, to devise appropriate management strategies to ensure water quality standards are met while at the same time accommodating responsible growth (see Water Resources Element).

### COORDINATION FOR EFFECTIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT

It is apparent from the prior discussion of growth-related impacts that a critical need exists for the Town and County to work together. Future growth of the County and Town will depend on sound strategies to address such issues as water quality and school capacity as well as demands on emergency services, public infrastructure, and transportation facilities. This sentiment was underscored by the *West Caroline County Comprehensive Plan*.

Like public infrastructure, water quality issues cannot be addressed by the Town alone. Going forward, effective management of non-point source pollution must be based on watershed-wide land use strategies and coordinated administration and enforcement of sediment and erosion control and stormwater management regulations. The planning requirements from Maryland House Bill 1141 direct the Town and County Planning Commission to meet and discuss this Comprehensive Plan prior to adoption. At a minimum, an agenda for such a joint County/Town meeting should include how best to coordinate the following:

1. Cooperative watershed planning initiatives for the watershed;
2. Coordinated policies concerning County land uses adjacent to the Town;
3. Coordinated policies concerning conservation of green infrastructure; and
4. Funding for public facilities and services, i.e., Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, impact fees, excise taxes, County/Town tax differential.

Effective mechanisms for County/Town dialogue, coordination, and agreement are needed. Acceptable coordinated strategies should be formalized in ways that bind each participant. Forums for on-going coordination and cooperation include the Caroline County Council of Governments (COG), sanitary districts, joint steering committees (for example for watershed planning initiatives) and others. Examples of potential formal mechanisms for recording joint policies include a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and/or an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA). An assessment of the direction for future development patterns in Caroline County is needed as a critical step in the broader process. Updates to Caroline County's policies and implementing provisions to reflect the recommendations of this Plan also are needed.

## IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Descriptions and other details regarding implementation are contained in Chapter 9 of this Comprehensive Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION #1:** Review, update, and revise Ridgely development standards, guidelines, regulations, processes, and procedures to achieve consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. This is particularly important for infill and redevelopment, annexation, and infrastructure.

**RECOMMENDATION #2:** Preserve the small town historic and rural character of Ridgely, while also preserving single-family neighborhood community identity by initiating local municipal policies and regulations to stabilize neighborhoods.

**RECOMMENDATION #3:** Initiate planning, design, and engineering for infrastructure upgrades to accommodate future development and redevelopment (water and sewer), when appropriate.

**RECOMMENDATION #4:** Require new planned development assess their impacts, including fiscal and environmental impacts.

**RECOMMENDATION #5:** Coordinate with Caroline County regarding County zoning, which surrounds the Town, and other planning initiatives such as watershed planning. Regarding County zoning, Ridgely should request enhanced coordination and cooperation from the Caroline County Department of Planning and Codes Administration to ensure compatible development with Ridgely's historic character and unique location. Low density residential development in Ridgely Growth Areas should be discouraged.

**RECOMMENDATION #6:** Coordinate with Caroline County to amend the Ridgely Growth Area and Greenbelt in the *Caroline County Comprehensive Plan* to reflect the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan and create consistency between the County and Town Comprehensive Plans.

**RECOMMENDATION #7:** Meet with the Caroline County Planning Commission to discuss the Ridgely Comprehensive Plan.

## Chapter 4 Community Facilities

Public services and facilities provided by Ridgely, and other government agencies, ensure the health, safety, and welfare of existing and future populations. To ensure that adequate community facilities and services are available when needed, the Town must continually monitor demand and capacity to anticipate when and where facility expansions will be needed. Preparation of a “Community Facilities Element” in the Comprehensive Plan is a preliminary step in addressing supply and demand for community facilities and services. This includes education and recreation facilities, police and emergency services, roads, streets and sidewalks, and water and sewer services. This element of the Comprehensive Plan examines existing community facilities and services. The “Municipal Growth Element” assesses the impacts of projected future growth and recommends actions the Town should take to ensure adequate community facilities and services are available.

### GOAL & OBJECTIVES

#### **GOAL:**

Provide an appropriate array of community facilities and services, required to maintain the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Ridgely.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

Assure the continued expansion of public facilities and services commensurate with local financial capabilities and the capacity of each system.

Assure the provision of community facilities and services to all “living and working” areas of Ridgely, accomplished in a manner least disruptive to the environmental qualities of the area.

Encourage the efficient use of natural resources such as water, waterways, and scenic areas for the benefit of all residents of Ridgely.

Encourage the use of public lands and buildings for a variety of public purposes.

## TOWN GOVERNMENT



Ridgely Town government maintains a town hall, police station, several water and sewer service support buildings and a public works maintenance garage and shop. The Town Hall, approximately 5,356 square feet, is located on Central Avenue. Built in 1867, this building is the former residence of one of the Town’s founding fathers. Named the “Ridgely House,” it served as a hotel and apartments before being purchased by the Commissioners of Ridgely in 1997. A careful and extensive restoration was undertaken. In August 1998, the building was dedicated to the citizens of Ridgely as the Town Hall. Today, it houses the administrative operations of the Town, including the

office of the Town Manager and staff and meeting rooms for the Town’s various Boards and Commissions. Public meetings are held at the Town Hall on a regular basis.

## PARKS & RECREATION

There are several parks located in the Town of Ridgely. The largest of these is the Ridgely Athletic Complex. This 35-acre facility was originally developed in 1999 as a cooperative agreement between the Town and the Ridgely Little League. The initial phase of the development of the Complex included the construction of parking facilities and two regulation Little League ball fields. Subsequent improvements included playground equipment and a temporary concession stand. Phase II begun in May, 2007 and was funded by State, Town, corporate, commercial, and private contributions. Renovations will include the installation of restrooms and construction of a Senior League ball field as well as a permanent concession stand.



Martin Sutton Memorial Park is a neighborhood park located on the southwest corner of Park Avenue and Fourth Street. This 24-acre facility, funded primarily with Project Open Space (POS) funds, was developed as a multi-service park. It includes playgrounds and facilities for baseball, softball, basketball, soccer, tennis, volleyball, picnicking, skateboarding, and horseshoes, as well as tracks and trails for walking, jogging, and cycling. The Park underwent \$15,000 worth of POS-funded renovations in the summer of 2007, including the construction of a new bandstand and additional park benches.



The Railroad Park Mini-Park is the smallest park in Ridgely. The Commissioners of Ridgely purchased the Railroad Depot from the Delaware Railroad Company in 1966, along with approximately one-third of an acre of land adjacent to the station. The railroad station served as the Town Office for a time. It is now occupied by a medical practice. The adjacent land was developed with POS funds as a small landscaped park with park benches for seating.

Ridgely Elementary School's 15-acre site on Central Avenue contains public recreation facilities, including 2 ball fields, a multi-purpose playing field, picnic tables, and a tot lot.



## REGIONAL PARK FACILITIES

Residents of Ridgely benefit from proximity to Tuckahoe State Park, a 3,800-acre park located approximately 2 miles east of Ridgely. The Park is maintained by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR). In addition to Tuckahoe Creek, which runs through the length of the park, visitors have access to a 60-acre lake for boating and fishing; over 20 miles of hiking, biking, and equestrian trails; playgrounds; picnic areas; and the 500-acre Adkins Arboretum, which offers education programs and special events to the public year-round.

A needs analysis conducted as part of the 2005 *Caroline County Land Preservation, Recreation and Parks Plan* revealed a lack of public recreation trails for walking, jogging, and bicycling in the County.<sup>1</sup> The County has identified priority trail projects. Among them is a rails-to-trails project that would connect Ridgely with Tuckahoe State Park and Adkins Arboretum. In 2007, the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appropriated \$200,000 in funds for planning and design of this trail, which will be named the Upper Choptank Trail. The SHA funds will assist the Town of Ridgely with construction design for segments of the trail located within Town limits. The project also will identify trail routes along existing county and state roads to connect Ridgely with Tuckahoe State Park facilities.

## EDUCATION

Ridgely is served by three public schools that provide education programs and facilities for grades kindergarten through 12. These include the following:

**Ridgely Elementary School:** Ridgely Elementary School is located on Central Avenue and serves students in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. In fall 2007, 420 students were enrolled at the school.

**Lockerman Middle School:** Lockerman Middle School is situated on 19 acres located at 410 Lockerman Street in Greensboro, Maryland. It serves students in grades 6 through 8. Fall 2007 enrollment was 796 students. According to the *2006 Educational Facilities Master Plan for the Caroline County Public Schools*<sup>2</sup> (School Master Plan), the school's building condition is "good."

**North Caroline County High School:** The North Caroline High School (NCHS) campus occupies approximately 50 acres near Denton, the County Seat. It serves grades 9 through 12 and includes a career and technology center. Fall 2007 enrollment was 1,201 students, which is estimated to be about 98 percent of capacity. The School Master Plan rated NCHS's building condition as "good."

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<sup>1</sup> 2005 *Caroline County Land Preservation, Recreation & Parks*. Prepared by the Caroline County Department of Recreation and Parks, the Caroline County Parks and Recreation Board, and ERM, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> *2006 Educational Facilities Master Plan for the Caroline County Public Schools*, Caroline County Board of Education, June 2006

## FACILITIES NEEDS SUMMARY

The condition of schools in Ridgely and Caroline County are described in the *2006 Educational Facilities Master Plan for Caroline County Public Schools; Caroline County Board of Education*. As shown in Table 4-1, School Rated Capacity (SRC) is summarized for educational institutions serving Ridgely and the surrounding areas.

Classification	2006 SRC (# of students)	% of SRC w/Fall 2007 FTE
<b>Ridgely Elementary School</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>88%</b>
Lockerman Middle School	997	83%
North Caroline High School	1,213	96%

SRC: State Rated Capacity  
 FTE: Full-time enrollment  
 Source: Caroline County, Maryland Board of Education 2007 Educational Facilities Master Plan

**School Capacity:** The School Master Plan includes a “Facilities Needs Summary” that states that Caroline County will need to build additional school capacity to meet anticipated needs as the County population increases. The State Rated Capacity or SRC for the three schools serving the Town of Ridgely, and the level of capacity for each school, has been reached with fall 2007 enrollment.

New facilities proposed in the School Master Plan include two new elementary schools, one new middle school (to augment capacity at Lockerman Middle School), and additional high school capacity to supplement capacity at North Caroline High School and/or the career and technology center.

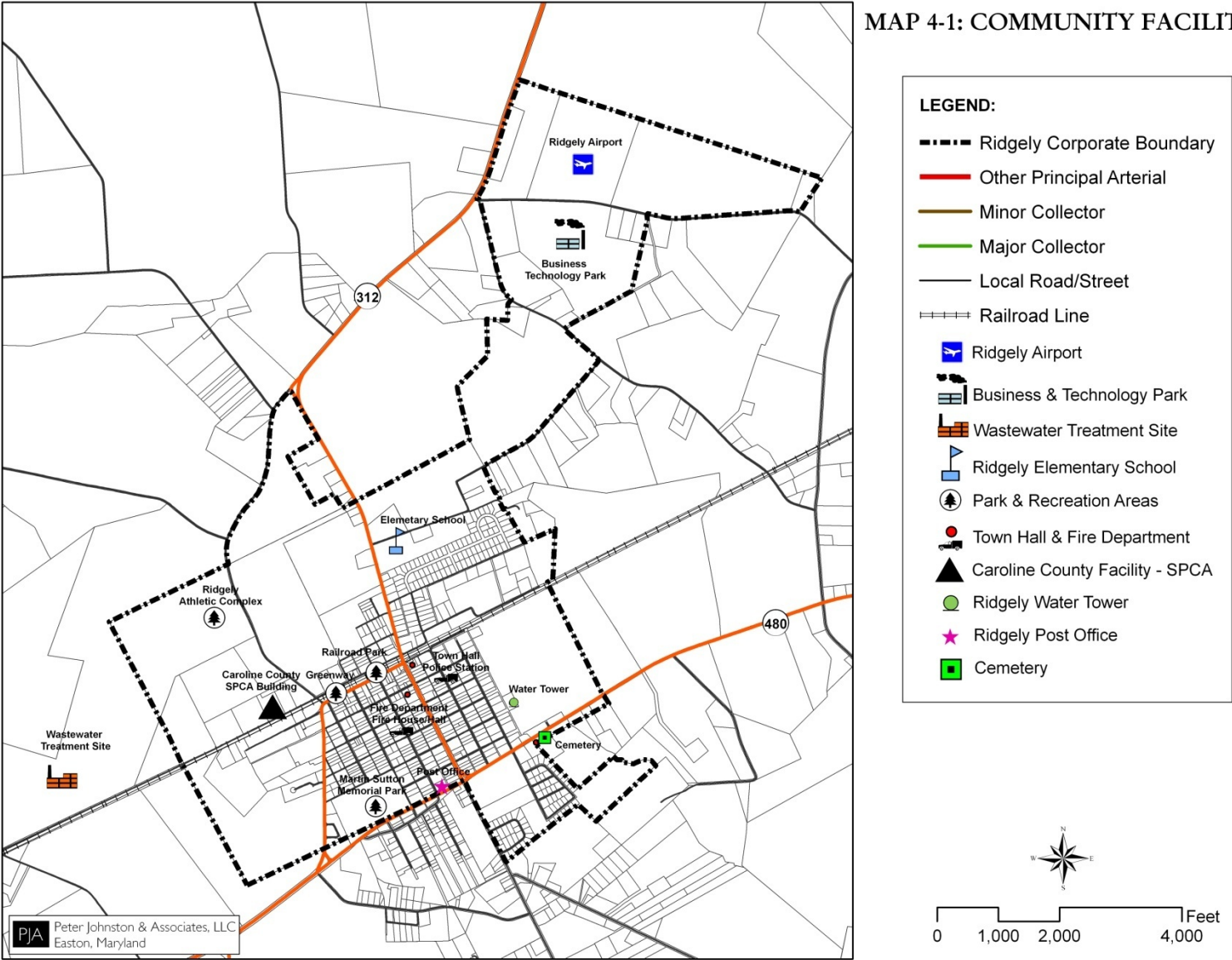
The *Caroline County Public Schools Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)* anticipates the construction of a new middle school within the next ten years, with the facility to be added to the North Caroline High School complex, if municipal sewer service is extended to the campus. If sewer service is not extended, another site will be chosen for the new middle school.

The timing and scale of improvements planned for the public schools that serve the Town of Ridgely indicate that the Town and the County have coordinated planning efforts to ensure that education facilities will expand to sufficiently accommodate anticipated growth. The School Master Plan estimates these projects will be included in the 2008 School CIP.

## POLICE SERVICES

The Ridgely Police Department provides police protection to the citizens of Town. It also enforces the criminal and traffic portions of the Town Code and State motor vehicle laws. The Department’s routine duties include traffic control, responding to citizen complaints, assisting fire and emergency services agencies, and providing services to local community organizations and gatherings.

MAP 4-1: COMMUNITY FACILITIES



## FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Ridgely Volunteer Fire Department, one of eight volunteer fire departments located in the County, provides fire and emergency medical services to residents in Ridgely and unincorporated areas located near the Town. The Department was organized in 1906 and incorporated in 1926, when its first fire engine was purchased. Currently, the Department operates two engine companies comprised of a shuttle tanker, a brush truck, a command vehicle, an advanced life support (ALS) equipped ambulance, a utility vehicle, and a canteen vehicle operated by the Ladies Auxiliary. In 2002, the Department replaced a 1972 Shuttle Tanker and a 1986 Engine with a 2002 International/Ferrara Tanker and a 2002 Spartan/Ferrara Engine. The total cost was \$350,000.00 for both pieces of equipment. In addition to the services it provides to residents living in and near Ridgely, the Department also has Mutual Aid Agreements with the other towns in Caroline County and with Talbot and Queen Anne's Counties.

At present, the Department is housed in its original building, which was constructed in 1930. The station has since been enlarged to include a banquet hall and additional equipment bays. Several years ago the Department purchased land on the corner of Sunset Boulevard and 1st Street, and is currently undertaking a capital campaign to raise funds for the construction of a new station.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Maryland Upper Shore Transportation provides daily fixed route service between Ridgely, Denton, and Easton. Delmarva Community Transit for Caroline County provides door-to-door service by reservation. Patrons must call to request service by noon the day before the needed service.

## UTILITIES

Electric service in Ridgely is provided by Connectiv and Choptank Electric Cooperative. Water and wastewater services, as well as general public works functions such as trash collection, are provided by the Town of Ridgely.

### WATER & SEWER SERVICES

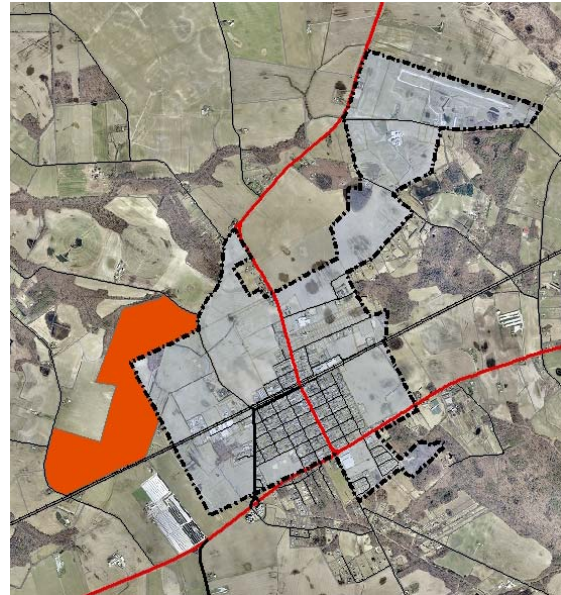
**Water Services:** Water service in Ridgely is provided by two wells that draw from the Piney Point Aquifer. A third well has been drilled but is not in use, pending construction of a new storage tank and final approval by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) for withdrawal.

The Town's water system includes a 200,000 gallon elevated water storage tank and a treatment facility. In 2008, there were 617 connections to the system. Of the total connections, 530 are residential (3 of which are outside Town boundaries), 44 commercial and industrial (1 is outside Town boundaries), and 43 apartments (11 of which are outside of Town boundaries).

A “Water Infrastructure Study,” completed in 2007, recommended the addition of a second elevated water storage tank with at least 500,000 gallons holding capacity. The planning and design phase of the new tower project is complete and Ridgely has submitted a Pre-Application for MDE Water Quality Infrastructure Program Capital Project funding. The new Mid Shore Regional Business & Technology Park has been identified as a potential site for the tank. Construction is anticipated to be complete by June 2009.<sup>3</sup>

**Sewer Services:** In 2008, there were 612 sewer connections to the Town’s wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). Of the total connections, 524 are residential (5 of which are outside Town boundaries), 45 commercial and industrial (1 is outside Town boundaries), and 43 apartments (11 of which are outside of Town boundaries).

The wastewater treatment system (see Figure 4-1) consists of two non-aerated storage lagoons, a chlorine contact tank, and effluent spray fields. Under the WWTP’s current operating permit (Permit Number 04-DP-0530), the facility may surface discharge 200,000 gallons per day. In 2008, the Plant’s average annual flow was 124,667 gpd (based on the average annual flows of 2005, 2006, and 2007).<sup>4</sup> The total spray field area currently is separated into three spray zones. These spray zones have soils ranging from moderately well-drained to well-drained. The three spray sites are each served by a rotating “center pivot” irrigator.



**FIGURE 4-1:** Figure 4-1 indicates the location of Ridgely’s wastewater treatment system (shown in red) and spray irrigation site, partially located outside the Town’s corporate boundaries.

The Town is in the process of upgrading its plant to maximize the use of its existing spray irrigation land for effluent disposal. The upgrade will include replacing the existing center pivot spray irrigators with solid set irrigators. In order to use the solid set spray irrigators, pumps will be added to correctly pressurize the system. The new pumps will be installed in a newly constructed building adjacent to the plant’s existing chlorine contact tank. These changes will be coupled with a crop replacement in the irrigation fields to loblolly pines, which will decrease crop management delays and keep nutrient levels within permitted limits. The project is estimated to be complete in mid-2009.<sup>5</sup>

As noted in the *Ridgely 5-Year Capital Improvements Plan*, “the sewer Infiltration/Inflow (I&I) issue has been around for some time, and the Town realizes it needs to be addressed. The complete replacement of the old collection system lines would cost around \$6,000,000. The Town has undertaken a study to ascertain the amount of I&I affecting the WWTP. It appears that though the issue is serious, the new WWTP could help alleviate the potential of the lagoons filling up and thus costing sewer capacity, since

<sup>3</sup> *Ridgely Five-Year Capital Improvement Program, 2007*

<sup>4</sup> MDE Letter to Joseph A. Mangini, Jr., Town Manager, Ridgely, February 15, 2008

<sup>5</sup> *Ridgely Five Year Capital Improvement Projects Report, April 2, 2007*

with the new plant the Town could discharge every day, and not be limited to just three months. However, the issue of I&I needs to be addressed and corrected. And a new main sewer pumping station needs to be constructed. The present one is old and parts for it are hard to get and expensive.”<sup>6</sup>

## WATER & WASTEWATER PLANNING

Under Maryland House Bill 1141 (HB 1141), comprehensive planning now requires the addition of two new Plan Elements to address Municipal Growth and Water Resources. As a result of HB 1141, new water quality requirements are being initiated by the State. The most important changes impacting municipalities are achieving compliance with the “Federal Clean Water Act” (CWA) and creating consistency with water and sewer planning in relation to growth and development. In general, sufficient water and sewer planning is a standard requirement before approvals can be acquired from Maryland regulatory/approving agencies.

Ridgely is responsible for local municipal water and wastewater planning. This includes ensuring that plans, reports, regulations etc. are consistent with State and local laws. The Town also is responsible for ensuring that water and wastewater facilities and services are adequate to serve existing residents and new development, providing for the public health, safety and welfare of Ridgely residents.

The Caroline County Commissioners are responsible for the adopting and updating the *Caroline County Master Water & Sewerage Plan* (County Water & Sewer Plan), as per State law. This includes ensuring that the Plan is updated regarding planning for municipal water and wastewater systems. In this role, Caroline County acts as the coordinating agency for water and sewer planning. The County is responsible for incorporating the subsidiary plans of Towns, as per State law. Currently, the County Water and Sewer Plan needs to be updated.

### CAROLINE COUNTY MASTER WATER & SEWERAGE PLAN

All counties in Maryland are required under the *Annotated Code of Maryland: Environment Article; Subtitle 5* (Maryland Environment Article) to prepare a “Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan.” The Plan requires updates every 3 years and annual review and reporting. The County Water & Sewer Plan was first adopted in 1984. It was updated in 1992 and several amendments were added to the Plan in 1996 and 2002.

The County Water & Sewer Plan clearly states in both Chapters 3 and 4 that the desired “growth pattern” is “mainly peripheral expansion in and around existing population centers.”<sup>7</sup> According to this statement, growth in and around the Towns, where it can be served by public infrastructure, is preferred by the County. This also is consistent with State Smart Growth goals and objectives. Furthermore, “Section 201 Sewerage Facility Studies” includes recommendations that some form of public sewerage service be provided outside the current limits of incorporated towns to areas in need of

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> 1984 *Caroline County Comprehensive Water & Sewerage Plan*, as amended. Caroline County Department of Planning & Codes Administration and the Maryland Department of the Environment; 1992, 1996, and 2002. Pg 4-3.

such services (e.g. failing septic systems). This service could take various forms, including, but not limited to: 1) annexation into and service by towns; 2) creation of separate sanitary district commissions to provide the service for each area; 3) creation of a new water and sewer division in the County Department of Public Works to provide service, possibly combined with sanitary districts; 4) and service by private sewerage companies.”<sup>8</sup>

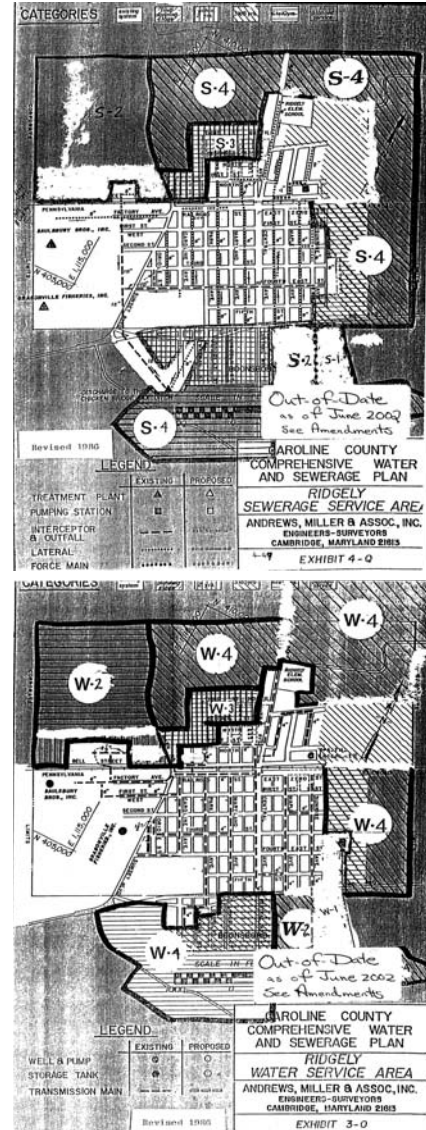
### **Water & Sewer Plan Goals and Objectives**

Section 1.3 of the County Water & Sewer Plan requires consistency with the *Caroline County Comprehensive Land Use Plan*.<sup>9</sup> Summarized objectives from the Comprehensive Plan related to water and sewer include the following:

- New manufacturing should be encouraged in accessible locations near towns, where utilities are available or can be made available;
- Housing development should be guided within or adjacent to existing communities;
- Retail and commercial development should be enhanced through new housing development near the County’s major towns;
- Encourage new housing in and adjacent to the towns to reduce pollution dangers and lessen the costs of community facilities; and
- Protect the County’s agricultural lands by avoiding random development patterns.

Several goals, as outlined in the *Caroline County Master Water & Sewerage Plan*, are pertinent to the water and wastewater goals and objectives of the Town of Ridgely.<sup>10</sup> These include:

- To protect the general health, safety, and welfare of the people of Caroline County through the provision of adequate water and sewerage facilities;
- To protect the natural resources and maintain the environmental quality of Caroline County;
- To provide for the stable orderly pattern of population growth where it can be efficiently and effectively served by public facilities and services; and
- To insure municipal, industrial, and individual water supply and wastewater systems are designed and constructed to acceptable standards.



**FIGURES 4-2/4-3:** Figures 4-2 and 4-3 are the original service area classifications for Ridgely as shown in the 1984 version of the County Water & Sewer Plan.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 1-10.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 1-8.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 1-1.

## Water & Sewer Service Area Classifications

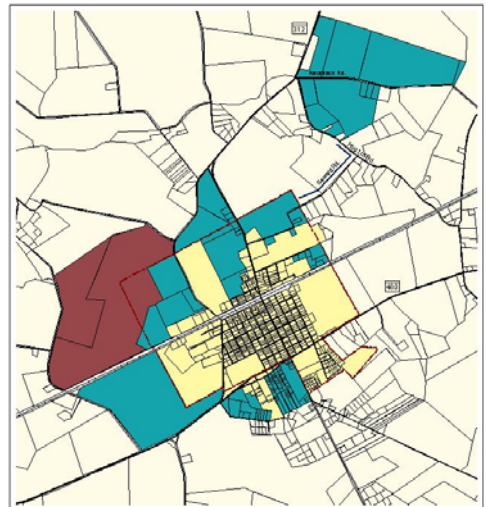
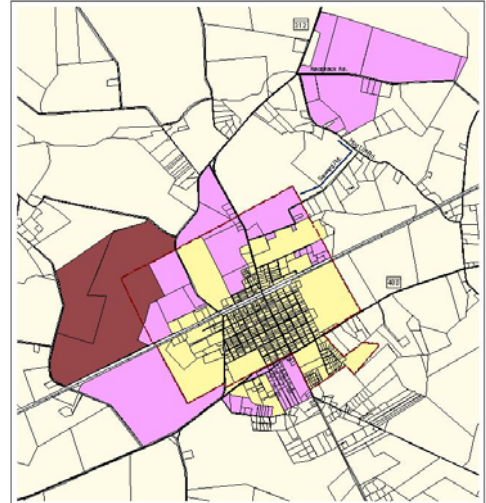
The County Water & Sewer Plan provides for a “Water and Sewerage Service Area Classification System, as required by State law.”<sup>11</sup> This system indicates when facilities and services will be developed and utilized. The Plan contains maps of the “Ridgely Water and Sewer Service Areas” and related classifications (see Figures 4-2 and 4-3), which include the following:

- W-1 and S-1: Existing water and sewer systems or systems currently under construction.
- W-2 and S-2: Planned water and sewer system improvements in the next 2 to 5 years.
- W-3 and S-3: Planned water and sewer system improvements in the next 6 to 10 years.
- W-4 and S-4: Areas with development potential but no current plans for water and sewer upgrades (beyond the 10 year horizon).
- W-5 and S-5: Agricultural and open space areas where water and sewer systems will not be constructed.

## 2002 Water and Sewer Plan Amendments for Ridgely

In 2002, several amendments to County Plans, both the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the Water & Sewer Plan, are relevant to discussions regarding facilities upgrades. These amendments include the following:

**Resolution #2002-008:** As empowered by *Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland*, the Caroline County Commissioners reviewed and adopted amendments to the *Caroline County Comprehensive Land Use Plan* in June 2002 to include the Ridgely Airport and Business & Technology Park. Prior to adoption by the County Commissioners, amendments were reviewed and approved by the Caroline County Planning Commission. As stated in Resolution #2002-00 8: “The Ridgely Airpark consists of 152.46 acres, located at the intersection of MD Route 312 and Racetrack Road, less than 1 mile northeast of the Town of Ridgely. Ridgely Airpark has been used continually as an airport since 1966 and currently provides small aircraft with a paved runway, airplane hangers, self service fueling facilities, and radio facilities for aviation assistance.”<sup>12</sup>



**FIGURES 4-4/4-5:** Figures 4-4 and 4-5 are illustrations of the officially mapped water and sewer service areas for Ridgely, as depicted in the County Water & Sewer Plan (Caroline County Resolution #2002-009). Yellow areas indicate current water and sewer service; blue and pink areas indicate planned service, and dark red areas show the location of the existing wastewater treatment plant (WWTP).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 1-3 – 1-7.

<sup>12</sup> Caroline County Resolution #2002-008. Officially amending the *Caroline County Comprehensive Land Use Plan*. 2002.



As stated in the *One Maryland Strategic Plan for Economic Development in Caroline County*, which was approved by the Caroline County Commissioners on July 27, 1999, “the protection of the airpark as a valuable resource is a priority for the County and is strongly supported by the Maryland Aviation Administration.”<sup>13</sup> The proposed site for the Ridgely Business/Technology Park adjoins MD Route 312, Racetrack Road, and Hog Lot Road, immediately south of the Ridgely Airpark.”<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, Resolution #2002-008 states that “the County should encourage and support the annexation of the Business/Technology Park by the Town of Ridgely to permit water, sewerage, and other municipal services.”<sup>15</sup>

Resolution #2002-009: As empowered by the *Annotated Code of Maryland: Environment Article 9; Subtitle 5*, the Caroline County Commissioners reviewed and adopted amendments to the *Caroline County Master Water & Sewerage Plan* on June 11, 2002 to include the following sites: 1) Ridgely Airport; 2) Business & Technology Park; and 3) Other defined areas within Ridgely’s Growth Area including the McNomee Farm, site of the Ridgely Park Development Project. Water & Sewer Plan amendments and revised “Water and Sewer Service Area Maps” received review and approval by the Caroline County Planning Commission in May of 2002.<sup>16</sup>

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) wrote a letter to Mr. John Cole, then President of the Caroline County Commissioners, on October 11, 2002 approving the amendments to the County’s Water & Sewer Plan, as per the requirements of State law Section 9-507 of the Environment Article, which requires MDE review and final approval.<sup>17</sup>

### **2008 Ridgely Water and Sewer Planning Initiatives**

Ridgely should ensure that the *Caroline County Comprehensive Land Use Plan* and the *Caroline County Master Water and Sewerage Plan* accurately reflect the Town’s land use and community facility plans. According to the Maryland Environment Article, “the objective of the county water and sewer plan is to develop the water supply and sewerage disposal systems in a way consistent with county comprehensive planning.”<sup>18</sup> “The county governing body is the coordinating agency required to develop county water and sewerage plans.”<sup>19</sup> The Environment Article further states that “these plans shall incorporate all or part of the subsidiary plans of the towns, municipal corporations, sanitary districts, privately owned facilities, and local, State, and federal agencies having existing, planned, or programmed development within the county.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *One Maryland Strategic Plan for Economic Development in Caroline County*. Prepared by Caroline County Administration, Caroline County Economic Development Council, and the Mid-Shore Regional Economic Development Council. 2001.

<sup>14</sup> *Caroline County Resolution #2002-008*.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>16</sup> *Caroline County Resolution 2002-009*. Officially Amending the Caroline County Master Water & Sewerage Plan. 2002.

<sup>17</sup> Letter to John Cole, President of the County Commissioners of Caroline County, Maryland: “Approval of Amendments to the Caroline County Master Water & Sewerage Plan.” Prepared by the Maryland Department of the Environment. October 11, 2002.

<sup>18</sup> COMAR: Code of Maryland Regulations: Title 26 Department of the Environment: Subtitle 03 Water Supply, Sewerage, Solid Waste, and Pollution Control Planning and Funding. “Section .02 General Provisions.” Maryland Department of the Environment. 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 1.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 1.

Resolution #2002-009, as defined above, constitutes an official amendment to the County Water and Sewer Plan for Ridgely. New “Existing and Planned Water and Sewerage Service Maps” were adopted by the Caroline County Commissioners and approved by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) in 2002 (see Figures 4-4 and 4-5). These maps indicate existing and planned water and sewer service areas for the Town and replace the maps shown in the original version of the County Water & Sewer Plan (see Figures 4-2 and 4-3). However, the revised maps do not provide for water and sewer service area classifications as required under State law. The Environment Article states that “as minimum requirements, the water and sewerage maps in the county plan shall be delineated to show each existing and proposed community and multi-use water supply and sewerage system.”<sup>21</sup> This process includes facilities locations (mapped) and service area classifications for the following:

1. W-1/S-1: water and sewerage facilities existing or under construction.
2. W-2/S-2: areas served by extensions of existing water and sewer systems, which are in the final planning stages.
3. W-3/S-3: areas where improvements to, or construction of, new the water and sewerage systems will be given immediate priority.
4. W-4/S-4: areas where improvements to, or construction of, new the water and sewerage systems will be programmed for a 3 to 5/6 year period.
5. W-5/S-5: areas where improvements to, or construction of, new the water and sewerage systems will be programmed for a 6/7 through 10 year period.
6. W-6/S-6: areas where there is no planned service.

Current planned developments in Ridgely, particularly the Ridgely Park Project, are important to meet the Town’s objectives for growth, revitalization, economic development, and infrastructure improvement. These planned developments also are important to meet Caroline County objectives for growth and economic development. Significant federal, State, and local investment have been made in the development of the Ridgely Airpark and Business & Technology Park.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 4.

## IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Descriptions and other details regarding implementation are contained in Chapter 9 of this Comprehensive Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION #1:** Annex the Town's existing wastewater treatment site (WWTP), which currently lies outside corporate boundaries, and seek Priority Funding Area (PFA) status from the Maryland Department of Planning.

**RECOMMENDATION #2:** Require adequate public facilities to serve any proposed new development. This includes assessing current fee structures and requirements.

**RECOMMENDATION #3:** Update and/or revise Ridgely infrastructure facilities reports, plans, policies, and regulations including, but not limited to, the Capital Improvements Plan and Water & Sewer Subsidiary Plans, to:

- Map utilities systems in Ridgely including water and sewer facilities for the Ridgely Geographic Information System (GIS).
- Outline areas for future development to be incorporated in the Capital Improvements Plan and Water and Sewer Subsidiary Plans.
- Map water and sewer service area classifications for Ridgely in relation to approved planned developments, future infill and redevelopment, and growth areas, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Ascertain an accurate measure of capacity and costs within existing systems and what upgrades and/or expansions will be needed to accommodate growth and development.

**RECOMMENDATION #4:** Upgrade and expand the Town's water and sewerage facilities and services to accommodate infill and redevelopment, as needed.

**RECOMMENDATION #5:** Conduct regular assessments of the Ridgely Fire Department to determine if expansion of facilities is needed as the Town's population increases.

**RECOMMENDATION #6:** Ensure adequate park and open space land and facilities to meet current and projected demands.

**RECOMMENDATION #7:** Coordinate planning and programming of community facilities and services with the appropriate Caroline County and State agencies and entities.

**RECOMMENDATION #8:** Request that the County update the *Caroline County Master Water & Sewerage Plan* to reflect the Town's planned water and sewer service areas and priorities consistent with State laws.

**RECOMMENDATION #9:** Consider establishing official Town policies for annexation, water and sewer extension/allocation, and other infrastructure, facilities, and services.

## Chapter 5 Resource Conservation

Managing growth and development in Ridgely should be balanced with careful consideration for the natural resources essential to the Town's quality of life. Ridgely's identity and present day charm are intertwined with its natural setting and its roots as a rural community. The conservation and protection of key natural resources and sensitive areas will be crucial to the successful realization of this Comprehensive Plan's goals.

### BACKGROUND

The implications of increasing water quality initiatives in the State will have impacts for Maryland jurisdictions. This is evidenced by the 2006 passage of Maryland House Bill 1141, which requires that all comprehensive plans now contain a "Water Resources Element." The results include an approach that focuses more on broader watershed planning for local communities to address regional impacts on the environment. In this regard, the "Resource Conservation" Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is important.

### PHYSIOGRAPHY

The physiography of Ridgely and the surrounding countryside is relatively flat and well drained. There are no major rivers or streams within the limits of Ridgely. However, the Tuckahoe River is just to the northwest and the Choptank River is four miles to the south of Town. Caroline County is one of only two Eastern Shore counties that have no direct border with the Chesapeake Bay. The other is Worcester County on the Atlantic Ocean.

### GOAL & OBJECTIVES

#### **GOAL:**

Ensure sensitive areas protection in accordance with State laws and preserve the natural resources and features of the Town of Ridgely and its surrounding environs.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

Provide specific protection measures for sensitive areas as defined in State law.

Minimize adverse impacts on water quality through "Best Management Practices" BMP's

Assess future development proposals in light of the site's physical suitability to accommodate development, while protecting natural resources and the quality of the Town's groundwater.

Ensure new development and redevelopment minimizes on-site pollutant loadings/runoff through stormwater and sediment/erosion control plans.

Identify wetlands and floodplains in order to ensure the special protection they may need.

Conserve forest and woodland resources and, wherever possible, replenish them through tree conservation measures and replanting programs.

Promote the protection and preservation of valuable ecological lands (Green Infrastructure) around Ridgely.

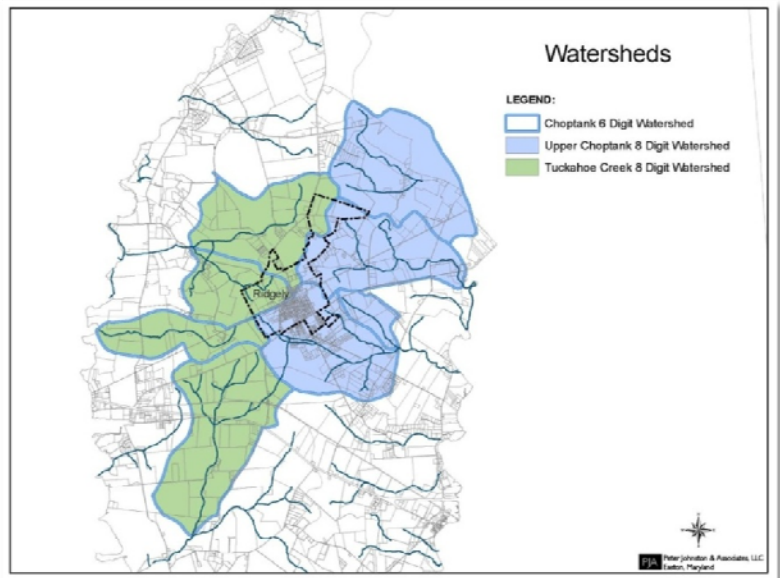
Protect the Town's natural scenic vistas by working with Caroline County to encourage strong land use controls on rural lands adjacent to Ridgely.

Encourage Caroline County support for the greenway trail connection from Ridgely to Adkins Arboretum and Tuckahoe State Park.

Update the Ridgely Geographic Information System-GIS for the mapping of natural resources and sensitive areas.

## BASIN & WATERSHEDS

Ridgely is located in the Choptank River Basin, which has the lowest elevation of any basin in Maryland. It drains approximately 700 square miles of land in Maryland, including portions of Caroline, Dorchester, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties. Larger water-bodies in the Basin include the Choptank, Little Choptank, and Tred Avon Rivers and Broad, Harris, and Tuckahoe Creeks. The Basin lies entirely within the Atlantic Coastal Plain.



Ridgely is located in the Choptank Watershed and the Town straddles the Upper Choptank and Tuckahoe Creek Sub-Watersheds. The Choptank Watershed extends from Maryland into Delaware. Both the Tuckahoe Creek and Upper Choptank Sub-Watersheds are listed as impaired by Maryland Department of Environment (MDE). In 2006, MDA received a \$796,600 grant from the "Chesapeake Bay Targeted Watersheds Grant Program" to increase the installation of agricultural best management practices (BMPs) by farmers in the Tuckahoe Creek Sub-Watershed. By promoting the use of additional BMPs, the project aims to reduce nutrient and sediment loads. Through field level research, the project's goal is to develop improved nutrient reduction efficiencies for conventional cover crops, commodity cover crops, and drainage control structures. The project also aims to develop a flexible, user-friendly planning tool that can be utilized by conservation program managers to optimize BMP implementation in the most cost-effective manner over the entire Choptank River Basin.

Under the 1998 *Maryland Clean Water Action Plan*, the State conducted a "Unified Watershed Assessment" for each of its 58 watersheds. The Choptank River was cited as a "Priority One Restoration Watershed," according to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards under the Federal *Clean Water Act*, being impaired by one or more pollutants, such as nutrients, sediments, toxic substances, acidity, or fecal coliform. This designation highlights the need for more cooperative regional planning on a watershed basis to address the health of the Choptank River and its sensitive natural areas to improve local water quality.

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

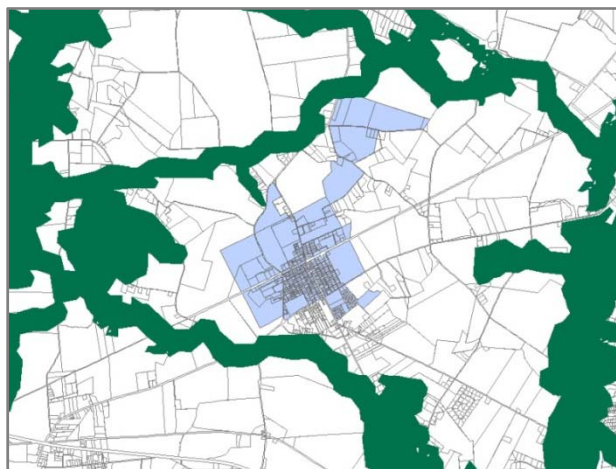
Maryland's green infrastructure is a network of undeveloped lands that constitute the bulk of the State's ecosystem. Green infrastructure areas, such as forests, wetlands, and other environmental resource lands act together to clean the air, filter water, store and cycle nutrients, conserve soils, regulate climate, and maintain hydrologic function. Ecologically valuable lands also provide marketable goods and services, like forest products, fish and wildlife sport, and recreation.

The *Maryland 2000 Green Infrastructure Assessments (GIA)*, as developed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), identifies green infrastructure as a network of waterways, wetlands, woodlands, wildlife habitats, and other natural areas of State and countywide significance that supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, and contributes to health and quality of life. As an interconnected system, green infrastructure provides greater environmental viability, value, and function than the sum of the individual parts. In addition to serving as vital habitat for wild species, green infrastructure contributes, in many ways, to the health and quality of life for Maryland residents.

The GIA identifies two types of important resource lands: "hubs" and "corridors." Hubs are typically large contiguous areas separated by major roads and/or human land uses, containing one or more of the following:

- Large blocks of contiguous interior forest containing at least 250 acres plus a transition zone of 300 feet;
- Large wetland complexes with at least 250 acres of unmodified wetlands;
- Important animal and plant habitats of at least 100 acres including rare, threatened, and endangered species locations, unique ecological communities, and migratory bird habitats;
- Relatively pristine stream and river segments, which, with adjacent forests and wetlands, are at least 100 acres, supporting trout, mussels, and other sensitive aquatic organisms; and
- Existing protected natural resource lands which contain one or more of the above features (e.g., state parks and forests, National Wildlife Refuges, etc).

As shown in Figure 5-1, corridors are linear features connecting hubs together to help animals and plant species to move between hubs. Generally, corridors connect hubs of similar types. Hubs containing forests are connected to one another; while those consisting primarily of wetlands are connected to others containing wetlands. Corridors generally follow the most appropriate ecological or natural routes between hubs. Typically, these are streams with wide riparian buffers and healthy fish communities. Other wildlife corridors include ridge lines or forested valleys. According to DNR, the fragmentation of green infrastructure has reduced the distribution and abundance of forest birds and other wildlife species throughout North America. As forest areas are divided and isolated by roads and development, interior habitat decreases. When human disturbance increases, opportunistic edge species replace interior species and populations of animals become too small to persist.



**FIGURE 5-1:** Indicates Green Infrastructure, as defined by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, in the vicinity of the Town of Ridgely.

## SENSITIVE AREAS & FEATURES

The *Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992* added the requirement to “Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland” that comprehensive plans must contain a Sensitive Areas Element. This element must describe how the jurisdiction will protect the following sensitive areas:

1. Streams and stream buffers,
2. 100-year floodplain,
3. Threatened and endangered species habitats,
4. Steep slopes, and
5. Other sensitive areas a jurisdiction wants to protect from the adverse impacts of development.

In its 2006 session, the Maryland Legislature passed Maryland House Bill 1141 (HB 1141), which expanded sensitive areas elements of comprehensive plans to include wetlands as well as agriculture and forest land for resource protection (conservation lands). Ridgely’s sensitive areas and their total acreage are listed in the table below and illustrated on Map 5-1.

### RESOURCE INVENTORY

The Resource Inventory provides a description of the natural resource features associated with the Town of Ridgely. Many of these resources are not located within the existing corporate boundaries of the Town but, rather on lands adjacent to the Town and within the general vicinity of the municipality.

Resources include the following: 1) Streams & Stream Buffers; 2) 100-Year Floodplain; 3) Sensitive Species Habitat; 4) Tidal & Non-Tidal Wetlands; 5) Forested Areas; 6) Mineral Resources; and 7) Soils. As indicated in Table 5-1, environmental and natural resources located within the current Town of Ridgely total approximately 152 acres and include the following:

<b>Sensitive Areas</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Non-Tidal Wetlands (NWI)	28
Sensitive Species Group 2 (State Listed)	117
Forest Interior Dwelling Species (FIDS)	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>152</b>
Source: MD Department of Natural Resources (DNR) NWI – National Wetlands Inventory	

- Non-Tidal Wetlands;
- Sensitive Species Habitat; and
- Forest Interior Dwelling Species (FIDS).



## **STREAMS & STREAM BUFFERS**

Streams and their adjacent buffers are home to a variety of species of animals and plants. Streams transport nutrients, minerals, and contaminants to rivers and creeks, providing both a positive and negative function. These rivers and creeks eventually empty into the Chesapeake Bay and the larger watershed ecosystem. Therefore, floodplains, wetlands, and wooded slopes along streams are all important parts of the stream ecosystem. In addition, streams support recreational fishing and serve as spawning areas for commercial fish stock. Streams in the Town of Ridgely are indicated on Map 5-1.

The majority of the streams in Ridgely have drainage ditch characteristics, owing to the area's prevailing agricultural uses. These ditches, located alongside roads maintained by Public Works, and on agricultural land, channel runoff from rainwater, irrigation, and larger storm events. Pollutants in agricultural runoff include eroded soil particles (sediments), nutrients, pesticides, salts, viruses, bacteria, and organic matter.

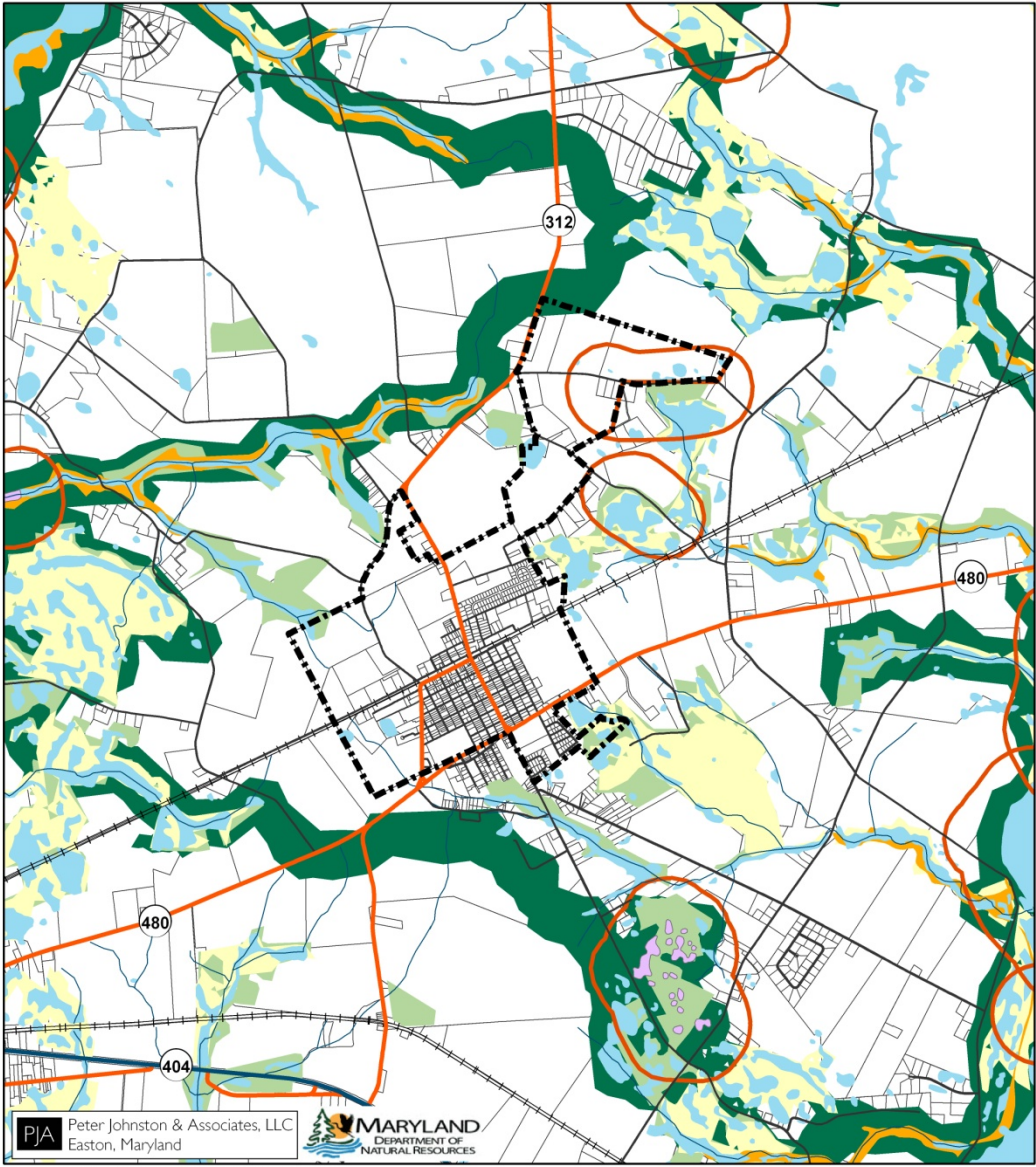
### **Public Drainage Systems**

The Caroline County Soil Conservation District (SCD) assists Public Drainage Associations (PDAs) to maintain ditches on agricultural lands. These are cooperative programs for agricultural drainage with local landowners. There are 343.6 miles of these manmade channels in Caroline County.<sup>1</sup> Because the land in the County is predominantly flat, farmers rely on the drainage ditches for healthy functioning and productivity of agriculture operations. Due to the County's flat topography, drainage ditches are vital to the healthy functioning and productivity of farms.

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<sup>1</sup> *Upper Choptank River Strategic Watershed Restoration Action Plan, 2003*

**MAP 5-1: SENSITIVE AREAS**



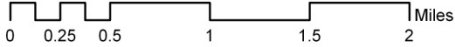
**LEGEND:**

- Ridgely Corporate Boundary
- Shore Highway
- State Roads
- Local Roads & Streets
- Railroad Line
- Streams & Stream Corridors
- Wetlands of Special State Concern
- Sensitive Species Project Review Areas
- Tidal & Non-Tidal Wetlands
- 100-Year Floodplain
- Forest Interior Dwelling Species
- Green Infrastructure

**RESOURCE CONSERVATION AREAS**

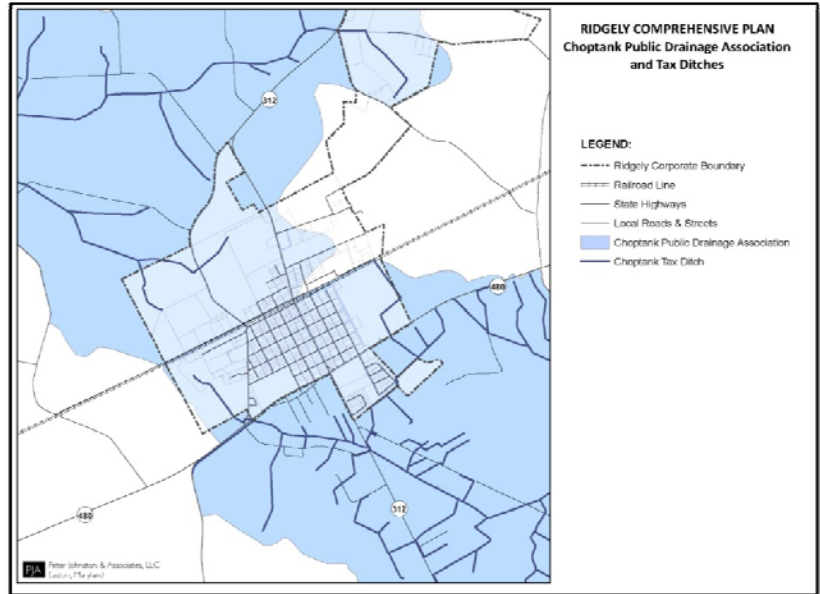
**Resources in the Town of Ridgely**  
 Streams & Stream Corridors (Public Drainage Ditches - PDA's)  
 Non-Tidal Wetlands - 28 acres  
 Sensitive Species Project Review Areas (Group 2) - 117 acres  
 Forest Interior Dwelling Species (FIDS) - 7 acres

**Resources in the Ridgely Vicinity**  
 Streams & Stream Corridors  
 100 - Year Floodplain  
 Tidal & Non-Tidal Wetlands  
 Wetlands of Special State Concern  
 Sensitive Species Project Review Areas (Groups 1, 2, & 3)  
 Forest Interior Dwelling Species (FIDS)  
 Green Infrastructure



Data obtained from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR)  
 NWI - National Wetlands Inventory

Ridgely is served by the Chicken Bridge Public Drainage Association (PDA) which was established in 1965<sup>2</sup>. The ditch system is about 15,000 feet in length within Town boundaries. The Association is regulated by Article 25 of the Maryland Drainage Law and meets on an annual basis to elect managers, review tax income and maintenance liability, review plan activity from the previous year, and determine plan activity for the upcoming year. The ditch is inspected annually and after severe storm events. Maintenance and enforcement needs are determined by the elected managers of the PDA in conjunction with Caroline County Soil Conservation Service, Maryland Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Natural Resources.



Maintenance generally includes the removal of debris, sediment deposits, sand bars, and undesired woody or vegetative growth. Undesirable woody growth is controlled by mowing ditch banks and berms. New sediment traps are installed after extensive cleanouts. The PDA maintains a minimum 10-foot filter strip on both sides of the ditch's main channel and lateral channels (access areas). Property owners along the ditch are responsible for keeping the ditch and drainage to the ditch from being obstructed. If obstruction occurs property owners are charged with a misdemeanor and fined.

In 2000, the Maryland Public Drainage Taskforce, in its report to the Chesapeake Bay Cabinet, issued recommendations for public drainage systems as they pertain to development and watershed planning. The recommendations, made in the 2000 report, include developing site-specific plans to slow the rate of water flow and improve habitat and the application of best management practices (BMPs) that incorporate the best achievable methods to reduce nutrient export and increase habitat quality. Recommendations also include the development of regulatory policies that direct the burden of costs required for altering public drainage (e.g., structural and non-structural stormwater features located up-stream or downstream of development) to the developers of property to be drained.<sup>3</sup>

The Soil Conservation District for Caroline County assists Public Drainage Associations (PDAs), which are cooperative programs for agricultural drainage with local landowners that manage drainage ditches. As an historical legacy, public drainage ditches for farmland were first channelized in the late 1700's. PDA's are located almost exclusively in rural Eastern Shore Counties with 343.6 miles of manmade channels in Caroline County alone. Due to the County's flat topography, drainage ditches are vital to the healthy

<sup>2</sup> Denton Journal, March 11, 1965

<sup>3</sup> *Moving Water*, A Report to the Chesapeake Bay Cabinet by the Public Drainage Task Force, Washington College and the Institute for Governmental Service at University of Maryland College Park, October 2000.

functioning and productivity of farms. They also benefit the County’s highway system, towns, and residential properties, by assisting in the drainage of excess water. PDA’s are inspected annually by PDA managers and Soil Conservation District personnel to identify maintenance needs.

## FLOODPLAIN

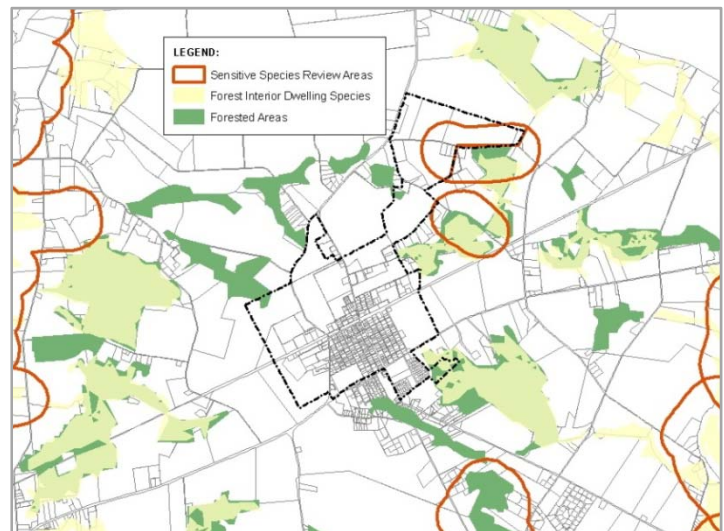
Flood and related losses are created primarily by inappropriately located structures, which are inadequately elevated, unprotected, and vulnerable to floods. Development, which increases flood damage to other land, also creates flood issues. While protection of life and property provide the initial basis for protection of floodplains, there is recognition in recent years that limiting disturbances within floodplains can serve a variety of positive functions with important public purposes and benefits.

Floodplains moderate and store floodwaters, absorb wave energies, and reduce erosion and sedimentation. Wetlands found within floodplains help maintain water quality, recharge groundwater supplies, protect fisheries, and provide habitat and natural corridors for wildlife. All these functions are best served if floodplains are kept in their natural state. Wherever possible, the natural characteristics of floodplains, and their associated wetlands and water bodies, should be preserved and enhanced. There are no floodplains located within the current corporate boundaries of the Town of Ridgely.

## SENSITIVE SPECIES HABITAT

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Wildlife and Heritage Division has identified “Sensitive Species Project Review Areas” in all Maryland jurisdictions. These areas are delineated to indicate sensitive species habitat. DNR designates these areas to provide local governments with information for assessing potential impacts and for reviewing development projects or land use changes within these areas that may affect the environment. Sensitive Species Project Review Areas are classified in 3 groups:

- Group 1: Federally listed sensitive species;
- Group 2: State listed sensitive species; and
- Group 3: Species or natural communities of concern to DNR but not with official status.



**FIGURE 5-2:** Indicates Sensitive Species Project Review Areas and Forest Interior Dwelling Species located in the Ridgely vicinity.

DNR lists three (3) types of Sensitive Species Project Review Areas (SSPRA) in the Ridgely vicinity, totaling 5,608 acres around the Town. The largest of these areas are classified as Group 2 totaling 4,746-acres. Group 1 areas total 125 acres and Group 3 areas total 737 acres. There are approximately 117 acres of Group 2 sensitive species located within the current corporate boundaries of Ridgely. These areas are located on the Ridgely Airport and Business Technology Park sites to the north-east of Town.

## **Forest Interior Dwelling Species**

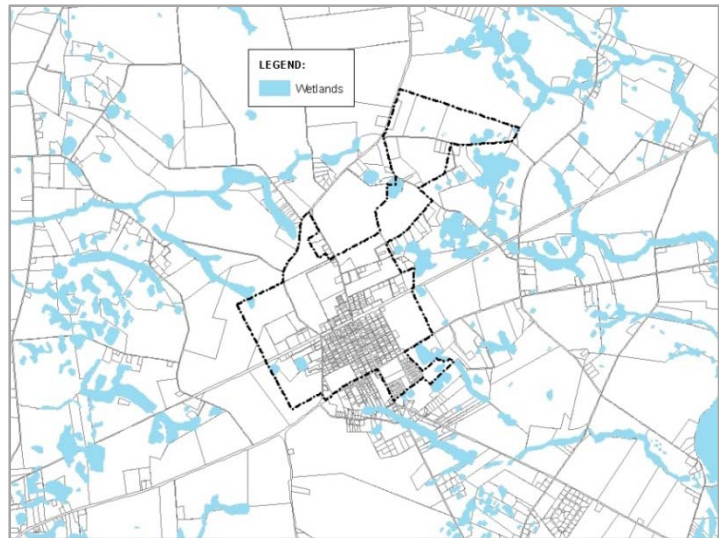
In addition to the Sensitive Species Project Review Areas, the forests in and around Ridgely are designated by DNR as habitat areas for “Forest Interior Dwelling Species” (FIDS). Approximately 7 acres of land within Ridgely is classified by DNR as FIDS habitat. FIDS are a group of species that require habitat conditions in the interior of forests for optimal reproduction and survival. A potential FIDS habitat is defined as a forest tract that is either greater than 50 acres with at least 10 acres of forest interior habitat (forest greater than 300 feet from the nearest forest edge), or riparian forests that are at least 300 feet in total width and greater than 50 acres in total forest area, where the stream must be perennial.

High quality FIDS habitat is defined as a predominantly mature hardwood or mixed hardwood-pine forest tract at least 100 acres in size, of which forest interior habitat comprises at least 25% of the total forest area. High quality FIDS habitats must contain one or more of the following:

1. Sensitive species habitat;
2. Riparian forest at least 600 feet in width;
3. Mature river terrace, ravine, or cove hardwoods at least 300 feet from the nearest forest edge;
4. Approximately 5 contiguous acres of old growth forest located at least 300 feet from the nearest forest edge; or
5. Contiguous forest acreage greater than 500 acres, where a FIDS habitat with contiguous forest greater than 500 acres is designated as Class 1.

## **TIDAL & NONTIDAL WETLANDS**

Public and private (tidal) wetlands are important natural areas protected by State law (Title 9, Sections 9-101/9-301 of the Natural Resources Volume, Maryland Annotated Code), which sets forth strict licensing procedures for any alteration of wetlands. These resources are within the protective jurisdiction of the federal government through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



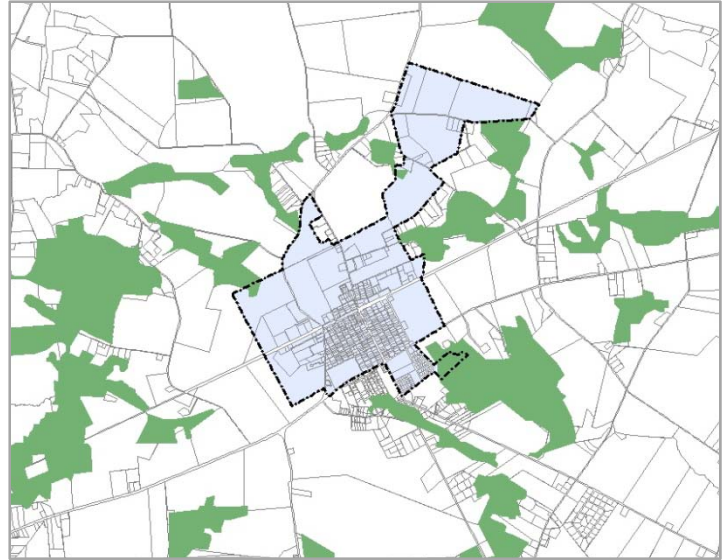
**FIGURE 5-3:** Indicates a little over 28 acres of non-tidal wetlands located in the Town of Ridgely

As shown in Figure 5-3, small areas of Palustrine system wetlands, totaling a little

over 28 acres, can be found within the Town of Ridgely. Palustrine system wetlands are non-tidal wetlands of low salinity and shallow depths (less than 6 feet), dominated by trees, shrubs, plants and undergrowth. Palustrine wetlands, mostly forested, exist in the northeastern and southwestern ends of the Town. Palustrine wetlands that border tidal wetlands (as they do in the northeastern corner of Ridgely, along Clarks and Racetrack Roads at the airport) are considered to be of moderate to high significance for serving to temporarily hold coastal surge flood waters and to temporarily store water during storm events.

## FORESTED AREAS

As shown in Figure 5-4, large and small tracts of forested land can be found around Ridgely, totaling approximately 2,657 acres. Much of these forested areas are located on farms surrounding the Town. The largest majority of regional forested areas are located at Tuckahoe State park to the west of Ridgely. Forested areas near Ridgely are designated by DNR as habitat areas for “Forest Interior Dwelling Species” (FIDS).



**FIGURE 5-4:** Large and small tracts of forested land can be found within the Ridgely vicinity, these areas also indicate Forest Interior Dwelling Species.

## MINERAL RESOURCES

Surface mining is not permitted within the Town of Ridgely. Therefore a specific mineral resources section for the *Ridgely Comprehensive Plan* is unnecessary. However, the region in which Ridgely is located (West Carolina County) is rich in sand and gravel. This has led to a significant increase in mineral extraction activities in lands surrounding the Town. Ridgely is concerned about surface mining operations that are located too close to Town boundaries, which may impact its roads and streets through increased industrial traffic. Town concerns also include the effects that surface mining may have on municipal gateways, scenic landscapes, and general quality of life.

According to the “Draft” *West Carolina County Comprehensive Plan* (West County Plan), as prepared by the Carolina County Department of Planning & Codes Administration (Planning & Codes), the region surrounding Ridgely contains much of the County’s sand and gravel resources. These resources are located along the Ridgely Paleochannel, which runs north to south. The West County Plan further states that “population growth in rural areas of West County combined with the increased urbanization of County municipalities creates the potential for land use conflicts with surface mining industries.” To this end the West County Plan identifies the following objectives/strategies for mineral resources:

1. Identifying specific mineral resource areas to indicate appropriate areas for mineral extraction; and
2. Developing performance and site development standards for surface mining and mineral extraction.

According to the West County Plan, in April 2005, Planning & Codes held a Focus Group meeting to gauge public sentiment regarding major land use and growth management issues including surface mining. Participant comments indicated a need for more detailed County policies, processes, and regulations regarding surface mining including the following:

- Developing professional “Surface Mining & Mineral Extraction Performance Standards” including hours of operation, strict buffering, landscaping standards and maintenance standards;
- Enhancing site mitigation/reclamation with a focus on end-use in the review and approval process;

- Enacting a Mineral Extraction Tax for public compensation for associated impacts;
- Designating appropriate areas for surface mining; and
- Developing a Ridgely Bypass to divert associated commercial truck traffic for surface mining from downtown areas.

County assistance in the planning and development of a bypass for Ridgely would allow for industrial traffic, generated from surface mining and the nearby County Landfill, to be diverted away from primary Town streets that residents use. Ridgely also agrees with the County's assertion that "large-scale mineral extraction is likely in the West County region" and "the County should consider appropriate policy and regulatory provisions to address this potential land use wherever it may occur." Mineral Extraction Zones can be defined by the County and coordinated with Ridgely. This can include revision of the *Caroline County Zoning Ordinance* to eliminate surface mining as an accepted use in designated Town Growth Areas.

One effective way to ensure that potential conflicts are minimized is to encourage the development of County "Surface Mining Performance and Site Mitigation Standards" (Performance Standards). Performance Standards should include detailed plans for each phase of the surface mine with particular emphasis on pre-planning (buffering, landscaping etc.) and end use (site mitigation/reclamation). Due to Caroline County's flat topography, surface mining operations are highly visible. Therefore, Performance Standards should concentrate on preserving scenic rural quality and visual aesthetics by providing adequate buffering. Buffers should include indigenous vegetation suitable to existing climate and soil conditions. As stated in the West County Plan, "Tall story and under-story vegetation should be required and buffering should be initiated before mineral extraction commences to provide suitable time for vegetation to grow. When possible, surface mining should utilize existing forestry to effectively screen operations."

## SOILS

The Caroline County Soil Conservation District (SCD) assists Ridgely with the implementation of soil conservation and water quality goals. Because of the large percentage of agricultural land in the County, drainage is one of the primary concerns of the SCD. Approximately 80% of the County's land, including Ridgely, drains into the Choptank River, while the remaining 20% drains into the Nanticoke River watershed. While agricultural and rural land programs focus on Best Management Practices (BMP's) for nutrient and pesticide controls, urban land areas, such as Ridgely, concentrate on erosion and sediment control as well as stormwater management to prevent soil erosion and conserve water quality.

As shown on Map 5-2, according to the 1962 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Soil Conservation Service (NRCS) General Soil Map for Caroline County, soils in Ridgely are classified as Sassafras-Fallsington-Woodstown association. These soils are coarsely textured soils that are well-drained to poorly-drained. The most widespread type in Ridgely is the Sassafras soils; a soil type that drains very well.

Identifying highly erodible lands is important to conserving soil and maintaining vegetative cover to reduce stream sedimentation. Soil characteristics assist in determining the suitability of land uses in a specific area. Nonpoint source pollution, which is associated with a variety of land-based activities including agriculture, is one reason why water quality remains impaired in Maryland. Nonpoint source pollution is defined as polluted runoff caused by stormwater (rainfall or snowmelt) or irrigation water, which moves over and through the ground. As this runoff moves, it gathers and carries pollutants such as sediments, nutrients, toxics, and pathogens. These pollutants are eventually deposited in lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters, ground waters, and the Chesapeake Bay.<sup>4</sup> The effects of runoff on streams and aquatic habitat include not only an increase in sediment, but also an introduction of toxins. These toxins are bound to the sediment, which is eroded and washed into the hydrologic system.<sup>5</sup>

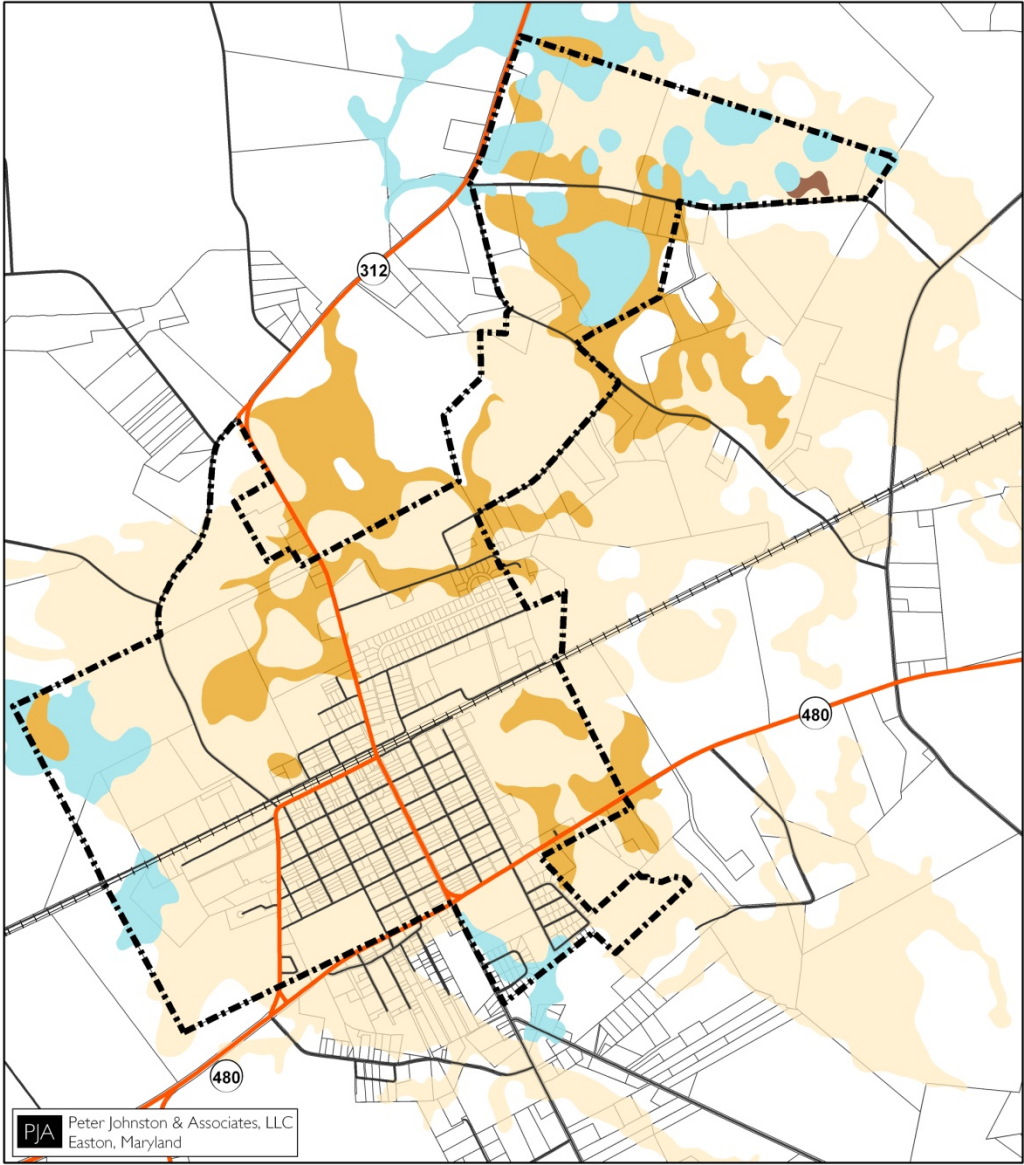
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<sup>4</sup> MD DNR Coastal Zone Management Division, Watershed Services Unit 2003 Annual Report

<sup>5</sup> US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service.



MAP 5-2: SOILS CLASSIFICATIONS

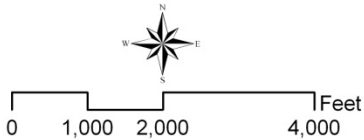


**LEGEND:**

- Ridgely Corporate Boundary
- State Roads
- Local Roads & Streets
- +—+ Railroad Line
- Hydric Soils
- Highly Erodible Soils
- Moderately Erodible Soils
- Not Highly Erodible Soils

**SOIL TYPES IN RIDGELY VICINITY**

- Highly Erodible Soils**  
 SnC3 - Sassafras Sandy Loam: 5% to 10% slopes
- Moderately Erodible Soils**  
 SaB2 - Sassafras Sandy Loam: 5% to 10% slopes  
 SnB2 - Sassafras Loam: 2% to 5% slopes  
 SnC2 - Sassafras Sandy Loam: 5% to 10% slopes  
 WdB2 - Woodstown Loam: 2% to 5% slopes  
 WoB2 Woodstown Sandy Loam: 2% to 5% slopes
- Not Highly Erodible Soils**  
 WoA - Woodstown Sandy Loam: 0% to 2% slopes  
 WdA - Woodstown Loam: 0% to 2% slopes  
 SnA - Sassafras Sandy Loam: 0% to 2% slopes  
 SmB - Sassafras Loamy Sand: 2% to 5% slopes  
 SaA - Sassafras Loam: 0% to 2% slopes
- Hydric Soils**  
 Fs - Fallsington Sandy Loam  
 Fa - Fallsington Loam  
 Ps - Pocomoke Sandy Loam  
 Pa - Pocomoke Loam  
 Em - Elkton Silt Loam



## RESOURCE CONSERVATION LANDS

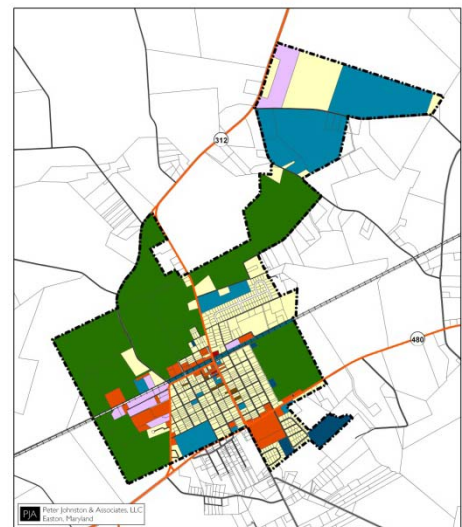
Resource conservation lands include areas within Ridgely as well as land located within the Ridgely Greenbelt. As shown in Table 5-2, Ridgely resource conservation land includes parks and open spaces and agricultural land. Protected lands, within or near the Ridgely Greenbelt, include Tuckahoe State Park, Agricultural Preservation Easements and Districts, as well as Private Conservation land. These areas total approximately 5,372 acres. Resource conservation lands are discussed below.

TABLE 5-2: RESOURCE CONSERVATION LAND	
Resource Conservation Lands	Acreage
Tuckahoe State Park	1,545
Agricultural Preservation Easements	2,915
Agricultural Preservation Districts	667
Private Conservation Land	245
- Ridgely Agricultural Lands	549
- Ridgely Parks, Recreation Land, & Open Space	120
Source: MD Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of Planning (MPV), and the Caroline County Department of Planning & Codes Administration	

### RESOURCE CONSERVATION LAND: TOWN OF RIDGELY

#### Agricultural Areas

According to the 2006 Maryland Property View (MPV), Ridgely contains approximately 549 acres of agricultural land within the existing Town boundary. Large tracts of agricultural land are located to the north and west of the center of Ridgely, as well as in the northeastern-most and southeastern-most corners of the Town. Although located within Town, this land is used for agricultural purposes. This valuable resource helps to define Ridgely as a rural community that was created in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Accordingly, the preservation of that farmland is part of the retention of the character of Ridgely. In addition, the agricultural products are an important economic asset to the community.



**FIGURE 5-5:** Agricultural areas in the Town of Ridgely are shown in green above. These areas total approximately 549 acres according to the Existing Land Use Map (Map 2-1).

The Town of Ridgely has an expectation that these agricultural areas within Town will be developed in the future. In addition, Ridgely has an expectation it will grow into the unincorporated and adjacent agricultural areas of Caroline County that have been defined as Town Growth Areas in the Municipal Growth Element of this Plan. However, every effort should be made to retain annexed agricultural lands for production until developed, where appropriate. If and when these lands are converted to another use, residential, recreational/cultural, or other, as much of the land as possible should be retained as open space.

#### Parks, Recreation Land, & Open Space

There are 120 acres of parks, recreation land, and open space in the Town of Ridgely. A detailed accounting of the specific parks and recreation facilities in Ridgely is contained in the “Community Facilities” chapter of this Comprehensive Plan.

In 2006, the Commissioners of Ridgely established a “Parks and Recreation/Open Space Development and Maintenance Fee” under Chapter 105 of the *Ridgely Zoning Ordinance*. Before securing a building permit, developers must pay a parks and recreation/open space development and maintenance fee of \$1,000 per dwelling unit to the Town. Fees received are maintained in a special account by the Commissioners of Ridgely to be used solely for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of municipal parks, community and recreation areas and buildings.

Ridgely parks, recreation, and open space efforts also are assisted greatly by the Caroline County Department of Recreation & Parks. The Department primarily utilizes “Program Open Space” (POS) funding to acquire land and develop projects. POS was established under the Department of Natural Resources in 1969, and is funded by State real estate transfer taxes, which are deposited in a special fund for the Program. POS funds are used by counties and municipalities to purchase and/or make improvements to park and recreation land.

Currently, a “Rails to Trails” effort has been initiated in Ridgely with assistance from the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) and Department of Natural Resources (DNR). As shown on Map 5-3, this effort utilizes the existing railroad line in Ridgely, which is approximately 1.25 miles, to form one portion of a greenway trail connection. The second portion of the Rails-to-Trails creates a greenway connection from the Town to Adkins Arboretum at Tuckahoe State Park. Currently, the Greenway is proposed to run from the Town’s corporate boundaries along Bell Road to Crouse Mill Road in Caroline County. It then turns onto Sawmill Road and runs to Eveland Road and ends at the Adkins Arboretum. The total length of the greenway trail from the Ridgely corporate boundary to the Arboretum is approximately 3 miles. Restoration of the historic “Ridgely Railroad Station,” as a public recreation facility along the greenway, is part of this initiative.

## **RESOURCE CONSERVATION LAND: RIDGELY GREENBELT**

### **Agricultural Preservation Areas**

According to the *West Caroline County Comprehensive Plan*, the “County has remained an agricultural community for over 300 years...where farming continues to be a vital component of the regional economy as a defining aspect of life.”<sup>6</sup> Caroline County’s goal for land preservation and conservation is to protect 100,000 acres by 2020, approximately 50% of the County’s land area. Farmland is presently being preserved through state preservation and conservation programs.

The *Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Program Fund* (MALPF) is the State’s most effective program for preserving agricultural land. Agricultural land preservation districts provide a temporary reserve, where the land cannot be developed in a non-agricultural use for five years. Once within an agricultural land preservation district, landowners may remain permanently in the program. Land held in agricultural land preservation districts cannot be developed for non-agricultural uses but landowners are able to sell development rights to the State in return for placing a conservation easement on the land.

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<sup>6</sup> 2006 “Draft” *West Caroline County Comprehensive Plan*. Prepared by the Caroline County Department of Planning & Codes Administration, the Caroline County Planning Commission, and the West County Comprehensive Plan Ad Hoc Committee.

As shown on Map 5-3, the Ridgely Greenbelt contains designated MALPF agricultural land preservation properties and private conservation areas for agricultural use totaling 3,827 acres. According to the West County Plan, changes to the County’s land preservation program could include municipal involvement to assist with enhanced preservation. This includes consideration of a local “Caroline County Land Preservation Program and Fund” for the County and its municipalities.<sup>7</sup>

The Plan states that “in order for Caroline County to reach its goal of 100,000 acres preserved by 2020, the future viability of preservation initiatives in the County depends on municipal involvement to maximize investment dollars.”<sup>8</sup> This includes the concept of leveraging agricultural preservation and conservation program funds as well as leveraging Program Open Space (POS) funding. It also considers County purchase of development rights from farmers, partially funded from new development.

Ridgely supports the preservation and protection of resource lands within the Ridgely Greenbelt. The Town also supports the Caroline County Department of Planning & Codes Administration’s focus on municipal greenbelts as “Priority Preservation Areas,” consistent with State law. As a designated “Priority Funding Area” (PFA) in Caroline County, the Town is a growth center. Therefore, Ridgely believes that cooperative planning for effective growth management and land preservation is essential. However, Ridgely feels that any County/Municipal Land Preservation Program must provide benefits for Town residents as well as County residents. Ridgely elected officials have a responsibility to ensure that such a program, if created, provides tangible value to the Town. Therefore, the development of any program should be carefully coordinated with Ridgely as well as the Caroline County Council of Governments (COG).

### **Tuckahoe State Park/Adkins Arboretum**

Tuckahoe State Park is a 4,000+ acre State owned park with recreation facilities along the scenic Tuckahoe River and creek. This large natural area and park is situated in the western portion of Caroline County on the border with Queen Anne’s County. The park is administered by Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The park provides for camping, fishing, and community recreation. As shown on Map 5-3, Tuckahoe State Park is linked to the Ridgely Greenbelt and constitutes an important amenity for the Town and its residents.



**FIGURE 5-6:** Adkins Arboretum and Tuckahoe State Park are important local resources, located near Ridgely. These resources are valuable amenities for the Town, its residents, and visitors to the area.

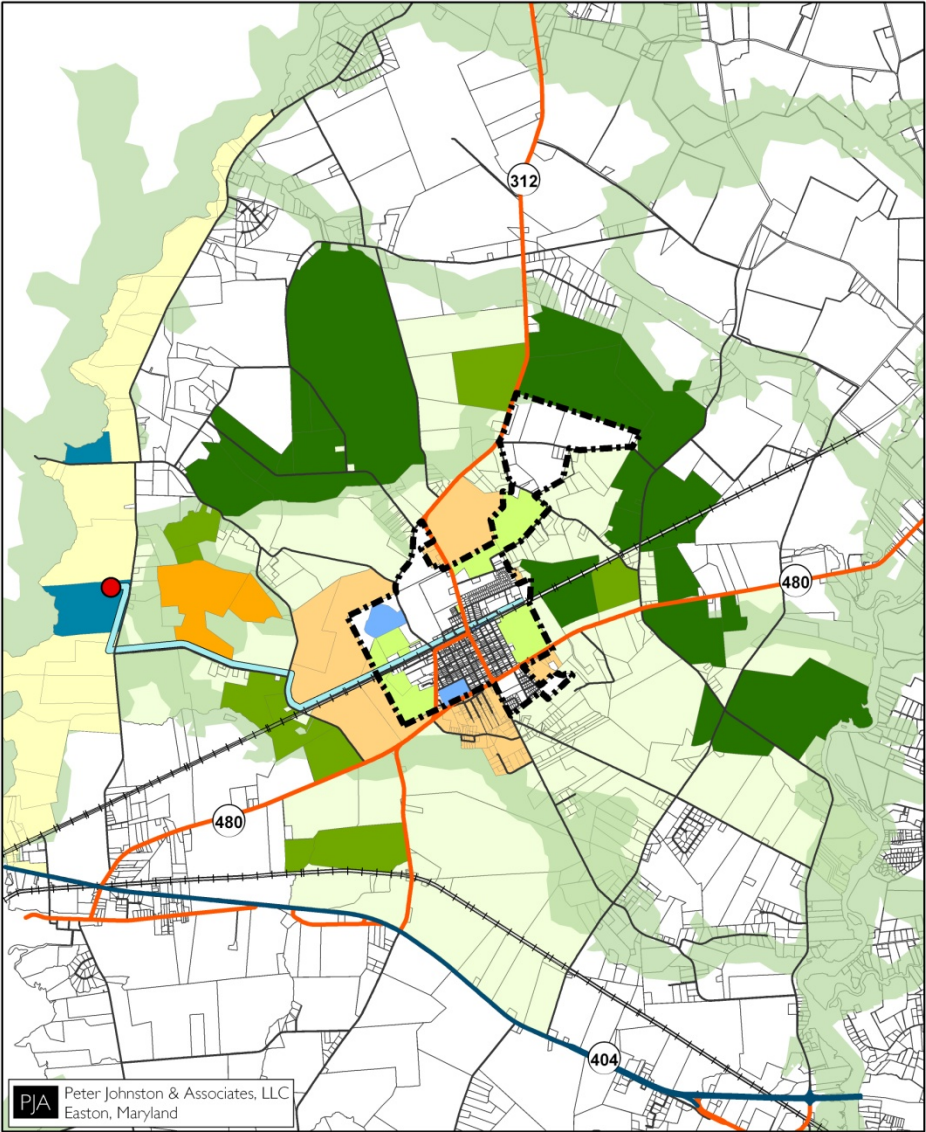
Adkins Arboretum is a 400 acre native garden and preserve located in Tuckahoe State Park. The Arboretum highlights natural vegetation and eco-systems indicative of the Delmarva region. Currently, an initiative is underway to establish a full service visitor center on the grounds. Plans also include a greenway trail connection to the Town of Ridgely.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

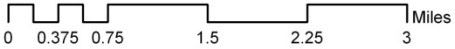
Greenway plans represent a tremendous recreation and economic opportunity for the Town and County. With the construction of the new Ridgely Airport and Business Technology Park, trail connections present a unique marketing opportunity. In addition, the greenway trail provides potential new residents, such as those in planned developments, with an amenity that many towns on the Eastern Shore lack. Ridgely feels that all efforts should be made by Caroline County to realize this important Town objective. Furthermore, the County should support the greenway trail connection through County areas.

MAP 5-3: RESOURCE CONSERVATION LAND



**LEGEND:**

- Adkins Arboretum Visitor Center
- Ridgely Corporate Boundary
- Shore Highway
- State Roads
- Local Roads & Streets
- ⊢⊢⊢ Railroad Line
- Adkins Arboretum Trail Connection
- Institutional Land - State Park
- Tuckahoe State Park
- Ridgely Park & Recreation Areas
- Ridgely Growth Area
- Agricultural Preservation Easement
- Agricultural Preservation District
- Private Conservation
- Green Infrastructure
- Ridgely Greenbelt
- Ridgely Agricultural Land



PJA Peter Johnston & Associates, LLC  
Easton, Maryland

## SENSITIVE AREAS POLICIES

Future development in and around Ridgely should seek to minimize impacts on sensitive environmental areas. Regardless of location, future development should be subject to minimum performance standards for environmental protection and natural resource conservation. Some planning strategies to be considered include the following:

- Identifying and protecting sensitive resources;
- Expanding and enhancing stream buffers; and
- Reducing impervious cover through such techniques as clustering, narrow streets, reduced parking and shared driveways, eco-friendly pavement processes, and other such techniques.

### STREAMS & STREAM BUFFERS

Buffer systems along Ridgely drainage ditches and small streams serve an important function and require vigilant protection and maintenance efforts. The cumulative loss of open space and natural growth in and around streams reduces the ability to filter the effects of greater stormwater runoff, sedimentation, and higher levels of nutrient pollution. Enhanced buffering is a “Best Management Practice” (BMP) that reduces sediment as well as nitrogen, phosphorus, and other runoff pollutants. Buffers act as a filter, thus minimizing damage to the water bodies that lie “downstream” from ditches and eventually the Chesapeake Bay.

The effectiveness of buffers is influenced by their width, which should take into account such factors as contiguous or nearby slopes, soil erodibility, and adjacent wetlands or floodplains. The type of vegetation within the buffer is important because some plants are more effective at nutrient uptake than others. Buffers also provide habitat for wetland and upland plants, which form the basis of healthy biological communities. A wide variety of animals use the natural vegetation as a corridor for food and cover. A natural buffer system provides connections between remaining patches of forest in the area to support wildlife movement.

### HABITATS OF THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES

Ensuring the protection and safety of threatened and endangered species habitat is important within all areas of the Ridgely's jurisdiction. The *Ridgely Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations* should include provisions for the protection of these habitats on all land within Town limits. This includes prohibiting development in sensitive species habitat areas or requiring specific protection measures in project designs of proposed construction projects that are located within or adjacent to an endangered species habitat. Protection measures should include site design plans and descriptions of measures to be taken to protect the endangered species (protection measures should be as described by the DNR Natural Heritage Program).

## WETLANDS

Public and private (tidal) wetlands are important natural areas protected by Maryland law (Title 9, Sections 9-101/9-301 of the Natural Resources Volume, Maryland Annotated Code) which sets forth strict licensing procedures for any alteration of wetlands. They are also within the protective jurisdiction of the federal government through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Town policies and regulations regarding wetlands require compliance with State and Federal wetland regulations. A twenty-five-foot (25') setback from all non-tidal wetlands is required for all development around the extent of the delineated non-tidal wetland, except as may be permitted by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and the State of Maryland, Department of Natural Resources, Nontidal Wetland Division.

## FOREST CONSERVATION

In 2006, the Commissioners of Ridgely established the Ridgely Tree Commission “to preserve and enhance the Town’s physical and aesthetic character by preventing the indiscriminate removal or destruction of trees between the sidewalks and the streets in the Town of Ridgely.” Additionally, the Commissioners wished to retain the Town’s trees for their positive environmental effects, including protecting wildlife, improving overall air quality, reducing and diverting surface water runoff, preventing siltation and sediment from entering into the Town’s storm sewer system, which ultimately enters the State’s waterways.

Town residents and officials are required to obtain written approval from the Ridgely Tree Commission before removing or destroying any tree over two inches in diameter at its base located on a municipal property or right-of-way. After removal of a tree, a replacement tree must be planted, and its location and species must be approved by the Tree Commission.

In 1991, the State of Maryland enacted the *Forest Conservation Act* to protect forests by making forest conditions and character an integral part of the site planning process. It is regulated by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources but implemented and administered by local governments. The law’s intent is to maximize the benefits of forests and slow the loss of forest land, while allowing development to take place. In 1993, the Commissioners of Ridgely adopted Subtitle 16 of Title 5 of the Natural Resources Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland as the “Ridgely Forest Conservation Program.”

Significant tracts of Forest Interior Dwelling Species (FIDS) habitat are located in areas surrounding the Town’s corporate boundary. This includes areas that are designated as potential growth areas for Ridgely. While the Town has not established any regulatory mechanisms to protect FIDS habitat, it is recommended that as growth areas are determined and established, protection measures should be addressed as part of the development process.



## EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL/STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Ridgely has adopted the *2000 Maryland Stormwater Design Manual, Volumes I and II* (Maryland Department of the Environment, April 2000) as the Town's official guide for stormwater principles, methods, and practices. Applicants must submit an "Erosion and Sediment Control Plan" to the Caroline Soil Conservation District (CSCD) for review and approval in all instances where a grading permit is required.

Clearing or grading land in excess of 5,000 square feet or earth movement in excess of 100 cubic yards is not permissible without first obtaining an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan from the CSCD. A standard Erosion and Sediment Control Plan for "Minor Earth Disturbances" may be used for projects with disturbances less than 30,000 square feet and 500 cubic yards of earth movement if certain limitations are met. When a Standard Erosion and Sediment Control Plan for Minor Disturbances is not appropriate, an Engineered Erosion and Sediment Control Plan is required. Engineered plans must be signed and sealed by either professional engineers, landscape architects or professional land surveyors licensed in the state of Maryland.

Ridgely also requires developers to submit a "Stormwater Management Plan" with proposed design and calculations for capacities of stormwater drainage systems for any new subdivision. Current stormwater management requirements address both the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff leaving the development site. In order to achieve many of the environmental protection and resource conservation objectives the Town has established, more emphasis should be placed on low impact stormwater management practices in addition to standard methods.

New development as well as infill and redevelopment projects should be required to treat stormwater using nonstructural and micro-scale practices to the maximum extent feasible. Techniques such as submerged gravel wetlands, rain water harvesting (Cisterns & Rain Barrels), landscape infiltration, infiltration berms, and dry wells should become common practices. Stormwater should be filtered using such techniques as rain gardens, landscape and tree planters (e.g., linear tree pits, sidewalk planters), grass swales and bio-Swales, tree-swales, grass filter strips and vegetated buffers.

## IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Descriptions and other details regarding implementation are contained in Chapter 9 of this Comprehensive Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION #1:** Amend the *Ridgely Zoning Ordinance* and *Subdivision Regulations* to provide specific protection measures for sensitive areas as per the requirements of Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

**RECOMMENDATION #2:** Assess future development proposals in light of the site's physical suitability to accommodate development, while protecting natural resources, sensitive areas, and the quality of the Town's groundwater and encourage Caroline County to develop similar policies and regulations

**RECOMMENDATION #3:** Consider incorporating environmentally sensitive building and site-design guidelines that follow LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) models into the subdivision review process to minimize the potential negative impacts of development on natural resources and sensitive areas.

**RECOMMENDATION #4:** Conserve forest and woodland resources, Forest Interior Dwelling Species (FIDS) habitat, and green infrastructure (hubs and corridors), and wherever possible, replenish them through tree conservation measures and replanting programs in compliance with the Maryland Forest Conservation Act.

**RECOMMENDATION #5:** Amend Town regulations to incorporate the "Conservation Corridor" as described in the Land Use Plan to protect sensitive environmental areas.

**RECOMMENDATION #6:** Work with Caroline County to review development proposals near the Town and ensure that sensitive areas are addressed.

## Chapter 6 Water Resources Element

The Ridgely Comprehensive Plan’s “Water Resources Element” (WRE) is a planning requirement mandated by Maryland House Bill 1141 (HB 1141). The purpose of the WRE is to assess the adequacy of water supply and wastewater capacity to meet current and future needs. In regards to meeting these needs, the WRE determines impacts on water resources. Considering available data, the statutory requirements are to accomplish the following:

- Identify drinking water/water resources adequate for the needs of existing and future development proposed in the land use element of the comprehensive plan.
- Identify suitable receiving waters/land areas to meet the stormwater management and wastewater treatment-disposal needs of existing and future development proposed in the land use element of the comprehensive plan.
- Adopt a WRE in the comprehensive plan on or before October 1, 2009, unless an extension is granted by Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) pursuant to State law. Zoning classifications may not be changed after October 1, 2009 if a jurisdiction has not adopted the WRE in its comprehensive plan.

Among other things, preparation of the WRE is an exercise intended to test water resource capacity limits, determine the potential implications of water resource issues for future growth, and facilitate development of management strategies. Specifically, the Ridgely WRE is directly linked to the following Plan elements:

1. Land Use Plan;
2. Municipal Growth Element;
3. Community Facilities; and
4. Resource Conservation.

### GOAL & OBJECTIVES

#### **GOAL:**

Maintain and protect an adequate and safe water supply to serve current and future residents of Ridgely.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

Maintain and protect an adequate water supply to serve the residents of Ridgely and collaborate with Caroline County to serve current and future populations.

Restore and protect water quality and contribute toward meeting water quality regulatory requirements in rivers and streams in the Upper Choptank River Watershed.

Address current water quality impacts as well as future impacts from land development and population growth.

Protect the habitat value of rivers and streams in the Upper Choptank River Watershed.

Work with Caroline County to develop watershed planning and management guidelines that relate land use and development to their impacts on water resources.

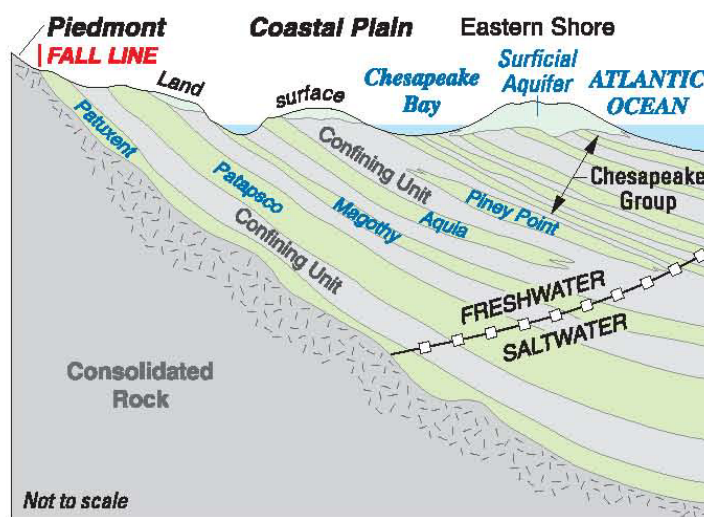
Work with the Federal, State, and Caroline County governments to address infrastructure limitations in Ridgely to achieve water and sewer service goals and water quality improvement goals.

Develop Town-wide water conservation methods and policies and encourage innovative technologies for stormwater management such as bio-roofs, rain gardens, rain barrels, and street-side buffer areas for home and business owners.

## BACKGROUND

### HYDROGEOLOGIC SETTING

Located in Caroline County, Maryland, the Town of Ridgely is part of the Northern Atlantic Coastal Plain aquifer system (NACP). The NACP system encompasses approximately 50,000 square miles that extend from the North Carolina and South Carolina border to Long Island, New York. In Maryland the aquifer system is bounded in the west by the Fall Line, which separates the Piedmont from the Coastal Plain physiographic province (see Figure 6-1). It is bounded in the east by the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>1</sup>



**FIGURE 6-1:** Describes the Northern Atlantic Coastal Plain Aquifer System, which separates the Piedmont from the Coastal Plain.

Source: *A Science Plan for a Comprehensive Regional Assessment of the Atlantic Coastal Plain Aquifer System in Maryland*, US Dept. of Interior and USGS

### REGIONAL WATER RESOURCES

The Atlantic Coastal Plain aquifer system in Maryland consists of an alternating series of aquifers and confining units that descend and widen, as they extend toward the Atlantic Ocean (see Figure 6-1). The major aquifers in the Coastal Plain system are the Patuxent, Patapsco, Magothy, Aquia, and Piney Point Formations, and the Chesapeake Group. The sediments that form the aquifers and confining units range in age from Cretaceous to Quaternary. Most of the Eastern Shore is covered by loose sediments in layers containing gravel, sand, silt and clay deposited during the present post-glacial period (Tertiary).

Total ground water use in Maryland exceeds 214 million gallons per day.<sup>2</sup> The urban areas of Baltimore and Washington, D.C. make up the largest percentage of water usage. Much of the water supply for these urban areas is derived from surface water sources. In Maryland's Coastal Plain counties, which include southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore, ground water comprises 86% of the total water use.<sup>3</sup>

Coastal Plain groundwater is drawn from unconfined (natural water table) and confined (artesian) aquifers. Unconfined aquifers are recharged by rainfall and snow melt, which can be depleted by drought resulting in fluctuating water levels. Artesian aquifers receive recharge from areas where water-bearing formations contribute to leakage through confining beds and lateral movement of water from adjacent aquifers. Artesian aquifers are much less vulnerable to drought conditions.<sup>4</sup> The natural water quality of Coastal Plain ground water is generally good and ranges from very soft to very hard (Vokes and Edwards, 1974).

<sup>1</sup> *A Science Plan for a Comprehensive Regional Assessment of the Atlantic Coastal Plain Aquifer System in Maryland* (Open-File Report 2007-1205), by Robert J. Shedlock, David W. Bolton, Emery T. Cleaves, James M. Gerhart, and Mark R. Nardi, U.S. Department of the Interior and U.S. Geological Survey, prepared in cooperation with the Maryland Geological Survey, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Maryland Department of the Environment.

<sup>2</sup> *An Overview of Wetlands and Water Resources of Maryland*, by Denise Clearwater, Paryse Turgeon, Christi Noble, and Julie Labranche. Prepared for Maryland Wetland Conservation Plan Work Group, January 2000

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Most Coastal Plain aquifers contain both fresh and salt water. Water directly below recharge areas is fresh and salt levels increase with aquifer depth and proximity to the ocean. The location of the freshwater/salt water boundary (zone of diffusion) depends on the volume of fresh water entering the aquifer from recharge or leakage.

### THE PINEY POINT AQUIFER

Currently, Ridgely draws its water from the Piney Point aquifer, which extends from North Carolina to New Jersey. In Maryland, the aquifer supplies water for much of Calvert and St. Mary's Counties on the western shore, and Queen Anne's, Talbot, Caroline, and Dorchester counties on the Delmarva Peninsula.

The Piney Point aquifer lies below all of Caroline County. The common range of yield for wells in the aquifer is 10 to 250 gallons per minute (gpm). In some areas the yield may exceed 600 gpm.<sup>5</sup> On the Delmarva Peninsula, the aquifer's rate of transmissivity (the rate at which water will move through the aquifer) is greatest in a zone that runs from Cambridge, Maryland to Dover, Delaware. Another area of comparatively thick high yielding surficial sediments is in the vicinity of Ridgely. The aquifer becomes less transmissive away from this zone, as sediment thickness decreases north of Ridgely.<sup>6</sup>

The Piney Point aquifer does not outcrop in Maryland. The principal recharge to the aquifer on the Eastern Shore is due to leakage from the overlying Cheswold aquifer in areas where the two aquifers are connected or separated by only a thin layer of silt and clay. Large water users on the Eastern Shore, particularly agricultural operations, depend more on the region's water table (surficial) aquifers than the Piney Point aquifer. The surficial aquifer in the northern part of Caroline County is the Columbia aquifer, which is poorly transmissive. The Columbia aquifer supplies some homes and farms (for irrigation purposes), but its shallowness makes it vulnerable to drought and pollution from surface sources.<sup>7</sup>

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) released projections of water use in the Piney Point aquifer in 1995. As shown in Table 6-1, these uses are classified as Agricultural and Non-Agricultural, reflected in gallons per day (gpd).

TABLE 6-1: MDE WATER USE PROJECTIONS BY LAND USE FOR THE PINEY POINT AQUIFER – CAROLINE COUNTY				
Classification	1990	1995	2000	2005
<b>Pop. Projections (MDP)</b>	<b>27,035</b>	<b>28,701</b>	<b>30,103</b>	<b>31,149</b>
- Agriculture Use (gpd)	553,737	553,737	553,737	553,737
- Non Ag Use (gpd)	929,248	986,515	1,034,708	1,070,657
- Total Use (gpd)	1,482,985	1,540,252	1,588,445	1,624,394
Source: <i>A Finite Difference of Analysis of the Piney Point Aquifer on the Eastern Shore of Maryland</i> , Maryland Department of the Environment Water Rights Division, 1995				

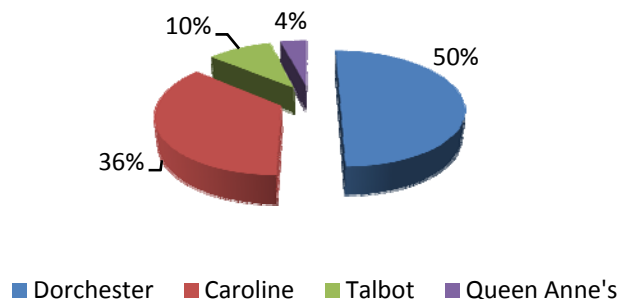
<sup>5</sup> *Caroline County Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan*, Caroline County, Maryland Planning Department, 1992

<sup>6</sup> *Agricultural Use of the Piney Point Aquifer*, Maryland Department of the Environment Water Rights Division, 1998

<sup>7</sup> *Maryland Geological Survey Report of Investigation #72*, D. D. Drummond, 2001,

In 1993, Caroline County comprised approximately 36% of the Piney Point Aquifer's usage on the Eastern Shore. In 1998, within the four Delmarva counties using the aquifer, a total of 392 wells were permitted to pump an average total of 31,280,800 gallons per day (gpd) from surficial aquifers. By contrast, there are 317 water appropriation permits for the Piney Point Aquifer with permitted averages totaling 5,125,950 gpd.<sup>8</sup> MDE's "Water Rights Division" instruct large irrigators in Caroline County to use the Columbia aquifer, reserving the more protected confined aquifers for drinking water supply. However, in the 1990s, an increasing number of farms sought water appropriation permits from confined aquifers (including the Piney Point) because of low yields in the surficial aquifer.

**FIGURE 6-2: Proportion of Piney Point Use for Caroline County**



In May 1998, MDE temporarily suspended processing applications from Caroline County farms for Water Appropriations Permits due to an increase in the number of large users interested in using the Piney Point Aquifer for irrigation. MDE conducted a study of water use and availability in the region to evaluate the cumulative impacts of all existing water uses and proposed permitted water uses of the aquifer. This included known water uses in surrounding counties and Delaware. The study concluded that uses, at that time, would not seriously impact the Piney Point aquifer or cause conflicts with other users. In addition, the aquifer could support additional withdrawals above existing levels. MDE has resumed processing all applications for ground water from the Piney Point aquifer. The Department continues to direct large users to the Columbia aquifer in areas where yield is sufficient. Where yield is insufficient, MDE will permit large water users including farmers, to use the Piney Point Aquifer on a case-by-case basis.

More recently, in 2007, MDE reported that steadily declining well water levels are a matter of concern to local residents in some areas of the State.<sup>9</sup> The aquifers requiring scrutiny are the Aquia, Piney Point, Magothy, and Patapsco Formations. These formations are heavily used on the Coastal Plain and in the Washington-Baltimore metropolitan area. In 2007, the U.S. Department of the Interior (USDI) and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) reported that "decades of increasing pumpage have caused ground-water levels in parts of the Maryland Coastal Plain to decline by as much as 2 feet per year in some areas of southern Maryland. Continued declines at this rate could affect the long-term sustainability of ground-water resources in Maryland's heavily populated Coastal Plain communities and the agricultural industry of the Eastern Shore."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Agricultural Use of the Piney Point Aquifer, Maryland Department of the Environment Water Rights Division, 1998

<sup>9</sup> Ground Water Protection Program, Annual Report to the Maryland General Assembly July 2007, Maryland Department of the Environment Water Supply Program.

<sup>10</sup> Open File Report 2007 – 1205, A Science Plan For A Comprehensive Regional Assessment Of The Atlantic Coastal Plain Aquifer System In Maryland, by Robert J. Shedlock, David W. Bolton, Emery T. Cleaves, James M. Gerhart, and Mark R. Nardi, U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, 2007.

A report prepared by the Maryland Advisory Committee on the Management and Protection of the State's Water Resources recommended a comprehensive study of the sustainability of the entire Atlantic Coastal Plain aquifer system in Maryland, which is currently being undertaken by the U.S. Department of the Interior and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), in cooperation with the Maryland Geological Survey and MDE. The assessment will be conducted in three phases and is expected to take 7 to 8 years to complete. Currently, the project is in Phase I, begun in 2006. A key component of the assessment will be the development of an aquifer information system designed to serve the needs of both water managers and scientific investigators. When fully developed, the system will serve as a web-based tool and facilitate the use of ground-water management models for evaluation of a variety of water-management strategies.

## RIDGELY WATER & WASTEWATER SYSTEM

### WATER SYSTEM

The Ridgely water system is comprised of two wells that draw from the Piney Point aquifer. A third well was installed in 2006. This well will come on-line when a new elevated storage tank and MDE permitting are completed. Water storage is provided in a 200,000 gallon elevated storage tank. In 2008, there are 617 connections to the water system and, of the total connections, 530 are residential, 3 of which are outside Town boundaries. There are 44 commercial and industrial connections, one located outside the Town's boundaries. There also are 43 apartment connections, 11 of which are outside of Town boundaries.

In 2007, a "Water Infrastructure Study" conducted for the Town recommended the addition of a second elevated water storage tank with at least 500,000 gallons holding capacity. The planning and design phase of the new tank is complete. The Town has submitted a "Pre-Application" for MDE Water Quality Infrastructure Program Capital Project funding. The new Ridgely Business & Technology Park has been identified as a potential site for the tank and construction is anticipated to be complete by June 2009.<sup>11</sup>

Classification	Well #1	Well #2	Well #3
Year Drilled	N/A	1995	1985
Well Diameter	N/A	6"	6"
Total Depth	N/A	347 feet	347 feet
Reported Capacity	N/A	110 gpm	150 gpm

Source: Town of Ridgely; Maryland Department of the Environment

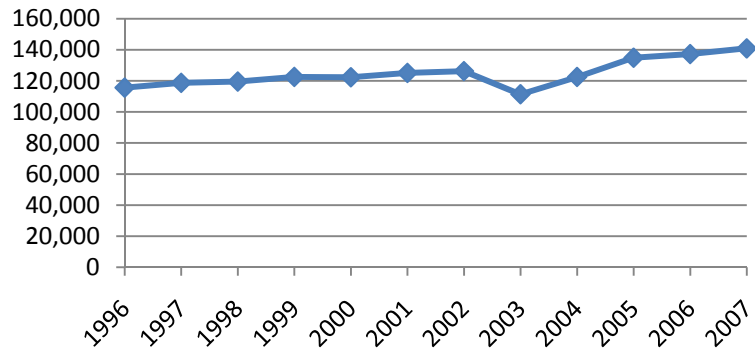
MDE issues ground water appropriation permits (GAPs) that specify average and maximum daily flow capacities for municipal water systems. Annual average daily flow is the total volume of water flowing into a water facility during any consecutive 365 days; divided by 365 and expressed in units of mgd (million gallons per day) or gpd (gallons per day). Maximum daily flow capacity is the maximum quantity permitted to flow within a single 24-hour period.

<sup>11</sup> Ridgely Five-Year Capital Improvement Program, 2007

The current Ridgely Groundwater Appropriations Permit GAP CO79G005(3), issued by MDE, authorizes the system to withdraw an annual average of 200,000 gpd and 300,000 gpd during the month of maximum use. Pumpage data from 1996 through the end of 2007 shows that water usage in the Town remained steady at or near 120,000 gpd between 1996 and 2002. However, use dropped about 10,000 gpd in 2003. Usage increased to 120,000 gpd in 2004 and climbed to almost 140,000 gpd in 2005. Usage has remained steady at or near 140,000 gpd through the end of 2007.

**FIGURE 6-3: Ridgely Water Pumpage (gpd) 1996-2007**

Source: MDE Water Supply Program



### SEWER SYSTEM

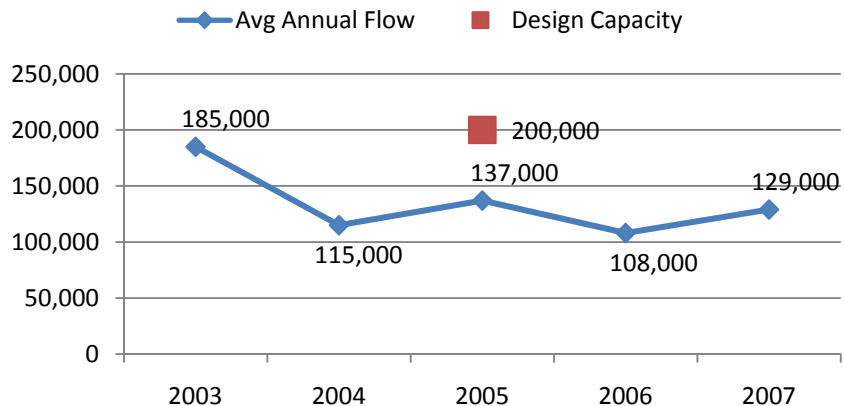
The wastewater treatment system (WWTP) consists of two non-aerated storage lagoons, a chlorine contact tank, and effluent spray fields. Under the WWTP's current operating permit (Permit Number 04-DP-0530), the facility may discharge 200,000 gallons per day (gpd). In 2008, the Plant's average annual flow was 124,667 gpd (based on the average annual flows of 2005, 2006, and 2007), with 75,333 gpd remaining in capacity.<sup>12</sup>

**TABLE 6-3: AVERAGE ANNUAL FLOW 2003 TO 2007**

Year	Average Annual Flow
2003	185,000
2004	115,000
2005	137,000
2006	108,000
2007	129,000

*2007 Town of Ridgely Annual Average Sewer Flow Report*  
 Note: Sewer is noted in gallons per day (gpd), 2003 was one of the wettest years on record. The Town had to use stream discharge outfall for most of the year.

**FIGURE 6-4: Ridgely 5 Year Average Annual Flow: Sewer**



<sup>12</sup> MDE Letter to Joseph A. Mangini, Jr., Town Manager, Ridgely, February 15, 2008



The Town is in the process of upgrading its plant to maximize the use of its existing spray irrigation land for effluent disposal. The upgrade includes replacing the existing center pivot spray irrigators with solid set irrigators. In order to use the solid set spray irrigators, pumps will be added to correctly pressurize the system. The new pumps will be installed in a newly constructed building adjacent to the plant's existing chlorine contact tank. These changes will be coupled with a crop replacement in the irrigation fields to loblolly pines which will decrease crop management delays and keep nutrient levels within permitted limits. The project is estimated to be complete in mid-2009.<sup>13</sup> It is anticipated that these upgrades will not increase the plant's design capacity of 200,000 gpd.

As shown in Table 6-3, the 2007 *Town of Ridgely Annual Average Sewer Flow Report* indicates a range between 185,000 gpd in 2003 to 129,000 gpd in 2007.<sup>14</sup> It is important to note that 2003 was one of the wettest years on recent record. Average Annual Sewer Flows for the last three years from 2005 to 2007 provide a more accurate measurement of flow (see Table 6-4).

TABLE 6-4: WASTEWATER CAPACITY MANAGEMENT PLAN SEWER CAPACITY SUMMARY	
Classification	Sewer Capacity - Gallons Per Day (gpd)
Design Capacity	200,000
Current Flow	124,667
Current Capacity	75,333
<b>*Remaining Capacity</b>	<b>37,933</b>
<i>Town of Ridgely Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity Management Plan – October 1, 2008 (Remaining capacity is calculated by subtracting allocations from Table 6-5 from current capacity in Table 6-4 (75,333 gpd – 37,400 gpd).</i>	
<i>*Note: All figures are in gallons per day and sewer allocation is based on a 300 gpd per single family dwelling. Remaining Capacity includes current capacity minus sewer allocation for committed and reserved planned development (see Table 6-3).</i>	

The Ridgely Department of Public Works detailed the Town's current sewer capacity in October of 2008. The *Ridgely Wastewater Treatment Plant Allocation Capacity Management Plan* outlines the Town's design capacity with the existing wastewater treatment plant, its current flow, and current capacity. The Report summarizes expected planned development in the Town (residential and non-residential).

TABLE 6-5: WATER AND SEWER ALLOCATION SUMMARY		
Water/Sewer Allocation Committed		
Classification	Lots	Allocated/Committed - Gallons Per Day (gpd)
Ridgely Business Technology Park – Phase I	N/A	9,000 (Commercial)
Walnut Farms	20	6,000
Ridgely Stores/Brodie Shopping Center	N/A	2,000 (Commercial)
Sebasco Subdivision	1	300
Elliot Subdivision	1	300
Water/Sewer Allocation Reserved		
Classification	Lots	Allocated/Committed - Gallons Per Day (gpd)
Existing Platted Lots	5	1,200
Ridgway Estates (Lister House Subdivision)	16	4,800
128 Walnut Street Subdivision	3	900
Cow Barn Project	36	10,800
Weese Town-Home Project	7	2,100
Ridgely Business Technology Pak	N/A	36,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>55,800</b>
<i>Town of Ridgely Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity Management Plan – October 1, 2008</i>		
<i>Note: All figures are in gallons per day and sewer allocations are based on a 300 gpd per single family dwelling, as per Ridgely sewer allocation policies.</i>		

<sup>13</sup> *Ridgely Five Year Capital Improvement Projects Report*, April 2, 2007

<sup>14</sup> 2007 Town of Ridgely Annual Average Sewer Flow Report.

## PROJECTED WATER DEMAND

Calculations for future water demand in Ridgely are based on projected residential and non-residential water usage (see the Municipal Growth Element, Tables 3-3/3-6). A per-household water usage multiplier of 250 gpd (MDE estimate of single family household daily water usage) was applied to the number of dwelling units projected to be built per year within the Town. Non residential water usage was calculated using a multiplier of 200 gpd per 1,000 square feet of commercial and industrial development space.

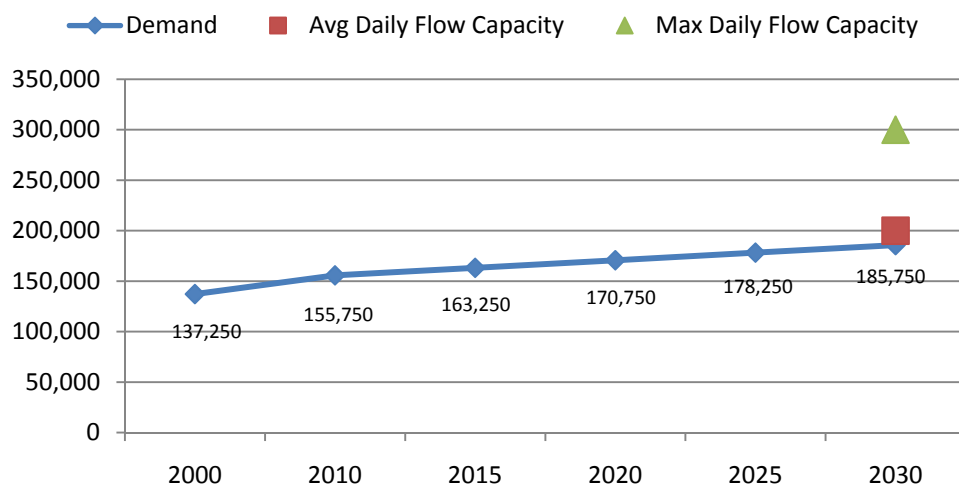
Non-residential development is projected to begin by 2010 with the first phase of the Ridgely Business & Technology Park (9,000 gpd) and the Brodie Shopping Center (2,000 gpd). It is estimated that the Town’s water usage will not exceed the water system’s average daily flow capacity (see Figure 6-5).

TABLE 6-6: RIDGELY PROJECTED WATER USAGE 2000 – 2030						
Classification	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Dwelling Units – DU’s	549	579	609	639	669	699
Water Usage (gpd)	137,250	144,750	152,250	159,750	167,250	174,750
- Ridgely Business Technology Park (gpd)	N/A	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
- Brodie Shopping Center (gpd)	N/A	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
<b>Total Water Usage (gpd)</b>	<b>137,250</b>	<b>155,750</b>	<b>163,250</b>	<b>170,750</b>	<b>178,250</b>	<b>185,750</b>
- % daily average flow capacity	69%	72%	76%	80%	84%	87%
- % remaining maximum daily flow capacity	46%	54%	66%	78%	90%	96%

Notes:  
 Percent of daily average flow capacity (200,000 gpd).  
 Percent maximum daily flow capacity (300,000 gpd).

Assumptions:  
 - Assumes residential development total of 150 additional DU’s by 2030.  
 - Assumes non-residential infill and redevelopment consisting of Phase I for the Ridgely Business & Technology Park and the Brodie Shopping Center project, as indicated in Table 6-3.

FIGURE 6-5: Ridgely Water Usage Projections 2000 - 2030



## PROJECTED SEWER DEMAND

Calculations for future sewer demand in Ridgely are based on projected residential and non-residential sewer usage (see Municipal Growth Element, Tables 3-3/3-6). In order to calculate projected usage, a per-household sewer usage multiplier of 250 gpd (MDE estimate of single family household daily sewer usage) was applied to the number of dwelling units projected to be built per year in the planning period. Non residential sewer usage was calculated using a multiplier of 200 gpd per 1,000 square feet of commercial and industrial development space. Non-residential development is projected to begin by 2010 with the first phase of the Ridgely Business & Technology Park (9,000 gpd) and the Brodie Shopping Center (2,000 gpd). The Town’s sewer usage will reach design capacity by 2015 (see Figure 6-6). Sewer capacity will accommodate projected residential infill and redevelopment for 150 dwelling units (see the Municipal Growth Element). It also assumes an additional 11,000 gpd for non-residential infill and redevelopment, Phase I of the Ridgely Business & Technology Park and the Brodie Shopping Center.

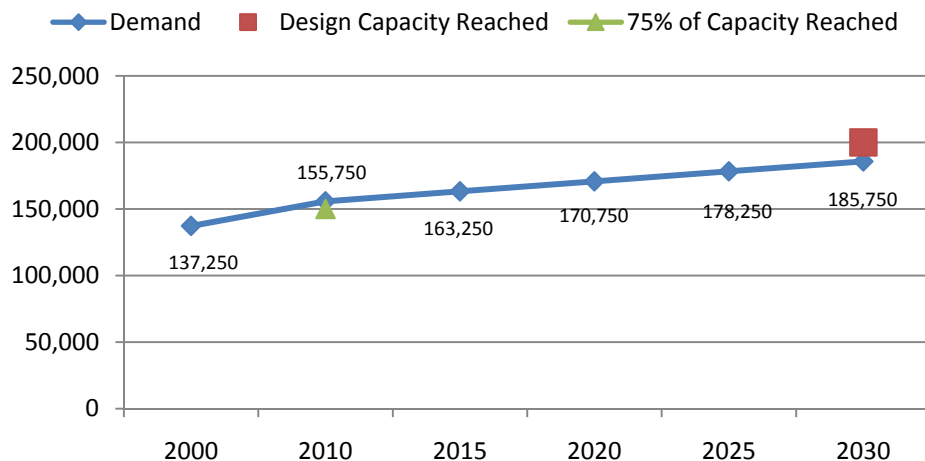
TABLE 6-7: SCENARIO 1 – RIDGELY PROJECTED SEWER USAGE 2000 – 2030						
Classification	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Dwelling Units – DU’s	549	579	609	639	669	699
Sewer Usage (gpd)	137,250	144,750	152,250	159,750	167,250	174,750
- Ridgely Business Technology Park (gpd)	N/A	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
- Brodie Shopping Center (gpd)	N/A	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
<b>Total Water Usage (gpd)</b>	<b>137,250</b>	<b>155,750</b>	<b>163,250</b>	<b>170,750</b>	<b>178,250</b>	<b>185,750</b>
- %of Permitted Sewer Design Capacity	69%	72%	76%	80%	84%	87%

Current Design Capacity = 200,000 gpd  
 Current Flow (Avg. Flow 2005 – 2007) = 124,667 gpd

Assumptions:

- Assumes 250 gpd per household based on MDE Guidelines for Wastewater Systems.
- Assumes residential development total of 150 additional DU’s by 2030.
- Assumes non-residential infill and redevelopment consisting of Phase I for the Ridgely Business & Technology Park and the Brodie Shopping Center project, as indicated in Table 6-3.

FIGURE 6-6: Ridgely Sewer Usage Projections 2000 - 2030



As shown in Figure 6-6, the current plant will reach 75% capacity by 2010. In accordance with MDE guidance, planning for the expansion of Ridgely’s sewer system should begin immediately.<sup>15</sup> Ridgely should plan to expand the sewer system to accommodate other projected residential and non-residential infill and redevelopment. This could require an additional 303,506 gpd of capacity beyond the current design capacity of 200,000 gpd (see Table 3-7: Potential Infill and Redevelopment Beyond 2030).

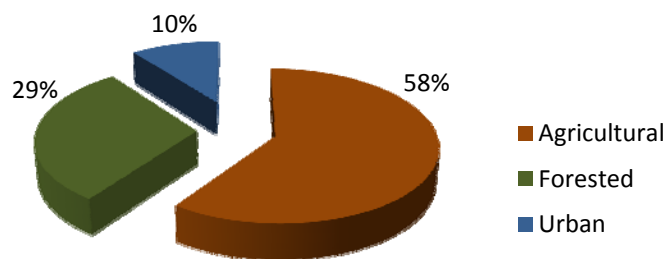
## THE WATERSHEDS

The Town of Ridgely is located in the Upper Choptank River Basin, which encompasses 795 square miles. Approximately, 700 square miles of the land area in the Choptank River Basin is located in Caroline, Dorchester, Queen Anne’s, and Talbot Counties in Maryland.

The Choptank River originates in Kent County, Delaware, and flows southwest, becoming tidally controlled near Greensboro, Maryland. At 68 miles long, it is the longest river on the Eastern Shore. The Choptank, Little Choptank, Honga Rivers, and Tuckahoe Creek are all part of the network of streams that make up the basin (see Map 6-1). The Upper Choptank River, “ranks as the third most important striped bass spawning and nursery area in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in terms of size and productivity.”<sup>16</sup> The Maryland portion of the Choptank River Basin includes the Tuckahoe Creek, Upper Choptank, Lower Choptank, Little Choptank, and Honga River watersheds. The corporate area of Ridgely is located in both the Upper Choptank and Tuckahoe Creek watersheds (see Map 6-1). The Upper Choptank and Tuckahoe Creek watershed encompass approximately 261,957 acres or approximately 45% of the land area in the Choptank River Basin. Ridgely’s corporate area is a small part of the River Basin and the two watersheds. The Town of Ridgely includes approximately 0.2% of the Choptank River Basin, 0.7% of the Upper Choptank watershed, and 1.2% of the Tuckahoe Creek watershed (see Table 6.7).

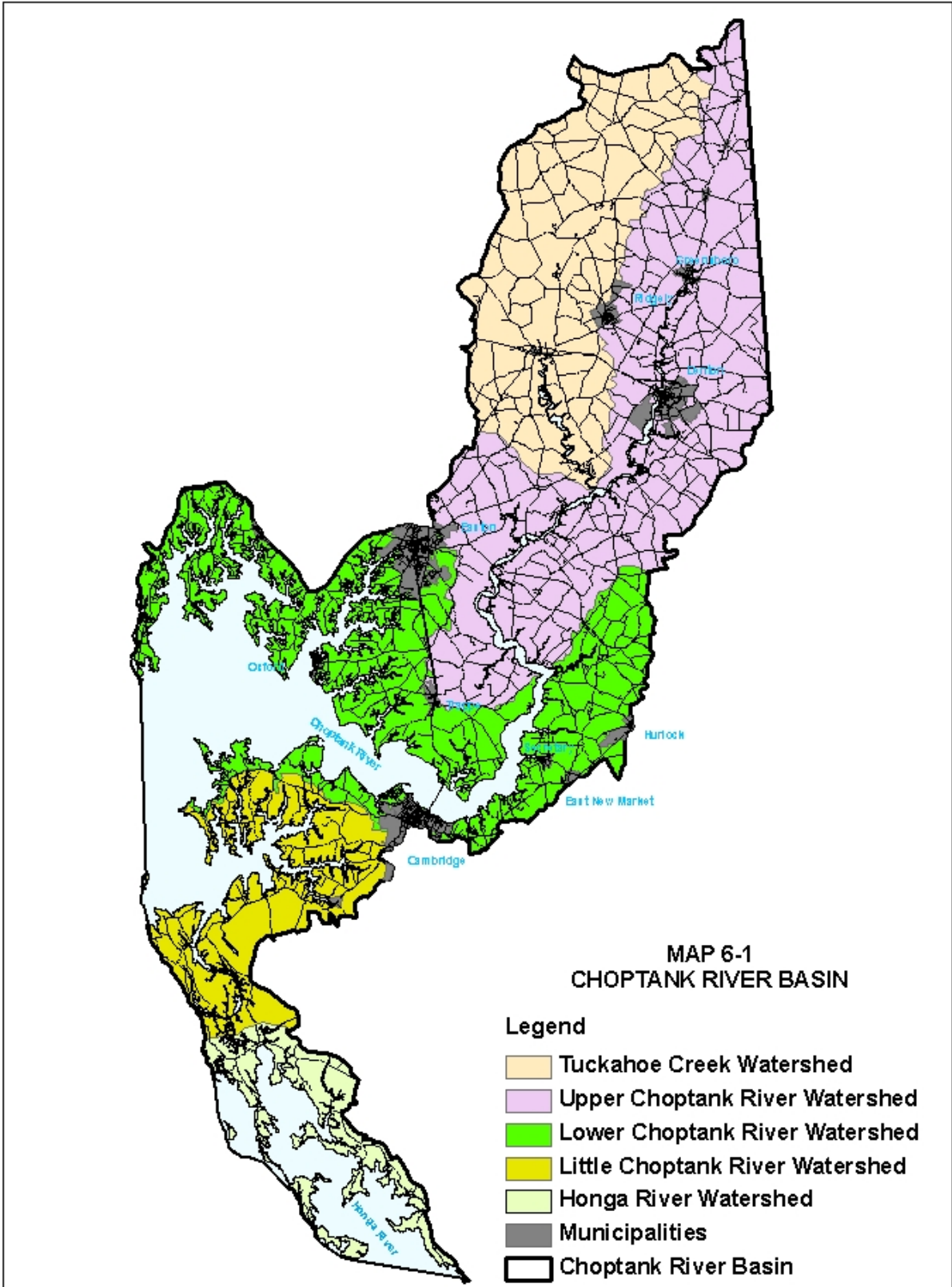
According to 2002 data from the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP), land use in the Choptank River Basin was 58% agricultural, 29% forested, and 10% urban area. The 2002 land use breakdown in the Upper Choptank Watershed was very similar to that of the overall River Basin (see Appendix C for details). At the same time, agriculture and forest uses constituted a larger percentage of land use in the Tuckahoe Creek watershed (see Appendix C for details). Urban uses were less than 4% of the total land area. The Town of Ridgely was less than 1% of the land area in the watersheds and about 2.6% of the urban land use in the watershed based on 2002 land use and cover data.

**FIGURE 6-7: Land Use in Choptank River Basin**



<sup>15</sup> *Guidance Document: Wastewater Capacity Management Plans*, Prepared by the Maryland Department of the Environment, 2006.

<sup>16</sup> *Upper Choptank River Watershed Characterization*, Maryland Department of Natural Resources in partnership with Talbot and Caroline Counties, September 2002



# WATER QUALITY ISSUES

## UPPER CHOPTANK RIVER & TUCKAHOE WATERSHEDS

All waters of the State are assigned a “Designated Use” (see COMAR 26.08.02.08), which is associated with a set of water quality criteria necessary to support that use.<sup>17</sup> These designated uses may or may not be served now but they should be attainable. All surface waters in the Upper Choptank River watershed are “Designated Use I” for water contact recreation and protection of aquatic life.<sup>18</sup>

The Upper Choptank River was first listed on the Maryland 303d list required by the *Clean Water Act* in 1996. The 1996 listings for the Upper Choptank River included the tidal portions of the Tuckahoe watershed. This listing means that pollution associated with impairment(s) are preventing full use of these water bodies for the designated use based on State criteria. As noted in 1996, pollution constituents preventing the Upper Choptank River and Tuckahoe Creek from meeting clean water quality standards included total nitrogen, total phosphorus, and total suspended solids. In 2002 the Upper Choptank River Watershed was also listed for combination benthic/fisheries bioassessments and in 2008 for Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) in fish tissue.<sup>19</sup>

In 2002, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reported that “the Choptank River, like other tributaries to the Chesapeake Bay, is degraded by nutrient and sediment pollution harming aquatic life. Excess nutrients and sediments are the primary sources of pollution in the Chesapeake Bay. Nutrients occur naturally in soil, animal waste, plants, and the atmosphere; but in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, urbanization and farming have increased nutrient loads to unhealthy levels. These nutrients – nitrogen and phosphorus – promote the growth of algae, which in turn, blocks sunlight from reaching underwater grasses and reduces dissolved oxygen and suitable habitat for aquatic life.”<sup>20</sup>

According to the DNR, “the dominant characteristic of the Choptank River Basin is agricultural land use. As a result, the major issues in the basin are those of non-point source nutrient and sediment loads.”<sup>21</sup> With its preponderance of poorly draining soils and forest area, this basin is atypical compared to much of the Eastern Shore. Much of the Choptank River Basin is drained through ditches that have been installed over many decades to drain the flatlands for agriculture use. The drains are typically kept clear of vegetation, thus expediting flow and providing less opportunity for nutrient uptake and de-nitrification.”<sup>22</sup>

More recently, it has been reported by DNR that “a wide array of best management practices (BMPs) have been planned to reduce impacts of non-point sources.”<sup>23</sup> As of 2004, Tributary Strategy goals have been met and exceeded for implementation of Best Management Practices - BMP’s for agricultural practices

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<sup>17</sup> Code of Maryland Regulations COMAR. Title 26: Department of the Environment.

<sup>18</sup> *Upper Choptank River Watershed Characterization*. In Support of Talbot and Caroline County’s Watershed Restoration Action Strategy for the Upper Choptank River Watershed. September 2002.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Choptank River Overview, Maryland Department of Natural Resource, November 2003.

<sup>21</sup> *Maryland Tributary Strategy Choptank River Basin Summary Report for 1985-2005 Data*, August 2007, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Tidewater Ecosystem Assessment.

<sup>22</sup> *Factors Affecting Nutrient Trends in Major Rivers of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed*, Sprague et al., 2000.

<sup>23</sup> *Upper Choptank River Watershed Characterization*. September 2002.

such as nutrient management plans, conservation tillage; implementation is also high (approximately 75% or more of goals) for animal waste management systems (both livestock and poultry), grass buffers at the edges of fields bordering waterways, and tree plantings on agricultural lands.<sup>24</sup> According to DNR, modeled nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment loadings have decreased substantially from 1985 to 2005. Total nitrogen loadings are down 2.28 million pounds per year, 60% of the Tributary Strategy goal. Total phosphorus loadings are down 0.28 million pounds per year, 70% of the Tributary Strategy goal. Sediment loadings are down 43,000 tons per year, 83% of the Tributary Strategy goal. Despite these successes, the Report finds that agricultural land is still the major contributor of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment and as of 2004 implementation of urban BMPs has not been as successful, notably those dealing with stormwater management (overall, approximately 12% of Tributary Strategy goals) and urban nutrient management plans (no progress).<sup>25</sup>

### TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS: TMDLS

Under the terms of the Federal Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §§ 1251-1387) the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) delegated authority to Maryland to implement a systematic technical and administrative framework for managing water quality. Delegated responsibilities include setting water quality standards, assessing water quality, identifying waters that do not meet standards, establishing limits on impairing substances, and issuing permits to ensure consistency with those pollutant limits.

The State must conduct scientific studies for waters that do not meet water quality standards due to an excessive pollutant load and determine the maximum amount of the pollutant that can be introduced to a waterbody and still meet standards. That maximum amount of pollutant is called a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), and the studies are called “TMDL Analyses,” or simply TMDLs. TMDLs are a regulatory mechanism to identify and implement additional controls on both point (i.e., wastewater treatment plants, urban stormwater) and non-point source (i.e., stormwater runoff, erosion) discharges in water bodies that are impaired from one or more pollutants and are not expected to be restored through normal point source controls.

Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) establish limits or “caps” on the amount of pollutants permitted from point (P) and non-point sources (NPS) through an allocation system and TMDL analysis defines a quantified framework for TMDL implementation. TMDLs are expressed as allowable loads of a specified pollutant by point and non-point sources. Point sources include wastewater treatment plants with direct discharge permits into waterways (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permits-NPDES) and urban storm sewer systems.

Legal responsibilities for water quality management, like sediment and erosion control, stormwater management and other activities that have a strong bearing on water quality, such as

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<sup>24</sup> Maryland Tributary Strategy Choptank River Basin Summary Report for 1985-2005 Data August 2007, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Tidewater Ecosystem Assessment.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

land use under purview of local government. “To maintain control over decisions that affect their communities, local jurisdictions have a stake in how the State’s legal responsibilities for maintaining water quality standards are executed. In particular, local governments have an interest in the implementation of TMDLs. They are also best situated to address many aspects of implementation, due to their geographic proximity to the impaired waterbodies, and their direct role in decisions that affect local water quality.”<sup>26</sup>

According to DNR’s 2002 Report, the impairments in the Upper Choptank and Tuckahoe Creek watersheds “will be the subject of TMDL programs within the next few years.”<sup>27</sup> As of 2008, TMDLs have not been established for the Upper Choptank River watershed or the Choptank River Basin. When TMDLs are established for the Upper Choptank River and the Tuckahoe Creek watersheds they could influence future NPDES permit limits and thus Ridgely’s wastewater treatment plant facilities planning.

### **Non Point Source Loading**

Non-point source pollution occurs when rainfall, snowmelt, or irrigation runs over land or through the ground and gathers pollutants. Pollutants are then deposited into streams, rivers, lakes, and coastal waters or introduced into ground water. Stormwater runoff for the land is a significant contributor to non-point source loading.

Stormwater runoff is part of the natural hydrologic process. Human activities, such as urbanization and agriculture, can alter natural drainage patterns and add pollutants to rivers, lakes, and streams as well as coastal bays and estuaries. Urban runoff can be a significant source of water pollution including flows discharged from urban land uses into stormwater conveyance systems and receiving waters. In the past, efforts to control the discharge of stormwater focused on quantity (e.g. drainage, flood control etc.) and only to a limited extent on quality (e.g. sediment and erosion control).

In urban areas, the amount of stormwater runoff is a function of the amount of impervious surface associated with roads, parking areas, roofs, and other human constructions. Impervious surface blocks the natural seepage of rain into the ground. Unlike many natural surfaces, impervious surface typically concentrates stormwater runoff, accelerates flow rates, and directs stormwater to the nearest stream.

Watersheds with small amounts of impervious surface tend to have better water quality in local streams than watersheds with greater amounts of impervious surface. Side effects of impervious surfaces become increasingly significant and negative as the percentage of impervious area increases. Examples of related problems include reduction of groundwater infiltration, increased soil and stream bank erosion, sedimentation, destabilization or loss of aquatic habitat, and “flashy” stream flows (reduced flow between storms and excessive flows associated with storms). The Maryland Biological Stream Survey has related the percent of impervious surface in a watershed to the health of aquatic resources. For areas with less than 4% impervious cover, streams generally rate “Fair” to “Good” for both fish and in-stream invertebrates.

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<sup>26</sup> MD’s 2006 TMDL Implementation Guidance for Local Governments, Maryland Department of the Environment, Document version: May 24, 2006

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.



Beyond about 12% impervious surface, streams generally rate “Poor” to “Fair” for both. Reduction of impervious area can be a valuable component of a successful Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS). In 2002, it was estimated that the entire Upper Choptank River watershed had approximately 2.3% impervious cover. This average imperviousness compared well with similar watersheds in Maryland.”<sup>28</sup> At the same time, it is estimated that the Tuckahoe Creek watershed had approximately 1.25% impervious cover.<sup>29</sup>

### **Point Source Loading**

Point sources are identifiable inputs of waste that are discharged via pipes or drains, primarily from industrial facilities and municipal treatment plants into streams, rivers, lakes, or oceans. Ridgely shares the River Basin with several other municipalities that have public sewer systems including the City of Cambridge, Denton, Easton, St. Michaels, Trappe, East New Market, Secretary, Greensboro, and Hurlock. Other point sources, in addition to municipal wastewater treatment plants, are located in the Upper Choptank River Watershed. According to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) permit data there are 26 permitted surface water discharges and three permitted groundwater discharges in the Upper Choptank River watershed.<sup>30</sup>

### **Future Point Source and Non Point Loading**

As discussed in the beginning of this section of the Comprehensive Plan, one of the requirements of the Water Resource Element (WRE) is to identify suitable receiving waters and land areas to meet the storm water management and wastewater treatment and disposal needs of existing and future development proposed in the Land Use Element of this Comprehensive Plan. Analysis also considers available data provided by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). According the Maryland Department of Planning, “the purpose of the WRE is to ensure that future county and municipal comprehensive plans reflect the opportunities and limitations presented by local and regional water resources. WREs are intended to improve local jurisdictions’ contribution to the protection of state land and water resources; to the protection of public health, safety and welfare; and to meeting local and state smart growth policies.”<sup>31</sup>

In 2002, Ridgely’s contributions to point and non-point loadings in the watersheds were fairly limited. Total nitrogen, total phosphorous, and total suspended solids were substantially less than 1% of the total loading attributed to the Choptank River Basin. Fecal coliform loading was slightly less than 1%. Ridgely’s contribution to non point loading the two watersheds was somewhat more, especially fecal coliform (see Appendix C for details).

Public health agencies look for the presence of “indicator” species, so called because their presence indicates that fecal contamination may have occurred. The two most commonly used indicators for

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<sup>28</sup> *Upper Choptank River Watershed Characterization*, Maryland Department of Natural Resources in partnership with Talbot and Caroline Counties, September 2002

<sup>29</sup> Watershed Treatment Model (WTM), Center for Watershed Protection and EPA

<sup>30</sup> *Upper Choptank River Watershed Characterization*, Maryland Department of Natural Resources in partnership with Talbot and Caroline Counties, September 2002

<sup>31</sup> *The Water Resources Element: Planning for Water Supply and Wastewater and Stormwater Management*, Maryland Department of Planning, Publication No. 2007-003, June 2007

recreational waters are fecal coliforms and *Escherichia coli* (E. Coli). These are bacteria that live in the lower intestines of warm-blooded animals including wildlife, farm animals, pets, and humans, and are excreted in their feces. E. Coli and fecal coliform are not usually pathogenic, but their presence can indicate sewage contamination, perhaps accompanied by disease-causing pathogens. Fecal coliform pollution may come from a variety of sources including urban runoff, pet waste, failing or leaking septic systems, livestock, wildlife, illicit connections, leaking sewer lines, and NPDES permitted point sources. Increased urbanization of the watershed could result in increases in NPS fecal coliform load. This potential outcome of growth should be taken into account when establishing urban best management practices related to potential sources of fecal coliform, e.g., pet waste, failing septic systems, etc.

## WATER RESOURCE IMPACTS FROM RIDGELY

The Town of Ridgely is a small part of the watersheds and a minor contributor of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediments to the receiving waters. Implementation of the Town's Comprehensive Plan will not significantly impact current non-point loadings in the watershed. At the same time, Town growth will affect future non-point loading contributions. If the Town continues to use land application technology to increase WWTP capacity to meet future demand the assimilative capacity of receiving waters will not be a limiting factor. Addressing the requirement that "all future treatment plants with a surface discharge have zero nutrient allocation and must therefore offset 100% of their nutrient load" will require the Town address offsets for any remaining nutrients in spray effluent.<sup>32</sup>

The Upper Choptank Tributary Stream Strategy is making progress achieving its nutrient and sediment management goals through the implementation of agriculture BMPs but not urban BMPs. "Despite these successes, the report finds that agricultural land is still the major contributor of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment and as of 2004 implementation of urban BMPs has not been as successful, notably those dealing with stormwater management (overall, approximately 12% of Tributary Strategy goals) and urban nutrient management plans (no progress)."<sup>33</sup>

According to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), the Ridgely wastewater treatment system has a "Tributary Strategy Point-Source Cap," which is 5,217 pounds of total nitrogen and 451 pounds of total phosphorus. At build-out of the Town, total nitrogen and phosphorus will exceed these limits. Unless Tributary Stream Strategy nutrient and sediment reduction goals are achieved the receiving waters for nonpoint source loading from Ridgely will not have the assimilative capacity to support the Town's planned growth. Furthermore, if consideration for infill and redevelopment in Ridgely is not included in the Tributary Strategy goals (or TMDLs when established) assimilative capacity in receiving waters may be a limiting factor for future growth.

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<sup>32</sup> *The Water Resources Element: Planning for Water Supply and Wastewater and Stormwater Management*, Maryland Department of Planning, Publication No. 2007-003, June 2007

<sup>33</sup> Maryland Tributary Strategy Choptank River Basin Summary Report for 1985-2005 Data August 2007, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Tidewater Ecosystem Assessment.

## IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Descriptions and other details regarding implementation are contained in Chapter 9 of this Comprehensive Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION #1:** Implement urban Best Management Practices or BMP's for Ridgely as recommended by Tributary Strategies and the Implementation Chapter of this Comprehensive Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION #2:** Update and/or revise Ridgely's *Stormwater Management Ordinance*, programs, and other development standards to require environmental site design (ESD) techniques that optimize

- Conservation of natural features (e.g., drainage patterns, soil, vegetation);
- Minimize impervious surfaces (e.g., pavement, concrete channels, roofs);
- Decrease runoff to maintain discharge timing; and
- Increase infiltration and evapotranspiration and use other nonstructural practices or innovative technologies approved by MDE.

**RECOMMENDATION #3:** Work with Caroline County to develop watershed planning and management guidelines and relate all development to its impact on the County's water resources.

# Chapter 7 Heritage Preservation

One primary goal of the *Ridgely Comprehensive Plan* is to preserve the features that define the Town and its unique sense of place. These resources include valuable historic sites and structures; archeological areas; and key scenic, natural, and cultural landscapes.

## BACKGROUND

Heritage resources within Ridgely are an important legacy for the Town and Caroline County. Heritage resources include sites and structures of significant historic value as well as cultural elements that define Ridgely’s character, its genesis, and development through the 19th and early 20th centuries. Heritage resources include the Town’s historic architecture, scenic settings, and the many natural resources that make this setting attractive.

### GOAL & OBJECTIVES

#### **GOAL:**

Preserve Ridgely’s heritage resources.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

Encourage the appropriate preservation of historical, cultural, archeological, natural, and scenic resources.

Improve Ridgely’s inventory of historic sites, structures, and heritage attractions.

Designate a list of Landmark Historic Sites and Structure for the Town and address policy/regulatory mechanisms to preserve these sites and structures.

Encourage and support heritage preservation through mapping, planning, and regulatory mechanisms.

Coordinate strategies to achieve mutual County/Town heritage preservation goals and objective.

Encourage the development of Historic Scenic Highways for Ridgely and the region.

Encourage industries that support heritage preservation.

The preservation of heritage resources in Ridgely is vital, not only because these sites and structures provide Town character and cultural roots, but they also provide economic benefits. Heritage resources are one of Ridgely’s primary attractions, providing significant and tangible value to the Town. Their loss or degradation potentially threatens to diminish future economic returns.

## HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Ridgely is unique because the Town did not evolve from a crossroads village, like traditional Chesapeake Bay communities, but was planned and designed to become a large regional trading city. Ridgely was envisioned as a future “boom-town” and it was designed on a grid-pattern to allow for structured expansion. The Town was founded in the post Civil War period, as land speculation and railroad expansion booms were initiated across the Delmarva Peninsula. With the end of the Civil War, northern railroads were able to continue their expansion plans and investors and merchants looked for new markets and sources of supplies for urban areas. With its rich agricultural bounty, Ridgely was considered a prime source of supply for these urban markets.

The land around the present day community of Ridgely was purchased in 1867 by the “Maryland and Baltimore Land Association” from Thomas Bell, who was a local farmer. The gentlemen who owned the Land Association had a vision of a large community that would stretch from the railroad southward to the Choptank River, a distance of about four (4) miles. The town was named after Reverend Greenbury W. Ridgely, who was instrumental in the formation of the Town. The beautiful wide tree-lined main-street of downtown Ridgely harkens back to the 19th Century in picturesque style.

According to the *Historical and Industrial Edition: The Founding of Ridgely and the Early Days of its History*, published in 1912 by the Ridgely based “Caroline Sun,” the Land Association was only able to attract a few individuals to its site in 1867 and the railroad did not actually arrive in Ridgely until 1868. However, during the first year and before the Land Association went bankrupt, the current layout of Ridgely’s streets were established. The wide streets and the Town’s grid pattern were intended to serve as the heart of a major trading city that the Land Association hoped to create and unite the railroad with the Choptank River.

That first year also saw the erection of several buildings. Among them were a railroad station and the Saulsbury family store and residence. The latter survives as the Ridgely House at Central Avenue and Railroad Street, purchased by the Commissioners of Ridgely in 2002. The building serves today as the Town Hall, anchoring the redevelopment of the downtown business district. The railroad station was replaced in 1892 with the present building.

Once the deeds and financial arrangements of the Land Association had been cleared, Ridgely began to slowly grow as a rural commercial and industrial center on the Maryland and Delaware Railroad line. This line connected Easton and the towns along the railroad with the main Pennsylvania Railroad trunk line that ran down the center of the Delmarva Peninsula in Delaware. From the beginning of its actual growth until the middle of the 20th Century, Ridgely had a number of industrial operations related to processing local crops. There were several canneries and basket factories. Most of the local farmland was used to produce fruits and vegetables for urban markets, which were either processed in Ridgely or hauled north in refrigerated railcars for sale as fresh goods for processing in the larger urban factories.

By all accounts and after its initial slow start, Ridgely was very prosperous. Throughout most of its history, there was at least one hotel near the railroad and the commercial strip along Central Avenue contained its fair share of clothing, furniture, jewelry, and stores for household dry goods. There also were specialized repair and manufacturing utilized by the local population. Ridgely was able to support several doctors and there was a small rural hospital located in the Ridgely House. An interesting note to the success of Ridgely is that many of those who helped start the Town, and who purchased building lots in and around the community, were not natives of Caroline County or of the Eastern Shore. Many of the new residents came from Pennsylvania and New York. Others came from New England and the upper Midwest. A significant percentage of the new residents were not of English ancestry but were of German ancestry.

One industrial plant that might have had a dramatic impact on Ridgely, if it had remained open, was the construction of the Armour Company Food Processing Plant on the lower portion of Bell Street. Begun in 1911, the plant employed almost 1,000 people at its peak of operation. In addition to the main plant building and its associated support buildings, the Armour Company also constructed housing for its employees at the plant site. The plant processed two million quarts of strawberries per year. It was considered the largest such plant in the world. The plant was intended to handle the initial processing of strawberries and other local berries, which would be capped and cooked in cooper kettles and packed into five-gallon containers for shipment to other Armour plants for final processing. The plant was only in operation for six or eight years. It was closed by the Armour Company in response to an anti-trust suit filed against the company by the United States Government.

Both before and after the Armour plant was in operation, the Ridgely Fruit Growers' Association maintained a fruit exchange for area producers. The Association was established to help local farmers market their crop and ensure that satisfactory prices would be paid for their produce. The Association also helped with transportation arrangements with the railroad. The Association seems to have been disbanded sometime in the 1920's, as the cost of harvest labor rose beyond the market's ability to cover the costs of production.

The next largest industrial venture in Ridgely was the 1939 opening of the Breyer Ice Cream Plant on upper section of Belle Street. This plant was used by the company to process local milk for use by the company's ice cream plants located elsewhere. This plant was designed to convert 90,000 to 100,000 gallons of milk per day. The plant remained in operation until 1961, when the Breyer Company stopped processing its own milk and began to purchase it from suppliers.

Change and the current size and condition of Ridgely came with the general shift from railroad transportation to highways and trucks in the 1950s. As business and industry began to concentrate in larger urban areas, the factories and processing plants in Ridgely could no longer compete with larger and more modern facilities operated by regional and national corporations. There is only one food processor currently operating in Ridgely, the Hanover Foods Freezing Plant, on the western side of Ridgely. The other major commercial operation is a fulfillment center, New Roads, currently in the process of downsizing or even possibly eliminating their presence in Ridgely. Their headquarters building is located in the former Bryer Company's plant on Bell Street.

## RIDGELY RESOURCE INVENTORY

Resource inventories assist public and private entities to catalogue valuable historic sites and structures and other heritage resources. For the purpose of this Plan, resource inventories are based on information contained in the Maryland Historical Trust's (MHT) database and the Maryland Historical Trust's *Inventory of Historic Sites in Caroline County, Maryland*, produced in association with Michael Bourne in 1980. Noted historic sites and structures are included in Ridgely's Geographic Information System (GIS Mapping System).



There are several important elements to the development of an effective program for the protection of heritage resources. First is to inventory heritage resources. This includes a strong need to update the Caroline County Inventory of Historic Sites in coordination with the County's Historical Society and the MHT. Updated inventories can be digitized and mapped to provide a modern database.

The second involves a designation of the most significant resources or "Landmark Historic Sites and Structures." These resources are critical areas for future preservation because they represent the County's most valuable resources. Many of these sites are eligible for listing on a Federal, State, or local register of historic places.

The third element involves specific policy and regulatory actions to protect heritage resources and build heritage tourism infrastructure. This includes the development of a local Historic Preservation Plan, Historic Preservation Ordinance, and designation of a Historic Preservation Committee to oversee activities. Historic Districts can be voluntary.

According to *Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland* (Planning & Zoning Enabling Act), Sections 8.01 to 8.17, "Historic Area Zoning," local jurisdictions, such as Ridgely, may designate "boundaries for sites, structures, or districts, which are deemed to be of historic, archeological, or architectural significance." Local heritage preservation planning allows property owners in designated historic preservation districts to access significant tax credits, low-interest loans, and grants to repair, restore, and/or renovate important historic properties.

### TOWN OF RIDGELY, MARYLAND HISTORIC CORE

**Town of Ridgely Historic Core (1870's-1900's) Eligible for Listing on the NRHP:** Much of Ridgely is the product of the late Victorian railroad age and represents a planned Eastern Shore community as opposed to the traditional crossroads village development pattern evident in the region. The Town of Ridgely has many sites and structures of historic importance. Many homes located within the Town are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

A survey/inventory of historic sites and structures in the Town of Ridgely is important. The Maryland Historical Trust has developed a preliminary analysis of the historic architecture of Ridgely and concluded that there is a potential historic district present in the Town. This potential historic district includes Central Avenue, Railroad Avenue, Maryland Avenue, Caroline Avenue, Park Avenue, and portions of Maple Avenue. When appropriate, a study should be undertaken to determine the extent and areas of significance for the potential “Ridgely Historic District.”



**FIGURE 7-1:** The Ridgely Town Hall is located in the historic “Ridgely House” in the downtown area.

The designation of a Ridgely Historic District will greatly assist property owners to meet the financial burdens for the maintenance of these old homes through grants, tax credits, and, in some cases, low interest loans from the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT). Ridgely’s many valuable heritage resources are economic resources for a growing industry in heritage tourism on the Eastern Shore.

### LANDMARK HISTORIC SITES - RIDGELY, MARYLAND



Several historic sites in the Town of Ridgely have been listed in this Comprehensive Plan as “Landmark Historic Sites.” These sites, and their historic structures, have been cited by the Town as important areas for future preservation. Landmark historic sites provide prominent historic, cultural, architectural, and/or archeological value in regards to the Town’s heritage. In addition, landmark sites and structures provide the core character and integrity of Town, creating a tangible economic value for its residents.

Landmark Historic Sites and Structures often are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in coordination with the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT). These sites and structures provide a setting of historic, cultural, architectural, and archeological importance to the Town. In addition, site characteristics include a unique natural and scenic setting with mature old growth deciduous trees and a prominent setback. Landmark sites and structures often form an intricate and vital part of the Town’s street façade. Mechanisms for the protection and preservation of Landmark Historic Sites and Structures should be addressed in Ridgely’s Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, and Design Guidelines.



The current list of Landmark Historic Sites and Structures for Ridgely includes the following:

1. Ridgely Town Hall;
2. The Cow Barn Site and Structures;
3. The Ridgely Railroad Station and Caboose;
4. Sites and Structures located and facing along Central Avenue (Main Street);
5. Central Business District structures; and
6. Ridgely Carriage House.

This list may be amended from time to time by Town officials as the research and analysis of valuable historic sites and structure continues. Most of the Town’s most valuable sites are located in the Town Center and the Central Business District.



**FIGURE 7-2:** Ridgely’s historic downtown area presents unique opportunities for the Town to capitalize on heritage tourism.

### PROMINENT HISTORIC SITES IN THE RIDGELY REGION

**Oak Lawn - White Hall (1783) National Register of Historic Places – NRHP 337/CAR 2:** Oak Lawn was built in 1783 by Benjamin Sylvester and is located just north of the Town of Ridgely. Sylvester was a large land-owner in Caroline County during the Revolutionary War period. The plantation was re-surveyed in 1790 and re-named as “Whitehall.” The brick mansion has a gable-roof and is two and half stories. Three sides consist of common bonded brick construction but the main façade consists of header bond, a unique and uncommon architectural attribute. At one time in the 19th Century, Oak Lawn was owned by Greenbury Ridgely, the founder of the Town of Ridgely.

**Marble Head (1780’s) Eligible for Listing on the NRHP/CAR 19:** Marble Head was constructed in the late Georgian and early Federal periods (circa 1770 - 1780). The mansion was owned by the influential Boone family (John Boone) and is the sister of Cedarhurst, another prominent brick home that also belonged to the Boones.



The mansion is composed of two large two-story brick sections connected at right angles by a one story hyphen. The back portion of the house is possibly the oldest section, having been constructed in the 1770’s with the front portion and main façade area constructed in the 1780’s. Marblehead remained in the Boone family until 1904 and then fell into disrepair in the 20th Century. Years of deterioration had taken a toll on Marblehead but with the assistance of the Caroline County Historical Society, the house was recently purchased and has been restored to its former glory.

**Cedarhurst (1727, 1782) Eligible for Listing on the NRHP/CAR 20:** Cedarhurst was constructed in the late Georgian and early Federal periods (late 18th Century) from 1781 to 1783. Like Marblehead, the mansion was owned by the Boone family and was built by Jacob Boone. The difference between Marblehead and Cedarhurst is reflected in the growing influence and wealth of the Boone family. Marblehead was constructed of common bonded brick, while Cedarhurst was laid in Flemish-bond.

**Castlebury (1780's) Eligible for Listing on the NRHP/CAR 25:** Castlebury is located on a 400 acre tract of land originally owned by Thomas Hardcastle and his sons, Aaron and Mathew. Thomas Hardcastle, a prominent figure in Caroline County's early history, heralded from a great tidewater plantation family. Prior to the Revolutionary War, Hardcastle was a member of the Caroline County Committee of Safety, a political body, which was given authority to raise troops for the colonial militia. In 1776, he was elected quartermaster of the West Battalion of Caroline County troops. Hardcastle also served as a Justice of the Peace and a Justice of the County Court.

The original house was a substantial brick dwelling, two stories in height and three bays long, resembling nearby Cedarhurst. In the 19th Century, a large brick wing and three story tower were added on the west wing. In this regard, Castlebury is a unique "one of a kind" architectural structure on the Eastern Shore.

**Brick Mill Landing/Hardcastle Mill House (1790's) Eligible for Listing on the NRHP/CAR-26:** Located on a winding dirt road near Castlebury and the Choptank River is the Hardcastle Mill House (circa 1790). The structure is a small mill house with similar fenestration as Castlebury. The Federal-style structure has a primary façade in Flemish-bond brick. The building is three-bays wide with a gable roof. Like Castlebury and Castle Hall (in north Caroline County), the Brick Mill Landing house is associated with the Hardcastle family, an early Caroline County patriot and colonial personage.

**Boonsboro Church-Zion Church (1880's) Eligible for Listing on the NRHP/CAR 119:** Trinity Boonsboro is a small rural village located south of the Town of Ridgely. Today, it is primarily composed of African Americans. Boonsboro existed prior to Ridgely as an early settlement within Caroline County. The late 19th Century church was originally constructed by white Methodists. The Boonsboro Church was L-shaped with a square tower and later moved to its present site.

**Ridgely Railroad Station (circa 1892): CAR-81:** The Ridgely Railroad Station is an important reminder of the Town's past, as it relates to the railroad industry, agriculture, and local canneries that provided goods to urban markets in the North-East. The structure is a one and half story five-bay by two-bay brick building. The Railroad Station is owned by the Town of Ridgely and is currently being restored for public uses along the Town's Rail to Trail system that links the Town with Tuckahoe State Park and Adkins Arboretum.

**St. Paul's Reformed Church (circa 1880): CAR-86:** St. Paul's is a frame gothic structure constructed under the direction of Reverend J.K. Hannaberry in the late 19th Century. The most notable architectural detail is the two unmatched entrance towers of the Church.

**Ridgely House (circa 1885): CAR-87:** The Ridgely House is a two and half story two-sectioned frame building in the late Victorian style. The house has a porch, gothic central dormer window, and parts of it reflect Georgian Revival elements.

**Cherry House (circa 1880): CAR-117:** The Cherry House is a three-bay, two-story gable roofed farmhouse with a gambrel roofed "barn-like" structure attached. The Cherry House represents an interesting architectural anomaly for Caroline County through the combination of a gable and gambrel roof. According to the Maryland Historic Trust, it is unknown whether the gambrel roof section is an earlier house, used as a workshop by past owners.

**J. Butler House (circa late 18th Century): CAR-118:** The older portion of the J. Butler House is laid in Flemish bond brick, being two stories and three-bays by one-bay. Original rooms have fine woodworking, including paneling, mantels, and built-in cupboards. The Victorian addition is a smaller frame structure with a wrap-around porch. Local legend states that the J. Butler House was originally one of the Boone Family houses along with Cedarhurst and Marblehead.

**Tilghman O'Neill House (circa mid-19th Century): CAR-120:** The Tilghman O'Neill House is a frame farmhouse, which is a composite of older structures. Alterations appear to span the 18th, 19th, and early 20th Centuries for Caroline County architecture.

**Ober Farmhouse (circa late 19th Century): CAR-128:** The Ober Farmhouse is interesting regarding its historical and architectural significance. Its architectural character appears to be Greek Revival (a vernacular style for the late 19th Century) with an octagonal tower added in the Queen Anne style. This house forms a hybrid architectural style uncommon in the area.

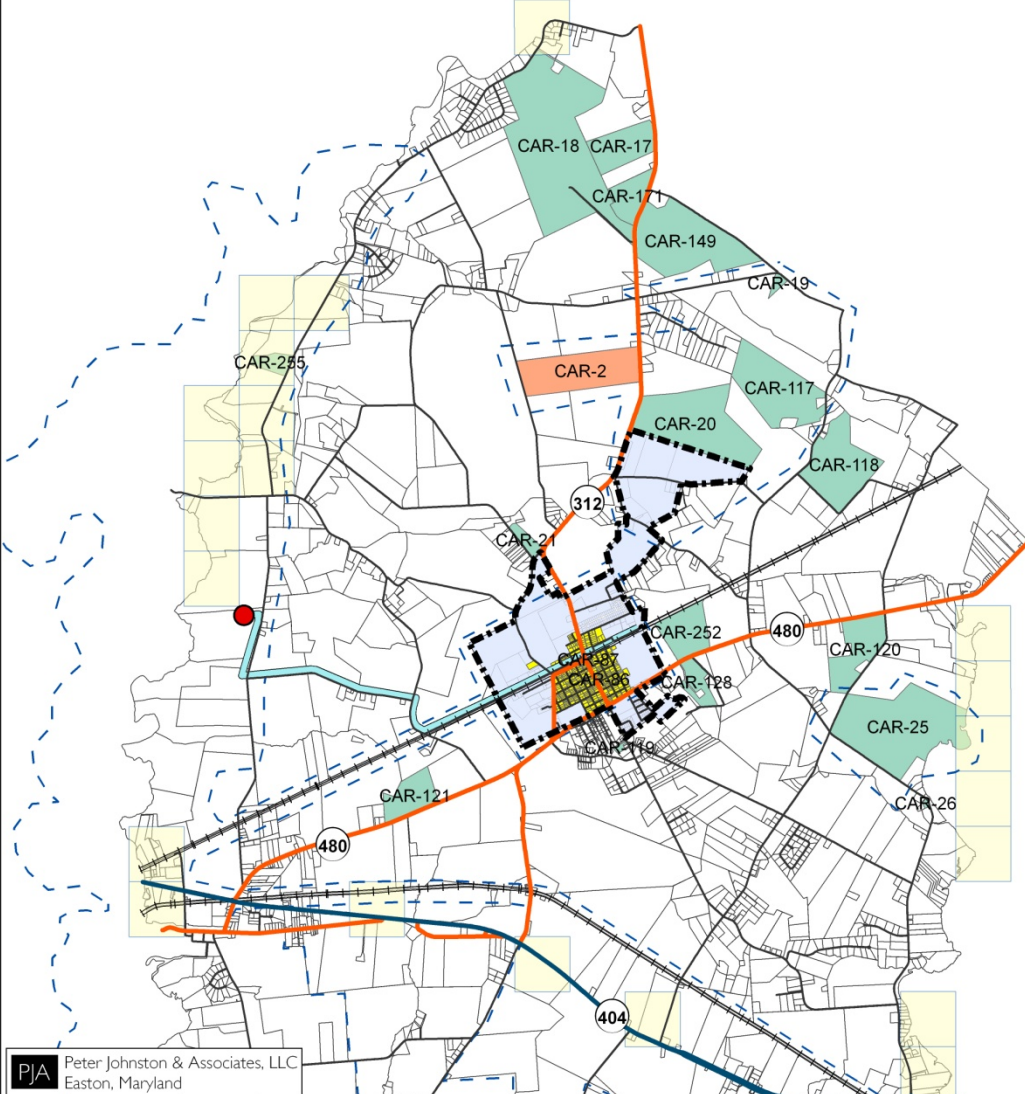
**Coursey Edwards House (circa early 19th Century): CAR-149:** The Coursey-Edwards House is a two-story gambrel roofed dwelling. Neighboring Queen Anne's County has many examples of gambrel roof historic structures, however, very few have survived in Caroline County.

**Edwards Farm House (circa 1910): CAR 171:** The Edwards Farm House exhibits architectural elements of early 20th Century vernacular Eastern Shore design. It is likely that the present house was a reconstruction in the early 1900's of a much older existing house. As tastes and trends changed over the past years on the Eastern Shore, this is not an uncommon trend for rural farmhouses. Owners often sought to incorporate the "architectural design of times" but they also used common sense in making use of existing historic structures to save money.

**Rudolph Peterson Log House (circa 1850): CAR-252:** Log houses are rare in Caroline County. A few existing examples, such as the Webb Cabin and the Greensboro Log Cabin, are important historical footnotes of mid-19th Century housing construction methods in the region. The Rudolph Peterson Log House is a one and half story 20' by 20' building, likely moved to its present location. Construction used saddle notching and a post, mortise, and plank technique. Current status of the structure is unknown.

**Morris Farm House (circa 1900): CAR-255:** The Morris Farmhouse is location on the west-side of Cherry Lane in the present day Tuckahoe State Park. It is a two-bay three story structure with a two-story rear addition.

# MAP 7-1: HERITAGE PRESERVATION HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES



**LEGEND:**

- ■ ■ ■ Ridgely Corporate Boundary
- Shore Highway
- State Roads
- Local Roads & Streets
- — — — Railroad Line
- Adkins Arboretum Visitor Center
- Adkins Arboretum Trail Connection
- - - - Heritage Area Target Investment Zone
- National Register of Historic Places
- Archeological Areas
- Ridgely Historic Area
- MHT - MD Inventory of Historic Sites

**Maryland Historical Trust (MHT): 1980 "Inventory of Historic Sites in Caroline County, Maryland"**

**Town of Ridgely - Historic Resources:**

- Town of Ridgely Historic Core
- Ridgely Railroad Station: CAR-81
- St. Paul's Reformed Church: CAR-86
- Ridgely House: CAR-87

**Ridgely Region - Historic Resources:**

- Oak Lawn: NRHP-337/CAR-2
- Marble Head: CAR-19
- Cedarhurst: CAR-20
- Castlebury: CAR-25
- Hardcastle Mill House: CAR-26
- Boonsboro Church: CAR-119
- Cherry House: CAR-117
- J. Butler House: CAR-118
- Tilghman O'Neil House: CAR-120
- Ober Farmhouse: CAR-128
- Coursey Edwards House: CAR-149
- Edwards Farm House: CAR-171
- Rudolph Peterson Log House: CAR-252
- Moris Farm House: CAR-255

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## HERITAGE PRESERVATION INITIATIVES

Many heritage preservation initiatives are currently occurring in Caroline County and the Ridgely region. These initiatives present opportunities to capitalize on the history of the Town to promote heritage tourism. More importantly, they represent opportunities to seek public and private investment to restore and rehabilitate heritage structures.



### STORIES OF THE CHESAPEAKE HERITAGE AREA

Under the Maryland Heritage Areas Program administered by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA), the Counties of Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne’s, and Talbot have partnered with the Eastern Shore Heritage Incorporated (ESHI – a public private partnership) to create the “Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area.” Partners in the Heritage Area also include 21 municipalities within the region. The “Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area” is one of the largest in the State.

ESHI is a non-profit organization tasked to manage the Heritage Area and implement a Heritage Area Management Plan. As a guiding policy, the *Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area Management Plan* seeks to promote heritage preservation and tourism for economic development. In 2005, the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area became “Certified” by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. Certified Heritage Area Status confers many benefits, including grant funding for local projects and historic rehabilitation tax credits for property owners. Ridgely is part of the Heritage Area

This Plan recognizes the importance of the certification status of the “Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area,” comprising heritage sites and places in Kent, Caroline, Queen Anne’s, and Talbot Counties. This status recognizes Ridgely’s unique heritage and offers the Town the opportunity for coordinated and enhanced tourism activity. Consequently, the *Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area Management Plan* is hereby incorporated in the *Ridgely Comprehensive Plan*, and may be amended from time to time.

### REGIONAL SCENIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

In January 2004, Caroline County in coordination with ESHI and Scenic Maryland prepared the *Cultural Landscape & Scenic Resource Assessment: Landscape Assessment Volume 1 for the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area*. The Resources Study is oriented by region and sub-region based on physiographic characteristics, including islands, maritime lowlands, maritime highlands, and interior farmlands. Districts were formed from these sub-regions for the purposes of evaluation, with criteria based on the *National Register Bulletin 30: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes*.

The West Caroline County region included three significant districts, the Ridgely District, Tuckahoe River District, and the Upper Choptank River District. These were rated by public workshop groups formed from citizens in the Heritage Area region. The Ridgely District is located in the Interior Farmlands region. The region is dominated by flat topography, open farm fields (primarily corn and soybeans), granaries, historic small towns related to farming and the railroad industry, as well as some forested areas.

A series of maps were developed as part of the Scenic & Cultural Study to rate overall resources including Visual Preference; Scenic Resources – Magnitude, Distinctiveness, and Intactness; Scenic Resource Assessment; Cultural Resource Assessment; and Scenic Cultural Landscapes. In addition, a series of individual maps were developed including Natural Resources Heritage; Colonial and Early Colonial Heritage; Small Town Heritage; Religious Heritage; African-American Heritage; Agricultural Heritage; Maritime Heritage; and Travel and Transportation Heritage. Although, highly rated for agriculture, the Ridgely District rated moderate to low for scenic and cultural resources.

The Scenic & Cultural Study is largely subjective. Overall the West Caroline County region is highly rated for cultural and scenic resources. It consistently ranked medium to high in almost all categories. In this regard, the Scenic & Cultural Study provides valuable information concerning the aesthetic value of resources for the public abroad and heritage tourism as a whole.

### **HISTORIC SCENIC BY-WAYS**

Under the National Scenic By-Ways Program, Caroline County, in coordination with Dorchester County, is engaged in designating several State highways as Historic Scenic By-Ways. The program is designed to recognize highways that are outstanding examples of scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archeological, and/or natural qualities and provide special benefits, including the promotion of heritage tourism. “Scenic By-Way” projects include the Underground Railroad Scenic Byway, which includes the Town of Ridgely.

### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAMS**

A number of programs exist to help individuals and groups temporarily or permanently protect sites and structures considered significant. Historic preservation programs include the inventorying, researching, restoration, and ongoing protection of sites and structures having a significant local or national historic interest. Historic and cultural resource preservation and enhancement through sensitive land use planning and other administrative means would provide Ridgely with a number of benefits including:

- Promotion of a strong sense of community pride for Town residents.
- Community and economic revitalization through the renovation or adaptive reuse of older structures.
- Increased property values and tax revenues as a result of renovation and restoration.
- Increased revenues generated from heritage tourism.

More detailed information on programs including the National Historic Landmark, National Register of Historic Places, Conservation and Preservation Easements, and Historic Overlay Districts can be found from various historic preservation organizations such as the Maryland Historical Trust.

### **Maryland Historical Trust**

The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) is a state agency dedicated to preserving and interpreting the legacy of Maryland's past. The Trust maintains the "Maryland Inventory of Historic properties," a broad-based catalog of historic resources throughout the State. The Inventory consists of written, photographic, cartographic, and other graphic documentation of over 14,000 historic districts, buildings, structures and sites that serve as a physical reminder of Maryland's history. The Inventory is constantly expanding through contributions from the Trust's Statewide Architectural Survey Program, which works with county and local governments and other institutions to identify and document historic resources. Listing in the Inventory does not limit or regulate the property owner in what can or cannot be done with the property.

### **Maryland Historic Preservation Easement**

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

### **National Register of Historic Places**

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

- National recognition of the value of historic properties individually and collectively to the Nation.
- Eligibility for Federal tax incentives and other preservation assistance.
- Eligibility for a Maryland income tax benefit for the approved rehabilitation of owner-occupied residential buildings.
- Consideration in the planning for federally and state assisted projects.
- Listing does not interfere with a private property owner's right to alter, manage or dispose of property.



## IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

**RECOMMENDATION #1:** Promote historic rehabilitation and revitalization tax credits and other historic preservation measures to improve the existing housing stock.

**RECOMMENDATION #2:** Continue to build heritage tourism attractions in Ridgely such as the Ridgely Railroad House, the Cow Barn, and the Rails-to-Trail, while also promoting the revitalization of the Town Center and Central Business District.

**RECOMMENDATION #3:** Seek ways to ensure that the Eastern Shore vernacular architecture found along Ridgely's streets is maintained and preserved as a valuable economic asset and an important heritage resource.

**RECOMMENDATION #4:** Consider the preparation of a "Ridgely Historic Preservation Plan," including the mapping, documenting, and inventorying of current heritage resources and scenic and cultural landscapes. This includes designating a list of official landmark historic sites and structures, encouraging the establishment of a local historic district, and promoting recognition through the awarding of plaques.

**RECOMMENDATION #5:** Update and revise planning policies and regulatory mechanisms, including Design Guidelines, to assist in the preservation of heritage resources in Ridgely.

**RECOMMENDATION #6:** Adopt flexible zoning provisions that promote the adaptive reuse of historic structures for public and private uses including, but not limited to, bed and breakfast establishments, craft/gift shops, small retail operations, cafes and restaurants, museums, and studio space for artisans, when such uses minimize exterior structural alterations.

**RECOMMENDATION #7:** Assist property owners in identifying financial incentives for rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of older buildings that exhibit important or traditional architectural features. New construction of commercial and residential buildings, including new development, infill and redevelopment, should reflect the characteristics of Ridgely's best historic architecture, where appropriate.

**RECOMMENDATION #8:** Establish mechanisms through partnerships to supply technical and professional assistance regarding heritage resources, including assistance to property owners for the rehabilitation and/or restoration of heritage structures in Ridgely.

**RECOMMENDATION #9:** Encourage the protection and rehabilitation of historic homes and buildings by evaluating the use of Façade Easements, Enterprise Funds, and Rehabilitation Tax Incentives, as well as working with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, the Maryland Historical Trust, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation to obtain financial support for rehabilitation.

**RECOMMENDATION #10:** Partner with local entities such as the Eastern Shore Heritage Incorporated (ESHI), Caroline County Government, the Caroline County Historical Society, and the Caroline County Economic Development Corporation to promote and enhance heritage preservation and tourism initiatives in Ridgely.

**RECOMMENDATION #11:** Partner with Caroline County and the Maryland State Department of Transportation (MDOT) - State Highway Administration (SHA) to promote Ridgely in regards to the benefits from Scenic and Historic Byway designations.

**RECOMMENDATION #12:** Work with Caroline County to explore ways to provide local funding to assist with heritage preservation, neighborhood revitalization, and tourism in Ridgely and other municipalities.

# Chapter 8 Transportation

The efficient and effective movement of people and goods is an important concern in any community's growth plan. Providing a safe and efficient transportation network with minimal disruption can sometimes be difficult to achieve. It requires that transportation planning be closely coordinated with other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. This assures that transportation plans and policies complement and promote other elements.

## BACKGROUND

The Town of Ridgely is located near the border between Queen Anne's and Caroline Counties along MD Routes 480 and 312. The primary transportation route near Ridgely is MD Route 404 (Shore Highway), which connects with U.S. Route 50 in Maryland and U.S. 13 in Delaware. Shore Highway is a major arterial route for the region. Minor routes serving Ridgely include Cow Barn, Log Cabin, Racetrack, Hog Lot, Ninetown, and Mason Branch Roads. As the control of transportation systems is divided among the State, Caroline County, and the Town of Ridgely, managing transportation facilities to ensure adequate capacity will require coordination and cooperation among these various levels of government.

Rural routes exhibit scenic characteristics in the Ridgely area. Ridgely also serves as a central location for local land uses including agriculture, surface mining, and proximity to the Mid-Shore Regional Landfill. Each of these land uses, combined with municipal traffic, contributes to increased vehicular volumes on highways, streets, and roads. Impacted areas include MD Routes 480 and 312. Truck traffic from mining operations and the regional landfill will place future burdens on municipal roads and streets, including Main Street in Ridgely's Historic Core (MD Route 312/Central Avenue). Alternatives, including a Ridgely Bypass, could be planned to lessen traffic related impacts from these County activities.

### GOAL & OBJECTIVES

#### **GOAL:**

Provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods and encourage regional and local coordination of transportation decisions.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

Improve the transport of people and goods along MD Route 404 (Shore Highway) and major collector systems;

Improve safety for motorists by controlling access along State and County roads;

Ensure development of appropriate vehicle and pedestrian circulation systems to serve designated growth areas and greenbelts;

Minimize the need for extensive capital investment in upgrading County roads outside of designated growth areas and greenbelts;

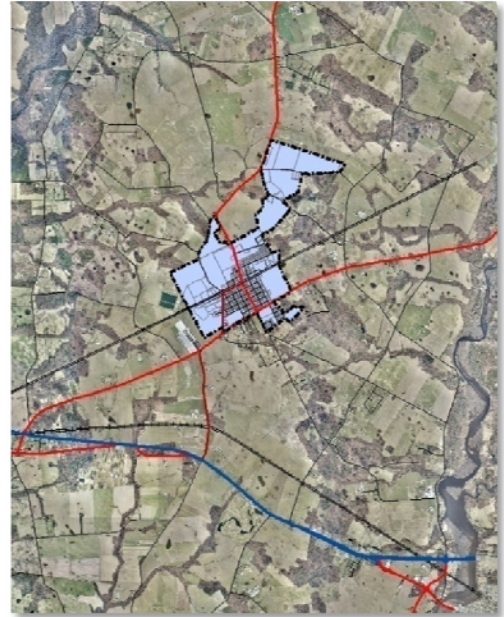
Encourage the location of jobs close to population centers in order to reduce vehicle miles of travel; and

Provide for alternative modes of travel, where appropriate, within designated growth areas and greenbelts such as pedestrian and bicycle routes.

## LOCATION & ACCESS

Ridgely is located on Maryland's Eastern Shore in the western portion of Caroline County, Maryland. Caroline County borders Dorchester, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties in Maryland and Kent and Sussex Counties in Delaware.

Major arterials for the region include MD Rt. 404 (Shore Highway), U.S. Route 50, and U.S. Route 13 in Delaware. Primarily, Ridgely is served by MD Rt. 404 and U.S. Rt. 50. State roads, which link to these arterials, include MD Rt. 480 and 312. Urban areas near Ridgely are Dover, Delaware; Annapolis, Maryland; Baltimore City, Maryland; and the District of Columbia (Washington DC). Other nearby metropolitan areas includes Wilmington, Delaware; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and New York, New York.



The nearest metropolitan areas are Annapolis, Maryland and Dover, Delaware. These urban areas represent potential places of employment for Town residents. The Town is centrally located on the Eastern Shore being approximately equal distance from the capital of Maryland (Annapolis) and the capital of Delaware (Dover). According to "Map Quest," approximate travel times and distances to large metropolitan centers are as follows:

- Dover, Delaware is 47 minutes and 31 miles;
- Annapolis, Maryland is 51 minutes and 41 miles;
- Baltimore City, Maryland is 1 hour and 19 minutes and 67 miles;
- Washington DC is 1 hour and 26 minutes and 70 miles;
- Wilmington, Delaware is 1 hour and 26 minutes and 71 miles;
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is 2 hours and 102 miles; and
- New York, New York is 3 hours and 26 minutes and 188 miles.

The existing State highway system provides for easy connections to higher order roads that access metropolitan, such as US Routes 50, 301, and 13. Ridgely is within easy driving distance of major metropolitan centers in Delaware and on the western shore of Maryland. Access to metropolitan areas will be enhanced when MD Route 404 is dualized. The closest regional cities include Dover and Wilmington, Delaware; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Annapolis and Baltimore, Maryland; and Washington D.C., all located within 1 to 3 hours driving time.

## TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM INVENTORY

The arterial system is MD Rt. 404 (Shore Highway), which bi-sects Caroline County from East to West connecting with Federal highways in Maryland (US 50) and Delaware (US 13). A major collector system of State maintained “feeder” highways connects to MD Route 404 and includes MD Routes 480 and 312. County maintained roads and Town streets form the minor collection system, branching from State arterial and collector routes. The Comprehensive Plan’s classification system of roads includes the following:

**TABLE 8-1: HIGHWAY & ROAD STATISTICS  
WEST CAROLINE COUNTY REGION**

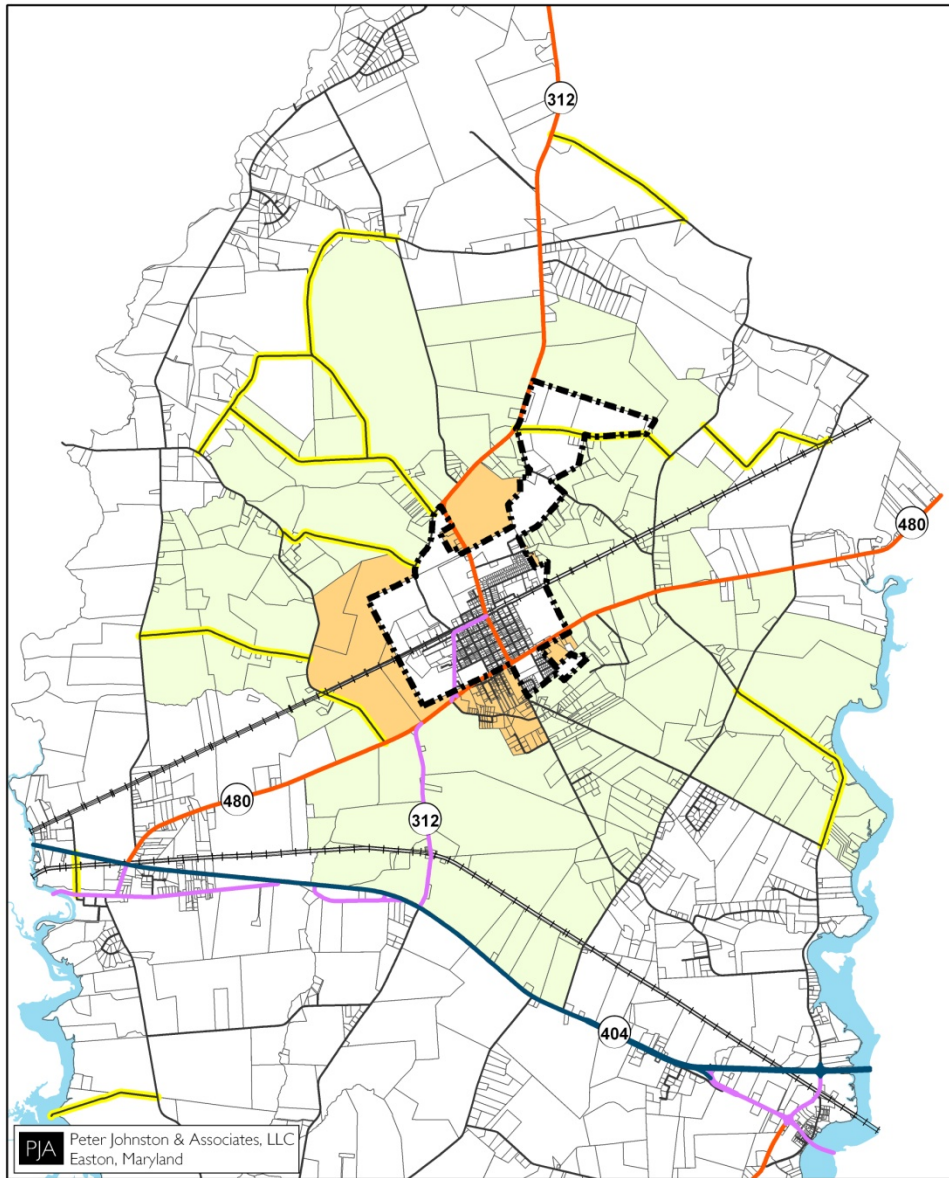
Classification	Miles	% of Total
Other Principal Arterial	6.95	5%
Major Collector	18.45	13%
Minor Collector	6.82	5%
Local Roads/Streets	107.68	77%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>139.90</b>	<b>100%</b>
Ridgely Streets	13.36	N/A
Unpaved Roads	18.57	N/A
Paved Roads	89.11	N/A

\*Note: Town streets include some State Highways and Caroline County Roads.

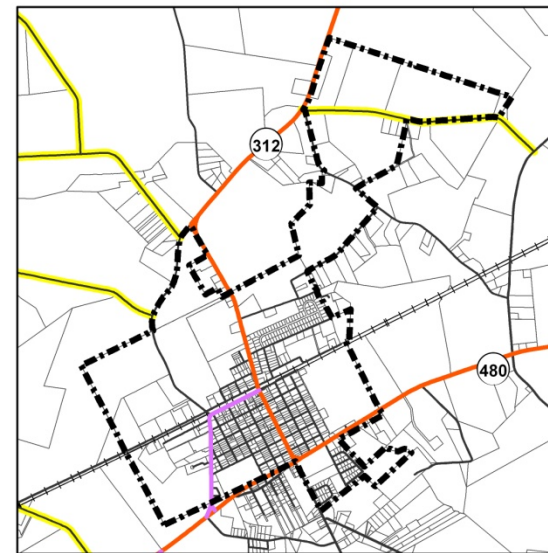
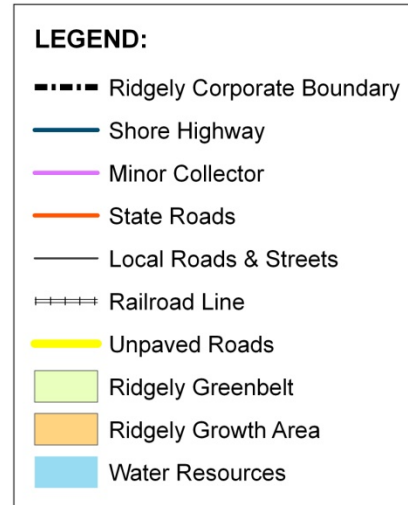
- **Arterial Road:** A primary major road that carries heavy traffic volume between towns, major communities, or other counties.
- **Major Collector Road:** A road providing access to properties. In addition, a major collector road moves moderate traffic volume between neighborhoods, areas of major development, or from one area to another.
- **Minor Collector Road:** A road providing access to properties. In addition, a minor collector road collects light traffic from, or distributes to, a series of roads in a neighborhood.
- **Local Roads/Streets:** A road intended to serve and provide access to properties that is locally controlled. A local road does not carry through traffic.
- **Commercial and Industrial Road:** A road that primarily provides access to commercial and industrial areas.

As shown on Map 8-1, the defined study region for the Transportation Chapter is the western portion of Caroline County, where the Town of Ridgely is located. The highway and road system serving this area totals approximately 140 miles. The major and minor collector systems include approximately 25 miles of State highways maintained by SHA. The highway system also includes 7 miles of arterial highway (MD Route 404-Shore Highway), which is maintained by the State. Arterial highways carry a high volume of intra-county traffic, providing access to and from higher-level arterial roads such as U.S. Route 50.

The major collector system serves travel needs and provides access to lower order County and Town roads, which provide direct access to properties. The local roads/streets system includes approximately 108 miles of roads maintained by the County and Ridgely. Town streets are the lowest order in the road system. The primary function of County roads and Town streets is to provide access to properties. Ridgely roads and streets total approximately 13 miles. Local roads and streets in the area include the following key roads: Tuckahoe, Reed, Log Cabin, Willow Pond, Saulsbury, Sawmill, Crouse Mill, Ninetown, Sparks, Eveland, Cow Barn, Racetrack, Holsinger Lane, Hog Lot, River, Mason Branch, Dean, and Marble Head. Several municipal road connections exist for Ridgely within the State and County system. Ridgely roads include MD Routes 480 and 312, which bisect the Town. County roads serving Ridgely include Central Avenue, Seward Road, Holsinger Lane, and Sunset Boulevard, which connects to Cow Barn Road



**MAP 8-1: RIDGELY CLASSIFICATION  
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**



## TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & PROGRAMMING

For most of this century, the primary responsibility for transportation has rested with Caroline County and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT). Limited public transportation is currently available, provided by an Eastern Shore non-profit agency, which provides transportation to commercial and employment centers in Caroline and nearby counties. This transportation element may expand as Ridgely continues to grow. Although private vehicle traffic is currently not an issue for Ridgely, there is the potential that this will not remain the situation in the future. This is especially true as projected growth occurs in Ridgely and the surrounding countryside. There are currently good connections to major metropolitan areas in Maryland and in Delaware and Pennsylvania.

Local heavy truck traffic continues to rise within the community of Ridgely. Some of this is generated by local businesses. However, a significant portion is generated by through trucks hauling sand and gravel from nearby quarries and even more traffic is envisioned with the planned location of the Mid-Shore Regional Landfill at the Holly Road Transfer Site in 2011 and the planned development of a Business Technology Park at the nearby Ridgely Airpark.

The number and size of trucks coming through Ridgely has increased dramatically over the past few years. Some of this truck traffic has been generated by increases at local commercial and industrial operations in and around Ridgely. Although, most of the trucks use Central Avenue for portions of their travel, a significant percentage also use Sunset Boulevard and Railroad or Belle Streets as parts of their routes. This has caused some concern among the residents and commercial business owners along the truck routes. Because these are State routes, Ridgely does not have the authority to limit access on those roads. Efforts have been put forth to securing a traffic light or control signal at the intersection of Central Avenue and Route 480. The industrial and commercial areas near that intersection generate significant traffic at shift changes and during morning and evening rush hours. Accordingly, there can be some difficulty experienced by drivers in trying to cross either of those two streets or in making a turn onto one of those two streets.

Major transportation issues identified by Ridgely are as follows:

- Ensuring that the Town's historic grid and alley system is incorporated in new development to provide for a logical extension of the historic core and create a cohesive community;
- Future improvements to MD Route 404 including highway dualization as well as major collectors including MD Routes 480 and 312;
- Defined need for planning and feasibility studies for a proposed Ridgely By-Pass to

accommodate regional commercial truck traffic, particularly in regards to the planned Landfill;

- Defined need for planning and feasibility studies for railroad right-of-ways in relation to tourism facilities and trail head connections;
- Lack of appropriate overall transportation design standards for arterial and major collector systems as well as designated Growth Areas;
- Poor control of visual impacts for gateway corridors and scenic routes (on State and County roads), such as appropriate road-side buffers, development of rural design guidelines for new development, improved and attractive signage and landscaping; and
- Limited access controls especially along the arterial and major collector system including the negative impacts caused by excessive curb cuts and strip development along highways.

## **TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

The Transportation Plan includes recommendations to increase route choices by providing for additional access such as the proposed Ridgely By-Pass (See Map 8-2). The Pedestrian Plan includes recommendations to improve pedestrian connectivity to activity centers such as the Ridgely greenway/trail (e.g., the Town Center and Central Business District). Route choice and pedestrian mobility should apply in the Growth Area.

### **Transportation Network**

The Town of Ridgely has responsibility for the streets within the Town limits. Technically labeled local access or collector streets, they provide local access to the state routes and to essential services located in the industrial and commercial zones of the town. They also provide interior access to the entire community. In addition to its system of paved streets, Ridgely also maintains a system of alleyways. Located at the rear of the building lots and between the local access streets, these alleys provide a valuable service. They are trash pickup points. They also help to keep garages and car storage sheds behind the main buildings. In addition, they are convenient access points for underground pipes and utility wires. By having such services under the alleys rather than under the paved streets, the repair of these services does not require that the roads be torn apart for the repair. This makes the repair work faster and less expensive.

In addition to working to separate truck traffic from private passenger vehicle traffic, Ridgely should also develop a method to encourage pedestrian traffic and the use of bicycle ways within the community's street/road network. The existing sidewalk system serves this purpose to a considerable extent; although a number of sidewalks within the community require repair or replacement. However, there are no designated bicycle paths within the community or on adjacent highways. Ridgely should work with the Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources, the Caroline County Commissioners, and the Caroline County Department of Public Works to provide means for alternate transportation that will permit the free flow of traffic and enable non motorized



transportation to flourish. In particular, the conversion of the Chesapeake Railroad roadbed to a biking and hiking path should continue to be explored and pursued in the Town and in County areas. Additionally, new commercial and industrial conversions and new construction and new residential developments should be encouraged to provide for the safe travel of bicycles and pedestrians and for the safe stowage of bicycles.

Ridgely should adopt road, sidewalk, and pedestrian passage standards that are consistent with those of Caroline County and the State of Maryland. Not only will this ensure that these facilities are properly constructed and maintained, it will also ensure that any potential programs administered by other governments might also apply to Ridgely.

Important transportation policy objectives include following:

1. Maintain the current street widths, sidewalks, and plantings in the established part of Ridgely and extend those widths and amenities into new development. In addition, it is important that the alley system be maintained in the existing community and be included as a part of subdivisions and new development that occurs as part of an extension of the village core of Ridgely;
2. Maintain and develop a road network that encourages the separation of pedestrian and bicycle traffic from regular street traffic. In addition, that same road system should encourage the separation of heavy commercial and industrial traffic from private vehicle traffic but without having a negative impact of existing or potential industrial or commercial development in Ridgely; and
3. Maintain Ridgely as a community that is friendly to pedestrian and bicycle traffic by the encouragement of walkways and bicycle paths throughout the community and through provisions for the safe and secure parking of bicycles at commercial and institutional establishments.

### **Grid & Alley System**

Except in some of the newer subdivisions in Ridgely, all of the streets follow a traditional grid pattern that was “laid out” when the town was surveyed and platted in 1867. The only major exception is Sunset Boulevard. This collector road basically angles away from MD Route 480 on the west end of Ridgely and connects to Railroad Street.

The grid pattern of the local streets is an important asset to the community. Coupled with the extensive alley system, they provide an aesthetic appearance that the community is anxious to retain and to extend to the undeveloped sections of Ridgely. Accordingly, as new development occurs on vacant land within Ridgely, the current grid pattern will be imposed on the new sections. This will help to integrate the new sections into the established community and will not create artificial barriers between the older and newer sections of Ridgely.

It is Ridgely's express policy that when new streets are constructed, they should continue the pattern of the existing streets and should include alleyways in residential neighborhoods. The current sidewalk retrofit program should be continued so as to ensure that all residential sidewalks are maintained in good repair.

### **Pedestrian Systems**

Ridgely sidewalks total approximately 5 acres, dispersed throughout the Town. Conceptual sidewalks in Ridgely total an additional 8 acres. Sidewalks are provided in only few areas of "Old Town" because of low traffic volumes and resident sentiments that have inclined Town officials to forego capital projects that add sidewalks to local streets. Sidewalks are or will be more prevalent in new subdivisions.

Within the older sections of Ridgely, all of the streets have curbs and sidewalks. These important transportation corridors should be made a permanent feature of all of the streets in Ridgely and in all planning districts and zoning classifications. All new developments planned for Ridgely and all new buildings erected on existing and plated lots should be constructed with sidewalks. The curbs and sidewalks should conform to those base standards developed for such constructions as incorporated in the Town of Easton *Standard Details for Public Works* as adopted by the Town of Ridgely. This will ensure a consistent method and type of construction throughout the community.

In addition to working to separate truck traffic from private passenger vehicle traffic, Ridgely should also develop a method to encourage pedestrian traffic and the use of bicycle ways within the community. The existing sidewalk system serves this purpose to a considerable extent. In addition, sidewalks should be required with all new construction in so far as practicable, as well as designated bicycle paths. Ridgely should work with the Maryland Department of Transportation and the Caroline County Department of Public Works to provide means for alternate transportation that will permit the free flow of traffic and enable non motorized transportation to flourish.

### **Responsible Agencies & Entities**

The primary agency responsible for implementing transportation improvements in Caroline County and the Ridgely area is the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT). MDOT meets with local officials each year to review capital project priorities in the County. These projects are then programmed in the MDOT's six year "Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP)." Much of the local contact with MDOT occurs through the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) local office in Denton, Maryland. Transportation for regional local roads and streets is the responsibility of the various public works departments in Caroline County and the Town of Ridgely.

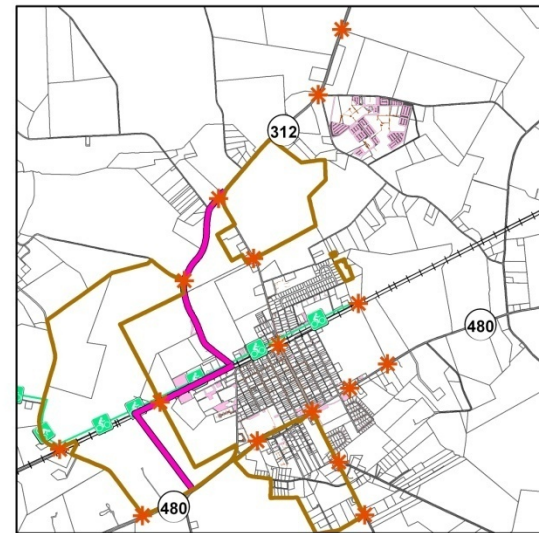
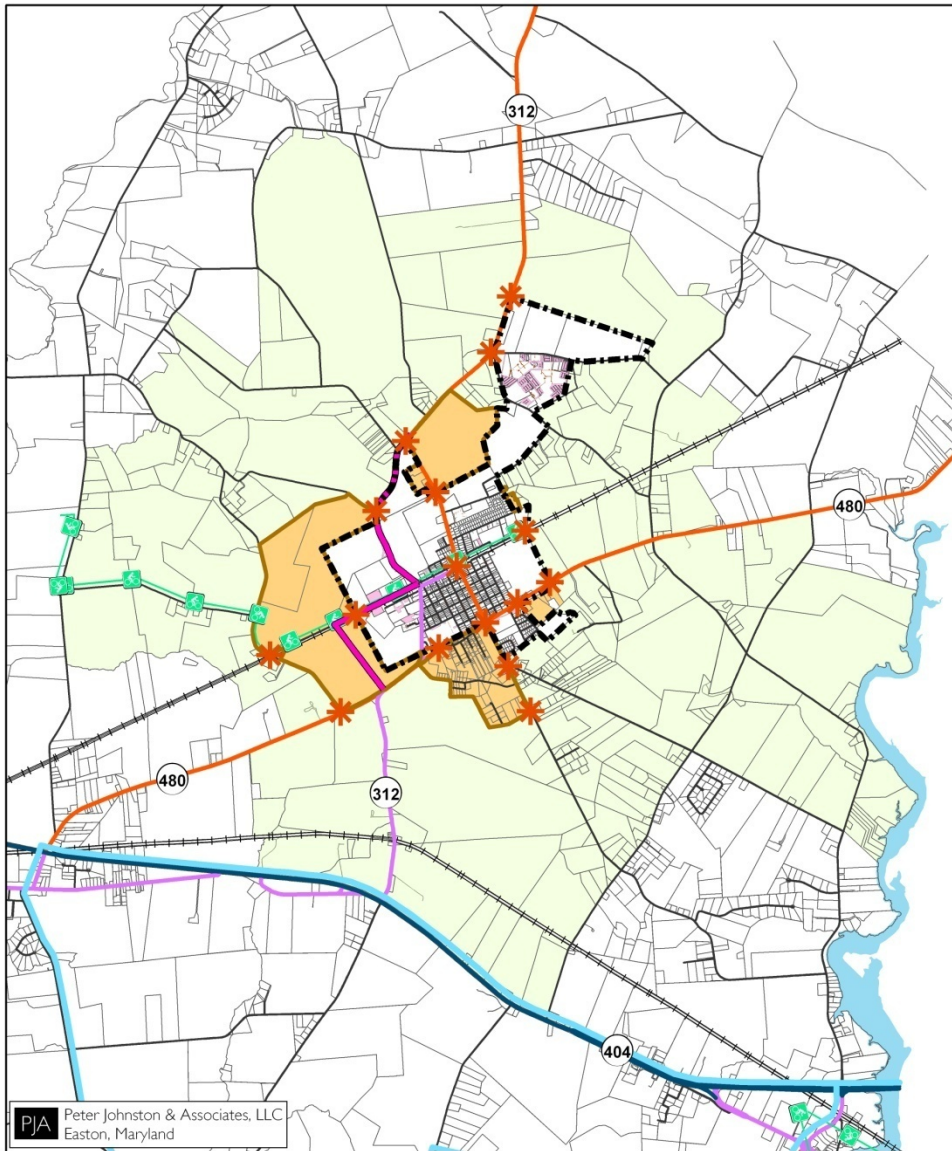
## **MD Route 404 Improvements**

With the increase in traffic volume for MD Route 404 (Shore Highway), the highway requires major improvements to ensure safety. MD Route 404 begins in Wye Mills, Maryland and runs to the Delaware line (approximately 25 miles). MD Route 404 traverses Caroline, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties. MDOT and SHA have planned the dualization of MD Route 404 to provide a major arterial connection to US Route 50 in Maryland and US Route 13 in Delaware. Every county in Maryland has a dualized major arterial connection except Caroline County.

Traffic congestion problems have escalated as travel to beach resort areas has grown. In 2002, traffic volumes indicate 16,700 vehicles per day during non-vacation months and 21,700 vehicles per day during the vacation season. The primary reason for traffic volume escalation is through traffic for shore points in Maryland and Delaware. By 2025, SHA has projected an increase in volume to 22,400 vehicles per day for non-seasonal months and 27,700 vehicles per day for seasonal months. Impacts include increased vehicular accidents (safety concerns) and a limiting effect for the efficient movement of people and goods on the major collection system.

Current SHA plans call for the dualization of MD Route 404 to a 4-lane divided highway from US 50 to the MD Route 16 near Denton (approximately 12 miles). Coordination includes Caroline, Queen Anne's and Talbot Counties. Current efforts are focusing on dualization on the East-side of Denton from the Denton by-pass to MD Route 16 (Denton/Preston Road).

MAP 8-2: TRANSPORTATION PLAN



PJA Peter Johnston & Associates, LLC  
Easton, Maryland

## **Transit**

Delmarva Community Services Inc. (DCS) provides limited public transit in the region. According to the *2000 Transportation Development Plan for Caroline, Kent, and Talbot Counties*, a report prepared for the predecessor provider, the region demonstrates a need for transportation services for disadvantaged residents.

## **Underground Railroad Scenic-Byway**

The *Underground Railroad Scenic By-Way Corridor Management Plan* (Corridor Management Plan), in coordination with Caroline and Dorchester Counties, SHA, and the Maryland Office of Tourism Development, focuses on the rich heritage in the area regarding the Underground Railroad, the Civil War, and the Eastern Shore's prominent African-American history and culture. Primarily located along MD Routes 16 and 313 in Caroline County, the Scenic By-Way also includes a loop portion of MD Route 404.

As shown on Map 8-2, the route is approximately 17 miles and follows Shore Highway to Hillsboro then it follows Tuckahoe Road to Reed and Willow Pond Roads, reconnecting with MD Route 404 in West Denton at the Maritime Museum Visitor Center. This route links Harriet Tubman's history with the Underground Railroad to Frederick Douglas, the great advocate of slavery emancipation and architect of the Underground Railroad.

The Corridor Management Plan provides comprehensive planning to preserve and enhance these rich historical, cultural, and scenic qualities. The eventual goal is classification in the Federal Highway System as a National Scenic By-Way. The Underground Railroad Scenic By-Way qualifies for this classification given the prominence of national history. The Federal classification also provides the County with numerous funding and assistance opportunities to promote heritage preservation and tourism.

## **Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development**

Economic development trends indicate that the Eastern Shore region is becoming a service and tourism based economy. This includes heritage tourism as well as eco-tourism, the enjoyment of natural amenities such as local rivers and creeks. Therefore the strengthening of historic, cultural, natural, and scenic qualities is essential for promoting tourism.

Investing in tourism initiatives, such as the Ridgely Greenway to Adkins Arboretum, provides valuable links for potential tourists to experience important elements of the County's national history. However, the development of each of heritage initiative can provide a link to build a critical mass of tourism destination sites. Many areas in the region, such as Chestertown and Easton, are experiencing reinvigorated economies due to tourism.

Transportation related initiatives for heritage preservation and tourism near Ridgely include the following:

1. Providing visitor services in key locations, including the Maritime Museum Visitor Center in West Denton and Adkins Arboretum in Tuckahoe State Park;
2. Enhancing highway and road connections to visitor center locations for enhanced tourism services, including potential upgrades to Eveland, Sawmill, and Bell Roads; and
3. Providing a pedestrian, bicycle, and trail connections from Ridgely to Adkins Arboretum (via Sawmill to Bell Roads); and

The creation of linkages via highways, roads, and trails provides tourists an opportunity to experience Caroline County's rich rural heritage. It also provides valuable economic development components for building a tourism-based economy. As shown on Map 8-2, a Ridgely connection to Adkins Arboretum and Tuckahoe State Park can supply a valuable amenity for the new Ridgely Business & Technology Park, assisting in the enticement of new businesses. Connections to tourism facilities and services also provide Town and County residents with useful amenities. These important initiatives should be examined in detail.

Sawmill Road currently maintains a 30 foot road right-of-way. Therefore, bicycle and pedestrian connections for Adkins and Ridgely via Sawmill Road will require the purchase/donation of additional road right-of-way easements. In addition Sawmill Road will require paving if a paved pedestrian trail is planned.

### **Streetscape Improvements and Design Guidelines**

The overall improvement of scenic and aesthetic qualities along arterial and major collector systems is an important economic development and quality of life initiative. Improving the appearance of town streetscapes and rural residential development along major and minor collector systems also is critical.

Street Improvements: Street improvement include increased parking, connectivity to public spaces, improved curb, sidewalks, and gutter systems, as well as street tree plantings, and improving the overall aesthetic appearance of the Town. Technical assistance includes working with SHA for street funding. In addition, the Town is located within a "Certified Heritage Area" under the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) *Heritage Tourism and Preservation Program*. Designation as a Certified Heritage Area provides Ridgely with priority status in State designation for projects.

Rural Design Guidelines: Caroline County should develop design guidelines for rural development. These should include residential, commercial, and industrial uses. Primary application should be along the County's arterial and major collector routes.

The development of Design Guidelines will greatly enhance the appearance of development along the arterial and collector systems. Standards should include appropriate buffering with natural vegetation, adequate location and setbacks for new development to minimize curbcuts, stormwater drainage problems, and pollution. Design Guidelines also include architectural standards to ensure integration with existing rural characteristics for the preservation of important scenic and cultural viewsheds. Design Guidelines should apply to both major and minor subdivisions for new development as well as potential new commercial and industrial sites. Design Guideline criteria should be integrated in the development review process.

Design Guidelines are critical in municipal Growth Areas and Greenbelts to limit the effects of adverse land uses, such as large-scale rural residential development and surface mining. These areas serve as transitional areas from rural to urban and suburban land uses. In addition, the preservation of municipal gateways in Greenbelt areas is an important public initiative for preserving the County's scenic and aesthetic qualities.

### **Ridgely By-Pass**

Ridgely serves as a central location for a many land uses in the region including agriculture, surface mining, and proximity to the Mid-Shore Regional Landfill, planned for Holly Road near the Town. Each of these land uses, combined with municipal traffic flow, contributes to increased vehicular volumes on highways, streets, and roads. Impacted areas include MD Routes, 404, 480 and 312. It also includes Main Street/Central Avenue (MD Route 312), which bi-sects the Town. Commercial truck traffic from mining operations and the regional landfill will place future burdens on municipal roads and streets, especially Main Street in Ridgely's Historic Core. Truck traffic does extract a heavy toll on Ridgely's streets and causes concern for the revitalization of the central business district.

Except for local streets, transportation historically has been managed by Caroline County and the State of Maryland. Heavy truck traffic continues to rise within the community. While some of this is generated by local businesses, a significant portion is generated by through trucks, most notably sand and gravel operations. As stated in the *West Caroline County Comprehensive Plan* a "primary goal is to conserve mineral resources in Caroline County and ensure that mineral extraction industries provide for impacts to public infrastructure and services." Several objectives were defined to accomplish this goal in the Plan and include:

1. Identifying specific mineral resource areas to indicate appropriate areas for mineral extraction;
2. Developing performance and site development standards for surface mining and mineral extraction;
3. Reviewing the feasibility of developing a County-wide mineral extraction tax.

According to public comments in a 2005 "Focus Group" meeting held by Caroline County planning officials, public concerns centered on three major land use and growth management issues for the County. One of those issues was increased surface mining in the West County region:

“Comments from participants indicate the need for more detailed County policies, processes, and regulations regarding surface mining. These include the following: 1) developing professional “Surface Mining & Mineral Extraction Performance Standards” including hours of operation, strict buffering, landscaping standards and maintenance standards; 2) enhancing site mitigation/reclamation with a focus on end-use in the review and approval process; 3) enacting a Mineral Extraction Tax for public compensation for associated impacts; 4) designating appropriate areas for surface mining; and 5) developing a Ridgely Bypass to divert associated commercial truck traffic for surface mining from downtown areas. Several key policy and regulatory considerations are required for surface mining given the County’s increased growth rate. These include:

1. Eliminating surface mining as an accepted land use from designated Growth Areas;
2. Eliminating surface mining as an accepted land use from Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas due to potential impacts on sensitive environmental areas;
3. Developing “Surface Mining Performance and Site Mitigation Standards” to minimize impacts to adjoining land uses and public infrastructure while insuring pre-planning for end-use; and
4. Creating multi-jurisdictional support with surrounding counties and municipalities for the enactment of a Mineral Extraction Tax.”

Ridgely is concerned with surface mining operations located close to town boundaries. This includes increased heavy truck traffic on roads and streets, impacts to Town infrastructure from such heavy truck traffic, and impacts to Town gateways and scenic countryside areas due to surface mining operations and inappropriate buffering. Due to the County’s flat topography, surface mining operations in rural areas are highly visible. Ridgely recommends that Caroline County provide “Mineral Extraction Zones” and develop “Performance Standards,” as stipulated in the West County Plan. The goal should be on preserving scenic rural quality and visual aesthetics. As stated in the Plan, “Performance Standards should apply to both small and large-scale surface mining operations to mitigate potential conflicts. Performance Standards also should include detailed plans for each phase of the surface mine with particular emphasis on pre-planning (buffering, landscaping etc.) and end use (site mitigation/reclamation).”

One potential solution to separate the heavy truck traffic from private vehicle and pedestrian traffic is the creation of a Ridgely bypass. As indicated on Map 8-2, a potential route was determined for a Ridgely Bypass. The route is located on the west side of Town and includes Cow Barn Road/MD Route 312 to MD Routes 480 and 404. The route is approximately 2 miles.

The proposed bypass route for Ridgely is located in the Town’s Growth Area. At a minimum, Ridgely policies and regulations should stipulate that any proposed development within the by-pass route be required to donate easement(s) to the Town during negotiations. A detailed transportation feasibility study of the potential Ridgely By-Pass route is required. Ridgely should seek assistance from Caroline County and the State of Maryland for such an initiative. Any route will require upgrades beyond simple paving. The Town should work cooperatively with Caroline County and State agencies and entities to determine the feasibility of the by-pass route.



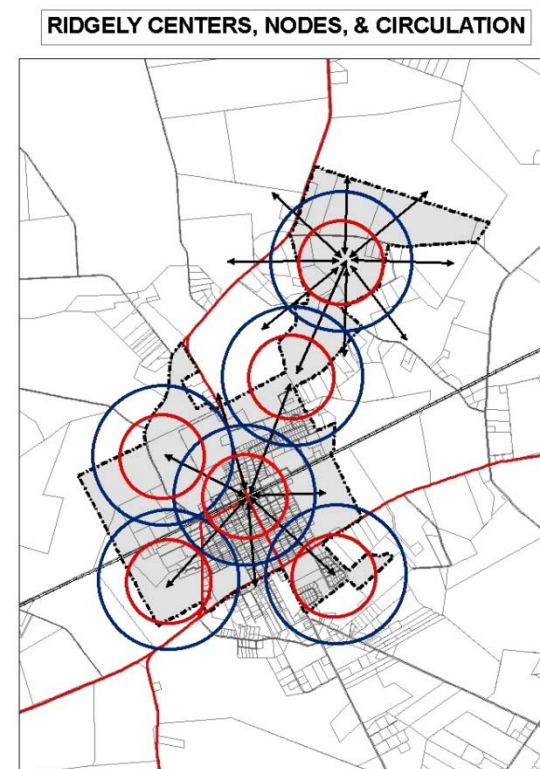
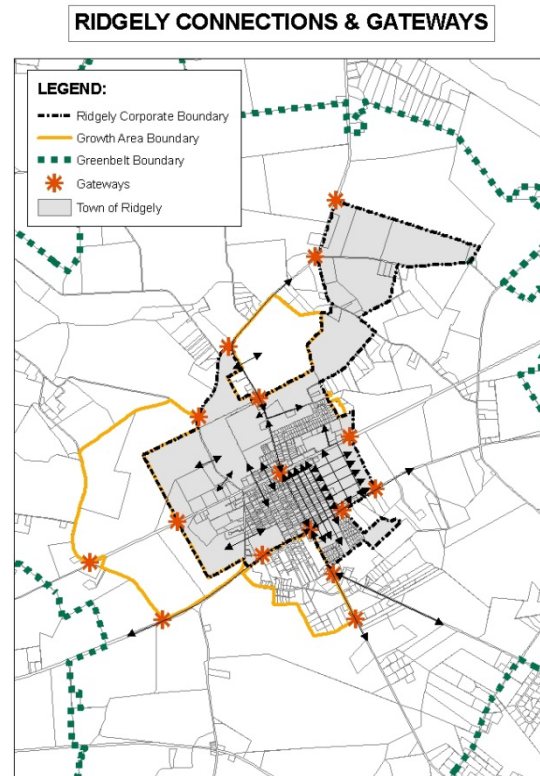
## DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

From a transportation perspective, landmarks in the landscape, whether natural or manmade, provide wayfinding for visitors and residents alike. In Ridgely, these landmarks form gateways to and from the Town. Gateways can be buildings, signs, natural features, etc.

Villages and towns in Colonial New England utilized landmarks for travelers to determine their location. Finding one's way on overland routes not only included maps and compasses but also physical markers that jutted out in the New England landscape, such as church steeples. These taller buildings stood above the tree line and provided markers.

Gateways: Small towns on the Eastern Shore of Maryland share similar characteristics to those in New England. Although, land on the Eastern Shore is relatively flat, local landmarks provide gateways to our small historic towns. In the case of Ridgely, it the grain silos located on MD Route 480, upon entering the Town. It is also the large expanses of open agricultural lands that can be found on all side of the Town, whether entering or exiting.

These gateway areas not only demarcate entrances and exits but also provide identity. As the Town grows, gateway areas also expand when new land is annexed. Gateways in Ridgely have been identified on Map 8-2 and are illustrated in detail on the above figure. In the future, these areas will require special attention and design treatment to ensure that cultural and historical identity is not diminished but rather enhanced. Aesthetic design is important because attractive gateways provide favorable first impressions to visitors. Gateways invite tourists into the Town and provide the setting that makes visitors feel comfortable in their surroundings. Other benefits include resident appeal and an improved tax base.



Linkages/Connections: The following figure to the right describes the central areas of Ridgely and a predefined distance from center to edge. Generally, 800 feet to 1,200 feet is a comfortable walking distance (approximately 10 minutes). The figure provides analysis on where central activities are likely to occur in the Town. They also define specific neighborhood areas for further analysis regarding land use trends, development patterns, and design considerations.

Both gateways and linkages combine to form an integrated and broad design schematic for neighborhood and street connections. Neighborhood linkages are provided from center to edge and center to center (from one neighborhood area to another). This includes areas where neighborhoods overlap, indicating where the Town Center influences surrounding areas and where new development will likely require its own center. In addition, connections also are indicated for Ridgely's street networks. This includes the extension of the Town's traditional grid system or thoroughfare connections, such as parkways, from one neighborhood to another.

With the current high cost of gas and a future national outlook that envisions rising energy costs, pedestrian and bicycle modes of transportation will play a prominent role in planning. Future development patterns may be more like traditional patterns.

## IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Descriptions and other details regarding implementation are contained in Chapter 9 of this Comprehensive Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION #1:** Ensure that new development extends the Town’s grid, alley, and sidewalk systems, where appropriate, and that Town/Developer plans and agreements reflect the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan for such systems.

**RECOMMENDATION #2:** Adopt the Federal Functional Classification System to maintain a balanced system of streets and provide guidelines for redevelopment of existing streets and the construction of new streets.

**RECOMMENDATION #3:** Initiate an Infrastructure & Facilities Plan following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, to provide details regarding infrastructure improvements, transportation networks, the proposed Ridgely Bypass, multi-modal transportation opportunities, and a capital improvements component. Such a Plan can be integrated with the Town’s Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). At a minimum, the Plan should review the following:

- Major Collectors - Traffic capacity for the near future and what street improvements may be warranted. Improvements could include installation of curb, gutter, sidewalks, and bike lanes where none exist including planting space between curb and sidewalk.
- Minor Collectors - Although, existing streets classified as local collectors may not be able to be improved to meet recommended standards, all future minor collectors in Ridgely should conform to standards set forth in the *Ridgely Subdivision Regulations* and other Town standards and specifications.
- Residential Streets - A “Capital Improvements Program” should be undertaken to upgrade existing local streets. Such a program should include installation of sidewalks, curb and gutter, and other streetscape improvements, where feasible. Priority streets for improvements should be detailed. Traffic calming measures should be studied and implemented in key locations.
- New Streets - Infill and redevelopment projects within Ridgely should be required to expand the modified grid street system and connect to other existing streets as appropriate.
- Public Parking – The Land Use Plan emphasizes infill and redevelopment, including development of small-scale retail establishments in the Central Business District. The Town should identify opportunities for public parking.
- Pedestrian & Bike Systems - New and upgraded pedestrian and bike systems should focus on providing safe access to the Town Center, Central Business District, other shopping areas, the Ridgely Elementary School, and parks and recreation facilities in Town.

**RECOMMENDATION #4:** New developments should be required to provide sidewalks, including sidewalks along property frontages as well as bike and pedestrian trails, where feasible and appropriate.

**RECOMMENDATION #5:** Maintain and develop a road network that calms traffic in residential areas and gives appropriate consideration to the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists.

**RECOMMENDATION #6:** Design new streets and sidewalks to fit with existing neighborhoods and facilitate circulation through the community.

**RECOMMENDATION #7:** Improve existing streets with walkways, where necessary, to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle movement. Maryland SHA policy is to make all State routes bicycle compatible to promote alternative modes of transportation, which also includes walking and carpooling. The SHA “Sidewalk Retrofit Program” can assist the Town with multi-modal transportation objectives.

**RECOMMENDATION #8:** Work with appropriate local and State agencies to provide assistance in repairing or reconstructing sidewalks and roads in the community.

**RECOMMENDATION #9:** Evaluate vacant lots to see if they can be used for off-street parking lots, especially near neighborhood commercial uses.

**RECOMMENDATION #10:** Adopt provisions for Ridgely regulations that insure that all future development provides adequate off-street parking.

## Chapter 9 Implementation

The 2009 *Ridgely Comprehensive Plan* is intended to help the Town achieve its vision for the future. It provides a policy basis for a wide variety of actions and development related decisions by both public officials and private landowners. It also provides general guidelines for the local community so that decisions can be properly evaluated against their long-range impacts on the community.

The core chapters of the Comprehensive Plan include the Land Use Plan, Municipal Growth Element, Water Resources Element, and Implementation. The Land Use Plan indicates the proposed or conceptual development pattern of the community, expected through 2030. It is not a detailed blueprint but rather a guide, which can permit the orderly and economical growth of the community. Ridgely's future growth expectations, as expressed in the Municipal Growth and Water Resources Elements, include impacts and limitations on the envisioned development pattern.

The Implementation Chapter is the culmination of analyses contained in the other chapters of this Comprehensive Plan. It provides detailed strategies to actualize goals and objectives. The ultimate purpose is to develop a Comprehensive Plan that can more efficiently address community needs.

### COMMUNITY DESIGN

Facing the prospect of significant future growth, Ridgely is understandably concerned about the impacts of development on existing community character. Planning policies addressing community character must attempt to translate a rather broad and sometimes vague term into more specific public guidance.

In an article entitled *Great Neighborhoods: Places that Stand-Out for their Character, Livability, and Positive Community Feeling*, a survey was conducted to determine the characteristics of a great neighborhood.<sup>1</sup> Respondents cited the following identifiers:

1. Has a variety of functional attributes that contribute to a resident's day-to-day living (residential, commercial, mixed uses);
2. Accommodates multi-modal transportation (pedestrian, bicyclists, drivers);
3. Has design and architectural features that are visually interesting;
4. Encourages human contact and social activities;



**FIGURE 9-1:** Traditional Neighborhood Design-TND or "mixed use" development replicates the historic subdivision patterns of the past, when services needed to be located nearby for convenience, facilitating community interaction.

<sup>1</sup> American Planning Association *Planning Magazine*, January 2008

5. Promotes community involvement and maintains a secure environment;
6. Promotes sustainability and responds to climactic demands; and
7. Has a memorable character.

Protecting and enhancing these qualities in Ridgely is an objective of the Comprehensive Plan. The concepts embodied in “place making,” as guiding principles for a community, are consistent with and reflective of these public sentiments. Because the scale of new development in the Town will strongly influence the look and feel of Ridgely tomorrow, establishing guidance for development design is important.

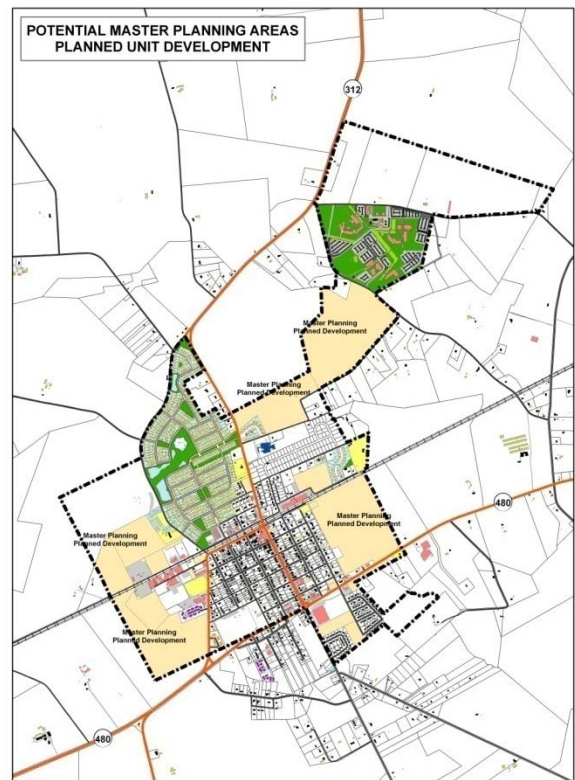
### DESIGN GUIDELINES AS PLACE MAKING PRINCIPLES

Ridgely favors planned projects that relate well to their surroundings. Instead of subdivisions, the Town encourages projects that result in new neighborhoods, which will fully integrate into the existing physical and social fabric of the Town. Some precedent has already been established for design guidance including the *Ridgely Design Guidelines* and a master plan concept for a traditional neighborhood development in the norther portion of Town. In order to further achieve this end, the Town should judge the quality of new development based on the following place-making principles:

**Character:** Place making should respond to the existing natural and developed features of the environmental context. A place that enhances the distinctive local landscape and sense of place and history, while also providing a quality living environment will establish a rich environmental character unique to its locality.

**Continuity and Enclosure:** The form and fabric of a place defines the living environment and establishes a hierarchy of both public and private spaces, providing clarity of function and movement.

**Quality of the Public Realm:** Good urban design provides a sense of well being and amenity by ensuring recognition of the natural context and the functional requirements of the community as well as responding with public spaces and routes that are lively and pleasant to use.



**FIGURE 9-2:** The Ridgely Park project was a planned mixed use community in Ridgely. The development proposal was withdrawn in 2009. However, the master plan concept for the site provides a good basis for master planning large infill areas in the Town currently cited in the Land Use chapter of this Comprehensive Plan for Planned Unit Development.

Ease of Movement: Ease of movement for residents and visitors is reinforced by consideration of connectivity and permeability.

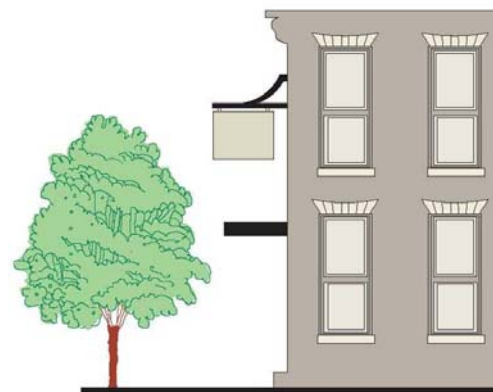
Legibility: Legibility principles establish an understanding of place and way-finding for residents and visitors. A discernable planned structure ensures that the living environment has a clear image and is easy to understand.

Adaptability: Provisions for changing lifestyles and community needs enhances the future social and economic sustainability of a community. Adaptable space provides for flexible uses, gradual change, where buildings and areas adapt to a variety of present and future uses, including the reuse of historic buildings and spaces.

Diversity: Diversity of space and function provides a range of experience and choice. This can be achieved through a different functions and land uses such as a broad cross section of the community and its cultural values, a variety of built forms and development character, and opportunities for biodiversity.

The following general guidance further clarifies the Town’s expectation for the design of new neighborhoods:

- Natural features and site constraints should suggest natural “common-sense” design solutions. This includes designing with nature, not fighting, controlling, or dominating natural and ecological processes;
- The automobile should not be the dominant force that dictates the layout and design of residential communities. New residential streets should be as narrow as possible to discourage fast moving through traffic, well-landscaped with shade trees, and recognized as the principal public spaces that they are. In view of their visual and functional importance; thought, deliberation, and investment in landscape and streetscape design should be evident;
- Landscaping should be included in common open spaces. Landscaping should provide shade, shelter from wind, and visual screens or buffers from unsightly elements on adjoining properties such as parking lots, loading areas, dumpsters, or utility structures. Landscaping can also provide wildlife habitat and linkages to forested and natural areas, greenways, and walking paths;



**STORE-FRONT SIGN EXAMPLES**

- Parking should not be a dominant site feature. Parking areas should be small scale, highly landscaped, attractive and inviting. Whenever possible, it is better to give preference to green space over asphalt and paved parking. This also assists in achieving the Town’s water quality objectives;
- Signage should be informative without being intrusive. Signs should not dominate the visual landscape. Signs should be compatible with their purpose. Signs should be clear, concise, and as small as reasonably possible to enhance aesthetics;
- Architecture and styles proposed should be in keeping with the best building types and styles that have evolved in the Ridgely region, albeit taking advantage of new building material and techniques associated with “green building”. The Town should strongly encourage traditional designs and materials so that new developments blend seamlessly with the old. Modern materials and layouts need not conflict with the character of Ridgely, if developers and builders are sensitive to the overall appearance of their creation;
- The views of a site and from a site should be clearly considered by developers and addressed.



**FIGURE 9-3:** Ridgely’s Victorian architecture is an important component of the Town’s character.

Large-scale development projects should be designed to achieve the following characteristics:

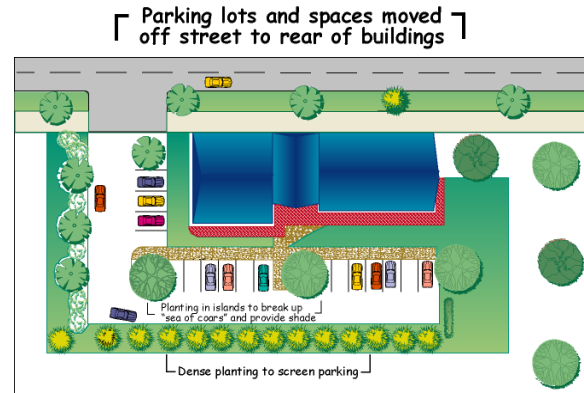
- ❖ Architectural harmony, including compatibility in styles, materials, colors, and building size and setbacks;
- ❖ Variety in housing types, density, and cost;
- ❖ Parks, squares, and other common open spaces for residents to interact and recreate, and to provide a setting for the architecture of the development;
- ❖ Neighborhood centers and civic spaces, which, depending on the scale of the development, can include places to shop, work, learn, or worship;
- ❖ An interconnected street system, which is based on a modified grid system;
- ❖ Sidewalks, street trees, and substantial on-street parking, providing distinct separation between pedestrians and traffic;
- ❖ Streets and sidewalks that are spatially defined by buildings in a regular pattern, unbroken by parking lots;
- ❖ Traffic calming, including more narrow streets with shorter turning radii than suburban streets, and medians, circles and related features along prominent streets;
- ❖ Lighting which is designed for safe walking and signage which has a pedestrian orientation; and
- ❖ A system of land subdivision and development which links one neighborhood to another and can logically be extended.



## ACCESS, CIRCULATION, & PARKING DESIGN

The layout of access and circulation systems in new developments must balance the mobility, safety and other needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic. Achieving this end requires more than simply complying with street standards and specifications. Successful design of access, circulation, and parking systems in new developments requires considerable effort.

Streets may be the most important public spaces in neighborhoods. Streets must be thought of as an integral part of the overall design of communities. Interconnected streets encourage people to walk by providing a variety of route options. Small blocks encourage people to walk by maintaining a human scale environment. A fine-grained system of streets, pedestrian ways, and bicycle routes helps disperse traffic and reduce congestion. Multiple streets provide opportunities to connect new neighborhoods with old neighborhoods. Pedestrian walkways, bicycle lanes, and other amenities enhance the desirability of walking and bicycling.



**FIGURE 9-4:** In planned mixed use areas, parking and utilities should be located in the rear of the building, whether commercial or residential, to present the building façade to the street, which improves visual aesthetics and traffic circulation.

New development design should be based on a modified grid system, consisting of a simple and logical hierarchy of streets that contributes to the sense of place and helps orient people. Every lot should be afforded a reasonable means of ingress and egress for emergency vehicles and property access. No direct driveway access should be provided onto an existing or planned major collector street from a residential lot. Vehicles should be able to enter and exit without posing any substantial danger to themselves, pedestrians, or vehicles traveling on abutting streets. This includes interfering with the free and convenient flow of traffic on abutting or surrounding streets.

Alleys provide opportunities for parking in the rear of housing and contribute to the overall permeability of the road network. Alleys should be considered for all residential neighborhoods. Alleys provide rear access, rear utilities networks, and additional parking areas for commercial uses.

Streets should connect with surrounding streets to permit the convenient movement of traffic between neighborhoods or to facilitate access to neighborhoods by emergency service vehicles or for other sufficient reasons. The street layout should serve the needs of the neighborhood and discourage use by through traffic. At the same time, the layout should provide appropriate vehicular and pedestrian connections between residential neighborhoods and shopping and employment areas.

As shown in this example from the *Kennedyville Village Master Plan* (Kent County, Maryland), the street layout should present an attractive streetscape. An interesting streetscape for pedestrians encourages more people to walk. Buildings should front on the street. Structures, whether residential, commercial, or office, should form a continuous street edge, a vertical wall that contains the street and encloses space. In this regard, most streets need to be designed so that they are usable and frontable. The street layout should permit the safe, efficient, and orderly movement of traffic while meeting the multi-faceted needs of drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists. Street rights-of-way should be adequate to serve all functions including carrying motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic, allowing on-street parking, and serving as a link in the town's drainage system.

When required, parking lots should consist of heavily landscaped small lot segments that are unobtrusive. In commercial areas, parking should consist of ample on-street parking and small lots located to the side or rear of buildings and screened from the main commercial street. Access to parking should be provided from rear driveways where possible. All parking lots should be screened from adjacent residential uses.

The design of circulation systems in all new developments should be consistent with the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan. Proposed new streets should provide for the appropriate extension of existing streets and key links of planned collector roads. The street layout should respect natural features, should relate appropriately to the topography, and be designed to facilitate drainage and storm water runoff.

#### BEFORE

View of existing firehouse parking lot and open space from the north



#### AFTER

Street trees, sidewalks, and storefronts create an inviting downtown-like atmosphere as well as visual interest and sense



The design of residential streets should discourage motorists from traveling above the intended speed and reflect their function in the system hierarchy. In particular, horizontal and vertical alignment should not be conducive to excess speed. Residential streets will be designed to manage the speed and volume of traffic in residential neighborhoods using traffic calming methods that encourage speeds of 25 mph or less. Lower order streets should be less than 1/3 mile in length, so that motorists will have no incentive to speed.

Appropriate facilities for bicycles should be provided at key commercial, civic and recreation locations. To ensure this, the Town Zoning and Subdivision codes should be amended to require non-residential uses to provide bicycle storage/parking facilities to encourage and support this alternative mode of travel.

### DESIGN: “A BRIDGE” TO REGULATORY UPDATES

The Comprehensive Plan is the first step in outlining Town policies that will ultimately be reflected in Ridgely’s regulations. The Comprehensive Plan provides the broad context with which all other plans will be developed. This includes more detailed development plans (master plans), design guidelines, transportation and infrastructure plans, etc. Detailed planning often follows the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

Ridgely’s “Design Guidelines” are an important document, providing public and private entities and individuals alike with an illustrated guide for development and redevelopment expectations in the Town. Design guidelines form a conceptual bridge from planning to implementation. Generally, design policies are developed prior to updating Town ordinances because these guidelines establish a blueprint for future development.



**FIGURE 9-5:** The *Crisfield Strategic Revitalization Plan* followed the City’s Comprehensive Plan, providing master planning for revitalizing the City’s Uptown and Downtown areas. The Plan also includes an economic assessment and policy/regulatory analysis.

As shown in Figure 9-5, Crisfield, Maryland developed a “Strategic Revitalization Plan” following the adoption of its Comprehensive Plan to target specific areas of the City, which are deteriorating.<sup>2</sup> Preparing a strategic revitalization plan with a design component can assist in further defining the community’s vision for new development and redevelopment. It also addresses key issues that may be impacting the community and stifling implementation, such as economics, housing, ineffective policies, inadequate regulations, etc. Developing a detailed plan for the community can provide more certainty for those seeking to invest and/or reinvest in a Town.

<sup>2</sup> *Crisfield Strategic Revitalization Plan*. Prepared by Peter Johnston & Associates, Thomas Point Associates, and John Moynahan Urban Design & Planning in coordination with the City of Crisfield, 2008.

## DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, STANDARDS, & GUIDELINES

In light of possible new development in the future, as well as infill and redevelopment in Ridgely, it is important to ensure that development codes and regulations guide development in a manner that is consistent with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. This includes promoting place-making principles through good design practices. Significant attention and activity should be devoted to reviewing the various land use regulations in the Town. Currently, these regulations may be an impediment to the effective implementation of the policies expressed in this Plan.

At a minimum, the Zoning Ordinance should accomplish the following:

1. Promote, in accordance with present and future needs, the safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of the citizens of Ridgely, Maryland and its environs;
2. Provide for efficiency and economy in the process of development;
3. Require appropriate and best use practices for land, including convenience of traffic and circulation of people and goods, the use and occupancy of buildings, and convenient distribution of population;
4. Foster good civic design and arrangement; and
5. Ensure adequate public services, utilities, and facilities by regulating the location and use of buildings, structures, and land for trade, industry, and residence and regulating and limiting or determining the height and bulk of buildings and structures, the area of yards and other spaces, and the density of use.

### GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Design guidelines

The current *Ridgely Design Guidelines* should seek to achieve consistency with the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan by Ridgely, the Town should review and update its Design Guidelines. This includes incorporating the concepts expressed in the Plan as well as developing a program to ensure broad public involvement. One way to better determine design parameters and solicit community involvement is to prepare a detailed revitalization plan. This includes a designation of the community districts or areas to be examined, interaction with citizens and stakeholders to determine desires, an economic analysis of needs, and a policy and regulatory overview to provide specific actions for the Town.

#### Zoning Regulations

The current Ridgely zoning regulations reflect efforts for zoning designations to match conditions, when they were established in years past and as they change in the present. These regulations should be thoroughly reviewed, updated, and potentially revised to ensure that compatible uses are created consistent with this Comprehensive Plan. Regulations also should ensure that growth and development is properly channeled into appropriate areas.

The specific zoning regulations that deal with lot size and setbacks should be examined to ensure encouragement of the type of village development appropriate to Ridgely. This also will ensure that property owners of existing buildings, rebuilding on small lots commonly found in the older sections of Town, are given the flexibility needed to accomplish infill and redevelopment. In consideration of the need to provide affordable housing, the zoning regulations should permit accessory dwellings, where appropriate and if infrastructure is available.

### **Zoning for Commercial Uses**

Ridgely should develop design guidelines for commercial development. These should include the design of the building, landscaping, parking requirements, lighting, and signage. All such buildings should be compatible with the scale and character of the Town. Great care should be exercised to ensure that the entrances into Ridgely do not deteriorate into an unattractive strip of commercial uses and/or storage facilities. These “gateways” provide the first impressions of the Town to outsiders.

### **Building Character**

The appearance and architectural character of new construction and renovation is a subject that warrants some discussion and guidance. While Ridgely has no intention to legislate style or taste, it recognizes a responsibility to guide the overall appearance of the built environment. Toward that end, the Town wants to ensure that additions to the community complement, blend with, and improve the general attractiveness and appearance of Ridgely.

New construction should take design inspiration from the forms and building masses that are prevalent in the area. Commercial buildings should retain as much of a residential “flavor” as feasible. This can be accomplished in ways such as breaking up the façade of larger buildings to give the appearance of smaller structures that are grouped together, including generous roof pitches (and avoiding flat roofs), and using window, door, and siding details that are similar to styles commonly found in residential construction. Parking should be screened, landscaped, lit with pedestrian scale lighting fixtures, and distributed around the sides and rear of commercial buildings. Ridgely does not want large parking lots that present a “sea of asphalt” in appearance. Shade trees and flowering shrubs should be combined with berms and evergreens to soften both building edges and parking areas.

### **Landscape Standards**

Ridgely should revise its development codes to include appropriate landscape standards. The objective is to ensure that landscaping is used to accentuate the natural and built environment, establish visual connectivity and community identity, and provide environmental and public health benefits. Landscaping is more than just greenery because it is used to “dress up” a place. Landscaping should relate to the overall community structure and protect water quality. Trees will effectively delineate space, highlight focal points, and provide buffer and transitional elements in addition to providing shade. Landscape master plans should be required for all major developments.

## **Environmental Protection**

The Eight Visions for Maryland, as expressed in Article 66B of the Annotated Code, encourage stewardship of the land as a universal ethic. In addition, the Planning Act of 1992 requires the Town to adopt policies for the protection of sensitive environmental areas. The Zoning Ordinance should be reviewed to determine if standards meet expectations for stream buffers, non-tidal wetlands, steep slopes, erodible soils, and the habitats of threatened and endangered species, consistent with State law. In addition, the Town should encourage development design that maintains or enhances green infrastructure, incorporates low impact design through stormwater management techniques for water quality and quantity management. The Town also should encourage LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) technology to promote sustainable building practices, conserve energy, and improve water and air quality.

## **Historic Preservation**

Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland allows local jurisdictions to adopt a Historic District Ordinance and establish a Historic District Commission. The preservation of Ridgely's historic sites and structures is important, both from a community identity and economic perspective. Ridgely may wish to consider a locally-zoned historic district, which is an overlay on the existing zoning ordinance of a specified area. This district, legally allowed by Section 8.01 of Article 66B in the Annotated Code of Maryland, is designed to maintain the visual character of the community. It may allow an appointed Commission to monitor changes, alterations, and demolition of buildings and structures of architectural or historic significance. The main purpose of such zoning is to:

- Safeguard the heritage of Ridgely by preserving the areas of the town that reflect elements of its cultural, social, economic, political or architectural history.
- Stabilize or improve property values in such a District.
- Foster civic beauty.
- Strengthen the local economy.
- Utilize Historic Districts for the education, welfare, and pleasure of the residents of the county or municipal corporation.
- Prevent demolitions and incompatible alterations in a Historic Zone.

It is important to balance historic preservation with energy conservation. Recent Maryland laws call for a reduction in energy consumption, supporting the concepts of "green" construction materials and practical energy-saving methods. These laws should be harmonious with historic preservation initiatives. Not all historic structures require museum-like restoration. In fact, many historic structures serve utilitarian functions, being places for business or worship. Providing a flexible range for use is appropriate. Historic preservation for non-landmark sites and structures should be tempered with the integration of modern and compatible construction methods, particularly the integration of energy-saving materials.

Ridgely should determine which historic structures in Town should receive local landmark status. These structures are integral parts of the Town's identity and should be preserved in a state consistent with their historic character. The Town should review the present Zoning Ordinance, as it relates to historic preservation, and develop public guidelines of acceptable "green" construction materials and practices for non-landmark historic structures.

### **Annexation**

Ridgely's long range growth plan identifies land outside of the corporate boundaries that is planned for annexation in the future. Future annexations must address State laws contained in Article 23A and the additional requirements from Maryland House Bill 1141. Although these properties are not needed to meet the Town's projected growth-related land demand to 2030, the Town has articulated several reasons in the Municipal Growth Element (MGE) of this Comprehensive Plan why annexation is important. As of October 1, 2009, all annexations must be consistent with the Town's MGE. At a minimum, annexations policies should include the following:

1. Require an "Annexation Agreement" be executed between landowner(s) and the Town;
2. Address potential impacts to community facilities and services through appropriate impact studies, including water and sewer, as well as environmentally sensitive areas;
3. Identify development funding responsibilities between identified parties;
4. Outline issues to be addressed in a Developers Rights and Responsibility Agreement (DRRA);
5. Require development form be consistent with the Ridgely Comprehensive Plan, i.e., compact development meeting smart growth density targets.

The long-term development policy for Ridgely strongly embraces the "Eight Visions" that comprise the State's Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Policy. Future development will be in accordance with the principles of Smart Growth. Consequently, the residential development expected in the future should be consistent with the density requirements of the State's Priority Funding Areas and the principles of Smart Growth in general. Development should be planned in a manner that makes efficient use of the land with runoff and other negative impacts minimized.

### **Planned Unit Development (PUD)**

When large parcels of land are annexed, Ridgely should encourage communities that include a mix of uses, providing a full range of opportunities and services. To accomplish this end, the Town should review and update provisions for planned mixed-use communities in the zoning ordinance. PUD provisions apply to large vacant tracts in Town and to annexed land. The PUD ordinance should promote "smart neighborhoods," exhibiting the following characteristics:

- Integrated mix of uses, including residential, commercial, employment/office, civic, and open space;
- Range of housing types and densities;
- Compact design;

- Interconnected streets designed to balance the needs of all users, with sidewalks and on-street parking;
- Density and design of new development should be such that these developments support themselves financially;
- Open spaces integral to the community; and
- Location adjacent to and extending the fabric of existing development.

### **Neighborhood Redevelopment & Revitalization**

The Comprehensive Plan identifies redevelopment areas where the Town wants to encourage appropriate infill and redevelopment. In order to enable this outcome, the Zoning Ordinance will need to include standards and guidelines for infill and redevelopment projects in these designated areas. This can be accomplished through the Town’s “Infill & Redevelopment Overlay Zone” that allows the Ridgely Planning and Zoning Commission to judge the merit of a proposed infill or redevelopment project against design objectives and provide administrative relief for projects that meet established criteria. This Ordinance should be reviewed and updated as appropriate to achieve consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Neighborhood Conservation**

The Comprehensive Plan identifies existing neighborhoods as areas in need of protection. The primary objectives for these areas involve maintaining the existing residential character of the neighborhoods and allowing compatible infill and redevelopment. Particular concerns that should be addressed through appropriate zoning standards and guidelines include:

- Connectivity – appropriate vehicular and pedestrian connections between on-site and off-site transportation systems.
- Circulation – consistency with the area wide vehicular and pedestrian circulation concepts of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Parking – flexible parking requirements.
- Compatibility – essential elements of compatible project design, e.g., design, pattern, alignment, size, and shape.

## **SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Zoning Ordinance**

New zoning provisions should be created to implement the Land Use Plan, including the creation of zoning district standards for the following: Town Center Residential District, Central Business District; Neighborhood Residential District; Highway Commercial District; Business Employment District; Planned Unit Development (PUD) District; and Conservation District.



## 1) LAND USE PLANNING AREAS IN THE REGULATORY CONTEXT

### **Town Center Residential District**

Land Use & Regulation: Land uses in this Planning Area should be limited to detached single family residential and customary accessory uses. Conversion to multi-family use of residential buildings, not specifically designed and intended as multi-family structures, should not be allowed. Because of the historic importance of this Planning Area, the Town should consider adopting a local historic district or adequate local processes to address historic preservation and context sensitive infill and redevelopment. At a minimum, strict appearance and development standards should apply to infill and redevelopment.

The Town Center Planning Area is one of the chief economic assets of Ridgely. It supports the general health, safety, and welfare of the community. For this reason, streamlining current regulations and creating appropriate guidance can promote compatible design as well as reinvestment in the existing built environment. Regarding infrastructure, the Town should consider improvements that increase public access, expand public parking, and improve vehicular and pedestrian safety. Particularly, capital improvements should address issues related to pedestrian and traffic safety to ensure a pedestrian-friendly environment as well as adequate on and off-street parking. Capital investments should focus on infrastructure upgrades including water and sewer and utilities, as well as aesthetic enhancements.

Growth Management Strategy: The growth management strategy for the Town Center is to preserve single-family residential homes and strengthen attractiveness. It also includes the concept of extending the historic core's grid system for nearby planned development areas. This will provide cohesiveness and connectivity. Public investment within the Town Center will emphasize improvements to address traffic, pedestrian safety and circulation, parking, streetscape improvements and aesthetic features, public amenities, enhanced public access, and utilities.

Ridgely should discourage additional single-family home conversions to multi-family dwellings. In addition, the Town should encourage the conversion of existing apartment units back to single-family uses, where appropriate. This is designed, however, to encourage single-family occupancy and not to discourage their use as single-family rental units. Ridgely recognizes that a well-maintained and adequate supply of rental housing is an important asset that allows a diverse population to live within the Town. At the same time, Ridgely should make the conversion of single-family homes into owner-occupied "bed and breakfast" accommodations easier and more economically viable. Presently, there are no overnight hotel/motel or bed and breakfast beds available in the Town.

In order to promote economic development and strengthen revitalization in the Town Center, Ridgely should make it easier to convert existing single-family homes and multi-family housing to home-office uses or other low-intensity home-based businesses. Provisions also should be made for accessory apartments or "granny flats" to be used by family members thus making it easier for property owners to adapt their homes for use by related members of the family that require special care. However, such

accessory uses should not be used as a means of increasing the population density by using former “granny flats” for rental housing by non family members. Strict regulations should be applied to accessory dwellings.

A “Village Overlay Zone” for defined and older portions of the Town of Ridgely (Old Town Village) can provide local guidance and regulations in regards to development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and exterior alterations in the Town Center or to landmark historic sites and structures. The purpose and intent of any overlay zone and ordinance should be “to preserve the patterns of design and development within said Overlay Zone and ensure the preservation of a diversity of land uses, together with the protection of buildings, structures, or areas, the destruction or alteration of which would disrupt the existing scale and architectural character of the Town.” The primary goals and objectives of any overlay zone should accomplish the following:

1. To create compact, identifiable neighborhoods with distinct yet compatible character to the rest of Town.
2. To integrate appropriate details in building design including protection of the village’s architectural massing, composition and styles as well as neighborhood scale and character.
3. To encourage compatibility of new construction and structural alteration with the existing scale and character of surrounding properties.
4. To encourage existing types of land uses that reflect the mixture and diversity of uses that have historically existed in the community.
5. To preserve the village streetscape.

Applicability can include all new construction involving structural alterations and new structures on land in the designated overlay zone. Enforcement applies to new construction and alterations. In addition, it should stipulate that impacts to the street façade and any change of use should be reviewed for compliance by the Ridgely Planning Commission.”

### **Central Business District**

Land Use & Regulation: Development regulations for the CBD should be designed to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) Regulations should encourage and allow for a broad range of uses including businesses, retail sales, services, and offices in existing buildings.
- 2) Development standards for infill and redevelopment in this Planning Area should be flexible for new commercial, business retail, and service uses.
- 3) New single family uses should not be allowed, but at the same time, regulations should not unduly impede redevelopment of existing single family dwellings.
- 4) Residential apartments should only be permitted on the second and third floors of existing businesses.

- 5) Conversion of buildings into apartments should not be allowed, where it preempts first floor non-residential use.
- 6) New multi-family residential structures should not be allowed.

Accommodations such as country inns or bed and breakfasts may be permitted as an adaptive reuse of existing buildings. Infill and redevelopment standards, including height, lot area, and yard requirements should be flexible to encourage appropriate infill and redevelopment. Parking standards also must take into account nearby public parking and allow for alternative parking solutions such as a satellite and shared parking arrangements.

Development standards should encourage infill and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized sites to maintain an attractive diversity but also ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses. This includes utilizing the concepts of adaptive reuse for existing structures and context sensitive infill and redevelopment for vacant and underutilized sites. Adaptive reuse and infill and redevelopment standards will be prepared mindful of the need to find an appropriate balance between historic preservation and sustainable energy and environmental protection policies.

The CBD is the chief economic asset of Ridgely. For this reason, streamlining current regulations, creating flexible development standards, and providing appropriate guidance can promote compatible design as well as reinvestment in the existing built environment. The Town should consider infrastructure improvements to increase public access, expand parking, and improve vehicular/pedestrian safety. Capital improvements should address issues related to safety to ensure a pedestrian-friendly environment and on and off-street parking.

Growth Management Strategy: Much like the adjacent Town Center, it is Ridgely's intent to promote the Central Business District as the primary location for community activity and to strengthen its role as a major determinant of the Town's identity. The growth management strategy for the CBD is to accommodate existing single-family residential homes, while strengthening and promoting neighborhood commercial uses. Public investment will emphasize improvements to address traffic, pedestrian safety and circulation, parking, streetscape improvements and aesthetic features, public amenities, and enhanced public access. Capital investments should focus on infrastructure upgrades including water and sewer and utilities upgrades.

An additional growth management strategy for the CBD is to support and promote neighborhood commercial uses. Historically, the CBD has been the primary location for commercial uses catering to residents and visitors. The purpose of this Planning Area is to protect the downtown business district by preserving the historic character and ensuring it continues to function as a center of commerce. This includes actions for the continued viability of the CBD as a pedestrian-oriented commercial center.

Ridgely should support retention of existing commercial uses and buildings as well as limiting the conversion of existing commercial structures to non-commercial uses. If residential conversion occurs, it should be relegated to second and third story areas only, maintaining the first floor for commercial use.

Design objectives and incentive-based processes can assist to maintain and/or enhance the existing architectural character.

Parking is always a prime consideration within commercial areas. Currently, on-street parking is the primary method used within this planning area. When the existing commercial properties were historically constructed, off-street parking was not a requirement or a necessity because of the smaller number of automobiles in private hands. However, it is a pressing concern in most communities and it will be in Ridgely in the years to come.

Currently, only a few businesses have enough land to provide off-street parking. As commercial development continues within the CBD, every effort should be made to provide for a mix of on-street and off-street parking. However, Ridgely should not encourage the removal of buildings for the creation of off-street parking. Rather, creative solutions should be sought through the use of flexible zoning regulations that encourage the use of on-street parking for customers and rear lot off-street parking for owners and employees. Because many of the existing lots within the CBD are very deep and the buildings tend to be closer to the street, there is usually ample room for off-street parking in the rear of lots, which are accessible through the well-developed alley system that exists in the Town.

Past public efforts have been made to revitalize and protect the businesses and buildings within the CBD. They have included sidewalk replacement, financial incentives arranged through the State of Maryland, and local enforcement of building codes and other regulations to ensure buildings are maintained and in good condition. Ridgely should encourage owner and investor interest in the CBD and work with property and business owners to plan organized and well-planned revitalization efforts. This might include street furniture improvements, improved trash removal and cleanup efforts, design guidelines specifically for commercial building construction and improvement, signage, and an owners' associations or voluntary booster groups for common advertising and promotions.

Ridgely should participate in government/regional incentives to promote business development and encourage new commercial entities and service providers to locate in Ridgely. Therefore, it is the intent of the Town to work with local and potential merchants to examine ways in which the Town can promote and enhance businesses in the CBD. This includes the visual character of the street-front along Central Avenue (Main Street) and Railway Street. Providing for linkages to other Town Planning Areas in order to make the CBD accessible to all residents is important. This is particularly true of any proposed planned development north of the CBD.

### **Neighborhood Residential District**

**Land Use & Regulation:** Regulations for the Neighborhood Conservation Planning Area should provide for single-family detached and semi-detached residences and supporting uses. It also is intended to provide for the minor infill of neighborhoods, consistent with existing character. This Planning Area includes some vacant properties that could be candidate sites for infill and/or redevelopment projects.

Zoning for these areas should address the need to protect existing residential areas from incompatible uses and activities. Design guidelines should encourage small building footprints, such as a preference for 2 story dwellings with similar architectural features to surrounding land uses. In order to promote infill and redevelopment, the Town will need to review current zoning and eliminate impediments to infill and redevelopment projects.

Growth Management Strategy: The growth management strategy for this Planning Area is the preservation and retention of the existing single-family homes as well as support for existing land use patterns. As much as possible, Ridgely should discourage additional single-family home conversions to multi-family and should encourage the conversion of the existing apartment units back to single-family use. This is designed to encourage single-family occupancy and promote neighborhood stability.

The growth management strategy also includes the concept of extending the Town's historic grid system for neighboring planned development areas to create connectivity. This will provide cohesiveness with neighborhood conservation areas. Public investment will emphasize improvements to address traffic, pedestrian safety and circulation, parking, streetscape improvements and aesthetic features, public amenities, enhanced public access, and utilities.

Ridgely should make it easier to convert existing single-family homes to home-office uses and other low-intensity home-based businesses. Provisions also should be made for accessory apartments or "granny flats" to be used by family members thus making it easier for property owners to adapt their homes for use by related members of the family that require special care. However, such accessory uses should not be used as a means of increasing the population density within this area by using former "granny flats" for rental housing by non family members. Strict regulations should be applied to ensure that accessory dwellings are used by family members only.

Preserving existing land use patterns also includes supporting public facilities and services in this Planning Area. The government service function is that land used by the Ridgely Elementary School and operated by Caroline County. School children from Ridgely who attend public schools are assigned to this school. In recent years, this school complex has been expanded because of increased enrollment. It is likely that Caroline County will be required to enlarge the school in the future. Ridgely should cooperate in the expansion of the school within the guidelines of this Comprehensive Plan and other regulations and policies of the Town.

### **Highway Commercial District**

Land Use & Regulation: Regulations for this Planning Area should protect existing commercial uses and business employment, while also allowing for the planned expansion of such uses for infill and redevelopment sites. Uses should be confined to service oriented commercial uses. Industrial and high-intensity commercial uses should not be permitted due the Planning Area's location, direct proximity to the Town Center and other residential neighborhood areas.

The Town should consider establishing a highway corridor overlay zone that includes appropriate development standards and design guidelines. These would be applicable to new and existing commercial uses. Development standards and design guidelines should address things such as access management, road buffers and landscaping, signage, parking and lighting etc. These special development design standards are appropriate for regulating highway uses and should be developed to ensure that public concerns are adequately addressed for safety, access, and appearance.

As a primary gateway to Ridgely, the Town should require appropriate signage and landscape buffers between businesses and MD Rt. 480 to improve the visual character along the corridor. Improving the appearance and attractiveness of this Planning Area is important. The addition of landscaping and buffer requirements, appropriate architectural design guidelines, and improved site plan submission requirements and review guidelines, will assist to accomplish these objectives. Consideration of improved signage and lighting in commercial areas also should be addressed.

Growth Management Strategy: The growth management strategy for the Highway Commercial Planning Area is to promote general and business commercial uses. Commercial and business uses locate here to take advantage of the highway frontage and exposure on MD Rt. 480. Such uses typically serve regional markets as well as providing services for motorists. Special design considerations include visual impacts on the Town's primary gateways from east to west and north to south, traffic operations and safety, and protecting adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Commercial uses in this Planning Area should avoid adverse impacts to existing and future residential neighborhoods. Much of this mitigation can be accomplished with good design. Design standards or guidelines should be developed to enhance landscaping, buffering, lighting, signage, and architecture. Improving the visual corridor along MD Rt. 480 is important because it is the primary entrance and exit to and from the Town Ridgely. Given the location of existing residential neighborhoods, and the Town's emphasis on protecting existing character, Ridgely should pay special attention to the potential impact of regional commercial development on local traffic circulation (positive and negative), visual impressions at gateways, and the potential cost and benefits of such uses to the Town.

### **Business Employment District**

Land Use & Regulation: The Planning Area is principally suited for either industrial or intensive commercial uses. This area is important for Ridgely's economic future. The existing industrial operations provide needed employment for residents and revenue for the Town. This area also has the potential to provide some services to the community. One of those services is a proposed fire station and community facility. Both of those uses should be encouraged. However, the Town should have sufficient flexibility to accommodate intensive commercial or industrial uses within this Planning Area. Buffers should be employed to safeguard different land uses. If mixed uses continue in this Planning Area, adequate buffer areas must be created to separate each use and to ensure that one use does not hamper the development of other uses and activities. Development regulations for the Planning Area should permit a broad range of light industrial and business uses. Incentives should encourage

development as planned business parks or planned redevelopment for infill and redevelopment sites. This will ensure good design and appropriate safeguards.

If commercial or industrial uses are proposed for the vacant land in this Planning Area, a careful analysis of minimum lot size and setbacks should be considered by the Planning Commission and Town Commissioners. The analysis should be flexible to allow for the highest and best use of property so that future enjoyment by property owners, and Ridgely residents, is not harmed.

Growth Management Strategy: Much of this Planning Area, located along West Bell Street in Ridgely, has existing commercial and industrial establishments. This includes the main offices and buildings of Hanover Foods, a local produce canning company. However, several properties in this Planning Area are vacant and underutilized. These properties are prime candidates for planned infill and redevelopment. Providing appropriate access for this Planning Area will be a challenge. Alternative access routes that eliminate the need for truck traffic in the Town Center are needed but will likely require State approvals, coordination with Caroline County, and major capital infrastructure investment.

The development of vacant and underutilized properties in the Planning Area presents an opportunity to increase local employment within the Town, while also improving appearance. It is adjacent to the Town's planned Rails-to-Trails system (Greenway). This Greenway runs the length of the Town from east to west. It links the old railroad corridor to the Town Center and Central Business District. Ridgely is already initiating improvements along the Greenway for resident and visitor enjoyment, including landscaping and restoration of an old railroad station, post office, and railroad car for site attractions. Eventually, trail plans include connecting this system from Ridgely to Bell Road in Caroline County. In turn, this will connect to Crouse Mill Road, Sawmill Road, and Eveland Road, linking Ridgely to Tuckahoe State Park and Adkins Arboretum.

The amenities offered by such as connection, to residents and visitors alike, is a tremendous economic boon for Ridgely. In addition, this connection provides unique amenities to attract investment and boost property values. Special design considerations should be considered along this corridor. These primarily include visual impacts on the Greenway from east to west. They also include traffic and pedestrian safety in relation to the Greenway.

Commercial and industrial uses in this Planning Area should avoid adverse impacts to the Greenway. Therefore, attractive streetscaping along this corridor is critical. Mitigation can be accomplished with good design. Design standards or guidelines should be developed to enhance landscaping, buffering, lighting, signage, and architecture for commercial and industrial street facades. Improving the visual corridor along the Greenway is important because it is a unique and valuable amenity to Ridgely. Much like the Highway Commercial Planning Area, Ridgely should pay special attention to the potential impact of regional commercial and industrial development on local traffic circulation (positive and negative) and visual impressions to and from the Greenway.

Development of the Ridgely Airport and Business Technology Park, to the north of Town along MD Rt. 312, presents a unique opportunity for Ridgely and Caroline County. The Business Technology Park project is funded by the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development. The Airport project is being funded by the Federal Aviation Administration.

Major investments have occurred in both projects and represent long-term economic development engines. The Airport is a County transportation hub that has the potential to further regional economic development initiatives. The Business Technology Park is closely linked to the Ridgely Airport as an adjacent site. The Business Technology Park has the potential to provide higher wage jobs in technology or satellite governmental industries for local residents. It also allows them to work closer to home.

An important component to support the Business Technology Park, and ensure its long-term viability, is the potential subdivision and development of the McNomee Farm. A planned residential development of approximately 400 dwelling units was proposed for this site, Ridgely Park, but was withdrawn in 2009. This area is indicated in the Land Use Plan for a mixed use/planned neighborhood development and a master plan concept exists for the site including a lake. It is the desire of the Town that future housing options provided by such a development, and the public amenities generally offered in Ridgely, will attract investors, new businesses, and new residents. In addition, development can assist the Town in upgrading its infrastructure, primarily water and sewer. This is needed to serve residential and commercial/industrial infill development in the Town. This includes the Business Technology Park.

### **Planned Unit Development District**

Land Use & Regulations: Regulations should facilitate planned development as opposed to by-right zoning. Development in this Planning Area, and on any significant addition to the Town, should be based on principles of urban design inherent in all great places. Urban design is directly related to the community character. Urban design is the attempt to give form, in terms of function and beauty, to entire areas or whole towns or cities. The focus is on the massing and organization of buildings and on the spaces between them, rather than on the design of individual structures. Its principle features are:

- 1) Neighborhoods have a center and edge;
- 2) Walkable—usually five-minutes from center to edge;
- 3) Contain a mix of uses and building types;
- 4) Have an integrated street network; and
- 5) Reserve special sites for special buildings.

It is Ridgely's intent that new large-scale developments become linked and integral parts of the existing Town, reflecting the scale and character of the existing community. This can be best accomplished by establishing a flexible design process based on traditional place making principles. These include:

- ❖ Neighborhoods accommodate and promote pedestrian travel equally as much as motor vehicle trips;



- ❖ Design results in residentially scaled buildings fronting on, and generally aligned with, streets;
- ❖ Neighborhoods contain a diversity of household types, age groups, and income levels;
- ❖ Building and site development patterns reflect the traditional patterns found in the Town, including an interconnected and rectilinear pattern of streets and blocks, which balance the needs of pedestrians and automobiles alike;
- ❖ Neighborhoods are functionally diverse, but visually unified, and focused on central squares;
- ❖ Social interaction is promoted through the use of neighborhood greens, landscaped streets, boulevards, and “single-loaded” parkways woven into street and block patterns to provide space for civic activity, parks, and visual enjoyment;
- ❖ Buildings for civic or religious assembly or for other common or institutional purposes that act as visual landmarks and symbols of identity are provided;
- ❖ Open space, sensitive environmental systems, scenic vistas, and natural areas are preserved; and
- ❖ Design flexibility is permitted in order to achieve an appropriate mix of residential and non-residential building uses.

Development standards for this Planning Area should provide for a master planned development process. Some specifications may include the following:

- 1) Allow density of up to 3 dwelling units per net acre for a Planned Development.
- 2) Require a minimum of 20 percent open space.
- 3) Development standards that reflect development capacity limitations, where present.
- 4) Require accounting for the Conservation Planning Area, as shown on Map 2-3 below (Conservation Areas may not be counted against minimum open space requirement).

Growth Management Strategy: The growth management strategy for this Planning Area is to extend the historic development patterns evident in the Town. Many areas for planned development are located near the Town Center and Neighborhood Conservation Areas. Therefore, the basic Ridgely street grid pattern and its alley system should be extended into these areas, where appropriate and as development occurs.

The land that is not used for residential housing in this Planning Area, as a result of cluster and/or traditional neighborhood development, should be devoted to either active or passive recreational use. Every effort should be made to provide for open space and recreational uses for any new developments proposed in this Planning Area. Mixed uses, including low-intensity commercial development, can be permitted. However, commercial uses should not be out of scale with the requirements of the residents of Ridgely. It should rather be scaled appropriately for surrounding residential neighborhoods.

### **Public & Semi-Public Land**

Land Use & Regulation: A large portion of the land in this Planning Area is used as part of the spray fields for the Town’s sewage treatment system. Because much of this area is not directly tied to the Town Center, this land can be used for a variety of agricultural, residential, and recreational uses. There is no

direct encouragement to convert agricultural land into residential uses. If residential development does occur, both cluster and traditional single-family housing are appropriate uses. In addition, because this area is not directly tied into the existing street pattern, there is no requirement to develop a grid system or an alley system as part of residential development. Strip development along Cow Barn Road should be discouraged. Regulations for the Town Expansion Planning Area should protect existing uses.

Growth Management Strategy: The growth management strategy for this Planning Area is to continue to provide services and facilities to the public. This includes those services and facilities for recreation as well as those connected to protecting the public health, safety, and welfare. Protecting environmentally sensitive areas also is important. This includes properties owned by the public that are heavily forested and may indicate the presence of non-tidal wetlands.

Much of the land in this Planning Area is owned by the Town of Ridgely or some other public/semi-public entity. This includes land used by the Town for the spray application of wastewater effluent. A portion of land in this Planning Area, along Cow Barn Road, is a Little League Park and a major County/Town recreational facility. Because of the proximity of the Town's wastewater treatment plant, care must be exercised in permitting residential development in this particular area.

Ridgely should seek to consolidate lands used for the spray irrigation of wastewater effluent under Town control. This includes annexing the current wastewater treatment site and spray irrigation lands outside, but adjacent to, the Town's existing corporate boundaries. This will allow the Town greater control and oversight regarding such lands. It also could facilitate processes associated with water and sewer at the County and State levels.

A variety of parks and open space should be provided as public land. Parks and open space are a purposeful component of design and should be prominently displayed. Special views and vistas should be framed or enhanced. Greens or commons should be located in each neighborhood to function as community gathering areas. Dignified or classical parks can complement civic architecture.

Parks should serve the active and passive recreation needs of Town residents. Parks should be located within easy walking distance (500 feet to 800 feet) of every residence. Parks and open space should be linked together by walking paths to the maximum extent possible. In all cases parks should be easily accessible and highly visible. Ideally, neighborhood parks or greens will be fronted on at least two sides by residential units so that residents can clearly see park activities.

The design of parks should respond to user needs. As a general rule, park design should adhere to the following principles:

- Everything should have an identified purpose;
- Design must be for "people", not a simple application of standards;
- Both function and aesthetics must be satisfied;
- Nothing should be randomly placed;

- Satisfy the technical requirements, e.g., for play fields, ball courts, etc.
- Use the most cost efficient design; and
- Provide for ease of use and supervision.

Current park facilities are adequate in Ridgely to serve the needs of the existing population. New developments should be required to provide a variety of park and open space facilities to address the needs of the new neighborhoods or a fee in lieu for existing park maintenance, if parks are available to new residents nearby. Parks will range from small, vest-pocket parks located within the neighborhoods to larger community parks serving all Town residents, as deemed appropriate. In this regard, regulatory open space requirements should be reviewed and, if necessary, updated/enhanced.

### **Conservation District**

Land Use & Regulation: The Conservation District is a natural resource protection overlay zone based on existing drainage patterns and proximity to nearby sensitive areas. This includes sensitive environmental features such as forests and sensitive species habitat, wetlands, streams and buffers, etc. The purpose of the district is to protect water quality and sensitive environmental areas in the Ridgely area.

The Town should encourage policies and regulations that maintain or enhance its “green infrastructure” as an important component of local ecological functions. In addition, Ridgely should encourage Caroline County to promote the preservation of green infrastructure in the County, not only for environmental protection, but also to provide separation between urban/suburban and rural areas.

The district should be used to implement a no net forest loss policy. Within the district only low intensity uses (including very low density residential use) that maintain the forest cover and protect sensitive environmental features will be permitted. Non-contiguous density transfer can be allowed for properties under single ownership.

Growth Management Strategy: The use of flexible development regulations to promote innovative and environmentally friendly site design is important for maintaining aesthetic, scenic, and ecologically important community features. In addition, conservation design techniques for development are critical for preserving precious resources. The core concept of the Conservation District centers on buffering sensitive environmental areas and clustering development in higher density patterns. Buffering is an important component of development design. When integrated with clustering, it produces an effective combination. Buffering provides numerous environmental benefits as well as aesthetic ones.

## **2) ZONING MAP**

The Town’s Official Zoning Map should be updated to reflect current corporate boundaries. The Official Zoning Map also should be updated to reflect the policy direction of this Comprehensive Plan, following review and updates to the Zoning Ordinance. GIS digitization will allow for the copying of existing hard

copy maps to a computerized format, which provides a ready and reliable source for reproduction, security, and storage. This process has largely replaced traditional mapping production methods.

### 3) ZONING PROVISIONS

Specific zoning provisions should be updated to simplify the Zoning Ordinance and improve current processes and procedures. These include, but may not be limited to, the following:

Height Area & Bulk Requirements: Zoning standards for such things as minimum lot size, building setbacks and maximum height should be examined to ensure they are not an impediment to appropriate infill and redevelopment. Special infill zoning provisions that create incentives for context-sensitive infill and redevelopment should be included in the Zoning Ordinance. This will ensure that property owners of existing buildings rebuilding on small lots can be given the flexibility needed to accomplish infill and redevelopment.

Subdivision Checklist: Ridgely should include a detailed subdivision process and checklist. This will assist with administrative review as well as clearly defining roles and responsibilities.

Table of Permitted Uses: Ridgely should include a “Table of Permitted Uses” in the Zoning Ordinance. This will codify accepted and permissible uses from those that require further process, such as special exceptions, in an easy to understand tabular format. A thorough review of uses in the Town is suggested.

Reference Table: Include a “Reference Table” for lot size/area and minimum setback requirements to assist developers, homeowners, and Town staff and officials.

Sensitive Areas Protection Standards: The Town’s emphasis on protecting natural resources supports a pro-active approach to managing sensitive environmental features. The following protection standards should be added to the Zoning Ordinance to achieve the Town’s objectives in this regard:

1. Require stream buffers of at least 100-foot wide naturally-vegetated areas on either side of streams, wherever possible. Where this buffer adjoins sensitive soils (e.g., hydric soils) it should be expanded.
2. Adopt additional standards to protect identified Federal Interior Dwelling Species (FIDS) habitat. This may include adoption of a natural resource protection overlay zone that strictly limits clearing of forest cover and only permits very low density residential development (e.g. one dwelling unit per 25 acres).

Landscape Standards: The Town’s landscape objective is to ensure that landscaping is used to accentuate the natural and built environment, establish visual connectivity, enhance community identity, and provide environmental and public health benefits. Landscaping should be used to effectively delineate space, highlight focal points, and provide buffer and transitional elements in addition to providing shade.

Ridgely should revise its development codes to establish appropriate landscape performance standards. Minimum landscape standards should be established for all land uses and include bufferyard standards between zoning districts of conflicting intensity, parking lot and perimeter landscape standards, street tree requirements, and special landscape treatment at gateway locations.

## **SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS**

The current *Ridgely Subdivision Regulations* do not adequately prepare the Town for growth. Ridgely should review its subdivision regulations to ensure that its provisions are consistent with the objectives outlined in this Comprehensive Plan. Among other things, the Town should review development standards for roads and streets to ensure that new impervious surfaces are minimized and consistent with the policy objectives of the Plan. In addition, traffic calming measures are important, particularly for residential neighborhoods. Traffic calming measures should be a basic design requirement.

Ridgely also should review current subdivision regulations for their impact on the character of the existing community. In addition to infrastructure requirements, any new and large scale development should not follow a sprawling, suburban development pattern. Therefore, the Town should encourage developments that are extensions of the existing built environment and not developments that do not match the scale and character of Ridgely.

An essential part of the subdivision regulations should be that the owners and developers of all new subdivisions be required to post surety for the proper and timely construction of all water and sewer systems, fire protection systems, all roads and sidewalks, and all other necessary and required improvements. Surety also should be posted for the appropriate completion of any other public feature or amenity that might be proposed by developers. This might include such things as recreational facilities, community halls, street lighting, and street furniture. The developers should be required to post bonds for the successful and timely completion of all buildings started in a development.

## **BUILDING CODES**

If Ridgely has not already adopted the *2000 International Building Code*, it should do so. As part of the enforcement of building codes, the Town's building inspector views the exterior of each property and develops a list of those properties that require remediation. Those that have obvious and major defects are noted and their property owners are given a written listing of deficiencies.

Property owners are thus given an appropriate time limit within which to make the necessary repairs. If a property is too deteriorated that it causes a danger to the health and safety of the community and a hazard of residents, the Town can initiate condemnation proceedings against the property owner as provided in the building codes and by Maryland law and civil procedure.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Ridgely should prepare a five and ten-year plan for capital improvements or “Capital Improvement Program (CIP),” which can be used by various administrative departments of the Town’s government or for the general benefit of the community. The CIP should identify needs, provide a justification for purchase or construction, and identify the sources of funds that will be used to pay for the project or item. The CIP should allow for alteration of the plan to meet changing needs.

## ADEQUATE FACILITIES PROVISIONS

As a primary policy, Ridgely should ensure that there is adequate water and sewer capacity for infill, redevelopment, and new development in the existing corporate boundaries of the Town. The Town also should ensure that there are sufficient roads and other infrastructure needs available for development. If the Town determines that it does not have adequate facilities for development, it should explore methods to acquire the needed facilities. Chief among the options available is to require that the owners of proposed development areas provide sufficient funds to build such required facilities.

Updating the Town’s Capital Improvement Program-CIP, preparing infrastructure studies (including water and sewer plans), and developing an impact fee structure are all critical. These are particularly important prior to the annexation of any new land outside current corporate boundaries for development.

Public Water & Sewer: Currently, Ridgely controls its own water and wastewater system. Water and sewer system upgrades are important to serve infill and redevelopment areas as well as any potential new development in the future. As indicated by the “Future Population Projections” contained in the Municipal Growth Element of this Comprehensive Plan, there is every reasonable expectation the population of the community will increase. Maryland regulations and policies have been adopted to encourage development in and around existing communities with adequate infrastructure and the capacity to support new projects (Smart Growth).

An important recommendation is achieving effective inter-jurisdictional coordination with Caroline County and State entities responsible for water and sewer processes and regulatory oversight. Ridgely should prepare a Water and Wastewater Capacity Management Plan in conjunction with the Town’s Capital Improvement Plan to determine needs, review infrastructure, recommend necessary upgrades, and detail associated costs. Water and wastewater capacity management plans are updated regularly. The development of official sewer allocation policies for the Town can assist with administrative and review processes.

Stormwater Management: Ridgely should periodically review and update stormwater management regulations to incorporate new techniques and requirements. In addition, Ridgely should vigorously enforce its Stormwater Management Ordinance.

## ADMINISTRATION & ENFORCEMENT

### STREAMLINING THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

Development review of infill and redevelopment projects within the old town portions of Ridgely should be streamlined by amending the Zoning Ordinance to give the Town Planning and Zoning Commission greater authority to vary certain development standards for proposed projects that meet voluntary design guidelines.

### INNOVATIVE DEVELOPMENT TECHNIQUES

The Town's planned unit development provisions within the Zoning ordinance should be reviewed to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Any amendments to the Zoning Ordinance should add special provisions for planned developments. Standards and guidelines should establish a development and design framework for mixed-use projects, including commercial and business uses appropriate to a neighborhood context. The process also should include a requirement that a "Developer Rights and Responsibilities Agreement" (DRRA) is executed as part of the zoning approval process.

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES

The ability of a municipal government to develop comprehensive plans and land-use regulations are based on the laws of the State of Maryland and on the specific charter and ordinances passed by the Town. This Comprehensive Plan provides a guide for the management of Ridgely and should be followed by the Town government.

The Ridgely Planning and Zoning Commission, appointed by the Town Commissioners, is charged with ensuring that this Plan is followed. The Planning and Zoning Commission advises the Town Commissioners on changes that might need to be made to the Comprehensive Plan and its implementing regulations over the Plan's life. The Comprehensive Plan is not a document that should remain "on the shelf." Copies should be provided to all members of the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Town Commissioners; as well as all employees and consultants that have responsibilities governed by the Comprehensive Plan.

The Planning and Zoning Commission should also review the Plan every year to determine if implementation programs are making progress towards Plan goals. The Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed at six-year intervals to ensure that it still reflects and satisfies the needs of the Town and the citizens. The yearly review and the six-year review should be done as part of regular Planning and Zoning Commission meetings and as part of a public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that appropriate citizen input is provided.

Because the central role of the Planning and Zoning Commission is guiding growth, development, and revitalization, it is important that it be composed of residents of the community. The Planning and

Zoning Commission should be kept at full strength at all times and the Town should ensure that they remain current with changing State laws and policies, with Caroline County’s laws and regulations, and with the management of Ridgely, providing the proper advice and guidance.

In addition, The Planning and Zoning Commission should have at least the following responsibilities:

- Maintain a current and accurate Comprehensive Plan and enforcement regulations;
- Review all decisions made by both Ridgely and other agencies that might affect the Town, the Comprehensive Plan, zoning regulations, subdivision ordinances, land-use regulations and guidance, and the future direction of the Town and its government and governance;
- Review and act on all requests for subdivision and other land-use change requests;
- Review and recommend changes on all revisions to the Ridgely Zoning Ordinance and associated maps;
- Assist the Town Commissioners in the development of a Capital Improvements Program-CIP;
- Activate and participate in all programs and recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan and in other regulations, ordinances, and resolutions that fall into areas of responsibility;
- Complete other tasks and responsibilities that might be assigned to it by the Town Commissioners; and
- Recommend changes to the Comprehensive Plan, zoning regulations, subdivision ordinances, and other land-use policies, regulations, and guidance.

## HERITAGE PRESERVATION

Implementation recommendations for heritage resources are designed to assist Ridgely in preserving significant resources. Recommendations also assist the Town in developing broad strategies to enhance resources and promote compatible economic initiatives that benefit the Ridgely’s tax base. Several conceptual actions are listed below. The ultimate purpose of these various proposed planning initiatives is to provide enhanced access to State and federal funds for heritage preservation and tourism as well as the improvement of the Town’s aesthetic appearance.



### LOCAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION INITIATIVES

Heritage preservation in Ridgely is important because historic sites and structures are valuable resources. Of particular importance are those “landmark” historic sites and structures that define the core of Ridgely. Documenting, listing, and mapping these sites and structures will assist the Town in its preservation goals and objectives. In addition, a wide variety of tools/mechanisms should be developed at the local level to ensure the preservation of these sites and structures including the following:



- Assisting property owners to access State programs that provide or may provide grants, loans, tax credits etc. for historic preservation.
- Accessing local entities, programs, and funding for heritage preservation and tourism initiatives.
- Developing local implementation tools, such as Façade Easements, flexible regulations, adaptive reuse provisions, etc. to promote investment in historic sites and structures.
- Working with the Caroline County Historical Society to preserve historic sites and structures.
- Considering a Historic District Ordinance and Historic District Zoning District for Ridgely.

At the municipal level, the Town should continue to build heritage tourism attractions thereby building the local economy and assisting in the enhancement of existing resources. The Victorian architecture of Ridgely is a commodity. The Town should seek ways to ensure that the architecture found along Town streets in the Old Village (Town Center and Central Business District) is maintained and preserved as a valuable economic asset.

The development of planning policies and regulatory mechanisms, including Design Guidelines, will assist in the preservation of heritage resources. Another example of enhancing heritage resources is to encourage the protection and rehabilitation of historic homes and buildings by evaluating the use of an “Enterprise Fund” in combination with “Rehabilitation Tax Incentives.” An Enterprise Fund can be established and paid for by new development or public/private partnerships. Funding initiatives also include working with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, the Maryland Historical Trust, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation to obtain financial support for rehabilitation.

An Enterprise Fund can be used to provide low interest loans or grants to homeowners and business owners for necessary property and infrastructure improvements, such as restoration, renovation for adaptive reuse, or sidewalks. In combination with Historic Tax Credits available from the MHT, the Enterprise Fund can provide an effective mechanism for revitalization. Many tools exist to assist heritage preservation efforts and should be researched to determine which tools are best suited for Ridgely.

## HERITAGE PRESERVATION PLANNING

Ridgely should consider developing a municipal “Historic Preservation Plan” that provides specific goals, objectives, and recommendations for the preservation of historic sites and structures. This Plan is important because it examines detailed strategies for heritage preservation as well as which tools, programs, funding etc. may be best suited accomplish these tasks. The preparation of a Historic Preservation Plan will assist in the inventorying, mapping, and documenting of key resources such as critical landmark sites and structures and those that are secondary contributing resources (those resources that do not require stricter appearance standards).

As part of this process the Maryland Historical Trust's *Inventory of Historic Sites and Structures for Caroline County* (1979/1980) should be updated to include buildings in the Town that may have been demolished or altered since the survey was first prepared (a snapshot of the Town's current state in relation to its heritage resources). In addition, resources should be mapped into the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS) and over-layered on the Caroline County aerial files. This includes the updating of the digital database inventory.

The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) provides grant funding for non-capital projects that include planning and outreach. In addition, a host of federal and non-profit foundation funds are available for planning projects as noted on the MHT website.

## **REGULATORY MECHANISMS FOR HERITAGE PRESERVATION**

Design Guidelines form a bridge between planning and regulation. Following the preparation of a Historic Preservation Plan, the development of "Design Guidelines" specifically for the Historic District can assist with appearance standards for new development, infill, and redevelopment. Updating regulatory mechanisms is encouraged including the adoption of building maintenance codes, stronger enforcement, and an assessment of the role of the Planning Commission in the Town's regulatory processes. Administrative enhancements also may be required to provide flexibility, innovation, and incentives. This could include an examination of whether a Historic District Ordinance and Commission are desired by Town residents or whether such duties can be effectively administered by the Planning Commission.

The adoption of zoning provisions that promote the adaptive reuse of historic structures for public and private uses is important. These include, but are not limited to, bed and breakfast establishments, craft/gift shops, small retail operations, cafes and restaurants, museums, and studio space for artisans, when such uses minimize exterior structural alterations. Heritage preservation should be balanced with energy conservation, allowing secondary contributing structures to integrate energy efficient building materials that still maintain a historic "look and feel." In addition, heritage preservation works best at the local level when regulations and associated processes are flexible enough to allow a meaningful dialogue between property owners and the municipal government.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS THAT PROMOTE HERITAGE TOURISM**

Ridgely should improve its infrastructure in the Town Center and Central Business District to promote a walkable and compact community. This includes sidewalks, period street lighting, greenways, street furniture, etc. Heritage area certification provides increased access to State funding through the Maryland Department of Transportation for infrastructure initiatives, such as the "Main Street and Neighborhood Conservation Program." This includes funding for parking, enhanced connectivity to public spaces, improved curb, sidewalk, and gutter systems, trail connections, as well as street lighting and street tree plantings and maintenance. The goal is to improve the overall aesthetic appearance of the Town to promote investment and reinvestment.

## REGIONAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION INITIATIVES

Ridgely should work with neighboring municipalities, Caroline County, and the State of Maryland to explore ways to assist heritage preservation, neighborhood revitalization, and tourism efforts in the Town and the region. Partnerships can create an “economies of scale” and allow for enhanced assistance. This is particularly important for property owners that may require assistance accessing State grants, loans, and tax credits for historic restoration/rehabilitation. Other non-public or semi-public partners could include the Eastern Shore Heritage Incorporated (ESHI), the Caroline County Historical Society, and the Underground Railroad Scenic Byway Board.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Adequate community facilities and services are necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. Ridgely should ensure that all residents of the Town have adequate public facilities and services and that such facilities and services are maintained and upgraded at reasonable costs to taxpayers.

## INFRASTRUCTURE PLANS & REGULATIONS

At a minimum, Ridgely infrastructure facilities reports, plans, policies, and regulations should be updated and/or revised. This includes, but is not limited to, the following for all new growth and development:

- 1) Require an “Annexation Agreement” be executed between landowner(s) and the Town;
- 2) Address potential impacts to community facilities and services through appropriate impact studies, including water and sewer, fiscal, as well as environmental;
- 3) Identify development funding responsibilities between identified parties;
- 4) Outline issues to be addressed in a Developers Rights and Responsibility Agreement (DRRA), which typically follows an Annexation Agreement, which may require the development of a Ridgely DRRA Ordinance;
- 5) Require development form be consistent with the 2009 *Ridgely Comprehensive Plan*; and
- 6) Create a specific regulatory provision that Caroline County Environmental Health must approve and sign plats before construction can begin and permits can be issued, officially verifying that water and sewer capacity exists to serve such developments.

Ridgely should specifically update its infrastructure plans to ascertain an accurate measure of capacity within existing systems and what upgrades will be required to accommodate growth and development. This includes mapping the Town’s infrastructure and facilities systems in the Ridgely Geographic Information System (GIS). Infrastructure mapping consists of locating and illustrating water and sewer lines, utility networks, road and street networks, manholes and stormwater drains, curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, etc. Infrastructure mapping also details these features in the GIS database, such as the current condition of water lines or when upgrades are needed or were completed. This data should be

included in the Town's infrastructure plans and be regularly updated to track infrastructure and associated costs over time.

Developing a detailed *Ridgely Capital Improvements Plan* (CIP) and Water and Sewer Subsidiary Plans are an important first step in Ridgely to address community facilities and services. This includes meeting the requirements of the State for Water and Wastewater Capacity Management Plans, as stipulated by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). MDE has produced guidelines for the preparation of Water and Wastewater Capacity Management Plans. According to the State, once a wastewater treatment plant reaches 75% capacity, detailed water and sewer planning is required to ensure that a new plant is being designed, engineered, and eventually constructed to meet demand. The State utilizes a 250 gallon per day (gpd) per dwelling unit (DU) to assess water and wastewater demand. Ridgely should consider using the State standard of 250 gpd per DU, if such a standard does not already exist.

Accurately updating facilities and service plans includes reviewing water and sewer service area classifications for Ridgely and ensuring these classifications are reflected in the *Caroline County Master Water & Sewer Plan* (County Water & Sewer Plan). Such service area classifications relate to approved planned developments in Town, future infill and redevelopment, and growth areas as shown in the 2009 *Ridgely Comprehensive Plan*. Ridgely should request an amendment to the County Water & Sewer Plan for planned developments within the Town's boundaries, not currently shown in the Water & Sewer Plan. Specifically, the Town should request appropriate service area classifications. Future amendments may be necessary to ensure that Ridgely's section of the County Water and Sewer Plan is accurate and up-to-date. This process includes initiating meaningful discussions with Caroline County Government and Environmental Health to facilitate water and sewer initiatives germane to Town growth and development plans.

### **Water & Wastewater Planning**

In 2004, the Maryland Department of Planning (MPD) prepared a list of draft "Water & Sewer Planning Principles" to assist local jurisdictions (towns and counties) in preparation for annexation, development and growth management in regards to water and sewer planning.<sup>3</sup> These "Water & Sewer Planning Principles" were reflected in the *Caroline County Water Quality Report*, an unofficial document prepared by the Caroline County Department of Planning & Codes Administration in 2006.<sup>4</sup> It is important to note that much of Ridgely's planning for water and sewer as well as growth and development are consistent with these principles, albeit a need for more detailed planning on the Town's part.

The Water Quality Improvement Report defines these nine (9) primary planning principles for water and sewer. The principles offer guidance to water and sewer facilities owners as to how planning for existing systems and system expansions should be developed:

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<sup>3</sup> *Draft Water and Sewer Planning Principles*; "Garrett County Water and Sewer Plan;" Prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning; July 18, 2003.

<sup>4</sup> *Caroline County, Maryland: Water Quality Improvement Report – Broad Policy Directives for Caroline County*; 14-15

- Principle 1 – Support Smart Growth: Water and Sewer Plans should be proactive in contributing to Smart Growth objectives of revitalizing existing towns and communities, promoting economic development in Priority Funding Areas (PFA's), and protecting rural areas from sprawl and leapfrog development. The Plan should do this by focusing on maximizing use of existing facilities through strong renovation and maintenance programs. Capacity increases should be based on documented needs and expansion of systems to new areas and should be in an orderly manner to areas contiguous to existing service areas. The Plan should present policies and practices that help reduce the cost of development on sewer and water relative to development on individual systems.
- Principle 2 – Maintain and Improve Existing Systems: Water and Sewer Plans should address how the physical and fiscal condition of existing water and sewer systems can be improved to support Smart Growth. This means that the Plan should give the highest priority to identifying and meeting needs for renovation and maintenance of existing systems in existing locations. This will help assure that there is adequate infrastructure to support revitalization and infill in existing communities.
- Principle 3 – Manage Service Area Expansions: Water and Sewer Plans should support any geographic expansion of existing systems only in existing PFA's and areas contiguous to existing service areas with densities no less than 1 unit/per acre and average densities sufficient to qualify for PFA designation (3.5 units/per acre). The Plan should indicate the staging of expanded areas with reference to specific timeframes. Techniques should be developed to discourage or prohibit physically preemptive low density development on individual systems in planned future service areas. As stated in State law, service should be shown for "...those parts of the county that can reasonably be expected to be served in the next 10 years." This provision is consistent with the PFA designation criterion which states: "PFA designation must represent a long-term policy for orderly development and efficient use of land and public services."
- Principle 4 – Expand System Capacity Based on Demonstrated Needs: Water and Sewer Plans should provide for adequate treatment and conveyance capacity for service areas that are delineated with "all practical precision." Capacity should be based on "reasonable" population, household and economic projections, in the context of local zoning as referenced in Principle 3. This will help to assure that capital, maintenance, and operating costs will be reasonable. Systems that have either too little or too much capacity in relation to realistic projected needs and/or geographic coverage can strain rate payers and local budgets and harm local bonding ability.
- Principle 5 – Present a Capital Program Based on Demonstrated Needs: Water and Sewer Plans should translate projected needs into specific projects for new, renovated, or expanded facilities for at least the 10 years following Plan adoption. These projects should be shown in tables with estimated costs and funding sources. Existing and planned major facilities and projects should be shown on the service area maps.

- Principle 6 – Allocate Capacity to Support Smart Growth: Water and Sewer Plans should describe capacity allocation policies and systems that serve the other principles and that maintain local control over available capacity. Allocations should be time limited and not transferable to avoid private control of capacity rights that are not used and to prevent the development of an unregulated market in these rights. Priority for allocations should be given to infill, redevelopment, and expansions into new areas that are contiguous to existing service areas and meet State PFA requirements.
- Principle 7 – Protect Water Quality and Water Supply Sources: Water and Sewer Plans should demonstrate how existing and proposed facilities, and the development patterns they support, will meet permit requirements for point discharges and stormwater. The Plan should describe its relationship and contribution to meeting the objectives of relevant watershed plans, TMDL's, and the Chesapeake Bay Agreement. In areas where sewage is treated by on-site disposal systems, promote the use of best management practices that reduce nutrient pollution without increasing housing density. For water supply, the Plan should identify that safe and adequate supplies are available for projected growth and describe programs to protect the integrity and quality of existing and planned ground and surface water supply sources.
- Principle 8 – Assure Adequate User Rate Structures: Water and Sewer Plans are mandated to address how systems will be adequately funded to assure protection of public health, water quality, and environmental protection. Recent Statewide studies of sewer and water infrastructure found extensive and expensive needs for renovation of existing systems that were leaking, overflowing, or otherwise inadequate to meet existing or planned future demands. A major finding of these studies was that rate structures are often inadequate for proper system maintenance. This has led to increasing risks to public health, water quality, and the environment. At the same time, the deterioration of older systems was found to be detrimental to Smart Growth.
- Principle 9 – Incorporate Subsidiary Plans: Water and Sewer Plans must by law, fully integrate planning and facilities for the county, municipalities, and other private and government entities that own or operate water and sewerage systems within the county or that serve more than one county. These entities must be full partners in the planning process to assure that their operating and capital program information, allocation policies and practice, and other required information is updated and that service areas reflect both county and municipal comprehensive plans. Issues related to future service areas and annexations around municipalities must be addressed and resolved to the maximum extent possible.

## **PARKS, RECREATION AREAS, & OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

Park and recreation facilities are an important local municipal component of the Community Facilities Element. Ensuring adequate park and open space land and facilities to meet current and projected demands is critical. Ridgely should require new developments to set aside land for neighborhood parks or provide a fee-in-lieu for existing park maintenance. Park facilities should be centrally located for

adjacent neighborhoods and easily accessible (pedestrians and vehicles) from anywhere within the Town.

Education (schools), emergency management, and other County provided facilities and services should be carefully coordinated with Caroline County Government. Fiscal, and other associated impacts from growth, will require multi-jurisdictional efforts. Forums such as the Caroline County Council of Governments provide an appropriate venue for such discussions amongst the County and its towns. Current local mechanisms to address fiscal needs such as impacts fees, excise taxes, and tax differentials can be appropriate discussion items at such meetings.

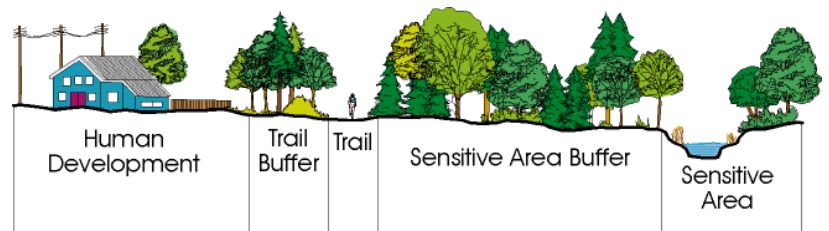
## TRANSPORTATION

Ridgely should seek to improve its transportation system consistent with the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan:

- 1) Promoting the development of “Parkway Standards and Design” by the State/County for MD Rt. 404 including side access roads, adequate landscaping and buffering (native trees), enhanced “gateway” treatments, improved and attractive signage, as well as the development of local land use policies and regulations that limit strip development and minimize curb cuts.
- 2) Planning for collector systems providing access to Growth Areas/Greenbelts in conjunction with current initiatives including planning for a proposed Ridgely By-Pass, designation of Maryland “Scenic By-Way” status for MD Route 404, establishment of “trail heads” for visitor and tourism services along MD Routes 480 and 328 (Adkins Arboretum, Ridgely Railroad Park, and the West Denton Maritime Museum etc.), potential upgrades for Eveland Road (Adkins Arboretum/Tuckahoe State Park - enhanced pedestrian, bicycle), and trail connections from Ridgely to Adkins Arboretum/Tuckahoe State Park.
- 3) Discouraging the location of non-resource based land uses outside of designated Growth Areas. This will insure that traffic volumes in rural areas remain low. Roadway capacity may be a limiting factor for development, even at low densities although, some key capital improvements will be required to maintain even minimum levels of service.
- 4) Concentrating growth in existing population centers (Growth Areas), which supports the limited future expansion of infrastructure and services. When development occurs, road improvements will be needed within designated areas. Towns, the County, and State will need to coordinate in order to insure efficient expansion of road capacity, such as the Ridgely By-Pass.
- 5) Preserving the character of rural agricultural areas, historic cross roads villages, and towns, which are important assets in Caroline County. Strip development along highway corridors detracts from positive visual qualities and should be avoided. Standards should apply in the County and the Towns alike to ensure that new development along highways, near gateways, and within defined scenic viewsheds is properly designed, including, most importantly, appropriate access controls and buffers.
- 6) Enhancing the visual quality of Ridgely and other Towns through streetscaping, wayfinding, aesthetic improvements, etc.

## RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Implementation recommendations for resource conservation are designed to assist Ridgely in preserving significant resources but also developing broad strategies to enhance these resources and promote compatible economic initiatives that benefit the Town's tax base.



**FIGURE 9-6:** “Sensitive areas” include riparian streams that are best protected by a buffering program, including buffer requirements. This visual illustration shows how buffering works to mitigate harmful pollutants before they reach a tributary.

**Streams & Stream Buffers:** Although, Ridgely requires “Best Management Practices” (BMP’s) to protect water bodies through its Forest Conservation and Stormwater Management regulations, more refinement is needed. This includes the establishment of a grading, erosion and sediment control ordinance and better stream protection standards. Adding the “Conservation Corridor” district to the Town’s Zoning Ordinance, with standards, will ensure that streams and stream buffers are protected.

**Green Building:** Environmentally sensitive building and site-design, following LEED Guidelines (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), should be encouraged to minimize the potential negative impacts of such things as forest and habitat disturbance as well as stormwater flows on adjacent sensitive areas, aquatic resources, and water quality. Incentive programs for private citizens to incorporate LEED principles in all home construction, repair and renovation projects can be developed by the Town. LEED initiatives can help educate the public and ensure that the natural environment is disturbed as little as possible by the impacts of the built environment.

**Watershed Planning:** Existing watersheds within Ridgely are located on the northwestern and southern ranges of the Town. At the northern end, these watersheds fall toward Tuckahoe Creek. At the southern end, the watersheds flow toward the Choptank River. Although, some environmental impact statements and studies have been conducted on these watersheds, there is not sufficient information available on the nature of these watersheds to make specific management and planning decisions. Because of the nature of these watersheds, the County and State governments, in partnership with Ridgely, should evaluate the watersheds to determine their condition and future potential and develop a monitoring process to ensure their health and survivability.

**Natural Resource Areas:** There are a number of natural resource areas within the town limits of Ridgely. Some of these natural areas are actually part of the agricultural lands surrounding the community. Others are part of wooded areas on the edges of farm fields or part of undeveloped lands. As with the watersheds, there has not been a thorough systematic inventory of the inhabitants and the extent of natural resource areas in and around Ridgely. This could be an important planning and management tool.



Endangered Species: Ridgely should require proposed development activities address the protection of State and federally designated endangered species. The developer must determine through contact with the Town, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Maryland Fish, Heritage and Wildlife Administration (MFHWA) whether proposed activities will occur within or adjacent to identified endangered species habitats and whether such activities will affect the area.

If it is established that an activity will occur within or adjacent to an endangered species habitat, the Town should require that the developer provide protection measures in the project design. A written environmental assessment including site design plans and a description of measures to be taken to protect endangered species should be submitted to the Town as part of the development review process. The developer should work to establish species/site-specific protection measures. Protection measures may include:

- Designation of protection areas around the essential habitat of the designated species.
- Prohibition of development activities or other disturbances in the protection area, unless it can be shown that these activities or disturbances will not have or cause adverse impact on the habitat.
- Implementation of design strategies that work to protect the species and essential habitat, which could include (but are not limited to) restrictions on siting of structures, use of cluster design, establishment of undisturbed open space areas, restrictive covenants, and restrictions on noise levels and timing of construction activities.

Steep Slopes: Although steep slopes are limited in Ridgely, development should be regulated in these areas wherever they occur. Placement of structures or impervious surfaces should be severely limited on any slope with a grade of 25% percent or more. On slopes between 15% and 25%, good engineering practices should be required to ensure sediment and erosion control and slope stabilization before, during, and after disturbance activities and to minimize cut and fill.

## WATER RESOURCES

The “Water Resources Element” (WRE) provides goals and guidance for both Caroline County and Ridgely planning initiatives. Broad goals for water resources include the following:

1. Maintaining and protecting an adequate water supply to serve the residents of Ridgely through 2030;
2. Protecting water supply from pollution and encroachment;
3. Initiating steps to restore and protect water quality and contribute toward meeting water quality regulatory requirements in the Watershed(s);
4. Addressing water quality impacts as well as future impacts from land development and population growth; and
5. Protecting the habitat value of rivers and streams.

Meeting the WRE regulatory goals will entail requiring that new development implement Smart Growth development densities (smaller lot sizes). It also requires the following:

- Implementing water conservation measures;
- Staging growth to the availability of needed water resources;
- Clustering development while protecting forested areas (e.g., the recommended Conservation Corridor described in the Land Use Element of this Comprehensive Plan);
- Enhancing existing developed areas through infill and mixed use zoning; and
- Implementing Best Management Practices – BMP's.

Most importantly, Ridgely can make a positive contribution to improving water quality in the watershed by implementing urban BMPs as recommended by the Tributary Strategies.<sup>5</sup> BMP's the Town should require include the following:

- Limiting impervious surface areas to 10% in identified critical or sensitive areas;
- Permitting open section roadways in new developments;
- Incorporating the use of nonstructural BMPs such as natural conservation areas, roof and non-roof top disconnection, vegetated swales, sheet flow to buffer, reduced impervious cover to the maximum extent practicable, and promote environmentally sensitive design (ESD) or low impact development (LID) techniques;
- Maintaining existing forest cover and promoting the enhancement of contiguous forest areas;
- Working with Caroline County to address failing septic systems in areas that can be served by public water and sewer;
- Allowing narrower and shorter streets, rights-of-way, and sidewalks. Streets may be as narrow as 22 feet in neighborhoods serving low traffic volumes; open space designs and clustering will reduce street lengths; rights-of-way can be reduced by minimizing sidewalk width, providing sidewalks on one side of the road, and reducing the border width between the street and sidewalks;
- Allowing smaller radii for turn-arounds as low as 33 feet, using a landscaped island in the center of the cul-de-sac, and designing these areas to treat stormwater runoff;
- Allowing grass channels or biofilters for residential street drainage and stormwater treatment;
- Interpreting parking ratios as maximum number of spaces; permit shared parking arrangements; minimum parking stall width should be less than 9 feet and stall length less than 18 feet;
- Requiring parking lots be landscaped and relaxing setbacks to allow for bioretention islands or other stormwater practices in landscaped areas;
- Adopting flexible design criteria to allow developers to use clustered development and open space designs;
- Reducing minimum lots sizes;
- Relaxing setbacks and allowing narrower frontages to reduce total road length as well eliminating long driveways;
- Allowing for shared driveways and alternative impervious surfaces;

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<sup>5</sup> Maryland Best Management Practices. <http://dnrweb.dnr.state.md.us/watersheds/surf/bmp/bmp.asp?trib=chop>.

- Requiring rooftop runoff be directed to pervious surfaces;
- Designating a minimum buffer width and providing mechanisms for long- term protection;
- Limiting clearing, grading, and earth disturbances to the minimum required for developing a lot;
- Promoting the use of native plantings;
- Providing incentives for conserving natural areas through density compensation, property tax reduction, and flexibility in the design process; and
- Implementing policies and education programs that encourage the reduction of fertilizer applications to grassed areas lawns in urban areas.

Integrating the techniques described above in local regulations assists with natural resource retention. Natural resource management requires the use of these current BMP's to enhance environmental attributes. Ridgely should seek to integrate many of these BMP's (some of which are state-mandated practices), such as Forest Conservation, Floodplain and Stormwater Management, and Erosion and Sediment Control regulations.

In addition, the *Ridgely Stormwater Management Ordinance* and other related development standards should require environmental site design (ESD) techniques that optimize conservation of natural features (e.g., drainage patterns, soil, vegetation), minimize impervious surfaces (e.g., pavement, concrete channels, roofs), decrease (slow down) runoff to maintain discharge timing and to increase infiltration and evapotranspiration, and use other nonstructural practices or innovative technologies approved by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE).

## ECONOMICS & HOUSING

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The preparation of a strategic revitalization plan for Ridgely is recommended. This planning effort can create a cohesive and detailed vision for the future economic viability of the Town. In addition, such a plan can examine specific and targeted areas of the Town for revitalization. In the changing global market, developing a coordinated plan for the Town's economy with short-term, mid-term, and long-term strategic actions provides a sound policy basis to further enhance Ridgely's climate for investment and re-investment. Generally, this type of detailed plan is prepared following comprehensive planning and before the preparation of design guidelines and ordinance revisions/updates.

The strategic plan also could address details for the design of the Town's Planned Neighborhood Development areas, master planning for infill and growth areas, and targeted actions for the Town Center and Central Business Districts. With the advent of the Ridgely Business Technology Park and the Airport, as well as the large tracts of land within the Town for future new development, this type of a plan could further solidify Ridgely's vision for the future. Potential state and federal funding may be available and should be researched.

## HOUSING & AFFORDABILITY

Data collected on housing affordability in Ridgely indicates a significant percentage of the Town's population (including renters and homeowners) cannot afford the cost of housing. The availability of affordably priced homes and rental housing is a key to serving the needs of both first-time home buyers and low to median income households, who make up 68% of the Town's population. Statistics outlined in the "Existing Conditions Chapter" of this Comprehensive Plan reveal that a significant percentage of households, not just low-income households, struggle to meet housing costs.

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines "very low-income" families as those earning 50% of the median family income for an area. "Low-income," as defined by HUD, is 80% of the median family income for an area. The 2000 median family income for Ridgely was \$38,929. Of the 351 family households in Ridgely, 9% met the HUD definition of very low income and an additional 9% met the definition of low income. Poverty and low income affect more than 20% of all people living in Ridgely and almost 20% of all families.

HUD also defines affordable housing as housing that costs 30% or less of the worker's wage. HUD determines that a household has a "housing cost burden" if it spends 30% or more of its income on housing. A household has a "severe housing cost burden" if it spends 50% or more of its income on housing. The housing cost burden combines renter and owner occupied housing statistics.

Owner housing costs consist of payments for mortgages, deeds of trust, contracts to purchase, or similar debts on the property; real estate taxes; fire, hazard, and flood insurance on the property; utilities; and fuels. Where applicable, owner costs also include monthly condominium fees. Renter calculations use gross rent, which is the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, water and sewer) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.). Household income is the total pre-tax income of the householder and all other individuals at least 15 years old in the household.

Using the HUD definition of affordable housing, more than a quarter (26.4%) of the homeowners and 25% of the renter households in Ridgely are cost burdened. This means, they are spending 30% or more of their income on housing. Including renters and homeowners, more than half of all households in the Town are experiencing housing cost burdens. Using the HUD definition of affordability, this means that more than half of the households in Ridgely cannot afford the housing they currently occupy. To appreciate the full impact of this data, bear in mind that household incomes include incomes from multiple wage earners, people working two jobs, income subsidies, etc. The problem of housing affordability in Ridgely is not just a problem affecting the poorest families; it also impacts working families with secure jobs and multiple incomes.

Rental housing is often the only housing option available to young families and low-income residents. While there is new housing development taking place in Ridgely, special consideration needs to be given to how to maintain existing homes so that they do not fall into decline. This includes not only the condition of the homes themselves, but also the yards and neighborhoods around them. In addition to

the condition of the existing housing stock, attention should be paid to the types of houses available in the Town both now and in the future. As the Eastern Shore's population continues to age, this segment of society will need to be considered in planning for new residential development to ensure that housing is suitable to the needs of the elderly. In addition to smaller houses on smaller lots, options such as condominiums, senior citizen apartments, and assisted living facilities should be made available.

Ridgely needs to address these issues if it wants to keep residents and attract new ones.

- Review the Town's regulatory policies and update regulations and/or requirements that do not sufficiently describe or enforce maintenance standards and occupancy limits for housing units. Possible changes may include increasing housing inspections from alternating years to an annual or twice annual schedule, which may necessitate the hiring of an additional part-time Town staff person.
- Consider the appointment of a Housing Commission to undertake regular inspections of housing conditions and oversee enforcement of housing regulations.
- Work with owners of older or dilapidated buildings to explore options for rehabilitation or redevelopment projects.
- In cases where cooperation from a property owner is not given, consider using Town authority to clean up a property and assess the costs to the property owner.
- Review the Town's regulatory policies to ensure they will support and not conflict with efforts to provide suitable housing choices for the elderly. This should include updating the Zoning Ordinance to accommodate special needs housing, including continuing care and assisted living facilities.
- Consider examining a Town inclusionary zoning ordinance that requires a portion of housing units in a new development be reserved for affordable housing for low income families and seniors. As appropriate coordinate this program with Caroline County.
- Maximize density in development or redevelopment projects where appropriate. This means permitting townhouse and multi-family units in the mix of residential units in a project.
- Implement public water and sewer projects that enable higher-density residential development and mixed-use neighborhoods in designated growth areas and encourage a mix of housing densities and types in new subdivisions through Planned Unit Development provisions.
- Work with property owners of vacant lots to have them cleaned up or prepared for development. Seek out the assistance of local business groups, individuals, and community organizations to help reduce the cost to the property owner when and where appropriate or in strategic areas.
- Consider allowing garage apartments and other kinds of secondary or accessory apartment units to increase the supply of affordable rental housing.

Accessory apartments, in-law apartments, and "granny flats" offer an opportunity to make adaptations to some single-family neighborhoods to accommodate changing housing needs. With the trend toward larger numbers of one and two-person households, accessory apartments provide opportunities for Town residents to make their housing available to the community at-large, including young couples, individuals, and senior citizens.

From a public policy perspective, accessory apartments provide an alternative to the popular "add-on" strategy of continually relying upon new construction (houses, streets, sewers, utilities and public services) to satisfy the needs of a growing community. They concentrate on preserving, refurbishing and making more efficient use of existing housing and the expensive community infrastructure, which is not maximized. Although likely dependent on the availability of public wastewater treatment facilities, this particular housing option offers a number of benefits:

- ❖ Creating new living units without the expense of new infrastructure;
- ❖ Generating a flow of new dollars within the community from home equity;
- ❖ Reducing the costs of medical care for the elderly, who can receive less-expensive "in-home" care services, while living in an accessory apartment rather than being forced to move to a more costly nursing home or long-term health care facility;
- ❖ Providing older homeowners with an opportunity to generate some additional income;
- ❖ Increasing the supply of low and modest cost rental housing;
- ❖ Providing young singles, couples, and single parents with another source of income. This option may allow them to buy into the housing market, maintain ownership of their present home, or make available modest-priced rental housing in neighborhoods, which provide a wholesome environment for children;
- ❖ Increasing modest economic activity in the private sector, which benefits commercial lenders, real estate agents, builders, and retail businesses;
- ❖ Resulting in small increases in property appraisals, which generate modest amounts of additional tax revenues,
- ❖ Creating an opportunity to continue to live in one's own home and maintain contact with the neighborhood (for older homeowners with a tenant). Tenants: 1) add a measure of security and alleviate the fear of break-ins; 2) provide companionship, particularly for the elderly; and 3) may be willing to provide personal services in lieu of rent including the performance of routine maintenance work around the house, maintaining the yard, shoveling snow, performing light housekeeping tasks, providing modest personal in-home health services, and providing occasional transportation.
- ❖ Consider incorporating refinements and safeguards into any code provisions permitting conversion to accessory apartments to prevent the occurrence of inappropriate or unsafe conversions to accessory apartments. Such refinements may include any of the following: 1) Restricting the conversion option to senior citizens over a specified age; 2) Requiring the homeowner to reside in one of the living units within the house; 3) Restricting the conversion to homes which were constructed prior to a given date; 4) Requiring a minimum square footage as a prerequisite for a house to be considered eligible for a conversion; 5) Specifying the particular zoning classifications, where conversions may be considered eligible; 6) Permitting conversions only by homeowners who have resided in the home for a designated number of years prior to making an application for a conversion; 7) Prohibiting exterior modifications to the house; 8) Specifying minimum or maximum floor sizes for accessory apartments requiring that a conversion not exceed a designated percentage of the total floor space of the house. Typically such floor areas required in ordinances establish a minimum of 400 to 500 square feet in size to a maximum of 900 to 1,100 square feet; 9) Placing a limit on the number of people who can occupy the accessory apartment or designating the

aggregate number of people who can occupy the entire house; and 10) Encouraging barrier-free design considerations for persons with handicaps or limited mobility.

Housing Programs and Resources: There are many Federal and State programs designed to address a variety of components of the housing issues facing the region. In addition, profit and non-profit organization may be underutilized resources in the community and/or offer opportunities for partnerships. Some actions the Town can consider include:

1. Forming a Housing Roundtable, a coalition of community organizations, local government representatives, private business owners (including builders and developers), and individuals who can assess and recommend housing policies for the Town.
2. Exploring avenues to significantly address better housing options, including:
  - zoning and design standards that increase the mix of uses and housing types;
  - employer-assisted housing;
  - housing trust funds solely to build affordable homes in low, moderate, and middle income brackets;
  - partnerships with nonprofit, semi-public developers, and other financiers of affordable housing.
3. Contacting the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to investigate opportunities to participate in affordable housing program partnerships with the State. The Governor's Affordable Housing Subcommittee, working with the DHCD, made primary recommendations for State affordable housing programs in 2004, including:
  - linking workforce housing needs with local job creation/economic development strategies and projects;
  - maintaining and increasing resources for affordable housing (multi-family and single-family) through a dedicated revenue stream (Federal, State, local, private, foundations);
  - considering a pilot program of funding for housing units targeted to households between 60% and 100% of "Area Median Income"; and
  - encouraging, developing, and funding education programs including financial literacy, credit counseling, and homeownership counseling.

# RIDGELY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2009 RIDGELY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – SUMMARY & OVERVIEW



RIDGELY PLANNING COMMISSION/TOWN COMMISSIONERS

Prepared by Peter Johnston & Associates  
416 Goldsborough Street  
Easton, Maryland

JULY 22, 2009



Peter Johnston & Associates, LLC - Easton, Maryland



## WHAT ARE HOUSE BILL 1141's REQUIREMENTS?

- ❖ Municipal Growth Element (MGE) and Water Resources Element (WRE) - required comprehensive plan chapters (Maryland House Bill 1141).
- ❖ Amends “Article 66B: Planning & Zoning Enabling Act” and “Article 23A: Municipal Annexation Act” of the Annotated Code of Maryland to require the following:
  - Inclusion of a MGE and WRE for all comprehensive plans by October 2009;
  - Prior to MGE approval, every town must: 1) provide a copy to the State and county; 2) accept comments; and 3) meet and confer with the county;
  - The Maryland Departments of the Environment and Planning will provide technical assistance, if requested;
  - HB 1141 gives affected local governments until October 1, 2009 to update their comprehensive plans; and
  - Plans not updated by October 2009 may not change the zoning classification of a property until their updates are complete.

## WHAT DOES HOUSE BILL 1141 ACCOMPLISH?

- ❖ The MGE and WRE probe the relationship among land uses, population growth, and impacts on the environment, water resources, public facilities and services, and infrastructure to accommodate projected growth. They require the jurisdiction to:
  - Prepare a development capacity analysis (infill and redevelopment);
  - Develop an “Annexation Plan” that specifies where a jurisdiction intends to grow, if at all. The “Annexation Plan” must be shared with other planning agencies;
  - Address public services, infrastructure, and environmental protection related to proposed growth;
  - Determine if the capacity of ground and/or surface water resources are adequate to meet current and future demand; and
  - Identify suitable water and land areas to receive stormwater and wastewater.

## WHAT ARE THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN'S GOALS?

- ❖ **LAND USE**: Preserve the small town atmosphere and qualities that make Ridgely a desirable place to live and work.
- ❖ **MUNICIPAL GROWTH**: Determine the future pattern of growth and development in Ridgely and address associated impacts on facilities, services, and infrastructure.
- ❖ **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**: Provide an appropriate array of community facilities and services, required to maintain the public health, safety, and welfare.
- ❖ **RESOURCE CONSERVATION**: Ensure sensitive areas protection in accordance with State laws and preserve the natural resources and features of Ridgely and its surrounding environs.
- ❖ **WATER RESOURCES**: Maintain and protect and adequate and safe water supply to serve current and future residents of Ridgely.
- ❖ **HERITAGE PRESERVATION**: Preserve Ridgely's heritage resources.
- ❖ **TRANSPORTATION**: Provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods and encourage regional and local coordination for transportation decisions.

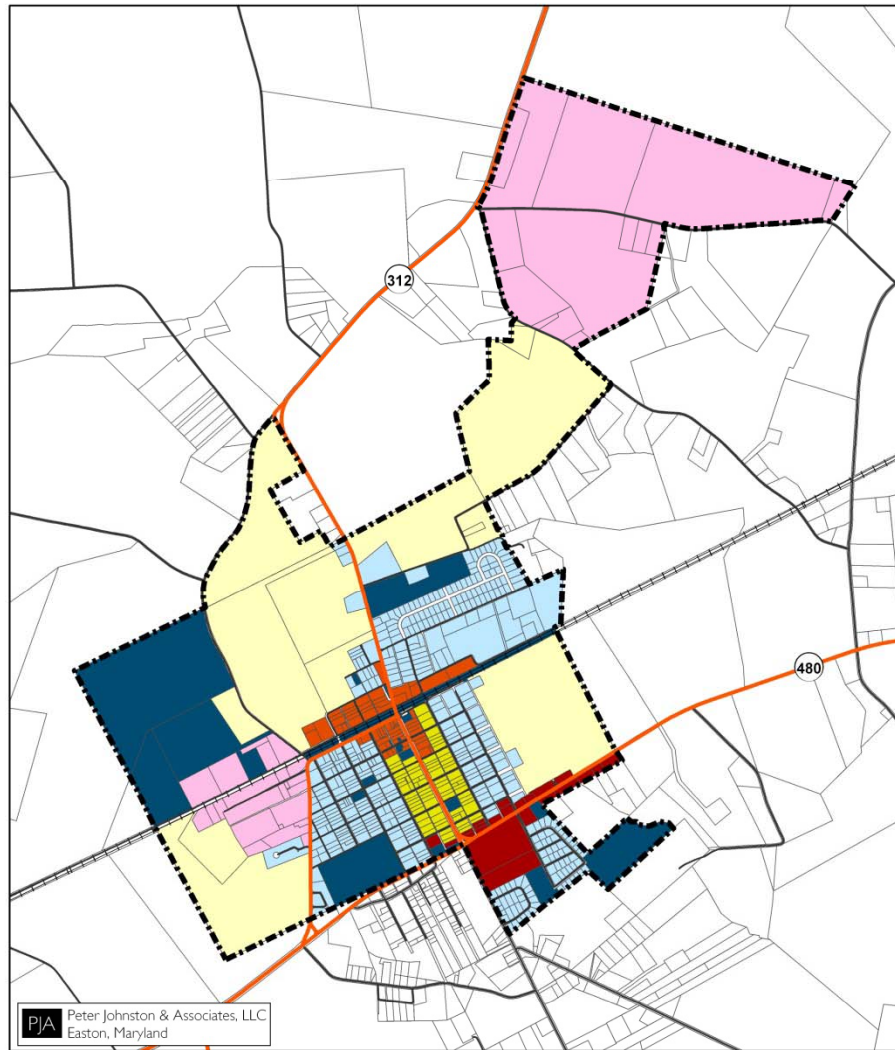
# LAND USE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT



## DEFINING RIDGELY'S DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

# 2009 RIDGELY LAND USE PLAN

MAP 2-2: LAND USE PLAN



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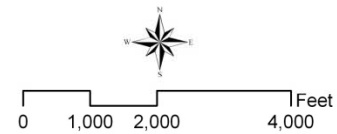
**LEGEND:**

- Ridgely Corporate Boundary
- State Roads
- Local Roads & Streets
- Railroad Line
- Public & Semi-Public
- Town Center
- Central Business District
- Neighborhood Conservation
- Highway Commercial
- Business Employment
- Planned Development

**RIDGELY PRIMARY LAND USE PLANNING AREAS**

- 1) Town Center - 25 Acres
- 2) Central Business District - 27 Acres
- 3) Neighborhood Conservation - 180 Acres
- 4) Highway Commercial - 28 Acres
- 5) Business Employment - 301 Acres
- 6) Public/Semi-Public - 171 Acres
- 7) Planned Development - 401 Acres

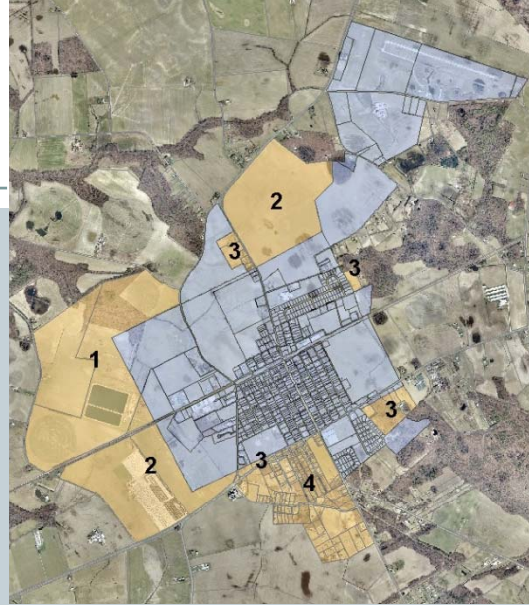
**TOTAL ACREAGE = 1,133 ACRES**



## 2009 RIDGELY LAND USE: DETAIL

FUTURE LAND USE – RIDGELY, MARYLAND		
Primary Land Use Categories	Acres	% of Total
1)Town Center - TC	25	2%
2)Central Business District - CBD	27	2%
3)Neighborhood Conservation - NC	180	16%
4)Highway Commercial - HC	28	2%
5)Business Employment - BE	301	27%
6)Public/Semi-Public - PS	171	16%
7)Planned Development - PD	401	35%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,133</b>	<b>100%</b>
*Secondary Land Use Categories	Acres	% of Total
1)Neighborhood Redevelopment Areas	56	40%
2)Parks & Open Space	34	23%
3)Conservation Corridor	51	37%
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>100%</b>
Peter Johnston & Associates		

# THE MUNICIPAL GROWTH ELEMENT



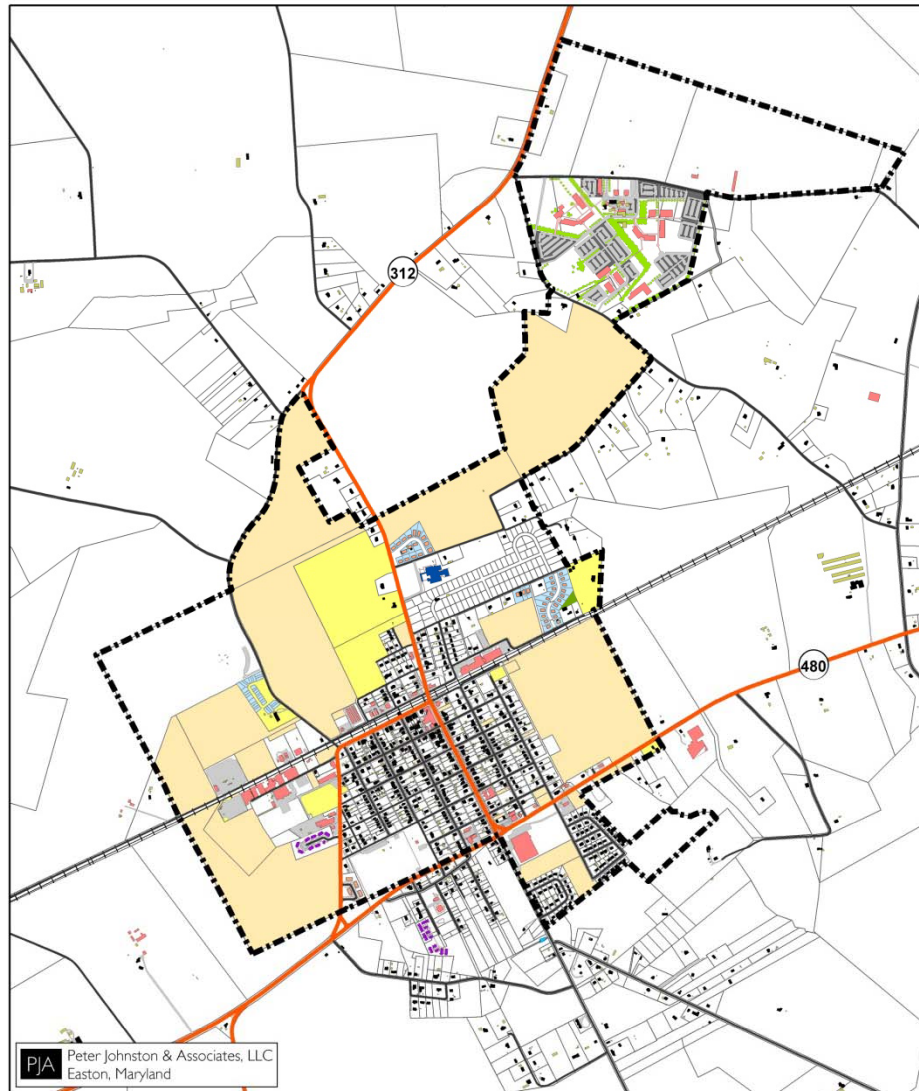
## ASSESSING MUNICIPAL GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

## MUNICIPAL GROWTH CONSIDERATIONS

- 1. Population** – What is Ridgely’s projected population growth? How quickly will the Town grow (pace of growth)?
- 2. Land Capacity** – Is there enough vacant and/or underutilized land within the Town’s corporate limits to accommodate projected population and housing growth (development capacity)?
- 3. Growth** – What land does the Town anticipate annexing in the future (Annexation Growth Plan). What is the planned land use for annexed areas?
- 4. Community Facilities and Services** – What will be the impact of projected population and employment growth on community facilities and services provided by the Town and/or County (growth impacts)?
- 5. Implementation Strategies** – When will facilities and services be needed and how will upgrades to existing and/or new public facilities or services be paid for?



# DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY (INFILL/REDEVELOPMENT)

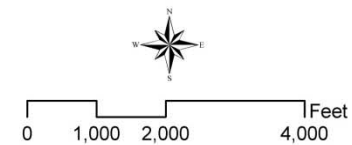


MAP 3-2: MUNICIPAL GROWTH PLAN  
INFILL & REDEVELOPMENT LAND

**LEGEND:**

- Ridgely Corporate Boundary
- State Roads
- Local Roads & Streets
- Railroad Line
- Orange Potential Dwelling Units
- Black Dwellings
- Red Commercial Buildings
- Purple Apartments
- Green Out Buildings
- Light Blue Church/Public
- Dark Blue Public/Semi-Public Buildings
- Pink Sidewalks
- Grey Impervious Surface
- Dark Green New Subdivisions - Open Space
- Light Blue New Subdivisions - Lots
- Yellow Underutilized Land
- Light Orange Vacant Land

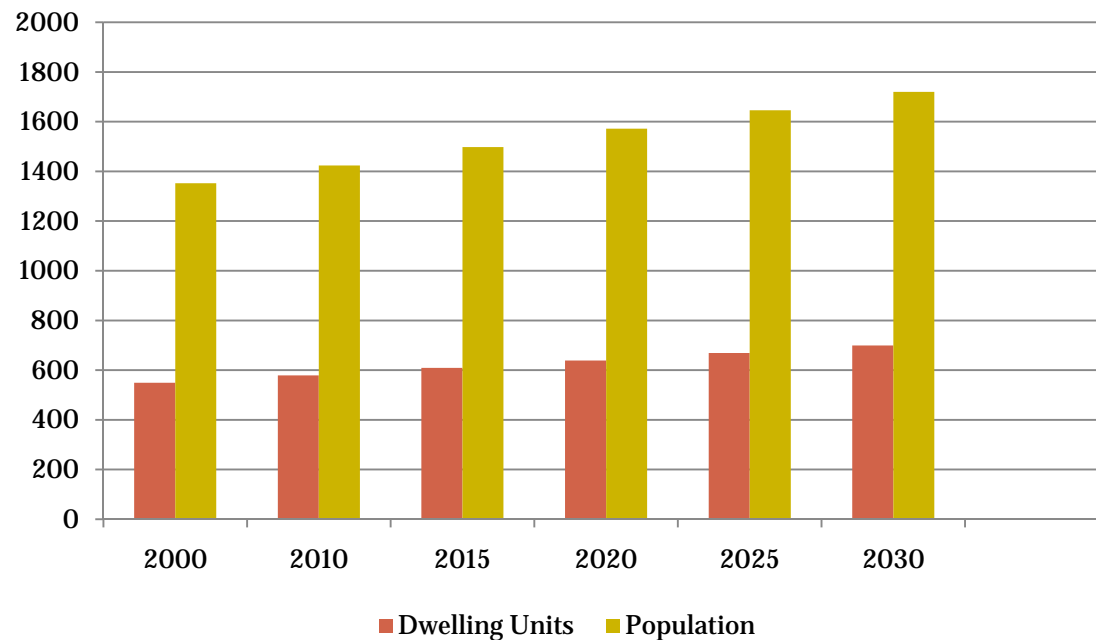
PJA Peter Johnston & Associates, LLC  
Easton, Maryland



# POPULATION & DWELLING UNIT PROJECTIONS

POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR CAROLINE COUNTY AND RIDGELY (2000-2030)									
Classification	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Change	Percent	Annual
<b>Caroline County</b>	29,772	34,200	37,300	40,750	44,000	47,150	17,378	58%	1.9%
<b>Ridgely</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>1,424</b>	<b>1,498</b>	<b>1,572</b>	<b>1,646</b>	<b>1,720</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>1.35%</b>
Dwelling Units	549	579	609	639	669	699	150	N/A	N/A
% of County Population	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	N/A	N/A	N/A

Sources: Maryland Department of Planning; U.S. Census; Peter Johnston & Associates



## POPULATION & DWELLING UNIT CONSIDERATIONS

- ❖ New planned developments, vacant land, and underutilized land total approximately 1,250 DU's (total infill and redevelopment potential in Ridgely) and approximately 496 acres.
- ❖ Residential planned developments, totaling 150 DU's, are where development is expected by 2030 (Growth Plan Map).
- ❖ Total residential development (by 2030) is expected to be approximately 150 DU's.
- ❖ Infill and redevelopment potential (other vacant and underutilized land for residential development) is estimated at 1,100 additional DU's.
- ❖ Development of other residential infill and redevelopment units depends on infrastructure upgrades and additional Town water and sewer capacity.

## POPULATION & DWELLING UNIT CONSIDERATIONS

- ❖ Population projections assume average household size will be commensurate with U.S. Census 2000 statistics for Ridgely at 2.46 persons per household.
- ❖ Population projections for planned developments and other residential infill and redevelopment total an additional 368 people by 2030.
- ❖ Population projections by 2030 assume that Ridgely's population will decrease to 4% of Caroline County's total population. Population projections assume that Ridgely's population will remain 4% of Caroline County's total population after 2030.
- ❖ After 2030, other residential infill and redevelopment units, totaling 1,100 DU's, may occur at a slower pace due to infrastructure limitations.
- ❖ No additional residential units are anticipated as a result of new annexations within the next six years.

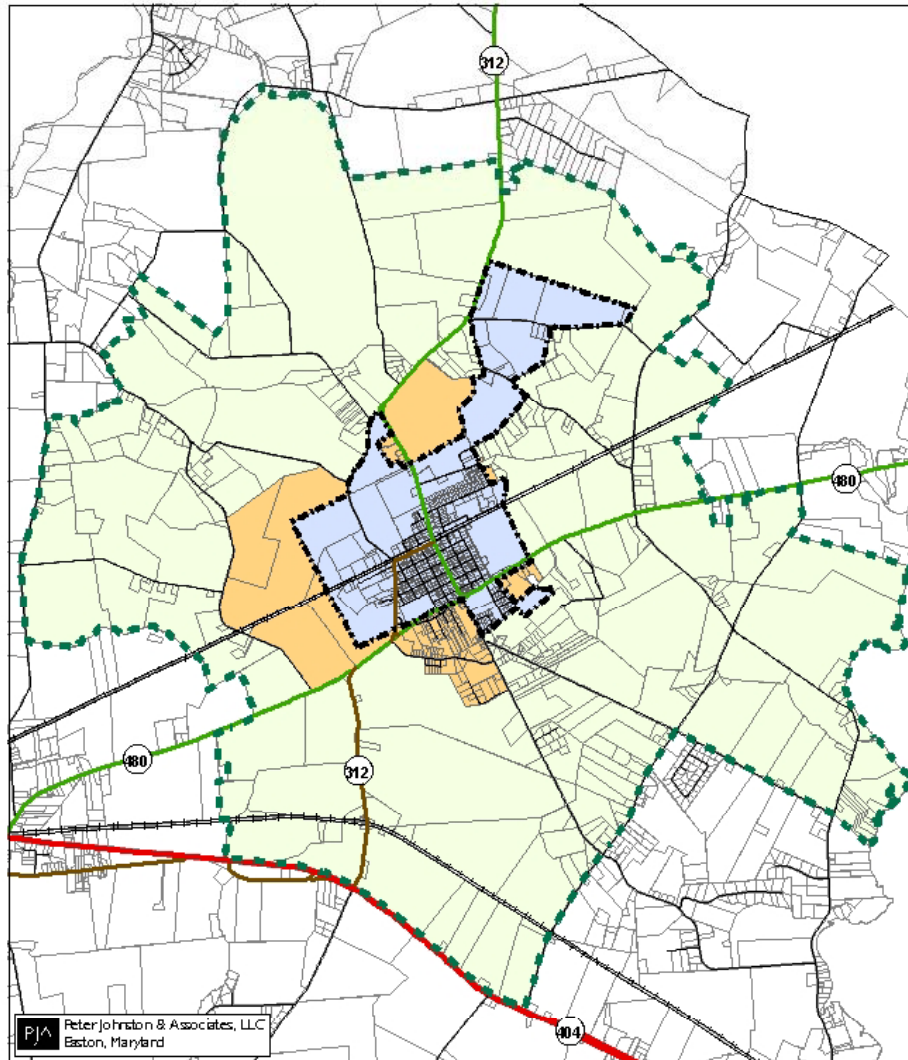
## GROWTH IMPACT ESTIMATES: 2000 - 2030

IMPACTS OF RIDGELY GROWTH ON PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES INFILL & REDEVELOPMENT FOR THE PLANNING PERIOD 2000 - 2030	
Classification	Infill/Redevelopment Areas
<b>Total Dwelling Unit Change</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Population Change</b>	<b>368</b>
- Additional Sewer Design Capacity Required (gallons per day - gpd)	37,500
- Additional Water Design Capacity Required (gallons per day - gpd)	37,500
- Non-Residential Sewer/Water Design Capacity Required (gallons per day - gpd)	11,000
<b>*Total Sewer and Water (including non-residential infill/redevelopment)</b>	<b>48,500</b>
<b>School (new students)</b>	<b>71</b>
- High School	23
- Middle School	16
- Elementary School	32
<b>Municipal Administrative Space (gross floor area – gfa)</b>	<b>1,472</b>
<b>Library (gross floor area - gfa)</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Police (personnel)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Recreation Land (acres)</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Fire &amp; Rescue (Emergency Services)</b>	
- Personnel	1
- Facilities (gross floor area - gfa)	294
Peter Johnston & Associates *Note: Impact projections assume approximately 150 dwelling units from planned developments for the planning period from 2000 to 2030. Impact projections also assume an additional 11,000 gallons per day (gpd) of water and sewer for commercial infill and redevelopment projects.	

## NOTES & OBSERVATIONS ON GROWTH IMPACTS

- ❖ The most substantial County impacts are to schools (71 students).
- ❖ Town administrative and meeting space will require expansion to maintain the current level of service, the capacity of the existing Town hall will not meet future needs (additional 1,472 square feet of space is recommended).
- ❖ Town public works assumes an expanded municipal role in the maintenance of streets and sidewalks, more personnel, and equipment .
- ❖ Planning, design, engineering, and permitting of expanded water and sewer capacity and/or other system upgrades should commence soon to meet projected demand (additional 48,500 gallons per day-gpd of water and sewer).
- ❖ The Town will reach a 75% sewer capacity threshold in 2010 - 2012.

# GROWTH & ANNEXATION AREA PLAN



PJA Peter Johnston & Associates, LLC  
Easton, Maryland

MAP 3-3: MUNICIPAL GROWTH PLAN  
GROWTH & ANNEXATION PLAN

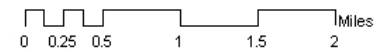
**LEGEND:**

- Ridgely Corporate Boundary
- - - Ridgely Greenbelt Boundary
- Other Principal Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local Road/Street
- Railroad Line
- Ridgely Growth Area
- Ridgely Greenbelt

**GROWTH & ANNEXATION LAND**

Annexation Area 1 = 208 acres  
 Annexation Area 2 = 320 acres  
 Annexation Area 3 = 145 acres  
 Annexation Area 4 = 151 acres  
**TOTAL = 824 acres**

\*Note: See Comprehensive Plan for details regarding Annexation Areas.



## POPULATION & DWELLING UNIT CONSIDERATIONS

**Assumptions:** Impact projections for the Ridgely Growth Area are confined to Annexation Area 2, large vacant parcels where future residential and/or mixed use development is anticipated.

❖ Potential impacts associated with annexation and development of the Ridgely Growth Area was calculated based on three potential development scenarios:



- Scenario 1: Based on standard zoning for the Ridgely R-3 Residential Zoning District, Scenario 1 assumes an average gross density of 2 dwelling units per acre.
- Scenario 2: Based on Maryland Smart Growth objectives, Scenario 2 assumes an average gross density of 3.5 dwelling units per acre.
- Scenario 3: Based on development standards that will permit maximum dwelling units per acre in planned mixed-use communities, Scenario 3 assumes an average gross density of 5.0 dwelling units per acre.



## GROWTH IMPACT ESTIMATES: (BEYOND 2030)

<b>IMPACTS OF RIDGELY GROWTH ON PUBLIC FACILITIES &amp; SERVICES (GROWTH AREA)</b>			
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Scenario 1</b>	<b>Scenario 2</b>	<b>Scenario 3</b>
<b>Gross Dwelling Units (Annexation Area 2)</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>1,120</b>	<b>1,600</b>
<b>Population</b>	<b>1,574</b>	<b>2,755</b>	<b>3,936</b>
<b>Additional Sewer Design Capacity (GPD)</b>	<b>160,000</b>	<b>280,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>
<b>Additional Water Design Capacity (GPD)</b>	<b>160,000</b>	<b>280,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>762</b>
- High School	99	172	247
- Middle School	68	120	171
- Elementary School	138	241	344
<b>Municipal Administrative Space (gross floor area – gfa)</b>	<b>6,296</b>	<b>11,020</b>	<b>15,744</b>
<b>LIBRARY (floor area)</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>394</b>
<b>POLICE (personnel)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>RECREATION LAND (acres)</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>FIRE &amp; RESCUE</b>			
- Personnel	3	4	6
- Facilities	1,259	2,204	3,149
Peter Johnston & Associates			

# FINANCING STRATEGIES - PUBLIC FACILITIES/SERVICES

FACILITY/SERVICE	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES
<b>School Facilities</b>	Property Tax, Excise Tax, Impact Fee, Federal/State School Construction Funds
<b>Town Administration</b>	
- Facilities	Property Tax, DRRA, Impact fee, Grants and Loans
- Personnel	Property Tax, Service Fees (e.g., zoning certificate fee, inspection fees), Grants
<b>Town Public Works</b>	
- Facilities	DRRA, Impact Fee, Connection Fees, User Fees, Public Works Agreement, Grants, and Loans
- Personnel	Property Tax, Service Fees (e.g., water and sewer charges)
<b>Library Facilities</b>	Property Tax, Excise Tax, Impact Fees, Grants and Loans
<b>Town Police</b>	
- Facilities	Property Tax, DRRA, Impact Fees
- Personnel	Property Tax, Fines and Fees
<b>Recreation Land</b>	DRRA, Land Dedication, State Program Open Space (POS)
<b>Fire and Rescue - Nonprofit</b>	
- Facilities	DRRA, Grants, Public and Private Contributions
<b>County-Provided Fire and Rescue</b>	
- Facilities	Property Tax, Excise Tax, Impact Fees, Special Taxes (e.g., fire districts tax), Grants
- Personnel	Property Tax, Special Taxes (e.g., fire district tax)
<b>Water and Sewer Facilities</b>	DRRA, Public Works Agreements, Connection Fees, User Charges, Gants and Loans

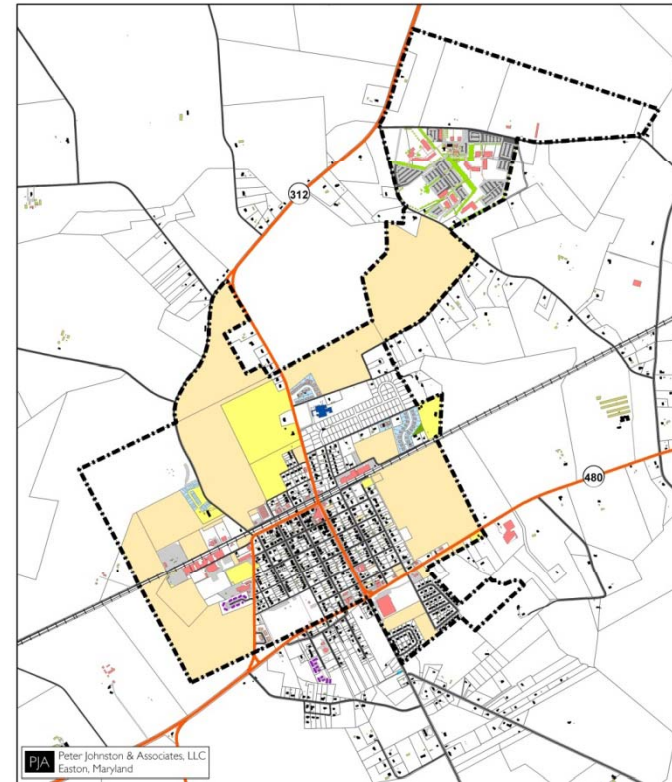
# THE WATER RESOURCES ELEMENT



## ANALYZING THE LIMITATIONS FOR FUTURE GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

## WATER RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 1. Receiving Water Capacity** – Are there any known limitations on the capacity of receiving waters for point and non-point source pollution discharge?
- 2. Development Impacts** – What is the potential impact of projected growth on water quality in receiving waters?
- 3. Ground Water Resources** – Is there enough groundwater resources to accommodate projected growth?
- 4. Implementation Strategies** - What management strategies are suggested?



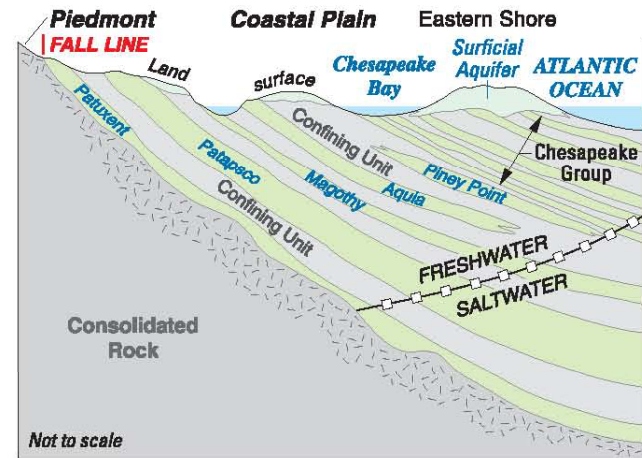
Analysis for the *Water Resources Element* is based on Ridgely's growth plans, as defined in the *Municipal Growth Element*.

## WATER QUALITY MEASURES

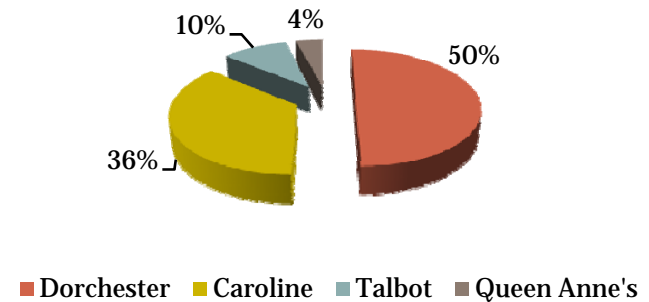
- ❖ Pollution in the Bay originates from two sources:
  - Point sources: wastewater treatment plants; and
  - Non-point sources: stormwater runoff, erosion, air pollution, septic systems, other “non-pipe” end sources.
  
- ❖ Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) are a regulatory mechanism to identify and implement additional controls for point and non-point source discharges in water bodies that are impaired from one or more pollutants and are not expected to be restored through normal point source controls.
  
- ❖ TMDLs establish limits or “caps” on the amount of pollutants permitted from point and non-point sources through an allocation system.
  
- ❖ TMDLs are expressed as allowable loads of a specified pollutant by point and non-point sources.
  
- ❖ **TMDLs have not yet been established for the Choptank River Watershed.**

# GROUNDWATER RESOURCES

- ❖ Ridgely is part of the “Northern Atlantic Coastal Plain Aquifer System” and draws water from the Piney Point Aquifer.
- ❖ Ground water quality is related to land use and is generally considered “good” in the area.
- ❖ Water quantity should be sufficient for infill development, subject to further study of the aquifer by the State of Maryland, and the United States Geological Survey (USGS).



**Proportion of Piney Point Use for Caroline County**



RIDGELY WATER SYSTEM	
<b>Water Appropriations Permit</b>	<b>Gallons Per Day (GDP)</b>
- Max Daily Withdrawal	300,000
- Avg. Daily Withdrawal	200,000
<b>USAGE</b>	<b>Gallons Per Day (GDP)</b>
<b>Average Daily Demand</b>	<b>140,000</b>
Peter Johnston & Associates	

Source: A Science Plan for a Comprehensive Regional Assessment of the Atlantic Coastal Plain Aquifer System in Maryland, 2007. Maryland Department of the Environment and the United States Geological Survey

# PROJECTED WATER & SEWER USAGE: 2000 - 2030

**Ridgely Water Usage Projections 2000 - 2030**

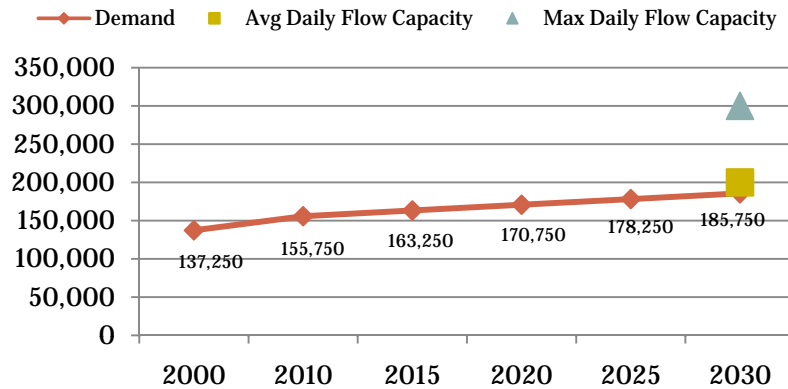
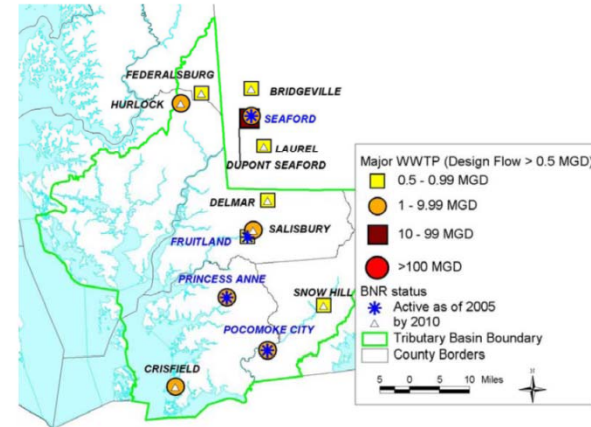
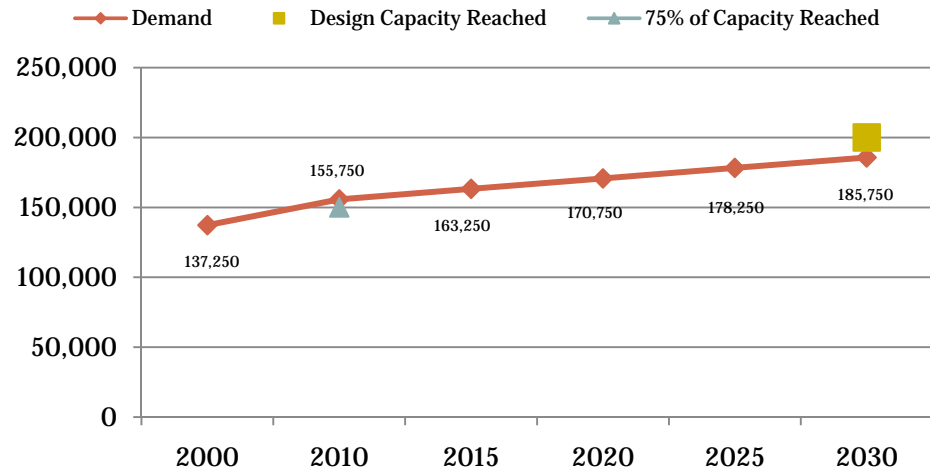


Figure LES3 – Major Wastewater Treatment Plants in the Lower Eastern Shore Basin. Data are available at <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/data/index.htm>.

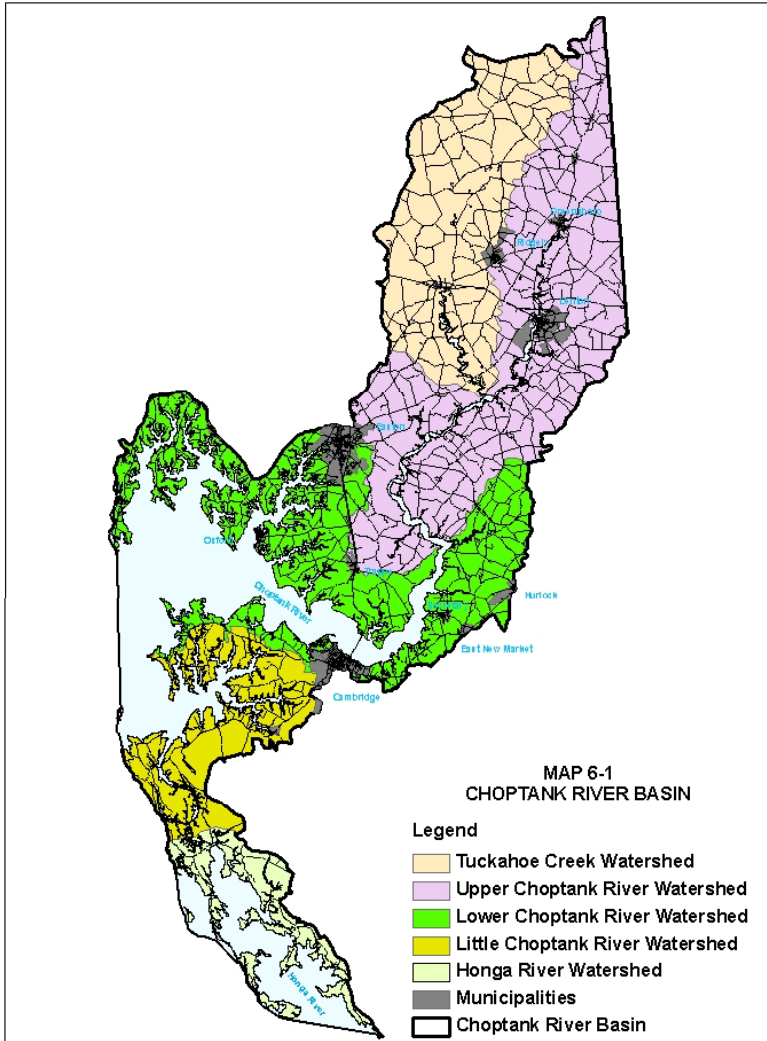


**Wastewater Treatment:** The Town of Ridgely utilizes a spray application system for the treatment of wastewater. The current Design Capacity is below 0.5 million gallons per day (MGD) and will remain below 0.5 MGD through the planning period 2000 - 2030.

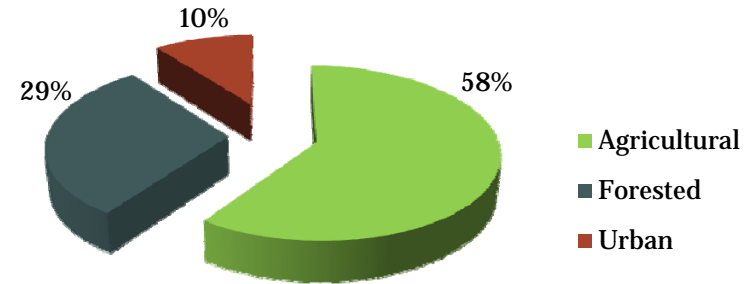
**Ridgely Sewer Usage Projections 2000 - 2030**



# CHOPTANK RIVER BASIN & LAND USE



**Land Use in Choptank River Basin**



**RIDGELY'S SHARE OF THE RIVER BASIN & WATERSHED**

Location	Acres	% in Ridgely
River Basin	580,054	0.2%
Upper Choptank Watershed	163,683	0.7%
Tuckahoe Watershed	98,274	1.2%
Town of Ridgely	1,193	100.0%

Peter Johnston & Associated  
Maryland Property View 2002: Land Use



# NON-POINT SOURCE LOADING ESTIMATES

NON-POINT SOURCE LOADING ESTIMATES – BASE 2002 LAND USE					
BASIN & WATERSHED CHARACTERISTICS		ANNUAL LOAD			
Classification	% Impervious Cover	TN lbs/yr	TP lbs/yr	TSS lbs/yr	FC # billion/year
Choptank River Basin	2.29	3,591,307	317,597	68,337,653	23,425,136
Upper Choptank River Watershed	2.73	703,851	89,278	17,546,239	8,071,568
Tuckhoe River Watershed	1.47	414,762	56,620	10,213,977	4,164,837
Town of Ridgely	19.78	7,454	1,038	187,371	216,292
% of Choptank River Basin	N/A	0.21%	0.33%	0.27%	0.92%
% of Choptank River Watershed	N/A	1.06%	1.16%	1.07%	2.68%
% of Tuckahoe Creek Watershed	N/A	1.80%	1.83%	1.83%	5.19%

Peter Johnston & Associates

NON-POINT SOURCE LOADINGS – BASE 2002 LAND USE AND 2030 RIDGELY LAND USE					
BASIN & WATERSHED CHARACTERISTICS		ANNUAL LOAD			
Classification	% Impervious Cover	TN lbs/yr	TP lbs/yr	TSS lbs/yr	FC # billion/year
Choptank River Basin	2.3	3,591,630	317,618	68,351,950	23,474,762
Upper Choptank River Watershed	2.8	704,006	89,287	17,553,339	8,096,895
Tuckhoe River Watershed	1.5	414,927	56,631	10,221,099	4,189,059
Town of Ridgely	25.5	7,776	1,059	201,642	265,874
% of Choptank River Basin	N/A	0.22%	0.33%	0.30%	1.13%
% of Choptank River Watershed	N/A	1.10%	1.19%	1.15%	3.28%
% of Tuckahoe Creek Watershed	N/A	1.87%	1.87%	1.97%	6.35%

Peter Johnston & Associates

Source: Derived from the Chesapeake Bay Program Watershed Model



## NON-POINT SOURCE LOADING ESTIMATES

DIFFERENCE IN NON-POINT SOURCE – LOADING 2002 BASE LAND USE WITH 2030 RIDGELY LAND USE					
Location	% Impervious Cover	TN lb/year	TP lb/year	TSS lb/year	FC # billion/year
Choptank River Basin	0.012	0.01%	0.01%	0.02%	0.21%
Upper Choptank River Watershed	0.021	0.05%	0.02%	0.08%	0.60%
Tuckahoe Creek Watershed	0.034	0.08%	0.04%	0.14%	1.15%
Peter Johnston & Associates					

**Assumptions:** Assumptions for non-point source loading estimates include the following:

- Relatively minor impacts from Town growth plans on overall loadings (Basin/Watershed).
- Town officials should not be misled by the modeling exercise, even considering relative minor impacts associated with Town growth, officials must remember that Ridgely's growth is only one aspect of potential land use changes in the river basin and watersheds.
- The modeling only accounts for land use changes associated with Ridgely's planned growth and according to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), a "Tributary Strategy Point-Source Cap" exists for Ridgely of 5,217 pounds of TN and 451 pounds of TP, indicating that Ridgely Build-Out would exceed these limits (potentially limiting growth).
- Realistically, changes in non-point source loadings will need to be accounted for in context of the water resource elements for Caroline, Queen Anne's, Talbot, and Dorchester Counties as well as the other municipalities in the region (including growth in Delaware).

## CONCLUSIONS: STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IMPACTS

- ❖ Limit impervious surface areas to 10% in identified critical or sensitive areas and permit open section roadways in new developments.
- ❖ Incorporate non-structural best management practices (BMPs) such as natural conservation areas, roof/non-roof top disconnection, vegetated swales, sheet flow to buffer, reduced impervious cover to the maximum extent practicable and promote environmentally sensitive design (ESD) or low impact development (LID) techniques.
- ❖ Maintain existing forest cover- promote enhancement of contiguous forest areas.
- ❖ Work with Caroline County to address failing septic systems in areas that can be served by public water and sewer (Trinity-Boonsboro).
- ❖ Allow narrower, shorter streets, rights-of-way, and sidewalks. Streets may be as narrow as 22 ft. in neighborhoods serving low traffic volumes; open space designs and clustering will reduce street lengths; rights-of-way can be reduced by minimizing sidewalk width, providing sidewalks on one side of the road, and reducing the border width between the street and sidewalks.

## CONCLUSIONS: STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IMPACTS

- ❖ Allow smaller radii for turn-arounds as low as 33 ft.; use a landscaped island in the center of the cul-de-sac and design these areas to treat stormwater runoff.
- ❖ Allow grass channels or biofilters for residential street drainage and stormwater treatment.
- ❖ Parking ratios should be interpreted as maximum number of spaces; permit shared parking arrangements; minimum parking stall width should be less than 9 ft. and stall length less than 18 ft.
- ❖ Require parking lots be landscaped. Relax setbacks to allow for bioretention islands or other stormwater practices in landscaped areas.
- ❖ Adopt flexible design criteria to allow developers to use clustered development and open space designs.
- ❖ Reduce minimum lots sizes. Relax setbacks and allow narrower frontages to reduce total road length; eliminate long driveways.

## CONCLUSIONS: STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IMPACTS

- ❖ Allow for shared driveways and alternative impervious surfaces.
- ❖ Direct rooftop runoff to pervious surfaces.
- ❖ Designate a minimum buffer width and provide mechanisms for long-term protection.
- ❖ Limit clearing, grading, and earth disturbance to that required to develop the lot.
- ❖ Provide long-term protection of large tracts of contiguous forested areas.
- ❖ Promote the use of native plantings.
- ❖ Provide incentives for conserving natural areas through density compensation, property tax reduction, and flexibility in the design process.

# IMPLEMENTATION



**USING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO CREATE THE  
RIDGELY OF TOMORROW BY IMPLEMENTING  
GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

## PROMOTE “PLACE-MAKING PRINCIPLES”

- ❖ **Continuity and Enclosure**: The form and fabric of a place defines the living environment and establishes a hierarchy of both public/private spaces for clarity of function and movement.
- ❖ **Quality of the Public Realm**: Good urban design provides a sense of well being and amenity by ensuring recognition of the natural context and the functional requirements of the community as well as responding with public spaces and routes that are lively and pleasant to use
- ❖ **Ease of Movement**: Ease of movement for residents and visitors is reinforced by consideration of connectivity and permeability.
- ❖ **Legibility**: Legibility principles establish an understanding of place and way-finding for residents and visitors, while a discernable planned structure ensures that the living environment has a clear image and is easy to understand.
- ❖ **Adaptability**: Provisions for changing lifestyles and community needs enhances the future social and economic sustainability of a community - adaptable space provides for flexible uses, gradual change, where buildings and areas adapt to a variety of present and future uses, including the reuse of historic buildings and spaces.
- ❖ **Diversity**: Diversity of space and function provides a range of experience and choice.

# A PLACE THAT HAS QUALITY IN THE PUBLIC REALM

## CONTINUITY & ENCLOSURE

Promote the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development, which clearly defines private and public areas.



Historic building and structures can serve as architectural models for new buildings and structures.

“The primary task of all urban architects and landscape designers is the physical definition of streets and public places of shared use.”

Principle 19: *Charter of New Urbanism*

“Parking should be located to the rear or side of buildings. All new development should be constructed with sidewalks to promote pedestrian travel.”



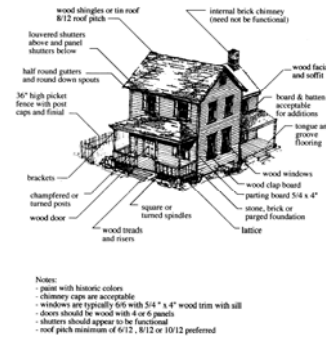
# A PLACE WITH ITS OWN IDENTITY

## CHARACTER

Promote character in Ridgely by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape, and culture.

“The positive features of a place and its people contribute to its special character and sense of identity. They include landscapes, building traditions and materials, patterns of local life, and other factors that make one place different from another. The best places are memorable, with a character, which people can appreciate easily.”

By Design: *Urban Design in Planning*



# A PLACE WITH ATTRACTIVE OUTDOOR AREAS

## PEOPLE ORIENTED

Promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered, and that work effectively.

“Above all else, a city is a means of providing a maximum number of social contacts and satisfaction. When the open spaces gape too widely and the dispersal is too constant, the people lack a stage for their activities and the drama of their life lacks sharp focus.”

Lewis Mumford: *The Highway and the City*



“Buildings should be built on a human scale (i.e., where buildings do not dwarf the people and where the detail, materials, and building design lend an intimate and personal feel to the streetscape). Buildings facing streets shall incorporate pedestrian scaled entrances.” (Easton, Maryland)

“Outdoor seating and dining areas that face onto the street should be encouraged such as this outdoor café in Trappe, Maryland).”



# A PLACE THAT IS EASY TO MOVE THROUGH

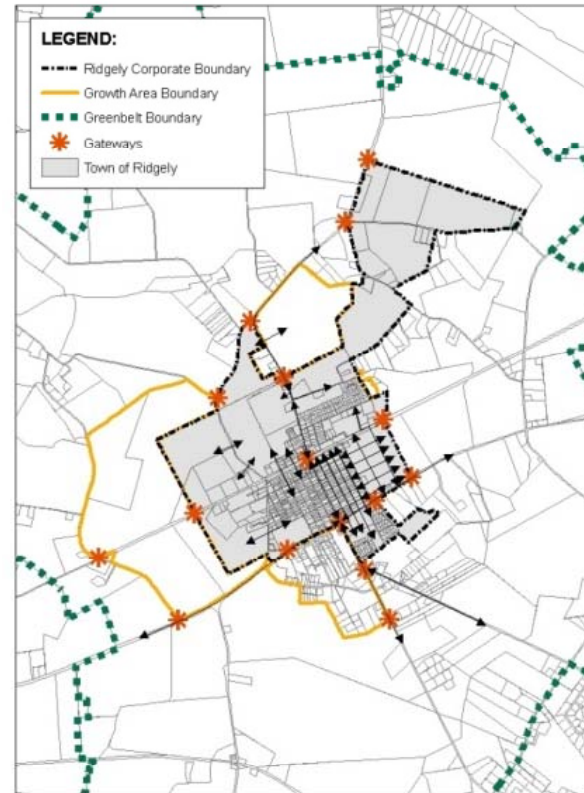
## EASE OF MOVEMENT

Promote access and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transportation.

“In Houston, a person walking is somebody on the way to their car.”

Anthony Downs: *Charter of New Urbanism*

RIDGELY CONNECTIONS & GATEWAYS



“It is Ridgely’s express public policy that when new streets are constructed, they should continue the pattern of existing streets, connecting to the 1867 grid and including alleyways in residential neighborhoods.”

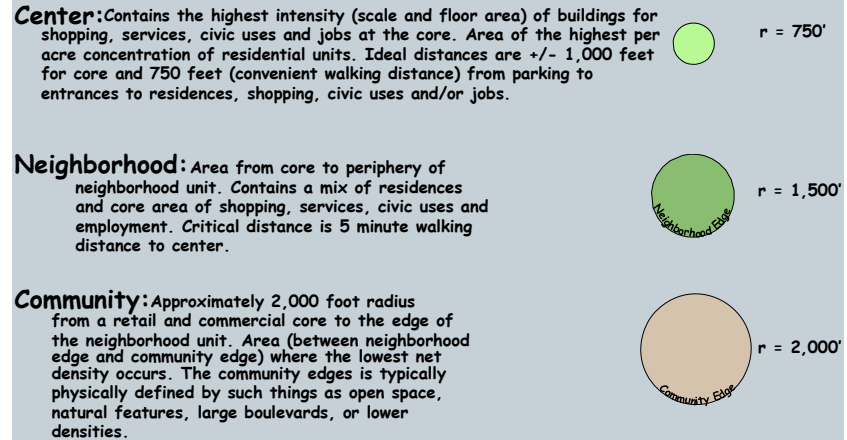
# A PLACE WITH A CLEAR IMAGE & FORM

## LEGIBILITY

Promote legibility through development that provides recognizable routes, intersections, and landmarks to help people find their way.

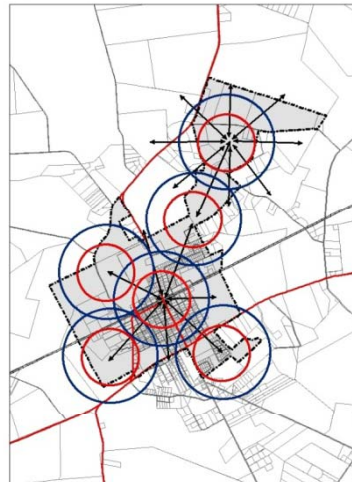
“In Colonial New England, Towns were laid out collectively by the community and the boundaries extended as far as the meeting bell could be heard. The founding of homes and businesses focused around the “heart” of the community – the town green was its cultural, economic, and spiritual center. From the local hilltop, people could see their community laid out and understand it.

Stephanie Bothwell: *Charter of New Urbanism*



“The Village should provide for a central and integrated location with equal access from the surrounding neighborhoods to serve as the community focal point.”

RIDGELY CENTERS, NODES, & CIRCULATION



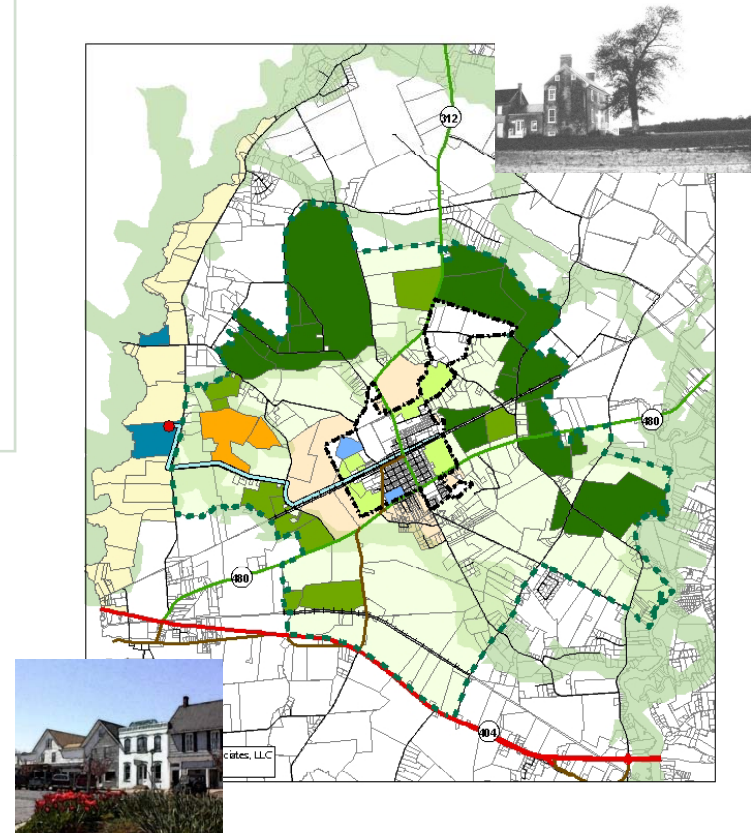
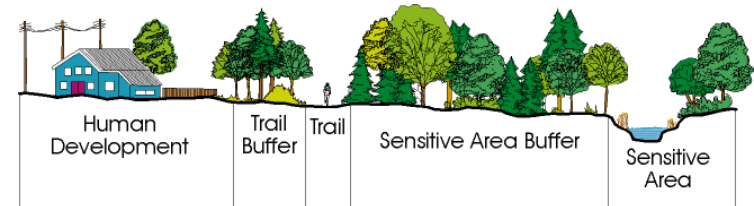
# A PLACE THAT PROMOTES RESOURCE CONSERVATION

## PRESERVATION & PROTECTION

Promote the preservation and protection of historic and natural resources, integrate those resources with society, and minimize the impacts of human activities on the natural environment.

“Where you find a people who believe that man and nature are indivisible, and that survival and health are contingent upon an understanding of nature and her processes, these societies will be very different, as will their towns, cities, and landscapes. The hydraulic civilizations, the good farmer through time, the vernacular city builders, have all displayed this acuity.”

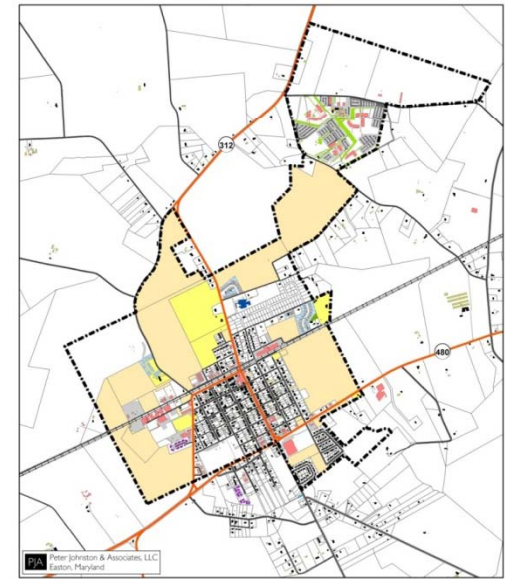
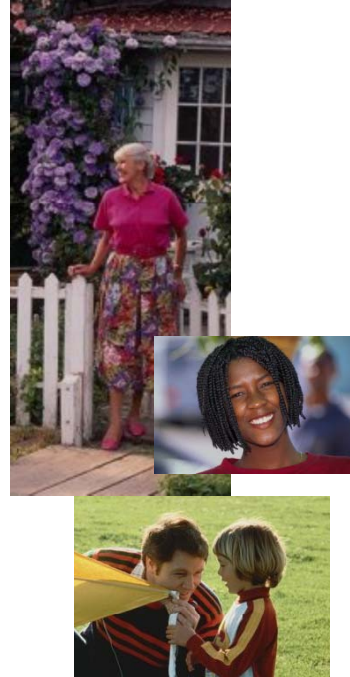
Ian McHarg: *Design with Nature*



# A PLACE WITH VARIETY & CHOICE

## DIVERSITY

Promote diversity and choice through a mix of compatible developments that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs.



“Vital places often have a mix of uses, which involves different people using the same parts of a building or place at different times of the day, as well as different uses happening in different parts of a building or space at the same time.”

By Design: *Urban Design in Planning*



## APPENDIX B: IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The “Implementation Matrix” is a general reference document that outlines the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the 2009 *Ridgely Comprehensive Plan*; Chapters 2 through 8 (Land Use & Growth Management; Municipal Growth; Community Facilities; Resource Conservation; Water Resources; Heritage Preservation; and Transportation).

**TABLE 1: LAND USE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>PRIMARY GOAL:</b> Preserve the small town atmosphere and qualities that make Ridgely a desirable place to live and work.	<b>OBJECTIVE #1:</b> Preserve Town character and residential neighborhoods and ensure that new development is consistent with existing character.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #1:</b> Ensure that Ridgely’s plans and ordinances conform with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #2:</b> Improve property values and the climate for new investment and reinvestment by addressing key infrastructure issues, such as water and sewer, roads and streets, and other capital projects.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #2:</b> Ensure that all development and redevelopment is compatible with the existing character of Ridgely and encourage the revitalization and continued improvement of the Town with a special emphasis on the Town Center, Central Business District, and Neighborhood Conservation areas. To accomplish this goal, the Town Commissioners should specifically identify future revitalization areas. In addition, the Town should review the Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map, and Subdivision Regulations to integrate safeguards for community character.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #3:</b> Protect sensitive environmental areas and landmark historic sites and structures.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #3:</b> Promote sensitive area protection and ensure that development employs best management practices to minimize adverse impacts on water quality and habitat.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #4:</b> Encourage the restoration, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of existing buildings.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #4:</b> Promote inter-jurisdictional coordination and future cooperative planning and zoning efforts with Caroline County:

**TABLE 1: LAND USE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the Caroline County Council of Governments (COG), which provides Ridgely a forum to discuss issues and opportunities with County officials. In addition, the County and Ridgely Planning Commissions should meet annually or periodically to discuss planning issues of mutual interest.</li> <li>• Encourage Caroline County to refer plans of proposed development, zoning changes, and subdivisions located within two miles of the Town to Ridgely officials for review and comment.</li> <li>• Work with Caroline County to ensure the adequacy of public facilities provided and that any new development adjacent to Ridgely minimizes impacts on the rural character surrounding the community.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #5:</b> Expand the tax base by encouraging appropriate infill and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #5:</b> Encourage the continuation of agricultural uses adjacent to Ridgely to maintain the rural character of the community, where appropriate.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #6:</b> Encourage the development of new well designed and properly located commercial and industrial facilities and promote the maintenance and revitalization of existing commercial and industrial uses.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #6:</b> Encourage the redevelopment and re-use of vacant buildings insuring compatibility with surrounding residential neighborhoods.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #7:</b> Maintain and create desirable residential environments based on “Smart Neighborhood” principles.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #7:</b> Encourage “Community Character Policies” that include the following design principles:</p>



**TABLE 1: LAND USE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish architectural guidelines as well as yard setbacks, bulk standards, and height restrictions to retain or promote desirable community character;</li> <li>• Retain or create site designs for a pedestrian-friendly community, which shall be encouraged and facilitated;</li> <li>• Insure development retains the pattern, scale, and character of the surrounding neighborhood;</li> <li>• Insure the review of development proposals to place priority on the protection of historic and culturally significant buildings, monuments, and spaces contributing to the Town’s character; and</li> <li>• Maintain connections to the rural landscape by encouraging the protection of farms and forested areas outside the Town boundary in the Ridgely Greenbelt.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #8:</b> Ensure new development is consistent with overall growth objectives by adopting appropriate development codes/standards and ensuring that all new development is appropriate in scale and size.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #8:</b> Continue to prepare a Planning Commission Annual Report in accordance with Section 3.09 of Article 66B to monitor plan implementation.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #9:</b> Improve coordination between Ridgely and Caroline County to promote inter-jurisdictional coordination and cooperation, as required by State law.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #9:</b> Consider detailed planning initiatives prior to regulatory updates and revisions, such as a strategic revitalization plan for Ridgely, to more clearly define Town goals and solicit broader public involvement in the development of action strategies to address</p>

**TABLE 1: LAND USE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS
		community needs and desires.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #10:</b> Ensure that residents and businesses have adequate public services and facilities to protect the health, safety, and welfare for an attractive live/work environment.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #10:</b> Review, update, and revise Ridgely’s Design Guidelines, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision Regulations consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
		<b>SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS ZONING ORDINANCE/SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS</b>
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #1:</b> Update the Town’s regulations consistent with the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan including creating new zoning provisions to implement the Land Use Plan and adopting a new official zoning map, which include the digitization of the Ridgely Zoning Map in the Town’s Geographic Information System-GIS.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #2:</b> Review, update, and revise (if required) special planning districts such as overlay and floating zones to encourage and facilitate context sensitive infill and redevelopment with an emphasis on appropriate design.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #3:</b> Establish development standards and guidance for infill, redevelopment, and new development that ensures compliance with the Town’s design guidelines.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #4:</b> Promote the upkeep and maintenance of existing buildings by adopting and enforcing a building code, livability code, nuisance ordinance, and related items to improve and maintain the Town.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #5:</b> Ensure that the approval of land subdivision, rezoning, special exceptions,

**TABLE 1: LAND USE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS
		variances, and capital expenditures are consistent with the Ridgely Comprehensive Plan.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #6:</b> Revise current development review processes. For other than permitted uses requiring a building permit, require all applicants to first submit a concept plan, including proposed building types and typical building elevations. Periodically update the development review and approval process to ensure that reviews can be carried out in a timely fashion and ensure appropriate decisions are made with regard to plan review and approvals required for projects.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #7:</b> Where possible, streamline current regulations and create flexible processes/procedures to promote investment and reinvestment in existing properties and promote context sensitive design for infill and redevelopment.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #8:</b> Establish development standards that are consistent with the existing lot and development pattern in surrounding neighborhoods and encourage the adaptive reuse of existing buildings.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #9:</b> Adopt or update zoning review fees that cover the cost of Town review, including the cost of any professional assistance the Planning Commission or Town Commissioners may need to adequately evaluate the merits of a proposed development.

**TABLE 1: LAND USE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS
		<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #10:</b> Update the <i>Ridgely Design Guidelines</i> and the <i>Ridgely Zoning Ordinance</i> based on the following basic design principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighborhoods are compact, identifiable, and their boundaries are visually discernible;</li> <li>• Neighborhoods are linear (cross-roads or grid patterned), with variations to enhance views and landmarks;</li> <li>• Neighborhoods are visually coherent and character is established through consistent rules of organization and architecture;</li> <li>• Street corridors are visually bounded and intimate in feeling. Street trees, sidewalks, and front yard design elements create visual layers and contribute to the intimacy of streetscape;</li> <li>• Street blocks help describe component neighborhoods, suggesting the role of the street as a channel for neighborly interaction;</li> <li>• Neighborhoods accommodate a mix of uses, where appropriate, even at the “town” scale;</li> <li>• Parking is accommodated through a mix of on-street and unobtrusive off-street strategies. Large-scale parking lots are avoided, and older lots are redesigned into smaller landscaped segments;</li> <li>• Most important, neighborhoods and their setting convey a strong “sense of place”; and</li> <li>• Landmark historic sites and structures are</li> </ul>

**TABLE 1: LAND USE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS
		protected.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #11:</b> Establish protection standards for “Sensitive Areas.”
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #12:</b> Ensure appropriate provisions to address flooding and stormwater management and encourage the use of innovative low impact stormwater management techniques, when feasible.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #13:</b> Eliminate the conversion of single-family homes to multi-family units by adopting a strong land use plan and implementing regulations that clearly differentiate housing types and densities.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #14:</b> Update the Planned Unit Development and Neighborhood Revitalization provisions of the Zoning Ordinance to reflect infrastructure limitations and to enhance process, procedure, and design.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #15:</b> For the Ridgely Zoning Ordinance: develop a Table of Permitted Uses and Subdivision Checklist; examine height, area, and bulk requirements to create consistency with the Comprehensive Plan; improve sensitive areas protection and landscaping standards; and include reference tables for lot size and setback requirements.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #16:</b> Update the Town’s Subdivision Regulations consistent with the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #17:</b> Work with Caroline

**TABLE 1: LAND USE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS
		County to encourage strong land use controls on rural lands adjacent to Ridgely within the Growth Area and coordinate with the County in the review of development proposals near the Town.

**TABLE 2: MUNICIPAL GROWTH**

MUNICIPAL GROWTH GOALS	MUNICIPAL GROWTH OBJECTIVES	MUNICIPAL GROWTH RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><b>PRIMARY GOAL:</b> Determine the future pattern of growth and development in Ridgely and address associated impacts on facilities, services, and infrastructure.</p>	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #1:</b> Perform a detailed impact analysis of new growth and development on Town services, facilities, and infrastructure.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #1:</b> Review, update, and revise Ridgely development standards, guidelines, regulations, processes, and procedures to achieve consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. This is particularly important for infill and redevelopment, annexation, and infrastructure.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #2:</b> Address potential impacts of growth and development in the Town’s Capital Improvements Program (CIP), which should be updated annually.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #2:</b> Preserve the small town historic and rural character of Ridgely, while also preserving single-family neighborhood community identity by initiating local municipal policies and regulations to stabilize neighborhoods.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #3:</b> Initiate a Master Planning Program for Town infill (Planned Development Areas) and growth areas to define Town expectations for new development.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #3:</b> Initiate immediate planning, design, and engineering for infrastructure upgrades to accommodate planned developments and infill and redevelopment (water and sewer).</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #4:</b> Improve inter-jurisdictional initiatives with Caroline County to coordinate growth and development for effective growth management.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #4:</b> Require new planned development assess their impacts, including fiscal and environmental impacts.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #5:</b> Update Town policies, processes, and regulations to address infill and redevelopment issues and opportunities including updating the Town’s design guidelines.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #5:</b> Coordinate with Caroline County regarding County zoning, which surrounds the Town, and other planning initiatives such as watershed planning. Regarding County zoning, Ridgely should request enhanced coordination and cooperation from the Caroline County Department of Planning and Codes Administration to ensure compatible development with Ridgely’s historic character and unique location. Low density residential development in Ridgely Growth Areas should be discouraged.</p>
		<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #6:</b> Coordinate with Caroline</p>

**TABLE 2: MUNICIPAL GROWTH**

MUNICIPAL GROWTH GOALS	MUNICIPAL GROWTH OBJECTIVES	MUNICIPAL GROWTH RECOMMENDATIONS
		County to amend the Ridgely Growth Area and Greenbelt as shown in the <i>West Caroline County Comprehensive Plan</i> to create consistency between the County and Town Comprehensive Plans.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #7:</b> Meet with the Caroline County Planning Commission to discuss the Ridgely Comprehensive Plan.



**TABLE 3: COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOALS	COMMUNITY FACILITIES OBJECTIVES	COMMUNITY FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><b>PRIMARY GOAL:</b> Provide an appropriate array of community facilities and services, required to maintain the public health safety and welfare of the residents of Ridgely.</p>	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #1:</b> Assure the continued expansion of public facilities and services is commensurate with local financial capabilities and the capacity of each system.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #1:</b> Annex the Town’s existing wastewater treatment site (WWTP), which currently lies outside corporate boundaries, and seek Priority Funding Area (PFA) status from the Maryland Department of Planning.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #2:</b> Assure the provision of community facilities and services to all living and working areas of Ridgely, accomplished in a manner which is least disruptive to the environmental qualities of the area.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #2:</b> Require adequate public facilities to serve any proposed new development. This includes assessing current fee structures and requirements.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #3:</b> Encourage the efficient use of natural resources in the area, such as water, waterways, and scenic areas for the benefit of all residents of Ridgely.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #3:</b> Update and/or revise Ridgely infrastructure facilities reports, plans, policies, and regulations including, but not limited to, the Capital Improvements Plan and Water &amp; Sewer Subsidiary Plans, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map utilities systems in Ridgely including water and sewer facilities for the Ridgely Geographic Information System (GIS).</li> <li>• Outline areas for future development to be incorporated in the Capital Improvements Plan and Water and Sewer Subsidiary Plans.</li> <li>• Map water and sewer service area classifications for Ridgely in relation to approved planned developments, future infill and redevelopment, and growth areas, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.</li> <li>• Ascertain an accurate measure of capacity and costs within existing systems and what upgrades and/or expansions will be needed to</li> </ul>

**TABLE 3: COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOALS	COMMUNITY FACILITIES OBJECTIVES	COMMUNITY FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS
		accommodate growth and development.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #4:</b> Encourage the use of public lands and buildings for a variety of public purposes.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #4:</b> Upgrade and expand the Town’s water and sewerage facilities and services to accommodate infill and redevelopment, as needed.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #5:</b> Conduct regular assessments of the Ridgely Fire Department to determine if expansion of facilities is needed as the Town’s population increases.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #6:</b> Ensure adequate park and open space land and facilities to meet current and projected demands.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #7:</b> Coordinate planning and programming of community facilities and services with the appropriate Caroline County and State agencies and entities.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #8:</b> Request that the County update the <i>Caroline County Master Water &amp; Sewerage Plan</i> to reflect the Town’s planned water and sewer service areas and priorities consistent with State laws.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #9:</b> Consider establishing official Town policies for annexation, water and sewer extension/allocation, and other infrastructure, facilities, and services.

**TABLE 4: RESOURCE CONSERVATION**

CONSERVATION GOALS	CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES	CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><b>PRIMARY GOAL:</b> Ensure sensitive areas protection in accordance with State laws and preserve the natural resources and features of the Town of Ridgely and its surrounding environs.</p>	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #1:</b> Provide specific protection measures for sensitive areas as defined in State law.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #1:</b> Amend the <i>Ridgely Zoning Ordinance</i> and <i>Subdivision Regulations</i> to provide specific protection measures for sensitive areas as per the requirements of Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #2:</b> Minimize adverse impacts on water quality through “Best Management Practices” BMP’s.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #2:</b> Assess future development proposals in light of the site’s physical suitability to accommodate development, while protecting natural resources, sensitive areas, and the quality of the Town’s groundwater and encourage Caroline County to develop similar policies and regulations</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #3:</b> Assess future development proposals in light of the site’s physical suitability to accommodate development, while protecting natural resources and the quality of the Town’s groundwater.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #3:</b> Consider incorporating environmentally sensitive building and site-design guidelines that follow LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) models into the subdivision review process to minimize the potential negative impacts of development on natural resources and sensitive areas.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #4:</b> Ensure new development and redevelopment minimizes on-site pollutant loadings/runoff through stormwater and sediment/erosion control plans.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #4:</b> Conserve forest and woodland resources, Forest Interior Dwelling Species (FIDS) habitat, and green infrastructure (hubs and corridors), and wherever possible, replenish them through tree conservation measures and replanting programs in compliance with the Maryland Forest Conservation Act.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #5:</b> Identify wetlands and floodplains in order to ensure the special protection they may need.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #5:</b> Amend Town regulations to incorporate the “Conservation Corridor” as described in the Land Use Plan to protect sensitive</p>

**TABLE 4: RESOURCE CONSERVATION**

CONSERVATION GOALS	CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES	CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS
		environmental areas.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #6:</b> Conserve forest and woodland resources and, wherever possible, replenish them through tree conservation measures and replanting programs.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #6:</b> Work with Caroline County to review development proposals near the Town and ensure that sensitive areas are addressed.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #7:</b> Promote the protection and preservation of valuable ecological lands (Green Infrastructure) around Ridgely.	
	<b>OBJECTIVE #8:</b> Protect the Town’s natural scenic vistas by working with Caroline County to encourage strong land use controls on rural lands adjacent to Ridgely.	
	<b>OBJECTIVE #9:</b> Encourage Caroline County support for the greenway trail connection from Ridgely to Adkins Arboretum and Tuckahoe State Park.	
	<b>OBJECTIVE #10:</b> Update the Ridgely Geographic Information System-GIS for the mapping of natural resources and sensitive areas.	

**TABLE 5: WATER RESOURCES**

WATER RESOURCES GOALS	WATER RESOURCES OBJECTIVES	WATER RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><b>PRIMARY GOAL:</b> Maintain and protect an adequate and safe water supply to serve current and future residents of Ridgely.</p>	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #1:</b> Maintain and protect an adequate water supply to serve the residents of Ridgely and collaborate with Caroline County to serve current and future populations.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #1:</b> Implement urban Best Management Practices or BMP’s for Ridgely as recommended by the Tributary Strategies and the Implementation Chapter of this Comprehensive Plan.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #2:</b> Restore and protect water quality and contribute toward meeting water quality regulatory requirements in rivers and streams in the Upper Choptank River Watershed.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #2:</b> Update and/or revise Ridgely’s <i>Stormwater Management Ordinance</i>, programs, and other development standards to require environmental site design (ESD) techniques that optimize</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation of natural features (e.g., drainage patterns, soil, vegetation);</li> <li>• Minimize impervious surfaces (e.g., pavement, concrete channels, roofs);</li> <li>• Decrease runoff to maintain discharge timing; and</li> <li>• Increase infiltration and evapotranspiration and use other nonstructural practices or innovative technologies approved by MDE.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #3:</b> Address current water quality impacts as well as future impacts from land development and population growth.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #3:</b> Work with Caroline County to develop watershed planning and management guidelines and relate all development to its impact on the County’s water resources.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #4:</b> Protect the habitat value of rivers and streams in the Upper Choptank River Watershed.</p>	
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #5:</b> Work with Caroline County to</p>	

**TABLE 5: WATER RESOURCES**

WATER RESOURCES GOALS	WATER RESOURCES OBJECTIVES	WATER RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS
	develop watershed planning and management guidelines that relate land use and development to their impacts on water resources.	
	<b>OBJECTIVE #6:</b> Work with the Federal, State, Caroline County governments to address infrastructure limitations in Ridgely to achieve water and sewer service goals and water quality improvement goals.	
	<b>OBJECTIVE #7:</b> Develop Town-wide water conservation methods and policies and encourage innovative technologies for stormwater management such as bio-roofs, rain gardens, rain barrels, and street-side buffer areas for home and business owners.	

**TABLE 6: HERITAGE PRESERVATION**

HERITAGE PRESERVATION GOALS	HERITAGE PRESERVATION OBJECTIVES	HERITAGE PRESERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>PRIMARY GOAL:</b> Preserve Ridgely’s heritage resources.	<b>OBJECTIVE #1:</b> Encourage the appropriate preservation of historical, cultural, archeological, natural, and scenic resources.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #1:</b> Promote historic rehabilitation and revitalization tax credits and other historic preservation measures to improve the existing housing stock.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #2:</b> Improve Ridgely’s inventory of historic sites, structures, and heritage attractions.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #2:</b> Continue to build heritage tourism attractions in Ridgely such as the Ridgely Railroad House, the Cow Barn, and the Rails-to-Trail, while also promoting the revitalization of the Town Center and Central Business District.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #3:</b> Designate a list of Landmark Historic Sites and Structure for the Town and address policy/regulatory mechanisms to preserve these sites and structures.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #3:</b> Seek ways to ensure that the Eastern Shore vernacular architecture found along Ridgely’s streets is maintained and preserved as a valuable economic asset and an important heritage resource.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #4:</b> Encourage and support heritage preservation through mapping, planning, and regulatory mechanisms.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #4:</b> Consider the preparation of a “Ridgely Historic Preservation Plan,” including the mapping, documenting, and inventorying of current heritage resources and scenic and cultural landscapes. This includes designating a list of official landmark historic sites and structures, encouraging the establishment of a local historic district, and promoting recognition through the awarding of plaques.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #5:</b> Coordinate strategies to achieve mutual County/Town heritage preservation goals and objective.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #5:</b> Update and revise planning policies and regulatory mechanisms, including Design Guidelines, to assist in the preservation of heritage resources in Ridgely.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #6:</b> Encourage the development of Historic Scenic Highways for Ridgely and the region.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #6:</b> Adopt flexible zoning provisions that promote the adaptive reuse of

**TABLE 6: HERITAGE PRESERVATION**

HERITAGE PRESERVATION GOALS	HERITAGE PRESERVATION OBJECTIVES	HERITAGE PRESERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS
		<p>historic structures for public and private uses including, but not limited to, bed and breakfast establishments, craft/gift shops, small retail operations, cafes and restaurants, museums, and studio space for artisans, when such uses minimize exterior structural alterations.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #7:</b> Encourage industries that support heritage preservation.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #7:</b> Assist property owners in identifying financial incentives for rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of older buildings that exhibit important or traditional architectural features. New construction of commercial and residential buildings, including new development, infill and redevelopment, should reflect the characteristics of Ridgely’s best historic architecture, where appropriate.</p>
		<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #8:</b> Establish mechanisms through partnerships to supply technical and professional assistance regarding heritage resources, including assistance to property owners for the rehabilitation and/or restoration of heritage structures in Ridgely.</p>
		<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #9:</b> Encourage the protection and rehabilitation of historic homes and buildings by evaluating the use of Façade Easements, Enterprise Funds, and Rehabilitation Tax Incentives, as well as working with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, the Maryland Historical Trust, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation to</p>



**TABLE 6: HERITAGE PRESERVATION**

HERITAGE PRESERVATION GOALS	HERITAGE PRESERVATION OBJECTIVES	HERITAGE PRESERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS
		obtain financial support for rehabilitation.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #10:</b> Partner with local entities such as the Eastern Shore Heritage Incorporated (ESHI), Caroline County Government, the Caroline County Historical Society, and the Caroline County Economic Development Corporation to promote and enhance heritage preservation and tourism initiatives in Ridgely.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #11:</b> Partner with Caroline County and the Maryland State Department of Transportation (MDOT) - State Highway Administration (SHA) to promote Ridgely in regards to the benefits from Scenic and Historic Byway designations.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #12:</b> Work with Caroline County to explore ways to provide local funding to assist with heritage preservation, neighborhood revitalization, and tourism in Ridgely and other municipalities.

**TABLE 7: TRANSPORTATION**

TRANSPORTATION GOALS	TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES	TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><b>PRIMARY GOAL:</b> Provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods and encourage regional and local coordination of transportation decisions.</p>	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #1:</b> Improve the transport of people and goods along MD Route 404 (Shore Highway) and major collector systems.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #1:</b> Ensure that new development extends the Town’s grid, alley, and sidewalk systems, where appropriate, and that Town/Developer plans and agreements reflect the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan for such systems.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #2:</b> Improve safety for motorists by controlling access along State and County roads.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #2:</b> Adopt the Federal Functional Classification System to maintain a balanced system of streets and provide guidelines for redevelopment of existing streets and the construction of new streets.</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE #3:</b> Ensure development of appropriate vehicle and pedestrian circulation systems to serve designated growth areas and greenbelts.</p>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION #3:</b> Initiate an Infrastructure &amp; Facilities Plan following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, to provide details regarding infrastructure improvements, transportation networks, the proposed Ridgely Bypass, multi-modal transportation opportunities, and a capital improvements component. Such a Plan can be integrated with the Town’s Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). At a minimum, the Plan should review the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Major Collectors</b> - Traffic capacity for the near future and what street improvements may be warranted. Improvements could include installation of curb, gutter, sidewalks, and bike lanes where none exist including planting space between curb and sidewalk.</li> <li>• <b>Minor Collectors</b> - Although, existing streets</li> </ul>

**TABLE 7: TRANSPORTATION**

TRANSPORTATION GOALS	TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES	TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS
		<p>classified as local collectors may not be able to be improved to meet recommended standards, all future minor collectors in Ridgely should conform to standards set forth in the <i>Ridgely Subdivision Regulations</i> and other Town standards and specifications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Residential Streets</b> - A “Capital Improvements Program” should be undertaken to upgrade existing local streets. Such a program should include installation of sidewalks, curb and gutter, and other streetscape improvements, where feasible. Priority streets for improvements should be detailed. Traffic calming measures should be studied and implemented in key locations.</li> <li>• <b>New Streets</b> - Infill and redevelopment projects within Ridgely should be required to expand the modified grid street system and connect to other existing streets as appropriate.</li> <li>• <b>Public Parking</b> – The Land Use Plan emphasizes infill and redevelopment, including development of small-scale retail establishments in the Central Business District. The Town should identify opportunities for public parking.</li> <li>• <b>Pedestrian &amp; Bike Systems</b> - New and upgraded pedestrian and bike systems should focus on providing safe access to the Town Center, Central Business District, other shopping areas, the Ridgely Elementary School, and parks and</li> </ul>

**TABLE 7: TRANSPORTATION**

TRANSPORTATION GOALS	TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES	TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS
		recreation facilities in Town.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #4:</b> Minimize the need for extensive capital investment in upgrading County roads outside of designated growth areas and greenbelts;	<b>RECOMMENDATION #4:</b> New developments should be required to provide sidewalks, including sidewalks along property frontages as well as bike and pedestrian trails, where feasible and appropriate.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #5:</b> Encourage the location of jobs close to population centers in order to reduce vehicle miles of travel; and	<b>RECOMMENDATION #5:</b> Maintain and develop a road network that calms traffic in residential areas and gives appropriate consideration to the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists.
	<b>OBJECTIVE #6:</b> Provide for alternative modes of travel, where appropriate, within designated growth areas and greenbelts such as pedestrian and bicycle routes.	<b>RECOMMENDATION #6:</b> Design new streets and sidewalks to fit with existing neighborhoods and facilitate circulation through the community.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #7:</b> Improve existing streets with walkways, where necessary, to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle movement. Maryland SHA policy is to make all State routes bicycle compatible to promote alternative modes of transportation, which also includes walking and carpooling. The SHA “Sidewalk Retrofit Program” can assist the Town with multi-modal transportation objectives.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #8:</b> Work with appropriate local and State agencies to provide assistance in repairing or reconstructing sidewalks and roads in the community.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #9:</b> Evaluate vacant lots to see if they can be used for off-street parking lots,

**TABLE 7: TRANSPORTATION**

TRANSPORTATION GOALS	TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES	TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS
		especially near neighborhood commercial uses.
		<b>RECOMMENDATION #10:</b> Adopt provisions for Ridgely regulations that insure that all future development provides adequate off-street parking.

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