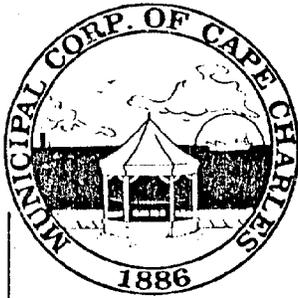


Law. 41



# Municipal Corp. of Cape Charles

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## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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**JMCI** PLANNING  
MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATES

CAPE CHARLES, VIRGINIA

April, 1989

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TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TASK FORCE

Jack Green, PDC Representative  
Rick Hubbard, Town Manager  
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Paul Tickle, Businessman (Pelican Mall)  
Butch Travis, Council Representative  
Jim Wells, Planning Commission Representative  
Catherine Windsor, Planner

TOWN MANAGER

Rick Hubbard

TOWN PLANNER

Catherine Windsor

CONSULTANTS

Planning Management Associates

Joy A. Cipriano, Principal-in Charge  
Elaine F. Killam, Economist  
A. Jack Stodghill, AICP, President

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CAPE CHARLES, VIRGINIA  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



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Prepared By

**PMAC** **PLANNING  
MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATES**

Community Planning · Landscape Architecture  
10227 Warwick Blvd. Newport News, Va. 23601

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THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF CAPE CHARLES, VIRGINIA

INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Planning in local government is a process of establishing community goals and of developing courses of action to achieve such goals. In order for the process to function, each community must develop certain tools as well as establish the administrative capability for using such tools. The major tools of planning established by Virginia Law<sup>1</sup> are as follows:

- (a) The Comprehensive Plan - a long-range plan for the physical development of the town.
- (b) The Subdivision Ordinance - a town regulation prescribing standards for land development and concentrating primarily on residential subdivision development.
- (c) The Zoning Ordinance - a town regulation prescribing the purposes for which land may be used.
- (d) The Capital Improvements Program - an administrative plan of a shorter range duration in which specific projects of the Comprehensive Plan are coordinated with the local budget.
- (e) The Official Map - an official document showing legally established public streets, waterways and public areas of the town.

This document presents a Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Cape Charles.

B. THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IN GENERAL

It is useful at the outset to identify the principal qualities of the Comprehensive Plan and the function of each. The Comprehensive Plan may be said to contain four specific characteristics. First, the Plan should be long range. What is meant by "long range" varies among communities. In large areas where one decision may influence a substantial amount of future growth a longer time frame is needed than in rural areas where growth takes place at a slower pace and involves fewer persons. Many communities establish 20 years as a time frame for the Plan but as a rule a time frame of 10 years for a rural county plan should enable the community to look sufficiently far ahead to make reasonable decisions on most matters. The Virginia Law requires that every five years the Plan be re-evaluated so as to keep it current. Therefore, if any major departure from projected growth trends occurs, subsequent plan revisions would compensate for such change.

The second characteristic of the Comprehensive Plan is that it be concerned with the physical development of the town and the provisions of adequate

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<sup>1</sup>Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, Sections 15.1-427 - 15.1-498

public facilities and services such as schools, public office buildings, recreational areas and utilities. While it is essential to take into consideration economic and social factors in evaluating community needs, the Virginia Law emphasizes that the Comprehensive Plan deal primarily with physical growth and improvements related thereto.

The third characteristic of a Comprehensive Plan is that it be general. This feature is usually interpreted such as to focus the Plan's attention on major development policy and major physical design rather than such specifics as exact site location, detailed cost estimates, engineering design specifications and means of financing public improvements.

The fourth requirement of the Virginia Law requires that the Plan be comprehensive. This requirement has several interpretations. The term "comprehensive" refers primarily to the categories of physical development to be covered in the Plan which are set forth in the Virginia Code as including the following:

- A Land Use Plan
- A Transportation Plan
- A Plan for Public Facilities

Comprehensive may also refer to the coverage of the entire territory of the town as well as consideration of activities of the Planning District or region, of which the town is a part. Comprehensive may also often be given the meaning that it takes into consideration the economic, social and legal structure within which the town functions.

While not specifically required by the Virginia Law, experience suggests that a comprehensive plan should also possess the additional quality of being usable. This refers to the ability of the plan to be: (a) available in a concise and understandable form; (b) up-to-date, so as to reflect current town policies and (c) in an understandable format.

#### C. PREPARATION AND ADOPTION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The overall process of preparation and adoption of a comprehensive plan may be divided into three steps.

Step one is the preparation phase. Under Virginia Law, the Local Planning Commission has the task of preparing and recommending (for adoption) to the governing body the Comprehensive Plan for the Town. If desired, the Plan may be prepared and adopted in separate increments such as the land use plan, highway plan, community facility plan, etc., or as a single document. Because of its technical content, most Planning Commissions rely on a technical staff or consulting staff to prepare the detailed documents while using their own knowledge of the community to make policy decisions on major issues.

Step two is the review and recommendation phase. This includes both the review by Planning Commission members and by the community's citizens. At least one official, duly advertised public hearing must be held by the Planning Commission on a portion of the Comprehensive

Plan prior to recommending its adoption by the Town Council. A copy of any plan to be recommended by the Planning Commission is to be certified to the governing body.

Step three is the formal adoption process. Virginia Law requires that this be done by the elected governing body. The procedure for adoption is as follows:

"After certification of the Plan, or a part thereof, the governing body after a public hearing with notice given as required by Section 15.1-431 shall proceed to a consideration of the plan and shall approve and adopt, amend and adopt, or disapprove the same within six (6) months after such certification (Code Section 15.1450)."

The Code further provides that:

"As the work of preparing the comprehensive plan progresses, the local commission, may from time to time, recommend, and the governing body approve and adopt parts thereof, any such part shall cover one or more major sections or divisions of the town or one or more functional matters (15.1.452)."

#### D. CONTENT AND FORMAT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is presented in a slightly different format from the traditional plan format. It is traditional for the plan to begin with volumes of technical analysis which eventually leads to a few pages called the Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan for Cape Charles begins with the plan. This gives it the prominence and attention it justly deserves. Technical and background analysis is presented behind the plan as support data.

The Comprehensive Plan for of Cape Charles presented herein contains the following components:

##### I. THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The plan for the future development of Cape Charles begins with the development of community issues, goals and strategies that have evolved through the analysis of existing conditions and through public meetings and workshops. The plans presented in this section include the following:

##### FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

A land use plan for the physical territory of the town shows recommendations for the overall growth and development of the town.

## TRANSPORTATION PLAN

A general plan for transportation takes into consideration improvements to the existing road conditions, pedestrian traffic, and rail and harbor needs.

## HOUSING PLAN

This component provides recommendations for improving the quantity and quality of the existing housing stock.

## PUBLIC SERVICES PLAN

This plan component defines the need for public support services and facilities necessary to serve the town's present and future needs. It includes such items as: governmental office needs; water and sewer; solid waste disposal; recreational areas and public safety facilities.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

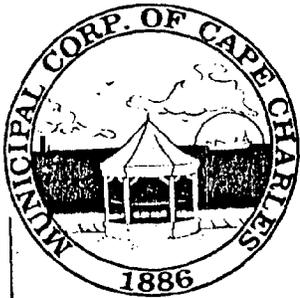
As a special component to meet the needs of Cape Charles, an Historic Preservation Plan has been added. This plan outlines the options available for preserving the special architectural features of Cape Charles.

## II. ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

The analysis of existing conditions includes an evaluation of existing physical conditions, both natural and man-made, which encourage or constrain future growth. These involve land use, community services and facilities, and transportation components.

## II. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND GROWTH

This element includes an evaluation of overall town growth patterns and trends including economic and population factors. A projection of future potential population is the basis for developing the Comprehensive Plan. The projections presented here consist of an evaluation of growth as the town is now developed; an evaluation of the town if major residential development is introduced, and an evaluation of the town if major economic growth is pursued.



# *Municipal Corp. of Cape Charles*

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## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**PMCA** PLANNING  
MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATES

I. THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A. ISSUES, GOALS AND STRATEGIES

An issue may be defined as a matter of community concern. This may be a community need, an existing problem, an unrealized opportunity to be pursued, or a threat to be neutralized. An issue may apply to the overall community or it may identify a need of a specific part of the community. Issues may appear differently to persons having different values; therefore, public discussion and debate is often necessary to reach agreement on goals.

Once an issue has been identified, a community may express its intent to deal with the issue through a goal. A goal is a community statement indicating the direction the government intends to deal with a specific issue. A goal deals with the same subject matter as an issue, but while an issue may be debatable, a goal should represent a consensus arrived at through public group discussions.

A strategy is a tool for pursuing a goal. It addresses questions of "how to proceed". A strategy is in itself one kind of overall plan for changing some specific aspect of the community. Strategies may also take on the form of specific actions such as installation of a capital facility or the adoption of new development policies or ordinances.

A plan addresses the issues and goals through specific strategies. Plans put goals into an action framework by defining them in a form that permits public action. Although comprehensive plans for different types of communities may require different levels of detail, a comprehensive plan for a specific community should emphasize realistic policies and actions that can be implemented using available tools and resources of local government.

The following table presents a basic model showing the relationship between issues, goals and strategies.

Qualities of Issues	Qualities of Goals	Qualities of Strategies
o May describe a condition that should receive attention	o Provides a consensus concerning overall directions for change	o Describes general methods for accomplishing goals
o May focus on an existing problem or may be directed toward a future opportunity	o Enables the community to raise its sights by projecting community thought beyond present problems	o Suggests typical projects or programs to be undertaken by community
o Persons with different viewpoints attach different priorities to a problem or opportunity	o Provides motivations for achieving improvements to the community	o Sets policies under which development is implemented

## B. A SUMMARY OF ISSUES, GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Throughout the Background Analysis for the Comprehensive Plan, issues, opportunities and problems have been identified. In addition, through the efforts of the Comprehensive Plan Task Force and public workshops, issues were discussed and goals were developed and prioritized for the issues that were considered critical to the future development of Cape Charles. This unit of work is critical to preparing an overall planning strategy for Cape Charles.

On the following pages are presented a summary of the issues, goals and strategies generated throughout the planning phases. This summary is the essence of the entire comprehensive planning process. It illustrates the philosophy of the community, the commitment of the community to its future, and the direction that commitment will take in the future. The first column is a list of the issues - the problems, opportunities and threats-perceived or identified through the analysis of the community. The second column is a list of the goals that have been developed to meet the challenges presented by the issues. The third column suggests possible strategies or actions that can be taken by the community that will address the goals. Issues, goals and strategies have been organized in the following broad areas:

- o Economy and Market
- o Environment
- o Historic Preservation
- o Housing
- o Public Services and Facilities
- o Recreation
- o Social and Demographic

In the development of issues and goals, two central and predominant community goals became evident. These community goals govern the direction and development of community policy and action.

### 1. The Expansion and Diversification of the Town's Economic Base

The problems of overall low and seasonal incomes received by residents spill over into numerous other problems and issues faced by the town. The ability to upgrade housing, make major building improvements, provide revenue to the town through taxes to help fund utility and other improvements are all affected by the incomes of individuals and businesses within the town limits. It is therefore of utmost importance that efforts are made to encourage appropriate types of economic development. Additional industries and businesses, if carefully chosen and pursued, will provide full-time jobs at higher wages for employees, provide much needed revenue to the town, and help to support, justify and fund other community improvements.

2. The Improvement of the Quality of Life for Town Residents

Along with the ability to earn a respectable living, the ability to live in a pleasant, safe and healthy environment is of paramount importance. It is the role of the public sector to ensure that the health, safety and well-being of the public is met and enhanced. Safe and sufficient water, safe streets and sidewalks, recreational areas, residential areas that are safe and well-cared for; economically healthy and well-cared for commercial and industrial areas. The Town of Cape Charles is committed to the improvement of the conditions for all of its residents and economic enterprises.

These two strategic goals form the foundation for the development of more specific plans and strategies aimed at meeting more specific needs. These strategies are found in the third column in the table on the following page.

Table 1  
SUMMARY OF ISSUES, GOALS AND STRATEGIES

ISSUES	GOALS	STRATEGIES
<u>ECONOMY AND MARKET</u>		
(I) Northampton County has identified Cape Charles and Exmore as the primary centers for county-wide industrial development. This provides the opportunity for maximizing joint economic marketing and development efforts.	(G) Work with the County to promote low intensity industrial development in Cape Charles to provide a balanced economic base.	(S) Improve and/or supply public services to the Industrial Park area to attract new industrial development. (S) Progressively move towards meeting the requirements of the VA Industrial Certification Program. (S) Develop a marketing package for economic development. (S) Establish a formal meeting structure with the county to work on joint economic development strategies.
(I) The industrial park is ideally located around the harbor and railroad and offers a great potential for improving the economic base of the town. This untapped resource needs to be put into the forefront of economic development.	(G) Promote the Industrial Park.	(S) Improve and/or supply public services to the Industrial Park area to attract new industrial development. (S) Progressively move towards meeting the requirements of the VA Industrial Certification Program. (S) Develop a marketing strategy for the industrial park.
(I) Some commercial properties located in neighborhoods are in need of repairs. Many of these activities are non-conforming uses. The current zoning ordinance limits repairs to not more than ten percent of the replacement value of the building.	(G) Encourage the maintenance and beautification of the entire community and in particular the Central Business District.	(S) Seek community improvement grants and funds to support community improvements. (S) Enforce Building Maintenance Code. (S) Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow for greater improvements for non-conforming uses in neighborhoods.
(I) Some commercial buildings, both in-use and vacant are poorly maintained and in need of repairs. The appearance of these buildings detracts from the working commercial enterprises and reduces the potential town revenue from sales which places a higher burden on existing commercial activities.	(G) Encourage the maintenance and beautification of the entire community and in particular the Central Business District.	(S) Seek community improvement grants and funds to support community improvements. (S) Develop a community beautification program emphasizing self-help projects. (S) Enforce Building Maintenance Code. (S) Adopt and enforce historic preservation standards.

ISSUES

GOALS

STRATEGIES

<p>(I) Owners of vacant buildings may need some economic development assistance in finding viable tenants or buyers for their property.</p>	<p>(G) Encourage diverse commercial activities appropriate to the growth of the town and in support of other economic development endeavors.</p>	<p>(S) Search for Economic Development Grants.                  (S) Generate a marketing package for economic development.                  (S) Advertise the historic tourism and recreational assets of the area to generate commercial business.</p>
<p>(I) If new jobs increase faster than the labor force, wages are likely to increase and employees likely to leave seasonal agricultural and fishing jobs for year round higher paying jobs, placing additional strains on those industries.</p>	<p>(G) Encourage and promote traditional fishing industries.</p>	<p>(S) Re-evaluate fees so as to support commercial fishing activities.                  (S) Enforce wetlands regulations and encourage preservation of the waterfront to reduce Chesapeake Bay pollution.                  (S) Promote Eastern Shore products along with tourism.</p>
<p>(I) Area income is low and losing ground relative to the state average. Low income of residents limits local ability to raise new revenues.</p>	<p>(G) Promote development of full-time, year-round, well-paying job opportunities.</p>	<p>(S) Improve and/or supply public services to the Industrial Park area to attract new industrial development.                  (S) Progressively move towards meeting the requirements of the VA Industrial Certification Program.                  (S) Develop a cooperative, county-wide strategy for industrial development with the county and private industry.</p>
<p>(I) The railroad is in the process of investing considerable sums of money in upgrading railroad facilities. It anticipates not only long term continuation of the Eastern Shore line, but continued growth in volume and qualitative development.</p>	<p>(G) Encourage private investment in economic development.</p>	<p>(S) Establish a dialogue with major industries and retail traders to determine the needs for public-private partnerships in economic development improvements.</p>
<p>(I) The harbor serves to meet the needs of two diverse groups - commercial/industrial operations and the tourist/recreational users. These two groups provide revenue to the town. They are at times compatible and at times incompatible neighbors.</p>	<p>(G) Maximize the use and operation of the harbor.</p>	<p>(S) Develop a harbor master plan that includes additional slips, improved bulkheads, improved utilities and services for industrial, commercial and recreational users.                  (S) Use the historic and recreational features of the town to encourage more recreational use of the harbor.                  (S) Work with economic development groups to promote the harbor as a cost effective alternative to Norfolk or Baltimore harbors.</p>

ISSUES

GOALS

STRATEGIES

ENVIRONMENT

(I) Cape Charles is extremely vulnerable to flooding from numerous sources. The lack of adequate street drainage leads to standing water throughout a large part of the town. About half of the property in the town is in flood hazard area. About half of the single family and duplex housing units and 29% of the multi-family units are in the flood hazard area. For the improvement of both private property and public services, an improved drainage system is required.

- (S) Strictly enforce flood plain policies and regulations to preserve the natural function of the flood plains to disperse flood water.
- (S) Develop a plan to provide for improved drainage.
- (S) Work with VDOT to develop an improved drainage system during routine street maintenance.

(I) The land in the northern edge of town, along the bayside, is experiencing some erosion problems. If and when development occurs, erosion mitigation should be addressed by the developers in order to prevent the need for costly public assistance in the future.

(G) Encourage erosion mitigation practices.

- (S) Establish/enforce appropriate zoning and subdivision regulations.
- (S) Encourage shoreline and watershed buffer strips, maintained in their natural state approximately 200 feet from mean high water level where all development would be prohibited.

(I) Groundwater is the only source of water on the Eastern Shore. The quantity and quality of the water supply is dependent upon careful use of this limited resource. All development must be evaluated in terms of its affect on groundwater quality and supply.

(G) Encourage land uses which do not negatively impact the environment- including protection of tidal and non-tidal wetlands, watersheds, sand dunes and water quality.

- (S) Establish/enforce appropriate zoning and subdivision regulations.
- (S) Enforce wetlands regulations.
- (S) Amend Zoning Ordinance to improve water quality for new development through requirements for large lots and the limitation of impervious surface areas of new development to 15% of the total land area.
- (S) Require run-off detention systems and stormwater retention systems in new residential developments.

(I) Chesapeake Bay pollution is a threat to fishing and tourism industries and local recreation which are dependent upon unpolluted waters and shorelines.

(G) Encourage preservation of the waterfront to reduce Chesapeake Bay pollution.

- (S) Establish/enforce appropriate zoning and subdivision regulations including a Chesapeake Bay Preservation Zone.
- (S) Enforce wetlands regulations.

ISSUES

GOALS

STRATEGIES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <p>(I) The community wants to preserve the historic character of the town for its intrinsic and commercial (i.e. Tourism) value.</p>  | <p>(G) Promote historic preservation throughout the town as a means of improving individual property values and as a means of developing a more vital tourist industry.</p>  | <p>(S) Adopt corresponding building maintenance codes and historic overlay ordinances.</p> <p>(S) Appoint an Historic Review Board to develop criteria and standards for repair, renovation, construction and demolition of structures within a historic district.</p> <p>(S) Begin the process of becoming a Certified Local Government under the Department of Conservation and Historic Resources.</p> |
| <p>(I) Designation as a registered historic district provides the potential to increase Cape Charles' visibility in the tourist business. However, the maintenance, renovation, and repair of existing structures must support these efforts in order to realize the benefit of such a designation.</p> | <p>(G) Promote historic preservation throughout the town as a means of improving individual property values and as a means of developing a more vital tourist industry.</p> <p>(G) Support the public interest in a more attractive community.</p> | <p>(S) Adopt standards for renovation, repair, construction or demolition of structures.</p> <p>(S) Develop guidelines and other forms of technical assistance for property owners.</p> <p>(S) Become a Certified Local Government to become eligible for additional funding.</p> <p>(S) Seek state &amp; federal funds to support historic preservation activities.</p>                                  |

ISSUES

GOALS

STRATEGIES

HOUSING

<p>(1) One owner owns almost all of the remaining developable land in town, and therefore controls a lot of the future potential development of the town.</p>	<p>(G) Encourage continued development of a variety of housing types and densities. (G) Discourage private road development in new residential development.</p>	<p>(S) Establish/enforce appropriate zoning and subdivision regulations that encourage the development of a variety of housing costs and types. (S) Encourage developers to provide affordable housing units within the community. (S) Seek federal and state funds to improve existing low income housing and to provide new low income housing.</p>
<p>(1) Housing in some parts of town and scattered throughout the town appears to be in very poor condition. Problems include sagging roofs, missing siding, hazardous entryways, missing windows, possible missing inside plumbing, deteriorating appearance and cluttered and unkept yards and outbuildings.</p>	<p>(G) Ensure that all housing is safe and properly maintained. (G) Ensure that all residents have, as a minimum, indoor plumbing facilities with both water and sewer service.</p>	<p>(S) Inspect housing and enforce Building Maintenance Codes. (S) Support and develop self-help neighborhood projects. (S) Secure funds and technical assistance to help improve housing for low and moderate income families.</p>
<p>(1) Some low income residents cannot afford housing improvements.</p>	<p>(G) Seek public and private sources of assistance for housing improvements for low income residents.</p>	<p>(S) As part of the water supply project, include funds for the installation and improvement of indoor plumbing facilities for low income housing. (S) Encourage participation by eligible homeowners in Virginia Housing Development Authority's housing rehabilitation and winterization programs and other public and private programs.</p>
<p>(1) The average household size is shrinking, causing less impact on schools but increasing the demand for smaller housing units.</p>	<p>(G) Encourage continued development of a variety of housing types and densities.</p>	<p>(S) Establish/enforce appropriate zoning and subdivision regulations.</p>
<p>(1) About half of the property in the town is in flood hazard area. About half of the single family and duplex housing units and 29% of the multi-family units are in the flood hazard area.</p>	<p>(G) Improve Drainage. (G) Promote flood awareness and precaution procedures.</p>	<p>(S) Establish/enforce appropriate zoning and subdivision regulations. (S) Develop a plan to provide for drainage improvements. (S) Provide information on flood safety.</p>

ISSUES	GOALS	STRATEGIES
<p>(1) The vacant, "for sale" rate probably allows for a reasonable degree of choice in the single family market but the multi-family rental market supply is limited. There are few to no multi-family rental units available for new workers if the demand for services increases beyond the current labor force.</p>	<p>(G) Encourage continued development of a variety of housing types and densities.</p>	<p>(S) Establish/enforce appropriate zoning and subdivision regulations. (S) Encourage the development of affordable housing by developers.</p>
<p>(1) Burned or abandoned houses remain as eyesores without evidence of intent to remove or rebuild.</p>	<p>(G) Promote the prompt renovation or removal of burned, deteriorated and substandard buildings.</p>	<p>(S) Enforce the Building Maintenance Code (Virginia Unified Statewide Building Code, Vol II). (S) Work with the county to develop more effective means of enforcing building regulations.</p>
<p>(1) One problem is enforcing building and other codes in the town. The town does not have sufficient staff to enforce the codes so is dependent upon county officials and public safety officers who must attempt to enforce codes throughout the county and the town. Liberties are being taken in the repair and renovation of housing. Houses have been converted into duplexes or apartments without proper authorization.</p>	<p>(G) Continue to improve public safety and welfare by enforcement of available codes.</p>	<p>(S) Develop cooperative plans of enforcing codes with town and county officials. (S) Continue to upgrade public safety officials, like police, fire and rescue to support code violation identification and enforcement. (S) Adopt a historic district overlay zone with criteria and standards for repair, renovation, construction and demolition of structures.</p>

ISSUES

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

(1) The water system is in seriously deteriorated condition with extensive rust and corrosion of pipes, tanks and facilities. The age and condition of the water system present serious health, safety and welfare problems.

(G) Provide safe and abundant water.

GOALS

STRATEGIES

- (S) Make the solution to this problem the number one town priority.
- (S) Continue to seek funding for water system improvements.
- (S) Establish a sinking-fund account to provide local matching funds when state or federal monies have been secured.
- (S) Coordinate provision of water and sewer facilities with county-wide land use goals and efforts.
- (S) Continue to upgrade aged and deteriorating utilities, especially the water system, when financially feasible.
- (S) Require through zoning and subdivision regulations that developers tie into public utility systems and share in the cost of upgrading systems.

(1) Deficient fire hydrants impair the fire safety of residents and property.

(S) Continue to upgrade and repair deteriorated fire hydrants.

(1) A new county ordinance for depositing solid waste in the county landfill increases costs especially for commercial and industrial users.

(G) Provide the most cost effective solid waste collection and removal system.

- (S) Evaluate with the county alternative collection systems to determine the most cost effective methods of providing collection service to residential and commercial users, including recycling.
- (S) Encourage a town-wide recycling program to reduce landfill costs and expand the life of the landfill.
- (S) Encourage industrial and commercial users to recycle as much as possible in order to reduce the cost of disposal of solid wastes into the landfill.

ISSUES

GOALS

STRATEGIES

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p>(I) Current infrastructure - roads, sidewalks, curbs and gutters are approaching hazardous conditions in some areas due to age and lack of maintenance. In some areas sidewalks and gutters are completely missing or have never been installed resulting in street flooding and unsafe walking areas as well as creating inaccessible areas for the handicapped.</p> | <p>(G) Upgrade roads, curbs, drainage and sidewalks to reduce flooding and unsafe pedestrian and vehicular transportation conditions.</p> | <p>(S) With VDOT undertake a study of all sidewalks and roads in the town to determine unequivocally, the responsible for improvements and maintenance.</p>   |
| <p>(I) Any increase in population will create an increasing need for police, fire and rescue personnel and equipment.</p>  | <p>(G) Provide public safety services for the population served.</p>  | <p>(S) Work with VDOT to design and implement projects that improve the safety of the transportation system in Cape Charles.</p>  |
| <p>(I) Rte 184 does not provide an apparent or attractive entrance into the Central Business District.</p>   | <p>(G) Provide an attractive and more effective entrance into town.</p>   | <p>(S) Attend yearly VDOT public hearings on the 6-year plans to promote local projects.</p>  |
| <p>(I) Increases in population will create increasing demands for public services.</p>   | <p>(G) Provide public services for the population served.</p>   | <p>(S) Require that developers build state-standard roads, traffic regulation devices and right-of-ways as necessary in all new major construction projects.</p>  |
| <p>(I) Increases in population will create an increasing need for police, fire and rescue personnel and equipment.</p>   | <p>(G) Provide public safety services for the population served.</p>  | <p>(S) Work with VDOT to design an improved access road into the Central Business District.</p>   |
| <p>(I) Increases in population will create increasing demands for public services.</p>   | <p>(G) Provide public services for the population served.</p>   | <p>(S) Increases in police, fire and rescue personnel and equipment will need to be planned for and funded as the population increases in the town budget.</p>  |
| <p>(I) Increases in population will create increasing demands for public services.</p>   | <p>(G) Provide public services for the population served.</p>   | <p>(S) Commercial, industrial and major residential developers should be required to provide fire protection equipment and services.</p>  |
| <p>(I) Increases in population will create increasing demands for public services.</p>   | <p>(G) Provide public services for the population served.</p>   | <p>(S) Begin planning for increases in the size of the public service staff necessary to provide the services demanded by the community. In particular, the near future may require a building inspector or codes compliance officer to enforce and implement zoning, subdivision and building codes.</p> |
| <p>(I) Increases in population will create increasing demands for public services.</p>   | <p>(G) Provide public services for the population served.</p>   | <p>(S) Begin funding a sinking fund to repair and renovate the school for a community center and municipal office space.</p>  |

ISSUES

GOALS

STRATEGIES

RECREATION

- (1) The town lacks recreational space other than the beach.
  - (G) Provide recreational facilities to meet the needs of local residents and as a means of supporting economic development and historic preservation efforts.
- (1) The school site would provide the town with a feasible opportunity to develop a town-wide community center and recreational facilities perhaps with a town hall for administration.
  - (G) Develop a community center with municipal office space, recreational and community office space and outdoor recreational facilities.
- (1) Cape Charles historic resources provide a recreational opportunity.
  - (G) Protect and preserve cultural, historic and environmentally sensitive areas.
- (S) Develop a plan to include a comprehensive recreation program.
- (S) Acquire and develop recreational sites and facilities to meet local and regional needs.
- (S) Encourage gifts of land, easements or money for open space and/or recreation development.
- (S) Continue and support cooperation between private recreational sites and facilities and public access.
- (S) Zoning and subdivision controls should encourage the provision of recreational space, facilities and public access to waterfront areas by the private sector in major development projects.
- (S) Approval of new development along waterfront areas should be conditioned upon dedication of easements for beach access.
- (S) Encourage the county development of a central elementary school outside the Cape Charles town limits.
- (S) Conduct a facilities study of municipal office needs for the next twenty years.
- (S) Develop a plan for renovating and repairing the existing structure to meet the facilities needs indicated in the study.
- (S) Put together a financing strategy, including a building sinking fund to pay for the improvements.
- (S) Identify and apply for any grants that may be available to pay for the repairs and to develop the park and recreational facilities.
- (S) Adopt Historic Overlay District in zoning ordinance.
- (S) Publicize historic and recreational assets.
- (S) Promote the recreational assets of Cape Charles as one component of economic development.

ISSUES

GOALS

STRATEGIES

(1) Town recreation needs to serve an aging population and all other population groups.

(6) Promote programs that stimulate participation by senior citizens and the handicapped.

(S) Establish a community center where programs can be offered to the elderly, handicapped and all other groups in Cape Charles.

(1) Beachfront utilization may result in parking overflow into residential neighborhoods.

(6) Operation of beach so that its function is compatible with the overall community.

(S) Develop contingency plan to regulate parking in residential areas - limit use to vehicles with special permits.

(S) Develop parking areas for the beach that are outside residential neighborhoods.

ISSUES

GOALS

STRATEGIES

SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC

<p>(1) There is an aging population with a low unemployment rate. Wages, however are low.</p>	<p>(G) Encourage the development of a diversified economy in order to improve local wages and job opportunities.</p>	<p>(S) Improve and/or supply public services to the Industrial Park area to attract new industrial development.</p>
		<p>(S) Progressively move towards meeting the requirements of the VA Industrial Certification Program.</p>
		<p>(S) Promote the Industrial Park and assets of Cape Charles such as the harbor and railroad facilities.</p>
<p>(1) Town population may be growing slightly which could raise the demand for both public and private services by existing residents.</p>	<p>(G) Develop public facilities that are appropriate to the growth of the town and to the delivery of expanding public services.</p>	<p>(S) Develop a plan to provide for infrastructure needs for growth in the community.</p>
<p>(1) The aging population increases the need for elderly housing, and medical, transportation &amp; other services, both private and public.</p>	<p>(G) Continue the community commitment to assisting the elderly, handicapped and low-income residents with home improvements and public access.</p>	<p>(S) Conduct grants search and provide information on public and private sources of assistance.</p>
	<p>(G) Encourage the continued provision of affordable housing for all income levels.</p>	
<p>(1) If the proposed resort/retirement development takes place as envisioned, approximately 2000 additional dwelling units (approximately 4000 people) may be built in and around the town with an undetermined number of other dwelling units required outside of the property to accommodate any in-migration of families as a result of increased demand for services.</p>	<p>(G) Encourage the continued provision of affordable housing for all income levels.</p>	<p>(S) Conduct grants search.</p>
		<p>(S) Establish/enforce appropriate zoning and subdivision regulations.</p>
		<p>(S) Work with developers to obtain assistance with public needs caused by development.</p>
<p>(1) There is the possibility of a secondary impact of any large resort/retirement development. If the increase in jobs and services is not filled by existing residents, in-migration of other families may occur who may require the provision of such diverse services as low income housing, schools, expansion of utilities, etc.</p>	<p>(G) Encourage the development of a diversified economy in order to improve local wages and job opportunities.</p>	<p>(S) Work with developers to obtain assistance with public needs caused by development.</p>
	<p>(G) Continue the community commitment to assisting the elderly, handicapped and low-income residents with home improvements and public access.</p>	<p>(S) Establish/enforce appropriate zoning and subdivision regulations.</p>

## C. FUTURE LAND USE CONCEPT

The process of updating the comprehensive plan has highlighted certain factors which will play important roles in the framework for future development in Cape Charles.

### 1. Framework for Development

The analysis of the existing community suggests that the town does not appear to necessitate the development of any new housing or commercial areas except, perhaps, some higher density residential area to provide affordable rental housing choices to lower income families.

Although the basic town layout has remained virtually unchanged from Scott's first plan in 1884, from the issues raised by the community and from the above analysis, it is apparent that Cape Charles has the potential for some change in the not-so-distant future. This change is the result of community values, economic pressures and individual desires for a better quality of living.

Any new large scale residential development will come as a result of pressures and demands outside the town to develop coastal residential communities, not from any need within the town for new residential development. These demands continue in spite of the environmental damage caused by this kind of intensive development along the Chesapeake Bay and in spite of the accelerated erosion to the land and property on which these developments sit. And yet, mitigation of the environmental impacts of development are the responsibility of the town.

Any massive development undertaken in Cape Charles will greatly impact upon the character of Cape Charles. The impact will be both positive and negative. However, the community may have little choice but to accept that change. There is no way to accurately predict whether or not a resort-retirement project will actually develop within the time frame envisioned or much slower or faster than envisioned. Innumerable external forces will play a part in this occurrence. And yet, the town has a role to play in determining if, when, and how such development will occur.

### 2. Land Use Guidelines

These influences, along with the issues and goals, suggest the following directions for future land use.

- \* Future residential development is recommended near the existing residential area.
- \* New residential development should be clustered on large lots in order to reduce environmental hazards to the Chesapeake Bay and groundwater resources on the Eastern Shore.
- \* New development on waterfront areas should be restricted to low density residential development, open space and recreation.

- \* A new higher-density rental area should be identified within the town limits to provide for affordable housing for lower income families and to account for the secondary impact of any large scale residential development.
- \* Commercial development should be encouraged to locate in and around the existing central business area so as to support and strengthen the retail economy.
- \* Industrial development suitable to the character of Cape Charles should be strongly encouraged to locate in Cape Charles in and around the harbor and industrial park.
- \* Recreational areas should serve both the community and the regional interests for public beach access.
- \* Recreational/community center space is also recommended for the central part of the town as a means of serving community public space needs.

### 3. Future Land Use Concept Map

Map 1 serves to illustrate the above guidelines. The map is not drawn to scale and therefore is not site specific. The following points should be noted.

#### a. Residential Areas

The Future Land Use Concept Map recognizes the development pressures faced by the Eastern Shore for new residential development and suggests that the one area where this type of development could occur would be in the northern section of the town.

The Future Land Use Concept Map recognizes the commitment the community has concerning affordable housing, by the recommended location of a multi-family residential area off a Route 184. This is discussed further in the Housing Plan. This location is chosen because of its proximity to another multi-family project, its location outside the flood zone and away from impacting the bay, its closeness to shopping and retail activity and its ability to better define the central business district by discouraging strip commercial development up Route 184.

#### b. Commercial Areas

The land on both sides of Mason Avenue is recommended for commercial-type activities as is the area around the Coast Guard facilities at the harbor and the boat ramps. By limiting the uses on Mason Avenue to commercial and retail, the community development improvements to the central business district will be supported and strengthened.

#### c. Industrial Areas

The existing industrial area remains intact and the industrial park is shaded for emphasis. It is important that this area not be reduced as

it is important for future economic development efforts which are a top priority for action by the town.

d. Recreational Areas

The existing school yard is shown as a recreational site. This site is proposed as the community's "heart" which includes recreation - both passive and active - through the development of a community center housing the municipal offices and recreation center within the school buildings and a park and recreational facilities in the yard area.

In addition to the school area, the beach front is identified as open space with two small "anchor" sites - one at the north end of the beach and one at the south end of the beach - proposed as support areas for the beach and commercial areas. These vacant sites could be developed as parking areas, picnic areas, festival areas, etc.

A natural buffer strip is proposed all along the bay front and along the waterways as open space. Although not specifically for recreation, this open space helps to mitigate the environmental impacts of development which in turn keeps the town attractive to tourists and prospective residents as well as existing residents.

e. Environment

The passage of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act will require that localities adopt new regulations within Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas according to criteria in the process of development by the Local Assistance Board.

The draft of proposed criteria allows towns to either adopt their own protective regulations or opt to be included in the county's regulations. It may be of greater benefit to the environment to have a single set of Coastal Waters Protection Area regulations that is uniformly enforced on the Eastern Shore. This would require strong cooperation between all the local authorities on the Shore. However, such cooperation would result in greater success towards protecting the coastal waters and preserving the quality of life so treasured by the Shore's citizens.

The entire town is suitable for inclusion as a Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area. Specific land use regulations need to be developed for this area in accordance with the criteria developed under the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.

Also, the lands fronting the bay and other waterways need to be buffered from any actual development in order to reduce pollution of the bay. The majority of this open space strip is identified on the existing official zoning map.

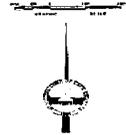
Other environmental recommendations can be found in the Environmental Plan.

f. Transportation

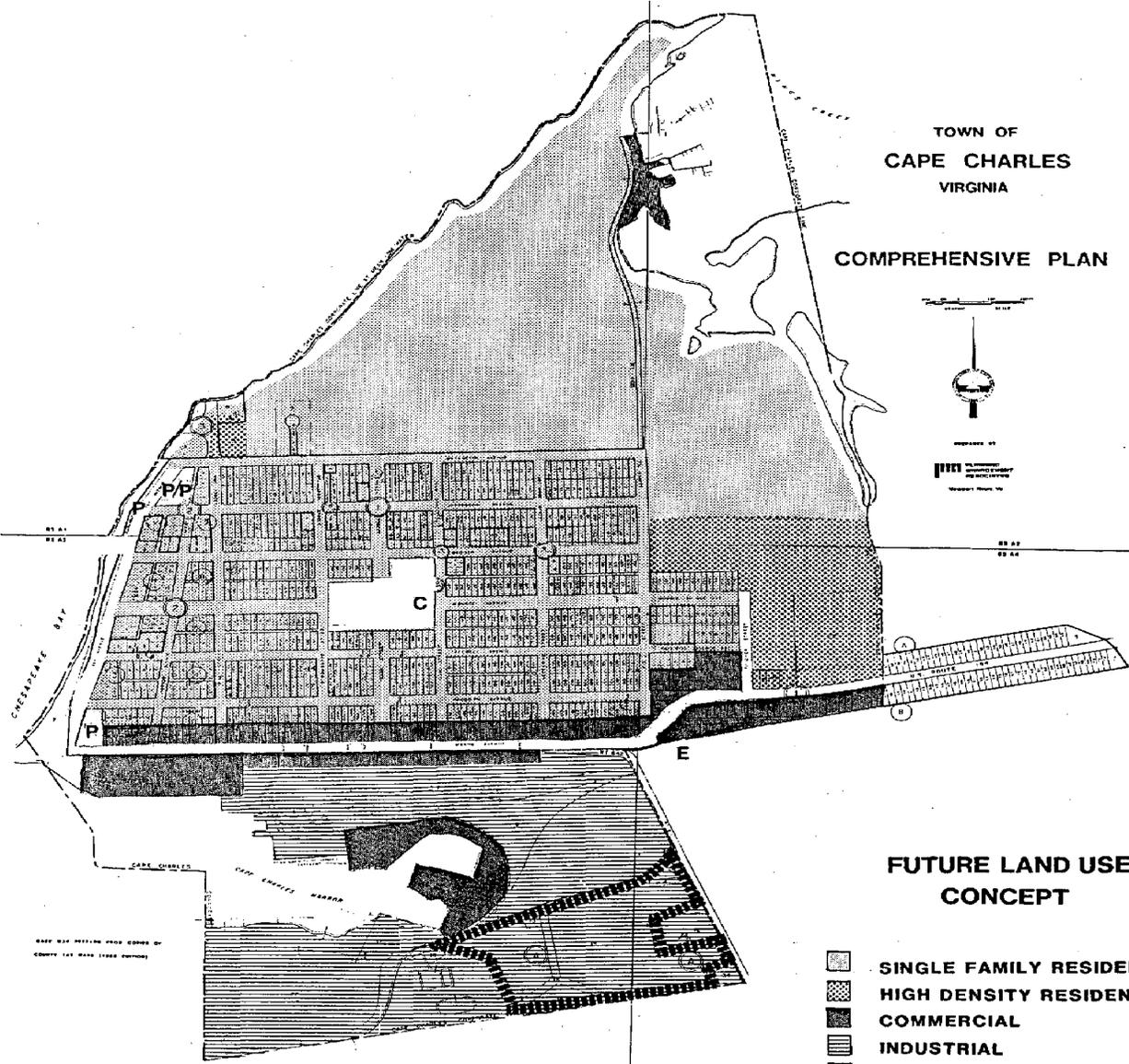
Two transportation components are visible on the concept map. The first is a recommended alteration to Route 184 after it enters the town limits. This is recommended as a means of providing an improved entrance into the central business district. The current road system brings the traveler into a confusing crossroad instead of clearly into the center of activity. The redesign of this intersection would need to be done in conjunction with the Department of Transportation. Any change would likely result in the need to move the water storage tanks. These could be located in the industrial park when the water system is upgraded.

TOWN OF  
CAPE CHARLES  
VIRGINIA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



PREPARED BY  
**PLAN**  
PLANNING MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES  
Newport News, Va.



FUTURE LAND USE  
CONCEPT

-  SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
-  HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
-  COMMERCIAL
-  INDUSTRIAL
-  OPEN SPACE/RECREATION

- E** REALIGNED ENTRANCE ROAD
- P/P** PARKING/PARK AREA
- P** PARKING
-  INDUSTRIAL PARK
- C** COMMUNITY CENTER/PARK

MAP 1

**CAPE CHARLES  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**PLAN** PLANNING  
MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATES  
10227 Warwick Blvd. Newport News, Va. 23601

## D. TRANSPORTATION PLAN - CAPE CHARLES

### 1. Street Plan

Next in importance to the Land Use Plan is the street system. Streets serve several functions: as access to individual properties; as a means to move from residential areas to major highways within the community; and as major transportation arteries between communities. A street plan for Cape Charles would deal primarily with the first two types, because the State constructs the Primary Roads.

In the situation that Cape Charles finds itself today, where its basic street structure has been established for many years but the town is faced with large-scale development, many new streets may be added to the system in the near future. Street development policies and plans are essential. The major issue concerns whether the streets will be constructed to public or private standards. If they are required to be public, then the Virginia Department of Transportation dictates the specifications of construction, and, after construction, the state takes them over for future maintenance. If they are private roads, there is the possibility that the developers will install them at lower standards than the State will accept, making it very unlikely that the State will ever contribute to their maintenance. In many communities this burden has fallen upon the local government after a large developer has come and gone.

The Street Plan for Cape Charles should establish a clear policy as to the standards for future streets (expressed in the subdivision ordinance) and also a clear policy as to the future ownership. The plan should also designate the streets according to their function as local, collector or primary. With regard to the older streets in the established Cape Charles community, the street plan should address the need for upgrading where necessary.

For the existing street system, it is recommended that Route 184, where it enters the town limits and becomes Randolph Avenue, be rerouted so as to provide for more direct access to the commercial area. The current intersection does not suggest the existence of the central business district and creates confusion to the traveler and tourist unfamiliar with Cape Charles. Rerouting the road is likely to require the removal of the water towers which also are a detraction to the town's entrance-way. This suggestion is shown on the Future Land Use Concept Map.

### 2. Sidewalks

Because of the aging population and size of the community, sidewalks take a much more prominent place in the transport system than they take in other communities. The sidewalks need to be more extensive and safer to use. Also because of the poor drainage throughout town, sidewalks must be in place to use when the roads are flooded.

Because it is unclear which sidewalks are to be maintained by the state and which are to be maintained by the residents and which are to be

maintained by the town, the town and VDOT must undertake a definitive mapping of the sidewalks and clearly indicate the responsible party. This cannot be done through the reading of policy statements, but only through a definitive section-by-section mapping study.

Once the sidewalks are mapped and responsible parties identified, a strategic plan for upgrading and maintenance and making them handicapped and elderly accessible must be developed. Property owners need to be informed of their responsibilities. The town and VDOT need to work out a program of installing or upgrading sidewalks when other transportation work is being done. Since some of the cost for this work will likely be charged to the town, the town needs to incorporate funding these projects in the Capital Improvements Plan.

### 3. Drainage

The lack of adequate drainage combined with the lack of adequate sidewalks makes pedestrian traffic difficult as well as an impediment to vehicular traffic. As part of the transportation plan, additional or improved drainage is required in certain parts of the town. Since this work requires engineering analysis, this study might be incorporated as part of a comprehensive transportation plan.

### 4. Parking

Lack of off street parking continues to be a problem. If any new development occurs, this problem will be accelerated. Zoning requirements compelling businesses to have a minimum number of parking places, puts some of the burden on the generators of the need for parking. However, in order to accommodate traffic generated by public programs such as recreation and tourism, additional parking areas need to be identified and provided.

One possible solution for the beach problem can be found on Bay Avenue. The road is built wide enough to allow for a two-way road system plus angular parking adjacent to the beach for the length of the public beach front. Although angular parking is not always the preferred method of accommodating parking needs, in this case it would prevent most of the parking in residential areas, concentrate the parking at the source of need, reduce pedestrian crossing of Bay Avenue to get to the beach. This is also a relatively low cost solution to the problem since the cost is mostly in paint and signs and, perhaps, removal of the median. Parking could be metered or by day-permit to provide for some additional revenue.

Two additional possible components to the plan might involve the two vacant parcels at either end of Bay Avenue. Both parcels, one on Bay and Mason and the other at Bay and Jefferson to Washington, offer vacant flat areas that could include combined parking and recreational uses, such as picnic tables and changing rooms and public toilets. The area between Randolph and Mason and Bay could service commercial parking needs as well as beach and public functions.

## 5. Waterways & Railroad

In order to achieve some of the pressing economic development goals, a task force comprised of representatives from the Port Authority, Eastern Shore Railroad, Eastern Shore Economic Development Commission, the Bay Consortium Private Industry Council and Cape Charles and Northampton County officials should be established. This group would be responsible for developing a strategy to improve and promote greater use of the transportation facilities around the harbor and railroad. This would improve the economic condition of the region as well as Cape Charles. A comprehensive regional strategy may prove to be more successful than the efforts of a single agency or organization.

Specific improvements to the harbor that may be required include: additional bulkheading, increased depth for the harbor and channel, location of a dredging spoils site and additional public services such as water and sewer. Once the improvements have been identified, funding sources need to be approached. The town will need to begin planning and saving funds to pay for its portion of the improvements as part of the Capital Improvements Plan.

## 6. General

In order to achieve many of the community improvement goals for Cape Charles, the transportation system must act to support those efforts or it will hinder them. Therefore, it is important to plan for the transportation system to act in concert with the strategies for community development - housing, economy, recreation, utilities, safety, etc.

## E. HOUSING PLAN

While some of the housing in Cape Charles is in satisfactory condition, there are some sections of town which require considerable improvements, including the installation of indoor plumbing. Examples of poorly maintained, abandoned or burned buildings are found throughout the town. A town-wide housing plan is needed to meet the housing goals of importance to the town.

Essentially, the plan must address the following requirements:

- providing indoor water and plumbing facilities for all residents
- upgrading unsafe or unhealthy exterior structural problems, such as decaying roofs, exterior holes in walls, missing steps into the house, etc.
- making housing accessible for handicapped and elderly residents
- winterizing housing through proper insulation and repairs
- requiring a minimum acceptable standard for regular building maintenance
- allowing for the forced removal of abandoned or burned buildings
- providing sufficient affordable rental housing
- minimizing development in the flood zones and environmentally sensitive areas

### Recommended Actions

The Housing Plan should begin with a thorough identification and evaluation of the existing housing stock and current conditions. Although one such study was done in the early 1980s, some houses have been improved since that study, while others (of a likely greater number) have further deteriorated, making the study out-of-date and unreliable.

Once the extent of the needs is known, funding sources and programs should be solicited, for example, the county is currently involved in a pilot project with the Rental Rehabilitation Program through VHDA. It is recommended that this program be funded separately from other projects, such as the water system project, so that 100% of the funds can be guaranteed for use for housing improvements.

The one exception to the above observations is provision for indoor plumbing and water services. These improvements are better handled as part of the water improvement project. However, money requested for these activities should not be used for any other activities other than the actual housing improvements.

To achieve better general maintenance of housing, the town needs to adopt and strictly enforce the Uniform Statewide Building Code, Volume II, Building Maintenance Code and Historic Preservation Overlay Zoning

regulations and guidelines for rehabilitation. These tools will help improve housing conditions, provide for improved community appearance, increase overall property values and improve the general safety and welfare of the residents. However, adoption is insufficient in insuring these improvements. Strict enforcement is essential. The town will need a Codes Compliance Official who would be responsible for enforcing all public ordinances including: Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, Building Codes, including Maintenance, Litter and Leash laws, etc.

The Zoning Ordinance and Map should be revised to allow for a second housing district which would allow for multi-family dwellings at a higher density than the single family district. Additional multi-family dwellings are necessary to provide sufficient housing for the low income and elderly in the area and to provide a greater degree of housing choice than what currently exists. Also, if large scale residential development occurs in and around Cape Charles housing will be needed for the secondary impact of migration to the town to seek employment associated with the development. This district could be located next to Heritage Acres at the entrance to town. This location would place the multi-family dwellings outside the flood zone and historic district but near retail shops. It would also discourage strip commercial development at the entrance to town therefore maintaining the prominence of the central business district.

## F. PUBLIC SERVICES PLAN FOR CAPE CHARLES

This segment of the plan addresses the need for public support services that are in scale with actual and expected development. While the Land Use Plan is the guiding force for private sector development; in the same sense, the Public Services Plan defines the scope of public involvement in the overall development process. The formula in its simplest form is this: (1) private investment initiates and builds most of the community, its residential, commercial, and industrial base; and (2) public investment then comes in to provide support services including hard services such as water and sewer and soft services such as protection, administration and other public assistance. It is clear that the stronger policies the community has concerning private sector development, the less burden is later placed on the government to provide for any deficiency in service. Against this background, the Comprehensive Plan includes policy statements along with general strategy plans for providing the basic services that are determined to be provided to the community. The services evaluated include:

- o Water
- o Sewer
- o Solid Waste
- o Public Buildings

These plans are of a general nature for planning policies and do not involve engineering of the system or of specific features.

### 1. Water

Of utmost importance to the citizens of Cape Charles is the upgrading of the water system. This top priority is well known to town officials. The needs have already been studied to some extent. Securing funding is the next step. Grant requests have been written to the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Specific projects to be incorporated in the water plan include:

Storage System. The elevated storage tanks are deteriorated and require replacement. As part of an overall community improvement plan, it would be advantageous to move the water storage tanks away from the entrance to the town and to place them perhaps in the industrial area. In doing so, there could be a better alignment of Route 184 towards Mason Avenue, thereby improving economic development efforts.

Distribution System. The entire distribution system is deteriorated. The leaking pipes are costing the town and users considerable money in wasted water. Additionally, the pipes are too narrow in some places to handle current demand. The entire distribution system needs to be replaced and upgraded to handle current and future water needs.

Treatment Facilities. The problems with the treatment facility have been identified by the Department of Health. A new treatment facility, also located in the industrial area, is required, along with upgraded

treatment and analysis equipment.

Water Source. Groundwater protection is required to sufficiently maintain the quantity and quality of water on the Eastern Shore. Adoption and enforcement of strict development regulations, although unpopular, are essential to ensuring this protection.

Housing Improvements. Along with upgrading the existing deteriorating water supply system is the upgrading of indoor water and plumbing facilities for some residents in Cape Charles. It is known that some houses do not have indoor water or toilets. Many residents can not afford to have these facilities installed in their homes. These homes need to be thoroughly identified and evaluated as to need. Through Community Development Block Grant funds or other sources, these homes should receive priority for improvements.

System Expansion. Planning should begin for including public water services in the industrial park. This will play an important part in the efforts towards successful economic development. Industries are more likely to locate on a site with public utilities. This will also help to pay for the system and reduce possible Chesapeake Bay pollution.

New development should be required to connect into the public system and pay pro-rata for the cost of developing the system to accommodate their needs. This way, the town will not be burdened in the future by pressures to take over maintenance of the private systems.

Fire Hydrants. The town is in the process of upgrading and replacing deficient fire hydrants. This effort will need to be continued for the next several years until all the inferior fire hydrants have been improved. Additionally, if development does occur new fire hydrants will need to be planned for and installed. Developers should be encouraged to support the funding for installation of fire and safety equipment generated by the additional development.

## 2. Sewer

The town has recently completed the installation of a new sewer distribution and treatment system. Other than routine maintenance, this will not require any major improvements.

System Expansion. Planning should begin for including public sewer services in the industrial park. This will play an important part in the efforts towards successful economic development. Industries are more likely to locate on a site with public utilities. This will also help to pay for the system and reduce possible Chesapeake Bay pollution.

New development should be required to connect into the public system and pay pro-rata for the cost of developing the system to accommodate their needs. This way, the town will not be burdened in the future by pressures to take over maintenance of the private systems.

### 3. Solid Waste

The recent changes in the county's fee structure for landfill disposal has caused some anxiety in the town because it will require separate collection for residential and commercial wastes. Charges are dependent on the poundage deposited in the landfill. These charges are necessary to pay for the increasing cost associated with maintaining and expanding the landfill.

Collection. The new charges necessitate changes the collection of residential and commercial wastes. These wastes must be gathered separately in order for the charges to be correctly distributed. Studies of alternative collection systems - private versus contracted and alternative frequency rates for collection - once a week versus bi-weekly are necessary in order to determine the most cost-effective system for the town.

Disposal. The county charges for wastes deposited in the landfill according to a schedule. The way to reduce the charges is to reduce the amount of wastes disposed of in the landfill. Charges to the town and the commercial depositors could be reduced if the town and county immediately began a recycling program. Buyers for paper, cardboard, aluminum and glass could collect the recyclable materials at the landfill or could be hauled directly from the commercial site to the buyer. This way, anything that is recyclable would not be counted towards the chargeable rate for landfill disposal. The businesses are charged less, the life of the landfill is extended and the cost of landfill maintenance is reduced. The town should begin an immediate discussion with the county to establish such a program and to contact possible buyers for the recyclable materials.

### 4. Public Buildings

The town needs to conduct a thorough public facilities study within the next five years. Two factors will play a part in future space facilities.

First, demand for public services and recordkeeping is an ever-expanding reality. The current Town Hall building already lacks sufficient storage space and is inadequately organized to meet current demands. Most services are inaccessible to handicapped or elderly. Although arrangements can be made for the handicapped, they must be specially requested. As localities are being left to do work that previously had been done by federal and state agencies, additional space must be found for staff, offices and storage. New legislation, new development, and new equipment and technologies will also force the local authority to expand. Current buildings will not be adequate to meet these pressures.

Secondly, within approximately five years, it is very likely that the school buildings in Cape Charles will be vacated.

These buildings, while inadequate for school use because of state and federal changes in policy and programs, would give the Town an excellent opportunity to establish a much needed Community Center.

With approximately 20,000 square feet of building area, this Community Center could include space for government offices and services. The auditorium could be used for public meetings, community programs, etc. Other classrooms (or maybe the cafeteria building) could be used as a Senior Citizen Center and meeting rooms for other recreational and community groups could also be found in the building.

The school yard could be improved for recreational purposes and a small community park. Because the school is located in the center of the town, it is easily the most accessible place for the myriad of activities that could be associated with it.

The existing municipal building could become the Public Safety Building and house all public safety departments such as Law Enforcement, Fire, DMV, and Rescue offices if they are needed.

The following procedures will assist in accomplishing the opportunities presented above.

Cape Charles School. First, Cape Charles needs to support and encourage the development of a new elementary school in the county. Plans for renovation can begin to be developed following a facilities space-needs study which can take place in the interim of time before the school closes. At the same time, the town should establish a sinking fund to renovate the school building when it is vacated by the School Board. Along with internal renovation plans, an external recreational and landscaping plan is required for the yard area.

Cape Charles Municipal Building. The existing building may require some renovation or repair work even if it is converted into a Public Safety Building. The facilities space-needs study conducted sometime during the next couple of years will indicate the amount of space needed for public safety departments and the renovations likely to be required.

## G. HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

The architectural and historical image of Cape Charles is one of the major economic assets of the town. It is the appearance of the town, in addition to its location, which encourages tourism and recreational visits to the area. It is also the architectural and historical appearance which helps to increase the value of individual properties. Historic preservation is, therefore, of economic importance to individual property owners as well as to the Town of Cape Charles as a whole.

This important asset is in jeopardy of being diminished through building additions, repairs and renovations that are inconsistent with the overall image. Also, the aging and general deterioration of buildings are diminishing the value of the property. These alterations and deteriorating conditions, not only affect the value of the altered or deteriorated building, they also affect the value of the property surrounding the building. Before the historical appearance changes further, a strategic plan for preservation and restoration needs to be developed and implemented for the entire town.

### 1. Major Participants

The best strategy would be the development of a cooperative program involving the individual residents and property owners, community organizations and local and state governments.

a. Individuals and Property Owners deserve credit for the degree that the town and its architectural uniqueness have been preserved to date. Pride in the town and community shows in the maintenance and care that many residents put into their homes. Residents and property owners are and will continue to be the key to an effective historical preservation strategy. Strategy plans and regulations cannot create community pride or desire for quality living. The incentives must come from individuals.

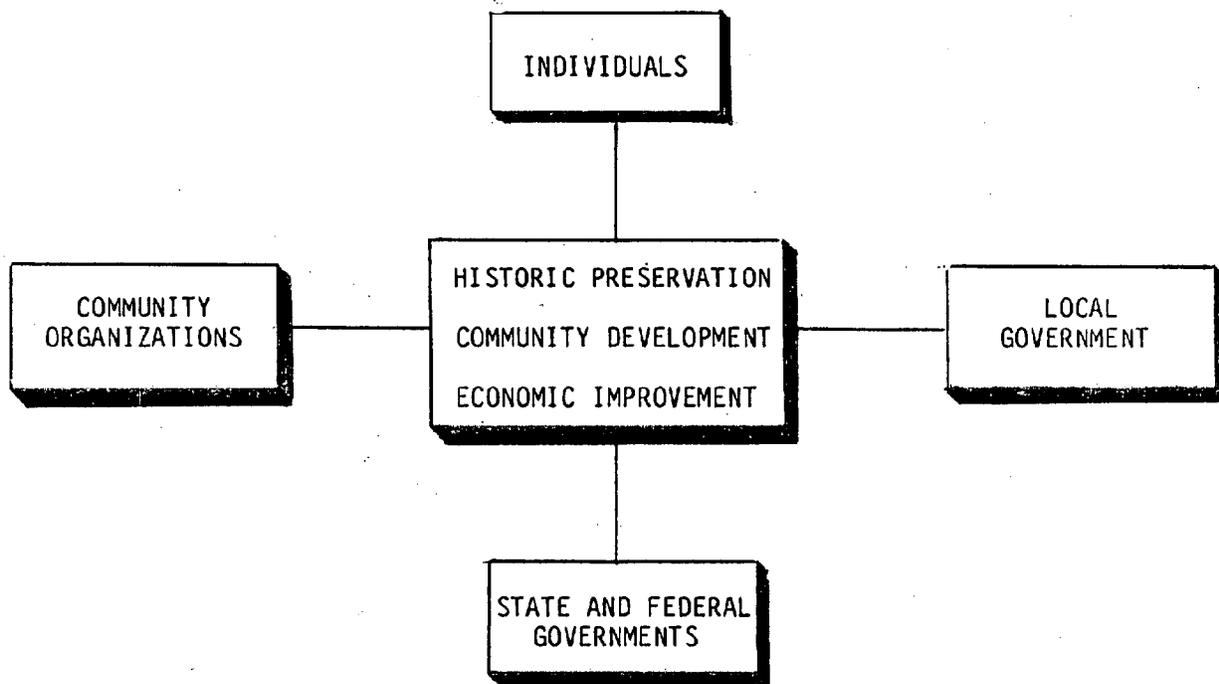
b. Community Organizations also are effective in developing and implementing any community improvement program. Organizations such as churches, school groups, women's clubs, gardening clubs, and especially, historical societies often have resources and collective interests that influence changes that individuals alone and the government do not have. Two examples of this include the highway adoption program where organizations volunteer to keep sections of highways clean. Another example is the neighborhood watch program to help keep communities safe. Historical awareness and preservation, too, is most often successfully accomplished through the historic preservation societies throughout Virginia and the United States. Also, organizations act sometimes as important communications links between individuals and the government.

c. Local government functions as a means of translating individual interests into general policy and then developing the tools necessary to support and execute those policies. It brings programs into action that affect numerous property owners, equally, while providing procedures for securing funds for major projects. Local government may also assemble land and develop it in the best interests of entire community. It also supports the efforts of individuals and groups by

providing support facilities such as parking, recreational facilities and improved public areas.

d. State government assists the efforts of the locality by providing on-going technical assistance. In the case of Cape Charles, it was the Virginia Department of Conservation and Historic Landmarks that took a leading role in the efforts currently underway to recognize Cape Charles as community of historical importance, both statewide and nationally. Besides providing technical and research assistance, the state government also has available some funding for historic preservation projects.

These four groups must work in concert with one another in order to establish and maintain a successful historic preservation and community improvement program.



## 2. Historic Preservation Plan Components

The first step in the process establishes good documentation of existing resources and historical information. The inventory of historic buildings provides the basis of the justification for community action. Cape Charles has received considerable contributions to this step already. Besides two books outlining the history of the Eastern Shore, The Eastern Shore of Virginia: 1603-1964, (N.M. Turman), Virginia's Eastern Shore, (R.T. Whitelaw), there is a thorough booklet by Jean Collins called A Calendar of the History of Cape Charles, A Walking Tour of Historic Cape Charles, Virginia by the Cape Charles Historical Society, a study of Cape Charles by Pat Spriggs of Old

Dominion University and a comprehensive study of the town by the Division of Historic Landmarks, Virginia Department of Conservation and Historic Resources.

In particular the study by the Division of Historic Landmarks has led to the next step in the process which is the delineation of the historic district borders (Map 2) as well as the identification of individual properties of historical significance. The boundaries have been determined by the division's established criteria. It is recommended that these boundaries be used by the town as the foundation of its preservation efforts, while at the same time including those isolated buildings located outside of the boundaries that are of historical significance, for example, St. Stephen's African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The state division has taken the lead in the third step which is the nomination of Cape Charles to the State Review Board and Virginia Landmarks Board which decides whether or not Cape Charles is added to the National Register and Virginia Landmarks Register, respectively. The Division of Historic Landmarks is confident that Cape Charles will be accepted by the national and state registers as a historic district. This should occur sometime in the latter half of 1989.

Since historic designation benefits primarily individual property owners and local businesses, these participants can be building support throughout the community for historic preservation and registration as a historical district. One concern that needs to be understood is that the national designation does not restrict an owner's use of his or her property if federal funds have not been used for the property. There are actually some financial benefits for owners: a) designation usually results in higher property values that can be realized at the sale of the property; b) there are some tax credits for some income-producing property in the designated area; c) there are on occasion some matching federal funds available for preservation projects; and d) the national designation is a means of attracting national attention to the area, therefore expanding tourism and the spinoff benefits associated with the tourist business.

During the process of becoming a registered district, the local government needs to begin developing the tools necessary to ensure that the benefits are realized long after the designation becomes final. If the district is not maintained relative to the historic character, the designation can be terminated and the commercial and individual benefits lost. The ordinances and guidelines are not intended as much to restrict a property owner as to protect that owner's property from the actions of other property owners.

One tool the town can adopt and enforce to encourage preservation is the Building Maintenance Code. The town is in the process of reviewing this set of regulations. Although not specific to historic preservation, the Building Maintenance Code will help to protect against the destruction of historical buildings and encourage proper maintenance of the buildings and property.

However, the Building Maintenance Code alone will not guarantee the architectural integrity of the buildings. The historic boundaries were

determined by including as many historic resources (properties) as possible. However, how this collection of properties related to one another was equally important. Conscientious homeowners can maintain their homes to be architecturally accurate, but if neighboring property owners fail to follow the same guidelines in their maintenance, additions, modifications and repairs, then the benefit is lost for all.

A historical or architectural review board should be established to help develop acceptable standards for rehabilitation and maintenance of property in Cape Charles. Such standards could involve suggestions for proper color combinations, recommended materials for renovation, methods for emphasizing unique architectural features. Also an ARB can help property owners with technical information and recommendations for making the most of the architectural features of their property. Federal and state departments can provide considerable information on acceptable standards and guidelines from other jurisdictions and agencies. One excellent resource is from the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. This report provides information on what standards are recommended and what actions are not recommended for individual building components, the general site and the district/neighborhood as a whole.

The Code of Virginia allows for the preservation of historical sites and areas through the use of historic districts as part of the Zoning Ordinance. The ordinance may include:

"...a provision that no building or structure, including signs, shall be erected, reconstructed, altered or restored within any such historic district unless the same is approved by the architectural review board, or, on appeal, by the governing body..."

and also that,

"...no historic landmark, building or structure within any such historic district shall be razed, demolished or moved until...approved by the architectural review board, or, on appeal, by the governing body..."

This gives the architectural review board another important on-going role in the process and that is the enforcement of the standards and zoning requirements for historic preservation.

Given the size of the historic district, it would be to Cape Charles' benefit to become a "Certified Local Government" under the Virginia Department of Conservation and Historic Resources. The town benefits by becoming a CLG in a number of ways. First, the CLGs are exclusively eligible for specially earmarked grants from the State Historic Preservation Officer. These grants are from a 10% share of the annual federal appropriation and are set aside specifically for CLG projects, including: surveys of historical resources, preparation for resource nominations to the National Register, activities related to comprehensive planning, providing staff support, developing design guidelines, writing amended ordinances, education programs and preparing preservation plans.

In order to become a CLG a local government is required to complete an application form. The National Historic Preservation Act requires that a CLG:

- o enforce State or local historic preservation legislation
- o establish a qualified historic preservation commission
- o maintain a system for the survey and inventory of property
- o provide for adequate public participation in the process
- o performs other functions according to the State Historic Preservation Officer

Once the town is accepted for the state and national registers, it should develop a plan for restoration and improvements and begin applying for grants to assist in funding the projects. However, the town will compete for these limited funds with all other jurisdictions. If it becomes a Certified Local Government, it may then apply for both the general grants and the set aside grants. The plan may include: restoration of existing buildings to a style compatible with the original architecture, creation of public areas, landscaping the pedestrian ways, and development of some off-street parking.

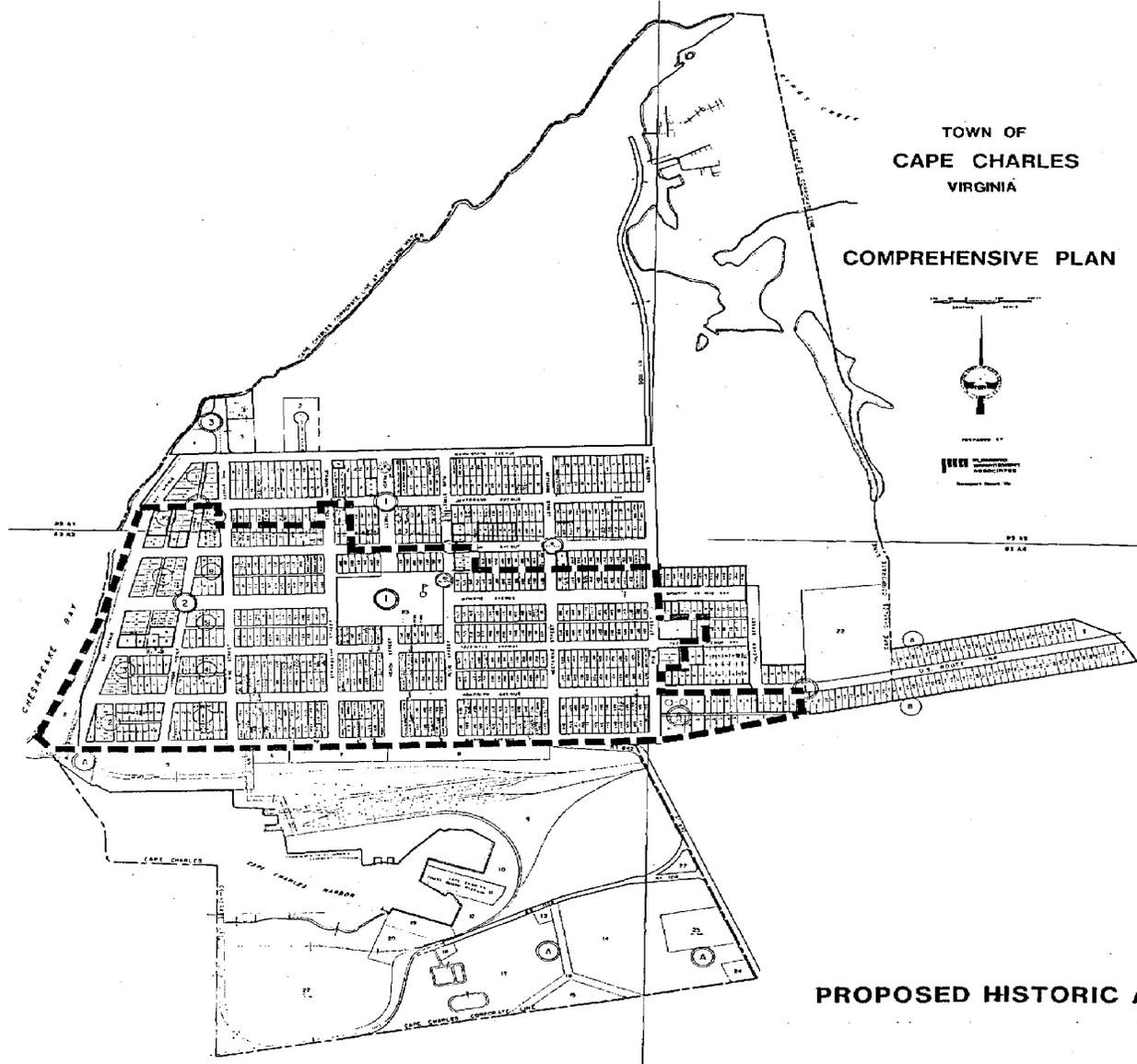
### 3. Summary of Future Actions

Within the next one to five years, the town should move to completing the following items:

- o Adoption and enforcement of the Building Maintenance Code
- o Establishment of an Architectural Review Board
- o Acceptance in the state and national registers for historic districts
- o Standards for the external appearances of buildings
- o Standards for renovation and repair of buildings
- o Sign regulations and controls
- o Zoning and subdivision controls
- o A plan for restoration that is architecturally compatible with the historic background of the town, including a plan for financing the restoration plan
- o Application submission to become a Certified Local Government

TOWN OF  
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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



PROPOSED HISTORIC AREA

MAP 2

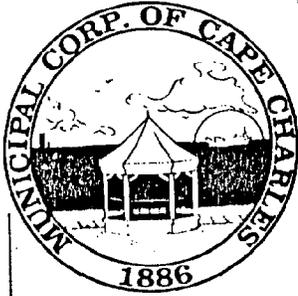
# CAPE CHARLES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



PLANNING  
MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATES

10227 Warwick Blvd.

Newport News, Va. 23601



*Municipal Corp. of*  
**Cape Charles**

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**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
BACKGROUND ANALYSES**

**PMAC** PLANNING  
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## BACKGROUND ANALYSES FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### II. EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### A. HISTORY

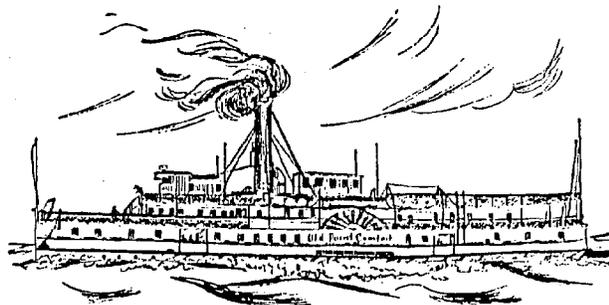
From its very conception, Cape Charles was a planned community. Although the Eastern Shore Railroad Company commissioned a survey to establish a railroad through the Eastern Shore, it was not until the 1870s that William L. Scott of Erie, Pennsylvania, started the machinery which would eventually result in the establishment of Cape Charles. He suggested a railway to run from the North to the South, although this plan was repeatedly rejected. Scott, along with Alexander J. Cassett, continued to research the area and to develop plans until 1882 when the existing Peninsula Railroad of Maryland and the Peninsula Railroad of Virginia were merged to form the New York, Pennsylvania and Norfolk Railroad Company, and it was decided that Scott's and Cassett's plans would be implemented.

In 1883 William Scott became President of the N.Y., P. and N. Railroad and purchased over 2100 acres from Sally and Ella Tazewell from acreage which included parts of the Old Plantation, New Acres and Kings Creek farms. Some of this land, named Cape Charles for the cape found to the south, Scott sold to the Railroad to serve as the southern terminus. In that same year construction of the railroad began. The original stations in Northampton County were Exmore, Bridgetown, Eastville and Cape Charles. In Cape Charles the Railroad built a harbor to handle steamships and freighters from Cape Charles to Old Point Comfort and Norfolk.

From the beginning, Scott envisioned a town to serve the needs of the railroad and its passengers, and in 1884 he commissioned two engineers, Bauman and Kyle from Washington, D.C., to do the official mapping of the town. The original town was approximately 136 acres divided into 644 equal lots. Seven avenues which run from east to west were named for Virginia Statesmen: Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Tazewell, Randolph and Mason. The streets which run north and south were named for fruits: Fig, Plum, Peach, Strawberry, Nectarine and Pine. The original layout of the town is still very visible today.

By November 1884, the first passenger and freight trains began running and by 1885, the first residential and commercial buildings existed in the town, along with a volunteer fire department, newspaper, school and churches. In less than two years, Scott built the railroad, harbor and town. On March 1, 1886, the town was incorporated.

The town continued to grow and develop throughout the golden age of the railroads, through World War II with its mission of ferrying troops and supplies, and on into the 1950s until the auto ferry



OLD POINT COMFORT  
P.R.R. Steamer 1887

was moved to Kiptopeke. In 1958 the last passenger train left Cape Charles. During the decline of rail transportation, Cape Charles experienced a decline in population and employment; the railroad changed hands repeatedly and at one time was totally abandoned. The late 1970s brought the Accomack-Northampton Transportation District Commission which has been instrumental in maintaining railroad interests in Cape Charles. Eastern Shore Railroad is the current owner of the line which is operating a freight service in the town with freight loaded onto barges in the harbor.

One of the most interesting aspects of Cape Charles' historical growth and development is the fact that it was bought and designed by one man and, other than an annexation of the land from Pine Street to the Bay in 1909, and an annexation in 1966 of land north of Washington Avenue including the Kings Creek harbor area and some land south of the Cape Charles harbor, the town has remained basically as it was planned from the beginning. This is a unique occurrence in a country where towns have similar deliberate and purposeful beginnings, but over time are altered in appearance and purpose by many different forces and developments.

This historic development along with the town's many examples of vernacular architecture have brought the town to the attention of the Department of Conservation and Historic Resources which is in the process of having portions of the town named in the National and State Registers of Historic Places. Given the town's existing economy, such a designation could contribute significantly to the town's attractiveness for tourism.

1. Issues, Opportunities and Problems

THE HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF CAPE CHARLES IS STRONGLY EVIDENT IN THE PRESENT BUILT ENVIRONMENT. THE COMMUNITY WANTS TO PRESERVE THE HISTORIC CHARACTER FOR ITS INTRINSIC, TOURISM AND COMMERCIAL VALUE.

THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF THE TOWN AND THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC RESOURCES, CAPE CHARLES HAS AN OPPORTUNITY OF BEING DESIGNATED AS A HISTORIC DISTRICT. THIS DESIGNATION PROVIDES THE POTENTIAL TO INCREASE CAPE CHARLES' VISIBILITY IN THE TOURIST BUSINESS. HOWEVER, THE MAINTENANCE, RENOVATION, AND REPAIR OF EXISTING STRUCTURES MUST SUPPORT THESE EFFORTS IN ORDER TO REALIZE THE BENEFIT OF SUCH A DESIGNATION.

THROUGH THE ADOPTION OF CORRESPONDING BUILDING CODES AND ORDINANCES, THE TOWN HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT THE INTEREST IN A MORE ATTRACTIVE COMMUNITY, INCREASE AND ENHANCE INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY VALUES, AND PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR ACCESS TO STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS TO SUPPORT HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES.

## B. PHYSICAL SETTING

### 1. Area

Cape Charles is situated in Northampton County, Virginia, along what is known as the bayside because the territory sits along the Chesapeake Bay. It is two miles from U.S. Route 13 on Route 184. The cape for which the town is named is approximately 14 miles south of the town limits. The Town of Cape Charles began with approximately 136 acres from the land holdings of William Scott. These 136 acres were developed into 644 equally sized lots. Today, the Municipal Corporation of Cape Charles encompasses 626 acres and, although the original 644 lots can still be identified, through subdivision and annexation, the number of individual parcels has risen to 1235. Map 3 shows the existing town limits as well as the original lay out of the town within the black border with the inset showing the location of the town on the Eastern Shore.

### 2. Topography

The topography of Cape Charles matches that of most of the bayside region of Northampton County. The town is relatively flat with most of the land under 10 feet with a less than 1 percent slope. Land elevations rise ever so slightly moving to the east from the Chesapeake Bay to approximately Fig Street where it divides the town into two parts--the parts to the west under 10 feet and the parts to the east over 10 feet. Because it is so low and flat, the Town is vulnerable to all types of flooding with little natural encouragement to drain off standing water.

The town has approximately two and a half miles of low shoreline, which includes the Cape Charles beach. There are approximately 30 acres of wetland areas in Cape Charles. Most are in the northern part of the town limits around King's Creek as well as a few places along the Cape Charles beach, the harbor, and along the edge of the golf course, including over three acres of Type I marshes which are the highest level of wetlands as determined by the Northampton County Tidal Marsh Inventory, 1977. These wetlands are described as:

"...having the highest values of productivity and wildfowl and wildlife utility and are closely associated with fish spawning and nursery areas. They also have high value as erosion inhibitors, are important to the shellfish industry and values as natural shoreline stabilizers."

The Code of Virginia requires that local governments establish and enforce regulations that protect wetland areas to include a local board to review any development or land use which may disturb or destroy these wetlands. This enforcement not only helps to protect and preserve the ecological environment, but because of the wetlands' ability to help control erosion and flooding, it protects the man-made development which occurs around the wetlands.

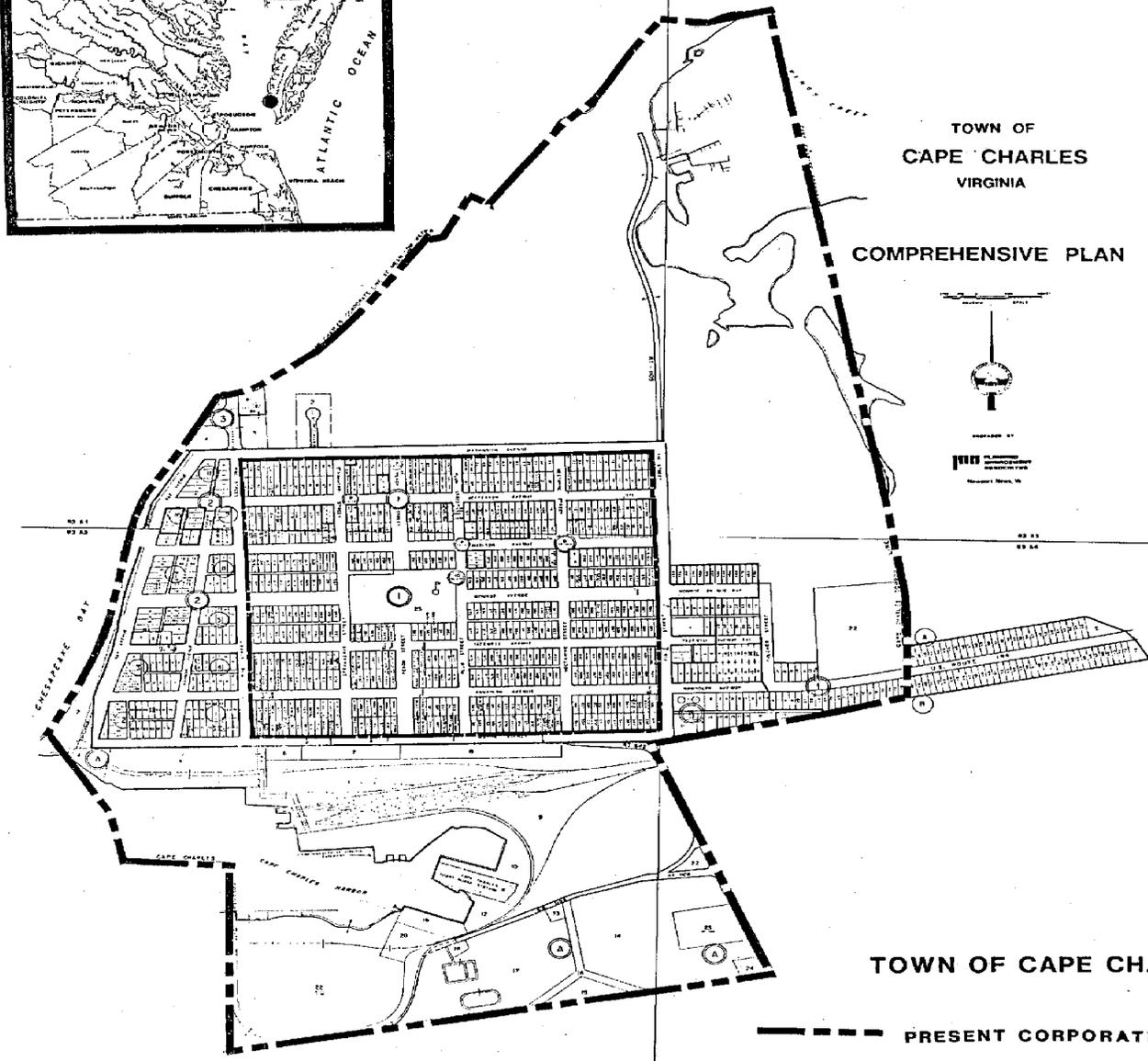
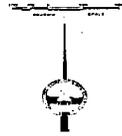
Because of the age of the wetland inventory, any proposed development site should be re-evaluated by state specialists for the presence of wetlands and other environmental concerns.

GENERAL LOCATION



TOWN OF  
CAPE CHARLES  
VIRGINIA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



TOWN OF CAPE CHARLES

--- PRESENT CORPORATE LIMITS

— ORIGINAL TOWN LIMITS

MAP 3

# CAPE CHARLES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



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### 3. Soils

The use of soil information for public and private planning purposes is important for numerous types of projects. These include agriculture, utilities planning, construction site planning, and determining minimum lot size requirements.

The U.S. Soil Conservation Service describes the soils on the Eastern Shore as follows:

The coastal plains soils of the Eastern Shore are generally very level soils that are considered to be prime farmland by the USDA... The two main soil associations are distinguished by the topography of the land which affects the groundwater. The Bojac-Munden-Molena association [found in Cape Charles] is nearly level with minor areas of steep slope and moderately well-drained to somewhat excessively well-drained.

The major soil association found in Cape Charles is the Bojac-Munden-Molena association, with Bojac fine sandy loam, Munden sandy loam, and Nimmo sandy loam the three most prominent classifications. The majority of the town sits on Bojac fine sandy loam which is a very deep and well-drained soil. The Soil Conservation Service lists its limitations as: droughtiness, slope and erodibility. This means that much of the rain water in Cape Charles penetrates the soil, reducing runoff where the soil is not covered by streets or buildings.

Map 4 shows the approximate soil type outlines.

### 4. Flooding & Erosion

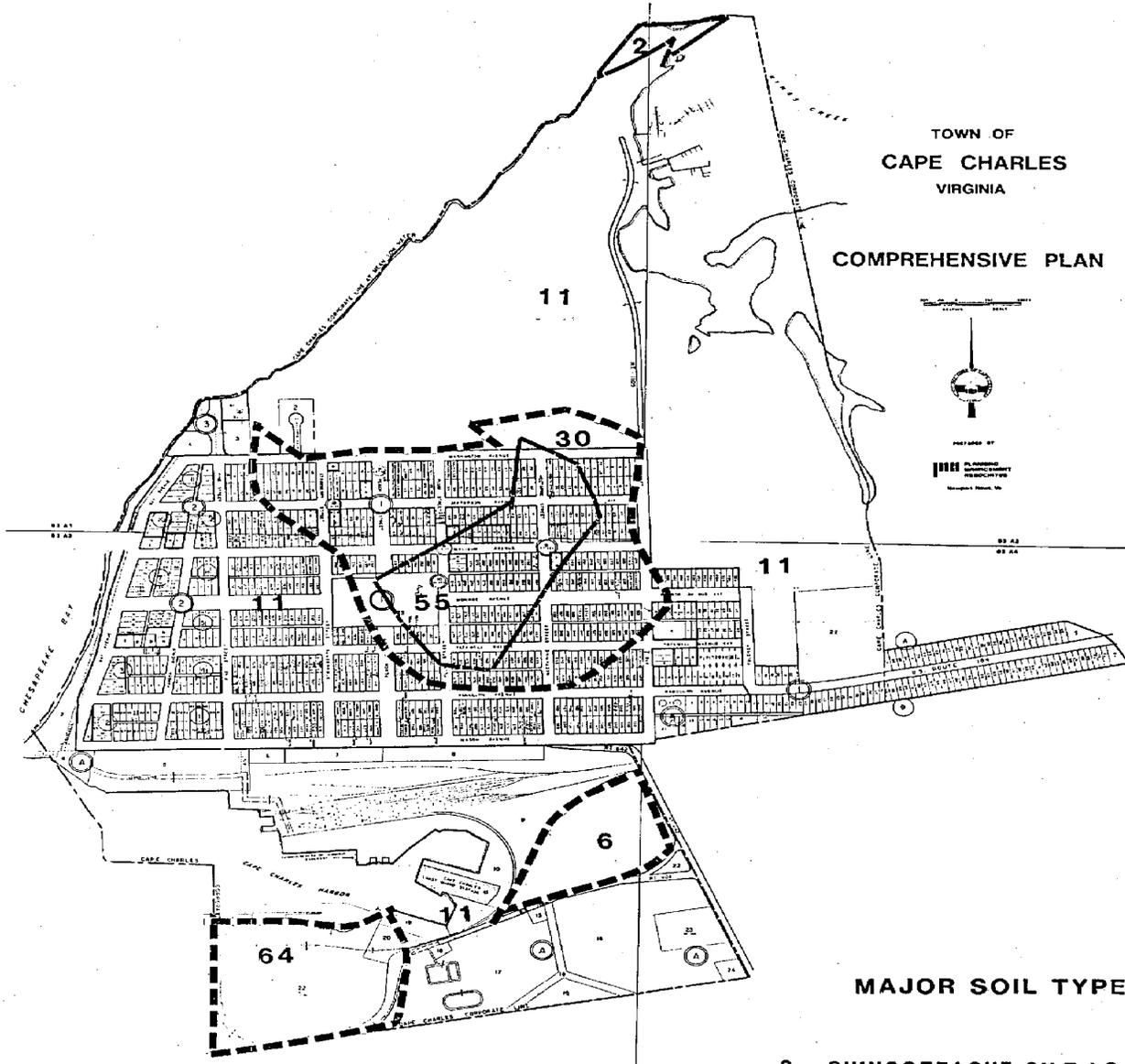
Because of the topography of the Eastern Shore, the bayside of Northampton County is extremely vulnerable to flooding. The flooding occurs from such sources as hurricanes (May through November) and northeasters (all year possibility but mostly from November through April). The flooding caused by hurricanes and northeaster storms is very damaging. Both hurricanes and northeasters normally are characterized by high winds, heavy rainfall, higher than normal tides, and higher than normal wave action. Although the northeasters are not normally as powerful as hurricanes, the damage can be as severe and can occur over a longer period of time.

Cape Charles is a low lying, relatively flat land area, going from just over five feet in elevation to just over 10 feet in elevation. This makes the entire town susceptible to flooding. The flooding caused by rains mostly occurs in the streets and is caused by the lack of proper storm drainage. This type of flooding is the most frequent but also the least damaging.

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science in the Shoreline Situation Report summarized the erosion problems of Northampton County as severe. Along the Chesapeake Bay, erosion is mostly caused by northwest or north winds which are connected to storms between November and April. Wave action will also cause some erosion during heavy storms.

TOWN OF  
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VIRGINIA

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MAJOR SOIL TYPES

- 2 CHINCOTEAGUE SILT LOAM
- 6 UDORTHENTS & UDIPSAMMENTS
- 11 BOJAC FINE SANDY LOAM
- 30 MUNDEN SANDY LOAM
- 55 NIMMO SANDY LOAM
- 64 CAMOCCA FINE SAND

MAP 4

CAPE CHARLES  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



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For the most part, Cape Charles experiences only slight erosion problems and is mostly protected from erosion by the bulkhead between the Cape Charles harbor and Washington Avenue as well as Wescoat Point to the north of the town. The beachfront along the existing town experiences only slight erosion, less than one foot per year. The area north of the Cape Charles beach experiences moderate erosion rates-between 1 to 3 feet per year. The Virginia Institute of Marine Science in the Shoreline Situation Report categorized the area as non-critical because of the lack of endangered buildings, roads and other structures. If this area becomes developed, it will be considered a critical, moderate erosion area. Mitigation measures and set back requirements are recommended for such areas. If original developers do not take these problems into account in the design of any type of development, then in time the town may be pressured into very costly protection measures by existing owners who are faced with deteriorating property lines.

MAP 5 shows the flood zones as determined by the Department of Housing and Community Development, FIA Flood Hazard Boundary Map (1976) and the erosion areas as determined by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Shoreline Situation Report (1974).

#### 5. Groundwater

With Cape Charles located on the Chesapeake Bay and sandwiched between two large creek systems, it would appear as though water would never be a concern. However, like the entire Eastern Shore, Cape Charles' water supply comes from only one source - precipitation. Rain and snow seeping into the aquifers are the only source of potable water.

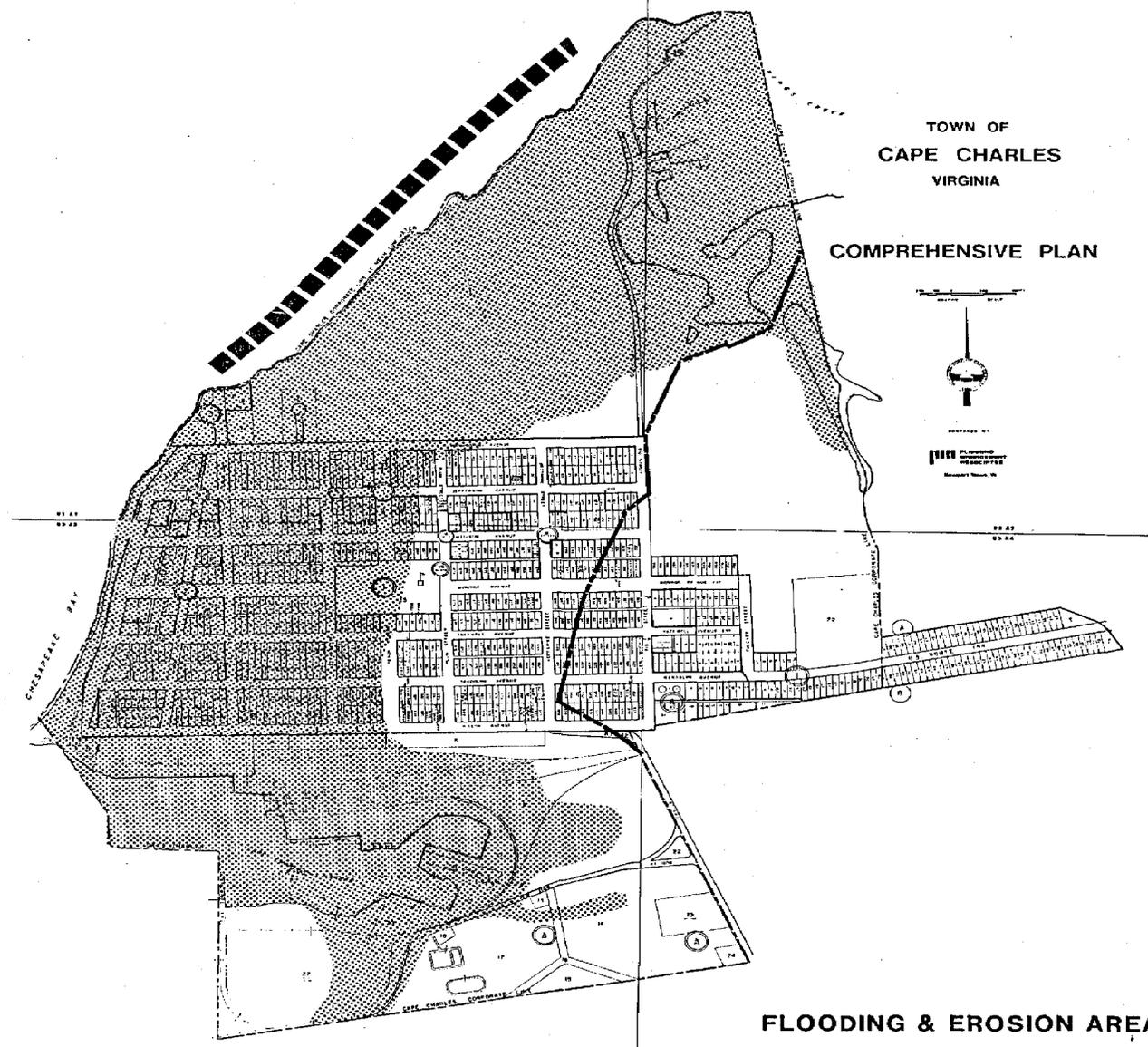
According to the State Water Control Board, about 43 inches of precipitation are recorded each year on the Eastern Shore. Of this, 70% evaporates, 4% goes to recharge the aquifers and 26% either runs off into the creeks and bay or is utilized for agricultural or human consumption.

The State Water Control Board calculates that there are approximately 29 to 78 million gallons of water per day available in Accomack and Northampton counties. Current usage is estimated between 14.5 and 21.75 million gallons per day. Although groundwater is available in sufficient supply now, the natural system is extremely fragile and has already been upset by excessive pumping. The region already experienced over-pumping of water in the 1970s which caused some well interferences.

November 1, 1976, the State Water Control Board designated Northampton and Accomack counties the Eastern Shore Groundwater Management Area. This is one of two groundwater management areas in the state. This designation was initiated by the Northampton County Board of Supervisors because of the total dependence the Eastern Shore has on groundwater to supply all of its water needs and because of the problems already experienced from over-pumping groundwater. The State Water Control Board found that the potential existed for serious groundwater supply inadequacies in the future. They also found that some existing industrial users had withdrawn enough groundwater from deep wells as to cause shallow well interferences. Further increases

TOWN OF  
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VIRGINIA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



FLOODING & EROSION AREAS

-  FLOOD HAZARD AREA
-  MODERATE EROSION (1 - 3 FEET)
-  10 FOOT CONTOUR LINE

MAP 5

# CAPE CHARLES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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in withdrawal would result in saltwater intrusion of the freshwater aquifers.

The designation of the region as a Groundwater Management Area is one attempt at ensuring that water supplies on the Eastern Shore continue in sufficient quantity and quality. Within this management area, there is the requirement for the issuance of a Certificate of Groundwater Right to any user of over 50,000 gallons per day of groundwater, except for agriculture, domestic and human consumption. This certificate puts a maximum limit on the right of large users to extract groundwater.

#### 6. Watersheds

Cape Charles straddles a peninsula between two watersheds, Kings Creek to the north and Old Plantation Creek to the south. Drainage from the town and environs either enters these bodies of water, which in turn enter the Chesapeake Bay, or enters the Bay directly. Within the town there are several smaller watersheds. These include the Mud Creek (Cape Charles harbor), the golf course pond, and a drainage-way through the undeveloped land north of Washington Avenue.

7. Issues, Opportunities and Problems

CAPE CHARLES IS EXTREMELY VULNERABLE TO FLOODING FROM NUMEROUS SOURCES. THE LACK OF ADEQUATE STREET DRAINAGE LEADS TO STANDING WATER THROUGHOUT A LARGE PART OF THE TOWN. ABOUT HALF OF THE PROPERTY IN THE TOWN IS IN FLOOD HAZARD AREA. ABOUT HALF OF THE SINGLE FAMILY AND DUPLEX HOUSING UNITS AND 29% OF THE MULTI-FAMILY UNITS ARE IN THE FLOOD HAZARD AREA. FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF BOTH PRIVATE PROPERTY AND PUBLIC SERVICES, AN IMPROVED DRAINAGE SYSTEM IS REQUIRED.

THE LAND IN THE NORTHERN EDGE OF TOWN, ALONG THE BAYSIDE, IS EXPERIENCING SOME EROSION PROBLEMS. IF AND WHEN DEVELOPMENT OCCURS, EROSION MITIGATION SHOULD BE ADDRESSED BY THE DEVELOPERS IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE NEED FOR COSTLY PUBLIC ASSISTANCE IN THE FUTURE.

GROUNDWATER IS THE ONLY SOURCE OF WATER IN THE EASTERN SHORE. THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF THE WATER SUPPLY IS DEPENDENT UPON CAREFUL USE OF THIS LIMITED RESOURCE. ALL DEVELOPMENT MUST BE EVALUATED IN TERMS OF ITS AFFECT ON GROUNDWATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY.

### C. LAND USE INVENTORY

Cape Charles land use was inventoried in the Fall of 1988 using a series of field surveys, tax maps and aerial maps. The inventory was then reconciled with the current tax records of property owners for the approximately 1,235 parcels.

The 1,235 parcels contain about 852 building uses: housing, commercial, industrial or public/semi public, and 355 vacant parcels. There is not an exact match between the number of parcels (1,235) and the number of uses (852) because in some cases a building or use will straddle several parcels and sometimes multi-family units will be on one parcel. Most of the Cape Charles housing uses are laid out on standard 40 foot by 140 foot lots. This was the original platting done in 1885. However, many of the parcels on the list of property owners are half this size or less. For example, an owner may own one standard lot with a single family home and also an adjoining parcel which is only half the size of a standard lot. Occasionally a standard lot has been divided into 3 or 4 parcels, each with a building and a different owner.

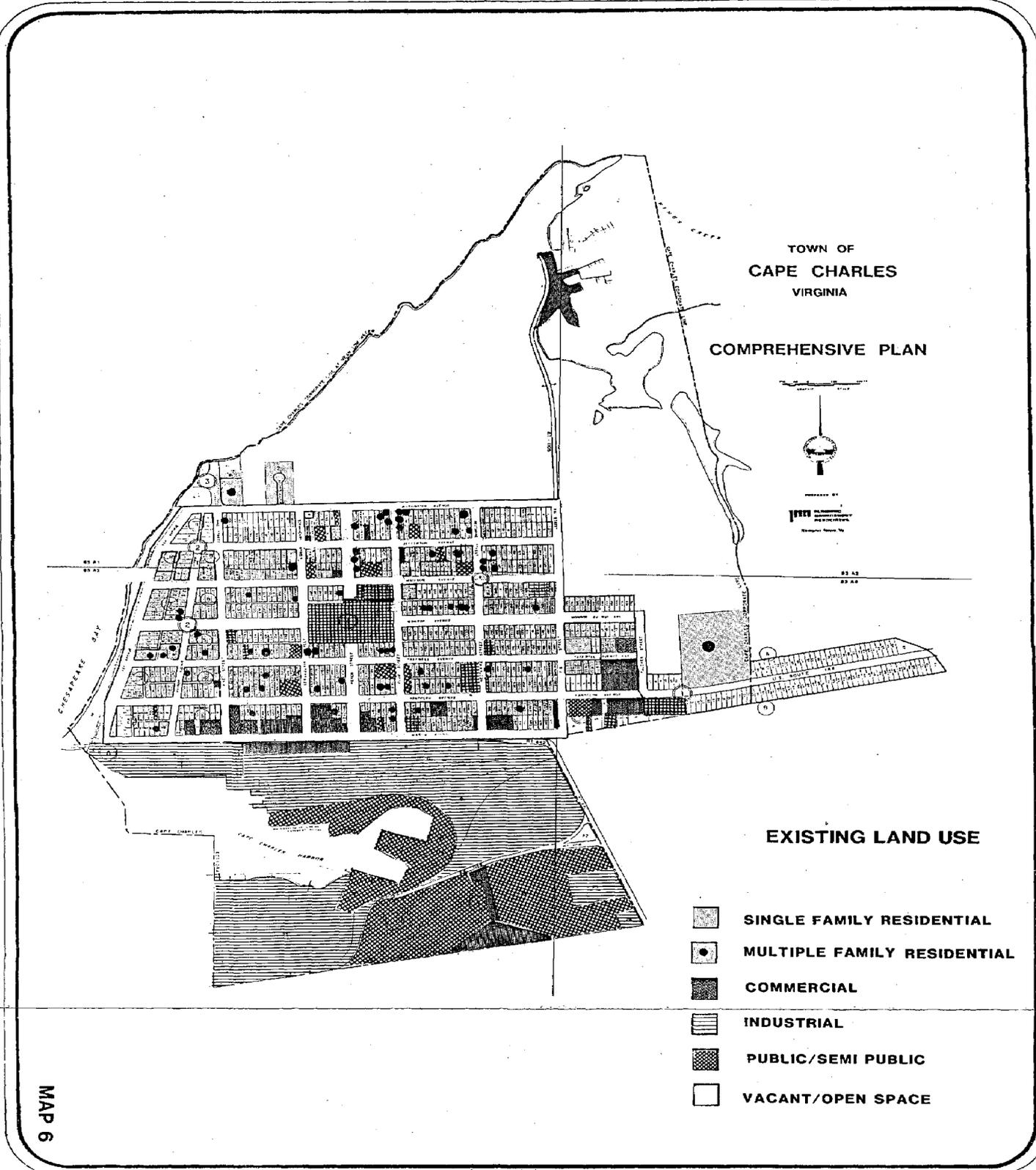
Table 2 provides a summary of the land use inventory, showing parcels and recorded uses for each category.

Table 2  
1988 LAND USE  
CAPE CHARLES, VIRGINIA

	PARCELS	HOUSING UNITS	OTHER USES	VACANT
PARCELS: MAP &/OR TAX LIST	1,224			
SINGLE FAMILY	577	492		
VACANT/CONNECT SF	31	0		31
SINGLE FAMILY W/COMMERC	1	1		
DUPLEX	63	111		
VACANT/CONNECT DUPLEX	4	0		4
MULTI-FAMILY	13	153		
MULTI-FAMILY W/COMMERC	1	4		
VACANT/CONNECT MF	2	0		2
MOBILE HOME	4	9		
COMMERCIAL	122		52	
INDUSTRIAL	10		4	
PUBL/SEMI-PUBLIC	77		26	
VACANT, NOT CONNECT HOUSING	319			318
TOTAL	1,224	770	82	355

SOURCE: Northampton County Tax Maps and PMA windshield surveys, October, 1988.

The following map (MAP 6) illustrates current land use.



TOWN OF  
CAPE CHARLES  
VIRGINIA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



EXISTING LAND USE

-  SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
-  MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
-  COMMERCIAL
-  INDUSTRIAL
-  PUBLIC/SEMI PUBLIC
-  VACANT/OPEN SPACE

MAP 6

CAPE CHARLES  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**PLAN** PLANNING  
MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATES  
10227 Warwick Blvd. Newport News, Va. 23601

## 1. Residential

The largest single land use in Cape Charles is for housing with about sixty percent of the housing in Cape Charles for single family homes. The residential sections of the town are primarily two-story frame buildings built in the early part of the 1900s in the original sections of town. Because the majority of houses are built on the original 40 x 140 foot lots, the houses are closely spaced to the point where it can sometimes be difficult to discriminate between properties in aerial mapping. Smaller one-story frame houses are located north of Madison Street and east of Strawberry Street. The houses built between Harbor and Bay Avenues on the west side of town and around Fig Street on the east side of town are in the "newer" sections. These are more frequently masonry structures built in the 1950s and are built on larger lots, approximately 100 by 150 feet.

Some of the larger homes have undergone conversions to two-family or multi-family uses and some that were duplexes appear to have been converted to single family. Without an internal house-to-house survey, it is difficult to identify all of these conversions. However, it is estimated that duplex units are about 14% of the housing stock and multi-family units are about 20%. Seabreeze and Heritage Acres account for 126 of the 153 multi-family units. In addition, nine mobile homes are located in one mobile home park in town.

Of the 770 housing units, it is estimated that 715 are occupied. About a dozen units are burned or dilapidated probably beyond repair. Ten units are estimated to be seasonal. When inventoried, a four-unit multi-family and nine single family units were observed to be for sale. This amounts to about one percent of the single family units that are vacant for sale, which is about the ratio considered necessary to provide choice in the market. Four single family units had "sold" signs. The rental market is very tight, however. Only about 27 units appear to exist in the entire town that are not restricted to elderly or low/moderate-income housing.

Estimated vacancies by unit type are:

Single Family Units	15 year-round vacancies 10 seasonal 7 beyond repair
Duplex Units	4 vacancies 5 beyond repair
Multi-Family Units	14 vacancies
Total	55

Half of the single family and duplex units are in flood hazard areas. Twenty-nine percent of the multi-family units are also in the flood hazard area.

A large percentage of the current housing stock is in considerable need of major repairs and renovation. The housing identified as beyond

repair includes those structures that are burned or collapsed through abandonment. In addition to these houses, numerous other dwellings are inhabited, but are dilapidated, appear to lack adequate amenities, and are on the verge of collapse.

## 2. Commercial and Public/Semi-Public

The commercial development uses are found in three locations in the town. The three locations are: scattered neighborhood commercial uses such as small markets, dry cleaners and funeral homes; the area around the entrance to the town off of Route 184 at Randolph Avenue and Fig Street which includes a grocery store, doll and frame shop, etc.; and the central business district which is located along Mason Avenue between Plum Street and Harbor Avenue.

Several of the commercial buildings in the neighborhoods need some repairs, although they are technically non-conforming according to the zoning ordinance. Decisions need to be made concerning these properties as to whether to discourage their continued use (in that case the buildings will continue to deteriorate) or whether to accept their continued use in the neighborhoods and to encourage improvements to the condition of the buildings. The commercial uses around the entrance to the town appear in good condition and many have been in the same location since the preparation of the last Comprehensive Plan. This shows some stability in the area. The one eyesore in the area is the iceplant area which continues to deteriorate and presents an unappealing introduction to the main street (Mason Avenue). The central business district has already undergone some improvements due to a small cities grant funded from 1982-85.

Single commercial uses frequently span several parcels. For example, a grocery may use four parcels, and another two vacant parcels may provide parking. Of the 132 parcels categorized as commercial or industrial, it is estimated that they are occupied by 52 commercial establishments and 4 industries. Public and semi-public uses consist mainly of the town, Delmarva Power & Light and Post Office properties as well as the property of about ten churches.

## 3. Industrial Uses

The major location of the industrial sites is in the southern portion of town around the harbor. The major industries include: the Eastern Shore Railroad, Bayshore Concrete, Eastern Shore Grain Corporation and the Cape Charles Wastewater Treatment Facility. Adjacent to the Treatment Plant is the 25-acre Cape Charles Industrial Park. This includes improved 25 acres served by water, sewer, rail and a 1,000 foot bulkhead. There are approximately 15 lots available for development with one site set aside for an elevated water tank and one small site for a wastewater lift station. These can be adjusted or combined to meet the needs of industrial clients. Most of the area south of the parcels located on Mason Street is zoned M-1 industrial.

## 4. Vacant Parcels

Vacant parcels within the original town limits are most frequently found to be integral to adjacent parcels and are frequently owned by

the same owners of the adjacent property. These parcels are used as gardens or expanded side yards. Most appear to be too small to allow for development under current ordinances. (The current zoning ordinance requires a minimum of 11,000 square feet for single family dwellings with an eighty foot minimum frontage.) These have been categorized in the data base separately as "Vacant Connect/SF" or "Vacant Connect/Duplex, etc. Of the 318 parcels that do not appear to be inseparable from housing on adjoining properties, 88 are smaller than the standard lot size of 40' by 140'. That leaves 230 vacant parcels of at least standard lot size. Brown and Root owns 113, or nearly half of those, most of which are located on Route 184 at the entrance to the town. One owner therefore controls much of the future direction of town growth.

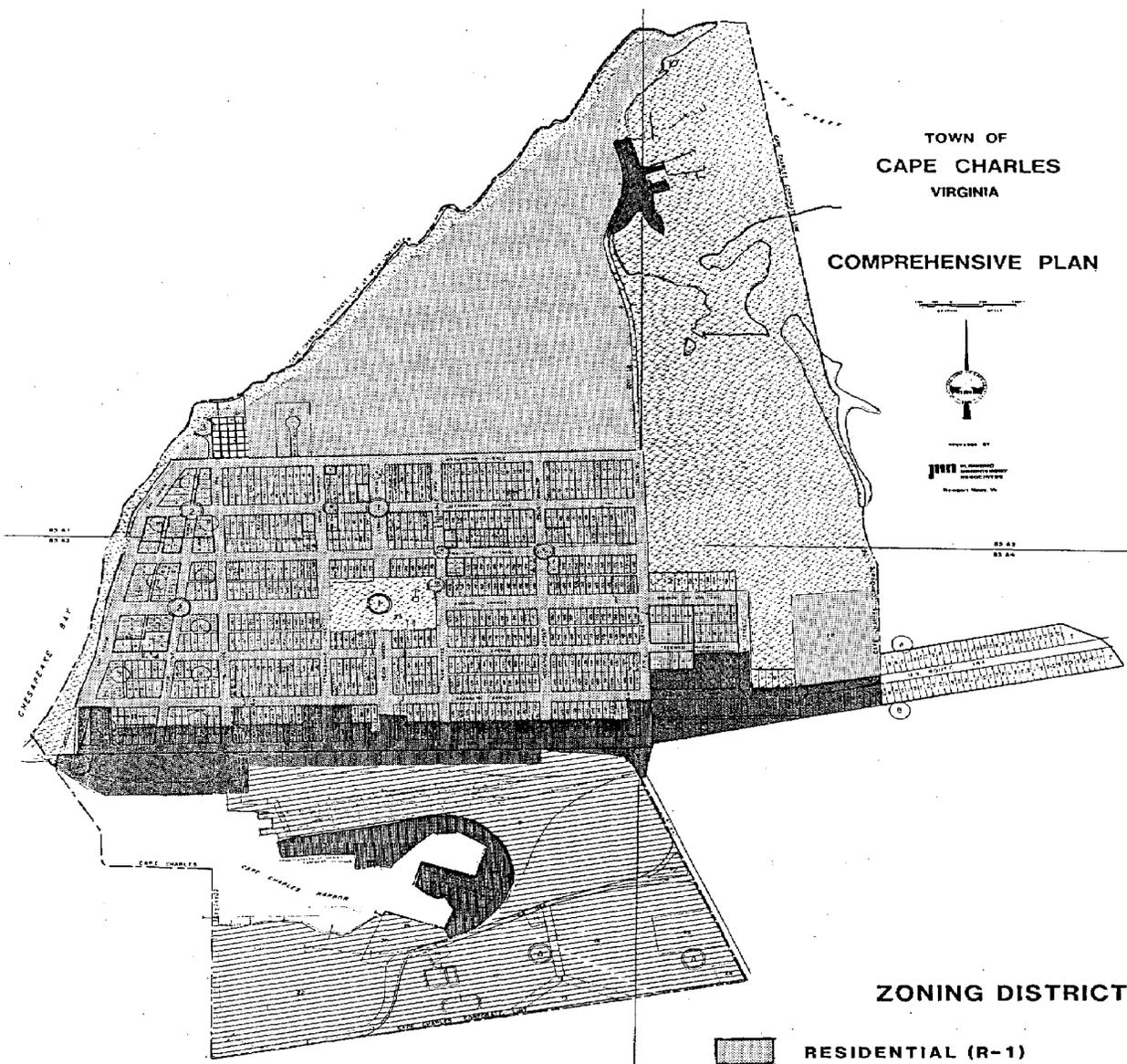
#### 5. Zoning

Until the early 1980s, the zoning districts in Cape Charles had remained the same for the past couple of decades. The first change came in 1981 with a request for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) in the northwest corner of the town to allow for the development of a small, low income apartment complex. The second request came within a year of the PUD to rezone some open space at the entrance of the town to residential zoning for the purpose of developing housing for the elderly, handicapped and disabled. Both zoning requests were approved. Map 7 illustrates the current zoning districts as amended.

The zoning ordinance adopted in March 1987 also requires a minimum of 11,000 square feet for residential development of single family homes with an eighty-foot width requirement. Other parts of the zoning ordinance, which may impact on the vacant land north of Washington Avenue and development or redevelopment of other parts of town, are the Flood Hazard District regulations and/or Planned Unit Development regulations.

TOWN OF  
CAPE CHARLES  
VIRGINIA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



ZONING DISTRICTS

-  RESIDENTIAL (R-1)
-  BUSINESS (B-1)
-  INDUSTRIAL (M-1)
-  OPEN SPACE / RECREATION (O-1)
-  PUD

MAP 7

# CAPE CHARLES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**JMA** PLANNING  
MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATES  
10227 Warwick Blvd. Newport News, Va. 23601

6. Issues, Opportunities and Problems

HOUSING

THE NEED TO IMPROVE HOUSING CONDITIONS IN PARTS OF THE TOWN HAS BEEN A MAJOR ISSUE THROUGHOUT THE PAST DECADES AND CONTINUES NOW INTO THE 1990S. DILAPIDATED, ABANDONED AND SERIOUSLY SUBSTANDARD HOUSING IS OF CONCERN TO ALL CITIZENS IN THE TOWN.

SOME HOUSING IN SOME PARTS OF TOWN AND SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE TOWN APPEARS TO BE IN VERY POOR CONDITION. A VERY THOROUGH HOUSING SURVEY IS REQUIRED TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM. HOWEVER, FROM THE SIGHTINGS FROM A WINDSHIELD SURVEY, A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF CERTAIN AREAS IN THE TOWN ARE SERIOUSLY SUBSTANDARD WITH ISOLATED PROBLEMS INTERSPERSED THROUGHOUT THE TOWN. PROBLEMS INCLUDE SAGGING ROOFS, MISSING SIDING, HAZARDOUS ENTRYWAYS, MISSING WINDOWS, POSSIBLE MISSING INSIDE PLUMBING, DETERIORATING APPEARANCE AND CLUTTERED AND UNKEPT YARDS AND OUTBUILDINGS.

IT IS LIKELY THAT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS WOULD BE NECESSARY TO ALLEVIATE SOME OF THE HOUSING PROBLEMS GIVEN THE LOW INCOMES OF A LARGE PART OF THE COMMUNITY. IN ADDITION SOME PROBLEMS NEED TO BE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE ADOPTION OF STRICTER ORDINANCES - SUCH AS THE BUILDING MAINTENANCE CODE AND STRICTER ENFORCEMENT OF ALL BUILDING CODES.

ONE PROBLEM HERE IS HOW TO ENFORCE BUILDING AND OTHER CODES IN THE TOWN. THE TOWN DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT STAFF TO ENFORCE THE CODES SO IS DEPENDENT UPON COUNTY OFFICIALS WHO MUST ATTEMPT TO ENFORCE CODES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY. LIBERTIES ARE BEING TAKEN IN THE REPAIR AND RENOVATION OF HOUSING. HOUSES HAVE BEEN CONVERTED INTO DUPLEXES OR APARTMENTS WITHOUT PROPER AUTHORIZATION. BURNED OR ABANDONED HOUSES REMAIN AS EYESORES WITHOUT EVIDENCE OF INTENT TO REMOVE OR REBUILD.

THE AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE IS SHRINKING, CAUSING LESS IMPACT ON SCHOOLS BUT INCREASING THE DEMAND FOR SMALLER HOUSING UNITS.

ABOUT HALF OF THE PROPERTY IN THE TOWN IS IN THE FLOOD HAZARD AREA. ABOUT HALF OF THE SINGLE FAMILY AND DUPLEX HOUSING UNITS AND 29% OF THE MULTI-FAMILY UNITS ARE IN THE FLOOD HAZARD AREA.

THE VACANT-FOR SALE RATE PROBABLY ALLOWS FOR A REASONABLE DEGREE OF CHOICE IN THE SINGLE FAMILY MARKET BUT THE MULTI-FAMILY RENTAL MARKET SUPPLY IS MOSTLY RESTRICTED TO ELDERLY OR LOW/MODERATE INCOME RESIDENTS. THERE ARE FEW MULTI-FAMILY RENTAL UNITS

AVAILABLE FOR NEW WORKERS IF THE DEMAND FOR SERVICES INCREASES BEYOND THE CURRENT LABOR FORCE.

ONE OWNER OWNS ABOUT HALF OF THE VACANT LOTS THAT ARE AT LEAST STANDARD LOT SIZE (40' BY 140'), IN ADDITION TO A MAJORITY OF THE OTHER VACANT ACREAGE, AND, THEREFORE, CONTROLS A LOT OF THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOWN. (MAP 8)

#### COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SOME COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES LOCATED IN NEIGHBORHOODS ARE IN NEED OF REPAIRS. MANY OF THESE ACTIVITIES ARE NON-CONFORMING USES. THE CURRENT ZONING ORDINANCE LIMITS REPAIRS TO NOT MORE THAN TEN PERCENT OF THE REPLACEMENT VALUE OF THE BUILDING. THIS RESTRICTION MAY BE LIMITING THE DEGREE OF IMPROVEMENTS UNDERTAKEN BY OWNERS. THIS PROBLEM NEEDS FURTHER CONSIDERATION AND STUDY. QUESTIONS AS TO THE DESIRABILITY FOR THESE CONTINUED USES IN NEIGHBORHOODS VERSUS THE DESIRABILITY FOR IMPROVED CONDITIONS NEEDS TO BE ASKED AND ANSWERED BY THE COMMUNITY.

THE CENTRAL BUSINESS AREA HAS BEEN GREATLY IMPROVED BY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS IN THE PAST. HOWEVER, SOME BUSINESSES, BOTH IN-USE AND VACANT, ARE POORLY MAINTAINED AND IN NEED OF REPAIRS. THESE UNKEPT BUSINESSES ARE DIVERTING ATTENTION FROM THE POSITIVE ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY AND PERHAPS DISCOURAGING IMPROVEMENTS BY NEIGHBORING PROPERTY OWNERS.

OWNERS OF VACANT BUILDINGS MAY NEED SOME ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN FINDING VIABLE TENANTS OR BUYERS FOR THEIR PROPERTIES. THE APPEARANCE OF A NUMBER OF VACANT COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS DETRACTS FROM THE WORKING COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES AND REDUCES THE POTENTIAL TOWN REVENUE FROM SALES WHICH ALSO PLACES A HIGHER BURDEN ON EXISTING COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES.

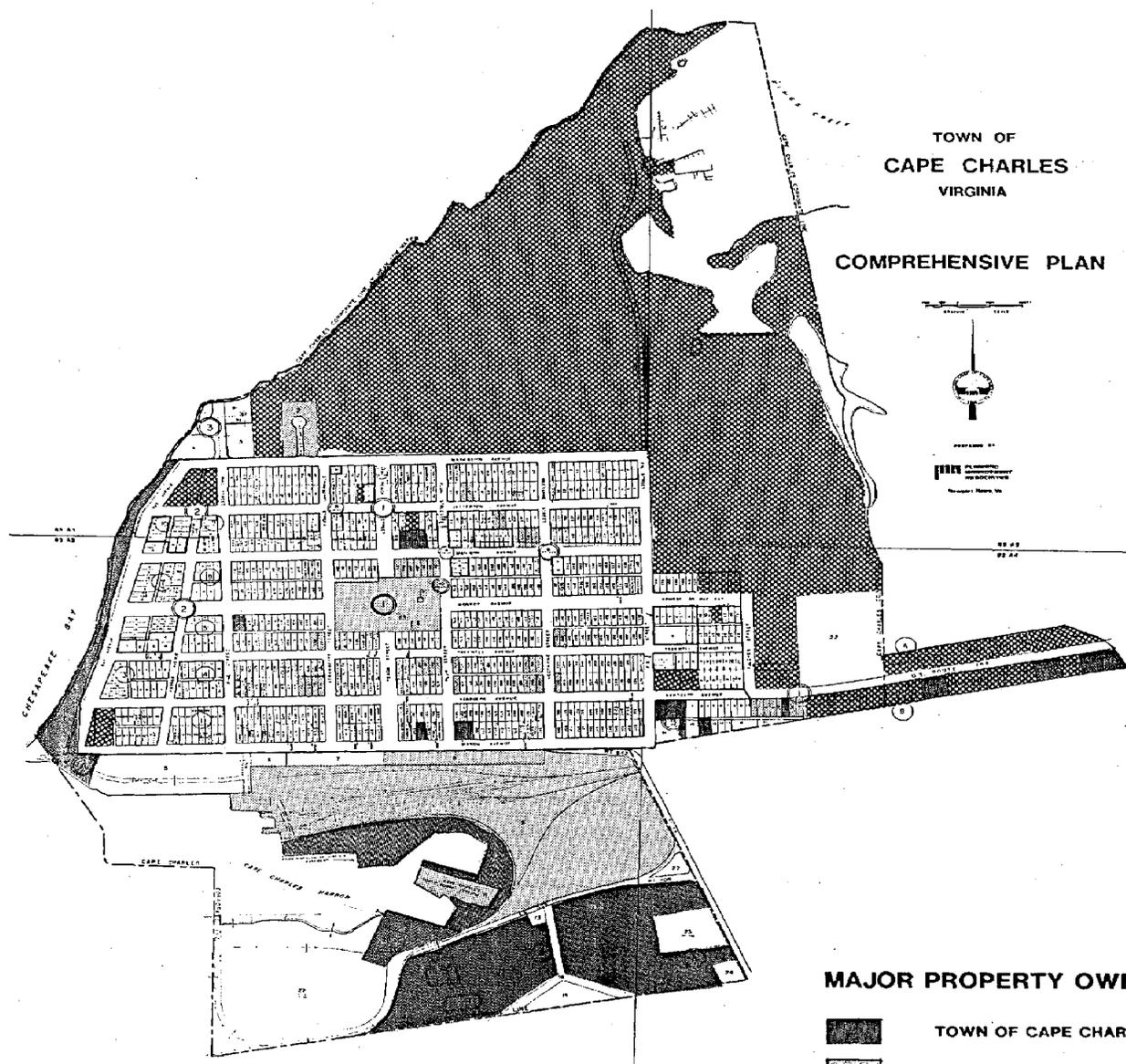
THE INDUSTRIAL PARK IS IDEALLY LOCATED AROUND THE HARBOR AND RAILROAD AND OFFERS A GREAT POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVING THE ECONOMIC BASE OF THE TOWN. THIS UNTAPPED RESOURCE NEEDS TO BE PUT INTO THE FOREFRONT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. COORDINATION BETWEEN STATE, COUNTY, PRIVATE AND TOWN ECONOMIC/INDUSTRIAL AND LAND USE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS HOLDS THE GREATEST OPPORTUNITY FOR SUCCESSFUL LEASING OF THIS PROPERTY ALONG WITH EXPANDED HARBOR AND RAILROAD TRAFFIC. THIS TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT ONLY INCREASE THE TOWN'S TAX BASE, BUT ALSO LIKELY OFFER HIGHER PAYING JOBS FOR

TOWN RESIDENTS WHICH WOULD RAISE THE STANDARD OF LIVING FOR INDIVIDUALS AS WELL.

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY HAS IDENTIFIED CAPE CHARLES AND EXMORE AS THE PRIMARY CENTERS FOR COUNTY-WIDE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT. THIS PROVIDES THE OPPORTUNITY FOR MAXIMIZING JOINT ECONOMIC MARKETING AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.

TOWN OF  
CAPE CHARLES  
VIRGINIA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



MAJOR PROPERTY OWNERS

-  TOWN OF CAPE CHARLES
-  OTHER PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC
-  BROWN & ROOT

MAP 8

# CAPE CHARLES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**JM&A** PLANNING  
MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATES

10227 Warwick Blvd. Newport News, Va. 23601

## D. PUBLIC SERVICES

Public services, whether provided by local government or volunteer groups, are those services which are intended to serve the entire community, specifically to protect and promote the health, safety and general well-being of the Town's citizens. These include: fire, rescue, law enforcement, schools, public utilities like water and refuse disposal, and recreation. The map on the following page shows the location of all major public services in Cape Charles.

### 1. Community Facilities

#### a. Local Government

The Town of Cape Charles was incorporated on March 1, 1886. The town's administration has been housed in the Municipal Building since the early 1930s. Services found in the Municipal Building including the Town Council, Town Manager, Treasurer, the Department of Taxation, the Department of Planning and Development, Fire Department Administration, Law Enforcement and the Department of Motor Vehicles.

#### b. Schools

Cape Charles opened its first public school in 1885 and became an independent school system in 1892. It moved to its present location on Monroe Avenue during the 1890s. In 1987, the town school system once again merged with the county. The agreement reads as follows.

" ON JULY 17, 1987, THE TOWN AND THE TOWN SCHOOL BOARD ENTERED INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON AND THE SCHOOL BOARD OF NORTHAMPTON COUNTY WHEREBY THE CAPE CHARLES SCHOOL WOULD BE CONSOLIDATED WITH AND OPERATED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD OF NORTHAMPTON COUNTY. THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SUCH AGREEMENT ARE SET FORTH IN DETAIL BELOW:

(1) The Town School Board shall convey to the County School Board all right, title and interest which it has in the Cape Charles property and all tangible personal property owned by it. However, in the event that the Cape Charles school ceases to be operated as a public school, such conveyed property will revert to the Town of Cape Charles.

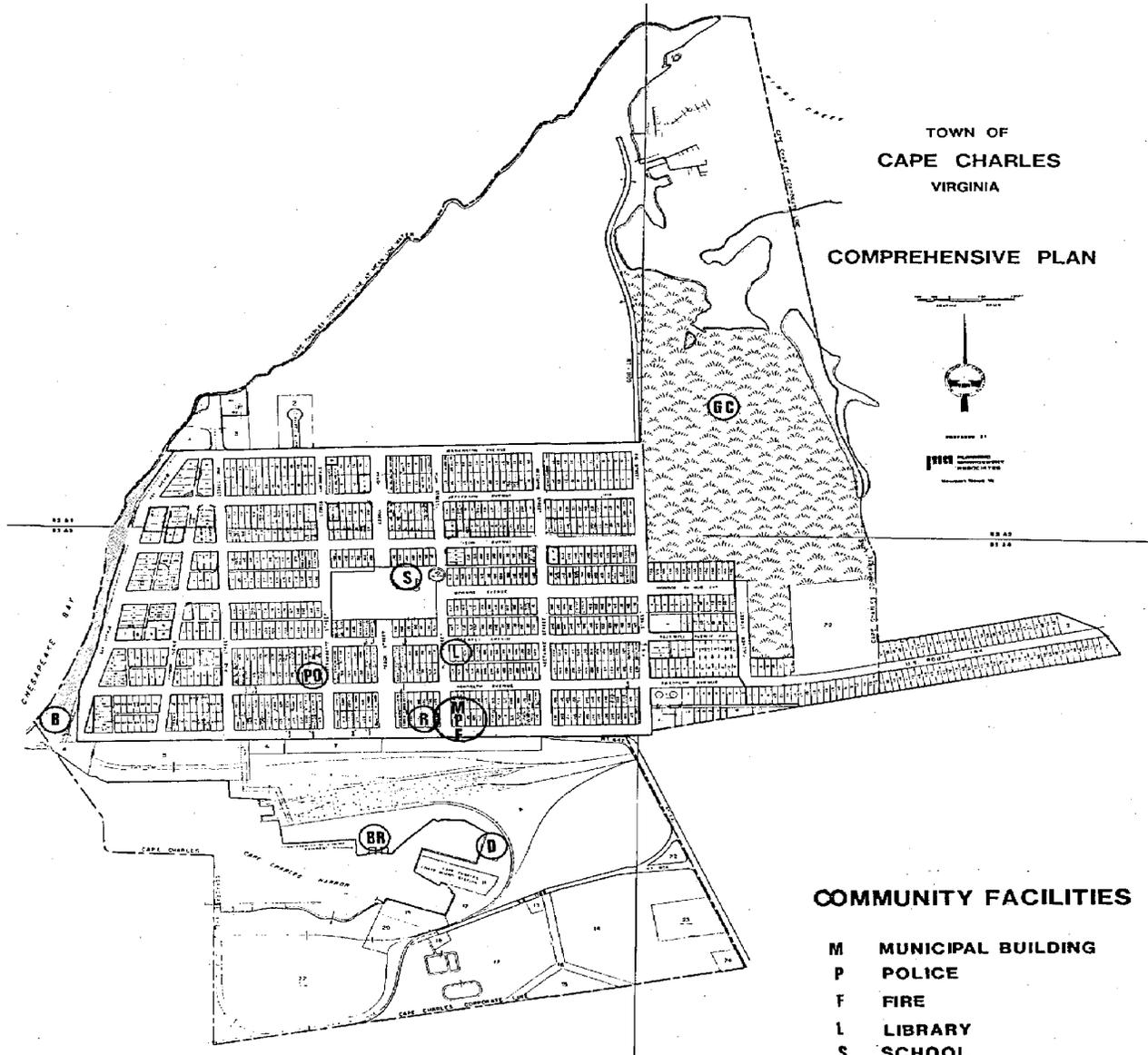
(2) The County shall pay to the Town the sum of \$10,000 upon the signing of the agreement and on the second, third and fourth anniversaries of such dates thus causing the County to ultimately pay the Town the total sum of \$50,000.

(3) The Town of Cape Charles shall provide sewage disposal, garbage removal, and public water free of charge to the County School Board.

(4) As of the execution of the agreement, the Town School Board shall assign to the County School Board the employment contracts of all employees.

TOWN OF  
CAPE CHARLES  
VIRGINIA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- M MUNICIPAL BUILDING
- P POLICE
- F FIRE
- L LIBRARY
- S SCHOOL
- R RESCUE
- P POST OFFICE
- G GOLF COURSE
- B BEACH
- BR BOAT RAMP
- D DOCK

MAP 9

CAPE CHARLES  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**PMAC** PLANNING  
MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATES

10222 Warwick Blvd. Newport News, Va. 23601

(5) The Town School Board retains, however, all obligations and liabilities to employees existing or claimed to be existing at or before the assignment of the employee contracts.

(6) The Town Council and the Town School Board assigns to the County and the County School Board the right to receive any funds received by or for the Town which are designated for local school purposes.

(7) The Town School Board will continue to exist in an advisory capacity only to the Northampton County School Board. This will continue until such time as the two school systems formally consolidate, which is expected to occur by the end of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1995."

Cape Charles was named as a Special School District and merged with the Northampton County school system at the start of the 1987/88 school year; in the 1989/90 school year that designation will be dissolved and Cape Charles will be completely consolidated with Northampton County under the name of the Northampton County School Division. The Northampton County School Board is obligated to operate a school in Cape Charles until 1995, unless a facility study determines that the school buildings cannot be feasibly repaired or renovated.

The school in Cape Charles houses grades 2 - 4 for Town and County students from Machipungo to the southern county line. There are presently 314 students, 13 teachers and 15 other staff positions filled at the school to include the principal, librarian, other supplemental education positions, office, custodial and cafeteria employees.

Students from Cape Charles go to Cheriton Primary School for grades Kindergarten and 1st grade, Cape Charles for grades 2 - 4, Machipungo for grades 5 and 6, NHC Middle School for 7 and 8, and NHC High School for grades 9 - 12.

The Northampton County School Board owns the land and buildings in Cape Charles where the school is located and will continue to own these until the School Board ceases to operate the school. At that time the property will revert back to the town. It is unknown at this time what the long term plans for the Cape Charles School may be concerning continuation as a school after the 1994-95 school year. However, there have been some preliminary discussions on building one central elementary school for the county and town students. Although the location has not been determined as yet, it is unlikely that the central elementary school would be in or near the town limits. Until the early 1990s, it is unlikely that any decisions regarding the Cape Charles school will be made.

#### c. Library

There has been a library in Cape Charles since 1917. Northampton Memorial Library moved to its present location on the corner of Tazewell and Plum Streets in 1926. The building was originally the First Presbyterian Church which was built in 1900. The Northampton

Memorial Library is a World War I memorial and was the first memorial library established in Virginia.

The Northampton Memorial Library was an independent library until 1957 when the Eastern Shore Public Library became the regional library for Accomack and Northampton Counties. At that time Cape Charles became a station of the ESPL which was defined by the state as having a rotating collection provided by the regional system. In 1979, Cape Charles became a branch of ESPL and in 1981 it again became totally independent. It is now completely owned and operated by the Town of Cape Charles and is the only library in Northampton County.

The building is owned by Cape Charles through the local Library Board which is appointed by the Town Council. There are approximately 6,000 volumes. The circulation has dropped considerably (under 2,000 volumes) since the library became independent because of the limited operating hours. The staff consists of one part-time librarian. The hours of operation are confined to only 12 hours per week.

The library relies on financial support from Cape Charles and private donations.

In addition to the Northampton Memorial Library, Cape Charles is served by the Eastern Shore Public Library in Accomac. This regional library is located about 40 miles north of Cape Charles with a collection of about 75,000 volumes. Also, the Eastern Shore Public Library provides additional library support through a bookmobile service. The bookmobile visits Cape Charles one hour every two weeks and carries a collection of about 6,000 volumes.

## 2. Recreation

There are five recreational areas in Cape Charles; however, some of these are for public use and some are private.

The golf course is a private nine-hole course on the northeastern corner of the town. The Northampton Country Club was organized in 1928 and has been in continuous existence since then. The property is now owned by Brown and Root and is in the process of being replanned. It is unknown at this time, whether the current owners plan to continue to allow the operation of the golf course at the present location in the future. Given that the golf course is privately owned and operated, it is not considered as part of the general town recreational facilities, although it does serve one private recreational need to some of the town's residents.

The Cape Charles school has a six-acre play area which includes an indoor gymnasium for year-round recreational activities as well as outdoor facilities such as: baseball, softball, football and basketball areas, tennis courts and playground equipment. The equipment is in poor condition and disrepair, for example, the absence of nets on the tennis court. The Cape Charles school, also, is not presently locally owned but owned by Northampton County School Board. The town residents are welcome to use the facilities; however, access is sometimes limited due to securing the property after school hours. Requests have been made to the Northampton County School Board to make arrangements

leaving the outdoor facilities unlocked so that residents may use the property after school hours. There have been some discussions involving this site as becoming a town park.

Patton Baseball field is approximately three acres and is located on the east side of "The Hump". The field includes a fenced diamond and bleachers for spectators. The field is used by the Cape Charles Little League teams. The land is owned by the Eastern Shore Railroad, but leased to the Town of Cape Charles.

The Town of Cape Charles owns the only public beach south of Chincoteague Island and the only public beach on the bayside of the Eastern Shore in Virginia. The Cape Charles beach is approximately one-half mile long which is stabilized with buried groins and a bulkhead. The top of the bulkhead is used as a walking area with a large gazebo which is one of the town's foremost landmarks.

Until the fall of 1987, the beach was described as narrow and not very clean. In 1987 the Corps of Engineers dredged the harbor and channel and deposited the sand along the beach area. This greatly expanded the width of the beach as well as improved the quality of the sand along the beach front. The town also began a dune creation project by planting sand grasses in order to help stabilize the sand especially during high winds. This project is scheduled to be finished in the spring of 1989.

The beach is open to the public year-round.

The Cape Charles harbor is one other public facility for recreational boaters and sport fisherman. Due to the scarcity of similar public facilities on the Eastern Shore, the harbor facilities are often crowded beginning with the Drum fishing season in April/May with sports fishermen, during the summer months and weekends with pleasure boaters and sports fishermen and from December through March with the commercial crab dredging boats. There are two double boat launching ramps. There is also sufficient parking for approximately 75 vehicles. The public boat ramps are maintained by the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries.

The town operates a small marina with 13 year-round boat slips. These slips are all rented by the commercial fishing industry. In addition, there is a very high demand for temporary (single day) slip rental during the summer and during any specialized sport fishing season.

### 3. Public Safety and Services

#### a. Fire Protection

By the end of 1885, Cape Charles had its first volunteer fire department, but it was not until 1889 that it was officially organized and not until 1932 that it was housed in the Town Hall Station. The building has since been expanded and remodeled in 1959.

There are currently 30 volunteers actively involved in the department. This includes a Fire Chief, also a volunteer, 2 Assistant Chiefs, 2 Captains and 2 Lieutenants. The volunteers

are provided with a state sponsored fire course consisting of a 30-hour training session.

The department receives operating funds through voluntary contributions and from Cape Charles and Northampton County. The department operates a weekly bingo game to help supplement revenues.

The department provides several services to the residents of Cape Charles and Northampton County upon request. These include:

- o inspections of school and business buildings
- o presentation of educational programs on fire and fire prevention
- o responses to fire calls within its primary service area which includes Cape Charles, the area adjacent to the town and the territory south of the U.S. Route 13 and Route 184 intersection
- o responses to fire calls outside of its primary service area as needed

The following table shows the number of calls responded to by the department in 1977 and then in 1987, ten years later.

Table 3  
MONTHLY FIRE CALLS

<u>MONTH</u> <u>(1988)</u>	<u>NUMBER OF CALLS (1977)</u>	<u>NUMBER OF CALLS</u>
JANUARY	4	11
FEBRUARY	15	6
MARCH	6	9
APRIL	3	4
MAY	9	8
JUNE	8	4
JULY	11	11
AUGUST	3	6
SEPTEMBER	8	12
OCTOBER	7	6
NOVEMBER	9	7
DECEMBER	6	8
TOTAL CALLS	89	92

SOURCE: Cape Charles Fire Department, November, 1988.

Of the 92 responses in 1987, approximately 23 were structure fires, two were trailers, two were false alarms and the remainder were for accident responses, car and grass fires and miscellaneous other activities. The department tends to respond to a slightly

greater number of incidents outside of the town than inside the town although there were no immediate figures to confirm this.

The major fire fighting equipment includes the following:

Table 4  
MAJOR FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT

YEAR	MAKE	CAPACITY	HOSE	
			LENGTH (feet)	DIAMETER (inches)
1924	American-LaFrance	700 gallons per minute 100 gallon tank (Parade use only)	150	3/4 booster
1963	International	750 gallons per minute 500 gallon tank	1000 200	3 1 1/2
1975	Ford	1250 gallon tank	500 500	1 3/4 2 1/2
1975	Ward-LaFrance	1000 gallons per minute 750 gallon tank	1600 400 300	2 1/2 1 1/2 3/4 booster
1966	White tanker	3300 gallon tank	300	2 1/2
1964	Dodge	utility truck		
1972	Ford	rescue truck		

SOURCE: Cape Charles Fire Department, November, 1988.

In addition to the above vehicles, the fire department has a 100-foot hydraulic aerial ladder and air packs which are in the process of being upgraded.

In the Town of Cape Charles, there are 60 fire hydrants. Of these, four are experiencing low water volumes and ten have deteriorated plugs with an additional four bad plugs already replaced this year. The town is responsible for maintaining these hydrants and is in the process of upgrading and replacing the bad plugs. The county does not have fire hydrants at this time in the area served by the fire department.

Map 10 shows the location of the fire hydrants and indicates the hydrants with low volume and bad plugs as well as illustrating the location of other public utility facilities.

b. Rescue

The Cape Charles Rescue Squad was organized in 1942. There are currently about 25 volunteers. The Rescue Squad is headed by a

president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, all of whom are volunteers. In 1987 the Rescue Squad responded to approximately 450 calls with summer being the peak response period.

The Rescue Squad is presently equipped with a 1983 Ford Modular Type III ambulance and a 1988 Ford BLS-ALS Modular III ambulance.

c. Law Enforcement

Law Enforcement is provided to the Town of Cape Charles by four full-time officers and one part-time officer. One of the full-time officers is the Police Chief. The officers provide both crime, traffic control services and public information programs to the citizens in the town.

The Law Enforcement Department is equipped with a 1988 Ford, radar, photo I.D. equipment, drug testing, finger printing and riot control equipment. Radio communications are maintained with the Central Alarm system at the Northampton County Sheriff's Department 24 hours per day which also maintains communication with the Town Fire Department, Rescue Squad, other law enforcement agencies, and local State Police office.

4. Public Utilities

a. Water

The first town surface well was dug in 1896. Water tanks and the other water work infrastructure were installed in 1923. The present water system dates to 1946 and is the largest system in Northampton County. It is supplied by two wells - one (210 feet deep) with a capacity of 275 gallons per minute and the other (220 feet deep) with a capacity of 250 gallons per minute. There are also twelve other wells at various shallower depths (between 75 to 125 feet) that contain various capacities (between 400 and 600 gallons per minute for all 12 wells). The water treatment plant has the capacity to treat 325,000 gallons of water per day by removing iron and manganese and adding chlorination and fluoridation. The town's two elevated water tanks have capacities of 50,000 and 150,000 gallons. Distribution lines include: eight-inch lines near the tanks, a ten-inch line for the industrial area. Most other areas are six and four inches, with a 3/4 inch line serving the golf course and 2 inch lines serving parts of Monroe Avenue. Fire hydrants are shown on Map 10. Average daily use is 144,000 gallons per day (1982 estimate); this is about 95 gallons per day per person.

The present system is dilapidated and in serious need of upgrading and replacement. The condition of the system components is described by the Department of Public Utilities as follows:

"WELLS: High in iron, manganese, color, sulfides, turbidity, sodium and chlorides, and getting worse.

TREATMENT: Building in a state of collapse. Iron filter

dilapidated. Softener dilapidated and not functioning. All valves rusted and leaking.

STORAGE: Both tanks on verge of collapse. Holes in roofs allow birds to nest inside potable tanks.

LINES: Old lead joints are leaking badly. Twenty-three known leaks. Lost water estimated between 50,000 and 100,000 gallons per day. Not looped. Few valves. When leaks are fixed, the entire system must be shut down. No cross connection backflow prevention provisions.

FINISHED WATER: Low pressure, bad taste, high turbidity. Occurrences of biological and chemical contamination have been reported."

On October 5, 1988, the Department of Health inspected the Cape Charles water treatment plant and storage tanks. This inspection was to identify problems in the condition of the system and to identify areas that are not in strict compliance with current Health Department regulations. A copy of the inspection letter is included as Appendix A. In summary the Department of Health identified twenty-six easily identifiable problems, including: rusty and "tuberculated" pipes, valves and tanks, which may be beyond repair; corroded valves causing excessive leaking and standing water in the treatment plant; severe potential safety hazards for workers within the plant caused by standing water and dilapidated building and storage conditions; the lack of space for laboratory analyses; and badly rusted water storage tanks.

Several items listed point to areas where the town is losing an excessive amount of money on a daily basis because of the conditions and lack of effective space and equipment. This includes excessive leakage of water; lack of laboratory analysis space; and lack of meter repair equipment and space (this means that broken meters are simply thrown away and replaced, not repaired).

Current inspections indicate that the existing system is in immediate and serious need for extensive replacement and renovation. Deteriorated conditions are already forcing some residents to purchase water for drinking and cooking and often these are residents who can least afford the added cost of bottled water.

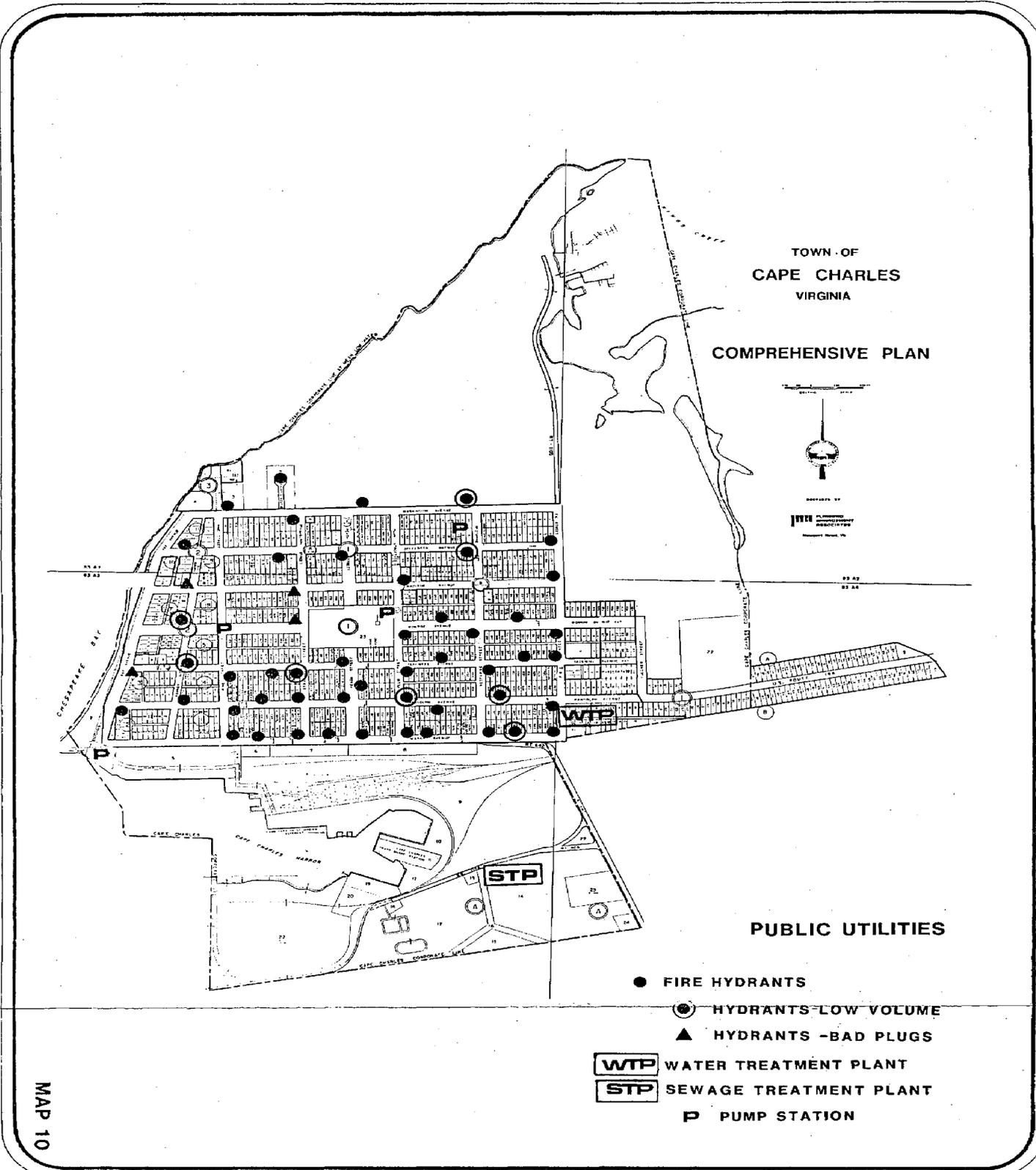
b. Wastewater

Over the past eight years, Cape Charles has greatly upgraded its wastewater treatment facilities. These, too, had seriously deteriorated because of age and were in such poor condition that the State Water Control Board mandated the renovation of the system. In 1981 a sewage treatment plant was constructed on a six-acre parcel on Route 1108. This treatment facility has a capacity of 250,000 gallons per day with current use approximately 170,000 gallons per day. In 1985 the entire collection system was torn out and replaced. The old 4-, 6- and 8-inch pipes were

replaced with 8-inch pipes. Four pump stations were built or renovated. These are now located on the corner of Mason and Bay Avenues, Plum Street at the school, Pine Street and Monroe Avenue and the 500 block of Washington Avenue.

c. Solid Waste

The town provides solid waste collection to residents and commercial users within the corporate limits of Cape Charles. The town owns the vehicles and employs the work force necessary to operate the program. The town owns one trash compactor, one dumptruck and one flatbed lift truck. Solid waste is currently collected from residential users two times per week. Commercial users are placed into one of three categories: small, medium or major business. The small businesses receive collection three times per week, the medium five times per week and the major businesses six times per week. The waste is deposited into the county landfill. The Town is charged nothing for the residential waste, but there is a charge for any commercial waste over 400 pounds. A new county ordinance will require the Town to separate commercial and residential waste in order to account for the charge for the commercial waste.



TOWN OF  
CAPE CHARLES  
VIRGINIA  
  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



PUBLIC UTILITIES

- FIRE HYDRANTS
- HYDRANTS - LOW VOLUME
- ▲ HYDRANTS - BAD PLUGS
- WTP WATER TREATMENT PLANT
- STP SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT
- P PUMP STATION

MAP 10

CAPE CHARLES  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**PM** PLANNING  
MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATES  
10227 Warwick Blvd. Newport News, Va. 23601

## 5. Transportation

### a. Roads

The roads and streets currently paved in Cape Charles are state numbered and maintained.

State Route 184 provides direct traffic access from U.S. Highway 13 to Cape Charles. This route is classified by the Virginia Department of Transportation as a rural minor arterial or collector road. In 1977, the average daily number of vehicles using Route 184 was recorded by VDOT as 2,665 vehicles. In 1987, this number had risen to 4,100 vehicles, indicating an increase in traffic, although not indicating the source of this increase whether from increased tourism, increased employment outside of the town by town residents, increased employment in town by county residents, or increased number of individual drivers versus carpooling. The mostly likely cause for the increase is a combination of all of these factors.

Most of the roads and streets within Cape Charles are in good condition and adequate for daily traffic use, including the overpass for Route 642 which underwent major repair work in 1985. The weight limit for this overpass had been restricted to 3 tons due to deterioration, but with the repairs has been adjusted to the legal vehicle load limits, thus permitting the industrial and safety vehicles easier access. The overpass continues to intersect Mason Avenue at a sharp angle making some turns onto or off of the overpass difficult. The VDOT does not have any plans at the present time for major road improvements in Cape Charles. This is in part due to the resurfacing that supposedly occurred following the sewer pipe replacement project from 1985-1987. Ordinary maintenance that will occur will include repairing potholes, minor street repairs and storm drainage repairs.

### b. Sidewalks

The sidewalks in the central business district have undergone major improvement by the town through a development block grant in 1985. Most sidewalks in the town are adequate for use, where they actually exist in completion. However, there are considerable areas lacking sidewalks or the sidewalks are in need of repair and maintenance. The problem appears to be in clearly identifying the responsible party for maintaining these sidewalks and funding the repair work. Some of the sidewalks are maintained by the state. These include some of the sidewalks that are within five feet from the street curb. However, many of the sidewalks in the town were installed when the town was originally developed or were installed by the town or private homeowners and are beyond the five-foot requirement. Maintenance of sidewalks built by the town or private homeowners are the responsibility of the town or private homeowners. If the Department of Transportation installs or improves a sidewalk as part of major road improvements then it will typically pay for half of the cost of the sidewalk and the town will pay for the other half. In locations where there might be some discrepancies, it might be very beneficial for the town

and the VDOT engineer to do a study of the existing sidewalks to definitively determine maintenance responsibility.

The map on the following page illustrates existing and missing sidewalks.

c. Railroad

The primary stimulus for the original creation of Cape Charles was for the support of the railroad. The railroad continues to be a major entity on the Eastern Shore and in Cape Charles where the railroad is linked to Little Creek in Norfolk by way of two car floats and docking facilities. Cape Charles is also the center for facility and equipment maintenance for the Eastern Shore line.

The Eastern Shore Railroad is owned by the Accomack-Northampton Transportation District Commission who, except for a brief period between 1985 and 1987, have owned the rail line since 1976.

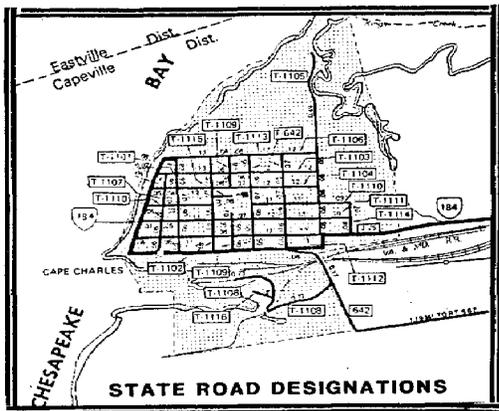
The Railroad estimates that their current capacity is approximately 25,000 cars per year and are at present reaching just under 50% of that capacity. The following table illustrates the monthly railroad car count using the car-float facilities.

Table 5  
EASTERN SHORE RAILROAD - MONTHLY CAR COUNT

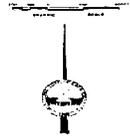
YEAR	1977	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	TOTAL
MONTH													
JAN	1150	0	611	689	927	450	637	563	895	1152	679	643	8393
FEB	617	0	549	450	645	388	519	702	861	1155	738	764	7388
MAR	1348	0	669	733	679	662	776	876	1064	1000	1275	955	10037
APR	296	823	906	887	515	591	552	849	942	1033	757	797	8948
MAY	866	967	654	694	677	530	692	910	1211	1362	1037	762	10362
JUN	565	1110	490	540	639	720	745	938	1227	1146	917	791	9828
JULY	648	874	530	414	641	608	441	809	842	719	675	652	7853
AUG	587	799	573	689	749	672	527	979	893	588	636	698	8390
SEPT	760	799	618	847	777	680	756	983	952	536	729	612	9049
OCT	772	730	803	959	573	750	831	914	861	685	963	830	9671
NOV	1249	613	784	887	485	601	682	782	1370	617	709		8779
DEC	758	753	689	1098	495	611	596	907	1131	503	849		8390
TOTAL	9616	7468	7876	8887	7802	7263	7754	10212	12249	10496	9961	7504	107088

SOURCE: Eastern Shore Railroad, January, 1989.

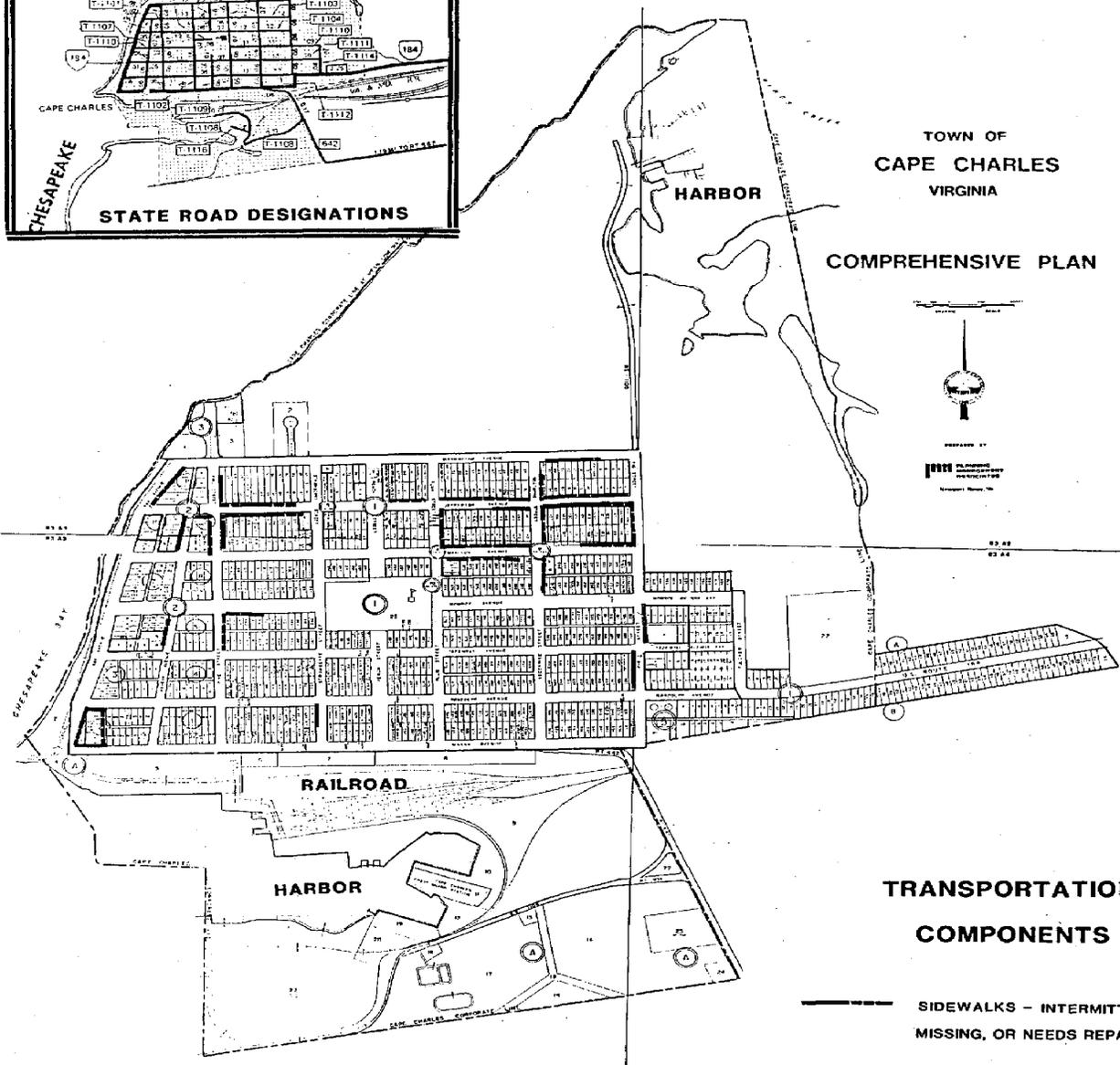
Although the table above does show some expansion in volume since the middle 1980s, it does not show the shift in the philosophy of the railroad from an emphasis on the quantity of traffic to an emphasis on



TOWN OF  
CAPE CHARLES  
VIRGINIA  
  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



PREPARED BY  
**PMAC** PLANNING  
MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATES  
Newport News, Va.



TRANSPORTATION  
COMPONENTS

----- SIDEWALKS - INTERMITTANT,  
MISSING, OR NEEDS REPAIR

MAP 11

**CAPE CHARLES  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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the quality of traffic. The railroad has replaced some of the higher volume, but less profitable, freight with freight that produces higher earnings per carload. The average per car earnings have increased 9.3% while concurring carload costs have decreased 30% since 1987.

The ESRR has also shifted to a greater emphasis on commodities that originate or terminate on the Eastern Shore, such as coal, stone, propane gas, tomatoes, lumber, brick and grain. At present, the Railroad transports over 50% of its traffic from freight originating or terminating on the Eastern Shore.

In addition to the shift in cargo type, the Railroad has also spent several million dollars in improvements to the lines and facilities since 1981. Twenty miles of track have been completely renovated with another 10 miles of track structure to be completed in the next couple of years. The receiving yard, float bed and pilings at Little Creek have been reconditioned and the bridge yard in Cape Charles has been improved.

d. Harbour

The Cape Charles harbor is the largest on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The harbor channels are maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The harbor has a main channel with a low water depth of 18 feet. The main channel splits south into the Mud Creek Channel (10 feet in depth) and north into the Harbor of Refuge (7 - 10 feet in depth). The main channel is 500 feet wide and extends from the Chesapeake Bay through Cherrystone Bar and Inlet to the harbor entrance for a distance of 2.7 miles. The harbor entrance is 3,000 feet long and 18 feet deep with a 600 to 1,000 foot side. The harbor channel is 100 to 180 feet wide, 10 feet deep, and 260 feet long. It connects to a basin of the same depth, 180 feet wide, and 420 feet long at the head of Mud Creek Channel.

The Corps of Engineers maintenance project was modified in 1966 to provide for the Harbor of Refuge Channel to vary from 200 to 250 feet wide, 375 feet long, and 7 feet deep. This channel is connected to Mud Creek on the north side by an approach channel 60 feet wide. The project is complete except for the widening of the harbor from 800 to 1,000 feet, which was no longer necessary at the time of the project.

The dredging of the harbor by the Corps of Engineers during 1966 and 1967 resulted in a total of 402,000 cubic yards of spoil. Dredging is scheduled every 25 years for the Cape Charles City Harbor entrance and every 2 years for Mud Creek. The spoil was deposited on a site south of Route 1108, approximately 1/5 of a mile from the Mud Creek Channel. Providing spoil deposit sites poses problems in that the spoil is saturated with brine. This causes the spoil to be unsuited for vegetation. Due to the consistency of the spoil, it has practically no value for productive uses. Anticipated dredging needs include the area in front of the refueling dock and the entrance into the Harbor of Refuge.

The improvements to the harbor are utilized by the Eastern Shore Railroad, operating car ferries between Little Creek, Virginia, and Cape Charles, and by fishermen and oystermen operating boats (including trawlers) in the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. Extensive bulkheading within the harbor provides shoreline stabilization and docking facilities. Cape Charles completed the bulkheading of the town-owned harbor utilizing federal, state, and local funds.

A portion of the harbor is outside the corporate limits of the town in Northampton County. Concrete pipe and other concrete products of the Bayshore Concrete Products Plant are shipped from docking facilities in this area.

Thirteen boat slips are leased by the town to commercial and recreational boaters. These slips are leased year-round. Frequently during the year, there are not enough vacant slips available to meet the demand for temporary and overnight slip requests. It is estimated that another twenty slips could feasibly be added to the Harbor of Refuge to better handle the volume of traffic and allow for adequate maneuverability of vessels.

Besides the need for additional boat slips the harbor also needs improvements in electrical and water services for the harbor users.

A rate study would be useful in determining possible increases in slip fees that could help in supporting the necessary improvements.

6. Issues, Opportunities and Problems

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

THE TOWN LACKS RECREATIONAL SPACE OTHER THAN THE BEACH. THERE ARE NO TOWN PARKS OR PLAYGROUNDS OTHER THAN THE SCHOOL PROPERTY CURRENTLY OWNED BY NORTHAMPTON COUNTY.

IN APPROXIMATELY SEVEN YEARS THE SCHOOL PROPERTY IS SCHEDULED TO BE RETURNED TO THE TOWN AS TOWN PROPERTY. AS THE TOWN CONTINUES TO AGE, THERE MAY BE LITTLE REASON TO MAINTAIN A SCHOOL WITHIN THE TOWN. THIS WOULD PROVIDE THE TOWN WITH A FEASIBLE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP A TOWN-WIDE COMMUNITY CENTER AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES PERHAPS WITH A TOWN HALL FOR ADMINISTRATION.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

THE TOWN'S WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES ARE NEW AND IN GOOD OPERATING ORDER. HOWEVER, THE WATER SYSTEM IS IN SERIOUSLY DETERIORATED CONDITION WITH EXTENSIVE RUST AND CORROSION OF PIPES, TANKS AND FACILITIES. THE AGE AND CONDITION OF THE WATER SYSTEM PRESENT SERIOUS HEALTH AND SAFETY PROBLEMS. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE TOWN POSITIONS THIS PROBLEM AS ITS NUMBER ONE PRIORITY AND ATTEMPTS TO SECURE NECESSARY FUNDING TO REPLACE THE EXISTING SYSTEM.

GIVEN THE NEW COUNTY ORDINANCE FOR DEPOSITING SOLID WASTE IN THE COUNTY LANDFILL, THE TOWN NEEDS TO EVALUATE THE EXISTING COLLECTION SYSTEM TO DETERMINE MORE COST EFFECTIVE METHODS OF PROVIDING COLLECTION SERVICE TO THE RESIDENTS AND COMMERCIAL USERS.

TRANSPORTATION

THE RAILROAD IS IN THE PROCESS OF INVESTING CONSIDERABLE SUMS OF MONEY IN THE RAILROAD FACILITIES. IT ANTICIPATES NOT ONLY LONG TERM CONTINUATION OF THE EASTERN SHORE LINE, BUT CONTINUED GROWTH IN VOLUME AND QUALITATIVE DEVELOPMENT.

CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE - ROADS, SIDEWALKS, CURBS AND GUTTERS ARE APPROACHING HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS IN SOME AREAS DUE TO AGE AND LACK OF MAINTENANCE. IN SOME AREAS SIDEWALKS AND GUTTERS ARE COMPLETELY MISSING OR HAVE NEVER BEEN INSTALLED RESULTING IN STREET FLOODING AND UNSAFE WALKING AREAS AS WELL AS CREATING INACCESSIBLE AREAS FOR THE HANDICAPPED.

THE HARBOR SERVES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF TWO DIVERSE GROUPS - COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL OPERATIONS AND THE TOURIST/RECREATIONAL USERS. THESE TWO GROUPS PROVIDE REVENUE TO THE TOWN. THEY ARE AT TIMES COMPATIBLE AND AT TIMES INCOMPATIBLE NEIGHBORS. THE TOWN IS STRUGGLING TO DETERMINE WHETHER IT SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON MEETING THE NEEDS OF ONE OR THE OTHER GROUP OR FIND SOME WAY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF BOTH GROUPS AS WELL AS EXPAND THE REVENUE PRODUCING ABILITY OF THE HARBOR.

### III. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND GROWTH

#### A. THE TOWN AS IT NOW EXISTS

This section discusses the long-range growth and/or decline of the town-population and economy - based on the existing town. This provides two valuable pieces of information. First, it gives a baseline from which other development can be gauged. For example, if a large development does occur, there is a useful foundation to determine the impact of that particular development on the town. Second, this section provides a long-term comprehensive plan for the town if no new large development takes place. In the past Cape Charles has developed plans for various developments which did not materialize for miscellaneous reasons. Planning, based upon proposed development which may or may not occur, might neglect the needs of the existing population.

##### 1. Population

Although the Town of Cape Charles seems on the verge of experiencing a surge of new development, the town has lost population since the 1960 Census. The following table shows that Cape Charles lost 350 residents between 1960 and 1970 and another 180 by 1980. The population has also been aging, reflecting national trends. The proportion of population under age 15 declined from 27% in 1960 to 19% by 1980. The proportion of age 65+ increased from 15% to 21% during the same time period. Over those two decades the proportion age 15 to 64 (most likely to be in the labor force) remained about the same: 58%-59%, although the actual number declined at an average of about 14 per year.

Table 6  
CAPE CHARLES TOWN POPULATION 1960-1980

AGE	1960		TOTAL	PERCENT
	MALE	FEMALE		
Under 5	98	108	206	10
5-14	180	160	340	17
15-24	96	116	212	10
25-34	95	115	210	10
35-44	118	125	243	12
45-54	119	142	261	13
55-64	112	147	259	13
65+	141	169	310	15
TOTAL	959	1082	2041	100
WHITE			1383	68
BLACK			658	32

AGE	1970		TOTAL	PERCENT
	MALE	FEMALE		
Under 5	64	41	105	6
5-14	128	157	285	17
15-24	99	114	213	13
25-34	55	88	143	8
35-44	89	89	178	11
45-54	95	117	212	13
55-64	93	115	208	12
65+	125	220	345	20
TOTAL	748	941	1689	100
WHITE			1164	69
BLACK			525	31

AGE	1980		TOTAL	PERCENT
	MALE	FEMALE		
Under 5	43	43	86	6
5-14	100	102	202	13
15-24	121	111	232	15
25-34	93	91	184	12
35-44	50	63	113	7
45-54	74	95	169	11
55-64	94	119	213	14
65+	99	214	313	21
TOTAL	674	838	1512	100
WHITE			1015	67
BLACK			494	33

SOURCE: U. S. Census of Population

Consistent with the increase in proportion of age 65+ population and the decrease in proportion of children, average household size has also been shrinking. In 1970, there were an average of 2.28 persons per housing unit; by 1980, 2.16 persons per housing unit. If we assume a continuation of this trend to 2.05 persons per unit, and apply this estimate to the current count of 777 dwelling units in 1988, then current population may be estimated at 1,590 residents in the Town of Cape Charles. This assumption seems valid since one of the largest developments during the 1980s was Heritage Acres, housing for the elderly, handicapped and disabled (and these units typically have smaller household size).

YEAR	UNITS	POPULATION	POP PER UNIT
1970	742	1689	2.28
1980	701	1512	2.16
1988	777	1590	2.05

a. Population Projections

Based on the analyses of population for the town as it now exists and for a hypothetical large scale residential development (examined in a later section of this report), the following population projections were derived.

Table 7  
CAPE CHARLES POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

YEAR	TRENDS				PROJECTIONS			
	1960	1970	1980	1988	1995	2000	2005	
POPULATION	2,041	1,689	1,512	1,590	LOW	1,400	1,275	1,200
					MEDIUM	1,660	1,710	1,760
					HIGH	2,500	2,700	2,850

The low projection uses trends from 1960 through the 1980 census and ignores the recent upturn. It assumes erosion of the economy and population decline. The medium projection assumes slow growth evidenced from 1980 - 1988 will continue to add an average of about ten people annually. The high projection assumes a large scale development, such as happened in Dare County, North Carolina, will provide impetus for rapid growth, first adding about 730 persons in the next few years and continuing the new trends since the 1980 census.

2. Economy

Economic data for towns is only published at census dates, every ten years. The most recent data available for Cape Charles are from the 1980 census. More recent data for Northampton County employment are available and included in this section of the report. Income and sources of income for residents of the town and the county, again 1980 census data, are included and compared with 1988 average weekly wages to judge their continued relevance.

a. Employment of Cape Charles Residents in 1980

Some observations from 1980 Census data for Cape Charles are:

- \* Half of the 1,215 residents over 16 years of age were reportedly in the labor force in 1980. About one-quarter (291) was over age 65 and assumed to be retired. The other quarter included students, housewives, etc. In the under 65 age group not in the labor force, women outnumbered men three to one (218 to 73). This may indicate a deficit of job opportunities for women or a preference for traditional families in which the women are housekeepers.
- \* The largest categories of employment types for Cape Charles residents, and the percentage of workers in each, were manufacturing (17%), retail trade (16%) and educational

services (13%). These three categories employed 46% of the workers. Agriculture, forestry and fisheries combined were reported to employ only 7%.

b. Recent Employment Trends - Local Area

Cape Charles is in the Northampton County labor market area. Table 8 shows that the recent economic picture in the county appears favorable. In general the labor force has been growing and the unemployment rate has been decreasing. Some other findings from the data are:

- \* A large proportion (27%) of employment based in the county is manufacturing, a basic industry that brings new money into the community. Manufacturing employment declined by about 90 workers in the mid 1980s but has since remained quite stable.
- \* Agriculture-fisheries employment has increased throughout the period. One disadvantage of this basic industry, however, is seasonal unemployment.
- \* Services employment has been growing steadily and represents 23% of the total. Service jobs and retail sales (another 13% of the workers) are known to be more apt to be part time and generally pay lower wages than manufacturing jobs. Another large proportion of workers (21%) have government jobs. This category includes public school employees. Government employment has fluctuated some, but generally increased since 1984.

Table 8  
COMPARISON OF MARCH EMPLOYMENT, RECENT YEARS  
Northampton County, Virginia

	1984		1986		1988		1988 PERCENT
	NO.OF ESTABL	EMPLOYMENT	NO.OF ESTABL	EMPLOYMENT	NO.OF ESTABL	EMPLOYMENT	
AGRIC.FOR.FISH	12	66	15	175	17	265	6
CONSTRUCTION	22	92	24	125	33	106	2
MANUFACTURING	16	1286	15	1199	13	1202	27
TRANS.COMM.& UTIL.	11	60	12	82	13	87	2
WHOLESALE TRADE	22	266	21	119	22	126	3
RETAIL TRADE	79	504	82	494	82	596	13
FIN.INS.R.E.	20	137	19	84	19	65	1
SERVICES	90	954	89	970	88	1032	23
GOVERNMENT	25	914	29	970	23	945	21
TOTAL	297	4279	306	4218	310	4424	100

SOURCE: VIRGINIA EMPLOYMENT COMMISSION, COVERED EMPLOYMENT..(by the Unempl Comp Act)

CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	5845	6379	6551
EMPLOYMENT*	5393	5916	6226
UNEMPLOYMENT	452	463	325
UNEMPL. RATE	7.7	7.3	5.0

SOURCE: VIRGINIA EMPLOYMENT COMMISSION, LABOR FORCE INFORMATION, LABOR MARKET REVIEW  
 \* Total Employment, Covered and Not Covered by the Unemployment Compensation Act

Recent newspaper reports of layoffs in 1989 cannot yet be evaluated for lasting impact, since employment fluctuates in the short run but may stabilize over a slightly longer period of time.

c. Income

Income data reported in the 1980 census showed that the median household income in Northampton County (\$9,930) was only 57% of the average for Virginia (\$17,475), the lowest of any county in the state. The median household income in Cape Charles (\$9,383) was even lower, 54% of the state average. Partly this reflects a lower cost of living than in the metropolitan areas of the state, but partly also it shows the effects of seasonal unemployment in agriculture and fishing and a higher proportion of families with no workers. The state average was 10.5% of the families with no workers, but Northampton County had 16.6%.

No more recent estimates are available for the town, but the University of Virginia Tayloe Murphy Institute (now the Center for Public Service) projected median household income for Northampton County at \$15,118 for 1986. This is still 57% of the state average, but the projection is probably based on the census ratios rather than on any new data. Also, the Department of Housing and Community Development has estimated that 62% of the town's families are below the state medium income in the later part of the 1900s. There is an indication, however, that Northampton County wealth is not increasing relative to the state, at least for wage earners. In 1984 the average weekly wage per employee in the county was \$221, 68% of the \$324 average for the state. By 1988 the average weekly wage per employee in the county was \$251, only 64% of the \$394 average for the state.

Some town and county comparisons evident from the 1980 Census are:

Households earning less than \$15,000:  
 Northampton County 50%                      Cape Charles 53%

Proportion of total income that was derived from wages  
 or salaries was:  
 Northampton County 60%                      Cape Charles 63%

Proportion of total income that was derived from  
 Social Security was:  
 Northampton County 11%                      Cape Charles 13%

The proportion of total income that was derived from Public Assistance was about 2% for both the town and the county.

3. Issues, Goals and Strategies - Town As It Now Exists

THE CURRENT DEMOGRAPHIC BASE IN CAPE CHARLES INCLUDES AN AGING POPULATION WITH A LOW UNEMPLOYMENT RATE. THIS MEANS THAT WITH ANY MAJOR DEVELOPMENT OCCURRING WITHIN THE TOWN, THE DEMAND FOR ADDITIONAL SERVICES MAY RESULT IN AN IN-MIGRATION (COMMUTER AND RESIDENTIAL) OF PEOPLE TO BE EMPLOYED IN THOSE SERVICES. IF NEW JOBS INCREASE FASTER THAN THE LABOR FORCE, WAGES ARE LIKELY TO INCREASE AND EMPLOYEES LIKELY TO LEAVE SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL AND FISHING JOBS FOR YEAR ROUND HIGHER PAYING JOBS, PLACING ADDITIONAL STRAINS ON THOSE INDUSTRIES.

TOWN POPULATION IS GROWING SLIGHTLY WHICH COULD RAISE THE DEMAND FOR BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SERVICES AND IS LIKELY TO IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT.

TOWN POPULATION IS AGING WHICH WILL INCREASE THE NEED FOR ELDERLY HOUSING, AND MEDICAL, TRANSPORTATION & OTHER SERVICES, BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC.

THE LABOR FORCE IS INCREASING AND EVEN THOUGH THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IS DOWN, THERE IS A NEED FOR JOBS TO CONTINUE TO INCREASE. CONVERSELY, EMPLOYMENT IS INCREASING, WHICH REQUIRES THE LABOR FORCE TO CONTINUE TO INCREASE AND MAYBE RAISES A NEED FOR JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS.

AREA INCOME IS LOW AND LOSING GROUND RELATIVE TO THE STATE AVERAGE. LOW INCOME OF RESIDENTS LIMITS LOCAL ABILITY TO RAISE NEW REVENUES. SPECIAL CARE TO AVOID REGRESSIVE SOURCES MAY BE REQUIRED IF A NEW MORE AFFLUENT POPULATION MOVES IN WITH THE LOWER INCOME EXISTING RESIDENTS.

## B. THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF MAJOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

This section is generated upon the foundation of the earlier section and assumes the possibility of a large development occurring either within existing town limits or adjacent to town limits. For a town the size of Cape Charles, any development has impacts - both positive and negative. These impacts need to be recognized and evaluated in such a way as to allow the town the possibility of best preparing for those impacts.

### 1. Demographics - Hypothetical Large-Scale Development

This section gives an analysis of the potential impact from a hypothetical large scale development of 2,000 acres in Northampton County, about 10% of which are in the Town of Cape Charles. For analysis purposes it is assumed that development would be at about two houses per acre and that 2/3 would be retirement homes and 1/3 vacation homes. It is further assumed that these would be built over a five-year period from 1992 to 1997 and that houses would sell for at least \$150,000 by 1992. Applying average household size data from the 1980 census, an average household size of 1.8 is derived.

Unit Type	Number of Units	Average 1980 Household Size	Estimated Total Population	Estimated Cape Charles Population
Retirement	2,670	1.5	4005	401
Family	1,330	2.5	3325	333
TOTAL	4,000	1.8	7335	734

About 10% of the added units and population are assumed to be within the current town boundaries which concurs with the percentage of land in the town boundaries.

Population projections described above in the section on "The Town as it Now Exists" are envisioned to be 2,500 persons by year 1995 and 2,850 by year 2005 if residential development of this scale occurred, assuming present town boundaries. Estimated population would be about 6,600 to 7,000 persons higher, if the town were to annex the entire development area.

### 2. Impact on Town Finances

The average cost of a new house in Northampton County in 1987 was \$49,613. New homes in the potential new development area are estimated to sell for three times that amount. It should come as no surprise, then, that these homes would more than "pay their own way" in government costs since they would provide triple the real estate tax as the average 1987 home. About half of the town revenues come from real estate taxes. The following analysis demonstrates how much a \$150,000 home would contribute to town revenues in 1992 with no tax or fee increases above those charged in 1988. The only increase assumed in the analysis is a 5% inflation rate in the cost of the new homes from 1992 through 1997.

Table 9  
 POTENTIAL TOWN REVENUES PER HOUSEHOLD AT 1988 RATES  
 MAJOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

\$150,000 DOLLAR HOMES IN 1992, 5% ANNUAL INFLATION  
 IN COST OF NEW HOME

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
HOUSE VALUE	\$150,000	\$157,500	\$165,375	\$173,644	\$182,326	\$191,442
REAL ESTATE TAXES	\$555	\$583	\$612	\$642	\$675	\$708
PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX - CAR	105	105	105	105	105	105
PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX - BOA	120	120	120	120	120	120
MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSES	15	15	15	15	15	15
UTILITY TAX - ELECTRIC	120	120	120	120	120	120
WATER & SEWER CHARGES	156	156	156	156	156	156
GARBAGE COLLECT.& DISP. FEES	100	100	100	100	100	100
TOBACCO TAX	7	7	7	7	7	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,178</b>	<b>\$1,206</b>	<b>\$1,235</b>	<b>\$1,265</b>	<b>\$1,298</b>	<b>\$1,331</b>

1988 RATES USED IN THIS ANALYSIS ARE:

Real estate taxes	\$.37/\$100
Personal property tax - cars	\$2.00/\$100; Assumes avg value of \$5,250/car
Personal property tax - boats	\$2.00/\$100; Assumes 1 unit in 5 would have \$30,000 boat
Motor vehicle licenses	\$15/car
Utility tax - electric	assumes \$10/mo. (Max.+ \$15)
Water & sewer charges	min.+ \$5/mo for water; \$8/mo for sewer
Garbage collect & disp fees	\$8.35/mo
Tobacco tax	\$7/yr. avg per hshld in 1988

Sources: Prior Tables, this report and PMA analysis

A comparable analysis of town costs per housing unit assumes a 5% annual inflation rate in annual costs. It also borrowed from the Dare County, North Carolina, experience in estimating added costs that would be incurred to serve the growing population. Dare County experienced similar growth from 1980 to 1988 as would occur in Northampton County with the large scale development proposed here for the mid-to-late 1990s. Both localities are attractive, coastal resort-retirement areas. Estimated growth in Northampton County parallels actual growth in Dare County:

	Northampton County	Dare County
Population at Start of Analysis Period	14,500	13,377
Growth during Period	7,350	7,528
Total after Growth	21,850	20,905

Sources: University of Virginia, Center for Public Service; North Carolina Office of Budget and Management.

Because of the similarities of the two communities, it is considered appropriate to use the Dare County experience as a model of what might happen in Northampton County regarding government costs (as evidenced by government employment). During the analysis period (1980-1988) Dare County based government employment increased from 830 to 1,220. This represents an addition of 390 government workers, or an average of one for every 18 or 19 new residents. This rate of increase is used in estimating additional government costs for new services because of new development in Northampton County. (The analysis assumes the same proportional rate of increase applies at all levels of government.)

This analysis of costs considers only operating costs, not future capital improvements such as extended sewer and water service, added recreation facilities, etc. All new major development must provide its own water supply, sewage disposal and municipal costs associated with installation of these services. Other capital costs might be financed by grants, bonds, and by developers and other future user charges.

Table 10  
ANALYSIS OF TOWN GOVERNMENT COSTS PER HOUSEHOLD  
MAJOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

TOWN EXPENDITURES (in dollars)	1988	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
EXISTING LEVEL OF SERVICE:							
TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENSES	281,165	341,758	358,846	376,788	395,627	415,409	436,179
WATER & SEWER FUND EXPENSES	140,017	170,192	178,701	187,636	197,018	206,869	217,212
GARBAGE COLLECT & DISP. EXP.	62,487	75,953	79,751	83,739	87,925	92,322	96,938
TOTAL, 1988 LEVEL OF SERVICE	483,669	587,903	617,298	648,163	680,571	714,599	750,329
NEW SERVICE (SEE BELOW)	0	0	53,347	51,558	50,147	49,041	48,186
TOTAL COST	483,669	587,903	670,645	753,068	835,623	918,693	1,002,609
COST PER HOUSEHOLD	622	757	783	804	822	837	852

(assuming 5% annual inflation in expenses)

Sources: Cape Charles Financial Reports and Technical Analysis of Population Impact Below

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS OF ESTIMATED NEW SERVICE COSTS BECAUSE OF ADDED POPULATION

TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	777	777	857	937	1017	1097	1177
NEW HOUSEHOLDS		0	80	80	80	80	80
NEW PEOPLE (ASSUM 1.84 PER UNIT)	0	0	147	147	147	147	147

(NORTHAMPTON COUNTY = 10 X THE GROWTH IN CAPE CHARLES)

NORTHAMPTON CO. GOVERNMENT EMPLOY (ADD 1 FOR 18 NEW RESIDENTS)	945	945	1,027	1,108	1,190	1,272	1,353
RATE WITH INCREASE			0.09	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.06

In summary, if house values are \$150,000 in 1992 when the first development is envisioned, each unit is estimated to add over \$400 more to Town finances than it would cost in Town services. (If the house values were only \$90,000, each unit would still add about \$100 more than it would cost, since only property taxes would be proportionately lower.)

FISCAL SUMMARY, (ASSUMING \$150,000 HOUSE VALUE)	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
COST PER HOUSEHOLD	\$ 757	\$ 783	\$ 804	\$ 822	\$ 837	\$ 852
ADDED REVENUE PER HOUSEHOLD	\$1,178	\$1,206	\$1,235	\$1,265	\$1,298	\$1,331

### 3. Impacts on the Economy

The impact of the hypothetical new development on government budgets is favorable. However, the impact on employment and the way of life for present residents can be negative.

Total non-agricultural employment in Dare County went from 6,020 to 13,020, an increase of 7,000 jobs, during the period. It must be stressed that a majority of these jobs are low-paying, seasonal, service-related jobs, such as fast food restaurants, grocery and other shop clerk positions, etc.. An increase of that magnitude in Northampton County seems unlikely unless it is at the expense of the current agriculture and fishing industries because:

- o Northampton County unemployment is low - (about 300 to 400 persons in the last couple of years). A maximum of about 300 more persons of working age (students, housewives, etc.) might be attracted to the labor force if attractive jobs were available.
- o The potential development area is physically isolated at the southern end of Northampton County and high tolls on the Bay Bridge discourage commuting.
- o The Tidewater area at the other end of the Bay Bridge Tunnel does not currently have high unemployment.
- o Available inexpensive housing is not plentiful (especially in the summer vacation months) to attract employee re-location to the county.

It seems, therefore, that the new potential jobs would be manned by part time students, retirees, housewives, transfer workers from seasonal agricultural and fisheries jobs and some relocated high-paid professionals who could afford the new housing costs to relocate in Northampton County.

The dark side of the impact of new development is described for the Tilghman Island, Maryland, community in the newspaper article on the following page.



#### 4. Impacts on Existing Housing and Residents

Costs in the private sector for food, housing, boat slips, clothing, etc. will rise as new more affluent customers move in. Pollution and solid waste will increase because of the added population. These are some of the "trade-offs" for improved government fiscal conditions and for increased property values which are bound to occur for existing owners. While increasing property values are a benefit for owners who wish to sell their properties, they bring higher taxes and make it harder for persons on fixed incomes to remain in homes they do not wish to leave.

5. Issues, Goals and Strategies - Town with Major Residential Development

THE CURRENT SIZE OF THE TOWN IS 770 DWELLING UNITS INCLUDING SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING, DUPLEXES, APARTMENTS, ELDERLY, DISABLED AND HANDICAPPED HOUSING AND MOBILE HOMES. IF THE PROPOSED BROWN AND ROOT DEVELOPMENT TAKES PLACE AS ENVISIONED, APPROXIMATELY 2000 ADDITIONAL DWELLING UNITS MAY BE BUILT ON THE BROWN AND ROOT PROPERTY WITH AN UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF OTHER DWELLING UNITS REQUIRED OUTSIDE OF THE PROPERTY TO ACCOMMODATE ANY IN-MIGRATION OF FAMILIES AS A RESULT OF INCREASED DEMAND FOR SERVICES.

THERE IS THE POSSIBILITY OF A SECONDARY IMPACT OF ANY LARGE RESORT/RETIREMENT DEVELOPMENT. IF THE INCREASE IN JOBS AND SERVICES IS NOT FILLED BY EXISTING RESIDENTS, IN-MIGRATION OF OTHER FAMILIES MAY OCCUR WHO MAY REQUIRE THE PROVISION OF SUCH DIVERSE SERVICES AS LOW INCOME HOUSING, SCHOOLS, EXPANSION OF UTILITIES, ETC.

ONE OWNER, BROWN & ROOT, OWNS ABOUT HALF OF THE VACANT LOTS THAT ARE AT LEAST STANDARD LOT SIZE (40' BY 140'), AND THEREFORE CONTROLS A LOT OF THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOWN.

THE VACANT-FOR SALE RATE PROBABLY ALLOWS FOR A REASONABLE DEGREE OF CHOICE IN THE SINGLE FAMILY MARKET BUT THE MULTI FAMILY RENTAL MARKET SUPPLY IS MOSTLY RESTRICTED TO ELDERLY OR LOW/MODERATE INCOME RESIDENTS. THERE ARE FEW TO NO MULTI-FAMILY RENTAL UNITS AVAILABLE FOR NEW WORKERS IF THE DEMAND FOR SERVICES INCREASES BEYOND THE CURRENT LABOR FORCE.

### C. THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF MAJOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This section examines the impacts of economic development. The economic development considered here is light industrial, warehousing, etc. and not major manufacturing plants. The ability to analyze the impact of economic development is less definite than that of residential development because of the abundance of unknowns and site and activity-specific details that cannot be accounted for prior to a particular proposal. Taking these cautions into consideration, the following is a general discussion of possibilities, of experiences by other companies and localities, and interviews with personnel active in the field of related economic development.

One community in Maryland has a similar sized harbor as Cape Charles and has attracted one shipping company which handles two primary cargoes: calcium chloride and lumber. For 1988, the company averaged a port call of one ship per month and unloading of between 20,000 - 25,000 tons. The company expanded its distribution operation to include the re-bagging and labeling of the calcium chloride from one ton supersacks into 50 and 100 pound bags. Similar combined loading and re-bagging operations is possible with chicken feed, fish meal and orange juice. The re-bagging operation does not require much land; they function on about a quarter of an acre. The harbor sits adjacent to newly developed condominiums of approximately \$225,000 in value each and neither the company nor the town report any problems. The Economic Development Director reported that the working harbor was actually used to draw prospective home owners to the area.

Measuring the economic benefits of this scenario are difficult because little data is available and the operation takes place on state-owned land so the town does not receive much in the line of direct revenue such as real estate taxes. However, the company does employ approximately 25 semi-skilled to skilled laborers; they pay docking and leasing fees to the state; and they pay the town/county a nominal tonnage fee as well as utilities taxes, etc. The town's major benefits come in the form of good jobs and wages for residents and the spinoff effect of having the harbor activities. Various other businesses have opened in the town to support the shipping and distribution operations. These businesses are on private land and do expand the economic base as well as provide other new jobs.

The Virginia Port Authority has done some studies of the economic benefits of different types of cargo. The table below compares the average dollar benefits (in 1984) to the community generated by three general types of cargo: break bulk, which is usually raw materials such as cocoa beans, steel, lumber, etc. loosely loaded onto vessels; container goods which are usually manufactured or processed goods; and coal.

TYPE OF CARGO	WAGES (payroll per ton)	RATIO OF JOBS TO CARGO	OTHER REVENUE govt services, taxes termination fees, etc.
BREAK BULK	\$105.33	1 : 175	\$ 97.73
CONTAINER	\$ 77.44	1 : 239	\$ 71.67
COAL	\$ 7.66	1 : 2071	\$ 18.84

SOURCE: Virginia Port Authority, Norfolk, Virginia

The figures presented indicate that break bulk cargo, such as described in the Maryland case, is more labor intensive and tends to generate higher "other revenue". The other revenue is money that not only goes to the locality in the way of taxes, but also to other private agencies operating the harbor facilities.

What is not shown is the revenue that is passed on to other firms that support the shipping business, a benefit acknowledged by the Maryland town. The initial customer may generate the development of a re-bagging operation like the one previously mentioned which in turn may generate the need for warehousing and distribution facilities, which are also possibilities for the Town of Cape Charles. They require little land and are not incompatible with the neighboring uses.

The Virginia Division of Industrial Development developed a promotional report to attract new warehousing and distribution facilities to Virginia, Warehousing and Distribution Centers: Advantages of a Virginia Location, 1981. In this report, different Virginia areas were compared with six areas in Maryland and North Carolina. State and local taxes were estimated for a hypothetical distribution firm and the Norfolk area was considerably less costly to the firm than the Baltimore area, therefore making the Norfolk area more attractive from the company's perspective than the Baltimore area. A similar case may be possible for promoting locations in Cape Charles versus Norfolk or Baltimore.

1. Issues, Goals and Strategies - Town with Major Economic Development

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THE SKETCHY COLLAGE OF INFORMATION PRESENTED ABOVE SUGGESTS THAT A TOWN, SUCH AS CAPE CHARLES, CAN DEVELOP A ADVANTAGEOUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PACKAGE IF IT CAN ATTRACT RELATIVELY SMALL-SCALE FIRMS WHO DO NOT WANT TO PAY THE HIGHER COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH BALTIMORE OR NORFOLK AND CAN BENEFIT FROM THE LOWER COSTS, TAXES AND WAGES ON THE EASTERN SHORE. WHAT IS POSSIBLE, ADMITTEDLY WITH CONSIDERABLE COMMITMENT AND EFFORT ON THE PART OF THE TOWN, IS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY THAT PROMOTES THE RESOURCES THAT CAPE CHARLES HAS TO OFFER AS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE, SMALL-SCALE HARBOR/RAIL/WAREHOUSING/DISTRIBUTION CENTER.

CAPE CHARLES HAS RESOURCES THAT ARE ATTRACTIVE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: A HARBOR, RAILROAD SERVICE AND ADJACENT INDUSTRIALLY-ZONED LAND. WHAT CAPE CHARLES NEEDS IS A DIVERSIFIED ECONOMIC BASE THAT SUPPLIES FULL-TIME, WELL-PAYING JOBS FOR TOWN RESIDENTS. BY USING THE ASSETS THE TOWN CURRENTLY POSSESSES, BENEFITS CAN BE ACHIEVED THAT ARE TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE: GREATER ECONOMIC SECURITY, ADDITIONAL PUBLIC REVENUE TO HELP SUPPORT OTHER NECESSARY PROGRAMS, ADDITIONAL PRIVATE REVENUE TO SUPPORT EXISTING AND NEWLY GENERATED COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY.

