COMMISSIONERS DRAFT: September 2017

Oxford Working Waterfront Strategic Plan

Town of Oxford, Maryland

MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

&Chesapeake
Coastal Service

NOAA

November 2017

Oxford Working Waterfront Strategic Plan

Town of Oxford, Maryland

LARDNER/KLEIN
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

in association with:

Heritage Strategies, LLC   Preservation

Partners for Economic Solutions   Economic Analysis

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The economic sustainability of Oxford and its quality of life are dependent on the successful continuation of its maritime industries, the employment they provide, the tax revenues they produce, and their appeal to the boating community, visitors, and future residents.

Figure 1   Slips and parking dedicated for commercial waterman use at the Causeway

At the same time, the Town recognizes the changing circumstances that are impacting the economics of its maritime industries, including shifting demographics, demand, and spending habits of the leisure travel market.

The Town is looking for new ideas and suggestions about how to enhance the economic sustainability of the Town's waterfront industries, while maintaining the strong sense of place that makes Oxford's waterfront unique and special.

PURPOSE

The development of a Strategic Plan for Oxford's Working Waterfront will help officials, citizens, and business owners to take the necessary steps to increase the viability of its maritime industries and identify the opportunities and resources that are available to implement the plan's vision and goals.

The plan establishes an overall vision and goals in support of Oxford's working waterfronts consistent with the Town of Oxford Comprehensive Plan. It includes economic development recommendations that are based upon the environmental actions that Oxford is already taking to improve its coastal resilience. The plan identifies new and creative marketing options, potential resources, funding opportunities, and priority actions to support progress towards achievement of the goals. The strategic plan:

- Develops an overall vision and achievable goals for the next ten to fifteen years to retain and expand working waterfront enterprises while preserving and maintaining Oxford's maritime heritage.

- Incorporates strategies that build upon the community-based assets of Oxford's working waterfronts.

- Builds upon Oxford's ongoing coastal resilience strategies and supports ongoing efforts to sustain a high quality marine environment.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provided funding for the strategic plan. DNR's Working Waterfronts Program provides financial and technical assistance to local governments to promote and assist with the preservation of existing and historic working waterfronts in Maryland. The Town was awarded a FY 2017 Working Waterfront Enhancement Grant to develop the strategic plan.

The Working Waterfront Strategic Plan will be adopted by resolution by the Commissioners of Oxford as the economic development plan for the

Town of Oxford Code Definition (s)

Town of Oxford Comprehensive Plan Definition of Maritime.

3.2.1 Maritime
The term maritime is used to indicate areas in Town, which will accommodate the boat building and repair operations in Oxford.

Town of Oxford Harbor Management Ordinance (Definitions and Applicability)

FACILITIES – Shall mean any and all facilities of a harbor or maritime facility either publicly or privately-owned that are intended primarily to be used by or for the service of small craft (including ramps, hoists, parking areas, leased water areas, concessions and service facilities located on land or in the waters of the municipality).

DEVELOPABLE WATERFRONT LAND – Any waterfront property from which access to a waterway area can be achieved.

11.4 Applicability
The provisions of this Ordinance and any rules and regulations adopted pursuant to this Ordinance shall be applicable, and shall govern, the harbor and waters within the Town of Oxford or adjacent thereto, and all other maritime or marine facilities within the corporate boundaries of the Town of Oxford, or which are otherwise subject to the police power regulations of the Commissioners of Oxford.

commercial waterfront community, along with being incorporated into the Oxford Comprehensive Plan during the next review.

What is a Working Waterfront

In Oxford, working waterfront includes those water-dependent uses and activities that cannot take place without physical access to the water and the supporting sectors of water dependent marine and recreational boating businesses including:

- Harbor or maritime facilities "either publicly or privately-owned that are intended primarily to be used by or for the service of small craft (including ramps, hoists, parking areas, leased water areas, concessions and service facilities located on land or in the waters of the municipality[1])".

- Marinas

- Boat yards, repair and sales

- Marine access for traditional watermen operations

- Fishing charters and head boats

- Yacht charters (sail and power)

- Paddle sport liveries

- Heritage and eco-tourism enterprises including dining, hospitality (bed and breakfast or small inn), specialty retail (less than 10,000 square feet), as well as support facilities for recreational and commercial maritime uses

- Tour boat operators and for-hire guides

- On-water service providers

- Supporting land-based marine businesses (marine retail parts, etc.)

- Aquaculture operations and specialty seafood markets

STUDY AREA

The Town of Oxford forms a peninsula that is bordered on the east by Town Creek where it meets the Tred Avon River; on the north and west by the Tred Avon River to where it meets the Choptank River; and the south by the Choptank River itself. The focus of the strategic planning effort is on the waterfront areas currently used by water-dependent businesses (primarily marinas and boat yards) and supporting and related commercial uses and public lands. The study area includes waterfront areas within Oxford's designated sustainable communities boundary (red outline as shown on Map 1, page 3).

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1   *Oxford Town Code (4.23.13) Amended through 5.20.13, CHAPTER 11, HARBOR MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE under definitions of "Facilities"*

WORKING WATERFRONT STRATEGIC PLAN
Oxford, Maryland
Study Area

DRAFT: MAY 2017

OXFORD, MARYLAND
Sources: MD iMap April/May 2017

Oxford town boundary
Parcel Boundaries
Study Area
MD Environmental Trust Easements
Local Protected Lands
Town property (derived from parcel data)

Tred Avon River

Causeway Park

Oxford Community Center

Map 1 Study Area

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The Town of Oxford is a small historic port town located along the Tred Avon River and Town Creek, the waters of which flow into the Choptank River. It is one of the oldest towns on the Eastern Shore, first appearing on maps as Oxford in 1670. In 1683, the Maryland General Assembly officially identified it as a seaport and requested the town be surveyed. In 1694 the Maryland General Assembly declared Oxford and Anne Arundel (Annapolis) as one of two official Ports of Entry into Maryland, a critical milestone in Oxford's long history as a working waterfront.

Figure 2   Oxford-Bellevue Ferry Landing

OXFORD-BELLEVUE FERRY

The establishment of a ferry service for "Horses and Men" was first authorized by Talbot County on November 20, 1683 (see http://www.oxfordbellevueferry.com/history.html). Richard Royston was paid 2,500 pounds of tobacco per year (about $25) to operate the ferry. He came to Talbot County from London as a merchant, and settled in what is now called Ferry Neck, across the river from Oxford, with his wife Mary. The Ferry is still in private operation after over 300 years—recognized as one of the oldest, if not the oldest, privately operated ferries in the country. The Oxford-Bellevue Ferry is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

PORT OF OXFORD

The Port of Oxford served as an international shipping center until the mid-18th century when Baltimore began to take on the role of Maryland's principal seaport. As Oxford's port activity began to decline, the seafood and ship building industries emerged. Passenger and freight trains arrived daily at the Oxford terminal and seafood canning and packing houses lined the streets. Many of the boatyards remaining today were established during this period.

The Great Depression signaled the end of an era for Oxford's seafood industries. By the mid-1950s, the railroad was abandoned along with Oxford's once booming seafood port.[2] With the opening of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge in 1952, Oxford began to reinvent its water industry to cater to expanding numbers of recreation-minded visitors and new markets for weekend getaways. Boatyards that formerly built skipjacks and bugeyes began building and maintaining high quality yachts for recreational use.

Figure 3   Historic view of Pier Street as an oyster operation and later as a restaurant excerpted from "Oxford Treasures Then and Now" by Douglas Hanks

2   The Delaware and Chesapeake RR that ran from Clayton, DE. to Easton was completed in 1869, and extended out to Oxford, MD in 1871. The company was acquired by the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad in 1882 and then became part of the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1918 and was named as the Oxford Branch. Passenger service ended in 1949 and the Oxford Branch was abandoned in 1959 [http://www.railroad.net/forums/viewtopic.php?f=122&t=19123].

Figure 4   Excerpt from 1904 Map illustrating the location of the Oxford Terminal at the end of the Delaware and Chesapeake Railroad

MARINAS AND MARITIME OPERATIONS

Oxford's working waterfront is now home to eight privately owned businesses that continue to provide Marina and Maritime Industry Operations, including world-renowned boat builders. Oxford is also home to the Cooperative Oxford Laboratory, housing a USCG Station, along with NOAA and DNR offices. The Oxford-Bellevue Ferry is recognized as the oldest private continuously operated ferry in the country. The Tred Avon Yacht Club sponsors regattas throughout the year that bring visitors to the area including occasional regional events such as the annual US Sailing Junior Olympics Sailing Festival and the club's largest annual regatta, the Oxford Regatta, that includes racing for PHRF, Log Canoes, Stars, Comets, Snipes, Penguins, Optis, Lasers and Club 420's.

Figure 5   Campbell's Boatyard at Jacks Point

PUBLIC ACCESS

Public access to Oxford's waterfront areas is provided at its town owned parks, beaches, and docks with rental slips, along with a transient dock and boat landing available for public use (Map 9, page 27). The waterfront area serves the housing needs of both seasonal and year-round residents, as it has for hundreds of years. Watermen still work the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and many of them use the docks of Oxford as their port. Although fewer in number, the town continues to support working watermen by making a portion of Town-owned dock spaces available exclusively for their use.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The review of demographic characteristics and trends for Oxford and Talbot County highlights the socioeconomic factors that shape future land use patterns and any new niche market opportunities in support of maintaining and expanding water-dependent business activity along Oxford's waterfront. The demographic profile reflects an update of previously provided demographic information from the 2015 report, "Oxford Historic Commercial District, A Strategic Plan for Revitalization" (Jakubiak Study) and insights into specific relevant trends for Oxford.

Initial demographic data show an estimated total population of 645 as of 2017 for Oxford compared to 38,203 residents for Talbot County as a whole. These are full-time permanent residents, excluding those who have second homes in Oxford but maintain their permanent residences elsewhere. Population declined from 2000 to 2010 in Oxford and began to stabilize over the last seven years while Talbot County gained roughly 400 new residents.

As would be expected there is a daytime surge in population with 455 individuals coming into Oxford, reaching 818 total daytime population for Oxford as of 2016 based on ESRI estimates. These roughly 450 individuals represent a mixture of workers and out-of-area visitors (either occupants of second homes or weekly renters). Slightly more than half (56.3%) the residents remain in Oxford during the day. This likely reflects the large number of retirees.

Figure 6   Age Pyramid for Talbot County (left) and Oxford (right) showing bulge in aging population

Within Oxford, residents are concentrated in the 65 to 69 age group, with a median age of 62.9. In Talbot County the median household age is 49.6. In part, this difference reflects the fact that high housing costs have pushed out younger workers.

While Talbot County and Oxford represent affluent communities, the median household income in Talbot County reached $60,998 with Oxford's median household income higher at $77,063 in 2017 estimates. In Oxford 35.7 percent of households earn in excess of $100,000, indicating a larger than average percentage of well-to-do households. Twelve percent of Oxford's households earn more than $200,000 annually. In Talbot County, by comparison, 28.9 percent earn more than $100,000.

Data from the U.S. Census American Community Survey provide information on housing units by type and tenure, accounting for those units that are seasonally occupied. This key indicator for Oxford highlights the number of second or vacation homes. In Oxford, 42.5 percent of all units (or 237 homes) are reserved for seasonal, recreational or occasional use. In all of Talbot County, seasonally occupied units represent only 10.2 percent (2,042 units). One-third of Oxford homeowners own their homes without any debt or mortgages on the property.

A review of recent sales data and listings for Oxford and comparison towns along the Eastern Shore indicates some key residential trends in the Town. Oxford's recent housing sales show a median sales price of $150 per square
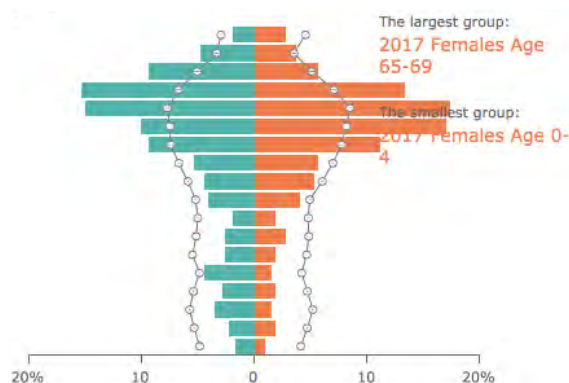
foot or $330,000. This compares to a slightly higher median sales price of $360,000 for the entire 21654 zip code within which Oxford sits. In the surrounding areas outside Oxford and properties with waterfront access, sales prices reach upwards of $230 to $350 per square foot. This reflects the high value of water access. Over the last three years, multiple-listing service data suggest that homes in Oxford remained on the market an average of 280 days.

With more access to capital large franchise format marinas offer more infrastructure upgrades, creating a more competitive environment for locally owned and operated marinas in Oxford. As a relatively new trend along Maryland's eastern shore, franchise marina operators market to an existing customer base from other marinas to capture higher transient slip occupancy rates during peak seasons. Additionally these operators use the franchise network for programming with cross-promotional outreach to day-tripping boaters. This is a unique technique used by groups of marinas that market together and may be something locally owned Oxford marinas should consider. However, the capital investment in landside and water side facilities for the larger operators creates a competitive advantage for recreational boaters and many local marinas can only compete by lowering prices.

ECONOMIC PROFILE

Data gathered on a series of economic indicators from previous reports and independent research, including the supply and demand of housing, annual visitation characteristics, potential consumer expenditures and the competitive environment for hotels, marinas and retail, provided inputs into the general market conditions. In general, these indicators show the recent changes to the economic environment with a resurgence in both the national and local Talbot County residential and commercial markets.

Oxford's commercial market focuses primarily on water-related activity (including watermen activities, wholesale seafood, boat maintenance and repair, boat sales and leasing, marina operations), hospitality and tourism.   Oxford's waterfront infrastructure includes both public and private boat yards, marinas , docks, and boat launches. Table __ lists existing public and private waterfront marinas including approximately 500 rental slips. Shifts in ownership of waterfront marinas and boat yards over the last five years show interest from large multi-state operators partnering with local operators along the Chesapeake Bay.

645
Population

62.9
Median Age

1.93
Average Household Size

$77,063
Median Household Income

ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD SPENDING

$2,721
Apparel & Services

$222
Computers & Hardware

$4,375
Eating Out

$6,499
Groceries

$8,526
Health Care

Figure 7   Household spending for Oxford, MD

Figure 8   Oxford's small inns and restaurants are a strong draw for visitors whether by boat or automobile

Figure 9   Rooms with a view of the Tred Avon

The Town of Oxford has roughly a dozen businesses categorized as retail or commerce. Retail demand from Oxford households represents $17.4 million in total 2017 expenditures, based on data from ESRI. These expenditures may be spent anywhere – at local retail establishments, in Easton, along Route 50, at work or on vacation. Due to the limited retail offerings within the town, many of these dollars are spent outside Oxford.

The potential performance of new retailers in Oxford will depend on their ability to compete for and "capture" the expenditures of area visitors, and trade area residents while attracting "inflow" from residents of other areas outside the town. For each cluster of retail within Talbot County, there exists a distinct trade area from which retailers draw the bulk of their customers.   Along the Eastern Shore, these trade areas extend into neighboring jurisdictions because of the rural character and the scattered nature of development.   Large clusters of stores not present in surrounding rural areas can draw from a much wider geography than in most urban areas.   For smaller communities like the Town of Oxford, the largest group of potential customer spending comes from the tourist base, as many residents travel to larger retail clusters in other communities like nearby Easton.

In downtown Oxford, the retail offerings include five restaurants and a local deli within a convenience store as the only neighborhood-serving retail operations.   Typically the success of retail in any market area depends on the income levels and spending patterns of its residents. A standard capture of current and prospective households' expenditures informs typical retail decisions. Attracting additional expenditures from the broader region would require the creation of a place or a frequent activity generator.   While the ability to draw from the broader region and its associated tourist activity will enhance the Town of Oxford's existing businesses, it is highly unlikely to spur creation of additional retail establishments.

Retail demand generated from visitors reflects the type of visitor, length of stay and the reason for their visit. The reason for the visit greatly impacts the retail spending potential of each visitor. While visitors to the Oxford Community Center may be more of a local audience, those coming to the regattas come from throughout the region. Oxford has several events and festivals throughout the year, including Oxford Day, regattas at the Yacht Club, and performances at the Oxford Community Center, among others. Those attending local festivals spend most of their dollars at the particular event rather than with local Oxford retailers. Therefore, the ability to capture this particular group of visitor expenditures is more limited.

The Oxford Museum anchors the town's tourism destinations with annual visitation of roughly 3,000 visitors. Visitors may also tour the downtown, eat at one of the local restaurants and visit the local recreational resources (including Oxford-Bellevue Ferry). As the oldest operating ferry in the nation, Oxford-Bellevue Ferry presents an opportunity for cultural heritage travelers. It is important to note that this visitor

group can be expanded to cyclists as well as visitors coming via water or along roadways in automobiles. The existing Robert Morris Inn, the Sandaway Lodge, and existing marina operations bring in new visitors to Oxford annually. In particular, the transient slips at the marinas provide a customer base unlikely to travel beyond the Town of Oxford because public transportation is limited. Marina and restaurant operators have been providing shuttle services to and from Oxford's commercial area and restaurants. Bicycles have also been available at marinas for use by customers. These marina guests become an almost captive audience for the retail shops and restaurants in downtown Oxford.

Partners for Economic Solutions (PES) estimated total annual visitation by length of stay. For day-trippers this resulted in 16,500 annual visitor-days. Of those, 16,100 visitor-days represent the potential for more overnight stays. In total, overnight transient boat users (often from nearby local towns or communities) do not become overnight guests but some could be captured if desirable and affordable lodging options were available in Oxford. While the special events and town activities in Oxford attract visitors from the broader region, these visitors tend to return home without spending the night. Those visitors coming for a competitive sailing race, may not have the time for a leisurely dinner and may stay as guests of members or camp instead of paying for overnight lodging. Finally, the limited number of overnight options limit overnight visitors' ability to stay in Oxford; many of these visitors opt to travel to other communities or head to Route 50 for accommodations.

The size of the town, the lack of density in surrounding areas and its close proximity to Easton limit the potential for a dramatic increase in retail or other specialty commercial offerings in the short- to mid-term. The full package of services and attractions are more available in other locations along the Eastern Shore, including Easton. Oxford can add a small boutique hotel operation, such as a bed and breakfast, but perhaps a more likely scenario would be the increase in AirBnB and other informal rental options. Tourists and visitors will continue to stay outside the town even with a modest increase in lodging supply.

The high cost and value of waterfront land further solidifies current land uses, limiting access for business startups and new families that may want to move to Oxford (Map 2, page 10)

MARKET NICHE

Many small towns search for unique ways to brand themselves and build on distinct commercial users, anchor institutions or particular natural features. These efforts reflect the principle that highly-specialized facilities or

Table 1 Annual Visitation Estimates By Catalyst Activity		
Catalyst	Day Time Visitation	Overnight Visitation
Arts	6,000	
Attractions	3,000	500
Special Events/ Festivals	7,500	3,400
Other Hotel Guests	N/A	3200
Marina Guests	N/A	9,000
Total Visitor Days	16,500	16,100

Source: Event Organizers; Interviews; Talbot County Tourism; Partners for Economic Solutions, 2017.

WORKING WATERFRONT STRATEGIC PLAN
Oxford, Maryland   **DRAFT: AUGUST 2017**
Parcel Value - Appraised Full Value Per Acre
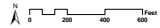
LEGEND
Sources: MD Property View (accessed July 2017)
& MD iMap April/May 2017
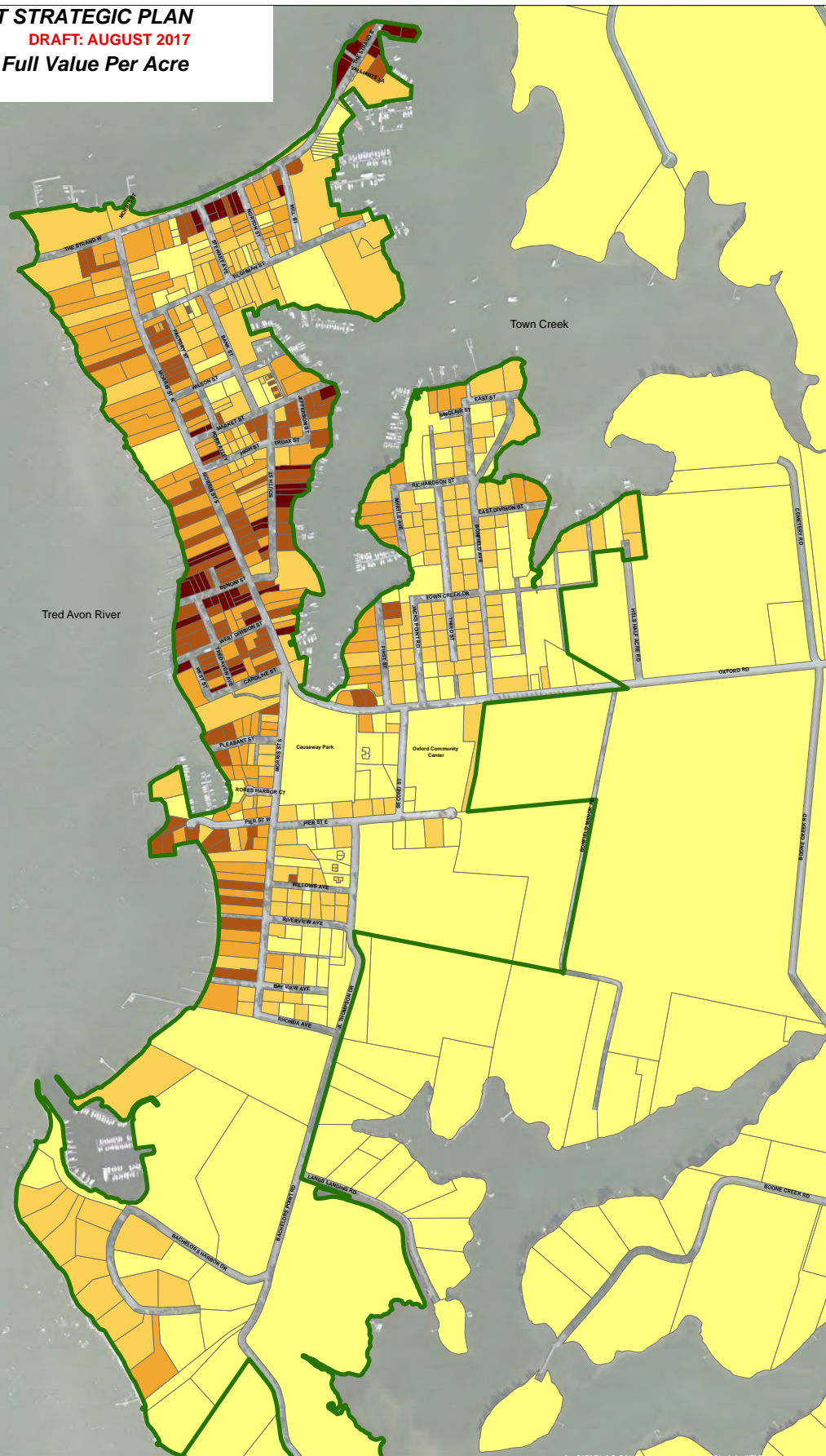— Oxford Town Boundary
▢ Parcel Boundaries
Parcel Value per Acre
▢ $0 - $794,103
▢ $794,104 - $1,847,967
▢ $1,847,968 - $3,062,299
▢ $3,062,300 - $4,716,455
▢ $4,716,456 - $8,745,871

Town Creek

Tred Avon River

Map 2 Land Value

clustered activities (which may include retail stores and restaurants) can attract customers from further away. Essentially, a niche attraction or asset becomes a destination for area visitors and residents.   Often these types of attractions draw repeat customers, with a ripple impact on other attractions or local events / activities.

Development patterns along the Eastern Shore followed water access more than roadway infrastructure with new development along inlets, rivers and eventually further inland. The towns along the shoreline began to compete for water-related users. Oxford's strength as a small port town along the Tred Avon River and Chesapeake Bay creates a unique waterfront community.   The niche for Oxford resides solely in its water access and identity as a historic port and town. The Town of Oxford (and Talbot County) supports its watermen with dedicated slips and access—a significant contribution towards retaining the historic uses of its working waterfront.

A further review of the boating industry, both recreational and commercial usage, provides a backdrop for market niche of waterfront communities like Oxford. Over the last decade fluctuations in the waterfront activity reflect the decline in boating industry during the Great Recession and an improvement in recent years. In Maryland there was a decline of 14,000 boater registrations from 2009 to 2013, reflecting the economic recession's impact. However, data from the last three years show marked increases in boater registrations, likely due to the overall economic recovery.

Maryland's efforts to protect waterfront resources extend to Oxford with the Waterway Improvement Fund and other State-led efforts to protect waterway infrastructure. The demand for recreational boating is growing again. As the economy recovered, recreational boat ownership and participation grew.

Commercial watermen require access to temporary slips throughout the Chesapeake Bay, as seasonal shifts in fisheries require new locations. The Town of Oxford rents 15 slips to commercial watermen. Talbot County currently has 135 slips rented at public boat landings with 103 of those rented to commercial watermen as per County policy. Oxford's transient watermen typically harvest oysters and need longer and wider marina spaces than does a recreational boater.

Publicly owned slips rented to watermen are much less expensive than privately-owned spaces, supported by Talbot County and Town of Oxford policies that favor working watermen. The ability of private marinas to charge more to recreational boaters for less space (both slip and dock side) creates an economic incentive to shift transient spaces away from watermen. Research conducted by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources concluded that Oxford's slip supply may not be as greatly impacted as other communities along the Eastern Shore (ERC Recreational Boating and Fiscal Analysis Study, February 2013). However, it is likely the increased recreational demand will raise prices for transient slips, creating an economic pressure on watermen's waterway access in Oxford.

Figure 10 Landside amenity at Brewers Oxford Boatyard and Marina

Great Allegheny Passage Economic Impact
Over $50 million in direct spending was attributed to GAP trail user spending in 2010, up from $41 million in 2008 and $7 million in 2001. The $41 million in economic impact in the 2008 season–April to November (Campos Market Research study) was coupled with another $7.26 million in wages in trail-related businesses in the same period and 55 new or expanded businesses; and 200 plus new jobs[1]. The Great Allegheny Passage achieved full connectivity in 2013. This 150-mile GAP rail trail connects with the 184.5 mile C & O Canal Towpath at Cumberland, MD to create a 334.5 mile route between Pittsburgh and Washington, DC, free from traffic and motorized vehicles. For more information see http://www. atatrail.org.

1   Personal communication, Bill Atkinson, Maryland Department of Planning, February 2, 2015

Figure 11   Bicycle, Paddle Board, and Kayak concession near the Ferry Dock

Figure 12   Charter operations at Pier St. Marina

Benefits to Fishermen of Community Supported Fisheries

Fishermen selling their product through a CSF may realize higher income, by earning a bigger percentage of the seafood dollar spent by consumers for high quality, locally produced food. Fishermen also gain access to a stable (certain) market and often receive payment for their catch up front or on a weekly basis. This helps fishermen cover the costs associated with going fishing, such as buying fuel, ice, or bait and paying crew wages. It also reduces business risk and increases financial stability.

- National Sea Grant Law Center (2012)

Building on the potential for area residents to purchase fresh seafood from watermen (see "From Dock to Plate" at http://docktoplate.us/), potential exists to establish an open-air seafood market during the high season in Oxford on publicly owned land such as at the Causeway. Such a market would require a centralized tent entrance and a weekly or bi-weekly event to generate larger demand. This type of operation could be marketed more broadly to the region and also incorporate a specialty event like a 'chef cook-off' based on the local catch, perhaps coordinated with the Robert Morris Inn which is already offering culinary experiences as part of their marketing niche.

Community supported fisheries (CSF), modeled after Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs is another opportunity for Oxford's waterman to participate as a way to find expanded markets for fresh seafood. CSF members pre-pay for a "season" of fresh, locally caught seafood, and in return fishermen provide a weekly share of premium fish or shellfish Pairing the CSF model with aquaculture, especially by partnering with other nearby working waterfront communities such as Tilghman and Cambridge would offer additional potential. CSF operations also present the opportunity for branding a particular fishery for its freshness and quality, associating it with the community or river from which it is caught, for example.

Another market niche potential is for small, human powered craft (kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards). As Oxford expands its waterfront exposure by addition to the DNR water trail project, Internet information to create a 'buzz' about the quiet, historic town of Oxford needs to be enhanced to capture the niche market. Within the tourism market, Millennials often seek experience-based vacations in unique locations with the ability to learn a new skill (such as sailing, boating, fishing, etc.). A location such as Oxford is advantageous both for its proximity to urban populations (DC and Baltimore), yet retains its distinctive rural and small town character as a weekend escape that is truly different from where they came.

In addition to the traditional waterway access points, throughout Oxford and Talbot County, individuals may access charter captains for fishing boats, skipjacks, recreational power boats and sailboats. Boat sharing or vessel rental concepts provide an opportunity to access the water via any mode, such as sailboats, powerboats, fishing vessels and self-propelled vessels. Boat-sharing programs have reported a jump in Millennial membership by 15 to 20 percent as long as fees remained reasonable (i.e., $250 a day for a fishing boat not the $7,500 chartered excursion fees). As the sharing economy expands, the boating industry grapples with the best format for these Internet-based apps. A few popular sites that cover the insurance costs for providers and users already offer rentals along Maryland's Eastern Shore. The offerings are more limited as this is an emerging market. Successful boat-sharing operations require significant turnover and boat usage high enough to spread the costs. Oxford may not be able to fully capitalize on these programs as charter excursions tend to dominate its marketplace.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The Town of Oxford recognizes the twin forces of regional and global economic and environmental changes that have altered its waterfront areas and that will continue to exert pressure on its marinas and maritime industries.

Economically, the recessionary economy that began in 2007 negatively affected the recreational spending habits of the population, especially for recreational boating. Demand for Oxford's marinas and maritime services subsequently declined, especially in the small to medium sized boat markets. Although economic conditions are improving, the demand for Oxford's marinas and maritime services remain flat. The next generation of recreational boaters has yet to emerge at the same level as Baby Boomers (neither Gen-X nor Millennial). Oxford's marinas and maritime industries continue to seek ways to expand their markets and recapture a reasonable share of the changing maritime sector of the leisure travel industry.

The Town of Oxford identifies support for the continued economic viability of its boating and marine uses as a priority for economic sustainability in their Comprehensive Plan. The Town recognizes the need to redefine maritime uses to meet changing market conditions and to determine how to overcome any known limitations and barriers as needed to support the continued viability of Oxford's three and a half centuries of maritime business and heritage.

The Town of Oxford also recognizes the need to address the potential environmental changes that are predicted for Maryland's shoreline communities such as sea level rise and increases in flood hazard and risk that accompany global climate change. The Town has spent the last several years seriously addressing the many issues that any Chesapeake Bay waterfront community faces in an effort to assure the sustainability of this unique historic port town.

The following sections summarize the Town's recent planning, environmental and economic initiatives aimed at addressing sustainability issues.

COMPREHENSIVE AND RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS

The Town of Oxford's Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2010. The next review is likely to be due in 2020. The Plan contains references to the important role that its marine and maritime services play in helping the Town achieve its economic goals, excerpted below:

> *"2.3.3 Economic Development (p15):*
>
> Oxford should strive to encourage the continued economic viability of its downtown merchants and its boating and marine uses that have been in existence since the 1600's. Oxford's maritime and water-based history should be preserved. The following objectives are important for economic development:
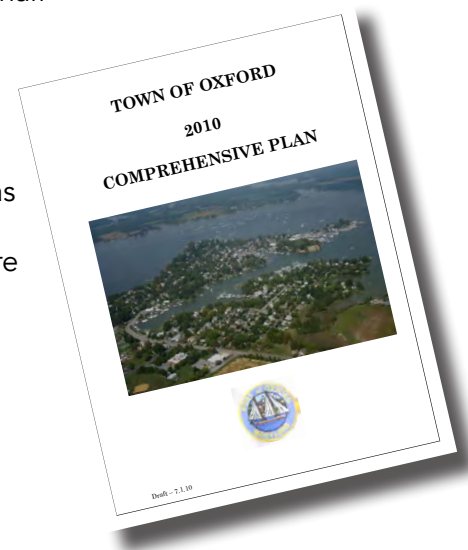

Figure 13 Oxford's Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of its marine and maritime businesses

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Encourage and preserve a sound economy, including the hospitality industry, maritime based services and boatyards, to maintain an economic base that is responsive to the needs of Oxford's population and provides a strong tax base for the town. Construction of bulkheads, wharves and piers, installation of mooring buoys and living aboard a vessel for more than 60 days a year, are all supervised by the Oxford Board of Port Wardens. This Board was established by Town Ordinance No. 173, adopted April 27, 1982. The Board meets monthly and reviews application permits for the above creek-related activities, listens to comments by neighbors and other townspeople and approves or denies permit applications.

The Board of Port Wardens recognize the great value of Oxford's adjacent waters, including Town Creek, to all citizens of Oxford, and to visitors, and attempts to balance the needs of users with the retention of the aesthetic values which have made the Town's waterfront both useful and attractive."

In 2016, the Town of Oxford prepared a strategic plan for its historic commercial district. The strategic plan recognized the relationship between maritime related tourism and its economic base:

"Finding: The Town's larger setting for tourism and sailing and maritime related tourism in particular. If Oxford can be said to have an economic base it is in the maritime industry and a major component of that is tourism driven. Over the next 10 years the Town should work to support and invigorate this industry, which is so central to preserving the Town's historic and cultural context and its waterfront land use and economy. That initiative should by intention result in the presence of local maritime related business activity on S. Morris Street within the commercial district".
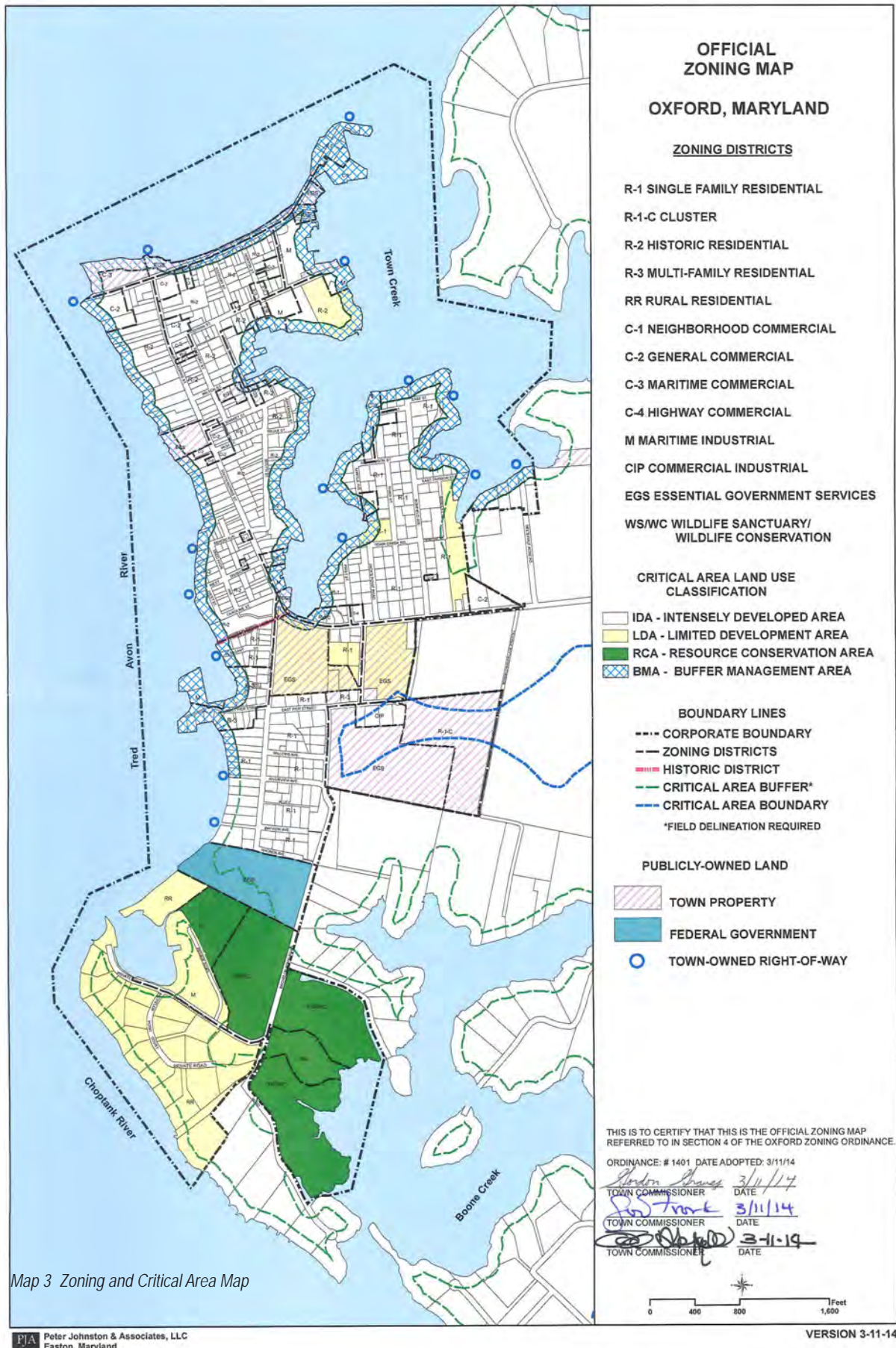

Figure 14 Oxford's Strategic Plan for its historic commercial district recognizes the link between its maritime visitors and the sustainability of its commercial district businesses

CRITICAL AREAS

Maryland Code Natural Resources Article § 8-1801, et seq., authorizes the Town of Oxford to adopt a Critical Area program, including a map establishing the boundaries of the critical area and its classifications within the corporate limits of the Town. Section 33, of the Town of Oxford's zoning code, identifies the critical area overlay district ("O") and subsequent regulations for Intensively Developed Areas (IDA), Limited Development Areas (LDA), and Resource Conservation Areas.

State law identifies "Intensely Developed Areas," or IDAs, as areas where continued growth could be accommodated through redevelopment and/or new development. IDAs consist of 20 contiguous acres of commercial/industrial use and/or residential of 4 dwelling units per acre. Local governments desiring to permit or promote such projects within the Critical Area have been encouraged to direct such efforts within the IDA.

As illustrated on Map 3, page 15 virtually the entire Town is located within an IDA. Along a significant portion of the waterfront areas, the Town also has designated Buffer Exempt Areas (BEA) along the existing developed shoreline. The approximately 12-acre parcel immediately south of Oxford's wastewater treatment plant is designated as a limited development area (LDA).

OFFICIAL ZONING MAP

OXFORD, MARYLAND

ZONING DISTRICTS

R-1 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

R-1-C CLUSTER

R-2 HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL

R-3 MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

RR RURAL RESIDENTIAL

C-1 NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

C-2 GENERAL COMMERCIAL

C-3 MARITIME COMMERCIAL

C-4 HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL

M MARITIME INDUSTRIAL

CIP COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL

EGS ESSENTIAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

WS/WC WILDLIFE SANCTUARY/
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

CRITICAL AREA LAND USE CLASSIFICATION

IDA - INTENSELY DEVELOPED AREA

LDA - LIMITED DEVELOPMENT AREA

RCA - RESOURCE CONSERVATION AREA

BMA - BUFFER MANAGEMENT AREA

BOUNDARY LINES

-··- CORPORATE BOUNDARY

-- ZONING DISTRICTS

HISTORIC DISTRICT

-- CRITICAL AREA BUFFER*

-- CRITICAL AREA BOUNDARY

*FIELD DELINEATION REQUIRED

PUBLICLY-OWNED LAND

TOWN PROPERTY

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

O   TOWN-OWNED RIGHT-OF-WAY

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THIS IS THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP
REFERRED TO IN SECTION 4 OF THE OXFORD ZONING ORDINANCE.

ORDINANCE: # 1401   DATE ADOPTED: 3/11/14

TOWN COMMISSIONER   DATE   3/11/14

TOWN COMMISSIONER   DATE   3/11/14

TOWN COMMISSIONER   DATE   3-11-14

Feet
0   400   800   1,600

VERSION 3-11-14

Map 3 Zoning and Critical Area Map

PJA   Peter Johnston & Associates, LLC
Easton, Maryland

The areas of tidal wetlands in Town adjacent to Bachelor Point Road have been protected with covenants against future development and are classified under the most restrictive critical area classification (Resource Conservation Area or RCA) and the most restrictive Town zoning classification, which is WSWC Wildlife Sanctuary/Wildlife Conservation Zoning District.

HARBOR MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES:

The following timeline summarizes key efforts undertaken by the Town of Oxford to address ongoing environmental, stormwater, floodplain management, and sea-level rise issues, providing context for the Working Waterfronts Strategic Planning effort:

Figure 15 Tide gate (left) installed near Hinckley's Yacht Services on Bank Street

1979   Board of Port Wardens established to regulate the placement of structures, moorings, buoys, anchors, floating wharves and related waterfront structures (Ordinance No. 165)

1982   Harbor Management Ordinance adopted (Ordinance No. 173 and amended by Ordinance 1222, adopted in May of 2013) governing the placement of structures within the waters of the municipality, as well as permitting requirements

1983   Harbor Management Plan – as per Harbor Management Ordinance the Board of Port Wardens may rely upon any other regulations or guidelines set forth in the Oxford Harbor Management Plan

2011   Stormwater Management Ordinance adopted

2012   Living shorelines installed at the Waterfront Park, the Ferry Dock, and along the Strand

2013   Stormwater and Flood Management Financing Study through the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center completed

2014   Based upon the 2013 study, adopted ordinance to create a Stormwater Management and Shoreline Protection (SMSP) Fund. Oxford commissioners unanimously agreed to increase the town's property tax rate in order to collect fees for the maintenance, enhancement, improvement and repair of the Town's stormwater management and shoreline protection improvements, facilities and systems

2015   Comprehensive Digital Inventory of Stormwater and Shoreline Infrastructure funded through the initial FY 2015 SMSP fees and to be used in the future development of the Stormwater Management and Shoreline Protection Capital Improvement Plan (SMSP Master Plan)

2016   MD DNR Coast Smart/NOAA technical assistance collaboration resulted in a Flooding/Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Study, to be used in combination with the Infrastructure Inventory to produce the SMSP Master Plan

2016   MD DNR Coast Smart funded engineering for the development of the SMSP Master Plan, identifying, prioritizing, pricing, and planning Stormwater and Shoreline Infrastructure Improvements to improve

drainage, maximize storage, enhance water quality, and reduce vulnerability and risk

2017   Town of Oxford is in the process of integrating two new substantial retention areas, and expanding and improve existing retention swales in order to increase stormwater retention capacity, improve water quality at final discharge to local waters, and increase coastal resiliency for a critical area of the community.

Figure 16 Oxford Mews

ECONOMIC INITIATIVES

At the same time the Town has made similar efforts to address the economic issues associated with the transition from a maritime economy to a heritage and recreational boating based economy. With a decreasing population and a profile that is aging, the Town has made efforts to increase economic activity through revitalization and reinvestment. The following are a sampling of the more recent initiatives.

2010   Oxford Community Center launches Capital Campaign for renovation

2013   Maryland Waterway Improvement Funds and the Federal Sport Fish Restoration Fund Boating Infrastructure Grant supported the reconstruction of the Ferry Dock increasing access to the Town for transient boaters.

Figure 17 Bulkhead along Tred Avon River adjacent to Pier Street marina

2015   Successful application to the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development for designation as a Maryland Sustainable Community. Oxford's application recognized the need to adapt to climate change; continue the development of living shorelines; establish a Community Revitalization Fund; acquire and/or support the rehabilitation of various commercial and mixed-use buildings in the historic district; and develop a long term Capital Improvement Plan to strengthen Oxford's stormwater and tidal water infrastructure

2016   Economic Development Plan for the Historic Commercial Area completed with financial assistance from the Maryland Department of Economic Development

Figure 18 Rip Rap along Tred Avon River south of Oxford Town Park

2017   Grant funding from both the USDA and the MD Bay Restoration Fund provided a significant portion of the construction cost for the upgrade of the wastewater treatment plant to an ENR (Enhanced Nutrient Removal) treatment facility

2017   Strategic Planning for Oxford's Working Waterfront underway (this study)

2017:   Awarded funding from DHCD for design services for the MEWS Building

WORKING WATERFRONT STRATEGIC PLAN
Oxford, Maryland
Existing Land Use and Shoreline Conditions (VIMS)

DRAFT: AUGUST 2017

Sources: MD iMap April/May 2017

Oxford Town Boundary
OxfordTownBoundary_1983_Approximate
Parcel Boundaries

— Breakwater
— Bulkhead
— Debris
— Dilapidated bulkhead
— Groin field
— Jetty
— Marina
— Marina, <50 slips
— Marina, >50 slips
— Riprap
— Unconventional
— Wharf
● Dilapidated dock
● Dock
● Outfall
▲ boathouse
■ private ramp
■ public ramp
Residential
Public and Semi-Public
Commercial
Agricultural and Open Space

Town Creek

Tred Avon River
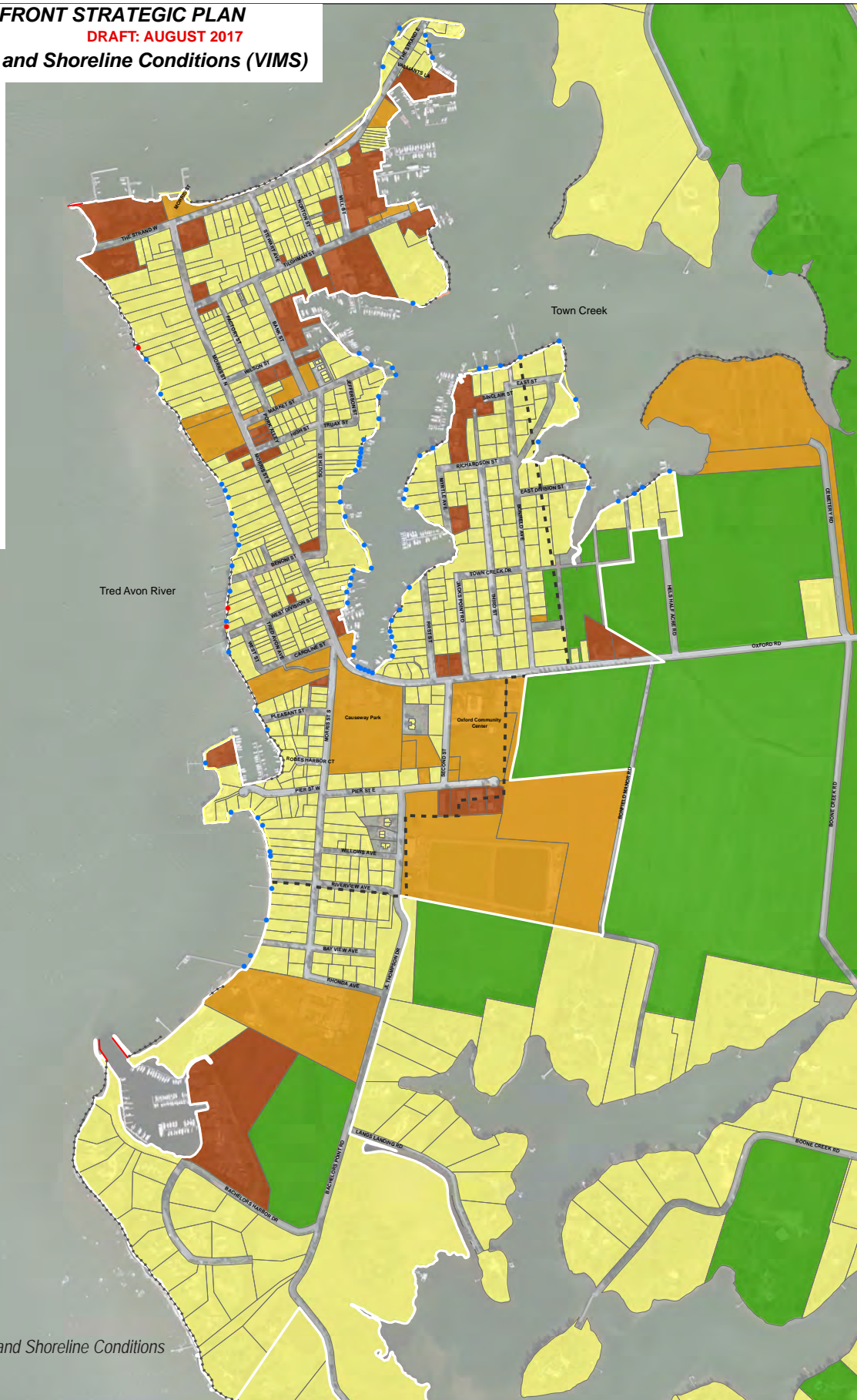
Map 4 Existing Land Use and Shoreline Conditions

WATERFRONT CONDITIONS

The following sections describe the existing conditions of Oxford's waterfront areas, its shoreline land uses, its harbors, navigation channels, and its public and semi-public access. Waterfront areas are susceptible to many different forces that result in a highly dynamic environment. Oxford has attempted to harness those forces through the use of various shoreline treatments, yet over time, the affects of climate change and sea level rise are likely to change shoreline conditions. As climatic conditions and land subsidence change over time, sea levels are likely to change with it, along with associated risks of flooding and storm surge. This section also documents the planning-based assumptions, moving forward, that serve to guide the strategic plan.

Figure 19 Living shoreline installed along the Tred Avon River at the Oxford Town Park

SHORELINE

Much of the shoreline in and near Oxford is almost completely lined with either bulkhead or riprap (Map 4, page 18); therefore the historical retreat of the shoreline has basically stopped.

Current land use along the Shoreline includes primarily publicly owned parkland, semi-public institutional uses, maritime commercial uses (marinas, boatyards and restaurants) and residential uses.

A 1983 Harbor Management Study inventoried the adjacent land uses along Oxford's waterfront. Over the past 30 years there has been a slight shift in land use favoring more residential uses as well as public and semi-public uses, with less agriculture and marine commercial uses along the waterfront areas (Table 2, page 19).

Table 2 Oxford Waterfront Land Use 1983	Town Creek		Tred Avon		Total	
	Feet	%	Feet	%	Feet	%
Residential	9,000	69.0	4,800	49.6	13,800	**61.0**
Public & Semi-Public	150	1	675	7.0	825	**3.6**
(Marine) Commercial	3,600	28	2,100	21.7	5,700	**25.2**
(Agricultural)/Open Space	222	2	2,100	21.7	2,322	**10.3**
TOTAL	12,972	100.0	9,675	100.0	**22,647**	100.0
Source: Harbor Management Plan, Town of Oxford, 1983						
Oxford Waterfront Land Use 2013						
Residential	9,667	65.8	11,522	69.1	21,189	**67.5**
Public & Semi-Public	939	6.4	2,530	15.2	3,469	**11.1**
(Marine) Commercial	3,885	26.5	2,626	15.7	6,511	**20.8**
(Agricultural)/Open Space	192	1.3	0	0.0	192	**0.6**
TOTAL*	14,683	100.0	16,678	100.0	**31,361**	100.0
* Includes additional lands annexed since 1983						
Source: Land use categories (left column) derived from parcel data, Maryland Dept. of Planning Open Data, 2013.						

Living Shorelines

Rather than the traditional means of hardening a shoreline to protect from erosion, living shorelines use plants, sand, and limited amounts of rock to provide shoreline protection and maintain valuable habitat. Protection is provided by various types of structural and organic materials, such as wetland plants, submerged aquatic vegetation, oyster reefs, coir fiber logs, sand fill, and stone. The intertidal environment in its natural state is rich in habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial species and the living shoreline approach attempts to restore the natural function of these riparian and intertidal environments. The living shorelines also help to improve water quality by providing a natural filter for upland runoff, trapping sediments that would otherwise settle out into the adjoining bay areas. Oxford has installed three living shorelines along Town owned waterfront areas at Oxford Park, Morris Street Park and the Oxford-Bellevue Ferry Landing. A fourth living shoreline was installed at the Cooperative Oxford Laboratory.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEA LEVEL RISE

According to the State of Maryland's official Climate Change web page (http://climatechange.maryland.gov/science/)

> *"Historic tide gauge records demonstrate that sea levels are rising along Maryland's coast. Due to a combination of global sea level rise and land subsidence, sea levels have risen about one foot within Maryland's waters during the last 100 years. As our climate changes, sea levels are expected to continue to rise— potentially twice as fast as during the 1900s. Maryland is at risk of experiencing another one-foot rise in sea level by 2050 and as much as a three-foot rise by 2100, contributing to higher storm wave heights, greater flooding in low-lying coastal areas, exacerbated shoreline erosion, and damage to property and infrastructure."*

Flood risks are also likely to be exacerbated by the potential effects of sea level rise. The NOAA Coastal Flood Exposure Mapper illustrates a sea level rise scenario of 0 to 6 feet, which represent a rise in water above the average of the highest high tides (called mean higher high water, or MHHW) for hydrologically connected areas. A sea level rise scenario of one foot (2050 scenario) is largely contained by existing shoreline and floodplain management efforts already in place. A sea level rise of three feet (2100 scenario), however would inundate the Strand (north of Mill Street), Pier Street Marina, the Causeway and Tilghman Street Docks, among other areas as shown on Map 5, page 22, Sea Level Rise Risk

Changes in local, or relative, sea level have long-term implications, including increased extent and frequency of events such as storm surge, as well as permanent changes to shorelines and coastal habitats.[3]

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3   *To get more details about the data shown in this map, visit the Sea Level Rise and Coastal Flooding Impacts Viewer (https://coast.noaa.gov/flood exposure/#/splash).*

Flood Risk

The Effective Flood Hazard Area (Map 6, page 23) as mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), illustrates a close correlation of the 1% Flood Zone (100-year flood) with the three-foot sea-level rise scenario (making the 100-year flood permanent).

A more immediate concern is the potential impact of storm surge on Oxford's waterfront areas. A storm surge inundation map created by the National Hurricane Center (NHC) Storm Surge Unit (Map 7, page 24) shows the highest degree of exposure to storm surge. The Sea, Lake, and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) model is used to calculate storm surge heights and the extents of inundation for hurricane evacuation studies. The model calibrates many factors that influence storm surge heights and combines them into a composite map with categories of 1 through 5. Category 1 storm surge would affect the lower lying areas of the town in a similar pattern to a sea level rise of three feet.

Figure 20   Nuisance flooding along Causeway Street

According to the 2013 study, Stormwater and Flood Management Financing Study in Oxford, Maryland, the South Morris area as currently configured is more susceptible to storm surge. However, all things being equal, Bachelor's Point would be more exposed to wind driven or storm surge flooding.

Vertical Land Movement/Subsidence

The Scientific and Technical Working Group of the Maryland Climate Change Commission estimates of the rate of sea level rise takes into consideration the role of vertical land movement and subsidence in its projections[4].

For the purpose of the Working Group's projection of relative sea-level rise in Maryland, a best-estimate VLM adjustment of 1.5 mm/yr. continuing throughout the 21st century was used. Projected to 2100, VLM would result in an adjustment in sea level rise of 3.2 inches. It should be kept in mind, however, that VLM may be greater locally due to sediment compaction and groundwater. Portions of Oxford have reportedly subsided by as much as a foot during the last 50-100 years.[5]

Shoaling

Shoaling, or sediment build up in a waterway's riverbed, is a natural process that makes waterways shallow and impassable over time. Within the waters of Oxford there are various areas of shoaling caused by natural processes:
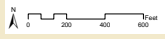
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4   *Boesch, D.F., L.P. Atkinson, W.C. Boicourt, J.D. Boon, D.R. Cahoon, R.A. Dalrymple, T. Ezer, B.P. Horton, Z.P. Johnson, R.E. Kopp, M. Li, R.H. Moss, A. Parris, C.K. Sommerfield. 2013. Updating Maryland's Sea-level Rise Projections. Special Report of the Scientific and Technical Working Group to the Maryland Climate Change Commission, 22 pp. University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Cambridge, MD.*

5   *Stormwater and Flood Management Financing Study in Oxford, Maryland, 2013*

WORKING WATERFRONT STRATEGIC PLAN
Oxford, Maryland   DRAFT: JULY 2017
Sea Level Rise Risk (NOAA) & Existing Zoning

Sources: MD iMap April/May 2017
Oxford Town Boundary
NOAA Sea Level Rise (feet)
0 ft SLR
1 ft SLR
2 ft SLR
3 ft SLR

OFFICIAL
ZONING MAP

OXFORD, MARYLAND

ZONING DISTRICTS

R-1 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
R-1-C CLUSTER
R-2 HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL
R-3 MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
RR RURAL RESIDENTIAL
C-1 NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
C-2 GENERAL COMMERCIAL
C-3 MARITIME COMMERCIAL
C-4 HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL
M MARITIME INDUSTRIAL
CIP COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL
EGS ESSENTIAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES
WS/WC WILDLIFE SANCTUARY/
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

CRITICAL AREA LAND USE
CLASSIFICATION

IDA - INTENSELY DEVELOPED AREA
LDA - LIMITED DEVELOPMENT AREA
RCA - RESOURCE CONSERVATION AREA
BMA - BUFFER MANAGEMENT AREA

BOUNDARY LINES
CORPORATE BOUNDARY
ZONING DISTRICTS
HISTORIC DISTRICT
CRITICAL AREA BUFFER*
CRITICAL AREA BOUNDARY
*FIELD DELINEATION REQUIRED

PUBLICLY-OWNED LAND

TOWN PROPERTY

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
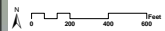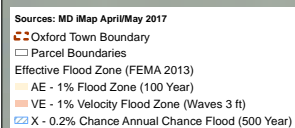
TOWN-OWNED RIGHT-OF-WAY

Official Zoning Map from the Oxford
Zoning Ordinance, 3/11/14

Tred Avon River

*Map 5 Sea level rise of from 1-3 feet in relationship
        to zoning*

WORKING WATERFRONT STRATEGIC PLAN
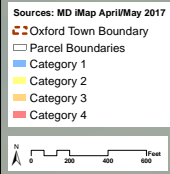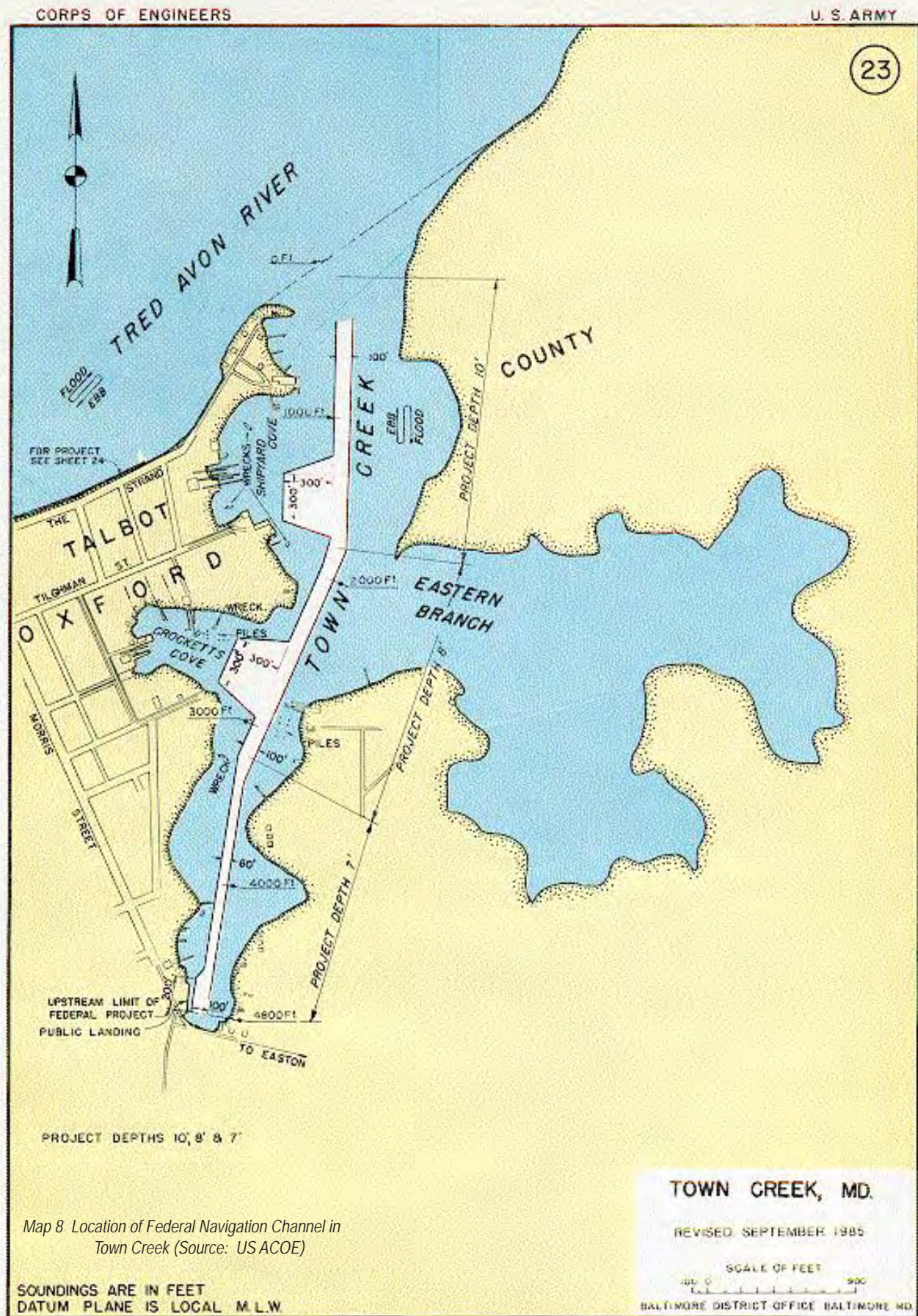*Oxford, Maryland*
Flood Risk

DRAFT: MAY 2017

Sources: MD iMap April/May 2017
- Oxford Town Boundary
- Parcel Boundaries

Effective Flood Zone (FEMA 2013)
- AE - 1% Flood Zone (100 Year)
- VE - 1% Velocity Flood Zone (Waves 3 ft)
- X - 0.2% Chance Annual Chance Flood (500 Year)

N
0 200 400 600 Feet

Tred Avon River

Map 6 Flood Risk

WORKING WATERFRONT STRATEGIC PLAN
Oxford, Maryland   DRAFT: MAY 2017
Hurricane Storm Surge (NOAA)

Sources: MD iMap April/May 2017
☐ Oxford Town Boundary
☐ Parcel Boundaries
■ Category 1
■ Category 2
■ Category 3
■ Category 4

Tred Avon River

Map 7 Storm Surge

Map 8 Location of Federal Navigation Channel in Town Creek (Source: US ACOE)

- Movement of bottom sediments due to littoral drift (longshore currents)

- The natural settling action of suspended sediments in quiet waters, and

- Storm drainage outfalls flushing sand and silt from the town streets into the town waters.

Shoaling may hinder ingress and egress into tributaries and rivers like Town Creek as well as reduce the capacity of inland waterways to accommodate flood waters. Shoaling can directly affect the ability of maritime industries to conduct business as normal.

Town Creek is designated as Federally maintained navigation channel (Map 8, page 25)[6]. However, to compound the shoaling issue, there has been a significant decline in federal funding for the Shallow Water Dredging Program operated by the Army Corps of Engineers required to dredge shallow waterways such as this. As competition for federal revenue sources for dredging has increased, shallow navigation channels such as found at Town Creek have not fared well against harbors with commercial navigation traffic, which is the current priority. This has left many federally maintained channels and harbors with no direct source of revenue to fund or initiate much-needed dredging projects.

6   *Public Law 14—79th Congress [Chapter 191st Session] {S.35} AN ACT Authorizing the construction, repair, and preservation of certain public works on rivers and harbors, and for other purposes.*

Table 3 Water Access Facilities	Public / Private	Number of Slips	Number of Ramps/Landings/Launches/Piers
TRED AVON RIVER			
Pier Street Marina	Private	60	Wood, fixed dockage (40' max)
Oxford Docks and Kayak Launch	Public	3 transient	2
TOWN CREEK			
Brewer Oxford Boat Yard & Marina	Private	152 fixed docks; 20 transient slips	Wood, fixed, 135' max
Campbell's Bachelor Point Yacht Club	Private	80	Dockage LOA max: 100 feet Slips: $2/foot (June 2017)
Campbell's Boatyard and Jack's Point	Private	56	
Campbell's Town Creek Boatyard	Private	42	
Causeway Docks	Public	24 (+/-)	
Cutts and Case Shipyard	Private	34 (+/-)	
Tilghman Street Docks and Boat Ramp (Oxford Boat Ramp)	Public	16 (+/-)	One concrete ramp
Oxford Yacht Agency	Private	15 in Oxford	LOA max: 75 feet Launching ramp
Tred Avon Yacht Club	Private (members only)	NA	ramp, hoist, sandy beach

WORKING WATERFRONT STRATEGIC PLAN
Oxford, Maryland
Study Area
DRAFT: MAY 2017

OXFORD, MARYLAND
Sources: MD iMap April/May 2017

Oxford town boundary
Parcel Boundaries
Study Area
MD Environmental Trust Easements
Local Protected Lands
Town property (derived from parcel data)

N
0   200   400   600   Feet

Town-owned right-of-way at waterfront

NOTE:

There are approximately 33 private residential docks between Bachelors Point and the east end of the Strand along the Tred Avon River.

There are approximately 48 private residential docks (excluding commercial boatyards and marinas) along both shores of Town Creek between Jack's Point and the east end of the Strand (some with multiple slips)

Tred Avon Yacht Club

Oxford-Bellevue Ferry
Transient Docks and Kayak Launch
Robert Morris Inn
parking lot
Brewer Oxford Boat Yard & Marina

Tilghman Street Docks and Boat Ramp
Capsized Restaurant and Marina
Cutts and Case Shipyard

Sandaway Waterfront Lodging

Hinckley Yacht Services

Campbell's Boatyard at Jack's Point
Campbell's Town Creek Boatyard

Latitude 38 Restaurant

Town Park

Oxford Yacht Agency
Causeway Docks

Oxford Inn & Tavern

Pier Street Marina & Doc's Sunset Grill

Causeway Park

Oxford Community Center

Tred Avon River

Cooperative Oxford Laboratory

Campbell's Bachelor Point Yacht Club

Map 9 Waterfront Assets and Access

HARBOR MANAGEMENT

Chapter II of the Town of Oxford Code, known as the Oxford Harbor Management Ordinance, provides regulations for the orderly management, development, and control of the waters within the corporate boundaries of the Town of Oxford. The Board of Port Wardens, established by Town Ordinance No. 173 (April 27, 1982) reviews the construction of bulkheads, wharves and piers, installation of mooring buoys and living aboard a vessel for more than 60 days a year.

Navigation and Access

Oxford is on the east side of Tred Avon River, 2 miles above its mouth at the Choptank River. Oxford is accessed from both the Tred Avon River side and the Town Creek side with the majority of the facilities along Town Creek on the east side of the town. Public access is available along the Tred Avon River at the ferry landing on the river side of Oxford with depths of 14 feet at the face. Ferry service is maintained to Bellevue (see page 4) on the opposite side of the river (closed in winter).

Town Creek enters the Tred Avon River east of Oxford. Public access to Town Creek is available from two town owned facilities at the end of Tilghman Street and at the Causeway (Map 9, page 27). Table 3, page 26 lists both public and private facilities that are available in Oxford

GRADE (HARBOR MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1983)
GRADE (2011 CONDITION SURVEY)

SECTION A
1983/2011 CHANNEL DEPTHS COMPARISON
HORIZONTAL SCALE: 1"=100'
VERTICAL SCALE: 1"=10'

PLAN VIEW - MAP OVERLAY
1983 TOWN OF OXFORD HARBOR MANAGEMENT PLAN
2011 TOWN CREEK CONDITION SURVEY, USACE
SCALE: 1"=1000'

CL FEDERAL NAVIGATION CHANNEL
GRADE (HARBOR MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1983)
GRADE (2011 CONDITION SURVEY)

SECTION B
1983/2011 CHANNEL DEPTHS COMPARISON
HORIZONTAL SCALE: 1"=100'
VERTICAL SCALE: 1"=10'

Figure 21 Town Creek Bathymetric Survey Comparison illustrating approximate changes to the navigation channel between 1983 and 2011 (does not factor in any recent dredging outside the navigation channel

Town Creek is a Federally maintained navigation channel. The Corps of Engineers is responsible for reporting the conditions of Federally maintained navigation channels. The Baltimore District performs periodic surveys to determine channel conditions. The most recent survey of Town Creek was conducted in July of 2011, the results of which were posted to the USACOE website at http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Nav-Maps/:

> In 2011, the controlling depth was 7 feet in the entrance of the channel to 38°41'20"N., 76°10'09"W., and 5 feet at mid-channel to the head of the navigation project. Two anchorage basins on the west side of the channel, 0.3 mile and 0.5 mile above the entrance, had depths of 9 feet and 7 feet, respectively.[7]

A bathymetric survey was previously conducted for the 1983 Harbor Management Study. An approximate comparison of the channels in two locations shows the 2011 depth with the 1983 depth (source data had to be rubber sheeted from the 1983 study to make the comparison. Therefore, it only provides a general picture of a slight shift in the navigation channel as a result of maintaining the federal channel.

Privately operated boat yards have requested permits for and performed dredging operations outside of the Federal navigation channel. In 2013 and 2014, for example, Campbell's Boat Yard performed extensive dredging to serve its Town Creek boat yard and requested an additional permit for ongoing maintenance dredging in 2017 to a depth of seven feet.

In 2017, As part of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources $10.5 million Waterway Improvement Fund grant program to improve public boating access and navigation throughout the state, the Town of Oxford received funding for maintenance and repairs to public boating facilities, including installation of a floating dock.

Stormwater Management

   The Town of Oxford has taken a proactive stand in finding ways to both manage and finance the potential effects of the external factors of climate change and sea level rise. A 2013 study, Stormwater and Flood Management Financing Study in Oxford, Maryland spelled out the various actions needed to manage stormwater so as to reduce its contributions to flooding and sedimentation of Town Creek.

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7   *https://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/nsd/searchbychart.php?chart=12266*
     accessed on 7/3/2017

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WATERFRONT VISION AND GOALS

Preserving and maintaining the waterfront assets that make Oxford a unique place requires community-based collaboration among those who work, use, live along and otherwise enjoy the waterfront on a daily basis. While the Town has clearly stated that it intends to support the preservation and enhancement of its working waterfront—especially considering its long history of boat building and marine-related commerce – the actual nuts and bolts of making it happen requires continual collaboration and support of its residents, employers and waterfront users and visitors. Oxford has and will likely continue to be a model for collaborative planning and implementation efforts that rural communities everywhere would do well to emulate. The following vision and goals are intended to build upon the ongoing successful and collaborative efforts addressing issues of stormwater and flooding and historic commercial area revitalization

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The plan was developed through a series of informal community meetings – working meetings – asking participants to brainstorm ideas, delve more deeply into those ideas that appear to have the most traction and then using the plan to advance Oxford's vision for its waterfront and its strategic priorities through the community-based planning process. In addition to the community meetings, a community survey/questionnaire was distributed to reach out to those who do not often participate in community meetings, but have a strong interest nevertheless.

Community Meetings

The following informal community meetings were conducted to provide an opportunity for those stakeholders with an interest in the waterfront – either as a business owner, a property owner, a user or a neighbor – to contribute the development of the plan.

- May 25, 2017 – The purpose of the first meeting was to introduce the planning process, identify issues, and generate ideas for consideration in the strategic plan.

- July 27, 2017 – The purpose of the second meeting was to review the results of the community survey and to discuss a preliminary list of ideas organized around three proposed goals based upon the results of the survey and the first community meeting

- September 20, 2017 – A third meeting was held to review the recommended vision, goals and strategies.

In addition, the draft plan was presented to the Town of Oxford Commissioners for their review.

Community Survey

Throughout June of 2017, the Town of Oxford conducted a survey of residents regarding their most pressing concerns and recommendations for improvements associated with Oxford's waterfront areas. Thirty-six residents participated in the community survey. The results and recommendations are documented in Appendix 1 and are incorporated directly into the recommendations for the plan.

COMMUNITY PLANNING ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Based upon the results of the community meetings and community survey, as well as a review of related planning efforts for the historic commercial area and for stormwater and floodplain management, the following issues emerged as the primary focus of the strategic plan.

Figure 22   Town of Oxford supports and maintains waterman access at the Town Docks

- There is a need to develop strategies that will sustain and grow Oxford's maritime industries that have built up around the boat building industry.

- There is a need for a "succession" plan that cultivates the next generation of marine businesses, waterfront users and waterfront visitors.

- There is a need for creating a springboard for new and expanding water-dependent businesses to develop and locate in Oxford through aggressive mentoring, partnership building, and business support services.

Figure 23   The Ferry is a collaborative effort among the Town, Maryland State Highway Administration and the Oxford-Bellevue Ferry

- There is a need to address the changing recreational habits that shape Oxford's maritime industries and water-dependent land uses and identify new ways to position Oxford to help capture an appropriate share of the markets associated with these new and emerging trends in the recreational boating market.

- What are the new and emerging trends in heritage- and nature-based tourism and how can Oxford position itself to use its known assets to better capture an appropriate share of this important segment of the tourism industry?

- Given that Oxford does not have a large number of hotel rooms (and likely will not into the future), how can Oxford develop and promote appropriately scaled events, educational activities, and other means of attracting small groups beyond the strong summer season, especially through the spring and fall?

Figure 24   Oxford's cluster of boatyards and marinas are unique to the Chesapeake Bay, especially for a community of its size

- How can water-dependent land uses be balanced with the need to preserve and maintain Oxford's historic qualities, its unique sense of place and its natural setting – the reasons that people are attracted to Oxford in the first place?

- There is a need to consider the importance of the Oxford-Bellevue Ferry to the businesses, residents and visitors and how

to ensure that the longest operating private ferry in the United States continues long into the future.

WATERFRONT ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

Talbot County's Department of Economic Development conducted a series of listening sessions around the County, including Oxford, at which participants listed each community's strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Of particular importance to the strategic plan for the waterfront areas are the following identified strengths and perceived weaknesses:

Strengths

- History and Community Character – Oxford is one of the oldest port towns in Maryland and it still retains many of the character defining features from its formative years that give it a unique and identifiable sense of place.

- Boat Building and Maritime Heritage – Oxford is well known for the quality of workmanship found in its many boatyards and boat building businesses.

- Water and Access – Oxford is home to more than 600 commercial boat slips serving transient, weekend and seasonal users throughout the mid-Atlantic region.

- Quiet Destination – Oxford is known for its serene and peaceful environment providing a strong identity as a getaway for seasonal and weekend travelers as well as attracting a specific segment of the transient boating market looking for a place that is out of the ordinary. For example:

  > "OXFORD is a quiet town on the Eastern Shore that was the first port of entry into the colonial states. It sits on the mighty Choptank River and is known for its boat building, quaint shops, waterfront parks, excellent restaurants, and many full-service marinas with swimming pools."

- Sense of Community – Oxford has a strong fabric of neighborhoods, an active community center, and is well known for its local museum and for its hospitality (small inns/bed and breakfast, quality restaurants, community organizations and public history).

- Active Citizenry – its residents are philanthropic, community minded, and have a wealth of experiences to share with others in support of the local community organizations and institutions.

- Seasonal Residents – Oxford has a strong and stable base of part-time residents who contribute to the economy and give back to the community by supporting local community organizations and institutions.

Figure 25   Yacht sales and service are also an integral part of Oxford's boatyards

Figure 26   Oxford is known as a quiet community with character

Figure 27   One of Oxford's fifteen dedicated slips for watermen
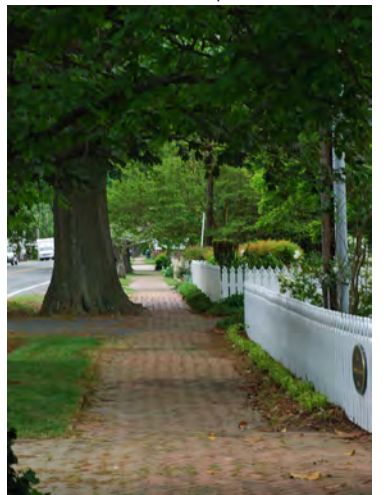
Figure 28   Oxford's brick walkways and picket fences define its character

- Private residential docks - approximately 80 private residential docks (some with multiple slips are important customers for the Town's marine commercial businesses

- The Town Staff – are dedicated and hardworking and put their efforts towards finding solutions to the Town's problems and its ongoing maintenance needs.

- Public landscape – Oxford has preserved waterfront access through its community parks and by preserving the public right-of-ways as public access to the waterfront.

- Cooperative Oxford Laboratory – NOAA and NCCOS - US Coast Guard Station brings the benefits of ongoing nationally significant research and marine sciences to the community and the potential for building partnerships that benefit Oxford's waterfront environs

Challenges

- Seasonality – business development in Oxford is limited by the extent of the summer boating and tourism season and the proportion of year-round residents to seasonal or part time residents (estimated to be over 40 percent). This affects business revenues and the ability of some businesses (especially restaurants) to remain open year-round.

- Affordability – Oxford's workforce, especially its commercial watermen, cannot afford to live in town, nor can new businesses find and lease affordable rental properties to start new businesses.

- Regulatory Environment – water-dependent businesses struggle with state regulations to keep their operation going.

- Preserving Oxford's Unique Character – the perception among business owners is that it is difficult to balance the preservation ethic in Oxford with the need to help local businesses survive.

- Aging population – few young families are moving in to Oxford affecting retail spending patterns and employment opportunities.

- Education/Mentoring/Apprenticeships – difficult to find employees that have the requisite skills or those that want to learn through apprenticeships, which is a perceived barrier for existing employers in the marine trades.

- Sense of Community - although Oxford is generally a welcoming place, it takes a while for new businesses and residents to get plugged in.

- Community Organizations – often rely upon local businesses for support, especially events, but it is a strain on small businesses to be continually asked for donations.

Figure 29 Hardened shorelines along the more exposed Tred Avon River waterfront

Figure 30 More recent "living shoreline" accomplishes the same goals with less impact

- Changing Economics and Market Demand for Recreational Boating – the next generation of recreational boaters has yet to emerge, resulting in less demand for low and middle end recreational boating sales, repairs, and related marine services including slip rentals and transient docking (with the exception of the very large boats).

- Changing Travel Patterns - the next generation of travelers are seeking out experience-based travel rather than attractions or points of interest (including historic sites)

A VISION FOR OXFORD'S WATERFRONT AREAS

The following statements help to focus the strategic planning effort on those collaborative opportunities that build upon the Oxford's assets while addressing the inherent challenges:

- Facilitate the next generation of maritime businesses and economic activity while preserving and maintaining the distinct historic character and quality of the Town of Oxford

- Build upon Oxford's distinct character and quality to build a brand and identity

- Combine Oxford's twin strengths of recreational marinas and boatyards with experience-based travel and tourism opportunities

- Attract a new generation of recreational boating and boat building

GOALS

- GOAL 1:   Working Waterfront and Land Use:
  Support existing working waterfront uses and increase opportunities for new enterprises as a means of attracting the next generation of maritime uses and activities.

- GOAL 2: Heritage and Nature-based Tourism
  Expand Oxford's visitor and educational/research infrastructure to capture the next generation of visitors.

- GOAL 3: Community Development Goal
  Retain Oxford's community character and quality of life while attracting new investments in working waterfront and heritage- and nature-based tourism.

The following recommended strategies are organized by goal and outline the rationale for the goal, recommended objectives for measuring how well the goal is being achieved, and recommended strategies for achieving the goal.

Figure 31 Oxford's picket fence fund raiser provides inspiration for the Town's branding and identity

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WORKING WATERFRONT AND LAND USE

GOAL 1: Support existing working waterfront uses and increase opportunities for new enterprises as a means of attracting the next generation of maritime uses and activities.

RATIONALE

- The Town of Oxford's Comprehensive Plan calls for the continued economic viability of its downtown merchants and its boating and marine uses that have been in existence since the 1600's and for its maritime and water-based history to be preserved

- The Town of Oxford's Historic Commercial Area Strategic Plan recognizes the relationship between its commercial area businesses and its marinas and marine businesses

- Oxford's marina and marine commercial uses are dependent upon their location along the waterfront and are more easily adaptable to changing conditions associated with climate change and sea level rise

- Oxford's water dependent businesses are widely recognized for their high quality of workmanship and level of customer service

Figure 32 Supporting waterman continues to be a broadly supported goal of the Town of Oxford through dedicated slips and dockside access at its public marina

Objectives

- Maintain existing working waterfront land uses

- Maintain and consider increasing public waterfront access

- Increase the number of slips dedicated to working watermen

- Increase the number of apprenticeship and mentoring opportunities

- Reduce permitting time and complexity for existing water-dependent business seeking to expand, or new businesses looking to locate in Oxford

- Increase opportunities for new business development in aquaculture and sea-to-table enterprises

STRATEGIES

1-1. Consider adopting as part of the Comprehensive Plan an official map that recognizes existing working waterfront assets and a specific policy that documents the Town of Oxford's commitment to maintaining working waterfront assets.

Assets to be included on the map:

- Rental/leased slips with direct access for loading and unloading, that are spatially and seasonally appropriate for watermen seafood operations

- Boatyards and marine commercial uses

- Public and private marinas

- Public waterfront parks and access (including fire access at ends of public right-of-way)

- Ferry landing and related facilities

- Waterfront hospitality businesses (including inns, bed and breakfasts, and restaurants)

- Private fishing and yachting charters and sales

Funding Strategy: Use map from this report and incorporate into next revision of the Town of Oxford Comprehensive Plan

1-2.   Adopt additional measures to adapt existing working waterfront assets to sea-level rise

- Bachelor's Point – low lying areas are already protected as RCA and very large lot residential.

- South Morris Street –the lowest of the low lying areas are protected as community park, while the Causeway remains vulnerable but must be addressed through cooperation with MDOT/SHA. Adjoining residential areas south of the Community Park are vulnerable longer term to a 2-3 foot rise in sea level. Residential streets south of the community park and east of South Morris Street are already located within the 100-year floodplain and will continue to face risks associated with nuisance flooding and sea level rise. The 100-year floodplain would likely expand under most sea level rise scenarios.

- Historic District (east side) – the low area along The Strand, Mill Street, Tilghman Street, Bank Street, Factory Street and Market Street is within the 100-year floodplain and is most vulnerable to nuisance flooding and sea level rise. The marine uses are less vulnerable and more easily adapted. Stormwater and flooding issues in this area are being addressed in other studies. A strategy for adapting residential uses within the historic district is needed, and although outside the scope of this work, will be identified as a potential need and worthy of pursuing current funding for vulnerable historic districts through state programs as a high priority. Organize waterfront business and property owners in order to advocate for maintaining the current town creek navigation channel (federal funding source) and for coordinating public and private investments in the maintenance of existing waterfront infrastructure

Funding Strategy: State case for coordinated strategies through ongoing state programs (Sustainable Communities, Working Waterfront, Maryland Heritage Area/Scenic Byway, National Register/Local Historic District flood protection, and use Stormwater Management and Shoreline Protection Fund, etc. (see Appendix Two for description of funding programs)

1-3. *Organize waterfront business and property owners in order to advocate for maintaining the current Town Creek navigation channel (federal funding source) and for coordinating public and private investments in the maintenance of existing waterfront infrastructure*

- Develop annual statements of harbor and shoreline maintenance needs and responsibilities, including dredging; and coordinate funding applications for maintenance and repair of public wharves, piers, landings and bulkheads with Talbot County (Waterway Improvement Grants)

- Annually track total usage by boaters (both commercial and recreational) to enable better scores in grant applications

- Use statement to seek additional funding and resources to implement maintenance program

Funding Strategy: Coordinated private actions of adjoining property owners (those that benefit from maintenance of navigation channels) with support from Town and Waterway Improvement Grants

1-4. *Consistent with land use and water quality and environmental considerations, seek out and encourage new waterfront commercial enterprises including aquaculture, boating and boat repair instruction schools, restaurants accessible to boaters, seafood retail stores or Sea-to-Table distribution sites, boat sharing operations, charter fishing operations, etc.*

- Develop and pursue designation of aquaculture opportunity zone(s) as a financial incentive to promote aquaculture and encourage investment. Adopt applicable local incentives and taxation options to promote aquaculture. Note that potential aquaculture businesses would only benefit if the price of land was less expensive (or subsidized) in Oxford and the distribution channels already used by watermen could be harnessed for the aquaculture distribution

Funding Strategy: Pursue Rural Business Development Grants (https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants)

1-5. *Support water-dependent businesses' efforts to expand existing business or create new business through permitting assistance*

- Consider exempting certain working waterfront uses from the "Non- conforming Use" clause by adding maritime water-dependent uses to the exceptions in SECTION 9. NON-CONFORMITIES §9.00 Non-conformities

    "B. It is the intent of this ordinance to permit these non-conformities to continue until they are removed, but not to encourage their survival, except in the case of historic structures, *maritime water-dependent commercial uses*, or casualty loss or

Waterway Improvement Grants
According to the DNR website:
"The Waterway Improvement Fund was established in 1966 (Annotated Code of Maryland Sec. 8-707 of the State Boat Act) for the purpose of funding projects which improve and promote the recreational and commercial capabilities, conditions and safety of Maryland's waterways for the benefit of the general boating public."

The Fund provides financial support in the form of grants and/or loans for capital projects and services that serve the boating public including the following selected project types directly relevant to Oxford:
- *Marking of channels and harbors and establishing aids to navigation.*
- *Clearing of debris and obstructions from navigable waters of the state.*
- *Dredging channels and harbors, and constructing jetties and breakwaters, including those projects in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.*
- *Construction of marine facilities beneficial to the general boating public.*
- *Installation of marine sewage pump-out stations.*
- *Evaluation of water oriented recreation needs and capacities of Maryland waterways and the development of comprehensive plans for waterway improvement projects.*

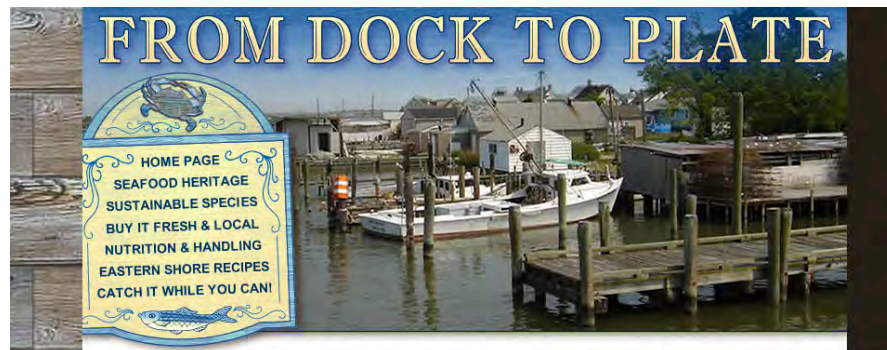voluntary demolition of structures as provided for in this Section."

- Consider establishing a working waterfront overlay district that is coupled with incentives for maintaining or expanding existing maritime businesses including expedited permit review and/or lower development fees for desirable uses

Funding Strategy: Implement as part of Comprehensive Plan update and resulting zoning code revisions.

1-6.   Establish initial set aside funding for social media marketing of activities that support water-dependent businesses.

- This could include marketing of any program that engages water-dependent businesses, such as marinas, boatyard tours via the Oxford museum, or annual festivals. Social media could include marketing strategies for sites serving the needs of the transient boating community such as Active Captain and other similar sites.

Funding Strategy: Work with Talbot County to pursue funding from Maryland Office of Tourism Development County Cooperative Grant Program, working under the direction of the Maryland Tourism Development Board and the Department of Business and Economic Development (cooperative with other working waterfront communities in Talbot County).

Figure 33 Seafood marketing through Maryland DNR program "from Dock to Plate" (http://docktoplate.us/)

HERITAGE AND NATURE-BASED TOURISM

GOAL 2: Expand Oxford's visitor and educational/research infrastructure to capture the next generation of visitors.

RATIONALE

- Oxford, as a distinctive destination with high quality marinas, restaurants, and supporting public visitor infrastructure (its inns, public spaces, historic commercial area, community center, the ferry, and unique events and activities) is strongly positioned to capture market trends that value place-based travel experiences, rather than just a collection of unrelated visitor attractions.

- Hospitality-and service-based businesses are an integral part of Oxford's maritime heritage and their success is dependent upon increasing their access to new markets in a manner that will not detract from Oxford's distinct community character and quality.

- Oxford's current visitors include boaters (both cruising and weekend trips), bicyclists, weekend escapes from the greater Baltimore/DC region, and local residents looking for a meal on the waterfront.

- Businesses centered on heritage and nature-based tourism, whether for recreation, education or leisure, can have a lower impact on Oxford's limited infrastructure and capacity. These types of businesses and organizations can build upon Oxford's distinct character and quality to lengthen the stay of Oxford's visitors and extend the season through carefully targeted programming and marketing aimed at those who appreciate Oxford for what it is today.

- The National Trust for Historic Preservation uses the term "cultural heritage tourism" to describe the act of "traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present [including] historic, cultural and natural resources."

- The Cultural and Heritage Traveler 2013 edition, found that cultural heritage travelers spent an average of $1,319 (up from $994 in 2009) per trip compared to $820 for non-cultural heritage travelers, making this a highly desirable travel industry segment. Cultural heritage travelers take an average of five trips per year, whereas other travelers take less than four.

- Oxford, through its extensive efforts to preserve and maintain its character defining features and through its participation in the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area and the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway, is well positioned to capture an increased share in the cultural heritage traveler market.

Figure 34 Oxford Museum provides a destination for the recreational boating audiences seeking out small town travel experiences

Figure 35 Waterfront dining destinations attract both recreational boaters and visitors from around the region

Maryland Certified Local Governments

The Town of Oxford Historic District overlaps with its waterfront on the west side of Town Creek and along Tred Avon River north of the Causeway. The Town can leverage this designation for additional funding opportunities by gaining designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG). According to the Maryland Historic Trust, "the Certified Local Government program recognizes counties and municipalities that have made a special commitment to preservation. This commitment includes, but is not limited to, establishing a qualified historic preservation commission to designate and review historic properties." The Town already has an historic preservation commission that appears to meet the qualifications. Maryland's CLG program is administered by the National Park Service and the Maryland Historical Trust. CLG programs are supported through the federal Historic Preservation Fund. MHT awards 10% of its annual allocation from the Historic Preservation Fund to CLG projects and educational opportunities each year, with applications available in January or February.

https://mht.maryland.gov/grants_clg.shtml

Objectives

- Increase the number of cultural heritage travelers visiting Oxford

- Increase the number of overnight stays (or the length of average visits in Oxford

- Increase visitation in the shoulder seasons (late fall and spring)

- Maintain or increase the number of programs and events focused on cultural heritage travelers

- Increase the operating hours (weekday and seasonal) of existing cultural heritage traveler oriented businesses

- Increase Oxford's participation in County and State marketing efforts for cultural heritage tourism, including regional and foreign visitors

STRATEGIES

The following strategies should be considered to address and work towards meeting heritage tourism objectives

2-1. Identify innovative means to help preserve the heritage and folklore associated with Oxford's working waterfront as a valuable and inherent part of the working and recreational landscape of the Chesapeake Bay

- Seek National Register listing for the Oxford-Bellevue Ferry under Criteria A (landing is located within Oxford National Register Historic District, however, at the time of review the structures or themselves were not more than 50-years old)

- Seek greater recognition and stronger identity for the boat building and repair yards associated with Town Creek (e.g. establishing a "boat building" cultural district, or similar)

Funding Strategy: Pursue funding through Maryland Historic Trust grant program. Expand range of grant program funding by gaining designation as a Certified Local Government so it could be eligible for additional preservation funding programs (https://mht.maryland.gov/grants_clg.shtml).

2-2. Define and target the next generation of visitors (e.g. better understand their interests, travel needs, and how travel decisions are made)

Those visiting Oxford by boat, whether a regular summer visitor or a more transient cruiser, tend to be looking for a quiet and unique place and are willing to go out of the way for that experience. The benefit of targeting boating visitors is that they would not impact Oxford's limited road capacity. This ties in with the same types of visitors that are coming to Oxford by land (automobile or bicycle) – those who come to visit because they like it the way it is (not the same visitor that goes to St. Michaels, for example). Draws to Oxford for both audiences include the restaurants, the bed and breakfasts and small inns, the character of the place and the small-town experience.

- Develop specific marketing approaches to Oxford's three distinct marina and boating markets

  - Transient visitors stopping for a weekend or a couple of days are interested in knowing that they can find a place to either moor or dock their boat, that they can get into town and enjoy a good meal or enjoy a special event or occasion and otherwise be a part of the community that they are visiting, and be able to enjoy a good night's sleep afterwards.

  - Loopers or other long-distance cruising associations are interested in similar experiences as weekenders, except that they may also be interested in marine services in support of their long distance travel and they may have a larger boat with deeper draft

  - Summer boaters (keeping their boat at a local marina) are more interested in fitting into the community through participating directly in community activities. They may also be interested in educational opportunities and other weekday activities.

- Work with marine-oriented social media to promote the experience of Oxford from the transient boater's perspective, such as the museum and dining opportunities through Active Captain and other similar sites (https://activecaptain.com/index.php)

- Work with existing boat sharing and home sharing businesses to identify Oxford as a distinct destination that is easy to get to from DC and Baltimore, and work with individuals wanting to participate in the sharing economy to establish a high quality experience.

Funding Strategy: Pursue grant funding for developing and implementing a coordinated marketing strategy with potential funding sources to include:

- Rural economic development programs

- Maryland Office of Tourism Development (MOTD) with Talbot County Tourism and Economic Development

- Maryland Heritage Areas Authority/Stories of the Chesapeake HA

2-3. Expand opportunities for season-extending business enterprises through programming

- Build upon the role that the ferry plays as a destination for motorcycles and bicyclists (longest continuously operating private ferry in the country) as part of a larger touring itinerary and cross-market with other communities on the touring routes

- Focus on smaller and appropriately scaled events (suitable for the capacity of the town and volunteers to both plan and manage) and experience-based itineraries designed to extend the season built upon available food and lodging resources. Resources noted for extending the seasons include:

Maryland Heritage Areas Financial Assistance Programs (MHT):

The Maryland Heritage Areas Program provides dollar-for-dollar matching grants to nonprofit organizations and government entities for capital and non-capital projects located within a Maryland Certified Heritage Area (CHA). Oxford is located within the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area. Grants can support projects involving historical, cultural or natural resources, sites, events or facilities. Eligible projects must have a heritage tourism component.

Non-Capital. Grants of up to $50,000 are available for non-capital projects, which can include Planning (research, field investigation, data recovery, feasibility and planning studies, design documents and other planning activities that support the heritage area); Interpretation (exhibits, signage, pedestrian wayfinding signage, interpretive brochures, educational programs and materials, other interpretive activities that support the heritage area); and Programming (seminars, conferences, performances, reenactments, commemorations, festivals).

Capital. Grants of up to $100,000 are available for Acquisition (fee title of real property, interest other than fee title (i.e. easement) of real property); Development (repair or alteration of an existing building, structure or site, new construction for heritage tourism purposes) among other purposes. For more information:

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Program Assistant Administrator

- Culinary events building on existing events at Robert Morris Inn

- Inn to Inn itineraries for bicycling and water trails – work with nearby smaller communities with working waterfronts (especially Tilghman or smaller Choptank River communities) to extend visitor stays using similarly scaled regional destinations

- Storytelling weekend – offer Oxford as a stage, in partnership with regional theater enthusiasts capable of providing event organization and management (example from Akron, Ohio's Summit Stagefest, five stages of public theater in an historic neighborhood) with Oxford working to provide venues and local/regional theater interests to provide organizational structure and volunteers

- Develop partnerships with secondary and higher education institutions to offer opportunities for marine oriented educational programs and teacher training that builds upon Oxford's waterfront assets including fisheries, marine biology, adapting to sea level rise, boat building, and historic preservation as a long-term investment in building a future visitor base.

Funding Strategy: Pursue grant funding for developing and implementing a coordinated marketing strategy (linked with Strategy 2.3) and consider pursuing cooperative marketing programs with similar working waterfront towns and villages in Talbot County

The Cooperative Oxford Laboratory is not primarily an academic institution. They do maintain partnerships with several universities, and offer opportunities for students and postgraduates at all levels to participate in their research programs. Examples of other institutions that may offer additional opportunities for higher education outreach include:

- Horn Point Laboratory

- Chesapeake College

- National Aquarium in Baltimore

- University of Maryland Eastern Shore

- University of Maryland College Park

- Washington College

2-4. *Continue to pursue funding for the physical improvements that are needed to make Oxford more attractive to future visitors (e.g. water trail, outdoor classrooms/facilities, expanded hospitality services)*

- Continue to seek funding for the self guided interpretive trail to tell the story of Oxford's long traditions of maritime heritage building upon expertise of Oxford Museum and local storytellers

- Water trail infrastructure - develop 2nd soft landing or dinghy dock at Pier Street marina and tie in with Captain John Smith water trail including the potential to develop interpretive buoys or similar as part of the self-guided interpretive trail system

- Increase access to recreational boating for younger generation through boat sharing programs by increasing access to visitor infrastructure at public piers and marinas

Funding Strategy: Seek funding for development of self-guided interpretive trail through Maryland Heritage Areas Authority/Stories of the Chesapeake HA.

Seek funding for waterfront access through Maryland DNR programs and Captain John Smith Water Trail (NPS); Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (USFWS) at https://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/ GrantPrograms/BIG/BIG.htm.

Seek rural economic development and recreational boating industry support for boat sharing programs

2-5. Update Oxford's branding and identity to better position the Town to gain access to younger markets and broaden the range of potential target audiences.

- Focus on marketing active experiences - doing something, rather than seeing something (boating, bicycling, recreational fishing, etc. and linking those experiences with packages at local inns and bed and breakfasts

- Support joint marketing activities aimed at youth and families including youth fishing (e.g. fishing rodeos), youth sailing programs, summer camp with related family activities and events (e.g. outdoor movies in the park)

- Work cooperatively with neighboring working waterfront communities along the Tred Avon and Choptank Rivers to market Oxford as part of a larger regional experience (coordinated programming, educational activities and packages)

Funding Strategy: Pursue grant funding for developing and implementing a coordinated marketing strategy (linked with Strategy 2.3). Consider sponsoring a Youth Rodeo Program through the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program

2-6. Development of group packages that link lodging options with experience-based adventure tours

Group ticket purchases help create a draw for group ticket sales. Active Millennials often choose experience based options that link several unique characteristics.

- Bicycle touring (bicycles provided) with providing tickets to ferry, and meal afterwards.

- Seasonal seafood cooking demonstrations tied to kayaking along Tred Avon from Town Creek for day-trippers or marketed along with a bicycling tour to St. Michael's or other local community.

Funding Strategy: Pursue grant funding for developing and implementing a coordinated marketing strategy (linked with Strategy 2.3)

Figure 36 Oxford's small inn's are an important asset for community-based heritage tourism

Maryland Department of Natural Resources Fishing and Boating Services partners with local community organizations to introduce children to fishing at youth fishing rodeos. This annual program seeks sponsors to provide fishing opportunities and fishing experience in a safe controlled, environment, teaches basic skills and offers a positive fishing experience to encourage fishing as an outdoor family activity. See http://dnr. maryland.gov/fisheries/ Pages/youth/rodeo.aspx

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

GOAL 3: Retain Oxford's community character and quality of life while attracting new investments in working waterfront and heritage- and nature-based tourism.

Figure 37 Ongoing cooperation with SHA is needed to ensure that the longest continuously operating private ferry service is maintained

Figure 38 Both public and private investments are needed to keep Oxford's maritime infrastructure in good working order

Figure 39 Maritime infrastructure within the Oxford Historic District may be eligible for funding programs designed to address sea-level rise through the Maryland Historic Trust

RATIONALE

The sustainability of Oxford's water-dependent businesses (especially its marinas and boatyards) is highly dependent on the economic viability of the Town as a whole. At the same time, the quality of life and sustainability of Oxford's local economy is dependent on a new generation of investments in its water-dependent business and marine infrastructure. Based upon input from the community meetings and survey, there are six specific investments in infrastructure needed to support the next generation of maritime-based community development in Oxford:

- The need to maintain and advocate for Oxford's federally-designated navigation channel as well as access to its marinas and boatyards

- The need to continue to invest in and support both public and private efforts to maintain Oxford's marine infrastructure including existing slips, docks, bulkheads, boat ramps, and other public access

- The need to continue to invest in and support the use of living shorelines to help preserve and restore aquatic habitats

- The need to continue to work with SHA and other partners to preserve and enhance the Oxford-Bellevue Ferry as the oldest continuously operated private ferry in the United States

- The need to preserve and enhance those portions of Oxford's historic district that are most vulnerable to sea level rise, while at the same time recognizing the need for more affordable housing opportunities to attract the next generation of residents and visitors

- The need to continue to invest in and support Oxford's community open spaces for both residents and visitors

Objectives

- Maintain or increase public investments in public spaces and waterfront access

- Maintain or increase private investments in waterfront infrastructure

- Increase the amount of local, state and/or federal funding used to address stormwater, flooding, and sea-level rise issues in Oxford

- Increase the amount of private investment in adapting water-dependent businesses and uses to increased flooding risks associated with sea level rise and climate change

- Increase the amount of affordable workforce housing in Oxford

STRATEGIES

The following strategies should be considered to address and work towards meeting heritage tourism objectives

3.1 Consider innovative financial tools to support the maintenance of working waterfront assets and the adaptation of those assets to future sea-level rise

Projects and priorities that will be funded through the Town of Oxford's Stormwater Management and Shoreline Protection Fund will have some direct benefit in addressing issues related to nuisance flooding on working waterfront infrastructure. However, longer term impacts of sea-level rise are not likely to be addressed with the available and anticipated funds. Additional options need to be considered to finance sea-level rise adaptation for existing working waterfront businesses (such as modifications to existing bulkeads, adaptation of piers and boatyards.

- Consider a modest expansion of the existing Stormwater Management and Shoreline Protection Fund to support additional shoreline protection projects and/or channel maintenance projects

- Consider establishing a specific waterfront improvement Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district to capture value created by investments in waterfront infrastructure to directly support maintenance dredging operations and enhancements to waterfront infrastructure. (NOTE: This fund should be viewed as limited and likely only to supplement Waterway Improvement Fund (WIF) grant applications, such as for matching fund requirements)

- Consider issuance of green bonds to finance the cost differential between working waterfront infrastructure designed for current FEMA floodplain elevations and storm surge models and infrastructure designed to address anticipated sea-level rise

Funding Strategy: State case for coordinated strategies through ongoing state programs in conjunction with Strategy 1.2

3.2 Continue to support public investments in working waterfront related economic development to sustain Oxford's maritime heritage and its contributions to overall quality of life

- Support long-term lease positions for watermen's slips to preserve commercial boat slips in both public and privately owned working waterfronts (public and private marinas, individual dock owners) that are spatially and seasonally correct

- Consider potential for property tax abatements (as recommended in the 2008 Maryland Working Waterfront Commission Report) to private marina operators that lease slips to watermen with minimum five year lease periods

- Work with state and local governments and non-governmental organizations to provide needed tools for business legacy planning and transition planning (with potential tieback to mentoring programs)

Green Bonds
Green bonds are debt securities issued by public and private organizations to raise capital specifically to support climate-related or environmental projects, to encourage sustainability, or to facilitate the development of high-impact sites. Green bonds simultaneously achieve financial returns and have a positive impact on society. More specifically, green bonds finance projects aimed at energy efficiency, pollution prevention, sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry, the protection of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, clean transportation, sustainable water management, and the cultivation of environmentally friendly technologies.

Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) and Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF)

According to its website, the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) "offers financial support to rural-serving nonprofit organizations that promote statewide and regional planning, economic and community development, and agricultural and forestry education efforts. The Fund also provides targeted financial assistance to community colleges that support small and agricultural businesses through enhanced training and technical assistance offerings.

The Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) supports the Rural Maryland Council's activities and the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF), which provides capacity-building funds to rural nonprofit service providers. It also supports the states' five regional councils, regional infrastructure projects, rural entrepreneurship development, rural community development, and rural health care organizations.

Grant applications were due in July and August of 2016, respectively for FY 2017 funding. For more information visit http://rural. maryland.gov/maerdaf/

Funding Strategy: Consider rural economic development business development grants through USDA (typically due in December)

3.3   Continue to work cooperatively to increase Oxford's competitiveness for state and federal funding to meet ongoing working waterfront needs

- Continue to support and document Oxford's coordinated public investments in community infrastructure (e.g. SMSP Fund, dedicated dock space for watermen, public access to waterfront areas, public investments in Oxford's commercial area, participation in Maryland Heritage Areas, etc) as a means of increasing competitiveness in related state funding programs

- Continue to document Oxford's leadership capacity on addressing environmental issues associated with sea-level rise, climate change resiliency, shoreline management, and public access to Oxford's waterfront areas through media releases, presentations at state conferences, and cooperation and partnership with Talbot County and neighboring communities on common issues

- Continue cross-marketing partnerships with Talbot County and Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area and establish new partnerships with neighboring Tred Avon and Choptank river towns as a means of increasing visitor spending (see goal 2)

Funding Strategy: Consider Rural Capacity Building for Community Development (HUD)

3.4   Build upon Oxford's boat building and repair industry as a maritime heritage asset and seek educational and workforce development tools and resources to support the boat building and repair enterprises

- Partner with other educational, marine heritage, restoration and apprentice programs to create a network of like minded organizations and communities that could work together and expand opportunities such as:

    - Sultana Educational Foundation, Chestertown (http://sultanaeducation.org)

    - Richardson Maritime Museum Boatworks Programs (http://www.richardsonmuseum.org/programs.htm)

    - Rock Hall Marine Heritage and Restoration Center (http://www.rockhallheritage.com)

    - Phillips Wharf Environmental Center, Tilghman (http://phillipswharf.org)

    - Upper Bay Museum Boat Builders School, Northeast, MD (https://www.upperbaymuseum.org/boat-school/)

    - Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (http://cbmm.org/)

- Tilghman Watermen's Museum (https://tilghmanmuseum.org/)

- Continue to pro-actively reach out to Chesapeake College and University of Maryland faculty with an interest in utilizing Oxford as a community laboratory for research, training, mentoring, apprenticeships, and public/private partnerships and establish new relationships and partnerships with faculty that focus on applied training as a means of expanding their student base.

   - Example of Adventure Sports Institute. (http://www. adventuresportsi.org), a two-year Garrett College program for outdoor leadership that was linked to the 4-year recreation program at Frostburg. The potential exists for forming a similar partnership with Chesapeake College (as a maritime institute) using the resources associated with the boat building and repair businesses, the ferry, the camp, and others as assets for training and apprenticeships in maritime-related careers.

Funding Strategy: Coordinate with Strategy 2.3. At the two-year college level, Chesapeake College's Division of Education and Workforce Training specializes in meeting the training needs of employers throughout the region and should be approached about offering training programs related to the marine industries (see http:// www.chesapeake.edu/continuing-education for a list of current offerings). Establishing a cooperative effort among Talbot County watermen, marina operators, boat building and repair, and other technical training opportunities, including offering of apprenticeships may be needed to establish a critical level of demand.

7th Annual
Marine and Maritime Career Fair
Saturday, February 25, 2017
Noon – 3 PM   Annapolis High School-Riva Rd

STUDENT INVITATION To Pre-Register
eycfoundation.org
Pre-Registration is limited to 500 students
FREE for ALL Students in Grades 6 – 12+ (Public,Private,Home-Schooled)
From Maryland & the Chesapeake Bay Region

Watch the VIDEO (YouTube): 2015 Career Fair Experience!!!

MARINE & MARITIME PROFESSIONS
- Network with Professionals, Entrepreneurs, Student Peers, Colleges, Training Programs, Internship Opportunities!
- Hands-on Experiences!
- Learn about Marine & Maritime Scholarships, the MTAM Pre-Apprenticeship-Summer Internship Training Program & more!
- Attend Special Sessions on the vast array of marine & maritime career pathways including STEM –focused professions & Marine Trades!
- Win Grand Door Prizes (Pre-Registration & Completion of On-site "Career Challenge" required for eligibility). Many Door Prize Opportunities for All Pre-Registered Students.

Pre-Register Today: eycfoundation.org
Contact: Tim Wilbricht, Chairman / Pam Ray, EYCF , eycfoundation@gmail.com

Marine and Maritime Career Fair
Annapolis-based Eastport Yacht Club Foundation, (EYCF) Marine & Maritime Scholarship Program, formerly known as MAST (Maritime Skills Training) program was initiated to enhance efforts to revitalize, restore and preserve and restore the vitality in marine trades and the maritime industry. Through its Annual Marine and Maritime Career Fair, its Outstanding Marine Wizard biennial awards, its annual Marine & Maritime Scholarships and its education outreach, EYCF seeks to raise awareness of the breadth of the maritime industry, increase career opportunity understanding, and provide assistance for those seeking maritime skills. To this end, EYCF has partnered with the Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS), the Center for Applied Technology (CAT South), and local maritime businesses.

3.5   *Increase housing opportunity and affordability by encouraging adaptive re-use of upper floors of commercial buildings for residential uses*

- Consider workforce housing options for the adaptive re-use of one or more commercial buildings in the Historic Commercial District

- Consider adopting more flexible zoning and incentives for accessory dwelling units within the R-2 zoning district

- Coordinate with potential developers to seek financing support for workforce housing

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the Oxford Working Waterfront Strategic Plan is directly tied to the implementation of ongoing Town initiatives related to the Stormwater Management and Shoreline Protection Fund and the revitalization of Oxford's Historic Commercial Area. However, in Oxford, a fairly small town of less than 700 residents, everyone involved with the Town in some capacity wears many hats. Those that are actively involved stated at the beginning of the process to take care to avoid counting on the same people to implement the plan. Efforts need to be made to reach out beyond the limited number of actively involved citizen's to find ways to engage a broader sector of the community and region. To that extent, three implementation programs focused on each of the three goals are recommended that are described below.
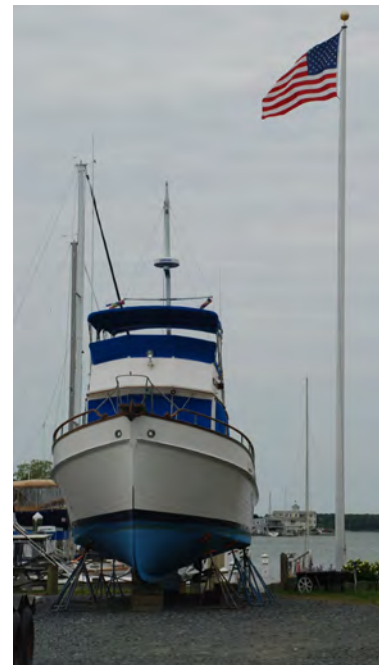
OXFORD BOATYARD DISTRICT

From the meetings and survey it is clear that the boatyards, inns, restaurants and the ferry are Oxford's strongest community-based waterfront assets from which to build, and that Oxford needs to use those assets to find a way to help bring more economic activity to the Town as well as the next generation of visitors – preferably extending the season, and staying longer.

One way to bring together many of the strategies that are included in this plan, would be to establish the "Oxford Boatyard District" The Boatyard District would be drawn to include the Town Creek boatyards and waterfront inns and restaurants, and then potentially a second area inclusive of the Tred Avon boatyards, waterfront inns and restaurants and the Ferry, and possibly the Yacht Club.

The purpose of the district would be to build a brand and identity for Oxford's marine businesses and maritime heritage. At first it would serve primarily as a way for the boatyards and water dependent businesses to work together on various marketing, outreach and advocacy efforts. The boatyard district could offer:

- Coordinated events aimed toward younger audiences by focusing on the "experience" associated with the boatyards (the building and repair of boats, rather than a boat show)
- Providing boating opportunities to introduce new audiences to the experience, grouped with Oxford's restaurants and inns to bring food and entertainment as part of the experience
- Tours/open houses on a monthly or seasonal basis organized to attract new (and younger) customers to marinas and/or boat sales
- Work to develop ideas related to "boat sharing"
- Coordinate the more traditional waterfront/boatyard events – spring boat checkups/recommissioning workshops, holiday lighting, 4th of July etc. Labor Day (mutts and boats show), winterizing workshops - "how to" workshops on boat maintenance, piloting/navigation,

fishing, etc.
- Potential to incorporate "sea-to-table" concepts for watermen at the Causeway
- The boatyard district could also be a way that Oxford's water dependent businesses could organize themselves to advocate for things that they need (channel maintenance/waterway and harbor improvements, etc.)

COOPERATIVE HERITAGE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

Considering Heritage Tourism in its broadest sense to also include both nature-based and recreation-based maritime tourism, Oxford is in a position to benefit from cooperative efforts among Talbot County's working waterfront communities, especially Tilghman, Easton, and Cambridge. Many of the strategies noted in this plan call for cooperative efforts among these related working waterfront communities along the Choptank and Tred Avon Rivers. While Talbot County's working waterfront communities can partner through Talbot County's Department of Economic Development, regional partnerships with Dorchester County would benefit all of the mid-shore working waterfront communities. The Mid-Shore Regional Council may be one organization that could provide a launching pad for further cooperation among working waterfront communities.

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Rural economic development efforts would also benefit from cooperation through the Talbot County Department of Economic Development. Oxford (as well as Talbot County) at one time, played a significant role in bringing Chesapeake Bay fisheries to market. The few remaining watermen in Oxford and Talbot County continue to bring fresh seafood to market. The Talbot County Waterman's Association is the main venue for cooperative action that allows watermen to speak with one voice and gain leverage. The Town of Oxford and Talbot County can support community-based economic development strategies that build upon the watermen's efforts as well as its boatyards and marinas by applying for rural economic development funding programs that continue to funded through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Ideas for bring small groups to Oxford for training programs that build upon the assets associated with its unique cluster of boatyards would help to meet the objectives of bringing more visitors to Oxford, especially in the spring and fall. Chesapeake College should continue to be approached as a partner for providing the structure for such a program combined with the expert knowledge of Oxford's boat yard owners and employees that could offer the classes and apprenticeships through Chesapeake College.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED FISHERIES

Several questions need to be resolved prior to moving forward with the idea of community supported fisheries and other related fresh seafood marketing and direct sales concepts for Oxford.

One critical issue is how the implementation of the community supported fisheries concept would affect existing watermen/buyer relationships. The Old Line Seafood Company is marketing itself as the first "community supported fishery" in the region. They have developed relationships with watermen in a similar way to existing buyers, yet, rather than distribution through retail outlets, they sell directly to consumers who buy a share or half share of a season's catch. (http://oldlinefish.com).

A second critical issue would be to determine how existing restaurants could participate (or if they would be excluded through existing regulations). Part of the marketing opportunity of a community supported fishery that works with local watermen would be that restaurants could market the direct sea-to-table concept with catch right from the docks (rather than waterman to buyer to distributer to restaurant).

Much of the supporting literature for the CSF concept touts the removal of the buyers and distributors enabling a greater share of the profits to go directly to watermen. The CSF concept allows for payments in advance to relive the potential risk of an unreliable marketplace.

SKILLED TRADES TRAINING IN MARINE INDUSTRIES

The following implementation steps are recommended for development of educational and workforce development tools and resources to support Oxford's boat building and repair enterprises. The steps noted below assume that Oxford's boat buildng and repair enterprises are willing to:

• Contribute resources such as internship, mentoring, and apprenticeship opportunities

• Consider opportunities to participate in curriculum development, including the potential for classroom and on-site instruction
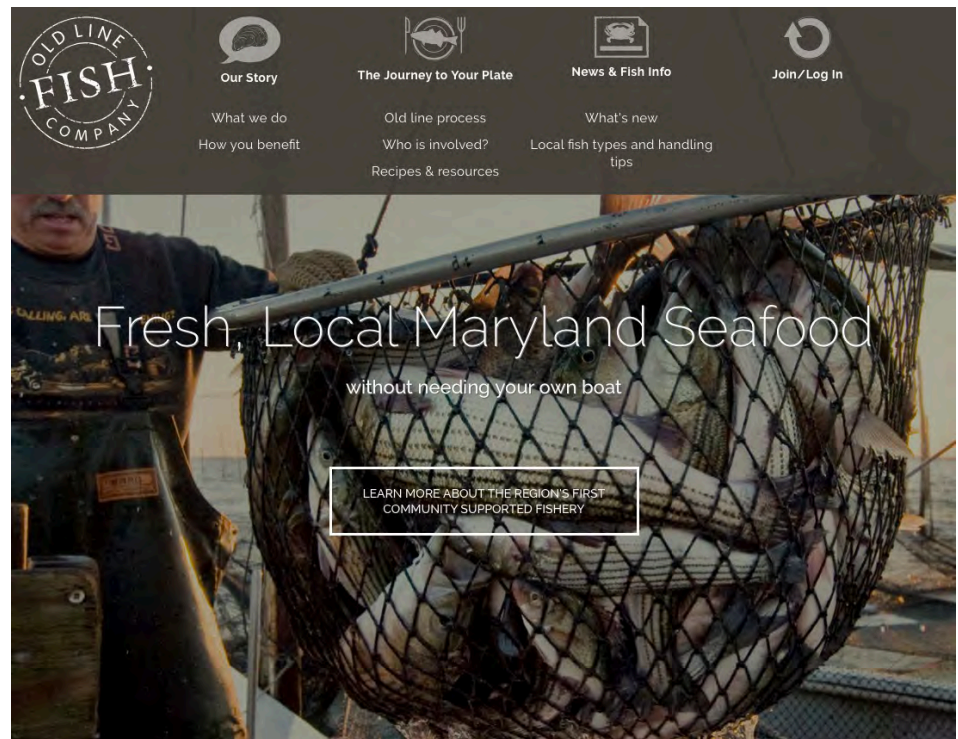
- Work cooperatively with other mid-shore communities to establish the need and advocate for skilled trades at Chesapeake College or other institutions (including high school and vocational training)

One of the biggest challenges facing Oxford's marine businesses is finding and retaining employees with the necessary skills and strong interests in the marine trades. Other nearby working waterfront communities such as Tilghman and Cambridge are facing similar issues. In Cambridge, the James B. Richardson Foundation is supporting efforts at the Richardson Maritime Museum, the Ruark Boatworks and the Brannock Education and Research Center to keep the traditional boat building skills alive.

According to its website (http://mtam.org/career-training/), the Marine Trades Association of Maryland (MTAM) formed the Marine Trades Industry Partnership (MTIP) to address the need for a sustainable workforce in the marine trades in Maryland. The Partnership consists of employers in the boating industry, local workforce development professionals and educators .

Through a grant from EARN Maryland (Employment Advancement Right Now), the Partnership is developing a program to recruit young people to the industry, train them in a 6-week on-the-job practicum, train the industry's incumbent workers, match workers to immediate job openings and train-the-trainer sessions for the employers. Full Apprenticeship programs are being developed for the boating industry in Maryland. [Elliot Anderson, Hinkley Yacht Service is on the Board of this organization representing the Eastern Shore].

Hinckley's, Brewer's, and Campbell's boatyards have all offered "On the Job Training Practicum's through this program (three of the fifty-nine participating companies. Seventy five applications were received overall for the program with 18 placements.

Oxford's boatyards are looking for ways to build upon these efforts and the following steps are recommended

- Initiate the formation of the Oxford Boatyard District
  As described above, but from a workforce training perspective, it would help to both attract and retain potential trainees, apprentices and future employees by promoting Oxford's boatyard employment cluster.

- Seek out additonal partnerships for joint training opportunities with nearby working waterfront communities

- Build upon Chesapeake College's Skilled Trades Program (https://www.chesapeake.edu/pathways) by partnering with other working waterfront communities and the State of Maryland to expand the marine trade offerings to include boat building and repair.

Appendix One:
Community Survey

DRAFT: August 2017
Oxford Working Waterfront Strategic Plan

Town of Oxford, Maryland

**LARDNER/KLEIN
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS**
in association with:

Heritage Strategies, LLC   Preservation

Partners for Economic Solutions   Economic Analysis

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COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Town of Oxford undertook an on-line community survey as part of its waterfront area strategic planning effort. The purpose of the survey was to gather opinions from both residents and visitors about the waterfront, its uses and its future.

The survey was available between June 7, 2017 and June 15, 2017. Information about the survey was posted on the Town website and an email distributed to the Town's email distribution list. The survey had six questions and was designed to take less than 10 minutes to complete.

The survey was not intended to be a scientific polling of the community, but rather a method of reaching out to those with an interest in Oxford's waterfront areas that do not typically attend a public meeting. Ninety-nine people completed the survey which was available both on-line and as a hard paper copy. Of the ninety-nine responses only three sets of responses came from the same IP address and of those the responses were different.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

- **Response distribution**: Of the ninety-nine responses, more than half (54%) responded that "year-round resident" was the best way to describe their relationship to Oxford, while just under a quarter (24%) were seasonal or part-time residents. Although the question asked for "the one phrase that best describes your relationship to the Town of Oxford's waterfront", additional comments reflected the multi-dimensional ways in which respondents related to the waterfront (e.g. year-round, property owner with a boat).

- **Importance of waterfront**: Nearly three-quarters of the respondents (~74%) identified "Serves as an amenity for residents of Oxford to increase the quality of life in the community", as either the first or second attribute when ranking the existing function of Oxford's waterfront areas.

- **Concerns about the waterfront areas:** "Effects of sea level rise" and "deterioration of infrastructure[1]" were the top two concerns when ranked by weighted average, followed closely by "conversion of working waterfront uses to residential" and "lack of year-round business opportunities." "Overall decline in the commercial fishing industry" and "overall decline in recreational boaters" were in the middle of the rankings, while "increased competition from tourism" or "increased competition from recreation" had the least concerns.

- **Interest in physical improvements**: A definite theme of "repair" rather than expand (waterfront access and bulkheads) was noted in the survey along with "restore" green spaces and natural shoreline areas. Expanding bulkhead, expanding boater parking or expanding trailer areas clearly was of less interest to respondents.

- **Interest in policy changes:** The strongest interest noted in the survey was for investing in the waterfront to make it more attractive as a destination and more attractive to water dependent businesses. Permitting assistance to make it easier to make improvements to water dependent businesses and cooperative marketing assistance for attracting the next generation of visitors were also noted as goals for policy changes.

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1   *Note that waterfront infrastructure owned by the Town of Oxford has been kept up to date and is in good condition. The concern about deterioration of infrastructure reflects a general concern as well as a more specific concern about a smaller subset of privately owned docks, piers, and bulkhead that show signs of deterioration.*

Caveats

The responses in the community survey provide a snapshot of the interests of those that responded to the survey. Only three respondents self-identified as being owners or employees of a water-dependent business. More outreach is needed to sample both the interests of the watermen that lease and/or use Town-owned piers and slips and those supporting businesses that depend upon the waterfront for their livelihood.

There was no significant difference when comparing responses from those that self identified as year-round residents versus seasonal or part time residents.

In reviewing the comments, several respondents thought that the survey did not address the boat building and marina businesses, noting the emphasis on commercial fishing in some answer choices as well as "recreational boating" rather than actually referencing boat building and marine-related businesses as a separate function of the waterfront. This may have produced different results on the question related to values. The use of the term "commercial fishing," rather than specifically referencing watermen's seafood operations may have caused some further confusion (although a 1983 survey conducted as part of the Harbor Management Plan used the term "commercial fishing").

The Oxford community survey was modified for use in Oxford from a similar one given as part of a working waterfront plan for Rock Hall (2016) for the purpose of being able to compare the results across communities. Two comparisons are worth mentioning. Sea level rise was a top ranking concern in Oxford while not being a concern in Rock Hall. Both communities valued repairing existing waterfront infrastructure (piers, wharves, ramps, bulkheads and parking) rather than expanding.

Further outreach will be needed to the watermen that use the Town's piers. Representatives from the boat building and marina businesses have been taking part in informal work sessions conducted at the Town Hall as part of the process and their insights have been noted as part of the planning process.

The following pages document the specific results of the survey including both the number and percentage of responses for each question.

Q1: Please indicate (using the drop down menu below) the one phrase that best describes your relationship to the Town of Oxford's waterfront:

Answer Choices	%	#
Year-round resident of Oxford	54%	53
Seasonal or part-time resident of Oxford	24%	24
A property owner of land along the waterfront	10%	10
Owner or employee of an existing waterfront business	3%	3
Use one of the Marinas to access the Chesapeake Bay	3%	3
A frequent customer of an existing waterfront business (e.g. restaurant, marina, marine supply, repair, etc.)	3%	3
Other - write in comment field below	2%	2
Other than one of the six above (please specify)	23%	23
Answered		**98**
Skipped		**1**

Percentage of Respondents
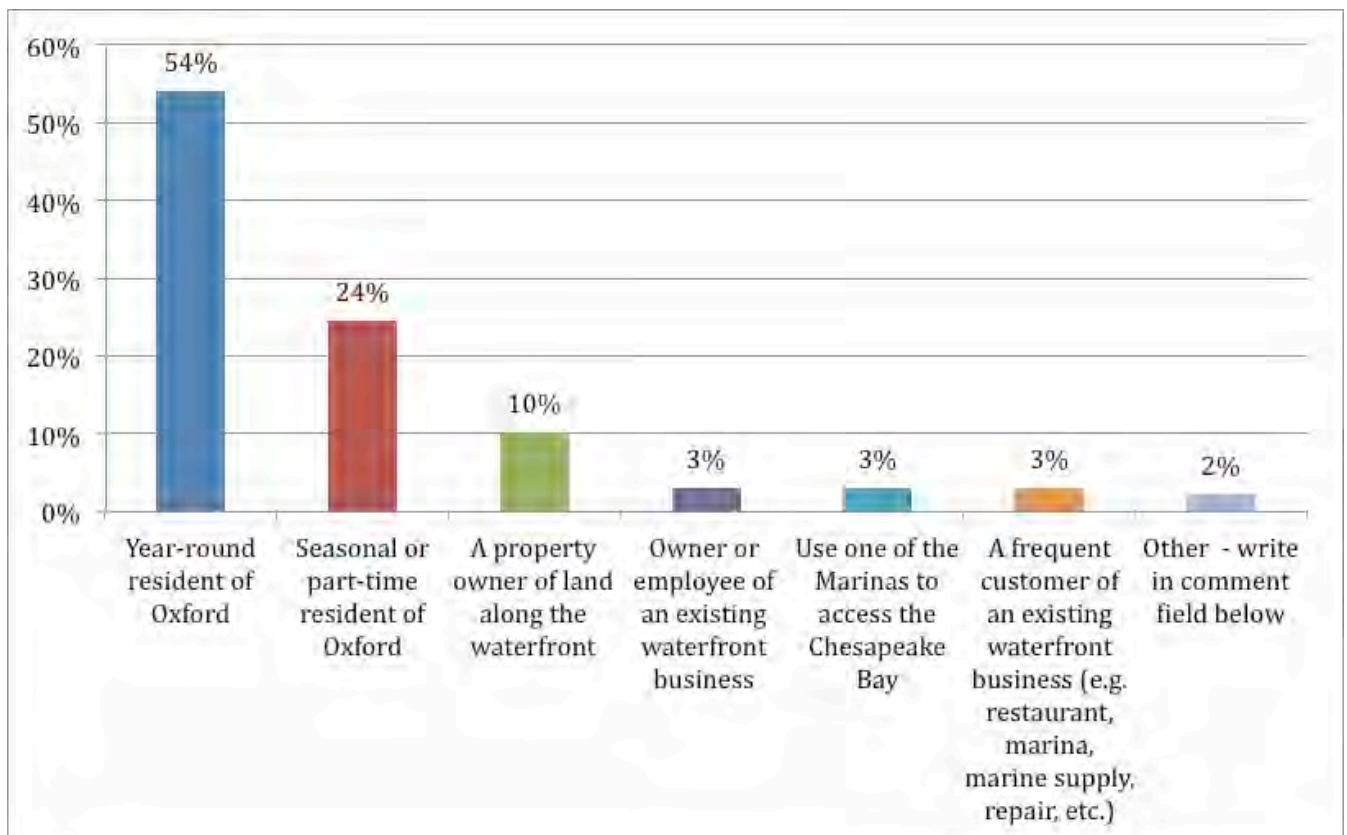
Additional comments:

- Owner of waterfront who enjoys all of Oxford and its community activities.
- Kayak user
- And live here full time on the Choptank
- Summer day camp that uses Town Creek for boating and nature programs
- And waterfront owner
- I am also an employee of the bank, which does not utilize the waterfront but does depend on the waterfront businesses.
- I'm also a customer of the restaurants, part-time employee of the ferry, and enjoy recreational time in kayaks on the water
- Waterfront homeowner with long-term marina usage.
- Town Staff
- Also own rental houses and we both work in Oxford.
- We own a house off the strand and we are there as much as we can be through out the year.
- Have a boat at the Pier Street Marina
- 65% resident
- I also keep a boat on a slip on property adjacent to our house
- Great place to keep my boat.
- Keep boat at Hinckley
- Frequently visit family who own residences in Oxford.
- Very much appreciate the accessibility of our waterfront. The beach and park and the entire length of the Strand are a terrific asset. Also we keep our small boat at the Hinckley yard, a short walk from our home.
- Use as a second home all year.
- Do not reside within town limits
- Also long time slip holder at an Oxford marina
- Business Owner, Marina Slip Holder, Year Round Resident
- I'm in the real estate business, frequent all the restaurants and am a boat owner, which means I require a slip.

Q2: Rank each of the following phrases as to their importance in defining the existing function of Oxford's waterfront areas (with 1 being the most important)

	1		2		3		4		5		6		Total	Score
	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	#	#
Provides dependable water access for water-dependent commercial fishing operations	24.1	19	21.5	17	12.7	10	10.1	8	20.3	16	11.4	9	79	3.85
Provides a dependable location for business operations that offer goods and services to commercial fishing operations	0.0	0	18.8	16	5.9	5	16.5	14	27.1	23	31.8	27	85	2.53
Provides a dependable location for business operations that are enhanced by proximity to water	5.0	4	15.0	12	31.3	25	31.3	25	13.8	11	3.8	3	80	3.55
Provides public access for water-dependent recreational uses	12.4	10	21.0	17	19.8	16	21.0	17	13.6	11	12.4	10	81	3.6
Serves as an amenity for residents of Oxford to increase the quality of life in the community	56.6	47	16.9	14	9.6	8	8.4	7	8.4	7	0.0	0	83	5.05
Serves as a destination for attracting new visitors to Oxford	15.4	14	11.0	10	24.2	22	9.9	9	9.9	9	29.7	27	91	3.23

Answered   **95**

Skipped   **4**

Weighted average (higher value indicates higher rankings)
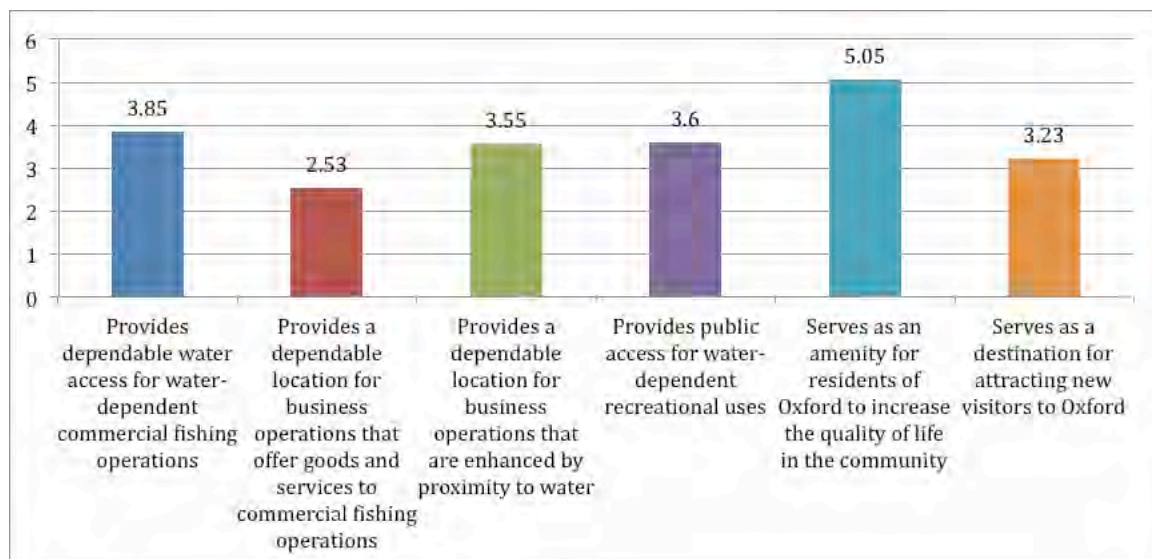
Q3: The National Working Waterfront Network states: "Working Waterfronts are the waterfront lands, waterfront infrastructure, and waterways that are used for a water-dependent activity, such as ports, small recreational boat harbors, fishing docks, and hundreds of other places across the country where people use and access the water." Oxford's waterfront areas are unique. Which of the following do you feel are important values that help to define Oxford's waterfront areas? (1=Definite Value, 2=Some Value 3=No value)

|	Definite Value		Some Value		No Value		Total	Weighted Average
	%	#	%	#	%	#	#	
Contributes to the economic well-being of Oxford	88.2%	45	11.8%	6	0.0%	0	51	2.88
Provides access to the Chesapeake Bay for marine commercial businesses (such as marine repair, sales, and charter)	70.6%	36	29.4%	15	0.0%	0	51	2.71
Provides affordable access to the Chesapeake Bay for watermen	76.9%	40	23.1%	12	0.0%	0	52	2.77
Contributes to the quality of life in Oxford	98.1%	51	1.9%	1	0.0%	0	52	2.98
Provides transient access to the Town's hospitality and service businesses for visitors arriving by boat	63.5%	33	32.7%	17	3.9%	2	52	2.6
Provides recreational opportunities for Town residents	88.5%	46	9.6%	5	1.9%	1	52	2.87
Provides other values not noted above (write in at end of survey)							19	
Answered							52	
Skipped							1	

**Q3: Weighted average (higher value indicates higher rankings)**
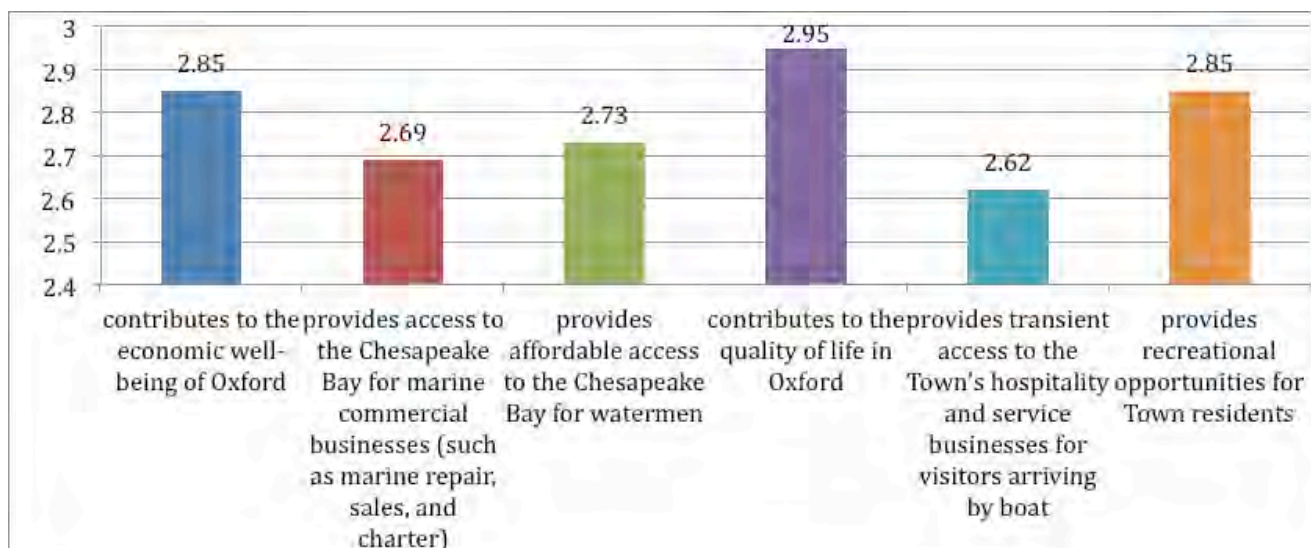
Q4: Rank the following types of changes that are likely to affect the quality of Oxford's waterfront areas - please rank the choices below in order of concern with 1 being highest concern. If you have other concerns that rank higher than these, please include those in the overall comment section at the end of the survey:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Not a concern	Total	Score
An overall decline in the commercial fishing industry	8%	13%	9%	19%	18%	5%	5%	5%	19%	85	5
Deterioration of infrastructure (wharfs, piers)	28%	14%	21%	9%	10%	3%	2%	6%	7%	87	5.9
Effects of sea-level rise	32%	15%	7%	7%	9%	8%	3%	3%	16%	88	5.99
Increased competition from tourism	1%	6%	9%	10%	12%	15%	8%	6%	33%	86	4.03
Increased competition from recreational use	0%	5%	11%	13%	15%	13%	16%	4%	21%	91	3.9
Conversion of working waterfront uses to residential	14%	24%	15%	8%	4%	11%	6%	4%	14%	84	5.57
Lack of year-round business opportunities	15%	17%	14%	17%	6%	12%	5%	1%	13%	84	5.52
An overall decline of recreational boaters	9%	11%	15%	10%	8%	13%	10%	7%	18%	91	4.68

Answered   **96**

Skipped   **3**

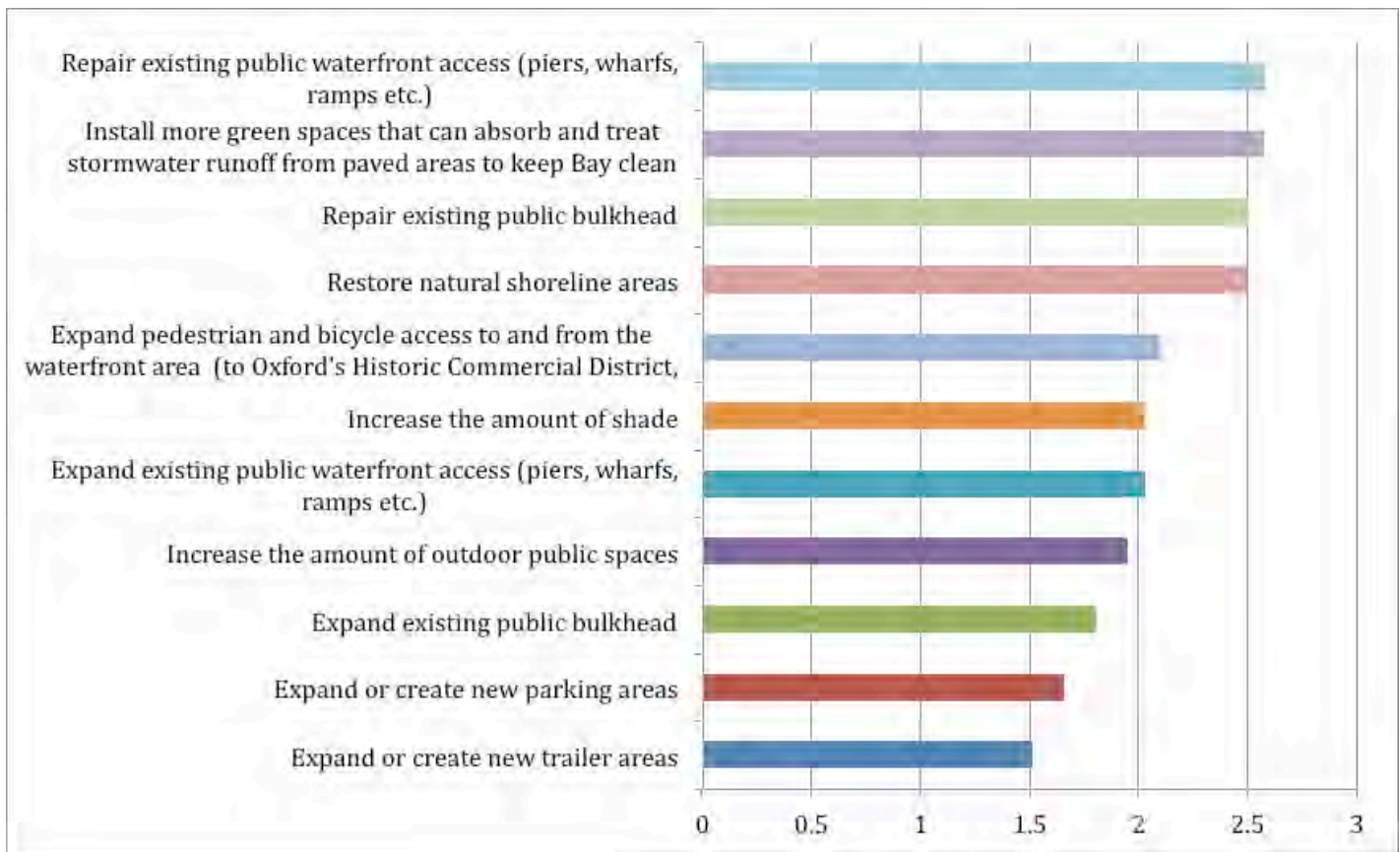**Q4: Weighted average (higher value indicates higher rankings)**
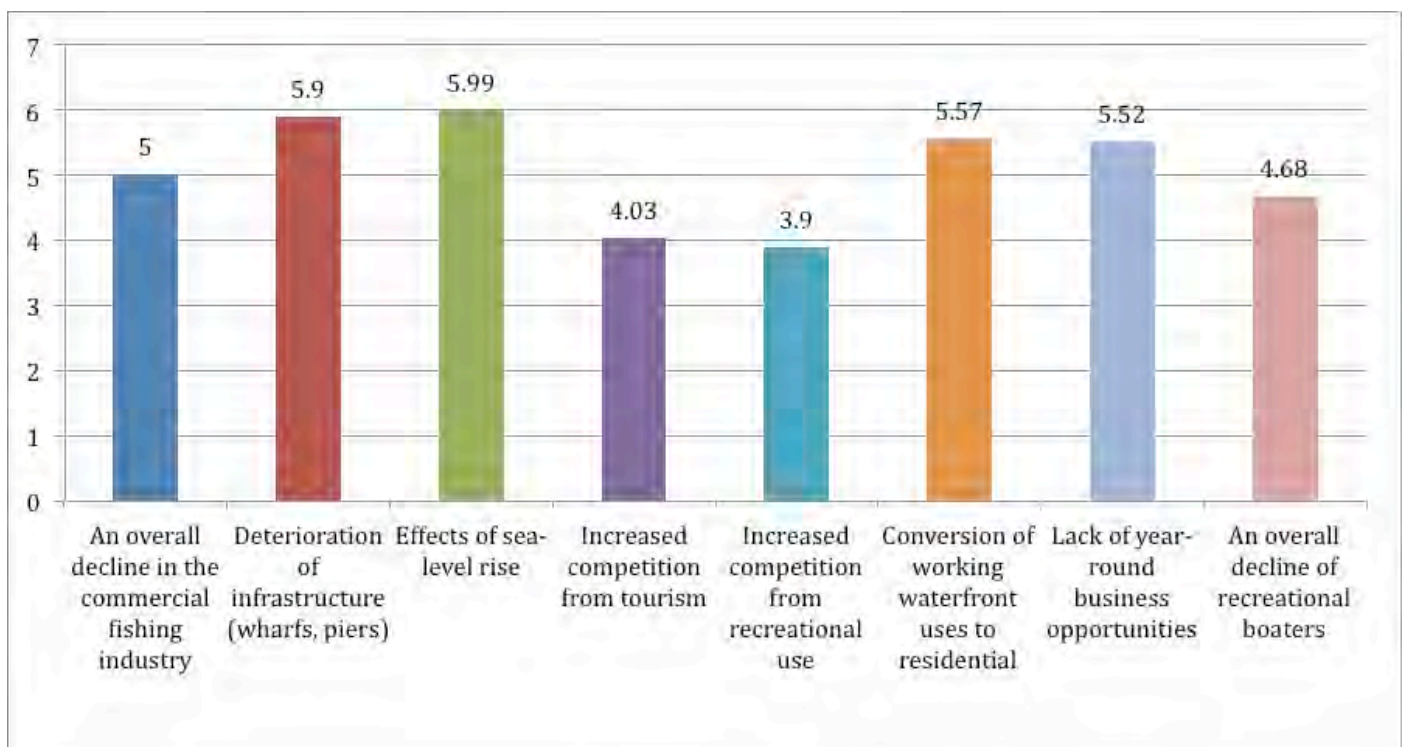
Q4: Percentage ranking for each concern (broken down by individual concern)
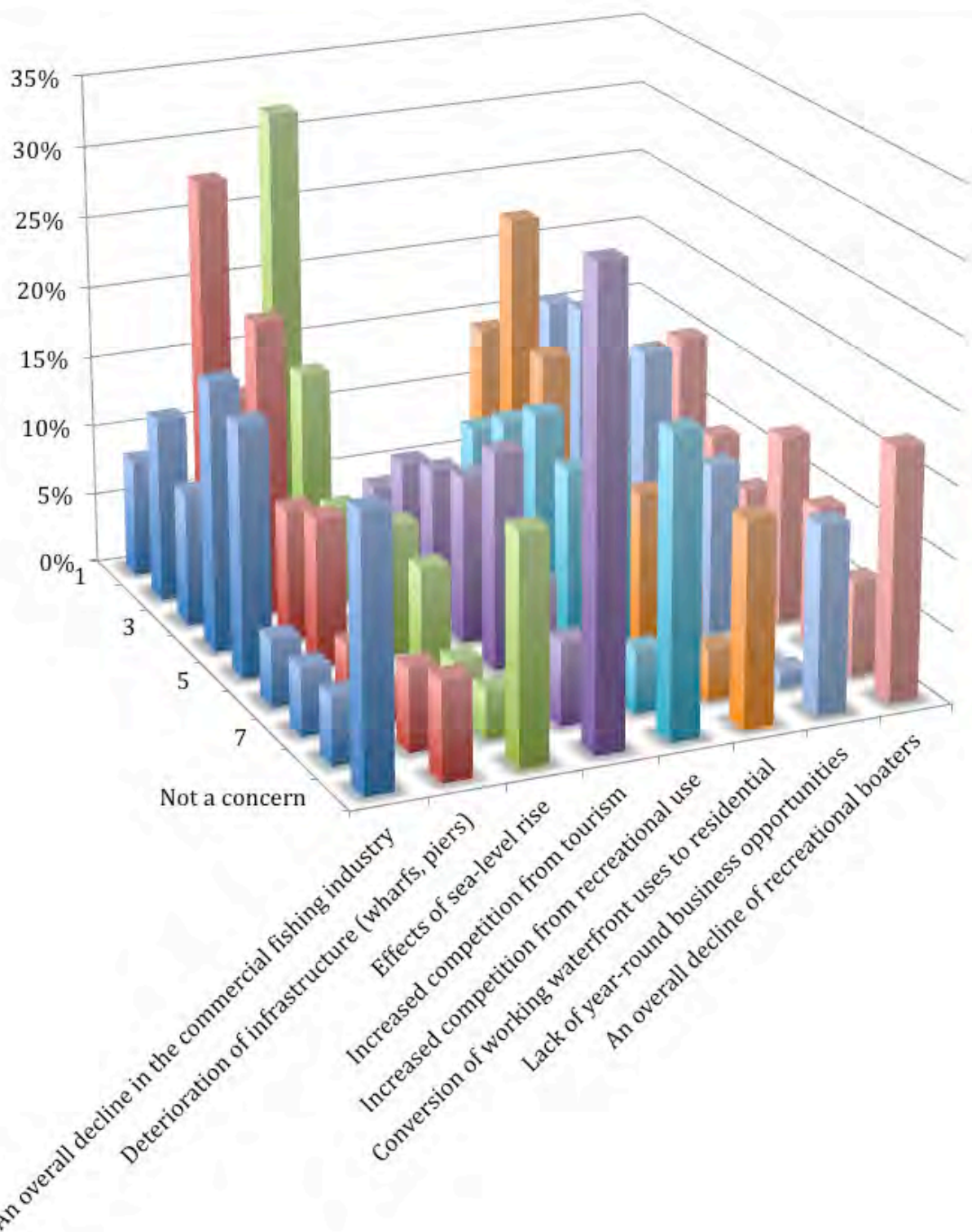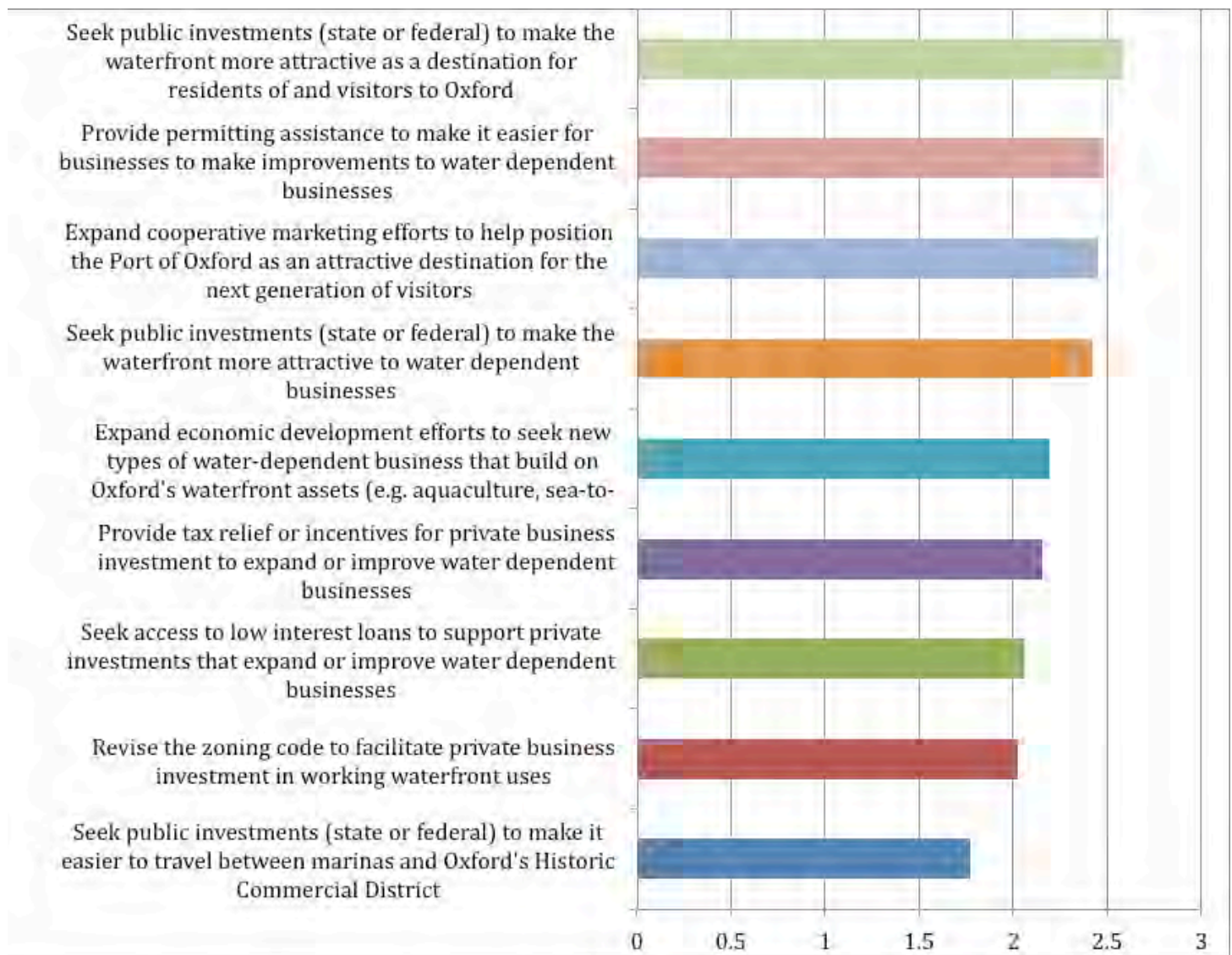
Q5: In your opinion, please indicate your level of interest in specific waterfront physical improvements that would help to preserve, maintain or enhance Oxford's waterfront area (3=Strong, 2=Somewhat, 1=No interest)

	Strong Interest		Some Interest		No Interest		Total	Weighted Average
	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
Repair existing public waterfront access (piers, wharfs, ramps etc.)	60.0%	57	37.9%	36	2.1%	2	95	2.58
Install more green spaces that can absorb and treat stormwater runoff from paved areas to keep Bay clean	67.0%	65	22.7%	22	10.3%	10	97	2.57
Repair existing public bulkhead	53.1%	51	43.8%	42	3.1%	3	96	2.5
Restore natural shoreline areas	55.2%	53	38.5%	37	6.3%	6	96	2.49
Expand pedestrian and bicycle access to and from the waterfront area (to Oxford's Historic Commercial District, adjoining neighborhoods, and other points of interest)	37.5%	36	35.4%	34	27.1%	26	96	2.1
Expand existing public waterfront access (piers, wharfs, ramps etc.)	27.1%	26	49.0%	47	24.0%	23	96	2.03
Increase the amount of shade	31.6%	30	40.0%	38	28.4%	27	95	2.03
Increase the amount of outdoor public spaces	24.7%	24	45.4%	44	29.9%	29	97	1.95
Expand existing public bulkhead	12.9%	12	53.8%	50	33.3%	31	93	1.8
Expand or create new parking areas	14.4%	14	37.1%	36	48.5%	47	97	1.66
Expand or create new trailer areas	12.4%	12	25.8%	25	61.9%	60	97	1.51
Other areas of strong interest (please specify)							14	

Answered 97

Skipped 2

Q5: Weighted average (higher value indicates higher rankings)

Q6: In your opinion, please indicate your level of interest in specific policies or programs that would help to preserve, maintain or enhance Oxford's WATERFRONT. (3=Strong, 2=Somewhat, 1=No interest)

	Strong Interest		Some Interest		No Interest		Total	Weighted Average
Seek public investments (state or federal) to make the waterfront more attractive as a destination for residents of and visitors to Oxford	69.8%	37	20.8%	11	9.4%	5	53	2.6
Provide permitting assistance to make it easier for businesses to make improvements to water dependent businesses	61.5%	32	32.7%	17	5.8%	3	52	2.56
Seek public investments (state or federal) to make the waterfront more attractive to water dependent businesses	54.7%	29	41.5%	22	3.8%	2	53	2.51
Expand cooperative marketing efforts to help position the Port of Oxford as an attractive destination for the next generation of visitors	56.9%	29	31.4%	16	11.8%	6	51	2.45
Expand economic development efforts to seek new types of water-dependent business that build on Oxford's waterfront assets (e.g. aquaculture, sea-to-table food networks, and charter services oriented towards experience-based travel)	42.3%	22	42.3%	22	15.4%	8	52	2.27
Provide tax relief or incentives for private business investment to expand or improve water dependent businesses	40.4%	21	42.3%	22	17.3%	9	52	2.23
Revise the zoning code to facilitate private business investment in working waterfront uses	32.7%	17	44.2%	23	23.1%	12	52	2.1
Seek access to low interest loans to support private investments that expand or improve water dependent businesses	26.9%	14	53.9%	28	19.2%	10	52	2.08
Seek public investments (state or federal) to make it easier to travel between marinas and Oxford's Historic Commercial District	17.7%	9	43.1%	22	39.2%	20	51	1.78
Other (please specify)							3	

Answered   53

Skipped   0

Q6: Weighted average (higher value indicates higher rankings)

Q7: Additional Comments (as submitted and unedited)

- Removal of poles / wire (overhead) will still need street light

- Question #2 makes NO mention of BOATYARD & MARINAS whether for commercial fishing OR recreational use.   We MUST support our existing boatyards and marine businesses. Also, most environmental issues are already being dealt with.

- The Town is primarily residential in architecture and activities; our existing waterfront, commercial and recreational, is a good balance as is. Environmental and modest infrastructure improvements are positive, but the Town will prosper without increased commercial waterfront uses or activities.

- Beaches! Please consider these areas to give more families and young families to relax and play. We would love more sandy areas if possible.

- Waterfront and local habitat are excellent for viewing wildlife throughout the year. The town is thoroughly walkable and bicycle friendly, enhancing those qualities should be a priority.

- Measure noise levels, set limits, enforce.

- We need to allow private boat lifts on Town Creek to help accommodate greater rising and falling tides. Reasons for not allowing are irrelevant compared to expected current/future conditions.

- Keep gov't out of it. Just keep Oxford the way it is. Everyone I know first came here by boat. They fell in love and moved here. Without any gov't help. Leave Oxford alone. Most of these questions point to gov't "helping" well don't. Effects of sea-level rise is of no concern. The Great Lakes, MN's 10,000 lakes, Long Island and Long Island Sound were made during the last ice age. The ice cap has been has been melting for millions of years. Oxford, isn't going to get wet anytime soon. The Commissioners can't make it colder to stop it anyway.

- The TAYC should work seriously with Town over site to sustain shoreline is being preserved.

- The water views in Oxford - the Town Park, street ends, the Strand are one of the major draws to the town.

- This is a very poorly worded survey created by someone who doesn't understand the nuances of the terms being used as they apply to the waterfront and the marine industry.

- Writer of survey appears to have little knowledge of Oxford. Questions poorly worded and confusing. In #2 I assume that marinas and boatyards are under businesses that provide services to fishing operations and restaurants are under businesses that are enhanced by proximity to water, but it is unclear. There is a big difference between wanting the boatyards to thrive and wanting more restaurants and bars. Recreational boating has a much bigger impact on the town than does the commercial fishing industry, but it is not really addressed in the survey. The marinas and boatyards exist more for recreational boaters than for the fishing industry.

- Consider privately or publicly owned floating docks on town creek to accommodate more visiting boaters along with water taxi service to shoreside attractions.

- Oxford is a destination for a certain type of traveler. It is important to understand who that traveler/tourist is and include that in the strategic plan. That will help to guide decisions when thinking about target travelers. For example, Oxford is not a target location for college students on spring break, while it is a target location for families with young children looking for a calm, nature infused vacation where they do not have to worry about their children.

- Excellent questionnaire but I thought question 4 was a bit confusing.

- Be careful what you wish for!

- This survey completely ignores the role of an environmentally functioning waterfront in preserving the bay and its adjoining habitat. Bay waterfront does not exist just for business or recreation be it commercial watermen, marinas, or sun worshipers. Planning must recognize the importance of integrating a healthy bay interface with any and all waterfront activity or we will all lose and may as well move to the devastated shores of South Florida. This survey needs serious reconstruction.

- Besides the waterfront the quaintness of Oxford is in my opinion the number one draw for tourist. There is a lot of truth in the old saying of Keep it Simple I would add slow and Simple.

- All activities should preserve Oxford unique historic nature and properties

- Build dingy dock at ferry

- Town pool

- I believe a proactive, long-term plan to deal with sea level rise is critical.

- The Town should consider more projects on town-owned waterfront like the Living Shorelines at the Park and Ferry Wharf.

- This effort is to be applauded. Thanks to the leadership for focusing and making this a priority.

- Great new launch. Great ice cream pier. New Private investment by two Easton businesses is a great start. Make Oxford Even Greater!

- MARITIME FESTIVAL

- In no way should zoning be changed to allow expanded residential development on Maritime zoned properties!!

Appendix Two:
Funding Sources

November 2017
Oxford Working Waterfront Strategic Plan

Town of Oxford, Maryland

LARDNER/KLEIN
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

in association with:

Heritage Strategies, LLC   Preservation

Partners for Economic Solutions   Economic Analysis

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POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

The Maryland Working Waterfront Program (https://dnr.maryland.gov/ccs/Pages/ww_cr.aspx) lists financial and technical assistance programs that could be utilized in to help implement Oxford's Working Waterfront Strategic Plan. The following more fully describes selected potential funding sources that are tailored to Oxford's specific needs. Note that many of the federal programs listed may change based on future federal budgets and priorities.

Waterway Improvement Grants

According to the DNR website:

"The Waterway Improvement Fund was established in 1966 (Annotated Code of Maryland Sec. 8-707 of the State Boat Act) for the purpose of funding projects which improve and promote the recreational and commercial capabilities, conditions and safety of Maryland's waterways for the benefit of the general boating public."

The Fund provides financial support in the form of grants and/or loans for capital projects and services that serve the boating public including the following selected project types directly relevant to Oxford:

• Marking of channels and harbors and establishing aids to navigation.

• Clearing of debris and obstructions from navigable waters of the state.

• Dredging channels and harbors, and constructing jetties and breakwaters,including those projects in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

• Construction of marine facilities beneficial to the general boating public.

• Installation of marine sewage pump-out stations.

• Evaluation of water oriented recreation needs and capacities of Maryland waterways and the development of comprehensive plans for waterway improvement projects.

• Boating information and education.

Construction of marine facilities for marine firefighting, police, first aid and medical assistance, and communications for promoting safety of life and property and general service to the boating public. Recreational Trails Program (SHA):

A federally funded program assisting development and maintenance of smaller scale motorized and non-motorized trail, trailhead and restoration projects. Examples of trail uses include hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian use, canoing, kayaking, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel driving, or using other off-road motorized vehicles. Recreational Trails is now a part of the larger Transportation Alternatives Program due to the latest federal transportation law, but has retained dedicated funding for the following eligible activities:

• Construction of new trails;

• Maintenance and restoration of existing trails;

• Development/rehabilitation of trailside facilities and linkages;

• Purchase/lease of trail construction equipment;

• Trail/corridor easement and property acquisition; and

• Interpretive/educational Programs, signage and maps related to recreational trails use.

Funding source: Federal. Grant awards cannot exceed $40,000 for new construction and $30,000 for other projects; Local match: 20 percent of total project cost as a cash match.

Maryland Heritage Areas Financial Assistance Programs (MHT):

The Maryland Heritage Areas Program provides dollar-for-dollar matching grants to nonprofit organizations and government entities for capital and non-capital projects located within a Maryland Certified Heritage Area (CHA). Talbot County is located within the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area. Grants can support projects involving historical, cultural or natural resources, sites, events or facilities. Eligible projects must have a heritage tourism component.

Non-Capital. Grants of up to $50,000 are available for non-capital projects, which can include Planning (research, field investigation, data recovery, feasibility and planning studies, design documents and other planning activities that support the heritage area); Interpretation (exhibits, signage, pedestrian wayfinding signage, interpretive brochures, educational programs and materials, other interpretive activities that support the heritage area); and Programming (seminars, conferences, performances, reenactments, commemorations, festivals).

Capital. Grants of up to $100,000 are available for Acquisition(fee title of real property, interest other than fee title (i.e. easement) of real property); Development (repair or alteration of an existing building, structure or site, new construction for heritage tourism purposes) among other purposes. For more information:

Jen.Ruffner@maryland.gov, Program Assistant Administrator
410-514-7612

Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) and Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF)

According to its website, the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) "offers financial support to rural-serving nonprofit organizations that promote statewide and regional planning, economic and community development, and agricultural and forestry education efforts. The Fund also provides targeted financial assistance to community colleges that support small and agricultural businesses through enhanced training and technical assistance offerings.

The Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) supports the Rural Maryland Council's activities and the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF), which provides capacity-building funds to rural nonprofit service providers. It also supports the states' five regional councils, regional infrastructure projects, rural entrepreneurship development, rural community development, and rural health care organizations.

Grant applications were due in July and August of 2016, respectively for FY 2017 funding. For more information visit http://rural.maryland.gov/maerdaf/

USDA Rural Business Development Grants

Most Recent Application Deadline: March 31, 2017

RBDG is a competitive grant designed to support targeted technical assistance, training and other activities leading to the development or expansion of small and emerging private businesses in rural areas that have fewer than 50 employees and less than $1 million in gross revenues. Programmatic activities are separated into enterprise or opportunity type grant activities.

https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants/md

According to USDA's web site there is no maximum grant amount for enterprise or opportunity type grants; however, smaller requests are given higher priority. Generally, grants range from $10,000 up to

$500,000. There is no cost-sharing requirement. Opportunity type grant funding is limited statutorily to up to 10% of the total RBDG annual funding.

Enterprise type grant funds must be used on projects to benefit small and emerging businesses in rural areas as specified in the grant application. Uses may include:

- Training and technical assistance, such as project planning, business counseling/training, market research, feasibility studies, professional/technical reports, or product/service improvements
- Acquisition or development of land, easements, or rights of way; construction, conversion, renovation, of buildings, plants, machinery, equipment, access streets and roads, parking areas, utilities
- Pollution control and abatement
- Capitalization of revolving loan funds including funds that will make loans for start-ups and working capital
- Distance adult learning for job training and advancement
- Rural transportation improvement
- Community economic development
- Technology-based economic development
- Feasibility studies and business plans
- Leadership and entrepreneur training
- Rural business incubators
- Long-term business strategic planning

Opportunity type grant funding must be used for projects in rural areas and they can be used for:

- Community economic development
- Technology-based economic development
- Feasibility studies and business plans
- Leadership and entrepreneur training
- Rural business incubators
- Long-term business strategic planning

***   Applicants should contact Business and Cooperative Programs Department at 302.857.3628 to discuss proposed projects with a Program Specialist prior to submitting an application.

Maryland Program Contact: Letitia Nichols, Business and Cooperative Program Director 302-857-3628

Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns

The Chesapeake Bay Green Streets-Green Jobs-Green Towns (G3) Grant Program funded by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region III (EPA), Chesapeake Bay Trust (Trust), and the City of Baltimore Office of Sustainability with support from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, was created to support design projects, financing strategies, and/or implementation of green street projects. The goal of the is to help communities develop and implement plans that reduce stormwater runoff, increase the number and amount of green spaces in urban areas, improve the health of local streams and the Chesapeake Bay, and enhance quality of life and community livability. This collaborative effort supports implementation of the and serves as a key component of

EPA's Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3) Partnership. The G3 Partnership provides support for local, grassroots-level greening efforts to reduce stormwater runoff from towns and communities in urbanized watersheds.

Up to $30,000 may be awarded for design projects. Up to $75,000 for implementation projects.

Deadline: March 17, 2017 at 5:00 pm.

Transportation Alternatives Program (SHA)

The program provides funding for projects that enhance the cultural, aesthetic, historic, and environmental aspects of the intermodal transportation system.

- Planning and design of bike/pedestrian facilities and safe routes for non-drivers;

- Construction of bike/pedestrian facilities;

- Construction of safe routes for non-drivers; and

- Conversion of abandoned rail to bike/pedestrian trails.

All TAP projects must meet the following criteria:

- Funding source: Federal. All TAP projects must comply with ADA, NEPA, Davis-Bacon wage rates, Buy America, and other applicable state and federal regulations;

- Local match: 20 percent of total eligible project costs as a cash match. A TAP grant can cover up to 80 percent of the design and/or construction costs. Prior project work and right-of-way acquisition and in-kind services match cannot be counted toward the 20 percent match requirement. In-kind services can be approved on a case by case basis;

- Open to the public and benefit all Marylanders, not a specific group or individual;

- Serve a transportation purpose, connecting two destinations (TAP projects cannot be solely recreational in purpose, but may be phased as long as each phase continues to serve transportation destinations);

- Unrelated to planned or existing highway projects, routine highway improvements, or required mitigation for a planned or existing highway project; and

Located on publicly owned right-of-way or on right-of-way encumbered with a permanent easement held by a state agency or the government agency sponsoring or co-sponsoring the project.

Contact: Transportation Alternatives Program Manager, SHA Regional & Intermodal Planning, 410-545-5659, http://www.sha.maryland.gov/Index.aspx?PageId=144.

Maryland Bikeways Program (MDOT):

The program supports projects that maximize bicycle access and fill missing links in the state's bicycle system, focusing on connecting shared-use paths and roads and enhancing last-mile connections to work, school, shopping and transit. The following projects are eligible for funding

- Feasibility assessments, design and engineering;

- Construction of shared use paths, cycletracks and bicycle lanes;

- Shared lane and other pavement markings;

- Bicycle route signage and wayfinding;

- Bicycle capital equipment (e.g. parking);

- Other minor retrofits to support bicycle routes; and
- Education materials to support bikeway projects.

Requirements:

- Funding source: State;
- Local match: Zero percent for Priority Minor Retrofit projects, 20 percent for other Priority Projects, and 50 percent for non-priority projects. Match may include cash or in-kind services contributing to the project, including expenditures up to 24 months prior to a Bikeways project award;
- All Bikeways Projects must meet at least one of the following criteria; and
- Located substantially within a Priority Funding Area, within 3 miles of a rail transit station or major bus transit hub;
- Provide or enhance bicycle access along any gap identified in the Statewide Trails Plan; and
- Identified as a transportation priority in the County's most recent annual priority letter submitted to MDOT.

Priority Projects are defined as any of the following:

- Enhance bicycle access within 3 miles of a rail transit station;
- Provide or enhance bicycle access along a missing link identified in the Statewide Trails Plan; and
- Enhance bicycle circulation within or access to a Sustainable Community, Designated Maryland Main Street, census tract at or below 60% of area median income, major university, central business district, or important tourist or heritage attraction.

Contact:

Marty Baker, MDOT Planning and Capital Programming, 410-865-1294, mbaker1@mdot.state.md.us, http://www.mdot.maryland.gov/newMDOT/Planning/Bike/Bikeways.html.

Program Open Space (DNR):

The program consists of two components, a local grant component often called Local side POS and a component that funds acquisition and recreation facility development by the State. The local side component provides financial and technical assistance to local subdivisions for the planning, acquisition, and/or development of recreation land or open space areas. Note that in order to be considered for this program, projects need to be referenced in the Kent County Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (last updated in 2012 and due for an update in the near future).

Contact:

Program Open Space Local Support Staff contacts can be found at http://dnr2.maryland.gov/land/Pages/ProgramOpenSpace/home.aspx

Community Parks and Playgrounds (DNR):

The program provides funding to restore existing parks and create new park and green space systems in Maryland's cities and towns. Flexible grants are provided to local governments, which help them rehabilitate, expand or improve existing parks. Funding can help develop environmentally oriented parks and recreation projects, create new parks, or purchase and install playground equipment in older neighborhoods and intensely developed areas throughout the state.

Contact:

Community Parks and Playgrounds Local Support Staff contacts can be found at
http://dnr2.maryland.gov/land/Pages/ProgramOpenSpace/cpp-Intro.aspx

Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration Program, Region 5

Boating Infrastructure Grant Program - Overview

The Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIG) provides grant funds to the states, the District of Columbia and insular areas to construct, renovate, and maintain tie-up facilities with features for transient boaters in vessels 26 feet or more in length, and to produce and distribute information and educational materials about the program.

The BIG Program includes two funding tiers, Tier One (non-competitive) and Tier Two (nationally competitive). Under Tier One each state, the D.C. and insular area may receive funding for eligible projects up to $200,000 annually. Tier Two funds are made available through a nationally competitive process. Tier Two proposals received are reviewed, evaluated and ranked by a national panel with the final decision for funding made by the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The ranking criteria, eligible projects and regulations are listed in 50 CFR 86.

Colleen Sculley, Chief, Division of Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration Phone: 413 253-8501 Colleen_Sculley@fws.gov

Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Safety Trust Fund (Dingle-Johnson/Wallop-Breaux):

This program, administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, may fund land acquisition and the development, operation, and maintenance of boating access facilities. Financial assistance requires a 25 percent match. NOTE: funding of approximately $600 million per year for the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund was authorized under the FAST ACT. Another positive feature of the reauthorization is resilience language that charges municipalities with designing infrastructure to withstand intense weather events, which will benefit fish and wildlife habitat connectivity. This program is accessed through state government.

Maryland Historic Trust - African American Heritage

The African American Heritage Preservation Program (AAHPP) was established by the General Assembly in 2010 to provide capital grants to assist in the preservation of buildings, sites, or communities of historical and cultural importance to the African American experience in Maryland. The AAHPP is administered as a partnership between the Maryland Historical Trust and the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC).

The FY2018 funding round of the African American Heritage Preservation Program (AAHPP) most recent deadlinen was July 15, 2017.

See http://mht.maryland.gov/grants_africanamerican.shtml for details and application materials.

ADDITIONAL PRIVATE GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

There are a variety of other public and private grant opportunities available to fund bicycle and pedestrian projects. The specific project type is the first step to determining funding eligibility. Several examples are included below.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (http://www.rwjf.org/) invests in grantees (e.g., public agencies, universities, and public charities) that are working to improve the health of all Americans. Current or past projects in the topic area "walking and biking" include greenway plans, trail projects, advocacy

initiatives, and policy development.

Partners for Places (https://www.fundersnetwork.org/partners-for-places) is a matching grant program that enhances local capacity to build equitable and sustainable communities in the United States and Canada. The fund does this by requiring local government and local foundation partnerships, and by pairing national and local philanthropic funding sources. These one-to-one matching awards support the planning and implementing of urban sustainability and green stormwater infrastructure projects. Hosted by The Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities (TFN) and in partnership with the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN), the Green Infrastructure Leadership Exchange(the Exchange), the Partners for Places program has funded 221 projects since 2012.

Grant periods are typically opened in December and due at the end of January for Spring Funding. A second grant period has been open in June and due at the end of July for Fall Funding.

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