

Chapter 5

Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Recommended Actions

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Introduction:

Chapter 5 sets forth the County's long term goals, the objectives that should be pursued in striving to reach those goals, and the Policies and Actions that should be carried out in order to achieve those goals and objectives. The many policies and actions are grouped under the most relevant objective, with a set of actions for each policy. At the end of the chapter, all of the actions are consolidated into major categories with key priorities identified.

GOALS

Have a strong, viable, rural community proud and supportive of its history, diversity, bountiful resources, traditional industries, and vision for the future.

Have safe, clean, convenient, and efficient community services and facilities for transportation, recreational opportunities, government services, and disposal of wastes.

Have a balanced, safe, and desirable pattern of land use that protects and conserves agricultural land, forest land, groundwater, surface water, wetlands and other valuable resources, providing an excellent resource base for wildlife habitat, recreation, agriculture, seafood industries, and tourism.

OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Objective 1:

Achieve safe, efficient development, compatible with Accomack County's traditional land use pattern and resource constraints by directing development towards existing population centers.

The county should use the zoning and subdivision ordinances to direct development towards the most suitable locations. Information from the Accomack County Soil Survey, Ground Water Management Plan, Flood Insurance Study, and Shoreline Situation Report should be used to identify areas that are unsuitable or hazardous for development. The county should direct development towards existing population centers. Clustering development around designated growth centers allows for more efficient services (solid waste collection and disposal, emergency services, transportation services, water and sewer, etc.) and preserves large, unfragmented areas of land for agriculture, forestry, recreation, and wildlife habitat. Existing land use maps should be used to identify existing pockets of development.

The public benefits of a more compact pattern of residential land use are supported by much research and deliberation by the County, including the following studies, analyses and public planning sessions:

- Eastern Shore of Virginia Ground Water Supply and Management Plan, 1992, Horsley, Witten Hegemann, Inc.

- Hydrology and Analysis of the Groundwater Flow System of the Eastern Shore, Virginia, 1992, U.S. Geological Survey
- Technical Analysis and Justification for Ground Water Ordinances on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, 2001, Malcolm Pirnie
- U.S. Route 13 Corridor Plan, 1999
- Route 13 / Wallops Island Access Management Study, 2002
- Accomack Transportation Planning Workshop, November 30, 2004.
- Accomack County Buildout Analysis, 2005
- Transportation Analysis for the Comprehensive Plan, 2005
- Accomack County Planning Commission and Land Use Planning Stakeholders Group - Joint Work Session on Land Use Planning Issues and Options, October 24, 2005
- Planning Commission Work Session, November 22, 2005
- Comprehensive Plan Workshops, September 25 and 26, 2006
- Future Land Use Map Public Meetings, January 23, 24, 30, and February 8, 2007.

In addition to the above cited studies, the data and analysis contained in this Comprehensive Plan provides further rationale for the County to implement policies and regulations to achieve a more compact pattern of residential land use that will better protect the public health, safety and welfare than does the current trend pattern of scattered development. The County took important steps in that direction by adopting amendments to its Subdivision Ordinance and the Agricultural District of the Zoning Ordinance in 2006.

There are many multiple, mutually-supporting reasons for redirecting the patterns and densities of land use, including the following:

- Protection of the limited capacity of the groundwater supply, including the groundwater recharge spine, the only major source of drinking water for the County's population
- Protection of the limited capacity of the Route 13 highway corridor, the only major roadway providing access to the County from areas beyond its borders
- Maintaining an efficient, compact residential land use pattern in order to limit negative fiscal impacts of providing public services to scattered development
- Protecting the rural character and heritage of the County in order to support the tourist industry
- Protecting agricultural and forest lands to maintain available land resources, for that critical segment of the local economy
- Encouraging farmers to conserve and protect groundwater by using the shallow Columbia aquifer
- Protecting tidal wetlands to minimize shoreline erosion, flooding, and to improve surface water quality
- Protecting non-tidal wetlands to minimize flooding, maximize ground water recharge, and improve surface water and ground water quality

It is clear from the available data and analysis that the County needs to promote a shift in the pattern of future development from a scattered to a more compact pattern, due to the inherent limitations on the capacities of critical resources, including the groundwater supply and the capacity and safety of the Route 13 highway corridor, and the other resources cited above.

Further, circumstances have changed since the last update of the County's Comprehensive Plan. The County is now facing much higher development pressures than were envisioned in 1996, due in part to changes in the national and regional economies, changes in retiree settlement patterns and second-home markets, and changes in telecommunications technology that have created what is called the "distributed workforce" (workers who are able to live long distances from their place of employment due to telecom access). Looking ahead, it is critical that the County ensure that its land development regulations are in conformance with its long term goals, so that it can create the best chance of protecting the long term public health, safety and welfare, in the face of these and other such changes in circumstances.

Policies:

- 1-1 Allow new development to occur only in locations that contain soils suitable for development*
- 1-2 Direct development away from critically eroding shorelines, including shoreline setbacks on the Seaside and Bayside that adequately take into account accelerated sea level rise and increased storm surges.*
- 1-3 Encourage new residential development to occur in patterns and densities that minimize the impact on the agricultural, groundwater, surface water and fiscal resources of the County, and require new development to use innovative designs and all available technology to completely mitigate any such impacts.*
- 1-4 Encourage new residential and commercial development to occur in and around existing towns and villages, in accord with the future land use map of this Plan.*

Recommended Actions:

- 1-a Revise the Zoning Ordinance to create additional zoning districts to allow various types and densities of development to occur in a coordinated fashion.*

The county's current zoning ordinance has four zoning classifications (agricultural, residential, business, and industrial). The pattern of development should be better managed by creating additional zones which allow for a variety of commercial uses and residential densities, while protecting areas designated as important for agricultural use or environmental protection.

New "Rural Settlement" and "Village Development" districts would provide opportunities for creating new neighborhoods in proximity to existing Towns and settlements. Such districts should provide for a wide range of housing types, sizes and costs. These new districts could also conserve open land through the use of smaller lot sizes, allow community water and wastewater systems, and potentially reduce the number and length of motor vehicle trips. Expanding the area of existing Residential zoning districts, where soils are suitable for on-site septic systems, will provide additional sites for affordable housing in existing residential communities.

The new zoning district for the Village Development areas would be a "planned unit development" (PUD) district, designed to produce coordinated, mixed-use development

that fits with the existing, traditional character of the County's historic settlements. To achieve these features in the PUD district, various elements of "traditional neighborhood development" (TND) would be incorporated, including:

- Located only in designated Village Development areas, in accord with the Future Land Use Map.
- Located only in areas served by central water and sewer systems.
- Carefully designed streetscapes and street patterns, with mixed-uses, narrow, interconnected streets, pedestrian walkways, and civic sites including small parks and institutional uses
- A wide variety of housing types, sizes and costs.
- Compatibility with the County's existing historic settlements in terms of character and scale.

1-b Revise the Future Land Use and Zoning Maps to reflect the distribution of soils suitable for septic system use.

Bojac is the soil type most suitable for agriculture and septic systems in Accomack County. The distribution of this soil is depicted in the Accomack County Soil Survey which was published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service in 1994. The distribution of residential land use on the future land use map should be revised, using the soil survey as a guide, to provide additional residential areas while conserving productive farmland.

1-c Amend the future land use map and zoning ordinance to maintain a low density of development outside of designated growth areas, and to focus new development within designated growth areas.

In order to ensure effective use of areas outside of development clusters for agricultural, forestry, habitat, and recreational use, development outside of designated growth areas should be low density in nature. Low density development can be achieved through large minimum lot sizes and clustering provisions to allow development on smaller lots to allow new housing while conserving farmland, forests, and open space.

In June, 2006, the County amended the existing Agricultural "A" District to increase the minimum lot size (decrease the overall intensity), and provide a clustering option within the district to allow houses to be clustered away from sensitive environmental resources, including productive farmlands. The amendments are also aimed at reducing the impact on groundwater resources by reducing the total amount of groundwater withdrawals compared to the old zoning densities, by allowing wells and drainfields to be dispersed at lower densities, and by allowing for the possibility of community wells, either initially or in the longer term. The encouragement of a clustered pattern of smaller lots at lower overall densities will also help protect groundwater recharge areas and reduce the need for residential irrigation.

In conjunction with limiting development in the agricultural areas, new growth should be focused within designated growth areas where services can be most effectively provided. These "service areas" are essentially the areas designated for Village Development on the

Future Land Use Map of this plan.

- 1-d Amend the future land use map and zoning ordinance to direct high density development away from shorelines, especially shorelines.*

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science has developed a Shoreline Situation Report for each coastal county in the state. In order to prevent property loss due to erosion and reduce the need for shoreline erosion control measures, high density development should be directed away from areas identified in the Shoreline Situation Report as high erosion areas (loss of greater than one foot per year). The future land use map and zoning ordinance should be amended in accordance with this policy.

The County's 2006 amendments to the Agricultural Zoning District, with a 5-acre density and minimum lot size, also allows residential units to be clustered onto 30,000 square-foot lots while creating larger "remainder" lots that conserve farmland, forests, wetlands, and other environmental resources.

- 1-e Work closely and collaboratively with the incorporated Towns to coordinate land use decisions so that new development is located in accord with the future land use map to achieve the goals of the County as well as the goals of the Towns.*

The County should collaborate with the Towns to prepare detailed comprehensive plan elements for key areas adjacent to the Towns that are suitable for development, in order to achieve mutual planning goals and objectives. Top priorities for these "Area Plans" would include the Rt. 175 Corridor and the Onley/Onancock area.

- 1-f Develop a shoreline management plan to address shoreline erosion problems.*

A shoreline management plan should be developed to evaluate the shoreline erosion problem in Accomack County and evaluate the effectiveness of erosion control measures. The plan should identify areas with erosion problems, determine rates of erosion, consider adjacent land use, and evaluate the most effective means of control. The plan could be used by the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals for land use decisions and by the Wetlands Board in consideration of erosion control structure permits.

- 1-g Collaborate with local, regional, and state agencies in planning for climate change.*

Planning for climate change can help county decision makers address the problem of sea level rise, and assess potential economic opportunities in responding to changing business and industrial markets. Such efforts should be done in conjunction with other government entities, including Northampton County, A-NPDC, and the Virginia state government.

Objective 2:

Conserve unique and environmentally sensitive areas for open space, recreation and habitat protection.

The county has a wide variety of open space areas including forests, creeks, beaches, and marshland. In addition to their natural beauty, these areas are beneficial for wildlife habitat, hunting, fishing, hiking and bicycling. Undeveloped areas provide aesthetic benefits, preserve the rural character of the Shore, and can produce tourism revenue. The county should protect open space through zoning and subdivision regulations. Sensitive areas, which are often expensive and unsafe to develop, should be designated as conservation zones. Through the subdivision ordinance and zoning ordinance, developers can be encouraged to cluster development within a portion of the development tract, leaving the remainder as open space. Lowering the overall permitted densities in the rural zoning districts, and allowing clustering on smaller lots, will also allow such resources to be better protected. Lastly, the County should implement green infrastructure planning.

Policies:

- 2-1 *Encourage the preservation of open space.*
- 2-2 *Encourage conservation of barrier island lands, marsh land, forested areas, and creek corridors for recreation and habitat conservation.*
- 2-3 *Identify and protect Accomack County's unique habitats.*
- 2-4 *Encourage the creation of additional wildlife habitat.*
- 2-5 Implement green infrastructure planning.

Recommended Actions:

- 2-a *Amend the zoning ordinance to provide incentives for clustered development to preserve open space and promote a more efficient pattern of development.*

The practice of clustering involves concentrating the bulk of a site's permissible density on only a portion of the parcel or site. This permits the undeveloped portion of the site to remain in an undeveloped, natural state. Houses may be clustered, for instance, to prevent destruction of important wetlands on the parcel or maximize distance from a creek or floodplain. Clustering is often encouraged by providing density bonuses as an incentive. If developers cluster development on a certain portion of the parcel, for instance, away from an important natural resource, the developer may be given permission to increase the number of dwelling units that may be built. Clustering can lead to a more efficient pattern of development and retain the bulk of land for agricultural and open space uses. Clustering is most effective when combined with a reduction in the overall residential density permitted, especially in areas zoned for agriculture. The recent Zoning Ordinance amendment to a 5-acre density, with clustering on 30,000 square-foot lots, advances both of these strategies.

- 2-b *Develop programs to encourage conservation of barrier islands, marsh land, forested areas, creek corridors, and other environmentally sensitive areas.*

When consistent with habitat conservation goals, alternatives to fee-simple ownership, such as conservation easements or lease-back agreements, should be encouraged to keep property on the

tax rolls and in productive use.

- 2-c *The county should work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Natural Heritage Program to identify and protect unique habitats.*

Extensive study has been made of Eastern Shore wildlife habitats and additional studies are on-going. The county should review this data and work with representatives to identify habitat areas most in need of conservation. Areas such as marsh and islands that are unsuitable for development but have value for wildlife habitat and recreational use should be zoned as conservation/recreation districts.

Objective 3:

Implement the Comprehensive Plan through fair and effective zoning practices and well-planned public facilities and services.

Policies:

- 3-1 *Use the future land use map and the policies of this Comprehensive Plan to guide decisions regarding land use, rezoning, special exception/special use permits, and the provision of public facilities and services.*

The Board of Supervisors has legislative discretion in approving applications for rezoning, conditional use permits, and special exception/special use permits, as well as decisions regarding the location, extent, and design of public facilities and services. Exercise of this discretion should be based closely on the policies and recommendations of this Plan, in order to create a prosperous, equitable, safe and harmonious future for the citizens of Accomack County.

- 3-2 *Require a "Commission Permit" before approving new or extended public facilities.*

§ 15.2-2232 of the Virginia Code provides for the Planning Commission to determine whether proposed public facilities are in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. The County Planning Commission should exercise this authority in order to effectively implement the Comprehensive Plan.

- 3-3 *Build upon the process initiated by the 1994 Countryside Stewardship Exchange, 1997 Comprehensive Plan visioning workshops, and the 2006 and 2007 Comprehensive Plan workshops to define values and ensure that policies, plans, projects, and regulations are aligned with the community's goals.*

Recommended Actions:

- 3-a *Revise the Accomack County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to be consistent with the recommendations of this plan.*

The zoning and subdivision ordinances are the primary land use regulations in Accomack County and the most effective tools available for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. These ordinances should be updated and revised as the county's needs and goals change.

3-b Implement and update the Capital Improvements Program consistent with recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

A Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a five-year plan to guide the construction or acquisition of capital projects. It identifies needed capital projects, estimates their costs, ranks them by priority, lists the year each should be started, and determines the best method of paying for them within the community's fiscal capabilities. State Code requires that the CIP be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. A CIP helps a locality prioritize projects, anticipate future capital facility needs, avoid poorly planned projects, and spread out the financial impact of expensive projects. Accomack County adopted its first CIP in 2006, and adopted an updated CIP in 2007.

3-c Seek public input in the development of local plans and regulations.

All plans and ordinances should reflect the community's vision for the future. The Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission should continue to seek public participation in the planning process and the development of ordinances in order to ensure that policies adopted are consistent with community goals.

Objective 4:

Recognize and protect the county's rural character, including historic resources and the character of villages and towns.

The rural quality of Accomack County, embodied by agriculture, forestry and seafood operations, scenic views, low density development, historic homes, towns and villages, and a safe, quiet life-style, is highly valued by the community. The vision statement created for the 1997 Comprehensive Plan envisions a future when Accomack County is, "still a quiet, rural community and remains the "vegetable garden of Virginia." Effort should be made to further define the elements that most contribute to the desirable rural character of Accomack County. Once the important contributing elements are identified, policies for their protection can be developed.

Policies:

4-1 Direct development towards areas that are consistent with Accomack County's historic pattern of development.

4-2 Support efforts to identify and preserve significant cultural resources.

4-3 Encourage the use of conservation easements to preserve significant rural and agricultural lands.

4-4 Enhance opportunities for historical and cultural education.

Recommended Actions:

4-a Develop a definition of Accomack County's Rural Character.

The County's rural character is a unique blend of farms, forests, crossroad hamlets, rural villages, and commercial enterprises. Preserving this mix of uses in its traditional pattern is a key purpose of this plan, and will be facilitated by a common understanding among citizens of how these components shape the County's rural character.

4-b Develop within the framework of the Accomack County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances procedures and guidelines which allow for a mix of residential and commercial uses in keeping with the traditional development pattern of our towns and villages.

Traditionally, residential and certain commercial uses were mixed within towns and villages. This pattern of development is desirable in that it places users and providers of services in close proximity to each other and it furthers the goal of concentrating development in growth areas, preventing sprawl and preserving open space. Adoption of Rural Settlement and Village Development zoning districts would encourage such a traditional and efficient development pattern.

4-c Conduct a survey of historic resources in Accomack County, in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources has shown considerable interest in conducting a survey of historic resources in Accomack County. Grant funding which requires a 50% cash match is available from the Department of Historic Resources for this survey. The survey would identify and place Accomack County's cultural resources in historical context. This information should then be used to evaluate the needs and priorities for protection of these resources.

4-d Develop incentives to encourage the use of conservation easements to preserve significant rural and agricultural lands.

Conservation easement programs have the advantages of relatively low per acre acquisition costs and private ownership and management responsibility. Lands under conservation easements continue to pay local property taxes, although they may be at lowered market values. The use of conservation easements in areas designated for agriculture, forestry or conservation could be encouraged by allowing additional density in developments that cluster building lots and place the remainder of the land under a conservation easement.

4-e Continue the Eastern Shore Heritage Trail into Accomack County.

This project would be a continuation of the trail which begins in Northampton County. The trail would combine routes for driving, bicycling, walking, and boating to view scenic areas and cultural sites. The trail would serve to promote and protect the rural nature and cultural history of the Shore and would encourage visitors to travel off Route 13, visiting

restaurants, shops, motels and inns along the way. Funding for this project should be sought from the Virginia Department of Transportation's Transportation Enhancement Program.

4-f *Develop local heritage interpretive opportunities.*

Museums, visitor centers, information points, maps, and guide books should be developed to promote tourism and educate visitors and residents about the Eastern Shore's unique culture. The County should follow the recommendations of Virginia's Eastern Shore Tourism Commission and the 1994 Countryside Stewardship Exchange in developing interpretive facilities and materials, including a facility in Accomack County.

4-g *Open a dialogue about growth management with incorporated towns and unincorporated villages.*

The entire community – town dwellers and county dwellers alike – must face and embrace the necessity of coordinating land use planning between the County and the incorporated towns if the character of the community is to be preserved and enhanced. Particularly to the extent that they may become future towns or future additions to towns, existing unincorporated rural development areas should also be recognized as potential or even natural locations for additional development. Where suitable soils, road access, and other appropriate conditions and resources exist, planning for the clustering of limited future development alongside existing unincorporated rural settlements would preserve and enhance the existing character of Accomack County.

Objective 5:

Conserve groundwater quality and quantity.

Groundwater provides Accomack County's only potable water supply. Protection of groundwater quality and quantity is therefore critical. In 1992, the Ground Water Study Committee produced the *Ground Water Supply Protection and Management Plan for the Eastern Shore of Virginia* (Groundwater Plan). The plan recommends the development of a comprehensive groundwater protection and supply management strategy in an effort to maintain an adequate supply of high quality water for the future needs of the region. The following policy recommendations for groundwater protection are derived from that strategy.

Policies:

5-1 *Encourage the wise use of Accomack County's groundwater resources.*

5-2 *Manage potentially polluting land uses so as to minimize contamination threats.*

5-3 *Seek additional information on the groundwater aquifers, the recharge process, and contamination threats.*

Recommended Actions:

- 5-a *Use the latest research to clarify the location of the groundwater recharge spine boundaries and consider creation-of a groundwater protection overlay district within those boundaries.*

Future research should be conducted to identify the extent of the groundwater recharge area that was identified in the *Ground Water Supply Protection and Management Plan*.

Regulations, such as prohibiting the future siting of major polluting activities (landfills, septage lagoons, etc.) and requiring special permits based on performance standards and emergency management plans for uses such as underground storage tanks and toxic and hazardous materials, should be placed on land use within this zone.

As development occurs in an area, the amount of land covered with impervious surfaces (preventing infiltration) increases and groundwater infiltration decreases. The creation and expansion of impervious surfaces such as buildings and parking lots in the groundwater recharge spine should be limited in order to maximize groundwater recharge and minimize the effects of erosion and non-point source pollution. Impervious surface extents can be managed by regulating allowable density in the recharge area through minimum lot size requirements and establishing limits on the percentage of a development site that can be covered with impervious surfaces. Encourage the use of pervious pavement surfaces in these areas.

- 5-b *Review the potential impact of new development on groundwater in the permit process.*

Groundwater protection should be incorporated into development site plan review. Developers of projects that require conditional use permits should be required to estimate total groundwater usage and identify and mitigate potential negative impacts to groundwater quality and quantity from their development.

New water supply sources that tap the Yorktown-Eastover aquifer should be located in the central portion of the Eastern Shore peninsula. This approach will minimize both lateral intrusion from saltwater and vertical intrusion of saltwater through confining layers. New water supply sources should be screened in the upper and middle Yorktown-Eastover aquifer, avoiding the lower Yorktown-Eastover.

Screening only in the higher layers minimizes many of the problems of due to upconing of high chloride content water. Well fields rather than single wells to produce large volumes of water should be encouraged. A series of wells, each pumping a moderate amount of water, will create less upconing, less well interference, and less lateral intrusion than one or two high volume wells. New and existing water supply users should be encouraged to pump at moderate volumes on an extended basis and to use surface storage (tanks, lined ponds) rather than pumping hard for short intervals to meet peak demands. The continual pumping of moderate volumes will allow a smaller upcone to develop and to stabilize, eliminating much of the problem of salt and freshwater mixing that occurs with intermittent pumping. A progressively enlarged mixing zone between fresh and saltwater will promote the intrusion of high chloride water into the freshwater zone. The use of water supplies from the unconfined Columbia aquifer should be encouraged in situations where water quality is of less concern. The Columbia receives considerably more recharge than the Yorktown-Eastover aquifer and,

while its water quality is sometimes marginal as a potable water supply, the quality is perfectly adequate for a number of industrial, agricultural and even domestic uses. High volume users of water that do not need water of drinking quality standards should be urged to use the Columbia as a source where adequate flows can be achieved.

5-c Amend the subdivision ordinance to limit the allowable density of remotely located drainfields.

On-site septic system density is, effectively regulated through the zoning ordinance's minimum lot size requirements. There are no restrictions, however, on the allowable density of systems located on remote sites. Minimum separation distances or minimum lot size requirements for remote drainfields would limit the potential for water quality impacts from overly-dense concentrations of drainfields.

5-d Amend the subdivision ordinance to require that the location of remotely located drainfields be recorded on the subdivision plat and that proper easements to those areas be provided.

Remotely located drainfields should be recorded on the subdivision plat to ease future location of the drainfield areas. Easements should be provided for access to remote drainfields locations and these easements should be indicated on the subdivision plat.

5-e Continue to conduct research on the geology of the aquifers, nature of recharge and contamination threats.

Answers should be sought to questions about the rate, volume, timing and distribution of recharge from the unconfined Columbia aquifer to the Yorktown-Eastover aquifer, salt water movement into the Columbia and Yorktown-Eastover aquifers, suitability of paleochannels for water supply use, impact of pesticides on groundwater, and impact of agricultural nitrogen use on groundwater. Assistance for this research may be available from the US Geologic Survey, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Office of Pesticide Management, and Virginia Tech.

5-f Amend the zoning and subdivision ordinances as necessary to adequately protect groundwater supplies and to balance the supply and demand for residential land.

5-g Continually monitor available data for all key natural systems, particularly ground and surface water quality, so that warning signs of significant deterioration and risk to the well-being of the county can be identified as early as possible.

Objective 6:

Protect high quality surface waters and restore degraded surface water to an excellent level of purity for aquaculture and shellfish harvesting.

Policies:

6-1 Encourage and promote the use of Best Management Practices for all land uses.

6-2 Manage development so as to minimize impact on surface water quality from nonpoint source pollution.

- 6-3 *Seek additional information on water quality within Accomack County's creeks, streams, and bays.*

Recommended Actions:

- 6-a *Encourage the use of Best Management Practices by agricultural and forestry operations to restore and protect surface water quality.*

Agricultural operations are a major source of nonpoint source water pollution. The tillage of soil permits erosion which, in turn, takes with it pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers. Intensive, nontraditional methods of cultivation, such as the practice of growing vegetable crops under plastic mulch, make intensive use of chemicals and create impervious surfaces, creating special management problems. The County should work closely with the Virginia Department of Agriculture to protect water quality.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) that can be used to manage these problems include crop rotation, conservation tillage, diversions, sediment basins and other structural practices, and containment of animal wastes. The use of nutrient management plans should also be encouraged. Nutrient management plans should include soil nutrient testing, crop productivity recommendations, animal waste management, and fertilizer use record keeping. Implementation of Forestry Best Management Practices helps to protect water quality by preventing erosion. Streamside management zones (SMZ) within 50 feet of streams and tidal marshes are mandatory. Within a SMZ 50 percent of the canopy can be harvested provided that the machines used to cut and remove the trees do not disturb the soils and create a potential erosion problem. The County should work closely with the Virginia Department of Forestry to protect water quality.

- 6-b *Adopt the water quality Best Management Practices for development on the Seaside, including shoreline vegetative buffers, stormwater management, limits on impervious surface, septic system reserve drainfields, and a septic system pumpout requirement.*

The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act requires water quality Best Management Practices in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Similar requirements, including a 100-foot vegetated shoreline setback, should be adopted in the zoning ordinance to protect Seaside water quality for the seafood and aquaculture industries, tourism and recreation, and wildlife habitat.

- 6-c *Require the use of better septic system technology, and improve septic systems as technology advances, on waterfront lots to protect surface water quality.*

Improved septic system technology, such as pre-treatment, should be used on waterfront lots to protect surface water quality.

- 6-d *Continue the County's June 2006 recommendation to the State to utilize great caution in the approval of wastewater discharge permits which clearly have the potential to cause long-term and irreparable water quality impacts to any public waters.*

Because the permitting of wastewater treatment plant effluent discharge automatically results in shellfish bed closures, Accomack County has adopted a policy of no new wastewater discharge to the Seaside to protect the County's valuable commercial and recreational shellfishing industry. All new development in the County with central

wastewater treatment systems should be required to use alternative effluent disposal to prevent shellfish closures. The County should work with the State to consider establishment of Shellfish Enhancement Zones.

6-e Add marina, dock and pier development standards to the Zoning Ordinance.

The zoning ordinance should provide some guidelines for density of private docks and piers and the location of commercial marinas. All new marinas should be required to provide pump-out facilities.

6-f Cooperate with government and private organizations to establish a water quality monitoring network in Accomack County.

Several federal, state and private groups monitor surface water quality in Accomack County. These groups and their areas of coverage should be identified to ensure that sufficient water quality data is available county-wide. Where monitoring deficiencies are found, the County should work with agencies to develop additional monitoring programs.

6-g Continue to develop plans for the replacement of septic systems with central sewage facilities in more densely developed areas.

Areas that have the greatest potential for future central sewage facilities should be identified, in accord with the Future Land Use Map. These should be areas with existing or potential development density to economically support a treatment facility. The pattern of distribution for these systems should reflect traditional village development. The extension of service outside designated areas should be avoided to prevent sprawl. Systems should be designed to accommodate septic wastes and septic haulers should be required to dispose in such facilities. Systems should be designed to use land application of treated wastewater.

6-h Consider public/private partnerships between the County and private developers to finance new or expanded wastewater treatment systems in accord with Action 6-g. A local government entity such as a service authority should be established to manage such systems.

6-i Adopt and administer the State's model stormwater management regulations.

As the County continues to develop, managing stormwater run-off becomes even more important, in terms of environmental quality, economic development, and public health and safety. New development and revitalization efforts should incorporate stormwater management techniques that meet these needs, while also allowing a compact, traditional development pattern in the village development areas.

Objective 7:

Establish a "business friendly" environment that promotes economic development that is compatible with the county's adopted objectives and vision for the future.

Policies:

- 7-1 *Provide incentives to bring new businesses to Accomack County and encourage additional investment by existing businesses.*
- 7-2 *Support the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce and Virginia's Eastern Shore Tourism Commission in their efforts to promote the Eastern Shore of Virginia.*
- 7-3 *Support programs that promote entrepreneurship and assist small and medium size businesses.*
- 7-4 *Support development of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport and the Wallops Research Park at the NASA Wallops Island facility, and consider NASA Wallops recommendations to address airport and launch range encroachment and safety issues, including deed notices.*
- 7-5 *Minimize the net economic impact of local regulations.*
- 7-6 *Encourage expansion of the "distributed workforce" in Accomack County through Broadband development.*
- 7-7 *Protect the visual and functional quality of the major highway entrances to the County as "gateways" important economic development resources that should reflect and enhance the image of the County as a tourist destination.*
- 7-8 *Protect the designated potential impact areas in the vicinity of the Wallops Island Regional Spaceport facility from intensive development, particularly residential development that may cause undue risk to public safety or impede the development and use of the spaceport as a major economic development resource.*

Recommended Actions:

- 7-a *Obtain Foreign-Trade-Zone designation for the Accomack County Airport Industrial Park, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport, and the Wallops Research Park.*

Foreign Trade Zone designation was recommended by the economic development advisory council. Foreign Trade Zone designation exempts import taxes for goods imported at that site, providing an additional incentive for business recruitment.

- 7-b *Explore local economic development incentives.*

Local incentives would serve to advertise the county's pro-business attitudes. Local incentives could be anything from accelerated permit processing and crime prevention programs to tax abatement for rehabilitation of commercial or industrial property.

- 7-c *Support the creation of a marketplace on U.S. Route 13 for the sale and promotion of local arts, crafts, and food products.*

Artisans and small production companies are a growing sector of the county's economy. The marketplace would provide an additional outlet for sale of their products, while also

encouraging travelers to stop in Accomack County.

- 7-d *Research, and possibly establish, a revolving fund to construct industrial buildings and establish a “ready-to-build” program for new businesses in the Wallops Research Park and Accomack Airport Industrial Park.*

Available industrial buildings are a prime concern of businesses considering locating in an area. The availability of quality business facilities and approved business locations will make Accomack County more attractive to new industry. A revolving building fund for the construction of industrial and commercial facilities and a ready-to-build program which includes site preparation and permit approval are feasible options for attracting business with infrastructure.

- 7-e *Designate additional areas for industrial development, including the NASA Wallops Island facility and along the Bay Coast Railroad.*

Available industrial locations are needed for businesses serving the NASA Wallops Island facility and other Accomack County industries. The availability of suitable industrial sites with good transportation access will help Accomack County compete for new industry.

- 7-f *Consider the cost/benefit of local regulations on economic development.*

Local regulations can impact existing businesses and desirability of the area for new businesses. Regulations can also increase the desirability of a place for doing business by protecting the assets that attract customers and clients, and that support the production of goods. The county should be careful to balance these competing factors and consider the potential economic cost/benefit of any new regulations.

- 7-g *Identify and rezone suitable sites for industrial uses.*

Companies are more likely to relocate or expand to Accomack County if they can find sites that have appropriate industrial zoning in place. The County can identify and rezone such sites in advance, on its own motion, in general accord with the Future Land Use Map and other policies of this plan.

- 7-h *Protect the Gateway Entrances to the County.*

Through a variety of means, including zoning regulations, special use permit conditions, and public/private partnerships, the County can help to ensure that the visual quality of the key road entrances provide a welcoming image to visitors. Land uses should have low intensities to reflect the County’s essentially rural character, parking areas should be set back from the public right-of-way with substantial protective landscaping, and motor vehicle access points should be designed and coordinated to minimize the amount of “friction” along the major roadways. Major gateways to the County include, but are not limited to, Routes 13 and 679 (Fleming Road) at the Maryland border, and Routes 13, 178 (Belle Haven Road), and the Seaside Road (Route 600) at the Northampton County border.

Objective 8:

Achieve thriving and growing seafood, agricultural and forestry industries.

Policies:

- 8-1 *Direct development away from prime agricultural lands as designated by Agricultural and Forestal Districts.*
- 8-2 *Protect, restore and maintain water quality at a level that will meet the needs of seafood industries.*
- 8-3 *Ensure that adequate land area is available on which to conduct viable seafood, agriculture and forestry operations.*
- 8-4 *Strive to strike a balance between the needs of Accomack County's resource based industries, including agriculture, forestry and the seafood industry.*

Recommended Actions:

- 8-a *Revise the future land use map and zoning ordinance to direct residential and commercial development away from land in Agricultural and Forestal Districts.*

The future land use map and zoning ordinance should be amended to direct residential and commercial development away from land in agricultural and forestal districts. The agricultural and forestal districts should be reviewed and updated every four years. The County should also develop "reverse setbacks" for residential and commercial development adjacent to land zoned Agricultural.

- 8-b *Monitor the effect of recent amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that they minimize obstructions to efficient and economical production of agricultural and forestal products.*

Amendments to the agricultural zoning district in 2006 were aimed at reducing the overall amount of potential residential development in order to mitigate the potential impact on surrounding farm operations and farmland, as well as on the groundwater supply. The effect of these amendments should be monitored to ensure they are effective.

- 8-c *Identify areas with existing aquaculture operations and areas particularly suitable for aquaculture.*

In order to promote aquaculture as an economically important industry in Accomack County, measures need to be taken to protect the resources necessary for viable operations. The county should work with the Waterman's Association and VIMS to identify areas in need of protection.

- 8-d *Ensure adequate waterfront access for commercial seafood operations.*

In the review of plans for waterfront developments and commercial marinas, consideration

should be given to providing public waterfront access. Also, the county could designate areas on the future land use map for commercial waterfront use.

8-e Maintain use-value assessment within the county.

Use-Value assessment is a basic tool for agricultural land preservation. Consider implementation of a sliding scale of real estate tax deferral for AFD land owners who are committed to keeping their property in agriculture or forest use for extended periods as an additional incentive for preservation (i.e., greater tax benefit in return for longer period of commitment).

8-f Revitalize Agricultural and Forestal Districts (AFD) within the County.

The county has had a very successful AFD program, and the county has begun the process of reviewing and renewing these districts. The AFD program should be continued, promoted, and enhanced.

8-g Implement an agricultural protection lease agreement program within the county.

Agricultural protection leases are essentially short-term conservation easements. They may have durations as short as five years, but 10 to 20 years are recommended. Under a county-sponsored leasing program, the provisions of such easements and the compensation to the land owner could be established by the county in consideration of what is appropriate for Accomack.

8-h Promote educational efforts to develop common understanding of the role of agriculture in the local community and economy.

- 1) Work with Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station to implement programs to educate the non-farm community within the county on agricultural issues.
- 2) Clearly communicate support of agriculture education programs in public schools and youth programs.
- 3) Collaborate with Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station to educate county residents on smart growth techniques.

8-i Promote agriculture as a key economic development component in the county.

- 1) Institute an Agriculture Industry Council (AIC) to advise the Board of Supervisors on agricultural matters.
- 2) Establish a staff position within the County's Department of Economic Development to advise the AIC and to promote economic development in the county, with a focus on the agricultural industry.
- 3) Conduct a review of the present agricultural zoning ordinance to ensure that appropriate commercial activities are allowed.

Objective 9:

Achieve safe and efficient provision of community services including, recreational facilities and solid waste collection and disposal.

Policies:

- 9-1 Encourage new development near existing communities and services to provide efficient delivery of public services.*
- 9-2 Keep Accomack County's roadways litter free.*
- 9-3 Reduce the amount of recyclable material that enters the landfill.*
- 9-4 Enhance recreational opportunities for residents of Accomack County.*

Recommended Actions:

- 9-a Continue the program to keep roadsides free from litter.*

The county should initiate and promote twice annual litter cleanups. Anti-litter educational programs should also be conducted in the county schools and at public events.

- 9-b Continue restructuring the county's solid waste collection system.*

The solid waste collection system should be expanded to ensure that the collection of solid waste is efficient and cost effective. Locations should be designed to improve safety, ease of use, and appearance.

- 9-c Develop an enhanced toxic waste disposal program.*

Safe methods of disposal of toxic wastes should be made readily available to county residents. The County should continue to work with the Eastern Shore of Virginia Ground Water Committee to hold an annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection for the disposal of pesticides and pesticide containers as well as other hazardous waste. A long-term goal should be year-round hazardous waste disposal at a centrally located solid waste convenience center.

- 9-d Expand the program for the collection of recyclable materials to reduce the expense of burial of large quantities of waste in the landfills.*

The current system of recyclable collection sites should continue to be expanded upon to provide county-wide coverage. In addition, private and public service business and public service institutions should be strongly encouraged to recycle either through incentives or regulations.

- 9-e Develop a parks and recreation plan and acquire and develop recreational areas and facilities near population centers.*

The county is developing a parks and recreation plan and should consider developing

additional recreation facilities throughout the county. Facilities should be provided for monitored youth activities and open community facilities such as parks and tennis courts.

- 9-f *Update the coastal public access plan to improve access to the Bay and Ocean, including beaches, parks and forested lands.*

The coastal public access plan should be updated to identify the condition and ownership of public boat ramps, docks and piers. Additional access sites should be acquired in areas where a need is determined. Community piers should be developed to increase recreational fishing opportunities. New commercial marina facilities should be required to provide community access and community facilities.

Objective 10 - Transportation Plan:

Achieve a safe and efficient transportation system.

Policies:

10-1 Maintain and protect U.S. Route 13's capacity as a thoroughfare.

10-2 Discourage strip development along transportation corridors.

10-3 Support the development of an effective public transportation network.

10-4 Maintain a safe and efficient roadway systems through a combination of public and private improvements aimed at meeting defined roadway needs.

10-5 Encourage all new streets to be accepted into the VDOT system

10-6 Designate Transportation Improvement Areas and Urban Development Areas, to better plan for and fund public road improvements.

Actions:

10-a Implement Key Elements of the Route 13 Access Management Plan.

Accomack County should work with VDOT to implement the key provisions of the Route 13 Access Management Plan to promote the concentration of access and development at major nodes, elimination of safety problems, storm water management facilities within the rights-of-way to protect water quality, a transit program to connect the villages and major nodes within the corridor, and coordination of tourism attractions with Route 13 signage.

10-b Revise the Zoning Ordinance to require a minimum 200 foot setback for structures located along Route 13.

Setbacks should be increased for development along Route 13 for increased safety, improved access, and to allow for future changes in the traffic pattern. The Accomack County Zoning Ordinance currently requires a 100 foot setback for development on Route 13.

10-c Develop a trails and greenways plan.

The County should develop a trails and greenway plan that links existing and proposed recreational, natural, cultural, water, business/commercial and other resources. The proposed Heritage Trail should be a component of this system. The Accomack County Bicycle Plan should be included to connect the County's wildlife areas, parks, historic sites, and cultural resources.

10-d Study the county's sign regulations and develop better standards to improve the county's appearance from the public road system, and the safety of motorists.

10-e Plan for and execute a program to enhance community safety and facilitate service delivery by improving unsafe and/or threatened transportation facilities including Route 13 and outlying roads.

10-f Carry out a countywide Transportation Needs Analysis to determine the specific needs for improvements within the 20-year policy planning horizon, as well as general needs in the 50-year conceptual planning horizon.

Objective 11 – Affordable Housing Plan:

Achieve an adequate supply of affordable housing in the county.

Policies:

11-1 Strive to reduce the amount of substandard housing in Accomack County and increase affordable housing options for residents.

11-2 Apply Objectives 1-4 for purposes of affordable housing:

Encourage new residential and commercial development to occur in and around existing towns and villages, in accord with the future land use map of this Plan.

Actions:

11-a Create an updated Housing Plan.

The county's Housing Plan should be updated to include updated information on housing conditions, an assessment of current housing assistance needs and a plan of action of meeting these needs. The county should cooperate with the Accomack-Northampton Housing and Redevelopment Corporation in development of this plan.

11-b Continue to support and fund programs that improve substandard housing and increase affordable housing opportunities.

The county should continue to support and participate in proven housing assistance programs such as the Community Development Block Grant and Rental Assistance

programs and explore and cooperate in the development of additional programs that address the county’s housing needs.

11-c Apply action 1-a for purposes of affordable housing:

Revise the Zoning Ordinance to create additional zoning districts to allow various types and densities of development to occur in a coordinated fashion.

11-d Apply action 4-a for purposes of affordable housing:

Develop within the framework of the Accomack County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances procedures and guidelines which would allow for a mix of residential and commercial uses in keeping with the traditional development pattern of our towns and villages.

11-e Adopt an Affordable Dwelling Unit ordinance (ADU)

An Affordable Dwelling Unit ordinance (ADU) is a tool available to localities in accord with § 15.2-2305 of the Virginia Code. Such an ordinance would require that up to 12.5% of the dwellings in developments of 50 or more dwelling units at densities of more than one unit per acre be affordable (as defined) in return for density bonuses up to 20%.

ACTION PLAN

The Planning Commission recommends the following priorities for implementation actions:

1. Zoning Ordinance Amendments (Actions 1-a, 2-a, 4-b)
2. Groundwater and Surface Water Protection (Actions 5-b, 5-g, 6-b, 6-1, 6-f)
3. Affordable Housing (Actions 11-a, 11-b, 11-c, 11-d, 11-e)
4. Transportation (Actions 10-a, 10-f)
5. Recreation (Actions 4-e, 9-e, 9-f, 10-c)

Zoning and Regulatory Actions

Action	Responsible Agency	Completion Date	Source & Amount of Funding
<i>1-a Revise the Zoning Ordinance to create additional zoning districts to allow various types and densities of development to occur in a coordinated fashion: Rural Settlement and Village Development Districts, using PUD techniques for the Village Development areas.</i>			
<i>4- b Develop within the framework of the Accomack County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances procedures and guidelines which would allow for a mix of residential and commercial uses in keeping with the traditional development pattern of our towns and villages.</i>			
<i>1-c Amend the future land use map and zoning ordinance to maintain a low density of</i>			

	<i>development outside of designated growth areas, and to focus new development within designated growth areas.</i>			
<i>1-d</i>	<i>Amend the future land use map and zoning ordinance to direct high density development away from shorelines.</i>			
<i>2-a</i>	<i>Amend the zoning ordinance to provide incentives for clustered development to preserve open space and promote a more efficient pattern of development.</i>			
<i>3-a</i>	<i>Revise the Accomack County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to be consistent with the recommendations of this plan.</i>			
<i>5-a</i>	<i>Use the latest research to clarify the location of the groundwater recharge spine boundaries and consider creation of a groundwater protection overlay district within those boundaries.</i>			
<i>5-b</i>	<i>Review the potential impact of new development on groundwater in the permit process.</i>			
<i>5-c</i>	<i>Amend the subdivision ordinance to limit the allowable density of remotely located drainfields.</i>			

Zoning and Regulatory Actions (continued)

Action	Responsible Agency	Completion Date	Source & Amount of Funding
5-d Amend the subdivision ordinance to require that the location of remotely located drainfields be recorded on the subdivision plat and that proper easements to those areas be provided.			
5-f Amend the zoning and subdivision ordinances as necessary to adequately protect groundwater supplies and to balance the supply and demand for residential land.			
6-b Adopt the water quality Best Management Practices for development on the Seaside, including shoreline vegetative buffers, stormwater management, limits on impervious surface, septic system reserve drainfields, and a septic system pumpout requirement.			
6-e Add marina, dock and pier development standards to the Zoning Ordinance.			
6-i Adopt and administer State's model stormwater management regulations.			
7-g Identify & rezone suitable sites for industrial uses.			
7-h Protect the Gateway Entrances to the County.			
8-a Revise future land use map & zoning ordinance to direct residential & commercial development away from land in Agric. & Forest. Districts.			
8-b Monitor the effect of recent amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that they minimize obstructions to efficient and economical production of agricultural and forestal products.			
8-d Ensure adequate waterfront access for commercial seafood operations.			
10-a -Implement Key Elements of the Route 13 Access Management Plan.			
10-b Revise Zoning Ordinance to require a minimum 200 foot setback for structures located along Route 13.			
11-e Adopt Affordable Dwelling Unit ordinance (ADU)			

Planning and Research

Action	Responsible Agency	Completion Date	Source & Amount of Funding
1-b <i>Revise the Future Land Use and Zoning Maps to reflect the distribution of soils suitable for septic system use.</i>			
1-e <i>Work closely and collaboratively with the incorporated Towns to coordinate land use decisions so that new development is located in accord with the future land use map to achieve the goals of the County as well as the goals of the Towns.</i>			
1-f <i>Develop a shoreline management plan to address shoreline erosion problems.</i>			
2-c <i>The county should work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Natural Heritage Program to identify and protect unique habitats.</i>			
3-b <i>Implement and update the Capital Improvements Program consistent with recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.</i>			
3-c <i>Seek public input in the development of local plans and regulations.</i>			
4-c <i>Conduct a survey of historic resources in Accomack County, in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.</i>			
5-e <i>Continue to conduct research on the hydrogeology of the aquifers, nature of recharge and contamination threats.</i>			
6-a <i>Encourage the use of Best Management Practices by agricultural and forestry operations to restore and protect surface water quality.</i>			
6-d <i>Continue the County's June 2006 recommendation to the State to utilize great caution in the approval of wastewater discharge permits which clearly have the potential to cause long-term and irremediable water quality impacts to any public waters.</i>			
6-g <i>Continue to develop plans for the replacement of septic systems with central sewage facilities in more densely developed areas.</i>			

Planning and Research Actions (continued)

Action	Responsible Agency	Completion Date	Source & Amount of Funding
7-e <i>Designate additional areas for industrial development, including the NASA Wallops Island facility and along the Bay Coast Railroad.</i>			
8-c <i>Identify areas with existing aquaculture operations and areas particularly suitable for aquaculture.</i>			
10-c <i>Develop a trails and greenways plan.</i>			
10-d <i>Study the county's sign regulations and develop better standards to improve the county's appearance from the public road system, and the safety of motorists.</i>			
11-a <i>Create an updated Housing Plan.</i>			

Operational Programs

Action	Responsible Agency	Completion Date	Source & Amount of Funding
2-b <i>Develop programs to encourage conservation of barrier islands, marsh land, forested areas, and creek corridors.</i>			
4-d <i>Develop incentives to encourage the use of conservation easements to preserve significant rural and agricultural lands.</i>			
4-f <i>Develop local heritage interpretive opportunities.</i>			
6-c <i>Encourage the use of better septic system technology on waterfront lots</i>			
6-f <i>Cooperate with government and private organizations to establish a water quality monitoring network in Accomack County.</i>			
7-a <i>Obtain Foreign-Trade-Zone designation for the Accomack County Airport Industrial Park, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport, and the Wallops Research Park.</i>			
7-b <i>Explore local economic development incentives.</i>			
7-f <i>Consider the cost/benefit of local regulations on economic development.</i>			
8-e <i>Maintain use-value assessment within the county.</i>			
5-g <i>Continually monitor available data for all key natural systems, particularly ground and surface water quality, so that warning signs of significant deterioration and risk to the well-being of the county can be identified as early as possible.</i>			

Operational Programs continued

Action	Responsible Agency	Completion Date	Source & Amount of Funding
8-f <i>Revitalize Agricultural and Forestal Districts (AFD) within the County.</i>			
8-g <i>Implement an agricultural protection lease agreement program within the county.</i>			
8-h <i>Promote educational efforts to develop common understanding of the role of agriculture in the local community and economy.</i>			
8-i <i>Promote agriculture as a key economic development component in the county.</i>			
9-a <i>Continue the program to keep roadsides free from litter. (initiate and promote twice annual litter cleanups, anti-litter educational programs)</i>			
9-b <i>Continue restructuring the county's solid waste collection system.</i>			
9-c <i>Expand the enhanced toxic waste disposal program.</i>			
9-d <i>Develop a program for the collection of recyclable materials to reduce the expense of burial of large quantities of waste in the landfills.</i>			
11-b <i>Continue to support and fund programs that improve substandard housing and increase affordable housing opportunities.</i>			

Capital Investments and Construction

Action	Responsible Agency	Completion Date	Source & Amount of Funding
4-e <i>Continue the Eastern Shore Heritage Trail into Accomack County.</i>			
6-h <i>Consider public/private partnerships between the County and private developers to finance new or expanded wastewater treatment systems in accord with Action 6-g. A local government entity such as a service authority should be established to manage such systems.</i>			
7-c <i>Support the creation of a marketplace on U.S. Route 13 for the sale and promotion of local arts, crafts, and food products.</i>			
7-d <i>Research, and possibly establish a revolving fund for the construction of industrial buildings and establish a "ready-to-build" program for new businesses in the Wallops Research Park and Accomack Airport Industrial Park.</i>			
9-e <i>Develop a parks and recreation plan and acquire and develop recreational areas and facilities near population centers.</i>			
9-f <i>Update the public access plan to improve access to the Bay and Ocean, including beaches, parks and forested lands.</i>			

Actions for Implementing Transportation Plan

Action	Responsible Agency	Completion Date	Funding
<i>10-a -Implement Key Elements of the Route 13 Access Management Plan.</i>			
<i>10-b Revise the Zoning Ordinance to require a minimum 200 foot setback for structures located along Route 13.</i>			
<i>10-c Develop a trails and greenways plan.</i>			
<i>10-d Study the county's sign regulations and develop better standards to improve the county's appearance from the public road system, and the safety of motorists.</i>			
<i>10-e Plan for and execute a program to enhance community safety and facilitate service delivery by improving unsafe and/or threatened transportation facilities including Route 13 and outlying roads.</i>			
<i>10-f Carry out a countywide Transportation Needs Analysis to determine the specific needs for improvements within the 20-year policy planning horizon, as well as general needs in the 50-year conceptual planning horizon.</i>			

Actions for Implementing Affordable Housing Plan

Action	Responsible Agency	Completion Date	Funding
<i>11-a Create an updated Housing Plan.</i>			
<i>11-b Continue to support and fund programs that improve substandard housing and increase affordable housing opportunities.</i>			
<i>11-c Apply action 1-a for purposes of affordable housing:</i> Revise the Zoning Ordinance to create additional zoning districts to allow various types and densities of development to occur in a coordinated fashion.			
<i>11-d Apply action 4-b for purposes of affordable housing:</i> Develop within the framework of the Accomack County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances procedures and guidelines which would allow for a mix of residential and commercial uses in keeping with the traditional development pattern of our towns and villages.			
<i>11-e Adopt an Affordable Dwelling Unit ordinance (ADU)</i> An Affordable Dwelling Unit ordinance (ADU) is a tool available to localities in accord with § 15.2-2305 of the Virginia Code. Such an ordinance would require that up to 12.5% of the dwellings in developments of 50 or more dwelling units at densities of more than one unit per acre be affordable (as defined) in return for density bonuses up to 20%.			