

Greensboro 2050

Comprehensive Plan

Town of Greensboro, Maryland

A river town on Maryland's Eastern Shore

Prepared in accordance with the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland

Draft — 2026

Greensboro Planning Commission

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INTRODUCTION

The Town of Greensboro, Maryland, nestled along the scenic Choptank River on the Eastern Shore, traces its roots to the early 18th century as a vital river crossing and trade hub—originally known as Bridge Town or Head of Choptank—before its formal establishment in 1732 and incorporation in 1826. Today, this charming community of about 2,634 residents cherishes its historic character, rural ambiance, and close-knit identity while navigating the challenges and opportunities of balanced growth in Caroline County.

This Comprehensive Plan represents the official policy framework for Greensboro's future development. Prepared under Maryland law, it serves as the cornerstone of the Town's growth management program. It works with the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, and Growth Tiers mapping to direct development to areas with adequate infrastructure, limit septic-based sprawl in rural zones, protect natural resources like the Choptank River and surrounding forests, and preserve the Town's unique sense of place.

The Plan analyzes current conditions—historical, physical, socio-economic, land use, transportation, and environmental—while projecting population and growth scenarios. It articulates five core visions shared by residents and stakeholders:

1. Carefully preserving Greensboro's character and community identity underpins its social and economic vitality.
2. Prudent management of geographic expansion and population growth to maintain unity, variety, order, and balance.
3. Protection of natural amenities and environmental resources for future generations.
4. Support for a well-rounded town offering job opportunities, diverse housing, and quality community life.
5. Creation of vibrant, pedestrian-friendly commercial areas that enhance downtown's historic appeal.

Through these visions, strategies, and mapped land use recommendations, the Plan aims to foster sustainable, efficient growth; prioritize infill and redevelopment where feasible; align with regional Caroline County plans; and ensure that future decisions enhance rather than diminish what makes Greensboro special. This document guides public and private actions, from infrastructure investments to regulatory updates, as the Town builds on its rich heritage toward a prosperous, resilient future.

Community Engagement

Maryland's Equity principle calls for engaging all sectors of the community in plan development so diverse voices are heard, and the needs of underserved populations are prioritized (Land Use Article § 1-201). That principle matters in Greensboro. Its residents are younger and have lower incomes than the county as a whole, about 19% were born outside the United States, and MDEnviroScreen identifies the Town as overburdened and underserved.

How the community took part. Beginning in January 2026, the Planning Commission held five public meetings on this Plan, followed by a public hearing on September 28, 2026. The Town posted draft materials on its website in English and Spanish, told residents how to comment and take part, and conducted a community survey on planning issues. To reach younger residents and their families, the Town prepared a presentation for Greensboro Elementary School on what a comprehensive plan is and how it shapes the Town. The State and Caroline County also reviewed the draft.

What we heard. The clearest message from the survey and public comments was to protect Greensboro's existing community character as the Town grows.

How it shaped the Plan. The land use plan responds by accommodating growth through context-appropriate infill and redevelopment. Transect zones match new buildings to the scale and pattern of each neighborhood (Chapter II), new housing is directed to land the Town already serves with water and sewer (Chapter IV), and the T-4 Rural Edge and the Rural Buffer keep the Town's rural edge intact.

Continuing engagement. To carry out the Equity principle after adoption, the Town will:

- continue to post plan materials and notices of hearings on the Plan, rezonings and major development proposals on the Town website in English and Spanish;
- hold at least one public meeting a year on Plan implementation, at a time and place accessible to working families; and
- report participation, including by Spanish-speaking, renter, senior and lower-income residents, in the Planning Commission's Annual Report.

Context For Planning

The following provides an overview of the key state-level planning laws and policies that shape the Plan's structure, required elements, and policy framework. These laws establish minimum standards for comprehensive plans while promoting smart, sustainable growth, protecting resources, and coordinating among local jurisdictions and the state. Greensboro's Plan aligns with these requirements, as administered by the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP), Caroline County, and local adoption processes.

The Land Use Article

The Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland sets the required contents of a municipal comprehensive plan in § 3-102. This Plan contains each required element:

- goals and objectives (Chapter I);
- land use (Chapter II);
- development regulations (Chapter II, Development Regulations, and Chapter XI);
- community facilities (Chapter III);
- municipal growth (Chapter IV);
- sensitive areas (Chapter V);

- water resources (Chapter VI);
- housing (Chapter VII);
- transportation (Chapter VIII); and
- areas of critical State concern: none has been designated or recommended within Greensboro.

A mineral resources element is required only where current geological information is available; none identifies mineral resources in the Town.

Maryland's Planning Principles.

Under § 1–201 of the Land Use Article, the Plan must implement the following statewide planning principles:

1. **Land** — Optimize productivity of working landscapes (farms, forests, fisheries) and prioritize development in population centers near existing infrastructure.
2. **Transportation** — Prioritize energy-efficient, affordable, reliable networks connecting jobs, housing, and services.
3. **Housing** — Enable diverse, quality, affordable housing options for all residents.
4. **Economy** — Support adaptive reuse, mixed-use, and context-appropriate development responsive to market changes.
5. **Equity** — Engage diverse community voices and prioritize underserved populations.
6. **Resilience** — Integrate measures to minimize impacts from natural and human-caused threats.
7. **Place** — Provide public spaces valuing cultural, historical, and natural resources.
8. **Ecology** — Protect and restore sensitive systems, conserving forests, agricultural areas, and waterways.

HB 243/SB 197 of 2026 replaces the § 3-102 element list with eight elements that mirror these Principles, effective October 1, 2026, for plan processes begun on or after that date. Greensboro began this update in January 2026, so this Plan follows the element list above. The next update will be organized around the Principles and will include the new Resilience element. The table below shows where this Plan carries out each Principle, as required by Land Use Article § 1-201 as amended by Chapter 64 of 2025 (SB 266).

Principle	Where this Plan carries it out
Land	Ch. II Land Use; Ch. IV Municipal Growth, including Working Lands
Transportation	Ch. VIII Transportation, including access to jobs, housing and services
Housing	Ch. VII Housing; Appendix A
Economy	Ch. IX Economic Development
Equity	Introduction, Community Engagement; Ch. I Environmental Justice goal; Ch. VII fair housing assessment; Ch. XI
Resilience	Ch. I Climate Change goal; Ch. V Sensitive Areas, including Resilience Policies; Ch. VI Water Resources
Place	Ch. II transect zones; Ch. X Historic and Cultural Resources; Ch. III Choptank River Park (waterfront gathering place)
Ecology	Ch. V Sensitive Areas; Ch. VI Water Resources

The Sensitive Areas Element

Required by the Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992, this element describes protections for:

- Streams and stream buffers;
- 100-year floodplains;
- Endangered species habitats;
- Nontidal wetlands;
- Steep slopes; and
- Other locally identified sensitive areas vulnerable to development impacts.

The Critical Area Act

Enacted in 1984, this act applies to lands within 1,000 feet of tidal waters or wetlands in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. It aims to minimize water quality impacts from pollutants, conserve habitats, and establish growth-accommodating land-use policies. Portions of Greensboro near the Choptank River are subject to Critical Area requirements, particularly for post-1997 annexations (Greensboro was granted an exclusion in the mid-1980s, but later annexed lands are subject to the law). Local programs must align with Critical Area Commission criteria.

Neighborhood Conservation and Smart Growth Areas Act of 1997

"Smart Growth" legislation targets state funding to Priority Funding Areas (PFAs)—municipalities, rural villages, and locally designated growth areas with planned public water/sewer—to limit sprawl in agricultural/resource areas. Greensboro's corporate limits, including areas annexed after 1997, are a Priority Funding Area. This Plan designates no growth area outside the corporate limits (Chapter IV). It directs new development to land inside the Town that the existing water and sewer systems serve or can serve.

Maryland State Finance and Procurement Article

This article links state funding for growth-related projects to consistency with Smart Growth policies, including PFA designations and density thresholds (e.g., at least 3.5 units per acre in certain extensions served by public/community sewer).

2006 Maryland House Bill 1141

HB 1141 added requirements for a municipal growth element (specifying intended growth outside corporate limits, infrastructure/environmental needs, and coordination with Caroline County, including comment/mediation processes) and a water resources element (addressing drinking water, stormwater, wastewater, and future demands). It mandates intergovernmental coordination, state agency review (MDP, MDE, DNR), and analyses for post-2006 annexations to qualify as PFAs (e.g., infill/redevelopment capacity and demand).

Smart and Sustainable Growth Act of 2009

This act clarifies that comprehensive plans guide decisions closely (with deviations rare), requires annual reporting on growth trends (e.g., inside/outside PFAs, densities, permits, capacity analyses every 3 years), and exempts low-permit jurisdictions (<50 residential units/year) from some measures. It emphasizes citizen involvement, sustainable PFA design, and education for planning bodies.

Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 (Senate Bill 236)

Known as the “septic bill,” the Act limits residential major subdivisions on septic systems and steers growth to areas served by public sewer. Local governments map growth tiers. For a municipality, the applicable tiers are Tier I (served by public sewer), Tier II (planned for public sewer), Tier IIA (an annotated Tier II the Town defines), and Tier IVA (a municipal greenbelt). Caroline County designates tiers outside the corporate limits. Map 18 shows Greensboro’s tiers, and Chapter IV describes them.

Recent Legislation and Updates

Since 2012, Maryland has introduced several significant updates to planning laws, with a growing emphasis on housing affordability, diversity, production, equity, and long-term resilience to address a statewide shortage estimated at around 94,000 units. These changes build on core elements while mandating enhancements to housing-related components in comprehensive plans. Ongoing implementation of SB 236 continues, including tier map updates for sewer changes. Key housing-focused legislation includes:

- **HB 1045 (2019, Chapter 713, effective June 1, 2020):** Made the housing element mandatory (previously optional) in comprehensive plans adopted or amended after the effective date. It requires addressing the need for affordable housing, specifically including workforce housing (typically 60–120% of area median income) and low-income housing (<60% AMI), with goals, objectives, policies, plans, and standards. MDPs' Housing Element Models & Guidelines provide tools, data dashboards, needs analysis resources, and best practices for compliance.
- **HB 1466 (2025):** Establishes State policy to encourage and promote the creation of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on land permitted for a single-family detached dwelling to help address the housing shortage. By October 1, 2026, each county or municipal corporation with planning and zoning authority must adopt a local law authorizing ADU development on land with a qualifying single-family dwelling. Greensboro will amend the Land Development Ordinance to comply with this mandate.
- **Chapters 751/752 (2021) and Chapters 89/90 (2024):** Establish a duty to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH) through housing and urban development programs, requiring fair housing assessments in housing elements to promote equitable access and address disparities.
- **HB 778 (2026):** Establishes state policy to promote middle housing (e.g., duplexes, triplexes) on single-family zoned land; requires counties (including Baltimore City) to assess the suitability of vacant/underutilized commercial/industrial land for housing in

housing elements enacted/amended on or after January 1, 2027, with recommendations to authorize such uses in sewer-served areas.

- **Governor Wes Moore's Housing Growth and Affordability Agenda (2026 bills):** Includes Starter and Silver Homes Act (prohibiting minimum lot sizes for smaller/affordable homes); and Housing Certainty Act (streamlining permitting). The "Housing Starts Here" Executive Order sets production targets through 2030, with annual progress reports influencing plan reviews.
- **HB 240 (2026):** Requires notification to MDP at the start of plan reviews, with MDP providing guidance/best practices within 60 days—this update began in January 2026.
- **HB 243/SB 197 of 2026 (Comprehensive and General Plans – Alteration of Elements):** reorganizes the required plan elements around the eight Principles for plan processes begun on or after October 1, 2026.

CHAPTER I – GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Vision Statement

Greensboro, Maryland: A resilient, welcoming river town on the Choptank, where small-town charm endures, diverse communities thrive, and sustainable growth preserves our Eastern Shore heritage for generations to come. Guided by Maryland's eight Sustainable Growth Planning Principles, this vision emphasizes quality of life, connected communities, environmental stewardship, and equitable opportunities.

Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives are derived from the 2010 Comprehensive Plan, 2016 Vision Plan, recent community input, and state requirements under Maryland's Land Use Article (§ 3-101 et seq.). They incorporate updates to comply with climate change laws (e.g., the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022), environmental justice (e.g., via the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities), and the eight state planning principles, effective October 1, 2025. Priorities reflect Greensboro's status as an overburdened and underserved community, as identified by MDEnviroScreen, focusing on mitigating pollution burdens, enhancing resilience, and promoting equitable access.

Land Use

Goal: Promote balanced, compact land use that preserves Greensboro's historic Eastern Shore character, walkable scale, and mixed-income neighborhoods while supporting sustainable infill and redevelopment.

Objectives:

- Encourage mixed-use developments to integrate residential, commercial, and recreational uses, reducing sprawl and fostering pedestrian-friendly spaces.
- Preserve open spaces, natural buffers, and agricultural lands by updating zoning to prioritize compatibility with the Town's grid layout, short blocks, and human-scale features such as front porches.
- Revise zoning ordinances to allow ADUs and manufactured homes in appropriate districts, enhancing housing diversity without compromising rural aesthetics or environmental quality.

Municipal Growth

Goal: Guide orderly, efficient growth within designated areas to enhance resource preservation, recreation, and employment while maintaining a stable, diverse population and protecting the Town's rural surroundings.

Objectives:

- Limit annexation to parcels that serve recreation, employment, or conservation, and work with Caroline County to conserve the Rural Buffer around the Town (Map 6), including a request that the County designate it as a Tier IVA greenbelt on the County Growth Tiers map.
- Attract families and small businesses.
- Work with Caroline County and the State to preserve the Rural Buffer (Map 6) around the Town, protecting sensitive environmental areas, retaining the Town's small-town setting and rural character, and managing environmental conditions to prevent suburban sprawl, conserve natural resources, and maintain open space, agricultural lands, and scenic quality.

Water Resources

Goal: Protect and enhance the Choptank River and related water systems as vital natural resources, ensuring sustainable supply, quality, and disposal to support growth and mitigate pollution burdens.

Objectives:

- Manage wastewater treatment capacity and implement stormwater best management practices (BMPs), such as rain gardens and green streets, to reduce nitrogen/phosphorus runoff, erosion, and impacts from external sources.
- Integrate public access points, trails, and native plantings along the river to connect neighborhoods, downtown, and institutions, while meeting state water-quality and shoreline-restoration standards.
- Address cumulative environmental burdens by prioritizing retrofits in overburdened areas and using MDEnviroScreen data to guide equitable water infrastructure improvements.

Transportation

Goal: Improve multimodal connectivity, safety, and walkability to reduce automobile reliance, link key destinations, and support commuting while adapting to regional pressures.

Objectives:

- Complete sidewalk networks, bike lanes, and pedestrian features (e.g., crosswalks, traffic-calming on MD Routes) to enhance safety and connectivity between neighborhoods, parks, schools, and the Choptank River.
- Develop a town-wide hiking/biking trail system to promote healthy travel and integrate with regional systems.
- Expand public transit options and coordinate with state agencies for maintenance, focusing on equitable access for low-income residents and seniors to mitigate isolation in underserved areas.

Sensitive Areas

Goal: Safeguard environmentally sensitive features, including the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area, floodplains, wetlands, forests, streams, and habitats, to protect against development impacts and climate risks per state mandates.

Objectives:

- Implement protection programs such as the Critical Area Program, Forest Conservation, and floodplain regulations that require low-impact development, tree planting, and native restoration in riparian zones.
- Integrate DNR's Habitat Connectivity Network and mapping tools to preserve ecological corridors and limit densities in sensitive areas.
- Expand to address climate vulnerabilities (e.g., sea-level rise, increased flooding along the Choptank) through resilience strategies like living shorelines and adaptive planning, restoring degraded areas for habitat enhancement.

Housing

Goal: Provide diverse, affordable housing options for all ages, incomes, and household types to support economic vitality, retain residents, and reduce disparities.

Objectives:

- Offer incentives such as facade grants, property tax credits, and workforce and affordable housing rehabilitation programs, including ADUs and manufactured homes, to increase the housing stock.
- Encourage infill and mixed-density developments (e.g., single-family, duplexes, small apartments) in neighborhoods and mixed-use areas, coordinating with Caroline County on a housing plan.
- Prioritize equitable access in overburdened areas by addressing aging housing stock and poverty and by ensuring benefits for vulnerable groups such as seniors, families, and low-income households.

Historic and Cultural Preservation

Goals

- Preserve and Enhance Greensboro's Historic Character.
- Protect Cultural and Natural Heritage Resources.
- Leverage Historic Resources for Community and Economic Benefits.

Objectives

- Maintain and expand the Greensboro Historic District through design standards and National Register nominations.
- Integrate historic preservation into all land-use decisions via assessments, overlays, and adaptive reuse incentives.

- Document and interpret underrepresented histories through partnerships and interpretive programs.
- Mitigate environmental impacts on historic sites, including climate resilience and Critical Area updates.
- Promote heritage-based economic development and tourism.
- Foster community stewardship through public engagement and preservation incentives.
- Promote heritage tourism linked to the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area and Harriet Tubman Byway to support local businesses and economic growth.
- Coordinate with Eastern Shore Heritage, Inc. (ESHI), Caroline County, and regional partners to advance shared goals of conservation, traditional economies, and harmonious development.
- Ensure new development and revitalization efforts protect historic resources, maintain the Rural Buffer (Map 6), and enhance interpretive opportunities without compromising environmental quality.
- Use the Maryland Historical Trust's flood mitigation and adaptation guidance to assess flood risk to the Historic District and riverfront resources, and pursue MHT and other funding for adaptation work.

Economic Development

Goal: Foster sustainable economic growth that creates jobs, supports local businesses, attracts visitors, and enhances the tax base while protecting sensitive environmental areas, retaining the small-town setting, managing environmental conditions, and preserving the Rural Buffer (Map 6) around the Town in coordination with Caroline County and the State.

Objectives:

- Leverage the North County Enterprise Zone to attract targeted investment in designated commercial and industrial areas.
- Revitalize the downtown and commercial districts as pedestrian-friendly hubs through Main Street improvements and adaptive reuse.
- Promote heritage and eco-tourism tied to the Choptank River and historic resources.
- Support workforce development and link economic growth to affordable/workforce housing strategies.
- Ensure all development incorporates environmental protections, green infrastructure, and low-impact design.
- Strengthen interjurisdictional partnerships for infrastructure, marketing, and regional initiatives.

Climate Change

Goal: Build town-wide resilience to climate impacts, such as flooding, sea-level rise, extreme heat, and storms, while reducing emissions and aligning with state goals (e.g., Climate Pollution Reduction Plan).

Objectives:

- Deploy green infrastructure (e.g., expanded tree canopy, rain barrels, stormwater retrofits) to mitigate runoff, enhance buffers, and adapt to vulnerabilities along the Choptank River.
- Promote energy-efficient practices and incentives for "greener" homes/businesses, and incorporate long-term data monitoring through surveys and indicators for water quality and resource health.
- Integrate climate considerations into all plan elements, prioritize underserved communities to avoid disproportionate impacts, and secure state funding for resiliency projects.
- Carry out the Resilience Policies in Chapter V, including amendments to the floodplain and stormwater ordinances within two years of adoption, with MDP technical assistance and grants such as DNR Grants Gateway Outcome 2. This work will also form the basis of the Resilience element the next plan must include.

Environmental Justice (EJ)

Goal: Advance equitable outcomes by addressing disparities, fostering inclusive engagement, and ensuring all residents benefit from growth, resources, and protections in line with state EJ frameworks.

Objectives:

- Enhance community participation through digital tools (e.g., online surveys, apps), citizen committees, and outreach to diverse groups (seniors, low-income, minorities) for input on beautification, vitality, and governance.
- Prioritize amenities such as parks, trails, and public spaces in overburdened areas; mitigate hazards; and promote social programs to address housing/recreational needs.
- Use MDEnviroScreen and state guidance to integrate EJ into decision-making, building partnerships to reduce pollution, promote economic diversification, and advance whole-of-community sustainability.

These goals and objectives provide a practical framework for the Greensboro 2050 Comprehensive Plan, emphasizing incremental, community-driven actions to comply with state requirements while preserving the Town's unique character.

CHAPTER II – LAND USE PLAN

Introduction

The Land Use Plan describes the preferred land use for various areas in the context of the goals and objectives. It establishes a policy framework for allocating land to categories of use (e.g., residential, commercial, etc.) and for managing the community's land resources to address residents' needs for an environment in which to conduct everyday life. The Land Use Plan also intends to establish policies and a spatial organization that support a sustainable, productive, and less costly future for the community. Finally, it relates the Comprehensive Plan to the State's Planning Principles.

Existing Land Use

The Existing Land Use section provides a snapshot of Greensboro's current development footprint, as of the most recent inventory (approximately 687 acres within municipal boundaries). This pattern is highly characteristic of a small Eastern Shore, Maryland town: deeply rooted in its rural-agricultural surroundings while maintaining a compact, historic core.

Significance of the Existing Land Use Pattern

Caroline County owns and manages North County Regional Park, which lies outside the Town corporate boundary.

Map 1 shows the existing land use pattern, and Table LU-1 summarizes it.

Table LU-1 - Existing Land Use Classification		
Land Use	Acres	Percent
Residential	253.0	36.8%
Multifamily	14.2	2.1%
Mixed Use	4.2	0.6%
Commercial	26.5	3.9%
Industrial	24.6	3.6%
Public/Semi-public	64.7	9.4%
Parks & Recreation	23.0	3.4%
Agriculture	209.8	30.6%
Unclassified	2.2	0.3%
Other (e.g., streets, river)	64.5	9.4%
Total	686.7	100.0%

Greensboro's existing land use distribution reveals a balanced yet distinctly rural-influenced municipal structure that has evolved organically from its origins as a rural crossroads village along the Choptank River. Key aspects and their implications include:

- **High proportion of agricultural and open land** - Over 31% of the land is agricultural, reflecting Greensboro's position within Caroline County's predominantly agricultural landscape.
- **Dominant residential use** - Residential use occupies the largest share of developed land, concentrated in the historic core and surrounding neighborhoods. This dominance underscores Greensboro's primary role as a residential community rather than a commercial or industrial hub, with modest-scale, walkable neighborhoods supporting family-oriented living and community cohesion. The prevalence of single-family detached homes on smaller lots in the core (as detailed in the T-1 transect) reinforces historic pedestrian-friendly patterns. Outer neighborhoods reflect larger-lot suburban development from the 1980s onward. This Plan does not extend that pattern; new development and redevelopment should follow the lot sizes, block pattern and connected streets of T-1 and T-2.
- **Limited commercial and industrial footprint (3.9% commercial + 3.7% industrial):** These uses occupy about 8% of the Town and are compact and clustered—traditional downtown retail/services in the core, plus highway-oriented and light industrial nodes (e.g., along MD 313 and rail-adjacent sites). It implies these uses primarily serve local needs rather than regional draw.
- **Significant public/semi-public and parks/recreation** - These areas support community institutions (schools, churches, library) and open-space access, enhancing quality of life and connectivity. Combined with river buffers, they contribute to ecological resilience and recreational opportunities in a flood-prone, river-oriented setting.

This existing configuration directly informs the proposed transect zones and implementation strategies, ensuring future growth builds on—rather than contradicts—the Town's established strengths and limitations.

Vacant Land Inventory

The 2018 vacant parcel inventory identifies approximately 267 acres of undeveloped or open land within Greensboro's municipal boundaries (see Map 2). Vacant land represents 39% of the Town's total 687-acre land area. The inventory includes:

- Approximately 172 acres, nearly one-quarter of the corporate area, are classified as Agriculture (primarily large peripheral holdings along the Choptank River and along the edges of MD Route 480).
- Numerous small-to-medium vacant residential lots (typically 0.1–0.4 acres).
- Open-space parcels within subdivisions (e.g., Caroline Farms common areas).
- Scattered exempt or utility-adjacent parcels (parks, stormwater management, rail rights-of-way).

This substantial vacant land reserve—concentrated in areas already served by existing infrastructure—lays a strong foundation for projected growth through compact, mixed-use redevelopment rather than outward expansion, while holding agricultural land for future growth and preserving riverine buffers that define Greensboro's Eastern Shore character.

Zoning

Map 3 shows Greensboro's current zoning, and Table LU-2 summarizes it. The Town of Greensboro regulates land use through a traditional Euclidean zoning ordinance that divides the incorporated area (approximately 687 acres) into the following primary districts:

- **R-1 (Low-Density Residential):** 389.5 acres (56.7%) – the dominant district, covering most of the Town's outer neighborhoods and intended primarily for single-family detached homes on larger lots.
- **R-2 (Medium-Density Residential):** 12.8 acres (1.9%) – transitional areas allowing slightly higher residential densities.
- **R-3 (Higher-Density Residential):** 15.0 acres (2.2%) – supports multifamily and attached housing near the core.
- **CC (Central Commercial):** 22.0 acres (3.3%) – the historic downtown core, permitting commercial uses with residential mixed-use potential.
- **HC (Highway Commercial) and LC (Light Commercial):** 20.2 acres combined (3.0%) – corridor-oriented commercial districts.
- **I-1 and I-2 (Industrial):** 35.9 acres combined (5.3%) – light and medium industrial areas.
- **TRC (Town Residential/Commercial Mixed-Use floating zone):** 42.6 acres (6.3%) – a flexible overlay intended for compact mixed-use and residential development (largely committed to one approved PUD).
- **ESG (Essential Government Services) and PSU (Public/Semi-Public/Utility):** 84.7 acres combined (12.6%) – institutional and public lands.
- **Other (streets, rights-of-way, river, and miscellaneous):** 64 acres (9.2%).

Table LU-2: Current Zoning		
Zone	Total	Percent
R-1	390	56.73%
R-2	13	1.87%
R-3	15	2.19%
CC	22	3.21%
HC	9	1.30%
LC	11	1.65%
I-1	16	2.32%
I-2	20	2.91%
ESG	43	6.33%
PSU	41	6.01%
TRC	43	6.21%
Other	64	9.29%
Total	687	100.00%

The Kinnamon Meadows TRC zone, the only one currently approved, is a floating zone brought to ground for a planned unit development that includes 117 residential lots, 40 of which have

already been built. The Master Plan includes areas for assisted living, commercial, multifamily, and townhouse development in future phases.

A Critical Area Overlay District, encompassing approximately 172 acres of the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area, applies to portions of the Town along the Choptank River and its tributaries within 1,000 feet of tidal water and wetlands and imposes additional environmental protections (buffers, forest retention, and density limits) that affect development in all underlying zones.

Overall, the current zoning pattern over-allocates land to low-density single-family residential use (R-1 comprises nearly three-fifths of all land), while concentrating opportunities for compact, mixed-use, and higher-density development in the small but strategically located CC, R-3, and TRC areas. This framework reflects the Comprehensive Plan's emphasis on preserving neighborhood character and directing growth primarily through infill and redevelopment of existing platted lots.

Transects

Greensboro's land-use plans historically reflected properties' assessed value and zoning classification, emphasizing a static view of the land's potential role, especially amid changing demographic and economic conditions. Implementing the land-use plan supported a regulatory framework grounded in best practices from a previous generation. Implementation was heavily influenced by the separation of land-use categories, rigid development standards, and off-street parking requirements, all of which emphasized automobile needs.

This comprehensive Plan establishes a land-use platform to promote urban design and creative use patterns while attending to the physical, cultural, and social systems that define the place and support its ongoing evolution. Proposed transect zones decouple the land use plan from an identity based on assessment classification or zoning. Instead, they reflect the Town's physical evolution from a rural crossroads village to a municipal center following a pattern of neighborhoods evolving to the next level of intensity.

Land use planning areas based on Transects are a geographic tool that defines a development hierarchy by the scale and location of different settlement types along a continuum from urban to rural (see Map 4). Greensboro's transects include four zones ranging in intensity from low-density suburban to urban center. The transects also include a special district dominated by employment uses (i.e., commercial and industrial).

In this Plan, a transect zone is a future land use category shown on Map 4. Transect zones are not zoning districts; they guide the zoning districts and rezonings the Land Development Ordinance update will create (see Development Regulations, p. 25). The existing zoning districts (R-1, R-2, R-3, CC, HC, LC, I-1, I-2, TRC, ESG and PSU) remain in effect until then.

T-1 Urban Core Transect

The T-1 Transect includes Greensboro's historic center—compact, walkable, and home to the Town's oldest buildings. It's where you find homes close together on small lots, shops and businesses right on the sidewalks, narrow streets, and a mix of living spaces above stores. The focus here is on preserving the classic small-town feel with pedestrian-friendly streets and heritage charm.

Key Characteristics

- **Size and Scale:** Total area approximately 74.85 acres — the smallest and most concentrated of the transects, reflecting a tight, historically defined footprint centered on the Town's origins along the Choptank River and key historic routes.
- **Dominant Land Use: Residential** (71.4%, 53.44 acres) — primarily single-family detached homes on small, narrow lots (median 0.239 acres, mean 0.295 acres), creating a dense but human-scaled fabric. Narrow frontages (average lot width of 50–60 ft, where data are available) promote traditional streetscapes with homes close to sidewalks.
- **Historic Character:** Predominantly pre-1950 buildings (77% of residential, 70% of commercial pre-1950; significant pre-1900 and pre-1925 portions), with many structures from the late 19th/early 20th century. Architectural styles emphasize simple, traditional designs—especially 2-story, no-basement homes (45% of residential records)—reflecting cost-effective historic construction.
- **Building Stock and Form:**
 - Modest residential footprints (mean 1,607 sq ft, median 1,496 sq ft).
 - Commercial buildings are larger and more varied (mean 3,286 sq ft), including stores, banks, and fraternal buildings.
 - Mixed-use parcels (2.4%, 1.81 acres) integrate residential above or behind ground-floor commercial, supporting live-work/shop patterns typical of older small-town cores.
 - Assessed values average \$119k for residential (land \$34k, improvements \$85k), with commercial higher (\$170k) due to business improvements.
- **Non-Residential Uses:**
 - Commercial (7.6%, 5.70 acres): Small-scale retail, convenience stores, banks — walkable and integrated.
 - Semi-Public/Public/Exempt (11.3% combined): Community facilities like churches, libraries, or public buildings with higher improvement values.
 - Parks/Recreation: Minimal but present for local access.
 - Industrial: Small legacy presence (3.8%, 2.86 acres), often larger parcels for light uses.

T-2 Neighborhood Transect

The T-2 Neighborhood Transect comprises the walkable residential neighborhoods immediately surrounding the historic core and serves as the primary transitional zone between the dense urban center and outer areas. These neighborhoods evolved primarily in the mid-20th century through

post-WWII expansion and 1970s–1990s subdivisions, extending the grid pattern outward while introducing some cul-de-sacs and larger lots.

Key Characteristics

- **Size and Scale:** Total area 145 acres — a balanced ring around T-1 that maintains connectivity via local streets and sidewalks.
- **Dominant Land Use:** Residential (62%, 90 acres) — mix of single-family detached (primary), two-family, and limited multifamily; median lot size 0.35 acres.
- **Historic Character:** Blend of pre-1950 (35%) and 1950–1990 construction; modest expansion of the original settlement pattern with some Victorian and mid-century ranch influences.
- **Building Stock and Form:** Residential footprints averaging 1,750–2,200 sq ft; wider frontages (60–80 ft) than T-1 but still supportive of streetscapes; many homes with front porches and mature tree canopies.
- **Non-Residential Uses:** Small-scale commercial and services (6%, convenience stores, offices); public/semi-public (12%, churches, community facilities, elementary school proximity); scattered parks and green spaces.
- **Overall Character:** Stable, family-oriented neighborhoods with strong pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to downtown; tree-lined streets, active front yards, and a sense of community that bridges the historic core with newer growth while preserving Eastern Shore scale and charm.

T-3 Suburban Transect

The T-3 Suburban Transect includes established low- to medium-density residential areas developed primarily from the 1980s onward, reflecting Greensboro's more recent growth along peripheral roads and in annexed areas.

Key Characteristics

- **Size and Scale:** Total area 165 acres — larger parcels and more open layout than inner transects.
- **Dominant Land Use:** Residential (78%, 129 acres) — predominantly single-family detached on larger lots (median 0.5–0.75 acres).
- **Historic Character:** Mostly post-1970 construction with limited pre-1950 remnants; reflects modern suburban expansion tied to regional economic and housing trends.
- **Building Stock and Form:** Larger homes (mean 2,200+ sq ft), two-car garages, deeper setbacks; some cluster developments with shared open space.
- **Non-Residential Uses:** Limited commercial (4%); public facilities and parks (10%); minimal industrial.
- **Overall Character:** Quiet, auto-oriented suburban neighborhoods with good access to town services; larger yards; cul-de-sacs in newer sections; and visual transitions to rural edges that maintain the Town's rural aesthetic appeal.

T-4 Rural Edge Transect

The T-4 Transect forms the outer fringe, blending very low-density residential with agricultural and open lands that buffer the developed Town from surrounding Caroline County farmland.

Key Characteristics

Size and Scale: The total area is 187 acres within the corporate limits.

Dominant Land Use: Low-density residential and agriculture/open space (residential 45%, ag/open 45%).

Historic Character: Sparse pre-1950 farmsteads with newer rural-residential infill.

Building Stock and Form: Large-lot single-family homes (1+ acre), farm structures, and preserved woodlands/fields.

Non-Residential Uses: Minimal; focuses on parks, natural buffers along the Choptank River and Forge Branch, and limited public uses.

Overall Character: Rural-residential edge that protects the Town's small-town feel, provides scenic gateways, and supports environmental stewardship along the river.

Special Employment District

This special district encompasses the Greensboro Industrial Park, rail-adjacent sites along Sunset Avenue, and limited highway-oriented commercial nodes along MD Route 313. It is designed to concentrate job-creating uses away from residential neighborhoods while allowing only compatible, low-impact employment activities. Dominant uses: light industrial, warehousing, office, and restricted highway commercial (no big-box or high-intensity retail). Development standards emphasize landscaping buffers, shared access, and compatibility with adjacent transects.

Size and Scale: 45 acres.

Character: Functional, employment-focused, screened from view where abutting residential areas, supporting economic vitality without compromising the historic or residential fabric.

Future Land Use

The Land Use Plan realigns Greensboro's future land use with the transect framework. Primary directions include:

- Prioritize infill and redevelopment in T-1, T-2, and T-3.
- Limit expansion in T-3 to what infrastructure can support.

- Protection of T-4 land as potential areas for development beyond the planning period, and the application of best management practices along the Choptank River and in the vicinity of sensitive areas through techniques such as buffers, conservation easements, and agricultural preservation programs.
- Contained growth in the Special Employment District to support jobs without sprawl.

This pattern supports a projected population of about 2,250–2,540 residents by 2050 while preserving approximately 30% agricultural/open space and maintaining the Town's compact, walkable scale.

Implementation Strategies - Transects

The implementation strategies outlined below serve as the practical bridge between Greensboro's visionary goals and objectives and the day-to-day decisions that will shape the Town's future development. These strategies translate the transect-based land use framework—rooted in Greensboro's historic evolution from a rural crossroads village to a compact, walkable municipal center—into clear, actionable steps using traditional zoning tools (use-based districts, dimensional standards, permitted/conditional uses, and performance criteria). They prioritize infill and redevelopment in the more central and connected T-1 and T-2 areas and guide thoughtful evolution in T-3 to mirror the stable, family-oriented, pedestrian-friendly character of T-2, protect the rural edge and environmental assets in T-4 as a long-term holding area beyond the current planning horizon, and concentrate employment-generating uses in the Special Employment District to support economic vitality without compromising residential neighborhoods or rural aesthetics.

By aligning with Maryland's statutory requirements—including sensitive areas protection (§ 3-104), water resources management, climate resilience (Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022), environmental justice principles, and the eight Sustainable Growth Planning Principles—these strategies ensure orderly, sustainable, and equitable growth that respects Greensboro's small-town Eastern Shore character, preserves the Choptank River and associated natural resources, enhances walkability and connectivity, and positions the Town to accommodate a projected population of about 2,250–2,540 residents by 2050 while maintaining approximately 30% agricultural and open space.

Adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan, these strategies provide the Planning Commission, Town Council, staff, developers, and residents with a consistent policy and regulatory roadmap for zoning amendments, subdivision approvals, capital improvements, annexation decisions, grant applications, and community investments over the next 20+ years. Annual reporting under Land Use Article § 1-207 and performance tracking will allow the Town to measure progress, adapt to changing conditions, and ensure that growth continues to deliver benefits for all residents—particularly families, seniors, and underserved populations—in line with the Town's commitment to inclusive, resilient, and heritage-sensitive development.

T-1 Urban Core Transect

Focus: Preserve and enhance the historic, compact center with pre-1950 buildings, mixed uses, narrow lots/streets, and pedestrian scale through traditional zoning that permits compatible uses and enforces dimensional standards to maintain heritage while prioritizing infill/redevelopment.

Strategies:

- **Short-Term (1-3 Years):** Create a T-1 Urban Core zoning district for the historic core now zoned CC and parts of R-1. Permit mixed uses (residences above shops, small retail) with standards for lot coverage, height (2–3 stories), shallow front setbacks, side and rear yards, and reduced parking. Provide facade grants and tax credits for pre-1950 buildings.
- Compare the historic core’s built pattern with R-1 standards. Document representative lot area and frontage (median lot 0.239 acres; frontages 50–60 feet), setbacks, building height and footprint, block size and use mix in T-1, and identify where R-1 standards minimum lot area and width make that pattern nonconforming. Use the findings to write the T-1 Urban Core district.
- **Medium-Term (4-10 Years):** Target infill on underutilized parcels, enforcing dimensional standards for narrow frontages (50-60 ft), modest footprints, and streetscape continuity. Require stormwater BMPs and tree planting in approvals.
- **Long-Term (11+ Years):** Apply appropriate use restrictions/variances to protect historic integrity; track vacancy/pedestrian metrics for vitality.
- **Key Actions:** Coordinate with Maryland Historical Trust; use hearings/digital tools for input.

T-2 Neighborhood Transect

Focus: Strengthen stable, family-oriented neighborhoods as a transitional ring, blending historic and mid-20th-century buildings, grid connectivity, modest lots (median 0.35 acres), and walkable features; use traditional zoning for diverse housing infill mirroring community character.

Short-Term (1-3 Years): Create a T-2 Neighborhood zoning district for the ring around the core now zoned R-1, R-2 and R-3. Permit single-family homes, duplexes, small multifamily buildings and ADUs at 2–6 units per acre, with standards for lot size, setbacks, height, coverage, porches and street trees. Accessory dwelling units are authorized on land with a qualifying single-family dwelling pursuant to HB 1466 (2025), effective October 1, 2026.

- **Medium-Term (4-10 Years):** Promote infill/rehabilitation on vacant lots through permitted uses, requiring green infrastructure (permeable surfaces, street trees) and traffic calming in approvals. Use neighborhood input for EJ-focused amenities.
- **Long-Term (11+ Years):** Require sidewalks/bike paths in new approvals; phase expansions only with capacity and tracking of housing diversity/poverty reduction.
- **Key Actions:** Partner with the county for links; apply resiliency grants for canopy/stormwater.

T-3 Suburban Transect

Focus: Manage medium-density areas, prioritize infill and redevelopment that mirrors T-2 character—family-oriented, walkable neighborhoods with connectivity, modest scales, porches/trees, and gradual evolution toward pedestrian-friendly patterns—while limiting major new subdivisions and tying growth to infrastructure.

Strategies:

- **Short-Term (1-3 Years):** Create a T-3 Suburban zoning district for established suburban neighborhoods. Evaluate rezoning T-3 blocks that have grid streets, sidewalks and sewer to T-2, so missing-middle housing is allowed at T-2 densities.
- **Medium-Term (4-10 Years):** Encourage infill/rehabilitation on underutilized or vacant parcels (e.g., via lot splits, redevelopment of older homes) mirroring T-2 patterns—modest footprints, active front yards, mature canopies—while incorporating green infrastructure (shared stormwater, native landscaping) and multimodal features (sidewalks, bike accommodations, traffic-calming) in approvals.
- **Long-Term (11+ Years):** Monitor evolution toward T-2 character through indicators (e.g., added walkability features, housing diversity); phase any limited expansions only where infrastructure supports equitable access to parks/trails/schools for families and underserved residents.
- **Key Actions:** Coordinate infrastructure with state DOT/MDE; explore incentives/density transfers to promote compatible infill over edge expansion.

T-4 Rural Edge Transect

Focus: Keep the T-4 Rural Edge in agriculture and open space as a long-term reserve for needs beyond 2050. Apply buffers, setbacks and low density in sensitive portions (river, stream and DNR-mapped features) and preserve parks, trails, greenways and stream buffers in perpetuity through easements.

Strategies:

- **Short-Term (1-3 Years):** Create a T-4 Rural Edge zoning district that keeps agriculture and open space as the principal uses through 2050. Allow homes only at one unit per 10 acres or through clustering that keeps at least 80% of the parcel open, and do not extend public sewer to T-4 during the planning period. Enforce riparian buffers, setbacks and low-impact design in sensitive areas.
- **Medium-Term (4-10 Years):** Limit to permitted infill; require BMPs (living shorelines, forested buffers) for habitat/flood resilience.
- **Long-Term (11+ Years):** Maintain as reserves; reevaluate post-horizon only with analysis, preserving gateways/ecology.
- **Key Actions:** Partner with DNR, MDE and the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MALPF) for easements/funding; ensure equitable rural trail/park access.

Special Employment District

Focus: Concentrate low-impact jobs in industrial/rail/highway nodes via traditional zoning with buffers/standards to screen from residential areas and support the economy without sprawl.

Strategies:

- **Short-Term (1-3 Years):** Create a Special Employment zoning district and rezone the Industrial Park, the rail-adjacent Sunset Avenue sites and the MD 313 commercial nodes (now I-1, I-2, HC and LC) into it. Permit light industrial, warehousing, office and restricted commercial uses, with landscaping buffers and access, lighting and noise controls.
- **Medium-Term (4-10 Years):** Attract businesses via incentives/sustainable features (solar, EV); add multimodal access standards.
- **Long-Term (11+ Years):** Retain existing; review for compatibility/adaptive reuse.
- **Key Actions:** Collaborate with the county; align with growth principles for funding.

These strategies advance a cohesive, walkable town pattern through traditional zoning, with T-3 evolving to complement T-2's family/neighborhood character via targeted infill and redevelopment.

Overall Implementation Strategies

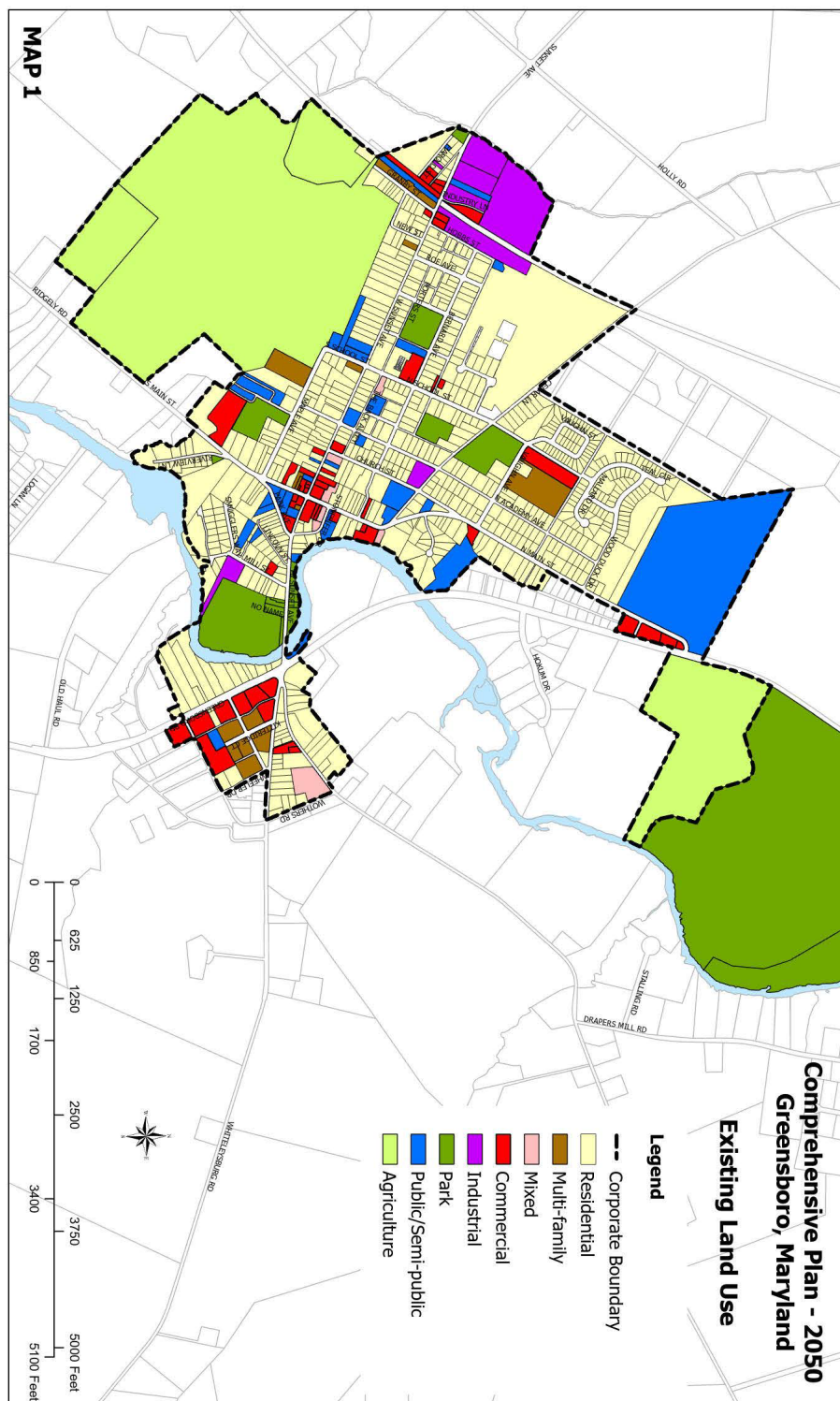
The implementation strategies outlined in the transect-specific sections provide targeted, area-focused actions to realize the vision of the Comprehensive Plan for Greensboro. To ensure cohesive, effective, and sustainable execution across the entire Town, the following general, overall implementation strategies apply town-wide and complement the transect-level approaches. These draw from Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) guidance, best practices for small rural/municipal towns, and state requirements for plan consistency, monitoring, and adaptive management.

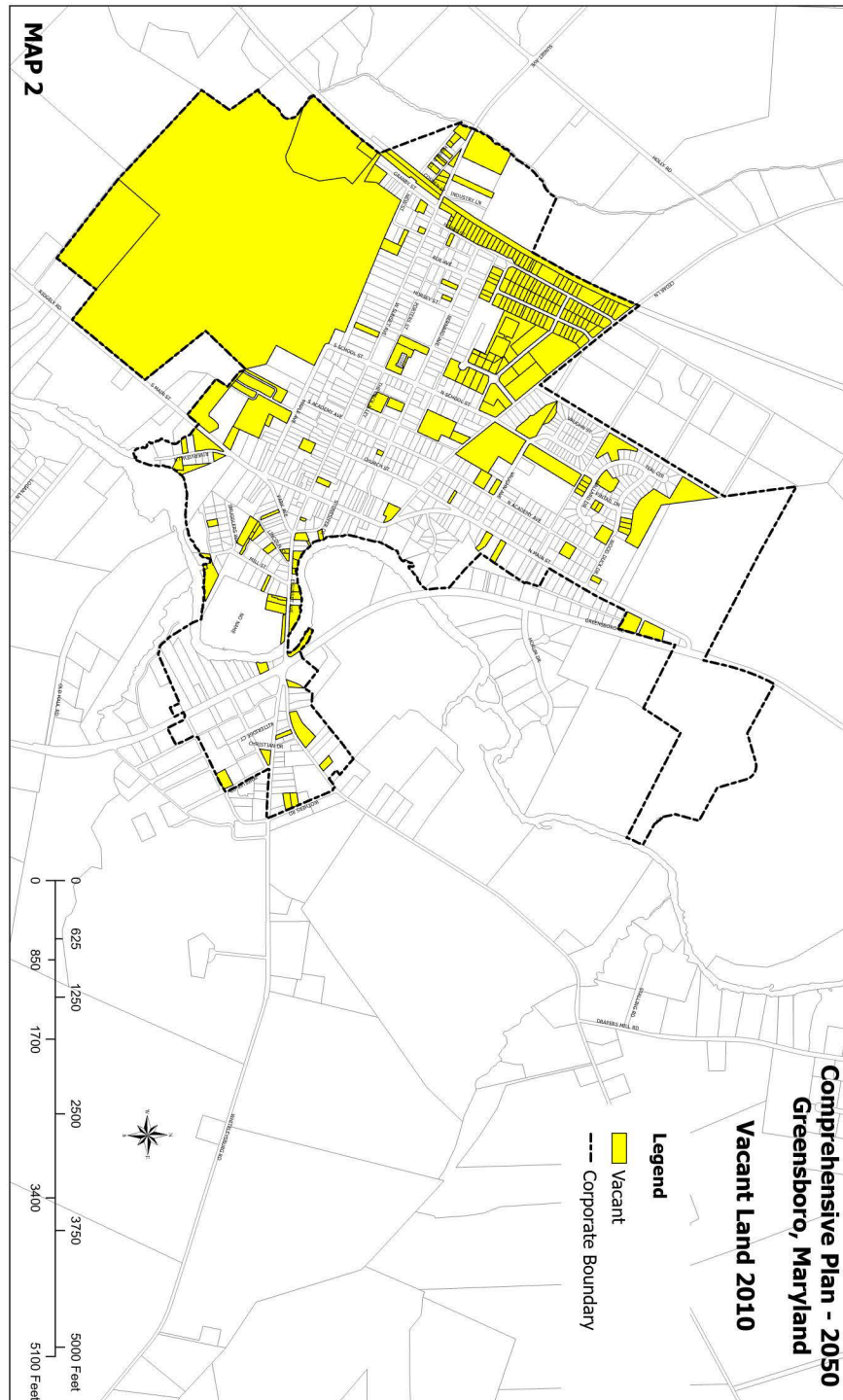
- **Development Regulations (Land Use Article § 3-103) (Short- to Medium-Term Priority):** Within 1–3 years of plan adoption, comprehensively update the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to fully incorporate the transect framework using traditional use-based districts, dimensional standards, and performance criteria. A zoning overhaul includes standardizing definitions, simplifying infill/redevelopment procedures (e.g., streamlined site plan reviews in T-1/T-2/T-3), reducing barriers to compatible housing types (e.g., ADUs, missing middle housing), and embedding protections for sensitive areas (e.g., mandatory buffers, low-impact requirements). Consolidate related documents where feasible to improve clarity and administrative efficiency, ensuring all regulations remain consistent with the Plan's goals, the eight Sustainable Growth Planning Principles, and state mandates (e.g., sensitive areas § 3-104, water resources).
- **Capital Improvements Programming and Infrastructure Coordination:** Develop and annually update a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) that prioritizes investments aligned with the Plan—such as wastewater capacity expansions, stormwater BMP retrofits, sidewalk/bike lane completions, trail extensions to the Choptank River, and

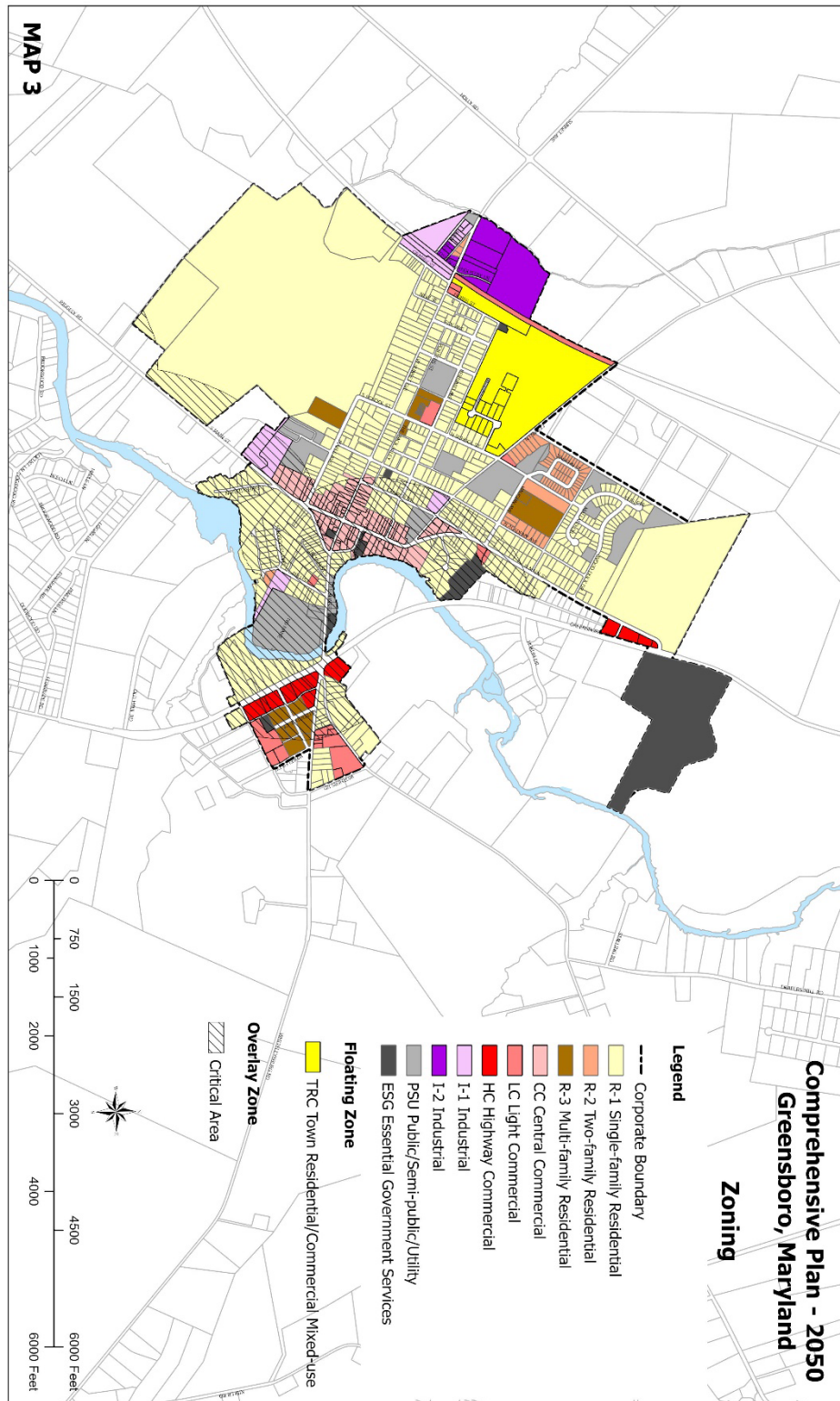
multimodal enhancements along MD Routes 313/480/314. Coordinate with Caroline County and state agencies (e.g., Maryland Department of Transportation, MDE, DNR) through intergovernmental agreements to phase infrastructure in growth areas, avoid over-extension in rural edges, and leverage Priority Funding Areas (PFAs) for state/federal grants. Tie annexations and major approvals to demonstrated infrastructure capacity.

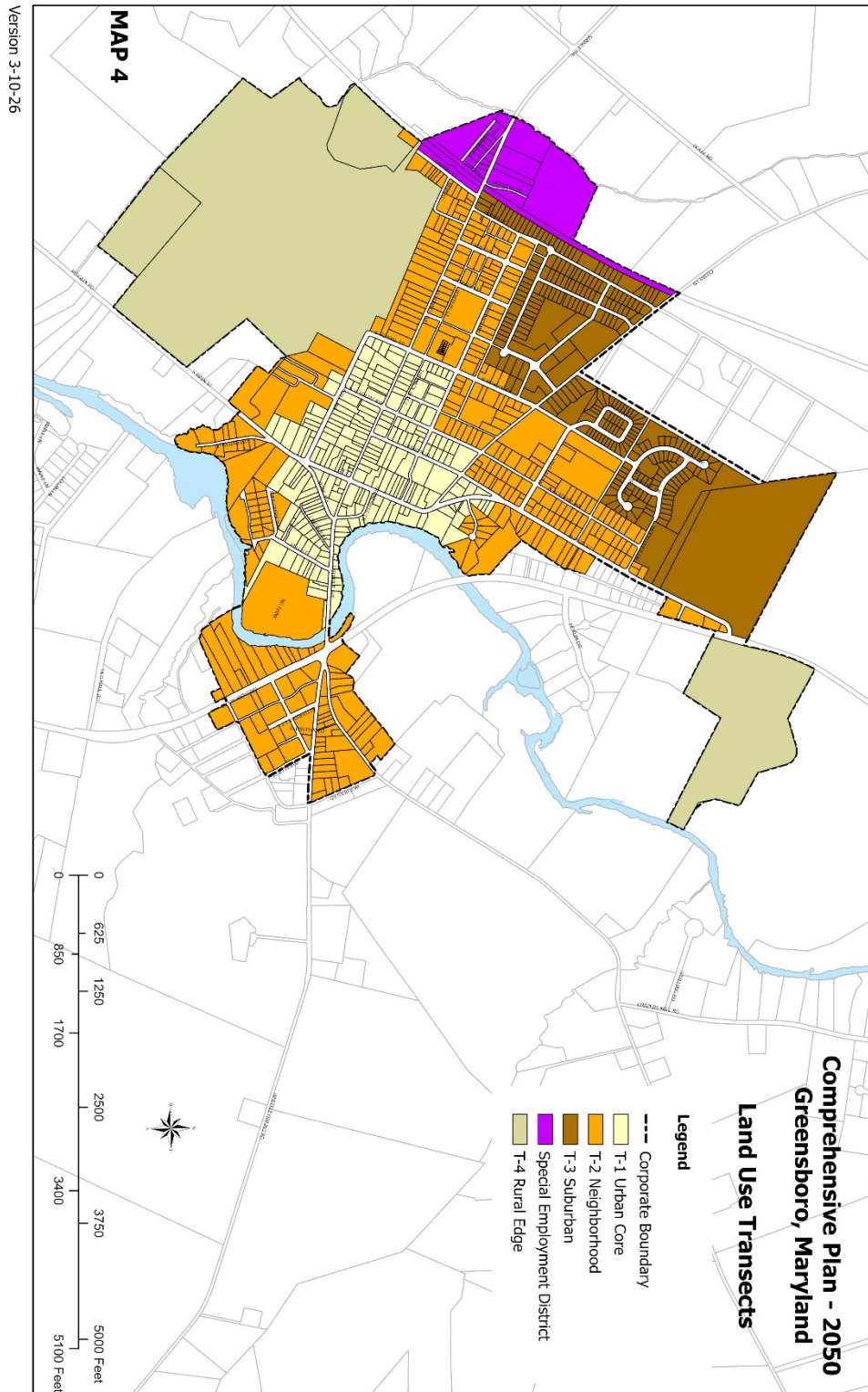
- **Incentive and Funding Programs:** Establish or expand financial tools to encourage plan-compliant development, including property tax credits for energy-efficient retrofits, facade improvements, and affordable/workforce housing; grants for business investments in the Special Employment District; and transferable development rights (TDRs) in conjunction with Caroline County to shift density from sensitive/agricultural areas to infill zones. Pursue state/federal funding streams (e.g., resiliency grants under Climate Solutions Now Act, Justice40-aligned programs for EJ benefits, Main Street Maryland for downtown vitality) by demonstrating alignment with plan priorities like climate resilience, water quality, and equitable access.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptive Management:** Within six months of adoption, the Planning Commission will adopt an Implementation Matrix drawn from Table SA-1 and Chapter XI, naming a lead, a time frame and a measure for each strategy. The Commission will report progress in its Annual Report under Land Use Article § 1-207 and in the Five-Year Mid-Cycle Report. Measures include the share of new dwelling units inside the corporate limits and on public sewer (target 100%); new lots created in T-4 (target none); the share of new units outside the Kinnamon Meadows PUD located in T-1 and T-2 (target at least 50%); new units by type and affordability, cost burden and poverty; stormwater BMPs installed, sidewalk and trail miles added, and Choptank water-quality trends; and participation by seniors and by low-income, minority and limited-English-proficiency residents.
- **Community Engagement and Partnerships:** Maintain ongoing, inclusive public involvement through digital tools (online surveys, town website/app enhancements), citizen advisory committees (e.g., for beautification, business vitality, resiliency), and annual public forums. Strengthen partnerships with Caroline County for housing, economic development, and regional coordination; with state agencies for technical assistance and funding; and with community organizations for EJ-focused outreach to ensure benefits reach overburdened/underserved populations.
- **Consistency and Enforcement:** Require all public and private actions—including rezonings, subdivisions, site plans, annexations, and capital projects—to demonstrate consistency with the adopted comprehensive Plan.

These overarching strategies provide the structural foundation for successful plan implementation, ensuring Greensboro achieves orderly, resilient, equitable growth that preserves its Eastern Shore heritage and Choptank River resources while adapting to future needs.









CHAPTER III - COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT

Introduction

Community facilities are essential components of Greensboro's infrastructure, supporting residents' health, safety, education, recreation, and overall quality of life (see Map 5). This element updates the information from the 2010 Comprehensive Plan, incorporating changes, additions, and current conditions as of 2026. It describes key facilities, including capacities where applicable and highlights known issues or recent developments. Covered facilities include water and sewer systems, parks and recreation areas, public buildings, police and fire services, the library, schools, and health services. Since 2010, Greensboro has experienced modest population growth, placing additional demands on some facilities, while others have seen improvements or face ongoing challenges.

Water System

The Town of Greensboro's water system continues to be supplied by three wells drawing from the Piney Point Aquifer: the Hobbs Street Well (300 gallons per minute, or gpm), the Academy Street Well (325 gpm), and the third well along MD Route 313 (350 gpm). Based on the latest available data, the system provides high-quality water, with disinfection as the primary treatment, using chlorine to remove bacteria. The permitted average daily appropriation is 325,000 gallons per day (gpd), with a permitted maximum daily withdrawal of 455,000 gpd, as established in the 2007 permit update from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). The system operates continuously, with periodic maintenance such as air lancing of sand filters and pressure testing.

Average daily demand has remained relatively stable due to modest population growth, estimated at approximately 183,000 gpd based on 2007 figures and adjusted for limited development since then. More recent assessments, aligned with wastewater flows (around 167,000 gpd in 2023), suggest water demand is similar, likely in the range of 180,000–190,000 gpd as of 2025. Peak demands have not exceeded the permitted maximum, and the system maintains a surplus production capability of approximately 409,000 gpd beyond maximum daily demand, based on state design standards that require capacity equal to peak flow with the largest well out of service (resulting in a total production capacity of 864,000 gpd under those conditions).

Improvements since 2010 include ongoing well rehabilitation and system monitoring. However, a significant issue arose in July 2024 when the system was deliberately sabotaged, leading to abnormally high chlorine levels. This incident prompted a criminal investigation by the Caroline County Sheriff's Department and the issuance of temporary boil-water advisories. The system implemented enhanced security measures, such as improved fencing and monitoring, to prevent future incidents. Water quality remains good overall, with no long-term contamination issues reported in recent assessments, and the system meets all EPA and state standards.

Available capacity for growth is calculated as the permitted average daily appropriation minus current average demand, accounting for a 10% drought allowance added to demand for safety.

Using an estimated 2025 average demand of 183,000 gpd, adding the drought allowance (18,300 gpd) results in an effective demand of 201,300 gpd, leaving approximately 123,700 gpd available under normal conditions. However, infiltration and unaccounted-for water (historically high, contributing to the 2007 permit exceedances) may reduce effective availability during peaks. Using the Town's standard projection of 250 gpd per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU)—a metric that accounts for residential demand—this translates to approximately 495 EDUs for potential new development. Greensboro plans no major expansions to the appropriation permit, reflecting its cautious approach to growth while ensuring sustainable use of the Piney Point Aquifer and protecting the Choptank River watershed.

The Town will not extend public sewer outside its corporate limits during the planning period. Map 1-4 of the draft Caroline County Comprehensive Plan (June 2026) shows Tier II land around the Town, which signals sewer service the Town does not plan to provide. The Town will ask the County to align its tier map and the County Water and Sewer Plan with this policy (Chapter IV, County Coordination).

The Town will update its 2006 wastewater allocation policy, which limits new taps mainly to public uses, rehabilitation and non-residential job creation. The update will reserve 60 EDUs through 2030 for residential infill, accessory dwelling units and missing-middle housing inside the corporate limits, within the roughly 300-EDU nutrient limit.

Sewer System

Greensboro's wastewater treatment plant is a fixed-film, activated sludge facility originally built in 1968 and upgraded in 1996. It underwent an Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) upgrade in June 2016, increasing its design capacity from 0.28 million gallons per day (MGD) to 0.332 MGD (332,000 gallons per day, or gpd). The permitted capacity is also 332,000 gpd. The increase in design capacity from 0.28 MGD to 0.332 MGD was made to accommodate 52,000 gpd of additional flow from the Goldsboro sewer service area, which includes properties located within the Town of Goldsboro and 25 properties located in the unincorporated area around Goldsboro. The Town of Greensboro owns and operates the plant as a regional facility. It treats wastewater from Greensboro, from Goldsboro, and from that limited unincorporated service area. Of the 332,000 gpd permitted capacity, 52,000 gpd is reserved to Goldsboro under the regional service arrangement. Goldsboro's reserved allocation—including any unused portion of that allotment—cannot be counted as available capacity for Greensboro growth. The plant discharges treated effluent into a tributary of the Choptank River. The collection system spans about 46,000 feet of mains, primarily 8-inch PVC pipes, divided into a northern gravity-flow zone and a southern pumped zone.

Average daily flows have increased modestly since 2010, when they were around 142,000 gpd. More recent data from the Maryland Department of the Environment's 2025 Bay Restoration Fund Advisory Committee Report indicate an average annual flow of 0.167 MGD (167,000 gpd) in calendar year 2023, reflecting stable operations amid population growth and connections from nearby areas. This average daily flow represents approximately 50% utilization of the upgraded capacity, leaving about 165,000 gpd of plant-wide unused hydraulic capacity under normal conditions. That plant-wide remainder is not Greensboro-only capacity. After deducting Goldsboro's reserved 52,000 gpd (used and unused), approximately 113,000 gpd remains as hydraulic capacity that may be attributed to Greensboro. However, peak flows during heavy rains can strain the system because ongoing infiltration and inflow (I/I) issues

allow stormwater to seep into leaky pipes. In 2019, officials recommended relining pipes to mitigate this burden on the plant.

Since 2010, the ENR upgrade has addressed longstanding nutrient discharge issues, enabling the plant to achieve significant reductions: in 2023, it removed 5,897 pounds of total nitrogen and 946 pounds of total phosphorus annually. A new regional approach connected failing septic systems in nearby areas, such as Goldsboro, to Greensboro's system, adding to demand but improving environmental outcomes. In August 2025, the Greensboro Mayor and Council elected not to extend service to the remaining north county towns. They deferred the option of an alternative treatment facility to serve the northern towns to Caroline County.

Available hydraulic capacity for Greensboro growth is not the plant-wide remainder of 165,000 gpd. Of the 332,000 gpd permitted capacity, 52,000 gpd is reserved to the Town of Goldsboro. Goldsboro's unused allotted flow cannot be included in Greensboro's future growth capacity calculations. Deducting the 52,000 gpd Goldsboro reservation from the 165,000 gpd plant-wide unused capacity leaves approximately 113,000 gpd attributable to Greensboro. Using the Town's standard projection of 250 gpd per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU), that hydraulic remainder translates to approximately 450 EDUs—not 660 EDUs. However, actual availability may be lower during peak events due to I/I, and the Town maintains a cautious wastewater allocation program established in 2006, limiting new sewer taps primarily to public uses, rehabilitative projects, and non-residential job-creating developments. Nutrient wasteload limits under the Chesapeake Bay TMDL remain more restrictive than hydraulic capacity; without purchased or generated offsets, planned Greensboro growth should be held to no more than about 300 EDUs so that the Town does not preclude TMDL achievement in the Upper Choptank. No major further expansions are planned, with emphasis on sustainable management to support the Town's vision for controlled growth while protecting the Choptank River watershed.

Capacity account	Gallons per day	EDUs @ 250 gpd
Plant permitted capacity (ENR)	332,000	1,328
Goldsboro reserved allocation	52,000	208
2023 plant-wide average daily flow (combined)	167,000	—
Plant-wide unused hydraulic capacity	165,000	660
Unused capacity after deducting Goldsboro reservation	113,000	450
Nutrient-limited cap without offsets (binding)	—	300

Table CF-1. Wastewater treatment plant capacity.

Parks and Recreation

Greensboro offers a variety of parks and recreational spaces that enhance community life, with adequate service levels given the Town's rural setting. Key facilities include:

Ober Community Park: A 3-acre town park located behind the Schoolhouse Apartments at Horsey Street and Bernard Avenues, this well-maintained park features open spaces, playgrounds, and picnic areas. It serves as a central hub for community events.

Choptank River Park and Greensboro Boat Ramp: On the north side of the Sunset Avenue bridge, this park provides river access, picnic areas, and boating facilities. It offers opportunities for fishing, kayaking, and outdoor enjoyment along the Choptank River. The park is also the Town's waterfront gathering place, hosting community events such as Riverfest.

Cedar Lane Park: Includes ballfields and recreational amenities supporting northern town residents.

Curtis Harvey Memorial Park: A smaller park with green spaces and potential for passive recreation.

North County Regional Park: A 2020s addition managed by Caroline County, located at 14267 Greensboro Road. It features over 2 miles of hiking trails, an entrance road, parking, sidewalks, a pavilion, and restrooms. This park expands active and passive recreation options, including loop trails for walking and nature observation.

Lions Club Ball Field: A 10-acre nonprofit-owned (Greensboro Lions Club) recreation property at 12833 Ridgely Road, providing ball fields and supporting civic activities.

Table CF-2. Parks, open space, and recreation lands serving Greensboro.

Park / open space	Approx. acres	Ownership/management	Notes
Ober Community Park	3.0	Town	Playground, picnic, community events
Choptank River Park / Boat Ramp	—	Town	River access, fishing, kayaking
Cedar Lane Park	—	Town	Ballfields; north-side recreation
Curtis Harvey Memorial Park	—	Town	Passive green space
Mill Street Park	1.6	Town	River-adjacent open space
Lions Club Ball Field	10.0	Greensboro Lions Club	Ball fields; civic use
North County Regional Park	—	Caroline County	County-owned; outside Town corporate area. Trails, pavilion, restrooms.
Other (Forge Branch picnic, tot lots, annexation parcels)	8+	Town / mixed	Active recreation from post-2010 southern annexations plus smaller passive parcels

North County Regional Park serves Town residents but is owned and managed by Caroline County and is outside the corporate boundary.

Mill Street Park: 1.6 acres of river-adjacent open space.

Additional facilities include the Forge Branch picnic area, tot lots at Rolling Meadows and the community center, and public boat launching on the Choptank River near the carnival grounds.

Southern annexations after 2010 added eight acres of active recreation space and smaller passive parcels. Overall, parks meet standard measures of adequacy, with no major capacity issues, though maintenance funding remains a concern in budget discussions.

Any change to parkland that received Program Open Space or Community Parks and Playgrounds funding requires prior coordination with DNR Land Acquisition and Planning.

Public Buildings

Public buildings in Greensboro support government operations and community activities:

Town Hall: Located on Main Street since 2005, it houses administrative offices, meeting rooms for boards and commissions, and serves as the central hub for town government. Hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday-Friday. It meets functional needs adequately, with no reported capacity issues.

The Greensboro Police Department currently emphasizes community-oriented policing. It provides neighborhood interaction and responds to local needs.

Former Town Office: Now used for police and public works, increasing space for these departments.

No major additions since 2010, but the buildings are well maintained. Emergency contacts for after-hours issues route through Caroline County Dispatch.

Police Department

A significant issue emerged in 2024: staffing shortages reduced the department to one officer, prompting discussions about potential closure or consolidation with county services. As of 2026, the Town is evaluating options, including partnerships with the Caroline County Sheriff's Office, to ensure coverage. No final decision has been made, but if unresolved, this could increase response times and risk to community safety.

Fire and Emergency Services

Greensboro's fire and emergency services are primarily provided by the Greensboro Volunteer Fire Company (GVFC), a nonprofit, 100% volunteer organization operating as Station 600 at 116 North Main Street. Established to serve the community, GVFC responds to about 350 emergency calls annually, about one-third of which involve automotive rescues, and maintains 24-hour, 7-day-a-week coverage comparable to professional departments. The company also hosts Caroline County Department of Emergency Services (CCDES) employees at the station for enhanced emergency medical services (EMS) coordination. GVFC's annual operating budget is around \$130,000, and it owns its property with no plans to sell or lease it.

Personnel: GVFC has about 25 active volunteers who handle fire suppression, rescue operations, and initial EMS response. As a fully volunteer force, members undergo training to

ensure readiness for diverse emergencies. The department collaborates with CCDES on advanced EMS, with county paramedics sometimes stationed on-site to improve response times.

Equipment: GVFC's apparatus includes a mix of engines, rescue units, and support vehicles:

- Rescue Pumper 600: 2009 Pierce Arrow XT (1500 GPM pump/500-gallon tank/25B foam).
- Brush 602: 2017 Ram 5500 / 1989 Pierce mini-pumper (400 GPM/250-gallon tank).
- Engine 603: 1999 Pierce Dash 2000 (1250 GPM/1000-gallon tank/foam capacity).
- Engine 604: 2008 Pierce Velocity 7010 (1500 GPM/1000-gallon tank).
- Tanker 606: Freightliner tractor / Walker tanker (1000 GPM/5200-gallon tank).
- Utility 608: 2007 GMC Sierra 3500 utility body.
- Antique Apparatus: 1927 Hale pumper (for parades and historical purposes).

The department is seeking funding to upgrade rescue tools, including replacing outdated 2008 Hurst hydraulic extrication equipment with modern Genesis EForce battery-powered tools that better handle high-strength vehicle materials. Retired apparatus includes a 1990 Simon-Duplex/Saulsbury walk-in rescue unit.

Service Area: GVFC's primary service area covers the Town of Greensboro and northern Caroline County, extending into rural areas along Greensboro Road and River Road. It provides mutual aid to nearby departments in Denton, Ridgely, and Goldsboro, ensuring regional coverage for fires, rescues, medical emergencies, and other incidents. The company also supports community events, such as hall rentals and fundraisers like the "Big Boys Beer & Tool Bingo."

Caroline County Public Schools provides educational facilities in Greensboro, including the Greensboro Elementary School, located at 627 North Main Street, serving pre-K through grade 5. The school's State Rated Capacity is 818 students following the 2021 replacement project. It focuses on inclusive education and community involvement. Students in higher grades attend schools outside Town, such as North Caroline High School in Ridgely.

The Caroline County Public Library - Greensboro Branch (North County Branch) is at 101 Cedar Lane. It offers books, digital resources, programs, and community events. Hours are Monday-Thursday with breaks for sanitation (e.g., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and 3-6 p.m. most days; Wednesday until 8 p.m.), closed Friday-Sunday.

Built in 1997 alongside the community center, it serves as an educational and cultural hub. No capacity issues, but digital access expansions post-2020 have enhanced services.

Schools

Based on the Caroline County Public Schools Educational Facilities Master Plan and related documents, Greensboro Elementary School (GES), serving grades PK-5, has a State Rated Capacity (SRC) of 818 students. The school underwent a major replacement project completed in 2021, designed to accommodate 800-818 students and address prior overcapacity issues identified in earlier plans. The University of Maryland Shore Regional Medical Center is undergoing a \$540 million major expansion to replace the existing hospital and serve residents across Caroline,

Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties. Construction began in spring/summer 2025, with building occupancy on track for summer 2028.

According to the 2021 Enrollment Projections (part of the facilities planning process), enrollment was 739 in 2020 (90% utilization), with forecasts showing gradual increases: 795 in 2025 (97%), 798 in 2026 (98%), and reaching 843 by 2030 (103%), indicating impending overcapacity without interventions. However, the more recent 2025-26 data reports an actual enrollment of 840 students, already exceeding the SRC by about 3% (103% utilization), suggesting faster-than-projected growth and potential strain on facilities. This data aligns with the 2024 Educational Facilities Master Plan's note of a 3.1% projected countywide enrollment increase, underscoring the need for ongoing monitoring and possible expansions as outlined in capital improvement programs. The Plan emphasizes aligning facilities with enrollment trends to maintain educational quality, with GES's modern infrastructure helping mitigate immediate issues but requiring future adjustments for sustained capacity.

Health Facilities

Greensboro lacks a full-service hospital, with residents relying on regional facilities:

- Nearest hospitals include the University of Maryland Shore Medical Center at Easton (about 20 miles away) and Bayhealth Medical Center in Milford, DE (a similar distance). The University of Maryland Shore Regional Medical Center is undergoing a \$540 million major expansion to replace the existing hospital and serve residents across Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties. Construction began in spring/summer 2025, with building occupancy on track for summer 2028.
- Local options are limited to clinics or urgent care; for example, primary care may be available through nearby providers, but there is no dedicated town health center.

Known issues include limited access for rural residents and transportation challenges for non-emergency care. The fire department and county EMS support emergency services.

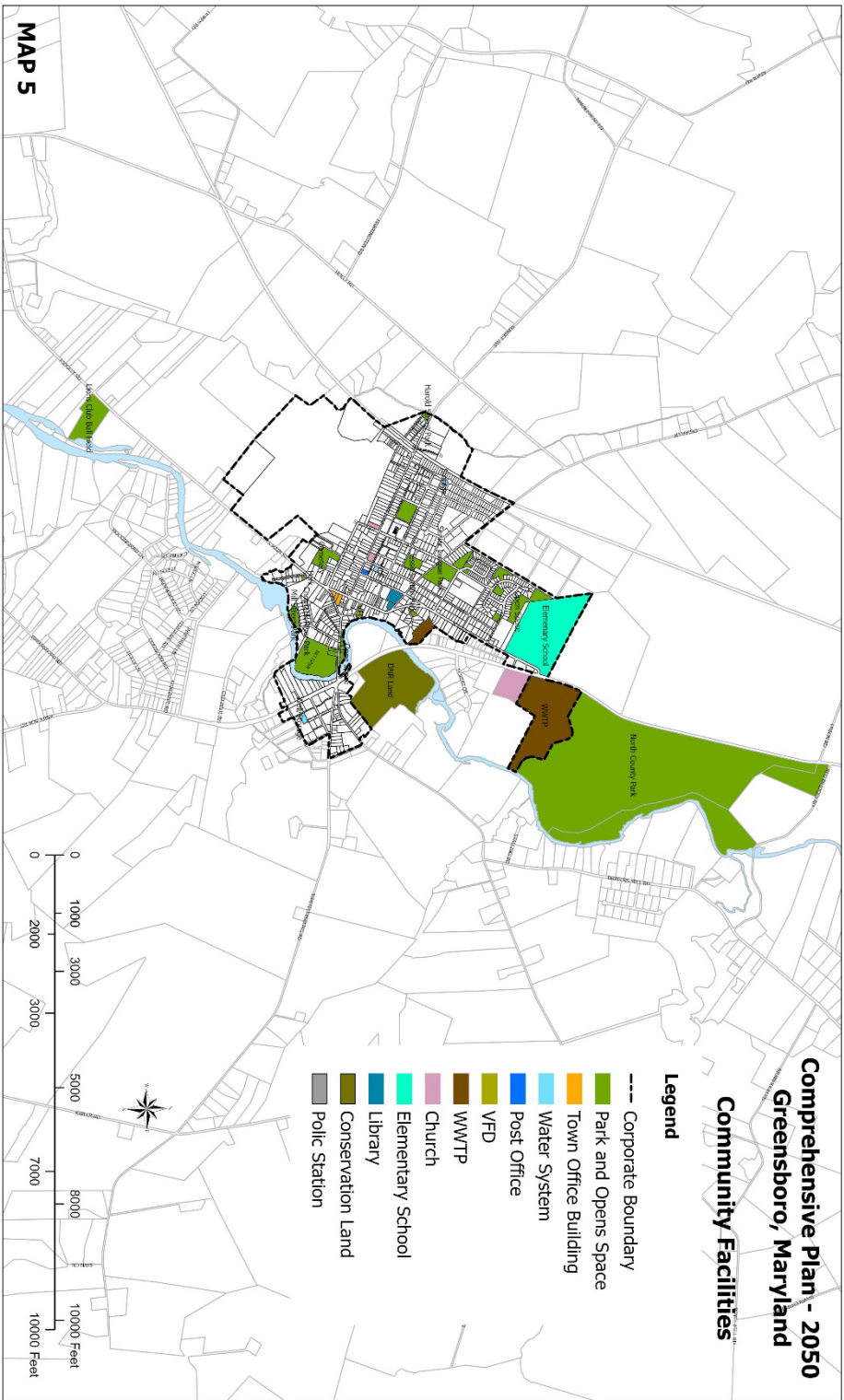
Religious Assembly Facilities

Greensboro hosts a limited number of religious assembly facilities within its corporate limits, all Christian churches that serve as hubs for worship and community gatherings. These reflect the Town's rural, Protestant heritage. No non-Christian religious institutions were identified within the town boundaries; residents may travel to nearby communities for diverse faith options.

Key facilities include:

- Greensboro Baptist Church (Southern Baptist Convention), at 401 W Sunset Avenue, offering Sunday Bible study at 9:30 a.m. and worship at 10:45 a.m.
- St. Paul's United Methodist Church (United Methodist), at 300 W Sunset Avenue.
- Whole Counsel of God Ministries, at 302 Church Street, is a non-denominational ministry.

These churches support the community's social needs through services and events.



CHAPTER IV - MUNICIPAL GROWTH ELEMENT

Introduction

This Municipal Growth Element (MGE) complies with §3-112 of the Land Use Article, Annotated Code of Maryland. It includes: analysis of past growth patterns; projections of future population growth; identification of land capacity within existing corporate limits (including infill and redevelopment); anticipated future municipal growth areas outside existing limits; land needed to satisfy demand at densities consistent with long-term development policy; impacts of growth on community facilities, infrastructure, and natural features (within and adjacent to the municipality); and mechanisms for financing growth, with coordination with Caroline County through shared data, joint meetings, and alignment on infrastructure (e.g., schools, roads, wastewater).

Past Growth Patterns

Greensboro has maintained slow, stable growth as a small Eastern Shore town. From 2000 to 2010, the population rose from 1,632 to about 1,900 (about 1.5% annually), driven by infill and subdivisions (e.g., Baldwin, Greensboro Farms). The 2020 Census counted 1,919 residents, and the 2020–2024 American Community Survey estimates 2,634. Development focused on residential infill within the corporate limits, with historic fabric preserved in T-1 (pre-1950 dominance) and suburban expansion in T-3.

Residential Development Capacity by Zoning District and Transect

Residential development capacity was calculated using the Greensboro Land Development Ordinance (2018 update), which emphasizes single-family development and provides limited multifamily options. Capacities were evaluated by transect and zoning district using the Maryland Department of Planning's suggested methodology (developable land identification, density assumptions, yield factors).

Vacant Properties

Vacant land inside the corporate limits can accommodate about 210 additional dwelling units. By zoning district, that is about 80 units in R-1, 70 in R-2 and 60 in R-3; by transect zone, about 30 units in T-1, 60 in T-2 and 120 in T-3, mainly the remaining phases of the Kinnamon Meadows PUD. The district and transect figures divide the same 210 units in two ways, and no growth is planned in T-4.

Underutilized Properties

Underutilized properties focus on developed residential parcels (mostly single-family) with excess land beyond zoning minimums (excluding environmental constraints like Critical Area and commercial/exempt parcels). Using MDP-style infill estimation (zoning density on excess developable land, conservative adjustments, minus existing units), the analysis identifies 70

parcels with 210 potential additional dwelling units (realistic via minor subdivision, ADUs, duplex conversions, or limited townhouse/multifamily additions).

Summary

Land needed for growth: The Baseline scenario requires about 207 additional dwelling units by 2050 and the Low scenario about 97. Capacity inside the corporate limits, excluding T-4, is 210 units. No land outside the corporate limits is needed to meet projected demand, and T-4 is not needed before 2050.

Growth Scenarios

The Growth Scenarios section outlines two realistic, infrastructure-constrained growth scenarios for Greensboro, Maryland, through 2050 (a 24-year planning horizon from the 2026 baseline). The Town's current population is 2,634 residents in 832 households (2020–2024 American Community Survey), an average household size of about 3.1 persons. The growth scenarios below start from the 2020 Census count of 1,919 residents, carried forward to a 2026 base of about 2,000 residents and 770 households; they do not use the higher ACS estimate, which carries a wide margin of error. Both scenarios reflect orderly, conservative development that preserves Greensboro's historic, walkable small-town character and environmentally sensitive areas, while aligning with Maryland's Sustainable Growth Planning Principles and wastewater treatment limits (a realistic cap of 300 additional equivalent dwelling units without major plant upgrades or regional expansions).

Low Growth Scenario

This high-likelihood scenario (70–80% probability) assumes an annual compound growth rate of 0.5%, driven by ongoing infrastructure constraints, economic conditions, and historic preservation priorities.

- Infill in T-1 (Urban Core) and T-2 (Neighborhood) adds only 5–10 new units (slow or partial realization on underutilized residential parcels).
- Kinnamon Meadows in T-3 sees delayed or minimal progress.
- No development occurs in T-4.

Projected 2050 outcomes:

- Population: 2,254 residents (+254 from baseline).
- Households/housing units: 867 (+97 units).

Impacts

Impacts remain minimal under the Low Growth Scenario. The existing wastewater treatment plant can accommodate the modest increase through routine maintenance alone, with no need for expansions or major upgrades. Greensboro Elementary School already enrolls 840 students against a State Rated Capacity of 818 (103% in 2025–26). Under this scenario, enrollment is

projected to reach approximately 105–112% of State Rated Capacity, or about 860–915 students. Caroline County Public Schools, which is responsible for school capacity, plans to address this through portable classrooms, attendance-area adjustments, or an addition identified in its Educational Facilities Master Plan—confirm with CCPS. The Town will share its growth projections with CCPS each year through its Annual Report. Demand for public safety, parks, roads, library services, and other municipal facilities will rise only marginally and will not require significant staffing or infrastructure changes. Overall, fiscal impacts on the Town of Greensboro and the burden on Caroline County government remain low. Natural resources are well protected, as growth occurs primarily through infill development on existing developed parcels, avoiding conversion of floodplain areas, agricultural land, or other environmentally sensitive resources.

Baseline Growth Scenario

This medium-likelihood scenario (50–60% probability) assumes an annual compound growth rate of 1.0%, supported by moderate wastewater improvements (e.g., efficiency upgrades, phased nutrient offsets, or partial expansions by the mid-2040s).

- Infill in T-1 and T-2 becomes more active, adding 10–15 new units total (from construction on vacant and/or underutilized residential parcels via minor subdivision, accessory dwelling units, or duplex conversions).
- Kinnamon Meadows in T-3 reaches substantial or full build-out, delivering 166–171 units (including 117 planned single-family homes across phases, 29 townhouse units, plus a 3-acre multifamily component yielding 20–25 units at effective densities of 6–9 units/acre).
- Additional infill in the T-3, 20 to 25 units
- No annexation is planned; T-4 remains undeveloped.

Projected 2050 outcomes:

- Population: 2,539 residents (+539 from baseline).
- Households/housing units: 977 (+207 units).

Impacts

Impacts remain manageable under the Baseline Growth Scenario with targeted, incremental investments and proactive planning. Wastewater treatment may require phased capacity additions, efficiency upgrades, or nutrient offset measures by the mid-2040s to accommodate cumulative demand, but these can be implemented without major disruptions. Greensboro Elementary School utilization is projected to reach approximately 112–118% of capacity, likely requiring county-level classroom additions or facility modernization to maintain educational quality.

Public safety staffing is expected to grow modestly—to less than 2 officers overall—while continuing to emphasize community-oriented, diverse training approaches. Parks and recreation facilities will benefit from the development of the North County Regional Park and other regional improvements. Roads, particularly MD 313, will require incremental upgrades to

enhance capacity, safety, and pedestrian and bicycle access. Library services and bilingual programs will expand in response to population growth and changing community needs.

The Town will safeguard natural resources through consistent application of clustering techniques, greenbelts, and environmentally sensitive design/low-impact development (ESD/LID) stormwater management practices, minimizing impacts on floodplains, wetlands, and other sensitive areas. Fiscal impacts on the Town of Greensboro are moderate and are largely offset by developer contributions, state and Maryland Department of the Environment grants, and appropriate user fees. The burden on Caroline County government remains moderate and is addressed through impact fees and ongoing joint planning efforts between the Town and the county.

Summary

Development Capacity

As discussed earlier, the residential development capacity of 210 dwelling units plus redevelopment capacity is adequate for either scenario. Capacity draws primarily from completing the Kinnamon Meadows Planned Unit Development (PUD) in the Suburban transect (T-3), plus modest infill on vacant and underutilized developed residential parcels in the Urban Core (T-1) and Neighborhood (T-2) transects. No growth is projected in the Rural Edge (T-4) transect.

Impacts

Under the Low Growth Scenario (0.5% annual growth), development impacts in Greensboro remain minimal and can be easily absorbed with no major investments required. Wastewater treatment continues with routine maintenance; Greensboro Elementary School utilization reaches 105–112% of capacity (manageable via portable classrooms); and demand for public safety, parks, roads, the library, and other services increases only marginally. Fiscal burdens on the Town and Caroline County stay low, while infill-focused growth protects natural resources by avoiding floodplains, agricultural land, and other sensitive areas.

In the Baseline Growth Scenario (1.0% annual growth, impacts are manageable with targeted, incremental investments. Wastewater may require phased additions or efficiency upgrades by the mid-2040s; school utilization is projected to reach 112–118% of capacity, likely requiring county-level classroom additions; public safety staffing grows modestly (less than 2 officers); parks benefit from regional developments; roads like MD 313 receive incremental upgrades for pedestrian and bicycle access; and library and bilingual services expand modestly. Clustering, greenbelts, and low-impact development practices safeguard natural resources. At the same time, moderate fiscal impacts on the Town are largely offset by developer fees, state grants, and user fees, with the county addressing burdens through impact fees and ongoing joint planning.

Funding Mechanisms

The identified impacts in the Municipal Growth Element (MGE) for Greensboro—primarily wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) upgrades or expansions, water supply enhancements (e.g., additional wells), school facility additions or modernizations (Greensboro Elementary), public safety staffing/equipment, parks and recreation expansions (e.g., North County Regional Park trails, fields, playgrounds), road improvements (e.g., MD 313 capacity, pedestrian/bike access), library expansions (bilingual services), and stormwater/ESD/LID practices—can be funded through a mix of local, state, federal, and private sources. These align with the needs of small towns and rural areas in Caroline County and support Chesapeake Bay restoration, equity, and resilience goals.

Funding is often layered (e.g., grants covering 50–100% of costs, loans covering the balance, and developer contributions offsetting the public burden). Key sources include:

Wastewater and Water Infrastructure (WWTP upgrades, water wells, stormwater)

- Bay Restoration Fund – Wastewater Program (Maryland Department of the Environment [MDE]): Provides grants (up to 100% for eligible costs) for Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) upgrades, sewer rehabilitation, stormwater BMPs, and extensions. Prioritizes public health/water quality projects tied to Chesapeake Bay goals.
- Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund (WQRLF) and Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund (DWRLF) (MDE): Low-interest loans (often with principal forgiveness/grants for disadvantaged/small communities) for wastewater treatment, water supply improvements, and related infrastructure. Applications are typically annual (December–January) and support minor expansions or efficiency measures.
- Water Supply Assistance Grant Program (MDE): Grants for publicly owned water facilities to address health/compliance issues (e.g., new wells or aquifer enhancements).
- Federal EPA Programs: Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and Drinking Water SRF capitalization grants (via MDE) provide low-interest loans/grants; recent allocations (e.g., \$124M+ to Maryland in recent years) prioritize small/underserved communities. The Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) offers direct, low-rate loans for projects ≥\$5M (potentially involving regional partnerships). Small and Disadvantaged Communities grants target compliance needs.
- USDA Rural Development Water & Waste Disposal Loans/Grants: Direct loans (low fixed rates, up to 40 years), grants, and guarantees for rural areas (<10,000 pop.); predevelopment planning grants available. Suited for Greensboro's scale.

Schools (Greensboro Elementary additions/modernizations)

- Caroline County Educational Facilities Master Plan funding: County general funds, state Public School Construction Program (via Maryland Interagency Committee on School Construction).
- Developer Pro-Rata Contributions/Impact Fees: Caroline County imposes development impact fees (e.g., \$5,000 per dwelling unit for schools/infrastructure); revenues are dedicated to school capital needs from new growth.

Parks and Recreation (North County Regional Park, trails, playgrounds)

- Program Open Space – Local (POS-Local) (Maryland Department of Natural Resources): Grants for acquisition, development, and improvements (e.g., trails, fields, playgrounds, parking); Caroline County has received POS-Local funds for North County Regional Park phases (e.g., recent approvals for trails/overlooks/shelters). Funded by property transfer tax; requires local match.
- Local Parks and Playgrounds Infrastructure Program (DNR): Complements POS for specific improvements (e.g., ADA-accessible features, playground equipment); recent funding for Caroline County projects.
- Sustainable Maryland Action Grants: Up to \$100,000 for certified municipalities supporting sustainability/resilience projects (e.g., park enhancements tied to climate goals).

Roads and Transportation (MD 313 upgrades, pedestrian/bike networks)

- State Highway Administration (SHA) or County Transportation Funds: Potential grants/partnerships for state routes (MD 313); developer exactions for local access.

Public Safety, Library, and Other (staffing, equipment, bilingual services)

- General Local Revenues/User Fees: Town budget, utility rates, or minor developer fees for incremental needs.
- State/Federal Grants: Limited targeted sources (e.g., community development block grants or equity-focused programs for bilingual services); often bundled with broader infrastructure.

Cross-Cutting/Local Mechanisms

- Developer Pro-Rata Contributions and Impact Fees: Require developers to pay proportional shares for infrastructure impacts (e.g., EDUs for WWTP, school capacity); Caroline County uses impact fees (\$5,000/DU for schools/infrastructure); offsets public costs in both scenarios.

- Bonds and Low-Interest Financing: Town bonds backed by user fees or grants (e.g., MWIFA-linked deposits for low-interest options).

In the Low Growth Scenario, minimal impacts rely on routine maintenance/user fees and small grants. Baseline Scenario needs targeted applications (e.g., Bay Restoration Fund for WWTP, POS-Local for parks) plus developer fees to keep burdens moderate. Pursuit of layered funding (state/federal grants first, then loans/developer contributions) maximizes affordability for Greensboro's small, disadvantaged community profile. Greensboro should prioritize applications to MDE/USDA/EPA and coordinate with Caroline County on county-level programs.

Annexation Plan

No specific parcels or areas are designated for annexation in this planning period, as the focus remains on utilizing vacant and underutilized land within current boundaries. Greensboro prioritizes accommodating projected population growth through infill and redevelopment within the corporate limits. This policy considers, among other things, limitations at the Greensboro WWTP.

Any annexation not described in this element requires an amendment to this Plan, including this Municipal Growth Element, before the annexation is approved. The 2010 Comprehensive Plan identified a growth area of about 3,590 acres outside the corporate limits; this Plan withdraws it.

Maryland's Smart Growth framework, established in 1997 and reinforced by subsequent legislation such as the 2009 Smart, Green, and Growing Planning Act and the 2012 Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act, prioritizes compact, efficient development to combat sprawl, preserve rural and natural lands, and optimize public infrastructure investments. Core principles include directing growth to existing communities and Priority Funding Areas (PFAs), promoting infill and redevelopment, protecting agricultural and environmental resources, and ensuring that development aligns with available services such as water, sewer, and transportation. Planning for significant growth outside Greensboro's corporate limits—such as the over 3,590-acre growth area identified in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan—runs counter to these principles for several reasons, particularly given the substantial untapped development capacity within the existing town boundaries.

Significant external expansion promotes urban sprawl by leapfrogging over serviced, underutilized land inside the Town, leading to inefficient land use and higher long-term costs for infrastructure extensions (e.g., roads, water/sewer lines, and public safety). Such expansion contradicts Smart Growth's emphasis on concentrating development in PFAs, where Greensboro's core (T-1 Urban Core, T-2 Neighborhood, and T-3 Suburban transects) already has public utilities and walkable, mixed-use potential. With ample internal capacity for infill and redevelopment, annexing large external areas would unnecessarily convert agricultural or forested land, fragment habitats, and undermine rural preservation goals.

In addition, it ignores environmental and equity considerations central to Smart Growth. Greensboro's location in the impaired Upper Choptank River watershed requires new

development to achieve "no net increase" in pollutant loads to comply with Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs). External growth would exacerbate impervious surface coverage, stormwater runoff, and habitat loss, straining natural systems already at capacity. These impacts are especially problematic in a community with environmental justice concerns, where low-income and minority residents (e.g., Hispanic/Latino populations facing higher poverty) could bear disproportionate burdens from degraded water quality or flooding without corresponding benefits like improved services.

Finally, the Town's modest growth projections (0.5–1.0% annually through 2050) can be fully accommodated within corporate limits, making external planning redundant and fiscally irresponsible. Smart Growth encourages "living within our means" by leveraging existing infrastructure rather than funding costly expansions that benefit few while taxing all residents. Greensboro's focus on infill aligns with state incentives such as the Bay Restoration Fund and the Program Open Space, which prioritize projects in established areas.

The town may consider limited annexation for economic development and job creation that benefits residents, provided it clearly aligns with this Comprehensive Plan's vision and goals. Any proposed annexation must be consistent with the Municipal Growth Element, including the adopted Growth Tiers map, and will be evaluated based on the following priority considerations:

- Capacity of existing and planned infrastructure (water, sewer, schools, roads, public safety, parks/recreation, and stormwater management) to support the proposed development without overextending resources or requiring premature major expansions;
- Protection of sensitive areas, including streams and buffers, 100-year floodplains, habitats of rare, threatened, or endangered species, steep slopes, DNR Habitat Connectivity Network corridors, nontidal wetlands, forests, agricultural lands, groundwater resources, and areas vulnerable to climate change impacts (e.g., CRAB inundation zones, riverine flood depths, and projected sea-level rise along the Choptank River);
- Environmental justice principles, ensuring that growth does not disproportionately burden or exacerbate conditions in overburdened and underserved areas (as identified by MDEnviroScreen), and that benefits such as amenities, retrofits, green infrastructure, and equitable access to services are prioritized for vulnerable populations (low-income households, minorities, seniors, families with children, and limited English proficiency residents);
- Climate change resilience, incorporating adaptive measures such as living shorelines, elevated design standards, expanded tree canopy, stormwater BMPs, and avoidance of high-risk flood-prone or inundation areas to minimize future vulnerabilities from increased flooding, storms, and sea-level rise;
- Consistency with the eight statewide Sustainable Growth Planning Principles, including optimization of working landscapes, protection and restoration of ecology, resilience to natural threats, and equitable engagement of diverse community voices;
- Promotion of compact, walkable, mixed-use patterns that support infill priorities, historic preservation, multimodal transportation, and economic vitality without compromising the Town's small-town Eastern Shore character or rural buffers;

- Coordination with Caroline County, including provision of the proposed annexation for county review, acceptance of comments, and meet-and-confer processes as required under Maryland Land Use Article § 3-206, with mediation available if requested; and
- Demonstration that the annexation will be revenue-neutral or positive for the Town, with appropriate financing mechanisms (e.g., developer contributions, impact fees, grants) to cover extension of services and avoid undue burden on existing residents.

Rural Buffer

The Rural Buffer is the ring of farms, forests and protected land outside the corporate limits shown on Map 6. It forms the Town's natural edge and should remain in agriculture, forest and conservation use. The Town has no land use authority there, so it will conserve the Rural Buffer through Caroline County, State programs and willing landowners, including a request that the County designate it Tier IVA greenbelt. The Rural Buffer is distinct from the T-4 Rural Edge, which lies inside the corporate limits (Chapter II); Map 6 also shows protected land inside the Town. The Rural Buffer revises the greenbelt on the 2010 Plan's Growth Area and Greenbelt map (2010 Plan, p. 117).

This rural buffer includes lands within the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area—particularly Resource Conservation Areas (RCAs)—as well as the catchment areas of Tier II streams on private lands, other protected properties (such as those under agricultural easements, Maryland Department of Natural Resources ownership, existing or proposed conservation easements), and known sensitive features including mandatory stream buffers, shoreline buffers, wetlands, and important forested areas.

Property owners in this rural buffer are strongly encouraged to participate in voluntary state and regional land conservation programs to protect these lands permanently. Options include:

- The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) farm easement purchase program, which enables rural property owners to receive compensation for placing perpetual easements on their land, restricting or prohibiting future development while allowing continued agricultural use and deriving equity without subdivision or intensive development.
- Conservation easement programs offered by the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC), Maryland Environmental Trust (MET), and Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) provide tax credits, estate-planning benefits, and other incentives for landowners who voluntarily restrict future development through easements.

Participation in these programs helps reinforce the rural buffer's role in preserving agricultural productivity, natural resources, and the rural character of the Greensboro area.

Working Lands

Maryland's Land principle calls for optimizing the productivity of working farms, forests and fisheries while directing development to population centers near existing infrastructure (Land

Use Article § 1-201). Farmland surrounds Greensboro, and the Choptank River supports recreational and commercial fishing. The Town will:

- keep the T-4 Rural Edge in active agricultural and forest use through 2050 and allow farm stands, agritourism and other farm-related uses there in the Land Development Ordinance update;
- require a landscaped buffer or setback where new development adjoins active farmland, and notify buyers of nearby farm operations;
- support Caroline County, the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation and the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy in placing preservation easements on farms in the Rural Buffer;
- retain forest cover through the Forest Conservation Act, and favor reforestation of stream buffers and marginal farmland in the Rural Buffer;
- protect Choptank River fisheries by limiting impervious surface in the watershed (Chapter V) and keeping public river access at the boat ramp; and
- support farm-based businesses, including farmers markets, value-added food processing in the Special Employment district, and the local producer network proposed in Chapter IX.

County Coordination (Land Use Article § 3-206)

The Town consulted Caroline County while preparing this element and provided the draft Municipal Growth Element to the County on July 25, 2026. The County's 30-day comment period closed on August 25, 2026. The County's comments concerned wastewater capacity and the Goldsboro reservation, sewer service to the northern towns, school capacity, and County parks and facilities, among other items. They are incorporated in this Plan and are resolved. The Town will continue to coordinate with the County on:

- the draft County Map 1-4 showing Tier II around the Town, and the Town's policy not to extend sewer beyond its limits;
- a Tier IVA greenbelt designation for the Rural Buffer;
- the County TDR area south of the Town and any role for Town infill as a receiving area;
- amendments to the County Water and Sewer Plan so it, the Growth Tiers map and this element do not conflict.

The Town and County may enter into a joint planning agreement to carry out these points.

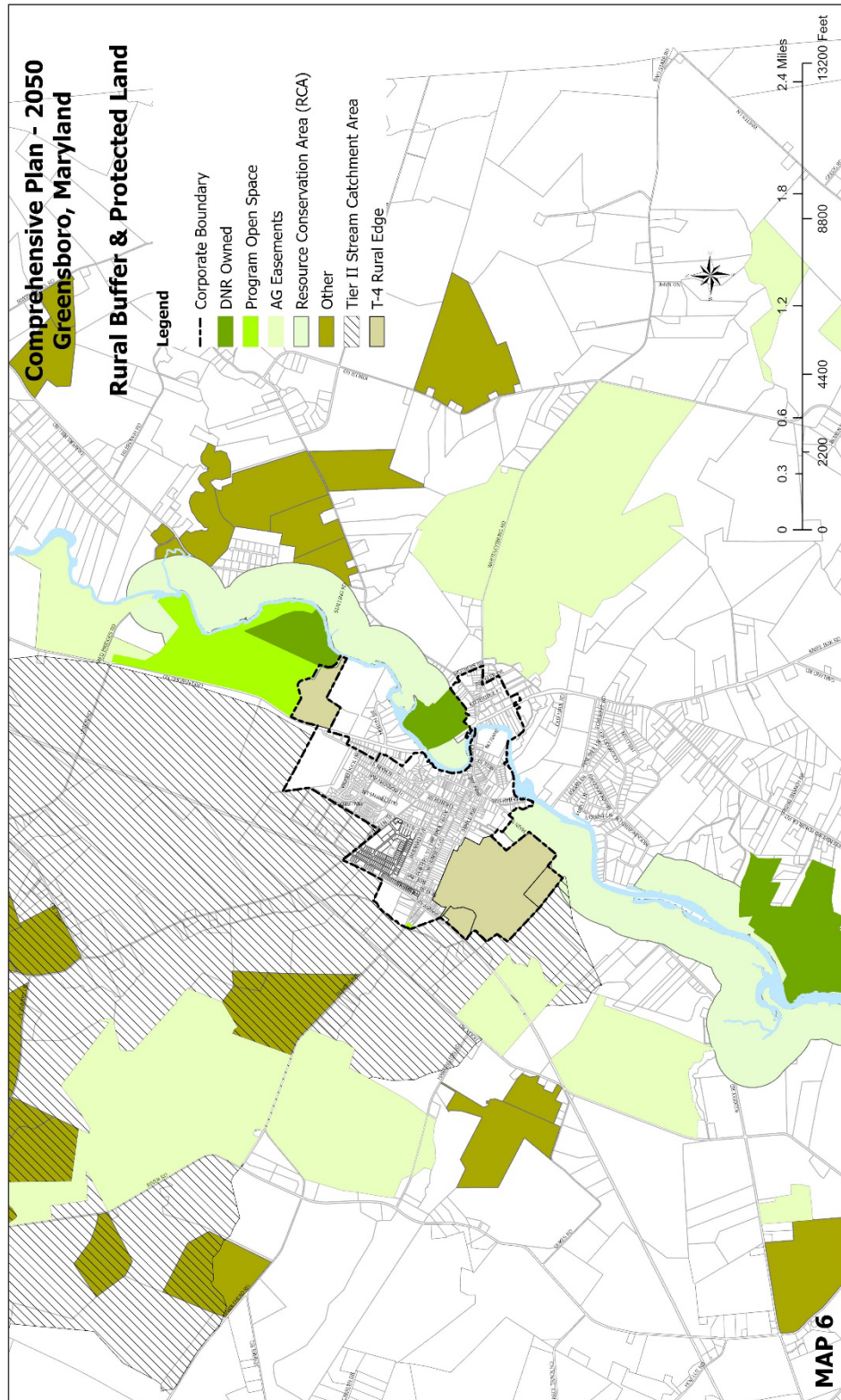
Growth Tiers (Map 18)

Greensboro adopts the growth tiers shown on Map 18:

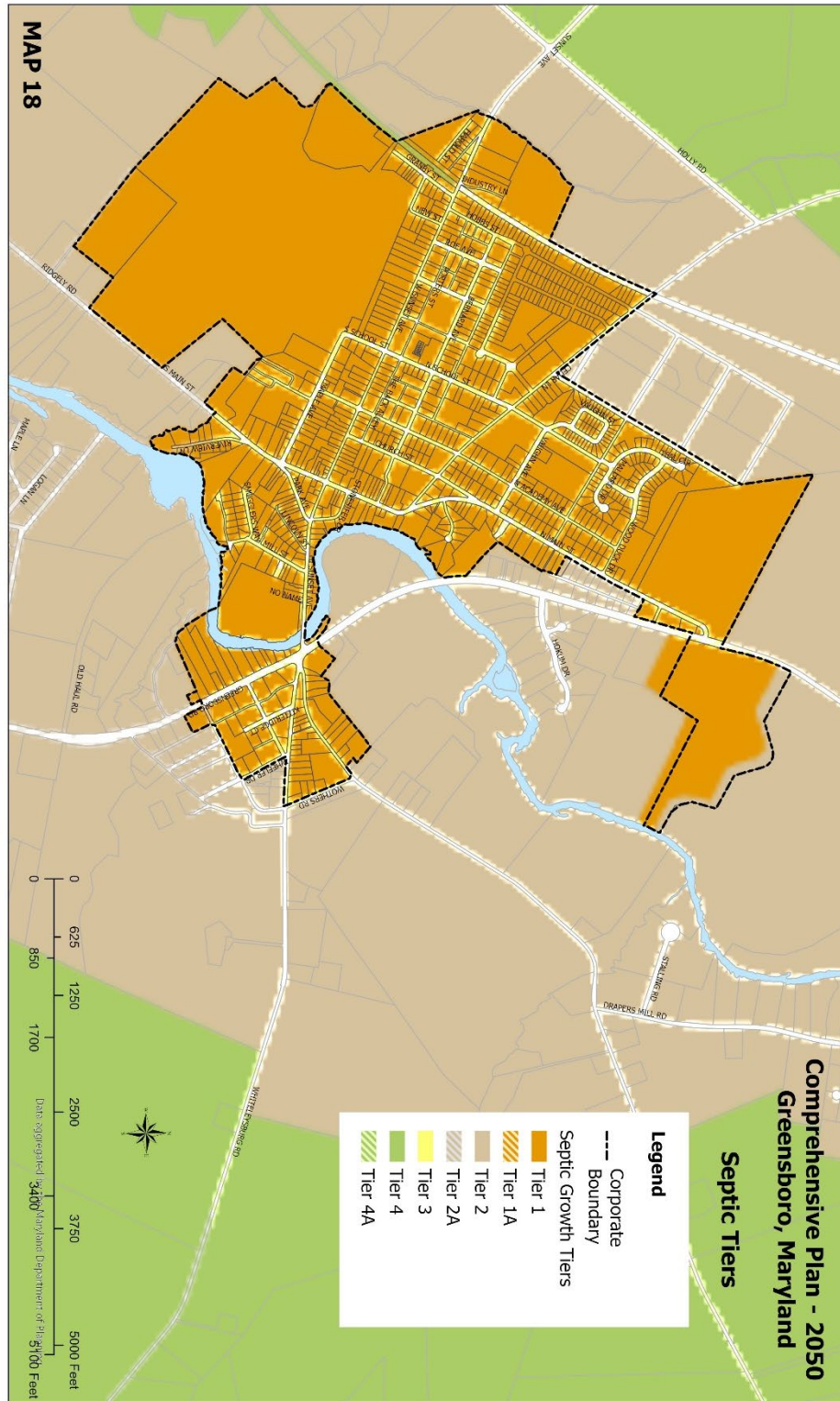
- Tier I: land inside the corporate limits within the Town's sewer service area (T-1, T-2, T-3 and the Special Employment area).
- Tier IIA: the T-4 Rural Edge, where public sewer is not planned before 2050, and no residential major subdivision on septic systems will be approved.

- Outside the corporate limits: Caroline County designates tiers. The Town asks the County to designate the Rural Buffer Tier IVA and to remove Tier II from land the Town will not serve.

The Town will submit Map 18 to MDP under Land Use Article § 1-504 and will amend it with the County when sewer service areas change.



MAP 18 — GROWTH TIERS



CHAPTER V - SENSITIVE AREAS ELEMENT

Introduction

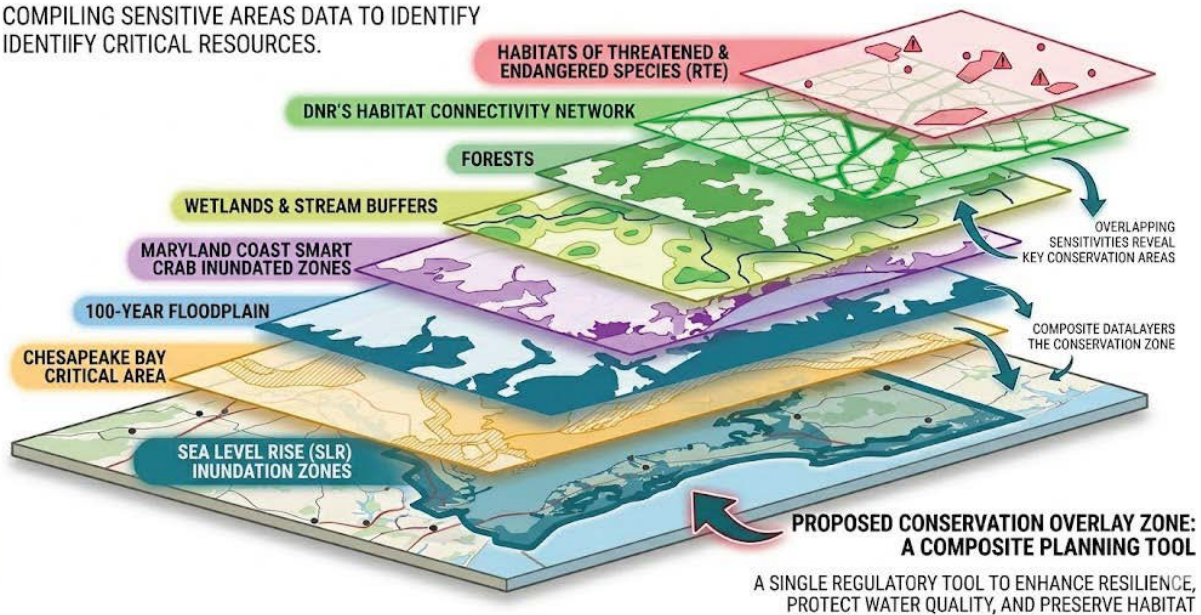
The Sensitive Areas Element is a required component of the Town of Greensboro's Comprehensive Plan, as mandated by Maryland Land Use Article §3-104. This element establishes principles, policies, and standards to protect sensitive areas from the adverse effects of development, ensuring the long-term sustainability of natural resources while supporting the Town's growth visions. Sensitive areas include streams and their buffers, 100-year floodplains, habitats of threatened and endangered species, and steep slopes. In accordance with guidance from the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP), this element also addresses additional locally identified areas such as wetlands, forests intended for resource protection or conservation, groundwater resources, and Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) designated Green Infrastructure (now referred to as the Habitat Connectivity Network), key wildlife habitats, and Tier II streams, particularly within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area.

This element integrates updated state guidance from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on habitats for rare, threatened, and endangered (RTE) species, the Habitat Connectivity Network, and key wildlife habitats; and from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) on stormwater management, floodplain protections, and stream tier designations. It incorporates climate change considerations such as increased flooding and sea-level rise, which exacerbate vulnerabilities in low-lying areas along the Choptank River. It also incorporates environmental justice (EJ) principles, as outlined in the dedicated section below, to ensure equitable protection of sensitive areas in overburdened and underserved communities, aligning with MDE's EnviroScreen tool and state EJ mandates.

To enhance protection and address the complexity of these interconnected resources, this element recommends establishing a Conservation Overlay Zone within Greensboro's Zoning Ordinance. Greensboro's location along the tidal Choptank River exposes it to escalating threats from climate change, including sea level rise (SLR), which is projected to be about 1–1.5 feet by 2050 and up to 4 feet by 2100, intensified storms, and nuisance/riverine flooding, which amplify risks to sensitive ecosystems such as tidal wetlands and RTE habitats. Existing regulations (e.g., the Critical Area Program and the Forest Conservation Act) provide foundational protection but are fragmented, potentially allowing cumulative degradation from development. The overlay zone offers a proactive, integrated approach to safeguard these resources, promote resilience (e.g., by facilitating tidal wetland migration and natural surge attenuation), and ensure equitable application—minimal impacts on existing built-out properties while imposing progressive requirements on new or intensified uses. This approach aligns with state visions for environmental stewardship, Chesapeake Bay TMDL goals, and MDP guidance, streamlining permitting while supporting sustainable growth and preventing habitat loss or water quality declines.

CONCEPTUALIZING THE CONSERVATION OVERLAY ZONE: A MCCARGIAN APPROACH

COMPILING SENSITIVE AREAS DATA TO IDENTIFY
IDENTIFY CRITICAL RESOURCES.



Identification of Sensitive Areas

Greensboro's sensitive areas are shaped by its location along the Choptank River in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, with flat topography, occasional steep slopes, extensive wetlands, floodplains, and forested areas. The following describes each sensitive area with local context:

Streams and Buffers

The Choptank River and its tributaries, such as Forge Branch, are vital for drinking water, recreation, fisheries, and wildlife habitat. Stream buffers filter pollutants, reduce erosion, and mitigate flooding. In Greensboro, buffers are required within the 1,000-foot Critical Area (expanded to 100 feet for non-tidal streams outside), but development pressures could degrade water quality if not protected. Near Greensboro, Forge Branch is designated Tier II (high-quality waters subject to anti-degradation policies under MDE regulations, meaning no degradation is allowed beyond existing uses) or upstream of Tier II segments, requiring enhanced protections to maintain water quality standards (see Map 7).

DNR identifies the upper Choptank River through Greensboro as spawning habitat for white perch, yellow perch, blueback herring, alewife and hickory shad, and runoff from the Town reaches American shad and striped bass spawning and nursery waters downstream. DNR research sets 5% impervious surface as the target for healthy aquatic habitat and 10% as the threshold for severe, hard-to-reverse harm. The upper Choptank watershed is at about 4.0%, and some small local tributaries are at or above 5%. The Town will minimize new impervious surface and apply DNR's Watershed Development Guidelines for Anadromous Fish Spawning, its Planning Guidance to Promote Resource Protection in Sensitive Watersheds, and the Non-tidal Stream Anadromous Fish Spawning mapping tool in development review.

The Conservation Overlay directly incorporates catchment/stream buffers and Tier II designations as core protected features. It enforces no disturbances in core riparian buffers for major projects, requires Low Impact Development LID stormwater to minimize pollutant runoff, mandates site-specific buffer plans (expandable as needed), and prioritizes enhancements/restoration on public lands to maintain water quality in the Choptank River and tributaries.

100-Year Floodplains

Approximately 15–20% of the Town, 103 properties with an assessed value of nearly \$18 million, lies in FEMA-designated 100-year floodplains, primarily along the Choptank River, posing risks to life, property, and infrastructure (see Map 8). Climate projections indicate more frequent flooding due to sea-level rise (up to 4 feet by 2100) and intense storms.

Floodplains form a foundational layer in the Conservation Overlay, with added SLR/storm surge simulations (e.g., Coast Smart CRAB inundation zones for +3 ft scenarios) to identify expanded high-risk areas. It would impose stricter setback/no-build rules in high-inundation zones, require elevation/freeboard adjustments, exclude floodplains from net buildable area calculations, and support acquisition and open-space conversion for flood mitigation.

Habitats of Threatened and Endangered Species (RTE)

DNR identifies potential RTE habitats in wetlands, forests, and riparian zones, including species like the bald eagle, least tern, and various amphibians/fish in the Choptank. The Maryland State Wildlife Action Plan highlights threats from habitat loss and invasive species. Key wildlife habitats in the Greensboro area, as per DNR classifications for the Coastal Plain physiographic province, include Coastal Plain River, Coastal Plain Stream, Coastal Plain Floodplain, Coastal Plain Seepage Swamp, Mesic Mixed Hardwood Forest, Basic Mesic Forest, and Coastal Plain Oak-Pine Forest. Important features include mature forests, migratory fish spawning areas, and habitats for species such as the shield darter (watchlist), triangle floater (state-threatened), sparkling jewelwing (state-rare), and plants such as creeping burhead (state-endangered).

The Sensitive Species Project Review Areas (SSPRA) is a GIS data layer (vector polygon coverage) maintained by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Wildlife and Heritage Service (see Map 9). It provides a statewide overview of areas containing habitats for rare, threatened, and endangered species, as well as rare natural community types. The layer consists of buffered polygons that generally encompass (but do not precisely delineate) documented sensitive locations and serves as a screening tool to flag potential impacts during project reviews. The data layer contains/incorporates buffered/generalized areas around documented rare, threatened, and endangered species locations. It also encompasses various regulated and sensitive habitat types, including:

- Natural Heritage Areas.
- Listed Species Sites.
- Other or Locally Significant Habitat Areas.
- Colonial Waterbird Sites.

- Non-tidal Wetlands of Special State Concern.
- Geographic Areas of Particular Concern.
- Critical Area Habitat Protection Areas.

The primary purpose of this data set is to trigger consultation with DNR's Natural Heritage Program for proposed development, land-use changes, or other projects that may affect these resources. Created to streamline compliance with laws such as the 1992 Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act, it serves as a "one-stop" preliminary indicator rather than exact boundaries for specific species or features. Detailed site-specific reviews follow if a project intersects these areas.

The Critical Area Habitat Protection Area known as the Upper Choptank River Listed Species Site lies in the northeastern corner of the Town, within the Sensitive Species Project Review Area (Map 9). Development proposals there will be coordinated with DNR's Natural Heritage Program and the Critical Area Commission.

Steep Slopes

Slopes exceeding 15% (and 25% in the Critical Area) are limited but occur near riverbanks, increasing erosion and sedimentation risks. Protection is essential to maintain soil stability and water quality. In Greensboro, steep slopes primarily occur along the banks of the Choptank River within the Critical Area Buffer. Riparian buffers incorporate steep slopes, especially along the banks of the Choptank River in the Critical Area. The Conservation Overlay builds on the Critical Area standards, requiring enhanced controls in SLR-vulnerable zones to reduce sedimentation risks.

DNR's Habitat Connectivity Network (Green Infrastructure)

Updated from the 2005 Green Infrastructure Assessment, this network identifies ecologically significant hubs (large, intact natural areas) and corridors (connections between hubs) to promote biodiversity and resilience (see Map 10). In Greensboro and Caroline County, it includes riparian corridors along the Choptank River, forested hubs, and linkages to larger regional networks, supporting habitat connectivity for species movement and adaptation to climate change. These areas overlap with other sensitive features, such as floodplains and wetlands.

This network (hubs and corridors along the Choptank and forested linkages) is a primary merged layer in the Conservation Overlay. It would guide conservation priorities, enforce forest retention thresholds, limit fragmentation in connectivity areas, require connectivity assessments for major projects, and promote restoration (e.g., reforestation) to enhance biodiversity resilience and species adaptation.

Other Areas (Wetlands, Forests, Agricultural Lands, Groundwater)

Other sensitive areas in and around Greensboro that require appropriate management to maintain their contributions to the region's overall environmental health include non-tidal wetlands, forests, and agricultural land (see Map 11). Wetlands (with migration corridors per SLR projections) and forest cover (tied to Forest Conservation Program retention) are explicitly

included in the Conservation Overlay, which would require designs permitting tidal wetland migration (e.g., setbacks, no barriers/living shorelines), strict no-clearing for forests in new major developments, expanded Critical Area-like protections town-wide, and LID/retrofits to protect recharge/contamination risks.

Climate Change

Why Climate Change Matters to Greensboro

Greensboro, a small historic town on Maryland's Eastern Shore in Caroline County, faces growing climate-change risks that directly affect its residents, economy, environment, and quality of life. As a river-oriented community along the Choptank River, the Town is particularly vulnerable to the region's accelerating changes.

Key reasons climate change is important include:

- **Rising Sea Levels and Increased Flooding:** Maryland's Eastern Shore experiences faster-than-average sea-level rise driven by land subsidence and global warming, with projections of about 1–1.5 feet by 2050 and up to 4 feet by 2100. Sea level rise (SLR) exacerbates riverine and tidal flooding along the Choptank River and its tributaries, including Forge Branch, threatening low-lying areas, infrastructure, homes, and agricultural lands. Current tools, such as the Maryland Coast Smart CRAB data, already show projected inundation zones that overlap with Greensboro's rural edges and open spaces.
- **More Intense Storms, Precipitation Changes, and Extreme Weather:** Heavier downpours, wetter winters/springs, drier summers, and stronger storm surges increase risks of flash flooding, erosion, and damage to roads, bridges, and stormwater systems. Warmer temperatures lead to more frequent heat waves, stressing public health (especially vulnerable groups such as seniors and outdoor workers) and straining energy supplies.
- **Impacts on Local Economy and Livelihoods:** Caroline County's agricultural base—corn, soybeans, and livestock feed—is threatened by saltwater intrusion into soils (already affecting lower Eastern Shore farms), shifting growing seasons, and extreme weather, all of which reduce yields. The Choptank River supports fisheries, recreation, and water quality in the Chesapeake Bay watershed; pollution runoff and habitat loss degrade these vital resources.
- **Environmental and Community Resilience:** Climate change worsens challenges such as nutrient loading, habitat fragmentation, and "ghost forests" observed regionally, while threatening drinking water sources and recreational opportunities. Without proactive measures, these changes could increase repair costs, reduce property values, and disproportionately impact families, seniors, and underserved residents.

Greensboro's Comprehensive Plan addresses these by focusing on infill growth in safer central areas. By planning for resilience—protecting the Choptank, preserving open space, and building

adaptively—the Town can safeguard its small-town Eastern Shore character and support sustainable growth.

Potential Effects

Maryland Coast Smart - Climate Ready Action Boundary (CRAB) Inundated Zones and Riverine Flood Depth Grid GIS data layers, part of Maryland's Coast Smart program, provide critical tools for assessing future flood risks due to climate change. They support resilient planning by identifying areas vulnerable to increased inundation, informing decisions on infrastructure, land use, development siting, and environmental protection—particularly relevant in river-oriented communities like Greensboro along the Choptank River.

CRAB Inundated Zones (see Map 13): This polygon-based map service delineates areas across Maryland projected to be inundated under the Climate Ready Action Boundary (CRAB) scenario. Created by the Maryland Environmental Service (MES) in partnership with the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and MDOT SHA, this layer guides state projects (especially those >\$500,000) in applying elevated flood standards for climate resilience.

CRAB Riverine - Flood Depth Grid (see Map 12): This raster image service depicts projected flood depths for riverine (inland rivers and streams) areas statewide, focusing on non-coastal flooding from rivers such as the Choptank. It represents CRAB-adjusted inundation in riverine floodplains, showing water depth above ground elevation under future climate conditions. Maintained by MDE with support from MES, DNR, and MDOT SHA, it complements the coastal-focused inundated zones by addressing inland risks from heavier precipitation, runoff, and elevated base flows. The grid supports transportation vulnerability assessments (e.g., roadways, bridges) and helps integrate riverine flooding into comprehensive plans.

Together, these layers advance Maryland's climate adaptation goals by extending beyond current FEMA flood maps to anticipate conditions through 2050+. In Greensboro and Caroline County, they highlight risks along the Choptank River and its tributaries, informing policies on buffers, elevation requirements, stormwater management, and avoiding development in high-risk areas. They align with state mandates for protecting sensitive areas, water resources, and equity in resilience planning, helping preserve natural resources, reduce flood damage, and ensure sustainable growth.

The Conservation Overlay directly incorporates CRAB riverine and inundation zones as core protected features. It enforces avoidance or elevation of structures in high-depth projected areas for major projects, requires Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater practices to reduce runoff and enhance infiltration, mandates site-specific flood risk assessments and resilient design (e.g., living shorelines, elevated foundations), and prioritizes conservation easements, buffers, or restoration on public/private lands to maintain floodplain function and ecological integrity. This aligns with state mandates for climate resilience (Climate Solutions Now Act), sensitive areas protection (§ 3-104), water resources management, and integration with existing Critical Area (1,000 ft tidal) and floodplain regulations to preserve the Choptank ecosystem, reduce long-term risks, and support sustainable growth focused on infill areas.

Resilience Policies

Maryland's Resilience principle calls for integrating measures that minimize the impacts of rapid and unexpected natural- and human-caused threats on communities (Land Use Article § 1-201). The Town adopts the following policies:

- **Floodplain development.** New buildings and substantial improvements in the 100-year floodplain will have their lowest floor at least two feet above the base flood elevation; the Town will amend its floodplain ordinance to require it.
- **Critical facilities.** New critical facilities, including Town offices, police and fire stations, water and wastewater facilities, schools and emergency shelters, will be located outside the 100-year floodplain and the areas projected to flood with sea-level rise (Maps 12 and 13). Where no alternative exists, they will be protected to at least the 500-year (0.2% annual chance) flood elevation.
- **Public infrastructure.** Streets, utilities and stormwater facilities built or rebuilt by the Town will be designed for the sea-level rise expected by 2050 (about 1–1.5 feet) and for current precipitation-frequency estimates.
- **Capital improvements.** The Town will rank Capital Improvement Program projects using resilience criteria: flood exposure, the importance of the service and benefit to overburdened areas.
- **Continuity of service.** The Town will maintain backup power for its water and wastewater facilities and, with Caroline County emergency services, designate an emergency shelter and cooling center.
- **Hazard mitigation.** The Town will take part in updates to the Caroline County Hazard Mitigation Plan and carry its Greensboro actions into the Capital Improvement Program, keeping the Town eligible for FEMA mitigation grants.
- **Natural defenses.** Floodplains, wetlands and stream buffers will be kept undeveloped where possible, with room for tidal wetlands to migrate as sea level rises (Conservation Overlay Zone).

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice (EJ) ensures the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, in developing, implementing, and enforcing environmental laws, regulations, and policies. In Greensboro, EJ considerations are integral to protecting sensitive areas, as they address how cumulative environmental burdens disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, exacerbating health disparities and limiting access to natural resources. The Maryland Department of the Environment's (MDE) EnviroScreen tool evaluates EJ risks at the census tract level, combining pollution burdens (exposures and environmental effects), sensitive populations, and socioeconomic factors to assign an EJ Score and classify areas as overburdened (three or more environmental health indicators above the 75th percentile statewide) or underserved (e.g., $\geq 25\%$ low-income residents, $\geq 50\%$ nonwhite residents, or $\geq 15\%$ limited English proficiency).

Census Tract 24011955100, encompassing Greensboro and surrounding areas in Caroline County, has an EJ Score of 42 and is classified as both overburdened and underserved. The

overburdened status stems from high proximity to environmental hazards, including brownfields (88.8th percentile), power plants (98.4th percentile), concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs, 98.4th percentile), and mining (99.1st percentile). While no CAFOs or major power plants are within Greensboro's corporate limits, nearby operations in unincorporated Caroline County (e.g., poultry CAFOs on Kibler Road and Linhard Lane, and the 145 MW Cherrywood Solar project north of Town) contribute to cumulative impacts through air emissions, potential runoff, odors, and infrastructure proximity. The underserved status is driven by socioeconomic factors, including low-income residents (78.7th percentile, representing 33.9% of the population) and sensitive populations such as those with asthma (45.7th percentile) or myocardial infarction risks (51.7th percentile). Other elevated indicators include respiratory hazards (2.9th percentile, though not top-tier) and cancer risk (0.2 percentile), highlighting vulnerabilities in this rural, agricultural community.

These EJ concerns intersect with sensitive areas, as pollution from nearby sources can degrade streams, wetlands, floodplains, and habitats—amplifying risks in low-lying riparian zones along the Choptank River. For instance, CAFO runoff threatens Tier II streams and groundwater, while power infrastructure (e.g., solar substations) may fragment habitat connectivity networks. Climate change exacerbates these issues, with sea-level rise and flooding disproportionately affecting low-income residents in flood-prone areas. Protecting sensitive areas through the proposed Conservation Overlay Zone can advance EJ by mitigating pollution (e.g., through buffers that filter contaminants), enhancing community resilience (e.g., green spaces for health benefits), and ensuring equitable access to clean water, recreation, and natural surge protection.

To address EJ, the Town will prioritize community engagement in planning, target resources to underserved areas, and integrate MDEnviroScreen data into site reviews. This approach aligns with state mandates under the Climate Solutions Now Act and Maryland's EJ framework, promoting sustainable growth that reduces disparities without burdening existing residents. Strategies include interjurisdictional coordination with Caroline County on transboundary hazards, incentives for pollution retrofits, and equitable distribution of conservation benefits (e.g., parks in high-EJ zones). By linking sensitive areas protection to EJ, Greensboro can foster a healthier, more inclusive environment while supporting its small-town character.

Principles, Policies, Standards, Strategies, and Actions

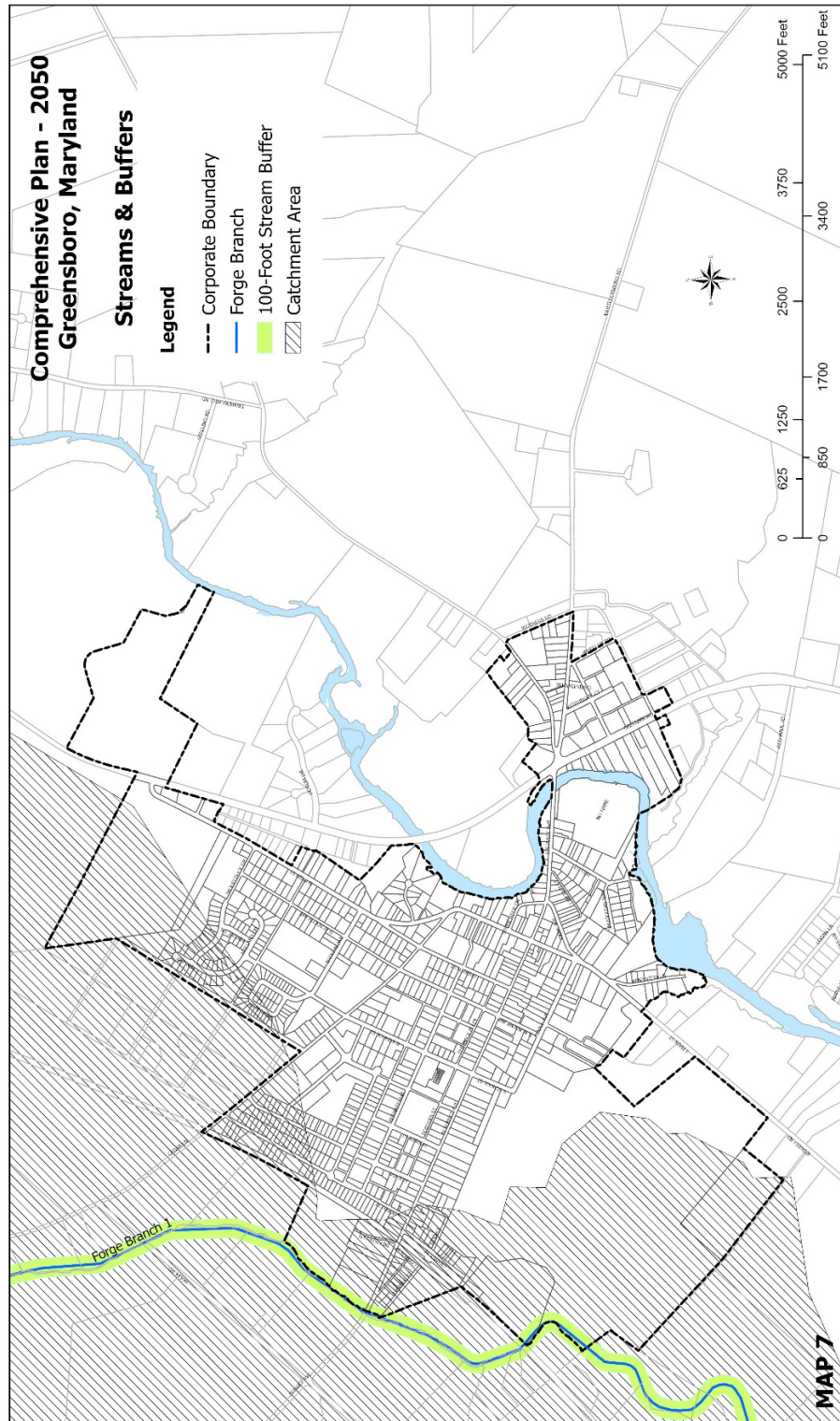
Table SA-1 summarizes key principles, policies, standards, strategies, and actions, drawing from MDP's "Preparing a Sensitive Areas Element" guidance, DNR's RTE and Habitat Connectivity Network recommendations, and MDE's stream tier protections. These are further supported by management strategies for the recommended Conservation Overlay Zone (see Map 14), which apply differentiated protections: minimal impacts on existing built-out properties (e.g., voluntary stormwater retrofits); low-impact development (LID) stormwater techniques to the maximum extent practicable for redevelopment and small-site infill; strict forest retention (no-net-loss), LID requirements, and wetland migration accommodations for new subdivisions, master-planned developments, and major site approvals; and buffer enhancements on publicly owned riparian lands. Site plan and subdivision applications must depict the full spatial extent of merged overlay features (e.g., wetlands with migration corridors, SLR/storm surge zones, floodplains, Tier II

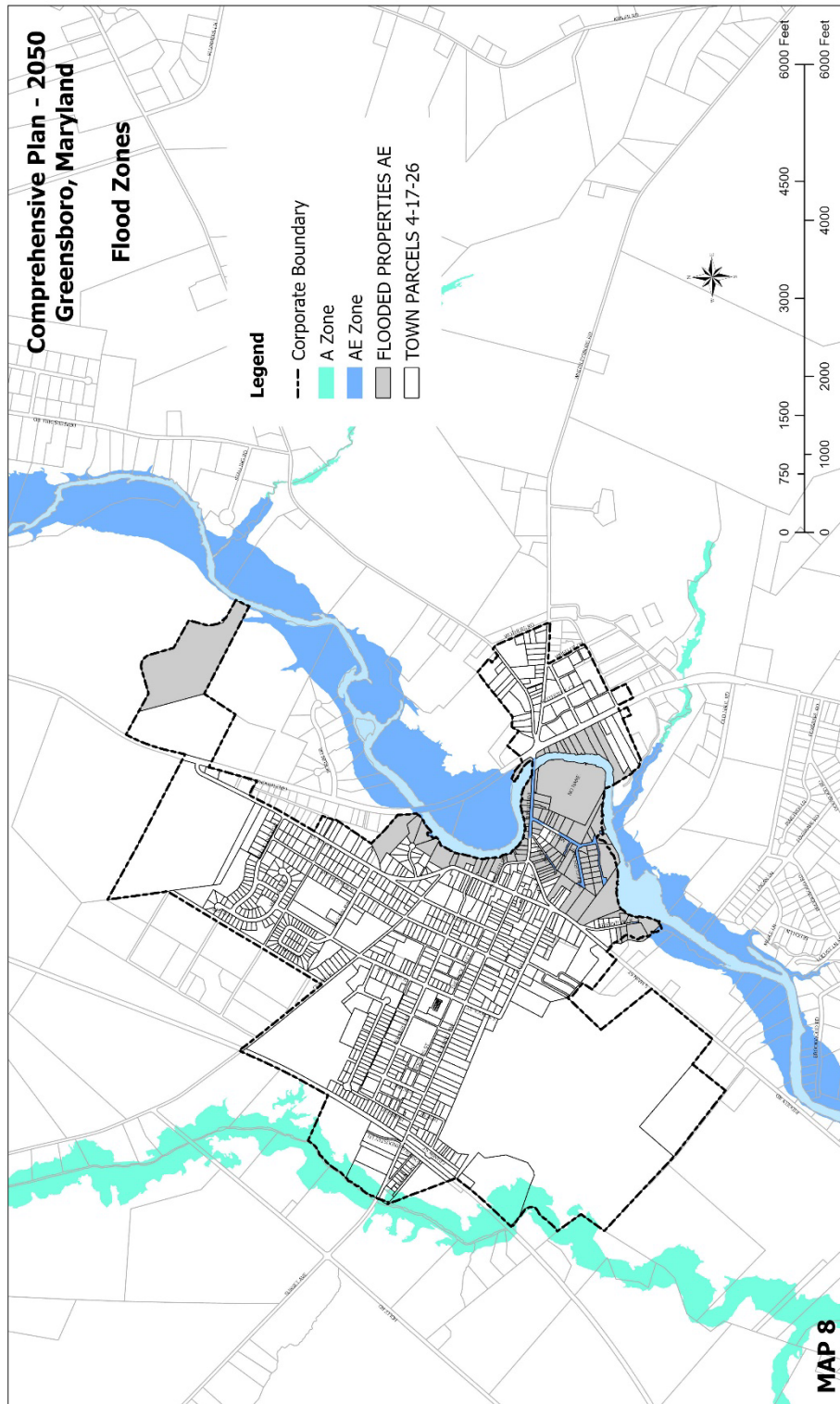
buffers) across the property and relevant adjacent areas, including environmental assessments to evaluate site suitability and impacts on sensitive resources.

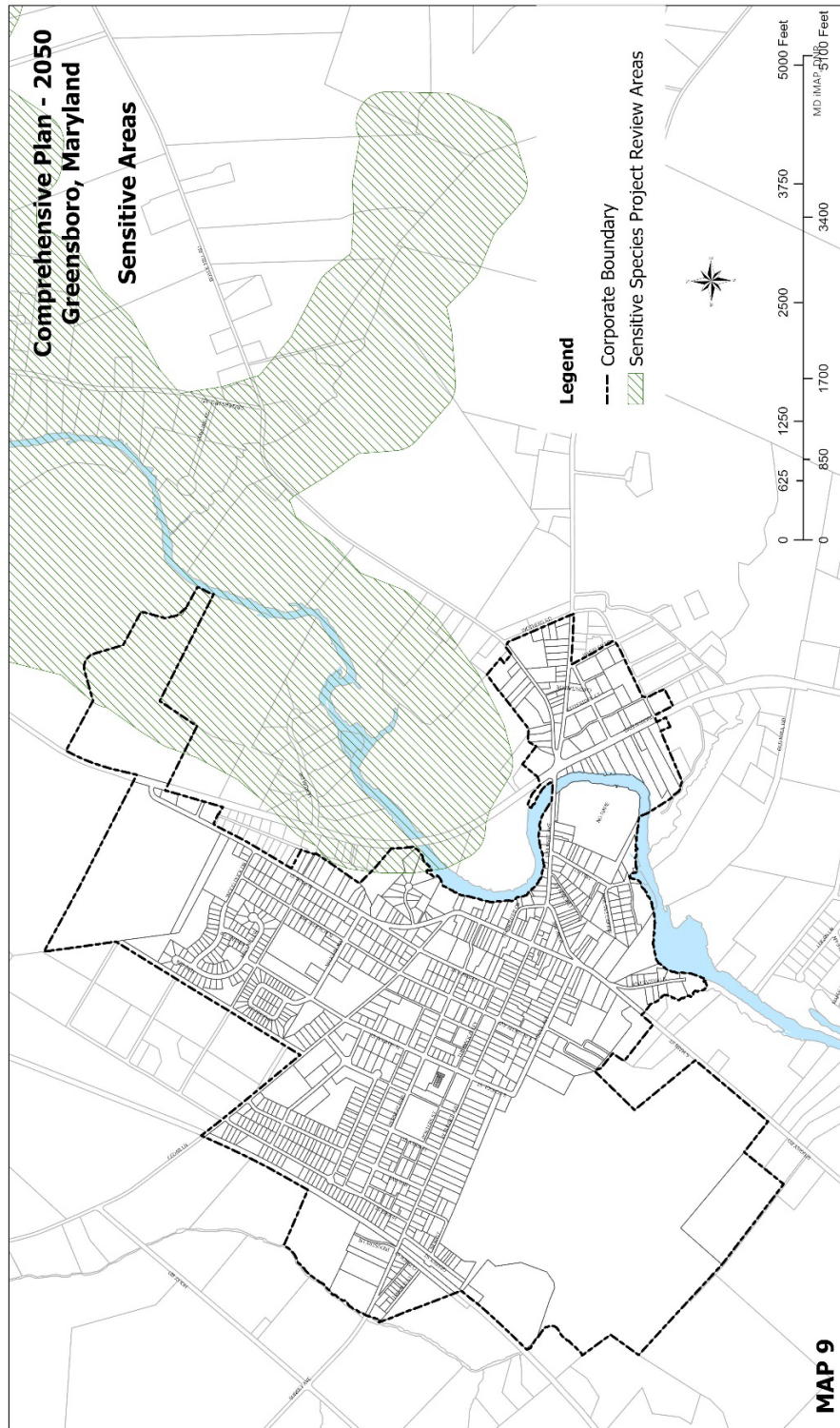
Table SA-1: Principles, Policies, Standards, Strategies, and Actions			
Sensitive Area	Principles	Policies and Standards	Strategies and Actions
Streams and Buffers	Buffers are natural filters essential for water quality and habitat.	Require 100-foot vegetated buffers (expandable to 200 feet in Critical Area); prohibit impervious surfaces within buffers per MDE stormwater guidelines. For Tier II streams, enforce anti-degradation policies to prevent increases in pollutant levels. In the Conservation Overlay Zone, require LID stormwater for redevelopment/infill and no disturbances in core buffers for major projects.	- Amend the Zoning Ordinance to mandate site-specific buffer plans that incorporate Tier designations and overlay strategies. - Partner with DNR for stream restoration (e.g., planting native vegetation); enhance public riparian buffers.
100-Year Floodplains	Floodplains provide natural flood mitigation; development increases risks.	No new structures in floodplains unless elevated 1 foot or more above base flood elevation; net buildable area excludes floodplains for density calculations. Incorporate SLR/storm surge overlays with stricter setbacks in high-risk A/AE zones.	- Update Floodplain Ordinance to incorporate climate projections (e.g., higher freeboard) and overlay management. - Acquire flood-prone lands for open space using Program Open Space funds. - Integrate floodplain mapping with SLR simulations into growth area planning and site evaluations.
Habitats of RTE Species and Key Wildlife Habitats	Habitats require site-specific protection to prevent species loss; key habitats support biodiversity.	Require environmental assessments for developments near RTE sites or key habitats; cluster development away from habitats per DNR guidance. In the overlay zone, mandate no-net-loss for sensitive species areas, with complex site-suitability evaluations that consider cumulative impacts.	- Consult DNR's Natural Heritage Program during site plan reviews, incorporating SSPRA data. - Promote conservation easements with Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, targeting key habitats like Coastal Plain Seepage Swamps; facilitate habitat connectivity in overlay designs.

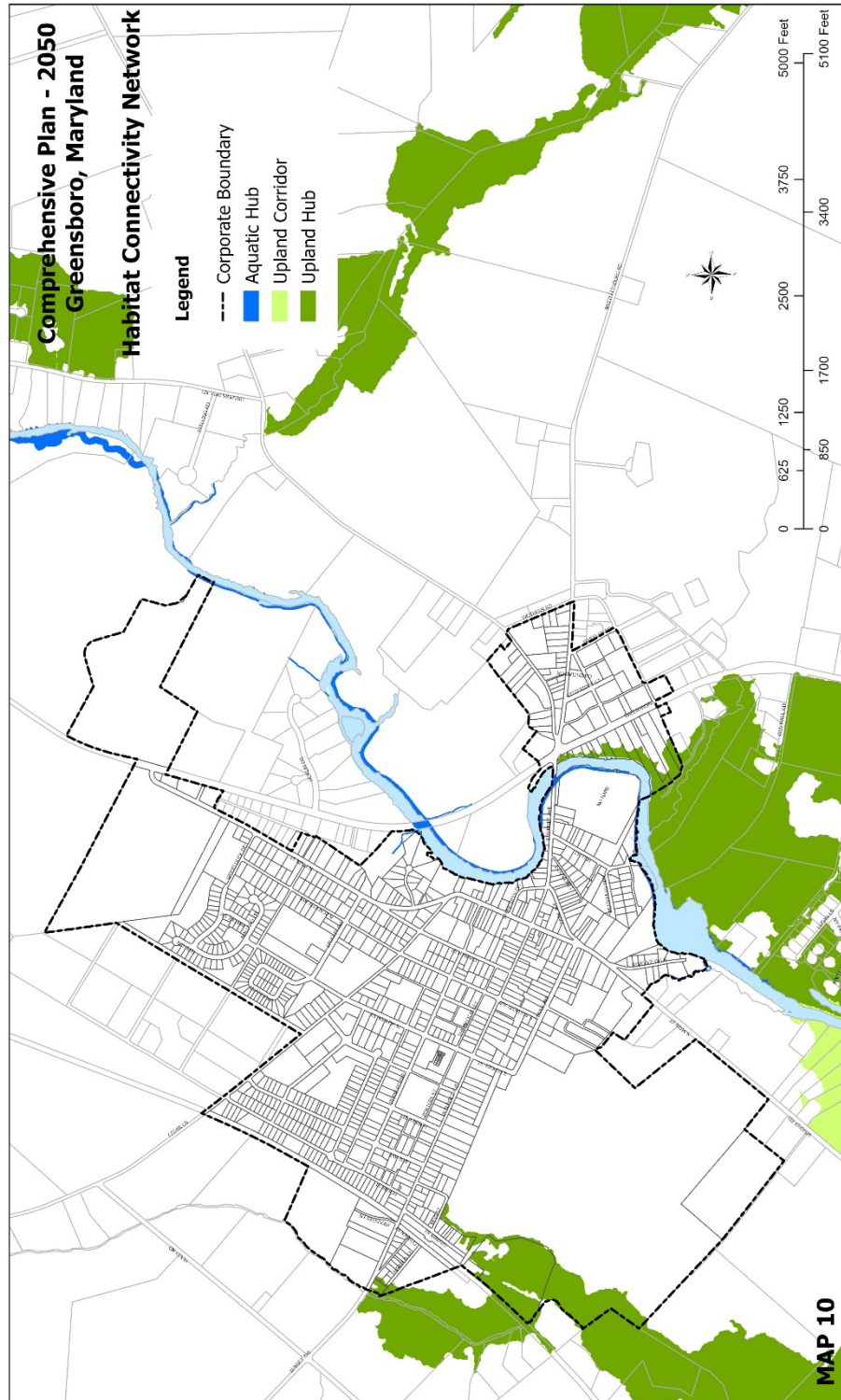
Table SA-1: Principles, Policies, Standards, Strategies, and Actions

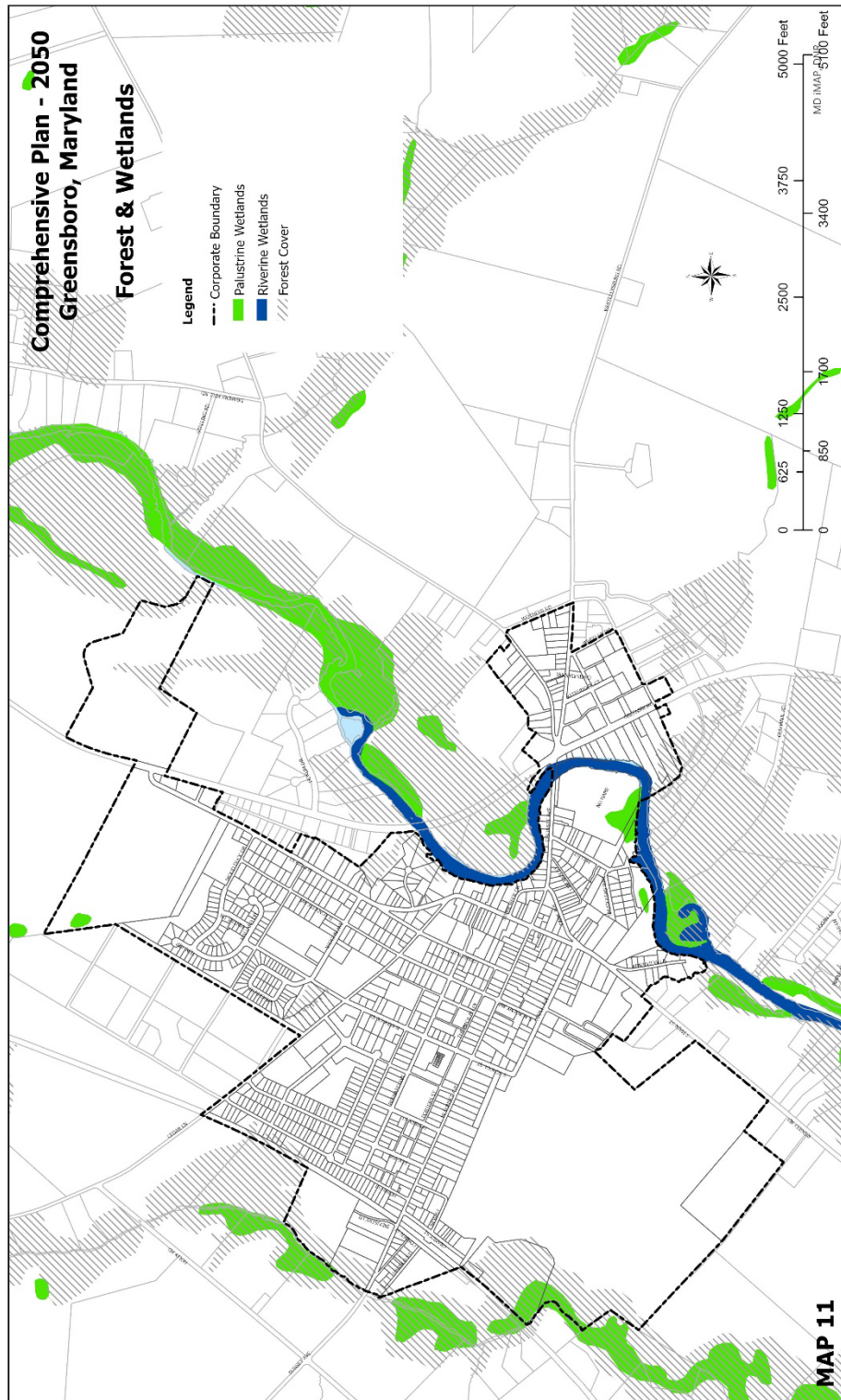
Sensitive Area	Principles	Policies and Standards	Strategies and Actions
Steep Slopes	Slopes prevent erosion and sedimentation when undisturbed.	Limit disturbance on slopes >25%; require erosion control plans for 15–25% slopes. Integrate with overlay buffers in riparian areas.	- Incorporate slope protections into Subdivision Regulations and overlay strategies.
Habitat Connectivity Network (Green Infrastructure)	Hubs and corridors ensure ecological connectivity and resilience.	Prioritize protection of DNR-identified hubs and corridors; limit fragmentation in connectivity areas. In the overlay, enforce forest retention thresholds and connectivity assessments for major projects.	- Integrate network maps into land use planning to guide conservation and overlay boundaries. - Restore corridors through reforestation and wetland projects. - Collaborate with Caroline County on regional connectivity initiatives, including climate adaptation.
Other Areas (Wetlands, Forests, Agricultural Lands, Groundwater)	These areas support biodiversity, water recharge, and agriculture.	Institute a no net loss forest cover policy; protect wetlands via state/federal permits; and agricultural easements in rural buffer. In the overlay, require designs that permit tidal wetland migration (e.g., setbacks, no barriers) and prohibit forest clearing for new developments.	- Implement groundwater monitoring with MDE; target retrofits for water quality. - Use LID and migration assessments in site plans.

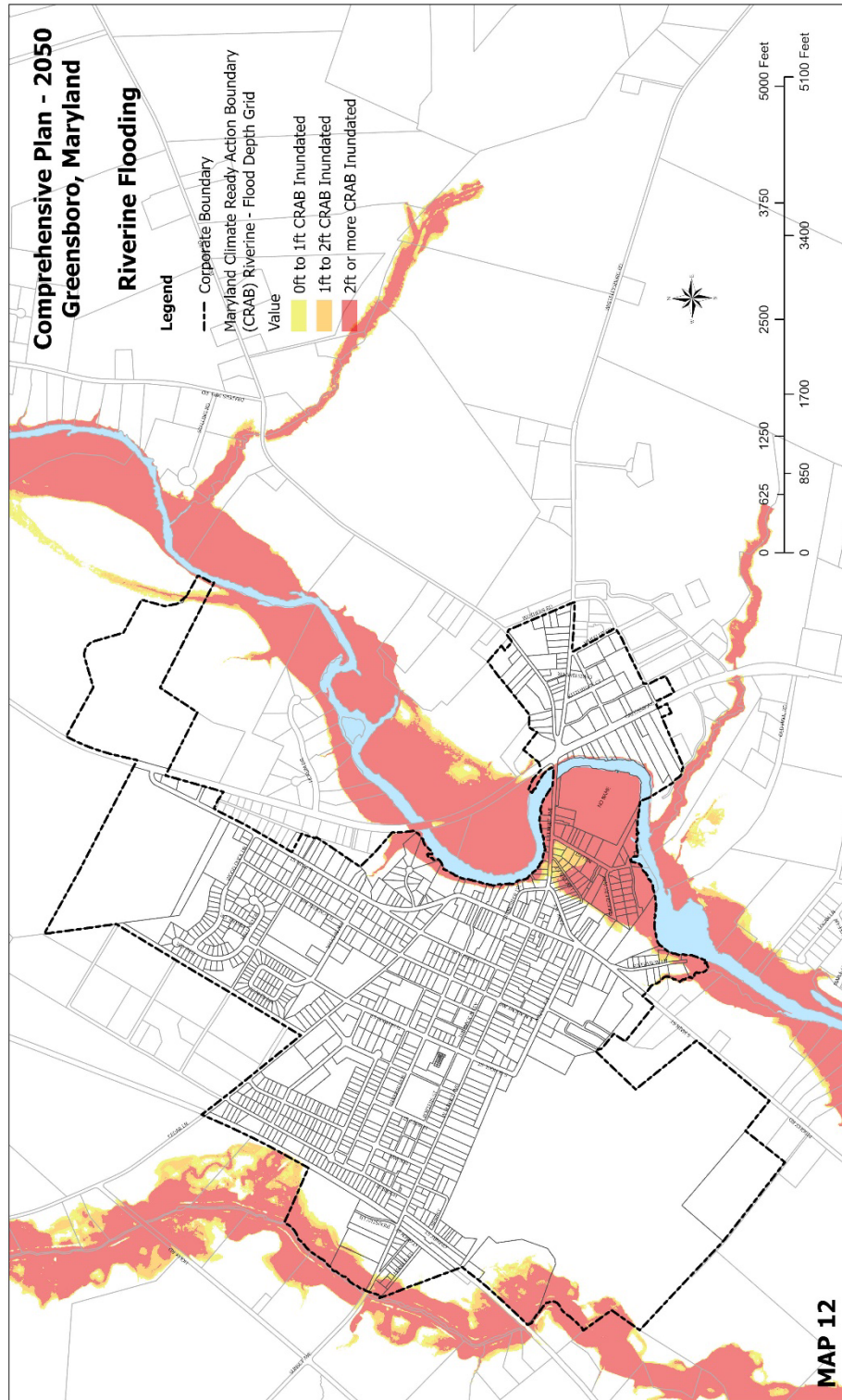


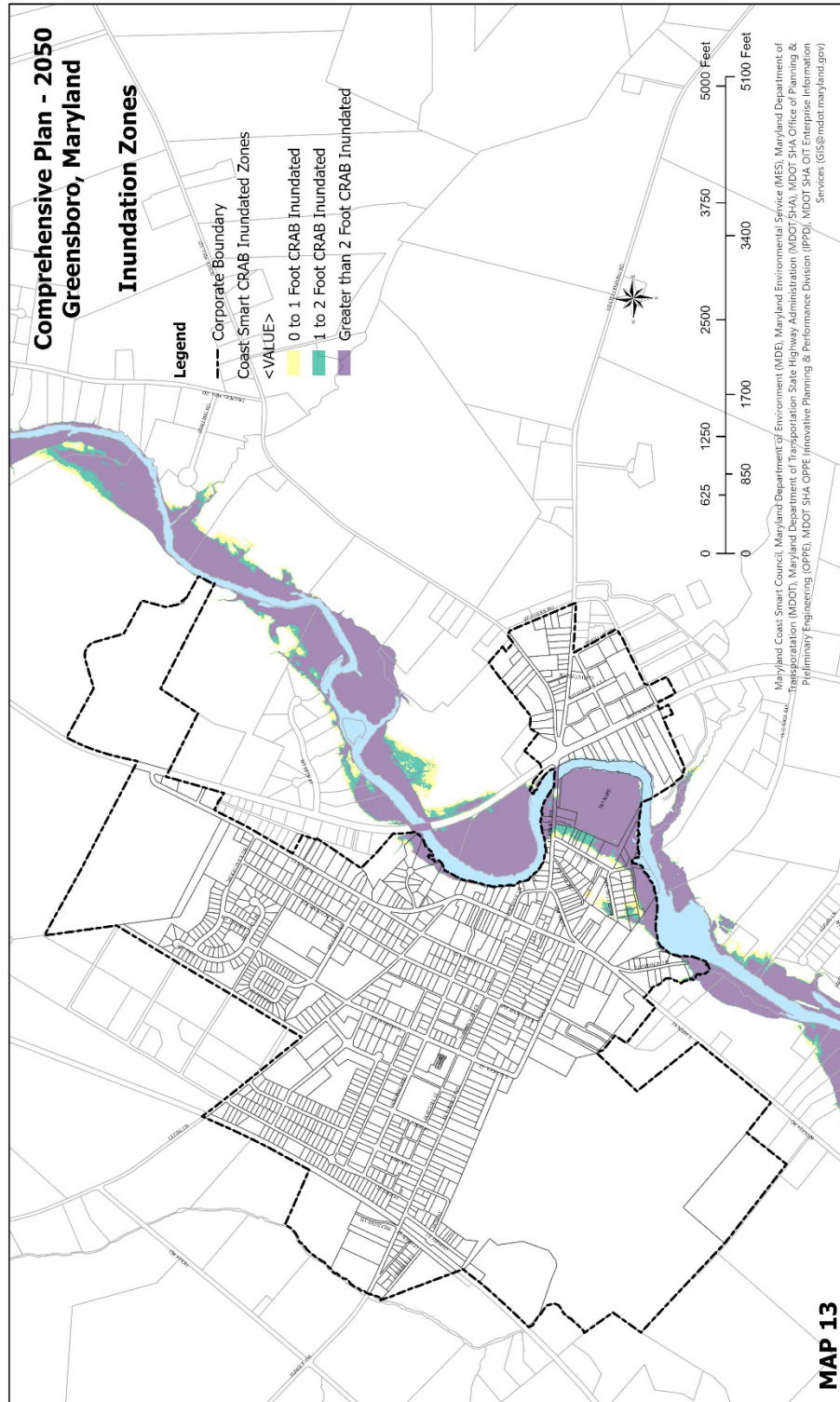


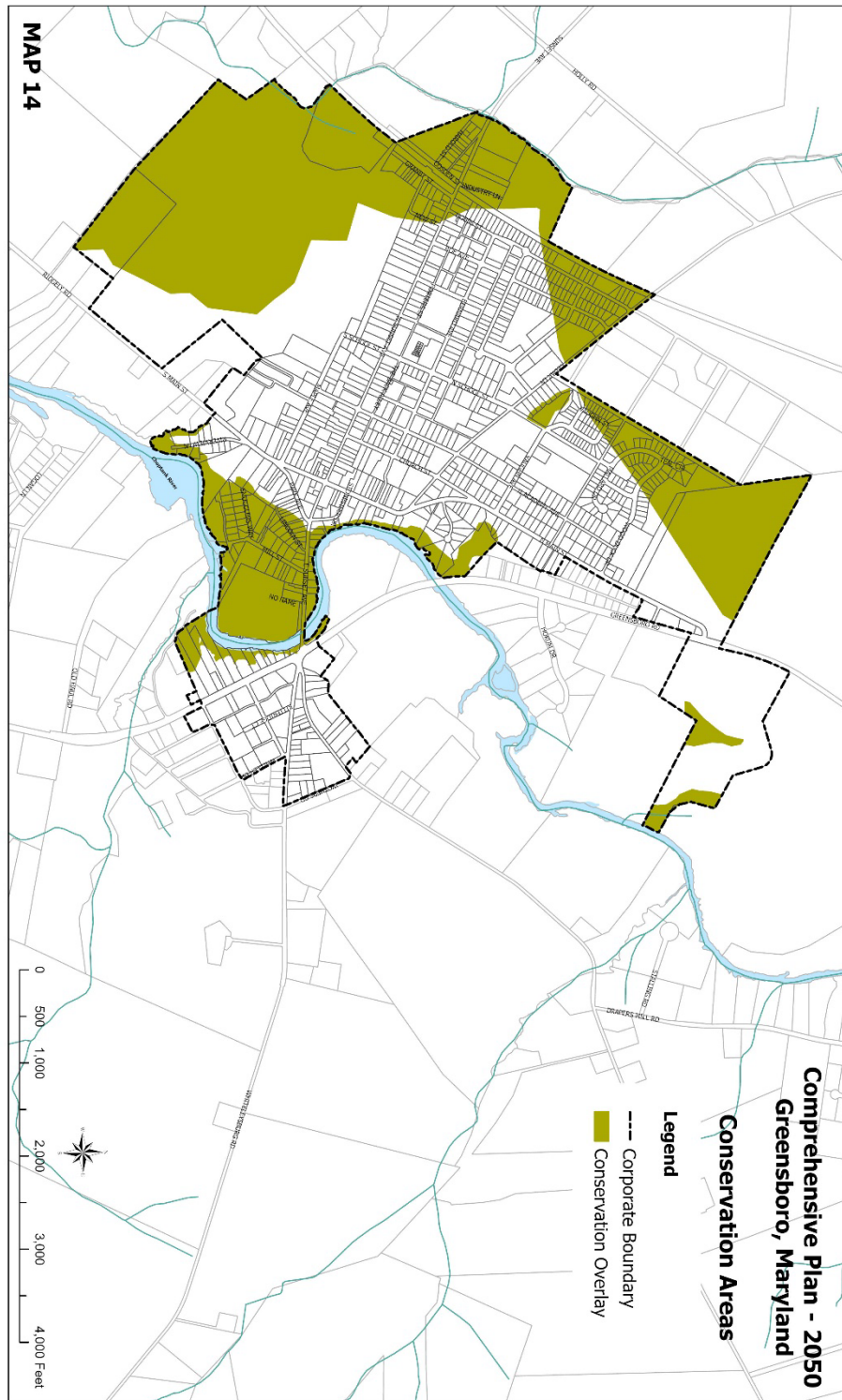












CHAPTER VI - WATER RESOURCES ELEMENT

Introduction

The Water Resources Element is a mandatory component of local comprehensive plans under Maryland Land Use Article §3-106. This element ensures that proposed growth and land-use decisions are supported by adequate, sustainable water resources while protecting water quality and preventing environmental degradation.

Per §3-106, considering available data provided by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), the Water Resources Element shall:

- Identify drinking water and other water resources adequate for the needs of existing and future development proposed in the plan's land use element.
- Identify suitable receiving waters and land areas to meet the stormwater management, wastewater treatment, and disposal needs of existing and future development proposed in the land use element of the plan.
- Evaluate whether planned development would preclude achievement of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), degrade healthy waters (including antidegradation protections for high-quality waters), or create or exacerbate flooding risks.

MDE reviews the element for consistency with state water resources programs and goals (as reflected in the general water resources program under Environment Article §5-203). The element must integrate with other plan components, such as the Land Use Element (for growth areas), Community Facilities Element (for infrastructure), and Sensitive Areas Element (for resource protection), while aligning with the County Water and Sewerage Plan.

This chapter addresses these statutory requirements for the Town of Greensboro by analyzing current and projected conditions for drinking water/groundwater (including wellhead protection), surface water quality, and receiving waters in the Upper Choptank River watershed; TMDL compliance; stormwater management; wastewater capacity; and flooding risks. It concludes that the Town's infill-focused, controlled-growth strategy—constrained by infrastructure limitations and protective policies—aligns with state mandates, supports sustainable development through 2050, and will not impair water resources or preclude TMDL achievement.

Drinking Water and Groundwater Resources

Overview

Greensboro gets all its drinking water from groundwater. This section reviews the Town's water sources, current conditions, protection measures, and whether planned growth through 2050 will affect water quality or supply. Information comes from Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) reports, the Town's annual drinking water quality reports (2023–2024), and the Comprehensive Plan's focus on controlled, infill-style growth.

Drinking Water Sources and Groundwater Conditions

Greensboro's public water system (PWSID #0050003) is supplied entirely by three wells drawing from the Piney Point aquifer:

- Greensboro 3 (near Hobbs Ave.)
- Greensboro 4 (near Academy St.)
- New Well (near Maryland Route 313)

The Piney Point aquifer is a confined aquifer, naturally protected by 350–390 feet of clay and other layers above it. These layers act as natural filters and barriers, preventing surface contaminants from entering. Water quality is excellent—the town contracts with Prostart for operations and treatment. Recent Consumer Confidence Reports show full compliance with all federal and state Safe Drinking Water Act standards, with no major violations and no issues with emerging contaminants like PFAS.

Caroline County has plentiful groundwater in several aquifers. Public water use (including Greensboro's) accounts for only a small share of total withdrawals—most groundwater is used for agricultural irrigation. MDE assessments confirm that the region has sustainable supplies to meet current and future needs.

Current Capacity and Usage

- Permitted Capacity: 325,000 gallons per day (gpd)
- Average Daily Usage: 180,000–183,000 gpd
- Unused Capacity: 123,700 gpd, about 495 EDUs (Chapter III)

Projected growth under the 2050 Plan is modest and focused on infill development and limited annexations. Even with approved projects, added demand is low, and existing permits can easily cover it. There are no concerns about shortages, over-pumping, or aquifer depletion in this area.

Wellhead Protection and Source Water Protection

Maryland has a Wellhead Protection Program to safeguard public water wells. MDE's Source Water Assessment for Greensboro states:

"The Greensboro water supply is not susceptible to contaminants originating at the land surface due to the protected nature of the confined aquifer."

Because the aquifer is deep and well confined, the risk of surface contamination is very low. The Town has mapped Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPAs) around each well. Potential risks in these areas (such as farms, septic systems, or storage tanks) exist, but the aquifer's natural protection keeps overall risk minimal.

The Town maintains a Source Water Protection Plan (available at the town office) that includes:

- Best management practices
- Zoning and land-use controls in sensitive areas
- Regular monitoring
- Public education
- Coordination with Caroline County and MDE

Capacity to Support Projected Growth

Planned development is limited, focused on infill, and tied to public water and sewer where possible. The large surplus in permitted capacity means groundwater can easily support growth through 2050 without straining the aquifer or risking water quality. The aquifer's natural protections and the Town's existing safeguards ensure that new development will not impair drinking water.

Conclusion

Greensboro's drinking water and groundwater resources are in excellent condition. The Piney Point aquifer provides a reliable, high-quality supply with ample capacity and strong natural protection. Planned modest growth will not exceed sustainable yields, harm water quality, or compromise wellhead protection areas.

Strategies and Recommendations

1. Plan Integration: Continue aligning with updates to Caroline County's Comprehensive Plan.
2. Growth Management: Require new development in or near Wellhead Protection Areas to connect to public water. Limit septic systems and high-risk activities (such as intensive agriculture or chemical storage) in these zones.
3. Monitoring and Protection: Continue annual water quality reports. Coordinate with MDE and the Caroline County Health Department for periodic source water reassessments (every 5–10 years). Track any emerging contaminants and aquifer trends.
4. Sustainability and Resilience: Promote water conservation (e.g., efficient fixtures). Consider climate impacts on recharge in long-term planning. Support regional aquifer studies if needed.
5. Public Engagement: Increase awareness of source water protection through town communications and reference the protection plan during development reviews.

Receiving Waters

Overview

This section reviews how Greensboro's planned growth may affect local rivers, streams, and the Chesapeake Bay. It focuses on pollution limits (TMDLs), protection of higher-quality waters, and flooding risks. Information is based on state and federal water quality requirements and the Town's emphasis on controlled, infill development.

TMDL Compliance and Growth Impacts

TMDLs (Total Maximum Daily Loads) are pollution budgets set by the state and EPA for the Chesapeake Bay and local waters. They limit nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus), sediment, and bacteria.

Key TMDLs affecting Greensboro:

- Chesapeake Bay TMDL (2010) – nutrients and sediment
- Local sediment TMDL (2019)
- Bacteria TMDL (2006)

Current Progress: Maryland is making good progress toward Bay goals (34% nitrogen reduction achieved by 2024, aiming for 60% by 2025). Local efforts include improved farm practices (such as cover crops) and Greensboro's upgraded wastewater treatment plant, which removes about 5,900 pounds of nitrogen per year.

Growth Capacity: The wastewater plant is permitted at 332,000 gallons per day and serves Greensboro and Goldsboro. Combined average flow in 2023 was about 167,000 gpd, leaving about 165,000 gpd of plant-wide unused hydraulic capacity. Of the permitted capacity, 52,000 gpd is reserved to Goldsboro; that reserved block—including unused allotted flow—cannot be counted toward Greensboro growth. After that deduction, approximately 113,000 gpd (about 450 EDUs at 250 gpd per EDU) remains as the hydraulic capacity attributable to Greensboro. Nutrient mass-load limits, not hydraulics, remain the binding constraint on new connections.

Even with Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) treatment at the Greensboro WWTP, new growth is limited to roughly 300 EDUs without nutrient offsets. ENR achieves excellent per-gallon nitrogen removal (3 mg/L), but the plant operates under a strict annual mass load cap for nitrogen and phosphorus set by the Chesapeake Bay TMDL. Additional flow beyond this point would increase the total pounds of nutrients discharged, requiring offsets to maintain "no net increase" and support Maryland's Bay restoration targets. The Goldsboro reservation does not change this nutrient finding: even the corrected Greensboro hydraulic remainder (~450 EDUs) exceeds the roughly 300-EDU nutrient-limited cap that applies without offsets.

New development must follow an allocation policy that prioritizes essential uses only. Agriculture accounts for about 70% of the watershed's current nutrient loads. Little room remains for additional pollutants without offsets, and all new growth must achieve "no net increase" in nutrients or sediment.

Conclusion: Planned modest infill growth will not prevent Maryland from meeting TMDL goals if it is carefully managed with nutrient offsets, stormwater controls, and strict regulations. Growth significantly beyond 300 EDUs would risk non-compliance without additional offsets.

Protecting Healthy Waters

Some portions of the Choptank River watershed are designated as Tier II (high-quality waters) and receive extra protection, even though most local waters are currently impaired.

Current Status: Some localized improvements have occurred (for example, better dissolved oxygen levels near wastewater plants), but no large stretches of healthy, unimpaired waters exist yet.

Forge Branch 1 is a Tier II (high-quality) stream segment, and the western part of the Town, including the southwest T-4 area, lies within its catchment (Map 9). MDE reports that the catchment currently has assimilative capacity. Projects in the catchment that need a nontidal wetlands, waterway construction or general stormwater construction permit must complete MDE's Tier II antidegradation review: a no-discharge alternatives analysis, a minimization analysis and, where impacts remain, mitigation.

Growth Impacts: Policies such as stream buffers, forest conservation rules, and modern stormwater design standards help prevent degradation. Greensboro's surplus drinking water capacity (about 123,700 gallons per day available) also supports low-impact growth.

Conclusion: Planned growth is unlikely to degrade receiving waters if the Town continues using low-impact development practices and maintains strong environmental protections. Current monitoring shows no immediate risks from existing development.

Flooding Risks

Greensboro has moderate flooding risks, mainly from the Choptank River and its tributaries.

Current Risks:

- About 32% of properties face a 30-year flood risk (Source: Peter Johnston & Associates, LLC).
- Roughly 15–20% of the Town lies within FEMA flood zones.
- No major floods have occurred recently, but climate change is expected to bring more frequent heavy rainfall events.

Growth Impacts: Zoning regulations keep new development out of floodplains. Stormwater management rules reduce runoff, and the focus on infill (rather than sprawl) helps limit additional flooding pressure.

Conclusion: Planned growth will not worsen flooding if development remains upland-focused, adheres to resilient design standards, and avoids flood-prone areas.

Overall Summary

Greensboro's receiving waters face ongoing challenges from nutrient and sediment pollution. Still, the Town's modest, infill-oriented growth plan can be accommodated without undermining TMDL progress or degrading water quality — provided that:

- Nutrient offsets are used when needed,
- Strong stormwater and buffer protections remain in place,

- Development avoids floodplains.

Continued monitoring, coordination with state and county partners, and responsible growth management will be essential to protecting the Choptank River and advancing Chesapeake Bay restoration.

Climate Change Implications for Water Resources

Climate change is expected to significantly alter water resource conditions in Greensboro and the Upper Choptank River watershed through 2050 and beyond. Rising sea levels, changing precipitation patterns, increased storm intensity, and warmer temperatures will affect both the quantity and quality of the Town's groundwater and surface water resources, as well as the performance of existing and future stormwater and wastewater infrastructure. Because Greensboro's growth strategy is intentionally modest and infill-focused, it can manage these climate-driven pressures through proactive planning, low-impact design standards, and integration with the Conservation Overlay Zone recommended in the Sensitive Areas Element.

Key Climate Change Impacts on Water Resources

Sea-Level Rise and Saltwater Intrusion Risk: Projections from the Maryland Coast Smart program indicate about 1–1.5 feet of sea-level rise by 2050 and up to 4 feet by 2100 along Maryland's Eastern Shore. Although Greensboro's drinking water is drawn from the confined Piney Point aquifer (approximately 350–390 feet below the surface and protected by thick clay layers), continued sea-level rise and associated changes in the regional groundwater gradient could eventually increase the risk of saltwater intrusion into shallower portions of the aquifer system or into the base of the Choptank River and its tidal tributaries. These conditions could indirectly affect surface water quality and the river's long-term sustainability as a receiving water body.

Changes in Precipitation and Storm Intensity: Maryland is projected to experience wetter winters and springs, drier summers, and more frequent extreme precipitation events. Heavier rainfall will increase stormwater runoff volumes, peak flows in Forge Branch and other tributaries, and the frequency and severity of riverine flooding along the Choptank River. These changes will heighten erosion, sedimentation, and nutrient/pollutant delivery to the Chesapeake Bay, potentially complicating achievement of the Bay TMDL and local nutrient and sediment TMDLs.

Increased Flooding and Infrastructure Stress: Climate-adjusted flood modeling (Maryland Coast Smart CRAB Riverine Flood Depth Grid and Inundated Zones) shows expanding areas of inundation risk along the Choptank River and low-lying portions of the Town. More frequent flooding could overwhelm existing stormwater systems, increase combined sewer or drainage backups (if any), and stress the wastewater treatment plant during high-flow events. Elevated groundwater tables during wet periods could affect the hydraulic capacity of the public wastewater system.

Water Quality and TMDL Implications: Warmer water temperatures and more intense runoff events are likely to exacerbate nutrient loading, dissolved oxygen depletion, and harmful algal blooms in the Choptank River. These conditions could make it harder to maintain progress toward the Chesapeake Bay TMDL and protect any localized Tier II high-quality waters. Conversely, prolonged summer dry periods could reduce base flows, concentrating pollutants, and further stressing aquatic habitats.

Integration with Town Policies and the Conservation Overlay Zone

The Town's infill-oriented growth strategy, combined with existing protections under the Critical Area Program, Forest Conservation Act, and proposed Conservation Overlay Zone, provides a strong foundation for addressing these climate impacts. The Conservation Overlay Zone will directly incorporate Coast Smart CRAB inundation and riverine flood-depth data, expanded riparian buffers, tidal wetland migration corridors, and enhanced Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater requirements. These measures will help:

- Reduce runoff volumes and pollutant loads through increased infiltration and filtration;
- Preserve floodplain storage capacity and allow for natural flood attenuation;
- Protect groundwater recharge areas and wellhead protection zones from increased contamination risks;
- Facilitate tidal wetland migration to maintain natural water quality buffering functions; and
- Limit new development in high-risk flood zones to reduce future strain on stormwater and wastewater infrastructure.

Recommendations

To ensure long-term water resource sustainability in the face of climate change, the Town should:

- Incorporate Maryland Coast Smart CRAB data layers (Inundated Zones and Riverine Flood Depth Grid) into all site plans, subdivision, and rezoning reviews, requiring climate-resilient design standards (e.g., elevated infrastructure, increased freeboard, and enhanced LID practices) for projects in projected high-risk areas.
- Update the Town's Floodplain Ordinance and Stormwater Management Ordinance to reflect future climate conditions, including higher design storms and sea-level rise-adjusted base flood elevations where appropriate.
- Properties in the Town lie in or near FEMA Zone AE (1% annual chance) and Zone X (0.2% annual chance) floodplains. Development will follow the Town's floodplain ordinance and FEMA standards. The Town will consult MDE's State National Flood Insurance Program coordinator (flood.maps@maryland.gov) on floodplain requirements and MDE's Water and Science Administration on climate resilience.
- Require nutrient offset credits or enhanced on-site treatment for any new development beyond the current realistic growth cap of approximately 300 EDUs to maintain TMDL progress under changing hydrologic conditions.

- Continue coordination with Caroline County, MDE, and DNR to monitor groundwater levels, salinity trends in the Choptank River, and aquifer health, with periodic updates to the Source Water Protection Plan every 5–7 years.
- Promote water conservation measures (e.g., low-flow fixtures, rainwater harvesting where feasible) and green infrastructure retrofits on public and private properties to build resilience and reduce demand on the Piney Point aquifer during drier periods.

By proactively addressing climate change impacts within the Water Resources Element and through the recommended Conservation Overlay Zone, Greensboro can safeguard its drinking water supply, maintain progress toward Chesapeake Bay TMDL goals, protect high-quality receiving waters, and ensure that its modest, sustainable growth strategy remains viable through 2050 and beyond. These efforts will also support the environmental justice objectives outlined in the Sensitive Areas Element by reducing disproportionate flood and water-quality risks to overburdened and underserved residents.

Overall Conclusions

Per Land Use Article requirements:

- Planned growth aligns with water quality standards and TMDLs, as it's infill-focused and constrained by infrastructure/nutrient limits.
- No evidence that it will preclude TMDL achievement, degrade waters, or increase flooding, given offsets and regulations.
- Watershed capacity is low (less than 300 EDUs total), underscoring the need to set sustainable limits to protect the impaired Upper Choptank.

Strategies and Recommendations

To meet the 2050 goals and the Land Use Article mandates:

- Update Plans: Integrate Caroline County's 2025 updates, focusing on water resource limits.
- Coordinate with Caroline County on the overdue update of the County Water and Sewer Plan so the Town's water and sewer data, its no-extension policy and Map 18 match in both documents. The County amended the plan to include connections for northern areas such as Henderson, Marydel and Templeville; this Plan reflects the County's 2025 decision to pursue a local facility instead, and the Town will update this Plan once the County makes a final decision.
- Enhance TMDL Compliance: Track farm and urban best management practices (BMPs) in Watershed Implementation Plans; require nutrient offsets/credits for any new EDUs over 300.
- Protect Waters: Mandate low-impact development (e.g., green stormwater infrastructure, riparian buffers) for all projects; preserve forests/wetlands through zoning.

- Manage Flooding: Update floodplain maps with climate data (e.g., sea-level rise); integrate resilience into the Hazard Mitigation Plan, requiring elevated buildings in at-risk areas.
- Monitor and Adapt: Partner with MDE/EPA for annual water quality checks; review growth capacity every 5 years, adjusting allocations if TMDL progress stalls.
- Infrastructure Focus: Maintain wastewater plant at ENR standards; explore trading programs for offsets without expansions.

These strategies ensure Greensboro's growth supports clean waters, TMDL success, and flood safety through 2050.

CHAPTER VII - HOUSING

Introduction

The housing element is a mandatory component of local comprehensive plans in Maryland, as required by the state's Land Use Article (amended by legislation such as HB 1045 of 2019). This element must be included in comprehensive plans updated or adopted after June 1, 2020, and jurisdictions must review and revise their plans at least every 10 years to incorporate all required elements. At a minimum, the housing element shall address the need for affordable housing within the local jurisdiction, specifically including:

- Workforce housing (Housing and Community Development Article § 4-1801): rental housing affordable to households earning 50% to 100% of area median income, and homeownership housing affordable to households earning 60% to 120% of area median income.
- Low-income housing (housing affordable to households with aggregate annual income below 60% of the area median income)

The element may include strategies to address the community's housing needs. Additional requirements apply to plans enacted or amended on or after certain dates:

Starting January 1, 2023 (per HB 90 of 2021), the housing element must include a fair housing assessment to ensure the jurisdiction is affirmatively furthering fair housing (promoting equitable access, reducing segregation, and addressing disparities).

- For plans enacted or amended on or after January 1, 2025 (and potentially later updates), further assessments may be required, such as evaluating the suitability of vacant, unused, or underutilized commercial/industrial land for housing opportunities in areas with existing infrastructure.

This element helps ensure communities plan proactively for diverse housing needs, supporting economic vitality, equity, and resource-efficient growth.

Housing Profile

The socio-economic profile prepared for this Comprehensive Plan update highlights several key findings directly relevant to Greensboro's housing element. Relevant findings include:

Population and household growth driving demand: Greensboro's population is estimated at 2,634, in 832 households (ACS 2020–2024 5-year estimates). Average household size has risen, reflecting larger families, multigenerational living, and affordability pressures. These factors support the need for more family-sized units (e.g., 3+ bedrooms) and for a broader range of housing types beyond single-family detached homes.

Younger, family-oriented, and increasingly diverse population: The median age is lower than the county/state averages, with a significant percentage of households with children under 18 and

notable numbers of female-headed households with children. Racial/ethnic diversification is evident, with Hispanic or Latino residents at 27.9% (up sharply from 3.4% in 2000) and Non-Hispanic White at 53.5%. These trends underscore priorities for equitable, inclusive housing that accommodates families, single parents, and diverse cultural needs (e.g., multilingual resources, larger units to reduce overcrowding).

Persistent affordability challenges and cost burdens: Median household income is well below Caroline County's and Maryland's, with a high poverty rate, disproportionately in female-headed families with children—housing stock: 48% renter-occupied (up significantly since 1980) and 51.9% owner-occupied. Single-family detached remains dominant, but multifamily and attached units have increased. Older stock suggests rehabilitation needs. These factors indicate strong demand for affordable options to prevent cost burdens, especially for low- and very low-income households.

Housing production and diversity gaps: High vacancy rate and limited multifamily options highlight constraints. The profile notes rising rental shares and median rents, though the document references older figures, with home values in the \$290,000–\$320,000 range per recent sources. These conditions support recommendations for diverse housing (e.g., duplexes, townhomes, ADUs, starter homes) and incentives to meet state production targets while preserving rural character.

Priorities tied to housing: Overall, the socio-economic profile emphasizes affordable and diverse housing choices (workforce/family-sized units, rehabilitation of aging stock), family-centered support (to address single-parent vulnerabilities), equity/inclusion (for diverse and lower-income residents), and Smart Growth (infill development, infrastructure alignment) to reduce sprawl and ensure housing meets demographic needs.

These findings reinforce the housing element's focus on expanding affordable supply, promoting diversity (e.g., multifamily/middle housing), addressing disproportionate needs of protected classes (per fair housing requirements), and integrating with other plan elements, such as municipal growth and public facilities. They provide a data foundation for policies and strategies to affirmatively further fair housing and meet statewide mandates.

Affordable Housing

Affordability Benchmarks

The affordability benchmarks for Greensboro, Maryland (Caroline County) are tied to the Area Median Income (AMI) of about \$86,200 per year for a family of four (FY 2025 HUD figures, effective since mid-2025 and still current as of March 2026). Housing is "affordable" when it costs no more than roughly 30% of a household's gross monthly income. These breakdowns help communities plan for diverse needs—ensuring options exist so no one pays more than 30% of income on housing.

Here are the key categories broken down into approximate maximum monthly housing costs (what a household at the top of each income category can typically afford without being

overburdened). These are rough estimates for planning purposes—precise HUD calculations determine actual program eligibility, and costs vary by household size, utilities, taxes, etc.

- Extremely Low Income (up to 30% of AMI, \$27,850 annual / \$2,321 monthly gross income): Affordable housing cost: Up to about \$696 per month. This figure covers rent/mortgage + utilities. Many in this group rely on deep subsidies (e.g., public housing or vouchers) to keep costs this low, as market rents often exceed what they can pay.
- Very Low Income (up to 50% of AMI: \$46,400 annual / \$3,867 monthly gross income): Affordable housing cost: Up to about \$1,160 per month. This group includes many working families who may qualify for programs like Section 8 or certain affordable apartments to keep housing within reach.
- Low Income (up to 80% of AMI \$74,250 annual / \$6,188 monthly gross income): Affordable housing cost: Up to about \$1,856 per month. This figure covers typical working households (e.g., teachers, nurses, tradespeople) who can often afford market-rate options in lower-cost areas like Caroline County. However, they may still need help in tighter markets.

Rent vs. Mortgage Examples (for context in Caroline County)

These are illustrative, based on local data (average rents around \$1,000–\$1,500 for 2-bedroom units; median home prices ~\$300,000–\$320,000; current 30-year fixed mortgage rates ~6.0–6.2% as of March 2026). Actual payments depend on down payment, credit, taxes, insurance, etc.

- For rent: The "affordable" monthly figures above directly translate to maximum rent (including utilities). Market 2-bedroom rents in the area often fall in the \$1,000–\$1,400 range, which fits well for low-income households but may strain extremely low-income ones without assistance.
- For a mortgage (e.g., on a \$300,000 home with 20% down, a \$ 240,000 loan at a 6.1% rate): Principal + interest \$1,450 per month (plus ~\$300–\$500 taxes/insurance, totaling \$1,800–\$2,000 PITI). This figure aligns roughly with low-income affordability but exceeds very low or extremely low without significant down payment help or subsidies.

Fair Housing Assessment

The Fair Housing Assessment is a required component of the Town's housing element under Maryland law (e.g., HB 90 of 2021), to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH) by evaluating and addressing barriers to equitable housing choice. The Greensboro Fair Housing Assessment, included in Appendix A of the Comprehensive Plan, supports proactive planning to promote equity, reduce disparities, and align with Maryland's Smart Growth and fair housing mandates.

The salient findings of the Greensboro Fair Housing Assessment are that the Town faces no major overt discrimination but experiences structural impediments to fair housing due to housing scarcity, limited diversity in unit types, zoning practices favoring low-density development, infrastructure constraints (e.g., sewer capacity), and rural isolation. Town-wide demographic data show disparities by race and ethnicity in cost burden and access to opportunity (detailed

below); however, data available at the Town's scale are not sufficient to support conclusions about where different racial or ethnic groups live within Greensboro, and no such claim is made here. Poverty disproportionately affects Hispanic and Black households compared to White households, though no Racially/Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty (R/ECAPs) exist per HUD standards.

Key challenges include:

- **Affordability and disproportionate needs:** Median household income (\$44,934) lags behind Maryland's, with 35% of households cost-burdened (>30% of income on housing), rising to 45% for renters. Minorities, families with children, and people with disabilities face higher burdens, overcrowding, and substandard conditions in limited multifamily/accessible stock.
- **Access to opportunity:** Low scores in job proximity (30), transit (20), and school proficiency (45) per HUD indices, with car dependency and agricultural reliance disproportionately impacting minorities and low-income groups.
- **Enforcement and policies:** Minimal local complaints reported; the Town lacks a dedicated AFFH plan and relies on county efforts, with potential disparate impacts from zoning (e.g., single-family focus) and private practices like source-of-income discrimination.

Recommendations

- Partner for a detailed local AFFH analysis (e.g., surveys).
- Reform zoning to allow more multifamily/middle housing and adopt reasonable accommodation policies for disabilities.
- Expand affordable supply (e.g., LIHTC, meet state production targets of 59 new units over 5 years via infill).
- Conduct outreach/education in multiple languages and track complaints.

State Housing Production Target

DHCD's Housing Starts Here report sets production targets under the Governor's executive order. Caroline County's cumulative target for 2026–2030 is 819 units; Greensboro's share is 59 units (7, 10, 12, 14 and 16 per year), based on the Town's 7% share of county housing units. That is about 12 units a year, above the Baseline scenario's pace of about 9 a year (207 units over 24 years). Kinnamon Meadows, accessory dwelling units and missing-middle infill are the Town's main tools for meeting it.

Housing Strategies

These housing strategies focus primarily on local actions, including regulatory changes, small-scale development, and sustainable financing, to increase housing supply without relying heavily on government subsidies or large-scale projects. They do not preclude partnerships with Caroline County, the State of Maryland, or federal programs that address housing needs. Nor do they rely on requirements for large developments to provide affordable housing (e.g., inclusionary

zoning). The funding mechanisms outlined are for elected officials to consider in the context of the Town's financial priorities, now and in the future.

This framework supports the housing element's objectives of expanding affordable and attainable options, promoting housing choice for diverse households (including families, single parents, and minorities), affirmatively furthering fair housing, and ensuring equitable access without overburdening local finances or infrastructure.

Streamline Permitting and Reduce Regulatory Barriers

- Simplify approval processes for small projects, such as fast-track or administrative (e.g., 30-day) reviews for single-family homes, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), backyard cottages, and conversions (e.g., adding kitchenettes or separate entrances to large homes for rentals). This change reduces friction, lowers applicant costs, and enables quick, affordable additions to housing stock.
- Explicitly comply with and leverage Maryland's Accessory Dwelling Units Act of 2025 (effective October 1, 2025; local adoption required by October 1, 2026; the Town has not yet adopted its ordinance), which prohibits unreasonable restrictions and mandates authorization of ADUs (attached/detached/converted) on single-family lots, with size limits (e.g., $ADU \leq 75\%$ of primary dwelling), building code compliance, and allowances for construction before/during primary home build (unless variance needed).
- Offer pre-application consultations, clear checklists, and online resources to guide residents and reduce frustration.

Associated Funding Strategies: Minimal direct funding needed, as the focus is on cost reduction through efficiency. For specific conversions (e.g., repurposing empty bedrooms into small apartments), consider micro Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) for minor upgrades on individual parcels, or prioritize low-burden grants from Maryland DHCD or county CDBG funds to cover initial administration/setup.

Reform Zoning to Allow Incremental Density and "Missing Middle" Housing

- Permit gradual, by-right increases in density, such as allowing duplexes, triplexes, small apartments, or mixed-use buildings in appropriate zones. Eliminate or reduce barriers like excessive parking mandates, large setbacks, and single-family-only restrictions to enable organic neighborhood evolution and diverse housing types (e.g., duplexes, cottage courts).
- Phase in reforms starting with pilot zones (e.g., in the T-1 Transect to support infill without displacement).
- Incorporate form-based code elements or overlays for "missing middle" housing to preserve rural character and ensure compatibility.

Associated Funding Strategies: Explore simple local incentives, such as negotiating Caroline County impact fee waivers for affordable units, or state/federal matching grants. Align with tax tools (e.g., potential land-value taxation, if enabled) to generate modest revenue for housing

investments while incentivizing efficient land use; supplement with county or state grants for pilot implementation.

Promote Starter Homes, Backyard Cottages, and Small-Scale Projects

- Encourage construction of small, entry-level units (e.g., 400-600-square-foot starter homes on empty lots) and additions, such as backyard cottages or ADUs, to utilize underused space and provide affordable options at scale.
- Integrate with the 2025 ADU Act specifics (e.g., detached cottages as ADUs, with design guidelines for compatibility such as no front-yard dominance and reasonable setbacks/lot coverage).

Associated Funding Strategies: Offer targeted local financing (e.g., low-interest revolving loans) for building small homes and backyard cottages, potentially at low or no cost to taxpayers by matching neighborhood values and buyer incomes. Repurpose traditional tools, such as short-term local bonds, or explore CDBG via Caroline County and state revolving loan funds.

Cultivate Incremental Developers and Local Ecosystems

- Build networks of small-scale developers through training (e.g., Incremental Development Alliance workshops) focused on mid-sized projects like duplexes or small apartments. Foster local builders to meet community needs incrementally.
- Partner with Caroline County, Upper Shore Regional Council, or regional nonprofits to host virtual/local sessions and provide incentives (e.g., expedited permitting for trained builders).

Associated Funding Strategies: Provide support via grants from rural housing-focused foundations or philanthropy, plus small developer revolving funds or training subsidies; minimize heavy local outlay.

Invest in Neighborhood Revitalization Without Displacement ("Gentrification")

- Focus on gradual improvements in struggling areas (e.g., rehabilitating pre-1940 stock) and on adding housing while preserving affordability. Engage residents (including NIMBY/YIMBY perspectives) through surveys or community benefits agreements to ensure benefits like protected property values and community gains.
- Emphasize targeted rehab incentives (e.g., grants/loans) and anti-displacement measures (e.g., right-of-first-refusal in land trusts).

Associated Funding Strategies: Tie to local investments in community capacity-building, using CDBG, state revitalization funds, or modest revenue from aligned tax tools to fund efforts without market disruptions.

Adopt Alternative Housing Models and Support Low-Barrier Homeownership

- Expand models like community land trusts, cooperatives, or shared-equity ownership for modest homes. Promote low-barrier paths to ownership (e.g., modest down payments) while integrating non-auto modes of transportation (walking/biking) in core areas to reduce living costs.
- Partner with existing Eastern Shore land trusts or the Maryland Affordable Housing Coalition for setup and expertise.

Associated Funding Strategies: Scale resources through local revolving funds, philanthropy, or state homeownership programs; avoid long-term liabilities by focusing on sustainable, income-scaled financing.

Additional Cross-Cutting Elements

- **Monitoring and Metrics:** Track progress annually (e.g., number of units added by type, affordability levels maintained, cost burdens reduced) to evaluate impact and adjust as needed.
- **Coordination:** Collaborate with Caroline County on zoning/infrastructure overlaps, shared services, and regional support.
- **Community Engagement:** Conduct early outreach (e.g., town meetings, bilingual materials) to build buy-in and address concerns about rural character or displacement.
- **Homelessness.** The Town has not conducted its own point-in-time count; the Mid-Shore Continuum of Care conducts the count and serves homelessness regionally. The Town will support the Continuum's annual count, refer residents to 2-1-1 Maryland for shelter and housing help, and coordinate with DHCD's homelessness programs and Caroline County providers.
- **State programs.** State programs available to carry out this element include Community Legacy (revitalization and adaptive reuse), DHCD's repair programs for homeowners (aging in place), Community Services Block Grant funds (services for households at or below 125% of poverty), Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (Greensboro Heights, 40 units, is the Town's existing tax-credit property), DHCD energy-efficiency programs, and the Maryland Local Government Infrastructure Finance Program. Chapter IX lists downtown and business programs.

CHAPTER VIII - TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Overview

Greensboro remains strategically located on the main north-south artery in Caroline County, MD, Route 313, a minor arterial that bypasses the Town center to the east. The Town connects to the US Route 50 corridor via MD Route 480 to MD Route 404. MD Route 480 (Main Street) is a Major Collector from MD 314 (Sunset Avenue) to Wood Duck Drive, while Sunset Avenue, running through the Town center and linking to MD Route 314, is part of MD 314, a Major Collector from Cosden Street to Main Street, connecting the Town to US Route 13 via MD Route 12. The remaining Town streets function as local roads and adequately serve existing land uses, though many still do not meet modern paving-width standards. Future development may require upgrades to comply with adopted construction and right-of-way standards.

This section updates the existing transportation conditions for key road links in Greensboro based on average daily traffic volumes and the level of service (LOS) for each link. The analysis draws from the Maryland State Highway Administration's Highway Needs Inventory (HNI) and the FY 2026–FY 2031 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), incorporating the best available data.

Roadway Functional Classification

The Transportation Element of the Greensboro Comprehensive Plan incorporates roadway functional classification as a key framework for understanding and guiding the Town's roadway network, mobility, access, and future development (see Map 15). This incorporation aligns with state and federal standards, including data from the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA).

MDOT SHA Roadway Functional Classification data consists of linear geometric features that showcase the functional classification of roadways throughout the State of Maryland. Roadway Functional Classification describes each roadway's role in moving vehicles within a highway network. MDOT SHA Roadway Functional Classification data is primarily used for general planning purposes.

Functional classification groups roadways based on their primary purpose—balancing mobility (efficient movement of vehicles over longer distances) and access (providing entry to adjacent properties, homes, businesses, and land uses). This hierarchical system helps prioritize investments, maintenance, safety improvements, and integration with land use planning in Greensboro.

Major and Minor Collectors

Collectors serve as the intermediate links in the roadway network, channeling traffic from local roads to arterials while providing access to nearby properties. They support moderate travel distances and volumes, connecting neighborhoods, small communities, and rural areas to higher-capacity routes.

Major Collectors emphasize greater mobility while still providing reasonable access. They serve higher traffic needs, such as linking larger residential areas, activity centers, county seats (where applicable), or key destinations not directly on arterials. Major collectors often make longer local trips, support local bus services (if available), and reach neighborhoods over significant distances. They handle more traffic and longer-distance movements compared to minor collectors.

Minor Collectors focus more on access than mobility. They collect traffic from local roads and connect smaller neighborhoods or rural areas to major collectors or arterials. They are more integrated into residential or low-density areas, serve shorter trips, and ensure all developed areas are reasonably accessible to the broader network.

Local Roads

Local roads primarily provide direct access to individual properties, homes, farms, businesses, and small developments. Their main function is land access rather than through-movement or mobility. Local roads discourage through traffic to maintain safety, quiet neighborhoods, and community character. They connect to collectors and make up most roadway mileage in areas like Greensboro, supporting short-distance, low-volume travel.

In the context of Greensboro's Comprehensive Plan, these classifications inform land-use decisions, infrastructure improvements, growth management, access control, and the preservation of the Town's rural-small-town character. For example, higher-functional roads (e.g., collectors) may support targeted economic development or connectivity, while local roads prioritize residential access and environmental protection. The plan coordinates transportation with other elements, such as land use, community facilities, and natural resources, to promote balanced, sustainable growth.

Traffic Volumes

The Maryland State Highway Administration reviewed Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes for recent years (e.g., 2023). The highest ADT on MD Route 313 in the Greensboro area is approximately 7,550 vehicles, classifying it as a Minor Arterial. MD Route 314, a major collector, handles around 2,300–3,000 vehicles per day on segments east and west of Town. MD Route 480 (Main Street) carries between 3,000 and 4,300 vehicles per day in and near the Town. Other local streets remain low-volume. Traffic volumes have increased significantly but modestly since 2010, and anticipated development (e.g., infill and small-scale redevelopments) is likely to continue this trend, with average annual increases of 40–135 vehicles on major routes based on historical patterns.

Capacity/Level of Service

Roadway capacity depends on classification, lanes, pavement type, and intersection control. According to the Maryland State Highway Capacity Manual, MD Route 313 has a capacity of about 7,900 vehicles per day to maintain LOS C as a two-lane highway. MD Routes 314 and 480 have similar capacities. Using 2023 ADT volumes, volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratios range from 0.37 on less-trafficked routes (e.g., Sunset Rt. 314 west of Town) to 0.96 on busier segments of Route 313 north of Town. MD Route 480 shows V/C ratios of 0.37–0.57, and the eastern end of Sunset operates at 0.59. These ratios indicate adequate capacity on most routes, but MD Route 313 north of Town is near its LOS C capacity and would feel strain first if growth accelerates.

Pedestrian/Bicycle Circulation

Greensboro provides approximately 5.8 miles of sidewalk (see Map 16). While pedestrian safety remains a priority, gaps in the continuous pedestrian circulation system persist. Some sidewalks remain hazardous and require upgrades. Notable improvements since 2010 include the walkway added to the Choptank River bridge, reducing barriers for east-side residents accessing the Town center, and a traffic light at MD Route 313 and Sunset Avenue. However, this intersection still

needs pedestrian crosswalks and additional safety features. Greensboro's compact size, scale, and neighborly character make it inherently walkable and bikeable, but it lacks a comprehensive network of walking, biking, and resting areas. Statewide initiatives like the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) and Bicycle and Pedestrian Accessibility Funds could support local enhancements, such as upgrading ramps to ADA standards and adding bike lanes to connect destinations. The current CTP funds no major Greensboro-specific projects, but coordination with Caroline County's Hazard Mitigation Plan could address pedestrian areas in flood-prone areas.

Segments of MD 313 and MD 314 in the Town meet SHA criteria for bicycle activity.

Within two years, prepare a bicycle and pedestrian master plan that maps sidewalk gaps, bicycle facilities, problem crossings and intersections needing traffic calming, and show planned connections on Map 16. Prioritize Safe Routes to School for Greensboro Elementary (840 students in 2025–26) and bicycle parking at the school, parks, the library and downtown. New development will extend the Town's street grid and sidewalk network, with dead-end streets only where a connection is impractical. The Town will use SHA's bicycle and pedestrian planning tools, consult MDOT's Office of Active Transportation and Micromobility on the e-bike and scooter pilot, consider a Complete Streets policy, and seek Transportation Alternatives, Recreational Trails and Kim Lamphier Bikeways Network funding.

The Land Development Ordinance update will set street types, sidewalk widths and frontage standards for T-1, T-2 and T-3, using the City of Aberdeen Development Code (Chapter 235, Attachment 7) and the Town of Galena Zoning Ordinance (Attachment G) as models.

Microtransportation (Micromobility Options)

Micromobility options—such as personal or shared electric bicycles (e-bikes), electric scooters, and other low-speed, lightweight devices—offer valuable potential for small towns like Greensboro. These modes fill gaps in short-distance travel (typically under three miles), serving as flexible, affordable, and low-emission alternatives that align with the Town's compact, neighborly scale.

Nationally, shared micromobility use has surged, reaching a record 157 million trips across the US and Canada in 2023, driven by post-pandemic preferences for local, active, and sustainable travel. Maryland is expanding e-bike access on state trails while exploring broader incentives. In Greensboro, where many daily needs are within easy reach of the Town center, these options could enhance connectivity via the improved Choptank River bridge walkway, link residents to parks, schools, and downtown destinations, and provide last-mile support to Delmarva Community Transit (DCT) or Mid-Upper Shore Transit (MUST) services. Benefits include reduced reliance on personal vehicles for local trips, improved accessibility for seniors and persons with limited mobility, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and stronger support for the Town's walkable character.

Implementation strategies suited to a small town include:

- Launching a modest pilot shared program (e.g., a fleet of 10–20 e-bikes or scooters) through partnerships with DCT/MUST, private operators, local nonprofits, or businesses, with devices stationed at high-use locations such as Main Street, Sunset Avenue, or public facilities.
- Installing low-cost supporting infrastructure, including designated parking corrals, solar-powered charging stations, and signage integrated with existing or planned sidewalks and bike facilities.
- Promoting personal ownership via resident incentives or rebates, coordinated with emerging state or county e-bike programs.
- Adopting simple local regulations—such as speed limits consistent with e-bike classes, recommended helmet use, and clear parking rules—to ensure safe integration without obstructing pedestrian pathways.
- Prioritizing equity by locating devices across neighborhoods and offering cash-access or subsidized options for low-income users.

These approaches require minimal upfront investment, can scale with demand, and are eligible for funding through state Bicycle and Pedestrian Accessibility Funds, federal grants, or developer contributions. Coordination with Caroline County's transportation planning will help align pilots with broader regional efforts.

Public Transportation

Public transportation options have evolved since 2010. Delmarva Community Transit (DCT), in collaboration with the Mid-Upper Shore Transit (MUST) Bus system, provides fixed-route and deviated fixed-route services across Caroline County and the Mid-Shore region. DCT offers door-to-door transportation for seniors (ages 60+), persons with disabilities, and the general public with advance notice. MUST Bus covers five counties, including Caroline, with affordable fares (single-ride tickets and discounted passes) for commuting, shopping, medical visits, or regional trips. Special services accommodate people who can't use fixed routes. While not ideal for daily commuting to work due to scheduling, these services have improved accessibility compared to the limited medical and U-STAR options in 2010. No rail or high-frequency transit serves Greensboro directly.

Regional transit should connect residents to what the Town lacks: jobs and services in Denton and Easton, the Mid-Shore Regional Technology and Business Park, University of Maryland Shore Medical Center at Easton, Bayhealth in Milford, Delaware, and full-service grocery stores. The Town will work with Delmarva Community Transit, MUST and MTA regional planning staff on these links and promote Commuter Choice Maryland to commuters.

Discussion of Potential Issues Related to Projected Growth

Greensboro's population has grown from approximately 1,632 in 2000 to an estimated 2,634 (2020–2024 American Community Survey). Caroline County's population is projected to be 34,663 in 2025, with modest annual growth of 1.2%. Traffic has remained manageable, but

continued growth (e.g., completion of the Kinnamon Meadows PUD and infill in T-1 and T-2; Chapter IV) could strain infrastructure. Key issues include:

- **Increased Traffic Volumes:** If the population reaches about 2,540 by 2050 (Baseline) (assuming 1–2% annual growth), ADT on MD Route 313 could exceed 10,000 in segments, pushing V/C ratios toward 1.0 and degrading LOS to D or E, leading to congestion at intersections such as MD 313/Sunset.
- **Safety Concerns:** Higher volumes may exacerbate pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, especially without crosswalk upgrades. Flooding from climate change (noted in Caroline County's 2024 Hazard Mitigation Plan) could worsen road washouts and impact emergency access.
- **Public Transit Gaps:** Limited frequency and coverage may not meet the needs of a growing workforce or an aging population (projected increase in residents over 50).
- **Pedestrian/Bicycle Deficiencies:** Incomplete networks hinder active transportation, reducing livability and contributing to health/safety issues.
- **Maintenance Needs:** Aging roads (e.g., nearby unpaved segments) require resurfacing; without funding, deterioration accelerates.

These issues align with Caroline County's Comprehensive Plan update, which prioritizes resurfacing MD 313 and improving drainage to address flooding and safety.

Recommendations to Address Projected Growth

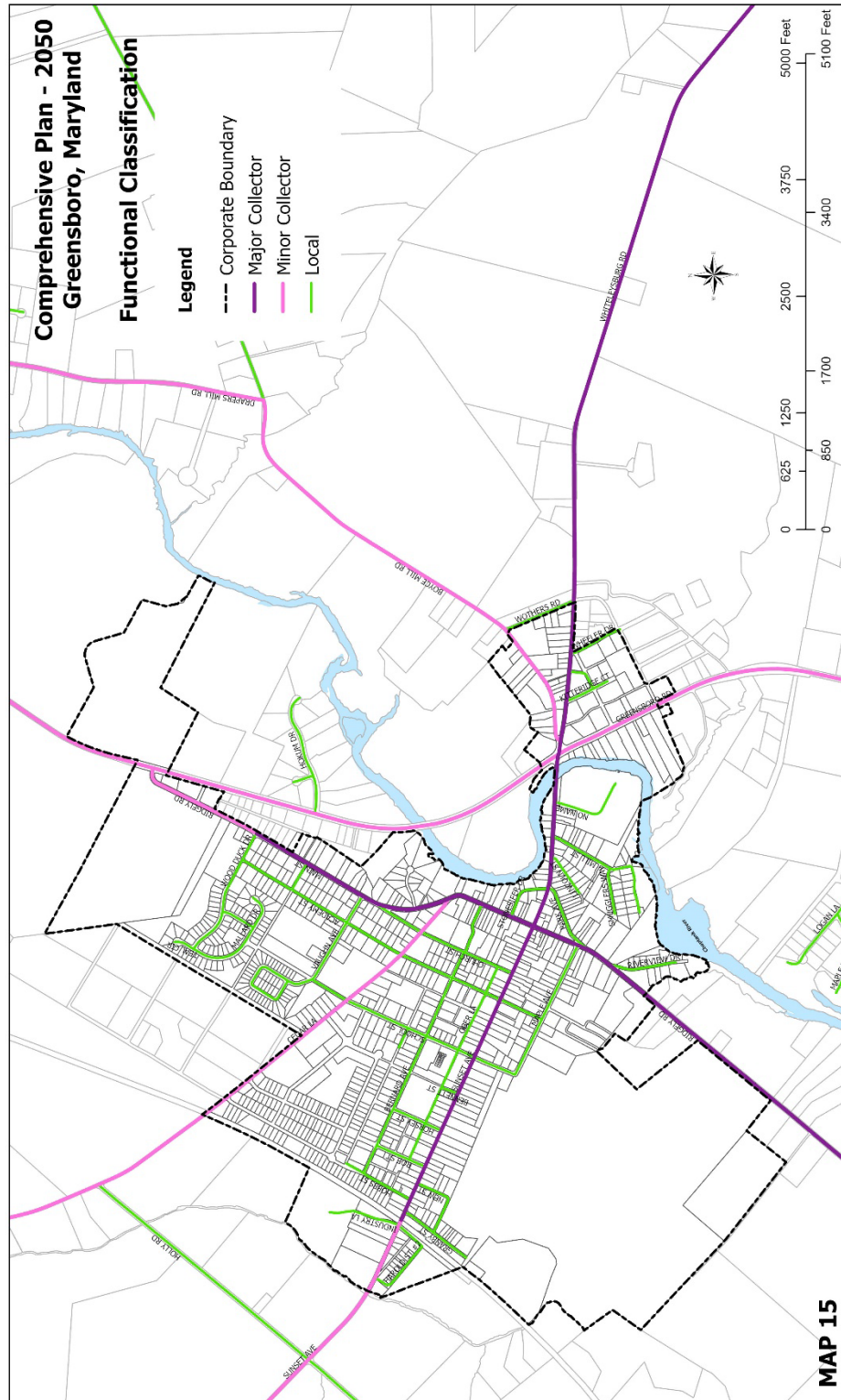
To mitigate issues and support sustainable growth, the following recommendations are proposed, drawing from the MDOT CTP (FY2026–2031), Caroline County's draft Transportation chapter, and state priorities:

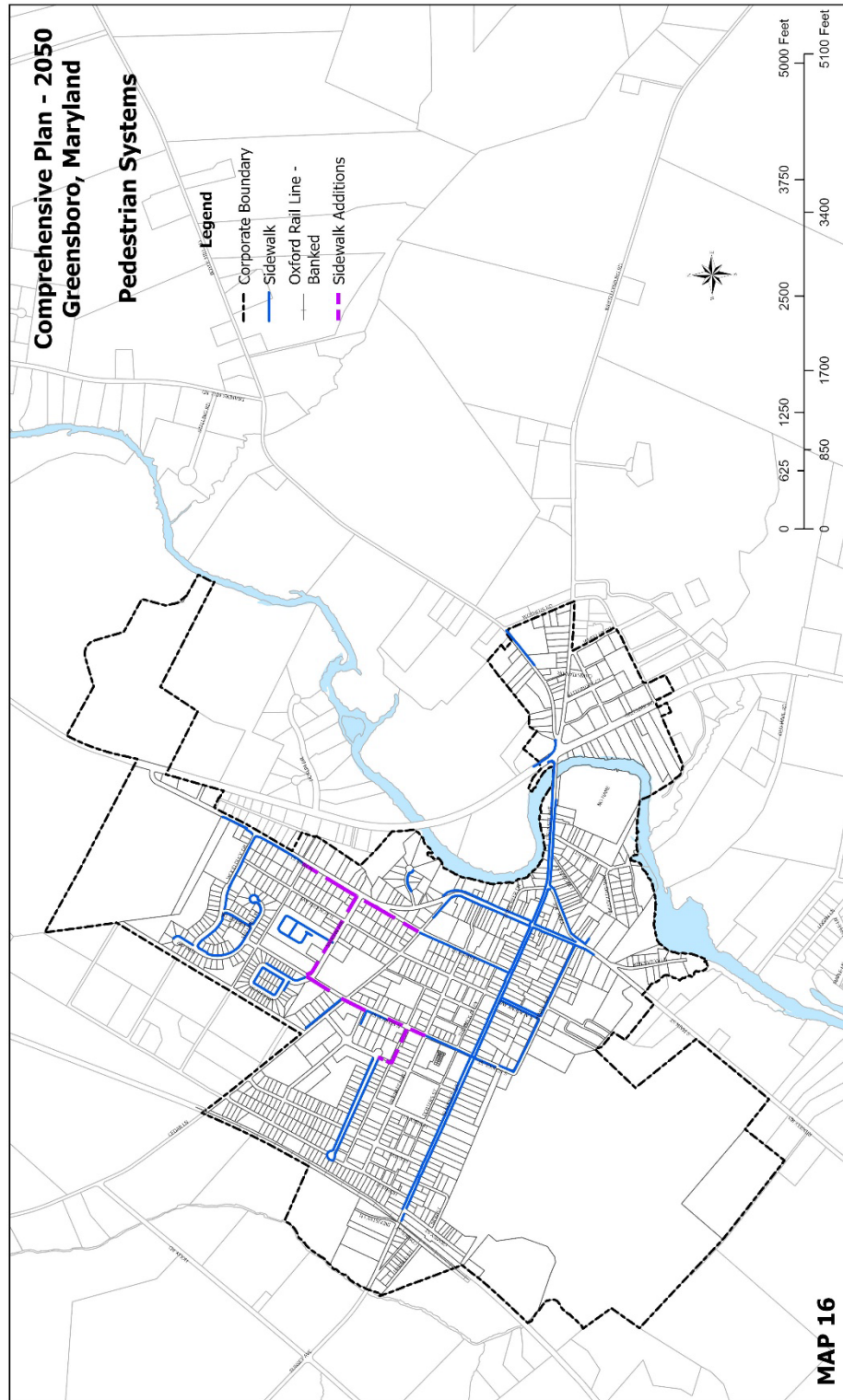
- **Road Maintenance and Upgrades:** The CTP includes regional projects that affect travel to and from Greensboro: the MD 404 (Shore Highway) PEL study (\$500,000, underway), Caroline County resurfacing projects (\$3,353,000–\$8,321,000, FY2026) and completed geometric improvements at MD 404/MD 328 (\$1,423,000). The Town will monitor these regional projects and advocate for MD 313 resurfacing from MD 404 to Federalsburg.
- **Safety Enhancements:** Add pedestrian signals and crosswalks at high-risk locations in Town, such as MD 313 at Sunset Avenue. Regionally, the CTP includes restriping MD 317 for a right-turn lane, and the State PSAP provides more than \$15 million statewide for pedestrian upgrades such as ramps and bus stops; the Town will pursue these funds for local needs.
- **Public Transportation Expansion:** Coordinate with DCT/MUST to increase route frequency and add commuter options. Support regional initiatives for elderly/disabled services and explore demand-responsive transit for job access.
- **Pedestrian/Bicycle Improvements:** Complete sidewalk networks, upgrade to ADA standards via SHA's Sidewalk Reconstruction Fund, and develop bike lanes/trails

connecting parks, schools, and downtown. Integrate with county priorities for alternative modes in growth areas.

- **Microtransportation (Micromobility) Pilot:** Launch a small-scale shared e-bike or scooter program and install associated charging/parking infrastructure to expand active transportation options, emphasizing equitable access and seamless integration with pedestrian and transit networks.
- **Resilience and Flood Mitigation:** Raise flood-prone roads and retrofit culverts (e.g., for fish passage and reduced blowouts) as per county plans. Update the priority roads list annually for funding.
- **Coordination and Funding:** Align with Caroline County's HNI priorities (e.g., MD 404 dualization final phase) and seek state/federal grants (e.g., RAISE for sustainability). Require traffic studies and developer-funded improvements for new developments to ensure fair-share contributions.
- **Oxford Line.** The Oxford Line, a railbanked corridor owned by MTA, lies within the Town. Railbanking allows interim trail use while preserving the corridor for future rail. MDOT's Office of Rail and Intermodal Freight is the trail sponsor, and the Town will coordinate with it on any trail proposal.
- **Scenic Byway.** Segments of MD 313 are part of America's Byways; the Town will work with SHA on updated Scenic Byway signage.
- **Park-and-Ride.** Work with MDOT SHA and Caroline County to establish a park-and-ride lot near MD 313 to support carpooling, Commuter Choice Maryland vanpools and regional transit connections.
- **Electric Vehicle Charging.** Install public EV charging at Town facilities and downtown, and consider EV-ready parking standards for new multifamily and commercial development in the Land Development Ordinance update.
- **Housing Near Services.** Direct new housing to T-1 and T-2, within walking distance of downtown services, Greensboro Elementary School and transit stops, to reduce household travel costs.
- **Reliable Routes.** Identify Town streets and State routes subject to flooding, and work with SHA and Caroline County to keep evacuation and emergency routes passable (Chapter V, Resilience Policies).
- **Mobility for All.** Promote Delmarva Community Transit's demand-response service for seniors, residents with disabilities and households without a car.

These updates ensure the transportation system supports Greensboro's visions of preserving character, managing growth, and enhancing quality of life, while adapting to modest projected increases. Regular reviews (every 5–10 years) will incorporate new data and emerging needs, such as electric vehicle infrastructure.





CHAPTER IX - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction and Background

The Economic Development Element provides a framework for sustainable economic growth that strengthens Greensboro's tax base, creates quality job opportunities, and supports a high quality of life while protecting sensitive environmental areas, retaining the Town's small-town setting and rural character, managing environmental conditions, and preserving a rural buffer around the Town through coordinated efforts with Caroline County and the State of Maryland.

This chapter builds directly on the 2010 Greensboro Comprehensive Plan (Visions Four and Five), the Town's designation as a Maryland Sustainable Community (2016, renewed through 2020+ application), participation in the North County Enterprise Zone (designated 2018), and alignment with the ongoing Caroline County Comprehensive Plan update (2025–2026). It incorporates state Smart Growth principles, Priority Funding Area (PFA) status, and Maryland's Sustainable Growth Planning Principles (2025 Implementation Guide). Economic activity will concentrate in existing commercial/industrial nodes and infill sites to avoid sprawl and protect wetlands, floodplains, the Choptank River watershed, and prime agricultural lands outside Town limits.

Economic Vision

Greensboro will be a vibrant, self-sufficient small town that offers meaningful job opportunities and a diversified economy while preserving its historic character, rural setting, and natural resources. Commercial areas will be busy, bright, attractive, and pedestrian-oriented. Through the North County Enterprise Zone, Sustainable Communities designation, and strong partnerships, the Town will attract compatible businesses, promote heritage and eco-tourism, and create sustainable growth that enhances quality of life without compromising environmental quality or the rural buffer surrounding the Town.

Economic Development Policies

- Direct commercial and industrial growth to Enterprise Zone properties and Priority Funding Areas to reinforce the rural buffer and protect agricultural/open-space lands.
- Require compliance with local zoning, design standards, and environmental regulations (e.g., stream buffers, Critical Area protections, stormwater management) that preserve historic and rural character.
- Prioritize adaptive reuse of historic structures and mixed-use development that supports small-town scale.
- Integrate economic development with pedestrian connectivity projects (including potential elevated boardwalks or trails) and river access improvements.
- In the short term, apply to renew the North County Enterprise Zone before it expires in 2028, and explore complementary incentives.

North County Enterprise Zone

The Town of Greensboro actively participates in the North County Enterprise Zone (NCEZ), a 710-acre multi-jurisdictional designation established by the Maryland Department of Commerce in December 2018. The zone encompasses most commercial and industrial properties within the town limits of Greensboro, Ridgely, and Goldsboro, as well as the Mid Shore Regional Technology and Business Park and planned industrial areas west of Greensboro.

The goal of this program is to leverage the North County Enterprise Zone to attract targeted business investment and quality job creation in appropriate locations, thereby strengthening the local economy and tax base while directing development away from sensitive lands, agricultural areas, and the rural buffer to maintain Greensboro's distinct small-town character and environmental quality. Program objectives include:

1. Promote and market the Enterprise Zone incentives to existing and prospective businesses in designated commercial and industrial areas to generate sustainable economic activity and employment opportunities.
2. Ensure all new development and redevelopment within the zone is consistent with environmental protections, including buffers for wetlands, floodplains, and the Choptank River watershed, to prevent adverse impacts on sensitive areas.
3. Retain and enhance Greensboro's small-town setting by limiting intensive uses to existing commercial/industrial nodes and avoiding sprawl into the rural buffer surrounding the Town.
4. Manage environmental conditions through zone-supported infrastructure improvements (e.g., utilities, broadband) that minimize impacts on natural resources and support sustainable growth.
5. Strengthen interjurisdictional partnerships with Caroline County, the Town, and State agencies to maximize zone benefits, coordinate with the County Housing Plan for workforce housing, and explore complementary projects such as pedestrian trails, boardwalks, and river access improvements.

Town policies for the Enterprise Zone are:

- Direct commercial and industrial growth to Enterprise Zone properties to reinforce the rural buffer and protect prime agricultural and open-space lands outside Town limits.
- Require compliance with local zoning, environmental regulations, and design standards that preserve the Town's historic and rural character within the zone.
- Advocate for renewal or expansion of the NCEZ designation and explore integration with other State tools, such as Priority Funding Areas and Transferable Development Rights, to further direct growth into the Town.
- Partner with Caroline County Economic Development to provide technical assistance, certification support, and streamlined permitting for zone-eligible projects.

Implementation Strategies and Actions

- Short-term (1–3 years): Collaborate with Caroline County Economic Development to conduct targeted outreach and marketing of the zone to businesses; verify and map all eligible properties within Greensboro town limits; integrate zone promotion into the Town’s website, comprehensive plan update, and economic development materials.
- Medium-term (3–5 years): Develop design guidelines for zone properties that emphasize compatibility with small-town character and environmental stewardship; pursue infrastructure upgrades (e.g., water/sewer extensions, broadband) funded through zone-related economic activity; coordinate with the County on workforce housing strategies to support jobs created in the zone.
- Long-term (5+ years): Monitor and report annually on zone performance (jobs created, investment, tax revenue); explore linkages with pedestrian connectivity projects (including potential elevated boardwalks or trails to the Choptank River) to enhance access and livability; evaluate opportunities to expand the zone or create complementary incentives.
- Responsible Parties: Town of Greensboro Planning Commission and Town Council, in partnership with Caroline County Economic Development and the Caroline County Planning & Codes Department.
- Metrics for Success: Number of certified businesses and new jobs created; value of new investments and property improvements; acres of development directed to zone areas (vs. outside the rural buffer); maintenance of environmental quality indicators.

Incentives Available to Eligible Businesses

Businesses located in the zone may qualify for two powerful tax credits (certification required before improvements or hiring):

- Real Property Tax Credit (10-year tiered benefit on increased assessed value from improvements, minimum \$100,000 investment): 80% credit in years 1–5, stepping down to 30% in year 10; applies to both County and municipal property taxes.
- State Income Tax Credit: \$1,000 per new qualified full-time employee (minimum 5 new positions), with enhanced credits available for economically disadvantaged workers; reapplication allowed annually.

Sustainable Communities Program and Sustainable Growth Integration

Greensboro’s 2016 Maryland Sustainable Communities designation (renewed via 2020 application) provides a framework for coordinated revitalization that is environmentally, economically, and socially responsible. Key initiatives include:

- Main Street revitalization (facade improvements, pursuit of National Main Street designation, and new businesses such as photography studios and ice cream shops).

- The Town will pursue Maryland Main Street designation, use the Maryland Facade Improvement Program for facade grants, and refer businesses to DHCD’s Neighborhood BusinessWorks lending. The Sustainable Communities Action Plan is the implementation companion to this chapter and Chapter VII.
- Choptank River Park enhancements (native plantings, dock/parking upgrades, Riverfest events, potential trails/boardwalks).
- Mixed-use development projects that generate jobs and reduce vacancies.
- River cleanup and green infrastructure to protect the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

All economic development will align with Maryland’s Sustainable Growth Planning Principles, emphasizing infill in PFAs, resource conservation, equitable access, and climate resilience. Growth will incorporate low-impact design, dark-sky lighting, forest conservation, and stormwater best management practices to manage environmental conditions and protect sensitive areas.

Heritage and Eco-Tourism

Greensboro, Maryland, located on the north bank of the Choptank River, is well-positioned to leverage its historic small-town character, riverfront assets, and proximity to major heritage corridors for heritage and eco-tourism. Key opportunities include its location along the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway (with documented sites such as the “Dangerous Crossing” at North Main Street/Cedar Lane and the Red Bridges area for wading across the Choptank), participation in the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area, and ongoing enhancements at Choptank River Park (native plantings, dock upgrades, potential trails/boardwalks, and events like Riverfest).

Additional assets include historic downtown buildings suitable for adaptive reuse, potential in the rail corridor, proximity to the Mid Shore Regional Technology and Business Park, and the broader Eastern Shore’s working landscapes, wetlands, and waterways that support paddling, fishing, birding, and nature-based experiences.

Economic and Community Benefits

Heritage and eco-tourism can deliver multiple benefits aligned with Greensboro’s Comprehensive Plan visions (particularly Visions Four and Five) and its Sustainable Communities and North County Enterprise Zone designations:

- **Job Creation and Local Business Support:** Tourism generates spending on lodging, dining, retail, guiding services, and local products (e.g., “Made in Greensboro” or cottage food items). Maryland heritage areas collectively support thousands of jobs and significant tax revenue; even modest growth in visitor numbers can help existing small businesses, reduce commercial vacancies, and create flexible opportunities for home-based or cottage enterprises.
- **Strengthened Tax Base Without Sprawl:** Visitor spending circulates locally with high multipliers, funding public services and infrastructure (e.g., river access improvements, pedestrian trails/boardwalks) while directing activity to infill sites, the downtown, and

Enterprise Zone properties—reinforcing the rural buffer and protecting agricultural lands and sensitive environmental areas.

- **Revitalization of Historic and Riverfront Assets:** Adaptive reuse of historic structures, facade improvements, and enhancements to Choptank River Park can create vibrant, pedestrian-oriented destinations. Events like Riverfest, combined with Tubman Byway interpretation and eco-experiences (kayaking, wildlife viewing, native plant gardens), build on existing investments and attract day-trippers or overnight visitors from the broader Chesapeake region.
- **Quality of Life and Community Pride:** These efforts enhance recreational access, preserve natural and cultural resources (e.g., stream buffers, wetlands, dark skies, and historic character), and foster community identity. They support diverse, meaningful job opportunities close to home and position Greensboro as a distinctive stop on regional byways and water trails.
- **Environmental Stewardship and Resilience:** Eco-tourism emphasizes low-impact activities that align with Critical Area protections, stormwater management, forest conservation, and living shoreline practices. It can fund habitat improvements and educate visitors about the Choptank River watershed and Chesapeake Bay.
- **Synergies with Broader Goals:** Tourism complements workforce housing, broadband expansion, and partnerships with Caroline County and state agencies. It diversifies the economy beyond traditional sectors while remaining compatible with small-town scale and rural setting.

Strategic Considerations

To maximize benefits, Greensboro should focus on coordinated marketing (e.g., integrating with the Tubman Byway and Stories of the Chesapeake), infrastructure such as trails and river access, and supportive policies, including design guidelines, micro-grants for small businesses, and events that highlight local makers and heritage. In addition, the Town should:

- Promote heritage tourism via the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area and Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway.
- Support adaptive reuse of historic buildings for commercial, office, or tourism uses.
- Coordinate with Caroline County on workforce training (healthcare, manufacturing, technology) and housing initiatives to support job growth.
- Partner with Caroline County Economic Development for business assistance, permitting, marketing, and infrastructure (e.g., broadband, wastewater).

Overall, heritage and eco-tourism offer Greensboro a resilient pathway to economic vitality, historic preservation, and enhanced livability, building directly on its unique riverside location and cultural assets while advancing the Town’s long-term vision.

Supporting Small Businesses and Cottage Industries

Supporting small businesses, home-based enterprises, and cottage industries is vital to Greensboro’s local economy and quality of life. In small rural towns like Greensboro, these enterprises serve as the backbone of the economy: they create a significant share of local jobs,

keep more money circulating within the community, generate tax revenue to support public services, and drive innovation tailored to local needs.

They strengthen the tax base without requiring large-scale sprawl, align with the Town's Sustainable Communities and North County Enterprise Zone goals by favoring infill, adaptive reuse, and environmentally sensitive growth, and help retain and attract residents by offering meaningful, flexible employment opportunities close to home. Beyond economics, they enhance quality of life by fostering a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented downtown, preserving historic character, supporting heritage and eco-tourism, and building community pride through unique goods, services, and gathering places that reflect Greensboro's small-town identity and rural setting.

The Town's existing Zoning Ordinance already provides a foundation for home-based activity through home occupation provisions, which allow accessory uses that are clearly incidental and secondary to residential use and comply with operational standards that help protect neighborhood character and meet Critical Area Buffer, stormwater, and performance requirements. The following innovative strategies build on this framework while suggesting targeted enhancements to better support existing small businesses and the evolution of home-based and cottage industries. The strategies promote entrepreneurship-led, asset-based development that leverages Greensboro's historic downtown, Choptank River frontage, and existing incentives while fully respecting the protections for residential character, neighborhood compatibility, and environmental resources. They position the Town for thoughtful, sustainable economic evolution that creates quality jobs, strengthens the tax base, and preserves the small-town and rural identity valued in the Comprehensive Plan.

Zoning and Regulatory Updates to Support Home-Based and Cottage Businesses

Review and modernize the home occupation standards and accessory use provisions to create a clear, tiered system (e.g., "no-impact," "low-impact," and "moderate-impact" categories) that remains fully compatible with residential character, Critical Area protections, and the Comprehensive Plan's vision of low-density, small-town scale.

- Maintain core protections (incidental/secondary status, family operation emphasis, limits on external employees/traffic/parking, no offensive impacts, and no exterior storage or alterations that change residential appearance).
- Explicitly reference and promote Maryland's cottage food law (allowing home-based production of non-potentially hazardous foods like baked goods, jams, and candies up to the state revenue threshold, with proper labeling) as a permitted low-impact activity, paired with town resources for compliance.
- Allow limited accessory structures or internal conversions for light production (e.g., small-scale artisanal crafts or digital services), subject to existing performance standards and a zoning use permit.
- Ensure all tiers comply with stream buffers, stormwater management, dark-sky lighting, and Critical Area rules.

This approach lowers barriers for residents to start or scale micro-enterprises (e.g., online sales, consulting, or cottage food production) while evolving from purely home-based to hybrid models without forcing relocation outside residential zones.

Small Business Incubator, Makerspace, or Co-Working Hub

Develop a shared workspace in a historic downtown building or underutilized Enterprise Zone property (leveraging adaptive reuse standards in § 15.09–15.11). Shared spaces could include affordable co-working areas, broadband, meeting rooms, and a makerspace for small-scale prototyping, subject to zoning district allowances and performance standards.

- Prioritize NCEZ-certified businesses to access tax credits.
- Integrate pedestrian connectivity and river access projects to create a walkable, tourism-friendly design.
- Fund via facade improvements, Sustainable Communities resources, or county partnerships.

Such hubs help existing small businesses expand and allow home-based operators to “graduate” to commercial space when ready, while maintaining small-town scale and environmental stewardship.

Targeted Micro-Grant, Loan, and Technical Assistance Programs

Establish a micro-grant or revolving loan fund (potentially supported by NCEZ revenues or state programs) focused on:

- Existing small businesses: facade upgrades, digital tools, energy-efficient retrofits (aligning with dark-sky and green infrastructure goals), and equipment that meets performance standards.
- Home-based and cottage operators: startup/scaling support (e.g., e-commerce setup, food safety compliance under Maryland cottage food rules, or limited marketing), while ensuring activities remain within home occupation limits.

Pair this with technical assistance on permitting (including accessory use permits), business planning, and workforce training through Caroline County partnerships. Explore “entrepreneurship through acquisition” to help locals purchase and revitalize businesses, reducing vacancies in compliance with adaptive reuse provisions.

Heritage, Eco-Tourism, and “Made in Greensboro” Producer Networks

Build on the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area and Harriet Tubman Byway with a “Choptank Made” or “Greensboro Makers” branding program linking home-based artisans, cottage food producers (under state law), and small manufacturers to visitors and locals.

- Support expanded pop-up markets, seasonal events (tied to Riverfest), or maker demonstrations in adaptive-reuse spaces, consistent with sign, parking, and traffic standards.
- Develop guided experiences combining historic tours with local product showcases.

This approach creates direct sales channels, boosts visitor spending, and supports value-added activities within environmental limits and in accordance with residential character protections.

Adaptive Reuse Incentives for Live/Work and Mixed-Use Spaces

Enhance incentives (e.g., expedited permitting or targeted abatements) for repurposing vacant historic buildings into mixed-use formats with ground-floor small-business space and upper-level live/work units, in accordance with the adaptive reuse Master Plan and performance standards.

- Develop or refine design guidelines emphasizing small-town scale, pedestrian orientation, and green features (native plantings, stormwater management).
- Ensure live/work components comply with home occupation rules where residential elements are involved.

This bridges home-based work with commercial viability, activates underused assets and minimizes pressure on the rural buffer and Critical Area.

Broadband and Digital Enablement Initiatives

Prioritize broadband extensions (via NCEZ infrastructure or grants) as a foundational enabler for home-based businesses. Pair with digital skills workshops to help operators adopt e-commerce and online tools while staying within zoning limits on external impacts.

Implementation Recommendations

- Short-term (1–3 years): Conduct a zoning audit focused on home occupation and accessory use provisions; launch a pilot micro-grant program and business needs survey; integrate these elements into downtown design guidelines and the Town website.
- Medium-term (3–5 years): Establish the incubator/makerspace and producer network; roll out live/work incentives.
- Metrics for Success: New home-based/cottage registrations (tracked via zoning use permits), small-business job creation, reductions in commercial vacancies, event-related visitor numbers, and continued protection of acres outside the rural buffer and Critical Area.
- Key Partnerships: Collaborate with Caroline County Economic Development, the Maryland Department of Commerce (for NCEZ renewal), and state Sustainable Communities programs.

Implementation Plan, Monitoring, and Coordination

Short-term (1–3 years): Market NCEZ and apply for its renewal before it expires in 2028; pursue Main Street designation; complete downtown design guidelines; initiate boardwalk/trail feasibility study.

Medium-term (3–5 years): Implement facade grants; expand riverfront amenities; coordinate workforce housing near job centers.

Long-term (5+ years): Monitor economic indicators; evaluate annexation or infrastructure expansions only if consistent with rural buffer goals.

Responsible Parties: Town Council, Planning Commission, Town Manager, in partnership with Caroline County Economic Development (410-479-4188) and State agencies.

Metrics: New jobs/businesses created; vacancy rates; visitor numbers (e.g., Riverfest); acres preserved in rural buffer; environmental compliance.

CHAPTER X - HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

Greensboro, Maryland, established in 1732 by an act of the Maryland General Assembly, has a rich history tied to its strategic location along the Choptank River. Originally founded as a river crossing, the town evolved from a colonial settlement into a vibrant community influenced by agriculture, steamboat trade, and small-scale industry. Its historic fabric reflects periods of growth in the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries, with architecture ranging from Federal-style homes to Victorian-era commercial buildings. The town's cultural heritage is embodied in preserved structures, roadside markers, and community landmarks that contribute to its small-town character and sense of place.

This Historic and Cultural Resources Element builds on the 2010 Greensboro Comprehensive Plan, which emphasized preserving the town's identity as central to its social and economic vitality. Looking toward 2050, this element aims to integrate historic preservation with sustainable growth, ensuring that Greensboro's cultural assets enhance quality of life, support tourism, and foster community pride. It aligns with Maryland's planning principles by promoting the careful management of historic resources amid population growth and development pressures.

Historic and cultural resources in Greensboro include buildings, districts, landscapes, archaeological sites, and intangible elements like traditions and stories. The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP), the Choptank River Heritage Inventory, and local surveys document these resources.

Inventory of Historic and Cultural Resources

Greensboro's historic resources are concentrated in its core, along Main Street, Sunset Avenue, and the Choptank Riverfront, forming a cohesive narrative of the town's development. Key inventories include:

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP): The MIHP documents over 50 properties in Greensboro, many within the Greensboro Historic District (MIHP ID: CAR-264). This district encompasses approximately 82 acres and includes a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional sites reflecting 19th- and early 20th-century architecture. Notable properties include the Goldsborough House (CAR-97), Leonard House (CAR-116, National Register), Peter Harrington House (CAR-151), St. Paul's United Methodist Church (CAR-94), and the Greensboro Bridge Site (CAR-286).

Choptank River Heritage Inventory This inventory highlights sites from 19th-century maps (1875 Isler and 1897 Saulsbury), focusing on the town's river-oriented economy and social life, including historic houses, churches, enterprises, river landings (e.g., Greensboro Steamboat Landing, 1748), and the Greensboro Almshouse (circa 1778).

Archaeological and Cultural Resources. Potential archaeological sites include pre-colonial Native American settlements along the Choptank River and remnants of early industrial activities. Cultural resources encompass intangible elements such as community festivals (e.g., the Greensboro Music Fest and Car Show, Greensboro Volunteer Fire Company Carnival), oral histories, and ties to African American heritage, such as Greensboro's contributions to the Eastern Shore's narrative of abolitionism, free Black resilience, and river-based freedom paths.

Map 17 delineates these historic features:

- **Historic District:** Core downtown along Main Street and the riverfront.
- **Historic Inventory:** Clusters of surveyed properties eligible for preservation.
- **Heritage Resources:** Individual sites distributed throughout the corporate boundary, focused on the river corridor and older residential/commercial zones.

This spatial representation ensures historic resources inform zoning, development reviews, and infrastructure planning.

Heritage Area

Recognition and Participation

The Town of Greensboro is a participatory member in the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area, a certified heritage area administered by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) under the Maryland Heritage Areas Program. This multi-county heritage area encompasses Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties. Eastern Shore Heritage, Inc. (ESHI), a nonprofit organization dedicated to stewarding the historic places, landscapes, waterways, living traditions, and cultural resources of the Chesapeake Bay region, manages it. The heritage area promotes themes such as "Working the Water," African American heritage, historic small towns, agriculture, maritime traditions, trails and byways, and sustainable tourism.

The Town of Greensboro recognizes and incorporates by reference the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area Management Plan, including its current Five-Year Strategic Plan (July 2023 – June 2028, as approved by MHAA in 2024). This plan serves as a guiding framework for heritage preservation, interpretation, tourism-based economic development, and collaborative projects within the certified boundaries. All relevant Town policies, projects, and initiatives related to historic preservation, cultural resources, tourism, and environmental stewardship shall be consistent with the goals, objectives, strategies, and actions outlined in the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area Management Plan (available at storiesofthechesapeake.org). This recognition supports eligibility for MHAA grants, tax incentives, and other program benefits while ensuring local efforts align with regional heritage priorities.

Key Heritage Assets and Projects in Greensboro

Greensboro contributes to the heritage area through its historic downtown, riverfront resources, and documented role in regional history:

- Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway — Greensboro features two interpretive sites on this nationally designated All-American Road and scenic byway:
 - Site 36: "Dangerous Crossing" (North Main Street and Cedar Lane) — Highlights risks faced by freedom seekers crossing hazardous areas during escapes on the Underground Railroad.
 - Site 37: Christian Park / Red Bridges – "A Place to Wade Across the Choptank" (Red Bridges Road) — Marks a shallow ford on the Choptank River used by Harriet Tubman and others to evade pursuers while heading north.

These sites promote public education, heritage tourism, and visitation, drawing travelers to explore Greensboro's historic character and river connections.

- Choptank River Frontage and Related Enhancements — Ongoing improvements at Choptank River Park (e.g., native plantings, dock upgrades, trails, potential elevated boardwalks, and events like Riverfest) align with heritage themes of maritime history, "Working the Water," and eco-tourism. These efforts protect sensitive watershed areas while enhancing public access and interpretation.
- Historic Downtown and Adaptive Reuse — Preserving historic structures supports heritage tourism, small-town character, and economic vitality, consistent with the heritage area's focus on vibrant communities.

Existing Protections in the Land Development Ordinance

The 2013 Land Development Ordinance (amended through 2018) provides targeted safeguards for historic and cultural resources, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's emphasis on preserving community character:

- **Demolition by Neglect (§9.00):** Prohibits willful neglect that causes deterioration of structures (including historic ones); requires written notification and minimum repairs; imposes penalties.
- **Adaptive Reuse (§§15.09–15.12):** Encourages renovation of structures with historic, architectural, or economic value through Town Council approval, Master Plans, and potential waivers of zoning standards; approved reuses are treated as lawful uses and must meet Critical Area standards.
- **Floodplain Protections (§4.6):** Allows variances for rehabilitating or repairing National Register or locally listed historic structures in flood zones to support preservation while minimizing risk.
- **Critical Area Overlay (§§17.00–17.19):** Safeguards Habitat Protection Areas (including historic waterfowl staging sites and Natural Heritage Areas) through required Habitat Protection Plans, DNR coordination, and Environmental Impact Assessments; integrates heritage considerations into development reviews, buffers, and mitigation measures.
- **Subdivision & Site Standards (Article V, §4.00+):** Mandates consideration of historic landmarks and significant cultural features in subdivision design, land suitability assessments, and floating-zone master plans.
- **Sign Regulations (§14.04):** Exempts signs of historic interest.
- **General Framework:** Nonconforming historic structures may be repaired or maintained; enforcement (§§8.00–8.01, 17.13–17.15) ties violations to community character goals.

Issues and Challenges

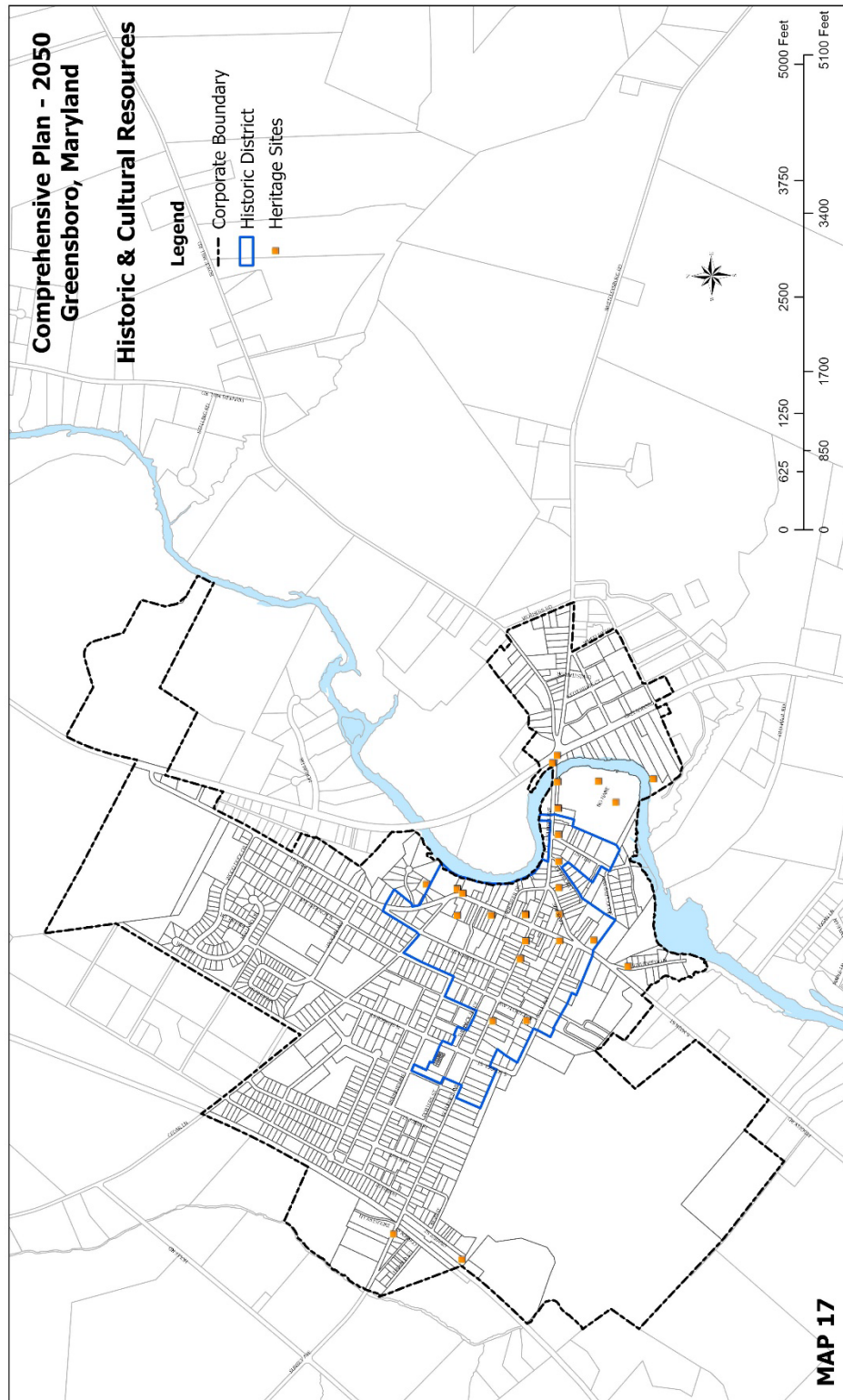
Greensboro faces several challenges in preserving its historic and cultural resources:

- Development pressures from projected growth could threaten unprotected sites outside the Historic District.
- Environmental threats, including Choptank River flooding exacerbated by climate change.
- Aging infrastructure and maintenance needs for historic buildings.
- Gaps in documentation of some 19th-century sites and intangible cultural resources.
- Limited funding and public awareness for preservation programs.

Implementation Strategies

- **Short-Term (2026–2030):** Consider updating the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations for historic overlays; complete a comprehensive heritage survey; install interpretive signage.
- **Medium-Term (2031–2040):** Secure MHT grants and partnerships for restoration; integrate heritage into school curricula and events.
- **Long-Term (2041–2050):** Monitor climate impacts; evaluate plan effectiveness every 10 years; expand the Historic District as needed.

This element ensures Greensboro's historic and cultural resources remain integral to its 2050 vision, balancing preservation with growth for a sustainable, vibrant community.



CHAPTER XI –IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

This Implementation Chapter provides a consolidated roadmap for implementing the 2026 Greensboro Comprehensive Plan. It summarizes the key strategies and recommendations from each element and chapter, organized by major plan component for clarity and ease of reference.

Where the source chapters specify timelines, they are retained (Short-Term: 1–3 years; Medium-Term: 4–10 years; Long-Term: 11+ years). All strategies align with Maryland's eight Sustainable Growth Planning Principles, the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022, and the Town's vision of a resilient, welcoming river town that preserves small-town Eastern Shore character while accommodating modest, sustainable growth to about 2,250–2,540 residents by 2050.

MDEnviroScreen identifies Greensboro as an overburdened and underserved community, reflecting higher pollution burdens, socioeconomic vulnerabilities, and environmental health indicators in certain census tracts. Implementation prioritizes equitable outcomes by directing resources, retrofits, amenities, and decision-making processes to mitigate disproportionate impacts on vulnerable residents (including low-income households, minorities, seniors, families with children, and those with limited English proficiency).

The Town Council and Planning Commission hold primary responsibility, supported by Town staff, Caroline County agencies, and state partners (MDP, MDE, DNR, MDOT, Maryland Historical Trust). Implementation will be funded through a layered approach of developer contributions, impact fees, state/federal grants (Bay Restoration Fund, Program Open Space, CDBG, USDA Rural Development, Justice40-aligned programs, etc.), and local revenues.

Land Use Plan

- Adopt transect-based zoning districts and update the Land Development Ordinance within 1–3 years to incorporate traditional use-based districts, dimensional standards, and performance criteria that reflect the T-1 Urban Core, T-2 Neighborhood, T-3 Suburban, T-4 Rural Edge, and Special Employment District framework.
- Direct all new housing to land inside the corporate limits served by public sewer; complete the Kinnamon Meadows PUD in T-3 and place at least 50% of other new units in T-1 and T-2. Hold T-4 as a long-term agricultural and open-space reserve through 2050, with Critical Area-style buffers. Preserve open space, parks, recreational trails and greenways in perpetuity through easements.
- Short-term: Create T-1 Urban Core, T-2 Neighborhood, T-3 Suburban, T-4 Rural Edge and Special Employment zoning districts; establish facade grants and tax credits for historic structures.
- Medium-term: Require green infrastructure, sidewalks, and traffic-calming in all approvals; promote missing-middle housing in T-2/T-3 that mirrors T-2 character.
- Long-term: Monitor progress toward compact, walkable patterns and phase any limited expansions only after demonstrating infrastructure capacity.

- Overall: Develop and annually update a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) tied to the plan; establish incentives (tax credits, TDRs, facade grants); require consistency review for all rezonings, subdivisions, annexations, and capital projects; maintain inclusive public engagement through digital tools and advisory committees.
- Work with Caroline County to list Town park and trail projects in the County Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan and keep them eligible for Program Open Space funding.
- Allow farm stands and agritourism in T-4, require buffers where development adjoins farmland, and support preservation easements in the Rural Buffer (Chapter IV, Working Lands).

Municipal Growth Element

- Focus growth on infill/redevelopment within existing corporate limits and Priority Funding Areas over the 24-year horizon.
- Advance the Baseline Growth Scenario (1.0% annual rate to 2,539 residents by 2050) while preparing for the more likely Low Growth Scenario (0.5% to 2,254).
- Complete Kinnamon Meadows PUD, prioritize T-1/T-2 infill, and avoid premature use of T-4 rural holding areas.
- Monitor wastewater treatment plant (approximately 113,000 gpd available to Greensboro after deducting Goldsboro's reserved 52,000 gpd; nutrient limits cap new connections at about 300 EDUs without offsets) and Greensboro Elementary School capacity (currently 103% utilization); phase any necessary upgrades with developer contributions and state grants.
- Fund infrastructure via Bay Restoration Fund, Program Open Space, developer pro-rata/impact fees (\$5,000/DU), USDA Rural Development, and county partnerships.
- Adopt Map 18 and Growth Tiers, submit them to the MDP, and ask the County to align its tier map and Water and Sewer Plan; review the element every 10 years or after major infrastructure changes.
- Pursue a joint planning agreement with Caroline County to carry out the points raised in the completed § 3-206 review.

Community Facilities Element

- Maintain and incrementally expand water (123,700 gpd surplus) and sewer (approximately 113,000 gpd surplus attributable to Greensboro after deducting Goldsboro's reserved 52,000 gpd) capacity through ongoing well rehabilitation, pipe relining, and ENR-level treatment; tie new allocations to public water/sewer and nutrient-offset compliance.
- Update the 2006 wastewater allocation policy to reserve 60 EDUs through 2030 for residential infill, accessory dwelling units and missing-middle housing, within the 300-EDU nutrient limit.
- Address Greensboro Elementary School's overcapacity through county-led additions/modernizations funded by impact fees and the Public School Construction Program.
- Expand parks/recreation (North County Regional Park trails, playgrounds, river access) via Program Open Space grants and developer contributions.
- Resolve Police Department staffing shortages through potential county consolidation or additional hires; support volunteer Fire Company equipment upgrades.

- Integrate all facility expansions into the annual CIP, prioritizing resilience and equitable access in overburdened areas identified by MDEnviroScreen.

Sensitive Areas Element

- Establish a town-wide Conservation Overlay Zone that merges floodplains, 100-year floodplains, RTE habitats (SSPRA), steep slopes, DNR Habitat Connectivity Network corridors, wetlands (with SLR migration corridors), forests, Tier II streams, and CRAB inundation zones.
- Require site-specific buffer plans, no-net-loss forest cover, LID stormwater to the maximum extent practicable, and environmental assessments for all major projects.
- Implement differentiated standards: voluntary retrofits on existing properties; strict LID, forest retention, and wetland migration accommodations for new subdivisions and major site plans.
- Partner with DNR for stream/habitat restoration, Eastern Shore Land Conservancy for easements, and MDE for floodplain ordinance updates incorporating climate projections.
- Update ordinances within 1–3 years; conduct connectivity and SLR vulnerability assessments for all growth-area projects.
- Amend the floodplain ordinance to require two feet of freeboard, site new critical facilities outside flood-prone areas, and rank Capital Improvement Program projects using resilience criteria (Chapter V, Resilience Policies).

Environmental Justice

- Enhance community participation through digital tools (e.g., online surveys, apps), citizen committees, and targeted outreach to diverse groups (seniors, low-income, minorities, limited English proficiency speakers) for input on beautification, vitality, resiliency, and governance.
- Prioritize amenities such as parks, trails, public spaces, and green infrastructure retrofits (e.g., expanded tree canopy, rain gardens, stormwater BMPs) in overburdened areas to mitigate hazards (flooding, pollution from nearby sources); use MDEnviroScreen data to guide equitable improvements to water/sewer infrastructure, reduce cumulative pollution burdens, and promote social programs addressing housing/recreational needs.
- Build partnerships to advance economic diversification, pollution reduction, and whole-of-community sustainability; integrate EJ considerations into all decision-making processes, including permitting, enforcement, and resource allocation, to affirmatively further fair environmental outcomes and avoid disproportionate impacts.

Water Resources Element

- Protect the confined Piney Point aquifer through continued source-water protection plans, public-water connection mandates in WHPAs, and restrictions on high-risk uses.
- Maintain TMDL compliance for the Upper Choptank by limiting new EDUs to ≤ 300 without nutrient offsets/credits and requiring LID/green infrastructure on all projects.
- Update floodplain regulations with CRAB riverine and inundation data; mandate elevated design and living shorelines in high-risk zones.

- Integrate water-resource limits into zoning, growth allocations, and the CIP; monitor annually with MDE and adjust development capacity every 5 years if TMDL progress stalls.

Housing Element

- Streamline permitting for ADUs, backyard cottages, starter homes, and conversions (30-day administrative reviews); adopt the local ADU ordinance required by the Accessory Dwelling Units Act.
- Reform zoning to allow by-right middle housing in T-1, T-2, and T-3 while preserving historic character and rural aesthetics.
- Promote incremental development through training for small-scale builders, incentives for rehab of pre-1940 stock, and anti-displacement measures (community land trusts, right of first refusal).
- Expand affordable and workforce housing via facade grants, property-tax credits, LIHTC coordination, and alignment with state production targets (Starter/Silver Homes Act, Housing Growth and Affordability Agenda).
- Conduct ongoing fair housing outreach in multiple languages and track cost-burden and overcrowding metrics annually.

Transportation Element

- Complete sidewalk and bike networks, upgrade to ADA standards, and install traffic-calming/pedestrian signals at high-risk intersections (e.g., MD 313/Sunset).
- Launch a small-scale micromobility pilot (10–20 shared e-bikes/scooters) with charging stations at key destinations.
- Coordinate with MDOT SHA and Caroline County for MD 313 resurfacing, geometric improvements, and drainage upgrades to address flooding.
- Expand Delmarva Community Transit/MUST service frequency and demand-responsive options for seniors, disabled residents, and workforce access.
- Require traffic studies and fair-share contributions from new development; integrate resilience measures into the CIP and county Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- The Town has not yet adopted a framework for ranking resilience projects. Until it does, resilience projects from this Plan and the County Hazard Mitigation Plan will enter the CIP and be ranked by flood exposure, critical-facility status and benefit to overburdened areas; the Town will build a scoring method with MDP technical assistance, using the Steps to Resilience process that MDE cites.
- Prepare a bicycle and pedestrian master plan within two years, including Safe Routes to School for Greensboro Elementary.
- Coordinate with the regional Continuum of Care and DHCD on homelessness services; refer residents to 2-1-1 Maryland.
- Review the Sustainable Communities Action Plan for consistency; pursue Maryland Main Street designation and renewal of the North County Enterprise Zone (expires 2028).
- Pursue a park-and-ride lot near MD 313 and public EV charging at Town facilities, and consider EV-ready parking standards in the Land Development Ordinance update.

Historic and Cultural Resources Element

- Short-term (2026–2030): Update zoning/subdivision regulations with historic overlays; complete comprehensive heritage survey; install interpretive signage.
- Medium-term (2031–2040): Secure Maryland Historical Trust grants for restoration projects; integrate heritage education into community events and school programs.
- Long-term (2041–2050): Expand the Greensboro Historic District as warranted; monitor climate impacts on riverfront resources; evaluate effectiveness every 10 years.
- Enforce demolition-by-neglect, adaptive-reuse incentives, and Critical Area Habitat Protection Area requirements for all development reviews.

Cross-Cutting and Monitoring Strategies

- Require consistency with the Comprehensive Plan for all public and private actions (rezonings, subdivisions, annexations, CIP projects).
- Pursue layered funding aggressively (grants first, then loans and developer offsets) to minimize local burden on this disadvantaged community.
- Maintain inclusive engagement through bilingual materials, digital tools, citizen advisory committees, and annual forums, with special focus on overburdened/underserved populations.
- Adopt an Implementation Matrix within six months of adoption, drawn from Table SA-1 and this chapter.
- Prepare the Planning Commission’s Annual Report by July 1 each year for the prior calendar year, file it with the Town Council and send it to MDP (Land Use Article § 1-207).
- Prepare the Five-Year Mid-Cycle Report under § 1-207(c)(6), and review the Plan at least once every ten years (§ 3-301).

Adoption of this Implementation Chapter, together with the supporting zoning and subdivision ordinance updates, will ensure that Greensboro's 2026 Comprehensive Plan guides orderly, equitable, and resilient growth that honors the Town's historic river-town character for generations to come.

APPENDIX A - FAIR HOUSING ASSESSMENT FOR GREENSBORO, MARYLAND

This assessment evaluates fair housing conditions in Greensboro, a town of about 2,634 residents (2020–2024 American Community Survey) on the Choptank River in Caroline County. It supports the Housing Element (Chapter VII), which must address the need for affordable housing (HB 1045 of 2019) and affirmatively further fair housing (HB 90 of 2021). It identifies barriers to fair housing choice by examining demographics, housing needs, access to opportunity, enforcement, and contributing factors, and it recommends actions the Town can take.

Publish plan summaries and hearing notices in English and Spanish, hold an annual public meeting on Plan implementation, and report participation in the Annual Report (Introduction, Community Engagement).

Data Sources and Limitations

This Plan uses the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) 2020–2024 5-year estimates of 2,634 residents and 832 households as its current population (the growth scenarios in Chapter IV start from the 2020 Census), and this assessment does the same. Income, poverty and housing costs also come from the 2020–2024 ACS. Race, ethnicity, age and household composition come from the 2020 Census, which counted 1,919 residents and is more reliable than the ACS for these characteristics in a town this size. Income limits come from HUD, as presented on the Maryland Department of Planning’s Housing Data Dashboard. HUD’s cost-burden data (CHAS) is not available for Greensboro or Caroline County; Section 2 explains the measures used instead.

ACS estimates for a town of Greensboro’s size carry wide margins of error, shown as $\pm$ values. The poverty rate of 15.9%, for example, has a margin of ± 8.8 percentage points. Year-to-year ACS changes are not meaningful at this scale and are not reported.

1. Demographics and Segregation Patterns

Greensboro is more racially and ethnically diverse than Caroline County as a whole, and its residents are younger and have lower incomes.

Indicator	Greensboro	Source
Population	2,634 (2020 Census count: 1,919)	ACS 2020–2024; 2020 Census
White	67.9%	2020 Census (race alone)
Black or African American	12.7%	2020 Census (race alone)
Two or more races	10.1%	2020 Census
Some other race	7.7%	2020 Census (race alone)
Asian; American Indian and Alaska Native	1.0%; 0.6%	2020 Census (race alone)
Hispanic or Latino (any race)	13.3%	2020 Census
Foreign-born	18.6% $\pm 8.1\%$ (Caroline County: 6.1%)	ACS 2020–2024
Median age	33.9 years; 27.9% under 18; 13.0% 65 or older	2020 Census
Households	832 (2020 Census: 703, of which 37.3% had children under 18)	ACS 2020–2024; 2020 Census
Housing units	791, of which 11.1% vacant	2020 Census
Occupied units by tenure	58% owner-occupied (483); 42% renter-occupied (349)	ACS 2020–2024

The Hispanic share rose from 9.4% in 2010 to 13.3% in 2020. ACS estimates suggest continued growth since 2020, but their margins of error are too wide to state a reliable current share.

Segregation analysis. Greensboro’s small population and Census privacy protections at the block level mean public data cannot document where racial or ethnic groups live within the Town. This Plan makes no claim about intra-Town spatial patterns. HUD’s definition of a Racially or Ethnically Concentrated Area of Poverty (R/ECAP) requires a census tract that is majority non-White with a poverty rate of 40% or more. The Town’s poverty rate of 15.9% is far below that threshold, and no R/ECAP is expected. Poverty does fall unevenly: ACS 2020–2024 estimates put it at 12.9% for White non-Hispanic residents, 25.2% for Black residents and 23.1% for Hispanic residents. At the town level, these estimates carry wide margins of error, but the gap is consistent with the county and State pattern.

Historical context. Greensboro grew as an 18th-century river trade town shaped by agriculture, including post–Civil War Black communities and, more recently, Hispanic residents drawn by agricultural and processing work. No evidence of overt segregation policies exists today. However, zoning that dedicates about 57% of the Town’s land to low-density single-family use (R-1, Table LU-2) limits housing diversity and can indirectly sustain past patterns.

2. Disproportionate Housing Needs and Affordability

Greensboro’s incomes are low relative to the county and the State, and its housing supply offers few choices beyond single-family homes. The effects fall hardest on lower-income households, larger families and people with disabilities.

Indicator	Greensboro	Source
Median household income	\$53,611 ±\$9,923 (Caroline County: \$68,457; Maryland: \$103,678)	ACS 2020–2024
Persons below poverty level	15.9% ±8.8% (Caroline County: 12.2%)	ACS 2020–2024
Median value, owner-occupied homes	\$251,100 ±\$23,028	ACS 2020–2024
Median gross rent	\$1,083 (about half of renters paid under \$1,000 in ACS 2019–2023)	ACS 2020–2024; ACS 2019–2023
Low-Income Housing Tax Credit units	40 (Greensboro Heights)	DHCD

Cost burden. A household is cost-burdened when it spends more than 30% of income on housing and is severely cost-burdened when it spends more than 50%. HUD’s Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data, the usual source for cost burden by race, ethnicity and disability, is not available for Greensboro or Caroline County. The ACS does not publish cost burden by race, ethnicity or disability for towns or counties and custom tabulations of its microdata cover only multi-county areas. This assessment therefore relies on the best available measures:

- In Caroline County, 34.8% of households were cost-burdened in 2020–2024 (ACS 5-year estimates).
- In Greensboro, the median household income is below 60% of AMI (see Income thresholds below), and poverty is higher among Black (25.2%) and Hispanic (23.1%) residents than among White non-Hispanic residents (12.9%). Because cost burden rises as income falls, Black and Hispanic households, and renters, are more likely to be cost-burdened than White and owner households.
- The Town will measure cost burden by tenure, race, ethnicity and disability directly through a resident housing survey (Recommendation 1) and will use CHAS data if HUD publishes it for the Town.

Income thresholds. State law defines low-income housing as affordable to households earning less than 60% of area median income (AMI), and workforce housing as affordable to renters earning 50% to 100% of AMI and owners earning 60% to 120% of AMI. The table uses HUD’s FY2025 income limits for Caroline County for a four-person household; AMI is derived from HUD’s 50% limit. Update to the FY2026 limits shown on the Maryland Department of Planning’s Housing Data Dashboard before adoption.

Income level	Share of AMI	Annual household income	Affordable monthly housing cost (30% of income)
Area median income	100%	\$92,800	\$2,320
Low-income	Below 60%	Below \$55,680	Below \$1,392
Workforce, rental	50%–100%	\$46,400–\$92,800	\$1,160–\$2,320
Workforce, ownership	60%–120%	\$55,680–\$111,360	\$1,392–\$2,784

The Town’s median household income of \$53,611 is below 60% of AMI, so roughly half of Greensboro households fall within the State’s low-income definition. The median gross rent of \$1,083 is affordable only to households earning about \$43,300 or more, which is below the 50% AMI limit; the local rental stock is therefore the Town’s main source of housing affordable to lower-income households.

Production target. Under the Governor’s Housing Starts Here executive order, DHCD set Caroline County’s cumulative 2026–2030 production target at 819 units. Greensboro’s share is 59 units (7, 10, 12, 14 and 16 per year), based on the Town’s 7% share of county housing units (971 units, 2023 ACS). Chapter VII describes how the Town will meet it through Kinnamon Meadows, accessory dwelling units and missing-middle infill.

The Plan’s emphasis on protecting rural character and directing growth to sewer-served land is consistent with State Smart Growth policy. It must be paired with zoning that allows more housing types inside the Town, or it will slow the production of affordable housing.

3. Access to Opportunity

Greensboro’s rural setting limits access to jobs, services and transit. These limits weigh most on households without a car, older residents and people with disabilities.

Indicator	Greensboro	Source
Mean travel time to work	36.6 minutes (Caroline County: 33.4; Maryland: 31.1)	ACS 2020–2024
Adults with a bachelor’s degree or higher	8.6% ±3.4%	ACS 2020–2024
Greensboro Elementary School	840 students in 2025–26 against a State Rated Capacity of 818	Chapter III
Public transit	Demand-response and deviated fixed-route service only (Delmarva Community Transit; MUST)	Chapter VIII
Environmental burden	Identified as an overburdened and underserved community	MDEnviroScreen (Chapter I)
Flood exposure	Portions of the Town lie in FEMA Zones AE and X along the Choptank River	Chapter V

Most residents commute to Denton, Easton or beyond for work and services, and transit service does not match those trips. Families with children rely on a single elementary school that is already over its rated capacity.

4. Fair Housing Enforcement and Complaints

Laws and protections. Greensboro is covered by the federal Fair Housing Act and the Maryland fair housing law, which adds protection for marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and source of income, among other classes. Complaints may be filed with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR) or HUD within one year of the alleged discrimination.

Complaints data. No fair housing complaints specific to Greensboro were identified in public records. The Town will request Caroline County complaint and inquiry data from MCCR and report it in its Annual Report.

Activities. Greensboro relies on Caroline County and State agencies (MCCR and DHCD) for fair housing activities. The Town has no local outreach or education program.

5. Contributing Factors and Impediments

- **Zoning and land use.** The 2018 Land Development Ordinance dedicates most residential land to low-density single-family use (R-1), which limits multifamily, missing-middle and other lower-cost housing. This pattern can have a disparate impact on families and protected classes. The Town has no formal reasonable accommodation procedure for residents with disabilities.
- **Limited affordable supply.** Wastewater nutrient limits of about 300 new EDUs, and a 2006 allocation policy that reserves new taps mainly for public and job-creating uses, constrain new housing (Chapter III).
- **Private market practices.** Source-of-income discrimination against voucher holders is possible in the rental market; the Town has no data on its extent.
- **Public policies.** The Town has no dedicated fair housing action plan and relies on County efforts that may not reach local needs.
- **Other factors.** Rural isolation, limited services for immigrant and Spanish-speaking households, and dependence on agricultural employment limit housing choice.

6. Recommendations and Goals

To affirmatively further fair housing, Greensboro will carry out the following through the Housing Element and track progress in its Annual Report:

1. **Measure local housing needs.** Conduct a resident housing survey, in English and Spanish, to measure cost burden by tenure, race, ethnicity and disability, and update the data in this appendix with each five-year Mid-Cycle Report.
2. **Reform zoning.** Allow duplexes, small multifamily buildings and accessory dwelling units in the T-1 and T-2 transect zones, and adopt a reasonable accommodation procedure.
3. **Increase affordable supply.** Meet the 59-unit State production target through infill, Kinnamon Meadows and accessory dwelling units; reserve sewer allocation for residential infill (Chapter III); and support new or expanded LIHTC development.
4. **Outreach and education.** Partner with MCCR and Caroline County on fair housing workshops, and provide information in Spanish.
5. **Enforcement.** Track local complaints and inquiries, request county-level complaint data from MCCR, and refer residents to MCCR and HUD.
6. **Access to opportunity.** Advocate for transit links to Denton, Easton and regional employment centers and prioritize sidewalk and Safe Routes to School improvements (Chapter VIII).

This assessment finds no evidence of overt discrimination in Greensboro, but structural barriers remain: low incomes, a limited range of housing types, and zoning and infrastructure constraints. Carrying out these recommendations will expand housing choice and meet the State's fair housing requirements.

Sources

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- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, FY2025 HOME income limits, Maryland (https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/home-datasets/files/HOME_IncomeLmts_State_MD_2025.pdf) (Caroline County).
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- Town of Greensboro, Greensboro 2050 Comprehensive Plan, Chapters I, III, IV, V, VII and VIII.