# Mid-Shore

# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

# CEDS

This document is an overview of the Mid-Shore CEDS, the full version is available online at https://ceds.midshore.org/.

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# Goals & Objectives

The goals outlined in this CEDS were developed in response to the barriers to economic development, and the needs and opportunities identified in the analysis.

These goals provide a comprehensive framework for guiding future economic development decisions within the Mid-Shore Region. They also reflect the direction and types of economic activity to be encouraged.

## Goal 1: Infrastructure

Ensure that there is sufficient public infrastructure (e.g. telecommunications, IT, incubators, water and wastewater, energy, roads, transportation, education facilities, health care facilities, technology training centers, and public parks) and investment capital to foster the development and prosperity of our existing and new industry sectors and clusters.

### Objectives

- Design and implement a master plan for regional telecommunications infrastructure and facilities to provide affordable, accessible, redundant broadband services for the public and private sectors.
- Conduct regional water and wastewater assessments, energy assessments, and determine capacity and technology needs to handle future growth and economic development.
- Improve the services available at existing and new industrial and commercial sites to further their potential for development.
- Establish and support regional investor network(s) and increase awareness, involvement and investments from angel investors and venture capital firms.
- Support and expand regional revolving loan and grant funds to promote job growth and local resources and support expansion of local businesses.
- Strengthen transportation linkages and make recommended improvements to regional highways and transportation.
- Support the funding and expansion of the coordinated regional transit program.
- Bring together federal, state, and local funding to acquire land and infrastructure for the development of business parks and technology training centers.
- Focus on promoting the growth and competitiveness of the local manufacturing sector by supporting infrastructure improvements, innovation, workforce development, and attracting new manufacturing businesses to the region; aiming to create jobs, stimulate economic diversification, and enhance the region's overall economic resilience by leveraging existing manufacturing strengths and/or identifying new opportunities within the industry.

## Goal 2: Marketing

Support a regional identity and marketing plan that leverages our competitive advantages, protects our natural resources, honors our rural and Chesapeake heritage, and takes proactive measures to diversify the economy.

Objectives

- Support the creation of a regional branding plan that supports the CEDS vision statement and obtain support from each county and local business leaders.
- Position our region so that it warrants public and private investment in economic growth.
- Support ongoing regional efforts to grow the cultural, heritage, natural, agricultural, aquaculture, and tourism industries.

## Goal 3: Innovation

Encourage programs that accelerate the development and expansion of companies that apply new concepts and technologies in innovative ways.

Objectives

- Establish incubation programs that accelerate the development of science and technology-based businesses, including marine, agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, and environmental.
- Develop and support centers for entrepreneurship and innovation
- Develop technical assistance programs and encourage the attraction of resources that help advance greater awareness, identification, protection, and utilization of innovation and technology, including an increase in the number of patents, for the purpose of commercializing new products and services and accelerating business growth.
- Develop CEO and peer groups to provide technical support for new, expanding, or struggling businesses.
- Support the development of responsible and efficient fuel sources
- Recognizing that cyber hygiene is the first step toward cybersecurity, encourage and support businesses and organizations to adopt best practices when utilizing computers, online platforms, and social media to conduct their operations.

## Goal 4: Industries

Strengthen and diversify agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and support newest techniques in aquaculture and agriculture.

Objectives

- Support the development of responsible and efficient fuel sources.
- Explore and identify emerging agricultural and food market opportunities associated with soy, common grains and other agricultural products that can be grown locally and provide high value markets for Delmarva producers and natural resource-based industries.
- Support the development of value-added agriculture businesses.
- Identify opportunities for high value aquaculture operations (to include finfish and shellfish) that create new opportunities for watermen and entrepreneurs.
- Work with legislators to remove local and state policies that are a barrier to on-farm processing and innovative niche farming operations.
- Retain the region's largest agriculture sector – poultry.
- Support initiatives to protect the environment using resource-based technology that garners a probable return on investment.
- Sustain existing forest product businesses; support the development of growth

opportunities for the forest products sector and remove barriers.

## Goal 5: Workforce

Support opportunities for continuous learning and workforce development.

### Objective

- Ensure that continuous learning and workforce development resources are available to all segments of our population.
- Encourage the coordinated attraction of public and private sectors funding to expand the region's financial capacity to increase workforce training.

## Goal 6: Technology

Provide regional data and technology services needed for present and future infrastructure planning and construction.

### Objectives

- Monitor the growth of the region's communities to periodically ascertain the impact on long-term infrastructure needs.
- Support and sustain a comprehensive resource that provides useful, unbiased information regarding the demographic and geographic characteristics of the region.

## Goal 7: Quality of Life

Define and develop strategies to enhance the quality of life (QoL) for the Mid-Shore workforce.

### Objectives

- Assess current strengths and deficits of QoL in the Mid-Shore including: access to thriving commercial and downtown districts, restaurants, entertainment venues, and gathering/open spaces; variety and quality of transportation choices including walking, biking, driving, and public transit; availability of artistic and cultural experiences; array of leisure/recreation options; availability of quality and affordable housing; home ownership opportunities; access to quality medical care; quality of preK-12 education, childcare, and caregiving support; and opportunities of higher and continuing education.
- Develop strategies to sustain and amplify QoL strengths.
- Prioritize QoL deficits to be addressed and develop a remediation plan that highlights short-term fixes and longer-term initiatives.

## Vision Statement

By executing a strategically sound business development and retention strategy, encompassing every Mid-shore jurisdiction, create a community where individual growth is nurtured and encouraged, where the creation of wealth is the result of a viable and diverse business community, where a range of cultural programs provide relaxation and stimulation, and where educational institutions provide opportunities for every age and socio-economic profile to improve their standard of living and reside in a safe and clean environment.

- Continually seek to improve education and training opportunities
- Preserve and promote the culture and heritage of the region
- Nurturing new ideas in the arts and business
- Foster the growth of broad spectrum of knowledge-based industries
- Create more opportunities to retain our youth by providing suitable employment and living conditions
- Continue to focus growth in the towns and villages that have adequate workforce, transportation, and infrastructure
- Support existing and new efforts to strengthen and diversify our resource-based industries

## Regional Background

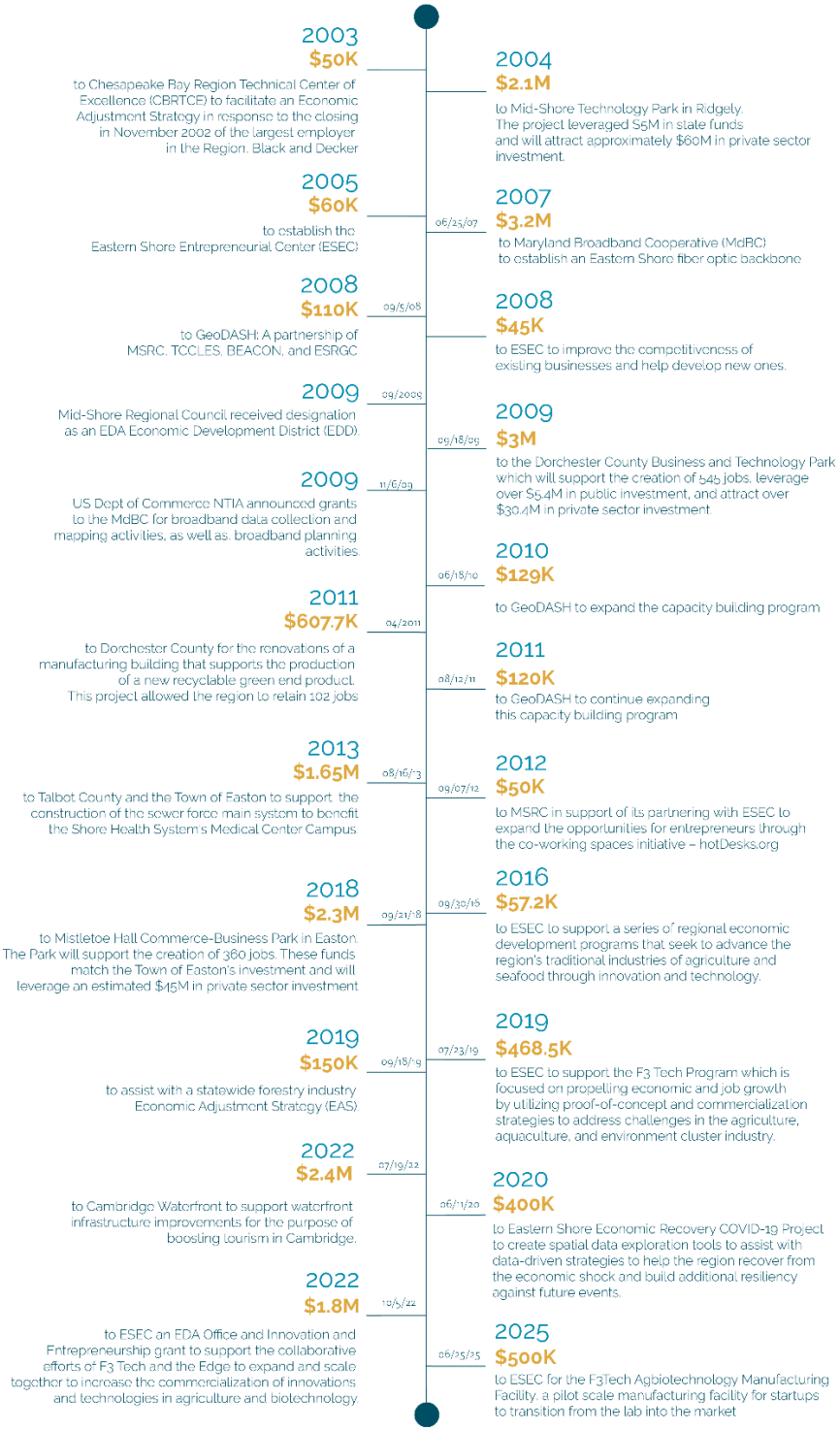
The Mid-Shore Region of the Eastern Shore of Maryland is facing significant economic challenges due to the diminishing economic returns in our natural resource-based industries and the loss of large manufacturing and food processing companies that have traditionally been the foundation of the local economy. In November 2002, Black and Decker announced that it would close its power tool manufacturing facility in Easton, Maryland by December 2003. Black and Decker employed approximately 1,250 people.

The economic impact was felt throughout the Mid-Shore Region of Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot Counties and beyond. Therefore, local governments and citizens actively searched for opportunities to maintain viable agriculture and fishing industries and foster the development of new technology-based business clusters that would provide living wage jobs for the existing and future workforce.

"*The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) process has been a valuable and timely venue for addressing our economic development needs*."

# Investments Facilitated by the Mid-Shore CEDS Committee

The efforts of the CEDS Committee have been rewarded over the past several years with federal and state grant awards as well as private sector investment. The following is a summary of U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) awards.



# History

The initial CEDS combined the data, recommendations and conclusions from previous research and strategic plans:

- Governor's Task Force Report on Economic Development for Maryland's Eastern Shore
- Dorchester County CEDS
- Caroline County Overall Economic Development Program Plan (OEDP)
- Goals from the Talbot County Economic Development Commission.

These efforts defined the strengths and challenges of the Mid-Shore economy. The Mid-Shore CEDS committee used these resources to refine our regional economic development goals and identify industry clusters that are the focus for future projects that will mitigate the existing barriers to job creation, build essential infrastructure, and strengthen and diversify the Mid-Shore regional economy.

In 2002, the CEDS Committee met once a month for 6 months to review and debate all the elements of the strategy. To provide professional guidance and develop policy recommendations a Steering Committee was created. The Steering Committee consisted of the Economic Development Directors from each county, one citizen/business volunteer from each county and the Executive Director of the Mid-Shore Regional Council.

The CEDS committee developed a draft CEDS document. The draft was presented in public forums at the Caroline and Dorchester Board of County Commissioner meetings and to the Talbot County Council for further review and comment. After all public comment was reviewed and incorporated the document was submitted to the EDA. With the successful completion and approval of the Mid-Shore CEDS the committee agreed to meet twice a year to conduct future revisions and/or updates.

The CEDS document analysis section and appendices are updated annually with the latest available statistical information. The Committee also takes into account the latest counties' economic development strategies when reviewing the document, such as:

- Caroline County Strategic Plan for Economic Development, Fiscal Years 2015 – 2020 by Sage Policy Group, October 2014
- Economic Development Strategic Plan for Dorchester County Maryland: Collaborate, Harness, Innovate & Promote Opening Doors for Business prepared by Vantage Point Development Advisors, January 2013
- Economic Development Strategic Plan for Talbot County and the Towns – an Opportunity for Alignment by Sage Policy Group, April 2013

During this past year's meetings, the CEDS Committee examined and discussed the Goals and Objectives of the strategy and made revisions. The Committee reviewed the Action Plan, received updates on current projects, and made appropriate changes and additions. After all updates were approved at the Committee's January 7, 2026 meeting, the document was revised to reflect the changes. Additionally, the Analysis section was given its annual update.

The revised CEDS was included on the agenda of the publicly announced meeting of the Mid-Shore Regional Council (MSRC). During the March 5, 2026 MSRC meeting the CEDS was further discussed and ratified. Following the meeting the MSRC conducted a 30-days public notice and comment period for the CEDS prior to its submission to EDA in April 2026.

## Committee

The Mid-Shore Regional Council (MSRC) is the lead agency in the CEDS process. The staff and Council members have established and maintain a committee to oversee the process. The MSRC Executive Director is the facilitator. To ensure that needs and interests from the entire community are included, the committee is comprised of stakeholders from the major business, education, and civic groups.

The Committee includes representatives from private companies, local governments, agriculture, education, public health agencies, ethnic groups, and women. These participants bring the skills, experience and the political will to the process that is necessary for successful program development and implementation. Each county appoints their CEDS representatives. The steering committee identifies and recruits other community leaders to ensure adequate representation and compliance with federal statutes. All members are volunteers and serve a term of one year. After one year they are given the option to continue or recommend a replacement that can represent their community's interest.

# Partners and Resources for Economic Development

The following is a list of the agencies and organizations that are partners for economic development. All the partners provide a range of expertise and are available to assist in the implementation of the CEDS.

## Municipalities and County Governments

- Economic development offices
- Public Works
- Departments of Social Services
- Tourism Departments
- Planning Departments
- Boards of Education

## State Departments

- Office of Planning
- Tourism Office
- Department of Labor
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Housing and Community Development
- General Assembly
- Governor's Office
- Department of Agriculture
- University of Maryland Extension Service
- Department of Natural Resources
- TEDCO

## Federal

- Economic Development Administration
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Administration,
- Small Business Administration
- Department of Commerce
- Federal Highway Administration
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal laboratories

## Local and Private

- Community Action Agencies
- Chambers of Commerce
- Rural Development Center, University of Maryland Eastern Shore
- Local Banks
- Local Management Boards
- Watermen's Associations
- Delmarva Community Services, Inc.

- Local Colleges and Universities
- Farm Bureaus
- Foundations

A significant resource is the staff expertise at the region's County Economic Development Departments and the Mid-Shore Regional Council. These partners have diverse backgrounds in the private sector and all levels of government. They serve as subject matter experts on a variety of advisory boards in the region including the CEDS Committee.

The various grant and loan programs will be an essential source of funding assistance in carrying out the CEDS activities. Technical assistance and financial support will be accessed in order to realize goals. The Region plans to utilize all available funds from the Economic Development Administration and Rural Development Administration, Maryland Department of Commerce, and the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development to carry out CEDS activities and to achieve CEDS goals. Additionally, tax credits and funding matches through various state and local governments are essential in implementing the plan.

# Mid-Shore CEDS Economic Resilience Strategy

The Mid-Shore CEDS Economic Resilience Strategy is based on conclusions from the Economic Resilience Survey, recommendations made by the EDA, and best and most pertinent recommendations/best practices for building economic resilience that have been identified and implemented in other regional CEDS around the country. Each action is aligned with at least one of the five objectives and is intended to achieve the primary goal of enhancing the Region's economic resilience.

## Resilience Goal

Enhance the ability of the Mid-Shore's regional economy and individual businesses to withstand, prevent, and quickly recover from environmental hazards and other major disruptions to its economic base.

## Objective 1

Encourage local emergency management authorities to help train and educate government staff, non-profit organizations, and economic development agencies on the creation, implementation, and maintenance of recovery plans and contingency actions for environmental hazard events.

- Advocate for economic development professionals and local business representatives to be involved in emergency/hazard preparation, response, mitigation, and recovery planning activities, including during the development of county hazard mitigation plans.
- Encourage local Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development professionals to work with the business community to establish a regional Business Recovery Center that can be activated within one-two weeks of a major economic shock or environmental hazard.
- Urge economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, and business associations to have alternate or backup office locations as these agencies play a critical role in disaster recovery efforts.

## Objective 2

Partner with organizations to train and educate business owners/managers and the general public on the development and implementation of business continuity and recovery plans to help respond and mitigate environmental disasters.

- Encourage businesses to develop, test, and implement business continuity plans, and support businesses by providing incentives (i.e. reduction in business license fees, small reduction in property taxes (or other tax), expedited plan review for hazard retrofit/mitigation projects), to those participating in specific Economic Resilience activities.
- Incorporate economic resiliency into workforce training programs by suggesting mechanisms to train and realign the workforce to match new needs post- disruption/post-hazard.

- Seek partners to develop and disseminate a survey to business owners/managers to gauge specific Economic Resilience efforts, in order to quantify pertinent factors (e.g. percent of businesses with Business Continuity Plans), and to create an inventory/baseline of ongoing Economic Resilience efforts by business owners/managers in the Region.
- Explore the creation of a GIS analysis that links economic-related, and environmental hazard related information, to identify the number and locations of businesses and jobs located in flood zones (total and by industry); to keep industries/businesses up-to-date on environmental risks (dissemination of current hazard data and projections); and to make post-incident impact assessments.

## Objective 3

Improve coordination and communication between economic development agencies, non-profit organizations, business owners/managers, and emergency managers/hazard mitigation and risk reduction specialists.

- Promote the integration and alignment of local and regional planning efforts, such as updating the economic development section of local comprehensive plans to include economic resilience and/or hazard mitigation considerations.
- Seek resources to provide technical support during the updating and maintenance of disaster response and recovery plans in the Region.
- Encourage the establishment of roles and responsibilities that economic development stakeholders in the Region will need to fulfill following an environmental hazard.
- Foster the development of procedures for Economic Development Professionals and business owners/managers to implement following an incident to ensure regular communication with business owners/managers, and monitoring of the business community's needs and issues

## Objective 4

Help identify financial resources to assist businesses affected by an environmental hazard or economic downturn with continuity or recovery.

- Identify financial resources to help keep businesses affected by an economic shock or environmental hazard from closing permanently.
- Explore ways to utilize Federal funding (such as FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program or HUD's Community Development Block Grants) as a tool to leverage local funds for business related mitigation activities (i.e. retrofit buildings, elevate critical equipment or build to higher code standards).
- Continue to build public-private partnerships and standing memorandums of understanding (MOU) to promote and enhance resiliency within the Mid-Shore region.
- Explore the development of an inventory of local businesses capable of providing services, materials, equipment, and an available workforce in the event of an

- environmental hazard, and establish a process to solicit, pre-approve and contract with local businesses, contractors, and vendors for those services, materials and equipment following a disaster.

## Objective 5

Advocate for the strengthening of the region's existing building infrastructure to be better prepared to withstand and promptly recover from environmental disasters.

- In cooperation with large employers, business clusters, and/or dense commercial areas located within hazard zones, and with local planning and emergency management professionals, facilitate the development of strategies to mitigate or prevent damage to buildings and infrastructure from environmental hazards.
- Offer a platform to educate and communicate with local utility companies on the importance of ensuring redundancy in telecommunications and broadband networks to protect commerce and public safety in the event of an environmental disaster

The Mid-Shore Region has taken its first and most important step to enhance economic resilience by establishing initial goals, objectives, and actions and has, in turn, heightened its ability to anticipate risks and vulnerabilities to evaluate how those risks and vulnerabilities can impact key economic assets and characteristics, and to build an improved responsive capacity. By doing so, the Region has poised itself with an enhanced ability to withstand, prevent, and quickly recover from an economic shock and/or environmental hazard, and is strategically working to strengthen overall economic resilience.

## Improving Resilience

Despite strides that the Mid-Shore Region has taken to become more economically resilient in the face of an economic shock and/or environmental hazard, the Region must continue to be proactive in building preparedness, and in turn, enhancing economic resilience.

The Region can begin to enhance such preparedness and economic resilience by:

- educating and training the public and local professionals on the importance of business continuity/recovery plans and associated contingency actions
- improving communications and coordination between regional local governments, economic development stakeholders, emergency management professionals, business owners/managers, and the public
- identifying financial resources for businesses to explore in times of need
- continuing to strengthen and maintain the region's building infrastructure in the face of stronger and more frequent environmental hazards.

# Action Plan

The following projects have been identified and ranked for the program year. They represent a comprehensive approach to achieving our regional economic development goals and mitigating existing challenges to high wage job creation in the region. Although EDA funding is a primary source for many of the projects the CEDS Committee and Counties understand that financial assistance will be sought from various state and federal agencies. To help the applicants gauge whether their projects are eligible for EDA funding and meet current funding priorities, the Committee requested the development of an evaluation matrix.

# Infrastructure

## Mid-Shore Technology Park in Ridgely

**Priority Rating - High**

**Background**

For the past 300 years much of the Mid-Shore Region has relied on commercial agriculture as a primary industry. To diversify the industry base of Caroline County several industrial parks were established in the 1970's. These parks have been filled and primarily house light manufacturing and distribution companies.

Caroline County qualifies as a One Maryland jurisdiction based on low per capita income and is a priority State investment area. Lack of improved land and business parks has been identified as a barrier to economic development in the Region by the CEDS committee. To this end, Caroline County is undertaking two major initiatives: 1) The development of Ridgely Regional Airport and, 2) The construction of the Mid-Shore Business and Technology Park which will be located adjacent to the airport.

**Purpose**

The Business and Technology Park will develop a modern facility that is strategically located to promote economic growth and create higher paying jobs. The strategy of the project is to build the capacity for technology related businesses and compliment other similar efforts in the region. The Ridgely site offers businesses the opportunity to utilize the adjacent airport facilities to enhance their logistics and marketability. By locating the park next to the airport, we expect to grow an aviation industry cluster that will diversify the Caroline County and regional economy.

**Project Description**

The location of the technology park is one mile north of Ridgely, Maryland just off MD Route #312. The Town of Ridgely is in the process of annexing the area into the town. Ridgely has also agreed to provide sewer and water to the Technology/Business Park and the airport.

Phase One of the project is to acquire the property known as the "Hayman Farm" which consists of several parcels totaling approximately 92 acres. An option to purchase the property has been negotiated with a purchase price of $750,000 that will be paid by Maryland One funding. The area has been rezoned by the County and has received from the Department of Planning Priority Funding Area (PFA) status as of June 25, 2002. The Phase One and Phase Two environmental studies have been completed. Additionally, all necessary studies have been accomplished in this phase including the engineering master plan and the business plan.

The second phase of the project is the development of the park that includes building site preparation, the infrastructure and the construction of the first park building. Groundbreaking ceremony occurred on November 28, 2006. Completion date for site construction is 270 days.

| Cost | |
|---|---|
| Total Project Cost | $6,900,000 |
| Estimated Maryland One financing | $4,500,000 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Funding request from EDA | $2,100,000 (Water, sewer, and roads) |
| Caroline County | $300,000 |

This exciting project represents a new direction in economic development for Caroline County. The Caroline Business and Technology Park is a top priority of both the Commissioners of Caroline County and the Town of Ridgely officials. We have also been encouraged by the help provided by the Maryland Department of Commerce. Caroline County has proceeded with this project and has demonstrated the ability and commitment to support this endeavor.

**Project Partners**

- Caroline County
- Town of Ridgely
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- EDA
- USDA
- Rural Development Center, UMES

## Dorchester Regional Technology

### Park Priority Rating – High

### Background

Dorchester County, the largest county on Maryland's Eastern Shore, has embarked on a revitalization program to enhance the economic development vitality of the area by exercising several options to increase the potential of attracting and expanding/retaining business to encourage and assist in the growth of industrial opportunities. Manufacturing accounts for 28% of total employment. One of these options is a planned 100+acre Technology Park near Cambridge. This Park will be owned and managed by MEDCO through the Maryland Department of Commerce's One Maryland Program.

In 1985, Dorchester County completed its development of the Chesapeake Industrial Park in Cambridge. The initial Industrial Park is on a 47-acre site and was developed into eight 5 acre parcels. All lots have been sold. In 1993, Dorchester County purchased another 30 acre parcel adjacent to the Chesapeake Industrial Park. This property was subdivided into four parcels and zoned light industrial. All lots have been sold and developed which leaves Cambridge without any industrial land for further development.

### Purpose

Dorchester County will market to small technology and medical equipment firms. Having lost almost 1,800 jobs in Dorchester to firms which have relocated to developing countries over the last five years, the abundance of labor and trained technicians are already here. With the aid of our transportation system, Cambridge is a central location on the Shore and we anticipate a regional effort to attract former employees from Black and Decker and surrounding counties. The market for medical devices is nearby, also, with large university hospitals, Johns Hopkins, National Health Institute and others so very close.

### Project Description

The Technology Park will consist of at least 100 acres, zoned light industrial. Phase One of the project is to acquire the property with One Maryland money. The engineering and annexation process are complete. The Park will be subdivided in 15 five-acre lots. We expect to draw employees from the four country region.

It is felt that this particular configuration will allow us to maximize the types of industry locating in the County as well as provide a good choice of sites to the companies which would help to attract them to the area. We will market the Park to technology medical research and device companies.

### Project Partners:

- Dorchester County
- City of Cambridge
- Maryland Department of Commerce

- Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO)
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Current Development Phase – Planning
- Funding Request - $2.5 million – water and sewer
- Estimated One Maryland Funding - $1.75 million – Acquisition of Land

## Eastern Shore of Maryland Regional Fiber Optic Backbone

**Priority Rating – High**

### Background

In April of 2002 The Technology Development Corporation of Maryland released their assessment of technology infrastructure for the State. The report verified the fact that the Eastern Shore does not have a regional broadband backbone and is drastically underserved when compared to other parts of the State. This lack of infrastructure creates a significant barrier to diversification of the economy and recruitment and development of new industries to the area. Potential growth clusters identified by the CEDS committee include IT and science based companies that will rely heavily on broadband infrastructure. To make this region attractive to high tech companies the development of a regional IT backbone is essential.

### Project Description/Strategy

Modeled after an EDA funded project in Virginia, the proposed backbone will connect industrial parks, Incumbent Carrier Central Office locations, and areas of interest such as higher education facilities, hospitals and business centers. The goal is to bring competition, affordable prices, and redundant/scalable access for all carriers who desire to provide competitive advanced broadband services to rural Maryland (Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland, and Western Maryland). The backbone will be owned by the Maryland Broadband Cooperative (MdBC) however, they will not offer lit services. Any company that purchases MdBC dark fiber can offer lit services to other carriers.

The Economic Development Administration fully understands that affordable advanced broadband services are the only way many rural communities can compete in a global networked. They have expressed interest in investing several million dollars in this project. The total project consists of 525.2 miles of fiber connecting NASA Wallops Island Facility in Virginia to the Patuxent Naval Air Station in Southern Maryland via the Chesapeake Bay Bridge, establish fiber loops connecting the Mid-Shore to the Upper Shore region on the Eastern Shore, and connecting the three Western Maryland counties to the network. The network can be built in phases. **Projected Cost** - $29,097,500MdBC has identified financing options for the balance of the project not provided by the EDA. Maryland's General Assembly passed Senate Bill 753 in 2006 that provides funding for the construction of fiber projects for rural Maryland for $10M over a three year span (FY 2007, 2008, and 2009). The federal government with support from U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski secured $2M in funding for FY2007. The MdBC is in discussions with the State of Maryland regarding resource share and right of way access.

### Project Partners

- U.S. Economic Development Administration
- Maryland Department of Budget and Management
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- TEDCO
- Lower Shore Tri-County Council
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- Upper Shore Regional Council

## Mistletoe Farm

### Project Priority

### Rating – High

### Background

The Town of Easton owns a 68 acre parcel of undeveloped land, located to the west, in the Town of Easton and referred to locally as Mistletoe Farm. The property is located adjacent to an existing County owned business park, the Talbot Commerce Park, Bryan Brothers property and the Easton Airport.

Mistletoe Farm is an irregular area of woodland and field with proposed access to the property available from Goldsborough Neck Road. The parcel is dissected with a wetland area that cuts the property in half: a 40 acre parcel with frontage on Goldsborough Neck; and a 20 acre parcel with frontage to the Easton Airport. The Airport must extend its current runway safety fly zone which will force the relocation of one of the fasting growing DoD contractors in the region; Global Strategies (formerly SFA). The Easton Airport currently supports 15 businesses and 300 jobs and is vitally important to the economy of the Town of Easton, Talbot County and the Mid-Shore area.

### Purpose

The Town of Easton would like to develop Mistletoe Farm into a business park that would offer sites for industrial, technology and aviation businesses.

Global Strategies manufactures shelter products with sales of $105 million/year expected to grow to $160 million by 2012 and expect to lease or build a new 200,000 SF facility on 30 acres. The jobs connected with this one facility will grow from 130 to 300 by 2012. The Airport is expected to grow an additional 100 jobs with airport related businesses.

### Project Description

The Town of Easton would like to develop Mistletoe Farm and is interested in opportunities to leverage the investment. The site is zoned Industrial and is included in the Town of Easton's Comprehensive Plan as a priority for development. Mistletoe Farm currently has access to Town water and sewer and electric but additional work is required to finish the utilities to the sites which have not yet been engineered. The Town is currently estimating the total investment that will be required for design, environmental studies, critical area and mitigation, engineering, construction of roadways, completion of the water and sewer and electric infrastructure build out to the newly defined sites and additional amenities (sidewalks, street lights, a mass transit shelter, etc).

Estimated project cost $4 million
Estimated time line 5 years
Jobs associated with the 60 acre parcel 400 by 2012

### Project Partners

- Talbot County

- Town of Easton
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

## Regional Medical

### Facility Priority

### Rating – High

### Background

To retain the Memorial Hospital at Easton, the Talbot County Council offered a 250-acre parcel along U.S. Route 50 to Shore Health System, Inc. (SHS), a subsidiary of the University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS). Construction estimates for the build-out of this project, exclusive of the funding request for the extension of water and sewer service, are approximately $250,000,000. Additional investment is planned for the build-out of the medical campus which will include massive, decade-long development and construction. The County Council awarded the design of the sewer lines, pump station and force main and water lines to Easton Utilities, a municipality-owned utility, on December 23, 2008, with the final designs for sewer lines, pump station and force main being forwarded for approval to the Maryland Department of the Environment in May 2009.

### Purpose and Project Description

This project will provide medical care and medically-related services to the more than 160,000 current residents of the Mid and Upper Shore Region, a population which is expected to grow throughout the foreseeable future. The project will require the extension of water and sewer services from the Easton Wastewater System at a cost of $15.5 million; $7.6 million for water and $7.9 million for sewer. This needed economic stimulus will generate a minimum of 160 jobs associated with the utility construction alone which includes over 2.5 miles of gravity sewer lines and force mains and about 4.0 miles of water lines. Construction of the medical facility and campus will employ several hundred workers over a span of four (4) to ten (10) years. Further economic stimulus will follow with employment to support the Regional Medical Campus which includes both UMMS/SHS and private sector medical services. In addition, Talbot County is in the process of designing an approved Athletic Complex adjacent to the Regional Medical Campus site and the Talbot County Community Center. The Athletic Complex, with a total project cost of $6,000,000, is anticipated to generate about 50 construction- related jobs as well as additional employment opportunities related to that project.

By retaining the UMMS/SHS Regional Medical Facility in Easton, the County will maintain its largest employer, which currently generates over 2,400 full-time positions, 1,681 of whom are residents of Mid-Shore Counties (Talbot, Caroline and Dorchester). In addition to retaining these jobs, the new acute care hospital, medical campus, and medical services facilities are anticipated to provide 600 additional jobs at an investment of $450,000,000. The projected build-out of the Regional Medical Facility is expected to occur over many years, providing stable work for several thousand employees.

Talbot County is proceeding with the preparation of the proposed 250-acre site and would like to add the new UMMS/SHS Regional Medical Facility as a priority for EDA funding consideration so that, as project decisions are made, the resources are available to support the infrastructure costs. The UMMS/SHS Regional Medical facility will provide medical services to a large portion of the rural Maryland Mid and Upper Shore population and is anticipated to draw patients from the greater mid- Maryland region. The Regional Medical Facility is a legacy project that will significantly impact the entire regional economy.

**Project Cost**

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Project Cost: | $250,000,000 Proposed Medical Facility<br>$200,000,000 Additional Medical Campus |
| Talbot County | $2,000,000 (land purchased and optioned) |
| Funding request MD Dept. of Commerce CDBG | $2,000,000 (Water and sewer to site) |
| Funding request USDA | $2,000,000 (Site development) |
| Funding request from EDA | $4,000,000 (Water and Sewer/site development) |

**Summary**

The UMMS/SHS proposes a $250,000,000 Medical Facility, a milestone project for the Mid-Shore Region. By locating the facility at the northern end of the Town of Easton, the Facility retains its accessibility and proximity to existing medical office infrastructure and provides for future expansion within a Priority Funding Area which may reasonably absorb the growth. Talbot County, in its effort to retain the proposed medical complex, is proceeding with efforts including annexation, zoning and a critical path for infrastructure considerations.

**Project Partners**

- Talbot County
- Town of Easton
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Maryland Department of Transportation
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- U.S. Department of Commerce, EDA
- U.S. Department of Agriculture

## Cambridge Waterfront: SAILWINDS PARK

**Priority Rating – Medium**



**Background**

Cambridge's waterfront has been studied extensively over the past several decades and has been identified as the key to the City's economic revival. The waterfront's current amenities, including the prominent sail, visitor center, boardwalk, play-ground, recreation area, and the Hyatt Chesapeake Resort represent the beginning implementation of the original Sailwind's Plan, dating from the early 1990's.

Cambridge's recent process of updating their Comprehensive Plan included a separate public charrette focusing on the waterfront from the Hyatt to Great Marsh Park. The community consensus resulted in a concept plan called the Waterfront 2020, which was incorporated as part of the final Comp Plan, adopted in 2011. The companion Sage Policy Group Report, which serves as the economic strategy for the City of Cambridge, strongly reinforced this policy direction.

One of Sage Policy's nine recommendations in the City's Economic Development Strategic Plan is to: **"Leverage Cambridge's Waterfront: Implement Waterfront 2020 Plan -** This should be the City's number one Economic Development Project... No aspect of economic development in Cambridge is as potentially impactful as this and therefore there should be a significant level of urgency regarding implementation of the [Waterfront 2020] Plan."

**Purpose**

The Waterfront 2020 (W2020) concept, as identified in the City's Comprehensive Plan, was designed to attract mixed-use development for Sailwinds Park (west). The W2020 devises a plan to leverage Cambridge's waterfront into significant job creation and enhanced visitation for an area stretching from Great Marsh Park to the Hyatt Resort along the Choptank River.

The objective of the W2020 implementation is to successfully partner with the State of Maryland, developer, county, and citizens to develop a 27 acre site extending from Dorchester County Visitor Center at Route 50 to Cambridge Creek in ways that promote tax base formation, greater visitation, employment and sustainability. The project is expected to attract between $100 to $200 million in public and private investment over the next 3 to 10 years, generating over 1,000 construction jobs and over 500 permanent positions. The mixed-use approach will provide a sustainable economic engine that will encourage further revitalization and growth in the Mid-Shore Region.

**Project Description**

The development vision for the site dating to the Waterfront 2020 vision includes: working waterfront, hotel, commercial, residential, and public open space integrated.

The Sailwinds Port property, covering some 10 acres on the Choptank River, which is owned by the

City of Cambridge under agreements with the State of Maryland to develop the property as a mixed use project for the purpose of economic development and protected waterfront access for residents and visitors. The University of Maryland Shore Regional Health (UM-SRH) has entered into an Letter of Intent with the Cambridge and Dorchester County to sell approximately 17 acres, now occupied by Dorchester General Hospital adding to the development parcels and making development more viable and increasing the number of potential jobs resulting from the redevelopment. UN-SRH is relocating medical services to another site within Cambridge.

Cambridge has been identified by the State for revitalization through various programs including Smart Sites, public-private partnerships, increased awareness of the significant impact of Harriet Tubman on the area's history, and redevelopment opportunities centered around the Sailwinds property on the Cambridge waterfront. The site is located within a federal Opportunity Zone as well. One of the most important aspects of the Waterfront 2020 plan is to develop additional local tourism infrastructure and to help connect the City's waterfront more effectively to other community assets. Accordingly, the concept plan encompasses comprehensive city renovations to enhance accessibility to Sailwinds and the linkages Sailwinds, the downtown, the Packing Plant (another redevelopment project 1 mile away) and other waterfront sites including the lighthouse, marina and Hyatt Resort.

The site includes a deep water port – one of only two in Maryland and as such presents unique opportunities for marine uses. Part of the Port property sold to the City has been leased to Cambridge Yacht Maintenance, a long time ship repair and maintenance firm. The lease is predicated upon an expansion of the business adding jobs and preserving a working waterfront in Cambridge. With State and City funding, the Sailwinds Port Property deep water wharf has been recently repaired and a grand public promenade built on top of it. This public investment has increased cruise line use and enhanced the attractiveness of the site. This public promenade connects with a board walk along the site to the Sailwinds Park and amphitheater and to the Visitors Center. The deep water port and attractive public amenity present unique development potential linking boating, cruising and tourist attractions on the site.

**Project Partners**

The City of Cambridge with Dorchester County formed Cambridge Waterfront Development, Inc., an independent economic development nonprofit corporation in 2018 with appointees from each body, an appointee of Governor Hogan, and a representative of Sailwinds Park, Inc. to oversee the redevelopment of the 27 acre site. This partnership of city, county and state has brought together development and real estate professionals along with community planning activists and local government managers to realize the community vision first expressed in W2020.

The project is part of an overall revitalization effort supported by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development focusing on downtown historic preservation and restoration, housing revitalization in the Historic Pine Street Area, and historic preservation in the rehabilitation and repurposing of the Phillips Packing House Factory F. These projects are within a square mile and taken together, represent jobs, housing improvements and commercial vitality for the City and County.

A collaborative approach is required for the success of this effort among all the stakeholders, emphasizing strong communications, transparency and a commitment to conflict resolution to

achieve the shared vision. Other important players include Sailwinds Park, Inc., Cambridge Yacht Maintenance, Richardson Foundation, University of Maryland Shore Regional Health, Dorchester County Tourism, Hyatt Resort, Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, Pine Street, Main Street, and the Chamber of Commerce of Dorchester County.

The project enjoys the strong assistance of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO) and the Maryland Department of Commerce played a leadership role in reviving the Sailwinds project and continue to stay at the ready. The Maryland Department of Planning also has maintained a keen interest in this project, participating in public meetings and tracking the project's progress over the last few years.

**Project Cost**

The overall project cost is estimated in the range of $100 to $200 million over the next 3 to 10 years, from the private and public sectors. The major economic impact will be realized in terms of strengthening Cambridge as a regional destination, the revitalization of downtown, and the transformation of an underutilized property into a revenue-generating waterfront development.

## Chesapeake Grove Intergenerational Center

**Priority Rating – High**

**Background**

Delmarva Community Services, Inc. (DCS) a multi-service community agency purchased a 30 acre parcel of undeveloped land within the City of Cambridge in 1997. This parcel is located just off the Cambridge Beltway/Rt. 16 and is directly adjacent to existing community service programming and transit facilities operated by DCS.

The property can allow up to a 10 acre area for site development with direct access and utility connection along Chesapeake Street, between Bayly Road and Rt. 16. The site has been reviewed and permitted by the Army Corp of Engineers for a wetland permit through June 2013 and sediment control plan through September 2013. Infill development of the site fits within the City of Cambridge recently updated Comprehensive Plan.

DCS anticipates a continued demand in senior and disability services regionally with specific needs related to less institutional and more modern facilities and community based services. Other demands faced by DCS include the aging population of Dorchester and the surrounding counties. Dorchester County is considered an economically depressed area in which DCS is currently the 4th largest employer and anticipates adding 60 additional positions of highly and moderately skilled professionals.

**Purpose and Project Description**

Presently the site improvements including water, sewer, storm water management, clearing, filling, seeding continues. We presently are continuing to improve the site but are in need of funding to continue infrastructure for the 10 acres beyond the Intergenerational Center. The entire site with improvements and planned facilities will be approximately a $35,000,000 to
$40,000,000 project. DCS believes that a request for EDA funds of $300,000 are needed to complete additional infrastructure to make this site viable while creating an additional 60 full/part time jobs bringing DCS's workforce to over 400 employees in the Mid-Shore area.

DCS will expand and update existing programming facilities which sorely lack in several areas including adequate space for services. The new Chesapeake Grove Intergenerational Center plans include facilities for physical therapy, aquatic activities, therapy fitness area, small space programming, congregate meals, community social activities, retail stores and fee for service. Seniors need access to education information, and other services sooner leading to a better quality of life. Rural transit bus services, mobility training, senior information and assistance will be interwoven with the center's operations including early childcare. After hours the facility will be available to be utilized by the public at large including families for a fee.

The Chesapeake Grove Intergenerational Center itself will be constructed over 2 to 2.5 years with site clearance and preparation beginning within the next 3-6 months. Three floors including an atrium, physical therapy pool and handicap accessible swimming pool are planned. Energy efficient measures include geo-thermal heating and cooling systems, design

elements incorporating natural lighting. Current DCS investment in the project is estimated to total approximately $190,000 through land acquisition and professional services leading to the development of the site and complex plans. Plans to start construction are estimated for summer of 2016.

The Center will later incorporate housing opportunities on site including assisted living for seniors, senior apartments, and units for intergenerational families leading to a dynamic setting with the Intergenerational Center at the heart of the 10 acre site. The Center will encompass the first phase of construction with housing construction following in split phases, which will create an estimated 150 construction jobs 5 year period during build out of the complete 10 acre complex. DCS currently employs approximately 340 persons in Maryland's Eastern Shore and southern Delaware. It is anticipated that over 50 new regular DCS employees will be added once the Center is constructed: 33 full-time employees and 26 part- time employees approximately.

**Project Cost**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Total Project cost:** | **$12,000,000** | **(Proposed Center Construction)** |
| Maryland Bond Bills 2015/2016 | $1,250,000 | (committed) |
| USDA Community Facilities Loan | $3,300,000 | (committed) |
| Community Investment Tax Credit Program | $60,000 | (committed) |
| Funding Request Weinberg Foundation | $1,360,000 | (committed) |
| Funding Request MDoA | $800,000 | (committed) |
| Funding Request George B. Todd Fund | $425,000 | (Spring 2013) |
| Funding Request CDBG | $1,600,000 | (Spring 2016) |
| Funding request Maryland Bond Bills (SGIF) | $400,000 | (FY2014 Legislative cycle) |
| Donors & Grants | $2,005,000 | |
| *DCS Match to EDA* | *$400,000* | |
| *Funding request from EDA* | *$400,000* | *(closes gap)* |

**Project Partnering**

- Dorchester County
- City of Cambridge
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
- Maryland Department of Aging (MDoA)
- Maryland Legislature – House & Senate sponsors
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Maintaining Active Citizens, Inc. (local Area Agency on Aging) (MAC, Inc.)
- Department of Health and Mental Hygiene - Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Rural Development
- Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation
- Mid-Shore Community Foundation – George B. Todd Fund

## Phillips Packing Company, Factory F

**Priority Rating – High**




### Background

The Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC), in partnership with Cross Street Partners, is planning to repurpose the historic Phillips Packing Company, Factory F (Phillips Building) in Cambridge, MD as a Food and Farming Exchange, that will include an array of food related uses that build off the Eastern Shore's strength in farming and food production while at the same time creating new jobs and supporting local hunger and nutrition needs.

The deteriorating Phillips Packing Company, Factory F (Phillips Building), is a 60,000 square foot vacant warehouse located in the geographical center of the city, which is adjacent and overlooks the future Cannery Park. It is the last remaining factory from the Phillips Company's empire of vegetable and food packing businesses, employing thousands and feeding our troops during WWI and WWII.

### Purpose

The Food and Farming Exchange will convert a large crumbling building into one of the largest economic development projects in the region. Our goal is to catalyze a vibrant mixed-use area, built on a foundation of innovation and entrepreneurial activity, targeting the attraction of private investment, creation of economic and employment opportunities, and job training. Redeveloping this culturally and historically significant building in a manner that celebrates the region's heritage helps preserve the legacy of food and farming based industries.

### Project Description

The Phillips Building is positioned to create a magnet and compass for investments in the region. Through this lens and building off local food-related investment, the development program for the Food and Farming Exchange has congealed to include a micro-brewery, a kitchen business incubator to support local food entrepreneurs, food production, and co-packing facility for small and medium-sized producers, market/food retail, collaborative office space/innovation hub envisioned as a community of local nonprofits and businesses with a focus on the Eastern Shore food and farming related industries, an oyster bar, and public events space. The project is estimated to create 145 full- time equivalent jobs and 105 temporary construction jobs.

**Project Budget**

Current costs for repurposing of the Phillips Building, into a Food and Farming Exchange, are estimated around $18 million.

| **Sources of Funds** | **Amount** |
|---|---|
| Federal Historic Tax Credit Equity | 2,727,813 |
| State Historic Tax Credit Equity | 3,000,000 |
| New Market Tax Credit Equity | 5,366,400 |
| Permanent Financing (Debt) | 3,033,961 |
| Grants/Fundraising | 3,495,165 |
| Developer Equity | 650,000 |
| **Total Sources** | **$18,273,339** |

**Project Partners**

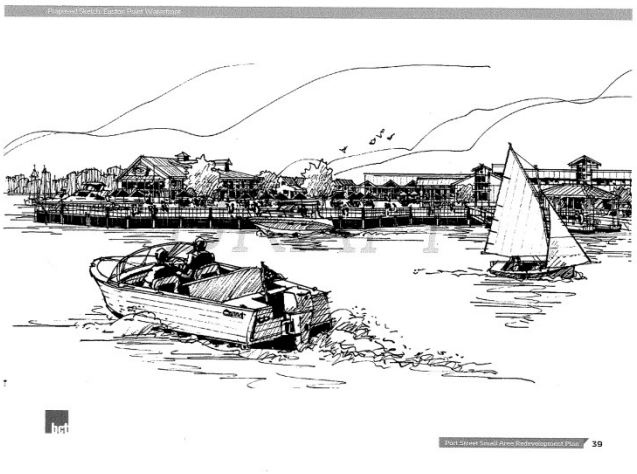
- City of Cambridge
- Dorchester County
- Dorchester Chamber of Commerce
- Chesapeake College
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
- Maryland Department of Planning
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)



## Port Street Redevelopment

**Project Priority Rating –**

**High Background**




The *Port Street Small Area Master Plan* is meant to provide a framework for evaluating and locating future commercial and residential projects, determining appropriate levels and locations for civic, commercial and recreational activities, and guiding land use decisions into the future. While focused on the Port Street corridor, this plan was developed in the context of the broader town and regional landscape of land conservation and smart growth, and informed by broader trends in land use, innovative economic development, and protecting the natural resources of the Chesapeake Bay. This plan is intended to be compatible with the Easton Town Master Plan and the Easton Point Park Master Plan. The plan was developed with citizen engagement throughout, in the form of a 47 person committee that met regularly over two years and engaged hundreds of citizens, residents, government officials, property owners and businesses.

**Purpose**

The *Port Street Small Area Master Plan*, developed by the Town of Easton and the Easton Economic Development Corporation, is meant to guide future development for the area known as Easton Point, and the Port Street corridor connecting Easton Point to downtown Easton. Through its redevelopment, Port Street will become a vibrant gateway into the Town, with diverse uses including cultural, housing, open spaces, walkability, recreation, restaurants, retail and office space.

**Project Description**

The proposed plan includes an enhanced gateway of a section of Easton Parkway; with traffic calming infrastructure and a rail trail extension to the water's edge. The plan points to a waterfront destination at Easton Point accessible to all, with an 11 acre park remediating a brownfield parcel, a waterfront promenade and plaza, a boatel, restaurants, retail, civic buildings, a farmer's/seafood center/market, healthy lifestyle center and mixed-income housing to include affordable housing options, duplexes, co-living, condos, apartments and townhouses. A new cultural center and University/Innovation Center hub will anchor Easton's gateway. The plan calls for environmentally sustainable practices and green technologies. Dynamic interpretation will trace themes of the history of Easton Point through stories of commerce, transportation, manufacturing, maritime, sail and steam, shipbuilding, slavery, the Underground Railroad, agriculture and Chesapeake fisheries. The Port Street Corridor will connect to The Hill, Easton's historic free black neighborhood with interpretation, education and enhanced tourism opportunities.

The master plan should be regarded as a possibility, but not necessarily the only possibility of what the study area may look like in the future. The scale and intensity of development within the plan is

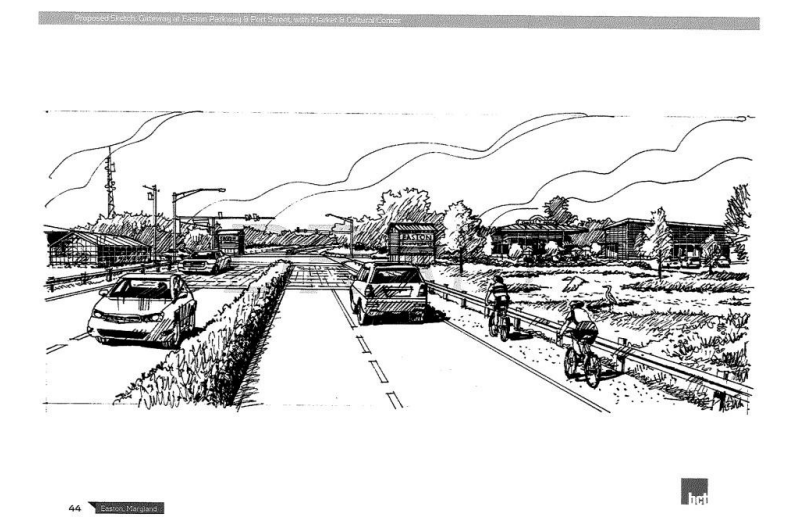
deemed by the Town to be appropriate for the study area and therefore may use this plan as guidance, but should not assume that simply because something is not shown on the plan that such land use or development proposal will be deemed by the Town to be inappropriate.

**Project Cost**

Based on the initial draft master plan and study, it is believed that the Port Street corridor could result in over $250 million in public and private investment over the next 15 years resulting in 28,000 square feet of new retail space; 53,000 square feet of community/civic space; 90,000 square feet of office space; 323 new construction affordable and market-rate units; 250 new hotel rooms; new waterside public parks; and an expanded boat ramp. Linkages between downtown and the waterfront will be strengthened through investments in streetscape and bike trails. To spur the redevelopment and private investments that the Town would like to see within the Study Area, some amount of public investment or other subsidy will likely be required and can be leveraged by private investment. Improvements that may need to be funded entirely by the public sector include: environmental enhancements; public boat ramp enhancements; public buildings; utility infrastructure upgrades, waterfront walkway/promenade; street upgrades, intersection improvements; street tree plantings; relocating overhead utility lines; sidewalk construction; rail trail extension; installation of street furniture; and trash recycling opportunities.

**Project Partners**

- Town of Easton, Maryland
- Easton Economic Development Corporation
- Talbot County, Maryland
- State of Maryland



## Town of Denton – Broadband, Fiber Optic Network

**Priority Rating – Medium**



### Background

The Town of Denton is the county seat of Caroline County, MD, located on the Eastern Shore. The Town and the County are limited in their telecommunications services to their residence. The area is considered rural which has multiple advantages in the quality of life including its school system. However, quality telecommunications services, i.e., broadband to include WiFi, and cable services, are a challenge in this low density, rural environment.

The Town of Denton has an ambitious goal, which was initiated in 2016 from a State grant from the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF), to connect the town's building with a fiber optic network. Today fiber is connecting the Town Hall, police station, and the micro enterprise facility, as well as and most important, the Wharves of Choptank Visitors and Heritage Center. The fiber connection from the Visitors and Heritage Center to the Town Hall provides the phones and Internet along with direct connection to the Town's server for the computer and surveillance equipment. The Denton public works facility is scheduled for connection once the Memorandum of Understanding with the County is approved. The town needs to use the County's facility to complete the connection to the Town Hall. Additionally, a 2017 RMPIF grant is supporting the process of connecting fiber to Denton's wastewater treatment plant along with two of its pump stations and one of its three wells which supply water to its residence and businesses.

Denton currently has Verizon DSL and Comcast services in the town limits; however, they are limited to certain areas. The Town of Denton received an State of Maryland economic development grant in 2014 to run fiber to the Denton Industrial Park for the businesses to have connections to the Internet. Recently a business in downtown opened and Comcast service was not available nor was a fiber connection. Cost is also a major factor for businesses and residents. The Town of Denton is looking for a low cost service solution.

Having Rural Maryland Council / RMPIF believe in this project was key for the Town of Denton, Mayor and Council, to develop a more expansive strategy for a fiber optic network.

### Purpose

The Town of Denton will create a fiber backbone to modernize its technology and services to improve the quality of life for its residence and businesses. Denton realizes that providing high quality telecommunication services is a necessity for the Eastern Shore to retain and attract talent in the region. Providing such services along with the wonderful rural setting will enhance the mid-shore's assets in growing its work and employment base.

**Project Description**

Denton's goal, once its buildings are connected to the fiber optic backbone, is to run all its facilities' phones, Internet, and computers from the Town Office. Additional plans allow for the police station and/or the Town Hall to house a backup facility for system redundancy.

The next stage will be to provide a WiFi network for the Town of Denton starting with Main Street and then expanding the WiFi network throughout the entire Town. The Town of Denton along with Downtown Denton Main Street (including the Arts and Entertainment District) will first offer WiFi service in the entire downtown area for the business community as well as its visitors and neighbors. Once this network is complete the town will further expand its services to provide quality Internet, cable, and phone service in the Town of Denton either through a partnership or a municipal owned utility, e.g., Easton Utilities.

The Town of Denton's fiber backbone is the key to starting its ambitious plan for the community. Children today in the school's system go to the library and even the local fast food restaurants to access the WiFi in these facilities to do homework and research. Parents also use these facilities to look for jobs and to stay connected.

**Project Cost**

| | |
|---|---|
| Fiber to facilities with connections | $75,000 |
| Town of Denton WiFi | $80,000 |
| Internet, Cable, WiFi, Phone System | $ 600,000 |

**Project Partners**

Town of Denton, Mayor and Council
Downtown Denton Main Street Rural
Maryland Council
Maryland Broadband Cooperative Caroline
County
Mid-Shore Regional Council

## Woods Road & Medical Facility Infrastructure Improvements

**Priority Rating – High**



### Background

The City of Cambridge has a ong history of manufacturing, and in 1985, Dorchester County completed the development of the Chesapeake Industrial Park. When all parcels were sold, an additional four parcels were developed in 1993. Despite this commitment to industrial development, careers in the manufacturing sector only account for 11% of positions throughout the city.

Presently, the city's wastewater treatment facility operates at approximately 50% capacity, which is an incredible asset for industrial recruitment. Cambridge has several manufacturing businesses, many located on or near Woods Road, which are expanding and making substantial capital investments. Some of these projects will require expanded water capacity now and into the future, especially those in the growing food related sector. These businesses have a significant impact on the local and regional economy through job retention, business retention and growth opportunities and an increased tax base. The proposed relocation of the University of Maryland Medical Center at Cambridge (Dorchester General Hospital) to a site utilizing this same infrastructure will also increase the need for adequate service.

### Purpose

The goal of this project is to upgrade necessary industrial infrastructure and improve safety and access on the Woods Road corridor to not only support new, job-creating manufacturing positions in existing building stock, but to support the relocation of University of Maryland Shore Regional Health to Cambridge Marketplace. This new location, where a K-Mart shopping center once stood, is also served by the Woods Road pump house and wastewater treatment facility less than one mile away.

The safety and security of its citizens is critical to any community. This project allows for improvements that would benefit anyone needing to access University of Maryland Shore Regional Health, Dorchester County's Emergency Management and Woods Road businesses. Due to Woods Road's straight line access to the Medical Center, emergency vehicles will utilize it, which will reduce emergency response times and provide improved medical service delivery to residents. Upgrading all of the infrastructure at once, including road repairs, widening and supportive services, will provide better return on the investment over the long term.

This will be an impactful infrastructure improvement project. When done in conjunction with road repairs and widening, improved technology infrastructure and enhancements, it will meet future industry standards and aid in attracting new business. Paired with incentives provided by HUBZone, Sustainable Community and Priority Funding Area designations, this project will better position Cambridge, Dorchester County and the entire region as a manufacturing destination, providing new opportunities for the region's current and future workforce.

As of December 2, 2019 there are four manufacturing companies housed on Woods Road. These companies currently employ 438 people with an additional seven non-manufacturing businesses that employ another 113 people.

The proposed UM Shore Medical Center at Cambridge would be an 82,000-square-foot, two- story, freestanding medical facility, open 24 hours a day. The freestanding medical facility will occupy the entire first floor and will include a 22-bed emergency department, six observation beds, intensive outpatient behavioral health services, infusion and cardiopulmonary rehabilitation.

The second floor will be a medical pavilion offering diagnostic imaging, laboratory services, rehabilitation services, pediatrics and specialists, cardiovascular diagnostics, sleep study services, a community education center and a surgery center. An adjacent MRI will provide outpatient and emergency department imaging access.

Currently, the hospital serves approximately 20,000 patients annually. The addition of this new facility will improve medical services to the region which will allow for job retention, creation and attraction. As of February 2, 2017, University of Maryland Shore Regional Health employed 1,473 citizens living in the mid-shore counties (Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot).

**Project Description**

The project will diagnose inadequate sections of Woods Road water, natural gas and technology all the way to the free standing medical facility. It will improve them to ideal standards for future manufacturing and ambulatory needs. In conjunction with a road paving and repair effort with Dorchester County and the Maryland State Highway Administration, it will allow for better accessibility for trucking materials and finished goods, but also for ambulance access to the new Shore Regional Health location.

**Project Partners**

Dorchester
County City of
Cambridge
Fairchild Properties (Cambridge Marketplace)
University of Maryland Shore Regional Health
State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Commerce Economic
Development Administration (EDA)

**Project Cost**

Estimated total project cost: $2.75 million

Water/Sewer: $1.25 million Paving/widening: $1.5 million

## Frank M. Adams Industrial Park

### Expansion Priority Rating – Medium

### Background

The Town of Federalsburg is in process of expanding its industrial space with the purchase of 117 +/- acres adjacent to the Frank M. Adams Industrial Park, which is part of an industrial land complex of nearly 260 acres aggregated that comprises the Federalsburg Industrial Park and the Caroline Industrial Park. The parks house some of the largest employers in Caroline County:

- Dart Container, nearly 800 employees, manufacturer of Solo Cup and other products
- Crystal Steel Fabricators, 100 positions, large contract steel fabricator
- M & M Refrigeration, 116 employees, commercial cooling system manufacturer
- Sisk Fulfillment, 91 jobs, specialized fulfillment house
- H & M Bay, 253 employees, regional warehousing and distribution center

The industrial parks are regional employment hubs. Business intel indicates that workers travel from the rural areas of Talbot, Dorchester, and Sussex (DE) counties, northern Caroline County, and other surrounding areas.

The Town of Federalsburg purchased land in September 1973 with the purpose of developing industrial space. In 2001, the Town received nearly $1,500,000 through an Economic Development Administration grant and State of Maryland "One Maryland" program funding, to leverage its own $252,000 investment to construct infrastructure on 45 acres of land that became the Frank M. Adams Industrial Park. This project was an expansion of the already established Federalsburg Industrial Park. The parks were designed and developed with the necessary amenities for industrial use: high voltage electric, broadband, freight routes, active railroad lines, water, sewer, and storm water management.

The Frank M. Adams Industrial Park is nearly at capacity with only two non-contiguous 5 acre lots remaining. In 2018, the Town received several development inquiries from manufacturing and warehousing businesses for which the lots were not viable options. The Town is missing economic development opportunities with its limited availability of industrial/commercial land.

### Purpose

The Town of Federalsburg would like to expand the Frank M. Adams Industrial Park to offer sites for industrial businesses that fit in with the current tenants of the Town's industrial development: advanced manufacturing, high volume distribution and logistics, chemical and petroleum processing, and freight transportation.

### Project Description

The Town of Federalsburg desires to build upon its success of industrial and commercial development by purchasing and improving 117 +/- acres of land adjacent to the Frank M. Adams Industrial Park. The Town is prepared to work with Caroline County to annex the property and include sewer and wastewater in

its water plan. The project includes design and build of roads, electric service, broadband fiber, and potentially natural gas service.

**Estimated Costs**

Estimate for purchase and infrastructure development:

* Estimated purchase 117 acres = $1,200,000
* Infrastructure (engineer estimate) = $10,656,050
* Total estimate costs = $11,856,050

The Town proposes to manage the infrastructure investment in three phases of approximately 39 acres per phase.
* Phase 1 infrastructure = $3,971,950
* Phase 2 infrastructure = $2,046,950
* Phase 3 infrastructure = $4,637,150

The Town will partner with Caroline County Economic Development to determine the best course of action for attracting business to the expanded industrial park.

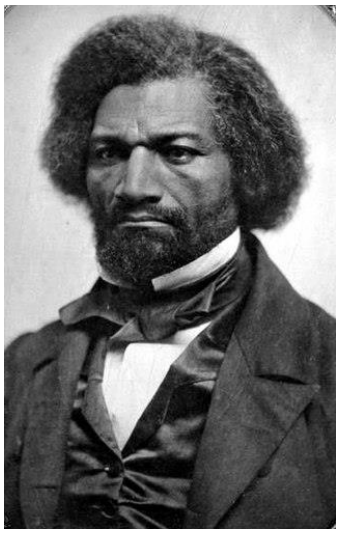
It should be noted that Federalsburg is an Opportunity Zone, and the Town and its partners hope to leverage private investment that desires to take advantage of the Opportunity Fund benefits.

**Project Partners**

- Town of Federalsburg
- Caroline County
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA)



**Frederick Douglass Park on the**



**Tuckahoe Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

The long journey of Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey from enslavement to international prominence as abolitionist, author, and statesman Frederick Douglass began in Talbot County, on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Much of the landscape of Douglass's youth, which he so vividly described in his writing, remains intact today. To celebrate his achievements, the Talbot County Council named in his honor an undeveloped park at 13213 Lewistown Road near the town of Queen Anne.

The 66.96-acre property was purchased in 2006 with $1.8 million from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Program Open Space. The family of George C. and Naomi H. Moore donated another 40.2 acres of adjacent wetlands, bringing the total to 107.16 acres.

**Purpose**

The Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe will most certainly provide Talbot County a place to interpret the life of native son Frederick Douglass. It will also provide abundant outdoor recreational facilities for residents and visitors, possibly including gardens, trails, and a canoe/kayak launch.

In a boarder context, this project ties Talbot County to regional efforts to interpret the stories of African Americans who helped change the course of history. With this project, we will leverage the considerable work already completed in Dorchester and Caroline counties to tell the Harriet Tubman story. Other storylines include Caroline County's Anna Murray Douglass and countless others who were instrumental in operating the Underground Railroad's Network to Freedom.

Cultural heritage tourism is a rapidly developing portion of the tourism industry. The National Trust for Historic Preservation reports that 57% of travelers consider cultural and heritage offerings "very important" when making leisure travel decisions. By contrast, only 15% report that they "are not" influenced by culture and travel.

African American travelers alone spend more than $63 billion dollars in travel each year, and they report that cultural and heritage attractions are key to the decision-making process. According to a 2018 study by Mandala Research, African American travelers spend an average of $1,345 per trip. That number soars to $2,078 per trip when cultural and heritage attractions are available. The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitors Center reported more than 100,000 visitors in its first year.

This park project has the potential to seed small businesses in the nearby towns of Queen Anne and Hillsboro and along Maryland Route 309 (Cordova Road), from Easton through the village of Cordova to the town of Queen Anne. The Maryland State Park Service is exploring the feasibility of a Frederick Douglass Rail Trail from Easton to the park and beyond. The park is in close proximity to

Tuckahoe State Park and Atkins Arboretum in Caroline County. Its development will strengthen the visitor experience for travelers to this portion of the Eastern Shore.

**Project Description**

Key to this park is its proximity to Douglass's birthplace. In his first autobiography, The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, he writes, "I was born in Tuckahoe, near Hillsborough, and about twelve miles from Easton, in Talbot County, Maryland."

The park — Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe — is located just upstream from the farm where Douglass was born in 1818. It provides largely unspoiled views of the Tuckahoe and the opportunity for outdoor recreation, including public water access. There is ample opportunity to tell the story of Frederick Douglass while also interpreting the significance of the Tuckahoe, a freshwater tidal river.

In 2018, the Talbot County Department of Parks and Recreation applied for and received funding from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority to create a two-part plan — a master plan for the park infrastructure and an interpretive plan for the park's stories. These plans will define the future of this project.

**Project Partners**

- Talbot County Department of Parks and Recreation
- Talbot County Department of Economic Development and Tourism
- Maryland Office of Tourism Development
- Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Town of Queen Anne
- Regional offices of tourism
- Private Donors and Philanthropists

**Project Cost**

Estimated cost: $10-$30 million. This investment will be better estimated once the in-progress master plan is completed. The plan is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2020. As a comparison, more than $31 million of local, state, and federal funds were spent to develop the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitors Center in Dorchester County.

**Talbot County Parks and Recreation Property**




Talbot County Public Works
July 25, 2016

## Ferry Point Project

**Priority Rating – Medium**

### Background



Talbot County has six (6) commercial properties along the shoreline of the Choptank River or in very close proximity to the Choptank River that are referred to as the Ferry Point Area. The area was called Ferry Point when a ferry was grounded and then converted into a restaurant and bar in the 1970s. The ferry was removed by the current owners in 2017 as they are seeking to add a new restaurant and other amenities to support their marina.

The commercial properties consist of a marina noted above, a motel, and a small strip center that provides marine-related services such as boat services, winter storage and building custom boats. In addition to these businesses, there are commercial lots that are unimproved. The total acreage designated as commercial in the Ferry Point Area totals about 47.0 acres.

The commercial properties are located adjacent to eastbound lane of U.S. Route 50 (Ocean Gateway), a major "Reach the Beach" highway. With development occurring in the city of Cambridge on the shore of the Choptank River directly south from the Ferry Point Area, the commercial properties in the Ferry Point Area have tremendous opportunity to expand their businesses. However, they are currently delayed in proceeding with any improvement to their properties because their separate, independent on-site sewage disposal systems cannot be expanded.

### Purpose

Because of the poorly drained soils, high groundwater, and the close proximity to the Choptank River, a new wastewater treatment plant is needed to serve the Ferry Point Area. In 2018, the Talbot County Council commissioned BayLand Designers and Consultants, LLC to prepare a preliminary engineering report and environmental report to seek funding through the USDA Rural Development's Rural Utility Service Program. The Preliminary Engineering Report was completed on October 16, 2016, and was submitted to USDA Rural Development for review.

Talbot County is currently working to initiate design of the wastewater system identified in the preliminary engineering report, and then seek possible grant funding and loans through USDA Rural Development and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). The design and construction of a new community-based wastewater treatment system meeting enhanced nutrient removal permit requirements will allow the commercial properties to expand their business with the wastewater generated from the existing and expanded businesses meeting the highest effluent quality, thus providing a significant benefit to the Choptank River and the Choptank Watershed.

**Project Description**

Talbot County would like to work with the owners of the commercial properties to design and construct a new community-based wastewater system that serves the commercial properties in the near future with capacity to serve the residential properties at some point in the future. The commercial properties are currently zoned Limited Commercial and are included in the Talbot County Comprehensive Plan. The proposed community- based wastewater treatment plant is being sized to treat between 15,000 to 20,000 gallons per day with the effluent being disposed of in the Choptank River. Talbot County is currently developing the request for proposals to design the wastewater system for the Ferry Point Area. Talbot County has completed the environmental report for the project but needs to secure the necessary permits for constructing the wastewater system through MDE and through the agencies reviewing Critical Areas, wetlands and roadways.

**Cost**

Estimated project cost $2.6 million
Estimated time line 3 years
Jobs associated 35-40

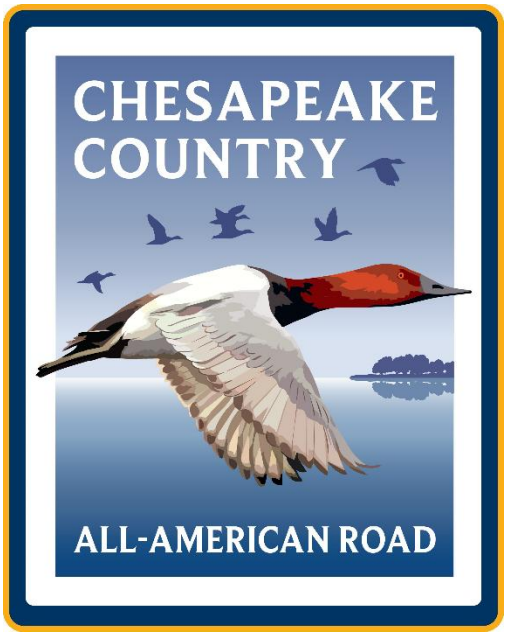
**Project Partners**

- Talbot County
- LS Futures, LLC (owners of the marina)
- WJK Management Corporation (owners of the unimproved commercial properties)
- Last Chance Partnership, LLC (owners of Composite Yachts, the marine services business)
- Gregory Kirk and Deborah L. White (owners of the motel and additional commercially zoned land)
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

## Chesapeake Country All-American Road and Future Projects

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**




The Chesapeake Country All-American Road is a federally designated National Scenic Byway that stretches 419 land miles from Chesapeake City to Crisfield (plus 12 nautical miles to Smith Island), and east to Snow Hill.

This network of scenic roads and historic travel routes winds through the extraordinary landscapes and waterways of Maryland's Eastern Shore. It consists of a main byway route, along with numerous branches and sidetracks. Together they provide a unique experience of the Eastern Shore's working waterways and landscapes and offer a window into the region's unique tidewater folklore and folklife.

The tourism offices of nine counties (Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Caroline, Dorchester, Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset) collaborate with three heritage areas—Stories of the Chesapeake, Heart of the Chesapeake, and Beach to Bay—through the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway Alliance to manage the Byway.

**Purpose**

The Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay retains a deep sense of time and authentic character of place—where the interdependence between people, land, and water has played out through generations and remains on full display today. Few places in the Mid-Atlantic Region are as unspoiled as Maryland Eastern Shore.

Life here is shaped by proximity to the Chesapeake Bay, North America's largest estuary. Located on the Delmarva peninsula, the rural communities of Maryland's Eastern Shore feature a mix of historic small-town charm and industries reliant on the resources of the waterways and landscapes. The geographic isolation and dependency on nature has given rise to unique cultures of people who call the Eastern Shore region home.

The compelling and unifying story of this nationally significant travel route is visible and told at dozens of culturally significant sites and recreation backdrops owned and managed by cooperating federal, state, and local agencies, along with numerous private organizations and landowners. Many of the interpretive and visitor contact opportunities affiliated with the Byway are interpretive opportunities that stand on their own as significant features—museums,

historic sites and communities, wildlife refuges, and trails, for example—yet collectively depict the unique character embodied by the Chesapeake Country All-American Road.

**Project Description**

Rather than being a single project, the Chesapeake Country All-American Road is a collection of cultural and recreational experiences woven together by a ribbon of highway that stretches 417 miles, from Chesapeake City to Crisfield.

The Byway Alliance, made up of nine counties and three heritage areas, has worked together to create an interpretive plan that makes strong recommendations for next steps. Collective projects range from developing outreach tools such as a website, brochures, and other media to gateway signs to featured byway destinations. The All-American Road designation gives Byway Alliance members an opportunity to work together on a cohesive regional identity. The interpretive plan includes an engaging sign design, suggested colors, and other design concepts.

The plan also identifies a series of projects in each county that, when fully developed, will enhance the visitor experience along the way. The application for All-America Road status included 16 sites, two in each county, that were chosen specifically because they sustain regional identity either culturally or recreationally. Many dozens more were considered. The Chesapeake Country Byway provides an opportunity to enhance these distinctive assets through interpretation, projects, and events.

- Chesapeake & Delaware Canal
- Mt. Harmon Plantation and Nature Preserve
- Chestertown National Historic Landmark
- Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge
- Old Wye Grist Mill
- Cross Island Trail at Kent Narrows Working Waterfront
- Museum of Rural Life
- Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail & the Maryland System of Water Trails
- Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum
- The Oxford/St. Michaels Bike Trail
- Long Wharf on the Choptank River
- Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge
- Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art
- Pemberton Historical Park
- DelMarva Discovery Center
- The Outdoor Adventures of Smith Island

A map of the Chesapeake Country All-American Road is included below.




**Project Partners**

Cecil County Tourism
Kent County Tourism
Queen Anne's County Tourism
Talbot County Tourism
Caroline County Tourism
Dorchester County Tourism
Wicomico County Tourism
Somerset County Tourism
Worcester County Tourism
Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area

Bay to Beach Heritage Area
Heart of Chesapeake County Heritage Area
Maryland Office of Tourism Development

**Project Cost**

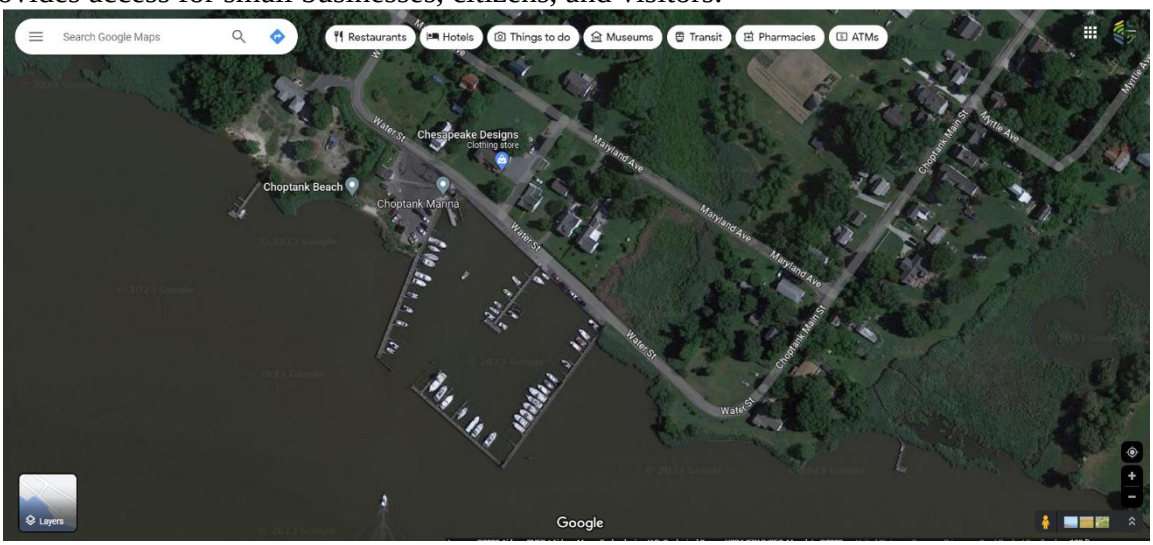
Estimated total project cost: depends on the agreed upon scope of each project.

## Choptank Marina Infrastructure Improvement

### Priority Rating – Medium

### Background

Caroline County relies on the northern end of the Choptank River for economic impact through commercial fishing and leisure water travel activities. The county's Department of Recreation and Parks owns and operates a marina that generates local economic activity and provides access for small businesses, citizens, and visitors.




Caroline County is the only Eastern Shore county without shoreline on the Chesapeake Bay or Atlantic Ocean. The Choptank River serves as an important economic engine for the county, bringing in tourism dollars through visitor activity and spending. As development along the western part of the Choptank River grows, there will be a push for more activity and visitors along the quieter shores in Caroline County. Providing safe and environmentally sound public access at the Choptank Marina will allow small, community businesses in the Town of Preston and Villages of Harmony and Bethlehem to grow. The quality of life aspect that the improvements will help to encourage will have an influence on business attraction and retention in the industrial hub in nearby Federalsburg.

### Purpose

Caroline County is known for the beauty and serenity of the Choptank River, and its public access to marina services at Choptank Marina. The county owns and operates a public marina as a way to serve visitors who traverse via boat and give access to the Town of Preston.

The Choptank Marina is owned and operated by Caroline County through the Department of Recreation & Parks. Because of its location along the Choptank River, it draws visitors from near and far who are boating along the more serene area of the river. It provides water access to areas along the Harriet Tubman Byway and the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway All American Road. It is an important element for quality of life for business owners and the workforce in nearby towns of Preston and Federalsburg.

Infrastructure improvements are necessary to ensure that the Choptank Marina is sustainable and provides economic opportunity to the rural area of Choptank and the nearest Town of Preston. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has identified improvements to the marina as a priority and committed funds for now completed engineering and design. DNR supports this project, and has encouraged Caroline County to apply for matching funds for the FY2025 budget to match the awarded RMEDF funds.

Because the project entails waterway improvements, and because the marina is an active facility for boating, the construction timeline is very narrow. Due to permitting, other environmental regulatory considerations, and use of the marina during peak season, construction is not expected to start until October 2024 and be completed by April 2025, thus full spend down of the all grant funding will be after construction completion. Expenditures will be made prior to the November 2024 deadline of RMEDF grants, but there may be some project expenses that are not spent out before April 2025.

**Project Description**

The Choptank Marina, located in the village of Choptank, is in need of infrastructure improvements to continue to be a viable resource for visitors. The project intends to make sustainable improvements to a key visitor waterway facility in Caroline County through:

- seawall repair/replacement- A seawall is the first line of defense against harsh, eroding waves. It can prevent floods, excessive erosion, and damage to structures and buildings due to large bodies of water.
- marina infrastructure: slips and piers repair with updated utilities (water and electric) and potential reorientation adding a floating pier.

The county submitted an application for Maryland Department of Nature Resources Waterway Improvement Funds for FY2025 to match the RMEDF Funds.

Project management will be through Caroline County Recreation & Parks and will be covered under normal operating funds.

The project is anticipated to be completed early 2025, but as with any construction project, there may be delays.

**Estimated Timelines and Costs**

The Choptank Marina Infrastructure Improvement is a major construction project. As such, specific timeline and milestones will be detailed in the bid/procurement process. The outline below is the anticipated timeline and milestones in general; specific metrics will be identified in the RFP.

- Engineering and permitting to commence immediately to completed by August 2024
- Site work to being November 2023- February 2024
- Environmental window through April 2024

- Major general contracting to begin November 2024, with completion by April 2025

Overall project cost $2.783 million.

**Project Partners**

- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Maryland Department of the Environment
- Caroline County Soil Conservation District
- Caroline County Health Department, Environmental Health division
- Engineering Firm (to be selected)
- General and sub-contractors (to be selected)
- Caroline County Economic Development & Tourism
- Caroline County Operational Departments
- Local residents and stakeholders

## Denton Industrial Park Expansion Infrastructure

**Priority Rating – High**

**Background**

The Caroline County Commissioners, in consultation with the Town of Denton and the Caroline County Department of Economic Development, propose the expansion of the Denton Industrial Park. The current inventory of industrial property within the incorporated boundaries of the Town of Denton is approaching full development.

The county acquired the 76.31-acre property in 2007 and has since constructed a Department of Emergency Services Building and the headquarters for the Sheriff's Department on the property. Approximately 67.55-acres is currently forested or in agricultural production.

The requested project funds would be used to conduct site work, parcel configuration, engineering for the extension of utilities and roadway site, construction of the roadway, utility extensions and upgrades to an existing sewage pump station that would experience increased demand due to this project.

Caroline County would be able to attract businesses in need of larger parcels with access to utilities and highway access.

**Purpose**

Attracting and developing businesses in the Denton Industrial Park is a top priority of Caroline County. It is prime land with visibility and access from Maryland Route 404 that is not currently generating any economic activity.

The Denton Industrial Park (see map) is owned by the Town of Denton and has been successfully marketed for development over the last two years. As of October 2023, all the available lots are either sold or have contracts pending.

Caroline County owns land directly adjacent to the Denton Industrial Park. There is a desire to expand the industrial land into a portion of the County-owned property to allow for more development that will increase jobs and revenue for the county and town. The land will require infrastructure improvements prior to the county marketing the land to the private sector for commercial and industrial development. Significant expected future growth needs in industrial and warehousing/distribution in this industrial zone is expected.

Caroline County will market the property through traditional commercial/ industrial property avenues after the infrastructure improvements are completed.

Infrastructure needs include an upgrade to the Town of Denton's pump station for wastewater and to build roadways. Water and energy infrastructure will be required also in the future phasing of development of the Park expansion.

A portion of the infrastructure development is funded through the Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund.

**Project Description**

The project includes design, planning, site work, and construction of a roadway, and the upgrade to the Town of Denton's wastewater pump station. All A & E and construction will be contracted with professional firms by the county, following the county's procurement rules. All other professional services will be contracted with professional firms by the county, following the County's procurement rules. Project goals and objectives, refined timelines, and specific performance metrics will be developed and maintained as part of the bid/procurement process.

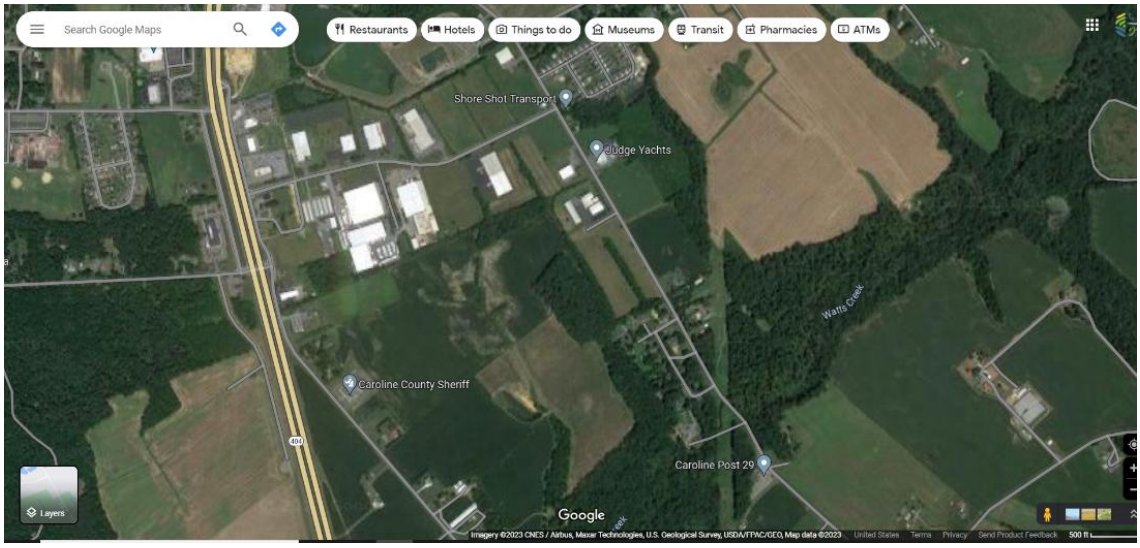
**Estimated Timeline**

The Denton Industrial Park Expansion Infrastructure project is a major construction project. As such, specific costs and timeline will be detailed in the bid/procurement process. The outline below is the anticipated costs in general; specific costs will be identified in the RFP.

Engineering, design and permitting $100,000
Construction and installation of infrastructure, and roadway project completion $1,200,000.
Upgrade to pump station $1,000,000

**Project Partners**

- Caroline County Commissioners
- Caroline County Economic Development & Tourism
- Town of Denton
- Choptank Electric and Choptank Fiber
- Mid Shore Regional Council
- Private sector contractors



**NSF Engine: The MidAtlantic COASTAL Project (Coordinated Opportunities Against Saltwater Threats and Limitations)**

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**Priority Rating – High**

**Background**

The MidAtlantic COASTAL Project seeks to serve as a national and international model for resisting, adapting, and transforming the economic and environmental effects of saltwater intrusion (SWI) and sea level rise on America's coastal landscapes. The coastal tidal and wetland MidAtlantic areas of Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, and Virginia are significantly impacted by SWI and much academic institutional research within the region has already occurred over the past fifteen years, resulting in a wealth of data and knowledge about the issue and its detrimental impacts on the economics, environment, and population of the region. The goal of the NSF COASTAL Project is to translate and apply into the market existing and yet to be developed use-inspired best practices, innovations, technologies, and products, in turn establishing new and expanded services, manufacturing, and exports (and their respective workforce and economic development) within each of the three strategic areas of impact:

- **Resist** – Develop and promote new, enhanced, and interdisciplinary best practices in countering SWI for farmers, land owners, and rural communities to include shoreline management, soil management, filters, sealing, ditches, and canals. Transfer SWI research knowledge to environmental consulting experts and services that better enable SWI response decision-making by landowners and rural communities.
- **Adapt** – Develop and promote new, enhanced, and interdisciplinary alternatives to SWI.
- **Transform** – Develop and promote new and creative innovations and technologies that completely alter the current scenarios of SWI, reinventing how the economy, environment, and rural communities of America's coastal areas interact with the long-term effects of SWI.

The key industries and technology areas being affected by the Project's activities will include environmental engineering and consulting, agricultural and other land uses, rural water and wastewater infrastructure, rural community development, disaster risk and resilience, and contributions to reducing climate change.

**Purpose**

Coastal communities in the United States face compounding risks of multiple environmental hazards that negatively impact infrastructure and livelihoods with increasing extent and frequency. Without additional and timely adaptation efforts, sea-level rise (SLR) is expected to increase the risks of flooding and salinization along all low-lying coasts by the end of the 21st century (Oppenheimer et al., 2019). Risks and vulnerabilities to these hazards are experienced disproportionately among socioeconomically disadvantaged communities due to a range of factors including geographic proximity to the coastline, lack of access to information and resources for timely adaptation, and insufficient adaptation or mitigation

capacities. As such, there is a critical need for convergent research on how disproportionately affected communities can increase climate resilience through effective adaptation. Delaware is the lowest-lying state in the U.S., with Maryland, North Carolina and Virginia having some of the lowest-lying counties. This coastal region accounts for between 9% to 10.5% of all U.S. coastline (including Alaska, Hawaii, and Great Lakes shoreline; NOAA fact sheet 2024). These coastal counties are experiencing environmental hazards exacerbated by climate change in both urban and rural areas, and the hazard risks are increasing at a faster rate than in many other regions. This coastal Mid-Atlantic Region of Service urgently needs research that identifies effective, equity-based strategies and tools to create resilient coastal communities through effective adaptation that mitigates vulnerabilities to climate hazards. Solutions require convergent research across the social, economic, and natural sciences and engineering to identify strategies that reduce long-term threats to coastal communities.

Inland movement of seawater, saltwater intrusion (SWI), can change soil salinity in coastal forest and wetland ecosystems faster than these ecosystems can adapt. This has led to the formation of ghost forests (the watery remains of a once verdant woodland) and loss of coastal land. SWI is also harming agricultural working lands, leading to losses in agroecosystem productivity, reduced resilience of farmland to climatic events, and rapid ecosystem transitions. In addition, SWI negatively impacts water and wastewater system dynamics and infrastructure, damaging household appliances, causing health-related issues. The inland extent of SWI is increasing over time, exacerbated by sea-level rise (SLR), drought, storm surge, land subsidence, and land and water management practices. Indeed, SWI represents the leading edge of coastal climate impacts, and understanding of its current and future impacts and extent will facilitate better planning and adaptation.

**Project Description**

There are several ways to tackle this rapidly evolving challenge – resist, adapt and transform. Resisting involves developing and promoting new, enhanced, and interdisciplinary best practices in shoreline/soil/infrastructure management and transferring SWI research to environmental consulting experts and services that better enable SWI response decision-making by landowners and rural communities. Adapting involves using a holistic systems-based approach for developing use-inspired, science-informed alternate scenarios, identifying feasible and acceptable options for any given landscape and community. Transforming requires developing, promoting, and commercializing new and creative innovations and technologies, completely reinventing and altering current scenarios, reinventing how the economy, environment, and rural communities of America's coastal areas tackle the long-term effects of SWI.

Our vision is to establish a COASTAL (Coordinated Opportunities Against Saltwater Threats and Limitations) innovation ecosystem, serving the coastal counties of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina and acting as a national model for maintaining the economic and environmental health of America's coastal landscapes impacted by SWI.

The COASTAL project brings together collaborators from four academic institutions including the University of Delaware (UD), University of Maryland, College Park (UMD), Virginia Tech University (VT), and North Carolina State University (NC State) as Core Partner organizations (see Project Partners section below). The core team members were

selected based on their expertise and portfolio of research on SWI, connectivity with their cooperative extension systems at their respective Land Grant Institutions of Higher Education, representing each of the four States within the Region of Service, and ability to lead across three structured "focus areas" of coastal wetland, productive farm and land use, and water/wastewater systems.

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC) joins these collaborators as the Lead Partner. ESEC brings its economic and community development perspective to the forefront of the project, prioritizing the project to go beyond past research and reach for solutions that respond to already documented SWI issues and impacts.

**Broader Impacts**

SWI negatively impacts rural community water and wastewater systems, damaging household appliances, causing health-related issues. Long overdue is an effort to advance new and enhanced water and wastewater management systems and the related skilled workforce for installation and maintenance, creating salt tolerant technologies and materials, and developing novel approaches to desalination technologies.

SWI damages agricultural land, reducing crop yields of human and animal feed. Advancing alternative salt tolerant crops and land use as well as alternative soil health solutions will help maintain stable and resilient food systems in the region.
SWI harms forested land, causing soil erosion, threatening local species, enabling increased invasive species, increasing greenhouse gasses, and contributing to climate change. Advancing newer best practices that incorporate innovations and new technologies will impede and or prevent further erosion of our coastlines.

Participants from each State are well-aware of the existing cross-sector partnerships that exist within their respective State innovation ecosystems to include knowing which stakeholders are most significantly impacted by the well-known issue of SWI. A gap to be addressed is interlacing the individual ecosystems together throughout the MidAtlantic, leveraging the strengths and specializations that exist to bear for the whole region.

Expectations are that the workforce required for the resulting products and services arising from the SWI project will be made up of primarily skilled, but non-degree jobs. This allows for the use of existing skill training programs. Including Workforce Investment Boards from throughout the four-state region on the leadership team will be instrumental in ensuring any labor barriers are overcome or reduced.

Though some of the Core Project Partners have existing relationships within their respective investment communities, a major ecosystem gap to be addressed will be the gathering together of government, corporate, and venture investment funds from all over the four-state region. A number of investment funds have recognized the vision of this project, and the societal importance investment will play in advancing validated innovations and well-positioned companies addressing SWI. Five years ago, the region lost a major investment resource, the Mid Atlantic Venture Association (MAVA). For over 30 years, MAVA served C-suite executives, corporate industry, leading technologists, and the full spectrum of private capital sources, delivering a series of programs and forums thoughtfully designed to stimulate

revenue, facilitate quality deal flow, encourage collaboration, and foster valuable business relationships. A similar organization could be stood up as part of the Engine, creating a coalition of commercialization and investment.

**Project Partners:**

***Maryland Partners***
Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center
Eastern Shore Land Conservancy
University of Maryland
Salisbury University
University of Maryland Eastern Shore
Chesapeake College
Maryland TEDCO
Maryland Dept of Natural Resources
Maryland Dept of Agriculture
*more still to be added*

***Other Partners***
North Carolina Biotechnology Center
University of Delaware
Virginia Tech University
North Carolina State University
Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research
Hampton Roads Workforce Council
Southeast Climate Hub
Northeast Climate Hub
NC Dept of Environmental Quality
North Carolina Wetlands
Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership
North Carolina Office of Recovery & Resiliency
RTI International
East Carolina University
Old Dominion University
Delaware Workforce Development Board
Suganit Biorenewables
*more still to be added*

Current Phase – Planning and Full Proposal Submission to National Science Foundation (NSF)

Funding Request – $160 million

**Town of Denton – Wastewater Treatment Plant Sludge Management Upgrade**

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**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

The Town of Denton is pursuing a sludge management upgrade project for the existing wastewater treatment plant. The Town has a 0.8 million gallons per day wastewater treatment facility that it owns and operates. Currently, the plant is receiving and treating 50-60% of its design flow. However, the sludge management system is at or beyond 100% capacity due to the incredible solids removal that this plant achieves. The wastewater treatment plant requires an upgrade to the sludge management to ensure a reliable and consistent way to process and remove the sludge produced.

**Purpose**

In 2022, the Town self-funded a consulting engineer's Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) to investigate the sludge management issue and propose potential solutions. The report provided the best sustainable option, but the costs associated exceed what the Town can afford, with estimated construction costs of $8.5 million.

The recommended improvement the Town of Denton plans to pursue is mechanical dewatering. The overall project includes the following components:

- Construction of a dewatering building and associated electrical service
- Construction of a covered cake storage pad
- New sludge pumps
- Extension of sludge and filtrate yard piping
- Construction of a new utility water system
- Rehabilitation of Biolac Basin No. 1
- Stormwater management
- Rebuilding existing reed beds

The improvement of the Town's wastewater treatment plant will help attain the following goals and objectives, which are concurrent to the CEDS goals and objectives:

- Ensure there is sufficient wastewater treatment capacity to allow for future growth and economic development within the Town for both existing and new residents / businesses.
- Position the Town of Denton to warrant public and private investment in economic growth by ensuring critical infrastructure has the ability and reliability to support it.
- Improve and protect the water quality of the Choptank River and the Chesapeake Bay that supports the commercial interests of the region.

- Encourage environmentally sustainable development that further allows for improved quality of life for both residents of the Town and the community workforce.
- Allow for growth within prescribed boundaries per the current zoning map that would be supported by the project and increased wastewater capacity. This would in turn allow for commercial and industrial growth, resulting in new workforce opportunities within the community.
- Ensure the availability of diverse economic opportunities that are consistent with the character of the community and its capacity to provide public services.
- Provide specific data on the future capacity of the wastewater treatment plant, which can then be incorporated into the review of proposed future development and associated infrastructure needs.

**Project Description/Strategy**

The proposed sludge processing upgrades to the Town of Denton wastewater treatment plant will ensure both capacity and reliability of the system for future economic growth and development in the community. The below listed milestones reflect an overall project duration of 24 months from design start to completion.

- A preliminary engineering report was completed in 2022.
- The final design of the project will include the completion of project documents (plans and specifications) and is anticipated to take 6-9 months.
- Permitting for the required improvements is expected to take an additional 2-3 months.
- Construction is anticipated to have a 12-month duration barring any major equipment procurement delays.

**Cost**

- Construction costs for the proposed project are currently estimated at $8.5M.

**Project Partners**

- Caroline County Economic Development
- Maryland Department of the Environment

## Aaron's Place – Food Hub and Innovation Campus

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### Priority Rating – Medium

### Background



Aaron's Place in conjunction with His Hope Ministries as a primary tenant proposes the development of a Food Hub and Innovation Campus in Denton, Maryland. Currently Aaron's Place and His Hope Ministries operate out of the former Wesleyan Campus located in Denton. Aaron's Place (AP) lease's a portion of a building owned by the Church of Denton. AP is the hub for food distribution via the Maryland Food Bank and the Farm to Foodbank for a network of seven pantries in Caroline County and needs more space for food storage, parking, and distribution.

His Hope Ministries (HHM) operates a seasonal shelter in a building leased from the Denton Camp. The building is only available September through May. HHM is one of two shelters in Caroline County. Demand for beds has overtaken availability and there is need for a year-round shelter in the Denton area. HHM's administrative center in downtown Denton needs more space for case workers, young adult counselors, and administrative support.

This project will expand storage space for refrigerated, frozen and dry goods. And increase the space to host ancillary programs for nutritional education, mental health counseling and supporting young mothers and seniors. HHM can build out a year-round shelter expanding the number of beds and configuration options and increase space for case workers, counselors, and ancillary programs.

### Purpose

AP & HHM have been serving Caroline County for several years. They have become anchors in the community for addressing Food Insecurity and Homeless Prevention. The need for these services has been increasing as many of our neighbor's struggle to keep up with increasing costs. AP & HHM have been planning for new facilities for a couple of years.

They are searching for a location in the Denton area that meets their requirements and will support the development of for-profit business that can provide jobs, job training, support entrepreneurship in addition to supporting AP & HHM's mission.

Several potential tenants including the Maryland Food Bank, The Chesapeake Culinary Center, and a food processing and aggregation business would locate operations in the hub. The largest commercial operation would be the development of an Industrial Quick Freeze production facility to spur the growth of alternative crops which can be frozen and used throughout the year.

This project will impact Caroline County and the Mid-Shore in several ways.

- From a quality-of-life perspective it will expand services addressing food insecurity and homelessness. Which allows folks to focus on being more productive members of the community, giving back, joining the labor force, and positively impacting the local economy.
- It will support workforce opportunities via job creation, job training, and business support, vis-à-vis partnerships with the commercial operations.
- The partnership with a food processing and aggregation business will help to promote agricultural diversity and innovation through investment in new technology.

**Project Description Strategy**

A scalable rural anchor promoting food access, homelessness prevention, food aggregation and distribution and economic mobility. The project will align with regional priorities such as enhancing infrastructure, fostering economic development, improving the wellbeing of the community, and providing new jobs via our tenants and training programs.

**Planned Tenants**

- Aaron's Place – Lead nonprofit managing food access and holistic community support services.
- His Hope Ministries – Emergency shelter and wraparound services for unhoused individuals and families. Providing services to prevent homelessness aligning with state and local programs.
- Maryland Food Bank – Regional distribution center and local farm produce aggregator.
- Food processing and aggregation facility to support small-scale growers and value-added food business incubation.
- Commercial Kitchen to provide support for food truck operations, culinary certification, job placement, and restaurant.

**Project Timeline**

- 2026 – Initiate Capital Campaign, Design and permitting.
- 2027 – Construction Phase 1 Aaron's Place, food processing, aggregation and distribution. Includes refrigerated and dry storage for commercial operations.
- 2028 – Construction Phase 2 His Hope Ministries and Commercial Kitchen.
- 2028 – Additional services and programs including culinary training, wrap around services associated with wellness, seniors, young adults, mommy and me and homelessness prevention, and shelter services. Expansion of mobile markets and regional policy engagement
- 2029–30 – Endowment campaign and sustainability integration.

**Cost**

Preliminary estimate of $10m, will be refined during design and assessment.

**Current Partners**

- Maryland Food Bank
- Caroline County
- Chesapeake Culinary Center
- Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC)
- State of Maryland, Dept. of Health
- Steward (gosteward.com) a firm dedicated to promoting environmental and economic stewardship.



**Eastern Shore Energy Needs Analysis**

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**Priority Rating – High**

**Background**
As the region seeks to attract new industries, retain and expand existing businesses, and support housing and infrastructure development, reliable, adequate, and strategically planned energy infrastructure has become a critical prerequisite. Businesses, local governments, and prospective investors increasingly require clear information about energy availability, capacity, reliability, and resilience to make sound location and expansion decisions.

Currently, the Eastern Shore lacks a comprehensive, region-wide Energy Needs Analysis that addresses existing electric infrastructure and capacity. It is also critical that there are documented evaluations for current and projected demand by sector and geography. The needs analysis will identify gaps, constraints and vulnerabilities that may limit economic development. Additionally, the report will examine how natural gas, small modular reactors (SMRs), and waste-to-energy and other technologies could help meet energy needs and address growing PFAS, municipal wastewater, and solid waste challenges.

At the same time, evolving state and federal policy frameworks related to grid modernization, renewable energy, resilience, decarbonization, and PFAS/waste management are creating both opportunities and requirements for proactive planning. Without a structured, data-driven understanding of regional energy needs and generation options, the region is limited in its ability to prioritize projects, coordinate with utilities and agencies, and compete for state and federal funding.

**Purpose**
The primary purpose of the Eastern Shore Energy Needs Analysis is to provide the nine-county region with a rigorous, objective assessment of current and future electric energy needs and the portfolio of potential power generation and infrastructure solutions to support the economic development goals identified by the partners listed below.

Specific objectives include:

1. **Document Current Conditions**
   Establish a clear picture of existing electric infrastructure, capacity, and reliability across the Eastern Shore, including major transmission and distribution assets, substations, and known constraints.
2. **Identify Future Demand and Capacity Gaps**
   Analyze projected energy needs based on anticipated population and employment growth, business expansions, targeted industry development, and planned CEDS projects (e.g., industrial parks, commercial corridors, institutional expansions, and housing initiatives).
3. **Assess Constraints, Vulnerabilities, and Resilience**
   Identify areas where electric capacity, reliability, or resilience may limit economic development, including aging infrastructure, limited redundancy, exposure to extreme weather, or other vulnerabilities.
4. **Evaluate Power Generation Options, Including Natural Gas, SMRs, Waste-to-Energy, biofuels, and forestry products**
   Examine existing and emerging power generation technologies relevant to the region—especially

natural gas, small modular reactors (SMRs), waste-to-energy, biofuels, and forestry products—and assess how they could contribute to meeting regional energy needs, including opportunities for waste-to-energy to help address PFAS-containing waste streams, municipal wastewater, and solid waste.

5. **Support Strategic Investment and Funding**
   Provide the analytical foundation needed to pursue federal, state, utility, and private funding for energy-related infrastructure and resilience projects.
6. **Inform Engineering Design and Grid Build-Out**
   Generate findings to guide a subsequent Engineering Study (Phase 2) and Electrical Grid Build-Out (Phase 3), ensuring that technical design and capital investments align with regional economic development needs and potential generation resources.
7. **Integrate Energy Planning into the CEDS**
   Translate analysis into actionable recommendations that can be used by local governments, utilities, and economic development organizations in planning and implementation.

**Project Description**

The initiative is envisioned as a three-phase project. This proposal focuses on Phase 1, the Energy Needs Analysis and outlines the subsequent phases, the Engineering Study and Electrical Grid Build-Out. All three phases will be monitored to ensure that the entire project aligns with the mission and goals of CEDS.

**Phase 1: Energy Needs Analysis** – The Energy Needs Analysis is a regional planning effort designed to answer: What energy infrastructure and generation resources will the Eastern Shore need - where, when, and in what form - to support long-term economic development and address related PFAS and waste management challenges?

**Scope of Work – Phase 1**

The Energy Needs Analysis will cover all nine Eastern Shore counties and will focus on:

- Existing and potential industrial and commercial sites.
- Major employment centers and institutional anchors.
- Communities experiencing or at risk of energy constraints or reliability challenges; and
- Existing and potential power generation resources and technologies, including natural gas, SMRs, waste-to-energy, biofuels, and forestry products that may also help address PFAS contamination, municipal wastewater, and solid waste management.

**Deliverables – Phase 1**

Energy Needs Analysis Report for Maryland's Eastern Shore will include:

- Maps, charts, and tables showing current infrastructure, projected demand, and priority investment areas.
- Discussion of generation options, including natural gas, SMRs, and waste-to-energy, and their relationship to PFAS and waste challenges.
- A concise Executive Summary.
- A presentation of findings to the CEDS committee, the lead non-profit and local officials, utilities, and other stakeholders.

A detailed schedule for the Energy Needs Analysis will be finalized with the lead agency, the project

management non-profit, and the organization hired to complete the study. The following two phases include an Engineering Study (Phase 2) and Build-Out of the Electrical Grid (Phase 2).

**Potential Project Partners**

The Energy Needs Analysis will be a collaborative effort involving regional, state, federal, and sector stakeholders across Maryland's Eastern Shore. Key partners include:

- **Established Eastern Shore Regional non-profit (Lead Agency)** – Potential non-profits include but not limited to Rural Maryland Foundation, Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland Foundation, and Maryland Rural Development Corporation. The lead non-profit provides overall leadership, governance, and oversight.
- **Project Management non-profit** – A separate non-profit under the Lead Agency's umbrella will manage day-to-day project activities and grant administration.
- **BEACON, Salisbury University (or similar research-based entity)** – (Business, Economics, and Community Outreach Network, Franklin P. Perdue School of Business at Salisbury University) – A research entity that is charged with delivering phase 1 and supporting the engineering study in phase 2.
- **County and Municipal Governments** – Governments in Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Caroline, Talbot, Dorchester, Wicomico, Somerset, and Worcester Counties will be asked to provide local data, participate in engagement, and identify priority sites and projects.
- **Economic Development Organizations and Chambers of Commerce** – These organizations will be asked to offer insights on business needs, target industries, and strategic sites.
- **Agricultural Organizations and Farm Stakeholders** – Including the Maryland Farm Bureau and local/county Farm Bureaus, will be asked to provide input on agricultural energy needs, opportunities for waste-to-energy, and PFAS/waste challenges.
- **Electric and Gas Utilities and Regional Grid Operator** – Choptank Electric Cooperative, Delmarva Power (an Exelon Company), Easton Utilities, Chesapeake Utilities, and PJM Interconnection (PJM) will be asked to supply system data, validate constraints, and collaborate on feasible solutions.
- **State Regulatory and Energy Agencies** – The Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) and Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) will be asked to assist in aligning the analysis with state policy, regulation, and funding opportunities.
- **Federal Energy Agencies** – The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) will be requested to be a key partner for aligning with federal energy policy, technical standards, and funding opportunities.
- **Major Employers and Institutional Stakeholders** – Businesses, industrial park operators, hospitals, educational institutions, and other large energy users will be asked to provide input on current conditions, expansion plans, and future energy needs.

**Cost**

The costs for Phase 1, the Energy Needs Analysis, and subsequent Phases will be determined in coordination with the lead agency, the project management non-profit, utilities, and other partners.

- Detailed cost estimates and budgets are to be developed and will be incorporated into the final proposal.
- Phase 1 is expected to be funded through a combination of local, regional, and state resources.
- Phases 2 and 3 are anticipated to rely primarily on DOE funding, supplemented by other federal programs and leveraged with state, local, and utility investments.

# Public Works

## North Caroline County Wastewater Treatment Plant and Sewer Collection System

**Priority – High**

**Background**

A regional Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) wastewater system (RWS) located in the Town of Greensboro and serving the north county towns of Goldsboro, Henderson, Marydel and Templeville, as well as Caroline Acres and Cedar mobile home parks and the Harman subdivision, will address failing septic and aging public and community sewer systems located in the region and address future development.

Extensive preliminary engineering reports and cost analyses conducted through the 2000s resulted in consensus among the local jurisdictions and funding agencies that the most cost-effective solution was the construction of a new RWS, located in and owned and operated by Greensboro and sized to serve Greensboro and the four north county towns. Construction of the first phase of the project – the new 332,000 gpd RWS in Greensboro and connection to the collection/conveyance system in Goldsboro – was completed in 2019. The next phase of the project – expansion of the RWS to 432,000 gpd and connection of the three remaining north county towns as well as the two mobile home parks and the subdivision – is planned for 2024, with final engineering to be completed in 2023.

In 1996, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) issued a Consent Order for Goldsboro and a draft Consent Orders for the cities of Henderson, Marydel, and Templeville and areas of northern Caroline County to address the long-standing public health threats associated with faulty septic systems, some of which have been around for over 20 years. The threat has not diminished over time; a more alarming trend now is the need to install wastewater retention tanks to reduce faulty systems. The cost of pumping and maintaining these tanks is overwhelming for many residents. Tank overflows and backups inside homes pose even greater threats to public health and the environment. Greensboro's Regional Wastewater System expansion to serve the remaining North County service areas will protect public and environmental health and provide economic stability and an improved quality of life for homeowners in Northern Caroline County.

Benefits of the project for owners: 1) reduction of existing and potential threats to public health and water quality; 2) no more limitations on property sales or additions to homes and businesses due to an inadequate or failed septic system; 3) torrential downpours shall not mean flooded drainage fields; 4) washing machines, dishwashers and sinks can be connected to the new system; and 5) the land dedicated for the drainage field and wastewater reserve area (SRA) can now be used for other uses.

**Project Description**

A regional wastewater treatment plant and wastewater collection and collection and conveyance system owned and operated by Greensboro to serve Greensboro, Goldsboro, Henderson, Marydel and Templeville, Caroline Acres and Cedar mobile home parks and the Harman subdivision. Construction of the regional system began in 2015 with a new Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) treatment plant in Greensboro and the connection of a new collection/conveyance system in Goldsboro to the new plant. Construction of the next phases is planned between 2024 and 2026, pending the success of funding

applications for the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), the U.S. Department of Rural Agricultural Development (USDA RD) and the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development 'MD DHCD CDBG' Community Development Block Grant program.



**Current Status**

Construction of the first phases of the project, the new ENR treatment plant in Greensboro and the collection/conveyance system in Goldsboro, was completed in 2019. Final engineering and funding applications are ongoing for the remaining phases.

The expansion of the regional system will be gradual:

- Phase 1, expansion of the wastewater treatment plant to 0.432 mgd;
- Phase 2, construction of the force main to Henderson, Henderson collection system and Caroline Acres pumping station and connection of Henderson's properties and mobile home park;
- Phase 3, construction of the force main to Marydel, Marydel collection system and Cedar pumping station and connection of Marydel properties and mobile home park; and
- Phase 4, construction of the main force to Templeville, the Templeville collection system and the Harman subdivision pumping station and the connection of the Templeville and Harman subdivision properties.

Pending the availability of adequate funds, construction of phases 1 and 2 is expected to begin in 2024; Construction of Phase 3 is planned for 2025, and Phase 4 is planned for 2026.

**Project Costs**

The new ENR treatment plant and Goldsboro collection/conveyance system (completed and awarded):

- $19.2M

Estimated capital costs for Regional Wastewater System Expansion:

- Phase 1: $4.9M
- Phase 2 $5.2M
- Phase 3: $6.2M
- Phase 4: $4.8M

The project will be funded by Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Bay Restoration Fund and Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Community Development Block Grants and USDA Rural Development Grants and Loans.

**Project Partners**

- Greensboro
- Caroline County
- Goldsboro
- Henderson
- Templeville
- Marydel
- EDA
- USDA
- US EPA
- Maryland Department of the Environment
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development CDBG

## Easton Utilities Water Treatment Plant (WTP)

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

Easton Utilities is pursuing upgrading the reliability of the Town of Easton water supply system. Currently, Easton Utilities operates five wells to supply potable drinking water to Easton residents, businesses, and commercial industrial sites. Water from two of those wells pumps to the Glebe Water Treatment Plant (WTP) for iron & manganese removal before water enters the distribution system.

The Glebe WTP has been effectively reducing iron below the State's secondary maximum contaminant level of 0.3 mg/L since its construction in 1989, however, Easton Utilities has identified a number of deficiencies and concerns with the current technology of the Glebe WTP and the need to construct a new treatment plant with different, more efficient treatment technology.

The deficiencies of the GlebeWTP include, but are not limited to:

- The Glebe WTP is over 30 years old and has exceeded its useful life. The mechanical and electrical systems are all in need of replacement, the structural components are corroded from decades of exposure to ambient chlorine vapors.
- The existing continuously backwashing upflow sand filters are unable to provide iron removal of levels less than 0.1 mg/L. This impacts negatively the quality of service to our domestic, commercial and industrial customers.
- The Glebe WTP is located adjacent to a child care facility. When lime is delivered to the treatment plant and deposited in the lime silo, lime dust is released in the air creating a safety concern for the children at the child care facility.
- The existing building footprint is limited, restricting the site for additions or expansion. This restricts capacity to support future water demand and economic growth.

**Purpose**

Easton Utilities commissioned a Preliminary Engineering Report to evaluate the existing Easton Water Supply System and to investigate alternatives to upgrade the Glebe WTP.

After careful analysis, it was determined that building a new water treatment plant with pressure filter technology would provide the most advantageous alternative to increase the resiliency and reliability of the Town's water system to support future growth.

The improvement of this facility will help attain the following goals and objectives which are concurrent to the CEDS goals and objectives:

- To assure adequate public services and infrastructure to support and complement the targeted level of economic growth; and
- To assure a diversity of economic opportunities within the Town of Easton, and surrounding communities in the County that are consistent with the character of the community and its capacity to provide public services; and

- To improve and expand the capacity of the water treatment system to meet present needs and future commercial and general population growth; and
- To improve and protect the water quality of the Tred Avon River and the Chesapeake Bay that supports the commercial interests of the region and general population; and
- To improve the reliability of critical infrastructure necessary for recovery and resiliency from economic stressors and natural disasters; and
- To encourage environmentally sustainable development.

To accomplish the CEDS Goals and Objectives, Easton Utilities, since 2010, has completed and anticipates the following to be completed:

- Completed 16 inch force-main relocation phase 1 (2010, $825,000)
- Completed 16 inch force-main relocation phase 2, cross-town water connector (2013 $1,967,000)
- Completed 1.0 megawatt landfill gas to energy project (2016, $1,650,000)
- Completed 2.0 megawatt photovoltaic array at Wastewater Treatment Facility (2017, $3,737,000)
- Completed Node +0 Cable/Internet infrastructure rebuild (2020, $10,000,000)
- Awarded USDA grant to provide broadband to Talbot County underserved areas ($17,500,000)

**Project Description/Strategy**

- Planning and preliminary engineering are in progress and will be completed this year
- Final design is planned for calendar year 2021
- A new, state of the art water treatment plant will be constructed to replace the existing facility
    - providing superior quality water and increased reliability
    - ensuring sustainability, capacity for future growth
- Construction time is estimated at 12 months from contract award to a general contractor
    - Contract award time is estimated at 6 months from notification of funding assistance
    - Contract award time is dependent upon funding related contract requirements

**Cost**

- Construction cost is estimated at $8.4M (funding assistance is requested for the construction)

**Project Partners**

- Town of Easton
- Talbot County
- Maryland Department of the Environment

## Easton Utilities Windmill Pump Station Relocation and Forcemain Upgrades

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

The Windmill Pumping Station and associated forcemain was constructed in the 1950s and has a rated capacity of 1,725 gpm. Raw wastewater flows through a comminutor channel prior to entering a below grade wet well. Two dry-pit submersible pumps are located within a dry well. The pumps discharge into an approximately 6,600 ft long, 12-inch cast iron force main, which connects to a parallel force main system. Force mains from a number of other pumping stations also tie into the parallel force main system before being conveyed to the wastewater treatment plant.

The station site currently borders the Windmill Branch and is located in the FEMA 100-year flood plain and floodway. The Windmill Branch flows to the Tred Avon River which flows to the Chesapeake Bay. During significant rain events, such as hurricanes, tropical storms, and Nor'easters, the open comminutor pit is overwhelmed by flood waters from the Windmill Branch, causing an environmental and public health hazard by discharging untreated raw sewage to the open surface waters.

Easton Utilities has identified a number of other deficiencies at the Windmill Pumping Station. The deficiencies identified include, but are not limited to, inadequate wet well storage volume, safety issues with removing pumps for maintenance and overhaul, lack of compliance with NFPA-820 and NEC, lack of backup power feed, unreliable flow measurement, and under-capacity pumping rates. The associated forcemain has exceeded its useful life and is tuberculated, and will be replaced.

The Windmill Pump Station and Forcemain is a critical facility as identified in the 2017 Talbot County Hazard Mitigation & Community Resilience Plan. The project to relocate the pump station and replace the associated forcemain will be added to Talbot County's 2021 Hazard Mitigation & Community Resilience Plan.

**Purpose**

Easton Utilities commissioned a Preliminary Engineering Report to evaluate the existing Windmill Pump Station and Forcemain and to investigate alternatives to upgrade the existing system.

After careful analysis, it was determined that relocating the pump station upland to property owned by the Town of Easton is the most advantageous alternative for public health and environmental benefit. The new pump station site is located out of the FEMA 100-year flood plain and floodway, eliminating the public health and environmental risk caused by flooding. The associated Windmill forcemain will be replaced and connected to the existing forcemain system that flows to Easton's Enhanced Nutrient Removal Wastewater Treatment Facility.

The improvement of this facility will help attain the following goals and objectives which are concurrent to the CEDS goals and objectives:

- To assure adequate public services and infrastructure to support and complement the targeted level of economic growth; and

- To assure a diversity of economic opportunities within the Town of Easton, and surrounding communities in the County that are consistent with the character of the community and its capacity to provide public services; and
- To improve and expand the capacity of the wastewater conveyance system to meet present needs and future commercial and general population growth; and
- To improve and protect the water quality of the Tred Avon River and the Chesapeake Bay that supports the commercial interests of the region and general population: and
- To encourage environmentally sustainable development; and
- To improve the reliability of critical infrastructure necessary for recovery and resiliency from economic stressors and natural disasters.

To accomplish the CEDS goals and objectives, and meet the goals and objectives of the Chesapeake Bay Agreement, Easton Utilities, since 2010, has completed and anticipates the following to be completed:

- Completed 16 inch force-main relocation phase 1 (2010, $825,000)
- Completed 16 inch force-main relocation phase 2, cross-town water connector (2013 $2,000,000)
- Completed 1.0 megawatt landfill gas to energy project (2016, $1,650,000)
- Completed 2.0 megawatt photovoltaic array at Wastewater Treatment Facility (2017, $4,000,000)
- Completed Node +0 Cable/Internet infrastructure rebuild (2020, $10,000,000)
- Awarded USDA grant to provide broadband to Talbot County underserved areas ($17,500,000)

**Project Description/Strategy**

- Planning and engineering design of the pump station and force-main are complete
- Next steps (funding assistance is requested with these steps)
    - Construct the new pump station upland of the existing pump station
    - Demolish the existing pump station and restore the Windmill Branch floodway
    - Construct the associated force-main

**Cost**

- Construct new pump station, demolish existing station and restore floodway - $ 2.8M
- Replace Windmill Forcemain - $2.2M

**Total $5.0M Project**

**Partners**

- Town of Easton
- Talbot County
- Maryland Department of the Environment

## Location and photographs of the existing station in flood conditions

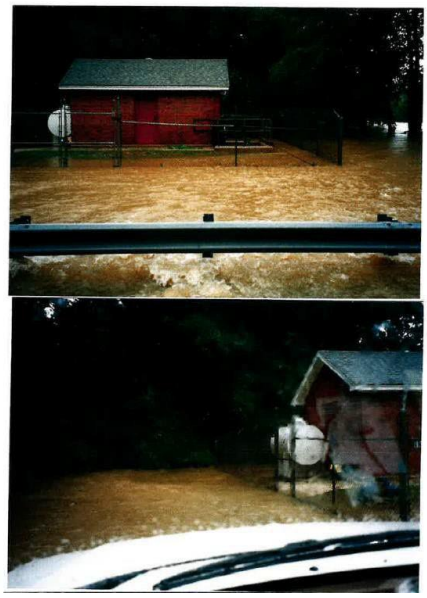
The Windmill Pump Station is located at 1131 S. Washington St, Easton, MD and is located within the FEMA floodplain and floodway, see figures below. The pump station is known to have been overtopped during hurricanes Floyd (1999), Isabel (2003) and Irene (2011), see photographs below.




**Figure 1 Aerial photo of area surrounding Windmill Pumping Station**




**Figure 2 FEMA Floodway and Floodplain at Windmill Pumping Station**



# Strategic Planning, Analysis, and Access to Capital

## Mid-Shore GIS Technology Center

**Priority Rating - Medium**

**Background**

Lack of standardized, current data and mapping technology has hindered the ability of the Counties to meet the demands associated with planning and implementation of regional telecommunications infrastructure, road construction, creation of technology parks, and identification of wastewater infrastructure needs. The CEDS committee identified this lack of GIS infrastructure as a significant barrier to economic development.

**Project Description/Strategy**

A centralized GIS technology center will provide cost effective and critical mapping services that will increase the institutional and technical capacity for job creation activities in the region.

The GIS Center is sponsored by the Mid-Shore Regional Council and the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore. The GIS Center is operated at Salisbury University as the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative (ESRGC). The ESRGC currently has contracts with seven counties on the Eastern Shore.

The ESRGC works cooperatively with private businesses, county governments, Universities and Community colleges, and the State of Maryland to identify, prioritize and implement projects.

**Cost**

The ESRGC is funded by annual donations of $15,000 from the two Tri-County Councils and in FY2007 received $15,000 from Caroline County. The coop also charges for their services, members of the coop pay 50% of a projects cost. Currently, the ESRGC is working with the Tri-County Councils to expand their revenue sources as the ESRGC is experiencing tremendous demand for their services.

**Project Partners**

- EDA
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- Chesapeake College
- Salisbury University's Geography Department
- University of Maryland Eastern Shore – GIS Department
- Caroline County, Dorchester County & Talbot County

## Eastern Shore Innovation Center and Business Accelerator

### Priority Rating - High

### Background

Broadening the economy of the Mid-Shore region and supporting new techniques in aquaculture and agriculture are major goals of the Mid-Shore Regional Council Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The Chesapeake Bay Region Technical Center for Excellence (CBRTCE) received a competitive grant award from the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO) to accomplish an incubator feasibility study for the Eastern Shore. The study was conducted by Angle Technology, a firm that specializes in the creation and management of incubators worldwide, and completed in July 2002. The study concluded that a technology-based incubator was feasible for the Eastern Shore. A second study, the Economic Adjustment Strategy, conducted in 2004 came to the same conclusion.

### Project Description/Strategy

A technology-based incubator was suggested for Dorchester County. Technology focus will be on agriculture science, bioscience, aquaculture, information technology, and environmental science.

### Cost

It is estimated that the annual cost of operations will be $50,000, not including capital provided to incubating companies.

### Project Partners

- TEDCO
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- MSRC
- Chesapeake College
- UMES
- Private Investors
- USDA
- ESEC

## Mid-Shore Near Equity Fund

### Priority Rating – High

### Background

Limited financial resources available for supporting startup companies and business expansion are a barrier to economic growth and diversification in the region. With current plans to develop technology incubators and expand business parks, a local source for financing that can complement traditional lenders will be a critical component for business development in the area.

### Program Description/Strategy

The Rural Development Center at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore manages a fund that serves the three lower shore counties in the Lower Shore Tri-County Region and Dorchester County in the Mid-Shore Tri-County Region. The Near Equity Fund will cater to the specific needs of the Mid-Shore region.

The Loan Fund makes low interest loans at advantageous terms. Lending priorities are developed by a loan review committee comprised of local bankers, economic development officials and Mid-Shore Council members. The review committee also determines the percentage of financing they will loan to the applicants. Administrative tasks for the Loan Fund include monitoring the progress of companies that have received loans and submitting financial reports to our lending partners and supporters.

### Cost

The Loan Fund started with loan capital from the Maryland Department of Commerce ($100,000 grant) and the USDA Rural Development Office ($55,000 grant). Currently, the Loan Fund has applied for an USDA Rural Development Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) for $450,000.

The Loan Fund administrative staff for the first two years has been funded by an EDA grant totaling $60,000; a TEDCO grant totaling $20,000; and the three Mid-Shore counties collectively funding $60,000.

### Project Partners

- EDA
- University of Maryland Eastern Shore Rural Development Center
- Chesapeake College Small Business Development Center
- Chesapeake Bay Region Technical Center for Excellence
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- Lower Shore Tri-County Council

## Delmarva Index

**Priority Rating – Medium**

### Background

The Delmarva Index is an online hub for data and visualizations for the Delmarva Peninsula. It provides users free and easy access to demographic, economic, geographic, and social data, pertaining to the Delmarva Peninsula. It is a partnership of the Mid-Shore Regional Council (MSRC), the Tri-County Council for the Lower Shore of Maryland (TCCLES), and the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative (ESRGC) with funding support from the Rural Maryland Council (RMC) through the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF).

While the ESRGC has a long-standing history working with the Regional Councils on data visualization projects, the Delmarva Index officially launched the website https://delmarvaindex.org/ in 2019. Since that time, the ESRGC has worked collaboratively with partners to add numerous data resources to the Delmarva Index including:

- Economic Dashboard
- Agricultural Census Infographics
- Workforce Infographics
- Economic Snapshots
- Census 2020 Mapping Story Map
- Maryland Parks Dashboards
- Public Safety Dashboard
- Healthcare Economic Impact Dashboard
- Maryland Tax Revenue Dashboard
- Tourism Dashboard
- Business Sentiment Dashboard

The ESRGC typically utilize public data to build these visualizations such as:

- U.S. Census
- Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Bureau of Economic Analysis
- Agricultural Census
- Maryland Department of Labor
- Maryland Department of Planning
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Maryland Comptroller's Office

### Purpose

These Delmarva Index resources cover a diverse range of topics and are a valuable resource to local and regional economic and workforce development specialist who use these data driven tools to communicate with business leaders, government leaders, and other interested constituents.

**Project Description**

The Delmarva Index will be consistently improved with new toolkits and dashboards and updates to established products. Projects will be identified and proposed by the partners and approved through a collaborative process with the Regional Councils and member counties' representatives. Examples of projects include adding sectors to industry specific dashboards, updating data visualization both in terms of backend processes and displaying technologies, and creating tools that expanded the relevance of economic development to other government departments.

**Estimated Costs**

The cost per specific project under the larger Delmarva Index initiative will vary.

**Project Partners**

- Caroline County Economic Development & Tourism
- Dorchester County Economic Development
- Talbot County Economic Development & Tourism
- Mid Shore Regional Council
- Tri County Council of the Lower Eastern Shore
- Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative
- Rural Maryland Council

# Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Forestry

## F³ Tech Accelerator Program

### Priority Rating – High



### Background

F³ Tech (Farm-Fish-Food) is a statewide private/public initiative that is creating a new renaissance of economic growth and prosperity through innovation and technology which is built upon Maryland's traditional industries of agriculture and seafood. The overall program is a pipeline of three components through which entrepreneurs, innovators, startups, and existing businesses go through the proof-of-concept and commercialization of new product and service ideas and innovations. The initiative includes partners and resources from throughout Maryland. Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center plays a leadership role in this initiative.

### Purpose

Maryland enjoys a rich history built upon its traditional industries of agriculture and seafood. Over the decades these industries have become eclipsed by other industry sectors which through time have developed into Maryland's priority industries for economic development. These include biohealth/life sciences, IT/cybersecurity, aerospace/defense, military/federal, manufacturing, and export, all primarily concentrated within the Baltimore/Washington DC corridor. There are many obvious reasons for why these priorities and concentration exist. However, they do not help to address the critical need in rural Maryland to have its own industry cluster and corresponding economic growth and prosperity.

A conversation among economic development service providers began during 2015 on Maryland's Eastern Shore to advance a regional strategy and industry sector focus based upon the region's strength in agriculture and seafood. Continuing in 2016, broader discussions with industry and regional stakeholders raised an increasing awareness that rural Maryland would benefit from a new generation of innovation and technology within agriculture and seafood. A recognized differentiator for Maryland, apart from land-locked regions in the U.S. involved in agriculture technology, is rural Maryland's holistic environment of both land and water (Chesapeake Bay estuary). This unique feature allows for advancements in aquaculture in combination with agriculture technologies and their related environmental aspects. Another realization was that efforts could be enhanced by the proximity to the strengths, talent, and resources of the Baltimore/Washington DC corridor, leading to the conclusion for a major initiative in agritech, aquatech, and envirotech.

Another overriding need for innovation and technology in agriculture, aquaculture, and the environment is based upon:

- A global need for 35% more food by 2030, per the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;
- This need cannot be met by merely cultivating more land, planting more crops per acre, or harvesting existing seafood sources;
- This worldwide demand can only be met through innovation and technology.

Any innovations and technology developed in addressing this need offers the additional opportunity to commercially export the resulting intellectual property to Third World countries frequently suffering from the very same challenges and issues.

**Project Description**

The framework of F³ Tech is based upon three activities which are intended to feed or pipeline entrepreneurs and innovators into subsequent stages: Stage 1 – Incubator Stage (Challenge Events), Stage 2 – Hatchery Stage (Pre-Accelerator), and Stage 3 – Nursery Stage (Accelerator).

Stage 1 – Incubator Stage (Challenges Events)
F³ Tech starts with one-day Challenge Events. These events are not startup exercises, but rather are strictly an ideation and innovation exercise. In preparation for the events, the industry is solicited for market-driven real-world problems or challenges, pain points that create difficulties or obstacles in the profitability and sustainability of their businesses and industry. An advisory board of industry partners will assist in the solicitation, evaluation, and prioritizing of challenges. It is from among this list of problems or challenges that entrepreneurs, innovators, and students form teams and spend the day ideating, innovating, and creating solutions to these challenges. At the end of the day, teams make presentations to a panel of industry and ecosystem representatives which will then award $1,000 cash prizes to deserving teams.

Stage 2 – Hatchery Stage (Pre-Accelerator)
The next activity in the F³ Tech pipeline is a six-week virtual Pre-Accelerator program which is targeted to individuals or teams with early-stage ideas and are gearing up to participate in a more traditional accelerator program or for an early product launch – but aren't quite ready yet. The format of the F³ Tech Pre-Accelerator is based upon the success of a similar program in Australia, SproutX. Entrepreneurs, innovators, and students from throughout Maryland and the Delmarva Peninsula, either new to the pipeline or having participated in previous Challenge Events, will focus primarily on the idea and market assessment and validation. Again, the emphasis is not about a startup business, but about putting an idea or innovation to the test or proof-of-concept, ensuring that any further progress towards business startup is warranted.

Stage 3 – Nursery Stage (Accelerator)
The final activity in the F³ Tech pipeline is a more traditional four-month Accelerator program. The primary purpose of the F³ Tech Accelerator program is to pick winners and losers which begins with a rigorous and competitive region-wide application process. Once in the program startups prepare for product/service launch and commercialization through concentrated mentorship, training, networking, and investment.

**Project Partners:**

- Maryland TEDCO
- Maryland Department of Agriculture
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Rural Maryland Council

- Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit
- MARBIDCO
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland
- Entrepreneur and Innovation Institute at College of Southern Maryland
- Maryland Business Incubation Association
- Area colleges and universities

**Project Cost:** $300,000

## Chesapeake Harvest Produce Processing and Aggregation Facility

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC) is a private sector nonprofit organization that provides programs and technical assistance to entrepreneurs and innovators commercializing innovations and technologies primarily in the sectors or agriculture, aquaculture, and the environment. Its mission is to "Solve regional problems through the attraction of innovation and technology" as well as to position the region to be more attractive for economic development investment. Its primary service area are the counties of Maryland's Eastern Shore with additional outreach to rural Delaware. Over the past five years, ESEC has attracted 11 federally funded programs totaling $6,800,000 (primarily EDA, USDA, and SBA) and 7 state funded programs totaling $1,040,000.

**Purpose**

The Chesapeake Harvest produce Processing and Aggregation Facility involves establishment of a processing and aggregation facility that will help solve a number of problems on the Eastern Shore and Delmarva, to include; 1) a means by which to create a more resilient and sustainable local food system through the availability of locally processed produce, 2) increasing the availability of local nutritious food to those areas of the region having limited access, 3) creating increased revenue and profit margin opportunities for local farmers and growers by providing wider access to markets (wholesale and institutional), and 4) creating the opportunity for growers to scale and diversify their production and increase employment..

**Project Description**

The project brings together two project partners; Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC) and Chesapeake Culinary Center (CCC). The partnership has been conducting a planning and development process to uncover an implementation strategy that responds to the above opportunities. The plan develops the process, operation, product trials, and relationship building that will ultimately lead to regionally-branded, source-identified Eastern Shore and Delmarva local frozen products. It will also expose and address details of the success, challenges, and vision involved for frozen produce to significantly contribute to the improved access of nutritious foods in the region and the increased market opportunities for growers/entrepreneurs.

The facility is planned to be located in Ridgely, MD within the Mid Shore Regional Technology and Business Park. The facility will occupy approximately 10,000 square feet, about 5,000 square feet being occupied by processing and IQF equipment and the other 5,000 square feet set aside for refrigerated, freezer, and dry storage as well as staging for shipping and receiving.

The overall plan is to lightly process and flash freeze the region's fruits and vegetables into 1 lb. and 2 lb. bags (possibly 20 lbs cases) for wholesale and institutional buyers. Plans are to trademark and market the finished product as "Chesapeake Harvest", branding it as originating from the Eastern Shore. We will also plan to offer private labeling of the product for buyers such as Maryland Food Bank that wish to have their own branding.

Current plans are targeted to have some level of operation started in time for the May 2024 growing season, recognizing that full scale processing will probably not be operational until the 2025 growing season. A lot will depend on the timing of funding and the subsequent placement of equipment purchases and the expected supply chain delays in delivery. Initial products under serious consideration for processing include corn, beans, broccoli, and cauliflower. Additional products will be added over time and when funds for new processing lines are acquired. Once up and running, the project expects to employ a minimum of 6 to 8 produce processors working the lines and an additional 4 managerial positions. Another 72 indirect jobs (additional farm labor, distribution, etc.) are also projected as a result of the facility.

**Cost**

$2.5M

**Project Partners**

- Chesapeake Culinary Center
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- Caroline County
- Caroline County Economic Development
- Town of Ridgely
- Rural Maryland Council
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- US Department of Agriculture
- Maryland Congressional Delegation
- Maryland Economic Development Corporation

## F3 Tech Agbiotechnology Manufacturing Facility

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC) is a private sector nonprofit organization that provides programs and technical assistance to entrepreneurs and innovators commercializing innovations and technologies primarily in the sectors or agriculture, aquaculture, and the environment. Its mission is to "Solve regional problems through the attraction of innovation and technology" as well as to position the region to be more attractive for economic development investment. Its primary service area are the counties of Maryland's Eastern Shore with additional outreach to rural Delaware. Over the past five years, ESEC has attracted 11 federally funded programs totaling $6,800,000 (primarily EDA, USDA, and SBA) and 7 state funded programs totaling $1,040,000.

During the past three years of the F3 Tech Accelerator program which helps commercialize innovations and technologies in agriculture and aquaculture, it has worked with twelve (12) portfolio companies that together have raised $63,410,351 of investment capital; $5,878,500 through loans, grants, and SBIRs; had sales over $4.5 million; created 77 jobs; and launched 18 new products.

**Purpose**

Through its F³ Tech (Farm·Fish·Food) Accelerator, ESEC has seen a concentration of early-stage companies that fall under the category of agbiotech. For this reason, ESEC conducted a feasibility study that inventories regional assets and market opportunity in support of an agbiotech manufacturing center.

Agbiotech includes innovations like crop protection, soil health, alternative protein supplements to animal feed, and algae. Agbiotech also involves genetically modified crops, development of biofuels, improved plant growth, improved plant seed quality, improved animal health and breeding, improved fermentation and food preservation, new vaccines, genetic editing and modification, synthetic chemistry (based upon enzymes not petroleum), microbiome research and biological products, to name a few.

For this project, ESEC proposes leasing and equipping a small pilot-scale agbiotech manufacturing facility that would position Talbot County as having the resources to expedite the advancement of startup companies from lab-stage technology development to pilot-scale manufacturing, then allowing companies to proceed into large-scale manufacturing through a the use of a contract manufacture or their own stand-alone manufacturing facility, capabilities, which do not currently exist elsewhere in the Mid-Atlantic.

**Project Description**

The proposed project involves the following steps and actions:

- Leasing 6,000 sq ft of flex space (four 1,500 sq ft increments) in Easton Technology Center.

- Allocating three of the 1,500 sq ft increments, each to one agbiotech startup company poised to manufacture and commercialize. Each increment would house the company offices, bioreactor and manufacturing equipment, and provide storage and warehousing.

- The fourth 1,500 sq ft increment would house a common area of multiple biotech lab equipment that would be utilized and shared by the three companies. It would also house the Agbiotech Manufacturing Center Lab Manager and serve as the administrative office for the F3 Tech Accelerator program.

- Purchase of biotech lab equipment and three bioreactors at discount pricing from Thermo Fisher Scientific. Lead time for delivery is projected to be 6 to 9 months following purchase.

- Each of the three agbiotech startups would lease a 1,500 sq ft increment for up to three years, the first year being rent free as an incentive to locate into the facility as well as a benefit to participating in the F3 Tech Accelerator. Years 2 and 3 would involve paying rent and utilities.

- Rent will include a turn-key facility and bioreactor as well as access to common area biotech lab equipment. Company tenants would be responsible for all of their materials and supplies.

- The purpose of the three-year period is to help the agbiotech companies transition from the lab, initiate manufacturing production, acquire customers, generate a revenue stream, and scale to the point of setting out on their own into contract manufacturing or their own manufacturing facility.

- Plans include partnerships with Johns Hopkins University and Chesapeake College to initiate a biotech workforce training program similar to that available at North Carolina BTEC (North Carolina State University – Biomanufacturing Training and Education Center, https://www.btec.ncsu.edu/index.php)

**Cost**

$1.5M

**Project Partners**

- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- Talbot County
- Talbot County Economic Development
- Town of Easton
- Rural Maryland Council
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- U.S. Economic Development Administration
- Johns Hopkins University
- Chesapeake College
- Thermo Fisher Scientific

# Continuous Learning and Workforce Development

## Chesapeake Culinary Center

### Priority Rating – Medium

### Background

In 2000, the Denton Development Corporation completed a conceptual plan for rehabilitation and adaptive use of the old "Caroline High School" in the Town of Denton as part of an economic development project designed to preserve and enhance the historic Denton Central Business District. The Denton Development Corporation worked in partnership with the Town of Denton to acquire the building in the spring of 2005. Since the acquisition, the Town of Denton and Denton Development Corporation have been working with the Chesapeake Culinary Center (CCC), a non-profit organization, to rehabilitate the structure as a hospitality workforce training facility, kitchen incubator, and performing arts venue.

The Culinary Center is a grassroots, non-profit organization staffed by hospitality professionals and governed by a Board of Directors. The organization began in 2005 and was responsible for starting the culinary arts program at the Caroline County Career and Technology Center. The Culinary Center also runs a public restaurant, the Emerson House, in Denton. This facility conducts vocational training for clients of Social Services and an after school program for high school students. The Culinary Center also does offsite training for Workforce Investment Board's youth program, teaching the basics of culinary skills. The Culinary Center also works with the James Beard Foundation to offer elementary aged students a program called Spoons Across America, which teaches students how to plan a dinner party from A-Z; including instruction on table manners, properly setting a table, how to plan nutritional meals and snacks, and the value of eating at the table with family. Once the old "Caroline High School" is complete, all operations of CCC will be moved into the facility.

The potential use of the Caroline High School for the food service industry may be critical to regional historic area tourism. The rehabilitation of this structure will also foster linkages with other places of interest in the Denton Historic District. It is anticipated that the schoolhouse will become a cornerstone for other heritage area attractions in Denton and the surrounding area.

The old "Caroline High School," constructed in 1901, is located in the Town of Denton's National Register Historic District. This structure represents the rural adaptation of architectural styles of the late 19th and early 20th centuries and in particular the period from 1895 to 1915. The old "Caroline High School" is one of the oldest public structures in Caroline County and the 1.35 acre property is also one of the largest open spaces in Denton.

### Purpose

This project will provide the midshore region with a professionally trained hospitality workforce, an increase in tourism, and a performing and visual arts venue. Further, the project will also foster the creation of new businesses and assist farmers in creating value-added products. It is envisioned that this structure will be rehabilitated to a standard of contemporary utility while preserving features which are significant to the historical, architectural, and culture values of Maryland's Eastern Shore community.

**Project Description**

The building will provide training space for the Caroline and Queen Anne's County Boards of Education's culinary programs, and house a commercial incubator program which will provide small business entrepreneurs and farmers the ability to produce products in a health-approved commercial kitchen, and will provide a small bottling facility. The Culinary Center will continue to provide after school and summer courses for youth in addition to vocational training for clients of Social Services (Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot and Queen Anne's) and local Work Force Investment Boards in the midshore area. The third floor of the building will house a small performing arts center as well as space for visual arts. This project has the potential to create 12 fulltime jobs and 15-20 part-time positions; seven of which would be made available to low- and moderate-income individuals.

The old "Caroline High School" will house many different programs. The scope of the project is as follows:

1. Caroline and Queen Anne's County Boards of Education culinary programs allowing 60-80 students at a time. Caroline is currently operating out of the local fire department's kitchen, which is limited in equipment. Queen Anne's currently does not have a culinary arts program at its Career and Technology Center.
2. Partnering with Chesapeake College to offer night programs for their hospitality program, allowing up to160 students a year.
3. After school programfor at-risk students, up to 120 students a year.
4. Community kitchen expected to create and expand15-20 businesses a year.
5. Bottling facility anticipated to serve 50 to 100 customers/ farmers a year.
6. Kid's camps during the summer expected to serve 60 youth between the ages of 5 and 17.
7. Adult continuing education classes expected to serve 70-100 adults a year.
8. Performing arts center that will be able to hold 100-150 persons at time.
9. Fourteen art studio spaces will be available to rent by local artists.
10. Art and music classes offered, expected to serve 150-200 people a year.

**Cost**

The estimated capital costs needed to redevelop the old "Caroline High School" is $2,415,000 for Phase I of the project. Phase I includes remediation of hazardous waste, restoration of the existing building, and the construction of the addition that will house the training kitchen, bottling facility, performing arts center, and classrooms. To date, $1.1 million has been secured through funding sources, including the Community Development Block Grant Program, the Maryland Historical Trust, USDA, Maryland State Bond Bill, Caroline County, and the Town of Denton. Partnerships are beginning to develop with private foundations and individuals for other funding sources. The project is in need of $1.3 million at this time for completion of Phase I.

**Project Partners**

- Town of Denton
- Denton Development Corporation
- Chesapeake Culinary Center

- Caroline County Board of Education
- Caroline County Government
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
- United States Department of Agriculture
- Maryland Historical Trust

**Program Partners**

- Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board
- Caroline County Recreation and Parks
- Chesapeake College
- Caroline and Queen Anne's Boards of Education
- Social Services of Caroline, Talbot, Queen Anne's and Dorchester

## Preparing a High-Tech Workforce for the Eastern Shore and Maryland

### Priority Rating – High

### Background

With the rapid expansion of technology and the information-based economy, there is an ever- increasing need for a skilled workforce from the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. Nationally[i] and locally,[ii] the supply of skilled labor is not keeping pace with demand. Additionally, well educated technology entrepreneurs are needed to move more traditional agricultural economies to emerging technology/information-based industries. In order to prevent loss of leadership and skilled workers in critical areas of technology and manufacturing, industry and government agencies need talented graduates from our educational institutions who can "hit the ground running." Further, the lack of highly qualified science and math teachers limits the pipeline of students who are prepared for rigorous STEM majors and careers in technology-related fields and science entrepreneurship. Thus, in order for the Eastern Shore and Maryland to compete in a technology-based economy, we need to increase the quantity and quality of our high-tech workforce and the educational infrastructure supporting this goal. This situation is well described in 'Investing in STEM to Secure Maryland's Future,' the recent report of Governor O'Malley's STEM Taskforce.[iii]

### Purpose

This project will address the shortage of technology workers and entrepreneurs created by increasing regional demand, aging of existing workforce and insufficient numbers of students pursuing and prepared for rigorous STEM majors in college. This is particularly relevant for our area given the actual and desired job growth within the state and on the Eastern Shore.

This project will establish a regional workforce pipelinethat provides students with knowledge and skills relevant to a technology-based economy and to the growth of such industries. As a result of these efforts, it is anticipated that well prepared college graduates with STEM majors will be employed by and establish their own technology-related companies. The project can be expanded into a regional effort to ensure that Eastern Shore residents can get a good education in technology and become part of a state-wide high-tech workforce, without ever having to leave the area.

### Project Description

To build a high-tech workforce and a culture of technology entrepreneurship, we need to: 1) get youth interested in pursuing careers in technology-related industries; 2) ensure that educational institutions (Middle School through College) are aware of and have the tools to provide curricula relevant to current and future industry and government needs; and 3) expose students to real-world experiences (and contact with prospective employers) throughout their educational careers. Additionally, in the near future, students will increasingly come from 'under-represented groups' that, by definition, have not historically had high rates of college-going or degree attainment.

The contribution of this proposed project will be to design and implement innovative linkages between educational and experiential mechanisms to engage students in middle school and which carry them through to college and into the workforce. In addition, this project will support a critical,

near-term need for expertise in the areas of computer science, engineering, and geographic information systems (GIS) via a novel university program that will utilize unique seminars and facilities to augment existing degree programs.
We propose two major tasks to develop a workforce prepared for science/technology jobs in the near-term and to create an environment that supports the flow of students into the STEM disciplines and out into the workforce:

**Task 1: Increase enrollments of science and math majors and preparation of college graduates for applied STEM careers, including careers in teaching math and science at the secondary level:** The program will address three challenges in the recruitment and preparation of a high-tech workforce by: 1) creating clearer connections between science/technology majors and rewarding and lucrative careers in the region, including the teaching of science and mathematics; 2) providing financial, social and academic supports for college students who choose rigorous STEM majors; and 3) equipping students with workforce skills not typically included in standard STEM curricula. The program will have three major activities: 1) 'deep recruitment' of regional students into STEM majors through strong connections with local schools and community colleges (see Task 2 below) and scholarships and other incentives for qualified students; 2) college-support programs for STEM and science/math secondary education majors such as first-year seminars and Living- Learning Communities;[iv] 3) clearer and better supported paths from community college to SU science majors, and 4) the development of seminars, research and internship experiences that prepare students for STEM careers by introducing them to the regional high-tech workforce and to topics not typically covered in undergraduate science curricula (e.g. error and risk-analysis, quality assurance, compliance, organizational effectiveness, project management, security clearances, or effective networking). To support this, we will leverage Salisbury University's STEM Advisory Board which includes representation from Eastern Shore school districts, employers, economic development agencies, and SU faculty and administrators and an cadre of outstanding math and science teachers from the region who can serve as role models for science and math students considering secondary teaching as a career.

**Task 2: Establish organizational and financial support for engaging future STEM workers and entrepreneurs.** This can be achieved by creating a standing program team, through execution of Memoranda of Agreement, with representatives from schools and other educational institutions, industry and local, state, and federal government entities to design an on-going program that attracts and retains middle- and high-school students to STEM careers. Activities could include support for SU support of STEM programs within school districts (e.g. STEM Academies, Lego Leagues, etc.), Science Camp@SU, and/or Science Nights at SU. We will also leverage existing relationships with regional community colleges (e.g. Chesapeake College and Wor-Wic) with whom we have had several collaborations in the past (e.g. the nationally recognized Quality in Undergraduate Education[v] program that aligned the Associate of Arts degrees at Chesapeake and Wor-Wic with baccalaureate degrees at Salisbury University). Further, we will recruit program sponsors from industry and government to more clearly connect academic achievement to rewarding and lucrative careers in the region.

**Need for the proposed projects:** Regarding science/biotechnology, space science, information sciences and innovation-based fields: Maryland leads the nation in per capita expenditures in research and development (R&D) and is second only to California in total R&D expenditures. Throughout the state, there is a strong interest in not just producing the intellectual property

associated with this R&D, but to establish businesses and industries within Maryland from this R&D.

Further, Maryland expects many high-tech jobs as a result of the Base Realignment and Closure Process (BRAC) with 18,000 jobs expected to become available in Maryland as many defense information-related agencies relocate and as demand builds for supporting agencies. Similarly, developments in the space launch industry are expected to positively impact job creation throughout the region[vi] and to demand the preparation of a high-tech workforce. To meet this demand, we need to increase the number of STEM graduates, particularly in the areas of computer science, chemistry, biology, physics, GIS, and engineering. Other concerns exist about the demography of the high-tech workforce, which includes 'baby-boomers' approaching retirement and a demographic shift within the college-age population in which the fastest growing segment now includes groups that have traditionally had lower rates of college attendance.

Regarding science/math teacher education: The Maryland Teacher Staffing Report 2008-2010[vii] published by the Maryland State Board of Education (Section VII) notes Mathematics, Chemistry, Earth/Space Science, Physical Science, and Physics (grades 7-12) as critical content shortage areas. The Report also declares all Maryland counties as areas of projected shortages of certified teachers (so includes counties in Mid-Shore Region).

**Estimated project cost:** $2 million
**Estimated time line:** 6 years
**Additional STEM and Science and Math Secondary Ed. Graduates within 5 years:** 150

**Project Partners**

- Henson School of Science and Technology at Salisbury University
- Seidel School of Education at Salisbury University
- Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative
- Chesapeake College
- Wor-Wic Community College
- Regional Tech Industry Partners (to be identified)
- Regional Middle and High School Partners (Maryland Eastern Shore counties are members of Salisbury University's STEM Advisory Board).

[i] *Rising Above the Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future* available at http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=11463.

[ii] For example, see discussions at http://mdworkforce.com/biotech/bioscisumagenda.htm and http://www.msde.md.gov/MSDE/programs/stem/ .

[iii] Governor's STEM Task Force. (2009) Investing in STEM to Secure Maryland's Future. http://www.gov.state.md.us/documents/090806stemReport.pdf.

[iv] Living-Learning Communities form strong social supports for students pursuing rigorous coursework through shared living spaces (same floor of a residence hall) and common courses. They can be powerful tools for retaining students in college, especially those at 'risk for leaving' such as those who are the first in their families to attend university.

[v] Program description electronically available at http://www.salisbury.edu/que/.

[vi] http://www.marsspaceport.com/pdfs/MDgov.pdf

[vii] Electronically available at http://marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/F3F5D904-0F5E-4FC7-87CE-464FC17DABB5/18552/MarylandTeacherStaffingReport20082010.pdf.

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background & Purpose**

In 2017, the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (CBMM) set out to develop a Master Plan that would serve the mission of CBMM now and well into the future. Working in tandem with the objectives of CBMM's Strategic Plan, the Master Plan helps guide CBMM's capital investments over the next twenty years. After a rigorous RFP process, then-woman-owned, Ann Behar Architects (ABA) was selected to provide the Master Plan's initial concept design. Workshops were held with key stakeholders, including members of CBMM's staff, boards, volunteers, donors, community partners, and other key constituent groups. From these workshops, several areas of focus were identified as necessary improvements to campus:

- Attract new visitors and increase membership (from 80,000 visitors annually pre-pandemic, and 5,000 member families)
- Expand CBMM's Shipyard and earned revenue commission-build opportunities
- Increase exhibitions and related programming
- Increase earned revenue growth in corporate and private event rentals
- Increase store capacity
- Ensure accessibility for all guests.

CBMM is a key economic driver for the State of Maryland. According to a study conducted by Rockport Analytics in Annapolis, visitors traveling specifically to visit CBMM from more than 50 miles generated $11.6 million in spending for Talbot County, and $1.7 million in state and local tax collections. The report also emphasizes the extensive PK-12 and community programming services we provide.

**Project Description**

The Master Plan is divided into three phases to maximize CBMM's ability to deliver on its mission, working in tandem with our Strategic and DEAI plans.

**Phase I** – Renovation of CBMM's Library and Collections facilities, now known as The Norman & Ellen Plummer Center for Museum Collections

The newly completed renovation added an additional 5,000 sq. feet to our current facilities. Formerly utilized as library and collections storage with limited visitor access, outdated research and collections storage, as well as a very limited ability to undertake vital conservation work, the building's renovation and expansion increased both capacity and accessibility for visitors, scholars, and researchers, with additional state-of-the-art climate control and security. Too, the Plummer Center will soon boast a three-dimensional scanner, making larger objects available to the public via CBMM's online collections portal. As a recently designated State of Maryland Regional Folklife Center, CBMM will make this technology available to other institutions dedicated to preserving critical historic objects. Another highlight of the new space is an enlarged public reading room. Already our Curatorial team is hosting visiting researchers, scholars, and other museums looking to access our extensive collection.

**Phase II** – CBMM's new Welcome Center




Construction has already begun on CBMM's new Welcome Center, a 12,000 sq. ft. multi-use orientation and exhibition facility. The new building is fully ADA accessible, for example ensuring consideration for individuals with light and sound sensitivities, and increasing the capacity of guests to be welcomed and oriented to campus and available programming experiences. Large group processing, along with high-volume weekend and festival crowds, has been catered for. Guest attendance for the initial year after opening is anticipated to exceed 100,000, a 15%+ increase over recent (non-COVID) years' attendance. The new building's design centers it as a re-designed guest experience, from the moment the guest arrives, through guest orientation, and guest flow throughout campus. The building will include two new exhibition experiences that have been developed in alignment with CBMM's new Interpretive Plan, including a new Museum Store.

**Phase III – The Rest of Campus**

Phase III of the Master Plan is currently in the design phase and will address the remainder of CBMM's campus, working to achieve the following goals:

- Expanding CBMM's working Shipyard
- Addressing climate resiliency
- Making more accessible CBMM's 18-acre-waterfront campus
- Renovating and upgrading our marina facilities



Expanding CBMM's Shipyard will allow us to continue to maintain our floating fleet of 14 historic Chesapeake Bay vessels; accept more commission-build projects such as the highly successful, recently completed *Maryland Dove;* and envision opportunities to grow our State-Certified Shipwright Apprentice program. CBMM's Shipyard is a major tourist attraction as a living, breathing exhibition experience. Guests from all over the world visit and enjoy interacting with and watching our

skilled shipwrights as they work in full public view. CBMM's State-Certified Shipwright Apprentice Program is integral to preserving traditional wooden boat-building skills and enables CBMM to continue to contribute to growing the local workforce.

Climate mitigation is a critical necessity on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Working in direct partnership with the Town of St Michaels' Climate Change/ Sea Level Rise Commission, CBMM's Harbor Flooding Task Force provides leadership to help address the critical current and future issue of nuisance flooding on CBMM's campus, which has become increasingly important to address. In October of 2021, CBMM experienced a King Tide, causing campus-wide flooding; accordingly, we were forced to cancel OysterFest, our largest annual event, resulting in more than $100,000 in lost revenue in addition to losses incurred by our onsite vendors and local businesses. A portion of the requested funding would help address this immediate need through preliminary design and engineering studies.

Our commitment to making campus more accessible to persons with disabilities is already being realized with the construction of the new Welcome Center. Additionally, we plan to address the remainder of campus through this lens as we embark on Phase Ill, re-examining entrances, wayfinding, walkways, and more as we work toward a more inclusive campus.

Upgrading and renovating our marina is another key priority of Phase III. We pride ourselves on providing a warm, welcoming environment for our local and broader population of guests. Our marina facilities need electrical, water, and infrastructure upgrades. CBMM hosts approximately 1,500 vessels annually; marina guests often spend one night to two weeks docked at our marina, while also visiting local businesses. Investing in marina upgrades will also help support our continued and expanding impact on the state and local economies.

**Project Partners**

- Delmarva Veteran Builders
- Gilbane
- The State of Maryland
- Private Funders
- Ann Behar Architects

**Project Cost:**

Phase I: Approximately $1.7M

Phase II: Approximately $10M

Phase III: Approximately $5 - $10M

Estimated total project cost: $15 million

**Chesapeake College – The Future Works Workforce Training Initiative**

**Priority Rating – High**

**Background**

Chesapeake College is a comprehensive public two-year regional community college serving the educational and training needs of the residents of Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot counties. The College provides a selection of program and course offerings designed to help students prepare for transfer to upper level institutions, for immediate entry into a career, and to enhance work-related skills. At a time when qualified local workers are in high demand on Maryland's Eastern Shore, the College remains attuned to the emerging needs of area businesses.

**Purpose**

Chesapeake College is dedicated to providing workforce training that impacts the region's economic growth and offers a different path from the traditional college degree. We remain responsive as the Shore faces a skills gap in the trades. To address that gap, Chesapeake College embarked on fundraising initiative to: create a mobile welding learning lab, expansion of the Marine Trades program, create an Advanced Manufacturing Technology (AMT) program, form a Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and recruit, retain, and support non-credit students with student success services and placement/credential tutoring.

**Project Description**

Chesapeake College will expand its current Marine Trades program into a Marine Service Technician certification. Hiring part-time lab assistants to aid existing instructors and adding equipment like engines, another test tank, ventilation, an on-site learning vessel/boat, and marine auxiliary technology are essential. This fully-built out program will intersect/complement other skilled trades and provide everything needed to bring a Marine Service Technician certification to Chesapeake College.

The Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) will serve regional business owners, students – particularly those in the skilled trades – and alumni both in-person and virtually with vetted small business management resources, professional trainings, and outreach opportunities. A central purpose of the CIE is to help identify common needs and collaborations among stakeholders. New staff to support the CIE will need to be hired.

A Deloitte and The Manufacturing Institute Manufacturing Talent study found that "U.S. manufacturing is expected to have 2.1 million unfilled jobs by 2030." To address this need and prepare for the future, Chesapeake College is developing a new Advanced Manufacturing Technology (AMT) program. Businesses that already utilize AMT will have a pipeline for trained workers, and this program will help make AMT a reality for those that have not yet launched the technology. This initiative requires expensive equipment like: 3D scanning and 3D printing, FANUC robotics, CNC milling, CNC routing and plasma cutting, Universal Laser Systems, CAD and CAM technology.

Industry staffing shortages (estimated to exceed 300,000 by 2024) combined with an aging workforce in the field means welding will be a sustainable career choice for years to come. The College is creating a mobile welding training lab to take its welding program out into local communities—where students live and work throughout the five-county area—eliminating transportation woes for those students. Chesapeake College can additionally deliver training in partnership with area social programs and services, providing opportunities to these high barrier, hard-to-reach populations. Local businesses that utilize welding in their work will also have the ability to upskill their current employees on-site or train new employees.

Chesapeake College is also seeking funds towards non-credit student success initiatives. The costs include tutoring services for prospective students across the region to aid them in receiving passing scores on non-credit placement testing for entry into programs and working with current non-credit students to assist in studying for certification exams. Work in this area would also include recruiting non-credit students into skilled trades programs, advising and working on retaining of current students, helping them navigate hurdles that may be in their path to success. These new services will exist at both the Cambridge Center and at the Wye Mills locations.

It should be noted that a future workforce and economic initiative of Chesapeake College is to upgrade its current skilled trades facilities, which are inadequate and antiquated. The Queen Anne's County Tech Center – built in the 1970's - remains one of only two buildings on campus not renovated and is nowhere near sufficient for educating the workforce of the 21st century. In early 2023, the College will be proposing the need for a 90,000 general-square-foot skilled trades building to the State of Maryland. Should approval from the state and the counties progress, along with the funding necessary to move forward, that new regional technology center would tentatively open in FY27. All equipment purchased for the above initiatives would be housed within the revamped center.

**Cost**

Total Cost of the Future Works initiative is $3 million:

- Mobile Welding Training Lab: $1 million
- Marine Trades Expansion: $500,000
- Advanced Manufacturing Technology (AMT): $1 million
- Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship: $350,000
- Student Success Initiatives: $150,000

As of November 2022, Chesapeake College has raised just over $1.4 million in restricted private funding towards these initiatives. The College also has a pending request in for federal congressionally-directed spending in the amount of $1.2 million that stipulates $500,000 for the AMT program and $700,000 towards the welding lab. Additionally, we have a request pending of $1,014,099 for Rural Maryland Economic Development Funds to also support facets of this project, as well as a $481,000 grant award pending as a subgrantee on the Maryland Department of Labor's Maryland Works for Wind grant.

That being said, in the event that our requested funding falls through from either/both of our two pending requests, additional funding sources will need to be sought. The cost of goods continues to rise on a monthly basis and with supply chain issues still unresolved, we are anticipating that at the time of purchase equipment costs could also well exceed initial estimates.

**Project Partners (including pending partners)**

- Caroline County Economic Development
- Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism
- Queen Anne's County Economic Development
- Dorchester County Economic Development
- Kent County Public Schools
- Queen Anne's County Public Schools
- Talbot County Public Schools
- Caroline County Public Schools
- Dorchester County Public Schools
- United States Federal Government
- Maryland Department of Labor

## Regional Mental Health Workforce Training and Community Outreach Center

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

For All Seasons, Inc. is leading the region as the "go-to" organization for mental health services and is still the only Rape Crisis Center serving the Mid-Shore's population of nearly 200,000 people. The agency's services include individual and group therapy; general, child and adolescent therapy; couples' counseling; grief counseling; school-based mental health therapy; rape crisis response; sexual assault counseling and support; 24-Hour English and Spanish Hotlines; and a robust education and outreach programming.

In FY2022, For All Seasons administered nearly 50,000 services to over 3,000 clients residing throughout the 5 Mid-Shore Counties and beyond. The agency provided over $430,000 in financial assistance for therapy, psychiatry, victim services, and education. When community members have the choice to seek care elsewhere, they choose For All Seasons.

The shortage of highly qualified mental healthcare workers has been steadily increasing at the same time that the need for mental health services has been on the rise. The Covid-19 pandemic intensified this gap in care, decreasing the availability of providers and dramatically increasing the demand for care. This is especially true for Maryland's young people, people of color, those living at or below the Federal poverty line, and those who live in rural areas – all populations who experience mental health symptoms and trauma at a higher rate.

For All Seasons' mental healthcare workforce strategies include:

1. **Creating new jobs to support the provision of mental healthcare** in the Eastern Shore region, including positions of licensed clinical social workers and professional counselors, administrative support roles, sexual assault advocates, Spanish-language interpreters, and psychiatric providers;
2. **Employing innovative and evidence-based employee retention strategies**, including in-house, comprehensive professional development provided as a benefit of employment, and staff self-care/burnout prevention activities; and
3. **Deploying hybrid working environments wherever feasible** to attract younger, long-term workers and retain employees who desire greater flexibility.

Still, a shortage of highly-qualified, expertly credentialed mental healthcare professionals persists across Maryland – and the nation. Across much of rural America, demand has long outpaced the availability of mental health services – and providers – leading to what is known as "mental healthcare deserts." Although the pandemic boosted access through teletherapy and telepsychiatry, this progress has not addressed the root crisis. There aren't enough experienced, highly skilled mental healthcare providers to treat everyone in need at their level of need.

**Purpose**

For All Seasons will establish a new headquarters/community outreach center in Easton, MD or the surrounding Talbot County area. This new headquarters / community outreach center will feature additional square footage, which will make possible the implementation of new and expanded mental

healthcare workforce strategies.

Investment in this project will:

1. **create and retain high-quality, well-paying mental healthcare jobs** in the Eastern Shore region, concentrated in the Mid-Shore counties;
2. **support a mental healthcare infrastructure** that meets the region's demand for mental health services;
3. **establish a regional mental healthcare training center that brings opportunities for continuous learning and workforce development**, featuring nationally-renowned expert trainers in an Eastern Shore context; and
4. **increase capacity of For All Seasons and the region's nonprofits** through partnerships with area nonprofit and public organizations and the creation of a community gathering and learning space.

Currently, For All Seasons' capacity to create additional positions – clinical and administrative – is hindered due to lack of physical office space. The creation of a new physical location will be accompanied by the creation of additional jobs in Talbot County.

Additionally, this new headquarters/community outreach center will make possible the dramatic growth of For All Seasons' Center for Learning, establishing this mental health training academy as a magnet for mental healthcare providers statewide. This strategy will not only invest in the expertise of mental healthcare workers on the Eastern Shore; it will create a local mental healthcare training industry by bringing leading healthcare professionals to the rural Eastern Shore for expert-level professional development training. These training participants will travel to this Talbot County mental health training facility from locations throughout the mid-Atlantic region, generating new sources of revenue for both For All Seasons and the tourism industry as out-of-towners stay at local hotels and eat at local restaurants.

The expansion of For All Seasons' Center for Learning will be an investment in the professional excellence of mental healthcare providers and agency administrators across the state as the agency develops and delivers relevant, trauma-centered, culturally competent curricula taught by world-class, nationally recognized mental health experts. Our Center for Learning will provide these trainings in a variety of formats, including virtual and in-person trainings that are offered both in interactive real-time and asynchronous on-demand formats. For All Seasons is already an approved provider of Continuing Education Credits (CEUs) by the Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners and the Maryland Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists.

In addition to developing and implementing educational offerings for mental healthcare workers across the state, For All Seasons' Center for Learning will coordinate the necessary credentialing of clinicians and law enforcement entities required for partnership with the Department of Social Services' Child Advocacy Centers local to the Mid-Shore.

**Project Description**

This project will produce a two-story, approximately 35,000-to-40,000 square foot headquarters/community outreach center in Easton, MD or the surrounding Talbot County area. To accomplish this project, For All Seasons will either build an entirely new building from the ground up or renovate an existing space into a state-of-the-art facility.

This building will include:

- **40-45 clinical offices** for the provision of mental healthcare;
- **State-of-the-art therapeutic spaces** for innovative, evidence-based services such as neurofeedback, group and family therapy, art therapy, and play therapy;
- **A dedicated Rape Crisis Center** with private entrance for sexual assault victim confidentiality;
- **A large-scale community gathering, training, and learning space** available to community nonprofit organizations and community groups; and
- **A high-tech educational learning center** that allows the Center for Learning's educational programming to take place in-person/virtual/hybrid capacities, including an auditorium, kitchen, and meeting spaces of various sizes.

**Project Partners:**

- Departments of Social Services throughout the Five Mid-Shore Counties
- Mid-Shore Behavioral Health
- Talbot Family Network
- Talbot County Law Enforcement/Emergency Services
- Talbot County Economic Development
- Kent County Public Schools
- Talbot County Public Schools
- Queen Anne's County Public Schools
- Kent County Chamber of Commerce
- Garfield Center of Arts and Prince Theatre
- The Avalon Foundation
- Oxford Community Center

**Current Development Phase**: Planning & Funding Development

**Project Cost**: $14,663,000

Acquisition of Real Property -- $2.5M

Construction/Renovation -- $7.6M

Technology, Furnishings, and Other -- $4.6M

# Completed Projects

## Infrastructure Related to the Commercialization of Denton

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background and Purpose**

Denton, the county seat of Caroline County, has been hard-hit by the loss of commercial and construction jobs resulting from the migration of commercial businesses to retail hubs such as Easton and Annapolis, Maryland as well as Dover, Delaware. Particularly adversely impacted has been the central or historic business district of the Town.

To counter these losses, the Town has laid out an aggressive revitalization program for the central business district with four key components; (a) The Wharves at Choptank Crossing project, described below; (b) the first retail incubator in Maryland; (c) the Chesapeake Culinary Center which teaches culinary skills to students; and, (d) the Artsway project, which creates a artisan village as the eastern anchor of the historic business district.

**Project Description**

**The Wharves Project**. The Wharves at Choptank Crossing ("Wharves"), which would form a western anchor for the central business district, is almost fully funded and the marine-related elements are started. The Wharves project has four critical components. These include: (a) a visitor's center; (b) a destination restaurant; (c) a boat marina; (d) boat wharves; and, (e) a nature trail. All of these component projects have been fully funded with federal, state and local monies totaling over $3.0 million. Unfortunately, as discussed below, critical infrastructure for the project has not been funded.

**Infrastructure needed**. The infrastructure for the park has been determined and an Infrastructure Master Plan has been prepared. Items needed include electric, parking lots, water, sewer, road-elevation work, and landscaping and storm-water management.

**Cost**

Projected cost of infrastructure is approximately $875,000. Professional engineers and consultants have estimated the above-described infrastructure costs at $874,808.

**Job Creation**

Job creation will be both direct and indirect. For example, employment at the destination restaurant of the Wharves project is expected to be a minimum of twenty persons.

Indirect job creation is expected to be extensive. The combination of the components of the entire revitalization project should produce hundreds of jobs.

**Work ready to commence**

As discussed above, all of the plans for the infrastructure have been completed. All that needs to be done is to bid the work.

PROJECT CATEGORY: INFRASTRUCTURE

COMPLETED: THE VISITOR CENTER OPENED IN OCTOBER 2017.

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

Choptank Community Health System, Inc. (CCHS), is a private, non-profit, Community Health Center providing access to exceptional, comprehensive and integrated health care for all. CCHS provides medical, dental and behavioral health care services in Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot Counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore. All CCHS offices and program sites are accredited and certified as Primary Care Medical Homes by the Joint Commission. In 2019, CCHS provided care for over 29,915 patients throughout all six (6) health center locations, school-based wellness centers and migratory agricultural worker clinics.

**Purpose**

In order to successfully implement the CCHS strategic plan, an investment must be made in facilities. The facility in Federalsburg, Maryland, needs replacement so that access to quality care is readily available for residents of our communities. This project will provide greater access to medical, dental and behavioral health care to the residents of Caroline County thereby improving health outcomes.

**Project Description**

CCHS proposes to construct a one floor building to address the region's increased need for preventive and comprehensive primary care, behavioral health, oral health, and women's health services. When fully operational, CCHS will model a "Medical Home," state of the art facility utilizing the latest technologies to provide an "exceptional patient experience". Any new facility will include design measures to allow CCHS to better serve the community in the event of another pandemic like COVID-19.

Services to be Provided:

Today, the Federalsburg facility includes medical and dental care only. The new facility will include behavioral health and prenatal care as well as more space for medical and dental care.

CCHS serves as a training site for medical and dental students and dental residents. Our dental residency is expanding to include 2 additional residents as well as adding pediatric dental residents.

The need for a new facility in Federalsburg has become more evident as CCHS has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. To care for patients that are experiencing flu like or respiratory symptoms, CCHS erected a tent outside of the Federalsburg health center to provide curbside visits for patients that need to be seen by a health care provider. Services include testing for flu, strep throat and COVID-19.

Any new facility would be built with at least one isolation room so that patients can be seen without

interaction with others. This design would help to further limit the risk of exposure to patients, families and staff members. The site also needs to be built in a manner that allows for drive thru services to occur in the event of another pandemic.

As a result of COVID-19, many patients, families and communities have been impacted financially and have experienced an increase in depression, anxiety and substance use. CCHS proposes to add behavioral health service to the Federalsburg location in the new facility which have been identified as a need based on a yearlong assessment conducted by the organization.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Dental Association are working on new guidelines and recommendations for dental practices to keep staff and patients safe. These measures will include changes to HVAC systems and overall air filtration systems which will require re-engineering of many practices across the country.

Overall, more space is required to meet the health care needs of the communities we serve.

Anticipated Square Footage: 15,000 square feet

**Cost**

- $6.1M

**Project Partners**

- Caroline County
- Talbot County
- Caroline County Economic Development
- Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism
- Town of Federalsburg
- Maryland Rural Health Association
- Caroline County Health Department
- Dorchester County Health Department
- Talbot County Health Department

PROJECT CATEGORY: INFRASTRUCTURE

ACTION: JANUARY 2026, THE CONSTRUCTION OF THIS 24,000-SQUARE-FOOT FACILITY HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND DOORS OPENED IN JANUARY 2025.

## City of Cambridge Sewer and Storm Water Infrastructure Improvements

**Priority Rating - High**

**Background**

The City of Cambridge recently completed a $16M BNR (Biological Nutrient Removal) project to comply with Maryland State discharge regulations. The City financed $10.5M of the total project costs. To service the costs of the upgrade the 11,000 residents and local businesses will have to pay significantly higher sewer rates. The City has also been notified that the tiered rating system they offer large industrial users violates the Clean Water Act and they have to charge them the same rate as residential users. The combination of increased rates and the transition to flat rate fees threatens the viability of several large businesses in Cambridge.

Icelandic Seafood's sewer fees will increase by 85% and will cost them an additional $246,000 per year. At this rate they can not sustain a profitable operation and have notified the City and County that they will relocate their operation and eliminate 450 jobs in the region. Even before the rate increase the City's sewer rates were some of the highest on the eastern shore and almost as high as some metropolitan areas. The rate increase also creates a barrier to expanding existing businesses or recruiting new environmental science and tech based companies to the region.

In addition to the BNR upgrade, the City has been mandated by the Maryland State Department of the Environment to separate their storm water and sewer infrastructure by 2006. They have completed phases I and II at a cost of $3.2M. The engineering plan for Phase III is complete. To avoid having to take on more debt and implementing another rate increase that would put more local businesses at risk, the City of Cambridge is seeking financial assistance to pay for Phases III and IV of the storm water upgrades.

Project Description/Strategy
Complete Phases III and IV of the storm water and sewer separation project mandated by the Maryland State Department of the Environment.

Cost

| | |
|---|---|
| Phase III – Oak Street and Willis Street | $1,075,000 |
| Phase IV- West End Ave and Choptank Ave | $1,075,000 |
| Total | $2,150,000 |

Project Partners
- City of Cambridge
- EDA
- USDA

PROJECT CATEGORY: PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT

COMPLETED: ALL FOUR PHASES COMPLETED BY 2006

## Wastewater Treatment Systems – Improvement and Development

**Priority Rating – High**

### Background

Wastewater treatment is an essential infrastructure requirement for businesses. Many of the Mid-Shore business districts and communities are served by systems that are at capacity or require upgrades to meet State and Federal requirements for biological nutrient removal. Some of the businesses in smaller towns are still using septic systems that are cumbersome and cannot accommodate growth. Improved wastewater treatment infrastructure has been identified as a priority by the CEDS committee and in the Governor's Task Force Report for Economic Development on the Eastern Shore.

### Project Description/Strategy

To ensure the region has the capacity to handle future growth, the Mid-Shore Council has commissioned an engineering firm to conduct an assessment of the priority wastewater treatment needs in the region and develop regional solutions. Many of the counties and municipalities are in the process of updating their comprehensive water and sewer plans.

### Cost

The regional wastewater assessment is financed by the Mid-Shore Regional Council. Future expansion or development of systems will require a collaborative funding effort.

Project Partners

- Caroline County
- Dorchester County
- Talbot County
- Mid-Shore Municipalities
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- Maryland State Department of the Environment

PROJECT CATEGORY: PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT

COMPLETED: NOVEMBER 2003

## Talbot County Bio-Solids Treatment Facility

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

The Bio-Solids Facility is located near the Town of Easton and serves over 16,000 commercial and residential properties having on-site sewage disposal systems (septic systems) in Talbot and Caroline Counties as indicated within the respective County Management Septage Plans. The treatment facility needs to be upgraded to address permit compliance issues related to processing septage, adding new brown grease acceptance and treatment services, and addressing various worker safety issues.

By improving the septage treatment capabilities this facility will be able to comply with all permit requirements and avoid future processing issues that could hamper the facility's ability to meet daily demands. Interruptions in the processing of septage would impact 20 businesses located in Dorchester, Caroline, Talbot, and Queen Anne's Counties that pump out septic systems and impact a large number of residential and commercial properties trying to maintain their septic systems. In addition, the proposed improvements would address longstanding worker safety issues.

When this facility was privately owned the method for accepting and disposing brown grease generated odors that impacted the neighboring residential properties. In reviewing the acceptance and treatment of brown grease which is collected from in-ground grease traps, the County focused on developing a new treatment strategy that processed the mixture of water and grease within enclosed tanks equipped with odor control systems compared to the previous method of concentrating grease in an open tank. The addition of brown grease treatment would assist restaurants in the Midshore Region in maintaining their in-ground grease traps and provide a long-term solution for preventing grease from entering the sewer lines connected to municipal wastewater treatment plants serving residents in the Midshore Region.

**Purpose**

After concentrating the brown grease, the County would dewater the grease within an enclosed building. In developing a treatment solution, the County has created an energy sustainability strategy that will utilize the BTU value of the dewatered grease. In addition, the County is proposing to pilot the use of dried switch grass as a filter mat for the grease and then burning the grease and switch grass to produce steam for drying and electricity to be used on-site.

This overall strategy for grease will address a growing concern on the Eastern Shore related to environmentally sustainable facilities for the acceptance and treatment of brown grease. The only facility accepting brown grease within the Midshore Region is the Hurlock Wastewater Treatment Plant. However, the grease disposed within the treatment lagoon has presented operational concerns, and the only other facility accepting grease is

located in Delaware. The lack of a treatment facility within about 30 miles of the Town of Easton as well as Queen Anne's and Caroline Counties, exposes businesses to higher transportation costs. In addition, any interruptions at the Hurlock Wastewater Treatment Plant would adversely affect businesses pumping out grease traps and restaurants in Dorchester County would need an alternative treatment facility. The added brown grease acceptance and treatment operations would provide restaurants in Dorchester, Talbot, Caroline, and Queen Anne's Counties with a long-term solution to treating brown grease and will assist the 20 businesses located in these counties in maintaining lower transportation costs. As transportation costs rise due to increased distances and increased fuel prices, the on-going maintenance of grease traps could be dropped or abandoned by various restaurants thus exposing municipal wastewater treatment systems to clogged sewer lines that result in sanitary sewer overflows and increased maintenance costs at the treatment facilities.

As wastewater treatment plants are upgraded with Enhanced Nutrient Removal and need to meet Total Maximum Daily Loads, these facilities are prohibiting the disposal of brown grease within the sewer collection systems. With limited treatment facilities accepting and disposing brown grease, these improvements are needed to support the businesses as increased regulations impact the treatment and disposal of brown grease.

The improvement of this facility will help attain the following goals and objectives which are concurrent to the CEDS goals and objectives:

- To assure adequate public services and infrastructure to support and complement the targeted level of economic growth; and
- To assure a diversity of economic opportunities throughout the Midshore Region that are consistent with the character of the Eastern Shore and its capacity to provide public services; and
- To improve and expand the capacity of the treatment facility to meet present needs and future commercial and general population growth; and
- To improve and protect the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries that supports the commercial interests of the region and general population.

To accomplish and meet the goals and objectives of the Chesapeake Bay Agreement, Talbot County, since 2007, has completed and anticipates the following to be completed:

- Constructing a Renewable Energy Demonstration Project to generate 600 kilowatts of electricity
- Completing the Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Reports for future grant and loan funding
- Setting meetings with waste haulers to update them on the progress of improvements
- Developing strategies to maintain pricing for at least five years due to the on-going issues with the economy

**Project Description/Strategy**

- Constructing tanks, odor control, dewatering building, boilers and steam generator for the disposal of brown grease.
- Construction of after-hour unloading system, expanding process tanks and improving chemical feed systems and replacing screening equipment.

**Cost**

- $1.5M for Grease Treatment Technologies
- $2.5M for Septage Treatment Improvements

**Total $4.0M**

**Project Partners**

- Talbot County
- Caroline County
- Dorchester County (Potential Project Partner)
- USDA
- Maryland Department of the Environment

PROJECT CATEGORY: PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT

COMPLETED: CONSTRUCTION WAS COMPLETED IN OCTOBER 2017.

## Response to Black and Decker Closure – Economic Adjustment Strategy

**Priority Rating - High**

**Background**

In November of 2002 Black and Decker, the largest employer in the Mid-Shore Region, announced that it will close its plant in Easton in December 2003 and subsequently lay off more than 1,300 people. Seventy five percent of the employees at Black and Decker reside in Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot counties. In a region already under significant economic distress this closure is creating severe hardships for the local citizens and private industries that cater to Black and Decker and their employees.

The CEDS committee and local elected officials are now facing the challenge of identifying the planning requirements, infrastructure, and training facilities that will be needed to grow emerging industry clusters, and attract new knowledge based and specialty manufacturing companies that will rebuild and diversify our economy.

**Project Summary**

Develop an economic adjustment strategy and implementation plan that will include the following:

1) A detailed needs assessment of training required to prepare our workforce for new higher wage jobs in industry clusters that have been identified in the CEDS as growth opportunities in the Region. These clusters include:

   a) Medical technology
   b) Aviation technology and service
   c) Agriculture processing technologies
   d) Marine/agriculture/bio science
   e) Environmental science and testing labs
   f) Homeland defense industries
   g) Contract/prototype specialty manufacturing for biotech companies in DC and Baltimore area

2) Bring delegation of elected officials to a community that has successfully broadened their economy in response a large plant closure/dislocation to interview elected officials, companies and ED Directors.

3) Develop specific short-term and long-term strategies (marketing and recruitment) for building out the above industry clusters, where market demand can be justified, and define costs associated with each activity.

4) Identification of specific opportunities relative to viable clusters for incubation and development of other forms of entrepreneurial infrastructure

5) Identification of infrastructure and operating costs of recommendations that result from task 4.

6) Long term job creation and investment potential (private sector) related to recommended implementation activities.

7) Long term job creation and private investment potential associated with build out of industry clusters mentioned above.

8) Projected timeline for achieving goals and performance measurement criteria

**Cost**

The estimated cost of for the work plan above is $100,000

**Project Partners**

- EDA
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- Chesapeake Bay Region Technical Center for Excellence
- Talbot County Office of Economic Development
- Easton Town Council

**Results**

This project was completed in March 2004 and briefed in July 2004.There were two primary recommendations.

- Create a technology incubator in Dorchester County affiliated with Horn Point Laboratory.
- Create an access to capital program to support the financing of entrepreneurs.

PROJECT CATEGORY: STRATEGIC PLANNING, ANALYSIS, AND ACCESS TO CAPITAL

COMPLETED: MARCH 2004

## Chesapeake Marine Trades Academy

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

The Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries boast the longest shoreline in the continental US. The Bay is world renowned for being a "sailor's paradise" and boasts being the boating capitol of the US. There are over 200,000 registered vessels, and according to the National Marine Manufactures Association's 2013 survey the state has 178,753 recreational boats. Over 1,043 recreational boating industry businesses generate $1 billion in spending and create approximately 19,477 jobs.

The vision for the Chesapeake Marine Trades Academy (CMTA) is to offer skills training to students seeking employment in the maritime trades, as well as offer classes for those individuals interested in obtaining professional certifications for recreational boating or the commercial marine industry. Currently, the workforce serving this industry sector is an aging workforce impacting the viability and overall economic health of the industry.

Jobs in the recreational marine sector are centered among boat services, marinas, and boat building businesses. These jobs include engine repair, rigging, fiberglass repair/hull manufacturing, boat related designs, woodworking, yacht brokerages/boat sales, metal working, chartering, marinas, docking services and support services.
Many of these jobs include construction related occupations such as carpenters, engine mechanics, welders, painters, electricians, marine architects, and project managers. (Source: Skills Gap Analysis: Prepared for Marine Trades Association of Maryland. Charles Petrocci, March 2014)

According to a study conducted by the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) and the Recreational Marine Research Center At Michigan State University, Maryland's congressional district 1 has 49,776 recreational boats, 343 recreational boating related businesses; a total of 5,394 jobs and an annual recreational boating related spending of $280.6 million. The largest sector contains 75 boat service businesses employing 1,410 workers and creates $337 million in annual recreational boating-related spending. These 343 recreational boating related businesses can be separated into two categories: direct marine businesses and indirect marine businesses. Direct marine businesses include boat repair, marinas, boat building, boat dealers, marine machinery, equipment and supply merchants, recreational goods and supplies sales, navigation services, vessel transportation, boat rentals, chartering, boat clubs, tourism by boating, boating instruction schools and boat storage. Indirect marine businesses include fiberglass and resin supplies, paints, coatings and adhesives, canvas and ropes, wood products, fabricated metals, plastic products, design services, industry publishing, boat transportation, trucking,

diving and salvage, electronic repairs, engine repair, maintenance, and legal services.

In Caroline, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Dorchester, and Wicomico Counties, there are approximately 74 marinas and/or boatyards, yet, there is a critical shortage of skilled marine tradesmen. In order to assess marine related job and skills shortages among businesses in Maryland, a survey was designed and circulated by the Maryland Marine Trades Association. The survey was made available to over 300 marine industry businesses throughout the Chesapeake Bay region. Approximately 51 marine industry businesses of the 300 surveyed responded to the questionnaire. Here is a summary of some of the findings:

Estimated Future Employment Openings

1) 5-20 employees (90%)
2) 1-4 employees (45%)

Unfilled Qualified Positions – This question addresses the projected need for skilled employees for the new season.

1) 1-5 employees (100%)

Workforce Age – This question identifies the average age of current employees at marine businesses.

1) Age 41-60 (78%)
2) Age 26- 40 (51%)
3) 18-25 (38%)

This data indicates that the current workforce of Maryland marine companies, including skilled workers, is an aging workforce. It is evident that these positions, through attrition, will eventually need to be filled with new employees. These statistics also support two sustainable branches for growth in the industry, one for the person setting off on a new career in the marine industry and the other for developing and sustaining a technically skilled workforce. A marine trade school in centrally located Talbot County will raise the bar on standards based work and will keep the trades professionals in steady demand.

Due to the small sample size of the Maryland Marine Trades Association Survey, the Chesapeake Marine Maritime Academy is conducting its own survey of marine business on the Eastern shore. This survey will be distributed to the marine industries on the Eastern shore with the goal of developing marine business relationships. The survey will give business names, contact information, number and age of employees as well as a detailed picture of 3 and 5-year expected job growth, skill demand and number of retirees. This detailed survey of Eastern Shore Marine businesses will be the basis of a database from which future strategies for engagement with marine business training needs will be made.

As for current relationships with marine businesses in Maryland, Chesapeake Marine Trades Academy (CMTA) currently has on its board Elliot Anderson, General

Manager, of Hinckley Yacht Service – Chesapeake. The CMTA has also had discussions with Original Equipment Manufacturers and the Maryland Marine Trades Association at this point.

While The Eastern Shore currently suffers from a lack of skilled marine tradesmen, it also contains a large pool of young adults who grew up in the labor-intensive culture of farming and seafood harvesting but are leaving the Shore to find work.
Developing and sustaining a technically skilled work force would allow these youth to remain, open new businesses, pay taxes, and raise their families here.

Many youth assume the best path to jobs is a four-year university education, yet many jobs require different form of post-secondary education. Approximately one third of jobs require postsecondary education or training, such as an associate's degree, technical certificate or an industry credential (Bureau of Labor Statistics) - exactly what can be offered through a trade school.

In addition, the Marine Trades Academy would also be an affordable option leading to well-paying jobs for many students who do not complete the graduation requirements of Chesapeake College, as well as, students currently graduating from high school within the catchment area of the College.

The Chesapeake Marine Trade Academy (CMTA) will create access to the highly effective trades training model and address many of the challenges facing young people in today's unfriendly labor market. It is also the intention of the CMTA to collaborate with the Department of Labor and local educational institutions to help identify students who may be interested in pursuing a career in the marine trades. Once trained and employed, these young students will replace the current experienced older retiring workforce, and because of their skill level, will help growing businesses in the region become productive and grow.

**Purpose**

The vision for the Chesapeake Marine Trades Academy (CMTA) is to offer skills training to students seeking employment in the maritime trades, as well as offer classes for those individuals interested in obtaining professional certifications for recreational boating or the commercial marine industry.

The CMTA will:

- Provide vocational training to individuals seeking a career in the maritime industry,
- Link graduates to high wage job opportunities,
- Offer an option to advanced level training or professional mariner careers, and,
- Develop a highly skilled labor force to sustain local and regional marine-related businesses.

The Chesapeake Marine Trades Academy will be a private non-profit organization and will seek 501c3 status through the IRS. A board of directors has been formed. Members include: John Schroeder, Guy Beckley, Douglas Blackmore, Elliot Anderson, and William Brashares. The CMTA has also formed an Advisory Board.

The Easton Economic Development Corporation (EEDC) will support the CMTA project with technical assistance and may pursue funding to support its initial efforts.

**Project Description**

Located on the North Fork of the Tred Avon River at Easton Point, the Chesapeake Marine Trades Academy will be based at 911 Port Street, Easton, MD. This commercial waterfront property is one mile from downtown Easton, has ~250 ft of bulkhead with ~15 ft of water depth. On site is a large brick building of ~4,000 sq ft with several office spaces, 2 baths, 2 workshop areas, plenty of off-street parking, and room for expansion.

Classes offered will be:

- Marine trades
    - Small engine and marine diesel engine repair and service
    - Yacht maintenance and repair
    - Marine electronics installation and repair
    - Fiberglass maintenance and repair
    - Marine air conditioning and refrigeration
    - Marine welding

- Professional certifications
    - USCG Captain's License certification
    - STCW safety certification
    - US Power Squadron boater safety

CMTA has approached Chesapeake College and they have expressed strong interest in supporting this program as a "continuing education" program. In addition, CMTA has been approached by Baltimore City Community College who has expressed interest in establishing this program as an "accredited" program in the State of Maryland. Their jurisdiction is for the entire State of Maryland.

It is also anticipated that Chesapeake College will partner in providing necessary remedial courses in the areas of mathematics, science and English, where necessary.

Supervised hands-on training for enrolled students will be available on private boats brought to the dock in need of maintenance or repairs. This combination of classroom work with real world experience and hands-on training will prepare students for a career in the maritime trades upon their graduation.

While a marketing plan has not been developed, it is anticipated that marketing efforts will include direct marketing through the public school systems of the Mid- Shore counties, direct advertising, a public relations campaign, the establishment of a tuition grant fund, and social media. Based on preliminary research, the market for programs developed by the CMTA is for the mid-Atlantic region; however, initial marketing efforts will be focused on recruiting students in the Mid-Shore region and expand as necessary.

It is standard practice for trade academies to establish tuition and have students pay such tuition. However, recognizing that in the immediate target market area some students will not be able to afford to pay tuition, a partnership is being developed with the Mid-Shore Community Foundation to establish a scholarship program.

The final pro forma for the operation of the school has not been completed. It is estimated that the Academy will need 15 students to be viable.

Job placement for graduates will be a high priority for CMTA and will be a programmatic function offered to students. Based on our preliminary research, there is a high demand for trained workers in the marine trades that will likely continue to be as the current workforce ages. Post-apprenticeship, these workers can be expected to make $60-70,000 annually.

There is a significant supplemental benefit to the investment of the Chesapeake Marine Trades Academy. This project will serve as an economic engine as well as a keystone property towards the Town of Easton's revitalization plan for the Easton Point waterfront.

The Town has indicated on its comprehensive plan that this area has Priority 1 status for annexation. Once this happens, property values will increase and a surge in various types of development is both planned and expected. This will greatly improve the prospect of expansion of the Chesapeake Marine Trades Academy.

**Project Partners**

Industry engagement has begun and is being led by Elliot Anderson, General Manager of Hinkley Yachts. Mr. Anderson has conducted a series of interviews with marina managers, suppliers, and industry leaders. He is joining the Board of Directors of the Marine Trades Association in order to solidify that connection.
During the winter of 2015, a survey of industry leaders will be conducted in partnership with the Marine Trades Association and other organizations. The results of that survey will inform CMTA on the needs of the industry, the scope and type of jobs anticipated, the training required, salary ranges, and available resources to support the initiative. While some of that data has been previously collected through industry surveys, the proposed survey will expand and update the information.

Regional buy-in will be obtained through industry support and commitments, commitments and support from local leaders, including the Mid-Shore Regional Council, and elected officials.

The Chesapeake Marine Trades Academy is partnering with various marine industry companies, trade groups, and government agencies. In addition, it is endorsed by the following.

List of Supporters for the Chesapeake Marine Trades Academy

- Scott Jensen, Asst Secty, MD Dept of Labor, Licensing and Regs
- Amy Fusting, MD DLLR EARN program
- Tracy Ward, Exec Dir, Easton Econ Develop Commission
- Herb Miller, EEDC Board Chair/CEO of Western Development
- Lehr Jackson, EEDC Board Member/Developer
- Paige Bethke, Director, Talbot County Econ Develop
- Buck Duncan, Midshore Community Foundation
- Mike Thielke, Exec Dir, Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center
- Barbara Viniar, President, Chesapeake Community College
- Jean Henry, Baltimore City Community College
- Susan Zellers, Exec Dir, Marine Trades Assn of MD
- Jay Dayton, MTAM Board Member/Avon Dixon Insurance
- Ronda Bollinger, Board President, Upper Bay Marine Trades Assn
- John Adey, President, American Boat & Yacht Council
- Cris Gardner, Manager of Education Services, American Boat & Yacht Council
- William Akridge, Founder, MESCSA and educator
- Elliot L. Anderson, Gen Mgr, Hinckley Yacht Service-Chesapeake
- Guy Beckley, US Navy Landing Craft Program/Marine Trades Educator
- Douglas Blackmore, Retired Director of High School Learning Support/Business Entrepreneur
- Mark Yehle, Steinberg Partnerships

**Project Cost**

$100,000 planning and permits
$400,000 build-out of the building and shop into classrooms and labs
$250,000 school equipment and tools
$50,000 parking lot and landscape improvements

PROJECT CATEGORY: CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

COMPLETED: AS OF 2019-2020 THE PROGRAM WAS IN ITS 4$^{TH}$ YEAR OF OPERATION.

## Chesapeake College Associate of Applied Science in Agriculture

**Priority Rating – High**

**Background**

As a regional community college serving Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot counties, Chesapeake College is more than an institution of higher education. The College harnesses the talent and resources necessary for students, employees and citizens of the region to thrive as individuals and as contributors to their communities and to society. It provides a foundation for educational access and community and economic development.

The College's Center for Leadership in Environmental Education (CLEEn) is an interdisciplinary academic institute with a mandate to serve as a regional catalyst for environmental sustainability. This mandate is outlined in the College's strategic plan, which states that "Chesapeake College... has an obligation to make a positive impact on the environment through partnerships, leadership, education, and modeling."

To meet this goal, CLEEn seeks to be a hub for building networks within the region and has done so with education, workforce development, and community outreach in mind. This has led to the development of degree programs in Landscape Design and Landscape Management. The success of these programs and community interest have led the College to add Agriculture as a third degree program developed through CLEEn.

**Purpose**

Chesapeake College has begun the development of its Agriculture program in response to specific workforce development needs.

A recent national study conducted by Purdue University in partnership with the USDA projected that employment opportunities in food, agriculture, renewable natural resources, and environment occupations will grow more than 5% for college graduates with bachelor's or higher degrees. An average of 35,400 new U.S. graduates with expertise in these preferred fields are expected to fill 61% of the 57,900 average annual openings with the remaining filled by graduates with less- preferred expertise outside the industry. This suggests that in the coming years, the demand for graduates with agriculture degrees will not be met. Chesapeake College's agriculture program will help local students along a path to bachelor's degrees in agricultural fields.

According to the USDA's 2012 Census of Agriculture, the five county region served by Chesapeake College represents 34% or 686,400 acres of the 2,030,745 acres of land in farms in the state of Maryland. The amount of farmland in four of our five service counties has increased over the past five years, and the market value of products sold in each county has increased significantly over the same five years. The Census also reveals a need for a new generation of farmers, as the average age of principal farm operators in the five county region is 61.

Additionally, a survey conducted of business owners working in the agriculture industry also indicates a need for a better trained agriculture workforce. Only half of respondents indicated that they are satisfied with the local working pool, and those who were not cited lack of training and skills as a challenge for their business. When asked how important it is that their employees have completed certain levels of education, 21% said some college was important, 17% said an associate's degree was important, and 14% said a bachelor's degree was important.

These indications of the demand for a stronger agriculture workforce are complicated in the state of Maryland by the fact that there are currently no 2-year college degree programs in agriculture. The only academic certification in agriculture at any community college in the state is a lower division Certificate in Agribusiness at Harford Community College. This absence of other associate's degree programs in agriculture positions Chesapeake College to be the sole provider filling a gap in training for the agriculture industry.

**Project Description**

In response to the community concern, Chesapeake College began development of the agriculture program. A focus group convened in spring 2015 to develop the priority topics to be included in the program. In collaboration with professionals from the field, notably the University of Maryland Extension Service, we researched and developed syllabi for the 11 new courses created for the program throughout the summer and early fall. The program is currently awaiting approval from the Maryland Higher Education Commission and classes will be offered starting Fall 2016.

The agriculture degree consists of 60 credits, and students who successfully complete the program will receive an Associates of Applied Science (AAS) degree in agriculture. New courses include soil science, animal science, vegetable and crop production, agricultural marketing, farm management, agricultural economics, integrated pest management, and special topics in agriculture. These courses will include laboratory components as well as visits to local agricultural operations to provide students with hands-on learning experiences.

The special topics course will address timely issues facing the local agricultural community and present new technology available to farmers. The objectives of the agriculture program are to provide hands-on instruction of topics in agriculture to students from the local community, through laboratory classes and farm visits, and prepare students to immediately find employment upon graduation with a family farming operation or local agricultural service provider. These objectives directly align with the mission of Chesapeake College.

We anticipate different types of students will enter the agriculture program. We are likely to attract young students on the Eastern Shore who may not have initially planned on attending a four-year institution. Students would likely be interested in obtaining a two-year degree and begin working either on a local farm or with an agricultural service provider in the area. Other students may want to continue their education beyond the AAS degree and transfer to a nearby four-year institution. The agriculture program will serve these different types of students; however, a full-time faculty member must be hired to serve as the program coordinator to advise students on course selection, career opportunities, and internships, and to perform additional tasks to ensure the success of the program.

The program coordinator will be responsible for not only overseeing the agriculture program on many

levels but also for teaching courses. In order to ensure a consistent message is being delivered throughout the program, the program coordinator will organize the adjunct faculty who will teach the individual courses. A critical role for the program coordinator will be to develop a relationship with the producer who will farm the 55 tillable acres surrounding Chesapeake College. Ideally, the producer will allow students to observe farming events on the College's land and communicate with the students about the farming practices used.

Additionally, the program coordinator will seek out and maintain a database of local producers, and local members of the agriculture support community, who are interested in utilizing student interns in their operations. As students are selecting an internship to complete their cooperative work experience credits, the program coordinator will pair each student with an appropriate work experience. Relationship building with local agriculture service providers will be a critical role of the program coordinator to ensure graduates of the agriculture program will be ideal employees of these businesses. Articulation agreements between Chesapeake College and nearby four-year institutions will be developed by the program coordinator to ensure transfer credits are awarded to students who have completed the agriculture program at Chesapeake College. Recruiting students to the agriculture program will also be the responsibility of the program coordinator, through communication with and presentations to local high schools, FFA organizations, and 4H clubs.

Students within the agriculture program will require an advisor, available full time, to provide individualized attention, due to the diverse nature of the student population. For the students who are interested in completing the AAS degree and gaining employment on a local farm, the program coordinator will match these students with local producers and assist these students with additional skill-building opportunities. For students who are interested in transferring to four-year institutions, the program coordinator will encourage students to complete courses with credits that will transfer to other institutions. The program coordinator will provide students with general advice and resources regarding local agriculture.

**Project Cost**

| *Expense Category* | *Description* | *Cost* |
|---|---|---|
| Salaries and Benefits | Full-Time Program Coordinator/Faculty, 20 Adjunct Faculty Load Hours | $88,144 |
| Equipment and Supplies | Technology (coordinator computer/iPad), Course Equipment and Supplies for labs/field work/teaching farm | $30,000 |
| Travel | Coordinator travel to community organizations and schools | $1,000 |
| Marketing | Program brochures, advertising | $5,000 |
| Student Scholarships | To help grow program enrollment | $5,000 |
| **TOTAL EXPENSE** | | **$129,144** |

**Project Partnering**

- Nicole Fiorellino, University of Maryland Extension
- Shannon Dill, University of Maryland Extension
- Andy Andrews, Chesapeake Harvest
- TracyWard, Easton Economic Development Corporation
- Jay Martin, Provident Organic Farm
- David Schmidt, Dorchester County grain farmer and Chesapeake College alumnus
- Gannon Farms
- Frank Coale, Ph.D., University of Maryland
- Mark Reiger, Ph.D., Dean, University of Delaware College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Eastern Shore Land Conservancy
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation

PROJECT CATEGORY: CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ACTION: JANUARY 2023, CHESAPEAKE COLLEGE HAS SUCCESSFULLY ACCOMPLISHED ALL THE OBJECTIVES OUTLINED INSIDE THIS PROJECT.

## St. Michaels Wastewater Treatment Plant and Sewer Collection System

**Priority Rating – High**

**Background**

The Region II Wastewater Treatment Plant located near and serving the Town of St. Michaels and surrounding communities is completing upgrades through the Bay Restoration Fund, and to address life expectancy issues of the existing system, and plan for future development. In accordance with the Facility Plan and the Talbot County Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan, the facility is presently being constructed with a capacity of 660,000 gallons per day with a peak flow mitigation system being design to address high flow experienced during wet weather events. The Enhance Nutrient Removal upgrade is expected to be completed by December 2007.

To address sewer system overflows and reduce peak flows experienced during wet weather events, a detailed analysis and an aggressive design and construction improvement program has been initiated to address inflow and infiltration into the gravity sewer collection system. During wet weather events, sewer system overflows occur in the Town of St. Michaels' harbor areas creating unsightly attractions for tourists and impacting the public health and the environment. Because of continuing problems with the gravity sewer collection system in the Town of St. Michaels, Talbot County hired an engineering consultant to design pump station improvements to eliminate sewer overflows. The pump station improvements were completed by directionally boring a force main from the pump station to the wastewater treatment plant and upgrading the pump station with new pumps, controls and emergency generators. This improvement will eliminate overflows that result from the gravity sewer collections becoming surcharged during wet weather events then over flowing when the force mains pump wastewater sewer lines and ultimately out of the system.

Because of the leaking sewer collection system, Talbot County has directed its engineering consultant to develop an aggressive rehabilitation program using a computer model to assist the County in implementing capital improvements. Using this program, the County is presently completing manhole rehabilitations and replacements, and sewer line rehabilitation through slip lining with this work being completed by May 2007. There habilitation and replacement of sewer lines and manholes is planned for the future with all this work reducing inflow and infiltration within the gravity sewer collection system.

These improvement projects will help attain the following CEDS goals and objectives:

- To assure adequate public services and infrastructure to support and complement the targeted level of economic growth; and
- To assure a diversity of economic opportunities within the Town of St. Michaels, and surrounding communities in the county that are consistent with the character of the community and its capacity to provide public services; and
- To improve and expand the capacity of the wastewater treatment and gravity sewer collection systems to meet present needs and future commercial and general population growth;
- To improve and protect the water quality of the Miles River that supports the commercial interests of the region and general population.

To accomplish the CEDS goals and objectives and meet the goals and objectives of the Chesapeake

Bay Agreement, Talbot County, since 2001, has been completed and anticipates in completing the following:

- In-pipe Flow Monitoring and Smoke Testing (July 2003) - $48,000
- Design of Biological Nutrient Removal Upgrade and Expansion of the Region II Wastewater Treatment Plant (February 2003) - $450,000
- Sewer Collection System Study and Computer Model (October 2004) - $278,000
- Biological Nutrient Removal Upgrade and Expansion (December 2007) - $13,500,000
- Pump Station Improvements Construction (May 2007) - $2,500,000

**Project Description/Strategy**

- Pump Station Improvements Construction -$1,300,000
- Sewer Collection System Improvements – ($5,000,000 – County to schedule high priority improvements first and budget improvements in future fiscal years. Funding assistance is desired for a portion of the cost.)

**Cost**

- $1.3M for Pump Station Improvements
- $2.5M for sewer collection improvements

**Total $3.8M**

**Project Partners**

- Talbot County
- St. Michaels
- EDA
- USDA
- Maryland Department of the Environment

PROJECT CATEGORY: PUBLIC WORKS

ACTION: JANUARY 2025, PROJECT COMPLETED WITH THE SEWER REPLACEMENT AND REHABILITATION PROJECT BEING CLOSED OUT IN 2024.

## Co-Working Initiative – hotDesks

**Priority Rating – Medium**



### Background

Working from home seems like a good idea at first to most entrepreneurs and startup business owners; a 30-second commute and no overhead sound very appealing. But after a short while the reality of working in isolation while trying to present a professional appearance from home begins to set in. Distractions from noisy pets to active children begin to impose on ones ability to get things done. The absence of a professional business setting where one can interact with peers can lead to creative blocks and tunnel vision.

### Purpose

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC) proposes to establish a network of Co-working Spaces across Maryland's Eastern Shore where participating members can work, meet with clients, access professional and technical resources – and communicate with like-minded peers. Whether they are a solopreneur, a consultant, a virtual assistance or project manager, or an executive visiting from out of town (for a company or a nonprofit), the Co-working Spaces available at hotDesks will be just the place they've been looking for; to get things done.

The culture of hotDesks will be based on the belief that people drive progress through critical connections and an idea only gets you about 10% of the way, while 90% is in the execution and the network.

As part of developing an overall Entrepreneurial Ecosystem on the Eastern Shore, hotDesks will serve as a stepping stone to the development of other regional initiatives; such as incubators, accelerators, etc. that together will aid in the creation of a burgeoning and significant economic engine for the region.

### Project Description

Initial hotDesks locations are planned to be in two strategically placed locations throughout the Eastern Shore during 2012 and 2013; Easton and Salisbury. Additional Centers can be added as interest dictates (i.e. Berlin and Cambridge). The first locations planned will be located in Salisbury (within the Tri-County Council of the Lower Shore's (TCCLS) new facility on Route 50 and Walston Switch Road, consisting of a 1,600 square foot area in the front of the building) and Easton. Each facility will have a secure access card-entry system as well as a digital video surveillance system which will record who enters and utilizes the facility.

Each space will consist of the following:

- Open plan office areas or Work Studio (with partitions and partition walls used only in moderation)
- Walls blanketed with whiteboards

- A gathering area with comfortable furniture
- Provide users the availability of a mailing address and mailbox for mail and package delivery
- Provide reliable high speed internet
- Provide cell phone signal booster to insure quality reception
- Availability for land-line phone service (at user's additional expense)
- Provide access to a printer, scanner, copier, fax, and shredder
- Conference room(s) and a lounge area to meet with clients (with telephone conference and video/web conference availability, white boards, flip charts, digital projector)
- Provide access to kitchenette or cafeteria (unlimited coffee, water, popcorn)
- Provide access to Virtual Local Area Network (VLAN) service
- Provide access to Voice Over Internet Phone (VOIP) service

**Project Partners:**

- Talbot County
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center
- Easton Utilities
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland

**Project Cost:** $50,000

PROJECT CATEGORY: STRATEGIC PLANNING, ANALYSIS AND ACCESS TO CAPITAL

ACTION: JANUARY 2025, THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED WITH TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP FROM EASTERN SHORE ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTER (ESEC) TO INDIVIDUAL OPERATORS. NETWORK OF LOCATIONS WORKS INDEPENDENTLY.

## The Arc Port Street Commons Project

**Priority Rating – Medium**

### Background

The Town of Easton has embarked on a redevelopment plan to enhance the economic vitality of the town by revitalizing and connecting Easton's waterfront district to its thriving downtown via the Port Street corridor.

The Eastern Shore of Maryland has its own unique history, culture, and opportunities for the families that call it home. However, even though there are more than 47,000 people with disabilities living on the Eastern Shore (American Community Survey of 2019, 5-Year Estimate, U.S. Census Bureau), the region remains underserved. There is a shortage of service providers for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities despite how important disability rights, inclusivity, and accessibility are for economic development and community health.

In 2007, The Arc Central Chesapeake Region (The Arc) responded to requests for greater access to services starting in Talbot County and grew to include Kent and Queen Anne's counties as well as the entire Mid-Shore Region. In 2018, The Arc began providing referral services in Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester counties meaning that, over the last three years, The Arc's services on the Eastern Shore have grown by 82%.

The Arc is committed to ensuring equity, inclusion, and belonging for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities on the Mid-Shore and knows that any plan for development and revitalization in the Town of Easton must include access, opportunity, and services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

### Purpose

Since 1961, The Arc has been focused on creating equity for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities across Anne Arundel County and the Eastern Shore through services that support people to live, work, learn, and connect with their communities.

Over the next five years, The Arc aims to grow its Eastern Shore programs by at least 60%, serving 150 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the Mid-Shore region. Services will focus on access to housing and wraparound living-related services, workforce development and ongoing job support, community-based day services and other supports necessary for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live meaningful, self-determined lives.

The Arc is committed to the Mid-Shore and the Town of Easton, emblemized by its investment in a property on Port Street purchased in July 2021 where The Arc will develop and build its Eastern Shore headquarters. This mixed-use, nearly 20,000-square-foot eco-forward building will be bordered by the Rail Trail and will play a major role in linking Easton's waterfront to its historic downtown. It will be an invaluable resource for the community of Easton, adding to the revitalization of the town in a meaningful, profound way as a first-of-its-kind community space that will bring more opportunities to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. As the Town of Easton ushers in a new era of progress and development, The Arc's commitment to innovative support services, universal design, and self-determination for people with disabilities must be essential to that progress.

**Project Description**

The Arc's **Eastern Shore Headquarters in Easton** will spur much needed economic development in the historic Port Street district. The investment will include:

**Community Hub** – A gathering space open to the public where the people and families The Arc serves can access resources, host support groups, receive family navigation services, and connect. The Community Hub will expand existing employer-based training and support initiatives.

**Day Service Space –** A conveniently located and fully accessible space that enables people with significant disabilities and medical issues to access life enrichment programs.

**Behavioral Health Suite** – An environment that encourages daily success for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Arc's team will support people through mental health counseling services and other behavioral health services.

**Office and Training Spaces –** The rapid expansion of Eastern Shore programs and services requires additional physical spaces and supports for employees to better respond to community needs. The Arc will also include a dedicated area to educate community members and The Arc's team of professionals on disability-related issues.

**Affordable/Workforce Housing** – The Arc will offer affordable and workforce housing for low- and moderate-income households whether or not they receive services from The Arc. Affordable housing is a core element of The Arc's services as well as Chesapeake Neighbors, an Arc Central Chesapeake company whose mission is to provide housing for people with disabilities and/or those who are low income. The Arc and Chesapeake Neighbors will manage eight apartments on site.

**New Jobs Created** – In addition to the economic impact that developing a 20,000-square-foot mixed-used building will create, The Arc's Port Street Commons will provide a minimum of 20 new direct support professional positions, 10 administrative and behavioral health support roles, as well as another 10 new positions through partner organizations. In addition, The Arc anticipates supporting at least 25 new people with intellectual and development disabilities through our workforce development services, supporting them through the interview and hiring processes at businesses across the Mid-Shore.

**Total Investment in the Project**

The Arc's Port Street Commons is a $7 million project, with $4.5 million projected to come from individual, private donors. $2 million is anticipated from a variety of government funding avenues, and approximately $500,000 from foundation support. The Arc supported the initial purchase of the Port Street property with reserves from operations.

**Project Partners and/or Partners The Arc Plans to Work in Close Collaboration**

- Town of Easton
- Talbot County
- Talbot County Office of Economic Development and Tourism
- Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration
- Easton Economic Development Corporation
- Mid-Shore Regional Council

**Current Development Phase**

- Planning with anticipated construction to begin spring/summer 2023

**Project Cost**

- Funding Request - $2 million - Infrastructure

PROJECT CATEGORY: CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ACTION: JANUARY 2025, THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED WITH A RIBBON CUTTING IN NOVEMBER 2024.

# Removed Projects

## Chesapeake College Regional Technology Training Center

**Priority Rating - High**

Mid-Shore CEDS goal to be addressed: #1 Ensure that there is sufficient public infrastructure (e.g. telecommunications, IT, incubators, wastewater treatment capability, roads, transportation, education facilities, technology training centers, and public parks) and investment capital to foster the development and prosperity of our existing and new industry clusters.

**Background**

Chesapeake College is a regional community college serving five counties of the Upper Eastern Shore of Maryland: Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot, Queen Anne's and Kent. The College was established in 1965 and has a commitment from the President and the Board of Trustees to provide economic development support in the region.

The College's Division of Continuing Education & Workforce Training is charged with providing training to employers throughout the five counties to improve and upgrade employee skills. The Division meets this challenge in two ways: (1) by continuously analyzing the needs of the community and offering courses from which citizens may choose; and (2) by developing and maintaining close relationships with employers throughout the region to determine their training needs and then developing customized contract training that is provided either at a College location or on-site at the company.

In 1996, the Chesapeake College Continuing Education Division was one of the first in the State to receive an Advanced Technology Center grant to build the capacity to deliver the types of training that were needed by local industry. The grant enabled the College to equip training labs for manufacturing, hospitality, and automotive industries. Training curriculum was also developed and the College has become the provider of choice when an employer wants training or professional development for their employees.

The College has developed partnerships with local employers to provide results-oriented training for their workers and as such plays a critical role in the development of the present and future workforce for the region. Project Description/Strategy

In 2000, in order to meet the growing demand by local employers for training, the College leased space on Brooks Drive in Glebe Industrial Park in Easton (Talbot County). Over $125,000 was invested to furnish and equip the facility to deliver contract training to employers throughout the region. The annual lease is $60,000.

With over 5,600 sq. ft. of space, the Brooks Drive Training Center includes a large meeting room (accommodates 50-60 people), a computer classroom with dial-up Internet access and 4 additional training rooms to accommodate about 20-25 persons each. Office space, restrooms and a kitchen/break room comprise the remainder of the space.

Additionally, there is a wireless cart with 20 laptops that are available for technology training. A new server and high speed internet connection are needed to make this location a more user-friendly resource for the entire community but most especially for the businesses in Easton, Cambridge and

Denton and the surrounding communities.

The College proposes installing a T-1 line from Brooks Drive to the College's existing network equipment at Easton Memorial Hospital, with potential Virtual Private networking capabilities built into hardware.

Because the region is rural and both the Brooks Drive Center and the Hospital are within the same LATA, Verizon is the most likely provider for the T-1 line. The following steps are necessary:

Purchase the equipment and installation from Verizon.

Lease a T1 facility from Verizon to connect the Brooks Drive Center to the College network equipment at Easton Memorial Hospital

Make minor modifications and additions to the existing College network to incorporate the new location onto the network

**Equipment needed includes**:

| | |
|---|---|
| New server | $6,000 |
| 2 work stations | $5,500 |
| Upgrade hub to a switch | $4,000 |
| Printer | $2,000 |
| Router with VPN software, DSU/CSU (includes installation) | $7,000 |
| Cabling and various connectors | $ 500 |
| T1 lease for 5 years | $25,000 ($5,000 per year) |
| Total needed | $50,000 |

**Rationale**

Maintaining a well-trained workforce is becoming an economic burden to many companies. According to the National Alliance of Business, companies have increased their spending on outsourced worker training steadily over the last decade, spending over $19 billion in 2000. Employers recognize that the community college is a stable, local and ongoing educational resource with the ability to offer a full range of education and training.

Additionally, worker training has become a key component to almost every corporation's long- range strategic plan. On-the-job training used to refer mainly to apprenticeships that provided

skills to workers learning a trade. However, technology use in the workplace has accelerated the pace of work and ramped up responsibilities and skill demands for workers at all levels. To provide workers with the skills needed to function in such an environment, companies are required to upgrade workers' knowledge and abilities continually.

Chesapeake College has the facility, the training materials, the instructors and the hardware and software needed to provide the technology training so necessary in today's corporate environment. The Brooks Drive Center is an ideal location for this type of training because it is centrally located, is in a business park and is already established, furnished, and equipped to deliver computer instruction. The missing and necessary component is better Internet access. The employers throughout the region look to the College for the short-term and customized training they need. Expanding the capacity at the Brooks Drive Center will increase the economic development strength of the entire region.

**Demonstration of Need**

The Upper Eastern Shore of Maryland, the region served by the College, comprises 20% of the landmass of the State of Maryland and 2% of the population. The population of the five counties is just over 150,000 -- 16,485 adults have less than a 9th grade education and 16,356 have education at the 9th-12th grade level but do not have a high school diploma. (See Table 1)

Table 1: Income & Education Levels by County

| County | # of People in County (All ages) | # of Hispanic Origin | Less than 9th grade Education | 9th-12th Grade – No Diploma | Percent Below Poverty |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Caroline | 31,822 | 1145 | 1,401 | 3,482 | 11.7% |
| Dorchester | 31,401 | 502 | 1,944 | 3,583 | 13.8% |
| Kent | 19,197 | 546 | 837 | 1,942 | 10.7% |
| Queen Anne | 40,563 | 444 | 1,182 | 3,258 | 7.5% |
| Talbot | 35,683 | 856 | 1,067 | 2,795 | 8.3% |

*Source: 2000 Census Data.*

**(See Attachment 1)**

The entire region has over 4,400 employers with nearly 45,000 workers. Only 50 of those employers employ 100 or more workers. Almost 85% of employers in this rural region are manufacturing firms, which require workers with high-level technology skills as well as low- skilled workers. However, the lower skilled production workers also need to understand and use technology to do their job.

The service industry is growing rapidly as the local population shifts to include more senior adults who retire to this beautiful area of the State. Hospitality, retail and small business employers all require workers who can use computer applications in the workplace. Although the seafood industry continues to be important to the region it is fast becoming an endangered species. However, even in this time-honored profession, new technology applications such as GIS and GPS are increasingly important.

In the past year, the Mid-Shore region, like many other rural communities in the country, has suffered significant loss of jobs. Manufacturers such as Airpax, Black & Decker and Hi-Tech Plastics have moved production work out of the country, leaving local residents with few options. Well over 1,000 workers have been dislocated and often need to upgrade their skills in

order to find work in more technical fields or even just to do the jobs now available in the workplace.

Although minority populations are significant throughout the Eastern Shore, Dorchester has the highest percentages of African-American and Hispanic residents and the highest level of unemployment at 11%. Of the five counties comprising the Mid-Shore, Kent, Caroline and Dorchester have the highest percentage of low-income families. A look at Effective Buying Income (Table 2) for these counties shows the range of income differences:

Table 2: Effective Buying Income

| Distribution | Caroline County | Kent County | Dorchester County |
|---|---|---|---|
| Under $15,000 | 26.7% | 24.1% | 29.0 % |
| $15,000 - $24,999 | 20.3% | 17.4% | 21.0 % |
| $25,000 - $49,999 | 38.2% | 35.3% | 34.5 % |

*Source: Maryland Department of Business & Economic Development*

Furthermore, these three counties are among the top quartile of jurisdictions in Maryland where significant percentages of families are considered at-risk. Some examples include:

- Teen mothers account for 63 of every 1,000 births in Caroline County; in Dorchester County, the ratio is 75 over 1,000.
- In 1997 40% of the births in Kent County were to unwed mothers; in Dorchester County, the percentage was 45%.
- The child poverty rate in Dorchester County is 25%.
- School dropout rates are also significant in Caroline County (6%) and in Dorchester County (5.2%).

**Source: Census Bureau and Maryland Vital Statistics**

Even though the median income level is greater, by comparison, in Talbot and Queen Anne's counties, the need for basic skills, technology skills and English language instruction is still evident: over 2,000 adults in Queen Anne's county have less than a 9th grade education and more than 3,000 have no high school diploma. Similarly in Talbot County, over 1,700 resident's have less than a 9th grade education and 3,500 did not graduate from high school.

Clearly, residents throughout the region will benefit from opportunities to develop technical skills to prepare young people for the jobs of the future and to upgrade the skills of dislocated workers so they can support their families. The Chesapeake College Regional Technology and Business Training Center is centrally located, easily accessible and fully equipped to meet the growing need for technology training throughout the region. With the installation of the T-1 line the Center will be able to expand the high-technology training necessary to maintain the economic competitiveness of the region.

PROJECT CATEGORY: INFRASTRUCTURE

ACTION: JANUARY 2014, THE CEDS COMMITTEE REMOVED FROM THE ACTION PLAN ON A REQUEST OF CHESAPEAKE COLLEGE THAT STATED "ALTHOUGH CHESAPEAKE COLLEGE REGIONAL TECHNOLOGY TRAINING REMAINS A PRIORITY FOR THE COLLEGE, THE COLLEGE IS PURSUING THE PROGRAM USING PHYSICAL RESOURCES THAT EXIST IN THOSE COMMUNITIES WHERE TRAINING IS CONDUCTED THAT ALLOWS THE COLLEGE TO FOCUS MORE FUNDS TOWARDS THE DIRECT PROVISION OF TRAINING.

## Speculative Building for the Caroline Technology Park in Ridgely

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

**Historical background.** Historically, Caroline County has been extremely successful in using speculative buildings to jump start their *industrial* parks. The same strategy appears to apply to the new Technology Park.

In that regard, until the 1970's Caroline County had no industrial parks, or even an industrial base. For over 300 years the economy of the county was based solely on agriculture or agriculture-related businesses.

During the 1970's and 1980's the county government, in cooperation with the towns of Denton and Federalsburg, erected three industrial parks. In each park, a 30,000-square- foot speculative building was erected, and in each case the building was quickly sold and occupied, creating the first tenant in each of the parks. Numerous tenants followed until all three of the parks were completely sold out.

**Recent experience.** The County has retained Ms. Cynthia Pyron as Marketing Director for the park. The Caroline Economic Development Corporation, a nonprofit corporation that handles economic development for the county, has also been engaged in taking "prospects" to the newly finished park. In various instances, the absence of a speculative building has been a decisive element in the failure to attract tenants for the park.

**Purpose**

Based on recent marketing experiences as well as long-term experience dating to the 1970's, the Caroline Technology Park at Ridgely needs a speculative building to "jump start' the park. The following relates to this need.

**Project Description**

The need for a speculative building anticipated. Based on the previous experience of the county building an industrial base, the need for a speculative building in the Technology Park was fully anticipated. The building and site chosen for the speculative building were designated as "Building H" on the Master Plan.

The plans for Building H, the proposed speculative building, are for the erection of a two- story building of 12,500 square feet. The building will have a "rural architectural design," as shown on the elevation design for Building C. Building H will be a "green building," LEED-qualified in every respect with a direct connection to the fiber-optic backbone presently under construction on the Eastern Shore or Maryland.

Finishes in the building will include a small office, a conference room and an elevator. The office space and conference-room will be immediately utilized for sales and local-government meetings. The remainder of Buildings H will be speculative space without partitions, but with basic finishes that include ceiling lights, HVAC and central restrooms.

Site work, including immediate access to storm-water management and a parking lot, was included in the construction of the park. The site also has immediate access to utilities.

**Cost**

Projected cost is approximately $3.1.million. The County has obtained an estimate of $250 per square foot for the actual construction of the 12,500-square-foot speculative building. Hence, the total projected cost of the facility is $3,125,000.

**Job Creation**

The Maryland Technology Development Corporation states that the minimum job- creation estimate for the building should be one job for every 250 square feet. Thus, the building should produce a minimum of fifty jobs. The County estimates a minimum of 75 to 100 jobs, just in Building H.

Equally important, the project is expected in many cases to serve as critical start-up space for larger projects that will involve the erection of a new building in the park. Hence, actual job creation may be in the hundreds.

PROJECT CATEGORY: INFRASTRUCTURE

ACTION: JANUARY 2017, THE CEDS COMMITTEE REMOVED FROM THE ACTION PLAN AT THE REQUEST OF ITS CHAMPION SINCE IT IS NOT ECONOMICALLY VIABLE AT THIS TIME.

## Environmental Monitoring of the Chesapeake Bay

**Priority Rating - Medium**

### Background

One of the indicators of the health of the Chesapeake Bay is the extent and coverage of the submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV). SAV is an important part of the Bay environment and is a nursery area for many species of aquatic life. The better the water quality, the more SAV. This project addresses the CEDS goal of strengthening our seafood and agriculture economic base.

The current methods for quantifying SAV coverage are very subjective. It does not allow for an accurate year-to-year comparison and requires extensive ground-truthing to verify the results of the interpretation. In addition, the turnaround time for the final product is more than 6 months and it cannot be used in real-time management of resources.

The results of these SAV surveys are used to judge the impact of the numerous environmental programs designed to improve the quality of the water in the Bay and its tributaries. This includes the mandated nutrient management plans that have been adopted for the farmers of MD. Millions of dollars are being invested in improving the water quality, but the assessment tools are obsolete.

### Project Description/Strategy

The TCE will apply NASA developed technologies to the assessment of the SAV. An Eastern Shore company has had success in quantifying SAV in lakes and reservoirs with an airborne hyper spectral imager. This company may be contracted to apply this technology to the vegetation of the Chesapeake Bay. If successful, the benefits would include:

- First generation digital data that is navigated in flight. The product would be a map of the locations and types of submerged aquatic vegetation.
- Location maps that can be compared year to year.
- Quick turnaround time and images that can be posted to the web as soon as they are collected.
- Standardized image interpretation that identifies vegetation based on measured reflected light rather than manual interpretation.
- Develop cause and effect relationships between environmental programs and water quality that can be measured and results judged.

### Cost

For $200,000, a program could be developed to support annual surveys, analysis of the results, and a program to allow the regulated groups to access the data.

### Project Partners

- USDA
- Maryland Department of Agriculture

- CBRTCE
- University of Maryland Eastern Shore

PROJECT CATEGORY: STRATEGIC PLANNING, ANALYSIS, AND ACCESS TO CAPITAL

ACTION: MARCH 2015, THE CEDS COMMITTEE REMOVED FROM THE ACTION PLAN AS IT IS AN INACTIVE/OUTDATED PROJECT; HOWEVER, A CHAMPION MAY REINTRODUCE A SIMILAR PROJECT WHEN THE INTEREST ARISES.

## Technology Incubation Innovation Fund

**Priority Rating - High**

**Background**

Limited financial resources available for supporting startup companies and business expansion are a barrier to economic growth and diversification in the region. With current plans to develop technology incubators and expand business parks, a local source for financing that can complement traditional lenders will be a critical component for business development in the area.

**Program Description/Strategy**

TEDCO's Technology Incubation Innovation Fund will provide working capital for early stage technology companies affiliated with Maryland's extensive business incubation network. Eligibility will be limited to tenants, affiliates, and graduates of EDA funded technology incubation programs and programs in EDA eligible areas. Non-conventional financing for working capital of $25,000 - $50,000 will be made available to an initial 10- 20 companies during the two year period of this grant program. There is currently no source of State or federal funding which provides flexible non-equity working capital to incubation stage technology companies.

Over 130 companies and 125 graduates are currently eligible for funding and each year approximately 20 % of incubator tenants' graduate; several other research parks/incubation facilities are under development in Baltimore, and other projects are under study in W. Maryland and the Eastern Shore.

The project will leverage TEDCO's federally funded seed grant and technical assistance funds which have created a State-wide network of business development specialists. (See Map 2)

The Technology Incubation Innovative Fund complements existing EDA-funded capital programs in Western Maryland, the Lower Eastern Shore, and for Defense Economic Adjustment activities. TEDCO currently works with all of the managing entities of these funds, and will include them into a policy oversight committee to encourage collaboration and coordination. Successful execution of the project will demonstrate the benefits of – and mechanism for - an integrated State-regional capital strategy, achieving critical mass in administrative efficiency, deal flow, and portfolio diversification.

**Project Partners**

- EDA
- University of Maryland Eastern Shore Rural Development Center
- Chesapeake College Small Business Development Center
- Mid-Shore Regional Council

- Lower Shore Tri-County Council

PROJECT CATEGORY: STRATEGIC PLANNING, ANALYSIS, AND ACCESS TO CAPITAL

ACTION: JANUARY 2018, THE CEDS COMMITTEE REMOVED FROM THE ACTION PLAN DUE TO LACK OF INTEREST, NOT PRACTICAL AT THIS TIME.

## Barley Based Ethanol Plant

### Priority Rating - High

### Background

A priority CEDS goal for the Mid-Shore Region is to strengthen and diversify the local farm economy. Mid-Atlantic BioFuels (MABF) working group has pursued the establishment of an ethanol industry in Maryland. It will help strengthen and diversify Maryland's agriculture sector by creating a demand for an underutilized crop that can be easily propagated in the area, barley. Developing a new industry and expanding the market for barley on the eastern shore will both improve the economy and create new opportunities for farmers in this rural area.

### Project Description

Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board, with financial input from the Maryland Center for Agro-Ecology, funded a feasibility study to see if high tech ethanol production using barley as a feedstock was profitable. Generally, the outcome was favorable, but marginal. This led to examination of building a much larger facility of approximately 50 million gallons per year. To attain this level of production it became necessary to plan for use of barley during three months after harvest, local corn for one month during harvest time and, finally, corn shipped via unit trains from the Midwest during the remaining 8 months. The long term goal is to increase use of barley in the plant to minimize the need for corn. With this new plan in mind, two major concerns had to be addressed – the added cost of rail transportation on the Shore and the impact on the poultry industry of using corn in an already deficit area. In November, 2005, as a result of recommendations by MABF, Chesapeake Ethanol LLC was formed, with 2 of the 5 board members from the Midshore, and a consultant on the project also from the Midshore. After thoroughly examining alternative sites for the ethanol plant, a decision was made to pursue a site in the Baltimore area. The site under consideration provides several advantages: proximity to ethanol/gasoline blenders, adequate rail for unit trains, marine industrial property to gain access to water transportation, ample supplies of process water and natural gas. Once the site is procured, it will take from 9 to 12 months to get the necessary permits followed by 14 to 18 months for construction.

### Project Cost and Funding Strategy

Funding to support the project has come from:

| | |
|---|---|
| Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board | 25,000 |
| The Center for Agro-Ecology | 25,000 |
| Maryland Farm Bureau | 25,000 |
| Maryland Crop Investment Assoc. | 5,000 |
| Maryland Farm Credit | 1,000 |
| USDA Rural Development Grant | 50,000 |
| Maryland Department of Commerce | 125,000 |
| Total | $ 256,000 |

The estimated cost of the plant is in excess of $100 million. Farmers will be given a priority as investors in the project. The feasibility study has been completed, a design and engineering firm has been hired, and the business plan is nearly complete. In addition to the above sources of funds, $100,000 has been raised from private sources to continue the business of the Chesapeake Ethanol LLC board.

**Project Partners**

- Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board
- The Maryland Center for Agro Ecology
- Maryland Farm Bureau
- Maryland Crop Improvement Association
- Maryland Farm Credit
- USDA Rural Development
- Maryland Department of Commerce

PROJECT CATEGORY: AGRICULTURE, AQUACULTURE, AND FORESTRY

ACTION: JANUARY 2012, THE CEDS COMMITTEE HAS FOUND THIS

PROJECT NOT TO BE ECONOMICALLY VIABLE AT THIS TIME.

## Strategy for an Aquaculture Pilot Project

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

The seafood industry has been a mainstay of the Eastern Shore economy. Traditional methods of harvesting from the Bay are producing lower economic returns due to conservation regulation and the uncertainty of naturally occurring populations of crabs, oysters and fish. The Mid-Shore Regional Council CEDS has goals to strengthen and diversify the seafood industry through new technologies in aquaculture. This project addresses that goal.

**Project Description/Strategy**

This project will examine the feasibility, economic viability and environmental impact of various aquaculture technologies that might be employed in the tri-county region. The goal of the project is to identify an aquaculture pilot project which has the potential for significant economic impact, and the likelihood of early success. The particular seafood product would likely, but not necessarily, be a traditional Eastern Shore commodity. Projects not selected for the pilot would be considered for future implementation or incubation.

**Cost**

It is estimated that the analysis to determine a pilot project would cost $100,000. Some pro- bono support would be anticipated from the USDA, Maryland Department of Agriculture, and various state and federal research activities.

**Project Partners**

- USDA
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- MD Dept. of Agriculture
- Wye Research and Education Center
- Horn Point Lab
- Oxford Cooperative Lab
- Chesapeake Bay Region Technical Center of Excellence
- Private investors

PROJECT CATEGORY: AGRICULTURE, AQUACULTURE, AND FORESTRY

ACTION: JANUARY 2012, THE CEDS COMMITTEE REMOVED FROM THE ACTION PLAN DUE TO LACK OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND OTHER DETAILS.

## Chicken Feather Processing

### Priority Rating – High

### Background

The production and processing of chickens is the number one agricultural activity of the Mid-Shore. Not only does the sale of chicken products generate direct value to the regional economy, chickens consume the majority of crops grown in the region as feed. A viable chicken industry is vital to the economy of the Mid-Shore and the surrounding region. The processing of chickens generates many by-products besides the various meat options. Creating value for these by-products improves the bottom line of the industry. One of the major by-products is feathers - nearly 200 million pounds on Delmarva annually. A variety of potential uses have been found for feathers. However, currently, the primary use in this region is as a source of protein for animal feed, while in other areas feathers must be disposed of in landfills. Developing alternative uses and markets for feathers may be critical to the poultry industry as it is anticipated that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will issue rules restricting their use as an ingredient in chicken feed similar to actions taken for cattle relative to BSE (mad cow disease).

### Project Description/Strategy

USDA BARC has been exploring new higher value uses for the feathers. One promising application is in the creation of bio-degradable products such as horticultural containers and agricultural film from pellets derived from processed feathers. The process, which is being researched but not yet commercially developed, consists of transporting the contaminated wet feathers from the chicken processing plant to the feather processing plant. There the feathers may be separated from non- feather material and washed depending on their final use. The feathers are then dried and ground. A plasticizer is added and the feather material is fed into an extruder which produces pellets ready for injection molding in standard machines which currently produce petroleum-based plastic pots and film which are not bio-degradable. It is estimated that the production of horticultural containers is currently an $800 million industry in the U.S.

### Cost

This project will require some in-kind costs and, possibly, additional research funding. Once a viable process is defined plant funding will be determined.

### Project Partners

- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot Counties
- CBRTCE
- Horticultural Research Institute
- Turf Bio-Net Research Group
- Maryland Department of Agriculture
- USDA / BARC and RD

- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Delmarva Poultry Industries
- TEDCO

PROJECT CATEGORY: AGRICULTURE, AQUACULTURE, AND FORESTRY

ACTION: JANUARY 2020, CHAMPION NO LONGER WITH US. USDA PATENT HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN.

## Calhoon MEBA Vessel Firefighting Program and Training Facility

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

The Calhoon MEBA Engineering School, located on a 625 acre waterfront campus in Talbot County, Maryland, is one of six Engineering Schools certified to train Merchant Marines. The Calhoon MEBA School is ISO 9000 certified, offering 28 programs in technical skills and seaworthy programs that are supported with state of the art labs and equipment. The school leads the industry in offering certified on line simulation training for the Merchant Marines and the Coast Guard and plays a large role in training the 80,000 registered and 30,000 active licensed Merchant Marines. Traditionally a school for the Unions, the Calhoon MEBA School has opened its doors to the area business community and would like to expand its offering in the skilled trades.

**Purpose**

This project has 2 components:

1. To expand the current Calhoon MEBA facility with a vessel firefighting simulation:
   Calhoon MEBA currently offers a Vessel Firefighting Program for Coast Guard and Merchant Marine certification. To ensure safety of maritime and cargo fleets and support homeland security initiatives through the training of local first responders, the school will donate land and is requesting funds to build a vessel simulation for the firefighting program. This is a national pilot project.

2. To support trade skill training requirements of regional businesses at the Calhoon MEBA Facility using their labs and instructors. Calhoon MEBA Engineering School will establish an area trade skill development program with local businesses.

**Project Description**

1. The Federal Government has determined that Coast Guard and Merchant Marines will be required to complete a Vessel Fire Safety Training Program, mandatory for all licenses every year beginning in 2010. The Calhoon MEBA facility is currently delivering a program to this audience, based on a five year requirement for recertification without a vessel simulation site. To train the volume of students expected after the 2010 start date, a dedicated site with vessel fire simulation infrastructure will have to be constructed. Calhoon would like to build a vessel fire fighting simulation site on their campus and make land available for the construction. The Vessel Firefighting Program would also be available to DNR and local fire houses in the region. The program would service the East Coast.

2. The Region would like to take advantage of the Calhoon MEBA Engineering School facilities to train area businesses in the trades. There are no technical skills training facility in the region. Monies for training at the state have diminished at a time when technical skill training

is drastically needed to provide future jobs. An investment of $500,000 is required to develop customized training programs using the Calhoon MEBA facilities and to offset the cost to area businesses. A pilot program will be developed with the majority of the funds be used as a 50/50 match to area businesses for employee training. The monies would be administered by the MSRC and made available to the businesses through Economic Development Directors and the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) who would coordinate the training requirements with the Calhoon School and Chesapeake College to deliver the program. It is expected that 300 area workers could be trained in a two year time frame.

**Cost**

1. The Vessel Fire Fighting program is expected to require $2 Million in infrastructure and program fees for the first year matched by an estimated land value of $1.2 Million from Calhoon MEBA. Calhoon MEBA will deliver 30 programs with 24 students in each program per year and will train 1,440 students over a two year time. The cost per individual is $1,500 for the one week program.

2. The trade skills training funds to support regional trade skill development for area employers requires $500,000, most of which will be used as a match for area employers to train 300 individuals in trade skills over 2 years.

**Project Partners**

- Calhoon MEBA Engineering School
- Talbot County
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- Chesapeake College
- Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board

PROJECT CATEGORY: CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ACTION: JANUARY 2012, THE CEDS COMMITTEE REMOVED FROM THE ACTION PLAN DUE TO THE CURRENT LACK OF INTEREST AND THE EXTREME COST RELATED TO THE PROJECT SHIFTED FROM A PROGRAMMATIC TO CONSERVATION FOCUS.

## Preparing Applicants for Utility Line Mechanic Careers on the Eastern Shore and Beyond

**Priority Rating – Medium**



**Background**

Maryland's utility work force is at risk from two interrelated problems: impending retirement of a large proportion of existing workers, and difficulty keeping qualified trainees in in-house training programs. According to an initial needs assessment, up to 40% of some utilities' workforces are currently eligible for retirement. The utility industry also has difficulty recruiting Marylanders into in-house training programs and retaining them in line mechanics' positions. Data from utility companies indicate that up to 70% of applicants are unable to assume trainee positions and are effectively prohibited from careers in utility line work. Preliminary needs assessment, conducted by the Chesapeake College Center for Leadership in Environmental Education (CLEEn) in cooperation with Maryland Energy Administration, indicates that this set of interrelated problems exists for local utilities, including Easton Utilities, Choptank Electric Co-Operative, and Delmarva Power, and for western-shore utilities, including Pepco and BGE. All of the named utilities have agreed to cooperate with CLEEn on solving the problem of recruitment and training.

**Purpose**

Chesapeake College CLEEn, in cooperation with the college's Division of Continuing Education and Workforce Training (CEWT), is planning the development of programs to help the needs of persons applying for utility line mechanic positions. The principal needs of those applicants include better academic skills in reading and mathematics, and physical training to prepare for climbing utility poles and lifting heavy loads during training. CLEEn and CEWT must identify, or develop, training materials to meet academic needs, and identify training facilities to prepare applicants for pole climbing and industry safety practices.

**Project Description**

The project proposed here has four principal goals:

1) Identification and/or development of academic training programs: Successful applicants and trainees for utility line work must have strong academic skills – equivalent to a 10th-grade level or higher – in basic mathematics, reading comprehension, and written communications. This level of skill is demanded by in-house utility training programs and by programs that offer necessary credentials. Some industry curricula exist to help meet these needs; a principal goal of the project proposed here is to identify appropriate curricular materials, develop other reinforcing material where necessary, and plan for delivery of those learning experiences.

2) Identification of a physical training facility and development of physical training protocols: Applicants for utility line work must also be in good physical condition, and be tolerant of the risks inherent in line work, including risks associated with working at heights and working with high- voltage electricity. One utility industry partner demands that applicants be able to climb a utility pole and lift equipment to the top of the pole before being employed as a trainee. Many, if not most, applicants have difficulty with the physical demands of the position. A principal goal of this proposed project is to identify at least one training facility that students in the program can use to learn the skills necessary to enter, and persist in, utility training programs. Concurrently, CLEEn and CEWT will need to identify, and/or develop, training protocols to use at that facility.

3) Identify job skills that add value to utility line work employees: In addition to English, math, and physical job skills, applicants for line work can enhance their skill set in several ways that make them stronger assets to the utility work force. Attainment of a CDL drivers' license is a concrete asset to line mechanics, as is ASTCC traffic-flagger training, first aid training, and basic electrical safety. Furthermore, advancement within utility career pathways requires facility with desktop computers and electronic communication. A third goal of this project is to develop a comprehensive list of these needs, and to determine which programs already exist to meet them, and which need development.

4) Preparation of a grant application for Spring 2014: once needs assessment has been performed, and curricular materials identified or targeted for development, we will identify other grant sources that will support the development and delivery of the utility line mechanics' career-preparation program. , These potential funding sources will include, but will not be limited to, the EARN Maryland program.

**Need for the proposed project:** Currently, utility training programs eliminate up to 70% of potential employees from utility line work careers, not because of technical skills needs, but because applicants lack basic academic skills. Incidental data from the utility partners indicate that some successful applicants are graduates of out-of-state training colleges in Georgia, Ohio, or California. These programs are costly – in the tens of thousands of dollars per student – and require great personal investment, both in time and money, for students. Furthermore, the current lack of a training pathway in Maryland makes state residents less competitive for utility line work careers in their home state.

The program proposed here will be the first program of its type on the Eastern Shore, the first program in the state to meet both academic and physical skills training needs, and will fill a statewide need. Long-term benefits of the program include increased stability and reliability of electrical supply, better ability to respond to storms and other disturbances, and the placement of Marylanders in stable, long-term, rewarding careers.

**Anticipated Cost:** $10,000 to accommodate travel and consulting fees during the needs- assessment and grant-writing processes.

**Project Partners:**

- Baltimore Gas & Electric
- Chesapeake College CLEEn
- Chesapeake College Division of Continuing Education and Workforce Training
- Choptank Electric Cooperative
- Delmarva Power
- Easton Utilities
- Maryland Energy Administration
- Pepco

PROJECT CATEGORY: CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ACTION: JANUARY 2016, THE CEDS COMMITTEE REMOVED FROM THE ACTION PLAN AT THE REQUEST OF ITS CHAMPION CHESAPEAKE COLLEGE.

THE COLLEGE STATED: CHESAPEAKE COLLEGE INVESTIGATED THE UTILITY LINE MECHANIC PROGRAM IN ORDER TO MEET AN ANTICIPATED NEED IN THE UTILITY INDUSTRY. WE DECIDED NOT TO PROCEED WITH THE PROGRAM FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- IT DID NOT LEAD TO DEGREE OR CERTIFICATION PATHWAY, NOR TO A PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION.

- THE PROGRAM WOULD ONLY HAVE PREPARED STUDENTS TO ENGAGE WITH THE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS FOR IN-HOUSE TRAINING WITH THE UTILITIES, WHICH IS ONLY AVAILABLE TO PERSONS WHO PASS BOTH A WRITTEN EXAM AND A PHYSICAL EXAM. OUR PROGRAM COULD NOT GUARANTEE THAT STUDENTS WOULD PASS THOSE EXAMS; NOR WOULD IT ALLOW STUDENTS TO BYPASS THOSE EXAMS. THEREFORE, THE BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAM WERE MODEST AT BEST.

- THE NUMBER OF JOB VACANCIES AT UTILITY OMPANIES DID NOT GROW AS ANTICIPATED. ALTHOUGH THE INDUSTRY REMAINS CONCERNED ABOUT POTENTIAL RETIREMENTS, TO DATE, THE NEED FOR LARGE NUMBERS OF NEW EMPLOYEES HAS NOT DEVELOPED. THEREFORE, OPPORTUNITIES FOR POTENTIAL STUDENTS WERE LIMITED.

## Center for Leadership in Environmental Education (CLEEn)

**Priority Rating – High**

**Background**

Chesapeake College plans the development and construction of a wind and solar education facility, the Center for Leadership in Environmental Education (CLEEn), at its Wye Mills (MD) campus which will model emerging renewable energy technologies while expanding education and training opportunities for students and small businesses. A leader in energy conservation and sustainability initiatives, Chesapeake College continues to demonstrate with this proposed facility its commitment to environmental sustainability as a global and regional responsibility, and to enhancing economic development on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

The US Department of Labor, in its March 2007 report Identifying and Addressing Workforce Challenges in America's Energy Industry, identified challenges facing the energy industry including that half of the current industry workers will retire in the next 5 to 10 years; the reduction or elimination of many training programs during the energy downturn of the 1980's and 1990's, programs that have not been expanded as the industry rebounds; and the need for energy industry workers who are more proficient than predecessors in math, science and technology skills. This last challenge in particular makes community colleges the ideal location for combining traditional higher education curriculum with emerging technologies demonstration and training. Chesapeake College is poised to fill this need on the upper shore with the CLEEn project.

**Description**

Chesapeake College proposes to construct a stand-alone facility that will utilize state-of- the-art wind, solar, and geothermal power-generating technologies. The 4,000 square foot facility will house two classrooms, a visitor/learning center, space for passive instructional displays, an outdoor classroom, and offer the opportunity for hands-on learning access to the mechanical, electrical, and solar elements of the building's operations. The footprint of the building as designed includes the possible addition of two classrooms.

The completed facility will host a 30-50KW wind turbine specially designed for regional wind speeds, mounted to a 140 foot monotower and integrated with the campus electrical supply. The turbine is sited close to US Route 50 in order to encourage public interest. The solar array will include both photovoltaic electrical generation panels and solar hot water panels. Water will be supplied by an existing well adjacent to the building, sewer connections will be made to the College's own wastewater treatment plant, and an additional twenty parking spaces will be added to an existing parking lot close to the facility. The proposed building design anticipates LEED Gold/Platinum standards, and will be fully self-sufficient, producing at least as much and possibly more than, the power it consumes.

**Purpose**

CLEEn will be used to recruit, train, and educate students for work in the emerging fields of wind and solar power generation, with emphases on planning, installing, and maintaining structures for both commercial and residential applications. Initially, the College anticipates students will be drawn

through continuing education courses and via applicable industry training courses. Additionally, middle and high school students throughout the five county service area (and other regions of the Eastern Shore) will be invited to visit the facility as a field trip experience. The development of resource materials related to the learning experiences at the facility, and the creation of distance learning events, are also possible. The College will work toward certification of educational programs offered through the facility so that interested students may obtain the industry credentials necessary to successful job seeking in these green technologies.

In partnership with local governments in the five county College service area, secondary school systems, other colleges, state and federal agencies, and the business community, Chesapeake College will promote CLEEn as a community resource for green business development, training and learning. Chesapeake College has an approved degree in environmental sciences and in collaboration with other bay area colleges, offers students opportunities for related, specialized degrees. Courses in wind power, solar, geothermal and electrical systems, have been offered by the division of continuing education and workforce training. CLEEn will allow the College to expand these programs and to design hands-on experiences to compliment the new K-12 Maryland State Board of Education requirement in environmental science.

Additionally, the College anticipates a continuing partnership with the commercial and industrial community for use of the facility to train incumbent and new workers in emerging green technologies. Key to student enrollment in both training and curriculum will be the potential for jobs on completion of certificate or degree programs. The College anticipates its partnership with the Upper Shore Manufacturing and Business Council to be an avenue for identifying and addressing industry needs that will allow for education programming targeted to potential jobs. The Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board, located at Chesapeake College, will use its "Green Navigator," funded by the Maryland Department of Labor and Licensing, to identify and direct trained workers to potential employers and jobs in the region.

**Cost**

*Estimated cost*: $3 million. These elements comprise significant project costs: facility ($1.9 million), energy components ($341,900), furniture, fixtures and equipment ($250,000), and curriculum ($525,000). Chesapeake College will contribute the land for siting the facility and on-going maintenance. The College will also expand the parking lot nearest to the CLEEn building in anticipation of increased attendance.

*Estimated completion timeline*: 2 years. The College anticipates a phased implementation as it develops project resources. Phase I will be the installation of the energy components (wind turbine and ground level solar panels), allowing an immediate impact to the campus power grid, and providing a visual appeal that will help generate interest and bring resources to the project.

**Summary**

As both a power-generating tool and a teaching tool, the Center for Leadership in Environmental Education enhances the College's vision of optimal experiences for its students, while supporting the Maryland Governor's education priority of expanding "the opportunity to learn and to earn; …..and to enjoy the health of the environment we love – to more people rather than fewer."

Course enrollment, degrees granted, placement of incumbent and new workers, educational tours by visiting students and the general public, will all be used as measures for evaluating the impact of the Center for Leadership in Environmental Education on the community at large. Most important, green jobs attained by trained workers will support the goals of CLEEn and the Governor's *Smart, Green and Growing* agenda which targets 100,000 new green jobs in Maryland by 2015.

The Maryland Energy Outlook 2010 prepared by the Maryland Energy Administration, reports that the Governor's Workforce Investment Board estimates that Maryland's green economy includes roughly 22,000 businesses directly employing nearly 250,000 people and generating wages of about $14 billion. Data from the US Department of Labor indicates that energy industry average wages for workers with some college can range from $17 to $33 per hour, estimates that are significantly above minimum wage and which would represent a good living wage for the Eastern Shore. The CLEEn curriculum will support the training and certification(s) necessary to prepare students for these jobs.

**Project Partners**

- K-12 Public School Systems in Kent, Queen Anne's, Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot Counties
- Maryland Energy Administration
- HordCoplanMacht (design team)
- Gipe Associates (design team)
- DMS Associates (design team)
- Fluharty's Electric (design team)
- Maryland Clean Energy Center
- US Senator Benjamin S. Cardin
- Atlantic Tractor
- Chesapeake College Foundation
- Maryland Environmental Service
- Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board
- Local governments in Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Dorchester and Caroline Counties (Proposed Project Partner)
- Chesapeake College Student Government Association
- Maryland Higher Education Commission
- Maryland Association of Community Colleges
- Mid-Shore Regional Council (Proposed Project Parnter)
- Upper Shore Regional Council (anticipated)
- Town Creek Foundation (anticipated)
- Pepco Holdings/Delmarva Power (anticipated)
- Choptank Electric Cooperative (anticipated)

PROJECT CATEGORY: CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND WORKFORCE DEVLOPMENT

ACTION: JANUARY 2018, THE CEDS COMMITTEE REMOVED FROM THE ACTION PLAN AT THE REQUEST OF ITS CHAMPION CHESAPEAKE COLLEGE. THE COLLEGE STATED: CLEEn HAS EVOLVED INTO ENERGY PROGRAMS ON THE COLLEGE CAMPUS AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS TO THE BAY. CLEEn HAS FOR POTENTIAL STUDENTS WERE LIMITED.

## Tech Transfer – Delmarva Technology Transfer Initiative (DT2i)

**Priority Rating – Medium**




### Background

In response to an increased need for job growth and business expansion in the region, while at the same time meeting the purpose and mission of area community colleges, a collaborative effort has begun in developing a common technology transfer course(s) and program to be offered at each of the community colleges throughout the Delmarva Peninsula. Through the efficient leverage of existing resources combined with the joint solicitation of additional resources, each community college will work to promote and expand an understanding of technology transfer among manufacturers and entrepreneurs with the offering of one or more courses that will teach necessary skill sets in technology transfer.

### Purpose

The purpose of the initiative is for community colleges to jointly work together in pursuit of a technology transfer initiative are as follows:

1. To more efficiently develop the initiative through existing resources that each Party will contribute;
2. To more successfully solicit and obtain grant funding from Federal, State, and local sources based upon the multi-state region represented by each of the Parties on the Delmarva Peninsula;
3. To better develop a sustainable initiative that will benefit each of the Parties for years to come;
4. To better coordinate the participation and resources of the private sector throughout the region.

### Project Description

The Delmarva Tech Transfer Initiative (DT2i) is a partnership of four community colleges from throughout the Delmarva Peninsula and the Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center. The DT2i partnership is promoting the potential of tech transfer and advanced manufacturing to the region's manufacturers and entrepreneurs. In concert with a course initiative, DT2i is working with regional economic development councils and the business community to help implement and then measure the impact of tech transfer on job creation and retention throughout the three-state region. The partnership will introduce tech transfer through a series of public symposiums, followed by a pilot tech transfer course offered at Wor-Wic Community College. DT2i will subsequently refine the curriculum and develop the delivery of the course at each of the four community colleges, meeting the needs of their respective audiences.

### Project Partners

- Chesapeake College
- Delaware Technical Community College

- Eastern Shore Community College of Virginia
- Wor-Wic Community College
- Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO)
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center
- Federal Lab Consortium (FLC)

**Project Cost:** $60,000

PROJECT CATEGORY: CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ACTION: JANUARY 2020, LACK OF INTEREST AND PARTNERSHIPS AT THIS TIME.

## Development of the "Tilghman Island Discovery Park"



### Priority Rating – High

### Background and Purpose

"Tilghman Island Discovery Park" will be created to promote regional economic and community development and will include an integrated aquaculture operation, a revitalized seafood market, and an education center to support aquaculture and environment programs. Led by the nonprofit, Philips Wharf Environmental Center, the project is intended to include collaboration with the Tilghman Area Youth Association, and the Tilghman Watermen's Museum. The Hooper's Island Oyster Aquaculture Company founders Ricky Fitzhugh and John Shockley have expressed interest in the aquaculture training of watermen as a component of this project.

Established in 2005, Philips Wharf Environmental Center (PWEC) is dedicated to education, specializing in hands on learning with animals and plants that live in the Bay and their impact on the environment. PWEC's commitment to direct personal involvement in activities that can impact the Chesapeake Bay is embodied in its motto: "Cherish the Chesapeake – Inform, Inspire, Involve . . ." PWEC has demonstrated the capacity to perform this work through many partnerships including working with the Maryland DNR to teach the community to nurture oysters under their piers. PWEC has also planted 200 additional canopy trees on the island, and installed a demonstration buffer garden for conservation landscaping. The PWEC Fish Mobile makes the rounds to area schools and centers teaching children environmental stewardship. PWEC has operated with a modest budget of donations from the community and volunteer staff. With the recent acquisition of the Harrison Oyster House, located at the Narrows in Tilghman, the PWEC is poised to make a major step forward, with the creation of the Tilghman Island Discovery Park.

### Project Description



PWEC has completed a 12 month study period and secured funds for the purchase of the Harrison Oyster Company property located beside the iconic Tilghman Bridge as a "gateway" location for Tilghman Island Discovery Park. This 2¼-acre site will provide an ideal location to accomplish several vital objectives:

- Create a new visitor destination, add jobs, and boost the local economy
- Establish a dockside market for buying and selling fresh local seafood
- Assist watermen with aquaculture best practices and explore new sources of income

- Become a strategic partner in the network of Chesapeake Bay environmental organizations with a learning center, expanded collection of live animal exhibits, and conservation landscape demonstration gardens

These programs will be available to those living and working in the nine counties of the Eastern Shore of Maryland (Kent, Cecil, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Caroline, Dorchester, Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset), as well as visitors.

PWEC is launching a capital funding program for $1.5 million and has received approval from the Maryland Department for Housing and Community Development for an allocation of tax credits for business entities that contribute to the Project under the Department's Community Investment Tax Credit Program.

The $1.5 million project includes funds for the purchase and renovation or rebuilding of existing structures and dock infrastructure of the Oyster House to host four program elements: (1) environmental education, (2) aquaculture operation, (3) seafood market and (4) conservation education. Program requirements will be met by facilities that include space for a laboratory, classrooms, exhibits, and a working seafood market.

The Aquaculture program will sponsor and train watermen to transition to oyster aquaculture by providing business start up support along with a modern facility to set oyster spat, clean and bag shell, and teach floating and bottom cage culture techniques. Techniques for growing other potentially economically valuable species will be tested and taught with support from DNR, NOAA and UM Horn Point Environmental Center. Interest in partnering with Hooper's Island Oyster Company is being explored to reach watermen throughout the Chesapeake Bay Region.

The former Harrison Oyster House has operated as a seafood distribution center for the region. To continue this tradition, the facility will require dock and building renovation to expand for sales of local watermen's catch to regional wholesale and retail markets.

The proposed site is located in the critical area, and must meet multiple county, state, and federal permit requirements. The infrastructure design and engineering will include the assessment of existing structures and their ability to meet program requirements while also meeting Federal, State, and Local permit requirements.

Tilghman Island Discovery Park will operate with aquaculture and seafood market businesses to create jobs. These operations will be integrated with water and land based environmental programs to continue the education mission of PWEC. Business plans for each program element have been developed under the leadership of the PWEC Board, a 9 member board of community and professional volunteers. The project is expected to generate 15 to 20 jobs with the initial phase of completion and provide retention of 70 watermen in the region who currently make their living harvesting oysters.

**Current/Planned Project Partners:**

- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- University of Maryland Extension Office

- Talbot County Waterman's Association
- Talbot County Chamber of Commerce
- Chesapeake Bay Trust; Chesapeake Bay Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Chesapeake Bay Program, Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, Chesapeake Bay Program, and the Chesapeake Bay Ecology Center Environmental Concerns
- Eastern Shore Land Conservancy
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
- Maryland Agriculture Resource Business Development Corporation
- NOAA Cooperative Oxford Laboratory
- USDA
- Hooper's Island Oyster Aquaculture Company

**Project Cost:** $750,000 as match for project implementation with $50,000 for professional services required for the infrastructure design and engineering of Tilghman Island Discovery Park

**Project Time Period:** 24 months

PROJECT CATEGORY: AGRICULTURE, AQUACULTURE AND FORESTRY

ACTION: JANUARY 2023, THE PROPERTY HAS BEEN SOLD AND CHAMPION IS NO LONGER WITH US.

## Chesapeake Harvest

**Priority Rating – Medium**

### Background

The Easton Economic Development Corporation (EEDC), a non-profit corporation, seeks to advance the economic development and prosperity of Easton and consequently Eastern Shore region, by promoting and encouraging trade and commerce. The board of directors includes representatives of the community, residents, business leaders, and civic leaders.

Chesapeake Harvest is a company started by the EEDC with the goal of creating jobs, trade, enterprise and commerce in Easton and throughout the region. The leadership of the EEDC and Chesapeake Harvest has identified unmet demand in adjacent metropolitan areas for locally grown, branded food and food products from the Eastern Shore. This demand exists for fresh, local fruits, vegetables, seafood, meats, and dairy products as well as value-added and processed foods exhibiting certain attributes associated with the region.

This conclusion was reached after extensive research, interviews, business meetings, constituent consultations, and first-hand experience. The brand "Chesapeake Harvest", with its attendant brand promises, resonates well in both wholesale and consumer-level communities. The brand is further enhanced when local farms are identified alongside the Chesapeake Harvest brand allowing for source-identified products and ordering.

The Eastern Shore of Maryland and the surrounding region contains rich agricultural land within close proximity to Washington D.C. and other large metropolitan markets. While the majority of farmland is commodity farmed, it is also ideal for high-value vegetable, fruit and livestock production. Existing commodity crop and poultry farmers could diversify their portfolio of food products and tap into the unmet demand by partnering with Chesapeake Harvest's branding, sales and marketing services.

### Purpose

Chesapeake Harvest, incubated by the EEDC, is a business entity designed to brand, market and sell local and regionally grown, harvested and prepared consumer foods from the Eastern Shore of Maryland, Delaware and Virginia to major metropolitan markets within 200 miles.

Economies of scale and the ability to share assets are essential to success. Some small and mid- sized consumer-oriented growers and producers on the Eastern Shore struggle with the essential marketing and delivery infrastructure needed to reach the larger marketplace (which would allow them to grow). Chesapeake Harvest will provide the broader regional, branding, sales and market reach necessary for expansion. Further, by coordinating logistics (aggregation and delivery) Chesapeake Harvest can help drive higher farm margins for these products using a shared, logistics infrastructure. This operational framework strengthens local and regional supply chain linkages allowing for improved scale, efficiency, and economic advantages.

Once sold, the successful movement of fruits, vegetables and other food products from the Eastern Shore to major metropolitan areas requires logistics that are specialized and specific to the food industry. Chesapeake Harvest plans to coordinate those logistical efforts by using existing aggregation and delivery assets in the region. Some of the assets exist within companies currently in the food distribution business, while other assets are present on farms and other food related enterprises. Chesapeake Harvest will not own an aggregation facility or a delivery infrastructure. It is the goal of Chesapeake Harvest to focus on regional branding, marketing and sales connecting local farmers, growers and producers to large metropolitan markets and to coordinate the necessary go-to- market logistics.

**Project Description**

The program concept is not unlike other regional brands being promoted nationally, such as Washington State Apples, Florida Oranges, California Asparagus, Georgia Peaches and Idaho Potatoes. However, unlike those singular regional brands, the Chesapeake Harvest brand represents a variety of products from the Chesapeake region that meet a brand standard and promise. Those brand standards and promises as well as the organizational design make Chesapeake Harvest locally and regionally compelling, as well as supportive of economic development efforts throughout the Eastern Shore.

Chesapeake Harvest is a Maryland Benefit Corporation (LLC) currently owned by the EEDC a 501(c)(3) organization. Maryland is one of pioneering states in the area of Benefit Corporation or B- Corps. Maryland B-Corps are, by design, meant to address and help their local communities and to incorporate that addressability in their charters within the enterprise. Typical B-Corp issues include employment, expanded commerce, economic vitality as well as environment, hunger and education.

Chesapeake Harvest has established the name and certification mark “Chesapeake Harvest”, which will represent participating farmers, growers and producers from the region. A marketing and sales team based in Easton will direct the branding, marketing, sales and logistical coordination of the Company within the 200-mile service area. Chesapeake Harvest will be marketed and sold to wholesalers such as grocery chains, restaurants, online grocers and point-to-point food delivery companies. Chesapeake Harvest products will be co-marketed and co-labeled with each individual grower and producer to preserve, enhance and identify the names of local growers and producers thereby allowing consumer traceability and consumer selection. The Chesapeake Harvest certification mark will only be used on items that represent the brand promise, goals and standards set forth by the Company given that target market.

In addition to shared branding, sales, marketing and logistics Chesapeake Harvest will provide farms with technical assistance, as needed, including the provision of USDA Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification education, certifying our partner farms as “bay-friendly” through the adoption of certain production and conservation standards, supporting regenerative growing practices for Chesapeake Harvest products, knowledge sharing of market trends and the identification of funding programs. Chesapeake Harvest will partner with Maryland Department of Agriculture and other organizations to pool resources in these efforts.

Chesapeake Harvest has retained, as a consultant, Red Tomato a local food company based in New England. When it began operating, Red Tomato, owned aggregation and delivery assets, but soon

learned that there are distinct advantages in "pushing" those services and assets into the field. Chesapeake Harvest plans on emulating the Red Tomato model.

In fulfillment of its B-Corp mission Chesapeake Harvest will provide a percentage of its gross food production at a free or reduced rate to the Maryland Food Bank and other food access agencies in the trade area.

As Chesapeake Harvest grows the plan is to work with farmers to fund and install on-farm assets that will allow for an extended, customized growing season helping to deliver products to markets being served. There is demand for local products in the cold weather months. Chesapeake Harvest can become a helpful, integrated, participatory driver of consumer foods and products from the Eastern Shore to adjacent metropolitan markets namely Washington D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia and ultimately New York City.

The goals of Chesapeake Harvest are several:

1. To help create awareness and consumption of local food and products from the Eastern Shore and increase the economic vitality, viability and business sustainability of consumer oriented farmers, growers and food producers in the Eastern Shore region.

2. To make Easton and the Eastern Shore region a source identified area for locally grown, fresh, healthy food products that are farmed and produced in a manner that supports the improved health of the Chesapeake Bay and the region as a whole (much of which exists in current agricultural standards and practices).

3. To maintain and create additional year-round jobs, careers and entrepreneurship in the agriculture, aquaculture, meat, dairy, poultry and processed food businesses across the Eastern Shore.

4. To create economies of scale and drive higher margins for these product to the farm by providing a shared regional brand, marketing and sales, shared aggregation and delivery, technical assistance, as needed, supporting growing and production across the region.

5. To achieve the necessary certifications, chiefly GAP, at the farm, handling and aggregation levels of the business, which will allow for sales to large wholesale buyers.

6. To make additional, diversified use of the largest assets of the region - namely the land, the water and the people who work it by increasing reach into major metropolitan areas and driving sales of local foods and other local products.

7. To create and maintain a brand promise that resonates with consumers such that they are assured that the products bearing the Chesapeake Harvest brand and certification mark are grown locally, are fresh and produced in a manner consistent with the continued and improved vitality of Chesapeake Bay and the region as whole. This is the growing Chesapeake Harvest target market that places high-value on products grown in this manner.

8. Support and promote the beneficial understanding and consumption of local, fresh, healthy foods

a. and value-added food products through brand awareness and education.

9. To memorialize a blueprint for the Chesapeake Harvest business model that will allow participating organizations to measure outcomes and share the outcomes and the blueprint with others.

**Project Cost**

The EEDC has received two grants to support Chesapeake Harvest. Seed funding in the amount of $150,000, was provided by Town Creek Foundation. The second grant was provided by the USDA under the Local Food Promotion Program and totals $383,673. These two grants along with hundreds of volunteer and employee hours compose total, current capitalization of Chesapeake Harvest. The total cash of $540,000 is being used to support the operations over 3 years, including hiring a full time Director of Sales and Marketing, the continued funding of a Production Manager, sales logistical support, technical assistance for USDA Group GAP certification and establishment, and other essential services. Outsourced services include aggregation space, delivery and warehouse labor. The EEDC anticipates applying for additional grant dollars, particularly to support branding and marketing as well as on-site farm infrastructure.

**Project Partners**

Chesapeake Harvest has a range of partners from farms to financial and is having discussions with a variety of potential partners to advance the missions of all involved. Chesapeake Harvest understands that it is to the benefit of the region and all concerned to shares resources and assets and partner where possible. Chesapeake Harvest has had discussions with a number of commercial enterprises in order to explore a variety of possible joint venture, partnership and funding arrangements. Chesapeake Harvest would like to establish additional working relationships with organizations and individuals representing farming across the Eastern Shore.

PROJECT CATEGORY: AGRICULTURE, AQUACULTURE AND FORESTRY

ACTION: JANUARY 2023, EASTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (EEDC) DECIDED TO SCALE BACK THEIR COMMITMENT IN CHESAPEAKE HARVEST DUE TO THEIR CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS. IN NOVEMBER 2022, THE EEDC TRANSFERRED THE OWNERSHIP OF CHESAPEAKE HARVEST TO THE EASTERN SHORE ENTRENEURSHIP CENTER.

## Data Center Shell Building

### Priority Rating – Medium

### Background

Maryland has focused on attracting data centers to the state for several years, and Caroline County identified data centers as a strategic industry focus in its five-year Strategic Plan. The Data Center Shell Building project is the opportunity to partner with utility and technology provider, Choptank Electric Cooperative and its subsidiary, Choptank Fiber, headquartered in Caroline County, to bring an appropriately scaled data center to the Mid Shore Regional Technology & Business Park. Providing a shell building and the basic infrastructure in terms of electricity, fiber, and water access will help encourage a boutique size data center to establish operations in Caroline County.

The proposal will leverage previous Maryland Department of Commerce investment in the Mid Shore Regional Technology & Business Park (the Park). The Park is owned by the County Commissioners of Caroline County, and despite concentrated marketing and attraction efforts, has not had a viable tenant since the Park development project was completed in 2008. The conditions of the state funding, and additional federal funding through the U.S. Commerce Economic Development Administration, require that businesses that purchase and build in the Park be in certain industry sectors. Technology is one of the requisite industry sectors. The goal of this project is to create an opportunity for technology companies to easily decide to move into a near-turnkey building. Caroline County will retain ownership of the land and building after the construction project is complete. The operations of the data center will fall to an as-yet-identified data center management firm.

### Purpose

Attracting and developing businesses in the Park has been the top priority of Caroline County since 2008. It is prime land that is not currently generating any economic activity. The Data Center Shell Building will bring one tenant and generate interest from other data centers and technology based companies. This one business in the Park is a 100% increase in economic impact, and sets the stage for many businesses in the Park to bring direct, indirect, and induced economic activity, creating revenue for the county and town, and demonstrating that the Park is a place for business development.

Directly, boutique data centers typically generate 10 to 15 higher wage jobs. With the current talent pool, this is manageable workforce expectation. And as demand grows with the addition of future data centers, the skills and knowledge for technology-based jobs will grow among the workforce through partnerships with the schools.

### Project Description

The project includes design, planning, site work, and construction of a 10,000 to 20,000 square foot post and frame building. All A & E and construction will be contracted with professional firms by the county, following the county's procurement rules. All other professional services will be contracted with professional firms by the county, following the County's procurement rules. Project goals and objectives, refined timelines, and specific performance metrics will be developed and maintained as part of the bid/procurement process.

The costs associated with this project as noted under the budget section are based on similar construction projects in Caroline County as of August 2022. Given the volatility of costs for supplies and labor, the budget reflects a significant cost escalation based on advice from local general contractors and builders.

**Estimated Costs**

The Data Center Shell Building is a major construction project. As such, specific timeline and milestones will be detailed in the bid/procurement process. The outline below is the anticipated timeline and milestones in general; specific metrics will be identified in the RFP.

* Caroline County staff writes scope and RFP draft by November 2023
* Identify and select RFP and bid management consultant by January 2023
* Put out RFPs for construction project management, site work, A & E, and construction by June 2023
* Select construction project management, site work, A & E, and construction by September 2023
* A & E, site work plan submitted by October 2023
* Construction to start February 2024
* Construction complete by September 2024

**Project Partners**

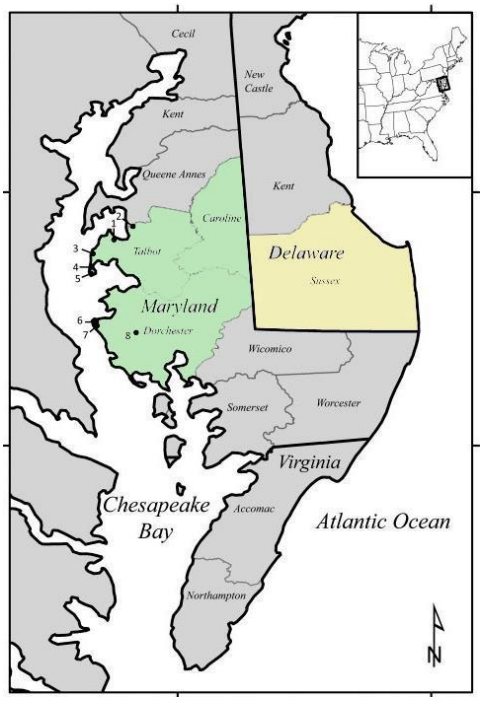
- Caroline County Economic Development & Tourism
- Choptank Electric and Choptank Fiber
- Town of Ridgely
- Mid Shore Regional Council
- Private sector contractors
- Data center management firms (to be identified)

PROJECT CATEGORY: INFRASTRUCTURE

ACTION: JANUARY 2024, CAROLINE COUNTY WILL NOT BE PURSUING THIS PROJECT.

## Chesapeake Bay Region Water Treatment and Environmental Restoration Program (WTER)

**Priority Rating – Medium**




**Background**

As part of the F³ Tech (Farm-Fish-Food) Accelerator, Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC) is applying to the USDA for funding in support of 9 municipalities identified in, Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot Counties where there are significant needs to upgrade and/or enhance their water infrastructure. ESEC is partnering with WTG Cleantech from California to demonstrate, design, and develop new technology solutions for addressing water and wastewater issues. WTG Cleantech is a manufacturer of water and environmental technologies with years of international experience in evaluating, designing, manufacturing, installing, and building the workforce for technologies in the water treatment sector. WTG has been interested since 2016 in expanding the availability of its technology to Maryland, having established strong ties with Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and other state agencies and the Mid-Shore region after numerous visits. The USDA grant being pursued has created an opportunity for collaboration with WTG and a strategic approach for bringing new technologies to the Chesapeake Bay region.

**Purpose**

The long-term objective of this grant proposal is to successfully execute a proof-of-concept approach to the prevention of pollution and contamination by counties and municipalities throughout the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed through the improvement of water and wastewater systems.

The short-term purpose of our grant proposal is to: a) design an innovative engineering solution to the unmet water treatment needs of 9 communities in the Mid-Shore counties, b) demonstrate that the solution actually meets the current stated needs to include Maryland's TMDL requirements, c) train the workforce on the use and assembly of the technologies, and d) work with the municipalities to apply for loans/grants for funding the installation of the proven system. This project seeks to build regional capacity to expand the impact of the proposed project well past the grant funding period to other municipalities and communities. At each step, ESEC will work with the municipalities to enable them to be independent users. In our proposal we will be actually demonstrating the solution via mobile versions of various technologies that we describe in detail below.

Each of the 9 Mid-Shore municipalities described below represents an opportunity to boost the quality of life in these rural communities that do not currently have the means to address much needed improvements to crucial water related infrastructure. Additionally, each of the communities is located in the Chesapeake Bay region, an area most vulnerable to the effects of nutrient discharge and enduring legacy of harmful human activity that has negatively affected the watershed. Our

overarching goal is to design, demonstrate and document the most efficient engineering solution to the water treatment needs of each community in order to facilitate funding of the solution that can ultimately benefit the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed.

We will facilitate workforce development in the water treatment sector by training the communities in the use of the innovative technologies. We also plan to coordinate workforce training at Chesapeake College in the assembly and maintenance of the implemented technologies in preparation of the expanded use of the technology throughout the Chesapeake Bay region. The primary outcome of this objective will be to create independence for municipalities utilizing the patented technologies. Second, our program will train the workforce in addressing regulatory mandates by utilizing the testing protocols and platforms to meet current and on ongoing future needs. The primary outcome of this step is to create employment and enable future economic growth. Third, our program will model the process of addressing water treatment challenges via technology to the creation of a design and proposal for funding. The primary outcome of this step will be the creation of an ecosystem that can allow the towns to generate economic growth on self-sufficient basis.

**Project Description**

We will initiate this project by manufacturing a single demonstration size mobile unit of three water treatment technologies in Maryland that, either alone or in some combination of one another, will be able to address the needs uncovered during our assessment of the 9 projects. A brief description of these technologies is given below.

WTG ENVIRO TECH- The ENVIRO TECH is a patented high-flow rate clarifier that deploys a physical-chemical process using selective chemical agents and polymers within a turbulent mixer inside a multi-chamber stainless steel vessel. ENVIRO performs both Coagulation, Flocculation & Sedimentation in a compact vessel and contains an UV and Ozonation unit. The ENVIRO is the most efficient clarifier in terms of energy, flowrate and portability in the world.



WTG ECO – The ECO is a proprietary design of an electrocoagulation unit. The ECO maximizes the performance in a mobile and high-throughput manner with low operating cost. A patent for this system is in the process of being filed in the USA and India. Some key differentiators for the ECO innovation in clude a) the combination of inert metal electrodes in order to enable low dissolution of electrode materials during reactions and b) the ability to vary the current and reaction times by monitoring the parameters in an automated manner.




BIOKUBE STP- The BIOKUBE Packaged Sewage Treatment Plant is a patented in Denmark. There are over 7000 installations of this technology around the world. BIOKUBE STP is an energy efficient onsite STP solution that can be used in homes, buildings, restaurants, and other venues to reduce discharge of pollutants into groundwater. This technology has been used to address municipal standards and address Net-Zero mandates.



ESEC will engage in person with the 9 municipalities and iteratively complete the following:

1. Confirm the initial needs assessment
2. Liaison with relevant regulatory bodies to understand local standards
3. Design an engineering solution based on the individual municipality needs
4. Confirm that the solution indeed does work by demonstrating the solution via the technologies noted above
5. Train the workforce in use of the technologies
6. Develop the final engineering design and costing
7. Provide technical assistance in preparing all applications and logistical plans required for loans and grants for actual installations of the solution. We believe that the eventual funding for these project installations will increase significantly because we are demonstrating the engineering feasibility of the mobile technologies. Our proposal describes a novel working model that can be duplicated throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed and thereby sustain this program beyond this particular grant period.

ESEC will manage this process, utilizing the subject matter expertise of WTG Cleantech to help execute the technological aspects of the projects.

**Project Partners:**

- Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC) dba F3 Tech Accelerator
- WTG Cleantech (California)
- USDA
- Rural Maryland Council
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- Chesapeake College
- Town of Goldsboro
- Town of Henderson
- Town of Marydel
- Town of Hurlock
- Town of Secretary
- Town of East New Market
- Talbot County
- Village of Cordova
- Village of Sherwood
- Village of Tilghman

**Project Cost:** $500,000

PROJECT CATEGORY: INFRASTRUCTURE

ACTION: JANUARY 2025, PROJECT REMOVED DUE TO A PIVOT AND BROADENING OF THIS

PROJECT TO ADDRESS THE LARGER ISSUE OF SALTWATER INTRUSION OF OUR COASTAL AREAS AND THE RELATED IMPACT OF OUR AGRICULTURAL LAND AND RURAL WATER/WASTEWATER SYSTEMS.

A NEW PROJECT WAS ADDED TO THE CEDS ACTION PLAN,

NSF ENGINE:  THE MIDATLANTIC COASTAL PROJECT (COORDINATED OPPORTUNITIES AGAINST SALTWATER THREATS AND LIMITATIONS).

## Eastern Shore Venture Network

**Priority Rating – Medium**

**Background**

One of the unique assets of the Eastern Shore, which has not been tapped for economic development, is the large population of high-net-worth individuals that reside and vacation in the area. Several informal meetings have been held with local angel investors and venture capitalists. They have voiced sincere interest in investing and supporting new technology-based/environmentally friendly businesses and requested a venue for identifying investment opportunities.

**Project Description/Strategy**

Economic development directors, Maryland Department of Commerce, Regional Councils, the TCE, small business resource centers, and investor groups will publicize the Network. The Rural Development Center and the Regional Councils will serve as collection centers for the applications. An advisory committee consisting of local bankers, investors and economic development professionals will screen applicants. If selected by the screening committee, companies will have five minutes to present their investment opportunity via a live, interactive broadcast and streaming video on the web. Qualified investors around the Shore will have access to the show via a secure website or the State telecommunications network.

**Goals**

- Link rural companies with qualified private investors
- Increase private investment and business development on the Eastern Shore
- Diversify the regional economy
- Foster the growth of high tech environmentally friendly industry clusters and create living wage jobs

**Cost**

Existing resources available through the local colleges, State communications networks, public access channels and regional councils will be leveraged to launch the project with minimal cost. As the program matures some financial assistance will be needed for production and overhead costs.

**Project Partners**

- EDA
- Private Investors
- University of Maryland Eastern Shore Rural Development Center
- Chesapeake College SBDC
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- Lower Shore Tri-County Council

- Chesapeake Bay Region Center for Technical Excellence
- Local banks

PROJECT CATEGORY: STRATEGIC PLANNING, ANALYSIS AND ACCESS TO CAPITAL

ACTION: JANUARY 2025, PROJECT REMOVED DUE TO LACK OF INTEREST, CAPACITY, AND PARTNERSHIPS AT THIS TIME.