

SPECIAL NOTE: The following Outline presents selective verbatim text extracted from the Citizen Advisory Committee's section of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan, August 2009 Summary of Recommendations and Process, Pages 7, 10–16. It is printed here in outline form, rather than the original matrix form, to increase readability. Key recommendations of special importance are marked with a red highlight on their number and utilize enlarged type. To read the entire Summary Section of the Comprehensive Plan in original format, see the County's Web site—www.qac.org

Land Use (Citizen Advisory Committee)

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The Citizen Advisory Committee prepared the following Vision Statement focusing on land use.

Land Use Vision Statement

Queen Anne's County will be a rural County that plans for the orderly growth to protect and sustain a primarily agricultural, forested and maritime community within the limits of natural resources by concentrating future growth in existing towns and population centers, and preserves the county's natural beauty and resources for future generations. A dedicated focus on maintaining a strong productive agricultural and forest land base will result in the preservation and conservation of these primary resources. Queen Anne's County is also a County that values and protects its water resources and is conscientious of its stewardship to the land and other natural assets and resources that make this a great place to live, work and play.

The Land Use Vision Statement is supported by the vision statements for each of the six (6) topics addressed by Topic Committees.

The Citizen Advisory Committee focused on discussing the issues and concerns with respect to strengthening and enhancing land use policies that affect preservation/conservation of agricultural lands, as well as community development and its impacts on water resources and other environmentally sensitive lands. Furthermore, the CAC was responsible for resolving inconsistencies between the recommendations from the six Topic Committees related to land use and agricultural land preservation.

A similar recommendation across all committees is to measure and monitor sustainability in the form of an Annual Report to track general factors such as: water quality of rivers and bays, land consumption, quantity of annual water consumption, amount of impervious surface and traffic counts on major arterials. The following is a detailed listing of key factors impacting land use decisions organized by planning topic that should be measured over time.

CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE—OVERARCHING GOALS

- *Adopt policies, legislation, regulations, enforcement, procedures, incentives and appropriate funding necessary to encourage infrastructure that will protect our waterways, conserve our natural resources and support sustainable and responsible agriculture.*

- *Queen Anne’s County should manage growth in a way that protects agricultural and natural resources.*
 - *Prevent destructive and costly rural sprawl.*
 - *Protect Priority Preservation Areas (PPAs).*
 - *Protect ground and surface water resources.*
 - *Direct growth to Towns and population centers.*
 - *Support the County’s agricultural economy.*

Government Cooperation and Participation: OBJECTIVES/RECOMMENDATIONS **p. 10**

Objective 1: *Promote inter-jurisdictional (town/county) cooperation to enable/manage growth and areas where growth is directed.*

1. Encourage greater interaction between the Towns and County through the Council of Governments program.
2. Require joint planning agreements between County & Town Planning Commissioners or Town Planners.
3. Promote Town and County government cooperation to make decisions that serve the greater good rather than the special interests of a few by:
 - Balancing the playing field for decision making so that all interested parties (those affected by and those implementing planning decisions) and not just special interest groups, have legitimate input.
 - Hold semi-annual planning meetings with surrounding jurisdictions and counties where decisions impact all.
 - Consider if development is really needed.

Objective 2: *Initiate joint planning opportunities between County & Towns and with surrounding Counties.*

1. Include representatives of bordering Towns and Counties in comprehensive and applicable community plan updates.
2. Request Queen Anne’s County representative be included in comprehensive and community plan updates of bordering Towns and Counties.
3. Schedule joint planning commission meetings with each bordering Town and County to discuss and resolve planning issues.
4. Establish regional citizen Task Forces to help create a more active and open planning strategy that respects unique aspects and needs of each area.

Objective 3: *Modify County government organizational structure.*

1. Consider a County Commissioner as part of the Planning Commission.
2. In areas where infrastructure deficiencies are joint between a municipality and the County, create a joint political and technical body to address the deficiencies as well as maintain and operate facilities (i.e. regional water/sewer authority, etc).

Infrastructure & Community Facilities/Services: OBJECTIVES/RECOMMENDATIONS p. 11, 12

Objective 1: Be proactive and address infrastructure at the County and municipal level rather than at the individual project level so that infrastructure installation precedes development within towns and population centers.

1. Potential development should not precede traffic remedies at problem areas (e.g. Wye Mills at 213/50 intersection, etc.—refer to the Infrastructure TC Advisory Report for additional areas in need of improvements).
2. County should help finance the various Town’s improvements to water and wastewater treatment systems or their connection to the countywide systems so the financial risk is shared with all County taxpayers.
3. Infrastructure (roadways, water, sewer, etc.) are in place to meet current needs before any further development commences. This should be supported by:
 - A complete needs analysis of infrastructure throughout the County based on revised and updated projects for this comprehensive plan period.
 - Require that infrastructure installation precedes development wherever it is planned in the County.

Objective 2: *Develop affordable, reliable, and up-to-date infrastructure and community facilities/services that meet the safety, transportation, communication system and entertainment needs of the County’s population and support clean high-tech industries.*

1. Ensure the APFO is maintained and improved to provide adequate public facilities as part of development proposals.
2. Infrastructure improvements should be planned and implemented through government entities. Currently developers expand infrastructure as they move forward with their projects. This puts full control of the timing and pace of development in the hands of the developers. The County should control the rate of development by controlling the timing of when infrastructure is provided.
3. The needs of residents in the County take precedence over the “drive through” populations.
 - Build an entertainment center in the abandoned outlets in the Kent Narrows (i.e. movie theatre, community theatre, swimming pool, bowling and other amenities).
 - Create a more reliable public transportation system.
 - Initiate joint planning efforts to relieve thru traffic congestion in the County and adjoining population centers.

Objective 3: *Plan, design, improve, manage, maintain and expand infrastructure and community facilities and services responsibly to meet the needs of local residents and businesses.*

1. Request that the State permit “local traffic only” restrictions on MD 18 and service roads on Kent Island similar to that allowed on the western shore side of the Bay Bridge.
2. Expand Kent Island trail system countywide to connect major towns and recreation areas. Fund this effort with impact fees, general funds, grants and other resources.
3. Expand public bus service to lower-income housing areas.
4. Establish measurable criteria to provide adequate police coverage and ensure that it is deployed to areas of the County properly based upon need.

5. No more major residential subdivisions should be permitted on Kent Island until transportation issues are resolved and effects of rising water levels/sinking land are understood.
6. Utilize existing infrastructure and expansion/upgrade of those facilities as a resource to attract development to those areas already served or adjacent to areas served.
7. Examine infrastructure within the growth areas and identify areas where infrastructure is deficient through the Master Water and Sewerage Plan and the Master Transportation Plan.
8. Create a strategic implementation plan and funding strategies to address infrastructure deficiencies as part of the Water and Sewerage Plan and the Master Transportation Plan.
9. Identify a sewer/water allocation policy in the Water and Sewerage Plan.

Objective 4: *Develop site design standards that promote environmental protection and aesthetics.*

1. Continue to promote “scenic byways” with regulation of land use and design to ensure the corridor retains its beauty and scenic characteristics (potentially 301 and 544, currently 213 and 18 are Scenic Byways).
2. Develop context sensitive site design standards and solutions collaboratively with Maryland State Highway Administration for state routes.
3. Promote use of best available stormwater management techniques by using latest technology.
4. Establish conservation-by-design standards

Education Facilities & Economic Development: OBJECTIVES/RECOMMENDATIONS **p. 13**

Objective 1: *Concentrate growth in towns and population centers in order to enhance educational facilities and promote economic development.*

1. Establish satellite classrooms in population centers for adult education.

Objective 2: *Expand and fund educational facilities, while balancing the needs of our existing population with the needs of future residents.*

1. Support and advance the educational plans for land acquisition, new facilities and improvements to existing facilities.

Objective 3: *Expand and fund educational opportunities for a variety of levels of training, higher education and other types of education.*

1. Foster partnerships with leading universities, medical community and businesses to provide post-secondary school educational opportunities and training.

Objective 4: *Encourage the agricultural and maritime economy and agri-tourism and maritime tourism.*

1. Actively promote the County’s agricultural and maritime economy by promoting local agriculture, maritime activities, agri-tourism and maritime

tourism to the entire mid-Atlantic coast through the County's Department of Economic Development, Agriculture and Tourism and other agencies.

Regulations, Design/Land Use: OBJECTIVES/RECOMMENDATIONS

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Objective 1: *Utilize existing vacant commercial space or commercially zoned areas before new commercial centers are developed.*

1. Encourage commercial growth in Town centers in addition to existing business parks.
2. Provide economic incentives to encourage infill development, adequate reuse or rehabilitation of existing of existing vacant structures and redevelopment.

Objective 2: *Improve design standards to include green elements and aesthetic land use.*

1. Explore sustainable and green codes in other jurisdictions supplemented by research to identify opportunities appropriate to Queen Anne's County to develop and adopt similar codes.
2. Create a vision of desirable types of sustainable and green developments.
3. Identify conflicts with other codes that will prevent implementation of a sustainable green code and work to eliminate the conflicts and barriers.
4. Develop a green/sustainable code and design standards that will implement the vision.
5. Address sustainable and green codes as part of a comprehensive zoning ordinance update.
6. Establish higher density rewards for "green" or sustainable residential and commercial developments outside of Critical Areas.
7. Establish "green" or sustainable standards for residential and commercial developments in Critical Areas.

Objective 3: *Modify zoning and development regulations and permitting policies.*

1. Establish more protective zoning in the AG and Countryside districts to discourage and prevent destructive and costly rural sprawl.
 - Downzone the Agricultural District to 1 unit per 25 acres. No higher density is allowed for any reason.
 - Deed-restricted open space is not required when clustering.
 - Eliminate the Non-Contiguous Development program.
2. Provide incentives to the municipalities so they will become TDR receiving areas.
3. No more major subdivisions should be allowed in AG zoned land.
4. Work with the Towns to establish more commercial areas within their current boundaries and growth areas.
5. Require integrated affordable housing be included in all major subdivisions.
6. Enforce building maintenance codes for rental housing and require a permit for rentals to help fund the increased level of effort.

7. Adopt and enforce a Housing Code to prevent overcrowding and provide adequate sanitary facilities.

Objective 4: *Establish Priority Preservation Areas that cover wide areas of the County's agricultural lands.*

1. Establish agricultural lands PPA(s) that meet minimum state requirements to ensure that QAC continues to be eligible for State preservation funding (i.e. MALFP, etc.).
2. Establish agriculture lands PPA(s) that extend beyond already preserved Rural Legacy areas and other lands already in preservation programs.
3. Supplement the PDR (purchase of development rights) program in order to encourage the retirement of development rights.
4. Establish creative programs (i.e. bonds, etc.) to provide the funding to purchase development rights while at the same time, helping large landowners protect their productive lands from development.
5. Consider areas on Kent Island that may meet the intent of the PPA for purposes of preserving areas of productive agricultural lands.

Objective 5: *Proactively manage growth.*

1. Identify areas where growth is appropriate through the comprehensive plan and then zone the land accordingly (a comprehensive plan update and comprehensive rezoning).
2. Establish Centreville as the central area of future growth in the County. Classify more land east of town for a County business/industrial park.
3. QAC's land use regulations (policies, zoning and development regulations) reflect the County's vision and adequately provides for thoughtful growth such as:
 - Focusing on attracting businesses that have the least impact on the environment (e.g. certain research and development businesses).
 - Increasing facilities and residential opportunities for low income, seasonal workers and the elderly.
 - Revisit projected population growth in light of changing economy.
 - Limit influence of developers on zoning changes.
4. Be a conscientious steward of land and waterways as well as natural assets through a variety of protection measures such as:
 - Always measure future plans for development against the Land Use vision. If plans do not support this vision, then scratch them.
 - No new growth allocation to create IDAs.

Objective 1: Protect the quality and quantity of ground and surface water resources.

1. Improve protection of the County’s fragile ground and surface water resources through development of a Water Protection Plan.
2. Promote greater use of the CREP buffering programs in order to improve County waterway quality with the intent to increase buffer areas near waterways.

Objective 2: Improved water quality in order to be removed from the State’s impaired waterway list.

1. Promote agricultural “best management practices” through tax incentives.
2. Work to ensure that ground water resources meet future demands (e.g. wells, irrigation, etc.).
3. Manage the County’s water resources by using the latest research and technology to lessen the impact on our environment while encouraging smart growth without restricting the water use by agriculture.
4. Encourage best management practices for progressive water management.
5. Work to ensure water resources meet future demands.
6. Retrofit failing septic systems utilizing Best Available Technology (BAT) and BNR.
7. Create implementing tools for Environmentally Sensitive Design (ESD).
8. Identify existing storm water management hot spots for establishment of facilities or systems.
9. Encourage watershed management plans for unincorporated growth areas.
10. Track key watershed parameters (e.g. impervious surface, etc.) on a watershed basis.