

# HOUSING

## INTRODUCTION

The 1998 Comprehensive Plan describes North Beach as originally being a family bayside resort with single family homes, open air pavilions, and hotels characteristic of the turn of the century. Over the last several decades, there have been many changes in Town; however, this community still functions as a family friendly town with many single family homes. The residential neighborhoods consist of single family detached, single family attached, townhouses, and apartments all on relatively small lots. Many homes have been transformed from weekend cottages to multi level single family homes.

North Beach has healthy, stable neighborhoods that provide a variety of housing options that can meet the needs of different age groups, family sizes and income capabilities. This element establishes the goals, policies, and implementation strategies for rental homes, vacation homes, and fee simple home ownership located in neighborhoods and in the mixed use district downtown.

North Beach can meet most of the Smart Growth Initiatives in Box H-1; and is close to meeting all objectives with adoption and implementation of their updated Comprehensive Plan.

Residents living in Town have access to many housing choices within walking or bicycling distance of shops, restaurants, offices, recreational areas, public transit, natural resources, and efficient infrastructure.

Densities in the Comprehensive Plan are proposed to be increased in the Low, Moderate, and High Density Residential Areas and the Waterfront Renaissance District will continue to offer mixed use in downtown where several apartments are located and several other projects with mixed use are planned. As growth pressures continue in future years, projects with higher densities will become more appealing which will not degrade the quality of life in North Beach as long as future plans contain landscaping, parks, public spaces outdoors, and recreational opportunities.

In accommodating new growth, emphasis should also be placed on the importance of preservation of existing housing stock, especially the historic homes that remind us of the character of our community.

### Box H-1

#### Smart Neighborhoods

- Transportation choice and walk-ability
- Community interaction and civic life
- Efficient use of land.
- Supports regional environmental goals reduced land consumption, improved air and water quality.
- Planned open space integral to the community.
- Efficient use of infrastructure.
- Synergistic effect of mixed use, in which residential and commercial uses support each other and contribute to long term vitality.
- Enhances and complements existing community.
- Linked to adjacent communities.
- Range of housing types and densities.
- Interconnected streets designed to balance needs of all users, with sidewalks, and street parking.
- Compact design.

### Other Housing Plans

The Architectural Survey and Historic District Evaluation which was prepared in August, 1998 identifies 40 existing historic structures that are located in Town. A list of these structures appears in

Appendix B. These structures are significant in that they reflect North Beach's historic architecture. Structures had been photographically documented in the report; however, they have not been added to the Maryland Historic Trust's Inventory of Historic Properties for the purpose of establishing a Historic District within the Town.

The report highlighted two approximate periods that were significant in North Beaches' growth: Residential and Beach Colony (c.1910 to c.1942) and Suburban Community (c. 1943 to the present). It reveals that a significant percentage of Pre-World War II residential dwellings exist, although many have been altered. Most of the commercial buildings have been destroyed: some by weather related events.

The report warns that historic resources are threatened by new development; if so, the Town should consider developing guidelines in their Zoning Ordinance to achieve preservation of architecturally solid structures and require salvage of portions of historically significant structures if the building cannot be totally preserved. Of course, this action would require amendment of the Zoning Ordinance which would require a public hearing process to gain citizen support.

The 1998 Comprehensive Plan established the following Housing goals and objectives.

- Encourage the availability of a variety of housing types which can meet the needs of various age groups, family sizes, and income capabilities.
- Encourage clearance and redevelopment of blighted housing units.
- Continue to enforce a "Livability code."

All of these goals appear to have been met since the time of the adoption of the 1998 Plan.

North Beach, also, meets the County's Housing Goals in that it "encourages the availability of a variety of housing types to serve different age groups, family sizes, and incomes....in a town center near services and recreational opportunities". In addition, the community does encourage upgrading and rehabilitation of substandard housing.

The 2004 Calvert County Comprehensive Plan expounds on the importance of sustainable communities when meeting the needs of the County residents in the following ways:

- Housing is designed and oriented to promote safety, "a sense of community", energy efficiency, and easy access to jobs, services, and recreation.
- An adequate percentage of homes are affordable.
- Housing is located away from incompatible uses.

These objectives are very well stated and should be carried forward in this Comprehensive Plan. North Beach mirrors the typical housing characteristics of Calvert County's housing stock since the majority of households are single family dwelling units.

#### Housing Demographics

Housing growth in North Beach is projected to be moderate. Based on some of the projects that are in

the pipe line or have been proposed to the Planning Commission by various property owners, it is possible that many of the housing units projected will be built midway through the Planning period. It is important to acknowledge that the uncertainty in the National economy may provide much slower development of the Town than is hoped to be possible.

Projected Housing Units 2000-2030  
Table H-1

<i>Year</i>	<i>Households</i>	<i>Household Change Yearly</i>
2000	803	-
2005	795	-8
2010	821	26
2015	853	37
2020	897	39
2025	938	41
2030	981	43

2000 Census data Compiled by ARRO Consulting, Inc.

Table H-1 shows that based on previous growth, there will be approximately 178 new dwelling units available in 2030. This number is based on 803 dwelling units in 2000 that were occupied. This information will provide the basis for analysis of the Community Facilities chapter and projections in the Municipal Growth Element chapter.

North Beach Housing Units Status, 2000  
Table H-2

<b>Housing Status</b>	<b>Units</b>
Occupied	802
Owner Occupied	502
Renter Occupied	300
Vacant	93
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>895</b>

2000 Census Data summarized by ARRO Consulting, Inc.

Table H-2 indicates that there were actually 93 dwelling units in 2000 which were unoccupied either because they were up for sale, seasonal units, or unoccupied for other reasons. Vacant dwelling units are considered as temporary situations so they should be compared to the next available census data.

North Beach Housing Units by Householder's Age, 2000  
Table H-3

Age of Householder	Owner Number	Occupied percent	Age of Householder	Renter Number	Occupied percent
	502	100.0		300	100.0
15-24 years	16	3.2	15-24 years	13	4.3
25-34 years	112	22.3	25-34 years	96	32.0
35-44 years	113	22.5	35-44 years	77	25.7
45-54 years	115	22.9	45-54 years	61	20.3
55-64 years	70	13.9	55-64 years	25	8.3
65-74 years	46	9.2	65-74 years	16	5.3
75-84 years	21	4.2	75-84 years	7	2.3
85 years and older	9	1.8	85 years and older	5	1.7

2000 Census Data; Summarized by ARRO Consulting, Inc.

Table H-3 depicts Housing units by age and by owner or renter occupied. Notice that householders over 55 make up approximately 29 percent of owner occupied householders. An additional 17.6 householders are 55 year old and older and are renting their homes. If the next census replicates these numbers, there will be approximately 47 percent of all householders that are approaching retirement or already retired. This is significant in that North Beach not only will have to provide housing for this population, but will have to have services and shopping for them as well. Public transit will be extremely necessary if services are not located in Town.

A 1992 study by Association of Retired Persons (AARP) states that 84 percent of the elderly would like to stay in their home; and 80 percent would prefer to live in a neighborhood with people of all ages. A majority of those surveyed wanted to live near a grocery store, a drug store, a doctor's office, and a hospital.

### DESIGN GUIDELINES

There is considerable diversity of housing in North Beach due to the following variables: a range of incomes, a mix of single households and family households with a variety of age differences in each; seasonal housing; historically significant and mixed-use properties. With all of these competing interests, it is often necessary to create design guidelines and/or standards to help plan growth in the Town. This is no easy task since many of the buildings are often narrow and have small lot sizes and setbacks that add to the difficulty of meeting design guidelines or standards which has a tendency to discourage development of some vacant lots due to having to ask for variances based on hardship or practical difficulty. Henceforth, some lots will remain vacant for longer than they need to be and will retard development of downtown.

Encouraging the use for development preceded by an approved area plan for several lots that are consolidated would achieve more efficient and compatible development.

Much of the development and redevelopment that will take place in North Beach is infill development that is adjacent or in close proximity with residential properties and neighborhoods which increases the necessity of good design guidelines or standards. Guidelines or standards with detailed criteria should be reviewed and updated in the land development regulations. This action would provide more compatibility with new development and adjacent neighborhoods. In addition, developers will know what will be expected of them when they make application which will add to a faster review time.

The challenge may be less burdensome if the Zoning Ordinance includes modifications that can be granted by the Planning Commission with proposals that demonstrate compatibility with adjacent properties. Each modification that may be granted should have criteria that must be met for the granting of the modification(s) so that each request will be granted on a consistent basis.

### **HOME OCCUPATIONS**

Home occupations have become increasingly popular due to higher transportation costs, the higher cost of living, and generally with a down turn in the economy when people are looking for alternative ways to support themselves.

Home-based businesses can offer advantages to the public sector and the homeowner, providing the business remains secondary and accessory to the principal use of the home. Neighborhood complaints relative to existing home occupations are a common occurrence, especially if the jurisdiction's Zoning Ordinance does not clearly define the regulations applicable to the home occupation when the application is approved and enforcement occurs when someone is in violation of their permit.

Inspection of the home is necessary if there is a violation and code enforcement should enforce the requirements of the home occupation.

Home occupations cannot accommodate everyone. There are some businesses that should only be permitted in a commercial zoning district only due to creating a nuisance or impact on a residence or a neighborhood. Definition of the home occupation and the requirements should be clear and concise in the Zoning Ordinance.

A successful home occupation section of the Zoning Ordinance could provide employment and a work force in North Beach that does not add to parking or traffic problems with little impact on the adjacent neighbors or neighborhood.

### **HOUSING GOALS**

1. Encourage the construction of housing for all age groups and income levels.
2. Support preservation of historic dwellings and buildings located in Town.
3. Encourage multi-modal transportation to serve all neighborhoods.
4. Review existing design guidelines and standards for compliance with policies and implementation strategies of this ordinance.
5. Improve the availability of housing stock for the elderly and disabled individuals.
6. Increase the workforce with allowing home occupations after meeting revised requirements set forth in the Zoning Ordinance.

## **POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

**Policy H.1: Promote the availability of an adequate housing supply for current and future residents.**

### **Implementation Strategies**

1. Encourage a mix of dwelling types.
2. Encourage higher density dwelling units in the Waterfront Renaissance district and development of at least 3.5 dwelling units per acre in the rest of Town in keeping with Smart Growth Initiatives.
3. Encourage upper-floor residential over commercial in the Waterfront Renaissance mixed-use district.

**Policy H.2: Promote the development of a mix of housing that is commensurate with the range of incomes to provide affordable housing for all citizens.**

**Policy H.3: Support housing for the elderly and individuals that are disabled.**

### **Implementation Strategies**

1. Encourage new buildings to have features that could be adapted to accommodate elderly or the disabled.
2. Provide bus shelters in areas in Town with a high concentration of elderly.
3. Continue to allow administrative approval for handicap accessible variances.
4. Encourage developers of new or reconstruction of single family homes to build homes that are adaptable to accommodate the elderly or those who are disabled.

**Policy H.4: Encourage the rehabilitation or adaptive reuse of substandard housing through public and private actions.**

### **Implementation Strategies**

1. Explore use of grants to rehabilitate blighted, vacant houses.

**Policy H.5: Support and encourage Historic Preservation.**

### **Implementation Strategies**

1. Support the presence of the historic structures in North Beach, and publicize the value of preserving, protecting, and restoring areas of historic significance.
2. Safeguard and improve property values in the area of historic structures or properties in the Historic Overlay district.
3. Provide incentives to retain portions of historic structures during redevelopment and adapt the significant historic part of the building to the design of the new structure.

4. Continue to require Historic District Commission review before razing or demolishing a Historic structure and require photographing or archeological inspection of the structure.

**Policy H.6: Encourage multi-modal transportation to serve all neighborhoods.**

**Implementation**

1. Coordinate additional stops with transit authorities as the population and density increases in North Beach.
2. Expand a shared use bicycle and pedestrian path from the waterfront to all neighborhoods in Town.
3. Support local business that can be accessed by biking or walking.
4. Promote a pedestrian-friendly, walk-able street scape that has designated crossings at intersections.
5. Provide bicycle racks at public places in the downtown.

**Policy H.7: Coordinate the adoption of design guidelines for the Town with the policies and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. Include mitigation features where commercial development is sited next to a residence or residential housing.**

1. Update the Zoning Ordinance to provide for requiring a photometric lighting plan that the Planning Commission may review before final site plan development review when a commercial establishment is locating in close proximity to a residence or residential neighborhood.
2. Update the Zoning Ordinance to provide for requiring a landscaping plan sign by a registered landscape architect when screening is required when a commercial use is locating in close proximity to a residence or a residential neighborhood.
3. Encourage the use of monumental signs and no temporary signage in the Waterfront Renaissance district or when commercial development is adjacent to a residence or a residential neighborhood.
4. Update the Zoning Ordinance to require commercial trash receptacles to be sited away from residential dwelling units.

**Policy H.8: Encourage home occupations to provide additional job opportunities in Town.**

**Implementation**

1. Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to allow low impact home occupations that can be administratively approved, if the applicant can meet revised criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance.
2. Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to allow home occupations that are approved by the Special Exception after being publicly heard, if the applicant can meet criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance.
3. Require staff visits to home occupations before approval and condition all approvals on allowing inspections by code enforcement, if violations of the permit occurs.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### INTRODUCTION

North Beach is predominantly a quiet residential bedroom community that takes advantage of job opportunities in nearby Washington, D.C., Annapolis, Baltimore, and other local communities. The "journey to work" is generally within an hour or less drive and commuters take advantage of the County and MTA bus service that shuttles workers to nearby employment areas.

Historically, the County relied on jobs associated with agriculture and aquaculture. Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, tourism and recreation became important in the County's economy when North Beach and Chesapeake Beach became sought after vacation stops that provided a high-class seashore experience. Most of the building construction at that time was summer cottages, churches, and shops. A commercial area grew around the trolley line, where Chesapeake Avenue is today, that ran to Chesapeake Beach and the amusement park that was built there. Many of the buildings that survive today were built between 1920 and 1940.

In 1910, North Beach had grown and prospered sufficiently to be granted a corporate charter by the State to be a self-governing municipality. However, the economy of the Town suffered when hurricanes in 1933 and 1954 destroyed a number of structures and improvements. In 1945 and 1975, fires caused additional destruction of businesses that provided services to the Town's citizens. Following World War II, legalized slot machines and other gambling attractions in Southern Maryland brought a resurgence of tourism to the beaches. This created a change in the nature of the town as a resort attraction from family facilities to gambling devices. Family oriented establishments were replaced with taverns and bars. The opening of the Eastern Shore by the construction of the Bay Bridge occurred just as North Beach was becoming more and more dependent upon slot machines as its main attraction. Repeal of legalized gambling in 1968 affected the prosperity of North Beach and Southern Maryland, as well.

Despite past economic fluctuation and difficulties, North Beach has continued to grow at a slow and steady pace. In the 1960s, the County's population growth began to accelerate as people moved out of the Washington, D. C. metropolitan area. North Beach had attracted this migration and cottages built for summer homes, had started to be converted to year round residents. This trend continued with some out-migration of younger workers looking for jobs in the 1970s; but commuters and retirees started to settle as permanent residents in this quiet little town with views of the beautiful Chesapeake Bay.

In the 1980s and 1990s, Calvert County's economy expanded and the County saw an increase of population and a change of the type of business into more technical-oriented companies. This attracted a more diverse base of services and retail establishments in Prince Frederick, and along Maryland Route 4 that provided a destination point for a variety of shopping opportunities for residents of North Beach and surrounding areas. Today, although North Beach's population cannot support some of the major retail chains or big box retail

establishments, the Town contains retail and service-related businesses located within walking or biking distance. The Town's officials are very interested in attracting other businesses and tourists, and have been making progress in doing that. (The Municipal Element describes some of these improvements). It is apparent that the current state of the national economy will affect the employment and economic growth in future years; however, the table and projections that are in the Plan will be able to be reviewed against the 2010 Census Bureau numbers during the next comprehensive plan review. Tables within this Plan may be revised during the next comprehensive plan update.

**Box EC-1**  
 Demographic and economic forecasts have been prepared With County Data when Town Data wasn't available. Tables should be updated during the next mandated 6-year Comprehensive Plan update.

**Employment, Journey to Work  
 Table EC-1**

<b>Maryland: Southern Region. Calvert County, North Beach            Actual 1970-2000; Projections 2005-2030</b>										
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>
<b>Southern Maryland Region</b>	41,190	50,980	93,028	125,371	148,629	160,400	177,700	187,800	195,600	201,300
<b>Calvert County</b>	6,249	7,797	18,276	26,056	32,433	35,200	41,100	44,500	46,300	47,200
<b>North Beach</b>	-	-	-	1,062	1,322	1,434	1,674	1,812	1,885	1,922

Historical Data from US Census Bureau of Economic Analysis, Tables CA 25 & CA 25N. Projections from 2010 to 2030  
 Prepared by Maryland Department of Planning Data Service, February 2009.

In the absence of at-place employment trends for North Beach, Calvert County and Southern Maryland data was used to illustrate employment growth trends. Overall Calvert County is projected to increase 3.6 percent in employment from the 26,056 actual person employed in the year 2000. Calvert County had a 134.0 percent increase from 1980 to 1990. Between 1990 and 2000, there was an increase of 42.5 percent; however, the percent of growth decreases over the forecasted years. A review of the 2004 Calvert County Comprehensive Plan partially explains that substantial growth in employment began in the 1970s due to construction of major employment facilities in the County. Additional expansion in growth can be explained by the increase of people willing to commute to work, as well as, retail and services sector growth needed to accommodate the increasing population.

Table EC-2 below shows the projections extrapolated out to the year 2030 based on the overall growth in employees in the County. According to the Calvert County 2004 Comprehensive Plan, the County expanded its civilian labor force 30 percent between 1992 and 2002 overall. The Plan cites the importance of Town Centers and references the resurgence in tourism and the development of small businesses in North Beach and Chesapeake Beach. North Beach should follow this trend fairly closely mainly based on residents commuting out of Town as they have in the past.

**2000-2030  
North Beach Employment Projections <sup>1</sup>  
Table EC-2**

Years	Percent Increase	Number of Jobs
1970	-	Table EC-2
1980	24.7	-
1990	134.4	-
2000	42.6	1,062
2005	24.4	1,322
2010	8.53	1,434
2015	16.7	1,674
2020	8.2	1,812
2025	4.0	1,885
2030	1.94	1,922

<sup>1</sup>Percents based on Calvert County's Projected Growth

According to 2000 census data, North Beach employees were traveling approximately 41.9 miles during their journey to work, were earning a median household income of \$46,111. The median value of owner occupied housing was \$116,000. Although it is recognized that the median household income and median value of owner occupied housing has increased over the last eight years, sufficient data at a town level is not available to cite exact numbers.

**Table EC-3  
Travel Time to Work; Median Household Income; Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing**

Year	Mean Travel Time	Median Household Income	Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing
2000	41.9	\$46,111	\$116,000

A Market analysis prepared by Hunter Interests, Inc in 2001, studied the market area of North Beach using a larger geographical area than the boundaries of the town which included areas that were

within one, five, and ten miles of North Beach. In this study they found that the most common sectors for employment in the workforce were in retail, professional, construction, and public administration. This study supported the fact that a large number of residents are traveling from their homes in North Beach to their jobs, which would continue until there are more employment opportunities in North Beach.

The Hunter Study (2001) contains a more expansive and significant look at North Beach from a more economic perspective and detail than the 2000 census data. Hunter utilized a larger market area for North Beach that would be more realistic in evaluating the type of services, retail, and job opportunities and the wealth that is in or closely adjacent to the Town. In the market study, the population increased due to a larger market service area; and, it indicated a population that would be likely to economically support commercial endeavors in Town.

Hunter found that within a one, five, and ten mile radius of the center of North Beach, the 2005 population was projected to be 6,015; 21,964; and 64,672 of patrons respectively. Of course, the market area does include the towns of Deale, Chesapeake Beach, and other commercial areas within a ten-mile radius that would be competing for a portion of the market, as well.

The market area's household wealth distribution shown in Table EC-4 shows a more specific and varied breakdown of household wealth in 2000 than census data did for the same year.

	<b>1-Mile Ring</b>	<b>% in 1- Mi. Ring</b>	<b>5-Mile Ring</b>	<b>% in 5- Mi. Ring</b>	<b>10-Mile Ring</b>	<b>% in 10- Mi. Ring</b>
Total Households	1,847		6,795		19,902	
Less than \$25,000	517	28.0%	1,580	23.3%	3,821	19.2%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	169	9.1%	561	8.3%	1,521	7.6%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	308	16.7%	1,075	15.8%	3,047	15.3%
\$100,000 to \$249,999	497	26.9%	1,880	27.7%	5,700	28.6%
\$250,000 to \$499,999	264	14.3%	1,156	17.0%	3,833	19.3%
\$500,000 and Over	105	5.7%	540	7.9%	1,969	9.9%

Of significance is the household wealth dynamics relative to income that indicates that 63.6 percent of household wealth within one mile of the center of North Beach is over \$50,000 and 46.9 percent is over \$100,000 in 2000.

Based on the Comprehensive Plan citizen survey, of those residents that wanted additional growth in Town, preferences were indicated for a grocery store, additional cultural events, some additional retail, and professional or general business offices. Due to the number of tourists that are visiting the area, some residents referenced a desire for some bed and breakfast or small hotel establishments. The Town's Zoning Ordinance does allow for home occupations that could add small business opportunities; however, these opportunities should not infringe upon residential neighborhoods.

## Tourism

North Beach strongest strength is its location on the Chesapeake Bay. It attracts buyers of second homes, attracts the older population who is seeking a quiet place to retire, and it draws tourists who realize that they can be on the beach in less time than it takes to get to the east coast.

North Beach has a number of community events during the year and an active tourist presence during the summer months. The beach, fishing pier, and special events have been very successful. In 2007, 24,958 people visited North Beach. From April 26 through September 13, 2008, the number of tourists grew by 25 percent to 31,311 visitors. These numbers are based on ticket sales and beach fees; however, the numbers could be much higher due to attendance at functions such as: the Friday night Farmer's market, Bay Fest, and other events during the year.

During the summer months the Beach Trolley (BTA) provides transportation for tourists and residents who travel between Chesapeake Beach, North Beach, Herrington Harbor, and Deal. There are a number of stops during the two hour round trip. Some citizens have stated that they enjoy the service; however, the time for a round trip is not always convenient. There has been a proposal to add an additional trolley which would reduce travel time during a round trip to one hour which is more favorable and would add flexibility to activities during the trip.

## ECONOMIC GOALS

1. Preserve the character of North Beach as a family-friendly small town while managing and directing the growth of the town to maximize revenues.
2. Expand the revenue producing opportunities of North Beach.
3. Provide additional parking opportunities downtown for business development and citizen and tourist parking.
4. Work with the County to improve transportation facilities between employment locations.
5. Encourage developers to pay their way relative to streetscape improvements, parking, public art, and community needs relative to their projects.
6. Continue to streamline and enhance development regulations to expedite redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and infill development on vacant and underutilized parcels downtown.
7. Continue to monitor grant and other funding programs to finance improvements in Town.
8. Retain and attract high quality businesses to achieve a balance of commercial, office, and home based businesses to provide a strong employment base and meet the needs of the citizens.
9. Attract a small hotel or encourage bed and breakfast business to locate in North Beach to enable tourists to stay in the Town during week ends and for summer events.

## POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

### **Policy EC.1: Promote a diversified economic mix.**

#### **Implementation Strategies**

1. **Explore the financial impact of acquiring additional sewer taps for future development to provide for growth in downtown.**

2. **Explore incentives to attract businesses to locate in downtown. The survey has suggested a small hotel would be desirable and would support tourism.**
3. **Attract services that residents need on a daily basis to promote North Beach's economy and reduce vehicular trips to other communities. The survey had suggested a small grocery store or drug store.**
4. **Encourage and attract a retail mix of small businesses and specialty goods and services that contribute to the economic mix while respecting the size, scale, and historic character of the community.**

**Policy EC.2: Strengthen downtown as a center for culture and arts. Evaluate the requirements to be included in the State's Entertainment District program and work toward making North Beach an Entertainment district during this planning period.**

#### **Implementation Strategies**

1. **Continue to promote and support the art and entertainment related businesses and activities in Town.**
2. **Explore the possibility of combining the future Bayside History and Nature Center with a conference room or large meeting room for small entertainment venues.**
3. **Work with Calvert County and other nearby communities when scheduling events tourist attractions.**

**Policy EC.3: Continue to promote North Beach as a tourist attraction.**

#### **Implementation**

1. **Continue to promote and support existing tourist attractions by working with the County tourism office.**
2. **Develop additional water related recreational opportunities: for instance rental of canoes, kayaks or paddle boats.**
3. **Promote the Bay Museum by capitalizing on the acquisition of the Captain John Smith book.**
4. **Explore the possibility of running a water taxi between North Beach and Chesapeake Beach.**
5. **Resurrect the plans for the Bayside History and Nature Center Museum and study possible construction of the facility in the future in conjunction with other water related activities.**

**6. Support the use of the summer trolley and addition of another trolley to lessen the travel time between points.**

**Policy EC.4: Encourage infill development and mixed use projects in the downtown area in the Waterfront Renaissance zoning district to allow for professional and general office space and commercial establishments.**

**Policy EC.5: Review the scale and types of uses in the Neighborhood and General Commercial zoning district use matrix relative to the impact of uses on residential development and amend the use matrix.**

**Policy EC.6: During development design and review of new projects or redevelopment, emphasis should be on preserving view sheds of the Chesapeake Bay for the majority of citizens to enjoy.**

**Policy EC.7: Seek Planning Commission future infrastructure improvement recommendations to be made and heard at a public hearing as part of the capital improvement budget approval process.**

**Policy EC.8: Analyze the cost of review of development applications and compare the Town's fees to other jurisdictions to be sure they are comparable.**

**Policy EC.9: Encourage and assist the private sector in obtaining State funding for neighborhood business revitalization projects that further the objectives of this Plan.**

**Policy EC10: Continue to apply for outside sources of revenue for needed capital improvements and maintenance of the same and coordinate major public improvement with adjacent jurisdictions, County, or State to save infrastructure costs.**

**Policy EC11: Revisit and reaffirm the Home Occupation regulations to be sure that businesses will not be operated that negatively impact residential neighborhoods.**

**Policy EC12: Work with County Transit to insure additional trips and several stops in town for morning and evening buses to major employers and for local service with an increase in population.**

**Policy EC13: Enhance the gateways to the key corridors with visual improvements.**

## ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

The ability of local government to meet the needs of citizens depends to a large extent, upon effective communication among elected officials, town administrators and citizens. Public participation in government, such as the public hearing process and notification requirements is mandated by Article 66B of the State Planning enabling legislation and is a most crucial element of the comprehensive planning process. Without public input, even the most well meaning plan is unrealistic.

Results from the citizen survey conducted in the fall of 2008 indicated that the citizens are satisfied with the help that they receive from town staff and the elected officials.

The Town has been successful over the past several years in applying for and receiving outside sources of revenues for needed capital improvements. However, there is still a need to continue to fund new capital improvements with the event of increased operating costs that will be associated with additional growth.

## POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

**Policy EC15: Continue to develop a strong public participation program in government decision-making.**

**Policy EC.16: Continue to provide adequate notice for public hearing and provide information on the issues that will discussed at the public hearings.**

# TRANSPORTATION

## INTRODUCTION

The Transportation Element of the North Beach Comprehensive Plan includes the classification of the streets, characteristics of all modes of transportation that exists in town, discussion relative to the issues involving movement in the community, and goals, policies, and implementation strategies to accomplish expanded and efficient multi-modal transportation.

This chapter is part of a policy document rather than a particular transportation plan so there will be no specific projects or changes in traffic movement that are mandated in this text.

It will discuss various options of movement throughout the community: automobile, public bus transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and to a lesser degree boat. It will, also, address the major roadways that connect North Beach to other counties and regions of the State and will include transportation goals and policies from the latest adopted Calvert County Comprehensive Plan.

You will find discussions of land use and transportation relationships; public transit issues, neighborhood impacts, and objectives and policies that will foster less reliance on the automobile and more opportunities for bicycles and walking.

Major automobile access to North Beach is via Route 261 from the north and south with limited access from Fifth Street extended. Route 261 connects to Md. Routes 2 and 260 that ultimately connect to Md. Route 4 and 495, and Interstate 95. In the 2004 Calvert County Comprehensive Plan, trends presented indicated that traffic volumes on Routes 2 and 4 have more than doubled in recent decades. This impacts North Beach since many of the residents of the Town commute to work using these routes. The County Plan recognizes Md. Routes 260, 2, and 4 as fast heavily traveled roads and it states that the gradual conversion of Md. Routes 2 and 4 into controlled access expressways will be the key to future traffic congestion. Improvements, such as these, funded by the County and State will improve the transportation network into the region from North Beach.

All streets in North Beach are owned and maintained by the Town except Chesapeake Avenue which is the responsibility of the State since it is a link of Maryland Route 261.

Adequate transportation arterials and access to the beach and commercial areas are important to the successful revitalization of North Beach. Traffic circulation and parking for vehicles and bicycle and pedestrian alternatives must meet the needs of the residents, tourists, business patrons, and employees.

In order to better understand the Transportation network and issues in North Beach, it was necessary to review the Transportation Element of the previous Comprehensive Plan which listed six major issues that are listed below.

- 1) Street directions and one-way rerouting are needed to improve circulation and access along the waterfront.
- 2) Several parts of the Town pose significant risk to pedestrians given narrow road widths, the absence of sidewalks, and vehicular traffic.
- 3) Sidewalks in many areas are in poor condition or do not exist.
- 4) Bicycles provide an alternative means of transportation to move around Town and among the recreational areas. It is not desirable for bicycles to use the Bay walk at the same time as pedestrians, thus, a means of enjoying the Town by bicycle should be identified.

- 5) Parallel on-street parking is permitted on most streets in the Town. Off-street parking is usually on private land and is unpaved. The poor condition of the sidewalks and curbs and the lack of designated off-street parking is an invitation to park on the sidewalks or on private property. The parking situation can only become worse as revitalization of the beach and commercial area occurs, unless off-street parking improvements are made.
- 6) Public transportation is an important component of town living; it is the only means of transportation for some residents of Town. Additional public transportation opportunities would be useful for commuter, the older population, and for special summer time events.

Since the time of the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, there has been some one way directional changes to the street pattern; however, there is currently a Parking Study being conducted that may provide recommendations for traffic circulation based on the location of major parking areas and the most favorable flow to access those areas.

There are still a number of streets that have no sidewalks and have sidewalks that are obstructed for handicap accessibility vehicles or are in need of repair. These issues may be able to be addressed once the Parking Study is finished and implemented which may allow for sidewalks to replace the need for on street parking. In addition, there are a number of paper alleys in Town that could be converted into alley ways that would allow parking behind residents instead of on the street. A bicycle path system should be studied and implemented within the Town to reduce the dependence on short vehicular trips.

### **Street Classification**

Street classification maps are adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan as are the goals, policies, and implementation strategies. Except for Maryland Route 261, North Beach's Transportation map will show Local streets; however, it should show streets that are considered constrained due to a narrow right-of-way and buildings that are close to the street that make widening the street economically unfeasible. Although most of the rights-of-way are approximately fifty feet, some of the streets could provide additional carrying capacity if rights-of-way could be expanded. Proposed street rights-of-way should be described and standard details should be determined for normal and constrained streets and the sidewalks that are either existing or planned. This analysis should be done to determine the feasibility of bicycle paths being constructed through the Town. Balancing pedestrian and vehicular traffic policies to determine the optimal balance is needed before construction should take place for any options.

### **Shared Use Paths**

Replacing vehicular trips with non-motorized bicycles or with walking yields significant environmental benefits and promotes a greater sense of community.

Planning bicycle paths and pedestrian walkways: generally requires a fair amount of planning; may require acquisition of land; and needs the support and commitment of public officials. Some communities elect to establish a bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee that would study and recommend efficient and safe routes to the elected officials and then provide construction plans for this public improvement. A comprehensive effort of establishing bicycle and pedestrian routes throughout the town will require a bicycle and pedestrian path plan (hereafter referred to as a shared use path) with routes and support of the Mayor and Council, Planning Commission, Public Works Department, and the residents. Connection to adjacent communities would be beneficial in planning this mode of transportation. Shared use paths on the public street should be incorporated into the

standard details or specifications of the street and traffic calming may need to be added to insure safety of riders or pedestrians. A shared path system is preferred over a separate bicycle path and pedestrian path due to the limited space that is available in an already built environment.

### **Traffic Calming**

Traffic calming utilizes a wide range of methods that diverts traffic or slows down motor vehicles which provides more safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. It is generally used in areas where there are a number of pedestrians on the street and a number of vehicles: some of which can be through traffic as we would see on Chesapeake Avenue or Fifth Street; or, in congested areas: like Bay Avenue, especially during special events. It is often requested by citizens when they hope to mitigate the impacts of speeding vehicular traffic through their neighborhoods.

Each situation where you may be utilizing traffic calming measures needs to be studied and applied properly to the specific situation for which it is intended to achieve positive results. A common traffic calming device could be as simple as a stop sign placed in an appropriate location to allow pedestrians to cross the street or to slow down speed in residential neighborhoods. Speed humps or tables are, also, used to slow traffic and discourages through traffic from using residential streets. When determining use of traffic calming devices, a qualified engineer and emergency personnel should be consulted to evaluate the application and a cost benefit analysis for the improvement such is considered. Improvement costs could be a funded by a developer if the project is creating an impact at an otherwise safe location that may become unsafe with the impact of the construction of new development.

### **Public Transit**

As stated in the Economic element, many residents of the Town commute out of Town, and in some cases out of the County, due to their journey to work each day. Those who do not drive or car pool, rely on County Bus Service or the Maryland Transit Administration bus to ride to work.

The County operates a fixed route service between town centers and a demand-responsive service which provides transportation for the elderly.

During the summer months, the Beach Trolley provides service between Deale, Chesapeake Beach, Harrington Harbor, and North Beach which is used by tourists and residents. There are plans to add an additional trolley to shorten the wait time between trips and to service more patrons.

### **Parking**

A parking study is currently being prepared at the present time. Recommendations of the parking study should be followed since this is an important element to development of North Beach.

## **TRANSPORTATION GOALS**

1. Develop a balanced, efficient, and equitable transportation system that provides a range of transportation options that reinforces the livability and sustainable neighborhoods in Town.
2. The transportation system should support a strong and diverse economy and provide parking areas for those shops and services in Town.
3. Minimize the number of low occupant vehicular trips and support public transportation.
4. Support and seek funding for bicycle and pedestrian shared use paths as a component of the recreational activities planned for the Town.

5. Provide traffic calming on streets that are considered unsafe due to lack of sidewalks or vehicular speed.

## POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

**Policy T.1: Coordinate with state and federal agencies, local governments, and providers of transportation services when planning and funding transportation links and services.**

### Implementation Strategies

1. Coordinate funding and development of transportation projects with public and private investment and in combination with other jurisdictions, if possible.
2. Support adding a second trolley to provide transportation for citizens and tourists.
3. Provide bus shelters at stops for public transportation.
4. Explore and identify revenue sources from parking to fund new parking facilities.
5. Explore shared parking when two businesses operate at the different times.

**Policy T.2: Complete the Parking Study and provide adequate parking for the citizens, businesses, and visitors.**

### Implementation Strategies

1. Design and construct well lighted and safe parking areas that are compatible with adjacent residential areas.
2. Provide handicap accessible parking areas and bicycle parking.
3. Encourage bioretention areas for storm water management and pervious paving in parking areas when at all possible.

**Policy T.3: Educate Citizens on the Transportation Goals, Policies, and Implementation Strategies.**

### Implementation Strategies

1. Increase public awareness of the benefits of walking and bicycling and of resources and facilities when they become available.
2. Educate citizens and businesses about Green Streets and encourage citizen support to build them to enhance and improve the livability of the Town and their neighborhoods.
3. Encourage citizen support to continue increasing multi modal transportation options in the future.

**Policy T.4: Provide Street classification designations and descriptions in the Town's Standard Details and Specifications. Describe streets, confined streets, bicycle pedestrians paths and other transportation related improvements.**

### Implementation Strategies

1. Provide standard details and specifications for all types of motor vehicles, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian, for each street classification. Include sidewalks, street lights, and street trees that are in conformance with this Plan.

### **Policy T.5: Support a bicycle and pedestrian path.**

#### Implementation Strategies

1. Make development of a shared path plan a Town effort; establish a mechanism to ensure coordination.
2. Develop a bicycle and pedestrian program that focuses on safe, direct routes that serve all neighborhoods. Prioritize development of routes based on potential usage and construct needed facilities as funding allows.
3. Promote bicycling and walking and encourage safe travel habits.
4. Encourage other communities to plan to connect to the Town's bike routes. Safe and convenient bicycle parking should be provided along routes and near shopping and services.

### **Policy T.6: Amend the Zoning Ordinance to include the option of traffic calming devices and add selected measures to the Town's Standard Details and Specifications.**

#### Implementation Strategies

1. Consider traffic calming measures in areas where there are safety issues or hazards due to vehicular/pedestrian conflicts and consult the proper authority before making decisions.

### **Policy T.7: Support Public Transit.**

#### Implementation Strategies

1. Make transit schedules available to the public and tourists.
2. Support transit services and encourage and participate in rider ship.