

— Introduction —



CHAPTER 1

1. Introduction

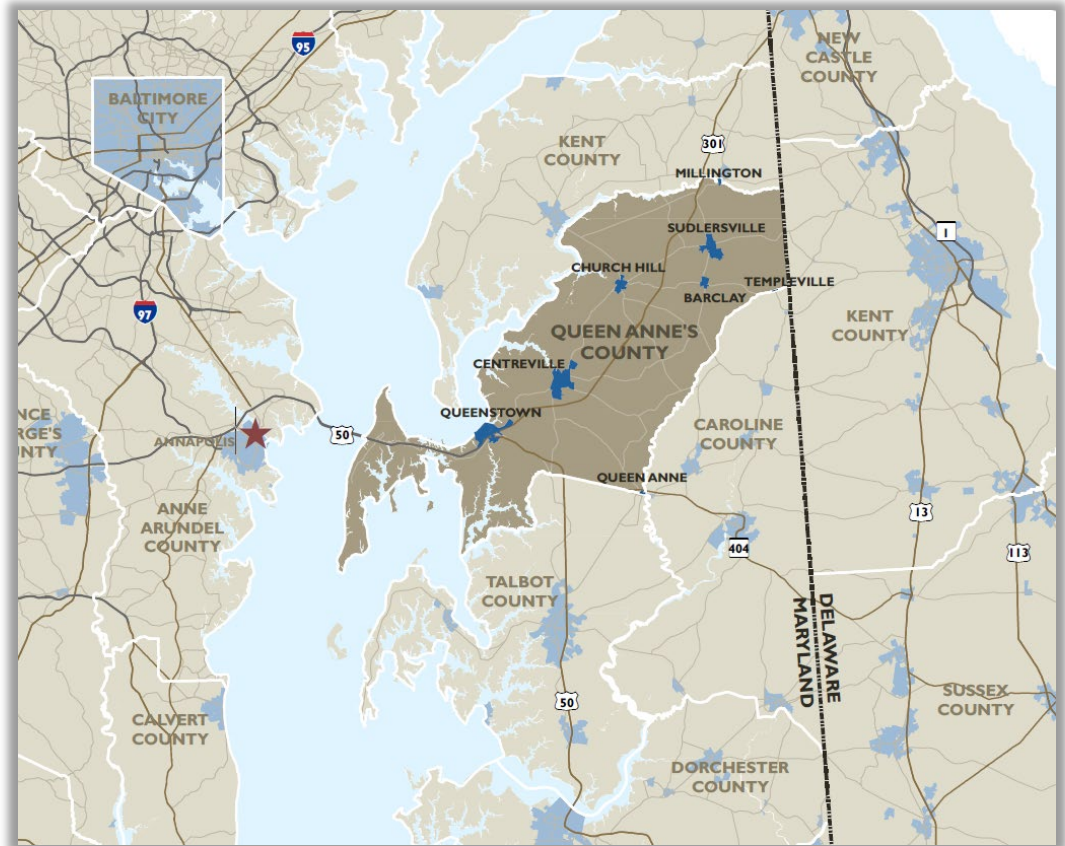


WELCOME TO PlanQAC 2022

PlanQAC, the 2021 update to the 2010 Queen Anne's County Comprehensive Plan (2010 Plan), continues to reaffirm the County's land use ethic to maintain it as a quintessential rural community. The 2010 Plan's theme carries through to this update: preserving the County's connections from the past to create a sustainable future. A sustainable community consists of strong, attractive, and economically thriving neighborhoods supporting all sectors including agricultural industry, residential neighborhoods, businesses, local government, and the natural environment. **PlanQAC** builds on the past ethic to ensure the County's sustainability through enhanced preservation and conservation of agricultural land and cultural resources, managing growth to reduce sprawl by directing it to existing communities and designated Growth Areas, promoting economic development, and protecting sensitive natural resources.

PlanQAC strengthens the County's long-standing guiding principles, growth management policies, and recommendations first outlined in 1987. It supports creating sustainable communities consistent with the County's vision and Maryland's smart growth goals and objectives and strengthens the County's commitment to sustainable smart growth management.

Figure 1-1. Regional Location



COMMUNITY VISION

The County Commissioners originally drafted the overall vision for the future of Queen Anne’s County. **PlanQAC** updates this vision, based on community input. This vision emphasizes preserving and enhancing the County’s character while maintaining a quintessential rural community. In addition to the overall community vision, **PlanQAC** introduces five themes linking its various elements (see **Page 1-13**).

VISION STATEMENT

PlanQAC’s vision is to preserve the County as a quintessential rural community whose overall character exemplifies it as:

- **A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE**—Queen Anne’s County is a predominantly rural county with small towns connected by creeks and county roads through fields and forests
- **A GOOD PLACE TO WORK**—Queen Anne’s County encourages agriculture, seafood and maritime industries, tourism and outdoor sports, and small business and high-tech enterprise
- **A GOOD NEIGHBOR**—Queen Anne’s County is a faithful steward of its natural and cultural heritage for the Chesapeake Bay and other Eastern Shore counties
- **A PROTECTIVE COMMUNITY**—Queen Anne’s County cultivates its citizens’ expectations and opportunities, emphasizing that development should not impair the quality of life enjoyed by all
- **A SUPPORTIVE COUNTY**—Queen Anne’s County supports the highest quality of education for its citizens, seeking to fully prepare them for the future

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Comprehensive planning’s primary objective is to anticipate, prepare for, and plan for land use patterns over a long-term planning horizon. **PlanQAC**’s emphasis is to preserve the County’s connections to create a sustainable future by strengthening principles for planning and growth management. These guiding principles emphasize sustaining Queen Anne’s County:

- As a predominantly rural agricultural community
- As a good steward by preserving and protecting the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries
- By reducing the growth of new residential development in agricultural and rural areas
- By improving the overall quality of housing stock
- By addressing the relative lack of affordable housing
- By delivering adequate public services including transportation and other infrastructure through community planning and design
- By encouraging and directing growth to existing communities and within designated areas.

PlanQAC reinforces these principles through its studies, analyses, and recommendations.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ROLE

PlanQAC is a guide for future decisions about appropriate land uses, based on forecasts of existing land use patterns and anticipated trends. It addresses environmental resources, population, demographics, land use, transportation, water and sewer utilities, community facilities, housing, economic development, tourism, historic resources, growth management, and interjurisdictional coordination between the County, its towns, and neighboring counties.

PlanQAC establishes priorities and a direction to achieve desired future land use patterns. It identifies goals, strategies, and actions to achieve the overall community vision and is intended to guide County officials when making decisions about future land use issues, prioritizing infrastructure needs, and budgeting for capital projects.

POLICY & LEGAL CONTEXT

Queen Anne’s County manages growth using a variety of land use regulations, tools, and techniques based on State legislation, judicial precedent, and past and present planning policies and decisions. **PlanQAC** is consistent with the State’s planning and growth management laws; specifically, it was prepared to meet the requirements for Maryland counties found in the *Land Use Article* of the *Annotated Code of Maryland*. The *Land Use Article* sets standards for local jurisdictions that exercise planning and zoning authority. While it delegates certain planning and zoning powers to the County, it also defines comprehensive plan requirements to address specific quality of life elements as well as content, preparation, review, and adoption. State planning legislation and policy help shape local goals and provide a framework for the County’s growth management policies and regulations.

ECONOMIC GROWTH, RESOURCE PROTECTION & PLANNING ACT

In 1992, the Maryland General Assembly adopted the *Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act (1992 Act)* to articulate the State’s growth policy and intent to reduce sprawl, concentrate growth in and near existing development areas, promote economic development, and protect sensitive natural resources. It required that comprehensive plans include seven Visions (amended to eight in 2000 and twelve in 2009).

The *1992 Act* required comprehensive plans to include a Sensitive Areas Element establishing policies to protect wetlands, stream buffers, and habitats of rare, threatened, and endangered species. It also required local governments to review their comprehensive plans at least every six years and update as necessary.

In 2013, the General Assembly approved House Bill 409, changing this review period to every ten years to coincide with the Decennial Census. It also required annual reports to be filed with MDP as well as a 5-Year Mid-Cycle Review that includes a narrative on the comprehensive plan’s implementation status.

SMART GROWTH LEGISLATION

In 1997, the State enacted Smart Growth legislation, giving it programmatic and fiscal authority to encourage local governments to implement “smart growth” planning. The *Priority Funding Areas Act* directed State funding for growth-related infrastructure to Priority Funding Areas (PFAs), providing a geographic focus for its investments. It designated certain areas as PFAs and established local designation criteria, including permitted density, water and sewer availability, and growth area designation in the comprehensive plan.

Subsequently, several Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) and other State agency initiatives provided resources, incentives, and programs to achieve smart growth. The General Assembly also passed related legislation modifying and expanding planning goals and requirements.

SMART, GREEN & GROWING

In 2009, the General Assembly passed three planning bills as part of its *Smart, Green & Growing* legislation to protect environmental resources and promote sustainable growth across the State:



THE TWELVE VISIONS

The Twelve Visions, outlined in the *Land Use Article*, are the guiding principles for developing goals and objectives for Maryland comprehensive plans, including **PlanQAC**:

1 QUALITY OF LIFE & SUSTAINABILITY

A high quality of life is achieved through universal stewardship of the land, water and air resulting in sustainable communities and protection of the environment.

7 HOUSING

A range of housing densities, types and sizes provides residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes.

2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Citizens are active partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives and are sensitive to their responsibilities in achieving community goals.

8 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development and natural resource-based businesses that promote employment opportunities for all income levels within the capacity of the State's natural resources, public services and public facilities.

3 GROWTH AREAS

Growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to these centers, or strategically selected new centers.

9 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Land and water resources, including the Chesapeake Bay, are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems and living resources.

4 COMMUNITY DESIGN

Compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character and located near available or planned transit options is encouraged to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources and preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas, and historical, cultural and archeological resources.

10 STEWARDSHIP

Government, business entities, and residents are responsible for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with environmental protection.

5 INFRASTRUCTURE

Growth Areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sustainable manner.

11 RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Waterways, forest, agricultural areas, open space, natural systems and scenic areas are conserved.

6 TRANSPORTATION

A well-maintained, multi-modal transportation system facilitates safe, convenient, affordable and efficient movement of people, goods, and services within and between population and business centers.

12 IMPLEMENTATION

Strategies, policies, programs and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, State and interstate levels to achieve, these Visions.

PlanQAC addressed these Visions through its various elements and was prepared consistent with, and in consideration of, ongoing efforts in the State to work toward these visions.

OTHER PLANNING LEGISLATION

Additional State planning legislation includes:

HB 1141

Adopted in 2006, HB 1141 requires inclusion of a comprehensive plan Water Resources Element (WRE) to address the relationship of planned growth to water resources for wastewater treatment and disposal, safe drinking water, and non-point source pollution of nitrogen and phosphorus.

(See **Chapter 5—Environmental Resources** and **Appendix D—Water Resources Element**)

HB 1141 also requires municipalities to prepare a Municipal Growth Element (MGE) as part of their comprehensive plan, identifying areas for future growth through annexation and allowing for coordination around municipal boundaries. MGEs inform WRE development.

(See **Chapter 10—Town Planning Framework**)

HB 2

In 2006, HB 2 added a Priority Preservation Area (PPA) Element to the list of comprehensive plan elements that jurisdictions can include. This is a required element for the County to maintain its certified status through the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) program.

(See **Chapter 4—Land Use**)

HB 1160

Also in 2006, HB 1160 established a Workforce Housing Grant Program within the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). To participate, jurisdictions must adopt a Workforce Housing Element containing an assessment of needs, goals, objectives, and policies that preserve or develop workforce housing.

(See **Chapter 9—Housing**)

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT

The *Sustainable Communities Act of 2010* strengthens reinvestment and revitalization in Maryland's older communities by reinventing an existing rehabilitation tax credit, creating "sustainable communities" to simplify the framework for designated target areas in the Community Legacy (CL) and Neighborhood Business

Works (NBW) program, establishing a new transportation focus in older communities, and enhancing the role of the Smart Growth Subcabinet (SGSC) in community revitalization.

(See **Chapter 10—Town Planning Framework** and **Chapter 7—Historic & Cultural Resources**)

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH & AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION ACT

The Maryland General Assembly approved the *Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012* (also known as the Septic Bill), during the 2012 General Assembly session. This Act provides an option for local jurisdictions to adopt growth tier designations and has associated requirements related to residential subdivisions.

(See **Chapter 4—Land Use**)

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES TIF DESIGNATION & FINANCING LAW

The 2013 *Sustainable Communities Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Designation & Financing Law (TIF Law)* authorizes local governments to finance Sustainable Community infrastructure improvements similar to Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) designated Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) including bonds, special taxing districts, and tax increment financing. This allows local governments to make important infrastructure and asset investments in their Sustainable Community areas to spur economic development and ensure quality of life and livable communities.

The *TIF Law* provides for new funding uses that include historic preservation, environmental remediation, demolition, site preparation, parking lots, facilities, highways, or transit that support Sustainable Community areas, schools, and affordable or mixed-use housing. It gives Sustainable Communities the opportunity to utilize Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO) bonding authority, which has the ability to finance, acquire, develop, own, and/or operate projects for economic development purposes.

(See **Chapter 8—Economic Development & Tourism**)

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING HISTORY

The County has a history of over 55 years of planning for its future starting as early as the 1965 Comprehensive Plan. Brief highlights for each planning effort are below.

 <p>1965</p>	<p>In 1965, the County recognized that the shores of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries were an important factor in attracting people to live and play. At that time, the County determined that these areas in particular would require close watch and careful planning. The vision for the future was one of maintaining a predominantly rural agricultural community.</p>
 <p>1987</p>	<p>In 1987, the primary goals and objectives of the Plan were to preserve and protect the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries and to maintain the rural character and protect large areas of the County for agricultural uses. The 1987 Plan proposed to meet those objectives by reducing the number of dwelling units in agricultural and rural areas, improving the overall quality of housing stock, and addressing the relative lack of affordable housing. It also included a growth management component intended to limit urban sprawl by directing new growth into areas designated as growth nodes where adequate public facilities could be provided, thus protecting environmentally sensitive and rural areas.</p>
 <p>1993</p>	<p>The 1993 Plan was a major update confirming the guiding principles of the 1987 Plan and added policies to comply with the 1992 Planning Act. It recommended that the County should prepare specific plans for its six designated growth areas. These plans addressed land use, transportation, infrastructure, and community design issues and, once adopted, the Community Plans became part of the 1993 Plan.</p>
 <p>2002</p>	<p>The 2002 Comprehensive Plan continued to address and resolve two key themes, which enhanced the County’s longstanding growth management policies and recommendations in effect since the 1987 Plan. Those themes included encouraging and directing growth to existing communities within designated growth areas, discouraging development of rural areas, and encouraging the preservation of agricultural lands.</p>
 <p>2010</p>	<p>The 2010 Plan strengthened the County’s long-standing guiding principles, growth management policies, and recommendations outlined since 1987, creating sustainable communities consistent with the County’s vision and Maryland’s smart growth goals and objectives.</p> <p>Its process was unprecedented in the County’s comprehensive planning history—the County Commissioners invested heavily in creating a collaborative approach to update the County’s Plan. The endeavor featured numerous and varied opportunities for public participation, resulting in the participation of approximately 800 residents who responded to a countywide community survey, 300 persons from the general public that participated in Visioning Workshops, nearly 200 high school students involved in a Student in Government Day, and over 100 individuals contributing as members of working committees that included a Citizen Advisory Committee and six Topic Committees.</p> <p>The collaborative planning process involved identification of community issues, goals, and objectives with recommendations based on the community’s perspective. The planning process allowed for meaningful community participation while meeting technical requirements outlined by the State for a comprehensive plan.</p>
 <p>2022</p>	<p>PlanQAC, the 2022 Plan, is a rewrite of the 2010 Plan. The effort focused on evaluating and updating existing conditions and trends, incorporating data and studies completed since the 2010 Plan’s adoption, and seeking broad public input during the COVID-19 pandemic. Efforts related to PlanQAC are further discussed on the following pages.</p>

PLAN UPDATE PROCESS

PlanQAC builds on its technical analyses and community outreach. Using the 2010 Plan as a baseline, the planning team evaluated existing conditions and trends, incorporating data and studies completed in the last decade. The team also identified and analyzed priority issues, evaluating those from the 2010 Plan in addition to new issues that evolved during the **PlanQAC** process. This informed subsequent stages, helping to update the countywide vision, refine and develop goals and strategies, and identify policies and actions. These goals, strategies and actions emerged during the planning process, informed by community and citizen input.

For this effort, the Planning Commission served as the primary body responsible for **PlanQAC**'s development. Throughout this process, other boards, commissions, and committees provided additional information, guidance, and review. The next section includes information on how and when this input was provided.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

PlanQAC utilized an outreach process to identify priority issues and visions for the future. In addition to technical analyses, its preparation included a countywide public opinion survey, stakeholder input, public workshops, and Planning Commission discussions.

PROJECT WEBSITE

To maintain communication with the public throughout the planning process, planning consultants developed a project website. The site served as the primary source of information on **PlanQAC**, including an overview of the planning process, links to previous plans, copies of draft chapters, previous presentations, calendar of future events, and weekly survey questions.

The site also provided an opportunity for interested parties to submit questions or comments and sign up for project updates.

PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

A thorough understanding of community and citizen attitudes toward growth and development provides a strong foundation upon which to build policy for the Plan. In October 2019, the County released a 12-question community survey (online and in print) as part of its effort to solicit public input into **PlanQAC**'s development. Planning consultants administered the online survey through the project website; they also located hardcopies of the print survey at several locations throughout the County.

The survey's purpose was to identify what issues respondents felt were most important to the County's preservation, enhancement, and physical development; it served as a key public participation component. The survey received a total of 226 responses through the end of February 2020.



PlanQAC integrates the survey results throughout various elements and a summary of results can be found in **Appendix C—Public Outreach Summary**.

The vast majority of survey respondents live in Queen Anne's County (219 or 97.3%). Over 40% of respondents live near Chester/Stevensville (92 or 41.4%) and nearly 30% live near Centreville (66 or 29.7%). The remaining respondents live near the communities of Grasonville and Kent Narrows, as well as the other seven incorporated towns in the County. "Other" responses included Wye Mills, Kingstown, Chestertown, and Easton, among others. Over half of the respondents are 55 years old or older, while less than 1% are under the age of 25. Over 75% of respondents already knew that the County had a comprehensive plan (171 or 76.0%).

WORKSHOPS & MEETINGS

As part of the **PlanQAC** planning process, the County held numerous public workshops including visioning workshops and special topic workshops. Each of the workshops and meetings are listed below **Appendix C—Public Outreach Summary** contains additional information and highlights for each meeting.

VISIONING WORKSHOPS

The County held five Visioning Workshops, each focusing on specific geographic areas:

- Visioning Workshop 1—Countywide & North County (January 27, 2021)
- Visioning Workshop 2—Countywide & Chester/Stevensville (January 28, 2021)
- Visioning Workshop 3—Countywide & Grasonville (February 3, 2021)
- Visioning Workshop 4—Countywide & Kent Narrows (February 4, 2021)
- Visioning Workshop 5—Countywide & North County (February 11, 2021)

SPECIAL TOPIC WORKSHOPS

The County held eight Special Topic Workshops, each with a different topic focus:

- Special Topic Workshop 1—Community Facilities + Open Space & Recreation (February 10, 2021)
- Special Topic Workshop 2—Environment, Transportation (February 24, 2021)
- Special Topic Workshop 3—Historic & Cultural Resources (March 4, 2021)
- Special Topic Workshop 4—Housing (March 17, 2021)
- Special Topic Workshop 5—Economic Development, Town Planning (April 1, 2021)
- Special Topic Workshop 6—KNDF/Kent Narrows Community Plan (April 27, 2021)
- Special Topic Workshop 7—Community Plans (May 5, 2021)
- Special Topic Workshop 8—Land Use + Priority Preservation (June 15, 2021)

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Technical Committee meetings were held as working sessions with the planning consultant and various members of County staff:

- Technical Committee 1—Introduction, County Profile, Community Facilities + Open Space & Recreation (February 9, 2021)
- Technical Committee 2A—Environment + WRE (February 25, 2021)
- Technical Committee 2B—Transportation (February 25, 2021)
- Technical Committee 3A—Historic & Cultural Resources (March 16, 2021)
- Technical Committee 3B—Housing (March 16, 2021)
- Technical Committee 4—Economic Development & Tourism (April 27, 2021)
- Technical Committee 5A—Town Planning (May 25, 2021)
- Technical Committee 5B—Community Plans (May 25, 2021)
- Technical Committee 6A—Land Use + Priority Preservation (June 22, 2021)
- Technical Committee 6B—Implementation (June 22, 2021)
- Technical Committee 7—Comprehensive Rezoning Request Land Use Review (July 19, 2021)
- Technical Committee 8—Full Draft Detailed Review (September 13, 2021)

SWOT ANALYSIS

The Planning Commission conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis as a take-home exercise after its

first meeting. **PlanQAC** integrates the analysis throughout various elements. Highlights from the responses are below.

Strengths

Agriculture	Quality of Life
Location & Proximity	School System
Open Space	Waterways

Weaknesses

Affordable Housing	Job Opportunities
Drug Use	Senior/Elderly Facilities
Vacant Spaces	Traffic

Opportunities

Bay Bridge	Increased Traffic
Gateway to Beaches	Proximity to Cities
Workforce Housing	

Threats

Bay Bridge	Sewer Capacity
COVID-19	Climate Change
Increased Traffic	Vacant Properties

PLAN ELEMENTS

PlanQAC outlines goals, guiding principles, strategies, and actions to achieve the overall community vision for the future of the County. It was prepared following the State’s requirement to update the Comprehensive Plan every ten years and contains the following elements (*highlighted items are required by the State’s Land Use Article*):

CHAPTER 1 Introduction	Planning Background County & STATE VISION	Legal Context Community Outreach
CHAPTER 2 County Profile	Physical Characteristics Demographic Characteristics	Housing Characteristics Economic Characteristics
CHAPTER 3 Community Facilities & Services	COMMUNITY FACILITIES & Services PUBLIC UTILITIES	OPEN SPACE & RECREATION
CHAPTER 4 Land Use	EXISTING LAND USE FUTURE LAND USE	PRIORITY PRESERVATION Growth Management Strategies
CHAPTER 5 Environmental Resources	NATURAL RESOURCES SENSITIVE AREAS AREA OF CRITICAL STATE CONCERN	WATER RESOURCES MINERAL RESOURCES FLOOD CONTROL
CHAPTER 6 Transportation	TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM Multimodal Facilities	Planned Improvements
CHAPTER 7 Historic & Cultural Resources	Preservation Framework Historic Resources	Cultural Resources Programs & Resources
CHAPTER 8 Economic Development & Tourism	Workforce & Employment FISHERIES Economic Centers	Tourism COMMUNITY RENEWAL Tools & Techniques
CHAPTER 9 Housing	Housing Stock & Market Affordable/ WORKFORCE HOUSING	Public & Assisted Housing Programs & Resources
CHAPTER 10 Town Planning Framework	County-Town Relationship Town Profiles	MUNICIPAL GROWTH
CHAPTER 11 Community Plans	Chester/Stevensville Grasonville	Kent Narrows
CHAPTER 12 Implementation	DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS Tools & Techniques	Planning Coordination Implementation Tables

These Elements are supported by maps, technical analyses, and appendices.

ELEMENT INTERRELATIONSHIPS

Planning to preserve connections from the past to create the future for the purpose of maintaining a quintessential rural community is the common theme of all Plan Elements. This emphasis is the cornerstone ethic for planning and decision making for the future of Queen Anne’s County. All Plan Elements are focused to achieve this overall community goal; however, **Chapter 4—Land Use** and **Chapter 5—Environmental Resources** collectively provide the core policies and guiding principles for sustainable smart growth management strategies:

- Directing growth to County and Town Growth Areas using a variety of land use regulations, tools, and techniques;
- Preserving agricultural lands applying a rural land use preservation strategy with the goal of preserving priority lands; and
- Preserving sensitive areas and protecting water resources through environmental stewardship by reducing impacts of development on wetlands, forested lands, and wildlife habitats along with reducing non-point source and point-source impacts on waterways

These Elements are supported by planning frameworks contained in **Chapter 10—Town Planning Framework** and **Chapter 11—Community Plans**. This framework is built around:

- Municipal Growth Elements (MGEs) to plan collaboratively and comprehensively for growth;
- Encouraging Town Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances (APFOs);
- Joint planning agreements;
- Establishing a “town fringe” for short- and long-term annexations; and
- Protecting sensitive lands and Critical Areas.

The County’s sustainable smart growth management strategies are further supported in **Chapter 3—Community Facilities & Services**, **Chapter 6—Transportation**, **Chapter 8—Economic Development & Tourism**, and **Chapter 9—Housing** by providing:

- Adequate community facilities and a transportation system that address schools, water, wastewater, solid waste, emergency services, park and recreational facilities, and available modes of transportation to meet the needs of current and future populations to ensure:
 - Facilities are designed and improved to meet current needs with the ability to easily expand to meet future needs as planned;
 - Facilities are appropriately designed and located to serve current and future concentrated populations within County and Town Growth Areas;
 - Facilities utilize innovative technology and sustainable design to minimize impacts on the environment as well as to minimize fiscal impacts associated with long-term maintenance; and
 - Facilities are improved through public-private partnerships as well as partnerships between the County and Towns.
- Economic development and tourism strategies to:
 - Create and sustain a balanced tax base;
 - Maintain an employed and trained workforce;
 - Understand the County’s role in the context of the regional economy;
 - Address opportunities for retail, service, and hospitality industries; and
 - Increase the supply of workforce housing based upon needs.

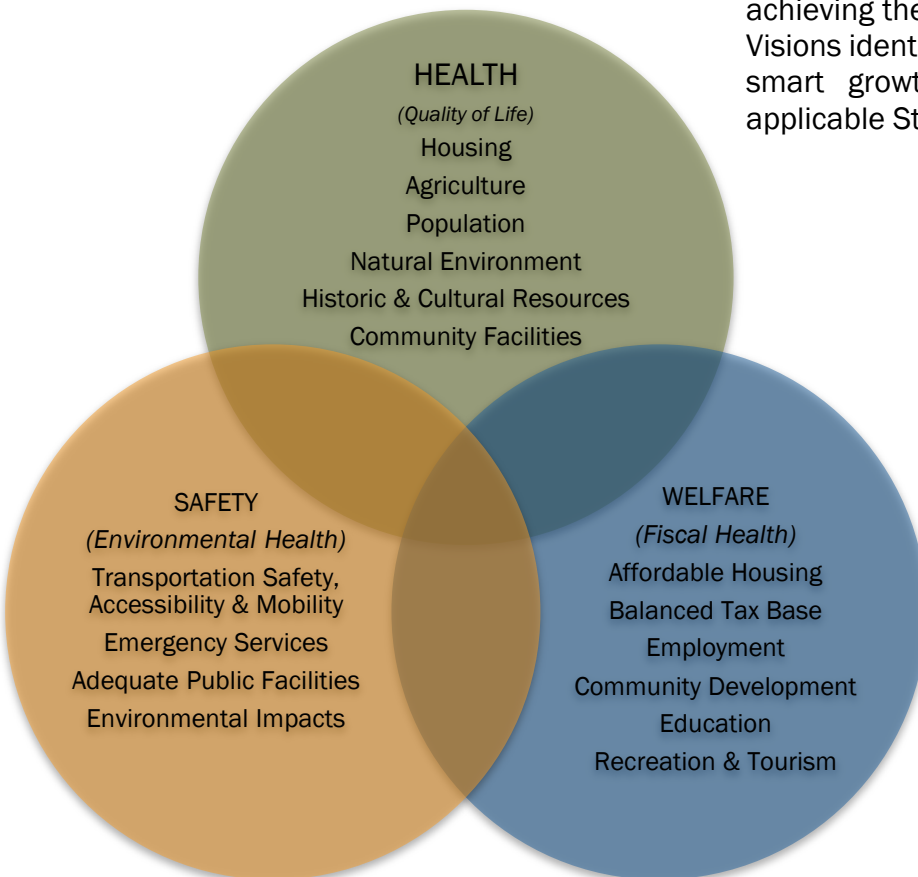
Chapter 7—Historic & Cultural Resources emphasizes completing inventories of significant structures, properties, and districts as well as creating an organizational structure to review projects and to pursue preservation funds.

PRESERVING CONNECTIONS THROUGH SUSTAINABILITY

A sustainable Queen Anne’s County may be achieved if the County’s short- and long-term planning and decisions are based on an understanding of past and current conditions, as well as assumptions about the future. Utilizing a variety of trends and indicators, **PlanQAC** revisited the County’s 2010 Plan’s sustainability assessment. **Figure 1-2** identifies various Community Sustainability Indicators (CSIs) that were used to evaluate the County’s health, safety, and welfare.

Tracking and evaluating these CSIs provide quantitative and qualitative measures to determine how well the County is meeting smart growth goals and objectives contained within each chapter. These indicators can also be used to measure how well the County is meeting State mandated smart growth goals.

Figure 1-2. Community Sustainability Indicators



TRENDS & INDICATORS

Trends and indicators provide data, information, and statistics to measure the progress the County is making toward achieving community goals and objectives with respect to desired levels of quality of life and sustainability as well as with respect to meeting statewide smart growth land use goals and objectives.

INDICATORS

Indicators are a tool for community assessment used as a measurement of various aspects or factors of health, safety, and welfare of the community.

TRENDS

Trends track indicators by using past performance or conditions to predict the future.

CSIs identified in the diagram are described in this Plan and reference documents. They will be utilized to evaluate the implementation success of policies, goals, strategies, and actions with respect to achieving the County’s overall vision and the Twelve Visions identified in the *Land Use Article*, the State’s smart growth goals and objectives, and other applicable State legislation.

PLAN THEMES

PlanQAC was also developed around five themes that further connect all its elements, identified in **Figure 1-3**. The first page of each element chapter provides a high-level overview including identified vision, key issues, goals, and a description of how the themes are represented in the chapter. The relevant State Visions discussed in each chapter are also represented by a highlighted icon at the beginning of each chapter (see **Figure 1-4**).

Figure 1-3. Plan Themes

	<p>FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY</p> <p>Includes providing infrastructure and services to citizens so that tax rates can remain low through cost-efficient growth and policies.</p>
	<p>SUSTAINABLE GROWTH</p> <p>Includes the wise use of physical resources, which allows the County to meet current and projected needs, while conserving resources for future generations.</p>
	<p>COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION</p> <p>Includes infill development of vacant parcels within developed areas and the redevelopment of existing sites.</p>
	<p>RESOURCE PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION</p> <p>Includes the protection or saving of resources in the present for the purpose of using them in the future, as well as the reduction or more efficient use of natural resources, specifically non-renewable resources.</p>
	<p>HEALTH & RESILIENCE</p> <p>Includes increasing the health, vitality, and resilience of the community through the improvement of the natural, built, and social environment, as well as responding to and accounting for the impacts of climate change.</p>

Figure 1-4. State Vision Icons

		
Quality of Life & Sustainability	Public Participation	Growth Areas
		
Community Design	Infrastructure	Transportation
		
Housing	Economic Development	Environmental Protection
		
Stewardship	Resource Conservation	Implementation

