Chapter 5 Implementation

The success of the *Crisfield Strategic Revitalization Plan* (SRP) depends heavily upon the effective implementation of the strategies discussed in this chapter. These have been organized and prioritized into short-term, mid-term, and long-term implementation actions, spanning a segmented 20 year time period. Additional City staff and/or professional assistance and services will likely be required to achieve full implementation success.

It is recommended that the SRP be regularly updated every 3 to 5 years to maintain its relevancy, track and report progress, and take advantage of new opportunities that may occur. Future SRP revisions should be integrated with the *Crisfield Comprehensive Plan*.

ORGANIZING THE SRP FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Economic development spans the entire length of the SRP's timeframe (20 years) and is vital for the revitalization of the City. It represents a significant and long-term investment by Crisfield. These include four broad strategies as defined in the Plan:

1) **Jobs:** Expanding businesses and industrial park opportunities to attract new jobs, including retail; creating a high-tech waterfront business center; expanding maritime industries; and modernizing the digital and physical infrastructure of the City.

2) **Full-Time Residents:** Tapping incoming retirees ("Grayshore Phenomenon"), who are relevant to the challenge Crisfield is facing. The City should engage these new home owners in community initiatives and also seek to achieve a stable and growing residential population base.

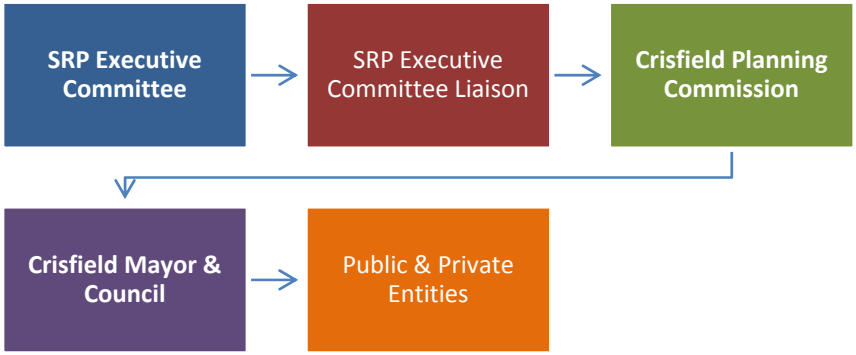
The *Crisfield Strategic Revitalization Plan* is divided into four broad strategies including expanding job opportunities, increasing full-time residents, enhancing tourism, and initiating the redevelopment of the City in targeted areas

3) **Tourism:** Expanding tourism linkages and opportunities, which are key issues in Crisfield. This includes marketing the City as a gateway to Smith, Janes, and Tangier Islands; expanding recreational boating and fishing; developing a Hotel/Conference Center; and supporting the concept of a Maryland Bay Discovery Center.

4) **Physical Redevelopment:** Acquiring public and private assistance in addressing the Crisfield's housing crisis. This includes redevelopment in targeted areas, such Public Housing Authority Lands, as well as utilizing marinas in the City to enhance economic development.

In addition, the physical redevelopment of the City will span the entire length of the SRP's timeframe (20 years). It also represents a significant and long-term investment by Crisfield. This includes addressing design issues and opportunities raised in Chapter 2 (Urban Design) of the SRP. It also includes addressing affordable housing initiatives, particularly the proposed redevelopment of portions of the Crisfield Public Housing Authority land as described in Appendix A: Strategic Revitalization Tasks (Tasks 4.9 and 4.12).

Full implementation of the SRP is critical for the revitalization of the City. In order to accomplish this, Crisfield should consider an "SRP Executive Oversight Committee" and an SRP Manager that can act as a liaison between the Committee and the Crisfield Planning Commission, Mayor and Council, and City Staff.



Additional staff for the SRP Executive Committee and Manager will likely be needed at some point within the first 10 years of implementation. This could include volunteers, assistant(s), a grants manager, and ongoing professional services. It also includes the need to secure Crisfield and/or City and Somerset County funding sources to ensure continued management and operations. Alternative sources of funding can be garnered through grants.

Monthly progress reporting to the Crisfield Planning Commission and Mayor and City Council is important. This will ensure that the SRP is following the projected timeline and is consistent with other City plans.

Implementation Actions: Priority Timeline

Implementation actions are a product of the sixteen tasks in the SRP "Request for Proposals," as introduced by the City of Crisfield (see Appendix A: Strategic Revitalization Tasks). It is important to note that many implementation actions overlap during the 20-year timeframe. Therefore, the City should be prepared to address issues and to take advantage of opportunities as they arise.

Short and mid-term actions are the most important tasks and span the first 10 years of the SRP's implementation life. These deal primarily with policy and regulatory actions but also include economic development and infrastructure initiatives as well as the Public Housing Authority Lands and the new Somerset County Library. Long-term implementation actions are dependent upon opportunities and timing, requiring partnerships for success, both public and private. Long-term actions may require additional City staff, professional assistance, and/or enhanced funding.

For the implementation chapter, it is assumed that the SRP will likely be revised in 3 to 5 years and therefore actions cannot be plotted with certainty as to an exact timeframe for initiation or completion. Below is an "Implementation Schedule" outlining the various tasks for the first 10 years of the SRP (Short and Mid-Term Actions). This schedule is followed by a detailed description of each of the tasks, which is designed to assist the City as a guide.

IMPLEMENTATION TASKS	YEAR 1	YEARS 2 -3	YEARS 4- 5	YEARS 5 - 7	YEARS 7 - 10
	SHORT-TERM ACTIONS			MID-TERM ACTIONS	
TASK 1: Initializing the SRP	**First 6 Months – Year 1**				
Step 1: Adopt SRP as Official City Document	X				
Step 2: Initialize State/Federal Assistance	X				
Step 3: Enact Development Moratorium	X				
Step 4: Establish SRP Executive Committee	X				
TASK 2: Somers Cove Marina	**Second 6 Months – Year 1**				
Step 1: Review SRP with State Entities	X	X			
Step 2: Coordinate SRP with Somers Cove Marina Committee	X	X			
Step 3: Ensure City Representation for Somers Cover Facilities Plan	X	X			
TASK 3: Somerset Library	**Second 6 Months – Year 1**				
Step 1: Locate Somerset County Library in Uptown Crisfield	X	X			
TASK 4: Specific Code Revisions	**First 6 Months – Year 1**				
Step 1: Initiate Comprehensive Rezoning	X	X			
Step 2: Enact Cost Recovery Ordinance	X	X			
Step 3: Develop City Design Guidelines	X	X			
Step 4: Enact City DRRA Ordinance	X	X			
Step 5: Update Infrastructure and Utility Policies/Codes	X	X			
TASK 5: Planning Initiatives	**First 6 Months – Year 1**				
Step 1: Prepare MGE/WRE for the Comprehensive Plan	X				
Step 2: Prepare Capital Improvements Plan/Program	X	X	X	X	X
Step 3: Prepare Water/Sewer Subsidiary Plan	X	X			
Step 4: Address Environmental Planning Initiatives	X	X			
Step 5: Prepare Transportation and Infrastructure Plan			X	X	
Step 6: Prepare Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan			X	X	
Step 7: Promote Heritage Planning Initiatives			X	X	
TASK 6: General Code Revisions				**First 6 Months – Year 5**	
Step 1: Amend the City Floodplain Ordinance				X	
Step 2: Update the City Stormwater Management Ordinance				X	
Step 3: Create Special Taxing Districts					X
Task 7: Affordable Housing & Redevelopment	**First 6 Months – Year 1**				
Step 1: Expand the role of the Crisfield Housing Authority	X	X			
Step 2: Establish Partnerships to Assist with Affordable Housing Initiatives	X	X			
Step 3: Build an Affordable Housing Coalition	X	X			
Step 4: Prepare Supporting Data for Affordable Housing Initiatives	X	X			
Step 5: Link Affordable Housing and Economic Development Initiatives	X	X			
Step 6: Research Private/Public Program Opportunities for Redevelopment	X	X	X	X	X
Step 7: Maintain and Increase Funding through Dedicated Revenues	X	X	X	X	X
Step 8: Initiate the Redevelopment of the Public Housing Authority Lands	X	X	X	X	X
TASK 8: Economic Development	**First 6 Months – Year 1**				
Step 1: Prepare Quality of Life Assessment	X	X			
Step 2: Convene Economic Development Summit	X	X			
Step 3: Coordinate Somers Cove Marina Master Plan	X	X			
Step 4: Complete Parks & Recreation Projects	X	X	X	X	
Step 5: Develop Signage/Wayfinding System	X	X	X	X	
Step 6: Ensure Regulatory Revisions that Support Economic Development	X	X	X	X	X
Step 7: Support Economic Development Coordination	X	X	X	X	X

Step 8: Establish Academic Support Networks			X		
Step 9: Develop/Assess Infrastructure Systems			X	X	X
Step 10: Develop Hotel Conference Center			X	X	X

SECTION I: SHORT & MID-TERM ACTIONS

Short and mid-term implementation actions cover a 10 year timeframe (Years 1 through 10). Year 1 is marked by the official adoption of the *Crisfield Strategic Revitalization Plan* (SRP) and other initial actions to be taken by the City to set the stage for full SRP implementation. Much of the first 10 years is devoted to necessary policy and regulatory changes as well as basic economic development actions to ensure that the SRP is successful.

Under the City's current administrative structure, Crisfield is capable of accomplishing many of the policy and regulatory actions identified in this section of the implementation recommendations chapter. In addition to City staff, these actions will likely require ongoing professional assistance, such as planner on-call and/or engineering services. Funding sources for implementation will include City and County funding, State grants, and federal assistance, where available. Economic development initiatives may require either professional economic development services, an economic development coordinator for the City, experienced volunteers, or a larger commitment by the Somerset County Economic Development Council (EDC).

Figure 1: SRP Master Concept Plan

Task 1: Initializing the SRP (Year 1)

1) **<u>Adopt the SRP as an Official City Plan</u>:** Adopt the *Crisfield Strategic Revitalization Plan* (SRP) as an official City document and where possible, require approved development projects not yet constructed to comply with the recommendations of the SRP (see Figure 1: Master Concept Plan).

2) **<u>Initialize State and Federal Assistance</u>:** Meet with State and federal representatives to review the recommendations of the SRP and identify how they can assist in its implementation.

3) **<u>Enact a Development Moratorium</u>:** Impose a moratorium on new development in the redevelopment districts that is effective until specific and identified zoning code provisions implementing the recommendations of the SRP are adopted, as indicated in Task 4 below.

4) **<u>Establish an SRP Executive Committee</u>:** Establish an official SRP Executive Committee and, if appropriate, hire a SRP Manager to coordinate with City appointed and elected officials as well as City staff. This includes the establishment of rules and procedures.

Task 2: Somers Cove Marina (Years 1 – 3)

1) **<u>Review the SRP with State Entities</u>:** Meet with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and designated State entities to review the recommendations of the SRP.

2) **<u>Coordinate the SRP with the Somers Cove Marina Advisory Committee</u>:** Meet with the Somers Cove Marina Advisory Committee (when it comes on board in November 2008) to review SRP recommendations.

3) **<u>Ensure City Representation for the Somers Cove Marina Master Facilities Plan</u>:** Work with DNR in the preparation of a "Somers Cove Marina Facilities Plan" including the following:

   - Developing a coordinated marketing plan for Somers Cove Marina and State/City Parks with DNR
   - Working with DNR on development plans for the State property adjacent to Evans seafood as the potential location for a Chesapeake Bay Discovery Center.

Task 3: Somerset County Library (Years 1 - 3)

1) **<u>Locate the Somerset County Library in Uptown Crisfield</u>:** Work closely with the Somerset County Library Board to locate a new library facility in the Uptown area of Crisfield.

Task 4: Specific Code Revisions to Follow Moratorium (Years 1 – 3)

1) **<u>Initiate Comprehensive Rezoning</u>:** Undertake a comprehensive rezoning to implement the land use and other recommendations of the *Crisfield Comprehensive Plan* and the SRP including the following specific revisions and/or additions:

   a. **<u>Redevelopment Districts</u>:** Define and map official redevelopment districts based on the recommendations of the SRP for inclusion in the *Crisfield Zoning Ordinance* and on the *Crisfield Zoning Map*, require all development comply with official City maps and codes. Revise official zoning maps to incorporate the boundaries of planned development floating zone and target redevelopment districts to be established.

b. **Base Zoning Provisions for Redevelopment Areas:** Revise existing zoning provisions within the designated redevelopment areas and establish minimal base zoning uses and standards for these areas. Include the land uses for the Uptown and Downtown areas recommended in the SRP in the City's Zoning Code.

c. **General Redevelopment Area Floating Zones:** Develop and adopt zoning provisions for "Redevelopment Area - Floating Zones," which will address the actions recommended in the Comprehensive Plan and implement the recommendations of the SRP (consistent with the Urban Design chapter of the SRP). Permit additional uses and more flexible development standards (e.g., height above 3 stories) in the floating zone process, based on development criteria derived from the Comprehensive Plan and SRP.

d. **Special Floating Zone for Housing Authority Land:** Develop and adopt a special "Housing Authority - Redevelopment Area Floating Zone" applicable to the Housing Authority property. When and if possible, include incentives to encourage a public-private partnership for redevelopment of the Housing Authority property, e.g., discounted utility re-connection fees.

e. **Project Vesting Provision:** Develop code amendments to address project vesting and defined processes. Define vesting as being final approvals and substantial investment in construction.

f. **Transfer of Development Rights:** Evaluate the feasibility of a Transferable Development Rights (TDR) program that allows for the transfer of height and density rights from waterfront and conservation properties with restricted development rights to designated receiving properties. Consider committing some sewer capacity as an added incentive for TDR transactions.

g. **Design Flexibility:** Develop regulatory codes that ensure design flexibility and incentivized processes. Development regulations in all zoning districts should incorporate appropriate provisions for design flexibility. The objective should be reasonable use of property in the least environmentally sensitive areas such as preserving woodland areas, flood prone areas, drainage ways, scenic vistas, etc.

h. **Infill and Redevelopment Provisions:** Adopt infill and redevelopment provisions in the Crisfield Zoning Code that give the City Planning Commission the ability to waive certain development standards when a proposed infill or redevelopment project meets design criteria to ensure context sensitive site and building design.

- Identify appropriate areas for infill and redevelopment, as part of the City's process.
- Adopt flexible infill and redevelopment zoning provisions.
- Consider waiving demolition fees and utilities reconnection fees for redevelopment projects.

i. **Accessory Dwellings:** Amend the Zoning Code to permit accessory dwelling units in appropriate locations and in conformance with development design standards.

j. **Conservation Areas:** Limit uses in zoned conservation areas identified in the SRP to low intensity uses, e.g., one dwelling unit per 10 acres.

k. **Water Dependent and Related Uses:** Ensure that water-dependent and water related uses in the waterfront development areas (e.g., marine repair) are accommodated in the revised Zoning Code.

l. **Environmental Protection:** Undertake a comprehensive rezoning to include the sensitive area recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and SRP to address the requirements of *Article 66B: Annotated Code of Maryland*:

- Create and map conservation zoning districts (see Figure 3 for recommended boundaries).
- Include submerged aquatic vegetation as a sensitive environmental area of concern to the City.
- Establish environmental protection standards, which should be similar to those required in the City's Critical Area Ordinance that are applicable to excluded areas, e.g., shore buffer requirements, 10 percent pollution reduction, etc.
- Establish a fee-lieu provision and program for developers that cannot meet stormwater management standards due to environmental and regulatory constraints, which can be paid to the City for offsetting stormwater management and flood control devices elsewhere specifically to improve water quality/quantity.

m. **Buffer Areas:** Require buffer areas in the City, particularly between the water's edge and buildings or parking areas because naturally vegetated buffers play an important role in environmental protection:

- Establish comprehensive sensitive area buffer requirements throughout all zoning districts in the City.

- Establish minimum landscape standards for all development and require native species be used to the maximum extent practical.
- Require vegetative buffers, where feasible, and reduce impervious cover through such techniques as clustering of development (on the land and vertically), narrow streets, reduced parking, shared driveways, and other techniques.

n. **Height Limitations:** Do not permit building height variances. Revise existing zoning regulations for the waterfront to limit the height of buildings as shown on the SRP - Master Concept Plan.

2) **Enact a Cost Recovery Ordinance:** Develop and adopt a cost recovery ordinance to require applicants for major development projects to be held responsible for all review costs including the fees of consulting specialists (professional review).

3) **Develop Design Guidelines:** Develop and adopt Design Guidelines for the City of Crisfield, specific to the Uptown and Downtown areas, to be formalized and made part of the City's Development Codes, as per the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and SRP. Consider design guidelines that exhibit historic development principles for appropriate areas such as the Historic District. Alternatively, the City can consider the development of City-wide "Form Based Zoning" to guide new development and redevelopment. This includes the incorporation of historic architecture as well as the view corridors and terminal views from the SRP into a form-based code.

4) **Enact a DRRA Ordinance:** Develop and adopt a "Developer's Rights and Responsibility Agreement" (DRRA) Ordinance. A DRRA is a contract between elected officials and a developer that outlines public improvements, expenses and other negotiated items of public benefit the developer will provide in exchange for the official guarantee that certain approvals, e.g., zoning, density, etc., will remain unchanged for a specified period of time. The DRRA should address developer responsibility for off-site and official improvements.

5) **Update Infrastructure/Utility Policies and Codes:** Adopt policy and utility code amendments, particularly provisions that require water and sewer allocations are in use within two years or they are rescinded. Policy and utility amendments should be based on the various planning initiatives described in Step 5 below.

Task 5: Planning Initiatives (Years 1 – 7)

1) **Prepare an MGE and WRE - Amend the Crisfield Comprehensive Plan:** Develop a Water Resources Element (WRE) and Municipal Growth Element (MGE) for the Crisfield Comprehensive Plan to comply with MD House Bill 1141 (requires an amendment to the existing Comprehensive Plan for adoption) and, during the course of this process, determine at what point planning must begin for a new City waste water treatment plant. Assess the long term viability of ground water resources.

2) **Prepare a Capital Improvements Plan:** Prepare and adopt a capital improvements plan/program (CIP) and capital budget for the City, which should be updated annually. The CIP should address the following:

   - Development impact fees;
   - State, federal and/or private sector funding for capital project improvements; and
   - Prioritized capital improvements based on health and water quality protection criteria and resulting capacity increases (e.g., correcting infiltration and inflow).

3) **Prepare a Water and Sewerage Subsidiary Plan:** Develop and adopt a Crisfield Water & Sewerage Subsidiary Plan to include the following:

   - Official water and sewer allocation policies and processes.
   - Policy and utility code amendments that require water and sewer allocations are in use within two years or they are rescinded.
   - Construct sewer line upgrades at critical locations, including the "1936 sewer collector line," which is a priority capital project that addresses environmental protection issues and potentially increases sewer capacity.

1) **Address Environmental Planning Initiatives:** Partner with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and other State and Federal agencies to determine appropriate strategies to address to environmental initiatives including flooding, sea level rise issues, barrier islands, natural resources etc. As part of this effort the City should determine where shoreline reaches will be armored and where they will be left in a natural state to permit migration of wetlands. These discussions should include State strategies for barrier islands that protect Crisfield, as defined in the Environmental Protection Task. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) currently is assisting Somerset County government officials with an effort to produce a local sea level rise technical assistance guidance document for communities in Somerset County. The City should participate with

the County in the preparation of this report and incorporate appropriate recommendations for sea level rise as it pertains to future development, transportation corridors, building codes and emergency planning into City plans, policies and codes that address.

4) **<u>Prepare a Transportation and Infrastructure Plan</u>:** Develop detailed transportation policies, procedures, and maps.

- Create and adopt an official Transportation Program and Map including maps, as shown in Figure 2, for street improvements, pedestrian improvements, and projects to reduce street flooding
- Adopt policies and regulations that require applicants for development approval dedicate and construct new streets or upgrade existing streets as shown on official maps and as recommended in the SRP.
- Adopt a City policy that states the City will not give up any existing public rights-of-way, e.g., street ends.
- Where appropriate to protect future access to the water, accept unexpired dedication of existing rights-of-way.
- Work with the State to improve drainage and flood mitigation measures along MD Route 413.

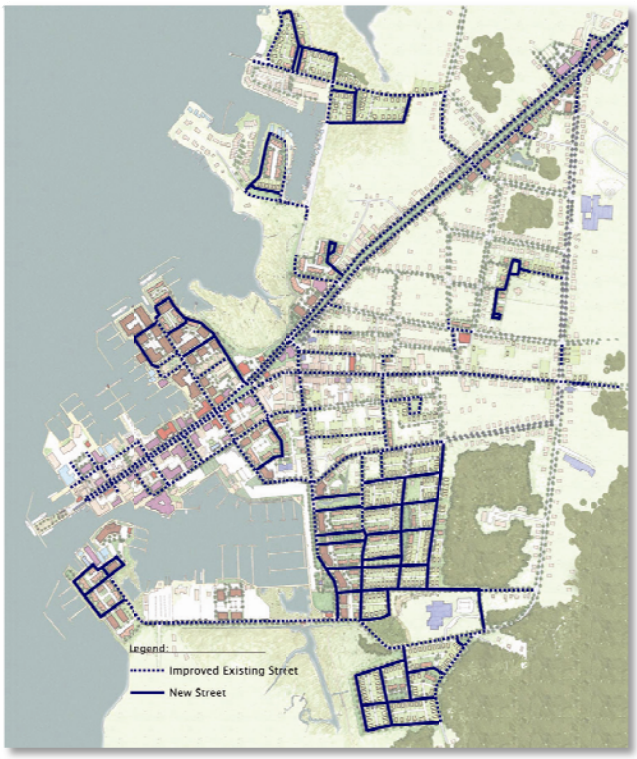


Figure 2: Transportation Plan Map

5) **<u>Prepare a Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan</u>:** Develop detailed parks, recreation, and open space policies, procedures, and maps.

- Create and adopt an official "Crisfield Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Program and Maps" (see Figure 3 for example) and require developments to provide public space and pedestrian systems in accordance with the

Figure 3: Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan Map

official map. This should include natural areas and a list of priority projects and key sites.

- Create new pedestrian links to the Marina (see Figure 4 Circulation Plan Map), including a proposed waterfront promenade that continues alongside the Marina's new open space and buildings and extends to Cedar Island Marsh and Jersey Island's Terrapin Pond.
- Establish in City development codes minimum parks and open space requirements for development projects including a Parks and Open Space Fee in Lieu provision.
- Work with Somerset County to incorporate the Crisfield Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Program into the Somerset County Parks, Recreation, and Land Preservation Master Plan.
- Work with private entities and non-profit organizations to develop additional recreation offerings, especially for young people.

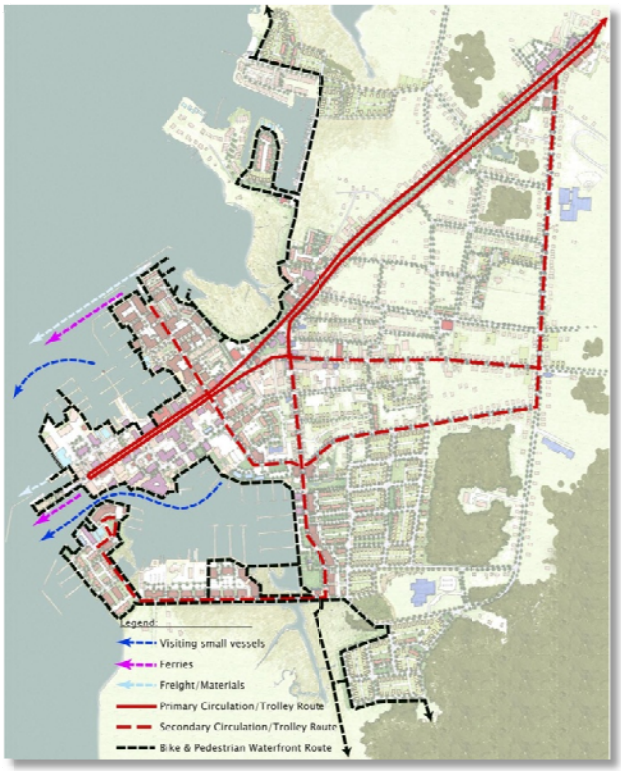


Figure 4: Circulation Plan Map

- Investigate the development of a "Skateboard Park" convenient to the Uptown and Downtown areas of the City.
- Work with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to increase the planning for and promotion of linkages with Janes Island State Park.
- Work with the Maryland Department of Natural resources (DNR) Program Open Space (POS) to implement a development program for Sunset Park and a community pier as well as the Veteran of Foreign Wars (VFW) beach.
- Ensure appropriate wayfinding signage to point people to parks and recreation facilities in the City as well as key sites and attractions.
- Adopt policies and regulations that require applicants for development approval dedicate and improve trail and pedestrian segments as shown on official maps for parks, recreation, and open space as well as transportation maps.
- Work with the DNR and private groups and organizations to strengthen pedestrian and non-motorize boat connections to activity sites located outside of the City. Promote Crisfield's hiking, biking and boating amenities in marketing materials.

- Create incentives for developers to provide public waterfront spaces (e.g., parks, plazas, waterfront trails, promenades), where people can access the water's edge.

6) **<u>Promote Heritage Planning Initiatives</u>:** Encourage heritage resource planning and regulatory actions.

Crisfield's maritime and seafood heritage, as well as its direct connection to Smith Island, present significant opportunities to promote heritage tourism and water related recreation initiatives.

- Inventory Crisfield's heritage resources through subsequent planning and identify critical resources for advanced preservation measures as "Target Priority Preservation Areas" (i.e., those resources that directly contribute to economic revitalization/tourism).
- Consider developing a voluntary his toric district ordinance for the Uptown area and establish an "Uptown Historic District" to allow for the voluntary inclusion of property owners to facilitate access to tax credits, low interest loans, and grants for historic preservation.
- Identify and preserve key areas of the "historic" working waterfront in the Downtown area.
- Partner with the Tawes Museum and the Crisfield Heritage Foundation to promote heritage preservation initiatives and consider supporting the Crisfield Heritage Foundation to prepare a specific Heritage Preservation Plan for the City of Crisfield and Smith and Janes Islands in coordination with the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.

Task 6: General Code Revisions (Years 5 - 10)

1) **<u>Amend Floodplain Ordinance</u>:** Amend the City's floodplain ordinance to add at least one foot to the base flood elevation.

- Developer contributions to offset impacts, and protect the community from flooding, are consistent themes in the Comprehensive Plan and the SRP.
- Specific projects including marshland and wetland restoration, improved floodgates, shoreline repair, and the design, construction and planting of wetland mitigation and

flood conveyance corridors should be identified and prioritized, much like a capital improvements program.

- The estimated cost of a project should be one of the determinants for the value of development proffers, in lieu and offset fees.

2) **Update Stormwater Management:** Update the City's Stormwater Management Ordinance.

- Standards should require that new developments maintain the volume of runoff at predevelopment levels by using structural controls and pollution prevention strategies, including strategies for minimizing land disturbances and retaining natural drainage and vegetation wherever possible.
- Runoff management plans for existing developed areas should be developed that identify priority pollutant reduction opportunities, protect natural areas to help control runoff, and develop ecological restoration and retrofit activities to clean up degraded water bodies.
- As development occurs, these and other stormwater management techniques should be required to mitigate the impacts of impervious areas on water quality. By requiring the most effective stormwater BMPs, the City will help preserve the "assimilative capacity" of local waters for future growth. New techniques should be integrated in municipal stormwater policies, regulations, and processes.
- The City should require new development and infill and redevelopment projects to treat stormwater using nonstructural and micro-scale practices to the maximum extent feasible. Stormwater should be filtered using such techniques as rain gardens, landscaping and tree planters (e.g., linear tree pits, sidewalk planters), grass swales and bio-swales, tree-swales, grass filter strips and vegetated buffers.

3) **Create Special Taxing Districts:** Create special taxing districts (e.g., shoreline protection districts), wherein those benefitting from shoreline stabilization and flood improvements contribute to the cost (if appropriate).

4) **Address Affordable Housing:** Develop initiatives that require developers to address low to moderate income and affordable homeownership opportunities as part of any new housing development strategy, and mandate that low to moderately priced dwellings comprise a percentage of all new developments. The City should consider enacting specific regulations to significantly address better housing options, including developing zoning and design standards that increase the mix of uses and housing types.

Task 7: Affordable Housing & Redevelopment (Years 1 – 10)

1) **Expand Role of the Crisfield Housing Authority:** Expand the role of the Crisfield Housing Authority (CHA) as the lead agency for affordable housing programs in the City and investigate opportunities for the CHA to participate in low income housing program partnerships with the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the State with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

2) **Establish Partnerships to Assist with Affordable Housing Initiatives:** Establish partnerships with nonprofit, semi-public developers, and other financers of affordable housing. This includes partnering with local lending institutions and HUD to develop a series of free community programs that educate the public about financial literacy, credit counseling, and homeownership counseling. It also includes partnering with local lending institutions and HUD to use federal programs and financial resources to rehabilitate existing properties to increase the supply of affordable housing.

The Crisfield Housing Authority Lands are a critical asset for the economic revitalization of the City.

3) **Build an Affordable Housing Coalition:** Form a "Crisfield Housing Roundtable," a coalition of members of the Crisfield Housing Authority Commission, community organizations, local lending institutions, local government representatives, private business owners (including builders and developers), and individuals, who can assist with assessments and recommendations for affordable housing policies in the City.

4) **Prepare Supporting Data for Affordable Housing Initiatives:** Develop a "Housing Affordability Index" in coordination with economic development initiatives and programs as well as the Crisfield Housing Roundtable initiative.

5) **Link Affordable Housing and Economic Development Initiatives:** Link workforce housing needs and initiatives with local job creation and economic development strategies and projects.

6) **Research Private/Public Program and Grant Opportunities for Redevelopment:** The City should explore the number of programs available to municipalities, housing authorities, and non-profit organizations and partnerships that encourage the purchase, redevelopment, and rehabilitation

of existing housing stock. One option, under a new HUB program, is to establish a funded pilot project for housing units that are targeted to moderate income households (see Appendix C).

7) **Maintain and Increase Funding through Dedicated Revenue:** Establish a "Crisfield Housing Trust" as an affiliate of the Crisfield Housing Authority to secure funding solely for the purpose of increasing affordable housing units through rehabilitation of existing structures or building new structures. Maintain and increase funding through a dedicated revenue stream - Federal, State, local, private, foundations, programs, and partnership opportunities.

8) **Initiate the Redevelopment of Public Housing Authority Lands:** Develop and issue a "Request for Qualifications/Proposals" (RFQ/RFP) to redevelop the Crisfield Housing Authority (CHA) property with a combination of market rate and subsidized housing units before demolition occurs. Among other things, the RFQ/RFP should state that project objectives include:

- Replacing 50% to 70% of existing public housing units with new units and renovated housing in the community.
- Forming a partnership with a developer and redeveloping the CHA property to generate funds for the replacement units.

Task 8: Economic Development & Infrastructure (Years 1 – 10)

1) **Prepare a Crisfield Quality of Life Assessment:** Carry out a "Quality of Life Assessment" and take the necessary steps to address described issues based on the results. A Quality of Life Assessment is a poll of Crisfield residents that can assist the City in determining what major economic issues are perceived by the public.

2) **Convene Economic Development Summit:** Convene an "Economic Development Summit" for round-table discussions regarding Crisfield and other regional economic initiatives. This includes federal, state, and local economic development organizations and departments as well as other public and private entities that can assist Crisfield to achieve its economic development goals.

3) **Coordinate Somers Cove Marina Master Facilities Plan:** Work closely with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on the "Strategic Master Facilities Plan" for Somers Cove Marina to assure that State objectives coincide with the economic development objectives outlined in the SRP.

4) **Complete Parks & Recreation Projects:** Complete Sunset Park and the Skateboard Park.

5) **<u>Develop Signage & Wayfinding</u>:** Create a coordinated signage and wayfinding system for the City of Crisfield to include:

- Coordination with public and private entities including DNR and the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), as shown in Figure 4.
- Incorporation of the City's logo and unified design features.
- Evaluation of a unified and coordinated lighting and signage scheme for waterfront buildings to create a distinct image of the City's waterfront.

Figure 5: Signage and Wayfinding Map

6) **<u>Ensure Regulatory Revisions that Support Economic Development</u>:** Ensure that local zoning codes permit uses related to:

- Recirculation aquaculture to provide higher quality/value seafood.
- Environmental sciences for research and commercialization.
- Sustainable energy and bio fuels including research and development.
- Marine industry trade activities around "U.S. M arine" in Salisbury.
- Information Technologies (IT) including communication related cluster development.
- Aerospace and satellite technology, space and satellite businesses cluster building around the Mid-Atlantic Regional Space Port (MARS) and the Mid-Atlantic Institute for Space Technology (MIST).
- Health care services focused on mobility and aging.
- Wellness centers and spas.

7) **<u>Support Economic Development Coordination</u>:** Support efforts to enhance and/or supplement City economic development staff. This includes utilizing skilled volunteers such as retirees with economic development experience. It also includes enhanced coordination and support from the Somerset Economic Development Council (EDC) and staff. At some point in the future, the City may consider hiring a full-time economic development coordinator.

8) **Establish Academic Support:** Engage universities, colleges, and other related entities in regional economic development initiatives, including Wallops Island (aerospace and satellite technologies).
9) **Develop/Assess Infrastructure Systems:** Develop a Geographic Information System (GIS) for Crisfield to assess all critical City infrastructure related to the SRP revitalization tasks. GIS can assist with economic development and grant funding. This includes the digitization of hard copy maps (infrastructure, planning, zoning, etc.), development of a Crisfield geodatabase, development of an interactive GIS system to assist businesses and web applications, and the procurement of ongoing GIS technical support and management.

10) **Develop Hotel Conference Center:** Develop a hotel/conference center for the City's Downtown.

SECTION II: LONG-TERM ACTIONS

Long-term implementation actions cover a 20 year timeframe (Years 1 through 20). All of the actions listed under Section II will likely require additional City staffing and funding as well as professional services to realize full implementation. Planning for and/or the programming of improvements may begin in Year 1 or 2, in some cases, but sequencing may be dependent on when opportunities are presented or issues arise.

Task 1: Outlet Port Strategies

1) Work with DNR to make improvements to the City Dock and Depot and the dock at the end of Broad Street. Improvement to the City Dock should take into consideration a breakwater and other improvements as recommended in the SRP. The City Dock should be the primary focus for City residents and visitors alike.

2) Conduct annual safety inspections and a regular schedule of maintenance of the City dock and Depot facilities to ensure that they are maintained to the highest standards. This may require additional City staffing.

3) Coordinate regular inspections of the dock facilities located on Broad Street with the County to ensure that all public dock facilities located within the City are up to standard.

4) Continue to work with the Maryland-Virginia Ferry Committee to develop a regular ferry route that includes Crisfield as a ferry terminal site.

5) Gather information from and provide assistance to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and relevant State agencies on the planning and preparation for the Smith Island Restoration Project. Provide regular updates for City officials, civic organizations, businesses and the local workforce on pertinent information about the project, including employment opportunities.

6) Plan, program, and implement the improvements to the City dock and Depot recommended in the Urban Design section of the SRP (see Figure 5 above):

- Installation of a protective breakwater;
- Construction of an extended and widened pier head that includes varied paved and natural surfaces;
- Installation of new shelters with seating, wind protection and updated real-time electronic information;
- Construction of a lighted, sound-equipped plaza to be used for public performances; and
- Addition of vertical aesthetic elements like trees, towers, and masts.

Task 2: Economic Development & Infrastructure (Years 1 – 20)

1) Expand information technology infrastructure in Crisfield such as linking the region's universities by advanced telecommunications systems. This includes working with local, State, and federal entities to develop information technology infrastructure.

2) Develop initial marketing materials, for the City's website and public distribution, that:

- Features the region's educational system and resources.
- Describes the business community in the City including leading businesses, institutions and resources, and provide quotes from business leaders.
- Identifies the leading technology resources in the region that have strong connections with economic development activities and businesses.
- Highlights recreation areas such as Somers Cove Marina, State Parks and Great Hope Golf Course.
- Promotes easy commuting patterns in and around the region (includes the airport).

- Highlights existing space and existing workforce numbers as well as other general social, political, and economic demographics, noting an available workforce (unemployment rates well above the State average).
- Lists available sites and buildings in the City, notably properties designated for industrial development.
- Provides an easy access internet WEB site for the City with an economic development section

3) Establish business assistance initiatives and programs that can be touted for their importance in helping companies improve their bottom line. Focus particularly on the "Grayshore Phenomenon" e.g., tapping skills of incoming retirees and ensuring a trained workforce to serve the needs of the elderly population.

4) Support and expand business and industrial parks that are within Crisfield or are linked to the City, including the Salisbury/Ocean City/ Wicomico Airport Business Center.

5) Pursue a health care training initiative.

6) Initiate planning for the construction of a breakwater.

7) Initiate the redevelopment of Main and 7th Street

8) Support and assist in the development of a new private marina in Crisfield as an important economic development tool. This includes the development of a Maritime Business Center on or near this waterfront area. It also include the concept of dredging a new harbor area for the marina, whereby dredge spoils can be used to augment barrier islands, which are important to protecting the City from natural disasters and periodic flooding.

9) Develop marketing materials that communicate Crisfield's attractions. New and revised materials should include:

    - A two page 8 ½ x 11" size brochure that features buildings in the downtown area. The back cover should include a pocket for a series of customized inserts.
    - A series of information briefs for each of the targeted stores. They should identify the downtown and uptown's strengths and relative advantages from the viewpoint of each type of store.

- Direct mail to a distinct group of target markets should be considered, in particular to business prospects that are targets for an Eastern Shore location, especially companies in the categories of interest.

10) Develop a fully functional Crisfield WEB site that features its places and businesses and includes the following:

- An interactive map of the commercial areas that highlights the places, things to do, and places to see and shop in each area.
- A section on the SRP and progress on its implementation, identifying new businesses, business expansions and new commercial development underway. This section should change every few months and provide a snapshot of progressive changes in the community.
- An e-mail program to communicate with potential prospects and media in target areas. This will require identifying the e-mail addresses of prospects, media contacts, and key state and regional contacts. At regular intervals, the region can send information to groups (e.g., prospect companies in the telecommunications industry) or to all contacts.
- Reciprocal links to the Somerset County and State of Maryland sites so that prospects can have information on state and local programs and opportunities regardless of where they enter the system.
- Links with professional organizations and associations as frequently as possible, including organizations like the International Economic Development Council, Urban Land Institute, and professional associations in targeted business sectors, as described in other sections of this Plan.
- A web-based feedback loop, whereby: 1) employers can be surveyed on workforce needs; and 2) specific skills, needs, and available jobs can be communicated to potential employees throughout the State as well as regional education/training institutions including K-12 and higher education institutions.

11) Expand tourism linkages and regional tourism, arts and entertainment, and cultural opportunities including:

- Welcome centers;
- Interpretive centers;
- Downtown revitalization;
- Linkage and marketing of Crisfield attractions with Ocean City attractions and other attractions throughout the region;

- Linkage and marketing with Smith and Janes Islands in Maryland and Tangier Island in Virginia.
- Eco-tourism, agricultural tourism, and heritage tourism; and
- Sport and commercial fishing.

12) Work with MPO and the Delmarva Water Transport Committee to protect transportation infrastructure and support transportation improvements, including the Somerset County/Chesapeake Ferry (Maryland – Virginia), Salisbury/Ocean City/Wicomico Airport expansion and increase in commercial services, Port of Salisbury and West Ocean City Harbor, Shore Transit, U.S. 113 dualization and U.S. 50 service road, rail infrastructure for freight.

13) Pursue targeted marketing efforts to determine how best to “brand” and “sell” the region to potential new businesses and entrepreneurs.

14) Increase availability of energy resources including natural gas, electricity through exploration of alternative energy sources (energy generation).

15) Initiate a retail development strategy based on the recommendations of the SRP contained in Chapter 2 (Urban Design).