



FINAL REPORT OF THE
**CITY OF SALISBURY'S
ENVIRONMENTAL
POLICY TASK FORCE**

DECEMBER 2020

2020 Mayor's Environmental Policy Task Force Members

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Tom Anderson, Tidal Health Peninsula Regional

Dave Layfield, Green Street Housing

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Executive Summary

The City of Salisbury Environmental Policy Task Force (EPTF) was created by Mayor Jake Day in early 2020 to develop a body of recommendations in order to reduce the environmental impact of the City and its citizens and is comprised of a variety of residents from the city of Salisbury and greater Wicomico County. Working through the COVID-19 pandemic, the EPTF settled upon twenty-two recommendations which are classified into the following categories: Energy Use and Emissions; Water, Wastewater, and Storm Water; Management of Public Open Space; Transportation, Sustainable Operation and Design; and Education and Outreach. These recommendations will serve the City as it develops and implements a sustainability plan.

Over ten years ago the City had previously charged an Environmental Policy Task Force to help guide its decision-making and to prioritize environmental policies and practices; and significant steps were taken to follow several of its recommendations. This current report was greatly informed by what the City has learned and implemented since the submission of its predecessor. In addition, new challenges and environmental priorities have emerged with each recommendation considering its impact on environmental justice and climate change implications. Recommendations were organized to be considered in Immediate, Medium, and Long Term time frames with general costs classified as Low, Medium and High.

The EPTF urges the City to lead by example in the County and greater Delmarva Peninsula, namely by prioritizing the consideration of environmental ramifications when making decisions with property it largely controls. Examples include embedding energy assessments into city planning (A-1); purchasing hybrid, electric and appropriately sized vehicles when necessary, as well as establishing fuel reduction goals (A-4), inserting trash collectors at storm water runoff drains (B-3), and establishing robust policies and procedures for the management of plants and trees on city-owned properties (C-2) while enhancing landscaping that is native to the Chesapeake Bay watershed (D-3).

The City needs to provide its own internal expertise and leadership to ensure that it can achieve and remain at the leading edge of environmental actions and policies. While focused on developing a robust plan for managing and expanding public open space (C-3), the City should consider a new department dedicated to city parks and recreation (C-1). Additionally, the City needs to work with the private sector to offer incentives for environmentally friendly building construction and renovation (A-3), to expand solar energy opportunities for the entire community (A-5) and to enhance the quality of local and regional transportation systems to ensure safe pedestrian and wildlife passage in and around the City (D-1). Environmental health of the citizenry should also be considered throughout City planning efforts (E-5).

Active educational and outreach programs should prioritize the impact of nuisance flooding (E-6), highlight the excellent quality of the City's drinking water (B-1) while making it more available (E-1) and preventing lead contamination (B-2). Many of the recommendations require the creation of partnerships with third parties to evaluate, design and implement gray water systems (B-4) and smart-growth alternatives (D-2), managing open space throughout the City (C-4), enhancing recycling and solid waste alternatives (E-4), and connecting with local educators to provide environmental learning opportunities outside of the classroom for K-12 students (E-3).

Executive Summary Table

Estimates of priorities and costs are considered relative to the other recommendations. It is recommended that the mayor, city council, and city department leadership consider taking further evaluation and/or action on the priorities ranked “Immediate” regardless of the relative cost. Costs associated with these recommendations could be borne by the City’s operating or capital budget or by the non-profit and private sectors. Whenever possible, external funding opportunities and partnerships should be considered.

Prioritization Key:

- I-Immediate (1-3 years)
- Med-Medium (2-5 years)
- LT- Long-term (4-7 years)

	Overall Priority	Cost	Page
A. Energy Use and Emissions			2
A-1 Embed Energy & Emissions Assessments Into City Planning	I	Med	2
a. Establish Goals			
b. Conduct Community Emissions Inventory			
c. Perform Regular Emissions Assessments			
d. Provide Training			
A-2 Environmentally Conscious Building Policy for City-Owned Construction Projects	Med	High	4
a. DOE ComCheck reports			
b. LEED Certification for City Buildings			
c. LEED Silver Certification for City Buildings			
A-3 Environmentally Conscious Building Policy for Non City-Owned Construction Projects	LT	High	6
a. DOE ComCheck reports			
b. Tax incentive for LEED Certified Buildings			
c. Tax incentive for LEED Certified Silver Buildings			
A-4 City Vehicles: Maintenance, Use, and Alternatives	I	Low	8
a. Apply for Grant Funding			
b. Optimize Vehicles for Size and Use			
c. Vehicle Rating System			
d. Establish Fuel Reduction Goals			
e. Accessory Power Units for All Emergency Vehicles			
A-5 Renewable Energy: Procurement, On-Site Solar and Community Solar	Med	Low	9
a. Expand Community Solar Partnerships			
b. On-site Solar Expansion			
c. Promote Renewable Energy			
d. Renewable Energy Procurement			

	Overall Priority	Cost	Page
B. Water, Wastewater, and Storm Water			12
B-1 Increase Public Outreach and Data Accessibility	Med	Med	12
a. Online Water Monitoring Website or App			
b. Consumer Confidence Report			
c. State of the River Report			
B-2 Lead Poisoning Prevention	Med	Low	13
a. Lead Registration Initiative			
B-3 Stormwater Inlet Trash Inserts	I	Low	14
a. Prioritize locations for Inlet Nets			
b. Add 10 Inlet Nets Per Year			
B-4 Gray Water Infrastructure Development	LT	High	15
a. Evaluate Feasibility of Greywater Infrastructure for New Construction			
C. Management of Public Open Space			17
C-1 Parks Staffing and Organization	Med	High	17
a. Properly Staffed Parks Division			
b. Establish a Department of Parks and Recreation			
C-2 Establish Policies and Procedures	Med	Low	19
a. Pesticide/Herbicide Use & Invasive Species Removal			
b. Tree Planting and Growth (Tree Canopy)			
c. Native Plantings			
d. Water Edge Practices			
C-3 Prepare a City-Wide Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan	I	Med	24
a. Analyze Existing Parks Throughout the City			
b. Prioritize Park Expansion and Pocket Parks			
c. Improve Utilization of Parks, also Considering Use of Waterways			
C-4 Increase Collaboration with Governmental, For-profit, and Nonprofit Organizations	LT	Med	27
a. Increased Collaboration with Local Governments & State Government			
b. Increased Collaboration with Nonprofit and For-profit Organizations			
D. Transportation, Sustainable Operation, and Design			30
D-1 Transportation Recommendations	Med	Low	30
a. Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Commission			
b. Transportation Infrastructure Plan			
c. Bicycle Parking Requirement in Zoning Code			
d. Pervious and Grass Pavers Requirement			
e. Wildlife Corridors			
D-2 Smart Growth Zoning alternatives	I	Low	33
D-3 Bay Friendly and Sustainable Landscape Options	Med	Low	34

	Overall Priority	Cost	Page
E. Education and Outreach			36
E-1 Drinking Water Stations	LT	High	36
a. Increase Accessibility of Water Bottle Refill Stations			
E-2 Efficient and Effective Plumbing Conveyance systems	LT	Low	37
a. “Don’t Flush” Educational Campaign			
E-3 Partnerships	Med	Med	37
a. Connect and Partner with Local Educators			
E-4 Recycling and Solid Waste	Med	Low	39
a. Expand Recycling Education			
b. Continue Green Festivals			
E-5- Environmental Health	Med	Low	39
a. Include Environmental Health in Planning Decisions			
E-6 Nuisance Flooding (Sunny Day Flooding)	I	High	40
a. Flooding Educational Campaign			

Mayor's Environmental Policy Task Force

Charge of the Environmental Policy Task Force

The 2020 Environmental Policy Task Force (EPTF) was created to undertake the following: perform a review of the progress made since the 2009 EPTF; work with the City staff in prioritizing broad sustainability goals and the actions required to achieve them; and form recommendations to serve as key elements of a city sustainability plan. Additionally, the task force will develop recommendations that the non-profit and private sectors may want to consider as a means to educate the citizens of the City. The goal of the City is to ensure that it will make decisions in an informed manner to become a more resilient city and community.

The Task Force has been appointed by the Mayor to help her develop a policy recommendation for consideration by the City Council and Department leadership. The membership has been drawn from a broad base of interests and backgrounds to facilitate discussion and to ensure that the results of the Task Force comprehensively cover the topic.

Meetings, Process, and Deliberations

The 2020 EPTF held its inaugural meeting in February and an organization meeting in March. There was a hiatus of a few months due to the pandemic but virtual meetings resumed soon thereafter. To facilitate the development of recommendations, the members of the task force split into the following five subcommittees:

1. Energy Use and Emissions
2. Water, Wastewater, and Storm Water
3. Management of Public Open Space
4. Transportation, Sustainable Operation and Design
5. Education and Outreach.

Besides initial and final meetings, the five subcommittees met separately from the task force. Each subcommittee was asked to update the task force on its initial recommendations for broader task force discussion and development. This report focuses on twenty-two recommendations largely developed within one of the five subcommittees.

A. Energy Use and Emissions

Vision Statement: The Energy Subcommittee provides these recommendations for municipal operations and community efforts to move towards a net-zero emissions goal for the City of Salisbury. The concept of “net-zero” means that the city and the community will work together to reduce current greenhouse gas emissions in a manner that also implements measures and changes to offset the remaining emissions that cannot be completely eliminated. A move towards net-zero is a complex but necessary process that will necessitate cooperation among multiple city government departments.

These recommendations include both broad and specific goals, some of which are large-systemic changes in municipal operations, while others are “low hanging fruit” that can be accomplished in the near-term. The following specific recommendations center on four distinct aspects of Salisbury’s energy portfolio:

1. Embedding energy and emissions assessments into city planning, which is a prerequisite for being able to adequately implement and track these efforts into the future;
2. Building usage, which in 2009 accounted for nearly 20% of the City’s emissions (2,057 tons);
3. Transportation usage, which in 2009 accounted for more than 19% of the City’s emissions (2,059 tons) and the most expensive category at \$435,813 per year; and
4. Sustainable energy sources, which are critical for moving the needle forward.

Recommendation A-1: Embed Energy and Emissions Assessments into City Planning

Synopsis: The Energy Subcommittee proposes an initial recommendation that the city of Salisbury incorporates a biennial municipal and community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Audit into the work plan of its existing energy consultant, CQI Associates. Additionally, because the City currently lacks a protocol for managing emissions, it should identify opportunities to normalize and embed these concepts into future comprehensive plans.

Recommendation A-1A: Establish Goals

We recommend that Salisbury publicly establish decadal goals (2030, 2040, 2050 and beyond) for municipal and community emissions reduction. This subcommittee recommends the following timeline for municipal goals, based on the ongoing 2020 GHG Emissions Inventory conducted by the City’s Americorps Member in 2020: 50% reduction by 2030, 90% by 2040, and net-zero by 2050.

Recommendation A-1B: Conduct Community Emissions Inventory

We recommend that the City undertake a Community GHG Emissions Inventory starting in 2022, in tandem with the next municipal emissions inventory. Based on the findings, the City should establish a timeline for achieving the broad reduction goals.

Recommendation A-1C: Perform Regular Emission Assessments

After reviewing the baseline emissions inventory conducted in FY20, we recommend undertaking GHG inventories on a biennial basis to adequately track progress against the baseline. Comparing annual biennial progress against performance measures will indicate whether implemented actions are effective or if adjustments to the approach are needed. The

documentation of progress can also encourage funding from both internal and external sources. The City already engages a consultant, to analyze their energy portfolio and has an opportunity to build on that experience to the biennial assessments. To ensure that these assessments are broadly understood, findings from reports should be published in an easy-to-understand format to the City's website with briefings to the department leaders and City Council.

Recommendation A-1D: Provide Training

In order for the assessments to be as effective as possible, we recommend providing energy efficiency and emissions reduction training to city personnel to establish and build upon a culture of sustainability. This training should be differentiated across departments which should be equipped to share the financial and environmental value of such training with their respective staffs.

Benefits:

- By working with energy consultants and internal staff the City can develop key data and metrics that need to be incorporated into an energy assessment.
- Biannual assessments will be helpful in ensuring that there is consistency in the data collection and integration.
- Professional assessments are important to ensure measured consistency and that further recommendations for consideration are feasible and are likely to meet goals.

Barriers:

- The consultant may not be familiar with the reporting ClearPath program. Tutorials and support from Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) are available to support this with the City's existing membership.
- There will be an additional cost associated with adding this bi-annual activity to a scope of work.
- Some support from the Sustainability Coordinator will likely be needed to fill in certain gaps in information.

Actions Required: Establish long term goals for emissions reductions at both the city and neighborhood levels. Commit to regular professional emissions assessments and share the results of those assessments. Provide training to city staff to maximize the impact of the assessment results.

Climate Change Implications: These recommendations are absolutely essential for the city to begin addressing its contributions to regional and global climate degradation.

Diversity and Justice: Climate change, caused by the anthropogenic creation of greenhouse gases, is fundamentally an environmental justice issue. By curbing the City's and its communities' emissions, we hope to limit its effects on public health. Among the many sectors that are significantly affected by the energy consumption of fossil fuels, the negative impact of climate change on minority and vulnerable populations is especially evident in the public health sector.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: This activity is a prerequisite for any energy and/or emissions policies to be effective. It is critical that the city develop goals that are ambitious, that align with other similarly sized cities have established goals and that regular assessments are conducted to determine what strategies are working or where adaptations may need to occur. As a result, costs associated with this activity will be on a biannual basis. It is expected that savings in cost will occur by incorporating this activity into the workplan.

Priority - Immediate; Estimated Cost - Medium

Recommendation A-2: Environmentally Conscious Building Policy for City-Owned Construction Projects

Synopsis: Several tools are available to define and implement energy-efficient and environmentally conscious building projects. These tools include the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), the International Green Code (IGC), the Department of Energy (DOE) COMcheck and the Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED®) rating system. To prevent disproportionately high costs to smaller projects, the proposed policy would increase requirements as the project size increases. Most studies show returns on the premium cost for environmentally conscious construction to be conservatively between five and ten years. The city should take the opportunity to lead by example with this policy.

Recommendation A-2A

All new construction and renovation projects shall have DOE ComCheck reports submitted to the City and stamped by a Maryland-registered architect and engineer before construction begins. COMcheck is a software program used by the Department of Energy that determines whether new commercial or high-rise residential buildings, additions, and alterations meet the requirements of the IECC and ASHRAE Standard 90.1 as well as several state-specific codes. The program has four sections – building envelope, mechanical systems, interior lighting and exterior lighting. The building envelope section lists a percentage higher than the code-required minimum, thus ensuring that all projects are meeting the IECC code minimum. The COMcheck reports shall also have a stamped letter submitted to the City by the same architect and engineer stating that they have visually surveyed the completed project and that the completed installation meets the requirements of the IECC and the ComCheck reports. This will ensure that the energy efficiency measures designed into the project will not be eliminated as it is constructed.

Recommendation A-2B

All new construction and renovation projects over 50,000 square feet shall obtain LEED certification.

Recommendation A-2C

All new construction and renovation projects over 75,000 square feet shall obtain LEED Silver certification.

Benefits:

- From construction and through its lifetime, an environmentally conscious building uses less energy, water and natural resources and creates, among many additional benefits, less waste and lower energy consumption costs.
- Healthier buildings have lower to no volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and other indoor toxins, contributing to increased health and productivity among employees and residents.
- Promotion of the active reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and lessened exposure to VOCs and other indoor toxins.
- Increased application of sustainable materials and adoption of practices used in the construction process.

Barriers:

- Outreach and Training - there is a need for outreach, education and training in every sector regarding environmentally conscious design and construction practices.
- Construction and Design Costs - green construction methods represent a 0 -15% premium in different studies. Payback periods are typically five and ten years. Administrative and design costs for LEED-registered projects need to be accounted for in design and construction cost planning.

Actions Required: Creation and passage of an environmentally conscious construction policy for all new city-owned facilities. Additionally, education of city permit officials and revisions to RFP and procurement policies and procedures would need to occur.

Climate Change Implications: Building construction and a building's energy usage within its finished envelope account for about a quarter of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. By adopting the policies presented in this section, the City can work toward limiting the amount of emissions created through the existence and use of these spaces.

Diversity and Justice: LEED explicitly promotes socially responsible practices within the project team and its supply chain through its Social Equity Pilot Credits, which includes social equity in the community.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: Low investment costs would be required to develop and adopt an environmentally conscious building policy. Premium construction, design and administrative costs would need to be included in construction budgets for new projects. Reduced energy costs and higher worker productivity would reduce long-term costs and typically begin to provide paybacks from five to ten years after the completion of construction. Using a stepped approach reduces the impact of higher design and administrative costs associated with LEED certification. Larger projects are able to absorb these costs more efficiently as the return on investment is generally greater.

Priority - Medium; Estimated Cost - High

Recommendation A-3: Environmentally Conscious Building Policy for Non City-Owned Construction Projects

Synopsis: Several tools are available to implement and define energy-efficient and environmentally conscious building projects. These tools include the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), the International Green Code (IGC), the Department of Energy (DOE) COMCheck and RESCheck, and the Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED®) rating system. The goal is to ensure minimum compliance with the IECC. To prevent disproportionately high costs to smaller projects, the proposed policy would increase requirements as the project size increases. City costs are primarily related to staff training and enforcement. Most studies show returns on the premium cost for environmentally conscious construction to be conservatively between five and ten years. The city should take the opportunity to lead by example with this policy.

Recommendation A-3A

All new residential and commercial construction and renovation projects shall have DOE ComCheck/ResCheck reports (as applicable) submitted to the city and stamped by a Maryland registered architect and engineer before construction begins. COMcheck is a software program used by the Department of Energy that determines whether new commercial or high-rise residential buildings, additions, and alterations meet the requirements of the IECC and ASHRAE Standard 90.1 as well as several state-specific codes. The program has four sections – building envelope, mechanical systems, interior lighting and exterior lighting. The building envelope section lists a percentage higher than the code-required minimum, thus ensuring that all projects are meeting the IECC code minimum. REScheck is a similar program for residential construction. The COMcheck and REScheck reports shall also have a stamped letter submitted to the City by the same architect and engineer stating that they have visually surveyed the completed project and that the completed installation meets the requirements of the IECC and the ComCheck reports. This will ensure that the energy efficiency measures designed into the project will not be eliminated as it is constructed.

Recommendation A-3B

All new construction and renovation projects over 50,000 square feet that obtain LEED certification will be offered a reduction in property tax by the City. Reduction amount will be determined by the City.

Recommendation A-3C

All new construction and renovation projects over 75,000 square feet that obtain LEED Silver certification will be offered a reduction in property tax by the City. Reduction amount will be determined by the City.

Benefits:

- From construction and through its lifetime, an environmentally conscious building uses less energy, water and natural resources and creates, among many additional benefits, less waste and lower energy consumption costs.

- Healthier buildings have lower to no volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and other indoor toxins, contributing to increased health and productivity among employees and residents.
- Promotion of the active reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and lessened exposure to VOCs and other indoor toxins.
- Increased application of sustainable materials and adoption of practices used in the construction process.

Barriers:

- Outreach and Training - there is a need for outreach, education and training in every sector regarding environmentally conscious design and construction practices.
- Other jurisdictions with dissimilar requirements. Outreach to Wicomico County and other local jurisdictions should occur so that similar requirements can be implemented in the County to even the playing field and not incentivize projects to move out of the City to the County or other local jurisdictions.
- Construction and Design Costs - green construction methods represent a 0 -15% premium in different studies. Payback periods are typically five and ten years. Administrative and design costs for LEED-registered projects need to be accounted for in design and construction cost planning.
- Increased upfront construction and design cost for developers: While increased costs are usually offset by 5-10-year payback periods, this timeframe may be longer than is typically acceptable for some developers. This can also be offset with increased property and rent values associated with environmentally conscious construction projects.

Actions Required: Creation and passage of an environmentally conscious building construction policy for all new non city-owned facilities. Additionally, education of city permit officials and revisions to RFP and procurement policies and procedures would need to occur while outreach to and education of the development community could be considered.

Climate Change Implications: Building construction and a building’s energy usage within its finished envelope account for about a quarter of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions. By adopting the policies presented in this section, the City can work toward limiting the amount of emissions created through the existence and use of these spaces.

Diversity and Justice: LEED explicitly promotes socially responsible practices within the project team and its supply chain through its Social Equity Pilot Credits, which includes social equity in the community.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: Low investment costs would be required to develop and adopt an environmentally conscious building policy. The cost of code enforcement on private commercial projects is negligible but the costs to the private sector of implementing environmentally conscious building practices will be more significant. Using a stepped approach reduces the impact of higher design and administrative costs associated with LEED certification. Larger projects are able to absorb these costs more efficiently as the return on investment is generally greater.

Priority – Long-Term; Estimated Cost – High

Recommendation A-4: City Vehicles: Maintenance, Use, and Alternatives

Synopsis: Currently, almost all city vehicles run on gas or diesel with a few electric/gas hybrids and no electric cars. The typical lifespan of a city vehicle is approximately twenty years. It is recommended that the City of Salisbury develop and implement a “Green Fleet” purchasing policy where purchases of new vehicles are mandated to be the lowest emission vehicle possible with a special focus on electric vehicles. Multiple types of hybrid and alternatively fueled vehicles now readily exist in the retail market. Depending upon the mix of fuel and/or power source, these vehicles significantly increase fuel efficiency, reduce carbon emissions and often reduce other forms of pollution. There are opportunities for bulk-purchase programs facilitated through organizations like Climate Mayors, most of which provide discounts on electric vehicles through SourceWell.

Suggested Policy:

Recommendation A-4A

The transportation specialist should apply for grant funding through the Maryland Clean Fuels Technical Assistance (CFTA) Program run through the Maryland Energy Administration to acquire needed technical assistance in examining the entire city fleet and determining a plan for vehicle conversion.

Recommendation A-4B

The carpool manager should begin a program to ensure that user needs are met by the smallest and most fuel-efficient vehicle available. Aside from emergency vehicles, small four-passenger automobiles with four-cylinder engines should be used over others. If the City purchases alternative fuel vehicles, their use should be a priority over older combustible engine vehicles. The city should consider opportunities for bulk purchases set forth through SourceWell.

Recommendation A-4C

A rating system should be established in which vehicles with low fuel efficiency and high use are prioritized for replacement and upgraded. The City should focus on procuring electric vehicles and require that new non-electric vehicles are as fuel-efficient as possible.

Recommendation A-4D

Department heads should be asked to monitor fuel consumption with the goal of maximum reduction in consumption. Annual goals for reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per department should also be established.

Recommendation A-4E

Consider purchasing Accessory Power Units for all stationary emergency vehicles to power equipment. According to DOE, payback periods for power packs can be reached within a few months or years because of the fuel savings.

Benefits:

- Gas/electric hybrids generally offer significant fuel efficiency and reduced emissions over models that are powered by a combustible engine.
- Electric vehicles have a limited range but may be highly useful for tasks that occur within or just outside of the city limits.
- Immediate fuel saving costs.
- Reduction in emissions.
- Educate the employees on the best methods for fuel-efficiency.

Barriers:

- Currently there is a premium cost to the purchase price of vehicles using alternative power systems.
- Newer vehicles will have a greater mileage rate as newer EVs – electric vehicles - have the capacity to go farther than older models before needing to be recharged.
- Older vehicles would not be used as much as they may have a lower rate of turnover and may require additional maintenance due to age.

Climate Change Implications: Transportation is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions due to the burning of fossil fuels like gasoline and diesel. Limiting the use of high-emission vehicles and transitioning to an electric fleet is an important aspect of moving the City towards a net-zero future.

Diversity and Justice: Climate change, caused by the anthropogenic creation of greenhouse gases, is fundamentally an environmental justice issue. By curbing the City's and its communities' emissions, we hope to limit its effects on public health. Among the many sectors that are significantly affected by the energy consumption of fossil fuels, the negative impact of climate change on minority and vulnerable populations is especially evident in the public health sector.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: The costs associated with matching user needs to vehicles would be minimal and should be covered by current staff. It is recommended that the City use gas/electric hybrids for vehicles that often go beyond the city limits and electric vehicles for cars that stay within the city limits. This cost difference may take several years to recover from the difference in fuel cost and efficiency due to the premium cost of the vehicles. The costs associated with this recommendation would be borne by the City in its Capital Equipment Budget only when vehicles are being replaced.

Priority - Immediate; Estimated Cost – Low

Recommendation A-5: Renewable Energy: Procurement, On-Site Solar & Community Solar Synopsis: Buildings use 40% of America's energy and 70% of its electricity and are responsible for more than one-third of all greenhouse gas emissions. Most buildings in Salisbury, private or municipal, commercial, residential, or industrial, use electricity as their primary source of energy for heating and cooling in addition to lighting and other electrical uses. Converting the energy supply for these buildings to renewable sources could account for a major reduction in greenhouse gas emissions attributed to our city. There are many ways in which these buildings

can utilize renewable electricity sources and the City should enhance current or adopt new strategies to facilitate this transition. Community solar is a relatively new opportunity in Maryland. As large solar farms are developed, individual homeowners may purchase their electricity from these facilities without having to make large equipment investments or have solar panels on their properties. There is a low-income carve out with all Maryland community solar projects that provide lower-income residents to save money on their power bills and participate in saving their environment. On-site solar continues to be a viable alternative to standard coal-fired electricity for commercial, residential, and municipal properties. In most cases, on-site solar is a long-term cash flow positive endeavor for the city government, local businesses, and homeowners. Even if the city can't feasibly supply all of its electricity needs from on-site sources, Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) may be purchased effectively categorizing all energy used by the City as renewable.

Suggested Policy:

Recommendation A-5A:

The City should expand upon its existing community solar provider relationships by partnering with multiple community solar providers. As community solar starts to increase in Maryland, there are multiple providers that city residents could buy solar energy from. The City should a) establish these connections and b) facilitate public outreach so that citizens are aware of the opportunities.

Recommendation A-5B

Solar technology costs have plummeted over the last few years and government incentives still exist that can make on-site solar a much cheaper alternative to standard electricity delivery or special renewable energy purchase contracts. A portion of these financing incentives are based on tax credits and as a not-for-profit tax entity, the City may not benefit from them. However, the City could still benefit from on-site solar by entering into a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) or a standard commercial lease with a private entity that develops the solar asset on municipal assets. When the term of the PPA or lease expires, the City may purchase the solar asset for little to no additional cost. The City should a) identify municipal locations that could support the solar infrastructure and b) procure a private vendor capable of offering a PPA or commercial lease to facilitate the solar assets.

Recommendation A-5C

As solar costs fall and financing incentives continue, there is an opportunity for local businesses and residents to build solar energy assets on their properties. The City should encourage the installation of solar assets through outreach to local businesses and residents with informational mailers, workshops, and cross-promotions with local solar energy installers.

Recommendation A-5D

The City has entered into a renewable energy procurement contract with Constellation Energy that expires in 2025. Through this procurement mechanism, the City is saving \$225,000 per year and sourcing 100% of its energy usage through renewable sources. The City should renew or rebid this contract for 100% renewable energy sources when the current contract expires in 2025.

Benefits:

- Solar and renewable energy effectively reduces greenhouse gas emissions to zero.
- Solar and renewable energy costs are often lower than conventional electricity costs due to financial incentives.
- Due to long lifecycles, the cost of on-site solar production can effectively approach zero in the out years of the asset.
- For properties either without room for solar or whose owners do not have access to investment capital for large equipment installations, there are alternatives that make the use of solar energy a viable option for all property types.

Barriers:

- Some properties may not have the physical capacity to host on-site solar production.
- Community solar capacity in Maryland is still limited, just a finite number of homeowner slots are available in these community systems.
- Financial incentives are typically government-based and rely on ongoing legislation that could be discontinued.
- For municipal on-site solar installations, the city must not own the equipment to maximize financial incentives and would therefore be required to enter into a procurement contract with a private entity in order to gain the use of required equipment.

Climate Change Implications: Investing in more renewable energy is critical for a transition away from creating greenhouse gas emissions from the burning of fossil fuels, a significant contributor to climate change.

Diversity and Justice: Climate change, caused by the anthropogenic creation of greenhouse gases, is fundamentally an environmental justice issue. By curbing the City's and its communities' emissions, we hope to limit its effects on public health. Among the many sectors that are significantly affected by the energy consumption of fossil fuels, the negative impact of climate change on minority and vulnerable populations is especially evident in the public health sector.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline:

Priority - Medium; Estimated Cost - Low to Revenue Positive

B. Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater

Vision Statement: We envision a City of Salisbury where all residents have access to clean water, who are informed about and engaged in the maintenance of our waterways and who live in a community focused on water resource conservation, policies and infrastructure that minimize negative impacts to our watershed.

Recommendation B-1: Increase Public Outreach and Data Accessibility

Synopsis: It is recommended to increase publicly accessible data and readily available resources for citizens to understand their own water usage and what steps they can take to help improve water quality and to efficiently consume water. With a personal computer or cellphone, citizens could log on to view, for example, hourly household water usage or a leak alert, taking personal action to help reduce the City's overall water usage. A map of citywide water conservation efforts onto which citizens could log their own domestic conservation practices (such as the use of rain barrels, planting of native plants, the reduction or elimination of fertilizer use on lawns, etc.) would allow them to see where others are doing the same and how areas of the city are trending. Conveying the consumer confidence report on the City's water quality through easily comprehensible infographics can help increase public knowledge on drinking water quality while highlighting the city's award-winning water. Doing the same with the State of the Wicomico River report could help increase public awareness of issues concerning river water quality and achievements while highlighting areas in which citizens could help with their own individual stewardship actions.

Benefits:

- Could reduce residents and the City's water consumption, save residents and taxpayer money on water bills
- Can identify potential leaks/issues in timely manner
- Highlight City of Salisbury's excellent drinking water quality
- Increase public knowledge on water quality issues; could help with public engagement on water conservation efforts

Barriers:

- Requires significant initial app development, integrating into systems already put in place.
- Cost for app development/use and integration in city efforts

Actions Required: This project would require application and website development both for monitoring direct water usage and for use of a map of water conservation projects. There would also be graphic design work required to convert the consumer confidence report on drinking water quality into easily comprehensible infographics to be publicly shared on the City's official website and its various social media platforms.

Climate Change Implications: According to the EPA, the shifting trends of rain and water accessibility will be a major implication of climate change. Creating awareness of the way we use water, how we distribute it, and the challenges it may face as a resource could be a driver of

public support for future projects to preserve, protect and manage the city's water supply in a sustainable manner. This could have positive implications for the public's support of preventative measures that guarantee future water accessibility.

Diversity and Justice: Environmental injustice disproportionately affects minority and poor communities when compared to their white and affluent counterparts. Cases like that of lead contamination in Flint, MI demonstrate that cost reduction measures can have devastating and long lasting effects on those underserved communities. The City of Salisbury has taken preventative measures to minimize such a scenario from happening; and creating awareness of these measures, such as water line replacement and water treatment, can boost public confidence and support for future improvement projects.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: Coordinating the creation of a computer application with the availability of real-time information on a platform such as a Neptune meter reading system may not happen in the next year. However, infographic sets and a map of citywide conservation efforts could be implemented in a shorter time frame.

Priority – Medium; Estimated Cost – Medium

Recommendation B-2: Lead Poisoning Prevention

Synopsis: In compliance with Maryland's Reduction of Lead Risk in Housing Law, it is recommended that the City of Salisbury implement a registration initiative to reduce risks of lead exposure to renters within the city limits. The law requires owners of rental properties built before 1978 to register their units with the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), to distribute specific information pertaining to existing lead paint and its abatement, and to meet specific lead paint risk reduction standards at certain triggering events. Similar to a program established by the City of Baltimore, it is recommended that Salisbury require registration for all rental properties and that the registration includes further information on risks from lead exposures from municipal water lines.

Benefits:

- Reduced public health impacts from lead exposures
- Increased awareness of health risks from lead paint and lead-containing fixtures

Barriers:

- Staffing and records maintenance
- Increased on-boarding for inspections

Actions Required:

- Creation of a city plan and timeline for registration of all rental properties with MDE
- Creation of a city plan and timeline for inspections of all rental properties (and associated entry into a City tracking database)
- Baltimore includes single-family homes as well as multi-family complexes (the registration occurs through MDE; and Baltimore requires inspection(s) and registration prior to initiation of a new rental agreement). The burden of inspection cost is borne by

the property owner, the burden of registry is borne by MDE and the burden of inspection expiration is borne by the City.

Climate Change Implications: As the likelihood of major storm events and flooding increases with global climate change, the potential for mobilization of lead-contaminated soils (created as a result of degradation of lead paint on building exteriors) and exposure to previously encapsulated lead-contaminated soils is also increased. Notification to renters of current levels of lead risk as well as routine monitoring and inspections of rental properties will mitigate detrimental public health effects.

Diversity and Justice: Environmental injustice disproportionately affects minority and poor communities when compared to their white and affluent counterparts. Cases like that of lead contamination in Flint, MI demonstrate that cost reduction measures can have devastating and long lasting effects on those underserved communities. The City of Salisbury has taken preventative measures to minimize such a scenario from happening; and creating awareness of these measures, such as water line replacement and water treatment, can boost public confidence and support for future improvement projects.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline:

Priority Level – Medium; Estimated Cost - Low

Sources:

<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/LAND/LeadPoisoningPrevention/Pages/rentalowners.aspx>

https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/LAND/Documents/LeadPamphlets/Non-owner_occupied_brochure_07102018FINAL.PDF

Recommendation B-3: Stormwater Inlet Trash Inserts

Synopsis: Storm water inlet trash-capture technologies use a device to trap trash at the inlet, helping to reduce the amount of trash entering the municipal storm water system and eventually our surrounding waterways. Of the 4,747 total storm water inlets in the City of Salisbury, only sixty-two have been fitted with trash-capture technology. From January to September of 2020, a total of 160 tons of trash was removed from all storm water inlets. In an effort to increase the amount of trash captured in storm water inlets, it is recommended that the City of Salisbury increase the number of storm water inlets with trash capture technologies by ten inlets each year. The number of inlets with trash-capture technologies may include the installation of new storm water inlets or existing storm water inlets retrofitted with this technology.

Benefits:

- A reduced amount of trash and debris entering our waterways
- Additional support to the City of Salisbury’s Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit to limit the amount of trash released from storm water system outfalls

Barriers:

- Increased initial capital costs compared to standard, or more conventional, storm water inlets
- Additional budget and capacity requirements for ongoing operation and maintenance

Actions Required: It is recommended that the City develop a plan to identify high priority existing storm water inlets likely to capture above average amounts of trash. High priority storm water inlets may be located along heavily used pedestrian areas, near convenience stores and gas stations, and within a specified distance of a waterway. Once high priority existing stormwater inlets have been identified, a plan should be developed to modify or replace the inlets to include a trash capture technology. It is recommended that the City encourage the installation of trash capture technology in all new storm water development and in areas of reconstruction.

Climate Change Implications: The reduction of inorganic trash, particularly plastics, in and around our waterways may encourage residents to make further changes toward reducing their carbon footprint.

Diversity and Justice: The amount of trash entering and accumulating along our waterways is likely to occur more in areas with poor or minority populations. Its interception at street level will reduce the amount of trash in these areas, contributing to a cleaner and healthier community.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline:

Priority Level – Immediate; Estimated Cost - Low

Sources:

<https://www.epa.gov/trash-free-waters>

[City of Salisbury Utility Viewer](#)

Recommendation B-4: Gray Water Infrastructure Development

Synopsis: Gray water, gently used and dirtied water from bathroom sinks, showers, tubs and washing machines, can be used in irrigation of household plants and yards or reused for toilet flushing. Currently, most urban wastewater systems treat gray water and black water as one. Implementing a gray water infrastructure in future construction could help residents reduce potable water use. According to the Alliance for Water Efficiency, gray water infrastructure could save homeowners per capita up to 2300 gallons of clean water per year.

Benefits:

- Reduction of household water use and cost.
- Lower input of wastewater into the water treatment plant.
- Potential for ancillary projects such as constructed wetlands.

Barriers:

- Resistance from developers.
- Gray water is unsafe to keep stored for prolonged periods of time.
- High cost of retrofitting existing installations.

Actions Required:

- Creation of a cost-benefit analysis of implementing gray water infrastructure.
- Work with construction companies in an implementation strategy for new developments.
- If implementation is viable, creation of provisions in the city code.

Climate Change Implications: Gray water as a source for non-consumptive water use allows potable water to be used strictly for our community’s primary needs – drinking, cooking and bathing. Water for safe personal use is a resource whose responsible management will significantly contribute to resiliency and sustainability in our area.

Diversity and Justice: Infrastructure that allows for the use of gray water for community gardens and home vegetable gardens may benefit people in lower-income brackets. The corresponding reduction in potable water use, and therefore its lower usage cost, would also benefit those in the lower income brackets.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline:

Priority – Long-Term; Estimated Cost - High

Sources:

www.allianceforwaterefficiency.org/files/assets/AWE-Greywater-Report-CDN_March-2017.pdf

C. Management of Public Open Space

Vision Statement: The Parks and Open Spaces Subcommittee envisions a City of Salisbury, in the year 2100, that is filled with vibrancy, prosperity, equity, and healthy and abundant life of all kinds.

The Subcommittee envisions a diverse and thriving Salisbury with public open space access within a ten minute walk of every resident, varied forms of active and passive recreation, ample access to clean waterways, a vast tree canopy, limited impervious surfaces, very little to no storm water runoff, sustainable infrastructure and practices, and multi-modal transportation safely interweaving between neighborhoods.

Under the oversight and guidance of a collaborative mix of engaged residents, community leaders, business owners, and City administration, the City of Salisbury will host healthy landscapes healthy habitats for families, birds, pollinators, and native flora and fauna while prioritizing climate resilience, connectivity, aesthetic beauty and sustainability.

C-1 Parks Staffing and Organization

Recommendation C-1A: Properly Staffed Parks Division

Synopsis: The existing staffing of the Department of Field Operations' Parks Division is insufficient for the number of parks, playgrounds, open spaces, and related facilities that the City must maintain. Over the past four years staffing has grown from six, as it has been for at least the past ten years, to now eight. Further growth is needed. Based on the National Recreation and Parks Association's 2020 Agency Performance Review benchmark report[1], the City should have a total of 12 parks maintenance staff[2] plus one division supervisor. Due to the seasonal nature of some maintenance, seasonal staff or contractors could be utilized.

Benefits:

- With additional staff and increased availability, parks maintenance standards would be at a higher level while environmental improvements, policies and procedure revisions would be able to be implemented.
- The parks supervisor would not need to be in the field performing maintenance, allowing him instead to invest considerably more time to planning for and coordinating improvements, grant applications, meetings, etc. and implementing improvements, policies, and procedures.

Barriers:

- The primary barrier to the hiring of additional staff is the potential lack of funding. Due to COVID-19, the city will have reduced revenue for the near future.
- Obtaining qualified applicants.

Actions Required: The City should develop a plan to increase the division's staff from eight to thirteen people over the next five years. These staff positions may be seasonal or contractual.

Climate Change Implications: Increased staff will be able to assist the City with implementing policies that will allow it to better adapt to climate change.

Diversity and Justice: Increasing the City’s staff will allow for greater equity in maintenance among the city’s parks.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: Without an increase in staff the majority of the recommendations for Public Open Space cannot be implemented. As such, this recommendation has a high priority and should be implemented within the next five years. The cost would be low, but would grow as staff and needed equipment are added.

Priority – Medium; Estimated Cost – High

[1] <https://www.nrpa.org/siteassets/nrpa-agency-performance-review.pdf>

[2] 8.9 median FTE per 10,000 residents. $8.9 \times 3 = 26.7$. 45% maintenance = 12, 31% programming = 8, 18% admin = 5, 3% capital development = 1, 3% other = 1.

Recommendation C-1B: Establish a Department of Parks and Recreation

Synopsis: The current parks, recreation and open space programs are managed through various departments. Planning is handled by the Department of Infrastructure and Design, maintenance by the Field Operations Department, and community centers through the Housing and Community Development Department. Implementation of park improvements is currently handled by the Department of Infrastructure and Design and the Field Operations Department, with some improvements handled by one or the other, or both. Reorganizing into a Department of Parks and Recreation, as found in many other cities, would assist in centralizing operations, including the development, coordination, and administration of all parks, open space, and recreation within the City, including the Zoo and community centers.

Benefits:

- A centralized and efficient coordination of core roles as the new operations model versus control among different departments currently employed.
- Move the park reservation process from the Mayor’s office to this department to allow for a more direct path between a reservation request and reserved space.
- Centralized point for donations.
- Allows a department structure for future park rangers/enforcement similar to Wicomico County.

Barriers:

- Additional cost of hiring staff, including a Parks and Recreation department head.
- Coordinating currently shared equipment between Field Operations divisions and Parks and Recreation.
- Communication among departments when utilizing other staff for projects (i.e. involving the city planner when an outside planner or architect is hired for a park master plan, the sanitation supervisor when discussing park trash pickup, etc.).

Actions Required: To clarify the scope of the new Department of Parks and Recreation, the City should develop a plan to reorganize and consolidate all tasks associated with the city’s new department, conducting interviews with other cities such as Greensboro, NC, whose Parks and Recreation Department functions alongside a Field Operations Department and an Engineering and Inspections Department. A department head should be hired with a background in Parks, Recreation and Sports Management, or a background in a similar field of study.

Climate Change Implications: Increased staff will be able to assist the City in coordinating implementation of its environmental policies, allowing the City to better prepare for and adapt to climate change.

Diversity and Justice: Increasing the City's staff will result in a more equitable maintenance plan among the city parks, builds upon an increased diversity among employees, will allow for more engagement by community centers and the unique communities they serve, and will offer enhanced recreational opportunities overall.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: The City should commission the new Department of Parks and Recreation once a fully staffed parks division and a citywide Parks Master Plan have been completed to gain a full-understanding of the department.

Priority - Medium; Estimated Cost - Medium

C-2 - Establish Policies and Procedures

Recommendation C-2A: Pesticide/Herbicide Use & Invasive Species Removal

Synopsis: Pesticide & Herbicide Use and Invasive Species Removal

Synopsis: The City currently has a staff member that is licensed to perform and oversee herbicide applications, however due to budget and understaffing, this staff member cannot be present at all times during the application process by staff. The City must develop a clear statement of goals, strategies and best practices for pesticide and herbicide use on city properties, and for removal and eradication of invasive species. Along with pesticide and herbicide applications, qualified personnel should also be present during invasive species removal to ensure all the plant material has been properly removed and disposed. The City must also ensure that a qualified staff member is present during these applications to reduce excessive use of pesticides and herbicides. Alternative pesticide and herbicide applications that are more environmentally friendly should be used whenever possible due to the proximity of City property to the Wicomico River; the city's pollinator, bird, and tree certifications; and areas of regular usage by young and old residents alike. Soil samples in open spaces and athletic fields can also reduce excessive amounts of fertilizer use.

Benefits:

- Improves health of downstream water bodies and open space plantings.
- Reduces excess waste of materials from over applying which saves the City money.
- Reduces the amount of applications needed to control invasive and noxious plants.
- Improves the health of the existing plant material.
- Reduces threats to non-target organisms
- Reduces threats to applicators and city residents
- Opportunity to reduce herbicide use through the installation of native landscaping, such as along park fence lines to reduce herbicide application and labor-intensive string trimming.

Barriers:

- Qualified staff are not sufficiently supplied with current education materials.
- With limited staffing, qualified staff may not always be present during applications.

- Lack of easily available and reliable information on alternative control methods and options beyond the status quo, and lack of time to investigate these.
- Some alternative methods require more labor than high-chemical alternatives, and the Parks Division is already understaffed.

Actions Required: An assessment of the areas of concern will help determine the levels of priority. Possible actions include the following: further education of staff, a maintenance plan and a statement of goals and best practices. Further education will enable certification of more staff to apply chemical pest and plant controls while also providing alternative incentives and control types and methods. A maintenance plan will then provide the City with the ability to follow an established schedule. This will allow the City to ensure that a qualified staff member is present to oversee the application of pesticides and herbicides and the removal of invasive and noxious plant materials. This will help in maintenance scheduling and long term planning. The City should also develop an educational and outreach plan to inform the public around their pesticide and herbicide use, including content on the City’s website.

Climate Change Implications: The introduction and spread of invasive plant and insect species is expected to increase due to climate change. Eliminating invasive insects and noxious plant material will reduce the need for pesticide and herbicide applications, which will in turn greatly reduce the amount of pollutants entering into the adjacent water bodies. Alternative applications that are more environmentally friendly will also improve the health of the surrounding flora.

Diversity and Justice: Education and licensure will allow additional city staff to become qualified to perform the application and supervision duties of the large scale application of pesticides and herbicides and will reduce the potential for the misuse of chemicals in a manner not consistent with best practices. This will decrease damage to local flora and fauna and will reduce the risk to health of humans through direct contact. Consistent control of chemical applications at each park will provide more even applications for adjacent communities, reducing the negative impacts from spray applications and ensuring that all community parks are maintained equitably.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: With proper planning in the beginning, this would allow the City to schedule the qualified staff to be present during the application of pesticides and herbicides. The qualified staff member should also be current on the education material for these applications, and the growing number of environmentally friendly alternatives. Actions could be initiated immediately with planning and staff scheduling, while maintenance scheduling could begin immediately. The costs for these recommendations would be within the purview the City for capital improvements.

Priority - Medium; Estimated Cost - Low

Recommendation C-2B: Tree Planting and Growth (Tree Canopy)

Synopsis: The City’s Code does not currently have requirements for tree plantings. This absence of requirements prevents large areas, including parking lots, streets, and open spaces from being shaded by a tree canopy. The City must develop a policy for tree canopy over impervious surfaces such as parking lots and streets in order to reduce heat island effect and storm water runoff. Increasing the City’s urban tree canopy can also impact the City’s

greenhouse gas emissions, as the energy recommendations discuss. This policy would be retroactive, allowing for analyses of existing large impervious areas for their potential to provide additional tree canopy.

Benefits:

- Reduces heat island effect which reduces temperatures (and air conditioning costs, and human health impacts from high heat).
- Reduces storm water runoff from the trees absorbing the water.
- Provides additional habitats for birds and animals.
- Increases property values.

Barriers:

- Poor selection of tree species and/or placement can damage property.
- Poor selection of tree species can introduce diseases and pests.
- Additional initial costs for tree installation.
- Currently the City does not have an arborist on staff.
- Power lines prohibit tree canopy and shading opportunities. There are currently no plans to more aggressively bury utility lines.

Actions Required: The City must establish requirements in the City Code that mandate minimum tree planting requirements for different land-use applications. These requirements must be for quantity and density, appropriate species, and size at installation. The City must also explore grants and provide incentives to install islands or grates for tree plantings for existing residential and commercial properties that do not currently have sufficient tree cover. Whenever possible during major road projects, the City must take advantage of the opportunity to bury power lines, with a long-term goal of burying all utility lines in the City. Through the Department of Information Services' GIS Division, City-owned rights-of-way and properties that could support more tree cover can be identified and used to create a long-term planting priority list. The City will need to develop an educational and outreach plan, which could include content on the City's website and involvement of various City Committees to encourage tree plantings and growth.

Climate Change Implications: Increasing the tree canopy had an enormous effect on mitigating the worst impacts of climate change. Trees create oxygen (and improve air pollution in urban areas), reduce carbon dioxide, absorb storm water (particularly important as climate change is correlated with an increased number of severe storm events), just to name a few benefits. One of the most important effects humans can feel by increasing tree canopy is the reduction of ambient temperature while standing outside. Maryland currently averages 10 days a year of extreme heat. This is projected to increase to 47 by 2050. Urban areas are estimated to be, on average, 2.7 degree warmer than rural areas. Trees are the most important and simplest way to combat this urban heat island effect.

Diversity and Justice: Increasing shade in open spaces, streets, and parking lots provides those who are typically unable to be in direct sunlight for extended periods of time the ability to be outside. Reduction in heat island effect reduces the need for the use of air conditioning needs in lower income neighborhoods, and reduces the impact of high heat on populations with health vulnerability. Research in US cities consistently shows that increased tree cover is associated

with wealthier neighborhoods, and that poorer neighborhoods and areas with high rental rates tend to have lower amounts of tree canopy (and thus are hotter).

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: While the City is in the process of revising the Code, additional tree planting requirements can be added to increase tree canopy. Actions to research grant opportunities to plant trees in existing parking lots in public or private property could be initiated immediately. The costs for these recommendations would be covered by the City, and would be for capital improvements.

Priority - Medium; Estimated Cost - Low

Recommendation C-2C: Native Plantings

Synopsis: Native plantings have multiple benefits to the ecosystem. They require less water, less herbicides, and have greater resilience to pests. The City must develop a native plant list to be required for future land use applications. It is understood that there many non-native plants that have flourished in this region and have had successful results. Therefore, the City should also develop a non-native plantings list that would provide acceptable alternatives to native plantings for reference. To encourage native plantings, the City should develop a policy to require more plantings in land use applications if non-native plants are specified.

Benefits:

- Native plantings require less maintenance.
- Benefits insects, bees and other pollinators, supporting the City's Birds and Pollinator initiatives.
- Reduces ability for invasive plantings to overtake areas.

Barriers:

- Plant availability, cost may increase to find particular species.
- Planting too many of the same plants may create a pest problem.
- As climate changes, some plants that have traditionally been native to this region may become inappropriate, so careful selection must be used in choosing plants for the planting list.

Actions Required: The City will need to create a native plant list to use in the City Code. Also included will be alternative plants to those native plants, or the ability to provide alternatives at that approval of the City. The Code should also require an increase in plant material if non-native plants are used. This would provide incentives for using native plantings. The City will need to develop an educational and outreach plan, including content on the City's website, to encourage native plantings.

Climate Change Implications: Native plantings have no known adverse impact on climate change since these plants have grown accustomed to the region's climate and biodiversity. However, due to climate change, plants that are resilient to increased drought and warmer temperatures should be prioritized.

Diversity and Justice: Native plant diversity is essential in the health of the landscape. Planting too many of one species will result in the opportunity for pests or diseases to wipe out the landscape.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: While the City is in the process of revising the Code, native plant lists could be added. The City should also establish policies on non-native plantings. Whether allowing particular species as alternatives, increasing the quantity of non-native plants if selected over native, or requiring approval of non-native species, the City has the opportunity to reduce noxious, nuisance plant species before they're planted. The costs for these recommendations would be covered by the City and would be for capital improvements.

Priority - Medium; Estimated Cost - Low

Recommendation C-2D: Water Edge Practices

Synopsis: The traditional grass lawn to the edge of the water body has always provided pleasant views. However, this could be one of the worst practices for the health of the water body. City parks, as well as other waterfront property owners, should allow thick vegetation to grow along waterways to slow runoff, soak up pollutants, and provide habitat for a wide range of species (including fish). Planting native trees, shrubs and groundcover should be encouraged along water edges. This will absorb up to 14 times more water than a traditional grass lawn. To compromise between the desire for views, safety in parks, and need for access to the waters edge for fishing and recreational purposes, planning should be in place to isolate areas along waterways to allow for access and to choose planting materials that offer the benefits without overgrowth.

Benefits:

- Thick, native plantings improve water quality.
- Proper water edge practices provide a biologically diverse habitat, particularly for fish, birds and insects.
- Discourages Canada geese from using the water feature.

Barriers:

- Property owners will remove vegetation to get a full view of the water.
- Proper plant selection to survive in wet conditions.
- Maintenance of plantings with invasive seedlings.

Actions Required: The City should create a policy to require a certain distance to the water to be set aside as a buffer or easement. A planting plan should also be required for this area on all future land use applications to ensure proper plant selection is proposed. Locations for access to the water body should be determined and provide clear access. Signage at parks, and content on the City's website, could be used for public education about the benefits of water-edge plantings.

Climate Change Implications: Proper plantings and buffers around water bodies will absorb a significant amount of runoff, which then doesn't allow it to get into the waterway. This also reduces the amount of trash and debris that make its way into the water and ocean.

Diversity and Justice: City staff can be trained to review plant selection and specifications for these buffers. Guidelines can be established by City staff.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: While the City is in the process of revising the Code, buffers and easements should be added along water edges. Plant selection will also be critical to establish the desired goals for the buffer. The costs for these recommendations would be covered by the City, and would be for capital improvements.

Priority - Medium; Estimated Cost - Medium

Recommendation C-3: Prepare a City-Wide Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan

Recommendation C-3A: Analyze Existing Parks Throughout the City

Synopsis: In order to analyze the existing parks and how to expand or improve in the future, the City needs to evaluate the current parks and open spaces within the corporate limits. This includes mapping the parks, neighborhoods, and proximity to areas of interest. Distance and safe routes would be evaluated to select where sidewalks and bike lanes need to be constructed or improved.

Benefits:

- This will provide the City with an up-to-date inventory of parks and equipment.
- Mapping will allow City staff to develop a more comprehensive schedule for routine maintenance.
- Provides the City with knowledge of the areas that have limited resources for recreation.

Barriers:

- Mapping of the park locations, equipment, and amenities will take considerable investment in time to complete and utilize already limited staffing resources.
- Analyzing the existing routes to the parks to determine what improvements are needed will be costly and timely.

Actions Required: Utilizing resources from the City, staff would need to map each park at its current state, including but not limited to, condition and type of equipment, access ways to the park, safety measures in place at the park (lighting, cameras, etc.) Neighborhoods would need to be surveyed for feedback on current and future use and needs.

Climate Change Implications: Pedestrian and bicycle traffic will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles traveling to and from the parks. Energy efficient lighting will reduce energy use on City property. GIS maps of city parks and open spaces could be combined with data layers from the ESRGC showing projected sea level rise and flooding risk along city waterways.

Diversity and Justice: Parks in less privileged neighborhoods would be evaluated and provided equal opportunities for recreation. Safe access ways will be delineated to provide all interested parties to experience the City's parks.

Priority Level and Recommended Time-Line: The City will need to dedicate staff members to map and evaluate the existing parks and routes to get to access the parks. In order to make any improvements to the existing parks, this task must be completed, therefore making this recommendation a higher priority and should be performed as soon as the City's budget allows. The costs for these recommendations would be covered by the City, and would be for capital improvements.

Priority - Immediate; Estimated Cost - Medium

Recommendation C-3B: Prioritize Park Expansion and Pocket Parks

Synopsis: Utilizing an up-to-date map of the parks throughout the City, staff can begin prioritizing where to focus adding new parks, expansion existing of parks, or park upgrades based on need. This allows an opportunity to include the local residents during the planning process to determine the needs of that particular neighborhood. Future parks should be mapped for locations and amenities per community recommendations, which will allow prioritization of improvements based on need. In some cases, neighborhoods with high rental rates and high rates of resident turnover will need to be shown special care in soliciting input.

Benefits:

- Provides the City with a plan to prioritize the areas of need.
- Improves the health of the residents and promotes outdoor activities.
- Allows community members to be a part of the City's vision.
- Improves residential property values.

Barriers:

- Costs associated with upgrading, adding or enhancing park equipment.
- Land to be acquired for parks would be expensive.
- Upgrading safe routes to new or upgraded parks would take a lot of time and could be expensive.

Actions Required: The City staff will need to prioritize the needs of the existing parks and allow community involvement to ensure the success of the park improvements. Whether being community surveys or meetings, community residents will be able to participate in the planning of the parks. The City will need to review areas requiring additional real property for potential property donors and develop and advertise to the public incentives for land donation. The City will need to target opportunities for new public parks during annexations.

Climate Change Implications: By adding more parks throughout the City, the residents will reduce the need for vehicular use, which reduces the amount of greenhouse gas emissions. Utilizing energy efficient power at the parks will also reduce the amount of energy consumed by the City. More green spaces is associated with reducing stormwater and the urban heat island effect.

Diversity and Justice: More parks throughout the City allows equal opportunities for all the residents to enjoy outdoor activities.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: The need to improve the access ways, park equipment, and locations of parks is important to the health and wellbeing of the City residents,

therefore making this recommendation a higher priority and should be performed as soon as the City's budget allows. The costs for these recommendations would partially be covered by the City and would also need donations and large purchases for additional lands.

Priority - Immediate; Estimated Cost - High

Recommendation C-3C: Improve Utilization of Parks, also Considering Use of Waterways

Synopsis: Diversification of amenities for all the parks will be key to the successful utilization of the new and existing parks. The Wicomico River offers the City an opportunity to provide recreation activities that are not available to surrounding communities. Providing safe access to the waterways from neighborhoods will promote healthy lifestyles while reducing emissions from vehicles and providing another "branding" opportunity for Salisbury's identity - particularly exciting would be an urban wilderness water trail from the Wicomico tourism center on Hwy 13 at Leonard's Mill pond to the Rose Street boat ramp, or from the Pohanka stage to Pemberton Park.

Benefits:

- Providing diverse, multi-use parks for residents to enjoy will promote active lifestyles.
- Active recreation on waterways is a great opportunity to promote
- The addition of waterway activities will bring more foot traffic downtown, which will improve the local economy
- Makes the city more appealing to young professionals interested in outdoor recreation.

Barriers:

- The costs to install the ramps or any other equipment necessary to access the waterways.
- Adding additional security measures to ensure the areas remain a safe place to use.
- The added costs to provide the safe access routes to and from the waterways.
- The City staff will be required to maintain the additional equipment.
- Current lack of commercial recreational infrastructure (selling or renting boats, etc.).

Actions Required: The City will need to determine what type of activities would be most utilized in the waterways. Prioritizing the needs of the existing and new parks will allow for budgeting and planning for future improvements. Access routes for pedestrians and bicyclists will need to be evaluated to establish the safest routes throughout the City.

Climate Change Implications: By adding more parks throughout the City, the residents will reduce the need for vehicular use, which reduces the amount of greenhouse gas emissions. Utilizing energy efficient power at the parks will also reduce the amount of energy consumed by the City.

Diversity and Justice: Safer access to parks throughout the City allows equal opportunities for all the residents to enjoy outdoor activities.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: The need to improve the access ways and utilization of the parks is important to the health and wellbeing of the City residents. Adding new parks and utilizing the waterways would provide additional benefits to the economy, therefore making this recommendation a beneficial improvement and should be performed as

soon as the City's budget allows. The costs for these recommendations would be covered by the City and would be for capital improvements. Water trails are a prime opportunity for a city-private business partnership with a recreational provider.

Priority - Immediate; Estimated Cost - Medium to low.

Recommendation C-4: Increase Collaboration with Governmental, For-profit, and Nonprofit Organizations

Recommendation C-4A: Increased Collaboration with Local Governments and State Government

Synopsis: Currently, the City of Salisbury's Parks Division of the Field Operations Department maintains much of the City's open space but doesn't appear to have the capacity to build new partnerships or initiatives with outside organizations or other government entities. Increased collaboration between City departments, with Wicomico County's Department of Recreation and Parks, with funding programs and staff at the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), or with the Wicomico County Board of Education, could yield a better result with open space usage and shared costs.

Benefits:

- Multiple City committees, including the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, the Sustainability Advisory Committee ("Green Team"), and the Parks and Recreation Committee all relate to public open space, and could all benefit from stronger and more frequent communication among themselves and with various City departments – bringing about cost savings on duplication of efforts or benefits from shared goals.
- Schools, especially environmental science classes and environmental clubs, could engage in real-world projects – bringing about a greater connection to the City while gaining a source of volunteers for needed or desired projects.
- Wicomico County Board of Education owns a significant amount of the open space in or adjacent to the city. The more that this property can be managed in concert with city open space management, the better this will be for all city parks and open space goals (everything from tree canopy, to pocket parks, to native plants, to herbicide/pesticide usage, etc.)
- Further City collaboration with Maryland DNR resiliency efforts could prove beneficial for DNR goals in the facing of a changing climate.

Barriers:

- Not having a lead individual who has the bandwidth and authority to coordinate open space and parks projects.
- Potentially not having matching money (from the City) for open space, resiliency, or planning projects.
- Lack of institutional culture of collaboration with regards to both the city and partner organizations.

Actions Required: This action may require a commitment from the City of Salisbury leadership towards having a public face and active team dedicated towards prioritizing projects, writing grants, or seeking out partnerships – beyond keeping up with current obligations. The City may

want to consider hiring an individual to lead this as well as committing an annual appropriation towards matching funds. A new Parks and Recreation Department director could be this person (see recommendation 1b above).

Climate Change Implications: The City is going to have to continue to partner with Wicomico County to deal with flooding and issues stemming from climate change. Over the next couple decades, there will be a greater surge in climate refugees and Salisbury will need to plan for displacement.

Diversity and Justice: Salisbury can continue to partner with Wicomico County, the Wicomico County Public School System, and others to continue to make sure that its open space projects and spaces are planned with the whole community in mind. Green space has mental health benefits, traffic calming, benefits, property value implications, and can serve as important space for healing, convening, and recreation. By engaging with local schools, underserved youth can have the opportunity to learn about ways to engage with the environment in their community.

Priority Level and Recommended Time-Line: This is likely a medium priority, but investment into collaboration often leads to free or discounted services as well as rapid advancement of shared goals. The City of Salisbury could immediately determine to make collaboration with local and state government, as well as nonprofit and for-profit partners, a budget priority.

Priority – Long-Term; Estimated Cost - Medium

Recommendation C-4B: Increased Collaboration with Nonprofit and For-profit Organizations

Synopsis: Much like with collaboration with local and state government entities, currently, the City of Salisbury's does not appear to have the capacity to focus on building new partnerships or initiatives with local or regional nonprofit and for-profit partners. The City should consider a dedicated effort towards partnerships with local nonprofits (including Lower Shore Land Trust, the Wicomico Environmental Trust, or the Chesapeake Bay Foundation), local businesses (including Salisbury Certified Green Businesses, residential and commercial property owners, or restaurants) or others.

The City is currently partnering with the Chesapeake Bay Trust to effectively manage and open funding for the City's Storm Water Utility Fee projects. The City could also consider converting the existing Parks and Recreation Committee to a 501c3 nonprofit organization in a similar fashion to the Zoo Commission and Friends of Poplar Hill Mansion, or establish a separate organization, with the goal for the organization to seek grants and donations, manage an Adopt-A-Park, Adopt-A-Waterway, and Adopt-a-Stormwater Facility Program, or for outdoor recreation businesses/providers.

Benefits:

- The City of Salisbury could benefit from local nonprofits' ability to secure financing for large and small projects, as well as benefit from their already established pool of volunteers and ability to manage projects.
- City partnerships with nonprofits like the Chesapeake Bay Trust are helpful in supporting the City to meet water quality and resilience goals.

- For-profit businesses could also support and benefit from open-space projects, tree canopy enhancement, or management of City property adjoining their businesses. Additionally, more partnerships – similar to “Adopt a Highway” – could relieve City staff from some of the burden of managing the vast land assets.
- If the City were to convert the existing Parks and Recreation Committee to a nonprofit organization, it could work in tandem with the City to accept grants towards mutually beneficial projects and priorities.

Barriers:

- The City does not currently appear to have an individual to lead collaboration efforts or have the staffing bandwidth to properly coordinate with potential nonprofit or for-profit partners.

Actions Required: As with partnering with local governments, partnering with nonprofits and for-profit businesses requires a commitment from the City of Salisbury to build and manage these partnerships. The City may want to consider hiring an individual or empowering a current individual to lead these partnerships as well as committing an annual appropriation towards matching funds. As with 5A, a new director of a Department of Parks and Recreation could be this person.

The City may want to consult with the Parks and Recreation Committee as to how to evolve these potential actions and if changing the structure of the relationship (such as creating a Salisbury City Parks Nonprofit arm) would be immediately beneficial.

Climate Change Implications: Partnering with local nonprofits on climate mitigation projects can be of benefit to all involved and can include, planning for sea -level rise or nuisance flooding, further creation of a better Salisbury tree-canopy (for heat-island effect mitigation), or partnering with local businesses on green infrastructure or other efforts to lower greenhouse gases.

Diversity and Justice: Environmental and conservation-minded nonprofits are looking for ways to bring their services and resources outside the traditionally homogeneous group of supporters and partners. Group could partner on beautification projects, community planning, strategic planning, outreach, and more. The goal should be a diverse and thriving Salisbury with public open space access within a 10-minute walk of every resident, varied forms of active and passive recreation, ample access to clean waterways, a vast tree canopy, limited impervious surfaces, near-zero stormwater runoff, sustainable infrastructure and practices, and multi-modal transportation safely interweaving between neighborhoods.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: This should be a higher level priority as there are nonprofits, “green businesses”, and numerous groups that are eager to partner with the City, but have had trouble navigating the bureaucracy.

Priority – Long-Term; Estimated Cost – Low

D. Transportation, Sustainable Operation, and Design

Vision Statement: Active towns and cities had developed for millennia in ways that directly responded to and enhanced pedestrian movement and interaction. In just over a generation up to now, however, the automobile and the infrastructure required to support it has redirected the arc of urban growth in a way that broadening social and commercial connections among citizens has, if not discouraged, been degraded.

The 2020 Salisbury Environmental Policy Task Force was reformed to review the environmental policy recommendations put forth by its 2008 predecessor and was guided by a shared vision of what Salisbury, MD should look like in the year 2100. The Transportation, Sustainable Operation and Design Subcommittee envisions a City of Salisbury, in the year 2100, whose communities share a sense of connection and connectivity and whose citizens may travel efficiently and unfettered as pedestrians among the primary and commercial districts established by the city land use code.

The subcommittee envisions a sustainable planning and practice model that encourages a dynamic and resilient pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly network and multi-modal transportation infrastructure that engenders a dense city center and accessible residential, commercial and work zones, enhances open-space access for all residents, and which espouses an urban growth model that unambiguously discourages urban sprawl into the city's rural surroundings.

Under the oversight and guidance of a collaborative mix of engaged residents, community leaders, business owners and city administration, the City of Salisbury shall be a model of responsible, efficient and intelligent urban development that not only sustains the emotional and cultural growth of its citizens but that enhances its positive impact on the landscape around it.

Recommendation D-1: Transportation

Synopsis: The current City administration has crafted its policies around the tenets that not only encourage the revitalization of a small urban center but that endeavor to connect it to the people who will seek its commercial and cultural resources. In conjunction with the forthcoming 2021 City Zoning Code revision and following the guidelines of contemporary urban planning, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure initiatives put in place since 2015, the City anticipates a realignment of growth with historically urban density and inward focus. While this alone will not immediately fix the problems of urban sprawl and its inherent barriers to multimodal transportation, the coordination of various programs, practices and initiatives with new and proven methods of urban transportation infrastructure pedagogy will seek to efficiently connect the city's residents with where they work and play. Nothing less than maintaining a shared, coordinated effort among city and county officials and city residents will be required.

Options to be considered may include the following:

- a. Creation of a Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Commission and subcommittee to better coordinate City road and bridge improvement projects with a robust pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure agenda that includes, but is not limited to, the 2017 Bicycle Network Master Plan, the 2017 Northwest Bikeways Plan, the 2017 Salisbury Boulevard Master Plan, the 2018 Rail with Trails Master Plan, the 2025 Vision Zero Action Plan, the Salisbury Urban Greenway Plan, and the Eastern Shore Drive Linear Park. It is

further recommended that the commission meet *biannually* or more frequently as required to discuss and vote upon the recommendations put forth by the subcommittee, which will meet *quarterly* or more frequently as required to discuss current and future work and to propose recommendations for vote by the commission. In addition to the representative members listed below, the inaugural commission will be comprised of members of the Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee, as a transitioning body, that exists at the time of commissioning. While the subcommittee shall have a minimum of six members -- five county residents and a commission liaison -- the size of the subcommittee shall be determined by the commission, which is to be comprised of one of each of the following representatives:

- a. (1) MDOT
 - b. (1) Maryland Department of Natural Resources
 - c. (1) county council
 - d. (1) Salisbury/ Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Commission
 - e. (1) city council
 - f. (1) Salisbury Department of Infrastructure and Development
 - g. (1) Salisbury Department of Housing and Community Development
 - h. (1) Salisbury Department of Business Development
 - i. (5) county residents, (1) per county district
- b. A revision of the Bicycle Network Master Plan (BNMP) to a Transportation Infrastructure Plan that integrates the BNMP with a city roads and bridges plan. This plan, created and maintained within a GIS framework, shall be revised every five years to coordinate the primary, secondary and tertiary areas of priority with, but not limited to, traffic rates and density, population density, commercial activity, school attendance, and recommendations put forth by the Public Open Space subcommittee of this Environmental Policy Task Force. University Zone and a connecting zone to the Hospital, Hospital Zone, Downtown, Historic Newtown (Family Destinations District), Peggy Branch Zone, the 2017 Northwest Bikeways Plan and Fitzwater Street should be included as areas of top priority.
- c. An increase of bicycle parking and addition of a clause to the 2021 zoning code that any new commercial and residential development that exceeds a minimum of square footage must meet requirements for a bicycle parking facility as determined by the City upon recommendation by the Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Commission.
- d. Coordination with a third-party urban planning consultant to study the realities of a multimodal transportation network of designated lanes on surface streets. This study will not include bicycle usage such as the Rail with Trails Master Plan but will instead study the creation of a local bus network with a BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) route on Business Route 13 with a secondary trunk branch at College Avenue and Beaglin Park Drive between Salisbury University and the Centre at Salisbury, and Route 50 between Westover Hills and Worcester-Wicomico Community College.
- e. Incorporation of pervious and grass pavers as a required percentage of surface parking into city code. This not only will mitigate against stormwater runoff and urban heating but will also be an attribute to urban planning and design.

- f. An increase in pedestrian safety and efficient automobile traffic flow, the creation of a “Don’t Block the Box” initiative under the Vision Zero Action Plan, to be recommended by the Bicycle-pedestrian Advisory Committee on a three-tier priority rating and implemented first at major intersections of top priority. Automobile locations at intersections will be monitored by camera, which will record and document infractions for ticket issuance. Ticket shall include image capture of car for evidential purposes, much like a curb-mounted speed camera. With an initially high cost, the cost over time will add revenue to the city budget while building safety awareness of others in the increasingly multimodal transportation network.
- g. Creation of wildlife corridors across the Route 50 bypass, in tandem with new zoning laws and from studies and recommendations presented by appropriate advocating body and within parameters established by federal and state guidelines. To further mitigate against sprawl and to protect the natural habitats and corridors of local fauna, this should be coordinated with applicable 2020 environmental task force recommendations and city zoning code revisions, and may also be in conjunction with but not limited to local partnership with sustainable land use groups such as a local land trust. This initiative would additionally result in the lowering of traumatic interaction between wildlife and automobile traffic and would encourage the extension of the local urban bicycle trail network beyond the extents of the Route 50 bypass, enabling the further interconnection of a local network while contributing to a growing regional network.

Benefits:

- See **Zoning**

Barriers:

- Automobile single-user ambivalence or bias against increased bicycle presence on surface streets.
- Public ambivalence toward transportation usage because of connection to wealth identity.
- Requires a high level of coordination among various parties and among various city initiatives.
- Controversial during public hearing process.
- Will require designation of appropriate “high density” areas or corridors.

Actions Required: These recommendations require substantial coordination among and adherence to by numerous parties derived from the city’s government and population. As the City explores these and other recommendations, the creation of a Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Commission would largely begin to address the issue of coordinating a growing list of infrastructure projects and the needs that they are to address.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: This project could have significant long-term impacts on the City’s future development patterns, infrastructure investment and allocation of resources. The economic and health impacts generated by a more extensive bicycle and multimodal transportation network are anecdotally encouraging. The initial financial burden of a significant portion of these recommendations would be covered by grant funding, while the additional overall life cost would translate to a higher initial financial cost but a lower cost over time. A small mass transit system would mean less road and automobile maintenance and less

congestion on primary city streets, would offer more access to the city’s amenities by the poor and working citizens and encourage a healthier and more balanced lifestyle.

Priority - Medium; Estimated Cost – Low

Recommendation D-2: Smart Growth Zoning Alternatives

Synopsis: The existing City of Salisbury Zoning Code has not been updated since 1983. Because the code is currently being rewritten, the City has the opportunity to explore and incorporate the best practices and strategies to enhance community open space, facilitate linkage of parks and usable open spaces for both passive and active recreation, encourage positive infill development, and promote density incentives and cluster options where appropriate while simultaneously preserving open space and farmland.

Options to be considered may include the following:

1. A transfer of development rights (TDR) program that may include coordination with Wicomico County.
2. An open space conservation program that may include coordination with Wicomico County.
3. A cluster development option that rewards preservation of community open space with smaller lot size, reduced setbacks, and greater density incentives.
4. Density bonus programs or other incentives for infill development.
5. Investment in connectivity of regional bicycle and pedestrian routes and open spaces in conjunction with new development or redevelopment.
6. A density bonus for proffers of investment in regional multimodal, bike, or pedestrian projects to link development with open space and urban/suburban commercial cores.
7. Programs to encourage cleanup and development of, and eventual investment in, existing Brownfield Program sites through density bonus or other improvement incentives.

Benefits:

- Reduction of sprawl development.
- Linkage of Community Open Space
- Concentrated density in appropriate areas, which would further facilitate redevelopment, promote greater opportunities for alternate modes of transportation, and optimize infrastructure investment
- Protection of property values for areas that are to be annexed or dedicated to open space/conservation

Barriers:

- Institutional and community bias against TDR
- More complex procedures required and more staff time and expertise for “tracking” TDR or bonus density programs.
- Requires strong internal management.
- Will require significant staff investment with Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson (JMT), the primary consultant on the code revision.
- Controversial during public hearing process

- Will require designation of appropriate “high density” areas or corridors

Actions Required: This project requires coordination with Johnson, Miriam & Thompson personnel responsible for coordinating the revision of the City of Salisbury Zoning Code as well as City of Salisbury staff. Ideas should be vetted through discussion and focus groups and, if appropriate, included in the documents submitted for public comment and public hearing.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: This project could have significant long-term impacts on the City’s future development patterns, infrastructure investment and allocation of resources. Furthermore, timing is critical due to the City’s current zoning ordinance revision. The costs associated with this recommendation would be burdened by the City, in terms of staff time investment, and in coordination with JMT. It is also expected that local design professionals, with their own personal and professional stakes in the positive growth of the City of Salisbury, would donate their time to sessions involving public input and to the public hearing process in general.

Priority - Immediate; Estimated Cost - Low

Recommendation D-3: Bay Friendly and Sustainable Landscape Options

Synopsis: The existing City code requires that all grass, weeds, brush, or plant growth in excess of 8” in height be cut, trimmed, or otherwise removed. The code does not allow for native vegetation in meadow condition under current rules. The city should explore options for more creative and functional use of native vegetation and meadow conditions on individual lots and in developments, and codify a specific native landscaping program in the either “Title 15 - Buildings and Construction” or “Title 8 - Health and Safety” of the Salisbury Municipal Code.

Benefits:

- Enhanced stormwater filtration, infiltration, and peak flow attenuation
- Creation of pollinator habitat
- Creation of habitat corridors
- Heat island reduction
- Reduction in suburban fertilizer use

Barriers:

- Community bias against “unmanicured” lawns
- Likelihood of increased complaints
- Requires strong internal management.
- Will require some staff investment to implement and oversee – including more work from code enforcement, and potentially an environmental scientist on staff, or some time and training from the sustainability officer.
- Has the potential to cause arguments between neighbors
- Must be developed in detail so it is not “misused”

Actions Required: This project requires coordination with City of Salisbury personnel. The City should take the opportunity to cross reference in the zoning code during the code re-write, and while JMT personnel have the opportunity to offer expertise. Ideas should be vetted through discussion and focus groups. Ordinance development will require coordination between

planning staff, sustainability coordinator, and the Department of Housing and Community Development. We recommend coordination with any local master gardener programs for design and maintenance expertise.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: This item should be cross referenced in the zoning code. Overall timing is not critical, but JMT staff expertise should be leveraged while they are re-writing the City's zoning ordinance. The costs associated with this recommendation would be covered by the City, in terms of staff time investment, and coordination. It is also expected that local design professionals would donate time in the brainstorming sessions and potentially during the public hearing process.

Priority - Medium; Estimated Cost - Low

E. Education and Outreach

Vision Statement: We envision the people who live, work, play, and are educated within the City of Salisbury to be in an environmentally safe and equitable environment regardless of race or economic status. They would also know what the City is doing to continually implement these ideals but also why they are so important to the vibrancy and health of our community.

Recommendation E-1: Drinking Water Stations

Synopsis: The City will be establishing an outdoor water bottle filling station in the City Park in Spring 2021. The station can be an excellent site to educate users on the benefits of re-filling water bottles such as 1) the importance of reducing plastic use which is costly to recycle and harmful to the environment, 2) highlighting the excellent quality of the City's water (both chemically and taste), and 3) the importance of drinking water for human health. The City should monitor the use of the filling station and determine how much water was used and estimate the number of plastic bottles saved. If the City Park's water filling station is deemed effective, the City should consider placing stations at multiple locations including "downtown," the amphitheater, and other highly trafficked pedestrian areas.

Benefits:

- Reduce the use of plastic bottles.
- Provides a free and safe source of water for its users.
- Is a venue for educational materials about the City's "award winning" water.

Barriers:

- Limited education and outreach staff.
- Cost associated with education and outreach materials.

Actions Required: This project requires an internal, administrative decisions related to staff time and the purchasing some resource materials. This project may be ideal for the City to engage suitable partners to identify funding sources and shared outreach programs.

Climate Change Implications: The production of plastic water bottles are energy and oil intensive.

Diversity and Justice: Everyone should have access to free and safe drinking water when necessary. Educational materials should be produced in multiple languages including Haitian Creole and Spanish.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: This is an excellent way for the City to enhance its sustainability goals while educating the citizenry. If the initial filling station is deemed to be successful, then the City should begin planning to install additional outdoor stations throughout the City in high traffic areas. There is likely to be excellent partnership potential (with NGOs and/or the private sector) as well as suitable grant funding. The priority is low because it may take 2-3 years to determine if the Park filling station is meeting its goals.

Priority – Long-Term; Estimated Cost - High

Recommendation E-2: Efficient and Effective Plumbing Conveyance Systems

Synopsis: Water conservation and effective wastewater treatment relies upon effective and efficient plumbing within structures as well as along the entire public water conveyance systems. Leaky faucets are one of the leading causes of unusually high water bills. Additionally, disposing of chemicals, wipes, prescription drugs, and oils and grease through plumbing systems can lead to blockages within the structure and/or public conveyance system, impact the waste water treatment process, and unnecessarily discharge harmful chemicals into the Wicomico River (WWTP outfall). The City should enhance its public outreach “Don’t Flush” programs and educate the importance of fixing leaky faucets.

Benefits:

- Leaky faucets waste high quality potable water and money.
- “Don’t Flush” programs reduce household and sewer blockages while reducing the risk of dangerous chemicals getting into the wastewater treatment facility and receiving waters.
- The County already has recycling programs associated with household chemicals, oil/grease.
- Numerous public (police stations) and private (several pharmacies) have “Prescription Drug Take Back” programs where they can ensure that the materials are disposed of properly.

Barriers:

- Identifying the best mechanism(s) to effectively inform the public.
- Limited education and outreach staff.
- Cost associated with education and outreach materials.

Actions Required: This project requires an internal, administrative decisions related to staff time and the purchasing some resource materials.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: Fixing leaky faucets reduces wasting potable water and saves money for its customers. City employees have reported more household items, particularly wipes, entering the wastewater system causing blockages along the conveyance system. Therefore, during the pandemic the City should enhance its “Don’t Flush” program.

Climate Change Implications: Production of potable water is energy intensive and thus conservation programs save more than just water.

Diversity and Justice: Educational materials should be produced in multiple languages including Haitian Creole and Spanish.

Priority – Long-Term; Estimated Cost - Low

Recommendation E-3: Partnerships

Synopsis: Currently there are numerous citizen groups, non-governmental agencies, and educational institutions that are working to study, explore and monitor our local environment. This opportunity is aimed at bringing formal and non-formal educators under Education and

Outreach Recommendation group so that multiple resources and efforts could be leveraged for the long-term sustainability and implementation of projects through education.

Benefits:

Helen Keller's words are true- "*Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much*".

- Students have the opportunity to investigate environmental issues in their community and identify ways to solve these issues using student voice and choice.
- Students have the opportunity to explore the outdoors.
- Students will have the opportunity for Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience.
- By partnering with different educational groups, there is shared responsibility and ownership to implement projects.
- Recruiting students from the school system would also benefit the students as they will be able to garner Service-Learning Hours and meet the Environmental Literacy graduation requirement.
- Students will develop a sense of place and positively contribute to the community.
- Overall reduction in project cost due to volunteers.

Barriers

- Communication between and among different educational groups and environmental projects
- Coordination between local environmental events and educational groups
- Timing the implementation of the project(s)
- Transportation

Actions Required: The primary focus needs is creating a list of ideas or environmental projects that the City has with a timeline of project implementation. Next we need to find a team of formal and non-formal educators to develop a plan that would connect the projects to the curriculum. This is crucial as it is important for teachers to have a longer lead time to incorporate the projects (not only the lessons) but also complete the required paper works to implement the projects.

Climate Change Implications: None

Diversity and Justice: Salisbury has a very rich and diverse groups of people representing different cultures and economic status. It is important to work across these groups to be inclusive and fair. The school system is a reflection of the community and so giving the students a voice in these projects will help with achieving this goal. This will also give students opportunities to develop their communication and leadership skills.

Priority Level and Timeline: Establishing partnership and leveraging resources between formal and nonformal educators. Planning and implementing student driven initiatives would be high priority as this will garner youth voice and rally the community around making positive changes throughout the community. The recycling project, drinking water fountain, tree planting, and water sampling are some of those projects which are high priority and could benefit immensely from partnerships.

Priority - Medium; Estimated Cost - Medium

Recommendation E-4: Recycling and Solid Waste

Synopsis: The city of Salisbury currently sends collected solid waste and recyclable material to Newland Park Landfill, which is operated by Wicomico County. The City should take a leadership role in encouraging sustainable procurement of solid waste and recyclable material in working toward becoming a zero-waste city.

Benefits:

- Decreases the tonnage of residential waste sent to the landfill.
- Partner with Wicomico County to educate and promote ways to reduce, reuse, recycle and recover waste material.

Barriers:

- Challenges involved in increasing consumer awareness and environmentally preferable products.
- Community members must be informed, empowered and motivated to actively support good health for everyone.

Actions Required:

- Continue with the ‘Reduce, Reuse, Recycle’ campaign
- Continue and increase scope of “Green Festivals” within the city.
- Increase business participation in recycling programs
- Learn more about what each multi-family unit is doing to encourage recycling

Climate Change Implication: Identify how cutting waste not only helps the environment but also saves on associated cost (lower disposal costs, waste treatment cost, savings on material and supplies.)

Diversity and Justice: Ensure that no one geographic or socioeconomic group in the city is being unfairly impacted.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline:

Priority - Medium; Estimated Cost - Low

Recommendation E-5: Environmental Health

Synopsis: The City of Salisbury is responsible for programs and activities related to the natural environment through the review of applications for land use. Staff will evaluate the impact of development proposals on residents, green infrastructure and the river.

Benefits:

- Ensure that our city is providing an exceptional quality of life for our citizens and visitors while being good stewards to our environment.

Barriers:

- Can the community, residents, and business owners manage and sustain the efforts.

Actions Required:

- Staff will propose appropriate measures to mitigate identified impacts.

- Development and implementation of community-led projects that address specific planning issues.
- Expansion of community gardens and food pantry gardens.
- Expansion of energy education programs in schools, businesses, organizations and government.
- Encouragement schools to incorporate into their curricula topics concerning sustainability.

Climate Change Implications: May reduce traffic and gas emissions and the distance that food products travel.

Diversity and Justice: Achieve and maintain a mix of affordable and livable housing types throughout the city for all socioeconomic and cultural groups that include household types for the elderly, families, single individuals and the disabled.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline:

Priority - Medium; Estimated Cost - Low

Recommendation E-6: Nuisance or “Sunny Day” Flooding

Synopsis: Sea levels are rising at a greater rate due to climate change, with Maryland’s being considered the third most vulnerable state. Recent conservative estimates predict that sea levels will rise an additional 10-20 inches over the next thirty years. Coastal communities such as Salisbury therefore face an even greater risk in the future. Due to the rising sea levels, parts of Salisbury are now experiencing what is commonly known Sunny Day Flooding (a.k.a. Nuisance Flooding) with great frequency – particularly in the flood plain area surrounding the North Prong of the Wicomico River. In addition, flooding due to storm surges is also impacting greater areas of the City. Besides the impacted businesses and residents, the streets are under pressure from constant flooding and traffic is often diverted as a result. The City should begin an aggressive education campaign for the businesses and residents who are currently or soon to be impacted from Sunny Day Flooding. This program should be focused on protecting property, reducing mold, and evacuation planning – especially when storm surges are expected.

The City should also begin to consider its ability to establish a Resilience Authority (perhaps jointly with Wicomico County) to establish and fund infrastructure projects and redevelopment.

Benefits:

- Sunny Day Flooding is becoming more challenging to greater parts of the City.
- It is important to properly clean up after flooding to minimize the impact of mold that can have deleterious health impacts.
- These areas are also the most vulnerable during storm surges and the residents and businesses should develop evacuation plans and know the locations of shelters.
- The City can now establish a Resilience Authority that may be a tool toward funding for redevelopment of heavily impacted areas.

Barriers:

- Education programs alone will not stop the flooding only prepare the impacted businesses and residents. Sea levels are rising due to global greenhouse gas emissions.
- Establishing a new bonding authority (Resilience Authority) may not raise sufficient funds for significant redevelopment of the impacted regions.

Actions Required: This project requires an internal, administrative decisions related to staff time associated with the development and delivery of educational materials to impacted businesses and residents.

Priority Level and Recommended Timeline: Due to the continued acceleration of sea level rise in this region, the number of days impacted by Sunny Day Flooding is expected to increase even further.

Climate Change Implications: This recommendation is a means toward mitigating the impacts of climate change to vulnerable sections of the City. This vulnerable area is likely to grow over time.

Diversity and Justice: Many of the residences in the area impacted by Sunny Day Flooding serve lower income populations and also serve minority communities.

Priority - Immediate; Estimated Cost - High