# The City of Salisbury Comprehensive Plan 2026




Prepared by: City of Salisbury Department of Infrastructure and Development and The Center for Watershed Protection

# Acknowledgements

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# Chapter 1 | Introduction




## Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan

A municipal Comprehensive Plan provides a vision and a guide for the future of a town or city based on history, anticipated growth and desired outcomes. It is a document that serves to put together the comments received by residents and local leaders to highlight what makes our communities special, what we wish to preserve, and what needs to change in order to grow. The Comprehensive Plan is framed around the efficient delivery of government services, incremental development, and long-term fiscal sustainability of infrastructure to guide annexation, zoning, capital investment, and transportation decisions. The City of Salisbury is committed to the use of this document to exemplify what we wish for the future.

## Legal Basis of Comprehensive Planning

In Maryland, comprehensive planning is governed by the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland which provides the legislative authority for a municipality's planning and zoning powers. Article 3-102 sets forth the minimum requirements for a municipal comprehensive plan which shall include the following elements as applicable:

- Community Facilities
- Areas of Critical State Concern
- Goals and Objectives
- Housing
- Land Use Development Regulations
- Sensitive Areas
- Transportation
- Water Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Municipal Growth
- Fisheries

The City of Salisbury Comprehensive Plan combines some elements for efficiency and clarity.

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The State of Maryland also requires that comprehensive plans incorporate Maryland's Sustainable Growth Planning Principles.

- **Land –** Optimize productivity of working landscapes, including farms and forests, and fisheries, and prioritize development within population centers that are in proximity to existing infrastructure and facilities.
- **Transportation –** Prioritize transportation networks that create energy efficient, affordable, and reliable access to jobs, housing, and services.
- **Housing –** Enable a mix of quality housing types and affordability options to accommodate all who want to live in the state.
- **Economy –** Allow for adaptive reuse, mixed-use, and context appropriate new development that responds to changing markets and innovations.
- **Equity –** Engage all sectors of the community in plan development to ensure diverse voices are heard and the needs of underserved populations are prioritized.
- **Resilience –** Integrate resiliency measures that will minimize the impacts of rapid and unexpected natural- and human- caused threats on communities.
- **Place –** Provide for public spaces that encourage social interaction and value cultural, historical, and natural resources.
- **Ecology –** Protect and restore sensitive ecological systems and conserve natural resources, including forests, agricultural areas, and waterways.

## Vision Statement

*The City of Salisbury will remain the medical, educational, cultural, and economic center of the Eastern Shore. Our commitment to excellence, innovation and service, combined with sound fiscal management will ensure the Greater Salisbury Area's future as a safe, vibrant, cohesive, and healthy community.*

## Public Participation

The City of Salisbury, Maryland, carried out extensive community outreach to inform its 2024 Comprehensive Plan. This engagement effort combined in-person and online opportunities to ensure wide participation. Starting in late 2023, the city launched a dedicated Comprehensive Plan webpage featuring a project roadmap, background information, and avenues for public input. In November 2024, Salisbury conducted an online community survey that received 429 responses from residents, business owners, and stakeholders. The survey focused on key planning topics such as land use, housing, transportation, resiliency, and community priorities, while also collecting demographic data to understand who participated and how they heard about the survey—most often through the city website and social media.

In early 2024, the city hosted public workshops, including a January 2024 presentation that introduced the planning process, outlined major themes, and invited discussion about Salisbury's future development. These workshops were complemented by a series of focus group sessions held in spring 2025, each centered on a specific topic area—Land Use and Economic Development; Transportation and Community Facilities; Housing and Historic or Cultural Resources; and Water and Environmental Sustainability. These sessions brought together residents, local leaders, and planning professionals to discuss opportunities and challenges in each area. For those unable to attend, the city provided an email contact for written comments and published meeting materials online for public review.

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The city also created accessible digital resources, including an ArcGIS StoryMap summarizing focus group insights and downloadable PDFs of survey results, workshop slides, and outreach summaries. Throughout the process, recurring themes emerged from public input: the need for more affordable and diverse housing options, preservation of neighborhood character, improved pedestrian and transit connectivity, and stronger environmental resilience. Feedback from these outreach activities directly informed the vision, goals, and policies outlined in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan. Overall, Salisbury's outreach process emphasized transparency, inclusivity, and multiple avenues for community participation in shaping the city's long-term growth and sustainability.

The Salisbury Planning Commission hosted three work sessions in early 2026 to review the Draft Updated Comprehensive Plan. They were held January 14, March 31 and April 9. The feedback from these meetings were used to further revise the draft prior to State review.

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# Chapter 2 | Community Profile

## Historic Population Growth & Future Population Projections

The 1970 Census counted 15,252 people residing within the boundaries of the city as indicated in Table 2-1. By 1980, Salisbury grew to a population of 16,429 people, an increase of 7.7 percent or 1,177 persons. The population of Salisbury started expanding greatly in the 1980s. In 1990, the City's population was 20,592, an increase of 25 percent or 4,163 persons. Much of this growth resulted from annexations during the 1980's, as well as an increased shift in new residential construction from the more traditional single-family residential dwellings to multi-family housing units. During the period from 1990 to 2000, the city population grew by 15 percent to 23,743. From 2000 to 2010, Salisbury experienced a 28 percent increase in population, followed by a 9 percent increase from 2010 to 2020.

Table 2-1: Wicomico County and Municipalities Population Statistics

| | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Salisbury | 15,252 | 16,429 | 20,592 | 23,743 | 30,343 | 33,050 |
| Delmar | 1,191 | 1,232 | 1,937 | 2,055 | 3,003 | 3,798 |
| Fruitland | 2,315 | 2,694 | 3,511 | 3,774 | 4,866 | 5,534 |
| Hebron | 705 | 714 | 655 | 844 | 1,084 | 1,113 |
| Mardela Springs | 356 | 320 | 360 | 364 | 347 | 357 |
| Pittsville | 477 | 519 | 602 | 1,182 | 1,417 | 1,363 |
| Sharptown | 660 | 654 | 609 | 649 | 651 | 691 |
| Willards | 494 | 540 | 708 | 940 | 958 | 963 |
| Wicomico | 54,236 | 64,540 | 74,339 | 84,644 | 98,733 | 103,588 |

*Source: US Census Bureau*

In addition to the increase in population, this plan emphasizes the expanded role of the city as it relates to accounting for a larger share of the overall county population. This increase of the city's overall proportion of the County population is consistent with Smart Growth principles. From 1970 to 2000, the city population accounted for approximately 28 percent of Wicomico County's total population.

Salisbury is anticipating a greater rate of growth than has been seen historically and, as a result, population projections based on historic growth trends are unlikely to accurately reflect the expected population increase by 2030. The City's population projections for 2030 have been developed based on the average household size and anticipated new housing construction as a result of the Here is Home program that began in 2021 and ends in 2027. For the 2040 population projection, the anticipated rate of growth from 2020 to 2030 has been extrapolated, but actual population increase will largely depend on growth policies and the ability of the city provide the infrastructure to support the development. For example, if all of the development currently in the pipeline from the Here is Home program were to be developed by 2040 and the average household size applied to those dwellings, the population of the city would be 50,254. (See Table 2-2.)

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| Table 2-2: Wicomico County & Salisbury Population and Projections | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Year | Salisbury | % of County | County |
| 1970 | 15,252 | 28% | 54,236 |
| 1980 | 16,429 | 25% | 64,540 |
| 1990 | 20,592 | 28% | 74,339 |
| 2000 | 23,743 | 28% | 84,644 |
| 2010 | 30,343 | 31% | 98,733 |
| 2020 | 33,050 | 32% | 104,200 |
| 2030 | 41,652 | 36% | 115,700 |
| 2040 | 50,254 | 40% | 124,650 |

*Source: US Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning Historical and Projected Total Population for Maryland's Jurisdictions (Dec.2020), & City of Salisbury Dept. of Infrastructure & Development.US)*

# General Demographics

## *Race & Ethnicity*

**Table 2-3** consists of data collected and compiled by the U.S Census 2000, 2010 and 2020, which presents a glimpse of the demographic conditions in the City of Salisbury.

| Table 2-3: City of Salisbury Race and Ethnicity | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Population:** | **2000*** | **Percentage** | **2010** | **Percentage** | **2020** | **Percentage** |
| **Total Population** | 24,159 | | 30,343 | | 33,050 | |
| **Race** | | | | | | |
| American Indian & Alaska | N/A | N/A | 81 | <1% | 177 | 1% |
| Asian | 997 | 4% | 964 | 3% | 1,232 | 4% |
| Black or African American | 7,939 | 33% | 10,441 | 34% | 13,897 | 42% |
| Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander | N/A | N/A | 21 | 0% | 18 | 0% |
| White | 14,501 | 60% | 16,911 | 56% | 13,624 | 41% |
| Other | 722 | 3% | 943 | 3% | 1,656 | 5% |
| Two or more races | 427 | 2% | 982 | 3% | 2,446 | 7% |
| **Hispanic Origin** | | | | | | |
| Hispanic | 664 | 3% | 2,128 | 7% | 3,029 | 9% |
| Not Hispanic | 23,495 | 97% | 28,215 | 93% | 30,021 | 91% |

*Source: US Census Bureau. *Note: Census 2000 data is based on a sample and therefore do not match other census data. The data was sourced from Summary File 4, Matrices PCT1, PCT3, PCT4, PCT8, PCT9, PCT10, PCT11, PCT12, PCT14, PCT15, PCT23, PCT26, HCT2, and HCT7. Information from Census 2000 data for "Two or more races" is not additive.*

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## Age Structure

Age composition of a community is a critical indicator in planning for future public services such as schools, libraries and public transportation services. For example, if there is an increase in the overall percentage of residents between the ages of 5 to 18, it is likely that additional school and library facilities may need to be expanded.

While Salisbury's age composition is generally comparable to that of the county, the city has a lower median age and a larger percentage of residents between ages 20 to 24. (See **Table 2-4**.)

**Table 2-4: City of Salisbury - Population by Age (2023)**

| | Salisbury | Percentage | County | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Population | 33,080 | 100.0% | 104,117 | 100.0% |
| Under 5 | 2,340 | 7.1% | 6,261 | 6.0% |
| 5 to 9 Years | 2,672 | 8.1% | 6,481 | 6.2% |
| 10 to 14 Years | 2,093 | 6.3% | 6,711 | 6.4% |
| 15 to 19 Years | 2,531 | 7.7% | 8,648 | 8.3% |
| 20 to 24 Years | 4,302 | 13.0% | 10,020 | 9.6% |
| 25 to 29 Years | 2,690 | 8.1% | 6,553 | 6.3% |
| 30 to 34 Years | 2,731 | 8.3% | 6,183 | 5.9% |
| 35 to 39 Years | 1,947 | 5.9% | 5,479 | 5.3% |
| 40 to 44 Years | 1,492 | 4.5% | 6,027 | 5.8% |
| 45 to 49 Years | 1,132 | 3.4% | 5,536 | 5.3% |
| 50 to 54 Years | 1,621 | 4.9% | 6,082 | 5.8% |
| 55 to 59 Years | 1,677 | 5.1% | 7,006 | 6.7% |
| 60 to 64 Years | 1,688 | 5.1% | 6,262 | 6.0% |
| 65 to 69 Years | 1,428 | 4.3% | 5,809 | 5.6% |
| 70 to 74 Years | 961 | 2.9% | 4,526 | 4.3% |
| 75 to 79 Years | 783 | 2.4% | 3,106 | 3.0% |
| 80 to 84 Years | 397 | 1.2% | 1,638 | 1.6% |
| 85 Years & Over | 640 | 1.9% | 1,789 | 1.7% |
| Median Age | 29.9 | (X) | 36.2 | (X) |

*Source: 2023 American Community Survey*

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## Education

The level of education achieved in a community directly relates to the types of jobs available in a particular area. Educational attainment of Salisbury residents is measured by level of education for adults age 25 or older: 87 percent have at least obtained a high school diploma and 37 percent have an Associate degree or higher. See **Table 2-5**. Salisbury and Wicomico County have comparable educational attainment figures, especially as it relates to persons with some level of college degree.

| Table 2-5: City of Salisbury - Educational Attainment (2023) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Salisbury | Salisbury | County | County |
| Population 25 years plus | 19,187 | 100.00% | 67,633 | 100.00% |
| Less than 9th grade | 688 | 3.60% | 1,918 | 2.80% |
| 9th to 12th grade, no diploma | 1,852 | 9.70% | 4,058 | 6.00% |
| High school graduate (incl. equivalency) | 6,315 | 32.90% | 24,507 | 36.20% |
| Some college credit, no degree | 3,236 | 16.90% | 13,788 | 20.40% |
| Associate degree | 1,662 | 8.70% | 5,436 | 8.00% |
| Bachelor's degree | 3,270 | 17.00% | 11,536 | 17.10% |
| Graduate or professional degree | 2,164 | 11.30% | 6,390 | 9.40% |

*Source: 2023 American Community Survey*

## *Labor Force & Employment*

Labor force is the term used to describe those available for work and living in a given community that are 16 years of age or older. According to the 2023 American Community Survey, the city has 25,857 residents that are 16 years of age or older. Of which, 17,043 residents or 65.9% percent of the 16 and older population are considered to be in the combined civilian and armed forces labor force. The majority of the labor force are employed (58.8%). Unemployment among this work force is 6.8%. City residents in the armed forces account for 0.3%. The city labor force accounts for 30.9% of the overall county labor force. The county has a slightly larger percentage of its residents 16 years of age and older in the labor force. The county experiences a slightly lower unemployment in comparison to the city. **Table 2-6** provides a more detailed breakdown of the labor force skills available in Salisbury.

| Table 2-6: City of Salisbury - Employment Statistics (2023) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Salisbury | Percent | County | Percent |
| In Labor Force | 17,043 | 65.9% | 54,702 | 64.6% |
| Employed persons | 15,191 | 58.8% | 53,022 | 62.6% |
| Unemployed persons | 1,762 | 6.8% | 1,540 | 2.0% |
| Armed forces | 90 | 0.3% | 140 | <1% |
| Not in labor force | 8,814 | 34.1% | 30,030 | 35.4% |
| TOTAL | **25,947** | **100.0%** | **84,872** | **100.0%** |

*Source: 2023 American Community Survey*

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Table 2-7 represents the various types of industries, both inside and outside of the corporate limits of Salisbury, which are employing the city's labor force. The primary sources of employment include: educational, health and social services (30.3%); manufacturing (14.1%); arts, entertainment and recreation (13.3%); and retail trade (11.9%). In comparison, the primary sources of employment in the County include: educational, health and social services (27.7%); arts, entertainment, and recreation (11.7%); and retail trade (11.3%).

**Table 2-7: City of Salisbury - Industry Employing City Residents (2023)**

| | Salisbury | Percentage | County | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agriculture, forestry, fisheries & mining | 229 | 1.5% | 894 | 1.7% |
| Construction | 593 | 3.9% | 3,675 | 7.1% |
| Manufacturing | 2,138 | 14.1% | 5,509 | 10.7% |
| Wholesale trade | 285 | 1.9% | 791 | 1.5% |
| Retail trade | 1,812 | 11.9% | 5,843 | 11.3% |
| Transportation, warehousing & utilities | 583 | 3.8% | 2,393 | 4.6% |
| Information | 252 | 1.7% | 739 | 1.4% |
| Finance, insurance and real estate | 493 | 3.2% | 2,173 | 4.2% |
| Professional, scientific, management, administrative, & waste management | 855 | 5.6% | 4,166 | 8.1% |
| Educational, health & social services | 4,597 | 30.3% | 14,263 | 27.7% |
| Arts, entertainment & recreation | 2,019 | 13.3% | 6,033 | 11.7% |
| Other services | 635 | 4.2% | 2,241 | 4.4% |
| Public administration | 700 | 4.6% | 2,768 | 5.4% |
| TOTAL | 15,191 | 100.0% | 51,488 | 99.8% |

*Source: 2023 American Community Survey*

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In addition to employment status and industry characteristics, the U.S. Census Bureau collects information about the specific occupations of the labor force. Table 2-8 reflects the service-oriented nature of the City's economy with 76.3% or 11,591 residents employed in management, service, sales and office occupations. The remaining 23.7% or 3,600 residents are employed in farming, fishing, forestry, construction, manufacturing, and producing or moving goods. The City and County have a similar overall distribution of the labor force for each specific occupation.

| Table 2-8: City of Salisbury - Occupation Characteristics (2023) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Salisbury | Percentage | County | Percentage |
| Management, professional & related | 5,345 | 35.2% | 18,241 | 35.4% |
| Service | 3,820 | 25.1% | 11,172 | 21.7% |
| Sales & office | 2,426 | 16.0% | 10,186 | 19.8% |
| Farming, fishing & forestry | 25 | 0.2% | 894 | 1.7% |
| Construction, extraction, maintenance & repair | 799 | 5.2% | 3,675 | 7.1% |
| Production, transportation & material moving | 2,776 | 18.3% | 7,320 | 14.2% |
| TOTAL | 15,191 | 100.0% | 51,448 | 99.9% |

*Source: 2023 American Community Survey*

## *Commuting To Work*

Table 2-9 represents the method of travel to work and the average travel time for the City and County labor force. According to the 2023 American Community Survey, approximately 75% percent of City residents drove alone to work using a car, truck or van as their source of transportation and 13% carpooled to their place of employment. The remaining 12% relied on public transportation (1%), walked (3.8%), had other means (2%), or worked from home (4.8%). The proportion of people working from home in Salisbury has increased significantly since 2020 as a result of the COVID pandemic. This trend has been even stronger in the county, with 7.5% of county residents working from home in 2023.

| Table 2-9: City of Salisbury - Commute to Work Characteristics (2023) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Salisbury | Percentage | County | Percentage |
| Drove alone | 11,294 | 75.2% | 40,781 | 79.9% |
| Carpooled | 1,958 | 13.0% | 4,616 | 9.0% |
| Public Transportation | 152 | 1.0% | 186 | 0.4% |
| Bicycle | 21 | 0.1% | 95 | 0.2% |
| Walked | 572 | 3.8% | 940 | 1.8% |
| Other Means | 301 | 2.0% | 623 | 1.2% |
| Worked at home | 725 | 4.8% | 3,805 | 7.5% |

***Source:*** *2023 American Community Survey*

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## *Income*

The median household income for the City of Salisbury and Wicomico County are shown in **Table 2-10**. The median household income for the residents of Salisbury is 22.5% or $16,459 less than the County. Approximately 12.6% of households in the city have an income less than $14,999. 50.5% percent of households had an income between $15,000 and $74,999, while the remaining 27% percent of households in the City had an income over $75,000. A significantly larger percentage of households in the county (48.6%) have an income over $75,000.

**Table 2-10: City of Salisbury - Median Household Income**

| Income | Salisbury | County |
|---|---|---|
| Less than $10,000 | 9.0% | 5.4% |
| $10,000 to $14,999 | 3.6% | 2.2% |
| $15,000 to $24,999 | 8.5% | 6.6% |
| $25,000 to $34,999 | 10.3% | 7.5% |
| $35,000 to $49,999 | 13.4% | 11.2% |
| $50,000 to $74,999 | 18.3% | 18.5% |
| $75,000 to $99,999 | 12.2% | 14.7% |
| $100,000 to $149,999 | 13.3% | 17.5% |
| $150,000 to $199,999 | 7.6% | 8.1% |
| $200,000 or more | 3.9% | 8.3% |
| Median Household income | $56,402 | $72,861 |

*Source: US Census Bureau*

## *Housing Tenure*

Salisbury's housing tenure is of a significantly different composition than the owner occupied versus renter-occupied status of Wicomico County. Overall, the City experiences a considerably higher renter-occupancy rate than the County as indicated in **Table 2-11**. Over the past 30 years the City's percentage of renter occupied housing units has increased from 47 percent in 1970 to 62 percent in 2000, which is an increase of 127 percent of renter occupied housing units. In comparison, the County experiences a larger share of owner-occupied housing units. From 1970 to 2000, the County averaged a relatively constant rate of 32 percent renter-occupied housing. Because of its close proximity to existing and planned services, regional hospital, and academic institutions it should be anticipated that the City would experience a slightly higher rate of renter-occupied housing units. This trend of increasingly higher rates of renter-occupied units should be monitored closely to reduce the potential for significant increases of additional renter-occupied units and the City will continue to explore new opportunities to increase homeownership opportunities.

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| Table 2-11: Salisbury and Wicomico County Ownership and Renter Occupied Housing Status | | |
|---|---|---|
| Year | Salisbury Owner - Occupied | Salisbury Renter - Occupied |
| 1970 | 2,789 (53%) | 2,484 (47%) |
| 1980 | 3,179 (49%) | 3,288 (51%) |
| 1990 | 3,273 (40%) | 4,896 (60%) |
| 2000 | 3,427 (38%) | 5,634 (62%) |
| 2010 | 3,981 (30%) | 8,002 (70%) |
| 2020 | 4,002 (29%) | 9,576 (71%) |

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

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# Chapter 3 | Land Use & Municipal Growth

Land Use decisions play an essential role in maintaining a livable and attractive city while guiding future growth and development. This section serves to guide land use decisions as required by state law, including the general distribution and location of land used for commercial, industry, education, housing, public facilities, open space, and more. The land use section also outlines general population and density goals of the various land uses. It is the central element of the Comprehensive Plan and forms the basis for all other plan elements.

**Comprehensive Plan and Relationship to Land Use Regulations:**
Zoning is the primary mechanism through which the city can determine its land usage. The city is divided into districts which each have a set of permitted and prohibited uses. These uses determine what is allowed to be developed on the land in the district. Zoning allows the city to promote compatibility of uses in neighboring areas, ensure adequate infrastructure, and improve public health and safety.

The State of Maryland has several consistency requirements established between the Comprehensive Plan and land use regulations such as the Zoning Code, and the Subdivision Code.

- Regulations such as the zoning ordinance and maps that implement the Comprehensive Plan must be consistent with the policies and recommendations of the Plan and the City's visions.
- Other City and County plans must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and its implementation regulations.
- State and local funding decisions, such as capital improvements, must be consistent with the Plan, i.e. local government construction projects involving state funds must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

## Goals

- Provide for the appropriate use of limited land resources within a framework of orderly, controlled, and sustainable growth and development, according to the specific needs of Salisbury.
- Encourage urban development and redevelopment in the city to promote, retain, and reinforce the role of the city as a center of regional activity.
- Maximize existing investment in public and private facilities serving the city by encouraging dense infill and redevelopment.

## Objectives

- Ensure proper and efficient land use, and protect from incompatible uses.
- Promote sustainability and conservation of the city's natural resources.
- Reevaluate, simplify, and improve zoning code to promote development.
- Ensure new growth is compatible with existing land use and city priorities.
- Promote redevelopment of existing resources.
- Encourage dense development utilizing mixed uses.

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# Implementation

- Protect residential neighborhoods from incompatible land uses.
- Encourage clustering of commercial activities at optimal locations.
- Separate industrial areas from residential areas and other incompatible uses by buffers, landscaped parking areas, open space and/ or transitional commercial uses to minimize adverse impact on adjoining uses including: impacts from noise; emissions; or heavy traffic.
- Discourage intensive commercial development and big-box retail stores in areas designated on the Land Use Map as Mixed Use.
- Encourage a compact growth pattern to efficiently use the remaining buildable land and enable cost effective provision of utilities and services.
- Encourage sustainable development practices
- Preserve wetlands, floodplains, and stream buffers, and promote expansion of the urban canopy as a means to improve stormwater management.
- Preserve and enhance open space natural features and conservation areas as an amenity and community hallmark.
- Provide for adequate, well-located parks, open space and other community facilities to serve all residential areas.
- Reevaluate existing zoning and make changes as needed to ensure that the Zoning Code is achieving the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Provide a sufficient amount of suitable land for future industrial uses near major transportation routes and protect industrial zones from encroachment by incompatible uses.
- Strive for a development pattern of new annexations in the future growth areas that provide a logical boundary for the city.
- Where appropriate, consider the establishment of design guidelines and standards to preserve neighborhood character and ensure new development is complimentary to existing communities
- Encourage new urban development that is mixed with both residential and commercial space knit closely together
- Encourage revitalization of neighborhoods with infill development and adequate community services that replicate the existing development pattern.
- Encourage redevelopment in areas with outdated or incompatible land uses.
- Encourage clustering of residential development as a means of preserving open space without changing the overall net density of a tract of land.
- Develop an impact fee policy that encourages infill development by having higher impact fees for development that requires expanded infrastructure.

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# Existing Conditions and Background

Residential land use is the dominant land use in Salisbury. 11.2% of city land is medium density housing, 8.5% is high density, and 2.3% is low or very low density. This amounts to 22% of the total land in the city being used for residential purposes. The next most prevalent land use is commercial at 13.5%, followed by Transportation at 12.7%, Institutional at 6.9%, and Industrial at 5.8%. Table 3-1 contains the land use percentages in the City, and Map 3-1 in Appendix A shows the location of these land uses as of 2018.

Per Maryland Department of Planning's 2018 Statewide Land Use Classification Definitions (2024 Edition), medium density housing, indicating attached or detached single-family homes at 2-8

dwelling units per acre, is the dominant form of residential use in the City. High density housing, indicating apartments, accounts for a smaller but still considerable portion of the total residential land. Low density housing accounts for the lowest proportion of residential land. These areas tend to be on the outskirts of the City. Commercial uses are primarily concentrated along the US Routes 50 and 13. Industrial uses are generally segregated from residential areas and are primarily located in the north of the City.

| Table 3-1: City of Salisbury - Land Use | |
|---|---|
| Low-Density Residential | 2.30% |
| Medium-Density Residential | 11.20% |
| High-Density Residential | 8.50% |
| Commercial | 13.50% |
| Industrial | 5.80% |
| Institutional | 6.90% |
| Open Urban Land | 2.40% |
| Water | 4.30% |
| Transportation | 12.70% |
| Other Land | 32.60% |
| Very Low Density Residential | 0.10% |

*Source: Dep. of Infrastructure & Development (2025)*

## Municipal Growth

The original core of the city was 2,307 acres. Since then, the city has annexed over 6,843 acres of new land, nearly quadrupling its original acreage. Annexations intended for residential use accounted for 22.1% of new annexations, followed by 15.8% intended for commercial, 16.8% intended for both commercial and residential, and 10.9% intended for industrial. This land growth has enabled the city's population to grow and facilitated its emergence as the commercial and industrial center of the Eastern Shore.

Salisbury saw expansion in the latter half of the 20th century. From 1960-1990, the city annexed 4,480 acres, more than doubling its size. Annexation slowed in the 90s to just 468 acres, but rebounded in the early 2000's. Since then, annexation has slowed considerably. See **Table 3-2** for the City's Annexation History and **Map 3-2** in **Appendix A** that shows the location of annexations over time. See **Table 3-3** for the City's annexations by land use.

The City's corporate limits are currently a result of growth along corridors and the use of road bed annexations to develop larger vacant parcels which has led to enclaves and large areas of developed County land within the Greater Salisbury area. These areas are problematic because the residents utilize City services but are not part of the City meaning that the properties do not generate tax revenue to fund the services used and residents of these areas do not have a vote in City elections.

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| Table 3-2: City of Salisbury - Annexation History | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Decade | Acreage | New Total Acreage | %Increase |
| Original | 2307 | 2307 | X |
| 1950-1959 | 27.74 | 2334.74 | 1.20% |
| 1960-1969 | 1273.2 | 3607.94 | 54.50% |
| 1970-1979 | 1299.43 | 4907.37 | 36.00% |
| 1980-1989 | 1908.04 | 6815.41 | 38.90% |
| 1990-1999 | 468.98 | 7284.39 | 6.90% |
| 2000-2009 | 1573.89 | 8858.28 | 21.60% |
| 2010-2019 | 236.22 | 9094.51 | 2.70% |
| 2020-2025 | 56.32 | 9150.83 | 0.60% |
| Source: Dep. of Infrastructure & Development (2025) | | | |

| Table 3-3: City of Salisbury Annexation by Use | | |
|---|---|---|
| Type of Annexation | Acreage | % of Total |
| Residential | 2022.91 | 22.10% |
| Commercial | 1444.01 | 15.80% |
| Commercial/Residential | 1536.5 | 16.80% |
| Industrial | 996.09 | 10.90% |
| Education | 546.93 | 6.00% |
| Other | 2604.4 | 28.50% |
| Source: Dep. of Infrastructure & Development (2025) | | |

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## Population Growth

Salisbury has experienced significant population growth throughout the last 60 years. The population in 1970 was slightly above 15,000. By 1990, it had surpassed 20,000, and grew to over 30,000 by 2010. This growth is expected to continue and accelerate. Historically, the city has accounted for approximately 36% of the county population. If this trend were to continue, using county population projections, the city's population would approach 42,000 by 2030 and nearly 45,000 by 2040. However, there is reason to believe that the city's growth will outpace that of the county. Based on the number of new housing units proposed in the City as a result of the City Here is Home housing incentive, Salisbury's population could exceed 50,000 by 2040.

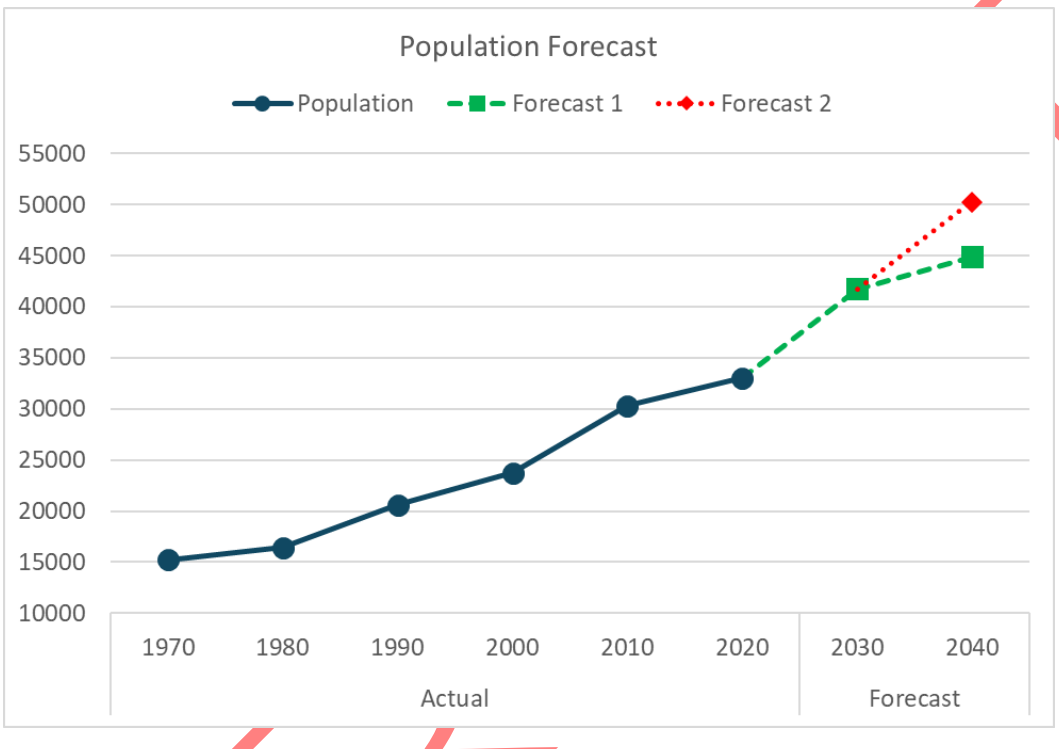



*Figure 3-3: Population Forecast*

The city has identified unincorporated areas around the corporate limits to target for future annexation. Map 3-3 in Appendix A shows these growth areas and their potential land uses. This map serves as a guide for where Salisbury's growth will occur and how that new land should be used.

## Development Capacity

One of the core requirements of the Municipal Growth Element is an assessment of the relationships between population growth, the amount of land needed to accommodate that growth and the underlying capacity of the land available to accommodate growth. The basic determinant of the amount of residential growth that needs to be accommodated by the City of Salisbury and evaluated in this Comprehensive Plan are the projected population and housing unit increases anticipated through 2040.

The 2020 Census indicated that the average household size for the City of Salisbury was 2.43 persons. Based on the average household size, we can estimate the number of new housing units that will be needed in the City based on population projections. Between 2020 and 2030, a population increase of 8,724 is anticipated, which adds approximately 3,728 households. The

estimated population increase between 2030 and 2040 is 8,480, which adds approximately 3,624 households. This is an increase of 7,352 households from 2020 and indicates the minimum number of new housing units the City should plan to accommodate.

### Residential Zoning in Salisbury

Table 3-4 represents the development capacity of zoning districts within the City of Salisbury that allow residential uses. As indicated in this table, the City of Salisbury has several zoning districts that provide for a variety of residential uses with a range of allowable density. The allowable density is based on the highest density allowed in the district, which is based on the development of apartment projects. Where the numbers are fractional, it is due to the density being based on lot size measured in square feet. Actual density yield per zoning district assumes that only 75% of allowable units can actually be developed due to environmental and other external constraints such as accommodating mixed uses, density ranges, stormwater management, and parking. Although the Central Business District (CBD) has a maximum density of 80 units per acre, it is unlikely to fully develop at this density due to the area being mostly built and containing a significant number of historic buildings. Prior to 2025, the maximum density of the CBD was 40 units per acre.

**Table 3-4: City of Salisbury Zoning District Density Allowances**

| Zoning District | Residential Units/Acre | Est. Actual Units/Acre (75%) |
|---|---|---|
| Mixed Use Districts | | |
| Central Business District | 80 | 60 |
| College and University | 12 | 9 |
| General Commercial | 12 | 9 |
| Hospital | 12 | 9 |
| Light Business and Institutional | 12 | 9 |
| Neighborhood Business | 12 | 9 |
| Office and Service Residential | 29.04 | 21.78 |
| Riverfront Redevelopment | 40 | 30 |
| Select Commercial -Mixed Use | 12 | 9 |
| Residential Districts | | |
| Residential R-5 | 8.71 | 6.53 |
| Residential R-8 | 5.44 | 4.08 |
| Residential R-10 | 4.36 | 3.27 |
| Residential R-5 A | 12 | 9 |
| Residential R-8 A | 10 | 7.5 |
| Residential R-10 A | 8 | 6 |

Source: Dep. of Infrastructure & Development (2025)

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### Existing Development Capacity

A development capacity analysis was conducted to determine how much land within corporate limits is available for development, and how many total units could be built upon the land. Based upon this analysis, there is capacity for approximately 18,934 units within the existing corporate limits (See Table 3-5). Of these, 7,212 units are in residential districts. Mixed use districts (other zoning districts that also allow residential uses) and the R-5A, -8A and -10A districts also allow for apartments and/or townhomes which accounts for the higher density potential in these districts. The residential potential of the mixed-use districts will not be realized because not all of the

acreage will not be utilized for residential purposes. Currently, only about 1% of land use in non-residential zoning districts is described as residential in State assessment data.

Although the anticipated growth in households projected to 2040 may be theoretically accommodated with the existing corporate limits, it is unlikely that this will occur. Undeveloped and underdeveloped parcels may not be developed for a variety of reasons. Based on the development capacity analysis of land within the corporate limits showing that the capacity in residential areas is 140 units short of the anticipated housing need, additional annexation should be anticipated and changes to the density allowances considered.

| Table 3-5: City of Salisbury - Development Capacity - Existing | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Zoning Districts | Underdeveloped Parcels in Acres | Allowable Residential Units/Acre | Estimated Actual Density Yield Units/Acre (75%) | Residential unit capacity-underdeveloped |
| General Commercial | 607.49 | 12 | 9 | 5467 |
| Light Business and Institutiona | 105.91 | 12 | 9 | 953 |
| Planned Development | 269.06 | 12 | 9 | 2422 |
| Planned Residential | 284.82 | 12 | 9 | 2563 |
| Riverfront Redevelopment | 10.58 | 40 | 30 | 317 |
| **Mixed Use District Totals** | **1,267.28** | | | **11,722** |
| Residential R-5 | 19.51 | 8.71 | 6.53 | 127 |
| Residential R-8 | 24.29 | 5.44 | 4.08 | 99 |
| Residential R-10 | 208.69 | 4.36 | 3.27 | 682 |
| Residential R-5 A | 152.64 | 12 | 9 | 1374 |
| Residential R-8 A | 327.12 | 10 | 7.5 | 2453 |
| Residential R-10 A | 412.88 | 8 | 6 | 2477 |
| **Residential District Totals** | **1,145.13** | | | **7,212** |

Source: Dep. of Infrastructure & Development (2025)

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### Methodology

Table 3-5 shows larger underdeveloped parcels within the city, defined as unimproved parcels that are greater than 2 acres and improved parcels that are greater than 5 acres. City and State GIS data were used for this analysis and provided by the city's Department of Information Services.

*Exclusions*

- *Unimproved parcels under 2 acres*
- *Improved parcels under 5 acres*
- *Tax exempt land*
- *Land in environmentally sensitive or hazardous areas*
- *Land in Historic Preservation Easements or containing historic structures*

While unimproved parcels under 2 acres could be developed and improved parcels under 5 acres redeveloped, they have been excluded from the analysis as areas that are likely built out or near capacity. It is noted that that not all zoning districts are shown and that is because they either do not allow residential uses or do not have any land area meeting the criteria for this analysis. Other lands excluded from the analysis include Tax Exempt Land, Wetlands, Flood Hazard Zones, Critical Areas (LDA and RCA only), Historic Preservation Easements, and properties that contain buildings on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties and National Register of Historic Places.

*Assumptions for Allowable Density and Density Yield*

- *In the mixed-use districts and residential 'A' districts, the allowable density was based on the maximum apartment units per acre.*
- *Allowable density in the single-family residential districts was calculated by dividing the land area with capacity by the minimum lot size allowed in the district.*
- *The allowable density or maximum density is not always feasible due to open space, stormwater, parking or other infrastructure requirements. To estimate the actual yield, the allowable units/acre is reduced by 25 percent.*

## Development Capacity - Growth Area

It is unlikely that all of the projected growth of the City will occur within the present corporate limits. Therefore, the City has defined a Municipal Growth Area that is sufficient to accommodate residential, commercial and industrial land uses as illustrated on Map 3-3 in Appendix A. Infill development and redevelopment is a primary growth strategy. Expansions of the corporate limits should consider efficiency of services, fiscal outcomes, and community benefits, such as affordable housing, extension of services or provision of other identified needs. A significant portion of the delineated future growth areas represent residentially developed areas with private wells and individual septic systems. These large concentrations of development have been included as a precautionary measure because most if not all of the parcels in these areas will eventually need to connect to public water and sewer systems, which generally requires annexation.

Table 3-6: Future Land Use Designations

| Future Land Use Designation | Acres |
|---|---|
| Low Density Residential | 3,926.55 |
| Medium Density Residential | 3,791.97 |
| High Density Residential | 448.38 |
| Business and Institutional | 28.83 |
| Commercial | 407.2 |
| Mixed Use | 1,069.23 |
| Industrial | 998.68 |
| Parks and Open Space | 144.76 |
| Salisbury University | 261.35 |
| Medians and Right-of-Ways | 1,073.56 |
| Waterbodies | 139.36 |
| **Total** | **12,289.87** |

Source: Dep. of Infrastructure & Development (2025)

### Description of Growth Areas

The growth areas designated in this plan have not been expanded from the 2010 City of Salisbury Comprehensive Plan. The development capacity analysis and public input indicates that the growth areas are large enough to accommodate projected development and that ensuring efficient use of existing City land should be prioritized through redevelopment and increases in

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density allowances. See Table 3-6 for the acreage by future land use type, and see Maps 3-3 and 3-4 in Appendix A for the future land use in the Growth Areas and within the current City boundaries, respectively.

### Growth Tiers

In 2012, the Maryland General Assembly passed the *Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012* to address the impacts of developments served by on-site sewage disposal systems on the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Local jurisdictions mapped lands into "Tiers" based on the existence or planned availability of public sewerage systems. The City of Salisbury's Growth Tiers are shown on Map 3-5 in Appendix A. Tier 1 includes lands currently served by public sewer; Tier 2 includes lands proposed for public sewer service; and Tier 2A includes lands within the City's boundary but are not planned for sewer service.

*Low Density Residential*

Low Density Residential areas are designated in areas toward the periphery of the proposed growth areas to function as a transition area between the urbanized areas of the existing City and the less intensive growth areas of the County. These fringe areas are proposed to be developed at no less than four dwelling units per acre, but no more ten. Clustering of development is encouraged to maintain open space.

*Medium Density Residential*

Medium Density Residential land use is designated in both developed and undeveloped areas with permitted densities of up to twenty dwelling units per acre. A mix of housing types that includes adaptive reuse and redevelopment that is compatible with the character of existing established neighborhoods is encouraged.

*High Density Residential*

High Density Residential is designated in limited areas of the northern extent of the growth area and have a maximum density of 30 units per acre. High Density Residential is appropriate for along major roads in close proximity to commercial areas, schools, transit service and other compatible non-residential land uses. Examples of areas appropriate for high density are the Downtown and commercial areas along US Route 13.

*Business and Institutional*

The areas represented by the Business & Institutional land use designation are generally located between U.S. Route 50 Business and bounded to the south by Mt. Hermon Road and to the north by the streets bordering adjoining residential neighborhoods. Because of the location and close proximity to major highways, these areas are unlikely to develop as a residential use.

*Commercial*

The Commercial land use designation includes uses servicing a variety of markets and trade areas providing retail and wholesale services. The areas included in this designation are used primarily for the sale of products and services, including associated yards and parking areas.

*Mixed Use*

The purpose of the Mixed Use category is to optimize the use of land and services, the conservation of environmentally sensitive areas, and the creation of functional and attractive developments. The Mixed Use designation, as its name implies, provides opportunities for alternative densities, lot sizes and other building types, and special design and development of public streets and utilities.

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Within this designation a mix of commercial, residential, institutional, light business, and neighborhood business land uses are envisioned that promote the best possible design of buildings and mix of uses should be permitted based on the zoning designation.

*Industrial*
The existing industrial base of the City of Salisbury is diverse, consisting of both light and heavy industrial uses. Its central location on the Delmarva Peninsula and accessibility with highways, rail system, airport and Port makes it the ideal place for industrial development.

*Parks and Open Space*
Parks and open spaces should be the integral part of Salisbury's urban life. Parks and open space help improve the physical and mental health of residents and their overall well-being.
Parks and open spaces are also used as a tool to protect environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, wooded areas, floodplains, and riparian buffers from intense development.

*Salisbury University*
The Salisbury University area provides opportunity for the expansion of the University beyond its existing boundary. It also provides an opportunity to fulfill the housing needs of University employees and students while preserving the characteristics of existing neighborhoods.

## Growth Area Capacity

The development capacity analysis for the Municipal Growth Area indicates the potential to accommodate an additional 39,118 dwelling units (see Table 3-7).

Table 3-7: City of Salisbury - Future Growth Area Residential Capacity

| Residential Land Use Designation | Developable Acres | Allowable Residential Units/Acre | Estimated Actual Density Yield | New Housing Capacity (nearest unit) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Low Density | 2153.73 | 10 | 7.5 | 16,153 |
| Medium Density | 994.44 | 20 | 15 | 14,917 |
| High Density | 357.77 | 30 | 22.5 | 8,050 |
| **Total** | **3,505.94** | | | **39,119** |

Source: Dep. of Infrastructure & Development (2025)

*Methodology*
Table 3-5 shows larger underdeveloped parcels within the residential growth areas, defined as unimproved parcels that are greater than 2 acres and improved parcels that are greater than 5 acres. City and State GIS data were used for this analysis and provided by the city's Department of Information Services.

*Exclusions*
- *Unimproved parcels under 2 acres*
- *Improved parcels under 5 acres*
- *Tax exempt land*
- *Land in environmentally sensitive or hazardous areas*

While unimproved parcels under 2 acres could be developed and improved parcels under 5 acres redeveloped, they have been excluded from the analysis as areas that are likely built out or near capacity. Other lands excluded from the analysis include Tax Exempt Land, Wetlands, Flood Hazard Zones, Critical Areas (LDA and RCA only), Historic Preservation Easements, and properties that contain buildings on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties and National Register of Historic Places.

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*Assumptions for Allowable Density and Density Yield*

- *Allowable density is based on the density assigned to each future land use category in this chapter.*
- *The allowable density or maximum density is not always feasible due to open space, stormwater, parking or other infrastructure requirements. To estimate the actual yield, the allowable units/acre is reduced by 25 percent.*

Residential development is only part of the anticipated growth. The City of Salisbury desires to remain the commercial and industrial hub of the Lower Eastern Shore. The City is the place of employment for citizens from an extensive geographical area. Annexations will be necessary to accommodate that growth and to provide water and sewer services to these areas.

## Analysis of Projected Growth Impacts – 2040

This Municipal Growth Element seeks to analyze potential growth in Salisbury and in the defined future growth areas based on the existing and projected land use policies. It also assesses how projected population and housing units to 2040 will impact public utilities and community services. Many of the areas considered for annexation already have current residents; however, these areas still offer the possibility of population growth consistent with existing zoning and future possible zoning for areas considered for annexation.

The purpose of this section is to evaluate the impact of projected growth in the City on the public services and infrastructure. The infrastructure and services assessed include: public school; libraries; public safety; recreational facilities; and water and sewer facilities. This list of facilities and services include County and regional facilities, as well as facilities and services under the control of the City of Salisbury. The impacts have been analyzed based on the projected population and housing units (2040), and the results do not take into consideration the location of future growth (Municipal Growth Area or the existing City of Salisbury corporate limits).

Table 3-8 represents the anticipated impacts to these public services and infrastructure based on the additional 17,204 residents projected to come into the City between 2020 and 2040.

Table 3-8: Impact of Projected Population and Housing units on Public Services and Facilities

| Public Services & Facilities | # of Persons | Impact Factor | Total Impact |
|---|---|---|---|
| Schools | | | |
| Elementary | 17,204 | 0.066 | 1,136 Students |
| Middle | 17,204 | 0.032 | 551 Students |
| High | 17,204 | 0.039 | 671 Students |
| Library | 17,204 | 1 sq. ft. per 1 person | 17,204 sq. ft. |
| Police | 17,204 | 3 officers per 1000 persons | 52 Officers |
| Fire | 17,204 | 0.84-1.30 Fire Fighters on Duty per 100 persons | 15-22 Fire Fighters |
| Recreation | 17,204 | 30 acres per 1,000 persons | 516.12 Acres |

Source: Dep. of Infrastructure & Development (2025)

*Table 3-8: Impact of Projected Population and Housing units on Public Services and Facilities (Note: School impacts based on 2023 ACS population age data)*

### Public Schools

Public schools serving Salisbury are part of the Wicomico County Board of Education System. There are 15 public schools, serving the students residing within the City of Salisbury. Among which,

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nine are elementary schools, three are middle schools, and three are high schools. School capacity issues and the impacts of growth on school capacity are dynamic in nature. It is impossible to assess the impacts of growth on individual schools in a comprehensive plan with a twenty-year time frame because of the impacts associated from growth of the other seven municipalities and the unincorporated County, as well as changing school districts. For the purpose of this Municipal Growth Element, this section looks at system-wide impacts of expected growth of the City to 2040.

Student enrollment factors were created by using 2020 full-time enrollment provided in the Wicomico County Public Schools Educational Facilities Master Plan FY 2026 and 2020 Wicomico County population data to estimate enrollment based on population. The Educational Facilities Master Plan provides detailed projections for each school through 2034.

The County Board of Education will work to determine and plan for school facility needs as development occurs.

### Libraries

The Wicomico County Free Library has three branches across Wicomico County, two of which are located within the City Limits of Salisbury, and Mobile Services. Wicomico County Free Library is a full-service library offering a variety of services.

For the purpose of the MGE analysis, the national standard used to determine the adequacy of a public library as it relates solely to size is 1 square feet per person, so that the additional population projected by 2024 would generate the need for an additional 17,204 square feet of library space. However, it is generally accepted that library capacity should be based on factors such as usage and the types of services demanded which may include computer labs, meeting rooms, and other community resources.

### Police

The standard for the number of police officers per population used in this Plan is 3 police officers per 1,000 population, which was the staff to citizen ratio cited in the 2010 City of Salisbury Comprehensive Plan as the current and desired future level of service. The Salisbury Police Department (SFD) is a full-service police department with 103 police officers and 30 civilians.

In an effort to meet this standard, an additional 52 officers are needed to accommodate the increase of 17,204 persons by 2040. However, officer to population ratios are not considered the best way to determine staff levels. They should be based on a more complex analysis of a variety of factors that reflect both population and demand for services.

The City also receives support from the Wicomico County Sheriff's Office and the Maryland State Police.

### Fire and Emergency Services

The Salisbury Fire Department provides fire and emergency services to the City of Salisbury and to a designated portion of Wicomico County outside of the City limits. Our fire district serves approximately 65,000 residents. The County is provided services through a negotiated agreement between the County and the City.

The NFPA provides general guidelines for staffing levels and how many firefighters are needed to assemble an effective firefighting effort within a certain timeframe. However, there are many

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factors that must be considered beyond just population size. The socio-economics of the community, travel distances and community age also impact recommended staffing levels. The City of Salisbury monitors response time and equipment capabilities to ensure service levels are maintained or improved over time.

Currently, Salisbury's minimum staffing is 19 firefighters on duty which is below the NFPA guidelines of 0.84-1.30 per 1,000 people. The City relies on mutual aid from other nearby departments to make up the additional staffing on a structure fire. The need for a fourth fire station on the north/northeast end of town is projected. This station would require five additional staff per day to operate effectively.

### Recreation

City of Salisbury owns and operates parks and playgrounds varying in size. The future growth of the City will exert additional pressure on existing park land, as well as create the need for additional parks in the City. Like other community facilities, both City and County residents use parkland owned by the City, as well as the County. For this reason, it is difficult to assess the park land need for the City without taking the County into account. However, solely based on the State's Program Open Space Standard of 30 acres of park land, the City's population increase would need an additional 516 acres of park land.

According to the 2022 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan, the Planning Area containing the City of Salisbury contained 1,145.9 acres of recreation area and 52 local recreation sites. Of these acres, 277.64 are located in the City of Salisbury.

### Water and Sewer Facilities

The Water Resources Element (WRE), Chapter 9, indicates the City of Salisbury has adequate water available for its current and future population. The WRE also suggests that water capacity of Salisbury Public Water System should be adequate for the next twenty years and beyond with an existing capacity of 12 MGD and a planned capacity of 18.0 MGD in 2030. Currently, the 2010 demand, which includes residential, commercial, and industrial users is estimated at 6.9 MGD. Based on the projected population increases, as well as the additional projected commercial and industrial use, the 2010 demand will increase by an estimated 1.5 MGD, for a total 2030 demand of roughly 8.4 MGD.

The City's Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) is capable of accommodating the existing demand, as well as the future demand created by an additional 11,160 residents by 2030. The City WWTP has a current capacity of 8.5 MGD with a total demand of 5.86 MGD. The impacts contributed to projected population increases, as well as estimated increases in commercial and industrial demand is 1.1 MGD. Therefore, the WWTP can easily meet the future needs of the residents, commercial, and industrial demand beyond the timeframe of this Plan.

A detailed discussion of water capacity, sewer treatment capacity and availability of drinking water supply sources is contained in the Water Resources Element, Chapter 5 of this Plan.

## Analysis of Projected Growth Impacts – Total Build-Out

In addition to assessing the impact of growth associated with population and housing unit projections for 2040, this MGE also evaluates the impact of projected growth in the City on the public services and infrastructure at ultimate build-out of the existing City limits, as well as the undeveloped future growth areas. The ultimate build-out for the existing City limit and the future growth areas is a representation of the results from the development capacity analysis of the City

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and the designated growth areas. The population associated with the total build out multiplies the number of dwelling units in the total build out by 2.43, which is the 2020 household size for the City of Salisbury. For the purpose of identifying the potential impact, the services analyzed are consistent with those contained in Table 3-8. Although it is difficult to predict when the ultimate build-out will occur, the information contained in Table 3-9 is unlikely to be reached within the timeframe of this planning document.

Table 3-9: Impact of Projected Population and Housing units on Public Services and Facilities (Total Build-Out)

| Public Services & Facilities | # of Persons | Impact Factor | Total Impact |
|---|---|---|---|
| Schools | | | |
| Elementary | 141,069 | 0.066 | 9,311 Students |
| Middle | 141,069 | 0.032 | 4,514 Students |
| High | 141,069 | 0.039 | 5,502 Students |
| Library | 141,069 | 1 sq. ft. per 1 person | 141,069 sq. ft. |
| Police | 141,069 | 3 officers per 1000 persons | 423 Officers |
| Fire | 141,069 | 0.84-1.30 Fire Fighters on Duty per 100 persons | 119-183 Fire Fighters |
| Recreation | 141,069 | 30 acres per 1,000 persons | 4,232 Acres |

Source: Dep. of Infrastructure & Development (2025)

*Table 3-9: Impact of Projected Population and Housing units on Public Services and Facilities (Total Build-Out)*

### Financing Infrastructure Improvements

A number of mechanisms exist that enable the City to finance necessary infrastructure improvements to accommodate expected growth. Whenever possible the City pursues available sources of funding from State and federal programs. These are of particular importance for funding of transportation and water and sewerage facilities. In a City context, Salisbury prepares a Capital Improvement Program that sets forth its capital improvement priorities and which forms the basis for the capital outlay requests in annual budgets.

The City pursues annexations necessary to protect the public health and welfare, as well as those necessary to accommodate growth. If the annexation is to accommodate new development, detailed annexation policies are in place to guide City actions. To advance and protect the public's interests when the municipal limits are expanded, municipalities can negotiate an annexation agreement with the petitioner/property owners.

New development both inside and outside of current City limits must also support the costs of new growth. Impact fees are one-time payments used to construct system improvements needed to accommodate new development. An impact fee represents new growth's fair share of capital facility needs. As the City continues to grow and additional pressures are placed on public services and infrastructure, the City should consider imposing impact fees to offset the costs associated with this future growth both inside the existing City limits and in the areas delineated as part of the Municipal Growth Areas.

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# Chapter 4 | Economic Development & Jobs

Economic development efforts aim to integrate all segments of the population into the local economy. These efforts take a variety of forms, ranging from the construction of affordable housing, to the establishment of businesses that support local workers, and through training opportunities that meet local employment needs. The local labor force must be prepared to take advantage of emerging job opportunities.

This Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for future reinvestment and development within the City of Salisbury. It sets forth the vision, core development goals, and strategies that should be implemented to ensure the orderly economic growth of the Salisbury metropolitan area. It encourages continued expansion of Salisbury's economy through a variety of well-designed and strategically located commercial facilities and neighborhoods, meeting regional market demand while promoting the redevelopment of existing sites into viable commercial assets. The overall goal is to support orderly growth and position Salisbury as a center of regional economic activity.

## Goals

- Maintain the City of Salisbury as the center of retail trade, health services and entertainment for the Lower Eastern Shore and much of the Delmarva Peninsula.
- Encourage a commercial redevelopment or revitalization that makes appropriate use of the Wicomico River waterfront for private redevelopment, while encouraging maximum public use of the river front.
- Encourage development that strengthens Downtown's position as the City's central hub for government services, retail activity, arts and entertainment, and its connection to the waterfront.
- Support the revitalization of existing neighborhoods and façade improvement of Downtown businesses.
- Improve public safety throughout the City.
- Maintain the status of the Port of Salisbury as an essential element of regional commerce.
- Prioritize addressing homelessness, deepening collaborative partnerships, and expanding pathways for community organizations to engage in meaningful work with the city.

## Objectives

- Attract and encourage businesses and corporations to invest, develop and expand in Salisbury, including health care, research, retail, manufacturing, food processing, and distribution businesses.
- Increase and encourage local job-training opportunities (expand and improve access to trade schools, community college, and higher education)
- Encourage and support locally-owned small businesses
- Support freight operations between metropolitan areas of Baltimore, Washington and Wilmington and the Eastern Shore for local manufacturing operations.
- Provide asset security by decreasing the crime rate, especially Part 1 crimes (violence and property)
- Provide financial incentives and technical assistance to encourage mixed-use development (commercial and residential) in the downtown.

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- Promote, develop and support local tourism industries, such as hotels and experience-based businesses
- Encourage and support expanding major anchor institutions like Salisbury University, Perdue Farms, and TidalHealth.
- Promote mixed use development in areas surrounding institutions to encourage working professionals to shop and reside within the area
- Expand industrial development to increase skilled-trade job opportunities.

## Implementation Strategies

- Work with owners, investors, and stakeholders to strengthen Downtown and established business districts.
- Continue to work with the private business sector and the local schools to identify and encourage qualified individuals to participate in job training programs.
- Plan and implement economic development activities in coordination with regional commerce/business partners.
- Enhance coordination between the City of Salisbury, Salisbury University, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, and Wor-Wic Community College and the Wicomico board of Education to establish partnerships and opportunities for both students and local businesses.
- Consider the creation of incentive programs for areas with commercial, industrial or institutional redevelopment potential.
- Target the downtown area for more office, retail, and high-density residential development, thereby strengthening its role as a vital City center with professional and recreational opportunities.
- Perform regular SWOT analyses to include economic development and revitalization of the City.
- Continue promotional activities and aesthetic improvements to enhance Salisbury's Downtown area and its overall economic activity.
- Work closely with Salisbury University to support further expansion in appropriate locations. Regulations should more clearly target expansion areas, while discouraging conflicts with existing neighborhoods.
- Support local bus routes and/or rideshare initiatives to ensure reliable transportation between residential areas and commercial centers. Expand the neighborhood business districts in areas that could benefit from the expansion of community retail.
- Work to further the relationship between the City, local K-12 schools, Salisbury University, Wor-Wic Community College, and UMES by expanding internship opportunities and learning opportunities.
- Continue to support small business organizations and coalitions.
- Improve wayfinding signage to special places and amenities both built and natural.
- Utilize diverse methods of community outreach.
- Partner with agencies to provide and coordinate grants for small business owners
- Update zoning code to locate areas that are appropriate for industrial uses and verify existing areas are optimally designed to protect surrounding uses.
- Research and establish funding mechanisms for dredging and river maintenance from properties and business that benefit from river access, as deemed feasible and appropriate.
- Leverage Maryland broadband Cooperative assets to encourage new beneficial development within Salisbury.

## Support for local businesses

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While it is important to maintain a business-friendly atmosphere to attract desirable retail firms to the area, there is also a critical need to support home grown businesses and investment. Local owners have an inherent interest of the long-term health of the City of Salisbury. Community-based businesses and owners are essential to charitable endeavors, serving on local boards, and supporting a variety of local causes.

Another advantage of supporting community-based businesses is the tendency of locally owned retailers to carry a greater degree of locally produced products. Local retailers bring a different flair to their presentation and a local feeling that is distinct from that provided by a national chain, which are often indistinguishable from a similar outlet anywhere else in the country.

## Employment profile

Employment statistics for Salisbury's population 16 years and over are provided in Table 4-1 alongside Wicomico County and the State of Maryland employment statistics. Of Salisbury's residents (16 years and over), 59 percent are employed, 7 percent are unemployed, and 34 percent are not in the labor force. The City of Salisbury's unemployed percentage is 2.6 percent higher than Wicomico County.

**Table 4-1: Employment Statistics**

| | Wicomico | | | | Salisbury | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Values | | Percentages | | Values | | Percentages | |
| Total: | 83,491 | ±2355 | 100.00% | ±2.8% | 25857 | ±567 | 100.00% | ±2.19% |
| In labor force: | 55,149 | ±1191 | 66.10% | ±1.4% | 17043 | ±856 | 65.91% | ±3.31% |
| Civilian labor force: | 55009 | ±1220 | 65.90% | ±1.5% | 16953 | ±880 | 65.56% | ±3.4% |
| Employed | 51,488 | ±1319 | 61.70% | ±1.6% | 15191 | ±857 | 58.75% | ±3.31% |
| Unemployed | 3,521 | ±623 | 4.20% | ±0.7% | 1762 | ±517 | 6.81% | ±2% |
| Armed Forces | 140 | ±117 | 0.20% | ±0.1% | 90 | ±106 | 0.35% | ±0.41% |
| Not in labor force | 28,342 | ±1164 | 33.90% | ±1.4% | 8814 | ±809 | 34.09% | ±3.13% |

Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 2021 5-Year Estimates

Salisbury's employment landscape is led by healthcare, education, and food production, with the largest employers being Tidal Health, Salisbury University, and Perdue Farms. Overall, the city's workforce is concentrated in educational services, healthcare, and social assistance (24%), followed by retail trade (14%), and construction and manufacturing (10% each), reflecting a balanced mix of service, trade, and industrial sectors.

**Table 4-2: Major Employers**

| Employer | Product/Service | Employment |
|---|---|---|
| Tidal Health | Medical services | 3,300 |
| Salisbury University | Higher education | 1,800 |
| Perdue Farms | HQ / Poultry processing | 1,600 |
| Walmart / Sam's Club | Consumer goods | 850 |
| Wor-Wic Community College | Higher education | 700 |
| Food Lion | Groceries | 379 |
| Genesis HealthCare / Salisbury Rehabilitation and Nursing Center | Nursing care | 340 |
| SHORE UP! | Community development & social services | 300 |
| Delmarva Power | Energy products & services | 300 |

Source: Salisbury-Wicomico Economic Development, Inc. Maryland Department of Commerce (2022-2023)

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### TidalHealth

TidalHealth is the largest employer on the Delmarva Peninsula with approximately 3,300 employees. It was established in 2020 through a strategic merger between Peninsula Health System, the parent organization of Peninsula Regional Medical Center in Salisbury, Maryland, and Nanticoke Health Services of Seaford, Delaware. Rather than a traditional acquisition, the two healthcare systems united as equal partners to form a new, integrated health network under the name TidalHealth.

In 2025, TidalHealth Salisbury advanced healthcare access and infrastructure with the launch of a 28-bed Intermediate Care Unit, merging its Progressive and Critical Care units to streamline services and enhance patient monitoring technologies. Simultaneously, the Edward Q. Wilgus Community Clinic opened on Salisbury's east side, offering primary care, behavioral health, and telemedicine to underserved neighborhoods, supported by a $1 million state grant. Over the next decade, TidalHealth plans to expand its reach through a Mobile Mammography & Wellness Program—a 38-foot van equipped with 3D imaging to serve rural communities across Delmarva. Additional initiatives include enhanced cancer care outreach, rural workforce development through clinical training hubs, and infrastructure upgrades to support telehealth and digital care platforms.

### Perdue Farms

With annual sales exceeding $10.3 billion, Perdue Farms is ranked as the fourth largest poultry company in the United States and operates a major processing facility within the City of Salisbury. The company provides food and agricultural products and services to customers in more than 50 countries. Perdue remains privately held and family-owned, now led by the third generation of the Perdue family. The company employs over 20,000 associates nationwide. Its corporate headquarters are located just outside the Salisbury city limits but remain within the designated municipal growth area.

## Colleges and Universities

### Salisbury University

Salisbury University is located on 220 acres within and adjoining the City of Salisbury. The University has nearly 100 buildings. As of the Fall 2023 semester, University System of Maryland Enrollment Projections show that total enrollment at 7,030 students. Projections show that we can expect enrollment to be near 9,000 by 2040. The university offers more than 60 undergraduate and graduate programs, including applied master's and doctoral degrees.
The mission of Salisbury University continues to emphasize offering excellent, affordable educational opportunities to empower students with the knowledge and skills for gainful employment and life-long learning. The goals in the Salisbury University Strategic Plan remain focused on strengthening academic programs, attracting and retaining quality students, maintaining a small-school feel with strong faculty-student-staff engagement, and increasing resources to address priority needs.

### Wor-Wic Community College

Located east of Salisbury in Wicomico County, Wor-Wic Community College is a two-year institution serving students primarily from Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset counties. Wor-Wic provides quality postsecondary education at a reasonable cost. The College offers credit and non-credit programs in seven study areas – Business and Hospitality, Education and Human Services, Health Care, Humanities and Social Sciences, Public Safety, Skilled Trades and Transportation, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math).

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## Salisbury - Wicomico Economic Development, Inc.

The primary agency charged with the promotion of economic development in Salisbury and Wicomico County is Salisbury-Wicomico Economic Development, Inc., (SWED) a private membership organization which receives support from local governments. . The mission of Salisbury-Wicomico Economic Development, Inc., founded in 1968, is "to enhance the socio-economic environment of Salisbury, Wicomico County and the region through the preservation and creation of productive employment opportunities."

In their 2023 - 2024 Annual Report SWED describes its activities as:

- *Aviation Workforce Development*: SWED is spearheading the launch of a 12-month Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT) school at Salisbury-Ocean City: Wicomico Regional Airport. This initiative, in partnership with UMES, Piedmont Airlines, and state and county agencies, will create a skilled pipeline of aviation mechanics and strengthen the region's aeronautics sector.
- *Shovel-Ready Site Activation*: To accelerate job creation and attract large-scale projects, SWED is investing in shovel-ready sites like Westwood Commerce Park. These pre-approved, design-ready locations reduce construction timelines and enhance the region's competitiveness.
- *Industrial Expansion*: SWED is facilitating industrial growth with new manufacturing developments like Marvel Road LLC's fragrance distribution plant and St. John Properties' commercial expansion in Greater Salisbury. These projects reflect a commitment to diversified industry and long-term economic resilience.
- *Strategic Collaboration & Public Engagement*: SWED continues to foster regional collaboration through public speaking engagements and strategic partnerships. Events like the Economic Forecast, Rotary Club presentations, and the Maryland Economic Development Association's Primer help align stakeholders and amplify regional goals.

SWED's future focus includes advancing key sectors such as agribusiness, health care, higher education, manufacturing, aviation and aeronautics, and distribution. They also aim to invest in infrastructure, support entrepreneurship, promote industry diversification, and strengthen public-private partnerships to drive regional economic growth.

## Maryland Broadband Cooperative

The Maryland Broadband Cooperative (MDBC) is a public/private partnership to promote economic development through the deployment of technology supporting infrastructures. The mission of MDBC is "to drive economic development through universal, open access to broadband services via a fiber optic network that serves rural Maryland by building an advanced, world-class broadband network across the rural communities of Eastern, Southern and Western Maryland supported by its members who provide "Last Mile" services." The MDBC receives funding to build the infrastructure through the Maryland Rural Broadband Coordination Board, which was formed under Senate Bill 753.

Salisbury is part of the Lower Eastern Shore network which serves Easton, Cambridge, Salisbury, West Ocean City, Snow Hill, Wallops Island, Pocomoke, and Princess Anne through a system of fiber optic cable. Access to the broadband network enables the City of Salisbury to become a technical hub for the region and allows universities and colleges in the area to implement more high-tech programs.

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# Economic Development Programs / Targeted Investment Areas

## Arts and Entertainment District

Maryland is the first state in the country to develop Arts and Entertainment Districts (A&ED) on a statewide basis. Arts and Entertainment Districts further the goals of Smart Growth by locating within a Priority Funding Area and by carefully coordinating with local plans and policies for economic development. In April 2007, Maryland granted Salisbury an Arts & Entertainment District designation, bringing additional tax and financial benefits to certain arts and entertainment related businesses and investments.

The benefits offered to participants in the A&ED include:

- Property tax credits for new construction or renovation of certain buildings that create live-work space for artists and/or space for arts and entertainment enterprises.
- An income tax subtraction modification for income derived from artistic work sold by "qualifying residing artists."
- An exemption from the Admissions and Amusement tax levied by an "arts and entertainment enterprise" or "qualifying residing artist" in a district.

*Salisbury Arts & Entertainment District*: The Salisbury Arts & Entertainment District works to enrich Downtown Salisbury by fostering collaboration among creatives, expanding access to arts and entertainment, and highlighting the District's distinct identity. The mission is to uplift community pride and maintain the character that makes the area a meaningful place for all.

*Arts, Business and Culture Department (ABCD)*: In 2022, the City of Salisbury created the Arts, Business and Culture Department to oversee the Arts & Entertainment District designation, support local businesses, expand economic opportunity, promote artistic expression, and host unique community events.

*Salisbury University Performing Arts Center:* Salisbury University's planned downtown performing arts center is included in Maryland's FY 2028–31 Capital Improvement Program and is expected to open within the next five years. The facility will expand the University's downtown presence and serve as a regional hub for entertainment, arts, and education. The project is expected to generate economic benefits through tourism, support surrounding businesses, and reinforce continued downtown development.

## Maryland's Designated Opportunity Zones

The Opportunity Zone program is a nationwide program providing federal tax incentives for investment in distressed communities. In Salisbury, there are multiple State-designated opportunity zones supporting the goals of this comprehensive plan, including:

*Priority Funding Area*

This state law directs state spending to Priority Funding Areas (PFA's). PFA's are existing communities and places designated by local governments indicating where they want state investment to support future growth. Growth-related projects covered by the legislation include most state programs that encourage or support growth and development such as highways, sewer and water construction, economic development assistance and state leases or construction of new office facilities.

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*Enterprise Zone*
The Maryland Enterprise Zone Program is a local economic development program established by the Maryland General Assembly that gives local governments the legal authority to offer economic incentives, including real property and income tax credits.

*Maryland Economic Development Assistance Authority Fund (MEDAAF)*
A flexible and broad-based program, MEDAAF (also known as Advantage Maryland) funds conditional grants, loans and investments to assist economic development initiatives in designated areas. Uses include business attraction and retention, infrastructure support, brownfield redevelopment, arts and entertainment districts, daycare, revolving loan funds and local strategic planning.

*Sustainable Community*
The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Sustainable Communities Program is a place-based designation offering a comprehensive package of resources that support holistic strategies for community development, revitalization and sustainability. Led by the Department, Sustainable Communities has provided local governments with a framework for promoting environmentally, economically and socially responsible growth and development in existing older communities. The 2010 Sustainable Communities Act defines Sustainable Community Areas as places where public and private investments and partnerships achieve:

- Development of a healthy local economy;
- Protection and appreciation of historical and cultural resources;
- A mix of land uses;
- Affordable and sustainable housing, and employment options;
- Growth and development practices that protect the environment and conserve air, water and energy resources, encourage walkability and recreational opportunities, and where available, create access to transit.

*Community Legacy Area* - The Community Legacy program provides local governments and community development organizations with funding for essential projects aimed at strengthening communities through activities such as business retention and attraction, encouraging homeownership and commercial revitalization.

*Neighborhood BusinessWorks*
The Neighborhood BusinessWorks program (NBW) provides a revitalization resource to help stimulate investment in Maryland's older communities. The NBW loans provide flexible loan financing to small businesses located in or expanding in locally designated neighborhood revitalization areas throughout the State.

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# Chapter 5 | Historic & Cultural Resources

The City of Salisbury is richly entwined with the history of the development of the United States and is richly endowed with local cultural traditions. The historic nature of Salisbury provides a context for residents of the City and visitors to understand the place, its development and its origins.

Salisbury was founded in 1732 and incorporated in 1854. Its strategic location on the Wicomico River resulted in the development from a small colonial outpost to an official port. The city quickly grew to become the second most active seaport in Maryland. As a result, Salisbury has a rich collection of historic buildings. The Downtown, Newtown, and Camden Historic Districts exemplify the beautiful Colonial, Victorian and Federal architecture in the City.

The City of Salisbury is committed to preserving, protecting and enhancing buildings, places and areas within the City which possess particular historic or architectural significance in order to promote the educational, cultural and economic welfare of its residents and visitors. To achieve these objectives, the City has been proactive in protecting its historic and archaeological resources by establishing the Historic District Commission, adopting rules and regulations within the City Zoning Code for historic districts, and designating the Downtown, Newtown and Camden Historic Districts. In 1959, the City enacted zoning regulations specifically intended to protect historic areas. These regulations exist within the City's current zoning code. The City, today, faces new challenges in the preservation of its historic and cultural amenities. The goals, objectives and implementation strategies clearly demonstrate a strong on-going commitment to preserve and protect our historic and cultural resources.

## Goals

- Promote civic and neighborhood pride in the City's historic and cultural identity.
- Preserve and celebrate Salisbury's unique community character by honoring the diverse cultures and histories that shape its neighborhoods.

## Objectives

- Protect and preserve the City's existing historical sites and resources.
- Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures with historical or archaeological significance.
- Promote historic resources as a tool for increasing economic development.
- Protect the historic character of the three existing historic districts through adaptive reuse.
- Protect against destruction and encourage the restoration of historic areas and structures.
- Identify and protect structures within a neighborhood that may not be historic but are part of the fabric of the community.

## Implementation Strategies

- Promote the use and preservation of historic areas for the education, welfare, and pleasure of the residents and tourists.
- Establish zoning and land development standards that prevent incompatible development and protect neighborhood character.
- Encourage the restoration of historic structures through financial incentives and public and private loan and grant funding programs.

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- Continue to assure that new structures and uses within historic areas will be in keeping with the character to be preserved and enhanced.
- Strengthen the role of historic resources in the City by encouraging rehabilitation and reuse of historic residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use buildings.
- Maintain and publicize financial assistance financial assistance for renovation and maintenance of existing structures.
- Promote active ground-floor uses in the Central Business District and mixed-use buildings to enhance street life by prioritizing retail, dining, and service uses at street level.
- Encourage the use of recognition signage such as National Register or local historic plaques to acknowledge properties that retain historic character or honor the historical significance of a redeveloped property.
- Collaborate with local non-profits and institutions such as the Edward H. Nabb Research Center to support research, interpretation, and public programs about Salisbury history, with particular attention to communities that have been displaced.
- Identify and celebrate culturally significant places that are not formally designated historic but hold social, cultural, or architectural importance to residents.
- Consider the development of neighborhood plans that can be integrated with funding mechanisms so impact fees and fee-in-lieu contributions can be targeted to projects within defined neighborhoods that experience the greatest impact.

## History

Governor Calvert offered fifty free acres of land to each settler within Somerset County in the 1660s. The majority of settlers, from Virginia, cleared land along the Wicomico River for plantation homes and slowly developed Salisbury, which was founded in 1732. By 1817, what is now the Downtown Historic District had begun to emerge with development concentrated along what are now Main, Division, and Church Streets. Over the next sixty years, houses and a more complex road system developed on the west and south end of town. The north end slowly developed into the present-day Newtown neighborhood and the southern end of town became the present-day Camden neighborhood. Salisbury was incorporated in 1854. In 1867, Wicomico County was created from parts of Somerset and Worcester Counties and Salisbury was named the county seat.

Twice during the nineteenth century fires destroyed two-thirds of the town, in 1860 and 1886, which had an impact on the growth and development at the turn of the twentieth century. In 1888, Salisbury's government structure was changed from a Board of Town Commissioners to Mayor and Council. Initial meetings of the new city council, were devoted to planning and directing the rebuilding of Salisbury. Improvements such as terra cotta sewer lines and water distribution systems were installed, as well as fire hydrants and iron fountains.

In 1909, the dam holding Humphreys Lake broke and exposed approximately 90 acres of land at the center of Salisbury. At one time Humphreys Lake, which was actually an old millpond, extended from Division Street on the west to Davis Street on the east end. When the lake emptied, several businessmen bought the land on either side of the railroad bridge that crossed the lake and formed the Salisbury Realty Company. Many of today's structures east of Division Street in the Downtown Historic District are built on land that was once Humphreys Lake.

During the second half of the 19th century the railroad improved connections between Baltimore and the Eastern Shore. This opened the region to the Northeast and expanded operations of freight yards in Salisbury. In addition to the railroad, when the automobile industry moved ahead in the 20th century, city dwellers were introduced to the beachfront communities and charming towns and villages of the Eastern Shore. Through all of this change Salisbury has preserved some of the most important architectural features and cultural resources of the past.

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# Historic Districts

## *Downtown*

The Downtown Historic District encompasses the commercial buildings on the downtown streets, including Division, Main and Church Streets, the first planned streets in Salisbury. After the fires during the nineteenth century, the City mandated that all buildings be constructed with brick and iron. Various styles emerged with the rebuilding of the downtown area: Victorian, Gothic, Romanesque Revival and Renaissance Revival. Several buildings reached heights of three or more stories, such as the County Courthouse (1878), Old Salisbury City Hall and Firehouse (1896) and the Salisbury Loan and Banking Association building (1914). The Ross, a 14-story high-rise built in 2023, is the largest structure within the Downtown Historic District.

The Downtown Historic District has wide sidewalks with interspersed trees lining the streets. West Main Street, from Division Street to Market Street, with retail and commercial space on the first floor of the buildings and with offices and/or residential apartments on the second and third floors, provides a strong sense of place with brick pavers, trees, and continuous building frontages.

## *Camden*

The Camden Historic District is bounded by Carroll Street to the north and Forest Lane to the south. This district was the site of the first planned residential development in Salisbury. The City of Salisbury planned for a wide variety of architectural designs and enacted an ordinance that required wider and straighter roads as well as right-of-way and sidewalk maintenance. The Camden Historic District also housed the City's first row homes.

## *Newtown*

The Newtown Historic District is the largest and oldest residential historic district in Salisbury. It is located just north of Route 50 on the lands of the former Poplar Hill plantation. There are numerous 19th and early 20th Century Victorian homes located on Park Avenue and North Division, William, Walnut and Isabella Streets.

Home to the Poplar Hill Mansion, this District is characterized by large shade trees lining the sidewalks, houses with large front porches, decorative cornices, diamond shaped pane windows and Palladian windows.

# Historic Sites

## *National Register of Historic Places*

Of particular significance are the structures and sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The NRHP recognizes districts, buildings, structures, objects, and sites for their significance in American history, archeology, architecture, engineering, or culture, and identifies them as worthy of preservation. Listing on the National Register is a nationally recognized honor making property owners of NRHP places eligible for historic preservation federal tax credits and loans. The structures on the NRHP within the City are as follows (* MHT Easement Sites):

1. *F. Leonard Wailes Law Office*: The F. Leonard Wailes Law Office building, located at 116 – 118 Main Street, is significant for its architectural character. Designed by Salisbury architect W. Twilley Malone and constructed in 1927, the two-story, four-bay brick building is a particularly

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fine and well-preserved example of early-20th century law office design incorporating neo-Federal elements in an adaptation of an urban townhouse form.

2. **Gillis-Grier House:* Built in 1887 by James Cannon and named after two inter-related families that held title to the property between 1896 and 1975. The structure, located at 401 N. Division Street, is a two and a half-story Queen Anne frame house with a three-story octagonal tower at the southwest corner. The structure is typical of Salisbury's Newtown neighborhood.

3. *Senator William P. Jackson House, site*: The Senator Jackson House, the site is located at present day 514 Camden Avenue, was significant in the areas of architecture and politics. Built by William P. Jackson in 1892, the house attested to the elegant and elaborate lifestyle of the time. William P. Jackson was appointed United States Senator from Maryland to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Senator Isidor Raynor. He took his seat in the Senate in December 1912. The house was demolished in 1976.

4. *Perry-Cooper House*: The Perry-Cooper House, located at 200 E. William Street, was constructed in 1880 and has the only Victorian French mansard roof remaining in the City of Salisbury. It also retains the architectural details, including a delicate stenciled design, of its exterior. The house was the residence of one of Salisbury's well-known civic leaders, Thomas Perry. An educator, newspaper publisher and editor, financier, industrialist, and official of county government, his family occupied the house from 1897 until 1950.

5. **Poplar Hill Mansion:* Poplar Hill Mansion is the only early dwelling of architectural significance to have survived the devastating fires of 1860 and 1886 in Salisbury. Construction of Poplar Hill started around 1795 by Major Levin Handy, the grantee in a 1795 deed of 357 acres. Located at 117 Elizabeth Street, the house Major Handy financed on his plantation was an ambitious structure that outdistanced most buildings of its time in size and attention to detail. At the time of Major Handy's death, the house was not yet completed. It wasn't until John Huston purchased the house in 1805 and worked on the house until 1828 that the interior woodwork was completed. In more recent times, Poplar Hill was the residence of George W.D. Waller. He occupied the home between 1897 and World War II. During the 1950's, the property was owned by Ward A. and Dorothy Garber. Most recently, the property is owned by the City of Salisbury as a house museum.

6. *Union Station:* Located at the intersection of Elizabeth Street and Railroad Avenue, Salisbury's Union Station is architecturally significant for its embodiment of the characteristics of the Colonial Revival style. Built in 1913-14 near the junction where the New York, Philadelphia & Norfolk Railroad intersected with the Baltimore, Chesapeake and Atlantic Railroad, this Colonial Revival building stands out as the most elaborate passenger facility to survive on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

## *Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) Easement Sites*

In addition to Gillis-Grier House and Poplar Hill Mansion, the following sites are also protected by MHT easements. Through the easement, which is given by the owner in return for income, estate inheritance, gift, or property tax benefits, MHT has approval authority for any proposed modifications to the structure or the area included in the easement.

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## Old Synagogue

This historic building is one of the most distinctive commercial structures on the downtown plaza in Salisbury. The Old Synagogue, located at 300 – 304 W. Main Street, is also known as the H.S. Brewington Building. The pressed brick corner building, lighted by Gothic arched colored glass windows and a distinguished corner tower was built in 1892. Over the course of more than one hundred years, the corner storefronts have housed many businesses and organizations, including the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Salisbury and Masonic Lodge.

## Charles H. Chipman Cultural Center

The Chipman Cultural Center, located at 321 Broad Street, is an historic landmark, the oldest African-American church on the Eastern Shore dating to 1837 when five local freedmen purchased property and built a one-story structure for use as a church, school and meeting place. Formerly known as the John Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church, the building is now a cultural center and small museum honoring the history of African-Americans of the Eastern Shore regional area. Opened in 1994, the Chipman Cultural Center serves its community and its environs. It is operated by the Chipman Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to maintaining the facility and educating the public of the region's rich cultural background and encouraging community support for multi-cultural issues and programs. The building now serves as a church, meeting space and a museum of Salisbury's African-American history.

In the fall of 2009, the Chipman Center with the assistance of Urban Salisbury was a recipient of a Community Legacy grant through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. This grant will be used for façade improvements such as the repainting of the exterior of the building.

## Salisbury City Park

The creation of the park on the east side of the railroad came about slowly as the city officials and residents warmed to the idea in 1909, subsequently plans were soon developed. The bandstand and old foot bridge are two distinctive fixtures in Salisbury's city park. Both of which, were erected with assistance from the Federal government's aid programs created during the lean years of the Depression as a part of a larger effort to improve the park lands following the devastating 1933 storm. The storm caused a failure in the Schumaker Mill dam upstream, and the resulting surge of water washed out early park improvements.

# *Other Historic Sites*

## Elba Stone

The Elba stone is a 3-foot high boundary marker, dating to approximately 1817, that is located along the railroad tracks on Mill Street. It marks the Elba tract which was a 71.25 acre tract of land that was part of the original Salisbury town settlement.

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## *Beach to Bay Heritage Area*

Maryland Heritage Areas are designated as revitalization areas that combine heritage tourism, and small business development with preservation, cultural conservation, recreation, and education. The State of Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) oversees the program and provides matching grants to partnerships and private interests to develop management plans that will help guide public and private investments in the development of tourism. When the plan is adopted, the locale becomes a Certified Heritage Area and its communities and businesses are eligible for targeted financial and technical assistance from the Authority and other state agencies.

The Beach to Bay Heritage Area (BBHA) is a grassroots, non-profit organization whose mission is to promote, preserve and protect the cultural heritage, historical linkages and natural areas of Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore, including Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties. Originally established in 2002 as the Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area, the BBHA has been successful at creating marketing materials that highlight the historic, natural, agricultural, and arts attractions in the area. In August 2022 the BBHA completed a five-year action plan for the FY 2024-2029 period to identify strategies to implement its mission.

The City of Salisbury recognizes the importance of the ongoing effort to evaluate and pursue designation of the Beach to Bay region as a National Heritage Area. The City supports the preservation, interpretation, and promotion of the region's historic, cultural, natural, agricultural, maritime, and recreational resources and encourages consideration of these resources and related heritage tourism, conservation, and community development opportunities within local and regional planning initiatives. The City further acknowledges the potential economic, educational and quality-of-life benefits associated with National heritage Area designation and encourages coordination with neighboring jurisdictions, nonprofit organizations, state agencies, and community partners in advancing the goals and vision of the Beach to Bay Heritage Area initiative.

## *Scenic Byways*

The National Scenic Byways Program is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States.

There are three scenic byways that include sites in Salisbury. The Blue Crab Scenic Byway is 122 miles in length and is a loop around the southern Maryland area, including Salisbury. This byway provides a linkage to the sites, attractions, communities and resources that are culturally significant, historical resources, and provide recreational opportunities for the area. It combines several existing state scenic byways into one primary touring route of the Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area. The byway includes the existing Old Ocean City Scenic Byway (connecting Salisbury to Ocean City); the southernmost portion of the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway (connecting Salisbury with Crisfield), and coexists with a portion of the Beach to the Bay Indian Trail (forming the southern portion of the loop connecting Assateague with Berlin, Snow Hill, Pocomoke City, and Princess Anne with a connecting link to Crisfield).

The second byway is Old Ocean City Road, a designated Maryland State Scenic Byway. This byway connects Salisbury to Ocean City via MD 346 and U.S. Route 50. The Salisbury portion of this byway travels along Old Ocean City Road to Church Street and meanders through Salisbury's Newtown

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Historic District and downtown Salisbury. The byway passes through the rural crossroads of Walston Switch, Parsonsburg, Pittsville, Willards, Whaleyville, St. Martin Neck, and Berlin as it traverses flat farm country and an occasional patch of woods on its destination of Ocean City. The third byway is the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway, which tells the story of water-laced land along the Chesapeake Bay with Victorian towns and waterfront villages. This byway is 85.5 miles in length along the Eastern Shore. The byway extends from Chesapeake City in Cecil County to Crisfield and Ewell in Somerset County, thereby stretching the entire length of the bay on the Eastern Shore. Both the national and state-designated sections of the byway run past many towns. Many of the places listed on the NRHP are located on this Byway.

## Non-profit and Heritage Research Organizations

### *Edward H. Nabb Research Center at Salisbury University*

In 1982, members of the Salisbury University History Department designed a course to prepare students for occupations other than the traditional goal of the school's history majors. The professors designed a course that would make use of the vast and largely untapped Delmarva Peninsula resources as the basis for case studies in the field. Faculty members Ray Thompson and Sylvia Bradley initiated a program to microfilm county court records for the entire region. The Center quickly became a popular repository for material pertaining to the Delmarva Peninsula. The Center collects and preserves archival material, artifacts, family history, maps and microfilms pertaining to the Eastern Shore of Delaware, Maryland and Virginia.

According to the Center's website, their mission is "to cultivate and sustain the advancement of scholarly research through collecting, preserving, disseminating and providing access to records and artifacts which illustrate the rich historical and cultural heritage of the greater Delmarva region."

The Center is endowed by Edward H. Nabb, a Maryland attorney and philanthropist.

### *Friends of Poplar Hill Mansion, Inc.*

Poplar Hill Mansion is an historic house (ca. 1805) owned by the City of Salisbury. The mansion is available to rent for civic and private functions. The Friends of Poplar Hill Mansion, Inc. are a non-profit organization appointed by the Mayor and City Council to maintain and oversee the mansion. The "Friends" upgrade the furnishings as funds become available. Historic seminars, concerts, art and antique exhibits, and related events are also held at the Mansion. In an effort to maintain a relevance of the period when the structure was originally built, the site features interior furnishings and plantings appropriate to the period.

### *Preservation Maryland*

Preservation Maryland is the state's oldest historic preservation organization. Founded in 1931 as the Society for the Preservation of Maryland Antiquities, Preservation Maryland is dedicated to preserving Maryland's historic buildings, neighborhoods, landscapes, and archaeological sites through outreach, funding, and advocacy. Preservation Maryland currently administers The Heritage Fund to support preservation projects and organizations through small grants that are awarded for a variety of purposes - from emergency repairs to case studies.

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## *Wicomico Historical Properties, Inc.*

The purpose of this 501(c)(3) organization is to support the physical preservation of historic structures in Wicomico County. Notable projects include the relocation of the Rockawalkin School, a one-room school house to the grounds of Pemberton Elementary School, the acquisition, restoration and resale of the Old Synagogue building in Salisbury, a loan to Pemberton Hall Foundation and a donation to the Chipman Foundation toward the restoration of the John Wesley Church.

## Cemetery Preservation

Cemeteries and burial grounds are complex cultural landscapes holding information about our social, cultural, artistic, and architectural heritage. Often, historic cemeteries are threatened by overgrowth and neglect. They are often hidden away in woodlands and farm fields.

Maryland law provides protection against disturbance of burial sites and human remains and provides a basis for access. Real Property Article, Titles 14-121 and 14-122 provide a framework for persons of interest to gain access to burial sites while protecting the landowner from liability. Article 66B, Land Use, Subdivision Controls, Title 5.03(d) requires an easement be provided for burial sites located on land that is to be subdivided. Provisions should be established for long-term care of cemeteries/burial sites.

The Salisbury-Wicomico County Department of Planning, Zoning & Community Development houses an Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites.

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# Chapter 6 | Housing

The Housing Chapter provides an analysis of the existing conditions of the City's housing stock, analysis of deficiencies and needs, and recommendations for future decision making. The City aims to provide access to affordable, safe, high quality housing to all residents. High-quality housing should also have access to city services, transportation options, and social, economic, and recreational activities.

Ensuring access to affordable and equitable housing a paramount to achieving a livable city for all. To this end, the City regularly creates an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice and a Consolidated Action Plan to address issues of equity and affordability. This chapter is informed by and references these plans.

## *Goals*

- Promote and encourage safe, decent, and sanitary housing to fulfill the housing needs of current and future residents.
- Improve the quality of housing while offering a variety of housing types to assure that the housing needs of all social and economic segments of the city are met.
- Affirmatively further fair housing to fulfill current and future housing needs.

## *Objectives*

- Provide an adequate supply of decent, safe and sanitary housing choices for families and individuals of all social and economic backgrounds.
- Increase housing and homeownership opportunities for low-income, moderate-income, and fixed-income people.
- Increase housing opportunities for aging in place and people with disabilities.
- Facilitate and reduce barriers to new development and redevelopment.
- Facilitate the maintenance and modernization of existing housing stock.
- Support the expansion of affordable housing opportunities for first-time homebuyers.
- Support housing counseling, down payment and closing cost assistance for first-time low-to-moderate income homebuyers.
- Provide assistance to extremely low-, low-, and moderate-income homeowners for housing rehabilitation.
- Increase and maintain the supply of affordable housing to low- and moderate-income persons, including renters, owner occupants and persons with special needs.
- Encourage accessibility alterations for existing owner-occupied units.
- Increase emergency shelter and transitional housing space for the homeless.
- Support the development of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for the homeless and disabled by non-profit organizations and governmental agencies.
- Develop neighborhoods that incorporate green spaces, recreational areas, and cultural centers to meet the needs of all income levels and demographic groups.

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# *Implementation Strategies*

- Promote neighborhood stabilization and reinvestment in the areas at risk for economic, physical and social decline.
- Promote collaboration between developers and community stakeholder groups to foster engagement and support for new developments.
- Support neighborhood improvements and amenities that promote safety, accessibility, connectivity, and recreational opportunities.
- Allow and encourage new housing with accessory dwelling units.
- Continue renovation and rehabilitation loans and technical assistance to improve the physical quality of existing housing stock.
- Utilize the Capital Improvement Program to revitalize infrastructure, protect residential uses, and demonstrate public commitment and interest in the preservation of such areas.
- Prohibit new industrial and large-scale commercial land uses in areas that are predominately residential and buffer existing incompatible uses.
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of existing buildings for residential use.
- Encourage small scale neighborhood commercial development.
- Consider and implement incentives for providing affordable housing, as appropriate.
- Implement crime prevention through environmental design standards such as lighting and landscape.
- Encourage homeownership by educating residents about the different existing federal, state, and local programs.
- Coordinate and partner with Salisbury University and private developers to provide housing choices for students, serving as an alternative to single-family neighborhoods.
- Review relevant City codes related to development and rental to improve access to alternative housing options while retaining and preserving existing neighborhood character.
- Review the Zoning Code for opportunities to expand and diversify the types of housing permitted in residential zones. Consider form-based code to prescribe architectural design features that are complementary to the local community with flexibility in building use.
- Collaborate with non-profits and developers to accelerate affordable housing initiatives.
- Pursue opportunities to acquire vacant properties to rehabilitate or redevelop underutilized spaces.
- Utilize State and federal resources for affordable housing projects.
- Support the establishment of an inclusive public shelter system that offer a variety of resources to all members of the community.
- Address utility capacity issues to support new developments and explore incentives to make utility hookups more affordable.
- Work closely with local stakeholders, including the university and major employers, to align housing development with broader economic and community goals.
- Consider universal design to increase housing accessibility
- Ensure neighborhood-scale commercial properties have architectural design features, signage, and parking requirements that minimize intrusion and visual impacts within neighborhoods.
- Incentivize renovations and upgrades to existing housing stock to meet evolving needs.
- Provide financial and counseling support for home purchase and rehabilitation.
- Develop affordable rental housing with pathways to homeownership.

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# Housing Stock

According to the 2020 Census, Salisbury has a total of 15,062 housing units. This is an increase of 1661, or 12.4%, from the 2010 census. This has coincided with a population increase of 9% from 2010 to 2020. The City estimates that the population could grow to 50,254 by 2040 if current trends continue. In order to match this growth, units would need to grow by 5,619 units.

The 2023 American Community Survey data estimated that the City had 1,484 vacant housing units, which amounts to 9.9% of the total units. This vacancy rate is down from 10.6% in 2010, but remains higher than the county-wide vacancy rate of 8.4%. The rental vacancy rate of 7.4% is substantially higher than the owner-occupied vacancy rate of 2.6%.

In 2020, 29.5% of units were owner occupied units compared 33.2% in 2010. Thus, the percentage of rental-occupied units grew from 66.8% in 2010 to 70.5% in 2020. This rate is heavily influenced by the fact that students at Salisbury University are overwhelmingly renters. The city can work to reverse this trend by incentivizing home ownership through programs like the City of Salisbury Tax Abatement Program, discussed in the next section. The county skews far heavier towards owner-occupied units, with 59.2% owner-occupied and 40.8% renter-occupied.

In September 2024, HUD release the newest Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data, which is based on ACS 5-year estimates from 2017-2021. This data demonstrates the extent of housing problems and housing needs, particularly for low-income households. In CHAS data tracks 4 housing problems: incomplete kitchen facilities, incomplete plumbing facilities, more than 1 person per room, and cost burden greater than 30%. It also tracks the varying level of housing cost burdens. This data is outlined in the table below.

Table 6-1: City of Salisbury - Housing Problems and Cost Burden

| **Housing Problems Overview** | **Owner** | **Renter** | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|
| At least 1 Housing Problem | 740 (22.1%) | 5035 (51.2%) | 5775 |
| No Housing Problems/Data Unavailable | 2605(77.9%) | 4790 (48.8%) | 7395 |
| **Total** | 3345 | 9825 | 13170 |
| **Housing Cost Burden Overview** | **Owner** | **Renter** | **Total** |
| Cost Burden <= 30% | 2614 (78.2%) | 4940 (50.3%) | 7554 |
| Cost Burden >30% to <= 50% | 335 (10.0%) | 2300 (23.4%) | 2635 |
| Cost Burden >50% | 329 (9.8%) | 2390 (24.3%) | 2719 |
| Cost Burden Not Available | 65 (1.9%) | 200 (20.3%) | 265 |
| **Total** | 3343 | 9830 | 13173 |

Source: Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy, U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development

The data shows that renters are more likely to have housing problems. Renters are more than twice as likely to have any of the 4 housing problems than homeowners. Housing costs are also significantly more burdensome for renters vs. homeowners. Almost 50% of renters report spending more than 30% of their income on housing, and nearly 25% spend over half of their income. This is compared to just under 12% of homeowners spending over 30% of their income and less than 2% spending more than half. This data, along with the fact that Salisbury has significantly more renters than homeowners, demonstrates the need for the city to encourage the ownership of homes and reduce the proportion of renters.

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In late 2021, the City implemented the Here is Home program to offer fee reimbursements to developers that submitted residential projects and met specific deadlines. The program generated 59 agreements and approximately 7800 new housing units. Most of these projects are still in the development and construction process. However, 10 projects have been completed introducing 746 new units into the City's housing supply. The program is scheduled to end in late 2027. It is anticipated that it will result approximately 2100 additional units; just 27% of the total units described in the Here is Home program agreements.

# Housing Programs

## *Housing Assistance*

As of 2023, the City provides 2,280 units of assisted housing. These units are subsidized to ensure that rents remain affordable. All of these units have income requirements, with some having other requirements such as minimum ages. The rents for these units are substantially lower than non-subsidized housing. Some rents are calculated using area median income, while others are based on the individual incomes of the tenants. Many of these units are specifically intended for use by disabled or elderly people. The funding for these units comes from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, the State Department of Housing, and Section 8.

There are numerous other programs available to assist low-income people in finding housing. These include:

Habitat for Humanity of Wicomico County

- Can construct homes for those in need.
- Funded by donations.
- Built by volunteers and "sweat equity" of the homeowners.

Salisbury Neighborhood Housing Services Inc.

- Offers services including home purchasing loans, renovation loans, foreclosure prevention, and financial counseling.

City of Salisbury Tax Abatement Program

- Requires converting a rental unit into an owner-occupied unit.
- Allows abatement of city property taxes for the first 5 years and a ramp up to the standard rate over the next 4 years.

Maryland Mortgage Program

- Income based program for first time home buyers that provides access to low-interest rate mortgage loans.

## Special Needs Population

Special needs populations include the elderly, persons with physical, development or mental disability, persons with AIDS, and persons with drug/alcohol addiction. While Salisbury serves as the focal point for service providers, this population is provided housing and supporting services through State, County and private non-profit service providers in Salisbury. The primary provider of supporting housing and services to this population is the Maryland Department of Health (DHMH) through its Development Disabilities Administration (DDA), and the County Health Department. The Holly Center, operator by the Maryland Department of Health, provides comprehensive healthcare services to individuals with disabilities. The Wicomico Health and Social Services Departments provide funding and licensing supervision for community residential programs for

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persons with mental and physical illness and service to all special need populations in Salisbury. The Wicomico Health Department also refers persons with HIV/AIDS or alcohol/ drug addiction problems to local non-profit service organizations.

The major provider for Wicomico and Salisbury's elderly is Maintaining Active Citizens (MAC) Incorporated or the State's Regional Area Agency on Aging. MAC works with numerous local organizations, including the Alzheimer's Association, Genesis Eldercare, Holly Community, Shore Up!, United Way, Wicomico County Health and Social Services Departments, local businesses and others. They have been providing housing services to seniors, particularly the congregate housing service and Senior Assisted Housing Program.

Accessible housing for the elderly and physically handicapped is one of the highest-ranking housing needs. A staff survey determined that there are only approximately 400 accessible, affordable housing units within the City of Salisbury. While we don't know exact numbers of residents that have special needs, we know that 23%, approximately 7,609 residents, of the City's population in 2023 was 55+. Although many of these individuals maybe aging in place and not putting additional demand on affordable and accessible housing, it is a strong indicator that accessible or adaptable housing needs to be required or incentivized in new development proposals.

Similarly, the public service needs of the elderly rank highest, followed by the service needs of the disabled and those with alcohol and drug problems. The City plans to continue to provide accessibility improvements to elderly homeowners, as well as support applications for financial assistance by service providers for rehabilitation and/or construction of a training facility and one or two group homes or facilities for three to ten persons with special needs.

### Homeless Needs

The homeless in Salisbury and Wicomico County are assisted primarily by non-profit organizations and local ministries providing shelter and various services.

Wicomico, Somerset, and Worcester counties conduct a combined Point-In-Time count of the homeless population each year. In 2025, the three counties reported a total of 283 homeless with 47 chronically homeless. It is assumed that as the largest urban area in area, a substantial amount of the homeless population was counted in Salisbury. Thus, there is a need for additional shelters, as well as permanent supportive housing. In addition to the housing needs, the survey indicated a need for dental care, medical care, transportation, medical assistance, and job training, as high priorities.

## *Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing*

As an entitlement community under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant, an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing must be conducted every five years. This analysis is accompanied by a Consolidated Action Plan. This analysis examines what barriers to fair housing exist and how they can be addressed. The City most recently conducted this analysis in 2024. It focuses on 6 fundamental conditions in the area:

- The sale or rental of dwellings.
- The provision of housing brokerage services.
- The provision of financial assistance for dwellings.

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- Regulations on the construction of publicly assisted housing.
- Policies which impact the ability of minority households to obtain housing without restriction.
- When an instance of discrimination is found to have occurred, actions that can be taken to remedy said instance.

Through this analysis, the City developed the following key findings:

- Lack of affordable housing for all income levels
- Lack of new housing construction to meet housing demand, particularly for owner-occupied units.
- The housing stock is older and in need to rehabilitation.
- Some areas with higher minority populations tend to have lower incomes.
- There are substantially more rental units than owner-occupied units.
- There is a lack of zoning provisions that improve access to fair housing.
- Communication issues exist for non-English speakers.

These findings informed the identification of five impediments to fair housing. The City developed a series of goals and strategies to address these five impediments. These goals and strategies are reflected in the beginning of this chapter.

## Impediment 1: Need for Fair Housing Education and Outreach

Goal: Improve the public's knowledge and awareness of the Fair Housing Act and other fair-housing related regulations.

Strategies:

- Educate residents, real estate professionals, banking professionals, and city decision makers on their rights and responsibilities with relation to fair housing regulations.
- Support fair housing organizations and legal advocacy groups to assist people who are victims of housing discrimination.
- Provide translation and comprehension assistance to non-English speakers.

## Impediment 2: Need for Affordable Housing

Goal: Increase access to a variety of quality affordable housing.

Strategies:

- Support private developers and non-profits in creating affordable mixed-income housing through new construction or rehabilitation of existing stock.
- Support the rehabilitation of existing housing units for households earning below 80% of the median household income.
- Support education and provide payment assistance to potential home-owners, especially for minority groups.
- Support maintenance training programs to encourage healthy rental units.
- Support organizations that serve low- and medium-income communities in developing relationships with landlords to expand the supply of affordable rental units.
- Support strategies to inform marginalized groups of new affordable housing opportunities.
- Support community led initiatives that create quality affordable housing.

## Impediment 3: Need for Accessible Housing

Goal: Increase the supply of quality, affordable, accessible housing for people with disabilities.

Strategies:

- Support private developers and non-profits in the construction of accessible housing.
- Provide financial assistance for in-home accessibility improvements.

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- Ensure landlords adhere to the ADA requirements to make “reasonable accommodations” to ensure accessibility.

## Impediment 4: Public Policy

Goal: Revise the zoning ordinance to promote the development of various types of affordable housing throughout the city.

Strategies:

- Revise the zoning ordinance to adopt fair housing provisions for reasonable accommodations, transit-oriented development, and regional cooperation.
- Implement incentives that encourage developers and other housing providers to offer more affordable housing options in the city.
- Encourage participation of marginalized communities in city boards and commissions.

## Impediment 5: Regional Approach to Fair Housing

Goal: Form a regional fair housing consortium to advance fair housing initiatives in the area.

Strategies:

- Form a partnership with existing organizations to encourage fair housing choice and projects.
- Establish and maintain a regional database of quality affordable housing.
- Collaborate with developers and providers to implement fair housing and de-concentration policies.

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# Chapter 7 | Transportation

Salisbury's strategic location has earned it the title of the "Crossroads of Delmarva." Positioned at the junction of two major highways—U.S. Route 13 and U.S. Route 50—Salisbury serves as the primary transportation hub for Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore. The city is home to the Port of Salisbury, Maryland's second-largest port by tonnage, a vital asset for regional commerce. Additionally, Salisbury benefits from a north-south rail line and the Salisbury-Ocean City Wicomico Regional Airport, which provides both commercial and passenger air services.

These transportation assets make Salisbury a key link between major metropolitan areas, offering strong regional connections to Baltimore, Annapolis, and Washington, D.C. to the west; Wilmington and Philadelphia to the north; Norfolk to the south; and Ocean City and other coastal destinations to the east.



Figure 7-1: Recently reconstructed streetscape with traffic calming on Main Street in downtown

The City of Salisbury owns and maintains 185.2 centerline miles of city streets, while the state of Maryland is responsible for maintaining designated state highways, as shown in Map 7-1 in Appendix A.

In recent years, there has been a strong focus—at federal, state, and local levels—on creating safer, more accessible transportation options for all users while maintaining a robust level of service. This chapter outlines key planning objectives and implementation strategies designed to enhance Salisbury's transportation network, which aim to address current and future mobility needs, ensuring safe, efficient transportation options for all residents.

## Goals

- Develop a well-integrated, multimodal transportation network that ensures the safe, convenient, and efficient movement of people and goods between residential, commercial, educational, and recreational areas.

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- Enhance connectivity for both residents and visitors throughout the city and the surrounding region.
- Prioritize transportation for safety for all users, especially vulnerable road users.

## Objectives

- Develop and expand the existing transportation system in a manner that does not adversely impact the community and neighborhood integrity or environmental amenities.
- Support the development and expansion of public transportation and other forms of motorized and non-motorized transportation to reduce traffic congestion
- Encourage the participation and cooperation of all interested and affected parties in the transportation planning process and roadway improvements, and the public, to ensure that a well-planned and coordinated transportation system is developed.
- Where possible and appropriate, improve existing roads and highways and build new linkages to support the City of Salisbury's Land Use Plan and Municipal Growth Element.
- Ensure that appropriate measures and improvements are proportionally funded by developers when it is determined that new development will create a traffic or safety hazard or necessitate traffic enhancements.

## Implementation Strategies

- Continue to coordinate with Shore Transit and the Maryland Transit Authority to expand and enhance the existing public transportation system and to increase connectivity within the City.
- Encourage the continued expansion and improvement of the Salisbury-Ocean City: Wicomico Regional Airport as a primary facility serving a multi-county and tri-state region.
- Encourage the provision of bike racks on all transit buses, and at publicly-owned facilities
- Continue to coordinate with the Maryland State Highway Administration during the planning and design of State Highway improvements in Salisbury, and in the surrounding area, to ensure that these roadways will function as important components of the local transportation system.
- Incorporate recommendations contained in the Corridor Studies prepared by the Salisbury/Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization that address improvements to the City's transportation system.
- Consider the adoption of a Level of Service Policy for the City to follow to ensure that proposed development does not negatively affect a roadway to a significant degree, unless mitigation is funded by the developer or through planned improvements included in the City's capital programs.
- Ensure that Rail Rights of Way are maintained and, should they become abandoned, consider their use as bike and pedestrian paths.
- Work with relevant authorities to encourage the establishment of an intermodal transportation hub to serve as a consolidated regional transfer center for passengers using the airport, local/regional bus service, rental cars, and carpooling.
- Support the efforts of the Delmarva Water Transport Committee and Wicomico County in the Wicomico River maintenance projects and in the selection of future spoil disposal sites.
- Continue to provide support for the rehabilitation and development of the Port of Salisbury to encourage additional waterborne traffic serving the City of Salisbury and the region.
- Support the preservation and revitalization of the Delmarva rail system.
- Continue to actively participate in the membership of the Salisbury/Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- Coordinate with emergency management agencies and local and state jurisdictions to develop an emergency transportation plan and maintain emergency routes.

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- Provide designated truck routes to accommodate freight movements and reduce freight traffic in residential areas and downtown streets.
- Encourage clustered commercial development with shared driveway access and internal travel networks. During the redevelopment of commercial properties, separate access drives should be consolidated to minimize the number of conflicts whenever possible.
- Proactively conduct studies along roadways at intersections of concern and implement appropriate upgrades to improve safety.
- Improve accessibility to all bicycle and pedestrian trails and facilities
- Identify locations to link existing City trails to the extensive network of the Wicomico County trail system
- Conserve, maintain, and enhance existing sidewalks and pedestrian crossings throughout the City.
- Review and revise city street standards to allow greater control over how the transportation network develops, how streets get built out, prioritize safety and connectivity
- Implement a fee-in-lieu policy to more effectively collect developer contributions to transportation infrastructure improvements, where appropriate.
- Create a plan for the creation and management of Parking in the Central Business District that addresses near, mid, and long-term needs.
- Implement mandatory speed reductions and targeted enforcement on high-crash corridors, where possible.
- Prioritize capital projects based on existing crash, rates and anticipated crash reduction, in addition to other factors such as environmental constraints and funding availability.
- Work with Wicomico County Board of Education and County government to develop safe pedestrian routes to school, particularly for school children that are required to walk to school.

## Roadway Safety and Improvements

Roadways are the primary linkages in the City's transportation network. They are what most residents see and utilize during their everyday lives. In addition to carrying automobiles, Salisbury's roadways support people walking, biking, taking transit, or moving about the City.

While the City's efforts have been relatively effective on City streets, many of the City's safe street projects have gaps in protection where they intersect with state-owned roadways due to jurisdictional differences. This is not uncommon for cities to encounter; it is also not an insurmountable issue. All roadway projects and policy proposals are primarily recommended and prioritized through the lens of safety and the City's goals to significantly reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries, even on State roads.

As the City develops, already highly trafficked roads will be further impacted by additional residents and visitors. The City will need developers to provide support in the form of traffic improvements coincident with their projects. The City should also work on a long-term strategy to identify roads that should have limited access points to create higher speed connections and local streets that require improvements to be safer and more accommodating to pedestrians.

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# Capital Projects

## Immediate (1-5 years)

- Citywide Vision Zero Rapid Safety Improvements is a proposed federally funded project that will install safety and traffic calming measures across local city residential streets that have suffered from high speeds.

- Citywide Pedestrian Signal and Crossing Beacons Upgrades is a proposed federally funded project to install pedestrian signals at high-volume City-controlled intersections, and pedestrian flashing beacons at uncontrolled crossings near parks and schools.

- Fitzwater-Parsons Road Safety Improvements is a proposed federally funded project for safety improvements along the busy corridor.

- Six Points Roundabout will dramatically improve upon one of the most inefficient and poorly designed intersections in the City. The major roadways of E Main Street, Mt. Hermon Road, Truitt Street, and Long Avenue all come together, as does the smaller side street of E William Street. The roundabout conversion will calm traffic to safe speeds, prevent queuing, and increase safety for all users.

- Jasmine Drive Completion is intended to create a parallel alternative to US 13 business from Naylor Mill Rd to E North Pointe Drive. Portions of the roadway have already been constructed and completion would take strain off the nearby signals at US 13, provide safer routes for people walking and biking, and open additional land for development. This project is primarily developer-funded.

- Glen Avenue Road Diet is a Wicomico County-led project – Glen Avenue is one of several streets that are split in ownership between the City and County. The project would remove travel lanes on Glen Ave, which were built to support a shopping mall that no longer exists. These lanes could be redesigned to include various features to accommodate all users.

- Replacement of Naylor Mill Rd Bridge is a project that is nearing completion of the design phase. The structure is one of the last wood-frame and deck bridges in the state, which is not a legacy, historical structure. Originally annexed into the City when Naylor Mill Road had far less traffic, the aging bridge has become obsolete and lacks pedestrian and bike accommodations. It will soon be replaced and include a side path provision.

- Mill Street Bridge Deck Replacement will update the deck and wearing surface of one of the busiest bridges in Salisbury. The project will include bridge modernization and improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

- Sidewalk and ADA Improvements should be implemented along roads throughout the city to enhance safety, accessibility, and connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists. Improvements along corridors such as Naylor Mill Road would help resolve long-standing safety concerns in areas that currently lack pedestrian and bicycle accommodations.

## Mid-Term (6-10 years)

- Culver Road exists currently as a used, but unimproved/gravel roadway. Completion of the roadway to include paved surfacing and an accompanying side path is intended to provide traffic relief to the Parsons Rd – Pemberton Drive Signal, and provide additional emergency

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service access to the shopping center adjacent to the site. From a safety standpoint, the roadway delivers a much lower volume and short distance option for people walking and biking to access the shopping center and its anchor supermarket.

- Eastern Shore Drive & W College Avenue Roundabout is part of a larger series of projects designed to increase safety for all users of Eastern Shore Drive and bridge the gap between the Presidents-Princeton neighborhoods to the east and the Downtown and University areas to the west. This project would create calmer traffic and provide safer crossing for people walking and biking in this pedestrian and cyclist-heavy area.

- Eastern Shore Drive Promenade Project Originally envisioned as a "business-friendly" highway, Eastern Shore Drive instead served as little more than a barrier to the Presidents-Princeton Community, preventing residents there from safely reaching the Downtown and University Districts and TidalHealth Hospital. The Promenade project will convert the corridor into a safer local collector street, with ample green space to catalyze the surrounding community's transition to a mixed-use neighborhood that provides for its residents, rather than serving as a barrier.

- Salisbury Rail Trail envisions a 5.4-mile separated path for people walking and biking in Salisbury. It is intended to be the core of a future extended trail system. The proposed route runs north-south and largely parallels the active freight railway, allowing it to serve as a main pedestrian and cycling route from Delmar in the north, through Downtown, to TidalHealth Hospital and Salisbury University, to Fruitland in the south.

- Riverwalk Expansion should continue throughout the Downtown, Riverside, Fitzwater, and City Park neighborhoods. The Riverwalk provides an opportunity to develop a separated path for non-motorized users along one of the City's most attractive elements. Currently, the path runs alongside the water and features a decorative concrete surface. As the trail extends beyond the Downtown area, it would benefit from a slightly wider design, a small buffer from the river, and a transition to a smoother, brushed surface that is both cost-effective and more comfortable for cyclists.

- North Pointe Drive Extension is planned to proceed both east and west. East of US 13, the extension could extend to Brown Road, enhancing connectivity and supporting development in the area. To the west, it would continue from its current endpoint behind Wal-Mart, linking to the planned extensions of Northgate Drive, and Northwood Drive. All enhancements should be partially funded by developers.

- Parsons Lake Drive Extension should occur as land in this area is developed. The roadway should extend to Brown Road over time as the project gets built out and partially funded as part of the private development projects.

### Long-term (11+ years)

- E Main Street, Snow Hill Road, and Ward Street Realignment is a safety-oriented project intended to bring Snow Hill Road and Ward Street into alignment and remove the offset intersection configuration that currently exists. Further study is needed to determine if realignment to a standard four-way intersection, or a roundabout variant, is preferable, because Snow Hill Road serves as an official emergency vehicle alternate & State-planned emergency detour to US 13 Business.

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- New River Crossing the New River Crossing project aims to reduce traffic congestion in Downtown Salisbury.

- Middle Neck Drive Extension Currently, Middle Neck Drive ends at Beaglin Park Drive, but future development plans extend it past Parker Road to Tilghman Road. This extension will help ease congestion on Old Ocean City Road and Merritt Mill Road. While the area is currently part of the county, it falls within the city's urban growth boundary.

- Glen Avenue Extension The plan aims to extend the roadway east to Tilghman Road, further expanding the street grid into developing areas. Part of this extension was set aside during the Gunby's Mill subdivision development. While the area is currently within the county, it lies entirely within the city's urban growth boundary.

- Emerson Avenue Alternate Connection The plan aims to create an alternate route from Deer's Head Hospital and Poet's Colony Subdivision to US 13 Business. Currently, traffic must take a long route via Emerson Avenue and Union Avenue. The project could involve a new street and rail crossing or, more likely, be combined with the Beam Street extension to improve access while limiting new rail crossings.

- Beam Street Extension The project aims to expand Salisbury's street grid. Currently, Beam Street is a short access road serving a few properties in the industrial park. Restoring this access would improve emergency response, provide a quicker route to Northwood Drive for businesses, and create a shorter path for pedestrians and cyclists commuting in the area.

- E Main Street, Civic Avenue, and Moss Hill Lane Realignment The project aims to fix an offset intersection. As the area redevelops, the Right-of-Way should be secured, and development fees should fund the realignment. A feasibility study will determine whether a four-way intersection or a roundabout is the best option.

- Northwood Drive Extension is intended to create a parallel alternative to US 13 business and extend developable land area by reaching from Naylor Mill Road, where Northwood stops currently, to Foskey Lane in Delmar. Construction and completion would take strain off the nearby signals at US 13, provide safer routes for people walking and biking, and open additional land for development. This project is intended to be primarily developer-funded.

- Northgate Drive Extension is intended to create a parallel alternative to US 13 business from Naylor Mill Road to a future extension of Dagsboro Road. The proposed road would be located behind existing commercial developments on the west side of US 13 Business, offering improved emergency access and primarily relying on developer funding.

- Dagsboro Road Extension is intended to create a connection to span from the current termination at Chili's Way on the west side of US 13 Business and join with the future extensions of Northgate Drive and Northwood Drive, to provide alternative access routes. The proposed road would be situated just north of the existing commercial developments on the west side of US 13 Business and primarily funded by developers.

- US 13 Business Boulevard Conversion is a project, or a series of projects that seek to convert the highway-style US 13 Business to an urban boulevard within the urban center.

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## Public Transit

Public transit provides significant benefits to the communities it serves. In Wicomico County, where 13.8% of residents live below the federal poverty line (U.S. Census Bureau), many residents lack reliable access to a personal vehicle. For these individuals, Shore Transit is essential for reaching jobs, healthcare, and grocery stores beyond walking or biking distance. Additionally, transit services are far more environmentally friendly and efficient than personal vehicles—one bus carrying 30–40 passengers has a much smaller impact on air quality and traffic congestion than the same number of individual cars.

Public transit in Salisbury is currently provided exclusively by Shore Transit, a regional agency managed by the Tri-County Council of the Lower Eastern Shore. Serving not only Salisbury and Wicomico County but also Somerset and Worcester Counties, this regional approach has both advantages and challenges.

One key benefit is the ability for riders to travel across the region with a single fare, a level of route coordination that larger cities often struggle to achieve due to multiple transit agencies. However, this regional focus also comes at a cost. Shore Transit operates on a limited budget and prioritizes long, looped rural routes over high-frequency local service in Salisbury. The absence of reliable public transit within the city is a significant issue for many City residents.

## Air Transportation/SBY Airport

Established in 1940 by local aviation pioneers and leased to the U.S. Navy during World War II, the Salisbury-Ocean City-Wicomico Regional Airport (SBY) is presently Maryland's second-largest airport. Spanning over 1,000 acres with two runways exceeding 5,000 feet, SBY supports regional jet travel and has announced plans to extend its primary runway to 7,000 feet to accommodate future aviation needs. As the only commercial passenger airport in the region, SBY plays a vital role in supporting business growth, workforce development, and the leisure travel industry.

Although located outside Salisbury's city limits and growth boundary, the County-run airport benefits from the City's municipal infrastructure. In 2023, Salisbury completed a water main extension to the airport, followed by a natural gas extension from Chesapeake Utilities in 2024—both aimed at meeting the growing needs of business park tenants. SBY has also recently expanded its educational and workforce-development footprint with the opening of the UMES FAA Part 147–certified Aviation Maintenance Technician School in August 2025, launched in partnership with Wicomico County, the State of Maryland, Piedmont Airlines, and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. The program's first cohort of 15 students is now training toward A&P certification, enhancing the region's aviation talent pipeline. Other recent developments include a drone services facility and designated small Unmanned Aerial Systems (sUAS) flight areas, reflecting the airport's focus on future growth and innovation in aviation technology.

SBY is home to Piedmont Airlines, a wholly owned subsidiary of American Airlines, operating Express regional routes to Philadelphia International Airport and Charlotte Douglas International Airport—both major hubs that connect travelers to domestic and international destinations.

Recently, discussions have emerged regarding the addition of a third airport service at SBY. While no destination has been finalized, Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) in Alexandria, Virginia, has been a primary focus of public interest. As an American Airlines hub, this route would establish a direct connection between Salisbury and the National Capital Region, enhancing travel options for business and government commuters. Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) has also been considered; however, its lack of American Airlines hub status makes service there less likely unless another carrier chooses to operate from SBY. Notably, Breeze Airways was recently added to SBY's list of carriers, signaling potential for expanded service opportunities in the future.

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A 2021 Leakage and Retention Study by Volaire Aviation Consulting, commissioned by SBY Airport, provided insight into regional air travel patterns. The study, publicly available through the Salisbury-Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization, found that SBY captures 15.5% of regional air traffic. Key factors influencing this trend include limited public awareness of SBY as a viable travel option and the dominance of Southwest Airlines, which operates a major hub at BWI. As Southwest leads the domestic air travel market, many travelers opt to drive to BWI rather than consider flights from SBY. See **Table 7-1** for a comparison of services offered at SBY for the 2008-2023 period.

**Table 7-1: Air Traffic Services vs 2008**

| | 2023 | 2008 |
|---|---|---|
| Aircraft Operations | Avg. 156/day | Avg. 108/day |
| Transient General Aviation | 32% | 36% |
| Local General Aviation | 29% | 30% |
| Military | 27% | 18% |
| Air Taxi | 12% | N/A |

Source: Salisbury Airport

## Port of Salisbury

Like the airport, the Port of Salisbury plays a crucial role in regional transportation and commerce. It is the second-largest port in Maryland by tonnage and one of the largest riverine ports east of the Mississippi. Serving as a key freight hub for the Delmarva Peninsula, the port primarily handles bulk goods such as fuel, construction materials, and agricultural products, with much of the cargo moving between Salisbury and the Port of Baltimore. However, the port is not currently equipped to handle containerized or unitized cargo.

The Port of Salisbury and its navigational channel on the Wicomico River are vital economic assets. A 2021 feasibility report examined the potential for a multi-user terminal to support various industries. The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers maintains the channel as long as the port remains “economically significant,” meaning it must handle at least one million tons of cargo annually. Falling below this threshold may result in the loss of support, limiting vessel access, and threatening the port's viability. This would increase freight traffic on regional roads, impacting congestion, safety, and air quality. An economic impact study sourced by Salisbury-Wicomico Economic Development dated October 2025 provides analysis that supports the continued efforts to maintain the viability of the port with improvements that will increase usage.

Currently, the designation "Port of Salisbury" refers to a collective of privately-owned terminals that coordinate informally through the Delmarva Water Transport Committee (DWTC), a nonprofit organization. While this arrangement works for existing operators, the lack of a public multi-user facility prevents smaller businesses from accessing river freight services due to cost and seasonal usage limitations. A shared-use terminal would offer affordable access through temporary leasing, lowering barriers for businesses unable to justify the expense of individual terminals.

## Rail

Rail transport has long played a key role in Salisbury’s history, once connecting the city to Baltimore, Wilmington, and beyond. As cars and highways became more popular, passenger rail declined, leaving only freight service or abandoned tracks. However, interest in rail travel has been

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growing again and the City should consider supporting any future passenger rail projects connecting the Lower Shore with larger cities in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States.

## Public Parking

Parking is mostly on-street and at City-owned properties. The City's Zoning Code currently requires most development to provide off-street parking to meet demand generated for parking by the proposal. This helps to prevent demand from exceeding on-street parking availability.

### Downtown

Those living downtown need to maintain vehicles in order to get around the City. The City anticipates a parking shortage in the future due to the demand from downtown residents, combined with demand from those who work in or visit. While the City previously had a surplus of surface parking downtown, as new developments are constructed over existing parking lots developers will need to provide adequate parking so that the City's street parking, public parking garage, and remaining lots are not strained beyond capacity. Over time the need for parking downtown may evolve, depending upon redevelopment and availability of public transportation. Independent parking studies should be done periodically to monitor the demand on the City's public parking.

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# Chapter 8 | Community Facilities

As the City of Salisbury's population continues to grows, the Community Facility chapter is a guide intended to establish, maintain, and deliver community facilities and services. Facilities include:

- Police;
- Schools;
- Fire, Rescue and Emergency;
- Parks and Recreation Areas;
- Sewerage;
- Water Systems; and
- Garbage Collection.

The 2010 Comprehensive Plan estimated Salisbury's population would grow to 40,085 residents by 2030, but Salisbury's population is now projected to be 44,874 by 2040. There is potential for the population to grow even more rapidly, based on the amount of new housing development currently ongoing in the city. This forecast estimates that the city's population could exceed 50,000 by 2040. As the city's population increase, so will the people's need for efficient and adequate services.

## *Goals*

- Provide community facilities that will ensure an adequate level of public services to all residents of the City of Salisbury.
- Maintain and make efficient use of the existing community facilities.
- Expand the existing community facilities to meet the needs of the expected growth in population.

## *Objectives*

- Provide adequate management and disposal of all non-hazardous waste materials generated within the City of Salisbury in an efficient and environmentally sound manner.
- Increase availability of recreational areas to improve the quality of life within the City.
- Provide an array of accessible and adequate recreational facilities and programs throughout the City.
- Work toward/plan for an open space network along rivers and branches that traverse residential and other developed areas to establish an interconnected open space network.
- Increase the accessibility of publicly owned community gathering spaces such as schools, fire stations, libraries and parks.
- Continue to support the Wicomico County Board of Education's as enrollment rates increase.
- Provide adequate water, sewer, and storm drainage systems to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all City residents.
- Ensure that the costs associated with providing sufficient public water and sewerage system facilities are equitably distributed between public and private sectors.
- Establish an interconnected open space network along rivers and waterways that traverse natural, residential, and developed areas of the City.

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## *Implementation Strategies*

- Map key community facilities with respect to their location on roadways, bikeways and pedestrian networks and identify capital projects or developer exactions to create necessary linkages throughout the City.
- Partner with nonprofits to promote reduction, reuse, and recycling awareness and education for City residents to eliminate as many waste items as possible.
- Develop public facilities that are minimally disruptive to the environment during construction and operation that incorporate sustainable site and green building guidelines.
- Preserve open spaces and provide a system of green corridors along the riverbanks through the City for recreational use and as wildlife habitat.
- Require all residential developers to provide adequate active and passive green and open space for the developing neighborhood to reduce the strain on existing public facilities.
- Consider methods to ensure adequate public facilities, such as an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance or the establishment and implementation of Impact Fees for Fire, Police, Parks, and Municipal Facilities to offset the costs to the City for providing public services and infrastructure improvements as a result of new development.
- Continue providing development information to the Wicomico County Board of Education to assist in the planning of educational facilities that are adequate in size to accommodate the anticipated enrollment in their service areas.
- Continue to coordinate with Wicomico County Parks and Recreation and ensure adequate recreational facilities are available.
- Monitor water and sewer use and prepare a Water & Sewerage Allocation Master Plan as needed to address increasing demand and future allocation requirements.
- Conduct a rate study for water, sewer, and stormwater utilities to ensure equitable and self-sufficient enterprise fund structures.
- Update the city's Stormwater Management Ordinance after new State stormwater regulations are issued.
- Require all development to provide water quality treatment, water quantity control, and green open space.
- Implement best management practices to reduce trash, floatables, and other debris from entering waterways.
- Encourage service clubs and other organizations to assist in landscaping with native plantings and performing maintenance of recreational trails and open spaces, including green infrastructure and landscaping n road rights-of-way.
- Support County waste management efforts with recycling and increasing landfill capacity.
- Track Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Building Energy Performance Standards (BESS) and long-term needs for all City-owned properties.

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# *Utilities and Public Services*

## Police

The City of Salisbury Police Department is a Nationally Accredited Law Enforcement Agency. The Salisbury Police Department currently staffs 103 commissioned officers and 30 civilians, a citizen ratio of approximately 3 officers for every 1,000 residents. The City will strive to maintain this level of service in the future. In an effort to meet this standard, an additional 17 officers are needed to maintain the officer-citizen ratio for a population of 50,254.

The Salisbury Police Department splits into three bureaus (i.e. administration, services and operations). The divisions of the department include animal control, K-9, tactical, criminal investigation, community affairs, negotiations and internal investigations.

The department will continue to make efficient use of their facilities to ensure an adequate level of public services to all residents of the City of Salisbury, expanding if necessary.

## Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Medical Services

The Salisbury Fire Department operates three fire stations and is comprised of 102 career personnel and 41 volunteers. The department covers an area of 48 square miles that includes the City of Salisbury and surrounding areas (i.e. Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia) providing fire, emergency medical services (EMS), technical rescue, and special operation services on a 24/7-day basis. Currently, fire and emergency services are provided to the Greater Salisbury area.

The SFD's capital apparatus inventory includes the following: four engines; one engine-tanker, one tower ladder/aerial; two ladder trucks; one heavy rescue; six advanced life support state certified ambulances; one brush unit; one Dive Rescue Unit; one HAZMAT/CBRNE vehicle; one spill response trailer; two marine vessels; and one command unit.

The department will continue to make efficient use of their facilities to ensure an adequate level of public services to all residents of the City of Salisbury, expanding if necessary. In planning of fire and emergency services, research on response time and equipment capabilities ensures that short response time and adequate service level is maintained or improved over time.

## Solid Waste Management & Recycling

The City of Salisbury provides waste management services to many of its residents. For single-family homes, trash and recycling are collected once a week and require the use of a standard 95-gallon trash can purchased from the City. Curbside recycling is a free service to all City of Salisbury residents who utilize the city's once a week trash collection. Multi-unit complexes are typically equipped with a common trash disposal area and are serviced three times per week. Due to recent rapid development, trash service for most new development in the City has private trash service. In addition to waste management and recycling services, the city also operates street sweepers for removing a variety of litter, debris, and pollutants from the road surface.

The City of Salisbury and local counties utilize the Newland Park Landfill, which is operated by Wicomico County and near capacity. As the city's population grows the city must plan for the increasing need for trash and recycling services.

## Water

The drinking water system for the City of Salisbury is a municipally owned and operated system consisting of two water plants located in the City Park (Park Water Treatment Plant) and on Naylor Mill Road (Paleo Water Treatment Plant). The Park Water Treatment Plant withdraws water from the Salisbury Aquifer and the Paleo Treatment Plant receives its source water from the Paleochannel. Both aquifer systems are partially overlain by discontinuous confining layers, so the Salisbury Aquifer and the Paleochannel refer generally to the same aquifer, which the USGS refers to as a surficial aquifer. Depending on the report or study, the aquifer has been referred to as the Columbia Aquifer, Quaternary Aquifer, Pleistocene Aquifer, Beaverdam sand, red-gravelly sand, and the Pensauken formation.

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The Salisbury Department of Water Works is responsible for the operation of the municipal water system. The facilities are permitted by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to withdraw up to 7.6 million gallons of water per day (MGD) from 12 production wells. The two treatment facilities have a combined future capacity of approximately 14.0 MGD with the maximum capacity for each facility of 4.0 MGD at the Park plant and 10.0 MGD at the Paleo plant after the upgrade is complete in 2029. Based on the actual flows over the past ten years, the highest annual average was 6.12 MGD in 2017 and the lowest annual consumption of 5.03 MGD in 2022. As discussed in the Water Resources Element (WRE), the average water consumption including residential, commercial and industrial demands was 5.24 MGD in 2024. The maximum daily flow over the past 10 years was 8.74 MGD in September 2018. Overall, the City water treatment facilities will be able to accommodate the projected future demands based on current capacity and planned expansions.

To provide water service to the City and the adjacent services areas within Wicomico County, the City's potable water distribution system is comprised of high service pumps that discharge treated water into the distribution system and storage facilities. The distribution system consists of a network of mains that vary in size from 4 inches to 30 inches that extend over a hundred miles. In addition to the distribution network, the City has three elevated storage tanks (2 million gallon (MG) tank at Salisbury University on Power Street, 0.5 MG tank at Edgemore Avenue, and 0.5 MG tank Wor-Wic Community College), a 1.0 MG at grade tank at the Paleo Water Treatment Plant, a 1.0 MG underground tank at Paleo WTP, and 0.5 MG underground reservoirs at Park WTP with a combined storage capacity of 5.5 million gallons, however 250,000 gallons of storage is used at each WTP for plant operations and is not typically counted in storage calculations. 500,000 gallons of storage will be removed from the system when the Edgemore tank is demolished. The Capital Improvements Plan includes a new elevated tower on the west side of the City that will be 1 MG and is planned for construction within the next 5 years. An additional elevated storage tank is projected to be needed on the east side of the City in the next 10 years. MDE's goal is to have one day of water demand in elevated storage tanks.

The Department of Water Works is planning for an upcoming expansion at the Paleo WTP including increased treatment to treat emerging contaminants. The City's Capital Improvements Plan also includes decommissioning the Edgemore Avenue elevated storage tank, constructing a new elevated storage tank on the west side of the City, installing water main extensions to create loops in the system which help the distribution system water pressure and water age, and installing new water meters as part of the automatic meter reading system.

Additional information about the drinking water system including an assessment of the impacts of potential future growth and development are discussed in the WRE of this Plan. Information about wellhead protection areas is contained in the Sensitive Areas Element.

## Wastewater

The City of Salisbury owns and operates a sanitary sewerage collection system and a complex Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) located on Marine Road. The Salisbury WWTP serves all properties in the City, as well as out-of-town customers in service areas in the County located in close proximity to the corporate boundary of Salisbury.

The most recent Salisbury WWTP upgrade and expansion was successfully completed in 2019. With this upgrade, the WWTP increased to a rated capacity of 8.5 MGD and improved treatment technology to an Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) system. The treatment upgrade significantly

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decreased the amount of nutrient and sediment contributions being discharged into the Wicomico River. As the service area population continues to increase in the future, the City will evaluate the need to upgrade the facility to the next capacity level which would be to increase the average daily capacity to 10.2 MGD with the ability to handle peak flows of approximately 30 MGD. When the WWTP flows consistently average 6.8 MGD (80% of the rated capacity), then a formal Preliminary Engineering Report to evaluate an expansion should be performed. The future capacity expansion is not planned at this time and will likely extend beyond the planning period of this plan.

In addition to the WWTP, the sewerage system consists of two primary pumping stations, Northside Pump Station on Fitzwater Street and Southside Pump Station on Ridge Road, along with 47 lift stations and a network of gravity sewer mains, varying in size from 6 inches to 30 inches, stretching over 159 miles. Upgrades to the City's two primary pumping stations as well as upgrades to other critical regional pump stations, including the Fitzwater Street, Parkside, and Hampshire Road pump stations have been completed in recent years to provide for reliability and energy efficiency.

The WRE of this Plan contains additional information about future estimated flow demands in comparison to the capacity of the central sewerage system network and the WWTP. In addition, the WRE analyzes the impact of future growth as it relates to nutrient loads from point-source pollution.

## Water and Sewage Allocation Master Plan

The purpose of a Water & Sewerage Allocation Master Plan (WSAMP) is to implement a process to inventory and track the allocation of all new water and sewer connections and increased water consumption by large industrial users in an effort to avoid over-allocation of water and sewer resources. Over-allocation could result in sewer system surcharges, overflows at the WWTP, or violations of the City's groundwater appropriation permit for potable water withdrawal. A WSAMP is required by MDE when water demands or wastewater treatment flows exceed 80% of the groundwater appropriation permit or the rated WWTP capacity. At the time of this publication, the City is currently at approximately 68% of the groundwater appropriation permit and 65% of the rated WWTP capacity.

## Stormwater Management

The City of Salisbury's Stormwater Management Ordinance establishes requirements for development within the City, defining the City's jurisdiction, authority, and allowable exemptions, as well as the procedures for requesting waivers or variances. The Ordinance outlines the actions required for effective stormwater management, including the preparation and submission of stormwater management plans, and provides guidance to developers on compliance expectations. The Ordinance also addresses permitting, inspection, maintenance, appeals, severability, and penalties, ensuring that stormwater management practices are properly implemented. If an approved stormwater management plan is not followed, the City has established enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance and achieve optimal environmental outcomes.

Future updates to the Ordinance will align with the Advancing Stormwater Resilience in Maryland (A-StoRM) Action Plan, which is anticipated to include enhanced environmental protections.

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## Public Buildings and Facilities

In 2023, the City of Salisbury signed a 15-year lease agreement at a 115 S Division Street, the historic former firehouse, to house the City Hall. The City Hall features on the ground floor, a large open space to serve as a meeting room and event space with roll-up doors, well accommodating for large community gatherings. Additionally, the first-floor houses the Department of Arts, Business and Culture on the first floor. Lastly, the second floor has offices for the Mayor, City Administrator and City Clerk. It is anticipated that the new City Hall will meet the needs of Salisbury's future growth.

The City owns the Truitt and Newton Community Centers. Truitt Community Center houses the Boys and Girls Club, which offers after school and summer activities to local children. The Boys and Girls Club operates the facility with the assistance of the Department of Housing and Community Development. The center began operation in 2022, and was expanded by the City in 2024 to a total size of 3,900 square feet with a capacity of up to 100 children. Facilities include sport courts, STEM labs, community rooms, art spaces, and more.

The Newton Community Center is operated directly by the City. It is a multi-purpose, three-story facility that hosts community focused activities. All of its programs are free and open to all to attend. The facility hosts after-school youth programs that provide exciting hands-on learning activities, homework help, and fun. Community members can access the 500 square foot community room for special events. The Newton Community Center also provides a 200 square foot community kitchen that features a 72-inch double standard oven, six burners, and 36" of griddle space. The upstairs space features a music & video recording studio, 4 large smart screen TVs, and video games.

# *Education*

Public schools serving the City of Salisbury are operated by Wicomico County. There are 15 public schools serving the City of Salisbury - nine elementary schools, two middle schools, and three high schools. In addition to the public schools, there are several private schools and early childhood facilities within the city and growth boundary of Salisbury.

Annually, public school enrollments are reported to the State of Maryland in September by the County Board of Education. Enrollment projections are updated frequently as enrollments in the school system, enrollments in any particular grade, can rise and fall based on changes in development, character of existing neighborhoods, and natural changes in population.

Table 8-1 provides the location and type of the educational facilities serving Salisbury along with their capacity and enrollment information.

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| Table 8-1: City of Salisbury - School Enrollment and Capacity | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| School | State Rated Capacity | Full Time Enrollment | Percent |
| Elementary Schools | | | |
| Beaver Run Elementary | 664 | 741 | 111.60% |
| Chipman Elementary | 384 | 318 | 82.80% |
| East Salisbury Elementary | 424 | 486 | 114.60% |
| Glen Avenue | 470 | 386 | 82.10% |
| North Salisbury Elementary | 506 | 526 | 104.00% |
| Pemberton Elementary | 523 | 521 | 99.60% |
| Pinehurst Elementary | 467 | 564 | 120.80% |
| Prince Street Elementary | 616 | 976 | 158.40% |
| West Salisbury Elementary | 352 | 409 | 116.20% |
| Middle Schools | | | |
| Bennett Middle | 1114 | 963 | 86.40% |
| Salisbury Middle | 999 | 847 | 84.80% |
| Wicomico Middle | 914 | 827 | 90.50% |
| High Schools | | | |
| Bennett High | 1496 | 1474 | 98.50% |
| Parkside High | 944 | 1272 | 134.70% |
| Wicomico High | 1215 | 1304 | 107.30% |
| Source: Wicomico County Public Schools Educational Facilties Master Plan FY2026 | | | |

As of 2025, 8 public schools in Salisbury are over capacity: Beaver Run Elementary, East Salisbury Elementary, North Salisbury Elementary, Pinehurst Elementary, Prince Street Elementary, West Salisbury Elementary, Parkside High School, and Wicomico High School. The Wicomico County Board of Educational Facility Master Plan is prepared by the Wicomico County Board of Education on an annual basis and addresses these facility needs. To manage increasing enrollments, the plan recommends:

- Annually assess school space utilization issues and consider implementing small annual adjustments to specific school attendance areas to re-balance enrollment and capacity.
- Consider a more comprehensive realignment approximately every 5 years to balance any major disparities in enrollments and/or capacities which have developed.
- Expand existing facilities to increase capacity where possible as part of any modernization and/or renovation program.
- Consider student attendance boundary adjustments as an acceptable approach to balancing enrollments with capacity. The City of Salisbury will continue to reference the Educational Facility Master Plan on an annual basis for school facility needs

## Salisbury University

Salisbury University is a four-year public university in the city and is a member of the University System of Maryland. Salisbury University is a part of the University System of Maryland. Salisbury University has collaborated with the architecture and planning firm Ayers-Saint-Gross to develop a comprehensive 2024 Facilities Master Plan that looks approximately ten years into the future. The plan is structured around three interconnected components: a Strategic Plan, a Physical Master Plan, and a Capital Plan. The plan is currently being developed and is in the data collection and analysis stage.

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## Wor-Wic Community College

Wor-Wic Community College is a public, two-year college primarily serving the residents of Wicomico, Worcester and Somerset counties. Founded in 1975, the college enrollment of full-time, part-time and continuing educations was 7,000 students in 2024, offering 2,500 classes each year. The main campus is located just outside the City's corporate limits at the intersection of U.S. Route 50 East and Walston Switch Road. See Map 6-3. In addition, Wor-Wic Community College offers continuing education classes throughout Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore.

Wor-Wic offers programs that lead to various Associate degrees including Arts, Arts in Teaching, Science, and Applied Science. In an effort to closely coordinate with the surrounding four-year academic institutions, Wor-Wic offers the first two years of a baccalaureate degree with programs such as General Studies, Business, Computer Science, Education, Electronics, and Science, for those that may want to transfer to a four-year college or university. Other credit programs are more occupational in nature, which are designed for individuals that desire entering the work force immediately after two years of college.

## Wicomico Public Libraries

Wicomico Public Libraries operates three branches and offers mobile services. The Paul S. Sarbanes Branch in downtown Salisbury, the Centre Branch at the Centre at Salisbury, and the Pittsville Branch on the campus of the Pittsville Elementary and Middle School.

The Library operates under the governance of the Wicomico Public Library Board of Trustees, as per the provisions of the Wicomico County Code and the Code of Maryland. Trustees are appointed by the County Executive and approved by County Council.

The Paul S. Sarbanes Library is in the process of relocating to site of the former Ward Museum at Schumaker Pond. Wicomico County will maintain a smaller downtown location at a different site. Salisbury University has secured state funding to acquire the site once the library moves, with plans to construct a performing arts center. The new site, expected to be completed within 4-5 years, will feature an auditorium, music and theatre space, a dance studio, performance support facilities, and classroom space.

# *Open Space and Recreation*

## Public Parks

The Wicomico County Department of Recreation, Parks, and Tourism is tasked with the preparation of the Land Preservation, Parks & Recreation Plan (LPPRP). The 2022 plan indicates that there are 277.64 acres of recreational land in the City, which includes the Salisbury City Park. See Map 8-1 in Appendix A for the location of public parklands in the City. On the park's western end are two distinctive structures erected during the early 1930s; an octagonal bandstand and arched foot bridge over Beaverdam Creek, both listed as a historic property by the Maryland Historic Trust. In the middle of the park is the Salisbury Zoo and Ben's Red Swings, a community playground. The park is also home to a skate park and trails.

The LPPRP furthers the goals of the county comprehensive plan in addition to assessing progress in meeting the leisure needs of a growing population and helping to preserve land. The plan's goals are as follows:

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- Goal 1: Increase investment in Recreation & Parks facilities and programs to better fulfill the Department's mission of improving quality of life.
- Goal 2: Perpetuate practices to make sure facilities within the Department remain safe, functional, accessible and attractive.
- Goal 3: Provide a wide variety of public recreation programs which are inclusive to all members of the community and promote healthy, active lifestyles
- Goal 4: Develop marketing vision and strategy for the Department to improve the County's overall image and to increase participation in programs and activities. The City of Salisbury will continue to coordinate with Wicomico County to further the goals of the Land Preservation, Parks & Recreation Plan

### Wicomico Youth and Civic Center

The Wicomico Youth and Civic Center is a 225,000 square-foot, multi-purpose complex owned and operated by Wicomico County, Maryland. The complex contains a main arena with 5,600 seats and floor space of 30,000 square feet. The building was designed to accommodate a wide range of athletic, entertainment and civic events and includes 11 meeting rooms as well as a multi-purpose room of 10,000 square feet. Renovations have occurred between 2007 and 2017 including the upgrading of the lighting and energy systems and roof rehabilitation.

## *Medical and Health*

### Health Department

The Wicomico County Health Department is a State agency operating several programs including Behavioral health, case management, community health services, dental, emergency preparedness, environmental health, maternal and child health medical assistance transportation, women, infants, and children's program (WIC), and vital services.

### TidalHealth Peninsula Regional

The TidalHealth Peninsula Regional, formerly known as the Peninsula Regional Medical Center, is a non-profit hospital located at 100 E Carroll Street. The hospital provides nearly 300 beds and employees over 3,000 health care professionals. Nearly 500,000 patients are served annually in a multitude of specialties. In the past several years, TidalHealth has been expanding the hospital and providing community clinics to make healthcare more accessible and meet the increasing demand.

### Deer's Head State Hospital

Deer's Head State Hospital Deer's Head Hospital Center is a state-owned and operated specialty hospital and nursing home, which has been providing services since 1950 to the citizens of Maryland. Deer's Head Hospital Center is located at 351 Deer's Head Hospital Road in Salisbury. The facility is accredited by the Joint Commission and licensed by Office of Health Care Quality.

### Holly Center

The Holly Center is a State-operated, 24-hour residential training facility for individuals with developmental disabilities and serves Maryland's Eastern Shore. This facility offers vocational, educational, physical therapy, respiratory, psychological, neurological and dietary services. The Holly Center is part of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Developmental Disabilities Administration and receives state and federal funding for its operations.

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# Chapter 9 | Water Resources

Maryland's Land Use Article (formerly Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland), as amended by House Bill 1141 in 2006, requires all county and municipal comprehensive plans to include a Water Resources Element (WRE). This mandate, effective October 1, 2009, aims to ensure that land use planning is closely aligned with the protection and management of water resources. The objectives of the WRE are to:

1. Identify potential constraints related to water supply, infrastructure capacity, or receiving waters early in the planning process; and
2. Propose strategies to address these constraints and develop a land use plan that minimizes negative impacts on water quality and water availability.

In 2022, the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) updated the state's WRE guidance to reflect advances in policy, science, and climate resilience. The updated guidance outlines best practices for:

1. Protecting receiving waters as land use plans are developed and implemented, reflecting updates to state water resource programs over the past decade; and
2. Incorporating climate change considerations, particularly flooding risk, into the drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater components of the WRE.

This WRE is comprised of four major components that include assessment of: drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, and non-point sources. The drinking water assessment contains information about the major groundwater sources used to provide drinking water to the City of Salisbury and some surrounding areas in the County, which receive public water and sewer services from the City. Information derived from existing sources such as the 2010 Wicomico County Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan is compared to existing and future planned withdrawal rates to determine the ability of existing sources and facilities to accommodate projected growth.

The wastewater assessment evaluates the capacity of the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) in the context of population growth and anticipated land use changes. This section examines the ability of the receiving waters, the Wicomico River, to absorb increased discharge while maintaining water quality standards.

In addition, the WRE includes an evaluation of land use changes as they relate to water quality and stormwater management. This includes a review of Salisbury's stormwater regulations and infrastructure, as well as a broader assessment of nonpoint source pollution and potential mitigation strategies.

The City of Salisbury is responsible for providing safe drinking water and managing wastewater and stormwater systems. The City owns and operates two drinking water treatment plants, groundwater wells, storage tanks, elevated towers, a wastewater treatment facility, sewer pumping

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stations, and a stormwater conveyance system. Stormwater infrastructure includes pipes, dams, and best management practices (BMPs). Salisbury's drinking water is drawn from local aquifers, while treated wastewater and stormwater are discharged to the Wicomico River under permits issued through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). The protection of these vital water resources is a top priority for the City and its residents.

## Community Outreach

In 2025, the City held four public workshops to gather community input. At the session focused on local water resource issues, participants shared a wide range of concerns and ideas, many of which are addressed in this chapter. While broader topics such as growth management are covered in other sections of the Comprehensive Plan, water resources specific concerns raised by the community include:

- The impacts of climate change, sea level rise and land subsidence
- The importance of green infrastructure and its maintenance
- Enhancing urban green space and tree planting efforts and emphasis on native plantings
- The condition and maintenance of dams
- Addressing emerging contaminants, such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)
- Opportunities with serving properties with private wells and septic systems
- Expanding public outreach and education on water resources

# Water Resources Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Strategies

## Drinking Water Goals

- Deliver safe, clean, and reliable drinking water that meets or exceeds all federal and state water quality standards at all times.
- Maintain system efficiency by keeping unaccounted-for water usage below 10% of total annual production.
- Protect and sustainably manage drinking water sources to ensure long-term availability.

## Drinking Water Objectives

- Evaluate the City's two Water Treatment Plants (WTPs) for maintenance, upgrades, and potential expansion.
- Maintain operations at the Park WTP as a vital component of the water system.
- Protect the Paleochannel as the City's primary potable water source.
- Align water supply and storage capacity with projected growth and development.

## Drinking Water Implementation Strategies

- Monitor and mitigate threats to drinking water from emerging contaminants, such as PFAS, through appropriate treatment technologies.
- Implement PFAS treatment at both WTPs by 2029.
- Implement an advanced automatic meter reading (AMR) system to improve leak detection, reduce consumption, and enhance billing accuracy.
- Upgrade all existing water meters to modern, accurate, and AMR compatible technology.
- Systematically identify and replace lead service lines on residential properties.
- Enhance public communication through:
    - The annual Water Quality Report,

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    - A more informative and accessible online presence,
    - Community education and water conservation outreach at City events.
- Conduct annual flushing of all fire hydrants to maintain water quality and system integrity.
- Protect, maintain, and expand the well fields to support current and future water demand.
- Continue to update the drinking water system model.

## Wastewater Goals

- Operate a Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) that protects public health and complies with all National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements.
- Ensure sludge (biosolids) is managed to meet all applicable state disposal and reuse regulations.
- Prevent pollutants from entering the wastewater system that could compromise treatment processes.
- Respond promptly and effectively to wastewater system emergencies.

## Wastewater Objectives

- Evaluate the WWTP for capital improvements, operational efficiency, and future capacity needs.
- Plan sewer infrastructure upgrades in support of current and future growth.
- Safeguard WWTP performance through effective pretreatment and pollutant control measures.

## Wastewater Implementation Strategies

- Ensure the WWTP maintains continuous compliance with all state and federal regulatory requirements.
- Promote collaboration with industrial users through outreach, technical assistance, and enforcement of pretreatment standards.
- Continue working on the Local Limits Study, which is expected to be completed within the next year, and update pretreatment requirements to address pollutant concerns.
- Develop a dynamic sewer system model to assess system capacity and guide land use and development planning. Funding for the sewer system model has been requested in the Capital Improvements Plan.
- Expand public sewer services to areas currently served by septic systems within the City's growth boundary and potential annexation areas.
- Upgrade the WWTP to handle the capacity from septic systems in Wicomico County adjacent to City Limits.
- Implement a routine preventive maintenance program for the sewer collection system, including closed-circuit television (CCTV) inspections and pipe cleaning.
- Monitor sludge quality and manage disposal practices to remain in compliance with Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) regulations.

## Stormwater & Resilience Goals

- Improve water quality in the Wicomico River and its tributaries.
- Effectively manage stormwater and address nuisance flooding to protect public and private property.
- Increase the City's resilience to climate change, sea-level rise, and extreme weather events.

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## Stormwater & Resilience Objectives

- Encourage enhanced stormwater management to reduce erosion and nutrient runoff.
- Integrate green infrastructure and nature-based solutions into land use and capital planning.
- Plan infrastructure and land management strategies that mitigate flood risks and support ecological health.

## Stormwater & Resilience Implementation Strategies

- Implement best management practices (BMPs) to reduce litter, floatables, and pollutants from entering local waterways.
- Increase tree canopy and green space to improve shade, absorb runoff, reduce heat islands, and enhance habitat.
- Require retention of existing native trees and incorporation of native plantings in new development projects.
- Promote residential use of lawn fertilization best practices to reduce nutrient laden runoff.
- Encourage and implement green infrastructure projects, including rain gardens, bioswales, green roofs, and permeable pavements.
- Support the installation and maintenance of living shorelines and preserve wetlands and marshes for flood buffering and habitat value.
- Reduce flood risks in vulnerable areas by expanding green open spaces and restoring natural floodplains.
- Address nuisance flooding and tidal inundation by investing in adaptive infrastructure and drainage improvements.

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# Watersheds

The City of Salisbury lies within two watersheds: the Wicomico River Headwaters and the Lower Wicomico River watershed. The City of Salisbury, City of Fruitland, and the Town of Delmar are the major centers of development in these watersheds. As their names imply, both watersheds contain portions of the Wicomico River. The Wicomico River is the receiving waters for the City of Salisbury.

The Wicomico River originates near Delmar, Delaware, and flows through the heart of Salisbury in a southerly direction into Tangier Sound and eventually into the Chesapeake Bay. Several major tributaries contribute fresh water to the Wicomico River, including, but not limited to, Tony Tank Creek, Walston Branch, Beaverdam Creek, and Brewington Branch.

Water quality is affected by land use activities (urban and agricultural) in the City and in Wicomico County's Metro Core. Watersheds are an important component of this document as it assesses the impact of growth and development on water resources. From a water supply perspective, the City of Salisbury and Wicomico County rely exclusively on groundwater as sources of potable water. Nevertheless, the WRE uses watersheds as an organizing element to discuss growth and development and their associated impacts on our water resources.

# Drinking Water Assessment

## Background Information and Technical Resources

Groundwater is an important source of drinking water throughout Maryland. Most void spaces in rocks beneath the water table contain water, but these spaces only become an aquifer when water

bearing rock readily carries water to wells and springs in significant volumes. On Maryland's Eastern Shore, aquifers are the source of all drinking water supplied by private wells or public water supply systems. Unlike areas on the Western Shore of Maryland, the construction of dams for storing and collecting large volumes of water for water supplies is problematic because of the relatively flat topography and the slow-moving nature of surface streams here on the Eastern Shore. Fortunately, the aquifers located under the surface on the Eastern Shore have a long history of providing high-quality water in substantial volumes. Based on estimates of growth as it relates to future demands for drinking water, the City of Salisbury has adequate water supply for its current and future residents.

To learn more about the aquifers in this region, refer to the 2010 Wicomico County Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan. To assist in future efforts to update this WRE, the City should continue to: research new reports and plans containing information about the aquifers in this region; complete a Water and Sewer Allocation Management Plan; and work in conjunction with Wicomico County to update sections of the 2010 Wicomico County Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan pertaining to City facilities, population and household projections. The City's Groundwater Protection Report was updated in 2013 as the City's Source Water Protection Report (SWPR). The SWPR includes recommendations for tiered zones associated with Groundwater Protection Areas. The report also recommends coordinating the requirements of Salisbury's Paleochannel Wellhead Protection overlay zone with the Wicomico County Zoning Code, as discussed in the Sensitive Areas chapter.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS), in conjunction with the Maryland Geological Survey (MGS) and MDE, is performing a three-phase study of the groundwater resources in the Atlantic Coastal Plain of Maryland. In 2013, with funding from MDE, the USGS and MGS developed a comprehensive, regionally consistent hydrogeologic framework of Mayland's Coastal Plain as part of Phase One of the long-term, multi-phase assessment of the Maryland Coastal Plain aquifer system. Data was compiled and incorporated into the Maryland Coastal Plain Aquifer Information System. For more details, see the full detailed report (Open-File Report 12-02-20, "Maryland Coastal Plain Aquifer Information System: Hydrogeologic Framework") and the Coastal Plain Aquifer information system:
http://www.mgs.md.gov/publications/report_pages/OFR_12-02-20.html.

Phase Two of this assessment consists of filling in any gaps in existing knowledge and building resource management tools, such as a groundwater flow model. Phase Three consists of implementation of the previously developed tools to manage and optimize resources. More information on this study can be found on the USGS website in a publication entitled, "A Science Plan for a Comprehensive Regional Assessment of the Atlantic Coastal Plain Aquifer System in Maryland,"
http://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2007/1205.

Upon completion, this comprehensive assessment will contain five goals directed at improving the current information and tools used to understand the resource potential of the aquifer system. The goals include:

- Document the geologic and hydrologic characteristics of the aquifer system in the Maryland Coastal Plain and the appropriate area of adjacent states;
- Conduct detailed studies of the regional groundwater flow system and water budget for the aquifer system;
- Improve documentation of patterns of water quality in all Coastal Plain Aquifers, including the distribution of saltwater;

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- Enhance groundwater level, stream flow, and water quality monitoring networks in the Maryland Coastal Plain; and
- Develop science-based tools to facilitate sound management of the groundwater resources in the Maryland Coastal Plain.

## The Salisbury Aquifer and the Paleochannel

The Salisbury Aquifer and the Paleochannel are referred to as surficial aquifers by USGS. Depending on the report or study, the Salisbury aquifer has been previously referred to as the Columbia Aquifer, Quaternary Aquifer, Pleistocene Aquifer, Beaverdam sand, red-gravelly sand, and the Pensauken formation. The Paleochannel is located in the north end of the City by the Paleo Water Treatment Plant (WTP) and the Park WTP draws from the Salisbury Aquifer.

The wells in the Salisbury Aquifer range from 40 to 65 feet deep, and the wells in the Paleochannel range from 90 to 120 feet below the surface. It is important to note that this subsurface waterbody receives recharge from precipitation in topographically high areas and supplies many small streams, man-made ponds, wells, and the tidal portion of the Wicomico River with water. Protection of this surficial aquifer is a primary concern to the City, as it is the major water source for the region. In doing so, the City has implemented, through the Zoning Code, protection efforts of the Paleochannel including the creation of the two Resource Protection Zoning Districts: Paleochannel and Wellhead Protection overlay zones.

In 2004, the City of Salisbury adopted both the Paleochannel and Wellhead Protection Overlay Districts (Chapter 17.1 of the Municipal Code) in an effort to protect this buried riverbed from overuse and contamination. These overlay districts largely follow the underlying zoning assigned to a property; however, both resource protection districts have additional use restrictions and development standards in comparison to the underlying zoning. These measures protect the water supply from surficial contamination as a result of impaired water discharge/recharge.

Uses which may be prohibited include: those that discharge excessive amounts of water; or use, store, or generate raw or waste materials which are ignitable, corrosive, reactive or toxic, such as, but not limited to, manufacture of organic and inorganic chemicals, paint and pigments, petroleum refining, steel, metal products fabrication, electroplating, and textile dyeing and finishing. Development proposals for any lot or parcel of land for any use within these two resource protection districts require submission of a comprehensive site plan to be reviewed by the Planning Commission to ensure the proposed use is not detrimental to the Paleochannel and Wellhead Protection areas.

## Water Treatment Systems

The City of Salisbury Water System has two water treatment and pumping facilities that withdraw water from the Salisbury Aquifer and the Paleochannel, the Paleo and Park Water Treatment Plants (WTPs). Both Paleo and Park WTPs have undergone process upgrades since the adoption of the last Comprehensive Plan. A third production well at the Paleo plant, Paleo Well 3, has been constructed to provide source water redundancy without increasing the overall water appropriation. Paleo Well 3 will be online once PFAS treatment is installed in the plant. Additional upgrades will be needed at both WTPs to meet the EPA PFAS maximum contaminant levels requirements and PFAS treatment must be in place at both WTPs by 2029 to be in compliance. The Park WTP is currently undergoing a PFAS study to plan the best course for treatment. Upgrade to Paleo WTP including PFAS treatment is at 100% design as of December 2025 and the project will be bid in early 2026. The City has a Water Supply Capacity Management plan to evaluate the level of growth that will trigger the need to pursue an increase in water appropriation

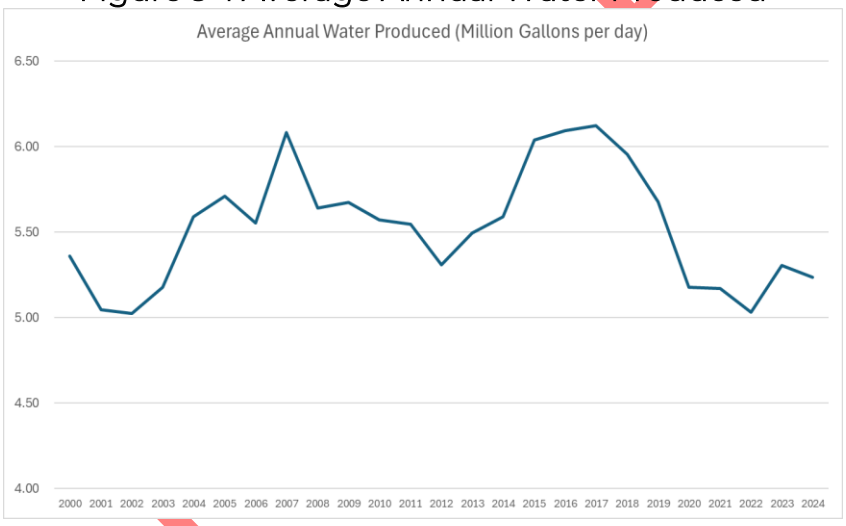
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through MDE. MDE has consistently required the WTPs to be functioning continuously at permit capacity prior to consider increasing the appropriations permit.

The Salisbury Water Appropriations and Use Permit provides an allocation for a daily average of 7,600,000 gallons on a yearly basis and a daily average of 10,000,000 gallons for the month of maximum use. The Water Appropriations permit number WI1973G001(07) expires on June 30, 2029, and allows for water withdrawal in the Salisbury Aquifer and the Paleochannel from 12 wells, including Paleo Well 3 which will go online when PFAS treatment is installed. With both water plants in operation, the City of Salisbury has a current capacity of approximately 12.0 MGD with the maximum capacity for each facility of about 4.0 MGD at the Park plant and 8.0 MGD at the Paleo plant. After the 2029 upgrades, the maximum capacity will be a total of 14.0 MGD when the Paleo WTP can produce 10.0 MGD. In 2024, the average water consumption including residential, commercial and industrial demands was 5.24 MGD.

Over the past 25 years, the average annual water production has ranged from 5.02 MGD to 6.12 MGD, with an average of 5.53 MGD, as shown in **Figure 9-1**. The City's efforts in water conservation fixtures and reducing unaccounted for water has resulted in a reduction in the average annual water produced over the past 5 years.

Figure 9-1 Average Annual Water Produced




The metered water sold per sector (residential, commercial, and industrial) has remained relatively similar over the past eight years. Water used for industrial purposes accounts for the highest metered water use in Salisbury at 46%. Residential use currently accounts for 44% of the metered water sold by Salisbury, and commercial use consistently accounts for 10%.

**Table 9-1** contains information about the anticipated water demands based on residential, industrial and commercial water consumption in comparison to the treatment facilities capacity, as it relates to accommodating future needs.

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| Table 9-1: Salisbury Water System Demand | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year | 2020 | 2030 | 2040 | 2040(max) |
| Population | 33,050 | 41,774 | 44,874 | 50,254 |
| Households | 13771 | 17406 | 18698 | 20939 |
| Water (gallons per capita per day) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Residential Demand (MGD) | 3.31 | 4.18 | 4.49 | 5.03 |
| Commercial Demand (MGD) | 0.75 | 0.95 | 1.02 | 1.14 |
| Industrial Demand (MGD) | 3.46 | 4.37 | 4.69 | 5.25 |
| Total Water System Demand (MGD)- *theoretical based on per capita demand* | 7.51 (theoretical)<br>5.03 (actual) | 9.49 | 10.2 | 11.42 |

Assumptions for Water System Demand:

1. Population projections provided by the Salisbury Department of Infrastructure and Development.
2. The total water system demands are based on industry standard per capita data and are significantly higher than actual water demand.
3. 2040 max scenario refers to full build out of the Here Is Home housing incentive program.
4. Per the census, Salisbury has an average of 2.4 persons per household.
5. Residential water use accounts for 44% of the total demand. Commercial is 10% and Industrial is 46%.

Overall, the City water treatment facilities will be able to accommodate the future demands based on current capacity and planned expansions. Currently, the two plants will have a future combined capacity of 14.0 MGD compared to the projected 2040 build-out demand of roughly 11.42 MGD.

It is important to note that the largest consumers of water are industrial users. An analysis of water supply records demonstrates that the percentage of demand by land use remains constant over the twenty-five-year period. In the future, there is the potential for an increase in future commercial and industrial growth versus residential growth. For example, the City currently provides approximately 1 MGD of water to the Perdue Farms, Inc. processing plant located on U.S. Route 50 East Business. Using demand estimates from 2020, Perdue alone would account for approximately 13 percent of the total demand of 7.51 MGD. Using industry standards for residential demands, which are equal to 100 gallons per day (GPD) per person, it would take the equivalent of 10,000 new persons or 4,237 housing units (average of 2.38 persons per household) equal to the usage by the Perdue processing plant. As the City continues to grow, careful consideration should be given to the allocation of water and the need for future expansions to the water systems to meet the projected demands.

## Water Distribution

Lead service lines are prevalent in older neighborhoods and are currently being identified and systematically replaced. In October 2024, the City submitted the Lead Service Line Inventory to MDE. The City is required to identify and eradicate all lead service lines from the system by 2037. The City is diligently working to identify the material of all pre-1986 unknown service lines. As of December 2025, only one line has been identified as containing lead and it has been replaced. The City is continually educating residents, locating lead lines, and securing funding for new water services.

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Water line extensions to create loops in the system help the distribution system water pressure and water age. A water main extension on Gordy Road was recently completed to loop the east and north sides of the City. A water main extension along Naylor Mill Road to loop the north and west sides of the City is in progress.

New water meters will be installed at properties as part of the automatic meter reading system. These installations are expected to be completed in the next few years. Locations that were previously unmetered will now be metered. The automatic meter reading system provides continuous monitoring and can detect leaks earlier, thereby preventing water loss.

Additional water storage is expected to be needed for future growth. A new elevated water tower on the west side of the City is in the City's Capital Improvements Plan and is projected for implementation within the next 5 years. Water modeling will assist with identifying a target location for the water tower and will evaluate whether an additional tower on the east side of the City is needed in the next 10 years.

# Wastewater Assessment

## Wastewater Treatment System

The City of Salisbury has the largest concentration of population within Wicomico County and is served by an extensive sewer collection system and an Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) wastewater treatment facility. The system includes two major pumping stations, Northside Pump Station on Fitzwater Street and Southside Pump Station on Ridge Road, along with 47 small pump and lift stations and a network of connected sewer mains varying in size from 6 inches to 30 inches that stretch over 159 miles. The WWTP serves all properties in the City, as well as out-of-town customers in the County located in close proximity to the corporate boundary of Salisbury.

The City WWTP, located on Marine Road in Salisbury, discharges treated effluent into the Wicomico River, which is within the Lower Wicomico watershed. The Salisbury WWTP upgrade and expansion was successfully completed in 2019. With this upgrade, the WWTP has a rated capacity of 8.5 MGD and consistently meets the ENR effluent parameters set forth in the City's NPDES permit (Permit No. MD0021571). The City anticipates stricter permit limits on the WWTP effluent in the future. The WWTP design considered tank accommodations to provide a second phase of capacity expansion in the future to increase the daily capacity to 10.2 MGD and a peak flow increase to 30 MGD, however current tanks fill to capacity during storms. Future upgrades will be required for growth as stricter permit limits were issued with the 2023 permit renewal.

The Chesapeake Bay has experienced a decline in water quality due to over enrichment of nutrients (mainly phosphorus and nitrogen) and sediments. Effluent from WWTPs and septic systems located in the Chesapeake Bay watershed is one of the top three major contributors of nutrients entering the Bay (urban and agricultural runoffs are the other two). ENR WWTPs contribute positively to reducing nutrients under the Chesapeake Bay 2000 Agreement.

Upgrades to the City's two primary pumping stations, Northside Pump Station and Southside Pump Station, as well as upgrades to other critical regional pump stations, including the Fitzwater Street, Parkside, and Hampshire Road pump stations have been completed in recent years to provide for reliability and energy efficiency.

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Wicomico County desires to serve areas with failing septic systems. The County's 2021 Water and Sewer Master Plan recommends that the majority of properties with septic system should connect to existing municipal WWTPs. Salisbury's WWTP has available capacity to serve areas adjacent to the City with failing septic systems. However, the lift stations need upgrades and repairs before this can be done. The City recently adopted a Utility Extension Policy to allow connections to the sewer system in environmental health circumstances without requiring annexation initially.

An Infiltration and Inflow (I&I) Study was completed, and remediation projects are underway. Projects are targeted in areas with significant levels of I&I with the goal of reducing the stormwater and groundwater entering the WWTP, which in turn will moderate the peak flows experienced during storm events. Remediation projects include providing watertight inserts in manhole, grouting and coating interiors of manholes, slip lining sewer mains, and providing liners and watertight connections between sewer laterals and the mains.

The Southside Pump Station force main runs under the Wicomico River. There is only one force main from the Southside Pump Station to the WWTP and if it becomes damaged, then there is no alternative way to bypass the pump from the station. The design of the Southside Force Main is underway and will provide redundancy. The project is in the Capital Improvements Plan. Additionally, the City is doing an outfall study to identify replacement options for the outfall including evaluating pipe size and capacity needs. The design of a new outfall pipe is underway and this project is in the Capital Improvements Plan.

The Salisbury Department of Infrastructure and Development projects population growth is expected to reach 50,254 by 2040. The capacity of the WWTP system is expected to meet that demand; however, it is important to note this assessment is based on projections, which vary over time. Table 9-2 represents the planned capacity of the City WWTP versus projected demand for the 2020, 2030, and 2040 horizon in Salisbury. Commercial and industrial sewerage contributions are typically lower than their water demands due to industries that are not permitted to discharge into the municipal sewer system.

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| Table 9-2: Salisbury Water System Demand | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year | 2020 | 2030 | 2040 | 2040 (max) |
| Population | 33,050 | 41,774 | 44,874 | 50,254 |
| Households | 13,771 | 17,406 | 18,698 | 20,939 |
| Sewer (gallons per capita per day) | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 |
| Residential Demand (MGD) | 2.97 | 3.76 | 4.04 | 4.52 |
| Significant Industrial User Demand (MGD) | 1.1 | 1.39 | 1.49 | 1.67 |
| Commercial and Minor Industrial Demand (MGD) | 2.69 | 3.39 | 3.65 | 4.08 |
| Total Wastewater System Demand (MGD) | 6.76 | 8.54 | 9.18 | 10.28 |
| Total Water System Demand (MGD) | 7.51 | 9.49 | 10.2 | 11.42 |

Assumptions for Wastewater System Demand:

1. Population projections provided by the Salisbury Department of Infrastructure and Development.
2. The total wastewater system demands are based on industry standard per capita data and are significantly higher than actual wastewater demand.
3. The 2020 theoretical system demand in the table is based off of the census and population, however the actual average wastewater demand in 2020 was 5.13 MGD. The difference is based on lower per capita demand then planning estimates.
4. 2040 max scenario refers to full build out of the Here Is Home housing incentive program.
5. Per the census, Salisbury has an average of 2.4 persons per household.
6. Significant Industrial Users (SIU) wastewater discharge is tracked by the pretreatment program and is reflected above. The same growth rate is applied for industrial as based on the population projections.

Total wastewater system demand is estimated to be 90% of total water system demand based on historical data for Salisbury.

## PFAS Management at the Wastewater Treatment Plant

Through sampling and testing, leachate, industrial users, and even toilet paper have been found to contain elevated concentrations of emerging contaminants, particularly per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), which are persistent and difficult to treat using conventional wastewater processes.

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In response to statewide concerns about PFAS, MDE now requires routine PFAS monitoring in WWTP influent, effluent, and biosolids (sludge). This requirement places additional analytical and regulatory burdens on the City and highlights the potential for regulatory action in the future regarding PFAS levels in discharge materials.

An additional complication is that the WWTP's dewatered sludge is currently disposed of at the County landfill, the same facility that produces the leachate. This creates a loop in which PFAS and other contaminants can recirculate between the landfill and WWTP, potentially increasing concentrations in both leachate and sludge over time.

If disposal of sludge at the landfill becomes restricted or prohibited due to PFAS or other regulatory concerns, the WWTP will need to identify alternative disposal or treatment options. These alternatives are likely to be significantly more expensive and logistically complex, potentially impacting operational budgets and requiring capital investment in sludge treatment or transport infrastructure.

In anticipation of similar issues, the City has made the policy decision to prohibit acceptance of septage from private haulers. Septage is known to exhibit highly variable pollutant loads, including elevated levels of nitrogen, phosphorus, heavy metals, and synthetic chemicals, which could compromise treatment plant performance or permit compliance. This conservative approach has helped limit unpredictable pollutant loads, but underscores the vulnerability of the WWTP to high-strength or variable waste streams like leachate.

Taken together, these challenges highlight the need for a comprehensive PFAS risk management strategy and long-term planning for sludge handling and disposal in light of emerging contaminant regulations.

## Assimilative Capacity

Assimilative capacity refers to the ability of a natural water body to absorb and process pollutants, such as wastewater, nutrients, or toxic substances, without causing harm to human health or aquatic ecosystems. In essence, the total pollutant load entering Maryland's waters, from both point and non-point sources, should not exceed the capacity of those waters to assimilate and safely neutralize those pollutants.

Water pollution originates from two primary sources: point source and non-point source pollution. Non-point source pollution is the leading cause of water quality impairment in Maryland. It occurs when rainfall, snowmelt, or irrigation water flows over land or through the ground, picking up and carrying pollutants into nearby water bodies. In contrast, point source pollution originates from a specific, identifiable location, such as a municipal wastewater treatment plant or an industrial discharge outlet.

## Tier II Waters

The State of Maryland has adopted an anti-degradation policy requiring special protection for waters of very high quality, also referred to as Tier II waterways. These waterways are streams and rivers where water quality exceeds the state minimum standards. MDE bases its designation decisions on data collection and analysis procedures that strictly follow the Maryland Biological Stream Survey (MBSS) protocols developed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR). This analysis protocol generates index of biotic integrity (IBI) scores for benthic and fish

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data. Any stream where both independent IBI scores are 4.00 or greater are designated Tier II. Maryland has designated 263 Tier II Streams.

Little Burnt Branch, located in Wicomico County and just outside of the City limits, was designated a Tier II stream in 2008 with an average benthic IBI of 5.00 and average fish IBI of 4.00. There is no assimilative capacity remaining for this waterway.

## Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)

A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is a scientifically derived estimate of the maximum quantity of a particular pollutant that a water body can receive on a daily basis while still complying with applicable water quality standards. TMDLs account for point sources, non-point sources, and a margin of safety to address uncertainty. Under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act (CWA), states are required to identify impaired waters and to develop TMDLs for each listed impairment. Impaired waters are ones that fail to meet designated uses such as aquatic life support, recreation, or drinking water supply. Jurisdictions must also prioritize TMDL development based on the severity of impairment and the designated use of the water body.

The establishment of a nutrient TMDL, typically for nitrogen and phosphorus, indicates that the water body has exceeded its capacity to assimilate these nutrients without experiencing adverse effects such as eutrophication, hypoxia, or harmful algal blooms. Consequently, any additional nutrient loads resulting from future land use changes, increased impervious surfaces, failing or outdated on-site sewage disposal systems (OSDS), or expanded WWTP discharges must be mitigated to prevent further degradation. For water bodies within Wicomico County that do not currently have established nutrient TMDLs, it is not yet possible to quantitatively assess their assimilative capacity or predict compliance with future water quality standards.

However, for receiving waters with existing nutrient TMDLs, including the Lower Wicomico River, Johnson Pond, and Tony Tank Creek, a preliminary assessment of future impacts can be made using available pollutant loading models. These models, such as those based on Chesapeake Bay Program CAST data or Simple Method runoff calculations, allow for comparative analysis between different land use and growth scenarios. However, their resolution is generally limited to 8-digit or 12-digit hydrologic unit codes (HUCs) and lacks the spatial or temporal precision required for direct comparison to TMDL load allocations. Therefore, while these tools are valuable for general planning, they cannot definitively demonstrate compliance with TMDL thresholds without refinement.

The City of Salisbury acknowledges that receiving waters with TMDLs should only be considered suitable for additional nutrient loadings if those impacts are fully offset through best management practices (BMPs), stormwater retrofits, or other nutrient-reduction strategies. The WRE includes recommendations for pollution control practices to help achieve compliance with nutrient TMDLs and improve water quality. In addition, the WRE recommends ongoing refinement of pollution forecasting tools and methods as more localized data, monitoring results, and improved modeling approaches become available.

The Lower Wicomico River watershed receives effluent from two major NPDES-regulated point sources: the Salisbury WWTP and the City of Fruitland WWTP. Both facilities have been upgraded to ENR treatment level, which reduces total nitrogen (TN) to ≤3 mg/L and total phosphorus (TP) to ≤0.3 mg/L, in accordance with MDE permit requirements. These treatment levels represent a significant improvement over earlier Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR) systems, which typically achieved TN reductions to around 8 mg/L and TP to approximately 2 mg/L. Nevertheless, projected

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increases in population and wastewater flows due to residential and commercial growth may offset the nutrient reduction gains achieved through ENR implementation.

It is recommended that the City continue to monitor effluent flows, nutrient concentrations, and associated loading rates from both WWTPs, particularly in the context of future sewer service area expansions, comprehensive plan updates, and capacity management evaluations. Integration of this data with watershed models will help refine pollutant load forecasts and support adaptive management strategies.

Table 9-3 presents a list of EPA-approved TMDLs for watersheds that contain land within the City of Salisbury or are hydraulically downstream, highlighting the regulatory framework under which the City must manage pollutant loads from both point and non-point sources.

Table 9-3: EPA Approved TMDLs

| Water Body Name | Impairment | Location | EPA's TMDL Approval Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tony Tank Lake | Phosphorus, Sedimentation | Lower Wicomico River | December 10, 1999 |
| Johnson's Pond | Phosphorus, Sedimentation | Wicomico River | February 13, 2001 |
| Lower Wicomico River | Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Biochemical Oxygen Demand | Lower Wicomico River Watershed | June 22, 2001 |
| Non-Tidal Wicomico River Headwater | Fecal Bacteria | Wicomico River | September 20, 2007 |
| Lower Wicomico River – Restricted Shellfish Harvesting Area | Fecal Coliform | Lower Wicomico River Watershed | June 18, 2008 |
| Ellis Bay | Fecal Coliform | Lower Wicomico River | May 20, 2021 |

Source: Maryland Department of the Environment (2025)

Water quality impairments trigger numerous issues within these water bodies. The Lower Wicomico River, with significant nutrient and biochemical oxygen demand point and non-point sources, has high algal levels and low dissolved oxygen concentration. During the summer, only a limited input of freshwater is available to the Lower Wicomico River, which elevates the impairment of the water body. Tony Tank Lake, which possesses significant phosphorus and sediment non-point sources of impairment, is used for recreation purposes. Tony Tank Lake is classified as highly eutrophic and there are no point sources entering the basin. Ellis Bay is located at the mouth of the Lower Wicomico River basin and has a TMDL for the restricted shellfish harvesting area.

The Wicomico River Headwaters possess high levels of fecal bacteria and is located just upstream of U.S. Route 50. A large volume of Johnson's Pond has been impacted due to high sedimentation rates and one major point source, Town of Delmar WWTP, which discharges into Wood Creek (a tributary of the headwaters of the Wicomico River through Johnson's Pond). Schumaker Pond, which is dammed off from the Wicomico River at Beaglin Park Drive, was once a swimming beach and is currently used for fishing and recreation.

## Water Quality Monitoring

The Wicomico River Creekwatchers is a joint project of the Wicomico Environmental Trust and Salisbury University. This program uses student volunteers from Salisbury University and has been monitoring the water quality of the Wicomico River by sampling for nitrogen, nitrates, phosphorus, phosphates, salinity, chlorophyll A, and bacteria levels. Weekly and monthly river updates are provided by the Wicomico River Creekwatchers here: https://www.wicomicoenvironment.org/wicomico-environment-news/river-updates.

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MDE finalized the *Watershed Report for Biological Impairment of the Lower Wicomico River Watershed in Wicomico and Somerset Counties, Maryland – Biological Stressor Identification Analysis Results and Interpretation* in March 2014. The report did not recommend new TMDLs. It noted that although the Lower Wicomico River watershed has elevated nutrients which results in low dissolved oxygen levels, the 2001 Lower Wicomico TMDL and the 2010 Chesapeake Bay TMDL contained appropriate management actions.

## Point Source Cap

The State of Maryland has adopted a point source strategy to address nutrient loadings from publicly owned and operated wastewater treatment plants. The State strategy for 'significant' WWTPs like Salisbury's that have a design capacity of 500,000 GPD or greater is to adopt a schedule of programmed improvements designed to upgrade those facilities to achieve ENR technologies and to operate the ENR facility in a manner that optimizes nutrient removal capacity. Salisbury's ENR upgrade was completed in 2019.

Based on Salisbury WWTP capacity of 8.5MGD and ENR treatment levels, MDE has established a point source cap for the City of 103,549 lbs of nitrogen per year and 7,766 lbs per year of phosphorus. Future expansion of the City's WWTP beyond a capacity of 8.5 MGD will require treatment levels greater than 4 mg per liter of nitrogen. The City is currently achieving 3 mg per liter of nitrogen in their effluent on a typical basis. To reach even greater levels of treatment or reduce the nutrients entering the river, the City may have to consider nutrient trading or spray irrigation as a means to dispose of the treated effluent. Although this is not an immediate concern, the City should begin planning to offset or mediate the effects of expanding the capacity of the WWTP as it relates to the established point source cap.

Table 9-4 uses the NPDES permit for the Salisbury WWTP for the nutrient load assumptions to calculate potential and future nutrient load contributions based on the treatment technology being employed, existing demands and 2040 projected demands for the City's WWTP. The limiting factor for the Salisbury WWTP in 2040 will be phosphorus. As mentioned previously, the results of this analysis should only be used to obtain a better understanding of the overall relative impacts of various future growth and treatment technologies as it relates to point-source nutrient loads.

TABLE 9-4: WWTP Point Source Analysis

| Type of WWTP (Based on Design Capacity) | Existing Demand (MGD) | Existing Nutrient Load Nitrogen (Lbs./Year) | Existing Nutrient Load Phosphorous (Lbs./Year) | 2040 Projected Demand (MGD) | 2040 Load Nutrient Load Nitrogen (Lbs./Year) | 2040 Load Nutrient Load Phosphorous (Lbs./Year) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Significant | 6.76 | 61,766 | 6,177 | 10.28 | 93,918 | 9,392 |

Assumptions for WWTP Point Source Analysis:

1. Existing and projected demand calculated per Table 9-2.
2. ENR effluent parameters are 3 mg Nitrogen and 0.3 mg Phosphorus per liter of effluent.
3. Calculations used to perform point source analysis: WWTP Existing Demand (MGD) * Pollutant Discharge Treatment Level (MG / L) * 365 days * 8.344 (Constant Conversion Factor) = Pounds of pollutant per year

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# Stormwater Management Assessment

Stormwater runoff occurs in developed areas due to an increase in impervious surface cover. In natural areas, stormwater is slowed by existing vegetation, which allows the soil to absorb the majority of water. In cases of development, stormwater hits impervious surfaces, gathers, and travels to the nearest collection of water, whether it is a receiving stream or stormwater collection system. Since the impervious surfaces cover the soil, water cannot be completely absorbed and used to recharge aquifers. Water picks up speed, since it cannot be absorbed and may cause scouring and erosion in a receiving stream. Additionally, stormwater cannot go through natural filtration for nitrogen and phosphorus removal while traveling along impervious surfaces, and instead, typically picks up more pollution from road salt, road residue, and tire residue. All these factors combine to support the claim that untreated stormwater needs to be mitigated in order to reduce adverse effects to the receiving water bodies.

Salisbury has a relatively flat topography allowing for an exaggerated sheet flow and produces slower flows due to the lack of gravity pulling water down hills, thereby reducing erosion potential.

## Stormwater Management Ordinance

The City of Salisbury has an existing Stormwater Management Ordinance that details all requirements for development. This ordinance specifies the City's jurisdiction over development, the exemptions allowed, and the details of obtaining a waiver or variance, if applicable. The City addresses redevelopment separately, allowing some leniency for developers looking to redevelop property within existing neighborhoods.

The Stormwater Management Ordinance additionally discusses what actions should be included for acceptable stormwater management, including the creation of stormwater management plans. The ordinance serves as instructions for developers who need to provide stormwater management by detailing what they may have to do and how to present it to the City.

Lastly, the ordinance discusses permitting, inspection, maintenance, appeals, severability, and penalties. These sections of the ordinance ensure that developers are completing appropriate stormwater management techniques to achieve optimum results. If, for some reason, the approved stormwater management plan is not followed or implemented properly, the City has established in its ordinance a way to make sure the developer solves the issues and/or faces penalties.

MDE is in the process of developing new SWM requirements per the Advancing Stormwater Resilience in Maryland (A-StoRM) Action Plan. Salisbury will review, adapt and adopt the new regulations and account for the changes in planning documents. Additionally, Salisbury should analyze the effectiveness and ability to implement the current stormwater regulations. The City should consider requiring new development or redevelopment projects in areas with water quality or pipe capacity issues to manage flow from higher pre-development storms. This has been done previously in the southeast quadrant of Salisbury due to storm drain pipe capacity issues in South Division Street.

## MS4 Permit

Salisbury is a Phase II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) permittee under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Discharges from Small MS4's (General Discharge Permit No. 13-IM-5500, General NPDES Permit No. MDR0555000).

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The MS4 permit requires compliance with the Six Minimum Control Measures and the Impervious Area Restoration Work Plan to reduce the untreated impervious surface from the baseline by 20%. The permit expired in 2023 and has been administratively extended. The upcoming renewal of the MS4 permit will likely include an increase in impervious surface reduction by an additional 10%.

The City's strategy to meet this restoration goal is documented in the Impervious Area Restoration Work Plan (IARWP) and includes:

- Identifying total impervious area restorations (pre-2006)
- Identifying new opportunities for impervious area restoration
- Planning, implementation, and feasibility of impervious area restoration
- Identifying funding sources for implementation
- Implementing BMP tracking and reporting for past, current, and future projects.
- Alternative BMPs including street sweeping, inlet cleaning, septic conversion, road de-paving, and urban tree canopy plantings

## Capital Improvement Plan Projects

The City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is updated annually. The CIP prioritizes projects needed throughout the City including stormwater management. In 2019, a cost-benefit analysis was conducted to identify potential stormwater management projects that offer the highest ratio of impervious area restoration credit to project cost. This analysis aimed to help the City maximize the efficiency of its stormwater management budget by prioritizing cost-effective solutions. The identified projects were generated through desktop-level assessments and have not yet undergone field verification. Actual feasibility will depend on several site-specific factors, including property ownership and availability, landowner cooperation, soil suitability, and availability of funding. Given these uncertainties, the City is currently prioritizing projects on public land or other locations where it has greater control over implementation. An additional study for potential projects was completed in October 2020 which included a stream restoration project on Beaverdam Creek that was identified as a high priority and is included in the CIP. Funding for the 30% design of the Beaverdam Creek restoration project was provided in a recent fiscal year. Additional funding options for implementation are being evaluated.

## Stormwater Utility Fee

The Stormwater Utility Fee, implemented on July 1, 2015, provides a dedicated and sustainable funding source for the City's stormwater management program. To ensure accurate billing and equitable cost distribution, the City performs biannual updates to its impervious surface GIS database, which forms the basis for fee assessments. Revenue generated from the fee is exclusively allocated to stormwater-related initiatives, including the CIP, street sweeping operations, compliance with the MS4 permit, and implementation of stormwater infrastructure projects, particularly those supporting the Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP).

In addition to funding public infrastructure, the stormwater utility fee also supports a grant program that provides financial assistance to private property owners for the installation of green infrastructure practices, such as rain gardens, permeable pavement, and cisterns. These projects contribute to pollutant load reductions and help advance the City's overall stormwater and water quality goals.

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## Nuisance Flooding

Salisbury prepared a Nuisance Flooding plan in 2019 in accordance with state requirements. Nuisance flooding generally refers to high tide flooding that is not caused by rainfall and results in public inconvenience. Several recommendations from the plan have already been implemented, including the relocation of the Fitzwater Street pumping station out of the floodplain.

Since the plan's development, the City has experienced an increase in both nuisance flooding and land subsidence. Over the past year, the City has installed new tide gates and is actively working on updating their Nuisance Flooding Plan. Resident complaints help identify areas for further study and potential improvements such as street raising, flood gate installation, and other mitigation measures. The City is also seeking opportunities to partner with private developers to mitigate problem areas as development or redevelopment occurs in areas affected by nuisance flooding.

Salisbury has four dams which serve as stormwater impoundments, specifically, Johnson Pond Dam, Beaglin Park Dam and two Mitchell Pond Dams. Of these, Johnson Pond and Beaglin Park are classified as high hazard dams and have Emergency Action Plans that detail processes for dam inspections and emergency response protocols.

# Non-Point Source Assessment

Non-point source (NPS) pollution is a significant contributor to water quality degradation in urban areas. Unlike pollution from a single, identifiable source, NPS pollution results from rainfall runoff transporting pollutants and nutrients into waterways. Impervious surfaces such as roads, rooftops, and parking lots prevent natural infiltration of stormwater and increase the volume and velocity of runoff, worsening NPS pollution. As development and land use change within the City, it is essential to evaluate how these changes affect water quality and to implement tools and practices that help track, reduce, and mitigate pollutant loads.

## Source Data

The Salisbury Department of Infrastructure and Development conducted a Development Capacity Analysis ("Build-out Analysis") to estimate the amount and patterns of future development that under current land-use laws, policies (e.g., zoning) and environmental constraints. To the extent practicable, the methodology for developing a build-out analysis takes into account parcels (and portions of parcels) that are not developable, including lands under restrictive easements, wetlands, utility rights-of-way and parcels in public ownership. The Build-out Analysis is based on a technical evaluation of the following factors:

- Assessment data from the Maryland Department of Taxation and Assessment;
- Zoning Maps for City of Salisbury and estimates of household yields per acre;
- Protected lands and lands with environmental constraints; and
- Water and Sewerage Plans.

The Build-out Analysis estimates 20,450 new residents between 2020 and 2040 throughout Wicomico County, including Salisbury and the other seven municipalities in the County. Of those residents, 11,824 are projected to reside in the City of Salisbury. The growth projections included as part of this Plan, estimate 4,866 housing units will be constructed in Salisbury between 2020 and 2040.

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Several conclusions can be drawn for the analysis:

- The City of Salisbury is unlikely to reach full build-out of all available developable lands within the City Limits within the timeframe of the Comprehensive Plan (2040).
- Based on the assumptions used in the Development Capacity Analysis, the projected housing unit growth can be fully accommodated within the existing City boundary; however, this GIS-based analysis typically produces a significantly higher number of potential new housing capacity than can actually be realized.
- The rate of actual development will depend on market conditions, infrastructure availability, and policy incentives.
- Municipal expansion through annexation is likely as growth continues.

The amount of new development and growth patterns have important implications for non-point source pollution, as more development typically leads to increased impervious surfaces and stormwater runoff unless mitigated through planning and stormwater management strategies.

## Impervious Surfaces

Impervious surfaces directly influence water quality and non-point source pollution. As the percent of impervious coverage in the watershed increases, the water quality in waterways typically declines. The Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative (ESRGC) at Salisbury University provides bi-annual updates of the impervious surface coverage in the City Limits to support the City's stormwater utility fee program. Impervious surface is digitized using aerial photography. This data helps monitor changes in impervious cover across the City. As of the 2025 impervious surface update, the percentage of impervious surface within Salisbury's City Limits is 26.25%. This percentage is in the range typically seen in a low density residential urban area. Tracking impervious surface area over time will continue to be a critical method for assessing water quality factors associated with development and non-point sources.

## Nutrient Loading

New development and redevelopment within Salisbury are required to meet the State of Maryland's stormwater management regulations and Salisbury's stormwater ordinance, which mandate the implementation of Environmental Site Design (ESD) to the Maximum Extent Practicable. These regulations promote stormwater best management practices (BMPs) that reduce stormwater volume, improve infiltration, and remove pollutants before they reach local waterways.

The amount of future nutrient loads to local waterways are impacted by the amount of impervious surface in the development, and land use changes, such as whether the development occurs on lands that were previously natural or designated as cropland or forest. Implementations of BMPs and policies that encourage compact or denser development positively impact water quality by promoting conservation practices, such as clustering of housing units and encouraging a reduction of impervious surfaces. Additionally, the nutrient loading is positively impacted by redevelopment of existing impervious parcels that may have predated current stormwater regulations.

The City assumes all new growth will occur on land that will be served by municipal water and sewer systems. Additionally, as properties are annexed into the City or served through out-of-town service agreements, individual wells and septic systems will be replaced with City water and sewer services. This change from onsite decentralized systems to municipal sewage treatment will significantly reduce the amount of nitrogen from non-point sources.

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To support informed decision making, estimate nutrient load reductions, evaluate progress in pollution reduction, and model future scenarios, the City can utilize the TMDL Implementation Progress and Planning (TIPP) Tool, developed by MDE. This tool incorporates data from the Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (CAST), which provides nutrient loading rates at the Maryland 8-digit watershed scale based on land use types. Users input baseline land use data, existing best management practices (BMPs), and Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit information. The tool tracks restoration progress under MS4 requirements and allows users to model various implementation scenarios. These scenarios can include stormwater BMPs such as bioretention, permeable pavement, and infiltration practices, land conversion BMPs, and alternative BMPs like street sweeping and inlet cleaning. Completing a TIPP analysis could serve as a short-term action item for Salisbury to evaluate water quality impacts of projected growth and guide future stormwater management investments.

## Mitigation Strategies

To reduce non-point source pollution impacts and protect local waterways, the City of Salisbury can pursue the following strategies:

- Encourage low-impact development by promoting site designs that reduce imperviousness, preserve natural hydrology, and minimize disturbance through clustering, narrower streets, and green infrastructure.
- Prioritize redevelopment over development on undeveloped or natural parcels by incentivizing infill and redevelopment, allowing for improved stormwater management and BMPs under current regulations.
- Incorporate TIPP and CAST Tools into the development review process to estimate nutrient impacts and evaluate non-point source pollution mitigation needs.

# Climate Change

To enhance resilience and mitigate the impacts of climate change on critical infrastructure, the City should incorporate the following adaptation strategies:

- Design Resilient Infrastructure: The planned filter building at the Paleo WTP and other improvements at the Park WTP should be constructed above the current Base Flood Elevation (BFE), incorporating design standards that account for future increases in flood risk and storm intensity as projected by regional climate models.
- Ensure Operational Continuity: Additional standby power generators have been installed at the WTP to maintain functionality during severe weather events and power outages. This ensures continuity of operations under emergency conditions.
- Expand Emergency Backup Power: The City should prioritize the installation of additional stationary emergency generators at the WWTP and at all new and existing pump stations to enhance system redundancy and emergency preparedness.
- Wastewater System Resilience: Expand flow equalization capacity at the WWTP to mitigate the impacts of Infiltration and Inflow (I&I), which are expected to increase due to the higher frequency and intensity of storm events associated with climate change.
- Modernize Stormwater Infrastructure: Update design standards using current rainfall projections (e.g., NOAA Atlas 14) and expand detention, retention, and conveyance capacity to manage more intense storms.

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- Reduce Nuisance Flooding: Identify flood-prone areas, elevate vulnerable infrastructure, install backflow preventers, and consider tide gates or pump systems in low-lying zones. Update floodplain maps with sea level rise and subsidence data.

## Equity

To promote environmental justice and ensure equitable access to water and wastewater services, the City should implement the following initiatives:

- Lead Service Line Replacement: Continue and expand efforts to replace lead service lines, including those located on private property, to reduce health risks and comply with emerging federal standards (e.g., EPA Lead and Copper Rule Revisions).
- Water Affordability Programs: Identify sustainable funding mechanisms to support low-income water customers, including water bill assistance programs and crisis assistance funds.
- Public Education and Outreach: Develop culturally and linguistically appropriate educational campaigns focused on leak detection, water conservation, billing literacy, and participation in infrastructure programs. Partner with trusted community organizations to facilitate engagement.
- Equitable Green Infrastructure Investment: Prioritize the installation of green infrastructure (e.g., bioswales, rain gardens, urban tree canopy) in historically underserved or environmentally overburdened neighborhoods to provide both stormwater management and co-benefits such as cooling, beautification, and air quality improvement.
- Address Failing Onsite Systems: Target resources to resolve contamination issues from failing septic systems and unsafe wells in disadvantaged or low-income areas, potentially through community water and sewer extensions.
- Tenant Protections in Flood-Prone Areas: Evaluate policy options to strengthen requirements for landlords renting properties in flood-vulnerable areas, including mandatory disclosure of flood risk, minimum flood resilience standards, and potential relocation assistance during post-flood recovery.

## Analysis of Water Resources Issues

The WRE identifies several critical issues affecting the City of Salisbury's long-term sustainability and growth. As discussed herein, key concerns include the quantity and quality of groundwater in the aquifers, non-point source pollution, sewer infrastructure constraints, and the potential for saltwater intrusion. These issues must be addressed through coordinated planning, capital investment, and ongoing intergovernmental collaboration. The following section provides a summary of the resource constraints identified throughout this element.

### Sewer Capacity and Growth Constraints

A major constraint to future growth is the limited capacity of the City's wastewater collection system infrastructure. While current capacity is adequate for existing demand, future residential and commercial development will require expanded sewer and pumping station capacity. The City must work collaboratively with developers and Wicomico County to evaluate and upgrade the sewer collection system to adequately serve the needs of growth within the City Limits as well as sewer extensions to County residents with failing septic systems. Additionally, Salisbury needs to monitor the capacity of the WWTP and plan the future expansion in a timely manner to accommodate projected growth. Planned improvements to the WWTP or major sewer facilities shall be documented in the updated Wicomico County Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan,

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which will serve as the primary reference for regional system capacity, capital investments, and service area expansions.

## Land Use and Nutrient Loading

Land use changes directly influence nutrient loads in local waterways. The City should consider zoning and redevelopment incentives that promote compact, infill development and direct growth toward areas already served by infrastructure. Encouraging higher-density development within the existing service area will reduce the need for costly system extensions and minimize water quality impacts.

## Water Conservation

To ensure long-term water supply sustainability, the City should implement proactive water conservation measures before regional aquifer levels decline. Conservation strategies include:

- Retrofitting existing plumbing with water-efficient fixtures,
- Promptly repairing leaks in homes and public infrastructure,
- Limiting non-essential outdoor water use.

Residents and businesses can find additional guidance through the MDE website.

## Nutrient Trading

Nutrient trading may offer a flexible mechanism for meeting regulatory load limits under Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements. While not currently necessary for the City to meet nutrient goals, such a strategy may become viable in the future if growth is constrained by nutrient caps. In that case, trading reductions with nearby watersheds could support continued development while maintaining compliance with water quality standards..

## Saltwater Intrusion

Although not currently a concern, saltwater intrusion remains a potential future threat to groundwater supplies, particularly under conditions of sea level rise or aquifer depletion. The City should continue to monitor regional trends and coordinate with the Maryland Geological Survey and other agencies to identify early warning signs and mitigation opportunities.

## Interjurisdictional Coordination

Aquifers and water tables extend beyond municipal boundaries. The City should maintain active coordination with Wicomico, Somerset, Worcester, and Dorchester Counties to monitor shared water resources, address emerging contaminants, and align groundwater management efforts.

## Wicomico County Comprehensive Water & Sewerage Plan

Wicomico County is responsible for preparing the Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan, which establishes system capacities and planned expansions over a 10-year horizon. The existing plan, adopted in 2010, is currently being updated. The revised plan will include an interactive, online GIS database of water and sewer service areas, enhancing accessibility and public transparency.

This Water Resources Element does not include detailed service area maps to avoid duplication or potential inconsistency with the County plan. Upon completion, the updated County Plan will require formal approval by the County Council and relevant State agencies, including MDE and MDP.

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# Chapter 10 | Environmental Resources & Sustainability

The City of Salisbury is recognized by its rich natural environment of parklands, woodlands, wetlands, and water resources which are some of the City's greatest assets. The City's strong commitment to sustainability guides efforts to retain and protect these sensitive areas, ensuring that development occurs in a manner that supports long-term environmental health and community resilience. By prioritizing sustainable growth, Salisbury helps preserve lands of high ecological value that not only filter water and reduce flooding, but also offer recreational opportunities. Clearly identifying and protecting these areas benefits both the environment and responsible development, maintaining the balance between conservation and progress. This chapter fulfills the Sensitive Areas requirements of the Comprehensive Plan by establishing strategies to safeguard and enhance Salisbury's most vital natural systems, ensuring that future generations continue to enjoy their ecological, recreational, and economic benefits.

## Goal

- To preserve, protect and enhance natural resources, habitat, sensitive areas, and green space to minimize the negative impacts of development; providing a healthy, clean and resilient environment for the residents.

## Objectives

- Protect drinking water sources, water quality, wildlife habitat, and natural features.
- Strengthen local regulations to preserve natural lands by promoting forest conservation and native soil preservation.
- Ensure that all new development and redevelopment in the City reduce pollutant loading to waterways and minimize runoff through the implementation of erosion and sediment controls, and stormwater management.
- Prioritize sustainability, address potential climate change impacts, and reduce hazards to build a more resilient community.
- Consider environmental standards when developing City Policies and evaluating options or actions.
- Maintain and improve the quality of the regions water resources
- Create and maintain green spaces throughout the city, enhancing environmental quality and fostering a sense of community involvement.
- Reduce the impacts of natural disasters through smart planning, resilient infrastructure and adaptive land use.
- Encourage revitalization of the riverfront which achieves an appropriate balance between commercial development, environmental protection and public open space.

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# Implementation Strategies

- Encourage and maintain planted buffers along waterways and create a continuous greenway to connect the zoo and downtown, while minimizing light pollution that can affect native insects and birds.
- Educate the public on invasive plants and discourage their use, specifically targeting species such as English ivy and bamboo, and promote awareness of invasive aquatic species such as snakeheads and blue catfish.
- Evaluate the City's Floodplain Ordinance to ensure sustainable development within the floodplain and incorporate updates based on revised FEMA floodplain maps.
- Strengthen the City's Wellhead Protection Area districts to align with Source Water Protection Program report recommendations and develop implementation strategies for the key findings.
- Promote planting native trees and plants and require the use of native plants in landscape plans for developments within the City.
- Reassess recommendations laid out in the 2020 Environmental Policy Task force report, and implement actions that are feasible, cost effective and beneficial for the community.
- Encourage use of high albedo building and paving materials to reduce urban heat island effects.
- Explore adding a light pollution standard in our municipal code.
- Research incentives for projects that exceed minimum energy efficiency requirements. such as tax incentives for LEED Certified buildings.
- Explore ways to reduce municipal energy consumption at public facilities, such as municipal buildings, public works facilities, and parking lots.
- Support the efforts of the Wicomico River Creekwatchers Program in an effort to encourage local residents and businesses to monitor the water quality of the Wicomico River and its tributaries.
- Promote backyard and neighborhood composting within the city.
- Create a masterplan for pocket parks in various neighborhood throughout the city.
- Encourage the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to help reduce flooding.
- Update and implement the City's Storm Water Management Ordinance to reflect revisions to the state storm water regulations.
- Identify vulnerable infrastructure, natural areas, and communities, and implement strategies to enhance resilience and adaptive capacity.
- Reduce flood risks with more green space and green infrastructure to absorb run off and buffer development from flooding and high tides.
- During the update of the zoning code, incorporate regulations to improve resiliency.
- Continue to update the City's Hazard Mitigation Plan as required.
- Discourage development in hazard zones.
- Consider purchasing alternative fuel fleet vehicles and expand alternative fuel infrastructure to include charging stations for electric vehicles across the city.
- Implement measures such as carpooling programs, bike-sharing initiatives, and the expansion of public transportation options.
- Seek opportunities for grant funding for clean energy projects.
- Work with the Green Team to organize workshops and community events to educate residents about sustainable city initiatives, such as energy conservation, waste reduction, green infrastructure, native plants, and sustainable transportation options.
- Explore funding opportunities to maintain and expand the city's existing tree canopy, particularly in areas with low tree coverage and along trails and parks.

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- Review and amend the existing landscaping regulations to encourage developers to retain existing trees and incorporate new tree plantings in development projects.
- Consider the reinstitution of a position similar to an arborist or landscape architect to educate residents about the harmful effects of invasive plants in forested areas, maintaining existing trees and improve the city tree canopy.
- Continue efforts to create community gardens to preserve green areas, expand access to fresh food, and foster community involvement with community partners.
- Consider adaptive reuse and other sustainable building practices for the expansion of community facilities.
- Consider requiring photometric plans as part of new development to help prevent and reduce light pollution.
- Encourage participation in the City's Adopt-A-Road Program to promote environmental responsibility, improved roadway safety and cleaner roadways while helping protect local waterways, including the Chesapeake Bay.

## Natural Resources Conservation Advisory Committee

Established in 2009, the Wicomico County Natural Resources Conservation Advisory Commission (NRCAC) works to protect the County's natural resources by identifying and prioritizing strategies to protect at-risk parcels countywide. The nine-member committee meets monthly and includes professionals including a forester, wildlife expert, wetlands expert, local land trust representative, environmental organization member, agricultural representatives, and appointees from the Recreation Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission, City of Salisbury, and County Council.

The NRCAC reviews environmental policies, practices, and procedures, and develops outreach materials to raise public awareness about environmental sustainability.

## Environmental Policy Task Force

In 2020, the City of Salisbury convened the Environmental Policy Task Force (EPTF) to recommend actions that would reduce the environmental impact of the City and its residents. Composed of community members from the City and greater Wicomico County area, the EPTF reviewed progress since the 2009 task force, worked with City staff to prioritize sustainability goals, and developed 22 recommendations. These recommendations were grouped into the following categories:

- Energy Use and Emissions
- Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater
- Management of Public Open Space
- Transportation, Sustainable Operation and Design
- Education and Outreach

On January 11, 2021, City Council adopted the 2020 EPTF Report through Resolution No. 3088, affirming the City's commitment to environmental sustainability and reducing its environmental footprint. The report serves as a guide for capital programming and budget priorities. Key recommendations include:

- Integrating energy assessments into city planning
- Purchasing hybrid, electric and appropriately sized vehicles
- Establishing fuel reduction goals
- Inserting trash collectors at storm water runoff drains
- Adopting policies for managing plants and trees on City-owned properties

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- Enhancing landscaping that is native to the Chesapeake Bay watershed
- Expanding and improving public open space
- Offering incentives for environmentally friendly building construction and renovation
- Increasing solar energy opportunities community-wide

# Environmentally Sensitive Areas

## Streams and Buffers

Streams provide habitat for diverse plant and animal species, serve as spawning grounds for important fish, and support recreation. Vegetated stream buffers act as protective zones, filtering sediment, nitrogen, phosphorus, and other pollutants from runoff, thereby reducing stream degradation. The effectiveness of these buffers depends on factors such as buffer width, vegetation type, and ongoing maintenance.

Prominent streams, rivers, and creeks in and around the City include: Owens Branch, Coty Cox Branch, Cottonpatch Creek, South Prong Wicomico River, Beaverdam Creek, Beaglin Branch, North Prong Wicomico River, Leonard Pond Run, and Middle Neck Branch.

Protecting waterways and their buffers will not only supports greenway connection across the City but also provides the following benefits:

- Enhance habitat and biodiversity by providing wildlife travel corridors.
- Stabilize stream banks.
- Improves water quality by mitigating pollutant sources.
- Prevents property damage, reduce public infrastructure costs, and increases property values through flood protection.

## Chesapeake Bay Critical Area

The Chesapeake Bay Critical Area (CBCA) encompasses all lands within 1,000 feet of the mean high-water line of tidal waters, or the landward edge of tidal wetlands, as well as all waters of and lands beneath the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, as defined by the Critical Area Act. Enacted in 1984, the Critical Area Act seeks to minimize adverse impacts on water quality from nutrient-rich runoff, conserve fish, wildlife, and plant habitats, and establish land use policies for development within the Critical Area. The Act also established the Critical Area Commission to oversee the creation and enforcement of local land use programs within this sensitive area.

On November 1, 1991, the City of Salisbury adopted the Salisbury Critical Area Implementation Ordinance, and established site-specific development objectives and procedures to minimize the impacts to the CBCA. In the City of Salisbury, the Critical Area law applies to the Wicomico River and its tidal tributaries. Objectives include:

- Creating protective buffer areas
- Reducing lot coverage
- Expanding public water access
- Enhancing wildlife habitat
- Preserving and increasing open space and recreational areas

In November 2024, Ordinance No. 2899 amended Chapter 12.20 of the municipal code, revising CBCA provisions and adopting an updated Critical Area Map.

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The CBCA contains three development designations: Intensely Developed Area (IDA), Limited Development Area (LDA), and Resource Conservation Area (RCA). See **Map 10-1** in **Appendix A** for the location of the Critical Area in the City.

1. Intensely Developed Area (IDA)
   The majority of Salisbury's Critical Area is designated as IDA. These areas are primarily urban, industrial, institutional, or commercial, with limited natural habitat and often impaired water quality. Requirements include:
   - Intense development permitted, subject to zoning and density controls
   - No vegetation clearing limits; vegetation establishment encouraged where possible
   - Construction on slopes >15% allowed
   - No lot coverage limits
   - Stormwater management required to reduce pollutant loads by 10%

2. Limited Development Area (LDA)
   LDA lands are primarily moderate-intensity residential and commercial areas, with some remaining natural habitat and moderately degraded water quality. Requirements include:
   - Development permitted, subject to zoning regulations
   - Clearing limited to 30% of forest and trees; replanting required
   - No construction on slopes >15%
   - Lot coverage generally limited to 15% (may be increased to 25%+ for certain lot sizes or grandfathered properties)

3. Resource Conservation Area (RCA)
   RCA lands include farms, forests, wetlands, and open fields, with low-density residential uses. Requirements include:
   - Development limited to agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and low-density residential
   - Maximum density: 1 dwelling unit per 20 acres
   - No new commercial, industrial, or institutional uses
   - Reforestation required for all clearing
   - Afforestation required on 15% of the site
   - No construction on slopes >15%
   - Lot coverage generally limited to 15%

When considering growth allocation requests, the City must follow state guidelines, which prioritize locating new development within or adjacent to existing developed areas, minimizing impacts to adjacent RCAs, and maximizing water quality benefits for new IDAs. All approved growth allocation changes require final approval by the Critical Area Commission.

The Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Law (HB 1253), enacted in 2008, requires local jurisdictions to consider planning, environmental, and economic factors in growth allocation decisions. Additional evaluation criteria include:

- For IDA: Availability of public wastewater, average density ≤ 3.5 units/acre, location in a Priority Funding Area, and demonstrated economic benefit.
- For LDA: Availability of public wastewater or best available nitrogen-removal technology, completion of existing subdivisions, expansion of existing businesses, and clustering to minimize environmental impact.

## Wetlands, Waterways and 100-Year Floodplain

Wetlands provide critical ecological functions, including moderating and storing floodwaters, absorbing wave energy, reducing erosion and sedimentation, improving water quality, recharging

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groundwater supplies, protecting fisheries, and providing habitat and migration corridors for wildlife. Within Salisbury's city limits, wetlands fall into two primary categories: tidal and nontidal.

In the City of Salisbury, wetlands are regulated by the U.S Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) through a joint permitting process. In addition, all tidal wetlands within the City are protected under the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program. Any construction occurring in or near wetlands, waterways, or floodplains must comply with the appropriate regulations.

A Joint Federal/State Application must be submitted for the alteration of any floodplain, waterway, tidal or nontidal wetland. Whenever an activity includes the disturbance of a wetland or depositing dredged or fill material into a wetland or waterway, the agency must complete a Joint Federal/State Application for the alteration of the environment. Applicants must demonstrate that the proposed impacts to wetlands are necessary and unavoidable, that mitigation for the negative impacts occurs, and that the mitigation is monitored. Upon receipt of the application, the USACE and MDE review the application and allows for a public comment period and site evaluation, if necessary. Final construction plans are reviewed before USACE or MDE issue a final decision.

Wetlands in the State of Maryland are protected under the following federal and state regulations: Clean Water Act, Section 404, Maryland Nontidal Wetlands Protection Act, Maryland Tidal Wetlands Act, and the Waterway and 100-year Floodplain Construction Regulations.

- Clean Water Act, Section 404: The USACE regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into wetlands. Activities include the placement of fill material, levee and dike construction, mechanized land clearing, land leveling, transportation infrastructure construction and dam construction. The USACE, district office determines whether the activity requires a permit.
- Maryland Nontidal Wetlands Protection Act: MDE Nontidal Wetlands and Waterways Division ensures there is no overall net loss of nontidal wetland acreage and function with the following construction activities: grading or filling, excavating or dredging, changing the existing drainage pattern, disturbing the water level or water table or destroying or removing vegetation. A permit is needed for activities that alter a nontidal wetland or the 25-foot wetland buffer. Wetlands of Special State Concern expand the buffer from 25-feet to 100-feet.
- Maryland Wetlands of Special State Concern (WSSC): In Maryland certain nontidal wetlands with rare, threatened, endangered species or unique habitat receive special attention. MDE is responsible for identifying and regulating these WSSC areas. The protection of these sensitive wetland areas includes the provision of a 100-foot buffer from development. In Salisbury, there are WSSC areas located at Schumaker Pond and at the headwaters of the North Prong (bisected by the Salisbury Bypass) – see **Map 10-3** in **Appendix A**. These areas contain some of the last remaining populations of rare native plants and animals in the state. Additional safeguards are encouraged to protect their ecological diversity.
- Maryland Tidal Wetlands Act: MDE manages tidal wetlands and provides resource protection from the following activities: Filling of open water and vegetated wetlands, construction of piers, bulkheads, revetments, dredging and marsh establishment.

Activities within a waterway or its floodplain are monitored to keep the area from flooding upstream or downstream, maintain fish habitat and migration, and protect waterways from erosion. Authorization is required if the following projects occur in a waterway or a 100-year floodplain: dams; reservoirs; bridges and culverts; excavation; filling; or channelization.

See **Map 10-2** in **Appendix A** for the location of Wetlands in the City, and **Map 10-5** for Floodplain locations.

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## Flood Mitigation

In 2008, Salisbury adopted a Flood Mitigation Plan which identified the City's long-term goal to improve resistance to floods by planning and undertaking hazard strategies in a preventive manner rather than a reaction after the fact. The plan was a cooperative effort between City of Salisbury, mitigation core team members, the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The Plan outlines six mitigation strategies: prevention; property protection; emergency services; structural projects; natural resource protection; and public information. For each category, the plan establishes goals and objectives as well as the agencies responsible for action items. In addition, the plan includes applicable funding sources, approximate costs and a general timeline for mitigation strategies.

In 2019, Salisbury prepared a Nuisance Flooding Plan in accordance with state requirements. Nuisance flooding generally refers to high tide flooding that is not caused by rainfall and results in public inconvenience. The plan identified three primary areas of interest: (1) the main stem of the Wicomico River including Fitzwater Street and West Main Street, (2) the South Prong including East Main Street and Market Street, and (3) the North Prong including Lake Street and Mill Street.

More recently, Salisbury worked with the USACE "Silver Jackets" program to provide technical support and resources to disadvantaged, flood-prone communities in Maryland.

According to US Climate Data, the City of Salisbury receives an average of 46 inches of precipitation annually. Combined with low-lying topography, high seasonal water tables and poorly draining soils, these conditions elevate the City's flood risk.

## Stormwater Management

Urban development significantly affects water quality due to the increase in impervious surfaces, which disrupt local hydrologic cycles. During construction, trees, grass, and crops that naturally absorb rainfall are removed, exposing soil to erosion and compaction. Compacted soils function similarly to impervious surfaces which do not allow for infiltration. When precipitation falls on impervious surfaces, most of it becomes surface runoff. This runoff often overwhelms the natural drainage system and transporting pollutants such as fertilizers and pesticides into waterways.

To reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality, the City of Salisbury should encourage the following practices:

- Reduce untreated impervious surfaces such as large parking areas, building footprints, and extensive roadways.
- Promote rainwater retention, harvesting, and reuse.
- Incorporate site designs that minimize roadway widths in new developments.
- Utilize permeable pavements, pavers, and decking materials to allow infiltration.
- Maintain vegetated buffers along waterways to slow and filter runoff.
- Plant native trees, shrubs, and groundcover to absorb rainfall and improve infiltration.
- Use natural alternatives to chemical fertilizers and pesticides to limit nutrient-rich runoff.
- Conduct soil testing to determine precise fertilizer, pesticide, and herbicide needs.
- Increase wooded and open space areas, and reduce or minimize impervious cover citywide.
- Implement measures to reduce debris and floatables entering the stormwater system and waterways.

## Paleochannel and Wellhead Protection Areas

The City of Salisbury receives its drinking water from wells drawing from the Salisbury Aquifer and the Paleochannel, which is the bed of an ancient river that lies at a depth of 100 to 200 feet below

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the surface. The Paleochannel extends in an east-west direction approximately 12 miles from Eastern Dorchester County to U.S. Route 13, about 2 miles northeast of Salisbury, and is estimated to contain approximately seven (7) billion gallons of water.

In 2004, the City of Salisbury adopted both the Paleochannel and Wellhead Protection Overlay Districts (Chapter 17.100 of the Municipal Code) in an effort to protect this underground riverbed from overuse and contamination. Some of these protective measures include: use limitations, performance standards, and detailed review procedures to ensure protection of the riverbed from contamination resulting from environmentally incompatible land uses. Prohibited uses include: soil remediation facility, hazardous waste storage or facility, toxic waste storage or facility, any principal use that will store or generate wastes that are ignitable, corrosive, reactive, toxic, hazardous, infectious or chemical or petroleum laden, borrow pits, and sanitary landfills.

The overlay districts largely follow the underlying zoning assigned to a property; however, the districts have additional use restrictions and development standards in comparison to the underlying zoning. Within the Wellhead Protection Overlay District, all uses are permitted in the underlying zoning district with exception of uses that discharge excessive amounts of water, or use, store or generate raw or waste materials which are ignitable, corrosive, reactive or toxic. It is imperative to protect the wells from contamination associated with volatile and synthetic organic compounds and nitrates.

Development proposals for any lot or parcel of land for any use within these two resource protection districts require submission of a comprehensive site plan to be reviewed by the Planning Commission to ensure the proposed use is not detrimental to the Paleochannel and Wellhead Protection areas.

## Source Water Protection Program (2013)

In 2013, the City developed a Source Water Protection Program report, funded by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). Key recommendations include:

- Revising City and County wellhead protection ordinances to contain coordinated and strengthened language, including defining zones of influence based on groundwater travel time
- Offering financial incentives to owners of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) and other farms for voluntary adoption of practices such as tree planting, crop rotation, and improved land management
- Developing a joint City–County community outreach program targeting residential (especially properties with septic systems) and commercial landowners
- Acquiring or granting easements to reduce incompatible land uses
- Extending water and sewer service throughout Wellhead Protection Zones 1 and 2, and abandoning existing wells and septic systems
- Posting “No Dumping” signs at strategic locations to discourage improper disposal of hazardous waste and petroleum products
- Creating a spill notification system along MD Routes 12, 13, 50, 346, and 350, as well as the Salisbury railroad corridor
- Abandoning unused wells, including well field test borings and obsolete monitoring wells

## Green Infrastructure

The Wicomico County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan, adopted July 2022, outlines recommendations for green infrastructure (GI). The plan defines GI as an interconnected network

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of natural lands and open spaces composed of hubs and corridors (see Map 10-4 in Appendix A for the location of Green Infrastructure components).

- Hubs are large expanses of natural land that provide wildlife habitat, filter and trap sediment, and conserve soils. Examples include forests, wetlands, and parks.
- Corridors, also referred to as greenways, connect hubs to one another, supporting ecological functions and species movement.

The plan identifies low-density sprawl as a significant threat to the protection of sensitive areas, along with the spread of invasive plant and animal species.

# Sustainablility

Sustainability broadly includes environmental stewardship, social equity, and economic development, with the intent on creating thriving, and resilient communities that can endure across generations. It is a balancing act that acknowledges that resources are finite, and that society should conserve such resources so that our children and grandchildren can live in healthy communities as well. Recognizing this, the city has made efforts to lessen its environmental impact, without hindering its development. Specifically, this includes actions aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, protecting natural resources, supporting local economies, and creating community through green spaces and local food resources. The rest of this chapter highlights specific ways Salisbury has practiced sustainability, and how it plans on doing so moving forward.

## Sustainability Advisory Committee

To help achieve its sustainability goals, the City of Salisbury established a Sustainability Advisory Committee, more commonly known as the "Green Team". The Green Team provides guidance on the development of regulations and policies related to environmental stewardship and sustainable practices. Since 2015, the City's Green Team has been promoting a greener, more sustainable Salisbury by engaging in a wide range of initiatives that support this mission. The team has help implement a Green Business Certification program to encourage local businesses to adopt environmentally friendly practices, reinforcing the city's dedication to sustainability at every level. In addition, the Green Team regularly attends and hosts green-focused events, participates in and organizes community litter cleanups, coordinates tree plantings across town, and supports the creation of pollinator gardens to foster biodiversity and ecological health. Through these ongoing efforts, the Green Team continues to play a vital role in shaping a more sustainable future for Salisbury.

# Sustainable Maryland

In 2016, Salisbury achieved designation as a Sustainable Maryland Certified city. This program recognizes Maryland municipalities that take steps toward becoming more environmentally conscious. Since earning the certification, Salisbury has implemented a variety of sustainability projects across several broad categories. These initiatives not only help the City maintain its Sustainable Maryland status but also serve as a framework guiding the sustainability efforts of the City and the Green Team. Since 2022 the city has maintained "Silver Status" which is the highest offered by the program. In October of 2025 the City was recertified silver and will hold that until 2028. The following outlines the key ways Salisbury has continued to uphold its certification:

## Local Economy & Food Production

Small businesses, local economies, and community-based food systems that allow people to sell their goods have become a powerful way to stimulate the economy in small cities. They promote entrepreneurship and community growth, while keeping money circulating within the area.

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Additionally, community gardens give people the option to grow their own produce in areas where space is limited. By supporting local food and economies, the city is working towards being a city that prioritizes health, sustainability, and collaboration. Here are some ways the city is taking action in those areas:

- Local Farmers Market
  The city currently supports two vibrant farmers markets; The Camden Avenue Farmers Market, The Camden Avenue market, located just a block away from Salisbury University, features over 20 vendors, attracting an average of 750 customers per week. Per the Farmers Market Vendor Guidelines, all vendors are required to be located within 100 miles of Salisbury.

- Community Gardens
  Community gardens are shared spaces built and maintained by the community. They are often located in schools, hospitals, parks, or vacant lots. These gardens offer several benefits including the beautification of public spaces, learning opportunities, supplying fresh food to the surrounding area, and promoting social interaction through collaboration. The city currently maintains four community gardens: Camden Community Garden, Boundless Community Garden, Riverwalk Edible Garden, and Truitt Street Garden.

- Urban Chickens
  In 2015, the Mayor and City Council approved an ordinance permitting residents to keep chickens within city limits. Chicks or chickens are required to be registered with the State Department of Agriculture before being purchased, and households are allowed up to six at one time. Keeping a small flock of chickens can provide many benefits, so long as they are well cared for. Those who participate can expect fresh, healthy eggs; fertilizer for gardening, and a great opportunity to be a part of a local and sustainable food system.

- Green Business Certification Program
  With the help of the Green Team, the City has created a Green Business Certification program to recognize businesses committed to sustainable practices. To qualify business must self-evaluate based on a list of actions that are assigned a point value. Actions include going “strawless” using energy-efficient lighting, being- bike friendly, or installing water-efficient fixtures. Once submitted, a representative from the city will visit the business for verification.

- 3rd Friday
  3rd Friday is a free monthly event held in Downtown Salisbury on the third Friday of each month. It features live music, local artists displaying their work on the streets, gallery shows, and special sales at local stores and restaurants. The event celebrates the community's unique local talent, creativity, and the beauty of downtown. Organized by the Arts, Business and Culture Department, 3rd Friday is supported by downtown businesses and restaurants, all working together to offer a variety of activities and sales. It is a downtown economic development initiative, managed by the Salisbury Arts, Business and Culture Department.

## Transportation, Energy & Carbon Footprint

For cities, managing energy use and reducing greenhouse gas emissions are critical to lowering operational costs, and protecting environmental health. Municipal efforts towards energy efficiency lessen a city’s environmental footprint and sets an example for residents, businesses, and institutions to follow. Salisbury has taken steps to monitor and reduce its environmental impact

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through data-driven energy and emissions initiatives. By tracking its municipal carbon footprint, conducting regular energy audits the City demonstrates a commitment to sustainability and operational efficiency. The following are ways the City is making efforts in energy efficiency.

- Municipal Carbon Footprint (Greenhouse Gas inventory)
  In 2020, the City renewed its commitment to become a leader in sustainability with a resolution reinstituting the Environmental Policy Task Force to develop a core set of recommendation to reduce the City's environmental impact. The city continues to use the task force document to inform decisions regarding energy efficiency, carbon footprint, natural resources and overall sustainability.

- Municipal Energy Audit
  The City initiated its commitment to energy efficiency around 20 years ago with the launch of its first Energy Management Program in 2004. Since then, the City has consistently reviewed and enhanced its efforts through program updates in 2008, 2012, and 2018. The facilities evaluated in these efforts include Poplar Hill Mansion, Salisbury Fire Department Stations 1, 2, and 16, Salisbury Marina, Salisbury Police Department Headquarters, Salisbury Service Center Buildings, the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Paleo & Park Water Treatment Plants and the Salisbury Zoo. In FY22, the City's energy consultant completed a comprehensive site assessment of all City facilities and prepared an FY24-31 Energy Management Plan. This plan will be the City's roadmap for energy saving improvements over the course of 7 years, projects which may coincide with or supersede those as presented to the City by the 2018 Honeywell audit.

- Public Charging Stations
  The City of Salisbury has nine installed public electric vehicle charging stations within the city corporate limits from 2014-2022. Seven of the ports are level 2 stations and two are DC Fast stations. The two DC Fast stations charge $0.28 per kWh and $0.26 per mile. The SemaCharge station is free for use. According to MDOT in the 21804 and 21801 Salisbury zip codes, there are over 550 registered EV's. The city should continue to strive to increase education and outreach regarding these amenities.

In addition to the efforts above, amendments to the zoning code that increase density, encourage mixed-use, and consider walkability are also ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through both direct and indirect activities. Encouraging developments with smaller lot sizes, but larger open green spaces, can help achieve financially viable projects while increasing habitat, shade, and community amenity.

## Community & Wellness

Small cities thrive on healthy communities and Salisbury continues to strengthen its sense of community and commitment to sustainability by engaging residents, students, and employees alike. Programs that promote environmental education, public art, civic participation, and workplace wellness collectively enhance quality of life. From cultivating environmental literacy in local schools to beautifying public spaces with art and maintaining cleaner neighborhoods through volunteer efforts, these initiatives reflect the City's dedication to building a healthy, creative, and connected community. The follow actions represent Salisbury's ongoing effort to support community health and wellness.

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- Maryland Green Schools
  The Maryland Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education (MAEOE) developed the Green Schools program to help schools and their communities assess their environmental sustainability efforts. Salisbury currently has five Maryland Green Schools located within its boundaries, including James M Bennet High, Parkside High, Prince Street Elementary, Pinehurst Elementary, and Choices Academy. In addition to traditional practices like student participation in school-wide recycling programs, these schools have undertaken ambitious projects that benefit the community and provide creative learning opportunities. Environmental literacy is integrated across all subjects, including foreign language classes. Students also engage in community gardening and habitat restoration projects both on school campuses and throughout the City.

- Public Art
  Public art can enhance community identity by educating residents about their local history and giving the city a personality and sense of place. Public art projects are emerging throughout Salisbury's major arteries and population centers in the form of sculptures, murals, and colorfully painted utility boxes. Two in particular stand out due to their historical significance; Church Street Mural, and VFW Westside Mural. To encourage exploration, the City's website features a Public Art walking tour, an interactive map showcasing all public art installations. In 2023, the City completed The Public Art Master plan as the guiding document for all things public art related moving forward.

- Community Cleanups
  Part of the City's Green Team initiatives has been taking an active role in community engagement through ongoing cleanup events held across Salisbury's parks and neighborhoods. These events, which are hosted on a monthly basis, are advertised through the City Green Team's page to encourage community participation. The Green Team frequently collaborates with Wicomico Clean, a county-wide initiative that also conducts cleanup activities throughout the Salisbury-Wicomico area. This partnership strengthens local efforts to reduce litter and enhances the appearance of public spaces. Continuing these initiatives supports the City's broader sustainability goals by encouraging community-driven action, improving environmental quality, and contributing to a cleaner and more resilient urban environment.

- Workplace Wellness Program
  The City of Salisbury's "Thrive" Wellness Committee promotes employee well-being through education and engaging activities aimed at encouraging healthier lifestyles. The committee offers programs that focus on physical, social, and occupational wellness, such as "Walk Wednesdays," "Lunch and Learn" sessions, and a free paddling program. Monthly newsletters share wellness events, articles, and healthy recipes, and committee meetings foster collaboration on new initiatives. Participation averages around 20 employees for key activities, with 40 employees engaging in other events. Additionally, the committee supports the "Buddy Program," helping new hires integrate into the city's culture by pairing them with experienced employees.

## Natural & Historic Preservation

The preservation of our natural and historic resources plays an important role in giving the City character and long-term resiliency. Areas such as parks, forests, and waterways help with biodiversity and provide residents with access to green spaces that enhance quality of life. Similarly, historic buildings, landmarks, and cultural sites fosters a sense of place and continuity, connecting

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current and future generations to the city's heritage. Together, these spaces contribute to a more sustainable, community that values its historic past and its natural present and future. The following are actions the City has taken in these areas:

- Tree, Bee, and Bird City
  Designations like Tree City, Bee City, and Bird City help guide the City towards environmental stewardship and sustainability. Much like the Sustainable Maryland program, these designations require the city to complete a number of actions is various categories. By making a commitment to these programs, the City is demonstrating a dedication to biodiversity, clean air and water, and the overall health of surrounding ecosystems. Tree Cities invest in green infrastructure that mitigates heat islands and improves air quality; Bee Cities foster native plantings and reduce pesticide use, supporting pollinators essential for food systems; and Bird Cities help protect migratory routes and urban wildlife through habitat preservation and public education. Together, these efforts not only enhance the quality of life for residents but also build resilience to climate change and contribute to a more sustainable future. Since 2018 the City has worked towards achieving and sustaining these designations starting with Bee City; then later obtaining Bird and Tree City recognition in 2020. Salisbury maintains these designations at the time of writing this Comprehensive Plan.

- Pocket Pollinator Meadow Program
  In 2021 the City passed legislation allowing for residence to plant and maintain a small pollinator meadow within their yard. These planned meadows offer the same ecological benefits of wild meadows but on a more manageable scale. Residents must first register with the city's Housing and Community Development department, and ensure that their pocket meadow does not become weed infested, and should include a majority of Maryland native plants. Building on this initiative, the City's Green Team Meadows Subcommittee has dedicated time financial resources to supporting these efforts across the community. The Subcommittee maintains its own pollinator garden on Wailes St and is actively scouting new locations throughout the city that could be converted into pollinator habitats.

- Urban Trees
  With guidance from the Tree Canopy Study, the City of Salisbury has launched a tree planting program focused on enhancing tree coverage within city limits. The program targets parks, schools, and neighborhoods with lacking tree canopy identified through the study. Initial planting efforts have already taken place at Waterside Park, Doverdale Park, The City Park, Mallard Landing, Parson's Cemetery and the Truitt Street Community Center. Looking ahead, the City plans to continue expanding its tree canopy.

- Naylor Mill Forest
  Situated near the baseball fields at the Henry S. Parker Athletic Complex, Naylor Mill Forest is one of Salisbury's most ecologically significant natural areas. Designated as one of the City's conservation districts, it is home to old-growth species such as red oak, Atlantic white cedar, and American chestnut. Spanning more than 92 acres, the forest has become a popular destination for bikers, hikers, and nature enthusiasts. Its quiet beauty offers a peaceful escape right within the city.

- Stormwater Fee Structure
  In 2014, the City of Salisbury established a stormwater utility to maintain its storm drain system and fund projects that reduce polluted runoff. Recommended by the University

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of Maryland Environmental Finance Center, this initiative aligns with federal pollution reduction requirements and mirrors successful programs in over 1,400 communities in the country. Funded by annual fees of $25 for single-family homes and variable rates for non-residential properties based on impervious surfaces—the revenue is placed in a dedicated city fund. These efforts aim to improve water quality, reduce flooding, protect property, and support Chesapeake Bay cleanup, ensuring the waterways and tributaries throughout Salisbury remain healthy.

- Create a Watershed Plan

  The Wicomico River Watershed Management Plan, completed in March 2013 and updated in 2014, includes a comparative sub watershed assessment and action plans for three sub watersheds of the river, the North and South Prong and Tony Tank. Actions included projects that span outside of City limits and include Fruitland and additional areas in Wicomico County. Due to the plan's broad scope, the City of Salisbury contracted KCI Engineering to prioritize projects specific to the city. The final prioritization report was completed in February 2018, and the City is actively implementing the recommended projects.

  Additionally, the City supports ongoing water monitoring through the Wicomico Environmental Trust (WET), a local non-profit partner. WET monitors the Wicomico River monthly via its Creekwatchers program, producing an annual River Report that tracks nutrient levels and identifies areas in need of improvement. The City funds this monitoring effort through the Stormwater Utility fee.

- Curbside Recycling

  Curbside recycling is a free service available to all Salisbury City residents who utilize the City's weekly trash collection. It's an easy way to recycle items like cardboard, plastics, paper, and glass. Information about the program as well as what items are accepted is available on the City's Website. Recycling bins are provided at no charge and can be delivered at request by the Field Operations Department.

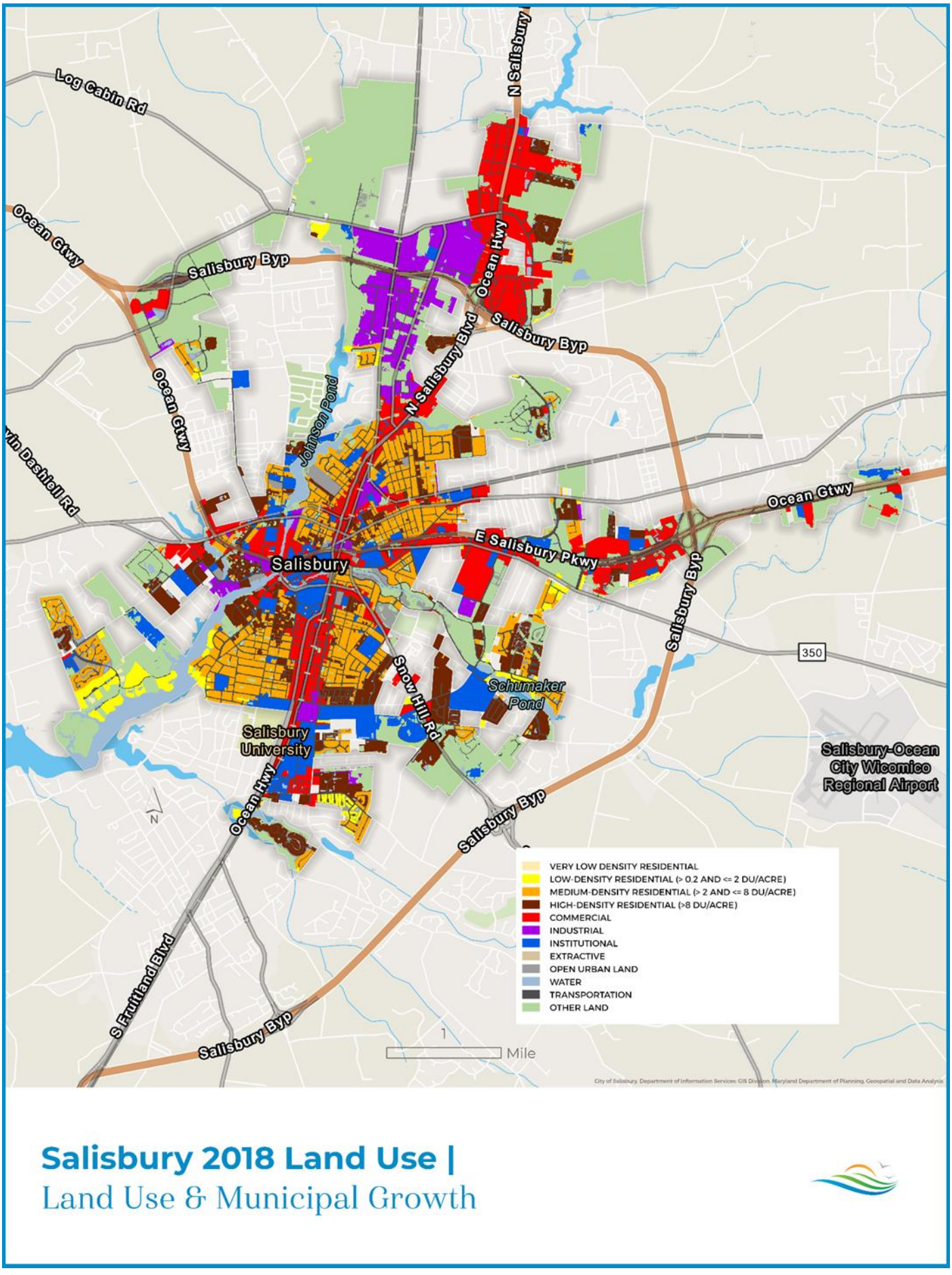
- Historic Area Zoning

  The City of Salisbury established its Historic District in 1983 to preserve its historic neighborhoods, following discussions in Annapolis about encouraging such efforts statewide. To this day the Salisbury Historic District Commission reviews applications for exterior changes to buildings within three recognized districts; The Camden Historic District, The Downtown Historic District, The Newtown District. The Historic District regulations protect Salisbury's architectural heritage while, in a roundabout way, encouraging sustainability. By designating a portion of the city for preservation, the district ensures that homes and businesses are maintained rather than demolished. This way the upkeep of existing structures is prioritized, minimizing the need for new materials, making the reuse of buildings one of the most sustainable practices available.

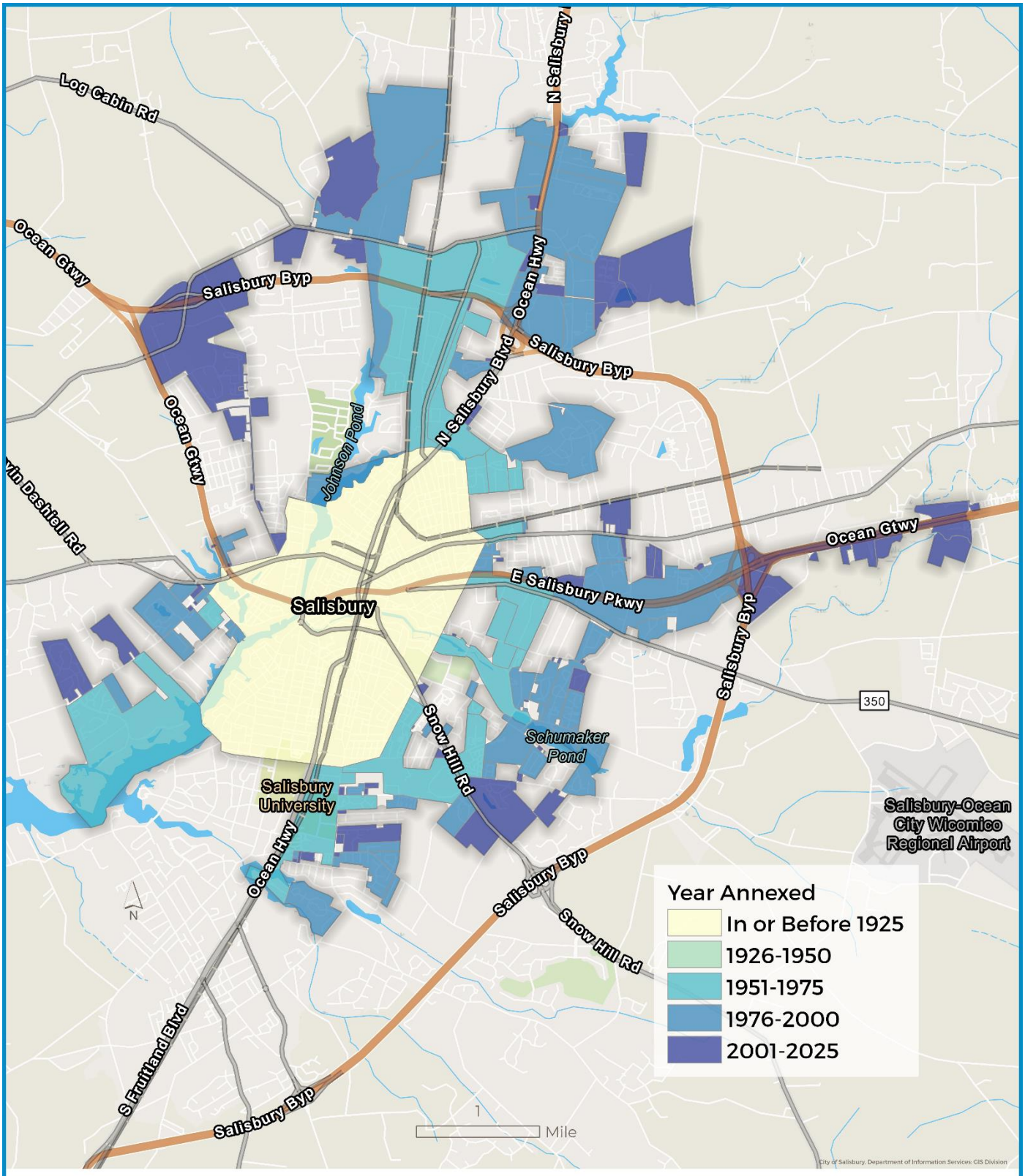
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# Appendix A
# Maps

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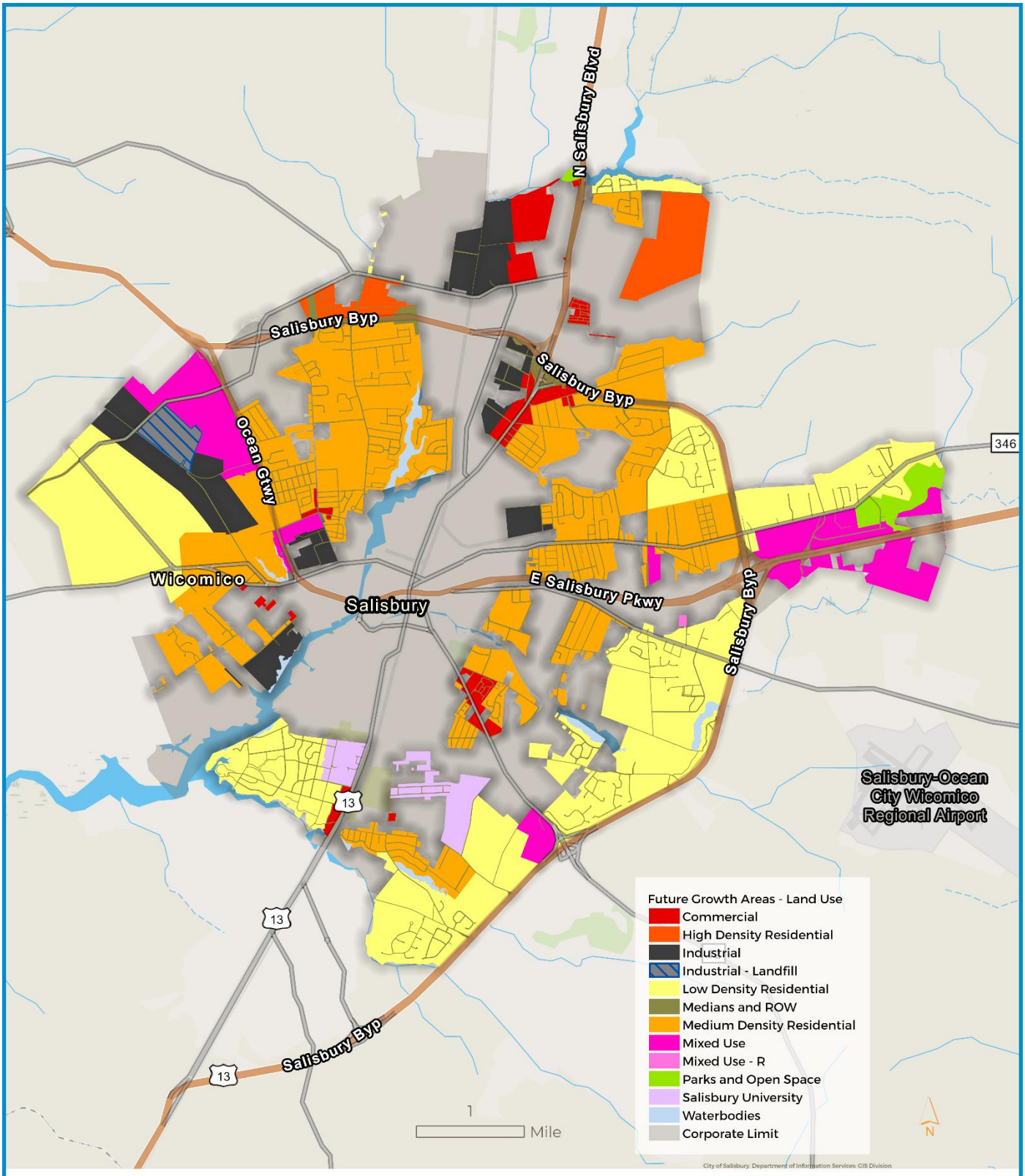



*Map 3-1 Land Use & Municipal Growth*



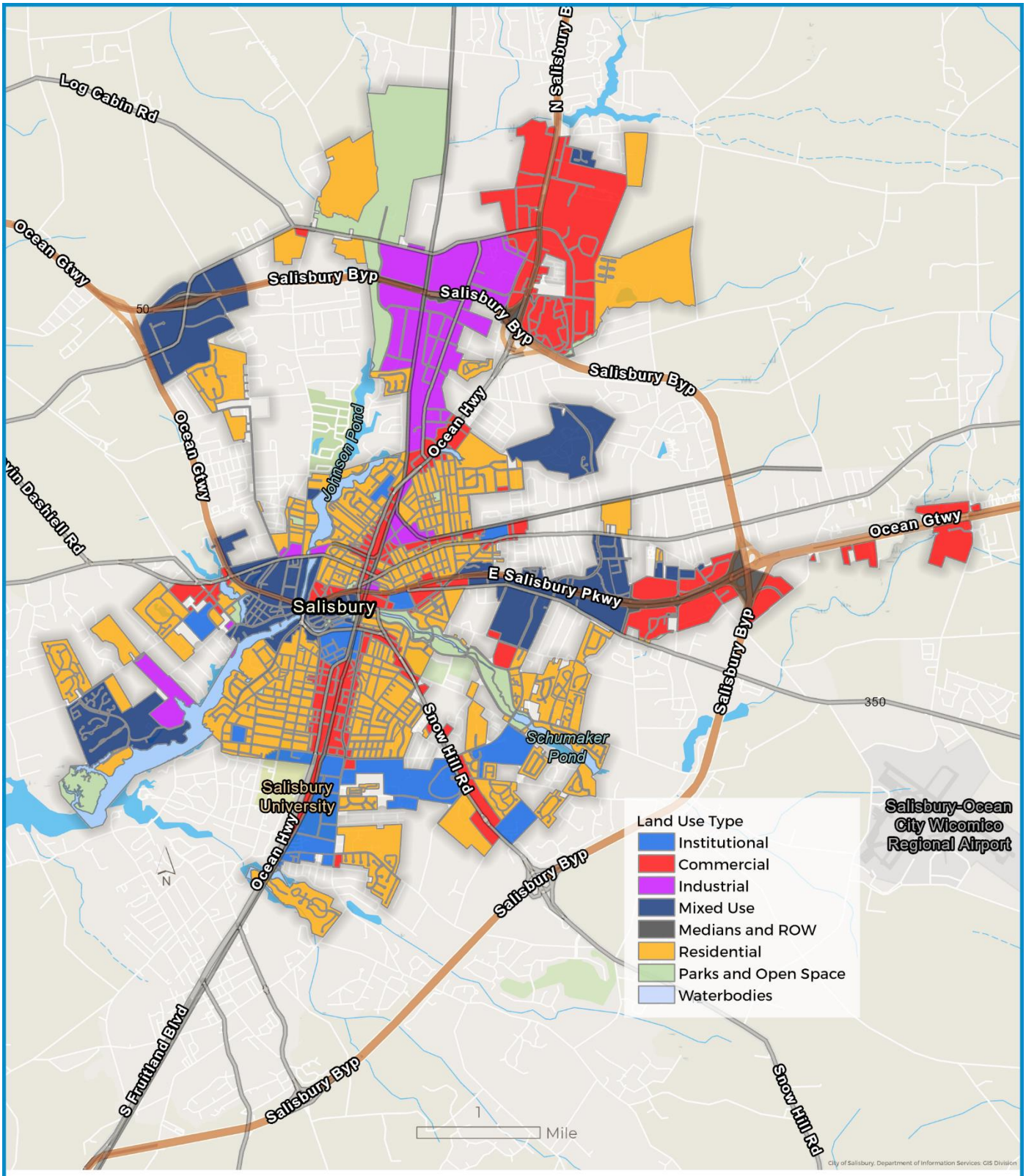

# Annexations |
## Land Use & Municipal Growth

*Map 3-2: Annexations*



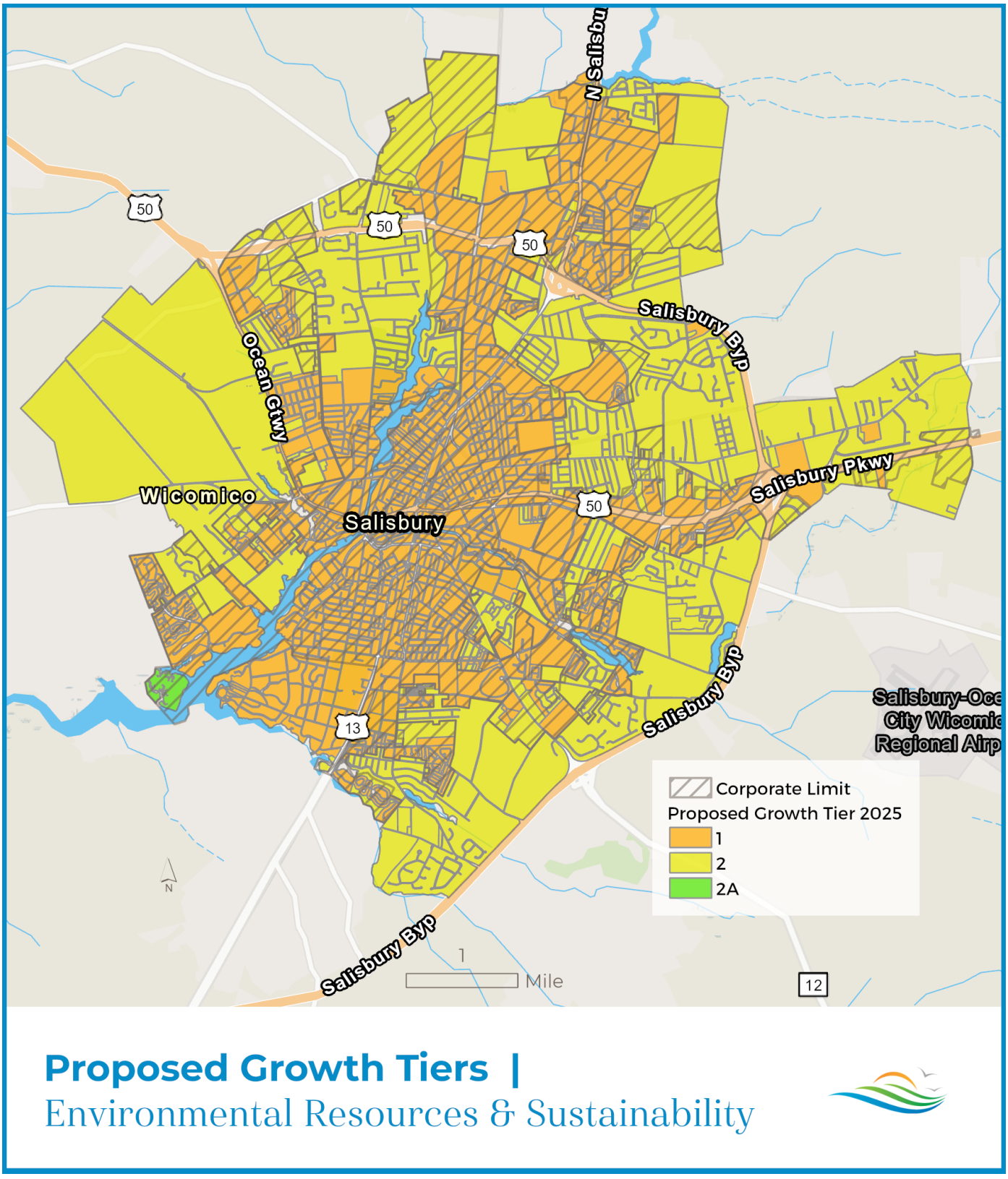

# Future Growth Areas |
## Land Use & Municipal Growth

*Map 3-3: Future Growth Areas*



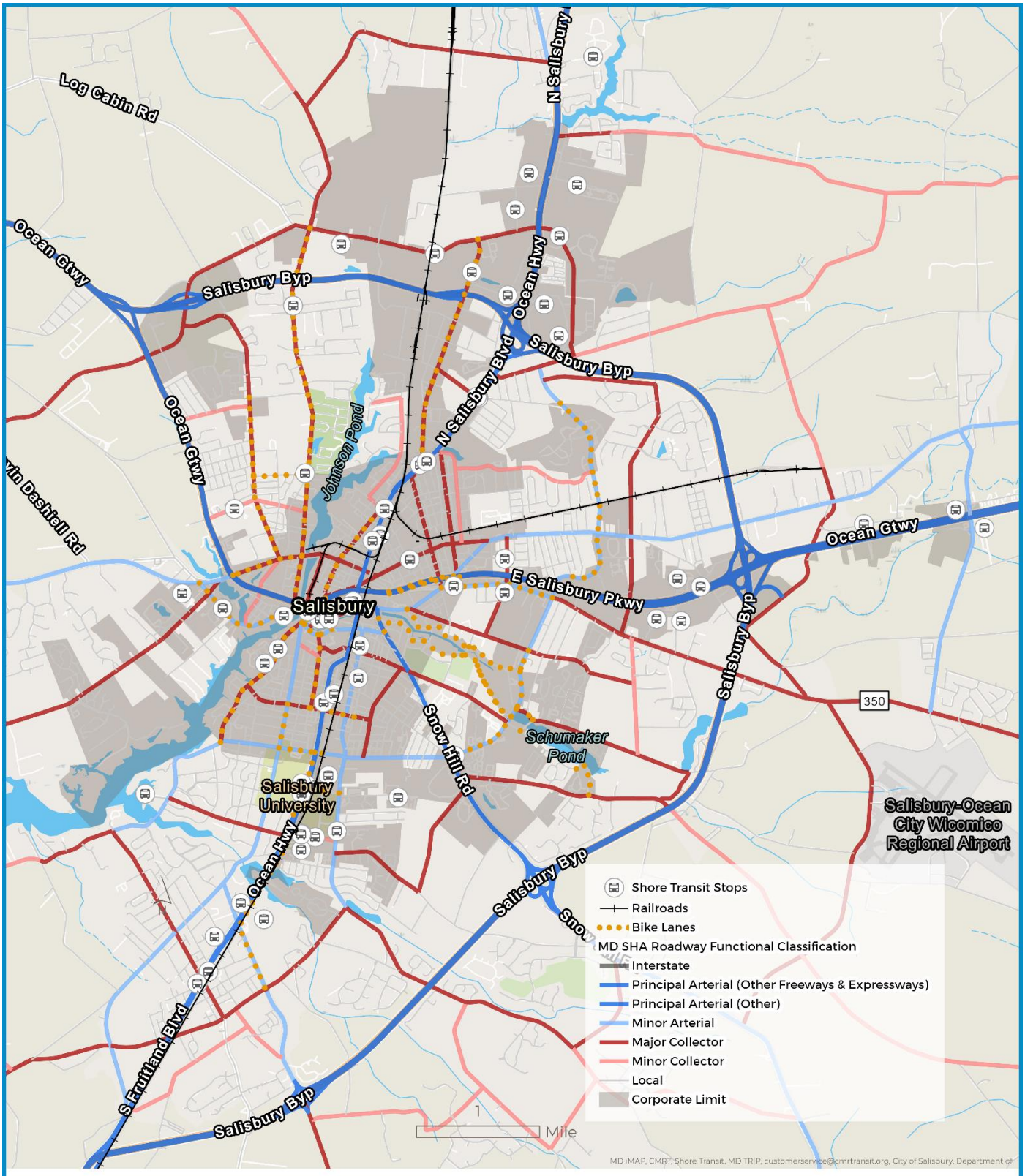

# Salisbury 2025 Future Land Use |
## Land Use & Municipal Growth

*Map 3-4: Salisbury 2025 Future Land Use*



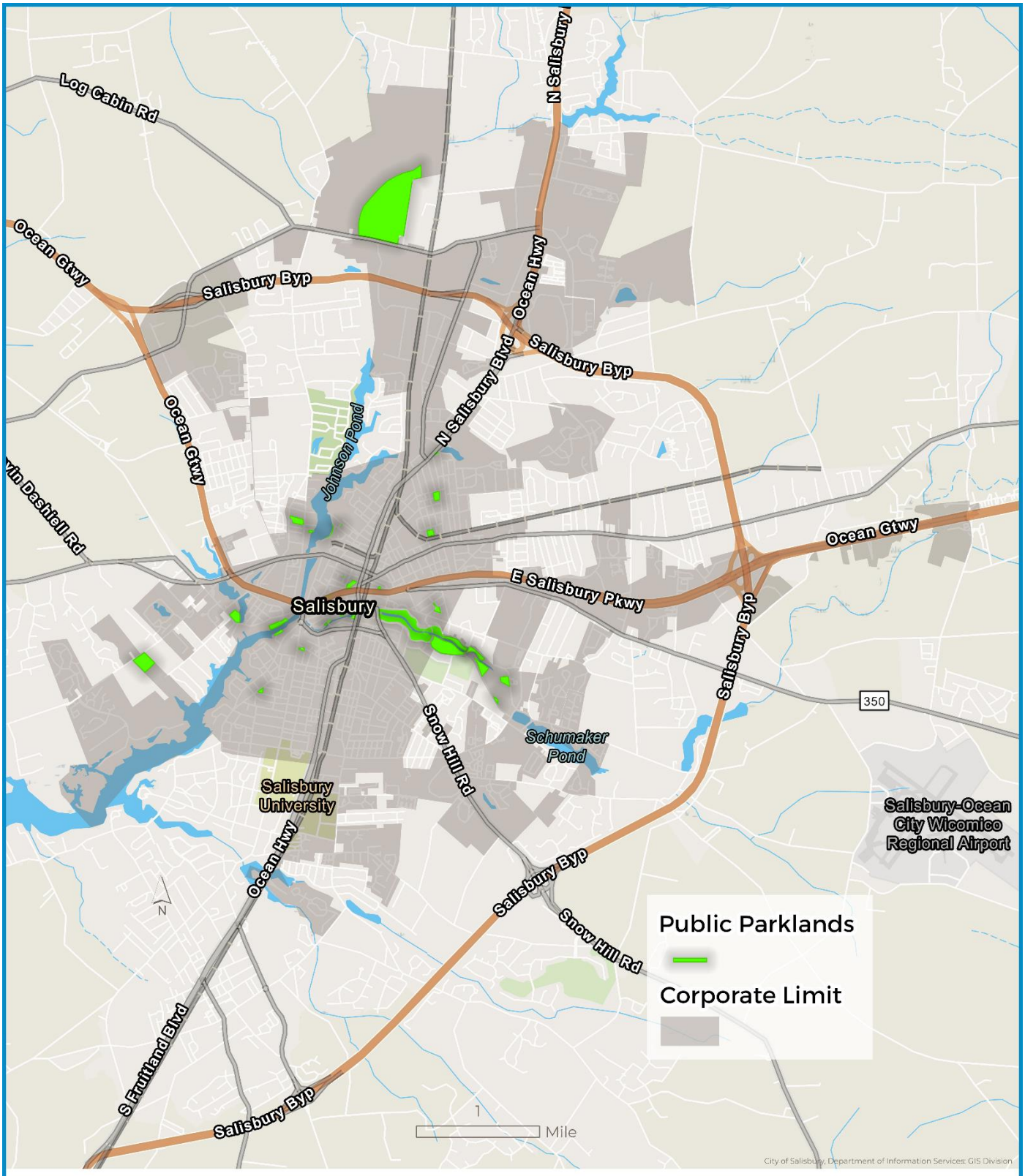

**Proposed Growth Tiers |**
Environmental Resources & Sustainability

Map 3-5: Proposed Growth Tiers



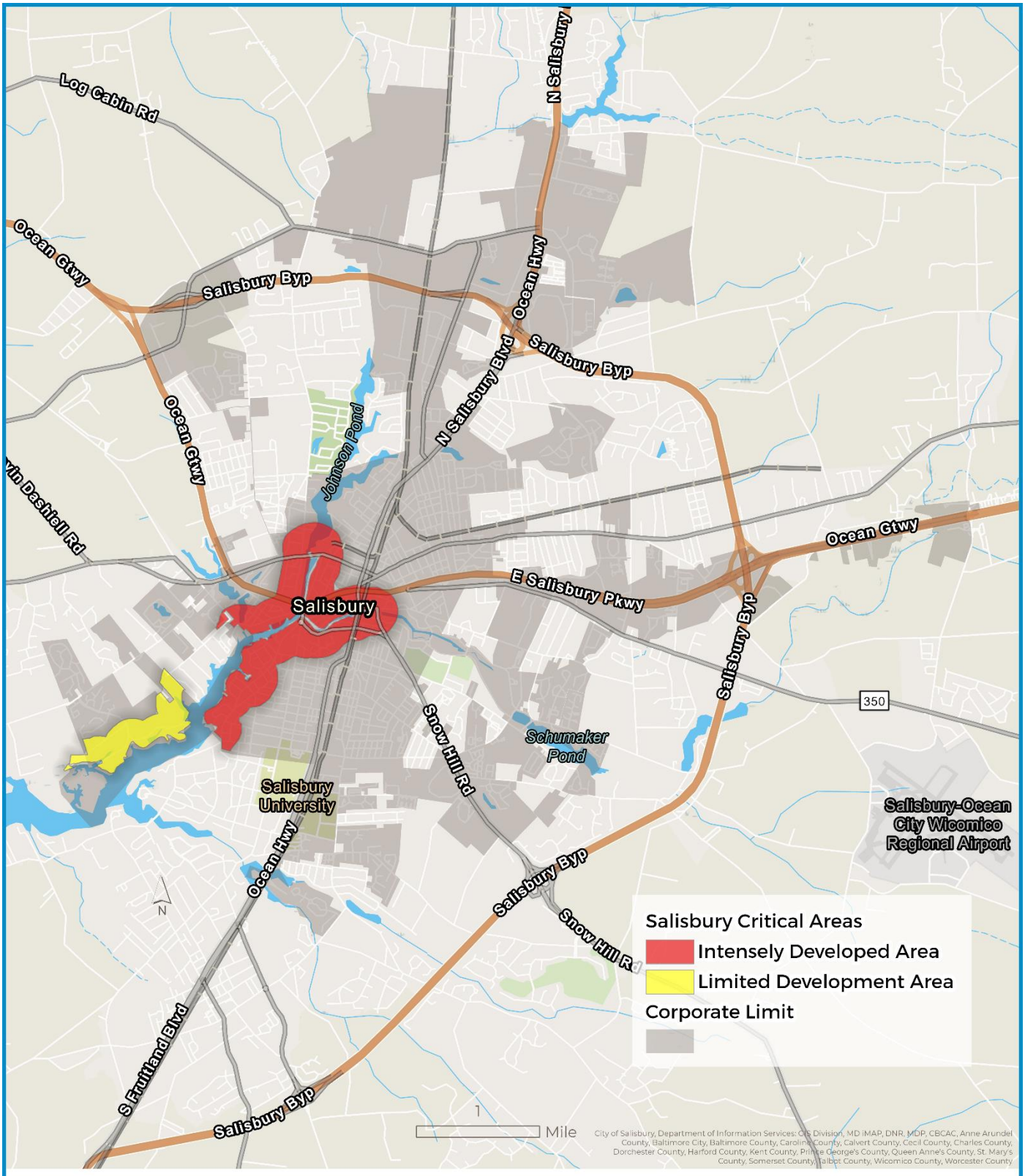

# Existing Transportation Facilities | Transportation

*Map 7-1: Existing Transportation Facilities*



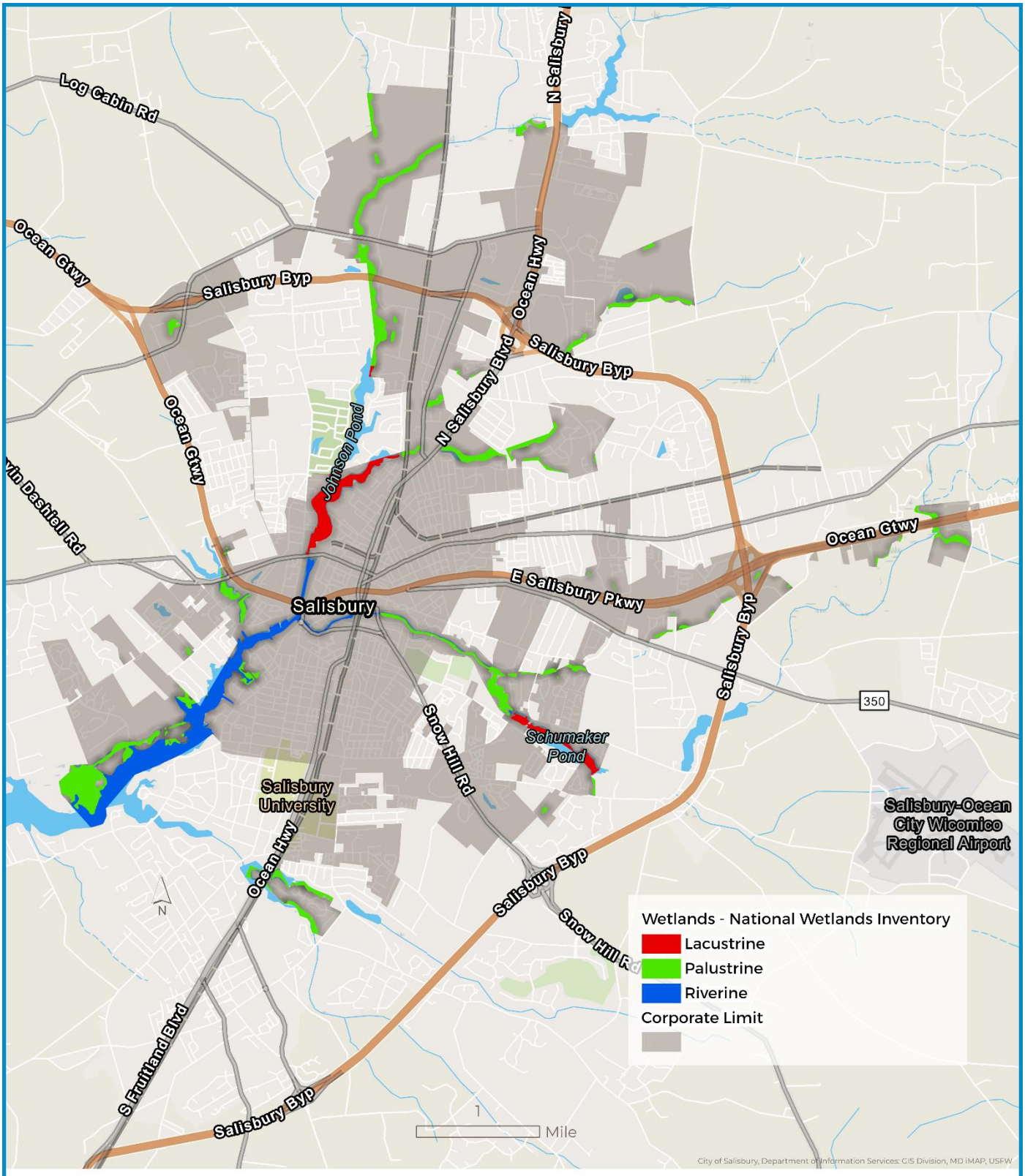

# Open Space and Recreation | Community Facilities

*Map 8-1: Open Space and Recreation*



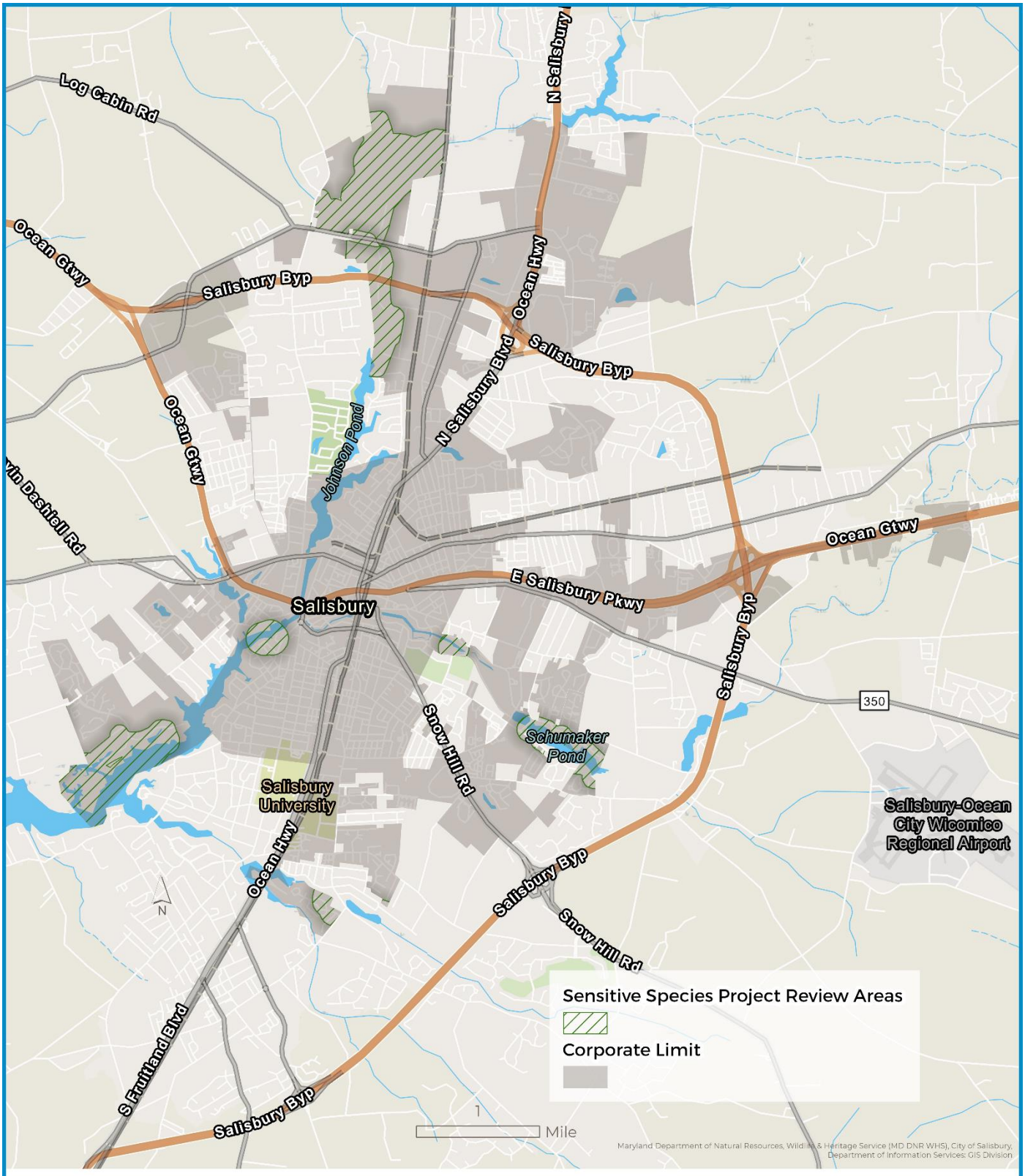

## Critical Areas |
Environmental Resources & Sustainability

*Map 10-1: Critical Areas*



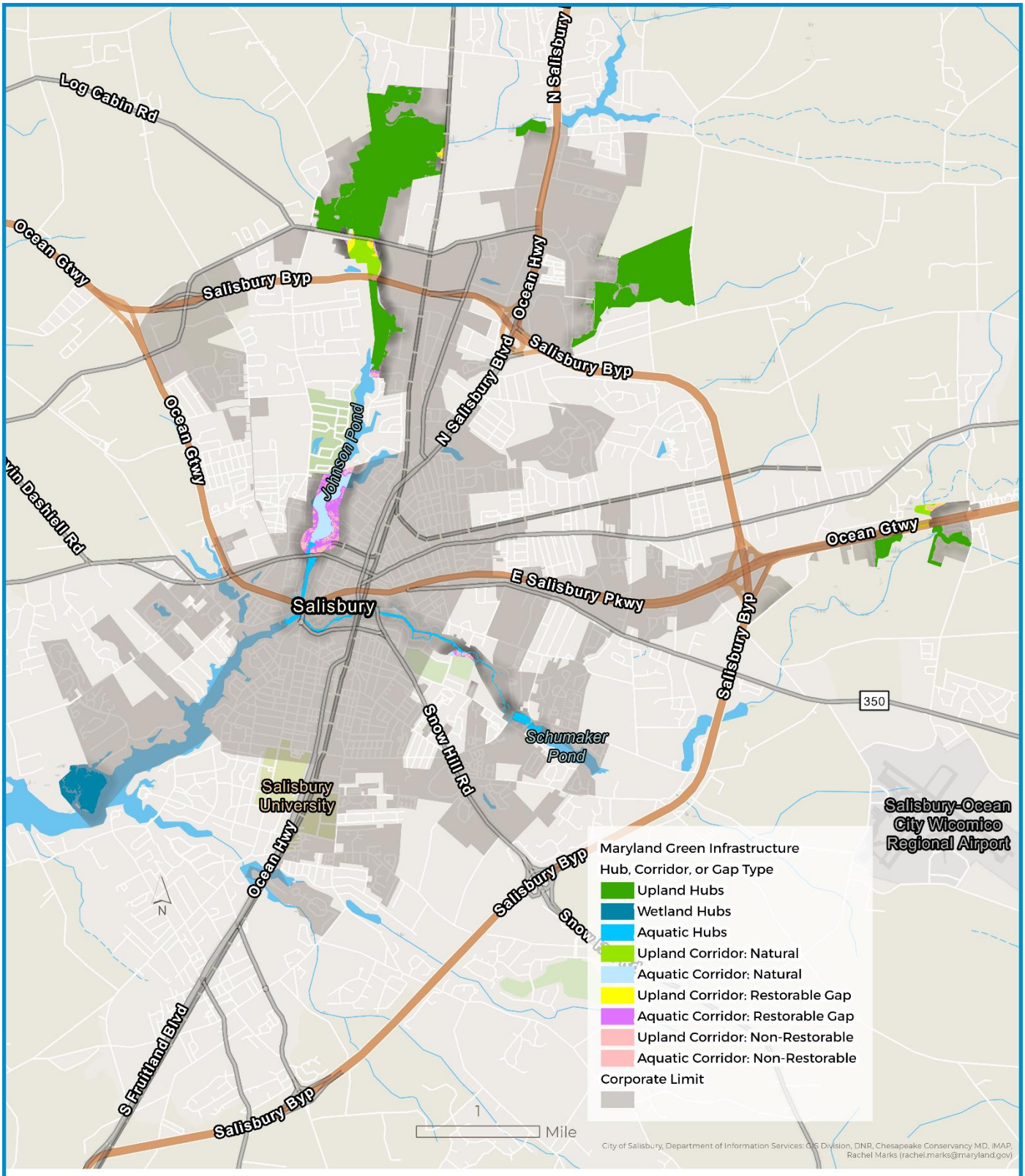

# Wetlands |
## Environmental Resources & Sustainability

*Map 10-2: Wetlands*



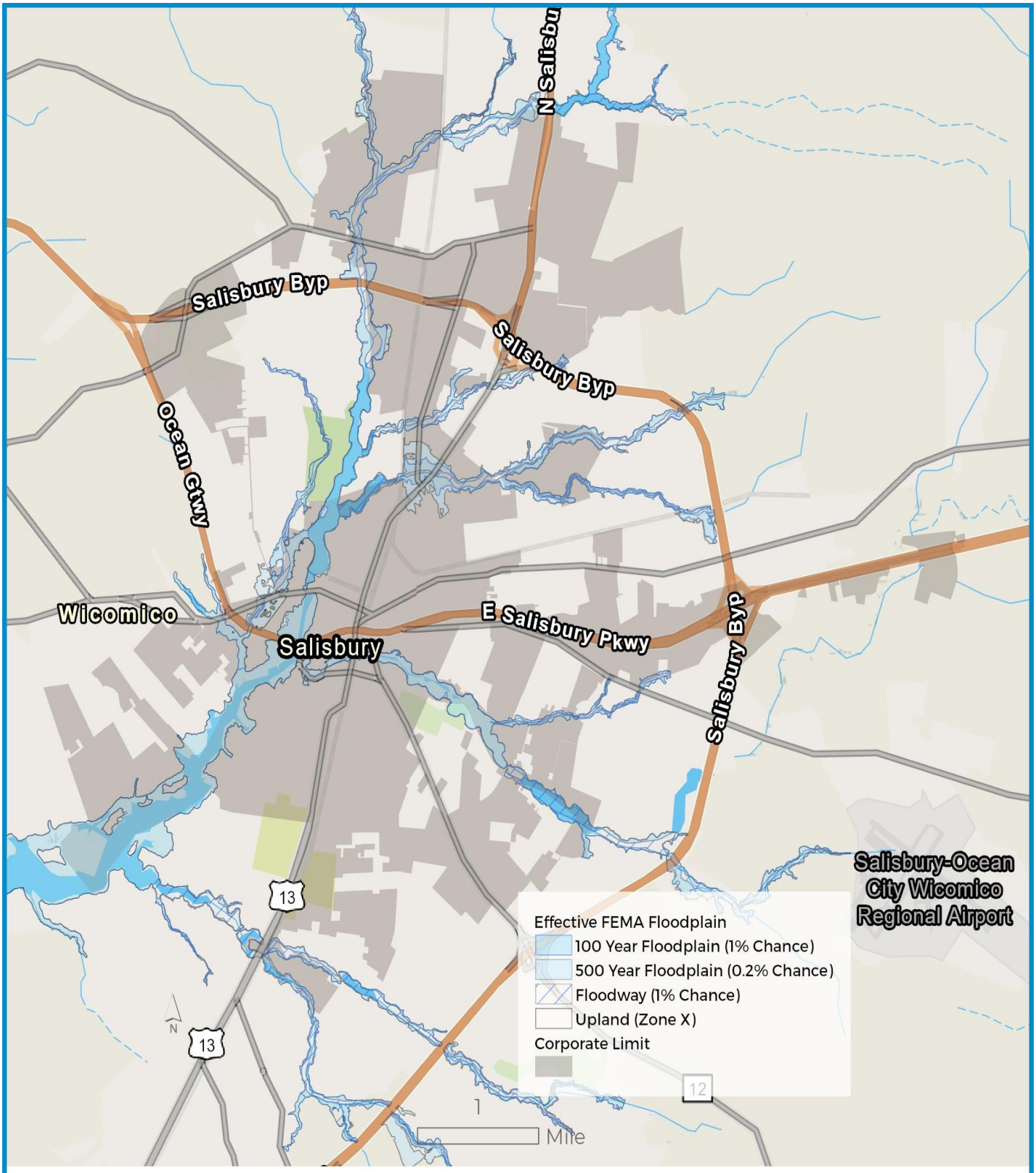

## Sensitive Species Project Review Areas |
Environmental Resources & Sustainability

*Map 10-3: Sensitive Species Project Review Areas*




## Maryland Green Infrastructure |
Environmental Resources & Sustainability

*Map 10-4: Maryland Green Infrastructure*




# FEMA Flood Zones |

## Environmental Resources & Sustainability

*Map 10-5: FEMA Flood Zones*

# Appendix B
# Historic Sites Inventory

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| MIHP No | Historic Name | Other Name | Address | Year Built |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| WI-106 | Perry-Cooper House | | 200 E. William Street | 1897 |
| WI-108 | George W. Humphreys House | Jeanette Long House | E. William Street | 1860 |
| WI-110 | Todd House | | 320 N. Division Street | 1840 |
| WI-117 | Bridge 22009, Salisbury Bridge, West Main Street Bridge | | W. Main Street (MD 991) over Wicomico River | 1927 |
| WI-12 | Wicomico County Courthouse | | Division Street & Main Street | 1878 |
| WI-127 | Salisbury Barracks, MD State Police, site | | Delmar Road (MD 13) & Dagsboro Road | 1938 |
| WI-13 | Gillis-Grier House | | 401 N. Division Street | 1887 |
| WI-134 | H. S. Brewington Building | Old Synagogue Building | 300-304 W. Main Street | 1892 |
| WI-135 | Holloway Hall, Salisbury State College | | 1101 Camden Avenue | 1924 |
| WI-137 | St. James A. M. E. Zion Church, site | | Lake Street & School Street | 1918 |
| WI-138 | St. Paul's A. M. E. Zion Church, site | | Delaware Avenue & Gordon Street | 1942 |
| WI-139 | First Colored Missionary Baptist Church of Salisbury, site | | Delaware Avenue & West Isabella Street | 1959 |
| WI-14 | Dr. Humphreys House | | 115 Broad Street | 1856 |
| WI-141 | John Wesley Methodist Episcopal (M. E.) Church and Parsonage | Wesley Cultural Center | 321 Broad Street | 1838 |
| WI-143 | White's Chapel (Methodist), site | | School Street | 1887 |
| WI-145 | Salisbury Historic District | | | - |
| WI-146 | West End Hotel | Merchant's Hotel | 243-245 W. Main Street | 1887 |
| WI-147 | Alfred C. Dykes Building | Kuhn's Jewelers | 107 W. Main Street | 1892 |
| WI-148 | William D. Long Building | Market Street Books | 146 W. Market Street | 1923 |
| WI-149 | Brewington Building | Goodman Department Store | 229 W. Main Street | 1905 |
| WI-15 | Dr. Spring Office | | Philadelphia Avenue | 1906 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| WI-150 | Union Railroad Station | Salisbury Station, New York, Philadelphia & Norfolk Railroad Station, Pennsylvania Railroad Station | 611 E. Railroad Avenue | 1913 |
| WI-151 | Birch Brae Apartments | | 221 Broad Street | 1930 |
| WI-152 | Salisbury Colored High School | Salisbury Elementary School | 707-725 Lake Street | 1930 |
| WI-153 | Newtown Historic District | | | - |
| WI-153-1 | House | | 116 Walnut Street | 1900 |
| WI-20 | St. Peter's Episcopal Church | | Church Street & Peters Street | 1887 |
| WI-21 | Wicomico Presbyterian Church | | Broad Street & Poplar Hill Avenue | 1859 |
| WI-211 | F. Leonard Wailes Law Office | | 116-118 E. Main Street | 1927 |
| WI-216 | Bridge WI-S-03, Snow Hill Road over Wicomico River E. Br. | | Snow Hill Road (MD 12) over Wicomico River, East Branch | 1928 |
| WI-222 | Bridge 22003 (SHA) | | N. Salisbury Boulevard (US 13) (Ocean Highway) over Conrail | 1930 |
| WI-224 | Bridge 22004 (SHA) | | S. Salisbury Boulevard (US 13) (Ocean Highway) over East Branch of Wicomico River | 1937 |
| WI-245 | William M. Day House | | 119 E. Isabella Street | 1898 |
| WI-246 | Fred L. Smith House | Joseph House | 411 Poplar Hill Avenue | 1916 |
| WI-247 | Morris-Holloway House | | 511 Poplar Hill Avenue | 1901 |
| WI-249 | L. Morris Oscar House, William J. Johnson House | | 113 E. Isabella Street | 1896 |
| WI-252 | Thomas H. Tilghman House | | 205 E. Isabella Street | 1907 |
| WI-253 | Moore-White House, Riall White House | | 117 E. Isabella Street | 1898 |
| WI-255 | Jay Williams House | | 201 William Street | 1886 |
| WI-256 | Samuel H. Evans Store Property | Broughton Law Office | 239-241 W. Main Street | 1887 |
| WI-257 | R.K. Truitt Building | | 235 W. Main Street | 1887 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| WI-258 | St. Peter's Church Rectory, Thomas J. Truitt House | | 306 Gay Street | 1880 |
| WI-259 | Vernon Powell Building | Montgomery Ward Building | 218-220 W. Main Street | 1936 |
| WI-260 | Woolworth's Building | Gallery Building | 212 W. Main Street | 1890 |
| WI-261 | White & Leonard Building | Joseph Bergen Commercial Block | W. Main Street & St. Peters Street | 1887 |
| WI-262 | Greater Salisbury Building | County Trust Company, Eastern Shore Trust Company | 200 W. Main Street | 1930 |
| WI-263 | Frist National Bank of MD | Salisbury National Bank | 201 W. Main Street | 1930 |
| WI-264 | Farmers' & Merchants' Bank | George, Miles & Buhr Architects & Engineers | 206 W. Main Street | 1929 |
| WI-265 | Dorman & Smyth Hardware Store | | 232-234 W. Main Street | 1886 |
| WI-266 | Frederick A. Grier, Sr. House | | 501 N. Division Street | 1897 |
| WI-267 | John Hanson Savings & Loan Bank | Eastern Shore Savings & Loan Building | 108 W. Main Street | 1914 |
| WI-268 | Port Exchange | Humphreys & Tilghman Building, Turner Bros. Co. Wholesale Grocers | 318 W. Main Street | 1886 |
| WI-269 | Jay Williams Law Office | | 116 N. Division Street | 1895 |
| WI-270 | Wicomico Hotel | One Plaza East | E. Main Street & South Division Street | 1923 |
| WI-271 | Wicomico News Building | | 110 W. Main Street | 1920 |
| WI-272 | Thomas H. Williams Building | | 113 1/2 W. Main Street | 1887 |
| WI-273 | Colonial Building | Hearne & Bailey Law Office | 126 E. Main Street | 1927 |
| WI-274 | B. L. Gillis & Son Store Building | Feldman Brothers | 150 W. Market Street | 1890 |
| WI-275 | Alexander G. Toadvine House | | 105 E. Isabella Street | 1864 |
| WI-315 | Phillips Bros. Cannery (site) | | | - |
| WI-328 | J. Waller Williams House | | 103 E. Isabella Street | 1920 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| WI-330 | Franklin Hotel | | 501 W. Main Street | 1930 |
| WI-34 | Handy Hall | | Pemberton Drive (MD 301) | 1860 |
| WI-35 | Senator William P. Jackson House, site | Jackson Mansion, The Towers | 514 Camden Avenue | 1892 |
| WI-35A | Senator Jackson House, Stables | | 514 Camden Avenue | 1892 |
| WI-360 | Montgomery-Dryden-Webb House | | 509 N. Division Street | 1900 |
| WI-361 | Charles Bethke House | | 601 N. Division Street | 1903 |
| WI-362 | Old School Baptist Church | | Baptist Street & East Church Street | 1913 |
| WI-363 | Theodore Parsons House | Hatfield Manor | 106 Colonial Court | 1850 |
| WI-364 | B. Frank Kennerly House | | 103 Elizabeth Street | 1904 |
| WI-392 | Charity M. P. Church, Charity Methodist Church | | | 1897 |
| WI-413 | United States Post Office | Maude R. Toulson Federal Building | 129 E. Main Street | 1924 |
| WI-414 | Armory Company No. 1, Wicomico County Free Library | | 122 S. Division Street | 1913 |
| WI-415 | Firehouse No. 1, Salisbury; Salisbury City Fire Headquarters/Department | | S. Division Street | 1927 |
| WI-416 | Albert M. Windsor Store Building, H. H. Hitch & Brother Grocery, Winder Store | | 701-703 W. Main Street | 1887 |
| WI-417 | Farmers & Planters Company | | 210 Mill Street | 1920 |
| WI-418 | Baltimore, Chesapeake & Atlantic Freight Office & Shed, Farmers & Planters Complex, Fulton Station | | Mill Street | 1890 |
| WI-419 | T. L. Ruark & Co. Warehouse | | 222 Mill Street | 1913 |
| WI-420 | Jackson Memorial Building | | N. Division Street and Broad St. NE corner | 1913 |
| WI-421 | E. Wilson Booth House | | 401 Pennsylvania Avenue | 1925 |
| WI-422 | Captain John Hagan House | | 724 Camden Avenue | 1909 |
| WI-423 | Levin D. Collier House | | 800 Camden Avenue | 1908 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| WI-424 | Bethesda Methodist Protestant Church, Bethesda United Methodist Church | | N. Division Street and West Williams St. NW corner | 1921 |
| WI-425 | Bethesda Church House, F. C. Todd House | | 107 W. William Street | 1902 |
| WI-426 | Asbury Methodist Episcopal Parsonage | | 302 N. Division Street | 1890 |
| WI-427 | Irving Powell House | | 328 N. Division Street | 1909 |
| WI-428 | William J. Downing House (WI-428) (c.1896) | | | 1896 |
| WI-429 | Charles R. Disharoon House | | 408 N. Division Street | 1901 |
| WI-431 | Bethesda Church House, Fish House | | 406 N. Division Street | 1888 |
| WI-432 | R. E. Powell House | | N. Division Street | 1888 |
| WI-433 | William H. Jackson House | | Camden Avenue | 1880 |
| WI-434 | John Wesley Church Parsonage, Salisbury | | 324 Broad Street | 1890 |
| WI-435 | Joseph James Hitchens House | | 668 W. Main Street | 1850 |
| WI-437 | William H. Price House | | 142 Second Street | 1850 |
| WI-438 | Handy Brown House | | 137 Second Street | 1892 |
| WI-439 | Daisy M. Bell Tenant House | | 138 Second Street | 1900 |
| WI-440 | Charles H. Chipman House | | 127 Second Street | 1894 |
| WI-441 | John Boznango House | | 105 Second Street | 1850 |
| WI-442 | Purnell House | | 102 Second Street | 1900 |
| WI-443 | Rebecca Ellis House, Jolley House | | 613 Pearl Street | 1872 |
| WI-444 | Cornish Market | | 613 Hill Street | 1900 |
| WI-445 | Benjamin H. Byrd House, Hillman House | | 610 Hill Street | 1815 |
| WI-446 | John T. Elliss House | | 675 W. Main Street | 1890 |
| WI-447 | Mary F. Toadvine Tenant House | | 615 Hill Street | 1860 |
| WI-448 | Hillman-Clark House | | 612 Hill Street | 1902 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| WI-449 | William H. Brown House | | 214 Delaware Avenue | 1937 |
| WI-450 | Charles D. Williams House | | 641 Fitzwater Street | 1908 |
| WI-451 | Brick Row | | 669-683 Fitzwater Street | 1911 |
| WI-459 | J. McFadden Dick House, Uriah W. Dickerson House | | 407 N. Division Street | 1912 |
| WI-460 | Marion V. Brewington House | | 104 W. Isabella Street | 1912 |
| WI-462 | Thomas H. Mitchell House | | 507 Park Avenue | 1935 |
| WI-463 | Judge Joseph L. Bailey House | | 810 Camden Avenue | 1910 |
| WI-464 | Patrick H. Doody House | | 808 Camden Avenue | 1912 |
| WI-465 | William Newton Jackson House | | 501 Camden Avenue | 1860 |
| WI-466 | Beauchamp Gillis House | | 511 Camden Avenue | 1860 |
| WI-467 | R. Frank Williams House, Williams-Leatherbury House | | 513 Camden Avenue | 1890 |
| WI-468 | John H. White House | | 412 Camden Avenue | 1870 |
| WI-469 | White-Woodcock House | | 410 Camden Avenue | 1860 |
| WI-470 | William B. Tilghman House | | 408 Camden Avenue | 1880 |
| WI-471 | Dr. Harry C. Tull House, Allison A. Gillis House | | 403 Camden Avenue | 1870 |
| WI-472 | Marion A. Humpreys House | | 722 Camden Avenue | 1904 |
| WI-474 | John T. Hooper House | | 324-326 Camden Avenue | 1840 |
| WI-475 | Lloyd U. Watson House | | 917 Camden Avenue | 1922 |
| WI-476 | John A. Kuhn House | | 900 Camden Avenue | 1928 |
| WI-477 | Guthrie House, Judge Levin Claude Bailey House | | 723 Camden Avenue | 1914 |
| WI-478 | Camden Avenue Rowhouse Block | | 400-402-404 Camden Avenue | 1917 |
| WI-479 | William Birckhead House | | 332 Camden Avenue | 1848 |
| WI-480 | William H. Rounds House | | 329 Camden Avenue | 1860 |
| WI-481 | E. S. Adkins & Company Office | | 801 N. Salisbury Boulevard | 1906 |
| WI-482 | Dr. Charles F. Smith House | | 802 Camden Avenue | 1923 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| WI-483 | Camden Court Rowhouse Block | | 404-412 Camden Court | 1912 |
| WI-484 | Thomas Hooper Roten House | | 413 Camden Court | 1839 |
| WI-485 | Olivia C. Oliphant House | | 710 Camden Avenue | 1911 |
| WI-486 | Jackson Duplex | | 312-314 Newton Street | 1878 |
| WI-511 | Merrill W. Abbott House | | 609 Camden Avenue | 1901 |
| WI-512 | Abbott Duplex | | 314-316 Maryland Avenue | 1910 |
| WI-514 | John T. Taylor, Jr. House | | 307 Newton Street | 1884 |
| WI-515 | Elihu Pusey House | | 306 Newton Street | 1910 |
| WI-516 | Peter Bounds House | | 335 Camden Avenue | 1900 |
| WI-517 | Phillips-Feldman House | | 406 Camden Avenue | 1890 |
| WI-519 | Margaret S. Murphy House | | 700 Camden Avenue | 1872 |
| WI-520 | Mary Jackson Marvel House | | 319 Newton Street | 1910 |
| WI-522 | W. Newton Jackson House | | 215 S. Clairmont Drive | - |
| WI-523 | Hendrickson House | | 231 S. Clairmont Drive | 1937 |
| WI-524 | Daniel J. Whealton House | | 312 N. Division Street | 1906 |
| WI-527 | Edward D. Mitchell House | | 806 Camden Avenue | 1911 |
| WI-528 | Hotel Esther, John B. Parsons-Salisbury Home for the Aged, Dr. Robert Naylor House, Parsons-Salisbury Home for the Aged | | 801-809 E. Church Street | 1895 |
| WI-529 | Holmes Home, Trinity M. E. Church Parsonage | | 716 Camden Avenue | 1912 |
| WI-530 | George C. Hill House, Martha T. Huston House | | 601 Camden Avenue | 1873 |
| WI-531 | Henry Scott Brewington House | | 605 Camden Avenue | 1870 |
| WI-532 | John W. Windsor House | | 607 Camden Avenue | 1920 |
| WI-54 | Victorian Barn, site | | North of Salisbury Mall | 1860 |
| WI-552 | Camden Historic District (a.k.a. Newton) | | | - |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| WI-553 | Bridge 22025 | | S. Salisbury Boulevard (US 13 Bus.) NB over Tony Tank Pond | 1938 |
| WI-554 | 1102 Camden Avenue, site | | 1102 Camden Avenue | 1928 |
| WI-555 | | | 312 E. Carroll Street | - |
| WI-556 | | | 202 Center Street | - |
| WI-557 | | | 323 College Avenue | - |
| WI-560 | Williams St. | | 822 S. Division Street | 1890 |
| WI-561 | Williams IV Residence | | 928 S. Division Street | - |
| WI-562 | | | 608 Hill Street | - |
| WI-567 | Elijah Stanton Adkins House | | 801 N. Division Street | 1893 |
| WI-568 | Leroy W. Wimbrow House | | 715 N. Division Street | 1905 |
| WI-569 | Cotton Patch (site) | | | - |
| WI-575 | Poplar Hill Avenue Rowhouse Block | | 329-333 Poplar Hill Avenue | 1915 |
| WI-576 | Albert W. Lankford House | | 106 E. William Street | 1889 |
| WI-577 | William J. Ennis House, James R. Taylor House | | 111 E. William Street | 1896 |
| WI-579 | Main Street Pumping Station | | 640 E. Main Street | 1926 |
| WI-580 | Messick (W. F. ) Ice Company Office, W. F. Messick Ice Compnay Office | | Vine Street | 1920 |
| WI-581 | Municipal Park, Salisbury City Park, Bandstand and Bridge | | E. Main Street | 1935 |
| WI-582 | Boulevard Theater, site | Hoyt's Cinema, Movies 6 | 317 E. Main Street | 1946 |
| WI-583 | East Main Street Professional Building, I.O.O.F. Building, Independent Order of Odd Fellows Building | | 132-134 E. Main Street | 1920 |
| WI-584 | Richardson Building | | 130 E. Main Street | 1921 |
| WI-585 | Salisbury News & Advertiser Building | | 120-122 E. Main Street | 1918 |
| WI-586 | John B. Parsons Home for the Aged, Lemmon Hill, Vanderbogart House | | 300 Lemmon Hill Lane | 1890 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| WI-587 | Salisbury Water Company Standpipe | | N. Division Street | 1888 |
| WI-588 | Fred P. Adkins House | | 321 Park Avenue | 1908 |
| WI-589 | Greenleaf J. Hearn House | | 317 Park Avenue | 1905 |
| WI-590 | Old Wicomico Presbyterian Church Manse | | 332 N. Division Street | 1885 |
| WI-591 | Dr. Samuel A. Graham House, Ralph H. Grier House | | 321 Division Street | 1894 |
| WI-592 | Henry S. Todd House | | 402 Park Avenue | 1889 |
| WI-593 | Florence Phelps Lowe House (WI-593) (c.1901) | | | 1901 |
| WI-594 | L. Atwood Bennett House, E. Dorothy Todd House | | 105 Elizabeth Street | 1910 |
| WI-595 | Samuel F. M. Adkins House, Bebee House | | 107 Oakdale Road | 1930 |
| WI-596 | Alfred T. Truitt House | | 201 Oakdale Road | 1930 |
| WI-597 | Richardson House, Sewell H. Richardson House | | Pemberton Drive and Nanticoke Road | 1907 |
| WI-598 | Camden Avenue Apartment House | | 1018 Camden Avenue | 1928 |
| WI-599 | Hooper S. Miles House, Houston Todd House | | 406 Park Avenue | 1923 |
| WI-600 | Wallace Ruark House | | 107 E. William Street | 1893 |
| WI-601 | Williams Residence | | 519 Lincoln Avenue | - |
| WI-602 | Williams II, Residence | | 521 Lincoln Avenue | - |
| WI-603 | | | 319 E. Locust Street | - |
| WI-604 | | | 321 E. Locust Street | - |
| WI-605 | | | 605 W. Main Street | - |
| WI-606 | Williams III, Residence | | 112 Naylor Street | - |
| WI-607 | | | 211 Newton Street | - |
| WI-608 | | | 213 Newton Street | - |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| WI-609 | | | 308 E. Vine Street | - |
| WI-61 | L.W. Gunby House | | 507 Camden Avenue | 1888 |
| WI-610 | Williams House | | 412 E. Vine Street | - |
| WI-613 | | | 409 Truitt Street | - |
| WI-619 | Church Street Historic District | | | - |
| WI-619-1 | House | | 312 Charles Street | - |
| WI-62 | Dr. Cawry House | | 315 N. Division Street | 1828 |
| WI-625 | Riverside United Methodist Church, Stengle Methodist Episcopal Church of South Salisbury | | 608 Riverside Drive | 1894 |
| WI-63 | Faith Community Church | Old Asbury M.E. Church | N. Division Street & Chestnut Street | 1887 |
| WI-632 | Richardson Apartment House | | 500 E. Isabella Street | 1912 |
| WI-633 | Cooper Avenue Tenant House Row, Hodgson Tenant House Row | | 833-839 Eastern Shore Drive | 1926 |
| WI-634 | Salisbury High School, Wicomico High School, Wicomico Middle School | | E. Main Street | 1929 |
| WI-635 | Gillis-Grier Carriage House | | Long Lane between E. Isabella & E. William and N. Division and Poplar Hill | 1887 |
| WI-636 | Wilsie Lowe Owens House, H. Winter Owens House | | 102 E. Isabella Street | 1915 |
| WI-637 | Mitchell-Langeler House, Frank M. Mitchell House | | 112 E. Isabella Street | 1905 |
| WI-638 | J. Clarence Parker House, Parker-Todd House | | 112 E. William Street | 1911 |
| WI-639 | Baptist Church Parsonage | | 312 Gay Street | 1900 |
| WI-64 | Trinity Methodist Church | Trinity United Methodist Church, Trinity M.E. Church South | N. Division Street & High Street | 1904 |
| WI-640 | John S. Adkins House | | 310 Poplar Hill Avenue | 1883 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| WI-642 | A.F. Benjamin House, Benjamin-Chandler House | | 323 Park Avenue | 1906 |
| WI-643 | Esther and Alice Davis House | | 312 Park Avenue | 1898 |
| WI-644 | John D. Williams House | | 302 Park Avenue | 1887 |
| WI-645 | Albert Smith House | | 300 Park Avenue | 1890 |
| WI-646 | Ivy Court, Pratt D. Phillips House | | 316 N. Division Street | 1926 |
| WI-672 | North Salisbury Elementary School | | 201 Union Avenue | 1937 |
| WI-673 | Prince Street Elementary School | | 400 Prince Street | 1949 |
| WI-678 | John Ward Dwelling | | 501 Christopher Street | 1885 |
| WI-74 | Old Salisbury City Hall and Firehouse | Police Department | 100 W. Church Street | 1896 |
| WI-75 | Masonic Temple | Wicomico Lodge No. 91 | 114 N. Division Street | 1904 |
| WI-77 | Rockawalkin School | Rockawalkin One-Room Schoolhouse | Pemberton Drive & Ellegood Street | 1900 |
| WI-78 | W.H. Jackson Livery Stable, site | Market Street Stable, Palace Stables | Market Street | 1888 |
| WI-8 | Poplar Hill Mansion | Pemberton's Good Will | 117 Elizabeth Street | 1795 |

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