

Local Planning and Staffing Capacity

This section is concerned with a local government’s ability to plan for the community’s future and to meet the current needs of residents.

Strengths, weaknesses and outcomes might focus on the following: updating zoning ordinances or land use; updating municipal/local policies, taxes, fees, etc.; increasing local government staff capacity; and updating planning documents like sector plans or comprehensive plans.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Town employs a Town Planner (Zoning Official) and a Code Enforcement Officer ● There is strong community involvement for a small town. ● The Comprehensive Plan reflects the community’s values. ● The Historic District Guidelines were recently updated and adopted. ● There were extensive Zoning Text Amendments in 2023 to address a variety of land use and zoning issues to further protect the small town and historic design of the city. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Franchise, chain store review regulations; - Tree mitigation requirements; - Commercial design and safety requirements; - Townhouse accessory use setback changes; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Town has more sophisticated land use and zoning issues than typical small towns due to its attraction to visitors and tourists which requires a high level of expertise but has limited resources. ● There is an abundance of short-term rental properties and their impact upon the community needs further analysis. ● Low elevations adjacent to waterfront makes large parts of the town susceptible to flooding and sea level rise impacts. ● The town utilizes many state and federal grants to fund projects and additional staff is needed to manage consultants, track and report on these projects. ● Limited staff requires employees to coordinate many projects. When someone leaves employment institutional knowledge is gone and sometimes important projects can be lost or require starting over. ● Lack of middle-income housing opportunities.

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Analyze Short Term Housing</p> <p>Progress Measures: Document existing short-term units, B&B's, residential room rental requirements and legal issues.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Revise application forms for consistency with adopted regulations.</p> <p>Strategy B: Prepare a comprehensive report for Town Commissioners</p> <p>Strategy C: Consider revisions to better mitigate impacts and ensure compliance with codes, ordinances and required tax payments.</p>	<p>Talbot County Tax Assessor's Office</p> <p>Business Association</p> <p>Citizens</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Update the Comprehensive Plan</p> <p>Progress Measures: The 10-year update is required in 2025</p>	<p>Strategy A: Utilize this Sustainable Communities Report to help guide issues in the update of the Comprehensive Plan.</p> <p>Strategy B: Develop a long-range implementation plan that can be used in part as a basis for capital improvements and policy planning.</p> <p>Strategy C: Engage the community in major planning efforts.</p> <p>Strategy D: Utilize the Housing section of this report for policy and program development in the plan.</p>	<p>Citizens of St. Michaels</p> <p>Maryland Department of Planning</p> <p>Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development</p> <p>Consultant assistance</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Additional staff and/or resources</p> <p>Progress Measures: Adopted budget</p>	<p>Strategy A: Provide facts and data related to staffing.</p> <p>Strategy B: Provide facts and data related to resources.</p> <p>Strategy C: Document work and fiscal projections for the future.</p>	<p>Town Administrator</p> <p>Town Commissioners</p> <p>Town Citizens</p>