

# Solomons Town Center Master Plan



Calvert County Planning Commission

Approved Plan *Marked-up Copy Showing Changes since Public Hearing*

July 29, 2009





**SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER MASTER PLAN  
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# Solomons Town Center Master Plan

Reorganized & Updated, Approved July, 2009

New text in underline. Deleted text in strikethrough (~~example~~).

Changes are shown from the Recommended Draft (March 10, 2009) with Errata Sheet (June, 2009) as presented at the public hearing.

## Overview

### A. PURPOSE OF THE SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER MASTER PLAN

The Solomons Town Center Master Plan has four primary purposes:

- provide policies and guidelines which are comprehensive yet are appropriate for each planning area
- direct future growth and development within the Solomons Town Center
- address the issues of protection and enhancement of the residential areas of Solomons
- encourage compatible commercial, residential, and marine development along the Patuxent River, Back Creek, the Narrows, Routes 2-4, and Solomons Island Road South

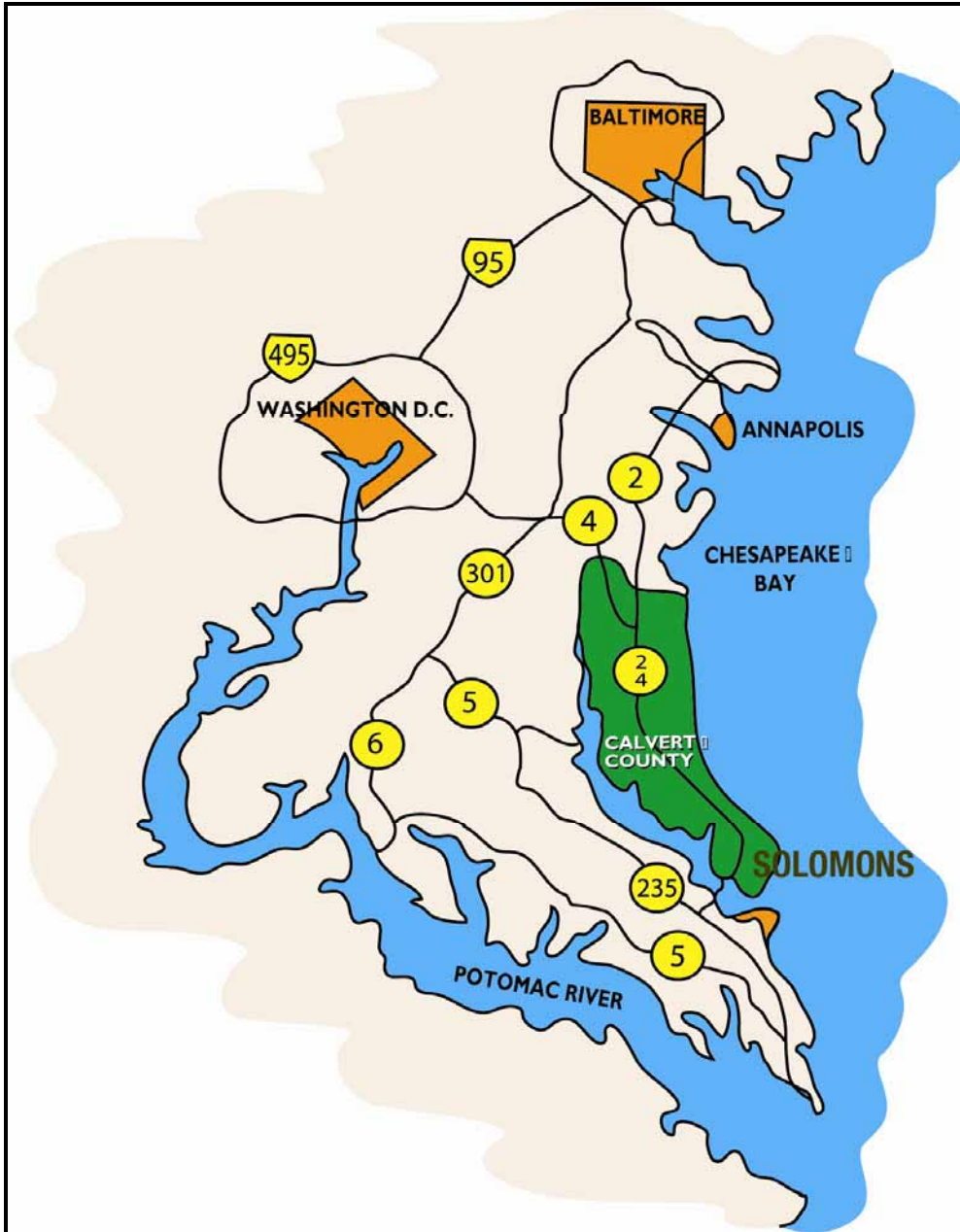
Preservation of Solomons' water resources, heritage and design character is an important component of this Master Plan. Thus, it includes not only general guidance for dealing with overall growth management, but also specific appearance guidelines, a general land use plan, and an implementation schedule. Furthermore, it graphically illustrates where the public interest encourages significant public expenditures, and where the public interest would like to see private development occur.

This Master Plan has been designed to protect and enhance the existing residential neighborhoods and to encourage the mixture of uses within the village core of Solomons Island. It allows for significant residential and commercial development to occur within the remainder of the Town Center area, in accordance with appearance and setback standards.

### B. BACKGROUND

#### 1. Geographic Location

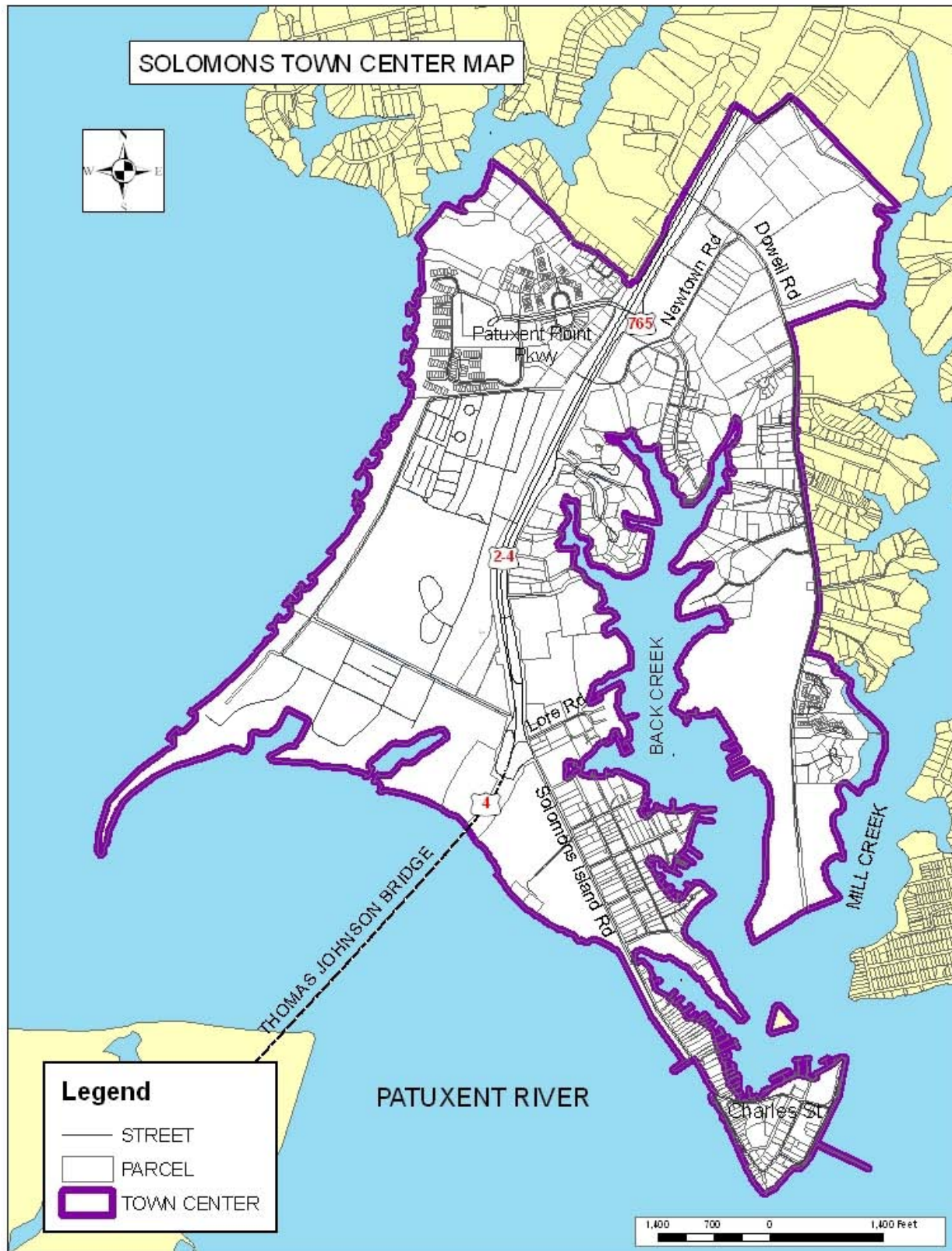
Calvert County, a peninsula in Southern Maryland, is bordered by the Patuxent River on the west and the Chesapeake Bay on the east. Solomons Island is located at the southern tip of Calvert County where the Patuxent River meets the Chesapeake Bay (refer to Figure 1 for a regional map of Solomons). The Island itself, in conjunction with the Dowell Peninsula and Lusby Point, forms a deep protected harbor which has served the maritime industry since the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.



**Figure 1 REGIONAL MAP OF SOLOMONS**

The Solomons Town Center designation includes Solomons Island, the land to the north of the Island along Maryland Route 2/4 to the south side of Swaggers Point Road on the west side of MD 2/4 and approximately a quarter mile north of the intersection of Dowell Road and H.G. Trueman Road, and the majority of the Dowell Peninsula. (Refer to Figure 2 Solomons Town Center Map).

Access to the Solomons Town Center is provided from the north by Maryland 2/4 and MD 765, and from the south by MD 4 which connects Solomons with St. Mary's County via the Thomas Johnson Memorial Bridge.



Prepared by: The Department of Planning & Zoning.

**Figure 2. Solomons Town Center Map**

## 2. Early History

### Historical Overview

Solomons Island was known as Bourne's Island (c. 1680), Somervell's Island (1740-1814), and Sandy Island (1827-1865). This area finally became known as Solomons Island when Isaac Solomon, a Baltimore businessman, purchased 80 acres in 1865 and established oyster packing facilities following the Civil War.<sup>1</sup> He advertised his cannery as "Solomons Island." Solomons Island received official recognition in 1870 when the United States Postal Service established an office.<sup>2</sup>

The oystering industry was supported by the development of ship yards on the Island in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. By 1880, the famed "Bugeye" sailing craft had been developed to support the Island's fishing fleet.

In the November 12, 1892 issue of the Calvert Gazette, Solomons was described as: "There are about one hundred houses upon the island, including some stores which do an active business in the oyster season, and three shipyards. It is chiefly occupied by oystermen and fishermen."

By the 1890s, Solomons consisted of two distinct communities - Solomons Island proper and Avondale on the mainland. The two were separated by a shallow stretch of water spanned by a rickety bridge. With a population, at this time, of about 400, most of the business activities were centered on the island and Avondale was mainly residential. Other nearby communities, notably Dowell and Olivet, also flourished.

Like other tidewater communities of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Solomons was isolated, close-knit and self-sufficient. Roads were few and became impassable in bad weather. By 1915, the state provided a road from Solomons to Prince Frederick, the county seat of government. Horse and ox-drawn wagons were the chief means of transport by land. Solomons' link with the outside world was the twice-weekly steamboat from Baltimore.<sup>3</sup>

Because of the Solomons deep harbor and uncomplicated entry from the Patuxent, ships have always played a major role in the Island's history. On the Patuxent side of the Island is one of the great natural harbors of the East Coast – over two miles wide and in places over one hundred feet deep. In the War of 1812, Commodore Joshua Barney's flotilla sailed from Solomons to attack the British fleet in the Bay. And over 200 years later, during 1942-1943, the U.S. Navy established three navy bases at the mouth of the Patuxent. Two of the three were sited in Solomons. During World War II, the Naval Amphibious Training Base was established on Dowell Peninsula to prepare American troops for overseas assaults. The Naval Mine Warfare Test Station was established at Point Patience. The station is now the Solomons Annex of NAS PAX River.

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<sup>1</sup> R. Eshelman and C.M. Dixon, Historical Tours through Southern Maryland, 1983, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Calvert Marine Museum, <http://www.calvertmarinemuseum.com/history.htm>, 12/12/2007.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Across the River is the Patuxent River Naval Air Station, which from 1941 until 1977 was connected to Solomons by ferry service ~~which saved its passengers a 60 mile one way commute up Calvert County, across the Patuxent River Bridge at Benedict, and back down the St. Mary's County side.~~ The opening of the Governor Thomas Johnson Memorial Bridge in 1977 caused the end of the ferry service.

Following the War, extensive marina development was begun in the area, until today over 9 separate marinas offer a total of 1,561 boat slips for transient and long-term dockage. With additional slips at restaurants, bars, government properties, and private residences, it is estimated there are over 2,000 slips in Solomons.

### 3. Demographics and Economics

Population figures and projections for Solomons, Calvert County, and the State of Maryland are shown below.

Population	1980	1990	2000	2010 Estimate
Solomons	700	N/A	1,536	N/A
Calvert County	34,638	51,372	74,563	90,900
Southern Md. *	167,284	228,500	281,320	350,550
Maryland	4,216,975	4,780,753	5,296,486	5,897,600

Note: N/A: data was not available.

\* [Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties](#)

Sources: Calvert County Planning & Zoning, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census; and Maryland Department of Planning.

According to the Census Bureau, there were 689 households in 2000 in the Solomons Census Designated Place.

#### General Demographic Characteristics, 2000

	Solomons Number	Percent	County Number	Percent
Male	683	44.5%	36,767	49.3 %
Female	853	55.5 %	37,796	50.7 %
Under 5	43	2.8 %	5,077	6.8 %
5 – 19	172	11.2 %	18,723	25.1 %
20 – 64	680	44.3 %	44,136	59.1 %
65 +	641	41.7 %	6,627	8.9 %
Median Age	56.1 years		35.9 years	

Race	Number	Percent	<a href="#">County Number</a>	<a href="#">Percent</a>
White, only	1,393	90.7 %	<a href="#">62,578</a>	<a href="#">83.9 %</a>
Black or African American, only	102	6.6 %	<a href="#">9,773</a>	<a href="#">13.1 %</a>
Other races, only	15	1.0 %	<a href="#">2,212</a>	<a href="#">3 %</a>
Two or more races	26	1.7 %	<a href="#">948</a>	<a href="#">1.3 %</a>

#### Housing Units, 2000

	Number	Percent	<a href="#">County Number</a>	<a href="#">Percent</a>
Total housing units	881	100 %	<a href="#">24,576</a>	<a href="#">100 %</a>
Occupied housing units	689	78.2 %	<a href="#">25,447</a>	<a href="#">92.3 %</a>
Vacant housing units	192	21.8 %	<a href="#">2,219</a>	<a href="#">7.7 %</a>
Owner-occupied housing units	389	56.5 %	<a href="#">21,679</a>	<a href="#">85.2 %</a>
Renter-occupied housing units	300	43.5 %	<a href="#">3,768</a>	<a href="#">14.8 %</a>

According to the 2000 Census, the median age of residents of the Solomons Census Designated Place (approximately the boundaries of the Town Center) is significantly older than the median age of residents of Calvert County as a whole. The median age of Solomons residents is 56.1 years while the median age of County residents is 35.9 years. In 1999, the median household income for Solomons residents was less than the County: \$48,532 for Solomons compared with \$65,945 for the County.

#### 4. Calvert County Comprehensive Plan Process

Calvert County adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 1967. Subsequent plans were adopted in 1974, 1983, 1997, and 2004. “A History of County Planning” is recited in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. The 1983 Comprehensive Plan called for the establishment of Towns and Town Centers and the development of a master plan for each Town. The State mandates that local jurisdictions update comprehensive plans every 6 years. Calvert County’s next comprehensive plan will be due in 2010.

#### The 1983 Calvert County Comprehensive Plan Establishes Town Centers

The purpose of the 1983 Calvert County Comprehensive Plan was “to ensure that Calvert County maintains the capability to guide development so that the nature and character of the County may be preserved for future generations.”<sup>4</sup>

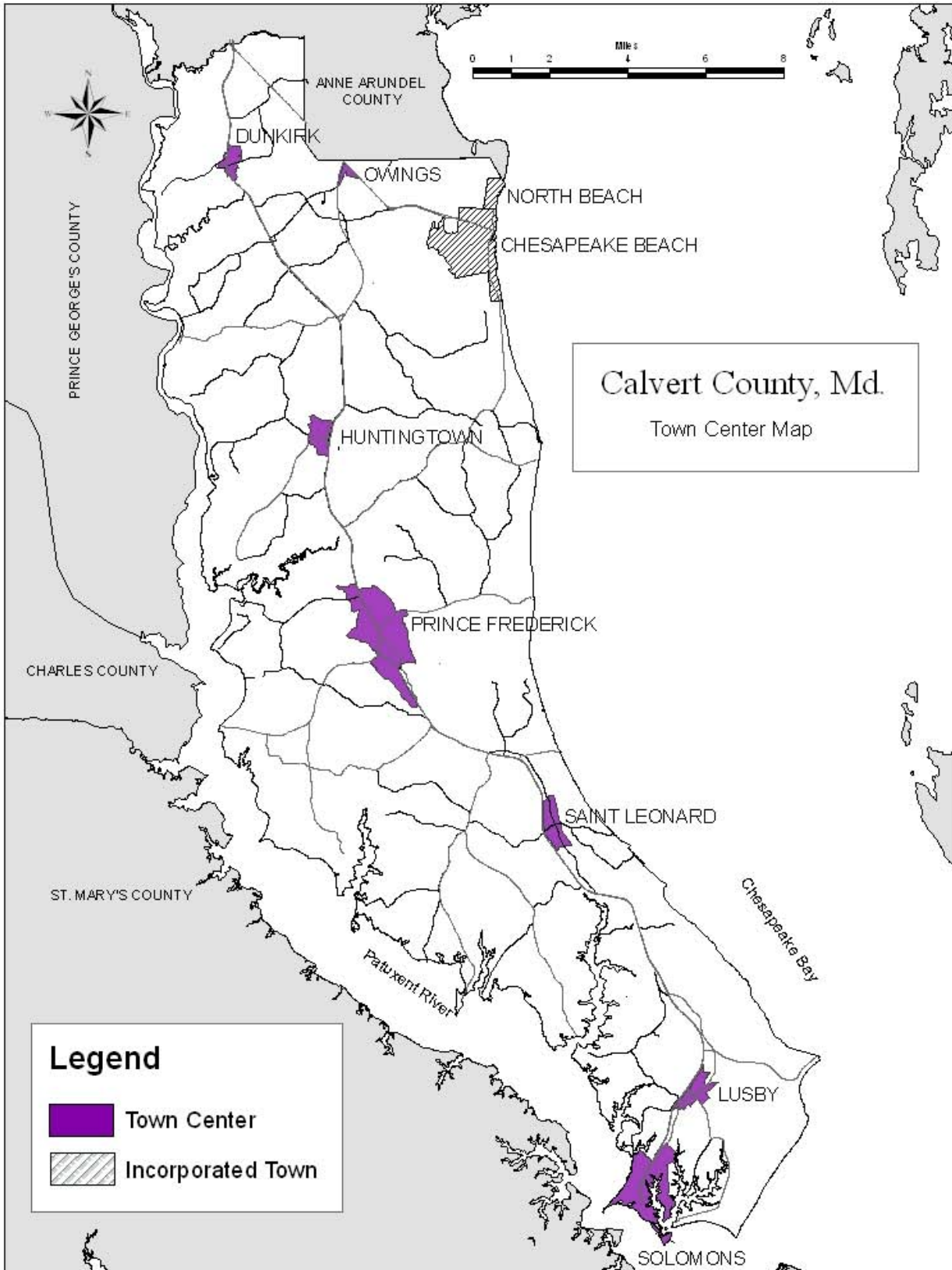
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<sup>4</sup> Calvert County Comprehensive Plan, Approved and adopted, 1983, p. 1.

Central to the concept of guiding development for the future was the establishment of Towns and Town Centers. The purposes of the Town Centers are to:

- a. Concentrate commercial growth and employment opportunities in Town Centers.
- b. Encourage multi-family residential development to locate in Major Towns.
- c. Encourage single-family residential development to locate in Major Towns.
- d. Promote efficient and attractive development in a rural setting.
- e. Allow increased residential densities in Towns by locating Transfer Zones in these areas.

There are seven Town Centers plus the municipalities of Chesapeake Beach and North Beach. Refer to Figure 3.



Prepared by: The Department of Planning & Zoning.

**Figure 3. CALVERT COUNTY TOWN CENTERS**

The goals for the development and approval of the Master Plan for each Town were to:

- a. Implement an active Citizen Participation Program,
- b. Establish land use policies based on desirable economic development, public facilities, available and needed, and residential development, available and needed, residential development, aesthetics, compatibility with and protection of existing and previously planned uses, and the cumulative effect upon the County,
- c. Delineate areas to have certain public facilities, including community water and sewerage and roads,
- d. Designate the physical boundaries of the Towns based on natural features, existing land uses, and policies indicated above, and
- e. Delineate identified locations not suited for certain types of development and restrict such development.

The 1997 and the 2004 Calvert County Comprehensive Plans continued the policy of the Town Centers being the primary growth areas of the County. The 2004 Comprehensive Plan sets forth the objective to “Develop town centers as attractive, pleasant, and convenient places to live, work, and shop.”

## 5. Solomons Town Center Master Plan Process

The first Solomons Town Center Master Plan was adopted in 1986.

### Community Consensus Process

As preparation for the development of the first Solomons Town Center Master Plan, the Calvert County Planning & Zoning Department staff hosted two community forums to determine a general consensus on needs and goals for the area: April 28, 1983, and July 30, 1984.

Major concerns expressed at these two forums focused on three broad categories: compatibility, design & appearance, and traffic.

- Compatibility between residential and commercial uses in the area of Lore Road south, with significant concern voiced over control of public drinking and noise, overnight camping and fishing along the bulkhead, and the proliferation of liquor licenses.
- Growth management and preservation of the unique character of the community. This was expressed in the discussions dealing with new commercial development along the bulkhead and the need for parking, the question of height limitations, and the desire for architectural appearance standards for buildings and signage. A height limitation of 3 stories was proposed for the entire Town Center area.
- Potential traffic and access problems on Dowell Road and identification of traffic problems at the Governor Thomas Johnson Bridge and Lore Road intersections.

## Accomplishments since the Adoption of the Master Plan in 1986

- 1988 Construction of the Solomons Information Center
- 1989 Construction of the Calvert Marine Museum Exhibition Hall
- 1991 Construction of the Comfort Station
- 1992 Construction of the South Section of the Riverwalk and Revetment
- 1993 Construction of the Public Parking Lot behind Our Lady Star of the Sea (25-year lease with the church)
- 1993 Construction of Sidewalks, Paving, and Curbing
- 1993 Opening of Annmarie Garden
- 1994 Watermen's Memorial Park (Solomons Riverfront Park)
- 1994 Solomons Fishing Pier
- 1995 Construction of North Section (Phase II) of the Riverwalk, Revetment, and Parking Lot
- 1995 Installation of Entrance Signs and Landscaping
- 1997 Construction of the Pavilion
- 1997 Placement of the Twin Bitts from the USS Arturus and USS Gage
- 2001 Construction of Phase II of the Sidewalk (Charles Street)
- 2001 Opening of Waterman's Wharf (lease with the State of Maryland)
- 2003 Installation of Riverwalk Lighting
- 2003 Dedication of the Town Clock to the Solomons Rescue Squad and Fire Department
- 2008 Construction of the Solomons Roundabout at Farren Avenue and Charles Street

## Timing of Review of This Master Plan

No plan is ever final or definitive. It reflects current conditions and anticipates future developments. Its function is to provide policy guidance and site specific recommendations as a planning framework within which change may occur.

The Solomons area has been identified as a high growth area in which a significant amount of residential and commercial demand is presumed. As conditions change over time, the Master Plan will be reviewed and updated if necessary.

In addition, it is clear that any major public improvements proposed will be implemented in specific stages. Any plan which presumes simultaneous implementation of all recommendations, involving either public funding or private investment, would be unrealistic.

This plan continues a process of change in Solomons which has been occurring since its initial founding in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Over time, the Island has been historically reshaped to reflect the changing economic conditions of the water-based industries which lie at the core of its history.

## Solomons Master Plan Update 2007-2009

In 2007, the Calvert County Planning Commission and the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners approved a process for updating all seven of the County's Town Center Master Plans. Solomons was the first master plan to begin the update process, starting in 2007. Updating the master plans includes reorganizing them into the same format as the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan, conducting special area studies, refining the visions, establishing new goals, and updating the content of the master plans. The master plan update process involves citizens, businesses, civic organizations, Town Center Architectural Review Committees, county staff, the Planning Commission, and the Board of County Commissioners.

The kick-off to the Solomons Town Center Master Plan Update was held on May 8, 2007 at the Solomons Volunteer Rescue Squad and Fire Department. There was a slide presentation that explained the master plan review process, gave a brief summary of the current plan, reviewed accomplishments since the Solomons Master Plan was adopted in 1986, and reviewed past issues and problems identified by citizens, including those that were generated at the meeting hosted by the Solomons Business Association in 2001. Over 100 participants attended the kickoff meeting. The participants worked in small groups to identify additional issues and problems, review the current plan's policies, and suggest a special study area,

The results from the Kick-Off Meeting were presented on June 26, 2007 at the Calvert Marine Museum. Three overall themes emerged:

- Dowell Road corridor was listed as a concern in all three exercises (problems & issues, policies, and special study area).
- There was concern about the tension between residential and commercial development.
- General sense that Solomons' village atmosphere is under pressure.

For issue identification, the Dowell Road peninsula was the most mentioned problem area, including road upgrades, over development, access to MD Route 2/4, and designating the entire peninsula as Town Center or removing the designation from those areas currently designated. Residential and commercial tension focused on noise and over-concentration of bars and restaurants compared to other commercial development. Other notable issues included harbor & water resource management, transportation (sidewalks, access to and across MD 2/4), parking, and environment (water quality and loss of tree cover).

The six policies from the current Master Plan were generally found to be still relevant. Additional emphasis was suggested: compatibility and mix of uses, better definition of "sense of place" and environmental and water resource protection. Study area

suggestions included the Harbor, Dowell Road corridor, C-1 District, and a traffic study.

During the second meeting, Department of Public Works staff reported on road projects, the roundabout, and sidewalk projects.

The third meeting was a boat, bus and walking tour of the three potential study areas: the Harbor, Dowell Peninsula, and Avondale & the C-1 Commercial District. Participants took a closer look at the Solomons Town Center from the vantage point from a boat tour of the harbor on the Wm. B. Tennison, a walking tour of Avondale and the C-1 District, and a bus tour of the Dowell peninsula. Participants provided input on issues identified during the kick-off meeting by answering survey questions and providing additional comments. Participants were encouraged to take photos of what they liked and disliked about the Solomons Town Center.

A focus meeting on Avondale was held on September 16, 2007 to review and discuss the survey results from the kick-off meeting and the responses from participants from the July 31<sup>st</sup> walking tour.

The area selected as the study area was the C-1 Commercial District. A design workshop was led by the design firm EDAW from November 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>, 2007 at the Solomons United Methodist Church. The study area, originally described as the Solomons Island Commercial Core, was redefined during the workshop as the Solomons Island Village Core. The workshop was an open and collaborative process. Over the course of the three days residents, business owners, community activists, local leaders, county staff and consultants collaborated to develop creative and exciting ideas and design concepts for the village core.

## **C. MASTER PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

The goal of this Master Plan is to develop the Solomons Town Center as an attractive, convenient, and interesting place to live, work, and shop while protecting the natural assets of the area and preserving the historic character for future generations.

To achieve this goal, eight objectives are established:

- a. Treat the entire Solomons Town Center as an economic, environmental, and aesthetic whole, except for the Solomons Annex of NAS PAX River (Planning Area A).
  
- b. Recognize and provide for within the Master Plan all the water-based activities of Solomons, including but not limited to, commercial and recreational boating, crabbing and fishing, and public access to the water.

- c. Support and enhance a mix of uses in the Solomons Island Village Core that are family-friendly, encourage year round activity, and are visually compatible with Solomons architectural heritage that makes it a distinctive destination.
- d. Protect and enhance established residential areas.
- e. Encourage commercial development that is compatible with the environmental, cultural, historical, and aesthetic character of Solomons.
- f. Promote a broad mix of commercial, office, residential, public and institutional uses within the Solomons Town Center.
- g. Protect the environment.
- h. Promote a balanced, complete transportation system to enhance mobility.

## **CHAPTER I**

### **LAND**

#### **GENERAL LAND USE POLICIES FOR SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER**

- This Master Plan has been designed to protect and enhance the existing residential neighborhoods and to encourage the mixture of uses within the village core of Solomons Island. It allows for significant residential and commercial development to occur within the remainder of the Town Center area, in accordance with appearance and setback standards.
- The appearance code shall be mandatory for all Planning Areas within the Town Center.

#### Considerations:

1. Solomons Town Center is designated as a Major Town Center.
2. The Solomons Town Center is located on a peninsula at the southern tip of Calvert County.

The Solomons Town Center is divided into six planning areas. The planning areas are further divided into sub-areas. This section discusses objectives, special considerations and actions and policies for each.

These planning areas reflect a commonality of geography, environmental considerations, or established land use patterns, and have been defined by the expressed needs of the community and the general Master Plan policies.

While the intent of the Master Plan is to treat Solomons Town Center as an economic and aesthetic whole, it is important that land use policies be tailored to the unique characteristics of the various planning areas within the Town Center.

#### Six Planning Areas

The six planning areas are:

1. The Solomons Annex of NAS PAX River (Planning Area A)
2. Sandy Point area (Planning Area B)
3. Lore Road south to Charles Street (Planning Area C)
4. Lore Road north (Planning area D)
5. Dowell Peninsula (Planning area E)
6. Swaggers Point (Planning Area F)

A map of the Town Center showing the boundaries of these six planning areas is shown in Figure 4. Precise land use boundaries for each sub-area are designated on the maps for each area by alphabetical and numerical symbols. This system was designed to clearly delineate where specific permitted and conditional land uses would be allowed and encouraged. A table of these permitted and conditional land uses by geographic sub-area as well as a list of special development requirements is provided in the Solomons Zoning Ordinance.

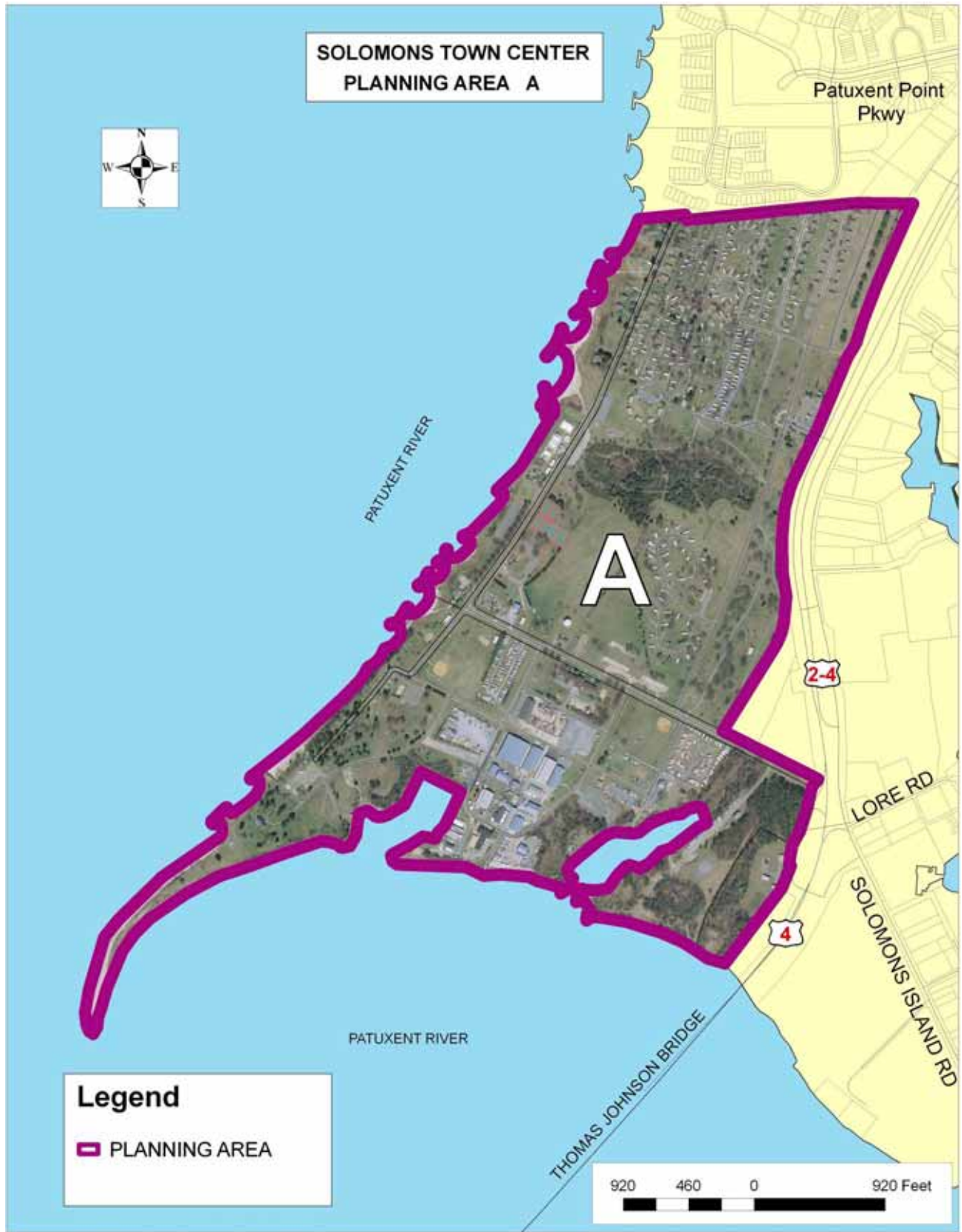


**Figure 4. SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER PLANNING AREAS**

**1. The Solomons Annex of NAS PAX River (Planning Area A)**

The Solomons Annex of NAS PAX River is federal property and, therefore, exempt from County Planning and Zoning regulations. It is identified for reference purposes as Planning Area A (refer to Figure 5). Should it ever cease being federal property, this Plan will be revised to develop actions and policies for this area.

The Solomons Annex is a component of the Naval Air Station Patuxent River. The Naval Air Station, located across the Patuxent River in St. Mary's County, is the Navy's principal research, development, test, evaluation and support activity for Naval aircraft, engines, and support systems. It is home of the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) Headquarters, the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD), the Naval Test Wing Atlantic, the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School, and several Navy Flight Test Squadrons. NAS PAX River employs a work force of 20,200 people, comprises approximately 6,500 acres, and contains three runways that support ~~50,000~~ 91,500 air operations per year. Aircraft from the station routinely operate in the airspace above the Patuxent River and Solomons during arrival and departure from the airfield and while conducting missions.



Prepared by: The Department of Planning & Zoning.

**Figure 5. PLANNING AREA A**

## **2. Sandy Point Area (Planning Area B, including Planning Sub-areas B1, B2, B3, B4)**

The Sandy Point Area includes the Sandy Point residential area; the institutional buildings and property of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Chesapeake Biological Laboratory; a mixture of residential, marina and institutional buildings and structures on property located at the north end of Farren Avenue; and the retail and lodging uses in the center of the area. Refer to Figure 6 for a map of Planning Area B.

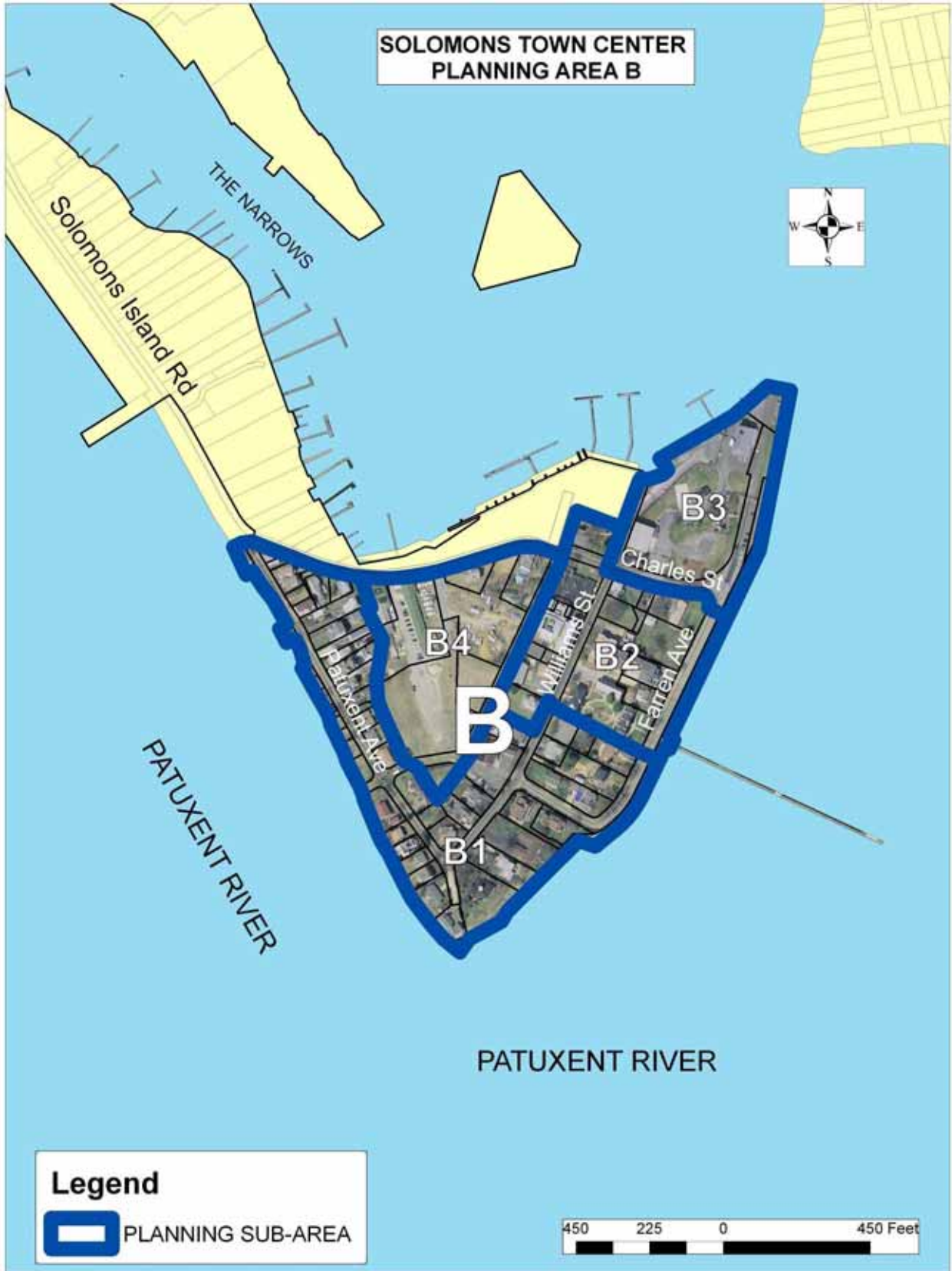
### a. Objectives:

- (1) Preserve and enhance the residential quality of Sandy Point, while permitting compatible commercial uses along Charles Street.
- (2) Encourage the continuation of the campus-like character of the Biological Laboratory property.
- (3) Preserve and provide accessibility to the scenic views of the water.

### b. Considerations:

The special environmental and land use considerations affecting this area are:

- (1) Sandy Point is an established residential area.
- (2) Except for a small area of former marsh land in Sub-area B4 the rest of the area is developed.
- (3) There are very attractive water views from Farren Avenue and Charles Street.
- (4) The land on the far northern tip of the Island, Sub-area B3, is located at the confluence of Back Creek and the Patuxent River and has good water depths at the entrance to the harbor.
- (5) This area has been settled for many years and much of the shoreline has been bulkheaded or stabilized in some manner thus destroying the wetlands which may have normally occurred here.
- (6) Rates of shoreline erosion vary widely within this Sub-area between very high to very low. However, most of the higher erosion areas have been stabilized.
- (7) The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Chesapeake Biological Laboratory has had a long term presence in the area.
- (8) There is a mix of uses along Charles Street.
- (9) There have been complaints about excessive noise in the commercial area.
- (10) There are few open space areas for residents and few locations for potential parks.
- (11) Because of the attractiveness of the area and its many water views, it is an area around which many local residents as well as visitors drive.



**Figure 6. PLANNING AREA B**

- (12) The ownership of Maltby Street, shown on land maps but not currently constructed, has yet to be determined.
- (13) The County government has an agreement with the State of Maryland, Board of Public Works, for the Watermans' Wharf and is responsible for its maintenance.
- (14) Construction of the roundabout at the intersection of Charles Street and Farren Avenue was completed in 2008. The project included sidewalks, lighting, and landscaping. The overhead utilities along the project limits of Farren Avenue and the intersection of Charles Street were placed underground.

c. Policies:

- (1) The Sandy Point residential area along Patuxent Avenue, including residential property along Williams Street and Farren Avenue, shall be designated for residential use only (Sub-area B1).
- (2) To protect this residential area, through traffic on Patuxent Avenue will be discouraged.
- (3) The property owned by the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science within Sub-areas [B1](#), B2 and B3 should be encouraged to adhere to the appearance standards governing new development and substantial rehabilitation in order to preserve the architectural character of the area and to ensure compatibility with adjacent residential areas.
- (4) Encourage a mixture of institutional and water-related commercial uses in the area between Farren Avenue, Williams Street and north Charles Street, Sub-area B3.
- (5) Preserve the attractive tree-lined character of eastern Charles Street .
- (6) The Tiki Bar property and the Harbor Island Marina property between Charles Street, Maltby Street and Patuxent Avenue, Sub-area B4, is designated for mixed commercial/residential use. Because the area borders the Sandy Point residential area, it is important to buffer this residential area from commercial incursion through the use of setbacks, fencing and screening.
- (7) Require commercial uses to provide an undeveloped buffer along property boundaries when adjacent to residential properties so that residences will be buffered from commercial uses and the development impact will be reduced.
- (8) The Appearance Code shall be mandatory in Planning Area B (see the Solomons Zoning Ordinance).
- (9) Reduced buffers are allowed in some areas that are already developed within the 100-foot buffer.
- (10) Encourage the preservation of the two Linden trees, on the campus of the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, at the east end of Charles Street near the intersection of Farren Avenue.
- (11) Encourage the retention of historic buildings.

(12) Identify and protect preferred locations for underground utility right-of-ways to eventually move above ground power lines.

d. Actions:

I-1 Maintain Waterman’s Wharf for use by Calvert County watermen.

I-2 Conduct a traffic analysis to determine how to improve traffic flow in Sandy Point while protecting the peace and quiet of the residential area and the security of the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory campus. The analysis should include pedestrian and bicycle traffic in addition to [motor](#) vehicular traffic.

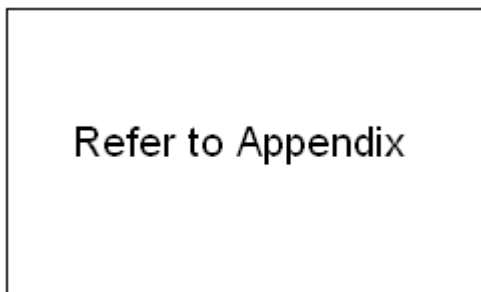
I-3 Work with the property owner (the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory) and utility companies to ensure the preservation of the two Linden trees, also known as the Pump Trees, at the east end of Charles Street.

I-4 Resolve the status of Maltby Street’s ownership.

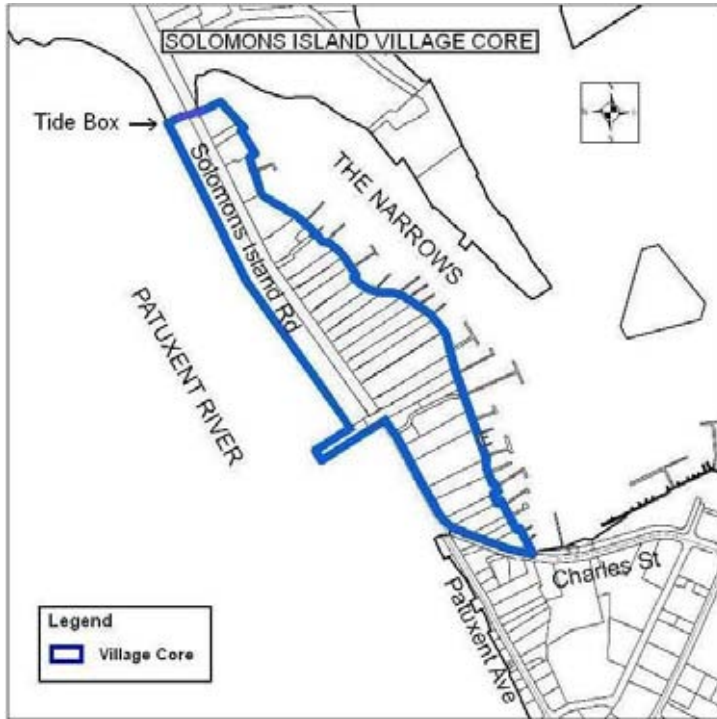
**3. Charles Street to Lore Road Area (Planning Area C, including Planning Sub-areas C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7)**

The area from Lore Road south to Charles Street is the historic core of Solomons Island and Avondale. Refer to Figure 7 for a map of Planning Area C. This area includes a mix of water-related commercial, residential, and institutional uses between the Narrows and Solomons Island Road; the parking area and bulkhead west of Solomons Island Road; the residential area of Avondale; the marinas on Back Creek and the Solomons inner harbor area; the farm along the Patuxent River, and the recreational area & open space under and adjacent to the Governor Thomas Johnson Memorial Bridge. The Solomons Island Village Core, from the Tide Box to Charles Street, is a destination for both residents and visitors (see Figure 8 for a map). The Village Core was the subject of a three-day design workshop in November 2007.

Planning Area C is the prime destination for many residents and visitors to Solomons. The compact development pattern of residential, commercial, and institutional uses provides excellent opportunities for walking.



**Figure 7. PLANNING AREA C**



**Figure 8. SOLOMONS ISLAND VILLAGE CORE**

There are numerous public facilities located in Planning Area C. The Solomons Boat Ramp and Fishing Pier are located along the Patuxent River’s shoreline at the eastern end of the Governor Thomas Johnson Memorial Bridge. The boat ramp is owned by the State of Maryland and is managed by Calvert County. The Solomons Visitors Center, located south of the bridge on State land, is run by the Calvert County Chamber of Commerce and maintained by the County government. The County government owns and maintains several properties in Planning Area C, including the following:

- The Calvert Marine Museum is located on Back Creek, and the J.C. Lore & Sons Oyster House is located on The Narrows immediately south of the Tide Box.
- The Solomons Waterfront Park includes landscaped walkways, seating areas with views toward the Patuxent River, a 16-foot wide Riverwalk, play areas, a pavilion, and the Watermen’s Memorial.
- The Solomons Comfort Station includes public restrooms and a Calvert County Sheriff’s Office Sub-station.
- The Solomons Mini-park is located on Back Creek behind the Comfort Station and includes a small seating area and a pier with a free pump-out station.

a. Objectives:

- (1) Encourage attractive and economically viable mix of commercial and residential uses along Solomons Island Road south of the Solomons Tide Box which provide goods and services to the local community as well as visitors.
- (2) Enhance the “island” quality of the area.

- (3) Preserve and enhance the residential quality of the Avondale area.
- (4) Balance vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian needs.
- (5) Ensure compatibility of adjacent land uses.
- (6) Make the Island family friendly and increase year-round activities.
- (7) Enhance the public realm and provide an attractive water-view recreational area.

b. Considerations:

The special environmental and land use considerations affecting this area are:

- (1) The majority of this area is developed except for the farm along the Patuxent River and the open space adjacent to the Governor Thomas Johnson Memorial Bridge, Sub-area C3 and C5.
- (2) Because of the prime location and because of market opportunities, rehabilitation or redevelopment of existing structures is possible.
- (3) The entrance to the Island itself is not obvious, and the appearance of this gateway area is dominated by an expanse of asphalt for parking.
- (4) The Riverwalk area provides the majority of the parking for tourists coming to Solomons.
- (5) In the Narrows and Back Creek area, there are good to excellent water depths for boating.
- (6) The architectural and landscaping style of the commercial/marina area along Charles Street is not integrated with the historic core or the Sandy Point area.
- (7) The shoreline conditions vary considerably for the unprotected shoreline with accretion of sand beaches and erosion of headlands along the Patuxent River and intermittent fringe marshes, and one area of an accreting sand beach on the Back Creek shorelines.
- (8) There have been complaints about excessive noise coming from the commercial and public areas.
- (9) Agricultural Preservation District, Overlay District. Two of the principal purposes of Agricultural Preservation Districts are to preserve prime agricultural land and to guide development away from prime agricultural land. Most of Sub-area C5 is currently included in an Agricultural Preservation District (APD). A designated APD is permanently protected when covenants are recorded. Covenants have not been recorded for the Strathmore Farm APD.

c. Policies:

- (1) For the Solomons Island Village Core, the following items are priorities:
  - (a) Consider a development bonus for desired public benefit, such as public access, preferred uses, design changes, etc.
  - (b) ~~Encourage~~ Promote a mix of uses which will encourage visitors and

[pedestrians to the area.](#)

- (c) Facilitate ground floor retail/dining to face the street.
  - (d) Establish build-to lines and reinforce the vernacular architecture and existing character of the Island.
  - (e) Clarify and illustrate the review process; modify inconsistent policies.
  - (f) Consider restricting the height of free-standing signs to a maximum of four (4) feet above the ground within the Village Core.
- (2) The property east of Solomons Island Road from the Tide Box to Charles Street, Sub-area C1, is identified for a mix of residential, commercial, and marina uses. On-site parking requirement should be reduced in order to help reinforce the mixed-use character and pedestrian scale of the area. Steps should be taken to ensure that uses are compatible with each other. In particular, it is important to promote a balanced mix of uses and to avoid any one use dominating others.
  - (3) The protection of the environmental and scenic qualities of the head of The Narrows shall be encouraged through easements in order to preserve the attractive, undeveloped scenic shoreline.
  - (4) Maintain the residential zoning for Avondale, Sub-area C6.
  - (5) Continue to facilitate commercial marina and boat-related service uses in the Sub-area C7.
  - (6) The Appearance Code shall be mandatory in Planning Area C (see Solomons Zoning Ordinance).
  - (7) Protect the Patuxent River and the Mill Creek watershed, including The Narrows, Back Creek, Mill Creek and St. John Creek, and thus the Chesapeake Bay, through the use of buffers. Buffers from mean high water vary based on current intensity of use, need for environmental protection and Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Commission regulations. There are Special Buffer Management Areas in Solomons (refer to the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance).
  - (8) Because the purpose of the Town Center is to be a focal point in the County for growth, it is recommended that no additional Agricultural Preservation Districts be designated in the Solomons Town Center.
  - (9) Protect the tree-lined character of Solomons Island Road.
  - (10) Identify and protect a preferred location for an underground utility right-of-way along Solomons Island Road to eventually move above ground power lines.
  - (11) Protect and enhance the pedestrian nature of the Solomons Island Village Core.
  - (12) Encourage the retention of historic buildings.
- d. Actions:

I-5 Study and evaluate land uses and zoning requirements for the Island Village Core (C1, C2, and the southern C3 Sub-areas), including:

- the range of uses,

- development patterns,
- densities,
- setback,
- heights,
- development bonuses, and
- free-standing signs.

I-6 Study the C1 Sub-area parking requirements to determine whether the requirements are appropriate.

I-7 Investigate obtaining scenic easements from Our Lady Star of the Sea for the head of The Narrows to preserve the natural habitat and the scenic views of Solomons Harbor.

I-8 Evaluate the Solomons Zoning Ordinance land use charts for ~~C5 and~~ C6 (Avondale) for compatibility with maintaining the residential character of Avondale, except for the commercial use of The Avondale Center.

[I-9 Evaluate the Solomons Zoning Ordinance land use chart for C5 should the Agricultural Preservation District designation be removed.](#)

~~I-10~~ Celebrate the Pavilion by providing a special park setting connecting the new Pavilion Park to the Harbor through the Comfort Station courtyard.

~~I-11~~ Establish an entry identity and improve the arrival experience by expanding Waterman’s Park to include the tide box area and install special treatments for the roadway and bridge railings/pylons to convey the historic feel of the entry; modify the green edge of the first parking lot along the riverfront to align with Alexander Street so that the initial view towards the water is greatly improved and the existing pump house is less prominent.

~~I-12~~ Construct a sidewalk between the Calvert Marine Museum and Alexander Street.

~~I-13~~ Buffer the Riverwalk and screen the parking lot with low, native shrubs, and reorganize the parking spaces to be more efficient.

~~I-14~~ Investigate the possibility of closing gaps in existing infrastructure, including breaks in the Riverwalk at the pier and missing sidewalks near the J.C. Lore & Sons Oyster House.

~~I-15~~ Connect Waterman’s Park east with the Harbor and the J.C. Lore & Sons Oyster House through the old federal building site and open the rear yard of the Oyster House to the public so that oysterman artifacts can be accessed.

~~I-16~~ Implement the walking trail along the Narrows from the remote parking lot behind Our Lady of the Sea Catholic Church to the Tide Box area.

~~I-17~~ Expand the existing beach to provide water interaction opportunities and to take advantage of the Island’s best asset, the waterfront.

~~I-18~~ Develop a ~~bike-path~~ bikeway along Solomons Island Road to provide an alternate means of transportation and unite the Calvert Marine Museum, the Solomons Annex of NAS PAX River, marinas, and the University of Maryland Chesapeake Biological Lab. See details in Chapter V, Public Improvements.

~~I-19~~ Public restrooms should be built and properly maintained near the existing

pumping station.

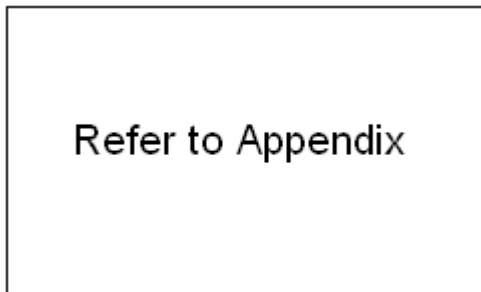
I-2019 Work with utility companies and property owners to ensure the preservation of the tree canopy lining Solomons Island Road. Encourage the preservation of existing trees and the planting of trees to replace missing or damaged/diseased trees.

I-219 Review the setback requirements of the Solomons Zoning Ordinance for consistency and compatibility.

I-224 Consider enacting a County-wide noise ordinance.

**4. Lore Road to the Town Center Boundary (Planning Area D, including Planning Sub-areas D1, D2, D3, D4, D5)**

The area in Planning Area D (identified in Figure 9) includes the land north of Lore Road, from the Patuxent Plaza Shopping Center east of MD Route 2/4 north to the Town Center Boundary. It is bounded on the east side by Back Creek and St. John Creek.



**Figure 9. PLANNING AREA D**

a. Objectives:

- (1) Preserve and enhance the scenic environmental character of the land and the water along Back Creek and St. John Creek.
- (2) Encourage major commercial development to locate adjacent to MD Route 2/4 or a service road.

b. Considerations:

The special environmental and land use considerations affecting this area are:

- (1) A majority of the parcels in Planning Area D has been developed with residential development primarily on the waterside and the commercial development along MD Route 2/4.
- (2) This area includes a considerable number of shore areas that are subject to flooding during the estimated 100 year flood event.
- (3) There are no soils present in the interior area that are identified as highly erodible soils. Some of the slopes adjacent to the Back Creek shoreline are highly erodible and steep enough that foot traffic will create erosion problems, and thus care will be

needed to protect shoreline soils from excessive use.

- (4) The shoreline conditions along this reach vary considerably between wetlands, intermittent fringe marshes, heavily wooded bank erosion and bulkheading.
- (5) The lower area is suitable for small craft boating activities, although care must be taken to avoid siting commercial boating facilities in the head waters of Back Creek.
- (6) The upper portions of St. John Creek have little potential for significant power or sail boating activity due to the shallow water and narrowness of the creek.
- (7) The bluffs along St. John Creek are of moderate height.
- (8) Dowell is a peninsula. All traffic must use Dowell Road. There was a traffic study of Dowell Road completed in November 2005. The County will be widening Dowell Road. Right-of-way is being acquired. Construction is to begin in 2010 and be completed in 2012.

c. Policies:

- (1) The land along MD Route 2/4 in the vicinity of the Patuxent Plaza, Sub-area D1, and the area north of Newtown and Dowell Roads, Sub-area D4, is designated for commercial use because of its convenient transportation access and because both areas are relatively isolated from residential uses and waterfront areas.
- (2) Sub-areas D2 and D3 are designated for primarily residential use with small scale commercial and wet boat storage use.
- (3) Sub-area D5 is designated for residential and commercial uses. Comprehensive plans for large underdeveloped land holdings are encouraged.
- (4) Water-use related activity shall be discouraged along St. John Creek because of the narrowness of the creek and sensitive shoreline conditions.
- (5) Roof pitch and siding materials shall be subject to architectural review requirements in Planning Area D2 because it is primarily residential in nature and highly visible from the water.
- (6) Protect the Patuxent River and the Mill Creek watershed, including The Narrows, Back Creek, Mill Creek and St. John Creek, and thus the Chesapeake Bay, through the use of buffers. Buffers from mean high water vary based on current intensity of use, need for environmental protection and Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Commission regulations. There are Special Buffer Management Areas in Solomons (refer to the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance).
- (7) The Appearance Code shall be mandatory in Planning Area D (see Solomons Zoning Ordinance). Since this Sub-area is north of Lore Road, the historic area of Solomons, styles may include modern interpretations of pre-20<sup>th</sup> century styles.
- (8) No clear cutting of forest will be permitted without an approved site plan. Site plans will require the least cutting of trees.
- (9) Encourage the retention of historic buildings.

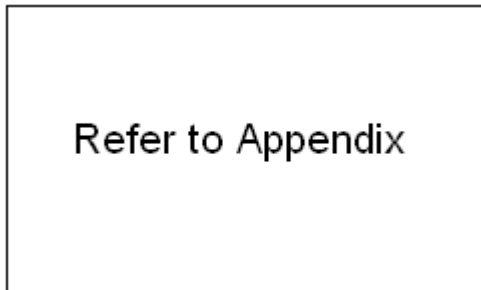
(10) Identify and protect a preferred location for an underground utility right-of-way to eventually move above ground power lines.

d. Action:

I-232 Construct a sidewalk from Solomons Landing to Dowell Road.

**5. Dowell Peninsula Area (Planning Area E, including Sub-areas E1, E2, and E3).**

Sub-area E (refer to Figure10) includes the land within the Town Center which is located on the Dowell Peninsula. The entire west side of the peninsula is included in the Solomons Town Center. The north and south areas of the east side of the Dowell peninsula are included in the Town Center, while the central portion is not. The U.S. Navy established the Amphibious Training Base at the southern end of the Dowell peninsula (Sub-area E1 and E3). The Navy base was subsequently purchased and was developed with marine and residential uses. Permits have been obtained for additional residential development. The rest of the area, Sub-area E2, to the north is developed in individual single family homes.



**Figure 10. PLANNING AREA E**

a. Objectives:

- (1) Permit and encourage an attractive mix of residential, marina, and commercial uses to be developed on the Calvert Marina site.
- (2) Preserve and protect the natural water environment along the Dowell Peninsula while permitting carefully planned residential and commercial development.

b. Considerations:

The special environmental and land use considerations affecting this area are:

- (1) The southern portion of the peninsula, Sub-area E1, includes large scale marina boat usage.
- (2) There are many small parcels with residential units on them in the northern part of the peninsula, Sub-area E2.
- (3) There is considerable variation in the types and locations of environmental constraints due to the size of the area.
- (4) The shoreline conditions vary between existing bulkheading in good repair, failing

bulkheading, intermittent fringe marsh, wetlands, and bank erosion.

- (5) The steepness of the shoreline in the northern portion of this area will require controlled foot access if erosion problems are to be avoided.
- (6) The relatively deep water associated with the southern half of the peninsula is highly suited for small craft boating use; however, the northern half of the peninsula is associated with relatively shallow water and is less desirable for commercial small craft activities.
- (7) Large scale development in the southern portion of the peninsula will generate substantial traffic on Dowell Road.

c. Policies:

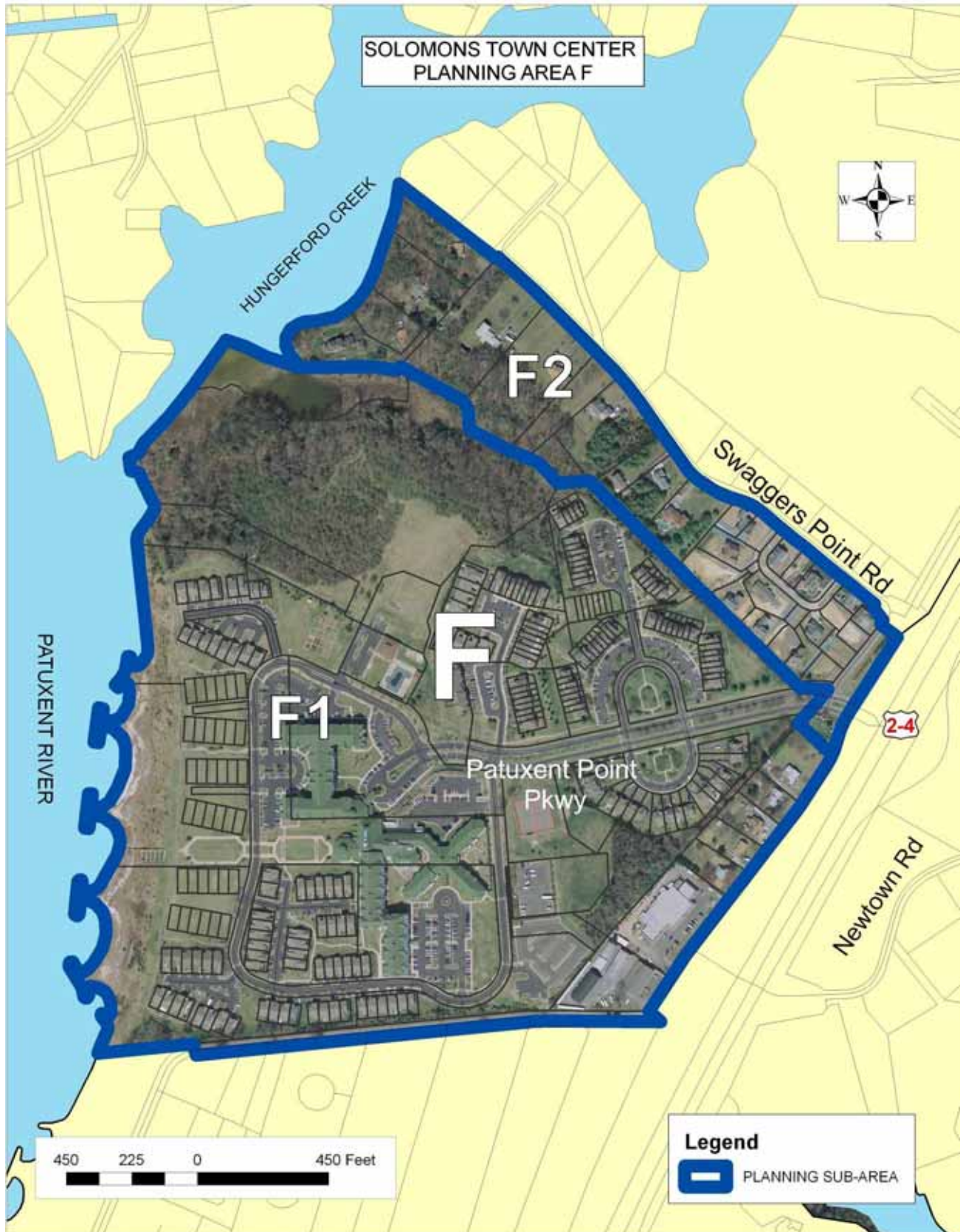
- (1) The Calvert Marina property is designated for mixed residential, marina and commercial use. Comprehensive plans for Sub-areas E1 and E3 are required and it will be mandatory to abide by the appearance and landscape guidelines because of the potential visual impact of development on the site.
- (2) The other land on the Dowell Peninsula is designated for residential and local serving commercial uses and wet boat storage.
- (3) The Appearance Code shall be mandatory in Planning Area E (see the Solomons Zoning Ordinance).
- (4) Protect the Patuxent River and the Mill Creek watershed, including The Narrows, Back Creek, Mill Creek and St. John Creek, and thus the Chesapeake Bay, through the use of buffers. Buffers from mean high water vary based on current intensity of use, need for environmental protection, and Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Commission regulations. There are Special Buffer Management Areas in Solomons (refer to the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance).
- (5) Commercial use is not permitted on parcels adjacent to the waterfront in Sub-area E3.
- (6) Encourage the retention of historic buildings.
- (7) Identify and protect a preferred location for an underground utility right-of-way to eventually move above ground power lines.

d. Action:

- I-234 Make road improvements to Dowell Road, including construction of sidewalks along Dowell Road and designation of bike lanes.

**6. Swaggers Point Area (Planning Area F, including Planning Sub-areas F1, F2)**

Sub-area F (Figure 11) includes primarily residential uses with some commercial uses fronting MD Route 2/4. Sub-area F1 includes the land west of MD Route 2/4 and north of the Solomons Annex of NAS PAX River, and is comprised of multi-family dwellings, single-family attached dwellings and businesses along the highway. Sub-area F2 is the single-family residential area south of Swaggers Point Road.



Prepared by: The Department of Planning & Zoning.

**Figure 11. PLANNING AREA F**

a. Objectives:

- (1) Preserve and enhance the residential quality of the property along Swaggers Point Road.
- (2) Permit and encourage an attractive mix of residential, institutional, professional, and convention center uses.

b. Considerations:

The special environmental and land use considerations affecting this area are:

- (1) The land along Swaggers Point Road is currently developed with single-family homes.
- (2) There are small residential structures and commercial businesses along Route 2/4.
- (3) Asbury-Solomons Island, a continuing care retirement community, is the largest residential development in this Planning Area. The facility includes cottages, apartments, and assisted living. Amenities include an indoor pool.
- (4) The western side of the planning area is characterized by high bluffs of about 30 feet overlooking the Patuxent River which are steep and have unstable soils and high erosion rates.
- (5) The only portion of the area that is within the flood hazard boundary is the shoreline area associated with the wetlands off of Hungerford Creek in the northwest portion of Sub-area F1.

c. Policies:

- (1) The property along Swaggers Point Road (F2) is to remain in residential use.
- (2) The land in Sub-area F1 is designated for residential, institutional, professional, and convention center uses. Retail commercial is not permitted in sub-area F1.
- (3) The Appearance Code shall be mandatory in Planning Area F (see the Solomons Zoning Ordinance).
- (4) Protect the Patuxent River and the Mill Creek watershed, including The Narrows, Back Creek, Mill Creek and St. John Creek, and thus the Chesapeake Bay, through the use of buffers. Buffers from mean high water vary based on current intensity of use, need for environmental protection and Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Commission regulations. There are Special Buffer Management Areas in Solomons (refer to the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance).
- (5) The wooded wetland at the entrance to Hungerford Creek is a natural asset and is to be preserved for use as passive recreation. No commercial or community water-dependent facilities are to be permitted within the mouth of the creek.
- (6) Identify and protect a preferred location for an underground utility right-of-way to eventually move above ground power lines.

## **B. TRANSPORTATION**

### **GENERAL TRANSPORTATION POLICIES FOR SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER**

- A balanced, complete transportation system will be promoted to enhance mobility of all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and bus riders.
- A bikeway has been designated for the entire Town Center area to provide an alternative means of transportation. The path would connect the residential, recreational and parking areas with the commercial areas.
- Sidewalks are deemed necessary, and all pedestrian circulation and automobile traffic should be separated and clearly defined.
- Water transportation is a key component of the Solomons transportation system for businesses, residents, tourists, and governmental agencies. Protection of the Solomons Harbor is important. The connections between land transportation and water transportation shall be carefully considered to promote mobility.

The Solomons Town Center includes three functional classes of roads: arterial, collector and local (land access). Arterials carry the heaviest volumes of traffic and serve inter-county travel. Collectors serve shorter trips and link residential areas to arterials. Local roads provide access to abutting properties. “Arterials should be designed and located so as to provide fast and convenient travel, to support necessary economic development, and to provide a framework for planned land use development.” (Calvert County Transportation Plan, page 21, adopted 1997) The Federal Highway Administration has two road functional classifications that it has used for roads in the Solomons Town Center.<sup>5</sup> According to the Maryland State Highway Administration’s Highway Location Reference, there are three classifications for roads within the Thomas Johnson Bridge Planning Study Project Area.<sup>6</sup>

Roads can be classified by ownership: State, County or private. MD 2/4 and MD 765 are arterial roads owned by the State, Dowell Road is a collector owned by the County, and the other roads are local roads owned by the County or owned privately. The Town Center

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<sup>5</sup> These two classifications are “Urban Collector” and “Urban Minor Arterial.” MD 765 is identified as an Urban Collector between MD 497 (Cove Point Road) and Dowell Road. Dowell Road is an Urban Collector. Solomons Island Road is an Urban Minor Arterial south of MD 4 to Patuxent Avenue. Urban collectors provide links between local neighborhoods streets (i.e., non-arterials) and larger arterials. Urban minor arterials provide “for movement within the larger subareas bound by principal arterials. A minor arterial may also serve ‘through traffic’ but provides more direct access to abutting land uses than does a principal arterial.” (Source: Maine Department of Transportation)

<sup>6</sup> These three road classifications are “Urban Collector,” “Urban Local Road,” and “Urban Minor Arterial.” MD 765 is classified as an Urban Collector from Dowell Road to Rousby Hall Road. MD 765 is classified as an Urban Local Road from Lore Road northward to Dowell Road. MD 2 is classified as an Urban Minor Arterial within the project area. (Source: Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Administration)

includes the eastern portion of the MD 4 – Thomas Johnson Memorial Bridge. The bridge connects Calvert County with St. Mary’s County. The State Highway Administration has prepared a traffic study and transportation plan for major roads from Cove Point Road (MD 497) to the Thomas Johnson Memorial Bridge.

The roads in the Solomons Town Center serve both local and through traffic. Solomons is a destination for tourists. In addition to the road network serving the needs of residents and businesses and through traffic, the network must serve the needs of tourists. Tourists arrive by both land and water. People that arrive by water may access other areas of the Town Center by bus, walking or bicycling. The Calvert Marine Museum attracted over 63,000 people in fiscal year 2007. The Solomons Visitor Center had over 12,800 people during the same time period. Thousands of people are drawn to Solomons during special events.

The Solomons Town Center is served by the County’s bus system. Two deviated fixed bus routes serve Solomons. The County buses are used as shuttle buses for special events.

Walking and bicycling are important modes of transportation. Both walking and bicycling help reduce energy consumption of vehicle transportation, reduce vehicle traffic, and promote human health through exercise.

Solomons Town Center’s location on the water provides opportunities for maritime business and recreation. Numerous charter boats operate out of Solomons Harbor. Marinas provide services and dockage to slip holders and transients. The Solomons Island Yacht Club and the Southern Maryland Sailing Association provide recreational sailors with racing and regatta events and training classes. Several institutions base their operations out of the Solomons Harbor: Association of Maryland Pilots, Maryland Department of Natural Resources Police, and the University of Maryland, Chesapeake Biological Laboratory.

One consideration that must be kept in mind in regards to transportation, especially on Solomons Island, is that there is a limited amount of area in the public right-of-way and on public property to accommodate bikeways, sidewalks, landscaping, and parking.

Action:

I-245 Promote multiple modes of transportation to reduce dependence on automobiles within Solomons Town Center, and connect the Town Center with adjacent communities through the encouraged use of water taxis, car pools, a trolley system, bicycle routes and storage, Segways, and electric carts.

1. MOTORISTS
  - a. Thomas Johnson Bridge Planning Study

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) is conducting a project planning study for MD 4 – Thomas Johnson Bridge. In the fall of 2007, SHA mailed the initial planning study newsletter to residents and businesses in the study area. The project’s purpose is “to improve existing capacity and traffic operations, and to increase vehicular and pedestrian safety along MD 4 while supporting existing and planned development in the area.” The study area impacts both Calvert County and St. Mary’s County. The project spans from the MD 235 intersection in St. Mary’s County to just south of Patuxent Point Boulevard in Calvert County, a distance of approximately 4 miles. The Alternatives Public Workshop booklet notes, “A substantial increase in residential development just north of Solomons Island and increased employment, particularly at the Patuxent Naval Air Station, have resulted in increased usage of the roadway network, contributing to operational failures as indicated by the congestion and high traffic volumes at the Thomas Johnson Bridge, especially during peak periods.” Open House meetings were held in 2007. An Alternates Public Workshop was held in Lusby in 2008. The study investigates pedestrian and bicycle access across the proposed bridge to St. Mary’s County.

Policies:

1. Work closely with the Maryland State Highway Administration on the Thomas Johnson Bridge Planning Study, including aesthetics, traffic control during construction, construction staging, and public and community outreach.
2. Inform the public of the study’s progress and recommendations.

b. Dowell Road

Substantial development in the southern portion of the peninsula will generate increased traffic on Dowell Road. Major improvements to the road are scheduled.

Actions:

I-256 Make road improvements to Dowell Road, including widening of the roadway, construction of sidewalks, and designation of bike lanes.

I-267 Construct a multipurpose path for pedestrians and bicyclists along Dowell Road, in addition to the bike lanes and sidewalks, to encourage bicycle use, promote pedestrian safety, and reduce car traffic.

c. Traffic in Planning Areas B & C

The traffic along Solomons Island Road, Charles Street and Farren Avenue has been of major concern, especially during the summertime. The area is a focus of recreation and business activity and as a result is the focus of traffic problems. Several projects have helped improve traffic since the adoption of the Solomons Master Plan in 1986, including the designation of parking under the Thomas Johnson Memorial Bridge for fishing and the prohibition of fishing, camping, car washing/polishing and overnight parking along the Riverwalk, the reduction of traffic through the Sandy Point area through signage, and ~~soon to be constructed~~, a roundabout at Charles Street and Farren Avenue.

Policy:

Build a sidewalk along the entire length of Solomons Island Road that continues along Charles Street and ends at the northeast end of Farren Avenue.

d. Streetscape

A streetscape includes all the area between the building fronts on one side of the street to the building fronts, on the other side or in the case of Solomons Island, the Riverwalk along the Patuxent River. This includes the sidewalk, the curbing, benches, pavement, trees and grass, trash receptacles, rest rooms, traffic signs, street lights and public signs.

The basic design of public improvements should serve to highlight the main entrances and intersections of the commercial area, to create distinctive vistas along the main streets, and to provide amenities such as rest areas and green spaces that reduce the harshness of building materials and paving. The effect of such improvements should be to create a sense of place which encourages consumers and tourists to shop, to stroll, and to enjoy the area.

The first vehicular bridge to Solomons Island was completed in 1907. The current “tide box” bridge resulted from the progressive widenings of the road in 1918, 1948-49, and again in 1957.

~~Because of the gradual dominance of the automobile as the principal means of entry to the historic area of Solomons Island, there has been little done to ensure a separation of modes of travel, such as walking, bike riding, and cars.~~ Shade trees above will provide both a change of scale and protection at the street level, and some visual interest along the entire commercial strip.

e. Entrance to Solomons Island

Few first time visitors to Solomons Island know when they have entered the “island” area. The historic separation of island from peninsula is no longer obvious to the casual observer (refer to Figure 12).



**Figure 12. “TIDE BOX” BRIDGE AT THE SOLOMONS ENTRYWAY (2007)**

### Solomons Tide Box

In order to begin to recreate a “sense of place” in historic Solomons and to provide an attractive, functional and historic entryway, this Master Plan proposes modifications to make a more prominent and attractive bridge at the “tide box.”

The following illustration shows suggested improvements to the Tide Box area, including installing different bridge railings that would recapture some of the look of earlier bridges connecting Solomons Island to the mainland (refer to Figure 13).



**Figure 13. TIDE BOX - SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS**

f. Parking

Since the primary mode of transportation within the Solomons Town Center is by motor vehicle, parking for vehicles must be provided. Parking becomes a greater concern where land area is limited. For the Solomons Town Center, the challenge of providing parking is a special concern for the area south of Lore Road, including the island itself.

Action:

I-278. Conduct a parking use study of Planning Area C. Include in the study the parking of vehicles with boat trailers.

1. Public Parking near the Governor Thomas Johnson Memorial Bridge

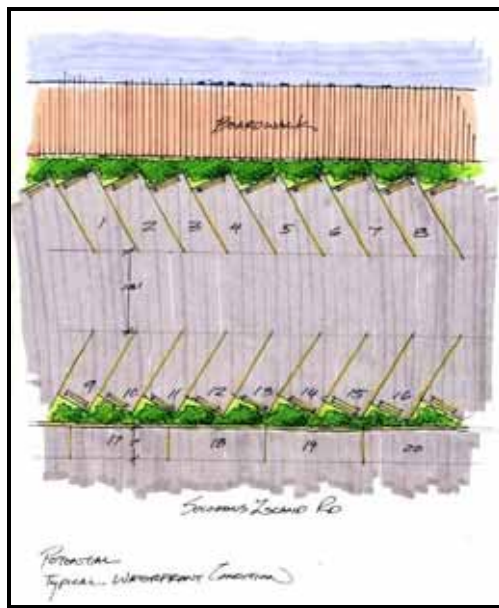
Public parking for boat trailers and vehicles is provided for people using the Solomons Public Boat Ramp and Fishing Pier. Parking spaces are adjacent to and underneath of the Governor Thomas Johnson Memorial Bridge.

2. Bulkhead Parking

The bulkhead along the Patuxent River provides parking for customers who visit the restaurants and businesses along Solomons Island Road, for people who visit the three churches, and for County residents and visitors who use the Solomons Waterfront Park. It is possible to buffer the parking lot by adding landscaping between the parking lot and the Riverwalk on the west side and between the parking lot and Solomons Island Road on the east side. See Figure 14 and Figure 15 (illustrations drawn by EDAW during the Design Workshop, November 2008). Adding a vegetated buffer has many benefits: the visual aesthetics of the Riverwalk will be improved, the amount of asphalt will be reduced thereby reducing the amount of impervious surface which will allow pollutants, including nutrients, to be filtered, and potentially reducing the amount of heat.



**Figure 14. POTENTIAL BUFFER ALONG RIVERWALK**



**Figure 15. POTENTIAL PARKING CONDITIONS WITH LANDSCAPED BUFFER**

Actions:

I-289 Restrict parking to vehicles only.

I-2930 Prohibit overnight parking.

I-301 ~~Allow public~~ Public parking spaces ~~on the bulkhead in Planning Area C may be used to satisfy a portion of the parking requirements for commercial development or substantial commercial rehabilitation non-residential uses~~ in Planning Sub-areas C1, C2, C3, and C4 only, subject to the approval of the Planning Commission based upon established standards. ~~Conduct~~ Within three years conduct a parking study of the Village Core sub-areas C1, C2, C3, and C4, then, ~~Periodically~~ periodically, as determined by the Planning Commission, re-evaluate the Solomons Zoning Ordinance

parking requirements [for Planning Area C](#) ~~the C-1 Sub-area~~ to ensure desired economic development objectives are being met.

43. Public Parking Lot behind Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church

In 1992 the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners entered into a 25-year lease with the Catholic Archbishop of Washington, D.C. for 1.5 acres of land for use as a public parking lot. The County constructed the parking lot in 1993 for \$228,489, with \$178,489 of County funds and \$50,000 of State funds. The lease began on July 1, 1992, and may be renewed for two additional 10-year periods. The County is responsible for trash removal, snow removal, and the electrical bills associated with lighting the parking lot. The church has priority of use of the lot for church activities. The lease agreement states that 25% of the parking lot would be available at all times for public use. The 25-year term will end in 2017.

Action:

I-342 Pursue renewing the lease for the public parking lot behind Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church when the initial term expires in 2017.

34. Calvert Marine Museum Parking

The Calvert Marine Museum draws tens of thousands of visitors each year. Over 63,000 people visited the museum in fiscal year 2007. Many visitors arrive by private car.

Action:

I-323 Sufficient land should be purchased or leased near the Museum to provide additional parking spaces.

g. Street Signage

It is important to have clear street signs that identify all streets and give appropriate directional information.

Action:

I-334 A sign showing street names will be maintained at each intersection in Solomons. Other appropriate public signage will be installed including: speed limit signs in the residential and commercial areas; public parking and park directional signs; and activity or vehicle prohibitions (e.g., No parking, No Camping, No Fishing).

2. TRANSIT USERS

The County government provides bus service for the general public, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. The County operates two kinds of routes: deviated fixed routes and demand response routes. Two of the county's six deviated fixed routes serve Solomons. One route runs between Prince Frederick and Solomons. The other route is the Lusby, Solomons, and Chesapeake Ranch Estates shuttle. The buses run

six days a week except certain holidays. In addition, there are four demand response routes, one which serves the Solomons area (Prince Frederick and destinations to the south).

The County government in cooperation with the Maryland Transit Administration provides commuter bus service. Buses run between Calvert County and the Washington metro area. Solomons' closest park and ride lot with commuter bus service located in Calvert County is in St. Leonard. There is a park and ride lot with commuter bus service located in California, across the Patuxent River in St. Mary's County. The closest park and ride lot for ridesharing (no commuter bus service) is located on the west side of MD 2/4 at the end of Creston Lane. A park and ride lot at Cove Point Road (MD 497) in Lusby is also available.

During special events, the County government provides shuttle buses that serve the Solomons Town Center. Such special events have included the Spring Launch, Fourth of July, and the Taste of Solomons. These events draw thousands of people to Solomons. An estimated 6,000 people attended the Solomons Fourth of July fireworks in 2007. Parking locations for these shuttles vary depending upon the event and have included Federal and private property. Businesses have operated private trolleys and vans, usually on a seasonal basis during the summer when there are more visitors.

Mitigation of automobile congestion on the Island is an important aspect of this plan. With the provision of public parking spaces at the State Park under the bridge, it would be feasible to encourage some temporary parking at this site, if shuttle bus service to the Island village core were available. The principal stops on this shuttle circuit could include the Solomons Annex of the Patuxent River Naval Air Station; the Calvert Marine Museum; the marinas on Back Creek; the "Riverwalk"; and the University of Maryland Biological Laboratory.

Actions:

I-345 Continue providing fixed route service to the Solomons Town Center.

I-356 Continue providing demand response transit service to areas south of Prince Frederick, including the Solomons Town Center.

I-367 Investigate the possibility of providing shuttle bus service to Solomons during the summer season and on weekends during the spring and fall seasons.

### 3. PEDESTRIANS

Solomons Island is an interesting place to walk. There are views to the Patuxent River, the Solomons Harbor, and the Chesapeake Bay. The County's Comprehensive Plan calls for reducing dependence on automobiles by increasing pedestrian and bicycle circulation in Town Centers.

Since the Solomons Master Plan was adopted in 1986, the County and State have spent funds to make Solomons a safer place to walk by installing sidewalks and

constructing the Riverwalk. The 1986 Plan called for sidewalks to be constructed from Lore Road south to the intersection of Charles Street and Farren Avenue. Refer to Figure 16.



**Figure 16. MAP OF SIDEWALK**

The section from Alexander Street to the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory was constructed, except for the segment from the Tide Box to Bunky's. This approximately 400-foot segment includes four parcels: two owned by the County and two owned privately. Figure 17. Existing Sidewalk Condition (non-existent) shows the existing condition. Possible ways to create a safe pedestrian path across this area include constructing a sidewalk or marking the asphalt shoulder as a pathway. Construction of a sidewalk would need to address drainage issues. Creation of a marked pathway would need to address vehicle-pedestrian safety issues. Any option would need to address parking and existing access to properties. Figure 18. Potential Sidewalk Condition shows one potential solution: identify a sidewalk by marking the asphalt shoulder. (Photographs by EDAW, November 2007.) Refer to the Planning Area C section, Action I-12, regarding investigating the possibility of constructing sidewalks near the J.C. Lore & Sons Oyster House.



**Figure 17** Existing Sidewalk Condition (non-existent)



**Figure 18** Potential Sidewalk Condition

**Policies:**

1. Provide safe pedestrian access to Annmarie Gardens from the Solomons Island Village Core.
2. Provide safe pedestrian access from the residential area on the west side of MD 2/4 to the commercial area on the east side of MD 2/4.

**Actions:**

I-378 Construct sidewalks that connect the commercial and residential areas along Solomons Island Road from Lore Road north to Dowell Road.

I-389 Construct sidewalks along Dowell Road.

I-3940 Construct a sidewalk that ties in the Solomons Annex of the Patuxent River Naval Air Station with the public boat ramp area under the Governor Thomas Johnson Memorial Bridge and the Calvert Marine Museum with the scenic walkway on Solomons Island.

I-401 Request the Maryland State Highway Administration to construct a crosswalk at the intersection of MD 2/4 and Patuxent Parkway.

I-412 Construct sidewalks along Newtown Road.

4.

## BICYCLISTS

### Bikeway Network

A policy of this Master Plan is to promote a balanced, complete transportation system to enhance the mobility of all users.

Because of its basically level terrain, and relatively small area, the Solomons Town Center is naturally suited to recreational travel by bicycle. A bikeway network for the entire Town Center area provides an alternative means of transportation. Such a network will connect the residential, recreational and parking areas with the historical core of Solomons.

A bikeway includes “Bicycle lanes, shared lanes, paved shoulders, wide curb lanes, and shared use paths. These facilities may or may not be marked for preferential or exclusive use for bicyclists.” A shared-use path is “A bikeway outside the traveled way and physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier and either within the highway right-of-way or within an independent alignment. Shared-use paths are also used by pedestrians (including skaters, users of manual and motorized wheelchairs, and joggers) and other authorized motorized and nonmotorized users.” (*Maryland State Highway Administration Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guidelines*)

There are several operations which could be united by such a bikeway:

- a. the Solomons Annex of the Patuxent River Naval Air Station,
- b. the Calvert Marine Museum,
- c. marinas on Back Creek and The Narrows, such as Zahniser’s and Spring Cove Marinas,
- d. the Chesapeake Biological Lab in the Sandy Point area,
- e. Annemarie Garden and the Solomons Town Center Park on Dowell Road.

Residents of the Dowell Peninsula and visitors Annmarie Garden could also benefit from such a network. Refer to Figure 19: Solomons Town Center Map of Proposed Bikeway.



Prepared by: The Department of Planning & Zoning.

**Figure 19. MAP OF PROPOSED BIKEWAY**

The Thomas Johnson Bridge Planning Study that the Maryland State Highway Administration is conducting investigates pedestrian and bicycle access across the proposed bridge to St. Mary's County.

#### A. Visitor Center & Bicycle Rental Facility

The Solomons Visitor Center provides information to residents and visitors. It would be extremely useful to have a bicycle rental facility near the parking area, so that visitors would be encouraged to leave their automobiles.

##### Policies:

1. Provide safe bicycle access to Annmarie Gardens from the Solomons Island Village Core.
2. Provide safe bicycle access from the residential area on the west side of MD 2/4 to the commercial area on the east side of MD 2/4.

##### Actions:

I-423 Develop a Town Center bicycle network by pursuing the following actions

- a. As County roads are improved or upgraded, ensure the roads include a bicycle lane; where feasible, construct a bikeway, which is to be a shared-use path, separate from the roadway.
- b. Require the construction of the bikeway/shared-used path as properties develop.
- c. Conduct an analysis of existing right-of-way to see if there is a sufficient amount to create a bike lane.
- d. [Install/maintain bicycle parking facilities at appropriate destinations.](#)

I-434 Consider providing or encouraging a bicycle rental facility at the Solomons Visitor Center to enable visitors to leave their cars or to walk from their boats and tour Solomons by bicycle.

## 5. BOATERS

#### a. Water Depth and Boat Traffic

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources discourages the siting of boating facilities in the upper areas of rivers and creeks since wave actions created by additional boat traffic increase erosion, boats and moorings often create navigational problems in constrained waters, and such waters often have inadequate flushing action of pollutants. This Master Plan follows this same policy. In keeping with this policy, no harbor line changes are proposed.

#### b. Harbor Protection Improvements

Solomons harbor is vulnerable to high wind and waves coming from the southeast. Considerable damage has been sustained at the Solomons Island Yacht Club and Inner Harbor Basin over the years. Participants in the Solomons Town Center Master Plan

Update Kick-off Meeting suggested that the Solomons Harbor be a study area. Participants on the July 31, 2007 boat tour of the harbor were surveyed. More people thought the harbor was inadequately protected from storms than those who thought the harbor was adequately protected. A majority of people surveyed believe the mooring of boats in the harbor is an issue and needs to be managed and that a harbormaster is needed.

The history of the small island known as Mols Leg Island is filled with conflicting opinions – even to the appropriate spelling of the name. “This man-made island was built in 1972 to hold the spoils from a shoal which was all that remained of the original natural island...The origin of the name is obscure, although one tradition holds that Mols Leg is a corruption of a Scandinavian phrase meaning ‘sea bum resting place.’” (Solomons Island & Vicinity: An Illustrated History and Walking Tour, Calvert Marine Museum 1995) Some people in Solomons have advocated the removal of Mols Leg due [to](#) concerns regarding navigation and harbor protection.

Actions:

I-44 Conduct a harbor study to investigate options for improving protection, navigation, mooring, and management of the waterways.

I-45 When the study is complete, evaluate options and consider pursuing construction financing via the Department of Natural Resources Boating Waterway Improvement Fund.

## C. ENERGY

### GENERAL ENERGY POLICIES FOR SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER

- Promote compact mixed-use development to reduce travel-related energy consumption.
- Encourage environmental and energy efficient design.
- Discourage light pollution.
- Encourage tree planting around buildings to reduce heating and cooling.

By directing development to Town Centers and promoting a mixture of uses (residential, commercial, recreational, and institutional), the length of daily trips can be reduced. The pattern of land uses directly affects energy consumption.

A potential off-site impact of waterfront development is the effect of exterior lighting on nighttime navigation. Exterior lighting, for example, around walkways, docks or buildings, can create confusion for the boater at night, especially if there are also lighted navigational aids in the area. Exterior lighting must meet the County’s Outdoor Lighting Regulations, including glare-control requirements for marine facility lighting.

Maintaining and planting trees and vegetation can reduce heat islands and energy costs for cooling buildings. The strategic planting of trees around buildings has a direct impact on the building’s interior temperature, can reduce air conditioning costs, and help reduce peak energy demand. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, air temperature in tree-shaded neighborhoods can be 3 to 6 degrees cooler and house cooling and heating costs can

be reduced between \$100 and \$250 per year with proper placing of three trees.

a. Underground Utilities

The presence of overhead utilities dramatically changes the skyline and clashes with the preservation and enhancement of the historic character of Solomons. The scheduling of construction of sidewalks provides an opportunity to coordinate the undergrounding of the utilities with this construction, and achieve some cost savings.

Policy:

Underground the utilities in the historic Solomons commercial area and along the Solomons Island Road. While it is preferable that this be carried out as a single project, it may have to be accomplished in two stages because of cost. In that case, the first stage of undergrounding should concentrate on the area south of Lore Road, especially in the historic, Solomons Island Village Core.

Actions:

I-467 Encourage green technologies including solar orientation, Low Impact Development (LID) design, bio-filtration, green roofs, and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification for new development.

I-478 Review the Solomons Zoning Ordinance for ways to allow/encourage low impact development and energy efficient designs.

I-489 Educate property owners on the potential off-site impacts of outdoor lighting on maritime navigation.

I-4950 Encourage the retrofitting of waterfront outdoor lighting so as to reduce nuisance glare.

I-501 Identify and protect a preferred location for an underground utility right-of-way to eventually move above ground power lines.

**D. WASTE MANAGEMENT**

**GENERAL WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICIES FOR SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER**

- All new slips shall have bath and toilet facilities in keeping with the Calvert County Health Department requirements.
- All new marinas with 10 slips or more shall have pump out facilities, per State law. The County encourages smaller marines to install pump out facilities.

The Calvert County Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan calls for community water and sewerage in the Town Center. Over 90% of the Solomons Town Center is served by public water. Areas not currently served by public water are scheduled for service. Over 90% of the Solomons Town Center is served by public sewer. Wastewater is treated at the Solomons Wastewater System. Areas not currently served by public sewer are south of Swagger's Point Road and north of Dowell Road. All new development is required to connect to the system.

## **E. NATURAL RESOURCES AND SENSITIVE AREAS**

### **GENERAL NATURAL RESOURCES AND SENSITIVE AREAS POLICIES FOR SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER**

- Waterfront development standards will apply to all waterfront development and rehabilitation.
- Building in the 100 Year Flood Plain must be consistent with the Calvert County Flood Plain Ordinance.
- Shore erosion control measures with the least impact on fish and plant habitat, and which are practical and effective, shall be used.

#### **1. WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

The Solomons Town Center includes some of the most highly developed waterfront in Calvert County. Within the historic Solomons commercial area, waterfront property is in demand for financial investment as well as for quality of living reasons. This preference for living on the waterfront brings with it many potential impacts on the environment and, in some cases, hazards to the waterfront residents. Many of these environmentally destructive or potentially hazardous situations result when development occurs too close to the highly dynamic natural environment of the shoreline.

Many factors must be weighed if construction is to be in harmony with the natural environment. The following paragraphs discuss development siting factors that have the greatest impact on the Solomons Town Center area. These waterfront development considerations have been incorporated into the land use recommendations.

It is important to understand that generalizations about large land areas, especially waterfront properties, are made as a practical matter – strictly for planning purposes. Within any planning area or sub-area, natural conditions will vary. Thus, a full site plan evaluation will be necessary before development-related permits are granted.

##### **a. 100-Year Floodplain**

Storm events (hurricanes and heavy rainstorms) may cause severe flooding in coastal areas and upland drainage ways. Loss of life and property during flooding is the result of improper placement and inadequate protection of structures in floodplain areas. Regulations governing the development in and adjacent to floodplains are designed to protect the property and lives of residents to meet State and Federal requirements.

Coastal flooding occurs naturally as severe ocean-based storm systems (hurricanes, tropical storms and extra-tropical storms) create higher than normal tides, called storm surges.

The storm flood risk of any particular shoreline depends on the degree of exposure to

larger-than-normal waves driven by high winds, and the relative elevation of the waterfront property above the storm surge and high waves.

The 100-Year Floodplain for the Solomons Town Center is generally shown in the following illustration (see Figure 20). The map below is for illustrative purposes. Please refer to the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for specific property information. Elevation always supersedes the mapping.

Maryland is particularly vulnerable to climate change given the state's vast tidal shoreline and the potential impacts of sea level rise. The location of the Solomons Town Center on tidal water makes it vulnerable to sea level rise and to increased storm intensities. In 2007, Governor Martin O'Malley established the Maryland Commission on Climate Change. The Commission is to present its report in 2008. The Commission is charged with "developing an action plan to address the causes of climate change, prepare for the likely consequences and impacts of climate change to Maryland, and establish firm benchmarks and timetables for implementing the Commission's recommendations. The Commission includes members representing academia, business, industry, environmental groups and many levels of government. It is staffed jointly by the Maryland Department of the Environment and Department of Natural Resources in coordination with other state agencies." (<http://www.mdclimatechange.us/>, 7/28/2008).

Based upon climate change projections for Maryland, it is predicted that sea level may rise one foot by mid-century and two feet by late century and, depending upon the rate of ice melting, may rise by three-and-a-half feet by late century.

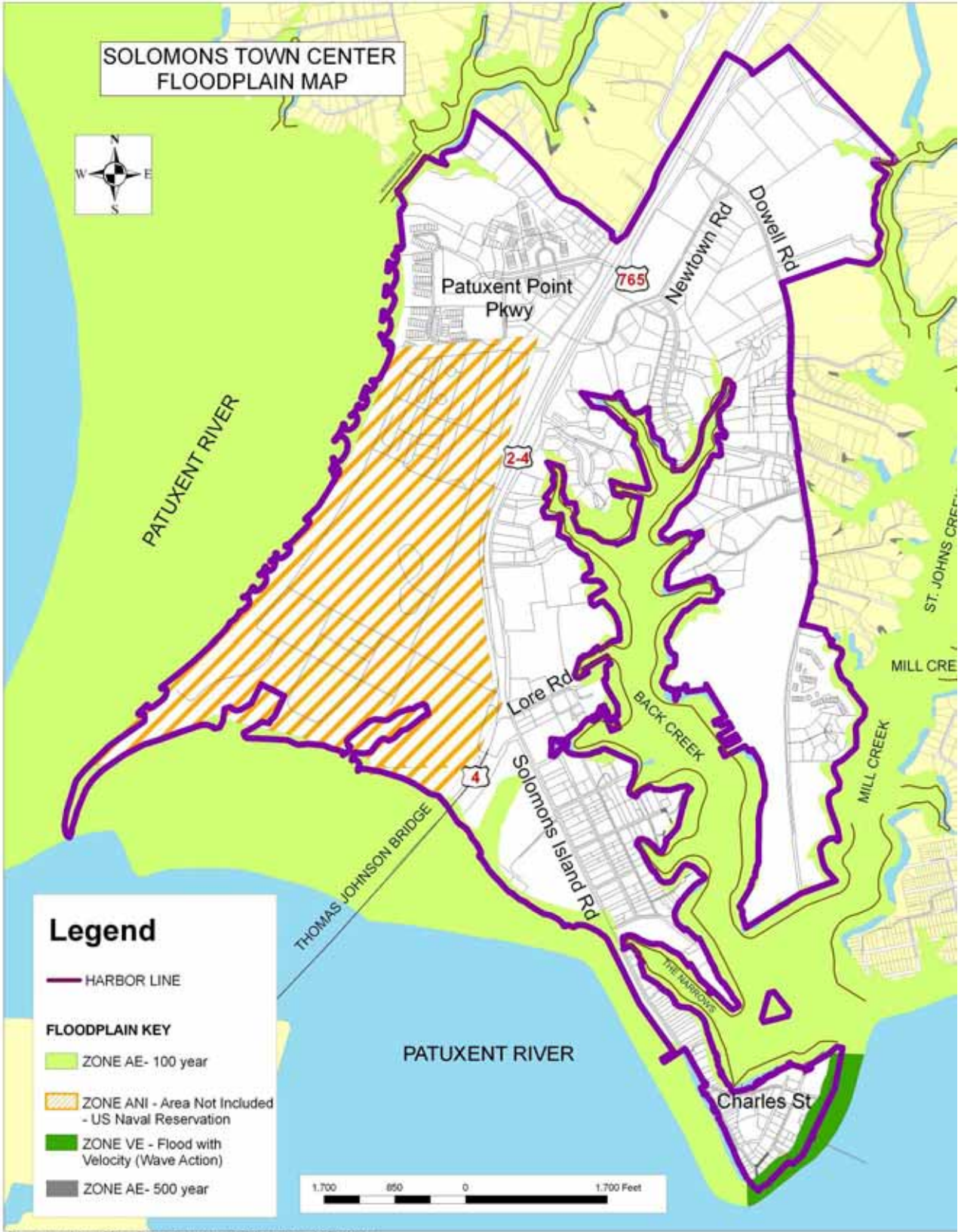
Actions:

I-512 Consider increasing the flood elevation requirements (freeboard) by two feet.

I-523 Review the Maryland Climate Change Commission's report when it is released and consider ways to implement the Commission's recommendations.

I-534 Work with the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory to monitor sea level rise in Calvert County.

I-545 Use geographic information systems technology to analyze the areas of the Town Center vulnerable to sea level rise.



Prepared by: The Department of Planning & Zoning.

Figure 20. FLOODPLAIN MAP (ILLUSTRATIVE)

b. Highly Erodible Soils

Certain shorelines in the Solomons Town Center have highly erodible soils. Highly erodible soils are those with a slope greater than 15 percent, or those soils with a K value {soil erodibility factor that is experimentally determined} greater than 0.35 and with slopes greater than five percent (Calvert County Zoning Ordinance, Revised August 28, 2007, Article 12, Page 28). These soils are difficult to stabilize, and runoff from rain storms will rapidly carry the topsoil into the adjacent body of water. This upland erosion contributes heavily to the “silting in” of navigable waterways, and is highly destructive environmentally.

Development of these soils should be avoided wherever possible. In addition, steps should be taken to stabilize these areas and any planned use of these areas should be reserved for activities which will not aggravate the erosion problem.

c. The Critical Area, Critical Area Buffer and Special Buffer Management Areas

The State adopted the Critical Area Act in 1984. The Act recognizes that the land immediately surrounding the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries has the greatest potential to affect water quality and wildlife habitat and thus designated all lands within 1,000 feet of tidal waters or adjacent tidal wetlands as the “Critical Area.” The Critical Area Law is designed to maintain or improve water quality and preserve and conserve plant, fish and wildlife habitat. Land within the Critical Area is designated as one of three categories: Intensely Developed Areas (IDA), Limited Development Areas (LDA), and Resource Conservation Areas (RCA). Each area has its own set of regulations. To accommodate future growth, local jurisdictions can change the area designation to a higher designation through a “growth allocation” process.

Calvert County adopted its Critical Area regulations in December 1988. A majority of the Solomons Town Center is located within the Critical Area (refer to Figure 21). Most of the Town Center has a Critical Area designation of IDA, and some is designated as LDA. The Critical Area Buffer is all land within 100 feet of tidal waters or tidal wetlands; the buffer can be expanded for steep slopes and highly erodible soils. The buffer is defined as an area with existing native vegetation or an area planted in native vegetation. Only water-dependent uses are allowed in the Critical Area Buffer. Many of the buffer areas in Solomons, where development existed in the buffer prior to adoption of the Critical Area Law and the buffer was not functional (little to no native vegetation), have been designated as Special Buffer Management Areas (SBMAs). In the SBMAs, the building restriction is reduced though mitigation is required for all impervious surface created or altered in the entire 100-foot or expanded buffer. The State Critical Area Law is implemented in Calvert County by regulations in Section 8-1 of the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance. State and County regulations prohibit commercial structures other than vessel service areas on piers.

Policy:

Encourage the mutual use of piers and/or mooring piles by adjacent property owners.



Prepared by: The Department of Planning & Zoning.

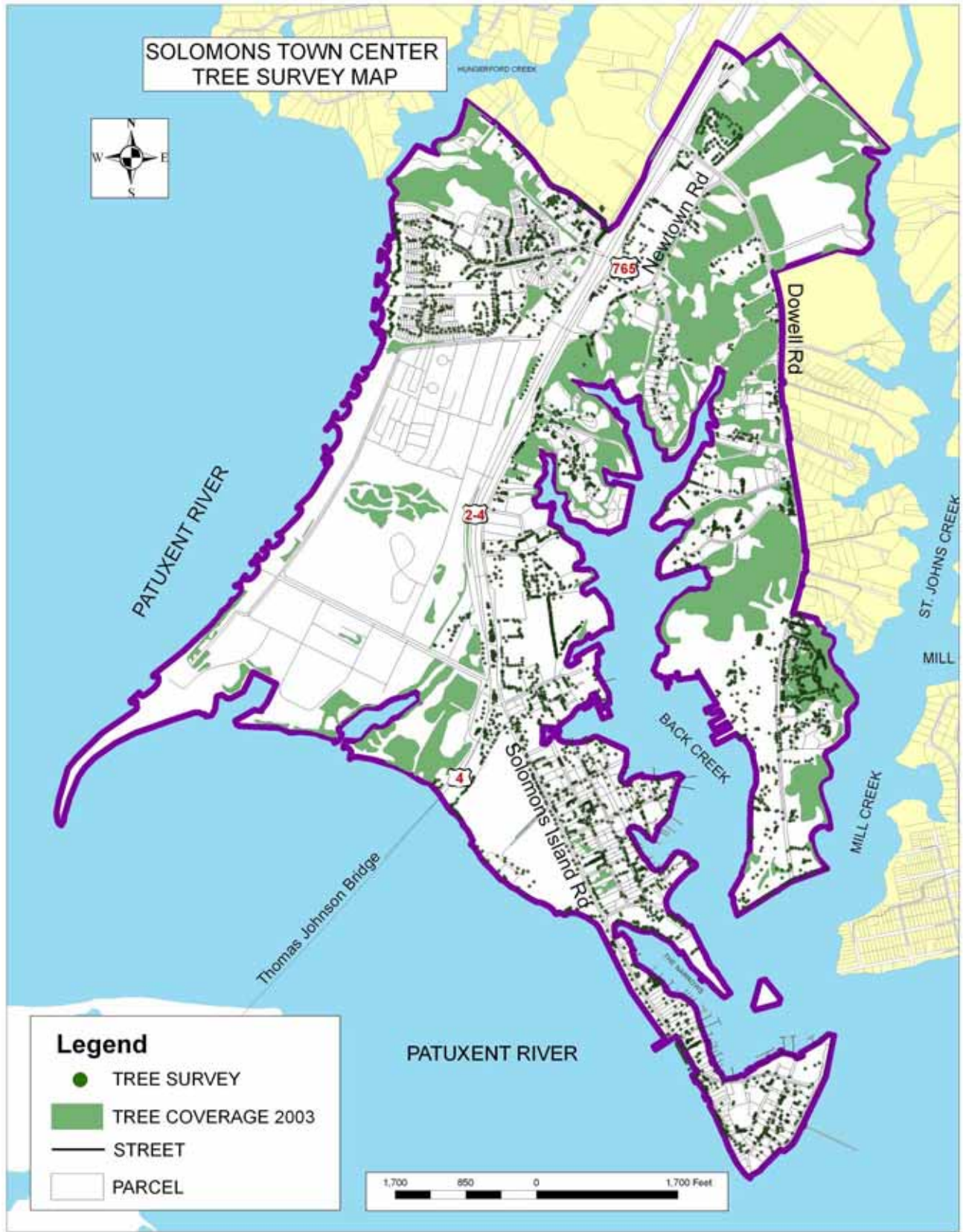
Figure 21. CRITICAL AREA MAP

d. Tree Cover and Impervious Surface

The cutting of trees along the waterfront and further inland will have the greatest impact on the rural character along Upper Back Creek and St. Johns Creek. The Critical Area Buffer regulations will help reduce the impacts along the waterfront. Maintaining tree cover and establishing tree cover in the Solomons Town Center will improve the aesthetics as well as conserve energy, provide wildlife habitat and improve water and air quality and should be encouraged. In the summer of 2008, the Planning & Zoning Department conducted a tree survey of the Solomons Town Center (refer to Figure 22, an interim map of the tree survey). The survey provided information on the ecological value of trees and the functions they perform, such as removing air and water pollution and controlling stormwater runoff. Results from this study included recommendations to provide greater protection to existing trees and to require tree planting when development occurs.

The Solomons Town Center has a 21% forest and tree coverage and a 21% impervious surface (roof tops, roads, driveways, parking lots, etc.) coverage. The forest coverage for the Mill Creek Watershed including individual trees in the Solomons Town Center is 47% and the impervious surface coverage is 10%.

American Forests (previously known as the American Forestry Association) recommends an urban tree canopy cover of 40%. Impervious surface of 10% or more of a watershed generally results in poor water quality. Increasing tree and forest coverage and minimizing impervious surface in the Mill Creek watershed will be important to maintaining good water quality in the Mill Creek waterways including Solomons Harbor (see the Water Quality Section below).



Prepared by: The Department of Planning & Zoning.

**Figure 22. TREE SURVEY MAP**

Action:

I-556 Establish a tree canopy goal of at least 40% for the Solomons Town Center.

e. Water Quality

The primary water quality problems in the Mill Creek watershed around the Solomons Town Center are sedimentation from shoreline and streambank erosion and upland runoff, and nutrient pollution from lawn fertilization, atmospheric deposition, septic systems, and urban runoff.

A report from the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory (CBL), University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science in 1996, indicated that over 50% of nitrogen pollution comes from septic systems in the Mill Creek Watershed (see Figure 23). In a later (2003) study by the GUND Institute of Ecological Economics, septic systems were estimated to account for between 12% and 26% of the nitrogen loading depending on whether the lawn fertilization rates were high or low, respectively (see Figure 24). This study found that lawn fertilization could account for 25% to 52% of the nitrogen loading, again dependent on lawn fertilization rates.

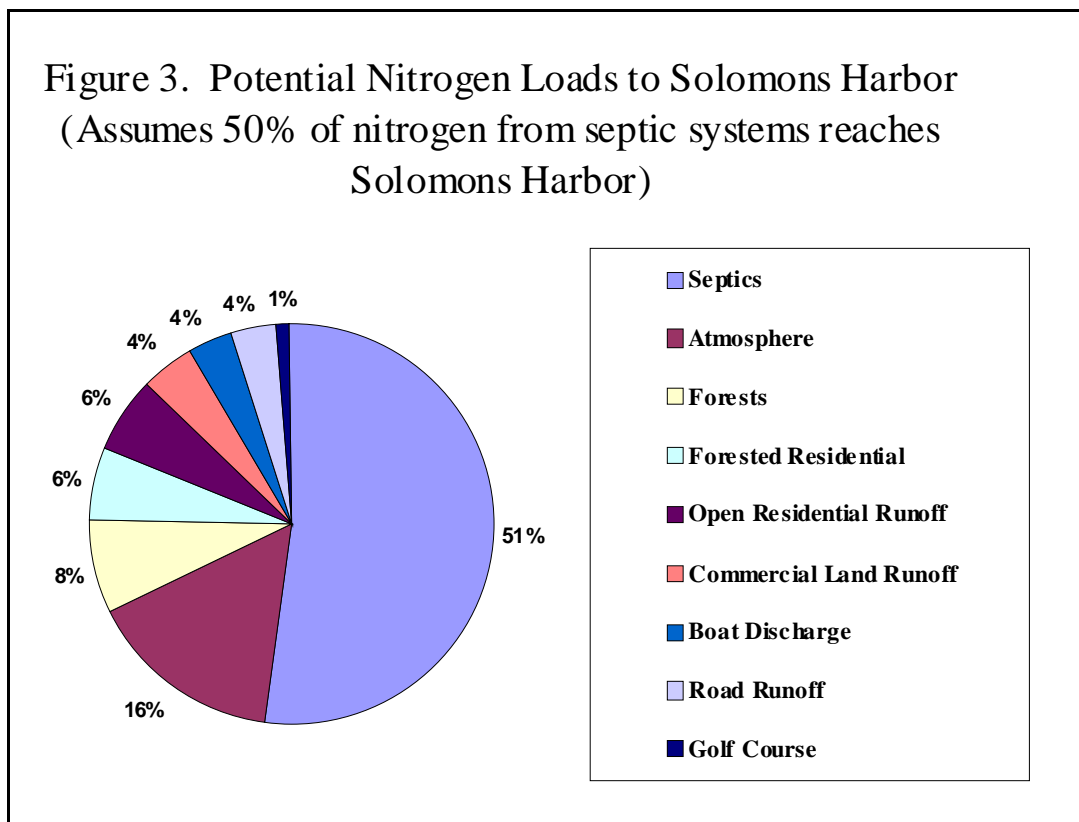
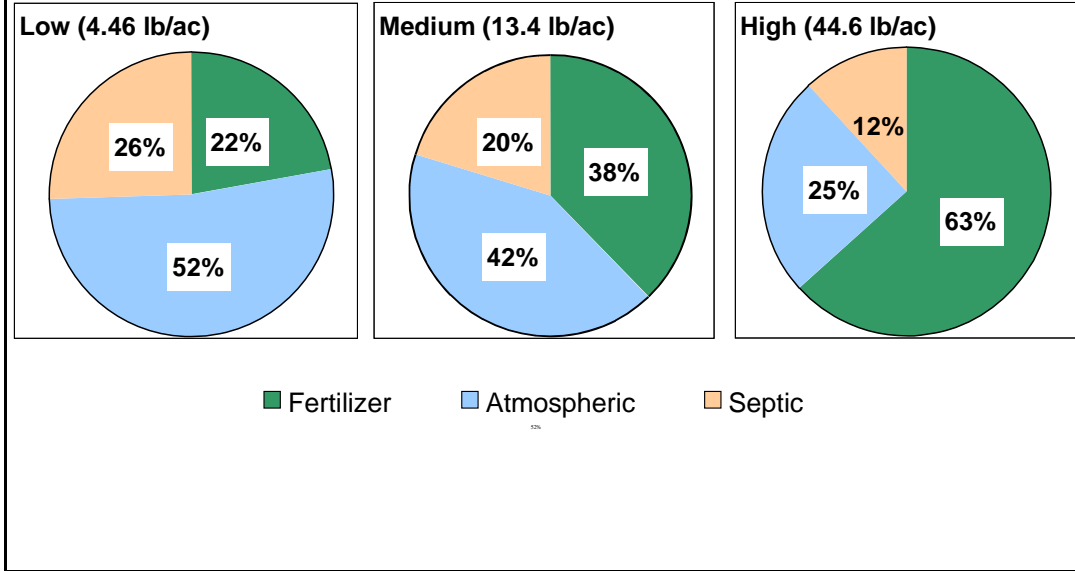


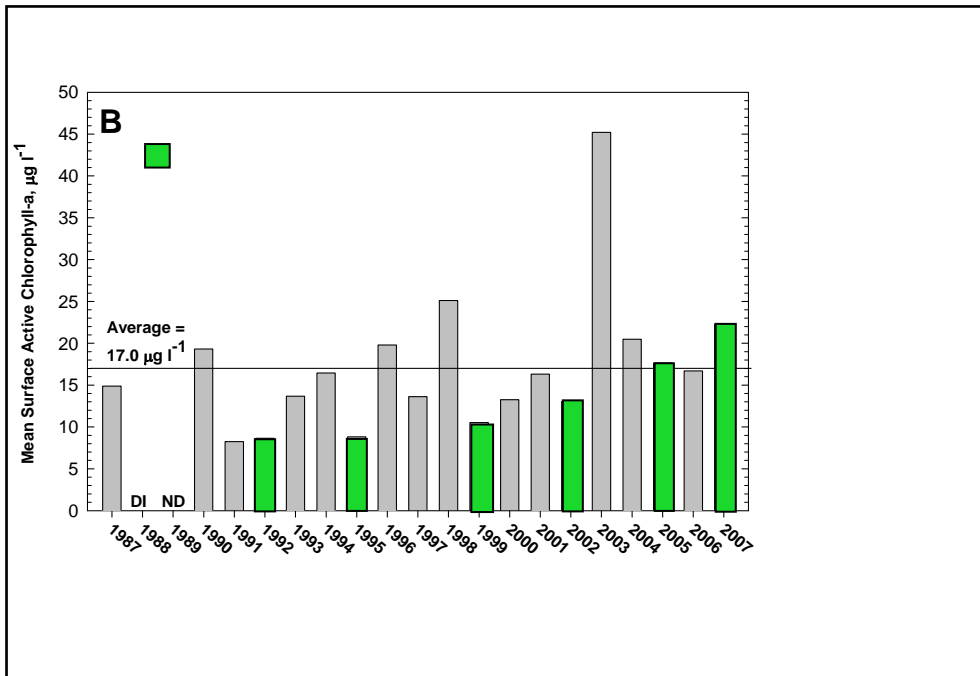
Figure 23. Solomons Harbor, Potential Nitrogen Load (Source: Chesapeake Biological Laboratory)

## Figure 5. Assumptions about Residential Fertilizer Usage



**Figure 24. Residential Fertilizer Use. (Source: GUND Institute of Ecological Economics)**

With support from Calvert County Government, CBL has conducted water quality studies on the tidal portions of the Mill Creek Watershed for the past 20 years. Generally, water quality is better in dry years than in wet years due to the increased runoff during wet years. However, the pattern of chlorophyll-a concentrations (a measure of algal biomass, high biomass = high nutrients = poor water quality) during drought years has been steadily increasing over the duration of the study indicating decreasing water quality (see Figure 25). While water quality in Mill Creek is still good to fair it is trending downward. To maintain the economic viability of the Solomons Town Center, water quality must remain fair to good and improved if possible. Steps must be taken to reverse the negative trend in water quality.



**Figure 25. Mean Surface Water Active Chlorophyll.** Mean surface water active chlorophyll-a concentrations at Stations 2, 6, 7, 9 and 15 in Mill Creek from 1987 through 2007. Green color indicated drought years. From the report, “Water Quality Monitoring program for Mill Creek and its Tributaries Located in Southern Calvert County, 2007.” Source: University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Chesapeake Biological Laboratory.

In the Mill Creek studies, the worst water quality was consistently found in the upper tidal reaches of Mill Creek and St. John’s Creek. Upper Mill Creek is dominated by residential development and has some commercial development (Lusby Town Center). Upper St. John’s Creek is dominated by residential development and also includes high, middle and elementary schools. Sewage treatment for the residential development in both of these areas is provided via septic systems. The Back Creek tributary to Mill Creek is served by the Solomons Sewerage Treatment Plant. In Back Creek, high concentrations of algae have been observed but usually only once or twice a year.

The CBL Mill Creek Study and the Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS) for the Lower Patuxent River make the following recommendations for improving water quality in the Mill Creek Watershed as a whole and these actions would also result in improved water quality in Solomons Harbor.

**CBL Mill Creek Study Recommendations:**

- Continue to monitor this system so that both negative and positive trends in the system’s health can be recognized in a timely fashion.
- Continue to support planning and eventual implementation of sewer upgrades, biological nutrient reduction (BNR), installation of BNR septic systems, riparian and vegetative buffer zones, and encourage the use of pump-out facilities by boaters within the Mill Creek system.
- Encourage the Maryland Department of the Environment to continue or intensify its fecal coliform monitoring program in the Mill Creek System.

- Continue to support the local county and state environmental educational programs as an educated person is our hope for a cleaner future.

Watershed Restoration Action Strategy Recommendations:

- Hire a watershed planner (completed).
- Establish implementation committee.
- Foster development of watershed associations (Southern Calvert Alliance for Watershed Protection (SCAWP) and Southern Maryland Oyster Cultivation Society (SMOCS) established).
- Conduct stormwater retrofit inventory.
- Map large tracts of forests (Forest Interior-Dwelling Bird Habitat Map created and proposed for adoption, Tree Inventory initiated in the Solomons Town Center).
- Enhance and restore riparian buffers.
- Hold Calvert County Site Planning Roundtable to promote environmentally sensitive design.
- Encourage marina owners to participate in Clean Marinas Program.
- Encourage or require use of nitrogen-removing septic systems.
- Promote good rooftop runoff management in Solomons.
- Initiate “Scoop the Poop” campaign in Solomons.
- Promote good commercial housekeeping (dumpster management program) in Solomons.

Actions:

I-567 Implement the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory Mill Creek Study Recommendations.

I-578 Implement the Watershed Restoration Action Strategy Recommendations.

f. Wetlands

The State of Maryland and the Federal government regulate development on or around tidal and non-tidal wetlands. Tidal wetlands are defined by the State of Maryland as any vegetated land below the mean high tide, affected by the regular rise and fall of the tide.

Tidal wetlands are recognized for their importance as a principal source of food for the animals that inhabit the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and for enhancing shoreline stability. These areas also provide significant pollution abatement as the incoming tide floods over the standing marsh grasses, reducing the levels of nitrogen and phosphates in the water, and by increasing the levels of dissolved oxygen. In addition, these areas also provide essential open space along the waterfront.

The State of Maryland also regulates development on non-tidal (or upland) wetlands. These areas are not as easily identified as tidal wetlands, but their importance in the recharging of ground water supplies, stormwater management and as sensitive natural habitats has been established.

g. Steep Slopes

The slopes around the Solomons Town Center area are for the most part not very steep; however, care must be taken to see that development does not occur too close to these areas. Wherever possible, development should avoid steep slopes.

## 2. SHORELINE PROTECTION MEASURES

Shoreline erosion characteristics fall into two broad categories: areas of low wave energy shoreline; and areas of high wave energy shoreline. The appropriate management of each area differs.

It is County policy to avoid structural shore erosion protections such as bulkheading and stone revetment when there is no serious erosion problem. In many cases, in addition to the non-structural approach being environmentally preferable, it is as effective and less expensive. Property owners must obtain State and County permits for shoreline protection measures.

Where non-structural measures are practical and effective, structural control measures shall not be used. Structural control measures shall only be used where non-structural control measures would be impractical or ineffective.

### a. Vegetative Stabilization

Vegetative stabilization is the recommended method for shoreline stabilization in areas without high wave and wind actions.

### b. Sloping Stone Revetment

If structural measures are needed, a sloping stone revetment (rip-rap) is the preferred method of shoreline protections. Its advantages are: the materials do not degrade with time; it is not likely to fail catastrophically during a storm; stones dislodged can be recovered and replaced; it provides a better habitat for biota than a vertical structure; wave run-up and overtopping is less; and wave reflection is lower, resulting in less disturbance and scour at the toe.

## F. APPEARANCE

### GENERAL APPEARANCE POLICIES FOR SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER

- In order to retain the small town, maritime village character of the Solomons Town Center, height limits south of Lore Road shall be limited so that the heights of new structures are compatible with the traditional building pattern. North of Lore Road, within the remainder of the Town Center, height limits of new structures may be higher than height limits south of Lore Road.
- Appearance standards have been developed for the Town Center. The standards apply to new construction or rehabilitation of the exterior of structures (see Appearance Code, Solomons Zoning Ordinance).
- Continue the design theme for public improvements that has been developed which pertains to street furniture and lighting, street signage and other public amenities.

#### Visual Impacts

Preservation of the visual qualities and character of the Solomons Town Center will enhance the quality of life for present residents and future generations. Such preservation will also substantially enhance the value of land in the area and increase its marketability. From an economic standpoint, it is important that Solomons retain and enhance its character in order to continue attracting tourists.

The overall pattern of streets, lots, and landmarks was set in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and determined, to a large extent, by the nature of the oystering and ship-building industries which characterized Solomons' early years. As a result, the buildings, lot sizes and streets have a "human scale". Street widths and the rhythm of buildings along the streets were designed for use by people arriving on foot or by boat.

Two key ingredients of this "human scale" are found in (a) the continuity of the street scene, and (b) height and scale. These characteristics are found in:

- height and bulk
- massing and building modules
- roof forms
- setbacks and yards
- construction materials, colors, and textures
- rhythms, proportions, and size of doors and windows
- construction details – cornices; window trim; decoration

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners adopted the *Solomons Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance* in 1986. The Solomons Architectural Review Committee was appointed in 1988 and held its first meeting in September, 1988. The role of the Solomons Architectural Review Committee is to:

- make recommendations to the Planning Commission regarding the approval of exterior design features of buildings, structures other than buildings, and signs based on the requirements of the Solomons Town Center Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.
- promote awareness of good design within the community.
- advise the County on matters relating to the design of public amenities within Town Centers and any other matters relating to appearance or design within Town Centers, and
- review Master Plans and make recommendations.

Since the Architectural Review Committee was formed, it has reviewed over 500 cases, including buildings, other structures, and signs.

The most important opportunities to improve the visible appearance of the Solomons area include improvement of the storefronts, implementation of the Appearance Code, and creation of a pleasant pedestrian environment.

For these improvements to work to their maximum effectiveness, they must be carefully designed and closely coordinated. The exterior of building facades is an extremely important component.

## **CHAPTER II PEOPLE**

### **A. COMMUNITY INTERACTION**

“To settle in a place is to accept the responsibility for creating it.” – *Mircea Eliade, 20<sup>th</sup> century philosopher*

The 2004 Calvert County Comprehensive Plan sets forth objectives on Community Interaction (Page 33) and lists actions to promote healthy, functioning communities. The Comprehensive Plan tasks the Calvert County Planning & Zoning Department and the Community Resources Department with assisting communities in writing and using community report cards. During the Solomons Town Center design workshop, several concerns were raised regarding behaviors.

Action:

II-1 Facilitate the development and monitoring of community report cards on the enforcement of laws and regulations, including those related to liquor, noise, behavior, speeding, and zoning.

### **B. HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Calvert Memorial Hospital has three medical centers located within the county. It is one of Calvert Memorial Hospital’s primary goals “to make sure that quality care is no more than a 20 minute drive for any county resident.” The Solomons Medical Center is located in the Town Center at the intersection of Route 2 and Lore Road and serves the southern area of the county.

### **C. HOUSING/RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **GENERAL HOUSING/RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES FOR SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER**

- Facilitate the development of a variety of housing types in the Solomons Town Center.
- Maximum residential density limits should not be as high as other major Town Centers since Solomons is within the Critical Area .

All community or condominium boat slips associated with residential development shall be required to provide adequate parking for the slips.

Actions:

II-2 In the Solomons Island Village Core, consider allowing a development bonus for desired public benefit, such as public access, preferred uses, design changes, etc.

II-3 Support the home buying community with the identification and increased awareness of programs, services, and grants that facilitate maintenance, first-time homeownership, and other housing initiatives.

## **D. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND LIFE LONG LEARNING**

### **Youth Education**

The Solomons Town Center is served by both public and private schools. Calvert County Public School districts that serve the Town Center include Dowell Elementary, Mill Creek Middle, and Patuxent High School. These schools are located north of the Town Center. Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church provides education for students Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. The school is located in Planning Area C on the southern area of the historic Avondale subdivision.

### **Higher Education**

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science has one of its three research and education laboratories located in Solomons. The Chesapeake Biological Laboratory (CBL) was founded by Dr. Reginald V. Truitt in 1925. The campus is located at the southern end of Solomons Island, in Planning Area B.

CBL has 25 faculty and 85 scientific staff that conduct environmental research and train over 35 graduate students each year. CBL also provides educational opportunities for the public, including summer programs for high school teachers, regular tours, a Visitor's Center, and a public seminar series where faculty and students discuss their research being conducted at the lab. CBL also hosts a distinguished scholars series where nationally and internationally known speakers present technical research talks.

The campus encompasses approximately 8.25 acres and includes waterfront on the Patuxent River and in Solomons Harbor. CBL has research vessels docked in the harbor and leases space to Calvert County Government for the Waterman's Wharf. The laboratory draws seawater from the Patuxent River for sampling and for the culture and maintenance of estuarine organisms. There are plans to replace the R.V. Truitt Laboratory, in the same place as the existing building, and in the future construct a new communications building, to be located northeast of the Charles Street and Farren Avenue intersection.

CBL is pursuing ways to reduce its environmental impact by establishing rain gardens and creating BayScapes, a landscape planted with native plants "to provide habitat for local and migratory animals, improve water quality, and reduce the need for chemical pesticides and herbicides." (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Chesapeake Bay Field Office) In addition, CBL is considering working in partnership with Calvert County to re-establish a living shoreline along the Patuxent River in front of its campus.

## **Libraries**

The Calvert Library serves people of all ages: children, teenagers and adults. The Southern Branch, located in Lusby, serves the Solomons Town Center. Library services are available on the web, including the library catalog. Audio books and videos are also available for download via the web.

## **Life Long Learning**

There are many opportunities for adults and children of all ages to participate in learning activities in the Solomons Town Center and immediate vicinity. The Calvert Marine Museum is dedicated to the collection, preservation, research, and interpretation of the culture and natural history of Southern Maryland. The Museum hosts special exhibits, lectures, and events such as Patuxent River Appreciation Days and Sharkfest.

Annmarie Garden is an outdoor sculpture garden located on the Dowell peninsula. The garden, located immediately adjacent the Town Center, encompasses 30 acres between Dowell Road and St. Johns Creek. The garden features outdoor sculptures from the permanent collection and on loan, some from the Smithsonian Institution. The Arts Building was completed in 2008 and provides interior exhibit space, a café, and gift shop. The Studio School offers art classes, workshops, and art camps for all ages and abilities.

## **E. RECREATION**

### **GENERAL RECREATION POLICIES FOR SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER**

- Develop a full range of recreational sites and facilities in or near the Solomons Town Center.
- Provide public access to the Patuxent River and the Chesapeake Bay.
- Ensure that a wide range of public recreation facilities and programs are provided to meet the interests and needs of all ages, incomes and abilities.
- Provide safe access to parks and recreational facilities, including, where feasible, pedestrian and bicycle access.

The 2004 Calvert County Comprehensive Plan sets forth recreational standards for the Town Centers. Major Town Centers, which includes Solomons, should serve residents within their districts, and in some cases, the entire County.

Each Town Center should have:

- A town park or "village green",
- An in-town trail and bikeway system that connects to extended greenways,
- An outdoor public facility designed primarily for active team sports, and

- An indoor community center capable of providing a range of activities for all age groups.

The Solomons Town Center has the Solomons Waterfront Park, which includes the Riverwalk and the Watermen’s Memorial. The County purchased 20 acres of land for the Solomons Town Center Park in Fiscal Year 2004. In 2007 the engineering was completed on the park site plan. Future plans include the construction of ballfields, parking lots, and a new restroom. The closest indoor community center is the Southern Community Center, located Lusby and 1.7 miles from the northern boundary of the Solomons Town Center.

One of the recommendations from the 2007 Solomons Island Village Core Design Plan and Workshop Summary was to “Celebrate the Pavilion by providing a special park setting connecting the new Pavilion Park to the Harbor through the Comfort Station courtyard.” Refer to Figure 26 for a photo of the existing situation and Figure 27 for an illustration of a potential Pavilion setting (illustration by EDAW, Design Workshop, November 2008). Refer to Chapter I, Action I-8 regarding celebrating the Pavilion.

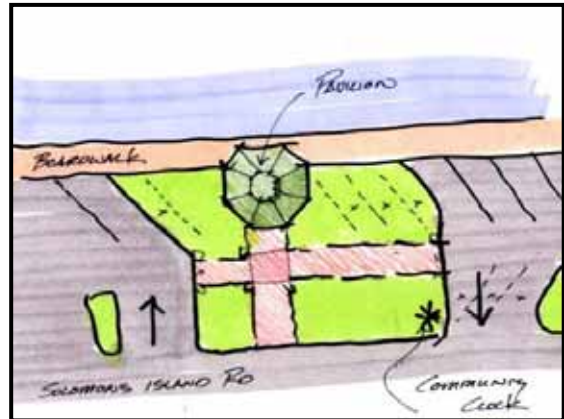
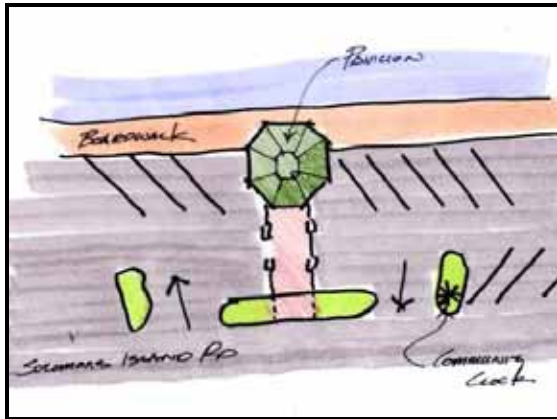


Figure 26 Pavilion Existing Situation

Figure 27 Potential Pavilion Setting

Actions:

II-4 Continue to develop the Solomons Town Center Park.

II-5 Establish the Solomons portion of the War of 1812 – Star Spangled Banner

Hiking/Biking Trail, which will extend from Flag Ponds to Solomons. Annmarie Garden and the Calvert Marine Museum are to be included in the Solomons section of the trail.

- a. Map the trail location.
- b. Provide appropriate trail signage.
- c. Ensure bicycle racks are provided at appropriate locations.
- d. Market the trail to residents and tourists.

II-6 Seek ways to improve public access to the water, including development of existing publicly owned property and acquisition of new properties and/or easements.

II-7 Establish a bicycle route between the Solomons Town Center and the Southern Community Center.

II-8 Identify and map water access that is owned by the government and open to the public.

II-9 Maintain and improve the playground near the Watermen's Memorial at the Solomons Waterfront Park.

## **F. PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **Law Enforcement**

Police protection is provided by the Calvert County Sheriff's Office, the Maryland State Police, and the Maryland Natural Resource Police. The Sheriff's Office has a substation located within the Solomons Town Center, located in the Village Core, Planning Area C. The Maryland State Police barracks are located in Prince Frederick. There is a law enforcement substation for use by the Sheriff's Office and the Maryland State Police located at the Solomons Annex of the NAS PAX River. The Maryland Natural Resource Police-Solomons Unit has facilities in the Town Center in Planning Area B, near the mouth of the harbor.

### **Emergency Management**

The Calvert County Department of Public Safety's Emergency Management Division has a comprehensive, All-Hazards Emergency Operations Plan along with the Calvert County Hazard Mitigation Plan. These plans include mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery concepts in the event of extraordinary emergencies of natural or man-made origin.

Actions:

II-10 Work with State of Maryland to retrofit the Tide Box with a device to prevent contamination from potential oil spills that may occur on either side of the Tide Box (the Patuxent River side or The Narrow/Back Creek/Solomons Harbor side). Ensure that the device does not impede the movement of water sports in the vicinity of the Tide Box.

II-11 Continue to work with citizens and other public safety partners to enhance the ability to mitigate emergency situations, to include evacuations due to man-made and natural events.

## **Fire-Rescue-EMS**

The function of the Division of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is to reduce the loss of life and property in the event of an emergency.

The Solomons Volunteer Rescue Squad and Fire Department, Company 3, is located within the Town Center, in Planning Area D, at intersection of MD 765 and Dowell Road. A Substation was established on Little Cove Point Road, located outside the Town Center, to serve the department's northern area. The Solomons Rescue Squad and Fire Department, originally established as the Calvert Rescue Squad, celebrated 50 years of service to the community in 2005.

## **G. HERITAGE**

### **HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND SITES**

The earliest surviving photographs and engravings of Solomons suggest that the largest structures on the Island were utilitarian and supported maritime industries. The oyster cannery and boat buildings, repair sheds and other miscellaneous machine shops and factories were constructed as industrial buildings and were built as inexpensively as possible. Many of the old building sites on the Island have local significance in terms of previous uses.

One of the most significant structures in the Solomons area, the Drum Point Lighthouse, is no longer on its original site. Moved to its present location on the grounds of the Calvert Marine Museum in 1975, the structure has been restored to its 1900 appearance, and constitutes a landmark for Southern Maryland.

In spite of the many losses to the built environment, Solomons still conveys some of the distinctive architectural features of a 19<sup>th</sup> century Chesapeake Bay fishing community. Characteristics such as high peaked roofs and narrow wooden clapboard siding, attest to earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century construction. Later 19<sup>th</sup> century architecture is also evident in several fine example of Victorian residences found along Solomons Island Road. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Solomons experienced a faltering economy as the oyster harvest declined and workboat building decreased. There was steady growth in providing recreation to "outsiders." Summer boarding houses and charter boat fishing offered services to visitors.

Solomons is located within the Southern Maryland Heritage Area, which was recognized as a Certified Heritage Area in 2003 by the Maryland Heritage Area Authority. The Southern Maryland Heritage Area includes Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties. It is one of eleven areas that have been certified by the State of Maryland. The *Heritage Tourism Management Plan* for the Southern Maryland Heritage Area describes the historical perspective, interpretive resources, key themes, stewardship and land use of the area. The management plan includes a market analysis for heritage tourism and sets forth strategic goals and objectives. The plan describes the eight Target Investment Zones in Southern Maryland and details projects and actions. The plan is available on the web at [www.southernmdisfun.com](http://www.southernmdisfun.com) or from the SMHA Consortium located in Hughesville.

A majority of the Solomons Town Center is located within the Solomons Target Investment Zone, which extends beyond the Town Center to Cove Point Lighthouse. A Target Investment Zone (TIZ) is an area recognized by the State. Benefits of the Target Investment Zone include matching grants and loans for acquisition, development, preservation and restoration; loans for economic development projects; and eligibility for the Heritage Preservation Tax Credit for both historic and non-historic structures, and the authority to provide local property tax credits for such rehabilitation.

Several of the key projects proposed within the Solomons Target Investment Zone include expanding the Calvert Marine Museum facilities, developing a water trail and tour to Chesapeake Bay area lighthouses, supporting the continued development of Annmarie Gardens, developing a water taxi shuttle service, creating and fabricating a collection of street banners, and encouraging mixed use development or re-development of key sites in keeping with the fabric and character of the Solomons community.

a. Objectives:

- (1) Preserve the historic character of Solomons.
- (2) New construction is compatible with Solomons' 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century maritime character.

b. Considerations:

- (1) Each of Solomons Planning Areas has a distinct identity.
- (2) Most of the historic structures are south of Lore Road.
- (3) Architectural historic surveys have been conducted in Solomons Town Center; these surveys include information on the structures design and histories. The surveys are available to the public at the Calvert County Planning & Zoning Department and the Calvert Marine Museum.
- (4) Solomons Town Center is located within the Southern Maryland Heritage Area. A majority of the Solomons Town Center is included in the Solomons Target Investment Zone (TIZ).

c. Policies:

- (1) Encourage the retention of historic buildings.
- (2) Ensure new construction or modifications to existing structures is compatible with Solomons' character.
- (3) Include criteria in the Appearance Code to preserve and maintain Solomons' historic character south of Lore Road.
- (4) Encourage heritage tourism sites and tourism-related businesses to take advantage of the benefits of being a Target Investment Zone.

d. Actions:

II-12 Architectural historic surveys of structures in this area shall be considered when construction or modification of existing buildings is proposed.

II-13 Encourage property owners to consider seeking Historic District designation for properties that have historic or architectural significance.

II-14 Develop historic context studies of the Planning Areas within the Solomons Island Town Center with participation of residents of those communities. [Calvert County Historic District Commission]

II-15 Review the adopted Solomons Zoning Ordinance Appearance Code Criteria and Guidelines and make any necessary revisions to ensure that new construction and additions to existing historic structures account for the character of the communities in which they are proposed, especially south of Lore Road.

II-16 Consider requiring archaeological surveys to identify buried resources in areas of high archaeological probability when ground disturbing activities are proposed.

II-17 Develop interpretive signs for historic buildings.

II-18 Continue to use the town logo of the “Bugeye Sailing Ship” that reflects Solomons’ heritage.

II-19 Encourage the continuity of local place names in development projects.

II-20 Educate citizens, property owners, and business owners on the benefits of being located within the Southern Maryland Heritage Area and the Solomons Target Investment Zone.

II-21 Consider including a provision in the Solomons Zoning Ordinance that would require site plan/subdivision applicants to meet with the Calvert County Historic District Commission in cases where there is a building listed on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Sites within the boundaries of a proposed development project. The purpose of the meeting would be to determine the feasibility of retaining the building and incorporating it into the site design. If it is not feasible to retain the building or make it available for removal to another site, the applicant would be required to document the structure prior to destruction.

## **CHAPTER III ECONOMY**

### GENERAL ECONOMIC POLICIES FOR SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER

The Solomons Town Center is a destination for both regional residents and for tourists. In addition, Solomons is a location for numerous conferences and conventions throughout the year.

- Support the extension of the traditional season and encourage extended stays by visitors.
- Encourage the expansion of the commercial tax base, to ensure the County's ability to provide basic government services, while minimizing the fiscal impact on individual property owners.
- Support the development of activities and facilities to provide entertainment and cultural enhancement for our citizens.
- Encourage sustainment and expansion of maritime industry activities.

Actions:

III-1 Encourage businesses to work together to improve the community and the business climate.

III-2 Assist business owners to strengthen the local economy through formalized business services and collaboration.

III-3 Encourage teaming opportunities to attract large scale conferences to the area.

III-4 Support and encourage coordinated efforts to market the Solomons Town Center both locally and regionally.

III-5 Locate a site within the Solomons Town Center for a farmers market.

III-6 Develop a business directional signage program in conjunction with citizens and businesses.

III-7 Develop a wayfinding program to help people find their way around Solomons. The program should assist motorists, bus riders, pedestrians, bicyclists, and boaters.

## **CHAPTER IV GOVERNMENT**

### GENERAL GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES FOR SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER

- Locate new public buildings in the Solomons Town Center, wherever appropriate, consistent with the Solomons Town Center Master policies.
- Be proactive in the development of infrastructure within the Solomons Town Center.
- Consider nontraditional funding sources to pay for the implementation of the Solomons Town Center Master Plan.

Any public improvements plan must take into consideration the present routes which people use as they move around the area; the relationship between present and proposed architectural structures; and the colors and textures of the small-scale features such as proposed landscaping, paving, sidewalk materials, street furniture, and graphics which – during the day or at night – create the total visual experience of the area.

#### **A. PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS**

##### 1. Roads

- Make road improvements to Dowell Road, including sidewalks and bikeways.
- Make road improvements to Newtown Road, including sidewalks and possibly bikeways.

##### 2. Sidewalks

- Construct sidewalks that connect commercial and residential areas along Solomons Island Road from Lore Road to Dowell Road.
- Construct sidewalks along Dowell Road.
- Construct sidewalks along Newtown Road.
- Construct a multipurpose path for pedestrians and bicyclists along Dowell Road.
- Construct a sidewalk that ties the Solomons Annex of the PAX River NAS with the public boat ramp and Calvert Marine Museum.

##### 3. Bikeways

- Develop a Town Center Bicycle Network.
- Construct a bicycle path along Solomons Island Road.
- Construct a multipurpose path for pedestrians and bicyclists along Dowell Road.
- Establish the Solomons portion of the War of 1812 – Star Spangled Banner Hiking/Biking Trail.
- Provide safe bicycle access to Annmarie Gardens from the Solomons Island Village Core.
- Provide safe bicycle access from the residential area on the west side of MD 2/4 to the commercial area on the east side of MD 2/4.

- Establish a bicycle route between the Solomons Town Center and the Southern Community Center.
  - Provide/encourage a bicycle rental facility at the Solomons Visitor Center.
  - [Install/maintain bicycle parking facilities at appropriate destinations.](#)
4. Village Core Improvements
- Create a park setting for the Pavilion and connect it to Solomons Harbor through the Comfort Station courtyard.
  - Establish an entry identity and improve the arrival experience to the Island.
  - Buffer the Riverwalk and screen the parking lot.
  - Repair gaps in existing infrastructure in the Village Core, including breaks in the Riverwalk and missing sidewalks.
  - Connect Waterman’s Park with the Harbor and the J.C. Lore & Sons Oyster House.
  - Expand the existing beach at the north end of the Riverwalk.
  - Construct public restrooms at the north end of the Riverwalk.
5. Commercial Pier(s) Along the Patuxent River Bulkhead
- The historic commercial strip of Solomons Island is both landlocked and very narrow. It is environmentally and aesthetically undesirable to permit the proliferation and duplication of private commercial piers along the public bulkhead.
6. Other Public Improvements
- Purchase or lease land near the Calvert Marine Museum to provide additional parking.
  - Conduct a harbor study.
  - Continue to develop the Solomons Town Center Park.
  - Develop interpretive signs for historic buildings.
  - Locate a site within the Solomons Town Center for a farmers market.

## **B. IMPLEMENTATION**

Implementation of this Solomons Town Center Master Plan will depend on strong public and private support. Primary, of course, will be approval by the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners and their decision to aggressively seek the funding from various sources to implement the public improvements of this plan.

### Infrastructure Improvements

Infrastructure projects mentioned in this plan are listed below and categorized as short range (1 to 10 years) or long range (10 to 20 years). Please refer to appropriate section in the Master Plan for further description about the proposed capital improvements projects. Approval of this conceptual program does not commit the County to any project or to implementing any projects in the years specified. This program is a guide. All projects must compete on a countywide basis for funding and inclusion in the County’s 5-year Capital Improvements Program.

## Short Term

### Roads

- Make road improvements to Dowell Road, including sidewalks and bike lanes.

### Sidewalks

- Construct sidewalks that connect commercial and residential areas along Solomons Island Road from Lore Road to Dowell Road.
- Construct sidewalks along Dowell Road.

### Bikeways

- Establish a bicycle route between the Solomons Town Center and the Southern Community Center.
- Provide/encourage a bicycle rental facility at the Solomons Visitor Center.

### Village Core Improvements

- Create a park setting for the Pavilion and connect it to Solomons Harbor through the Comfort Station courtyard.
- Establish an entry identity and improve the arrival experience to the Island.
- Buffer the Riverwalk and screen the parking lot.
- Repair gaps in existing infrastructure in the Village Core, including breaks in the Riverwalk and missing sidewalks.
- Connect Waterman's Park with the Harbor and the J.C. Lore & Sons Oyster House.
- Place overhead utilities underground in conjunction with other Village Core improvements.

### Other Public Improvements

- Purchase or lease land near the Calvert Marine Museum to provide additional parking.
- Conduct a harbor study.
- Continue to develop the Solomons Town Center Park per the park master plan.
- Develop interpretive signs for historic buildings.
- Locate a site within the Solomons Town Center for a farmers market.

## Long Term

### Sidewalks

- Construct a multipurpose path for pedestrians and bicyclists along Dowell Road.
- Construct a sidewalk that ties the Solomons Annex of the PAX River NAS with the public boat ramp and Calvert Marine Museum.

### Bikeways

- Develop a Town Center Bicycle Network.
- Construct a bicycle path along Solomons Island Road.
- Construct a multipurpose path for pedestrians and bicyclists along Dowell Road.
- Establish the Solomons portion of the War of 1812 – Star Spangled Banner Hiking/Biking Trail.

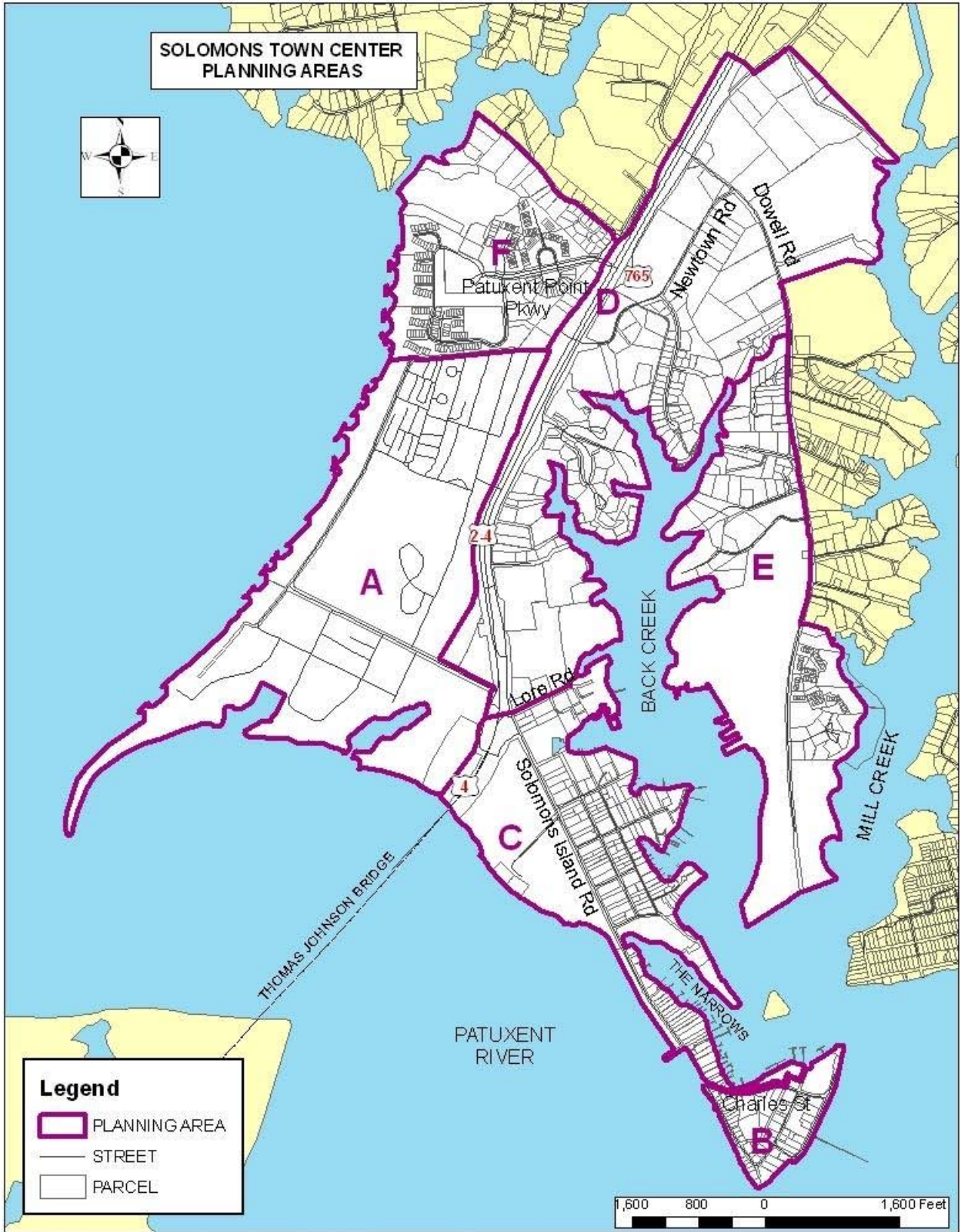
#### Village Core Improvements

- Expand the existing beach at the north end of the Riverwalk.
- Construct public restrooms at the north end of the Riverwalk.

#### 3. Private Development & Rehabilitation

It will be important for the public to be vigilant and support the enforcement of necessary rules and regulations to make the general policies viable.

APPENDIX: Additional Maps

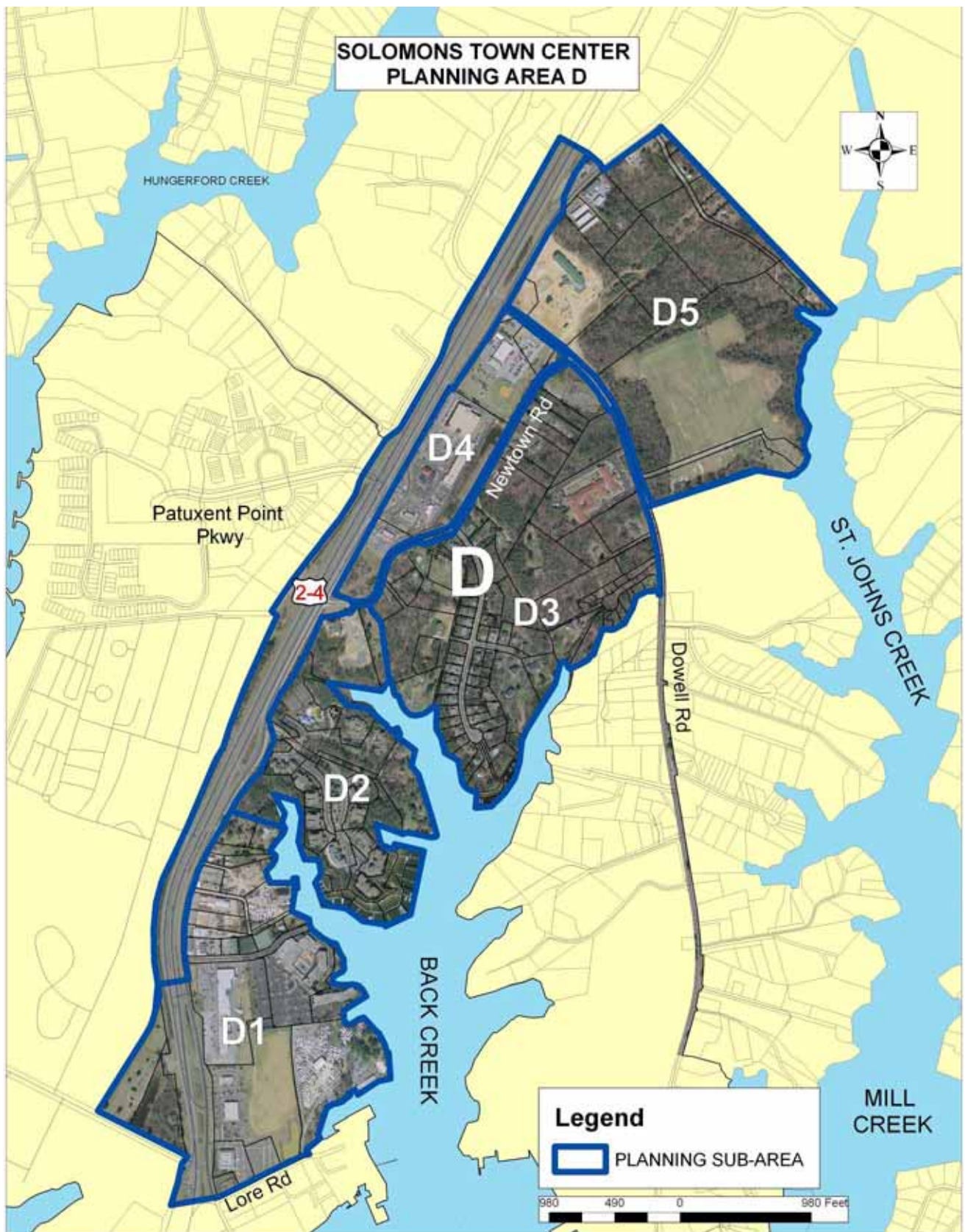


Prepared by: The Department of Planning & Zoning.

Figure 4. SOLOMONS TOWN CENTER PLANNING AREAS



Figure 7. PLANNING AREA C



Prepared by: The Department of Planning & Zoning.

**Figure 9. PLANNING AREA D**



Figure 10. PLANNING AREA E