

**The Governor's
Eastern Shore
Economic
Development
Task Force Report**

December 2000



EASTERN SHORE

Economic Development Task Force

William Ecker
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Hon. David Wooten
Vice-Chair

December 1, 2000

The Honorable Parris N. Glendening
Governor
The State of Maryland
State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Glendening:

While low unemployment rates and rising household incomes have rocketed Maryland into an unprecedented period of economic prosperity, several Eastern Shore counties have been left in the wake without the resources to reach their economic potential. At the request of the Eastern Shore Delegation, in December 1999, the Governor's Task Force on Eastern Shore Economic Development (Executive Order 01.01.1999.36) was authorized to address issues surrounding this economic disparity.

On March 6, 2000, the first full Task Force, composed of nearly 200 representatives from state and local government, education, private industry, and community affairs, met at Chesapeake College to discuss the outlook for the region. The Task Force set as its goal to establish a forum in which business, government, and leaders from the entire Eastern Shore could provide leadership in developing smart growth strategies through a private/public partnership. These strategies would allow Eastern Shore residents to share in the current and future prosperity being realized across Maryland. State, local, and community leaders compose the steering committee, formed to assist the Task Force Chair.

For the partnership to succeed, the Task Force urged each of the nine counties on the Eastern Shore to take part in a regional strategy and expanded the membership to ensure that each county has been adequately represented. Each county held local meetings to identify the top five issues in each of seven targeted areas that impact the future of the Eastern Shore region: agriculture and natural resources, economic development and infrastructure, education and workforce development, transportation, health, tourism and recreation, and government services. As discussions ensued, the Task Force determined that housing issues needed to be addressed as an eighth target area. The counties examined their concerns, identified common goals, and established regional priorities.

At a mid-term meeting on June 7 the Task Force met to provide additional insight to subcommittees and members formulated overall priorities. Using these priorities as a guide, the steering committee identified common issues between individual focus areas.

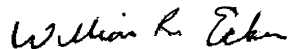
As a result, a regional strategy for the Eastern Shore has emerged, identifying the interdependence and interconnection of the nine counties. This regional strategy focuses on the necessity for support from both intergovernmental agencies and private industry to achieve the future vision for the region. The intent of the Task Force was to develop a strategic plan that would identify issues and interests that could be approached through collaborative regional initiatives. However, developing the strategy is only the first step in the process. To be successful, we must now implement the Task Force's recommendations. To carry out these regional initiatives, an interim action team will move the recommendations forward until such time that two planning organizations, which will serve as resources for the Eastern Shore to address economic issues, are established.

The Honorable Parris N. Glendening
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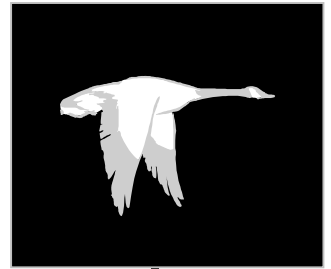
This report is the result of numerous strategy sessions and is divided into three parts. Part I presents an overview of the Eastern Shore economy; Part II supplies a summary of the report of the Task Force, recommendations for immediate consideration, and regional initiatives in each of the eight targeted areas; Part III contains Addendum A, a summary of remaining issues, concerns, and recommendations, and Addendum B, local issues and interests presented by each county.

With respect, we submit the Report of the Eastern Shore Jurisdictions: Commitment to United Partnerships.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William R. Ecker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'W'.

William Ecker
Chairman, Eastern Shore Economic Development Task Force



The Report of the Eastern Shore
Economic Development Task

December 2000



THE REPORT OF THE EASTERN SHORE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the process of determining recommendations for the Report of the Eastern Shore Economic Development Task Force, eight subcommittees, composed of members from each of the nine Eastern Shore counties, submitted individual and regional issues, concerns, and recommendations which the steering committee has outlined by economic area. These recommendations form the basis of a comprehensive regional economic development strategy for long-range economic planning and development for the Eastern Shore, both for individual counties and the Eastern Shore as a whole.

However, the Task Force agreed that the following six recommendations require immediate attention in order to preserve the integrity of the Eastern Shore.

- Recommendation:

Create two permanent regional planning organizations, charged with planning for and taking the required steps in achieving the desired business, economic, and community outcomes for the regions, including the timely implementation of the recommendations of the Eastern Shore Economic Development Task Force.

- Recommendation:

Create water and wastewater treatment systems as identified in individual county master plans to handle current and future needs.

- Recommendation:

Establish funding mechanisms, organize producer cooperatives, and promote production and marketing alternatives to enhance the sustainability of the agriculture and seafood industries. Use statewide study currently underway to examine impact of agriculture and poultry on Eastern Shore economy.

- Recommendation:

Implement a high-speed fiber-optic network on the Eastern Shore to meet current and future needs.

- Recommendation:

Promote the development of an integrated regional public transportation system for the entire Eastern Shore and Delmarva that includes securing long-term (at least 5 years) funding from the Maryland Mass Transit Administration and the Federal government for regional public transportation systems.

- Recommendation:

Support local Workforce Investment Boards' efforts to aid in motivating and training residents seeking to participate in the labor force.

EASTERN SHORE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

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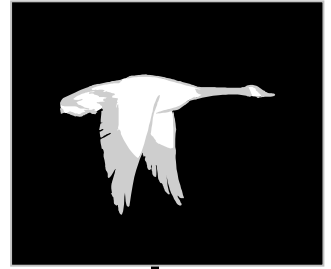
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Part I

The Eastern Shore: Taking Decisive Strides
in the Second Millennium

An Overview of the Eastern Shore Economy



THE EASTERN SHORE: TAKING DECISIVE STRIDES IN THE SECOND MILLENNIUM

In March 2000 the Governor's Task Force on Eastern Shore Economic Development set as its goal to provide leadership in promoting smart growth economic development strategies for the entire Eastern Shore of Maryland, including those four counties qualifying under *One Maryland* initiatives: Caroline, Dorchester, Somerset, and Worcester counties. Subcommittees in eight economic arenas were responsible for assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the total Eastern Shore for growth in years to come and developing recommendations for a focused and coordinated growth of the total region.

Task Force Chairperson William Ecker charged the subcommittees to:

The mission of the Eastern Shore Economic Development Task Force is to provide for a broad public and private partnership to promote business and employment development on the Eastern Shore.

- support economic development improvement for all Eastern Shore counties;
- provide for increased regional coordination and collaboration; and
- stimulate capital investment and the creation of family- supporting jobs.

Investigating economic development strategies for the region has been the goal of several private partnerships on the Eastern Shore like the Upper Shore Association of Counties and the Rural Development Center, University of

Maryland Eastern Shore. Tourism, high technology, and health care, along with the traditional core of the Shore's economy, such as agriculture and poultry, have been earmarked as those industries which should be not only retained but also attracted to the region. These industries allow economic growth while they also provide for stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and surrounding sensitive areas. Vital to Eastern Shore communities is providing growth strategies that still sustain a quality of life that has been unique to the Eastern Shore.

The Eastern Shore has a history rich in tradition, a history that stretches back to the days before the gentleman farmer. Settlers came to the New World seeking a way of life filled with hope and freedom from religious and ethnic domination. In those early days the land was fertile and the air warm and wet, giving these men and women an opportunity to grow the grains, fruits, and vegetables they needed for survival in the New World. What the land did not produce, the Chesapeake Bay did. The waters were filled with oysters and clams, crabs and shrimp, and an abundance of fish swam beneath the clear blue waters. An entirely new economic way of life for settlers developed around the Bay and, hand in hand with agriculture, gave rise to the self-sustaining lifestyle of watermen and farmers who still form the core of the Eastern Shore's economy.

In 1997, 61 percent of Eastern Shore farmers were full-time farmers, while in the rest of Maryland, less than half of the farmers were full-time. However, with increased strict regulations in fertilizer and pesticide use, land preservation, and soil and water conservation, watermen and farmers alike are finding increasing difficulty in remaining economically viable.

Maryland agriculture has been sustainable for more than 300 years. On the Eastern Shore, labor-intensive tobacco fields yielded to more diverse crops like grains, soybeans, fruits, and vegetables. Recent strides are being taken by the industry in the area of nursery and greenhouse production. In 1997, Wicomico, Worcester, Somerset, Caroline, and Frederick counties accounted for 48 percent of all agricultural sales in the state. Queen Anne's and Talbot have the highest percentage of grain and oilseed acreage; Dorchester and Caroline are known for vegetable production. Other types of husbandry include dairy, poultry, cattle, hogs, and, of course, seafood aquaculture. Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset are the largest poultry producing counties in the state.

Poultry remains the primary driver of the Eastern Shore's agricultural industry. Maryland ranks as the nation's eighth largest state in terms of broiler production. In 1997, ninety-nine percent of all broilers produced in Maryland were raised on the

Eastern Shore. The Eastern Shore provides 61 percent of the state's grain and oilseed acres to supply the poultry industry's high demand for feed. Transporting feed and providing wood chips to poultry farmers energizes other important Eastern Shore industries, particularly forestry and railroads.

In the economic post-war activity of the 1950's that surrounded Baltimore and Washington, the Eastern Shore lagged, cut off from major cities by miles of farmland, Bay water, and an inadequate roadway system. The construction of two bridges changed the way the Eastern Shore would view its economy in the twentieth century. The isolated Lower Shore counties became linked to the rest of Maryland when a bridge was constructed over the Choptank River at Cambridge in 1935. Then, in 1952 the Chesapeake Bay Bridge opened for business. The poultry, trucking, and seafood industries of the Eastern Shore were able to shift their sights from Philadelphia to Baltimore and Washington. Tourism became an industry no longer restricted to the wealthy estate-owners from the north. During the first 36 hours of the Bay Bridge's opening, 18,000 vehicles crossed the bridge. Today, on any given weekend between May and September, twice that number cross the bridge in a single hour, bringing a lively but seasonal tourist trade to waterfront towns and beach resorts.

Despite the steadily declining income in the seafood and agriculture industries, these sectors remain the core of Eastern Shore economy and lifestyle. Meanwhile, increasing trends in leisure time activities provide a new source of income for Eastern Shore residents.

This new tourist activity projected Ocean City to the forefront of Maryland cities, its annual tourist numbers surpassed only by the city of Baltimore. In 1998, revenues generated by tourists to Ocean City comprised 7.5 percent of the tourism industry in the entire state. Off-season numbers climbed as builders raised condominiums along the oceanfront,

and the city erected a convention hall to attract winter crowds. As Ocean City swelled into the Atlantic to accommodate its 2 to 3 million summer vacationers, small working towns along the Bay turned to historic preservation efforts to attract visitors. Cambridge, St. Michaels, and Deal Island draw tourists with their nautical heritage. Each year in summer, Chestertown re-enacts its own Tea Party.

During the past three decades focus groups have concentrated their concerns on the ecosystems of the Chesapeake Bay. Local magazines and television programming examined the effects of nuclear power and river pollution on the biology of the Bay. Environmentalists studied soil conservation in the farmlands and in the woodlands. Poor forest management on both sides of the Potomac river basin, as well as inadequately planned housing, farming, and highway development, had led to run-off into oyster beds. Coal companies and sewage drained into rivers and streams, all emptying into the Bay and destroying the natural balance of the Bay and its environs. State and local agencies have manifested and taken aggressive measures to protect and preserve that balance.

Increased regulations serve to protect and rejuvenate the Chesapeake Bay, but watermen and farmers throughout the Eastern Shore have found heightened difficulty supporting families in the face of decreasing income and increasing regulations.

Disease and overharvesting have destroyed an oyster industry that was once the greatest supplier to the world's oyster market. From Baltimore to Crisfield oyster packing plants have disappeared. With a fleet of fewer than a dozen actively dredging skipjacks, watermen are harvesting one tenth the number of oysters they did ten years ago. With boat maintenance costs high, oyster harvesting has become an unprofitable business. The decline of the oyster industry has taken a toll on other traditional occupations of the watermen: tongshaft makers, sailmakers, and wooden boat builders. Cooperages have fallen prey to lighter, more cost effective cardboard boxes and new age packaging for shipping products. Even pound netting, a fishing technique in use for scores of years, has become too expensive and labor intensive for local watermen in view of regulations that have created a surfeit of rockfish in the Bay and its tributaries.

Across the Eastern Shore, historians, archeologists, and folklorists reveal the histories that are rapidly disappearing. The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum's Center for Chesapeake Studies, the Delmarva Folklife Project,

Washington College's archeological program, the Rural Development Center, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, and Salisbury State University lead these efforts and serve as models for the need for regional historical research and a foundation in developing quality interpretive tourism programs in the region.

Tourism, agriculture, and aquaculture present seasonal employment for those

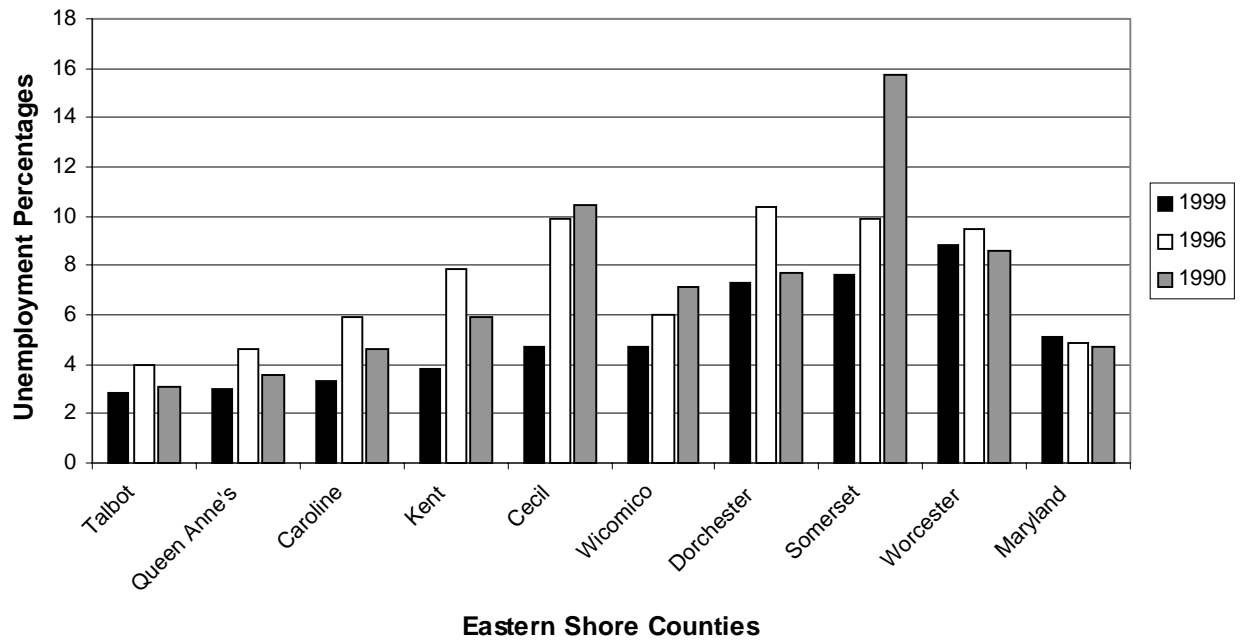
Nearly 5 million tourists visit the Eastern Shore each year and average a 3 day stay. Chief draws are beaches and shopping, although interest in state parks and nightlife is increasing.

whose lives are entwined with the fields and waters of the Eastern Shore. A vast trucking fleet operates to transport agriculture and seafood for worldwide distribution. Industrial parks are breaking ground to furnish an outlet for businesses and manufacturers to provide local workers with family-supporting jobs. Printing, plastics, and pharmaceuticals offer resources for additional employment. With increased tourism, the region has seen a growth in the service sector: restaurants, hotels, marinas, auto dealers, fuel and oil. Retail trade has doubled that of the rest of Maryland. While the manufacturing sector provides a significant number of jobs on the Eastern Shore, it has shown a slow decline during the past 15 years.

The Eastern Shore has developed its identity based on a quality of life associated with small towns and rural countryside. This appealing image as a vacation haven has caught the eye of couples in their search for a restful, green arena for vacation and retirement. High-paying jobs and high tech industry are not among the requirements for their lifestyle. Families from metropolitan areas are moving into Worcester, Kent, Talbot, and Queen Anne's counties, bringing with them a need for services in recreation areas, such as golf, boating, tennis, and life enrichment classes. This older population also requires more specialized health care services. On the other hand, Lower Shore counties have high percentages of elderly who live on fixed incomes. They still require medical services but have additional needs in areas of transportation, housing, and assisted living.

Initiatives do work. Recently, two tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay, closed for shellfish harvesting, have reopened because Chesapeake Bay initiatives like the Water Quality Improvement Act of 1998 have effected a change in the quality of its water. Now the Task Force meets to focus on those barriers to economic growth and development: how to make housing costs more equitable for all socio-economic levels; how to create a skilled labor force that will fulfill the needs of high technology industries; how to develop an adequate system of public transportation; how to make telecommunications available to all communities; how to redesign zoning and tax laws to attract businesses and high tech industry into the region; and how to create a base for venture capital investment to promote high technology development. Adequately providing economic opportunities for everyone will reduce the cycle of dependency in Eastern Shore communities.

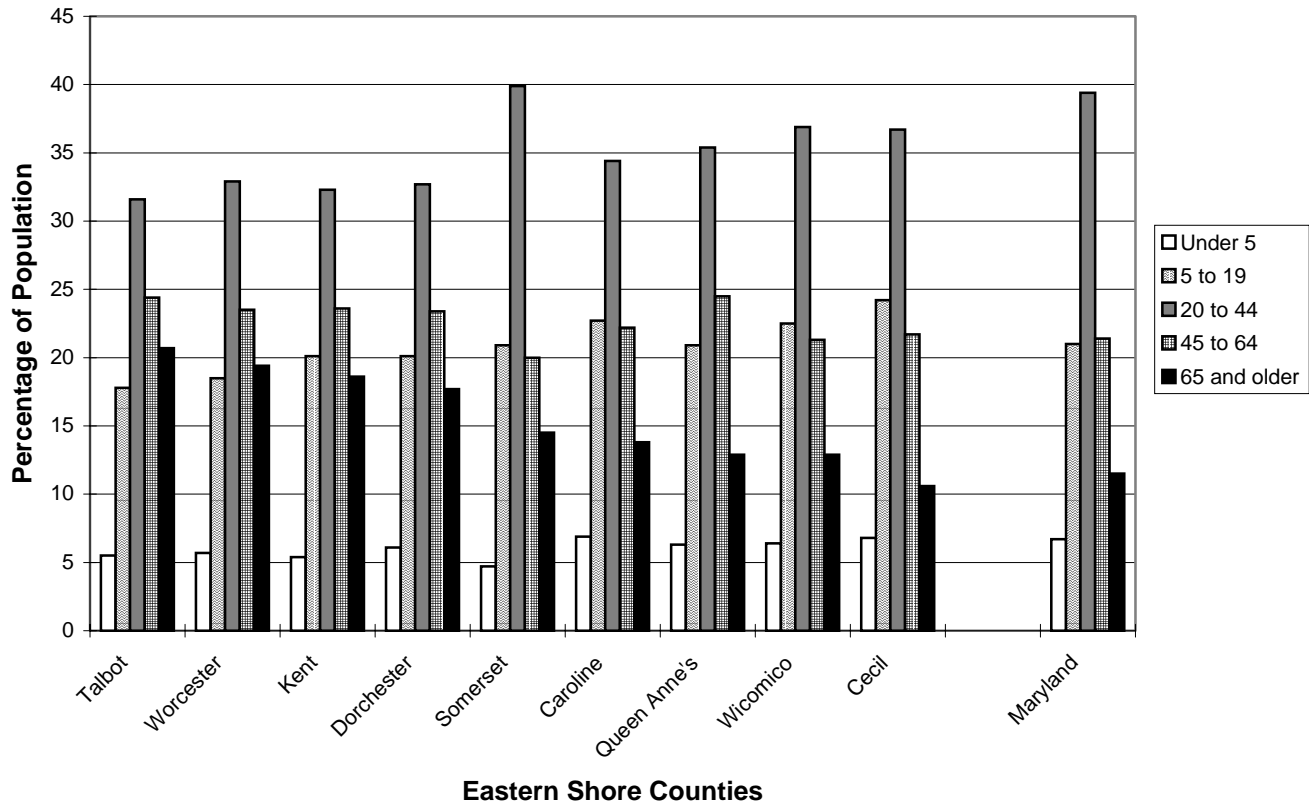
Unemployment Rate Trend - 1990-2000



Data sources: Figures estimated by U.S. Labor Force Statistics and U.S. Census (1990)

- Despite recent trends in unemployment rates, six of nine Eastern Shore counties still report unemployment rates above the state average (3.4%).
- Worcester, Dorchester, and Somerset counties report unemployment rates double that of the current state rate.

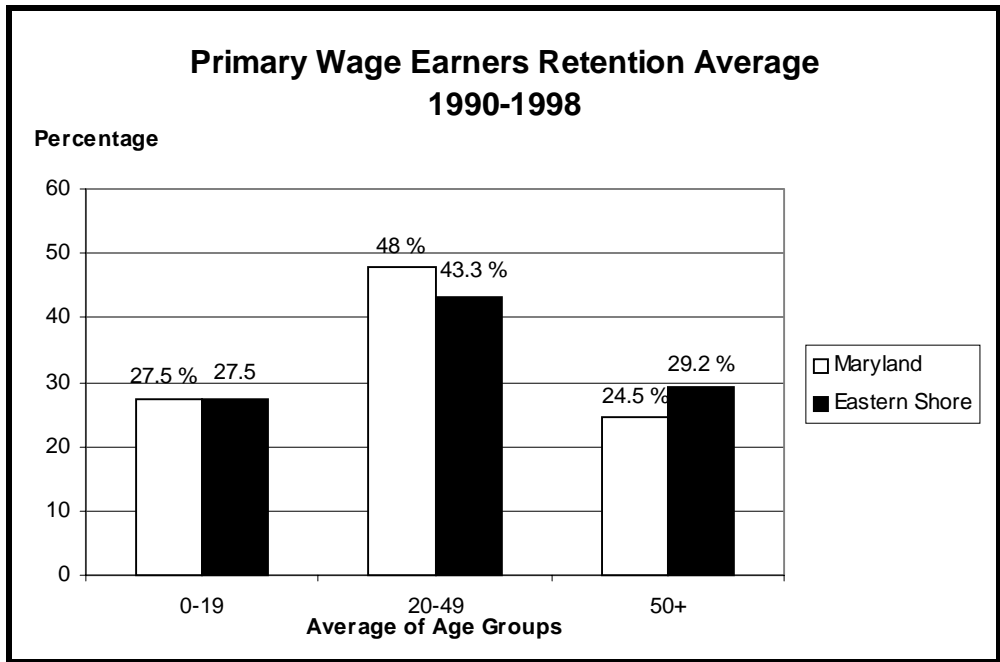
Percentage Population Distribution by County - 1998



Data source: Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development

Figures estimated by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Division of Health Statistics

- With the exception of Cecil County, all Eastern Shore counties have a higher percentage of residents 65 and older than the state average.
- All Eastern Shore counties except Somerset show a lower percentage of residents between the ages of 20 and 44 than the state average.



Data source: Labor Force Statistics

- Although retention of adults through the age of 19 remains equal to average retention in the same age group in the state, Labor Force Statistics on primary wage earners reveals that the percentage of adults in the highest wage earning bracket (ages 20-49) is lower than the state average, 43.3 percent versus the state average of 48 percent.

1998 Disposable Income on the Eastern Shore

Percent Households

	<i>under 15K</i>	<i>15K- 24,999</i>	<i>25K- 49,999</i>	<i>50K- 74,999</i>	<i>75K+</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>PCI</i>
Queen Anne's	14.1%	12.6%	33.7%	24.2%	15.4%	\$42,193	\$50,381	\$18,767
Cecil	14.7%	15.1%	36.8%	23.4%	10.0%	\$38,533	\$43,494	\$15,244
Talbot	17.1%	16.0%	32.7%	17.1%	17.1%	\$36,751	\$51,511	\$21,361
Kent	22.3%	16.5%	34.0%	16.4%	10.8%	\$32,346	\$44,126	\$16,899
Wicomico	20.6%	17.7%	36.3%	17.0%	8.4%	\$31,965	\$40,080	\$15,168
Somerset	24.8%	17.6%	35.2%	15.8%	6.6%	\$29,701	\$39,505	\$12,143
Worcester	24.6%	19.4%	36.7%	12.8%	6.5%	\$28,370	\$35,906	\$14,329
Caroline	25.1%	19.6%	36.9%	14.0%	4.4%	\$28,119	\$32,842	\$12,135
Dorchester	27.1%	20.1%	34.7%	12.2%	5.9%	\$26,540	\$32,855	\$13,299
Maryland	13.1%	12.5%	32.7%	23.7%	18.1%	\$43,628	\$52,040	\$19,133

Source: Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development

- The nine Eastern Shore counties reported household median incomes in 1998 less than the state average.
- The nine Eastern Shore counties have less average disposable income than state averages.
- The four qualifying counties report that approximately 25 percent, or greater, of their households earned incomes under \$15,000. They continue to rank four of the five counties with the highest number of households earning under \$25,000 yearly.
- On the other end of the scale, while over 40 percent of Maryland residents averaged yearly incomes greater than \$50,000, fewer than 20 percent of Eastern Shore residents earned incomes in these same income brackets.

A Commuting Population

Residents Commuting to Work Outside the County*

Queen Anne's	56.7%
Caroline	50.6%
Cecil	50.3%
Somerset	37.0%
Kent	25.9%
Worcester	24.0%
Dorchester	23.0%
Talbot	19.5%
Wicomico	18.5%

Data Source: Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development
* Estimates are based on percentages from the 1990 Census.

- Three Eastern Shore communities have 50 percent or more of their population commuting to other counties for work.
- On the average 34 percent of Eastern Shore residents commute to work outside their county of residence.

LEVELS OF EDUCATION AND ACHIEVEMENT

	<i>Percent of High School Graduates or Higher</i>	<i>Percent of Bachelor's Degree or Higher</i>	<i>Percent of High School Dropouts* (1999)</i>	<i>SAT Math scores</i>	<i>SAT Verbal scores</i>
Queen Anne's	76.8	19.9	4.08	479	490
Talbot	76.5	23.0	2.31	507	510
Cecil	72.2	12.1	4.45	510	501
Wicomico	72.1	8.5	6.17	497	505
Kent	71.4	16.9	4.39	500	521
Worcester	70.8	14.8	3.94	472	482
Caroline	66.8	10.8	4.37	467	477
Dorchester	64.7	10.9	5.91	471	471
Somerset	61.2	9.6	6.56	420	446
Maryland	84.7	31.8	4.16	504	501

Data Source:

* MD State Department of Education, Maryland School Performance Report released June 2000

*The dropout rate reflects the percentage of students in grades 8-12 who leave school before graduation or completion of a Maryland approved program.

- While 85% of Maryland adults have completed high school or received higher education, only 75% of Eastern Shore adults have achieved the same results.
- An even greater disparity exists among Eastern Shore adults with Bachelor's Degrees or higher, with an average of 14 percent of Eastern Shore residents holding college, university, or post-graduate degrees compared to a state average of 31.8 percent.
- The four qualifying counties average student SAT scores which are consistently the lowest on the Eastern Shore and 60 to 80 points lower than the average student score in the state. Three of the counties have the highest dropout rate, above 5 percent.

Farm Acreage in Use by County

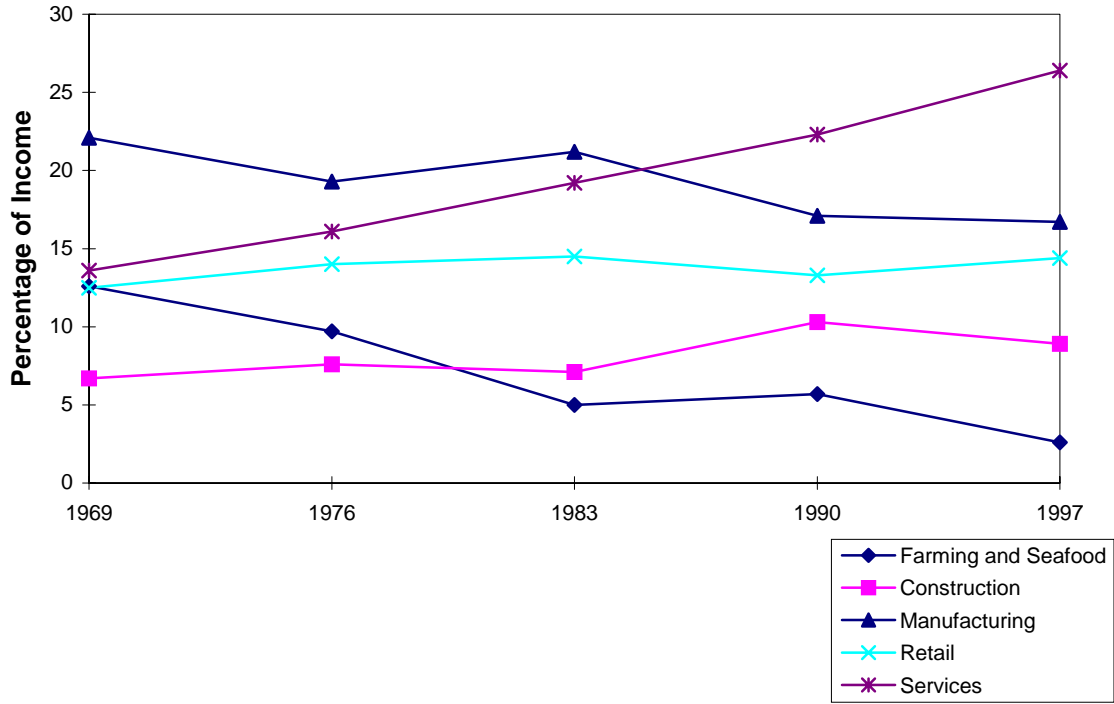
	1997	1992	1987
Caroline	111,316	126,981	132,804
Cecil	85,702	80,241	86,861
Dorchester	122,928	123,762	125,019
Kent	117,526	131,283	133,597
Queen Anne's	167,957	165,349	170,677
Somerset	54,823	55,657	64,305
Talbot	109,572	109,108	109,032
Wicomico	90,656	91,254	95,542
Worcester	111,835	107,519	123,406
TOTALS	972,315	991,154	1,041,243

Number of Farms

Caroline	525	588	636
Cecil	464	455	501
Dorchester	297	347	392
Kent	314	318	361
Queen Anne's	419	413	457
Somerset	288	345	406
Talbot	240	250	280
Wicomico	580	684	774
Worcester	631	474	415
TOTALS	3,758	3,874	4,222

Data Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Census

Industry Sectors with Greatest Change in Income 1969-1997



Data Source: U.S. Labor Statistics and Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development

IMPACT OF AGE AND UNEMPLOYMENT ON THE ECONOMY OF THE EASTERN SHORE

Despite recent trends in decreasing unemployment rates, six of nine Eastern Shore counties still report unemployment rates above the state average (3.4%). Worcester, Dorchester, and Somerset counties report unemployment rates double that of the current state average rate. Over the past ten years, while the rest of the state recorded a Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI) growth rate of 4.4 percent, the four *one Maryland* qualifying counties averaged a PCPI growth of only 3.4 percent. In Somerset County 17 percent of its population lives at or below poverty level, Dorchester, 22.3 percent.

Although retention of adults through the age of 19 remains equal to average retention in the same age group in the state, Labor Force Statistics of primary wage earners reveals that the percentage of adults in the highest wage earning bracket (ages 20-49) is lower than the state average, 43.3 percent versus the state average of 48 percent. Adults under the age of 19 logically have lower earning power than other age groups. Many retired adults over the age of 50 do not tend to view high-paying jobs as a requirement for their lifestyle. The Eastern Shore retains a higher percentage of adults in the over 50 age group, making adequate specialized health care a primary issue for Eastern Shore residents.

All nine Eastern Shore counties reported household incomes in 1998 less than the state average as well as less disposable income than the state average. Somerset, Caroline, and Dorchester reported average Per Capita Incomes that were approximately two-thirds that of the state average. Caroline and Dorchester reported average household incomes that were less than two-thirds of the state average. The four qualifying counties have approximately 25 percent, or greater, of households on the Eastern Shore earning under \$15,000 yearly. This compares to a state average of 13.1 percent. At the other end of the scale, while over 40 percent of Maryland residents averaged yearly incomes greater than \$50,000, fewer than 20 percent of Eastern Shore residents earned incomes in the higher brackets.

Higher unemployment rates, greater numbers of older residents utilizing Medicaid and Medicare, greater numbers of older residents on the Eastern Shore, and fewer families earning a median household income to match that of the rest of the state place an unequal burden on taxpayers. Fewer high-paying jobs, particularly in the Lower Shore counties, and higher unemployment rates reduce effective buying power on the Eastern Shore.

Figures reported for 1996 by Maryland Health Care Access and Cost Commission reveal five Eastern Shore counties rank in the top eight Maryland counties utilizing Medicaid and Medicare programs for health care.

In 1996, the U.S. Census reported that the average percentage of Maryland residents receiving Social Security (SSA) benefits was 13.7 percent. Caroline and Somerset counties reported the percentages of residents receiving SSA benefits was 18 percent, while nearly 25 percent of residents of Talbot, Worcester, and Kent counties received SSA benefits.

In the current Maryland School Performance Report released in June 2000, Kent County gained 5.3% in 1999 on the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program. Queen Anne's and Wicomico counties continued their pattern of making gains during each year of the testing program.

Coupled with the higher rates of unemployment and the lower earned incomes is the fact that while 85% of Maryland adults have completed high school or received higher education, only 75% of Eastern Shore adults have achieved the same results. An even greater disparity exists among Eastern Shore adults with Bachelor's Degrees or higher, with an average of 14 percent of Eastern Shore residents holding college, university, or post-graduate degrees compared to a state average of 31.8 percent. The four qualifying counties average student SAT scores which are consistently the lowest on the Eastern Shore and 60 to 80 points lower than the average student score in the state. Wicomico and Somerset counties have the highest average dropout rates, half again that of the state average. These figures have led the education and business community to examine the workforce and the workforce capability.

Improving education in the public school arena is paramount to a qualified workforce. Yet, equally important is the capacity to create an avenue by which an inadequately trained adult workforce can develop skills to use in business and manufacturing.

Trends in Eastern Shore Industries

Agriculture is still the number one industry on the Eastern Shore with 972,315 acres representing 45 percent of the regional land area. In the last ten years, the Eastern Shore has lost nearly 70,000 acres (6.6%) to development, particularly in Caroline, Kent, Somerset, and Worcester counties. The number of farms has dropped by 11 percent with as great as a 30 percent reduction in Somerset and nearly 25 percent in Dorchester and Worcester counties. However, the amount of land still being farmed on the Eastern Shore has reduced by only 7 percent, indicating that farms are increasing in size if not number.

Recent trends in industry indicate that, in general, farm size is growing, traditional commodities are produced, and full-time farmers sell to wholesale markets. Income from agriculture and seafood industries has been falling consistently in the past 30 years, dropping from 12.6% to 2.6% of total income for the region. During that same period of time, income in the service sector nearly doubled, rising from 13.6 percent to 26.4 percent. Over 75% of farmers on the Shore are older than 44 years of age, describing a continuing trend of younger family members' not remaining in the industry. Compounding the tendency of fewer small farms surviving over the years is the knowledge that more farmers are viewing their land as retirement incomes. This new attitude in farming will not support an industry vital to the poultry and feed industries which drive much of the economy on the Eastern Shore and the Delmarva area.

CURRENT REALITIES OF THE EASTERN SHORE ECONOMY

Although participating members of the Task Force suggested more than 100 recommendations, an analysis of these recommendations reveals that Eastern Shore counties share concerns in the following 7 areas:

- ample arenas to provide for advances in technology;
- improved water and wastewater facilities;
- streamlined processes for permits and regulations;
- adequate housing;
- enhanced public transportation;
- appropriate identification of priority funding areas; and
- preservation of Eastern Shore industry and quality of life.

A Graying Population

The Maryland Department of Planning, Data Planning Services, reports since 1970 the population of Upper Shore residents 65 and older has doubled while the total Upper Shore population has increased by one-third. By 2005, the number of residents 65 years and older in Upper Shore counties is projected to be 13.75 percent of the population; yet in Worcester, Dorchester, Kent, and Talbot counties, the elderly populations already exceed 15 percent. With an increasing older population, the Eastern Shore is faced with some difficult questions: how to provide adequate health and nursing care in a system that does not support enough primary care and specialty care providers; how to provide adequate and affordable housing for those living on retirement and fixed incomes; how to provide convenient bus or shuttle transport to local businesses, major shopping districts, and air terminals; and how to provide appropriate recreational outlets for a population that has increasingly more time on its hands.

A Commuting Population

Juxtaposed with the older population is the fact that fewer younger families are remaining in the area, and often those who do remain commute to work areas in Baltimore and Washington, creating an imbalance in the economic structure of the region. According to estimates based on the 1990 census, over 50 percent of residents in Cecil, Caroline, and Queen Anne's counties are commuting outside their counties to work in higher-paying industry than those available in local areas. Current trends in the commuting population justify the need to maintain and expand road ways.

Commuter traffic, when combined with increasing tourist traffic, clogs major arteries and the Bay Bridge. At peak times, any vehicular movement on these roads halts. Of growing concern is the ever-increasing leisure traffic. Once considered to be weekend traffic, these vehicles along with boat trailers, horse vans, and recreational vehicles are now an every day sight. Vast trucking fleets require highways and secondary roads on which they can operate without interfering with the increasing daily traffic. Secondary roads must be able to provide alternate routes not only to travelers but also to transport and emergency vehicles. A well-planned transit plan that includes alternative Bay crossings, improved roadways, regular public transportation, and commuter parks is included as an integral part of economic development initiatives.

Attracting High Technology Industry

If the Eastern Shore is to present an appealing image to the technology industry, to technology-driven manufacturers, and to telecommunications companies, the necessary technology infrastructure, such as fiber optic cable and towers for wireless and broadband width, must be in place. Moreover, new industry would expect to look within the local regions to provide a sufficiently skilled workforce for entry-level and first-line supervisor jobs. Advances in computer technology that are extended to schools and community resources will offer diverse opportunities both through formal, classroom training and on-the-job-training to provide a skilled workforce from within Eastern Shore communities. Currently, an unskilled workforce coupled with inadequate fiber service has prevented high-end industries from advancing into a region technologically ill equipped to provide high-speed cyber traffic to homes, businesses, and public services.

Housing and Accommodations

As additional incentive to lure new industry to the area, developers must be able to provide adequate, affordable housing to meet the needs of a mid-management level population. Such housing is currently at a premium in many counties.

Historical districts command high prices in the market, rural lands are restricted to low-density housing, and identified growth areas face high-density issues. Not only is mid-priced housing an issue but also access to home ownership for first-time homebuyers and long-time renters. Counties are faced with too few staff personnel to utilize those programs currently available to assist homebuyers. Issues on adequate housing for itinerant workers in summer and college students during school terms must also be addressed.

Transporting Residents and Visitors

To further attract visitors and reduce traffic congestion in tourist areas throughout the nine counties, a regional system of public transportation, open to the general public and not used only for select groups, must be integrated into the infrastructure. A well-planned, integrated public transportation system with appropriate incentives for its use could substantially reduce daily commuter traffic. Currently, most available public transportation is provided through county departments of the aging, and the routes are specifically designed to assist the elderly in meeting their transportation needs. Lower Shore counties report that over 20 percent of their workforce is commuting out of their county of residency, with Somerset reporting a figure as high as 37 percent. Regional public transportation with regular specific stops would enable workers to travel between counties to work as well as to shop, visit family members, keep doctor appointments, and attend community events open to the general public. Additionally, an infrastructure that includes mass transit systems to major cities like Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and Philadelphia will enhance the availability of cultural events to both tourists and Eastern Shore residents alike, create a means of easier access to international airports, and provide alternative means of commuting to major cities.

Simplifying Permit and Regulation Processes

In addition to advances in technology, adequate housing, and improved systems of transportation, the Steering Committee has identified the need for a simplified, more business-friendly permit and regulations processes. High tax structures and strict regulations have contributed to the decline in manufacturing and hindered high tech growth in the region. With major manufacturers relocating elsewhere in the U.S., the Eastern Shore has turned toward a services-based economy, which has traditionally offered lower wages to employees, lessening income and buying power.

Laws and regulations designed to protect the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, as well as Coastal Bays, serve an integral role in preserving the quality of life on the Eastern Shore. However, some heightened regulations and a lengthy permit process are seen as deterrents to economic development.

Residential and commercial landowners must be aware of regulations surrounding the use of pesticides, fertilizers, and storm drainage. Watermen and the aquaculture industry have finfishing and shellfishing restrictions placed on what, where, when, and how much they can remove from the water. An increasing number of safety regulations raises the already high maintenance cost that watermen face in their industry.

Handling Water and Wastewater

Economic development on the Eastern Shore has been deterred by inadequate water and sewer facilities for not only the businesses but also the homes and communities for their employees. Lack of adequate systems and substandard systems affect the health of area residents as well as impact the integrity of the surrounding environment. Because of the relatively flat terrain, high ground water, proliferation of hydric soils (wetlands), and ultimate drainage pattern to the Chesapeake and Coastal Bays, environmental risk is high to the base resources of surface waters and ground water supply.

Many areas of the Eastern Shore use private wells and septic systems that were developed prior to current regulations. Safe disposal of on-site sewage is critically hampered on small lots by high water tables, deep trench systems, and poorly drained soils. Inadequate separation distances endanger the safety of drinking water supplies.

New technologies continue to be developed that improve the treatment of wastewater prior to land application by drain fields, cisterns, injection or spray irrigation. However, Maryland's policy and regulatory guidelines for land application of effluent has not been updated since 1987. Many other states are progressively ahead of Maryland as it relates to user-friendly issues such as waste treatment setbacks. Setbacks, because of the extent of available suitable soils, wetlands and surface drainage patterns, become a limiting factor, increasing actual acreage requirements and expense, while removing otherwise suitable lands from consideration.

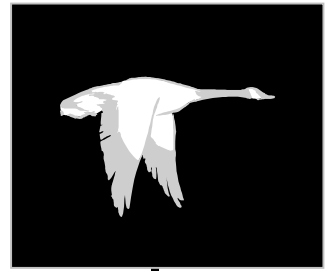
Of equal concern is ensuring a sufficient supply of water during extended periods of drought to meet the demands of households, businesses, and agriculture.

Promoting Tourism and Marketing a Quality Way of Life

Eastern Shore community leaders and residents desire to maintain and enhance current quality of life standards; consequently, they seek to imbue the Eastern Shore with the types of industry that will maintain clean and green standards while still allowing for personal and professional growth for its residents. Heritage tourism, high technology, and health industries all provide avenues for increasing the standard of living while respecting quality of life issues.

Included in quality of life issues is maintaining the stewardship of the Chesapeake and Coastal Bays. This concern places additional strains on already weak resources. Agriculture must be supported in its continuing efforts to find new ways to irrigate and fertilize crops to reduce run-off into local watersheds. Construction of new buildings, commercial and residential, must meet rigid standards of water and wastewater disposal. Recreation and tourism must market a desirable vacationing area to lure visitors, yet avoid additional stress to the Bay and surrounding land.

Tourist destinations are composed of attractions, facilities, infrastructure, transportation, hospitality and image. Furthering the growth of the tourism and hospitality industry is continued development of permanent collections of historic resources and treasures to tell the rich stories of the Eastern Shore. Strategic planning and implementation fuel new initiatives in the hospitality industry, housing, information technologies and transportation. Initiatives must be based on the preservation, enhancement, and interpretation of the Eastern Shore's natural, cultural, and human resources.



Part II

*Recommendations of the Eastern Shore Jurisdictions:
Commitment to United Partnerships*



EASTERN SHORE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE STEERING COMMITTEE

- Chair:* William Ecker, former Caroline County Superintendent of Schools
- Vice Chairs:* Edwin Richards, former Caroline County Administrator
David Wooten, City of Cambridge, Mayor
Norman Wolske, Rubberset, Plant Manager
Jerry Redden, Worcester County Economic Development, Director
Suzan Doordan, Cecil County Chamber of Commerce, Executive Director
- Caroline County:* Helen Spinelli, Caroline County Economic Development and Tourism, Director
Honorable Franklin W. Prettyman, Caroline County Commissioner
Robert Behlke, Choptank Electric, Manager Customer Services
- Dorchester County:* Betty Causey, Dorchester County Economic Development Director
Dr. Thomas Flowers, Dorchester County Commissioners, President
Jack Brooks, J.M. Clayton Co.
- Somerset County:* Caren French, Somerset County Economic Development, Director
Honorable Philip Gerald, Somerset County Commissioners, President
Fred Lankford, Lankford SYSCO
- Worcester County:* Honorable Jeanne Lynch, Worcester County Commissioners, President
Roger Richardson, Farmer and Trucking Industry
- Cecil County:* Paul Gilbert, Cecil County Economic Development, Director
Honorable Nelson K. Bolendar, Cecil County Commissioners, President
- Kent County:* Dave Taylor, Kent County Economic Development, Director
Honorable W. Michael Newman, Kent County Commissioners, Vice-President
- Queen Anne's County:* I. Katherine Magruder, Queen Anne's County Economic Development, Director
Honorable George O. O'Donnell, Queen Anne's County Commissioners, President
Marlene Davis, Queen Anne's County Commissioner
- Talbot County:* Durrie Hayes, Talbot County Economic Development, Director
Honorable Hilary B. Spence, Talbot County Council, President
- Wicomico County:* Dave Ryan, Wicomico County Economic Development, Director
Honorable Russell Molnar, Wicomico County Council, President
- Technical Assistance:*
Jim Gring, MD Department of Business and Economic Development
Vernon Thompson, MD Department of Business and Economic Development
Dr. Memo Diriker, Salisbury State University
Daniel Kuennen, University of Maryland Eastern Shore
Dale Maginnis, Delmarva Advisory Council
Susan Hilderbrand, Chesapeake College
- Honorable Norman Conway, Chair Eastern Shore Delegation
Honorable Charles McClenahan, Vice-Chair Eastern Shore Delegation

IMPLEMENTING THE WORK OF THE EASTERN SHORE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE THROUGH REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS

The Eastern Shore Economic Development Task Force has involved nearly 200 people from the private and public sectors in its discussions and work sessions. Eight subcommittees in each of nine counties examined issues in subject areas outlined by the Task Force. These activities increased awareness of issues important to the residents of the Eastern Shore and identified those specific areas where action is needed. Taking advantage of the efforts of the Task Force and committing to the recommendations put forth requires appropriate, well-organized, structured planning organizations which can coalesce the diverse needs of individual counties into a comprehensive economic strategy.

The Eastern Shore Economic Development Task Force recommends the following:

Create two permanent regional planning organizations, charged with planning for and taking the required steps in achieving the desired business, economic, and community outcomes for the regions, including the timely implementation of the recommendations of the Eastern Shore Economic Development Task Force.

As the regional organizations are being created, and as they are developing their organizational structure, an interim group of staff personnel is necessary to implement some of the identified action steps. Elected and appointed officials from each of the nine Eastern Shore counties, together with members of the Eastern Shore Economic Development Task Force advisory groups will form a support/resource/action team, with a one year mandate from the Eastern Shore Delegation. At the end of this term, or as the regional planning organizations become operational, the implementation role of this group will come to an end. The original members of the Eastern Shore Economic Development Task Force will then revert to their advisory role in the service of the regional planning organizations and the Eastern Shore Delegation.

The support/resource/action team will be composed of members of the Task Force Steering Committee, industry sector representatives, Task Force Advisory Group Members, and others as needed to provide a balanced representation of the Eastern Shore's economic and demographic profile, including, but not limited to, staff members from the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, FORVM for Rural Maryland, Delmarva Advisory Council, Chesapeake College, Salisbury State University, the University Center at University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Project Management Group, and the Rural Development Center, University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

I. AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Agriculture

- 1. Establish regional and local cooperatives to help producers gain market share through collective marketing and buying.**

Cooperatives can increase capital for use by introducing new technology and education for members. Cooperatives provide rural communities the advantage of combining the freedom of an independent producer with the strength of an organization and can increase overall profits.

- 2. Recommend the legislature provide \$2 million each year for 5 years to develop sustainable alternative agriculture through a regional fund at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.**

Because seafood and agriculture are industries that demand large capital investment with relatively low margins of profit, coupled with high-risk factors, opportunities to compete in growth industries are often lost to watermen and local farmers. In addition, diversification within or between the industries, such as current trends in hydroponics, greenhouses, and nurseries, often takes up to three years. Two million dollars each year for five years would provide avenues for both job development and increased rates of return consistent with the agriculture and seafood industries.

- 3. Request that the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development and/or the Maryland Department of Agriculture use the economic study currently being conducted to determine the impact of poultry and agriculture on the Eastern Shore and Delmarva Peninsula.**

An impact study will allow DBED to have a specific economic development plan regarding the agriculture and seafood industries and natural resources. Such a plan will enhance opportunities for the Eastern Shore to preserve these heritage industries.

- 4. Facilitate the use of science-based information in establishing environmental and land development policy.**

Legislators must use diligence in reviewing pertinent science-based data and attaining professional interpretation of data prior to legislation of land development and environmental policy. An easily accessible mechanism will provide concise information to informed, educated legislators so that they may enact appropriate legislation.

5. Enact 30-year interest-free loan for Agricultural Land Preservation Program.

This loan could be funded through banks, costing the state only the interest on the loan. The program would be administered through the existing MALP network. The program is intended to complement existing programs and provide a tool to protect agricultural land that would not be protected under existing programs.

B. Natural Resources

1. Review and adjust regulations and secure funding to encourage a sustainable and viable public and private finfish and shellfish industry while encouraging aquaculture in Maryland.

Reviewing regulations and related issues at federal, state, and local levels will enhance the economics of the bay region while encouraging an environmentally sound policy for the Chesapeake and Coastal Bays. Provide special attention to license, permit, and lease issues; affordable dockage; county-owned and maintained dock buying stations; storage areas for shells; and zoning regulations. Develop a right-to-fish law to support commercial fishing, aquaculture, and related issues. Secure funding to underwrite research in developing a disease-resistant oyster and to develop new technology for harvesting and processing in the finfish and shellfish industry.

2. Seek additional state or federal funding available for shoreline protection to minimize the impact of erosion.

3. Develop public awareness and education programs regarding the region's resources, including agriculture, shellfish, natural habitat, and land use.

4. Continue efforts and funding for maintaining water quality in the Chesapeake and Coastal Bays.

II. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

The high priority infrastructure additions and upgrades required for "Smart Growth" include five areas of concern: water and sewage; fiber optics, telecommunications, and Internet infrastructure; industrial parks and shell buildings; transportation; and natural gas. Individual counties should join forces to ensure that they are able to meet standard industry regulations for digital industry, electronic commerce, and information technology by October 1, 2000.

A. Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

Create water and wastewater treatment systems as identified in individual county master plans to handle current and future needs.

- Make technical and monetary resources available through federal and state assistance to provide the best available and most affordable water and wastewater treatment technologies to the region.

Public utility infrastructure in the region designated for growth areas would provide the opportunity for higher development in and around existing municipalities. A two-fold outcome of the infrastructure would reduce development pressure on sensitive and agricultural areas and provide affordable permanent and seasonal housing for labor in the agriculture and seafood industries.

- Explore opportunities for incentives to develop community water supplies.

Although community water supply on the Eastern Shore would reduce substantially the risk for ground water contamination due to poorly constructed or failing wells, communities themselves have little incentive to develop treatment plants because individual wells cost less when installed over time. Collectively, however, individual wells contribute substantially to the risk for ground water contamination.

- Maryland must also actively test new sewer treatment technologies by establishing demonstration or test projects, such as Delaware is preparing to do with a new system (Biocel).

B. Fiber Optics and Telecommunications Infrastructure

1. Implement a high-speed fiber-optic network on the Eastern Shore to meet current and future needs.

The first step in this plan is to implement the *Net.Work.Maryland* plan immediately. The broadband capability planned for the linkage of Baltimore and Salisbury, for providing high-speed network access to the backbone, must receive the highest priority. Any delay to this infrastructure project will impede and deny any meaningful progress for solving employment and economic development problems. Explore public and private partnerships to enhance the economic feasibility of running bandwidth in the area, perhaps

consolidating the process with the laying of needed natural gas pipeline or other public utilities.

High-speed connectivity must reach all the way into the resident base of our region. If the last thirty feet of the connection is slow (28K phone connections to our homes), the high speed infrastructure is meaningless for citizens transacting business with companies, for students taking online classes at our educational institutions, or for home-bound patients receiving health care support from our hospitals.

To provide service to our population base, legislation or regulations (Public Service Commission) should be implemented requiring the servicing of rural areas with inexpensive DSL, ISDN and fiber connectivity. If specific companies are granted the privilege of road access and easements to connect the State's metropolitan areas, they must be strongly encouraged to provide equal service to the outlying areas to prevent a "Digital Divide" from occurring on the Eastern Shore.

2. Identify avenues by which business and education can share access to current technology.

To strengthen the ability to compete in a technology-based economic market and to reduce the digital divide that occurs between those who have access and those who do not have access to technology require improved technology access in the classroom, enhanced student, educator, and workforce skills, and increased availability to all members of the community.

- Develop a plan to focus on building human capacity in technology at all levels.
- Work with the Department of Education, local school systems, and our colleges and universities, to create and implement a K-16 plan for technology instruction for students, educators, and the existing workforce.
- Create a process by which schools and colleges can assess training to meet future business needs.
- Develop, in conjunction with local school systems, a forum in which schools and businesses can develop and redefine a set of essential skills for students at all levels.
- Identify the resources that will enable school systems to respond quickly to changes in technology by ensuring an infrastructure to support continuing growth.

C. High Technology and Industrial Campuses and Parks

Support the private sector/government partnership concept of constructing and funding sophisticated business facilities and settings for recruiting technology-based companies into the area.

These complexes should provide both the atmosphere and infrastructure to entice technology companies and technology-dependent businesses into the serene, scenic setting the area can provide. Sub-dividable Building/Campus infrastructure must include secure, fireproof network communications rooms,

back up generators and battery stacks for computer equipment, accessible conduits behind all walls for customized wiring of computer stations, as well as telecommunications, networking, and conferencing capabilities.

Efforts for enticing high tech and other desired companies into these complexes should consolidate each county's efforts into one regional recruitment drive, using both traditional and e-recruitment marketing methods. A regional recruitment Web site should be constructed providing content and links to all pertinent area information

Work with local governments to earmark and zone more land for Light Industrial use and streamline the permit process to be more business friendly.

D. Power supply

Ensure that a process is in place to purchase appropriate and adequate power for the region.

- Natural gas
- Electricity

E. Regional economic development strategy

Identify and establish a regional strategy focused on targeted industry sectors.

Leading edge competitors are adopting a sophisticated approach to attracting and retaining future industry: the Cluster Strategy.

Maintaining and growing regional clusters is a key element in economic development efforts to boost rural economies. For the strategy to be successful, industry leaders must actively identify cluster issues. Government plays a supportive role by identifying existing or emerging clusters through research of the economy and the region itself.

Government facilitates by:

- identifying an industry cluster that exists or is emerging in the region;
- identifying partners, including business, government, and academia needed to support the cluster;
- establishing a strategy, including financial, educational, and marketing packages to promote the cluster; and
- implement the strategy.

F. Funding

Ensure that counties annually review and confirm projects for Priority Funding Areas.

III. EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Recruitment and Retention of Teachers

Improve recruitment and retention of public school teachers and administrators in the region.

Teacher shortages impact the quality of training and education on the Eastern Shore.

- Raise teacher salaries to compete with the school systems on the Western Shore.
- Study and implement merit pay systems.
- Examine ways to change the structure of the job to include some 10, 11, and 12-month positions.
- Identify regional efforts to recruit and retain teachers from within the local communities.
 - Promote and market teaching as a positive career choice.
 - Develop a mentoring system to encourage those interested in education as a profession.
 - Develop a regional effort in teacher recruitment and retention initiatives, such as Future Educators of America.
- Continue education training and retraining to keep the professional workforce current on technology, research, and literature.

B. Career and Job Planning and Workforce Training

1. Conduct an adult workforce study through the Governor's Workforce Investment Board or other appropriate agency to determine workforce requirements.

In order for the Eastern Shore to have a competitive workforce, training must begin in the early years of school and continue throughout each employee's life. The training must include skills as well as work attitudes.

- The business community and K-16 education must assess training needs.
- Parents, educators, and business must reinforce the concept of the basic work ethic.
 - Teaching staff must model appropriate work behaviors.
 - A regional program, such as Character Counts, should be developed.
 - Opportunities for training in non-technological work fields, such as hospitality and tourism, must be explored.
- Develop and implement a plan to create a competitive, skilled workforce to meet the needs of the business community through adult career training programs by utilizing funding available through the Maryland Higher Education Commission.
- Increase personal income through a skilled workforce.

2. Ensure that educational institutions can deliver industry leaders to meet the needs of the fast-paced and ever-changing opportunities of the hospitality industry.

Hospitality—the business of managing hotels, food service, travel and tourism, entertainment, and people—plays a vital part in the Eastern Shore economics.

The hospitality industry today comprises much more than hotels and restaurants. It is an industry of businesses specializing in sports arenas, cruise lines, entertainment and amusement venues, senior living communities, car rentals, real estate development, consulting, corporate managed services, finance companies with ties to investment banking and the stock market, conference/convention planning, facility design, catering, bed-and-breakfast inns, large chain restaurants, general brand management and franchise management, accounting, law, human resources and management training, information technology, and travel agencies. The potential for increasing revenues to the Eastern Shore is limited only by the ability to provide a diversely skilled workforce.

C. Business and Education Collaboration

Continue to develop means and opportunities for business and education to collaborate.

- Enhance opportunities for student and teacher internships.
- Develop a plan that addresses ways to relate workplace needs to the education system.
- Provide experiences for teachers that help them to understand the issues that business must deal with.

D. Education and Funding Equity

Develop a plan with community leaders to ensure that equity in funding becomes a reality.

E. Academic Intervention

Implement academic intervention for both students and workforce at the earliest possible stage of either education or training.

F. Program Expansion

Examine opportunities for technology program expansion in higher education.

IV. GOVERNMENT SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Examine avenues to simplify permits and regulations processes to expedite service delivery.

The region requires a modern technological infrastructure, linking counties to municipalities within each county. Linking county to state and federal agencies will greatly expedite the building and developing permit process. A streamlined, more user-friendly regulatory process may attract desired business and industry into the area.

B. Obtain funding to implement regional solutions.

To provide needed services and take advantage of the newest technology in diverse occupations may require regional efforts. Building modern technological infrastructure within the public services arena will better serve communities, particularly in emergency services, law enforcement, public transportation, and water consumption and disposal.

V. HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Low Cost Health Insurance

Develop a funding mechanism so the state, employers, and the working uninsured or underinsured can share in the costs of obtaining affordable health insurance with a prescribed set of benefits.

Insurers and Managed Care Organizations could develop provider networks and enroll eligible persons. As an alternative, expand the eligibility of the Care First Program to include the underinsured or provide for another layer of benefits in the Care First Program that requires the underinsured to pay part of the premium.

Additionally, the state could provide an incentive or subsidy for new and existing employers to partially cover the cost of health insurance. As health insurance premiums continue to rise (with 10-20% annual increases) employers are finding it necessary to shift more of the cost to employees or are dropping health insurance coverage altogether.

B. Rotation System to Provide Needed Primary and Subspecialty Care

Develop linkages with the University of Maryland School of Medicine and the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine to rotate Primary Care and subspecialty residents through the local hospitals and other medical service providers on the Eastern Shore.

Physician to population ratios and other methods of determining physician needs has identified a shortage of many primary care and subspecialty physicians. It is difficult to attract physicians to rural markets, yet their unavailability causes medical needs to go unmet or burdens families by requiring them to seek care in Baltimore, Washington, D.C., or Wilmington. Providing an opportunity for specialty rotations would expose physicians to the benefits of working in rural areas, allow for patients to stay at home for care, and perhaps encourage some physicians to remain in rural communities after their residency.

In addition to physicians, the Eastern Shore lacks many other health care manpower resources, including nurses, social workers, sanitarians, addictions counselors, and all types of therapists. The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene should be requested to fund a special recruitment and retention program operated by the Eastern Shore Area Health Education Center (ESAHEC). The ESAHEC already has a process for providing educational experiences for medical students and other health care professionals and, with the addition of state funds, this organization could gear up for recruitment and generate fee-based income in the process.

C. Mental Health and Substance Abuse Prevention

Expand mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment services through increased reimbursement, expanded insurance coverage, and increasing the number of school based health educators.

Substance abuse prevention programs through schools, after-school programs, and community organizations encourage workers and future workers to value sobriety and achieve optimum potential. For those already affected, local detoxification and expanded treatment services are needed to decrease lost time and improve attendance and productivity.

Reimbursement for mental health services and the availability of mental health professionals (including psychiatrists) is a major problem for the Eastern Shore. Assistance in providing training opportunities and recruiting mental health professionals can be provided through a rotation system. However, the Eastern Shore is severely underserved by psychiatrists—particularly those trained in the treatment of adolescents and children. Compounding the manpower issue is the rate at which funding for mental health and substance abuse services has declined to the point where public and private providers of these needed services are dropping out of the business. Some long-term funding strategy must be implemented to answer this need.

D. Sexually Transmitted Disease Testing and Treatment

Develop a program for the testing and treatment or referral of sexually transmitted diseases.

Sexually transmitted diseases rates have escalated throughout the Eastern Shore in recent years, making case management demands that the Eastern Shore counties are unable to keep up with.

E. Emergency Services

Increase both training and financial resources for emergency services and the incentives for trained volunteer technicians.

VI. HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Affordable Housing

Establish and/or support regional housing program to provide technical assistance in utilizing rehabilitation funding for both privately owned, existing housing and renter-occupied homes.

- Responsibilities would include to
 - a) plan, implement, and promote housing in designated growth areas;
 - b) provide incentives to developers to build affordable housing;
 - c) assist in transition from renting to buying; and
 - d) provide plans for college dormitory housing and summer labor housing.
- Ensure developers build affordable, quality housing that can be personally owned, from first-time home buyers through retirees and elderly citizens.

Affordable home ownership would retain a younger, higher income-earning population and would provide adequate housing for the increasing number of retirees to the Eastern Shore region.

- Build housing that can accommodate and be affordable for mid-management level personnel.

Appropriate and adequate housing can draw high-end industry to the region, substantially increasing the wage base on the Eastern Shore. As tourism on the Shore has grown to attract visitors from upscale and professional areas, preferred second homes and retirement locations tend to bring the same visitors back to the Shore. Today, many mid-aged executives find they can manage their own companies from in-home environments of choice close to the major metropolitan areas. Such choices drive the real estate market, certainly in prime locations such as waterfront villages and towns, leaving little affordable housing for those individuals desiring work on front line and back of the house positions.

- Initiate a focused effort on developing "continuing care communities" with associated industries and services. Establish a steering committee with representatives from both the private and public sectors to pursue and monitor the development of these communities.

As a whole, the nation is aging, and, in particular, the Eastern Shore has more elderly as a percentage of its total population than Maryland or the U.S. Because of the quality of life benefits and the natural attractiveness of the Eastern Shore, the elderly population is expected to grow to even greater numbers within the next 5-10 years. The Eastern Shore needs to develop living accommodations that meet the need of older adults and continuing care communities that are able to transition the elderly from near total independence to assisted living arrangements and even nursing home admission. These community

campuses can be linked to local colleges and universities for “life-time learning experiences.” The health care infrastructure is already in place as well as the framework for the training of geriatric healthcare professionals. Children of senior residents will come to visit and will require accommodations themselves, thus providing increased opportunities for the hospitality industry.

B. Regulations

- 1. Utilize the new statewide Smart Codes legislation for building codes to facilitate the rehabilitation of existing housing and the adaptive reuse of other structures for housing.**
- 2. Utilize Smart Growth policies, designated growth areas, and the new statewide Smart Codes legislation for development standards to strengthen the existing communities of the Eastern Shore while providing convenience, affordability, and continued quality of life.**

VII. TOURISM AND RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Product Development and Public Awareness

Preserve and promote history, heritage, culture, and the arts on the Eastern Shore.

A balanced commitment for protection of the Eastern Shore heritage, history, and culture offer opportunities to cultivate economic growth. Building regional alliances to realize product development and increase public awareness leads to dozens of cooperative efforts which, in turn, can increase public funding from state and federal resources to stimulate private investment. Such efforts instill pride in the region, spark local planning and zoning sensibilities, and strengthen regional leadership.

- Coalesce visions to obtain designation as a National Heritage Corridor.
- Obtain funding to staff ongoing management and development of Recognized and Certified Heritage Areas in the region.

B. Regional Identity

Create a dedicated entity, with proper funding support, to establish a regional identity as a destination for visitors.

The region has begun to gain national recognition as a preferred destination among travelers, primarily in the Mid-Atlantic Region. While each county invests thousands of dollars to promote visitor experiences, the regional destinations are the lure that entices visitors to stay longer, increasing expenditures. Rather than compete, the Eastern Shore should take advantage of its strategic position between the regionally recognized markets of Myrtle Beach and the historic Brandywine Valley area of Pennsylvania and market its own unique identity.

Historic sites, museums and the singular heritage of the region offer a tremendous potential to attract upscale spenders. While the Atlantic Ocean is a major draw to the region, other outdoor activities including sportfishing, sailing, boating, shooting sports and nature tourism reflect a healthy percentage of the visitor population. Elegant or dockside dining, regional cuisine, and shopping opportunities from designer outlets to upscale boutiques to unique antique shops are very marketable. The small town charm and waterfront villages, friendly bed-and-breakfast inns, scenic vistas and roads, and seasonal festivals and events all have potential appeal to the discerning traveler.

Product packaging and targeted marketing should be coordinated and managed by a dedicated entity with funding support and direction from public and private sector representatives.

- Implement a regional marketing effort and product packaging.
- Define and establish a “regional brand” identity for the Eastern Shore.
- Improve visitor-friendly directional signs.

C. Recreation Product Opportunities

Enhance and develop recreation product opportunities by forming a closer working relationship with the Department of Natural Resources.

The region is a recreational playground for residents from and visitors to the surrounding hubs of Baltimore, Washington, DC and Philadelphia. As the metropolitan areas become more and more congested with development, the Eastern Shore can increase revenue generated by travel expenditures by providing well-managed access to area resources. Carefully preserved natural areas, designed for recreation, will be a key factor in exploiting this opportunity.

- Identify funding and pursue sources to expedite the design, interpretation, development and construction of land and water trails.
- Direct funding for waterway improvement projects and land acquisition to facilitate bay access by progressively increasing the share of boating excise tax revenues available for this purpose.
- Develop and improve amenities at state and local parks including campgrounds, swimming venues, skating venues, canoe and kayak concessions, etc.

D. Related Infrastructure

1. Revitalize downtown areas and other business districts to encourage small business owners to enter the hospitality industry.

Revitalization to downtown areas and other business districts contribute to increased attractions, shopping opportunities, restaurants, inns, and transportation and will maintain a healthy tourism environment on the Eastern Shore

- Develop resources and financial incentives on the state and local levels to encourage small business development.
- Utilize the support of SCORE representatives to educate new entrepreneurs.
- Target capital investments to assist large-scale, tourism-related developments that appeal to or enhance the needs of the Eastern Shore Region.
- Encourage local Main Street Projects and Programs such as Easton’s Main Street.

2. Develop a quality web site for the Eastern Shore Region to make travel planning easy and comfortable for users.

- Linkages should be available to all county tourism offices.
- The web-site should offer users the opportunity to create on-line itineraries that meet their preferred activities.
- Centralized reservation systems for the region should model those available in popular destinations like Cape May, New Jersey, and Jackson Hole, Wyoming.
- Develop unified highway and direction signs throughout the region.
- Utilize capital investments in related large-scale business development projects.

E. Open Space Acquisition and Land Use

Facilitate open space acquisition and land preservation.

The state has developed excellent tools for local governments to preserve land and lifestyles. The Eastern Shore Delegation should work with the General Assembly and the Governor to increase the resources available for such programs as Open Space, Rural Legacy, Agricultural Preservation and Heritage Conservation and buoy the preservation accomplishments of the region. Local governments then must be encouraged to actively participate in these programs.

- Create Tax Incentives for donations of land and operating funds for public parks.
- Create agri-tourism initiatives and programs.
- Evaluate the appropriations of real estate transfer taxes and boating excise tax revenues and their ability to support agri-tourism initiatives and programs.

VIII. TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Air Transportation

Ensure that an adequate regional airports network and related facilities for commuting and general aviation meets current and future growth needs.

Extension of regional runways will allow the region to respond to the needs of regional jets, enabling easier commuting to and from area airports such as BWI, Dulles, and Reagan. This will promote economic development by supporting tourism, future population growth, and employment needs.

B. Highway/Road/Vehicular Transportation

- 1. Request the Maryland Department of Transportation to fund for maintenance and upgrades to the two major business arteries and secondary and alternate routes to visitor and business areas.**

Route 50 is the major artery connecting Washington with the Eastern Shore and resort areas and serves Queen Anne's, Talbot, Dorchester, Worcester, and Wicomico. Route 13 is the major north-south artery between Dover, DE, and points north, and Norfolk, VA, crossing Worcester, Wicomico, and Somerset counties. US 301 intersects 50 at Queenstown, runs through Queen Anne's and Kent, and provides access to I-95. Routes 404, 213, and 313, linking upper shore counties with 50/301, provide access to Delaware to the north and to Atlantic coastal resorts to the east. Routes 113 and 413 serve lower shore counties from Crisfield to Ocean City.

- 2. Encourage development of alternative Chesapeake Bay crossing projects.**

Currently, as many as 50,000 vehicles a day cross the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. Projects like the Crisfield-St. Mary's Ferry Project would promote tourism for the Lower Shore, make travel to and from Southern Maryland very accessible, and reduce traffic in some of our state's most congested areas.

C. Public Transportation

- 1. Support the development of an integrated regional public transportation system that includes all of Delmarva.**

The Lower Shore's *Regional Public Transportation Master Planning Project (Somerset, Worcester and Wicomico)* and the Upper Shore's *Transportation Development Plan (Kent, Caroline and Talbot)* have made a number of recommendations that could ultimately lead to an integrated regional public transportation planning process that includes all of Delmarva (including Delaware and Virginia), incorporates planning for rail travel, and involves all

State agencies that fund transportation services, including Department of Transportation, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Human Resources, and Department of Agriculture.

2. Secure long-term (at least 5 years) funding from the Maryland Mass Transit Administration and the Federal government for regional public transportation systems.

Funding would allow for a doubling of ridership for transit systems on the Eastern Shore.

The Maryland Transit Advisory Panel has recommended that transit ridership be tripled over the next 20 years in rural areas of the state, including the Eastern Shore. Meeting this goal will require a more strategic approach to the funding of public transportation is available. Currently, disparate funding streams support diverse transportation operations. This patchwork approach to public transportation does not adequately support the growing regional economy. In addition, funding is planned for the next fiscal year only, rather than several years out. As a result, capital planning is almost impossible for replacement or expansion vehicles. Local governments should support such efforts by soliciting the support of the region's legislators and making the provision of local capital and operational matching funds a high priority.

3. Develop, in conjunction with the Mass Transit Administration, transit links to Baltimore, Washington, and Annapolis, as well as explore transit links to Wilmington and Philadelphia.

Such links would promote the economic development of the whole region by supporting both increased leisure and business-related travel to the Eastern Shore, while easing traffic congestion.

D. Freight Transportation

Ensure continued railroad and waterway service on the Eastern Shore for import and export of products and supplies by working with the Maryland Department of Transportation.

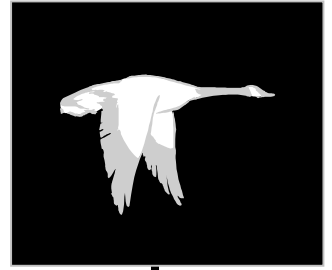
The Maryland Department of Transportation has developed a new plan to deal with State-owned tracks. This involves providing funding for improvements to several lines on the Eastern Shore, as well as selling or looking for alternative uses for those tracks that are not deemed cost effective. Continued rail and water service is paramount to meet the needs of a growing Eastern Shore.

- Retain and maintain rail access where feasible and improve services on Delmarva secondary lines and short lines. Rehabilitate short lines.

Following the acquisition and division of Conrail by Norfolk Southern and CSX, Norfolk Southern now operates the main line on and off the Delmarva

Peninsula. Supporting the secondary lines will provide rail service to existing industries (i.e., agriculture, poultry, energy, and manufacturing), while positioning Eastern Shore counties to attract new industry. In addition, many lines have deteriorated to the point where customers question their long-term existence. Repairing and maintaining the existing lines will provide safe and efficient rail transportation. Businesses located on rail lines must also be encouraged to use them. Rail accessible sites are limited, and, if sufficient business is not generated, track owners—either Maryland Department of Transportation or Norfolk Southern—will abandon the lines.

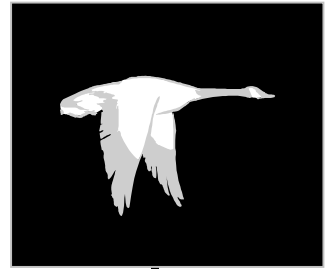
- Maintain proper depths of river and channel waterways to encourage freight use.



Part III

Addendum A: Remaining Recommendations
Addendum B: Individual County Recommendations





Addendum A

*Remaining Recommendations
Submitted to Steering Committee on June 7, 2000*



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Business Environment

- Create a state-wide task force to examine and develop a more user-friendly regulatory process.
- Coordinate access to business information. A portable office, rotating on a regular schedule, could provide additional satellite offices.
- Improve investments for prospective start-up or expanding employers by increasing availability and access to capital and financing.
- Promote Smart Growth initiatives with local municipalities.
-

Agriculture/Aquaculture

- Create a program to keep farmland productive and farmers solvent. (short-term)
- Ensure all laws and regulations affecting poultry Industry and agriculture is science-based and justified.
- Support transportation infrastructure such as the needed up-grade of the rail system in general and specifically between Snow Hill and Frankford, which serves three (3) feed mills. The Eastern Shore is now an importer of grain and not an exporter.
- Begin looking into the possibility of more water transport for bulk products to reduce congestion on the highways and provide lower cost freight. For example, consider a major bulk port or barge terminal on the Nanticoke River at Vienna or at a downstream point on the Wicomico River where the future Salisbury by-pass is projected to be built.
- Growth should be channeled and encouraged in existing areas having under-utilized infrastructures such as water, sewer, streets, roads, etc. This would help preserve the rural character of the Eastern Shore as well as act as a catalyst to develop smaller town communities.
- Support former Governor Hughes in leading the effort to unite farmers and environmentalists through the coalition of farmers, environmentalists, forestry, business people, university and educational, and government people on the 15-member board of directors for The Maryland Center for Agro-Ecology Inc.

Technology

- Telecommunications
Business parks should provide modern PBX systems with auto-attendant, voice mail, call monitoring, and auditing capabilities. Linkage of these systems to the Net.Work.Maryland Internet infrastructure would provide tenants with local Baltimore dial tone.
- Networking
During the construction phase, both copper and fiber cables should be put in place between the central networking room and a smaller room in each of the satellite buildings/offices. The Ethernet traffic to each building/office would be multiplexed and delivered via fiber while the copper would be used for low data rate and telephony connections.

- Conferencing
Video conference systems could be placed in a shared conference room for all tenants in each complex, which would have the ability to link to any other video conference center around the country.

Site Development

- Develop a new industrial park near Cambridge. (Dorchester)
- Develop Hurlock shell building. (Dorchester)
- Develop the 23 acres in Cambridge on Washington Street into a business park with office suites, light industrial and research services and facilities. (Dorchester)
- Funding for future business park sites. (Queen Anne's)
- As part of One MD, construction of a 40,000 square ft. clear span, spec. building is proposed along Route 13 with office space and bathrooms. (Somerset)
- Develop customer-ready industrial parks with incentives. (Worcester)

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Emergency Services

- Volunteer fire companies need evaluations to determine their capacity to meet growing customer base and to determine with whether maintenance of fire companies rests with local government. (Cecil)

Law Enforcement/Corrections

- Hire additional personnel in both law and corrections to meet growing population and increasing crime. (Queen Anne's)
- Construct a corrections facility. (Kent, Somerset)

Public Institutions

- Obtain funds to upgrade and enlarge county schools and libraries. (Somerset)
- Ensure technological capability. (Somerset)
- Improve quality of life services (libraries, arts, music, museums, film, parks and recreation, senior centers). (Worcester)

Business Community

- Upgrade Governor's Hall at Sailwinds Park with air conditioning, commercial kitchen facilities, electrical upgrades, and expanded water facilities. (Dorchester)
- Expand Ocean City Convention Center to encourage year-round activities. (Worcester)

Public utilities and transportation

- Install natural gas line to service the citizens. (Caroline, Worcester)
- Plan and finance a non-specialized transit service. (Kent)
- Meet citizen transportation needs. (Wicomico)
- Provide financial assistance to improve Smith Island roads, bridges. (Somerset)

Other

- Provide funding for additional staff to implement plans developed by Task Force. (Queen Anne's)
- Provide funds to encourage the preservation of agricultural land. (Wicomico)

TOURISM AND RECREATION

Heritage Tourism

- Support development of a Harriet Tubman Interpretive Center. (Dorchester)
- Establish Underground Railroad trail that links related sites regionally and nationally.
- Frederick Douglass Archaeological Research & Historic Development

Regional Identity

- Implement a regional marketing effort and product packaging.
 - Organize and sustain a marketing authority to manage an ongoing coordinated program, insure consistency, track and fulfill inquiries.
 - Develop and publish packages and itineraries to assist travelers in planning to better travel traffic to appropriate attractions and destinations.
 - Develop and implement an overall strategic plan for promotion.
- Define and establish a regional brand identity for the Eastern Shore.
 - Design and consistently using a logo, slogan, image and advertising message.
 - Coordinate advertising campaign design, development and placement encouraging cooperative funding partnerships with private sector.
- Improve visitor-friendly directions and signs.

Recreation Product Opportunities

- Easton-Clayton Trail, an opportunity to connect communities with existing State Parks. (Caroline, Talbot)
- The Upper Choptank Water Trail (Caroline, Talbot, Queen Anne's, Kent)
- Make capital improvements to Governor's Hall at Sailwinds Park and festival grounds to increase regional utilization of the civic/recreation complex. (Dorchester)

Workforce Training in the Hospitality Industry

- Support high school hospitality and tourism credit programs. Encourage all high schools to develop programs that offer a four credit State-Approved Completer Program. Such programs are offered at St. Michaels High School and developed with Chesapeake College.
- Encourage the development of Chef/Cook Culinary Arts Programs as offered at Easton High School and Cambridge South Dorchester High School.
- Offer Culinary Arts/Hospitality scholarships to high school students utilizing the Shore's educational institutions.
- Support the continuation and leadership of the Hospitality Programs at Chesapeake College, Salisbury State University, and the University of Maryland-Eastern Shore.
- Develop guaranteed job placements upon merit performances.
- Evaluate the feasibility of connecting with hotel franchise to support the operation of a small hotel in partnership with the hospitality institutions on the Eastern Shore.
- Evaluate and develop international labor pool for the Eastern Shore Hospitality businesses.

Land Preservation

- Support the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway Alliance- a partnership between Cecil, Kent & Queen Anne's Counties in an effort to obtain Federal designation for Maryland Routes 18/213 and related spurs, as a National Scenic Byway.

TRANSPORTATION

Air Transportation

- Extend runways at Crisfield Airport, Cambridge-Dorchester Airport, and Salisbury Ocean City Airport.
- Expand new administration/passenger building at Cambridge/Dorchester Airport.
- Construct corporate aircraft hangars at Salisbury-Ocean City Airport.
- Promote assets of airports (e.g., FAA approved tower at Salisbury-Ocean City Airport) to draw additional airlines and small aircraft.
- Construct hangars at Crisfield Airport.

Highway/Road Vehicular Transportation

Planning Process:

- Apply Smart Growth principles to highway investments.
- Get input on design criteria from ALL highway users when planning enhancements.
- Anticipate commercial/residential build out when designing road system to make sure that proposed development can be managed.

Improvements to Existing Assets:

- Improve access management and traffic problems along the following existing roadways:
- US Route 40 and MD 213 (Cecil)
- Route 16/392 from Mt. Holly to Hurlock, Woods Road Industrial Park Complex accessing airport and proposed industrial park (Dorchester)
- Ease truck traffic around towns of Hurlock and East New Market (Dorchester)
- Replace Bridge at Hunting Creek and Bridge at Back Landing (Dorchester)
- Accelerate funding for road improvements to Route 50 from Queenstown to Route 404 for projects now in planning stages (Queen Anne's)

New Projects:

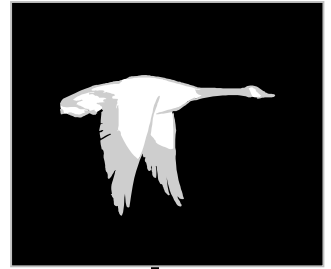
- Support development of Crisfield-St. Mary's Ferry Project.
- Continue to support UMES Access Road Project (under Construction).
- Complete Highway 50 Bypass on current accelerated schedule (under construction).
- Fast track Route 113 dualization project (under construction).
- Support efforts to construct dual highway for Route 413.
- Construct Route 50 bridge into Ocean City.
- Construct highway bypass at Route 16-Route 343 Sandy Hill Road.

Public Transportation

- Apply Smart Growth principles to public transportation investments.

Freight Transportation

- Work with the Delmarva Water Transport Committee to support initiatives to keep water traffic safe and timely.
- Maintain channel depth of the Wicomico River.



Addendum B

*Individual County Recommendations
Submitted to Steering Committee on May 22, 2000*



CAROLINE COUNTY (QUALIFYING COUNTY)

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Recognize and protect diminishing natural resources of our woodland, farmland, rivers and streams which make the Eastern Shore the true land of pleasant living.
- Support and recognize agriculture as a viable, important industry that is the critical essence of maintaining the Eastern Shore's quality of life.
- Increase adoption of irrigation by farmers.
- Support services needed by the poultry industry to ensure viability on the Delmarva Peninsula.
- Environmental impact on the waters and tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay deriving from non-point runoff sources is a pivotal concern.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Grow businesses with higher paying jobs which provide employment opportunities for our citizens while increasing the tax base.
- Develop necessary infrastructure to support expanding business growth.
- Raise the standard of living through work force development, thus helping people live productive lives.
- Support and define agriculture businesses.
- Develop and support tourism industry.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Improve employer/school cooperation.
- Establish academic expectations and standard quality measures and comparative ratings across line that are meaningful to existing and potential businesses.
- Promote employer/school collaboration barriers/scholarships/tax credits.
- Improve programs for job/career training.
- Create programs that engage aspects of school culture, real world, and workforce expectations.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES (INCLUDING CORRECTIONS AND HOUSING)

- To reduce difficulty and cost of government services, counties and towns must develop expertise and collaborate on proactive land use planning that is sensitive to the preservation of the Shore's special quality of life. One example is the Rural Legacy Program.
- Government services on the Shore are sometimes perceived as disorganized, duplicative, not cost effective, or poorly thought out in terms of concept and implementation. Citizens demand ongoing service evaluation and improved management of service delivery.
- New millennium service provision requires new millennium budgeting skills. Government officials will need to weigh the needs for services verses the tax burden. Maryland is still viewed as a high-tax burden state. This is of concern where Eastern Shore counties border sales tax-free Delaware which is perceived as having lower taxes. The perception can be a deterrent to new and expanding business development.

- Open and free-flowing communication between public officials and the citizens they serve has produced better government. Discussion of the appropriate type and level of government responsibilities and services must be ongoing.

HEALTH

- Improve access to quality health care and health information. Promote prevention as a health strategy.
- Sexually transmitted disease rates, especially Chlamydia, have escalated in Caroline County in recent years; establish diagnosis and treatment centers.
- Commit state funds, including tobacco money, to develop comparative measures and study existing and potential health problems in the region.
- Using information from study and comparative measures, apply state resources including tobacco money to develop effective approaches and programs to deal with identified health problems.
- Use state and private resources, including tobacco money, to develop facilities and programs to deal with identified health problems and to reach target populations.

TOURISM AND RECREATION

- Develop State parks as regional resources.
- Study the benefits of additional State investment in parks and other State-owned natural resources assets.
- Move ahead with the heritage program to promote a regional program for tourism development.
- Develop a regional tourism program that identifies themes, facilities, and existing resources that could improve tourism.
- Study the tourism potential of our region as a destination.

TRANSPORTATION

- Increase regional input into Department of Transportation five-year and long-term planning process.
- Make sure that transportation planning takes into consideration both the transport of people and products.
- Determine needs for transportation improvements to deal with problems in access to jobs, public programs, services, and businesses.
- Study the needs of special populations.
- Continue with the transportation forum process.

DORCHESTER COUNTY
(QUALIFYING COUNTY)

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Establish a regional seafood/agriculture economic development and marketing program.
- Preserve agricultural lands by providing incentives to farmers to retain lands in production.
- Extend waste water treatment systems within each county.
- Increase utilization of forest resources on public lands to promote use by hunters, naturalists, and tourists and harvest as beneficial to the land itself.
- Bulkhead or rip rap 100 miles of endangered shoreline.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Extend runway and build administration building at airport.
- Develop Hurlock shell building.
- Develop a new industrial park near Cambridge.
- Improve and upgrade Woods Road.
- Develop the 23 acres in Cambridge on Washington Street into a business park with office suites, light industrial and research services and facilities.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Provide funds and programs to assure the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers to the area (i.e., programs to waive college loans for service in One Maryland identified counties).
- Implement education and training programs to increase general population employability skills and support expansion of the local hospitality industry.
- Fund the modernization of public school science laboratory facilities.
- Fund collaborative efforts between community colleges and the public schools to provide expanded adult and continuing education programs.
- Fund the modernization of public school media centers and instructional computer technology (Internet access).
- Upgrade the Cambridge-South and North Dorchester High Schools' auditoriums to expand the potential for community use.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES (INCLUDING CORRECTIONS AND HOUSING)

- Build a technological infrastructure to serve the needs of local government (connected to State and Federal systems as appropriate).
- Build a shell building at Hurlock Industrial Park.
- Develop and implement a housing plan.
- Subsidize the cost of infrastructure and services to support development in designated growth areas.
- Upgrade Governor's Hall with air conditioning and kitchen services.

HEALTH

- Ensure a viable, economically-stable Dorchester General Hospital.
- Recruit one pediatrician and extend and establish two well mobiles to serve the less-populated areas of the county.
- Establish a one-stop senior information service center with an emphasis on hospitalization, health care, safety, and pharmaceuticals.
- Plan and establish waste water treatment system with lateral lines extending into the various sections of the county.
- Support a county-wide ALS system that provides 25/4 hour coverage seven days a week.

TOURISM AND RECREATION

- Establish a regional marketing authority for Maryland's Eastern Shore.
- Coordinate the development of a tourism management plan for Dorchester County; attain certified Heritage Area Status for Choptank River Heritage Area.
- Improve Governor's Hall at Sailwinds Park and festival grounds to increase regional utilization of the civic recreation complex, i.e., heating and air conditioning system, kitchen, improve water access, sound & lights, portable stage.
- Support the development of the Harriet Tubman Interpretive site.
- Create a network of public campgrounds within Dorchester County.
- Acquire easements along old railroad bed from Egypt Road Park to Blackwater at Key Wallace Drive.
- Acquire land/easements along Marshy Hope to build ramps as an access to boaters and emergency personnel.
- If Glasgow School is closed, utilize buildings and improvements between Glasgow and School Streets for a recreational complex.
- Develop preparatory programs for hospitality and tourism employment as part of high school and higher learning facilities curriculum.
- Create regional financial support system for museums, historic attractions, properties and heritage-based industries to promote long-term sustainability.

TRANSPORTATION

- Upgrade and improve roads including Route 15/392 (from Mt. Holly to Hurlock), Cambridge, Woods Road Industrial Park Complex, and roads accessing Cambridge area airport and proposed industrial park.
- Lengthen runway at Airport and build a new administration/passenger building at site.
- Improve the community transit system, promote existing DDUST bus system, erect signage, benches, and shelters, and develop and encourage alternative transportation enterprises for the promotion of tourism, i.e., limousine services, airport shuttles, heritage tours, charter services.
- Ease truck traffic around the towns of Hurlock and East New Market and replace bridge at Hunting Creek.
- Construct highway by-passes: Route 16-Route 343-Sandy Hill Road and replace the bridge at Back Landing.

SOMERSET COUNTY

(QUALIFYING COUNTY)

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Obtain funding to hire a regional agriculture and seafood economic specialist.
- Request the State of Maryland increase the amount of funding to the MD Agriculture Preservation Fund.
- Pump-out facilities for vessels are needed at the Deal Island Harbor.
- Adequate space is needed at the Deal Island Harbor for watermen to load and unload their catch.
- The seafood license procedure (for watermen) is in need of revision to accommodate new entries.
- The current marketing trends do not promote local seafood.
- Construct a breakwater near the Crisfield Harbor entrance to block the wave action.
- Expand opening to Somers Cove Marina and include a fishing pier.
- Crop insurance for adjusted gross revenue which would insure gross revenue on all crops on the farm.
- A one-stop permitting process for Natural Resources related permits.
- Decrease regulations affecting our poultry industry.
- Increase opportunity for on-farm processing.
- Encourage property owners to clean out lead ditches to improve drainage.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Permit process and regulatory process needs to be more user-friendly.
- Support "One Network MD." Include Somerset Co. in the high speed network.
- Increase the number of representatives serving on MD Economic Development Commission (add more from the Shore).
- As part of *One Maryland*, propose construction of a 40,000 square ft., clear span, spec. building along Route 13 with office space and rest rooms.
- Increase workforce development.
- Bring properties in the Princess Anne Industrial Park up to grade to encourage new businesses.
- Attract high tech employers.
- Market the One Maryland concept plan and promote the tax benefits.
- Determine infrastructure needs, i.e., sewer & water, natural gas, fiber optics.
- Promote Somers Cove and Janes Island.
- Support Wallops Island Projects, i.e., Venture Star and Spaceport.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Produce a highly-skilled, high tech workforce.
- Consolidate county high schools.
- Fund opportunities for practical experience for UMES students; provide training for UMES students toward our workforce needs.
- Vocational training: include marine construction, and other local related trades.
- Joint effort of public schools, community colleges, and four-year colleges to expand training to include high tech training.
- Improve training and education regarding work ethics: address drug abuse and absenteeism issues. Encourage students to remain in school and obtain diploma.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES (INCLUDING CORRECTIONS AND HOUSING)

- Improve drainage.
- Increase county tax base -remote real estate growth – incentives for home ownership in One Maryland counties.
- Audit current zoning procedures and compare with other eight counties; redesign the zoning process to address problems in a timely fashion.
- Construct more prisons.
- Encourage development of median income housing.
- Smith Island: seek state assistance with costly projects such as road improvements, schools, and bridges.
- Explore alternative methods of punishment for delinquent parents' not paying child support. Incarceration leads to overcrowding of our prisons, costly medical services. Compare our system with the other eight counties.
- Examine conflict between state programs, such as One Maryland, Smart Growth, and Critical Areas.

HEALTH

- Seek methods for providing affordable health insurance for the under-insured; seek funding assistance for employers providing health insurance to their employees.
- Improve reimbursement rates for rural hospitals.
- Provide pharmacy assistance for the elderly due to the high cost of medicines.
- Assist McCready Hospital to establish assisted living facilities.
- Expand retirement living opportunities.

TOURISM AND RECREATION

- Strengthen existing tourism resources through training and associations.
- Develop additional resources and infrastructure for waterfront development, site-seeing boats, and water taxis.
- Develop recreational trails (biking, hiking) and link them with other counties.
- Seek funding to increase marketing efforts for the county and develop a strategic plan.
- Encourage hotels and motels to locate in the County.
- Identify funding for construction or acquisition of the Americana Museum, located in Marion.
- Resume efforts to develop Deal Island Harbor Project and improve present conditions at Deal Island Harbor.
- Seek additional Program Open Space funding and Waterway Improvement funding for county projects.

TRANSPORTATION

- Implement the Somerset County Public Transportation System.
- Support the development of the Crisfield-St. Mary's Ferry Project.
- Support the Regional Transportation System as introduced by Salisbury State University.
- Continue to support the UMES Access Road Project.
- Expand development at the Crisfield Airport – extend runways, establish hangers.
- Support the efforts to construct a dual highway for Route 413.
- Pursue efforts to change U.S. Route 13 from a non-access highway to an access highway.

WORCESTER COUNTY

(QUALIFYING COUNTY)

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Encourage the agricultural industry to remain and thrive on the Eastern Shore.
- Sustain/support commercial fishing industry.
- Promote the development of producer-owned co-ops.
- Create capital structure for marketing and research, infrastructure needs, etc.
- Support aquaculture.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Install fiber optics and natural gas.
- Improve transportation infrastructure system, i.e., rail, water & sewer, competitive regional airline(s).
- Support Wallops Island Development (Spaceport concept).
- Develop customer-ready industrial parks with incentives.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Expand technical education, e.g., more involvement from community colleges and universities, wire schools, build/upgrade facilities.
- Train/retrain adult workers for various industries.
- Educate/train youth workforce.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES (INCLUDING CORRECTIONS AND HOUSING)

- Simplify and define permit process.
- County government should support economic growth; create a complete friendly environment, encourage wealth-creating companies, expand the Worcester County Dept. of Economic Development.
- Promote adequate and affordable housing.
- Increase marketing efforts; increase budget.
- Improve quality of life services, i.e., libraries, arts, music, film, museums, parks and recreation, and senior activities (centers).

HEALTH

- Recruit, hire, and train medical employees; promote more competitive salaries.
- Continue to provide high quality health services, i.e., Atlantic General Hospital, PRMC.
- Explore creation of elder-care/rehabilitation facilities, assisted living facilities (new facility under development in Ocean Pines), and nursing homes.
- Examine what health care jobs are available and where they are located.

TOURISM AND RECREATION

- Develop year-round tourism.
- Support the expansion of the Ocean City Convention Center.
- Create/improve destination points, i.e., Pocomoke Learning Center, small museums, historical sites, and antique opportunities.
- County to explore creation of a recreational zone.
- Create bike trails and running paths.

TRANSPORTATION

- Continue to fast track Route 113 dualization project.
- Promote dualization of MD Route 589.
- Develop integrated mass transportation systems: passenger train, Worcester County Ride, airport.
- Explore Route 50 Bridge into Ocean City.
- Explore alternative routes into Ocean City.

CECIL COUNTY

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Discourage the loss of farmland to low-density development.
- Ensure that agriculture remains viable as an economic enterprise.
- Individuals seeking to enter agriculture should be brought in contact with farmers ready to retire.
- Property owners should be encouraged to enroll their farms in agricultural preservation programs through the State programs—MALPH and Rural Legacy—and through local preservations programs which are funded more swiftly.
- The county should maintain a critical mass of farmland.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Seek funding to expand or replace local and municipal water and sewer systems.
- Expedite permitting at State and Federal levels for infrastructure.
- Derive and implement a multi-faceted marketing strategy.
- Improve collection and dissemination of data pertaining to labor force skills and availability.
- Make additional state resources available to local jurisdictions for small business development.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Recruit and retain a quality teaching and education leadership workforce.
- Initiate and expand a career-planning program for middle and high school students.
- Implement a training and retraining worker program.
- Implement an effective pre-kindergarten through grade twelve academic intervention program.
- Plan and install a county and regional technology infrastructure that supports and provides the necessary information and services to identify and resolve workplace employee needs now and in the future.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES (INCLUDING CORRECTIONS AND HOUSING)

- Evaluate methods local governments use to provide services to maximize efficiency.
- Establish the necessary infrastructure base to properly implement the land use goals of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Convert all present methods of permitting to electronic, where practical.
- Allow for a range of housing types in the designated growth area.
- Establish proper measures to ensure demand for services does not outpace the ability for counties to provide needed services.

HEALTH

- Encourage development of policies, services, and programs that strengthens the emotional health and safety of families and family members.
- Expand smoking prevention and cessation programs and cancer diagnosis and treatment services locally.
- Enhance programs and services to improve cardiovascular health.
- Expand substance abuse prevention and treatment services.
- Improve transportation safety.

TOURISM AND RECREATION

- Counties should promote heritage of Eastern Shore.
- Preserve rural character and open spaces.
- Promote Cecil County as the gateway to the Eastern Shore.
- Develop and promote nature tourism.
- Capitalize on natural linkage of the Chesapeake Bay.

TRANSPORTATION

- Maximize opportunities for multi-modal travel options.
- Encourage and exploit rail access where possible.
- Explore methods for improved access management on major roads.
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled by preserving farmland and open space.
- Enhance existing centers for commerce culture.

KENT COUNTY

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Foster agriculture profitability.
- Recognize agriculture and other resource-based industries as a preferred use in the rural portions of the Shore.
- Address farmland and natural resource preservation in the context of the rural Eastern Shore.
- Develop farm link and other programs to entice new farmers into the industry and region.
- Create a regional identity for shore agriculture in response to the consolidation of agricultural industries in the region.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Develop industrial park near Route 301 North – access to rail and major roads would help to attract new companies.
- Plan infrastructure for the Worton Industrial area.
- Seek federal and state funding.
- Seek funding of the County Airport.
- Consider more industrially-zoned lands in Kent County (on the railroad lines and major highways).

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Attract and retain teachers for the Kent County Public School Systems.
- Ensure that funding for public education is a major priority for Kent County.
- Establish programs to teach high technology skills.
- Attract businesses that will provide employment opportunities to high school graduates.
- Establish training programs for the existing untrained, unemployed workforce.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES (INCLUDING CORRECTIONS AND HOUSING)

- Provide for a new correctional facility (perhaps a regional facility).
- Allow for housing rehabilitation outside of designated Smart Growth Areas, where existing housing is involved.
- Continue grants for extension of public water & sewer systems/service to rural neighborhoods.
- Explore funding for innovative technology.
- Plan and finance for non-specialized transit services; improve financing for fire and rescue services; provide long-range planning for recycling and future landfill considerations/costs.

HEALTH

- Sexually transmitted disease rates, especially Chlamydia, have escalated in Kent County in recent years; establish diagnosis and treatment centers.
- Examine programs and methods to continue to reduce teenage pregnancies in the county.
- Kent County has higher incidence rates of lung and bronchus cancer than the State; a variety of services, including education, cessation treatment for smoking, and outreach are needed.
- Underage alcohol use as well as the use of other illicit substances by the youth of our County continue to be of concern.

- HIV/AIDS continues to increase in the adult population making case management demands that the State is not keeping up with.

TOURISM AND RECREATION

- Build a Kent County Community Center.
- Prepare a corridor management plan to garner national Scenic Byway designation for MD Routes 18, 20, 213, and 445.
- With the help of the Maryland Heritage Area Authority (MHAA), the counties of Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot will become a recognized heritage area, to be known as the Eastern Shore Heritage Area.
- Capitalize on the Chesapeake Bay Gateways & Watertrails Initiative.
- Develop Rails and Trails for bikers and hikers.

TRANSPORTATION

- Develop a secure, coordinated/integrated and long-term strategic plan for funding for public transportation.
- Local governments in Kent, Caroline & Talbot counties should pledge to support the recommendations of the forthcoming regional Transportation Development Plan (TDP).
- The Governor proposes to provide sufficient resources to allow for the doubling of ridership for transit systems in rural areas of Maryland.
- While regional transportation coordination is important at the local level, there exists the need for greater coordination between state departments such as DHMH, DHR, DOA, MTA.
- Local government should realize that there are economic development benefits that result from a commitment to good public transit.

QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Increase and improve agriculture/aquaculture infrastructure:
 - facilities for processing grain, oysters, and agricultural waste
 - financing for equipment and irrigation systems
 - affordable housing for seasonal labor
 - affordable dockage to sustain seafood industry
- Ensure availability of seasonal labor.
- Investigate regulations and environmental concerns.
- Conduct agriculture industry economic impact assessment.
- Provide technical support and education to encourage diversification.
- Continue funding for agricultural land preservation.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Implement fiber optics network to assure capacity for ISDN and DSL service.
- Improve water and sewer systems to handle current and future needs. Include adequate well capacity.
- Create a sustainable, coordinated regional vision and initiative to obtain increased state and federal funding.
- Provide funding for incentives to implement Smart Growth visions.
- Provide funding for future business park sites.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Conduct a regional labor study.
- Increase public funding for technology upgrades, renovations and new construction of schools.
- Continue funding workforce training programs.
- Address need for increased day care services for both children and adults.
- Address teacher shortages, hiring issues and mentoring opportunities.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES (INCLUDING CORRECTIONS AND HOUSING)

- **Staff dedicated for administration and implementation of plans developed by the Task Force.**
- Create affordable housing.
- Provide for additional law enforcement & corrections resources.
- Address demand for emergency services in relation to current volunteer staff.
- Utilize NASA technology and data links for regional planning and to catalyze business development.

HEALTH

- Develop regional plan for future waste management, including agricultural waste.
- Provide additional medical service providers and facilities in county.
- Address demand for emergency services in relation to current volunteer staff.
- Provide affordable assisted living facilities and in-home services for aging populations.

- Improve disease control methods and increase related public education.

TOURISM AND RECREATION

- Develop regional marketing campaign and product packaging.
- Provide technical and funding assistance for product development projects and initiatives.
- Support family recreation amenities and businesses.
- Provide funds for staff support to implement heritage plans, including enhanced interpretation, preservation, promotion and increased public access to sites.
- Provide improved and increased Bay access.

TRANSPORTATION

- Accelerate funding for improvements to Route 50 from Queenstown to Route 404, for projects now in planning stages.
- Expand and enhance public transportation systems and service.
- Develop mass transit links to Western Shore.
- Maintain service and enhance business development on rail lines for shipping.
- Plan and budget to construct future Bay Bridge or crossing to relieve some of the current pressure.

TALBOT COUNTY

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- State regulations that impact agriculture should be developed using sound science that has been peer reviewed and should contain a cost-benefit analysis to determine its efficacy.
- Funds should be allocated to conduct studies that delineate the importance of agriculture to the economic health of Talbot County.
- Enhance agriculture land preservation programs.
- Develop an agriculture public awareness and education program.
- Enhance opportunities for agriculture to add value to its products and explore the feasibility of establishing additional markets through studies and the development of an Eastern Shore Economic Development Plan.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Implement Industry Target Market (ITM) plan development by the Office of Economic Development by 12/31/00.
- Ensure that existing and future businesses are provided with a well-educated, well-trained, technologically adept workforce.
- The overall upswing in local secondary and post-secondary education and training is a positive aspect that needs to continue to be the focus of marketing efforts.
- Provide the entire Eastern Shore with the same high speed access capabilities that are available to the rest of the State.
- Provide a public transportation system that will serve all residents of Talbot County.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Talbot County Public Schools will upgrade the curriculum and equipment in all Talbot County State Approved Career and Technology Programs to reflect national industry skills and standards (expand distance learning opportunities, upgrade curriculum, upgrade technology).
- Talbot County Public Schools' students will demonstrate information literacy and fluency with information technology by accessing information effectively and creatively.
- Talbot County Public Schools will fully implement its Technology Plan to include equal access to high-speed data networks.
- Talbot County Public Schools will collaborate with community, business, and education partners to fully utilize resources to expand needs-based workforce preparation and training opportunities for area residents as appropriate.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES (INCLUDING CORRECTIONS AND HOUSING)

- Ensure that the County has the technological capability to interact with citizens to provide direct access to County departments and services.
- Continue improvements to the physical structure of the county, including a renewed effort to centralize the location of County departments and related agencies, especially those involved in joint permitting functions.
- Continue to develop a strong working relationship between the County and the municipalities.
- Continue to develop an effective Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to allow for multi-year scheduling of public physical improvements.

HEALTH

- Increase screening for and access to mental health services for parents and children of all ages.
- Reduce utilization of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs through increased prevention and treatment service.
- Increase access to transportation for health services for all Talbot County residents.
- Raise reimbursement rates for dental providers to acceptable levels to enable more children and families to have adequate dental care.
- Establish a primary care health home for all residents of Talbot County. Institute a health insurance program so that all residents of Talbot County have adequate medical care.
- Increase access to community-based services to support maintaining vulnerable populations in their homes rather than institutional settings.

TOURISM AND RECREATION

- Create a multi-media information source for Talbot County Tourism to include: completed web page with links; coordinated events calendar; tourism video (County attractions); self-tour audio; local access AM radio; and comprehensive visitors guide.
- Improve functions of and access to Talbot County Tourism Information sources: reservations clearinghouse for accommodations, restaurants and attractions; information technology based kiosks with web page access; web TV-based access to Talbot County web page through Easton/Charter Communications Cable (available in hotels, motels, inns); customer feedback via web page (kiosks, web-TV Internet); visitors' centers for Talbot County, Easton, Oxford, St. Michaels and Tilghman Island; "Smart Card" for tracking feedback and attraction access (one pass); statewide tourism kiosks; and consistent look and feel to tourism information systems.
- Improve tourism infrastructure of Talbot County to include: permanent participation in County planning and economic development process; improved signage for attractions; international exchange program for hospitality employees; sponsorship program for foreign hospitality industry employees; bring culinary school to Talbot County.
- Lead effort to create statewide leading-edge technology-based Maryland One Pass System for tourism to include: internet based access to tourism information sufficient for itinerary planning.

TRANSPORTATION

- Develop a County transportation plan that addresses the needs of all Talbot County citizens (by January, 2001); ensure that the County plan is integrated with those in the rest of the region, both Upper and Lower Shore, so that citizens have access to transportation to move throughout the region (by January, 2003).
- Ensure that County governments are the single points of entry for mass transit funds into the region (by January, 2001); require County government approval for any funds or grants that are to be awarded to vendors to ensure that their initiatives are aligned with the County government's transportation priorities (by July, 2001).
- Support the development of the transportation-planning infrastructure within County government through the provision of state funds (by July, 2001).
- Develop a coordinated plan that anticipates commercial/residential build out and design the road system to manage this development at its total capacity (by January, 2002).

WICOMICO COUNTY

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Agricultural activities within MD are critical to MD's economy and must continue to provide the nation with quality food at a reasonable price.
- Farming and related industry is critical to the economic life of the Eastern Shore.
- Environmental regulations without supporting economic and scientific study are crippling agriculture and the poultry industry's ability to continue to exist:
- Support the research for alternative uses for animal manure that are environmentally safe and economically feasible.
- Allow the existing regulations to have an impact before imposing additional mandates.
- Develop balanced land use plans that consider both the character of our region and need to grow and develop without adversely impacting the environment.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Complete immediately the *Net.Work.Maryland* program to upgrade the region's information infrastructure.
- Workforce development programs to prepare workers for existing and potential new businesses are critical.
- Stop over-regulating business and address the perception that Maryland is not business friendly.
- Modernize and simplify the tax structure for the State.
- Develop a regionally focused, coordinated marketing campaign with the funds from Conectiv and some matching money from the State and counties.
- Support existing businesses as priority one and recruit new businesses that will provide good paying jobs in industries that mesh with our life style.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Retain good teachers and recruit new teachers through teacher compensation.
- Establish merit pay and re-certification standards to insure the quality of teachers.
- Include basic work place skills like communication and simple mathematics and work ethic in curriculum.
- Set and enforce standards for academics and conduct.
- Remind the educational structure that its mission is to prepare today's students to become tomorrow's workforce.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES (INCLUDING CORRECTIONS AND HOUSING)

- Cooperation of state, county and local officials is needed to simplify permitting process and codes.
- Support economic development with an attitude of willingness to work with business.
- Develop regional approach to marketing the Peninsula for tourism and relocation (personal and business).
- Focus on affordable quality of life improvements.

HEALTH

- Develop linkages with the University of Maryland School of Medicine and the John Hopkins School of Medicine to rotate subspecialty residents through the local hospitals and other medical service providers in the county.
- Develop a funding mechanism wherein the state, employer, and the working uninsured and underinsured can share in the costs of obtaining low cost health insurance with a prescribed set of benefits.
- The State should provide a tax credit or other financial incentive to encourage employers to allow employees to receive health screenings and wellness benefits at the worksite.
- The State should provide funding for the expansion of water and sewer service to allow for the development of private and commercial enterprise. Funding could take many forms including matching dollars, a granting process, the development of urban districts, tax credits, etc.

TOURISM AND RECREATION

- Promote the Civic Center for regional and small national conventions.
- Expand the promotion of our area as a bicycle tourism destination with more races and better advertising.
- Partner with SSU to help the Sea Gull Century to grow.
- Help other groups doing Bicycle Races expand their events (flyer for Sea Gull Century listing all other races and how to sign-up).

TRANSPORTATION

- Complete the regional Transportation Master Planning Process being conducted by SSU and use it as the basis for a regional public transportation system.
- Complete the Highway 50 Bypass on the current accelerated schedule.
- Extend the runways at the Salisbury-Ocean City: Salisbury-Ocean City-Wicomico Regional Airport to make the airport commuter jet-capable into the 21st century.
 - Add a second airline to better service the people of the Peninsula.
 - Add corporate aircraft hangers to encourage area businesses to base company aircraft here.
 - Promote the FAA approved tower as a draw to airlines and small aircraft.
- Work with Norfolk Southern to improve rail access to the Lower Shore.
- Work with the Delmarva Water Transport Committee to support initiatives to keep water traffic safe and timely.
- Create a strong three-state alliance to support expansion of space operations from the Wallops Island area.