

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

MARCH 6, 2025

Comprehensive Plan Update

*Somerset County,
Maryland*

DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES

READY ^{SOMER} SET PLAN

Plan Update Process

- Project website used throughout planning process.
 - Working Draft Chapters – Comment Form
- Online public survey used to obtain community perspective. Public survey results shown on topical plan chapter covers.
- Attended Princess Anne & City of Crisfield public meetings to discuss plan update and gather input.
 - Both municipalities invited to participate on the Technical Committee.
- Regional Coordination meeting with Wicomico and Worcester County.
- Visioning Workshop
 - Vision Statement on project website along with review and comment form.
- Technical Committee meetings held throughout planning process.
 - March 6, 2025, from 1:30-3:00 PM.





READY^{somer}SETPLAN

Draft Plan Review & Highlights

Draft Plan Review

Chapter 1: Introduction

- Includes Maryland planning legislation and the state's twelve visions.
- Informs the reader on the organization of the plan and the planning process.
- Provides Somerset County's Vision Statement.

Chapter 2: Community Profile

- Demographics - characteristics of the population, such as age, gender, race, and income.

Plan Organization

Chapter 2: Community Profile

Chapter 3: County & Municipal Plan Integration

Chapter 4: Economic Vitality

Chapter 5: Affordable Housing

Chapter 6: Community Facilities

Chapter 7: Transportation

Chapter 8: Sensitive Areas

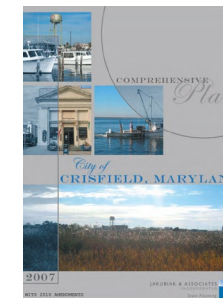
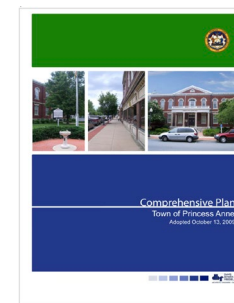
Chapter 9: Water Resources

Chapter 10: Land Use

Chapter 11: Priority Preservation Area

Chapter 3: County & Municipal Planning

- House Bill (HB 1141) adopted in 2011 mandates that jurisdictions meet and confer on this subject before a municipal growth element can be adopted. HB 1141 strengthens land use requirements by necessitating better planning for annexations.
- Provides existing conditions and land use.
- Proposed growth and annexes. Town of Princess Anne, no annexations are planned due to various physical constraints. Infill and redevelopment are the Town's priorities. City currently has no specific annexation plans it will consider annexing for economic development.
- Priority Funding Areas and Hazard Risk Areas
- Goals & Implementation Strategies



Draft Plan Review

Chapter 4: Economic Vitality

- Included economic demographic data and background.
- Examined existing land use and zoning as it relates to various economic development topics.
- Strategic Opportunities Analysis
 - retirement living & healthcare
 - aquaculture, agriculture, food processing & distribution
 - skilled trades, including those related to construction and manufacturing
 - alternative energies
 - tourism.

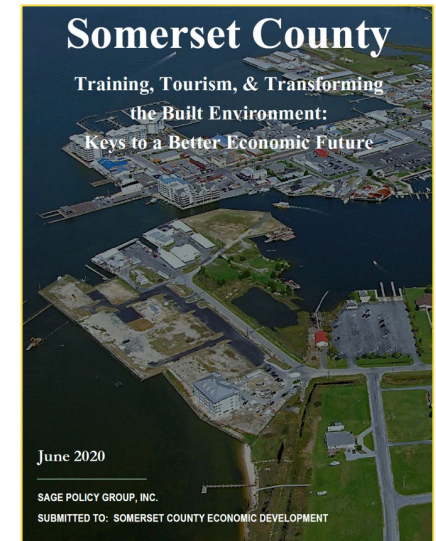


Figure 4-1: Cover photo from the strategic opportunities analysis, Sage Policy Group, Inc., June 2020

Chapter 5: Affordable Housing

- Included State Perspective on Housing Needs & 10-Year Strategic Plan
 - Regional and Somerset County specific information integrated.
 - Households earning 30 percent AMI or extremely low-income households are a priority. Additional groups identified to focus on serving over the next 10 years include: seniors; persons with disabilities; and persons experiencing homelessness.
- Housing Projection: Total new housing units needed in 2030 is 563, which averages 56 new units needed per year over this period, based on the assessment.

Total Housing Units Authorized for Construction in Somerset County, Maryland: 2011 to 2023													
Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Residential	60	15	26	48	31	25	16	36	25	20	62	33	43
Multi-Family Housing	-	-	2	92	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
Total Housing Units*	62	15	28	140	181	25	16	36	25	20	62	34	47

Chapter 6: Community Facilities

- Includes community facilities, services, and amenities and specific upgrades, modifications, and additions.
- Infrastructure and services to support Economic Vitality.
- Supports implementation of the Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan (LPPR.)
- Encourages creation of a connected, county-wide network of greenways, parks, trails, and natural areas.
- Support efforts to identify landfill facility expansion.
- Expand broadband infrastructure to provide coverage throughout Somerset County.

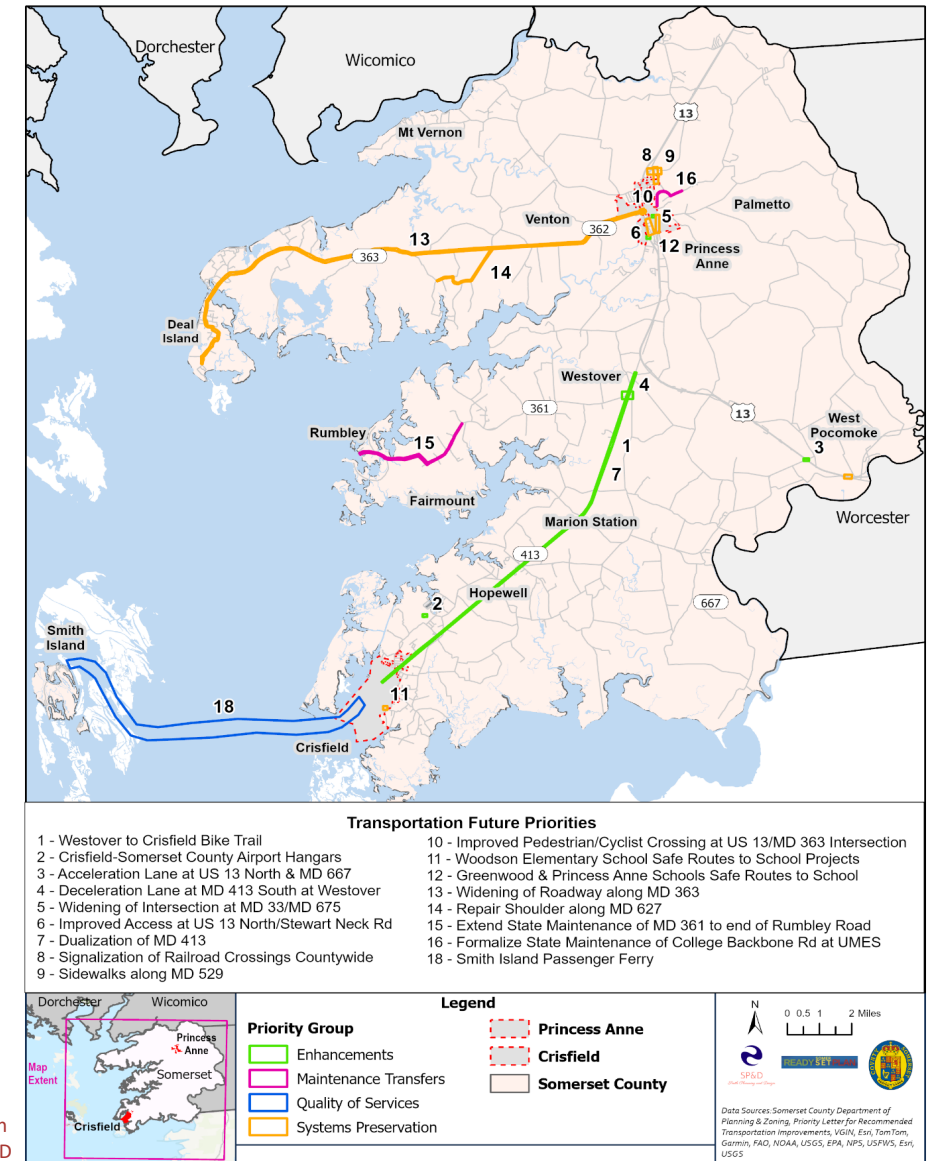
Community Facilities - Strategies

- A. Add a fishing pier adjacent to existing pier in the Rumbley community.
- B. Identify opportunities for additional public access to waterways at appropriate locations.
- C. Encourage and/or support a new or upgraded Princess Anne Library.
- D. Identify new locations for emergency services EMS and fire substations in areas of the County that lack these services and therefore experience longer response times, on average.
- E. In consideration of landfill capacity, expand landfill.
- F. Establish additional compost site for the collection and processing of yard waste in both the northern and southern areas of the County.
- G. Target demolition waste for recycling to better support LEED building process.
- H. Upgrades to the existing Princess Anne Civic Center to be a state-of-the-art facility.
- I. Look for opportunities to connect trail systems both locally and regionally to create additional ecotourism opportunities.
- J. Identify future trails/paths to connect residential neighborhoods with shopping centers and employment centers.
- K. Strongly support improvement and dedication of lands for public trails and paths as part of development plans.

Draft Plan Review

Chapter 7: Transportation

- Includes a description of the existing transportation system and goals and strategies to address both current and future conditions. While transportation planning has historically focused on the roadway network, specifically the movement of goods, a focus of this update is the mobility of people using a variety of transportation modes.
- Numerous Goals & Implementation Strategies, integrated with other topical plan chapters.



Map 7-7: Future Transportation Priorities, Somerset County, MD

Chapter 8: Sensitive Areas

- Land Use Article requires jurisdictions to “protect streams and their buffers; the 100-year floodplain; habitats of threatened and endangered species; and steep slopes, wetlands and agricultural and forest lands intended for resource protection or conservation”.
- Fisheries included in Chapter 8: Sensitive Areas - Counties located on tidal waters must include a fisheries element.
- Sensitive Areas was expanded beyond the requirements.
 - Watersheds (Groundwater, Stormwater, Drainage)
 - Streams and Their Buffers
 - 1 Percent Annual Chance Floodplain
 - Habitats of Threatened and Endangered Species
 - Steep Slopes
 - Wetlands
 - Agriculture
 - Forests
 - Chesapeake Bay Critical Area
 - Sea Level Rise
 - Shoreline Erosion
 - Green Infrastructure (Protected Lands, Targeted Ecological Areas)
 - Fisheries
 - Hazard Mitigation Planning

Draft Plan Review

Chapter 9: Water Resources

- Somerset County's first Water Resources Element was completed in 2010.
- Chapter 9: Water Resources is an update to the 2010 element.
- Plan integration with the Draft 2024 Somerset County Water & Sewerage Plan, best available information & Data.
- Completed a comprehensive water resources analysis and integrated findings into Chapter 10: Land Use, which was then further refined.
- Plan integration with 2022 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan



Somerset County, Maryland



Water Resources Element

March 2010

Chapter 9: Water Resources

HIGHLIGHTS FROM SESSION WITH TC MEMBERS

- TC meeting was primarily focused on the review of proposed water and sewer extension areas. These areas were reviewed in relation to land use, both current and future. For each proposed utility extension shown on mapping products, participants reviewed various factors:
 - existing priority funding areas,
 - flood hazard areas,
 - sea level rise, critical areas,
 - wetlands,
 - relation to transportation corridors,
 - community facilities,
 - parks and recreation,
 - existing land use, and zoning.

*** Analysis further refined following growth area analysis - Chapter 10 Land Use.**

Chapter 10: Land Use

- Drafted throughout the plan update, however the land use chapter was not fully completed until the end of the planning process.
- The Land Use Plan examines future land use for all the major topics included in this comprehensive plan and includes mapping of proposed changes

Land Use Requirements

The land use element outlines the most appropriate and desirable patterns of growth and development. Maps are particularly helpful for this section and can show areas targeted for different types of development; revitalization; priority corridors or areas; and preservation areas.

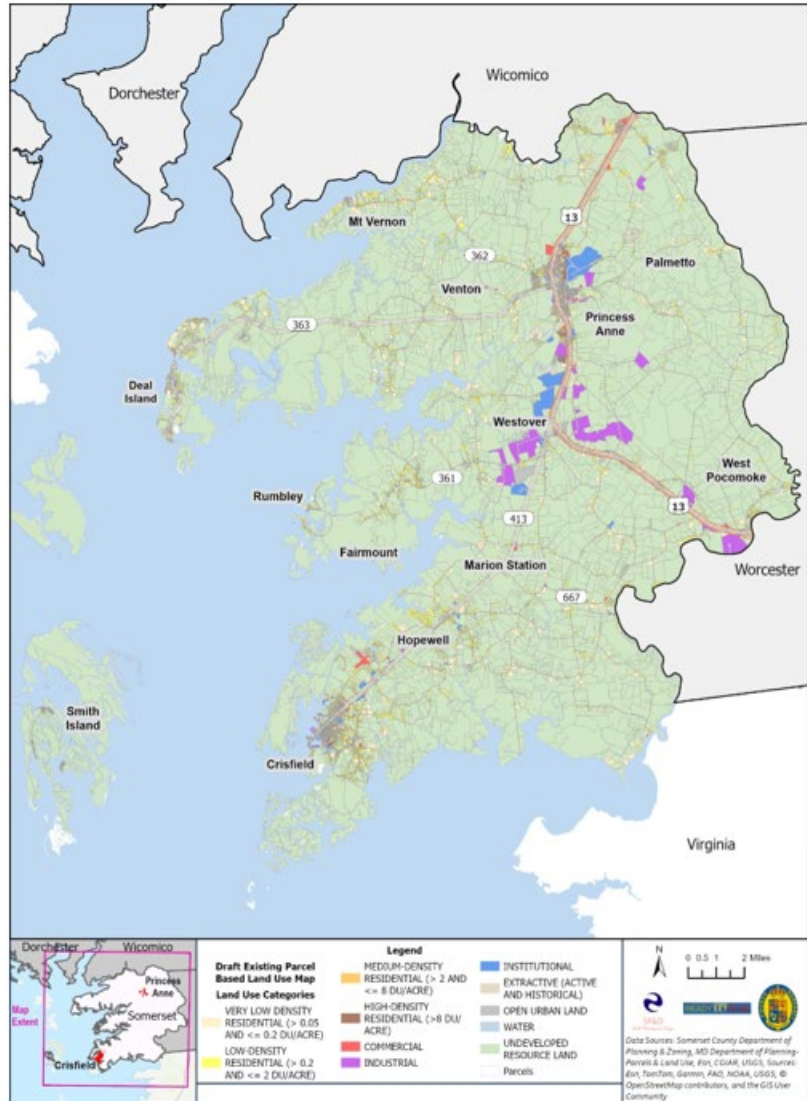
Source: Maryland Department of Planning.

Land Use Data Background Information & Caveats

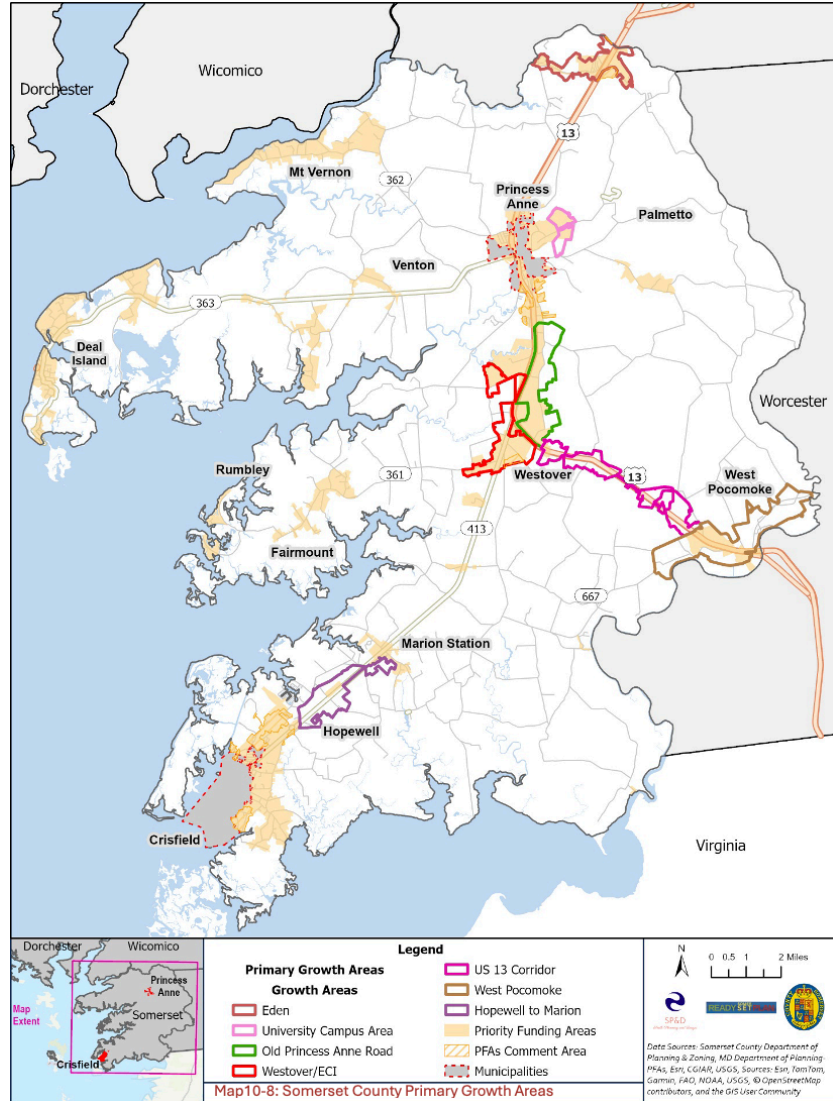
*As part of this planning process, Somerset County requested early use of draft land use data from the Maryland Department of Planning. Somerset County reviewed this data prior to usage in this Comprehensive Plan. Per the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) correspondence specific to data **utilization August 14, 2024**. The MDP's draft 2018 Land Use data along with the draft classification descriptions and methodology documentation were provided for the local review and comprehensive planning, however this information was not final. **MDP's draft 2018 Land Use data was provided for use in the comprehensive plan**. The final 2018 Statewide Land Use Map (2024 Edition) was released January 2025.*

Note: Due to differences in how the 2018 land use data set was created, it cannot be directly compared to the 2010 Land Use/Land Cover data. Therefore, it is not possible to directly compare the two datasets to determine changes over the last decade. The 2018 land use data set was developed using available parcel polygons attributed with tax assessment data as of project initiation in early 2020, Computer-Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) data dated February 2020, and the Chesapeake Bay Program's 2017/18 Land Use Land Cover data (2022 edition). In addition, the land use classification scheme was updated with the decision to update only urban land uses. Maryland Department of Planning's land use map classifications detail land use types such as low to high-density residential, commercial, and other developed areas and no longer distinguishes between different types of undeveloped land such as agriculture, forest, wetland, and barren lands.

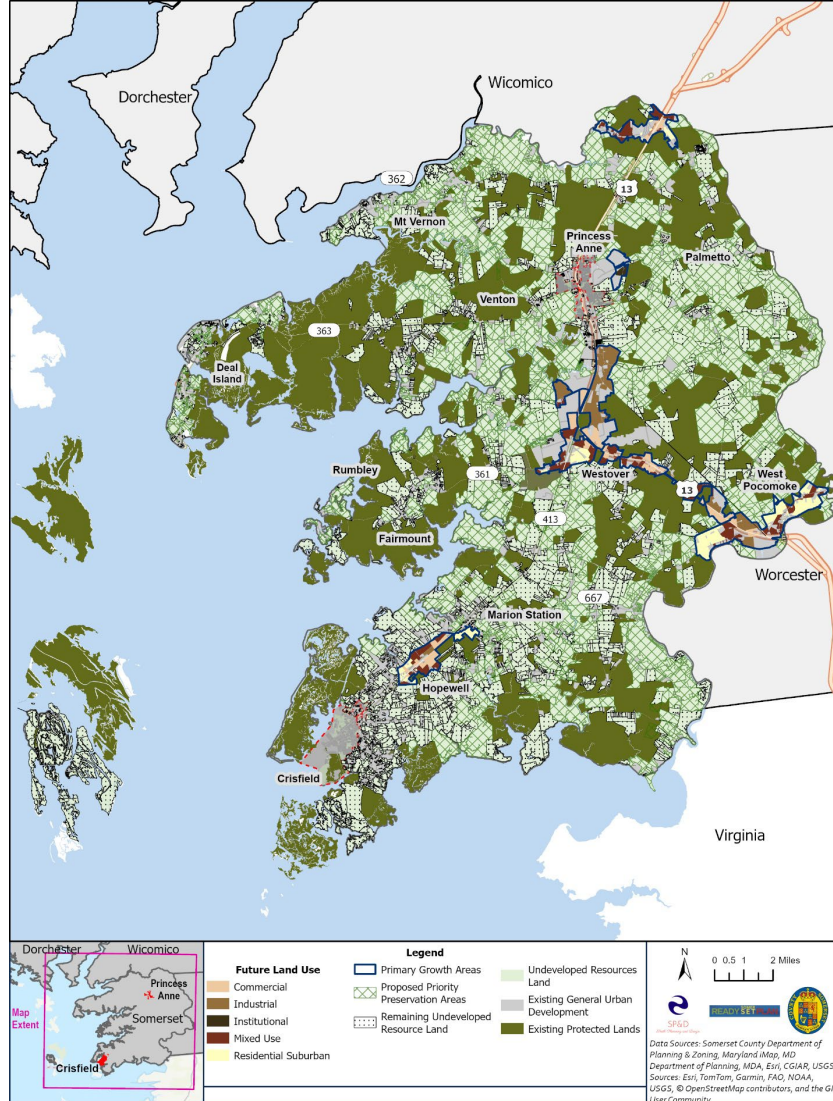
Draft Plan Review



Existing Land Use



Primary Growth Areas



Future Land Use Map Plan (FLUMP)

Draft Plan Review

Chapter 10: Land Use

- Primary Growth Area Designation & Implementation

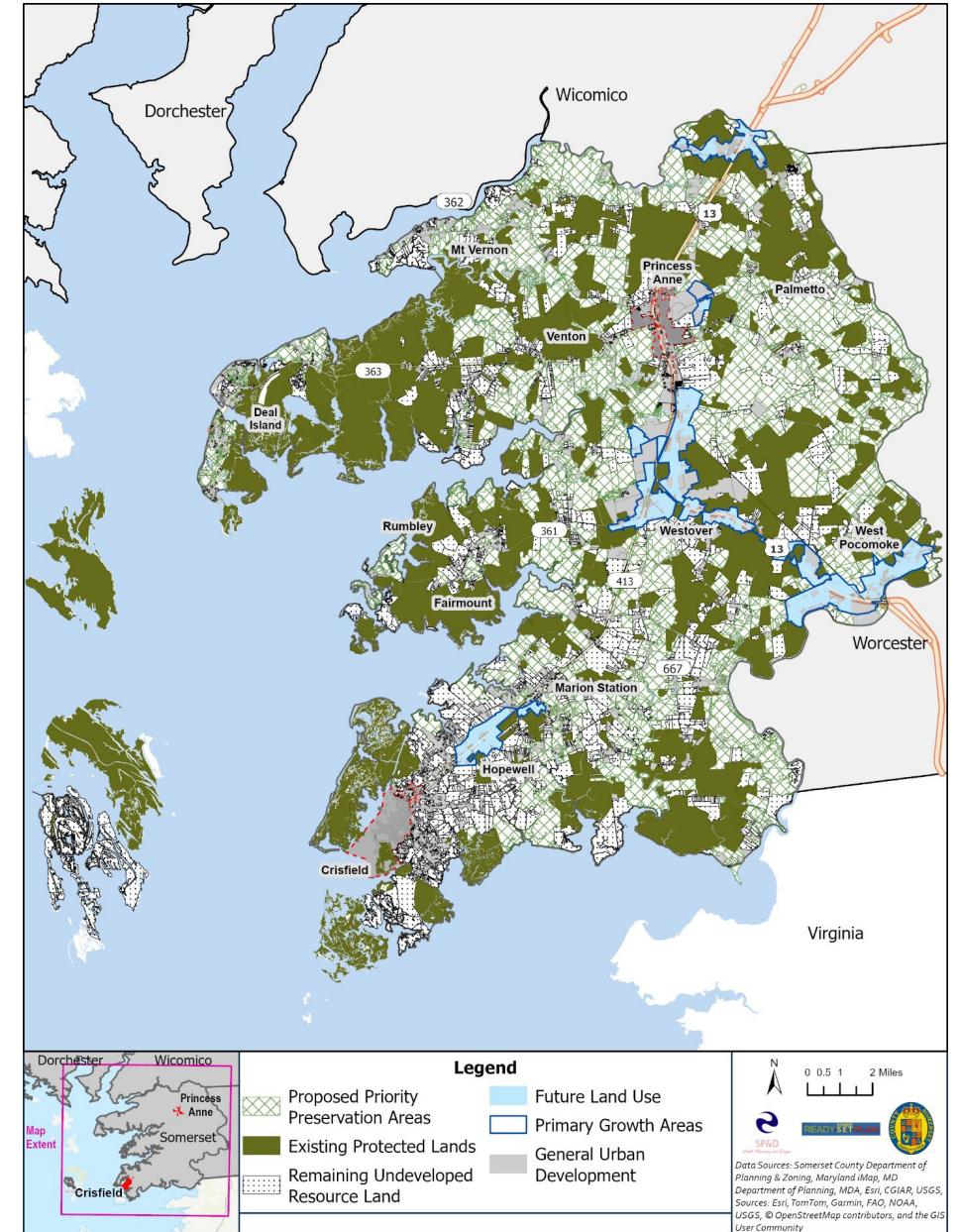
Primary Growth Area Designation & Implementation				
Primary Growth Area	Description of Future Land Use	Modifications to Priority Funding Areas	Modifications to Existing Land Use	Modifications to Existing Zoning

- Secondary Growth Areas (Infill Areas) - intended principally for residential development with supporting community facilities.
- In addition, the Greater Crisfield Area was identified for sewer expansion to replace failing septic systems. This area could be considered for infill development following this expansion project. This area is included as a long-range plan in the draft Water and Sewer Plan.

Draft Plan Review

Chapter 11: Priority Preservation Area

- This chapter informed the Chapter 10: Land Use— adjustments made thereafter to the Primary Growth Areas and Future Land Use Map Plan.
- Protected lands in Somerset County total 81,758 acres, or 40% of the total land area.
- Undeveloped resource land parcels containing prime agriculture soils and designated as PPA total 1,683 parcels containing 60,217 acres.



Next Steps

- Dept. of Technical & Community Services Review & Comment
 - Draft Chapter 10: Land Use
- Provide the Technical Committee with Somerset County Comprehensive Plan for review and comment
- Upload draft Somerset County Comprehensive Plan to project website for public review and comment
- Provide Maryland Department of Planning with Somerset County Comprehensive Plan
- Integration of review comments
- Planning and Zoning Commission recommendation submittal to Board of County Commissioners
- Plan Adoption Process