



## TOWN OF IRVINGTON, VIRGINIA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2017

# *Town of Irvington*

Comprehensive Plan 2017



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Community Planning Partners, Inc.; Google Earth; Preferred Hotels & Resorts

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PURPOSE

The Comprehensive Plan is a guide for the physical development of the Town of Irvington to the year 2027. It addresses the entire Town and is intended to positively influence all the physical elements which make up its form. Towards this end, the overriding purpose of the Plan is to encourage the continued development of a safe, healthy, and prosperous community by offering a distinctive “vision” for the Town.

The Comprehensive Plan represents the most important public document for orchestrating growth and development in the years ahead. It establishes goals, objectives, and strategies to guide both civic and public activities related to land use and resource utilization for ten years.

Though the Plan outlines a long-term vision, it is not static. The Comprehensive Plan is meant to be a “living document” – continually reviewed and periodically updated based on changing conditions and shifting resources. Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan is only as good as the tools and actions utilized in implementing the plan. It comes to life as action plans and specific project plans are developed and implemented.

## 1.2 AUTHORITY

Chapter 22 of Title 15.2 of the Code of Virginia grants local governments distinct powers and responsibilities to plan for future growth and regulate the use of land within their jurisdictions. One primary way this is accomplished is through the Comprehensive Plan.

Section 15.2-2223 of the Code of Virginia mandates that:

“The local planning commission shall prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction and every governing body shall adopt a comprehensive plan for the territory under its jurisdiction.”

The Planning Commission of the Town of Irvington is tasked with the responsibility of preparing the Plan and recommending the Plan for adoption by the Town Council.

## 1.3 TOWN BOUNDARY

It is very typical for there to be confusion as to the exact location of a municipality’s corporate limits. This can be true of those who reside inside a given municipality and those who reside just outside of its corporate limit. Readers of this Comprehensive Plan should review the maps contained herein for the precise delineation of the boundary of the Town of Irvington. It should be noted that the Irvington Postal Zip Code (22480) encompasses a geographic area which extends well beyond the boundary of the Town of Irvington. While many of the residents living outside of the Town, but residing within the 22480 Zip Code might identify with Irvington and take an interest in its affairs, the data, descriptive information, and planning discussions contained in this Comprehensive Plan are limited to matters pertinent to the Town of Irvington as established by the Town Charter and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## 2 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 POPULATION AND AGE

The Town of Irvington experienced a dip (10%) in its total population between the 2000 and 2010 Censuses, and a similar decline (3.2%) by the 2014 estimate. As seen in Figure 1 below, this decrease in population exceeds the decline countywide (3.0% from 2000-2014). Note that the numbers provided in Figure 1 below represent adjusted population counts for Irvington provided by the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service. Erroneous data provided through the 2000 Census necessitated these adjustments. Subjects for which adjusted data are not available, such as household counts, do not include 2000 Census data.

As a waterfront community, the Town has a larger percentage of part-time residents than most other municipalities in Virginia and the Northern Neck. The Town's Planning Commission members cite a gradual transition over the past 15 years from a majority of full-time residents to more part-time and seasonal residents. Lancaster County's tax records confirm this by showing that of all Town residences, roughly half are under the possession of an owner whose mailing address is somewhere other than Irvington.

Though Irvington's population swells during the warm weather months, any temporary increase would not be depicted in a year-round count of the population.

Irvington is also prone to more rapid turnover, as a destination for retirees and second homes. According to the National Institute on Aging's *Health and Retirement Study* (2015), retired individuals will, on average, live an additional seventeen to twenty years after retirement.

In spite of the small population decrease in Lancaster County since 2000, projections indicate that over the next 15 years the County is expected to steadily undergo a gradual uptick in population similar to the Northern Neck. Since Irvington's population is largely seasonal, population fluctuation at the County and Regional levels will likely not have a significant influence on the Town. Whereas the County may be subject to the ebbs and flows of migration and natural increase, Irvington is greatly affected by in-migration, out-migration, and full-time versus part-time residency.

**Figure 1: Population Change, 2000-2014**

	2000	2010	2000-2010	2014	2010-2014	2000-2014	2000-2014 Change
Irvington	480	432	-48	418	-14	-62	-12.92%
Lancaster County	11,567	11,391	-176	11,224	-167	-343	-2.97%
Northern Neck Planning District Commission	49,353	50,429	1,076	50,134	-295	+781	1.58%

Source: U.S. Census, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

**Figure 2: Households & Families, 2010**

	2010
Total Households	215
<b>Family Households (Families)</b>	<b>142</b>
Female Householder with Children	4
Nonfamily Households	73
<b>Households with Children</b>	<b>29</b>
Households with Householder 65 or older	98
Average Household Size	2.01
Average Family Size	2.42

Source: U.S. Census

There were 215 households in Irvington in 2010, a significant number of which were occupied by householders 65 years of age or older. Figure 2 above emphasizes how few households in Irvington are comprised of families with children.

At the current rate, new homes or homes new to the market will be occupied more and more by “empty-nesters”. This demographic represented nearly half (45.6%) of all households in the Town in 2010.

Of the increase in population that is predicted for Lancaster County and the Northern Neck, the greatest influence will be in persons of retirement age. An *Estimate of Projected Age in Virginia, 2020 – 2040* published by the Weldon Cooper Center in 2012 indicated that between 2020 and 2030, the Northern Neck will see a 24% increase in the population age 65 and over. Lancaster County is predicted to experience a similar increase (22%) in the same cohort. Another notable 20% and 23% increase will occur in the cohort of persons age 40 to 49 as the millennial generation reaches middle age in the Northern Neck and Lancaster County, respectively.

As of the 2010 Census, the largest proportion of the Town’s population was concentrated in the three cohorts for ages 55 through 69 years. The vast majority of of the Town’s residents are between 45 and 74 years of age. In fact, no individual age cohort under 45 years makes up more than 6% of the male or female population in the Town. Figure 4 on the following page provides a graphic depiction of the townwide age distribution.

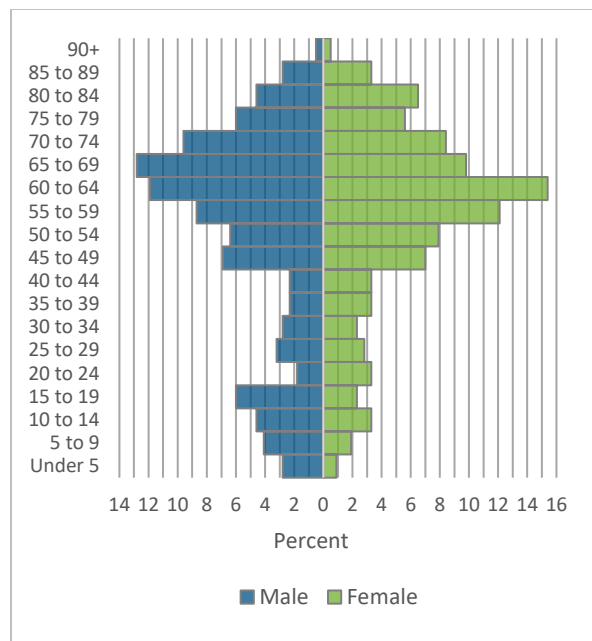
**Figure 3: Population Projections**

	2020	2030	2040	2020-2040	2010-2040	2010-2020 Change
<b>Northern Neck Planning District Commission</b>	52,444	54,511	56,443	+3,999	+6,014	+11.92%
<b>Lancaster County</b>	11,736	12,166	12,581	+845	+1,190	+10.45%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service



**Figure 4: Irvington Population Distribution, 2010**



Source: U.S. Census

Both the Town and County are experiencing declines in the youth and middle aged segments of the population with a more dramatic decline in Irvington. As of 2014, the median age for the Town was 62.6 years, compared to 55.3 years in the County. By 2030, the population distribution of Lancaster County is expected to resemble an

inverted top with those aged 65 to 74 comprising the largest proportion of the population and those aged 25 to 34 the least.

### 2.1.1 Key Takeaway

Trending figures support the Town's acknowledgement that it has become a destination for adults nearing or in retirement. More than any time in its history, Irvington is a community of choice for seasonal and weekend residents and extended renters. However, with an increase in the number of part-time residents, the Town will likely struggle to retain a base of permanent residents that have a vested interest in the day-to-day life of the community. Given current trends, Irvington's population will continue to drift downward as more families are replaced by non-resident property owners. Irvington needs to find a balance between being a premier vacation and seasonal destination and positioning itself to attract younger generations and family households that prefer quaint small town living. This balance will likely require additional infrastructure and amenities attractive to these younger residents and households.

## 2.2 HOUSING

**Figure 5: Housing Occupancy in Irvington, 2000-2010**

	2000	2010	2000-2010 Change
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>+49</b>
Occupied Housing Units	240	215	-25
Vacant Housing Units	85	159	+74
For Rent	N/A	9	N/A
For Sale Only	N/A	14	N/A
<b>Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>+61</b>
All Other Vacants	N/A	19	N/A
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	4.1%	7.0%	+2.9%
Rental Vacancy Rate	5.9%	23.7%	+17.8%

Source: U.S. Census

Irvington experienced a housing boom prior to the recent recession like much of the United States. Figure 5 above shows that from 2000 to 2010, available housing increased by approximately 50 units, almost half of which are a part of the Vineyard Tents development. However, the twenty or so cottages at the vineyard are mainly for weekly and bi-weekly rentals and therefore do not increase the Town's permanent residential population.

The 2010 Census determined that the number of occupied units declined by 25 since 2000. In order for a residence to be considered occupied, the person or family must live and sleep in the home more frequently than they do anywhere else. As anyone in the Town can attest, many of the homes are not the owner's primary residence. From 2000 to 2010, the number of residences considered vacant (defined by the Census Bureau as an occupiable dwelling for which no Census form was returned and appears vacant, as verified by a Census enumerator) nearly doubled.

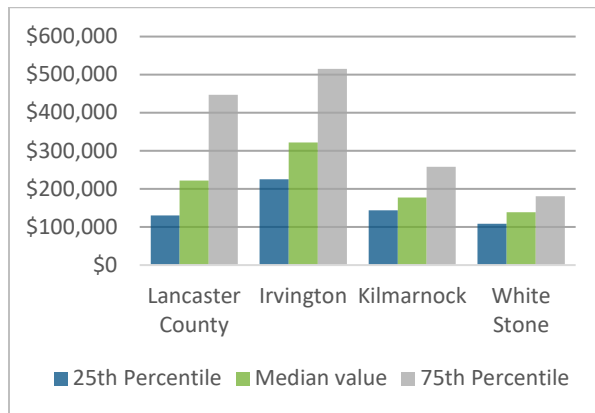
As can be seen in the above figures, most of these are residences for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. It is possible that there are more traditionally vacant properties (for sale, for long-term rent, etc.) in the Town as a result of the housing crash of the 2008 and its aftermath, however it is difficult to determine this conclusively. Figure 6 below depicts the 2014 distribution of housing units in Irvington and Lancaster County by type. As of the 2014 estimate, there were 379 housing units in Irvington, a minor increase since 2010 which indicates that only a handful of new homes was constructed since the most recent census. Of the 379 units, 371 or 98%, are single-family homes. The only other housing type delineated in the data from 2014 is one multifamily building with two units. Lancaster County is primarily dominated by single-family homes as well, but not by as much, with 82% of units designated as single-family.

**Figure 6: Housing Units, 2014**

	Irvington	Percent	Lancaster Co.	Percent
Total Housing Units	379	[x]	7,517	[x]
<b>Single Family</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>97.9%</b>	<b>6,125</b>	<b>81.5%</b>
Attached & Multi-Family	2	0.5%	860	11.4%

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2010-2014 Estimates

**Figure 7: Value of Owner-Occupied Housing, 2014**



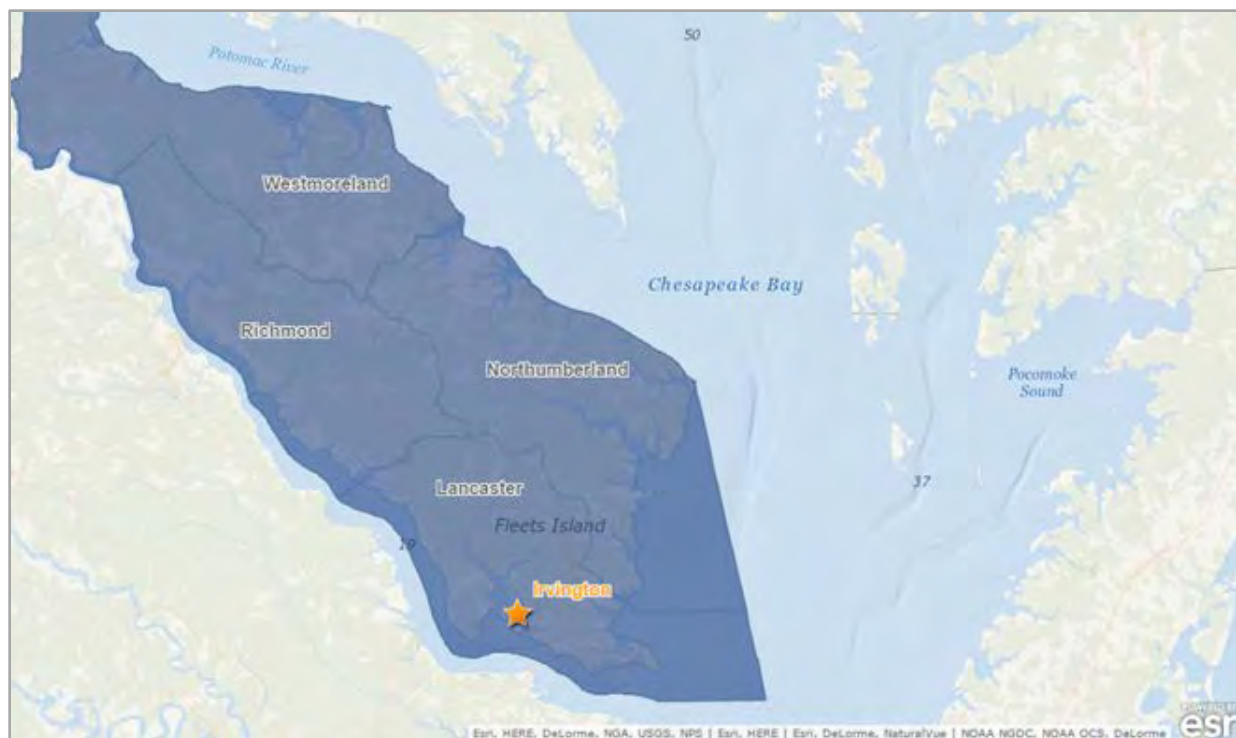
Source: U.S. Census

As seen in Figure 7 above, housing values are higher in Irvington than the Lancaster County average. The median value of owner-occupied housing in the Town is \$322,200 according to 2014 estimates. This is far higher than the surrounding area as equivalent median home values in Kilbuck and White Stone are \$177,500 and \$138,500, respectively. The countywide median home value is \$222,200, very close to the lower quartile value of homes in Irvington.

### 2.2.1 Key Takeaway

The price point of Irvington's existing housing stock is geared more towards those with higher incomes, a positive when it comes to attracting developers and very stable, well-to-do residents. Alternatively, high housing prices coupled with the homogeneity of housing choices can limit growth and the attraction of new residents, particularly younger households with more limited income. Also, individuals hoping to downsize after their children leave home may have no choice but to remain in their existing home or relocate outside of the Town since smaller homes and apartments are very limited in Irvington.

**Figure 8: Town of Irvington Regional Setting**



## 2.3 HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

### 2.3.1 Regional Setting

The Town of Irvington is located in Lancaster County, Virginia in the southeastern portion of the Northern Neck, a peninsula bounded by the Potomac River to the north, the Chesapeake Bay to the east, and the Rappahannock River to the south. Irvington sits on the shores of Carter's Creek, a tributary of the Rappahannock River.

### 2.3.2 History

Irvington's identity is strongly tied to its location on the water. The area now known as the Town of Irvington was originally established as Carter's Creek Wharf in honor of the surrounding waterway. The original wharf community was largely isolated from surrounding localities due to poor road conditions. As a result, water transport was the only practical way to reach the community prior to the introduction of paved

roads and bridges in the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Residents relied on ferry boat service to cross the Rappahannock River.

This land-based isolation was significantly mitigated by the success the Town found during the steamboat era. At its height, steamboats to and from Baltimore and Norfolk would stop in Carter's Creek up to eight times per week. Soon support industries and residential dwellings began to develop along the Town's then commercial center, present-day Steamboat Road. The village quickly grew into Lancaster County's largest community and was renamed Irvington in 1891 after local resident Captain Levin Handy Irving to alleviate confusion with postal delivery.

The decline of the steamboat industry, an unfortunate fire in 1917, and a major storm in 1933 resulted in a loss of many of the Town's

water-based commercial enterprises and original architecture. The Town's remaining historic architecture is included within the boundaries of the Irvington/Carter's Creek Historic District as shown in the map at the end of this section. The district includes the Town's first public school house, which now functions as the popular Hope and Glory Inn.



**The Hope and Glory Inn**

*Source: Community Planning Partners, Inc.*

### 2.3.3 Arts, Culture & Events

Present-day Irvington continues to benefit from its idyllic location near the Chesapeake Bay and has experienced a resurgence as an attractive tourist destination. Irvington is probably most well-known as the location of the Tides Inn (established in 1947); however, its history as a

thriving steamboat community lives on through the Steamboat Era Museum. The museum was established to preserve the legacy of steamboats in the Town and throughout the Chesapeake Bay. From its grassroots inception in 1999 to its opening day in 2004, the museum has evolved to become a unique treasure for the local community and visitors alike. In fact, the Steamboat Era Museum is the only museum dedicated to the history of steamboats on the Chesapeake Bay.

In addition to the Town's historic assets, Irvington further offers popular local events that attract visitors from around the region. The Irvington Commons is centrally located along King Carter Drive and serves as the Town's hub of activity. The Irvington Village Improvement Association (VIA) sponsors and implements the majority of the community events held there.



**Irvington Commons**

*Source: Town of Irvington*



**Steamboat Era Museum**

*Source: Virginia Foundation for the Humanities*

### Irvington Farmers Market

The Irvington Farmers Market is held every first Saturday from May through November at the Irvington Commons. The market attracts over 100 vendors from across the Northern Neck and beyond who display artisan-made crafts, breads, cheeses, furniture, jewelry and artwork. The Irvington Farmers Market was voted Best Farmer's Market on Virginia's East Coast by *Virginia Living Magazine* from 2012 through 2016.

**Typhoon Nationals**

Irvington is home to the nation's largest fleet of Cape Dory Typhoons, and the Rappahannock River Yacht Club hosts an annual regatta in June that draws entrants from a wide geographic area.

**Annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade**

Irvington's annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade winds down King Carter Drive and continues along Irvington Road, drawing visitors from across the region. The parade typically includes over 100 entries and is followed by an antique car show on the Irvington Commons with over 75 models dating back to the early 1900s. Locals favorably refer to the event as a "Hometown Parade" reminiscent of a scene by Norman Rockwell.

**U. S. Air Force Band Concert**

The premier event occurs in the summer, usually around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, when VIA presents the USAF Heritage of America Band. This renowned group, with 40-plus musicians, brings marches, show tunes, orchestral, and jazz numbers to a huge crowd. Held on the Commons, the event provides the perfect setting for family picnics and gatherings of friends.

**Annual Halloween Costume Contest**

The annual event features prizes for best costumes for children under 13 years of age.

**Annual Turkey Shoot Regatta and Turkey Trot**

Irvington marks the fall with two region-wide community events. In early October, the Rappahannock River Yacht Club, Yankee Point Racing and Cruising Club, and Rappahannock Yachts host the Hospice Turkey Shoot Regatta, a fund-raising event with all proceeds going to local Hospices.

In November, the VIA co-sponsors the annual Turkey Trot, which includes two- and five-mile runs and a 100-yard Tot Trot for children.

**Annual Christmas Holiday Festival**

Each year brings Christmas caroling and the blessing of the Town Christmas Tree on Christmas Eve.

**2.3.4 Key Takeaway**

Irvington's identity is deeply rooted in the steamboat era and the development of the Town as a close-knit waterfront community. Town leaders and citizens have worked diligently to preserve this original village character and it is reflected in the Town's local events, the majority of which take place at the Irvington Commons and emphasize community and small town hospitality. Preserving and enhancing the Town's village aesthetic and historic assets are essential to residents and must remain a high priority in the future.



# HISTORIC DISTRICT

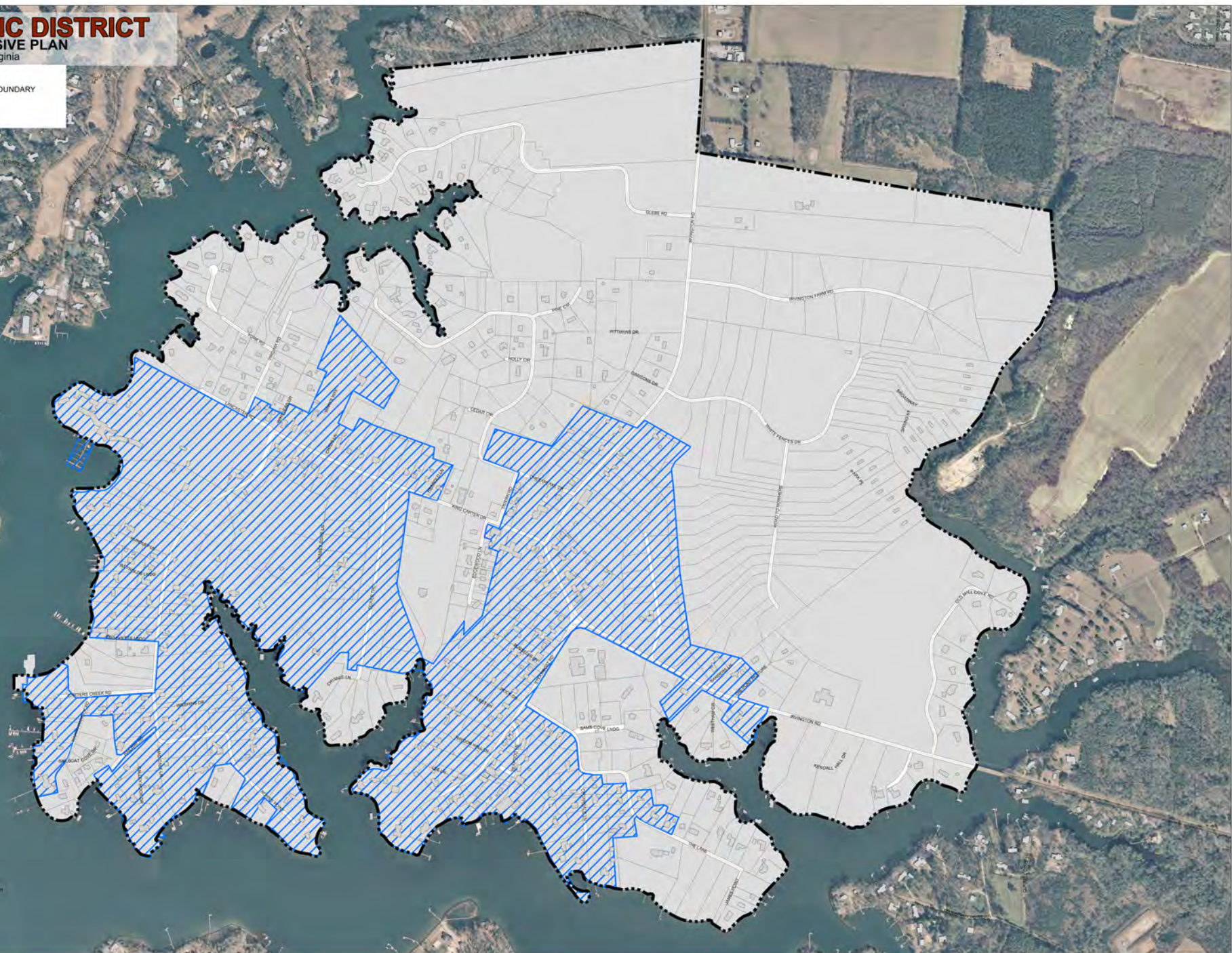
## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Town of Irvington, Virginia

### LEGEND

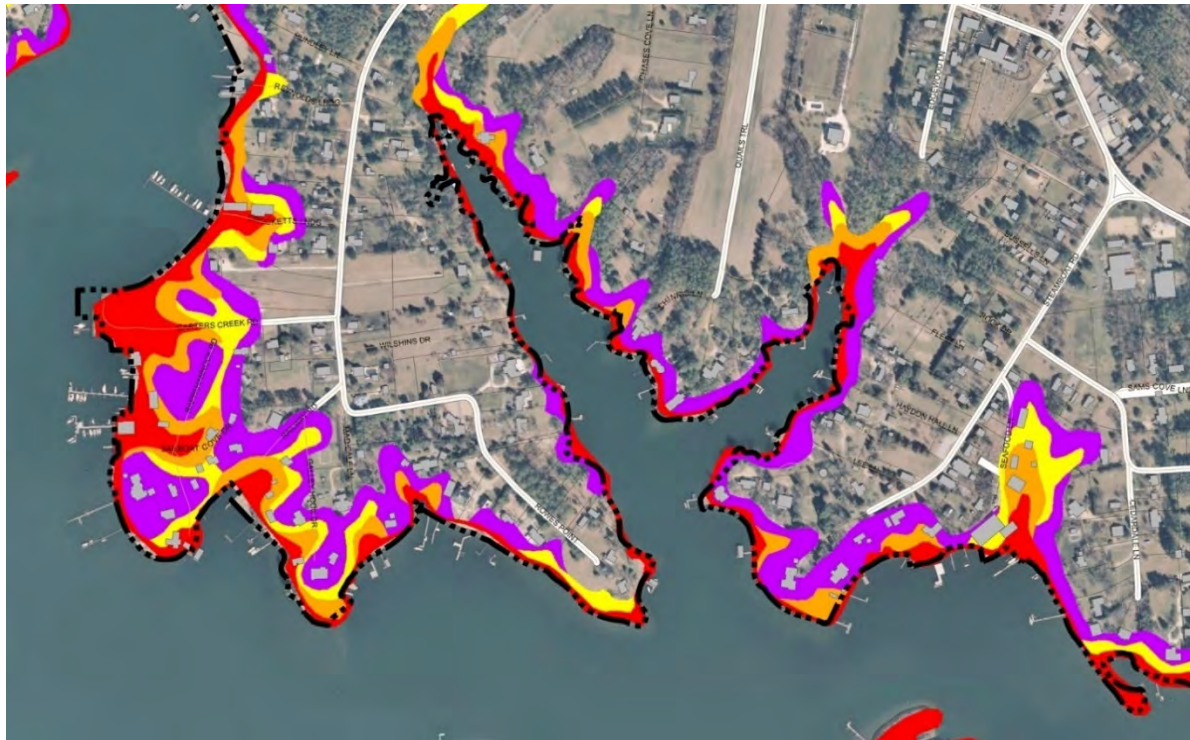
----- TOWN OF IRVINGTON BOUNDARY

▨ HISTORIC DISTRICT





**Figure 9: Irvington Category 1-4 Hurricane Storm Surge Map**



*Source: Storm surge data obtained through FEMA; Mapping by Community Planning Partners, Inc.*

## **2.4 ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

### **2.4.1 Coastal Waters and Wetlands**

#### **Carter's Creek**

Carter's Creek, the last major tributary along the north bank of the Rappahannock River, is the crowning jewel of Irvington. Irvington's economy and quality of life are dependent on the locational advantage the creek provides. The geography of the creek flowing to the Rappahannock River serves as a direct route to the Chesapeake Bay with the advantage of being set back from the cross hairs of coastal storms and tidal surges.

#### **Flood-Prone Areas**

The peninsula that is the Town of Irvington, demarcated by the tidal waterways of Carter's Creek, has several minor flood-prone areas of note. These flood-prone areas are defined by the

100-year flood plain as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). However, the 100-year flood plain does not extend very far inland into the Town's residential areas. All in all, about 59 acres (roughly 6%) of the Town's 959 acres of land area lies within the 100-year flood plain.

The largest area within the flood plain is in the southwestern portion of Town. The yacht club, and marina, as well as a sliver of residential area in the southwestern corner are in the 100-year floodplain. Other flood-prone areas include areas extending from the creek in the northwest part of town and along the Eastern Branch of Carter's Creek. These areas, subject to inundation from a 100-year flood, can experience damage resulting in expensive repairs to structures, loss of use of structures, inoperable septic systems, and water contamination. Exacerbated by existing develop-



ment in flood-prone areas, Irvington should continue to work with regulatory agencies to restrict development in the 100-year floodplain.

Areas that flood from storm surge are comparable to areas that flood from 100-year storms, given Irvington's tidal location. A category 1 hurricane would push water from the Bay and Rappahannock River roughly to the same point as a 100-year storm. Figure 9 on the previous page depicts local category 1-4 hurricane storm surge areas, with red areas representing category 1 hurricanes and purple areas representing category 4 hurricanes. The Environmental Factors Map that follows this page shows the FEMA delineated 100-year flood plain.

# ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Town of Irvington, Virginia

### LEGEND

-----TOWN OF IRVINGTON BOUNDARY

100 YEAR FEMA FLOODPLAIN



COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERS, INC.  
Richmond, Virginia  
January 2017

**Wetlands**

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service has defined wetlands as land transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water. The Town of Irvington contains minimal tidal and non-tidal wetlands. Considering the amount of tidal water that envelops Irvington, there are surprisingly few marshy or estuarine environments inside the Town. There is one small freshwater wetland between two ponds in the northeastern corner of the Town, and a few small pockets of tidal wetlands along the shore scattered about.

No matter how small, wetlands are an ever vital natural resource offering benefits to people and the environment. They provide aesthetic, recreational and economic benefits to communities. Fish rely on wetlands for spawning and nursery grounds, waterfowl for feeding sites, birds for a nesting habitat, and wildlife for a home. Wetlands also allow for groundwater recharge, flood control, pollutant absorption, and sediment retention especially during stormwater runoff. Therefore, it is of utmost importance for Irvington to preserve the wetlands, however small, that are endemic to the Town.

**Water Access & Use**

Irvington's adjacency to tidal waterways that are mostly protected from the major storms is its greatest asset and advantage. It is perhaps because of this that all of Irvington's shoreline is under private ownership. While a majority of this land contains private residences, other parcels are either undeveloped or home to a waterfront business. Entities like the marinas, Tides Inn, and Rappahannock River Yacht Club provide partial public access to state waters, but for members, customers, and guests only.

One privately owned parcel located off Steamboat Road referred to as Gaskins Landing does provide public access to the Eastern Branch of Carter's Creek. The owners of the site allow the general public to take advantage of the boat ramp and limited parking for a voluntary fee or donation. Other than Gaskins Landing, Irvington currently has no areas designated for public access or public use along its shoreline.

**2.4.2 Topography & Soils**

The topography of Irvington is such that it is an ideal location for coastal water access and for development of all types. Much of the shoreline rises fairly quickly from sea level to at least 20 feet above sea level. Only in certain areas to the south and southwest does the shore not rise rapidly. Away from the immediate shore, the Town is relatively flat with nearly unnoticeable changes in elevation.

While it is nearly impossible to be more than a half mile from water anywhere in Irvington, less than a quarter of the Town's total land area rests below 20 feet above sea level. A majority of the southern and western half of the Town is between 20 and 30 feet above sea level, and the northern and eastern half is mostly between 30 and 35 feet above sea level. The flat nature of the Town's inland topography can inhibit stormwater run-off following moderate or significant rain events. Areas along the shore with steeper slopes drain more quickly into Carter's Creek. However, quick run-off along the shore adds to coastal erosion problems.

The shoreline is made up of steep sandy land where the land rises more dramatically, and sloping sandy land where it is a more modest slope. In the interior of Irvington, the soils are prime for agriculture and also for development. The soil is predominantly a level and gently sloping Sassafras fine sandy loam that drains well



and represents two to three feet of separation between the surface and the water table below.

### **2.4.3 Key Takeaway**

Private access to state waters in Irvington is available to residents who are waterfront property owners as well as to customers of the businesses that offer access to state waters for a fee. These businesses include marinas, the Tides Inn, and the Town's various industrial uses. The most common type of access to state waters is through private, residential ownership.

The last of the privately owned commercial sites is Gaskins Landing which is located off Steamboat Road on the Eastern Branch of Carter's Creek. Although this site is privately owned, the owners allow it to be used by the general public. The owners offer a boat ramp and limited parking in exchange for a small donation.

There are currently no publicly owned access points to the water in Irvington. As a result, landlocked residents of the Town may lack any means of access to the water. In addition to public access, Irvington currently does not have any areas designated as public use areas along the coast.

Measures should be taken to increase the availability of public access to the shoreline in order to ensure a high quality of life for all residents as well as continue to enhance Irvington's appeal as a destination on the Chesapeake Bay.

## **2.5 EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING**

### **2.5.1 Existing Land Use**

The Land Use patterns in the Town of Irvington emerged because of its role as a waterfront community developed originally around the boating and fishing industry with later development characterized by residential and recreational use, including the continued growth of the Tides Inn. Much of the industrial uses have declined over the years reflecting the overall decline in the fishing, oystering, and crabbing industries. The Town has traditionally had two commercial hubs, a larger one primarily centered around the intersection of Irvington Road and King Carter Drive and a much smaller hub at the end of Steamboat Road.

The Town still has 478.3 acres of land that is in agricultural or forested use or has been subdivided for development, but remains vacant. This land is primarily interior land on the north and east of the Town without access to the water. The recent subdivisions are subject to the provisions of the Town's R-2 Residential District designation that require residential lots to be a minimum of two (2) acres. The lots along Irvington Farm Road and the Road to Nowhere are subject to this requirement. Development of these subdivisions has been slowed by the bust of the "housing bubble" of the mid- and late-2000's and the recession that followed. Additionally, the development potential of these lots is likely impacted by their lack of water access where water access is "king."

It should be noted, however, that the Hills Quarter development just north of Irvington also has no Bay or river access, but rather depends on amenities to spur development including public water and sewer, significant landscaping including man-made lakes, and the adjoining King Carter Golf Course. Hills Quarter also

clusters the developed housing on smaller lots to allow the development of the common spaces listed above.

As can be seen in Figure 10 on the following page and the Existing Land Use Map that follows next, the Town's predominant Land Use is single-family residential, making up 344.8 of the Town's 957.5 acres, or 36.0% of the land. Forested land makes up the next largest Land Use at 236.1 acres (24.7%), mainly concentrated in the northern and eastern portions of Town with scattered parcels throughout the more developed portions of Irvington. The vacant land mentioned previously makes up 190.2 acres or 19.9% of the Town. Agricultural use has dwindled to 48.1 acres, half of which is on land held in conservancy on the north end of Irvington. In an "urban" setting, agricultural, forested, and vacant land is considered to be developable land unless impeded by environmental factors such as wetlands, steep slopes, etc. or in conservancy. Most of the developable land in Irvington is not significantly constrained and therefore the Town continues to have significant development potential with 450.5 acres of developable land, after subtracting out the land held in conservancy, or 47.0% of the land.

As referenced earlier, land in Industrial use has shrunk significantly over the years as has the amount of land dedicated to boat sales and repairs. Land in retail and service use had grown, mainly through the continued growth of the Tides Inn complex on the western edge of Town and the creation of the Vineyard Tents development (most of which is in vacation rental use) on the eastern edge of Town. Retail and service use represents 56.0 acres of land or 5.8% of the Town's land mass, making it the 4<sup>th</sup> largest Land Use.

**Figure 10: Existing Land use**

	Land Use Classification	Acres	Percent
Residential	Single-Family Residential	344.8	36.0%
	Single-Family/Business-Professional	2.0	0.2%
	Single-Family Rental	1.1	0.1%
	Multi-Family	0.3	0.0%
Commercial	Business/Professional	8.7	0.9%
	General Commercial	1.7	0.2%
	Retail & Service	56.0	5.8%
Industrial	Industrial	11.9	1.2%
Public and Semi-Public	Community Facilities	6.9	0.7%
	Institutional	8.6	0.9%
	Churches, Cemeteries & Lodges	6.6	0.7%
	Rights of Way	33.1	3.5%
	Utilities	1.4	0.1%
Undeveloped	Agricultural	24.2	2.5%
	Agricultural in Conservancy	23.9	2.5%
	Forested	236.1	24.7%
	Vacant	190.2	19.9%
<b>Total Land Area</b>		<b>957.5</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: CPP Field Survey, June 2016; updated through December 2016.

### 2.5.2 Current Zoning

The Existing Zoning Districts Map that follows the Existing Land Use Map shows the current Zoning Districts for the Town of Irvington. For the most part it reflects the Existing Land Use Map. It does, however, set a current and clear course for Irvington by indicating that the larger undeveloped tracts of land in the northern and eastern portions of Town are to be developed at a lower density (one dwelling unit per 2 acres of land) than the existing residential portions of Town (one dwelling unit per 1 acre of land for new development). This delineation does help preserve the small town and rural atmosphere in Irvington, but it also has the potential, intentional or unintentional, to slow the pace of development of the remaining undeveloped land.

### 2.5.3 Key Takeaway

Irvington's current Land Uses are very reflective of a community geared towards persons with a second home or persons of retirement age that have gravitated to its waterside location and village feel. With the limited amount of general commercial and retail uses found in Irvington, residents depend on neighboring commercial and retail uses in nearby Kilmarnock and White Stone. As the Town looks to the future, it will need to strike a balance between preserving the village feel and promoting and facilitating the development of its remaining undeveloped land.



# EXISTING LAND USE

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Town of Irvington, Virginia

### LEGEND

----- TOWN OF IRVINGTON BOUNDARY

LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

RESIDENTIAL

SINGLE FAMILY

SINGLE FAMILY/RENTAL

SINGLE FAMILY/BUS. PROFESSIONAL

MULTI-FAMILY

COMMERCIAL

RETAIL & SERVICE

GENERAL COMMERCIAL

BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL

INDUSTRIAL

INDUSTRIAL

PUBLIC & SEMI PUBLIC

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

PLACES OF WORSHIP, CEMETERIES

LODGES

INSTITUTIONAL

UTILITIES

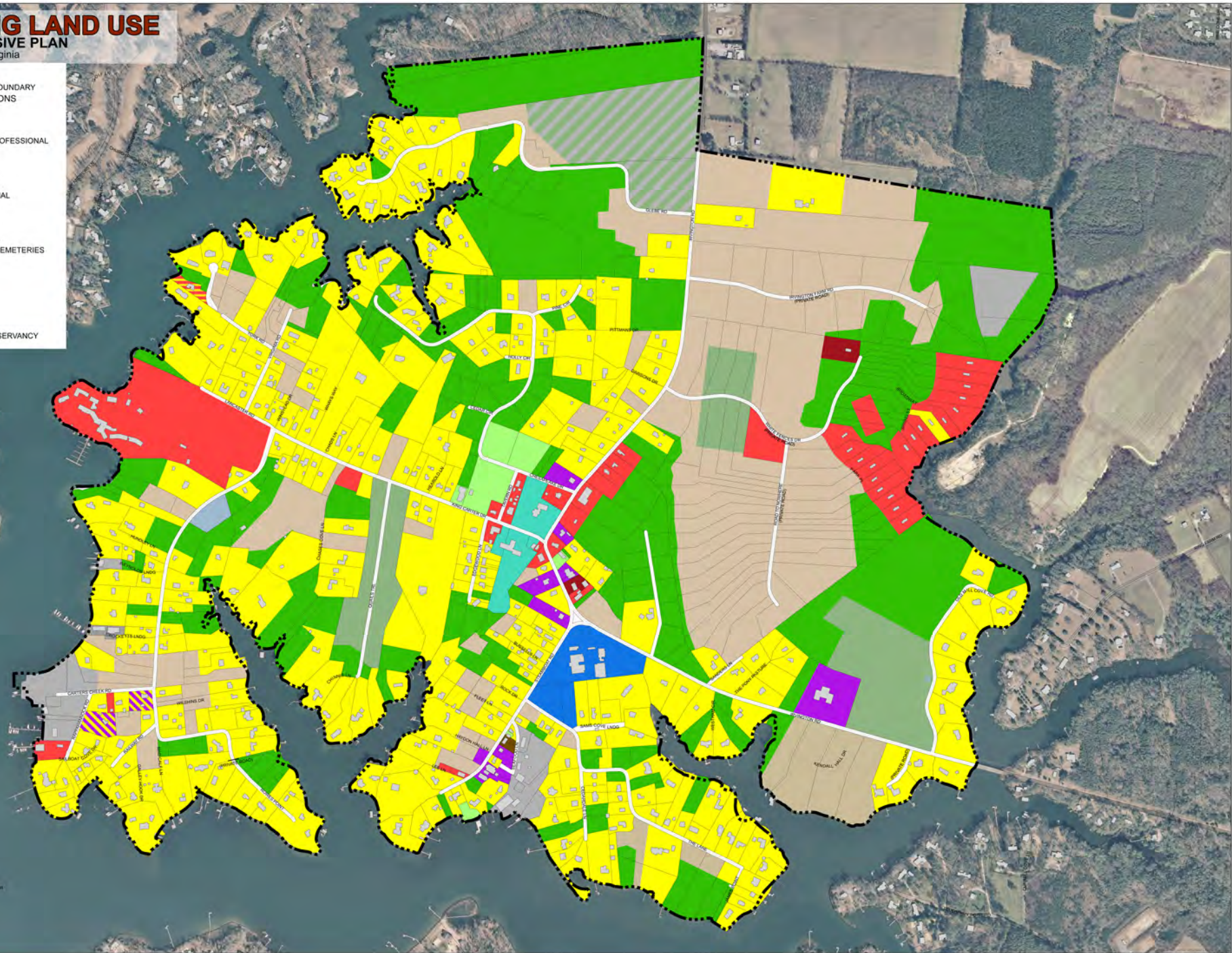
OTHER

VACANT

FORESTED

AGRICULTURAL

AGRICULTURAL IN CONSERVANCY





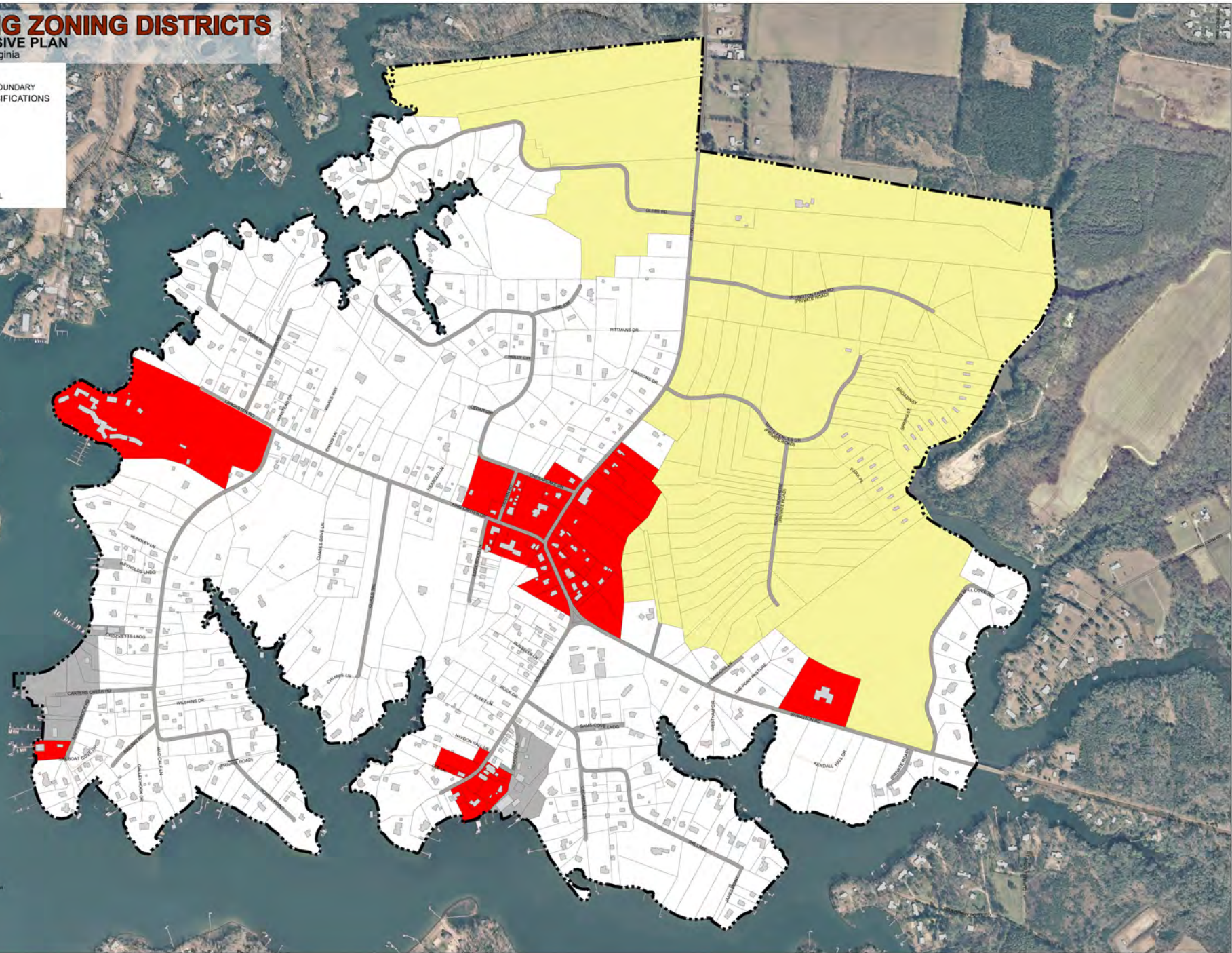
# EXISTING ZONING DISTRICTS

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Town of Irvington, Virginia

### LEGEND

- TOWN OF IRVINGTON BOUNDARY
- ZONING DISTRICT CLASSIFICATIONS
- RESIDENTIAL
  - R-1 RESIDENTIAL
  - R-2 RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL
  - B-1 & B-2 BUSINESS
- INDUSTRIAL
  - M-1 LIMITED INDUSTRIAL





## 2.6 DEVELOPMENT INTEREST

A number of landowners and developers have expressed an interest in new development and additional development on land they control. In several cases, land has already been subdivided and approved by the Town for development of additional single-family homes. The highlights of these “development interests” are outlined in the information that follows.

### 2.6.1 Approved Development

**Vineyard Meadow** – twenty-five (25) lots of approximately 2 acres each have been subdivided and approved for single-family homes along White Fences Road and the paved Road to Nowhere. At this point no development has occurred.

**Irvington Farms** – Seventeen (17) lots of approximately 2 acres each have been subdivided and approved for single-family homes along paved Irvington Farms Road. At this point no development has occurred.

**Unnamed Subdivision** – Ten (10) lots ranging from 0.7 to 1.2 acres each have been subdivided and approved for single-family homes along an unnamed right-of-way that runs north-south just to the east of the home addressed as 4693 Irvington Road. At this point no development has occurred.

**Revival and Renovation of Tides Inn** – The renovations/new construction are planned to expand and vary the accommodations and opportunities at the Tides Inn to attract a greater clientele. The goal of the owners is to provide additional benefit to local residents as well as transient guests. There are three major components to the proposed renovations:

- **The Spa** - The current spa will be transformed into an upscale, enhanced

facility that will allow the Tides Inn to compete with the best spas in the country. Larger and more luxurious, there will be guest rooms as well as a wider array of treatment options at the new Spa.

- **Conference Facilities** – A new 13,000 square foot conference center will be constructed to allow for expansion of business uses as well as to create opportunities for local residents to use the Tides Inn for their meetings.
- **Condominium Hotel Rooms** - Once renovations and new construction are fully completed, the Tides Inn will grow to approximately 167 rooms. These will consist of approximately 49 rooms in the “Old Inn” with the remaining being newly constructed condominium hotel and cottage units.

The plans for the revival and renovation of the Tides Inn have been approved in concept by the Town, but at this point no development has occurred.

### 2.6.2 Downtown Development Proposal

An Irvington property owner and regional developer has put forward a vision for the central business district of Irvington as a mixed-use development with pedestrian and bicycle connections that blends residential, commercial, cultural, and institutional uses in which those functions are physically and functionally integrated. This mixed-use development would take the form of a “town block” of mixed-uses in a complex of buildings along both sides of Irvington Road with small office, business, retail, and restaurant establishments at the ground level, moderately priced apartment or condominium residences on the upper floors, and off-street parking to minimize impacts on Irvington

Road. This development would utilize a consistent design concept and have a strong neighborhood character, continuing the trend started with the recent development of the Trick Dog restaurant and adjoining shops. The actual plans and details are still under consideration and development is not expected for another two to three years.

The Town recognizes that there has already been much investment in acquiring land resources to implement this vision. The planned improvements for the central business district of Irvington, in conjunction with the long-term plans for improvements at the Tides Inn, should bring much needed business activity to the Town of Irvington in 2018 and beyond. The final concept of small offices, unique shops, boutiques, restaurants, and appropriate housing in the Town of Irvington would be in step with all these, as well as other planned Town redevelopment activities.

### **2.6.3 Planned Unit & Clustered Development**

Because none of the previously approved subdivisions has yielded any new development to date and because of the interest in developing downtown Irvington with a mixed-use concept, the Planning Commission endeavored to educate itself regarding the efficacy of potentially creating and including a Planned Unit/Cluster Development ordinance in the Town's Zoning Ordinance. This new, more flexible type of zoning has been popular and useful in urban areas for many years and is finding more acceptance in rural and small town settings as well. The flexibility allowed under a Planned Unit Development accommodates a developer's interest in more intensive development in exchange for requiring additional up-front planning that lays the groundwork for the type and character of development a locality wants to see occur. The following is provided as

additional background information for this Comprehensive Plan.

As defined in the Code of Virginia, a "Planned Unit Development (PUD) means a form of development characterized by unified site design for a variety of housing types and densities, clustering of buildings, common open space, and a mix of building types and land uses in which project planning and density calculation are performed for the entire development rather than on an individual lot basis."

A PUD, as allowed by local ordinance, has a number of unique characteristics that encourages and enables a more flexible and livable development pattern that allows for both more density while at the same time preserving public or open space. These characteristics include:

**Floating Zone** – a PUD is a "floating zone" that is not designated on the locality's adopted zoning map, but is a zone that can be requested by a developer to provide for the unified development of a number of smaller adjoining parcels or a large parcel of land. Most communities require a minimum amount of contiguous land to qualify for a PUD ranging from 25 acres in a rural area to 10 acres in a more urban environment.

**Mixed Use** – very often a PUD allows for a mix of uses such as residential and retail to be constructed on a single parcel (before subdivision) or the assembled parcels to be developed. The goal of this mix of uses is to make for a more walkable community much like the communities of old where a corner store was always within walking distance of neighborhood homes. The allowable uses can be any allowed by the adopted Zoning Ordinance or can be restricted by various limiting provisions:

- Restricted to the allowable uses for the underlying zoning district.

- Restricted by a maximum percentage of certain uses. *Example: where the original zoning might have been residential, retail or commercial use can be restricted to 25% of the allowable square footage for the development.*
- Restricted by a limiting statement such as “structures and uses will adequately safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of the occupants of the adjoining and surrounding property.”

**Unified Site Design** – rezoning under a PUD is approved only upon the submission of a preliminary master plan, that once approved becomes the final master plan. Unified site design typically includes:

- A site plan;
- A land use plan;
- Development regulations including setbacks, height, building coverage, lot coverage, densities, parking requirements, and landscaping guidelines;
- A roadway/circulation plan;
- A public services/utilities plan;
- An open space plan;
- Preliminary architectural renderings and design guidelines of sufficient detail to clearly show and describe the intended development;
- A delineation of the ownership structure once developed including the disposition of common lands; and
- A development schedule if the development is large enough or the market is such that phasing will be required.

**Clustering** – the typical PUD “clusters” development onto the more accessible portions of the original parcel in order to preserve undeveloped land as common space for public use, such as active recreational or park land, or as partially- or fully-restricted conservation land. In an urban environment, the preserved land might have to be only 10% to 15% of the parcel; in a small town or rural environment, approximately 25% of the parcel; and in a rural setting for the purpose of land conservation, as much as 50% of the land.

**Density Bonus** – as an incentive for setting aside the common space, the developer is awarded a “density bonus” for the areas to be developed so that the development is truly clustered. Typically, the density is not allowed to exceed what would have been allowed if the entire original parcel was developed. *Example: Ten 3,000 SF homes on 2 acres each subdivided from a 20-acre parcel would equate to 30,000 SF of development that could be clustered perhaps onto 10 acres of the land, preserving the remaining 10 acres as common space.*

**Preservation of Existing Character or Creation of an Urban Village** - in addition to maintaining common space, one of the major goals for PUD development is to place active development in a location on the site that is adjacent to and mirrors what is nearby (such as a small village feel or the urban street grid) instead of having development at the back of parcels with large swaths of open land that can never be developed in the future or in the case of an urban setting, large parking lots adjacent to the street grid. All of the “New Urbanism” developments have been developed using a PUD as the means to create a close-knit village atmosphere or a more urban community.

#### **2.6.4 Key Takeaway**

With fifty-two (52) single-family housing lots already approved, the Town of Irvington's housing unit count could grow by 14.5% (52 new housing units / 379 existing units) without any additional subdivisions of land. The planned new construction at the Tides Inn would more than double the number of new "households" in Town when the new condominium units and cottages are fully occupied.

Lingering anemic economic growth and poor housing market conditions since the "Great Recession" have likely hindered development of the previously approved lots. That being said, both economic and housing market conditions have improved significantly over the last 2-3 years, but interest in developing these lots continues to lag. This is likely an indication that, as configured, these lots, and hence the type of housing that can be built on them, are not much in demand.

Though the Town of Irvington is not seeking to grow dramatically and residents and leaders would like to preserve the village feel in Town, some growth is required to maintain the vitality and resource base needed for community success. Development and growth that is in keeping with the Town's history and character and is compatible with the Town's vision is also important to the Town's vitality and success. Town leadership would be well served to explore additional options for developing these lots with their owners, such as that allowed by PUD/cluster development. Similarly, development options that enhance and provide a better mix of downtown retail and restaurant services, that also serve to better connect downtown to the Town's residential areas, should be explored.

## 2.7 ECONOMY

Irvington developed as a steamboat community during the 1890s and early 1900s. The Town's position along the shores of Carter's Creek supported both commercial enterprises and tourism, and the Town quickly grew into a bustling village offering expanded business enterprises catering to the needs of out-of-town visitors.

An unfortunate fire in 1917 destroyed much of the Town and the end of the steamboat era left Irvington's economy in a transitional period for a number of years. Despite these setbacks present-day Irvington has managed to retain its original charming village aesthetic, a point of pride for local residents. Irvington continues to benefit from its idyllic location near the Chesapeake Bay; however, traditional water-based commercial enterprises based on aquaculture have been replaced by service-

oriented activities based on tourism and recreational boating. Present-day Irvington is perhaps most well known as the location of The Tides Inn, which opened in 1947 and brings a steady stream of visitors to the Town.

### 2.7.1 Existing Business Mix

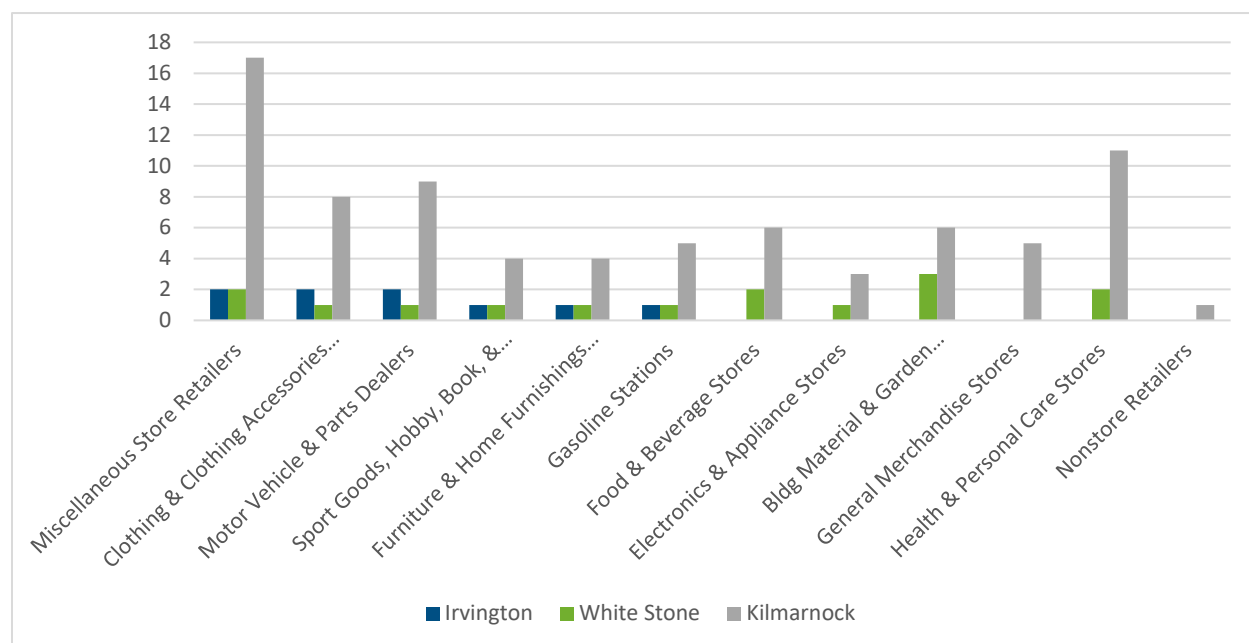
Irvington is home to a tourism-based economy and its associated support industries. Local residents are largely dependent upon establishments in nearby Kilmarnock and White Stone for everyday goods and services. Figure 11 below provides details about the existing business mix of the Towns of Irvington, White Stone, and Kilmarnock. The majority of businesses within this three community "triangle" are concentrated in Kilmarnock and are in the *Retail Trade* sector. Figure 12 on the following page provides a detailed look at this sector and the types of retail establishments within each locality.

Figure 11: Number of Establishments by Business Type, 2015

	Irvington	White Stone	Kilmarnock
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	0	0	1
Mining	0	0	0
Utilities	0	0	0
Construction	5	8	15
Manufacturing	4	2	6
Wholesale Trade	3	1	13
Retail Trade	9	15	79
Transportation & Warehousing	1	1	4
Information	0	2	13
Finance & Insurance	4	10	27
Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	2	8	22
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	9	13	25
Management of Companies & Enterprises	0	0	2
Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation	1	2	9
Educational Services	1	1	2
Health Care & Social Assistance	3	4	32
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	4	2	3
Accommodation & Food Services	5	3	23
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	4	6	40
Public Administration	1	2	2
Unclassified Establishments	4	0	13
<b>TOTAL ESTABLISHMENTS</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>331</b>

Source: ESRI and Infogroup, Inc. Copyright 2015.

Figure 12: Retail Establishments by Business Type, 2015



Source: ESRI and Infogroup, Inc. Copyright 2015.

The Town of Irvington's existing business mix is limited to small, local enterprises that predominantly cater to out-of-town visitors. The Town's commercial center is characterized by retail trade, professional services, and locally-run luxury boutiques with a notable absence of day-to-day retail and convenience goods. This mix is in contrast to nearby Kilmarnock, which has a more diverse retail environment.

The following key sectors paint an important picture of what is present, as well as absent, in the Town of Irvington. It should be noted that Irvington is home to a large seasonal population, therefore the Town is somewhat limited in regards to the types of establishments it can realistically support.

#### Key Represented Retail Sectors

- **Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores**

There are currently three clothing stores located in the Town of Irvington, each

offering an assortment of limited boutique items. Residents seeking everyday wear at affordable price points must travel outside of the Town to Kilmarnock or further.

- **Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers**

The *Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers* industry sector is not limited to automobiles. The Town is home to Rappahannock Yacht Services, a company with services that include new and used boat commissioning, routine yacht maintenance, and full custom restoration. The company's history is rooted in servicing commercial boats for watermen working in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries and it has made its home along Carter's Creek for over 35 years. Custom Yacht Service is a full-service boat yard specializing in the maintenance and repair of fine pleasure

craft also based in Irvington. Custom Yacht Service offers in-house carpentry, fiberglass, paint, mechanical, and systems expertise to projects big and small.

### Key Unrepresented Retail Sectors

- **Food & Beverage Stores:**

The Citgo gas station in Irvington carries a very limited assortment of grocery items, however Irvington's nearest full-service grocery stores are the Tri-Star Supermarket and Food Lion in Kilmarnock. Residents must travel outside of the Town to buy the majority of their food items.

- **General Merchandise Stores:**

The Walmart Supercenter in Kilmarnock is the closest convenient location for

residents to shop for general merchandise such as home goods and personal care items.

- **Health & Personal Care Stores:**

The Town does not have a local pharmacy. Residents travel to White Stone or Kilmarnock to fill prescriptions and purchase over-the-counter remedies.

### 2.7.2 Town Employment

Figure 13 below provides a detailed breakdown of each industry within the Town by number of establishments and employees in 2015. Local employment opportunities are relatively limited and are primarily concentrated in service-providing industries.

Figure 13: Employment Breakdown for the Town of Irvington, 2015 Estimates

	Number of Establishments	Number of Employees	Lancaster Avg. Weekly Wage
Accommodation & Food Services	5	279	\$406
Finance & Insurance	4	64	\$1,336
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	9	41	\$967
Retail Trade	8	33	\$448
Educational Services	1	32	\$670
Manufacturing	4	31	\$728
Wholesale Trade	3	25	\$967
Health Care & Social Assistance	3	23	\$713
Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	2	17	\$426
Construction	5	16	\$667
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	4	15	\$515
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	4	4	\$405
Transportation & Warehousing	1	3	\$867
Unclassified Establishments	4	3	\$440
Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation	1	2	\$560
Public Administration	1	2	\$629
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	-	-	-
Mining	-	-	-
Utilities	-	-	-
Information	-	-	-
Management of Companies & Enterprises	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>\$672</b>

Source: ESRI and Infogroup, Inc. Copyright 2015; Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages, Q3 2015.

Employers in Irvington support an estimated 590 workers; however, the local labor force only accounts for a fraction of this total. 89% of Irvington's local labor force works in Lancaster County, yet the majority (70%) works outside of the Town of Irvington. This trend indicates that there are a substantial number of workers commuting into Irvington that do not live in the Town to staff local establishments. Three of Lancaster County's major employers are located in the Town of Irvington, and their presence helps explain this discrepancy.

**Figure 14: Labor Force Participation by Age Group, 2014**

Age	Proportion of Labor Force	Percent in Labor Force
16 to 19	3%	0%
20 to 24	4%	100%
25 to 44	8%	95%
45 to 54	19%	98%
55 to 64	15%	60%
65 and Over	51%	49%

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey Estimates

### The Tides Inn

The Tides Inn is by far the largest employer in the Town of Irvington, accounting for 42% (250) of all employees within the Town and 90% of total employment in the *Accommodation & Food Services* sector. Tides Inn also serves as a major tourism asset for the Town.

### Northern Neck Insurance Company

The Northern Neck Insurance Company is the second-largest employer in the Town of Irvington, and employed an estimated 50 persons in 2015. Northern Neck Insurance Company's client base extends far beyond the Town of Irvington and the Northern Neck region and its employees represent 78% of the Town's total *Finance & Insurance* sector employment.

### Chesapeake Academy

The Chesapeake Academy is an independent co-educational day school serving students pre-kindergarten through eighth grade from the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula. The Academy employed 32 persons in 2015 and has been an institution in the Town of Irvington since its founding in 1889. The Chesapeake Academy makes up 100 percent of the Town's total *Educational Services* sector employment.

### 2.7.3 Income

Local income levels provide a snapshot of the present social and economic conditions of the local economy. Figure 15 on the following page provides a detailed breakdown of comparative income status for the Town of Irvington and the surrounding communities of the Northern Neck. Irvington's median household income is higher than that of its regional counterparts, though not significantly so, yet lower than that of the Commonwealth overall.

However, it is important to point out that the margin of error at the Town level is significantly higher than the reported margins of error at the County and State levels. Beginning with the 2010 Census, the U.S. Census Bureau does not collect the level of detailed data previously gathered via the "long form" Census questionnaire. Prior to the 2010 Census, the Census Bureau shifted to collecting much of the household and economic data via the more frequently conducted American Community Survey (ACS) process. The ACS methodology is based on smaller sample sizes and consequently has higher margins of error, a fact that is particularly pronounced for small localities. It is therefore important to emphasize that the numbers reported here are estimates only and are meant to serve only as references to guide future planning efforts.



**Figure 15: Comparative Income Status, 2014**

Locality	Median Household Income	Margin of Error
<b>Irvington</b>	<b>\$52,292</b>	<b>+/- \$21,587</b>
<b>Northern Neck</b>		
Lancaster	\$49,456	+/- \$3,365
Northumberland	\$59,369	+/- \$3,849
Richmond	\$47,199	+/- \$4,654
Westmoreland	\$48,750	+/- \$6,400
<b>Virginia</b>	<b>\$64,792</b>	<b>+/- \$247</b>

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey Estimates

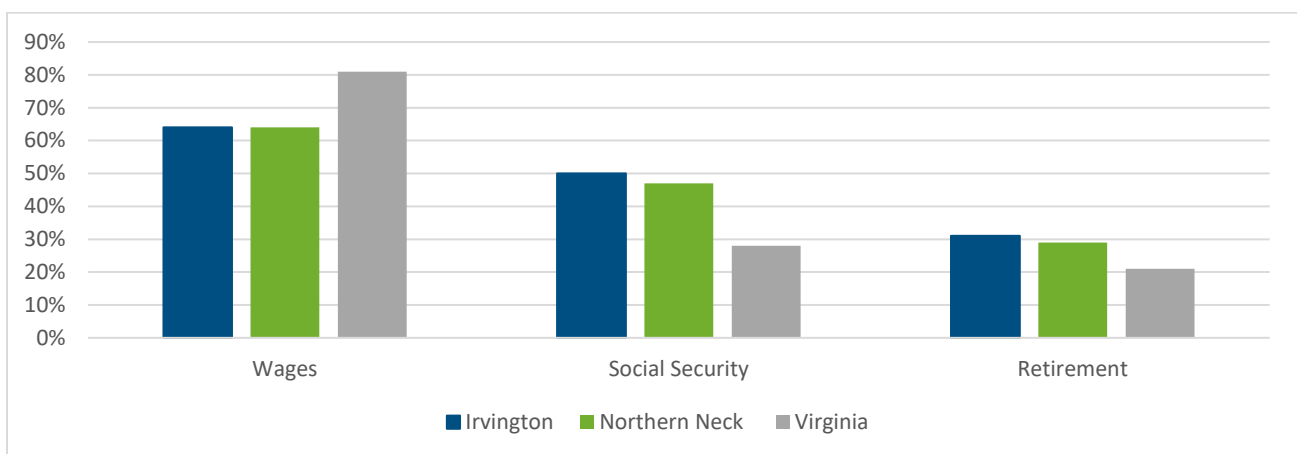
The American Community Survey also estimates that up to 5.6% of Irvington residents qualified as low-income even with the Town's higher overall income. Comparatively, 10.9% of Lancaster County's population was reported as low-income during the same time frame.

Irvington is home to a high proportion of adults over the age of 62, a number of which may be reliant upon Social Security as their primary source of income. Some of these older adults may be previously self-employed individuals who do not have significant additional resources to draw upon in retirement. Households that mainly rely on or only have Social Security

income in retirement often are low-income. The 2010-2014 ACS data supports this theory in that perhaps as many as 10.0% of persons 65 years old and older in Irvington are reported as being low-income.

Figure 16 below provides a detailed breakdown of income sources by locality. At the Town and regional levels, the proportion of individuals with social security income is nearly equal to the proportion of individuals with earnings (wages), whereas at the state level, there is a significantly higher proportion of individuals earning a wage than on social security or retirement income. This trend speaks to the comparatively high number of retirees living in the Northern Neck and in the Town of Irvington in particular.

**Figure 16: Comparative Income Sources, 2014**



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

#### **2.7.4 Key Takeaway**

The Town of Irvington has managed to retain the village environment associated with its initial founding as a thriving steamboat community, a characteristic which sets it apart both economically and aesthetically from surrounding localities. The Town's present economy is comprised primarily of small, locally run enterprises, with the notable exceptions of the Tides Inn, Northern Neck Insurance Company, the Chesapeake Academy, Custom Yacht Service, and Rappahannock Yacht Services. Local businesses are largely supported by out-of-town visitors and offer goods and services that cater to that demographic. Irvington's major employers attract employees from surrounding localities.

The size of Irvington's existing labor force is insufficient to support the staffing needs of the Town's major employers, as evidenced by the fact that the majority of their employees commute to Irvington from surrounding localities for work. Local residents must travel outside of the community to access basic goods and services, such as grocery items and affordable, everyday clothing.

The size of the existing permanent resident population and the Town's proximity to larger commercial centers limit its ability to realistically support a more robust retail base. However, it may be important to explore obstacles that limit access to important goods and services such as limited public transportation options and the fact that connectivity is limited almost entirely to vehicular traffic. Providing expanded transportation options, including pedestrian and bicycle trails, and prioritizing the attraction of a small corner store with staple goods or the expansion of goods offered in an existing local store would go far to make Irvington a more walkable and livable community.

## **2.8 COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

### **2.8.1 Town Office**

The Town of Irvington's Town Office at 235 Steamboat Road was formerly the Town's library. It is a small building with a partial basement that houses the Town Clerk's office, the Town Administrator's office, a small waiting/seating area, and a conference space used for meetings of the Town Council and Planning Commission. There has been some recent discussion among Town leadership about seeking a better situation for Town Hall.

### **2.8.2 The Commons / North Commons**

The Town's Commons is a 3.16 acre parcel located on King Carter Drive at Tavern Road. Mainly an open area used for public events such as the Irvington Farmers Market, the Commons also includes tennis courts with an adjoining garden and a small gazebo. There is also a seldom used softball diamond and backstop on the property.

The North Commons is two parcels totaling 3.24 acres just north of the Commons across Chesapeake Drive. The North Commons is undeveloped at this point.

There have been many discussions as to how to develop the Commons/North Commons, but no definitive plans are in place at this time.

### **2.8.3 Utilities**

The Town of Irvington has a central water system consisting of a well, storage tank, and distribution lines owned, operated, and maintained by Aqua Virginia. The system serves just over 300 residential and non-residential customers including the Tides Inn. The primary well is located just off King Carter Drive near the entrance to the Tides Inn. Over the years, residents have complained about water quality,

but per Aqua Virginia, the water meets all applicable water quality standards.

The Town of Irvington does not have a central sanitary sewer system. Homes and businesses are dependent on on-site septic systems for their sewage disposal. The Tides Inn operates its own packaged sewage treatment plant. The lack of a central sanitary sewer system has often been cited as a reason that new development in Irvington has been very slow.

The most feasible means of providing a central sanitary sewer system for the Town of Irvington would be to tap into the system and treatment facilities operated by the Town of Kilmarnock. As a part of this Comprehensive Planning process, a Town representative met with officials of the Town of Kilmarnock to explore this possibility. The outcome of that meeting is as follows:

- Kilmarnock's sewage treatment plant is at 50% of capacity and could accommodate Irvington.
- Even with the excess capacity, major upgrades would have to be made to the plant. The exact cost of the upgrades cannot be determined without an extensive study.
- The Town of Irvington would be responsible for the cost of the upgrades.
- An exact cost of the lines cannot be determined without an extensive study, but for a similar project done several years ago from Wiggins Street to Harris Road, piping and pump stations cost approximately \$45 per linear foot. That amount would likely be higher now.
- The distance from Harris Road at its intersection with Irvington Road (the current extent of the sewer lines and pumping capacity at this point) to

Irvington and all the road miles in the Town of Irvington total approximately 8.2 miles.

- The cost for the lines and necessary pump stations would therefore be approximately \$1,948,000 (\$45/linear foot \* 5,280 feet/mile \* 8.2 miles).
- The cost for lateral connections to the residences and businesses is \$8,040. This is a fee the property owner would pay for hook-up to the system.
- “Out of Town Sewer Administration Fee” (water & sewage cost per household) would be \$375.00 bi-monthly.
- Because sewage use is calculated based on the amount of water coming into a property, Kilmarnock would not allow sewer connections without also connecting to its water system.

Given the above costs, it was determined at this point that a central sewer system for Irvington is not feasible, but that the Town Council should determine what grant funds might be available to defray these costs and revisit the possibility in the future.

#### **2.8.4 Other Facilities**

Schools are the responsibility of Lancaster County, but Irvington is home to the Chesapeake Academy. The Academy has 166 students from pre-kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Irvington is also home to the Irvington United Methodist Church, Irvington Baptist Church and the Odd Fellows Lodge.

## 2.9 TRANSPORTATION

### 2.9.1 Roadway Classifications

The Town's road network includes routes classified by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) as minor arterials and minor collectors. These classifications denote the kind of function each roadway serves. Arterials are intended to emphasize *mobility*, the efficiency by which traffic can move. Collectors are intended to emphasize *access*, connecting different uses along the route. Each functional classification exists on a scale between providing efficient mobility and access via points of entry and exit. The VDOT Functional Classifications are represented graphically in the Functional Classification Map below.

### 2.9.2 Roadways and Traffic Volumes

The Town's three primary roadways are Irvington Road (State Route 200), King Carter Drive, and Steamboat Road. Traffic volumes and Functional Classifications made by VDOT for each of these roads are explored in detail in the following section.

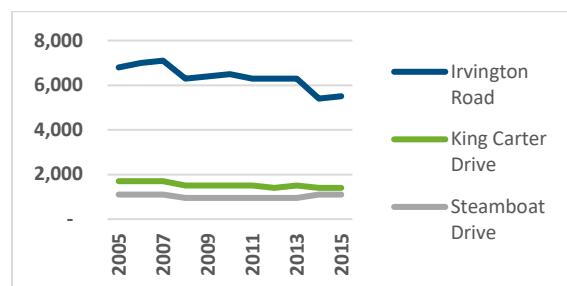
Figure 18 on the next page depicts historic traffic volumes for Irvington's three primary roadways for the ten-year period from 2005-2015. Traffic levels along King Carter Drive and Steamboat Road have remained relatively flat. Conversely, traffic volumes along Irvington Road have declined in recent years.

**Figure 17: Roadway Functional Classifications**



Source: Virginia Department of Transportation

**Figure 18: Major Roadway Traffic, 2005-2015**



Source: Virginia Department of Transportation Traffic Data

### Irvington Road (State Route 200)

Irvington Road enters the Town from White Stone to the east and serves as the primary access road for the Town, connecting visitors and residents to the local commercial center as well as Kilmarnock to the north. It is classified by VDOT as a *Minor Arterial* roadway, a classification which generally indicates higher mobility and through movement as well as linkages to cities, large towns, and other major traffic generators.

### King Carter Drive

King Carter Drive is classified by VDOT as a *Minor Collector*, a classification that indicates that it collects traffic from major traffic generators and connects the local road network to larger arterial roadway systems.

King Carter Drive's most heavily trafficked segment begins at its intersection with Irvington Road and terminates at Winstead Drive, just before the gate of the Tides Inn, where it makes a sharp turn south following the ridge of the western peninsula. The popular Steamboat Era Museum and historic Hope & Glory Inn as well as a concentration of single family homes are located along King Carter Drive.

### Steamboat Road

Steamboat Road intersects with Irvington Road at its northernmost point (known locally as "The Triangle") and continues south to its natural

terminus at the shore of Bridge Cove. It provides access to the Irvington Town Office and Chesapeake Academy as well as several local businesses and an enclave of single family homes with commanding views of the Eastern Branch of Carter's Creek.

Steamboat Road is not classified under the VDOT classification system even though it experiences comparatively high traffic volumes.

Due to high traffic volumes along these three major roads, traffic calming measures including rumble strips, flashing warning lights, high visibility crosswalks with pedestrian flashing lights, and bump-outs have been installed along Irvington Road at and near its intersections with King Carter Drive and Steamboat Road. These improvements have been somewhat effective in enhancing pedestrian safety and lowering the speed at which vehicles travel through the area.

### 2.9.3 Alternative Transportation Options

Transportation can be a significant financial burden for residents reliant upon cars to access jobs and services. This burden is particularly pronounced for households living on a fixed income. Communities that foster walkable environments with a cohesive alternative transportation network see a decrease in car dependence and healthier, happier residents. Walkable communities further benefit from decreased parking demands and higher volumes of foot traffic along commercial corridors.

According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's *Location Affordability Index* for Irvington, a four-person household with two commuters earning the local median income drives an estimated 31,000 miles per year and spends approximately 29% of its annual income on transportation. Local residents must frequently travel to surrounding localities to access goods and services and are largely

dependent upon cars as their primary source of transportation. The burden of transportation increases to 36% of annual income for working individuals that must travel outside of Irvington to access employment opportunities.

Figure 19 below details local means of transportation to work as provided by the 2010 Census and 2010-2014 American Community Survey estimates. Note that public transportation as a means for commuting to work is excluded from these results as it is not currently available to Irvington residents.

As Figure 19 indicates, private vehicles are the most common means of transportation to work for Irvington residents. It should be noted, however, that the small sample size of the American Community Survey means that the margin of error is especially large for underutilized means of transportation. In spite of this lack of precision, the findings demonstrate that there are currently very few workers in Irvington that are using modes of transportation other than personal automobiles when commuting to work.

Workers in Irvington generally do not walk to work, likely due to the fact that only 30% of the local workforce is employed within the Town of Irvington, therefore further commutes are common (the average commute time for Irvington residents in 2014 was 17 minutes). There has been a small increase in the number of reported bicycle commuters in the Town.

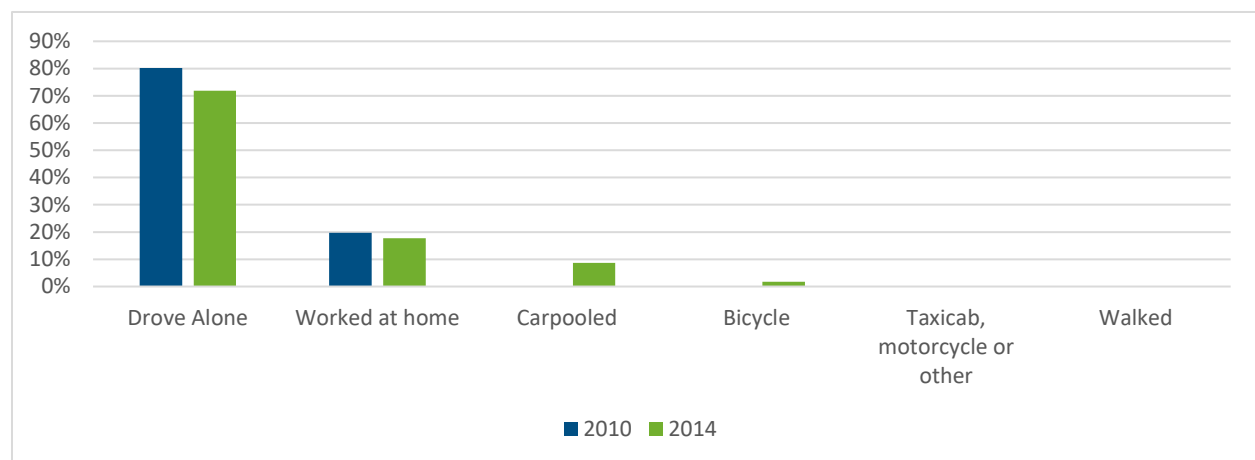
### Public and On-Demand Transportation

The Town of Irvington does not currently offer a public transportation network; however, several regional on-demand transportation options are provided through various sources, including Bay Transit and Virginia Rides. From late spring to early fall, the Triangle Trolley provides scheduled weekend and holiday services among Irvington, Kilmarnock, and White Stone, including other stops such as Historic Christ Church. Most of the additional on-demand services are limited to seniors, persons with disabilities, and non-emergency medical needs.

### Walking and Biking

Sidewalk connectivity within and around the central commercial corridor and surrounding

**Figure 19: Method of Transportation to Work for Workers Aged 16 and Over, 2010-2014**



Source: 2010 Census, 2010-2014 American community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

neighborhoods is generally sufficient to meet the needs of local residents. Housing developments such as the Vineyard Tents Development are not currently connected to the central Irvington area via a sidewalk or bicycle network. Residents have noted an increase in the number of bicycle commuters and leisure riders in the Town; however, no formal bicycle infrastructure, such as shared lane markings and/or protected bicycle lanes, is currently in place. This lack of infrastructure is a safety concern that must be mitigated, particularly along higher-traffic routes such as Irvington Road.

#### **2.9.4 Key Takeaway**

The Town's current transportation infrastructure fosters a primarily car-dependent environment. Although sidewalk connectivity within the central commercial corridor and its surrounding neighborhoods is adequate, new developments are largely isolated from alternative transportation networks. It is equally important to consider that connectivity to surrounding localities is currently limited to vehicular transportation. Due to the fact that local residents frequently travel along Irvington Road to access goods and services offered in Kilmarnock, it would be beneficial to explore options for increasing connectivity via alternate forms of transportation, such as extended bicycle lanes or a scheduled shuttle service, should demand prove sufficient. The benefits of investing in alternative forms of transportation within the Town include increasing accessibility for existing and future residents and visitors which in turn bolsters the "village" atmosphere that the Town has carefully cultivated throughout its history.

It is additionally essential to consider that many retired individuals are attracted to locations that will allow them to "age in place", meaning key recreational, cultural, community, and commercial amenities are both available and conveniently accessed. Often, aging residents desire to eventually forego their car as their primary source of transportation in order to avoid the stress and financial burden of car dependency. Irvington's current and projected demographic makeup emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the needs of retirees are met by the community. Notably, the same accessibility is often desired by young families, therefore investing in an expanded transportation network is an important step in ensuring that the Town is providing for both current and potential future residents.



### 3 PUBLIC INPUT

Public input is essential to putting together a Comprehensive Plan that presents the issues recognized by residents as needing to be addressed and that helps move the community toward a vision that garners wide acceptance. The Code of Virginia requires a public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan as it is moving toward adoption, but that comes very late in the process. Gathering community input by a survey process and through a public input meeting or meetings early enough to impact the outcomes of the planning process are the steps that ensure public involvement in the process and buy-in of the results.

#### 3.1 COMMUNITY SURVEY

A Community Survey was assembled and distributed by mail to every property owner in the Town of Irvington in mid-August 2016 and collected through mid-September 2016. The Planning Commission received 235 survey responses which is a very large response for a town the size of Irvington. It is important to note that by using a property owner's list, both full-time and part-time residents were given a chance to respond. Non-resident property owners had the same chance to respond. A brief summary of the results is included below with a copy of the survey instrument included as Appendix A and a lengthier summary of the results of the Community Survey included as Appendix B.

The two answers across all questions with the highest response in the survey provide a window to the success of the Town and the vision of its residents. In reply to the question on what drew respondents to Irvington, 64% of Irvington residents were drawn to the Town by its small town atmosphere. 59% were drawn by its water-

front location. As was true in the past, these are two keys for the Town's future, both as a tourist destination and a seasonal and full-time residential location.

The top reason respondents might leave and/or not recommend Irvington was the new Town property tax with 29% indicating this as a reason. This is not an unusual response for a community that only recently adopted a property tax. More important were the responses that each received 27% of the vote – lack of restaurants/stores/services and lack of medical services.

On the basic "agree/disagree" questions related to the level of retail, services, and employment opportunities; the level of public services; the level of recreational facilities; and the level of Town facilities, there is for the most part, a fairly even split with both sides of those questions garnering between a 40% and 50% response. This split toward the status quo is also seen in the response to the specific questions regarding Town services, recreational facilities, and Town facilities where favorable responses ranged from as low as 7% to a high of only 32%. Ideas with a higher response rate, and those deemed significant by the Planning Commission, were given further attention in the development of this Comprehensive Plan. Among these items are:

- Sewer service – 32%
- Public water viewing area – 22%
- Public trash/recycling collection services – 20%
- Hiking/biking/golf cart paths – 29%

Related to the need for additional housing, a "no growth" attitude was exhibited. Of note, however, was the fairly high response of 39%

desiring more affordable housing for the elderly. As indicated earlier in this plan, there is a dearth of smaller, more affordable homes in Irvington, so this response comes as no surprise. Coupled with an aging population that loves living in Irvington and would like to continue living in Town as their life situation changes, more housing options for older adults is an idea that seems to be rising to the top.

### **3.2 PUBLIC MEETING**

A quite lively Public Meeting was held on September 15 with 65 persons in attendance plus the Planning Commission. Ten questions were included in a hand-out to spur discussion along with the results of the Community Survey, summaries of background data, and a list of the “Top Ten Qualities of Successful Small Towns.” Because of the “non-scheduled” dialogue that took place and time constraint, only two of the questions were ultimately utilized. However, the two questions that were used generated significant and important feedback.

Participants were encouraged to answer the ten questions included in the hand-out and return it to the Town office. Separate submissions were received from two individuals subsequent to the Public Meeting. Several individuals also provided written input subsequent to the Public Meeting in formats that did not directly correlate with the ten questions.

Key input from the Public Meeting and subsequent written submissions include:

- There is a concern about the aging of Irvington and the inability to attract younger people.
- Land already slated for development will eventually increase the number of housing units in Town and bring about change.

- Irvington needs additional employment opportunities, but economic development is always regional.
- The educational system needs to continue improving in order to attract and keep families with children.
- Present zoning requirements should be reconsidered to allow for cluster zoning, smaller lot sizes, and open space.
- The village atmosphere should be maintained and promoted.
- Public water access with a boat launch is key.
- Irvington needs to be a walkable and bike-friendly community.
- Tourism will always be important, therefore we need to brand ourselves better and maximize and improve the assets we have to offer.
- Irvington needs a better mix of ages and income and housing for more moderate income individuals.
- Irvington needs to deal with the septic/public sewer issue.
- Irvington should promote additional specialty businesses and restaurants in the downtown area, but of a smaller scale appropriate to the village atmosphere.
- There is a need for better internet service to promote the ability to work at home.
- One particular vision statement offered by a respondent was succinct, yet noteworthy: “To be an exceptional place to live and a special place to visit.” (A similar phrase is used often by the Town and its residents in describing the

success of Irvington, usually in reverse order.)

A lengthier summary of the input received at the Public Meeting and subsequent to it is included as Appendix C.

### **3.3 KEY TAKEAWAY**

While the Community Survey indicated a particular bias toward the status quo, the Public Meeting and the input provided subsequent to it indicated a stronger willingness to see change come to Irvington. Items that were supported by those attending the Public Input Meeting and responding later include attracting younger people and families; having additional and more affordable housing options; allowing clustered development; promoting more businesses downtown; providing more pedestrian and bicycle facilities; creating public water access; and constructing a public sewer system. At the same time, every speaker and respondent wanted to make sure the village atmosphere of Irvington was maintained.

## 4 THE PLAN

The Plan component of a Comprehensive Plan is that section of the Plan that delineates the vision the community has set for its future and the goals, objectives, and strategies needed to move that vision forward. Per the Code of Virginia, the Plan component must also contain a generalized land use plan that encourages an orderly, harmonious arrangement of land that will meet the present and future needs of the locality. This is typically done through a Future Land Use Map that represents the vision the locality has for the development and/or redevelopment of the land within its boundaries.

### 4.1 VISION & GOALS

A vision statement can be many things – a short phrase, similar to a branding statement; a paragraph that describes the intended future; or a bulleted list of intended goals and actions. The following vision that is established by this Comprehensive Plan is a combination of the above formats. The vision statement is a single sentence with a branding statement embedded within in it. The goals that follow outline those areas of concentrated effort that the Town of Irvington will focus on during the lifespan of this Comprehensive Plan.

#### **Vision**

Building on Irvington's history, charm, and waterfront location, our vision is to maintain and enhance Irvington as a premier Chesapeake Bay community, celebrated as "a special place to visit and an exceptional place to live" for many years to come.

#### **Goals**

A. Preserve and enrich the charm of the Irvington Village by maintaining the value

and attractiveness of the Town's existing real estate and encouraging new growth and development.

- B. Expand Irvington's livability by encouraging the development of new single-family housing of varying sizes and price points with amenities geared toward citizens of all ages and household status.
- C. Improve the walkability of Irvington through the development of additional sidewalks and trails within Irvington and to other nearby communities.
- D. Build stronger ties among Irvington's residents and provide an additional tourism venue by the further development of the Commons/North Commons as the central gathering place for community meetings, events, and festivals.
- E. Strengthen Irvington's tie to the water through the development of a public waterfront park/canoe & kayak launch.
- F. Position Irvington as a great place to grow a small or home-based business by seeking partnerships that help deliver stronger internet connectivity.

## 4.2 OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

In this section, each goal is restated with specific objectives and strategies outlined under each. The combined goals, objectives, and strategies provide more details to the roadmap of decisions, activities, and resources that will be required to accomplish the intended vision.

**Goal A:** Preserve and enrich the charm of the Irvington Village by maintaining the value and attractiveness of the Town's existing real estate and encouraging new growth and development.

**Objective:** To protect existing real estate assets and maintain the Irvington Village atmosphere and its Historic District.

**Objective:** To encourage new development that has a density and mix of uses similar to that of the current Irvington Village.

**Objective:** To encourage new development that is architecturally appropriate and with the scale and bulk in keeping with the context of the current Irvington Village.

**Strategy #1:** Implement a comprehensive study and re-write of the Town's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances and other Town Ordinances related to land use, construction, and development in order to protect existing land uses and structures; strengthen enforcement of existing and new regulatory tools; and implement new regulatory provisions as needed.

**Strategy #2:** Develop one or more Planned Unit Development ordinances that allow for mixed use, clustering, and higher densities while requiring unified site design, design guidelines, set-asides of open and other public spaces, and appropriate development regulations.

**Strategy #3:** Proactively work with current landowners interested in the development of their land or properties and those with future development interests to encourage development utilizing the Planned Unit Development ordinance.

**Goal B:** Expand Irvington's livability by encouraging the development of new single-family housing of varying sizes and price points with amenities geared toward citizens of all ages and household status.

**Objective:** To provide housing options for Irvington's older residents needing to down-size their housing in their later years, but wishing to stay in Irvington.

**Objective:** To provide more affordable housing options for younger adults, young families, and persons of more limited income.

**Strategies** for this goal are the same as those under Goal A.

**Goal C:** Improve the walkability of Irvington through the development of additional sidewalks and trails within Irvington and to other nearby communities.

**Objective:** To enhance the livability of Irvington and promote healthy lifestyles for current and future residents.

**Objective:** To improve the attractiveness and value of Irvington real estate, particularly non-waterfront lots and buildings.

**Strategy #1:** Commission the development of a pedestrian and bicycle master plan to be added to this Comprehensive Plan in order to guide the development

of both public and private pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

**Strategy #2:** In cooperation with Lancaster County and the neighboring towns of Kilmarnock and White Stone, research the feasibility of developing connecting trails between the County's three towns and participate in their joint construction if feasible and fundable.

**Strategy #3:** Seek VDOT Transportation Alternative Program funding in several phases for the construction of planned public pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

**Strategy #4:** Construct the planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities as funds are awarded by VDOT and as matching funds become available.

**Goal D:** Build stronger ties among Irvington's residents and provide an additional tourism venue by the further development of the Commons/North Commons as the central gathering place for community meetings, events, and festivals.

**Objective:** To provide a space for planned and informal recreational activities geared toward younger adults and young families.

**Objective:** To boost visitation and interest in Irvington through having a venue for regular outdoor concerts and other special events.

**Objective:** To encourage citizen participation in the governance of the Town of Irvington by having a more spacious and appropriate facility for community meetings.

**Strategy #1:** Engage in a community-driven process of discerning the needs, opportunities, and vision for the development of the Commons/North Commons.

**Strategy #2:** Once a unified vision is agreed to, commission a plan of phased development for the Commons/North Commons to be added to this Comprehensive Plan with the elements outlined in the community's vision.

**Strategy #3:** Construct the planned improvements to the Commons/North Commons in phases as funding becomes available for each phase.

**Goal E:** Strengthen Irvington's tie to the water through the development of a public waterfront park/canoe & kayak launch.

**Objective:** To provide free water access to residents who reside on interior parcels within the Town of Irvington.

**Objective:** To boost tourism by making it easier to enjoy the waterside location of the Town of Irvington.

**Strategy #1:** Research the acquisition or donation of an appropriate waterfront parcel and take ownership of the land as the land is made available by donation or as funding becomes available.

**Strategy #2:** Once land is secured, commission a plan of development for a public waterfront park/canoe & kayak launch.

**Strategy #3:** Construct the planned public waterfront park/canoe & kayak launch as funding becomes available.

**Goal F:** Position Irvington as a great place to grow a small or home-based business by seeking partnerships that help deliver stronger internet connectivity.

**Objective:** To provide additional job opportunities within the Town, making it easier to live and work in Irvington.

**Objective:** To attract the new generation of entrepreneurs that are coming up in Virginia and build a creative economy that enhances the vitality and viability of the Town.

**Strategy #1:** Monitor and engage in efforts by Lancaster County, the Northern Neck Planning District Commission, the Northern Neck Broadband Authority, and the Center for Innovation and Development to develop more robust internet connectivity in the area.

**Strategy #2:** Continually keep an eye on the public and nonprofit resources that might become available to boost the internet connectivity in the Town.

### **4.3 FUTURE LAND USE**

If the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies outlined in this Comprehensive Plan (particularly under Goal A and Goal B) are accomplished, the Town of Irvington will likely find itself at a turning point in the development of its undeveloped land and the physical layout and environment in the downtown area. Such a turning point would move the Town toward a future that looks a lot like its past – an urban village that includes areas of low and moderate density, connected by charming and friendly byways. This future, if it came into being, would change the land use patterns currently codified by the Town’s Zoning Ordinance for the undeveloped land. Those patterns would shift from a suburban pattern to a more urban pattern, at least toward the center of Town.

Because this turning point is at best still on the horizon at the writing of this Comprehensive Plan, the Future Land Use Map that follows this page reflects mostly the current situation, with some adjustments made related to recent Planning Commission actions and business closings, such as Quarles Petroleum. It is a placeholder that will need updating, perhaps even before the end of the 10-year time period covered by this Plan if new development begins to occur that is denser and more clustered than currently allowed.



# FUTURE LAND USE

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Town of Irvington, Virginia

### LEGEND

--- TOWN OF IRVINGTON BOUNDARY

LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

RESIDENTIAL

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

COMMERCIAL

BUSINESS

INDUSTRIAL

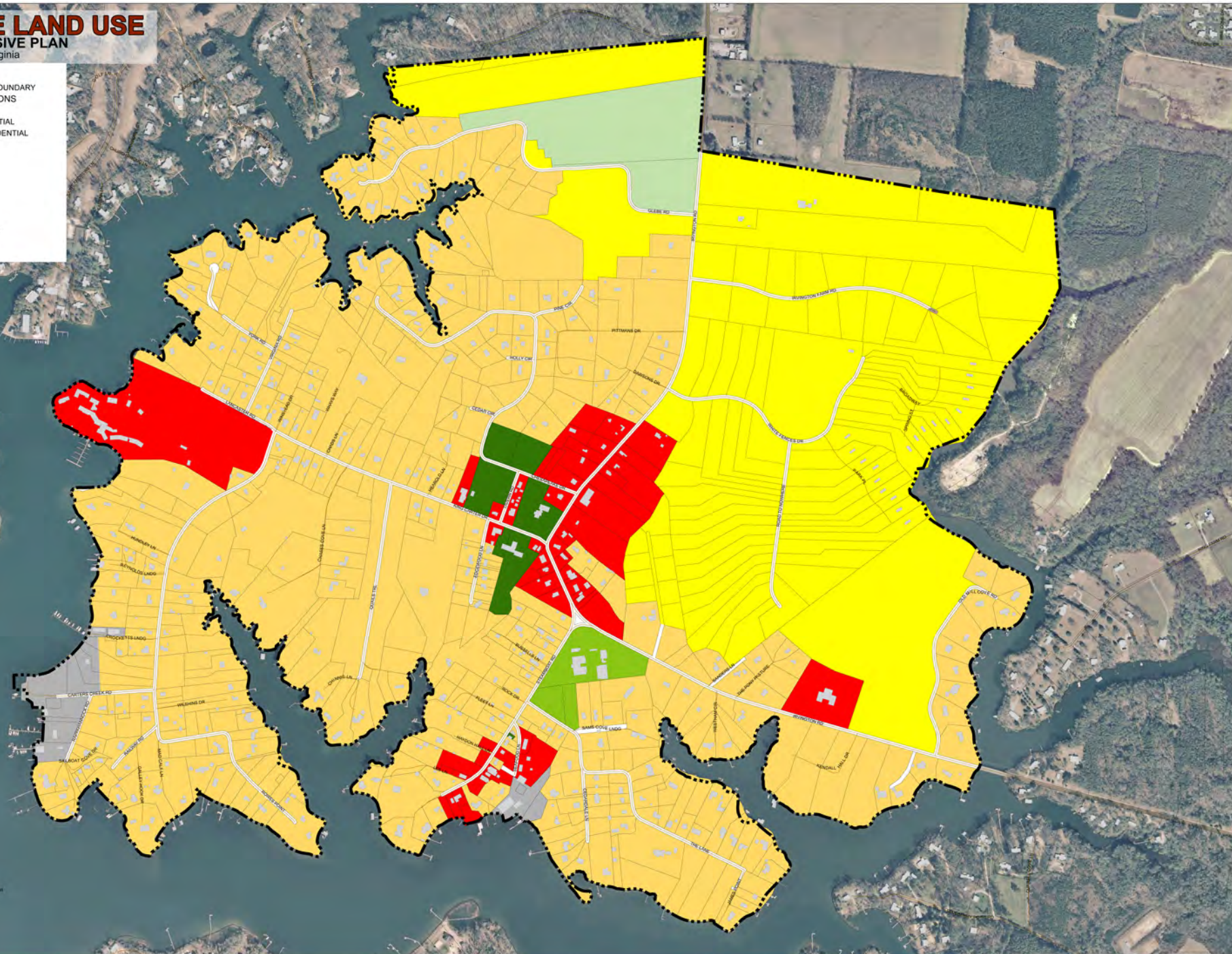
INDUSTRIAL

PUBLIC & SEMI PUBLIC

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

SCHOOLS (PRIVATE)

LAND CONSERVANCY



COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERS, INC.  
Richmond, Virginia  
January 2017

## 5 IMPLEMENTATION

The success of a Comprehensive Plan depends on a scheduled implementation of the Plan's goals, objectives, and strategies that is monitored and adjusted as needed over the life of the Plan. The Implementation Schedule that follows this page outlines how the "on the ground" work of this Comprehensive Plan is to unfold. It serves the purpose of pacing the work in order that planning precedes expenditures to make sure funds are secured and expended in a timely and prudent manner.

This Implementation Schedule also places the less capital intensive actions at the front of the Plan. While not capital intensive, these actions could be just as impactful. It is hoped that these actions become imbedded in the DNA of the Town of Irvington and are repeated on a regular basis as long as they prove useful to the Town's growth and development



## Implementation Schedule

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
<b>Goal A: Preserve and enrich the charm of the Irvington Village by maintaining the value and attractiveness of the Town's existing real estate and encouraging new growth and development.</b>										
Strategy #1: Implement a comprehensive study and re-write of the Town's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances.	✓	✓								
Strategy #2: Develop one or more Planned Unit Development (PUD) ordinances.	✓	✓								
Strategy #3: Proactively work with current landowners interested in the development of their land per the PUD ordinances.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Goal B: Expand Irvington's livability by encouraging the development of new single-family housing of varying sizes and price points with amenities geared toward citizens of all ages and household status.</b>										
Strategies: The strategies for this goal are the same as those under Goal A.										
<b>Goal C: Improve the walkability of Irvington through the development of additional sidewalks and trails within Irvington and to other nearby communities.</b>										
Strategy #1: Commission the development of a pedestrian and bicycle master plan to be added to the Comprehensive Plan.		✓	✓							
Strategy #2: Cooperatively research the feasibility of developing connecting trails to neighboring towns and construct as fundable.		✓	✓							
Strategy #3: Seek VDOT Transportation Alternative Program funding for the construction of public pedestrian and bicycle facilities.				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Strategy #4: Construct pedestrian and bicycle facilities as funds are awarded by VDOT and as matching funds become available.				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Goal D: Build stronger ties between Irvington's residents and provide an additional tourism venue by the further development of the Commons/North Commons as the central gathering place for community meetings, events, and festivals.</b>										
Strategy #1: Engage in a community-driven process of discerning the needs, opportunities, and vision for the Commons/N. Commons.	✓									
Strategy #2: Commission a plan of phased development for the Commons/N. Commons to be added to the Comprehensive Plan.		✓								
Strategy #3: Construct the planned improvements to the Commons/N. Commons as funding becomes available for each phase.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Goal E: Strengthen Irvington's tie to the water through the development of a public waterfront park/canoe &amp; kayak launch.</b>										
Strategy #1: Research the acquisition or donation of an appropriate waterfront parcel and take ownerships a donation or funding becomes available.	✓	✓								
Strategy #2: Commission a plan of development for a public waterfront park/canoe & kayak launch.		✓	✓							
Strategy #3: Construct the planned public waterfront park/canoe & kayak launch as funding becomes available.		✓	✓							
<b>Goal F: Position Irvington as a great place to grow a small or home-based business by seeking partnerships that help deliver stronger internet connectivity.</b>										
Strategy #1: Monitor and engage in cooperative efforts to develop more robust internet connectivity in the area.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Strategy #2: Continually keep an eye on the public and nonprofit resources that might become available to boost internet connectivity.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## APPENDIX A – COMMUNITY SURVEY

(A copy of the survey follows this page.)

# Irvington Community Survey

If you live, work, or shop in Irvington and want to provide your input, please fill out the following survey. Limit 2 surveys per household. Surveys should be returned to the Town Office located at 235 Steamboat Road or by mail to P.O. Box 174, Irvington, VA 22480.

All responses will be treated anonymously.

- 1) Home Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Please circle all that apply: I (live) (work) (shop) in Irvington.
- 3) Are you a weekend / seasonal / year-round resident?
- 4) Age (18-29) (30-49) (50-64) (65+)
- 5) Gender: M / F
- 6) Do you have children at home? Y / N

7) **What are the top three reasons you were drawn to Irvington?**  
(circle the appropriate letter)

- a. Small town atmosphere
- b. Tides Inn/Hope & Glory Inn
- c. Waterfront location
- d. Sailing/boating/fishing
- e. Golf
- f. Nearness to work
- g. Job opportunities
- h. Safety
- i. Low tax rates
- j. Seclusion
- k. Town services
- l. Historic character
- m. Cultural activities
- n. Family ties
- o. Raised here
- p. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

8) **What are the top three reasons you might leave and/or not recommend Irvington?** (circle the appropriate letter)

- a. Lack of jobs
- b. Lack of restaurants, stores, services
- c. Lack of activities and events
- d. Housing costs
- e. Lack of medical services
- f. Quality of schools
- g. Lack of Town services
- h. Lack of public water access
- i. Town property tax
- j. Flooding
- k. Crime
- l. Roads
- m. Hard to get around without a car
- n. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

9) **Retail, Services, & Employment Opportunities:** (circle an option for each from "strongly agree" to "no opinion")

- a. Retail, services, and employment are sufficient; there's no need to add more or change anything.  
strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion
- b. Retail, services, and employment are insufficient; more and better opportunities need to be added.  
strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion
- c. Specific recommendations for retail, services, & employment (circle the appropriate number):
  - i. More retail such as neighborhood retail, specialty stores
  - ii. More restaurants such as pubs, cafes, rest. with entertainment
  - iii. More services such as medical, personal care, home repair
  - iv. More offices including local and regional businesses
  - v. Other, and additional detail: \_\_\_\_\_



As with question #9, for the remaining questions, where an opinion is asked for, circle an option for each from “strongly agree” to “no opinion.”

**10) Town Services:**

- a. I would like to have more public services (e.g. water, sewer, etc.).  
strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion
- b. If you would like to have more public services, what specifically would you like to have (circle the appropriate number):
- i. Water
  - ii. Sewer
  - iii. Trash/recycling collection
  - iv. Police
  - v. Other:
- 
- 

**11) Recreational Facilities:**

- a. I would like to see more recreation facilities (e.g. playgrounds, sports fields, etc.).  
strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion
- b. If you would like to see more recreational facilities, what specifically would you like to see (circle the appropriate number):
- i. Tennis courts, basketball courts
  - ii. Fitness facilities, swimming facilities
  - iii. Playgrounds, picnic facilities
  - iv. Public water viewing area
  - v. Hiking/biking/golf cart paths
  - vi. Public watercraft launch
  - vii. Kayak/canoe/blue-way trails
  - viii. A more fully landscaped Commons
  - ix. A more fully landscaped North Commons
  - x. Community garden
  - xi. Dog park
  - xii. Other:
- 
- 

**12) Other Town Facilities:**

- a. I would like to see additional Town facilities, (e.g. meeting space, performance space, community center, etc.).  
strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion
- b. If you would like to see additional Town facilities, what specifically would you like to see (circle the appropriate number):
- i. New town office
  - ii. Meeting space
  - iii. Community center
  - iv. Farmer’s market building
  - v. Performance pavilion
  - vi. Other:
- 
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**13) Housing:**

- a. There should be more apartments to meet housing needs.  
strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion
- b. There should be more single-family homes to meet housing needs.  
strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion
- c. There should be more duplexes and town houses to meet housing needs.  
strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion
- d. There should be more mobile homes to meet housing needs.  
strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion
- e. There should be more affordable housing for the elderly.  
strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion
- f. There should be affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households.  
strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion
- g. There should not be any new housing.  
strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion
- h. Other:
- 
-

## APPENDIX B – COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

The Planning Commission received 235 Community Survey responses. The demographics of responders were as follows:

- 77% of respondents live within the Irvington zip code.
- 44% identified as male, 50% as female.
- 84% of respondents live, 18% work, & 56% shop in Irvington.
- 62% of the respondents are year-round residents of Irvington.
- 61% of respondents were 65+ years old, 31% age 50 to 64, 4% age 30 to 49.
- 84% of respondents indicated that they have no children at home.
- No young adults completed the survey.

The results of the survey are outlined in the following paragraphs. After the demographic questions, the first question concerned the top reasons respondents were drawn to Irvington. The answers given were:

- Small town atmosphere – 64%
- Waterfront location – 59%
- Sailing/boating/fishing – 31%
- Family ties – 24%
- Tides Inn/Hope & Glory Inn – 23%
- Historic character – 20%
- “Other” reasons given at least 3 times: marriage; scenic setting; friends; opportunity.

The top reasons respondents might leave and/or not recommend Irvington were:

- Town property tax – 29%
- Lack of restaurants, stores, services – 27%
- Lack of medical services – 27%
- Quality of schools – 17%

- Housing costs – 13%
- Hard to get around without a car – 13%
- “Other” reasons given at least 3 times: none/never; getting too old; death of a spouse; speeding traffic; boring/lack of matters of interest; too many people coming here.

Concerning retail, services, and employment opportunities in Irvington, property owners responded as follows:

- 51% agreed or strongly agreed that existing offerings are sufficient; 43% disagreed or strongly disagreed that existing offerings are sufficient.
- 49% agreed or strongly agreed that additional offerings are needed; 44% disagreed or strongly disagreed that additional offerings are needed.
- A number of respondents mentioned that the retail offerings in Kilmarnock and White Stone are sufficient.
- A number of respondents mentioned that small businesses in the area are struggling.

Related to Town services:

- 40% agreed or strongly agreed that they would like to have more public services; 48% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they would like to have more public services.
- 32% of respondents wanted public sewer service.
- 20% wanted public trash/recycling collection service.
- 8% wanted public police protection.
- 7% wanted public water service.

## APPENDIX B – COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

- Specific “other” public services mentioned at least 3 times: none/ nothing; better quality water; better monitoring of traffic/speeding; sewer.

Regarding recreational facilities:

- 40% agreed or strongly agreed that they would like to see more recreational facilities; 45% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they would like to see more recreational services.
- 29% of respondents would like to see hiking/biking/golf cart paths.
- 22% would like to see a public water viewing area.
- 17% would like to see a public watercraft launch.
- 16% would like to see a more fully landscaped Commons.
- 15% would like to see kayak/canoe/ blue-way trails.
- 14% would like to see fitness/swimming facilities.
- 13% would like to see playgrounds/ picnic facilities.

- Specific “other” recreational facilities mentioned at least 3 times: bike path/sidewalk to Kilmarnock; facilities already available in Irvington or the area.

When asked about other Town facilities:

- 34% agreed or strongly agreed that they would like to see additional Town facilities; 47% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they would like to see additional Town facilities.
- 18% of respondents would like to see a community center.
- 17% would like to see a performance pavilion.
- 13% would like to see a new Town office.
- 13% would like to see a farmer’s market building.
- Specific “other” Town facilities mentioned at least 3 times: none/ nothing.

The results of the housing question are shown below. Specific “others” mentioned at least 3 times: allow smaller, one-acre lot size; housing for persons growing older and needing to downsize; should be market driven, not Town driven.

### Responses to Survey Housing Question

There should be more:	Agree/ Strongly Agree	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree
Apartments	9%	78%
Single-family homes	18%	61%
Duplexes & town houses	13%	73%
Mobile homes	1%	95%
Affordable housing - elderly	39%	43%
Affordable housing – low & moderate income	25%	57%
No new housing	39%	47%

## APPENDIX C – PUBLIC MEETING RESULTS

A quite lively Public Meeting was held on September 15 with 65 persons in attendance plus the Planning Commission. Ten questions were included in a hand-out to spur discussion along with the results of the survey, summaries of background data, and a list of the “Top Ten Qualities of Successful Small Towns.” Because of the “non-scheduled” dialogue that took place and time constraint, only two of the questions were ultimately utilized. However, the two questions that were used generated significant and important feedback.

### **What were the “aha” moments you might have had listening to the presentations this evening?**

- The “Top Ten Qualities of Successful Small Towns” discussion should be included as a component of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Market and generational trends are revealing, particularly changes to the housing market and the trend towards downsizing.
- Land slated for development poses a pre-authorized 30% increase in available housing units in the future – this is a change that will occur, and it’s important to prepare for it.
- The local age distribution (heavily weighted towards the 65+ age range) causes concern over the future viability of the existing housing market.
- Attracting younger people is key – emphasis on improved infrastructure (internet especially) education, and housing options.
- Many people that live in Irvington are visitors that decide to move here after retirement – important to market the town to visitors that have money and may be interested in a second home.
- The community vision should emphasize appropriate types of development.

### **What is your vision for the Town of Irvington?**

- Time is of the essence – change needs to occur quickly.
- Economic development is always regional.
- Education options must continue to improve – the school board has a vision to become the premier school district on the Northern Neck and is working towards that end.
- The future of Irvington depends on younger people moving to Irvington.
- Present zoning requirements should be reconsidered – cluster zoning that promotes smaller lot sizes and more neighborhood open space should be explored.
- A village atmosphere should be promoted through neighborhood-oriented development patterns.
- Public water access with a boat launch is key (this point was voiced several times).
- Irvington needs to be a walkable community – completion of bike trails.
- Mixed ages, mixed wealth, a more youthful population.
- Water is the biggest asset; tourism is the biggest source of income.
- Becoming better known – approximately half of the people that come to visit the Vineyard know nothing of the area.
- Need for better branding and maximizing existing assets.
- Pursue funding options – dollars need to go towards improving tourism, housing options.
- Deal with septic issues.
- Develop housing for moderate income individuals.

## APPENDIX C – PUBLIC MEETING RESULTS

- Offer more tourism assets – hotel rooms, etc.
- Draw attention to historic assets, potentially a self-guided tour using technology.

Participants were encouraged to answer the ten questions included in the hand-out and return it to the Town office. The following are answers received as separate submissions from two individuals subsequent to the Public Meeting:

**1. What were the “aha” moments you might have had listening to the presentations this evening?**

- It was polite of the Planning Commission to ask for our ideas, BUT the Comprehensive plan needs to be visionary, reflecting the Town leadership’s ideas of future needs. We need something to react to rather than grope without. The absence of a leadership-proposed vision for the community’s future meant that the discussion would primarily be about details and self-interest items.
- Extrapolating ‘data’ from the ‘survey’ – aside from the demographics – was a stretch.
- There are several people in the Town who are making investments that do not appear to be based solely on profit. What are their objectives for the community?
- This is not easy!

**2. What do you see as the greatest need in Irvington?**

- A more balanced population in terms of ages, employment status, means, and ethnicity.

**3. What do you see as the greatest challenge or opportunity in Irvington?**

- Our greatest challenge is to find ways to make the water accessible to those who don’t have water access. This includes a beach/places to swim as well as a place to launch small boats and kayaks.
- Ways to make a living.
- Access to our greatest resource – the Creek – for the general population.

**4. Based on the last several years, what experience have you had in Irvington or event that was held here that you think the Town ought to build on to make Irvington a more vibrant community?**

- The Fourth of July Parade and the Farmer’s Market are fine community events that seem to pull people together.
- Chesapeake Academy sports events provide a youthful noise; as does neighbors’ grandkids playing in the Creek.

**5. In your own travels to other communities, what activities, amenities, private enterprises, or public facilities have you experienced that you think Irvington ought to look into for the future?**

- The university town where I used to live, Ann Arbor, MI, made a conscious effort to build bike paths both into the town and through the surrounding open green spaces. Biking from the Tides Inn or Hope and Glory Inn is very restricted (surrounding roads soon dead end or one has to brave the traffic on Rt. 200) I think that expanding bike paths by at least building one or two loops would encourage people, and visitors in particular, to get out and about.



## APPENDIX C – PUBLIC MEETING RESULTS

- Provide a public access to the Creek via a marina/boat ramp and a few park benches to watch people use it.
  - Provide bike trails to some place interesting.
  - Make sure that the people performing domestic and yard services don't have to travel long distances to provide those services to residents and visitors.
- 6. Irvington is often described as having a "village feel." What is it about Irvington that makes it a village?**
- I can walk to all local amenities: cafe, bank, shops, gas station, restaurant.
  - Golf carts are allowed on some roads.
  - The fact that all the amenities are concentrated in one area.
  - I can have chance meetings with friends and neighbors in the shared common space that includes the tennis courts.
  - The town is small enough that one is likely to encounter someone you know at the local cafe or that one is recognized by, for example, the Postmaster.
  - The shared community notice board at the Post Office.
  - People walk and wave and talk to each other.
  - No leash laws, but plenty of pets.
  - Central Post Office and 'the Local.'
- 7. What is missing that would make Irvington even more of an inviting village for residents and visitors?**
- A public waterfront that could include another café.
  - Continued low property and other taxes.
  - Telecommuting facilities.
  - Lancaster County continuing to improve public education.
  - Uber?
  - Better signage – tasteful of course – to the Town's assets (the Tide's Inn, The Vineyard, etc.). Currently visitors have to hunt. Maybe a Town map for visitors.
- 8. When you think of where you will be in your life 5, 10, or even 15 years from now, what should Irvington consider doing to make sure your tenure in Irvington continues to be everything it ought to be?**
- Medical facilities and transport. BUT, I – at age 75 – should not be answering this question. It should be asked of those aged 45 or less!
- 9. What is your vision for the Town of Irvington? Describe in words or a picture what you would like to see in the future for the town.**
- A perfect vision for me would be to include more lower cost cluster housing offset by open spaces that encourage daily use such as biking, communal tennis courts, water access, etc. without being overly built up (e.g. a gazebo or stage of some sort that would only be used occasionally is NOT desirable.) The village should offer a choice of eating establishments and specialty food options and perhaps some services such as a hair salon, dry cleaner, shared office space, etc. Personally, I would NOT like to have medical facilities, a grocery store, or any other type of retail that would require large parking areas and promote traffic and noise.
  - My vision – Lots of green space, some devoted to commercial farming, a wonderful, unique characteristic. Not much larger population, but with greater age distribution. Cluster housing rather

## APPENDIX C – PUBLIC MEETING RESULTS

than typical development housing on two-acre lots. Respect for environmental conservation evident in policy and facilities.

**10. In the final document, the plans that will be set out in the Comprehensive Plan will be expressed as a set of goals and objectives. What do you think some of those goals and objectives ought to be?**

- Goal – promote an inflow of residents by building affordable, smaller cluster housing that would suit, among others, older residents. This should be offset by pleasant green spaces.
- Goal – getting around should be "user friendly" i.e. bike and golf cart paths.
- Goal – Promote use of our environmental assets by building bike/walking paths and water access.
- Goal – maintain the village feel by avoiding high volume businesses and concentrating smaller business and services in one area that is attractive to foot traffic.
- Goal – to provide residents and visitors a comfortable village atmosphere via physical facilities and events that are supportive – not intrusive – of a salt water-based recreation and atmosphere.
- Objective – enhance the value and attractiveness of non-waterfront residential real estate in the town via attractive public water access.
- Objective – maintain non-intrusive governance and low cost public management.
- Objective – ensure the Town's interests in/need for services provided by other jurisdictions like Lancaster County (e.g. education, utilities, etc.) are well represented.

### **Additional Public Input**

The following input was provided by several individuals subsequent to the Public Meeting in formats that did not directly correlate with the ten questions. Lengthier input has been summarized.

1. If we want Irvington to be successful we must define our objectives. Would you say Irvington is successful if it created hundreds of new jobs by attracting a steel mill? I don't think so. So, we must set our goals before we do anything else.
2. Many residents say we want to keep the small historic town charm that we have. This does not mean we don't do anything. Keep our sense of place, that is, historic, safe, and has the retail to conform with the "historic district" as federally designated in 2000. If Irvington avoided all changes in the past, we would have dirt roads today. So, if we take the path we don't want Irvington to change, we must make plans to accommodate the changes that will be forced upon us by a changing world.
3. Changes that effect Irvington's future and what we should do:
  - More people want to work at home. These people typically are the higher income people that can afford Irvington home prices. Thus, it appears we should do the things that make it easier for people to work at home, for example, have better access to high speed internet.
  - The people that can afford higher price housing typically eat out at quality restaurants.
  - Do other things to keep a high standard of living we now have in Irvington.
  - Attract people who are in their 40's and 50's who are planning to retire and want to leave the city traffic and poor quality

## APPENDIX C – PUBLIC MEETING RESULTS

of life. This trend seems to have already started with new home buyers who are still working by either telecommuting or having a defined travel schedule for their jobs.

- Use White Stone and Kilmarnock for shopping for our household needs. Today, affordable retail shopping for essential items such as cleaning products and perishable goods occurs at very large retail establishments. Large stores like Giant would not be in keeping with the feeling we want Irvington to project.
  - The safe, comfortable, small town atmosphere will result in greater demand for houses in Irvington.
4. Irvington is part of a region where Kilmarnock and White Stone provide much of the retail, medical, and commercial facilities. They also offering housing alternatives. Irvington is primarily a residential and hospitality community. It differs from the others because the Town is clustered around its waterfront which makes housing costs higher than in the other towns. It is one of the few places that you can enjoy the combination of waterfront living and a small town environment. Therefore, the Town should not strive to be a comprehensive town, but rather should focus on enhancing itself as a residential and hospitality community.
  5. There are three categories of homeowners that live in Irvington: a) older people moving here from elsewhere because it is a nice place to live and have waterfront property; b) part-time residents as a gateway to living in Town in retirement; c) local working people, though it seems this number is gradually diminishing. With this in mind, as long as Irvington is attractive to retirees coming from outside of the area, a population with a disproportionate number of older people is to be expected. To ensure a future flow of prospective buyers, Irvington should create an environment that appeals to younger visitors/potential future residents. To attract more local working people, more affordable, livable housing should be constructed.
  6. Concerns: a) Younger buyers that are considering moving to the area will be very concerned about the school system. Action to improve the schools is being taken and Irvington and its residents should be very supportive of school excellence; b) Better high speed internet access is needed to attract businesses and young people to Town; c) concern about rising sea levels has become a factor in attracting people to the area.
  7. Vision: “To be an exceptional place to live and a special place to visit.” Irvington’s exceptionalism includes the following:
    - A small town atmosphere with a strong sense of community.
    - A picturesque town with varied architecture, open spaces, fields, gardens, and prolific vegetation.
    - Situated on the banks of Carter’s Creek, a beautiful and sheltered creek.
    - A generally gentle climate.
    - Located in a region of exceptional natural, human, and U.S. history.
    - Adjacent to great sailing, boating, and fishing on the Rappahannock River and Chesapeake Bay.
    - Generally low traffic levels and the ability to walk and cycle safely throughout the old town.
    - A lack of junk and strip development.
    - Monthly Farmer’s Markets and other special community events.

## APPENDIX C – PUBLIC MEETING RESULTS

- One of the very few places that is not congested and overrun with traffic and commercial development.
8. The following suggestions have been compiled with younger family residents and visitors in mind and could complement the current strengths of the community:
- Develop public access to the water such as a boat ramp plus kayak launch and/or town dock.
  - Consider additional appropriate housing for local working people.
  - Ensure Irvington keeps pace with the needs of communications technology.
  - To the extent possible, support the improvement of the county educational system.
  - Extend the Town sidewalk system to reach peripheral areas such as out to the bridge to White Stone, the Glebe, and the Vineyard.
  - To enhance the visitor experience, in addition to Steamboat Era Museum, develop Irvington as a center of information on the history of the region.
  - Make Irvington a center of information on the natural history of the region.
  - Introduce at least one truly community annual event for Town residents to build community involvement and outreach.
9. Too much "improvement" and commercialization is not recommended as this could change the nature of the Town altogether and make Irvington just like anywhere else.