



ST. MARY'S 2050

CHARTING OUR TOMORROW

**St. Mary's 2050: Charting Our Tomorrow
Comprehensive Plan Update Project
March 24, 2025**

Planning Commission Update

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St. Mary's 2050: Charting Our Tomorrow



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Project Timeline



LAUNCH PROJECT

Fall 2024

Kickoff Meeting
County Tour
Internal Interviews
Project Website



ESTABLISH VISION AND GOALS

Winter 2024 - 2025

Community
Engagement
Window #1*



DEVELOP POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

**Spring –
Fall 2025**

Community
Engagement
Window #2*

Community
Engagement
Window #3*



PLAN ADOPTION

Winter 2025-2026

Public Hearings
Adoption

*** Includes PC Briefings**

Project Kickoff & Key Planning Themes



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Project Kickoff

Interviews conducted with the following agencies:

- Commissioners of St. Mary's County
- Planning Commission
- County departmental leaders
- MetCom
- St. Mary's County Public Schools
- NAS Pax River
- Health Department



Key Planning Themes



- Strong appreciation and desire to preserve the county's rural, agricultural landscape and views
- Protecting vulnerable coastal, wetland, and other natural areas from development
- Balanced land use that supports redevelopment and development in growth areas while protecting the county's rural heritage

Key Planning Themes



- More options for walking and biking to destinations and on trails
- More and improved public transportation options within the county and to outside destinations
- Improving the county's roadway network and addressing safety and traffic issues

Key Planning Themes



- The need for more affordable and attainable housing for people at all stages of their lives
- Providing a wider variety of housing options in growth areas is an important solution to help everyone, including critical employees, find a place to call home
- Action to address the need for better and expanded wastewater treatment options in certain areas of the county

Community Engagement Window #1



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Community Engagement Window #1

(Jan. 16 – Mar. 3)

12 Community Visioning Sessions

Jan. 16 – Feb. 22
(10 in-person, 2 virtual)*

Visioning Activities included:

Small group discussions
Surveys
Mapping

Online visioning activities:

Avail. Feb. 3 – Mar. 3

* See project website for dates/times:

<https://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/StMarys2050/GetInvolved/>



Community Engagement Window #1

Outreach Strategy

- County website frequently updated
 - Prominent announcement box on main webpage
 - Banner on LUGM homepage directing visitors to project website
- Periodic News Releases
- Multiple emails to Community Engagement Team to boost notifications in established social networks
- Flyers in public places across county

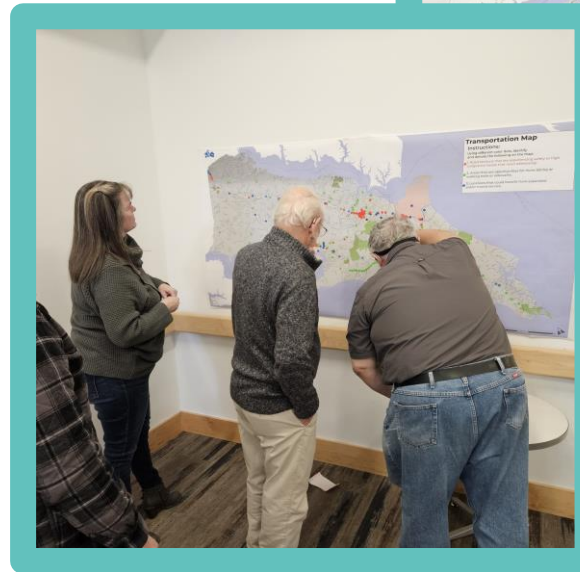


Community Engagement Window #1

Public Participation

Total # of participants: 288

- In-person/virtual: 139
- Online (asynchronous): 149



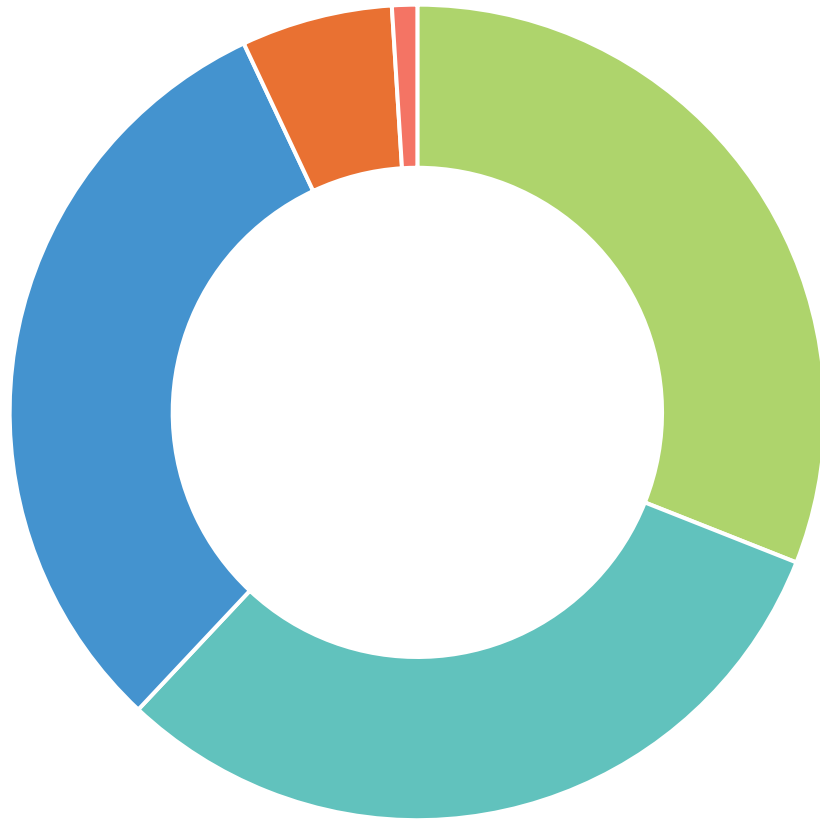
Engagement Objectives

- 1 **Engagement Satisfaction**
- 2 **Representative Engagement**

Engagement Objective #1

Engagement Satisfaction

How likely are you to participate in future St. Mary's 2050 public engagement activities?

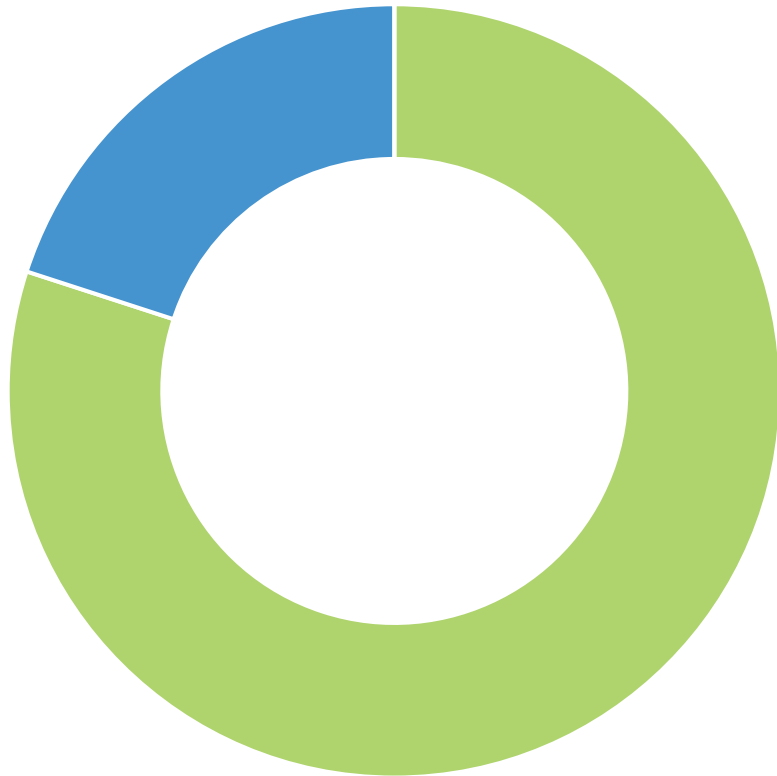


- 31% I'll be there
- 31% Very Likely
- 31% Somewhat Likely
- 6% Not Likely
- 1% Definitely Not!

218 responses

Engagement Objective #1

Engagement Satisfaction

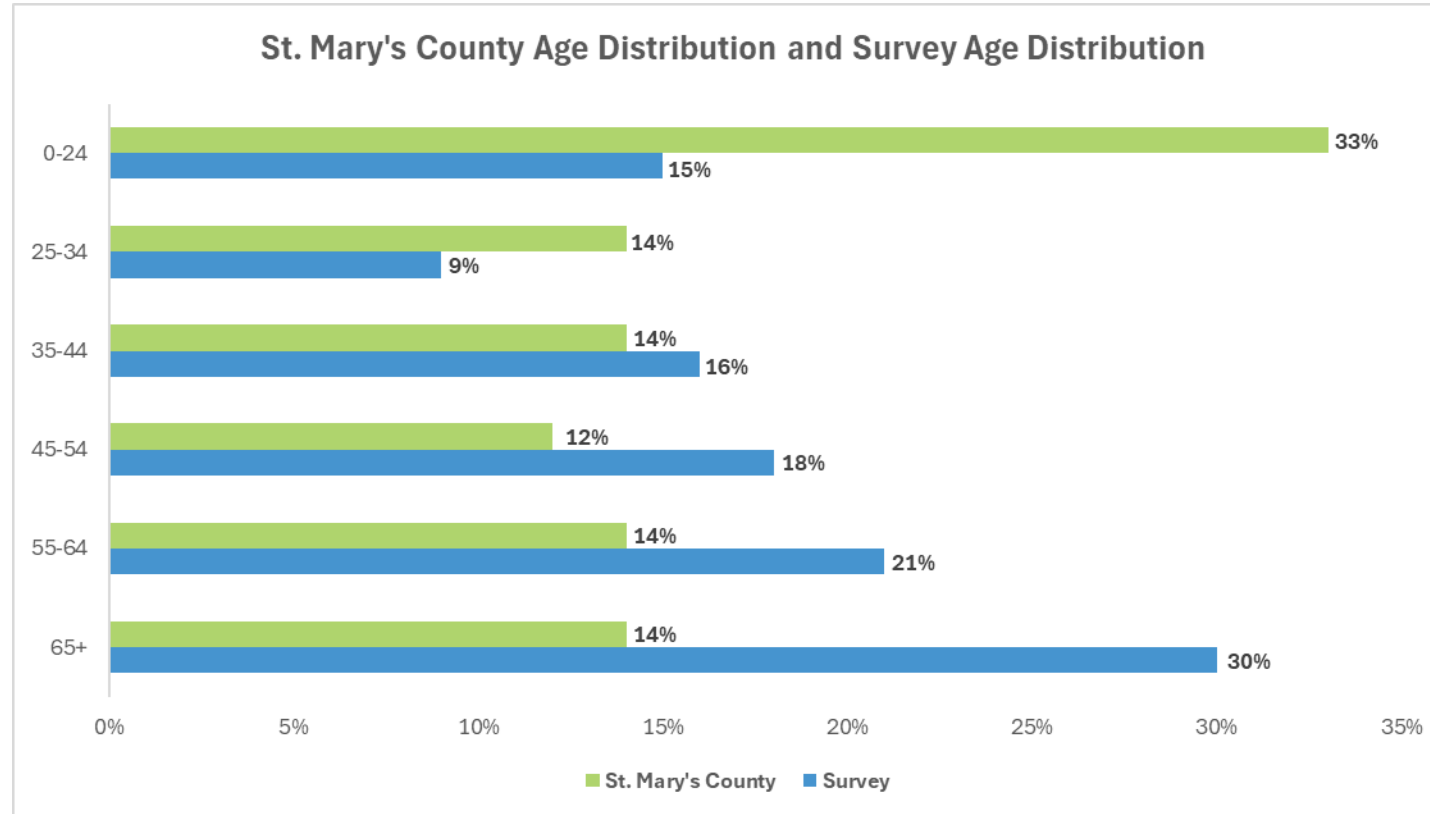


Were you comfortable sharing your ideas and opinions today? Choose one.

- 80% Very Comfortable
- 20% Somewhat Comfortable
- 0% Uncomfortable

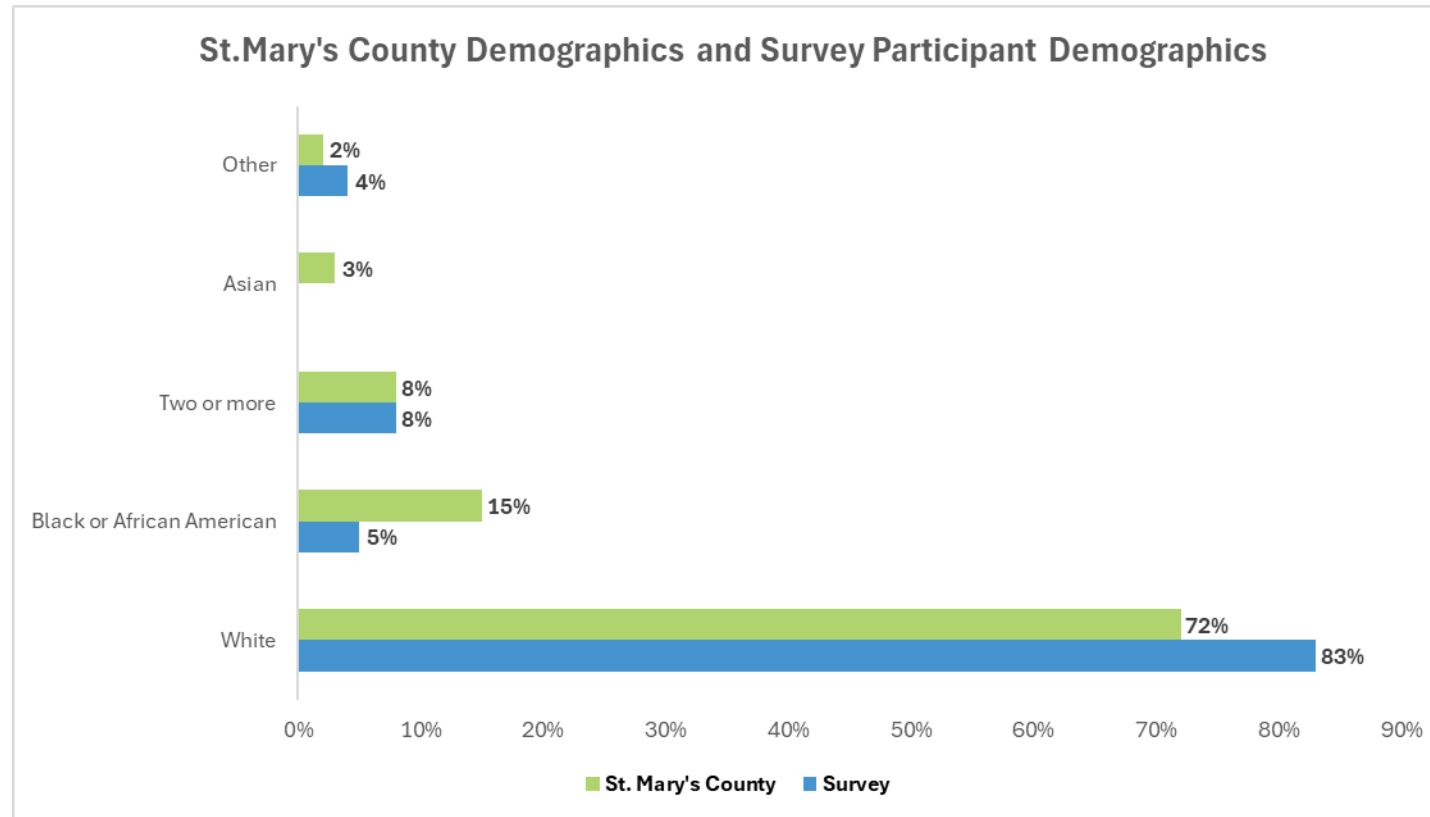
Engagement Objective #2

Representative Engagement (Age)



Engagement Objectives

Representative Engagement (Race)



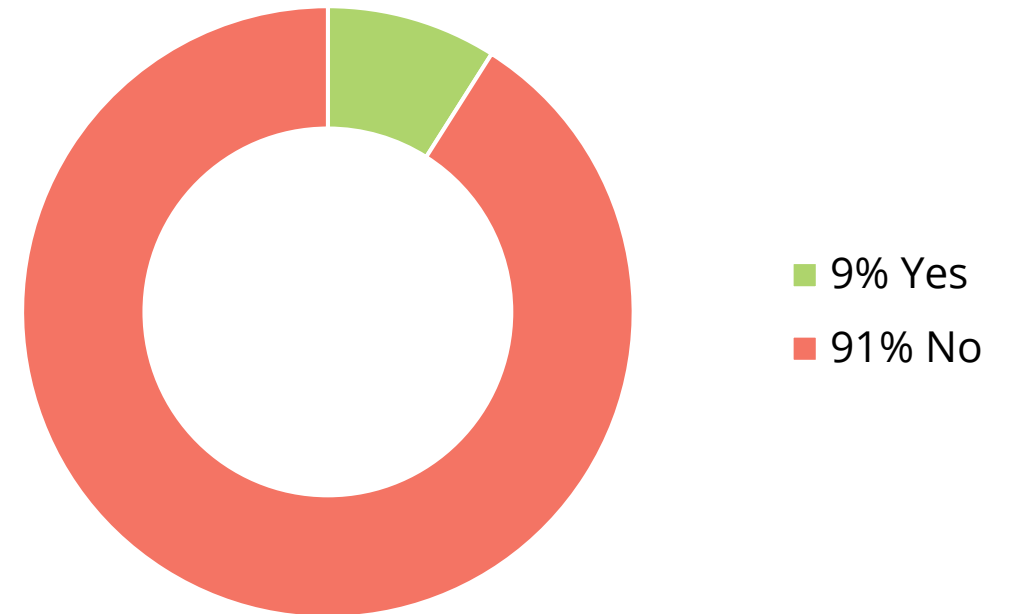
Engagement Objectives

Representative Engagement (Hispanic Origin/Latinx)

St. Mary's Demographics

6% of county residents are Hispanic/Latinx

Survey Demographics

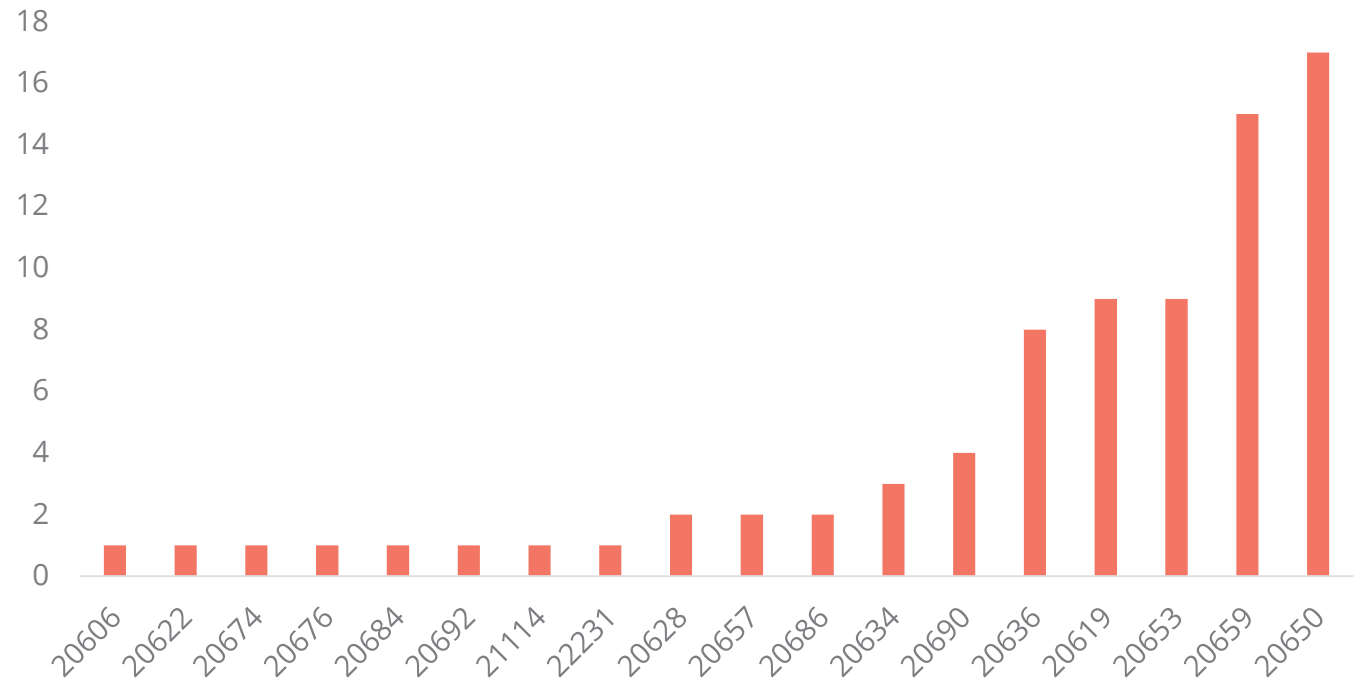


Engagement Objectives #2

Representative Engagement (Primary Residence)

- ✓ Most participants skipped this question but of those who answered, 16 of 27 zip codes within St. Mary's County were represented
- ✓ 2 zip codes from outside the county (those who work but do not live in SMC)

Survey Respondent Zip Codes

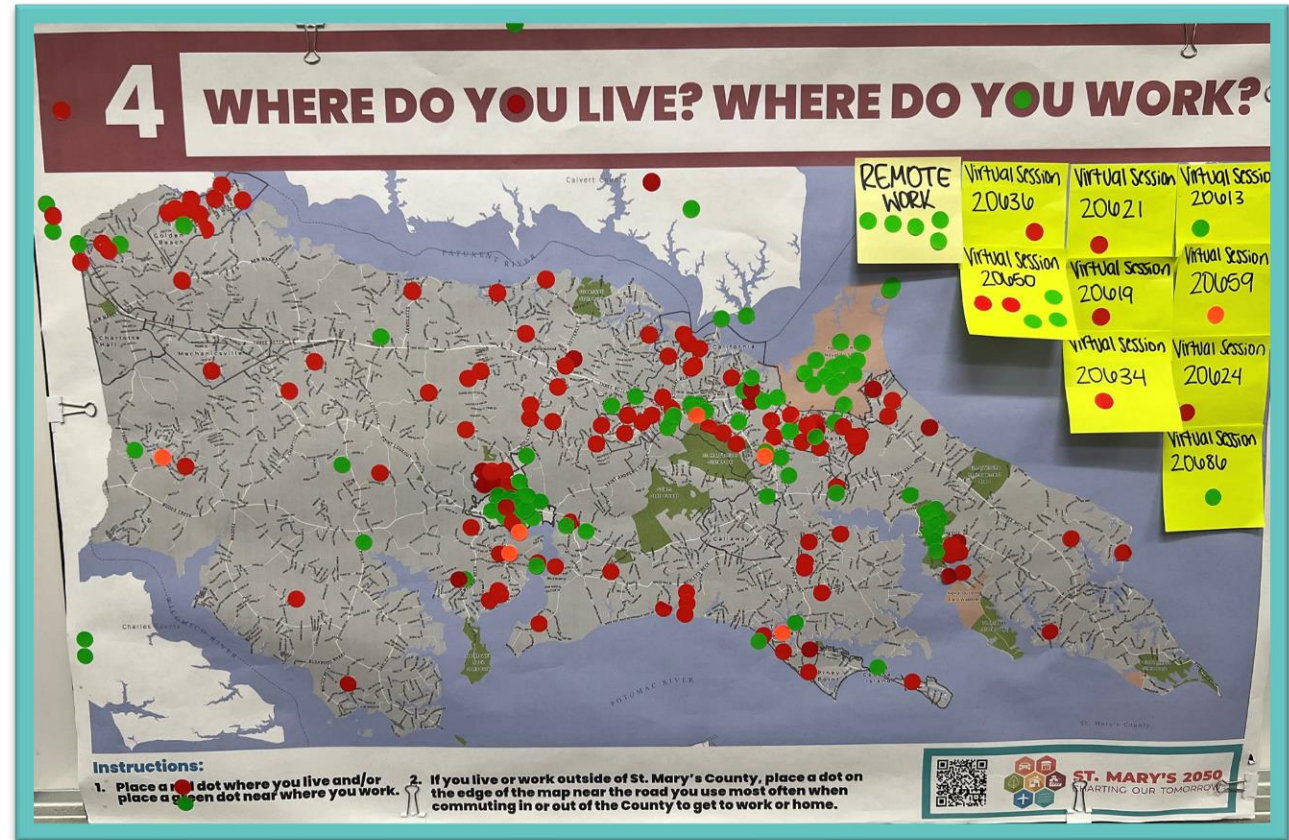


79 responses

Engagement Objectives #2

Representative Engagement (Live/Work Map)

- This map was used for all Community Visioning Sessions; attendees added dots for where they lived and worked
- Dot locations aligned with population and employment density



Community Engagement Window #1: Online Community Visioning Survey Results



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Online Community Visioning Activities

Results: Key Priorities Survey

- **Question 1: Almost all (91%)** agreed or strongly agreed that land use in SMC **should be balanced**, with protection of rural areas and growth in growth areas
- **Question 2: 78%** either agreed or strongly agreed that **Development Districts and Town Centers should be the focus** for new development and redevelopment
- **Question 3: 84%** either agreed or strongly agreed that **Village Centers should support small-scale businesses & tourism**, and serve as local shopping centers for rural residents
- **Question 4: 77%** either agreed or strongly agreed that **new infrastructure** (water-related & roads) is needed to support development in growth areas
- **Question 5: 63%** either agreed or strongly agreed **that 'package' sewer treatment plants should be considered** for wastewater services in areas with failing septic

Online Community Visioning Activities

Results: Key Priorities Survey (cont.)

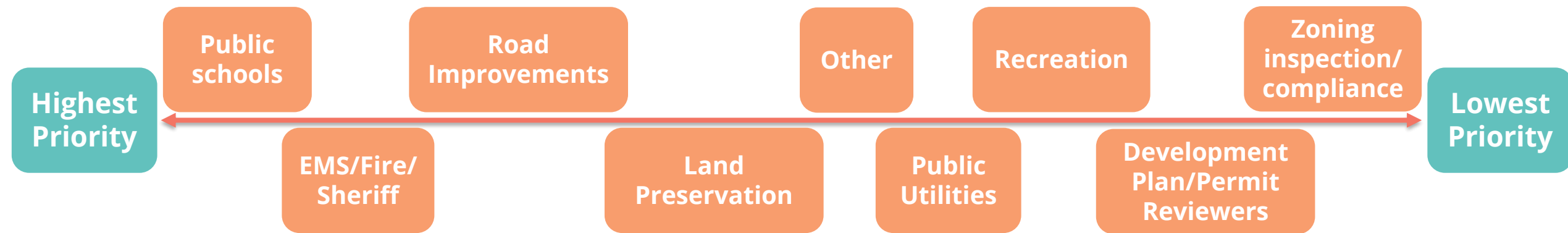
- **Question 6:** **77%** of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that the county could use **more options for walking and biking** (transit and recreation)
- **Question 7:** **76%** of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that providing **smaller homes and townhouses in growth areas** is an important solution to ensure that young families, professionals, and critical employees (fire, police, nurses, teachers, etc.) can find housing
- **Question 8:** **66%** of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that **providing new multifamily housing in growth areas** is an important solution to ensure that young families, professionals, and critical employees (fire, police, nurses, teachers, etc.) can find housing
- **Question 9:** **No consensus** on whether providing **manufactured/mobile homes in growth areas** is a good solution to increase housing: **35%** agreed, **41%** disagreed or strongly disagreed, **22%** were neutral
- **Question 10:** **Nearly all (93%)** participants either agreed or strongly agreed that sensitive natural resources should be protected from development impacts

Online Community Visioning Activities

Results: Key Priorities Survey

Question 11: Public Spending Priorities Ranking

- Public schools and EMS/Fire/Sheriff services, and road improvements were ranked as the **top 3 spending priorities**, with land preservation in 4th
- Many respondents added their own ideas under 'Other,' like public transportation or libraries



Mapping Activity #1: Where to Grow

1/16-1/18/25 Paper Map

Most agree:

- Expand water/sewer service to certain areas
- Prioritize redevelopment

No strong consensus:

- Location(s) for +/- growth

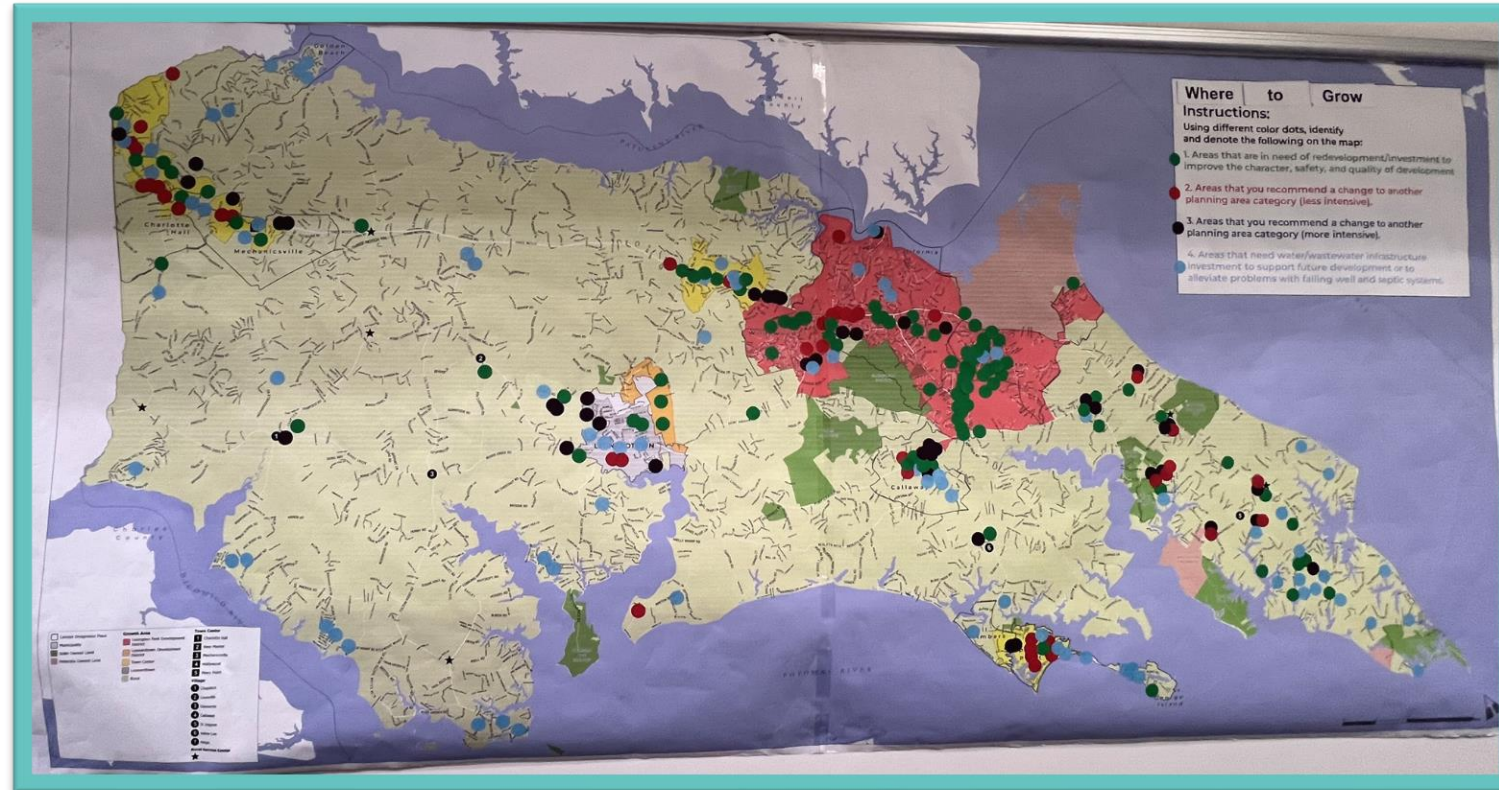
Patterns of feedback very similar for other two maps; more redevelopment pins on online map



- Areas that are in need of redevelopment/investment to improve the character, safety, and quality of development
- Areas that you recommend a change to another planning area category (less intensive)
- Areas that you recommend a change to another planning area category (more intensive)
- Areas that need water/wastewater infrastructure investment to support future development or to alleviate problems with failing well and septic systems

Mapping Activity #1: Where to Grow

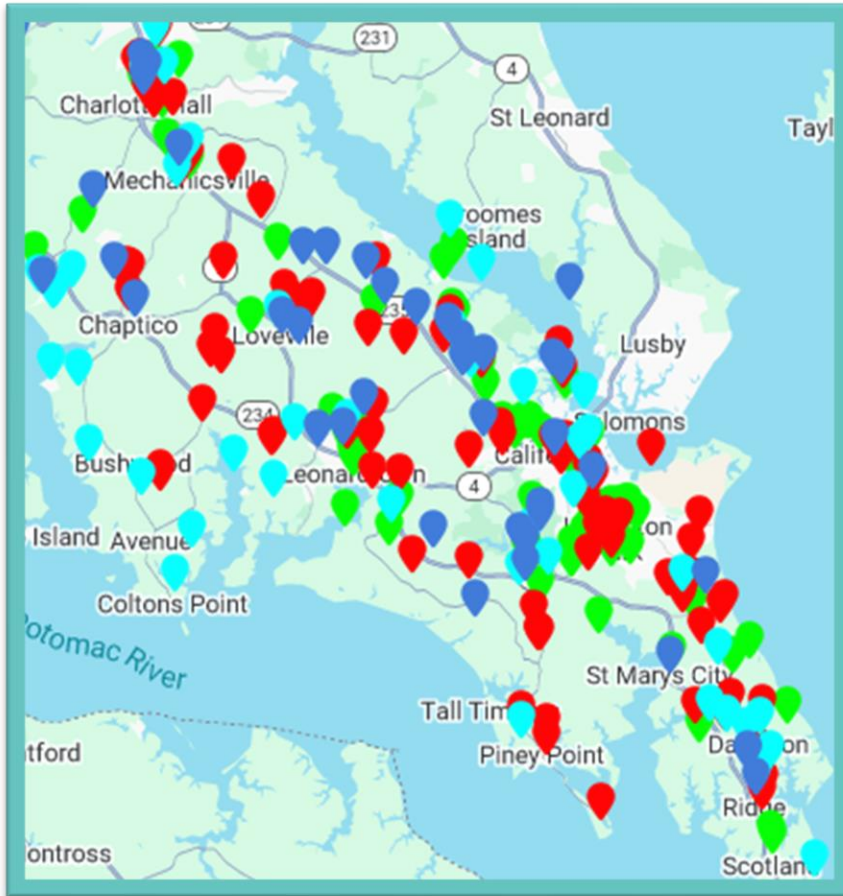
1/22-2/22/25 Paper Map



- Areas that are in need of redevelopment/investment to improve the character, safety, and quality of development
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Mapping Activity #1: Where to Grow

2/3-3/3/25 Online Map



- Areas that are in need of redevelopment/investment to improve the character, safety, and quality of development
- Areas that you recommend a change to another planning area category (less intensive)
- Areas that you recommend a change to another planning area category (more intensive)
- Areas that need water/wastewater infrastructure investment to support future development or to alleviate problems with failing well and septic systems

Mapping Activity #2: Getting Around

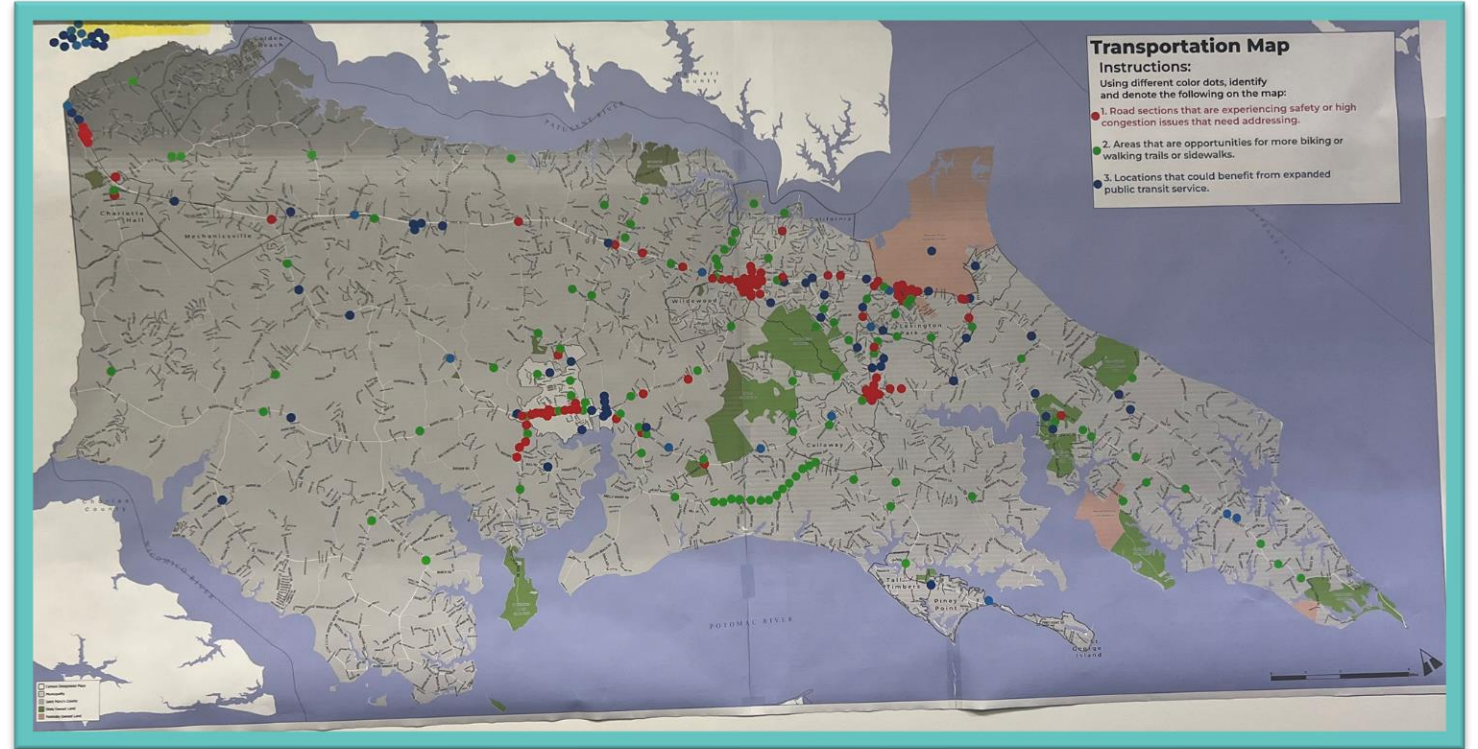
1/16-1/18/25 Paper Map

Commonly-held concern:

- Road safety in certain corridors and at key intersections

Shared desires:

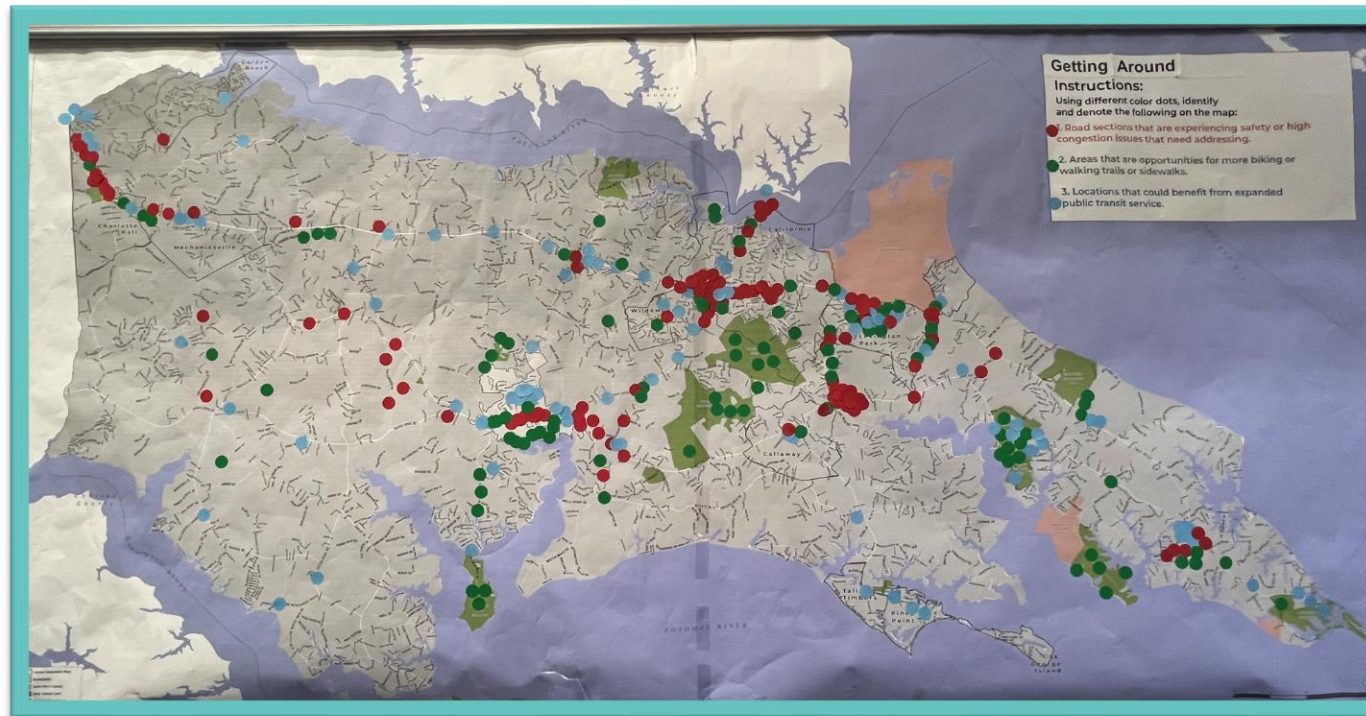
- New biking/walking trails
- Increased public transit






- Road sections that are experiencing safety or high congestion issues that need addressing
- Areas that are opportunities for more biking or walking trails or sidewalks
- Locations that could benefit from expanded public transit service

Mapping Activity #2: Getting Around

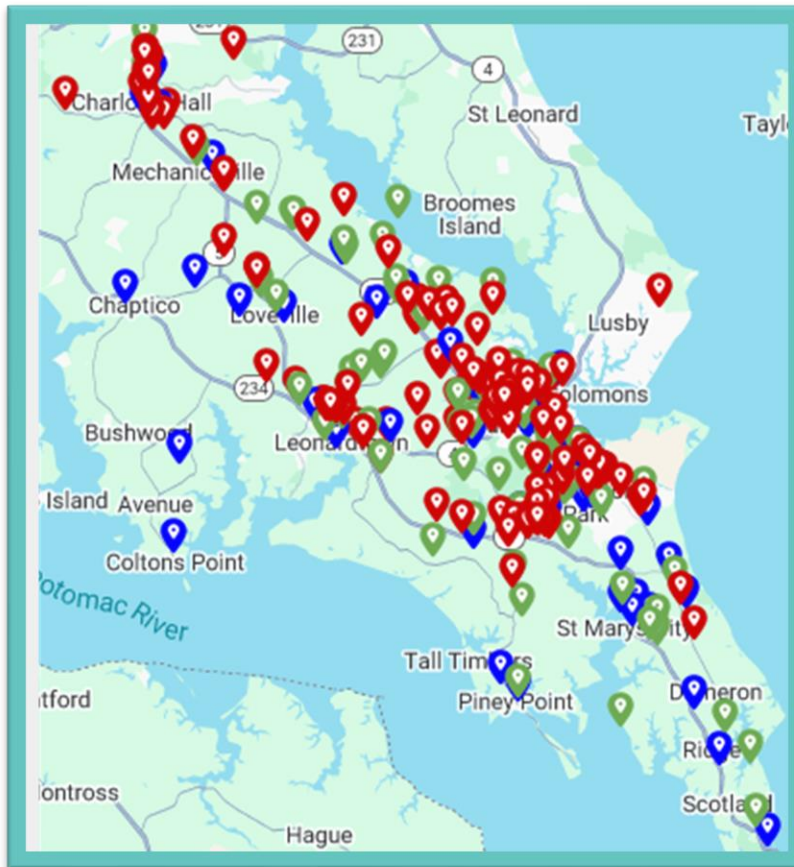
1/22-2/22/25 Paper Map






-  Road sections that are experiencing safety or high congestion issues that need addressing
-  Areas that are opportunities for more biking or walking trails or sidewalks
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Mapping Activity #2: Getting Around

2/3-3/3/25 Online Map



-  Road sections that are experiencing safety or high congestion issues that need addressing
-  Areas that are opportunities for more biking or walking trails or sidewalks
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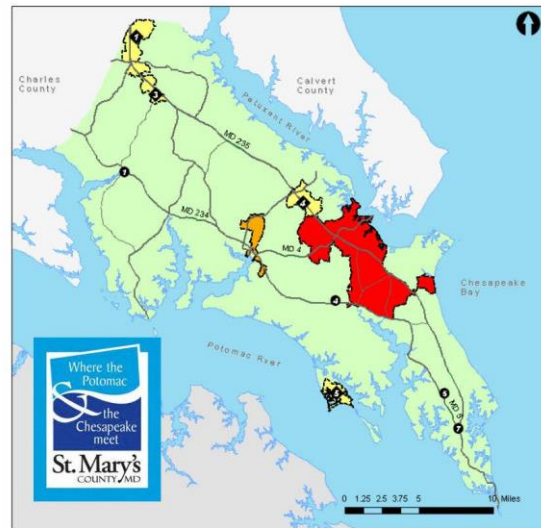
Recommended Plan Framework



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Recommended Plan Framework

ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Adopted: March 23, 2010

Effective: April 6, 2010

QUALITY OF LIFE IN ST. MARY'S COUNTY
— A STRATEGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY —

Prepared and adopted
in accordance with
Article 66B of the
Annotated Code of Maryland



Recommended Plan Framework

1. Introduction

About the Plan

Key Planning
Influences

How to Use The Plan

Glossary of Terms

Plan Monitoring
Process



2. Plan Elements

Introduction

Guiding Our Growth
Through 2050

Protecting Our
Environmental and
Agricultural Resources

Serving Our Community

*(Goals, policies, and actions
under each section)*



3. Implementation

Implementation
Overview

Monitoring and
Updating

Action Plan

Recommended Plan Framework

Section 1: Guiding Our Growth Through 2050

- Future Land Use Plan/Map
- Development Capacity Analysis Element
- Growth Management Element
- Growth and Water/Sewer Service Areas
- Development Regulations Element
- Natural Hazards, Vulnerability, and Resiliency

Section 2: Protecting Our Environmental and Agricultural Resources

- Water Resources Element
- Sensitive Areas Element/Areas of Critical State Concern
- Priority Preservation Areas Element
- Working Lands
- *Mineral Resources and Fisheries Elements pending staff direction*

Section 3: Serving Our Community

- Government and Community Facilities Element
- Transportation Element
- Housing Element
- Public Health and Human Services Element
- Development Regulations Element
- *Community Renewal Element pending staff direction*

Questions?

**More information is available
on the project website:**

<https://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/StMarys2050/>