



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

April 09, 2024 at 7:00 PM

Council Chambers – Town Municipal Center

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. March 12 Minutes

REVIEW OF 2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CHAPTER 1

2. Community Profile

UPCOMING TOPICS TO ADDRESS

3. Upcoming Topics to Address

ANNOUNCEMENTS OR COMMENTS

ADJOURN

**MINUTES OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE, VIRGINIA
MARCH 12, 2024 - 7:00 P.M. – Council Chambers**

Commission Members Present:

Mr. Ray Rosenberger, Chairman
Mrs. Mollie Cherrix
Mr. Michael Dendler
Mr. K. Savage, Councilman
Mr. Robert Shendock

Commission Members Absent:

Mr. David Britton
Mr. Steve Katsetos

Staff Present:

Mr. Michael T. Tolbert, P.E., Town Manager

Call to Order

Chairman Rosenberger called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Invocation

Councilman Mr. K. Savage offered the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Rosenberger led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Participation

Chairman Rosenberger opened the floor for public participation, there was none.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Robert Shendock motioned, seconded by Mr. K Savage to adopt the agenda as presented. Unanimously approved.

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. K Savage, seconded by Mr. Robert Shendock to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2023, meeting as presented. Unanimously approved.

Review of 2025 Comprehensive Plan

The Commission reviewed Chapters 1 – 7. There was further discussion. The Commission will review the items discussed to readdress them at the next meeting.

Announcements or Comments

There were none.

Adjourn

Mr. Robert Shendock motioned, seconded by Michael Dendler to adjourn. Unanimously approved.

Chairman, Mr. Ray Rosenberger

Chapter 1 Community Profile

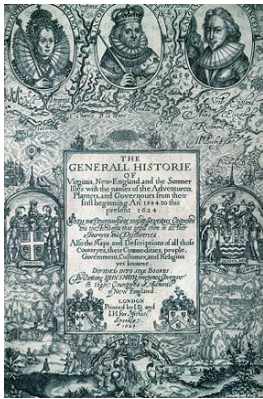
Discovered by Captain John Smith in 1608 for English settlement, the Delmarva Peninsula is situated between the Atlantic Ocean on the east and the Chesapeake Bay on the west. In Virginia, the peninsula was divided into two counties in 1663, Accomack and Northampton. Chincoteague's first European settlers arrived on April 1st, 1671. Prior to that date, the earliest inhabitants were the Gingo-Teague Tribe of Indians, who were eventually dispersed by colonial settlement. Indian influences are present today in the names of Eastern Shore towns such as Chincoteague, Assateague, Onancock, and Chesapeake.



Chincoteague's first settlers arrived in 1671, as the Colony of Virginia witnessed more immigrants from England. The early economy of the region was based on seafood and agriculture.

History of Chincoteague

Agriculture was the primary Colonial economy. This included tobacco, livestock, and later grain. Located in Accomack County, Chincoteague agriculture produced crops of potatoes, strawberries, and corn. Local watermen have been harvesting a seafood bounty for generations including oysters, blue crabs, clams, and scallops. Chincoteague and other waterfront villages and towns on Virginia's Eastern Shore, were important centers of seafood trade. This would be the beginning of the Town's lifelong connection to the Atlantic Ocean and bay that borders its shores, as evidenced by the fact that a post office was not established on the Island until 1854 as access remained by boat only.



Chincoteague is famous for its ponies, a particular breed only found on Chincoteague and Assateague Islands. There are two predominant theories as to how the ponies arrived on the Islands. The first theory is that the ponies came to the islands by way of a shipwrecked Spanish Galleon, probably in the 1700s; they came ashore and began to thrive. The second theory is that the ponies are descendants of herds turned loose by early settlers. The island provided a perfect grazing land with naturally "fenced" boundaries. "Pony Penning," or round-ups, began as a way for livestock owners to claim, brand, break, and harness their loose herds. By the 1700s it had become an annual event, complete with drinking, eating and plenty of revelry by the entire community. The earliest known description of pony penning was published in 1835, and is believed to have been begun by two islanders who owned large herds that grazed on Chincoteague.

The penning continued on Chincoteague and Assateague Islands for years. In 1923, the event was moved to Chincoteague with one penning for both islands. In 1925, the practice of transferring the herds by boat was discontinued and ponies were swum across the channel between the two islands, a practice that continues today. Marguerite Henry's book "Misty of Chincoteague" helped make the area nationally famous. Thousands of visitors come each year to see the "Pony Penning."



By the latter half of the 1800's, the number of people living on Chincoteague had grown substantially, overtaking agricultural land and uprooting early settlers, who could no longer make a living by farming. At about this time a steamboat named "Chincoteague" was put in service to carry passengers and freight to and from the Island, departing from the mainland at Franklin City and arriving at Chincoteague during the busy crop production season of the summer. Stores, hotels, and wealthy business owners began to appear in Chincoteague and several churches were organized. The Island's fame for its seafood began in the early to mid-1800s, when oysters became hugely popular and were much sought after, particularly in the large, northern cities. In 1861, when Union forces (including many from Chincoteague) won a significant battle in the early part of the Civil War, a celebratory banquet was held for the victory. An estimated 4,000 people were served Chincoteague oysters and from this point forward the Island became known for its succulent oysters. Chincoteague's seafood industry grew to include consumers in New York and Philadelphia.

Chincoteague continued to prosper through the turn of the century, incorporating as a Town in 1908. In 1919 a causeway connecting the Island to the mainland was proposed to eliminate the need for steamers and passenger boats to carry people to and from Chincoteague and Franklin City. Construction was started, but while it was underway, in 1920, a major fire burned much of downtown Main Street to the ground. With the causeway under construction, fire companies on the mainland were not able to assist the newly-formed local volunteer fire company of Chincoteague. The extensive destruction caused by the fire threatened to destroy the economy of the Island, but in 1922 the causeway was opened and traffic and access to the Island increased. The 4.5 mile-long road that entered Chincoteague began as a toll road, but in 1930 the Commonwealth of Virginia took over ownership and made it free to the public.

Another major fire in 1924 nearly destroyed the Town a second time, and efforts to raise money to improve the equipment and capabilities of the fire department resulted in the organization of the annual pony penning event that continues today as the Town's major tourist attraction. In 1943 the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) was created on Assateague Island, and in 1965 Assateague was designated as a National Seashore. Through the end of the 20th century, the peaceful seclusion of the Island, its famous seafood, abundant wildlife, proximity to two national landmarks, Wallops Island launch events, and preserved coastal setting all contributed to a steadily growing tourism industry.



Today, Chincoteague is home to over 3,600 people. Tourism is its primary industry. However, a significant portion of the population is employed in the professional, scientific, and health care fields. Seasonal residents and visitors swell this number to over 15,000 during the summer months. Over the years the Town has seen three annexations, with the most recent being in 1989. The 1989 annexation made the entire Island part of the Town of Chincoteague. While annexation provided the Town with additional revenues, it also presented the municipality with expanded public service

responsibilities. The Town is required to provide general governmental services to the residents of the areas annexed at the same level as was provided to the original Town's residents.

The annexation enabled the energies of the enlarged municipality to address more effectively the significant environmental and public service concerns confronting the Island. The future well-being of all residents will be determined by a proper resolution of the same public service issues and environmental concerns.

Socio-Economic Characteristics

Population

Chincoteague's population has remained steady over the years, with a small decline from 1950 to 1970, and a minor increase by only 17 people (0.004%) between 1970 and 1980. The Island experienced its first significant population gain in 30 years between 1980 and 1990, when it grew by 5% as a result of the 1989 annexation of the entire Island. This period of growth was continued between 1990 and 2000 with a 21% increase in population. Between 2000 and 2010 Census counts, the population of Chincoteague declined 32% from 4,324 to 2,941 people. The recent decline is attributed to the conversion of permanent residences to investment properties/seasonal rentals and difficulty in completion of census surveys in our 'hard to count' community. The Town of Chincoteague and Accomack County revised the permanent resident population estimate to over 3,600 people for the purpose of redistricting with approval by the U.S. Justice Department in 2011. The American Community Survey (ACS) 2013-2017 estimates relatively stable population numbers for the period (Reference R-01). Note that projections in this study are based on the 2010 Census population of 2,941 people.

Race

The Island's predominant race is Caucasian, comprising 91% of the population. The remaining 9% represents a mix of African American, Asian, American Indian, mixed and other races. The distribution of races in the population has changed slightly since 2010. Note that variations between the 2010 Census counts and 2017 ACS estimates are within the margins of error.

Age and Sex

Data from the 2017 ACS estimates the median age of the total population had increased slightly from 52 years to 54.4 years from 2010 to 2017. 28.7% of the population is 65 or older.

Chincoteague's median age is significantly older than the median age of Accomack County's population (45.4 years) and 14 years older than the median age of the State's population (37.8 years).

The percentage of females (53.7%) in Chincoteague continues to outnumber the percentage of males (46.3%). The median age of females is slightly older (55.2 years) than the median age of the population and the median age of males is slightly younger (53.7 years).

Households and Families

2010 Census data on household characteristics showed that virtually all (99.5%) of the Island's population lives in households. Chincoteague's average household size was 2.06 persons. The average household size in 2000 was 2.08 persons, indicating a slight decrease in household size between 2000 and 2010. There were 1,417 households on the Island; 61% of them are family households. Of the remaining non-family households, 38.8% were householders living alone. Average family size decreased slightly between 2000 and 2010 from 2.63 persons to 2.58 persons.

2017 ACS data estimates an average household size of 2.02 persons, a slight decrease from 2010 Census data. Estimated total number of households increased to 1,423 with 68.7% as family households with 31.3% were householders living alone. 18.1% are estimated to be occupied by a householder 65 years and over living alone. The average family size estimate of 2.49 is slightly less than that of the 2010 Census data.

Housing Units

The 2017 ACS estimates there are 4,304 housing units on the Island. Of those occupied by households (approximately 1423 units), 74.6 % are 1-unit structures, 5.6% 2-or-more-unit structures, and 19.8% mobile homes or other types of structures. The remaining unoccupied units are second homes, seasonal rental homes, hotel / motel units, rental cabins, campground sites, and other units.

Workforce

Estimates provided by 2017 ACS indicate approximately 57% of the 16 and over population is in the workforce. The unemployment rate is about 6.4%. Of those employed:

- 33% in management, business, science, and the arts
- 32% in sales and office occupations
- 18% in service occupations
- 9% in production and transportation
- 8% in natural resources, construction, and maintenance
- 1% serve in the military

An estimated 87% of the workforce did so within Accomack County. 80.6% commuted to work alone, 9% in carpools, 4% by bicycle, 2% walked to work, and 4% worked at home.

Median household income is \$48,800 with mean earnings of \$59,400 and mean retirement income of \$25,300.

Natural Features

Climate

The average annual temperature in Chincoteague is 56.2 degF. The warm season begins mid-May and ends early October. The highest average monthly temperature occurs in July at 83.4 degF. The coldest month is January, with an average low of 27.4 degF.

Annual total precipitation is 39.9 inches and falls at a rate of about 3 inches per month throughout the year. Average annual snowfall is 8.8 inches, mostly falling during January and February.

Chincoteague Island has a humid climate with no distinct dry season. The relative humidity (measured at nearby Wallops Flight Facility) averages 76%. Spring is least humid, with an average of 78% to 79% humidity from August through September. Daily averages of humidity vary from 83% in early morning to 66% in the afternoon.

Surface winds are highly variable and frequent. Winds are predominately from the south or southeast in the summer, and westerly or northwesterly in the winter. The average wind velocity is 9 to 10 mph in the summer (early-May to early October) and 11 to 13 mph in winter.

At Norfolk, the nearest source of such information, the annual mean number of clear days averages 109, with 103 partially cloudy days, and 153 cloudy days. The average percent of possible sunshine is 63%. The brightest period is from mid-April to mid-August. Early-November to early-February is the darkest period.

Two general types of storms affect the area: hurricanes and northeasters. On average, once a year, a tropical storm of hurricane force passes within 250 miles of Chincoteague. Hurricanes are a threat from May through November. Nearly 80% occur in the months of August, September, and October. About 40% occur in September alone. Hurricanes cause damage from winds and tidal surge. If the storm hits during high tide, a higher surge will occur. If the tide is ebbing, however, flooding will be less. This vertical range of tidal change represents a storage pool.

Northeasters are storms with strong on-shore winds from a northeast direction. The winds are persistent, causing above normal tides for long periods of time. These storms usually occur from September through April. The March 1962 northeaster caused 10 to 15 foot waves, persisted for five tide cycles, and caused inundation and wave damage for 60 hours.

Consult References R-02 and R-03 for additional details.

Geology

Chincoteague Island is commonly believed to be an ancient barrier island. It was formed some 4,000 years ago, as the forces of wind, waves, and ocean deposited sand parallel to the Eastern Shore mainland. Erosion formed breaks in these barrier Islands and allowed the still rising sea to flood the flatlands behind the Island. These flats are now the marshes, channels and bays between Chincoteague and the mainland.

Between 2,000 and 4,000 years ago, scientists believe Assateague Island joined the north end of Chincoteague Island. An Inlet formed, separating the two islands, and continued sand deposits caused a spit to build southward from the Assateague side of the Chincoteague-Assateague Inlet. This spit grew and eventually formed a south neck. This neck grew between Chincoteague Island and the sea, located around today's Assateague Channel and continues to provide barrier island protection for the Town. Its successor, Tom's Cove Hook, is following a much similar pattern as the one that formed Chincoteague Island (see Exhibit 1-1).

Large-scale weather events, as well as, natural and man-made changes to Assateague Island and the Wallops Island coast contribute to changes in the southern portion of Chincoteague Island.

Physiography

Most of Chincoteague Island's shoreline consists of tidal and non-tidal wetlands (see Exhibit 1-1). Numerically, nearly 85% of the Island's 31.6 miles of shoreline is marshlands with another 11% consisting of artificially stabilized shoreline made up of bulk heading and riprap along commercial waterfronts and privately owned areas. In many of these places the shoreline has been built out or filled in, and many piers extend out into the water (see Exhibit 1-2).

The fast-land of the Island, above the shoreline, is typically flat. In fact, elevations on the Island rarely exceed 10 feet. The higher ridges on the Island run northeast to southwest along the length of the Island, again giving evidence to the barrier island origin of the Island. As remnant sand dunes, these upland ridges are composed of well-sorted sand particles - and as a result are high in strength, low in compressibility, and highly permeable and porous. In layman's terms, if these areas are protected from winds and waves, they can bear heavy loads and will drain water quickly.

Off shore, the bottom of the bays surrounding the Island also have mild slope. Except where dredged, Chincoteague Bay is shallow with four feet or less of water and a soft bottom. Muddy, and in some places, marshy tidal flats extend from the shore into the bays. Only in Chincoteague Channel and Assateague Channel does the bottom drop off quickly. Chincoteague Channel, a dredged channel paralleling the western edge of the Island, averages 13 feet in depth with 6 inch to 4 foot shoals. Assateague Channel, on the eastern edge of the Island, has a maximum depth of 21 feet. This channel is narrow, bordered by mud flats and oyster rocks. Between Piney Island and Janeys Marsh Creek, it is only four feet in depth.

Fortunately, most of Chincoteague Island is not experiencing shoreline erosion due to the storm damage protection provided by Assateague Island. However some locations around Chincoteague are experiencing severe rates of erosion (greater than 3 feet per year), particularly,

the southern portions of the island. Moderate erosion (1 to 3 foot per year) is occurring above Black Point Landing in Assateague Channel. No structures are in immediate danger, however shoreline protection projects for critical infrastructure, such as south Main Street and the Route 175 Causeway, will be needed.

Fast-land Soils

Exhibit 1-3 identifies five basic soil complexes on Chincoteague Island. As can be seen from Exhibit 1-3, very poorly drained Bohicket tidal marsh soils surround much of the upland and extend inland in the drainage ways between the upland areas. These soils characteristically are very compressible, consolidate under a load, have high water content, and are poorly drained. As a result, these areas are unsuited for development.

The higher Duckston sand soils represent somewhat better conditions for development. These soils cover the central portion of Piney Island, areas along the waterfront in the center of the Town, and inland from Assateague Channel. Even though these land areas are considered upland, and have been developed in many areas, they are still poorly drained soils subject to flooding, wetness, and seepage.

The best soils on the Island in terms of development are called Pactolus soils. These soils are the best drained, although problems of flooding and wetness occur. These soils extend along Rt. 175 (Main Street) and Willow Street, along Chicken City Road, between Deep Hole Road and Oyster Bay, and are also found around the harbor near Chincoteague Point.

Ground Water

The Town of Chincoteague is surrounded on all sides by saltwater, has no streams of any substantial size, has no significant source of surface water and therefore must depend on groundwater as its sole source of drinking water. Groundwater sources available on the Island are typically not suitable as a drinking water supply due to nutrient/septic system contamination (shallow) or brackish water intrusion (deep). A community water supply system has been constructed to serve the entire Island and is currently supplied by existing wells located on the mainland of Accomack County. Five miles of transmission lines carry water from these wells across the marshes to Chincoteague Island.

The source of the Town of Chincoteague's drinking water is high quality ground water from the Columbia, Upper and Middle Yorktown-Eastover Aquifers. All of the Town's wells are located on land owned by the Town of Chincoteague or within a perpetual easement located on NASA property. Raw water is pumped from the mainland to Chincoteague Island for treatment, storage and distribution. The Town's water supply is regulated by the Virginia State Water Control Board, an approved Water Supply Plan (Reference R-05), and a Source Water Protection Plan (Reference R-06).

Ten separate well fields serve the pumping station. Depths vary from 63 to 256 feet. While the danger of contamination of these wells is considered minimal, vigilant monitoring of activities on land near the wells is critical. To maintain a supply of quality water for the future, the Town is pursuing development of additional well capacity on the mainland, adjacent to Route 175. The

Town also must ensure that future activities, on or around the Wallops Flight Facility's property, do not pose a danger to the wells.

Based on the Accomack County Regional Water Supply Plan (Reference R-07), data indicates that the Town of Chincoteague is one of several public water systems in Accomack County. The combined public water systems account for approximately 20% of permitted groundwater withdrawals in 2013. The Town of Chincoteague's permitted use accounts for approximately half of the community water systems or 8% of total County permitted groundwater withdrawal.

Coastal Floodplain

Chincoteague Island is subject to periodic flooding and storm water drainage limitations due to its unique location and topography. The entire Town has been mapped within a special flood hazard district based on the National Flood Insurance Program that estimates the extent of a 100 year storm event and a base flood elevation. A new coastal flood hazard study has been prepared by FEMA Region 3 that updated the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) information as of May 18, 2015 (see Exhibit 1-4).

The 2015 FIRM removed 0.6 square miles from the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), which removed 1,167 buildings from the SFHA, such that they are no longer required to have insurance if they are under a mortgage. Previously all properties were at the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) of 7, 8 or 9 feet, but the new FIRM has the majority of the commercial and most densely populated area at 4 feet BFE, with the highest BFE now at 6 feet BFE. Base Flood Elevation is the elevation of surface water resulting from a flood that has a 1% chance of equaling or exceeding that level in any given year. The FIRM does not take into account any changes in relative sea-level rise or increases in storm frequency (see Reference R-08).

According to the Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences (VIMS), historic rates of sea-level rise were always estimated at approximately one foot per century. Sea level has been rising since the last Ice Age, but modern rates of sea-level rise are estimated to be 1.5 to 3 times the historic rate. This is supported by trends in sea-levels collected by the NOAA certified Wachapreague Tidal Gauge Data (Figure 1-1)

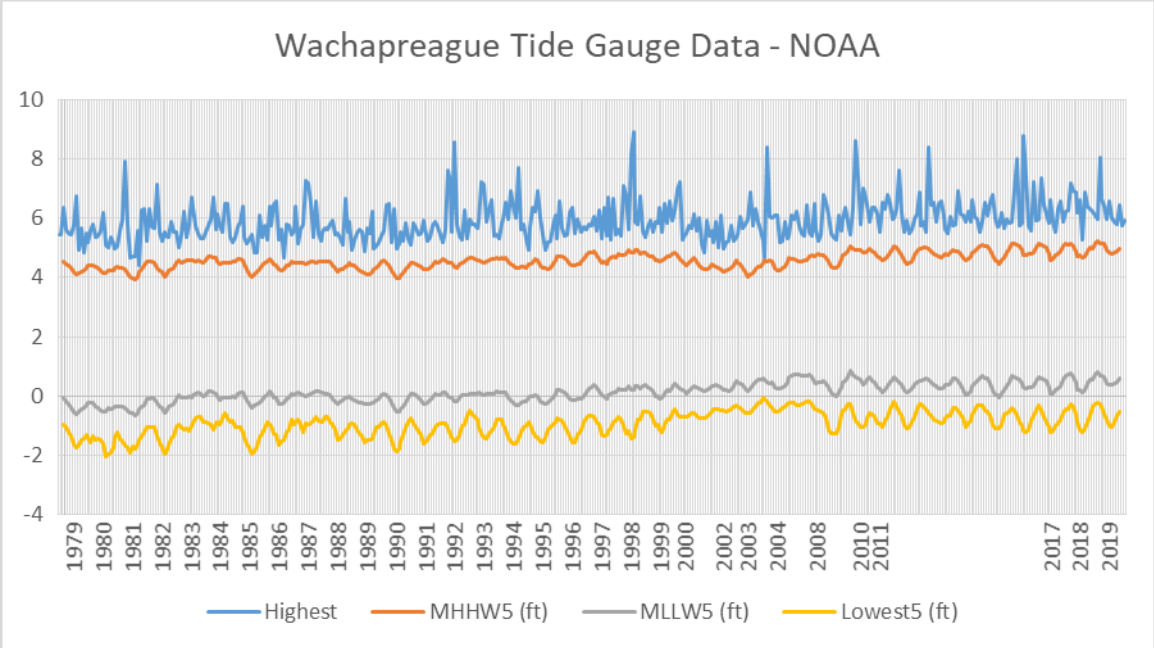


Figure 1-1: Wachapreague Tidal Gauge Data (Source: NOAA)

Tree Cover

Natural area tree cover, in particular the stands of mature Loblolly Pine, has become an important part of the community image and identity. Many of the forested areas of the Island have grown up since the 1962 storm and are experiencing stress from age, saltwater flooding, pine bark beetle and wind damage. In 2011, aside from woody wetlands (22%) and herbaceous wetlands (34%), approximately 3% was evergreen forest. However, stands or single trees are common in developed areas. Exhibit 1-5 shows land cover (Reference R-08). The loss of over 500 mature trees during Hurricane Sandy highlighted the need to plan for trees that help to stabilize the soil, minimize and reduce stormwater flows, balance the water table, improve air and water quality, and provide shade and shelter for our residents. Each year a significant number of trees are lost due to pine park beetle damage with limited and costly options for control and disposal of the trees. It is anticipated that this problem will continue to be a concern for Chincoteague Island.

Surface Water

Freshwater from rain falling on Chincoteague generally drains in a north-south direction over the low glades between the higher sand dune ridges. Since the Island is so flat, open and clear drainage ways are critical. Filling of ditches, important to the Island's drainage, should not occur. This kind of activity is controlled by ordinance (10)a, Section 22-62 of the town code (Reference R-09). Proper management of surface water runoff by property owners is also a concern. An ordinance amendment was approved in 2019 to address this aspect of drainage..

The saltwater bays surrounding the Island support a wide variety of marine and animal life. Shellfish such as oysters and clams are important to the livelihood of many local residents. These areas should be preserved in a natural and healthy state.

Marshlands



Exhibit 1-6 displays the estuarine, marine, and freshwater wetlands on and about the island. All the marshes have high value for wildlife and wildfowl and are closely associated with fish spawning and nursery areas. They also help to prevent erosion, are important to the shellfish industry, and help keep the shoreline stable. The marshlands are an important element adding to the resiliency of the Island.

Drainage

Due to the low elevation of the Island, proper drainage requires constant attention. Storm water drainage is always a problem, especially during periods of heavy rainfall. Most of the uplands soils on the Island are sandy and tend to absorb water quickly. However, the Island is within 3-10 feet of sea level and the soil becomes easily saturated. As a result, ponding occurs in low-lying areas. Often water must await lower tides to flow from the drainage ditches on the Island into the surrounding water. Exhibits 1-7 and 1-8 show the major drainage paths.



The increased frequency and severity of storm events has resulted in larger volumes and higher accumulation rates. Maintenance and an increase of existing drainage capacity has become more imperative to both the Town and property owners in order to maintain the resiliency of the Island.

Current Land Use

With respect to the original Town's physical development, 1988 land use data indicated that 52% of Chincoteague's total area was devoted to residential development, 13% to commercial enterprise, 8% to industrial activity, 8% to public and semipublic uses, and 19% (97 acres) remained vacant. A large portion of the vacant land was situated on tracts, which had questionable development potential with the result that the Town had an extremely limited amount of vacant land suitable for future development.

Recent land use data for the area of the Island incorporated in 1989 reveals that exclusive of tidal waters (33.2 square miles), 14% of the area is devoted to residential development, 5% to commercial enterprises, 35% to public and semi-public uses, with 47% remaining vacant.

Exhibit 1-9 shows current land use on the entire Island. As the map shows, what little industrial activity there remains in Town is on the waterfront side of North and South Main Street within 5 or 6 blocks from Bridge Street.

A large number of commercial businesses, many of them tourist related, are also located along the waterfront side of Main Street. The commercial businesses on the fast-land side of Main

Street within 3-4 blocks of the causeway combine with the stores, shops, and seafood businesses on the waterfront to create Chincoteague's unique and historic downtown area. This downtown area provides goods and services to local residents and tourists alike. It is also an important center for social and civic life in Town.

A second commercial area is located on Maddox Boulevard, the road which leads to Assateague. Unlike the older Main Street shopping area, this shopping district is oriented more towards the automobile than the pedestrian and more toward the tourist than the year-round resident. Nearby motels and campgrounds strengthen the role of this area as an auto-oriented, seasonal tourist center.

Much of the remaining land on the Island is either in residential use or is vacant. Businesses and tourist facilities are scattered among some areas designated as "Residential" and many residents pursue secondary and even primary vocations out of their homes (home occupations). In addition many residential structures are located in areas zoned "Commercial." Several distinct residential neighborhoods have evolved in Town. For example, three of the Town's seven churches are located among the homes around Church Street.

With the increasing importance of tourism, any population increase will more likely be temporary; seasonal residents attracted to the Island's summer job market, weather, or cultural atmosphere. Further, new dwellings may take the form of manufactured homes, may be conversions of existing homes to apartments, or may be new apartments or townhouse type structures of higher density than existing homes on the Island. The 1980-1990 decade saw a dramatic increase of new homes in Town.

Given continued economic growth on the Island, hopefully, both the old downtown commercial area and the newer Maddox Boulevard area can continue to grow in future years. The Town of Chincoteague has a unique opportunity to both encourage and direct future growth to the long term good and betterment of all local residents.

Vacant Land / Open Space

At present, some of the vacant land in Town serves to drain storm water and functions to direct and contain flood waters. Current "wetlands" are regulated by various government agencies. Where large tracts of vacant land remain, the Town may consider Innovative-zoning techniques that encourage development designed in response to storm water drainage, "wetlands", or other local environmental factors. Currently the Town, the School Board and several local residents own large tracts of land. It is critical that future development criteria, particularly in the larger tracts or where higher than normal density is proposed, adequately address the issues of wastewater, drainage, and floodplain management.

With the adoption of the 2015 FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps, some areas of higher elevation are no longer mapped within the regulatory floodplain. Preservation of open space and maintenance of drainage ways are important tools to manage flood risks.

Resiliency

Resiliency is defined as the capacity to maintain or regain functionality and vitality in the face of natural, climate-induced, or man-made stressors and disturbances. In the short term, resiliency strategies provide communities with tools for bouncing back more quickly from extreme weather or other high-impact events. For the long term, resiliency planning provides communities with the ability to adapt and thrive despite changing environmental, social, and economic conditions.

To assist in the development of short-term goals, results from the Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool (RAFT) were utilized. The RAFT Scorecard was completed by an independent Core Team and provides a comprehensive assessment of the Town's resilience in five different categories. An Implementation Team from the Town interacts on an on-going basis with the Core Team which provides technical and funding source assistance to localities. The Town of Chincoteague received the second highest score of all localities evaluated on the VA Eastern Shore. Accomack County received the highest score.

The Town of Chincoteague RAFT Implementation Team had identified six main areas to be considered in the 2020 Update of the Comprehensive Plan. They are:

- Shoreline Management- comprehensive evaluation & recommended solutions
- Wastewater Management – find a discharge solution
- Stormwater Management- improve capacity within Town
- Access to Island - flooding of evacuation route
- Communications – effectively distribute information
- Comprehensive Plan Update – actions the Town can implement

For long term resiliency planning, the Town will work with the Eastern Shore of Virginia Climate Adaptation Working Group (CAWG) which coordinates efforts among local, state, and federal representatives of government, aquaculture, agriculture, and community organizations to better plan and mitigate risks associated with climate change and sea level rise. CAWG's mission is to provide educational outreach and develop planning tools to assist local governments and residents. Accomack- Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC) assumed leadership of CAWG in 2012.

Revisions incorporated in this plan utilized goals, assessments, and implementation strategies recommended by the government, commercial, and private sectors. While many medium and long options are available (Figure 1-2), each planning district plans for and develops implementation strategies within its ability to adapt.

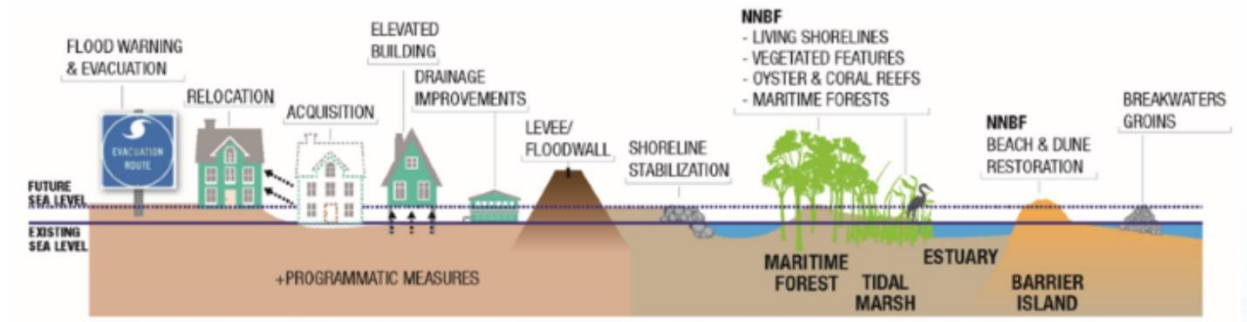


Figure 1-2: Resilient Coastal Solutions (Source USACE)

Exhibits and Their Use

To facilitate their use in the Comprehensive Plan, exhibits are located at the end of the chapter in which they first occur. The resolution of these images are constrained by page size but do provide the user insight into their content.

On-line references are provided whenever available to both document the source and provide a path for the user to view higher resolution and/or updated images.

Exhibit 1-1: USGS TOPOS Map - Chincoteague Island



Exhibit 1-2: Shoreline Conditions

Riparian Land Use / Land Cover

Source: CCRM Accomack County Comprehensive Map Viewer

http://cmap2.vims.edu/CCRMP/Accomack2016/Accomack_CCRMP_Viewer.html



January 28, 2019

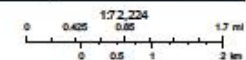
Virginia Administrative Boundaries - Cities/Counties

Riparian Land Use/Land Cover
Agriculture
Bare

Commercial
Forested
Government / Military

Grass
Industrial
Paved
Residential

Scrub-shrub / Timbered



Center for Coastal Resources Management,
Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Gloucester
Point, Virginia
Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar

Created from the Accomack County 2018
Comprehensive Map Viewer

Exhibit 1-3: Soils - Chincoteague Island

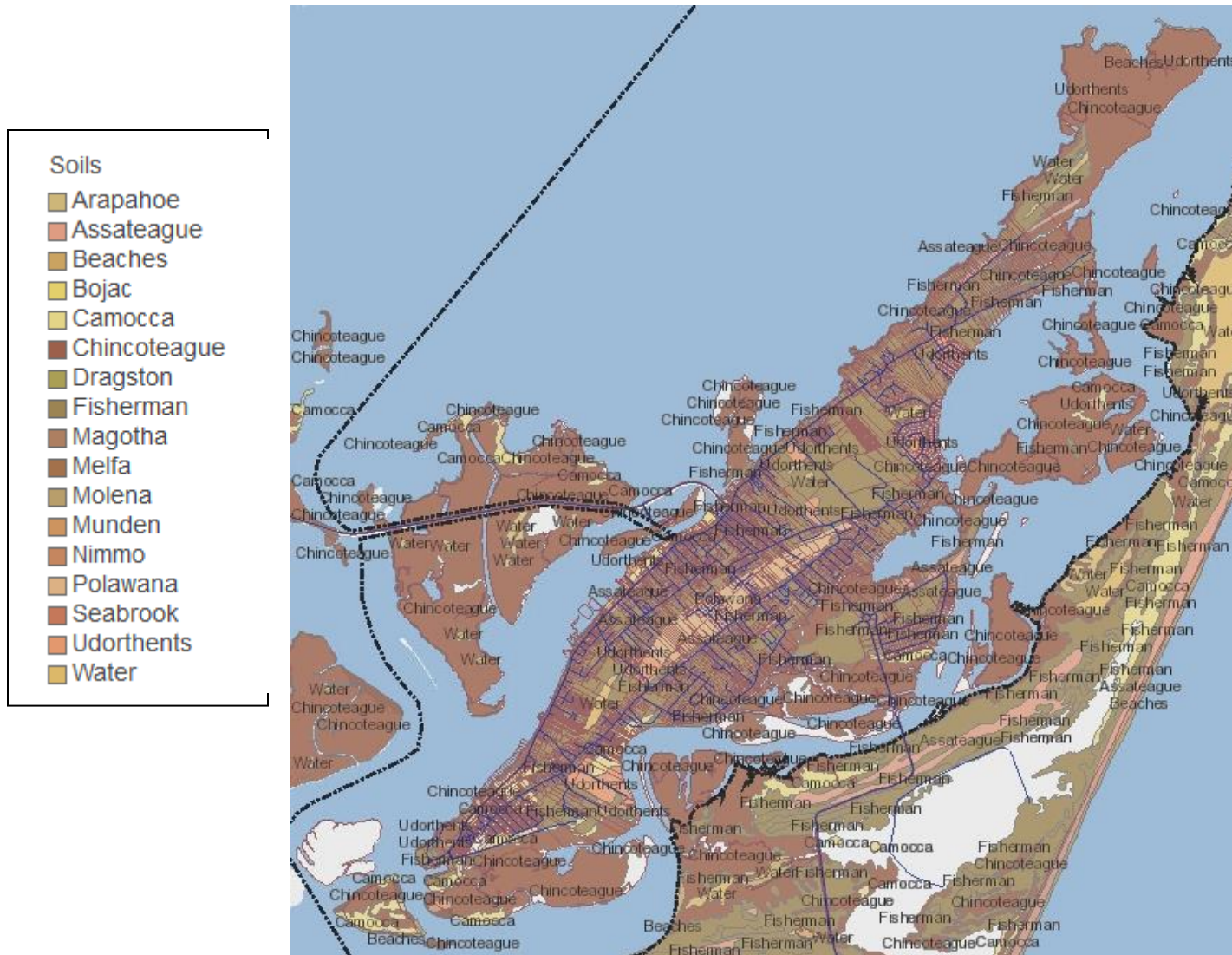


Exhibit 1-4: FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) 2015

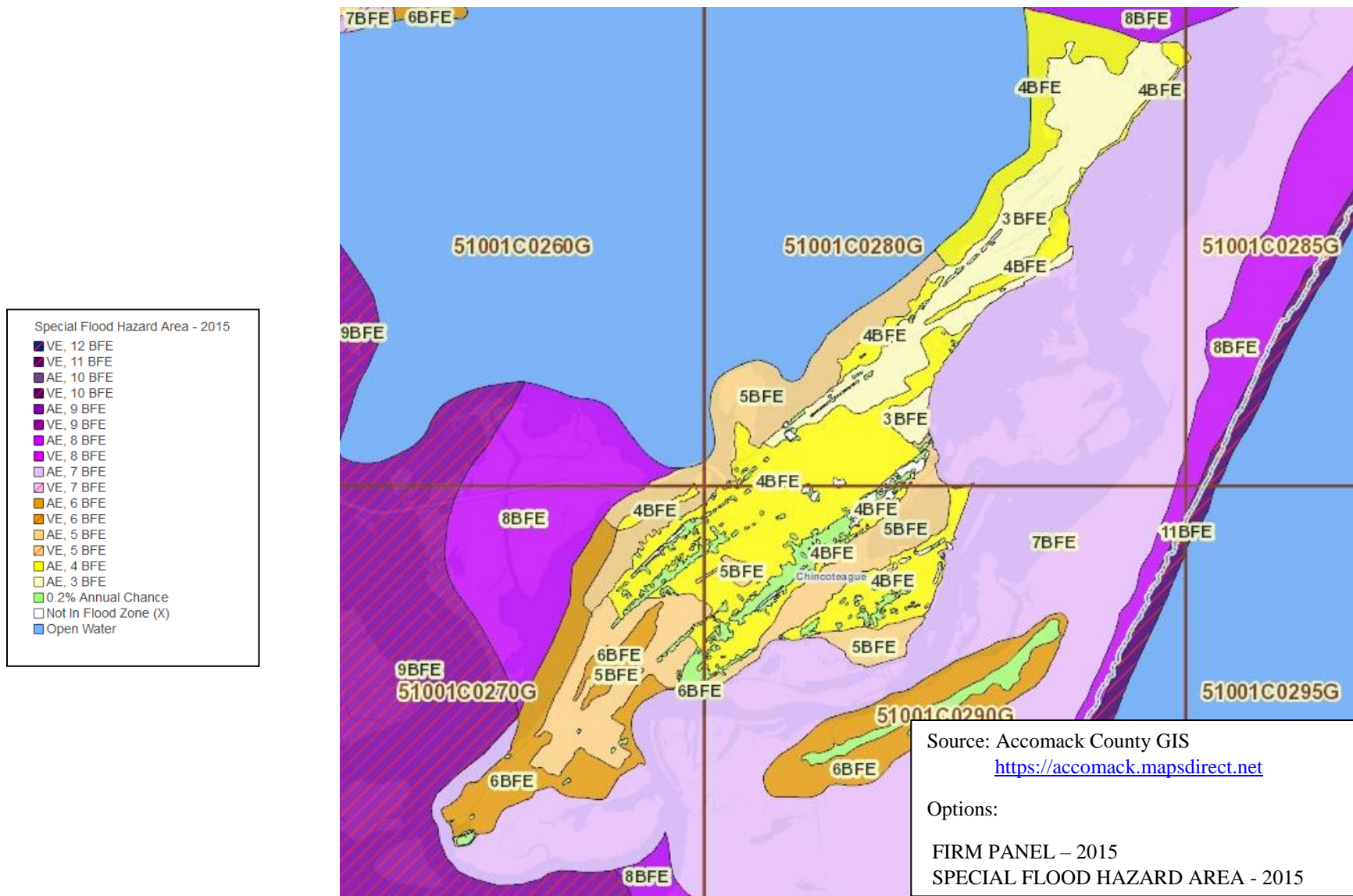


Exhibit 1-5: Land Cover - 2011

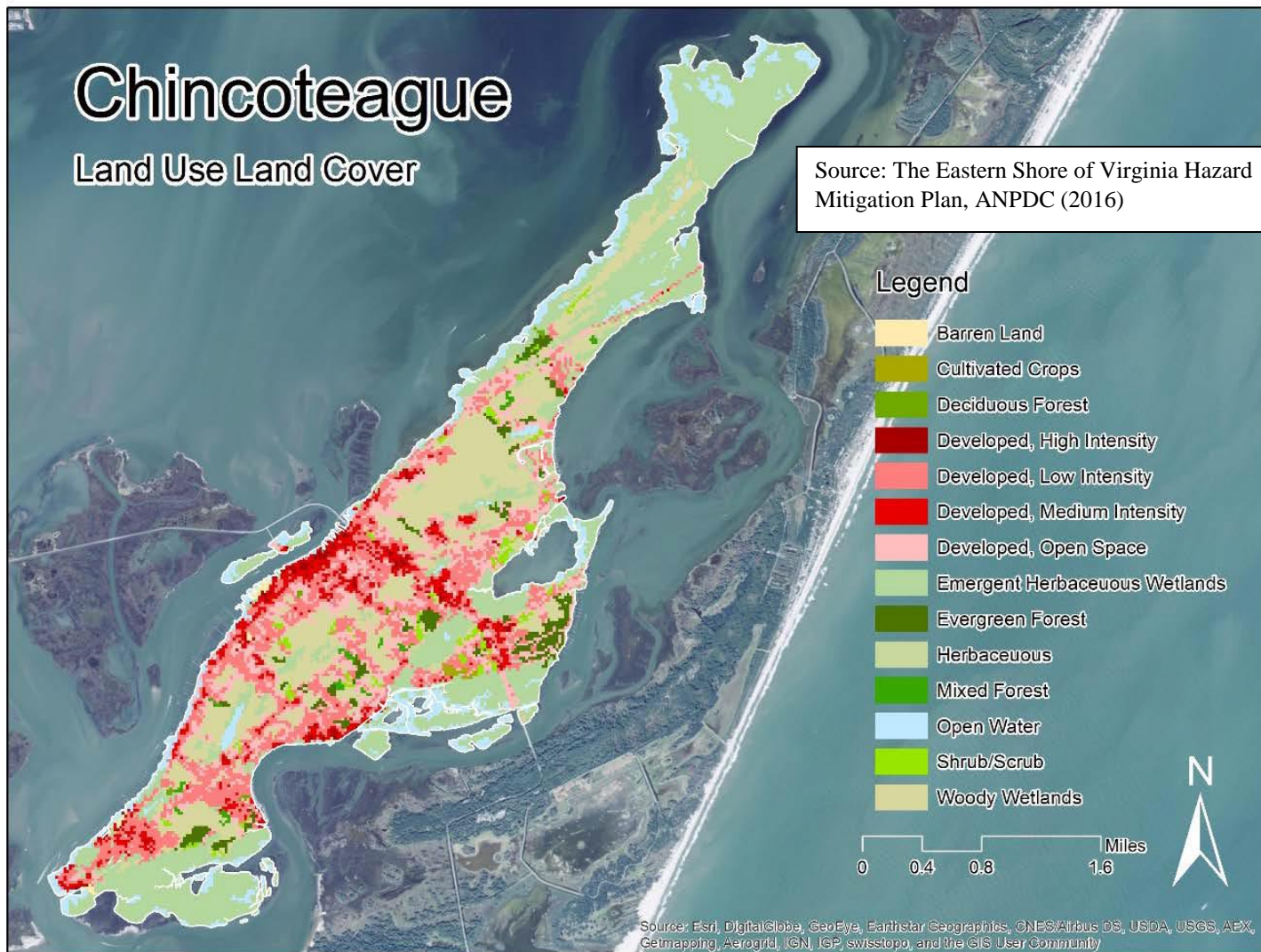


Exhibit 1-6: Tidal and Non-Tidal Wetland Marshlands

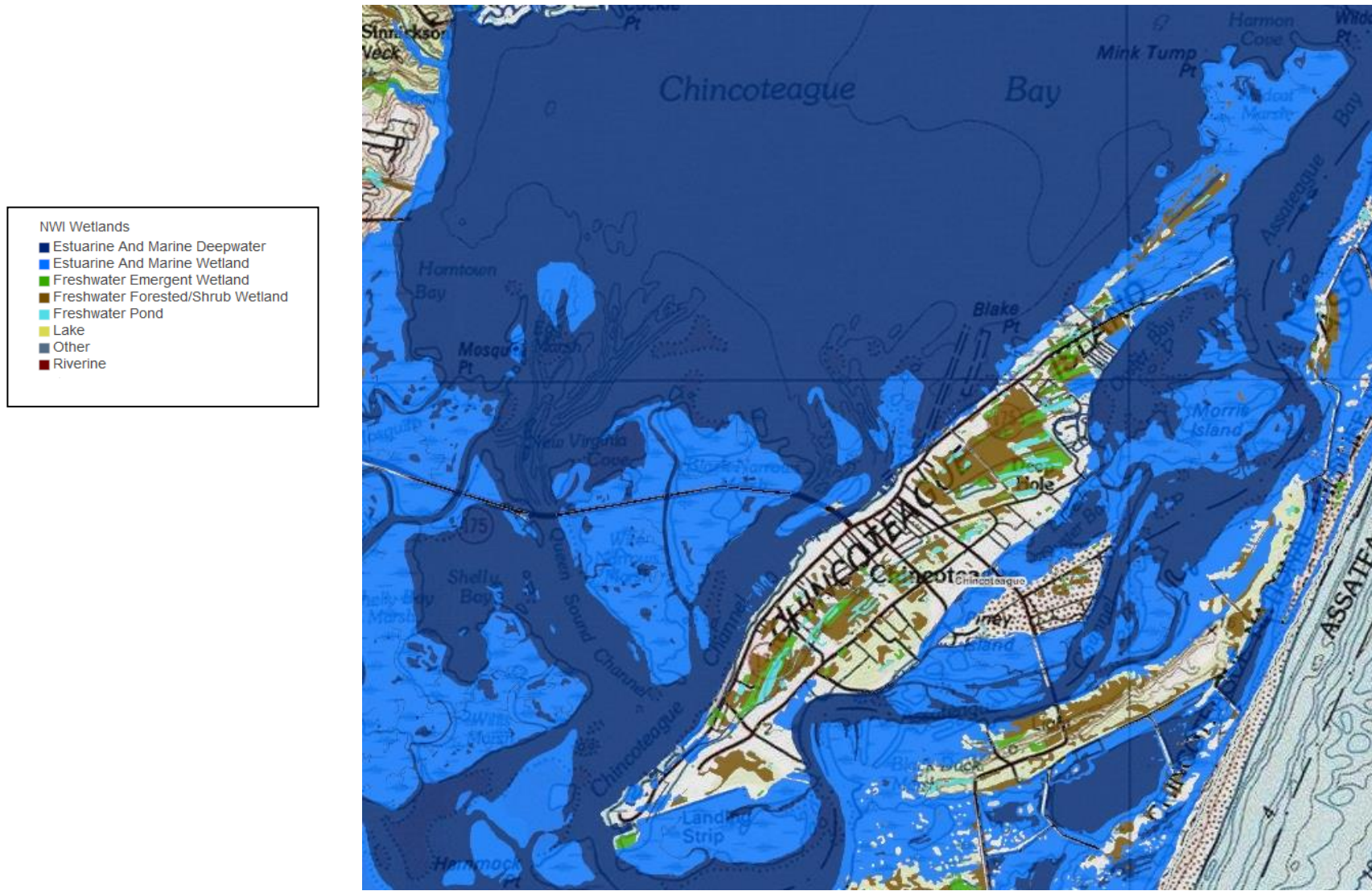


Exhibit 1-7: NHD Drainage Flows - North Island

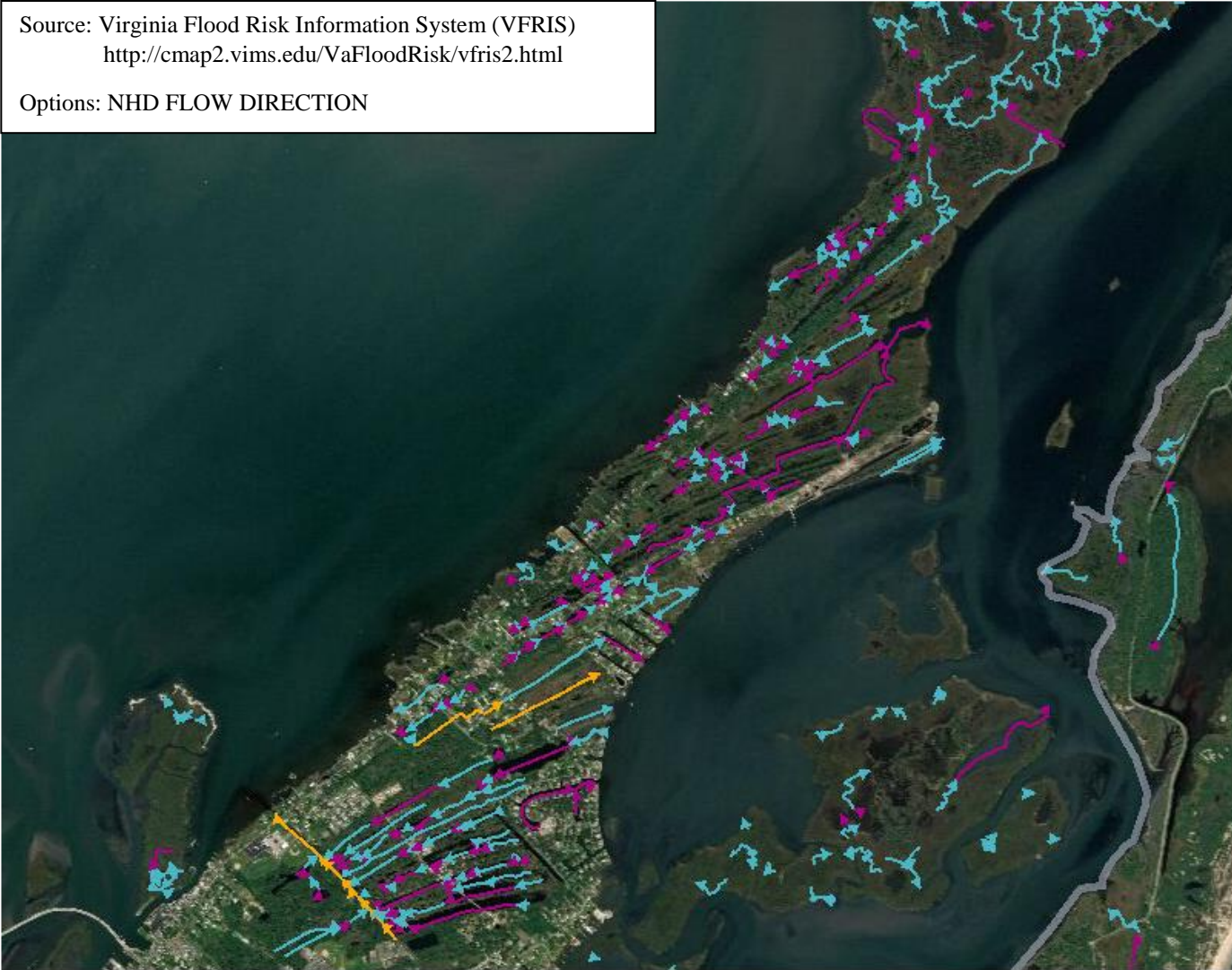
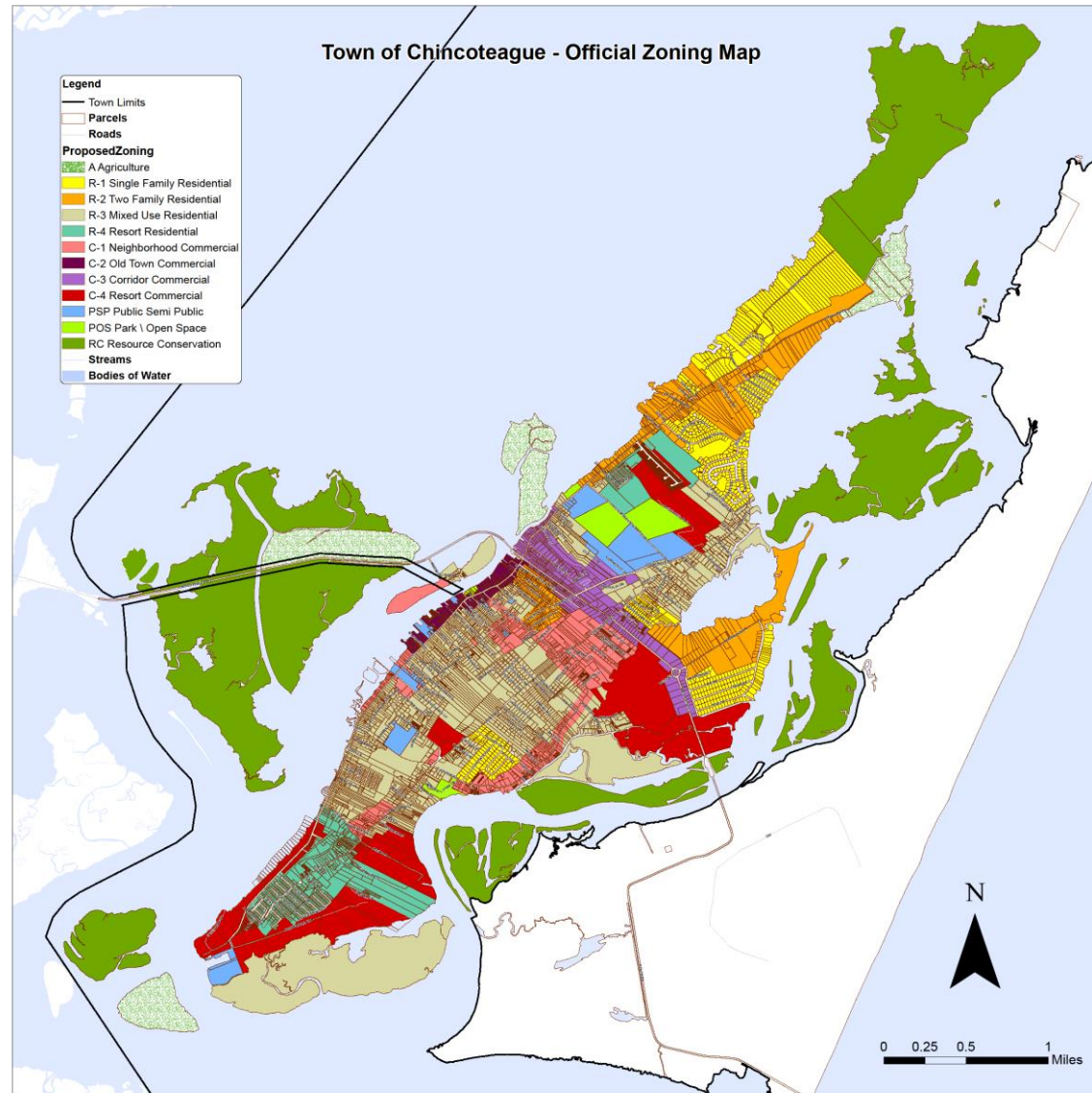


Exhibit 1-8: NHD Drainage Flows - South Island



Exhibit 1-9: Land Use Map





April 9, 2024

Upcoming Planning Commission Topics for Consideration.

1. Historic District – Review of the existing historic district and the direction of development of that district. This includes uses permitted by right.
2. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) – The proposed legislation to allow ADU’s in the General Assembly. How does this affect the Town and what should the Town’s response to the GA be on the subject.
3. Flag Lots – The prevalence of flag lot developments is skirting the current zoning code and producing groups of housing without the minimum conditions set by the minor subdivision ordinance.
4. Public Sewer service – Completion of the direction of the Town’s initial public sewer service.