

Table of Contents

- I. Situation Analysis
 - County Water and Sewer Plan
 - Current Land Use and Annexations
 - Development Regulations and Code Enforcement
 - Development and Infrastructure Grants
 - City/County Relations
 - Community Appearance
 - Historic Snow Hill
- II. Strategic Potentials
- III. Revitalization Strategies
 - Core Strategies
 - For Basic Physical Improvements
 - For Economic Expansion
 - For Historic Snow Hill
 - For Byrd Park
 - For Housing
 - For Government Facilities
 - New Initiatives Strategies
 - City/County Relations
 - Job Creation
- IV. Implementation Opportunities
 - Phase I Targets
 - Phase II Targets
 - Phase III Targets
- V. Organization
- VI. Financial Considerations
- VII. Marketing
- VIII. Critical Risks and Potential Problems

sidewalk paving be upgraded to brick in this area, with improved lighting, street trees, and traffic calming devices utilized at the Green Street intersection to accommodate pedestrians as well as automobiles. The same techniques would be used at Willow and Bank Street to maintain the pedestrian-friendly character and scale from the Courthouse to the river. Bank Street is the most direct connection to the river but it is not pedestrian-friendly. The problems are a lack of street trees, oversized parking spaces by the library, views of rear parking lots, and no real focal point at the river. To re-establish the link between the downtown and the Pocomoke River, improvements should be made to Bank and River Street to make this area inviting and pedestrian-friendly. Sturgis Park is a good beginning but there are numerous rundown and worn out details, e.g. signs and display boards, and there is no connection to Byrd Park or the rest of the river. There is an opportunity to provide a link from Gateway Park to Byrd Park and future development sites to the west. Any future development or re-use of the property along River Street should be directed toward the goal of improving pedestrian accessibility and generating uses that foster river use activities.

Historic Snow Hill

While the settlement of the Town of Snow Hill dates from the late seventeenth century, the majority of the fabric of the town is from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Devastating fires in the middle and late 19th century have eradicated most of the early periods of the town's development. All of the periods of design represented by the physical fabric of the town today should be evaluated in a clear non-judgmental fashion. The more recent periods of post-World War II architecture as well as the earlier periods deserve a proper presentation. Proper presentation should also be given to various outbuildings such as woodsheds, privies, and stables/garages, which are still in situ. Many of these somewhat unique vernacular structures represent folkways, which have vanished as the twentieth century progressed. This broad, wide-ranging look at the town and its fabric will ultimately be attractive to a larger segment of the tourists looking for someplace new and different to visit.

II. STRATEGIC POTENTIALS

Snow Hill has a diverse and active population, significant cultural attributes, and a good balance among its land uses and economic activities. It also has a core of concerned and active citizens who are aware of the issues that keep the town from becoming a thriving destination for travelers and tourists. Some action involving more than just the core group is necessary to energize the entire community to take those actions necessary to move Snow Hill into the future. The citizenry must organize for a long-term plan of public improvements, annexation of key parcels, and marketing of its historic

Site 3 whose basic purpose is

attributes.

The riverfront and the historic character of the downtown offer a potential to create a retail environment that will bring, among other things, necessary services to the town. The short distance from Ocean City and the Delaware beaches offers the potential to attract day visitors from those destinations and other in between who are looking for interesting places to go while on vacation. The land in the Route 113 corridor and Route 12 corridor on the far side of the bridge offer the potential of (1) increasing population by creating broad housing opportunities and (2) creating retail uses that will be complimentary to those in the existing downtown area.

Advocate develop & manage the organizations aspects

* **The basic implementation plan for revitalization of downtown Snow Hill is to build long-term organizational capacity, construct public improvements to enhance appearance and accessibility, create new sites for both public and private uses by taking advantage of inactive or underutilized space and land, encourage private improvements, and attract new activities that are compatible with Snow Hill's community history and sensitive environmental setting.**

There are several categories of downtown physical improvements available including special pavements, landscaping, lighting, signage (regulatory, way-finding, informational, directional, and store front), street furniture, public art, gateways, fencing, screening, and the development of public open space for plazas and squares. But physical improvements are only one small part of the total effort required for the revitalization of the downtown. The addition of brick paving and street trees will not, by themselves bring visitors into the downtown. However, appropriate site improvement in an historical context will go a long way to create an environment that will foster development and make the visitor to Snow Hill feel safe and comfortable. This will in turn enhance the reputation and image of Snow Hill for everyone who lives and works there. This is called pride of place.

The following improvement opportunities should be examined (see map for locations).

1. **Gateway Park** - Improve the existing municipal parking lot adjacent to Gateway Park (1) behind Washington Street. This should include shade trees, lighting, landscape buffers, re-surfacing as needed, and striping. A permanent "Farmer's Market" structure (4) could be placed in the municipal parking lot. The structure could also be used for picnics, flea markets, and other festival events during the year.
2. **Pedestrian Connectors** - Create pedestrian connectors (2) between the

municipal parking lot and Washington Street. These connectors would be narrow brick sidewalks with decorative lighting, perennial beds, and picket fences. Additional retail space (3) may be developed along these connectors or at the rear of properties along Washington Street. New structures would face the parking lot and a service corridor would provide access between the rear of the buildings.

3. **Enhance Walkways** - Investigate deleting or reducing parking along the north side of Green Street (5), widen the sidewalk, install brick pavers, street trees and ornamental lights where needed. Hedge wall or fence type buffers should be utilized where the sidewalk abuts a parking lot. Install "Chokers" or "Bump-outs" at all four corners of the Bank, Green Street (5/6) intersection. Add a kiosk (4) for a downtown directory. Enhance pedestrian connections between the downtown, the riverfront, and the county office buildings along the river (10). Develop a Riverfront Walk from Gateway Park to Byrd Park, (15) along the riverfront. Enhance pedestrian experience of the Cultural Arts District Walk (9) along Water, Petit, Church, Willow and Commerce Streets connecting Julia Purnell Museum with a "Fire House Visitors Center" Add directional signage, enhance sidewalks, add street trees, lighting, etc.
4. **Maintain traffic flow** - Maintain and enhance the flow of vehicular traffic on Washington and Market Streets (8). Provide adequate lighting, turning radii, and signalization. Do not widen lanes that promote higher speeds. Investigate deleting or reducing parking on both sides of Pearl Street (7) while maintaining through vehicular traffic. This street can be closed for special events along with sections of Green and Bank Streets (5/6).
5. **Gateway entrance(s)** - Create gateways (14) and other minor entrance features at all of the entry points into the downtown. Pay special attention to the four at MD Rt. 12, (east and west) and Business Rt. 113 (north and south at the by-pass.) Work with Maryland State Highway Administration to have them develop a plan to screen the SHA Maintenance Depot (19) including the large asphalt parking areas, salt dome buildings, and chain link fence.
6. **Byrd Park** (17). Byrd Park needs to be refurbished and enhanced. Add new play equipment, enhance basketball courts; add skateboard park, upgrade boat launch facilities and consider adding display gardens to feature plants of the Eastern Shore. Clean up the signage and add sidewalks and walkways.
7. **Refresh buildings** - Clean and paint all building facades in the core area

- whether occupied or vacant. Give the appearance of a town that is dedicated to preservation and restoration. The cost of paint and elbow grease will go a long way to reduce the perception of decline and decay in the core area.
8. **Signage** - Develop and install direction signage at key intersections to direct the first-time visitor to major facilities and parking. Enforce signage guidelines and architectural design standards. It is imperative to preserve the historic qualities of the downtown.
 9. **Historic guidelines** - Establish design criteria and guidelines, which respect the historic architectural qualities and urban fabric of Snow Hill. Maintain and enhance the historic scale and "grid pattern " of streets, sidewalks, and street trees where ever possible. Investigate ways to insure that new development meet or exceed these criteria and guidelines. The objective should be that new development be compatible with the rich historic qualities currently presented in Snow Hill. Review planning and zoning regulations and building codes to insure that new development blends with the historic qualities so important to Snow Hill.
 10. **Cultural Arts District** - Investigate the opportunities which could be derived from the current promotion of the Cultural Arts District (9). The District may want to add visual and performing arts, environmental education, and other elements which will help to invigorate the downtown area and enhance the quality of life in Snow Hill.
 11. **Retail environment** - The riverfront and the historic character of the downtown offer a potential to create a retail environment that will bring, among other things, necessary services to the town. The short distance from Ocean City and the Delaware beaches offers the potential to attract day visitors from those destinations and others who are looking for interesting places to go while on vacation.
 12. **West side** - The unsewered land both in the Route 113 corridor and Route 12 on the far side of the bridge (16) offer the potential of increasing population by creating housing opportunities and retail uses that will be complimentary to those in the existing downtown area. The potential for a hotel and restaurant should be investigated.

III. REVITALIZATION STRATEGIES

The following three actions should be taken by the Town as soon as possible. They are items critical to the success of revitalization and should not await the completion of the Strategic Plan.