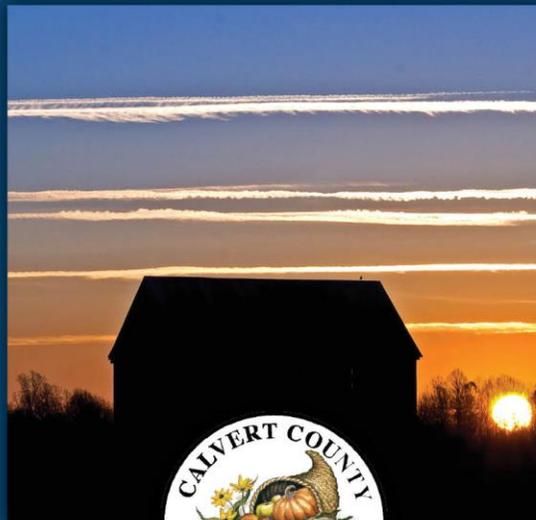




# MASTER PLAN OF TOWN CENTERS



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A sincere thank you to Jenny Plummer-Welker for her exceptional contributions throughout the years on the development of the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan and Town Center Master Plans.

## Acronyms

<b>ACS</b>	U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey
<b>AMI</b>	Average Media Income
<b>BIAC</b>	Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
<b>CDP</b>	Census Designated Place
<b>EDU</b>	Equivalent Dwelling Unit
<b>EMS</b>	Emergency Medical Services
<b>ESD</b>	Environmental Site Design
<b>IBA</b>	Important Bird Area
<b>MDOT</b>	Maryland Department of Transportation
<b>MGD</b>	Million Gallons Per Day
<b>MIHP</b>	Maryland Inventory of Historic Places
<b>MTA</b>	Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration
<b>PFA</b>	Priority Funding Area
<b>RIAC</b>	Regional Infrastructure Advisory Committee
<b>TEA</b>	Targeted Ecological Areas
<b>TDR</b>	Transfer Development Rights
<b>SHA</b>	Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration
<b>SMECO</b>	Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative

## Master Plan of Town Centers

Town centers, established in 1983, are the county's primary designated growth areas. There are nine designated town centers: Seven town centers are under the purview of the Board of County Commissioners—Dunkirk, Huntingtown, Lusby, Owings, Prince Frederick, Solomons and St. Leonard—and two within municipalities. Chesapeake Beach and North Beach manage their own planning and zoning authority.

The county's town center master plans have been amended several times over the past four decades. The St. Leonard Town Center Master Plan was updated in 2013; the remaining have not been updated.

In February 2025, the Department of Planning & Zoning proposed a framework for updating its town center master plans referred to as The Master Plan of Town Centers.

This single document is intended to streamline the master plan update process by eliminating redundancy in town center master plan updates. The first chapter will include the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan vision and goals and background information applicable to all town centers. Subsequent chapters will include updates specific to each town center. Examples of background information and major themes applicable to all town center master plans are:

- Concentrate growth in town centers to prevent commercial sprawl along MD 2/4 and limit residential sprawl on agricultural land.
- Protect natural resources through required buffers and setbacks.
- Preserve cultural assets by implementing protective development standards.
- Plan for diverse housing options and provide financial assistance to meet residents' housing needs.
- Support small businesses with low-interest loans and relocation or expansion services.
- Improve transportation networks to enhance safety, reduce congestion and increase connectivity via roads, pedestrian paths, bike trails and transit.
- Invest in government and civic facilities to meet the evolving needs of county residents.





# MASTER PLAN OF TOWN CENTERS

## CHAPTER 3

# Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan



## Accomplishments

The Dunkirk Town Center was designated a Town Center when the Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance were adopted on July 28, 1987. Since then, key amendments to the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance, as well as infrastructure and public service improvements include:

- Establishment of the Dunkirk Town Center as a Transfer Zone, designated to receive increased density using Transferable Development Rights (TDRs) from the sending areas of Agricultural Preservation Districts.
- Designation as a [Priority Funding Area](#) under the State of Maryland's Smart Growth Act<sup>1</sup>.
- Establishment of the Dunkirk Town Center appearance code and project review process.
- Expansion on the west side of the Town Center to include the land area encompassing West Ward Road.
- Extension of West Ward Road across MD 4, connecting to Ferry Landing Road.
- Construction of a local road system on the east side of the Town Center as an alternative to MD 4.
- Reconstruction of the Dunkirk Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad.
- Addition of turning lanes and access lanes at lighted intersections of MD 4/Town Center Boulevard and MD 4/Ward Road.
- Lowering of the speed limit from 55 to 45 miles per hour.
- Establishment of the Sheriff's Dunkirk District Station in the Town Center.
- Establishment of the Maryland Transit Administration's (MTA) Dunkirk Park and Ride, north of the Town Center.
- The designation of the Town Center as a Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's [Sustainable Community](#).
- Establishment of the Apple Greene Shopping Center.
- Construction of Dunkirk Gateway Well and Water Tower facilities.

See Chapter 1 for the intent of the Town Center designation and other designations that apply to the Town Center.

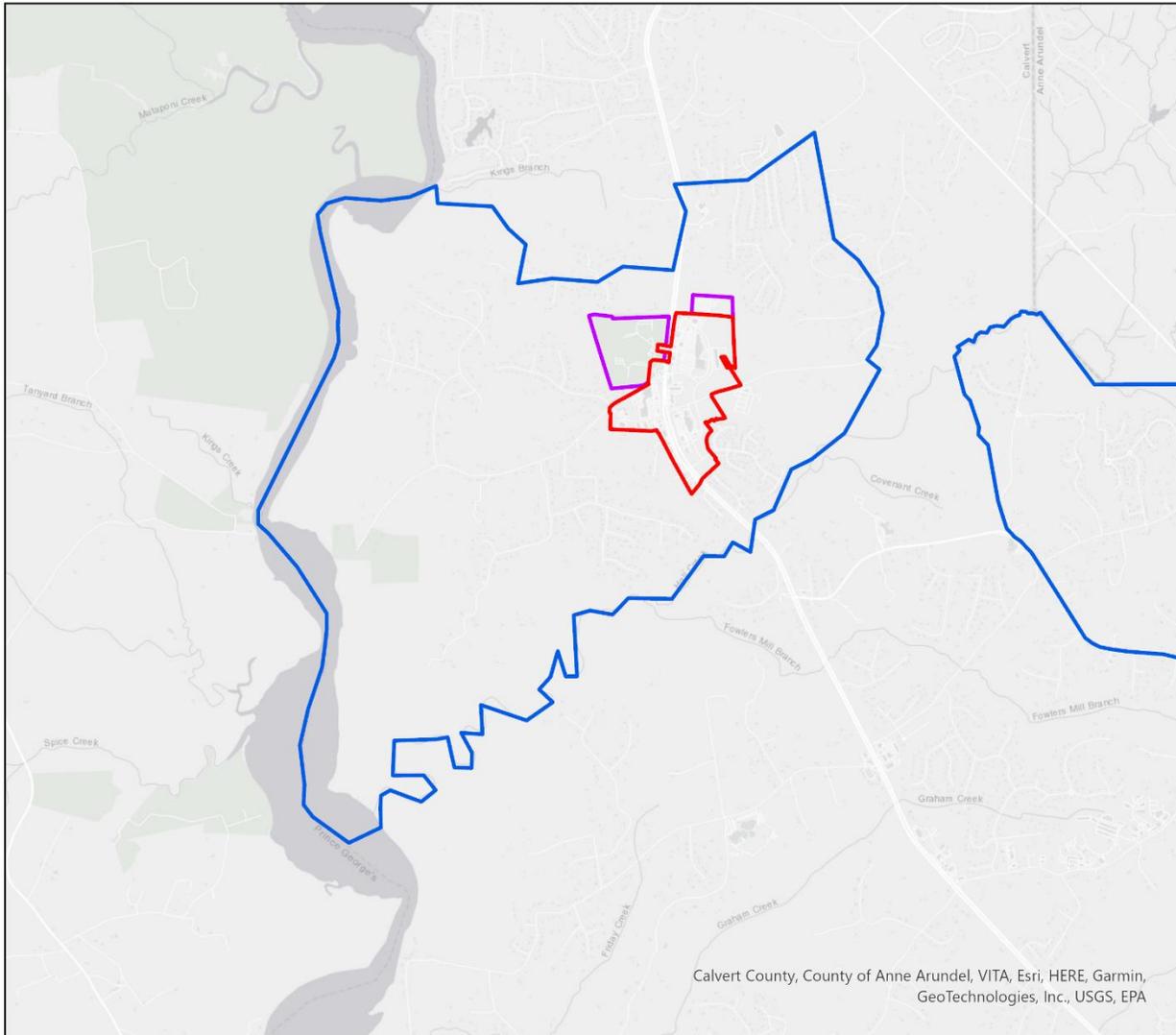


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<sup>1</sup> Most of the Town Center is designated as a Priority Funding Area. For more information, refer to the Maryland Department of Planning's [Priority Funding Area Interactive Map](#).

## Demographics

U.S. Census Data, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, **DUNKIRK CENSUS DESIGNATED PLACE (CDP)** is the source for the Dunkirk Town Center data. While the boundaries of the Town Center and the CDP are not similar, the CDP includes housing that surrounds the Town Center.



### Legend

-  Census Designated Place Boundary
-  Town Center Existing Boundary
-  Proposed Expansion

## Age Composition Percentage Breakdown

- 27% - under 25 years old
- 22% - 25 to 44 years
- 32% - 45 to 64 years
- 18% - 65 years or older

## Calvert County Total Population

2020: 92,783

## Dunkirk Total Population

2020: 2,175

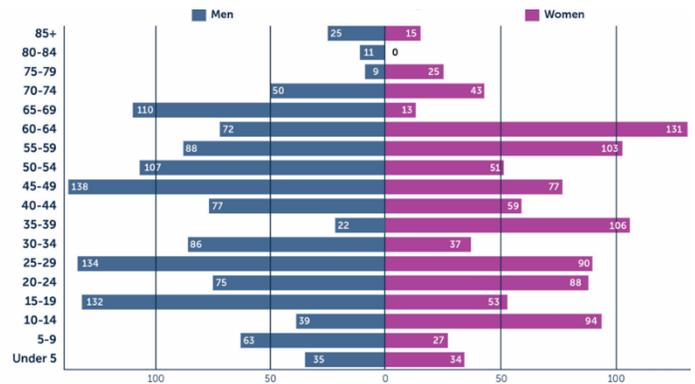
2023: 2,319



Between 2020 & 2023, the population 65 years and older decreased from 18% to 13%.



## Male/Female Breakdown By Age



84% of households earn

**\$100,000+ annually**



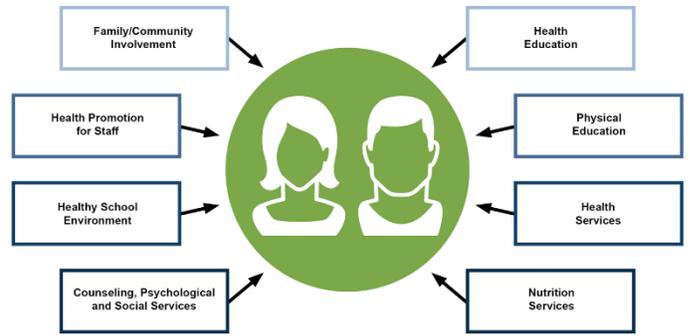
## Dunkirk Demographic Composition

White 1,915  
 Black 114  
 Other 290





## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

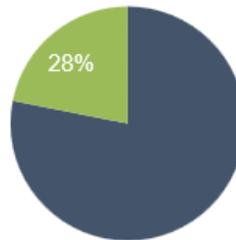
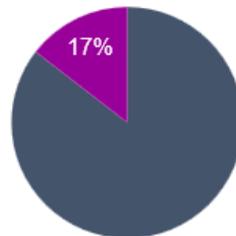
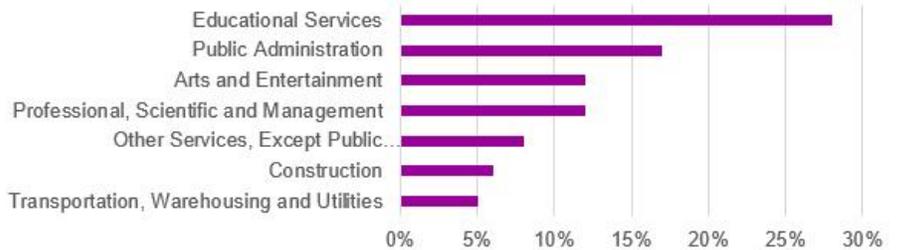


**89%** of the workforce commutes to an office

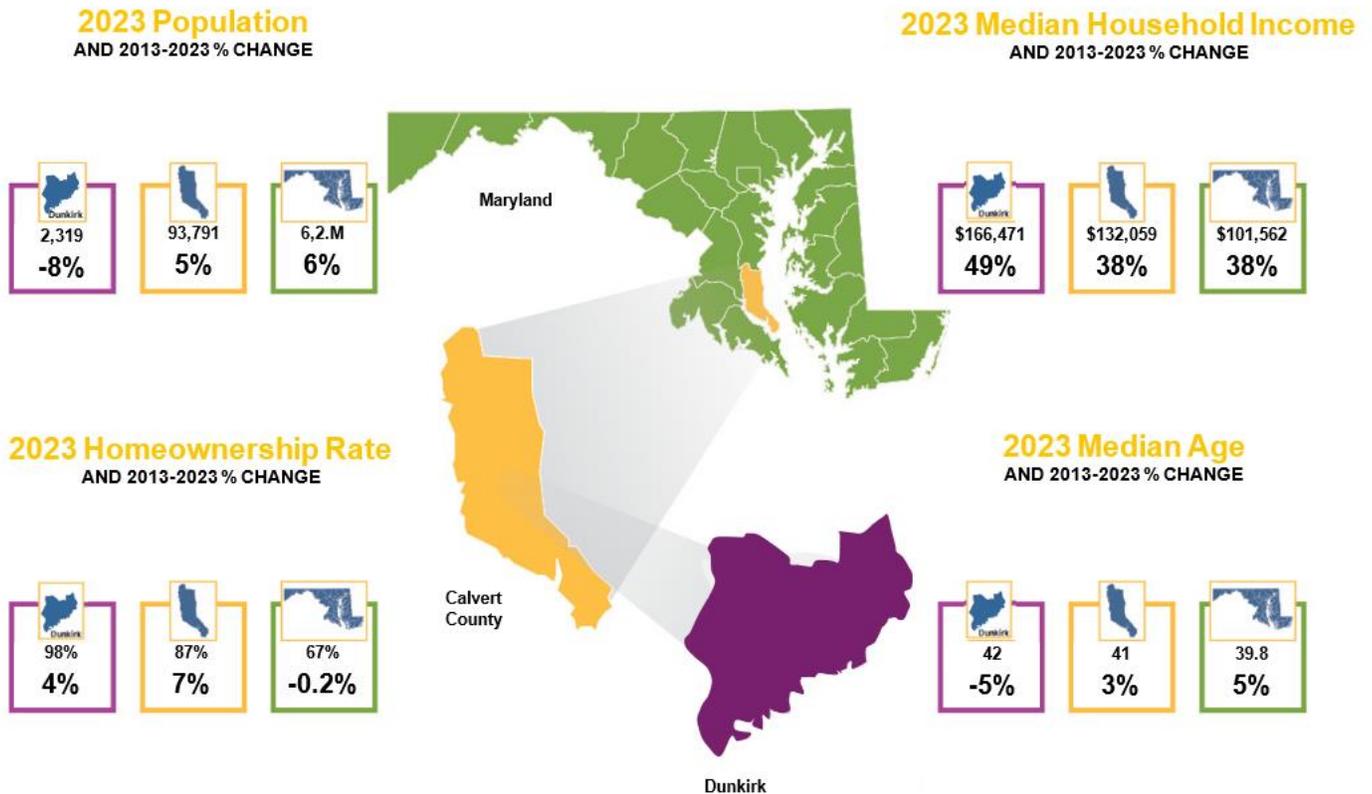
The median travel time to work is **33.6** minutes

**82%** of the workforce drives a car alone to work

The unemployment rate is **≤ 1%**



## Dunkirk Census Designated Place – Calvert County – State of Maryland Comparisons



### Strategic Direction

Established 40 years ago, the Dunkirk Town Center spans 195 acres and serves as the gateway to the county’s northern boundary. It is the second smallest of the county’s Town Centers but has the second highest concentration of commercial uses, making commercial development the predominant land use. Originally a small farming community, Dunkirk remained sparsely populated and dominated by agriculture until the mid-20th century. Its proximity to the Capital Beltway/I-495 (17 miles), Washington, D.C., Arlington, Suitland, Baltimore, and Annapolis spurred steady commercial growth between the 1960s and 1990s, while adjacent areas experienced residential growth. Today, the Town Center is largely built out, with commercial development concentrated within its boundaries and residential development surrounding it. This development pattern reflects the original intent of the Dunkirk Town Center: to preserve agricultural land by concentrating growth in designated commercial and residential areas. The following guiding principles inform this master plan update:

1. Continue to treat the Town Center as an aesthetic whole by retaining the single zoning district, Town Center.
2. Encourage commercial, medical, professional services, recreational, and institutional uses, senior housing, and mixed-use development/redevelopment.
3. Encourage cohesive design by enforcing landscaping, lighting, sidewalks, signage, and appearance code requirements.

4. Establish a distinctive gateway.
5. Expand the Town Center boundary to include the Dunkirk District Park and MTA's Dunkirk Park and Ride.
6. Conserve forests and sensitive areas with the Natural Resource Protection Area (buffer).
7. Protect the Town Center's receiving waters through environmental sensitive design and addressing increasingly frequent and intense rain events.
8. Encourage private investment in sewage treatment systems while continuing to work with the Maryland Department of the Environment to ensure full compliance with all applicable regulatory standards.
9. Conserve Smithville Methodist Church and increase outreach to historic property owners for designated Historic Districts.
10. Encourage multi-media means of presenting historic sites/ structures and points of interest.
11. Restrict access from Apple Way to MD 4, allowing right hand turns only.
12. Complete Penwick Lane to provide direct access from MD 4 to Town Center Boulevard.
13. Extend Gateway Drive to Brickhouse Road to complete the east side local travel route.
14. Connect MTA's Park and Ride to MD 4.
15. Place a crosswalk at the intersection of MD 4/Town Center Boulevard.
16. Expand public transit services along Dares Beach Road to create a bi-directional route.
17. Expand public transit evening hours, increase on-demand services, and advocate efficiency in MTA's commuter service.
18. Implement recommendations in [Dunkirk and Prince Frederick Bikeways Feasibility Studies](#), prepared by Mead & Hunt and funded by the [MDOT FY22 Kim Lamphier Bikeways Network Program](#) when funding is available.

## Land Use

### Key Issues

How can the Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan continue to focus commercial growth within the Town Center and residential growth in surrounding areas to preserve rural land, while promoting high-quality design despite land and sewer capacity constraints?

Key issues identified through public input during this master plan update, consistent with those raised during the 1987 Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance adoption process, include:

- Cohesive design standards to create a distinctive identity and “sense of place”.
- A distinctive and welcoming gateway.
- A well-defined commercial core in the Town Center serving residential development in the outlying area.
- Conservation of remaining historic Smithville sites and architecture.
- Preservation of natural and environmental resources.
- Smooth traffic flow throughout the Town Center, with traffic control at MD 4/Ferry Landing Road and MD 4/Ward Road<sup>2</sup>.
- Limited and adequate access into commercial areas.
- Permittance of senior housing.

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<sup>2</sup> See the Transportation section for a detailed discussion on traffic congestion and safety.

- A joint-use community center, with a focus on seniors and the potential inclusion of a library branch<sup>3</sup>.
- Water and sewer infrastructure that supports existing and future development.

## Development Trends

Dunkirk’s development patterns provide insight into its past and help shape its future growth. From the late 1600s to early 1700s, the area—then known as Smithville—was named for the Smith family, who purchased land, built homes, and established a thriving community based on agriculture, fishing, and seafood harvesting, fueled by enslaved labor. The African American community also played an important role in establishing the community as it rose from slavery, achieved freedom, and founded churches and schools. Remnants of historic Smithville remain in the Town Center today, including the Smithville Methodist Church and the Shiloh Methodist Episcopal Church cemetery—landmarks that reflect the area’s heritage. Just outside of the Town Center lies the Smithville Methodist Cemetery. These historic sites, with their distinctive architecture, contribute to a strong sense of place and contrast with the surrounding modern development.

Into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and through the 1950s, the Dunkirk area retained its small, rural, agricultural community character with a modest population. Beginning in the 1960s and accelerating through the 1980s, the Town Center experienced commercial growth with the construction of Dunkirk Place, Dunkirk Square, and County Plaza shopping centers, and the standalone Howlin and Laurian buildings along MD 4. These structures are typically older strip malls or brick buildings with white columns and dormers, surrounded by parking lots with grassy areas and landscaping. Residential growth during this period included nearby neighborhoods like Smith’s Purchase and Halls Hills, and outlying communities like Lakewood, Century Estates, Ferry Woods, and Benson Acres.

Into the 1990s, the Calvert Gateway and Dunkirk Market Place shopping centers were built, featuring big-box stores, smaller shops with similar architectural styles accompanied with large, landscaped parking lots—some with standalone pad sites. Residential growth continued with communities like Lakewood, Dunkirk Subdivision, Smithville, and Apple Greene, as well as outlying residential communities like Howes Meadows, Hickory Creek, Old Hundred, and Ward Meadows.

In 2015, the Dunkirk District Park, a regional park located just outside of the Town Center, was completed. This civic amenity attracts local and regional users and offers picnic areas, pavilions, a playground, a dog park, a skate park, walking/jogging trails, tennis courts, pickleball courts, baseball/softball fields, and a year-round restroom facility. In 2018, the nearby MTA Dunkirk Park and Ride, also just outside of the Town Center, was completed. It provides 486 parking spaces for commuters traveling to Anne Arundel, Prince George’s and Baltimore counties, Arlington, and Washington, D.C. In 2024, the Sheriff’s Dunkirk District Station was established in the Town Center, fulfilling a goal of the 1987 Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan.

## Towards a Vibrant Town Center

Today, the Dunkirk Town Center is mostly developed with a distinctive core of commercial, medical, office, historic and civic uses serving surrounding residential communities. Architecture in the Town Center is characterized by three distinctive types—Historic Smithville, pre-1990s and post 1990s—each type easily identifiable. While there are residential developments surrounding the Town Center and assisted housing is

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<sup>3</sup> See the Government and Community Facilities section for a discussion on the joint-use community center.

permitted in the Town Center, no assisted housing is in the Town Center. Additionally, the gateway, marked by a sign at the Town Center's entrance, is undistinguishable and obscured by trees that line MD 4. Traffic flow continues to be a challenge, impacted by workforce commuters, intra-county travel, and an unsignalized access points from MD 4 into the Town Center, but improved by the construction of an alternative transportation route on the east side of the Town Center and expanded access lanes at the signalized intersections of MD 4/Town Center Boulevard and MD 4/Ward Road. The placement of a pedestrian crosswalk at the intersection of MD 4/Ward Road is anticipated sometime in 2025-2026<sup>4</sup>. Lastly, the Town Center is served by private wells and septic systems. A few septic systems have failed periodically, creating challenges for accommodating additional development or redevelopment<sup>5</sup>. The 1997 Calvert County Comprehensive Plan included a policy allowing Town Centers to be served by public water and sewer; however, the current Calvert County Water and Sewerage Plan does not plan for these provisions in the Dunkirk Town Center. Private investment in sewage treatment systems while continuing to work with the Maryland Department of the Environment to ensure full compliance with all applicable regulatory standards is encouraged to address this challenge.

## Land Uses

Since the Town Center's inception in 1987, land uses have been governed by the Town Center (zoning) District and the Use Table in the Dunkirk Town Center Zoning Ordinance, and subsequent amendments. This master plan recommends retaining the Town Center Zoning District designation and continuing to allow uses outlined in the Use Table, with a focus on commercial, medical, professional services, civic, and institutional uses, senior housing and mixed-use development/redevelopment. It also recommends continuing to prohibit industrial uses that cannot be adequately screened, limiting free-standing signs, and encouraging cohesive design by enforcing landscaping, lighting, sidewalks, signage and appearance requirements.

## Architecture

During the public participation process for the 1987 Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan, the community emphasized the importance of architectural compatibility and the conservation of historic Smithville. This master plan update continues to advocate this, but also acknowledges the three distinctive architectural styles found in the Dunkirk Town Center today. This master plan recommends continuing to enforce appearance code requirements with an emphasis on architectural elements that complement the scale, building placement and materials of immediate surroundings.

## Gateway

The current Town Center gateway is defined by a sign in front of a row of trees, which blends in with the Dunkirk District Park entrance. A gateway should serve as a visual focal point that connects two areas and welcomes residents and visitors. Effective gateways include curb extensions, raised crosswalks or driveway treatments, raised medians, landscaping, lighting, seating, and public art. With the proposed inclusion of Dunkirk District Park in the Dunkirk Town Center, there is an opportunity to create a more distinguishable gateway spanning both sides of MD 4 and the median. Features could include the county flag, conservation landscaping, lighting, community art (e.g., sea horse sculptures that once decorated the county's landscape), and Town Center and Dunkirk District Park signs. Additional signage could highlight historic Smithville and the Dunkirk area's heritage. A redeveloped gateway would enhance a "sense of place" at the county's entrance.

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<sup>4</sup> See the Transportation section for a detailed discussion on traffic congestion and safety.

<sup>5</sup> See the Water Resources section for a discussion regarding failing septic systems.

This master plan update, consistent with the 1987 Dunkirk Master Plan, recommends establishing a distinctive identity for the Town Center as the gateway to the county, located at MD 4/Town Center Boulevard.

## Infill, Redevelopment and Development

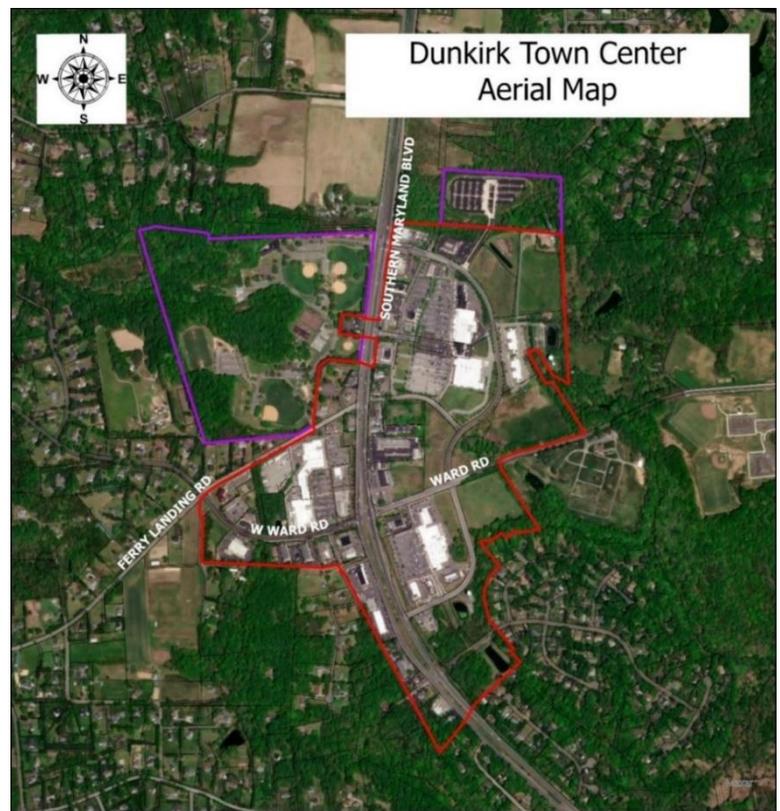
Some of the Town Center’s structures were constructed before current stormwater and sensitive area protection requirements. Growth will focus on developing the few remaining vacant properties. Two parcels—approximately 15 and 19 acres—have limitations due to septic or community sewer systems, forest conservation areas, wetlands, stormwater management facilities, and, for one parcel, a proposed road and related rights-of-way. Other opportunities include an eight-acre parcel, several smaller properties of three acres or less, along with building out existing pad sites and redeveloping or reusing existing buildings. This master plan recommends allowing commercial development and redevelopment, with an option of a floating commercial overlay zone that would allow flexible setback and bulk standards and reduced parking requirements. It also recommends protecting streams, wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes and highly erodible or hydric soils through the Natural Resource Protection Area (buffer and setback), in accordance with the county’s zoning regulations. Additionally, through redevelopment and retrofit measures, this master plan recommends protecting receiving waters through stormwater standards that address the increasing frequency and intensity of rain events. Lastly, this master plan encourages private entities ensure adequate sewage treatment to accommodate development and redevelopment<sup>6</sup>.

## Town Center Boundary Expansion

With the completion of the Dunkirk District Park in 2015 and MTA’s Dunkirk Park and Ride in 2018, both located outside of but adjacent to the Town Center, this master plan recommends expanding the Town Center boundary to include these amenities. This expansion supports the Town Center’s role in providing civic spaces and government facilities in Town Centers and fulfills the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan’s recommendation for this boundary expansion. The proposed boundary expansion increases the Town Center from 195 to 291 acres.

## Goals and Objectives

See Appendix A for goals and objectives.



0 0.25 0.5 Miles

Prepared by Department of Planning & Zoning  
7/21/2025

<sup>6</sup> See the Water Resources section for a discussion on the stormwater standards and failing septic systems.

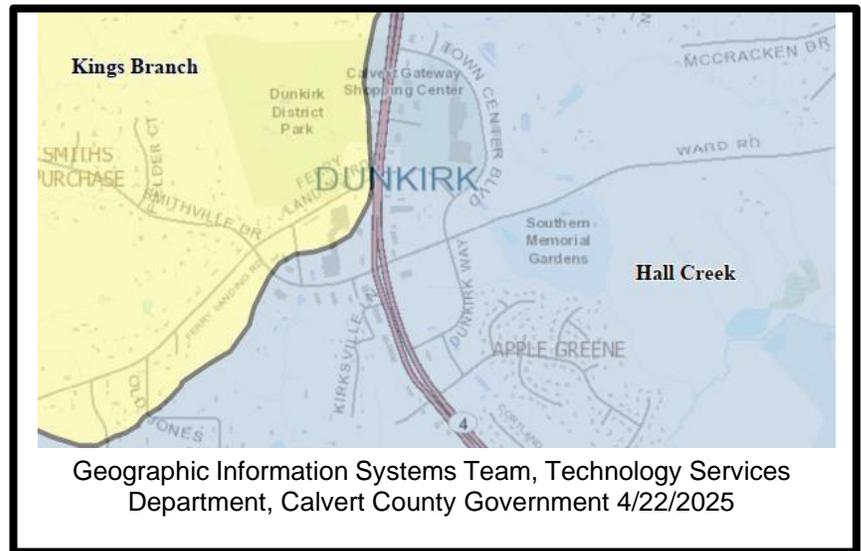
## Environment and Natural Resources

### Key Issues

The Dunkirk Town Center sits between the Hall Creek and Kings Branch subwatersheds, which flow into the Patuxent River and Chesapeake Bay. How can this master plan conserve sensitive areas, and riparian forests and vegetation along Hall Creek and King's Branch tributaries to protect water quality from the impacts of impervious surfaces and increased frequency and intensity of rain events?

### Regional Watershed Management

The Dunkirk Town Center drains into the Chesapeake Bay and Patuxent River watersheds. The Patuxent River is about 1.5 miles west of Dunkirk, and the Chesapeake Bay is six miles to the east. The Dunkirk Town Center lies mostly within the Hall Creek sub-watershed (north, east, south and southwest) and the Kings Branch sub-watershed (northwest). It covers 195 acres and with the boundary expansion, will cover 291 acres of mostly level land, with elevations ranging from 50 to 150 feet above sea level, lowest at the southern edge.



### Watershed Health Indicators

According to [The Center for Watershed Protection](#), when impervious surface exceeds 10% of a watershed, a stream's ecosystem begins to show sign of distress. Based on a 2023 analysis of aerial photography, the Dunkirk Town Center contains approximately 100 acres of impervious surface, or 51%<sup>7</sup>. Impervious surfaces make up approximately 6% of the Kings Branch watershed and about 8% of the Hall Creek watershed<sup>8</sup>. Concentrated impervious surfaces in the Town Center impact nearby tributaries, highlighting the need to protect sensitive areas, conserve riparian forests and vegetation and manage stormwater to reduce downstream effects.

Tree canopy coverage is also an indicator of healthy watersheds and their ecosystems. Based on a 2023 analysis of aerial photography, the Dunkirk Town Center contains approximately 70 acres of tree canopy coverage, or 24%<sup>9</sup>. The King's Branch and Hall Creek watersheds are in good condition. Approximately 88% of streams in the Hall Creek watershed and 89% in the King's Branch watershed are buffered by natural

<sup>7</sup> 2023 planimetric data photography, the Calvert County Department of Technology Services, Geographic Information Systems (11/26/24).

<sup>8</sup> [2023 American Chestnut Land Trust Updated Report Card for Parkers Creek, Percent Natural Vegetation in Riparian Zones of Calvert County Watersheds \(2017-2018 data\), p. 7 \(accessed 8/21/2025\)](#).

<sup>9</sup> 2023 planimetric data photography, the Calvert County Department of Technology Services, Geographic Information Systems (11/26/24).

vegetation<sup>10</sup>. Increasing tree and forest coverage to help manage runoff from impervious surfaces and increased intensity and frequency of rain events is important to maintain good water quality. According to the Department of Natural Resources' [GreenPrint](#) Ecosystem Services GIS layer, undeveloped land and pervious surfaces in the Town Center have an estimated value of \$200 – \$400 per acre annually in benefits to air quality improvement, carbon sequestration, groundwater recharge, nutrient uptake, wildlife habitat and biodiversity, as well as stormwater mitigation. These areas are located in the west of Dunkirk District Park, north of MTA's Park and Ride, east of the Calvert Gateway Shopping Center, east of Town Center Boulevard and south of Apple Way.

This master plan recommends improving watershed management by using natural resource solutions, retrofitting inadequate stormwater management measures, accounting for increased rainfall volume and frequency and managing untreated stormwater runoff. Additionally, the plan recommends assessing impervious surface data every five to seven years, as it becomes available, and analyzing the current and potential impervious surface coverage to establish a targeted impervious surface threshold. It also recommends protecting forest, vegetation, and riparian forests through landscape conservation techniques, forest conservation regulations and the Natural Resource Protection Area.

## Protected Sensitive Areas and Forests

Only the protected sensitive areas located in the Town Center are listed below. For a complete list of protected sensitive areas in all Town Centers, see the Environment and Natural Resources section in Chapter 1.

- **Wetlands** – Small nontidal, palustrine wetlands are located on West Ward Road's southwest boundary and near East Ward Road's southeastern boundary. These wetlands are freshwater ponds with trees, shrubs and emergent vegetation.
- **Streams and Their Buffers** – Perennial and intermittent streams, tributaries of Kings Branch and Hall Creek, are located in the Dunkirk District Park, north of MTA's Park and Ride, north of Calvert Gateway Shopping Center, east of Town Center Boulevard, and south of Apple Way. Dunkirk Way and West Ward Road cross streams in the Town Center.
- **Steep Slopes and Highly Erodible Soils** – Small areas of slopes 25% to 50% are scattered throughout the Town Center, with a single area exceeding 50% slope to the southeast. Most soil is categorized urban land and is suitable for development. Other soils suitable for development include Ingleside-Galestown and Ingleside-Woodstown complexes, and Udorthents, loamy soils. In contrast, the Dodon-Marr, Downer-Woodstown, and Zekiah/Issue soils are characterized with high seasonal water tables, steep slopes, or poor drainage and are generally unsuited for development.
- **Forest and Tree Canopy** – Most forest and tree canopy in the Town Center consist of landscape plantings and forest retention areas, required by the county's zoning ordinance. Forested areas are located south of the Shoppes at Apple Greene, in the Dunkirk District Park, and north of MTA's Dunkirk Park and Ride and Gateway Shopping Center. These areas connect to larger forests outside the Town Center.

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<sup>10</sup> [2023 American Chestnut Land Trust Updated Report Card for Parkers Creek, Impervious Surfaces in Calvert County Watersheds \(2017-2018 data\), p. 8 \(accessed 8/21/2025\).](#)

This master plan recommends protecting these sensitive areas in the same manner, discussed in the Regional Watershed Management section, above. See Chapter 1 for additional details on protective measures, applicable to all Town Centers and countywide.

### Hazard Assessment

A comprehensive risk assessment was conducted for Dunkirk Town Center based on the threats and hazards identified in the [Calvert County 2023 All-Hazard Mitigation Plan](#). The risk assessment evaluated 24 natural and human-caused threats and hazards for the Town Center and was a collaborative effort that included representatives from the Departments of Public Safety, Planning & Zoning, Public Works, and Communications & Media Relations. Other represented entities included Calvert Soil Conservation, Calvert County Sheriff's Office and the Calvert County Health Department. Based upon the assessment, four high-risk threats and hazards were identified for Dunkirk: motor vehicle crashes, utility interruptions, tornadoes and windstorms, and radon exposure.

The highest-ranking hazard in Dunkirk is motor vehicle crashes, including crashes involving bicycles and pedestrians.

According to data from the Maryland State Police, there have been 1,227 motor vehicle crashes in Calvert County for the years since 2024. Of these, 17 crashes have resulted in fatalities. None of the crashes in Dunkirk have resulted in fatalities; however, several other crashes that resulted in injuries and/or property damage have been documented along MD 4 through the Town Center and at the intersection of Ward Road. Additional concerns related to motor vehicle crashes and overall transportation safety in the Town Center include access to bike lanes, sidewalks and marked crosswalks on both state and local roads. As the Town Center continues to develop and motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic increases, transportation safety will remain a top priority.

Utility interruptions are the hazard with the second highest risk ranking and include interruptions to water, sewer and electricity. As an economically focused Town Center, Dunkirk Town Center is more vulnerable to outages that disrupt the delivery of goods and services of businesses. Additionally, current limitations of

Threat/Hazard	Risk Factor
Motor Vehicle Crashes	3.4
Utility Interruptions	3.3
Tornadoes and Windstorms	3.2
Radon Exposure	3.1
Winter Storms	2.8
Hurricanes and Tropical Storms	2.6
Dam Failure	2.5
Emergency Services Shortages	2.5
Extreme Temperatures	2.5
Flooding, Flash Flooding, and Nuisance Flooding	2.5
Pandemic, Epidemic, Endemic, and Infectious Disease	2.5
Terrorism and Cyberterrorism	2.5
Hail	2.4
Hazardous Materials (Fixed Facility and Transportation)	2.3
Drought	2.2
Invasive Species	2.2
Opioids & Overdoses	2.1
Earthquake	1.9
Nuclear Incidents	1.2
Civil Disturbance	1
Coastal Erosion	1
Landslide	1
Subsidence and Sinkhole	1
Wildfire	1

existing water and sewer infrastructure prevent the establishment of businesses that require high water-usage and are of significant concern for long-range planning. Lastly, in addition to disrupting businesses, power outages that affect traffic lights increase the risk of motor vehicles crashes.

Tornadoes and windstorms are the hazard with the third highest level of associated risk in Dunkirk. Both windstorms and tornadoes bring damaging winds that threaten community lifelines such as shelter, transportation and utilities. Tornadoes are relatively infrequent; however, the damage caused by a tornado can severely impact critical infrastructure and public safety. Historically, two (2) tornadoes were observed in Dunkirk, resulting in damage totaling approximately \$330,000. In contrast, windstorms are a much more common occurrence and are often the result of severe summer thunderstorms, although the damage is usually minor. Observed damage may include downed trees and power lines, damage to building fascia, and damage or loss of small outdoor resources such as road signs or furniture.

The fourth and final high-risk hazard is radon exposure. Radon is a tasteless, odorless and naturally occurring radioactive gas produced by the natural decay of uranium in the soil and rocks beneath the ground. This gas can then seep into homes and buildings through cracks and openings in the foundation. Radon exposure is a slow-onset hazard but is widespread and is a significant environmental cause of lung cancer. According to the Maryland Department of Health, Environmental Health Bureau, the average radon level in Dunkirk is 7.8 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) and the lung cancer risk due to radon exposure is 2.3 - 4.5%. Children receive higher estimated radiation doses from radon compared to adults due to differences in lung shape and size as well as respiration rates. However, because Dunkirk Town Center has very few residential structures, this reduces the risk associated with long-term exposure.

Other hazards that were not classified as high risk but still of concern for Dunkirk include winter storms, hurricanes and tropical storms, dam failure and flooding. Flooding is primarily a concern in regard to Hall Creek due to the potential for waters to overtop MD 4 south of the Town Center. Flooding and subsequent closure of MD 4 limits travel into or out of the Town Center. Additionally, failure of the Calvert Gateway Dam has the potential to substantially damage Ward Road. Although the dam is not classified as high-hazard, failure would result in major transportation disruptions until alternate routes were made available.

## Goals and Objectives

See Appendix A for goals and objectives.

## Heritage

### Key Issues

Dunkirk has a rich history as a rural community known for historic Smithville. How can this master plan encourage the preservation and recordation of historic and archeological assets, and encourage new construction that records these resources and is compatible with but distinguishable from Historic Smithville?

### Cultural Resource Assets

There are 10 historic sites and structures, and no archeological sites listed on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties in the Town Center. The MIHP is a statewide listing of historic sites and structures and is not regulatory. However, of this number, only four are extant: Smithville Methodist Church, Smithville

Parsonage, the Smithville Market and the Smithville Meeting Hall. Additionally, although Shiloh Church has been demolished, its cemetery remains in a grassy area between Dunkirk Market Place Shopping Center and MD 4. The Maryland Archeological Site Survey lists no previously recorded archaeological sites within the current Dunkirk Town Center boundary. Dunkirk contains no National Register of Historic Places-listed properties; no farmsteads occur within Town Center boundaries. The historic sites and structures represent irreplaceable heritage resources. Accordingly, this plan seeks to protect these resources. See Chapter 1 for a discussion on the county's historical and cultural assets and the commissions that advise staff on their management.

### **Smithville Methodist Church**

The Smithville Methodist Church is one of the oldest Methodist churches in Southern Maryland. Built in 1843, a belfry was added to the two and one-half story building in the late-twentieth century. The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners designated the church property Calvert County Historic District in October 1976 through Resolution 35-76. This designation assures preservation of the historic appearance of the church while allowing for necessary upkeep and interior upgrades.

### **Smithville Parsonage**

In 1844, the Methodist Church split over the issue of slavery in the United States. The following year, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South splintered from the main church institution over the issue of racial enslavement. The Parsonage was constructed circa 1890 and served as the rectory for this congregation until 1922. When the building was inventoried for inclusion in the MIHP in 2004, it was being used as a florist shop. Since then, it has been used for personal services. The Parsonage is recorded in the MIHP as CT-86. While not currently a designated Calvert County Historic District, it may be eligible to be designated. If an MIHP-listed property, direct impacts from proposed site development would be reviewed per the county's zoning regulations.

### **Smithville Market**

Recorded in land records as the Smithville Market, the property was rumored to have been a slave market during the Antebellum Period. No evidence remains from this period. However, it contains a circa 1870 Victorian house built for Dr. Thomas M. Chaney with the main block used as a residence and an ell with office space. The property is recorded in the MIHP as CT-87. Accordingly, direct impacts from proposed site development would be reviewed per the county's zoning regulations. While not a county designated Historic District, it may be eligible to be designated.

### **Smithville Meeting Hall**

Built around 1921 for the Junior Order of United American Mechanics, the Smithville Meeting Hall operated as a general store and post office into the 1970s. Chimney removal, alteration of the entrance, an addition and the use of vinyl siding and asphalt single rooming have drastically altered the appearance of the Smithville Meeting Hall. The building nonetheless retains its American foursquare design and window arrangement. Recorded in the MIHP as CT-82 any direct impacts proposed by site development would be reviewed per the county's zoning regulations.

Historically known as Smithville, little evidence of this past remains within the Dunkirk Town Center boundaries. To preserve what exists, this plan sets out two specific objectives:

- Retain the Smithville Methodist Church in preservation as a Calvert County Historic District. This resource is the oldest historic building in Dunkirk and serves as a focal point for the present community.
- Encourage owners of historic structures in the Dunkirk Town Center to place the properties in preservation. Designated Calvert County Historic Districts are eligible for a historic preservation property tax credit equal to 25% of preapproved maintenance and/or improvements.

This master plan recommends the continued conservation of the Smithville Methodist Church through the advisement of the Historic District Commission and Heritage Committee, and increased outreach to historic property owners on incentives available for designated Historic Districts. It also recommends encouraging multi-media outreach of historic sites/points of interest in the Dunkirk Town Center and vicinity to the public. A potential opportunity exists with the recommendation to redevelop the Town Center's gateway by including signage that highlights historic Smithville and the Dunkirk area's heritage.

### Previously Unrecorded Archaeological Resources

While most of the Dunkirk Town Center has been developed, the potential remains for intact archaeological deposits. If these deposits exist, they could contain significant information about those who preceded us.

### Resources Outside the Town Center

Numerous historic architectural and archaeological resources occur proximal to the Dunkirk Town Center but outside its boundaries. These include Native American sites dating as early as 10,000 years ago through to the period of contact with arriving Europeans, Colonial Period through early-twentieth century residences and historic agricultural structures. Preserving these resources, in particular those that reflect Calvert County's agricultural tradition, is essential to retaining the rural character of the lands outside the Town Center enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

There are two properties designated as Calvert County Historic Districts that are either adjacent to the current Town Center boundary or will be when the Town Center boundary is expanded. Both are privately-owned and not accessible to the public. Additionally, there are two historic sites along the Patuxent River.

- **Red Hall (CT-4)** – Red Hall is located to the east of the Town Center, on the northside of Ward Road. Red Hall is distinctive because it is reported to be one of the earliest gambrel-roofed buildings in Southern Maryland with elements possibly dating to the late 1600s. Red Hall was disassembled and reassembled with additions in the mid-twentieth century when owned by Perry B. Van Vleck, a builder and preservationist. Mr. Van Vleck acquired numerous neglected historic houses and relocated them to Calvert County, primarily in the Lower Marlboro area. For a short period of time, the Christ at the Sea Russian Orthodox chapel, was located at Red Hall. Built in 1940 by Russian immigrant Natalie Scheffer, the chapel was moved from Cove Point to Red Hall and eventually to Herrington Harbor – North Marina where it is currently being restored.
- **Whitehall (CT-84)** – White Hall is located to the north of the Town Center. The architecture of White Hall fuses Federal, Italianate and Greek Revival-style elements. The main house was constructed around 1858 by Thomas W.B. Smith after a fire consumed an earlier dwelling. The property contains several

secondary structures including a smokehouse, barns and the Sunderland Polling House (CT-192). According to the MIHP documentation for White Hall, Mary Eisenman, owner of White Hall at the time, had the Sunderland Polling House relocated to White Hall in 1985.

- **Patuxent River Mining Sites (CT-79) and Ferry Landing (CT-1190)** – These historic mining sites, located along the Patuxent River, are located within or adjacent to land owned by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

Information for these and other properties on the MIHP is available online from the Maryland Historical Trust via Medusa, Maryland's Cultural Resource Information System: <https://mht.maryland.gov/secure/medusa/>.

## Maryland Transit Authority Archeological Sites

Prior to development of the MTA's Dunkirk Park and Ride facility north of the current Town Center boundary, MTA contracted a Phase I archaeological identification survey. Because the proposed development utilized federal funds, the project triggered the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) which requires federal agencies to consider potential impacts to significant archaeological resources. The survey identified two Native American archaeological sites.

Phase II evaluation-level investigations determined both sites were significant due to their ability to yield important information about Native American lifeways. In accordance with the NHPA, the Federal Transit Administration, the MTA and the Maryland Historical Trust entered into a memorandum of agreement to conduct Phase III data recovery of the sites.

The combined archaeological investigations revealed Native American use of the area beginning approximately 9,500 years ago and continuing intermittently as late as the arrival of European colonists. These findings are important because they trace aboriginal subsistence strategies from early hunter-gatherers through development of horticulture, and more extensive use of agriculture to meet dietary needs. Archaeologists note significant social, economic, demographic and political changes that result from this transition. Agriculture increased food availability but mandated greater sedentism. These two forces resulted in drastic population increases and greater social complexity. More information about the MTA's Dunkirk Park and Ride archaeological investigation may be found in the online [brochure](#).

Despite considerable development within the Town Center, there is potential for discovering intact archaeological resources exists. If present and identified prior to disturbance, these areas could be preserved as "pockets of preservation." Future development must consider potential disturbance of archaeological deposits.

Specifically, this master plan sets as objectives policies intended to:

- Assess locations of archaeological potential within areas of proposed development, and
- Record previously unknown archaeological resources exposed during construction.

This master plan recommends conducting professional review of proposed subdivision and site development plans for potential of previously unrecorded archaeological resources, and review of building permit applications to monitor ground disturbing activities and record historic and archaeological resources prior to

loss during construction. See Chapter 1 for existing policies and development review requirements for historic and archeological assets.

## Goals and Objectives

See Appendix A for goals and objectives.

## Housing

### Key Issues

How can the master plan encourage meeting the need for senior and affordable housing given land and sewer service constraints?

### Housing Characteristics

Since 1987, the vision for the Town Center has been to serve as the commercial core for surrounding residential communities, and that vision has largely been realized. Although the Dunkirk Town Center Zoning Ordinance permits assisted housing within the Town Center, none currently exists. An assisted living facility is located along Yellow Bank Road north of the Town Center, but there are no other senior or assisted living facilities nearby or in the Town Center. See Chapter 1 on services for the senior population.

### Housing Affordability

The Maryland General Assembly's 2025 adoption of HB 1045 requires jurisdictions to include a low-income and workforce housing assessment in their next comprehensive plan or housing element update. To meet this requirement, this master plan compares 2023 U.S. Census ACS Five-Year Estimates and HUD's 30%, 50%, and 80% Area Median Income (AMI) thresholds for Calvert County households. (For additional information on HB 90, see Chapter 1 on housing.)

Most of the Dunkirk CDP's 887 housing units are single-family homes. Nearly 90% of the current housing stock was built between 1960 and 2000, and 2023 data show a 99% homeownership rate. The median housing value is \$557,700, with a median monthly mortgage payment of \$2,760—making Dunkirk one of the county's three most expensive CDPs for homeownership. 2025 rental listings indicate average monthly rates of \$1,700 for smaller units and \$3,200 for larger ones.

The 2023 median household income of \$166,471 is above HUD's countywide AMI of \$152,100, but housing costs remain high. While median-income households can generally afford to buy or rent in Dunkirk, affordability declines sharply for households earning at or below 80% of AMI (\$95,300), and especially for those at or below 50% (\$75,350) and 30% (\$45,200). Lower-income households face significant barriers to both homeownership and rental options, reflecting a limited supply of affordable housing.

Consistent with the Calvert County Housing for All Task Force's 2020 Report, this master plan recommends developer incentives, planned unit development, education on the definition and availability of affordable and workforce housing, and promoting awareness of opportunities for housing assistance programs. In addition, this master plan recommends identifying additional measures to address housing affordability and workforce housing to comply with Maryland House Bill 1045 and incorporate these measures in future updates to the comprehensive plan and town center master plans. See Chapter 1 for efforts to promote fair housing and

affirmatively further fair housing and administer housing assistance to income eligible individuals and households.

## Goal and Objectives

See Appendix A for goals and objectives.

## Economic Vitality

### Key Issues

Adequate public water and wastewater systems will promote economic opportunities in the Dunkirk Town Center. How can the Dunkirk Town Center continue to serve the Dunkirk region as a retail and employment hub given land and sewer infrastructure constraints and no plans to provide public water and sewer infrastructure in the Town Center?

### Economic Trends

Historically, the Dunkirk Town Center's local economy relied on agriculture, fishing, seafood harvesting, and recreation. Today, it has emerged as a favored spot for residents of Calvert County and its adjacent regions, serving as the commercial hub. Residential and commercial areas are geographically separated from each other, maintaining a lower population density while adhering to the conventional suburban framework of segregating land usage. Its strategic positioning along MD 4 renders it readily accessible from various parts of Calvert County and beyond. Given its location at the entrance to Calvert County, Dunkirk serves as a prominent landmark, functioning as a gateway that caters to the requirements of the community without transforming into a high-density region. Overall, the Dunkirk Town Center remains a vibrant and thriving asset to the community that offers a range of amenities and services to its residents and visitors.

### Economic Opportunities

The Dunkirk area has long attracted people who work in major employment centers like Washington, D.C., Arlington, Suitland, Baltimore, and Annapolis, seeking a more affordable place to live in a small-town, rural setting. The MTA Dunkirk Park and Ride, offering daily commuter bus service to most of the centers, adds convenience for local residents. The area's labor force consists of 1,378 individuals, with a 67% participation rate. 88% of Dunkirk's workforce commutes outside of the county, mostly traveling alone by car<sup>11</sup> with an average commute time of 33.6 minutes. The median household income in Dunkirk is \$166,471, the third highest of the Town Centers and among the highest in Southern Maryland. Dunkirk's population is diverse in age, with 28% under 24, 26% between 25 and 44, 33% between 45 and 64, and 13% aged 65 or older.<sup>12</sup> This age distribution reflects Dunkirk's status as a primarily residential area that attracts families.

Despite being the second smallest Town Center in terms of area, it encompasses a diverse array of retail stores, restaurants, medical facilities, and other commercial establishments anchored by multiple prominent grocery chains. The Town Center's transportation and sewage infrastructure, along with limited vacant land, will support modest growth over the future decades. Its long-term viability depends on offering diverse retail, dining, entertainment, professional services, and recreational facilities. The goal is to make the Town Center a

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<sup>11</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year Estimates, [Table DP03](#) (accessed on 4/22/25).

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year Estimates, [Table S1901](#) (accessed on 4/22/25).

vital hub for residents and an appealing destination for visitors and investors, while supporting local businesses and specialty shops. A vibrant Town Center can be achieved through:

- A floating commercial zone that allows projects with flexible setback and bulk requirements, and reduced parking requirements.
- Appearance code requirements with an emphasis on architectural elements that complement the scale, building placement, and materials of immediate surroundings.
- Redevelopment of the Town Center's gateway.
- Expansion of the Town Center's boundary to include the Dunkirk District Park and MTA's Dunkirk Park and Ride.
- Enhancement of local dining and shopping options, creating more walkable and bikeable commercial zones and connections between attractions such as Dunkirk District Park and Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park.

This integrated approach contributes to creating a healthy and livable community that balances economic prosperity and social equity that offers employment, services, and shopping for those living in the surrounding lower-density rural areas.

## Emerging Industries

Dunkirk Town Center boasts a significant commercial presence with six shopping centers offering a diverse range of retail, restaurants, medical facilities, and various other establishments. Anchored by multiple prominent grocery chains, Dunkirk Town Center's easily accessible and highly visible location makes it a convenient go-to destination for everyday needs.

As the Town Center continues to evolve and adapt to changing consumer preferences, the availability of personalized shopping experiences and niche products will undoubtedly contribute to its overall attractiveness as a destination for both residents and visitors. With its highly visible and easily accessed location, the Dunkirk Town Center is well-positioned to take advantage of this growing trend in retail and commercial offerings. Small independent retailers have the ability to reach a broader customer base through the expansion of e-commerce and online shopping. With this trend on the rise, the Dunkirk Town Center has the potential to attract more of these specialty shops to meet the growing demand from its consumers. See Chapter 1 for information on services available to small business services.

## Recreation and Tourism

There are several key attractions that residents and visitors can explore including Dunkirk District Park and the nearby Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park, which offer opportunities to experience unique aesthetics, recreation activities, and scenery. Economic Development's effort to expand vendor options and special activities at the farmers market in Dunkirk District Park present unique opportunities to enhance overall aesthetics and allow visitors to experience local agricultural county offerings. These avenues combined with local dining, shopping opportunities and walkable bikeable zones draw day trippers visiting the county. Investing in further improvements to the aesthetics fosters a stronger sense of community identity and pride among residents and guests, generates foot traffic and increases spending in the surrounding businesses.

## Goals and Objectives

See Appendix A for goals and objectives.

## Transportation

### Key Issues

Traffic congestion and the safety, including highway capacity, travel delays, and the lack of alternative transportation methods through the Town Center are significant concerns for many residents of Dunkirk. How can the master plan improve the transportation network in a way that is balanced given the minimal amount of undeveloped land?

### Transportation Network

MD 4 is the primary north-south route for local and commuter traffic. The first Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan called for the construction of West Ward Road, constructed in the early 1990s, connecting to Ferry Landing Road and offering an alternative to MD 4 in the northwestern portion of the Town Center. As development progressed, service roadways were created on the east side of the Town Center. The first improvement constructed was Town Center Boulevard which connected MD 4 behind the Calvert Gateway Shopping Center to Ward Road. Next, Dunkirk Way was constructed on the east side of the Shoppes at Apple Greene at the southernmost point of the Town Center offering an alternative connection from MD 4 to Ward Road. These service roads currently connect several major retail shopping centers to one another without having to access MD 4 on the east side of the Town Center. Several access lanes also connect MD 4 to various buildings along MD 4, including Penwick Lane. Lastly, Plaza Drive connects MD 4 to the Calvert Gateway Shopping Center.

### Traffic Congestion and Safety Concerns

There are 1,941 individuals in the Dunkirk area's workforce, with more than 85% commuting by car and 2% using public transportation to reach their workplace destinations in Anne Arundel, Prince George's and Baltimore counties, and Washington, D.C. The mean travel time to work is 33.6 minutes.<sup>13</sup> MD 4 carries between 33,895 to 34,572 trips on the average weekday<sup>14</sup> through the Town Center. Driving through the Dunkirk Town Center during AM and PM peak hours produces bottlenecks along MD 4. Much of the traffic traveling in and around the northern portion of the county remains internal traffic from Calvert County residents. Both intra-county and peak hour traffic contribute to traffic congestion and safety. Identified safety concerns include the lack of signalized pedestrian crossings at or near the intersection of MD 4/Town Center Boulevard, inadequate access lanes at unsignalized access points onto MD 4 and Ward Road, and dangerous driving behaviors such as driver speeds driving in excess of the Town Center's 45 mile per hour speed limit.

### Managing Traffic Congestion and Safety

The minimal amount of undeveloped land within the Town Center requires developers to assist in performing future improvements. Additionally, the responsibility to continue to achieve the county's adequate public facilities requirement heavily relies on coordination efforts with the Maryland Department of Transportation

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<sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, Dunkirk, CDP, Selected Economic Characteristics, [Table DP04](#) (accessed 4/15/26.),

<sup>14</sup> [Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Average Daily Traffic \(ADDT\) Locations](#) Interactive GIS Map, Mt. Harmony to MD 260 on MD 4 at the Calvert County line in 2022 (accessed 4/16/25).

(MDOT) and county agencies. The State Highway Administration (SHA) conducted a transportation feasibility study in 2006 including additional dedicated southbound left turn lanes at the two major intersections to improve traffic flow through the Town Center that have been implemented. Some of the study's concepts were not pursued, such as an overpass or an overpass with six lanes.

Currently, Dunkirk Way doesn't connect to Apple Way on the east side of the Town Center, requiring residents in the Apple Green subdivision onto MD 4 to access the Town Center. MTA's Dunkirk Park and Ride doesn't have direct access to MD 4 either. Additionally, Penwick Lane, which connects to MD 4 near the Calvert Gateway Shopping Center, dead-ends and does not link to Town Center Boulevard. The future level of service for Ferry Landing Road and MD 4 should be considered, as access from MD 4 southbound is limited to a left turn, and access to MD 4 is limited to a right turn. Residents of Ferry Landing Woods Road also need a route to Dunkirk District Park that avoids using MD 4. Furthermore, although the speed limit has been reduced from 55 to 45 miles per hours in the Town Center, if warranted, an additional reduction within the Town Center limits may become necessary. Additionally, the Sheriff's Dunkirk District Station was established in the Town Center in 2024 to address safety issues, such as speeding. Furthermore, the Calvert County Traffic Safety Council meets quarterly to identify and address locations in need of heightened enforcement.

### **Strategies to Address Congestion and Safety Concerns**

The areas of congestion are most obvious during the evening peak hours while traveling through the Dunkirk Town Center. Calvert County agencies have partnered with SHA to monitor and plan for growth and the potential increase in highway capacity. An off-corridor circulation system is needed to prevent congestion and dangerous traffic points. The internal circulation system should provide sufficient access and a safe and efficient means of controlling traffic. Consistent with the 2020 Calvert County Transportation Plan, this master plan recommends:

- Restricting access from Apple Way to MD 4, allowing right hand turns only.
- Completing Penwick Lane to provide direct access from MD 4 to Town Center Boulevard.
- Placing a crosswalk at the intersection of MD 4/Town Center Boulevard, approved by SHA but unfunded.
- Encourage MDOT/SHA to place traffic cameras, speed sensors or other real-time data collection tools along MD 4 approaching the northern boundary of the Town Center.

In addition, this master plan recommends extending the existing loop road on the east side of the Town Center by utilizing two county-owned undeveloped rights-of-ways at the north and south end of the existing loop road. At the southern end, Shoppes Way would connect Dunkirk Way and Apple Way but should be limited to local traffic. At the northern end, extend Gateway Drive to Brickhouse Road to complete the Dunkirk Town Center local travel.

Funding for completion of the east-side loop road, Shoppes Way and Penwick Lane could be funded through developer contributions, or county capital investments. The county would need to rely on SHA to fund improvements at the MD 4/Apple Way intersection and to place the pedestrian crosswalk at the MD 4/Town Center Boulevard intersection. See the Proposed Transportation Map on the following page for proposed improvements.

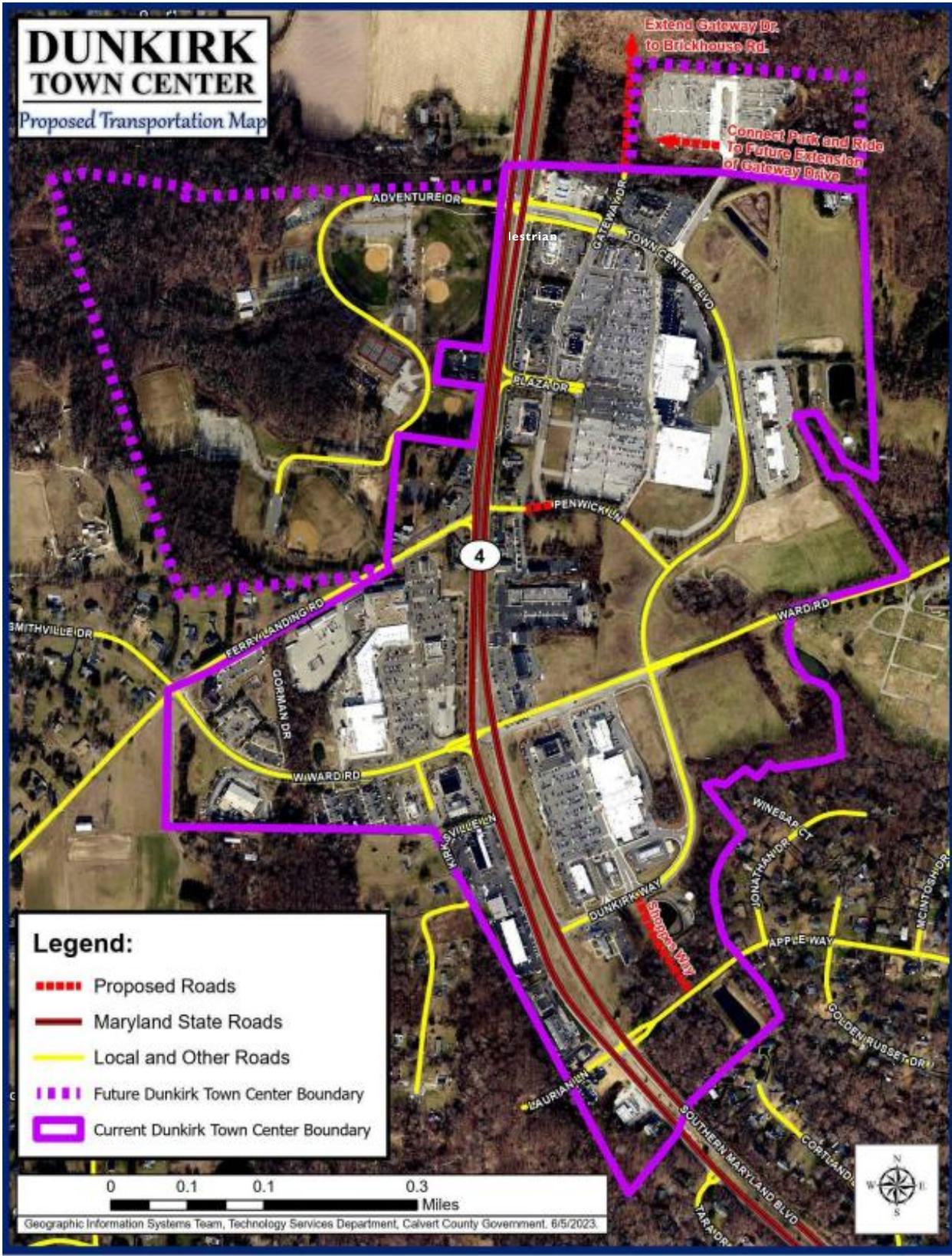
## Public Transportation

The county's bus service currently operates as a "flag system" on weekdays with limited service on Saturdays. This system provides limited established bus stops, allowing passengers to hail buses anywhere along the bus routes. The Dunkirk Route serves the Town Center and performs five daily round trips in the Dunkirk area with two connections to Prince Frederick that runs counterclockwise and in one-directional, making trips inconvenient for riders. In addition, Dunkirk-area seniors, individuals living with disabilities, and citizens without the use of automobiles rely heavily on-demand paratransit services.

The Maryland Transit Administration completed the 408-space MTA's Dunkirk Park and Ride facility at the north end of the Dunkirk Town Center adjacent to the Dunkirk Medical Center and Dunkirk Shopping Center, which provides a Metro Commuter Bus connection to Washington, D.C., the Federal Center at Suitland, and Alexandria, Virginia. Online resources are available for Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties to coordinate work commutes by way of carpools and vanpools through MTA's [Regional Ridesharing Program of Southern Maryland](#). Both public transit routes and regional ridesharing are also accessible through the [Tri-County Council's Regional Transportation Planning Webpage](#).

This master plan, consistent with the 2022 Calvert County Transit Development Plan, makes the following recommendations for improving public transit services:

- Provide service into Prince Frederick from Dunkirk on each run while also adding additional service along Dares Beach Road, Wilson Road, and Ponds Wood Road to create bi-directional service along a majority of the Dunkirk Route. While the proposed schedule reduces the daily trips from five to four round trips, it would improve intra-county connectivity, enhance efficiency and convenience, and increase access to Prince Frederick and the Calvert Pines Senior Center.
- Expand evening hour services.
- Increase public transportation-based mobility on-demand door-to-door services for individuals that cannot drive, like seniors, especially frail seniors, and people with disabilities.
- Work with MTA to restructure inefficient routes to Alexandria, Virginia and the Pentagon to reduce commute times from Dunkirk.
- Work with MTA to establish new services to Annapolis, New Carrollton, Greenbelt and College Park to address increasing commuters from the county to these areas. As an interim step, it is recommended that MDOT MTA consider establishing and subsidizing subscription-based van pool service to the above-named destinations.



## Pedestrian and Bicycle Pathways Planning

Travel on foot or by bicycle can be extremely difficult and thus represents a tiny percentage of all trips in the Town Center. However, pedestrian and bicycle lanes and sidewalks provide an alternative to traveling by car and provide for exercise opportunities and recreational activities. Although improvements have been made over the past decade, significant gaps remain in the sidewalk and bicycle network in the Dunkirk Town Center. Consistent with the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan and the [Dunkirk and Prince Frederick Bikeways Feasibility Studies](#), prepared by Mead & Hunt and funded by the [MDOT FY22 Kim Lamphier Bikeways Network Program](#), this master plan recommends:

- Establishing shared-use paths along Dunkirk Way and Town Center Boulevard.
- Upgrading and extending bicycle facilities in the Dunkirk District Park.
- Connecting the Dunkirk District Park to Dunkirk Market Place and other nearby businesses via a pedestrian access gate on the south side of the park to Ferry Landing Road.
- Connecting the Dunkirk District Park to Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park with a shared-use path.
- Design and construction coordination with SHA regarding a safe pedestrian crossing at the intersection of MD 4/Town Center Boulevard. As of 2025, SHA has approved the pedestrian crossing; however, a project timeline has not been released.
- Addressing sidewalk gaps along developed parcels on both sides of MD 4 through redevelopment activities or SHA Sidewalk Retrofit Program.
- Constructing a shared-use pathway along the existing Shoppes Way right-of-way to Dunkirk Way if the roadway construction is not currently feasible.

Design concepts for the above reference recommended improvements may be found in Appendix B-1 of the [Dunkirk and Prince Frederick Bikeways Feasibility Studies](#). These improvements could be implemented with a combination of developer contributions, county funding, and grants, although public funds will unlikely be available into the foreseeable future due to current budget constraints and economic trends. Additionally, the county would need to work with private property owners to purchase land to create a path that connects the Dunkirk District Park with gated access to Dunkirk Market Place.

## Goals and Objectives

See Appendix A for goals and objectives.

## Water Resources

### Key Issues

Adequate public water and wastewater systems helps protect the integrity of the Town Center's water supply aquifers and surface waters. How can the Dunkirk Town Center master plan implement the Comprehensive Plan's goal of protecting public health and water quality when these services are managed by private property owners?

Rapidly changing climate patterns could have myriad effects, ranging from torrential rainfall that may overwhelm existing drainage and damage stormwater management infrastructure; excessive heat and excessive cold that may cause roadways to buckle and crack with more regularity; and rising home heating and cooling costs due to rapid temperature fluctuations. How can this master plan strategize for climate change impacts?

## Drinking Water Demand and Capacity

The Dunkirk Town Center does not have any public water systems. Water is provided to the Town Center through a series of private wells and privately run water systems. The Calvert County Water & Sewer Department does not currently operate or maintain any of these water systems within the Town Center or to surrounding residential areas. Given that the Dunkirk Town Center does not have a public water system and all wells that provide water to the Town Center are private, there is no current data which accurately represents the total amount of water being withdrawn from the groundwater aquifers that serve the area. That said, there are two aquifers of primary significance that serve this area (Aquia and Magothy aquifers) and all indications from the Groundwater-Level Monitoring Network data suggest there is sufficient groundwater available for many decades to come.

## Drinking Water Quality

Much of the drinking water provided to the Dunkirk Town Center through private wells undergo regular testing in compliance with Maryland Department of the Environment requirements.<sup>15</sup> The Dunkirk Town Center water supply is not susceptible to contaminants originating at the land surface due to the protected nature of confined aquifers.

## Wastewater Treatment Capacity and Demand

The Dunkirk Town Center is not served by a public sewerage. Calvert County does not own, operate, or maintain any wastewater treatment plants within Dunkirk Town Center, nor has the county invested in or has planned for any public sewerage systems to serve the Dunkirk Town Center. There are two larger private wastewater systems serving the Town Center (and many smaller systems), several of which have experienced significant problems including direct discharge of wastewater effluent onto the ground's surface over the past several years. Given the natural and inevitable deterioration of land's ability to sufficiently treat wastewater, even if there is no further expansion of businesses or housing, the frequency and severity of sewage onto the ground and into area creeks and streams will worsen in the coming years.

The Dunkirk Town Center is served by many smaller septic systems and two larger private wastewater disposal systems. The exact capacity of all the various individual systems is not known; however, the maximum capacities of the two larger private systems is less than 50,000 gallons per day combined. The Calvert County Department of Public Works, Division of Water & Sewer does not currently own, operate, or maintain any wastewater treatment facilities within the Dunkirk Town Center.

## Effluent Impact to Water Resources

There is currently, and there has been in the past, significant discharge of wastewater onto the ground's surface and eventually into the waterways in the Dunkirk area from improperly operated private systems. If this continues to be the status quo, the quality of our surface waterways will substantially degrade, the health of the citizens of Dunkirk may be threatened by disease carried by wastewater effluent and businesses will not be able to occupy commercial spaces with failing systems.

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<sup>15</sup> If a private well falls within the definition of a Transient or Non-transient Non-Community water supply (TNC or NTNC), there are regular testing and monitoring requirements. Many of the private wells in the Dunkirk Town Center qualify as either TNC or NTNC water supplies and, therefore, must be regularly tested. When it comes to all other private wells that do not qualify as either TNC or NTNC, there is no requirement for regular testing or monitoring in Maryland.

## Managing Stormwater and Nonpoint Source Pollution

The Dunkirk Town Center contains many retail uses with large surface parking lots. Based on aerial photography analysis, approximately 51% of the area is impervious surface—26% asphalt or concrete and 7% buildings<sup>16</sup>. This master plan recommends assessing the Town Center’s receiving waters—Hall Creek, Kings Branch, and their tributaries—for stream function, water quality, and habitat. Existing tools should be used to track progress toward meeting Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load limits and improving waterway health. These tools include MS4 Permit projects, the percentage of impervious surface and tree canopy coverage within the Town Center, and within the Hall Creek and Kings Branch watersheds. The Plan also recommends amending the county’s stormwater management ordinance to reflect updated rainfall intensity and frequency standards, based on findings from the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. Updating stormwater regulations for increased rain intensity and frequency provides environmental benefits by improving water quality, protecting stream habitats from erosion and increasing groundwater recharge through better management of runoff. These updates also prevent the degradation of aquatic ecosystems and will likely reduce flooding. For more on impervious surface and tree canopy thresholds as indicators of ecosystem health, see the Environment and Natural Resources section of this chapter.

## Goals and Objectives

See Appendix A for goals and objectives.

## Government and Community Facilities

### Key Issues

Since the mid-1980s the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan has called for the Town Centers to include indoor and outdoor public spaces. How can this master plan encourage the creation of additional civic buildings and spaces that meet community desires given sewerage treatment and land capacity limitations?

### Government Facilities

Government facilities currently located in the Town Center boundary include the Dunkirk Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad and the Sheriff’s Dunkirk District Station. The MTA Dunkirk Park and Ride and the Dunkirk District Park are also in the Town Center, with the expansion of the Town Center boundary as a part of this master plan update.

### Educational Facilities

The Dunkirk Town Center’s residential communities are served by Mt. Harmony Elementary, Northern Middle, and Northern High schools. These schools experience higher student enrollment compared to the southern portion of the county. Over the past several years, student capacity in these schools has been or is currently overcapacity. The Northern High School reconstruction, completed in 2020, appears to have abated overcapacity issues. However, student enrollment at Mt. Harmony Elementary School continues to be overcapacity, while student enrollment at Northern Middle School is overcapacity less frequently. The Calvert County Public Schools is considering adjusting school attendance areas to provide relief for this part of the

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<sup>16</sup> 2023 planimetric data photography, the Calvert County Department of Technology Services, Geographic Information Systems (11/26/24).

county by taking advantage of available capacity in the southern schools. A replacement for Northern Middle School is planned in FY 2025 and is anticipated to address overcapacity issues. Mt. Harmony Elementary will be evaluated pending a feasibility study, in the future.

## Libraries

There is no library in the Town Center. The 2017-2037 Calvert Library Facilities Master Plan (August 8, 2017), prepared by Providence Associates LLC, identified the need to renovate or rebuild the Fairview Library, located on 8120 Southern Maryland Boulevard in Owings. At the time that the library's Facilities Master Plan was prepared, the Board of County Commissioners' vision ranged from all library locations in Town Centers to the Fairview Branch remaining in its current location. Public participation during this master plan update process included a discussion on locating a new Fairview Branch in the Dunkirk Town Center. Also discussed was the possibility of locating a joint-use community center in the Town Center that houses a library and aging and disability services.

Currently northern Calvert County is emerging as an area experiencing increasing percentages of seniors and individuals with disabilities. Dunkirk Town Center is primarily a retail destination with limited community supports. There is a medical office building with an urgent care center and several local provider offices. There are two recreation parks, Dunkirk District Park and Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park (with numerous amenities) nearby to offer recreational opportunities. The Department of Community Resources, Office on Aging Division is conducting an age-friendly community planning process and has plans to conduct a facilities plan/needs assessment. Currently, Dunkirk residents travel to the North Beach Senior Center or the Calvert Pines Senior Center in Prince Frederick for programs and services. Challenges to constructing a joint-use community center with a library and senior services in the Town Center are land and sewer infrastructure constraints. Additionally, due to current budget constraints, Calvert Library anticipates that the Fairview Library will remain in its current location. If the current scenario changes and infrastructure and land constraints are overcome, consideration for a location such as a joint-use community center in the Town Center should be considered.

## Parks and Recreation

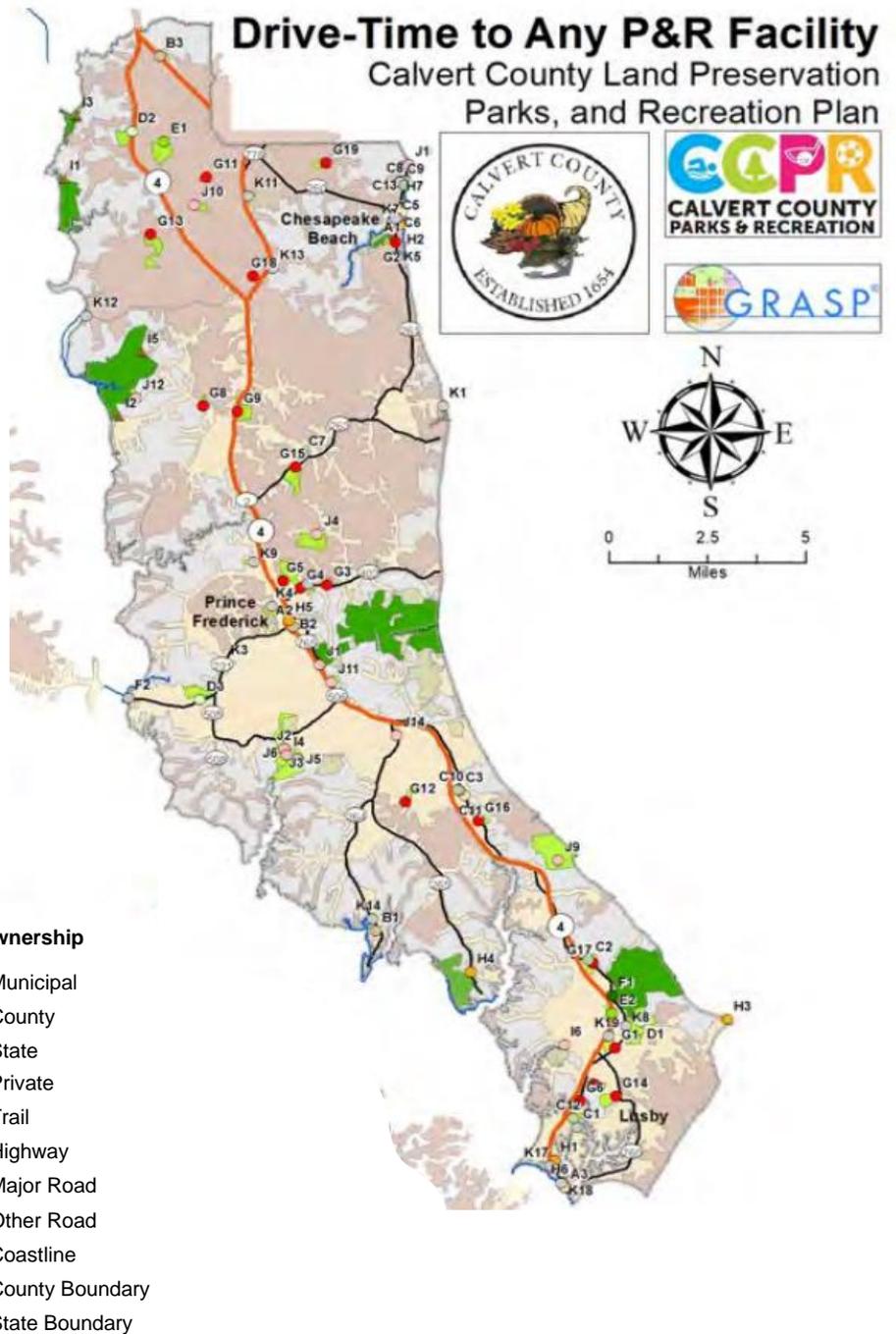
Dunkirk District Park, a regional park, acquired in 1975 with funds from the Maryland Open Space Program, is located in the northern portion of the Town Center. The park's facilities include picnic areas, pavilions, a playground, a dog park, a skate park, walking/jogging opportunities, three exclusive tennis courts, four exclusive pickleball courts, two dual-lines courts, three baseball/softball fields, and a climate-controlled year-round restroom facility. Restroom and skate park replacement, lighting for night play and along pathways, additional parking, stormwater conveyance retrofitting are current planned improvements. Located outside but in proximity to the Town Center is Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park, purchased in 2013 with funds from Calvert County Youth Recreational Opportunities Fund. The park's facilities include a baseball field, a fishing pier, restrooms, hiking trails, picnic areas, walking/jogging opportunities, tot lot playground, disc golf and cross-country skiing. Planned improvements include paved trails, a new maintenance shop, and an overlook pavilion. Funds from Calvert County Youth Recreational Opportunities Fund Improvements are allocated to partially fund improvements at both parks.

The Comprehensive Plan envisions recreation amenities in each Town Center (in bold). Below is a comparison of the vision and what currently exists or is programmed in the capital improvements program for the Dunkirk Town Center.

- A town park or “village green”: Dunkirk District Park is considered a town park that not only serves sports, but has a dog park, multiple playgrounds, and future plans for walking paths.
- An in-town pedestrian and bikeway system that connects residential areas, activity centers, and schools: Sidewalks have been constructed during county and state streetscape projects and development of commercial and residential projects. During the update of the Town Center Master Plan, the county received grant funds to conduct the [Dunkirk and Prince Frederick Bikeways Feasibilities Studies](#), prepared by Mead & Hunt, funded by the [MDOT FY22 Kim Lamphier Bikeway Network Program](#). This study determined the feasibility of creating shared-use paths that would connect important commercial, recreational, and residential destinations within each of the two Town Centers. These improvements could be implemented with a combination of developer contributions, county funding, and grants, although public funds will unlikely be available into the foreseeable future due to current budget constraints and economic trends.
- An outdoor public facility designed primarily for active team sports: Dunkirk District Park is located west of the Town Center and is one of the county’s three district parks. Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park is a new facility opened in March 2022 which includes active and passive park areas for team sports, nature education, paths, and walking trails. Dunkirk District Park has also upgraded the tennis and pickleball facility onsite.
- An indoor community center capable of providing a range of activities for all age groups: Currently, there are plans for a nature center near the Town Center at Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park as well as the repurposing of a farmhouse into an agricultural museum. Both projects are within this master plan for the park facility with funding coming from a combination of county funds and a dedicated state funding source called the Calvert County Youth Recreational Opportunities Fund. This provides annual funding of projects to build out the Master Plan at Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park.

One intent of Town Centers is accessibility to recreational facilities, for which the Dunkirk Town Center is within a 10-to-20-minute drive to several facilities. Driving distances to five types of recreation sites are grouped into three categories: 10 minutes or less, 20 minutes or less, and more than 20 minutes. The map on the following page illustrates driving times to athletic fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, trail sites and water access sites.

- Athletic fields:
  - 0-5 minutes in the Town Center and surrounding area
- Outdoor sports courts:
  - 0-5 minutes
- Indoor facilities:
  - 0-5 minutes or over 15 minutes depending on destination in the Town Center
- Trail sites:
  - 0-5 minutes for the areas along and east of MD 4 due to their proximity to the trails at Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park
  - 15+ minutes from other areas in the Town Center
- Water access and historical/cultural sites:
  - 5 -15 minutes, but in some areas 15+ minutes, depending on the distance to Chesapeake Beach
- Picnic areas:
  - 0-5 minutes throughout the Town Center



Source: [Calvert County's Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan](#), p. 56 ( accessed 3/27/24).

## Public Safety

One goal for Town Centers is to provide public safety service to area residents. Fire, emergency, and policing services are located in the Town Center, satisfying the goal of the 1987 Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan to locate these facilities in the Town Center. These facilities include:

- **Dunkirk Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad** – The Dunkirk Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad is located within the Dunkirk Town Center at 3170 West Ward Road, providing fire/rescue/EMS services for Dunkirk, Owings, and Lower Marlboro, as well as Anne Arundel and Prince George’s counties. In 2020, paramedic ambulances staffed by career EMS employees on a 24-hour/7-day basis was established and an aerial ladder truck was purchased. The county’s Capital Improvement Program has allocated future funding for a command vehicle, an engine, an ambulance, and a rescue vehicle.
- **Sheriff’s Dunkirk District Station** – The Sheriff’s Dunkirk District Station is located at 10500 Southern Maryland Boulevard and was established in 2024, satisfying the 1987 Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan which included a goal to provide policing services in the Town Center and is a direct result of the collaboration and commitment between the Board of County Commissioners and the Calvert County Sheriff’s Office to ensure the continued safety for all residents and visitors in the Town Center and countywide.
- **Medivac** – The county has identified the need to locate a medivac site in the Town Center on the Dunkirk Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad site. While there are no immediate plans to establish a medivac site in the Town Center, landings currently occur on vacant land on the Dunkirk Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad property.

## Goals and Objectives

See Appendix A for goals and objectives.

## Appendix A: Goals and Objectives

### Implementation

This chapter is a compilation of the goals and objectives and the corresponding responsible parties for overseeing goal and objective implementation, or at the very least, are initiated and are progressing towards implementation. In addition, goal and objective implementation are characterized by timeframes or associated actions.

### Timeframe or Associated Actions

**Short-Term Actions** are intended to be accomplished in the three years following adoption of the Town Center Master Plan.

**Mid-Term Actions** are intended to be accomplished in the third to fourth year following adoption of the Town Center Master Plan.

**Long-Term Actions** are intended to be accomplished in the fifth through tenth year following adoption of the Town Center Master Plan.

**Ongoing Actions** are conducted as needed and responds to the changing needs of the residents.

**Concurrent with Development** actions are conducted as development occurs. Staff reviews development proposals and makes recommendations to the Planning Commission for consideration for approval.

The **MDOT Priority Letter** is the county's statement of its priorities for state spending on roads, bridges, bikeways, and transit in the county. It is submitted annually to MDOT upon approval by the Board of County Commissioners.

The **Zoning Regulations Update** is updated after the comprehensive plan is adopted. The **Zoning Regulations Update** requires analysis and development by the Department of Planning & Zoning, followed by public hearings and action by the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners.

The **Adequate Public Facilities (APF)** regulations are part of the Zoning Ordinance Update. In addition to schools and roads, the Board of County Commissioners approved amendments to the APF regulations to include, water and sewer, stormwater management, solid waste, and fire, rescue, and EMS services on November 29, 2022.

### Responsible Agencies

BOCC	BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CA	COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
CCHD	CALVERT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
CCPT	CALVERT COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
CCSO	CALVERT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
CMR	DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS & MEDIA RELATIONS
CR	DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES
CSM	COLLEGE OF SOUTHERN MARYLAND
DNR	MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
EC	ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
ED	DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
F&B	DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE & BUDGET
GS	DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES
HC	HERITAGE COMMITTEE
HCD	HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
OOA	OFFICE ON AGING (DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES)
PC	PLANNING COMMISSION
P&R	DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION
PW	DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
P&Z	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING
TS	DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY SERVICES
SHA	MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

## Tables of Actions, Schedule, and Responsible Agencies

### Land Use Goals and Objectives

**Goal 1: Continue the goal that the Dunkirk Town Center “reflect the best features of the county’s land use development philosophies and create a positive first image.”**

<b>Objective 1: Treat the entire Dunkirk Town Center as an economic and aesthetic whole.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
LU.3.1.1.1 Continue the policy of treating the Dunkirk Town Center as a whole by retaining the single zoning district for the Town Center.	Ongoing	[P&Z]
LU.3.1.1.2 Continue the policy of enforcing an appearance code for new construction, renovation and additions where applicable.	Ongoing	[P&Z]
LU.3.1.1.3 Continue the policy of prohibiting industrial uses that cannot be adequately screened to maintain the attractive image of the community.	Ongoing	[P&Z]
<b>Objective 2: Continue to encourage a “sense of place” with recognizable boundaries and unifying characteristics.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
LU.3.1.2.1 Continue the policy of creating unity through quality design, planned landscaping, planned roads, uniform signage and street lighting and the use of consistent materials for walkways and parking lots.	Ongoing	[P&Z, PW]
LU.3.1.2.2 Update the Dunkirk Town Center zoning regulations to reflect the updated Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan.	Short-Term	[P&Z]
LU.3.1.2.3 Continue to encourage the creation of memorable spaces through architectural elements that complement the scale, building placement and materials of immediate surroundings within the Dunkirk Town Center, while acknowledging the Town Center’s three distinctive architectural styles.	Ongoing	[P&Z]
LU.3.1.2.4 Continue the policy of requiring front elevations of attached stores, offices, and residences to have varying depths. Strip shopping centers with only one depth will not be allowed.	Ongoing	[P&Z]
LU.3.1.2.5 Continue the policy of establishing lighting standards and the guidance that fixtures to light signs or buildings in general need to be hidden from view in architecturally complementary fashion, if attached to the building, or in landscaping.	Ongoing	[P&Z]
LU.3.1.2.6 Continue the policy of limiting the number of freestanding signs.	Ongoing	[P&Z]
LU.3.1.2.7 Continue the policy of limiting building heights to no more than three stories high for a total of 50 feet including the roof.	Ongoing	[P&Z]
LU.3.1.2.8 Redevelop and create a distinguishable gateway incorporating the Dunkirk District Park’s entrance.	Long-Term	[P&Z, P&R]

**Goal 2: Expand the Dunkirk Town Center to include the Dunkirk District Park and the MTA Dunkirk Park and Ride properties.**

<b>Objective 1: Incorporate the public properties adjacent to the Dunkirk Town Center, outlined in the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2019 and amended in 2022.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
LU.3.2.1.1 Rezone the Dunkirk District Park and MTA's Dunkirk Park and Ride properties as Town Center through the formal rezoning process.	Short-Term	[P&Z, PC, BOCC]

**Environment and Natural Resources Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 1: Preserve, protect, and conserve water resources in and near the Dunkirk Town Center.**

<b>Objective 1: Protect perennial streams and their buffers.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
ENR.3.1.1.1 Identify pollution sources and take remedial measures.	Ongoing	[P&Z, MDE, DNR]
ENR.3.1.1.2 Preserve and restore plantings to reduce stormwater runoff.	Ongoing	[P&Z, DNR]

**Goal 2: Assess watershed ecosystem health indicators.**

<b>Objective 1: Track impervious surface and tree canopy coverage to monitor watershed ecosystem indicators.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
ENR.3.2.1.1 Assess tree canopy coverage every five to seven years.	Mid-Term	[P&Z]
ENR.3.2.1.2 Assess impervious surface coverage when data becomes available from the state, every five to seven years.	Mid-Term	[P&Z]
ENR.3.2.1.3 Evaluate current and potential impervious surface coverage to establish a recommended threshold.	Short-term	[P&Z, PC, BOCC]

**Goal 3: Incorporate environmentally sustainable development into Dunkirk Town Center's policies.**

<b>Objective 1: Encourage the use of green infrastructure when developing/redeveloping the Dunkirk Town Center.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
ENR.3.3.1.1 Enhance environmentally sustainable infrastructure using conservation landscape techniques within the Dunkirk Town Center.	Ongoing	[P&Z, EC]
ENR.3.3.1.2 Analyze current tensions between environmental challenges and the Dunkirk Town Center's current infrastructure. Consider solutions including green infrastructure and natural solutions for stormwater management.	Ongoing	[P&Z, EC]

## Heritage Goals and Objectives

### Goal 1: Enhance, while preserving, a walkable and vibrant business district and center of community life.

Objective 1: Preserve and enhance historic resources and architecture that uniquely characterize Dunkirk.	Timeframe or Associated Action	Responsible Parties
HE.3.1.1.1 Maintain the relationship between Smithville Methodist Church and the Historic District Commission.	Ongoing	[P&Z, HDC]
HE.3.1.1.2 Increase outreach to historic property owners to inform them of the incentives available for designated Historic Districts	Ongoing	[P&Z, ED, CMR]

### Goal 2: Identify and Record Previously Unrecorded Archaeological Resources.

Objective 1: Identify and record previously unrecorded archaeological resources.	Timeframe or Associated Action	Responsible Parties
HE.3.2.1.1 Conduct professional review of proposed subdivision and site development plans for potential for previously unrecorded archaeological resources. Inform development applicants when the potential to encounter previously unrecorded archaeological resources is high through the review process. When appropriate, include notation on plats and development plans indicating this potential and the requirement to report the discovery of artifacts to Planning & Zoning so that the finds can be recorded prior to disturbance. Enable the Historic Preservation Planner to monitor ground disturbing activities.	Ongoing	[P&Z, HDC]
HE.3.2.1.2 Review building permit applications, monitor ground disturbing activities, and record historic and archaeological resources prior to loss during construction.	Ongoing	[P&Z]

### Goal 3: Develop heritage resources that preserve and tell the story of Dunkirk and its people.

Objective 1: Identify and record previously unrecorded archaeological resources.	Timeframe or Associated Action	Responsible Parties
HE.3.3.1.1 Identify and develop multi-media means of presenting historic sites/points of interest and structures in the Dunkirk Town Center and nearby vicinity to the public.	Long-Term	[P&Z, HDC, HC, ED, CMR]

## Housing Goals and Objectives

### Goal 1: Continue to support the existing Dunkirk Town Center policy of allowing multi-family attached dwellings only for age-restricted housing.

Objective 1: Locate senior housing near health and other support services.	Timeframe or Associated Action	Responsible Parties
HO.3.1.1.1 Continue to encourage age-restricted (senior or 55+) housing in the Town Center.	Ongoing	[CR, P&Z, BOCC]
HO.3.1.1.2 Identify forces behind housing trends for the purposes of maintaining a healthy, accessible and sustainable housing stock.	Long-Term	[CR, P&Z, BOCC]

## Economic Vitality Goals and Objectives

### Goal 1: Utilize smart growth principles to strengthen economic opportunity and drive business growth in the Dunkirk Town Center.

<b>Objective 1: Locate senior housing near health and other support services.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
EV.3.1.1.1 Maintain an online presence of tools and resources for county businesses and businesses looking to locate in the county.	Ongoing	[ED]
EV.3.1.1.2 Continue promotion of Dunkirk as an option to site selectors and developers.	Ongoing	[ED, CMR]
EV.3.1.1.3 Provide an array of business services that encourage qualified projects to relocate and expand their businesses in Dunkirk.	Ongoing	[ED, P&Z, PW]
EV.3.1.1.4 Streamline the development review process in the Dunkirk Town Center. Maintain a Fast Track Development Plan process for targeted businesses.	Ongoing	[ED, P&Z]
EV.3.1.1.5 Support the development of commercial projects that provide walkable, pedestrian-friendly, and well-connected infrastructure to encourage consumers and visitors to spend more time in the Dunkirk Town Center.	Ongoing	[ED, PW, P&Z]
EV.3.1.1.6 Encourage collaboration between community members, local businesses, and government officials to identify and address community needs and priorities.	Ongoing	[ED, CMR, CR, PS]
<b>Objective 2: Build a sense of community within the Dunkirk Town Center area.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
EV.3.1.2.1 Support opportunities for residents, business owners, and community leaders to connect and communicate regarding Dunkirk Town Center activities through community meetings, social media, and other channels.	Ongoing	[ED, CMR, CR, P&Z]
EV.3.1.2.2 Expand activities at the farmers market and other events located within the Dunkirk Town Center to bring residents together, promote local businesses, and establish a “sense of place” with a welcoming atmosphere.	Mid-Term	[ED, CR, P&R]
EV.3.1.2.3 Increase the visibility and promotion of the unique shops in the Dunkirk Town Center to draw more attention to local businesses, resulting in greater patronage and visibility.	Long-Term	[ED, CMR]
EV.3.1.2.4 Encourage innovative concepts for alternative entertainment and service centers that can be established in the Dunkirk Town Center.	Mid-Term	[ED, P&Z]

## Transportation Goals and Objectives

### Goal 1: Improve traffic and mobility in the Dunkirk Town Center.

<b>Objective 1: Extend the existing alternative loop road network on the east side of MD 4.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
TR.3.1.1.1 Construct Shoppes Way from Dunkirk Way to Apple Way to allow direct access to amenities for local residents.	Long-Term	[BOCC, PW]
TR.3.1.1.2 Extend Gateway Drive to Brickhouse Road.	Long-Term	[BOCC, PW]
TR.3.1.1.3 Provide entry and exit points from the existing park and ride to the future Gateway Drive.	Long-Term	[BOCC, PW]
<b>Objective 2: Address geometric insufficiencies at intersections of concern.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
TR.3.1.2.1 Restrict turning movements from Apple Way to right turn only at the MD 4 intersection.	Long-Term	[PW, SHA]

### Goal 2: Implement bicycle, pedestrian, and streetscape improvements to enhance community connectivity and sustainability.

<b>Objective 1: Expand bicycle and pedestrian networks to enhance accessibility between nearby residential development and the Dunkirk Town Center.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
TR.3.2.1.1 Create a bicycle/pedestrian connection between Dunkirk District Park and adjacent retail amenities by way of Dunkirk Market Place. Install a pedestrian/bicycle gate on the south side of Dunkirk District Park at Ferry Landing Road.	Long-Term	[P&R, PW, P&Z]
TR.3.2.1.2 Provide an alternative transportation route linking Dunkirk District Park and Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park.	Long-Term	[P&R, PW, P&Z]
TR.3.2.1.3 Convert the outer lanes on Town Center Boulevard and Dunkirk Way to a shared-use path.	Long-Term	[PW, P&Z]
TR.3.2.1.4 Placement of a pedestrian crosswalk at the signalized intersection of MD 4/Town Center Boulevard.	Mid-Term	[PW, P&Z]
<b>Objective 2: Implement strategic policy changes to advance sustainability and safety</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
TR.3.2.2.1 Update county road and development standards to ensure that new roadways fully incorporate safe and buffered bicycle facilities or shared-use paths.	Mid-Term	[BOCC, PW]
TR.3.2.2.2 Coordinate with SHA to install sidewalks on the east side of MD 4 in front of existing developed properties. Fill key gaps in the pedestrian network along MD 4 by utilizing MDOT SHA Sidewalk Retrofit programs.	Long-Term	[PW, P&Z]
TR.3.2.2.3 Require new development in the Dunkirk Town Center to connect their frontage sidewalks to the nearest logical termini.	Ongoing	[PW, P&Z]
TR.3.2.2.4 Require electrical vehicle charging stations at new developments and encourage existing commercial entities to provide electrical infrastructure.	Mid-Term	[P&Z, ED]

TR.3.2.2.5 Consider reducing the speed limit within the Town Center.	Mid-Term	[P&Z, SHA, PW, PC, BOCC]
TR.3.2.2.6 Coordinate with MDOT/SHA to place traffic cameras, speed sensors or other real-time data collection tools along MD 4 approaching the northern boundary of the Town Center to monitor vehicle speed.	Mid-Term	[P&Z, SHA, PW, PC, BOCC]
T.R.3.2.2.7 Coordinate with the Calvert County Traffic Safety Council to monitor traffic safety in the Town Center, including traffic accidents caused by speeding.	Ongoing	[P&Z]

### Goal 3: Improve and expand existing transit services.

<b>Objective 1: Increase the frequency of local transit service between Town Centers, including employment areas and health centers.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
TR.3.3.1.1 Identify the level of demand among local employers and workers for which transit buses may be used to transport employees to and from workplaces. Develop and implement routes likely to encourage transit access for employees, patients, and students throughout the county.	Mid-Term	[CR, ED]
TR.3.3.1.2 Evaluate existing routes serving the Dunkirk Town Center. Establish additional routes as necessary to ensure that all employment centers are adequately served.	Mid-Term	[CR, ED]
TR.3.3.1.3 Consider extending transit hours to serve employees within the Dunkirk Town Center and adjacent areas.	Mid-Term	[BOCC, CR]
<b>Objective 2: Expand and improve demand-responsive transit services.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
TR.3.3.2.1 Increase availability of local demand-response public transportation.	Mid-Term	[BOCC, CR]
TR.3.3.2.2 Investigate public transportation-based mobility on-demand services for individuals unable to drive.	Mid-Term	[BOCC, CR]
TR.3.3.2.3 Consider re-establishing an on-demand or subscription-based transit program that utilize es volunteers for older individuals unable to drive.	Long-Term	[BOCC, CR]
TR.3.3.2.4 Consider requesting MTA to implement a new commuter bus route from to federal facilities in northern Prince George's County (New Carrollton, Greenbelt and College Park).	Mid-Term	[BOCC, CR]
TR.3.3.2.5 Encourage MTA to consider establishing and subsidizing subscription-based van pool service to the above-named destinations in the interim prior to new or restructured commuter routes.	Mid-Term	[BOCC, CR]
TR.3.3.2.6 Consider requesting MTA to restructure inefficient/lengthy routes to connect from Dunkirk to Alexandria, Virginia, and the Pentagon.	Mid-Term	[BOCC, CR]

## Water Resources Goals and Objectives

### Goal 1: Protect public health and water quality.

Objective 1: Minimize pollution from wastewater treatment plants and septic systems.	Timeframe or Associated Action	Responsible Parties
WR.3.1.1.1 Consider conducting a wastewater treatment study to analyze the current state of private wastewater systems, options for long-term maintenance of the private systems and/or replacement with a public or public/private partnership system and potential locations and costs for such options.	Mid-Term	[PW, HD, MDE]

### Goal 2: Install or enhance stormwater management systems to reduce pollution in the county streams, Patuxent River, and Chesapeake Bay.

Objective 1: Treat unmanaged impervious surfaces.	Timeframe or Associated Action	Responsible Parties
WR.3.2.1.1 Incentivize removing unused impervious areas, retrofitting micro-scale practices to provide treatment of existing impervious surfaces.	Ongoing	[PW]
Objective 2: Protect Hall Creek and King's Branch.	Timeframe or Associated Action	Responsible Parties
WR.3.2.2.1 Prioritize the protection of Hall Creek, King's Branch, and their tributaries.	Ongoing	[BOCC, PC, P&Z]
WR.3.2.2.2 Assess Hall Creek, King's Branch, and their tributaries for stream erosion. Seek ways to restore the streams.	Long-Term	[PW, P&Z, EC]
WR.3.2.2.3 Work with the Calvert County Environmental Commission for public outreach to reduce impacts to Dunkirk-area waterways.	Ongoing	[P&Z, EC]

### Goal 3: Preserve, protect, and conserve water resources in and near the Dunkirk Town Center.

Objective 1: Protect perennial streams and their buffers.	Timeframe or Associated Action	Responsible Parties
WR.3.3.1.1 Identify pollution sources and take remediating measures.	Ongoing	[P&Z, MDE, DNR]
WR.3.3.1.2 Preserve and restore plantings to reduce stormwater runoff.	Ongoing	[P&Z, DNR]

## Government and Community Facilities Goals and Objectives

### Goal 1: Establish policies and strategies that provide for high-quality, responsive, and cost-effective services to residents, businesses, and organizations in the county.

Objective 1: Provide high-quality, responsive, and cost-effective customer service.	Timeframe or Associated Action	Responsible Parties
GCF.3.1.1.1 Conduct periodical analyses of county government services in the Dunkirk Town Center.	Ongoing	[CA, PW, GS]

**Goal 2: Maintain the high quality of the educational facilities that serve the Dunkirk Town Center area: schools and libraries.**

<b>Objective 1: Continue to support Calvert County Public Schools serving the Dunkirk area.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
GCF.3.2.1.1 Support the Calvert County Public Schools that serve the Dunkirk Town Center through the Capital Improvement Plan.	Ongoing	[BOCC, PC, F&B, P&Z]
<b>Objective 2: Provide a high-quality library facility in the northwestern area of the county that supports public education.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
GCF.3.2.2.1 Evaluate the possibility of relocating the Fairview Library Branch to the Dunkirk Town Center Include in the evaluation the options of including a joint-use community center and/or senior center.	Ongoing	[CR, P&R]

**Goal 3: Provide access to a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities in the Dunkirk Town Center.**

<b>Objective 1: Increase the amount of land area dedicated to recreation and natural resources.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
GCF.3.3.1.1 As the county’s population grows, the inventory of parks and recreation assets and programs, as well as resources of the Department of Parks & Recreation should increase in a corresponding manner to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality programs, facility maintenance and infrastructure management.	Ongoing	[P&R, P&Z]
GCF.3.3.1.2 Continue to target the development of any new indoor and outdoor sports fields or courts, and/or other active recreation components in or near the Dunkirk Town Center.	Long-Term	[P&R, P&Z, ED]
GCF.3.3.1.3 Plan for the creation and/or expansion of centrally located parks and green spaces in the Dunkirk Town Center.	Ongoing	[P&R, P&Z]
GCF.3.3.1.4 Ensure that the Dunkirk District Park and the Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park are easily accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists.	Long-Term	[P&R, P&Z]
<b>Objective 2: Meet present and future needs of the community as it relates to recreation and natural resources.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
GCF.3.3.2.1 Based on the Calvert County Land Preservation, Parks, & Recreation Plan, adjust variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities through trends analysis and updates to individual Park Master Plans.	Ongoing	[P&R]
GCF.3.3.2.2 Produce an optimum mix of programming that provides for all recreation needs of the community creating lifelong participants.	Ongoing	[P&R]
GCF.3.3.2.3 Conduct public outreach to gauge interest, satisfaction, input, and ideas on recreation and natural resources programs, amenities, and services.	Mid-Term	[P&R, CMR]
GCF.3.3.2.4 Evaluate accessibility for participants of all ability levels to recreation and natural resources program opportunities and develop plans for accommodation.	Mid-Term	[P&R, CR]

GCF.3.3.2.5 Continue to implement the Dunkirk District Park Master Plan as funding becomes available.	Ongoing	[P&R]
GCF.3.3.2.6 Continue to implement the Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park Master Plan as funding becomes available.	Ongoing	[P&R]

**Goal 4: Support and/or encourage adequate healthcare facilities and programs in Dunkirk.**

<b>Objective 1: Support the health and well-being of Dunkirk area residents.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
GCF.3.4.1.1 Work with CalvertHealth to address the priority health topic of exercise, nutrition, and weight.	Ongoing	[CR/OAA, CCHD]
GCF.3.4.1.2 Support the Calvert County Health Department’s efforts to provide services county-wide, including mobile outreach services to those who may have challenges traveling to the Health Department.	Ongoing	[BOCC, CR, CCHD]
GCF.3.4.1.3 Support the Calvert County Department of Community Resources, Transportation Division’s efforts to provide county-wide transit services to health-related appointments for those individuals who do not have access to an automobile, are unable to drive, or are unable to use the county’s standard bus service.	Ongoing	[BOCC, CR, CCHD]

**Goal 5: Support public safety programs, strategies, and facilities development.**

<b>Objective 1: Support the health and well-being of Dunkirk area residents.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
GCF.3.5.1.1 Explore a location for a medivac site.	Long-Term	[PS]

**Goal 6: Maintain well-managed and effective solid waste and recyclable materials management systems in the Dunkirk area.**

<b>Objective 1: Ensure adequate facilities and infrastructure to accommodate current and future waste and recyclables.</b>	<b>Timeframe or Associated Action</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
GCF.3.6.1.1 Continue to provide trash and recyclable services at the Mt. Hope Convenience Center.	Ongoing	[PW]

## Appendix B: Public Partnerships, Outreach and Input

### Phase 1: Identify Issues

**April 2021:** A postcard was mailed to all addresses in the Dunkirk ZIP code (approximately 3,000) and two videos on the origins of Dunkirk were posted on the Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan and Zoning Update's webpage and the Calvert Broadcast YouTube channel.

**May 11, 2021:** The Department of Planning & Zoning met with Dunkirk-area community groups and county departments to solicit outreach assistance and input on the Town Center's vision.

**May 19, 2021:** The Department of Planning & Zoning informed the Planning Commission of the kick-off meeting on June 2, 2021.

**June 2, 2021:** The Department of Planning & Zoning held a kick-off meeting and administered a survey for feedback on key issues and a survey for the public to submit photos on the visual quality of the Town Center: buildings, places, landscapes, streetscapes, etc.

**July 15, 2021:** A Survey Results/Focus Area Workshop was held. Survey results were presented, and participants were encouraged to discuss the survey results.

**Aug. 25, 2021:** The Planning Commission acknowledged three focus areas: land use (how to manage future growth); roads, traffic, and public walkways; and economic vitality (improved shopping and dining options).

**Nov. 2021:** Two videos on the origins of Dunkirk were posted to the county's Facebook page, [Dunkirk Origins 1](#) and [Dunkirk Origins 2](#).

**Dec. 6, 2021:** The Department of Planning & Zoning held a public information meeting on:

- Economic Vitality: How do businesses make location decisions?
- Land Use/Water Resources: Septic Systems: How they work and how to care for them?
- Land Use/Water Resources: What is the status of Dunkirk Town Center's environmental health?
- Transportation: What is Calvert County doing to improve walking and bicycling in the Dunkirk Town Center and vicinity?

**Jan. 11, 2022:** The Dunkirk and Prince Frederick Bikeways Feasibility Studies were presented at a public meeting.

**Jan. 26, 2022:** Two information videos were posted on the county's Facebook page, the [Septic School Video](#), featuring Dr. Andrew Lazur, a University of Maryland water quality specialist, and the [Dunkirk Outdoor Recreation Amenities](#).

**March 16, 2022:** The Planning Commission directed staff to further explore transportation concerns and develop possible solutions with the assistance of a Town Center consultant. The Planning Commission also directed staff to proceed with the second phase of the Town Center Master Plan update.

**June 2022:** Based on public input on the draft Prince Frederick Town Center Master Plan, occurring simultaneously with the Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan update, the Board of County Commissioners held two workshops to consider Town Center expansion areas including the Dunkirk Town Center expansion area, as recommended in the 2019-approved Calvert County Comprehensive Plan.

**Nov. 29, 2022:** The Board of County Commissioners approved amending the 2019 Calvert County Comprehensive Plan, maintaining the proposed Dunkirk Town Center expansion area.

## Phase 2: Develop the Plan

**April 6, 2023:** County staff and other government agencies prepared the draft updated Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan. Additionally, the departments of Planning & Zoning and Public Works and SHA staff further explored the transportation concerns, also considering the findings in the Dunkirk and Prince Frederick Bikeways Feasibility Studies.

**July 19, 2023:** The Department of Planning & Zoning presented the draft chapters 1 -10 of the Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan to the Planning Commission and sought feedback.

**Sept. 9, 2023:** The Department of Planning & Zoning presented a timeline for completing the draft Town Center Master Plan to the Planning Commission. Several staffing transitions delayed the draft plan's progress. Due to this delay, the Planning Commission directed staff to hold a public informational meeting to update the public on delays and the proposed timeline for completion.

**Nov. 2, 2023:** A public informational meeting was held to present the draft Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan to the public and to report on the proposed timeline for adoption.

**Nov. 15, 2023:** The Department of Planning & Zoning briefed the Planning Commission on the informational meeting.

**Dec. 18, 2023:** The process of updating the draft Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan was placed on hold to process an amendment to the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan that would expand the Dunkirk Town Center boundary. The amendment was processed through March 2023 and then placed on hold per direction from the Planning Commission until findings from the state became available on the proposed use in the expansion area.

**Jan. 15, 2025:** The Department of Planning & Zoning presented the new format of The Master Plan of Town Centers to the Planning Commission, which included Chapter 1: Town Centers, applicable to all Town Centers and subsequent chapter, applicable to each Town Center.

**March 10, 2025:** Staff commenced working on the draft Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan, reformatting it to align with the format of The Master Plan of Town Centers.

**May 21, 2025:** The Department of Planning & Zoning presented the draft Chapter 3: Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan of The Master Plan of Town Centers to the Planning Commission for review.

### **Phase 3: Adopt the Plan**

**June 18, 2025:** The Planning Commission directed staff to distribute the draft Chapter 3: Dunkirk Town Center Master Plan of The Master Plan of Town Centers to departments, agencies and the public for the 60-day comment period, required by the Title 3 of the Land use Article of the Annotated Code.

**June 19, 2025:** Staff distributed the draft chapters to departments, agencies and the public.

**Aug. 19, 2025:** The 60-day comment period ended.

**Nov. 19, 2025:** The Department of Planning & Zoning presented the public comments to the Planning Commission.

**Dec. 17, 2025:** The Department of Planning & Zoning solicited feedback and sought guidance to advertise for a public hearing.

**Jan. 21, 2026:** The Department of Planning & Zoning informed the Planning Commission that the public hearing was moved from Jan. 21, 2026, to Feb. 18, 2026, to meet legal notice requirements.

**Feb. 18, 2026:** The Planning Commission held a public hearing.