

Greater Riverdale Sustainable Community Application



Prince George's County
February 5, 2015

I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Sustainable Community: Greater Riverdale

Name of Applicant: Prince George's County

Applicant's Federal Identification Number: 52-6000998

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II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

A. Proposed Sustainable Community Area(s):

(1) Name of proposed Sustainable Community Area(s): Greater Riverdale

(2) Provide a description of SC area boundaries: The proposed Sustainable Community boundary encompasses the Town of Riverdale Park and includes some unincorporated areas of Prince George's County. It is comprised of properties east of Kenilworth Avenue (MD 201) to just north of the Bladensburg municipal boundary. It traverses north of Varnum Street to Good Luck Road and south of Good Luck Road from Kenilworth Avenue to Auburn Street; west of Auburn Street from Good Luck Road to First Street; and west of the Baltimore Washington Parkway from First Street to Bladensburg and ends at the Beacon Heights Community on the east.

(3) Approximate number of acres within the SC area: The Greater Riverdale Sustainable Community boundary includes 2,038 ± acres.

(4) Existing federal, state or local designations: The SC area includes a State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District and is located within a Priority Funding Area.

(5) Prior Revitalization Investments & Smart Growth:

(a) List and describe any significant State and local smart growth or revitalization related program investments. What impact have these investments made in the community?

Community Development Block Grants:

In 2013, Riverdale Park received \$75,000.00 for road and sidewalk improvements on Riverdale Road. The improvements sidewalks provide better walking and driving conditions for residents and commuters in the area.

In 2013, Riverdale Park received \$150,000.00 for road resurfacing on Riverdale Road. The resurfacing of the road improved driving conditions for commuters and residents in the area.

In 2013, Riverdale Park received \$100,000.00 for road resurfacing on Jefferson Street. The resurfacing of the road improved driving conditions for commuters and residents in the area.

Community Legacy Grants:

In 2014, Riverdale Park received \$150,000.00 for improvements on Queensbury Road. The reconfiguration of Queensbury Road provided additional parking to support the Town Hall expansion as part of the Youth and Community Center.

In 2013, Riverdale Park received \$195,000.00 to construct playground at Riverdale Park Community Park from the Community Parks and Playgrounds Program. When constructed, the playground will serve the students at Riverdale Elementary School and the community.

In 2013, Riverdale Park received \$35,000.00 for the Riverdale Park Connector (Us Route 1 to Kenilworth Avenue) through the Maryland Bikeways program. The funds will be used for signage and markings for shared bike lanes at designated roads.

The Prince George's County, the Department of Parks and Recreation provide comprehensive park and recreation programs, facilities, and services. Parkland acquisition and recreational facility development is programmed through a six year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The following lists some of the capital improvement projects within the SC area:

Anacostia SVP- Riverdale Road Site - Funds Received: \$400,000.00

This project is located within the Anacostia Stream Valley Park adjacent to the Northeast Branch trail and the Riverdale Elementary School in the Town of Riverdale Park. The project is a joint venture with the Town of Riverdale Park and Prince George's County Public Schools. The Town has received a \$200,000 Community Park and Playground Grant for construction of a playground. Other work includes a new parking lot and pre-school play area on school property. M-NCPPC funding is for a synthetic futsal court, ½ basketball court, sidewalk games, a trail, and other associated improvements to be located on park property. In FY14, \$400,000 of bond funding from Public facility Renovation (EC001101) was transferred to this project to provide funding for park improvements. The improvements will support the recreational needs of the growing number of young children in the area, including 700 students at Riverdale Elementary.

Anacostia Tributary Trail Signage - Funds Received: \$100,000

Funding will provide planning and design of a new wayfinding signage system along +26 miles of the Anacostia Tributary Trail System. The plan will include design and specifications of "You are Here", directional, and identification signage. The plan will include graphics/text and locations for all signs. The signs will be designed and planned for trailheads, trail access points, intersections, and other locations needed for navigation along the trail system. The Maryland Department of Transportation is providing matching funds up to \$50,000 through the Maryland Bikeways Program. In FY14, \$50,000 was transferred to this project from the Trail Development Fund (EC001062) to provide a match for the Grant. The new signage will provide more information for trail users to find their way to neighborhoods; commercial areas; transit stations; visitor services; and cultural, historical and recreational sites.

The above mentioned projects and programs have had and will continue to have positive impacts on Sustainable Community area by respond to changing needs within the communities and through the strengthening of neighborhoods, promoting public safety, and encouraging pedestrian-oriented communities.

(b) Describe any existing barriers to Smart Growth that may affect your jurisdiction or the proposed SC area.

The aging housing stock, poor connectivity and lack of quality retail are issues affecting sustainability in the SC Area. The majority of the residential properties in the SC Area are older detached and semi-detached single-family houses, with some multifamily units built in the late 1940's and mid 1960's.

Connectivity is another critical element for achieving sustainability. There is a need for improved pedestrian access, connectivity within neighborhoods, and streetscape improvements in the SC area. Poor connectivity and limited modes of transport prevent an ease of travel for all users. There are roads in the SC area without appropriate sidewalks and limited access for pedestrians. The major roads such as East West Highway/Riverdale Road, Baltimore Avenue (US Route 1) and Kenilworth Avenue (MD 201) have high volumes of traffic that are unsafe for pedestrians to navigate.

The communities also have strip shopping centers with limited choices along Kenilworth Avenue (MD 201), Baltimore Avenue (US Route 1) East West Highway/Riverdale Road. Some of the shopping centers have experienced economic distress that may benefit from revitalization efforts.

B. Community Conditions: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses in the proposed Area's existing built environment.

Strengths:

- The majority of the housing stock in the SC area is less expensive than the surrounding areas, which makes the area very attractive for first time home buyers.
- Foreclosures have decreased dramatically during the last year.
- The area is in close proximity to major roadways such as Baltimore Washington Parkway, Annapolis Road (450) and routes 201 and 410, and is centrally located to easily connect to DC in the east and other areas of the county.
- The community is also accessible to public transportation systems including Prince George's County's The Bus and Metro bus lines, the College Park Metro station, and the proposed Purple Line Stations.
- Parks owned by M-NCPPC and municipal open spaces provide area residents with a number of gathering places for recreational activities and social events.
- Proximity to government agencies such as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, as well as the University of Maryland College Park will make the area more attractive to potential residents and business owners.

- Riverdale Historic District is a centrally located district with housing dating from the turn of the century, and it is centered around the Riversdale mansion, a National Historic Landmark.
- Due to the proposed Purple Line stations, there is potential for Transit- Oriented Development (TOD) in the future.

Weaknesses:

- A majority of the housing stock in the area are multi-family units that are aging and need better maintenance. These properties are also dealing with issues of overcrowding, due to the lack of affordability.
- Residential neighborhoods suffer from a lack of diversity in the housing stock; there is a need for more affordable single family homes for purchase.
- The area does not accommodate pedestrians, as it lacks direct connectivity from the residential areas to the commercial centers within the community; it is a difficult and dangerous environment for pedestrians.
- Although there are several bus routes in the area, many of the bus stops are not sited in convenient locations; and the bus routes do not connect well to the metro stations, especially to University of Maryland College Park.
- The bike and trail options are many, but they lack connections to the major highways and metro stations; they need to be better integrated into the existing transportation system.
- The community is faced with an aging infrastructure; there are issues with flooding and maintenance of the street network.
- Students have great difficulty commuting to school due to the lack of school buses, and the county buses are not considered safe enough for the children to use. Crossing the major highways which separate them from their neighborhood schools and their homes is difficult and dangerous.
- There are housing issues with the senior population; lack of affordability and lack of choice, and there are no public housing units for seniors in the area.

(2) Describe the Area's land use/zoning make-up (residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use). Is the current land use or zoning conducive to revitalization investment?

The existing land uses in the SC area primarily consist of single family detached residential (R-55) and neighborhoods. There are smaller areas of multifamily medium density (R-18) residential uses scattered throughout the area as well. The commercial uses which consist primarily of shopping centers (C-S-C), offices (C-O) and miscellaneous (C-M) retail uses are located primarily along Kenilworth Avenue (MD 201) and to a lesser extent, along East West Highway (MD 410).

The area also includes transit-oriented development (TOD) uses at the College Park Metro and proposed Purple Line stations (M Square and Riverdale Park). Zoning at M-Square is Mixed-Use Transportation (M-X-T) on the northern part, and I-3, Planned Industrial Employment Park on the southern portion. It also has a Transit District Overlay Zone (TDOZ), designating land that is planned for Transit-Oriented Development. The zoning surrounding the proposed Riverdale Park station

includes residential and commercial uses such as Multifamily High- Density (R-10), One-Family Semidetached (R-35), Commercial Shopping Center (C-S-C) and General Commercial(C-2), among others.

An extensive amount of land designated as Reserved Open Space (R-O-S) for recreational uses are located along the Anacostia River Watershed Park on the west side of the SC area. The mix of land uses and zoning in the SC area is quite conducive to revitalization investment, as it has lots of recreation areas, and land reserved for TOD at the proposed Purple Line stations.

(3) Describe strengths and weaknesses in basic features of community quality-of-life.

Strengths:

- The SC area is culturally diverse with 40% of residents born outside of the U.S.
- The crime rate in the area is has been lowered by Transforming Neighborhood Initiative efforts.
- Two community gardens in the area, Parkview Gardens and Sheridan Street Community Garden, provide a social environment for residents and help increase availability of low cost produce.
- Templeton Elementary School has participated in Safe Routes to School Program and has improved its sidewalks.
- The Riverdale Park farmers' market is very well-attended and participates in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), which provides supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income persons found to be at nutritional risk.
- The NE Branch Anacostia trail is a wonderful amenity for the community. The bike and pedestrian trails are excellent. Schools take students to fish, hike and canoe along the water, using it as an educational and recreational tool.
- There is a new middle school planned for the near future. The site is yet to be determined.

Weaknesses:

- There are not many quality eating establishments in the SC area, and none are accessible by foot.
- 80% of William Wirt Middle School students are on free or reduced lunches.
- Many area sidewalks and streets are in need of repairs and better pedestrian crosswalks for pedestrian safety.
- A distressed shopping center, Riverdale Plaza is in need of extensive repairs and renovations. Some of the day laborers and panhandlers intimidate shoppers.
- The municipal code enforcement divisions of the municipalities are not as active as they could be in reducing violations and conditions of blight in the residential and commercial areas.
- The many parks in the community need a stronger patrol presence to reduce crime and make residents more comfortable using them.

C. Natural Resources and Environmental Impact: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the community's "natural environment" in or near the Sustainable Community Area.

Strengths:

- The community's environmental strengths reside in its central location which consists of both the presence of a 100 year flood plain and its proximity to abundant natural resources. These resources include the Northeast Branch Anacostia River to the West, Briers Mill sub watershed tributary and Green Belt National Park to the North.
- Located within the Northeast Branch watershed, the community benefits geopolitically from several forward looking action plans including the "Northeast Branch Subwatershed Action Plan, 2008" the "Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan, 2005" and the "Anacostia Watershed Restoration Committee (AWRC)."
- The community is served by many neighborhood parks which include Templeton Knolls Park, Varnum Park, Browning's Grove Neighborhood Park, East Pines Recreation Area, Fletchers Field Park, and Bladensburg Community Center Park.
- Additionally, the community has access to the Northeast Branch River which provides walking and bicycle trails. These trails go north to Berwyn ending at Lake Artemesia and are continuing to grow to the South. Just to the North lies the heavily forested National Greenbelt Park which offers hiking and outdoor recreation opportunities all year round.
- The natural environment running throughout the community and along its streets is made up of many mature trees. A largely undeveloped swath of forest runs north to south alongside the Baltimore-Washington Parkway and contributes significantly to the areas mature tree canopy.
- The current tree canopy covers between 36-40 percent, slightly below the threshold of 45 percent, which is commonly associated with higher air quality and stream health in the Mid-Atlantic region.
- There are three streams running east to west that feed the Northeast Branch river and transverse the community. In 2003, the Northwest Branch/Sligo Creek Fish Passage Restoration project was completed restoring the presence of multiple blockages in the Northwest Branch and Sligo Creek that either precluded or greatly restricted movement of both resident and migratory fishes.

Weaknesses:

- The community's current environmental conditions include periodic flash flooding and poor air and water quality. An aging and leaking sewer system and a high percentage of impervious surfaces from roads and rapid suburbanization pollute the area's local water systems and further hostile pedestrian situations.

- This excessive amount of pavement greatly contributes to the uncontrolled release of untreated storm water runoff which in turn causes flash floods, pollution, erosion, and sedimentation, all to the detriment of local ecosystems and wildlife.
- Water quality of major watersheds from 1999-2003 was rated as very poor to poor on the “Countywide Green Infrastructure Functional Master Plan 2005.”
- Trash continues to be a problem in the streams running throughout the community. Principal trash items include plastic bags, food wrappers, and styrofoam. Trashes entering the Northeast Branch from these streams originate from both commercial and industrial areas as well as higher density residential areas.
- These streams are inadequately maintained and collect trash along its banks. Trash cans in the area would be helpful along with additional education highlighting the benefits of environmentalism.
- Air quality is another issue that faces the community. Heavy traffic and lack of tree canopy around commercial areas is insufficient and leaves much room for improvement. Though the community does have a decent population of mature trees, more tree planting are needed to create fuller tree lined streets
- The sidewalks and trails are neither lighted nor integrated into the rest of the community’s residential areas. Overall trail and sidewalk connectivity, along with park access can be easily improved upon. The current conditions do not encourage or allow safe pedestrian mobility throughout the community.

(2) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of any current efforts to reduce the community’s “carbon footprint” or impact on the environment.

Strengths:

- Reductions of the community’s carbon footprint exist mainly in its increased focus on pedestrian orientation, current recycling programs, and high density town center developments.
- The *Community forklift organization* operates in the area and provides recycled and salvaged building materials to the community at up to 75% below retail values.
- The community is composed of multifamily housing and higher density developments which reduce the community’s carbon footprint in many ways including reducing energy consumption and traffic congestion.
- The Riverdale farmers market is located nearby. This local open air market sells local products and increases fresh healthy food availabilities to its residents.
- The Sheraton Street Community Garden has been identified by the community as a specific example of re-greening the built environment and a source of community pride.
- Community gardens are expanding. There is greater participation from residents now, it started with outsiders and now it is residents, especially Parkview Gardens. Templeton turned their tennis courts into a garden.
- The Rain Garden at the Edmonston/Kenilworth school and in other locations are gaining popularity.

- The local nonprofit organization S.E.E.D (Sowing Empowerment & Economic Development) provides food, second hand clothing, education, and training while promoting self-sufficiency and empowerment directly to low income families within the community.
- The Riverdale Town Center Development is underway. The development will provide retail and office space in a town center format adjacent to the Riverdale MARC station.
- Public transportation options are available, numerous, and with high ridership. Reducing traffic and carbon emissions, the proposed “Purple Line” Metro rail will contribute to reducing carbon emissions by decreasing individual automobile traffic.

Weaknesses:

- Current major weaknesses regarding the reduction of the community’s footprint include excessive auto dependency, low pedestrian infrastructure, underutilized recycling programs, and continued suburban oriented development.
- Commercial establishments do not recycle as much as their residential counterparts.
- Driveways are continuing to enlarge, contributing to uncontrolled storm water runoff.
- Lack of environmental education/awareness/sensitivity-This could be improved if outreach was done in multiple languages, primarily Spanish.
- Continued suburban oriented development contributes to increased carbon emissions, energy consumption, and decreases walkability.
- Traffic congestion continues to worsen creating more pollution and worsening already hostile pedestrian situations.

(3) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the jurisdiction’s current stormwater management practices and how these may affect the proposed SC area.

Strengths:

- The strengths of the areas stormwater practices reside in the recently updated stormwater regulations passed by the State Assembly in 2010. Past plans (Sub-Watershed Action Plan and Green Infrastructure Plan) also address the problem of increasing stormwater runoff and creates and targets realistic future goals to reduce the pollution levels of our areas waterways.
- The enhanced Anacostia River levee system was recently completed and raised up to 3 feet in areas, helping to prevent flooding within the Northeast Branch watershed. These levees were brought to current safety criteria determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
- Current storm water management strategies involve the reestablishment of natural drainage through stream stabilization. Stream restoration including clearing, cleaning and maintenance is supported by the community and the *Greenup Cleanup Program*. Additionally, rain gardens, community gardens, and bio retention areas are beginning to be more frequently used as a means to reduce stormwater runoff.

- Prince George’s County rain check program promotes solutions to stormwater runoff, giving rebates and providing financial incentives to those who reduce and manage their storm water runoff.
- Cisterns, green roofs, pavement removal, rain barrels and gardens are all solutions supported by the “Rain Check Rebate” program.

Weaknesses:

- Most of the land within the boundary was developed well before the adoption of current environmental requirements, including recent storm water management requirements. In the past streams were removed and even filled in to make room for new sprawling developments.
- These irresponsible practices alongside rapid suburbanization has created an environment in which large quantities of polluted storm water runoff is carried directly to the Northeast branch river and its stream tributaries from roads, parking lots and sprawling housing developments.
- With stream and groundwater quality rated as “very poor” storm water regulations are needed to be implemented quickly. Currently, the area is covered by nearly 37% impervious materials. A percentage which is a very high compared to the rest of Prince Georges County.

D. Economic Conditions and Access to Opportunity: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the SC area’s current economic strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths:

- The proposed Purple Line stations in the SC area will create growth opportunities for existing businesses, catalyze new development, and expand access to employment opportunities.
- The SC area has a strong transportation network with access to the Capital Beltway and the Baltimore Washington Parkway. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and The Bus operate transit routes along East-West Hwy and Rt. 1 that provide connections to Metro and MARC trains.
- Rt. 1 and Kenilworth Ave are major commercial corridors and commuter routes connecting Prince George’s to Washington, DC and surrounding counties. Enterprise Zones are designated along these roadways that provide tax credits for businesses located in the zones in return for job creation and investments.
- A mixed-used town center is under construction along Rt. 1. The development will be anchored by a Whole Foods and contain multifamily housing, a hotel, and retail/office space.
- The University of Maryland’s Research Park, M Square, provides flexible space for science and technology companies including NOAA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
- The University of Maryland’s Center for Educational Partnership (CEP) is a unique university-community partnership that offers academics, parenting support, adult education, and recreational and cultural programs for the greater Riverdale community.

- Gapbusters, one of CEP's six organizations, provides workforce development through workshops that teach youth and young adults resume-building, dressing for success, effective interview skills, writing follow-up and thank you letters. It also provides ESOL and GED preparation class.
- CASA de Maryland is active in the SC area given the large Hispanic population. It provides vocational training, technical assistance to start small businesses, financial literacy programs, citizenship preparation, Spanish literacy, computer classes, and ESOL.
- CASA was awarded an EARN Maryland 2014 Implementation Grant for a Purple Line Skills Training Partnership. The grant will provide business management, accounting, bookkeeping, and marketing training to the minority-owned businesses along the proposed Purple Line.
- Prince George's Community College established workforce development training programs for the construction and operation of the Purple Line and was selected as a Preferred Training Partner by MTA's Economic Empowerment Program.
- The Riverdale Business Association focuses on the redevelopment of the Rt. 1 corridor, Town Center, and businesses on Kenilworth Avenue.

Weaknesses:

- Day laborers loiter at Riverdale Plaza Shopping Center, which often creates parking and traffic problems and have led to an increased fear of crime among community members.
- Residents commute outside of the SC area for employment because it offers low-paying, service-oriented jobs. This is especially problematic for the 16-24 age cohort and those without access to transportation.
- Sidewalk infrastructure (excluding Riverdale Park) is disjointed and transit services lack amenities. These deficiencies are especially difficult for the 16% of SC households that do not have access to cars.
- East of Rt. 1, the majority of the SC area is zoned residential except along Kenilworth Avenue which contains Commercial Shopping Center zoning and limited Commercial Office zoning. The main commercial property, Riverdale Plaza Shopping Center is an older strip shopping center containing low-end retail and fast-food restaurants and is representative of most of the commercial development in the SC area.
- Office space rent along Kenilworth Ave and East West Hwy averages \$16-\$24 per sq. ft. compared to \$32-\$36 at M Square. Approximately 69% of the office space in the SC area was built between 1950 -1990.
- Dated office and commercial space is a contributing factor to community issues such as: lack of national chain retailers, underutilized commercial space, and integrated development. Low rent for older office space is probably attributed to the SC area's healthy neighborhood retail vacancy rate which is current 1%.

(2) Describe the jurisdiction's housing market and access to affordable workforce housing. What are the trends in residential construction (rental and homeownership), homeownership rate, foreclosure rate and, property values?

There are 6,658 housing units in the SC area, of which approximately 92% are occupied. Of the 6,110 occupied housing units in the SC area, 52% are owner occupied and 48% are renter occupied. The 2015 estimated median value of owner-occupied homes in the SC area is \$250,430, which is approximately 11% lower than the County median (\$282,164).

Vacancy rates for multi-family rentals are currently very low at 3.4% (2014) indicating a high demand for multi-family rentals. Of the total 6,658 housing units in the SC area 56% are single-family detached, 38% are multifamily, 5% are townhomes, and 1% are duplexes. Nearly one-third (31%) of the housing units were built before 1950 and only 5% after 2000. The majority of the housing was built in the 50's, 60's and 70's with 1959 representing the median year structures were built.

Affordable housing is defined by HUD as housing in which the occupants pay no more than 30 percent of their income for gross housing costs, including utilities. In the SC area, multi-family rentals range from \$963 for a one-bedroom apartment to \$1,423 for a three-bedroom apartment. The median home sale price in the SC area is \$208,000; given a 30 year fixed mortgage rate of 5% with a 20% down payment, monthly payments would be approximately \$1,126 (including principal, interest, taxes, and insurance). Thus, a household must earn at least \$45,040 to afford the median home in the SC area.

The median household income of the SC area is \$56,147 which should equate to no more than \$1,404 in monthly housing expenses. Households earning at least 80% of the median household income (\$44,917.60) would likely find affordable housing given a monthly housing allowance of \$1,122.94. However, more than a quarter (28.45%) of the SC households earn less than \$35,000 which equates to a monthly housing allowance of \$875 and thus renting or purchasing housing is considered unaffordable.

Prince George's County in partnership with the State of Maryland created the MMP TriplePlay Initiative to help with purchasing a home in Prince George's County by providing down payment assistance, discounted interest rates, and tax credits for eligible households. The County also provides Section 8 vouchers through HUD for rental assistance.

Between November 2013 and September 2014 foreclosures and real estate owned (REO) sales accounted for 34% of single-family home sales and 27% of townhome sales in the SC area. Prior to the recession, foreclosures and REO sales averaged only 3% - 4% of home sales. Median regular sale prices for single-family homes during this period were \$208,000 compared to \$171,750 for REO sales. Median regular townhomes sales were \$125,000 compared to \$155,000 for REO sales.

(3) Describe the SC area's demographic trends (with respect to age, race, household size, household income, educational attainment, or other relevant factors).

The 2010 Census reported 21,934 people living in the SC area. Between 2000 and 2010, this area grew 6.61%, slightly less than the County as a whole (7.72%). Whereas in the next decade, the County's growth is projected to remain constant at 4.50% (2010-2015) and 4.49% (2015-2020), the SC area's growth is expected to increase from 3.19% (2010-2015) to 3.70% (2015-2020).

The 2015 estimated racial composition of the SC area is somewhat evenly split between white alone (27%), black or African American alone (28%) and some other race alone (37%). This area reflects a greater racial variation than the County's racial composition of 19% white alone, 63% black or African American alone, and 9% some other race alone. Additionally, a majority (58%) of the SC area identifies themselves as Hispanic or Latino as compared to 17% for the County.

Also different from the County, the SC area contains more men (53%) than women (47%). However, similar to the County the SC area's largest age cohort is between 25-34 years and represents nearly a fifth of the population as compared to only 15% for the County. The SC area has far fewer seniors than countywide, with only 7% reported 65 years or older as compared to 12% for the County. The median age is much younger at 31.6 compared to the County's median age 36.3.

Between 2000 and 2010, the percentage of households decreased in the SC area by 5% although the population grew. This can be attributed to the SC's area high percentages of households with five, six, and seven people living together. Thirty percent of households in the SC area contain 5-persons or more living together compared to only 15% for the County. The average household size in the SC area is 3.68 compared to 2.79 in the County. In the SC area, 20% of the population speaks Spanish at home compared to 12% countywide.

The 2015 estimated median household income for the SC area is \$56,147, which is almost a quarter less than the County's median household income of \$73,192. The median household income for Black or African American households is 15% lower (\$47,862) than the household median income for the SC area. The SC area has a larger percentage of its families living below the poverty line (12%) than the County (7%). The SC area has a slightly higher unemployment rate of 9.53% than the County at 7.02%; the Federal Reserve indicates that a normal unemployment rate is between 5%-6%. A third of the occupations reported by residents of the SC area are classified blue collar as compared to 17% countywide.

Building grounds maintenance and construction are the top two occupations of SC residents representing 12.5% and 19% and double the countywide percentages of 5.47% and 6.05 respectively. More than a third (38.7%) of the SC population did not complete high school compared to only 14% for the County. Further, 72% of the Hispanic population in the SC area does not possess a high school diploma.

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS AND PROJECTS

A. Organizational Structure:

Describe the applicant's organizational structure. Specifically, which organizations are members in the Sustainable Communities Workgroup and who are the respective staff? Who are the leaders, and how will the Workgroup advisor or staff manage the implementation of the SC area Plan?

The Prince George's County Planning Department, and its respective staff in the Community Planning Division assisted with preparation of the SC Application and Action Plan. The Planning Department has received ongoing support from various stakeholders, including the county's Economic Development Corporation (EDC), Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T), Department of Environment (DOE), Police Department and members from the County Council, District 3, as part of the workgroup. The workgroup is also comprised of representatives from the Town of Riverdale Park along with business owners, area residents and members of the Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization (CKAR) Community Development Corporation that have been influential in the development of the application.

After the SC area receives the designation, the lead organizations will be the County, Town of Riverdale Park, and CKAR with business owners, area residents along with the Planning Department and other county agencies playing a supporting role by assisting with the implementation of the Action Plan. The workgroup will support implementation of the SC Action Plan and the related goals and recommendations of the approved plans for the area. The goals and policies outlined in the approved plans for the area emphasize policies that will strengthen neighborhoods, support economic development along corridors, capitalize on transportation investments, and encourage transit-supporting, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods. In order to implement the approved area plans and ultimately the SC Action Plan, the workgroup's responsibilities will include:

- Assessing current housing, economic conditions, and transportation issues, and opportunities.
- Assisting with the identification, review, and evaluation of alternative programmatic, legislative, and zoning options.
- Advocating the needs of the SC area to the Prince George's County Executive, County Council, Municipal appointed and elected officials, the state, and developers.
- Supporting ongoing implementation of the Action Plan.
- Assessing the performance of the Action Plan and recommending periodic revisions.
- Reviewing and coordinating future funding sources.

B. Organizational Experience:

Describe the Applicant organization's past experience in administering revitalization plans and projects. Describe the roles of the members of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup, including their experience in implementing revitalization initiatives. What are the strengths and challenges of the capacity of these groups with respect to implementation of the SC Plan?

Listed below are the roles of *some* of the key workgroup members and their strengths and challenges with respect to implementation of the SC Plan.

CKAR

The Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization (CKAR) Community Development Corporation, Inc. has been engaged in collaborations with key area stakeholders (such as the University of Maryland, Prince George's Community College, CASA de Maryland, private businesses, active non-profits and the religious community) to bring experience, capacity and resources to match CKAR's grass-roots approach to community development and revitalization. CKAR has been involved in a variety of revitalization plans and initiatives including organizing a community-wide planning charrette with University of Maryland and The Neighborhood Design Center, producing recommended revitalization efforts for Kenilworth Avenue Corridor and affected communities. This effort is documented in a full-color M-NCPPC published information hand-out. This organization will be in valuable in the implementation of the SC Plan.

Prince George's County Planning Department

The Prince George's County Planning Department of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) is the primary planning and zoning resource for the county. Although it's not an implementing agency the department's Community Planning Division works to manage the county's community planning process. Staff develops plans and studies used to guide future growth and physical development in the county. The department has staff and resources to promote and develop concept plans and budget estimates. In addition, with plan preparation the department utilizes a variety of community outreach techniques to ensure meaningful public participation and engagement. Given the department's community awareness, resources, and experience, it will be an asset in assisting the workgroup with implementing the Action Plan.

Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

DHCD is comprised of three governmental agencies: the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Housing Authority, and the Redevelopment Authority. DHCD is responsible for the implementation of HUD housing regulations at the local level and implementation/administration of federal grants that revitalize neighborhoods. The Mission of DHCD is to expand access to a broad range of quality housing, and to create safe, well planned, attractive residential communities which enable families to become stable and self-sufficient. DHCD has experience in the development and execution of varied revitalization projects and will be valuable in the implementation of the SC Plan.

C. Public Input:

How did residents and other stakeholders in the community provide input to the Action Plan described below in Section IV?

Community meetings, which included residents, community representatives, property owners, businesses, and other stakeholders, were held throughout the development of the *Port Towns Sector Plan, Bladensburg, New Carrollton and Vicinity Master Plan, and Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Action Plan*. These plans and studies were the foundation for the SC Action Plan.

Additionally, in order to obtain funding for Community Development and Block Grants and HOME funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, DHCD must complete a series of requirements which include community input for a five year Consolidated Plan and its interim Annual Action Plan. These plans are very similar in nature to the SC Action Plan.

With the assistance of the municipalities in the SC area, County Council Staff, and the Prince George's Planning Department residents will be involved in all aspects of the Action Plan. Furthermore, the implementation objectives of the Action Plan have originated from the approved area plans which heavily incorporated community input. The Action Plan reflects over several years of work and scores of stakeholder input.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

A. Supporting existing communities & reducing environmental impacts.

(1) Broadly describe your jurisdiction's Smart Growth approach and any significant accomplishments made over the last decade or so.

The communities approach to smart growth includes past and future projects that contribute to their economic, environmental and social sustainability goals. Greater Riverdale, while it faces many challenges has currently planned and completed numerous projects that benefit the community and its citizens.

With the exception of the Purple Line, the largest project in the area is the towns new town center "Riverdale Park Station." The site is located on Baltimore Avenue (Route 1) between East-West Highway and Albion Road. Currently under construction, the new town center symbolizes a new way of thinking that includes denser mixed use buildings, multi-family housing options, and a renewed focus on walkability, leisure, and improving the lifestyles of its citizens. The new town center will include several formally designed public parks, squares, and pedestrian promenades, all of them reflecting Riverdale Parks' commitment to improving its sense of community through the use of public space and alternative transportation.

The Riverdale Park Station town center in conjunction with the proposed Purple Line will usher in a new era for the region. The Purple Line is anticipated to be a major catalyst for public and private development in Riverdale Park and stand as a symbol for smart growth in the area. Other noteworthy projects include three public investments that focus on making a big impact on a community scale through the use of community parks and the public realm. Infrastructure spending though badly needed is indeed underway. Listed below are several examples.

- One current capitol project that promotes public health, environmental stewardship and childhood development through sports education and green public space is the Anacostia SVP-Riverdale Road Site. This \$400,000.00 dollar joint venture investment with the town and Prince George's County Public Schools, includes a new community park and playground for the children of Riverdale Park. Another MNCPPC Capitol Parks improvement project is also in the works at Fletchers Field Community Park on Kenilworth Avenue. This investment focuses on updating recreational facilities and addressing erosion and drainage problems. New basketball, baseball, and football areas are all included in the renovation.
- The Anacostia Tributary Trail Sign Project is a \$100,000.00 Maryland Bikeways Program plan to invest in the communities walking and biking trails. The project will include trail signage that provides navigation and historical information throughout the trail.
- The Riverdale Historic Site involves the restoration of a historic structure for the public to use for various social functions. This \$4,581,000.00 public-private investment will reflect the communities pride and desire to preserve its own unique history.
- Past smaller scale projects include;
 - The addition of 116 pedestrian oriented street lights to improve public safety at a cost of \$107,677.00.
 - New sidewalks at 67th place in Beacon Heights improved walkability and connectivity.
 - Traffic calming measures in general, in particular between 62nd and 64th place.

(2) Describe any major investments in community infrastructure – water, stormwater, sewer, sidewalk, lighting, etc. – that must be undertaken in order to improve the readiness or competitiveness of the proposed SC area for private investment and compliance (if applicable) with TMDL regulations.

Background:

Current and past efforts are underway to address deficiencies in infrastructure. Sidewalk, connectivity, storm water management, green infrastructure, and street lighting have all begun to be addressed but continue to be in need of improvement. Community gathering places, social capital, and thriving public spaces continues to be challenge that needs attention. The Purple line would be a huge addition in transportation infrastructure. Private investment would likely respond immediately to public transportation that is integrated into a walkable existing community.

Actions:

- Focus major infrastructure investment towards repairing roads, creating walkability, and new environmentally sensitive streetscaping.
- Overhaul the existing storm water system, including the installation of new storm drain lines.
- Reduce poor drainage areas that are prone to flooding. These areas include the intersection of East Pine and 410 and Valerie and Wiley St between the 5300-5400 blocks.
- Creating a more walkable environment will include; infill development, streetscaping down a strategic pedestrian corridor, traffic calming, sidewalk connectivity, and street lighting.
- Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity needs to be improved and integrated into a new streetscaping project at Riverdale Rd and East-West Highway.
- Bicycle lanes need to be added but only in a safe and segregated manner that does not create a dangerous environment for either drivers or cyclists.

(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that the community will undertake or expand in order to reduce the SC area's impact on the environment.

Background:

The community benefits from several action plans including the Northeast Branch Subwatershed Action Plan (2008), the Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan (2005), and the Anacostia Watershed Restoration Committee (AWRC). The community's water and energy conservation efforts are strengthened by the Northeast Branch Subwatershed Action Plan, and the Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan. Both of which identify the Anacostia River and its Northeast Branch as priority areas for restoration and conservation. In 2002, the restoration of a 3/4 mile-long section along the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia south of Randolph Road was completed. It included restoring stream meanders, flow depths, deep pool habitat, and the restoration of access to floodplain areas within the overly widened channel.

There is currently a farmers market which is held in the town's historic center. This established open air market has been a success in the otherwise overly vacant center. These markets connect local farmers and residents, support local produce and offer healthy fresh produce in a community building manner. A "pop-up" temporary farmers market is planned to begin in the place of vacant building in Riverdale Park in January 2015. This new farmers markets aims to be a dynamic community gathering place that will stand in stark contrast to the vacant building in will temporarily replace. These markets help to reduce environmental impacts by reducing vehicle trips and thus emissions.

Actions:

- Increase community building exercises that promote environmentalism. Rain gardens at Edmonston and Kenilworth school are good examples.
- Augment the urban tree canopy especially along roadways and open stream buffer areas.

- Build upon on the community efforts to clean up streams and reduce littering.
- Expand on the popularity of the “Community Forklift Organization”. Their mission is to provide reused and salvaged building materials to the community at up to 75% below retail values.
- Build on past success’s gathering the community to create rain gardens and build social capital.
- Build on the MUTC efforts to create higher-density mixed-use developments.
- Encourage the use of green building techniques and principles as designated by the U.S. Green Building Council.
- Identify areas for new public open spaces that include playgrounds and recreational facilities.

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

The Prince George’s County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) and Department of Environment (DOE) will play a significant role on the public side. The Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Community Development Corporation (CKAR) Community Development Corporation will also play a particularly pivotal role in the shaping of and implementation of future plans from the private sector. In addition, the Town of Riverdale Park Town government will be needed to provide as much coordination and facilitation as necessary.

B. Valuing communities and neighborhoods - building upon assets and building in amenities:

(1) What are the key assets that exist in the community upon which the Plan’s projects and initiatives will build?

Location and Proximity to Employers:

The SC area is located in northern central area of Prince George’s County in close proximity to Washington D.C. Just to the north of the area is the University of Maryland College Park, a world-renowned research institution. Within the boundaries of the sustainable area are major economic drivers and employers such as M Square Research Park, a center for technology and research; NOAA Center for Weather and Climate Prediction; The FDA Office of Foods and Veterinary Medicine and Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, and the U of Maryland Center for Advanced Study of Language. These and various technology related companies and start-ups are strong sources of employment for the area.

The Sustainable Community area is connected to major roads within the county, state and region. These roads include Baltimore Avenue (US-1), East West Highway (MD 410); Baltimore Washington Parkway (MD 295); and Kenilworth Avenue, (MD 201). This extensive network of roads offers residents easy access to major employment areas within the Maryland, Washington D.C. and Virginia metro areas.

Open Space & Recreation:

The sustainable community area has a number of open space and recreation assets that are used by residents and operated by M-NCPPC. The parks contain nature trails, picnic shelters, playgrounds, basketball courts and other amenities. The Anacostia Stream Valley Park bisects the area, running north to south. The park is one of the largest natural trails in the county, and consists of many undeveloped acres of waterfront parkland with biking, jogging and hiking trails, boat rentals and fishing options. Fletcher Fields Park contains a tennis court, a basketball court and soccer field. Riverdale Park and Riverside Drive Park have playgrounds, a baseball diamond, soccer fields and picnic areas. The Herbert Wells Ice Skating Center is another amenity in the area, offering ice hockey, ice-skating, and swimming.

Public Transportation:

The Sustainable Community Area is well served by several regional and local transit services such as The Bus and Metro bus and Metro rail. The College Park Metro Station, which is very near the area, is an important asset that connects with MARC rail transit, and is much used by the community. The planned Metro Purple Line Stations in the area will include M Square, Riverdale Park and just outside the area, Beacon Heights. The Purple Line will be an important east west connector, integrating Prince George's County with the rest of the metropolitan Washington area. Efficient public transportation options in the SC area improve the quality of life for residents, employees and visitors alike.

Cultural Amenities:

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission owns and maintains two historically significant properties within the sustainable community, Cherry Hill Cemetery Historic Site and the Riversdale House Museum. Cherry Hill Cemetery is an African American family burial ground established in 1884. It is the only intact African American family cemetery in the Bladensburg-Riverdale area. Riversdale, a Federal era plantation house, uses archaeology, archival records, and oral histories to provide visitors with an understanding of the 19th century gentry-class woman and enslaved African Americans. The volunteers at the Riversdale Historical Society work with M-NCPPC staff to preserve the cultural heritage of Riversdale and maintain the mansion as a cultural amenity for the community.

The SC area has two National Register Historic Districts: Riverdale Park and West Riverdale. Riverdale Park and West Riverdale is approximately one square mile of housing dating from the turn of the century. Planned and built by a developer, they are gridded areas of single family homes in the Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Craftsman, and Tudor Revival styles, and are unique neighborhoods of historic interest and significance.

(2) What policies, initiatives or projects will reuse or enhance the historical assets, traditional business districts/Main Streets and cultural resources of the community?

- To preserve and enhance the exiting historic property and districts there are many tax incentives and grants at the county, state and federal levels that the SC can take advantage of. Tax incentives will provide financial benefits to owners of buildings regulated by preservation laws and encourage their rehabilitation and improve the quality of the neighborhood and enhance the sense of place.
- Focusing on the establishment of high-quality shopping and dining establishments in the Sustainable Community area will help attract younger people with more diverse income demographics and provide better food choices for residents.
- Provide better quality multi-family housing for people who want to work in the area, and better rental choices will encourage people to work at M Square businesses, and other employment start-ups that are in the area.
- The Cafritz Development at Riverdale Park Station is a mixed-use development project that will be located on Route 1 between East West Highway and Albion Road. The 35 acre development will include the first Whole Foods in Prince George’s County and upscale multi-family housing in an urban setting. The project will contain 1,000 units of multi-family and single family residences and is estimated to bring 3,000 new residents to the area. This new development will be designed in a traditional business district or town center format and will be a seed that attracts more upscale retail businesses to the SC area.
- The two Purple Line Stations planned in the SC area are going to be excellent opportunities to plan future development as TODs, because of the people and activity they will bring to the areas.
- Kenilworth Avenue and East West Highway corridors consist of many strip commercial shopping centers fronted by large parking lots, which make the commercial corridor appear disjointed and unappealing. Promoting commercial façade upgrades and improved landscaping will improve the value of the shopping areas and attract shoppers.
- The development of a business improvement district (BID) would attract new businesses and help create a main street for the SC area.
- The Sustainable Community Area should participate in a sustained branding effort that stems from strategies identified in the Prince George’s County Economic Drivers and Catalysts study which could help promote the area. Combined with signage, it could create a sense of place that would give identity to the area.

(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that will increase community access to green spaces, parks and other amenities?

- A key recommendation of the M-NCPPC’s Formula 2040 plan for parks is to provide multigenerational community centers to provide an array of programs to serve the recreational needs of an entire family. These regional recreation centers will be supplemented by the existing system of community centers.

- Connect the bike trails to existing roads so they can be used by commuters as well as for recreation. Provide more bike routes that connect to existing parks including the Anacostia Stream Valley Park and the community gardens.
- Connect the neighborhoods with the schools that service them by improving the cross-ability of the highways by children, by upgrading the cross-walks and lights.
- Organize community groups to participate in tree plantings and community clean-ups to provide a sense of neighborhood pride and increase public involvement.

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

At the local level, important stakeholders would include the Town of Riverdale Park, CKAR, local businesses, property owners, schools and churches, as well as participation from the civic associations in the area will be important to implementing some of the strategies targeted in this plan.

From the County, staff from the County Council Districts 3 and 5, agencies such as the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Environment Resources (DER), Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T), the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation, Redevelopment Authority, Department of Environmental Resources, and Department of Public Works and Transportation, Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement, and Prince George's County Health Department are important stakeholders that could provide assistance with implementing initiatives and projects in this proposed Sustainable Community area.

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and the Maryland Department of Planning are ideal stakeholders from the state level to partner with on issues related to housing, community development and planning issues. In addition, the State Highway Administration will be an important partner to engage to implement some of the initiatives and projects outlined in the action plan.

C. Enhancing economic competitiveness and access to economic opportunity.

(1) What economic development policies, initiatives or projects will improve the economy through investments in small businesses and other key employment sectors? What economic development and business incentives will you build upon or implement as part of the SC Plan?

Background:

There are several major projects that will have an economic impact on the SC area. The future Purple Line represents enormous economic development opportunities for the SC area. The project is community supported as evidenced by the Purple Line Compact signed by Prince George's County, the Town of Riverdale Park, and the Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Community Development Corporation. Local economic planning for the Purple Line is well underway with the

Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation's (EDC) Small Business Services (SBS), the Purple Line Team, and the Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Community Development Corporation meeting with local businesses along the proposed Purple Line route to discuss future development opportunities.

Another key economic project is the MGM Casino National Harbor Project, slated to open summer 2016 and is expected to generate thousands of construction jobs and more than 4,000 permanent jobs. A Community Benefits Agreement has been established to source fifty percent of the jobs slated for the \$925 million MGM National Harbor Resort and Casino to local residents. The agreement has provisions for a percentage of contracts are awarded to area minority-owned businesses during the construction phase of the development. A third economic driver for the SC area is the Riverdale Park Station mixed used project. It is expected to create 1,921 full-time jobs (1,729 Prince George's County residents) during the construction period and 463 full time jobs in retail and food services post construction. These three projects represent significant economic and employment opportunities for residents of the SC area given that a third of residents reported being employed in blue-collar jobs such as construction and build grounds maintenance.

There are many programs designed to help improve the economy of the SC area. First, the State of Maryland provides tax credits for businesses that create new jobs or hire employees through its Enterprise Zone Tax Credit program. The SC area contains designated Enterprise Zones along Kenilworth Avenue and Route 1. Another program is the EDC's Economic Development Incentive Fund (EDIF) that has allocated \$50 million to support small and local businesses, job retention and attraction, transit-oriented development, and growth of key industry sectors.

A third program particularly useful to the SC area given the area's many small businesses, is the EDC's Small Business Services (SBS), which provides financing to small and minority businesses through eight distinct loan programs. SBS provides capital to businesses, contract opportunities, assistance with proposal writing and the bidding process, management consulting, outreach and marketing, technical assistance, joint ventures and alliances coordination, and entrepreneurial training. Additionally, the Town of Riverdale Park has established a façade improvement and sign improvement fund for businesses.

Actions:

- Meet regularly with business owners to continue to plan for economic growth opportunities brought by the Purple Line.
- Work with the EDC to advertise the job opportunities associated with the construction of the MGM casino and the Riverdale Park Station project.
- Meet with the owner of Riverdale Plaza to discuss potential revitalization/redevelopment plan
- Work with MNCPPC and EDC to identify all properties within Enterprise Zones and research opportunities for redevelopment and revitalization.

- Work with the EDC to understand the various incentives available to support existing business and attract new business via approaches such as EDIF, tax credits, and SBS to address small business needs.
- Meet with the Town of Riverdale Park to determine if the town's façade and sign improvement fund could be replicated to other areas
- Brainstorm branding and marketing strategies for the Kenilworth commercial corridor.

(2) *What workforce development policies, initiatives or projects will increase access to jobs and economic opportunity for residents in the SC area?*

Prince George's Community College (PGCC) created a workforce development training program for construction jobs in anticipation of the Purple Line and the Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Community Development Corporation (CKAR) established an intake and assessment center at the University of Maryland's Center for Educational Partnership (CEP) building. The CEP is a unique university-community partnership that offers academics, parenting support, adult education, and recreational and cultural programs for the greater Riverdale community and is centrally located in the SC area at the former Riverdale Hills Elementary School on Sheridan Street. One of CEP's partner organizations, Gapbusters, provides workforce development programs that teach youth and young adults resume-building, dressing for success, effective interview skills, writing follow-up and thank you letters. It also provides ESOL and GED preparation class. It was recently awarded \$40k by Aetna to help fund its after school bike repair program which teaches engineering concepts to youth while donating the bikes to families in need.

Another community partner, CASA de Maryland is active in the SC area given the large Hispanic population. It provides vocational training, technical assistance to start small businesses, financial literacy programs, citizenship preparation, Spanish literacy, computer classes, and ESOL. It was awarded the EARN Maryland 2014 Implementation Grant for a Purple Line Skills Training Partnership. The grant will provide business management, accounting, bookkeeping, and marketing training to the minority-owned businesses along the proposed Purple Line.

The County's Youth Career Connect Program provides career skills development in the fields of IT and Healthcare to high school students. The program is targeted to Bladensburg High School, which is just outside of the SC boundary but should be utilized as a resource for youth in the SC area. Youth@Work Job Readiness Program provides youth ages 15-19 with access to job training, opportunity, resume development and career exploration. Many are placed in employment with Prince George's County government and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

The community indicated that youth and young adults need better employment opportunities rather than low paying service industry jobs. The County's Economic Development Corporation's Workforce Services Division (WSD) connects job seekers with employment and provides recruitment, training, and workforce development services to employers located in Prince George's County. WSD and PGCC have teamed up to provide training in the following areas: construction and

energy; hospitality and tourism; human and social services; and transportation and distribution. Job seekers and employers access these services through Prince George's One-Stop Centers located in Largo and Laurel, MD.

Actions:

- Ensure collaboration between the various Purple Line workforce training programs
- Advertise Purple Line Workforce Training Programs especially to the Spanish speaking population
- Advertise youth training programs including Gapbusters new bike repair program, the Youth@Work Summer Youth Enrichment Program Job Readiness Program, and the Youth Career Connect Program.
- Work with the EDC to connect local workers with contractors associated with the construction of the MGM casino and Riversdale Park Station.
- Coordinate shuttle service or similar for workers to the MGM Casino and Riverdale Park Station job sites.
- Explore the opportunity to construct a multipurpose center in the SC area that would double as a community center and a workforce placement and training center.
- Promote the CFCC's and WSD's training programs: construction and energy; hospitality and tourism; human and social services; and transportation and distribution training programs.
- Provide/coordinate transportation to Prince George's One-Stop Centers in Largo and Laurel.

(3) Describe whether the sustainable community will be impacted by the Base Re-alignment and Closure (BRAC) activities in Maryland. If impacted, how do the initiatives and projects in your Plan complement BRAC-related growth?

This question does not apply to the Sustainable Community Area.

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

The collaboration of the County's Small Business Services (SBS), the Maryland Transit Administration's Purple Line Project Team, and the Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Community Development Corporation (CKAR) provide a solid foundation for continued economic development discussions anticipated by the construction of the Purple Line. More local businesses could be included in the Purple Line discussions through outreach by the Riverdale Business Association. Also involved in preparing small businesses for economic development, is CASA de Maryland, who was awarded the EARN Maryland 2014 Implementation Grant for a Purple Line Skills Training Partnership. The grant will provide business management, accounting, bookkeeping, and marketing training to the minority-owned businesses along the proposed Purple Line.

A specific component of economic development activities are the workforce training programs associated with the Purple Line. Prince George's Community College, the County's Workforce

Services Division (WSD), the Maryland Transit Authority, the Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Community Development Corporation (CKAR), and the University of Maryland's Center for Educational Partnership (CEP) represent a strong network for the development and promotion of workforce training programs. Each of the before mentioned organizations provides an important service ranging from education and training to community outreach and together create a successful model that will train workers for jobs that are in demand. To address the specific needs of the youth in the SC community, the programs associated with Prince George's County, Prince George's County Public Schools, and Gapbusters, Inc. will provide workforce training and employment opportunities.

Additionally, the signatories of the Purple Line compact including the County, the Town of Riverdale Park, and CKAR will support economic development activities and workforce training associated with the Purple Line. The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission will continue to be actively involved in implementing the action plan.

D. Promoting equitable access to high quality affordable housing.

(1) What housing policies, initiatives or projects will expand housing choices – rental and homeownership – for people of a range of ages, incomes, and also for disabled individuals? How will these actions address the current housing conditions and needs noted in Section II?

Background:

As indicated in Section II, there are a higher percentage of residents renting housing in the SC area compared to countywide. Approximately 48% of the housing in the SC area is renter occupied compared to 37% countywide. There are two housing programs targeted specifically for the SC area to assist residents seeking home ownership. The Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in partnership with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development created the Maryland Mortgage Program Triple Play Initiative to help with the purchase of a home in Prince George's County in areas with high foreclosure rates. In Prince George's County, fourteen zip codes have been identified with high foreclosure rates including the SC area (20737). The program provides down payment assistance and closing costs, discounted interest rates, and tax credits for eligible households.

Also, DHCD offers the MY HOME Program II which provides down payment and closing cost assistance when purchasing a property in an eligible zip code in Prince George's County. The SC area (zip code 20737) has been identified an eligible area and allows first time homebuyers to purchase a vacant foreclosed property, untenanted short sale property, a resale, or new property. For residents requiring rental assistance, the Housing Authority of Prince George's County offers several programs including the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program (Section 8) and the Rental Allowance Program (RAP) for low-income residents and households. The HCV program also provides supportive services such as education and job training.

Also identified as issues in Section II is an aging housing stock. Nearly one-third of the housing units were built before 1950 and only 5% after 2000. The majority of the housing was built in the 50's, 60's and 70's with 1959 representing the median year structures were built. The community has indicated that some housing in the SC area is dilapidated, not well maintained, or not equipped for aging in place. In response to this, the SC area should consider the Housing Rehabilitation Assistance Program (HRAP) which provides funds to repair health and safety hazards in the homes of low-and moderate-income homeowners in Prince George's County. Also, the Redevelopment Authority offers a façade improvement grant program for Suitland and District Heights residents and the Town of Riverdale Park offers town residents a grant program for residential chain link fence removal; similar programs should be explored and considered for the SC area. Additionally, Habitat for Humanity is actively looking for housing rehabilitation projects in the SC area.

Actions:

- Promote the Triple Play Program, My Home II Program for assistance with home ownership and the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program (Section 8) and the Rental Allowance Program (RAP) for assistance with rental housing. All programs need to be more widely advertised to residents of the SC area including Spanish speaking residents.
- Promote the Housing Rehabilitation Assistance Program (HRAP) to repair health and safety hazards in the homes of low-and moderate-income homeowners.
- Explore the possibility of replicating the Redevelopment Authority's façade improvement grant program (similar to Suitland and District Heights residents) or the Town of Riverdale Park's residential chain link fence removal grant program.
- Work with Habitat for Humanity to identify housing rehabilitation projects in the SC area.
- Work with nonprofit organizations in the area including the Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization CDC, CASA de Maryland, Gapbusters, and the University of Maryland's Center for Educational Partnership to assist residents with housing issues given their coinciding missions and presence in the community.

(2) Will these housing initiatives or projects increase access to transit or community walkability and/or decrease transportation costs? In other words, will the housing investments result in more people living near work or town centers, or able to more conveniently reach work, school, shopping and/or recreation?

There are two significant housing projects slated for the SC area that will increase access to transit and community walkability. One is a mixed-use town center currently under construction along Route 1 north of East West Highway. The mixed-use project is known as the Riverdale Park Station development and will be anchored by a Whole Foods grocery store and will contain 875 apartments, 100 townhomes, 120-room hotel, 168,000 square feet of retail space, and offices located above retail. Whole Foods should be an asset and a strong community partner for the SC area. It holds community giving days several times a year giving back 5% of the day's net sales to local nonprofit or educational organizations. Also, it donates food to area food banks and shelters. A grocery store

with access to fresh, healthy foods is much needed in Prince George's County as the county is underserved by both grocery stores and full service restaurants.

The development will build a north-south hiker/biker trail that will connect the development to the surrounding areas. Sidewalks will be installed throughout the 35-acre property including along Route 1, a heavily traveled corridor. A traffic signal will be constructed at the main entrance (Van Buren Street and Route 1) and will include pedestrian crosswalks, handicap ramps, and countdown signal heads. A pedestrian and vehicular bridge will be constructed over the CSX railroad tracks through a public-private partnership and will provide an east-west connection. The project has also developed a transportation demand management plan which includes transit and alternative transportation information to each tenant, employee, and resident; on-site transportation amenities including taxi stands, bus shelters, bike racks, and bike lockers; and commuter incentives such as shuttle service, rideshare, carpool, and vanpool programs, and transit subsidies. The project is served by several transit systems including MARC Rail, Metro's Green Line and future Purple Line, and WMATA buses. The development is also expected to be certified LEED Neighborhood Design (LEED-ND).

The other significant project is the construction of the Purple Line in the SC area. The Purple Line has begun to spur new development of housing, commercial services, and offices along the transit route. Transit-oriented development provides opportunities to live, shop, and work in close proximity to each other, sometimes without the need for car ownership. At the M Square station, two million square feet of office have been proposed. As discussed previously, 875 apartments, 100 townhomes, 120-room hotel, 168,000 square feet of retail space, and offices located above retail have been approved near the Riverdale Park station. Also near the Riverdale Park station, the Refreshing Springs Church located at 6200 Kenilworth Avenue is proposed for redevelopment into housing and mixed use development. Near the Beacon Heights station, the New Carrollton Woods Apartments (Advantage Properties), located at 6285 Fernwood Terrace is scheduled for redevelopment into newer multifamily residential units.

(3) What is your goal for of number of units to be created of affordable workforce housing, rental and homeownership? What populations (by income or special needs) will benefit from this increased access to affordable housing?

Currently, the Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development is updating the County's 5-year Consolidated Plan for Housing which will address the housing needs countywide. The *2011-2015 Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development* identified Riverdale Park and East Riverdale (the SC area) among 16 targeted communities countywide for Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSAs). The plan found that more than half of East Riverdale (54%) and Riverdale Park's (56%) residents are low-to moderate income individuals as defined by HUD and may have difficulty affording housing.

To address the housing needs of the 5,540 low and moderate income households countywide; homeless individuals and families; persons at risk of becoming homeless; and non-homeless persons with special needs, the plan set the following five-year goal for housing countywide:

- Increase the availability/accessibility of decent housing by 3,133 units for homeless persons to obtain permanent housing, persons at risk of becoming homeless and persons with special needs to obtain affordable housing.
- Increase affordable housing options for low-, and moderate-income households by 1,925 units.
- Increase the affordable housing stock by 392 units.

While no specific goals for affordable workforce housing, rental, and homeownership units have been identified for the SC area (at the Census tract, block group, or block level) housing data shows that there is a higher rate of renter occupied housing in the proposed SC area (48%) than compared to countywide (37%). Also, data shows that the SC area has experienced a high rate of foreclosures and is listed among fourteen zip codes for highest foreclosure rates in Prince George's County. Combined, these elements represent an opportunity to bring the percentage of renter occupied households more in line with the county average by marketing foreclosed properties to residents seeking homeownership through county and state programs and assistance. Thus a goal for the SC community is to increase homeownership rate, closer to the countywide average.

Housing data also shows that the majority of the housing type in the SC area and countywide is single-family housing built circa 1959 or earlier. The Prince George's County 2035 General Plan indicates that future County residents will demand more multi-family housing (61%) compared to single-family (39%). Further, SC community members have indicated that the area lacks new, modern housing options to support such new developments as the Purple Line. Thus a goal for the SC community is to build additional new, multifamily housing at various price points to meet future demand. Finally, while the existing housing stock is older and in some instances in need of repairs but older housing stock also provides opportunities for affordability. A goal for the SC community should be to identify aging housing stock that is in need of repairs and work with home owners to utilize county and state rehabilitation and weatherization funds.

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

The bulk of home ownership and rental assistance programs will fall under the purview of the Housing Authority of Prince George's County, Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Redevelopment Authority of Prince George's County. As outlined in section D.(1) of the application, these agencies administer many home ownership and rental assistance programs for County residents. Nonprofits, community groups, and churches including CASA de Maryland, Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Community Development Corporation, Gapbusters, Inc., and the University of Maryland's Center for Educational Partnership (CEP) will be

key partners in spreading the word to the community about the availability of these housing programs and connecting residents with housing programs and services.

Both Prince George's County and the Town of Riverdale Park will be key agencies to address existing housing issues ranging from weatherization to chain link fence removal. Nonprofit organization, Habitat for Humanity is actively looking for a housing rehabilitation projects in the SC area; the Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission has met with Habitat and is interested in working with Habitat and Prince George's County to identify eligible sites.

New housing developments generated in the SC area will likely involve Cafritz Development, the Maryland Transit Administration's Purple Line Project Team, Whole Foods, Prince George's County, the Town of Riverdale Park, and the Riverdale Business Association. Specifically, the development of the Purple Line will generate a greater demand for newer, modern housing. Refreshing Springs Church and Advantage Properties are two private land owners that have proposed new housing developments along the proposed Purple Line route.

E. Supporting transportation efficiency and access.

(1) What policies, strategies and projects are envisioned to strengthen the transportation network that affects the proposed SC area? How will these initiatives support transportation choices (including walking, bicycling, bus or rail transit, and carpooling) or otherwise promote an efficient transportation network that integrates housing and transportation land uses?

Background:

The Riverdale Park Mixed-Use-Town-Center Plan, published in 2004 is a comprehensive plan that establishes a new mixed-use pedestrian oriented philosophy for future development. This plan establishes new goals in integrating housing, commercial amenities and transportation land uses through mixed use development. It continues to detail many design standards with regards to transportation, cycling, and pedestrian mobility. The new streetscaping guidelines present a blueprint for what is needed to create walkable neighborhoods. Neighborhoods that integrate land uses, have higher density mixed use development, and incorporate future environmental goals will all contribute to an efficient transportation network.

One major success of the Mixed Use Town Center (MUTC) Plan is the Riverdale Park Station project. This mixed use pedestrian oriented town center is currently under construction and will play a major role in creating a thriving and walkable town center. Worth noting, the new town center would be accessible by the proposed Purple Line light rail. The new town center will further promote cycling as an alternative to the car by tying into a proposed extension to the Rhode Island Ave Trolley Trail. This existing trail in College Park will follow the path of the area's historic trolley. The proposed 3.9 mile extension will run from Riverdale Park to the south through the existing portion in College Park and North to Albion Road creating a larger pedestrian and cycling network. The project also includes a major new pedestrian bridge that crosses over the adjacent CSX line. This iconic new pedestrian

bridge will stand as a symbol to the renewed focus on the pedestrian and cycling mobility. The new town center also promotes alternative forms of transportation including the “Commuter Assistance Programs” which encourages ridesharing and carpooling through parking incentives offered at the soon to be finished suburban town center.

Eastern Riverdale has continued to prioritize pedestrian mobility by installing over 116 new street lights. These street lights both encourage and facilitate safe pedestrian travel. The lighting initiative complete by the “DPWT” Department of Public Works and Transportation will eventually combine with the suggestions of the “*Countywide Master Plan of Transportation.*” The recommendations include strategically adding new bicycle lanes, walking trails, and sidewalks to achieve a greater network of connectivity within the SC area. Their recommendations specifically include new bike lanes on 57th Avenue, Shepherd St, and 53rd Avenue. These bicycle lanes should be designed and implemented in a way that is safe for both drivers and cyclists.

Perhaps, most important to the region’s transportation future is Metro’s Purple Line which will bring mass transit directly to the SC area, providing its citizens with convenient safe access to the entire metropolitan region. The Purple Line is however currently awaiting approval from newly appointed Governor Hogan, its fate hanging in the balance.

Actions:

- Expand on the trail connections including the Trolley Trail connecting College Park to the Riverdale Park Station
- Expand on lighting and streetscaping initiatives that are consolidated around a pedestrian corridor and integrated with environmental initiatives.
- Follow through and maintain the roads as suggested in the Road Assessment Plan
- Concentrate further development around the new town center and the proposed metro station.
- Implement a bicycle lane network that is safe, separated, and part of a larger network.
- Lobby local officials and Governor Hogan to show support for the Purple Line.

(2) If applicable, describe the SC area’s connection or proximity to transportation centers (e.g. Metro, MARC, and light rail stations) and describe opportunities for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). Will the planned strategies and projects contribute to jobs/housing balance or otherwise provide a mix of land uses that can be expected to reduce reliance on single-occupancy automobiles?

Background:

The Greater Riverdale area currently has access to the Prince Georges Plaza Metro to the West and the Cheverly Metro to the South. In addition Riverdale Park has a MARC station which sits on the “Camden line” and provides commuter access to both Washington D.C. and Baltimore MD. The SC area is also served by various bus lines; The R12 on Kenilworth Ave, T14 on Edmonston Ave, and T18 on 57th avenue.

There are major future transportation planning efforts underway in and around the SC Area. The new town center is a critical first step and will contribute to new jobs and housing while beginning to reduce automobile dependency. The proposed Purple Line light rail will include the Riverdale Park Metro Station, which would tie into the existing MARC station and be located directly in the SC area. This connection is badly needed to help rejuvenate the town's historic center which includes the Riverdale Park MARC station. The historic station is currently underutilized and located at the largely vacant historic town center. The Purple Line is projected to bring a rush of new mixed use development, reduce automobile dependency, reduce traffic congestion, and generally reinvigorate the historic "street car" suburbs.

Actions:

- Offer incentives to new business's at the MARC Station.
- Encourage and concentrate development within cycling distance of existing and proposed Metro stations.
- Capitalize on the new town center with additional mixed use, urban scaled, infill development.
- Prioritize pedestrian mobility by evaluating the installation of pedestrian activated signals at key intersections and dual-language directional and street signage along major roadways
- Implement traffic calming measures, including speed bumps, speed cameras, and shorter turning radiuses.
- Create bicycle mobility means in the SC Area by implementing a bicycle route network that is safe, convenient, and well connected.

(3) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

Achieving the proposed vision for the SC Area depends greatly on the continued collaboration of public and private agencies. The private agency best positioned and most motivated to handle implementation currently is CKAR CDC. Public agencies key to the implementation of this plan include the MNCPPC alongside the (DPWT) Department of Public Works and Transportation.

The Purple line will require a vast array of public and private partnerships to ensure successful and seamless implementation. Federal and state agencies including the Department of Transportation (DOT), Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and the (MTA) The Maryland Transit Administration, and the (DOE) Department of the Environment to name a just a few.

F. Coordinating and leveraging (federal, state, and local) policies and investment.

(1) What specific steps will the Sustainable Community Workgroup take to coordinate policies and funding streams to remove barriers to investment and maximize and increase funding in the proposed Sustainable Community Area?

The establishment of the Sustainable Community workgroup in which Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization, Community Development Corporation (CKAR, CDC) volunteered to lend is a major

milestone in bringing its members together to coordinate various interests. CKAR CDC was founded in 2007 and its mission is to bring together a multi-lingual community to promote the social, economic and business interests of the Riverdale community. Under CACA CDC leadership, the workgroup intends to continue its collaboration as it oversees the direction of the Action Plan and advocate its implementation. The Workgroup will work towards marketing the area to attract higher quality businesses and programs to improve the quality of life for residents in the SC area. The workgroup will play a role in identifying and endorsing the application of state and federal funding programs to support the implementation of the Action Plan.

The County Executive's Office and County Council supports Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and economic growth throughout the County. They will work in partnership with the workgroup to ensure economic and development opportunities are created. Inclusion, with the county's economic development incentive fund (EDI Funds) initiative, it presents an opportunity to support TOD; it can be used to leverage federal, state, and private funding to revitalize commercial properties around the proposed Purple Line stations.

(2) How is the proposed Sustainable Community Plan consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans?

The Sustainable Community application is consistent with existing planning efforts and implementation efforts led by the Planning Department. The SC area is located within the boundary of the *Bladensburg New Carrollton and Vicinity Master Plan and SMA (May 1994)* which capitalizes on Metro station areas as focal points of commercial, office, and community activity. It also discusses rehabilitation and improvement existing neighborhoods and communities, as well as providing adequate, appropriately located commercial space.

In 2008, the Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Planning Process and Action Plan was created with the assistance from Prince George's County Planning Department, CKAR, students from the University of Maryland Landscaped Architect Program, community members, municipalities, local elected officials and Neighborhood Design Center for portion of the SC area. The plan identifies issues confronting the area, research best practices and solutions to those issues, develop a prioritized action plan of solutions, and develop partnerships with local, municipal, county, and state stakeholders that have an ability to implement solutions. As a result, a steering committee was formed to review the plan, strategize for the year ahead, and spearhead implementation of the plan.

In addition, the *Prince George's County 2035 plan* designated portions of the SC area as an Employment Area and Established Community. The Employment Areas reflect concentrations of economic activity in four targeted industry clusters—healthcare and life sciences; business services; information, communication, and electronics (ICE); and the Federal Government. The plan recommends continuing to support business growth in these geographic areas—in particular in the targeted industry clusters—concentrating new business development near transit where possible,

improving transportation access and connectivity, and creating opportunities for synergies. As an Established Community, the plan recommends maintaining and enhancing existing public services (police and fire/EMS), facilities (such as libraries and schools), and infrastructure in these areas (such as sidewalks) to ensure that the needs of existing residents are met.

The application builds on and supports the implementation of each of these planning efforts through the incorporation of the visions and objectives of the plans and also by attempting to implement many of the plan recommendations.

(3) How will the Plan help leverage and/or sustain more private sector investments?

The designation of the Town of Riverdale Park and the unincorporated areas of Bladensburg, East Pines and Beacon Heights as a Sustainable Community them to apply for state and federal funds to help revitalize the areas, apply for public infrastructure improvements, and strengthen its existing communities and businesses. This designation has the potential to help attract private investment, grow and expand existing businesses and the commercial tax base, and leverage development and investment in and around the planned Purple Line stations.

V. PROGRESS MEASURES

In this section, explain how your jurisdiction will measure its progress towards the goals of the Action Plan outlined in Section IV.

A. List the specific outcomes that the Plan seeks to produce.

1. Support communities and reduce environmental impacts:

- Reduce stormwater runoff and pollution.
- Support and improve recycling efforts.
- Decrease vehicle emissions.

2. Value communities and neighborhoods:

- Coordination of code enforcement matters in areas of mutual concern.
- Number of homes sold versus for sale inventory.

3. Enhance economic competitiveness:

- Additional collaboration with the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation to link with incentives to develop more diverse commercial uses.
- Enhanced signage and encourage façade improvements of commercial uses.
- Develop a promotional and marketing strategy to market investment opportunities.
- Recruit diversified businesses such as restaurants and retailers.

4. Promote access to quality affordable housing:

- Guide investment in existing neighborhoods.
- Encourage the development of “net-zero” housing development in the Sustainable Community area.
- Develop creative options to reduce housing vacancy and foreclosure rates.

5. Support transportation efficiency and access:

- Develop bike connections to the Metro, MARC and Purple Line Light Rail Stations.
- Advance more multi-modal transit options to and within the Sustainable Community area.
- Complete gaps in the pedestrian street network.
- Finish CIP projects related to bikes, trails and street improvements.

6. Coordinate and leverage policies and investment:

- Leverage economic development incentives available through Prince George’s County including Economic Development for implementation.
- Influence investment opportunities in and around the transit station areas.
- Support and expand sustainable green development policies within the SC area.
- Influence relationship building opportunities with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and Economic Development Corporation.
- The number of grants awarded to fund programs, initiatives and improvement projects.

B. And, list the specific benchmarks that will be used to measure progress toward these outcomes.

1. Support communities and reduce environmental impacts:

- Promote green retrofitting of existing commercial buildings and housing to incorporate energy and water use efficiencies.
- Increased community building exercises that promote environmentalism. Augmentation of the urban tree canopy especially along roadways and open stream buffer areas.
- Increased community efforts to clean up streams and reduce littering.

2. Value communities and neighborhoods:

- Develop a unique sense of place and identity.
- Total increased number of community gathering spaces in the Sustainable Community area.
- Enhance number of collaborations between police services, neighborhood schools, local civic associations and parks in the Sustainable Community area.
- A developed wayfinding signage program for the Sustainable Communities area.

3. Enhance economic competitiveness:

- Target public investment to attract high-quality economic development.
- Status of marketing and branding strategies in the community.
- Total increased number of employers that offer a “livable wage” for employees.
- Total new, expanded and diversified businesses in the community.

- Number of leveraged resource support to small businesses in the community.
- Number of permits for commercial construction or rehabilitated projects.

4. Promote access to quality affordable housing:

- Number of new or additional workforce training opportunities for youth in the area.
- Number of expanded to expand the number of units that are rehabilitated or renovated over the next five years in partnership with existing multi-family apartment residential property owners.
- The quantity of code enforcement citations and violations.
- Decrease in the number of foreclosed properties in the community.

5. Support transportation efficiency and access:

- Number of new pedestrian connections in the Sustainable Community Area.
- Addition of new sidewalk areas in the community.
- Number of new transit, pedestrian or bicycle related Capital Improvement Program projects.

6. Coordinate and leverage policies and investment:

- Increase the number of mixed-use and higher-scale residential uses within the Sustainable Community area.
- Number of applications for and awards from state, federal and other sources of funding for projects.
- County Council appropriations of infrastructure funding as part of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).