



Chapter 4

Community Profiles

Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Plan

2025 Update

COMMUNITY PROFILES

This chapter of the 2025 hazard mitigation plan update will detail the “Community Lifelines” that are critical for disaster recovery through effective coordination of partners and resources to ensure the continuity of services and to support the needs of affected communities.

The seven community lifelines represent only the most basic services a community relies on, and which, when stable, enable all other activity within a jurisdiction. These lifelines include:

1. Safety and Security,
2. Food, Water, and Shelter
3. Health and Medical
4. Energy (Power and Fuel)
5. Communications
6. Transportation
7. Hazardous Materials

The community lifelines do not directly cover all important aspects of community life that can be affected by an incident, including impacts to natural, historical, and cultural resources. For example, financial and economic issues important to the life and safety of impacted individuals may also arise indirectly from impacts to lifelines during an incident as described in the National Response Framework, 4th Edition.

A Planning District Commission (PDC) is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth chartered through the Regional Cooperation Act and created through agreements between local governments. These districts aim to encourage and facilitate cooperation among local governments and between state and local government to address regional problems.

Community Lifelines are the most fundamental services in the community that, when stabilized, enable all other aspects of society to function. The integrated network of assets, services and capabilities that provide community lifeline services are used day to day to support recurring needs. Lifelines enable the continuous operation of critical government and business functions and are essential to human health and safety or economic security.

The Accomack- Northampton Planning District Commission (A-N PDC) serves the jurisdictions of Unincorporated Accomack and Northampton Counties and their respective Towns along the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The A-N PDC is acting as the lead jurisdiction responsible for coordinating the grant, plan submission, and adoption by all participating

jurisdictions on the Eastern Shore. The Eastern Shore covers approximately 660 sq. miles (Accomack 450 sq. miles and Northampton 212 sq. miles).

The Eastern Shore of Virginia spans approximately 70 miles from south to north and varies in width from 5 to 15 miles east to west. Bordered by the Chesapeake Bay to the west and the Atlantic Ocean to the east, it is connected to mainland Virginia by the 17-



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mile Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel and Maryland to the North. The region has a total estimated population of just over 43,000.

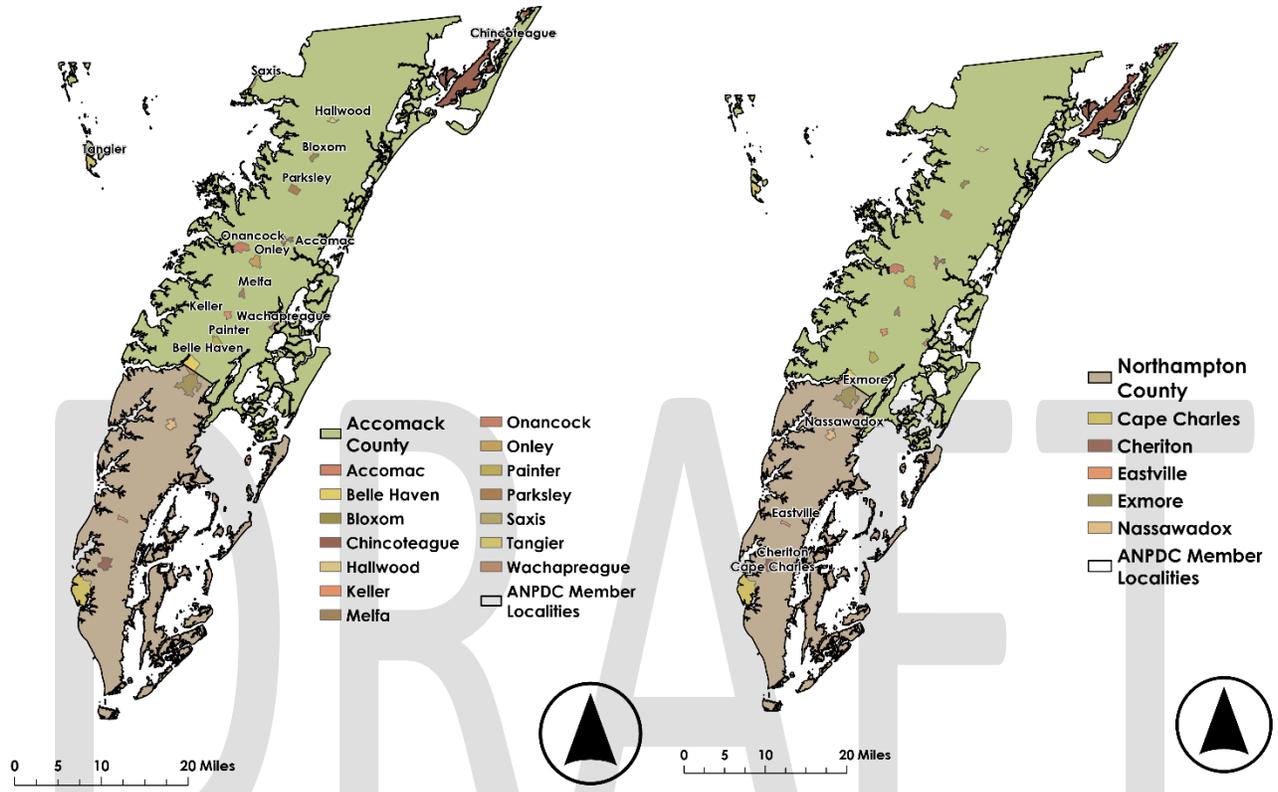


Figure 4.1, Community Profile Map

Figure 4.2, Community Profile Map

Land use and land cover describe how land is utilized by people and the physical materials that cover the earth's surface. On Virginia's Eastern Shore, these patterns reflect a mix of natural and developed landscapes shaped by geography, agriculture, and settlement history. The region is dominated by agricultural land and forested areas, with cropland and pasture interspersed among patches of deciduous and mixed forest. Extensive wetlands, tidal marshes, and beaches line the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic coasts, providing natural buffers that reduce storm surge and flooding. Developed land is concentrated in towns such as Chincoteague, Onancock, and Cape Charles, along with scattered rural communities connected by a network of roadways. Land cover changes, especially conversion of open space to development or the loss of wetlands due to sea level rise, can alter drainage, reduce habitat, and increase flood risks.



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Understanding these patterns is essential for hazard mitigation planning, as land use decisions directly affect exposure to hazards and the region's long-term resilience.

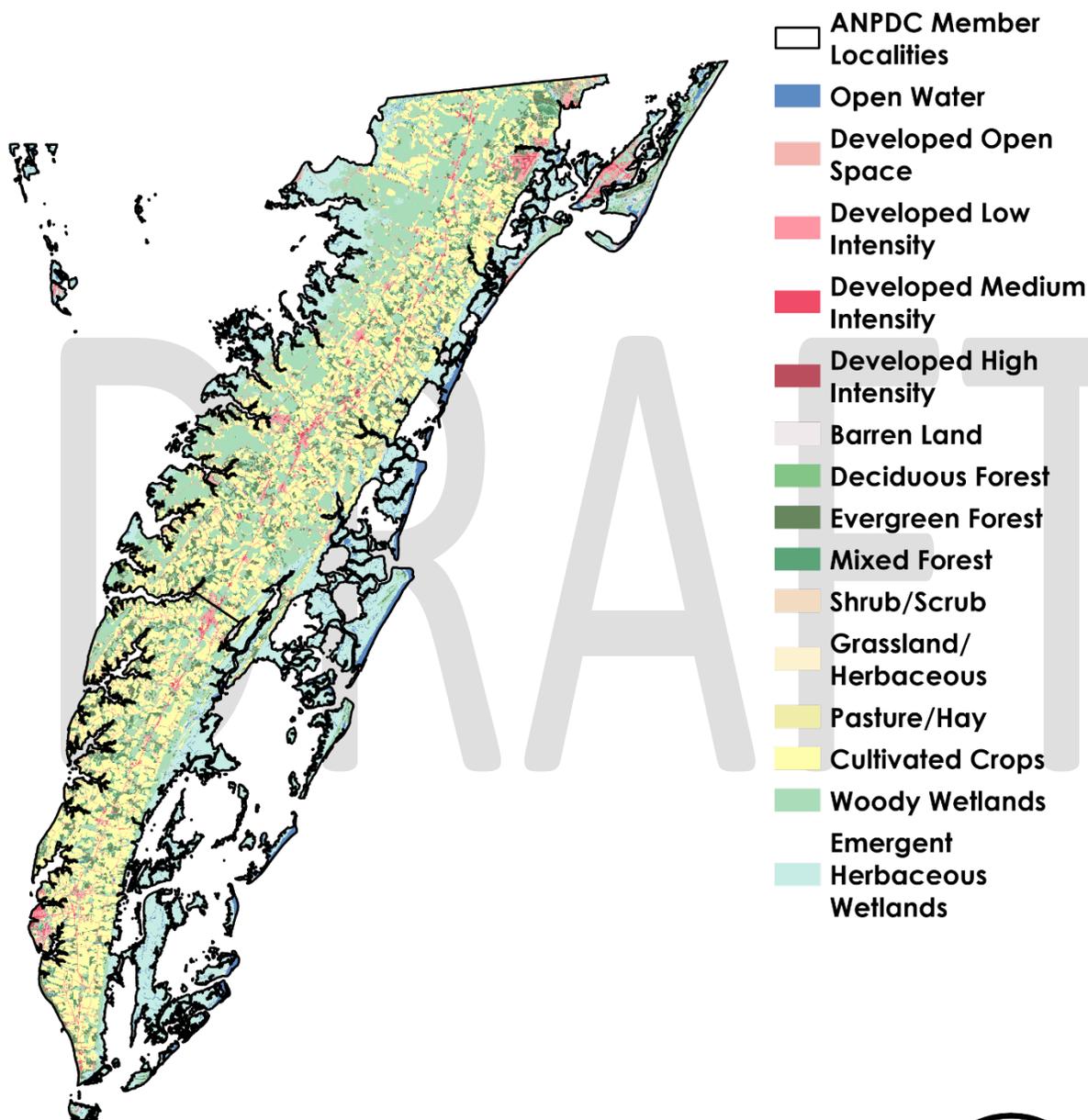
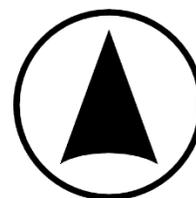


Figure 4.3, Land Use Cover of the A-NPDC Peninsula, USGS, 2025

0 5 10 20 Miles



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Table 4.1, Jurisdictions within A-NPDC

Jurisdictions
Accomack County
Town of Accomac
Town of Belle Haven
Town of Bloxom
Town of Chincoteague
Town of Hallwood
Town of Keller
Town of Melfa
Town of Onancock
Town of Onley
Town of Painter
Town of Parksley
Town of Saxis
Town of Tangier
Town of Wachapreague
Northampton County
Town of Cape Charles
Town of Cheriton
Town of Eastville
Town of Exmore
Town of Nassawadox

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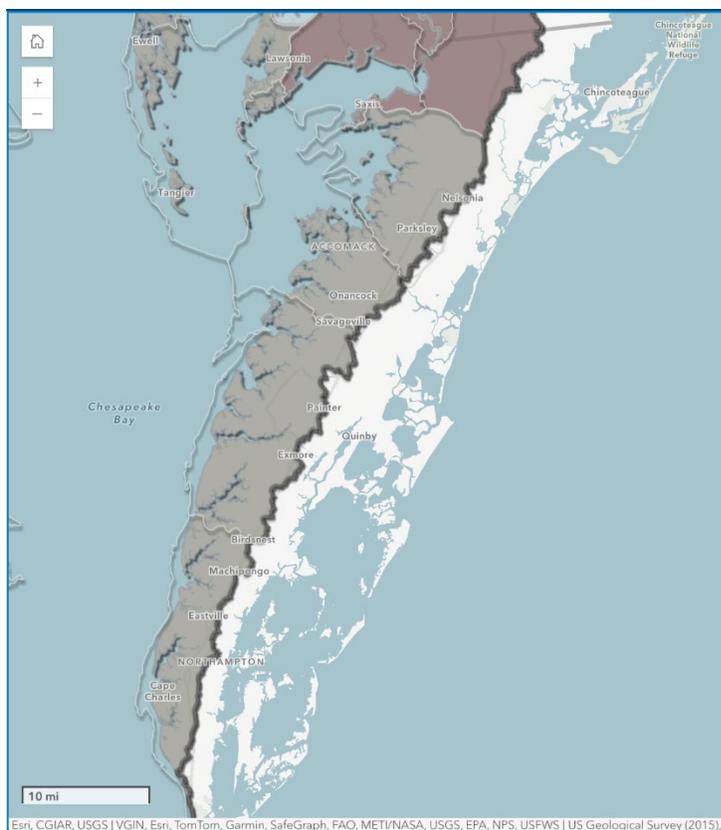


Figure 4.4, Chesapeake Bay Watershed Geography, Esri

According to the Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan (CRMP) the Accomack-Northampton PDC has led several initiatives to further resilience, including managing the Climate Adaptation Working Group with The Nature Conservancy, coordinating relevant research, like the Transportation Infrastructure Inundation Vulnerability Assessment, and developing the Eastern Shore Resiliency Project Database with input from stakeholders and localities. The Commission has also leveraged funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to elevate more than 50 homes since 1999. In 2018, seven of the Commission's member localities participated in the Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool (RAFT) process.

As participants in the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program, Virginia's eight coastal PDCs and RCs meet quarterly to discuss matters of shared interest in Virginia's designated Coastal Zone, including coastal adaptation and protection efforts that cross local boundaries. The Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan focuses on all the territory within these eight PDCs and RCs, which extends beyond Virginia's Coastal Zone in some regions.

4.1 ACCOMACK COUNTY

There are 14 incorporated towns in the County: Accomack, Belle Haven (portion located in Northampton County also), Bloxom, Chincoteague (most populated town), Hallwood, Keller, Melfa, Onancock, Onley, Painter, Parksley, Saxis, Tangier, and



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Wachapreague. The following information is for the unincorporated areas of Accomack and the incorporated Town of Belle Haven. Information for the other incorporated towns in Accomack is located in their respective community profiles. These Towns include Accomac, Belle Haven, Bloxom, Chincoteague, Hallwood, Keller, Melfa, Onancock, Onley, Painter, Parksley, Saxis, Tangier, and Wachapreague.

Part of assessing hazards in relation to their risk is understanding the people affected. Not all people are affected equally. Some are affected by factors relating to their ability to understand risks posed by hazards, and some by their ability to remove themselves from harm's way. Those factors include age, mobility, income, and the languages individuals speak and the languages in which individuals are able to access information.

Demographics

Population growth has been flat or declining over the last two decades. The 2023 ACS 5-year estimates report a population of about 33,300 residents with a median age of 47.5 years, reflecting an older population relative to the state as a whole. This average has increased and represents an aging population. Approximately 16.7% of residents have a disability, and about one fifth of residents live below the poverty line. The county is home to growing Hispanic/Latino and non-English speaking communities; roughly 10 % of residents speak Spanish at home.

Table 4.1.1.1 Demographic Information – Accomack County

	2023	2019	2014	2010	2000
Population	33,300	33,413	33,165	33,164	34,488
Median Age (years)	47.5	45.9	44.9	44.7	39.4
Disability	16.7%	14.1%	12.1%	3.2%	19.9%
Income					
Median Household	\$57,500	\$46,073	\$38,389	\$41,372	\$30,130
Poverty Level	13.1%	19.0%	20.5%	34.7%	18%
Language					
Only English	46.3%	88.5%	89.6%	91.3%	93.3%
Other	53.7%	11.5%	10.4%	8.7%	6.7%
Spanish	49.7%	8.1%	8.3%	6.9%	5.7%
Ind-Euro	3.4%	2.7%	1.9%	1.4%	0.7%
Asian	0.6%	0.6%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%
Other	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: ACS 2023, U.S. Census 2020, ACS, 2014-2019, Annual Estimates of the Residential Population, 2010-2014, ACS, 2009-2013, U.S. Census 2010, U.S. Census 2000

Housing and Workforce Centers

The County's largest industries are manufacturing, education, and health care services. Many individuals in the manufacturing industry are employed at either Tyson Foods or Perdue Farms. These companies often have policies in place to mitigate the economic impact of a hazard for both the company and the employees; however, long-term



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closures would have strong negative impacts on the County. Other dependent agricultural businesses would be at a loss as well, particularly noting the increasing trend of individuals in the agricultural industry within the County. Although it may take some time for the industry to recover following a hazard, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency provides assistance for natural disaster losses, which enables farmers to rebound more easily following severe weather events.

Other large employers in the County include the County of Accomack, Accomack County School Board, NASA, Eastern Shore Community Services, and Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital.

Inflow/Outflow Job Counts in 2022



Figure 4.1.1.1 U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap, LEHD

Safety and Security, Food, Water, and Shelter Health and Medical

Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital relocated from Nassawadox (Northampton County) to between Onley and Onancock (Accomack County). The County has just hired dedicated EMS personnel, as many of the fire companies also provide EMS services (Personal communications, Tom Brockenbrough, Floodplain Administrator, March 2, 2021).

There are five Eastern Shore Rural Health (ESRH) Community Health Centers (CHC) located in Accomack County that provide medical and dental services; however, Onley and Chincoteague CHC's are solely medical, while Pungoteague Elementary and Metompkin Elementary are solely dental. The Atlantic CHC provides both medical and dental services and is located in the unincorporated area of New Church (near the Maryland border outside of the Town of Chincoteague).



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Energy (Power and Fuel)

A&N Electric Cooperative is the regional electrical distribution cooperative serving over 35,000 homes, farms, and businesses in Accomack and Northampton Counties on Virginia's Eastern Shore and Smith Island in Somerset County, Maryland. ANEC representative, Curits Taylor, Safety Coordinator was an active stakeholder in the planning process.

Communications

Transportation

The Eastern Shore of Virginia has fewer major roads and limited rail infrastructure, but the transportation network is crucial to move goods and people. As identified in the Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan (VCRMP) transportation assets may be significantly impacted as flood risks intensify and adversely affect communities.

Hazardous Materials

Rural property owners tend to rely on septic systems for wastewater disposal, and some rely on wells for drinking water. As flood risks intensify, impacts to wastewater, and water assets may be significantly impacted and adversely affect communities (VCRMP).

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

Since 1953, there have been 14 Federal Disaster Declarations for hurricanes, flooding, and severe storms in the County, three of which occurred in the past ten years (FEMA Disaster Declarations, 2022). There are 14 severe repetitive loss (SRL) properties and 92 NFIP-recognized repetitive loss (RL) properties in the County (FEMA NFIP Data Report, 2022), which has increased substantially since 2015. According to the FEMA Flood Risk Report in 2015, there were only 3 SRL and 37 RL properties, which was 12 more than there were in 2003 (FEMA Flood Risk Report 2015, FEMA NFIP Report December 2003).

There has been a steady decrease in the total number of active insurance policies for the County, as more homeowners learn of the changes to the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). With the 2015 updates to the FIRM, there were changes to the associated Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) for the County. The total area of the SFHA increased by 12 square miles and decreased by 16.6 square miles for a net decrease of 4.6 square miles including 1,111 buildings. The area within the V zone increased by 3.6 square miles and decreased by 44.8 square miles for a net decrease of 41.2 square miles including 300 buildings. This is extremely important as 1,411 structures that previously were required to have flood insurance under a mortgage are no longer required to have even basic flood insurance coverage. Flood insurance is cost prohibitive for many residents in the County. Without insurance, should there be flooding, the recovery time for residents, businesses, and the overall community will be much longer.

The County participates in the Community Rating System (CRS) program in order to provide a policy discount to residents and businesses in the unincorporated areas of the County. Since 2016, Accomack County's CRS rating has dropped from 8 to 6, now providing residents a 20% discount for insurance (Personal communications, Tom Brockenbrough, Floodplain Administrator, March 2, 2021). More information on



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repetitive loss properties, NFIP policies and claims, and the CRS program can be found in Chapter 6: Coastal Flooding and Chapter 9: The Region.

Other Resources - natural, historical, and cultural

Rural Coastal Virginia is home to many historic communities that were settled due to water-dependent economic activity. Access to water and natural resources supports agricultural, aquaculture, fishing, and tourist economies. Increasingly, the region has a growing number of waterfront or water-accessible residential developments as more people from urban centers move or purchase second homes. Natural resources, such as fish, crabs, and oysters, drive local economies, supporting tourism and local food production and accounts for the largest portion of the GDP originating from agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting sector, compared to other regions in the state.

4.1.2 TOWN OF ACCOMAC

The Town of Accomac is known for its historic architecture and is the County seat for the County of Accomack. Before settlers first arrived in what is now Virginia, Native Americans called the Eastern Shore “Fig,” meaning “across the water place.” The original shire of Accomac was created in 1634 and was made up of the entire Eastern Shore. The name was changed to “Northampton” in 1642, and over 20 years later, the area was divided into two counties-Northampton and Accomac. In 1940, the County of “Accomac” officially became “Accomack” (Accomac – Virginia). In 1786, Virginia officially established the Town as Drummondtown and was renamed Accomac in 1893, which came as a result of a petition to the Virginia General Assembly for a town to exist at the courthouse site (Town of Accomac Comprehensive Plan, 1989). The Town of Accomac was incorporated in 1944 and includes just 250 acres, 0.4 square miles (Accomac – Virginia).

Table 4.1.2.1 Demographic Information – Town of Accomac

	2023	2019	2014	2010	2000
Population	949	479	485	519	NA
Median Age (years)	26.0	48.1	43.1	44.0	NA
Disability	6.2%	1.4%	0.9%	NA	NA
Income					
Median Household	\$43,211	\$50,625	\$41,750	NA	NA
Poverty Level	13.1%	12.6%	5.5%	NA	NA
Language					
Only English	46.3%	80.1%	81.0%	95.8%	NA
Other	53.7%	19.9%	19.0%	4.2%	NA
Spanish	49.7%	16.3%	16.7%	3.4%	NA
Ind-Euro	3.4%	3.6%	2.3%	0.8%	NA
Asian	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	NA
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	NA

Source: ACS 2023, U.S. Census 2020, ACS, 2014-2019, Annual Estimates of the Residential Population, 2010-2014, ACS, 2009-2013, U.S. Census 2010, U.S. Census 2000



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According to the American Community Survey five-year estimates, Accomac had a population of 949 in 2023. The median age is 26, which is significantly younger than in prior years. There appears to have been large population growth in the Spanish-speaking community members, who are generally younger and more female according to the sex and age breakdown. The majority of the population speak a language other than English, with the other languages being primarily Spanish. This is important to consider in the event of a potential hazard in order to ensure all citizens are able to access important safety information.

Workforce

Employment patterns are important to examine for two reasons. They can help to identify concentrations of people for hazard information dissemination or hazard rescue and evacuation. They can also identify where disruptions in employment and income might occur in the aftermath of a disaster.

Town residents work in the Educational and Health Care Services industry (22.7%), followed by the Manufacturing industry (16.7%). The high percentage in the Manufacturing industry is likely due to nearby poultry processing plants, such as Perdue Farms and Tyson Foods. These companies often have policies in place to mitigate the economic impact for both the company and the employees; however, long-term closures would have strong negative impacts on the Town. There would be a 'domino effect' from such a closure, as employees in that industry wouldn't have spending dollars for rent, local shops, nor family necessities. Other dependent agricultural businesses would be at a loss as well, particularly noting the increasing trend of individuals in the agricultural industry. The Town of Accomac hosts an abundance of local government entities, which may employ residents of Accomac as well.

4.1.3 TOWN OF BELLE HAVEN

Belle Haven is located between Northampton and Accomack Counties. Most of the incorporated town is on the Accomack side. The community was settled by a man named Bell in the eighteenth century who constructed the first residence and a large oven from which he sold baked goods to passing travelers. The community was first called Bell's Oven. It was bypassed by the railroad in 1855; however its close proximity to a later transportation rail line, the 1884 Eastern Shore Railroad, as well as steamboat traffic, caused Belle Haven to develop into a bustling community.

A small commercial district is located at the core of the district with the remaining, and majority of the district is comprised of residences. In addition to commercial buildings and residences, churches and cemeteries are also in the community. Most of the structures were constructed from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. Belle Haven has an area of land of 1.5 square miles.



Table 4.1.3.1 Demographic Information – Town of Belle Haven

	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	813	791	842	837
Median Age (years)	43.8	40.5	40.1	40.6
Disability	19.4%	78%	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$55,933	\$52,841	\$43,625	\$35,313
Poverty Level	17.1%	13.0%	14.1%	NA
Language				
Only English	66.7%	73.7%	83.7%	NA
Other	33.3%	26.3%	16.3%	NA
Spanish	6.3%	2.9%	10.1%	NA
Ind-Euro	26.8%	23.3%	2.0%	NA
Asian	0.1%	0.0%	4.2%	NA
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	NA

Source: ACS 2023, U.S. Census 2020, ACS, 2014-2019, Annual Estimates of the Residential Population, 2010-2014, ACS, 2009-2013, U.S. Census 2010, U.S. Census 2000

Workforce

The largest employer of Town residents is the manufacturing industry, which makes up 84% of the workforce (ACS, 2023). This industry is most likely dominated by poultry processing positions at nearby plants such as Perdue Farms and Tyson Foods. These companies often have policies in place to mitigate the economic impact for both the company and the employees; however, long-term closures would have strong negative impacts on the Town. There would be a 'domino effect' from such a closure, as employees in that industry wouldn't have spending dollars for rent, local shops, family necessities, etc., and other dependent agricultural businesses would be at a loss as well.

Housing

The ownership rate in Belle Haven is 59.1% with 317 of the 396 units occupied (ACS, 2023). As of 2019 there were about 188 housing units in Bloxom, with roughly 84 % occupancy. Housing consists primarily of single-family homes and a few mobile homes. There is no municipal water or sewer; residents rely on private wells and septic systems. Stormwater drainage can be problematic in low-lying areas.

Community Facilities

Community did not provide a specific list.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

The Town joined the NFIP on February 8, 2001. The Town has 3 NFIP policies. The most recent flood zone map update occurred in 2015. More information on NFIP policies and claims can be found in Chapter 6: Capability Assessment.

Table 4.1.12.2 Critical Infrastructure Information – Town of Belle Haven



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Facility	Hazards	Number of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential
Locality-Owned Facilities					
N/A					
Other Facilities (Not Locality-Owned)					
N/A					

4.1.4 TOWN OF BLOXOM

Bloxom is located west of the central spine of the Eastern Shore in Accomack County. The Town was established in the early 1800s as a farming community. The railroad was constructed in 1884 and the Town experienced significant growth. By the early 1900s, Bloxom had become a major produce shipping point on the Eastern Shore. As farm labor needs decreased in the 1930s, the population of Bloxom began to decline. By 1952, the railroad had ceased passenger service and the Town's high school had closed. The Town was incorporated in 1951 and has evolved primarily into a residential community (Town of Bloxom Comprehensive Plan, 2000).

Table 4.1.13.1 Demographic Information – Town of Bloxom

	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	459	392	387	395
Median Age (years)	29.6	39.3	36.4	37.7
Disability	19.4%	42%	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$62,188	\$48,438	\$37,188	\$25,000
Poverty Level	8.5%	13.8%	13.3%	NA
Language				
Only English	72.4%	78.9%	92.8%	89.4%
Other	27.6%	21.1%	7.2%	10.6%
Spanish	6.2%	16.8%	7.2%	10.6%
Ind-Euro	19.5%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Asian	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: ACS 2023, U.S. Census 2020, ACS, 2014-2019, Annual Estimates of the Residential Population, 2010-2014, ACS, 2009-2013, U.S. Census 2010, U.S. Census 2000

In 2023, the community reached the highest population since 1980 at 459 (ACS, 2023) with the minimum of 357 in 1990 (Town of Bloxom Comprehensive Plan, 2000). According to the American Community Survey five-year estimates, the 2023 population is at 459, which signifies a distinct increase since the previous estimates; however, the population has remained fairly stable over the last several decades. The median age for residents in Bloxom in 2023 was 29.6, which is significantly younger than the national median age (ACS 2023); however, the Town believes that average age should be



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higher, as there are few minors residing in the Town and over 20% of the population is over the age of 65 (Personal communications, Jeanette Eby, Town Clerk, March 16, 2021).

In 2016, former Mayor Callander pointed out that Table 1 does not reflect the increase in the Haitian population in the Town, which he estimates to be approximately 1%, and the Town's Haitian and Latino year-round population is increasing as well (Personal communications, Mayor Callander, January 25, 2016). This is now reflective according to ACS 2019 estimates and is important, as different language (Spanish, French, and/or Creole) outreach materials need to increasingly be made available. Most households in Bloxom have at least one non-English speaking resident and the number of individuals who do not speak English should be about 5-10% higher than what is represented in Table 1 (Personal communications, Police Chief Tittermary, March 16, 2021). Town representatives also pointed out that the estimated median household income level indicated in Table 1 is most likely too high (Personal communications, Jeanette Eby, Town Clerk, March 16, 2021). Typically, the lower a household income the less able they are to mitigate hazards by installing, updating, or renovating their properties.

Workforce

Employment patterns are important to examine for two reasons. It can help to identify concentrations of people for hazard information dissemination or hazard rescue and evacuation. It can also identify where disruptions in employment and income might occur in the aftermath of a disaster.

The town is primarily a residential community with the majority of employed residents commuting out of Town to work. NASA, Accomack County Public Schools, the seafood industry, and Tyson and Perdue poultry processing plants are several major employers located near Bloxom (Town of Bloxom Comprehensive Plan, 2000); these are reflected in Table 2 below, primarily in the manufacturing and educational industries. The Retail industry employs the highest percentage of the workforce in Bloxom at 21.6% (ACS 2014-2019). Companies like Tyson and Perdue often have policies in place to mitigate the economic impact for both the company and the employees; however, long-term closures would have strong negative impacts on the Town. Town representatives believe the total number of the Civilian Employed Population is too low and about 75-80% of residents in Bloxom are employed either full- or part time (Personal communications, Chief Tittermary, March 16, 2021).

Housing

Knowledge of a community's housing base contributes to hazard and vulnerability analysis by identifying how many homes are at risk. Bloxom is predominantly residential. According to the American Community Survey five-year estimates in 2019, there are 188 total housing units in Bloxom; however, the Town Clerk believes the number from 2010 is more accurate, at 184 (Personal communications, Jeanette Eby, March 16, 2021). Out of these housing units, 31 were vacant in 2019 (ACS, 2014-2019); however, Chief Tittermary estimates the number of vacant units is way too high and the number is actually closer to 5 (Personal communications, March 16, 2021). The majority of homes in Bloxom are in good condition, with the exception of some areas on the west side of



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Town (Town of Bloxom Comprehensive Plan, 2000).

Community Facilities

Community facilities are facilities required to support the services and functions provided by the Town government or in coordination with other public and private entities. These facilities enhance the overall quality of life for the Town and its citizens. It's important to note what facilities are available in case of a hazard, and it's important to make an inventory of facilities that could be affected by a hazard. Bloxom has a Police Department, a Town Hall located within the Police Department, a Fire and Rescue Department, and a Post Office. The Town of Bloxom does not have its own Public Works Department, but rather, relies on the County and private facilities in regards to water, drainage and road systems, parks, and boating facilities.

Police protection is provided by the Bloxom Police Department which currently has one car and one full-time police officer. The Bloxom Volunteer Fire Company provides fire and EMS and is equipped with two full-time employees, several volunteers, four bays, two engines, one tanker, one brush truck, and three ambulances (Personal communications, Tyler Marshall, Fire Medic, 3/16/2021). All of these are capable of sourcing water from the refill pond behind the Firehouse. The Town Firehouse is equipped with a generator to supply back-up power in the event power is lost during a storm event and also houses two HazMat vehicles.

Use of the Bloxom Town Hall pictured to the left in Figure 3 has been discontinued and the Town has been operating out of the Police Department. The intent is to remodel the Police Department building, converting one bay into the Town Council chambers (Personal communications, Jeanette Eby, Town Clerk, 3/16/2021).

Bloxom residents rely on private wells for potable water supply. In the past several years, there have been about 8 wells drilled to a deeper aquifer level than the existing wells, which is due to the thought that the water level could be lowering. See the Natural Environment, Groundwater section for more information.

Bloxom does not have a public sanitary sewer system, so sewage disposal is by septic systems. In addition, residential water supplies can be threatened by failing septic systems, which the majority of residences operate for waste disposal. Under the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, septic tanks are required to have pump-out service at least every five years. They are currently in the process of being updated (Personal communications, Jeanette Eby, Town Clerk, 3/16/2021).

Although there are no Town-owned parks, the Town has a 99-year lease for the Town Square area from Canonie Atlantic, Co. and uses this area along the railroad for the annual Bloxom Family Fun Festival, which took place last in 2018 due to flooding of the property and the COVID-19 pandemic. The Bloxom Town Square is also used for car shows, and the Town intends to host a circus in the near future (Personal communications, Jeanette Eby, Town Clerk, March 16, 2021).

In 2010, the Town petitioned the County to have the drainage ditches dredged. They had to have notarized permission from every homeowner along the drainage, then the



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appropriate permits from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) were obtained. The ditches were finally serviced in 2012, with payment being made by Accomack County. Since that time, there has been very little problem with drainage and the roads no longer have rushing water during and following rain events. A nor'easter in November of 2013 and Hurricane Matthew in September of 2016 are the main two events that caused some minimal flooding in the recent years (Personal communications, Jeanette Eby, Town Clerk, March 16, 2021). It is crucial for drainage ditches to be frequently and properly maintained in order to continue mitigating stormwater flooding.

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

Bloxom lies within the Chesapeake Bay watershed and is drained by Muddy Creek and Guilford Church Branch, which drain the northern and southern parts of the Town, respectively. The elevation ranges from 15-feet to 35-feet with an average slope of 1%. This results in flooding due to poor drainage. Adding to the drainage problems are the soil types in Bloxom being largely hydric (Town of Bloxom Comprehensive Plan, 2000).

Bloxom is mainly composed of low-density residential land uses. There is minimal agricultural land use and a small portion of wetlands within the Town. These non-tidal wetlands are located on the banks of Muddy Creek and Guildford Church Branch. There is also an area of non-tidal wetlands located to the east of Route 316. Wetlands are important to protect due to assisting with flood control and serving as groundwater discharge and recharge areas (Town of Bloxom Comprehensive Plan, 2000). In the past, Bloxom has been limited in its development due to most of the soils being unsuitable for septic tank filter fields (Town of Bloxom Comprehensive Plan, 2000); however, new technologies in alternative (above ground) septic systems may help to change this.

The Town does not provide public water services, so all residents rely on individual private wells for their potable water supply. Most of the Town's water supply is withdrawn from the upper Yorktown aquifer. The Town lies slightly west of the important spine recharge area. Bloxom is located in Wellhead Protection Area C – Perdue Area. Major water withdrawers in this area are Perdue, the towns of Onancock and Parksley, and the Riverside Shore Rehabilitation Center (Town of Bloxom Comprehensive Plan, 2000), now known as Saber Shore Health and Rehabilitation Center. There have been a few times when the water has been too low and the wells have “sucked up sand,” which most likely spurred the drilling of deeper wells in the last (ten) years (Personal communications, Mayor Callander, January 25, 2016).

Table 4.1.13.2 Critical Infrastructure Information – Town of Bloxom

Facility	Hazards	Number of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential
Locality-Owned Facilities					
Town Hall/Police Station	Wind, flooding, tornadoes, cybersecurity	459	Major	Yes	Yes
Bloxom Volunteer Fire & Rescue	Wind, flooding, tornadoes, cybersecurity	459	Devastating	No	Yes



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Bloxom Post Office	Wind, flooding, tornadoes, cybersecurity	459	Major	Yes	Yes
Town Square (Town-Leased)	Wind, flooding, tornadoes, cybersecurity	459	Inconvenient	No	Yes
Other Facilities (Not Locality-Owned)					
Gas Station	Wind, flooding, tornadoes, cybersecurity	459	Major	No	Yes

4.1.5 TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE

Chincoteague is a barrier island that is characterized by a series of ridges that run in a northeast-southwest direction that were formed approximately 2,000 to 4,000 years ago when the island was connected to the south end of Assateague Island. An inlet eventually formed at what is now the north end of the island separating Chincoteague and Assateague. A spit subsequently developed off the south end of Assateague, serving as a barrier that has sheltered Chincoteague Island from erosion. The Accomack County Soil Survey shows that there are nine types of soil on Chincoteague. Several landform types are present including tidal salt marshes, dunes, beaches, intermingled dunes and marshes, coastal upland or floodplain, and fill.

The Town's economy has always been closely tied to natural resources and scenic beauty. Prior to the mid to late 1800's, the inhabitants of the island primarily subsisted by farming and raising cattle and sheep. As the demand for oysters grew throughout the 1800's, the seafood industry became the Town's main source of income. The seafood industry expanded to include clams, crabs, and fish during the 1900's and Chincoteague became widely known as a seafood capital (Town of Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan, 2020).

When the causeway to the Island was constructed in 1922, the Town's primary economy began to shift from seafood to tourism. Chincoteague is now heavily dependent on the tourist industry. Many visitors come to enjoy Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge and Assateague Island National Seashore, as well as the small coastal town atmosphere (Town of Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan, 2020). In the 1950's, the tourist accommodations included rooming houses and small hotels. The island now includes approximately 20 hotels and motels, four campgrounds, and various vacation/rental homes (Personal communications, Michael Tolbert, Town Manager, April 7, 2021) to support the tourism industry during the 21st century and contributes approximately 80% of Accomack County's tourist-related tax revenue (Town of Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan, 2020).

Table 4.1.5.1 Demographic Information – Town of Chincoteague

	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	3,300	3,344	3,600 (2,914 US Census)	4,317



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Median Age (years)	56.8	56.5	52.0	46.1
Disability	NA	477	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$62,292	\$52,848	\$33,109	\$28,514
Poverty Level	10.6%	9.7%	18.9%	NA
Language				
Only English	96.5%	91.9%	93.0%	96.0%
Other	3.5%	8.1%	7.0%	4.0%
Spanish	1.5%	3.7%	4.2%	2.1%
Ind-Euro	0.0%	2.8%	2.8%	0.8%
Asian	1.3%	0.4%	0.0%	0.9%
Other	1.6%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: ACS 2023, U.S. Census 2020, ACS, 2014-2019, Annual Estimates of the Residential Population, 2010-2014, ACS, 2009-2013, U.S. Census 2010, U.S. Census 2000

The Town has experienced significant population growth over the last several decades as it has become an increasingly popular tourist destination. The first significant population gain occurred leading up to the 1990's and has continued into the 21st Century. The population grew 21% from 3,572 to 4,317 between 1990 and 2000 (U.S. Census, 2000). The 2010 Census indicated that the Town experienced a decrease in population from 2000 to 2010, but the Town has appealed this count and estimates 3,600 as the full year resident population, which will also affect the ACS estimates for subsequent years. Since the 2000 Census, the Town's population has been on a slight decline, as shown in Table 1; however, there has been significant increases in transient populations with second homes or rental homes during the summer months (Personal communications, Bryan Rush, Director of Emergency Services; Michael Tolbert, Town Manager; and Mark Bowden, Building and Zoning Administrator, April 7, 2021). The population for 2023 according to ACS five-year estimates is likely too low and is more accurate to the 2014 estimates (Personal communications, Town Officials, April 7, 2021). The median age for residents in Chincoteague in 2023 was 56.8 years, 18.6 years above the national median age, indicating an older population with 37.4% over the age of 62. This population may require additional assistance during a hazard. The Town and Police Department are aware of residents that may require assistance in the case an evacuation is ordered for the Town. Table 1 also indicates a non-English speaking population, which is important to consider when providing information regarding an emergency.

Chincoteague is a gateway community providing a single point of access to the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge and Assateague Island National Seashore in Virginia. Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge is one of the most visited refuges in the country, with over one million visitors each year. With tourism as the primary industry on the island, the Town experiences a peak population of over 15,000 seasonal residents and tourists during the summer months (Town of Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan, 2020). Planning for hazards with regards to such a significant seasonal population change is a challenge that Chincoteague has taken many steps to address. The Town utilized the Delmarva Evacuation Plan and the Virginia Hurricane Evacuation Study to



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determine evacuation timing during the summer months versus the off season (Personal communications, Bryan Rush, Director of Emergency Services, April 7, 2021).

Workforce & Industry

Chincoteague shows a great deal of workforce surrounding the tourism market in arts, recreation, food, and entertainment. The highest percentage of the Chincoteague workforce is employed in the education and health care industry. A large portion of the population is also employed in professional, scientific, and waste management industries, which reflects upon the location of NASA Wallops Flight Facility (WFF) as well as the Surface Combat Systems Center, both located on Wallops Island and just over 5 miles from Chincoteague Island. There is also a trend of new mobile businesses, primarily restaurants/food trucks, that are increasingly opening along the main commercial strip on Maddox Boulevard. These food trucks are able to evacuate their business, thus are able to bounce back much faster following a storm. Unlike these mobile businesses, many of the restaurants, hotels, and entertainment industries are much more susceptible to flooding and would take longer to recover following a storm.

Business data provides basic information used in projecting potential economic losses from business and employment disruption, along with wage losses to employees. It can also serve as an indicator of community recovery resources. Finally, it can help to prioritize restoration of utility and infrastructure functions following a high-intensity hazard. Chincoteague supports a seafood industry that has been a vital component of the Town's economy for generations. The Town also supports a growing aquaculture industry. Both industries are vulnerable to economic losses as a result of coastal flooding. Storm events have historically had adverse impacts on the local seafood industry by damaging facilities and gear as well as damaging oyster and clam beds. There is a significant risk of economic losses to the tourist related businesses if a spring nor'easter caused a functional shut down of access to the beach during the summer tourist season. A late summer hurricane could also cause the tourist season to be shorter than usual and cause functional losses. Although the NASA facility is a large employer and the NASA launches at Wallops can be a tourist attraction, they also can influence tourism and fisheries by forcing beach and waterway closures at the time surrounding scheduled launches (Personal communications, Bryan Rush, Emergency Management Coordinator, April 7, 2021). The majority of businesses on Chincoteague consist of food and accommodation services as well as retail businesses. There are several restaurants, hotels, motels, rental and real estate agencies, souvenir shops, seafood stands, ice cream parlors, coffee shops, and even a large waterpark on the Island. The majority of these businesses are susceptible to coastal flooding and high-winds. The Town has currently issued over 1,000 business licenses and officials stated the total number of establishments is likely too low, particularly the number of food and accommodation establishments (Personal communications, Michael Tolbert, Town Manager, April 7, 2021).

Housing

Though Chincoteague supports a substantial residential population, there is also a large portion of housing available as seasonal rentals for the warmer summer months. Table 4



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shows over 65% of the housing units as vacant, which is indicative of the abundance of second homes and rental properties. These properties provide an important economic vitality to the community of Chincoteague and are typically well kept and do not create additional hazards typical of vacant, dilapidated structures. There are four campgrounds and many mobile homes or trailers that are coastal and prone to damages from storms, with 14.3% of occupied housing units being a mobile home or other type of housing (ACS, 2019). There are no campgrounds on Chincoteague that offer sites year-round; however, there are several transient residents that own lots with permanent campers during the months of March-November. These permanent campers and trailers are primarily along the coast and surrounded by pine trees, which could result in substantial damage to property during flooding and high-wind events.

Town officials state that there are five structures currently looking to be demolished, two of these structures being mobile homes (Personal communications, Town Officials, April 7, 2021). Since April, one of these structures has already been demolished and the lot cleared in order to begin new construction. The number of total housing units in 2019 estimated by the American Community Survey is likely too low and should be higher. There are approximately 18-24 new homes on Chincoteague each year (Personal communications, Town Officials, April 7, 2021).

Community Facilities

Community facilities are facilities required to support the services provided by the Town government or in coordination with other public and private entities. These facilities enhance the overall quality of life for the Town and its citizens. It's important to note what facilities are available in case of a hazard, and it's important to make an inventory of facilities that could be affected by a hazard. Community facilities in Chincoteague include the Chincoteague Police Department, the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company, Chincoteague Combined and Chincoteague Elementary Schools, the Town Office, and several recreational entities. The Public Works Department manages the daily operations related to the Town's water, drainage and road systems, parks, and boating facilities.

Fire and emergency services are provided by the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company, a combination of paid EMS and volunteer firemen supported by the Town. The Company owns three pumper engines, a rescue truck, a ladder truck, and several ambulances that are stored in the fire house (Personal communications, Bryan Rush, Emergency Management Coordinator, April 7, 2021). The Fire Company has no shortage of volunteers and the Town has increased EMS personnel in order to reduce support needed from the County, as causeway traffic, delays, or closures can increase response times from Fire and EMS services not located on the Island. The Fire Company's new Fire House, shown in Figure 3, has six bays in the front, two in the back, and was completed in 2019.

The Chincoteague Police Department is the Island's primary law enforcement agency and employs 10+ full-time officers as well as several full-time and part-time dispatchers, bicycle patrol officers, and traffic control officers. Personnel is increased during the summer months with part-time employees to assist with traffic, events, and other ordinances around the Town. Chincoteague Police and other EMS services often work



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with Federal Law Enforcement Officers at nearby Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge and Assateague Island National Seashore. Chincoteague is the only accredited police department on the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

There is no shelter located on the Island. When the causeway floods and residents are unable to evacuate, as they were for a short time during Hurricane Sandy in 2012, they must shelter in place. The Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company, EMS, and Police must be able to provide rescue services throughout the entire Town during storms and must remain on the Island during Town evacuations. Additional emergency vehicles able to tread through high waters are utilized for rescues during hazardous events, such as Hurricane Sandy.

The Chincoteague Community Health Center, run by Eastern Shore Rural Health, provides the primary health services for the Island. There is also the Island Chiropractic Center and two dentist offices serving the Island.

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

Many believe that Chincoteague is an ancient barrier island that was formed approximately 4,000 years ago as wind and waves deposited sand parallel to the Eastern Shore mainland (Town of Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan, 2020). Due to erosion, the rising sea was able to break through barrier islands and flood the flatlands behind Chincoteague Island. These flats are now the marshes, channels, and bay between the Island and the mainland. Assateague Island joined the north end of Chincoteague Island around 2,000 to 4,000 years ago; however, an inlet formed which separated the two Islands and sand deposits cause a spit to build southward from the Assateague side of the Inlet, eventually forming a "south neck". This neck continues to provide protection to Chincoteague as a barrier island and has become Tom's Cove Hook. "The Hook" on Assateague Island is following a much similar pattern as the one that formed Chincoteague. How these interactions continue to occur will have an impact on Chincoteague's ability to prepare for hazards, especially in relation to coastal erosion and hurricanes. Above the shoreline, the land is typically flat with elevations on the Island rarely exceeding 10 feet. The upland ridges of the island are composed of well-sorted sand particles, and as a result, are high in strength, low in compressibility, and highly permeable and porous (Town of Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan, 2020). This means that as long as these areas are protected from wind and waves, they can bear heavy rainfall and drain water quickly.

Most of Chincoteague Island's shorelines consists of tidal and non-tidal wetlands. There are also artificially stabilized shorelines made up of bulk heading and riprap along the commercial waterfronts and privately owned areas. In many of these places, the shoreline has been built or filled in and many piers extend out into the water. The marshlands surrounding Chincoteague have high value for wildlife and waterfowl and are closely associated with the fish spawning and nursery areas. They also help prevent erosion and help keep the shoreline stable. There is a large area of vacant land seen in the northern parts of Chincoteague, which serves to drain storm water. The Town includes about 37 square miles of total area, only about a quarter of which (9 square miles) is land.



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Due to a high ground water table and storm water drainage limitations, the Town is susceptible to periodic flooding. The resulting standing water increases the risk of insect borne diseases, such as West Nile and Zika Virus. High ground water and saturated soil conditions increase the risk of downed trees, decrease the functionality of septic systems, and can move pathogens and excess nutrients hundreds of feet much more quickly than under normal conditions. In order to mitigate the risk of insect-borne diseases, the Town sprays for mosquitoes on a daily basis, generally through the months of April through September, but may begin earlier and continue later if the need persists. The Town also contracts a plane to spray for mosquitoes on an as-needed basis; however, this mitigation technique is extremely costly since the Town must purchase the chemicals and insurance (Personal communications, Mike Tolbert, Town Manager; Mark Bowden, Building and Zoning Administrator; and Bryan Rush, Emergency Management Coordinator, April 7, 2021).

There are a variety of recreational facilities available on the Island. There are a number of boat landings maintained by the Town. The Robert N. Reed Downtown Waterfront Park serves approximately 1,500 visitors annually. The Park also contains 10 boat slips available for rent to transient boats. The Donald J. Leonard Park has over one acre of waterfront land left in its natural state with picnic tables to view the sunset. The Chincoteague Veteran's Memorial Park includes two age-appropriate playgrounds, a basketball court, a tennis court, a baseball field, a hiking/biking trail, a pavilion, grills, restroom facilities, boat ramps, fishing piers, and kayak launches. This area is heavily utilized throughout the year and the docks, ramps, and parking lots frequently flood, just from higher-than-average high tides. Located next to Curtis Merritt Harbor is the Waterman's Park and Chincoteague Island Waterman's Memorial that overlooks the inlet and features a walking pathway, benches, sunset views, and a large cross dedicated to those lost at sea, which can be seen from the water and up close on land. With help from the Town, businesses, and community groups on Chincoteague, funds are steadily being raised to put towards a new park located on Smith and School Streets and is to be named "The Brianna Kindness Park." The Park is expected to feature sensory playground equipment, multi-use sports fields, a pavilion, restroom facilities, an exercise trail, and additional parking.

Several hiking and biking trails exist on the Island. The Island Nature Trail is located between the Elementary School and the Combined School on Hallie Whealton Smith Drive. There is both a paved and unpaved trail available as well as two dog parks, separated by the size of the dogs. A new bike trail was completed in recent years allowing easier and safer access to main points located on and around Maddox Boulevard. The Town is in the process of creating safer multiuse paths around the Island.

The Chincoteague Center, located in the Chincoteague Municipal Complex across from the Town Office and Police Station, is used for special events such as graduations, fundraisers, school functions, weddings, etc. and meets most of the needs of the Island's civic and volunteer organizations. Located just past the Municipal Complex is the North Accomack Little League Complex with three lighted baseball and softball fields, concessions, and bleachers. The non-profit Island Community House hosts and rents out space for small events, meetings, etc. as well. The Chincoteague Volunteer Fireman's Carnival is located off Main Street and Willow Street and is one of the largest



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sources of funds for the Volunteer Fire Company. The carnival boasts rides, games, food, bingo, live music, fireworks, and other fun activities that residents and visitors from all over come to attend each year. The carnival is also home to the famous Chincoteague Pony Auction and is the location where the ponies are kept after the famous Annual Pony Swim, during health checks, and any other instances deemed necessary (young foals, safety protocols, etc.). The location of the carnival grounds near the coast and the several large, tall pine trees in the area put the infrastructure at significant risk of damage and the Fire Company, as well as other businesses in the Town, at risk for immense financial losses. During the month of July, the carnival is open every Friday and Saturday night and the last week of the month. There is a high chance of a dangerous thunderstorm occurring while hundreds of visitors are in the carnival grounds with little to no shelter. Volunteers monitor weather and radar and announce closures due to impending storms; however, fast moving storms may still put hundreds of volunteers, visitors, and residents at risk.

The Museum of Chincoteague Island provides cultural and historical resources and activities for the Island. The Chincoteague Island Library provides recreational, educational, and job research opportunities, as well as free public Wi-Fi. The Captain Timothy Hill House and the Captain Chandler Cemetery are just a couple of significant historical aspects in the Town that could face possible damage from flooding and high-wind events.

Land Use and Infrastructure

Chincoteague Island residents are dependent on underground wells on the mainland for drinking water. Eight separate well fields, all located on land owned by the Town of Chincoteague or within a perpetual easement located on NASA property, serve the pumping station. There are currently 4 deep wells and 6 shallow wells for public water supply (Personal communications, Town Officials, April 7, 2021), with a total capacity of the working wells of approximately 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD). Depths vary from 63 feet to 256 feet. The GAC plant is located at Pumphouse Turn and is owned and operated by NASA (Personal communications, Bryan Rush, Emergency Management Coordinator, April 7, 2021). This filtration system filters the water from the Mainland for the Town. While the danger of contamination is considered minimal, vigilant monitoring activities on land near the wells is critical. In 2017, NASA found toxic chemicals in Chincoteague's wells from the aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF) used to smother fires at Wallops Flight Facility. Although the Town immediately disconnected from the contaminated wells, it is important to test contaminants regularly and provide water quality reports, which the Town does on an annual basis.

There are approximately 70 miles of Town-owned and maintained water mains on the Island. Pumped water is chlorinated at the well site and then pumped five miles to the Island via transmission lines. Proper maintenance of these transmission lines is vital to the success and safety of the Town. The water reaches the filtration system and then enters a 200,000-gallon elevated storage tank. It is then distributed to the Town's 3,582 water customers (Personal communications, Mike Tolbert, Town Manager, April 7, 2021). The town has considered installing an additional 1,000,000-gallon tank or two high-rise tanks to meet demand (Town of Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan, 2020; Personal communications, Town Officials, April 7, 2021).



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In the 1980's, the Town updated the length of the transmission line to a larger capacity pipe, while maintaining the smaller pipe for use during peak demand and during maintenance to the newer line. Having two separate pipes capable of bringing fresh water to the Island is a positive step; however, both pipes are at risk to saltwater contamination and/or damages which would jeopardize the water for all residents on the Island. Of additional concern is the limited storage capacity of water on the Island, which is about a one-day supply during peak tourism season (Town of Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan, 2020; Personal communications, Town Officials, April 7, 2021).

There is no central sewage collection and treatment on the Island. Wastewater is disposed of by discharge directly into seepage pits, cesspools, holding tanks/septic tanks and drain fields, or one of a few new engineered, residential sewer systems. The maintenance of these sewage systems is provided by periodic pumping by private firms (Town of Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan, 2020). The Town has revisited the idea several times of a centralized wastewater treatment system, as health codes require expensive individual lot septic systems that were required to meet advanced technology standards (Town of Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan, 2020). There are currently plans for a "Phase 3" of the Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) project that would allow the Town to connect to a treatment system; however, this would likely not occur for several years.

The Town provides weekly pick up of regular household waste through a private hauling company, a bulk trash service, and the County provides a recycling center. The Town public work trucks are used for this service. So long as the trucks are not damaged during a hazard event, then the Town will be able to serve their own community in the removal of debris. The Chincoteague Convenience Center is located on the Island off Deep Hole Road and is closed on Tuesdays. There are two other County Convenience Centers nearby as well located in the Horntown and Makemie Park areas. The Town typically contracts out for debris removal; however, Town trucks are utilized in the event removal of debris is needed immediately, e.g., debris blocking roadways or causing additional safety hazards.

Power is brought to the Island in large lines suspended by concrete utility poles, then contained in the new bridge infrastructure to Marsh Island where they are submerged below the highly trafficked Chincoteague Channel. These lines were recently reinforced and new footers were installed for the poles. The five miles of lines and inability to access them during extreme flooding is a vulnerability for the Town. During Hurricane Irene, the combination of salt-accumulation and sustained winds in the 60-mph range, caused an island-wide power outage for eight hours. The lines had to be cleaned with fresh water prior to power being restored. Town officials stated that after much needed updates to this infrastructure, salt accumulation is no longer an issue for the Town (Personal communications, Bryan Rush, Emergency Management Coordinator, April 7, 2021). The Town of Chincoteague, as well as all incorporated towns in Accomack and Northampton Counties, are now able to access Virginia Broadband Authority. The Town has several other options for internet and communications as well.

The Town maintains drainage ditches and storm drains on the Island (Personal



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communications, Bryan Rush, Emergency Management Coordinator, April 7, 2021). Due to the fact that the majority of the development in the Town is within 3-7 feet of sea level, often times water must await lower tides to flow from the drainage ditches on the Island into the surrounding water.

Two public schools are located in the Town of Chincoteague: Chincoteague Elementary School and Chincoteague Combined School, which includes grades 6-12.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

The Town joined the NFIP on March 1, 1977. Chincoteague has 1,642 flood insurance policies in force as of July 2025.

§201.6(c)(2)(ii), §201.6(c)(3)(ii), §201.6(d)(3) Chincoteague participates in the Community Rating System (CRS) of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The NFIP provides participants protection against catastrophic damage of loss from flooding. Communities participate in the NFIP by adopting and enforcing local ordinances that reduce future flood losses by regulating new construction. These measures include the adoption of floodplain zoning provisions, designed to limit damage to structures in flood hazard areas, and the adoption of special building codes for affected areas. Homeowners, renters, and business owners living in communities that participate in the NFIP are eligible for federally backed flood insurance.

The Community Rating System rewards communities that voluntarily take steps beyond the minimum requirements of the Flood Insurance Program with discounts on flood insurance premiums. Eligible activities fall under one or more of the following categories: flood preparedness; flood damage reduction; mapping and regulations; and public awareness.

In 2003, Chincoteague improved its rating to Class 8, entitling the community to a 10% discount on flood insurance premiums. Chincoteague's current rating is still Class 8; however, the Town has been actively putting measures in place in hopes to lower the Class rating to 7 (Personal communications, Mike Tolbert, Town Manager and Bryan Rush, Emergency Management Coordinator, April 7, 2021). The Town currently has 1,710 policies according to the 2022 FEMA NFIP Data Report. Depending on the distribution of NFIP policies, these should provide a portion of the cost of repair. Purchasing NFIP contents insurance is not usually required unless the property is being used to secure a loan. In this case, NFIP building insurance is a requirement to receive a mortgage on the property. Most of the covered losses will be for repair of existing buildings and will not be for replacement of personal property. In 2003, there was approximately \$46.3 million in properties that are uncovered for residential structural loss. This amount increased to approximately \$89.5 million in 2011 for the Town. In 2003, private residential property owners would have suffered an estimated \$107.9 million in structural and contents damage in the event of a 100-year flood. In 2011, this estimate increased to approximately \$208.3 million (Eastern Shore of Virginia Coastal Flood Vulnerability Assessment, 2006 and 2011).

Chincoteague has three Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) as of the most recent 2015



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FIRM. The 1984 FIRM shows the old Town boundaries and the 1992 FIRM shows the rest of Chincoteague Island. In 1989, the Town of Chincoteague annexed the remainder of Chincoteague Island. As a result, both the 1984 FIRM and 1992 FIRM are incorrect in showing the Town's boundaries. An updated FIRM was provided to the Town by FEMA with an effective date of March 16, 2009.

The 2015 FIRM removed 0.6 square miles from the SFHA, which removed 1,167 buildings from the SFHA, such that they are no longer required to have insurance if they are under a mortgage. Couple this with the increase in rates, and the conditions for decreases in the number residents choosing to maintain insurance coverage. Previously all properties were at the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) of 7, 8 or 9 feet, but the new FIRM has the majority of the commercial and most densely populated area at 4 feet BFE, with the highest BFE now at 6 feet. Construction standards are focused around this FEMA value, and so, if an under estimate, buildings are typically not built high enough, and mitigation moneys to raise buildings would only cover costs to construct to BFE. This can decrease the ability of the residents and the community to rebound following a large flooding event that may vary from the FIRM reflected exposure risk. The new FIRM is represented in Figure 5. The FIRM does not take into account any changes in relative sea-level rise or increases in storm frequency.

In the past, floods that have covered the entire island, such as the 1933 hurricane and the Ash Wednesday Storm of 1962, have garnered federal assistance; however, there is no guarantee that the President would declare a disaster for a specific storm. If a federal disaster was declared, then some Federal Disaster Assistance would become available. The average housing assistance in medium sized states, such as Virginia, is \$1,675 per home (Code of Federal Regulations, 2012). This housing assistance can include lodging reimbursement, rental assistance, home repair, or home replacement. There were 2,068 households in Chincoteague in 2000 and 4,480 in 2009 (Census 2000; 2004-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate). If all of these households applied and received the average assistance, the total federal assistance that might be available for repair of the homes would be \$3.5 million in 2003 and \$7.5 million in 2009, far short of the funds needed in both years.

There is currently some limited Federal Disaster Assistance for personal property such as loss of clothing, household items, etc., and other necessary costs such as cleanup. For medium sized states, the average amount of this assistance is \$2,106 (Code of Federal Regulations, 2012). If all the households received the average assistance the total assistance that might be available for contents replacement would be \$4.4 million in 2003 and \$9.4 million in 2009, far short of the funds needed in both years.

The 2000 Census showed that there were approximately 542 houses with a mortgage and these homes are valued at approximately \$85,317,500. The July 2003 NFIP insurance report showed that there were 530 policies for \$57,295,800 in 2003. In 2011, the number of policies in the Town had increased to 819 covering \$159,316,400 (FEMA NFIP Insurance Report, May 2011) and the number of mortgages had risen to 635 in 2009 (2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate). It appears that most of the flood insurance policies are on mortgaged houses and that as mortgages are paid off, owners are dropping their flood insurance. It also appears that those policies are not



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covering all the losses that would occur in the 100-year flood.

In addition, it appears that few businesses have flood insurance and those that may have flood insurance likely only insure the structure and not the contents. Depending on depth of flooding, the displacement time for a one-story commercial structure could be anywhere from 62 days (flood 1-foot above floor) to 302 days (flood 8-feet above floor).

Table 4.1.5.2 Critical Infrastructure Information – Town of Chincoteague

Facility	Hazards	Number of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential
Locality-Owned Facilities					
Municipal Complex & Public Works	Wind, Storm Water Flooding, Fire	4,000+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Re-purposed Chincoteague Fire House (Main St)	Wind, Erosion, Coastal Flooding	4,000+	Inconvenience	No	Yes
Old Fire House (Cropper St)	Wind, Flooding	4,000+	Minor Disruption	No	Yes
Chincoteague Police Dept.	Wind, Storm Water Flooding, Fire	16,000+	Devastating	No	Yes
Town Office	Wind, Storm Water Flooding, Fire	4,000+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Curtis Merritt Harbor	Wind, Erosion, Coastal Flooding	45,000+	Devastating	No	Yes
Water Supply & Distribution	Wind, Erosion, Flooding, Power Loss	16,000+	Devastating	No	Yes
Town Docks	Erosion, Coastal Flooding	16,000+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Island Gymnasium	Wind, Fire, Storm water flooding	4000+	Inconvenient	No	No
Other Facilities (Not Locality-Owned)					
Medical Centers	Wind, Flooding	4,000+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
New Fire House	Wind, Storm Water Flooding	33,000+	Devastating	Yes	Yes
ANEC Substation	Wind, Erosion, Flooding	4,000+	Devastating	No	Yes
Banks	Wind, Storm Water Flooding	4,000+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Hotels, Motels, Restaurants	Wind, Erosion, Flooding	33,000+	Devastating	No	Yes
Coast Guard Station	Wind, Erosion, Flooding, Fire	45,000+	Devastating	Yes	Yes



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Route 175 Causeway	Wind, Erosion, Coastal Flooding	30,000+	Devastating	No	Yes
Collector Streets	Wind, Flooding	4,000+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Communications Network	Wind, Flooding	4,000+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Drainage System	Erosion, Flooding	4,000+	Devastating	No	Yes
Post Office	Wind, Flooding	4,000+	Inconvenience	Yes	Yes
Schools	Wind, Flooding, Fire	4,000+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Gas Stations	Wind, Flooding, Fire	4,000+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Campgrounds	Hurricanes and Tropical Storms	15,000+	Major Disruption	No	No

4.1.6 TOWN OF HALLWOOD

Hallwood is located near the central spine of the Eastern Shore in the northern portion of Accomack County and encompasses approximately 234 acres. The Town, like a number of other Eastern Shore towns, developed around the construction of the railroad in 1884. The Town's primary commercial activity in the 18th and 19th centuries was timber harvesting. A canning factory became a prominent feature in Town around the beginning of the 20th century. Hallwood has evolved primarily into a residential community since rail service began to decline in the early 1960s (Town of Hallwood Comprehensive Plan, 2002).

Table 4.1.6.1 Demographic Information – Hallwood

	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	156	202	206	290
Median Age (years)	35.8	42.0*	40.5	32.0
Disability	24	43*	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$55,417	\$41,250*	\$21,250	\$29,861
Poverty Level	16.7%	18.2%*	53.6%	NA
Language				
Only English	86.0%	84.4%*	91.4%	NA
Other	14%	15.6%*	8.6%	NA
Spanish	14.0%	15.6%*	4.6%	NA
Ind-Euro	0.0%	0.0%*	0.4%	NA
Asian	0.0%	0.0%*	3.5%	NA
Other	0.0%	0.0%*	0.0%	NA

Source: ACS 2023, U.S. Census 2020, ACS, 2014-2019, Annual Estimates of the Residential Population, 2010-2014, ACS, 2009-2013, U.S. Census 2010, U.S. Census 2000



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The 2023 American Community Survey five-year estimates indicate Hallwood's population has declined over the past two decades. The 2019 estimate (226 people) fell to around 156 people in 2023. Median age dropped from 42 yr in 2019 to 35.8 yr in 2023. The town previously reported a high poverty level (53.6 % in 2010), though recent ACS figures show improvement. Spanish-speaking households increased markedly between 2000 and 2023.

Workforce

The Town is primarily a residential community with the majority of employed residents commuting out of Town to work. Several major employers are located near Hallwood including NASA, Accomack County Public Schools, and Tyson and Perdue poultry processing plants. The decrease of residents employed in the educational and health care services industry shown in Table 2 is likely not accurate, as several Town residents are still employed in this industry (Personal communications, Mayor Jackie Poulson, May 24, 2021). Over half of the work force in Hallwood works in the manufacturing industry (ACS 2014-2019), which is likely dominated by poultry processing positions at Tyson and Perdue. These companies often have policies in place to mitigate the economic impact for both the company and the employees; however, long-term closures would have strong negative impacts on the Town. There would be a 'domino effect' from such a closure, as employees in that industry wouldn't have spending dollars for rent, local shops, nor family necessities, and other dependent agricultural businesses would be at a loss as well.

The Town has seen a steadily declining business presence over the last five years, but the number of employees has remained somewhat constant. Economic activity within the Town includes a post office, a welding shop, a day care, a repair garage, and two retail businesses (Personal communications, Mayor Jackie Poulson, Danny Shrieves, Town Clerk, May 24, 2021).

Housing

Knowledge of a community's housing base contributes to hazard and vulnerability analysis by identifying how many homes are at risk. Vehicles available to households is one indicator of a household's ability to evacuate when necessary.

The estimates of housing units from the American Community Survey in 2014 should be ignored as gross overestimates. Town representatives indicated that there are 84 occupied housing units and a few unoccupied structures that need to be demolished. There has been one demolition since 2016, and although the Town has expressed interest in removing more, neither the Town nor the residents have the necessary resources to do so (Personal communications, Mayor Jackie Poulson, May 24, 2021). Often, these structures can cause additional debris hazards due to lack of maintenance and loose debris in yards.

Community Facilities

Community facilities support the services and functions provided by the Town government or in coordination with other public and private entities. These facilities enhance the overall quality of life for the Town and its citizens. It is important to note



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what facilities are available in case of a hazard, and it is important to make an inventory of facilities that could be affected by a hazard. Community facilities include a public recreation facility, The Hallwood Town Park. There is also a Town Hall that doubles as the Police Station and Post Office (Personal communications, Danny Shrieves, Town Clerk, May 24, 2021).

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

Hallwood is relatively flat with the elevation ranging from 15-feet above mean sea level to 25-feet above mean sea level with a general downward slope from east to west. Slopes are under 2% for the majority of the Town, which can lead to flooding problems due to poor drainage. Adding to these flooding problems are the presence of hydric soils which are characteristically wet and poorly drained. The soils are not suitable for septic systems due to the hydric, highly permeable soils and have a shallow to ground water table, between 0-18 inches (Town of Hallwood Comprehensive Plan, 2002).

The total land area of Hallwood is 234 acres, with the majority of development being residential. Developed areas are scattered throughout the Town. Agricultural land use is prevalent in the north and northeast parts of the Town. Cultivated crops include tomatoes, soybeans, grains, and cover crops. Land adjacent to the Town is predominantly agricultural (Town of Hallwood Comprehensive Plan, 2002).

Critical Infrastructure

The critical-facility inventory includes three Hallwood-specific facilities. Local hazard planning should focus on ensuring continuity of volunteer fire and EMS services and maintaining access to regional services during storms.

Table 4.1.6.2 Critical Infrastructure Information – Town of Hallwood

Facility	Hazards	Number of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential
Locality-Owned Facilities					
Town Hall/Police Station	Flooding, Wind	156+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Post Office	Flooding, Wind	156+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Town Park	Wind	156+	Inconvenience	No	No

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

§201.6(c)(2)(ii), §201.6(c)(3)(ii), §201.6(d)(3) The July 2003 NFIP Insurance Report showed that there were 6 A zone policies within the Town and no claims for flood damage had been made. These 6 policyholders were probably paying more than they should for flood insurance since they are no longer in an A zone. In 2016, Hallwood had only 1 NFIP policy, for a property not located within a flood zone, totaling \$350,000.00 in coverage (FEMA NFIP Insurance Report, 2016). There are currently no active policies in the Town (FEMA NFIP Data Report, 2022). The Town has had only one claim that was rewarded \$4,923 since joining the NFIP in 2000 (FEMA NFIP Data Report, 2022). This claim was the



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result of storm water flooding from a thunderstorm in 2003. The Town does not participate in the Community Ranking System (CRS).

Storm water flooding has the greatest and most frequent impact on the Town. The Town sits on poorly drained soils which retain rainwater. During heavy rains, the Town's roads are often flooded and floodwaters have historically rushed down the main street in Town causing damage to property (Town of Hallwood Comprehensive Plan, 2002). The Town relies on VDOT for the maintenance of ditches along roadways throughout the Town. If drainage ditches are not properly maintained, flooding will occur throughout the Town's roads and other areas (Personal communications, Mayor Jackie Poulson and Danny Shrieves, Town Clerk, May 24, 2021). During Hurricane Sandy, one home at the junction of Fitzgerald and Main suffered from storm water flooding to the extent that the furnace was ruined. Educating residents about the risks associated with storm water flooding and standing water, such as septic contaminants and mosquito-borne illnesses, is an important step in mitigating potential negative impacts to the Town residents.

4.1.7 TOWN OF KELLER

Keller is located near the central spine of the Eastern Shore in south central Accomack County and comprises 218 acres. The town was originally called Pungoteague Station and was established around a railroad station, which was the center of economic activity for the Town. Once Keller was no longer used as a rail station, economic conditions began to change (Town of Keller Comprehensive Plan, 2006). The Town of Keller was incorporated in 1951.

Table 4.1.7.1 Demographic Information – Town of Keller

	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	144	144	178	173
Median Age (years)	32.5	53.9	55.5	47.3
Disability	16.5%	24	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$33,570	\$28,906	\$49,375	\$25,500
Poverty Level	43.5%	28.5%	17.6%	NA
Language				
Only English	98.8%	99.3%	75%	97.6%
Other	2.0%	0.7%	25%	2.4%
Spanish	2.0%	0.0%	9.6%	2.4%
Ind-Euro	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Asian	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: ACS 2023, U.S. Census 2020, ACS, 2014-2019, Annual Estimates of the Residential Population, 2010-2014, ACS, 2009-2013, U.S. Census 2010, U.S. Census 2000

According to the 2023 American Community Survey, the population in the Town of Keller has remained relatively stable over the last couple of decades. The median age



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for the Town is 32.5, indicating an inaccuracy in the ACS 2023. The town has an older population that would typically need additional assistance during a hazard. The high median age, poverty levels, and number of individuals with a disability are also important factors to consider when planning for a hazard. There is a larger number of Spanish-speaking households, so it is likely the data indicating languages spoken is inaccurate (Personal communications, Town Council, April 16, 2021). Town Officials point to the 2010 Census figures as being anomalous and inconsistent with their knowledge of the Town (Personal communications, Town Council, November 4, 2015). Although the population may be accurate, the median household income and the languages spoken are likely not.

Workforce

The local workforce primarily consists of Retail Trade and Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, and Food. Construction and Wholesale Trade industries dominate the employed population in Keller as well (ACS, 2014-2019). This reflects Keller being primarily a residential, white-collar community (Town of Keller Comprehensive Plan, 2006). The workforce saw a significant drop between 2010 and 2014, but increased back to previous numbers in 2019 (ACS, 2014-2019).

Keller is primarily a residential community, which is reflective upon the low number of businesses within the Town. An antique shop, storage units, 84 Lumber, OrthoFit, and two automotive dealerships, J&J Auto Sales and Preston Ford, are located in Town (Personal communications, Town Council, April 16, 2021). There is also a non-profit homeless shelter and a post office. The Town has been having zoning and ordinance issues relating to “back-yard” businesses and are currently working to resolve these problems while also promoting economic development (Personal communications, Town Council, April 16, 2021).

Housing

There are 86 total housing units in Keller (Personal communications, Town Council, May 4, 2021) and the housing market is relatively stable, consisting primarily of single-family housing (ACS, 2014-2019). There are 20 vacant units in Town, one of which is being used as a vacation home (Personal communications, Town Council, April 16, 2021). Many of these vacant structures are in poor condition due to owners not living in the area and being unable to maintain their properties. Vacant units can be dangerous during a hazard due to lack of year-round maintenance and loose yard debris. Town officials stated that they have proposed an incremental tax increase and auctions will soon take place in an attempt to negate the issue. In the last five years, there has only been one demolition; however, the Town is taking steps to complete more (Personal communications, Town Council, April 16, 2021).

Community Facilities

Community facilities are facilities required to support the services and functions provided by the Town government or in coordination with other public and private entities. These facilities enhance the overall quality of life for the Town and its citizens. It is important to note what facilities are available in case of a hazard, and it is important to make an inventory of facilities that could be impacted by a hazard.



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Natural Environment

Keller encompasses 218 acres. Elevations in the Town range from approximately 30- to 40-feet, with a local high spot of 44-feet above mean sea level, and slopes are typically less than 2%. Most of the soils in Keller are not ideal for development due to the majority soil type being unsuitable for individual land-based waste water treatment facilities, like septic systems (Town of Keller Comprehensive Plan, 2006). There have been large amounts of forest land purchased recently within Town limits. The area has been cleared, but it is unclear if there are any plans in place for the land (Personal communications, Town Council, April 16, 2021).

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

§201.6(c)(2)(ii), §201.6(c)(3)(ii), §201.6(d)(3) The Town does not currently participate in the NFIP, but has expressed interest in potentially joining the program in addition to the Community Rating System (CRS) Program. No areas of the Town lie within a Special Flood Hazard Area. The community relies on Accomack County if this were to arise.

Storm water flooding poses the greatest risk to the Town and has the most frequent impact. The majority of the Town contains soils that are poorly drained and readily retain rainwater. The Town's poorly drained soils are located primarily in the central and northern portions of Town. The intersection where N.R. North Street and H. West Avenue meets at Center Avenue is prone to frequent flooding as well as where H. West Avenue meets Second Street near the Methodist Church. VDOT and the County have been working to resolve these issues (Personal communication, Mayor, September 12, 2025).

Keller regularly experiences storm water flooding during heavy rain events. Drainage problems in Town have been attributed to the soil characteristics, lack of sufficient topography for drainage, and lack of maintenance to existing drainage culverts. The Town relies on the Virginia Department of Transportation and Accomack County to perform maintenance on the main drainage ditches within the Town limits (Personal communications, Town Council, April 16, 2021).

Drainage issues were previously experienced at the intersection of Center Avenue, H. West Avenue, and Lee Street and the northern end of H. West Avenue. These areas have poorly maintained ditches that have silted with sediment and become overgrown with vegetation. The ditch near the intersection of Lee Street and Center Avenue has been Town of Keller removed, and underground drainage has helped to mitigate storm water flooding in this area (Personal communications, Town Mayor, September 12, 2025). Town officials indicate that there has been no residential or commercial property damage within Town as a result from storm water flooding.

The town has historically experienced severe storm water flooding events. Town officials recall at least two major flooding events where streets were inundated with rain water to the point where residents were traveling down the streets in boats in the areas of Town that still experiences flooding today. These flood waters remained for approximately 24 hours. The Town experienced severe storm water flooding again throughout the Fall and Winter in both 2019 and 2020 (Personal communications, Town Council, April 16, 2021). The majority of houses in Town are not elevated and Town



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officials state that structures being inundated during these flood events is common

Table 4.1.13.2 Critical Infrastructure Information – Town of Keller

Facility	Hazards	Number of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential	Responsible Entity
Locality-Owned Facilities						
Keller Town Office	Flooding, Wind	144+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	Town
Keller Post Office (currently closed for repairs) closest Melfa or Painter	Flooding, Wind	144+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	Private

4.1.8 TOWN OF MELFA

The Town of Melfa encompasses 165 acres along the south-central spine of Accomack County (Figure 1). Melfa developed around a railroad station in 1884. In the early 1900s Melfa was a site of industries, including a canning factory, bottling company, three sawmills, two dairies, a barrel factory, and two hatcheries. Presently, Melfa is largely residential. The Town became incorporated in 1951 with the purchase of a fire engine (Town of Melfa Comprehensive Town Plan, 1997).

Table 4.1.8.1 Demographic Information – Town of Melfa

	2023	2020	2014	2010	2000
Population	447	396	411	408	450
Median Age (years)	58.5	55.1	44.9	43.0	38.0
Disability	19.4%	38	12	NA	NA
Income					
Median Household	\$28,250	\$46,250	\$38,684	\$34,097	\$37,361
Poverty Level	26.8%	12.5%	15.4%	29.2%	NA
Language					
Only English	85.4%	96.8%	100%	96.1%	94.2%
Other	14.6%	3.2%	0.0%	3.9%	5.8%
Spanish	5.4%	1.3%	0.0%	1.6%	4.4%
Ind-Euro	9.3%	1.9%	0.0%	2.3%	1.3%
Asian	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%



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Source: ACS 2023, U.S. Census 2020, ACS 2014-2019, Annual Estimates of the Residential Population: 2010-2014, ACS, 2009-2013, U.S. Census 2010, U.S. Census 2000

American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates for 2019 show a population decline in the Town of Melfa; however, this is believed to be an underestimate and the population is likely closer to the 2010 Census figures displayed in Table 1 (Personal communications, Mayor Charles Wilbur, June 8, 2021). ACS data also shows a steady increase in the median age, which is currently about 17 years higher than the national median age. An older population may need additional assistance in the event of a hazard. The majority of residents speak English and would be able to access information about potential hazards or other safety information.

Workforce

Melfa is primarily a residential community, where the majority of employed residents commute to work outside of Town. According to Table 2, the majority of the workforce (34.1%) in Melfa are in the education and health care services industry, which is likely due to the Eastern Shore Community College being located just outside of Town limits and Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital in the nearby Town of Onancock.

Another industry that dominates the area is manufacturing, which is most likely made up of poultry processing positions at Perdue Farms and Tyson Foods. These companies often have policies in place to mitigate the economic impact for both the company and the employees; however, long-term closures would have strong negative impacts on the Town. There would be a 'domino effect' from such a closure, as employees in that industry wouldn't have spending dollars for rent, local shops, nor family necessities, and other dependent agricultural businesses would be at a loss as well.

The number of the total civilian employed population has greatly decreased in 2019 according to the American Community Survey five-year estimates. This number is likely not accurate, as Town officials state there is no large population retiring or not working (Personal communications, Mayor Charles Wilbur, June 8, 2021). This decrease in the civilian employed population is likely due to the decrease of the total population (Table 1) that was also deemed inaccurate by the Town Mayor.

Housing

Knowledge of a community's housing base contributes to hazard and vulnerability analysis by identifying how many homes are at risk. ACS 2019 five-year estimates show approximately 190 total housing units in the Town with approximately 7% being vacant. There is a trailer park containing several double-wide and single-wide trailers that sits just outside of Town limits and smaller structures in need of repair located on Main Street off Route 13 (Personal communications, Mayor Charles Wilbur, June 8, 2021). There are a few derelict homes within the Town that remain vacant, with one in the process of being repaired. Often times, vacant homes pose a threat during a hazard due to lack of maintenance and loose debris.

Community Facilities

Community facilities are facilities required to support the services and functions provided by the Town government or in coordination with other public and private



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entities. These facilities enhance the overall quality of life for the Town and its citizens. It is important to note what facilities are available in case of a hazard, and it is important to make an inventory of facilities that could be impacted by a hazard.

The Melfa Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company was organized in May 1950 in the aftermath of the “Easter Sunday Fire.” Presently, the Fire Company operates a fleet of six apparatus, including two advanced life support ambulances, two engines, a 2,500-gallon tanker, and a brush truck. Additionally, there are three trailers that are kept on the station’s property. The Melfa Fire Station was built in 2002 and includes three bays, a community room, bunk rooms, restrooms, station watch room, laundry room, offices, and storage areas. In addition to serving Melfa, the Melfa Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company serves portions of Bobtown, Boston, Hacks Neck, Harborton, Keller, Texacotown, Savageville, and various outlying areas.

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

Melfa lies within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The Town itself is relatively flat, with most of the Town ranging in elevation from 45 to 54-feet above sea level, although the highest point on the Shore is located west of Route 13 and is 54-feet in elevation. Melfa is not located within the 100-year or 500-year floodplain.

Melfa has a land area of 160 acres. Approximately 60% of the land area is developed with residential land use being the predominant land use category. The majority of the developed land use areas surround Route 13 and there is very little in the way of forest or shrub habitats. Like many towns along the Eastern Shore, the Town of Melfa is surrounded by an abundance of agricultural lands.

Future Development

Melfa is underlain by some soils that are unsuitable for drainage and rainwater. Arapahoe mucky loam (very poorly drained) and Nimmo sandy loam (poorly drained) are the dominant soil types, along with Munden sandy loam (moderately well drained) and Bojac sandy loam (well drained). Installation of culvert pipes has lessened the stormwater flooding in the Town; however, Woodland Avenue and around the area of Vance’s Furniture on Railroad Avenue are still in need of a culvert, as ditches are currently just draining into the street (Personal communications, Mayor Charles Wilbur, June 8, 2021). The lower portion of Main Street is mostly impacted by stormwater flooding and lower portions of the Town still have drainage issues even several days after heavy rains (Personal communications, Mayor Charles Wilbur, June 8, 2021).

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

§201.6(c)(2)(ii), §201.6(c)(3)(ii), §201.6(d)(3) Melfa does not participate in the NFIP program. No areas within the Town lie in a Special Flood Hazard Area.

Critical Facilities

The following table lists the critical facilities and their relative importance to the Town. Nandua High School, not in the Town or any incorporated area, is critical, as it serves as the shelter of last resort for residents. Additionally, the State Police Office and the Eastern Shore Community College, although outside of the Town limits, are also critical



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facilities to the Town.

Table 4.1.8.2 Critical Infrastructure Information – Town of Melfa

Facility	Hazards	Number of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential
Locality-Owned Facilities					
Melfa Town Office	Stormwater, Wind, Fire	400+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Town Park	Stormwater, Wind, Fire	400+	Inconvenience	No	Yes
Empty Lot	Stormwater	400+	Inconvenience	No	Yes
Melfa Post Office	Stormwater, Wind, Fire	400+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Other Facilities (Not Locality-Owned)					
Internet Towers	Stormwater, Wind, Fire	400+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Gas Stations	Stormwater, Wind, Fire	500+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
State Police Headquarters	Stormwater, Wind, Fire	45,000+	Devastating	Yes	Yes
Community College	Stormwater, Wind, Fire	3,000+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Nandua High School	Stormwater, Wind, Fire	5,000+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Melfa VFC	Stormwater, Wind	5,000+	Devastating	Yes	Yes

4.1.9 TOWN OF ONANCOCK

The Town's port was founded to collect tax on tobacco and other products exported from Accomack County. In 1680, the Act of Cohabitation set aside 50 acres at the head of Onancock Creek for development of a town center. This area was called Port Scarborough, but was quickly changed to Onancock. Accomack's county seat was located here until 1693 when a new courthouse was built in the nearby Town of Accomac. The Town was a major port on the Eastern Shore allowing access to Baltimore's markets. The Town declined after 1884 when the railroad was built further inland. Today, the Town includes 665 acres (just over a square mile) and is a residential center, service area, and small active port with 91 business establishments, many located in its historic downtown area (Town of Onancock Comprehensive Plan, 2021).

Table 4.1.9.1 Demographic Information – Town of Onancock

	2023	2020	2014	2013	2010	2000
Population	1,323	1,169	1,226	1,381	1,263	1,525



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Median Age (years)	44.6	57.3	51.6	50.1	51.1	45.3
Disability	269	159	101	73	NA	NA
Income						
Median Household	\$53,750	\$50,347	\$39,927	\$40,313	\$41,372	\$28,214
Poverty Level	25.7%	15.3%	30.1%	25.6%	21.2%	NA
Language						
Only English	97.6%	89.9%	92.7%	94.7%	93.5%	94.0%
Other	2.4%	10.1%	7.3%	5.3%	6.5%	6.0%
Spanish	1.9%	5.4%	0.3%	0.9%	6.3%	4.1%
Ind-Euro	0.5%	2.8%	6.6%	4.2%	0.2%	0.8%
Asian	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: ACS 2023, U.S. Census 2020, ACS, 2014-2019, Annual Estimates of the Residential Population, 2010-2014, ACS, 2009-2013, U.S. Census 2010, U.S. Census 2000

The 2023 American Community Survey indicates that the Town had a population of 1,323, which is a decline from the 1,525 people that lived in the Town during the 2000 Census. According to the 2023 American Community Survey estimates, the population has stabilized and increased slightly since the last census. The median age for residents in 2023 was 44.6, signifying a population on average younger than in the past. However, a significant percentage of the population is aging and older than 62. Older populations often require additional assistance in the event of hazards. The 2023 ACS appears to undercount other language speakers, as in 2020 there was 10% of the population in Onancock speaking a language other than English, which is important to consider during a hazard in regard to accessing safety information. Most, if not all, of these residents are able to access hazard and safety information in a language they are able to understand (Personal communications, Matt Spuck, Town Manager, March 31, 2021).

Workforce

Onancock has seen a declining workforce since 2000, as shown in Table 2. The majority of the workforce is employed in the educational, health care, and social services industry as well as the professional, scientific, and waste management industry, likely due to the Town's Wastewater Treatment Plant. A large portion of residents also work in retail trade, reflective of the downtown retail area, and manufacturing, due to the close proximity of various industrial poultry processing plants nearby. Following an emergency situation that caused significant negative impacts to the tourism industry, the rebound for the Town would most likely also be negatively impacted; however, the portion of the workforce employed in education, construction, professional services, and utilities would be in high need, potentially lessening the negative impact.

Housing

In 2023, the ACS five-year estimates show a slight drop in total housing units from 794 to 762 and a dramatic increase in vacant housing units. The majority of these units are single-family housing and are owner-occupied. The presence of substandard housing in



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Onancock has been greatly reduced over the last 40 years. There is still a presence of some substandard housing in disrepair; however, the Town has a very active plan for removing housing blight. In the last few years, six structures have been demolished and removed and ten were repaired. Grant applications to continue this work are currently in progress (Personal communications, Matt Spuck, Town Manager, March 31, 2021).

Generally, a large portion of vacant housing units can be hazardous during storms due to lack of maintenance and loose debris; however, the Town's efforts in removing dilapidated structures helps to mitigate this hazard. The remaining portion of vacant homes in the Town are largely in part due to seasonal residents, second homes, retirees, and vacation homes. Town officials have also stated they believe this number to be too high (Personal communications, Matt Spuck, Town Manager, March 31, 2021).

Community Facilities

Community facilities comprise all the public services and facilities provided by the Town to all residents. Those services include public water and sewage treatment facilities, police and fire departments, wharf, parks and recreation facilities, and solid waste management.

Onancock's Town Square is located on Market Street and covers an area of about half an acre. It features a gazebo and two monuments. The Northeast Onancock Community Park is about 14 acres and has a basketball court, playground equipment, and benches. There are fields in the Town at Fireman's Field with no active courts or maintained fields. The fields at the water tower are leased for recreational sports use.

The Onancock Wharf and Marina facility includes 12 floating dock slips and two stationary slips available for local and transient use. Public restrooms and private bath houses as well as free laundry facilities for slip rental guests are also available. The Marina sells non-ethanol mid-grade gasoline and diesel fuel, 10 lb. bags of ice, and provides hourly or daily golf cart rentals (Wharf Information | Town of Onancock, Virginia). The public boat ramp is currently closed for renovations. Adjacent to the Marina, the Onancock Landing Park boasts a kayak and paddle board launch and several picnic benches. There are plans to construct a new nature trail, bike path, and dog park (Personal communications, Matt Spuck, Town Manager, March 31, 2021).

The Historic Onancock School and Cultural Center contains 13 acres for recreation, exercise, and walking the Nature Trail along Onancock Creek. A playground, ball field, and additional open spaces are available for pet exercise, frisbee, picnics, and more (What to Do | Town of Onancock, Virginia). The Town also contains two cultural museums, the Roseland Theater hosting first-run films as well as monthly international films, and the North Street Playhouse staging live play and other productions throughout the year.

The Town employs five full-time police officers headquartered at the police station on North Street next to the Town Hall (Police | Town of Onancock, Virginia). Accomack County Sheriff's Department and Virginia State Police also provide assistance when needed. Fire protection and rescue services are provided by the Onancock Volunteer Fire Department. The fire department serves the Town of Onancock and the outlying



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areas of Deep Creek, Chesconessex, Bayside, Cashville, Nebo, East Point, and part of Savageville. A combination of paid and volunteer firefighters as well as volunteer non-firefighters provide 24/7 coverage. The department currently operates three ALS ambulances and an EMS first response vehicle. Fire apparatus includes one engine, one tanker, one ladder truck and one brush truck as well as a utility vehicle (Fire | Town of Onancock, Virginia). A 1993 tanker that could carry two individuals was recently replaced with a new one that is able to carry four and has recently applied for a FEMA grant to replace air packs for self-contained breathing apparatus (Vaughn, C., "OVFD Update" Eastern Shore Post, 2021).

The Town has a municipal water system supplied by groundwater wells at Hartman Avenue. Well depths are about 265 feet, and sodium hypochlorite is injected into the water at the water tank. Two smaller back-up wells are located at the Parker Street site along with a pump station. The water tower is 168-feet-high and contains a 300,000-gallon elevated storage tank. Water is distributed through 2-, 4-, 6-, and 8-inch water lines. The Town owned and operated a wastewater treatment facility located on North Street. The facility serves all residents and businesses in Town, as well as the Airport Industrial Park and several businesses and commercial establishments located on the west side of Route 13 south of Route 179 in Onley. The facility was updated in 2012 from a capacity of 250,000-gallons-per-day to 750,000-gallons-per-day. In 2021, ownership of the facility was transferred to Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) as part of a regional project that will eventually provide the opportunity for several towns up and down the Eastern Shore of Virginia to connect to the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). The first phase of the project will connect from the Town of Nassawadox up to the Onancock facility.

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

Almost 70% of Onancock is developed; however, this includes green space, such as parks and large grassy yards. This trend can easily be seen in the satellite imagery for the Town, presented in Figure 1, where the majority of the Town is residential. The percentage of wetland area is somewhat low relative to the waterfront property, approximately 3.3 miles, and many of the homes on waterfront properties are less than 80 feet from the water's edge. Because wetlands act as sponges during flooding events, typically areas with more extensive wetland fair better during these events. That said, the elevation of much of Onancock is over 20 feet, thus, the Town is less sensitive to flooding, except the westernmost areas of the Town. Onancock has an official Tree Board to improve their green space and long-term green-scape planning. The Town has also recently implemented a dark-sky policy to help mitigate light pollution for migrating birds and other wildlife (Personal communications, Matt Spuck, Town Manager, March 31, 2021).

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

§201.6(c)(2)(ii), §201.6(c)(3)(ii), §201.6(d)(3) The Town joined the NFIP on December 15, 1981. There are currently 30 active policies in the Town and two claims filed to date. The Town does not participate in the Community Rating System (CRS). Unlike many of the coastal Towns on the Eastern Shore, the amount of land in the SFHA remained the same with the new 2015 FIRM. Although the area in the SFHA remained at 0.1-square-miles, the delineation shifted slightly, removing two buildings from the zone and adding three



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buildings for a net increase of only one building in the SFHA.

The Town also has three facilities that are affected by flooding: the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), Onancock Wharf, and the Harbormaster's House. The WWTP could contaminate Onancock Creek and North Branch, and to a lesser extent, the Chesapeake Bay, if it failed during a flood event. Recent improvements to the plant have lessened threats from coastal and stormwater flooding and in turn have reduced the threat of contamination to the creek. The Town now has a 4,000-gallon storage and dispensing tank at the Wharf. The new Onancock Wharf Harbormaster's House, completed in 2014, was built several feet higher than the previous building and is more resilient to flooding damages (Personal communications, Russell Jones, Town Mayor, June 2, 2016). Figure 4 reveals an increasingly more common flooding situation at the Onancock Wharf and Marina. Recent repairs were made to the parking lot and drain approaches, however, flooding during storm events continues to be a significant issue.

An additional 19 structures carry flood insurance, but are not located in a flood zone (FEMA NFIP Insurance Report, January 2016). This may indicate potential storm water flooding issues within the Town. The total number of NFIP policies rose from 10 in 2003 to 30 in 2011, but fell to 23 in 2016 (FEMA NFIP Insurance Report, July 2003, May 2011, January 2016). The soil in Onancock drains well compared to many areas on the Eastern Shore and due to its coastal location, there is a change in elevation (reaching sea level approaching the surrounding creeks). Despite this, the Town still experiences some stormwater flooding problems, including the building that houses the Town Office and Police Station. Of particular concern is Lilliston Avenue, west of Lee Street, which is partly paved right off of Market Street. VDOT is responsible for the maintenance of the ditches adjacent to state-owned roads; however, there are several roads that are owned by the Town for which the Town is responsible. The Town contracts for weed control in Town owned drainage ditches (Personal communications, Matt Spuck, Town Manager, March 31, 2021).

Table 4.1.9.2 Critical Infrastructure Information – Town of Onancock

Facility	Hazards	Number of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential
Locality-Owned Facilities					
Town Office/Police Station	Wind, Stormwater Flooding, Fire	1,098+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Onancock Town Wharf and Marina	Wind, Coastal Flooding, Erosion, Ice, Groundwater Contamination	2,500+	Devastating	No	Yes
Waste Water Treatment Plant	Wind, Flooding	1,098+	Devastating	No	No
Water Supply Tower	Wind, Stormwater Flooding	1,098+	Major Disruption	No	No



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Other Facilities (Not Locality-Owned)					
South Street Pump Station	Coastal Flooding, Stormwater Flooding	1,098+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
National Guard Armory	Wind, Fire	1,098+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Fire Station	Wind, Stormwater Flooding	3,500+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Telephone Company Exchange Building	Wind, Stormwater Flooding, Fire	45,000+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Gas Station	Wind, Stormwater Flooding, Fire	1,098+	Minor Disruption	Yes	Yes
Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital	Wind, Stormwater Flooding, Fire	45,000+	Devastating	No	Yes

4.1.10 TOWN OF ONLEY

Onley is located near the central spine of the Eastern Shore in south-central Accomack County and encompasses approximately 486 acres. The Town was originally known as Cross Roads until its name was changed to Onley after the name of Virginia Governor Henry Wise's home on Onancock Creek in the latter part of the 19th century. The Town, like a number of other Eastern Shore towns, developed around a railroad station built following the construction of the railroad in 1884. The railroad spurred a thriving downtown which included the headquarters of the Eastern Shore Produce Exchange. The Produce Exchange was the first cooperative marketing organization and proved to be a vital component of the flourishing potato market on the Shore. The Town was incorporated in 1950 and experienced a series of fires in the early 1970s that destroyed much of its business district. At that time, the Town's commercial activity began to relocate westward to Route 13. Today, the western portion of Onley along Route 13 is the site of the largest concentration of commercial activity in Accomack County. The rest of the Town remains largely residential (Town of Onley Comprehensive Plan, 2017).

Table 4.1.10.1 Demographic Information – Town of Onley

	2023	2019	2014	2013	2010	2000
Population	612	532*	502	598	516	496
Median Age (years)	40.1	40.0	50.0	45.3	48.6	46.3
Disability	77	59	31	33	NA	NA
Income						
Median Household	\$55,139	\$53,690	\$59,643	\$80,813	\$74,417	\$36,750
Poverty Level	7.2%	19.1%	13.3%	10.9%	NA	NA



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Language						
Only English	91.4%	80.4%	87.8%	89.8%	97.0%	91.3%
Other	8.6%	19.6%	12.2%	10.2%	3.0%	8.7%
Spanish	5.5%	13.2%	8.0%	9.6%	3.0%	3.8%
Ind-Euro	3.2%	5.4%	4.2%	0.5%	0.0%	1.1%
Asian	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.8%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: ACS 2023, U.S. Census 2020, ACS, 2014-2019, Annual Estimates of the Residential Population, 2010-2014, ACS, 2009-2013, U.S. Census 2010, U.S. Census 2000

The Town's population grew from 415 in 1960 to an estimated 612 according to the 2023 American Community Survey (U.S. Census, 1960; Personal communications, John Pavlik, Zoning Administrator, February 18, 2016, ACS 2023). The median age of 40 is slightly older than the national and state median age, which is generally good in terms of preparing for a hazard. The high median household income displayed in Table 1 for 2010 and 2013 may be attributed to a large portion of the population nearing retirement and at the highest of their pay range during that time. This is also reflected by the decrease of the civilian employed population, shown in Table 2. There has been a steady increase in residents that speak a language other than English since 2010 (ACS 2019). This is extremely important to consider when planning for a hazard. It is pertinent that residents in Town are able to access important safety information in a language they are able to understand. However, the ACS 2023 shows a decline in this population, which is likely inaccurate given the trend across the last decade.

Workforce

The workforce in Onley works in education, health, and social services, with a large increase in manufacturing and public administration since 2014, according to ACS estimates. There are also substantial portions of the population that work in the construction, manufacturing, and public administration industries. The manufacturing industry is likely dominated by the block and concrete company located in Town and poultry processing positions at nearby plants, such as Perdue Farms and Tyson Foods. These companies often have policies in place to mitigate the economic impact for both the company and the employees; however, long-term closures would have strong negative impacts on the Town. There would be a 'domino effect' from such a closure, as employees in that industry wouldn't have spending dollars for rent, local shops, nor family necessities, and other dependent agricultural businesses would be at a loss as well.

Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital relocated just outside of Town limits and opened in February of 2017 (Town of Onley Comprehensive Plan, 2017). New businesses have already began locating to the original downtown area and along the Route 13 corridor. This trend will likely continue and have an effect on the local workforce industry.

Onley is one of the larger commercial centers of the Virginia Eastern Shore. Because of its location on Route 13, this area is the County's hub of commercial activity. Businesses located adjacent to Route 13 include a variety of retail stores and services, restaurants,



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a grocery store, three banks, two motels, and professional offices (Town of Onley Comprehensive Plan, 2017). Another large shopping center, Chesapeake Square, lies adjacent to the Town's northwestern corporate limits, but the majority of the Town's commercial activity is concentrated along Route 13 and in the shopping center. A Wal-Mart is located on land adjacent to Onley's southern border. The Town expects that there will be a continuous increase in businesses with the new hospital located just outside Town limits. There is no recent data for business types in the Town of Onley available and officials were not able to provide estimates (Personal communications, Chief of Police John Spivey, May 6, 2021); however, the Town of Onley Website states there are currently more than 80 retail businesses.

Housing

Between 2000 and 2010, there were a significant number of housing units constructed, with the majority of them being single-family residential (U.S. Census, 2000, 2010). Although Town representatives indicated that the number of vacant housing units displayed in Table 4 was too high for each year, they confirm that there seems to be an increase in the number of homes that are occupied by renters as opposed to owners (Personal communications, John Pavlik, Zoning Administrator, February 18, 2016). Although most of the housing stock is in good condition in Onley, there are a few houses scattered throughout the Town that are in various states of disrepair and in need of rehabilitation (Town of Onley Comprehensive Plan, 2017).

Community Facilities

Community facilities include the services and functions provided by the Town government, in coordination with other public and private agencies. Such facilities are essential to support the Town and its development to enhance the overall quality of life for its residents. Community facilities include necessities such as public safety services, solid waste collection, mosquito control, and street lighting (Town of Onley Comprehensive Plan, 2017).

Police protection is currently provided by three sworn officers employed by the Town; however, the Town is funded for and is currently working to fill a fourth vacancy (Personal Communications, Deborah Bliss, Planning Commission Chair, October 24, 2022). Back-up service is provided by the Onancock Police Department, Accomack County Sheriff's Department, and the Virginia State Police. Fire and Rescue services have been terminated as of July 2017. These services are now provided by nearby Onancock, Tasley, and Melfa Fire and Rescue (Town of Onley Comprehensive Plan, 2017). *See Onancock and Melfa's respective chapters for personnel and inventory information.

Onley's Town Office, built in the late 1970s, previously functioned as both the Town's administration building and Police Department; however, the Town Office has recently relocated to Four Corners Plaza off U.S. Route 13 (Personal Communications, Deborah Bliss, Planning Commission Chair, October 24, 2022). The new facility will be located on Town property adjacent to the former Town Office, while the Onley Police Department is now the sole occupant in the existing building. The Town has expressed interest in constructing the new Town Office facility to more stringent building codes that would lessen the risk of flooding and wind damage to the property. The Town employs a full-



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time Town Manager/Zoning Administrator and a full-time Clerk/Treasurer to carry out administrative, zoning, and financial functions of the Town.

The George M. McMath Town Park, officially opened on October 24, 2020. The Park is located at 21062 Colonial Avenue and offers a walking path, walking labyrinth, ornamental pond with a sculpture, pavilion, cooking grills, and playground equipment (Personal Communications, Chief Spivey, March 30, 2021).

The Town of Onley provides weekly residential trash collection services, contracted out to Davis Disposal. Private contractors are responsible for emptying large dumpsters within the Town that are used primarily by commercial establishments. The Town also conducts a general clean-up week for brush and debris removal twice a year. Recycling and waste disposal centers are located in the nearby Town of Tasley and further south in Painter (Town of Onley Comprehensive Plan, 2017).

Residents and businesses in Onley rely on individual private wells for their water supply. All residents use private on site septic systems for sewage and wastewater disposal, and the majority of businesses treat wastewater and sewage through mass drain-fields. Several businesses on Route 13 utilize a sewage trunk line which is connected to a wastewater treatment facility in Onancock that has the possibility of expanding in the future (Town of Onley Comprehensive Plan, 2017). The Wal-Mart, only partially within Town limits, has its own sewage disposal system.

There are no schools or known daycares within the Town of Onley; however, Nandua High School is located less than a mile south of Town limits and is a designated shelter for Accomack County. Nandua Middle school is less than a half mile from Town limits.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

§201.6(c)(2)(ii), §201.6(c)(3)(ii), §201.6(d)(3) The Town of Onley joined the NFIP on February 1, 2012. There is currently one active policy in Town. There are no Special Flood Hazard Areas within the Onley. More information on repetitive loss properties, NFIP policies and claims, and the CRS program can be found in Chapter 6: Coastal Flooding and Chapter 9: The Region.

Table 4.1.10.2 Critical Infrastructure Information – Town of Onley

Facility	Hazards	Number of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential
Locality-Owned Facilities					
Onley Police Department	Stormwater Flooding, Wind, Fire	532+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Post Office	Stormwater Flooding, Wind, Fire	532+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Onley Town Office	Stormwater Flooding, Wind, Fire	532+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Other Facilities (Not Locality-Owned)					



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Riverside Hospital (just outside of Town limits)	Stormwater Flooding, Wind, Fire	44,627+	Devastating	No	Yes
Gas Stations	Stormwater Flooding, Wind, Fire	532+	Major Disruption	No	Yes

4.1.11 TOWN OF PAINTER

The coming of the New York, Pennsylvania, and Norfolk Railroad in the 1880s initiated a geographical population shift from the coasts to the center of the Eastern Shore. This created several new towns, including the Town of Painter, which lies at the exact center between the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel and the Maryland state line. Painter, previously called “Mappsburg,” was incorporated by the Circuit Court of Accomack County in 1950 and has a total area of 400 acres. The main highway for the Eastern Shore, Route 13, intersects almost directly in the center of the Town (Town of Painter Comprehensive Plan, 2002).

Table 4.1.11.1 Demographic Information – Town of Painter

	2023	2020	2014	2000
Population	172	272	308	229***
Median Age (years)	58.5	32.5*	35.8	39.7
Disability	19.4%	25*	12	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$55,933	\$40,833*	\$51,667	\$39,063
Poverty Level	17.1%	33.9%*	24.7%	NA
Language				
Only English	98.7%	83.0%*	86.3%	79.2%
Other	1.3%	17.0%*	13.7%	20.8%
Spanish	0.0%	16.6%*	12.6%	20.8%
Ind-Euro	0.0%	0.4%*	1.1%	0.0%
Asian	0.0%	0.0%*	0.0%	0.0%
Other	0.0%	0.0%*	0.0%	0.0%

Source: ACS 2023, U.S. Census 2020, ACS, 2014-2019, Annual Estimates of the Residential Population, 2010-2014, ACS, 2009-2013, U.S. Census 2010, U.S. Census 2000

According to the American Community Survey five-year estimates, the Town of Painter had a population of 245 in 2019. The median age is only 32.5, indicating a younger population; however, Town officials believe that age should be higher (Personal communications, Mayor Connie Campbell and Kerri Atkinson, Town Clerk, May 26, 2021). A younger population is generally good in regards to a hazard, unless there is a high population of young children; however, only 6.5% of the population in Painter is under the age of five. According to the ACS, the majority of the population is between the ages of 5-17 and 25-44 years. The language residents speak is important to consider in the event of a hazard in regards to residents having the ability to access important



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safety information in a language they can understand. In the Town of Painter, 17% of residents speak a language other than English, that language being primarily Spanish. It is important for the Town to consider this when planning for hazards and to provide emergency information in both languages.

Workforce

According to Table 2, the majority of the work force in Painter is employed in the Educational and Health Care Services industry, which has been on an upward trend since 2010. Previously, a large percentage of the Town also worked in the Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, and Food industry, but according to ACS 2019 estimates, that percentage has decreased significantly. Town officials believe the number of residents employed in the Retail industry should be higher and the Education and Health Care Services industry is likely lower (Personal communications, Mayor Campbell and Kerri Atkinson, Town Clerk, May 26, 2021). The total civilian employed Eastern Shore of Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan 2021 Chapter 19 | Page 283 population has decreased since 2010 as well, which is likely due to a high number of residents retiring (Personal communications, Mayor Campbell and Kerri Atkinson, Town Clerk, May 26, 2021). The next two highest industries that employ residents of Painter are Construction and “Other.”

The Town of Painter is primarily residential. Nearly all businesses in the Town are located just off Route 13. Some of these businesses include a gas station, Dollar General, a discount tire shop, United States Post Office, a food truck, farmers market, seafood stand, an HVAC shop, a nail salon, day care, and an antique shop (Personal communications, Mayor Campbell and Kerri Atkinson, Town Clerk, May 26, 2021). The majority of businesses in Painter are in the Retail Trade industry.

Housing

According to the American Community Survey five-year estimates, Painter's total housing units dropped from 141 in 2014 to 107 in 2019; however, the 2019 number is estimated to be too low and is likely closer to 2014 and 2010 figures shown in Table 4 (Personal communications, Mayor Campbell and Kerri Atkinson, Town Clerk, May 26, 2021). Town officials also noted that the number of vacant housing units is likely closer to 15, with many dilapidated and in need of demolition. Although the Town currently does not have any demolition plans, they are interested in seeking funding opportunities to do so.

Another trend to note in Table 4 is the drastic decrease (over 50%) of owner-occupied housing units since 2010. This number is likely too low, whereas the number of renter-occupied units is too high (Personal communications, Mayor Campbell and Kerri Atkinson, Town Clerk, May 26, 2021).

Community Facilities

Community facilities are facilities required to support the services and functions provided by the Town government or in coordination with other public and private entities. These facilities enhance the overall quality of life for the Town and its citizens. It is important to note what facilities are available in case of a hazard, and it is important to make an inventory of facilities that could be impacted by a hazard.



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Most of the community facilities within the Town of Saxis focus upon the harbor and seafood industry.

Fire protection for the Town is provided by the Saxis Volunteer Fire & Rescue Company, Inc. The fire company also provides an ambulance service and includes one ALS ambulance, two engines, two other utility trucks. The brick building itself, a renovated schoolhouse, has five bays, one facing in the other direction in order to increase EMS response time, and the building contains the Town office. The Saxis fire house is the designated staging area following an emergency and has a raised generator.

State Route 695 provides the only road access to the Town and portions of the route are often inundated during storm events and astronomically or wind-driven tides. With only one foot of sea level rise (SLR), it is estimated that the part of State Route 695 will be submerged with one foot of water. This is important to note, as it also reflects that with one foot of flooding about mean high tide, this section of the road would also be inundated, and the remainder of Route 695 leading towards Sanford vulnerable to two feet of SLR or flooding above mean high tide.

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

The Town of Painter encompasses approximately 400 acres. Elevations in the Town range from a high of 37-feet and a low of 25-feet with overall slopes less than 1%, which may result in flooding due to poor drainage. Soils in Painter are either hydric or highly permeable and have a high potential for groundwater contamination. Presence of groundwater near the surface can cause septic system failure, which could result in groundwater contamination, putting the health of residents at risk (Town of Painter Comprehensive Plan, 2002).

The primary land uses in the Town are residential and agriculture, with commercial uses concentrated along the Route 13 corridor (Town of Painter Comprehensive Plan, 2002). Soil types in Painter are a major constraint to future development, as the Town has not experienced any new development in several years.

The Town of Painter is completely reliant on groundwater and faces a threat of contamination from several sources, including failed septic systems within the Town, leaks, and spills of petroleum-based products from underground storage tanks, and major industrial facilities within the area.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

§201.6(c)(2)(ii), §201.6(c)(3)(ii), §201.6(d)(3) The Town of Painter does not participate in the NFIP. There are no Special Flood Hazard Areas within the Town.

Table 4.1.11.2 Critical Infrastructure Information – Town of Painter

Facility	Hazards	Number of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential
Locality-Owned Facilities					

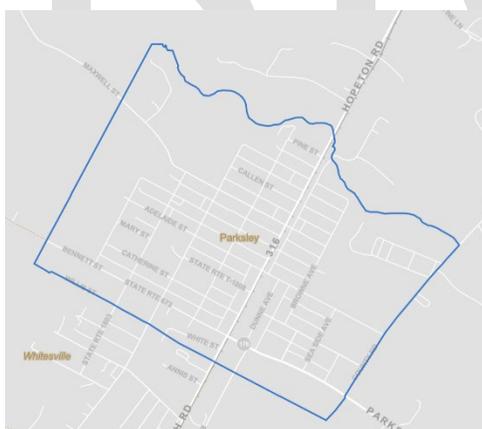


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Painter Fire and Rescue Department	Storm Water Flooding, Contamination, Wind	7,500+	Devastating	No	Yes
Town Hall	Storm Water Flooding, Contamination, Wind	245+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Other Facilities (Not Locality-Owned)					
U.S. Post Office	Storm Water Flooding, Contamination	245+	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Gas Station	HAZMAT Incidents, Storm Water Flooding, Wind	245+	Major Disruption	No	Yes

4.1.12 TOWN OF PARKSLEY

Parksley is located in central Accomack County and was originally a planned development that was founded in 1885 as a Victorian-era railroad community centrally located to nearby water-access. U.S. Route 13 passes just east of town and the Eastern Shore Railroad, which is connected to the Town's rich history and heritage, runs through the downtown commercial district. The Town was incorporated in 1904 and in 1906 became the first town on the Eastern Shore to have electricity. Although the railroad is no longer active, it defined the Town's growth and prosperity and still remains a prominent feature of the Town (Town of Parksley Comprehensive Plan, 2006). A state-of-the-art library and cultural center will provide modern conveniences and genealogy research activities.



Parksley has an area of land of 0.6 square miles or 400 acres. Approximately 30% of land in Parksley is developed with residential land use being the predominant land use category concentrated in the southeast portion of the Town. Commercial land uses are clustered throughout and agricultural land use is comprised of three large tracts of farmland located in the outlying areas of Town.

Table 4.1.12.1 Demographic Information – Town of Parksley

	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	816	791	842	837
Median Age (years)	43.8	40.5	40.1	40.6
Disability	19.4%	78%	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$55,933	\$52,841	\$43,625	\$35,313
Poverty Level	17.1%	13.0%	14.1%	NA
Language				



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Only English	66.7%	73.7%	83.7%	NA
Other	33.3%	26.3%	16.3%	NA
Spanish	6.3%	2.9%	10.1%	NA
Ind-Euro	26.8%	23.3%	2.0%	NA
Asian	0.1%	0.0%	4.2%	NA
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	NA

There has been an influx of young migrant families moving into the area, as nearly a quarter of the population is under the age of 18 (24.7%). Typically, younger adult residents are less of a high-risk population in times of hazards; however, families with young children may also need assistance in the case of an emergency. The population that speaks a language other than English doubled from 2010 to 2023 (ACS, 2010, 2019, 2023). This is an important factor to consider when there is a potential hazard in order to ensure all citizens are able to access important safety information in a language they can understand.

Workforce

The largest employer of Town residents is the manufacturing industry, which makes up 42% of the workforce (ACS, 2023). This industry is most likely dominated by poultry processing positions at nearby plants such as Perdue Farms and Tyson Foods. These companies often have policies in place to mitigate the economic impact for both the company and the employees; however, long-term closures would have strong negative impacts on the Town. There would be a 'domino effect' from such a closure, as employees in that industry wouldn't have spending dollars for rent, local shops, family necessities, etc., and other dependent agricultural businesses would be at a loss as well.

Housing

The ownership rate in Parksley is 59.1% with 317 of the 396 units occupied (ACS, 2023).

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

Parksley is also home to the Eastern Shore Railway Museum (Town of Parksley Comprehensive Plan, 2006).

Community Facilities

Community facilities in Parksley include the Parksley Police Department, Fire Department, the Accomack County Department of Public Safety main office located across from the Fire Department, Parksley Town Office, and a Farmer's Market.

Fire protection and ambulance services for the Town and surrounding area, approximately 7,500 people, are provided serviced by the Parksley Volunteer Fire Department, located on Dunne Avenue. The Fire Department operates ambulances, fire engines, and other utility vehicles. The Fire Department is also the designated emergency staging area, and the Pavilion is the area for dispensing emergency supplies, such as food and medicine (Town of Parksley Comprehensive Plan, 2006).



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The Town operates a public water supply system with ground water wells. There are two deep production wells operated on a regular basis, with a third well available for emergency backup operations and Fire Department use. Water is chlorinated at the well site and then pumped to a 75,000-gallon elevated storage tank for distribution. There are several wellhead-protection measures in place, such as fencing and locked well caps (Town of Parksley Comprehensive Plan, 2006).

Parksley's potable water supply is obtained from ground water through a municipal supply system. Parksley is located in Wellhead Protection Area C- Perdue Area. Major water withdrawers in this area are Perdue, the Towns of Onancock and Parksley, and Shore Rehab and Rehabilitation by Saber Healthcare. Additional large withdrawals could have an impact on water quality from salt water intrusion and deterioration of water quality.

Natural Landscape

Parksley lies within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The elevation ranges from 30 to 43 feet above sea level, with slopes from 0-6%. The Town itself is relatively flat and is not located within the 100-year floodplain. The soils are a major limiting factor for development due to their unsuitability for septic tanks (Town of Parksley Comprehensive Plan, 2006).

Future Development

A substantial portion of agricultural land contains soil types which would allow on-site septic systems, which offers an opportunity for future development. There are plans for towns further south on the Shore to connect to Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) sewer lines that will be running from Nassawadox in Northampton County to the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) in Onancock. Sequential phases in the north following these initial connections would potentially allow Parksley to connect to a sewer system. If available, would allow for further development and would assist in the mitigation of groundwater contamination and other health risks that septic tanks pose. Until then, vacant land present in Town can be developed with alternative or engineered septic systems.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

The Town joined the NFIP on December 22, 2008. The Town has 2 NFIP policies. Neither policy is located in a flood zone, nor have there been any claims filed in the Town (FEMA NFIP Data Report, 2022). This may indicate potential storm water flooding issues within the Town. More information on NFIP policies and claims can be found in Chapter 6: Capability Assessment.

Table 4.1.12.2 Critical Infrastructure Information – Town of Parksley

Facility	Hazards	Number of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential
Locality-Owned Facilities					
Parksley Town Office	Wind Stormwater Fire Tornadoes Cyber Security	~816	Major	Yes	Yes



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Parksley Public Water Supply & Sewer System	Wind Stormwater Tornadoes Cyber Security Terrorism	~816	Devastating	No	Yes
Parksley Town Park	Wind Tornadoes Hurricanes	~816	Inconvenient	No	Yes
Parksley Pavillion/Stage Area	Wind Fire Stormwater Flooding	~816	Major	No	Yes
Parksley Police Dept.	Wind Stormwater Fire Tornadoes Cyber Security	~816	Major	Yes	Yes
Town Parking Area	Wind Stormwater Fire Tornadoes Hurricanes Flooding Tropical Storms	~816	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Other Facilities (Not Locality-Owned)					
Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Library	Flooding, Tornadoes, Cybersecurity	~1500	Inconvenient	Yes	Yes
Eastern Shore Railway Museum	Flooding, Tornadoes, Cybersecurity, Hurricanes, Tropical Storms	~816	Inconvenient	No	Yes
Parksley Fire & Rescue Dept.	Wind, Fire, Stormwater, Cybersecurity, Flooding	7500+	Devastating	No	Yes
U.S. Post Office	Wind, Fire, Stormwater, Cybersecurity, Flooding	~816	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Accomack County Dept. of Public Safety	Wind, Fire, Stormwater, Cybersecurity, Flooding	7500+	Devastating	Yes	Yes
E.S. Community Services Board	Wind, Fire, Stormwater, Cybersecurity, Flooding	7500+	Devastating	Yes	Yes

4.1.13 TOWN OF SAXIS

Saxis Island juts into the Pocomoke Sound and is separated from the rest of Accomack County by Freeschool Marsh. The island was first recorded in 1666 and a single farmstead that primarily raised cattle until 1800 when four families inhabited the Island. The community grew in size throughout the 1800s and cattle farming declined due to lack of space on the island. It was during this period that seafood became the primary economy. In the 1920s, the causeway connecting the Island to the mainland was constructed and a channel was dredged to the harbor allowing for larger boats to access the Island. Seafood continues to be the main economy for the Town. Saxis was incorporated in 1959 (Town of Saxis Comprehensive Plan, 1997).

Table 4.1.13.1 Demographic Information – Town of Saxis

	2023	2019	2010	2000

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Population	172	238	241	337
Median Age (years)	58.5	56.0	55.5	47.3
Disability	19.4%	42%	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$55,933	\$39,028	\$29,545	\$18,125
Poverty Level	17.1%	13.8%	17.6%	NA
Language				
Only English	98.7%	95.7%	NA	99.4%
Other	1.3%	4.3%	NA	0.6%
Spanish	0.0%	2.1%	NA	0.6%
Ind-Euro	0.0%	2.1%	NA	0.0%
Asian	0.0%	0.0%	NA	0.0%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	NA	0.0%

The 2023 American Community Survey five-year estimates indicate that the Town has a population of 172 which is a decline from the relatively stable population trends since the 2010 Census. The Town has previously experienced a decline in population since 1960 when the population was 577 (Town of Saxis Comprehensive Plan, 1997). As shown in Table 1, the median age for residents in Saxis in 2023 was 58.5. This is a population approximately 18 years older than the national and state average, with 26.6% of the population over the age of 65 (ACS, 2023). Populations with a high percentage of elderly residents may require additional assistance in the event of a hazard.

Workforce

Saxis is primarily a community of working watermen and the fisheries industry is based on soft shell crabs and hard crabs resulting from the soft-shell catch. Some clamming and fin fishing also occur. From April to November, peeler crabs are caught in traps, scrapes, pots, and dip nets, held in floats until they shed, and sold as soft crabs (Town of Saxis Comprehensive Plan, 1997). Data from the 2023 ACS depicts the Saxis work force with the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industry accounting for nearly 46.5% of the workforce. Other dominating industries include manufacturing (17.4%) and educational, health care, and social services (15.1%). There has been a shift to manufacturing in 2019 at 6.1% to 17.4% in 2023.

Housing

The majority of homes in Town have previously remained occupied; however, the Town has experienced an increase in the number of vacation homes that remain vacant through the majority of the winter months. The influx of second homes in the Town is represented in the ACS 2023 Housing Occupancy that states eighty-seven housing units are occupied with eighty-five units sitting vacant. Town residents obtain their water from private wells and dispose of wastewater with private septic systems. Due to Saxis' location near the coast, there is an increased chance of saltwater intrusion into the York-Eastover Aquifer, from which private wells source the residents' water, although no impacts have been measured to date. Public health risks may be encountered during and following coastal flooding events as septic system drain fields are inundated with flood waters.



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Community Facilities

Community facilities are facilities required to support the services and functions provided by the Town government or in coordination with other public and private entities. These facilities enhance the overall quality of life for the Town and its citizens. It is important to note what facilities are available in case of a hazard, and it is important to make an inventory of facilities that could be impacted by a hazard.

Most of the community facilities within the Town of Saxis focus upon the harbor and seafood industry.

Fire protection for the Town is provided by the Saxis Volunteer Fire & Rescue Company, Inc. The fire company also provides an ambulance service and includes one ALS ambulance, two engines, two other utility trucks. The brick building itself, a renovated schoolhouse, has five bays, one facing in the other direction in order to increase EMS response time, and the building contains the Town office. The Saxis fire house is the designated staging area following an emergency and has a raised generator.

State Route 695 provides the only road access to the Town and portions of the route are often inundated during storm events and astronomically or wind-driven tides. With only one foot of sea level rise (SLR), it is estimated that the part of State Route 695 will be submerged with one foot of water. This is important to note, as it also reflects that with one foot of flooding about mean high tide, this section of the road would also be inundated, and the remainder of Route 695 leading towards Sanford vulnerable to two feet of SLR or flooding above mean high tide.

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

A public harbor and boat launch with public restrooms are located in Town as well as a public pier. The public harbor was built in 1962 at the south end of Town adjacent to Starling Creek and funds were reinvested in 2005 to upgrade and maintain the facility. The harbor contains 75 boat slips rented out on a yearly basis for a fee.

The harbor is equipped with electricity, lights, restrooms, a concrete boat ramp, and a working stall with a hoist. Majority of the boat slips are used by commercial boats. Maintaining the channel navigability is extremely important, the entrance channel and turning basin were authorized by the River and Harbor Act of 1935. The Harbor was designated as a federal Harbor of Refuge by the USACE in July 1960. A jetty has been installed to protect the Island from erosion by trapping moving sand with the expectations that a beach will develop on the Island. The last time that Starlings Creek and the harbor were dredged was in 2015 utilizing Hurricane Sandy funds at a cost of almost \$700,000 which removed 82,500 cubic yards of sediment (Starlings Creek Dredging, 2015). Dredge spoils were used for beach nourishment and the finer sediments were pumped into the dredge spoil site on the property that the USACE leases from the Town.

The Saxis Wildlife Management Area, which borders the eastern half of the Town, offers opportunities for hunting, fishing, and bird watching. As part of a coastal resilience project, the Town is working towards constructing a public recreational area adjacent to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) leased dredge spoil site that will include a



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designated parking lot, restrooms, a native garden, covered picnic facilities, beach access, a boat ramp, a pier, and a playground. A pavilion located at the Harbor was completed in 2016 and is accompanied by a restroom facility. These improvements to the Town will accommodate special Town events, such as popular oyster roasts, as well as personal events, such as weddings and picnics.

Saxis Island Museum was created in 2014 in the larger portion of the same building that hosts the Post Office. Saxis received state and federal historical designation, leading to additional funding for mitigation and resilience projects. A federal grant allowed the Crockett Store to be fully renovated and house the museum's new location showing the Saxis way of life.

The community's cemeteries are a cultural resource in the Town. During Hurricane Floyd in 1999, and again during an extremely high-tide occurrence in July of 2020, several graves floated up on the north area of Town indicating the continued risk as increasing frequency and duration of inundation and erosion rates will affect these vulnerable assets.

Saxis Island Historic District was designated by the Commonwealth of Virginia Landmarks Register on June 15, 2017, and designated by the National Register of Historic Places November 24, 2017. The 353-acre Saxis Island Historic District encompasses the Town of Saxis and adjacent areas of a narrow Accomack County peninsula that juts into the Chesapeake Bay.

Natural Landscape

Saxis lies within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Saxis is situated on a ridge of sand-rich soils on the western perimeter of Freeschool Marsh. The shoreline is 9,000 foot long, including a narrow beach along the Pocomoke Sound. The town encompasses approximately 210 acres. Excluding the dredge spoil site, the highest elevation is five feet above mean low water (Town of Saxis, VIMS).

Future Development

Soil types on the island are a major limiting factor in regard to development as most soils in Saxis are not suitable for septic tank use (Town of Saxis Comprehensive Plan, 1997). Engineered septic tanks or the potential to connect to the Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) sewer line may allow for future development.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

The Town joined the NFIP on November 17, 1982. Saxis has had 37 flood insurance claims since 1982 (FEMA NFIP Data Report, 2022). There was only one claim in the Town from 2003 to 2011, with the average claim settled being \$6,314 (FEMA NFIP Flood Insurance Report, May 2011), while there were 12 claims totaling approximately \$210,000 between 2011-2016. These recent claims were likely from damage incurred during Hurricane Sandy. More information on repetitive loss properties, NFIP policies and claims, and the CRS program can be found in Chapter 6: Capability Assessment.

Table 4.1.13.2 Critical Infrastructure Information – Town of Saxis



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Facility	Hazards	Number of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential
Locality-Owned Facilities					
Saxis Town Office	Flooding, Wind, Fire	~200	Minor Disruption	Yes	Yes
Saxis Harbor	Flooding, Wind, Erosion, Ice	10,000+	Devastating	No	Yes
Saxis Town Pier	Flooding, Wind, Erosion, Ice	~400	Minor Disruption	No	Yes
Saxis Pavillion	Wind , Flooding	~400	Inconvenience	No	Yes
Dredge Spoil Basin	Flooding, Erosion	10,000+	Devastating	Yes	Yes
Town Parking & Beach	Flooding, Erosion, Wind	~400	Minor Disruption	No	Yes
Public Boat Ramps	Flooding, Erosion, Ice	~400	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Public Restrooms	Flooding, Wind, Erosion	~400	Inconvenience	No	Yes
Other Facilities (Not Locality-Owned)					
Saxis Causeway	Flooding, Erosion	~400	Devastating	No	Yes
Saxis Island Museum	Flooding, Wind, Fire	~400	Inconvenient	No	Yes
Saxis Volunteer Fire Company	Wind, Fire, Stormwater, Cybersecurity, Flooding	2000+	Devastating	Yes	Yes
U.S. Post Office	Wind, Fire, Flooding	~200	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Places of Worship	Wind, Fire, Flooding	~200	Inconvenient	Yes	Yes
USGS Tide Gauge	Flooding	10,000	Minor Disruption	No	Yes

4.1.14 TOWN OF TANGIER

The Town of Tangier or Tangier Island is in Chesapeake Bay, located between the Eastern Shore and the Northern Neck of Virginia. Tangier was first settled in 1686 as a farming community as the island was much larger and had woodlands. Measuring less than one square mile, the Town of Tangier is comprised of three low-lying islands joined by small bridges. Most of the island is comprised of tidally inundated marshland, and has a population of around 400.

Table 4.1.14.1 Demographic Information – Town of Tangier

	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	436	506	727	604
Median Age (years)	63.8	52.3	48.6	42.7



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Disability	17.9%	87%	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$55,933	\$41,806	\$40,556	\$26,607
Poverty Level	17.1%	17.2%	28.5%	NA
Language				
Only English	100%	100%	99.5%	97.9%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	2.1%
Spanish	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%
Ind-Euro	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%
Asian	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The 2023 American Community Survey five-year estimates indicate that the Town has a population of 436 which continues the declining population trend since the 2010 Census. As shown in Table 4.1.14.1, the median age for residents in Saxis in 2023 was 63.8. This is a population approximately 24 years older than the state average, with 47.5% of the population over the age of 65 (ACS, 2023). Populations with a high percentage of elderly residents may require additional assistance in the event of a hazard.

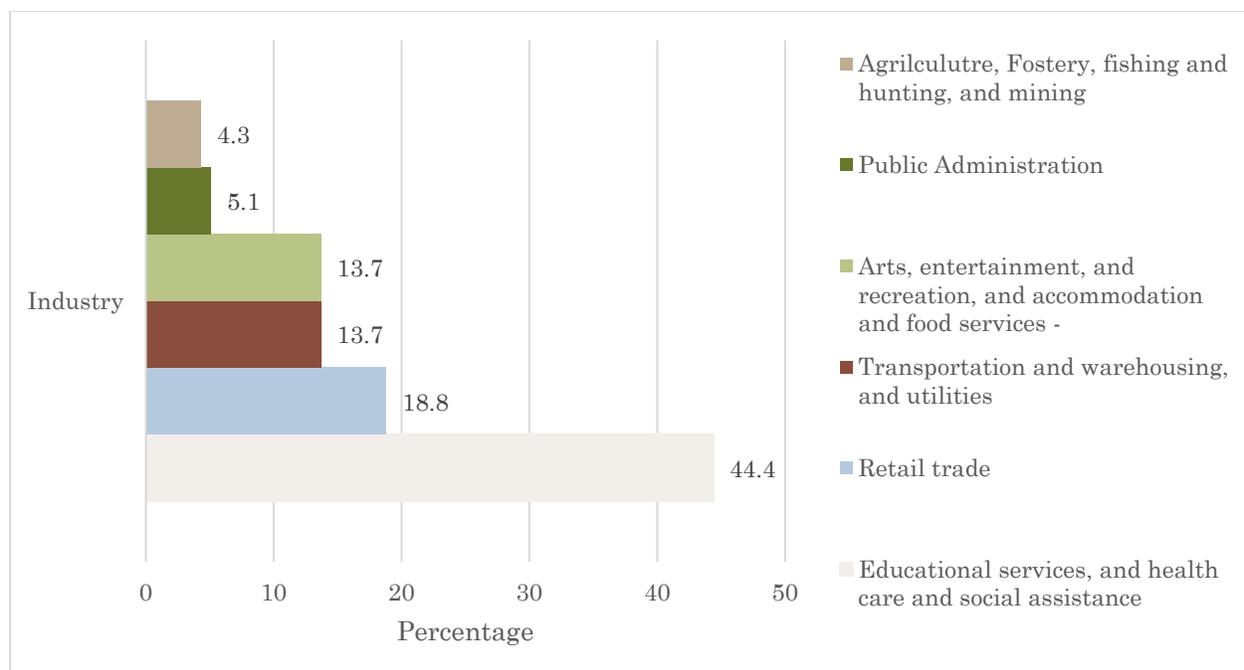
Workforce

Data from the 2023 ACS depicts the Tangier dominant industry work force as the educational, health care, and social services (44.4%). There has been a shift from Agriculture, forestry, fishing/hunting, or mining and Transportation and warehousing, and utilities. This represents a decline in watermen, which local representatives attribute to the increases in regulations and fees associated with fishing licenses.

Figure 4.1.14.1 Workforce by Industry, ACS 2023 – Town of Tangier



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Housing

The ACS 2023 Housing Occupancy that states 205 housing units are occupied with 66 units sitting vacant, totaling 271 housing units. Town residents obtain their water from private wells and dispose of wastewater with private septic systems. Due to Saxis' location near the coast, there is an increased chance of saltwater intrusion into the York-Eastover Aquifer, from which private wells source the residents' water, although no impacts have been measured to date. Public health risks may be encountered during and following coastal flooding events as septic system drain fields are inundated with flood waters.

The Town has not managed a grant under the FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). Accomack County has used the HMGP to elevate 3 homes on Tangier. Under Disaster Recovery Initiative funds made available following Hurricane Floyd in 1999, the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC) also elevated 6 houses. The Town and A-NPDC elevated 12 homes following flooding from Hurricane Isabel in 2003. No additional projects have been completed and it is thought to become increasingly difficult for residents to elevate additional homes as the program has become cost prohibitive.

Community Facilities

Housing units, community facilities, and transportation are all important factors when considering hazard resiliency for Tangier Island. Water transportation is the primary mode of transport between the Town and the mainland. The harbor at Crisfield, Maryland is more heavily traveled than any in Accomack County; however, the Onancock Wharf is becoming more popular with the regular, seasonal ferry service. There are three other seasonal ferry services to and from the Town as well while mail is routed through Crisfield, Maryland and most residents travel to Crisfield for shopping, business, and entertainment purposes. Residents store over 100 cars in Crisfield's



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garages and parking lots. Grocery store supplies are brought by boat and large items, such as mobile homes and building supplies, are brought in by barge. There is an airstrip owned by the Town located on the west side of the Island. This airport is the only link the Town has to the mainland when ice covers the Bay. The airport has no landing lights, but it has been paved. Transportation on the island is by foot, bicycle, golf cart, 4-wheeler, ATV, or motorcycle.

The Tangier Volunteer Fire Department provides fire protection for the Town. The fire alarm is activated by the 911 Operations Center on the Eastern Shore. The Fire Department has 20-25 volunteer firefighters and one paid part-time EMT. Equipment includes one mini-pumper, one S-10 pick-up truck, and a Jeep with a pump. The fire company also provides ambulance service with one ambulance and a John Deere equipped with a stretcher when the ambulance cannot fit down narrow lanes. The State of Maryland provides emergency airlift services by helicopter.

Tangier also has an agreement with the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) whereby the one VMRC officer that lives on Tangier can provide back-up response in the absence of a permanent police officer.

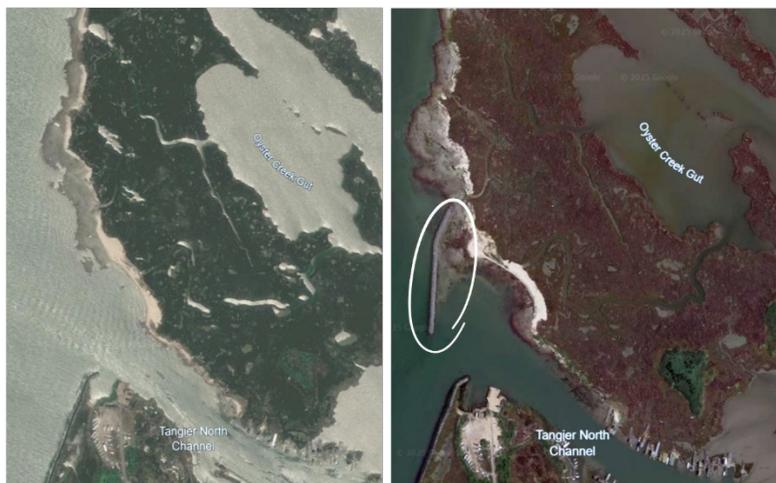
The Tangier Health Center was constructed in 2010 in a manner that minimizes impacts from flooding and high winds. The clinic is staffed by a doctor on Tuesdays and Thursdays. There are two registered nurses that are residents of the Town and a full-time nurse practitioner. A dentist visits the Town regularly and an optometrist visits six times each year.

The Tangier Channels are maintained by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). To a minimum 8-foot-deep, 100-foot-wide, and 1,300-foot-long in Tangier Sound and also 8-foot-deep, 60-foot-wide, and 4,800-foot-long to an anchorage basin 400-square-foot and 7-foot-deep adjacent to the Town. There have been several dredging projects to ensure the safe navigation of vessels into the harbor. Typically, the Channels are dredged by the USACE at least every five years. With new technologies in alternative dredge spoil use, this is something that should be considered in efforts to reduce erosion and improve resiliency. A contract was issued in 2020 to construct a 685-foot-long stone jetty at the northern end of the seawall and the southern end of the Uppards to protect the harbor and increase navigability in the Channel.

Figure 4.1.14.2 Town of Tangier Stone Jetty at the Northern End



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April 17, 2020

July 4, 2024

Google Earth Imagery

The Town provides public water and sewage treatment to residents. The water comes from five 1,000-foot artesian wells sourcing the Eocene-aged Potomac Aquifer, which differs from the rest of the Eastern Shore. It is stored in a water tower with a tank capacity of 150,000 gallons, located on the western marsh of the Main Ridge. The Town's water supply is not affected by its own ground water recharge, yet it is still important to protect the resource due to its effect on the ecological diversity of the Island.

The sewage treatment plant serves all the homes and businesses in the Town (Town of Tangier Comprehensive Plan, 2001). The treatment plant was retrofitted in the last decade and now has solar panels and releases less nitrogen and phosphorus into the Chesapeake Bay. It is located on the western part of the West Ridge, almost due west of the water tower.



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Aerial view of West Ridge, West Ridge Creek, Main Ridge, and the Mail Channel, featuring the water tower west of the Swain Memorial United Methodist Church and one of the main cemeteries. Photo ©2016 Gordon Campbell/At Altitude Galler

The Town operates a waste incinerator for the disposal of most trash that is collected twice a week from homes and businesses. The Town incinerator was rehabilitated under the same contract that updated the wastewater treatment plant. There is also a Town dump located on the northwest side of the Island for larger items that can't be put in the incinerator. Barges collect the trash approximately three or more times a year to bring to the mainland.

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

The Tangier Island Historic District was designated by the Commonwealth of Virginia Landmarks Register on June 18, 2015 and designated by the National Register of Historic Places August 24, 2015. The Tangier History Museum, opened in 2007, also operates a small community library, provides free maps, contains public restrooms, and is responsible for the historical markers that line the streets, allowing visitors to do a self-guided history tour of the Island.

The location of the former community located on the Uppards has been greatly impacted by erosion in recent years resulting in many cultural resources, including graves and artifacts, being lost to wave action. There are cemeteries and plots on private property on the main island that should be considered as well. A public beach with a foot bridge is also located in Town at the end of West Ridge past the Jetty and B&B.

Natural Landscape



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A large portion of the land area of Tangier consists of marshes, tidal waters and cut by tidal creeks and guts. The shoreline is characterized by salt marshes with occasional narrow, sandy beaches. Tangier is relatively uniform in topography with the highest elevation less than 6 feet above sea level and slopes effectively 0% (Town of Tangier Comprehensive Plan, 2001). Tangier is highly dependent on the health of the Chesapeake Bay. Tangier's fishermen rely on good water quality to provide healthy crabs for the year. The dynamic nature of the Island means that the number of birds and habitat availability fluctuate. There are other species of wildlife including otters and muskrats. The Atlantic Blue Crab is the most important species due to its value as a resource for Tangier fishermen

Future Development

The majority of development is located on the three sand ridges, Main Ridge, West Ridge, and Canton Ridge. Canton Ridge is the eastern-most ridge and is entirely residential, while West Ridge is primarily residential (Town of Tangier Comprehensive Plan, 2001). Nearly all commercial development and some residential development is located on Main Ridge. Soil types along West Ridge are poorly drained and typically have severe limitations when it comes to development.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

The Town joined the NFIP on October 15, 1982. There are 49 policies with 107 claims for the Town. Between May of 2011 and January of 2016, there were an additional 11 claims, averaging about \$13,348 each. This could be a reflection of an increase in the frequency and intensity of storms, relative sea level rise, and the negative effects of erosion, and can certainly be attributed to damages from Hurricanes Irene and Sandy. More information on repetitive loss properties, NFIP policies and claims, and the CRS program can be found in Chapter 6: Capability Assessment.

Coastal Barrier Resource Act (CBRA) lands exist within the Town and are located in the southeast corner. In addition, there are CBRA lands outside the Town limits that border the corporate boundaries to the south and to the east. After November 16, 1990, flood insurance cannot be purchased from the federal government for any new development or substantial improvement of an existing structure on these lands. Besides the prohibition on purchase of flood insurance, other federal monies that cannot be expended in this area include: disaster assistance, Community Block Development Grants (CDBG), flood control projects, construction of new federal highways, and beach nourishment projects.

Table 4.1.14.2 Critical Infrastructure Information – Town of Tangier

Facility	Hazards	Number of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential
Locality-Owned Facilities					
Tangier Town Office	Flooding, Wind, Erosion	~500	Devastating	Yes	Yes
Tangier Sewage Plant	Flooding, Wind, Erosion	~500	Devastating	No	Yes



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Tangier Water Tower	Flooding, Wind, Erosion	~500	Devastating	No	Yes
Other Facilities (Not Locality-Owned)					
Tangier Fire and Rescue Department	Flooding, Erosion, Wind	~500	Devastating	No	Yes
ANEC Power Station	Flooding, Erosion, Wind	~500	Devastating	No	Yes
Tangier Airport	Flooding, Erosion, Wind	~500	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Tangier Combined School	Flooding, Erosion, Wind	~500	Major Disruption	No	Yes
U.S. Post Office	Flooding, Erosion, Wind	~500	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Tangier Harbor	Flooding, Erosion, Wind	~500	Devastating	No	Yes
Tangier Health Center	Flooding, Erosion, Wind	~500	Major Disruption	No	Yes
Tangier Museum	Flooding, Erosion, Wind	~500	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Gym	Flooding, Erosion, Wind	~500	Inconvenience	Yes	Yes

4.1.15 TOWN OF WACHAPREAGUE

Wachapreague was originally a Native American fishing village settled by the Matchapungos, a subdivision of the Algonquin Tribe. Nathaniel Bradford first patented the land in 1662 for 1,000 acres. The Town settlement wasn't developed until the early 1800s. The Town's wharf was used to ship goods to other American cities in 1825. The late 1800s saw a successful fish oil and fertilizer company and a booming reputation as a tourist destination. The Wachapreague Hotel in 1902 attracted hunters and fisherman from all over the country until it burned down in 1978. Wachapreague has seen history as a town that capitalized on its location for shopping, natural beauty, and fishing (Town of Wachapreague Comprehensive Plan, 2016).

Table 4.1.15.1 Demographic Information – Town of Wachapreague

	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	257	192	232	236
Median Age (years)	58.1	61.5	57.9	55.6
Disability	17.9%	39%	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$55,933	\$42,386	\$454,688	\$36,625
Poverty Level	17.1%	5.2%	24.2%	18.0%
Language				
Only English	97.9%	100%	92%	97.8%
Other	2.1%	0.0%	8.0%	2.2%



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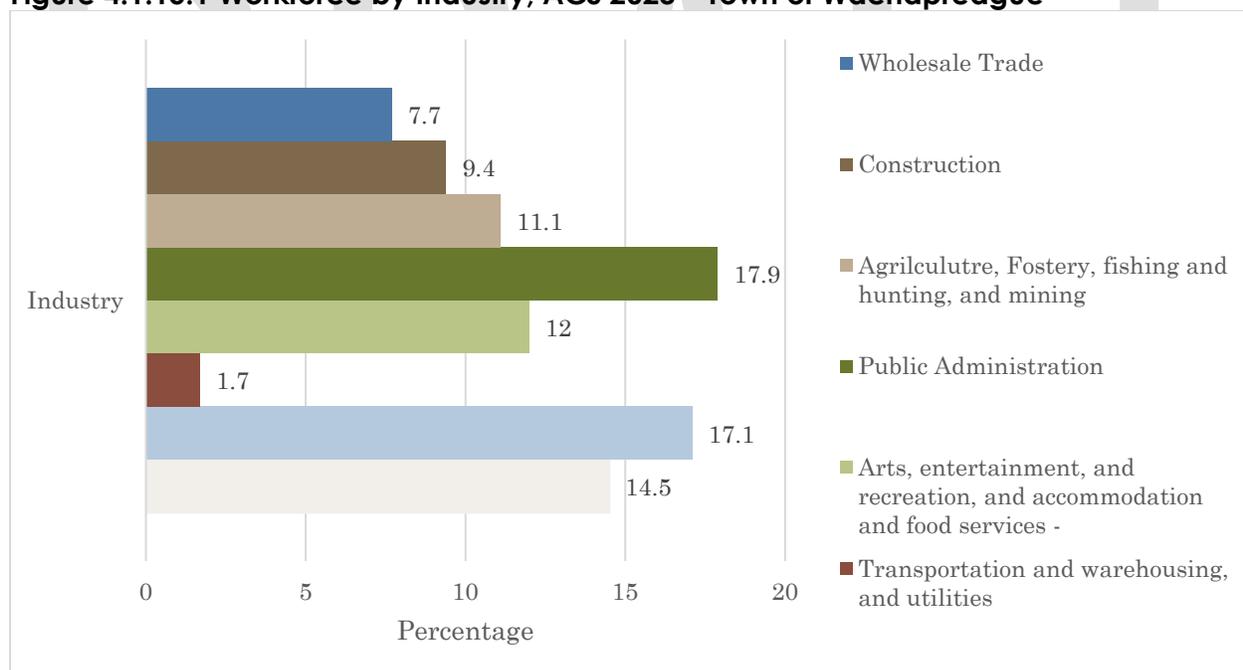
Spanish	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%
Ind-Euro	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Asian	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The 2023 American Community Survey five-year estimates indicate that the Town has a population of 257 which is an increase population. As shown in Table 4.1.15.1, the median age for residents in Wachapreague in 2023 was 58.1. This is a population approximately 24 years older than the state average, with 42.8% of the population over the age of 65 (ACS, 2023). Populations with a high percentage of elderly residents may require additional assistance in the event of a hazard.

Workforce

Data from the 2023 ACS depicts a wide range of types of workforce industries. The diversity of employers makes the community resilient to a shift in income due to a natural or manmade hazard impacting an industry.

Figure 4.1.15.1 Workforce by Industry, ACS 2023 – Town of Wachapreague



Housing

The ACS 2023 Housing Occupancy states that 123 housing units are occupied with 103 units sitting vacant, totaling 226 housing units. Wachapreague residents rely on private wells for their water supply. There is no central sewage collection or treatment in the Town; however, the Town is hoping to connect to the new HRSD line in the future and is currently seeking funding options. Wastewater disposal is by septic systems. In addition, residential water supplies can be threatened by failing septic systems. In the past, flooding that has damaged homes and destroyed possessions has also caused failed septic systems (Town of Wachapreague Comprehensive Plan, 2016).



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The Town received funding from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) following Hurricane Isabel in 2003 to elevate six homes that had been impacted during the storm. One house was elevated in 2016 as a result from a 2012 grant.

Community Facilities

The commercial center is found along Main Street and Atlantic Avenue and consists of lodging, a Post Office, marinas, restaurants, and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science Eastern Shore Laboratory facilities.

Police protection is provided by the Accomack County Sheriff's Department and Virginia State Police. The Volunteer Fire Company is located at 1 High Street and also serves as the Town polling place. The Fire Company is all volunteer and no longer provides rescue services. The Town has two ambulances stationed out of Painter to provide Emergency Medical Services which are staffed by the Accomack County Department of Public Safety.

The Town's fire station features five engine bays to house an engine, tanker, brush unit, and utility/support vehicle. There are about 25 volunteers and no paid firefighting or non-firefighting personnel (Personal communications, Robert Williams, Floodplain Administrator/CRS Coordinator, March 17, 2021). Due to the current Station being located in a flood plain, the Town has purchased property on higher ground just outside of Town limits with the intent to relocate.

There is a private waste disposal service located within Wachapreague. The Accomack County Convenience Center on Wachapreague Road in Grangeville is just over 2.5 miles from Town.

The 15-acre Powell Memorial Park serves as a recreational area and the storage location for the Town vehicles (Personal communications, Robert Williams, Floodplain Administrator/CRS Coordinator, March 17, 2021). The 1.5-acre Wachapreague Seaside Park, sits on the parcel on Atlantic Avenue where the historic Wachapreague Hotel once stood and boasts native plants, beneficial in water retention. Nearby, the fairgrounds bring a significant amount of traffic to the Town and the Wachapreague Fireman's Carnival located there provides much of the funds for the Volunteer Fire Company.

Water access is of vital importance for watermen, recreational fishermen, birders, marine research, outdoor enthusiasts, special events, and fishing tournaments, such as the Marlin Tournament. In addition to the private Wachapreague Marina, LLC, there is also the Town Marina, which offers free use of the boat ramp for all Wachapreague taxpayers and offers transient and monthly slip rentals for boats up to 44' length over all. This facility provides access to paddle sport enthusiasts with a floating dock and a launch site on the Eastern Shore Seaside Water Trail.

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science Eastern Shore Laboratory is located on the northern side of Town and has multiple buildings, including dormitories.

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural



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The carnival grounds in Wachapreague are at risk to coastal flooding and were inundated with flood waters from Hurricane Isabel in 2003. High winds and Lightning also threaten these structures.

Natural Landscape

A large portion of the land area of Tangier consists of marshes, tidal waters and cut by tidal creeks and guts. The shoreline is characterized by salt marshes with occasional narrow, sandy beaches. Tangier is relatively uniform in topography with the highest elevation less than 6 feet above sea level and slopes effectively 0% (Town of Tangier Comprehensive Plan, 2001). Tangier is highly dependent on the health of the Chesapeake Bay. Tangier's fishermen rely on good water quality to provide healthy crabs for the year. The dynamic nature of the Island means that the number of birds and habitat availability fluctuate. There are other species of wildlife including otters and muskrats. The Atlantic Blue Crab is the most important species due to its value as a resource for Tangier fishermen

Future Development

The majority of the Town has already been developed. There are remaining undeveloped lots gradually being filled up with new buildings. The Town is looking into future development and revitalization of the waterfront Business District; however, septic issues have been preventing this. The Town is looking into connecting to the Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) sewer line in the future to help mitigate this issue. Some of the soils in Wachapreague are generally not suited for conventional septic tank drain fields; however, due to alternative on-site wastewater treatment systems such as mound systems, it is now possible to develop on some of these soils (Town of Wachapreague Comprehensive Plan, 2016).

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

The Town has been a participant in the NFIP program since 1982. Every year, there are a few policies for structures that were not located in the 100-year floodplain, which potentially indicates a stormwater flooding problem. Most of the Town lies in the 100-year flood plain with the remainder lying in the 500-year floodplain. There are currently 72 policies in the Town with 29 claims to date (FEMA NFIP Data Report, 2022). More information on repetitive loss properties, NFIP policies and claims, and the CRS program can be found in Chapter 6 Capability Assessment.

Wachapreague also participates in the voluntary Community Rating System (CRS), which encourages the community to establish sound programs to recognize and encourage floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements (Town of Wachapreague Comprehensive Plan, 2016). The Town previously had a rating of 9, but was able to lower this rating to an 8 in 2018. This new rating qualifies policy holders in Wachapreague an average of \$94.00 in savings on their annual premiums, as well as additional discounts for policy holders located in the SFHA (FEMA, 2018).

Table 4.1.14.2 Critical Infrastructure Information – Town of Tangier



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Facility	Hazards	Number of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential
Locality-Owned Facilities					
Town Hall	Flooding, Wind	~200	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
Town Vehicles	Flooding, Wind, Fire	~200	Inconvenience	Yes	Yes
Town Marina	Flooding, Wind	~200	Devastating	No	Yes
Dredge Spoil Basin	Erosion	~200	Devastating	No	No
Fire Station	Flooding, Hurricanes and Tropical Storms	~11,000	Devastating	Yes	Yes
Other Facilities (Not Locality-Owned)					
Places of Worship	Flooding, Wind	~500	Inconvenience	Yes	Maybe
VIMS Campus and Dock	Flooding, Wind	~200	Devastating	No	Maybe
Carnival Grounds	Flooding, Wind	~1,000+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes
U.S. Post Office	Flooding, Erosion, Wind	~500	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes

4.2 NORTHAMPTON COUNTY

Northampton County is the southern county on Virginia's Eastern Shore. It was settled by the English in 1614, named Northampton in 1642, and divided into Accomack County and Northampton County in 1663. The present County seat in Eastville was founded in 1680 when a courthouse was erected there. Northampton has the oldest continuous court records in the country and is one of the oldest counties in the entire nation. The Cape Charles Light (built in 1895) on Smith Island guides mariners into the Chesapeake Bay is visible when traveling across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. There are six incorporated towns in the County: Belle Haven (spilt with Accomack County), Cape Charles, Cheriton, Eastville, Exmore, and Nassawadox.

Demographics

According to the 2023 American Community Survey, the County had a population of 12,115, indicating that the population has been relatively stable with a slight decline since 2000. The median age for residents in Northampton County in 2023 was 51.6 years, which is over 10 years higher than the state average, with 28.5% of the population over the age of 65 (ACS 2023). This indicates an older population in the County, which may require additional assistance during a hazard. Table 4.2 also indicates disability and poverty rates and primary languages.

Table 4.2 Population Information – Northampton County



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	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	12,115	11,885	12,389	13,093
Median Age (years)	51.6	49.0	47.8	42.4
Disability	19.4%	15.6%	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$55,933	\$47,227	\$35,760	\$28,013
Poverty Level	17.1%	18.0%	15.8%	15.8%
Language				
Only English	89.7%	90.4%	89.7%	89.1%
Other	10.3%	9.6%	3.2%	5.3%
Spanish	7.3%	7.3%	3.0%	2.5%
Ind-Euro	1.6%	1.6%	0.0%	0.1%
Asian	1.4%	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%
Other	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Source: * ACS 2023 5-year est, **ACS, 2014-2019, ***U.S. Census 2010, ****U.S. Census 2000				

Housing and Workforce Centers

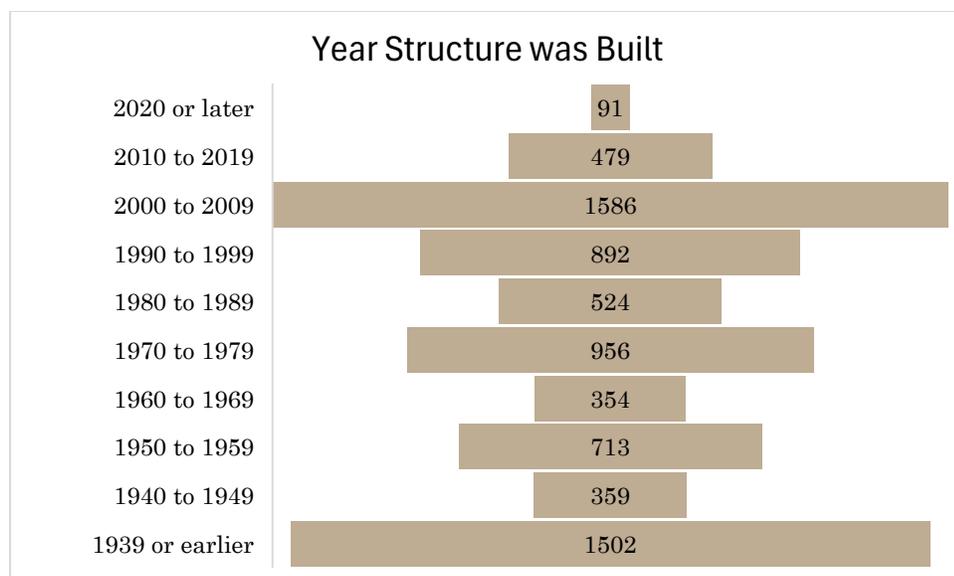
According to the 2020 US Census data, Northampton County has 7,373 total housing units with 1,916 units being vacant. Often, unoccupied houses are not properly maintained and can cause additional debris hazards during high-wind events. The homeownership rate is 65.2% according to the 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan identifies real estate industries as the largest economic sector. Property taxes are critical to supporting local government revenues and the regional economy, meaning increased coastal hazards may threaten the viability of water-adjacent neighborhoods.

About 8% of the housing units in the County are single-wide mobile homes (Northampton County Comprehensive Plan, 2021). The plan emphasized their vulnerability and inability to maintain value. Manufactured homes are typically more susceptible to storm damages incurred from winds and flooding than other types of homes. The aging housing stock combined with the high number of vacant housing units could create a significant amount of debris and additional surrounding damage during a high-wind event.

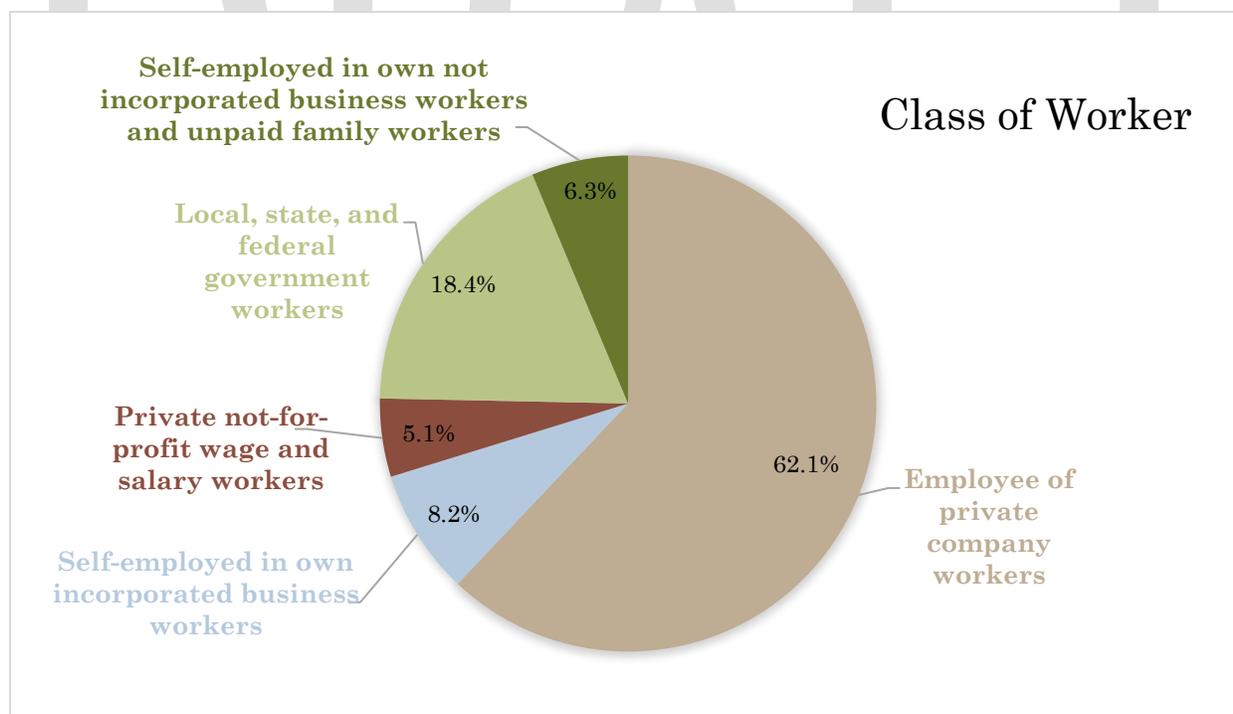
	2023	2010	2000
Total Housing Units	7,373	7,301	6,547
Occupied	5,457	5,323	5,321
Vacant	1,916	1,978	1,226
Owner-Occupied	3,481	3,553	3,649
Renter-Occupied	1,857	1,770	1,672
Median Housing Value	279,100	NA	NA



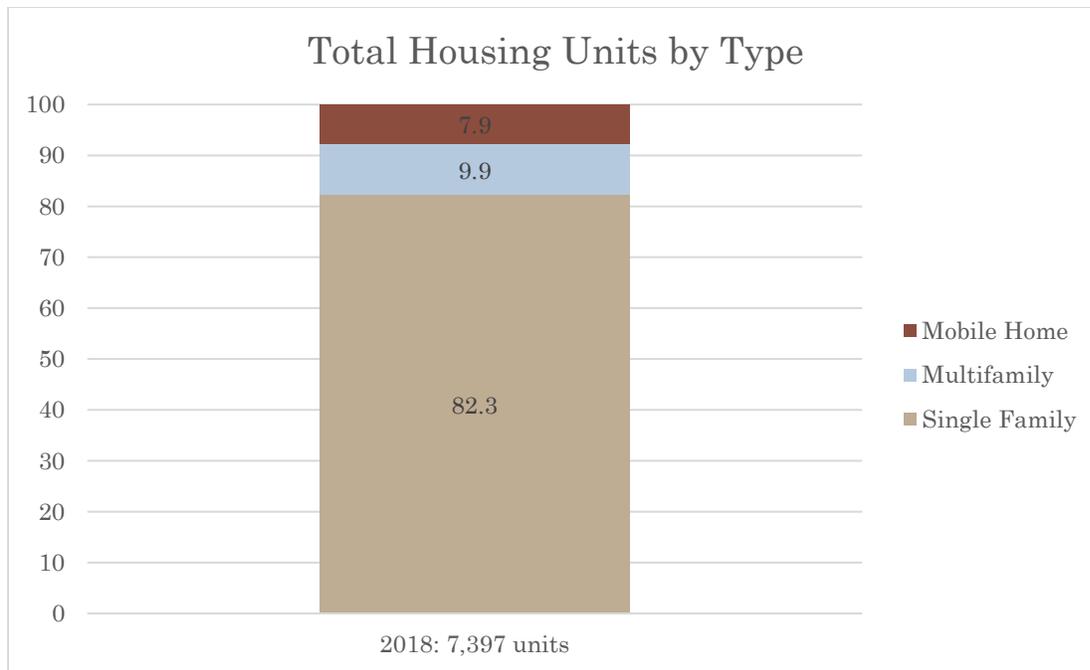
Chapter 4 – Community Profiles



2023: ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles



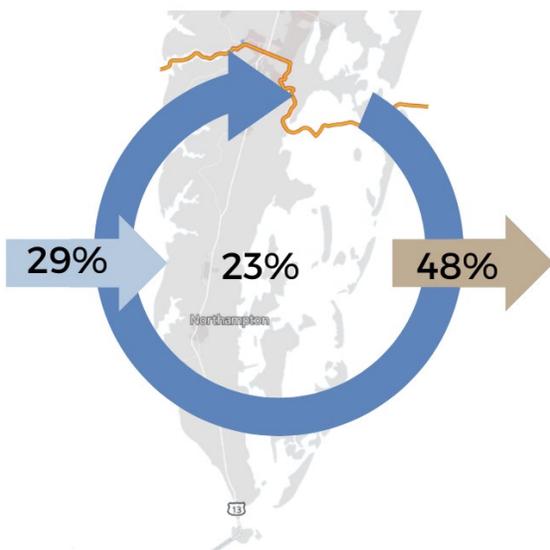
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Employment patterns are important to examine for two reasons; they can help to identify concentrations of people for hazard information distribution or hazard rescue and evacuation. Secondly, they can identify where disruptions in employment and income might occur in the aftermath of a disaster.

As of the 2023 Job Counts by NAICS Industry Sector estimates, over a fifteen percent (16.7%) of the workforce in Northampton County is employed in the health care services industry. In 2020, the hospital moved from Nassawadox in Northampton County to Onancock in Accomack County.

Inflow/Outflow Job Counts in 2022



U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap, LEHD

About half of the residents in Northampton County travel outside of the County to their place of employment, with many commuting as far as the Hampton Roads area (Northampton County Comprehensive Plan, 2021). This is important for the community's ability to rebound following a severe event, as there are many variables that could prevent them from reaching their place of employment, i.e., damages to vehicle, damages or closure to roadways or bridge and tunnel systems, flooding, etc.

Safety and Security

Fire protection is provided by five independent all-volunteer fire companies. Community Fire Company (Exmore), Northampton Fire & Rescue



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Company (Nassawadox), Eastville Volunteer Fire Company, Cheriton Volunteer Fire Company, and Cape Charles Volunteer Fire Company work independently and through mutual aid to provide fire protection throughout the County (Personal communications, Hollye Carpenter, EMS Director/Chief, April 12, 2021). Information detailing apparatus for each locality can be found in their respective chapters.

Ambulance services for 911 and emergency calls are provided from three locations in the County: Community Fire Company (Exmore), Northampton County EMS (Machipongo), and Cape Charles Rescue Service (Cheriton). While there are a few volunteers still active, services are primarily provided by 27 full-time and 15 part-time medics (Personal communications, Hollye Carpenter, April 12, 2021). The respective Town Chapters have details on the capabilities of each response facility. The relocation of the hospital from Nassawadox to Onancock has forced EMS in Northampton County to expand their workforce in order to maintain services (Northampton County Comprehensive Plan, 2021)

The Department of Emergency Management (EM) coordinates efforts to ensure the County can mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from any type of natural or human-caused disaster. The County uses an all-hazards approach to emergency preparedness, which means planning efforts consider all types of natural and human-caused disasters that could occur in the County. Also, the Department of Emergency Management provides disaster preparedness presentations, Emergency Response Training (CERT), and community CPR training. In 2012, the County established a Citizen Emergency Alert Program that provides critical information related to severe weather, road closures, missing persons, and evacuations (Northampton County EMS Website).

Food, Water, and Shelter

The County's primary economies are affiliated with agriculture, working waterfronts, and local government (Northampton County Comprehensive Plan, 2021), with some of the largest employers in the County being Northampton County Schools, The County of Northampton, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT), Heritage Hall (now The Citadel), Food Lion, Ballard Fish and Oyster Company, David's Nursery, Eastern Shore Rural Health System (ESRH), Coastal Precast Systems, and several tourism and agricultural based businesses (Virginia Employment Commission, 2020).

Housing units, community facilities including grocery stores, and transportation are all important factors when considering hazard resiliency related to food, water, and shelter. Survey respondents indicated a decent level of feeling prepared for hazardous events by stocking up food and supplies.

A few key points related to resiliency of this community lifeline are the concerns around localized water sources as well as septic failures related to salt water intrusion or flooding events. Manufactured homes are typically more susceptible to storm damages incurred from winds and flooding than other types of homes, and should be considered in the event of an emergency.

Health and Medical

Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital is now located in the Town of Onancock in Accomack County and provides medical services to the Region.



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There are two Eastern Shore Rural Health System Medical Centers in Northampton County: Eastville Community Medical Center and the Franktown Community Medical Center, which provides only Dental services (Personal communications, Susan McGhee, March 22, 2021).

Energy (Power and Fuel)

A&N Electric Cooperative is the regional electrical distribution cooperative serving over 35,000 homes, farms, and businesses in Accomack and Northampton Counties on Virginia's Eastern Shore and Smith Island in Somerset County, Maryland. ANEC representative, Curits Taylor, Safety Coordinator was an active stakeholder in the planning process.

Communications

The Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1 Communications Center is the public safety answering point for the Counties of Accomack and Northampton located in the Town of Melfa. All 9-1-1 calls are received by the ESVA911 Communications Center. Police calls are transferred to local Sheriff's Offices or the Virginia State Police for handling and dispatching. Fire and emergency medical services calls are handled and dispatched directly to fire and EMS agencies by the staff of the Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1 Communications Center.

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is also located with ESVA911 for any consolidated Emergency Services operations of the two counties and the Town of Chincoteague, as well as housing the Accomack County Emergency Operations Center at 28598 Beacon Road, Melfa, VA 23410.

Transportation

The Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel is a 17.6 mile bridge and tunnel complex that spans the lower Chesapeake Bay and connects Virginia's Eastern Shore with the mainland in Virginia Beach.

A new Parallel Thimble Shoal Tunnel project involves the construction of a two-lane bored tunnel from the CBBT's southernmost island (#1 Island) under Thimble Shoal Channel to #2 Island. When complete, the new tunnel will carry two lanes of traffic southbound and the existing tunnel will carry two lanes of traffic northbound. The new Parallel Thimble Shoal Tunnel will be the first transportation tunnel constructed in the Mid-Atlantic region by a tunnel boring machine (TBM).



Chesapeake Bay -Bridge Tunnel

Hazardous Materials

The County operates six waste collection sites, all of which offer recycling, used oil, and scrap metal, including appliances. None accept commercial waste, yard waste, or tire disposal (Personal communications, Susan McGhee, March 22, 2021). The County now



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operates a single transfer station located adjacent to the previous landfill near the community of Oyster. The waste is regularly transferred to the landfill by tractor trailers. This meets the disposal needs for commercial operations, construction companies, and households.

Most residents rely on private wells and septic systems for their water supply and wastewater disposal; however, about a quarter of the County's population relies on the municipal water systems of Cape Charles, Eastville, Exmore, Bayview, Riverside, and the County Complex. There are three waste water treatment plants (WWTP) in the County for residential sewage treatment, located in Machipongo, Exmore, and Bayview. These facilities serve approximately 15-25% of residents (Northampton County Comprehensive Plan, 2009). The remaining residents rely on septic tank and drain field systems and cesspools or pit privies. In the past, poor soils limited development on some vacant parcels of land in the County, but alternative or engineered septic technologies have made some previously undevelopable parcels available; however, these systems are much more expensive to build and to maintain than traditional systems.

Discharge from WWTP and proper maintenance of private systems is important to maintain the health of both the surface and ground water. Although surface water in the County is not used for human consumption, it is important for recreation and shellfish harvesting, and thus water quality must be protected in accordance with the State Water Control Law. According to the 2024 Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report, all of the bayside creeks and most of the seaside creeks in the County are considered impaired (see Impaired Waters of CB) due to various causes such as pH, Enterococcus, Fecal Coliform, benthic-macroinvertebrate bioassessment, E. Coli, dissolved oxygen levels, etc.

The Eastern Shore's designation as a sole source aquifer is discussed in the 2009 Northampton County Comprehensive Plan, and strategies for preventing additional salt water intrusion can be found in the Eastern Shore Ground Water Supply Protection and Management Plan. The areas of the County near shorelines are expected to be the most vulnerable to salt water intrusion. The Eastern Shore of Virginia Ground Water Committee has historically and will continue to assist the County in monitoring the quantity and quality of ground water in the County.

In October of 2020, a circuit court determined that Northampton and Accomack Counties could benefit from joining the Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) and the two counties were incorporated into HRSD's jurisdiction. The Counties are now able to negotiate contracts with HRSD for operation, maintenance, and updates to sewer systems (Northampton County Comprehensive Plan, 2021). It is also important to note that localities within both Counties are not obligated to transfer services to HRSD, but have the option if they choose. The first phase is scheduled to be completed in 2023 and will connect the Northampton County towns of Exmore and Nassawadox to the Town of Onancock's treatment facility in Accomack County. HRSD is willing to invest nearly \$25 million in sewer system infrastructure on the Eastern Shore, starting with a force main from Nassawadox to Onancock. The Onancock wastewater treatment plant processes sewage, and the cleaned wastewater flows into Onancock Creek.



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Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

The Cape Charles Light we see standing today on Smith Island guiding mariners into the Chesapeake Bay was built in 1895 and is the third lighthouse to be built on Smith Island as the first two were destroyed in Confederate raids and erosion.

4.2.1 TOWN OF CAPE CHARLES

The Town of Cape Charles was created in 1884 as a planned community at the southern terminus of the railroad. It is located in southern Northampton County on the Chesapeake Bay and it was incorporated in 1886. An area west of the Town on the Bay was called the Sea Cottage Addition and was incorporated in 1909. The Town was designated as a Natural Historic District in 1989 due to the architectural diversity and integrity. Further annexations occurred in the southern and northern portions of the neck in the 1990s which have been undergoing significant new development and renovations.

Demographics

The 2019 American Community Survey five-year estimates indicated that the Town had a population of 1,239, which is an increase of 230 since the 2010 U.S. Census (Table 1). The Town has become a popular destination for retirees, tourists, and second homeowners in the last decade and is experiencing a greater influx of seasonal residents during the warmer summer months. This trend is expected to continue to grow in the future, and the Town is planning accordingly (Town of Cape Charles Comprehensive Plan, 2016).

Town representatives indicated owners that were previously leasing their properties have been retiring and moving to the Town as their primary residence (Personal communications, Jeb Brady, Building Official, March 23, 2021). The above average median age of 55 is nearly 20 years higher than the national median age and reflects this trend, which is anticipated to continue. According to the 2023 American Community Survey, 36.6% of the population is 65 years or older. This population generally requires additional assistance and outreach in hazard preparation and mitigation education.

Table 4.1.16.1 Demographic Information – Town of Cape Charles

	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	1,178	1,239	1,009	1,134
Median Age (years)	55.6	58.0	48.7	44.2
Disability	17.4%	185	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$51,250	\$54,643	N/A	\$22,237
Poverty Level	15.0%	21.1%	N/A	N/A
Language				
Only English	96.2%	95.9%	95%	97.1%
Other	3.8%	4.1%	5.0%	2.9%
Spanish	0.8%	0.8%	2.3%	1.4%



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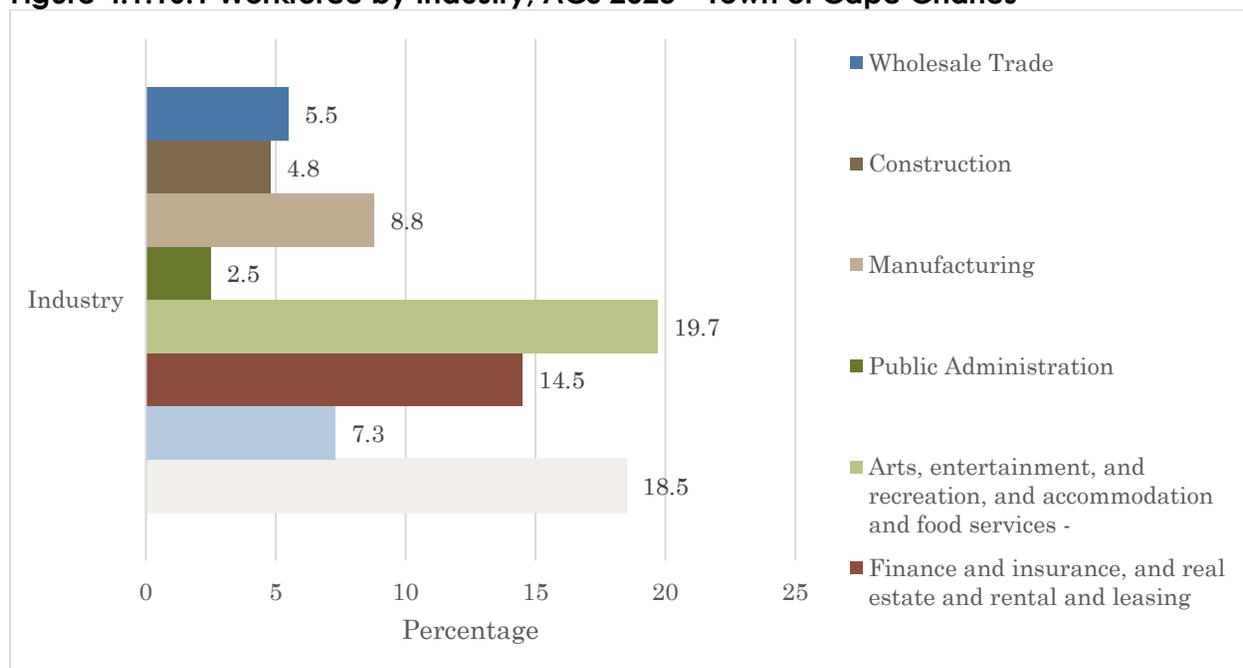
Ind-Euro	2.7%	2.3%	2.2%	1.5%
Asian	0.3%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

*ACS, 2023, **ACS, 2019, ***U.S. Census 2010, ****U.S. Census 2000

Workforce

Data from the 2023 ACS depicts a wide range of types of workforce industries. The diversity of employers makes the community resilient to a shift in income due to a natural or manmade hazard impacting an industry.

Figure 4.1.16.1 Workforce by Industry, ACS 2023 – Town of Cape Charles



Housing

The ACS 2023 Housing Occupancy states that 626 housing units are occupied with 525 units sitting vacant, totaling 1,151 housing units. Cape Charles residents rely on central town water supply and central sewage collection and treatment in the Town.

Community Facilities

The Bay Creek Resort and Club is the largest residential and mixed-use development in Town and also provides a variety of housing options; therefore, the Resort is a major economic impactor for the Town (Town of Cape Charles Comprehensive Plan, 2016). Seasonal tourism along with the Cape Charles Yacht Center and Coastal Precast Systems provide opportunities for economic growth and development.

Many of the surrounding towns in Northampton County have citizens that commute into Cape Charles to work.



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The local transportation system links the Town to the rest of the Region. Routes 184 and 642 are the Town's two main arterial roads, which both intersect U.S. Route 13. The historic downtown area exhibits a historic grid system.

The railroad, although now abandoned, was converted to the Southern Tip Hike & Bike Trail from the abandoned railroad and is located at the Eastern Shore of Virginia Wildlife Refuge south of Cape Charles and connects to Kiptopeke State Park.

The segment of abandoned railroad in Cape Charles was one of the first to be transitioned into the multi-use path as part of the Eastern Shore Rail Trail project that will connect up U.S. Route 13.

While there is still potential for new development, Cape Charles Harbor currently serves Coastal Precast Systems, Cape Charles Yacht Center, United States Coast Guard, Mid-Atlantic Maritime Academy, commercial fisherman, and recreational boaters.

There are only two roads leading into the Town, therefore, lack of accessibility is a risk factor. In the past, accidents have closed the main road leaving only one route accessible. Both roads have matured trees that could also close the road in a wind event. Ice and snow events occasionally threaten accessibility to the Town on both roads. According to the ESVA Transportation Infrastructure Inundation Vulnerability Assessment, roads in the historic area are more vulnerable to inundation than Bay Creek or other areas of the Town.

The measure of vehicles available to households is one indicator of a household's ability to evacuate when necessary.

The Town is considered a golf cart community, the percentage of no vehicle ownership may be attributed to the high percentage of second homes for which there is no locally registered vehicle.

Table 4.1.16.2 Cape Charles Vehicles Available per Household

Vehicles Available	2023	2010	2000
None	59	61	159
One	328	195	214
Two	228	155	118
Three or More	64	68	43

*ACS, 2023, **U.S. Census 2010, *****U.S. Census 2000

The Cape Charles Police Department works in conjunction with county and state resources. The Department currently has six officers and six police vehicles. The Cape Charles Volunteer Fire Company and the Cape Charles Rescue, Inc. work cooperatively with other local fire departments and rescue squads to provide fire protection and emergency medical services Cape Charles Rescue Service is located outside of town limits and is staffed 24/7 with a minimum of two certified EMS personnel provided by a combination of volunteers and career personnel by Northampton County Department of EMS. Cape Charles Rescue Service has two ALS licensed



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ambulances. There are no paid employees at the Fire Company, but there are approximately ten auxiliary volunteers and twenty volunteer firefighters. Town employees that are also volunteers of the Fire Company are permitted to respond to calls while in paid status, which aids in improved responses. The Fire Company is equipped with two engines, two tankers, one brush truck, and no medics and/or ambulances.

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

The carnival grounds in Wachapreague are at risk to coastal flooding and were inundated with flood waters from Hurricane Isabel in 2003. High winds and Lightning also threaten these structures.

Natural Landscape

Cape Charles has a variety of community facilities available including the Cape Charles Harbor, the public beach, the Fun Pier, Library, and Central Park, with recent new and expanded facilities including the Beach Club at Bay Creek, the Palace Theatre, and Kings Creek Marina with a plan to put in a divided median with lighted sidewalks on North Peach Street and lighted sidewalks from Fig to the Bay along Washington Avenue, as well as to connect the entire town with non-motorized trails

Cape Charles Beach is one of the only two public beaches on the Chesapeake Bay on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, the other being Savage Neck Dunes Natural Area Preserve in the Town of Eastville. The Cape Charles beach provides an important recreational function and vital protection against hazards. Almost half of the historic area of Cape Charles is considered to be in the 500-year flood plain, but the beach is identified as being in the VE Zone (zone of high velocity waters).

Future Development

The majority of the Town has already been developed. There are remaining undeveloped lots gradually being filled up with new buildings. The Town's public utility system has allowed more dense development in Cape Charles than the rest of Northampton County. The Town prohibits new private deep wells and septic systems due to them threatening the Town's water supply (Town of Cape Charles Comprehensive Plan, 2016). The drinking water, which is drawn from two wells in the Upper and Middle Yorktown-Eastover Aquifers has the capacity to provide 500,000 gallons per day of production and additional wells and filtering equipment could carry production to over one million gallons per day, when needed (Town of Cape Charles Comprehensive Plan, 2016).

The Cape Charles Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) was upgraded in 2008 and is now capable of treating 250,000 gallons per day but has no plans for expansion at its current capacity and ownership.

The Town contracts with Davis Disposal for weekly residential trash collection, which is transported to a Northampton County transfer station. There is also a community cardboard recycling bin from Davis Disposal and weekly yard debris pick-up.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)



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The Town joined the NFIP on February 2, 1983. The Town currently has 170 policies, a decrease of 64 since January 2016 (FEMA NFIP Data Report, 2022). The new Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) is most likely the cause of the vast reduction in the number of overall policies.

Cape Charles participates in the Community Rating System (CRS) program, which provides incentives for NFIP communities to complete activities that reduce flood hazard risk. When a community completes specified activities, the insurance premiums of these policyholders in communities are reduced. The Town received an initial score of nine as a new participant, meaning that residents receive a five percent discount on flood insurance, but anticipate a new score of 8 in the near future.

Table 4.1.17.3 Town of Cape Charles Critical Facilities

Facility	Hazards	No of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential	Responsible Entity
Town-Owned Facilities						
Waste Water Treatment Plant and Water Tower	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	1,178+	Devastating	No	Yes	
Police Departments & Municipal Building	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	1,178+	Devastating	No	Yes	
Central Park	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	1,178+	Inconvenience	No	Yes	
Town Beach	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm, Erosion, Waterspouts	1,178+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	
Town Pier	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm, Erosion	1,178+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	
Town Harbor	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	44,558+	Devastating	No	Yes	
Pump Stations (4 in the old Town, 1 in the marina, 3 more in Bay Creek - those 3 are vacuum stations)	Flooding	1,178+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	



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Town Wells	Salt Water Intrusion, Contamination	1,178+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes	
Public Works and Utility Buildings (behind Rayfield’s Pharmacy) and vehicles (~30 including tractors)	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	1,178+	Minor Disruption	Yes	Yes	
Other Critical Facilities						
Post Office	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	1,178+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	
Riverside Medical Center	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	1,178+	Inconvenience	No	Yes	
Pharmacy	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	1,178+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	
Volunteer Fire	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	11,885+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	
Dredge Spoil Basin (Federally owned)	Erosion	1,178+	Minor Disruption	No	No	
Coast Guard Station	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	11,885+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	
Cape Charles Christian School	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	500+	Inconvenience	No	Yes	
Civic Center	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	1,178+	Inconvenience	Yes	Yes	
Museum & Welcome Center	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	1,178+	Inconvenience	Yes	Yes	
Cape Charles Memorial Library	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	1,178+	Inconvenience	No	Yes	



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4.2.2 TOWN OF CHERITON

Cheriton started out as a railroad town and can trace its beginnings to 1884, when the New York, Philadelphia, and Norfolk Railroad Company was extended from Maryland to Cape Charles. Cheriton merged with another town called Sunnyside, where downtown Cheriton is currently located. The Town prospered during the early 1900s due to its role as a local agricultural shipping point and service center. The Town of Cheriton became formally incorporated in 1951 and encompasses a land area of 1.1 Square miles (ACS, 2023).

The Town of Cheriton had the lowest population of 461 in 2019 and has gained population to 486 in 2023 according to the American Community Survey (ACS). The median age for the Town is 50.6, compared to the nation's 39.3, signifying an older and aging population with 33.6% over the age of 65 in 2023(ACS 2023). This portion of the population would likely require additional assistance during a hazard. There has, however, been an influx of younger individuals and families moving to the area (with the median age dropping by 5 years, so future estimates may differ.

Table 4.1.17.1 Demographic Information – Town of Cheriton

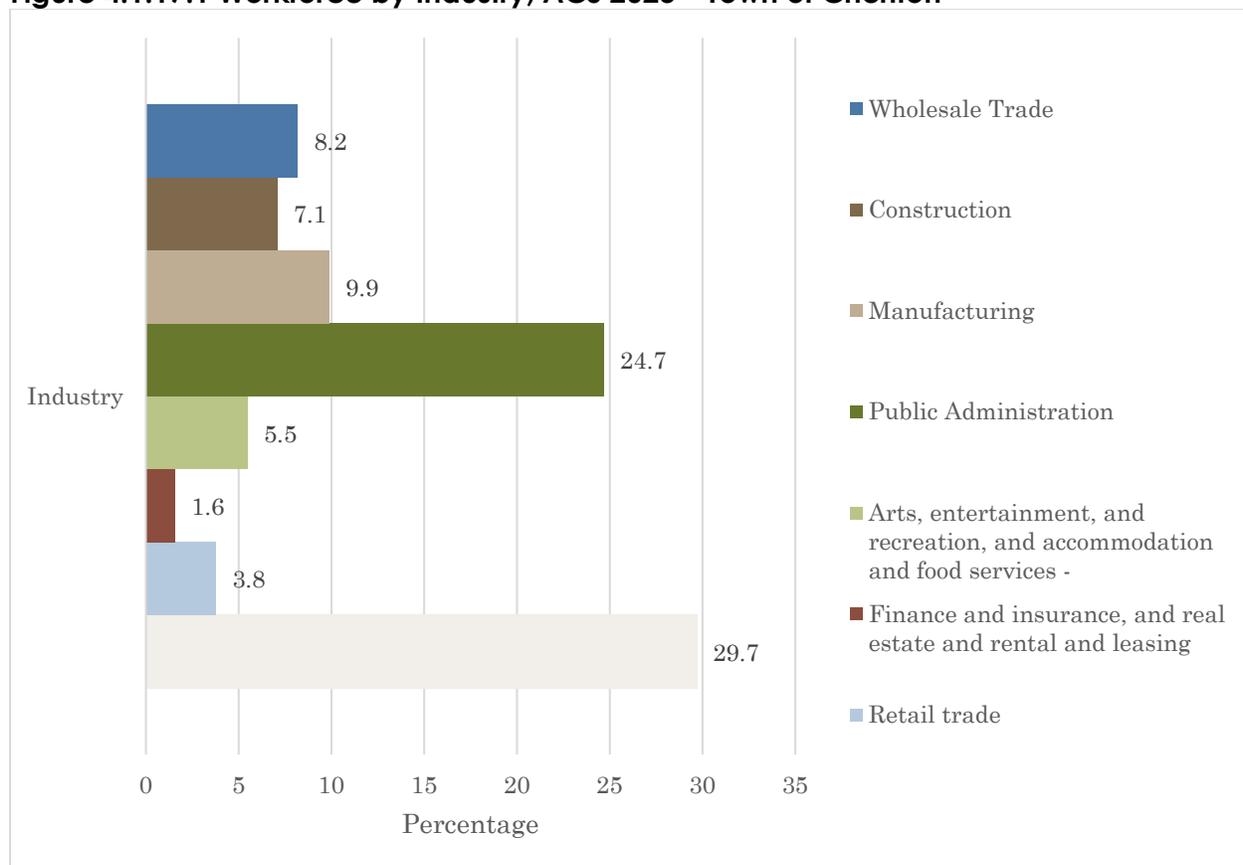
	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	486	461	487	499
Median Age (years)	50.6	55.5	45.3	44.2
Disability	17.4%	66	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$37,125	\$31,250	\$35,550	\$25,429
Poverty Level	24.3%	12.0%	8.8%	N/A
Language				
Only English	98.1%	98.2%	86.9%	98.1%
Other	1.9%	1.8%	10.4%	1.9%
Spanish	0.4%	1.8%	7.4%	1.5%
Ind-Euro	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	0.4%
Asian	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
*ACS, 2023, **ACS, 2019, ***U.S. Census 2010, ****U.S. Census 2000				

Workforce

Data from the 2023 ACS depicts a wide range of types of workforce industries. The diversity of employers makes the community resilient to a shift in income due to a natural or manmade hazard impacting an industry. Many of the County's largest employers are located just outside the Town and include Northampton County Schools, County of Northampton, Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT), Coastal Precast Systems, and several other aquafarms and accommodation services. Some of these employment entities operate in waterfront areas, and thus are more exposed to winds and water damages during a storm event, which may slow the following recovery time for both the business, the workforce, and the Town.



Figure 4.1.17.1 Workforce by Industry, ACS 2023 – Town of Cheriton



Housing

The ACS 2023 Housing Occupancy states that 223 housing units are occupied with 31 units sitting vacant, totaling 254 housing units. Many of these vacant units may also be second homes or vacation homes due to Cheriton's growing tourism and the close proximity of the beach in the Town of Cape Charles. Town of Cheriton residents rely on individual private wells and septic systems for their water supply and wastewater disposal. Due to new regulations, new septic field construction requires alternative disposal designs that avoid having the septic field too close to the water table.

Community Facilities

U.S. Route 13 provides good regional access and directs major traffic flow away from the town, while Business Route 13 provides safe access in to and out of Town. With the addition of a new traffic light, signage, reduced speed limits, and a contractual deputy to help enforce speed limits, there are generally no major traffic issues in Cheriton. The former Bay Coast Railroad is now abandoned and has not been an active railroad since 2018. The plan is to railbank and turn the now abandoned railway into a multi-use path as part of the Eastern Shore Rail Trail, which will extend 49.1 miles from Cape Charles north to the Town of Hallwood in Accomack County. This project has made slow process in securing grant funding for construction.



Chapter 4 – Community Profiles

The downtown area is an important local retail center. Commercial buildings house local retail businesses such as Barrier Island Salt Co., ESVA Boxing Club, Northampton Farm Store, Northampton Firearms, LLC., The Sheep Factory, two barber shops, and American Legion Post 56

U.S. Route 13 has directed traffic away from Business Route 13 and Downtown Cheriton; therefore, the presence of Cheriton's business district is not obvious to highway travelers.

Community facilities are facilities required to support the services and functions provided by the Town government or in coordination with other public and private entities. A contractual deputy, the Northampton County Sheriff's Department, and the Virginia State Police provide police protection for Town residents. Fire protection for the Town is provided by approximately 25 volunteer firefighters and 5 volunteer non-firefighters in the Cheriton Volunteer Fire Department; however, the Town has had difficulty recruiting volunteers. This station has a primary engine, engine/tanker combination, super brush truck (rescue and brush), and a teleport water tower. Ambulance service is provided by the Cape Charles Rescue, Inc., which is only a half a mile to a mile (0.5-1) from Town limits.

Collection services are provided to the Town by Davis Disposal. Northampton County transfer station is located close by for disposal services as well.

Currently, the Town has one park located in the downtown area. The Park boasts a stage area, picnic facilities, and a playground with a paved parking lot for ADA accessibility. A Parks and Recreation Committee has also been formed to ensure continued improvements for the park and downtown areas.

Public schools nearby serving students in the Town include Kiptopeke Elementary and Northampton Middle and High school.

The Cherrystone Family Camping resort is a major tourism destination for the Town. In 2014 a tornado tore through the Town, killing three individuals at Cherrystone Campground and injuring several others. Although uncommon, it is important for the Town to consider mitigation and education of residents and visitors for these types of sudden hazards.

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

Elevation in Cheriton ranges from 26 feet, from a high point of 36 feet where the abandoned railroad crosses Sunnyside Road, to a low point of 10 feet where Eyrehall Creek crosses Route 13. The small elevation change of 26 feet results in overall slopes in Cheriton of less than 2%, which contributes to flooding due to poor drainage. Maintenance of drainage ditches is the responsibility of VDOT and have been regularly maintained by VDOT in order to provide sufficient drainage and mitigate stormwater flooding. The hazards expected to have the greatest impact on the Town are stormwater flooding and high-wind events, which have been experienced throughout the Town's history. Other hazards facing the Town are groundwater contamination, ice and snowstorms, fire, and tornadoes.



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Future Development

The majority of the Town has already been developed. There are remaining undeveloped lots gradually being filled up with new buildings.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

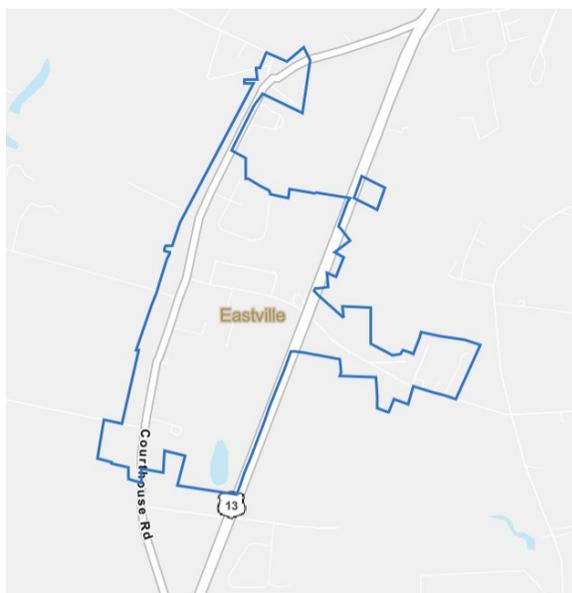
The Town is almost entirely out of the flood zone (Zone X), except for the areas at the headwaters of both Kings and Eyrehall Creeks, where there are small portions in the 0.2%-annual-chance flood zone and in the A zone with a BFE of 5 feet. There are very few businesses or residents that are near these flood zones. The Town of Cheriton joined the NFIP in 2020 after adopting floodplain management ordinance and enforcement procedures. Residents in the Town are now able to purchase insurance through the NFIP.

Table 4.1.17.3 Town of Cheriton Critical Facilities

Facility	Hazards	No of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential	Responsible Entity
Town-Owned Facilities						
Town Office	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	486+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes	Town
Other Critical Facilities						
Post Office	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	486+	Devastating	No	Yes	US Government / Owner
Volunteer Fire Department	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	486+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	Town
Cherrystone Family Camping Resort	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	11,885+	Inconvenience	No	Yes	Private



4.2.3 TOWN OF EASTVILLE



Eastville is located near the central spine of the Eastern Shore in the central region of Northampton County and now encompasses approximately 412 acres after a boundary adjustment, which more than doubled the previous land size. Approximately 60% of the Town drains into the Chesapeake Bay and 40% drains into the Atlantic Ocean. The Town has a rich history dating back to its establishment in 1677 when the community was known as “the Hornes” and was the site for colonial court. Eastville was incorporated in 1897 and has a wealth of 18th century buildings in Town. Eastville is the Northampton County seat and the Courthouse houses the oldest continuously documented court records in

the nation. The Town has developed and changed modestly over time with the construction of the railroad and U.S. Route 13, which bisect the Town. The Town’s predominant land-use is residential, with a large County and local government presence and a relatively smaller commercial district.

The Town of Eastville underwent a boundary adjustment in 2017, which is now being reflected in the American Community Survey five-year estimates. According to Table 4.1.18.1 the median age for the Town is 56.2, compared to the nation’s 39.3, signifying an older and aging population with 25.9% over the age of 65 in 2023(ACS 2023). This portion of the population would likely require additional assistance during a hazard.

Table 4.1.18.1 Demographic Information – Town of Eastville

	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	300	611	305	203
Median Age (years)	56.2	38.9	37.4	40.8
Disability	16.2%	56	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	\$71,071	\$43,319	\$55,179	\$36,250
Poverty Level	6.3%	39.4%	NA	N/A
Language				
Only English	96.9%	70.7%	NA	98.6%
Other	3.1%	29.3%	NA	1.1%
Spanish	0.4%	28.0%	NA	0.0%
Ind-Euro	0.0%	0.0%	NA	1.1%
Asian	3.1%	1.3%	NA	0.0%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	NA	0.0%

*ACS, 2023, **ACS, 2019, ***U.S. Census 2010, ****U.S. Census 2000

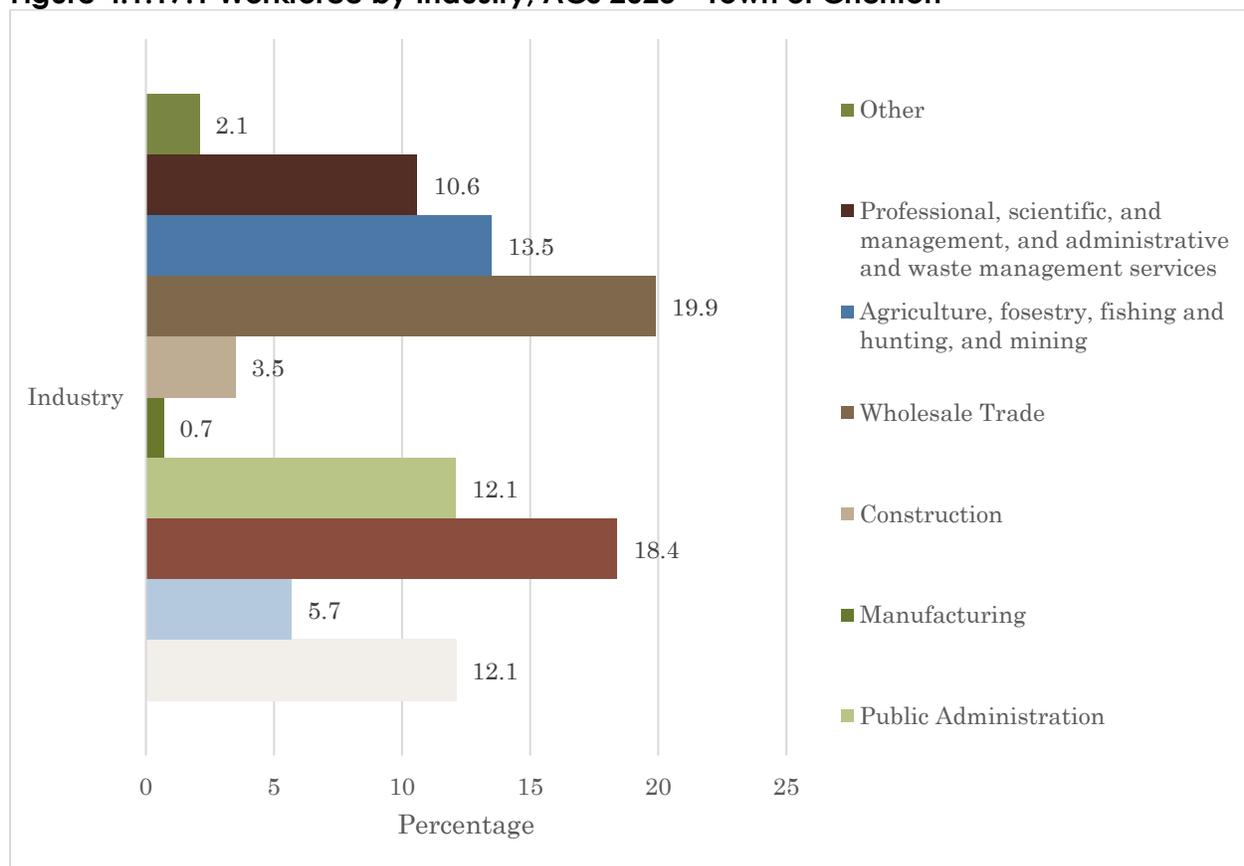


Chapter 4 – Community Profiles

Workforce

Data from the 2023 ACS depicts a wide range of types of workforce industries. The diversity of employers makes the community resilient to a shift in income due to a natural or manmade hazard impacting an industry. Many of the County's largest employers are located just outside the Town and include Northampton County Schools, County of Northampton, Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT), Coastal Precast Systems, and several other aquafarms and accommodation services. Some of these employment entities operate in waterfront areas, and thus are more exposed to winds and water damages during a storm event, which may slow the following recovery time for both the business, the workforce, and the Town.

Figure 4.1.17.1 Workforce by Industry, ACS 2023 – Town of Cheriton



Housing

The ACS 2023 Housing Occupancy states that 143 housing units are occupied with 36 units sitting vacant, totaling 179 housing units. Many of these vacant units may also be second homes or vacation homes due to the close proximity of the beach in the Town of Cape Charles. Town of Eastville residents rely on individual private wells and septic systems for their water supply and wastewater disposal. Due to new regulations, new septic field construction requires alternative disposal designs that avoid having the septic field too close to the water table.



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Community Facilities

U.S. Route 13 provides good regional access and directs major traffic flow away from the town. As the site of the Northampton County Seat, the primary activity in Eastville is government, justice, and government Services.

Police protection is provided by the Eastville Police Department, which was established in 2009. The Department consists of five full-time, two part-time, and one auxiliary officer, as well as six police vehicles, all of which are four-wheel drive and would allow officers to assist more frequently and effectively during hazards. Fire protection for the Town is provided by the Eastville Volunteer Fire Department, consisting of 19 volunteer firefighters, two engines, two tankers, one brush truck, and one utility vehicle. Ambulance service is provided by the Cape Charles Rescue Squad located in Bayview. Town officials stated that in the event of a hazard, the Eastville Fire Department has a generator and is a very safe, sturdy structure with the ability to house residents when needed. During the storms that produced a deadly tornado in the nearby Town of Cheriton in 2014, the Firehouse sheltered over 100 Eastville residents.

The Town of Eastville relies on two wells. The primary well is located at the intersection of Route 13 and Route 631, while the backup well is located just outside the Town's corporate limits, situated near the 75,000-gallon water tank located east of the northern section of Courthouse Road. The water supply is good in both quantity and quality. The Town has a generator to serve as a backup source for electricity for the water pump. The Town supplies water to several County municipal buildings. T

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

Indiantown Park is a 52-acre, mixed-use County-owned park that contains a 36-hole disc golf course and is located in the Town of Eastville. Park facilities include parking, picnic areas, and restrooms. The Town of Eastville is home to Northampton Middle and High School and is part of the Northampton County School District. The new Northampton Junior High is located within Town (construction began in Fall 2021).

Elevations in Eastville range from approximately 22 feet above mean sea level in the westernmost part of Town to 40 feet above mean sea level in the eastern portion. There are no perennially flowing surface water bodies in the Town (Town of Eastville Comprehensive Plan, 2018). Drainage ditches in the eastern half of Eastville drain towards Indiantown and Taylor Creeks, ultimately draining into the Atlantic Ocean. Drainage ditches on the western side of Town drain to the Chesapeake Bay.

Future Development

The Town of Eastville is comprised of 412 acres of land, most of which is developed (Town of Eastville Comprehensive Plan, 2018). The developed land is primarily residential with single-family housing situated on large lots; however, the Town contains several municipal and school buildings and is steadily increasing commercial business presence. There is a limited amount of undeveloped land that is used for agriculture purposes. The town is contracted with Northampton County to serve as their planning staff and Planning Commission for development reviews.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)



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The Town does not participate in the NFIP.

Table 4.1.17.3 Town of Eastville Critical Facilities

Facility	Hazards	No of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential	Responsible Entity
Town-Owned Facilities						
Town Office /Police Dept	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	300+	Devastating	No	Yes	Town of Eastville
Town of Eastville Water System	Hurricanes, Tornadoes, Winter Weather	2000+	Devastating	No	Yes	Town of Eastville
Eastville Municipal Wells	Stormwater flooding	2000+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	Town of Eastville
Other Critical Facilities						
Eastville Volunteer Fire Dept.	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	13,000	Devastating	No	Yes	Eastville Volunteer Fire Dept.
Eastville Community Center	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	1500	Major Disruption	No	Yes	
Eastern Shore Regional Jail	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	350+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes	

4.2.4 TOWN OF EXMORE

The Town of Exmore is located in Northampton County along the central spine of the Eastern Shore near the border of Accomack County. It is located on the central spine of the Eastern Shore and encompasses approximately 590 acres. The Town of Exmore was established in 1884 with the designation of the first stop in Northampton County for the New York-Pennsylvania-Norfolk Railroad. The railroad brought with it commerce due to the Eastern Shore's produce, and its growing tourist market to the barrier islands. The Town was incorporated in 1950 due to a second wave of population growth. Exmore became the transportation nexus for the Eastern Shore, and to this day, the Town has one of the largest concentrations of commercial activity in Northampton County. Route 13 allows Exmore to remain an important commercial hub for the Eastern Shore.



Chapter 4 – Community Profiles



The Town of Exmore had a population of 1,473 in 2023 according to the American Community Survey five-year estimates. The median age is 37.8, revealing a population younger than the state average, whereas 29.6% of the population is over the age of 65 (ACS 2023).

Table 4.1.19.1 Demographic Information – Town of Exmore

	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	1,473	1,501	1,460	1,136
Median Age (years)	35.9	41.8	44.4	38.6
Disability	10.8%	309	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	NA	\$27,679	\$23,958	\$31,143
Poverty Level	23.2%	33.6%	NA	N/A
Language				
Only English	82%	96.9%	NA	97.1%
Other	18.0%	3.1%	NA	3.9%
Spanish	12.4%	3.1%	NA	2.0%
Ind-Euro	0.0%	0.0%	NA	0.8%
Asian	4.9%	0.0%	NA	0.0%
Other	0.7%	0.0%	NA	0.0%
*ACS, 2023, **ACS, 2019, ***U.S. Census 2010, ****U.S. Census 2000				

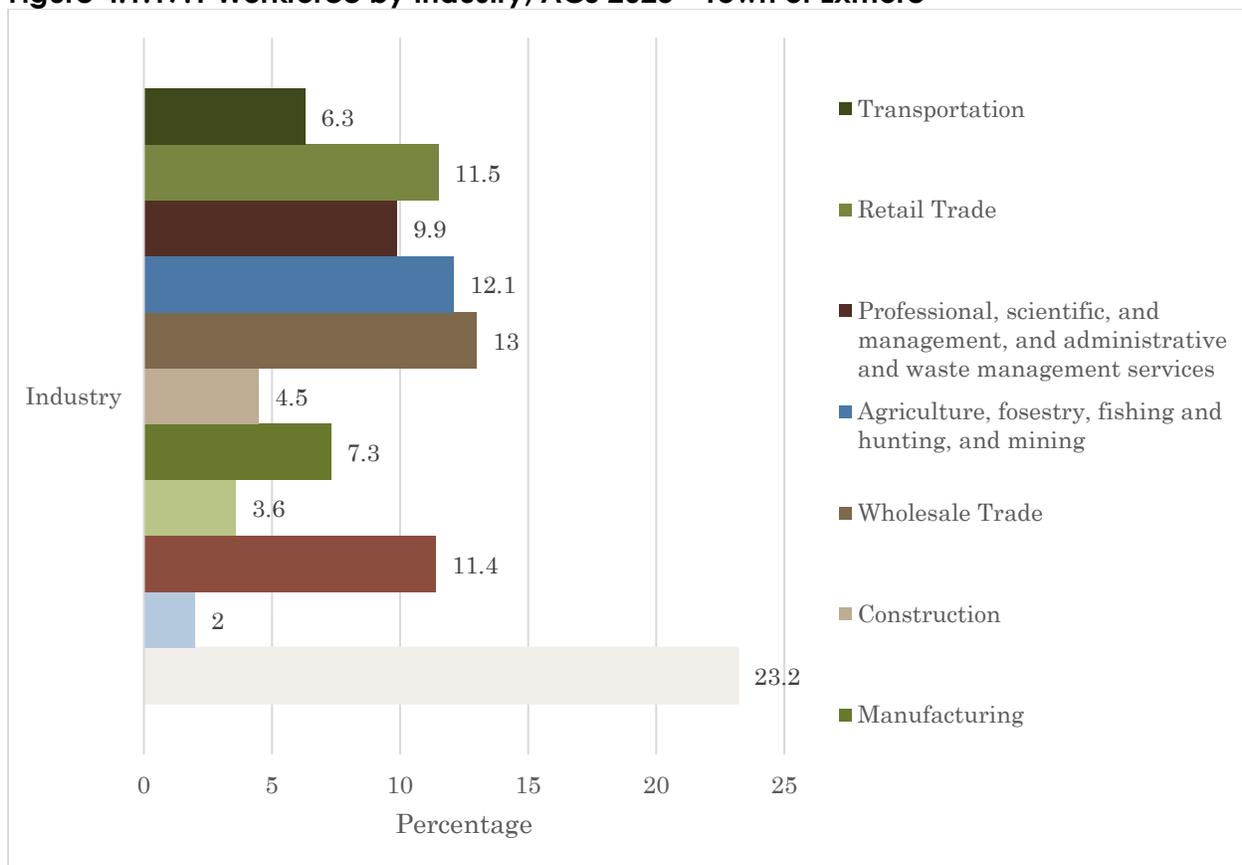
Workforce

Data from the 2023 ACS depicts a wide range of types of workforce industries. The diversity of employers makes the community resilient to a shift in income due to a natural or manmade hazard impacting an industry. Some of these employment entities operate in waterfront areas, and thus are more exposed to winds and water damages during a storm event, which may slow the following recovery time for both the business, the workforce, and the Town.



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Figure 4.1.17.1 Workforce by Industry, ACS 2023 – Town of Exmore



Housing

The ACS 2023 Housing Occupancy states that 691 housing units are occupied with 92 units sitting vacant, totaling 783 housing units. Residents rely on individual private wells for their water supply and individual septic systems for their wastewater disposal.

Community Facilities

The Town of Exmore hosts five aquaculture businesses at Willis Wharf, as well as the three largest clam culture businesses on the East Coast. Water quality in the Region is vital to the security of ongoing economic prosperity of the businesses located in Exmore, as well as the Region as a whole.

U.S. Route 13 provides good regional access and bisects the town. The former Bay Coast Railroad has been inactive since 2018 and runs through the middle of Town.

Fire protection for the Town is provided by the Exmore Volunteer Fire Department, for which there are 18-20 volunteer firefighters, two ambulances, one engine, one tanker, one brush truck, and one support vehicle. Ambulance service is provided by Northampton County. The Town of Exmore has its own police department which includes seven full-time officers serving approximately 1,500 residents. Northampton County Sheriff's Office and Virginia State Police also provide additional police assistance when needed.



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The Town of Exmore had one new well installed approximately 24-36 months ago and another that is in process of being replaced. Both wells pump to a chlorination facility and to a water tower with a single-day storage capacity. Failing septic systems in the late 1990s led to the construction of two sewage systems. The one on the north end of Town was constructed in 1999 and collects sewage from individual septic tanks to a mass drain field. The 2005 septic tank effluent pump modified individual septic tanks in the downtown area and diverts the settled effluent to a waste water treatment plant on the east side of Town. The newer system suffered from malfunctions and the USDA granted Exmore \$30,000 in planning funds to study sewer collection and treatment (Town of Exmore Comprehensive Plan, 2015). The Town plans to connect to Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) sewer lines in the near future, which will allow for new residential and commercial developments. Installation of the collection system and treatment facility will increase the Town's ability to get back to business following stormwater and flooding events and will protect businesses both within and near the Town and Region.

Three schools are located within the boundaries of the Town, including one public school, Occohannock Elementary School, and two private schools, Broadwater Academy (PreK-12), and Shore Christian Academy (Town of Exmore Comprehensive Plan, 2015)

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

The Exmore Town Park has been renovated with the addition of new restrooms. The parking area has been enhanced and the Town is beginning to use the Park for activities and events beyond just the playground.

The closest public library is in Nassawadox and is part of the Eastern Shore Public Library system. Exmore developed as a result of the completed railroad in 1884. There are historic buildings that go back to this age, such as the Exmore Historic Train Station.

Future Development

As of current, the wastewater collection system in Exmore is unable to serve the demands of businesses downtown and along Route 13, limiting future development.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

The Town of Exmore joined the National Flood Insurance Program on February 8, 2001 as a No Special Flood Hazard Area Participating Community due to the town having no identified Special Flood Hazard Areas. Claims in Exmore are most likely the result of stormwater floodings.

Table 4.1.17.3 Town of Exmore Critical Facilities

Facility	Hazards	No of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential	Responsible Entity
Town-Owned Facilities						



Chapter 4 – Community Profiles

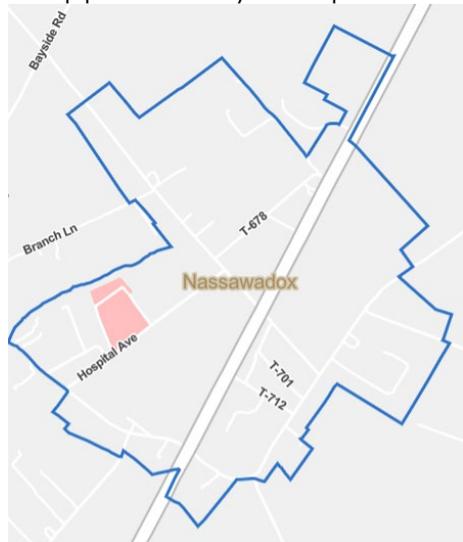
Town Office /Police Dept	Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	1,500+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes	Town of Exmore
Town of Exmore Water Towner (located inside corporate limits of Belle Haven) and Filtration Building	Hurricanes, Tornadoes, Winter Weather	1,500+	Devastating	No	Yes	Town of Exmore
Exmore Municipal Wells	Stormwater flooding, Groundwater Contamination	1,500+	Devastating	No	Yes	Town of Exmore
Exmore Water Distribution System	Stormwater flooding, snow, and ice	1,500+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	
Exmore Public Sewer Systems (2)	Stormwater flooding	1,500+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	
Exmore Town Park	Stormwater flooding, wind	1,500+	Inconvenience	No	Yes	
Exmore Public Works	Stormwater flooding, Wind	1,500+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes	
Other Critical Facilities						
Post Office	Flooding	1,500+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes	
Exmore Village/AP Apartments	Wind, Fire	400+	Devastating	No	Yes	
Power substation	Wind, Fire	1,500+	Devastating	No	Yes	
CSB	Wind	500+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes	
Communication Tower (behind old A&N building)	Wind	1,500+	Major Disruption	Yes	Yes	
Associated Grain Bins	Wind	1,500+	Inconvenience	Yes	Yes	
Exmore Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department	Stormwater flooding, wind	11,885+	Devastating	No	Yes	
Exmore Schools	Stormwater Flooding, wind	1,500+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	

4.2.4 TOWN OF NASSAWADOX



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The Town of Nassawadox is located in Northampton County along the central spine of the Eastern Shore. The Town is just 5 miles south of Exmore and 25 miles north of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The name “Nassawadox” derives from a Native American word meaning “land between two waters.” The Town is made up of an area of approximately 0.4 square miles and is located on US Route 13.



The Town of Nassawadox had a population of 533 in 2023 according to the American Community Survey five-year estimates. The median age is 37.8, revealing a population younger than the state average, whereas 29.6% of the population is over the age of 65 (ACS 2023).

There is a nursing home/rehabilitation center located in Nassawadox and is important to consider when planning for a hazard, as this population could be considered high risk and would likely require additional support. The majority of residents speak English and would be able to access pertinent emergency information in the event of a hazard.

Table 4.1.19.1 Demographic Information – Town of Nassawadox

	2023	2019	2010	2000
Population	533	486	499	572
Median Age (years)	37.8	58.1	61.8	53.5
Disability	10.8%	69	NA	NA
Income				
Median Household	NA	\$41,250	\$35,893	\$21,250
Poverty Level	23.2%	10.9%	NA	N/A
Language				
Only English	88.1%	97.5%	96.7%	97.1%
Other	12.0%	2.5%	3.3%	2.9%
Spanish	10.7%	1.9%	0.0%	2.9%
Ind-Euro	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Asian	1.3%	0.6%	3.3%	0.0%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
*ACS, 2023, **ACS, 2019, ***U.S. Census 2010, ****U.S. Census 2000				

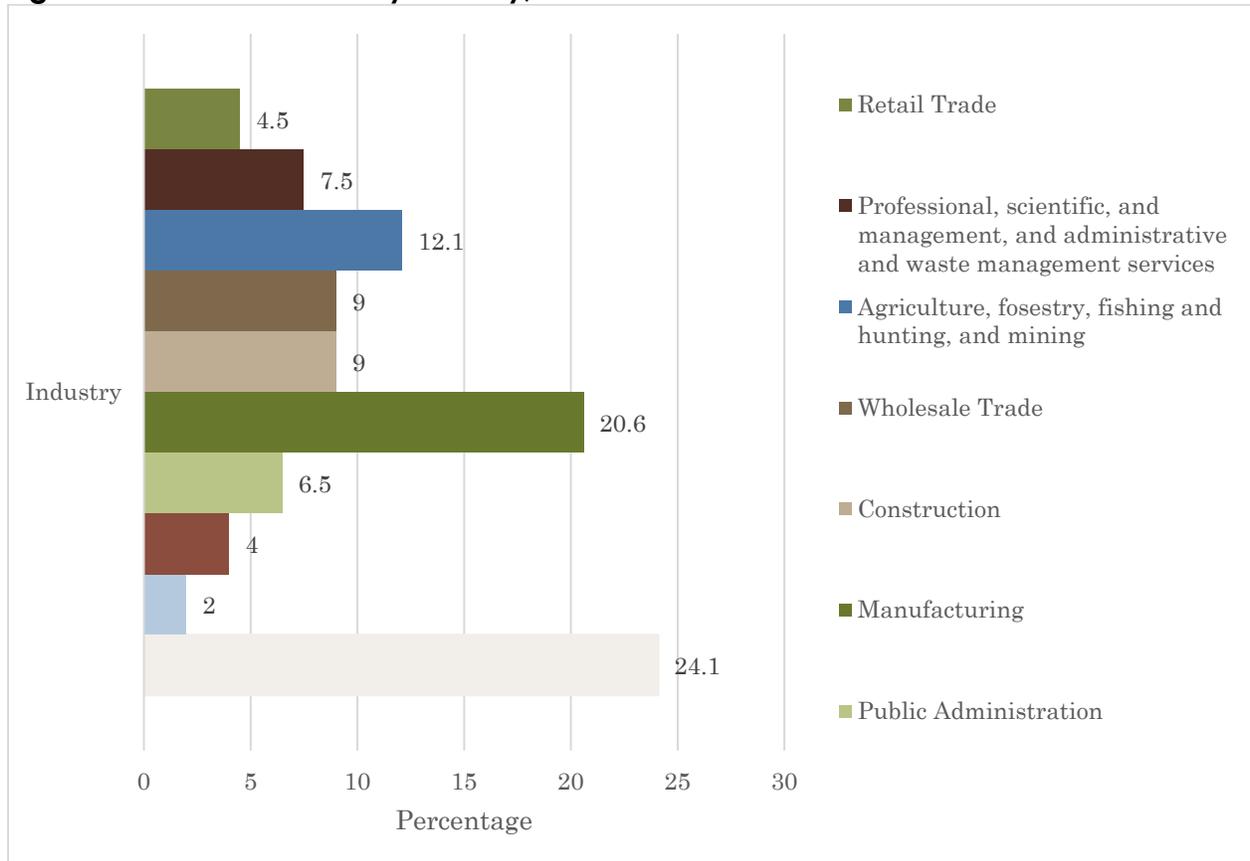


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Workforce

Data from the 2023 ACS depicts a wide range of types of workforce industries. The diversity of employers makes the community resilient to a shift in income due to a natural or manmade hazard impacting an industry. Some of these employment entities operate in waterfront areas, and thus are more exposed to winds and water damages during a storm event, which may slow the following recovery time for both the business, the workforce, and the Town.

Figure 4.1.17.1 Workforce by Industry, ACS 2023 – Town of Cheriton



Housing

The ACS 2023 Housing Occupancy states that 191 housing units are occupied with 41 units sitting vacant, totaling 232 housing units. Residents rely on individual private wells for their water supply and individual septic systems for their wastewater disposal.

Community Facilities

U.S. Route 13 provides good regional access and bisects the town. The former Bay Coast Railroad has been inactive since 2018 and runs through the middle of Town. There are ongoing plans to convert the railroad into a rail-trail multi-use path, which would give residents in Nassawadox and other towns in the Region safe access to stores, restaurants, jobs, exercise, recreation, and more. The railroad right of way also houses pertinent infrastructure, such as the Virginia Broadband Authority and the future Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) sewer lines. Streets and sidewalks are



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maintained by VDOT and several areas are in need of repair. The commercial center consists of a restaurant, several variety shops, a bank, Post Office, lumber yard, library, and several other businesses.

Police protection is provided by the Northampton County Sheriff's Department and the Virginia State Police. Fire protection for the Town is provided by the Nassawadox Volunteer Fire Company, which has 20 members, 10 of whom are active fire and rescue members. Equipment at the facility includes one engine, one tanker, one brush truck, one supply/accident truck, one personnel/command truck, and one ambulance that is currently up for. Ambulance and EMS response is provided by Northampton County and surrounding Towns. The Nassawadox Volunteer Fire Department responds to calls throughout Northampton County (Town of Nassawadox Comprehensive Plan, 2000), particularly the area between Exmore and Eastville, including Hare Valley, Franktown, Bayford, Vaocluse Shores, Marionville, Red Bank, Wierwood, Birdsnest, Treherneville, and other outlying areas.

The Town of Nassawadox invested in a central public sewage system, which they have found to be overly expensive and unnecessary. The hospital was one of the main entities driving investment into a waste water treatment plant (WWTP). Although the hospital has moved out of town, other medical services have connected to the WWTP. There are no private residences connected.

The Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) has begin serving the Eastern Shore of Virginia with are multiple phases of the project proposed. The first phase to construct sewer lines from Nassawadox up to the Town of Onancock in Accomack County has been proposed. The option to connect to HRSD's sewer system will allow for additional development in Nassawadox and several other towns that are included in the project's first phase.

The Town residents benefit from free weekly residential pickup by Davis Disposal. Commercial waste is collected by private haulers and must be taken to Accomack County. The Hare Valley Convenience Center is located just one mile north of the Town.

Other Resources - Natural, Historical, and Cultural

The Randy Custis Memorial Park is located within the Town and contains a playground, concession stand, picnic area, and several various sports fields. There is an indoor complex with a gym floor for residents in the area to utilize as well. The Northampton Free Library is also located in Nassawadox.

Nassawadox is very flat with slopes ranging from 0% to 2%. Most of the land is at an elevation of 35 to 40 feet above sea level. The soils in Nassawadox are either hydric or highly permeable, with a depth to groundwater of 0-36 inches. Hydric soils are a major limiting factor in Nassawadox due to their severe limitations in respect to constructing onsite septic systems. Residents in the Town are completely reliant upon on-site septic systems for waste disposal. The presence of groundwater near the surface can cause septic system failure resulting in ground water contamination.



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Future Development

Nassawadox is just over 50% developed, the Town is more susceptible to stormwater issues. Cultivated crop covers approximately a fifth of the Town, indicating the importance of agriculture in the Region.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

The Town of Nassawadox joined the NFIP program on May 8, 2007. Nassawadox does not have any identified Special Flood Hazard Areas. Claims filed in the Town are likely a result of stormwater flooding.

Table 4.1.17.3 Town of Nassawadox Critical Facilities

Facility	Hazards	No of People Affected	Loss Potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential	Responsible Entity
Town-Owned Facilities						
Other Critical Facilities						
Volunteer Fire Dept.	Fire, Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm, Ice	10,000	Devastating	Yes	Yes	Volunteer Fire Dept.
Randy Custis Memorial Park	Fire, Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm, Ice	1,000	Inconvenience	No	Yes	Town
Post Office	Fire, Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm, Ice	1,000	Major Disruption	No	Yes	
Northampton Free Library	Fire, Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm, Ice	10,000	Inconvenience	No	Yes	
Shore Stop (Gas station)	Fire, Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm, Ice	2,000+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	Private
Water Tower (at hospital)	Fire, Flooding, Hurricane and Tropical Storm, Ice	1,000+	Major Disruption	No	Yes	

