



TOWN OF OCCOQUAN
Circa 1734 • Chartered 1804 • Incorporated 1874

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Occoquan Town Council

**Work Session Meeting
January 20, 2015 | 7:00 pm**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Regular Items**
 - a. River Park Discussion: Revised Conceptual Plan
 - b. Fiscal Year 2016 Goal Setting Discussion
- 3. Adjournment**



TOWN OF OCCOQUAN
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Agenda Communication

2. Work Session Regular Item	Meeting Date: January 20, 2015
2 A: River Park Discussion: Revised Conceptual Plan	

Explanation and Summary:

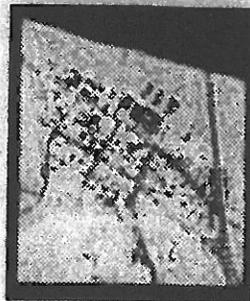
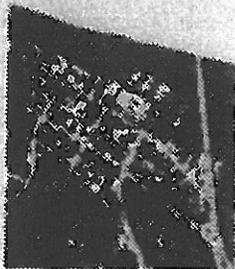
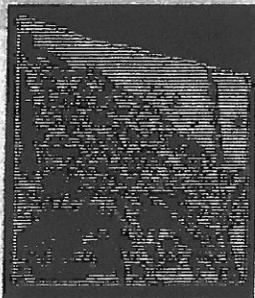
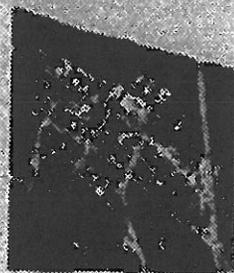
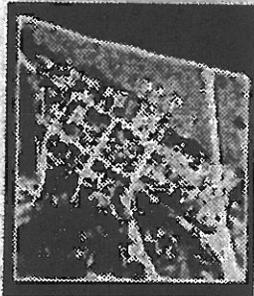
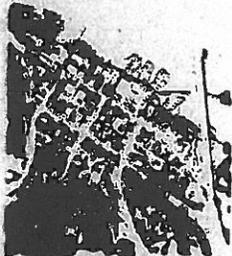
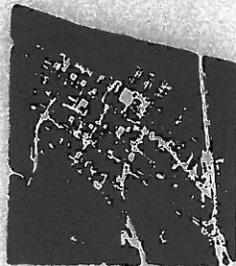
Assistant Town Engineer Matt Williams, The Engineering Groupe, will present revised conceptual plans for the river park site located at the west end of Mill Street.

Demolition of the former River Station Water Treatment Plant is currently taking place. Once the demolition work is complete, Fairfax Water will turn the park over to the Town to begin construction of the next phase of the project, which includes developing the gateway to the park consisting of the restroom and storage facility. The next phase, which is being discussed during this work session, will focus on developing the remainder of the park to include a pavilion, pedestrian bridge improvements, a looped walking path, interpretive signage and historic artifacts.

Conceptual designs will be provided and discussed during the meeting.

Attachments: None.

the
Occoquan
charrette



October 15-17, 1998

**the
Occoquan
charrette**

Sponsored by

The Town of Occoquan

*Patricia Conway, Mayor
Chris Hardy, Vice Mayor
Harry Ervin, Councilmember
Barbara F. Frank, Councilmember
Stephen Malter, Councilmember
Barbara Maye, Councilmember*

*with assistance from
The Northern Virginia Planning District Commission*

Special Thanks

The Town is grateful to the following for their support:

*Harbor River Cruises
Cafe Rochambeau
Garden Kitchen
Sea, Sea and Co.
Occoquan Inn
Corner Cafe
VFW Post 7916*

Facilitated by

*Mark Gibb, Northern Virginia Planning District Commission
Richard Kaku, Kaku Associates
Dave Wilcox, Economics Research Associates
Frank Fuller, ELS Architects*

schedule of events

Thursday, October 15, 1998

The Information Phase

8:30 AM	Registration and Informal Introductions	Noon	Working Lunch
9:00 AM	Introduction and Description of Charrette Goals and Objectives	1:00 PM	Sub-Team Assignments: Summary Reports as necessary with test, flip charts and overheads.
9:30 AM	Orientation: Occoquan/Prince William County Boat and Walking Tour. Site visits: Downtown Occoquan, Marina/Waterfront, Major Intersections, and Historic Sites	5:00 PM	Full Team Report
		6:00 PM	Recess until Saturday.
Noon	Working Lunch: Open discussion of technical issues, review various planning studies.		
1:30 PM	Goals and Objectives in the following issue categories: Transportation, Community Development, Finance and Economics, and Main Street.		
3:00 PM	Panel Discussion of the Technical Issues with the Consultant Team, Town Council Members, and Planning Commission members.		
6:00 PM	Working Dinner		
7:30 PM	Public Input Forum (Advertised). Open discussion as required and round table suggestions.		

Saturday, October 17, 1998

The Recommendation Phase

9:00 AM	Alternative Land Use Scenarios: Maps, Charts, Graphics, Text Support
11:00 AM	Selection of Preferred Concepts - Final Review of the Plan and Recommendations
Noon	Working Lunch
1:00 PM	Presentation and Public Input Session
2:00 PM	Adjourn

Friday, October 16, 1998

The Analytical Phase

8:30 AM	Identification of Key Areas to Study: Land Use, Transportation, Amenities, Performance Standards, Historic Preservation, Housing.
9:30 AM	Cross-Gestalt Process
10:30 AM	Proposed Components - Specific Areas for Resolution

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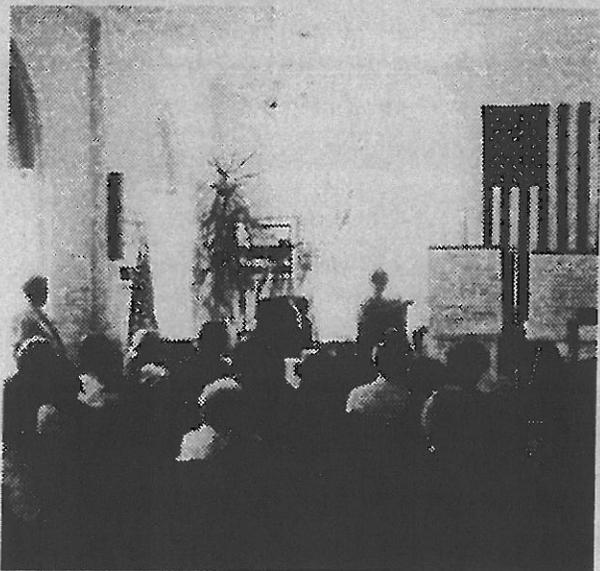


the Occoquan charrette

Introduction

The Town of Occoquan is a special place in Northern Virginia. In a rapidly-urbanizing, highly populous region that has seen almost all of its growth since World War II (and much of it in the last two decades), Occoquan is a small town (1990 population: 361) that is rich in history. Although its first streets were laid out in 1804, Occoquan has been a site for commercial activity since well before the Revolutionary War.

Today, Occoquan attracts visitors from the region and beyond with its mix of historical charm, shops and restaurants, river-related activities, and special events. Occoquan has managed to welcome tourists without becoming a Disney-like imitation of small town America.



Because the town is located along the Occoquan River that forms the boundary between fast-growing Prince William and Fairfax Counties, and just one mile from Interstate 95, maintaining and strengthening the unique character of Occoquan is a special challenge. It's a challenge that has been met again and again by the town, but a challenge that continues. Today, some of this challenge includes the prospect of continued development of the open space near the town, the upcoming widening of the Route 123 bridge to six lanes to meet ever growing transportation demands, and improvements to the water authority facility to meet the needs of a growing regional population.

The Occoquan Charrette was held on October 15-17, 1998, to focus on these and other important issues facing the town. Three consultants: Dave Wilcox of Economics Research Associates, Richard Kaku of Kaku Associates, and Frank Fuller of ELS Architects led participants in discussions about the present and future of Occoquan. After several days of listening, talking and touring, the three consultants presented their findings and recommendations on Saturday, October 17.

The main body of this report focuses on the final presentation of the three consultants as they address three main topics: planning and design; transportation; and economics, enterprise, and finance. So as not to lose the many significant points raised during the days of discussion, the appendix contains a

transcription of all of the notes taken during the charrette.

Findings & Recommendations of the Consultants

Planning & Design Issues

Frank Fuller, of ELS Architects, presented the findings and recommendations related to planning, design, and land use issues. He began by noting that many charrettes limit themselves to design issues and the more comprehensive nature of the Occoquan Charrette was very valuable.

Mr. Fuller emphasized the importance of consensus in the visioning process: consensus about what the future holds as well as about what the future should be. The town's resources for meeting challenges include not only what may already exist, but also the perception of the future and the community's desire to see that future happen.



Occoquan as a Regional Idea

Describing the "particular nature of a place" is an important starting point in the visioning process. For Occoquan, one can begin with the name. "Occoquan" is repeated in the name of a bay, the river, the town, the watershed. "Occoquan" has kept a lot of its character even though on each side there have been, and are, threats to its existence. In many ways the unique character extends all the way up to Manassas and Bull Run.

Occoquan is more than the town, even though the town is very important — the town is the heart. This idea of "regional Occoquan" informs visioning because it encompasses many things: wildlife and recreation, history, and other parts of the town and the region. So we've looked at more than the downtown proper, to the area surrounding the town as well.

Scale and Surrounding Area

The setting of the town is really quite pastoral. When you are down in this valley, near the river, enjoying how quiet it is (apart from when the sand and gravel trucks are accelerating), there's a small, intimate pedestrian quality to the town.

There was a lot of discussion during the few days of the charrette about how the town sits along the river and how it sits relative to other groups who are involved in its future: the Water Authority, Vulcan Quarry, the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, and developers. Forested land around the town gives the town some of its identity and must be

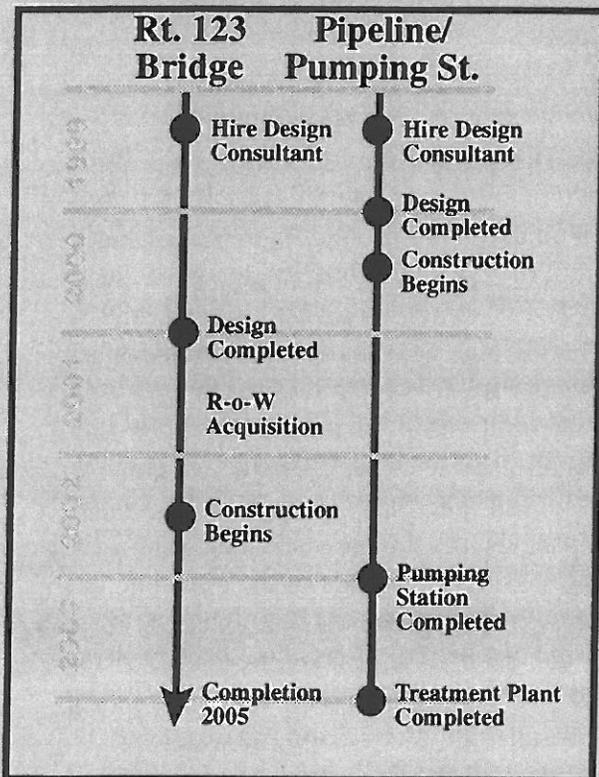
protected. The County is an important partner in the town's future because much of the fragile open space critical to the town's character is outside the town boundary.

A defining aspect is the many creeks that have created small canyons that are steep enough and wooded enough that so far, developers haven't wanted to build there. The "area of least resistance" has been farther west and northwest. That doesn't mean development won't come. Looking at a map, one sees roads shown as connected up in the forested area — Tanyard Hill Road is connected now but still relatively narrow. Connecting and improving those roads will bring not just traffic but access for future development.

The surrounding forested area is a key to the identity of the town and its future. One can define the important forested area by the ridges. From each of these hilltops one gets a different perspective: the white hilltops of the quarry slag piles, for example. But more importantly, the ridges define the area that one can see from the town itself — a "viewshed," as it were.

The most important actions in the surrounding area that are of immediate interest to the town have to do with the two major projects occurring upriver: the water authority and the Route 123 bridge. The water tanks are right at the edge of town. Pipes lead to the upper dam. The Fairfax County Water Authority is re-routing the pipes to get to a new water treatment facility upriver, on the Fairfax County side. The existing Route 123 bridge has three lanes and the Virginia Department of Transportation plans to increase the capacity to at least six lanes crossing the river.

Estimated Bridge and Pipeline Time Line



Bridge and Pipeline Timing Issues

The timelines of these two projects are important. They cover seven years. What is most important to Occoquan is the first couple of years because that is when the water authority will hire consultants and start design. Construction is planned to start by mid-2000, with the pump station expected to be finished by mid-2003 in order to finish the water treatment plant by the end of 2003, which is the federally mandated deadline for the water authority.

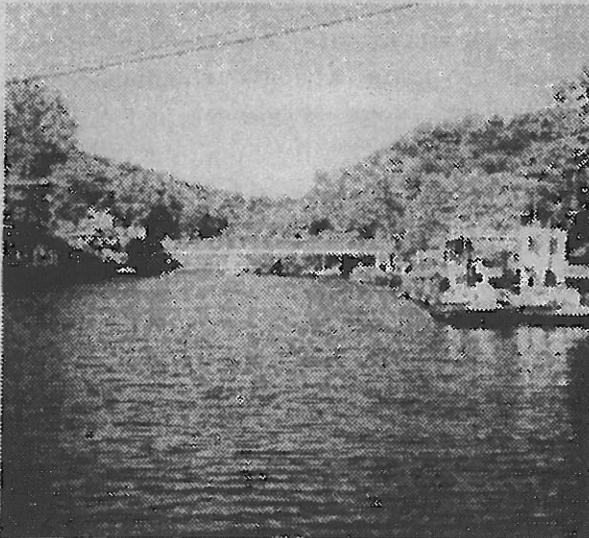
This means that there must be conversations with the Water Authority in the next year for the town to have its concerns addressed.

Otherwise, the Water Authority's schedule would be pushed back, which is unlikely due to the funding mandate for the Water Authority.

The Virginia Department of Transportation wants to hire a consultant for the Route 123 bridge in April 1999 and have the design concepts finished by the end of 2000. They hope to start detailed design right after that and hope to start construction in the middle of 2002 with completion in mid-2005. This schedule also means that the next two years are the window for input on bridge design.

The Water Authority Project and River Access Issues

The pipeline and water treatment plant projects bring up another issue that was a topic for discussion at the charrette: how these projects can be accomplished in a way that's respectful of the identity of Occoquan and recognize the importance of water access up and down river, as well as, increase opportunities for river access.



These major pipelines have to be secured, as does the pumping station, but the issue is how to accomplish this while allowing people to walk up and down the river. The Fairfax County Water Authority has a system in mind where they take a pipe underneath the river and into the pumping station, coming underneath the river at a diagonal and under the bridge that they use for the existing pipeline. The pipeline bridge could then be available for a pedestrian crossing, so that people might be able to walk along the river, cross the bridge, and walk up the other side.

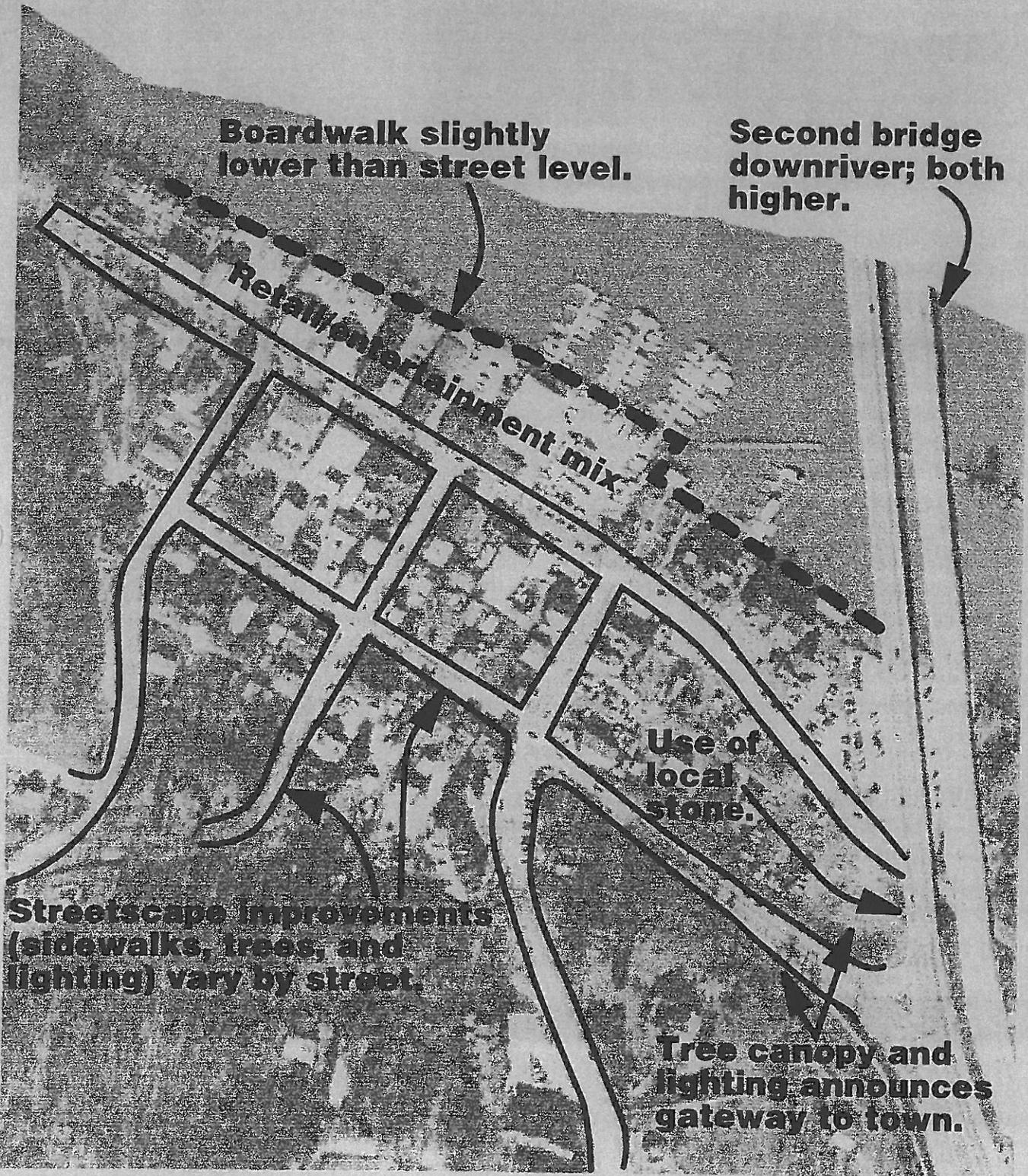
If the pumping station and the pipeline upriver can be secured, people could be allowed to walk and bike upriver, with the possibility of linking up with the regional parks. Occoquan, then, becomes a gateway to enjoying the river in both directions.

Recommendations for the Route 123 Bridge

There was a lot of discussion during the charrette about the Route 123 Bridge: how high would it be, what would it look like, and what would it mean for the town. VDOT has preliminarily configured the bridge to be six lanes. VDOT contemplates building a new, three lane bridge next to the existing one and then going back to the old bridge to either improve or rebuild it. The result would be two bridges of three lanes each. The consultant team suggests, and the consensus of Charrette participants is, that the new span should be built on the downriver side of the existing span. It was also agreed that the existing bridge can be left where it is, but rebuilt so that the whole thing is higher, about 35 feet above mean high tide, raising the water clearance under the bridge and visually

Planning and Design Concepts

Occoquan, Virginia





consistent with the character of Occoquan. The discussions of various groups and committees stress the ideas of using quarry stones as part of the bridge and having stairs that wind to the top.

Some advantages of putting the new bridge on the eastern/downriver side are visual, particularly if the new bridge is higher. This would open up a gateway rather than a visual barrier to the town approaching by the river, if the design is open underneath. The acoustics will be improved as well by distancing the noise source and reducing the need for trucks to downshift. Bike and pedestrian connections would allow improved access between the town and the Occoquan regional park on the Fairfax County side.

Downtown Recommendations

The recommendations for downtown are in three general categories: a streetscape plan, the boardwalk, and land use recommendations for waterfront properties.

The Downtown Streetscape Plan

A streetscape plan for downtown should reflect the fact that Occoquan has an incremental quality to it; that is, it has been built

over time. That means, too, that it is not any one particular architectural style, such as Victorian or Classical Revival, but has a number of different styles. That's not a negative, it's part of the quality of Occoquan. It also has different kinds of streets, different passages that cut through the town, a sidewalk program that is being implemented piece by piece, and gas lights that are coming on block by block.

In concert with this incremental quality, a totally consistent streetscape is not a requirement. For example, landmark trees. Sometimes if you put the emphasis on getting the curbs, sidewalks, lamps, etc., just right, champion trees don't have the space they need to survive. So we will want to have exceptions, and these exceptions — or idiosyncracies — contribute to the character of Occoquan as a historic district.

Given that, there are still some places where improvements can be made. These include the streetscape along the boardwalk as well as the inner streets and alleys. The streetscape is particularly important on Commerce where you enter the town. A visitor should have the feeling when they enter the town on Commerce Street that "now I am in a small town," rather than "I have just come off of a freeway

off-ramp.” The present Commerce Street is still too wide, given the more intimate feel of the town itself. This can be remedied with a tree canopy that will enclose the street to the sides and up above. Sidewalks with lights will also be visually more narrow and will signal that one has arrived in a small town. Once in the downtown, the street trees continue and the sidewalks change width, signaling that you’re downtown where the pedestrian is as important as the automobile.

The streets can be differentiated by varying the streetscape: For example, on Commerce Street you might have street trees on both sides and gas lights on just one side. Maybe on other streets you have street trees on just the side that gets the afternoon sun.

The alleys also add another dimension to the town’s character: back entrances, deliveries, and so forth. That randomness is essential to character.

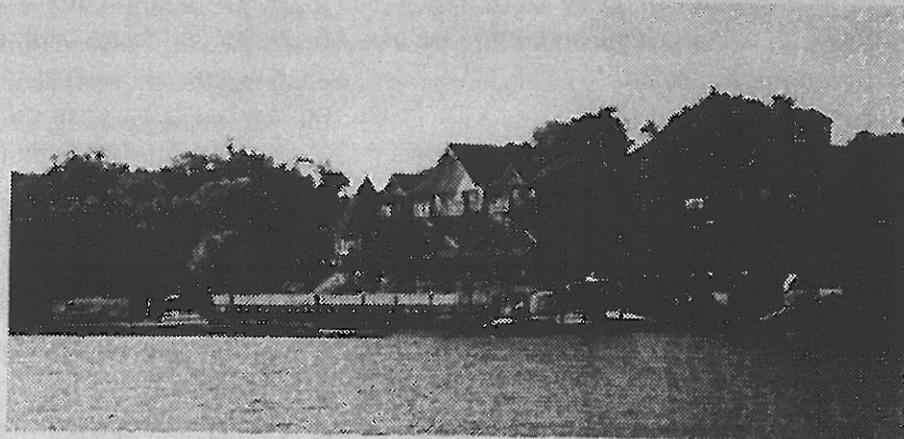
We recommend additional access from the downtown/central area to the places where infill residential might occur later. Sidewalks should continue a little farther from the downtown to the residential area than they do

now, so that one doesn’t perceive that the two are completely different and cut apart.

River Access — The Boardwalk

Access to and exploitation of the river is essential. The Boardwalk is key to that access. It is very important that the Town begin to implement it, even if there are sections that are not connected to each other. In fact, a uniform “Boardwalk” may not be desirable. Several separate and distinctive access points would be keeping within the character of the town. Regardless, it is much more likely that the boardwalk will be completed if it is started, and much less likely if one waits until it can be done at once. For example, in St. Paul, Minnesota, they began their system of enclosed pedestrian bridges one at a time. Sometimes a new bridge connected with an existing one, sometimes it didn’t. Eventually, though, they had a system of interconnected bridges that’s been very successful.

Focusing on the area near the Route 123 bridge, there is private property with existing boardwalk, a town access way, another private property with existing boardwalk, a short area, and the Mamie Davis Park. Those three





pieces might be the first three pieces connected, establishing more than 1,000 feet of boardwalk.

A second point is to make sure there are connections between Mill Street and the Boardwalk, actual connections as well as visual ones so that Mill Street and the river are complimentary and build upon one another.

Recommendations for Waterfront Properties

The first step is to develop a policy regarding the relationship of the properties to the boardwalk or to the river even without the boardwalk. This is particularly true with river access because if the town doesn't specify what it wants ahead of time, it could lose a critical link to the water.

Regarding the kinds of land uses appropriate for the waterfront properties, the consultant team feels that the first priority should be retail/entertainment uses, including those related to maritime and boating.

A hotel or conference type facility is a second choice, particularly if mixed with some kinds

of retail and entertainment uses. A third choice is housing. If it is housing, it should have retail or entertainment on the first floor. With housing it is particularly essential to get access and water edge issues solved first.

Other River-Related Issues

There are two other issues related to the river, the first having to do with its depth. The effect of former floods, of drainage from streams, and storms coming downriver is to dump silt in the river channel. The depth of the river, not simply for passage but also enough room for turning boats around, is an important issue for boat access to the town, particularly if there are already a couple of things that might make people think twice about bringing their boats five miles or so upriver to Occoquan. Keeping the channel deep enough to accommodate boats needing five to seven feet of water will address that issue, especially if the bridges are high enough and designed to encourage people to come past the bridges.

A second point is the elevation of the boardwalk. The boardwalk should be a little lower than the land behind it so visitors on the water are connected visually to the town.

Transportation

Richard Kaku, of Kaku Associates, presented the consultants findings and recommendations concerning five transportation issues: parking, the Route 123 bridge, new automobile access, entrances to the town, and bypass traffic.

Route 123 Bridge

As regional traffic grows, there is a need to widen the Route 123 bridge. Because the existing three-lane bridge has no room for any shoulders or facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, the widening may require at least one new span that has three fully operational lanes, plus all of the other needed facilities. The existing span will probably have the deck replaced.

Parking Considerations

Near Term

- On-Street Parking Time Restrictions
- Use of Commerce Street
- Temporary Parking on Private Property
- Pave Dawson Property

Long Term

- Form Business Improvement District to help implement parking management plan and raise revenues.
- Coordinate with Fairfax County Water Authority to maintain or speed up their schedule and to use property for parking.

In looking at the options that are available from the Virginia Department of Transportation, it is very important that the town get involved, because the bridge design will have such an impact on the town.

The consultant team recommends that the new span be located to the east side (down river) of the existing bridge. The team recognized and reviewed the other options, even though a new span on the east side would impact several residential properties (although there are residential units on either side). In looking at the maps, the area, and the ground, the team still felt the best approach is to add the new span on the east side and improve the existing bridge. To visually preserve the historic district and protect the economic resource that is the business district, both spans should be raised in such a way to reduce the noise impact on the community and have a 35-foot vertical clearance to make better use of the water. Finally, the design of the new bridges should be visibly compatible with the town.

Once construction starts on the bridge, whichever option is chosen, the 100-space parking lot currently used by the town will have to be closed.

Parking

To provide background, let's look at the comparing the supply and demand for parking today. Using the best available data, there are approximately 140 on-street parking spaces in the town and 140 off-street parking spaces controlled by the town, for a total of 280 publicly-controlled spaces. On private property there are about 220 parking spaces scattered throughout the downtown. That

number does not include the parking lot at Ebenezer Church. This means that there are approximately 500 parking spaces downtown available to employees, residents, and tourists.

On the demand side, it is recognized that there are about six months out of the year that parking demand increases, or is at its peak. During these peak months there are peak days, generally during the weekends.

The consultant team's conclusion is that the peak day/peak period parking problems are not so acute that they are not solvable within the context of what exists today. That does not minimize the fact that there are parking problems on those days in the peak months.

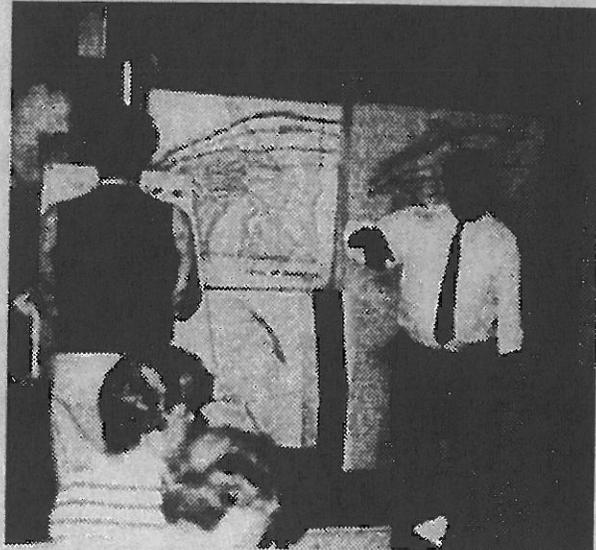
It is useful to remember that there are a total of 52 peak days during the peak period. It is important to remember because the town, like other towns, has limited resources and a number of projects it wishes to pursue. The town may not want to direct all of its limited resources to fully addressing a parking problem that occurs on just 52 days out of 365. That is not to minimize the problem, since these 52 days are important to the economy of the town.

Taking a look at demand on those peak days, the town has estimated that they receive about 5,000 visitors on those days. Based upon the compilation of many parking studies, parking experts have developed standard factors for determining how many of those visitors will be in the town at one time during the day. In the case of Occoquan and its 5,000 visitors, one can assume that 20 to 25 percent of the visitors (between 1,000 and 1,200 persons)

will be in the town at any one point in time during a peak day. Again, using standard factors, one can assume that each visiting vehicle arrives with between 2.0 and 2.5 visitors per car, which corresponds to a demand for between 400 and 600 spaces in the town at one time, and there are about 500 spaces in the town already.

Using a second methodology, parking experts generally estimate demand for parking by looking at the type and amount of commercial space that needs to be served. In Occoquan there are 150 shops with an average of 1,000 square feet in each shop, or a total of 150,000 square feet of retail space. The standard amount of parking needed for retail is 3.0 spaces per 1,000 square feet of floor space, or 450 spaces.

The list of parking recommendations below is not necessarily shown in order of priority, but more in terms of an implementation schedule, mainly because the actions at the top of the list are a little faster and are things the town can do now, whereas the actions at the bottom



of the list take more time and cost more money.

The consultant team recommends strongly that the town have a parking management program so that the best spaces are available to your customers: your visitors, your tourists. It is important to come up with a way to make sure your best spaces, those right in front of the shops, are not used by the merchants, their employees, or in some cases, your residents. Those spaces need to be available, and they need to turn over and then become available for the next customer.

The best way, in the consultant's view, to maximize the availability of parking spaces while maintaining the nature and flavor of the town is through on-street parking restrictions and make sure that you enforce them. A side issue is that there are a number of residents inside the town and they should be permitted to receive special permits to allow them to park in town (although you might want to limit long-term residential parking to side streets so that the very best spaces are available for customers).

The consultant team also suggests (in keeping with some of the earlier planning recommendations for Commerce Street) because the street is wide, the use of shoulders for on-street parking. One of the other things that can be done is a temporary use of currently vacant pieces of private property in the town for parking. We recognize that if these properties were used long-term for parking, it might hurt their chances to someday be redeveloped. But if they are only used during those 52 peak days per year, it would not have that detrimental effect. These are things the town can

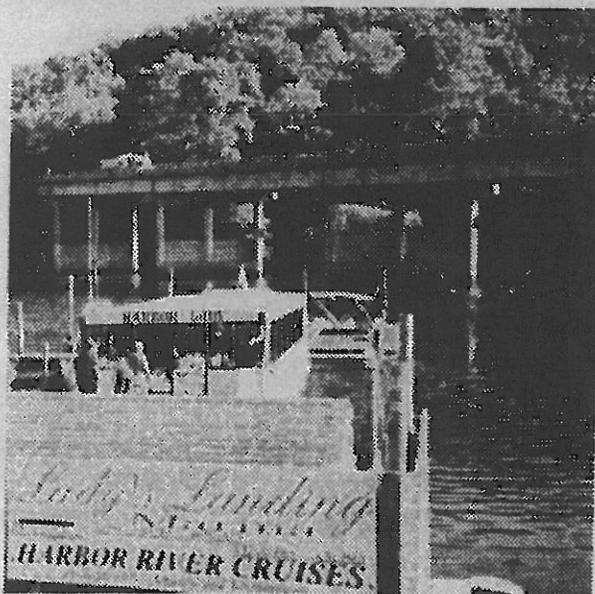
do relatively quickly in order to prepare itself for the impacts that will result as construction begins on the bridge.

A more permanent action is the formation of a business improvement district (BID). One of the important roles a BID can play is the development and enforcement of a parking management plan: that is, encouraging employees and merchants to park in the off-street spaces in the less convenient parts of town, rather than in the prime spaces, as well as implementing parking restrictions for the best on-street parking spaces. To do that, the cooperation of everyone is needed, particularly among merchants themselves. As a second point, the BID can generate revenue, as addressed in the Economics and Finance section.

The next two steps are critical in developing solutions for parking while the Route 123 bridge is under construction as well as for the longer term when construction is completed. The first has to do with land the Fairfax County Water Authority is now using, but may become available once they make their planned improvements. The town should begin to coordinate now with FCWA to see if there are opportunities to use that land temporarily for parking while the bridge is under construction. For this to have maximum benefit for the town, it would be helpful if the FCWA's schedule is maintained or accelerated. The expected completion date for the water project is 2003 and for the bridge is 2005, so if both projects stay on schedule, it is possible that there would be two years when it would be very helpful to the town to have access to the FCWA land.

The second part of the long range program is to coordinate with VDOT to see if there is a possibility of delaying construction on the bridge until land for replacement parking is available. Because they plan to start construction in the second half of 2001, there will be a 1-1/2 year period between the time when the bridge construction first takes out the 100-space lot and 2003, when the FCWA land is potentially available as a replacement lot.

It is also important for the town to be involved in the selection of the alignment for the bridge and in the bridge's ultimate design. As mentioned, the team feels that it is very important that the east/downriver side of the bridge be selected as the site of the new span. One consequence of the new span is that there will be additional land that is under the bridge, and the possibility that arrangements can be made with VDOT to use that land for parking. That additional amount of land should be more than adequate to carry the town through several years beyond 2005.



Other concepts for parking include the potential for structured parking; there may be such opportunities because of the differing elevations of different pieces of property, especially around the bridge, which might make it easier than in other places to put in structured parking. However, a parking structure in Occoquan, in the consultant's opinion, could make Occoquan more like Belmont Bay

Non-Auto Access

VDOT has a bikeway plan, they call it the Route 1 plan, that utilizes the old Route 123 bridge. Unfortunately, the way the Route 1 plan works, it uses both 123 and Old Bridge Road. Anyone who has driven on those two routes knows that it just won't work. No one would use either of those two roads to ride bicycles because there are no separate facilities to make it a safe place to ride. Rather than assuming that there is existing bikeway access to the town, the town should focus on developing the internal routes that are available for bicycles that include the use of the old bridge, the use of the boardwalk, and the use of other facilities in the town. The town has to try to make sure that as VDOT improves the bridge to meet regional auto traffic needs, they also include bikeway facilities that are separate and safe.

Water transportation will never be more than a supplemental service, even though it can be an important part of creating an image for the town and can be useful. It won't address the automobile access and parking problem except in a symbolic way. Nevertheless it is important to develop and carry out the policies for the town dock proposals to be considered, because access to the water is vital for so many reasons.

Transit can be viewed as supplemental, and as such is certainly worthwhile. In particular, it would be useful to designate places where tour buses could park and unload passengers. The current system of shuttles for festivals is great, but it is not realistic to expect that expansion would yield more than marginal benefits. Of course transit also serves more than tourists, it also serves employees and residents, and the Omnilink service is important for that.

Entrances/Signing

There should be a signing program that begins on I-95 that directs people to the 123 off-ramp, and then to Commerce Street. Once on Commerce Street, the signing should direct people to various activities and points of interest. The signing program should also have signs for pedestrians that they see as they walk around, so they have a better feel for what's available.

Bypass Traffic

One of the real key advantages to 123 bypassing the town is that we don't have all of that traffic passing through the center of town. That's why it is important to make sure that the regional highway system is improved sufficiently so that regional traffic does not use the streets in Occoquan as a bypass. The town should make sure that VDOT only makes safety improvements, not capacity or speed improvements, to the roads that provide access to the town. Traffic calming measures should be considered, although as a last resort, because they also affect how residents live their daily lives.

Implementation Techniques

This section is devoted to implementation techniques that will allow the town to meet the challenges that are ahead, to profit from them, to improve the quality of life for residents, and to allow visitors to have fun.

Reviewing some of the facts or numbers that the consultants have been told about the town: Occoquan now attracts about 900,000 visitors per year and 100,000 per show, twice a year. A portion of those visitors pay bus fees of about \$36,000 so about 18,000 people arrive by that mode. If the town is thinking about verifying the number of visitors, it may want to think twice about running to the press: increased numbers of visitors may also increase the amount of the fees that must be paid for police, fire and other services.

Looking at how those visitors are spread out over the year, it can be assumed about 65 percent come in the peak 6 months and about 35 percent in the six off-peak months. In the peak months, that translates into between 76,000 to 88,000 per month, 19,000 to 22,000 per week, and between 4,300 and 5,000 per weekend day, and 2,100 to 2,400 per week day. In the off-peak months, there are about 41,000 visitors per month, or between 10,000 and 16,000 visitors per week. These are rough estimates and more accurate estimates and information will help the town to better understand what it needs to do in the future. This may include identifying some of the demographic characteristics of the town's visitor base because inevitably, the current visitors will age and the town must market itself to a new group.

Vision Forward

This section looks at some measure of town size and activity and makes some forecasts about where the town will be a decade or so from now. Currently, the town has about 150 businesses, about 120 of them are retail, for about 150,000 square feet of commercial space. There are between 500 and 700 residents, and it is useful to remember that if official estimates sound low, there may be some benefits to making sure official estimates are correct because to some extent services and other benefits from higher levels of government are given out on the basis of population. The town has between 280 and 300 dwelling units.

There are no overnight rooms in the town, and the consultant team does believe there is a real market opportunity there for a conference lodge for meetings during the week and tourists during the weekend, although there may not be much business purpose travel in the near term.

The town hosts three big events a year, two in town and one out of town at the regional park across the river. There are fewer marinas than there were previously. The riverwalk is an opportunity at this point, as are historical resources that are not yet highlighted.

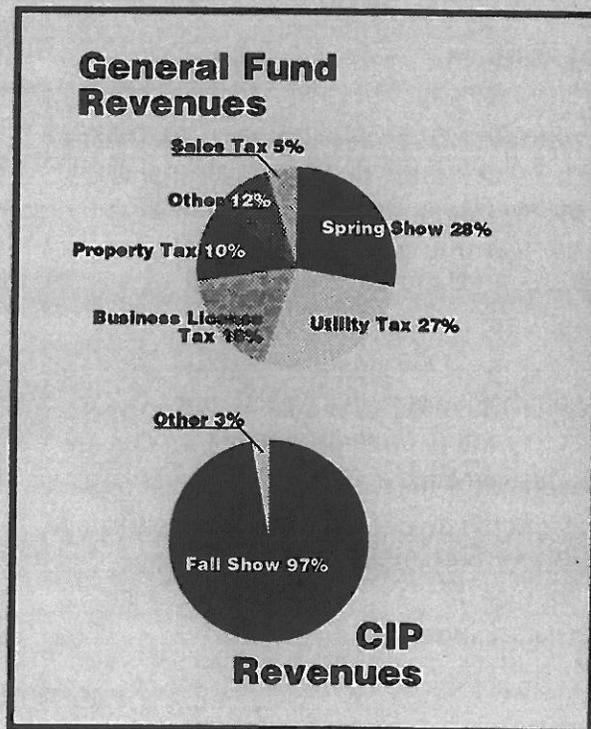
Looking a decade into the future, about 2008 or 2010, after the bridge and the pipeline/water treatment plant projects are completed, the consultant team forecasts about 235 businesses with about 180 of them retail. That would mean about another 60,000 square feet of commercial space, to 210,000 square feet. There is enough existing space in the town to accomplish this. There may also be as many

as 200 "office-at-home" activities, something which is going on all over the United States. It does build value in that it increases incomes while not encouraging new development that would encroach on green space.

By 2008 we may have as many as 900 or more residents and 450 or more housing units, so we need to consider what increases in services may be needed for those additional residents. Perhaps there will be as many as 200+ lodging rooms, which should work very well here with the unique experience. This could be a conference lodge or motor inn, or a 3-star hotel, or perhaps four to six bed-and-breakfasts.

Also by 2008 we may have five big events rather than the three now, not necessarily in the town itself but they should have the "Occoquan" name on them. Then also we

Revenues by Source



may have “new niches;” that is, not big events but small, sustainable events right through the season, such as a focus on wildlife appreciation. The town may also be able to strengthen/restore a small watercraft focus, develop on an incremental basis new connections to the river (e.g., the boardwalk), and implement the “recreational loop”(on both the Prince William and Fairfax sides of the river) to allow enjoyment of both sides of the river.

Finance: The Fragile Miracle

The town now has an expense budget of about \$425,000, of which about \$300,000 is in the General Fund, about \$90,000 in the capital improvements program (CIP), and \$35,000 in other expenses. The major sources of funds include two shows that the town operates, generating \$85,000 (or 28 percent of the budget and almost all of the CIP); a utility tax that generates \$80,000 (27 percent of the budget); and business licenses based upon gross receipts (and therefore dependent on the health of your businesses) generating \$55,000. The property tax generates about \$30,000, or just 10 percent of your revenues, while the sales tax generates \$15,000 per year.

This means that 40 percent of the town budget depends upon four days of good weather and volunteers, which it may not be able to count on forever. The town does not have a real financial cushion and has lost the potential benefit of new assessed value since 1993. That suggests the town may want to re-balance its sources of revenues to assure its ability to sustain itself, because if it cannot, it cannot assure that it will continue to have the ability to direct the course of its future.

Marketing

Some additional ideas for marketing the town. One is to become a founding member of “Historic Towns of Northern Virginia,” which is something the town can do, designing it ourselves, with other similar towns, as a way for co-promotion. This is another step forward and brings with it a series of new opportunities.

The second idea is the Business Improvement District, because there’s nothing more important than that bond between the merchants – some of whom are tenants and some of whom are landowners – and the town itself. The two do not grow unless they grow together. An “Occoquan Partnerships, Inc.” would be a flexible vehicle of convenience for umbrella purposes. It would be an organization that’s purpose is to look for new opportunities for the town, to reach out to other entities for partnering. It may be an *Occoquan Economic Development*-type of organization. It needs to be staffed and advised by people who are not elected officials – there’s a lot of expertise in this town and taking advantage of it can open the door to new opportunities.

It is understood that the name “Occoquan” means “end of the waters” or “nexus of waters,” referring to the end of the Occoquan River. However, the consultant team recommends that the town consider a “Head of the Waters” recreational program that both capitalizes on the resources the town has already and stimulates interest in moving forward on some of the initiatives that are important to the town’s future that we’ve discussed earlier.

Partnerships

Some of the existing partnerships are the Merchants Association, the Merchants Guild, Historic Occoquan Inc., Prince William County Tourist Center, the Fairfax County Water Authority, Prince William County Government, Prince William Chamber of Commerce, homeowner associations, the Northern Virginia Planning District Commission, and the Virginia Department of Transportation (for parking). Partnerships that could be created in the future are the business improvement district, a partnership with VDOT concerning the Route 123 bridge, George Mason University, and a partnership with the regional park authority.

The Business Improvement District

The consultant team presented recommendations the town may wish to explore concerning the Business Improvement District (BID) through a negotiated process with all of the stake holders. The first recommendation was to develop a "program of benefits;" that is, a list of projects or outcomes that are desired (such as parking, restrooms, marketing, etc.). Another issue that will need to be addressed is the boundaries of the BID. An equitable annual assessment formula must be developed, and options include basing it on the business license tax, the property's floor area, or the zone of benefit. The important thing is to keep it simple.

A BID corporation will need to be created and a board of directors named, elected from those who are contributors. There will then be a contract between the town and the BID. The initial time frame for the contract is recom-

mended to be five years, with annual renewals thereafter. This action would be followed by a petition campaign and it is recommended that the town's goal be a participation rate of at least 65 percent of the eligible members. The next action would be a public hearing to make sure that the town has substantial agreement about the creation of the BID, followed by adoption of an ordinance of assessment.

An example of membership boundaries or categories could be all B-1 properties, excluding residential tenants in those properties. A possible "conceptual" budget is \$80,000 to \$100,000 per year with perhaps one-third spent on parking, one-third on visitor amenities, and one-third on marketing. Although the budget of the BID will not be large enough to produce something major every year, it will

Partnership Opportunities

Now

The Merchants Association
The Merchants Guild
Historic Occoquan Inc.
Prince William County Tourist Center
Fairfax County Water Authority
Prince William County Government
Prince William Chamber of Commerce
Homeowner Associations
Northern VA Planning District Comm.
VDOT (for parking)

Future

Business Improvement District
VDOT (bridge)
George Mason University
Northern VA Regional Park Authority

be helpful to organize the BID's CIP or work program to try to have regular deliverables so that a feeling of accomplishment is maintained. It should be noted that the BID would best be organized as a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit corporation so that it can accept gifts, grants, and donations, and enter into corporate sponsorship contracts.

An option for the town is to commit to match, on an annual basis, a percentage of the business license tax revenues, as well as a percentage of the increase in business license tax revenues that occur as the BID successfully improves business. Similarly, the town may consider implementing one or more new tax revenue streams focused on the visitor/tourist (such as a restaurant tax, guest tax, etc.) and earmark a portion of these revenues to the BID. Finally, it would be a good idea to provide assessment credits for dues paid to the Merchants Association and the Merchants Guild, plus more seats on the BID for the Merchants Association and the Merchants Guild. This recognizes the contributions of these two organizations and creates a partnership with them rather than competing with them.

Occoquan Process

In order to make progress, there should be recognition of some of the key factors shaping the town's future, such as the current murky economics; that is, changing retail shopping behavior and the requirement of boutiques to continually re-capture impulse and discretionary spending. A major role the town plays in supporting its businesses is in strengthening the "quality of experience" of visitors to the town.

Because Prince William County may move to restrict or remove the town's ability to implement a restaurant meals tax, the town may wish to move pre-emptively if it believes this revenue source would be key to ensuring the vitality of its tax base. As was mentioned, the consultant team believes the town needs to add certainty and balance to the town's revenue base, possibly by doubling the property tax base, which would still leave it at half of what it was in 1992 and provide the town with an additional \$35,000. "Those who have enjoyed the benefits of 'bargain town' must now step up to accept more partnership responsibilities within the town."

A critical element is to begin now – ahead of the big projects that are coming up. There is a window of opportunity of 18 months to two years to make these important "enterprise" decisions.

Governance of Occoquan

The consultant team recommends several means to modify the town charter to strengthen its ability to meet the challenges ahead. These include longer (four year) and staggered (three and three) terms for the mayor and the town council to provide continuity and to provide citizens with the ability to hold elected officials responsible for delivery of results. Without that continuity, it may be difficult for a town to see major projects through to completion.

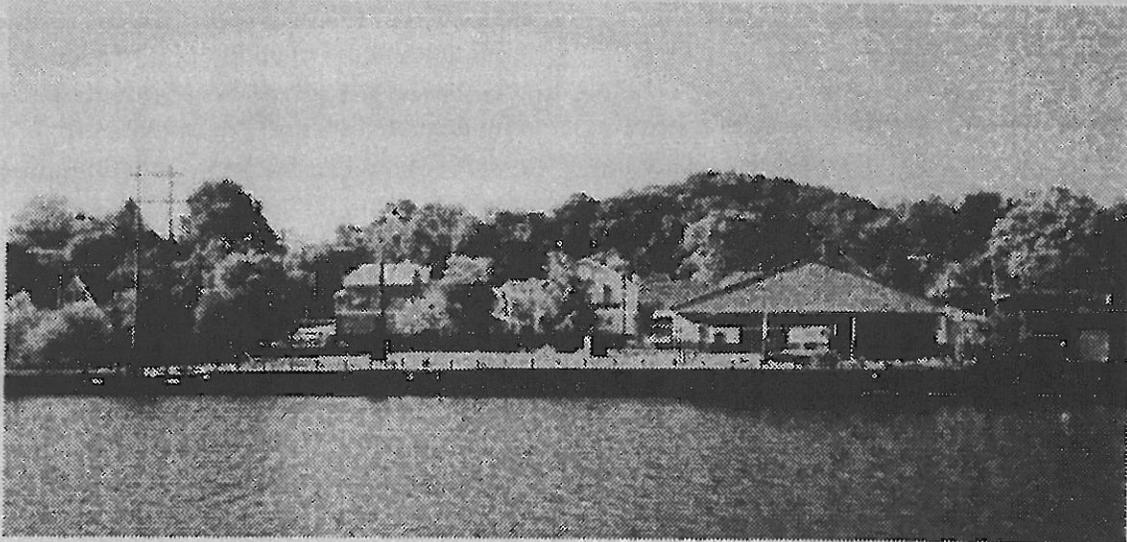
Adding to that continuity would be formal, multi-year partnership commitments, such as the five year contract with the BID. Another strengthening mechanism is a capital improvements program that is town, partner, and

grant-funded. The CIP then becomes an implementing mechanism in which the major players all have a stake.

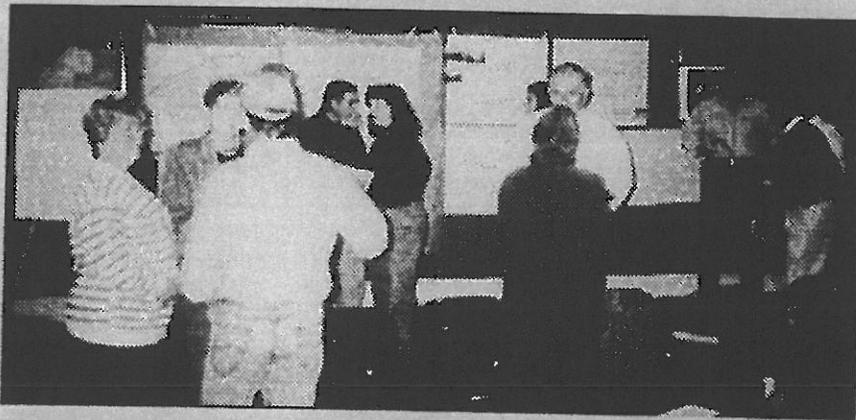
There will probably be a need for more or higher quality services in the town's future and attention must be paid to making sure the fees and charges for town services are equitable.

Always be sure to tap local resources of expertise. This knowledge can be an invaluable resource as you tackle projects large and small. This gives people the opportunity to contribute and also to become engaged in the process of preparing for the town's future. When local expertise is not sufficient, or when beginning a new project, contracting with outside professionals will assist the town in meeting its objectives.

Look for opportunities for "extra-territorial" partnerships; that is, partnerships with entities that encompass areas larger than the town or outside the town. These partnerships do more than improve the chances of success with a specific project, they also set the stage for future partnership opportunities with new and current partners.



notes
from the
Occoquan
charrette



I. FCWA: Fairfax County Water Authority

1. Preliminary stage: approvals by Board needed
2. Not a water tra (?)
3. News on Medium Security Prison (North of Lorton on 123): 2003 - end of federal mandate
4. Nothing at Occoquan until after end of 2003
5. Pump station - raw water - reservoir to treatment plant - not manned - vehicle access, cranes - look like rock ledge
6. Treatment plant - brick, columns, windows - "Old Virginia"
7. Reservoir (abandoned quarry) stays, discharge into river
8. Pipes - stay - from dam 72" to under crossing; pipe bridge eventually to go, new pipes on diagonal under river.
9. Low dam - remove? - not sure - no need - not much sediment - acts like river - federal permit - not start until 2004 to look at removal
10. Pipes - to high dam from crossing
11. Access - to area with water supply security; pipe to dam, dam itself, security
12. Time: after end of 2003 at earliest; pumping station before treatment (3-6 months before).
13. Fish ladders: (for migratory fish) no provision to be made after study
14. Pipe bridge re-use: FCWA - no maintenance, liability, will tear it down if not used, trail uses on both sides?
15. Bridge: stone - Homeoye Falls, NY (outside Rochester, near Pittsfield). Landscape part of every development plan.
16. Consultant on Board now for pumping station.
17. diagram (to be added).

II. Transportation

1. Coordinating parking development between Water Authority construction and VDOT construction of bridge.
2. Temporary loss of 100 spaces during construction.
3. Town to make recommendations of VDOT on bridge; i.e., clearance for boats.

4. Build new parking lots and/or use old Hechingers lot with jitney buses & bus parking
5. Request funding assistance to mitigate impact of loss of parking top pay for buses (buses *must* be super-convenient)
6. Ferry links: Old Belmont town, etc.
7. Town could rent available space that is under-utilized.
8. Dawson General Store lot - build immediately in turn for extension to approved site plan (40-50 spaces). Doleman lot: 30-40 spaces.

III. Community Development

1. Preserve natural setting of Occoquan
 - wildlife study
 - boardwalk provides nexus for visitors interested in natural setting
 - should be marketed, interpretation, telescopes
 - Vulcan sponsorship to emphasize "preserve"
 - gardening in town, wildflowers around edges (comprehensive landscape plan), plant strips along sidewalks, restore tree canopy over streets
 - emphasize changing river character (still water, upstream rapids, bay)
 - tie into regional park system
 - find way to hide "trash"
2. Develop historic interpretation of entire setting
 - both sides of river, upstream, downstream
 - Mt. Vision (quarry)
 - Ferry
 - Mall
3. Occoquan Recreation
 - fishing
 - cross river trail
 - small boats, canoes, non-motorized
 - upstream trail to high dam
 - larger boats
 - bicycle rentals
 - interpretive, informational signs, plaques, kiosks, markers

- route bikeway 1 along 123 to Belmont Bay after crossing at footbridge
- provide bike pat/unified sidewalk up 253
- distinctive 123 interchange: flowers, landscaping, structure?
- control light pollution - provide historic lighting on bridge and elsewhere
- lot-by-lot study to identify all properties for development/redevelopment
- Contract town planner
- build regular and formal communication with neighbor jurisdictions

4. Tanyard Hill

- protect "isolation" of town
- protect character of town
- protect drainage/watershed
- Make it one way to preserve character (narrow?) with safety
- Ask for/buy adjacent land, explore land exchange, in-kind gifts
- Ask PWC to revise comprehensive plan to protect environment of this very steep land that is already marginal for development - currently zoned for townhouses.

5. Living Downtown

- Increased residents in past few years/future and increased activities drawing people downtown could make economic sense, good services available without leaving "sanctuary" of town or using car.
- Such as: drug store/pharmacy, deli, butcher, market, bank, newspaper stand/bookstore/mini library, Amish market/fish market/farmer's market (reflect town heritage).

IV. Main Street

1. Town Dock: accessible to/from park. Dredge and extend boardwalk just beyond and parallel to jetty.
2. Boardwalk
 - Phase 1: 123 Bridge up to and include Mamie David Park. Link riverwalk existing boardwalk with

Sea Sea boardwalk by constructing 20' boardwalk on Town property. Town provide material, volunteer effort for labor.

3. 123 Bridge: native stone stairway

4. Underground utilities: sewer lie is currently 12' under Mill Street, how about remaining utilities? 2 major power lines not providing service to Town should be affixed to new bridge.

V. Finance/Economics

1. Current desires and future vision
2. Got and operate
 - current budget \$ need
 - \$450,000 annual operating now
 - \$1.2 million annual operating: need?
3. Collect taxes: property/utility, county/town
4. Services provided by town:
 - festivals: introduce people to Occoquan (and to merchants)
 - trash pickup: \$60,000/year
 - Visitor's Center - many languages - area and town information
 - Value of services
5. More revenue ideas
 - holiday events, Christmas Trees event
 - Docks, dock fees
 - tax structure, property + (bottom of list!)
6. Continue visioning and process
 - Continual process/involvement
 - Periodic revisiting - quarterly
 - Committee/group - experts to teach group
 - funding and grants
 - applications, research, follow-through
 - continual process and build upon success
7. UDAG: Gatgo (sp?) property - construction that creates employment
8. Prince William County Economic Development Committee: money for waterfront development
9. Corporate sponsors
 - Wolf Trap with sponsored boards/decks
 - New Orleans Riverwalk bricks sold to donors

- 10. Foundations - Funding Resource
 - Mill reconstruction, models, history
- 11. Value to surrounding areas (Prince William and Fairfax Counties)
 - \$16/day/person for day tripper
 - \$60-72/day/day for overnigher (parks of Virginia value)
 - Economic value and multiplier
- 12. Historic towns of Virginia - association?
 - town should have a lot to say
 - storms: debris, trees down river
 - stagnant, smell
 - keep flow, fountain, Geneva, jet
- 8. BID - property tax replaced by business tax?
 - add increase in property tax also?
 - fee for services
 - partnership - city/BID/others

Occoquan Charrette

Saturday Morning

- 1. Highway 123 Bridge
 - 2 houses and across Mill Street for eastern new bridge?
- 2. Restaurant tax - small one now, say 1/2%?
 - pre-empt County restaurant tax
 - meal tax issue earlier
 - in many Northern VA towns now
 - competition from other towns
- 3. Tax Structure: double-taxed (town). Highest rate to Prince William County in state.
 - Rebate of County taxes from state
 - last year County doubled commercial property tax
 - more County taxes back to Occoquan
 - taxes changed over time.
- 4. Parking: Ebenezer Baptist Church parking on Saturday and Sunday
 - data collection and sharing of information; real numbers and parking
 - aerial photos by new helicopters at various times of the day
- 5. Visitors at events: use real numbers, not 900,000 visitors/year?
- 6. Public restrooms - need downtown, couple of places!
- 7. River
 - Health of River
 - bridge
 - storm drainage and silt
 - Corps to remove silt
 - Water Authority - projects
 - Dam removal - low dam - silt of 50 years
 - hydrologist study of river in town
 - white water near lower dam
- 9. Landscape
 - add landscape along river
 - Dock - upstream
 - relation to boating and maritime
 - replace street trees
 - County arborist available
 - landscape plan: BID and city
- 10. Historical
 - Plaque recognition program
 - Town/map +
 - not by individual owner only
- 11. Natural character
 - Audubon Society - water
 - water quality - Chesapeake Bay Foundation
 - Virginia Nature Plan Society - Fairfax and Prince William Chapters
 - Regional Park System - both Counties coordinate - Prince William Shoreline
- 12. Water - BMP (Best Management Practices)
 - Boardwalk Water Management for Water Management Environmental Stewardship
 - Use for granting
- 13. Uses on water property
 - Retail/restaurant
 - boating/maritime
 - hotel/conference
 - Residential on upper level
 - clear policy on boardwalk
- 14. Mixed Use
 - multi-use community center
 - construction types
 - parking on site
 - quality of construction
- 15. Mill
 - Add to presentation
 - Exploration, business plan
 - Model to \$ to construction

- George Mason University students
- Process of mill: coopers, ships, grain put around town with historical ideas

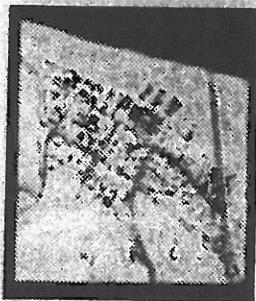
Occoquan Charrette

Saturday Afternoon

Priorities from the Charrette Participants
(not in priority order)

16. Trees
 - standards for height and size
 - buckeye, magnolia, red leaf, Japanese maple, champion trees
 - tree planting in and out of downtown
17. Businesses
 - times of operation
 - community service
18. Dock
 - boat slips
 - city dock
 - small, not large
 - add to Riverwalk
19. Riverwalk
 - easements of property owners
 - docking: rights & realities
 - VDOT land under bridge
 - drainage easements - other public
 - Mamie Davis park +
 - do Phase I: east end of town
20. Areas Other Than Mill and Waterfront
 - more ideas and improvements
 - Dawson Corner
 - Commerce: on street parking and streetscape
 - signs: vehicle and pedestrian, brochures, signboards now
21. Maintenance
 - trash - management, screening, and locations
 - dual ideas - alleys and streets have different design ideas: lights, trees, trash
22. Newsletter (E)
 - Calendar of Events
 - other marketing information
23. Riverview Drive
 - sign or no sign
 - add to sign program

1. Streetscape downtown (Frank)
2. Boardwalk Implementation (Frank)
3. Increase Property Tax or _____? (Dave)
4. Town Dock (Dick)
5. Land Use Recommendations for Waterfront Properties (Frank)
6. Mill(s) Recommendations (Dave)



TOWN OF OCCOQUAN CITIZEN'S SURVEY

March, 2002

Dear Town Resident:

Think for a moment about what makes Occoquan a great place to live. Why did you move here? In fast growing Northern Virginia, how do we keep Occoquan special. What would make it even better? As a resident of an incorporated "town" under the Code of Virginia, you have an enhanced opportunity to help shape the future of your community.



In an effort to serve you better, the Town is conducting the attached citizen survey. Your answers will provide Town officials with invaluable information on the effectiveness of Town government. In addition, the survey will be used by the Planning Commission as it updates the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is the Town's primary long-range tool for planning land use, transportation, community facilities and services, and environmental protection.

As you answer the survey questions, please remember that major streets are managed by the Virginia Department of Transportation. Many major public services – such as schools, libraries, and social services – are provided through Prince William County. Specific services offered by the Town include:

- Police protection
- Refuse and recycling collection
- Riverfront parks
- Sidewalk maintenance
- Snow removal
- Minor street maintenance

The Town has control over zoning, the Future Land Use Plan, environmental protection, municipal parking, and historic preservation. Finally, the Town operates Fall and Spring Craft Shows.

Thank you for your assistance in this effort. **The completed survey should be returned by March 29, 2002 in the enclosed postage-provided envelope.** Survey results will be tallied and made available at Town Hall. Individual survey answers will be kept confidential. Please do not hesitate to contact Town Administrator Claudia Cruise at (703) 491-1918 x11 or OccoquanTownHall@aol.com should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Pat Conway
Mayor

Joy Houghton
Planning Commission Chair

TOWN OF OCCOQUAN CITIZEN'S SURVEY

Please use the comment boxes for specific suggestions/recommendations, particularly if rating "fair" or "poor."

GENERAL

1. How long have you lived in Occoquan? _____
2. Overall, how would you rate the way the Town is managed? (Circle)
 - A. Excellent
 - B. Good
 - C. Fair
 - D. Poor
 - E. Don't know/ No opinion

Comments:
3. Do you participate in Town meetings/decision-making? (Circle)
 - A. Frequently
 - B. Sometimes
 - C. Seldomly
 - D. Never/Almost never
4. If you do not frequently attend Town meetings, why not? (Circle All That Apply)
 - A. Subjects don't interest me
 - B. Times are inconvenient
 - C. Would like to participate but have too little personal time
 - D. Don't know when meetings are
 - E. Don't fee as though input will make a difference
 - F. Don't know/No opinion
 - G. Other: _____
5. What could the Town do to increase your willingness/ability to participate in the Town's decision making process?

6. In your opinion, what is the best part of living in Occoquan?

7. In your opinion, what is the greatest threat to your quality of life as a resident of Occoquan?

LIFE IN OCCOQUAN

1. How would you rate overall quality of life in Occoquan? (Circle)
 - A. Very Satisfied
 - B. Satisfied
 - C. Dissatisfied
 - D. Very Dissatisfied
 - E. Don't Know/ No opinion

Comments:

TOWN OF OCCOQUAN CITIZEN'S SURVEY

2. Do you feel safe in your neighborhood? (Circle)

- A. Very Safe
- B. Reasonably Safe
- C. Safe
- D. Not Safe
- E. Don't Know/ No opinion

Comments:

3. What is your general feeling towards the Spring and Fall Craft Fairs? (Circle)

- A. Very Satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Dissatisfied
- D. Very Dissatisfied
- E. Don't Know/ No opinion

Comments:

4. Are you satisfied with the aesthetic appearance of Occoquan? (Circle)

- A. Very Satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Dissatisfied
- D. Very Dissatisfied
- E. Don't Know/ No opinion

Comments:

SERVICES

1. In general, over the past few years, do you think that Town-provided services have: (Circle)

- A. Improved
- B. Stayed about the same
- C. Become worse
- D. Have not lived here long enough
- E. Don't know/ No opinion

Comments:

2. In general, over the past few years, do you think that County-provided serves have: (Circle)

- A. Improved
- B. Stayed about the same
- C. Become worse
- D. Have not lived here long enough
- E. Don't know/ No opinion

Comments:

Please rate your satisfaction with the following specific services, whether they are Town or County provided.

3. Refuse and Recycling Collection (Circle)

- A. Very Satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Dissatisfied
- D. Very Dissatisfied
- E. Don't Know/ No opinion

Comments:

TOWN OF OCCOQUAN CITIZEN'S SURVEY

4. Parks and Open Space (Circle)

- A. Very Satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Dissatisfied
- D. Very Dissatisfied
- E. Don't Know/ No opinion

Comments:

5. Youth Recreation (Circle)

- A. Very Satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Dissatisfied
- D. Very Dissatisfied
- E. Don't Know/ No opinion

Comments:

6. Adult Recreation (Circle)

- A. Very Satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Dissatisfied
- D. Very Dissatisfied
- E. Don't Know/ No opinion

Comments:

7. Traffic Management and Parking (traffic, speeding, etc.) (Circle)

- A. Very Satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Dissatisfied
- D. Very Dissatisfied
- E. Don't Know/ No opinion

Comments:

8. Police Protection (Circle)

- A. Very Satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Dissatisfied
- D. Very Dissatisfied
- E. Don't Know/ No opinion

Comments:

9. Town Employees (Circle)

- A. Very Satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Dissatisfied
- D. Very Dissatisfied
- E. Don't Know/ No opinion

Comments:

10. Value of Services for Town Taxes Paid (Circle)

- A. Very Satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Dissatisfied
- D. Very Dissatisfied
- E. Don't Know/ No opinion

Comments:

TOWN OF OCCOQUAN CITIZEN'S SURVEY

11. What County services do you use that are essential to your every-day quality of life? Are these County services conveniently located? Should the Town work with the County to bring services closer to the Town?

<u>County Service</u>	<u>Frequently used?</u>		<u>Convenient?</u>		<u>Need for closer facilities?</u>	
A. Schools	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
B. Sports	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
C. Indoor rec.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
D. Parks	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
E. Fire/resc.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
F. Libraries	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
G. Social svcs.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
H. Other _____						

12. Are there services that the Town should be providing that it currently does not?

13. Would you be willing to pay more in Town taxes if you knew that the money would be spent on any of the following additional services/projects? (Circle)

- A. Match for state/federal grant applications
- B. Improved landscaping/streetscaping
- C. Improved environmental/water quality protection
- D. Increased administrative staff
- E. Increased police protection
- F. Increased recreational opportunities
- G. Improved pedestrian access (sidewalks, etc.)
- H. Additional municipal parking
- I. Capital improvements to the Occoquan River footbridge
- J. Riverwalk/boardwalk construction and maintenance
- K. None
- L. Other _____

TOWN OF OCCOQUAN CITIZEN'S SURVEY

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT IN OCCOQUAN

Several of the following questions ask you to rank the importance of issues facing the Town. Please rank the issues so that each has its own number. (Example: D=1 (highest priority), A=2, F=3, J=4, B=5, E=6, G=7, etc.)

1. To you, what are the most important community design, development, and management issues confronting Occoquan? (Rank)
 - A. Buffers separating the Town from the County _____
 - B. Historic preservation _____
 - C. Downtown improvements/aesthetics _____
 - D. Traffic and parking _____
 - E. Pedestrian access in Town _____
 - F. Waterfront development _____
 - G. Rt. 123 Bridge _____
 - H. Redevelopment of Water Authority property _____
 - I. Parks and recreation _____
 - J. Taxes and fees _____
 - K. Protection of the environment/water quality _____
 - L. Other: _____

2. In your opinion, has recent development in the Town been: (Circle)
 - A. Too dense
 - B. Just about right
 - C. Not dense enough
 - D. Other: _____
 - E. Don't know/ No opinion

3. What additional commercial uses or activities would you like to see in the Town? (Rank)
 - A. Food store _____
 - B. Restaurants _____
 - C. Drug store _____
 - D. Professional services offices (doctors, dentists, etc.) _____
 - E. None _____
 - F. Other: _____

4. What kind of uses or activities would you like to see on the waterfront? (Rank)
 - A. Shops _____
 - B. Restaurants _____
 - C. Homes _____
 - D. Offices _____
 - E. Parks _____
 - F. Boardwalk _____
 - G. Marinas _____
 - H. Other: _____

TOWN OF OCCOQUAN CITIZEN'S SURVEY

5. What additional actions would you support to better protect the environment and water quality? (Rank)
- A. Reduce development density in sensitive areas such as steep slopes _____
 - B. Limit access to waterfront areas _____
 - C. Expand "no-build" buffer areas around perennial streams _____
 - D. Pollution prevention/education measures _____
 - E. Change Town zoning regulations to require "low impact development" (such as reducing paved areas and increasing vegetative cover) _____
 - F. None _____

DEMOGRAPHIC/ECONOMIC DATA

1. Is the head of the household employed? (Circle)
- A. Yes
 - B. No
2. Number of adults who work full-time other than head of household. _____
3. If you commute, do you predominately: (Circle)
- A. Drive own car
 - B. Car pool
 - C. VRE
 - D. Other Describe _____
4. Number of vehicles at your home. _____
5. Do you take advantage of telecommuting from your home? (Circle)
- A. Yes If yes, Full Time _____ Part Time ____ (Number of hours/week? ____)
 - B. No
6. Approximate combined household income. (Circle)
- A. Below \$25,000
 - B. \$25,000 to \$35,000
 - C. \$35,000 to \$45,000
 - D. \$45,000 to \$55,000
 - E. \$55,000 to \$65,000
 - F. \$65,000 to \$75,000
 - G. \$75,000 to \$100,000
 - H. \$100,000 to \$149,000
 - I. Above \$150,000
7. Do you have school aged children?(Circle)
- A. Yes # children/ages _____/_____
 - B. No
8. Do you own property in the Town?(Circle)
- A. Yes
 - B. No
9. Do you own a business in the Town?(Circle)
- A. Yes
 - B. No

TOWN OF OCCOQUAN CITIZEN'S SURVEY

10. Which best describes the house that you live in?(Circle)

- A. Single-family detached
- B. Single-family attached (townhome)
- C. Condominium apartment
- D. Rental apartment

11. Which best describes your neighborhood location? (Circle)

- A. Historic district area
- B. Poplar Lane east of Route 123
- C. Tanyard Hill Road west of historic district
- D. The Hollows
- E. The Hollows II
- F. Occoquan Pointe/Barrington Pointe
- G. Nottinghill Gate area
- H. Mount High Street area
- I. Woodlee Terrace Apartments
- J. Other _____

Please offer additional comments/suggestions on issues of importance to the Town.

Thank you for your cooperation. Please mail in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.

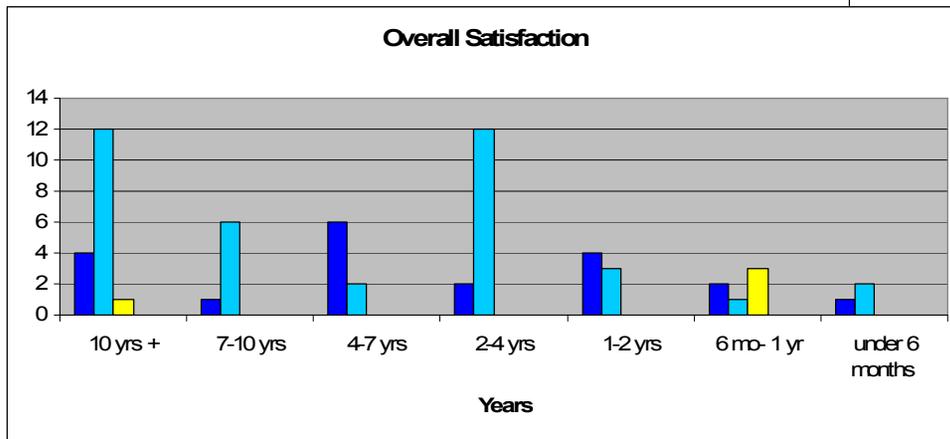
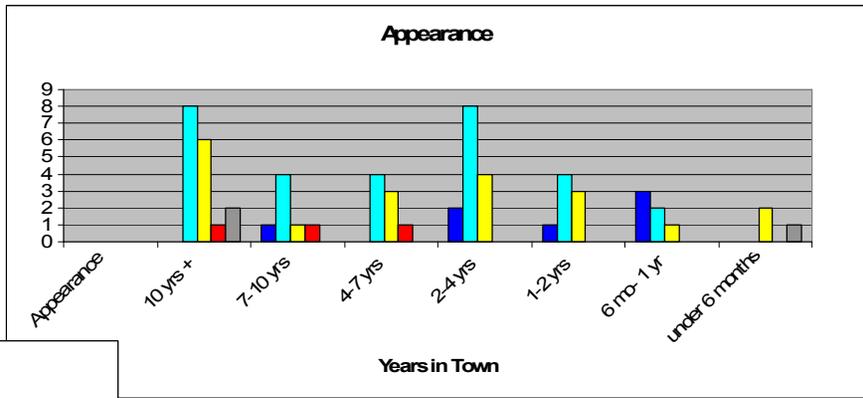
Town Survey Results

3 June 2008

Summary

- 139 surveys
 - 54 visitors
 - 85 residents
 - Most neighborhoods had at least one reply
 - Exceptions
 - Brookside, Gaslight Landing, Nottingham Gate, Washington Square, Woodlee Terrace
 - Town of Occoquan resident snapshot... they are:
 - Satisfied, Safe, patronize Town Businesses, are relatively happy with town management, but don't participate
 - Lack of time and belief that their opinion won't count
 - Believe Town development has been too dense and we need a good restaurant
-

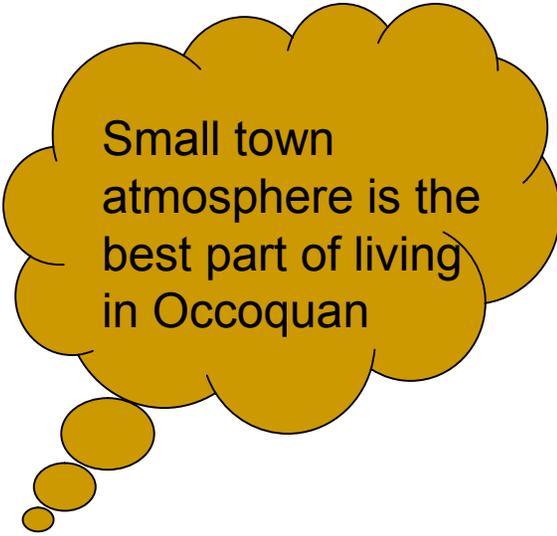
A view of opinions compared with time in town



- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Don't know/No Opinion

Town Goals

1. Keep the Town Pleasant
2. Preserve Unique Character
3. Develop Water Authority plans
4. Balance Town Budget
5. Facilitate and Develop Waterfront
6. Traffic Management
7. Surface Water Development
8. Maximize Parking
9. Minimize Pollution
10. Control Erosion



Small town atmosphere is the best part of living in Occoquan

Business

- 18 responses
 - 10 with 10 years + in town
 - Generally satisfied with business life and craft shows
 - Dissatisfied with appearance
 - “Basically Occoquan looks and feels tired”
 - Traffic and Parking top the list of concerns
 - Business has been decreasing for past 4 years, to many non-retail places replacing retail stores
-

Visitors

great atmosphere -
unique destination

- 28 visitors
 - Come once a week or every six months
 - Good experience, will certainly return
 - Heard via word of mouth
- Would like:
 - Better hours
 - Available “after work”
 - More variety
 - High-end restaurant

Suggestion:

“I love Occoquan. I just wish the Merchants would work together to offer an overall shop schedule that the public could count on. Wouldn't be a bad idea to look at how Old Town Manassas has come together.”

Themes and Ideas

- Better communication is wanted
 - More surveys, Website, etc,
 - Need to find ways to get new people involved
- Change needs to be quicker and more perceptible
- General concern over state of repair/appearance

-
-
- Bike/Walk trails; footbridge
 - Farmer's Market
 - Special Events Committee could help coordinate/plan new events
-



Town of Occoquan **Strategic Plan**

Strategic Planning Committee
January 2013

Town of Occoquan Strategic Plan

Prepared by

Betty Dean (Committee chair)

Barry Dean

Susan Lee-Merrow

Christine Myskowski

Liz Quist (Occoquan Town Council)

Jared Espenschied

(graduate student/consultant, American University)



Introduction

This Strategic Plan represents the Occoquan Strategic Planning Committee's response to the June 2011 Charter document (Addendum A) which tasked the Committee with preparing a Strategic Plan that makes "recommendations for a 5-10 year vision for the town, as well as specific recommendations on how to implement that vision."

The plan was prepared between January 2012 – January 2013. Its content, conclusions and all recommendations are the sole work of the preparers.



Methodology

To develop the plan the Committee sought the input of Town Stakeholders as well as experts throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. However as specified in its Charter, the final product and all recommendations herein are not intended to represent a consensus of stakeholder viewpoints or any other parties – they represent the conclusions and best judgment of the preparers. The following summarizes work that informed the final document:

SWOT Sessions

The Committee hosted two SWOT sessions in which Town Stakeholders were invited to participate in structured exercises to identify perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats related to the Town's ongoing success. The sessions were attended by 52 participants, categorized as follows (total is more than 52 due to overlap in categories):

- 24 Town Residents
- 23 Work or own a business in town
- 8 Shoppers/visitors or other connections to town
- 3 Town staff

The high level results are summarized in the committee's May 2, 2012 Interim Report – Addendum B.

Methodology

Research

Committee members used the Internet as well as phone conversations with area town officials to identify programs and strategies for community and economic development in other Virginia towns and cities, to learn what is working and, just as importantly, what is not. Searches also focused on grants and other community development opportunities through the Commonwealth, the federal government and other non-government agencies.

Also during the time of the plan's development, the Committee's chair was fortunate to have been a participant in the LEAD Virginia program (see www.leadva.org) during which she attended and acquired information on the area economies and economic development initiatives in Southside (Danville/Martinsville areas), Southwest (Abingdon area), Shenandoah (Harrisonburg/Staunton), Hampton Roads and Richmond, Virginia.

Methodology

Presentations to the Committee

The Committee received the benefit of two formal presentations from Prince William County. The first briefed the Committee on the concurrent development of Prince William County's newest Strategic Plan, and was presented by Prince William County strategic planning director Pat Thomas. The second featured members of Prince William County's Economic Development department and focused on resources available through that department, as well as a brainstorming session to identify areas of common ground.

Field Trip

Committee members Betty and Barry Dean, Susan Lee-Merrow and Councilwoman Liz Quist traveled to Staunton, VA where they met with Bill Hamilton, Staunton's Director of Economic Development, the former Executive Director of the Staunton Creative Community Fund and its current Executive Director, Christina Cain. The Staunton Creative Community Fund (see <http://stauntonfund.com>) serves as the model for the Community Investment organization recommended in Key Strategy #3 of this report.

Methodology

Consulting Services

The Committee was aided in its efforts by the assistance of Mr. Jared Espenschied, who provided consulting services concerning issues of developing partnerships, as well as valuable “outsider” input as part of his graduate level studies in Organizational Development at American University. The results of Mr. Espenschied’s work on partnerships are summarized in Addendum C – Data Feedback Document.

Scope and Timeframe

The plan’s objectives are written to fit within a 5-year timeframe. The timeframe, along with the goals and objectives themselves is considered to be achievable but ambitious. Further, the plan is written at a fairly high level and anticipates that the implementers of the plan will develop the actual step-by-step tactical implementation plans necessary to achieve the objectives.

Methodology

Caveats

The plan document includes some preliminary projections of required investments to implement the plan as well as estimates of some of the potential increased revenues to the Town (but no estimates of what would be far larger revenue increases for Town businesses). It is important to remember though that this is a Strategic Plan, and not a Financial Plan – the details of which will ultimately need to be developed. Additionally the reader should note that the plan does not take into account any forecasts of larger macro-economic trends or the impact of changes to the Northern Virginia economy that might result from changes in federal spending.

Strategic Approach

Two key drivers form the foundation on which the plan is built:

1. Use the Town's history as a lever to create opportunity, not an anchor to hold it back.
2. Maximize the advantages presented by Occoquan's natural strategic assets:
 - a. Its waterfront location
 - b. Its location at the juncture of two major commuter routes (I-95 and Route 123)
 - c. It is a part of the nation's 9th wealthiest county
 - d. It enjoys a compact, walkable downtown
 - e. It has an interesting, visible and well-documented history
 - f. Its stakeholders have a deep, abiding affection for the town and the desire to see it succeed



Strategic Goals and Measurable Objectives

Strategic Goals define the “big picture” of what the plan is trying to achieve. They answer the question “Where do we want to go?” Measurable objectives provide a factual basis for answering the subsequent question “How will we know when we get there?” This section of the plan identifies four overarching goals that, taken together, will facilitate the next “re-invention” of Occoquan – a town that has reinvented itself continually over hundreds of years – while at the same time preserving and capitalizing upon those qualities that endear it to those who call it home.



Goal #1

Be the shopping, dining and entertainment hub of the premier leisure destination in Prince William, southern Fairfax, and northern Stafford counties.

Occoquan enjoys a wealth of natural assets that, properly leveraged, make it uniquely suited to become a highly touted destination. These include: having a waterfront location at the juncture of two major commuter routes, being located in the nation's 9th wealthiest county; enjoying a compact, walkable downtown; and boasting an interesting, visible and well-documented history. This goal is based on the concept of building upon what is already in place to attract the kinds of businesses and visitors who are already pre-disposed toward this kind of setting.

Objective 1.1

Two or more entertainment venues, offering a minimum of 125 events annually, in some combination of performing arts, live music; recreation/games (non-gambling), film, etc. are operating within town limits.

Target Completion:
4th quarter FY16

Objective 1.2

The number of dining options in town is doubled and includes a range of options from casual family dining through fine dining.

Target Completion:
4th quarter FY16

Objective 1.3

A minimum of 15 rooms for overnight accommodations and the capacity to host business meetings (with appropriate technological amenities and breakout capabilities) for 150 people are available within town limits.

Target Completion:
4th quarter FY17

Objective 1.4

Occoquan and/or the Occoquan region has been rated as a "top shopping" (or equivalent) destination by at least 2 premier regional and/or national publications or websites (such as Washingtonian magazine, Virginia Living, Washington Post, Southern Living, Travel & Leisure, etc.).

Target Completion:
4th quarter FY18



Goal #2

Be an attractive center of employment for start-ups and small businesses (5-25 employees) in targeted sectors.

This goal is based on the concept that the attraction of non-retail businesses will benefit the retail base by increasing the number of people who are in town during the day, and encourage a culture of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship that will in turn attract more visitors and businesses. The plan envisions retail businesses at street level in the downtown district, with professional services and non-retail businesses occupying space on upper floors that are less attractive for retail and which may lack the amenities of class A office space but be quite suitable and more affordable for startup situations and micro-businesses.

Many of the same natural assets that make Occoquan desirable as a leisure destination also create a favorable environment for very small non-retail businesses. This is particularly true for entrepreneurs who are members of what is known as the “creative class” – people who make their living with their ideas. Such individuals may bring a natural enthusiasm for the creative repurposing of space while benefiting from opportunities to work where they can walk to take a client to a restaurant for lunch or stroll along the riverfront while contemplating their next idea.

Objective 2.1

Prince William County’s Economic Development department and the Town establish a joint initiative to attract “creative class” entrepreneurs to the Occoquan region.

Target Completion:
3rd quarter FY14

Objective 2.2

Non-retail employment has increased 30% - as measured by the number of full-time equivalent employees whose primary work location is within town limits.

Target Completion:
4th quarter FY16

Objective 2.3

A minimum of 5 new non-retail “creative class” businesses start or re-locate within town limits.

Target Completion:
1st quarter FY16

Goal #3

Be regarded as one of the top 5 most attractive small towns in Virginia.

During the SWOT sessions held as part of the planning process, residents, merchants and visitors alike expressed their affection for the town and appreciation of its distinctive features. Words such as “charming”, “quaint” and “quirky” were used. Stakeholders also listed the town’s sense of community and its historic characteristics as strengths. However, the largest overriding concern regarded a perceived deterioration in the general upkeep and look of the town, coupled with concern that development opportunities be approached thoughtfully and with a view toward the long term. By creating a proactive approach to capitalizing on the town’s physical assets and enhancing its aesthetics, Occoquan will improve its ability to attract businesses and visitors, and improve property values and quality of life for residents and existing businesses.

Objective 3.1

An “Arts and Cultural” district is established within the Historic District. (See Addendum D – Arts and Entertainment District Legislation).

**Target Completion:
2nd quarter FY14**

Objective 3.2

Undeveloped riverfront property at the West end of Mill Street has been redeveloped as an architecturally distinctive “landmark” multi-use commercial property.

**Target Completion:
4th quarter FY16**

Objective 3.3

A publicly accessible, waterfront boardwalk extends the length of Mill Street.

**Target Completion:
4th quarter FY17**

Objective 3.4

80% of waterfront buildings and 40% of other buildings in the Historic District have participated in a formal “renewal” program aimed at improving structural integrity, aesthetic appeal, facades and waterfront views.

**Target Completion:
4th quarter FY17**

Objective 3.5

Occoquan is listed on the “prettiest small towns” or equivalent lists of at least 2 premier regional or national publications or web sites.

**Target Completion:
4th quarter FY18**

Goal #4

Be clean, green, safe and stable.

In order to accommodate the business growth envisioned in the plan, and to continue to build and improve upon the already exceptional quality of life enjoyed by its residents and businesses, Occoquan will need to upgrade its infrastructure while maintaining the safe and wholesome environment as well as the sense of community so often cited as vitally important to its stakeholders. This goal centers on building connections, both virtual and physical, between Occoquan and its surroundings, while at the same time employing a proactive approach toward the preservation of its environment – in both the human and ecological sense of the term.

Objective 4.1

A study is completed that examines the potential impact of time-limited on-street parking in the town's business district and provides recommendations for whether or not to implement such limits and if so by what method.

Target Completion:
4th quarter FY14

Objective 4.2

Reliable, free Wi-Fi is available to visitors throughout the retail shopping/dining district and reliable broadband is affordable and accessible to businesses and residents.

Target Completion:
4th quarter FY14

Objective 4.3

Public transit (PRTC or alternative) is available from the town to VRE and other key locations.

Target Completion:
4th quarter FY15

Objective 4.4

65% of residents and merchants meet established goals for recycling and energy conservation (and other possible "green" goals such as water conservation).

Target Completion:
End of FY18

Objective 4.5

At the plan's conclusion, the crime rate is the same or lower than at the plan's inception.

Target Completion:
End of FY18

Key Strategies

Strategies describe, at a fairly high level, the recommended approach for achieving the plan's goals. They answer the question "How will we get there?" Some strategic plans identify strategies that are tied to one specific goal in the plan. Each of the strategies developed for this plan tend to support most if not all of the strategic goals, so we have listed them separately and trust it will be apparent to the reader how the execution of the strategies below will ultimately lead to achievement of the goals above.

Major strategic thrusts

This plan describes six key strategies, but they can be grouped into two major strategic thrusts. The first centers on the creation of formal mechanisms and programs that will utilize a combination of public/private investment and regional cooperation to take the town's business district to the next level, while increasing its visibility and attractiveness as a business location for targeted businesses and a leisure destination for residents and businesses.

The second major thrust centers on the concept of aligning stakeholder interests and government policy to town initiatives, thereby ensuring that the community and its government are continually engaged in a creative process for improving, protecting and injecting vitality into the town.

First Strategic Thrust
Formal Mechanisms and Programs

Key Strategy #1

Create and fill a new town staff position* for Economic Development/Tourism, reporting directly to the Town Council, with specific responsibilities for promoting the town as a leisure destination and for implementing business attraction strategies aimed at the following targeted business categories:

- **“Artisan” businesses, especially independently owned food & dining and American craft**
- **“Green Industry” entrepreneurs, especially those focused on water, energy, sustainability and/or recycling**
- **Entertainment and recreation venues**
- **Facilities for Meetings/Accommodations and other travel-related services/facilities**

Anticipated actions:

- Creation and implementation of a formal economic development plan
- Creation and implementation of a branding/marketing/promotion program (see Key Strategy #2)
- Development of strong ongoing collaborative relationships with other regional attractions such as the Workhouse Arts Center and the Occoquan Regional Park, including collaborative programming of events and promotions
- Development of strong collaborative relationships with Town merchants and Craft Show Director for creation, implementation and promotion of such events as the annual Craft Shows, holiday activities, water and river-focused activities, Art Walks, etc.
- Development of strong collaborative relationships with PW County Economic Development and Discover Prince William/Manassas agencies
- Collaboration with a new Community Investment Organization to facilitate programs that help businesses to succeed in Occoquan (see Key Strategy #3)
- Intensive collaboration and work with the Town Council to establish a plan for utilization of the Water Authority property as active recreational space

Anticipated outcomes:

- Increased tourism and utilization of town assets
- Increased property values
- Arrival of new businesses in targeted categories
- Existing businesses more active and engaged in Town events/activities
- Increased use of natural assets (such as the river)
- Establishment of active recreational opportunities in a new park space**
- Occoquan is seen as a destination for more than shopping

* Alternatively, establish an Economic Development authority – initially funded by the Town but which could eventually include some private funding and a Board that is populated with public/private representation.

** The committee recommends that the Town commit to creating both an entertainment and a recreational venue in the new park space. A pavilion, similar to the Harris Pavilion in Manassas, which is also an ice skating rink in cold weather months, is one such suggestion. Other suggestions include an outdoor fitness facility and the creation of an annual “Walk of Lights” to be in place during the winter holiday season.

Key Strategy #2

With assistance from a marketing firm managed by the Economic Development/ Tourism staff position, create and implement a formal marketing and public relations program to articulate the Occoquan brand and increase awareness of the town – with special emphasis on its key assets/features such as fishing, boating and other water-oriented activities; convenience of location plus affordability for new or relocating businesses; sense of community and unique/interesting shopping and dining options.

Anticipated actions:

- Creation of a formal marketing/public relations plan
- Development of a unique graphic identity
- Heavy utilization of low and no-cost promotional channels such as social media and press relations
- Leverage promotional opportunities via Visit Prince William and other local, regional and national tourism organizations

Anticipated outcomes:

- Increased tourism and utilization of town assets
- Increased property values
- Increased awareness/visibility (including press coverage) of town at local, regional and national levels
- A recognizable graphic identity forms the basis of a unified approach to town-owned signs, websites, etc. and is extended for use by town merchants in ways that benefit their businesses



Key Strategy #3

Facilitate the creation a not-for-profit Community Investment Organization* focused on fostering a culture of entrepreneurship in the town and eventually the region.

Anticipated Actions:

- Development and implementation of micro-lending capability
- Provide support services for borrowers, such as counseling, training, and connections to other resources through organizations such as the Flory Small Business Center, SBDC, etc.
- Creation of a “time bank” – where businesses/entrepreneurs “deposit” services that they can provide in exchange for “withdrawing” services they need.
- Creation of regular, ongoing entrepreneur ideation sessions – possibly to include opportunities to “win” funding for the most promising ideas

Anticipated Outcomes:

- New startup businesses (retail and other) in town
- Existing and new businesses have a new funding source
- “Time bank” allows businesses to find economical ways to accomplish objectives while facilitating a stronger, better-connected business community
- A supportive, safe environment is created in which “creative class” entrepreneurs are encouraged to take risks with creative ideas that are grounded in sound business practices



*The Staunton Creative Community Fund serves as a model for this strategy

Second Strategic Thrust

**Align Town Stakeholder Interests
with Town Initiatives**

Key Strategy #4

Develop a Community Engagement Program to deepen the connections between residents/businesses and the town, and foster a sense of ownership of town initiatives in those who will benefit from their successful implementation. This program will require oversight, particularly at first, by town government but over time can become more and more the domain of citizen volunteers and/or not-for-profit organizations.

Anticipated actions:

- Develop an awards program (e.g. Business of the Year, Citizen of the Year, Beautification Awards) to be overseen by citizens
- Create a community garden
- Develop an educational program covering issues of importance to the community such as:
 - Storm water management
 - River conservation
 - “Green” practices
 - Crime prevention
 - Disaster preparedness and emergency procedures
- Create opportunities for town benefactors to donate money or property for benefit of the town, in exchange for naming opportunities or other forms of recognition

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Increased volunteerism
- Increased motivation for businesses and property owners to become more involved and to upgrade their operations
- More informed citizens and businesses
- Stakeholders feel more invested in the success of the town



Key Strategy #5

Identify key areas of town to target for redevelopment and develop Visualization vehicles to allow stakeholders to “see” the possibilities.

Anticipated actions:

- Creation of professional artist’s/architect’s renderings of key redevelopment targets

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Increased community support for redevelopment initiatives
- Increased interest and funding support from redevelopment resources



Key Strategy #6

Review and where necessary revise salient ordinances, policies and comprehensive plan chapters to insure alignment with the Strategic Plan and identify any prospective barriers to success.

Anticipated actions:

- Formal review/revision process that includes stakeholder input

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Increased attractiveness of town to targeted businesses
- Increased capability of town government to facilitate and influence a desirable future for the town

Funding the Plan

In creating this Strategic Plan, the committee envisioned a series of bold steps intended to facilitate the next “re-invention” of the Town of Occoquan. This reinvention is intended to position the Town as a highly desirable location with a small but thriving business district with multiple options for shopping, dining and recreation and a culture that welcomes and nurtures creativity and entrepreneurship.

A significant level of investment is required in order to achieve the plan goals. The committee believes that such an investment is warranted to attract and retain desirable, successful, sustainable businesses, increase property values and create an improved quality of life for town stakeholders.

To implement the plan, the Town will want to examine multiple options for funding the required investments. These include grants (such as Community Block Grants), private investment, possible County contributions and of course direct investment from the Town.

For the Town’s investment, the committee recommends a commitment at the outset of 100% of Craft Show revenues during the plan’s first two years, and another fixed percent (to be determined by the Town Council) during subsequent years based upon its success in obtaining other funding and the results generated by achieving plan objectives.

Financial Implications

The Committee based its financial implications on anticipated results and estimates, where appropriate. In most cases, FY12 actual Town revenues are used as a baseline from which anticipated growth is calculated. Where recommended programs or staff positions do not already exist, the Committee used documented costs from Staunton, Virginia, or other for-profit projects to estimate anticipated expenditures.



Financial Implications

Key Strategy #1: Create an Economic Development/Tourism Position

Implementation of Key Strategy #1 requires staffing a 32-hour per week economic development position, working day-to-day with Town Hall staff and reporting to the Town Council. This individual will be a dedicated resource for economic development, which elevates the professionalism of the Town's business relationships and infrastructure. It would be the intention that the individual hired would work closely with larger Town businesses, perhaps those grossing over \$1 million in revenue per year.

Annual cost, plus benefits, equates to approximately \$60,000, in order to obtain someone with significant experience and the skills required to launch an aggressive economic development plan for the Town. The underlying fiscal strategy for funding this position would be the creation of additional revenues to justify the position.

For example, if the Director of Economic Development were to meet objective 1.3 of bringing one new lodging and conference facility to Occoquan, the increased revenue could be estimated at \$9,380 per year, computed as follows:

Lodging/Conference Facility	Gross Revenue = \$600,000	BPOL	Meals	Occupancy
Lodging	\$300,000 in receipts	\$780	-	\$6,000
Conference Room Rental	\$200,000 in receipts	\$400	-	-
Catering	\$100,000 in receipts	\$200	\$2,000	-
Tax Increase (not including additional sales tax on all items):		\$1,380	\$2,000	\$6,000

Key Strategy #1: Create an Economic Development/Tourism Position

If the Director were also able to meet objective 1.2 of doubling Occoquan's dining options, the Town would realize an additional \$99,347 of meals tax revenue, which is twice the FY12 meals tax collected, and an additional \$9,935 of BPOL (calculated at \$0.20 per \$100 of gross receipts) per year.

Accomplishment of objective 1.1 will yield an estimated \$23,250 of revenue per year. We assumed 1,000 attendees to each of the 125 events, with an average ticket price of \$40, yielding gross receipts of \$5,000,000. BPOL revenue on this would be approximately \$10,000, due to the rate of \$0.20/\$100 of gross receipts. Sales of food or beverage 50% of the attendees, using \$10/person, would yield another \$1,250 of BPOL, as well as \$12,500 in meals tax revenue. Total revenue from meeting objective 1.1 is therefore estimated at \$23,750.

Key Strategy #1: Create an Economic Development/Tourism Position

Another function of the Director would be to develop a program of redevelopment and revitalization to improve the appearance and condition of Town properties, and to identify zoning opportunities for professional services businesses. Financial outcomes of objective 3.4 are difficult to ascertain, but if the Director were to implement programs resulting in a 5% increase per year in the overall assessed values of real estate in Occoquan between FY16 and FY18, the Town would recognize approximate increases in the real estate tax revenue as follows:

	Base Year (2012)	Year 3: FY16	Year 4: FY17	Year 5: FY18
Assessed Value	\$150,401,100	\$157,921,155	\$165,817,213	\$174,108,073
Real Estate Tax	\$145,930	\$153,227	\$160,888	\$168,932
Increase over base year:	-	\$7,297	\$14,958	\$23,002

There are numerous other sources of funding for the creation of an economic development and tourism position. Grants, special tax assessments, membership/partnership programs within the business district, and large branches of regional banks can all provide funding towards this strategy.

Key Strategy #2: Establish a Marketing/ Public Relations Program

Hiring a marketing firm to assist the economic development officer obviously represents a significant financial investment. The scope of their work with the staff economic development officer would vary depending upon the desired programs being implemented, and the financial resources available. The marketing program overall, would seek to attract non-retail businesses, as well as bring traffic to established Occoquan merchants and professionals services.

Initial estimates place the first year investment at between \$40,000 and \$50,000, with follow-on investments of between \$15,000 and \$25,000 per year. This would bring the five-year investment in a formal marketing and public relations program to between \$100,000 and \$150,000.

Strategy #3: Create A Community Investment Organization

Creation of a community investment organization within the Town of Occoquan will require an initial investment on the part of the Town government and other partners within the community. It is estimated that first year expenditures will amount to approximately \$110,000, consisting primarily of the following estimated costs:

- Wages, Taxes & Benefits (1 FT Director, 1 PT Admin.) - \$90,000
- Space Rent & Utilities - \$13,200
- Technology (phone, internet, etc.) - \$1,400
- Professional Fees (legal, accounting) - \$2,000
- Insurance - \$1,400
- Office Supplies & Other - \$2,000

The organization can expect to spend an additional \$5,000+ each year in program activities and events. Much of the groundwork done in the first few years will be done with human capital and sweat equity. For example, the amount of money spent to administer a time bank should be relatively small. This program activity relies upon the coordination of the Executive Director in matching donations and donors within the bank, and management of an advertising mechanism to promote services available for barter.

Strategy #3: Create Community Investment Organization

In addition to funding from the Town government, a 501(c)(3) Community Investment Organization would be eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions, sponsorships for events, and Federal, state and local grants. Some programs within the Organization will generate revenue themselves, such as interest income from micro-loans, and fees for consulting services rendered. As the Organization matures, the goal is that it will become self-sustaining.

Depending upon the level of initial micro-lending, the Organization can expect to realize a small amount of interest income, estimated here at 6% on the following note receivable balances over the life of the Strategic Plan:

	Year 1: FY14	Year 2: FY15	Year 3: FY16	Year 4: FY17	Year 5: FY18
Balance	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$50,000	\$200,000
Interest Income	\$300	\$600	\$1,200	\$3,000	\$12,000

The Committee has used the Staunton Creative Community Fund as an example of the level of lending possible in the initial years. The group in Staunton had end of year micro-loan receivable balances of \$5,000, \$23,000, \$53,000, and \$232,000 in the organization's first four fiscal years.

In addition to funding from the Town government, a 501(c)(3) Community Investment Organization would be eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions, sponsorships for events, and Federal, state and local grants.

Key Strategy #4: Develop A Community Engagement Program

A community engagement program will, by definition, rely largely on the creativity and manpower of a network of residents, businesses and public servants. The proposed community garden could be accomplished by offering owners of vacant properties a short-term lease opportunity. The awards programs will require minimal administration, with the majority of the expense borne by interested merchants and residents. Educational programs will be part of collaborative efforts with Federal, state and local organizations.

Strategy #5: Develop Redevelopment Visualization Vehicles

Local artists, commissioned for \$500 per rendering, will provide the visual inspiration to encourage redevelopment projects on private property. The Committee suggests commencing this Strategy with a minimum of six artists' renderings, resulting in approximately \$3,000 total initial investment. The centerpiece of the group of visualization vehicles will be the boardwalk project, with construction anticipated to commence in FY15.

Strategy #6: Review Salient Ordinances

Legal expenses may be incurred if significant re-writes are required to affected areas of the Town Administrative Code. Current estimates are \$200/hour.

Implementing the Plan

Specific steps and task lists for implementation of this plan are not addressed here and will be the appropriate province of those individuals assigned to carrying out the plan's goals. It is recommended that the Town adopt the "Action Register" template (included as Addendum E) that lays out a format for identifying tasks associated with each plan objective, assigning responsibilities and tracking progress. It is further recommended that the Town consider creating a volunteer task force or committee for each of the major plan goals, which will work with staff and the Council to create individual implementation plans, participate in and track their progress.



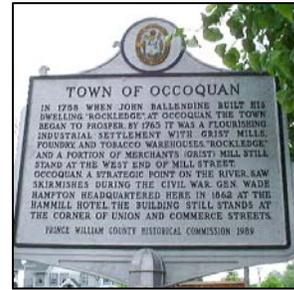
Addenda

- A. Strategic Planning Committee Charter**
- B. Interim Report, May 2, 2012**
- C. Data Feedback Document**
- D. Arts and Entertainment District Legislation**
- E. Action Register template for Plan implementation**
- F. Business Resource Grid and Listing**
- G. *"Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth and Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia"***

End of Report



TOWN OF OCCOQUAN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



September 3, 2013

TOWN OF OCCOQUAN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Adopted September 3, 2013

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Earnest W. Porta, Mayor
Elizabeth Quist, Vice Mayor
Denise Bush
Barry Dean
Patrick Sivigny
James Walbert, PhD

PLANNING COMMISSION

James Walbert, PhD, Chair
Cindy Chapman
James Drakes, PhD
Ann Kisling

Approved:

Earnest W. Porta

Attest:

Sheldon Levi, Acting Town Manager

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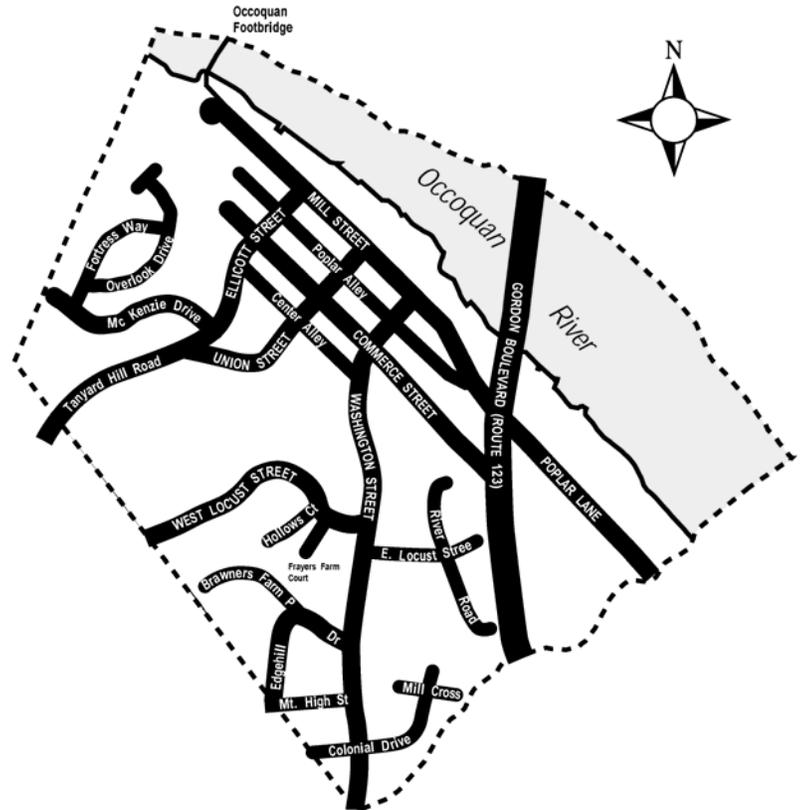
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STREET MAP OF OCCOQUAN

ACRONYMS

Utilized in the Comprehensive Plan

ADT –	Average Daily Trips
ARB –	Architectural Control Board
BMP –	Best Management Practice
CBPA –	Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas
CBPO –	Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance
CIP –	Capital Improvement Program
DU/AC –	Dwelling Units Per Acre
E&SC –	Erosion and Sediment Control
FIRM –	Flood Insurance Rate Map
HOV –	High Occupancy Vehicle
IDA –	Intensely Developed Area
MGD –	Million Gallons Per Day
NPS –	Nonpoint Source Pollution
NVRC –	Northern Virginia Regional Commission
PMR –	Planned Mixed Residential
PWCE –	Prince William Cooperative Extension
PWCSA –	Prince William County Service Authority
PWSWCD –	Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District
RMA –	Resource Management Area
RPA –	Resource Protection Area
RPD –	Residential Planned Community
ROW –	Right-Of-Way
SAV –	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation
USGS –	United States Geological Survey
VDOT –	Virginia Department of Transportation
VPD –	Vehicles Per Day



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Financial support for the preparation of this Plan was provided by Prince William County. Technical support for the Plan was provided by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and AMEC Earth & Environmental, Inc.

TOWN OF OCCOQUAN
**COMPREHENSIVE
 PLAN**



October 14, 2003

Preface

The Comprehensive Plan is critical to defining the intentions and expectations of the Town. It sets in writing the aspirations of the Town's citizenry and forms the basis from which Town government makes decisions concerning historic preservation, development, transportation, environmental protection, Town services, and a host of other issues that confront Occoquan on a daily basis. The Comprehensive Plan is multi-faceted and long-range in nature. It is as much a process as it is a document. This process provides a chance for competing interests to arrive at a common vision, and to consider how cumulative actions may affect the long-term viability of the Town.

The Town of Occoquan is rich with historical and cultural background. And yet, because the Town is relatively small, Occoquan is also fragile. Many communities like Occoquan once dotted the Northern Virginia landscape. Today, very few have survived. The Comprehensive Plan is the Town's primary tool for ensuring that future growth and development in the community protects, preserves, and builds on those characteristics that make Occoquan special.



Town of Occoquan

While the Comprehensive Plan must be specific enough to provide direction on the future physical development of the community, it must also be general enough to allow the Town Council and Planning Commission to exercise discretion in decision making. This means that the Comprehensive Plan is concerned with policies and major community design considerations; not specific properties or detailed designs.

Upon adoption, the Comprehensive Plan serves as the official guide of the governing body in decisions related to land use and community facilities. It becomes the primary tool for achieving the Town's development goals. Therefore, it is critical that the Comprehensive Plan be faithfully observed by both elected and appointed officials.

Although the Town Council, Planning Commission, Architectural Review Board, and Town staff have the primary legal responsibility for developing and implementing the Comprehensive Plan, citizens of the Town also play a critical role in plan development and implementation. Only if Town residents and businesses share in a sense of responsibility for the future of the Town can the vision that the Comprehensive Plan presents ever truly be realized. In an effort to provide Town residents with input into the plan development process, a survey, sponsored by the Town and conducted through the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, was distributed to all residents in April 2002. Out of the approximately 450 households in Occoquan, over 120 responded to the survey – a 27% response rate. Approximately 15 responses were received from respondents who are not citizens of Occoquan but who have an interest in the Town. The results of the survey, which requested input on the quality of Town services, design and development issues, environmental protection, Town finances, and transportation, are provided throughout the Comprehensive Plan.

What Makes Occoquan Special

What is it exactly that the Town hopes to achieve through the Comprehensive Plan? What is it that the Town's elected officials must nurture, or risk losing what makes Occoquan special? To answer these questions, one must recognize that Occoquan is a place where most people have chosen to come. In many senses, Occoquan is a very new town, despite its nearly 300 year history. According to the survey, the mean number of years that respondents have lived in the Town is only 8.8, while the median number of years is only 4.8.

Despite the fact that the influx of new residents means that the Town is constantly re-inventing itself, there is remarkable unanimity in answers to the question "What is the best thing about living here." Peace and quiet, and small town atmosphere are mentioned in over a quarter of survey responses. Historic charm and quaintness are mentioned in over one in six responses. Other features that have attracted people to

the Town include a feeling of safety, a sense of being a close knit community, and the ability to walk to shops and the Occoquan River.

What Makes Occoquan Vulnerable

What makes Occoquan vulnerable? In response to "What is the worst thing about living here," residents most commonly responded (in order from highest response rate to those with three or more responses) parking, cut through traffic, the commute to work, the upkeep of properties, the



2002 Plan Survey

craft shows, noise, and having to leave Town for access to a grocery store or supermarket.

Residents were also asked “What is the greatest threat to your quality of life here.” Nearly half of question respondents cited rapid growth and over-development, including growth both inside the Town and in surrounding Prince William and Fairfax counties. Cut-through traffic, too much commercialization of the Town, construction of the Route 123 bridge, vandalism and lack of maintenance to aging buildings, and noise were also cited.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a framework from which the Town can preserve and build on the best aspects of Occoquan while working to find solutions to the problems that threaten the long-term viability of the Town.

Physical Setting

The Town of Occoquan is located along the Occoquan River in the northeastern portion of Prince William County. The Town occupies approximately 125 acres, including 25 acres of the Occoquan River. While the built portion of the Town is located along the southern shore of the Occoquan River, the Town boundary actually



Occoquan PO 1879

Early map showing the location of Occoquan Flour Mill.

The Town is situated at the “fall line” which delineates the Piedmont and Coastal Plain geological provinces and represents the end of the navigable waters of the Occoquan River. The downtown and Poplar Lane portions of Occoquan are on a relatively level and low-lying plain adjacent to the river. To the southwest of this low-lying plain is a ridge underlain by mostly granite rock. The ridge is dissected by several small streams that empty into the river. The largest stream is Ballywack Branch. The other streams are Furnace Branch, Boundary Branch, Phelps Creek, and the tributary of Boundary Branch designated as Edgehill Creek. High ground is generally rolling with some very steep slopes and rocky outcrops adjacent to streams and the river plain.

While Occoquan has successfully maintained much of its small-town charm, surrounding areas of Prince William differ significantly in terms of scale, density, and design. Within a one mile radius are several automobile-oriented shopping centers and a commuter parking lot – all starkly in contrast to the Town’s pedestrian friendly atmosphere. The surrounding unincorporated areas of Woodbridge and Lake Ridge have populations of 31,941 and 30,404 respectively, dwarfing the Town’s population of 759. Encroachment by Fairfax County development to the north also offers new and diverse settings in contrast to the small pedestrian ambiance of Occoquan.

History of Occoquan and Historic Preservation

“Occoquan” is a Dogue Indian name meaning “end of the waters.” Here the Dogues had bountiful fishing and convenient trade routes while living in a protected site. As Europeans came to the area, the site was used for storage and shipping of tobacco. John Ballendine recognized the

potential of the site and in the 1750s began building a settlement of stores, industry, and houses. Ballendine's residence, built around 1760 and named Rockledge, is a unique stone structure which still overlooks the Town and the Occoquan River from its hillside perch.

Before the dawn of the 18th century, Occoquan had forges, grist mills, tolling mills, a bake house, sawmills, storehouses, and dwellings. The Merchant's Mill, constructed in 1759, was upgraded in 1790 to be the nation's first fully automatic grist mill. The mill operated for 175 years until destroyed by fire in 1924. Ruins of the foundation may still be seen along the river bank. The adjacent stone mill house, however, was left intact and serves as the Historic Museum. A Pratt Iron Truss Bridge at the site of the present-day foot bridge was constructed to replaced ferry service over the Occoquan.



Merchant's Mill 1920

Merchant's Mill, as owned by the Janney family shortly before being destroyed by fire in 1924.

In 1804, another entrepreneur by the name of Nathaniel Ellicott formalized the layout of the Town and was successful in having the General Assembly grant a charter for Occoquan. A map which survives from that date illustrates a street pattern nearly identical to the present layout.

In the early 1800s, a large cotton mill was built by the Janney family, who had also acquired the Merchant's Mill. This marked the beginning of a period of prosperity for the Town. It was a natural stopping place for travelers crossing the Occoquan

River by toll bridge or ferry. One of the Town's prominent landmarks, the Hammill Hotel, was built during this period. The building later served as a headquarters for Confederate General Wade Hampton during the Civil War.

By the mid-1830s, Occoquan contained about 50 residences in addition to mills, stores, and "mechanics." Most of the structures existing at that time have since disappeared, but a number of houses built in the mid to late 1800s comprise about half the structures in the "Old Town" area today. Most of the buildings on Commerce and Union streets date from this period, as well as a half-dozen structures on Mill Street.

Map No. 1 indicates the location of older buildings in the central area of Town and their periods of construction. The map also shows the Town's Historic District, as adopted in August 1999, which roughly mirrors the boundaries established in the 1804 charter.

In 1916, a major fire destroyed a number of commercial structures on Commerce, Union, and Mill streets. Other fires over the years have destroyed significant buildings, including the flour mill in 1924 and Ebenezer Church in 1923. The Church was rebuilt the following year on the same site where it still stands.

When U.S. Route 1 was constructed in 1928 with a bridge across the Occoquan River two miles downstream from the Town, a change in orientation took place. Having lost its major industry to fire and its position on the major north-south highway,

Over 32% of the survey respondents identified "Preserving the Town's historic structures and character" as the most important design and development issue affecting Occoquan. Another 41% identified historic preservation as one of the top four issues affecting the Town.

Occoquan became more of a typical small town with businesses such as a drug store, bank, movie theater, grocery store, funeral parlor, and other locally oriented activities. When Interstate 95 was built in the 1960s, an interchange about a mile from the Town

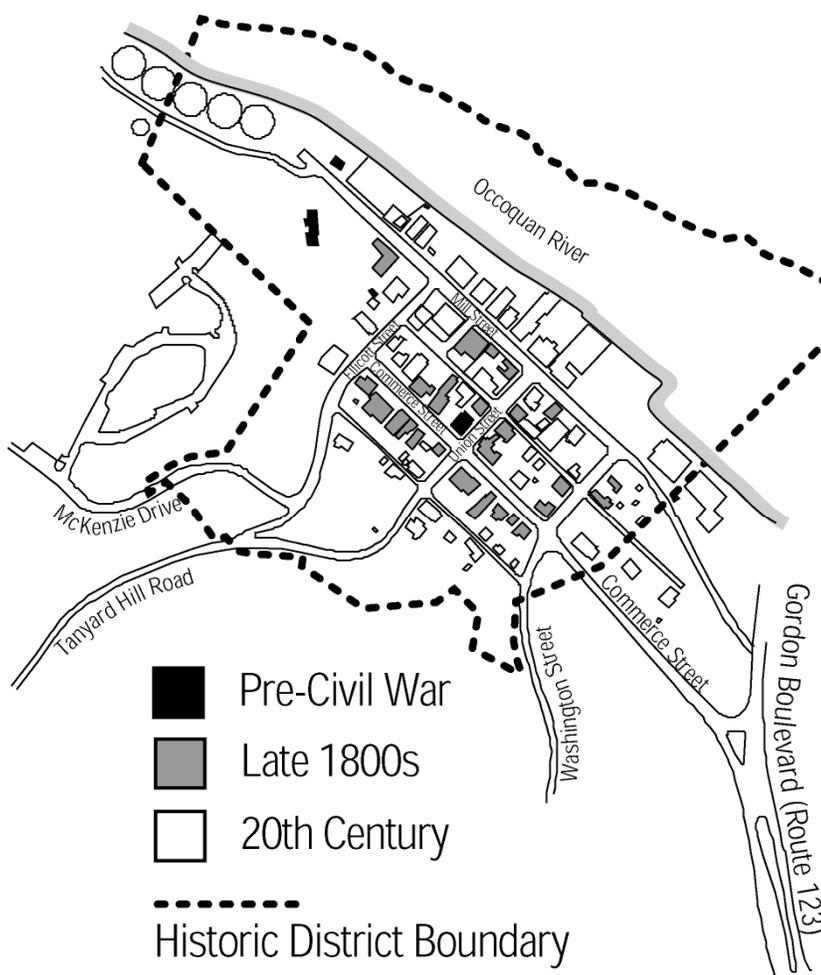
improved access somewhat with traffic traveling through the Town between I-95 and Fairfax County.

In 1972 the Town experienced a disastrous flood from Hurricane Agnes. Not only were homes and businesses severely damaged; the Town's bridge across the river was washed away. Economic consequences were rapidly felt and property values declined when the replacement bridge, relocated downstream of the iron truss bridge, resulted in essentially all traffic bypassing the Town. However, this was also the beginning of a period of resurgence when a few people with vision began rehabilitating older structures and converting them to shopper-oriented specialty shops, restaurants, and boutiques.

Today the Town's economic viability is largely based on a combination of its water access and its

quaint restored buildings. The process of restoration and conversion is still taking place and Occoquan is once more enjoying a measure of prosperity. In 1984 the Old Town area was declared a historic landmark by the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, and was added to the National Register of Historic Places. There are also hopes for funding opportunities to rebuild some of the significant early buildings that helped start the mercantile basis of the original settlement of Occoquan. The reconstruction of the Merchant's Mill and the iron foundry are two of these. The current effort to construct an Occoquan Riverwalk and provide access to the boating community of the Potomac and Occoquan rivers is also a step towards bringing the Town back to its river-oriented origins.

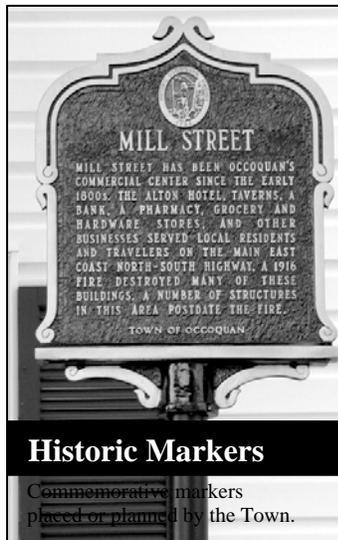
In recent years, Occoquan has become an attractive location for builders of new homes due



Source: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey/
Prince William County GIS (structure footprints), January 2002.

to its geographic location, picturesque setting, and quaint ambience. Several developments have been constructed including Occoquan Pointe (aka Barrington Pointe), a 118-unit condominium project, Hollows I and II, and Occoquan Mill. New development and redevelopment in and adjacent to historic areas of the Town has attracted both proponents and opponents. Regardless of perspective, development must not come at the expense of historic preservation.

Of equal concern to the Town are those structures that have been bypassed for repair and rehabilitation. The concern is not simply an aesthetic one – although aesthetics is a major



- 1804 Town Plat at the Tourist Building
- The Boundary Stone at Coopers Alley
- The Occoquan Wharfs
- Mill Street Sign at the Golden Goose
- Methodist Church
- Ellicott's Mill
- Occoquan River Bridges
- Dogue Indian Reservation
- Rockledge
- Commerce Street
- Odd Fellow's Hall
- Ebenezer Baptist Church
- Ogle Harris' Store

factor. Many older structures have not been upgraded to meet fire, electrical, and sanitary codes. The Town must continue to find ways to encourage property owners to invest in these historic structures.

To protect and preserve the Historic District and to ensure that new development is in keeping with its character, the Town has established an Architectural Review Board. The ARB utilizes guidelines found in the Architectural Review Board Design Manual, adopted by the Town in 1992. A 1999 Historic District Guidelines Design Manual was also prepared by the ARB.

The Town has

recently taken steps to better emphasize its rich historical heritage through the establishment of a walking tour and the placement of commemorative markers throughout the Town. The markers are cast with a description on one side and an etched image of the site from old pictures on the other. A total of 14 markers will be placed in all. There has also been discussion over whether a Historic District buffer area should be established to provide the Town with a tool to address preservation and architectural issues outside of the Historic District.

Historic Preservation Issues

- ❑ Preservation/maintenance of historic buildings/streetscapes and the historic character of Occoquan.
- ❑ Rehabilitation of historic structures that are substandard or in a derelict state.
- ❑ The impact of infill development and redevelopment within and adjacent to the Historic District.
- ❑ Funding for projects such as the reconstruction of Merchant's Mill and the Iron Foundry as well as construction and maintenance of an Occoquan Riverwalk.
- ❑ Update of ARB guidelines and adoption by the Town Council.
- ❑ Whether a Historic District buffer area should be established.

Population Characteristic S

According to U.S. Census figures, there were 759 persons living in the Town as of April 1, 2000. This represents a 125% increase from 1990 when Occoquan officially had 338 residents and a 214% increase from 1980 when Occoquan officially had 241 residents. There is evidence to suggest that census figures under-represent the actual population of the Town since it appears that all of Woodlee Terrace Apartments has been counted as being outside the Town. In fact, there are 72 apartment units which are located inside Town limits. A major factor in the Town's population increase was the completion of Occoquan Pointe, which added 118 units to the Town's housing stock.

2000 Census data reveals several interesting trends with regard to the Town's population characteristics. For example, the median age in Town is 41.6 years, which is a significant reversal of a trend towards a younger populace (the Town's median age dropped from 32.4 in 1980 to 32.1 in 1990). By contrast, Prince William County's median age is only 31.9. Not surprisingly, the percentage of Town residents over the age of 61 has also increased – from 12.4% in 1990 to 14.4% in 2000. This is in comparison to 6.3% of the population being age 61 and older in Prince William County.

The number of households reporting in the 2000 Census was 418 (out of a total of 443 possible housing units), resulting in a vacancy rate of 5.6%. This is down significantly from 1990 and bringing it more in line with Prince William County's rate of 3.6%. Family households represented 44% of total households while non-family households represented 56% of total households. This is in stark contrast to Prince William County, where families make up nearly 80% of households. In this regard, Occoquan is more akin to the City of Alexandria, with non-family households at 55%, than Prince William County. The primary

manifestation of this phenomenon is that the Town's average household size, at 1.82, is significantly less than the average of 2.94 in the County.

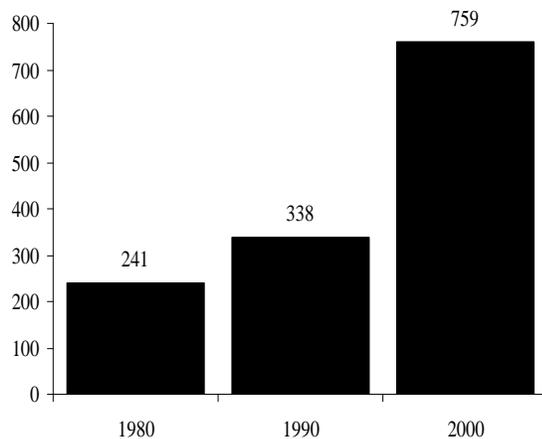
Compared to 1990, the Town has witnessed an increase in owner-occupied housing, with 57.9% of units being owner-occupied. Rental units comprise 42.1% of the housing stock. This represents a slight trend away from renter-occupied units. In 1980, only half of the housing units in Occoquan were owner-occupied. However, renters still comprise a very significant percentage of the Town's residents.

Additional useful information – such as commuting patterns, means of transportation, population mobility, household income, and education – should be available from the Census Bureau within the next year. Table I illustrates available population characteristics for the Town from 1990 and 2000 and compares them with similar parameters for Prince William County.

While there is a clear trend of population growth in the Town, the availability of land for additional development is diminishing. However, a further population increase of several hundred people might still be conceivable, depending on the development type, in the next ten years.

TABLE No. 1 –Town and County Population Characteristics

Parameter	Prince William County		Town of Occoquan	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Total Population	215,686	280,813	338	759
Under 19 Years	33.3%	32.9%	10.9%	13.1%
19-61 Years	61.6%	62.3%	76.7%	72.5%
Over 61 Years	5.1%	4.8%	12.4%	14.4%
Race – White	83.3%	68.9%	87.3%	85.5%
Race – Black	11.6%	18.8%	9.8%	8.2%
Race – Asian	3.0%	3.8%	2.4%	1.6%
Hispanic	4.5%	9.7%	0.6%	6.5%
Family Households	80.7%	76.9%	71.0%	44.7%
Married Couple Families	69.0%	61.3%	23.4%	35.6%
Non-Family Households	19.3%	23.1%	29.0%	55.3%
Average Household Size	3.04	2.94	1.98	1.82
Average Family Size		3.32		2.54
Total Housing Units	74,759	98,052	230	443
Vacancy Rate	6.8%	3.6%	24.8%	5.6%
Owner Occupied Units	71.0%	71.7%		57.9%

FIGURE No. 1 – Population Growth in the Town (1980 to 2000)

All population statistics from U.S. Census data.

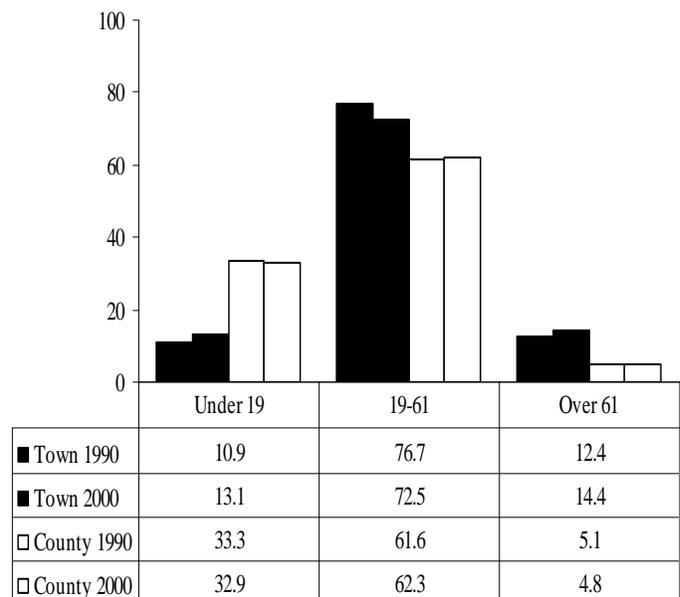
FIGURE No. 2 – Age Distribution (Town versus County)

FIGURE No. 3 – Race Distribution (Town versus County)

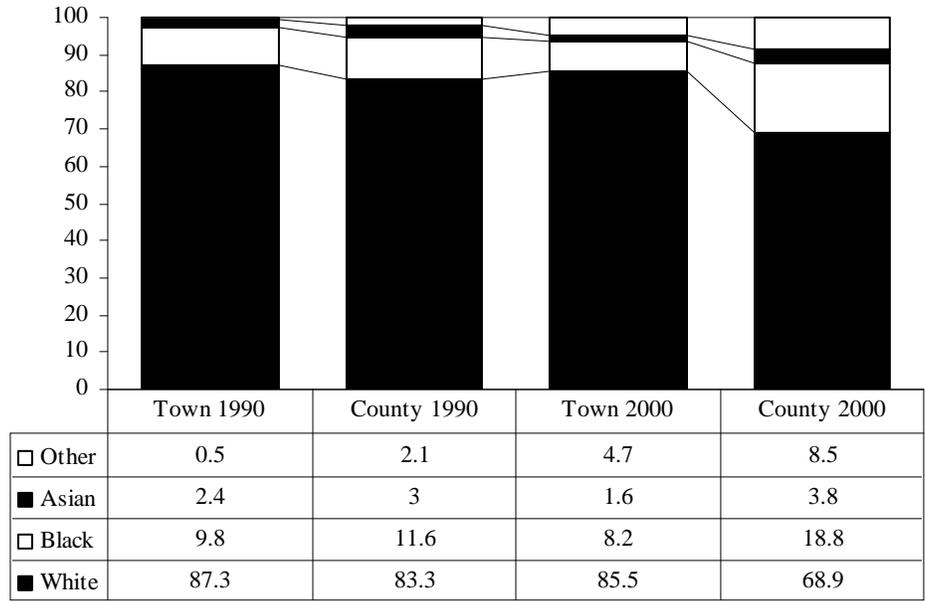
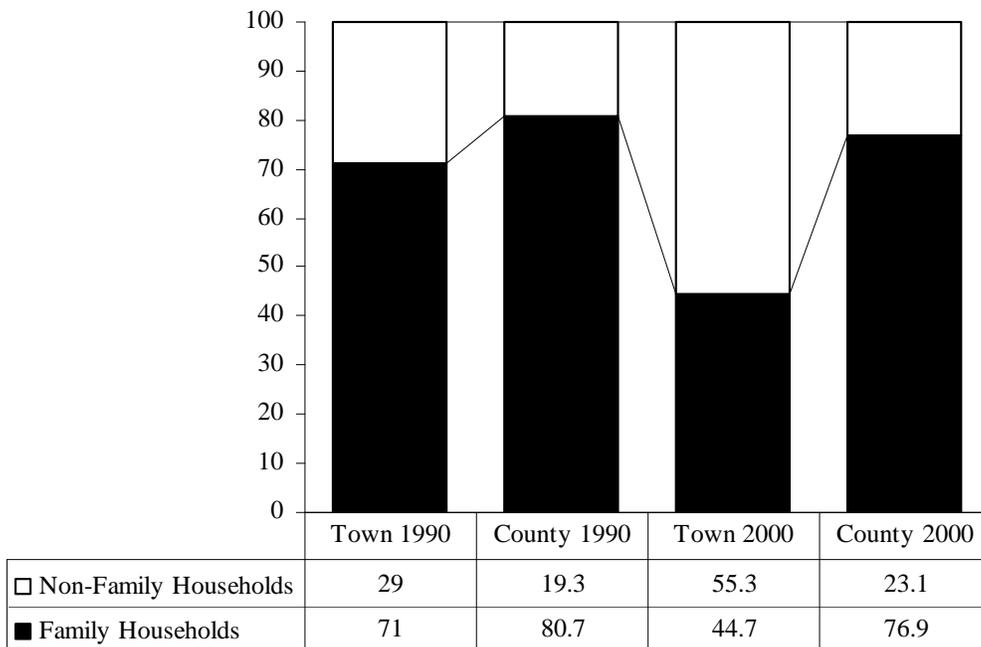


FIGURE No. 4 – Families versus Non-Families (Town versus County)



Economy and Finances

The economy of Occoquan remains relatively strong and continues to experience growth. The boutiques, craft shops, restaurants and gift shops continue to draw tourists and local citizens alike who are attracted by the unique character and ambiance of the Town. During FY 2001, building permits generated \$9,131 in revenue for the Town, up from \$5,861 the previous year. However, these figures are significantly less than during the mid-1990s when permits were issued for new construction at Occoquan Pointe, Dawson's Green, and Hollows II, in addition to various smaller projects.

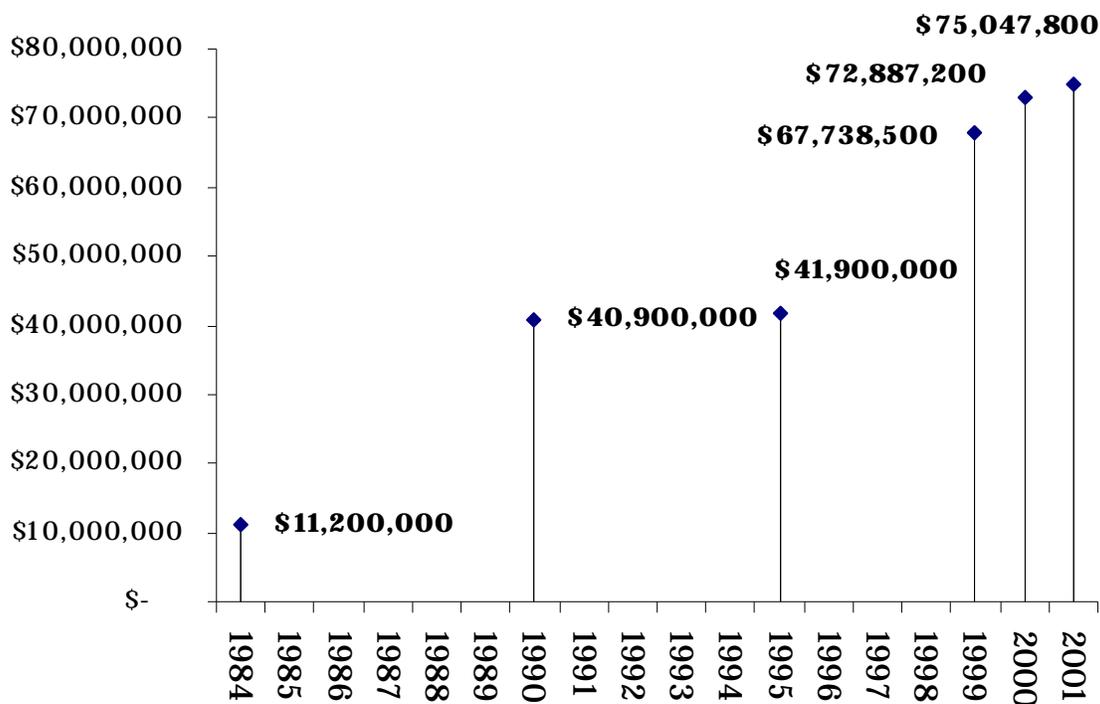
Another indicator of continued growth in the Town is the increased value of assessments of taxable property by Prince William County. A combination of increased property value and new construction have resulted in a taxable base of \$75,047,800 in 2001, up 11% from 1999 and 79% since 1995.

Healthy economic growth and increased revenue from the Spring and Fall Occoquan craft shows provided the Town the opportunity to lower the tax rate in the early 1990s. The tax rate was decreased from \$0.25 per \$100 assessed to \$0.05 per \$100 assessed value.

Revenue for Town activities is primarily raised through the Spring and Fall craft shows, with additional sources of revenue coming from business licenses and real estate, sales, and utility taxes. Expenditures primarily support Town staff (33%), craft show costs, trash removal, public works/capital improvements, and various professional services.

Issues facing the Town with regard to economy and finances largely center around (1) the potential impact of the Route 123 bridge reconstruction on commerce, (2) maintaining and expanding a mix of retailers that will make the Town a destination for visitors, and (3) whether the Spring and Fall craft shows produce adequate revenue for the Town to implement and maintain various improvement projects.

FIGURE No. 5 – Value of Assessments of Taxable Property



Would you be willing to pay more in Town taxes if money were spent on: (% of respondents presented below)

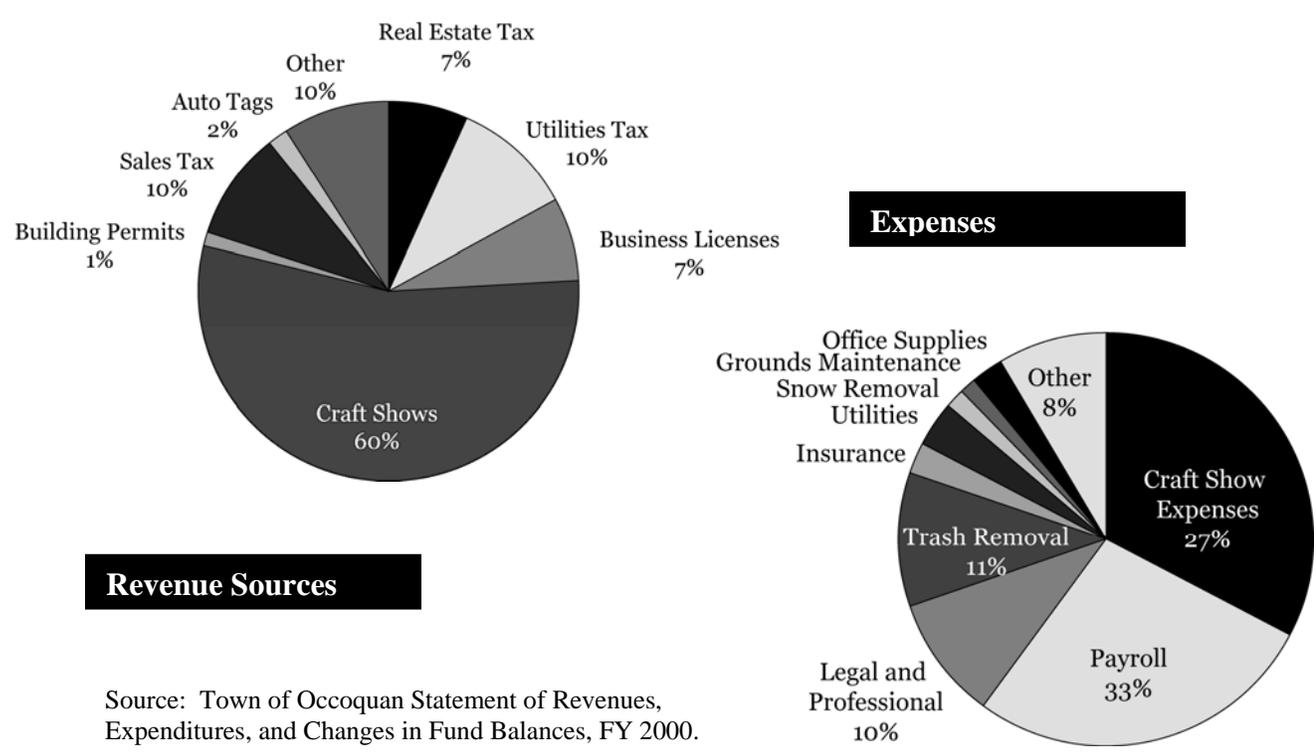
Yes	No	Don't know	
38%	27%	34%	Match for state/federal grants
53%	33%	15%	Landscaping/street scaping
51%	32%	17%	Environmental protection
10%	60%	29%	Administrative staff
20%	58%	22%	Police protection
31%	51%	18%	Recreation
42%	43%	14%	Pedestrian access
36%	51%	13%	Municipal parking
42%	39%	19%	Occoquan River footbridge
61%	25%	13%	Riverwalk construction/maint.
55%	33%	12%	Other

From NVRC Town Survey, April, 2002.

With regard to the Route 123 bridge, the current replacement design would eliminate the spectacular vista of the Town that serves to draw potential visitors in for a look. The long-term impact that this may have on local businesses is of serious concern to the Town. For better or worse, the State budget crisis has resulted in at least a one year delay on the bridge reconstruction project, which was originally to have been advertised in the Summer of 2002. However, the Town must also make contingency plans for how to market the Town to potential visitors from the Northern Virginia region and beyond.

Maintaining and expanding a mix of retailers that will appeal to and draw in outside visitors is also of concern to the Town as well as the Occoquan Merchants Association and the Business Guild of Occoquan. There are numerous opportunities for the Town to bring in additional businesses, particularly along the Town's waterfront, which

FIGURE No. 6 – Town Revenue Sources and Expenses (Based on FY 2000)



Source: Town of Occoquan Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances, FY 2000.



Spring Craft Show

Spring and Fall Craft shows are a significant source of Town revenues.

currently has two largely underutilized privately owned properties. In considering what types of businesses to encourage, the Town must maintain the delicate balance between a thriving commercial sector and keeping a small town atmosphere.

Many of the issues and ideas presented in this Comprehensive Plan will require additional fiscal resources. For instance, grants and reimbursable programs for historic preservation, street scaping, marketing, environmental protection, etc. are generally available through Federal, State, and County organizations. However, these grants often require a sizable match from the Town. According to the results of the 2002 Plan Survey, 38% of respondents would pay more in taxes to provide match for State and Federal grant applications while 27% indicated that they would not be willing and 35% indicated that they didn't know. The results indicate that there are a large number of people who could be persuaded one way or another. On the other hand, several results provide a clearer picture of how residents might feel if increased revenues were put towards specific projects. 61% of respondents indicated that they would be willing to pay additional taxes towards the completion of an Occoquan Riverwalk. However, only 10% and 20% of respondents would be willing to pay additional taxes for increased Town staff or police protection, respectively.

Finance Issues

- ❑ Can the Town rely on existing revenue sources to accomplish planning goals.
- ❑ Influence the development and/or redevelopment of underutilized riverfront properties.
- ❑ The impact of the reconstruction of the Route 123 bridge on Town merchants.
- ❑ Whether there is a need for the Town to develop a more aggressive marketing approach.

Land Use, Zoning, and Design and Development

Occoquan as it appears today is a reflection of past decisions – or lack of decisions – concerning land use. The extent to which a community has recognized its opportunities and capitalized on them is shown in the character and quality of its land use arrangement. Likewise shown is the extent to which vulnerabilities have been recognized and protected. Orderly growth and development depend upon coordinated land use decisions and effective controls on a Town-wide



Mill Street Improvements

basis. Lack of planning and controls usually results in an arrangement of land use which is inefficient, detrimental to the quality of life, and the source of many unnecessary conflicts.

The existing land use pattern in Occoquan has

resulted from historical determinants involving actions of individual entrepreneurs. Only in recent years has the Town government become actively involved in influencing and controlling land use for the greater welfare of all its citizens. The most significant change in land use during this recent time has been the expansion of the central business area. However, other actions have been taken which set the stage for more significant changes in the future. These potential changes are discussed under the section of Future Land Use Plan.

Currently, the “heart” of Occoquan is its central

business district located along the entire length of Mill Street and on Commerce Street from Washington Street to Ellicott Street. No commercial activities are located outside this general area. The types of businesses found in Occoquan are generally of the specialty retail variety, interspersed with restaurants. There is some office space in Town, usually as an adjunct to retail businesses and most often located on the second floor above specialty shops.

The business district and the immediately adjacent residential area are laid out in a grid pattern which

What do you consider to be the most important design and development issues: (% of respondents presented below)

Top priority	Top third in priority	
7%	44%	Low density buffer around Town
33%	73%	Historic structures and character
9%	45%	Downtown aesthetics
11%	50%	Reduce cut through traffic
4%	23%	Increase parking options
1%	10%	Improve pedestrian access
15%	57%	Waterfront development
5%	22%	Route 123 bridge design
5%	32%	Water Authority property
0%	26%	More parks and recreation
10%	36%	Protect the environment
12%	23%	Other

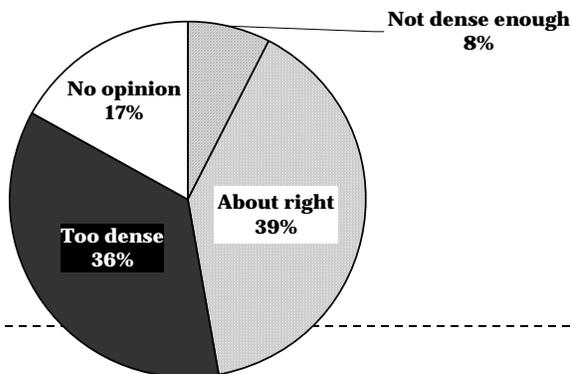
What additional commercial uses would you like to see in Town? (% of respondents presented below)

Yes	No	Don't know	#1 Priority
55%	40%	4%	38% Food store
33%	62%	4%	8% Drug store
74%	22%	4%	49% Restaurants
31%	54%	15%	1% Profes. services
26%	39%	35%	0% None
			3% Other

What additional commercial uses would you like to see on the waterfront? (% of respondents presented below)

Yes	No	Don't know	#1 Priority
73%	21%	6%	2% Shops
88%	10%	2%	30% Restaurants
20%	69%	11%	0% Homes
18%	71%	11%	0% Offices
86%	10%	4%	19% Parks
89%	10%	1%	40% Boardwalk
63%	26%	11%	6% Marinas
			4% Other

Has recent development in the Town been:



From NVRC Town Survey, April, 2002.

was established in a plat recorded in 1804. This “Old Town” area is rather compact and orderly, preserving the quaint character and atmosphere not found in sprawling shopping centers and strip commercial developments of modern times. This old-fashioned ambience and town scale is what makes Occoquan a popular attraction for the tourists and shoppers upon which the Town’s economy depends.

The Town is presently completing a Mill Street Enhancement Project, which has included the installation of gas street lights, brick sidewalks, new curb and gutter, undergrounded utilities, street trees, etc. to improve the aesthetic appeal of the central business district. Improvements to the Town’s other major thoroughfares, such as Washington Street and Commerce Street, are also future possibilities. Improvements to these thoroughfares would serve to announce to visitors that one is entering a “small town” and would help to distinguish Occoquan from surrounding areas of Prince William County.

The Town has several waterfront properties in its downtown that have good potential for redevelopment or revitalization. Three issues are associated with the redevelopment of these properties – (1) connection with the future Occoquan Riverwalk, (2) providing the necessary flexibility and incentives to make development economically viable, and (3) the actual “use” of the land.

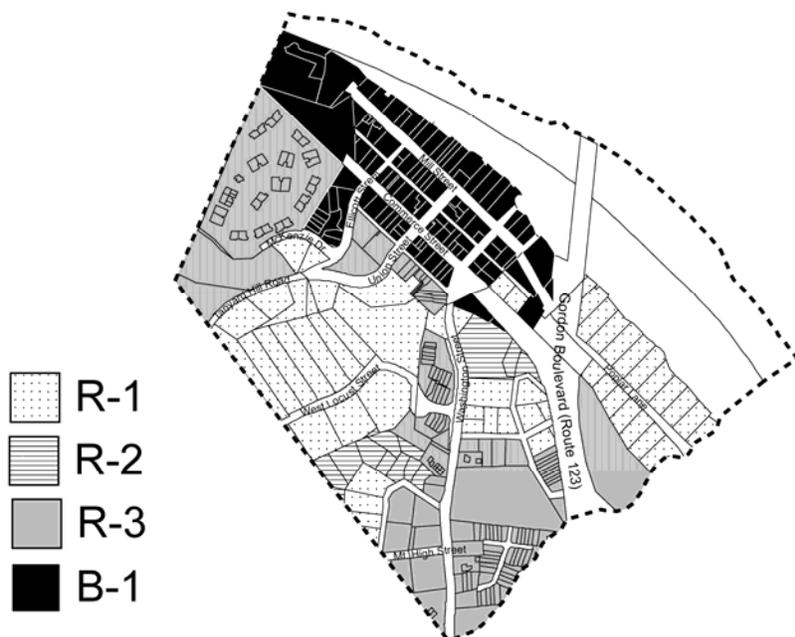
In particular, the Town must specify how any future uses will link to the Riverwalk. This is critical to ensure an adequate number of access points and to ensure that building design takes into account and encourages the use of the Riverwalk. Use type is critical in that uses should lend themselves to Riverwalk activities. If the Town is silent on what kind of uses it would like to see, then it may lose an opportunity to influence the decision making process. Finally, the Town needs to address whether current zoning restrictions placed on waterfront properties, such as the 35 foot height requirement, need to be more flexible in order to encourage redevelopment of the type desired.

Outside the “Historic District” area, land use consists of a mixture of residential structures on radial roads and other small streets. Several of the houses are comparable in age to those in the “Historic District,” while many others are of more recent vintage. Most single-family homes outside of the central area are located on relatively large lots. (Homes within the central area are on small lots of 5,000 square feet or less.)

While many residences are single-family detached dwellings, the current trend is towards higher density residential development. Projects begun since 1990 include the townhouse addition to Occoquan Mills, single family homes at Hollows II and townhouse units at Dawson’s Green. Proposed residential development includes additional townhouse units at Myrtle Bank in the

MAP No. 2 – Town Zoning Map

Note: Map No. 2 is for graphical purposes only. Official Town Zoning Map adopted under Sec. 66-5 of Town Code is available at the Town Hall. GIS base from Prince William County, January 2002.



“Old Town” area and single family units at Vantage Pointe outside the downtown area. Continued development has caused debate over whether the Town should encourage or discourage dense forms of development such as townhouses, both in and out of the Historic District area.

Public and semi-public uses within the Town consist of the Town Hall, the Occoquan Museum, Mamie Davis Park, a church, a cemetery, two lodges, the post office, and the Prince William County Visitors Center. All of the above (except the cemetery) are located within the “Old Town” area. These facilities are important elements comprising the flavor of Occoquan and are all worthy of preservation.

Many of the debates over development in the Town have as much to do with open space preservation as they do with design and compatibility with existing development patterns. At present, the Town still enjoys a great deal of open space. Significant undeveloped areas are located near the southeastern Town limits between Washington Street and Route 123 (approximately 4 acres), north of West Locust Street (approximately 10 acres) and along the upper portion of Ballywack Branch (about 2 acres). The Occoquan River provides open space and comprises nearly 25 acres within the Town.

Design and development issues will continue to be of major concern for the Town whether one is dealing with a new residential subdivision or small infill projects. The likely abandonment and redevelopment of the Fairfax County Water Authority Property will also provide the Town with a unique opportunity to anchor the northwestern end of its retail district. These new projects must be planned in harmony with the surrounding areas while at the same time maintaining the eclectic mix that is Occoquan.

Land Use and Zoning Issues

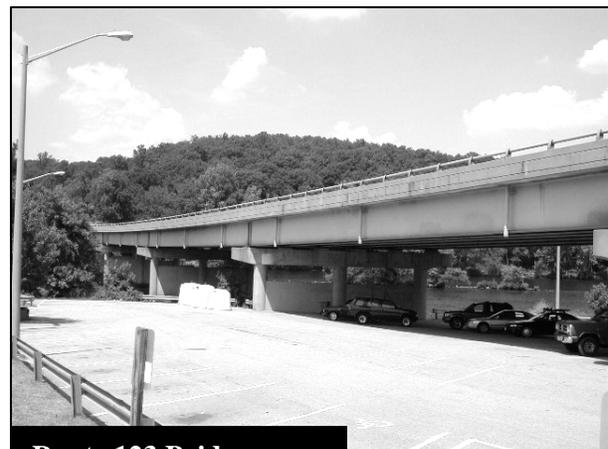
- ❑ Whether to continue planning for dense development in the Town.
- ❑ Constraints to development in environmentally sensitive areas.
- ❑ Open space preservation.

- ❑ Design of major redevelopment and development projects.
- ❑ Planning for and attracting appropriate waterfront land uses.
- ❑ Funding for additional street scape improvements.
- ❑ Whether additional flexibility in zoning requirements is needed to attract desired waterfront redevelopment.

Transportation and Circulation

Historically, the Town of Occoquan has survived the loss of major transportation facilities. In fact, much of the historic preservation of the Town may be due to its removal from the path of strip commercial development which has taken place along the arterial highways nearby. At any rate, the Town’s street system has remained in scale with the small town it serves.

As part of the original Town charter in 1804, a plat was created which established a grid system of streets and lots. The originally platted system of street rights-of-way still exists to some extent, but some of the streets have been vacated. Other streets were never developed and the current status of the streets is controversial. An official mapping



Route 123 Bridge

of these streets by current standards of accuracy would be helpful in determining the potential use or disposition thereof.

The remaining grid street system of the old central area is connected to the surrounding areas and highways by several radial roads. These radials are the “life-lines” of the Town, providing access to and from the rest of the region. The most important radial roads are Union Street/Tanyard Hill Road, Washington Street/Occoquan Road and Commerce Street with its connection to Route 123.

The westerly portion of Union Street and Tanyard Hill Road outside the Town limits is a narrow, winding road with no shoulders and restricted sight distances. The current 30-foot wide right-of-way does not provide sufficient space or adequate alignment for the widening and regrading which would be necessary to meet reasonable safety standards. According to statistics kept by Prince William County, this road carries about 4,300 vehicles per day (VPD); much of this traffic being composed of commuters from the Lake Ridge area using the road as a short cut to Route 123. Recent improvements include the widening of Route 123 and completion of HOV lanes on I-95 may explain the reduction in the amount of commuter traffic through Town via Tanyard Hill Road, which stood at approximately 5,400 VPD in 1996.

Washington Street likewise suffers from narrow pavement and inadequate sight distances. The right-of-way width is generally 30 feet with no room for widening or realignment. The current traffic volume is about 2,500 VPD, a slight increase from the 2,000 VPD count in 1996. However, this is still a significant drop from the 7,800 VPD reported in 1986. The reduction in traffic can be attributed to improvements to Old Bridge Road and Route 123 and making the detour through Town unnecessary. Likewise, the traffic on Commerce Street has experienced a reduction of traffic from 7,000 VPD in 1986 to 6,500 VPD in 1996 to 5,300 VPD in 2001. These statistics demonstrated that continued road improvements around the Town will help in keeping commuter traffic out of the Town and reduce the congestion on local streets.

Within the central area, the primary streets have adequate rights-of-way. One exception is Ellicott Street which has a narrow right-of-way and is one-way from McKenzie Drive to Union Street. Traffic on all central area streets is relatively heavy during peak business hours, but is not usually considered to be congested.

According to the survey, cut-through traffic is a major quality of life concern to Town residents. The narrowness of many of the radial roads entering the Town – to the extent that they are not a safety hazard – serves to discourage traffic.

Parking

How to maximize the availability of parking spaces while maintaining the historic nature of the Town has been an ongoing issue. Parking problems typically occur on peak days in the peak months. While these represent only a minority of days out of the year, they are critical to the Town’s economy.

The majority of parking for visitors in Town is on-street parking or parking made available under and near the Route 123 bridge. Parking is also available near the Occoquan Museum and at the western end of Commerce Street. The Town Council continues to look for ways to increase parking. Additional parking is expected to be provided through improvements to the western end of Mill Street and improvements at the intersection of Commerce Street and Washington Street (Dawson Property). It is anticipated that 49 new spaces will be provided at the latter site, and that approximately 29 of these spaces will be for public use.

The Town has also worked on a plan with VDOT to increase on-street parking in downtown by making Commerce, Washington, Mill, and Ellicott streets into a one-way loop. The Town Council will continue to investigate ways to increase parking through parking management techniques and by working with developers to provide parking convenient to existing commercial establishments.

In addition to the issue of additional parking, the Town is also working with VDOT to plan for the temporary loss of parking space during the Route 123 bridge construction.

Route 123 Bridge Construction

One by-product of continued growth in the region has been the need to increase the carrying capacity of the Route 123 bridge. Reconstruction is a major concern to the Town and will impact property owners and merchants alike as well as the Town's ambiance and visitor draw. The Town has worked with the Virginia Department of Transportation, Prince William County, and others to address Town concerns, but only to a limited degree of success. Apart from the disruption to parking and the quiet of the Town during construction, the bridge is designed at a height that will not allow passers-by to view the Town. Rather, Route 123 will carry potential visitors over the Occoquan with little visual interest to tempt a stop.

Because the construction advertisement has been delayed from Summer 2002 to Summer 2003 due to State budget cuts, the Town has a limited window of opportunity to work with VDOT to address remaining concerns.

Sidewalks, Riverwalk, and the Occoquan Foot Bridge

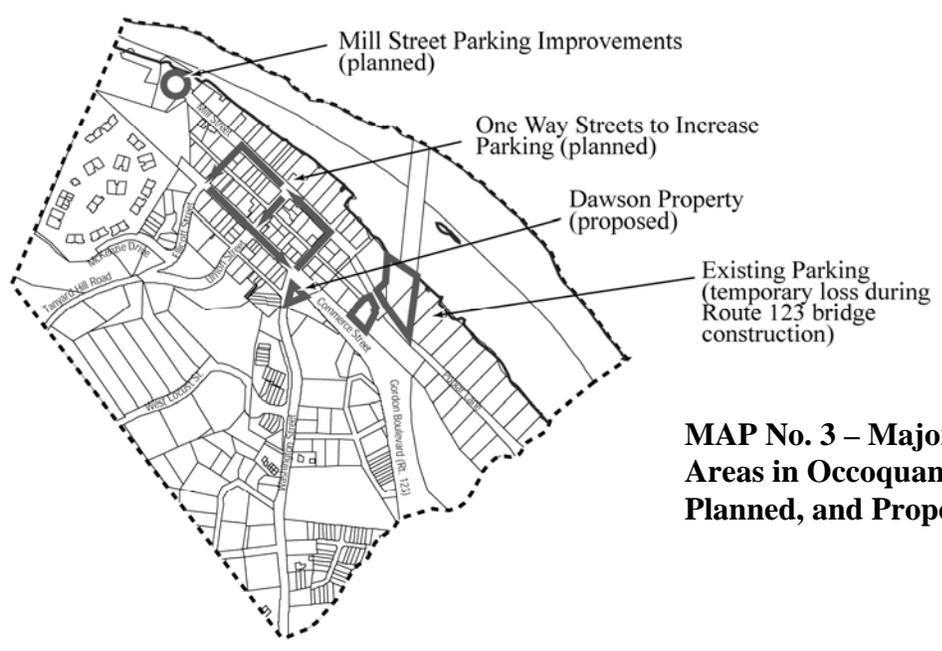
Although automobile access to the Town is certainly important, one of the charms of Occoquan is that it is accessible by foot and by water.



There are several efforts underway to increase pedestrian access within the Town. The most significant effort is the Occoquan Riverwalk, which will significantly increase access to the Town's waterfront. Phase I of the project will result in a jetty and Town dock, while Phase II will result in the extension of the boardwalk. Ultimately, the

Occoquan Foot Bridge

Site of the original iron truss Occoquan River crossing. boardwalk will connect approximately 539 feet of river frontage and include a pier that will jut approximately 130 feet in the Occoquan River for



MAP No. 3 – Major Public Parking Areas in Occoquan: Existing, Planned, and Proposed

transient boaters underneath the reconstructed Route 123 bridge.

Another pedestrian access issue is the Occoquan foot bridge. The foot bridge serves as a critical link for those parking at Vulcan Quarry during the craft shows to enter the Town as pedestrians. However, the bridge is in need of repairs by VDOT.

Transportation Issues

- ❑ Cut through traffic.
- ❑ Lack of parking at peak times.
- ❑ Route 123 bridge reconstruction.
- ❑ Completion of Occoquan Riverwalk.
- ❑ Repair and enhancement of Occoquan River foot bridge.

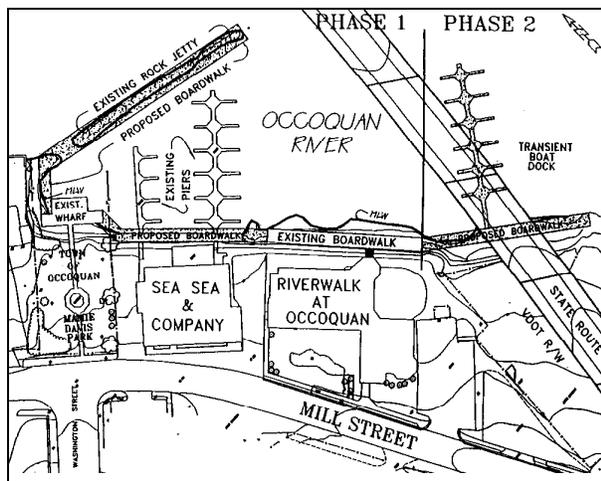


FIGURE No. 7 – Plan for the Occoquan Riverwalk Phase I and II

Community Services and Facilities

Because the Town is part of Prince William County, many services and facilities are provided by County government. These include water and sewer service, schools, recreation facilities and public health services. An agreement exists whereby County police have concurrent jurisdiction within the Town. Also, fire protection and rescue service is provided by the Occoquan-Woodbridge-Lorton Volunteer Fire and Rescue Squad to which the County contributes funds.

Services provided by the Town include refuse collection and recycling, police protection, maintenance of riverfront parks, sidewalk maintenance, snow removal, and street lights. The Town also regulates business establishments and building activities. A Town Hall and a public park with a pier on the river are maintained by the Town for public use and a public parking lot is now in operation. The Occoquan Museum, now owned by the Town through a gift by the Fairfax County Water Authority, is operated by Historic Occoquan, Inc. Some minor streets are maintained by the Town while others are the responsibility of the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Services and facilities of a charitable nature or of public benefit are also provided by various private groups and include social clubs and a church. Mail service is provided through the local post office by the U.S. Postal Service.

The future of the Occoquan post office is one issue that will be facing the Town. The lease on the property is set to expire in the next two years and there is no guarantee that the post office will remain in that location. Regardless of where in the Town the post office is located, however, a vast majority of the respondents surveyed in April, 2002 said that it was “very important” (84%) or “important” (9%) that the post office remain within the Town limits.

The Town's primary potable water supply is the Occoquan Reservoir immediately upstream from the Town. The Town's supplier is the Prince William County Service Authority which purchases the water wholesale from the Fairfax County Water Authority. This water supply is one of the best protected in the Commonwealth. By cooperative agreement under the Occoquan Basin Nonpoint Pollution Management Program (established in 1978), the entire Occoquan Reservoir watershed has been subject to nonpoint source pollution controls since the early 1980s.

The Occoquan Reservoir is supplemented by a water intake on the Potomac River in Loudoun County (Corbalis intake) which is also maintained by the Fairfax County Water Authority. This dual water intake system helps to protect residents from water shortages due to spills or droughts.

The Town anticipates that its current source of potable water is sufficient to meet both the short and long term needs of the Town. The PWCSA's capacity allotment from the Fairfax County Water Authority for eastern Prince William County is 37.5 million gallons per day (MGD). Current usage averages between 10 and 12 MGD, which leaves significant capacity for anticipated growth.

The PWCSA is planning a major capital improvement to the Town's water distribution system that will involve the replacement and upgrade of a 10 inch water main under Mill Street. The main, which was built in the late 1940s or early 1950s, is the PWCSA's oldest line and recent breaks have caused significant damage to public infrastructure. The upgrade will be made during Fiscal Year 2003 and should take approximately one month. Because the upgrade will almost certainly result in a temporary loss of parking and possible lane closures, it is important that the Town work closely with the PWCSA to address concerns. At a minimum, work should



Occoquan Town Hall

How satisfied are you with your Town government:

(% of respondents presented below)

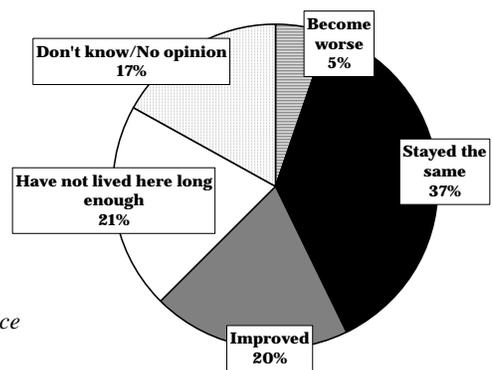
Very satisfied	Satisfied	No opinion/don't know	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	
35%	53%	8%	4%	0%	Value of services for taxes paid
30%	49%	11%	5%	5%	Overall Town management
46%	34%	18%	2%	1%	Responsiveness of Town employees
55%	32%	7%	5%	1%	Management of Craft Shows

How satisfied are you with the quality of specific services:

(% of respondents presented below)

Very satisfied	Satisfied	No opinion/don't know	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	
40%	46%	5%	7%	2%	Refuse and recycling
36%	54%	3%	4%	4%	Management of parks and open space
51%	39%	4%	4%	1%	Police protection
23%	49%	3%	19%	5%	Traffic management and parking

Over the past few years, do you think that the quality of Town services has:



From NVRC Town Survey, April, 2002.

avoid major holidays and the Fall and Spring craft shows. If possible, an incremental approach that will disrupt only small areas at a time would be preferable. The PWCSA Operations and Maintenance Division has indicated that it is willing to work closely with the Town to address these issues.

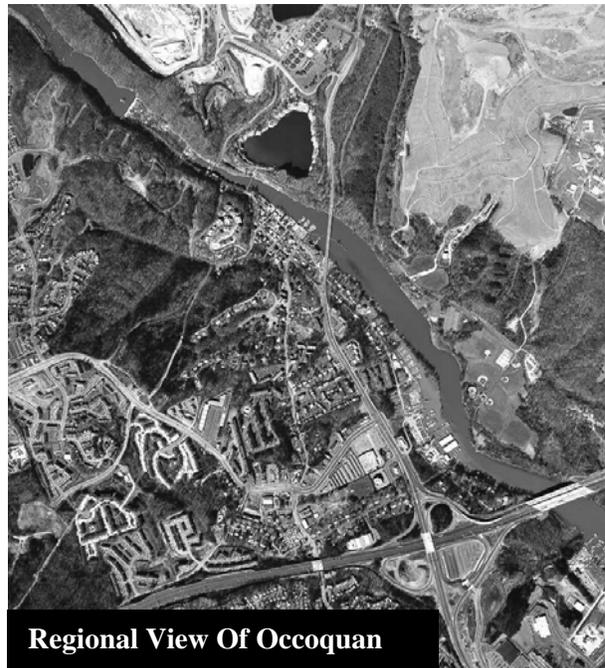
Overall, Town residents are satisfied or very satisfied with the way that Town government is run. One notable exception is traffic management and parking, with a dissatisfaction rate of 19%.

Community Services Issues

- ❑ Planning to retain a post office within the Town limits.
- ❑ Planning for the impacts of utility service upgrades on Town residents and merchants.

The Occoquan Region

While residents enjoy significant control over many aspects of life in the immediate Town of Occoquan, development and transportation projects in surrounding Prince William County have the capacity to significantly affect the Town's quality of life. As a result, the Town must pay attention to potential development projects, and when appropriate, work with County officials and staff to ensure that impacts to the Town are



Regional View Of Occoquan

minimal or even positive. Perhaps the two greatest issues with potential to impact the Town are (1) development that could reduce the existing forested and low-density residential buffer around much of the Town and (2) development or transportation projects that could increase cut-through traffic.

Development Surrounding the Town

Part of the charm that attracts residents and visitors to Occoquan is that it has maintained a small town identity despite the fast pace of growth in surrounding Prince William County. Entering the Town from Tanyard Hill Road and Washington Street, one can still imagine how a turn-of-the-century traveler might have felt upon arriving at the Town from a long journey. While these low-density buffers have survived to today, it is important that the Town work with the County to ensure that these buffers are preserved for future generations. For the most part, this has been accomplished and development patterns have long been established. For instance, the forested area north of Tanyard Hill Road is protected by virtue of being a part of the larger Lake Ridge Residential Planned Community (RPD). Because much of Lake Ridge is zoned as a unit, and because the area north of Tanyard Hill Road consists of steep slopes and Ballywack Branch, this area was preserved from development.

There are areas, however, that deserve attention by the Town as development is proposed. The area between West Locust Street and Mount High Street, and the Occoquan Road corridor, are zoned R-10 (Suburban Residential), with a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet. This equates roughly to a standard quarter acre subdivision lot. Full development of these areas at an R-10 density could significantly alter the approach to Occoquan. Another area that deserves attention is the Vantage Pointe development that has recently been approved for the area near the intersection of Tanyard Hill Road, Herndon Street, and Hall Street (Mount High Street). This area will be developed as business/office space and some Planned Mixed Residential (PMR). As part of the development process, the area between Tanyard Hill Road and West Locust Street south of the water line has been preserved as open space. While this is good news for the Town, the new residential development in the western portion of Tanyard Hill Road could affect this area significantly and reduce the forested buffer area.

Transportation Projects

Apart from the Route 123 bridge widening project, there are few other transportation projects in the

surrounding County that would likely have a major impact on the Town. An exception could have been the Vantage Pointe project, which originally proposed extending and completing Hall Street (Mount High Street), and connecting it with Brook Drive on the southern side of Old Bridge Road. However, the Prince William County Board of Supervisors decided not to link these roads as part of the Vantage Point project.

According to Prince William County Office of Planning staff, the County has no plans for transportation improvements to Tanyard Hill Road or Poplar Lane.

Town and County Coordination

Although zoning in the County surrounding the Town is well established, coordination and cooperation between the County and Town is important to ensure that any eventual development is compatible with the existing character of Occoquan. The Town has several options for strengthening this coordination with the County ranging from more frequent meetings between Town and County staff, to meetings between the Town Planning Commission and County Office of Planning staff, to the development of an "Occoquan Sector Plan" for inclusion in the County's Comprehensive Plan. Such a sector plan could establish common community design themes, park and open space goals, and long-range land use goals.

Environment, Sources of Pollution, and Physical Constraints

The Virginia Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act requires the Town to establish a long-range vision for how to protect and restore the Town's creeks

and streams as well as the natural habitats of the Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac River that are dependent on the water quality in these tributaries. The Act also requires the Town to establish goals, policies, and action plans based on an inventory and analysis of the Town's water environment to guide the Town as it continues to grow and develop as a community.



Ballywack Branch

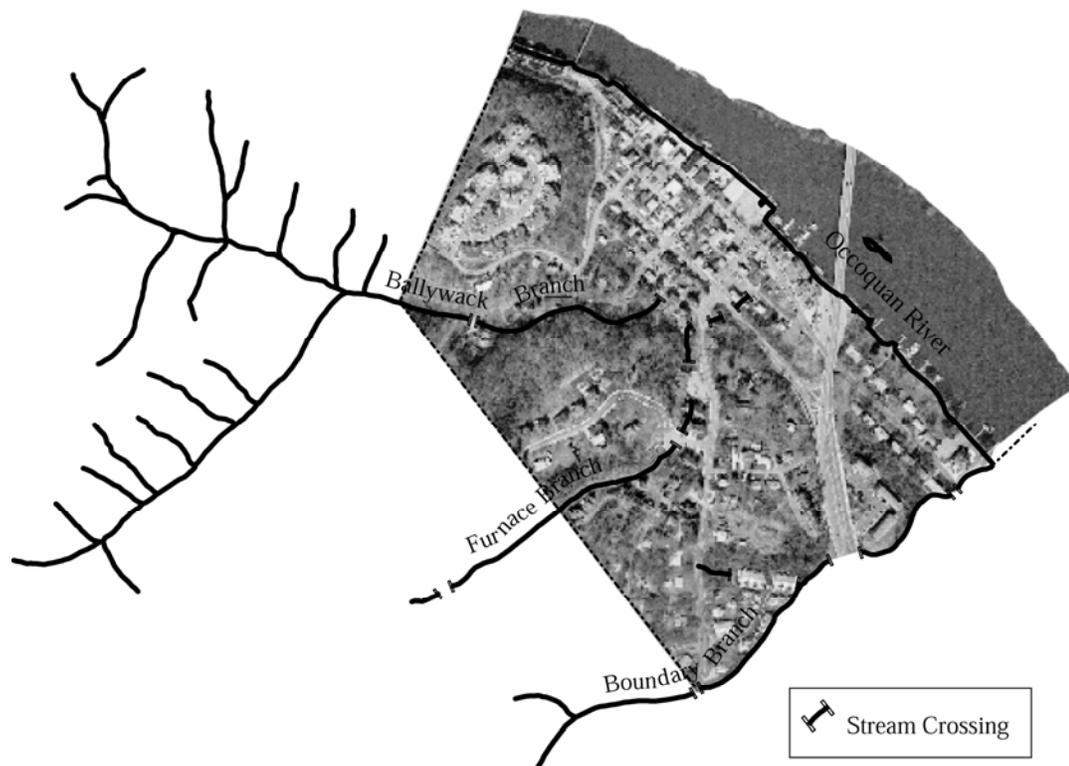
Ballywack Branch as it enters the Town is relatively pristine.

All of the Town's waterways, including its creeks, drainage ditches, stormdrains, and culverts, are part of a larger Chesapeake Bay ecosystem. Tremendous growth in the Chesapeake Bay watershed has led to the significant decline of Bay water quality and habitat. Today, once-plentiful aquatic species, including sturgeon, striped bass, oyster, blue crab, and many

species of waterfowl have reached critically low numbers. In addition, submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), which serve as food and habitat for many aquatic species, declined sharply during the 1960s and 1970s as a result of increased pollution from development of the surrounding watershed.

In 1983, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency signed the Chesapeake Bay Agreement and created the Chesapeake Bay Program to help find ways to restore the Bay. In Virginia, the most widely recognized result of this agreement is the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. The Town implemented the Act in the form of a Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance in June, 1991. In addition to requiring the development of an ordinance, the Act (Code of Virginia, Section 10.1-2109.B) also states that "Counties, cities, and towns in Tidewater Virginia shall incorporate protection of the quality of State waters into each locality's comprehensive plan consistent with the provisions of this chapter."

The purpose of incorporating water quality protection into local comprehensive plans is to account for what is already being done to help protect water quality and to provide a framework for expanding these efforts in a way that helps all



Virginians to meet environmental, social, and economic goals. Therefore, it is the intent of the Town to:

- ❑ restore impaired streams that are capable of supporting diverse aquatic habitats;
- ❑ protect streams which currently support aquatic life from the effects of improper development and other sources of pollution; and,
- ❑ provide residents with a wide-range of opportunities to interact with and become stewards of their natural environment.

In general terms, pollution from urban areas can be reduced through the application of four guiding principles. These include:

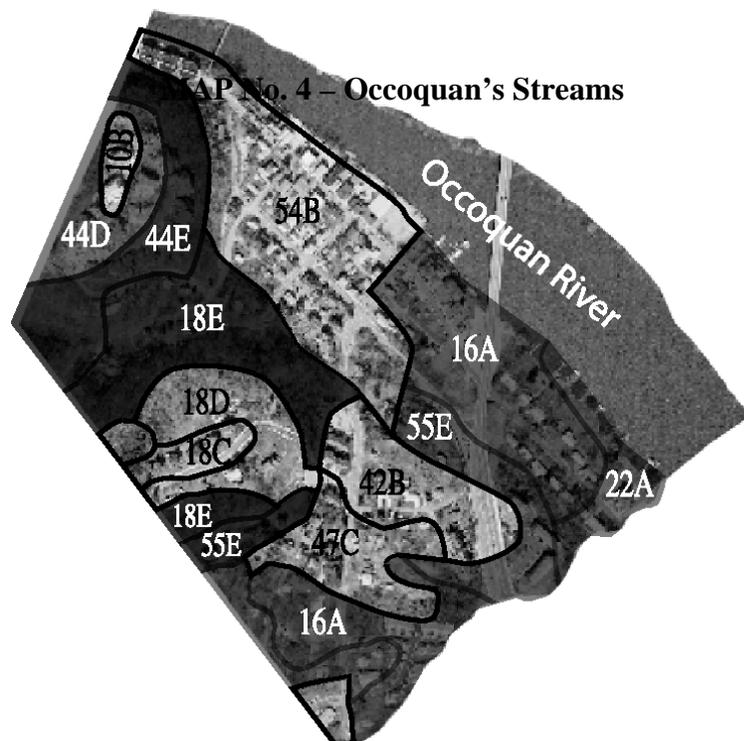
- ❑ minimize the impervious surface area necessary to accommodate a desired land use;
- ❑ preserve existing vegetation in the landscape during development to the maximum extent practical;
- ❑ challenge and change the human behavior that results in pollution through public education; and,
- ❑ control pollution that cannot be reduced

through change in human behavior by employing technology or by installing stormwater management pollution reduction facilities (also known as best management practices, or BMPs).

By incorporating these principles into everyday decision-making, the Town anticipates being able to make a real contribution to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay and to the improvement of the overall quality of life for the residents of the Town.

The Town has taken the approach that to arrive at achievable water quality goals, strategies, and action plans, it is necessary to have a detailed understanding of the Town's natural environment and existing programs and regulations intended to protect water quality. This detailed assessment, which is summarized below, is found in Appendix A. By comparing identified constraints to development, existing and potential sources of pollution, and sensitive natural resources with existing regulations and programs, the Town can identify elements of its water quality protection program that may require additional refinement.

MAP No. 5 – Overall N



Sensitive Natural Resources and Constraints to Development

Much of the water quality degradation suffered in the Chesapeake Bay watershed is a result of development on, or the destruction of, sensitive land resources. Inappropriate development of these resources can result in excessive erosion, high volume and velocity of stormwater runoff, and habitat destruction – not to mention property damage and loss of human life.

In the Town of Occoquan, sensitive natural resources include soils with high potential for erosion, areas of steep slopes, floodplains, and forested habitat corridors. The erosion potential of a soil, which is a factor of soil structure and slope, is the primary soil limitation in the Town. Approximately 41% of the Town has only slight erosion potential while another 10% of the Town has moderate erosion potential. Fully 49% of the Town has severe erosion potential. Fully 27% of the Town's land area has slopes between 25 to 50%. Areas with slopes between 15 to 25%, which is considered moderate and may require special engineering precautions, occupy another 15% of the Town. Approximately 58% of the Town has no slope restrictions (slopes ranging from 0 to 15%) and it is these areas where development is most appropriately concentrated. Steep slopes, or slopes on which development is inappropriate, are considered to be those greater than 20%.

Most of the Town's floodplain has been developed for many years – as it serves as the interface between the Town and the Occoquan River. Development within the floodplain has not been without its consequences. Prolonged rainfall can and has resulted in flooding and property damage along the Town's waterfront areas. The official floodplain, which is defined as the 100-year flood level, is designated on the federal Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) and development within these areas is controlled by the Town's Floodplain Management Ordinance.

Remaining forested areas, stream buffers, and wildlife habitat corridors are quickly disappearing in the Occoquan area and their preservation is



essential for the protection of water quality and aquatic habitats. Fully a quarter of the Town's **Route 123 Parking Area** most of the large areas of impervious surface cover in a western portion of the town are steep terrain areas. Significantly, the Ballywack Branch watershed area to the west of the Town is still largely forested. Significant stream buffers still exist around Ballywack Branch and Boundary Branch.

Existing and Potential Sources of Pollution

Because of the Town's relatively small size and absence of major industry, existing and potential sources of pollution are relatively easy to account for. Most pollutants generated in the Town are considered to be nonpoint source in character. Nonpoint source pollution is pollution that is generated from diffuse sources. While all pollution may be traced to an originating source, the term nonpoint source pollution is meant to recognize that it is often impossible, or impracticable, to hold any one party responsible for a single act of polluting. Nonpoint source pollution is most often a result of pollutants collecting on roadways, parking lots, etc. which are flushed to local streams during storm events. While most pollution is nonpoint source pollution in nature, other sources include underground and

above ground storage tanks, stream bank and land erosion, and malfunctioning septic systems and water quality BMPs.

Nonpoint source pollution in the Town can be divided into four primary sources for management purposes. These include residential activities, commercial activities and parking areas, waterfront activities, and atmospheric deposition.

Environmental Protection Programs and Regulations

Responding to State and federal mandates, as well as a desire to protect its environment, the Town has adopted and implemented a number of ordinances designed to solve specifically identified problems.

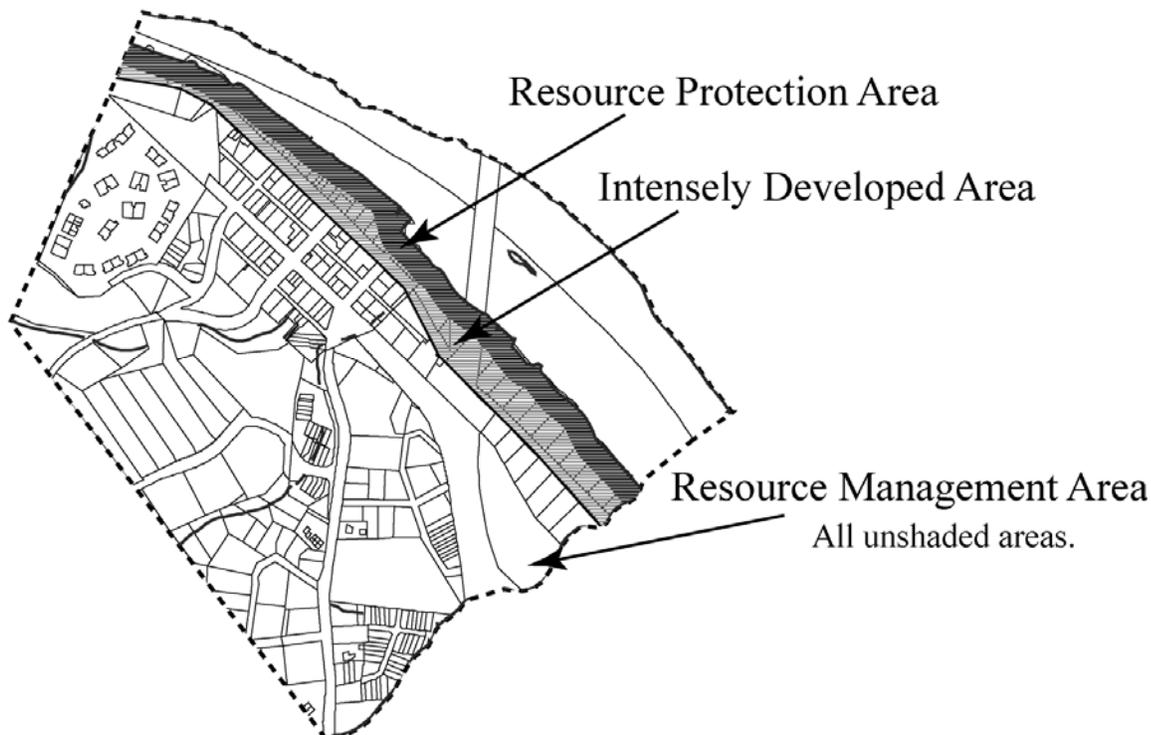
Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance

The Town's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance is its most visible and comprehensive water quality protection tool. The Ordinance implements the Virginia Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. The primary purpose of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance is to prevent any increase in nonpoint source pollution

from new development and to reduce by at least 10% nonpoint source pollution as a result of redevelopment. In addition, the Town has committed to:

- ❑ protect existing high quality State waters and restore all other State waters to a condition or quality that will support the propagation and growth of all aquatic life that might reasonably be expected to inhabit them;
- ❑ safeguard the clean waters of the Commonwealth from pollution;
- ❑ prevent any increase in pollution;
- ❑ reduce existing pollution; and,
- ❑ conserve water resources in order to provide for the health, safety, and welfare, or the present and future citizens of the Commonwealth.

To accomplish these goals, the Ordinance establishes a program that protects environmentally sensitive features, which, when disturbed, lead to reductions in water quality. In accordance with the guidelines established by the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations, the Town has mapped Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas (CBPAs). CBPA's include two components – Resource Protection Areas (RPAs) and Resource



Management Areas (RMAs).

RPAs are lands at or near the shoreline that have intrinsic value due to the ecological and biological processes they perform which benefit water quality or are sensitive to impacts that may cause significant degradation to the quality of State waters. The RPA designation in the Town includes tidal wetlands, nontidal wetlands connected by surface flow and contiguous to tidal wetlands or tributary streams, tidal shores, and a 100-foot vegetated buffer area located adjacent to and landward of all previously listed components are all tributary streams. In practical terms, the RPA includes a 100-foot strip of land landward of the Occoquan River shoreline. However, recently revised Chesapeake Bay Act Regulations will require that the Town protect any stream with perennial flow. As a result, Ballywack Branch, Furnace Branch and Boundary Branch and possibly other streams, the recently named Phelps Creek and the tributary of Boundary Branch, which was designated Edgehill Creek, may be protected as RPAs.

Among its most important features, the Ordinance requires that a 100 foot vegetated buffer area must

be preserved along all RPA features and tributary streams, and in some cases, reestablished if one does not presently exist or is in poor conditions. These buffer requirements are relaxed in areas identified by the Town as *Intensely Developed Areas* (IDAs) out of recognition of the difficulty in reestablishing full buffers in these areas due to the nature of development. The IDA in the Town includes all areas to the north of Mill Street and Poplar Lane.

RMAs include land types that, if improperly developed, have the potential for causing significant water quality degradation or for diminishing the functional value of the RPA. All lands in the Town not included in an RPA constitute the RMA. This is because all stormwater from development within the Town is flushed directly into natural or man-made channels and then directly to the Occoquan River. Development and redevelopment within the RMA must meet several performance criteria to minimize impacts on water quality. Performance criteria include preventing an increase in nonpoint source pollution as a result of new development based on a Town-wide average, decreasing nonpoint source pollution by 10% during redevelopment, minimizing land disturbance during development, maximizing the preservation of indigenous vegetation, and minimizing impervious surface area for a desired land use.

The criteria are intended to establish rules that local governments can use in granting, denying, or modifying requests to rezone, subdivide, or use and develop land in the RMAs and RPAs. Implementation of the criteria is achieved through the use of performance standards, structural pollution management facilities (also known as BMPs), and various planning and zoning concepts. Map 6 presents the Town’s Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Map.

Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance

The Town’s Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance (E&S Ordinance) implements the Virginia Erosion and Sediment Control Law (§§21-89.1 *et seq.*, Code of Virginia) as well as the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. Adopted in 1992, the purpose of the ordinance is to conserve

Would you support the following to better protect the environment and water quality? (% of respondents presented below)

<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	
86%	7%	7%	<i>Reduce development density on sensitive areas such as steep slopes</i>
41%	36%	22%	<i>Limit access to waterfront areas</i>
54%	22%	24%	<i>Expand existing 100-foot no build buffers around streams</i>
76%	9%	15%	<i>Implement pollution prevention/education measures</i>
65%	12%	23%	<i>Change zoning regulations to require "low impact development"</i>
64%	7%	29%	<i>Other</i>

From NVRC/ Town Survey, April, 2002.

the land, water, and other natural resources of the Town by establishing requirements to prevent and control erosion and sedimentation that results from land disturbing activities. The Town's ordinance also requires the land owner to take necessary measures to preserve and protect vegetation during all phases of land development and to minimize erosion potential through appropriate phasing of land disturbing activities. The E&S Ordinance compliments the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance, and together, land owners proposing a non-exempt activity of greater than 2,500 square feet in all Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas must first submit an erosion and sediment control plan to the Town.

With some exception, the Town has adopted the erosion and sediment control guidelines contained in the Virginia Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook, published by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Review of erosion and sediment control plans is coordinated with the Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District. The specific requirements of an erosion and sediment control plan are outlined in Chapter 15 of the Town Code.

Floodplain Management Ordinance

The primary purpose of the Town's Floodplain Management Ordinance is to prevent the loss of life and property, the creation of health and safety hazards, the disruption of commerce and government services, the extraordinary and unnecessary expenditure of public funds for flood protection and relief, and the impairment of the tax base by:

- ❑ regulating uses, activities, and development which, alone, or in combination with other existing or future uses, activities, and development, will cause unacceptable increases in flood heights, velocities, and frequencies;
- ❑ restricting or prohibiting certain uses, activities, and development from locating within areas subject to flooding; and,
- ❑ requiring all those uses, activities, and developments that do occur in flood-prone

areas to be protected and/or flood proofed against flooding and flood damage.

The Town's Floodplain Management Ordinance applies to all areas subject to inundation by waters of the one hundred year flood (floods that have a one percent likelihood of occurring each year, although the flood may occur in any one year). Management districts include the Floodway District (defined as that portion of the floodplain capable of carrying the waters of a 100-year flood without increasing the water surface elevation of the flood more than one foot at any point) and the Flood-Fringe District (defined as the area of the one hundred year floodplain not included in the Floodway District). The basis for the delineation of these districts is the Flood Insurance Study for the Town of Occoquan prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Federal Insurance Administration, dated January 5, 1995 or as revised.

Uses, activities, and development may occur within any floodplain district only upon the issuance of a special permit as outlined in Chapter 14 of the Town Code. While specific requirements depend on whether a proposed development is within a Floodway District or a Flood-Fringe District, they include detailed hydrologic and hydraulic analysis to ensure that other properties are not placed at undue risk as a result of development in the floodplain and strict application of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code for floodproofing. In addition, the Floodplain Management Ordinance specifies specific design criteria for sanitary sewer facilities, water facilities, drainage facilities, and utilities to ensure that the potential for water pollution or unsanitary conditions during flood events is minimized.

Site Plan Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance

The Town's Site Plan Ordinance (Chapter 13 of the Town Code) and Subdivision Ordinance (Chapter 14 of the Town Code) contain several provisions aimed at protecting the environment and preventing inappropriate development on land with unsuitable characteristics for the proposed use. The Town's Subdivision Ordinance stipulates that public sewage facilities must be extended by a

subdivider to all lots within a subdivision and that septic tanks are not permitted (§14-21D.)

Public Education Programs

While the Town does not itself run any environmentally-related education programs, the Prince William Cooperative Extension (PWCE) and the Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District (PWSWCD) have developed a number of programs and publications to support environmental stewardship. These services are available to Town residents as citizens of the County.

The PWCE provides educational opportunities through field days and seminars, demonstration lawns, and one-on-one visits from trained “Master Gardener” volunteers. For the past several years, the PWCE has conducted a water quality program aimed at reducing the excessive use of lawn fertilizers and pesticides through proper lawn care techniques. The PWSWCD provides a number of services, including public education and ecology workshops, and works with local residents on reforestation and conservation projects.

Environmental Issues

- ❑ Avoidance of development on sensitive natural features such as steep slopes.
- ❑ Nonpoint sources of pollution from impervious surfaces adjacent to the River.
- ❑ Public education and pollution prevention.
- ❑ Enforcement of ordinances such as the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance.
- ❑ Protection of all perennial streams per revisions to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations.

Goals and Policies

The following statements reflect the guiding principles upon which planning in the Town of Occoquan is based. These statements reflect an extensive assessment of the Town's existing resources and address major issue areas expected to face the Town as it continues to grow and develop. The goals are general statements of desired ends or conditions. The policies listed under each goal further delineate the ways and means by which it is believed that the goals can be achieved. It is likely that additional policies may evolve over time as the Town strives to shape its future, and the statement of policies herein does not preclude the implementation of additional policies as may be appropriate, so long as such policies are in furtherance of the stated goals.

Occoquan Business District and Historic District

GOAL: To preserve and enhance the unique character of the Occoquan Business District and Historic District.

ENABLING STRATEGIES

- 1 – The geographic extent of the Business District shall not be expanded beyond Center Lane or east of Gordon Boulevard (Route 123).
- 2 – Office development in the Business District shall be limited generally to mixed use projects. Large buildings devoted solely to offices will be considered inappropriate in light of the existing scale and character of buildings and activities.
- 3 – Development requiring large vehicles is strongly discouraged in the Business District.
- 4 – Residential uses in the Business District are encouraged in order to maintain activity and diversity. Residential uses may be in the form of detached dwellings, multi-family dwellings, or dwelling units combined with commercial activities in one structure. Such development is consistent with historic conditions as well as recent trends. Projects that result in a net loss of residential dwelling units are considered to be undesirable.
- 5 – Generally, industrial activities other than craft type activities associated with a retail sales facility shall be prohibited in the Business District. Industrial activities that serve to re-create those historically associated with the Town may

be appropriate if presented in a style and scale consistent with the Historic District.

- 6 – The preservation of existing older structures shall receive the highest priority in considering the appropriateness of proposed development or redevelopment within the Historic District.
- 7 – Architectural review of proposals within the Historic District shall be undertaken from the viewpoint of Occoquan as it developed from its founding through the early 20th century.
- 8 – The limits of the Historic District shall not be significantly expanded or changed from the current. The boundary of the Historic District is provided in Map No. 1.
- 9 – The Fairfax County Water Authority property, once vacated, should be redeveloped as a combination of open space and parking. The reconstruction or re-creation of historic structures and/or activities is also appropriate for this site.
- 10 - Beautification and landscaping efforts should enhance the aesthetics of the Town.

GOAL: To facilitate public access to waterfront areas and the redevelopment of underutilized waterfront properties while ensuring such development does not harm water quality or habitats in the Occoquan River.

ENABLING STRATEGIES

- 1 – The Occoquan Riverwalk, once completed, will be open for public access and use.
- 2 – Development and redevelopment along the Business District portion of the riverfront should plan for access to and/or the expansion of the Occoquan Riverwalk.
- 3 – Redevelopment of underutilized properties along the Occoquan riverfront will be actively promoted. Development should be of a water-oriented nature. Mixed use incorporating river front activity, housing and offices will be encouraged.
- 4 – The Virginia Marine Resources Commission’s *Criteria for the Siting of Marinas or Community Facilities for Boat Moorings* (VR 450-01-0047) will be utilized during the planning and design of any marina or boating facilities in the Town.
- 5 – The Virginia Marine Resources Commission and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality will be consulted during construction of new public and private access points to ensure environmental sensitivity.
- 6 – The Town will provide administrative support for dredging and maintenance of the Occoquan River as necessary for navigation. In the event that barge traffic were to resume, noise regulations should be explored for enactment.

- 7 - The Town will actively work with the appropriate Federal, State and County agencies to actively promote efforts to ensure that the proper agencies dredge and maintain the Occoquan River.

Residential Districts

GOAL: To keep existing and future residential areas of the Town pleasant, attractive, and livable.

ENABLING STRATEGIES

- 1 – Higher density residential development shall be limited to those areas already zoned for such.
- 2 – Retail and industrial activities are considered inappropriate in areas planned for residential development and will be prohibited.
- 3 – Multifamily development shall incorporate recreational amenities and open space appropriate to the site and the number of dwelling units being constructed.

Community Services

GOAL: To provide Town residents and merchants with access to high quality community services.

ENABLING STRATEGIES

- 1 – Maintain and improve Town-provided services and work with Prince William County, Fairfax County, and the Commonwealth of Virginia to do the same.
- 2 – A post office should continue to be located in the Town's Business District with easy access to Town residents.

Transportation and Parking

GOAL: To provide for safe and efficient movement of automobile and pedestrian traffic while minimizing impacts of traffic increases.

ENABLING STRATEGIES

- 1 – Town streets are ill-configured to accommodate through commuter traffic and increases of such traffic, especially during peak hours, presents significant safety problems so consideration should be give to such measures as the Town seeks to minimize through traffic and to oppose road improvements which will have the effect of encouraging additional through traffic.
- 2 – Sidewalks are considered to be beneficial wherever they will encourage pedestrian circulation in lieu of automobile traffic. Such sidewalks will be provided by developers, property owners, or by the Town in accordance with the Town Charter when deemed appropriate.
- 3 – Tanyard Hill Road should remain in a rural state. The Town will pursue designation of the road as a State scenic byway.

- 4 – The Town will develop an official map to delineate where existing platted streets may be developed and where new or widened streets are needed.
- 5 – The Virginia Department of Transportation should retain maintenance responsibility for the Occoquan foot bridge.

GOAL: To maximize the availability of parking in the Town while maintaining its historic nature.

ENABLING STRATEGIES

- 1 – Additional parking is needed in and near the Business District. The Town will seek opportunities to increase the supply of parking spaces through private development projects or public funding if appropriate. The Town will also seek to maximize utilization of existing space to avoid creation of additional impervious surfaces.
- 2 - One way streets with diagonal parking to increase the parking availability and to improve traffic flow.

Town and County Cooperation

GOAL: To increase communication with Prince William and Fairfax counties to ensure that surrounding development is coordinated and consistent with Town goals.

ENABLING STRATEGIES

- 1 – An area of natural open space and low density development should be maintained between the Town and Prince William County.
- 2 – The Occoquan Riverfront on the Fairfax County side should remain, to the extent practical, in a natural state.
- 3 – Additional linkages between the Town and Prince William County, Fairfax County and the Commonwealth of Virginia should be established, including the development of an Occoquan Sector Plan as part of the County's Comprehensive Plan and more frequent meetings between Town and County elected and appointed officials to monitor their plans and the impacts on our Town.

Environment and Natural Resources Protection

GOAL: To protect the surface water quality of the Town and the Chesapeake Bay from the adverse effects of development and use the process of redevelopment to reduce the impacts of existing land uses on water quality.

ENABLING STRATEGIES

- 1 – All streams determined to be perennial shall be protected under the provisions of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance.
- 2 – Qualifying land development and redevelopment as defined in the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance will be planned and managed in a manner that utilizes preventative water quality protection measures such as providing more functional open space, preserving sensitive environmental features, maintaining maximum indigenous vegetative cover, and minimizing impervious land cover.
- 3 – Water quality best management practices (BMPs) that require little or no surface space (such as sand filtration systems and rooftop detention) will be required in densely developed areas to address water quality without detracting from the Town's unique urban character.
- 4 – The long-term capacity of BMPs established under the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance to protect water quality will be ensured by enforcing ongoing maintenance of these facilities.
- 5 – A vegetated buffer areas along the Occoquan River will be established during development or redevelopment where not in conflict with future plans for an Occoquan Riverwalk.

GOAL: Minimize to the extent possible the amount of pollution generated by residential and business activities and land uses that degrade the Town's environmental and water resources.

ENABLING STRATEGIES

- 1 – The Town will work with the Prince William Cooperative Extension, the Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District, and other public and private partners to develop and implement a public and business education program aimed at reducing the incidence of the Town's most common preventable sources of nonpoint and point pollution.
- 2 – The Town will develop a means of encouraging the use of water conservation practices by Town residents.
- 3 – Voluntary stewardship of the Town's natural and water resources will be encouraged by increasing public awareness of these resources.
- 4 – The Virginia Department of Transportation will be encouraged to practice a more environmentally friendly means of cleaning the Route 123 bridge.
- 5 – The Town's groundwater, which feeds the region's streams and other waterbodies, will be protected by encouraging infiltration of stormwater into the soil, working with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Environmental Quality to prevent and remediate underground storage tank spills, and working with the Prince William County Health Department to prevent septic tank failures.

GOAL: Protect the sensitive natural resources of the Town during development and redevelopment and take an active role in the restoration of wildlife habitat corridors and stream valleys that are capable of supporting diverse aquatic habitats.

ENABLING STRATEGIES

- 1 – Development on significant steep slope areas in excess of a 20% grade is strongly discouraged.
- 2 – Development in areas with highly erodible soils, including steep slopes of less than 20% grade, must demonstrate that water quality will not be adversely affected.
- 3 – The Town will evaluate opportunities for incorporating clustering, or conservation development, into the Town's Zoning Ordinance so that development can avoid unnecessary disturbance to areas with extensive mature vegetation, sensitive soil areas, and areas of extensive steep slopes.
- 4 – Strongly encourage the preservation of the remaining natural streams of the Town, along with their associated wildlife habitat corridors, to the maximum extent practical and encourage the establishment of vegetation along streams where vegetation has been denuded.
- 5 – Existing tree cover will be preserved to the maximum extent practical. Existing living trees shall not be removed without approval of the town Council.. Parking areas and large impervious surface areas will not be approved without a plan for providing sufficient tree canopy or ground cover.

GOAL: Control erosion along the Occoquan River and its tributaries as well as erosion generated by natural springs and the overland flow of stormwater runoff.

ENABLING STRATEGIES

- 1 – The Town will work with the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, Occoquan River Maritime Association to promote and publicize the “no wake zone” in the upper tidal reaches of the Occoquan River.
- 2 – Reconstruction of failing bulkheads along the Occoquan River will be required as part of any redevelopment proposal.
- 3 – The Town will encourage property owners to solve local erosion problems by providing technical support and information and enacting spot solutions to soil erosion problems occurring on public property or rights-of-way.

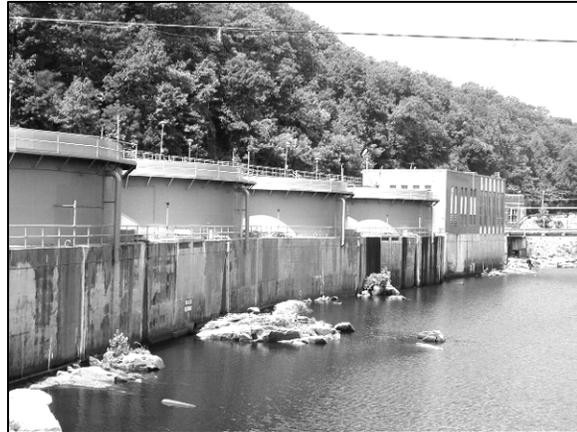
FUTURE LAND USE ACTION PLAN

The Future Land Use Action Plan addresses land use and zoning issues as well as historic preservation issues. The Plan sets forth specific actions to achieve the Town's goals and policies and to address issues identified in the inventory section of the Comprehensive Plan. The primary tools for implementing the Future Land Use Plan are the Town's Zoning Ordinance, Capital Improvement Program (CIP), and the authority vested in the Planning Commission and the Architectural Review Board.

Land Use and Zoning Issues

Land use and zoning issues identified in the inventory section of the Comprehensive Plan include the following.

- ❑ Whether to continue planning for dense residential development.
- ❑ Constraints to development in environmentally sensitive areas.
- ❑ Open space preservation.
- ❑ Design of major redevelopment and development projects.
- ❑ Planning for and attracting appropriate waterfront land uses.
- ❑ Funding for additional street scape improvements.
- ❑ Whether additional flexibility in zoning requirements is needed to attract desired waterfront redevelopment.



Water Authority Property

The potential redevelopment of the Fairfax County Water Authority Property represents an important opportunity for the Town.

Future Land Use Map

Map No. 7 shows the future land use designations for the Town. No changes to this map have been proposed for the 2002 update.

Commercial Land Use

The Future Land Use Plan reflects that the geographic extent of the Business District will not expand beyond Center Lane or east of Gordon Boulevard (Route 123).

The Town will continue to encourage the incorporation of residential or living units as a part of renovated and new buildings to retain a residential character in the Historic District.

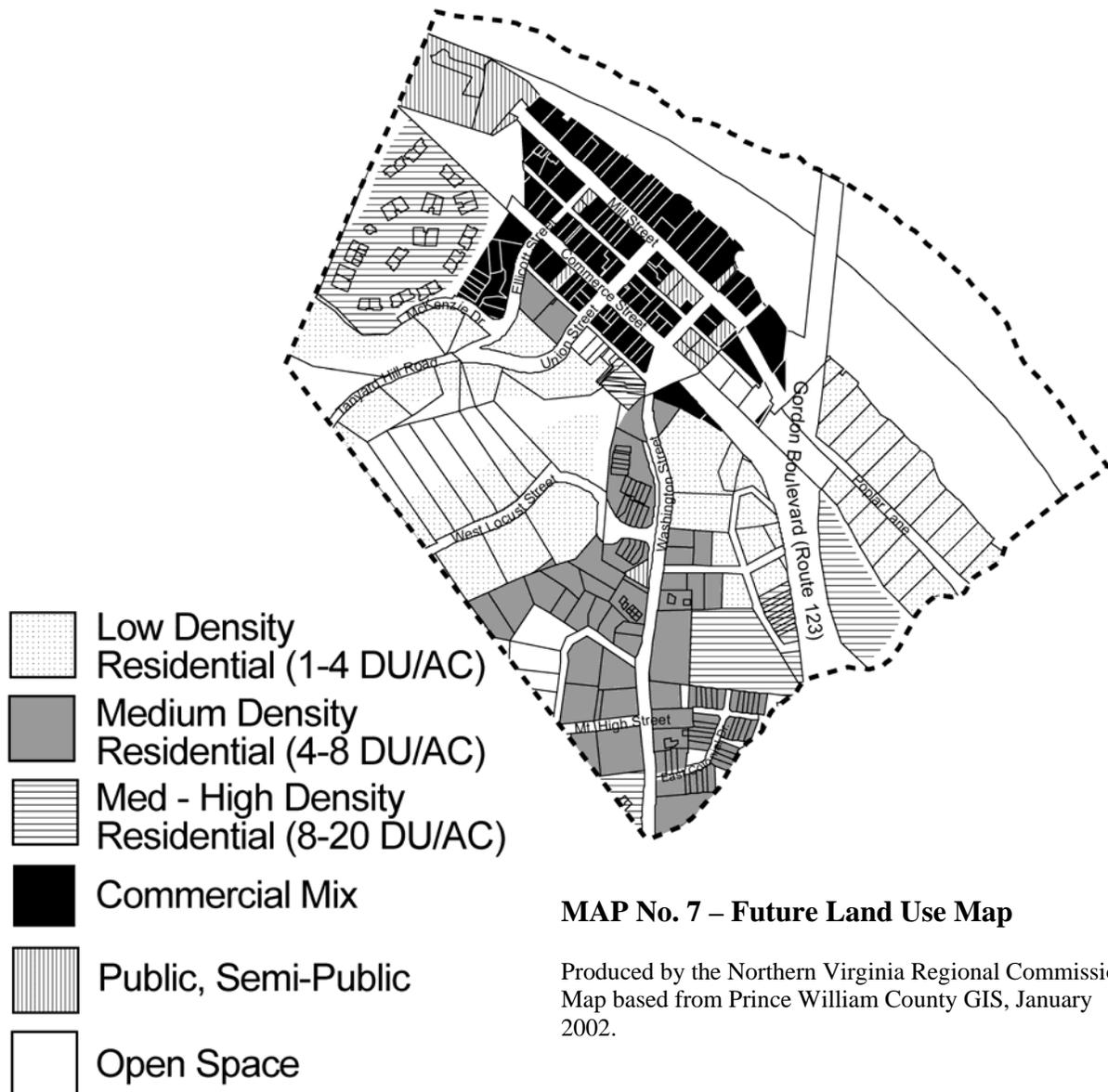
Additional commercial development is expected to take place on vacant lots located on Mill Street and Ellicott Street and east of Rockledge. Because of the architectural and historic importance of the Rockledge mansion, any development adjacent should be carefully controlled as to height, bulk and style.

- ❑ Several parcels along the Occoquan Riverfront are vacant or underutilized. While no formal process is proposed, the Town should take an active role in promoting their development/redevelopment. Appropriate uses include restaurants, shops, small hotels, marinas, and other water dependant uses. It is appropriate that the Planning Commission and Town Council exercise the flexibility built into the Historic District Overlay as a way to attract appropriate waterfront uses.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should examine how the cumulative impacts of waterfront redevelopment will affect the availability of

limited on-street parking. This examination should be conducted as part of a larger assessment of the Town’s parking space requirements and whether the Zoning Ordinance requires amendment to account for changes in Town density and demographics (see Transportation and circulation Actions Time-Line).

Residential Land Use

The Future Land Use Plan conserves existing residential areas within the Town. It is expected that the past trend of rehabilitation and



improvement of individual homes will continue, resulting in an on-going maintenance of the quality of living now enjoyed by Town residents.

It is the intent of the Plan to maintain the existing balance and mix of residential density patterns in the Town. It is recognized that this will be difficult because the existing Zoning Ordinance often allows for by-right densities higher than proposed on the Future Land Use Map.

Future development in the areas between Washington Street and Tanyard Hill Road will be on moderate to steep (>20%) slopes and should be carefully studied for the compliance with Town's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance prior to approval.

The area west of Gordon Boulevard and east of Washington Street, between Commerce Street and Poplar Alley, should be developed in the medium density category to reflect transition from commercial on the north to low density residential on the south. This area could change to either mixed use or higher density residential in the future dependent on improvements to Poplar Alley and maintenance of the relatively open/green character of this block.

The areas on both sides of West Locust Street and west to Tanyard Hill Road should be developed at low density to reflect compatibility with existing single family detached housing development.

- The Town wishes to make it possible for residents to work at home if the nature of the business will have minimal impact on parking and neighbors. The Planning Commission will develop recommendations for the Town Council on potential amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to address this issue in a more comprehensive fashion.

Public/Semi-Public Use

The public/semi-public use classification is applied to existing uses such as churches, the Town Hall, post office, cemetery, parks, and the Prince William County Visitors Center.

Open space areas mapped on the Future Land Use Plan include steeply sloping lands not suited for development and elements of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act local program.

Any new developments will be required to preserve natural vegetation on site to the maximum extent feasible. The Town has adopted ordinances that require all new development or redevelopment to incorporate measures for managing stormwater runoff and avoiding increases in pollutants going into the local streams.

- It is not presently clear whether, or under what conditions, the Fairfax County Water Authority will relinquish control over their treatment facilities at the end of Mill Street. It is clear, however, that the Town needs to plan for this prospect. The Town Council should appoint a special committee to plan for this property, which will include a public participation component. A report should be submitted to the Town Council by December 2003. The committee shall assess the appropriate mixture of public/open space and parking, and will evaluate the potential for use of the site to reconstruct historic land uses such as a grist mill/mill interpretation, an iron foundry, Dogue Indian settlement, etc.

Zoning Ordinance

Zoning patterns have long been established in the Town, and are generally in accord with the Future Land Use Plan. However, there are a few areas for which the Plan calls for lower densities than what is currently permitted under the Zoning Ordinance. Because it is difficult to downzone, the Town should work cooperatively with property owners to implement the Plan through voluntary measures. This could include the establishment of conservation easements.

- Parcels on the north side of Tanyard Hill Road are zoned R-3 but planned for Low-Density Residential. Due to steep slopes and the Town's goal to maintain Tanyard Hill Road in a rural state, the Town should work with property owners to proactively and voluntarily establish conservation easements.

- ❑ The Planning Commission is tasked with identifying conflicting or non-conforming language in the current Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Commission will make recommendations to the Town Council for amendments by July 2003.

Gateway Areas

Major gateways to the Town include Commerce Street from Gordon Boulevard, Washington Street, and Tanyard Hill Road. These “gateways” are an important element of Town design and serve to announce to visitors that they are entering some place unique or special. As stated previously, it is the Town’s policy that the Tanyard Hill Road gateway be preserved in a rural state that provides a glimpse of how an early traveler might have viewed the Town.

- ❑ The Town will pursue designation of Tanyard Hill Road as a State scenic byway as one way of preserving its character.

The Commerce Street gateway will be of particular importance on completion of the replacement Route 123 bridge. This gateway will replace the panoramic view of the Town from the bridge as the primary means of attracting the interest of passing traffic. The Town has already established a gateway design template through its Mill Street improvement project. Implementation should be relatively easy since there is no development on Commerce Street east of Washington Street.

- ❑ The Town should plan in its CIP for how to implement and finance improvements to the Commerce Street gateway.

Washington Street provides far fewer opportunities as a Town gateway. Existing development is a mix of older homes and newer single family and townhomes. The Town’s primary opportunity for creating an effective Washington Street gateway is between West Locust Street and Commerce Street.

The Planning Commission will make recommendations to the Town Council for the implementation of a Washington Street gateway, which should include a combination of preserving existing scenic views and various improvements.

Commerce Street Gateway

The Commerce Street gateway will be the primary face of the Town on completion of the Route 123 bridge replacement.



Washington Street Gateway

Washington Street should be preserved and improved to better announce that a visitor is entering a unique place.



<h2 style="text-align: center;">Land Use and Zoning Actions Time-Line</h2>	Short Range	Medium Range (2 Years+)	Long Range (5 Years+)	Responsible Party
Promote development/redevelopment of vacant and underutilized parcels along the Occoquan Riverfront.	●	●	●	Town Council, Planning Commission
Develop recommendations for potential amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to comprehensively address the issue of private businesses in residential areas.	July 2003			Planning Commission submits to Town Council
Develop a plan for potential use and development of the Fairfax County Water Authority property.	December 2003			Town Council appoints special planning committee
Identify and assess alternative sites for a Town post office.	December 2002			Planning Commission
Work cooperatively with property owners where planned densities exceed zoned densities.	●			Planning Commission
Identify conflicting or non-conforming language in the current Zoning Ordinance and make recommendations for amendments.	July 2003			Planning Commission submits to Town Council
Pursue designation of Tanyard Hill Road as a State scenic byway.	●	●		Town Council
Plan, for incorporation into the CIP, design elements for a Commerce Street gateway.		●		Planning Commission, Public Works Committee
Develop recommendations for implementation of Washington Street gateway improvements.			●	Planning Commission
Pursue Prince William County agreement to develop an Occoquan Area Plan component of the County's Comprehensive Plan.			●	Town Council, Planning Commission
Pursue formal integration into Fairfax County's comprehensive planning process.		●		Town Council, Planning Commission

Coordination with Fairfax and Prince William Counties

Coordination with Prince William and Fairfax counties is imperative on a number of fronts, but particularly in the area of land use. Development in Prince William has and will continue to affect the Town in terms of traffic and in maintaining Occoquan as an area with a separate identity. Development in Fairfax will impact the County in terms of traffic, but more importantly, any land use change on the Occoquan Riverfront could adversely affect the quaint nature of the Town. The Fairfax County shoreline, to the extent practicable, should remain in a natural state.

- ❑ The Town should pursue with Prince William County the creation of an Occoquan Sector Plan component of the County's Comprehensive Plan.
- ❑ The Town should pursue land use coordination with Fairfax County, potentially by seeking a role in the County's Area Plan Review process.

Historic Preservation Issues

Preserving the historic fabric of the Town will be of paramount consideration in all land use decisions within the Town, and particularly within its Historic District.

Historic preservation issues identified in the inventory section of the Comprehensive Plan include the following.

- ❑ Preservation/maintenance of historic buildings/streetscapes and the historic character of Occoquan.
- ❑ Rehabilitation of historic structures that are substandard or in a derelict state.
- ❑ The impact of infill development and redevelopment within and adjacent to the historic district.
- ❑ Funding for projects such as the reconstruction of Merchant's Mill and the Iron Foundry as well as construction and maintenance of an Occoquan Riverwalk.
- ❑ Update of ARB guidelines and adoption by the Town Council.
- ❑ Whether a Historic District buffer area should be established.

The Architectural Review Board is the Town's primary tool for ensuring the historic preservation of Occoquan.

The 1996 Comprehensive Plan contained a Town Design section that called for the development of a "town design concept." Since that time, much of what was envisioned to be in the concept – standards for sidewalks, landscaping, and "street furniture" – have been realized through the Mill Street Improvement Project and preliminary designs for the Occoquan Riverwalk.

- ❑ During its review, the ARB should consider how to include "town design concepts" being implemented through the Mill Street Improvement Project and the Occoquan Riverwalk.

<h2>Historic Preservation Actions Time-Line</h2>	<p>Short Range</p>	<p>Medium Range (2 Y ears+)</p>	<p>Long Range (5 Y ears+)</p>	<p>Responsible Party</p>
<p>Re-address the ARB guidance manual.</p>	<p>July 2003</p>			<p>ARB submitted to Town Council for approval</p>
<p>Investigate and report on the potential benefits and drawbacks of a Historic District buffer area.</p>	<p>July 2004</p>			<p>Planning Commission and ARB submit recommendations to Town Council</p>

FUTURE TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION PLAN

The Future Transportation and Circulation Action Plan addresses vehicular traffic management, pedestrian access, and parking issues. The Plan sets forth specific actions to achieve the Town's goals and policies and to address issues identified in the inventory section of the Comprehensive Plan.

Transportation Issues

Transportation issues identified in the inventory section of the Comprehensive Plan include the following.

- ❑ Cut through traffic.
- ❑ Lack of parking at peak times.
- ❑ Route 123 bridge reconstruction.
- ❑ Completion of Occoquan Riverwalk.
- ❑ Repair and enhancement of Occoquan River foot bridge.

Streets and Traffic

While recent road improvements around the Town have reduced cut through traffic, it can be assumed that traffic will begin to increase again as development continues in Prince William County. Additional residential development in Town will also create more demands on the street system. Finally, increasing business activity will intensify not only traffic problems, but parking demand problems as well.

The problem of increasing commuter traffic cannot be solved by the Town alone because the source of much of the problem is outside the Town and roadway modifications are the responsibility of the Virginia Department of Transportation. The joint effort between the Town, Prince William County, and VDOT needs to continue in order to develop solutions and to plan for required improvements. However, in no case should improvements be made or additional streets be built which will encourage additional through traffic in Occoquan.

The Future Transportation and Circulation Action Plan continues to reject incorporation of any improvement to Tanyard Hill Road for the purpose of improving commuter traffic. The Town will work with the County to have Tanyard Hill Road designated as a Virginia scenic byway. Improvements to benefit commuter traffic flow must be developed outside of Town limits. Improvements have been completed on Gordon Boulevard from Commerce Street to I-95. These improvements have resulted in a marked decrease in traffic on Washington Street and a leveling-off of traffic on Tanyard Hill Road. This demonstrates that when improved traffic movement is available outside Town limits, there is less desire to detour through Town.



Cars Versus Pedestrians

Occoquan faces the challenge of accommodating cars, while maintaining a pedestrian friendly atmosphere.

Certain standards for residential and business streets are considered desirable. These are listed below:

- ❑ All Town streets, alleys and lanes should have a width of from 36 to 40 feet with sidewalks 6 to 10 feet in width on each side. Within the historic district, such sidewalks shall be brick.
- ❑ Residential driveway entrances on streets expected to have traffic volumes exceeding 5,000 vehicles per day (ADT) should be discouraged.
- ❑ As a part of the site plan or subdivision approval process, developers should be required to improve abutting streets to standards of VDOT and this Plan.
- ❑ All residential streets serving lots less than one acre in size should be constructed with curbs and gutters and with sidewalks on at least one side.
- ❑ No street rights-of-way in Occoquan should be vacated until the surrounding properties have been fully developed or an alternate plan for handling automobile circulation in the vicinity has been endorsed by affected property owners and by Town Council.

The Town Public Works Committee will investigate and make recommendations to the Town Council on the need to widen portions of Commerce Street. Any widening project will include new curbs and brick sidewalks consistent with other Business District improvements.

Parking

Parking problems are acute in the Business District due in part to the fact that when the Town was originally laid out and built, there were no automobiles to contend with. The Town originally adopted a Zoning Ordinance which did not require any off-street parking in the Business District. The ordinance was subsequently amended so that off-street parking is now required for all new development, redevelopment, or expansion.

Although on-street parking accommodates many cars, increased development and visitation have required additional action to alleviate parking problems.

The following actions for alleviating parking problems are envisioned:

- ❑ Continue to look for suitable close-in sites and develop Town-owned parking lots.
- ❑ Institute a shuttle system using small and colorful vehicles (“streetcars”, jitneys, etc.) to transport visitors from parking lots to business streets, the new Occoquan Workhouse (Lorton Workhouse in Fairfax County), or the new scenic areas resulting from the Fairfax\County Water Authority land development. These have been successful during the Occoquan Craft Shows and may be viable during other peak tourist events.
- ❑ Implement the Town Council’s decision to have a one-way traffic pattern in the Business District and to incorporate angled parking spaces.
- ❑ Require developers to provide appropriate off-street parking.
- ❑ Encourage use of business-owned vacant land for commercial parking.
- ❑ Improve pedestrian circulation facilities so as to decrease dependence on the automobile as a means of getting around.

The Planning Commission has been assigned a task by Town Council to evaluate the current parking space requirements for new construction and make recommendations regarding changes that might be required due to changes in demographics and other information concerning the number of cars per household.

Pedestrian Circulation

The plan for pedestrian circulation is illustrated on Map No. 8. The most important element of the

plan is for the construction of the Occoquan Riverwalk at the “rear” of lots between Mill Street and the Occoquan River Front Access pedestrian walkway. This walkway will make maximum use of the Town’s scenic assets, open greater commercial possibilities and allow the establishment of a buffer in accordance with the intent of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance. Construction of the Riverwalk between the foot of Washington Street and the Route 123 bridge has already been funded and is awaiting construction. Expansion of the Riverwalk west of Washington Street should be an ongoing and cooperative effort between the Town and riverfront property owners.

Maintenance of the Occoquan foot bridge is an important element of the Town’s pedestrian circulation plan in that the bridge serves as part of a regional bike trail and provides pedestrian access to the Town during the Fall and Spring craft shows. Without the foot bridge, pedestrians wishing to park on the Fairfax County side of the Occoquan would be forced to walk over the Route 123 bridge. The Town should work with VDOT to ensure that there is a long-term State maintenance plan in place.

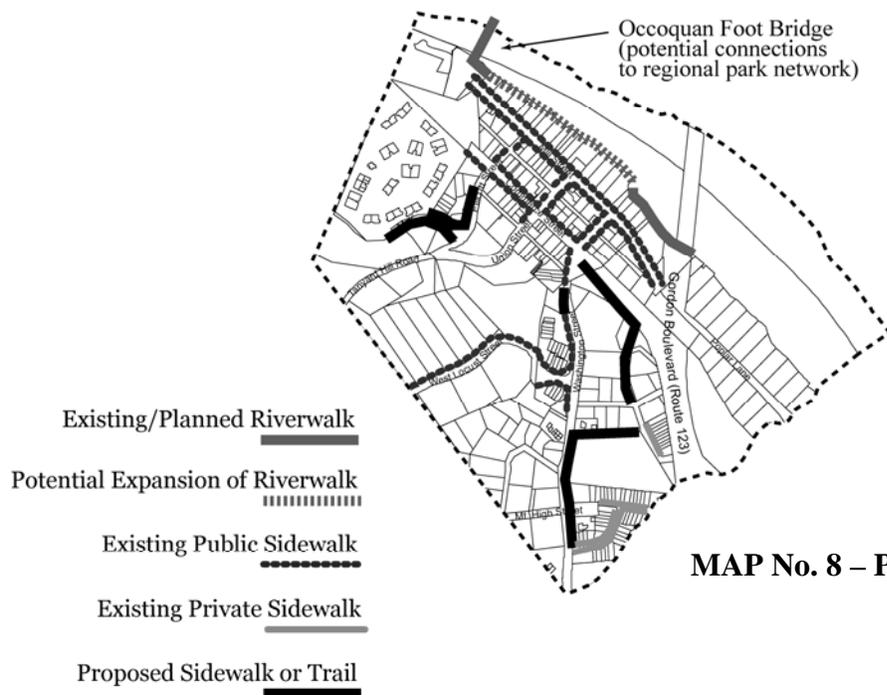
At present, the Mill Street Improvement Project is making pedestrian facilities in the Business

District more attractive by replacing aging concrete with brick. Improvements to Mill, Washington, and Commerce streets will be completed. In addition, the Town will investigate whether these improvements should be expanded to between Washington Street and Gordon Boulevard – both as a pedestrian safety issue and as an aesthetic issue.

Other pedestrian related improvements include extension of sidewalks and construction of pedestrian trails to serve new residential developments. Sidewalks within the historic district shall be brick paved.

Emergency Evacuation Planning

The Town has been subject to several disasters in its past, including flooding and fires. As part of the greater Washington region, planning for disasters should be a real issue for the Town. The Town needs to address several key issues in terms of evacuation planning: which routes should be designated for evacuation; which routes are most appropriate under certain circumstances; how is this information communicated to citizens in advance of an emergency; and who maintains responsibility for calling for evacuation.



MAP No. 8 – Pedestrian Circulation Plan

The Occoquan River presents a major hurdle to evacuation as well as a potential source of an emergency. In the case of flooding, most residents will have no choice but to exit the Town through Occoquan Road, Tanyard Hill Road, and/or Commerce Street.

with the FCWA to establish criteria for when and by whom a warning would be activated and by what means citizens would be alerted (siren, horn, etc.).

Probably the greatest catastrophe that might hit the Town would be the breach or collapse of the Occoquan dam. If such a disaster were deemed imminent, time would be of the essence and the Town would need to have a warning system in place. The need for an alert system has been discussed with the Fairfax County Water Authority (FCWA); however, no system has been established. The Town Council should consult

For all other disasters, the Occoquan River footbridge also serves as an effective escape route. In fact, for those living in or near the Historic District, the footbridge may serve as the quickest way to get out of harm's way. For this reason, the Town needs to continue to encourage VDOT to properly maintain the footbridge. The Town may also wish to consider applying for federal or State funding to develop an emergency management plan for the Town that would address a number of potential natural and man-made disasters.

<p>Transportation and Circulation Actions Time-Line</p>	<p>Short Range</p>	<p>Medium Range (2 Years+)</p>	<p>Long Range (5 Years+)</p>	<p>Responsible Party</p>
<p>Investigate the need to widen portions of Town streets, alleys and lanes.</p>	<p>July 2003</p>			<p>Public Works Committee</p>
<p>Pursue designation of Tanyard Hill Road as a State scenic byway.</p>	<p>●</p>	<p>●</p>		<p>Town Council</p>
<p>Evaluate current parking requirements for new construction and make recommendations for potential changes to the Zoning Ordinance.</p>	<p>July 2003</p>			<p>Planning Commission</p>
<p>Investigate whether improvements to Mill, Washington, and Commerce streets should be expanded to Commerce Street between Washington Street and Route 123. Coordinate with Commerce Street gateway concept.</p>		<p>●</p>		<p>Planning Commission, Public Works Committee</p>
<p>Work with the Fairfax County Water Authority to establish an alert system in case of flooding or a dam breach.</p>	<p>●</p>	<p>●</p>		<p>Town Council</p>

NATURAL RESOURCES ACTION PLAN

The Natural Resources Protection Action Plan addresses environmental protection issues and fulfills the planning requirements of the Virginia Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations. The Plan sets forth specific actions to achieve the Town's goals and policies and to address issues identified in the inventory section of the Comprehensive Plan.

Environmental Issues

Major environmental issues identified in the inventory section of the Comprehensive Plan include the following.

- ❑ Avoidance of development on sensitive natural features such as steep slopes.
- ❑ Nonpoint sources of pollution from impervious surfaces adjacent to the River.
- ❑ Public education and pollution prevention.
- ❑ Enforcement of ordinances such as the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance.
- ❑ Protection of all perennial and intermittent streams per revisions to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations.
- ❑ Preservation of the footbridge as an important link to Bike Route #1.

Actions and Strategies

ACTION: Protect surface water quality and sensitive environmental features from the adverse effects of development and utilize the redevelopment process to reduce the impacts of existing land uses on water quality.

- ❑ The Future Land Use Plan recognizes several open space corridor areas principally reflecting areas of steeper slopes and major drainage ways.
- ❑ Vigorously enforce the provisions of the Town's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance and Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.
- ❑ Recent changes to State regulations requires that the Town amend its Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance by March 2003 to protect all perennial and intermittent streams as RPAs, regardless of whether they are shown on U.S.G.S quadrangle maps as a blue line. This will require the Town to take two actions (1) amend its ordinance and (2) coordinate with the County to implement a protocol for determining whether a stream is perennial or intermittent. At present, only the Occoquan River waterfront is mapped as an RPA. At the very least, it is anticipated that Ballywack Branch, Furnace Branch and Boundary Branch, Phelps Creek and Edgehill Creek (the tributary of Boundary Branch at Washington and Mt. High Streets) may now qualify as an RPA, and that a 100-foot buffer will need to be protected on both sides of the creek during development. Both of these tasks should be accomplished, and changes adopted, by March 2003.

- ❑ The Town will encourage innovative techniques to reduce impervious surfaces including pervious/block pavement, shared parking facilities (including municipally owned lots), etc.
 - ❑ The Town strongly encourages the use of BMPs that require little or no surface space in the Town's Business District and Historic District. The use of such facilities will result in improved water quality while protecting the unique character of Old Town Occoquan. The use of shared facilities is also highly encouraged to save on construction and maintenance costs.
 - ❑ While the Town's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance requires private owners of BMPs to enter into a maintenance agreement, the Town does not have a system for ensuring that these agreements are carried out. While this has not been a significant problem in the Town so far, the Town should establish a BMP maintenance protocol. The Town should investigate the potential for adopting the criteria outlined in §720.15 of the Prince William County Public Facilities Manual which requires the owner of a private facility to provide annual inspections by a certified professional engineer and to provide a report to the Town which addresses the maintenance needs of the facility in accordance with the inspection.
 - ❑ The entire shoreline of the Town is designated as an Intensely Developed Area under the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance which allows for flexibility in the Ordinance's vegetative buffer area requirements. There is a delicate balance to be struck between allowing access to the Occoquan River and protecting water quality through the establishment of vegetative buffers. However, even in areas where water-dependant development is anticipated (such as the Riverwalk), low-lying vegetation can be established to reduce the introduction of pollution to the Occoquan River. The Town should work with owners on an individual basis during the redevelopment process, and under the enforceable provisions of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance, to maximize the riverfront's vegetated buffer.
 - ❑ The municipal lot is a significant source of pollution (as a result of automobile leakage and litter) and there is very little that prevents this pollution from being flushed directly to the Occoquan River. There is active erosion in this area where the high velocity of water from the parking lot and the bridge has scoured away the soil. In addition, the recycling station's proximity to the water, and the lack of any buffer, contributes to water pollution. Locating a berm and a planting bed underlain by gravel to trap and treat water and pollutants at the end of the parking lot could provide an aesthetic solution to this problem. Maintenance of the planting bed could be the responsibility of a local business (with advertising potential) or a local civic club or association. Timing should be coordinated with the planned reconstruction of the Route 123 bridge.
- ACTION:** Implement a pollution prevention/water conservation public education program.
- ❑ Although the structural BMPs required by the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance are effective at removing pollution once it has entered the water, the most effective means of protecting the environment is to prevent pollution at its source. This requires that pollution-generating behavior on the part of residents and businesses is challenged and changed through public education. The Town should work with the Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District, the Prince William Cooperative Extension, and other agencies to implement a Town-wide pollution prevention public education program.
 - ❑ The Town may wish to consider partnering with the PWSWCD, the PWCE, the

Northern Virginia Regional Commission, or other Northern Virginia towns to apply for funding to implement these public education programs.

- ❑ The Town may wish to investigate and support and effort to declare the Town Baptist Church an historic landmark.
- ❑ Water conservation is one of the most important ways of reducing pollution – either in the yard or in the home – by reducing the requirements for eventual treatment. The Town should develop a means to distribute information on water conservation to Town residents – perhaps through the insertion of a brochure in a utility bill or other public notice. The City of Fairfax has a water conservation brochure that the Town can use as a template.

ACTION: Promote awareness of the Town's natural resources.

- ❑ Many people do not realize the importance of small tributaries to the overall ecology. A good way to draw attention to the Town's water resources is to identify the unnamed tributaries and perennial or intermittent streams and the need to protect the environment surrounding them. The Town may wish to partner with the County in this effort.

ACTION: Protect the Occoquan River from pollution generated by traffic on the Route 123 bridge.

- ❑ VDOT street sweepers that clean the Route 123 bridge have been observed sweeping debris directly into the Occoquan River. A vacuum sweeper would be more effective in this area. The Town should approach VDOT officials and Prince William and Fairfax counties to correct this situation.

In addition, the two VDOT retention basins which control stormwater volume from the recently widened Route 123 are already aesthetic nuisances. In addition, the grass around the basins is cut too short to provide

any effective water quality control. The Town should work with VDOT to implement a maintenance program that takes water quality and aesthetics into consideration. An example may be the use of wildflowers in place of turf grass, or the strategic placement of woody vegetation known to provide nutrient uptake.

ACTION: Protect the Town's groundwater supply from contamination.

- ❑ The Town's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance, by requiring the minimization of impervious surfaces helps to promote groundwater recharge. The primary potential sources of groundwater contamination in the Town are underground storage tanks from outside of the Town and failing septic systems from inside and outside the Town. The Town should continue to work with the DEQ and the Prince William County Health Department, who have primary responsibility in these areas, to ensure that water quality in the Town is protected and spills or failures are expeditiously remediated.

ACTION: Protect steep slopes and highly erodible soil from improper development.

- ❑ §13-15C.&D. of the Town's Site Plan Ordinance should be used to prohibit or strictly regulate development on steep slopes in excess of 20% and in areas where highly erodible soils conditions cannot be overcome with accepted erosion and sediment control practices.
- ❑ The Town's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance and Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance should be vigorously enforced to ensure that development on moderately erodible soils and steep slopes less than 20% in grade does not threaten water quality.

ACTION: Preserve and enhance remaining tree cover and wildlife habitat corridors in the Town.

- ❑ The remaining natural streams of the Town, along with their associated wildlife habitat corridors, should be preserved to the maximum extent practical and the establishment of vegetation along streams where vegetation has been denuded should be encouraged. Preservation efforts may be amplified through the use of an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that encourages clustering or conservation development.
- ❑ The Town's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance should be used to preserve the existing tree cover of the Town to the maximum extent practical. The Town should consider adding minimum landscape areas in municipal parking lots to achieve this goal. Finally, the Town should seek opportunities in possible conjunction with the Soil and Water Conservation District and other private volunteer organizations to increase tree cover in the Town.

ACTION: Protect the citizens of the Town from flooding.

- ❑ The Town's Floodplain Management Ordinance reflects the need to protect the citizens of the Town from flood damage as well as the fact that the most intensely developed portions of the Town are and will continue to be within the floodplain. The Town must continue to vigorously enforce its Floodplain Management Ordinance in order to ensure that this balance is maintained.

ACTION: No wake zone enforcement.

- ❑ Although the Occoquan River at the Town is a "no wake zone," the nearest sign is more than a mile downstream. Many boaters are not aware that the restrictions carry as far upstream as the Town. As a result, boating has resulted in an unnecessary increase in streambank erosion. The Town should work with the Virginia Marine Resources Commission to post "no wake zone" signs near the Town and to enforce "no wake zone" requirements. The Town should also work to establish the "no wake zone" as a

six mile per hour zone, with appropriate signage.

ACTION: Reconstruction of failing bulkheads.

- ❑ Many of the Town's bulkheads are failing. Not only is this a public safety hazard, but it also increases the potential for sediment to enter the Occoquan and the Chesapeake Bay. The Town should consider coordinating an effort by private property owners to apply for a Water Quality Improvement Fund grant to replace failing bulkhead areas. Additionally, the Town may wish to coordinate reconstruction of bulkheads with efforts to construct a Town Riverwalk.

Reconstruction of failing bulkheads should be part of any redevelopment proposal along the Occoquan River.

ACTION: Enact spot solutions to localized erosion problems.

- ❑ In general, the Town should encourage individual property owners to solve erosion problems located on private property by providing technical support and information to the property owner/manager. Technical support and information may also be obtained through the Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District.
- ❑ Streambank erosion in the Town is not presently considered severe; however, the potential for significant upstream development will place additional stress on existing channels. This could exacerbate streambank erosion problems. Although the Town's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance requires the use of BMPs to control for water quality, BMPs do not always control for the adverse impacts of increased water quantity. As a result, there is a need to be proactive in the requirement for the establishment of stormwater detention as a result of development. The Town could adopt a Stormwater Management Ordinance under the Virginia Stormwater Management Regulations to

require adequate stormwater detention. However, some other Northern Virginia towns have simply adopted the pertinent sections of the local county public facilities manual.

- The Town should adopt by resolution the pertinent sections of the Prince William County Public Facilities Manual regarding stormwater volume management.
- The proper siting and design of future marina or boat mooring facilities is important to the Town's environmental protection efforts. The Virginia Marine Resources Commission has established *Criteria for the Siting of Marinas or Community Facilities for Boat Moorings* (VR 450-01-0047) which outline proper best management practices to ensure a marina's compatibility with the environment. These siting requirements will be used as part of the planning and design of any marina facility proposed for the Town.
- Pedestrian and boating activity along the Occoquan River can result in the generation of nonpoint source pollution. Although the Department of Environmental Quality very rarely requires small marinas to establish stringent monitoring programs, marina operators should, at the very least, be informed about the need to prevent water pollution. The Town should periodically invite the Virginia Marine Resources Commission to address local marina operators about how to prevent nonpoint source pollution from marinas.

In addition, the Town, in lieu of a stringent monitoring program, should work with the VMRC to require the following to be implemented at any new marina operation or public access point (including a boardwalk) within the Town.

- Signage informing users that polluting the water is a violation of the federal Clean Water Act and a number to call to report suspected violations.

- Adequate provision of waste receptacles.
- Where possible, the establishment of vegetation to buffer adjoining land uses and the Occoquan River.

<h2>Natural Resources Protection Time-Line</h2>	<p>One to Two Years</p>	<p>Three to Five Years</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Responsible Party</p>
<p>Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance, Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance, and Floodplain Management Ordinance implementation.</p>			● →	<p>Town Council, Planning Commission, Town Engineer</p>
<p>Reestablishment of Occoquan Riverfront vegetated buffer area.</p>			● →	<p>Town Council, Planning Commission, Town Engineer</p>
<p>Groundwater protection.</p>			● →	<p>Town in coordination with Department of Environmental Quality and Prince William Health Department</p>
<p>Reconstruction of Occoquan River bulkheads.</p>			● →	<p>Town and private businesses through redevelopment</p>
<p>Amend Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance to protect all perennial and intermittent streams.</p>	March 2003		● →	<p>Planning Commission, Town Council</p>
<p>Strengthen BMP maintenance requirements.</p>	● →			<p>Town Council, Town Engineer</p>
<p>Initiate Spring and Fall lawn care letters.</p>	● →			<p>Town in conjunction with PWCE and PWSWCD</p>
<p>Initiate riverfront clean up day and storm drain marking program.</p>	● →			<p>Town in conjunction with PWCE and PWSWCD</p>
<p>Tributary naming contest.</p>	● →			<p>Town Council</p>
<p>Route 123 bridge sweeping issues and storm water retention basins.</p>	● →			<p>Town Council communication with VDOT</p>
<p>No wake zone enforcement.</p>	● →			<p>Town Council communication with Virginia Marine Resources Commission</p>

<h2>Natural Resources Protection Time-Line</h2>	<p>One to Two Years</p>	<p>Three to Five Years</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Responsible Party</p>
<p>Report on options for adding cluster development to the Town's Zoning Ordinance.</p>		●	→	<p>Planning Commission</p>
<p>Consider adoption of County stormwater management requirements from Public Facilities Manual.</p>		●	→	<p>Town Council, Planning Commission, Town Engineer</p>
<p>Develop plan for managing Ballywack Branch litter boom.</p>		●	→	<p>Town Council, possibly in coordination with Regional Park Authority for boat access</p>
<p>Route 123 municipal parking lot water quality improvements.</p>		●	→	<p>Town and Town Engineer with assistance from civic and business organizations</p>
<p>Pollution prevention program for Riverwalk and future marinas.</p>	<p>At Completion</p>		→	<p>Town Council in coordination with Virginia Marine Resources Commission</p>

TOWN OF OCCOQUAN

Goals from 1998 to 2013

Goals from the 2013 (& 2003) Comprehensive Plan

- To preserve and enhance the unique character of the Occoquan Business District and Historic District.
- To facilitate public access to waterfront areas and the redevelopment of underutilized waterfront properties while ensuring such development does not harm water quality or habitats in the Occoquan River.
- To keep existing and future residential areas of the Town pleasant, attractive, and livable.
- To provide Town residents and merchants with access to high quality community services.
- To provide for safe and efficient movement of automobile and pedestrian traffic while minimizing impacts of traffic increases.
- To maximize the availability of parking in the Town while maintaining its historic nature.
- To increase communication with Prince William and Fairfax counties to ensure that surrounding development is coordinated and consistent with Town goals.
- To protect the surface water quality of the Town and the Chesapeake Bay from the adverse effects of development and use the process of redevelopment to reduce the impacts of existing land uses on water quality.
- Minimize to the extent possible the amount of pollution generated by residential and business activities and land uses that degrade the Town's environmental and water resources.
- Protect the sensitive natural resources of the Town during development and redevelopment and take an active role in the restoration of wildlife habitat corridors and stream valleys that are capable of supporting diverse aquatic habitats.
- Control erosion along the Occoquan River and its tributaries as well as erosion generated by natural springs and the overland flow of storm water runoff.

Goals from the 2013 Strategic Plan

- Be the shopping, dining and entertainment hub of the Occoquan Region, the premier leisure destination in Prince William, southern Fairfax, and northern Stafford counties
- Be an attractive center of employment for start-ups and small businesses (fewer than 25 employees) in targeted sectors

- Be regarded as one of the top 5 most attractive towns in Virginia
- Be clean, green, safe and stable

Items from the 2012 Draft Action Plan for the Town Council

- Improve the appearance of historic district structures, possibly through the use of incentives for property owners (cash or tax).
- Improve the appearance of historic district infrastructure and town property, including the appearance (inside and out) and functionality of Town Hall.
- Establish an aggressive program to bring new businesses into town.
- Formulate a plan for completion of the boardwalk, including town control of the project.
- Oversee transfer of the Fairfax Water property and its first phase of establishment as a Town park.
- Formulate a plan for a multi-level parking facility adjacent to the Rt. 123 Bridge.
- Improve the professionalism of staffing.
- Increase ease of constituent services (e.g. web site improvements).
- Determine role of town government in town events (e.g. partnering).

Goals of Respondents from the 2008 Town Survey

- Keep the Town Pleasant
- Preserve Unique Character
- Develop Water Authority plans
- Balance Town Budget
- Facilitate and Develop Waterfront
- Traffic Management
- Surface Water Development
- Maximize Parking
- Minimize Pollution
- Control Erosion

Recommendations from the 1998 Occoquan Charrette

- Maintaining river access during and after the Fairfax Water Authority station relocation
- Working with VDOT to provide recommendations for the Rt. 123 bridge construction with regard to design and impact on short and long-term parking
- Preserving the character of the downtown and its “incremental” history by improving the streetscape
- Providing additional access to the downtown area from the residential areas through additional sidewalks
- Improving access to the Occoquan River by the implementation of a “Boardwalk”, even if there are sections not connected to each other and several separate and distinctive access points are required
- Developing policies that specify the kinds of land uses appropriate for riverfront properties
- Maintaining appropriate river depths for accommodating boats requiring 5-7 feet of water
- Development of a parking management program, consisting of on-street parking restrictions, enforcement, and special permitting for residents
- Utilization of private property for temporary parking during peak times, and potential for a parking structure
- Determining alternate, non-auto options for access to the Town of Occoquan (bike, water, tour bus), improving signage drawing people into Town, but not allowing VDOT to make capacity or speed improvements
- Creation of a business improvement district (BID), a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, with membership revenues that fund parking, visitor amenities, and marketing
- Longer and staggered terms for Council members to provide continuity and to provide citizens with the ability to hold elected officials responsible for delivery of results