# CHAPTER 4
# PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

## A. INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 focuses on that phase of the plan which is primarily represented by public investment. Its focus is on the provision of public facilities and services. In combination, the Land Use Plan and the Public Facilities and Services elements comprise the nucleus of the Comprehensive Plan for Northumberland County as envisaged by the Virginia Statutes. Public services covered in this chapter are provided by a combination of state, county and private agencies. The level of detail for any one subject area is general because of a requirement of the Virginia Law which stipulates that the Comprehensive Plan

> "... shall be general in nature, in that it shall designate the general or approximate location, character and extent of each feature shown on the plan ..."

The Public Facilities and Services Plan is intended to provide guidance to the County by enabling it to anticipate additional public services that will be needed in future years. To private as well as public agencies that operate separately from the County government, the plan will provide policies and guidance concerning the County's intent to provide services of a particular type.

## B. HIGHWAYS

Northumberland County is served by a network of primary and secondary public roads that are maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation. Route U.S. 360 is a federal primary road while all other public roads, primary and secondary, are state roads. Although there are a few residential streets that are privately owned, the State's policy is to operate and maintain the public road system within counties. This policy applies throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. New secondary roads may be built as part of a private development and brought into the state system if they are planned and constructed to VDOT standards and meet the service requirements for state-maintained roads.

While the State gives a high priority to traffic considerations when planning improvements to existing public roads, the County may influence the timing of improvements. Road widening, bridge replacements and other major improvements to the existing system may be offered as priorities of the County during periods when VDOT is preparing its plans for highway improvements.

Table 4.1 presents the year 2014 VDOT traffic counts for Route U.S. 360 and Route 200.

Table 4.1 Average Daily Traffic Volumes, Routes 360 and 200

| From | To | 2013 |
|---|---|---|
| Route U.S. 360 | | |
| Northumberland/ Richmond CL | SR 202 | 5,853 |
| SR 202 | Route 750 | 7,726 |
| Route 750 | SR 201 | 6,760 |
| SR 201 | SR 200 | 4,451 |
| SR 200 | Route 702 | 4,796 |
| Route 702 | Route 657 | 2,767 |
| Route 657 | Route 644E | 812 |
| Route 200 | | |
| US 360 Burgess PO | Route 609 | 4,516 |
| Route 609 | Northumberland/ Lancaster CL | 4,761 |
| Reference: 2014 VDOT data see Figure 4.1 | | |

The Board of Supervisors has concentrated on pressing VDOT to complete bringing Route U.S. 360 up to four lanes but that does not seem likely in the near future. There are no plans to address the bottlenecks until the four lane upgrade project is complete. There are two state plans for roads, one for the primary system and one for the secondary system. Each system has its own planning cycle and in order for the County to introduce its planning priorities it must do so at the proper time within each planning cycle.

Each year VDOT prepares its own capital improvements programs. One program is prepared for improvements to primary highways and another for secondary roads. There is an opportunity for the County to express its priorities in each of these plans. Primary highways are planned and constructed through the District Engineer's Office. The County may make recommendations to the District Engineer at yearly hearings held for the purpose of discussing future improvements.

Improvements to secondary roads are handled by VDOT through a Six-Year Plan with local planning being coordinated through the Resident Engineer. The opportunity also exists for the County to make its priorities known when the Resident Engineer discusses planned secondary road improvements with the Board of Supervisors at a yearly public hearing.

This section of the comprehensive plan focuses on the potential need for improving a network of roads that best meets the circulation needs of different areas of the County.

## 1. Major Roads Identified

The clearest picture of which roads carry the predominant traffic in Northumberland County comes from an inspection of Annual Average Daily Traffic volumes. VDOT prepares traffic counts on most state roads on a continuing basis. Figure 4.1 illustrates graphically the amount of traffic currently (2014) on specific roads. The color of the line

depicting the road indicates the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) as determined by VDOT 2014 road count data, and specific road counts are labeled for most segments.

- Primary routes U.S. 360 and 200, both of which carry in excess of 4,000 vehicles per day (VPD) form the central corridor of the County. Route 202 is also an important primary that connects Northumberland to Westmoreland County. These three primary roads not only provide primary circulation within the County's economic corridor but they also connect the County with Westmoreland, Richmond and Lancaster Counties.

- Secondary roads, shown on the map with traffic flow above 500 VPD, extend traffic service from the primary routes to areas with concentrations of residential development, farm or marine activities. Some observations are appropriate for specific roads.

- Route 201 has traffic volumes that are below that normally expected on a Primary Road, but instead carries traffic at about the same level as a secondary road. This is a reflection of its physical condition because the distance from Heathsville to Kilmarnock over the 201/3 combination is about the same as it is over U.S. 360 and 200. Traffic naturally follows the routes of better roads; therefore, the 360/200 combination from the central part of the County south to Kilmarnock is the preferred route.

- Route 617 from Hyacinth to Village appears to be a "shortcut" from Route 201 to 360. Drivers often select roads of lesser quality if they can gain a substantial distance saving. That seems to be the case with this route.

- Most of the other roads with traffic above 500 VPD serve major areas of development or serve as corridors through rural areas. In general, these are the roads that are likely to continue to serve as feeder roads to developing areas and will warrant a higher priority for improvements.

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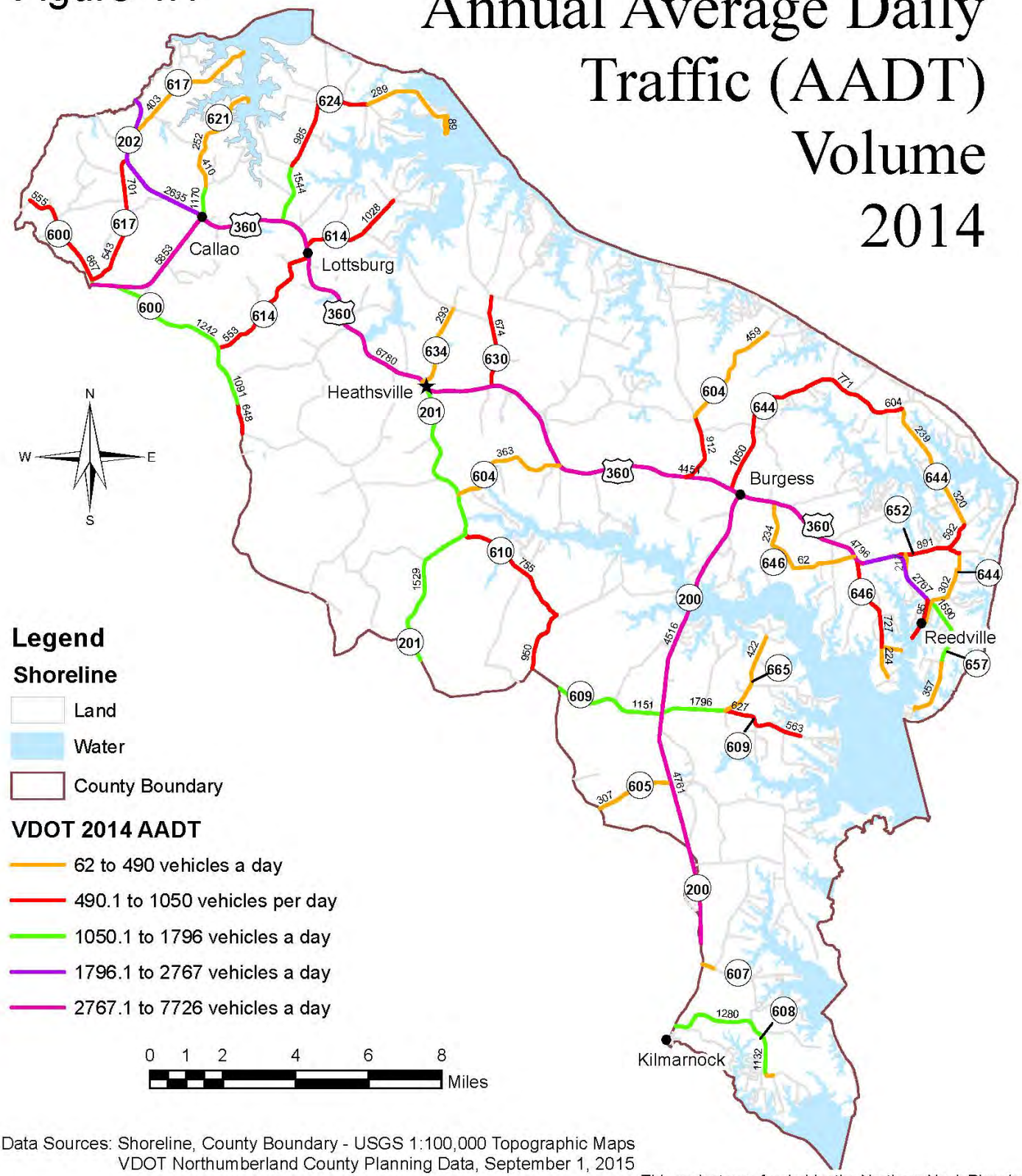
Figure 4.1

# Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) Volume 2014




Data Sources: Shoreline, County Boundary - USGS 1:100,000 Topographic Maps
VDOT Northumberland County Planning Data, September 1, 2015

This project was funded by the Northern Neck Planning District Commission and the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program at the Department of Environmental Quality through Grant #NA14NOS4190141 of the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended.

## 2. General Road Plan

The General Road Plan for Northumberland County is presented on Figure 4.2. This plan serves as a guide to the County for purposes of identifying the County's own priorities for road improvements in future years. The plan includes identification of currently planned improvements by VDOT discussed below and recommendations from County residents.

The General Road Plan for Northumberland County is presented on Figure 4.2. The public roads in Northumberland County are classified and identified as follows:

### *a. Four-lane Primary*

U.S. Highway 360: This is the central traffic corridor of the County which serves nearly all traffic moving into, through and out of the County. It now has four lanes except for the segments through Lottsburg, between Heathsville and Burgess and between Lilian and Reedville. The County's primary long term strategy for this road includes completion as a four-lane road in order to establish a safe and efficient traffic corridor through the entire County. The County plans to continue to request 4-laning in the Pre-allocation funding of VDOT.

Where 360 passes through villages, it is necessary to coordinate improvements with the local need for traffic management in order to minimize interference between local and through traffic. This is in particular a factor in Callao, Lottsburg and Heathsville where on-street parking competes with through traffic. Within the villages that have not yet developed to the extent of experiencing traffic and parking interference, this issue should be addressed by including off-street parking requirements in the zoning ordinance and coordinating access to parking areas through site plan review. See the Section on the Highway Corridor Overlay District in the Land Use Plan, Chapter 3.

Further improvement in the function and safety of this road may be accomplished by reducing the number of access points. This is also addressed in the Highway Corridor Overlay District in Chapter 3.

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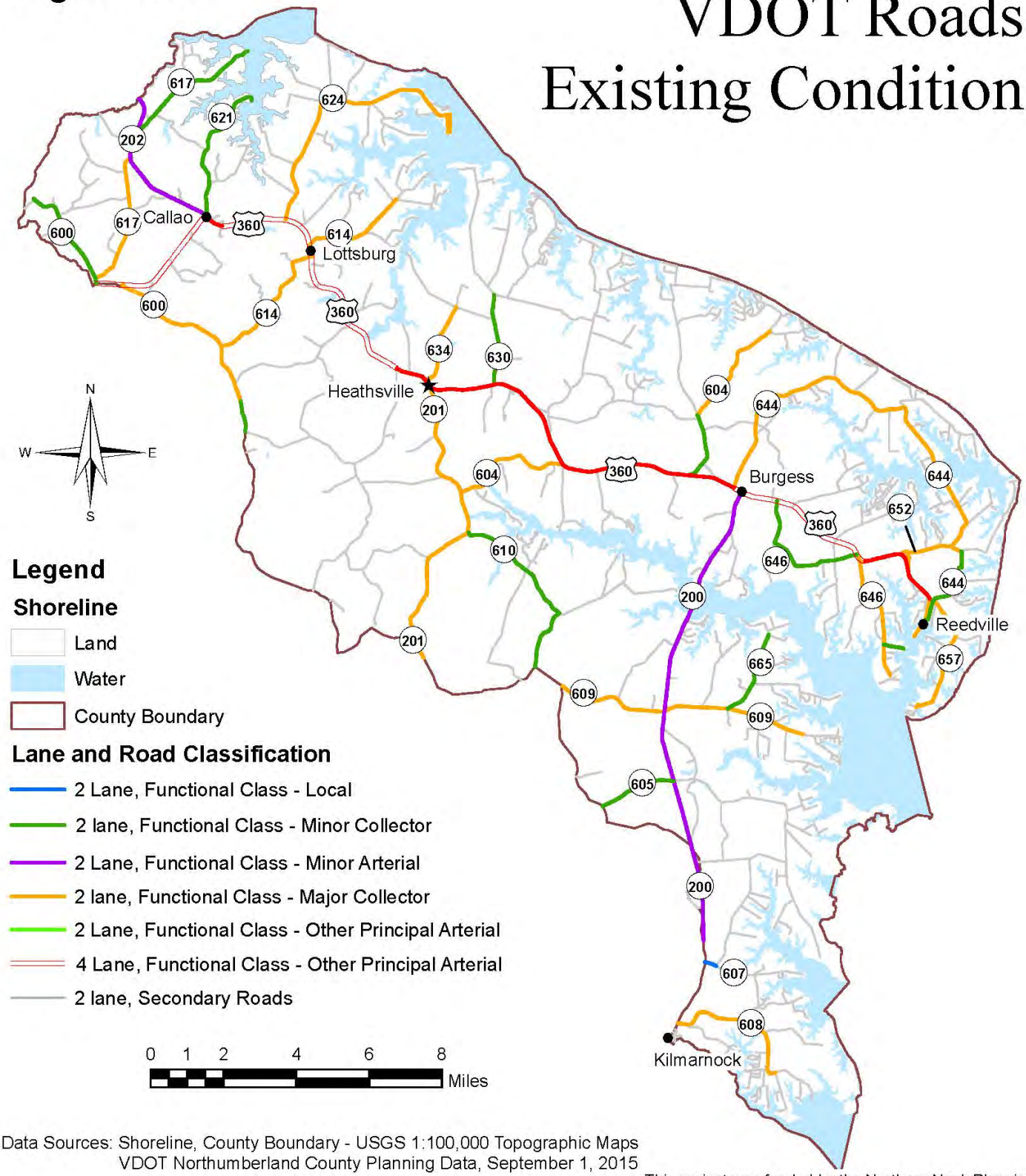
Figure 4.2

# VDOT Roads Existing Condition

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*b. Two-lane Primaries*

VA 200: This route links U.S. 360 at Burgess to Kilmarnock and from there via Route 3 to locations south of the Rappahannock River. It carries just slightly less traffic than U.S. 360 and serves as an extension of the central corridor that runs through the County. The 360/200 corridor serves all villages and constitutes an "economic corridor" within the County and also links the County with outside markets. Past improvements such as the improved bridge over the Great Wicomico River are consistent with the economic importance of Route 200. Accordingly, it warrants a major position in the comprehensive plan.

VA 202: This primary links Route U.S. 360 at Callao to Route 3 at Templeman. It is a more direct route to Northumberland County from the north and west than Route 3 via Warsaw and Kilmarnock. Yet it has been reported that traffic to Northumberland County from the west often uses the longer Route 3 via Warsaw rather than VA 202.

VA 201: This road, although classified as a primary, provides a much lower level of service than Routes 200 and 202. In terms of traffic using it and its alignment, 201 is more like a secondary road than a primary. Unless it is improved to standards similar to 200 or 202, the road will likely continue to serve at the level of a secondary feeder road. This plan continues to designate 201 as a primary, although the major priorities of the County may be better served by continuing to upgrade the corridor primaries.

*c. Feeder Secondary Roads*:

These are secondary roads that serve as feeder roads to developed areas and primary circulation throughout rural areas of the County. They are identified on the Highway Plan as feeder secondary roads and should be high on the VDOT list for maintenance and improvement.

## 3. Planned Highway Improvements by VDOT

The planned highway improvements are based on a six-year plan presented and updated annually by VDOT to the Board of Supervisors in November of each year. Public input has been invited by VDOT at that time.

## 4. Public Transportation

At present Bay Transit provides an “on-demand” service throughout the County. Bay Transit has also started a fixed bus route connecting Lottsburg, Callao, and Warsaw. For more information, visit the Bay Transit website at: http://baytransit.org/

## 5. Northumberland County Bicycle Facilities Plan

Non-roadway improvements such as bike lanes, sidewalks and greenways perform a vital community function by linking residential areas with non-residential areas such as businesses, schools, and historic or scenic sites. Links between residential areas may also be beneficial. In some instances, bikers, walkers and joggers may need to share the same facilities. However, the potential for user conflicts can be great in certain areas and in those instances it is preferable to create separate bikeways and sidewalks. If necessary, a wider joint use facility may be constructed with a narrow grass median or pavement striping to separate users.

Bicycle facilities should be promoted in subdivisions, on the county-designated Bicycle Trails and especially in more developed areas such as Reedville, Heathsville and the other villages. Priorities should be construction of bicycle facilities within developed areas prior to their extension outside of such areas unless a compelling connection to a recreation area or other public facility is deemed more important.

Bikeways are generally at least five (5) feet wide and are developed in three configurations:

Separate (Class I) - Separate and distinct from roadways. This configuration is generally the safest and most desirable but also the most expensive.

Separate Lanes (Paved Shoulders or Class II) - Paved shoulder adjacent to roadways. Pavement is marked with bicycle symbols and/or text. Roadway signs may also be provided for additional notice where warranted. This configuration is safe and convenient for most cyclists. Added benefit is recovery room for drivers that may need to swerve to avoid obstacles and prevention of road edge deterioration caused by vehicles leaving the roadway temporarily.

Shared Roadway (Class III) - Roadway signs only to alert motorists of designated bikeway routes and remind them to share the roadway as legally required. This configuration is the cheapest and easiest option to establish bikeways, but their use is only recommended for experienced cyclists or average to below average cyclists on roads with good sight distances and low traffic volumes.

While some people may believe bicycle use is just for children, safer facilities could encourage more people to use this form of transportation. In addition, certain persons would be able to safely ride a bike to work or other destinations near or far because they like to or they have to due to income limitations or license loss.

Bike paths and sidewalks should be considered in the design of improved and new road

projects. Bikeways and sidewalks provide room for vehicles and people to safely coexist along heavily traveled roads. Construction of sidewalks and bikeways concurrent with road improvements is much easier and cheaper than retrofitting an existing road. Small projects such as painting bike lane stripes on existing roadways with sufficient pavement width could provide a useful start in providing facilities and getting motorists accustomed to dealing with bicycles in a more formal fashion. Additional smaller projects include the identification of existing and potential edge of pavement and sight distance problems that could be corrected through relatively minimal work such as asphalt patching, compacted gravel, minor grading or vegetation trimming.

The bicycle transportation goal of the County is to have an efficient transportation network that reinforces the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and offers alternatives to automobile dependency in selected areas.

This goal should be implemented through a regional approach, using the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail with suitable segments for use by bicyclists and pedestrians. The County should continue to participate in this strategy by working with the Northern Neck Planning District Commission as the transportation planning body for the region.

In addition, the strategy should include identification of bikeways and/or pedestrian facilities within major developments and encourage or require the construction of sidewalks and\or bike lanes as part of new subdivisions or commercial developments.

The strategy also includes the following:

- Emphasize primary highways and portions of roadways on the designated Bicycle Trails in establishing priorities for funding the provision of bicycle facilities throughout the County.

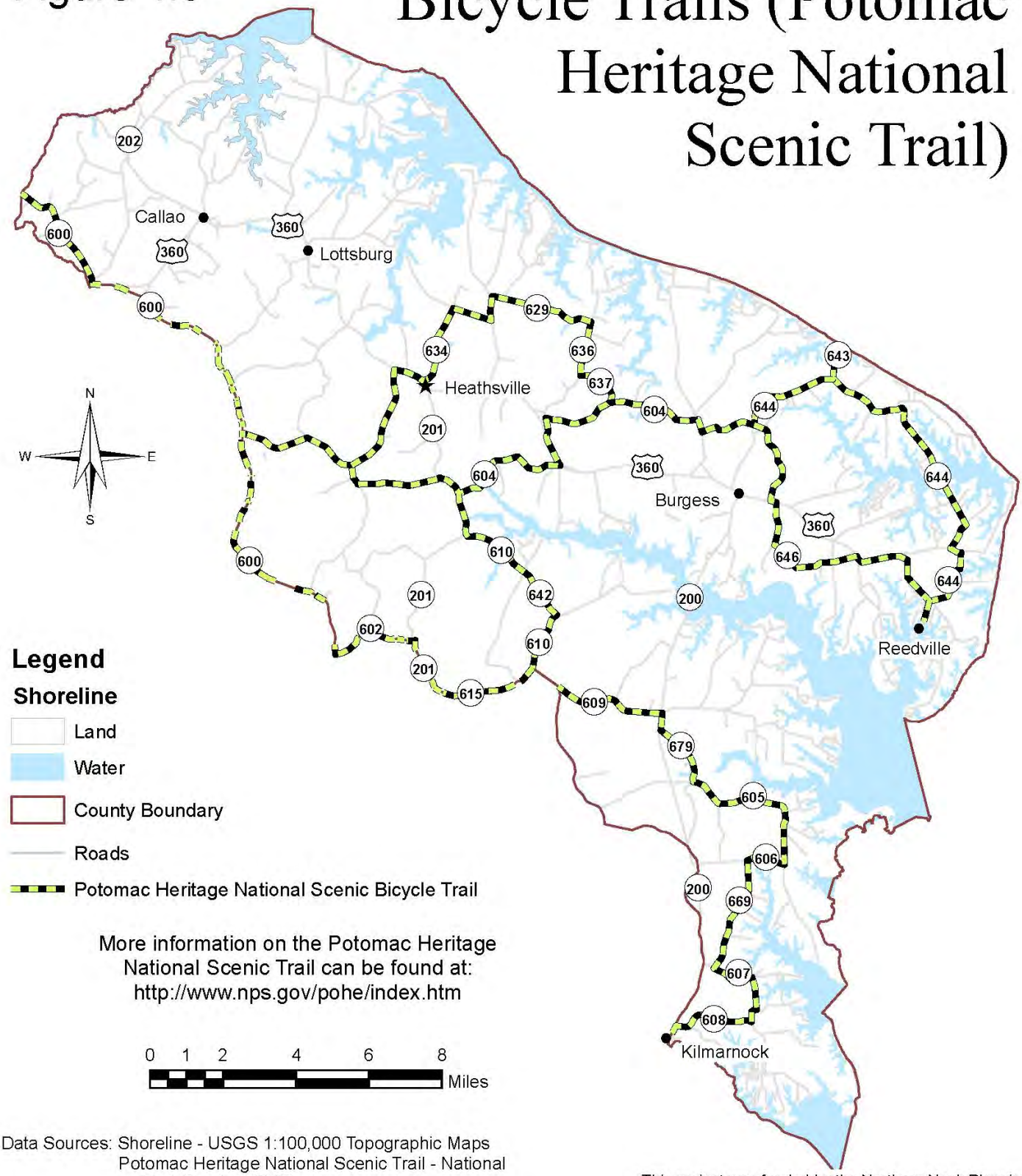
- Pursue the identification and correction of existing and potential edge of pavement and sight distance problems along bike routes designated as Signs Only.

- Pursue the installation of Share the Road signs along the designated Bicycle Trails to remind motorists of Virginia traffic laws and encourage safe habits where automobiles, trucks and bicycles utilize the same roadways.

Figure 4.3 on the following page identifies the designated Bicycle Trails.

Figure 4.3

# Bicycle Trails (Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail)




Data Sources: Shoreline - USGS 1:100,000 Topographic Maps
Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail - National Park Service, 2009

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## C. RECREATIONAL AREAS AND FACILITIES

### 1. Existing Recreational Sites and Opportunities

Recreational opportunities in Northumberland County consist of a mixture of public and private facilities and programs, both land and water oriented. Some of the more significant facilities are illustrated in Figure 4.4 and identified below.

*a. Athletic Fields.*

The only operated athletic park is located adjacent to the Northumberland Elementary School. It offers four ball fields at the present time. The area between Rt. 360 and the Middle/High School complex contains soccer fields which are available for public use when not being utilized by the school.

*b. State Facilities.*

State facilities include three large conservation areas. The Hughlett Point Natural Area Preserve contains about 204 acres. Facilities include parking, trails, a woodland boardwalk, wildlife viewing platforms, and interpretive signs. A second state-owned site, Bush Mill Stream Natural Area Preserve, containing 103 acres is located near Howland off Route 624. The Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Resources, has developed the Bush Mill site with a small parking area, scenic trails and overlooks and interpretive signs. The third site is Dameron Marsh Natural Area Preserve off VA 605 which extends into Chesapeake Bay. It is the largest wetland on the western side of Chesapeake Bay. Facilities include a walking trail and boardwalk, a wildlife viewing platform, a small parking area, and a canoe/kayak launch site. These were established as conservation areas under the control of the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

To see the latest planning for recreational activity at the State level, please see the Virginia Outdoors Plan by the Department of Conservation and Recreation: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational_planning/vop.shtml

*c. Chesapeake Bay Access.*

In the Chesapeake Bay Area Access Plan (1990) both public and private areas for accessing public waters in Northumberland County were identified. Thirty access points were examined of which 14 are publicly owned and the remaining 16 are private. The private facilities include both commercial marinas and membership associations. The two tables on the following pages identify the major features of each of these sites.

Table 4.2 gives a listing of public sites together with the specific recreational opportunities available at each site. The most dominant activities are (i) fishing that is available at all but three of the sites and (ii) trailer boat launching facilities available at about half of the facilities. Beach access by the public is available at Vir-Mar Beach, Hughlett Point Nature Preserve and Kohl's Island. Kohl's Island incorporates Smith Point itself and a beach to the west of where the Potomac River empties into the Chesapeake Bay, and is owned by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. No public access by land exists, or is planned and access can only be gained by boat. One of the concerns continually expressed by citizens was a need for more access to beaches. Greater beach access would also support the tourist business of the County as well as serve the needs of county residents. While it is true that many residents have access to the beach from waterfront homes or from membership associations, other residents of the County do not have the same access to the waterfront. A related concern is access to public picnic tables and restrooms.

The Chesapeake Bay Access Plan indicated that "numerous beaches exist along protected shorelines. These beaches are often informal access areas, located on private property. Many receive heavy use by those familiar with the area and can be reached only by boat. They should be evaluated to determine suitability for future development for public use", according to that plan another resource for access to the Bay are tour boats and charter fishing boats, the latter being available from numerous private sources in Northumberland County and throughout the Northern Neck.

The County would also like to have public water access to take the pressure off shoreline development and encourage attractive, affordable housing inland.

Table 4.2
PUBLICLY-OPERATED PUBLIC ACCESS FACILITIES TO THE CHESAPEAKE BAY
Northumberland County

| SITE IDENTIFICATION | Trailer Boat Landing | Car Top/Canoe /Kayak Launch | Fishing (Pier or Bank) | Beach (Swim - ming) | Natu re Stud y Area | Picnic Area | Camping Area |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hampton Hall Creek Landing Hampton Hall Creek | | | X | | | | |
| Lodge Landing, Lodge Creek | X | X | X | | | | |
| Forrest Landing, Coan River | X | X | X | | | | |
| Rowes Landing, Coan River | X | X | X | | | | |
| Vir-Mar Beach, Potomac River | | | | X | X | X | |
| Shell Landing, Cockrell Cr. | X | X | X | | | | |
| Cranes Creek Ldg., Cranes Cr. | X | X | X | | | | |
| Cedar Point Ldg., Great Wicomico River. | | X | X | | | | |
| Coopers Ldg.,Gr. Wicomico R. | X | X | X | | | | |
| Sampsons Wharf | | X | X | | | | |

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Northumberland County

| SITE IDENTIFICATION | Trailer Boat Landing | Car Top/Canoe /Kayak Launch | Fishing (Pier or Bank) | Beach (Swim - ming) | Natu re Stud y Area | Picnic Area | Camping Area |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Great Wicomico Fishing Pier, Wicomico River. | | | X | | | X | |
| Hughlett Point Natural Area Preserve, Chesapeake Bay | | | | | X | | |
| Bush Mill Stream Natural Area Preserve, Bush Mill Stream | | | | | X | | |
| Dameron Marsh Natural Area Preserve, Chesapeake Bay | | | | | X | | |

Source: Modified from Chesapeake Bay Area Public Access Plan; and Planning Commission Members.

## Northumberland County Public Water Access

The 1996 Northumberland County Comprehensive Plan pointed out the lack of public water access points in the county for citizens. The County has 14 power boat ramps; however, there are few opportunities for those citizens, who want to bank-fish, crab, launch canoes and/or kayaks. The county does have Vir-Mar Beach, a small (250 ft) long beach area on the Potomac River for fishing, crabbing, swimming and/or picnicking.

The Northumberland County Planning Commission has been working many years towards improving public water access for Northumberland County citizens. To that end, Northumberland County, with assistance from the Northern Neck Planning District Commission submitted a grant application for a public fishing pier on the Great Wicomico River to The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's Coastal Program (funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) in 1999. To secure matching funds, the County submitted another grant application to the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's Recreational Saltwater Fishing Fund in 2000. Both grants were awarded, and the County now has a public fishing/crabbing pier to serve its citizens on the south side of the Great Wicomico River Bridge.

However, there are still many opportunities to increase access to state waters within Northumberland County, especially to increase handicap accessibility, and to provide adequate parking for cars and trailers. This plan seeks to address those opportunities.

One goal that might increase tourism and recreational opportunities would be to establish a sufficient number of canoe/kayak launching facilities so that a “trail” would be created, allowing individuals not only to launch and return to a variety of sites, but to “tour” the County by water. The Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship, NAPS,

has developed a series of canoe/kayak trails and identified launching sites. The map is available on the web site http://www.napsva.org/paddlersguide.html. In addition to the NAPS map, the NNPDC in conjunction with the NNCBPAA and the Northern Neck Tourism Commission has created four canoe/kayak water trails in Northumberland County. The four trails are: Cockrell's Creek Water Trail, Coan River Water Trail, Lower Coan River Water Trail and the Great Wicomico Water Trail. The guides to the water trails in Northumberland County, as well as other Northern Neck county water trails, can be found at: http://www.northernneck.org/parks-nature-trails/

The Northern Neck Chesapeake Bay Public Access Authority, as described in Chapter 1, is currently assisting Northumberland County to increase public access opportunities. For more information, please visit:
http://www.nnpdc.org/PAGES/PAA/public-access.htm

Four planned improvements to public water access sites will fulfill some of these needs for individual natural, water dependent, recreational opportunities, while emphasizing handicap accessibility. Two sites are existing powerboat launching ramps (Coopers Landing, and Rowes Landing), the other two sites are new water access points (Hampton Hall Creek and Great Wicomico River).

Coopers Landing

Coopers Landing is a public power boat launch facility in the upper reaches of the Great Wicomico River at the end of State Route 707, owned by the County of Northumberland. There is one active concrete launch ramp and a second ramp unsuitable for launching power boats but suitable for canoes, kayaks and/or car top boats. The Landing gets considerable use from recreational bank fishermen and crabbers. A 72 x 8 foot fishing pier is planned for this site between the two launch ramps to augment the existing 30 inch launching walkway.

Rowes Landing

Rowes Landing is an existing powerboat launch ramp, at the end of State Route 601 in Heathsville, with a gravel turnaround, concrete boat ramp, and small fixed boat launching pier, owned by the County of Northumberland. The proposed improvements are to add a 10 foot by 6 foot floating canoe/kayak launch platform, on the opposite side of the pier from the boat launch ramp so as not to interfere with the powerboat launching function of the site

Hampton Hall Creek

The Hampton Hall Creek site is a former public water access site on Route 202 adjacent to the border of Westmoreland and Northumberland County. This public water access site was abandoned many years ago. The plan is to reinstate this site as a public water access point, and construct a canoe/kayak/car top boat launch

facility.

A floating pier with a fixed 30 foot by 6 foot entrance deck, and 20 foot by 6 foot moveable ramp and 10 foot x 6 foot floating launch platform is planned to be built adjacent to the access road's turnaround. The floating deck should be very near the surface of the water, making entering and exiting a kayak easy. Vegetation around the kayak launch should be cleared to afford bank-fishing opportunities for land-based anglers.

The County owns the land, and the old roadbed is still intact that terminates at the edge of Hampton Hall Creek.

Great Wicomico River

A new public water access site adjacent to the Great Wicomico River Public Fishing Pier, under the Rt. 200 Bridge is planned. The planned canoe/kayak launching pier site is located on land owned by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), however, the County of Northumberland has obtained written permission from the Warsaw Residency of the Virginia Department of Transportation for the construction of a canoe/kayak launching platform at the site. The canoe/kayak launching pier should be very basic. The existing shoreline is a gently sloping sand beach, which is very conducive to launching human powered watercraft. The pier should be an 8 foot by 10 foot ramp connecting to a 12 foot by 16 foot floating platform. The floating platform should be close to the water surface that should allow easy entry for those persons launching kayaks.

Table 4.3 lists 16 marinas that provided 838 boat slips in 2015. These are commercial marinas available to the public and offering not only boat storage but fuel, food sales, restrooms, and boat repairs. There are many additional “membership” marinas available that provide access to a limited clientele. Many of these are controlled by Homeowners Associations. Northumberland County's unique location at the mouth of the Potomac River near the middle of the Chesapeake Bay makes this one of the more popular destinations for recreational boating and fishing.

Table 4.3
PRIVATELY OPERATED ACCESS FACILITIES TO THE CHESAPEAKE BAY
Northumberland County

| SITE IDENTIFICATION | Trailer Boat Landing | Marina (No. of Slips) | Fishing (Pier or Bank) | Beach (Swim-ming) | Nature Study Area | Picnic Area | Camping Area |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coan River Marina, Coan R. | X | 60 | | | | | |
| Lake Francis Marina, Kingscote Cr. | X | 28 | | | | | |
| Olversons Marina, Lodge Cr. | X | 189 | | | | | |
| Lewisetta Marina | X | 28 | | | | | |

Table 4.3
PRIVATELY OPERATED ACCESS FACILITIES TO THE CHESAPEAKE BAY
Northumberland County

| SITE IDENTIFICATION | Trailer Boat Landing | Marina (No. of Slips) | Fishing (Pier or Bank) | Beach (Swim-ming) | Nature Study Area | Picnic Area | Camping Area |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Krentz Marina, | X | 35 | | | | | |
| Cockrell's Marina | X | 70 | | | | | |
| Smith Pt. Marina/Campground, Slough Cr. | X | 113 | | | | | X |
| Gaps Marina, Slough Cr. | | 26 | | | | | |
| Buzzards Point Marina, Cockrell Cr. | | 56 | | | | | |
| Horn Harbor Marina, Campground & Restaurant, Gr. Wicomico R. | X | 30 | | | | | X |
| Ingram Bay Marina | X | 49 | | | | | |
| Smith Point KOA | | 20 | | | | | X |
| Glebe Point Campground | | 18 | | | | | X |
| Reedville Marina | | 20 | | | | | |
| Fairport Marina | | 48 | | | | | |
| Jennings Marina | | 48 | | | | | |

Source: Modified from the Chesapeake Bay Public Access Plan, 1990 and Northumberland County staff marina survey, 12/8/2015.

*d. The Northumberland Family YMCA*

The Northumberland Family YMCA is a program-based YMCA currently operating from a new facility on the old High School property. They operate several programs through a partnership with the Northumberland County Public Schools. These include After School Care, Summer Day Camp, and various sports activities at the three schools in the County. This facility houses a full health and wellness center, group exercise center, child watch center, and an outdoor pool.

*e. Golf Courses*

Two golf courses are located within Northumberland County. Indian Creek golf course is part of a group of recreational facilities offered by the Indian Creek Yacht and Country Club. Quinton Oaks golf course is also located within the County outside Village and off Route 600.

## 2. Conclusions Regarding Recreational Facilities

Northumberland County's major recreational offering is its access to 509 miles of shoreline of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers and creeks. Sport fishing, recreational boating and sailing also provide a stimulus for summer tourism thereby contributing greatly to the economy of the County through marine sales and operation of

marinas, including repairs and fuel sales. In addition, the boats that are based permanently in the County provide a significant contribution to the tax base. It should be a major policy of the County to promote the development of quality boating facilities for both public and commercial use. In the same sense, public beaches may also contribute to the economy of the County while providing a major recreational service for local citizens. One needs only to look at the growth of other communities along the East Coast to see that public beaches attract significant investment that satisfies a market for recreation. The growth of sport and recreational boating, combined with expanded beaches and controlled beach front development, offers a substantial opportunity for the growth of Northumberland County's economy.

Vir-Mar Beach facilities were removed in the mid-1990s due to misuse and the difficulty in providing security. The County should explore the re-establishment of picnic and rest room facilities at Vir-Mar Beach.

In the area of public recreation, the focus of recreational planning should be on services that serve the local population of all ages. At the present public recreation that is offered is limited by the amount of land available.

The County should plan to have a public park oriented toward children and young adults. The neighborhood-type park should have tennis courts, a jungle gym, basketball court and other amenities and be located off the water. Consideration should also be given for a comparable public facility oriented toward the retired community.

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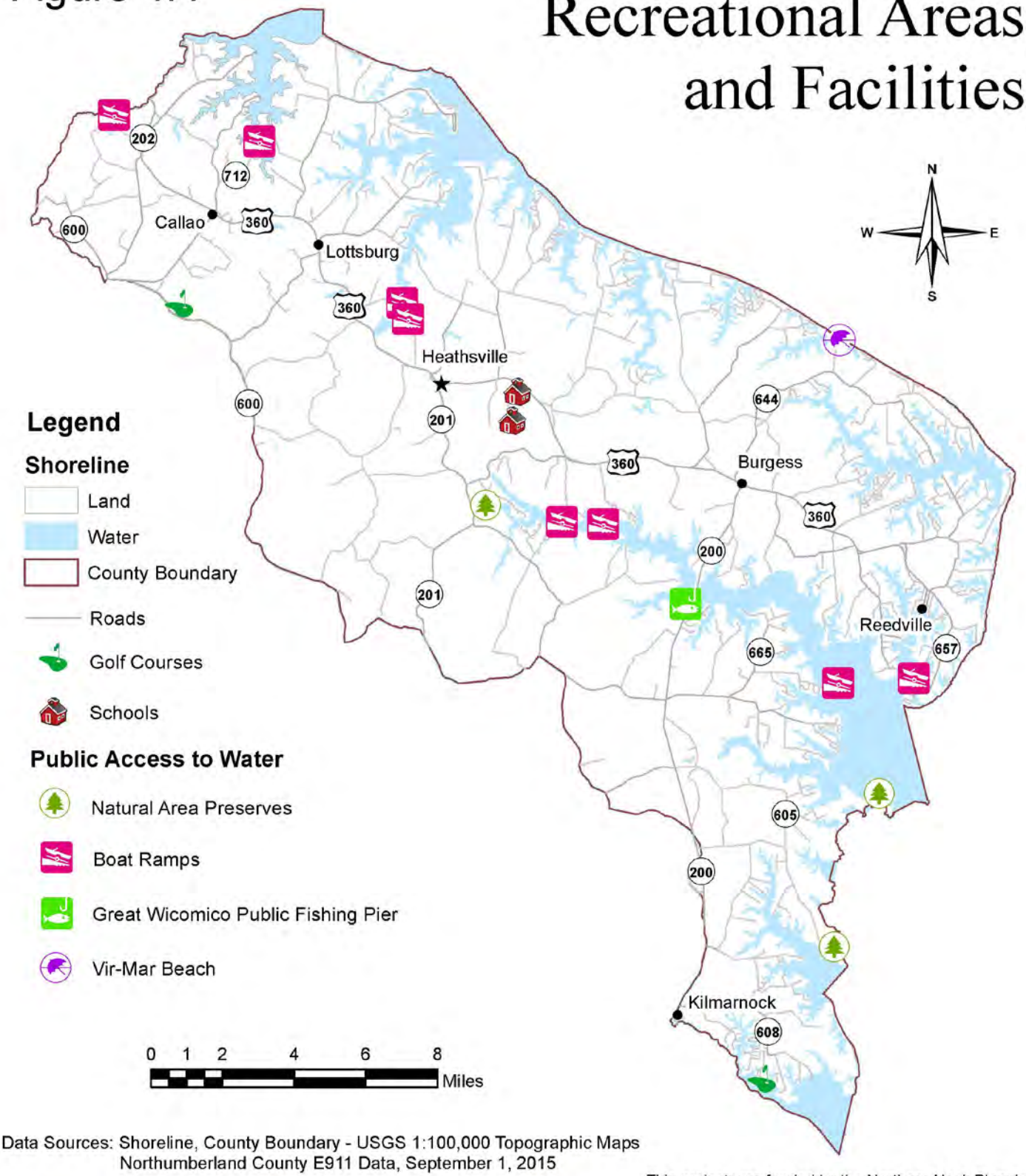
Figure 4.4

# Recreational Areas and Facilities

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Northumberland County E911 Data, September 1, 2015

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As future plans are made for recreational facility development, the following general standards that have been used in other parts of Virginia as well as nationally may be helpful. These standards have been found to provide a satisfactory number and distribution of recreational facilities in typical communities.

a. Baseball and softball fields: Baseball is played in almost all communities and by nearly all ages. Fields that are designed for youth baseball can also be used for adult softball since both use the same base spacing. The major difference is that softball requires a little longer pitching distance and longer outfield. A rule of thumb for ball fields in a community is at least one ball field for every 6,000 persons. Considering the demographics, two should be sufficient for Northumberland County, but because of the distance between upper and lower parts of the County others may be required in order to provide service to all parts of the County.

b. Basketball: This is another popular activity among youth. Schools may provide enough basketball courts to meet this need if they are spaced throughout the community appropriately. The general standard for basketball courts is one court for every 500-1,000 persons.

c. Tennis: The demand for tennis depends upon the importance of this game to each locality. There is a state standard that suggests one tennis court for every 2,000 persons. At least one court should be available at the Middle School and two at the High School.

d. Swimming Pools: The state standard suggests a swimming pool for every 10,000 persons. At present a public swimming pool is not available in Northumberland County for swimming lessons and competitive activities and adult recreation. The recent renovations at the Northumberland YMCA include an outdoor pool. The Northumberland YMCA has been working with Northumberland Schools offering swimming lessons to second graders.

Future efforts to provide opportunities for recreation in Northumberland County should be focused on establishing a basic infrastructure of facilities similar to and in the amounts suggested above. The next step is to secure sites for the facilities with the facilities themselves being added as funds are available.

## D. PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND SCHOOL FACILITIES

This section addresses the public buildings used for the County administrative offices and courts related uses, the Sheriff's department, and the buildings used for the County school system. The location of each of these facilities is indicated in Figure 4.5. Information on the County administrative office needs was obtained through discussions with County officials and department heads. Information on the County school buildings was

obtained from material provided by the Superintendent of Schools to the Board of Supervisors.

The Northumberland County Library, which has facilities for public meetings, is an important contribution to public services to the County residents as is the Fisherman's Museum located in Reedville, the Northern Neck Farm Museum located between Burgess and Heathsville, and the Rice's Inn Hughlett's Tavern Foundation located in Heathsville.

**1. Administrative Offices**

County administrative offices, courts facilities, sheriff's office and other government functions are centrally located in Heathsville in or near the courthouse. With the completion of the new courts facility for the General District Court, the Circuit Court, Clerks of both courts, and the Juvenile and Domestic Court Services units, their space and facility requirements outlined in the last version of this Comprehensive Plan have been met for the foreseeable future. These are located in a separate building behind the existing courthouse.

The Commissioner of the Revenues and the Treasurer's requirements for additional office space were met when the court clerk relocated from the first floor of the courthouse to the newer facility. Social Services, Health, and the Cooperative Extension Service have sufficient space in their existing locations and should not likely experience significant growth in the foreseeable future.

Due to deteriorated conditions in the Sheriff's building and the need for additional space, a new Sheriff's Office was completed in 2015.

Participation in the Regional Jail has eliminated the requirement to accommodate inmates in the Sheriff's building.

**2. Other Public and Quasi-Public Facilities**

The Northumberland Public Library located on U.S. Route 360 in Heathsville is available to the public and is a valuable resource. The Library is open 62 hours a week, including Saturdays and some evenings.

The Library is an important aspect of life in Northumberland County. Library attendance in 2013 was approximately 44,417. 26% of the County population holds library cards. The card catalog is also available online.

The collection consists of approximately 35,000 books and materials and provides free internet broadband access through the Library computer center and also offers high speed wireless WiFi service to patrons with laptops.

There is a planned balance in the collection between the user demographics and the

classes of items. Additional emphasis has been given to audio books and videos to meet the needs of the older population and the disabled. A children's librarian focuses on pre-school and elementary school children and a new "Homework Center" focuses on Middle and High School students.

The Library is a very busy place and lack of additional space is becoming a problem. The Library Long Range Plan and the Expansion Plan both address the needs of the future and expected growth in the County.

## 3. School Facilities

Schools are provided in Northumberland County School system by a Board of Education through the office of the Superintendent of Schools. The Board, together with its administrative staff is responsible for providing a system of public school facilities and an educational program of high quality. The population range from which most of the school enrollment comes has remained almost constant since 1980 and state estimates suggest this trend should continue for the next 10 to 15 years. Following are the estimates of population for the age group 0 to 19 for the last four decennial censuses and projections by the Virginia Employment Commission for the next three census years (Refer to Table 2.2, Appendix A).

| YEAR | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 | 2030 | 2040 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Population | 2485 | 2305 | 2491 | 2266 | 2120 | 2091 | 2166 |

Demographic trends show that although population growth has been occurring in Northumberland County, most of the growth is occurring in the adult population. The analysis referred to above reports that the age group from 20 to 44, customarily referred to as the "childbearing age" is projected by the state to remain constant at approximately 2500 persons through 2040. In addition, the older population is growing not only demographically but by the attraction of Northumberland County as a place for retirement. These forecasts point to an era of little growth potential for school enrollment.

The County opened the Northumberland Elementary School in 1996. This facility replaced the elementary schools at Fairfield and Callao. Northumberland Middle School and Northumberland High School continue to serve the upper grades. The school system projects that school membership in the next five to ten years should remain fairly steady. The schools are identified in Figure 4.5 and described in the following paragraphs:

- Northumberland Elementary School

  This elementary school is designed for an enrollment of 750 students from preschool to kindergarten through the fifth grade. School system projections indicate that the elementary school enrollment should remain steady or

gradually increase in the future; therefore, it should have sufficient capacity until growth patterns in young families increase. Current enrollment is approximately 650 students.

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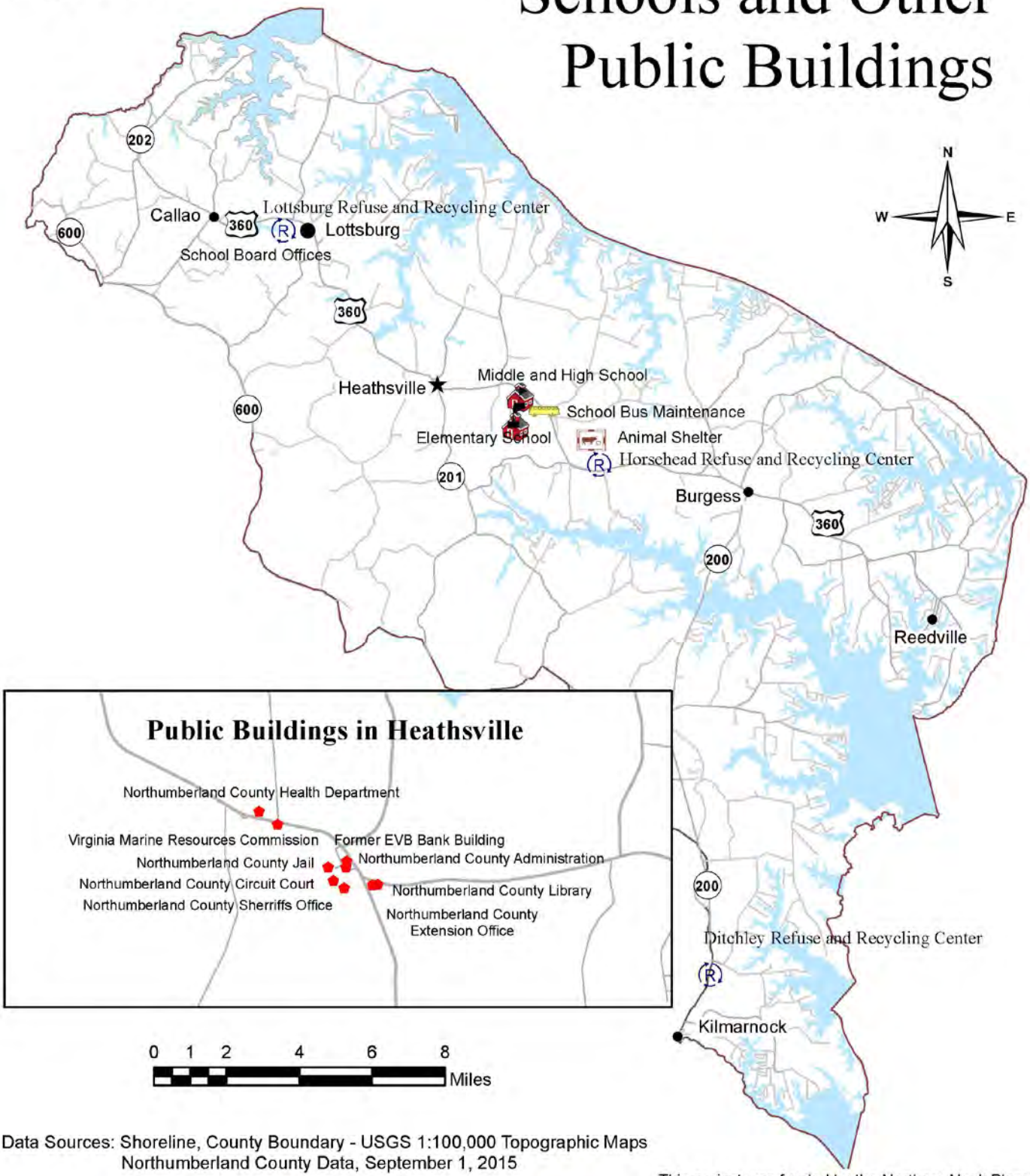
Figure 4.5

# Schools and Other Public Buildings

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- Northumberland Middle/High School Complex

  This combined facility was completed in 2009. The Middle/High school accommodates 750 students from sixth grade through the twelfth grade.

Overall, the present school system's capacity appears to be fairly evenly matched with the number of students. With little growth foreseen in enrollment, future school planning can focus on matching the facilities with the educational needs of the community.

An analysis of recreational space suggests that the playfields could increase the opportunities for full-time recreation. The buildings present other opportunities such as the current use of offices for the School Board.

## E. WATER SUPPLY AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

### 1. Water Supply

An examination of water sources is presented in Chapter 1 as part of the analysis of environmental conditions. That chapter identified groundwater as the present source of potable water supply for Northumberland County. Water comes from three aquifers: the surficial or water table aquifer, the Chickahominy-Piney Point aquifer (the so-called "intermediate artesian aquifer"), and the Brightseat-Upper Potomac aquifer (the so-called "principal artesian aquifer"). Today most large water users take ground water from the Brightseat-Upper Potomac artesian aquifer, and it is anticipated that this aquifer will experience the most development in the next decade or so. Numerous households, however, that are not on a community water system; take water from the water table aquifer, the one closest to the surface. In an effort to protect potable water supply for Northumberland County, the Board of Supervisors has supported the adoption of the Northern Neck Regional Water Supply Plan as well as encouraging the incorporation of the County into the expanded Eastern Virginia Groundwater Management Area. Both of these items are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 of this plan.

State surveys have indicated that the aquifers should provide an adequate supply of potable water to the County well into the 21st century. However, it appears certain that continued withdrawal of artesian water at current rates, causing water level declines of 1.1 feet/year, are ultimately not sustainable. Currently, declining water levels in the artesian aquifers of Northumberland County are caused predominantly by ground water withdrawals by large water users in Southern Maryland and the West Point (King William County) region. In the future, increasing economic and residential development in Northumberland County will place additional stress on the ability of the artesian aquifers and accelerate water level decline.

The Health Department classifies water systems as community, transient or non-transient water systems. A community water system is one that serves 14 or more houses or 25 or

more persons for at least six months per year. A transient public water system is a class that is used by motels, restaurants and similar uses. A non-transient system is the same as a community water system but is used less than six months per year.

The Three Rivers Health District listed 57 public water systems in Northumberland County in 2015 (See Chapter 1). These were distributed among the above three classes as follows: 35 community water systems; 19 transient systems; and 3 non-transient systems.

Figure 4.6 illustrates the locations of 57 of the major public water systems currently in service within the County.

Future needs over the next 20 years and beyond for potable water are a significant planning issue for Northumberland County as discussed in Chapter 1. There appears to be sufficient groundwater in the deeper aquifers for the next several decades. Eventually, the artesian aquifers will cease to supply an adequate quantity of potable water and alternative supplies will be required.

If large-scale development of the type that is developing in many communities along the Mid-Atlantic States comes to Northumberland County, or to nearby communities using the same aquifers (as is already happening in Maryland to the detriment of both artesian aquifers) water supply will become a more immediate problem.

Such development, however, may be regulated and required to provide its own water system in scale with need. It would be prudent on the County's part, however to have an alternative source of potable water supply. This is particularly true because of the County's proximity to sea water. Major withdrawals even in the upper reaches of the lower aquifers combined with pressure from sea water would adversely modify the quality of water available in the aquifers.

*A long-range strategy of surface impoundments is prudent.*

The 1969 report prepared for the NNPDC by Martin, Clifford and Associates identified nine (9) reservoir sites in Northumberland County. All these sites should be permitted to develop only as consistent with a future public water supply. The sites of greatest potential include:

| Site | Serving | Acres | Million gallons/day |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lodge Creek | Callao | 118 | 1.05 |
| Sydnor's Mill | Burgess and points east | 328 | 0.48 |
| Crabbe Mill | Heathsville | 310 | 0.56 |

These three reservoirs could provide 2.09 million gallons/day, enough to serve 20,900 people assuming typical water usage of 100 gallons/day/person. These three reservoirs should provide abundant water for the foreseeable future recognizing that some citizens

not easily served by a public supply will remain on either artesian or shallow wells. Because most of the population of the county is in the northeast, and that is where growth is likely to be highest, it will ultimately be necessary to connect the reservoirs.

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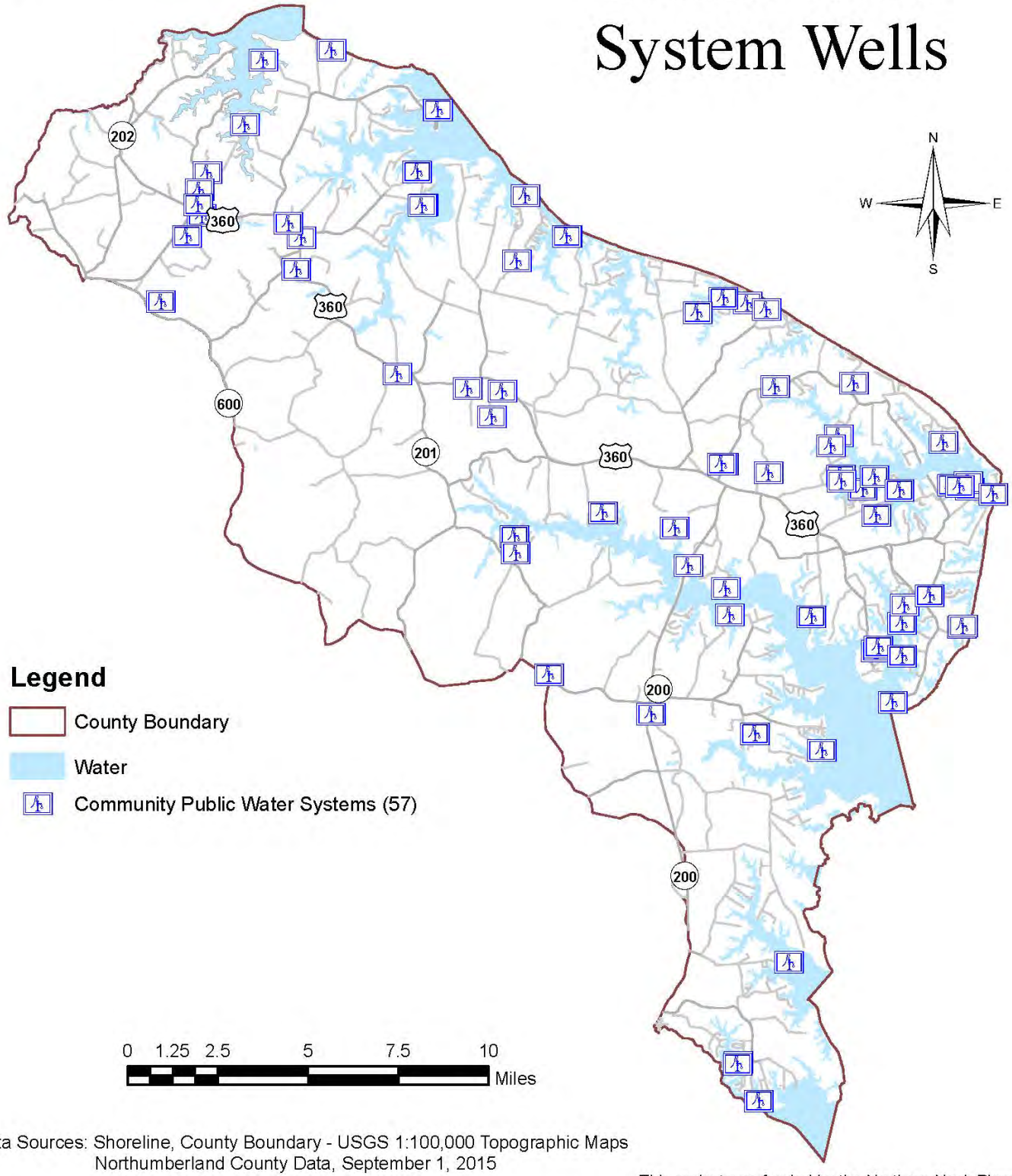
Figure 4.6

# Public Water System Wells

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Northumberland County Data, September 1, 2015

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## 2. Sewage Disposal

The general mode of sewage disposal in Northumberland County is the septic tank; the exceptions are at Reedville, Callao and Kilmarnock where public sewage systems have been established. The systems above, with the exception of the Kilmarnock Sewer, are operated by the Reedville Sanitary District which is governed by the County Board of Supervisors. The Sanitary District was originally designed to serve the town of Reedville but it was expanded in order to extend coverage to the Blackberry Community Development Project Area, Fleeton and Callao.

Figure 4.7 shows sanitary sewage facilities in the Reedville and Callao areas. Also shown on this map are the general locations of the pumping stations and the treatment plants. The Reedville plant is located across Cockrell Creek near the Omega Protein Facilities, which is also served by the Reedville system.

With the addition of the Fleeton community, the system is presently operating at a high percentage of its total capacity. The Reedville treatment plant is designed to treat 200,000 gallons per day and the Callao plant 60,000 gallons per day.

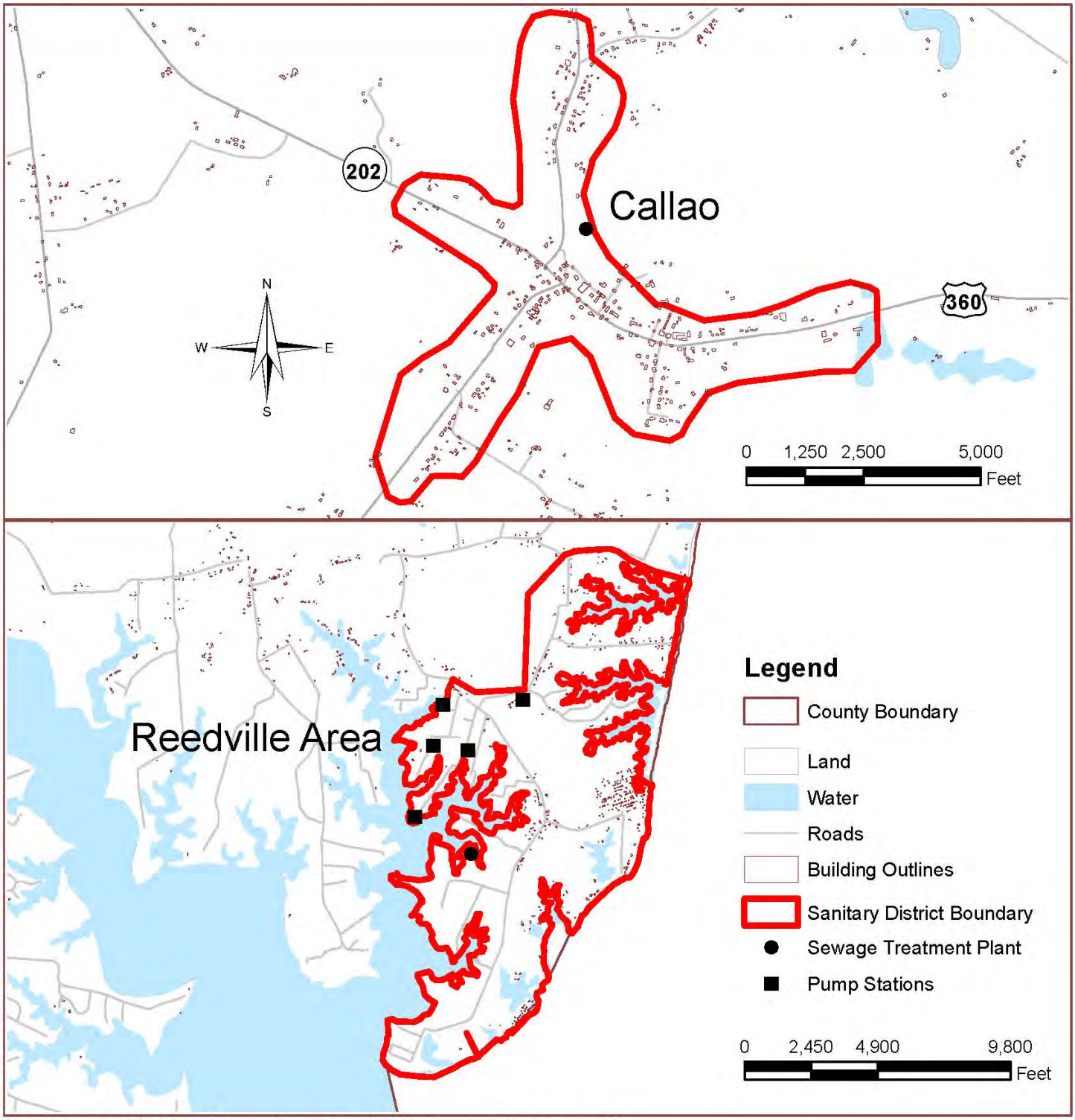
Other areas of the County shows signs of developing into active commercial areas even without sewers. There are signs of growth at Burgess and at Heathsville, and in the long-range these areas would likely experience more development if sewer systems were available.

But there is the constraint of economic and financial feasibility. The Fleeton expansion at Reedville and the Callao sewer system received grants of 75% of the construction costs leaving the remainder to be borrowed by the County and the debt serviced by the monthly fees. In general, future expansions of the existing systems are encouraged where there is no financial impact on current patrons caused by the expansion.

There is a problem in the lower end of the County at the Indian Creek community. Soil problems and other constraints have led the County to apply for a grant to install a community sewer system similar to Callao. The grant application was not economically feasible at this time, and the County is continuing to weigh options to bring sewer to the area of Indian Creek.

None of the other villages of the County appear to meet the current requirements for similar grants because of the low population densities. The monthly rates would have to be too high even with a comparable percentage of the funding in grants. Nevertheless, the potential exists in these areas for commercial development and the establishment of new jobs. This is sufficient reason to continually monitor and examine the feasibility of establishing sewer systems at each location, and when determined to be feasible and cost-effective, to actively pursue them.

# Figure 4.7 Sanitary Sewerage Facilities

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New facilities should be designed with state-of-the-art nutrient reduction technology. Upgrading the Reedville plant to reduce nutrient discharge and to accept septic pump-out should proceed simultaneously in order to realize cost savings. At least one of the current sewage systems should be adapted to accept septic system pump-out.

## F. OTHER PUBLIC AND QUASI-PUBLIC SERVICES

### 1. Emergency Services

Emergency services are available in Northumberland County through volunteer fire departments and volunteer rescue squads. Communications are coordinated through the Sheriff's office. Figures 4.8 and 4.9 identify the locations of fire and rescue facilities within the County and the area served by each facility.

Fire departments serving Northumberland County include the following fire stations:

- The Callao Volunteer Fire Department: serves the northern part of the County to Horsehead.

- The Fairfield Volunteer Fire Department: serves the eastern portion of the County approximately from Horsehead to the Chesapeake Bay and the southern portion to about one mile below Wicomico Church. This fire company's main station is in Reedville with a sub-station located on Route 200 between Burgess and Glebe Point.

- The Kilmarnock Volunteer Fire Department: serves the remainder of the County from the point served by the Fairfield Company to the county line (blue outlined area on Figure 4.8).

- The Upper Lancaster County Volunteer Fire Department serves a small portion of Northumberland County between Mill Creek and Route 615 (county line).

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Figure 4.8

# Fire Districts

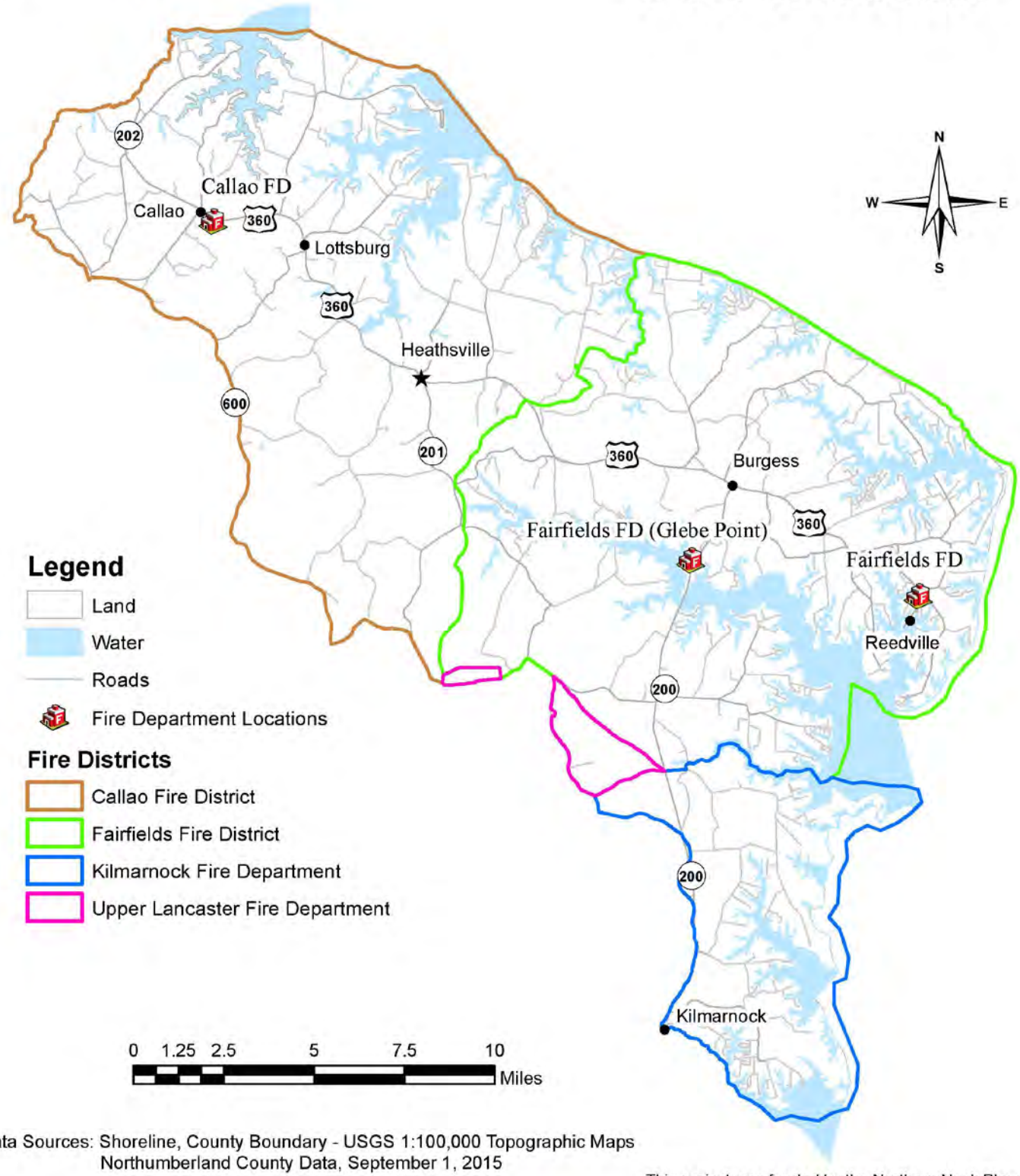


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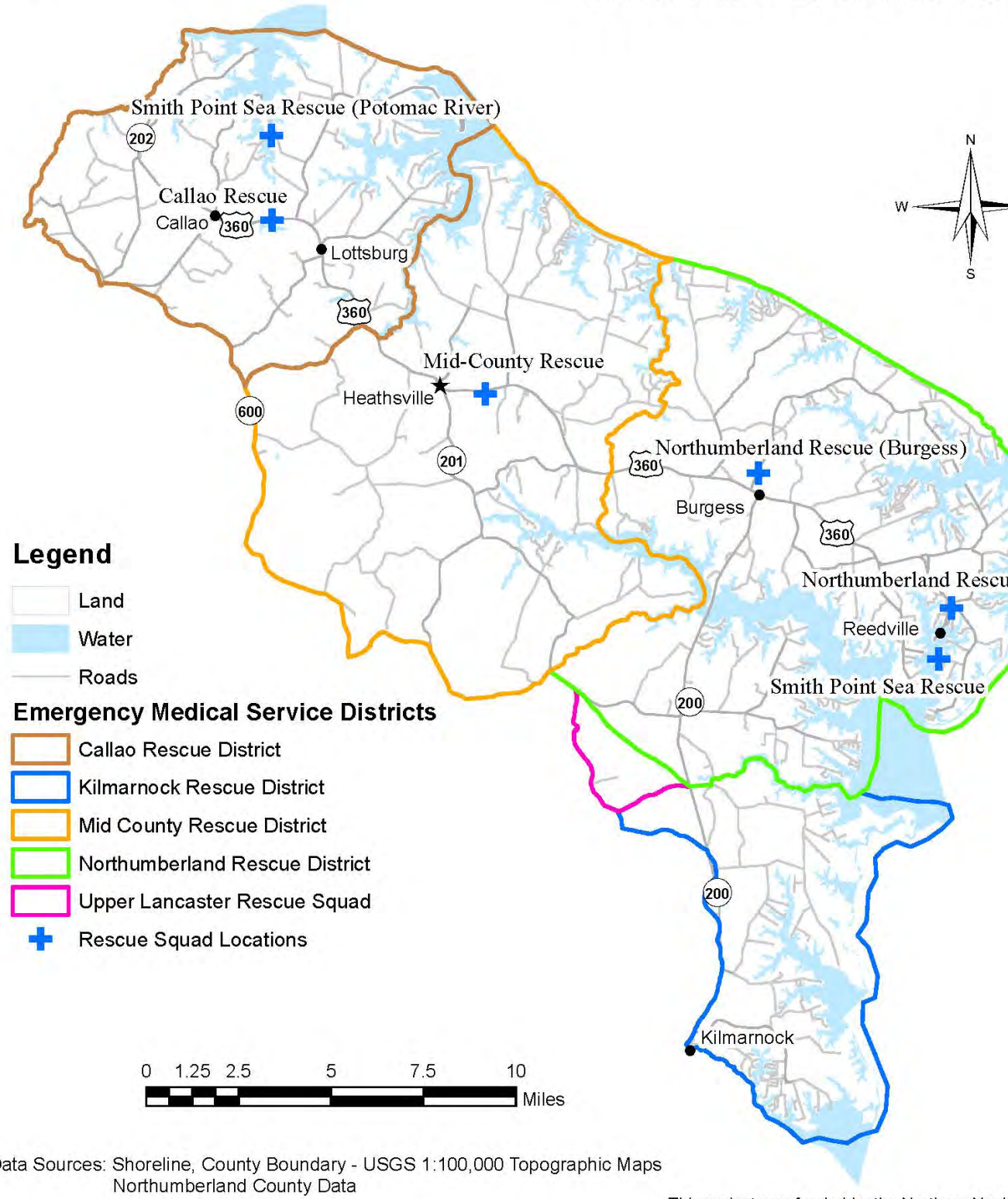
Figure 4.9

# Rescue Districts

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Department of Commerce, National Oc
Atmospheric Administration, under the Coa
Management Act of 1972, as a

Rescue squads serving Northumberland County are:

- The Callao Volunteer Rescue Squad serves the western part of the County from the county line to the Coan River.

- The Mid-County Volunteer Rescue Squad located just east of Heathsville serves the area from the Coan River to an area marked approximately by Horse Head, Hull Creek, Great Wicomico River and Browns Store.

- The Fairfield Volunteer Rescue Squad serves approximately the same area as the Fairfield Fire Department and also operates through a main station at Reedville and a substation at Burgess.

- The Kilmarnock Volunteer Rescue Squad serves the southern tip of the county from just below Wicomico Church, the same area served by the Kilmarnock Fire Department. The portion of the County served by the Lancaster Volunteer Fire Department is provided with Rescue Service by the Kilmarnock Rescue Squad.

- Smith Point Sea Rescue, operated by volunteers, provides a search and rescue service in the Lower Potomac River and Mid-Chesapeake Bay Area.

These services are provided by volunteer organizations; however, the last couple of years have proven difficult in recruiting and retaining qualified personnel to respond to emergency calls for these organizations. The organizations recognized this fact and asked for help from the Northumberland County Board of Supervisors. In November 2014, the Northumberland County Board of Supervisors hired its first Chief of Emergency Services to direct the new Emergency Medical Services Department. The Chief of Emergency Services will not only perform administrative duties for the County's Emergency Management Program, but will also assist and support the volunteer organizations by running emergency medical calls when necessary. In addition to the Chief of Emergency Services, the County hired its first Emergency Medical career staff in 2015 to aid the volunteer rescue squads in answering emergency calls when needed and the county now has 24/7 coverage for the Rescue Squads.

As indicated in the demographics, the County contains an aging population and it is to be expected that an increasing number of calls will be for rescue squad services to transport persons to hospitals. This will place a further strain on personnel, especially if the volunteers are drawn away from their places of employment. The County needs to encourage and continue its support of the recruitment of volunteers.

## 2. Solid Waste Services

The solid waste system serving Northumberland County consists of three solid-waste collection stations which provide facilities for citizens to dispose of their refuse and recyclables into appropriate bins. The bins are then transported to a land fill in another

jurisdiction by a private contractor. The locations of the collection stations (Refuse and Recycling Centers) are shown on Figure 4.5. They are located as follows:

- Lottsburg on land which was part of a school site; now beside the School Board offices.
- East of Horse Head on U.S. 360.
- On Route 200 between Wicomico Church and the County line.

A typical solid waste collection site occupies about an acre and contains the following:

- Container with compactor that can be transported by truck.
- Spare container
- Recycle box (1 or 2)
- An attendant is stationed at each site.

While the present sites offer a solid waste disposal system, including recycling, in different parts of the County, concern was expressed in meetings of a need to have a more visible program for disposing of household wastes which are classified as hazardous. The Northern Neck Soil and Water Conservation District (NNSWCD) has been conducting semi-annual hazardous waste and electronic waste collections in the Spring and Fall, and these collections have been successful and well received by the community.

### 3. Animal Shelter

A fenced animal shelter has been built on the property currently used for solid waste disposal on U.S. 360 near Horsehead. This facility can house 20 dogs and a recent expansion provides space for cats. It is operated by volunteers and managed by the Animal Warden who is supervised by the Sheriff.

### 4. Emergency Preparedness

Hurricane Isabel hit Northumberland County on Thursday September 18, 2003 and caused extensive damage to trees and the power grid and also caused water damage from storm surge along the rivers. For many reasons, a combination of preparedness, effective support systems, strong community support and good fortune, there were no deaths attributed to the storm and minimal injuries.

The State and Federal policy is that a disaster is a local event and each jurisdiction must take care of itself for at least 72 hours and not rely on the State or Federal organizations. When all local resources have been expended to resolve a particular problem, then localities may look to the State for assistance. When all State resources are expended, then the Federal government will provide assistance.

The County performed a “Lessons Learned” analysis and developed a set of

recommendations after Hurricane Isabel and has initiated a program to increase preparedness and response in several key areas:[1]

- Management and Organization – formalize several informal working relationships to ensure all relevant personnel understand their roles in the process;
- Facilities – provide necessary emergency facilities and logistic support to the County Administrator in his role of Emergency Coordinator;
- Communications – improve communications between all emergency service organizations and between governmental entities; improve communications with the public;
- Shelters – ensure that existing shelters in the schools and other facilities are staffed and equipped to accommodate expected demand, investigate the possibility of adding additional shelter space; and
- Power – ensure that emergency generators are available and operational to support the shelters and communications needs

### 5. Educational Facilities

Approximately 37 acres in the Bluff Point area, close to Kilmarnock, has recently been gifted to James Madison University. This property is to be utilized by students and staff of the University as a field laboratory for research and teaching.

## G. HEALTH, HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES

This Health, Housing and Human Services section of the Comprehensive Plan describes the needs and available services.

Services are currently available in the following areas:

1. Health Services;
2. Provisions for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities;
3. Other Social Services Programs; and
4. Housing.

Each of these services is described in more detail below. While the list appears extensive, it is not clear that the funding and other resources match the needs.

### 1. Health Services

The County has a number of residents who are at or below federal poverty levels and/or unemployed and a disproportionate number of the population who are over sixty-five and

1 Kenneth D. Eades and Gregory T. Haugan, *Lessons Learned – Hurricane Isabel*, December 17, 2003

are a burden on the local health care system. Currently approximately 33% of the population is over 65 years of age and by 2030 the number is expected to be almost 40%.

Northumberland County has no public medical facilities other than the services of the Northumberland County Health Department which is a component of the ten-county Three Rivers Health District. These limited services are available to the citizens of the County, with fees on a sliding scale based on income. Northumberland County is one of nine counties in the District that is designated as "Medically Under-Served". There are several private doctor and dentist offices and clinics in the County.

Services outside the County are provided by Rappahannock General Hospital, RGH, in Lancaster County which provides significant health care to the county and is linked to Chesapeake Medical Group and has recently become a part of the Bon Secours Virginia Health System. Riverside Tappahannock Hospital, in Essex County, also provides health care to the County and is linked to the Riverside Medical Group. Because of high medical liability costs and a relatively small number of patients, RGH has recently discontinued its maternity ward activities.

The Northern Neck Free Health Clinic in Kilmarnock provides health care to persons in the Northern Neck and Middlesex County who cannot reasonably be expected to pay for such care.

The County should work toward bringing medical facilities, nursing homes and assisted living facilities into the County.

## 2. Provisions for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities

The County has an aging population and it is expected to continue as more retired persons move into the area. This section describes the services available.

### *a. Auxiliary Grant Program*

Financial assistance is available for certain needy aged, blind or disabled persons who reside in adult care residences or adult family care homes. The money received, plus other income, is used by the person to pay for care provided by the home. Individuals who get money from the Auxiliary Grant Program also get a Medicaid card to use for medical bills.

### *b. Adult Services of the Northumberland Department of Social Services*

(1). Adult Protective Services

This program receives and investigates complaints and reports concerning the abuse, neglect, or exploitation of those over age 60, disabled individuals over age 18, and their families, when necessary. Intervention may involve in-home services, counseling, transportation, day care, sheltered employment, legal proceedings, and meal provision.

(2) Home-Based Services

The Home-Based Service provides home-based services for those over age 60, disabled individuals over age 18, and their families when necessary. The goals include the maximization of self-sufficiency, the prevention of abuse and neglect, a reduction and delay in premature or unnecessary institutionalization, and aid (when such a placement is appropriate).

(3) Screenings

This service provides screenings for nursing home and adult home residential placements and for community-based home care.

*c. Bay Aging*

Bay Aging is a non-profit organization that works at the community level to assure the delivery of efficient and appropriate services to older persons. Bay Aging's goal is to provide support to help older citizens remain as independent as possible -- for as long as possible. The organization serves 10 counties in the area including the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula. It is funded by a combination of Federal, State, and Local governments and by donations.

Bay Aging provides four primary services: Adult Day Services at Senior Activity Centers; Meals on Wheels; Bay Transit and a Housing Program.

*The Senior Activity Center* for Northumberland is located in the Old Fairfields Elementary School in Burgess. The Senior Center is a community focal point which offers the opportunity for socialization through supportive and challenging group programs. It is available to individuals age 60 and over who function independently.

*Adult Day Care Program* is located at Bethany United Methodist Church in Reedville. The Northumberland program is licensed by the Department of Social Services and is an approved Virginia Medicaid provider. The Center provides various activities, opportunities to socialize, a change of scenery, physical and mental exercises and health monitoring. The latter involve the use of trained nurses to help families understand health care needs and identify conditions that need medical attention. Meals and transportation are provided.

*Meals on Wheels* uses dedicated volunteers to deliver hot lunches to individuals age 60 and over who are homebound due to illness or disability and are unable to prepare nutritious meals.

*Bay Transit* is a public transportation system for all people of all ages that serves the entire Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula. It is a "dial-a-ride" system that operates from 6 am to 6 pm Monday through Friday. There is also a fixed route system that operates from Heathsville to Lottsburg, Callao and Warsaw four times each weekday.

*The Housing Program* works through the Department of Social Services who provides space one day per week for a representative of Bay Aging to meet with applicants from

Northumberland County for their housing assistance services. Primary assistance is through the Indoor Plumbing and Rehabilitation Program, the Virginia Water Project and the emergency Home Repair Project. This complements the Section 8 housing assistance offered through the Northumberland Social Services.

*d. Northern Neck Disabilities Services Board*

Formed on September 21, 1999, the Northern Neck Disability Services Board (NNDSB) is a partnership of disabled consumers, local governments and businesses working to extend existing services and create new services for individuals of the Northern Neck with physical and/or sensory disabilities through administration of the Rehabilitative Services Incentive Fund.

The NNDSB provides disabled consumers with increased transportation, education and employment opportunities, accessible and affordable housing and medical services. The NNDSB also continues to improve awareness of existing and new programs through quarterly meetings, local media, related organizations and direct contact with individuals in need.

Duties of the NNDSB:

- Develop and make available for public comment an assessment of local needs and priorities of people with physical and/or sensory disabilities, updated every three years;
- Provide information and resource referral to local governments regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- Administer the Rehabilitative Services Incentive Fund and serve as a catalyst for the development of public and private funding sources;
- Exchange information with other local boards regarding services to persons with physical and/or sensory disabilities and best practices in the delivery of services; and,
- Provide such other assistance and advice to local governments as may be requested.

The NNDSB administers the Rehabilitative Services Incentive Fund (RSIF) which is a grant allocated by the Department of Rehabilitative Services to promote investment in meeting the needs of individuals with physical and/or sensory disabilities. The RSIF grant is used to increase service capacity through expanding existing services or creating new services.

Through the NNDSB and the County match, local service providers (Bay Aging) have provided home repairs and modifications for accessible housing, emergency services, education on disability issues and increased awareness of existing and new programs for disabled consumers.

The NNDSB performed a Triennial Needs Assessment in 2003 for the Northern Neck, however it was not sufficiently definitive to provide a basis for firm action.

The NNDSB shall support the needs assessment described in Section 5 below by providing input on needs and priorities of people with physical and/or sensory disabilities in Northumberland County. This data should be a comprehensive update of the Triennial Needs Assessment performed in 2003.

*e. Emergency Services*

With an aging population it will be increasingly difficult for the volunteer emergency services to meet the needs of the citizens of the County. See Section F.1 for a discussion of this issue.

**3. Other Social Services Programs**

Below is a listing of other programs administered by the Northumberland Department of Social Services. Some of these also assist the elderly and persons with disabilities but that is not necessarily their primary focus. The Northumberland Department of Social Services provides a broad range of services to the citizens of the County,

(a). TANF - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program and TANF-UP

TANF provides temporary financial assistance to families with children who have financial need. The TANF program is the cornerstone of Virginia's Welfare Reform initiative. The TANF program initiative has time limited benefits, a strong work requirement, and a social contract that sets out the responsibilities of and expectations for recipients of public assistance and the government.

(b). Aid to Dependent Children - Foster Care (AFDC-FC)

Financial aid is provided for the care of children eligible for assistance that have been removed from their homes and placed in custody of the Department of Social Services.

(c). General Relief (GR)

The General Relief program provides limited financial assistance for those appealing Supplemental Security Income, SSI, maintenance determinations. General Relief includes limited medical care for the indigent, burial of the indigent, and other emergency services.

(d). State and Local Hospitalization (SLH)

State and Local Hospitalization provides direct payment to hospitals for individuals, who do not qualify for Medicaid and who are unable to pay for required medical services. The payments are limited to the total of the County’s funding allocation from the State. This program will pay for limited hospitalization, outpatient surgery, and emergency room visits. Inpatient and outpatient doctor visits are not covered.

(e). Medical Assistance (Medicaid)

The federal/state-financed Medicaid program provides medical care for specified needy persons. The Social Services Department determines eligibility for Medicaid, according to criteria established by the Department of Medical Assistance Services, which administers the program.

Medicaid makes direct payments to health care service providers for eligible individuals and families who are unable to pay for needed medical services. Medicaid pays for a variety of medical services including prescription drugs, doctor visits, nursing facility care, and hospital care.

(f). Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (FAMIS)

The FAMIS program provides health insurance for eligible low-income children who are not eligible for Medicaid. The eligibility determination for this program was transferred in August, 2002, to a State Central Processing Unit. However, the option for applicants again to go through the local departments of social services was reinstated to better facilitate the process, and the program has been renamed Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (FAMIS).

(g). Food Stamp Program

The federal Food Stamp Program supplements the food budgets of low-income households to help assure needy persons a nutritionally adequate diet. Eligibility is determined by financial need, household size, and non-financial criteria such as student and work registration.

(h). Fuel/Cooling Assistance Program

Eligible low-income households receive federal assistance with their home heating bills. Faulty or hazardous heating systems may also be repaired in households eligible for fuel assistance. Eligible low-income households that also have a member meeting age or medical vulnerability criteria may receive assistance with home cooling bills. Air conditioners or fans may be repaired or provided under certain conditions.

(i). Child Protective Services

This program receives and investigates complaints and reports concerning the abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children, and provides preventive action where there is a threat of harm. Services are available 24 hours a day to handle emergency situations.

(j). Foster Care Services for Children

The Foster Care program provides counseling, supervision, and supportive and rehabilitative services to, or, on behalf of children who are committed or entrusted to local boards of social services.

(k). Employment Services

The Employment Services program provides services to recipients to assist them in retaining, regaining, or securing full or partial employment.

(l). Day Care Services for Children

This program provides services of day care in approved facilities for a defined portion of a 24-hour day, to enable parents to be employed or to provide services when they must be

away due to an emergency. Services may also be provided for children needing protection.

(m). Other Social Work Services

1) Adoption Services - provides services and registries to bring together children and families for permanent placements.
2) Family Services - provides counseling, educational information, monitoring (for protective services cases), and referrals to other resources for families with special needs.
3) Interstate foster care - provides monitoring and supportive services for foster children placed in our locality by another state.
4) Home Studies - provides assessments of suitability of homes for placement of children when ordered by the court.
5) Emergency Services - provides assistance with food, shelter, utilities, and clothing in crisis situations; assists the Red Cross in the operation of shelters.
6) Other Social Services Programs

(n) Child Abuse and Sexual Assault Investigation Team

A unique program in Northumberland County is the Child Abuse and Sexual Assault Investigation Team that consists of the Office of the Sheriff, the Office of the Commonwealth Attorney and the Department of Social Services. These three organizations have put together a team of trained investigators and social workers that work together to investigate and resolve claims of child abuse.

(o). Community Support

Northumberland County is very fortunate to have a strong network of support for a variety of emergency services and human services from non-profit organizations and volunteers. Some of the support comes from individuals and small informal groups, some is from individual churches or other structured community organizations, and some is from networks of churches, such as the Interfaith Service Council and Church Resource Services.

Some of the emergency services provide individuals in crisis in the community assistance with utility bills, food, clothing, or rent. The Department of Social Services relies heavily on collaboration with community organizations to assist with these services when the individuals do not qualify for government funded programs for such assistance.

Some groups provide summer or after school programs for youth while they are not in school and have no other structured supervised settings. Some provide organized recreational activities available on a county-wide basis. Some work to improve housing, water and sanitary systems or other conditions that affect quality of life.

Northumberland County is, also, very fortunate to have a very active and capable chapter

of the American Red Cross, managed and operated entirely with volunteers, who operate emergency shelters for the County in addition to other types of disaster assistance.

**4. Housing**

Affordable housing is a major issue in the County. There is a shortage of safe, healthy living places for low income persons in our area. There are still a large number of homes in the County without indoor plumbing and a number of homes where the houses are literally falling down around the people living in them. While not all are in poor repair, over a third of the 8,000 houses in the County are over 40 years old.

Currently there are limited resources available to assist low income persons with housing problems. There are various volunteer groups that help with repairs, Bay Aging Agency provides an indoor plumbing program, Habitat for Humanity helps build new homes and the Northumberland Department of Social Services provides "Section 8" housing assistance.

The Section 8 program consists of two elements: rental housing subsidies for eligible low-income families within the allotment of vouchers provided to the locality by the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA); and self-sufficiency services which provide assistance in developing and achieving plans of self-sufficiency that include goals of transitioning from subsidy assistance to financially independent housing. As a further element of assistance, the County should provide some property tax relief for low income households.

Northumberland County will work with the Northern Neck Planning District Commission to seek future Virginia Community Development Block Grants, VCDBG, for housing rehabilitation. Housing activities are eligible for VCDBG assistance to improve the living conditions of low- to moderate-income (LMI) persons. VCDBG funding may be used to rehabilitate LMI-occupied housing units or in support of the development of new housing units which will be occupied by LMI persons. In addition, once the housing needs analysis is complete, the Board of Supervisors should establish an affordable housing policy, strategies and implementation program. The objectives should be to support affordable housing for those who live and/or work in the County. In particular, the County should provide guidance, resources and incentives to the nonprofit and for-profit development and financing communities to increase the supply of affordable housing (both rental and homeownership) for households with incomes below the median income of the County. "Affordable Housing" in general terms means safe, decent housing where housing costs do not exceed 30% of the gross household income. In addition, affordable housing is defined, for purposes of the proposed policy as those houses affordable to the forty percent of the County population that have household incomes at or below 80% of the County median income.

This policy and related strategies and recommendations should be developed by a proposed Northumberland County Housing Committee or equivalent organization to be established after completion of a needs assessment.

## H. STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING PUBLIC SERVICES

### 1. Public Services Reference

The following table provides a quick reference to the public services covered in this Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Because services are provided by a combination of different public and private sources, planning for their development must be done in coordination with several other agencies.

The County is directly responsible for providing resources for construction of schools, county offices, sewage disposal facilities, solid waste stations, reservoirs and public recreational sites. The State provides for highways and support services through the Health Department and VPI Extension. Still other services (emergency services and recreation are in this category) are provided by private enterprise or not-for-profit organizations. The strategy for implementing the public elements of the Comprehensive Plan involves coordinating County projects with those provided by the State and other groups, private or public.

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**SUMMARY - PROVIDERS OF SERVICES**

| Type of Facility | Agency or Level of Government Responsible for Providing Service |
|---|---|
| Highways, Public | Primary Highways: VDOT[2], District Engineer's Office, Fredericksburg |
| | Secondary Roads: VDOT, County Resident Engineer's Office |
| | Bus Service: Bay Transit |

[2]Virginia Department of Transportation

| | |
|---|---|
| Recreational Facilities | Recreational Programs: Northumberland YMCA |
| | State: Construction and operation of public boat ramps, maintain Natural Area Preserves |
| | Commercial marinas; charter fishing boats; campgrounds; community associations |
| Water Supply | Community water systems: public and privately owned and operated |
| Sewage Disposal | Private septic tank except in Reedville, Callao and Kilmarnock where public sewerage systems are operated |
| County Office and Operational Buildings | County: Administrator's office |
| Schools | Northumberland County School Board |
| Social Services | Northumberland Department of Social Services |
| Health Services, Septic Systems | Health Department of Northumberland County |
| Emergency Services | Volunteer Rescue Squads, Paid EMS, Fire Companies, County Officials, Sheriff |
| Solid Waste Services | Private Contractor |