

# **TOWN OF IRVINGTON**

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**2023 Update**

**Alan Simpson (EPR, P.C.)**

**February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

# INTRODUCTION

A scenic view of a large body of water, likely a lake or bay, with a forested shoreline in the background and several houses with docks in the foreground. Two small sailboats are visible on the water.

# Purpose & Authority

- The Code of Virginia grants local governments distinct powers and responsibilities to plan for future growth and regulate land use within their jurisdictions. **The primary way to accomplish this is through the Comprehensive Plan.**
- Local governments in Virginia are required to review their comprehensive plan **every 5 years** for necessary updates.
- Irvington's Planning Commission is responsible for preparing the Plan and recommending the Plan for adoption by the Town Council.

# Timeline

**2017:** Existing Comprehensive Plan Adoption

**2022-2023:** Community Assessment

**2023:** Comprehensive Plan Update

**2022:** Community Survey

**2023:** Public & Stakeholder Meetings

**2024:** Updated Comprehensive Plan Adoption



# BACKGROUND



# Demographics & Housing Characteristics

- Irvington has experienced notable demographic and housing changes over the past decade. **The population increased by 9.26% between 2010 and 2020**, defying a countywide decline.
- This growth, however, is marked by **a transition to more part-time and seasonal residents**.
- Over the last ten years, there has also **been a welcome increase in young families with children moving into Irvington**.

Figure 1: Population Change (2010-2020)

Locality	2010	2020	Change (2010-2020)	Percent Change (2010-2020)
Irvington	432	474	+42	+9.26%
Lancaster County	11,391	10,919	-472	-4.14%
Northern Neck Planning District Commission	50,429	50,158	-271	-0.58%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census

Figure 2: Population Projections (2030-2050)

Locality	2030	2040	2050	Change (2030-2040)	Change (2040-2050)
Lancaster County	10,297	9,826	9,502	-4.57%	-3.30%
Northern Neck Planning District Commission	49,171	48,843	49,245	-0.67%	+0.82%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

# Demographics & Housing Characteristics

- The housing market reflects demographic trends, showing **a minor increase in housing units, a decline in occupied units, and a rise in primarily seasonal properties**, driven significantly by the transition of some homes to short-term rentals.
- Single-family homes dominate the housing landscape, and **home values in Irvington are considerably higher than the Lancaster County average**.
- These trends underscore **Irvington's unique position as a waterfront community, attracting a predominantly older and part-time population**. This dynamic will likely continue to shape the town's demographics and housing market.

**Figure 5: Housing Occupancy (2011-2021 Estimates)**

Category	2011	2021	Change (2011-2021)	Percent Change (2011-2021)
Total Housing Units	341	351	+10	+2.93%
Occupied Housing Units	253	213	-40*	-15.81%
Vacant Housing Units	88	138	+50	+56.82%
For Rent	0	12	+12	-
For Sale Only	0	5	+5	-
Seasonal, Recreational or Occasional Use	78	99	+21	+26.92%
All Other Vacant Units	4	17	+13	+325%
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0	2.5	+2.5	-
Rental Vacancy Rate	0	37.5	+37.5	-

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*\*The planning commission notes that this American Community Survey estimate may be inaccurate. The reduction in full-time residents from 2011 to 2021 was likely less than 40.*

# Existing Land Use

- The town's predominant land use is **single-family detached residential**, making up 446.66 of the town's 985.23 acres, or 45.34% of the land.
- **Agricultural use** comprises 54.35 acres, 19.92 of which are placed in a land conservation easement on the north end of Irvington.
- **Vacant or undeveloped land** makes up 353.12 acres or 35.84% of the town. This land is considered developable unless impeded by environmental factors such as wetlands, steep slopes, etc.

Figure 8: Existing Land Use

Land Use Classification		Acres	Percent
Residential	Single-Family Detached	446.66	45.34%
	Single-Family Attached (Townhouses)	0.3	0.03%
Commercial	Business/Professional	10.59	1.07%
	General Commercial	0.67	0.07%
	Lodging	27.14	2.75%
	Recreation	8.61	0.87%
	Retail & Service	12.24	1.24%
Industrial	Industrial	12.4	1.26%
Public and Semi-Public	Community Facilities	9.59	0.97%
	Institutional	8.72	0.89%
	Places of Worship, Cemeteries & Lodges	6.38	0.65%
	Rights of Way	33.1	3.36%
	Utilities	1.36	0.14%
Agricultural	Agricultural	34.43	3.49%
Undeveloped	Agricultural in Conservancy	19.92	2.02%
	Vacant/Undeveloped	353.12	35.84%
Total Land Area		985.23	100%

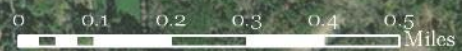
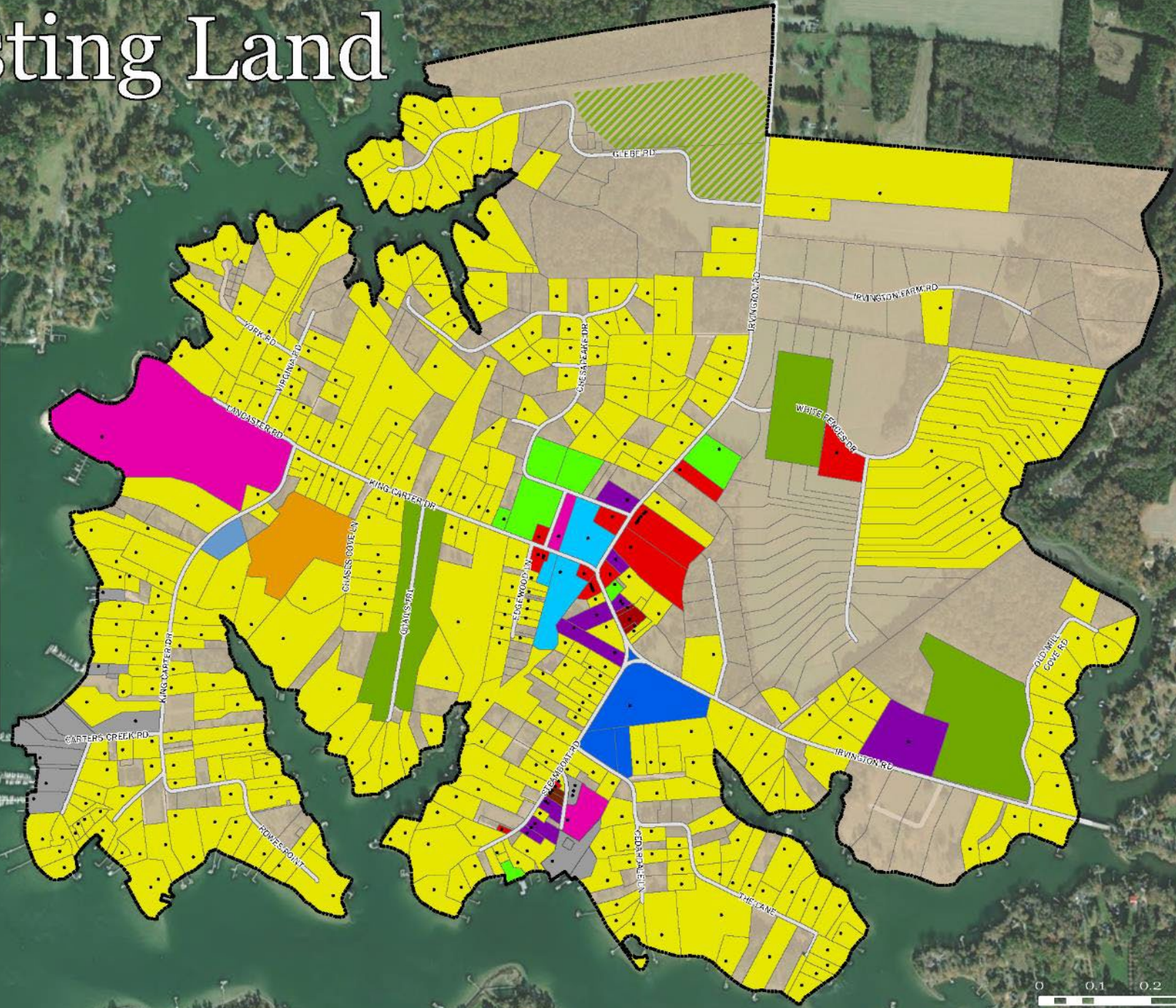
Source: EPR Analysis (2023)



# Existing Land Use

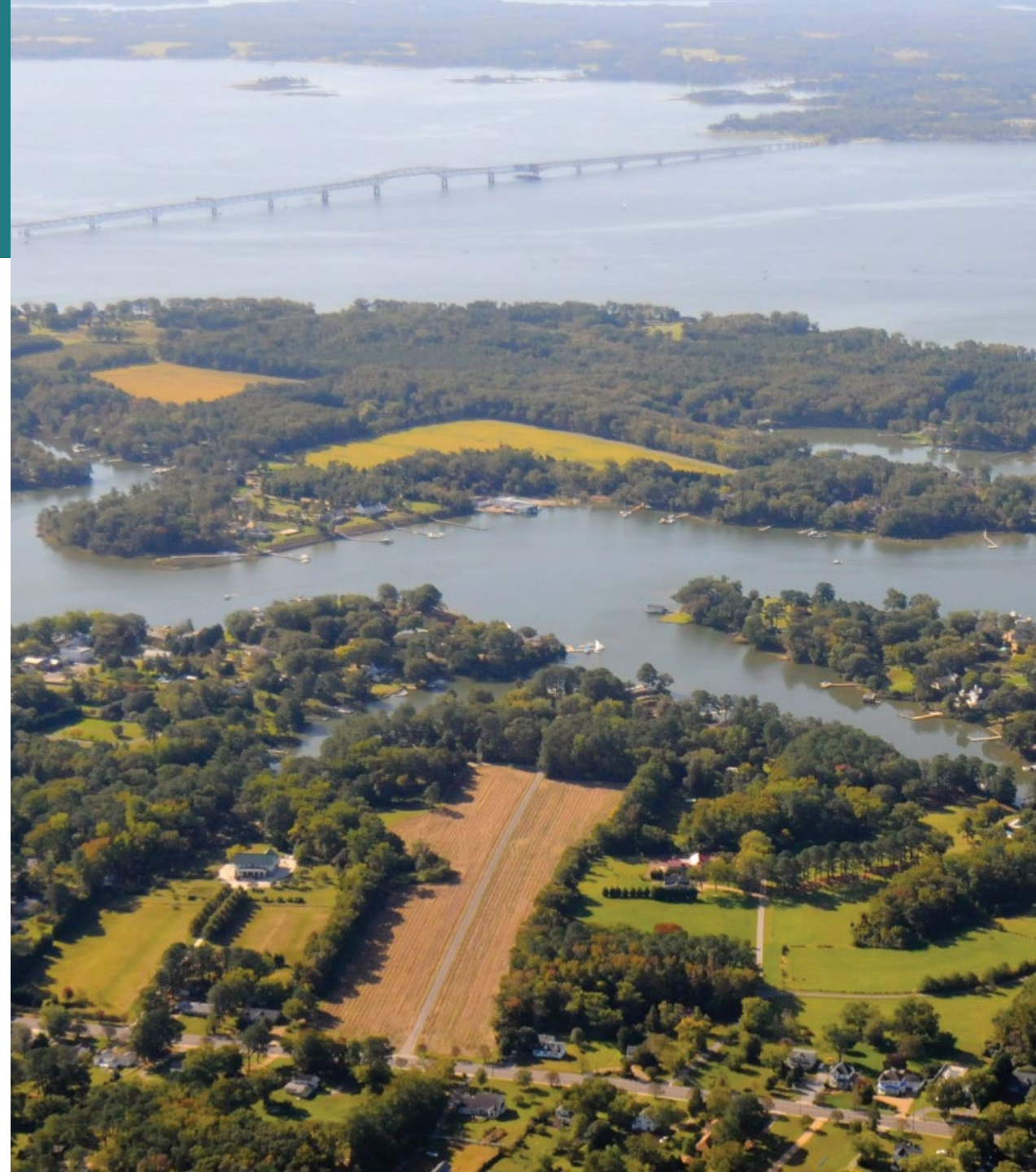
**Legend**

- Agricultural
- Business/Professional
- Community Facilities
- General Commercial
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Lodging
- Places of Worship, Cemeteries, & Lodges
- Recreation
- Retail & Service
- Single-Family Attached
- Single-Family Detached
- Vacant/Undeveloped
- Utilities
- Agricultural in Conservancy
- Buildings



# Existing Zoning

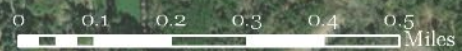
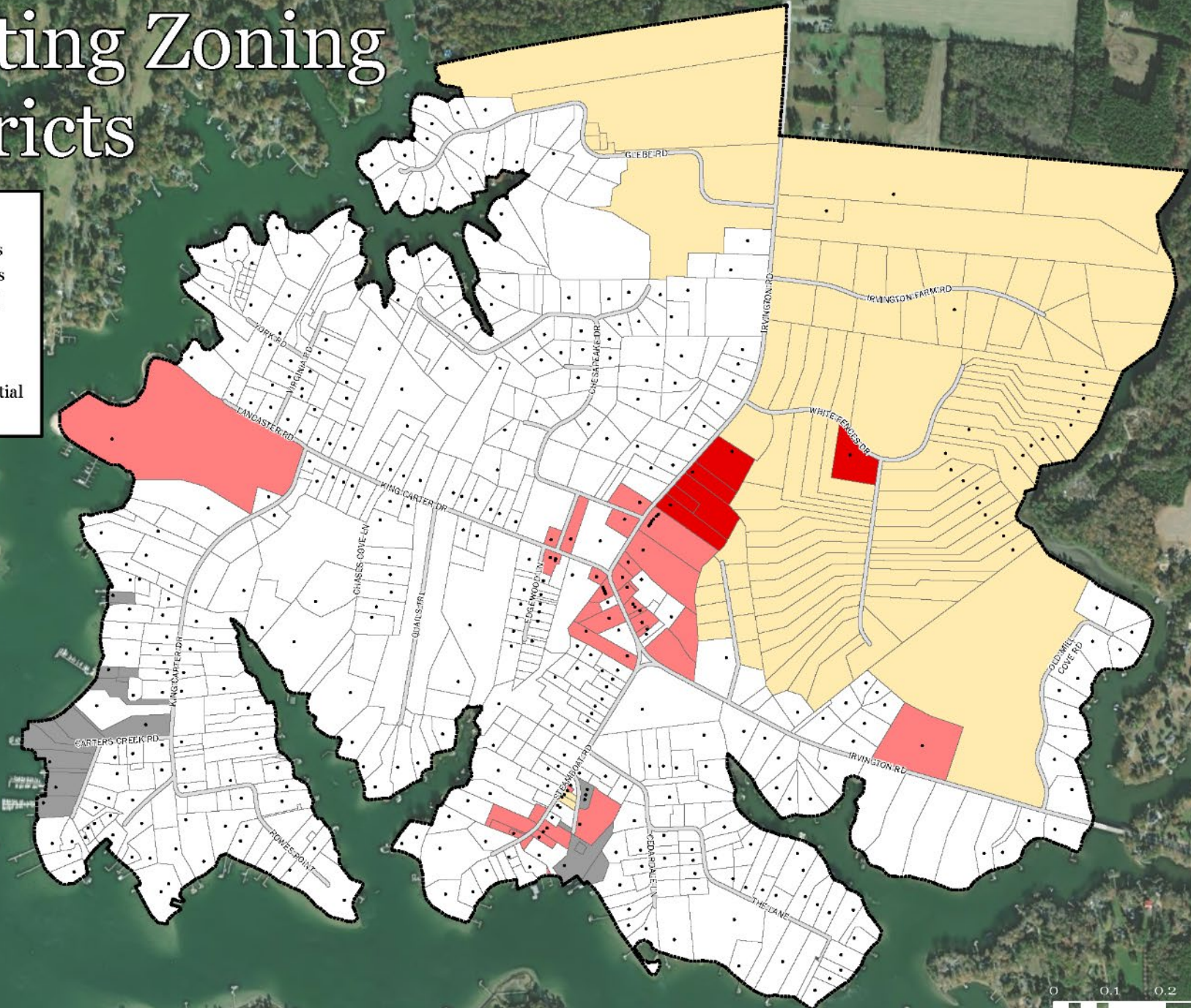
- The *Existing Zoning Districts* Map sets a **clear course** for Irvington by indicating the more extensive undeveloped tracts of land in the northern and eastern portions of the town are **to be developed at a lower density** (one dwelling unit per 2 acres of land) than the existing residential portions of town (one dwelling unit per 1 acre of land for new development).
- This delineation serves to **preserve the small-town and rural atmosphere in Irvington**, but it also has the potential to **slow the growth of the remaining undeveloped land**.



# Existing Zoning Districts

**Legend**

- B-1 Business
- B-2 Business
- M-1 Limited Industrial
- R-2 Residential
- R-1 Residential
- Buildings



# PUBLIC INPUT

A scenic view of a large body of water, likely a lake or bay, with a forested shoreline in the background and residential buildings with docks in the foreground. The sky is overcast. The text "PUBLIC INPUT" is overlaid in the center in a bold, teal font.

# Public Input

- In conjunction with EPR, the Town conducted a **17-question community survey** from June 1, 2022, to July 15, 2022.
- A summary of all survey responses can be found in **Appendix A** of the plan document.



## We Want to Hear from You

Welcome to the Town of Irvington's Community Survey!

If you are a Town resident, property owner, or business owner, we ask that you take a moment to respond to this survey. By providing your opinions and feedback, local officials will revise the Town's Plan accordingly. This effort will guide Irvington's vision of the future, goals, and investments.

We anticipate that your response time will be about 15 minutes. Use your phone's camera to scan the QR code to take the survey.

## COMMUNITY SURVEY



## For a Hardcopy of the Survey

You can find a hardcopy version of the survey at the Town Office:



4203 Irvington Rd  
Irvington, VA 22480

# Public Input

The 2023 survey and subsequent stakeholder meetings elicited valuable input regarding Irvington's future:

- Respondents generally supported **new local businesses, restaurants, families, and full-time residents**. Moreover, they desired any **new housing to be consistent with the town's existing style** and called for **thoughtful growth that maintains its character**. There was also widespread support for **repairing existing sidewalks**.
- However, residents were divided over several critical issues, such as **introducing a public sewer system, waterfront improvements, the scale of future residential development, a potential meals tax, improvements to the Town Commons, and the extension of sidewalks**.
- The results of the stakeholder meetings further elucidated these contentious topics, highlighting a recurrent **need for more information and clarity on the details and financials of proposed changes** and an **overarching desire to preserve the town's character** while balancing growth and community needs.

These findings **underscore the necessity of careful planning, clear communication, and community engagement** in any future development decisions in Irvington.

# DEVELOPMENT INTEREST



# Development Interest

Several landowners and developers have expressed an interest in the development of land they control:

- **Vineyard Meadow** – Thirty-five (35) lots of approximately 2 acres each have been subdivided and approved for single-family homes along White Fences Road and the paved Road to Nowhere. **At this point, no development has occurred.**
- **Irvington Farms** – Seventeen (17) lots of approximately 2 acres each have been subdivided and approved for single-family homes along paved Irvington Farms Road. **At this point, only one home has been built.**
- **Unnamed Subdivision** – Ten (10) lots ranging from 0.7 to 1.2 acres each have been subdivided and approved for single-family homes along an unnamed right-of-way that runs north-south just to the east of the house at 4693 Irvington Road. **At this point, no development has occurred.**
- **The Continued Revival and Renovation of the Tides Inn** – The hotel is into its fourth consecutive year of renovations and creating new programming and spaces. Upgrading all hotel spaces is intended to draw higher net worth individuals for longer stays, driving short-term business for the hotel, town, and surrounding areas.



# Development Interest

## Downtown Development Proposal

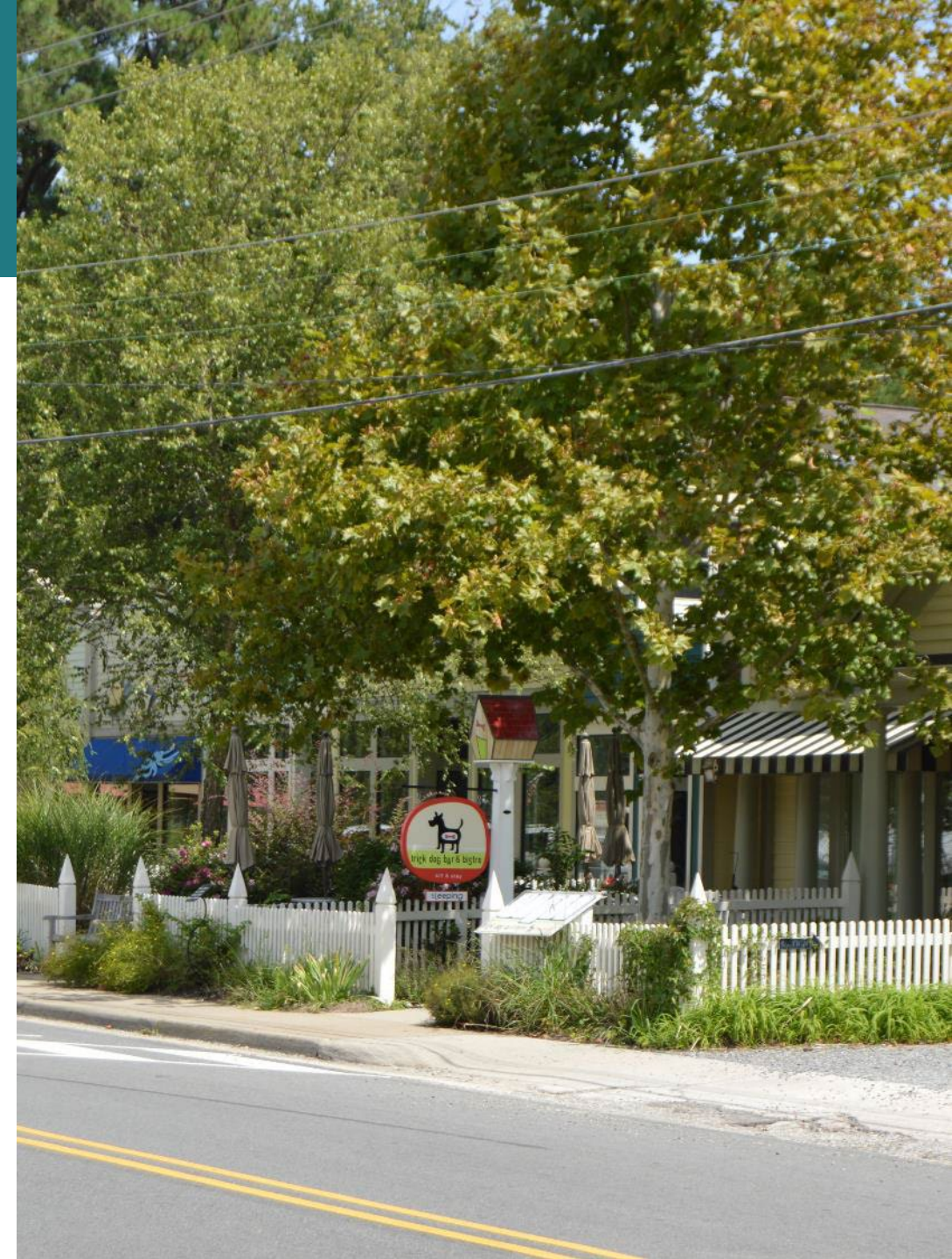
- An Irvington property owner and regional developer has put forward a vision for **the central business district** of Irvington as a **mixed-use development** with pedestrian and bicycle connections that **blends residential, commercial, cultural, and institutional uses**.
- This proposed development would take the form of a “**town block**” of mixed-uses in a complex of buildings along both sides of Irvington Road with **small office, business, retail, and restaurant** establishments at the ground level, **moderately priced apartment or condominium residences** on the upper floors, and **off-street parking** to minimize impacts on Irvington Road.
- This development would utilize a **consistent design concept** and have a **strong neighborhood character**, continuing the trend that started with the development of the Dredge Restaurant and adjoining shops. The actual plans and details are still under consideration.
- The proposed vision for developing the downtown business area **awaits market demand and infrastructure development**.

# ECONOMY

A scenic view of a large body of water, likely a lake or bay, with a forested shoreline in the background and residential buildings with docks in the foreground. The sky is bright and slightly hazy. The word "ECONOMY" is overlaid in the center in a bold, teal font.

# Economy

- The town's present economy comprises primarily **small, locally-run enterprises**, with the notable exceptions of the Tides Inn, Northern Neck Insurance Company, the Chesapeake Academy, Custom Yacht Service, and Rappahannock Yachts.
- Irvington's major employers **attract employees from surrounding localities**.
- The size of Irvington's existing labor force is **insufficient to support the staffing needs of the town's major employers**, as evidenced by the fact that most of their employees commute to Irvington from surrounding localities for work.
- Town residents **must visit neighboring localities to access goods and services** such as grocery items and everyday clothing.
- The size of the existing permanent resident population and the town's proximity to larger commercial centers **limit its ability to realistically support a more robust retail base**.



# COMMUNITY FACILITIES



# Community Facilities

The public engagement process for this comprehensive plan update **revealed conflicting opinions** among residents on the level of investment the Town should pursue regarding improvements to community facilities and amenities such as the **Town Office**, the **Commons**, and **public waterfront access**, as well as the prospect of bringing a **public sewer system** to Irvington:

- The survey generally indicated **little public support for significant investment** in a new **Town Office**.
- There was **general support for minor, inexpensive improvements** to the landscaping and beautification of the **Commons** and refurbishment of the existing tennis courts and playgrounds.
- Regarding **waterfront access**, many residents indicated that the existing Gaskins property and other boat ramps and parks near Irvington provided sufficient public water access. However, many participants also supported waterfront amenities such as a small park, a launching point for small watercraft, or a fishing dock. Still, there was **a general sense that the Town should not prioritize these improvements** over more pressing needs.
- The results of the community survey and stakeholder meetings confirmed that there **is little consensus on how the Town should approach the potential installation of a public sewer system**.

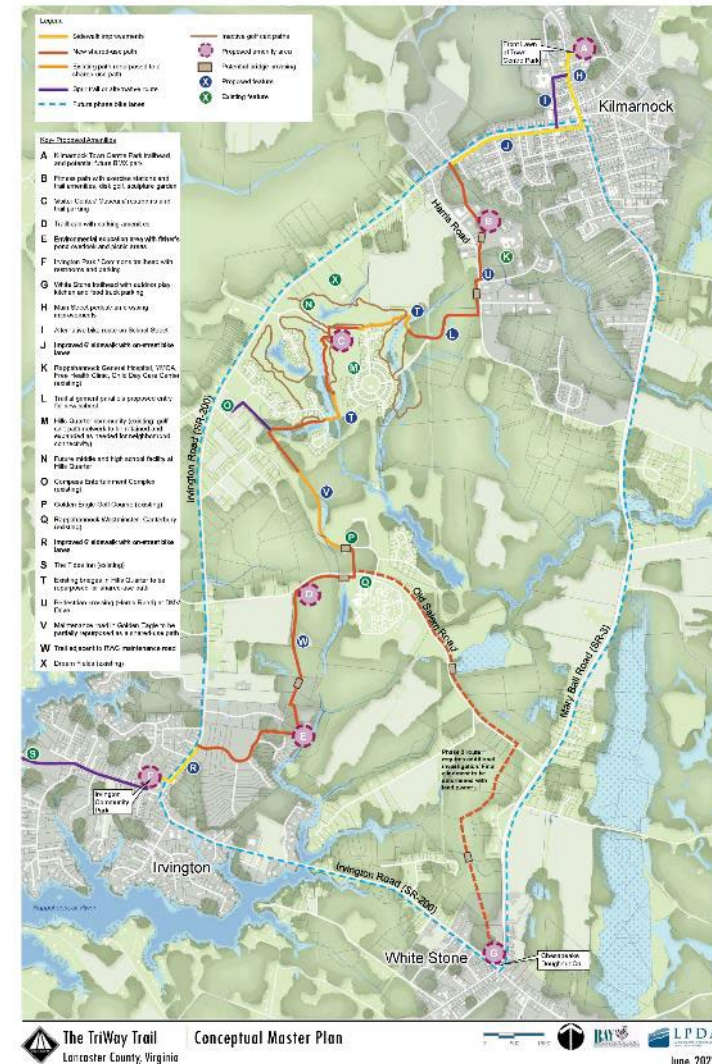
Going forward, **the Town should carefully consider feedback received during the public engagement process** before committing to improvements to community facilities and amenities. Additionally, the Town should make every effort to provide **as much information as possible regarding the costs, benefits, and potential drawbacks of any proposed improvements**.

# TRANSPORTATION



# Transportation

- Due to high traffic volumes, **traffic calming measures** have been installed along Irvington Road at and near its intersections with King Carter Drive and Steamboat Road. These improvements have been **somewhat effective** in enhancing pedestrian safety and lowering the speed at which vehicles travel through the area.
- The town has not yet implemented traffic calming measures such as **street trees, roundabouts, and brick crosswalks**, but such interventions could be **useful tools to calm traffic**.
- Although sidewalk connectivity within the central commercial corridor and its surrounding neighborhoods is generally adequate, there are **gaps in sidewalk coverage**, and some segments of the existing sidewalk need repair.
- Often, aging residents desire to eventually forego their car as their primary source of transportation to avoid the stress and financial burden of car dependency. Irvington's current and projected demographic makeup emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the community meets the needs of retirees. Notably, the same accessibility is often desired by young families. Therefore, **investing in an expanded transportation network** is essential in ensuring that the Town provides for current and potential future residents.
- The **TriWay Trail Master Plan** proposes an asphalt **multi-use path** down White Fences Drive, eventually turning north out of town towards Kilmarnock. This multi-use path would connect with Irvington Road at its intersection with White Fences Drive. Additionally, the plan proposes widening sidewalks from 4' to 6' on Irvington Road from its intersection with White Fences Drive to its junction with King Carter Drive, an on-street bike lane down that segment of Irvington Road, and a spur trail/on-street bike lane down King Carter Drive towards the Tides Inn.



**Figure 20: Proposed Transportation Improvements & Cost Estimates**

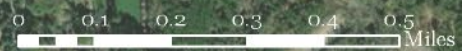
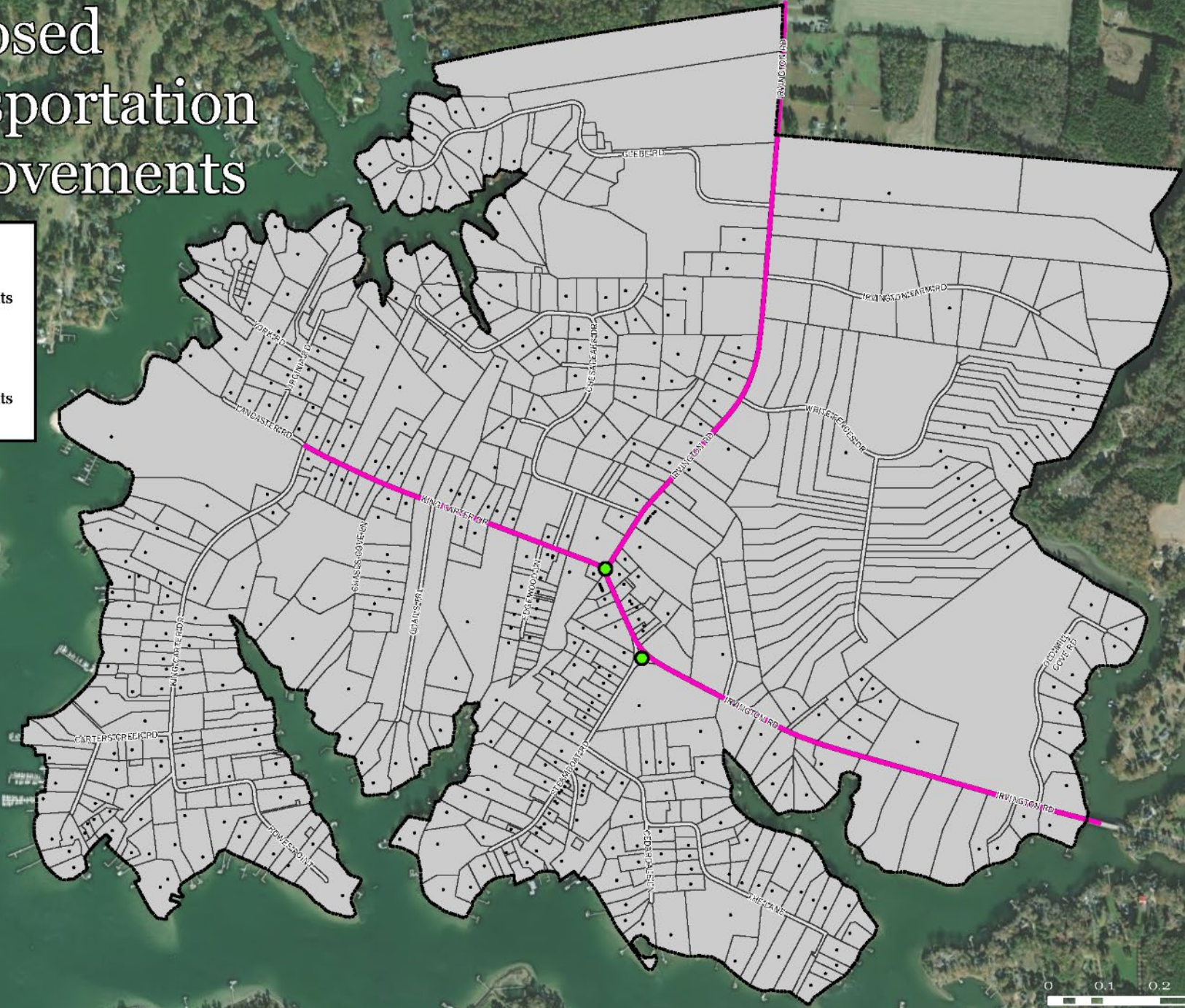
Project	Length	Estimated Cost per unit	Total Cost Estimate
Install street trees every 30 feet along both sides of Irvington Rd. between Pittman’s Dr. and its intersection with Steamboat Rd. as a traffic calming measure	0.7 miles	~\$421 per tree	~\$53,500
Install street trees every 30 feet along both sides of King Carter Dr. between its intersection with Irvington Rd. and Hearold Ln. as a traffic calming measure	0.9 miles	~\$421 per tree	~\$67,500
Construct a roundabout at the intersection of Irvington Rd. and King Carter Dr. as a traffic calming measure	n/a	n/a	~\$9,000,000
Construct a roundabout at the intersection of Irvington Rd. and Steamboat Rd. as a traffic calming measure	n/a	- n/a	~\$9,000,000
Install thermoplastic bike lane lines and signage along both sides of Irvington Rd. to enhance bicycle safety and accessibility	4.28 miles	\$175,000 per mile	~\$749,000
Install thermoplastic bike lane lines and signage along both sides of King Carter Dr. from its intersection with Irvington Rd. to Winstead Dr. to enhance bicycle safety and accessibility	1.18 miles	\$175,000 per mile	~\$206,500
Repair/replace sidewalks and complete gaps in the existing sidewalk network to provide full pedestrian access to adjacent residential and commercial uses	~1,000 linear feet	~\$750,000 per mile	~\$142,500
Install visual entrances to town limits on Irvington Rd.	N/A	N/A	~\$50,000



# Proposed Transportation Improvements

**Legend**

- Intersection Improvements
- Pedestrian, Bicycle, and
- Traffic Calming Improvements
- Buildings



# THE PLAN

This section outlines the **community's vision for its future** and the **goals, strategies,** and **tactic** needed to move that vision forward.



# Goal A: Preserve and enrich the charm and attractiveness of the Town of Irvington.

- **Strategy A-1: Protect existing real estate assets and historic resources.**
  - Tactic (ordinance): Conduct an ongoing review of the zoning and subdivision ordinances to determine code rewrites that protect existing real estate assets and historic charm while balancing individual property rights.
  - Tactic (program): Explore beautification efforts. Finance landscaping and maintenance of the Town's streetscape that reduce traffic speed throughout Irvington.
- **Strategy A-2: Ensure that organic growth is consistent with the Town's character.**
  - Tactic (ordinance): Conduct an ongoing review of the zoning and subdivision ordinances to determine code rewrites requiring appropriate densities and uses.

# Goal B: Enhance Irvington's livability and promote community through a livable, walkable town.

- **Strategy B-1: Foster active living and safety with bicycle and pedestrian improvements.**
  - Tactic (policy): Cooperate with Lancaster County and surrounding towns to implement the TriWay Trail (project) between Irvington, Kilmarnock, and White Stone.
  - Tactic (capital): Seek VDOT Transportation Alternatives Program funding in several phases for the construction of planned public pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
  - Tactic (capital): Construct planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities as VDOT award funds become available.
  - Tactic (program): Minimize through trucks in Irvington.
- **Strategy B.2: Ensure Irvington has state-of-the-art internet and cellular services.**

# Goal C: Foster the development of the Town's infrastructure for full- and part-time residents and tourists.

- **Strategy C.1: Improve the Town's Commons through playground and tennis court upgrades.**
  - Tactic (capital): Implement the Commons Improvement plan (currently underway).
- **Strategy C.2: Maintain and improve public access to the waterfront.**
  - Tactic (capital): Understand the Gaskins plan for maintaining our current waterfront access.
  - Tactic (capital): Appoint a Waterfront Committee to consider alternatives to Gaskins (currently underway).
- **Strategy C.3: Review alternatives for public sewer service.**
  - Tactic (program): Have a consultant develop options for sewer service following recommendations from the Sewer Advisory Panel (currently underway).
- **Strategy C.4: Develop and implement a plan for a new Town Hall by 2025.**
  - Tactic (capital): Develop and recommend alternatives to Town Council (currently ongoing).

# Goal C: Foster the development of the Town's infrastructure for full- and part-time residents and tourists.

- **Strategy C.5: Ensure Irvington has state-of-the-art communications infrastructure for cell phone and internet services.**
  - Tactic (program): Have Breezeline present to the Town their plans to provide state-of-the-art internet service to all of Irvington.
  - Tactic (program): Have Verizon and other cell phone service providers present to the Town their plans to provide state-of-the-art cell phone service for all of Irvington.
- **Strategy C.6: Develop traffic calming measures to build on our unique and walkable community.**
  - Tactic (program): Hire a consultant to identify traffic calming measures that will improve safety and walkability in Irvington.
  - Tactic (capital): Fund recommended traffic calming measures through local, state, and federal funds.

# Goal D: Encourage the organic growth of Irvington's tourism industry while preserving the Town's quiet waterfront character.

- **Strategy D.1: Boost tourism by advertising community events.**
  - Tactic (program): Continue to organize and host a widely available calendar of community events.
  - Tactic (program): Provide a map of waterfront access points in Irvington and the surrounding area.
- **Strategy D.2: Foster local business development for a healthy and active main street.**
  - Tactic (ordinance): Conduct an ongoing review of the zoning ordinances to determine code rewrites that would support local business development while limiting chain stores.
  - Tactic (capital): Conduct a feasibility analysis for a sewer system (See Goal C, Strategy C.3).
- Tactic (capital): Fund the traffic calming plan to build upon our unique and walkable community (See Goal C, Strategy C.6).

# Goal E: Foster Town unity, recreation, and fellowship.

- **Strategy E.1: Provide a space for planned and informal recreational activities geared toward residents and visitors.**
  - Tactic (capital): Maintain and upgrade playground and recreation equipment at the Town Commons (see Goal C, Strategy C.1).
  - Tactic (program): Organize family events and festivals that draw residents and visitors.
- Tactic (capital) Fund the traffic calming plan so that people of all ages can safely enjoy walking or biking to restaurants, coffee shops, houses of worship, and other destinations in town. (See Goal C, Strategy C.6)



# Goal F: Continue to preserve and enhance Irvington's waterfront charm.

- **Strategy F.1: Maintain existing waterfront access points.**

- Tactic (initiative): Create a relationship with the Gaskins family and a long-term goal to preserve Gaskins Landing (see Goal C, Strategy C.2).
- Tactic (capital): Formalize a right of first refusal for the Gaskins property in the event the family wishes to sell (part of Goal C, Strategy C.2).
- Tactic (policy): If the Town secures the Gaskins property, commission a plan of development site improvements.

- **Strategy F.2: Consider alternative public waterfront access**

- **Strategy F.3: Provide tourism information on waterfront access points.**

- Tactic (program): Develop informational materials on where visitors can find waterfront access in the area.

- **Strategy F.3: Maintain a working waterfront.**

- Tactic (initiative): Develop an understanding of current working waterfront plans by property owners and encourage continued cooperation.

# FUTURE LAND USE

A scenic view of a large body of water, likely a lake or bay, with a forested shoreline in the background and residential buildings with docks in the foreground. The sky is bright and overcast. The text "FUTURE LAND USE" is overlaid in the center in a bold, teal font.

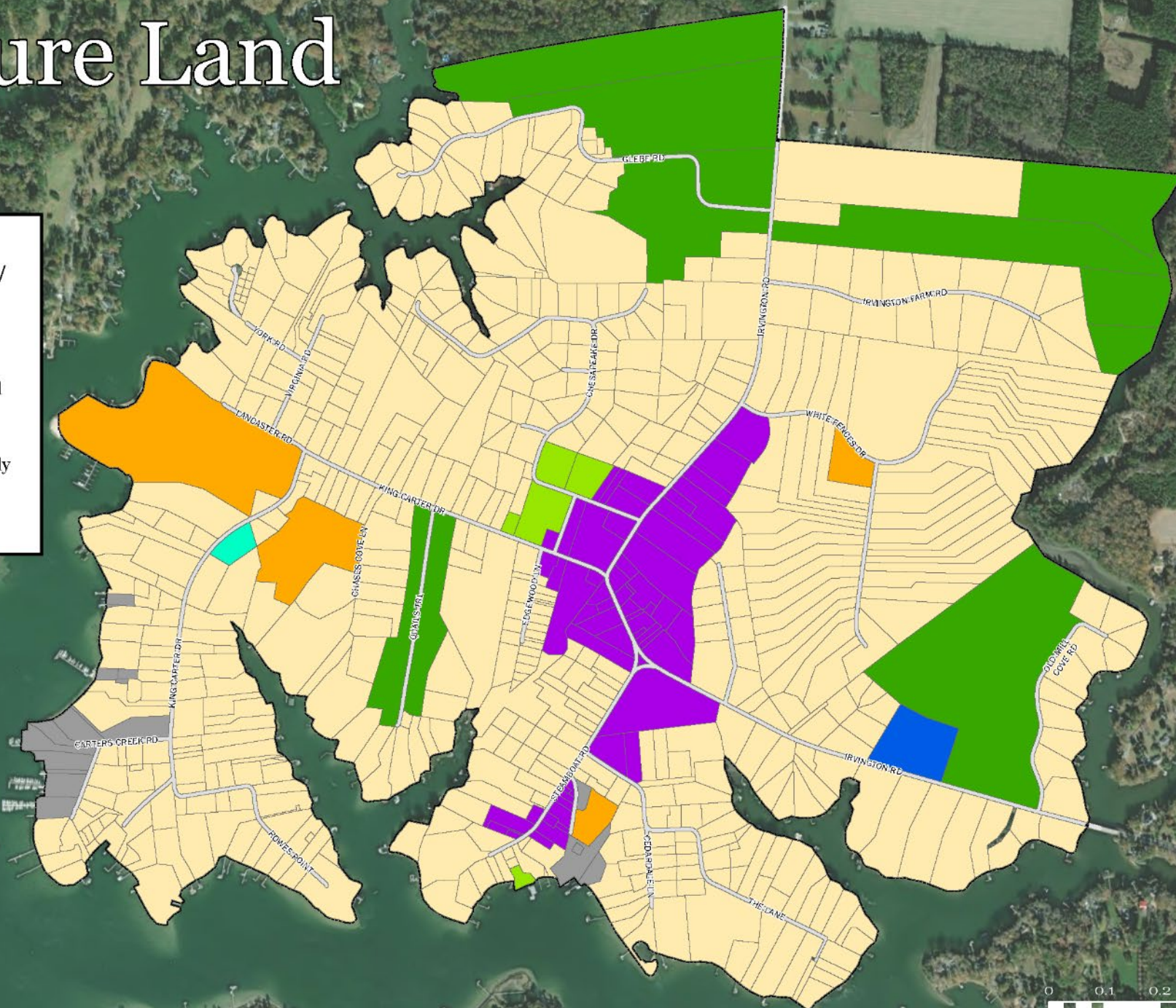
# Future Land Use

- The Town is poised for **thoughtful development that aligns with its commitment to preserving its charm and attractiveness.**
- Key aspects of Irvington's future land use patterns include **the protection of natural and historic resources, management of organic growth** to maintain the town's character, enhancement of **waterfront access**, fostering **local business development**, and ensuring that **new developments are in harmony with the town's existing character.**
- In short, future land use in Irvington will be focused on **preserving the town's unique charm and historical significance** while **accommodating controlled and thoughtful growth.**
- The **Future Land Use Map** reflects the goals, strategies, and tactics outlined in this Plan, approved residential development, and a proposed vision for a central business district that involves mixed-use development integrating residential, commercial, cultural, and institutional uses.

# Future Land Use

**Legend**

- Agricultural/ Open Space
- Community Facility
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Mixed-Use
- Office
- Single Family Residential
- Utilities
- Hospitality



# **THANK YOU!**

## **QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

**Alan Simpson**  
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**(804) 833-9151**