

3. Continue to support the beach replenishment project
4. Work with the towns to support their tourism efforts
5. Expand eco-tourism opportunities through environmental, heritage and cultural attractions
6. Accommodate the location of year-round recreational and resort oriented land-uses
7. Develop facilities and attractions that continue full operation in the non-peak seasons
8. Recognize and provide for the needs of the hunting, fishing, and boating sectors

Construction and Real Estate

1. Provide through the land use plan sufficient land for planned growth to meet expected demand for housing, commercial and support services.
2. Continue to provide vo-tech training to provide skilled labor for the construction industry
3. Provide “in-service” training to keep construction and real estate professionals informed of relevant county policies and programs



Industrial Development

1. Continue the industrial development program to retain existing industries and emphasize light industry to expand the county’s

- research/product-development, manufacturing, health and high-tech sectors
2. Maintain an inventory of suitable locations for appropriate industries to locate within the county
3. Locate industrial uses primarily in industrial parks
4. Address industrial infrastructure needs, including electrical supply, natural gas, and bandwidth improvements
5. Inventory and develop policies for rehabilitating and using “brown fields” sites

Health Care

1. Anticipate growth in health care needs and facilitate the industry’s expansion to address these needs.

Agriculture and Forestry

1. Work to preserve farming and increase its economic viability. Explore the utility of agricultural tourism⁴⁴, alternative crops (flowers, organic farming, vegetables, cotton, hemp, wine grapes, greenhouse crops), “value-added” products (wine, soy products, bio-fuels), and co-op marketing
2. Provide for sufficient agricultural support services
3. Reduce farm area fragmentation through agricultural zoning permitting only minor subdivisions (five or less lots), the state’s agricultural preservation program, the Rural Legacy program and explore the use of a transfer of development rights and other preservation mechanisms

⁴⁴ Worcester County Tourism and the Agricultural Extension Service began in the fall of 2004 to organize local farmers to develop agricultural tourism.

4. Continue the “right-to-farm” law
5. Encourage development of an educational/recreational agricultural park
6. Review permitted land uses in agricultural zone to ensure compatibility with agriculture as a quasi-industrial use. Adjust requirements to prevent inappropriate uses from developing in agricultural areas
7. Work to preserve forestry by preventing fragmentation and providing for support facilities

Fisheries

1. Seafood landing and processing facilities should be retained through land use controls and incentives
2. Protect the seafood and recreational fisheries through fisheries management and the use of suitable local, state, and federal regulations to protect water quality, fish stocks, nursery areas, and local access to fisheries
3. Encourage aquaculture of fish, clams and oysters
4. Maintain the West Ocean City Harbor as a working commercial harbor



Compatible signage helps commercial uses fit into a neighborhood

5. Work to bring dormant oyster leases back to production

Commercial Services

1. Locate commercial and service centers in major communities; existing towns should serve as commercial and service centers.
2. Provide for suitable locations for commercial centers able to meet the retailing and service needs of population centers.
3. Encourage mixed-use commercial, office and residential development.
4. Bring into balance the amount of zoned commercial locations, with the anticipated need with sufficient surplus to prevent undue land price escalation.
5. Locate commercial uses so they have arterial roadway access and are designed to be visually and functionally integrated into the community.
6. Explore the use of transfer of development rights to reduce the over supply of commercially zoned land.
7. Provide design guidance for commercial development to ensure it is a community asset. Commercial development by its nature locates on highly visible sites, therefore increased landscaping, signage, lighting, screening, architectural and other standards are necessary to maintain neighborhood character.
8. Develop appropriate site, design and location standards for larger-scale and “big-box” commercial developments.
9. Discourage “franchise architecture” and standard flat roofed strip-type commercial facilities.

Recommendations

Employment

Agricultural employment will largely remain stable or may increase somewhat