

Our Vision for Salisbury  
'Capital of the Eastern Shore'

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DRAFT



*February 2012*



*Dear Friends,*

*This document represents a living commitment; a promise that I will work hard, every day, if I have the great honor to serve you. It will undoubtedly change and morph as I learn more about what our community needs, what we want and what the best tools for restoring PRIDE and PROSPERTY to Salisbury are. Fundamentally, this requires PARTNERSHIP among City entities, community organizations, State/Federal/national leaders and you - the residents who love Salisbury and hope for better.*

*I don't promise that in two and a half years we will have tackled everything in here - but I do promise to work each day toward taking these actionable steps. Call this proof positive that I have a vision and I will use my vote and my voice to work toward impelementing this vision that many people have contributed to and that I know many of you share.*

*Respectfully and faithfully yours,*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Day'.

*Jake Day*



## VISION

The City of Salisbury will shine as the Delmarva Peninsula’s cultural, economic and transportation capital.

## GOALS

1. Restore Pride to Salisbury
2. Restore Prosperity to Salisbury
3. Restore Partnership to Salisbury’s Government

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## Pillar 1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### STRATEGY 1 Downtown

*To ever convince others that we are worthy of their investment, we must first invest in our own heart and soul.*

#### ACTIONS

- 1. Place-based economic development is critical to revitalizing our downtown and neighborhood commercial centers. Creating great places where people want to spend time is a lasting and self-replicating economic development strategy.**
- 2. Create a cheerleader and a foreman: someone to gather disparate interests and maintain momentum and someone to implement the plans. In all tasks, planning and discussions, they should maintain respect and a unified front among all involved; focus on clear and decisive action; and include leadership from private and public sectors**

Create a Downtown Revitalization Task Force empowered to propose reduced barriers to investment, meet with city officials and engage directly with local and other development interests. The Task Force should include the Chamber of Commerce, Greater Salisbury Committee, SWED, SWAC and City and County Council.

Establish and provide start-up and maintenance funding for a Downtown Salisbury Association - of private businesses. Fund in part through Business Improvement District.

Establish a Land Bank/Community Trust to assemble, market and sell remaining city-owned lots for private development after preliminary RFP process is complete.

Create Downtown Development Office in a storefront location. This will be the 'front door' for developers in the City. In the near term, staff with one Downtown Development Associate. At least one representative from Planning & Zoning, Neighborhood Services and Public Works will work at least one day/week out of the office.

Conduct monthly walking tours with mayor, department heads and council members around downtown to discuss progress and opportunities.

Staff will provide marketing analysis for businesses, serve as liaisons to other city departments, shepherd ordinance changes, expedite reviews and processes, match investors/property owners/lessees.



### **3. Capitalize on the Riverfront**

Implement the 2008 North Prong Strategic Revitalization Plan.

Create a Long-Term Plan to connect the River to US 50, prioritizing redevelopment/infill of land around Salisbury Plaza and Perdue plant, including City lots.

Produce riverfront design guidelines that maximize site coverage and floor area ratio; identify build-to lines; require ground floor retail and other uses above; maintain porosity between street and river, but primarily through pedestrian walk-throughs (not parking lots or un-designed spaces between buildings).

### **4. Redesign the Plaza so that pedestrians and cars have a clearer sense of who owns what space and when.**

Keep the plaza pedestrian oriented by creating great sidewalks on Main Street with grade change to the street and open to narrow traffic and an increased number of on-street parking, but minimize traffic calming planters to encourage traffic and maintain street trees with narrow canopy.

Implement the Main Street streetscape developed by Urban Salisbury. State Highway Administration and Sustainable Communities funding from MDP/DHCD/DOT should be pursued immediately.

Install retractable bollards on the plaza to close for street festivals. This should be included in grant applications for the Main Street streetscape.

### **5. Design the City's highest quality environment in our Downtown.**

Require parking to be on-street, on alleys (back lot) or in garages. Surface lots are wasteful of the City's resources and environmentally unsustainable.

Develop a visual Downtown Design guideline document and apply Form-Based (as opposed to Use-Based) codes downtown.

Require all projects to apply the principles of (if not be certified by) LEED for Neighborhood Development.

As proposals are accepted in response to the latest RFP, develop Lots 1 and 10, 500 Riverside and the North Prong as nodes of activity.



**6. Mix uses by developing projects with retail on the ground floor, housing above and parking within.**

Continue the addition of loft apartments in upper floors of existing buildings throughout Downtown by gathering downtown building owners and realtors to identify and reduce impediments to turning any remaining vacant upper floors into residential space.

Develop mixed-use buildings in Old Town and Development districts with ground floor retail.

The RFP process for downtown development should require on the City's Lot 10 mixed-use development, a parking garage, a marquee attraction (such as a cultural venue or theater) and an open civic plaza/space for the Flea Market.

The RFP process for downtown development should require on the City's Lot 11 and 12 mixed-use development with housing and ground-floor retail.

**7. Expand community facilities downtown.**

Incorporate the pursuit of a theater or community hall downtown for public/civic events in current and future RFP processes.

Maintain the redevelopment of Fire Station 16 as a top priority in the ongoing RFP process.

Create a Visitors Center/Perdue/Agriculture museum next to the Perdue processing plant. This can be a signature attraction to those entering downtown and act as a nexus for redirecting visitors to other sites in the downtown area. This should be staffed jointly by the City of Salisbury and Wicomico County. Discussions with the MHAA, DOT and Wicomico County Department of Recreation, Parks & Tourism should begin immediately to identify potential funding strategies.

Keep the Wicomico Public Library downtown and lobby the County to renovate and expand the facility into a 21st Century knowledge/research center.



## **8. Actively manage and monitor downtown parking.**

Reduce surface parking requirements downtown and city-wide.

As parking lots are turned into garages, pursue policies that include:

Privatization of garages, placing a cap on the fee structure.

Study an increase in on-street parking including on the West Main Street Plaza.

Determine location for metered and un-metered on-street parking spaces.

In areas where meters are recommended, implement smarter metering systems that allow payments by phone and credit card.

## **9. Create incentives to encourage growth of existing investors.**

### Industrial Wastewater Credit Allowance

For industrial users of City water with wastewater discharge less than the water used (like Pepsi and Perdue), a credit can be given to reduce the cost to the user - and to accurately reflect the service provided to those users.

### Property Improvement Staggered Tax Program

Provide a tax break to developers/investors who make improvements to pay one-fifth of their increased property taxes based on any increase in assessed value. Only one-fifth of city tax obligations are due in tax break year 1 (increases in property values due to improvements only), two-fifths during year two, three-fifths during year three and four-fifths during year four.

### Vacancy Reduction Program

For owners of under-performing property (chronically high vacancy) the City should work with existing landlords to induce the establishment of reasonable asking rents or promote other actions to reduce vacancy, including property improvement. This should be the responsibility of the Downtown Development Office. In the future, the City could attempt to purchase (via the Land Bank/Trust) the underperforming properties with the intention of the re-selling those properties to more engaged investors and property managers.



## 10. Reduce barriers to further investment.

### Maintain Low Impact Fees

I will support no new impact fees on new development in the City for fire, police or other services for which no explicit authorizing legislation exists.

Maintain existing impact fees for City services as among the lowest among Eastern Shore municipalities.

### Equivalent Dwelling Unit Bank

Using surplus Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs) from Linens of the Week or other properties, create a bank of EDUs for downtown development that reduces the cost of connecting to City services in the downtown area.

### Surplus Parking Lots

As articulated in the Downtown Plan, surplus the City surface parking lots downtown. Simultaneously require that development on the lots be mixed use and preserve at least 50% of parking spaces - though none on streets. Require ground floor retail on all public streets - where possible.

Maintain the façade Revolving Loan Fund, Enterprise Zone, Sustainable Community Designation, Historic District, Arts & Entertainment District.

Create a discussion group of local banks to determine the best methods for increasing access to capital for downtown development.

Consider the creation of a downtown Tax Increment Financing district to fund the development of garage elements of development and other public infrastructure.

## 11. Eliminate the ‘Downtown Island’ created by US 50, US 13 and Carroll Street.

Codify the City’s housing development plan to respond to the identified challenge: “issues such as traffic congestion, poor signalization, restrictive access, inadequate river crossings, and insufficient pedestrian crossings have helped to isolate the Downtown from the neighborhoods, especially the Westside. Thus, a key to revitalization of the Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods is to link both through improved pedestrian access.”





Meet with Perdue to develop a plan to clean up street frontage of Perdue processing plant with more plantings against the fencing and street trees only between the sidewalk and US 50.

Partner with SHA to implement a uniform street tree program on US 13, US 50 and Carroll Street.

Build median on US 13 and Carroll Street like that on US 50.

Update zoning to require building to lot lines along US 13, US 50 and Carroll Street. Any renovations to shopping centers should require parking be located behind buildings.

## **12. Connect the University to downtown.**

### **Redesigning the Route 13 Corridor**

Develop and publish a form-based zoning code for the corridor from Downtown to Salisbury University that emphasizes pedestrian-oriented buildings, housing above retail and increased density.

Pursue grant programs with SHA to institute street trees along the corridor and in the median.

Pursue and study the long-term development of a 1.4 mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or Trolley Line from Salisbury University to Downtown.



## **STRATEGY 2 Growth + Development**

*A concentrated effort to grow wealth in our community must include real estate development and growth. This growth can be both economically and environmentally sustainable.*

### **ACTIONS**

#### **1. Reinforce the objectives of Salisbury's 2010 Comprehensive Plan**

Namely: "Promote a compact development pattern and to grow in an orderly and controlled manner that enhances sustainability and provides a livable community" and "To pursue infill annexation opportunities while assuring that future growth does not outpace available public facilities".

#### **2. Official Street Map**

Explore an 'Official Street Map' in growth areas to help coordinate development and growth through the City and County Planning & Zoning and Public Works offices.

#### **3. Developers' Rights and Responsibilities Agreements (DRRA)**

Pursue DRRAs with each developer to define community needs and desires for every project, to include design features, community amenities, fee, incentive and payment expectations.

#### **4. Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO)**

Rather than extracting fees from all developers at all times without an express intent, implement an APFO tying development approvals and the content of DRRAs to the existing and planned capacity of infrastructure based on quantifiable levels of service for public facilities and services.

#### **5. Market-Cluster Analysis**

Immediately conduct a new Market-Cluster Analysis, examining indicators at block-group level and lower to determine what businesses and services are missing in the downtown and commercial areas.



## **6. Land Bank/Land Trust**

As the outcome of the Downtown RFP Process becomes clearer, and if development does not begin soon on parcels, begin the land assembly process on a small scale by establishing a government Land Bank for City-owned lots and other vacant parcels that have long gone un- (or under-) developed.

## **7. Ensure the policies of the City abide by the goals of our comprehensive plan, including:**

“Redevelop underutilized areas in the City in an appropriate manner for the benefit of existing and future residents, while encouraging responsible and sustainable new development in appropriate areas.” “Promote Salisbury as the urban center of the Delmarva Peninsula by creating opportunities to expand into new tourism markets and enhancing existing tourism markets, such as interconnecting the existing hiking and biking trails through the City.”

## **8. Make annexation of developed and developing areas easier and mutually beneficial to the City and property owners.**

Streamline the annexation process to reduce conflict between the City and Wicomico County, establish clearer boundaries between the urban/developed area of the County (in municipal areas) and the undeveloped or rural areas of the County and update annexation plans as necessary.

In all new annexations, continue the policy of negotiating developer payments to a fund for neighborhood revitalization.

Create a working group of homeowners in residential areas in the County that are adjacent to the City to discuss and identify the barriers and potential resolutions to a cleaning up of the City’s boundaries through annexation.

## **9. Encourage a policy of City Growth First**

Maintain a policy of growth through reinvestment in the City, growth in identified growth areas and infill development. While development in the County rural areas is not within the scope of the City Council, the Council can communicate with its County partners its commitment to first investing in the City and second to growing the City.



## **STRATEGY 3    Development Approval Process**

*We must reduce impediments to investment, beginning with reducing confusion and red tape.*

### **ACTIONS**

#### **1. Developers' Front Door**

Create a Developers' Front Door in Salisbury through the Downtown Development Office (described above).

#### **2. Developer's Forum**

Host a bimonthly Developer's Forum for developers from within and outside of the region to create an opportunity for residents to share their wishes with real estate developers. As a complement to market analysis, this anecdotal process would emphasize what excites consumers in Salisbury.

#### **3. Real Estate Breakfast**

Host a regular Real Estate Breakfast with the Mayor and Council. A bimonthly breakfast should be hosted at a local business by the Mayor and Council with Mayor and Council members dispersed among tables of real estate development professionals from the area and beyond to discuss progress and issues related to development in the City.

#### **4. Regular development opportunity publicity**

Monthly inserts in the Daily Times and other papers around the region should highlight opportunities for development including RFPs for city-owned lots, joint public/private opportunities and private investment/development opportunities with public benefit.

#### **5. Monthly RFP Cycle**

Requests for Proposals should be published once per month until every vacant lot in the city has some development activity underway.



## **STRATEGY 4 Economic Development Office**

*To increase our community's wealth and success, we must increase the share of our government time and resources that are invested in economic development. An economic development office can be mediator, shepherd and partner for the business community.*

### **ACTIONS**

#### **1. Economic Development Officer**

Fund in FY14 a dedicated Economic Development Officer to lead all economic development efforts within the City.

#### **2. Salisbury/Wicomico Economic Development, Inc.**

Maintain the City's investment in SWED and require that the Economic Development Officer work in concert with SWED, supporting broader regional economic development strategies while maintaining a focus on Salisbury's role.



## STRATEGY 5 Entrepreneurship

*Homegrown businesses are the lifeblood of our economy and of community pride. Look at Southern Boys' Concepts, Rise Up Coffee and countless more as examples.*

### ACTIONS

#### 1. Small Business Incubator

Create a new Small Business Incubator for startup companies. For an example, see Beta-more in Baltimore, started by Salisbury native Mike Brenner or find more info at <http://mdbusinessincubation.org>.

Publish an RFP for reduced-cost or donated space to host the incubator.

Add a budget line item to the City budget for funding toward renovating the space and operating the incubator. A goal should be to have the incubator operate as an independent 501(c)3, but should be managed in the interim by the City Economic Development Office.

Seek matching State, County and Salisbury University/Wor-Wic investments and investment in startup businesses should be sought from Perdue and other established firms.

Research a policy structure (fees, ownership, expansion, duration of presence, etc.) that provides the best launching pad and incubation space for successful businesses in Salisbury. The space could even be on a specific industry like agriculture technology or alternative energy technology since the region is well-positioned in both industries, or it could have multiple specialties.

#### 2. Startup Space Locator

Gather a consortium of commercial real estate brokerages as a task force for helping fledgling businesses shift from the incubator into new spaces.

Like the 'Cool Space Locator' in Pittsburgh, PA, gather a task force of real estate brokerages to meet with fledgling businesses that have growth potential to identify spaces and strategies for successful transition to independence.



## STRATEGY 6 Manufacturing + Commerce

*The manufacturing and large-scale commercial sector in Salisbury spans from agriculture and food processing to microwave filter, aerospace, shipbuilding, petroleum refinement and much more. This is a cornerstone of future economic growth in Salisbury and policies should be implemented to reinforce the sector.*

### ACTIONS

#### 1. Property Tax Credit for Manufacturers

The City should offer a tax credit to manufacturers who locate in the City in the amount of 10% of their property tax for the duration of their stay in the City, 20% for the first 5 years in the City and 25% for the duration of their stay in the City if they locate in the Enterprise Zone.

#### 2. Inventory Tax Elimination

The City should lobby Wicomico County to eliminate the inventory tax over the next five years to create incentives for manufacturing firms to locate in the County and City. This directly impacts businesses like Perdue, Pohanka and Pepsi.

#### 3. Strengthen connection to agribusiness

In concert with the visitors center project, Salisbury University and Perdue - initiate planning for an informational and commemorative space in the downtown area for agriculture, agribusiness and Perdue's relationship to the area.

Begin discussions around efforts to maintain and attract long-term additional investment in the City from Perdue. The relationship between Perdue Foods, Perdue Agribusiness and the Salisbury community is known worldwide. This relationship can be strengthened with an ever-increasing investment by Perdue in its business - in the Salisbury area.

Commission a study from BEACON to determine the potential for the growth of Salisbury as a hub for agribusiness and bioenergy.

Task the new City Economic Development Officer with pursuing the relocation of agribusiness firms from elsewhere in the region to Salisbury.



#### 4. Strengthen connection to Wallops Space Flight Facility and aerospace industry

The Economic Development Officer should be tasked to work with the Greater Salisbury Committee, Mid-Atlantic Institute for Space Technology, Wallops Space Flight Facility, UMES and Salisbury University to recruit new businesses related to the aerospace industry and to identify actions the City can take to better position itself to be attractive to the aerospace industry.

#### 5. Hospital Partnership

The Economic Development Officer should be tasked to work with Peninsula Regional Medical Center to identify strategies to support further expansion of the health service industry within the City.

The City should continue to partner with Peninsula Regional Medical Center and Salisbury University to develop any policies needed to attract a future medical school to Salisbury.





## Pillar 2 REVERSING THE BRAIN DRAIN

### STRATEGY 1 Youth Involvement in Governance

*We have an opportunity to increase the likelihood that young people will stay in our community if they are involved at a young age and feel ownership over the issues that affect the community.*

#### ACTIONS

##### 1. Youth Civics Council

Establish a Council of young people, selected from 5th through 12th grade and from across the City to participate in a monthly Civics Council meeting, including: a Council meeting of their own to discuss community issues, observation of a City Council meeting and discussion with the City Council and Mayor of relevant contemporary issues, procedures and future challenges.

##### 2. Board & Commission Youth Mentorship Program

Establish a program for students, selected from 10th through 12th grades interested in specific City programs and issues such as Historic Preservation, Planning, Recycling or Housing to provide insight into the issues that communities grapple with in various professional interest areas. Not only will this provide career development and mentorship but will increase ownership in young citizens over community issues.



## **STRATEGY 2 University Relations**

*Deepening the connections between Salisbury University students and the community in which they will spend at least four years.*

### **ACTIONS**

#### **1. Salisbury University Community Council**

To strengthen the relationship between Salisbury University students and the community, a council of students with faculty and administration support and participation should be created to create a forum for dialogue with the City Council, mayor's office and neighborhood entities to discuss issues and to resolve challenges.

#### **2. Downtown Incubator (see above)**

Priority in the downtown incubator should be given to winners of the Bernstein Entrepreneurship Competition and analysis should be conducted in concert with the Small Business Development Center.

#### **3. Strengthen relationship with Salisbury University leaders**

Continue to work closely with Salisbury University to support further expansion in appropriate locations. Regulations should more clearly target expansion areas, while discouraging conflicts with existing neighborhoods. Salisbury University leadership should be invited to make frequent and regular presentations to the City Council regarding its plans and ways in which the City and University can benefit one another.

#### **4. Strengthen relationship with Wor-Wic Community College**

Work with Wor-Wic Community College to identify programs that can more frequently bring students into the City and identify long-term strategies for a permanent satellite presence in Downtown Salisbury.



## Pillar 3      **TRANSPARENCY + OPEN GOVERNMENT**

### **STRATEGY 1    Accessible + Representative Government**

*Although transparency in local government has been a priority of our Council for some time, there is a perception in the community that their City government is still operating without their best interest at heart. Several steps can be taken to overcome that perception and to effectively increase transparency, accessibility and representation.*

#### **1. Redistricting**

Prior to the 2015 City elections, the City's election districts will be redrawn. The process that the City Council has taken thus far has been open to all, but hardly reflective of the community's interests. If given the opportunity to do so between now and the 2015 election, the Council should consider the most representative districts possible - either 5 or 7 with 1 representative from each district.

#### **2. Hold all city council meetings and work sessions in the evening**

It is a simple matter of fact that most citizens in Salisbury work or attend school during the day. Afternoon work sessions are less accessible than evening work sessions for the average adult in Salisbury and so all meetings should be held in the early evening.

#### **3. Town hall sessions with the mayor and department heads**

To increase transparency, I would encourage our mayor, along with his/her department heads to hold an informal town hall session each quarter to take questions from the public and to provide important updates to the City.

#### **4. Coffee talks with your Councilman**

Upon election, I will schedule and host monthly coffee talks at coffee shops around Salisbury, open to all citizens, to discuss issues identified by the attendees. I would encourage the Mayor and other Council members to do the same - allowing us to share notes.

#### **5. Mayor + Council blog**

I will maintain a personal blog to share my perspectives on City issues and I would encourage the Mayor and Council to do the same and for all to be shared through the City web site.



#### **6. Mayor Office Hours**

I would encourage the Mayor to keep open office hours for a small portion of each day so that citizens may drop in with their questions/concerns.

#### **7. 311**

The City should deploy a '311' information and service request line like many major cities. This will improve customer service and awareness of City services.

#### **8. Business Friendly Action Plan**

In an effort to create business-friendly attitudes across City government, request a 'business friendly action plan' from each Department Head.



## STRATEGY 2 Ideas

*The ideas to resolve our City's challenges lie within the people who live here. They have to be heard and engaged.*

### ACTIONS

#### 1. Prayer Breakfast

The Mayor and Council should host a quarterly non-denominational pot luck prayer breakfast, rotating among the City's churches, temples, synagogues and other religious establishments, to engage the faith community in broader community dialogues.

#### 2. TEDxSBY series

Host a series of TED-style (or actual TED) events (see <http://www.ted.com/>), in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, Salisbury University, PRMC and Greater Salisbury Committee.

#### 3. Listening Posts

Pursue a public arts grant (such as National Endowment for the Arts ARTWORKS) to install several listening posts around town with call-in and text for idea sharing. These can be as simple as well-branded and easily identifiable posters or as complex as physical installations for recording ideas. The scope would be dictated by a grant and could be administered in partnership between Salisbury University's arts program and the Salisbury-Wicomico Arts Council.



### **STRATEGY 3 Participatory/Decentralized Decision Making**

*One of the great but underutilized tools of local government is the participatory engagement process. Salisbury can better engage more people in planning, visioning and even budgeting by utilizing community engagement processes other than public hearings. Our government should consider incorporating into its lexicon of both listening and sharing activities: charrettes, workshops and neighborhood meetings.*

#### **ACTIONS**

##### **1. Budget Prioritization by Neighborhood Meetings**

In writing the City's operating budget and Capital Improvement Plan, 10% of Community Promotions, Neighborhood Services, Streets, Street Lighting, Sanitation and Parks should be attributed by number of households to each neighborhood of the City. A community meeting should be held to discuss priorities in each budget. This process should determine how the apportioned funds should be spent. This program should be re-analyzed annually to determine if the share should be grown.

##### **2. 'Capital of the Eastern Shore' Visioning Process**

In order to refine the City's plan for our vision, we should spend a brief and intense period of time in the first year after the election to hear from residents and business leaders about their vision for the City of Salisbury - and what the 'Capital of the Eastern Shore' should look like.

This process will be executed by a series of community/ neighborhood 'charrettes' or design workshops that will afford everyone in the community the opportunity to define our shared vision and to develop ownership. In the first 6 months of the seating of the new Council, each neighborhood should be met with. Meetings should be facilitated by a design-oriented facilitator who can communicate visually. Grants for costs should be pursued from Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore and the Chamber of Commerce.



## STRATEGY 4 Accountability

*Currently, Salisbury's citizens' only accountability tool is the election process. Alternatively, government can more actively manage its activities and more easily communicate its track record with tools developed in business and used by cities in recent years.*

### ACTIONS

#### 1. Results-based management

The City should implement results-oriented monitoring and evaluation systems for each department to determine if we are on the right path toward our long-term goals. This type of management can orient us toward our vision while remaining diverse in our strategies and actions. We must determine key indicators for outcomes, collect data and analyze it. The City government may not be the actor - but the results and impact on achieving our vision will be measured. This may mean that the most powerful tool for implementing/achieving our vision is inspiring or encouraging the private sector to take steps to improve the City.

#### 2. Mayor's Dashboard

The Mayor's Dashboard can be a powerful set of indicators, collected from each department and from data collected via service calls to 311. The Dashboard need not be high tech (but can be). It can be nothing more than a powerpoint slide that orients the Mayors' staff meetings to deliverables and progress on the measurables that matter most to the City.

#### 3. CitiStat/Geographic Information System Monitoring

As a complement to the Mayors' Dashboard and to support results-based management, the City can invest more in its Geographic Information Systems and staffing to monitor performance and progress. I propose hiring an additional full-time GIS Analysts to monitor and report on key City indicators that geographically track departmental performance, trends and progress toward achieving our vision.



## STRATEGY 5 Digital Access

*In the 21st Century, it is imperative that any organization, particularly one that belongs to all of the citizens of a community, be accessible on the web. Salisbury's web presence is dated and not well-suited for two-way communication.*

### ACTIONS

#### 1. Digital Team

I will assemble a Digital Team (at first volunteer-based) that focuses on (1) a better website that the city can develop to engage the community for information and interaction, and (2) preparing Salisbury for the basic technology skills coming forward in the 21st century. A great example is NYC's: <http://nyc.gov/html/digital/html/home/home.shtml>

#### 2. <http://salisbury.md>

One simple change we can make is to Salisbury's website, currently located at <http://www.ci.salisbury.md.us>. No one can remember that and it reeks of antiquity. The much simpler [salisbury.md](http://salisbury.md) is available for \$150/year - a small fee to illustrate a huge change. I have registered the domain and I will be donating it to the City upon completion of this campaign.

Even this can be a 'front door' to business in the City: economic development, tourism, community information and government services.

#### 3. WiFi Network

A public WiFi network should be available across downtown and more broadly, if possible. Towns like Chestertown and Cambridge have long had this in place.





## **STRATEGY 6 State/National Advisors**

*Having developed relationships over years with State agencies, thought leaders and national organizations on urban design, planning and revitalization, I will bring those relationships to the City Council to help guide our implementation with best practices, emerging models and technical assistance. Organizations with which I will work include: Mayors' Institute on City Design, National Endowment for the Arts, University of Maryland, Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Department of Business & Economic Development, American Institute of Architects, Strong Towns, Urban Land Institute Daniel Rose Center for Public Leadership in Land Use, Partners for Livable Communities and many more.*



## Pillar 4 NEIGHBORHOODS + HOUSING

### STRATEGY 1 Homeownership

*A long-time issue for Salisbury has been the steady decline in home ownership. Efforts should be taken to stem the tide of this disinvestment, to reverse it and to bring it to parity with rental/owner rates nationwide.*

#### ACTIONS

##### 1. Urban Homesteading

Offer a City property tax reduction to persons who purchase and reside in a home in the City, so long as they remain there for 10 years. The credit should amount to 10% in year 1 - reducing by 1% per year until it expires after 10 years. This should apply to both those who are new to the City and those who move, but remain within the City.

##### 2. Rental Industry

The City has improved its relationship with the rental industry in recent years and should continue on this path of pursuing a partnered effort with landlords. Where the rental industry identifies bad actors within its ranks, the City and the rental industry should first utilize peer-to-peer mentorship to guide them toward best practices. The City can facilitate this by providing newly licensed landlords a list of contacts in the rental industry. In concert with the strict application of existing and proposed ordinances (see below), the City can continue to improve its track record with respect to compliance.



## STRATEGY 2 Neighborhood Quality

*The issue of quality of life in our neighborhoods is not limited to the actions of landlords or tenants - but is affected by the actions of all land owners and all occupants. The legislative approach to preserving and enhancing neighborhood quality is limited and dependent on strong government-landowner relations.*

### ACTIONS

#### 1. Government-Landowner Relations

Fundamentally, the City must adopt policies that are equally applicable to all landowners (whether landlord or homeowner who occupies their home).

#### 2. Repeated Calls for Service Ordinance

This ordinance ought to apply to all who generate repeated calls for service, creating a nuisance, not just renters. There must be an exemption for domestic abuse victims so as not to punish the victims for the actions of the abuser. Code Compliance and Police calls should be considered separately so that the actions of tenants and the actions of landlords are not wrongfully attributed to a party who bears no responsibility for the calls.

#### 3. Nonconforming Uses Relief

I propose revisiting the proposed Nonconforming Uses Relief/Amortization Ordinance. I would maintain the Registration of Multifamily Dwellings Section; add a section to allow for new secondary structures (so-called mother-in-law suites) and duplexes in low-density Residential zones. I would recommend keeping the proposed Amortization period, but include the Urban Homesteading policy in this ordinance to encourage homeownership.



## STRATEGY 3 Homelessness

*Salisbury's homelessness challenge persists in our down economy and it is our responsibility to reduce the rate of homelessness.*

### ACTIONS

#### 1. Not-for-profit Shelters

The City should continue to act as a conduit for funds and grant writer on behalf of not-for-profit shelters who serve the homeless from and within the Salisbury area. Through the pursuit of these funds, the City should frequently request the guidance of these shelters to determine other policies and actions the City should adopt to reduce homelessness.



## **STRATEGY 4 Affordable Housing**

*38% of Salisbury households experience some type of housing affordability problem. The City must rehabilitate and develop new affordable housing units within the City for extremely low and low income families.*

### **ACTIONS**

#### **1. Rehabilitation of Units**

Pursue grants to fund rehabilitation, including accessibility improvements and lead paint abatement, of homes occupied no fewer than 25 extremely low-, low-, and moderate-income homeowners in the coming five years.

#### **2. New Affordable Housing Units**

Encourage the private development of at least 100 units for extremely low- and low-income tenants as well as the rehabilitation or construction of one or two residential facilities (serving between three and 10 special needs persons) during the coming five years.



## Pillar 5 FISCAL DISCIPLINE

### STRATEGY 1 Intermunicipal Relations

*Our relationship with the County, State and neighboring jurisdictions is important to our financial health and can help structure our City's finances in ways that will determine the sustainability of our current costs, revenues and services.*

#### ACTIONS

##### 1. Resolving the Tax Differential

The City has made little progress in resolving the tax differential dispute with Wicomico County. I believe that the City has made reasonable arguments, but that the key to resolving the disagreement is in broader decisions, such as boundary resolution and I believe that this debate must be folded into conversations about consolidation and service duplication.

##### 2. Boundary Resolution and Reducing Service Duplication

Joint City and County Council discussions should be held on an annual basis to discuss and develop an action plan to resolve the illogical municipal boundaries of Salisbury and to reduce the costs to taxpayers

Community workshops should be hosted County-wide to begin a dialogue about how any change to the structure of City and County government - namely consolidation - can be beneficial to each person in the County.



## **STRATEGY 2 Budget Policy**

*The City Council must adopt policies which institutionalize the advances made in the last decade regarding fiscal policy (such as the audit and surplus) - one of the areas in which the City is keeping up with its peers.*

### **ACTIONS**

#### **1. General Fund Reserve Policy**

Like any good business, the City should maintain a reserve - specifically a General Fund Reserve of 10 percent (10%) of annual general governmental operating expenditures for unforeseen emergencies or catastrophic impacts to the City.

#### **2. Water/Wastewater Reserve Policy**

Like the General Fund, the City should maintain a 60-day operating reserve for its water and wastewater utilities.

#### **3. City Attorney**

The City can save money by moving the City Attorney's office back under the oversight of the Mayor - as with every other municipal office - and to structure the office primarily as in-house counselor as opposed to fee-for-service, with the exception of hired assistance for litigation and other needed services.



### **STRATEGY 3    Increasing the Tax Base**

*The single most important act we can take to promote sound financial footing for City government is to increase the assessable base by adopting policies that promote economic growth.*





## Pillar 6 PUBLIC SAFETY

### STRATEGY 1 Community Policing

*Our gains in reducing crime in Salisbury should be the clearest signal that now is the time to prepare ourselves for its inevitable return. We should increase the ties our police department has with neighborhoods and better equip it for the challenges of a growing City. This week, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa cited the same statistics that we have been citing in Salisbury: that violent crime is down 40%. This is a national trend over the last 4 years and we cannot rest on our laurels. We must now position ourselves for lasting community safety.*

#### ACTIONS

##### 1. Increase # of Officers

The City of Salisbury Police Department is currently under-manned compared to its population. An immediate concern should be the pursuit of federal and state support to fund at least a 20% increase in the number of sworn officers on the Police force.

##### 2. Beat Cops: Walking & Biking

Community policing is proven to be effective when police officers are able to interact with residents. This type of engagement is impossible in cars. We should re-launch our walking and biking policing strategies, beginning in the highest crime areas.

##### 3. Non-Lethal Weapons

The debate on non-lethal weapons is not settled, and I believe the City Police Department should conduct a study on the frequency of applications of force by officers, the incidence of injury to officers during those applications of force and the incidence of lethality to suspects and bystanders. The results of this study should determine the investment the City makes in non-lethal weapons.

##### 4. Substations

The City's substation program should be scaled up to include as many as 2 new substations. The City should seek donations of property and refurbishment services. The substations should be manned 24-hours/day but should minimize the creation of new tasks. A workspace for Detective employees should exist in each, as well as private space for discussions with citizens, interviews and space for officers working a beat in the neighborhood.



## **6. Relationship Building with University Population**

Through the proposed Salisbury University Community Council, students and police officers should meet one another to discuss ways to build better relationships between the student population and the Police Department.

## **7. Assault Rifles and Shotguns**

The City Council needs to request from the Mayor and Police Chief a position on the long-term employment and distribution of assault rifles and/or shotguns to City Police officers. It is no secret that the use and availability of these weapons has increased and the City must be certain that its Police force is at least as well equipped as criminal elements it may face.



## **STRATEGY 2 Fire Protection Services**

*The greatest investments needed by our fire department are in preservation and enhancement of infrastructure and facilities in the northern half of the City - the area which has grown most rapidly in the past 20 years.*

### **ACTIONS**

#### **1. Permanent Fire Chief**

Our City desperately needs a permanent fire chief. At the first meeting of the newly seated Council, I would request that the Mayor put forth the best candidate and his/her qualifications for the Council's endorsement at the following meeting. The City cannot stomach a longer delay.

#### **2. North End Facility**

The fastest growing area of the City over the past 20 years has been the North End. It is geographically underserved by the City's fire stations and this can be corrected. It is included in the Capital Improvement Plan to be built in FY16 and I believe should be funded as outlined in the plan.

#### **3. Station 2 Improvements**

Station 2 is in the heart of the City and is an aging facility that must be updated. The Capital Improvement Plan calls for renovation in FY13. This project should not be delayed beyond FY14.



### **STRATEGY 3 Safe Streets**

*Effectively administer the Maryland Safe Streets Grant, serving as an active partner in the multiagency cooperative agreement.*

#### **ACTIONS**

##### **1. Continue the Safe Street Program progress**

The progress of the Safe Streets program has shown a greater than 40% reduction in Part 1 crime in Salisbury. This progress can continue as Salisbury is again the recipient of a Safe Streets Grant from the State of Maryland. The Council must now work to implement elements of Safe Streets programming as recommended by the Safe Streets Coordinator.



## Pillar 7 ENVIRONMENT + THE RIVER

### STRATEGY 1 Carbon Footprint Reduction

*The long term sustainability of our city is dependent not only on sound fiscal discipline, but on a mutually beneficial relationship with the natural environment around us. Costs of doing business will rise year-on-year as we ignore the imperative of reducing energy costs, reducing waste and reducing our carbon footprint. Other cities are discovering this and the longer we wait, the faster we lose our competitive advantage.*

#### ACTIONS

##### 1. Set Carbon Neutral City Buildings Goals

Long-term goals for all City buildings should be set to reduce carbon footprints. The City should adopt an implementation plan that is no longer than 10 years.

##### 2. Pursue Interjurisdictional Transfer of Development Rights Agreements and other Incentives for Densifying Urban Areas

Partner with Wicomico County and the Planning & Zoning Commission to consider IJTDRs and other incentives to densify urban areas. Meet with County Council to discuss barriers, incentives and timelines.

##### 3. Codify Energy Efficient Building Codes

Adopt a set of mandatory building standards for commercial buildings and building codes for new homes and some remodels that incorporate energy efficiency standards and renewable energy requirements (see US Green Building Council's LEED Standards).

##### 4. Community-wide High Performing Green Concrete Policy

Require, through city policies, the use of "green" concrete, consisting of at least 20 percent fly ash, in all public and private construction projects. Pilot projects are recommended using both fly ash and recycled aggregates, in public and private projects to evaluate the feasibility of large-scale implementation.



## **5. Incentivize Recycling**

### **Long Term Recycling/Garbage Collection System Balance Plan**

Request from the Mayor and Sanitation team, a plan to incentivize/encourage a reduction household waste and increase in household recycling. Consider other community strategies such as the phased reduction in trashcan size and increase in recycling bin size.

### **Updated Trucks (fix arms)**

Include in the FY14 budget the repair of broken arms on our garbage trucks (a problem plaguing at least two trucks).

## **6. Support Carbon Offsets in local projects at state and federal levels**

Support policies at the state level for investments from local carbon offset purchases, in order to make impacts visible and immediate.

## **7. Renewable Energy Projects**

Support Delmarva Power and other energy providers in generating power and steam for commercial, residential and industrial use through renewable sources including biomass (particularly from waste), solar and wind.

## **8. Allow renewable energy projects in the City (including green historic districts)**

Immediately amend Historic District ordinance to allow for the application of solar and wind projects, just as Historic Districts from around the country and the Shore have done. This is recommended by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and they have made Design Guidelines and Model Ordinances for Solar Installations and Wind projects available for free.



## STRATEGY 2 Clean the Wicomico River

*The Wicomico River is an economic and cultural asset that has been underutilized and under appreciated by Salisbury for the better part of a century. To capitalize on the River requires that we respect it and right the wrongs of the past. Furthermore, it requires that we better manage our future impacts - namely related to stormwater runoff.*

### ACTIONS

#### 1. Wastewater Treatment Plant

The Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) debacle has largely been resolved, but the costs are going to burden the City and its taxpayers for years to come. The City must vigorously pursue efficiency measures in operating the WWTP in order to keep cost increases to ratepayers at a minimum. This should begin with renewable energy and the City should adopt a policy requiring on-site development of solar, wind and/or biomass boilers in partnership with another utility or industrial entity with unmet needs in the Port area or beyond. Furthermore, the City should cap increases in rates to City residents at no more than 10% per year.

#### 2. Stormwater Utility

The University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center study recommended that the City create a Stormwater Utility and tax residents as it does for other utilities (water, wastewater). Somehow, the City must deal with the Phase II Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) developed as required by the Bay TMDL 'pollution diet'. The estimated cost to Salisbury in the coming 12 years of implementing the best management practices identified in Wicomico County's Phase II WIP is \$227,240,786. As unreal as that figure sounds, the requirement to address it is very real. Even if it is reduced, we must comply with the requirements by implementing many of the following implementation strategies. A Stormwater Utility should be put to referendum. If a Stormwater Utility is supported by the voters, it should be implemented at as low a cost as possible to users, should incentivize the implementation of the following strategies on private properties.

#### Leadership from the City

All City-owned properties should implement the following best management practices in a timely fashion.



#### Bioretention/Raingardens

This implementation strategy can account for almost 27% of the cost of all strategies. The City should pursue and disburse through competitive applications, grant funds for implementing these projects on private properties.

#### Stormwater Management to updated standards

Also 27% of the implementation costs, the new stormwater site design standards are already in effect and must be enforced.

#### Street sweeping 25 times/year

Although this cost only represents an estimated 0.4% of the total cost of implementing the WIP II strategies, the cost will fall on the City and should be funded through the Stormwater Utility, if approved.

#### Urban Forest Buffers

Although this cost only represents an estimated 0.3% of the total cost of implementing the WIP II strategies, the cost will fall on the City and should be funded through the Stormwater Utility, if approved.

#### Urban Infiltration Practices, Urban Nutrient Management, Urban Stream Restoration, Shoreline Erosion Control and Regenerative Stormwater Conveyance

An implementation plan for these strategies must be developed in partnership with the Maryland Department of the Environment. Since over 29% of the total cost can be achieved through this strategy, and because this is a cost that will largely be drawn from public funds, grants should be pursued

#### Urban Tree Canopy Survey

An updated Urban Tree Canopy Survey should be commissioned through ESRGC/Salisbury University. Urban Tree planting policies should be derived from the results of this study. This plan will address an estimated 14% of the total cost and a significant portion of the cost can be acquired through grant-sources and codified to be incorporated in redevelopment projects.





## Pillar 8 TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

### STRATEGY 1 Walkability + Bikeability

*Use open space, pedestrian and street corridors to strengthen connections between residential neighborhoods, the downtown and employment areas.*

#### ACTIONS

##### 1. Skate Park

Re-apply for funding to build the City Skate Park and immediately begin construction.

##### 2. Urban Greenway

Partner with the County Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism to pursue acquisition and development funding to finalize a greenway linkage between the Ward Museum and Pemberton Hall.

##### 3. Bike Lanes

The City's Comprehensive Plan calls for an increase in bike lanes on City streets. The Department of Planning & Zoning must immediately develop a comprehensive bike lane plan to identify every route that could and should include bike lanes. Partner with BikeS-BY as the City's grassroots community of bikers who are working toward a more bikeable Salisbury. Task the Department with the crafting of a set of design standards that include separated bike lanes and less intensive standards as a secondary alternative.

##### 4. Route 13 Corridor Redesign (see above)

As discussed above, issue an RFP for a Long Term plan for Route 13 Corridor redesign and the accompany zoning/code changes necessary to implement it. Include City-wide recommendations and those specific to the University-Downtown corridor. The plan should include phasing and strategies for transitioning from short-term strategies to long-term plans (for example, planted medians in the short-term to BRT lanes in the long term).



## **STRATEGY 2    Airport**

*Our physical and marketing linkage to the airport - an important conduit to commerce - should be strengthened.*

### **ACTIONS**

#### **1. SBY Marketing Initiative**

Work with SWED, the County's Airport Commission, SWAC and the County's Recreation, Parks and Tourism Department to develop a marketing campaign around the 'SBY' airport code.



## **STRATEGY 3 Transit**

*A growing community that seeks economic development will naturally densify in areas that are under-developed. Increased development and accompanying density affords a community the option to consider transit expansion.*

### **ACTIONS**

#### **1. ShoreTransit Network Expansion**

Continue to work through the Tri-County Council to leverage the City population to encourage an expansion of ShoreTransit services, infrastructure investment (bus stops) and marketing/branding within the Salisbury area.

#### **2. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)/Trolley - SU-Downtown (see above)**

Investigate the feasibility of a dedicated transit lane between Salisbury University and Downtown, as noted above.



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Authority Jake Day for City Council,  
Treasurer Jordan A. Gilmore