



# TOWN OF IRVINGTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SEPTEMBER 18, 2007  
K. W. POORE & ASSOCIATES, INC.

# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

## **TOWN OF IRVINGTON, VIRGINIA**

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. Purpose, Scope and Vision of the Comprehensive Plan

The Purpose of the Irvington Comprehensive Plan is to provide general direction to the Irvington Planning Commission and the Town Council regarding considerations of any future changes to the town, to include growth and development.

The Scope of the Irvington Comprehensive Plan is broad. It references and reviews the vibrant and colorful history of Irvington's past and highlights the natural and physical characteristics, population and demographics, etc., that describe Irvington's present. But most importantly, it projects a strong vision of what Irvington's future can and should be.

The Vision of the 2007 Irvington Comprehensive Plan reflects the timeless goals that were stated in the 2001 Comprehensive Plan. It is the heartfelt desire of the Planning Commission, the Town Council, and the residents of Irvington that this document shall serve to:

1. Preserve the character of Irvington as it exists today.
2. Perpetuate the rural character of the countryside and preserve open space.
3. Provide guidance for the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances that reflect this vision.
4. Provide a continuous planning process, wherein the needs and desires of the citizenry will constantly be reflected and realized.
5. Provide a framework for the orderly growth of the community wherein the demands for residential, commercial, public and other land uses can be accommodated in a harmonious manner.
6. Protect the water quality and resources of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

The update of the Comprehensive Plan for Irvington, Virginia, was initiated in July 2006, with a kickoff meeting to converse with various residents and business owners within the Town. Various identities and visions for the Town were identified and organized. A follow-up meeting was held in August 2006, where goals and objectives were specifically addressed. A Business Group meeting was conducted in September 2006 where critical use factors within Irvington's business community, and commercial issues and assets within the Town at large were identified, that could serve to help preserve the character and vision for the future. A third meeting was held in September 2006, in order to address the Town's transportation and community facilities needs.

On November 1, 2006, a public meeting was held on the draft comprehensive plan elements to receive citizen input on critical issues and further define the Plan's recommendations. This was considered important before it was reviewed and approved by Irvington's Planning Commission and adopted by Town Council.

## **B. Legal Foundation**

Virginia planning legislation requires the Town Planning Commission to prepare a Comprehensive Plan indicating the Commission's long-range recommendations for general development. The plan is to be based on careful and comprehensive studies of existing conditions, trends, growth, and probable future requirements of the community.

After public notice and hearings, the Planning Commission may recommend the Comprehensive Plan, or parts of the plan, to the Town Council. The Council then considers the plan at the public hearings and adopts, or amends and adopts the plan. Pursuant to Title 15.2 of the Code of Virginia, 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 and shall indicate where existing lands or facilities are proposed to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated, narrowed, abandoned, or changed in use as the case may be. The plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts, and descriptive matter, shall show the locality's long-range recommendations for the general development of the territory covered by the plan. It may include, but need not be limited to:*

1. *"The designation of areas for various types of public and private development and use, such as different kinds of residential, business, industrial, agricultural, mineral resources, conservation, recreation, public service, flood plain and drainage, and other areas;*
2. *The designation of a system of transportation facilities such as streets, roads, highways, parkways, railways, bridges, viaducts, waterways, airports, ports, terminals, and other like facilities;*
3. *The designation of a system of community service facilities, such as parks, forests, schools, playgrounds, public buildings and institutions, hospitals, community centers, waterworks, sewage disposal or waste disposal areas, and the like;*
4. *The designation of historical areas and areas for urban renewal or other treatment;*
5. *The designation of areas for the implementation of reasonable ground water protections measures;*
6. *An official map, a capital improvements program, a subdivision ordinance, a zoning ordinance, and zoning district maps, mineral resources district map, and agricultural and forestall district maps, where applicable; and*
7. *The location of existing or proposed recycling centers."*

*"The plan shall include: the designation of areas and implementation of measures for the construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance of affordable housing, which is sufficient to meet the current and future needs of residents of all levels of income in the locality while considering the current and future needs of the planning district within which the locality is situated."*

*Code of Virginia 1950, Title 15.2 as amended, Subsection 15.2-2223.*

## C. Regional Setting

The Town of Irvington is located in the southwestern part of Lancaster County, served by Irvington Road (State Route 200) which also is used as the primary roadway providing access to the Town of Kilmarnock to the north as well as to State Route 3/Mary Ball Road/Historyland Highway that traverses the County located east through the Town of White Stone. With over 280 miles of shoreline and 10 local marinas, Lancaster County is a leading retirement and vacation community within Virginia. Unique among other towns in Lancaster County, Irvington has remained a historic small town village community. The Town has also retained a flavor of its earlier water-related history both in the structures and the uses that continue into the present. The Town's boundaries are evident to anyone traveling into Irvington from either of the Town's two entrances defined by the tributaries of Carters Creek.

The Town is also situated in the southern portion of the Northern Neck Planning District, consisting of Westmoreland, Richmond, Northumberland, and Lancaster Counties. This multi-county planning area contains approximately 50,000 residents and is 78 miles east of Richmond, 100 miles south of Washington, D.C., and 70 miles north of the Port of Hampton Roads. The Regional Location Map shows the location of Irvington in a regional context.

## D. Description of Planning Area

Identified by its waterways and related functions, Irvington is viewed as a small village community that serves a majority retired and seasonal population. Located within Lancaster County, the Town's populace has access to numerous opportunities for recreation and leisure within the surrounding environs. Also, the Town's close proximity to the two other incorporated towns within Lancaster County (the Towns of Kilmarnock and White Stone) is advantageous in terms of the proximity to other local goods and services not offered in Irvington.



*A sign welcomes visitors to the historic village of Irvington.*

The Town of Irvington Map indicates the more immediate planning area for Irvington. While the Town has no extraterritorial power related to planning, it is recognized that municipal boundaries are somewhat artificial for planning purposes. Irvington and its neighboring communities share many social, economic, and land use relationships which exceed their political boundaries.

## II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### A. Historical Overview

The Town of Irvington is situated in Lancaster County, on Virginia's Northern Neck. The Northern Neck lies in the Atlantic Coastal Plain known as Virginia Tidewater. The Northern Neck is a peninsula that is bounded by the Potomac River to the north, the Chesapeake Bay to the east, and the Rappahannock River to the south. The Town of Irvington is located in the southeastern part of the Northern Neck along the shores of Carter's Creek. Carter's Creek is the first major tidal tributary of the Rappahannock River going upstream on the River's north side.

The Town of Irvington's roots are intertwined with the creek and coves that act to shape the Town's 8.78 miles of shoreline. Original residents of the Town largely emigrated here from the Eastern Shore of Maryland during the nineteenth century. These founding residents came to the area by means of the waterways and earned their livelihood from the water. Irvington's original development patterns evolved as this founding generation settled and set up home and occupation.

All of Irvington's first commercial/industrial areas and neighborhoods were established within short walking distance of the water. These waterfront areas were chosen for both convenience and necessity. First, during this time water-based transportation was the primary mode of travel through means such as the steamboat. Secondly, as much as the creek and coves aided water borne transportation, they served to discourage land-based means of travel. As such, early development in Irvington occurred at the end of present day Steamboat Road in east Irvington and towards the end of King Carter Drive in west Irvington. Lastly, at the central place where west and east Irvington were linked by roads, many of the Town's quasi-public uses developed such as churches and schools.



*Irvington's strong ties to the water have helped in defining the Town's current status as a historic village.*

Irvington expanded and became linked to the nearby Towns of White Stone and Kilmarnock as well as the Village of Weems as land-based transportation developed. As these inland ties developed, traffic increased through Irvington on what is the present day Irvington Road. These changes in transportation shifted growth in the Town up along Steamboat Road and King Carter Drive towards the Town's present commercial center.

This historic growth pattern left a rich legacy which gives present day Irvington testimony to its roots along the water, particularly the Rappahannock River and Carters Creek. Many historic commercial structures and homes are found along the lower reaches of Steamboat Road and King Carter Drive. Also, many industrial sites and water-related businesses still exist and provide livelihoods for present day Irvingtonians just as these sites served the Town's people over 100 years ago. This mixture of historic commercial structures, noteworthy homes, and unique families has acted to preserve a part of "old" Irvington for the present day citizens of the Town. Furthermore, these assets have acted to create a unique character for which the Town of Irvington is known today.

## B. Demographics and Growth Trends

### Population Characteristics and Trends

The study of Irvington's population characteristics provides an important foundation for the planning of capital improvements and town services. As future growth demands are evaluated, a reasonably accurate forecast of population size is needed for the community, as well as for specific demographic groups.

Irvington is one of three incorporated towns in Lancaster County, with a current population of approximately 673. As evident in Table 1, Irvington's population increased at a rapid rate (35.7%) during the 1990s. This trend is similar to other localities in the region, but at a more rapid rate of growth than compared to Lancaster County (6.2%), the Northern Neck Planning District (1.7%), and the Commonwealth of Virginia (14.4%). Much of the growth can be attributed to the continued draw of the waterways, increased financial capability of middle income families to invest in associated leisure activities, and the lure of the area as a retirement and second home destination.

**Table 1**

<b>COMPARATIVE POPULATION GROWTH</b>			
<b>Locality</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Irvington	496	673	35.7%
Lancaster Co.	10,896	11,567	6.2%
Northern Neck Planning District	44,173	49,353	11.7%
(Lancaster Northumberland Richmond Westmoreland)	10,896 10,524 7,273 15,480	11,567 12,259 8,809 16,718	6.2% 16.5% 21.1% 8.0%
Virginia	6,187,358	7,078,515	14.4%
(Source: 1990, 2000 U.S. Census)			

Irvington has a large number of elderly residents, as indicated in Table 2, with 52.7% of the 2000 population aged 60 years or older. Elderly growth from 1990 to 2000 was 74% while the core workforce (combined ages 25-59) in Irvington increased slightly (3.9%) between 1990 and 2000. While the Town's elderly population grew, Irvington's school age population also increased by 2.8%. Those children under the age of 5 have increased slightly by 0.6%. Females outnumber males by approximately 11.4% based on the 2000 U.S. Census.

**Table 2**

<b>POPULATION BY AGE GROUP</b>			
<b>Town of Irvington (1990-2000)</b>			
<b><u>Age Group</u></b>	<b><u>1990</u></b>	<b><u>2000</u></b>	<b><u>% Change</u></b>
Under 5 years	17 (3.4%)	18 (2.7%)	0.6%
5-24 years	72 (14.5%)	92 (13.7%)	2.8%
25-44 years	94 (19.0%)	89 (13.3%)	-5.3%
45-59 years	109 (22.0%)	119 (17.6%)	9.2%
60 years and over	204 (41.1%)	355 (52.7%)	74.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>496 (100%)</b>	<b>673 (100%)</b>	<b>35.7%</b>
(Source: 1990, 2000 U.S. Census)			

Based on 2000 Census figures, the proportion of elderly in Irvington (52.7%) is notably higher than the state average (15.1%). As such, Irvington residents have a much higher median age (62.8 years) than the state and surrounding counties (see Table 3). It is important to note that the surrounding region is also experiencing larger net increases in median age than the state median age.

The statistics for Irvington generally echo national trends (although to a much greater extent) of an expanding elderly population due to increasing improvements in health care, a general movement to the shoreline along both coasts, the proximity of Irvington to major population centers, and relatively affordable property compared with nearby metropolitan areas. The significance of this, for the next few decades, is that there will be an increasing demand for affordable forms of housing in the Northern Neck region. Housing types may range from independent living, assisted living centers, and full-service retirement homes with nursing and medical facilities. In addition to housing, a growing elderly population will create demand for specialized types of health care, social, and human services.

**Table 3**

<b>COMPARATIVE MEDIAN AGE</b>	
<b><u>Locality</u></b>	<b><u>2000</u></b>
Irvington	62.8
Lancaster Co.	49.8
Northern Neck Planning District	
(Lancaster	49.8
Northumberland	50.1
Richmond	40.3
Westmoreland)	42.8
Virginia	35.7
(Source: 2000 U.S. Census)	

### **Economy, Labor Force, and Economic Development**

In the past, the Town’s commerce was largely based on waterfront activities and the downtown area, with various industries and small retail businesses. Existent throughout the Northern Neck is the decline of active, working, small seafood enterprises, such as local oyster and crab houses, as well as the decline in natural resources such as fewer fish, crabs, oysters, etc. This in conjunction with the decreased numbers of active watermen has resulted in a change in emphasis in local business—from water dependent to service oriented and specialty oriented business.

In recent years, Irvington has benefited from its location. The local economy has been strengthened because of Irvington Road which crosses through the heart of Irvington, serving as a link to neighboring Towns and the region’s growing population. Today, the Town’s commercial center and activity is somewhat unique, characterized by retail trade, professional services, and locally-run specialty boutiques. This specialty character sets Irvington apart from neighboring jurisdictions and helps define the role the Town plays within the regional economy.

#### Employment Trends and Characteristics

Irvington’s market presently supports a labor force of approximately 250 workers. Table 4 provides a breakdown of the major employment groups, based on Town residency. In the past 10 years the service sector has become the largest employer, accounting for 56%

of the Town's employment as of 2000, an increase of 35% from 1990. This trend is not only seen locally but nationally as the nation continues to transform into an information-based, service oriented economy.

Also notable is the emergence of the information sector within the Town. The appearance of a new technology-based sector has the capability of creating more home-based jobs instead of traditional commercial outlets. Retail and wholesale trade also contribute significantly to the local employment base but has declined almost 10% from 24.5% in 1990 to 14.9% in 2000. As the service industry absorbs more employees in Irvington, the retail and wholesale trade as well as the finance, insurance, and real estate industries have seen the sharpest decline

**Table 4**

<b>EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY</b> (Based on Town Residency) <b>Town of Irvington (1990-2000)</b>			
<b><u>Industry</u></b>	<b><u>1990</u></b>	<b><u>2000</u></b>	<b><u>% Change</u></b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining	0	3	300%
Construction	17	17	0%
Manufacturing	17	18	5.90%
Wholesale/Retail Trade	55	41	-25.50%
Transportation/ Warehousing/Utilities	14	35	150%
Information	N/A	8	N/A
Finance/Insurance/ Real Estate	37	16	-56.70%
Services	78	134	71.80%
Public Administration	6	3	-50.00%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>22.80%</b>
(Source: 1990, 2000 U.S. Census)			

While employment by industry is useful to analyze what people are doing for a living, it is also important to know what businesses are represented within the Town. There are several primary businesses in Irvington that generate much of the economic vitality of the Town. These businesses are as follows: The Tides Inn, Chesapeake Academy, Northern Neck Insurance Company, Khakis of Irvington, The Dandelion, Inc., TCH Oil Co., Denhart, Clarke & Co., P.C., Custom Yachts, Rappahannock Yachts, and Trick Dog Cafe.

### Income and Poverty Status

Income and poverty levels are an important measurement used to determine social and economic conditions. While it is recognized that creating and retaining jobs is vital to the growth and development of the community, equally important is the income that is derived from this employment. Income determines how much people spend and the kind of goods and services they are willing or able to buy. In turn, spending as determined by disposable income influences economic activity, particularly that of the local retail/service sectors. Therefore, a community's capacity to expand and develop is affected by the income and spending patterns of its residents and whether or not they are sufficient to support future economic investment and growth.

Table 5 compares several income-related components for Irvington, the Northern Neck region, and the State. The biggest difference is the much higher incomes in Irvington when compared to the region and state. In terms of per capita income, Irvington's (\$50,743) is approximately two and half times the regional average (\$20,932) and more than two times the State average (\$23,975). A similar trend is found when comparing the Town, region, and State's median household incomes. Irvington's average household income is much higher (\$60,139) than its regional (\$35,048) and State (\$46,677) counterparts.

**Table 5**

<b>COMPARATIVE INCOME AND POVERTY STATUS 1999</b>			
<u>Locality</u>	<u>Per Capita Income</u>	<u>Median Household Income</u>	<u>% of Population Below Poverty Level</u>
Irvington	\$50,743	\$60,139	3.5%
Lancaster Co.	\$24,663	\$33,239	12.5%
Northern Neck Planning District			
(Lancaster	\$24,663	\$33,239	12.5%
Northumberland	\$22,917	\$38,129	12.3%
Richmond	\$16,675	\$33,026	15.4%
Westmoreland)	\$19,473	\$35,797	14.7%
Virginia	\$23,975	\$46,677	9.6%
(Source: 2000 U.S. Census)			

## **C. Existing Land Use and Transportation**

### **Existing Land Use**

The existing land use pattern for Irvington is illustrated on the Existing Land Use Map. The Existing Zoning Districts Map is also included as a reference. The present use of all property was compiled from aerial photographs and field surveys conducted by K. W. Poore & Associates, Inc., in July and August of 2006. All property lines shown are based on County tax maps and subdivision plats recorded at the time of the survey.

The major categories of land use in Irvington are as follows:

1. **Single-Family Residential**
2. **Multi-Family Residential**
3. **Retail and Service**
4. **General Commercial**
5. **Resort Facilities**
6. **Industrial**
7. **Community Facilities**
8. **Places of Worship/Cemeteries**
9. **Parks and Recreation**
10. **Land Conservancy**
11. **Vacant**

Table 6 provides a summary of Existing Land Use data for the Town. Measurements of all land areas were planimetered from the Existing Land Use Map, August 2006. This information was also compared with land use data from earlier planning documents, including Irvington's 2001 Comprehensive Plan. This comparative analysis helps reveal past growth trends and probable forms of future development.

**Table 6**

<b>EXISTING LAND USE</b>		
<b>Town of Irvington</b>		
<b><u>Land Use Classification</u></b>	<b><u>Total Acreage</u></b>	<b><u>% of Town Area</u></b>
Residential		
Single-Family	399.00	41.27%
Multi-Family	1.00	0.10%
Commercial		
Retail & Service	20.40	2.11%
General Commercial	1.95	0.20%
Resort Facilities	25.35	2.62%
Industrial		
Industrial Facilities	12.09	1.25%
Public/Semi-Public		
Museum	0.93	0.10%
Community Facilities	6.58	0.68%
Places of Worship/Cemeteries	5.78	0.60%
Parks & Recreation	3.60	0.37%
Transportation		
Streets/Roads	31.22	3.23%
TOTAL DEVELOPED	508.00	52.54%
TOTAL VACANT	434.90	44.98%
LAND CONSERVANCY	24.0	2.48%
TOTAL ACREAGE	966.90	100%
(Source: Land Use Field Surveys, K. W. Poore & Associates, Inc., July/August 2006)		

**Development Trends**

Throughout the years, Irvington has developed along its waterfront and along the Town’s main commercial corridor, Irvington Road between Chesapeake Drive and Steamboat Road. The largest tracts of existing vacant land are located adjacent to the Town boundary to the north and east, most of which is farmland or forested land. Since there are limited developable parcels remaining in the older section of town, the utilization of infill development is the only option available.

The Town must protect its physical edges to maintain its community image. Currently, Irvington is set apart from the surrounding community at the two entryways by Carter’s

Creek on one side and by a swath of agricultural and forest uses on the other. However, recent development down State Route 200 from Kilmarnock poses potentially detrimental effects on the vision of the defined community.

There are several current and future developments in and around Town that will add extra pressure on the future development trends of Irvington. Increased population, additional housing, and supplementary infrastructure improvements will all need to be addressed as a result of these developments.

The following sections describe Irvington’s existing land use pattern by the major use categories:

### Residential Uses

Of the developed land within the Town of Irvington, the predominant use is residential. Single-family residences are the most prevalent (399 acres). The heaviest concentrations of residences are found along King Carter Drive in western Irvington and along Steamboat Road and The Lane in eastern Irvington. Lesser concentrations are found along Chesapeake Drive, Old Mill Cove Road along the eastern Town boundary, and Glebe Road.

### Commercial Uses

Existing commercial uses are primarily concentrated in two areas of Town. The heaviest concentration of commercial land is located along Irvington Road near the intersections with Steamboat Road, King Carter Drive, and Chesapeake Drive. This area includes specialty gift shops and clothing boutiques, professional offices, restaurants, and a gas station.



*Irvington Road is home to the Town’s various specialty boutiques and shops.*

The second concentration of commercial land is located along the lower portion of Steamboat Road, which is in a historic section of Town.



*Formerly a schoolhouse, the Hope and Glory Inn, located on King Carter Drive, serves as a small hotel for those visiting Irvington.*

This area includes professional offices and an art gallery.

There are two other lesser concentrations of commercial land throughout the Town. The first is the Northern Neck Insurance Company which is located along Irvington Road near the eastern Town boundary. The second concentration is located along King Carter Drive near the intersection with Tavern Road. This area includes professional offices, the Steamboat Era Museum, and the Hope and Glory Inn.

The only resort facility use in the Town is the Tides Inn which is located directly west of King Carter Drive, immediately after the ninety degree turn. This use encompasses a hotel, boating piers, tennis courts, golf course, and spa.

### Industrial Uses

Industrial uses are concentrated in two primary areas within the Town. The first area is located along the western side of the West Irvington peninsula along the Main Branch of Carter's Creek and includes Rappahannock Yachts, Inc., Crockett's Landing, and Irvington Marina.

The second industrial concentrated area is located in East Irvington along the Eastern Branch of Carter's Creek at the end of Seafood Lane. This area includes Custom Yacht Service, Inc. and TCH Oil Company.

### Public and Semi-Public Uses

Public land use in Irvington consists of two properties, the first being the Irvington Town Office and Library located on Steamboat Road. The second property is the Town Commons located at the intersection of King Carter Drive and Tavern Drive, consisting of a ball field, playground, tennis courts, and a bandstand/gazebo.



*The centrally-located Town Commons holds such events as a monthly farmer's market and various concerts throughout the summer.*

Semi-public uses consist of the Chesapeake Academy, a co-educational independent day school, near the intersection of Steamboat Road and Irvington Road, as well as the Irvington United Methodist Church and the Irvington Baptist Church, both located near the intersection of King Carter Drive and Irvington Road.

### Vacant Land

Of the Town's total land area (966.9 acres), 434.9 acres remain vacant. The Existing Land Use Map shows the extent of the Town's existing land use. Vacant land in the Town is concentrated in two main areas. The first area is comprised of large tracts of farmland and woodland bounded by Irvington Road to the west and south, Old Mill Cove and Creek to the east, and the Town boundary to the north. The second area is located west of Irvington Road heading north towards the Town boundary and surrounds Glebe Road. These open spaces assist in defining the remaining rural character of Irvington as one enters the Town from the north on Irvington Road.

## Land Conservancy

In July 2000, 24 acres of land off Glebe Road was conveyed to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation and became a perpetual preservation of open space. This conservation easement is now the property of The Chesapeake Academy and is restricted to agricultural use.

## **Housing**

The Town of Irvington has long recognized the importance of maintaining sound neighborhoods to provide for the stability of the community. A variety of neighborhoods exist in and around the Town. Many older neighborhoods, particularly those of historic value, must be preserved.

## Housing Tenure

Based on 2000 Census data, the majority of occupied housing units in Town (329 total units) are owner-occupied units (86%). As is seen in Table 7, renter-occupied units comprise 14% of the housing stock. This trend has remained steady from the 1990 census data figures of 84% owner occupancy and 16% renter occupancy. In the year 2000, the housing vacancy rate for Irvington stood at 26%, or 86 units, and is up slightly from 24%, or 72 units, in 1990. One of the primary reasons for this high proportion of vacant units is the large number of homes (61 or 18.5%) used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

**Table 7**

<b>HOUSING TENURE</b>			
<b>Town of Irvington</b>			
<b><u>Type</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Units</u></b>		<b><u>% Change</u></b>
	<b><u>1990</u></b>	<b><u>2000</u></b>	
Occupied Housing Units	234	243	3.8%
Owner-Occupied Units	197	210	6.6%
Renter-Occupied Units	37	33	-10.8%
Vacant Housing Units	72	86	19.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>7.5%</b>

(Source: 2000 U.S. Census)

## Housing Stock

As of 2000, approximately 25% of Irvington's housing stock was built prior to 1940 and is over 65 years in age, with approximately another 23% of the housing stock built between 1940 and 1959. Table 8 displays a further breakdown of when structures in Irvington were constructed.

**Table 8**

<b>YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT</b>		
<b>Town of Irvington</b>		
<b><u>Year Built</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Units</u></b>	<b><u>% of Total</u></b>
1939 or earlier	83	25.2%
1940 to 1949	42	12.8%
1950 to 1959	33	10.0%
1960 to 1969	52	15.8%
1970 to 1979	42	12.8%
1980 to 1989	37	11.2%
1990 to March 2000	40	12.2%
TOTAL	329	100.0%
(Source: 2000 U.S.Census)		

## **Transportation Facilities and Services**

A safe and efficient transportation system is a key factor in of community development. Not only do transportation facilities serve the needs of existing residents, they also influence the location of future development and economic activity. Irvington's transportation system includes three (3) basic types of facilities: roadways, parking facilities, and pedestrian facilities.

### Roadways

Irvington is served by three functional classifications of roadways: arterials, collectors, and local roads. Arterial roads are designed to provide access to adjacent land and access to the higher order systems. Service to through traffic on these roads is highly discouraged. Irvington Road/State Route 200 is the only arterial road located in Irvington. Collector roads are designed to provide access from the primary road to the various residential, commercial, and



*Irvington Road (State Route 200) is the main thoroughfare that provides access to the Town.*

industrial areas found throughout the Town. Examples include King Carter Drive, Steamboat Road, and Chesapeake Drive. Local streets are designed as minor roads to be utilized solely for local residential access. Examples include The Lane and Old Mill Cove Road. Existing roads are functional and at their current capacity and no extensive changes are necessary in the near future.

Average daily traffic counts, on Table 9, depict the relative use and importance of local roadways. The heavy volume along Irvington Road and to a lesser extent, along King Carter Drive and Steamboat Road is readily evident as these two streets serve as gateways for local residents into the main residential areas of Town. Traffic calming devices such as speed bumps should be considered and evaluated.

One of the main concerns that the Town expresses is the amount of truck through-traffic traveling along Irvington Road. The amount of trucks traveling along Irvington Road has significantly increased within the last few years due to the relatively short turning radius along Irvington Road when compared to the ninety-degree turn along Harris Road, the regularly-traveled route. It should be noted by VDOT that Irvington Road is commonly referred to as Route 3 on many on-line mapping service websites, which could be the primary reason for the recent increase in through-traffic. Since Irvington Road used to be Route 3 until a few years ago, some data sources still classify it as such. VDOT should be made aware of this situation and road signs discouraging through-traffic are encouraged at the Town's boundaries.

### Parking Facilities

The background analysis indicated no significant deficiency of parking spaces throughout the Town. The on-street parking and lot parking opportunities are sufficient enough for the downtown area along Irvington Road and King Carter Drive as well as along Steamboat Road. However, better signage identification of off-street parking in the downtown area should be encouraged to promote use and discourage on-street parking.

### Sidewalks

The Town of Irvington has maintained a walkability that allows residents, visitors, and business owners to traverse the streets and services of the Town completely on foot. Irvington has sidewalks in and around its downtown but many of the residential neighborhoods lack them. Newly developed areas in Irvington have excluded sidewalks and rely on vehicular modes of travel. Generally, the sidewalks are well utilized and in good condition. The sidewalks in Town can be found in the following areas:

- Along the entire state-owned portion of Steamboat Road
- Along the southern side of The Lane from Steamboat Road until Sams Cove Landing and the northern side from Sams Cove Landing until the continuation of The Lane.

- Along the southern side of Irvington Road from Steamboat Road until King Carter Drive, along the eastern and western sides from King Carter Drive until a point opposite “The Bay Window.”
- Along the eastern side of King Carter Drive from Irvington Road until Edgewood Lane and along the western side from Irvington Road until Virginia Drive.
- Along the eastern side of Tavern Road

**Table 9**

State or Public Roads Town of Irvington, Virginia				
<u>State Route</u>	<u>Road Name</u>	<u>Road Classification</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)</u>
Route 200	Irvington Road	Arterial	1.68 miles	6500
Route 633	Carter's Creek Road	Local	0.15 miles	500
Route 634	King Carter Drive	Collector	1.21 miles	2810
Route 635	Steamboat Road	Collector	0.42 miles	2220
Route 636	The Lane	Local	0.50 miles	500
Route 657	Rappahannock Road	Local	0.11 miles	200
Route 672	Virginia Road	Local	0.24 miles	490
Route 715	Tavern Road	Local	0.19 miles	360
Route 719	Quails Trail	Local	0.31 miles	40
Route 721	Railway Road	Local	0.09 miles	80
Route 727	Lancaster Road	Local	0.08 miles	80
Route 746	Cedardale Lane	Local	0.10 miles	70
Route 758	Edgewood Lane	Local	0.18 miles	70
Route 768	Chesapeake Drive	Collector	0.39 miles	830
Route 769	Chesapeake Drive (Ext.)	Local	0.25 miles	80
Route 776	Seafood Lane	Local	0.09 miles	230
Route 781	York Road	Local	0.10 miles	60
Route 787	Glebe Road	Local	0.63 miles	120
Route 1301	Cedar Circle	Local	0.05 miles	20
Route 1302	Holly Circle	Local	0.05 miles	20
Route 1303	Pine Circle	Local	0.10 miles	30
Route 1304	Old Mill Cove Road	Local	0.34 miles	110
<b>1.68 miles</b> of Arterial Roads <b>2.02 miles</b> of Collector Roads <b>3.56 miles</b> of Local Roads  <b>7.26 miles of Total Roadways</b>				
(Source: 2004 VDOT Daily Traffic Volume Estimates)				

## Bikeways

The Town of Irvington does not currently have either a comprehensive bicycle trails plan or designated bike lanes. However, the current widths of Irvington Road and King Carter Drive are substantial enough to provide a safe environment for cyclists. Lancaster County has an ongoing effort to create a biking trail connecting Irvington, White Stone and Kilmarnock.

## **Historic District and Structures**

The Town of Irvington's Historic District was entered in the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, on December 8, 2000. The Historic District includes large parts of both West and East Irvington. According to the official narrative compiled by the National Park Service, "the district is made up of 197 resources, 153 of which contribute to the context of the district. The district consists of 162 freestanding single family dwellings with 13 commercial, 2 churches, 6 cemeteries, and 3 institutional buildings." In the future, the Town may elect to issue, for a fee, historic house plaques for any structures that qualified for historic designation in the 1998-1999 Town survey. The Historic District Map displays which properties are included within the Irvington Historic District.



It has long been recognized by the Town of Irvington that the community possesses the ambiance of a historic village. The Town's historic relationship to the water, historic preservation efforts, and pedestrian-friendly downtown have all contributed to the historic village concept which is recognized by residents and visitors alike. One of the main reasons that Irvington attracts so many visitors is that they want to be surrounded by this historic village environment. This village concept is one that residents treasure and do not want overlooked.



*Some of the many historic structures located in the Irvington Historic District.*

Subsequently, it is imperative to preserve the historic character of Irvington. An Architectural Review Board (ARB) is already in place in the Town's zoning ordinance with duties to "administer the provisions...that no building or structure, including signs, shall be erected, reconstructed, altered or restored within any such historic district unless the same is approved by the architectural review board or, on appeal, by the governing body as being architecturally compatible with the historic landmarks, buildings, or structures therein."

## **D. Environmental Conditions**

### **Coastal Waters and Wetlands**

#### Flood-Prone Areas

Due to its large amount of coastal shoreline and proximity to tidal water bodies, the Town has some flood prone areas along its shores. Damage from flood waters in these areas can result in expensive repairs to structures, loss of use of structures, inoperable septic systems, and water contamination. These are problems that can be further aggravated by the cumulative impact of development in flood-prone areas. In all, Irvington has only 6% of land that lies within the 100-year flood plain.

#### Wetlands

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service defines wetlands as land transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water. The Town currently has both tidal wetlands and non-tidal wetlands within its boundaries.

Wetlands are important natural resources that provide many positive benefits to the man-made and natural environments. Wetlands provide aesthetic, recreational, and economic benefits to the community. Furthermore, wetlands are spawning and nursery grounds for fish, feeding sites for waterfowl, nesting habitat for birds, and home to wildlife. These wetlands also serve as important areas for groundwater recharge, flood control, pollution adsorption, and retention of sediment from stormwater runoff. It is of extreme importance to preserve these wetlands in and around the Town of Irvington. These wetlands serve economic, environmental, and recreational purposes that are all integral to the vitality of the Town.

#### Public / Private Water Access and Use

Private access to state waters in Irvington is available to residents who are waterfront property owners as well as to customers of the businesses that offer access to state waters for a fee. This fee is usually charged in the form of slip rentals or ramp fees. The most common type of access to state waters is through private, residential ownership. It is estimated that 90-95% of Irvington's shoreline is dedicated to either private residences or undeveloped parcels. The only other access to state waters that is available in Irvington is through its waterfront businesses. These businesses include marinas, the Tides Inn, and the Town's various industrial uses.

The last of the privately owned commercial sites is Gaskins Landing which is located off of Steamboat Road on the Eastern Branch of Carter's Creek. Although this site is privately owned, the owners of this site allow it to be used by the general public. The owners offer a boat ramp and limited parking in exchange for a small donation. There

are currently no publicly owned access points to the water in Irvington. As a result, landlocked residents of the Town lack any means of access to the water.

In addition to public access, Irvington currently does not have any areas designated as public use areas along the coast and there are no appropriate lands remaining for this type of use.

### Viewsheds

Viewsheds in Irvington refer to those physiographic areas composed of land, water, biotic, and cultural elements. Views of the water are a valuable asset to residents and enhance Town character. Limiting viewsheds has the potential to diminish the Town's character.

### **Topographic Characteristics**

The large majority of the inland areas in Irvington are flat with elevations ranging from 20-35 feet above sea level. However, approximately 20% of the Town has slopes with elevations ranging from sea level to 20-25 feet above sea level. These sloping areas are found along the Town's tidal shorelines and natural drainage courses. The Town's flat topography inland, along with soil conditions, can be linked to drainage problems in sections of Irvington. Areas of Town in which slopes are in excess of 15% include the coastal areas along the northwest shorelines as well as the coastal areas along the east and southeast shorelines of the Town. These areas require awareness due to the highly erodible nature of the soils and their proximity to streams. The Town will aggressively work to enforce compliance with all regulations mandated by the Chesapeake Bay Act.

## **E. Community Facilities**

Community facilities consist of all public buildings, utilities, and parks serving the residents of Irvington. One of the chief functions of local government is to provide an adequate level of public services within the boundaries of that community's legal authority and financial capability. The following section briefly summarizes existing conditions of community facilities in the Town with a few broad references to future needs.

### **Current Water and Sewer Systems**

#### Water System

The Town of Irvington relies on a central public water system, including wells and distribution lines. It is privately owned, providing water for residences as well as businesses, and maintained by Aqua Virginia. The Town system serves approximately 339 residential and non-residential customers including the Tides Inn.

The Irvington water system currently has two wells providing water to the system. The original well, Well No.1, located off Seafood Lane was constructed around 1954, pumps approximately 100 GPM directly to the system through the use of a 5,000 gallon hydropneumatic tank, and only pumps during peak demand periods. The well and controls are housed in a cinderblock building.

The primary well, Well No. 2, which is located off King Carter Drive near the entrance to Tides Inn and was constructed in 1974, pumps approximately 185 GPM to a 30,000 gallon welded steel atmospheric storage tank. A pump test conducted in 1986 indicated that the yield of Well No. 2 is approximately 200 GPM. Two 15 HP booster pumps rated for 480 GPM at 165 feet of TDH take the water from the atmospheric tank and pump it to the system through the use of a hydropneumatic tank. The booster pumps and controls are housed in a cinderblock building and the well is in front of the building.

The existing distribution system has 6" piping from the Well No. 2 facility to Irvington Road and North on Irvington Road to Glebe Road but is also mostly comprised of 2" and 2-1/4" cast iron distribution mains. The cast iron mains are approximately 50 years old and have lead joints.

Based on a visual inspection, the storage tanks are in fair condition. Some evidence of corrosion was evident indicating that the exterior of the tanks need to be scraped and painted. The extent of the corrosion and the condition of the inside of the tanks should be investigated.

There has been recent discussion of integrating the independent water systems of White Stone, Irvington, and Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury. The Tides Inn is in the process of redeveloping the Tides Lodge property into the Pointe on Carters Creek, a 65 condominium development across Carter's Creek from the Inn. If a central water system

was created, the Inn could pay to cross the Creek and connect to the central system in lieu of constructing an independent system, which would also allow the central system to serve the homes around the Tides Lodge property. Also, a new development called Golden Eagle which includes 400 residential units is being planned just north of RW-C. Again, if the combined system was created, the developers could pay to connect to the system. This information on the Town's water service was taken from the Bury and Partners 2006 study entitled "Water System Integration – White Stone, Irvington, and Rappahannock Westminster Canterbury."

### Sewer System

An extremely high proportion of all private residences in the Town utilize septic systems for sewage disposal purposes. The remaining residences are served by other means of disposal. The current septic systems adequately provide service to the Town's residences and businesses.

### **Public Safety and Emergency Services**

The Lancaster County Sheriff's Office provides law enforcement for the Town of Irvington. They supply comprehensive police service for the residents of the Town. The police department provides professional emergency services as well as community-based educational and prevention programs. The idea of creating a partnership with the Town of White Stone Police Department in order to formulate a dual-Town Police Department that serves both Towns should be considered and promoted by the Town Council as a priority item. This would create a safer ambiance for the Town as well as provide a more individualized set of services.

With the increased usage of the internet, the Town should look into wireless services for the future delivery of government and emergency messages as well as a service to overnight tourists. Wireless service will provide maximum strength, speed, security, and dependability for both receipt and transmission of large files. Having a Town intranet and website is a good way to deliver information in addition to newspaper notices, flyers, and mailings.

## F. Parks and Recreation

The Town of Irvington has several properties which offer recreational, cultural, and entertainment opportunities. The first property is the Town Commons located at the intersection of King Carter Drive and Tavern Drive, consisting of a ball field, playground, tennis courts, and a bandstand/gazebo. The Commons doubles as the location for the Town's farmer's market, summer concerts, and other large-scale, outdoor Town events. Concert an event attendance has spilled over into surrounding streets and properties. Design changes or expansion should only be considered if the functional and aesthetic character of the existing property is not compromised.

For the Town's boating enthusiasts, Irvington has various privately-owned marinas located throughout Irvington. For a fee, residents can dock their boats at any of these local marinas or at the Gaskins private dock site. Opened in June 2004, The Steamboat Era Museum is the Town's primary cultural attraction. Located at 156 King Carter Drive, the Steamboat Era Museum's mission is to collect, preserve, and act as a depository for artifacts and all types of information pertaining to the steamboats that served the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.



*The Steamboat Museum is one of the Town's many cultural attractions.*

### **III. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

If the Comprehensive Plan is to be useful, its stated goals must be known, understood, and supported by the people of Irvington. The design of the Plan and its various tools for implementation should be predicated upon these goals. Should Irvington's goals and objectives change, the Plan and its implementation strategies should also change in response. The following goals and objectives have been compiled through public meetings, business-community open forums, and the steering committee process.

#### **Land Use and Development**

**Goal:** Encourage and provide for the utilization of the land in a manner that meets the needs of the population, stimulates physical, social, and economic development harmonious with the character of the town, and protects the environmental quality of the area.

**Objectives:**

1. Preserve prime open space in the Town through the use of such tools as land conservancy, ownership, and zoning and regulatory controls, in order to protect the Town's natural areas.
2. Adopt ordinances that encourage and promote the option of conservation design for future development where this concept and design would enhance the "rural village" atmosphere and character of Irvington.
3. Consider incentives to promote voluntary concessions of already approved development plans to encourage conservation design.
4. Preserve the rural character of the Town by directing and controlling growth and architectural design in designated areas.
5. Maintain existing open/recreation space and identify and consider procurement of any additional open/recreation spaces as deemed proper and advisable to maintain and promote the Town's charm and appeal.
6. Enforce the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act and erosion control regulations to assure protection of the water quality of Carter's Creek.
7. Assure that new development is regulated in a manner that provides for continued protection of the Town's surface and groundwater resources.

## **Community Preservation**

**Goal:** Protect and preserve Irvington's historic quality and character.

### **Objectives:**

1. Consider implementing a Town Architectural Review Board (ARB) which will act to assure that buildings and structures in the Town are in good taste, good design and harmonious with surrounding developments, and contribute to Irvington's reputation as a place of beauty and historic significance. If a Town ARB is implemented, ARB approval/disapproval should be made part of the zoning approval process.
2. Develop, through consultation between the Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator, a comprehensive handout that outlines the entire building process in a step-by-step manner that will be made available to all property owners, developers, and contractors involved in any building or development project in Irvington.
3. Encourage protection of the Town's viewsheds and streetscape enhancements.
4. Comply with the Chesapeake Bay Act in furtherance of above.

## **Public Facilities**

**Goal:** Provide an adequate level of public services to all people in the Town as efficiently and as economically possible.

### **Objectives:**

1. Provide and maintain an adequate public water system for the Town.
2. Investigate alternative sewage disposal options for the Town.
3. Insure appropriate police, fire, and rescue protection for Irvington's residents corresponding with the needs of the present and future population.
4. Investigate the future of wireless and fiber optic services for the Town and explore the role a Town website and intranet can play in delivering information to residents and potential visitors.
5. Establish a policy guideline for use of the Town Commons.

## **Transportation**

**Goal:** Provide for a system of streets, sidewalks, parking areas, traffic controls, and other related facilities, in appropriate areas of the Town, which will provide for safe, convenient, and reliable movement of goods and people.

**Objectives:**

1. Coordinate with VDOT in limiting through-traffic and encouraging speed calming techniques through signage or other devices.
2. Determine the feasibility and cost of improving and maintaining sidewalks on the main thoroughfares of Irvington.
3. Cooperate with Lancaster County in implementing a County Bicycle Trails Plan.

## **Water Access**

**Goal:** Provide access to state waters, while assuring continued protection of the natural environment.

**Objective:** Explore the possibility of establishing access to state waters (e.g. Town dock) to provide possible picnic areas and enhance boating and fishing opportunities.

## **Economic Development**

**Goal:** Provide for new commercial development opportunities through the promotion of the Town's commercial assets.

**Objectives:**

1. Allow for mixed use or development in business districts B-1 and B-2 only.
2. Encourage a public, central sewer system.
3. Encourage and promote the hospitality services found in Town.
4. Continue the concept of allowing home occupation business, subject to Town ordinance restraints.
5. Emphasize and encourage those specialty services which attract the most visitors.

## **IV. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN**

The Future Land Use Plan, featured on the Future Land Use Map, depicts a generalized land use concept for the Town of Irvington and specific guidance in certain instances. The purpose of the Plan is to encourage an orderly, harmonious arrangement of land that will meet the present and future needs of the Town. The Plan is essentially an expansion of the existing land use pattern that has developed in and around the Town. Based on anticipated needs, land is identified for various forms of development uses.

In addition, recommendations for transportation and community facilities are identified in the Plan to serve the needs of a projected population and a proposed land use pattern. The Plan has been prepared for a twenty-year period, with an emphasis on the immediate decade ahead. The Plan is intended as a guide in making decisions respecting future growth and development, and is to be construed broadly within the context of the Plan's goals and objectives. The Future Land Use Map shows the future land use pattern for Irvington.

### **Residential Uses**

Three (3) types of residential areas are identified based on housing type and density. These include low and medium-density areas, and subdivisions. For all residential uses public water and an acceptable sewage disposal system must be available.

#### Low-Density Residential

Low-density residential use is designated for established single-family areas, as well as nearby vacant areas where similar development is expected to occur. Existing low-density areas are generally situated on larger lots.

#### Medium-Density Residential

Medium-density residential concentration areas are areas which allow a greater concentration and variation of housing types. Permitted uses include single-family and two-family dwellings. The maximum number of dwelling units per acre will be specified by Town Council. A majority of the residences in Irvington fall under this category.

#### Residential Subdivisions

In concurrence with the Town's land use goals and objectives, any subdivision ordinances adopted by the Town should require a majority portion of the land be left open as open space in perpetuity

## **Business Uses**

The pattern of business uses in Irvington is well-established, concentrated mainly along Irvington Road in the downtown area as well as along Steamboat Road. If any expansion of commercial uses is foreseen it should be concentrated on the northwest side of Rt. 200/Irvington Road.

## **Industrial**

The Future Land Use Plan envisions the preservation of the Town's existing industrial, water-dependent uses. Any redevelopment or reuse of the Town's industrial sites should act to retain these uses for commercial, industrial, or possible public use.

## **Transportation**

No changes are needed in the Town's existing transportation network. The Town's roads adequately meet the needs of residents and no extensive changes are necessary.

## **Public Uses**

The community facilities throughout Irvington are well distributed and adequately serve the public. Parks and open space are dedicated primarily to active or passive recreational use and include the Town Commons. One of the goals of public use areas is to better define the Town Commons area.

## **V. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Zoning and Subdivision Regulations**

With each revision of the Land Use Plan, the Town must review its zoning and subdivision ordinances. Changes in land use must be reflected in the ordinances, thereby requiring possible revisions to the existing regulations. Zoning is the legal means by which land uses, lot sizes, building setbacks, height, bulk, and other related matters are controlled. The zoning ordinance and zoning map are the primary tools for implementing the Land Use Plan.

Of interest to the Town, the Virginia General Assembly has enabled counties, cities, and towns to establish by local ordinance a local tourism zone with tax incentives and regulatory flexibility (HB 518, CH 642). The Town should consider a viable location for such a zone downtown and sufficient development incentives to entice tourism-related businesses to locate in Irvington.

### **Regional Cooperation**

In the years ahead, many planning related decisions must be made that will directly affect the quality of life for residents of Lancaster County and the Town of Irvington. Given Irvington's smaller size and limited staff, it must work in conjunction with the County and surrounding communities. Irvington should utilize regional resources such as technical assistance, funding support for some local services, assistance with site plan reviews, and special grant applications. Irvington, in turn, must actively support, when appropriate and beneficial to the Town at large, regional economic development initiatives.

It is important that White Stone, Irvington and the County initiate and foster an atmosphere of cooperation on interjurisdictional issues. All three governing bodies must communicate openly and work together in order to ensure compact, orderly growth and conservation of the area's natural resources.

### **Capital Improvement Program**

A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a 5-year schedule of capital expenditures by the Town. The program's long-range plans are developed by the Planning Commission with consideration of the Town's financial resources and other potential leverage funding sources.

While adoption and implementation of the CIP is the responsibility of the Mayor and Town Council, the Planning Commission should provide the advice and direction since it is the body charged with preparing for the Town's growth needs in the coming years. Therefore, the Commission should become acquainted with local revenues and expenditures, as well as recently adopted budgets. The Commission can then meaningfully assist Town staff and Council in drafting a workable CIP amortized over a

five year period. As such, the Town should consider the adoption of a five-year CIP which may include the following items:

- 1) Signage or other traffic calming techniques to be located along Irvington Road.
- 2) Streetscape enhancements along the Town's major thoroughfares which include benches, street trees, sidewalk improvements, street lamps, etc.
- 3) Implementation of a Town intranet and website to be used as an informative tool by Irvington residents and visitors.
- 4) The acquisition of waterfront property to be used by the Town for public access and/or use.
- 5) Physical improvements to the Town Commons area as well as a policy guide for its use.
- 6) Participate/cooperate with County in establishing a County Bicycle Trails Plan that includes segments of Irvington Road.