FY 1992 **FINAL PRODUCT** Task 35
Technical Assistance

TOWN OF CLAREMONT

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Prepared By Claremont Planning Commission
with assistance from
Crater Planning District Commission

September, 1993

A report of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's Coastal Resources Management Program pursuant to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Award No. NA27OZ0312-01.

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TOWN OF CLAREMONT

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Adopted October 4, 1993 by
Claremont Town Council

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INTRODUCTION

Authority

Under Title 15.1, Chapter 11, Article 4 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, the Claremont Planning Commission is authorized to prepare and recommend a plan for the development of the Town. The Act stipulates that the plan, with illustrative materials, shall show a planning commission's long-range recommendations for the general development of the territory within its jurisdiction. 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, 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 groundwater protection measures;

6. An official map, a capital improvements program, a subdivision ordinance, and a zoning ordinance and zoning district maps; and,

7. The designation of areas for the implementation of measures to promote the construction and maintenance of affordable housing.

The Act further provides that the plan shall show the general or approximate location, charter, and extent of each feature described in the plan; but it may also show where lands or existing facilities are proposed to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated narrowed, abandoned, or otherwise changed. In addition, the Act states that at least once every five years the comprehensive plan shall be reviewed by the local planning commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan.

Purpose

The Claremont Comprehensive Plan is a general guide for decisions and actions that determine the Town's physical, social and economic development. The plan identifies goals and objectives, suggests policies to implement them and proposes programs to carry these policies out.

Plan History

While the Town's planning commission has been in existence since March 25, 1976, it had been more or less idle until it was reactivated in 1985. Preparation of the Comprehensive Plan was started in 1987. The staff of the Crater Planning District Commission assisted in the preparation of the first draft in 1990 and the final draft in 1993.

Data Collection

Data for Claremont's Comprehensive Plan was collected from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Crater Planning District Commission, the Surry County Planning Commission and the Surry County Office of the Treasurer.

Plan Format

The Claremont Plan contains six parts. The introduction describes the planning area, the authority for planning, the purpose of the plan, and the plan adoption procedures.

The second provides economic and population characteristics, an inventory of land features and land use, housing and transportation, and community facilities.

The third section discusses special planning considerations that will affect development.

The fourth section contains goals, objectives, and policies to guide future land use planning and development.

The fifth provides specific suggestions for future land use, a future transportation system, and plans for community facilities.

The sixth section discusses plan implementation methods such as zoning, subdivision control, and capital improvements programming.

Plan Adoption

After the required public hearings, the Planning Commission will amend the plan, if necessary, and then recommend it to the Town Council for adoption. The Town Council will then have ninety days to adopt the plan after receiving it from the Planning Commission. If not adopted, it is returned to the Planning Commission and must be re-submitted within sixty days.

The plan may be amended at any time, using public hearing and adoption procedures.

History

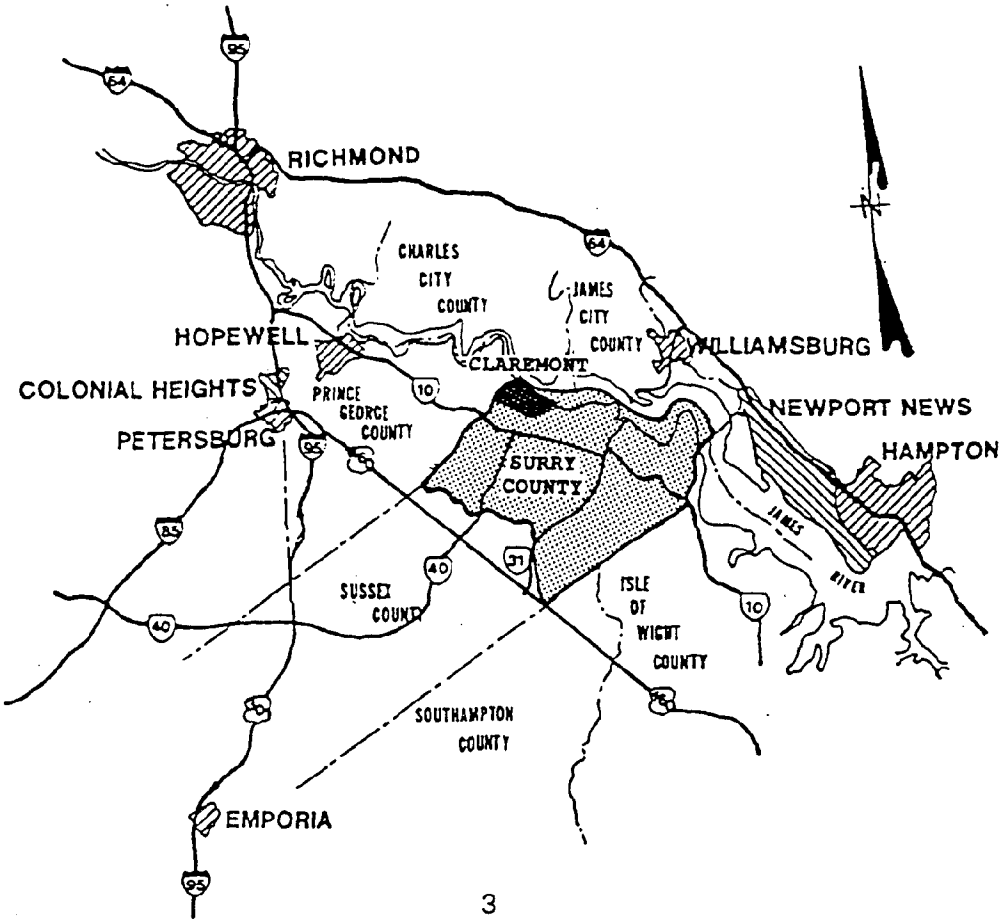
Before selecting Jamestown as the first permanent English settlement in America, the land on which Claremont is now situated was first explored when the colonists met with natives of the nearby Quioughchonach tribe in May of 1607.

In 1632, Benjamin Harrison arrived in Virginia and took title to what is now Claremont and Sunken Meadow. The plantation stayed in the Harrison family until after the American Revolution when it was purchased by William Allen.

After the Civil War, the Allens and the plantation fell on hard times and the plantation was sold to J.F. Mancha. Claremont was officially incorporated in 1886 and it was to be the period of the area's greatest growth, which continued into the first quarter of the twentieth century, with an estimated population of one thousand persons.

By World War II, the Town had significantly declined and today maintains a population of under four hundred, which is increased by seasonal residents who occupy riverfront summer homes.

Claremont is situated on the northernmost point of Surry County on the South bank of the James River.



POPULATION ANALYSIS

This section analyzes Claremont's population characteristics and will used to project a population trend which provides a basis for establishing public service priorities and for setting Town goals and policies. Data from the 1960 through the 1990 U.S. Census will be compared.

Trends and Estimates

Claremont is located in the Crater Planning District, an area where the population increased between 1960 and 1980. This growth occurred where new industries were established in the nearby cities of Colonial Heights, Hopewell and Petersburg. However, between 1970 and 1980, population growth moderated as industrial growth leveled off. During the eighties, the Tri-Cities area experienced major industrial closings and layoffs. Between 1980 and 1990 the population of the district decreased by 0.34 percent.

Surry County's population between 1980 and 1990 experienced a slight decrease.

Surry's sparsely populated Guilford District which surrounds Claremont had very little change between 1960 and 1990, losing only 10 persons.

Claremont's population experienced only a slight decrease throughout the years between 1960 and 1990. The 1990 Claremont population, according to the Census, was 335, a decrease of only 42 persons over the 1960 population.

Population Characteristics

Population characteristics present statistics on age, race and sex. Such statistics are useful in evaluating the Town's labor force, its dependents, and the structure of community facility programs needed to serve Claremont's population.

Age

The age profile of Claremont's population is determined by using age groups. The Town of Claremont has a lower proportion of its population in the youth age group (birth to 24) and a higher proportion in the elderly dependent group (over 65) than Surry County or Virginia. This results in an older overall population for the Town. Because of its older population, Claremont currently has a relatively small labor force (ages 25 to 64). A labor force is a prerequisite for attracting industry.

More than forty percent of Claremont's labor force was above 45 years old in 1990 and will all reach retirement by the 2010's. These retirees would normally be replaced by younger workers from within the community. This will be a different case, however, in Claremont, for the 5 to 24 age group has a combined population of only 28 percent of the total population.

Race and Sex

In 1990, there were more blacks than whites in Surry County. Blacks accounted for 55.5 percent of the County's population. For the Town of Claremont, whites accounted for 73.18 percent of the Town's population; only 26.82 percent of the 1990 population was black.

According to the 1990 Census, there were more females than males in both Surry County and Claremont in 1990. The accounted for 54.9 and 45.1 percents of Claremont's total population respectively.

Population Projections

Claremont's projected population is based on an analysis of past and current population trends and the extension of these trends into the future. Population projections reflect both historical and current population trends and a sense of local economic and physical development factors. Population projections should be used only as a guide because unforeseen factors, such as the location of a new industry, or location of a new river crossing close to Claremont, may cause the population to increase. By contrast, the loss of an industry could cause further population decline.

Population gains and losses for Surry County and Claremont have historically run a parallel course. State population projections for Virginia's counties and cities are prepared by the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget. Although projections are not made for towns, Claremont's 2000 population is expected to be 350 persons. This projection is based on the projected annual population increase for Surry County of 0.42 percent, to 6,400 persons by 2000.

For Claremont to be a desirable place in which to live, there should be employment opportunities, sufficient and affordable housing, places to shop, and public services. If Claremont is to attract more population for the next ten years, the Town must find a way to improve the quality of life and the means to achieve it.

Population Change 1960-1990

	1960	1970	1980	1990	Average Annual Rate of Growth 1970-1980	Average Annual Rate of Growth 1980-1990
Town of Claremont	377	383	380	335	-.008	-.118
Guilford District	1,851	1,738	1,798	1,841	.035	.024
Surry County	6,220	5,882	6,046	6,145	.028	.016
Crater Planning District*	147,006	161,059	161,959	156,457	.006	-.034
State of Virginia	3,966,949	4,648,494	5,346,279	6,187,358	.130	.160

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1990.

* Includes the population of the Counties of Dinwiddie, Greensville, Prince George, Surry and Sussex; and the Cities of Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell and Petersburg.

Population Characteristics
Claremont and Surry County
1990

	Surry	Percent of Total Population	Claremont	Percent of Total Population
Population	6,145		335	
White	2,722	44.48	237	73.18
Black	3,411	55.50	98	26.82
Other	12	0.02	0	0

By Age and Sex	Female	Male	Percent of Total Population	Female	Male	Percent of Total Population
Under 5	229	221	7.3	7	4	3.3
5-14	459	461	15.0	30	23	15.8
15-24	362	376	12.0	16	24	11.9
25-44	1,024	939	31.9	49	36	25.4
45-64	602	566	19.0	38	28	19.7
65 +	515	391	14.8	44	36	23.9
TOTAL	3,191	2,954		184	151	

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990.

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Income

In 1989, the per capita income in the Town of Claremont was $11,714, a figure which is 27.9 percent lower than Surry County's per capita income figure of $16,245 for the same year. When comparing Claremont's income to that of the State's as a whole, Claremont's represented only 74.5 percent of Virginia's average. As has been the case since 1979, the Town's income grew at a slower rate than the County's. The average annual rate of growth in per capita income in the County was 19.5 percent, higher than the rate of growth for the Town or State.

Per Capita Income

	1979	1989	Average Annual Rate of Change 1979 - 1989
Claremont	$6,100	$11,714	9.2%
Claremont as a percent of Surry	110.7%	72.1%	-----
Surry County	$5,515	$16,245	19.5%
Claremont as a percent of Virginia	80.7%	74.5%	-----
Virginia	$7,563	$15,713	10.8%

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Selected Characteristics for Governmental Units and Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas - Virginia, October, 1982 & 1992.

Median family income information for 1989 was also collected as a part of the 1990 Census. This data revealed that the median family income level in both the Town and Surry County fell far below that for the State as a whole.

Median Family Income - 1989

Claremont	$28,333
Surry County	$30,109
Virginia	$38,213

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Selected Characteristics for Governmental Units and Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas - Virginia, October, 1982 & 1992.

Employment

The information gathered during the 1990 Census indicated that, in 1989, 118 persons in Claremont who were sixteen years old or older were a part of the civilian labor force. Of that number, 7 persons were unemployed, producing an unemployment rate at that time of 5.9 percent. For the same period, the County's unemployment rate was reported to be 6.6 percent.

More recent data regarding the County's labor force shows that unemployment has risen. According to the Virginia Employment Commission, during the first two months of 1993, the County's civilian labor force consisted of 3,179 persons, with an unemployment rate in May 1993 of 9.2 percent, increasing to 9.4 percent in June 1993. Data for the Town is not tracked separately by the Virginia Employment Commission.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The natural resources of an area, such as topographic features, geologic materials, and availability of groundwater, influence decisions concerning suitability for agricultural, forestal, residential, and industrial development. Activities causing overuse of groundwater, increased surface drainage, or air and water pollution can adversely impact land use.

Physiography

Claremont is located in the Coastal Plain Physiographic Province of Virginia. The Coastal Plain consists of a series of broad, relatively flat areas referred to as terraces, separated by relatively steeper areas referred to as scarps. The terraces decrease in elevation seaward and toward rivers.

Claremont is situated on a coastal plain terrace approximately 110 feet in elevation. Steep ravines dissect the terrace, directing surface water flow to the James River or to Brandon Gut and Sunken Meadow Creek which form tributaries to Upper Chippokes Creek and the James River respectively.

Geology and Soils

Surficial sedimentary deposits in the Claremont area are assigned to the Moorings unit and consist primarily of clayey silt and fine sand which grades downward into sand and gravel. Soils which have developed within the upper 70 inches are classified as Craven loam throughout more than 50 percent of the area, and mostly as Emporia fine sandy loam and Kempsville fine sandy loam throughout the remainder of the area. These soils are moderately well-drained to well drained, exhibit slow permeability, exhibit low natural fertility, and are strongly to extremely acidic. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service has interpreted the soils for land use management as follows:

Cropland:
Cultivated crops are moderately well suited to this soil. Economic yields can be obtained by applying lime and fertilizer based on soil test results and a management plan. Wetness in the spring restricts tillage operations, harvesting, and alfalfa growth. Management practices that maintain organic matter content and tilth, reduce crusting, and reduce runoff and erosion are minimum tillage, cover crops, returning crop residue to soil, grassed waterways and diversions, and crop rotations that include grasses and legumes.

Pastures:
Pastures and hay grasses and legumes are moderately well suited to this soil. Carrying capacity of pastures is increased by establishing and maintaining a mixture of grasses and legumes, proper stocking rates, and rotating and deferring grazing. Economic yields can be obtained by applying lime and fertilizer based on soil test results and a management plan. Compaction of the surface layer of the soil, damages to grasses and legumes, and increased erosion occurs by grazing during periods of seasonal wetness.

Woodland:
The potential productivity for loblolly pine is very high; the site index is 88. The estimated annual production of wood is 125 cubic feet per acre. Wetness limits use of equipment for managing timber. Plant competition limits establishment of desirable tree species.

Community Development:
Septic tank absorption fields are limited by slow permeability and a seasonable high water table. Unsatisfactory performance of septic tank absorption fields can adversely affect public health. Sanitary landfills are limited by slow permeability and a seasonal high water table. Building sites are limited by low strength and moderate shrink-swell potential. Excavations are limited by a perched high water table. Vehicular traffic is limited when the clayey subsoil is wet.

Hydrology

Water is obtained from surface water supplies, such as rivers, streams, and lakes, and from groundwater, which is water stored in the ground within permeable sediments, in layers, at specific depths below the ground surface. When water from rainfall reaches the ground surface, it moves laterally across the surface as runoff and also infiltrates the ground to deeper subsurface zones. Best Management Practices have been outlined by the Department of Environmental Quality in order to prevent runoff from causing soil erosion and from allowing water to flow into streams and rivers instead of infiltrating downward as groundwater. Proper groundwater management can create a perpetual adequate water supply to communities and agricultural areas even in times of drought.

Permeable sands and gravels which are saturated with water at specific depths, in zones or layers, are referred to as aquifers. In the Claremont area, there are 4 major aquifers which can supply groundwater. The aquifers are separated from each other by relatively impermeable sediments. The water table aquifer is the first aquifer encountered below the ground surface. It consists of sand, silt, and some gravel at depths generally less than 50 feet and is usually adequate to supply pumping rates of 10 to 50 gallons per minute of domestic needs. The water table aquifer is not level; rather, it reflects the ground surface topography and decreases in lower areas such as ravines. Also, the water table aquifer does not maintain a constant level; it fluctuates seasonally with varying amounts of precipitation. Groundwater from this aquifer has highly variable water quality with respect to iron and hydrogen sulfide content and may be easily polluted.

The Miocene aquifer is encountered at depths between 100 feet and 150 feet and is separated from the water table aquifer by a relatively impermeable silt and clay unit. With impermeable sediments above and below, this aquifer is referred to as a confined aquifer. Water infiltrates, or recharges this aquifer where its sediments are exposed at the ground surface west of Surry County in Sussex and Dinwiddie Counties. The aquifer slopes gently seaward and is covered by younger deposits. Groundwater from the Miocene aquifer is commonly used for domestic purposes and yields approximately 50 gallons per minute. The water quality is generally good; pollution would enter the aquifer from the recharge area.

The Paleocene aquifer is another confined aquifer; it is encountered at depths between 350

and 400 feet. This aquifer is similar to the Miocene aquifer, having a recharge area in Sussex and Dinwiddie Counties and yielding approximately 50 gallons per minute. Water quality from the Paleocene aquifer is good; pollution would enter the aquifer from the recharge area.

The Cretaceous aquifer is encountered at depths of 460+ feet. The recharge area for this aquifer is in Dinwiddie County. Yields from this aquifer are adequate for large municipal and industrial use, generally 700 gallons per minute. Fluoride and sodium concentrations are commonly high in water from the Cretaceous aquifer; pollution would enter the aquifer from the recharge area.

Climate and Air Quality

The Claremont area has a temperate climate with normal daily Maximum temperatures ranging seasonally from approximately 46°F to 88°F and normal minimum temperatures ranging seasonally from approximately 26°F to 78°F. Normal precipitation is 44 inches and normal relative humidity ranges from 53% to 90%. Mean annual wind speed is 7.6 mph, generally from the NNE in February and October and from the S and SSW the remainder of the year.

The Federal Clean Air Act of 1970 established national air quality standards for allowable amounts of suspended particulate matter, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, ozone, and lead. Areas near Claremont currently exhibit air quality better than the required standards. Surry County does not have any ambient air monitoring sites. In consideration of the general wind directions, the closest monitoring sites to Claremont are located at Waverly (monitoring suspended particulate matter, Suffolk (monitoring ozone), Newport News (monitoring carbon monoxide), and West Point (monitoring suspended particulate matter).

HOUSING

Claremont's housing inventory, trends, projections, and problems are discussed below. In developing the background data, the Census of Housing for 1980 and 1990, as prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, were used.

Housing Inventory

Housing Types:

Claremont's dominant housing types are traditional single family structures. In 1990, there were 286 single family units in Claremont, which is an increase of 50.5 percent over the number of single family units in 1980. During the same time period, there was a 33.3 percent decrease in the number of multi-family units. There were 40 manufactured housing units, 18 units more than the 1980 Census figure. The total number of year-round housing units increased by 91 units, or 37.8 percent during the last decade.

Housing Units by Type of Structure
Claremont, Virginia

Structure Type	Number of Units 1980	Number of Units 1990
One Family	210*	286
Multiple Family	9	6
Manufactured Housing, Year-Round Units	22	40
TOTAL	241	332

* includes 20 seasonal and manufactured units.

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Housing, 1980 & 1990.

Housing Occupancy
Claremont, Virginia

	Number of Units	
	1980	1990
Owner Occupied	112	99
Renter Occupied	41	53
Vacant	68	77
Seasonal or Occasional Use	20	103
TOTAL	241	332

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Housing, 1980 & 1990.

Conditions of Housing:
The 1980 Census of Housing classified substandard housing according to units which lacked complete plumbing facilities or which were overcrowded. Overcrowding exists when a unit contains 1.01 or more persons per room used for living purposes.

According to the 1990 Census of Housing, 32 units in Claremont were identified as lacking of plumbing. No information on overcrowding was provided by the 1990 Census.

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Housing, 1980 & 1990.

Housing Trends and Projections

Twenty housing units were added to Claremont's housing stock between 1980 and 1990. It should be noted that contradictions exist in information provided by the Census of Housing from 1980 and 1990. The increase in total number of housing units between 1980 and 1990 is 91, while the number of new units is only 20.

After discussions with the Planning Commission, it was determined that the Town supplies water to 250 units. Thirty-two of the units are in Cypress Point, outside of Claremont, bringing the number to 218 units in Claremont. After adding approximately 20 units found in the Claremont Beach area, the number of units counted within Claremont is approximately 238. This number nearly matches the number of houses included in the 1980 Census of Housing.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities and services include those government and quasi-public improvements that serve the general public. Community facilities include buildings, land, and improvements that provide utilities, trash disposal, recreation, and library services. Community facilities are among the basic necessities needed for a community's growth and development.

Utilities

Water:
Claremont's water system was established in 1982. The system's water is supplied from two wells with a total pumping capacity of 30,000 gallons in twenty-four hours. The untreated water is stored in a 5,000 gallon tank. Distribution lines are 4" to 6" in diameter. The system serves the Town as well as an area southeast of the corporate limits along River Road.

Claremont's present water system is not capable of meeting existing needs; additional storage is necessary for existing needs and future growth. Residential or industrial growth, therefore, will influence decisions regarding an expansion of the Town's water system.

Water Source, Storage, and Distribution
Town of Claremont, 1989

Well Number	Pumping Capacity in Gallons per Minute
1	50 (back-up system)
2 (River Road)	200

Water Storage - 5,000 gallon tank

Pipe Size	Water Distribution Length in Feet	Percent of Total
6"	16,000 (est.)	60.0
4"	10,000 (est.)	37.7
2"	500 (est.)	2.3
	26,500	100.0

Fire Hydrants - 32

Customers

	Number	Water Use in Gallons Per Month-January 1989
Small	230	702,100
Large	1	Summer Only

Sewerage:
Claremont residents have individual septic tanks.

Electricity:
The Virginia Power Company supplies Claremont's electricity with 34½ Kilovolts. Presently there is no problem with this service.

Telephone:
GTE of Virginia, Inc. supplies Claremont's telephone service. This service is adequate.

Solid Waste

Claremont is supplied by dumpsters from Surry County which are emptied twice weekly by County trash trucks. Industrial and commercial customers may rent dumpsters and receive the same service. Claremont uses the Surry County Landfill which is twelve miles southeast of the Town.

Education

Claremont school children attend Surry County Schools, which provide instruction from kindergarten through 12th grades. There is one elementary school and one high school in Surry County.

Institutions of higher education near Claremont include two four-year colleges and two community colleges offering two-year programs.

Institutions of Higher Education Near Claremont

Name	Degree Program	Distance
Virginia State University	Four year Bachelor and graduate degree programs	33 miles in Petersburg
The College of William and Mary	Four year Bachelor and graduate degree programs	25 miles in Williamsburg
Richard Bland College of The College of William and Mary	Two year associate degree programs	30 miles in Petersburg
John Tyler Community College	Two year associate degree programs	35 miles in Chesterfield County

Health Services

Surry has one physician in private practice. Public health services and home health care services are available at the Surry County Public Health Department located on Route 10, 21 miles east of the Surry Court House.

The nearest hospitals are John Randolph in Hopewell, Williamsburg Community Hospital in Williamsburg and Southside Regional Medical Center in Petersburg.

Public Safety

Police:
Police protection for Claremont is provided by the Surry County Sheriff's Department. One officer is assigned to Claremont.

Fire:
The Claremont Volunteer Fire Department was established in 1945. There are 23 volunteers in the County Fire Fighters and Auxiliary Council. Seventy-five hours of training is required at the Department of Forestry Fire Program.

Equipment consists of a 1979 3/4 ton brush truck, a 1982 1,000 gallon pumper and a 1984 1,500 gallon tank.

Funding: One-half of the budget for the fire department comes from grants and county taxes, while the remainder comes from a $1,000.00 donation from the Town of Claremont and private donations and fund raising events.

Rescue Squad:
The Town is served by the Surry County Rescue Squad.

SPECIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Not all of the land in Claremont is suitable for development; parts of the area are more easily developed for certain uses than others. Certain land disturbing activities can possibly create hazards if unnatural uses occur. Additional costs may be incurred when overcoming the natural conditions existing in the area or when development in the area disturbs the natural process through environmental degradation, both on and off the site. There are development constraints and several important factors that have affected the Claremont area's growth and will continue to have a major influence on the area's future. Special planning considerations are directed to address these development constraints and factors to guide the best possible land uses for the study area in the future.

Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act

Protection of the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay, the James River and its tributaries is essential to the welfare of the Commonwealth and the Town of Claremont. As a natural resource, the Chesapeake Bay has always been instrumental to the growth and vitality of Virginia. It is an attractive body of water for recreation and transportation, and it has always been a critical component of the state's ecosystem.

In December 1987, Gov. Gerald Baliles acknowledged the significance of the Chesapeake Bay and the importance of protecting its water quality by signing the 1987 Chesapeake Bay Agreement, along with Representatives from Maryland, Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Chesapeake Bay Commission. Passage of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act by the 1988 General Assembly demonstrates Virginia's commitment to the Bay.

In an attempt to save the Bay from pollution that will be generated as millions live, work and play along the Bay, the General Assembly mandated that preservation regulations be adopted. Those regulations were enacted in September, 1989. These regulations affect shoreline development in all Tidewater localities including the Town of Claremont.

The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act requires that all tidewater communities to designate Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas (CBPAs). Land features within these areas serve an important function in the protection of water quality by removing sediment, nutrients and harmful substances from runoff entering the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. If improperly developed or disturbed, these areas may greatly degrade water quality. Two types of land are included in these Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas.

Resource Protection Areas (RPAs) are to include "areas which consist of sensitive lands at or near shorelines that have intrinsic water quality due to the ecological and biological processes they perform or are sensitive to impacts which may cause significant degradation to the quality of state waters." Areas designated as RPAs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- tidal wetlands;
- non-tidal wetlands connected by surface flow and contiguous to tidal wetlands or

tributary streams;
- tidal shores; and
- 100-foot buffer zones adjacent to other RPA components.

Resource Management Areas (RMAs) are lands which "have a potential for causing significant water quality degradation or for diminishing the functional value of the Resource Protection Areas." These management areas include all areas contiguous to the entire RPA inland boundary.

Included in Resource Management Areas are such components as:

- floodplains;
- highly erodible soils;
- highly permeable soils;
- isolated, non-tidal wetlands;
- steep slopes; and
- other lands at local discretion.

Following the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act's designation guidelines, the Town of Claremont designated the entire jurisdiction a Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area. Map 1 identifies Claremont's CBPAs.

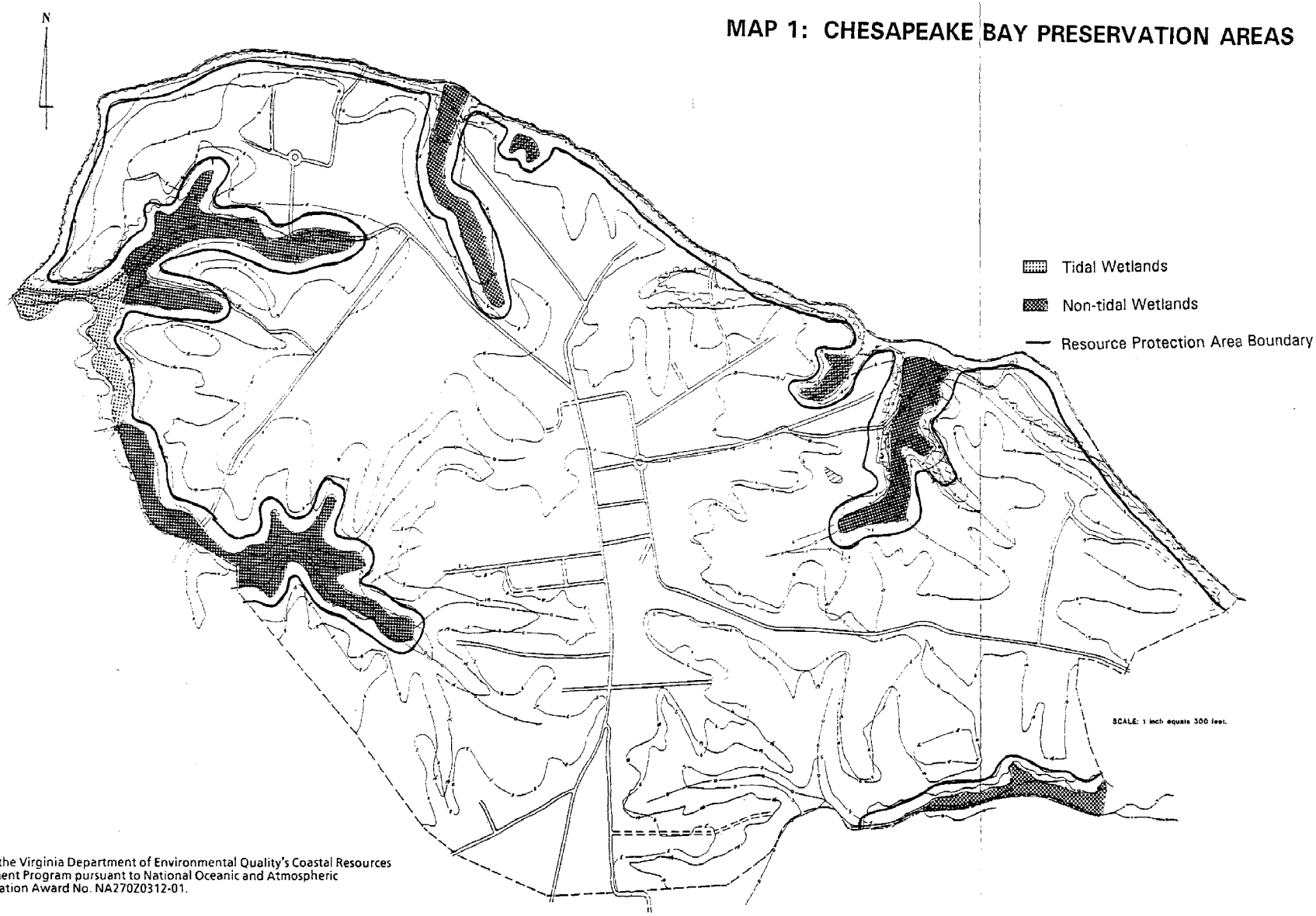
Inappropriate land uses and development within Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas may have a negative effect on the water quality of the area. Development in an RPA is allowed only if it is water dependent or if it constitutes redevelopment. A water quality impact assessment is required for any proposed development or redevelopment within an RPA. A water quality assessment may be required within a Resource Management Area because of the unique characteristics of the site or intensity of development.

Floodplains

The James River borders the corporate limits of the Town of Claremont on the North and flows eastwardly toward the Chesapeake Bay. An examination of the Flood Hazard Areas map of Claremont reveals that most of the flood plains in the area are located along the banks and beaches of the James. Because of its relatively high elevation, few structures were identified to be located in the flood plain, except those in the Sloop Point area. Map 2 illustrates the Flood Hazard Areas for Claremont. The map was prepared by the FIA (Federal Insurance Administration, now the Federal Emergency Management Agency) in April, 1975.

In general, flood plains are best left in a natural state. In addition to serving surface water hydrological functions, they are a prime habitat for animal and plant life. If left undisturbed, flood plains can provide a useful function of filtering eroded soils and other debris resulting from land-disturbing activities. Preserving flood plains in a natural state can also serve as a quiet reserve for passive recreation activity. Flood plains are crucial to the environment and ecological balance and must be protected.

MAP 1: CHESAPEAKE BAY PRESERVATION AREAS



A map of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's Coastal Resources Management Program pursuant to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Award No. NA270Z0312-01.

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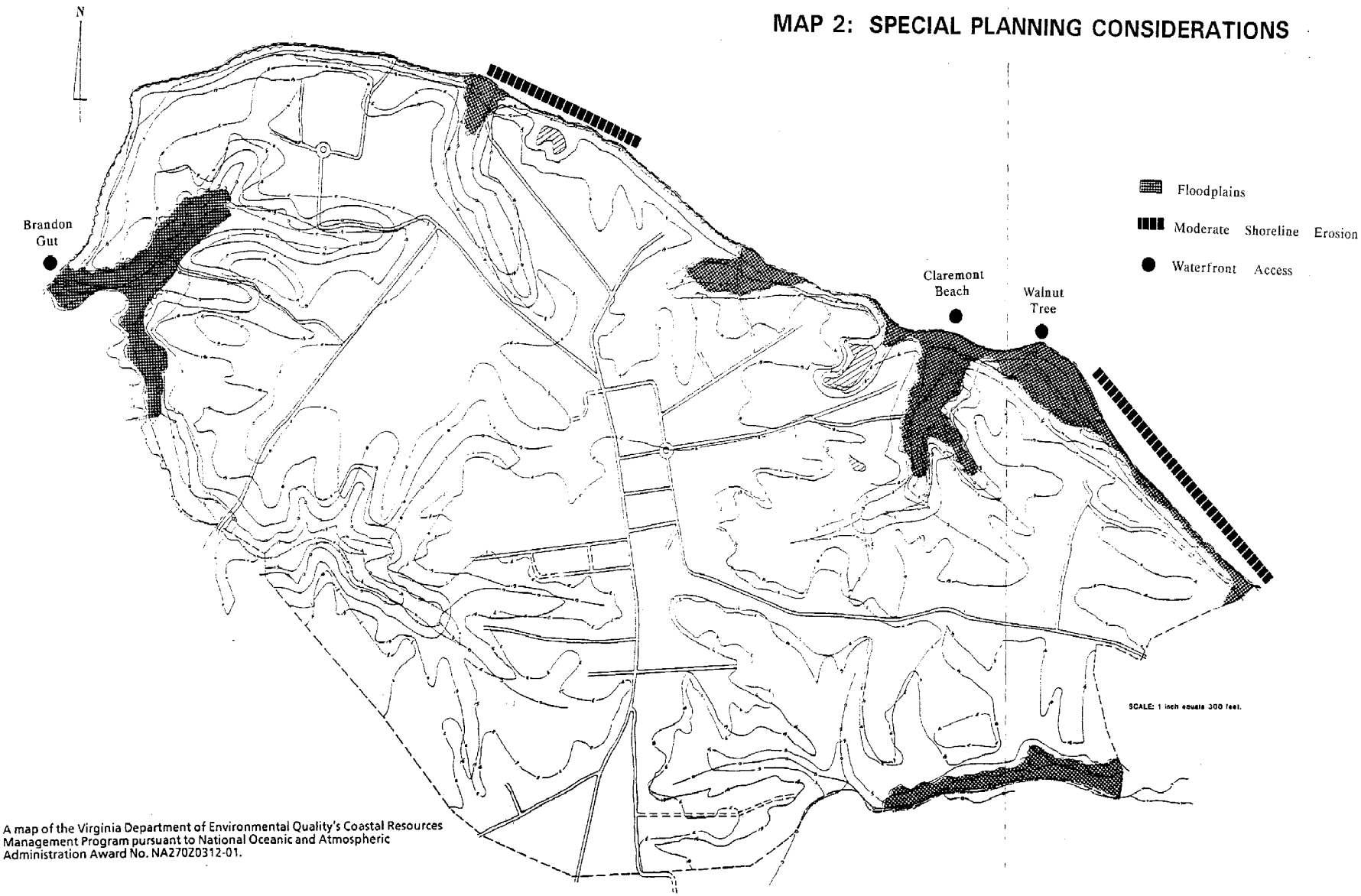
SEPTEMBER 1993

CLAREMONT

MAP 2: SPECIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS



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CLAREMONT

Waterfront Access

The 1990 Coastal Zone Management Act encourages the coastal community to identify opportunities for public waterfront access. Provision of public access is an important part of the Commonwealth's overall strategy for improved stewardship of its natural resources; citizens will be more likely to develop a sense of ownership and appreciation for Virginia's coastal environment if they are able to experience these resources personally. In turn, these citizens will become more likely to support coastal resource protection programs.

In the spring of 1993, a Waterfront Access and Recreation Plan was prepared by consultants for Surry County. Included in the plan is an identification of the problems and opportunities that exist along the county's waterfront. As recommended in the consultant's report, the following is a list of waterfront access points located in Claremont:

Walnut Tree: This beach is for the use of residents of Claremont only. The area is used for sun bathing and picnicking. Several benches are in place at this site.

Claremont Beach: Claremont beach is a private, mostly vacation home community with perhaps one of the best natural area for a bathing beach in the County. The beach area is privately owned and for the exclusive use of owners and their guests. There is a boat ramp and small pier within this community which can be used by the public for a fee. Several signs posted at the entrance to the community tend to discourage any general public access without prior knowledge of being able to use the boat ramp.

Brandon Gut: The drive to the mouth of Brandon Gut is one of the most scenic areas in the County and is obviously used for such purposes. However, the scenic drive and turnaround area are the subject of a disagreement between the Town of Claremont and the adjacent landowner. A large fence which denies access to the water has been constructed by the adjacent owner. A fishing pier and a pier where boats tied up no longer exist at this access point.

Because of the potential for environmental damage at these waterfront access points, guidelines for activities and development in these areas should be developed and actively enforced to ensure the protection of this valuable resource. Map 2 identifies waterfront access areas. All of these sites are privately owned, however, there may be future possibilities for public access.

Shoreline Erosion

Shoreline erosion can have adverse effects on surrounding lands. These areas often include subaqueous lands, marshes and other lands which play a vital role in maintaining water quality. Because of the potential hazards associated with shoreline erosion, careful management of shoreline property is necessary. The condition of shorelines within a community should be identified and development in these areas should be monitored.

Map 2 illustrates the conditions of the shoreline in the Town of Claremont as identified in a study by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. Erosion in this area is identified as slight to moderate with historical erosion rates averaging 1.0 to 1.2 feet per year. No structures are threatened by this rate of erosion. The shoreline areas of Claremont are suitable for low-

density usage such as recreation areas. Any development should be in harmony with the natural surroundings.

Soil Suitability

The suitability and limitations of the soils in an area have a great impact on its development. Soil factors such as depth, absorption, percolation, shrink-swell conditions, wetness and filtering action all have an effect on development. Identified on Map 3 are highly erodible soils and hydric soils. Map 4 is a general soil suitability map for Claremont. Soils identified in the Town are divided into three categories defining their suitability for development. A working definition for each soil suitability classification provided by the Virginia Soil Conservation Service is as follows:

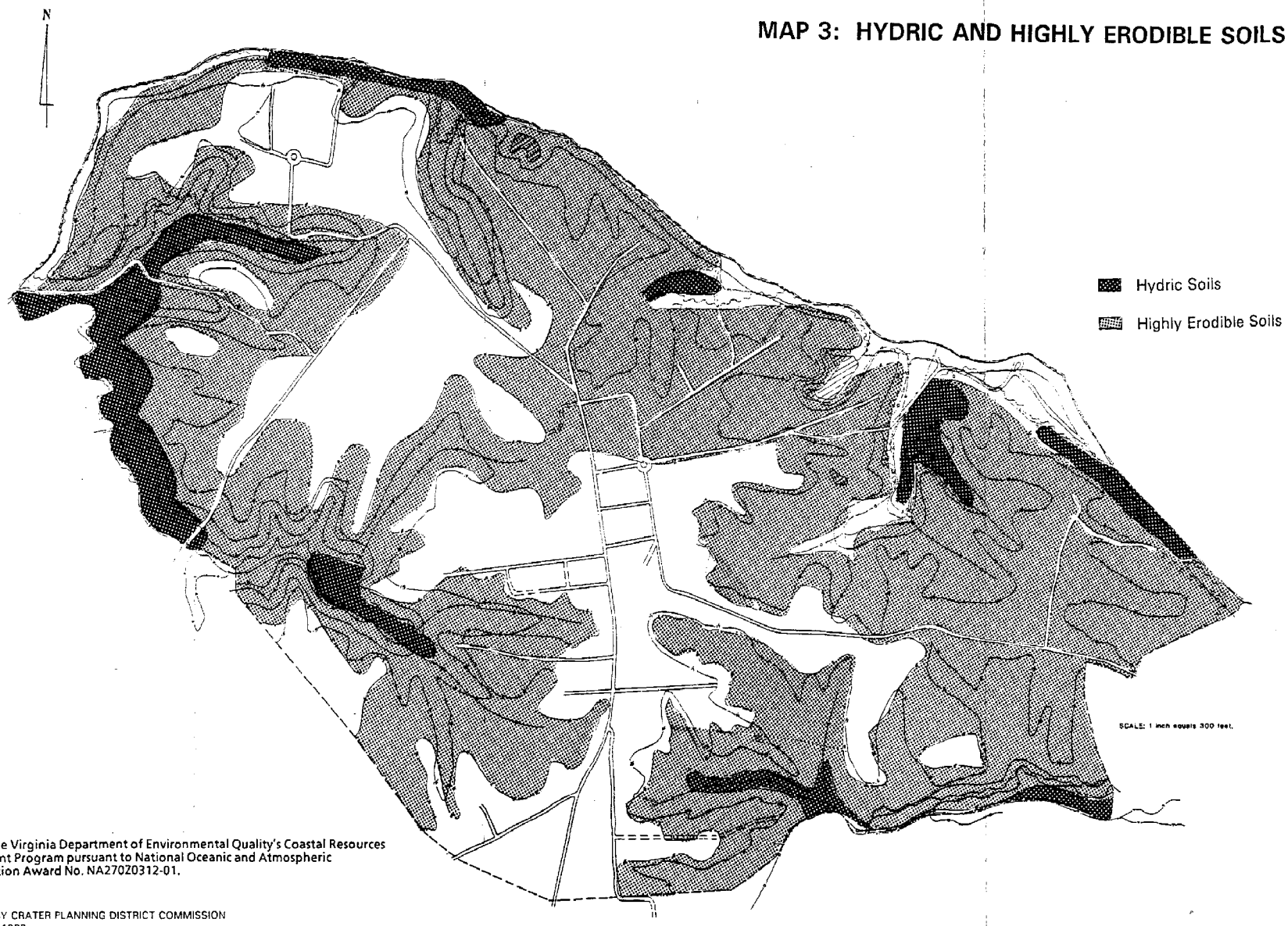
Slight Limitation: On-site study should indicate that only minor problems exist in the dominant soils. There are other soils in the area that have severe limitations due to seasonal high water table, slow permeability, steep slopes, flooding and other undesirable soil characteristics.

Moderate Limitation: Indicates that one or more of problems exist in the dominant soils, and an on-site study is recommended to determine the seriousness of the situation. There are soils in this area that have slight limitations due to more desirable soil characteristics. There are also soils with severe limitations due to undesirable soil characteristics.

Severe Limitations: Indicates that the dominant soils have one or more serious problems, and that on-site study is necessary to determine the feasibility of corrective measures. There are also minor soils in this area that have slight and moderate limitations due to more desirable soil characteristics.

The information on soils in this section has only a general application to the study area. Before development on a site, tests should be undertaken to identify the limiting soil conditions which may occur on the site.

MAP 3: HYDRIC AND HIGHLY ERODIBLE SOILS

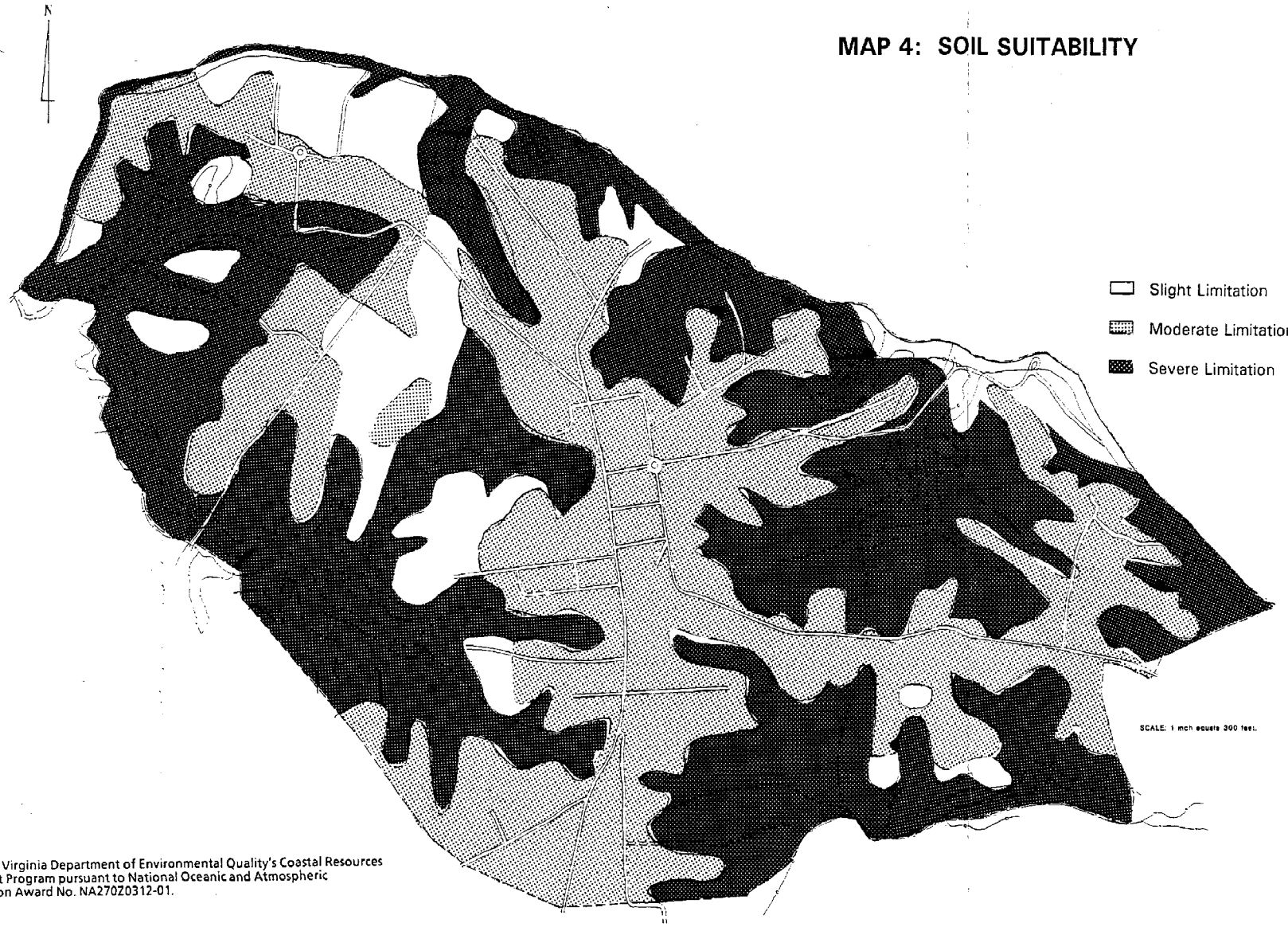


A map of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's Coastal Resources Management Program pursuant to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Award No. NA27OZ0312-01.

PREPARED BY CRATER PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 1993

CLAREMONT

MAP 4: SOIL SUITABILITY



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CLAREMONT

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Following are the goals, objectives and policies for Claremont regarding Land Use, Community Services and Capital Improvements.

As defined in the Virginia Citizens Planning Association Handbook, "The Comprehensive Plan":

A goal is a general statement of a future state which is considered desirable for the community; it is an end toward which actions are aimed.

An objective is a clear statement of a way in which a goal is to be reached; it refers to some specific accomplishment which is reasonably attainable.

A policy is a statement of a fundamental commitment which is used to guide decisions. It prescribes a definite course of action or method of doing something, and is selected from alternatives based on an assessment of existing conditions and future expectations.

Land Use

Goal: To provide a balanced pattern of land uses that will meet the future needs of all of Claremont's citizens and promote both social and economic development.

Residential Land Use

Objective: Provide for continued safe and attractive housing areas.

Policies:

1. Encourage residential development that is compatible with nearby residential development.

2. Encourage new housing only where land is suitable for septic tank installation.

3. Recognize manufactured housing as an alternative affordable housing option and plan for its future development.

4. Explore possibilities for the limited use of residential areas for small businesses.

5. Establish an information center at the Town Hall for the distribution of information on building and zoning codes to facilitate the use of proper procedures by prospective home builders and those planning home improvements.

Commercial Land Use

Objective: Upgrade and expand the current commercial areas.

Policies:

1. Promote the establishment of new businesses and the remodeling of existing ones.

2. Explore demolition or restoration of current dilapidated buildings in commercial areas.

3. Implement the use of special use permits to encourage small businesses in residential areas that do not conflict with current zoning laws.

Historic Preservation

Objective: Encourage the preservation of local historic homes and buildings.

Policies:

1. Adopt ordinances to preserve historic landmarks in Claremont as established by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

2. Follow guidelines set down by the Natural Trust for Historic Preservation to protect historic structures.

Environmental Protection

Objective: Sensitive lands at or near shorelies that have intrinsic water quality value due to the ecologocal and biological processes they perform should be protected from the adverse effects of indiscrminate land development patterns and practices.

Policies:

1. Enforce the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.

2. Protect ecologically and environmentally sensitive areas for open space and passive recreational use.

3. Reserve flood hazard areas for open space and passive recreational use.

4. Restrict development in areas of critical environmental importance.

5. Collect and refine land use information or physical contraints, then direct future development away from these areas.

Community Facilities and Services

The quality, range and accessibility of community facilities and services are critical factors in planning for the future of the community.

Goal: To provide and maintain a high quality of community facilities necessary for the continued growth of the area.

Utilities

Objective: Completion of a water system to provide adequate water for every citizen of Claremont and Claremont Beach.

Policies:

1. Supply a generator for the pumping station on River Road to provide power during blackout emergencies.

2. Eventually install a 50,000 gallon elevated water storage tank to replace the 5,000 gallon tank in the pumping station.

Public Safety

Objective: Continue current support of the Claremont Volunteer Fire Department and local Sheriff's Department.

Policies:

1. Provide in the annual budget for the support of the Claremont Volunteer Fire Department.

2. Encourage private and public support of the Surry County Rescue Squad.

Library

Objective: Provide for increased library service.

Policies:

1. Explore federal and state support for the expansion of the current library.

2. Look for land in Claremont that could facilitate a new library, or find a pre-existing structure that might accommodate one.

3. Expand library facilities and programs.

Litter Control

Objective: Remove or replace all unsanitary garbage disposal sites.

Policies:

1. Approach Surry County's Board of Supervisors and request the placement of dumpsters in or near Sunken Meadow to alleviate over-loading of Claremont dumpsters.

2. Modify the Adopt-A-Mile Highway program to "Adopt-A-Street" for Claremont.

3. Police Claremont dumpsters to maintain current legal and health standards.

4. Plan for eventual curb-side garbage pickup.

5. Encourage private and public support of community-wide recycling program.

Communications

Objective: Improve the current system of communications in the vicinity of Claremont.

Policies:

1. Upgrade telephone services with fiber optics.

2. Solicit proposals for cable television services for the Claremont area.

Capital Improvements Program

Objective: Since the financing of community facilities and services is complex, even the smallest community should develop a capital improvements program.

Policies:

1. Install sidewalks and gutters.

2. Utilize a capital improvement program to ensure that community facilities are scheduled in a manner compatible with the financial capability of the Town.

THE PLAN

The history of a town affects its present and future. Therefore, this plan includes an analysis of past trends and developments as well as projections for the future. In formulating the plan, consideration has been given to the Town's current inventory, status and financial standing, as well as citizens' wishes for its future development.

Land Use

The plan recommends continued expansion of single-family detached dwellings in conformity with the present make-up of the Town, while seeking to insure that new developments only build on land that will meet the needs of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. It encourages the Town to pursue ordinances to enforce the restoration of abandoned buildings and deteriorating structures, or to demolish them.

Commercial

The Town wishes to promote new businesses in the existing land zoned for commercial use and to expand into, with limited special use permits, some land currently zoned residential. It encourages owners of dilapidated and deteriorating buildings to upgrade and improve such structures or to demolish them and build new ones.

Historic Preservation

With its historic past, many of the current homes and buildings have historic significance and the plan encourages the Town to preserve these landmarks.

Community Facilities

Water: The plan believes that it is imperative that every citizen of the Town have access to necessary water, despite power breakdowns and occasional over usage. The addition of a generator to the pumping station and the projected building of a 50,000 gallon elevated water storage tank for the Town should be a priority.

Public Safety

The plan encourages the current financial support of the Fire Department and increased private support of the Sheriff's office and the Surry Rescue Squad.

Health Services

A litter control program is urged, cleaning up and policing the dumpsters, asking the Board of Supervisors to provide extra dumpsters for Sunken Meadow and to eventually have garbage pick-up for the Town.

Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)

The capital improvements program should include installation of curbs and gutters where necessary and eventual retirement of the current water-loan debt.

Communications

The installation of fiber optics cable in the telephone system and the establishment of a Cable TV system is recommended.

Library

A priority is the expansion of the facilities in the current library and plans for a new building for a larger library.

Map 5 is the land use map for the Town of Claremont.

IMPLEMENTATION

Full implementation of the Claremont Comprehensive Plan is as important as the preparation and adoption of the plan. The value of the plan to the Town will be determined by the extent to which it guides future development in the Town.

The State Code mandates the review of the adopted comprehensive plan at least once every five years. Due to the mid-range time frame of the plan, periodic monitoring and evaluation is necessary to insure its adequacy and appropriateness against changed values and other conditions. The maintenance of current data upon which the plan was predicated is a prerequisite to such periodic monitoring and evaluation.

There are a number of techniques that could be employed in Claremont to implement the plan once it has been approved by the Council. These include both direct and indirect methods. The more direct methods include a zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and capital improvement programming. The State legislation enabling the Town to implement these mechanisms already exists. These mechanisms and others are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Adoption or Revision of Land Use Regulations

Zoning is probably the single most important land use regulation that can be used in Claremont to effectuate the comprehensive plan. A zoning ordinance consists of a text and a zoning district map. The text may regulate in each district the use of land and the size, height, area, bulk, and location of structures. The zoning district map divides the locality into the various districts described in the text. A properly prepared zoning ordinance will enable Claremont to achieve many of the objectives delineated in the comprehensive plan.

Claremont adopted its subdivision ordinance. Through regulating the division of land in preparation for sale and/or development, the Town is in a good position to protect the interests of those affected by such development.

Peanut, Soil and Water Conservation District currently enforces a Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance for the Town of Claremont. This ordinance regulates certain "land-disturbing activities" by requiring the submission of soil erosion and sediment control plans prior to the approval of certain types of development. Land-disturbing activity means any land change which may result in soil erosion from water or wind and the movement of sediments into water or onto land including clearing, grading, excavating, transportation and filling of land.

Capital Improvements Programming

Many private investments hinge on the availability of public facilities and services. The availability of schools, recreational and cultural facilities, water and sewer services and other community facilities can cause the growth and development of certain areas. This gives the Town the opportunity to channel growth and development, commensurate with its financial capabilities, in a manner compatible with the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan. Community facilities and services should be provided on a priority basis only to those areas in which growth and development are anticipated.

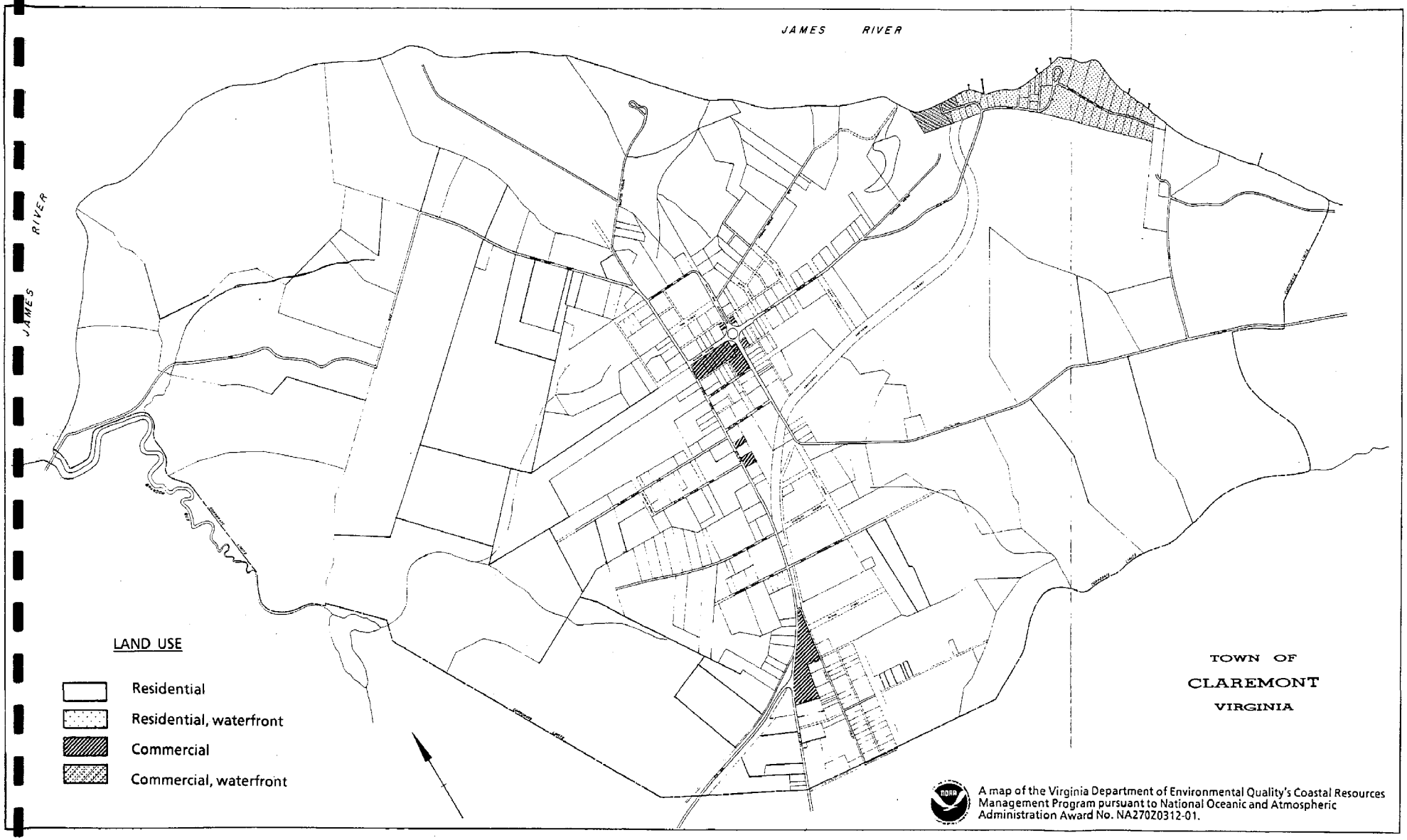
Citizen Cooperation and Coordination

It is obvious from the foregoing discussion that a number of public and private decisions will be involved in the implementation of Claremont Comprehensive Plan. The importance of consistent decisions and the facilitation of citizen support of the Plan cannot be overstated. Successful implementation of the plan requires openness and the cooperation of all of the parties involved.

Summary

A comprehensive plan is an official public document adopted by a local government as a policy to guide decisions about the physical development of the community. Thus, the comprehensive plan is an instrument by which general guidance is applied to issues addressed by the Town Council and Planning Commission regarding decisions directly or indirectly related to future development.

The above mentioned implementation techniques are those which are essential to realizing Town objectives. However, it should be remembered that implementation is a process of coordination and decision making which is consistent with planning policies. Thus, it is the process which will help the Town reach its goals and objectives.



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