



SOMERSET COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Jesse Drewer, MPA, Director
William Cornish, CFM, Assistant Director and Zoning Administrator

July 1, 2026

Clearinghouse and Plan Review
Maryland Department of Planning
301 West Preston Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY TO: mdp.clearinghouse@maryland.gov

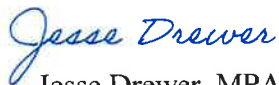
RE: CDBG SFY 2027 Application

To Whom it May Concern,

The Somerset County Department of Technical and Community Services, on behalf of the citizens of Somerset County, submit the following application for the current SFY' 27 cycle of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

Enclosed, you will find copies of the project description, map of the project, budget and the staffing plan. If you should have any further questions please contact this office at (410)-651-1424 or via email at jdrewer@somersetmd.us.

Respectfully,


Jesse Drewer, MPA
Director

11916 Somerset Avenue, Suite 211 • Princess Anne, Maryland 21853
Telephone (410) 651-1424 • Fax (410) 651-2597
Email: dtcs@somersetmd.us

**MARYLAND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM
APPLICATION SFY 2027**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Name of Jurisdiction: Somerset County, Maryland | 2. County (Municipal applicants only): N/A |
| 3. Address: Somerset County Commissioners 11916 Somerset Ave, Room 111 Princess Anne, MD 21853 | 4. Name of Subrecipient or Business, if applicable, and their Unique Entity Number: <p style="text-align: center;">N/A</p> |
| 5. FID Number: 52-6001-020 Unique Entity Number: NSBFMZ7RP729 | 6. Name, phone number and email of jurisdiction's contact person for this application: Jesse Drewer, DTCS Director jdrewer@somersetmd.us 410-651-1424 |
| 7. Project title, brief description & location (Full street address(es) and zip code of Project is required): The "Somerset County Blight Removal" grant application requests CDBG funds for the removal of blighted structures, to include abandoned and dilapidated residences, residential accessory buildings, and agricultural buildings that are not feasible to be repaired. These structures have been determined to have an adverse impact on health and public safety. First priority will be given to County-owned properties, obtained primarily through tax sales, but the majority of blighted properties to be removed are currently in private ownership with priority given to those along main travel routes; those adjacent or in proximity to well-maintained residential properties and established neighborhoods; those located in environmentally-sensitive areas, such as the floodplain; and in the vicinity of other important County landmarks, such as historic properties. If fully funded, the County estimates 20-25 blighted structures can be removed. Additionally, there are numerous structures in private ownership that have been identified as being in violation of the County's Nuisance Ordinance that will be pursued for demolition also. This number is in the hundreds and individual properties will be prioritized if grant funding is approved. | |
| 8. Project type: <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Public Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | 9. National objective(s): <input type="checkbox"/> Low and moderate income benefit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elimination of slum/blight |
| 10. CDBG request: \$ <u>200,000.00</u> Local funds \$ <u>17,935.50</u> <i>(in-kind)</i> Other funds \$ Total costs \$ <u>217,935.50</u> | 11. U.S. Congressional District No. <u>1</u> State District No. <u>38 & 38A</u> (List State legislators for entire district): Mary Beth Carozza, State Senator District 38 Kevin Anderson, State Delegate District 38A |
| 12. Date Public Hearing held: June 2, 2026 <i>(Attach minutes and hearing notice to application)</i> | 13. Required Resolution attached? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Resolution 1227 Attached |
| 14. Is Citizens Participation Plan current? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Dated: 03/25/2025 If not, did you attach new plan? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |

PART A

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Describe the proposed project in detail. Include location and specific activities to be undertaken.

Somerset County plans to use CDBG funds and County matching funds to remove blighted homes and other structures that pose a health and safety risk in the County. Through the elimination of these structures, economic development would be a secondary benefit to the County and its residents, by increased property values and a more appealing visual appearance that would be attractive to potential businesses looking to locate in the County. Somerset County was successful in its application FEMA to become a Community Rating System (CRS) community, receiving a Class 7 designation. This designation provides benefits to County homeowners through reduced flood insurance premiums, and will also provide additional protection and increased compliance with floodplain regulations. The removal of blighted structures will have two benefits for CRS. First, in the event of a flood, debris from blighted structures is more likely to damage existing structures and create travel hazards; and second, if blighted properties are rebuilt, they will be required to comply with more stringent building code and floodplain requirements, improving overall safety in the County.

A two phased project is proposed, with Phase I consisting of the elimination of dilapidated structures on County-owned lands. These will consist primarily of properties the County took ownership of through the annual tax sale process where property taxes went unpaid for at least two years. Although the County has made a concerted effort in recent years to return these properties to the tax rolls by offering them for sale at reduced rates, in the future, with adequate funding available, the County will remove blighted structures from these properties prior to their sale.

The second phase consists of dilapidated structures located on privately-owned lands that are in violation of the County's Nuisance Ordinance. These properties have been determined to pose a threat to public health and safety. The County intends to work cooperatively with these property owners insofar as possible so that removal of the unsafe structures can be mutually beneficial. The County will follow the process outlined in the Nuisance Ordinance to achieve compliance, which includes notification to the property owner to try and achieve voluntary compliance, which would not involve any County or CDBG funds. If the property owner does not resolve the violation, a citation will be issued and enforcement procedures will begin, resulting in confirmation from the Circuit Court for the structure's removal.

Once finalized by the Court, the County will follow its procurement process to hire licensed, bonded contractors to demolish and remove the blighted structures. Debris will be separated so that hazardous materials are disposed of properly and in accordance with all State and Federal regulations, at the County Landfill.

If this CDBG application is fully funded, the County estimates 20-25 structures could be removed; the County anticipates the inventory of blighted structures in the County will number in the hundreds, providing a substantial supply of structures that will be prioritized to provide the maximum beneficial use of grant funds.

Currently, the County addresses dilapidated structures through enforcement of its Nuisance Ordinance and budgets funds for compliance. Funds budgeted annually are limited, however, given the County's financial situation, and only about \$50,000 is budgeted annually, which is used for other types of nuisance violations such as the removal of abandoned vehicles, maintenance of tall grass and other vegetative overgrowth, and removal of junk, debris, garbage, etc., from properties in addition to the removal of blighted structures. Obviously, at removal costs of \$7,000-\$10,000 for one blighted structure, the annual level of County funding for nuisance enforcement will not nearly address the blighted structure problem in Somerset County. The

annual funding is typically used for other nuisance ordinance violations, and funding for the removal of blighted structures is requested on a case-by-case basis from the County Commissioners, using the County's general fund. In practice, only about two to three blighted structures may be removed in a given year.

Prioritization of structures to be removed will be based on several factors, including those located on high visibility roadways, such as U.S. Route 13 and MD Route 413 (Crisfield Highway); proximity to well-maintained occupied homes and established residential neighborhoods; proximity to facilities such as schools, day care centers, churches, historic structures and commercial businesses; and proximity to sensitive environmental areas, such as floodplains.

PART B

PROJECT NEED/IMPACT: Describe the need for the proposed project. Include statistics and other documentation supporting the described need. Discuss how the project will make an impact on the described need? If existing infrastructure or facility, discuss past maintenance and improvements undertaken or deferred.

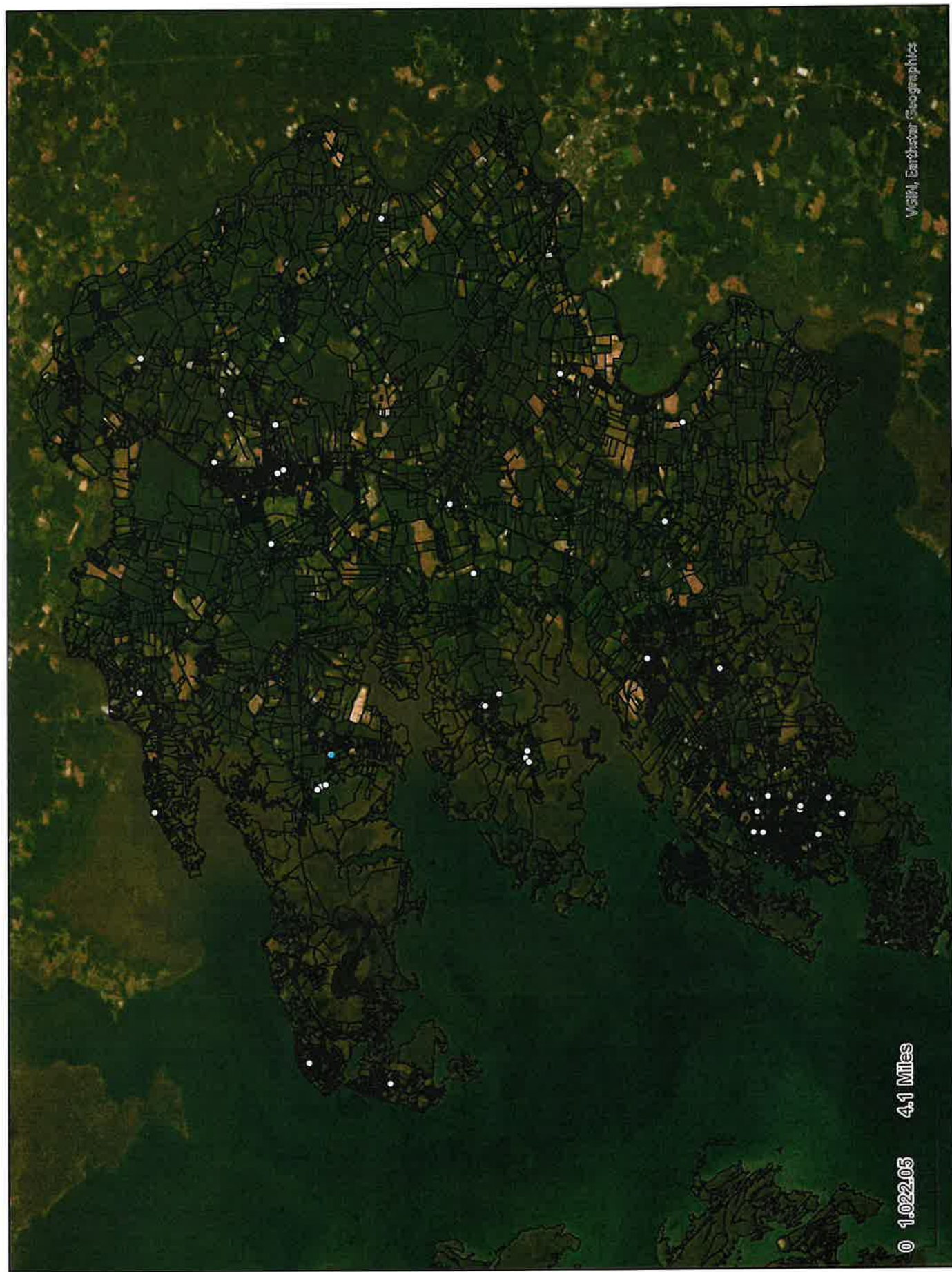
A great need for the removal of blighted structures exists in Somerset County. This need has been recognized for many years, but the lack of available funding has hindered the County from making significant progress on these structures' removal. Unfortunately, traveling along virtually any road in the County will reveal the extent of this problem.

The County's housing stock is aging, which indicates increased maintenance will be necessary, and is also an indicator of why there are so many blighted structures in the County. According to the American Community Survey (2013-2017), almost one in five (18.5%) of all occupied housing units in the County were built before 1940, compared to 12.1% State-wide. The Census Bureau reports that the median value of owner-occupied housing units in Somerset County (\$131,000) is less than half that of the State (\$296,500).

These figures indicate the level of poverty that exists in the County and can help explain why there are a substantial number of blighted structures that have accumulated through the years.

This application requests \$200,000 that the County estimates could remove between 20-25 blighted structures. Unfortunately, there is no shortage of identified structures that could be removed with this funding. Each year, the County takes ownership of properties through the sale of properties whose taxes have remained unpaid for at least two years. In the past, the County has attempted to return these properties to the tax rolls by selling them at reduced rates. Although most of these properties are undeveloped, a number are "improved" with blighted structures - in a typical year, there are perhaps 5-8 of these. With adequate funding, the County would remove these structures prior to sale so that they could perhaps be redeveloped at a future date, with the understanding this would be at least five years after grant close-out.

Although this grant application, if fully funded, would not remove all blighted structures in the County, it would certainly have a positive impact on the problem. The County will prioritize structures for removal, with those that are highly visible from heavily-travelled roadways receiving the highest priority. This would include U.S. Route 13 and MD Route 413 (Crisfield Highway), as these two roads cover the entire length of Somerset County from north to south and are traveled by County residents daily, and are the main routes of travel for visitors to the County.



Visit, Earthstar Geographics

0 1.022.05 4.1 Miles

PART D
LOCAL PLANNING/GROWTH MANAGEMENT:

Answer the following questions:

- 1. Describe how the proposed project conforms to revitalization strategies, marketing studies, economic development strategies, capital improvement plans, housing study, a comprehensive plan or other community plan. Do *not* submit copies of the entire plan(s), but reference the name and date of the plan, the section and the page. You should ATTACH a copy of the REFERENCED portion which specifically mentions your project.**
- 2. For economic development projects discuss any feasibility studies, economic conditions survey, financial analysis, economic impact assessment or market analysis completed in relation to the proposed activity. Provide the dates those items were completed and information on who prepared them.**
- 3. Is your project located in a Priority Funding Area? ____ Yes ____ No (SEE NOTE)**

NOTE: Some of the individual structures to be demolished may be located within a PFA, but the majority of structures will be located outside of a PFA.

ATTACH MAP(S) OF PROJECT AREA

List Census Tract(s) and Block Groups for all projects:

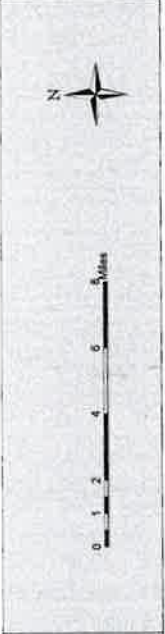
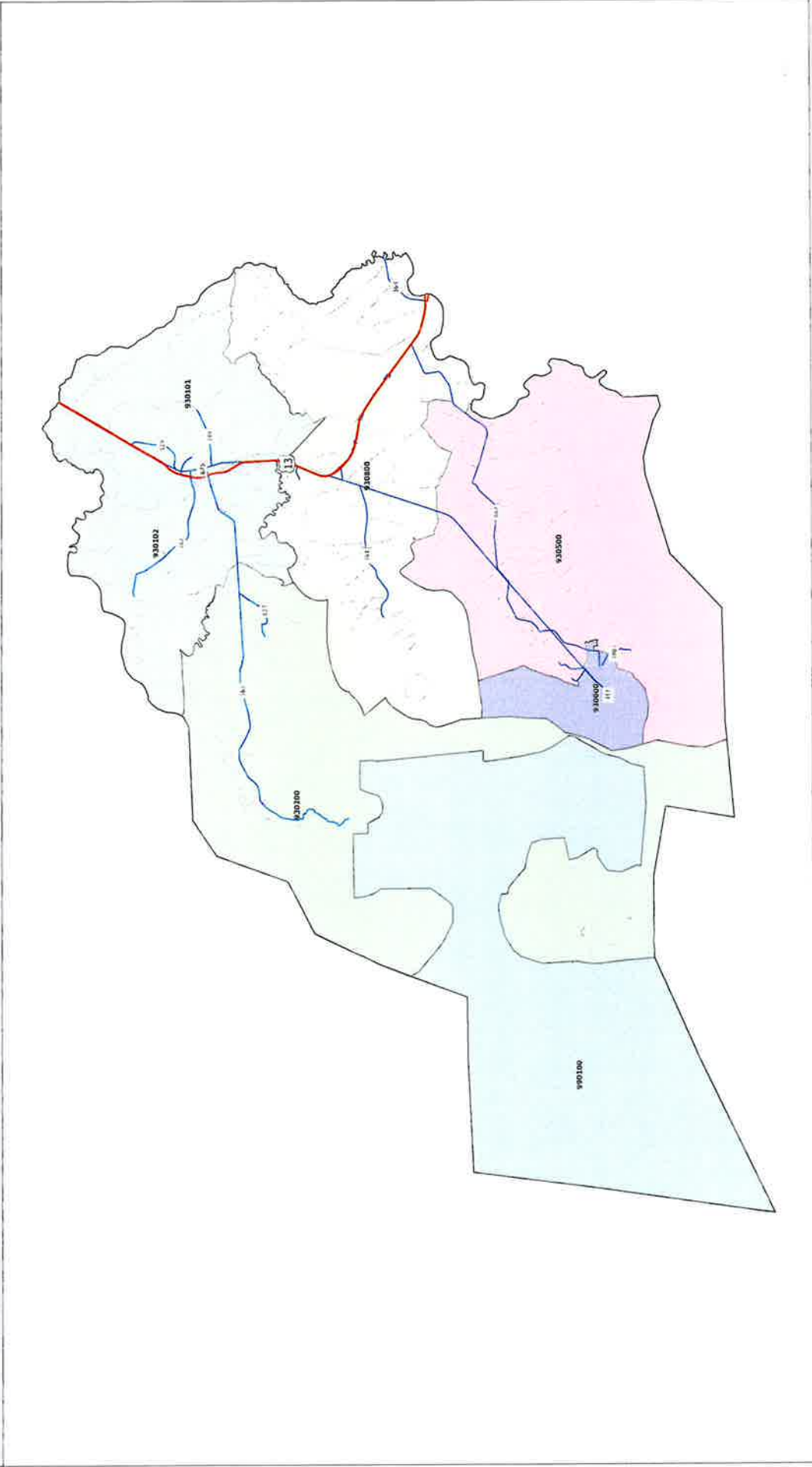
930102, 930101, 930200, 930800, 930500, 930600

13308 Pine Beach
13537 Bobtown Road
12487 Loretto Road
31968 College Backbone Road
31231 Williams Road
13595 Backbone Road
32085 Perryahwkin Road
32135 Perryhawkin Road
30843 Hampden Road
31136 McCormick Swamp Road
11464 Peters Ave
11472 Peters Ave
11374 Greenwood Road
29744 Deal Island Road
29353 Fairmount Road
29373 Fairmount Road

27191 Oriole Road
10808 Oriole Back Road
10696 Oriole Back Road
33672 Dublin Road
27958 Jones Factory Road
27940 Jones Factory Road
27167 Fairmount Road
27135 Fairmount Road
7644 Lower Hill Road
8298 Upper Hill Road
8317 Upper Hill Road
8218 Upper Hill Road
8638 Old Westover Marion Road
5839 Harry Burton Road
28112 Holland Crossing Road
28269 Holland Crossing Road

More properties will be identified as the process continues and advertising commences

**Somerset County, Maryland
2020 Census Tracts**



Prepared by the State Data Center, Oct 2021
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020

SOURCES AND USES OF FUNDS: List each specific project activity separately (*please break down the costs as far as possible*). Type in the actual sources of other funding. Indicate whether funds are "L" for loan or "G" for grant. **INDICATE STATUS OF FUNDS** using "P" for pending, "C" for committed, "R" for received, "N" for no action. Attach commitment letters and cost estimates directly behind this page of the application. For administrative costs, indicate what portion of local contribution is cash and what portion is in-kind.

SOURCES OF FUNDS

| ACTIVITY | SOURCES OF FUNDS | | | | | | TOTALS BY ACTIVITY | STATUS |
|----------------------------|------------------|-------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------------------|--------|
| | OTHER: | | | | | | | |
| | CDBG: | APPLICANT | OTHER: | OTHER: | OTHER: | OTHER: | | |
| Demolition of Structures | \$195,000.00 | | | | | | \$195,000.00 | "P" |
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| Project Admin. (Cash) | \$5,000.00 | | | | | | \$5,000.00 | "P" |
| Project Admin. (In-Kind) | | | | | | | | |
| General Admin. (Cash) | | | | | | | | |
| General Admin. (In-Kind) | | \$17,935.50 | | | | | \$17,935.50 | |
| TOTALS BY SOURCES OF FUNDS | \$200,000 | \$17,935.50 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$217,935.50 | |

PART G

STAFFING AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT: This section will discuss the capacity of the applicant to administer the project and how CDBG funds will be used for project administration costs. Project costs for engineering, architectural services and inspections are to be identified as separate line items in Part F.

Identify the primary person for the *jurisdiction* who will administer this project. Discuss their experience with CDBG regulations and requirements as well as past grant and project implementation.

The Planning Director will be the primary person responsible for this grant, and be assisted by the senior planner, nuisance code officer, and the housing division staff. Mr. Drew the planning director has 5 years' experience working with CDBG Grants, and will be assisted by staff who have years of experience.

Identify others who will assist in the administration of this CDBG project.

- The Planning & Zoning Officer, who is responsible for the enforcement of the Nuisance Ordinance
- Building Inspectors, will review sites identified for demolition and conduct a site visit to ensure no hazards on the site will prohibit demolition.
- Administrative Assistants, will place the advertisements for the demolitions and process the payments after reviewed and approved by Director & P&Z Officer.

Amount of funds requested for Project Administration, if any: \$0.00

If Project Administration funds requested for staffing, please identify the following:

| Person | # Hours Anticipated to Work on Project | Hourly Wage | Total Funds |
|--------|--|-------------|-------------|
| | | | |
| N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

If planning to use Project Administration funds for other expenses other than staffing, identify those expenses and estimated costs.

| Expenses | Estimated Costs |
|---|-----------------|
| Newspaper Advertising for the Demolition Rounds | \$5,000.00 |
| | |
| | |

PART H

PROJECT SCHEDULE: Using the anticipated month of grant award as the start of the activities, list all project activities and the anticipated dates for the start and end of specific activities. A CDBG grant agreement provides a 24-month implementation period so all activities to be paid for with CDBG funds must occur within this timeframe. If an activity is completed prior to application or award, indicate the actual dates.

EXAMPLE: For a Community Development application, CDBG funds are being requested for site acquisition and construction. The applicant provided the following schedule:

| <u>Activity</u> | <u>Begin</u> | <u>Completion</u> |
|---|----------------|-------------------|
| Grant Award | August 1, 2026 | |
| Environmental Review | August 1, 2025 | October 15, 2026 |
| Preliminary Engineering | Completed | |
| Site Acquisition | October | November |
| Bidding & Selection for Engineering | October | November |
| Meeting 180 Day Expenditure Requirement | August 1, 2026 | January 28, 2026 |
| Engineering Complete | November | December |
| Bidding & Selection Construction | December | January |
| Construction | January 2027 | December 2028 |

NOTE: An Environmental Review is the first step for every funded grant after award date

| | <u>BEGIN</u> | <u>COMPLETION</u> | <u>RESPONSIBLE PERSON</u> |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| GRANT AWARD | September 2026 | September 2026 | Applicant |
| ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW | September 2026 | October 2026 | Applicant |
| Identify county and privately-owned properties for demo | August-September 2026 | August-September 2026 | Applicant |
| Advertise demo bids for county and Privately-owned structures (Round 1) | October-November 2026 | October-November 2026 | Applicant |
| Select contractor for demo of county and Privately-owned structures (Round 1) | November-December 2026 | November-December 2026 | Applicant |
| Demo of county and Privately-owned structures | January 2027 | January 2027 | Contractor |