

# TOWN OF CHERITON

## TOWN PROFILE

Cheriton started out as a railroad town and can trace its beginnings to 1884, when the New York, Philadelphia, and Norfolk Railroad Company was extended from Maryland to Cape Charles. The land was owned by Dr. William Stratton Stoakley, who, in 1886 laid out the western part of his land as a town. Cheriton merged with another town called Sunnyside, where downtown Cheriton is currently located. The town prospered during the early 1900s due to its role as a local agricultural shipping point and service center. The Town of Cheriton became incorporated in 1951. Today, Cheriton has many historic homes and churches. (*Town of Cheriton Comprehensive Plan, 2010*)



Figure 1: Cheriton Context and Boundary Map

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC

Part of assessing hazards in relation to their risk is understanding the people affected. Not all people are affected equally. Some are affected by factors that relate to their ability to understand risks posed by hazards, and some by their ability to remove themselves from harm’s way. Those factors include age, mobility, income and the languages individuals speak and the languages in which individuals are able to access information.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

The Town of Cheriton had a population of 471 in 2014 according to the American Community Survey (ACS). This shows a steady population for the Town, aligning with both 2000 and 2010 (U.S. Census, 2000, 2010). The population provided by the ACS for 2013, however, is very high, and deemed inaccurate by Town Council Members. The number of disabled residents and the percentage of people living in poverty is also judged to be an underrepresentation, which is important to note in the efforts of responding to and assisting residents during a hazardous situation (M. Mears & G. Hardesty, personal communications, Jan. 14, 2016). Town representatives estimate that about 40% of the population either have physical or mental limitations that would require that they need assistance during an emergency.

*Table 1: Cheriton Demographic Information*

	2014***	2013**	2010*	2000****
<b>Population</b>	471	624	487	499
<b>Median Age</b>	49.7	46.3	45.3	44.2
<b>Disability</b>	39	34	-	0
<b>Income</b>				
Median Household Income	32,969	28,393	35,550	26,429
<b>Poverty Level</b>	21.8%	16.5%	8.8%	NA
<b>Language</b>				
Only English	90.7%	87.1%	86.9%	98.1%
Other	9.3%	12.9%	10.4%	1.9%
Spanish	7.3%	10.4%	7.4%	1.5%
Indo-Euro	1.1%	1.8%	3.0%	0.4%
Other	0.9%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%

\* U.S. Census 2010, \*\* American Community Survey 2009 – 2013, \*\*\* Annual Estimates of the Residential Population: 2010 – 2014, \*\*\*\* U.S. Census 2000

### WORKFORCE

Employment patterns are important to examine for two reasons. They can help to identify concentrations of people for hazard information dissemination or hazard rescue and evacuation. They can also identify where disruptions in employment and income might occur in the aftermath of a disaster.

The Town of Cheriton’s workforce is primarily a residential and retail/service-oriented community. Because of this, most people commute outside of the Town and work in retail trade, agriculture, or education/health services, or manufacturing (American Community Survey, 2010 – 2014). Businesses and industries near Cheriton that provide employment to residents include Bayshore Concrete (waterfront), commercial and recreational fishing, R & C

## Eastern Shore of Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan

seafood packing plant in Oyster (waterfront), VDOT Maintenance Facility, Northampton County offices in Eastville, Cherrystone Aquafarm (waterfront), and Cherrystone Campground (waterfront) (*Town of Cheriton Comprehensive Plan*, 2010). Most of these employment entities operate in waterfront areas, and thus are more exposed to winds and water damages during a storm event, which may slow the following recovery time for both the business, the workforce, and the Town.

**Table 2: Cheriton Local Workforce**

Industry	Civilian Employed Population							
	2014*		2012*		2010*		2000**	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing/hunting, or mining	11	5.1%	6	2.4%	13	5.1%	16	7.0%
Construction	8	3.7%	16	6.3%	20	7.8%	11	4.8%
Manufacturing	3	1.4%	42	16.7%	42	16.4%	38	16.6%
Wholesale trade	42	19.4%	28	11.1%	12	4.7%	20	8.7%
Retail trade	11	5.1%	14	5.6%	0	0.0%	32	14.0%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	14	6.1%
Information	5	2.3%	0	0.0%	18	7.0%	2	0.9%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rentals	10	4.6%	11	4.4%	21	8.2%	5	2.2%
Professional, scientific, waste management	29	13.4%	48	19.0%	69	27.0%	10	4.4%
Educational, health care, social services	26	12.0%	22	8.7%	28	10.9%	41	17.9%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, food	17	7.8%	8	3.2%	4	1.6%	17	7.4%
Public Administration	24	11.1%	23	9.1%	24	9.4%	11	4.8%
Other	11	5.1%	6	2.4%	13	5.1%	12	5.2%
<b>TOTAL CIVILIAN EMPLOYED POPULATION</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: \*ACS, 2010 – 2014, \*\*U.S. Census 2000

### BUSINESSES

Business data provide basic information used in projecting potential economic losses from business and employment disruption, along with wage losses to employees. They can also serve as an indicator of community recovery resources. Finally, data can help to prioritize restoration of utility and infrastructure functions following a high-intensity hazard.

Before the turn of the century there were significantly more businesses, however, the number of businesses continues to decline. Economic opportunities within Cheriton are limited, there are few establishments within the Town itself and most residents commute to jobs outside of the town (*Town of Cheriton Comprehensive Plan*, 2010).

**Table 3: Cheriton Business Types**

## Town of Cheriton

Industry Code Description	Total Establishments			
	2015**	2013*	2011*	2009*
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	0	2	2	2
Construction	4	2	3	2
Manufacturing	1	1	1	1
Wholesale Trade	3	3	5	4
Retail Trade	1	2	4	5
Finance and Leisure	2	1	1	1
Real Estate and Rental Leasing	2	2	3	1
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2	2	2	2
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	2	2	2	2
Health Care and Social Assistance	2	2	4	5
Accommodation and Food Services	4	2	1	2
Other Services (Except Public Admin)	4	4	2	4
<b>Total, All Establishments</b>	26	25	31	32
<b>Total Employees</b>	-	323	285	316

Source: \*Census Zip Code Business Patterns, 2009, 2011, 2013; \*\*Town representatives, personal communication

## BUILT INFRASTRUCTURE

Housing units, community facilities, and transportation are all important factors when considering hazard resiliency. They provide the social services necessary during hazardous scenarios, safe cover for those wanting to stay, and a way to leave towards safety.

Cheriton identified specific design goals for its 'Gateway Commercial Character Area' in their 2010 Comprehensive Plan, indicating a desire to avoid the existing, strip commercial development trend, driving business into the existing downtown area, while preserving the family appeal of the Town.

## HOUSING UNITS

Knowledge of a community's housing base contributes to hazard and vulnerability analysis by identifying how many homes are at risk. The 2014 American Community Survey figure for the total number of housing units indicated in Table 4 is thought to be too high, and the U.S. Census data from 2010 indicating 243 much more accurate. The majority of properties are occupied, and again the 2010 data closer to correct according to local Town Council members (M. Mears & G. Hardesty, personal communications, Jan. 14, 2016).

*Table 4: Cheriton Housing*

	2014*	2010**	2000***
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	276	243	239
Occupied	219	211	219

## Eastern Shore of Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan

Vacant	57	32	20
<b>Owner-Occupied</b>	163	146	155
<b>Renter-Occupied</b>	56	65	64
<b>Median Housing Value</b>	\$173,900	NA	NA

\* ACS, 2010 – 2014, \*\* U.S. Census 2010, \*\*\* U.S. Census 2000

### TRANSPORTATION

Cheriton has an adequate road system which is maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation. Route 13 provides good regional access and directs major traffic flow away from the town, while Business Route 13 provides safe access into and out of Town. Generally there seem to be no major traffic problems in Cheriton, although visibility at the intersection of Route 13 and Cherrystone Road has been identified as a problem, due to speeding traffic and high volume of campers which create visibility limitations. In addition, tractors using Route 13 as a means of transportation has been identified as a hazard for both motorists and tractor operators (M. Mears & G. Hardesty, personal communications, Jan. 14, 2016).

Vehicles available to households is one indicator of a household’s ability to evacuate when necessary. Table 5 states that there are 25 residencies without a vehicle available, however, it is very likely that the number is higher (closer to the 2010 estimate), as Town representatives indicated such a high percentage of residents whom are unable to move themselves due to physical or psychological barriers. Star Transit serves the Town, connecting it to the rest of the Eastern Shore, with its stop being found at the Town Parking Lot. The railroad runs through Cheriton, although it does not stop, primarily on its way to and from Bayshore Concrete Products Corporation in Cape Charles. The line could potentially pose a risk as a hazard if carrying any hazardous materials, but also could be utilized following a hazard event to move people or product.

Another concern that arose was that of small tractors being hit by semi-tractor trailers, as there have been 3-4 fatal incidents in the last couple of years (M. Mears & G. Hardesty, personal communications, Jan. 14, 2016).

*Table 5: Cheriton Resident Vehicles*

Vehicles Available	2014*	2010*	2000**
None	25	53	34
One	108	86	75
Two	58	92	79
Three or more	28	44	29

\* American Community Survey, 2010 – 2014, \*\* U.S. Census 2000

### COMMERCIAL AREAS

The downtown area is no longer an important local retail center. Those that are in within the Downtown are well maintained and the owners have exhibited pride in the buildings and shops; however, about half of the commercial buildings stand vacant in the area, some of which are in need of repair. U.S. Route 13 has directed traffic away from Business Route 13 and downtown Cheriton, and the presence of Cheriton’s business district is not obvious to highway travelers (*Town of Cheriton Comprehensive Plan*, 2010). A new Visionary Committee has been formed for the Town, which will focus on murals, farm stands, fitness focus, etc. (M. Mears & G. Hardesty, personal communications, Jan. 14, 2016).

---

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES & PUBLIC WORKS

Community facilities are facilities required to support the services and functions provided by the Town government or in coordination with other public and private entities. These facilities enhance the overall quality of life for the Town and its citizens. It's important to note what facilities are available in case of a hazard, and it's important to make an inventory of facilities that could be affected by a hazard.

---

### PUBLIC SAFETY

The Northampton County Sheriff's Department, four officers, and the Virginia State Police provide police protection for Town residents. Fire protection for the Town is provided by about 25 volunteer firefighters and 5 volunteer non-firefighters in the Cheriton Volunteer Fire Department. This station has a primary engine, engine/tanker combination, super brush truck (rescue and brush), and a teleport water tower (Town Clerk, personal communication Feb. 8, 2016). Ambulance service is provided by the Cape Charles Rescue (*Town of Cheriton Comprehensive Plan, 2010*).

---

### WATER SUPPLY AND WASTEWATER

Residents rely on individual private wells and septic systems for their water supply and wastewater disposal. Due to new regulations, new septic field construction requires alternative disposal designs that avoid having the septic field too close to the water table (*Town of Cheriton Comprehensive Plan, 2010*).

---

### SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Collection services are provided to the Town by Davis Disposal. Northampton County transfer station is located close by for disposal services as well.

---

### PARKS AND RECREATION

There are no parks within the Town boundaries. Currently the Town is working on securing grant funds in order to create a park within town limits (M. Mears & G. Hardesty, personal communications, Jan. 14, 2016). In 2014 and 2015 VDOT replaced many of the old sidewalks, however the privately owned sidewalks in front of the stores are in need of replacement and repair (M. Mears & G. Hardesty, personal communications, Jan. 14, 2016).

---

### DRAINAGE DITCHES

Maintenance of drainage ditches is the responsibility of VDOT; however, maintenance is not sufficient (*Town of Cheriton Comprehensive Plan, 2010*).

---

### SCHOOLS

No schools exist within the Town boundaries.

---

### POWER AND COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

Chesapeake Bay Communications broadband comes through Town, and has contract with a new company in order to reach all of those that are not covered by broadband services. There is no substation in or adjacent to Town limits, but the Town does not typically experience lengthy service outages.

## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Elevation in Cheriton ranges from 26 feet, from a high point of 36 feet where the Eastern Shore Railroad crosses Sunnyside Road, to a low point of 10 feet where Eyrehall Creek crosses Route 13. The small elevation change of 26 feet results in overall slopes in Cheriton of less than 2%, which contributes to flooding due to poor drainage.

### LAND USE LAND COVER

Today the Town of Cheriton consists of 647 acres, reflecting an increase of 362 acres due to an annexation from the County of Northampton in 1997 (*Town of Cheriton Comprehensive Plan, 2010*). The primary land use in development of some degree, however, open developed is typically attributed to transportation infrastructure.

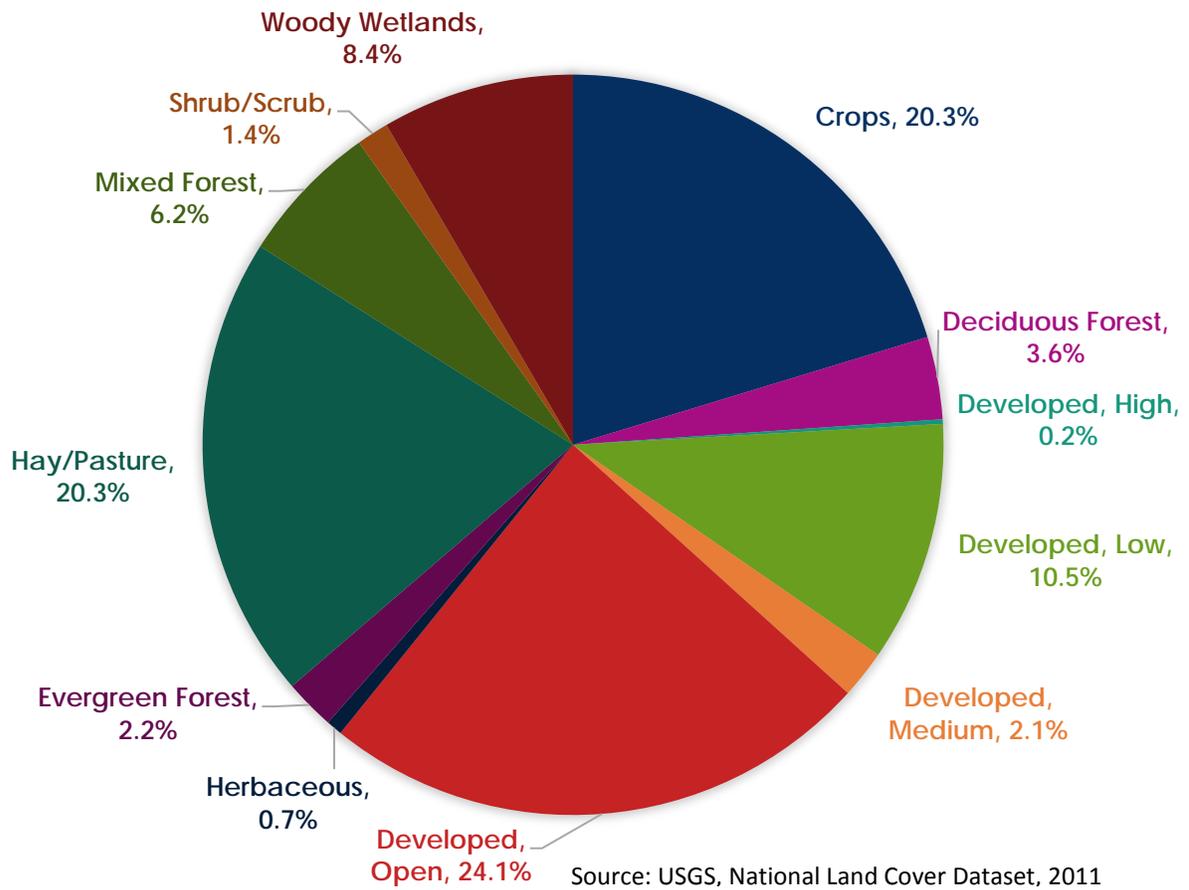


Figure 2: Cheriton Land Use Land Cover Percentages

### GROUND WATER

The Town does not provide water, potable water is supplied by individual private wells, which withdraw from ground water aquifers. The Town's water supply is mostly withdrawn from the upper Yorktown aquifer. The majority of land in Cheriton lies within the spine ground water recharge area and is in Wellhead Protection Area E. Protecting the spine recharge is important to assure good quality and large quantities of ground water on the Eastern Shore (*Town of Cheriton Comprehensive Plan, 2010*).

HAZARD PREPAREDNESS & COMMUNITY CAPABILITIES

PREVIOUS HAZARD MITIGATION PLANS

Cheriton has not participated in the hazard mitigation process before and have formerly been covered under the county’s hazard mitigation plan.

Table 6: Cheriton Hazard Mitigation Resources

	Ordinances, Plans, & Publications													Resources, Committees						
Authority	Building Code	Chesapeake Bay Act	SWMP	Hazard Mitigation Plan	Comprehensive Plan	Ordinance	Storm Water Regulations	Transportation Infrastructure Inundation Vulnerability Report	All Hazards Preparedness	Emergency Operations Plans	Mutual Aid	Agreements/Documents	Neighborhood Emergency Help	Virginia Hurricane Evacuation	Oil & HazMat Response Plan; HazMat Commodity Flow	Ground Water Committee	Navigable Waterways Committee	Climate Adaptation Working Group	ES Disaster Preparedness Coalition	
Local	*				*	*														
County			*																	
Regional				*				*	*	*					*	*	*	*		
State		*					*							*						*
Federal	*																			

## NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM & HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM

---

### NFIP

The Town has no identified Special Flood Hazard Areas and does not participate in the NFIP. Residents and business owners in these Towns can purchase preferred risk policies.

---

### HMGP

The Town has not participated in the HMGP.

## HAZARD PROFILE

### COASTAL FLOODING

The Town is almost entirely out of the flood zone (Zone X), except for the areas at the headwaters of both Kings and Eyrehall Creeks, where there are small portions in the 0.2%-annual-chance flood zone and in the A-zone with a BFE of 5 feet. There are very few businesses or residents that are near these flood zones.

### COASTAL EROSION

No structures are at immediate risk to coastal erosion.

### WIND

No parts of the Town lie in the wind borne debris hazard area. This area extends 1-mile inland from the coast. The Town lies in the 110-120 mph design wind zone (Northampton County Building Code).

### STORM WATER FLOODING

Drainage and flooding are problems in Cheriton due to the flat topography and inadequate maintenance of drainage ditches. The Comprehensive Plan notes that drainage is not adequate and needs to be improved (*Town of Cheriton Comprehensive Plan, 2010*).

There is storm water flooding on Mill Street and Cherrystone Road (*ESVA Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2011 & M. Mears & G. Hardesty, personal communications, Jan. 14, 2016*).

## HAZARDS OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

---

### GROUND WATER CONTAMINATION

Due to the high permeability of the soils in Cheriton, they are generally not well suited for septic tank filter fields. When soils are saturated, waste may not be sufficiently treated (*Town of Cheriton Comprehensive Plan, 2010*).

---

### ICE & SNOW STORMS

2009 & 2015

**FIRE & SMOKE**

In the 1950's two fires almost destroyed downtown. Many of the buildings were rebuilt using brick, but there are still a lot of wooden structures.

**TORNADOES**

July 2014 Photos

**CRITICAL FACILITIES**

The following table lists the critical facilities and their relative importance to the Town.

*Table 7: Cheriton Critical Facilities*

Facility	HMP 2006	HMP 2011	HMP 2016	Hazards	No of People Affected	Loss potential	Relocation Potential	Retrofit Potential
Cheriton Town Office	n/a	n/a	X		471	Major Disruption	Y	Y
Cheriton Fire Department	n/a	n/a	X		471+	Devastating	Y	Y
Head Start					~80			Y
Child Care					~80			Y
Star Transit					~235	Major Disruption		Y
Service Station					471+	Major Disruption		Y
Post Office					471+	Major Disruption		Y