

Preserving the Unique Culture of Your Community

Working Waterfronts

“Local interest in the promotion and preservation of working waterfronts as a critical component of our resilient coastal communities...” – Town of Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan

As a planner, administrator, or elected official, how can you help ensure recognition and protection for these historically and economically vital areas?

Working waterfronts are those structures on, over, or adjacent to navigable bodies of water that provide access to the water and are used for water-dependent commercial, government activities, including recreational fishing, boat and ship repair, boat and ship processing, seafood sales, marine construction, military activities, and other water dependent uses. *access to the water and are dependent commercial, government activities, commercial fishing, tourism, aquaculture, building, boat and ship services, seafood transportation, shipping,*



- Ensure that your Comprehensive Plan includes language & actions that preserve working waterfronts (see reverse).
- Establish permissive, by-right zoning policies for working waterfronts.
- Establish local tax policies that stimulate water-dependent business development.
- Establish incentives encouraging appropriate uses of working waterfronts.
- Deploy appropriate development districts to increase working waterfront development.



Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program



Comprehensive Plan Examples

Working Waterfronts

“Appropriate business locations on the waterfront are important to the long-term economy of the County and should be carefully protected and utilized in a productive manner. In particular, preference should be given to promoting areas and sites for working waterfront operations, fishing, aquaculture, and habitat preservation that will support the economy, enhance the environment, and ensure quality production of fish and shellfish.” – Mathews County Comprehensive Plan

Example Strategies/Actions:

- Protect working waterfront operations that are important to the economy of the County. Cooperatively work with & educate residents & businesses on aquaculture needs & waterfront operations. (Mathews Co.)
- Develop an Aquaculture & Working Waterfront Committee to identify & enhance specific opportunities & properties. Collaborate with multiple agencies & coordinate with property owners & businesses to build understanding & consensus. (adapted from Mathews Co.)
- Adopt a formal resolution/policy that promotes & protects working waterfronts. (adapted from Mathews Co.)
- Utilize VIMS/VCZMP/[National Working Waterfronts Network](#) resources for Best Management Practices (BMPs) in working waterfront areas. (adapted from Chincoteague)
- Ensure local policies are consistent with the provisions of the permit & continue to allow traditional options where necessary for working waterfronts. (Chincoteague)
- Develop a Working Waterfront Zoning District. (Gloucester Co.)
- Because of the scarcity of land in Town, it is important to protect commercial, water-related land uses. (Tangier)
- An opportunity to strengthen maritime economy by boosting recreation & tourism activities as well as promoting aquaculture & working waterfront businesses. (Essex Co.)



Managing & Funding

Working Waterfronts

Waterway Maintenance

Managing waterways for successful working waterfronts:

- Regional collaboration: [Middle Peninsula](#) and [Northern Neck](#) Public Access Authorities and [Eastern Shore Water Access Authority](#) (the latter not yet established) authorized to manage and apply for opportunities independently or jointly.
- [Waterway Maintenance Fund](#) established 2018 & managed by the [Virginia Port Authority](#): \$1.35M total grant funds available annually (requests due by March 1) for dredging, studies, permit work, & beneficial use planning; Guidelines [here](#).
- [Virginia Resources Authority](#) now includes [‘dredging’ in the definition of ‘project,’](#) opening an additional potential loan source for waterway maintenance.
- [Virginia Marine Resources Commission](#) is establishing a fast-track permitting program for disposal of dredged material, effective by July 1, 2019.
- [US Army Corps of Engineers Planning Assistance to States](#) and [Continuing Authorities Program](#)
- Local potential maintenance or match funding option: TIF (see below)

TIF

Tax Incremental Financing – NOT a new tax!

TIF is a public financing method whereby municipalities divert some portion of future property tax revenue increases from a defined area or district toward an economic development or improvement project in the community. It does not take away revenue needed today to fund essential government services. A process for monitoring performance of the district needs to be included in the plan, which should determine if the TIF revenue generation is meeting targeted funding expectations. More information in the [MPPDC report](#).

Today's Assessed Value

Land and Building Assessed Value	\$100,000
Taxable Units	1000
Levy	75 cents per hundred or 1000 taxing units
Tax Revenue Generated	\$750

New Revenue Generated

The difference between annual generated tax revenue

\$75

Reassessed

Land and Building Assessed Value	\$110,000
Taxable Units	1100
Levy	75 cents per hundred or 1000 taxing units
Tax Revenue Generated	\$825

A TIF policy can dedicate a percentage (1-100%) of new revenues to fund a public need.

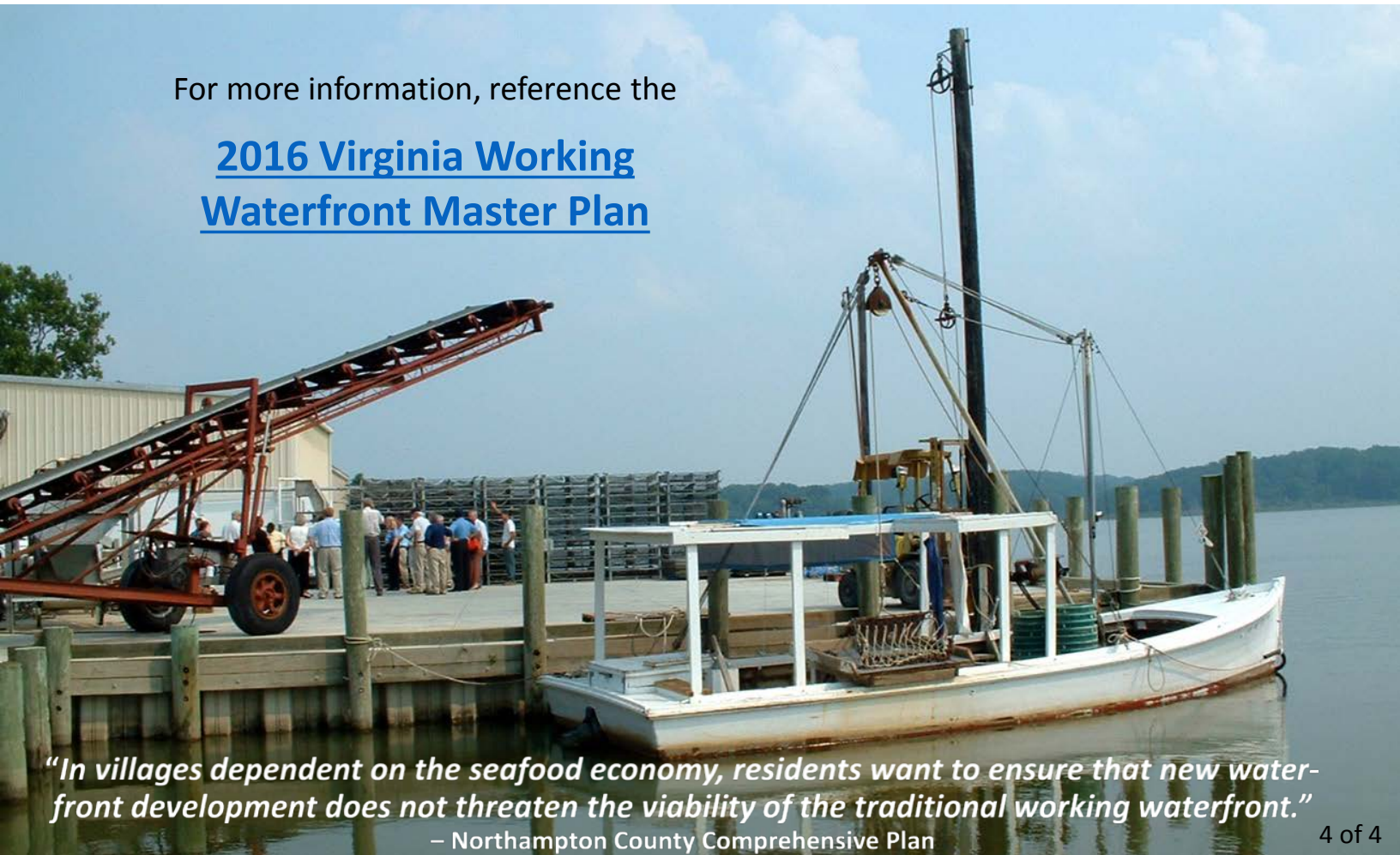
For Instance: A TIF policy could dedicate 50% of new revenues to a specific dredging fund. Therefore \$37.50 would be directed to the dredging fund.

Local Options for Protecting & Preserving Working Waterfronts

- [§ 15.2-2283](#) Purpose of Zoning Ordinances is ‘to protect against destruction of or encroachment upon historic areas and working waterfront development areas’
 - Consider Enterprise Zones, Technology Zones, Community Development Authorities, Working Waterfront Development Areas (see below), and other measures.
- [§ 15.2-2306.1](#). Creation of Working Waterfront Development Areas:
 - Must establish by ordinance & associated public notice/hearing, similar to [§15.2-2306](#) for historic districts
 - Defined as a portion of a locality
 - Effective for a period of up to 10 years
 - Potential incentives include:
 - Reduction of permit fees, user fees, and/or gross receipts tax
 - Waiver of tax liens to facilitate property sale
 - May also include special zoning, special permit process, exemption from certain specified ordinances (excluding Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, Erosion and Sediment Control Law, & Virginia Stormwater Management Act)

For more information, reference the

[2016 Virginia Working Waterfront Master Plan](#)



“In villages dependent on the seafood economy, residents want to ensure that new waterfront development does not threaten the viability of the traditional working waterfront.”