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# Chapter 2      Background Data and Planning Assumptions

## Introduction

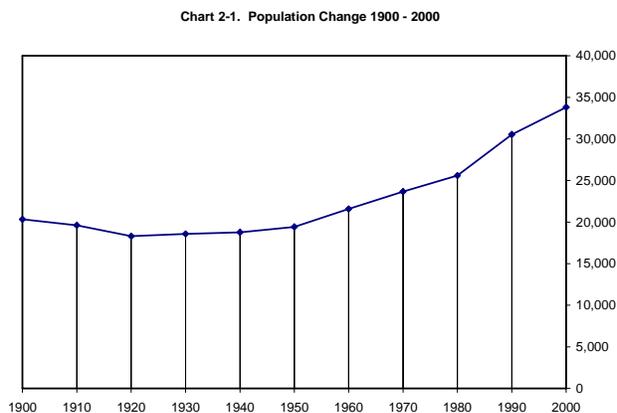
Trends, projections, and assumptions provide a numerical benchmark to help determine if the plan is realistic and reasonable. A variety of information, in combination with citizen input, was used as a basis for the policies in the Plan.

It is important to develop quality baseline data in an effort to benchmark and monitor progress. This data should be updated on a regular basis as new information becomes available.

Important trends, projections, and planning assumptions are discussed in this Chapter. Unless otherwise noted, the U. S. Census Bureau and Maryland Department of Planning are the sources for information contained in this Chapter. Projections prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services are as of October 2002. Historical jobs, total personal income and per capita personal income data through 2000 are from the U. S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Historical school enrollment is from the Maryland State Department of Education.

## Population

As shown in Chart 2-1, between 1900 and 1950, Talbot County's population remained relatively unchanged. The opening of the first Chesapeake Bay Bridge in the early 1950s marked the beginning of an increased rate of growth in both Talbot County and the Upper Eastern Shore Region.



Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning

Between 1950 and 2000, the population increased by 74%, going from 19,328 in 1950 to a population of 33,812 in 2000. The County population increases considerably during the weekends, particularly during the summer months. Much of this periodic increase is attributable to a growth in tourism and in second homes. While few indicators are available to quantify these periodic increases in population, the County should identify ways to quantify these trends to improve its ability to monitor this trend and its impacts to infrastructure and public service delivery demand in future years.

### Talbot County Population Distribution

The population growth in Talbot County has not been evenly distributed throughout the county. The Easton Election District is by far the County's most populous and contains slightly more than 52% of

the County's total population. The remaining population is generally dispersed among the County's other four election districts. Between 1990 and 2000, 2,161 or 66% of new residents located in the Easton Election District.

	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
Easton	47.2%	47.5%	50.6%	52.1%
St. Michael's	18.6%	18.2%	17.3%	16.7%
Trappe	14.2%	13.7%	13.3%	13.2%
Chapel	11.7%	13.1%	12.3%	12.2%
Bay Hundred	8.3%	7.5%	6.4%	5.8%

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning.

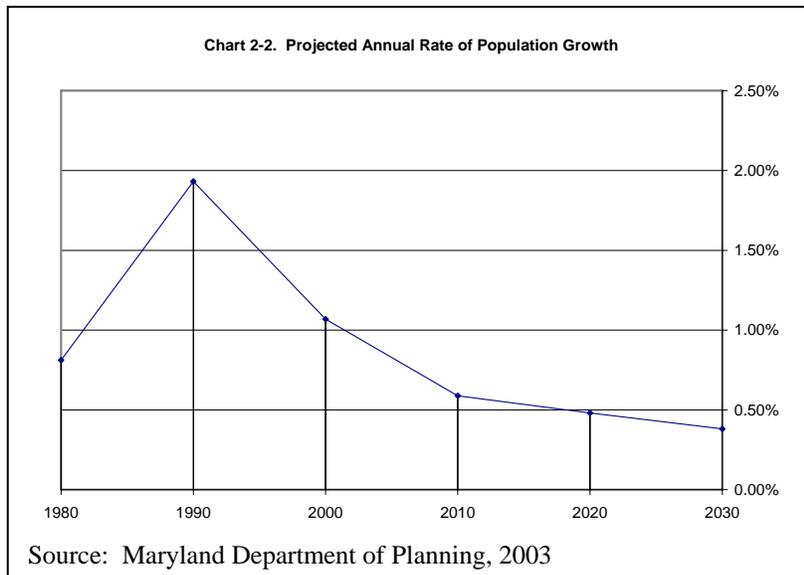
In 1970, approximately 40% of all Talbot County residents lived within the County's five incorporated towns. By 2000, the combined population of all towns grew to represent just over 44% of the total County population. Easton is the largest town in Talbot County. Easton's population represented 28.8% of the total County population in 1970. By 2000, Easton's population has grown to represent 34.6% of the County. The Town of Trappe is the only other town to sustain significant growth during the 1970-2000 time periods. Trappe's population more than doubled over the 30-year period growing from 426 residents in 1970 to 1,146 in 2000.

	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
Unincorporated Area of County	59.5%	59.2%	59.2%	55.9%
Town of Easton	28.8%	29.4%	30.7%	34.6%
Town of St. Michaels	6.1%	5.1%	4.3%	3.5%
Town of Oxford	3.2%	2.9%	2.3%	2.3%
Town of Trappe	1.8%	2.9%	3.2%	3.4%
Town of Queen Anne (pt)	0.6%	0.5%	0.4%	0.2%
Total Incorporated Towns	40.5%	40.8%	40.8%	44.1%

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning.

## **A. Talbot County Population Projections**

Current and projected population and household data for 2000 to 2030 prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning show that by 2030 the County's population would grow to 38,950. The population projections reflect a growth rate in the range of 0.5% per year. The population growth rate between 1990 and 2000 averaged 1.02% per year. It should be noted that the State's projections may be low when considering the current rate of residential construction in the county and towns.



In 2000, the median age in Talbot County was 43.3 years compared to the statewide average of 36 years. Talbot County’s relatively high median age is a function of a population that is aging in place, and immigration of wealthy retirees locating to high-end waterfront housing.<sup>1</sup>

## B. Current and Projected Households

The number of households in Talbot County has significantly increased over the last thirty years. As indicated in the table below, household growth has occurred at a substantially higher rate than population growth due to decreasing average household size. Between 1970 and 2000, the rate of increase in the number of households is 80.8%, nearly double the rate of increase in population (42.8%) over the same period.

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
Households	7,914	9,934	12,677	14,307	15,500	16,675	17,450
Average Household Size (persons per household)	2.94	2.55	2.39	2.32	2.26	2.20	2.18

Source: U. S. Bureau of Census and Maryland Office of Planning

The trend has clear implications for future housing demand in the County as more housing units will be needed to accommodate projected population growth and smaller average household size. Since fewer people will be living in each household, more housing units will be needed to accommodate population growth than were required in the past.

## C. Age Distribution

The following table shows the age distribution of Talbot County’s population in 1990, 2000 and projections for 2020 and 2030 and compares these to the Upper Eastern Shore and the State of Maryland.

<sup>1</sup> Data Source: Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services, from the U. S. Census, May, 2001. Prepared by Mark Goldstein, 2003.

Cohort	Talbot				Upper Eastern Shore				Maryland			
	1990	2000	2020	2030	1990	2000	2020	2030	1990	2000	2020	2030
0-4	6.5	5.2	4.9	4.6	7.4	6.2	6.0	5.6	7.6	6.4	6.4	6.1
5-19	16.8	18.3	14.9	14.8	20.5	21.6	18.6	18.5	19.7	21.4	19.0	19.1
20-44	34.4	29.0	23.9	24.1	37.8	33.8	28.3	28.3	42.8	34.6	31.8	31.7
45-64	22.4	27.2	28.4	23.1	20.6	24.6	28.2	23.9	19.1	25.8	26.1	22.2
65+	19.9	20.4	27.9	33.4	13.6	13.8	18.9	23.7	10.8	11.7	16.7	20.9

Age Distribution, as a percent of total population. Year 2000

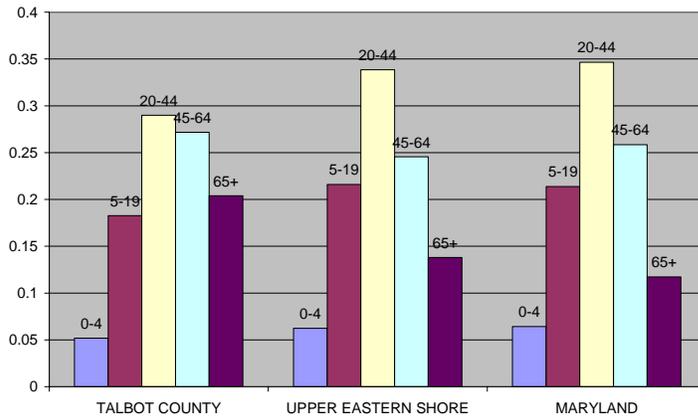


Chart 2-3. Age Distribution Year 2000. Talbot County, Upper Eastern Shore, Maryland. Source. U. S. Bureau of Census and Maryland Office of Planning

In 2000, as compared to the Upper Eastern Shore and the State of Maryland, the County had a lower proportion of population in all categories except in the 65+ category.

The County is expected to see a decline in the school age population over the next 10-year period. The overall student population is projected to decline from 4,338 students in 2002, to 3,820 students in 2012. This translates into a 10.5% decrease in elementary school enrollment; a 16.4% decrease in middle school enrollment and a 10.3% decrease in high school enrollment.

## Housing

In 2000, there were 16,500 housing units. Of these 14,307 (86%) were occupied, 13.3% were vacant, a high percentage of these may be for seasonal or recreational use. Between 1980 and 2000, the total number of housing units increased by 5,270. In 2000, of the total number of occupied units, 71.6% were owner occupied, and 28.4% were rental units. Between 1970 and 2000, percentage of owner occupied units has increased by 4%. The ownership rate is slightly higher than the State at 67.7% but lower than the 75.4% for the Upper Eastern Shore.

	<b>Total Units</b>	<b>Total Occupied Units</b>	<b>Owner Occupied Rate</b>	<b>Renter Occupied Rate</b>
Talbot County	16,500	14,307	71.6%	28.4%
Upper Eastern Shore	89,073	79,608	75.4%	24.6%
Maryland	2,145,283	1,980,859	67.1%	32.3%

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning

Between 1990 and 2001 a total of 3,592 housing units were constructed in the County. Of these 3,258 were single family homes. In the ten-year period between 1981 and 1990, only 37% of the growth in housing units occurred in the towns. From 1991 through 2000, 53% of the growth in housing units occurred in the towns.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Unincorporated Area of County</b>	<b>Easton</b>	<b>St. Michaels</b>	<b>Oxford</b>	<b>Trappe</b>	<b>Total Incorporated Areas</b>	<b>Total County</b>
1980	156	41	16	1	4	62	218
1981	91	43	7	2	1	53	144
1982	109	30	1	6	0	37	146
1983	146	123	4	3	4	134	280
1984	143	129	53	2	1	185	328
1985	249	66	6	3	2	77	326
1986	209	152	2	3	8	165	374
1987	250	108	0	15	6	129	379
1988	216	85	0	4	50	139	355
1989	225	44	1	9	26	80	305
1990	152	68	5	3	19	95	247
1991	130	28	3	5	9	45	175
1992	122	124	3	5	4	136	258
1993	150	93	6	8	7	114	264
1994	220	80	1	1	7	89	309
1995	133	91	5	6	6	108	241
1996	153	165	4	11	8	188	341
1997	152	178	6	8	7	199	351
1998	172	162	4	7	2	175	347
1999	174	201	2	7	4	214	388
2000	153	124	3	6	8	141	294
2001	154	155	0	4	2	161	315
2002	169	172	1	4	5	182	351

Source: Talbot County Public Works Department, Building Inspection and Town Clerks, March 2003.

Recent trends indicate a significant shift in the distribution of growth in the County. In the years

2000 –2002, 50.42% of all new units built in the County were built in the incorporated towns. The Town of Easton issued more building permits in 2001 and 2002 for new residential units than the County. This trend is in part due to County planning policies that encourage growth to locate in the incorporated Towns.

## Employment

Several state agencies track economic indicators and provide annual updates and long-range projections. The information in Table 2-7 and 2-7a is taken from data provided by the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation. Table 2-8 reports on the number of Talbot County residents reported to be in the labor force and the unemployment rate.

The actual size of the resident labor force in Talbot County varies from month to month and year to year. As shown in Table 2-7, the resident civilian labor force increased between 1980 and 2000. This trend is projected to continue through 2030. The percent of the population in the labor force is projected to decrease over the next 30 years. While this is a statewide trend, it is more pronounced in Talbot County. In 2030, only 54.7% of the total population over 16 is projected to be in the labor force, this is a significantly lower percentage than in either the Upper Eastern Shore or the State.

<b>TABLE 2-7. CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE AND PARTICIPATION RATES</b>						
<b>1980 – 2030</b>						
<b>Talbot County</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2030</b>
Total Population 16+	20,510	24,690	27,200	29,830	31,450	32,780
In Labor Force	12,760	16,220	16,790	18,240	18,280	17,930
% in Labor Force	62.2	65.7	61.7	61.1	58.1	54.7
<b>Upper Eastern Shore</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2030</b>
Total Population 16+	114,830	140,110	161,730	184,610	201,000	212,600
In Labor Force	69,430	94,470	108,290	123,130	128,860	130,000
% in Labor Force	60.5	67.4	67.0	66.7	64.1	61.1
<b>MARYLAND</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2030</b>
Total Population 16+	3,213,990	3,731,820	4,085,980	4,550,920	4,880,740	5,088,130
In Labor Force	2,108,300	2,639,920	2,769,560	3,064,140	3,174,140	3,159,710
% in Labor Force	65.6	70.7	67.8	67.3	65.0	62.1

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning, 2003

Table 2-7a shows growth in the resident civilian labor force and unemployment trends between 1980 and 2000. From 1990 to 2000 the labor force grew by just over 2,379; from 16,483 to 18,862 by 2000.

**TABLE 2-7a TALBOT COUNTY CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE AND**

<b>EMPLOYMENT TRENDS (1980-2000)</b>				
<b>YEAR</b>	<b>TALBOT COUNTY</b>		<b>STATE</b>	
	<b>Civilian Labor Force</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	<b>Civilian Labor Force</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate</b>
<b>1980</b>	10,160	5.4%	2,158,000	6.5%
<b>1985</b>	15,119	3.6%	2,260,000	4.6%
<b>1990</b>	16,483	3.1%	2,609,439	4.7%
<b>1995</b>	17,923	3.6%	2,715,094	5.1%
<b>1996</b>	18,472	4.0%	2,787,788	4.9%
<b>1997</b>	18,721	4.3%	2,782,198	5.1%
<b>1998</b>	18,944	3.9%	2,753,258	4.6%
<b>1999</b>	18,877	2.8%	2,774,718	3.5%
<b>2000</b>	18,862	3.1%	2,789,282	3.8%

As indicated in Table 2-8, the total number of jobs in Talbot County increased by over 2,506; from 23,239 in 1996 to 25,745 in 2000. The growth in the actual number of jobs has outpaced growth of the resident County labor force, providing a clear indication of the County's role as a regional employment center.

<b>TABLE 2-8: RATIO JOBS TO WORKFORCE 1996-2000</b>							
<b>Title</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Change 1996/2000</b>	<b>% Change 1996/2000</b>
*Total Jobs	23,239	24,227	24,416	25,066	25,745	2,506	9.37%
Civilian Workforce	18,472	18,721	18,944	18,877	18,862	390	2.07%
Jobs to Workforce	1.26	1.29	1.29	1.33	1.36	--	--

\* include both full-time and part-time jobs

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning, 2003

In 2000, there were 1.36 jobs for every person in the labor force in Talbot County. This compares to less than 1 job for every person in the labor force in the Upper Eastern Shore during the same time period. As fewer County residents participate in the labor force, the number of jobs per person is projected to increase, which may include individuals holding down more than one job and/or part time or seasonal positions.

<b>TABLE 2-9. UPPER EASTERN SHORE RATIO JOBS TO LABOR FORCE 1980 - 2030</b>						
<b>UPPER EASTERN SHORE</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2030</b>
Population in Labor Force	69,430	94,470	108,290	123,130	128,860	130,000
Ratio of Jobs to Labor Force	0.87	0.86	0.93	0.92	0.92	0.93

Source: U. S. Census Department, Maryland Department of Planning, 2003

TABLE 2-10. UNEMPLOYMENT RATES		
MARYLAND		TALBOT COUNTY
4.7%	1990	3.1%
6.0%	1991	4.6%
6.7%	1992	5.2%
6.2%	1993	4.2%
5.1%	1994	3.4%
5.1%	1995	3.6%
4.9%	1996	4.0%
5.1%	1997	4.3%
4.6%	1998	3.9%
3.5%	1999	2.8%
3.0%	2000	3.1%
4.0%	2001	3.0%
4.4%	2002	3.2%
4.5%	2003	4.2%

Source: Maryland Department of Planning, 2003

Talbot County has enjoyed a low unemployment rate relative to the Eastern Shore and the State of Maryland as a whole. The combination of a declining labor pool, an increasing number of jobs will continue to make Talbot County a regional employment center.

In 2000, 76.1% of employed residents worked in the County. However, the percentage of the total number of county jobs held by residents was 62%, with non-residents holding 38% of the jobs.

The statistics relating to Labor Force and Jobs presented in this section are based on information available from the Census Bureau and the Maryland Department of Planning (CB/MDP). It should be noted that these statistics vary considerably from statistics on the same subjects published by the Maryland Department of Business & Economic Development (MDED). An example of the disparity is that the CB/MDP statistics for the year 2000 indicate a labor force of 16,760 and a number of jobs of 25,900; while the MDED statistics for 2000 are a labor force of 18,862 and a number of jobs of 18,227. This disparity is even more evident when a Ratio of Jobs to Labor Force is calculated using those year 2000 statistics: for CB/MDP the ratio is 1.54, compared to a ratio of 0.97 for MDED.

Statistics and personal observations regarding employees commuting into vs. out of the County would lead to an impression of there being more jobs in the County than there are members in our labor force; but the MDED data would cause one to wonder if the CB/MDP Ratio overstates that relationship. The Jobs to Labor Force Ratio is important because the CB/MDP Ratio could negatively influence consideration of economic development actions to bring employment opportunities to our citizens; or conversely, the MDED Ratio could mislead prospective new employers as to availability within the County's labor force. The County needs to have meaningful measures of the size and nature of its labor force and the type and number of its jobs, to be able to appropriately consider actions related to employment.

## A. Major Economic Sectors

The major economic sectors in the County in terms of jobs include services, retail trade, and manufacturing. As shown in Table 2-11, these economic sectors, with the exception of manufacturing, have increased their share of total employment. The greatest rate of growth in jobs

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is in transportation, communications and utilities as well as the retail and service industries. The agriculture, fisheries, forestry, government, transportation, communication and public utilities sectors have decreased their share of total employment over the last three decades. The percentage share of persons employed in the construction industry reflected modest overall growth through the period.

As indicated in Table 2-11, farm employment in Talbot County dropped by approximately 24%, from 493 in 1990 to 373 by 2000. Despite employment losses, the agricultural industry has remained relatively strong in Talbot County during the last decade.

<b>Table 2-11 TALBOT COUNTY FULL AND PART-TIME JOBS (by place of work) BY TYPE OF INDUSTRY (1990-2000)</b>				
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Change (1990-2000)</b>	<b>% Change (1990-2000)</b>
<b>TOTAL JOBS</b>	21,437	25,745	4,308	20%
<b>BY TYPE</b>				
Wage & Salary	16,920	20,198	3,278	19%
Proprietors	4,517	5,547	1,030	23%
Farm Proprietors	299	266	-33	-11%
*Nonfarm Proprietors	4,218	5,281	1,063	25%
<b>BY MAJOR INDUSTRY</b>				
Farm	493	373	-120	-24%
Nonfarm	20,944	25,372	4,428	21%
<b>PRIVATE</b>	19,516	23,463	3,947	20%
**Agservice, forestry, fishing, and other	811	(D)	(N)	(N)
Mining	40	(D)	(N)	(N)
Construction	2,003	1,980	-23	-1%
Manufacturing	2,876	2,959	83	3%
Transportation & public utilities	436	664	228	54%
Wholesale trade	539	768	229	42%
Retail trade	4,084	4,852	768	19%
Finance, insurance, & real estate	1,445	2,126	681	47%
Services	7,282	9,212	1,930	27%
<b>GOVERNMENT &amp; GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES</b>	1,428	1,909	481	34%
Federal, civilian	181	299	118	65%
Military	159	115	-44	-28%
State and local	1,088	1,495	407	37%
State	82	203	121	148%
Local	1,006	1,292	286	28%

\* Excludes limited partners

\*\* "Other" consists of the number of jobs held by U.S. residents employed by international organizations & foreign embassies & consultants in the U.S.

"(D)" Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information

“(N)” Data not available for this year

Source: Extracts prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services, from U.S. BEA Table CA-25, May, 2003

The number of people commuting into Talbot County to work has increased steadily over the last ten years. In 1990, 6,076 people commuted into Talbot County workplaces from other jurisdictions. This number increased to 7,461 in 2000. In the same time period, the number of people commuting out of Talbot County to workplaces in other jurisdictions increased from 3,083 in 1990 to 3,836 in 2000.

## B. Income

Since 1988, Talbot County has ranked number 3 in per capita income in the State. In 2000, the per capita income was \$37,809. At the same time, the per capita income for the Upper Eastern Shore was \$28,774 and \$34,060 for the State. Talbot County median household income is lower than the state or Upper Eastern Shore Region median household income.

The U.S. Census Bureau reported that in 1999, 2,771 individuals or 8.3% of the total population were below the poverty level. Of the total, 520 individuals were 65+ years of age, and 755 were children under 18 years of age.

<b>MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>	<b>Census 1989</b>	<b>Census 1999</b>	<b>Estimated 2002</b>
<b>UPPER EASTERN SHORE REGION</b>	\$33,785	\$47,700	\$53,350
<b>TALBOT COUNTY</b>	<b>\$31,885</b>	<b>\$43,550</b>	<b>\$46,150</b>
<b>MARYLAND</b>	\$39,386	\$52,850	\$58,600

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning, 2003

## C. Existing Land Use

Based on the Maryland Department of Planning's analysis of Satellite imagery in 1997, approximately 20,506 acres in Talbot County were developed at that time and approximately 150,917 acres remained undeveloped. The vast majority of this undeveloped land was in agricultural use. In 1997 total land in agricultural use accounted for 104,045 acres while forest lands represented 41,749 acres in undeveloped lands.

Residential development accounted for about 15,905 acres of the developed area of the County in

1997. From 1997 to 2000, residential developed land increased by approximately 7 percent or 1,108 acres and grew to 17,013.

In earlier years land use tracking with satellite imagery used by the State could only measure change through the use of 90-acre cells. In 1997, imagery and methodology permitted a finer grain picture of land use patterns down to a 5-acre cell size as the basis for measurement. Since data in years prior to 1997 is not comparable to more recent land use analysis, longer-term trend analysis would not be accurate.

It is estimated that over 80% of all residential development in the County is single-family detached homes. The estimated 20% of housing units that are multi-family are almost exclusively located in the County's incorporated towns. The majority of the residential development in the unincorporated areas of the County is lower density, single-family detached housing, located in waterfront subdivisions and in scattered locations in rural and waterfront areas. There are also concentrations of older homes located in the County's numerous unincorporated villages.

Commercial and industrial development in 2000 accounted for about 2,271 acres of the developed area of the County. Most of the commercial and industrial development in Talbot County is located in the incorporated towns with some strip development in unincorporated areas along Routes 50 and 33. Limited amounts of commercial development are also found within various village centers. Map 2-1 shows the existing land use pattern in Talbot County in 2001.

<b>TABLE 2-13. TALBOT COUNTY LAND USE CHANGE</b>				
<b>1997 - 2000</b>				
<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Year 1997</b>	<b>Year 2000</b>	<b>Land Use Change</b>	
			<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Low Density Residential	13,189	14,182	993	7.5%
Medium/ High Density Residential	2,716	2,831	115	4.2%
Commercial/ Industrial	2,157	2,271	114	5.3%
Institutional / Open Space	2,444	2,269	-175	-7.2%
Total Development	20,506	21,553	1,047	5.1%
Agriculture	104,045	103,532	-513	-0.5%
Forest	41,749	40,633	-1,116	-2.7%
Extractive/ Barren	207	207	0	0.0%
Wetland	4,916	4,637	-279	-5.7%
Total Resources	150,917	149,009	-1,908	-1.3%
Total Land	171,423	170,562	-861	-0.5%
Water	129,796	129,798	2	0.0%
Total Area	301,219	300,360	-859	-0.3%
Figures prior to 1997 have been excluded since they are not comparable to years shown due to changes in methodology used to measure land use cells and satellite imagery. Source: Maryland Department of State Planning.				

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## D. Agriculture and Resource Lands

Currently 64% (109,572 acres) of the county land area is classified as lands in farms. Of these 92,953 acres (85%) are cropland. Crops represent the primary type of farm production.

<i>Farm Number and Size</i>	<i>1982</i>	<i>1987</i>	<i>1992</i>	<i>1997</i>
Number of Farms	350	280	250	240
Average size (acres)	342	389	423	457
Land in Farms (acres)	119,684	109,032	109,108	109,572

Source: United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Census U.S. Department of Commerce, 1997.

According to the 1997 U. S. Census of Agriculture, while the average farm size has increased from 342 acres in 1982 to 457 acres in 1997, approximately 10,000 acres of farmland has been lost since 1982.

### **Agricultural Preservation Districts**

As of December 2002, approximately 14,523 acres of land located in 95 districts in Talbot County have been placed in agricultural preservation districts. Development rights easements have been purchased on forty-nine (49) of the 95 districts, which permanently protects 8,100 acres of farmland.

### **Maryland Environmental Trust Lands**

Land trust organizations do not typically purchase development rights from a property owner, but rather accept conservation easements as donations and in return, the property owner receives significant tax benefits. As of December 2002, approximately 14,804 acres of land within the County have entered into conservation agreements with various land trust organizations.

### **DNR Lands**

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages publicly owned lands and protected open space in the State. In Talbot County, DNR manages 238 acres of public lands and protected open space, including Black Walnut Point Natural Resource Management Area, Choptank Fishing Pier State Park, Wye Oak State Park, and Seth Demonstration State Forest.

### **Agriculture Industry**

Talbot County's agricultural industry is still a major component of the County's economic base, occupying 63% (109,572 acres) of its land area and provides \$48.7M in gross annual sales revenue. While the gross sales of agricultural industries is one measurement of the impact of agriculture on the economy, industries that are linked to agriculture must also be considered to better estimate the total economic impact. "Backward-linked" industries are all of those that the agriculture industry supports through purchases. These industries include fuel, fertilizer, machinery repair, feed, and many others. Due to the large purchasing power of agriculture on the Delmarva, backward-linked industries rely on purchases made by agriculture to support their employees and economic prosperity. "Forward-linked" industries also rely on agriculture. These industries purchase agricultural commodities and in some way, add value to them through packaging and/or processing. Backward and forward linked industries contribute more than \$165M to the local economy.