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Keller Town Plan /

1988

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### The Comprehensive Plan

The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to give direction to both public and private decisions so that the most beneficial arrangement of land uses can be recognized. The comprehensive plan also facilitates the orderly and economic provision of public services for present and future residents.

A comprehensive plan provides a basis for intelligent discussions by town residents and its elected representatives concerning the future development of their community. It also coordinates decision making within and between public and private activity in the endeavor to achieve a healthy and balanced environment, as well as a high quality of life.

The most frequently asked question concerning the process of comprehensive planning is "Why bother to do it?" One reason is that every governing body in the Commonwealth is required to adopt a comprehensive plan. But more importantly, an adopted comprehensive plan can provide a backbone and framework for decision making in Keller. A comprehensive plan attempts to address, and anticipate, aspects of a community that are crucial in determining the overall quality of life that its residents presently enjoy, and hope to preserve in the future. Past experience has shown that planning and foresight are essential to a community's health. Once undesirable development begins, is recognized, and addressed, it is often too late to take effective measures to prevent it.

To be effective, the plan must be geared toward the social, economic, and environmental provisions that currently prevail. Yet at the same time, it must promote the balanced services, environment, and facilities required by the populace of the future. By adopting such a plan, decisions which will be made, monies which will be spent, and programs which will be initiated or amended can be accomplished in an orderly and logical manner.

More specifically:

- An economically healthy balance of land uses is represented in a comprehensive plan. This provides a framework for consideration of rezoning applications.
- Use permits, subdivision plats, site plans and general development proposals can be reviewed within a more comprehensive frame of reference and not approached on a piecemeal basis.

- Programs for the improvement and/or expansion of public utility systems can be undertaken in a more judicious manner.
- Public services and facilities can be provided in a more economical and efficient manner.
- A comprehensive plan will promote the accommodation of a wide variety of housing types, densities, and price ranges and should accommodate housing demands of all income levels.
- Once officially recognized, features of architectural or historical significance and areas of natural beauty can be more effectively preserved, protected, and integrated into an orderly pattern of development.

#### State Planning Legislation

The process and purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is outlined clearly in the Code of Virginia, Title 15.1, Article 4, Section 446 through Section 457. The commission referred to in the Code is the local Planning Commission.

"In the preparation of a comprehensive plan the commission shall make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth, and of the probable future requirements of its territory and inhabitants. The comprehensive plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants."

"The comprehensive plan shall be general in nature, in that it shall designate the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature shown on the plan and shall indicate where existing lands or facilities are proposed to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated, narrowed, abandoned, or changed in use as the case may be."

"Such plan, with accompanying maps, plat, charts, and descriptive matter, shall show the commission's long-range recommendations for the general development of the territory covered by the plan. It may include, but need not be limited to:

- 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;
- The designation of a system of transportation facilities such as streets, roads, parkways, railways, bridges, viaducts, waterways, airports, ports, terminals, and other like facilities;
- 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;
- The designation of historical areas and areas for urban renewal or other treatment; and
- An official map, a capital improvements program, a subdivision ordinance, and a zoning ordinance and zoning district maps."

"In the preparation of a comprehensive plan, the local commission shall survey and study such matters as the following:

- Use of land, preservation of agricultural and forestal land, production of food and fiber, characteristics and conditions of existing development, trends of growth or changes, natural resources, population factors, employment and economic factors, existing public facilities, drainage, flood control and flood damage prevention measures, transportation facilities, the need for housing, and any other matters relating to the subject matter and general purposes of the comprehensive plan.
- Probable future economic and population growth of the territory and requirements therefor."

"The comprehensive plan shall recommend methods of implementation. Unless otherwise required by this chapter these may include but need not be limited to:

- An official map;
- A capital improvements program;
- A subdivision ordinance; and

- A zoning ordinance and zoning district maps."

"Whenever the local commission shall have recommended a comprehensive plan or part thereof for the county or municipality and such plan shall have been approved and adopted by the governing body, it shall control the general or approximate location, character and extent of each feature shown on the plan. Thereafter, no street, park or other public area, public building or public structure, public utility facility or public service corporation facility other than railroad facility, whether publicly or privately owned, shall be constructed, established or authorized, unless and until the general location or approximate location, character, and extent thereof has been submitted to and approved by the local commission as being substantially in accord with the adopted comprehensive plan or part thereof. In connection with any such determination the commission may, and at the direction of the governing body shall, hold a public hearing."

"The commission shall communicate its findings to the governing body, indicating its approval or disapproval with written reasons therefor. The governing body may overrule the action of the commission by a vote of a majority of the membership thereof. Failure of the commission to act within sixty days of such submission, unless such time shall be extended by the governing body, shall be deemed approval. The owner or owners or their agents may appeal the decision of the local commission to the governing body within ten days after the decision of the commission. The appeal shall be by written petition to the governing body setting forth the reasons for the appeal. A majority vote of the governing body shall overrule the commission."

"Widening, narrowing, extension, enlargement, vacation or change of use of streets or public areas shall likewise be submitted for approval, but paving, repair, reconstruction, improvement, drainage or similar work and normal service extensions of public utilities or public service corporations shall not require approval unless involving a change in location or extent of a street or public area."

"Any public area, facility or use as set forth which is identified within, but not the entire subject of, submission under either 15.1-475 for subdivision or 15.1-491 for development or both may be deemed a feature already shown on the adopted master plan, and therefore, excepted from the requirement for submittal to and approval by the commission or the governing body; provided, that the governing body has by ordinance or resolution defined standards governing the construction, establishment or authorization of such public area, facility or

use or has approved it through acceptance of a proffer made pursuant to 15.1-491."

The Code of Virginia also provides requirements for Plan review in Title 15.1, Section 454.

"At least once every five years the comprehensive plan shall be reviewed by the local commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan."

## II. INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

Location. The Town of Keller is located on the Virginia Eastern Shore in Accomack County (Map 1). Virginia's Eastern Shore is located at the southern tip of the Delmarva Peninsula. Virginia Eastern Shore is bordered to the north by the state of Maryland, to the east by the Atlantic Ocean, to the south and west by the Chesapeake Bay. Keller is located in the southern third of Accomack County in the Pungoteague Magisterial District.

History of the Area. Keller first established itself as a small neighborhood in Accomack County called Pungoteague Station. Chosen as site a for a rail station the Town became Keller. Keller's name was taken from the contractor who constructed the railroad through the neighborhood, thereby creating the Town. The Town was officially incorporated on February 15, 1951.

Early economic activity in the Town centered around the railroad. Two hotels existed to served rail guest and the Town contained a fair amount of economic activity. When Keller was no longer utilized as a rail station the economic conditions of the Town changed. One of the hotels later burned and the Town office now stands on that lot. The other hotel, located across from the Town hall still stands and is used as apartments.

While the railroad still runs through the Town, the Town is no longer a stop. Today Keller is a small residential community with business activity located along U.S. Route 13.



INSERT MAP 1

### Natural Resource Features

To insure that future development in Keller is compatible with the natural environment, it is necessary to understand the natural resources which exist in the county. This section of the comprehensive plan summarizes the natural resources within the Town. Problems associated with the county's natural resources are also discussed.

Climate. Keller experiences mild winters and warm, humid summers due to its location near the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay. Average temperature for Keller in January is 39 degrees and the average temperature in July is 78 degrees. Average annual rainfall is 43 inches. The prevailing winds come from the south to the southwest off the Bay.

Area. Keller's corporate limits encompass approximately 172 acres.

Topography. Topography or land formation is critical to how land may be developed. Ground slope is one of the more important aspects of topography in that the use and maintenance of land depends upon it. Keller has no land that cannot be developed due to slope.

Elevation in the Keller area is approximately 25 feet. Topography for the most part is level throughout the Town, with slopes less than 2 percent.

Soils. Overall suitability and limitations of the soils in Keller have a significant impact upon future development. Suitability of the local soil is basic to design, layout and construction of roads, buildings, excavation of basements and sanitary operation of septic tanks. Soil factors such as depth, absorption, shrink-swell conditions, wetness, and filtering action all affect development.

In a community such as Keller, it is important to understand the general suitability of soils for septic tank filter fields. Since public utilities are not available, soil suitability for septic tank filter fields is a primary health factor that affects how the Town develops.

Keller lies within the geological region known as the Coastal Plain. All of the Eastern Shore is included in the Coastal Plain geological region, which is a low-lying region composed of sands, silts, and clay deposited by glacial melt water. Map 2 provides information concerning general soil types. Map 2 is general and therefore variations among particular parcels is to be expected. As indicated by Map 2, most of the soils in Keller are generally not suited for septic tank filler fields.

INSERT MAP 2

The majority of the soils in Keller fall within the Nimmo sandy loam classification. Nimmo sandy loam is a nearly level very deep and poorly drained soil that is located on flats and in depressions of Carolina bays. Carolina bays are characterized as low-lying areas with a high water table and wet soils. Its capability for development is very poor. However, in some cases it may be possible to drained this soil to support development.

Other soil types found in the immediate vicinity of Keller include a narrow strip of Bojac sandy loam, Molena loamy sand and Munden sandy loam. Bojac sandy loam is a gently sloping very deep and well drained soil that is located on side slopes and rims of Carolina bays. Bojac sandy loam is well suited to development. Molena sandy loam is a nearly level very deep and moderately well drained soil that is found on broad flats and in depressions. This soil can be compatible with development, but is often too wet to support a septic system. Molena loamy sand is moderately sloping to very steep soil that is very deep and somewhat excessively drained. This soil has many limits to use.

Overall, the soils in Keller do not represent good areas for development. Nimmo soil type is generally unsuitable for individual land based waste water treatment facilities, such as septic systems.

Natural Drainage Areas. Property in Keller is regularly flooded during heavy rains. Drainage problems in Town have been attributed to the soil characteristics, the overall lack of slope in the area and a lack of maintenance to existing drainage culverts. Flood conditions in the Town have been reviewed by the Town, the Highway Department and the Soil Conservation Service. Original drainage culverts were constructed by the Work Program Administration. These culverts while still in existence have not been maintained and are no longer functioning properly. Maintenance has not been undertaken due to the lack of funding sources. To date action involved in researching the problem includes a series of meetings with the Town Council, Soil Conservation Service, Resource and Conservation Development, and the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission.

While no physical action has resulted from the meetings to date, the problem has been document and the action necessary to improve the drainage in Keller has been outlined. Cost estimates that have been produced to date indicate that the total cost for the project is approximately \$23,000. These cost estimates would require updating and the total cost for the project would probably be higher. Another key point that has been established from the meetings to date is that the Town will be required to take the lead in the project and be responsible for carrying the project from beginning to end and in establishing a maintenance program.

Establishing the funding source for the drainage improvements should be one of the first steps in proceeding with the drainage improvements. This funding source will either be the Town or the property owners who would receive direct benefit from the improved drainage or a split between the Town and property owners. Due to the cost of the project, drainage improvements should be carried out over a series of years to reduce the overall burden of the project.

In order to proceed, once a funding source has been established the Town will need to establish a local project coordinator. This coordinator would be responsible for insuring communication between the Town, the Soil Conservation Service, Highway Department and the firm hired to conduct the construction work. The coordinator could change with each phase of the project, relying on the previous coordinator for technical assistance.

Flood Hazard Areas. According to the Accomack County Wave Height Study Keller is not located within the 100 year flood plain nor is it located in the 500 year flood plain. However, the Town is located in an area that could receive minor flooding in the event of either a 100 year flood or a 500 year flood.

## Population

Social and economic vitality of a community is a direct result of the characteristics of its residents. It is important to examine the changes that have taken place among Keller's population and to anticipate future changes. This section assesses the size of Keller's past and present populations, their characteristics, and trends of change.

Historic Change. Past changes in population for both Accomack County and Keller are presented in Table 1. The most recent population estimates for the Town are for 1986. These figures indicate that in 1986 Keller had 250 residents. Both the county and the Town lost residents between 1960 to 1970. However, while the county gained 2,264 residents between 1970 and 1980, the Town gained only one resident. Population estimates indicate that the Town gained 14 residents between 1980 and 1986.

Age Groups. Residents of Keller represent a slightly younger population than that found in the rest of the county (Table 2). Median age for Town residents was 33.3 in 1980 as compared to 34.9 for the county.

Keller basically mirrors the county in terms of percentage of the population found in each age group. Age group comparisons indicate that the 18 and younger contains 28.3 percent of county residents and 31 percent in the Town and that the age group of 19 to 64 contains 55 percent of the county's residents and 52 percent of the Towns. Keller does contain a slightly higher number of residents 65 and older than the county, with 17 percent in the Town and 16.7 percent in the county.

Gender and Racial Characteristics. Women comprise a slightly higher percentage of the Town population than the county population. Table 3 presents information for the 1980 census. According to the census 54 percent of Keller's residents are female and 46 percent are male.

A major difference in the population of Keller and that of the county is in regards to race. Accomack County's non-white population contains 36 percent of the total population, while the non-white population in Keller is only 6 percent.

Summary. Although the population of Keller is low, it has remained stable for the last 20 years. However, the population has not experienced any significant growth. Non-white population in the Town has not increased and is well below that found in the county, this is a trend consistent with other Towns in Accomack County.

The limited amount of population growth in Keller is probably

linked to the condition of the soils found in the Town and the limitations the soils place on development.

TABLE 1  
HISTORIC POPULATION CHANGE  
1960 - 1986

	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1986</u>
<u>Accomack County</u>				
Total	30,635	29,004	31,268	31,600
Numeric Change	—	-1,631	2,264	332
Percentage Change	—	-5.3	7.8	1.1
<u>Keller</u>				
Total	263	235	236	250
Numeric Change	—	-28	1	18
Percentage Change	—	-10	.4	5

1) Differences are computed from last reporting period.

Sources: U. S. Census of Population and Housing, 1960 - 1980.

U. S. Census Local Population Estimates for 1984,  
issued September 1985.



TABLE 2  
PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION BY GENERAL AGE GROUP  
1970 - 1980

	ACCOMACK COUNTY			KELLER
	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>1980</u>
Median Age	35.3	34.9	-0.4	33.3
% 18 or Younger	32.0	28.3	-3.7	31.0
% 19 to 64	52.6	55.0	2.4	52.0
% 65 and Older	15.4	16.7	1.3	17.0

Source: U. S. Census of Population and Housing, 1970 and 1980.

TABLE 3  
POPULATION BY SEX AND RACE  
1970 - 1980

	ACCOMACK COUNTY			KELLER
	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>	<u>1980</u>
Male	13,872	14,662	5.7%	108
%	47.8	46.9		46%
Female	15,132	16,606	9.7%	128
%	52.2	53.1		54%
White	18,101	19,753	9.1%	222
%	62.4	63.2		94%
Non-White	10,903	11,515	5.6%	14
%	37.6	36.8		6%

Source: U. S. Census of Population and Housing, 1970 and 1980.

## Housing

Availability, accessibility, and quality of housing is a vital aspect of a community. Discussed in this section is the condition, availability and value of Keller's housing.

Occupancy Rate. In 1980, Keller contained 94 year-round housing units, of those units 88 percent were occupied. Of the occupied housing units, 84 percent of these were owner-occupied and 16 percent were renter-occupied (see Tables 4 and 6).

The corresponding overall occupancy rate for Accomack County in 1980 was 88 percent, of which 75 percent were owner-occupied and 25 percent were renter-occupied.

Characteristics of Households. A majority of Keller residents live in family households. Table 5 reveals that 57 percent of Town residents live in family households and 13 percent live in non-family households. Non-family household consists of a person living alone or with one or more persons that are not related.

Table 5 also presents figures for elderly residents. Approximately 59 percent of elderly households are non-family households. A vast majority of these (88 percent) consist of female head of households. Census figures for 1980 indicate that 26 percent of all occupied dwelling units were occupied by only one person. Most of the one-person households represent elderly female residents.

Information concerning selected characteristics of occupied dwelling units can be found in Table 6. Owner-occupied units were in better condition than renter-occupied units according to the 1980 census. Owner-occupied housing tends to be larger in terms of the number of rooms and contain sufficient plumbing facilities. Of the 13 renter-occupied units in 1980, 31 percent lacked complete plumbing facilities or the exclusive use of complete facilities.

Housing Value. Self-reported value of owner-occupied housing in Keller is listed by value categories in Table 7. Median housing value in Keller is over \$2,000 greater than the median housing value in the county. Over one-third of the owner-occupied housing in the county is valued at less than \$20,000 as opposed to less than 27 percent of Keller housing.

Contract rent charged for renter-occupied units is presented in Table 8. Median contract rent of \$95 in Keller is higher than the \$77 median rent for county rental units.

Characteristics of Year Round Housing Units. Table 6 indicates the characteristics of year round housing units in the Town. Exhibited by Table 6 is that while the majority of the housing

units in Keller are in good condition problems do exist. In 1980 approximately 19% of the owner occupied housing units and 31% of the renter occupied units lack complete plumbing facilities. Map 3 provides information concerning housing conditions.

Additional Housing Issues. Keller's Town Planning Commission identified four housing issues that are of concern to the Town. These issues include the use of mobile homes in Town, conversion of single-family homes to multi-family homes or group homes and the establishment of apartments within the Town. These issues are discussed below.

Use of mobile homes within the Town has been of concern for several years and recently the Town adopted a Town ordinance restricting mobile homes to specific areas of the Town and/or to mobile parks. Keller is concerned with the devaluation of property that may occur if mobile homes are allowed to be located throughout the Town. In addition, mobile homes have been deemed by the Town to be incompatible to the single-family site built home character that presently exists within the Town. However, the Town does recognize its responsibility to provide for areas within the Town for the use of mobile homes. Keller has identified these areas in the Town ordinance and has included these areas on the future land use map. Mobile homes located in the Town should be fully skirted, anchored and inspected by the health department, county building inspector and the Town Zoning Administrator to insure that all required regulations are met.

Conversion of single-family homes in existing single-family neighborhoods to multi-family homes is of concern to the Town. Change in the character of the existing neighborhood by allowing higher density housing units is the predominate issue. Impacts associated with this issue include increased traffic, an increased population density, an increased demand for services and the influences of these impacts on existing neighborhoods. The Town has identified specific neighborhoods where the existing character should exclude the use of multi-family housing as a primary use. Multi-family use within this district should be limited to owner occupied housing units and 30 percent of the entire floor area.

Group housing, such as labor housing or shelters also create problems when allowed to occur without regulation. Group housing creates similar problems in existing single-family neighborhoods as multi-family housing. This type of housing should require special review by the Town before being allowed to be establish in the Town.

While the conversion of single-family homes to multi-family homes within the Town is seen as a threat to the stability of certain neighborhoods within the Town the development of apartments in compatible areas of the Town is not. Apartment development

INSERT MAP 3

within viewed as a positive factor. Apartment development in designated areas is to be encouraged by the Town.

Summary. In many respects Keller's housing market is stable. Single-family owner-occupied housing units, the core of Keller's housing, is in good condition. Value of the single-family housing is, on the average, slightly higher than single-family housing in Accomack County. However, substandard housing does exist with in the Town.

Keller lacks, due to soil limitations, is the ability to develop more land for housing. Because the Town is currently unable to grow the housing issues it faces consist of changes to existing neighborhoods, including conversion of single-family homes to two-family homes, the use of mobile homes on lots with existing single-family homes and the conversion of single-family homes to group homes and the level of substandard housing in the Town.

TABLE 4  
NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS  
1970 - 1980

	ACCOMACK COUNTY			KELLER
	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>	<u>1980</u>
Total Housing Units	11,729	13,815	17.8%	94
Year-Round Units	11,409	13,048	14.4%	93
% of Total Units	97.3	94.4		99%
Occupied Year-Round Units	9,713	11,600	19.4%	83
% of Year-Round Units	85.1	88.9		88%
Persons per Household	2.95	2.67	-9.5%	2.8

Sources: U. S. Census of Population and Housing, 1970 and 1980.

TABLE 5  
HOUSEHOLD TYPE AND RELATIONSHIP  
KELLER, 1980

	ALL RESIDENTS		RESIDENTS 65 AND OLDER	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Family Household	215	87%	24	41%
Non-family Household	31	13%	34	59%
Male Householder	5	16%	4	12%
Female Householder	16	52%	30	88%

- 1: Includes householder and those related by birth, marriage, or adoption. Figures includes 10 non-relatives that live within family households under the All Residents category.
- 2: A household consisting of a person living alone or with persons note related to them.
- 3: Percentages based on total Non-Family Households.
- 4: Percentages based on total Residents Age 65 or Older.

Source: U. S. Census of Population and Housing, 1980.



TABLE 6  
CHARACTERISTICS OF YEAR-ROUND OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS  
Town OF KELLER, 1980

	OWNER OCCUPIED	RENTER OCCUPIED
	<u>1980</u>	<u>1980</u>
Total Units	70	13
Percentage	84%	17%
With Plumbing Deficiencies	13	4
Percentage	19%	31%
With Crowded Conditions	2	0
Percentage	2%	0%
Median Number of Rooms	6.3	5.2

- 1: Percentage of all Occupied Year-Round Units.
- 2: Units lacking complete plumbing facilities or exclusive use of facilities.
- 3: Percentage of total Owner Occupied or Renter Occupied Units.
- 4: Number of units with 1.01 or greater persons per room.

Sources: U. S. Census of Population and Housing, 1980.

TABLE 7  
VALUE OF SPECIFIED OWNER OCCUPIED  
HOUSING UNITS, 1980

	ACCOMACK COUNTY		KELLER	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Less than \$10,000	862	13.3	6	10
\$10,000 - \$14,999	614	9.5	2	3
\$15,000 - \$19,999	714	11.0	9	14
\$20,000 - \$24,999	816	12.6	9	14
\$25,000 - \$29,999	653	10.1	7	11
\$30,000 - \$34,999	568	8.8	12	20
\$35,000 - \$39,999	439	6.8	4	6
\$40,000 - \$49,999	748	11.6	9	14
\$50,000 - \$79,999	822	12.7	4	6
\$80,000 - \$99,999	116	1.8	1	2
\$100,000 - \$149,999	93	1.4	0	0
\$150,000 - \$199,999	11	0.2	0	0
\$200,000 or More	13	0.2	0	0
Median Value	\$26,700		\$28,929	

Source: U. S. Census of Population and Housing, 1980.

TABLE 8  
CONTRACT RENT OF SPECIFIED UNITS, 1980

	ACCOMACK COUNTY		KELLER	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Less than \$50	632	32.5	1	8
\$50 to \$99	627	32.2	5	43
\$100 to \$119	193	9.9	0	0
\$120 to \$139	164	8.4	1	8
\$140 to \$149	46	2.4	0	0
\$150 to \$159	97	5.0	3	25
\$160 to \$169	20	1.0	1	8
\$170 to \$199	60	3.1	0	0
\$200 to \$249	72	3.7	0	0
\$250 or more	34	1.7	0	0
No Contract Rent	559	N/A	1	8
Median Contract Rent		\$77		\$95

1: Based on units with contract rent.

Source: U. S. Census Population and Housing, 1980.

## Economic Characteristics

In order to gain an effective understanding of Keller and its residents, the following section explores the economic characteristics of the Town. Included in this section are discussions regarding employment, income and the economic activity within the Town.

Employment. Keller, in the 1980's, is basically a white collar residential community. Leading categories of employment, by type of industry, for Keller residents are retail trade and professional services. Each of these industry categories account for approximately 17 percent and 20 percent of the working residents (see Table 9) for a total of 37 percent. These category percentages are higher than those for Accomack County where manufacturing represents the leading source of employment (25 percent). Only 7 percent of Keller's residents make their living in the manufacturing industry.

Table 10 indicates employment by type of occupation for the county and Town residents. A significantly higher percentage of Town residents are employed in managerial and professional specialty occupations (22 percent) and service occupations (21 percent) than county residents (13 percent and 12 percent respectively). Approximately the same percentage of Town and county residents are employed in the technical, sales and administrative support positions (24 percent). However, a higher percentage of county residents make their living as operators, fabricators, and laborers than county residents, and fewer are occupied in farming, forestry and fishing positions.

An analysis of the labor force aged 16 or older can be found in Table 11. Approximately 58 percent of the population 16 or older is in the labor force, just slightly higher than the percentage of county residents. Town labor is roughly equivalent to the county labor force in terms of population percentages by sex and race.

Income. Table 12 indicates household income for 1979. According to Table 12, 52 percent of Town residents earned less than \$10,000 in 1979, while 46 percent of the county's residents earned less than \$10,000 in 1979. Per capita money income estimates by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census indicate that the per capita money income for Keller residents in 1985 was \$7,038. This figure was below the estimated per capital income level for the county which was \$11,894 in 1985.

Economic Activity. The principal area of economic activity in Keller is along U.S. Route 13. Business activity extends the length of the Town's highway corridor. Business activity is currently limited to U.S. Route 13. However, business are

beginning to occur in residential areas of the Town. .

Summary. Keller is a white collar bedroom community. The majority of residents work in retail trade and professional services. Approximately 58 percent of the residents 16 and older are in the work force. Approximately 52 percent of the residents earned less than \$10,000 in 1979. Estimates of per capital income for 1983 indicate that at \$5,930 the per capita income of residents is below the county level of \$9,233. Economic activity within the Town is currently limited to U.S. Route 13.

TABLE 9  
EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY, 1980

	ACCOMACK COUNTY		KELLER	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Mining	1,489	11.8%	9	11%
Construction	698	5.5%	8	10%
Manufacturing	3,212	25.5%	6	7%
Transportation, Communi- cation, Public Utilities	771	6.1%	2	2%
Wholesale Trade	849	6.7%	0	0%
Retail Trade	1,848	14.6%	14	17%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	343	2.7%	0	0%
Business and Repair Services	293	2.3%	10	12%
Personal, Entertainment, and Recreational Services	651	5.2%	8	10%
Professional Services	1,685	13.3%	15	20%
Public Administration	780	6.2%	9	11%

Source: U. S. Census of Population and Housing, 1980.

TABLE 10  
EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION, 1980

	ACCOMACK COUNTY		KELLER	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Managerial and Professional Specialty Occupations	1,737	13.8%	18	22%
Technical, Sales and Administrative Support	2,995	23.8%	20	24%
Service Occupations	1,601	12.7%	17	21%
Farming, Forestry, and Fishing Occupations	1,261	10.0%	4	5%
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair Occupations	1,479	11.7%	10	12%
Operators, Fabricators, and Laborers	3,516	27.9%	13	16%

Source: U. S. Census of Population and Housing, 1980.

TABLE 11  
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE STATISTICS  
PERSONS 16 AND OLDER, 1980

	<u>Accomack County</u>	<u>Keller</u>
Population 16 and Older	23,977	160
In Labor Force	13,758	90
% of Population 16	57.3%	58%
Male	7,642	47
% of Labor Force	55.5%	52%
Female	6,116	43
% of Labor Force	44.6%	48%
White	8,853	69
% of Labor Force	64.3%	77%
Non-White	4,905	N/A
% of Labor Force	35.7%	N/A

Source: U. S. Census of Population and Housing.



Table 12  
HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1979

	<u>Accomack County</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Keller</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Less than \$2,500-\$7,499	\$ 3,771	34%	27	32%
\$7,500-\$9,999	1,350	12%	17	20%
\$10,000-\$12,499	1,075	9%	4	5%
\$12,500-\$24,999	3,314	28%	21	26%
\$25,000-\$29,999	662	6%	10	12%
\$30,000-\$39,999	519	5%	4	4%
\$40,000-\$75,000 or more	630	6%	1	1%

### Transportation

Transportation problems that exist within the Town basically concern intersections where due to construction and/or vegetation sight lines are poor. These intersections are indicated on Map 4. Three intersections have been identified as problems. Labeled as A, B, and C. Intersection A is the intersection of Lee Street and Route 620, the triangle shape of the intersection creates poor sight lines. Intersection B is the intersection of Route 620 and Route 180, vegetation along the western border of this intersection creates poor sight lines. Intersection C is at the intersection of U.S. Route 13 and First Street, Crestar Bank's Sign creates poor sight lines. Proper setbacks from streets can reduce the problems caused by poor sight lines in the future.

INSERT MAP 4

Community Facilities

Solid Waste. Keller currently contacts with Shore Disposal for solid waste pick-up. Solid waste pick-up is currently on Tuesday.

Public Safety. Keller does not have its own police department. Police protection is provided by the County Sheriff Department and the State Police.

Fire protection is provided by the Melfa Volunteer Fire & Rescue Co. The volunteer fire & rescue also respond to calls from Keller.

### Existing Land Use

A land use survey for the Town of Keller was completed in 1988 in order to gain an accurate picture of Keller's land use pattern. Contained within the existing land use section is first a description of the methodology by which the survey was conducted and second the results of the survey in the form of both map (Map 5) and an analytical written description.

Using the existing land use as a base, future land use that would best promote and improve the economic and social fabric of Keller will be recommended.

Methodology. A survey of all existing land uses within the Town of Keller was completed utilizing a combination of two methods. The first step involved an examination of each parcel by traveling all of the existing streets in Town. Present land use was classified into one of five general categories: residential, commercial, institutional, agricultural, or vacant. Residential uses consisted of structures used by one or more individuals as a dwelling. This included single-family homes, duplexes, and apartments. Commercial land uses included structures primarily used as a place of business of any type. Public and semi-public uses include churches, cemeteries, registered historic sites, schools, Town-owned land, and other land owned by non-profit organizations, such as fire companies. These parcels generally are not taxed as a result of ownership.

Agricultural parcels include those presently under cultivation, or at the time of survey, appeared to have been cultivated in the past. Vacant land is characterized by forest areas or parcels without a structure not being utilized for agricultural purposes.

These field notes were then compared to ownership records as they appeared on the Accomack County tax records. These records were particularly important in determining distinctions between vacant and residential classifications. The visual survey revealed that in some instances there were lots without structures on them that were landscaped, mowed, or generally maintained. While technically "vacant", the tax records revealed that these lots were often mowed by the adjacent homeowner. If such ownership was found to exist, the lot was classified residential, not vacant. Many homeowners desire these adjacent lots because they extend yard space, add to the attractiveness of the home, and serve as a buffer from other properties.

In some instances, lots were found that had no structure, but were being maintained. As indicated by mowing and general upkeep. If these lots were not owned by a contiguous landowner, they were considered to be vacant. Vacant parcels are important because they represent land with that most potential for future development.

INSERT MAP 5

Land Use Analysis. After the land use classifications were finalized, the information was transferred to a map of the Town. Map 5 presents the various land uses by category, on a parcel by parcel basis, as they appeared during the summer months of 1988. Map 5 was constructed to scale using the official tax map utilized by the Town and Accomack County. Land uses, streets, as well as the subdivision of land are represented on the map.

Once the information was mapped, a planimeter was used to determine the acreage of each category of land use. The results of these measurements are given below:

<u>Land Use Category</u>	<u>Approximate Acreage</u>	<u>Percentage of Town Acreage</u>
Residential	38.0	22.0%
Commercial	5.0	2.7%
Agricultural	83.0	48.0%
Institutional	.57	0.3%
Vacant	<u>46.0</u>	<u>27.0%</u>
Total	172.57	100%

Dominant land use in Keller is agricultural. Agriculture land use in Keller comprises approximately 48 percent of the total acreage within the Town limits. Vacant land comprises the second leading land use category, containing approximately 27 percent of the total acreage. Residential land use comprises the third leading land use category with the Town limits. Agriculture, vacant and residential land uses comprise approximately 97 percent of the total land use within the Town. Commercial, public and semi-public uses comprise the remaining 3 percent of the Town's land's area.

Vacant parcels and those in agricultural use, represent prime areas for future development. As growth pressures occur in the future, these areas should represent the most affordable and marketable spots for residential and commercial uses. Approximately 129 acres, or 75 percent of the Town's acreage, falls within these categories.

Map 6 depicts all of the vacant and agricultural parcels within the Town. As the map indicates, there are scattered, relatively small areas as well as several larger tracts. Small, isolated parcels represent areas where residential infill is likely to occur. Parcels surrounded by single-family homes and future development should follow the same pattern. Largest agricultural parcels are on the north end of the Town with approximately 44 acres between them. In addition, several parcels exist in the southern end of the Town.

### NEEDS SUMMARY

The following needs and concerns have been identified as a result of the analysis presented in the preceding sections.

#### Natural Resources

Concern: Areas of the Town experience flooding during rains due the lack of maintenance to existing drainage ditches.

Need: Current drainage ditches need to be maintained and a maintenance plan should be established to ensure future maintenance of the drainage ditches.

Concern: The Town currently lacks an established Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.

Need: The Town needs to develop and adopt an Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.

#### Housing

Concern: According to the 1980 Census 19% of the owner occupied housing units and 31% of the renter occupied housing units in Keller lacked complete plumbing

Need: The Town needs to develop a housing plan to address the substandard housing units in Town.

Concern: The use of mobile homes on single-family lots is of concern to the Town. In order to address this problem the Town adopted an ordinance limiting the location of mobile homes in the Town.

Need: The mobile home ordinance should be incorporated into the Keller Future Land Use Map and in the Keller Zoning Ordinance.

Concern: The Town is concerned that the conversion of single-family housing units to multi-family units will create negative effects on the existing single-family neighborhoods.

Need: In the Future Land Use Map the Town needs to designate areas where multi-family units are compatible with existing neighborhoods. Multi-family units in single-family neighborhoods will be limited to 30% of the total floor area in owner-occupied units.

Concern: Group homes are not compatible within single-family neighborhoods in the Town.



Need: Group homes require special review by the Town before being allowed within the Town.

#### Economy

Concern: Keller has seen some expansion of business in residential areas. Further expansion of business in the residential areas of Keller is undesirable.

Need: Designate areas for commercial and residential uses on the Future Land Use Map and through the Zoning Ordinance limit further business use in residential areas.

Concern: Signs along U.S. Route 13 have not been regulated as to size and density in the past. At least one sign on U.S. Route 13 causes sight problems.

Need: To develop within the Zoning Ordinance a means to regulate the size and density of signs in Keller.

#### Transportation

Concern: Sight lines at three intersections currently cause traffic problems.

Need: In the Zoning Ordinance set backs need to be established to reduce and eliminate the problem of sight lines at intersections within the Town.

### III. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this chapter is to articulate the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan. Goals and objectives are general policy statements which reveal planning ideas and concepts concerning future growth and development in the Town of Keller.

Goals provide statements of the general long range direction for future growth and development. Objectives provide specific policies and principles necessary to achieve the stated goals.

These goals and objectives are based on observations in Chapter II, Inventory and Analysis. They also provide the background for Chapter IV, Plans and Action Programs.

#### Overall Goal and Objective of the Comprehensive Plan

##### Goal

The overall goal of the Town of Keller Comprehensive Plan is to protect the public health, safety and welfare by encouraging orderly and coordinated development of the Town's resources.

##### Objective

This goal is accomplished by arranging land uses so that traffic hazards are minimized, pollution of land, water and air is prevented, and efficient provision of public services at minimum cost is promoted. Orderly and coordinated development is also accomplished by planning for a system of transportation and community facilities to accommodate economic and population growth.

#### Natural Resources

##### Goals

1. To improve drainage within Keller.
2. To conserve and protect Keller's natural resources.

##### Objectives

1. Develop a program to improve the existing drainage ditches and establish a capital improvements program to insure that future maintenance occurs.

2. Continue to develop and enforce ordinances and standards designed to minimize environmental impacts of development on Keller's natural resources. Attention should be given to drainage, water pollution, and erosion.

#### Recreation Development

##### Goal

1. To promote the public health of residents.
2. To enhance the aesthetic appeal of Keller.
3. To stimulate commercial activity through tourism.
4. To stimulate intellectual growth and public education through promotion of cultural activities and the arts.

##### Objectives

1. Initiate efforts to establish recreation facilities within Keller.
2. Promote tourism activities within Keller.

#### Residential Development

##### Goal

1. To eliminate substandard housing in Keller.
2. To promote and conserve the existing character of Keller's single-family residential neighborhoods.
3. To stimulate a variety of quality housing types.
4. To ensure equal housing opportunity for all races.

##### Objective

1. Initiate efforts to develop funding sources to improve the substandard housing in Keller.
2. Include within the Town zoning ordinance revisions to insure that adequate buffers are present to protect the character of existing neighborhoods from intrusions by adjacent land uses.
3. Prevent development from occurring within a neighborhood that is not compatible with its existing character.
4. Encourage innovative residential development techniques, such as Town houses, garden style apartments and other forms of

cluster housing development to occur where appropriate.

5. Stimulate rehabilitation of existing structures capable of saving.

#### Economic Development

##### Goal

1. Promote economic development activities in Keller.
2. Promote the use of U.S. Route 13 for commercial use in Keller.
3. Promote attractive and convenient commercial concentrations.

##### Objectives

1. Commercial activity located in Keller should include landscaping designed to promote and maintain the attractiveness of the Town.
2. Include the area along U.S. Route 13 as commercial\business in the Keller zoning ordinance.
3. Include setbacks, density and size requirements for signs and billboards located in Keller.
4. Maintain a policy of supporting positive economic activities in Accomack County that would have positive effect on Keller.

#### Community Facilities

##### Goal

1. To promote the development of community facilities in the Town such as, improved drainage, sidewalks, central water, central sewer, recreation facilities and other facilities that would improve the quality of life for Town residents.

##### Objective

1. Maintain contact with local, state and federal agencies concerning funding opportunities.

#### Transportation Development

##### Goal

1. To provide efficient vehicular movement that is compatible with adjoining land use.

2. To provide necessary transportation to meet economic development and human resource needs.

Objective

1. To install and maintain necessary traffic controls, signs, signals, street signs and parking facilities.
2. To perform the necessary improvement and maintenance of streets.

#### IV. PLANS AND ACTIONS PROGRAMS

Keller's existing resources, needs and concerns were described in detail in Chapter II. Keller must now develop specific plans and courses of action for the future. This section provides plans and action programs designed to meet the objectives set forth by the goals and objectives outlined in Chapter III. The purpose of this section is to provide development guidelines and proposed future land uses that are designed to insure that future growth takes place in a coordinated and compatible manner.

Many, but not all, of the issues, needs and concerns identified in chapter II are addressed here. Availability of resources, degree of local factors were considered in an attempt to develop a realistic program for Keller.

Town citizens should bear in mind that even the most realistic or conservative, plans may not be fully implemented as intended, for any number of reasons. Therefore, the recommendations outlined in this plan should be viewed as targets, not as firm commitments or mandates. If desired results are not achieved, an evaluation should be conducted to determine the reasons so the Town can decide whether to continue to pursue the original objective or to modify it.

##### Future Land Use Plan

The future land use plan for the Town of Keller is basically concerned with the location, intensity, and amount of land development required for the various space using functions of Town life. The land use plan embodies a proposal as to how land should be used as expansion and renewal proceed in the future. The plan is based in principle upon the goals and objectives presented in Chapter III. An illustrated presentation of the plan is found in Map 6 the Future Land Use Map. The concept of the future land use plan is to promote the single-family residential character of the Town, while providing land for a variety of housing types and a mixture of compatible business. The following is a narrative description of the plan as it is illustrated in Map 6.

There are three residential categories of land use represented in the future land use plan: low density, medium density and business residential mixed use district. Each is distinguished by the uses allowed and by the density of dwellings units per acre of land that would be allowed in the corresponding category.

The area represented in Map 6 by the R-1 designation is low density residential development. The primary use in this district

5

INSERT MAP 6

would be for residential single-family dwelling units. Secondary uses allowed would include accessory use apartments, limited to a percentage the total dwelling units floor area, and parks and playgrounds. Uses not compatible with the primary use would not be allowed. The recommended density for new dwelling units is between 2 and 4 dwelling units per acre or lot sizes between 12,000 and 20,000 square feet.

The area represented in Map 6 by the R-2 designation is for medium density residential development. The primary uses for the district would be for residential single-family and two-family dwelling units. Secondary uses that would be allowed include multi-family units, group homes, home occupations, neighborhood parks, day care centers, mobile homes. The recommended density for new development is 3 to 5 dwelling units per acre or lot sizes between 10,000 and 15,000 square feet for single-family dwelling units and 10 to 15 units per acre for multi-family units.

The area represented in Map 6 by the B-R-Mixed designation is for a mix of business and residential uses. The primary use for the district would include single-family dwelling units, multi-family units, home occupations, and business uses that would be compatible with residential development. The recommended density for new development is between 3 to 5 dwelling units per acre for single-family units and 10 to 15 units per acre for multi-family units.

Two business districts are represented by B-1 and B-2 designations on Map 6. The B-1 district is recommended for the western side of U.S. Route 13. The primary uses in the B-1 district include offices, banks, automobile sales and service and electronic sales and service. The purpose of the district is to maintain and promote the existing business in Keller. The B-2 district is recommended for the eastern side of U.S. Route 13. The primary uses in the B-2 district include warehouses and light industry. The purpose of the district is utilize existing structures and the rail road to improve the economic standing of the Town.

#### Proposed Action

1. Development of a zoning ordinance to implement the future land use plan.
2. Development of a subdivision ordinance to regulate the division of land within Keller.

#### Natural Resources Plan

Keller contains several areas in Town that are affected by flooding during heavy rains. Due to the low priority of drainage



projects the Town or the residents affected by flooding will be responsible funding the drainage improvements. To insure that drainage maintenance is continued in the future a drainage maintenance fund should be establish to pay for future work.

#### Proposed Action

1. The Town should work with the Soil Conservation Service District Office to establish the method and procedures to improve drainage within the Town.
2. Development of a Storm Water Management Ordinance as part of the Keller Town Zoning Ordinance.

#### Residential Development Plan

The majority of the residential structures in Keller are single-family houses that are in good condition. A change in the character of housing units in Keller is evident with the conversion of single-family home lots for mobile home, multi-family and group home use. The conversion of single-family structures should be limited to the areas indicated on the Future Land Use Map.

Substandard housing conditions, such as overcrowding, lack of plumbing, and general deterioration, occur throughout the Town, but are most prevalent in the northeast portion of the developed area. Those least able to combat such conditions-non-whites, the elderly and renters - are most affected. A housing rehabilitation is needed to remove unsafe and unsanitary conditions, prevent substandard houses from becoming completely unserviceable, and prevent marginally standard houses from becoming substandard. Based upon the 1980 Census and the 1988 housing survey, minimum of 13 units should be targeted for rehabilitation.

1. Development of a Keller Zoning Ordinance which identifies the area of Town most suited to different housing types.
2. The Town of Keller should request assistance of the Accomack-Northampton Housing Corporation in locating funding sources and the preparation of a housing rehabilitation grant applications.

#### Transportation Plan

The Keller Planning Commission should initiate a Transportation and Parking Plan for the Town. This plan should analyze vehicular traffic flow and street capacity, assess the need for traffic control signs, signals and street signs, assess existing parking facilities and determine future needs, analyze pedestrian traffic and review needs for sidewalks and crosswalks, review needs for non-automobile forms of transportation, such as bicycles and

buses. A technical advisory committee composed of representatives from the Highway Department, the Town Council, and the Planning Commission could be formed to advise the Planning Commission.

Proposed Action

1. Following adequate analysis, necessary streets, sidewalks, traffic control signs and signals, street signs and parking facilities should be installed.

Recreation Facilities Plan

The Town of Keller currently contains no recreation facilities. In order to improve the quality of life to the residents of Keller the Town should examine the feasibility of developing a small 1/4 acre or larger neighborhood park. Facilities might include playground, horseshoe court, basketball court picnic facilities. Assistance in the design of the park may be provided by the Department of Conservation and Historic Resources Division of Parks and Recreation.

Proposed Action

1. Keller should examine the feasibility of developing a neighborhood park within the Town.

## V. ACTION AGENDA

This Comprehensive Plan has identified needs that either require action by the Planning Commission and Town Council to implement solutions or require future study. Since the Town officials have limited time and resources to work with, it is necessary to set priorities on the actions proposed by this plan.

The following agenda sets the work priorities of the Keller Planning Commission and Town Council as they work to implement the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan. (Priority A is the highest priority):

### Priority A

- Zoning Ordinance
- Subdivision Ordinance

### Priority B

- Housing Plan
- Transportation Plan

### Priority C

- Recreation Plan

It should be the goal of the Town of Keller to complete the items listed in this Action Agenda within the next five years, at which time the Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed and revised as necessary.

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