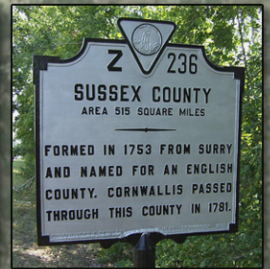
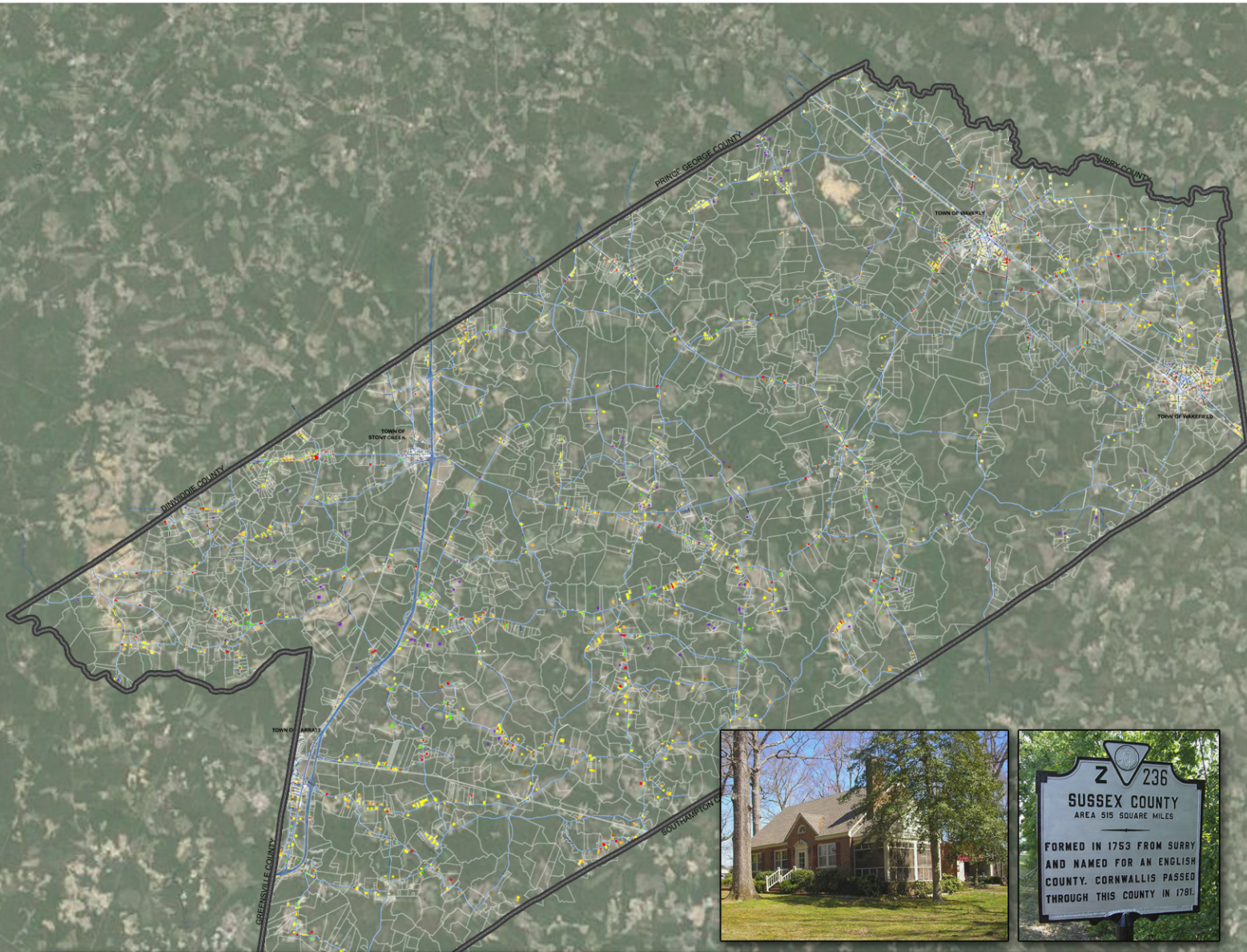


Countywide Housing Conditions Assessment

Sussex County, Virginia



JULY 1, 2013

Assistance Provided by:

COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERS, INC.
Community Development • Planning • Economic Development



NEIGHBORHOOD NEEDS ASSESSMENT

SUSSEX COUNTY

July 2013

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Sussex County has a vested interest in understanding and quantifying the condition of its housing and neighborhoods. Healthy, stable neighborhoods provide a solid foundation for a healthy, vibrant county. The County has undertaken a comprehensive community-wide survey of housing and infrastructure conditions throughout Sussex to determine the extent of deficiencies at the neighborhood level. The purpose of the study is twofold: 1) identify those neighborhoods that have the highest levels of deficiencies and, 2) develop a plan to rehabilitate those housing units and improve neighborhood infrastructure.

The County of Sussex applied for and received a needs assessment planning grant from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in February 2011. The County was tasked with making visual assessments of housing units utilizing a five-point scale. The scale rated each property as 1) sound; 2) minor deficiencies; 3) intermediate deficiencies; 4) major deficiencies; or 5) dilapidated. The ratings were translated onto a color-coded map for each neighborhood to reveal concentrations of blighted housing. Community Planning Partners assisted the County with the assessment and implementation of the planning grant. Infrastructure assessments were conducted by Community Planning Partners and county staff.

PURPOSE AND INTENT

The Sussex County Housing Department, with the support of the Sussex County Board of Supervisors, has an interest and need to understand and quantify the current state of housing in the county. Substandard housing can lead to other problems throughout the community such as health issues, resident safety, property values, and other quality of life factors. Concentrations of deficient neighborhood conditions can have a downward effect on the entire community and it is in the interest of County leadership to address those concentrated areas of substandard housing and prevent other neighborhoods from transitioning to that state.

The County has utilized the information gathered during the needs assessment to quantify the approximate number of substandard housing units and identify those areas where concentrations of substandard housing units exist. This information has been used, in part, to identify project areas that are potentially eligible for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) assistance. The Neighborhood Needs Assessment Management Team has prioritized those areas with the highest concentrations of substandard housing units and other neighborhood deficiencies so that the County can address those areas in an orderly fashion. Other strategies will be utilized by the County to address scattered site issues.

METHODOLOGY

The County contracted with Community Planning Partners, Inc., (CPP) a community development consulting firm based in Richmond, Virginia, to conduct a housing conditions assessment of every residential structure in Sussex County. The assessments conducted by CPP were based on visual observations of residential building exteriors from the public right-of-way based on a set of defined condition ratings. Exterior conditions were assumed to represent the overall condition of the structure since detailed inspections were not feasible. The condition ratings utilized in the assessment were:

Sound Condition

Buildings in solid structural condition and appearance are considered sound. Aesthetic appearance is not included as rating criteria unless the appearance of the structure has an adverse effect on surrounding businesses. Signage is in good condition but may not be the most appropriate design and minor cosmetic improvements may be warranted.

Minor Deficiencies

Buildings with minor deficiencies are characterized by such conditions as peeling paint, faded awnings, deficient railings, poor signage, etc.

Intermediate Deficiencies

Deficient windows and doors, damaged awnings, missing paint, failing mortar, poor exterior lighting, etc. are all conditions warranting a rating of intermediate deficiencies.

Major Deficiencies

Buildings with major deficiencies exhibit broken windows, severe paint loss, lack of handicapped access, awning failure, etc.

Dilapidated

Buildings with structural damage, lack of paint, missing windows/doors, lack of safety devices such as railings and overall deterioration are considered dilapidated and in need of the most rehabilitation assistance.

The condition assessment categories were based on the amount of CDBG funds available per unit for rehabilitating each property up to DHCD's Housing Quality Standards. If a property appeared to exceed the \$30,000 cap on CDBG funds, the house was coded as 'dilapidated' and may require leverage funds to complete the housing rehabilitation.

POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

A demographic analysis of the existing Sussex County Housing Market provides insight into the current state of housing in the county. Demographic factors are directly applicable to the eligibility of CDBG funding in the future (primarily household income), yet other demographic characteristics provide insight into the existing conditions of Sussex County and how those conditions may affect housing.

Population

The population of Sussex County declined slightly between 2000 and 2010 from 12,504 to 12,087 (-.03%). Beyond the 2010 census count, the American Community Survey estimates a further net decrease in population between 2010 and 2012. The County had an estimated net loss of 132 residents over this time period; 63 by natural means (births and deaths) and 70 by out-migration. The overall population change is stagnant with a marginal decline.

Age

The median age in the county rose from 37.6 years in 2000 to 40.6 years in 2010. The largest shifts were a reduction in children (14 years and younger) and adults aged 25-44. Older working-age adults (45-59) represent the largest increase. These adults are still working-age but over the next decade many will retire and could be faced with a difficult housing market if the total population of working-age adults has shrunk. Also, these households may also have difficulty maintaining homes as they grow older.

Table 1: Sussex County Age Distribution, 2000-2010

Age	2000	2010	Dif.
5 to 9 years	713	554	-159
10 to 14 years	731	556	-175
15 to 19 years	684	656	-28
20 to 24 years	874	885	11
25 to 34 years	2054	1937	-117
35 to 44 years	2242	1719	-523
45 to 54 years	1802	1915	113
55 to 59 years	1153	1589	436
65 to 74 years	889	973	84
75 to 84 years	575	581	6
85 years and over	211	198	-13

Source 1: US Census, 2010

Income

Household income estimates are gathered by the American Community Survey by averaging statistical samples over a 5-year span. Two separate estimates, 2005-2009 and 2007-2011 are compared. This comparison shows an increase in overall household incomes. Average household income for owner-occupied households grew quickly while renter-occupied household incomes shrunk.

Table 2: Average Household Income – Sussex County

	2005-2009	2007-2011	% Change
Total	\$ 37,492	\$ 40,088	7%
Owner occupied	\$ 43,131	\$ 48,004	11%
Renter occupied	\$ 31,142	\$ 30,685	-1%

Source 2: American Community Survey, 2005-2011

Housing Cost

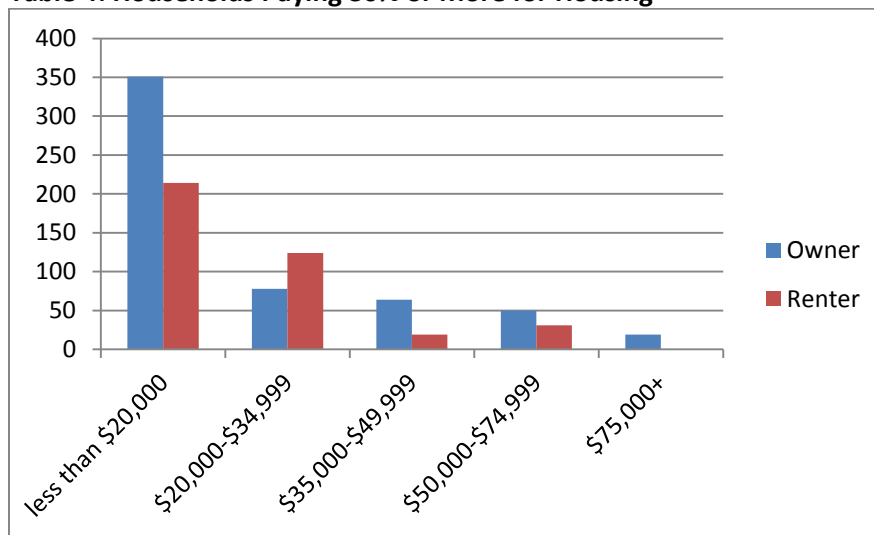
Annual incomes for homeowners and renters are lower in Sussex than median incomes for the entire Richmond MSA. However, the cost of housing is also lower and housing is more affordable in the County compared to the overall MSA.

Table 3: Housing Cost

	Sussex County		Richmond MSA	
	Median Income	Housing Cost	Median Income	Housing Cost
Owner	\$48,004	13%	\$74,696	21%
Renter	\$30,685	26%	\$ 34,814	32%

Source 3: American Community Survey, 2005-2011

The average household pays less than 30% of their income for housing in Sussex County. However, there are still some households for which housing is unaffordable¹. Table 4 shows that households that spend more than 30% of their income for housing are most commonly owner-occupied households with annual incomes of less than \$20,000/year. It is unlikely that households with incomes under \$20,000/year are newer homeowners. A more likely scenario is that low-income homeowners reside in homes that they have inherited or are retired homeowners on fixed incomes. In contrast, there are few households with incomes above \$35,000 that are paying more than 30% of their income for housing.

Table 4: Households Paying 30% or More for Housing

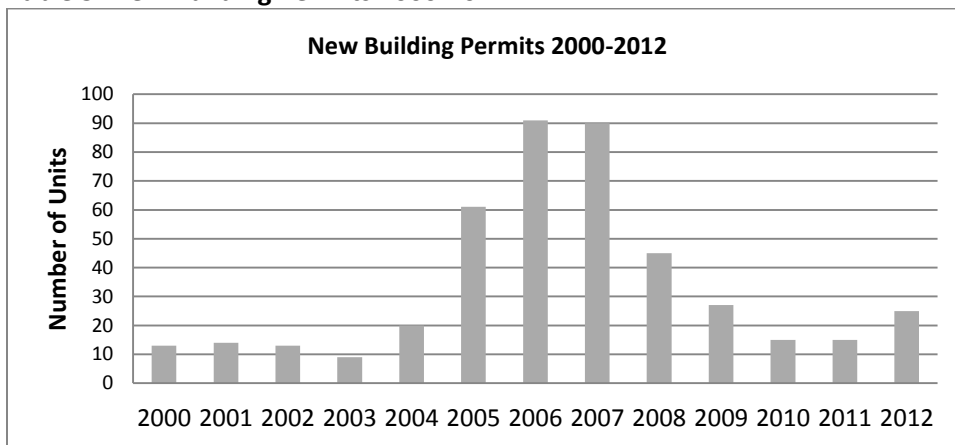
Source 4: American Community Survey, 2005-2011

¹ Housing Unaffordability is defined as monthly housing costs that exceed 30% of monthly income.

Residential Housing Units

Between 2000-2010 there were 398 building permits for new single-family detached houses. Annual building permit totals have ranged in the teens and twenties with the exception of a three year spike from 2005-2008, which hit a maximum of 91 permits in 2006. This spike reflects national economic trends. In 2012, the number of building permits rose for the first time since 2005 but it is too early tell whether this will become a trend.

Table 5: New Building Permits 2000-2012



Source 5: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, 2013

Despite 398 new building permits between 2000 and 2010, the total number of housing units only grew by 43 since that time. This difference suggests that housing units have been demolished over this time period. In addition to demolition, there was also an increase in vacant housing units from 527 to 702.

Table 6: Housing Occupancy

OCCUPANCY STATUS	2000	2010	Diff.
Total housing units	4,653	4,696	43
Occ. housing units	4,126	3,994	-132
Vacant housing units	527	702	175

For this narrative, "the towns" refers to the four census-designated places within Sussex County: the towns of Jarratt, Stony Creek, Waverly, and Wakefield.

The total number of housing units in Sussex County is 4,686; 40% of these housing units are located within the towns of Jarratt, Stony Creek, Waverly and Wakefield. Seventy percent of the housing units in Sussex County are single family detached houses. Stony Creek's housing stock consists almost entirely of single family detached homes. Mobile homes comprise of 22% of Sussex County's housing stock. Eighty percent of Sussex County's mobile homes are located outside of the towns' boundaries while Wakefield and Waverly have the largest number of in-town mobile home housing units. Fourteen percent of Waverly's housing units and 11% of Wakefield's housing units are mobile homes.

The housing in Sussex County was built steadily throughout the last century. Twenty-one percent of housing units were built before 1949, 30% were built between 1950 and 1969, another 30% were built between 1970 and 1989, 16% were built between 1990 and 2004, and only 3% were built since 2005. The majority of housing units (84%) built after 2000 are outside of the towns' boundaries. Of all the towns, Wakefield has the oldest housing stock, with 30% of housing units built before 1939.

The median value of owner-occupied housing units in Sussex County is \$122,400, which is half of Virginia's median value (\$243,100) of owner-occupied housing units. Stony Creek and Wakefield have a higher median value at \$136,600 and \$133,300 respectively. Jarratt's median value for owner-occupied housing units is \$102,800, with 47% of housing units valued under \$99,999. Waverly has the lowest median value for owner-occupied housing units at \$92,500, with 17% of housing units having a value of less than \$50,000.

Table 7: Physical Characteristics of Housing and Housing Value

	Sussex County		Jarratt		Stony Creek		Wakefield		Waverly	
Total Housing Units	4686		324		117		449		1052	
Units in Structure										
1-unit, detached	3331	70.7%	270	83.3%	114	97.4%	387	86.2%	753	71.6%
1-unit, attached	33	0.7%	8	2.5%	3	2.6%	2	0.4%	9	0.9%
2 units	79	1.7%	7	2.2%	0	0.0%	10	2.2%	61	5.8%
3 or 4 units	42	0.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	33	3.1%
5 – 9 units	108	2.3%	7	2.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	31	2.9%
10 – 19 units	34	0.7%	1	0.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	21	2.0%
20 or more units	13	0.3%	13	4.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Mobile home	1063	22.7%	18	5.6%	0	0.0%	50	11.1%	144	13.7%
Year Structure Built										
Built 2005 or later	134	2.9%	22	6.8%	0	0.0%	6	1.3%	5	0.5%
Built 2000 to 2004	210	4.5%	10	3.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	12	1.1%
Built 1990 to 1999	540	11.5%	51	15.7%	0	0.0%	17	3.8%	136	12.9%
Built 1980 to 1989	420	9.0%	28	8.6%	2	1.7%	27	6.0%	70	6.7%
Built 1970 to 1979	1003	21.4%	20	6.2%	8	6.8%	51	11.4%	198	18.8%
Built 1960 to 1969	733	15.6%	30	9.3%	10	8.5%	117	26.1%	163	15.5%
Built 1950 to 1959	702	15.0%	90	27.8%	30	25.6%	77	17.1%	312	29.7%
Built 1940 to 1949	269	5.7%	46	14.2%	9	7.7%	19	4.2%	65	6.2%
Built 1939 or earlier	675	14.4%	27	8.3%	58	49.6%	135	30.1%	91	8.7%
Owner Occupied Units	2,315		198		63		228		534	
Value of Owner-Occupied Units										
Less than \$50,000	317	13.7%	10	5.1%	2	3.2%	16	7.0%	93	17.4%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	507	21.9%	83	41.9%	14	22.2%	72	31.6%	207	38.8%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	567	24.5%	57	28.8%	23	36.5%	36	15.8%	129	24.2%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	378	16.3%	15	7.6%	16	25.4%	45	19.7%	45	8.4%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	298	12.9%	24	12.1%	7	11.1%	37	16.2%	39	7.3%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	183	7.9%	9	4.5%	1	1.6%	9	3.9%	21	3.9%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	65	2.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	13	5.7%	0	0.0%
\$1,000,000 or more	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Median (dollars)	122,400		102,800		136,600		133,300		92,500	

Source 6: American Community Survey 2011, 5-Year Estimates

Owners occupy 64% of the housing stock in Sussex County. Wakefield has the highest number of owner-occupied homes at 73%, while Jarratt, Stony Creek and Waverly have a lower owner-occupancy rate than county as a whole. Waverly has the lowest rate of owner-occupancy at 57%.

Twenty-three percent of housing units in Sussex County are vacant. Wakefield is the only town with a higher vacancy rate than the county, with 31% of its housing units vacant. Eighteen percent of Stony Creek's, 12% of Waverly's, and 11% of Jarratt's housing units are vacant. Vacancy primarily occurs in rental units rather than homeowner units, with one-quarter of rental units vacant in Sussex County. Less than 1% of homeowner units are vacant in Sussex County. Wakefield has the highest rental vacancy with

41% of the town's rental housing stock vacant. Additionally, 4% of Wakefield's homeowner units are vacant. Twenty percent of Stony Creek's, 17% of Waverly's, and 11% of Jarratt's rental units are vacant.

Table 8: Housing Occupancy

	Sussex County		Jarratt		Stony Creek		Wakefield		Waverly	
Total Housing Units	4,686		324		117		449		1052	
Occupied	3,600	76.8%	287	88.6%	96	82.1%	311	69.3%	930	88.4%
Owner-Occupied	2,315	64.3%	198	69.0%	63	65.6%	228	73.3%	534	57.4%
Renter-Occupied	1,285	35.7%	89	31.0%	33	34.4%	83	26.7%	396	42.6%
Vacant	1,086	23.2%	37	11.4%	21	17.9%	138	30.7%	122	11.6%
Homeowner Vacancy Rate		0.7%		3.9%		0.0%		3.8%		0.0%
Rental Vacancy Rate		25.0%		11.0%		19.5%		40.7%		17.3%

Source 7: American Community Survey 2011 5-Year Estimates

The average household size in Sussex County is 2.8 people. With the exception of Jarratt, all of the towns have a larger average household size compared to Sussex County as a whole. Jarratt's average household size is 2.39 people, Waverly's is 2.82 people, Stony Creek's is 3 people, and Wakefield's is 3.29 people. For Sussex County, the median number of rooms in a house is 5.2. The median number of rooms for housing units located within the towns is 5.3, except in Stony Creek where the median number of rooms is 6. The majority of housing units (86%) in Sussex County contain 2 or 3 bedrooms. Eleven percent of housing units in Sussex County contain more than 4 bedrooms and 3% contain one bedroom or less.

Table 9: Average Household Size and Housing Unit Size

	Sussex County		Jarratt		Stony Creek		Wakefield		Waverly	
Average Household Size	2.80		2.39		3.00		3.29		2.82	
Median Number of Rooms	5.2		5.3		6.0		5.3		5.3	
Total Housing Units	4,686		324		117		449		1,052	
No bedroom	39	0.8%	4	1.2%	0	0.0%	6	1.3%	0	0.0%
1 bedroom	119	2.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.9%	22	4.9%	55	5.2%
2 bedrooms	1,605	34.3%	116	35.8%	32	27.4%	123	27.4%	412	39.2%
3 bedrooms	2,427	51.8%	167	51.5%	71	60.7%	222	49.4%	480	45.6%
4 bedrooms	470	10.0%	33	10.2%	12	10.3%	69	15.4%	105	10.0%
5 or more bedrooms	26	0.6%	4	1.2%	1	0.9%	7	1.6%	0	0.0%

Source 8: American Community Survey 2011 5-Year Estimates

Forty-four percent of homeowners in Sussex County have a mortgage. Jarratt has the highest rate of homeowners who have a mortgage at 62%. Most of Stony Creek's homeowners (71.4%) do not have a mortgage.

Selected monthly costs for owner-occupied units include property costs such as mortgages, property insurance, real estate taxes, utility and fuel bills, and, where appropriate, condominium fees and mobile home costs. Monthly costs are shown separately for units with and without a mortgage.

The median monthly cost for homeowners with a mortgage in Sussex County is \$1,124. Forty percent of Sussex County's homeowners with a mortgage pay less than 20% of their household income to monthly costs and 24% of homeowners with a mortgage pay more than 35% of their household income to monthly costs. Wakefield is the only town with a higher median monthly cost for homeowners with mortgages at \$1,042 and more than a quarter of Wakefield's homeowners with a mortgage pay more than 35% of their household income to monthly costs. Although Waverly has the lowest median

monthly cost at \$957, Waverly has the highest rate of homeowners with a mortgage who pay more than 35% of their household income to monthly costs.

The median monthly cost for homeowners without a mortgage in Sussex County is \$337. Almost 20% of homeowners without a mortgage in Sussex County pay at least 30% of their household income on monthly costs. Similar to Waverly's homeowners with a mortgage, more of Waverly's homeowners without a mortgage pay more than 35% of their household income to monthly cost than any other town in Sussex County or the county as a whole.

Table 10: Monthly Costs for Homeowners

	Sussex County		Jarratt		Stony Creek		Wakefield		Waverly	
Owner-Occupied Units	2,315		198		63		228		534	
Units with a Mortgage	1,018	44.0%	122	61.6%	18	28.6%	92	40.4%	239	44.8%
Selected Monthly Owner Costs										
Less than \$300	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
\$300 to \$499	48	4.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	23	9.6%
\$500 to \$699	167	16.4%	13	10.7%	2	11.1%	4	4.3%	37	15.5%
\$700 to \$999	183	18.0%	38	31.1%	6	33.3%	30	32.6%	81	33.9%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	383	37.6%	48	39.3%	8	44.4%	35	38.0%	60	25.1%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	164	16.1%	23	18.9%	0	0.0%	17	18.5%	21	8.8%
\$2,000 or more	73	7.2%	0	0.0%	2	11.1%	6	6.5%	17	7.1%
Median (dollars)	1,124		1,060		1,042		1,214		957	
Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a % of Household Income										
Less than 20.0 percent	410	40.3%	72	59.0%	12	66.7%	17	18.5%	74	31.4%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	180	17.7%	15	12.3%	2	11.1%	26	28.3%	47	19.7%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	118	11.6%	17	13.9%	0	0.0%	8	8.7%	31	13.0%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	70	6.9%	2	1.6%	3	16.7%	17	18.5%	12	5.0%
35.0 percent or more	240	23.6%	16	13.1%	1	5.6%	24	26.1%	74	31.0%
Not computed	0		0		0		0		0	
Units without a Mortgage	1,297	56.0%	76	38.4%	45	71.4%	136	59.6%	295	55.2%
Selected Monthly Owner Costs										
Less than \$100	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
\$100 to \$199	149	11.5%	7	9.2%	1	2.2%	13	9.6%	79	26.8%
\$200 to \$299	427	32.9%	18	23.7%	15	33.3%	22	16.2%	64	21.7%
\$300 to \$399	184	14.2%	26	34.2%	16	35.6%	42	30.9%	43	14.6%
\$400 or more	537	41.4%	25	32.9%	13	28.9%	59	43.4%	109	36.9%
Median (dollars)	337		331		336		370		312	
Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a % of Household Income										
Less than 10.0 percent	561	43.4%	37	48.7%	20	44.4%	41	30.8%	97	32.9%
10.0 to 14.9 percent	138	10.7%	21	27.6%	2	4.4%	41	30.8%	5	1.7%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	144	11.1%	7	9.2%	7	15.6%	4	3.0%	80	27.1%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	90	7.0%	4	5.3%	0	0.0%	21	15.8%	27	9.2%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	109	8.4%	2	2.6%	14	31.1%	14	10.5%	26	8.8%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	58	4.5%	1	1.3%	1	2.2%	7	5.3%	8	2.7%
35.0 percent or more	194	15.0%	4	5.3%	1	2.2%	5	3.8%	52	17.6%
Not computed	3		0		0		3		0	

Source 9: American Community Survey 2011 5-Year Estimates

Gross rent is the contract rent plus the average monthly cost of utilities and fuels paid by the renter. In every town and the county as a whole, the median cost of gross rent is less than the monthly cost for

homeowners with a mortgage but more than the monthly cost of homeowners without a mortgage. The median gross rent paid by Sussex County renters is \$671.

Table 11: Monthly Costs for Renters

	Sussex County		Jarratt		Stony Creek		Wakefield		Waverly	
Occupied Rental Units	985		56		21		55		356	
Gross Rent										
Less than \$200	18	1.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	18	5.1%
\$200 to \$299	6	0.6%	2	3.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
\$300 to \$499	200	20.3%	2	3.6%	7	33.3%	11	20.0%	64	18.0%
\$500 to \$749	391	39.7%	41	73.2%	10	47.6%	12	21.8%	171	48.0%
\$750 to \$999	203	20.6%	11	19.6%	2	9.5%	26	47.3%	74	20.8%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	119	12.1%	0	0.0%	2	9.5%	6	10.9%	21	5.9%
\$1,500 or more	48	4.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	2.2%
Median (dollars)	671		703		572		818		622	
No rent paid	300		33		12		28		40	
Gross Rent as % of Monthly Costs										
Less than 15.0 percent	71	7.6%	14	28.6%	9	42.9%	4	7.7%	52	14.6%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	179	19.2%	1	2.0%	0	0.0%	9	17.3%	79	22.2%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	142	15.2%	2	4.1%	1	4.8%	15	28.8%	90	25.3%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	153	16.4%	8	16.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	26	7.3%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	23	2.5%	1	2.0%	0	0.0%	2	3.8%	6	1.7%
35.0 percent or more	365	39.1%	23	46.9%	11	52.4%	22	42.3%	103	28.9%
Not computed	352		40		12		31		40	

Source 10: American Community Survey 2011 5-Year Estimates

Almost 40% of Sussex County renters pay 35% or more of their household income to gross rent. Jarratt and Wakefield have a higher median gross rent than Sussex County at \$703 and \$818 respectively. All of the towns with the exception of Waverly have more renters that pay 35% or more of their household income to gross rent in comparison to Sussex County as a whole. Although Stony Creek has the lowest median gross rent, more renters in Stony Creek pay 35% or more of their household income to gross rent than any other town in Sussex County or the county as a whole.

Manufactured Housing

Eighty percent (80%) of all manufactured housing is located outside of the towns (American Community Survey 2011 5-year estimates). The housing conditions assessment identified many of these units to be in substandard condition and/or likely constructed prior to 1976 when national minimum construction standards were set for all mobile homes. Because of their age and condition many of these units cannot be repaired to suitable standards under existing federal funding guidelines and need to be replaced with stick-built or modern modular units.

HOUSING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

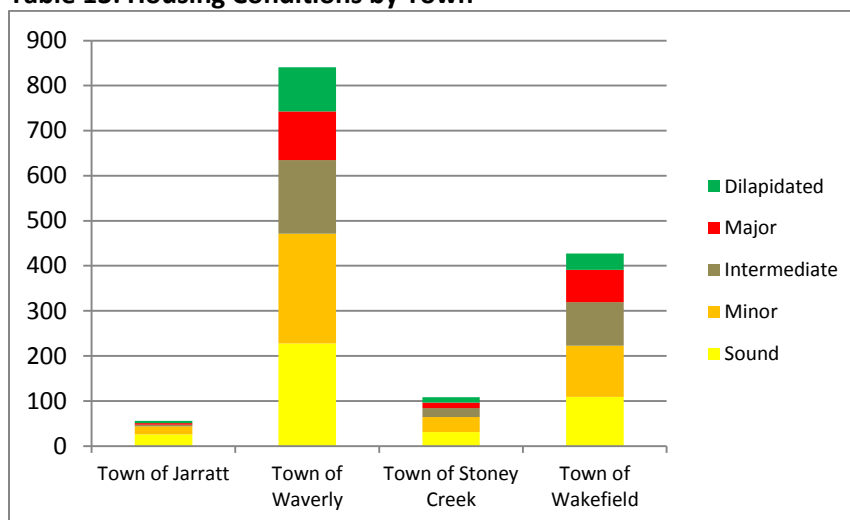
Table 12: Housing Conditions Assessment

Condition	County Total	Unincorporated Areas	Jarratt	Waverly	Stony Creek	Wakefield
Sound	32%	34%	46%	27%	29%	26%
Minor	29%	29%	32%	29%	31%	27%
<i>subtotal</i>	<i>60%</i>	<i>63%</i>	<i>78%</i>	<i>56%</i>	<i>60%</i>	<i>53%</i>
Intermediate	18%	17%	5%	20%	19%	22%
Major	11%	10%	7%	13%	11%	17%
Dilapidated	10%	10%	9%	12%	11%	8%
<i>subtotal</i>	<i>39%</i>	<i>37%</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>45%</i>	<i>41%</i>	<i>47%</i>

Source 11: Community Planning Partners, Field Assessment 2013

Housing conditions throughout the county are skewed towards homes in sound condition or with minor deficiencies. Outside of the Towns, over a third of all housing is in sound condition and almost two thirds (63%) is sound or with only minor deficiencies. Among the Towns, Wakefield and Waverly have the highest percentage of housing in poor or deteriorating condition. When compared in real numbers, Waverly and Wakefield are also the two towns with the most residential structures in the county². Table 14 compares the condition of residential structures in real numbers. Waverly has the highest number of housing in poor condition among the towns and should be top priority for policies and programs that address concentrations of poor housing. In pure numbers, however, over half (59%) of all structures in poor condition are located outside of town boundaries. Policies and programs that address scattered site housing should also be pursued in order to address housing substandard housing throughout the county.

Table 13: Housing Conditions by Town



Source 12: Community Planning Partners Field Assessment, 2013

² For the purposes of this study, the Town of Jarratt only includes those sections within Sussex County.

Table 14: Housing Conditions - Total Counts

Condition	County Total	Unincorporated Areas	Jarratt	Waverly	Stony Creek	Wakefield
Sound	1228	834	26	228	31	109
Minor	1100	692	18	243	33	114
Intermediate	683	400	3	164	20	96
Major	438	242	4	108	12	72
Dilapidated	402	251	5	98	12	36
Total	3851	2419	56	841	108	427

Source 13: Community Planning Partners Field Assessment, 2013

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

Community Planning Partners conducted the county-wide Housing and Infrastructure Needs Assessment over the course of several months starting in October 2012. During this time, members of the assessment team made general notes about the condition of the visible infrastructure in each neighborhood. Additional input was provided by members of the Management Team.

Streets

Roadways throughout Sussex County appeared to be in overall good condition. They were mostly free of debris and pot holes. Traffic circulation through neighborhoods appeared to flow easily. Posted traffic speeds seemed appropriate for residential neighborhoods. Roads in Sussex County are maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and any improvements would require VDOT review and approval.

Sidewalks

Most residential neighborhoods in the county do not have sidewalks unless they border a major thoroughfare or are centrally located within town limits. Sidewalks would be helpful in neighborhoods that have narrow roads or are near schools, playgrounds, or commercial areas.

Water and Wastewater

The densely populated areas of Sussex County receive water and wastewater services from various entities: the Sussex County Service Authority, Greensville Water and Sewer Authority, and the individual towns. The systems provided by these entities receive regular maintenance and upgrades as needed. Overall, the systems appear to be in working order and suffer from common problems such as inflow and infiltration issues. Current systems are able to handle existing loads.

In the rural areas, septic tanks and drain fields are the predominate systems for wastewater treatment. Extension of public sanitary sewer to these areas is not economically feasible. The inclusion of alternative wastewater treatment systems into neighborhood revitalization projects remains an option. Onsite wells are the predominate source of potable water in the rural areas.

Curb & Gutter and Storm Drainage

Curb and gutter are present in the more dense areas of Sussex County but do not appear to contribute to a coherent storm drainage system. Residential neighborhoods do not have curb and gutter yet ponding or poor storm drainage do not appear to be widespread problems. Significant storm drainage problems appear to be confined to the Stony Creek area near Interstate 95.

CDBG ELIGIBILITY

The Community Development Block Grant program, as established under the *Housing and Urban Development Act of 1974*, states that all projects must meet at least one of three national objectives:

- The benefit of low-to-moderate income (LMI) persons
- The elimination of slums and blight
- Response to an urgent need such as a natural disaster

Neighborhood revitalization projects that include housing rehabilitation and infrastructure improvements are typically funded under the first national objective: the benefit to LMI persons.

Since CDBG applications for construction assistance are awarded on a competitive basis, other factors play a crucial role in developing a successful project. These factors include interest from the neighborhood residents, a level of need that warrants grant funds, and a desire by the County to correct all the deficiencies in the neighborhood. All of these factors were considered when the neighborhoods were prioritized.

PRIORITIZATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS FOR CDBG ASSISTANCE

The Needs Assessment Planning Grant process requires the project management team to identify concentrations of blight and prioritize those areas for a more in-depth study. DHCD expects that the County will address these areas by applying for CDBG construction funds according to a timetable established by the County.

The Needs Assessment Management Team gathered on July 19th to review the results of the needs assessment and identify concentrations of blight. The team considered numerous factors in addition to the housing conditions including infrastructure deficiencies, overall eligibility of the area, and future developments such as the Route 460 Bypass that are planned for construction through Sussex County.

Project area boundaries, as identified during the planning process, may evolve over time as conditions in the area change. Project budget considerations also affect the final project area size and number of units to be addressed. See Appendix A for project maps.

NEIGHBORHOOD #1 – POCAHONTAS, TOWN OF WAKEFIELD

The neighborhood identified by the Management Team as the first priority for Sussex County to address deficient housing and infrastructure conditions is the Pocahontas Neighborhood located in the northwest corner of the Town of Wakefield. The neighborhood straddles the town and county line and may be addressed best as a joint project between these two localities.

Sound	1	1.1%	
Minor	23	24.2%	
Intermediate	26	27.4%	74.7% Deficient
Major	31	32.6%	
Dilapidated	14	14.7%	
Total Units	95	100.0%	
Vacant Parcels			

NEIGHBORHOOD #2 – WEST MAIN STREET, TOWN OF WAVERLY

The West Main Street Neighborhood is located in the southwest corner of Waverly and contains a mixture of single-family units and mobile homes. Preliminary designs for the proposed Route 460 Bypass indicate that the new roadway and exit/entrance ramp will run through the center of this area resulting in the displacement of numerous residents.

Sound	3	3.1%	
Minor	19	19.6%	
Intermediate	21	21.6%	77.3% Deficient
Major	28	28.9%	
Dilapidated	26	26.8%	
Total Units	97	100.0%	
Vacant Parcels			

NEIGHBORHOOD #3 – TRI-AVENUES, TOWN OF JARRATT

The Tri-Avenues Neighborhood is located outside the southern boundary of the Town of Jarratt. The area primarily consists of single-family homes and a significant number of vacant, yet buildable lots. This project area may warrant the consideration of a joint venture between the town and county.

Sound	4	9.3%	
Minor	16	37.2%	
Intermediate	13	30.2%	53.5% Deficient
Major	8	18.6%	
Dilapidated	2	4.7%	
Total Units	43	100.0%	
Vacant Parcels			

NEIGHBORHOOD #4 – WEST LEE AVENUE, TOWN OF STONY CREEK

The West Lee Avenue Neighborhood is located in the southwest corner of the Town of Stony Creek in the western portion of Sussex County. The area consists of many single-family and multi-family (duplex) units.

Sound	1	3.4%	
Minor	4	13.8%	
Intermediate	6	20.7%	82.8% Deficient
Major	8	27.6%	
Dilapidated	10	34.5%	
Total Units	29	100.0%	
Vacant Parcels	50		

NEIGHBORHOOD #5 – MARS HILL (PHASE I & PHASE II), TOWN OF WAKEFIELD

The Mars Hill Neighborhood is located in the eastern portion of Wakefield and has a mixture of housing types and lot sizes. Route 460 borders the neighborhood to the south. Portions of the neighborhood extend beyond the town and into the county. The area is too large to address as one project and will require multiple CDBG applications for funding.

Sound	8	6.3%	
Minor	19	15.0%	
Intermediate	35	27.6%	78.8% Deficient
Major	40	31.5%	
Dilapidated	25	19.7%	
Total Units	127	100.0%	
Vacant Parcels	51		

NEIGHBORHOOD #6 – NEW STREET (PHASE I - III), TOWN OF WAVERLY

The New Street Neighborhood is situated towards the center of Waverly just north of the downtown area and south of Route 460. The overall size of the area may require a project in three phases to address all of the blighting influences.

Sound	22	9.1%	
Minor	51	21.2%	
Intermediate	62	25.7%	69.7% Deficient
Major	48	19.9%	
Dilapidated	58	24.1%	
Total Units	241	100.0%	
Vacant Parcels	67		

NEIGHBORHOOD #7 – HUNT ROAD, SUSSEX COUNTY

The Hunt Road neighborhood is located in the far western portion of Sussex County and is characterized as a crossroads community in a rural setting. The housing types consist of primarily single-family homes with a few mobile homes. Infrastructure deficiencies may include roads, septic systems and poor storm drainage.

Sound	4	11.8%	
Minor	10	29.4%	
Intermediate	5	14.7%	58.8% Deficient
Major	6	17.6%	
Dilapidated	9	26.5%	
Total Units	34	100.0%	
Vacant Parcels	undetermined		

NEIGHBORHOOD #8 – BRIGGS ROAD, SUSSEX COUNTY

The Briggs Road neighborhood is located just east of Interstate-95 between the towns of Stony Creek and Jarratt. The neighborhood is comprised of single-family homes that also suffer from deficient storm drainage. Additional infrastructure deficiencies may include roads and septic systems. This area may best be addressed as a 'scattered site' project instead of a CDBG project due to the neighborhood's size.

Sound	6	33.3%	
Minor	3	16.7%	
Intermediate	2	11.1%	50.0% Deficient
Major	0	0.0%	
Dilapidated	7	38.9%	
Total Units	18	100.0%	
Vacant Parcels	undetermined		

PROPOSED TIMELINE FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The County is eligible to submit a planning grant request for Neighborhood #1 (Pocahontas – Wakefield) in the summer of 2013. The planning and project development phase would last through March 2014 when an application for CDBG Community Improvement Grant funds (CIG) is submitted to DHCD for funding consideration. If funded, the project would commence around the beginning of 2015 and take approximately thirty-six (36) months to complete. The County is allowed to have up to \$2 million in active CDBG projects at any given time, therefore allowing the County to conduct the planning and project development for Neighborhood #2 (West Main Street – Waverly) as early as 2013-2014. From that point forward, the County can pursue planning and CIG funds for each neighborhood identified above as previous projects close out. The potential schedule for addressing each neighborhood is as follows:

Neighborhood #1 – Pocahontas, Wakefield	March 2014
Neighborhood #2 – West Main Street, Waverly	March 2015
Neighborhood #3 – Tri-Avenues, Jarratt	March 2017
Neighborhood #4 – West Lee Avenue, Stony Creek	March 2018
Neighborhood #5 – Mars Hill (Phase I), Wakefield	March 2020
Neighborhood #6 – New Street (Phase I), Waverly	March 2021
Neighborhood #7 – Mars Hill (Phase II), Wakefield	March 2023
Neighborhood #8 – New Street (Phase II), Waverly	March 2024
Neighborhood #9 – Hunt Road, Sussex	Address under a scattered site strategy
Neighborhood #10 – Briggs Road, Sussex	Address under a scattered site strategy

Adherence to this schedule assumes each project is completed in a timely manner.

HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS, PARTNERSHIPS AND POLICIES

The overall improvement of housing conditions in Sussex will require a multi-faceted approach by the County that includes pursuing grant funding, partnering with existing housing non-profit groups, promoting the establishment of new non-profit groups, and implementing policies that encourage those citizens that are able to undertake the rehabilitation of their properties.

The following programs, partnerships and policies are recommended for consideration by the Sussex County Board of Supervisors and county staff. While all properties may not be sufficiently addressed under these actions, a large number of substandard properties could ultimately benefit from their implementation.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program

The State of Virginia receives an annual allocation of CDBG funds each year from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the state's non-entitlement communities. The funds are distributed to eligible communities through a competitive application process and are directed to projects that focus on benefiting low-to-moderate income households, removing slums and blight, or addressing an urgent need after a federally declared disaster. The CDBG Program also provides planning grants up to \$30,000 to develop projects within defined neighborhoods.

Indoor Plumbing Rehabilitation (IPR) Program

The Indoor Plumbing Rehabilitation (IPR) program provides zero percent interest, forgivable loans in eligible localities for the installation of indoor plumbing to owners of substandard housing where indoor plumbing does not exist, or where the existing water delivery or waste disposal systems have failed. Loan repayments are determined by the homeowner's ability to make payments. The program also provides for the general rehabilitation of these units and for accessibility improvements to units occupied by persons with disabilities or where overcrowded conditions exist.

The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) contracts with locally appointed sub-recipients, including local governments, nonprofit housing providers, and housing authorities, to administer the IPR program. The sub-recipients are responsible for most program operations, including outreach, application intake, beneficiary and property eligibility determination, and construction management.

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity is a national non-profit known for assisting low-income households with owning a home and, more recently, with the renovation of existing homes. The Sussex County branch of Habitat for Humanity is located in the Town of Waverly. Habitat works with eligible low-income persons who aspire to own a house and are willing to provide the sweat equity to build a new house or renovate an existing one.

Rebuilding Together

Rebuilding Together, a non-profit that utilizes citizen and skilled volunteer assistance, has provided extensive home rehabilitation and modification services to homeowners in-need for nearly 25 years. The Rebuilding Together network consists of 200 affiliated non-profits that brings together 200,000 volunteers and completes 10,000 projects each year. Aside from housing rehabilitation, Rebuilding Together projects may also include community center rehabilitation, playground builds, and partnerships with organizations focused on energy efficiency, sustainable community gardens, volunteer engagement, and education.

There is currently no provider for Sussex County. The national office can be contacted at:

Rebuilding Together National Headquarters
1899 L Street NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20036
1-800-473-4229

Weatherization Assistance Program

This program is funded through the US Department of Energy, administered by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, and implemented by the Crater District Area Agency on Aging. The program utilizes grant funds to improve the energy efficiency of residential units, thereby reducing heating and cooling costs of eligible low-income households. The program focuses on those low-income households that contain elderly persons, individuals with disabilities, and families with children but eligibility is determined by income level. Eligible households receive an on-site energy audit that identifies areas of improvement to reduce heating and cooling costs. Typical weatherization services include sealing air leaks, installation of ventilation fans, repairing deficient duct systems, repairing or replacing inefficient or unsafe heating and cooling systems, and installation of energy efficient lighting.

Provider Contact Information:

Crater District Area Agency on Aging
23 Seyler Drive
Petersburg, VA 23805
Contact: Kathy Evans
Phone: (804) 732-7020
E-mail: kevans@cdaaa.org

Housing Tax Abatement Program

The County can implement a tax abatement program that promotes private residential rehabilitation by property owners. This program requires minimal oversight by county staff and encourages county residents to make improvements on their own. Tax abatement programs typically include the following requirements:

- The property must be no less than 20 years old.
- Rehabilitation must increase the value of the structure by a minimum of 40%.
- All required permitting must be obtained at the time of application for tax abatement.
- Rehabilitated structures must meet zoning requirements.
- The rehabilitated structure cannot exceed the square footage of the original structure by more than 110%.

CONCLUSION

The Management Team for the Sussex Needs Assessment convened on July 19, 2013 to review the identified concentrations of blight and select the priority neighborhoods. The Pocahontas Neighborhood in Wakefield was selected as the priority project area based on the level of need and the age of the homes. The other project areas have varying levels of need and other considerations such as the construction of the Route 460 Bypass that determined their position in the proposed timeline.

A competitive Community Development Block Grant application demonstrates a high concentration of interested participants, housing rehabilitation needs, and a majority of households earning below 80% area median income. Based on the neighborhood needs assessment, public input, and Census data, the management team has concluded that each identified project area has the strong potential to develop into a competitive project worth of CDBG funding. The proposed timeline for implementing projects across the county requires the focused attention of county leaders and the demand of the residents to seek neighborhood rehabilitation assistance.

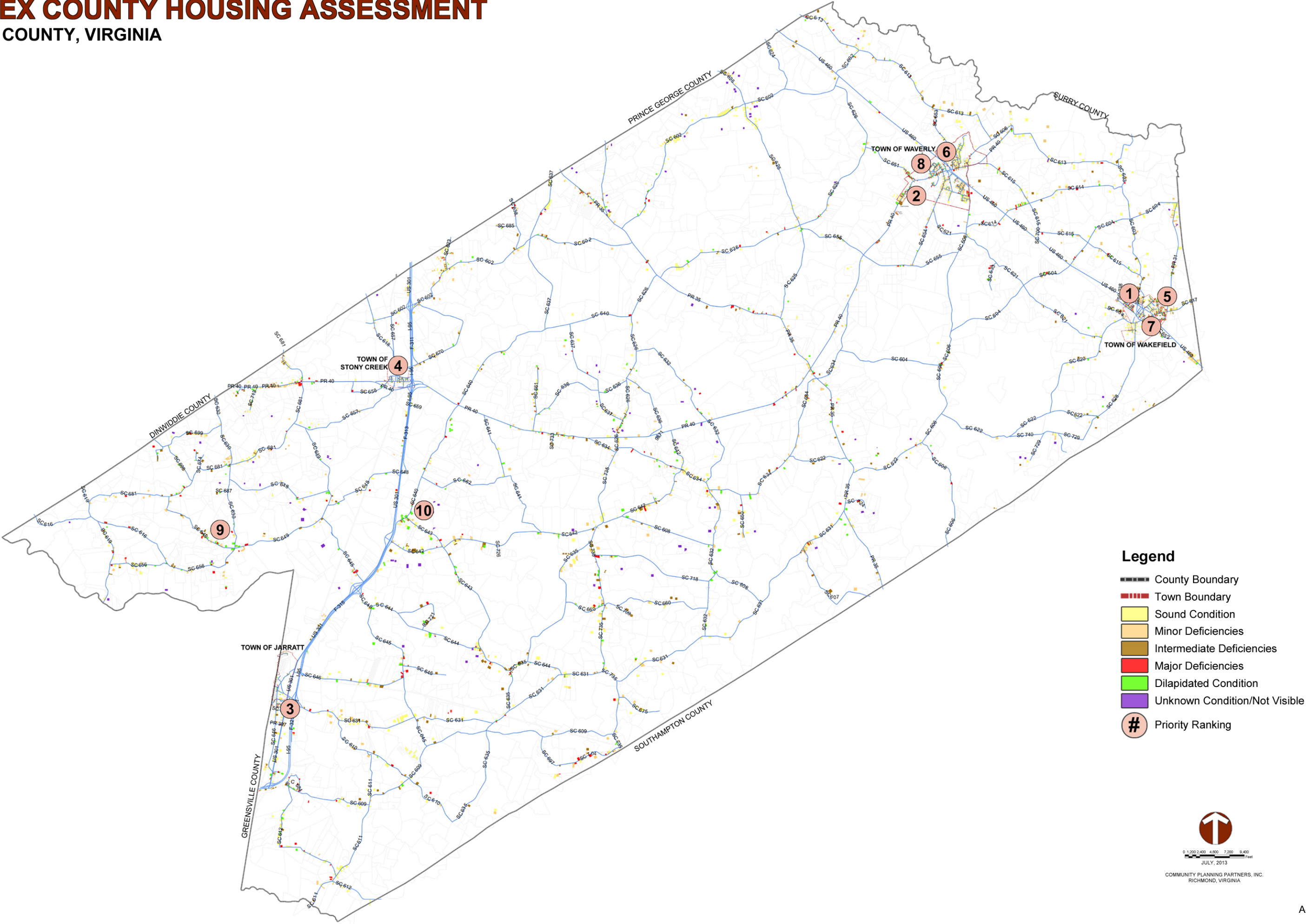
Substandard homes located in areas unsuitable for CDBG funding due to the scattered nature of the sites will have to be addressed utilizing other funding sources or rehabilitation strategies. The County can address these units in a timely fashion by instituting incentive programs, partnering with housing non-profits, and seeking other grant funds that allow scattered site projects.

The selection and ranking of the priority neighborhoods were determined by a unanimous vote by the management team members on July 19, 2013.

APPENDIX A – PROJECT MAPS

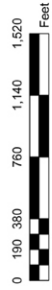
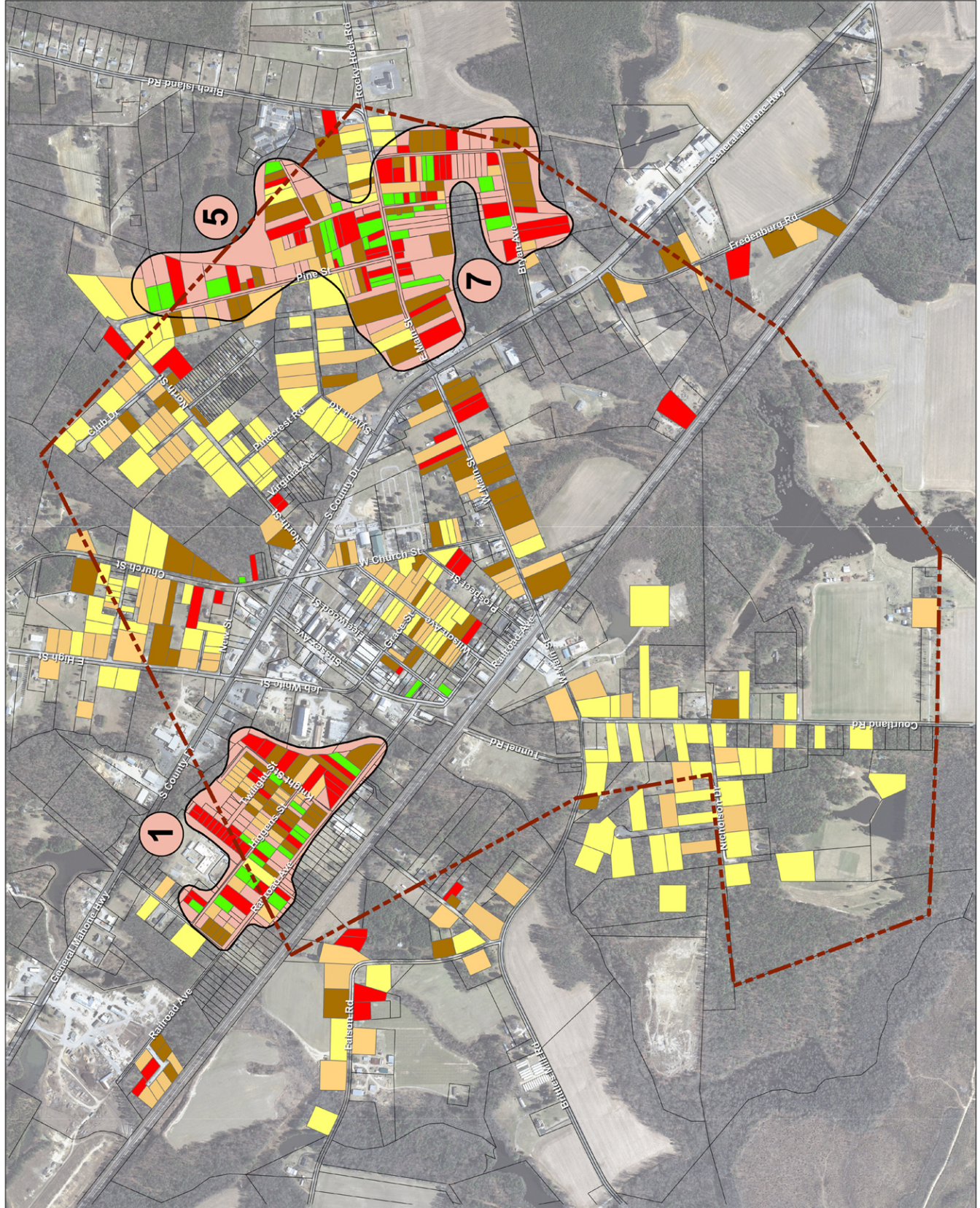
SUSSEX COUNTY HOUSING ASSESSMENT

SUSSEX COUNTY, VIRGINIA



Existing Housing Conditions
Town of Wakefield
Sussex County, VA

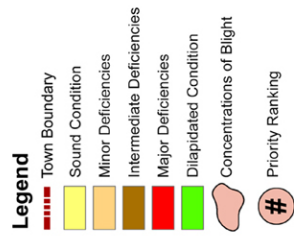
- Legend**
- Town Boundary
 - Sound Condition
 - Minor Deficiencies
 - Intermediate Deficiencies
 - Major Deficiencies
 - Dilapidated Condition
 - Concentrations of Blight
 - # Priority Ranking



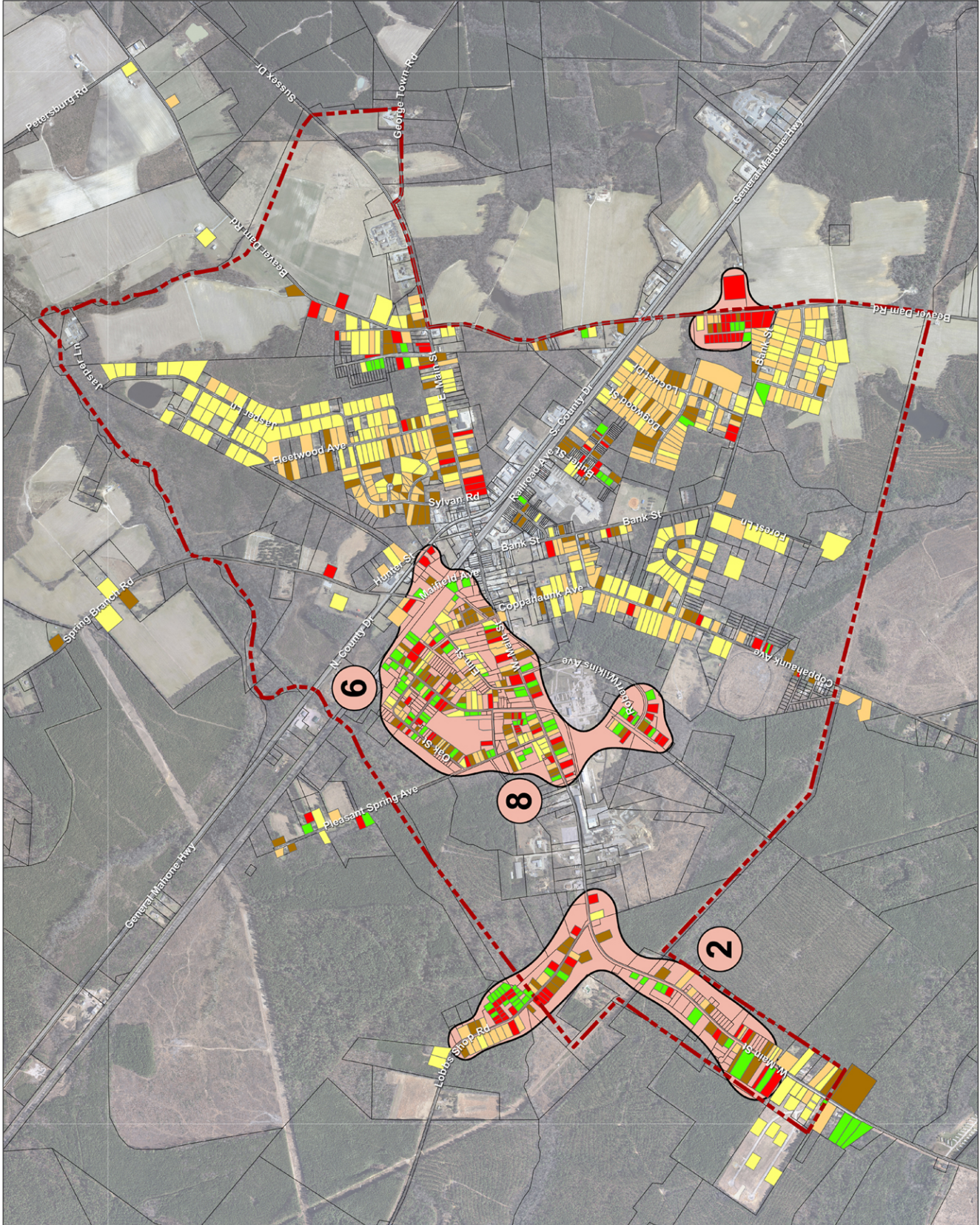
April, 2013

Community Planning Partners, Inc.
Richmond, Virginia

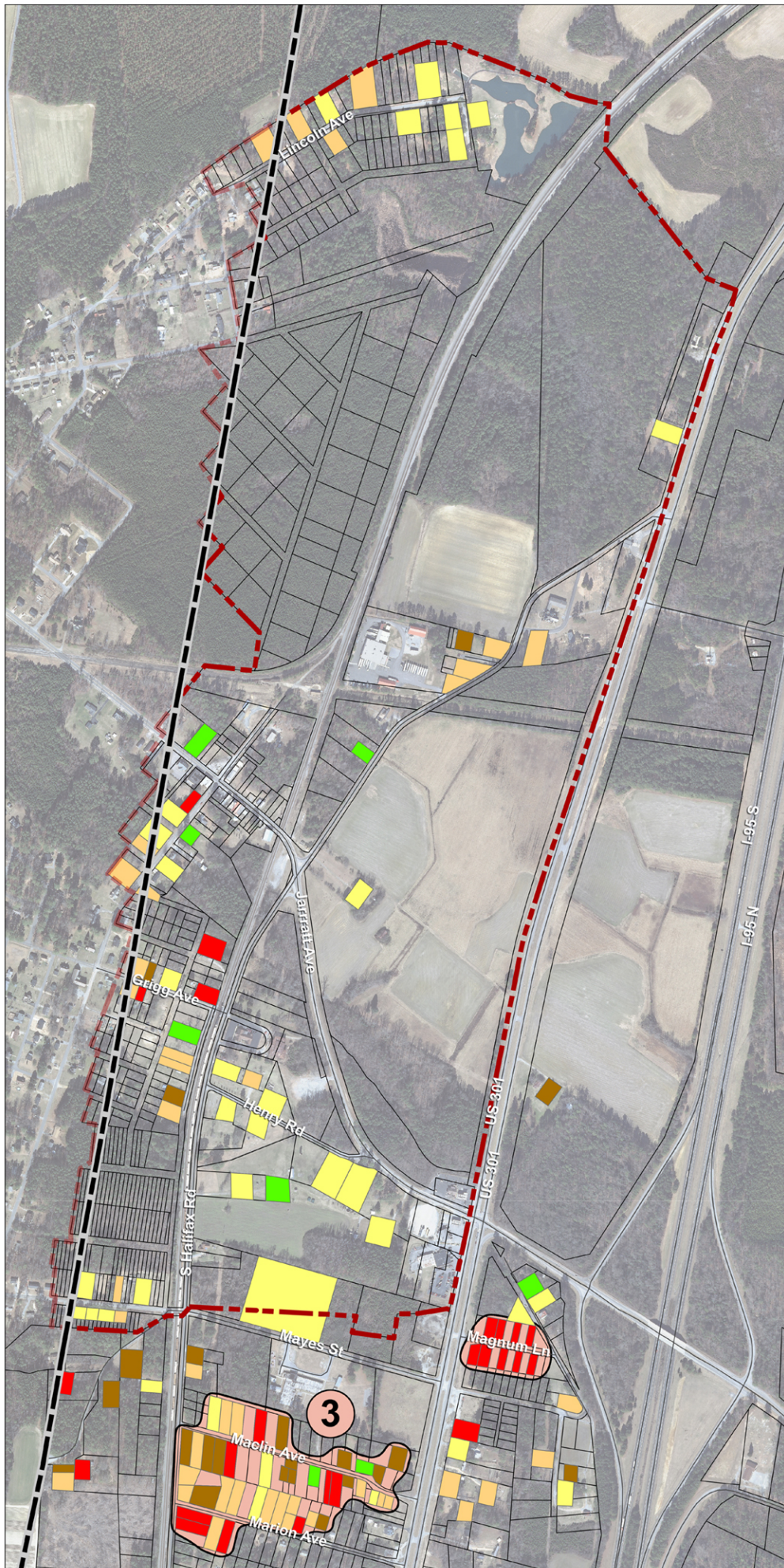
Existing Housing Conditions
Town of Waverly
Sussex County, VA



April, 2013
Community Planning Partners, Inc.
Richmond, Virginia

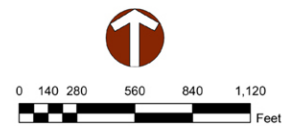


Existing Housing Conditions
Town of Jarratt
Sussex County, VA



Legend









- County Boundary
- Town Boundary
- Sound Condition
- Minor Deficiencies
- Intermediate Deficiencies
- Major Deficiencies
- Dilapidated Condition
- Concentrations of Blight
- # Priority Ranking

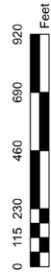
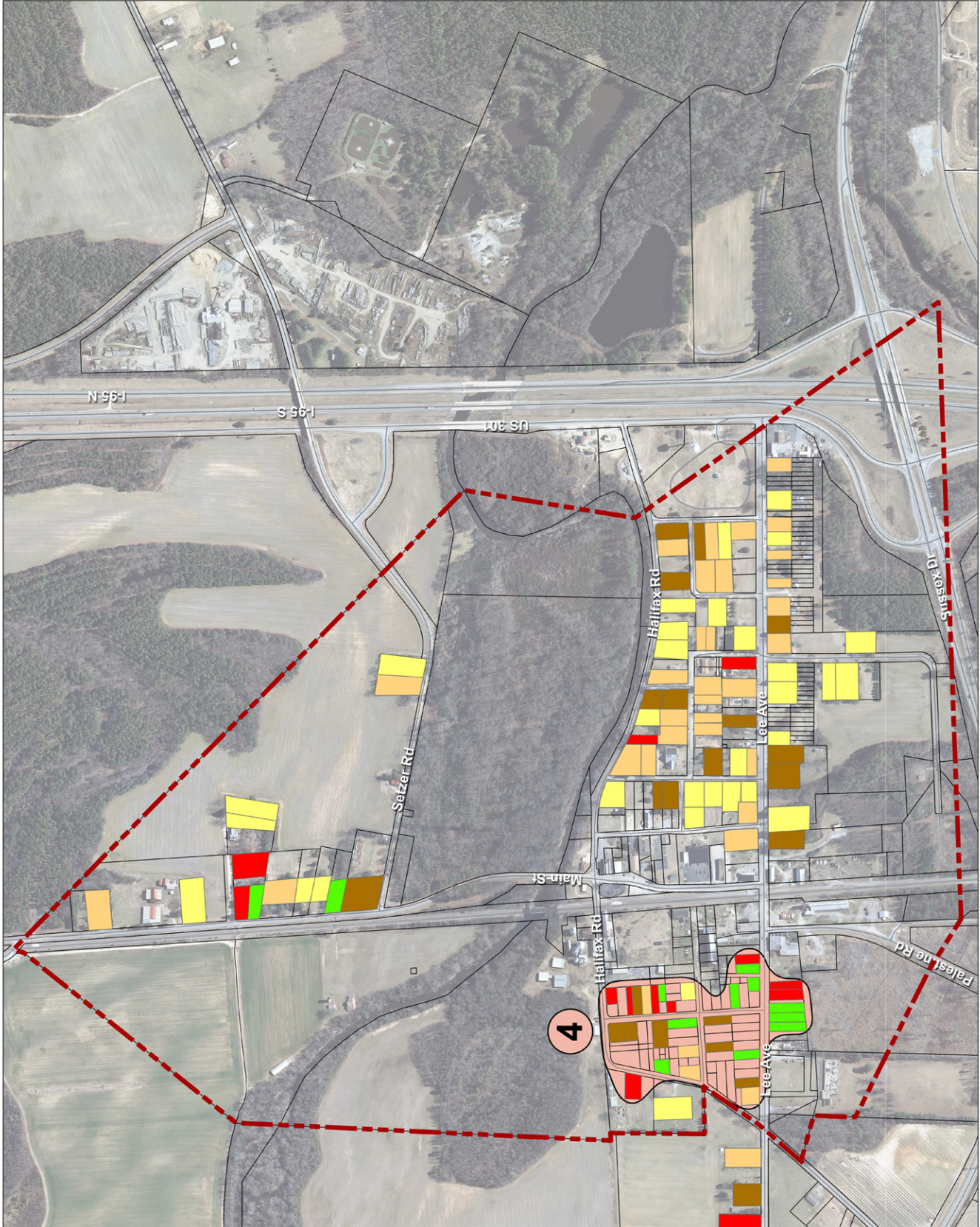


Community Planning Partners, Inc.
Richmond, Virginia

Existing Housing Conditions
Town of Story Creek
Sussex County, VA

Legend









-  Town Boundary
-  Sound Condition
-  Minor Deficiencies
-  Intermediate Deficiencies
-  Major Deficiencies
-  Dilapidated Condition
-  Concentrations of Blight
-  Priority Ranking

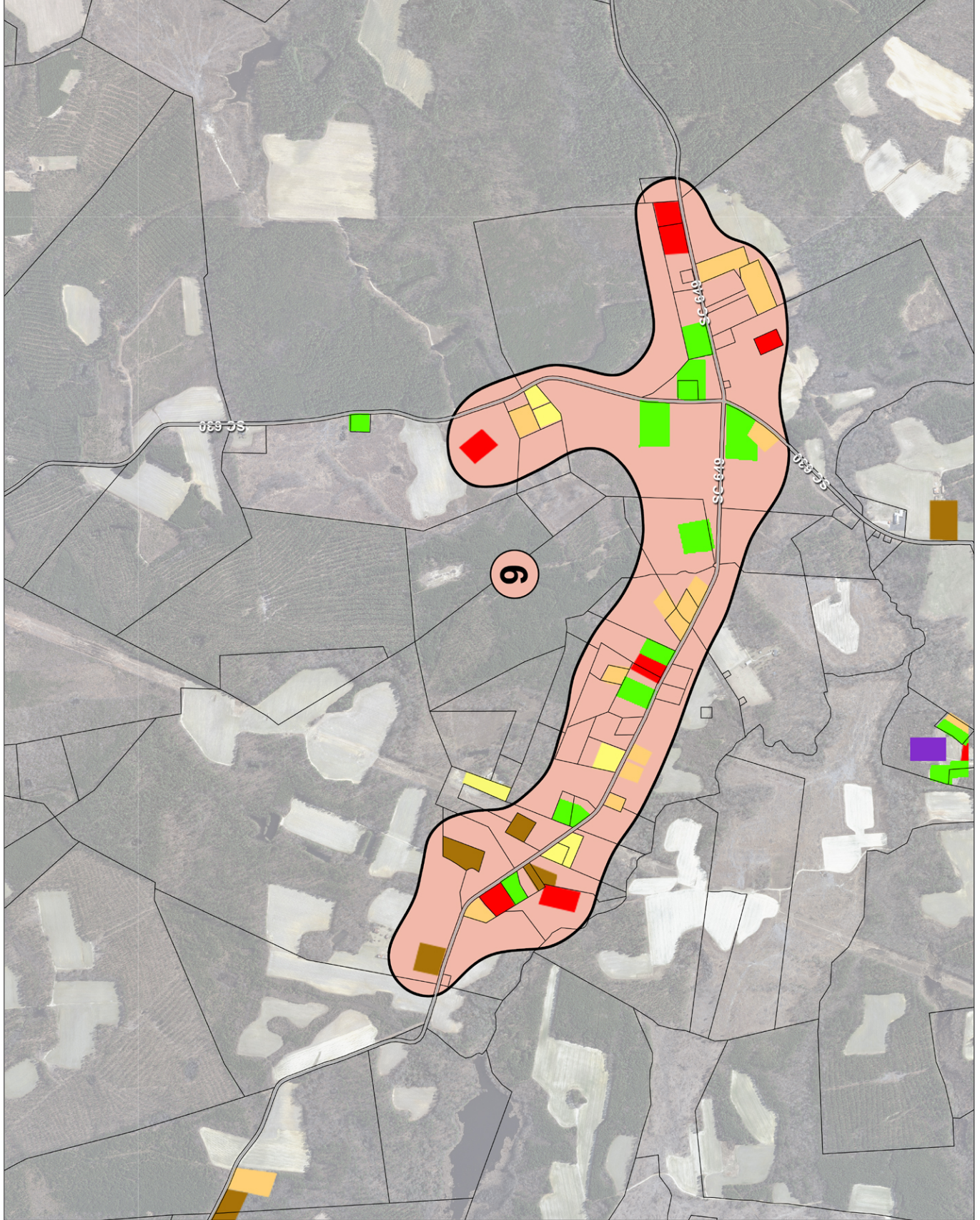


April 2013
Community Planning Partners, Inc.
Richmond, Virginia

Existing Housing Conditions
 Priority Area #9
 Sussex County, VA

Legend









-  Town Boundary
-  Sound Condition
-  Minor Deficiencies
-  Intermediate Deficiencies
-  Major Deficiencies
-  Dilapidated Condition
-  Concentrations of Blight
-  Priority Ranking

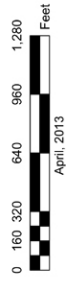
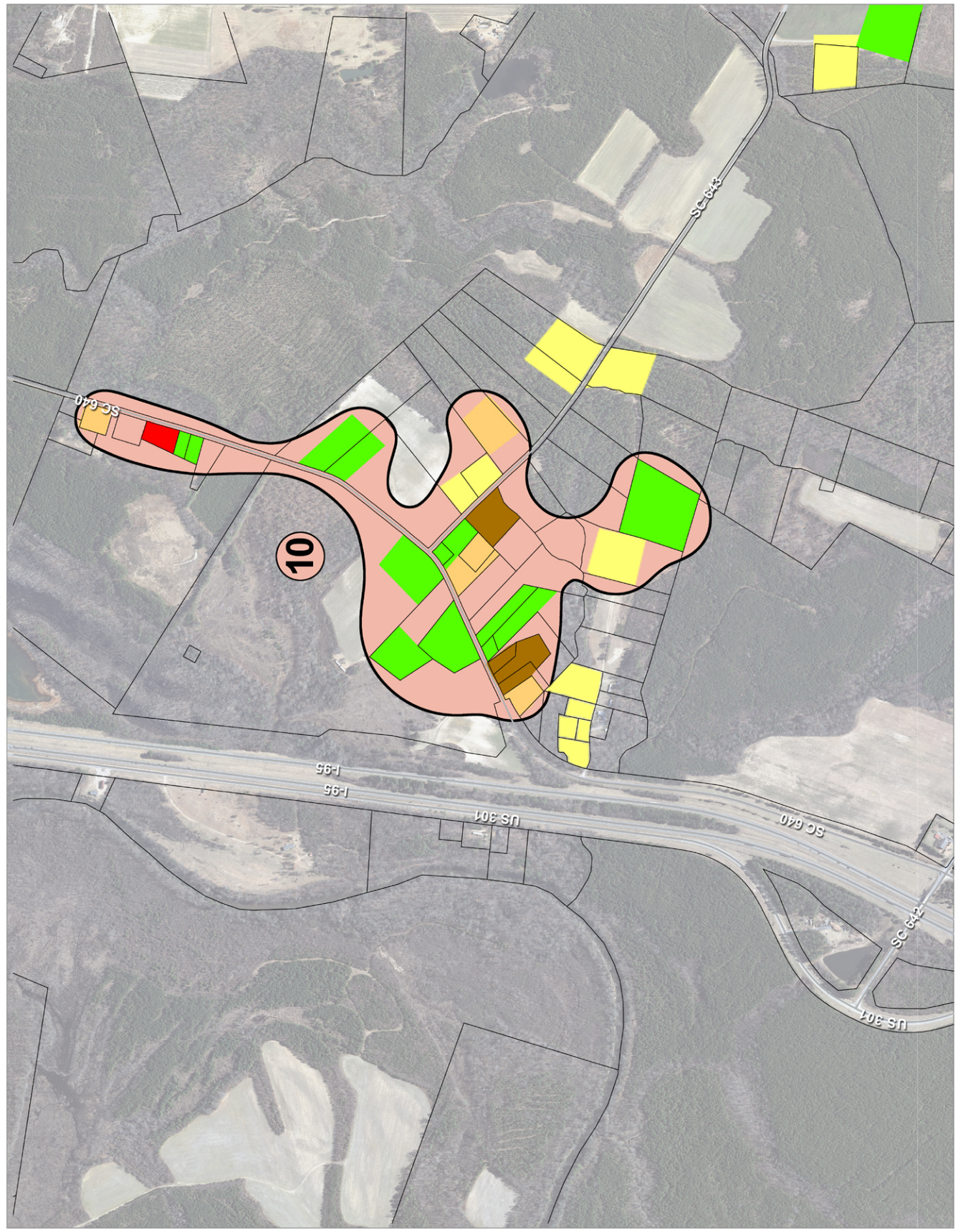


April 2013
 Community Planning Partners, Inc.
 Richmond, Virginia

Existing Housing Conditions
 Priority Area #10
 Sussex County, VA

Legend

-  Town Boundary
-  Sound Condition
-  Minor Deficiencies
-  Intermediate Deficiencies
-  Major Deficiencies
-  Dilapidated Condition
-  Concentrations of Blight
-  Priority Ranking



April 2013

Community Planning Partners, Inc.
 Richmond, Virginia

APPENDIX B – PRELIMINARY HOUSING SURVEY RESULTS

SUSSEX COUNTY OCCUPANCY SURVEY
Sussex County, Virginia

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Sussex County, Virginia

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Sussex County, Virginia

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SUSSEX COUNTY OCCUPANCY SURVEY
Sussex County, Virginia

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