




Town Council Special Meeting

December 04, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Cape Charles Civic Center - 500 Tazewell Avenue

Agenda

- 1. Call to Order**
 - A. Roll Call
 - B. Establish Quorum
- 2. Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Public Hearing: (3 minutes per speaker)**
 - A. None
- 4. Public Comments (3 minutes per speaker for topics not subject to this evening's public hearing)**
- 5. Unfinished Business:**
 - A. Downtown Restroom - POSTPONED to December 18 Regular Meeting
- 6. New Business:**
 - A. Harbor Boardwalk Reconstruction, Phase 2
 - B. Railyard & Harbor Area Master Plan Kick-off Meeting with the Berkley Group
- 7. Town Manager Comments**
- 8. Mayor & Council Comments (5 minutes per speaker)**
- 9. Announcements**
- 10. Adjournment**

	Agenda Title:	Agenda Date:
	Harbor Boardwalk Reconstruction, Phase 2	December 4, 2025
	Subject/Proposal/Request:	
	Approve Determination of Nonresponsibility and authorize contract award.	
Town of Cape Charles	Attachments:	For Council:
	1. Tabulation of Revised Bids 2. Determination of Nonresponsibility	Action: x Information:
	Staff Contact(s):	Reviewed by:
	Bob Panek, Project Manager	Rick Keuroglan, Town Manager

Background:

The evaluation of harbor capital assets by our marine engineering firm, Langley & McDonald, indicated that the boardwalk built on top of the bulkhead at the outer harbor needed continuing repair to extend its service life. A subsequent detailed inspection revealed that much of the decking, supporting stringers and battens are rotted. A three-phase plan has been developed to reconstruct the boardwalk with pressure treated lumber rated for ground contact and synthetic decking. The first phase of 139 linear feet near the bath house was completed this spring. Council authorized award of a \$120,000 contract to Carolina Marine Structures, Inc. (CMS) for the second phase of 380 linear feet on September 4, 2025.

Item Specifics:

CMS defaulted on the contract due to bankruptcy after performing some of the demolition work. No payments have been made to the contractor. The three other bidders for the original contract were invited to submit revised bids based on a reduced scope of work reflecting partial demolition on November 12, 2025. Three bids were received on November 26, 2025. Attachment 1 is the tabulation of revised bids. The low bid was from Harmonia Contracting, Inc. While this bid is responsive to the Invitation for Bids, the extremely low amount raises the question of whether it is a responsible bid under the Virginia Public Procurement Act, Code of Virginia Sec. 2.2-4300 et seq. Attachment 2 is a proposed Determination of Nonresponsibility which is based on this unusual bid and prior experience with this contractor. Should Council approve this determination, the Town Manager, under the authority granted in Sec. 2.2-4302, will proceed with the notification process specified in Sec. 2.2-4359.

This does not preclude award of the contract to another bidder. Staff is of the opinion that it is in the public interest to award the contract to the second lowest bidder, Pratte Construction, as the partially demolished boardwalk poses a potential safety risk. This firm has the appropriate state contractor’s license and is not debarred. Pratte was the subcontractor for the first phase of boardwalk reconstruction and delivered a high-quality product. The FY 2025 budget includes \$129,000 for this project.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that Council:

1. Approve the Determination of Nonresponsibility and authorize the Town Manager to proceed with the notification and written determination process, per Code of Virginia, Sec. 2.2-4359.
2. Authorize the Town Manager to award the contract to Pratte Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$123,380, with a contingency reserve of \$5,620 should additional damage be discovered during reconstruction.

December 1, 2025

Determination of Nonresponsibility
Harbor Boardwalk Reconstruction, Phase 2

A. Town Code and Code of Virginia

Section 2-28 of the Town Code states that the town shall comply with the Virginia Public Procurement Act:

Code of Virginia, § 2.2-4300 et seq., is the Virginia Public Procurement Act. Code of Virginia, § 2.2-4343.A.9, exempts towns with a population of less than 3,500 from most provisions of the Act. However, it shall be the policy of the town to comply with the provisions of the Act, except that the small purchase threshold in Code of Virginia, § 2.2-4303.G, shall be \$50,000.00 for goods and services other than professional services and \$30,000.00 for professional services.

Sec. 2.2-4303 requires that **construction be procured via competitive sealed bidding** except for specific circumstances.

Sec. 2.2-4302.1 defines the process for evaluation of bids and **requires award of the contract to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder:**

4. Evaluation of bids based upon the requirements set forth in the Invitation to Bid, which may include special qualifications of potential contractors, life-cycle costing, value analysis, and any other criteria such as inspection, testing, quality, workmanship, delivery, and suitability for a particular purpose, which are helpful in determining acceptability; and

5. Award to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

Sec. 2.2-4301 provides the following definitions:

"Responsive bidder" means a person who has submitted a bid that conforms in all material respects to the Invitation to Bid.

"Responsible bidder" or "offeror" means **a person who has the capability, in all respects, to perform fully the contract requirements and the moral and business integrity and reliability that will assure good faith performance**, and who has been prequalified, if required.

Sec. 2.2-4319 provides that **bids may be rejected for valid reasons:**

A. An Invitation to Bid, a Request for Proposal, any other solicitation, or any and all bids or proposals, may be canceled or rejected. The reasons for cancellation or rejection shall be made part of the contract file. A public body shall not cancel or reject an Invitation to Bid, a Request for Proposal, any other solicitation, bid or proposal pursuant to this section solely to avoid awarding a contract to a particular responsive and responsible bidder or offeror.

Sec. 2.2-4359 specifies the procedures for determining whether a bidder is nonresponsible:

A. Following public opening and announcement of bids received on an Invitation to Bid, the public body shall evaluate the bids in accordance with element 4 of the process for competitive sealed bidding set forth in § [2.2-4302.1](#). At the same time, **the public body shall determine whether the apparent low bidder is responsible**. If the public body so determines, then it may proceed with an award in accordance with element 5 of the process for competitive sealed bidding set forth in § [2.2-4302.1](#). **If the public body determines that the apparent low bidder is not responsible, it shall proceed as follows:**

1. **Prior to the issuance of a written determination of nonresponsibility, the public body shall (i) notify the apparent low bidder in writing of the results of the evaluation, (ii) disclose the factual support for the determination, and (iii) allow the apparent low bidder an opportunity to inspect any documents that relate to the determination, if so requested by the bidder within five business days after receipt of the notice.**

2. **Within 10 business days after receipt of the notice, the bidder may submit rebuttal information challenging the evaluation. The public body shall issue its written determination of responsibility based on all information in the possession of the public body, including any rebuttal information, within five business days of the date the public body received the rebuttal information. At the same time, the public body shall notify, with return receipt requested, the bidder in writing of its determination.**

3. **Such notice shall state the basis for the determination, which shall be final unless the bidder appeals the decision within 10 days after receipt of the notice by invoking administrative procedures meeting the standards of § [2.2-4365](#), if available, or in the alternative by instituting legal action as provided in § [2.2-4364](#).**

B. Procurement for Harbor Boardwalk Reconstruction, Phase 2

1. A contract was awarded to Carolina Marine Structures (CMS) pursuant to an Invitation for Bids (IFB) dated July 18, 2025. The other three bidders in ascending bid price order were Pratte Construction, Harmonia Contracting, and Docks of the Bay. **CMS defaulted on the contract after performing partial demolition of the boardwalk decking over a few days.**

2. **The three remaining bidders were invited to submit revised bids** based on a scope of work that recognized the partial demolition. **Harmonia Contracting submitted the lowest bid.** The bid is considered responsive in that it complied with the IFB requirements for lump sum pricing of the Base Bid and four Bid Alternates. However, **the very low Base Bid raises the question whether Harmonia “has the capability, in all respects, to perform fully the contract requirements”, as demonstrated below:**

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Original Bid</u>	<u>Revised Bid</u>	<u>Change</u>
Pratte	\$122,380	\$113,380	- 7.4%
Harmonia	\$159,500	\$ 88,545	-44.5%
Docks of the Bay	\$176,000	\$176,000	0.0%

The revised bid submitted by Harmonia **suggests either a fundamental misunderstanding of the minor amount of work performed by CMS prior to default, or a deliberate underbid of the work** with the possibility of recovery via change orders.

3. **Additionally, Harmonia demonstrated poor management of the contract for the first phase of the boardwalk reconstruction.** Harmonia was awarded the contract and subcontracted all the work to Pratte. **There is no evidence that Harmonia performed any on-site supervision of the subcontractor's work. This resulted in the subcontractor performing significant unauthorized additional work that had to be ratified by an after-the-fact contract change order.** The Town spent an inordinate amount of time directly overseeing the work of the subcontractor.
4. Finally, a **payment dispute emerged between Harmonia and Pratte, resulting in the latter filing a criminal complaint with the Virginia State Police.** The Town has had to dedicate time to this investigation as well.
5. Based on the above, it is **staff's judgement that Harmonia does not meet the requirements of a responsible bidder as defined in the Code of Virginia:** "Responsible bidder" or "offeror" means a person who has the capability, in all respects, to perform fully the contract requirements and the moral and business integrity and reliability that will assure good faith performance, and who has been prequalified, if required.

C. Appeal of Determination of Nonresponsibility

In addition to the notification requirements described above, the Code of Virginia provides for an appeal process after the determination has been made:

Sec. 2.2-4359

B. If, upon appeal pursuant to § [2.2-4364](#) or [2.2-4365](#), it is determined that the decision of the public body was not (i) an honest exercise of discretion, but rather was arbitrary or capricious or (ii) in accordance with the Constitution of Virginia, applicable state law or regulation, or the terms or conditions of the Invitation to Bid, and the award of the contract in question has not been made, the sole relief shall be a finding that the bidder is a responsible bidder for the contract in question or directed award as provided in subsection A of § [2.2-4364](#) or both. If it is determined that the decision of the public body was not an honest exercise of discretion, but rather was arbitrary or capricious or not in accordance with the Constitution of Virginia, applicable state law or regulation, or the terms or conditions of the Invitation to Bid, and an award of the contract has been made, the relief shall be as set forth in subsection B of § [2.2-4360](#).

C. A bidder contesting a determination that he is not a responsible bidder for a particular contract shall proceed under this section, and may not protest the award or proposed award under the provisions of § [2.2-4360](#).

Sec. 2.2-4360

B. If prior to an award it is determined that the decision to award is arbitrary or capricious, then the sole relief shall be a finding to that effect. The public body shall cancel the proposed award or revise it to comply with the law. If, after an award, it is determined that an award of a contract was arbitrary or capricious, then the sole relief shall be as hereinafter provided.

Where the award has been made but performance has not begun, the performance of the contract may be enjoined. Where the award has been made and performance has begun, the public body may declare the contract void upon a finding that this action is in the best interest of the public. Where a contract is declared void, the performing contractor shall be compensated for the cost of performance up to the time of such declaration. In no event shall the performing contractor be entitled to lost profits.

Sec. 2.2-4361

Pending final determination of a protest or appeal, the validity of a contract awarded and accepted in good faith in accordance with this chapter shall not be affected by the fact that a protest or appeal has been filed.

Sec. 2.2-4362

An award need not be delayed for the period allowed a bidder or offeror to protest, but in the event of a timely protest as provided in § [2.2-4360](#), or the filing of a timely legal action as provided in § [2.2-4364](#), no further action to award the contract shall be taken unless there is a written determination that proceeding without delay is necessary to protect the public interest or unless the bid or offer would expire.


Sec. 2.2-4364

A. A bidder or offeror, actual or prospective, who is refused permission or disqualified from participation in bidding or competitive negotiation, or who is determined not to be a responsible bidder or offeror for a particular contract, may bring an action in the appropriate circuit court challenging that decision, which shall be reversed only if the petitioner establishes that the decision was not (i) an honest exercise of discretion, but rather was arbitrary or capricious; (ii) in accordance with the Constitution of Virginia, applicable state law or regulation, or the terms or conditions of the Invitation to Bid; or (iii) in the case of denial of prequalification, based upon the criteria for denial of prequalification set forth in subsection B of § [2.2-4317](#). In the event the apparent low bidder, having been previously determined by the public body to be not responsible in accordance with § [2.2-4301](#), is found by the court to be a responsible bidder, the court may direct the public body to award the contract to such bidder in accordance with the requirements of this section and the Invitation to Bid.

November 26, 2025

Town of Cape Charles
 Harbor Boardwalk Reconstruction, Phase 2
 Revised Bid Tabulation (Reduced Scope)

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Addendum</u>	<u>Base Bid</u>	<u>Alt. 1</u>	<u>Alt. 2</u>	<u>Alt. 3</u>	<u>Alt. 4</u>
Pratte Construction	N/A	113,380	-25,000	10,000	1,050	40
Docks of the Bay	N/A	176,000	-29,000	8,000	1,000	50
Harmonia Contracting	N/A	88,545	-22,500	10,000	1,100	50

	Agenda Title: Item 6B	Agenda Date:
	Railyard & Harbor Area Master Plan	December 4, 2025
Subject/Proposal/Request:		
Kick-Off Session with consultant, The Berkley Group, for Railyard & Harbor Area Master Plan		
Town of Cape Charles	Attachments:	For Council:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Town Council Kickoff Meeting – Agenda by Berkley Group 2) Kickoff Presentation Powerpoint 3) Cape Charles Schedule 4) Council Interview Questions 5) Rural Resilience Advisors (RRA) Working Harbor & Coastal Economic Development Brief 6) Town Council Kickoff Visioning Questions 	Action: X Information:
	Staff Contact(s):	Reviewed by:
	Katie H. Nunez, Director of Planning & Zoning Administrator	Rick Keuroglan, Town Manager

Background: The Town has engaged the services of the Berkley Group for planning services for the former Railyard and Harbor Area properties. This meeting will be the kick-off session with Town Council and the consultants for this planning process.

As you will see from the attached Cape Charles Schedule, the consultants have booked Thursday, December 4, 2025 for a full day presence in our community. Throughout the day, the consultants will be meeting with Council Members either one or two at a time and interviewing them, using the attached Council Interview Questions as the jump off point for those interviews. In addition, the consultants will be touring the subject area during the day with Town staff.

Item Specifics: Berkley Group staff will be introducing themselves to the Town Council and the public and conducting their Town Council Kick-off Meeting with a powerpoint presentation (included) as well as an Economic Development Brief prepared by their subconsultant, Rural Resilience Advisors to assist in a discussion about selecting the three comparative communities we will utilize as part of this planning process.

Recommendation: To hear and participate in this interactive process with our consultants in the first of several public meetings for the Railyard and Harbor area Master Planning process.

Agenda

1. **Welcome and Introductions** (5 min.)
2. **What is the Railyard and Harbor Master Plan?** (25 min.)
 - a. Overview of purpose and outcomes
 - b. Project Schedule
 - c. How is the Community Involved?
 - i. Public events
 - ii. Steering Committee
3. **Comparable Communities Discussion** (Rural Resilience Advisors) (25 min.)
4. **Interactive Visioning** (Please have smartphone, tablets, or computer available) (25 min.)
5. **Questions and Next Steps** (5 min.)
 - Site Assessment
 - Economic Profile
 - Community Engagement



Cape Charles Railyard and Harbor Master Plan

Town Council Kickoff Worksession
December 4, 2025

Meeting Objectives



Introductions



What is the *Railyard and Harbor Master Plan*?

What is the Process?

How is the Community Involved?



Review Comparable Communities for Economic Profile



Railyard and Harbor Master Plan Visioning Exercise

Meet the Team

**BERKLEY
GROUP**



Catherine Redfearn
Project Manager

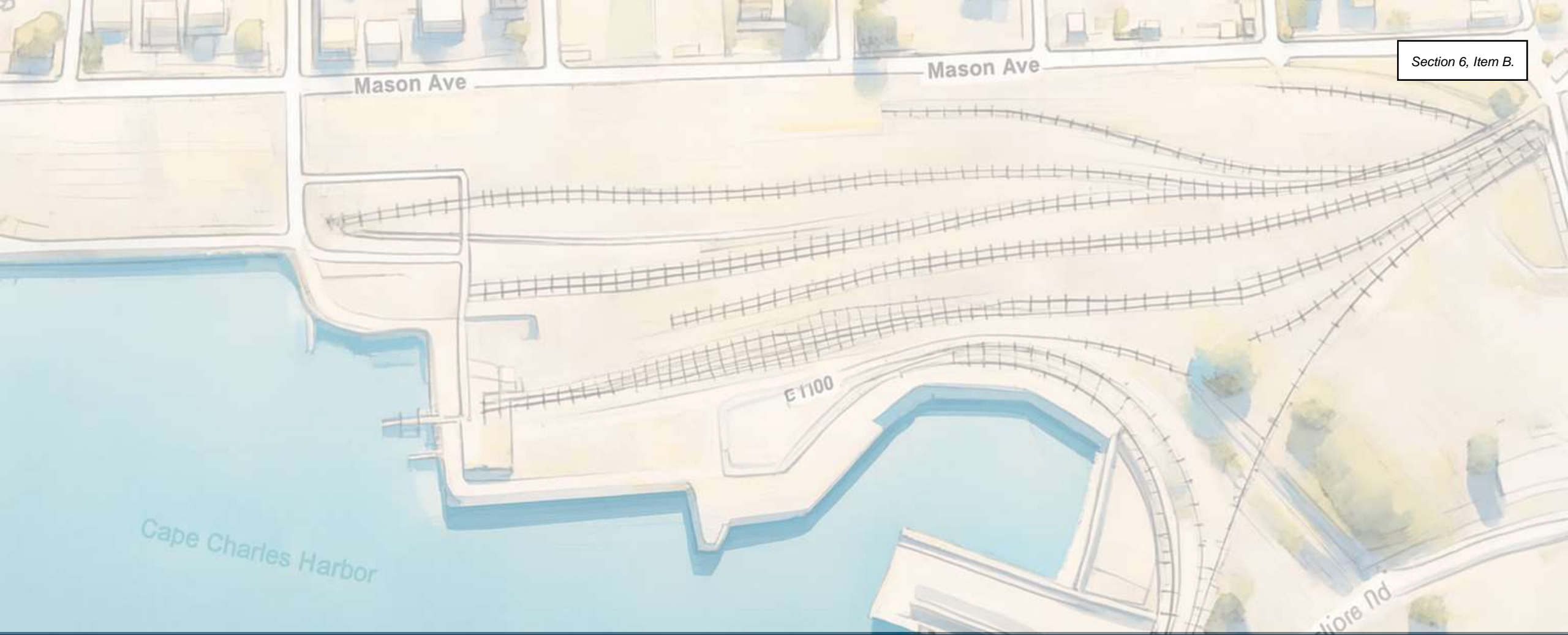


Brooke Frink, CZA
Project Support



Stephanie Mathena, AICP
Project Support

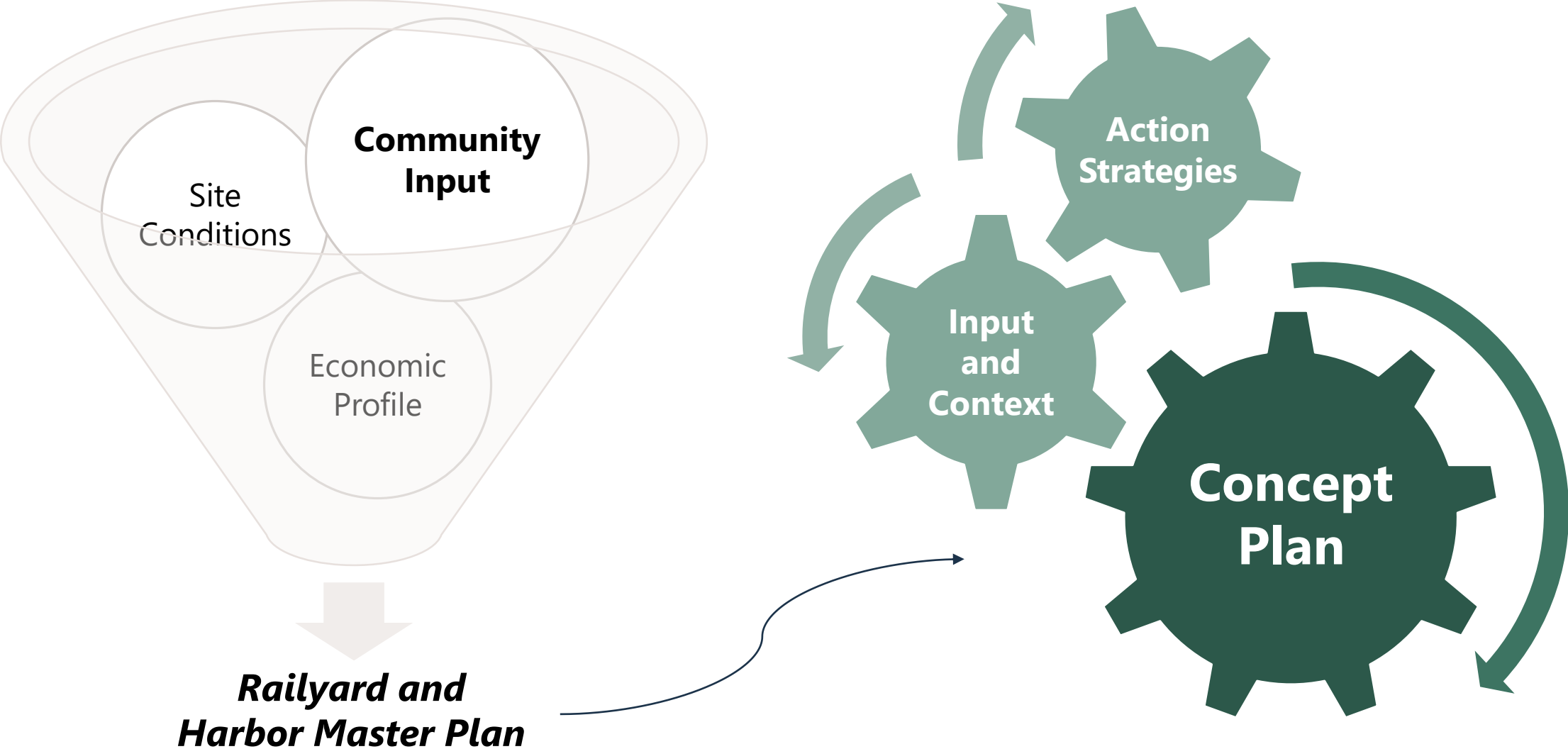




Section 6, Item B.

What is the Railyard and Harbor Master Plan?

Railyard and Harbor Master Plan



Concept Plan

What a Concept Plan Is...

- ✓ A community-driven and informed idea.
- ✓ A way to test ideas, illustrate possibilities, and begin community conversation.
- ✓ A big-picture vision for how a site could develop.
- ✓ A tool to identify land use patterns, site layout, and relationships between spaces.
- ✓ A strategic assessment for identifying opportunities, challenges, and desired outcomes.

What a Concept Plan Is Not...

- ⊙ A final design, construction, or engineering plan.
- ⊙ A commitment to a specific development or project.
- ⊙ A market-tested scenario.

Concept Plan *Example*




Annaburg Park Master Plan

Implementation and Next Steps (Continued)

3. Prioritize Funded Projects
Focus on projects that are already funded (or need minimal funding), or that are a top priority for the park to function. These may include erecting the donated windmill, implementing gardens that will be installed and maintained by local groups, working with an arborist to prune and shape the arborvitae hedge, reconstructing the parking lot to aid in stormwater function (including the biofiltration garden and ADA parking spaces), and installing the fountain if current funding is in place.

4. Coordinate Construction & Site Work
Select projects for design and implementation based on need, available funds, and logistics. Once the house is stabilized, the parking lot is reconstructed, and existing vegetation has been cared for, the flow of project implementation will vary. Ideally, if funding allows, the most site-intensive projects will be designed, engineered, and built first. These include the paved walking paths (including the historic driveway alignment), the picnic shelter and restrooms, the reconstructed wrap-around porches and porte cochere, new surface on the plaza and central promenade, the event pavilion, the playground and play equipment, and the stone seatwall in the historic tower location.

5. Complete Park Amenities
Once construction of the larger park features is complete in each section of the park, the focus can shift to the arboretum, additional gardens, site amenities such as benches, bike racks, and planters, signage and bronze interpretive statues. Funding for these amenities could be solicited through the City's Peeks for Parks program or a standalone Annaburg donation campaign.



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Project Schedule

Project Schedule



- ✓ Staff Kickoff
- ✓ Council Work Session & interviews
- ✓ Site Visit
- Technical Assessment and Mapping
- Economic Profile
- Community Event #1**
- Steering Committee #1**
- Site Preliminary Concepts
- Data and Engagement Report
- Steering Committee Meeting #2**
- Community Event #2**
- Draft Master Plan
- Steering Committee #3**
- Finalize Site Concept
- Steering Committee #4**
- Community Event #3**
- Council Adoption



How is the Community Involved?

Community Engagement Plan



Set the Vision

Community Event #1 (2-day)

Steering Committee #1 (Kickoff & Vision)

Steering Committee #2 (Site Analysis & Engagement Results)

React & Refine

Community Event #2 (2-day)

Steering Committee #3 (Draft Concept Review)

Finalize Concept & Plan

Steering Committee #4 (Final Concept Review)

Community Event #3

Steering Committee



Town Staff

- Administration
- Planning,
- Harbor Master
- Code Official

Town Council

Planning Commission



Harbor Area Review Board



Railroad Property Owners



Commercial Representatives

- Cherrystone Investments
- VA Marine Equipment
- Royal Farms



Community Representatives



Questions?



Rural Resilience Advisors

Economic Profile – Comparable Community Analysis

Section 6, Item B.





Visioning Exercise

Interactive Polling



Thank You!

PROJECT SCHEDULE			November	December	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26
Phase 1 - Project Management; Preliminary Concepts	1.1	Project Management	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V
	1.2	Staff Kickoff Meeting	V										
	1.3	Town Council Kick-Off/Interview		X									
	1.4	Site Assessment and Site Visit		X									
	1.5	Technical Assessment and Mapping											
	1.6	Economic Profile and Comparable Community Analysis											
	1.6	Public Engagement Event (#1)			X								
	1.7	Steering Committee Kickoff Meeting (#1)			X								
	1.8	Railyard Site Preliminary Concepts											
	1.9	Site Assessment and Engagement Report											
1.10	Steering Committee Meeting (#2, Virtual)				V								
Phase 2 – Plan & Concept Development; Public Engagement	2.1	Public Engagement Event (#2)					X						
	2.2	Draft Master Plan Development											
	2.3	Refinement of Railyard Site Concepts											
Phase 3 – Final Recommendations, Concepts & Plan Adoption	3.1	Steering Committee Meeting (#3, Virtual)						V					
	3.2	Finalization of Railyard Site Concepts											
	3.3	Plan Drafting											
	3.4	Steering Committee Meeting (#4, Virtual)								V			
	3.5	Public Engagement Event (#3)									X		
3.6	Plan Adoption										X		
3.7	Final Deliverable												

X = In-Person Attendance; V = Virtual Attendance



Vision & Big-Picture Goals

1. When you think about the Railyard and Harbor Site 10–20 years from now, what do you hope it becomes for Cape Charles?
2. What would a “successful” Railyard and Harbor Master Plan look like to you?
3. Do you see the Railyard and Harbor Site primarily as an economic engine, a public space, a neighborhood extension, or something else?
4. What should the Town absolutely preserve or enhance as redevelopment occurs?

Opportunities, Challenges & Constraints

5. What do you see as the biggest opportunities for the Railyard and Harbor Site?
6. What are the biggest risks or challenges of the Railyard and Harbor Site?
7. Are there political or financial constraints Council believes we should consider early in the planning process?

Community Values & Public Expectations

8. What do you think the public cares most about in the Railyard and Harbor Site? What do you anticipate will be the biggest community concerns (scale, access, environmental impacts, change in character, growth, compatibility/continuity with both the Historic District and Bay Creek)?

Railyard Site Priorities

9. What opportunities do you believe the Railyard and Harbor Site offers that are unique compared to other parts of Town?
10. Are there specific types of land uses, amenities, or development forms you think are most appropriate for the site?
11. Are there any uses or development patterns that you believe would be inappropriate or undesirable?
12. What public amenities or community benefits do you believe would be most meaningful for the Town?

Economic Development & Community Impact

13. What economic outcomes do you hope redevelopment will support (jobs, tourism, tax base, local businesses, marine economy)?
14. What economic sectors would the Town like to recruit for this area of Town, if commercial activity is envisioned for some or all of this land?

Closing Questions

15. What information do you need from our team to feel confident making decisions later in the process?
16. Is there anything we haven’t asked that you believe is critical for us to understand at this early stage?

Cape Charles, Virginia – Working Harbor & Coastal Economic Development Brief

This paper is intended to stimulate the thinking of the Town Council about which three (3) localities it wants to be evaluated as peer comparables. The Rural Resilience Advisors team has researched localities on both the east and west coasts of the US. Ultimately RRA recommends that the Town Council select from the list of thirteen (13) in this report.

Before the upcoming Council work session, we ask that Council members take time to do their own research on these localities. At the Council meeting, RRA will facilitate input from Council members to understand their priorities for selecting three localities. If there are other localities that Council members would like to consider that are not in this list, it would be helpful for the member to come prepared with information on the locality that is similar to the evaluation criteria used in this report

Executive Summary

Cape Charles is a historic bayside town of roughly 1,250–1,300 residents on Virginia’s Eastern Shore. It combines a walkable main street, a public beach, and a true mixed-use working harbor that hosts commercial watermen, industrial vessels, and recreational boaters. The town’s economy is built around tourism, accommodations and food service, retail, health care and social services, and transportation-related activity, with the harbor and marinas serving as critical economic and identity anchors. Compared with a curated peer set of small coastal towns and working harbors from Maine to Georgia, Cape Charles scores highly on overall comparability with places such as St. Michaels (MD), Rockport (MA), Beaufort (NC), Lewes (DE), and Boothbay Harbor (ME). These communities offer useful benchmarks for harbor management, tourism strategy, resilience planning, and historic district preservation.

Working Harbor Profile Definition & Purpose

A **working harbor** is a waterfront area whose primary function is to support **commercial, industrial, logistical, and water-dependent economic activities**. Unlike recreational marinas or scenic waterfronts, a working harbor is defined by **active maritime operations**, movement of goods and vessels, and infrastructure that enables commerce. Its identity is shaped by the industries it serves, the vessels it hosts, and the economic value it generates for the surrounding community and region.

Working harbors typically include **commercial docks, shipyards, cargo facilities, fuel terminals, fishing piers, and industrial waterfronts** that rely on direct access to navigable water. They serve as operational hubs where marine transportation, seafood industries, shipbuilding, maintenance services, and water-dependent industries converge.

Top Comparable Locations to Cape Charles (qualitative summary)

Top 10 Comparable Locations to Cape Charles (qualitative summary)

Location	Similarities to Cape Charles	Key Differences / Risks
St. Michaels, MD	Very close match on scale, historic harbor, mixed commercial/recreational fleet, tourism intensity.	More upscale lodging/dining profile; higher tourism price point.
Rockport, MA	Similar walkable village, arts + tourism, active harbor with strong visitor economy.	Larger arts/gallery cluster; New England climate and context.
Beaufort, NC	Harbor town with maritime history, tourism, research presence; similar mixed economy.	More exposure to hurricanes; larger marine science footprint.
Lewes, DE	Historic coastal town with harbor, ferry connection, retiree + tourism mix.	Denser development, more established tourism and retiree population.
Boothbay Harbor, ME	Working harbor with fishing fleet + tourism; similar harbor operations + seasonality.	Colder climate; stronger lobster fleet orientation; more seasonal closures.
St. Marys, GA	Small historic coastal town with marsh/river access, ferry connections, visitor appeal.	Stronger marsh/island tourism dynamic; part of Lowcountry environment.
Southport, NC	Historic harbor town with strong maritime identity, festivals, and visitor traffic similar to Cape Charles.	Greater exposure to Atlantic hurricane impacts; higher peak-season congestion.
Port Royal, SC	Historic waterfront community with redevelopment efforts, small-town coastal scale, and growing marina assets.	Greater regional competition (Beaufort/Lowcountry); warmer climate and higher hurricane risk.
Crisfield, MD	Strong watermen heritage, seafood identity, working harbor, and Chesapeake cultural parallels.	Economic distress, declining population, higher climate and subsidence vulnerability.
Wickford (North Kingstown), RI	Historic harbor village, walkable district, marinas, boutiques—close feel match.	New England climate; different tourism seasonality; higher cost base.
Old Saybrook, CT	Historic coastal town at river-mouth setting, boating/marina amenities, tourism + residential blend.	Larger community scale; stronger commuter influences; higher housing costs.
Exmore, VA	Nearby Eastern Shore town with corridor role, some tourism/retail parallels.	Less direct waterfront presence; fewer destination amenities than Cape Charles.

Comparative Scoring Index

To make peer comparisons more actionable, each location has been scored on five qualitative dimensions relative to Cape Charles (1 = low similarity, 5 = very close match):

- 1) Scale / population fit
- 2) Working harbor profile
- 3) Tourism & seasonality match
- 4) Historic / character match
- 5) Risk / resilience profile similarity

Comparative Scoring Index – Cape Charles Similarity

Location	Scale	Harbor	Tourism	Historic	Resilience	Overall Score
St. Michaels, MD	5	5	5	5	4	5.0
Rockport, MA	4	4	5	5	4	4.5
Beaufort, NC	4	4	4	4	3	4.0
Lewes, DE	4	4	4	4	4	4.0
Boothbay Harbor, ME	3	5	4	4	3	4.0
Southport, NC	3	4	4	4	2	3.75
Wickford (North Kingstown), RI	4	3	3	5	3	3.75
St. Marys, GA	3	3	4	4	3	3.5
Old Saybrook, CT	4	3	3	4	3	3.5
Crisfield, MD	3	4	3	4	2	3.5
Georgetown, SC	3	4	3	4	3	3.5
Port Royal, SC	3	3	3	3	2	3.0
Exmore, VA	2	2	3	3	3	2.5

Word Cloud

- ***"In one word, what should the Railyard and Harbor Area become in the future?"***

Ranking Question

- ***"As a vision is developed for the Railyard and Harbor Area, which guiding principles matter most to you? Please rank your choices. 1 = Most Important."***
 - Celebrate working waterfront heritage
 - Enhance public water access and amenities
 - Balanced mixed-use development
 - Support a vibrant, mixed-use economy
 - Protect natural and coastal resources
 - Promote high-quality, context-sensitive design

Multiple Choice Question

- ***"Which of the following community benefits should be prioritized in the Railyard and Harbor Master Plan. Please choose up to five."***
 - Waterfront and infrastructure upgrades
 - A destination for residents and visitors
 - A walkable, mixed-use development (housing and commercial)
 - Waterfront parks and public spaces
 - Public water access and boating access
 - Space for arts, culture, and music
 - Community history and story telling
 - Environmental education and interpretation
 - Green infrastructure and resilience features
 - Trails and pedestrian/bike improvements
 - Parking solutions
 - Small business opportunities, including water-based businesses (seafood market, water based recreational business)
 - Viewsheds and scenery
 - Site design and character