

Strategic Plan Update
Boonsboro Environmental Commission
2021- 2025 Goals & Objectives

(Adopted October 12, 2021)

BEC Mission: To develop and promote a healthy environment for the benefit and well-being of the citizens of Boonsboro through education, community awareness and involvement, sustainable practices, and responsible management of the environment.

Strategic Plan Goals: The BEC hopes to complete the following special projects by 2025:

- **Goal #1:** By June 2022, encourage the town to become an official Appalachian Trail Community. The AT is one of our area's most important visitor attractions.
- **Goal #2:** By June 2022, establish a community walking program to encourage healthy living practices among town residents.
- **Goal #3:** By 2023, open a community garden space for use by the residents of Boonsboro.
- **Goal #4:** By 2023, organize and implement a community-wide beautification program.
- **Goal #5:** By 2025, work with the Safe Routes to School program to develop safe walkways, bike paths and crosswalks.

In addition to the above new initiatives, the BEC members plan to continue working on established programs and projects, including the Farmers Market (May-November), the speaker programs, tree plantings and park/stream clean-up projects, and Green Team initiatives to maintain certification in Sustainable Maryland Certified.

RESOURCES

The BEC receives operating funds from the Town of Boonsboro, as well as grant funding for special projects.

There are many additional non-monetary resources in the local community, including local scout and student groups, members of the Tree Board and Park Board, relationships with Washington County and other state and national programs, which provide valuable information, guidelines for action and opportunities to network with other communities.

In addition, the town has achieved and maintained certification in two important programs over the last several years: **Sustainable Maryland Certified** (2014-2020) and **Tree City USA** (2015-2020).

The BEC has developed and maintained relationships with a variety of groups, businesses, agencies, and experts, including:

- Antietam Creek Watershed Alliance (ACWA)
- Apple Valley Waste
- Audubon Society
- Boonsboro Mayor and Town Council
- Entsorga WV
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Maryland Department of the Environment
- Maryland State Highway Administration

- Master Gardeners of Washington County – University of Maryland Extension
- Potomac River Keepers
- Washington County Ag Business Development Office
- Washington County Solid Waste Management
- University of Maryland - Sustainable Maryland Certified

FUTURE GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

The commission continues to broaden its resource base and to seek out grants and other funding opportunities for a variety of environmental projects that will benefit the town. Some of the agencies and organizations regularly awarding grants to municipalities are:

- Keep Maryland Beautiful – Clean Up & Green Up Maryland Grants
- Chesapeake Bay Trust – Green Streets/Green Jobs/Green Towns (G3)
- National Garden Clubs – Plant America Community Project Grants
- State of Maryland – Community Parks & Playground Program
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources – Program Open Space
- Sustainable Community Designation – State of Maryland
- Maryland State Highway Administration – Safe Routes to School Program

OUTLOOK

The Boonsboro Environmental Commission was originally organized as an official town commission in November 2012. Many of its original members had been actively involved in community improvement efforts before joining the new BEC, the first municipal environmental commission in the county.

The many strengths of the commission include action-oriented members who work with local and state agencies, as well as with certification programs such as Tree City USA (in conjunction with the Park Board) and Sustainable Maryland Certified. They also help with public outreach events, speakers, town newsletter articles and public education.

The covid pandemic has adversely affected many community projects and programs, including educational outreach initiatives. Hopefully, as the threat of covid wanes and citizens feel safe attending public gatherings, these programs can be restarted.

The challenge will be to re-engage the scout troops, master gardeners, local businesses, organizations, families and students in environmental projects that will benefit all residents. Marshalling volunteers has been a challenge in most communities; it just might be even more difficult in the near future.

The BEC stands ready for the challenge.

Awards:

- 2009 – Maryland Recycling Network Award: Boonsboro Recycling Task Force
- 2010 – Washington County Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Award: Boonsboro Green Fest Committee
- 2014 – Tawes Award for a Clean Environment (State of Maryland): Boonsboro Environmental Commission
- 2014 – Sustainable Maryland Certified – initial designation

— *The Strategic Plan is a working document which will be updated annually.*