

Upper Shore Regional Council and Rivers & Roads Consulting Unveil Marine Trades Workforce Development Feasibility Study for Rock Hall

Chestertown, MD (March 25, 2025) - The [Upper Shore Regional Council](#) (USRC) is pleased to announce the successful completion of a Feasibility Study for Marine Trades Training in Rock Hall, located in Kent County, Maryland. The study was made possible through collaboration with [Rivers & Roads Consulting](#), the Town of Rock Hall, Mayor James Cook, and funding from USRC's Municipal Development Consulting Program.

The Feasibility Study assessed the workforce development needs of marine-oriented businesses in Rock Hall. The study evaluated industry needs and workforce readiness by conducting surveys, interviews, data analysis, and engagement with key partners, including Chesapeake College, the Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board, and the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. The insights and concerns gathered shaped the development of a detailed phased approach, tailored to address the specific needs and priorities of the maritime community in Rock Hall.

"Marinas, repair shops, charter operations, and other marine-related businesses are at the heart of Rock Hall's economy," shared Rock Hall Mayor James Cook. "Recognizing the need to address the workforce challenges facing our local marine industry, the partnership between USRC and Rivers & Roads Consulting has allowed us to chart the best course forward. Through a strategic, phased approach, we are laying the groundwork for the workforce development that will support Rock Hall's marine trades sector for years to come."

The first step in the phased approach is hiring a program coordinator for Marine Trades Workforce Development. This position will address immediate workforce needs while laying the foundation for the potential creation of a full-scale training center in the future. The long-term goal is to expand from a single coordinator into a fully operational training hub that supports Rock Hall's growing marine trades industry.

"Through direct engagement with local businesses, educational institutions, and workforce leaders, Rivers & Roads Consulting gained valuable insights that are pivotal to addressing the workforce challenges in Rock Hall," said Sam Shoge, Partner at Rivers & Roads Consulting. "This Feasibility Study has been a crucial step in identifying the needs of Rock Hall's marine trades industry and devising solutions. It's been a privilege to work with USRC on several projects that have helped strengthen communities across the Upper Shore, and this initiative is another example of how thoughtful planning and collaboration can lead to long-term growth and success."

"The Feasibility Study in Rock Hall is a prime example of the impactful projects that can be made possible through the Upper Shore Regional Council's Municipal Development Consulting Program," said Susan O'Neill, executive director of the Upper Shore Regional Council. "This program was designed to help municipalities conceptualize, study, and prepare initiatives that address the specific needs and challenges of communities. We take great pride in supporting

Cecil, Kent, and Queen Anne's Counties, and we are thrilled to see the positive outcomes from this collaboration in Rock Hall."

To learn more about the Municipal Development Consulting Program and apply for funding, visit the Upper Shore Regional Council's [website](#).

The full Feasibility Study for Marine Trades Training is available on the River & Roads Consulting [website](#).

About the Upper Shore Regional Council: Since 2003, the Upper Shore Regional Council (USRC) has fostered planning and development in Cecil, Kent, and Queen Anne's counties. USRC affords federal, state, county, and local governments a regional forum to identify issues and opportunities. USRC plans and implements programs to improve the quality of life in the Upper Shore Region of Maryland.

About Rivers & Roads Consulting: Rivers & Roads Consulting is a regional leader in community, economic, and real estate development consulting. With a keen focus on driving transformative change, our firm collaborates closely with mission-oriented nonprofits, forward-thinking local governments, and ambitious entrepreneurs to conceptualize and execute initiatives that invigorate communities and stimulate sustainable growth.

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