

2013

Harford County

Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan



2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan

David R. Craig, Harford County Executive

County Council of Harford County

'Billy' Boniface, Council President
Dion F. Guthrie, District A
Joseph M. Woods, District B
James 'Capt'n Jim' McMahan, District C
Chad Shrodes, District D
Richard C. Slutzky, District E
Mary Ann Lisanti, District F

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Daniel J. Hickey, Chairman
Joseph J. Chenowith Sr.
James E. Claypool, Jr.
Leight D. Collins
Linda James
Thomas C. Mottley
Thomas M. Walsh

Parks and Recreation Staff

Arden C. McClune, Director
Paul S. Magness, Chief of Capital Planning & Development
Shanna R. Jay, Recreation Specialist V

Planning & Zoning Staff

C. Pete Gutwald, Director
Anthony S. McClune, Deputy Director
Janet Gleisner, Chief, Land Use and Transportation Planning Section
Patricia J. Pudelkewicz, Chief, Environmental Planning Section
Maury M. Thackston, GIS Technician, Mapping and Data Services

CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
CONTENTS	i
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	v
Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION	1-1
Purposes of the Plan	1-1
2010 State Guidelines.....	1-1
Local Agency Preparation of the Plan.....	1-2
Relationship to the Comprehensive Planning Process	1-2
Harford County Master Plan	1-2
Element Plans.....	1-3
Public Participation	1-3
Definitions Used in the Plan	1-4
Chapter 2: FRAMEWORK	2-1
Physical Characteristics	2-1
Water Features	2-2
Woodlands and Steep Slopes.....	2-2
Prime Agricultural Soils.....	2-2
Unique Natural Areas and Critical Areas	2-6
Development—Preservation Pattern	2-6
Demographic Characteristics.....	2-9
Population.....	2-10
Age	2-14
Gender.....	2-17
Housing.....	2-18
Income	2-20
Recreation Councils	2-20
Planning Framework.....	2-25
Department Accomplishments.....	2-25
Chapter 3: AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION ELEMENT	3-1
Introduction.....	3-1
Goals of State Plan.....	3-1

	<u>PAGE</u>
Agricultural Preservation Goals of 2005 LPPRP	3-2
Accomplishments in the Implementation of the 2005 LPPRP Goals	3-4
Preservation Programs	3-4
2008 Development Regulations	3-9
County Agricultural Land Preservation Program Improvements and Challenges	3-10
Harford County Agricultural Land Preservation Policies and Strategies	
2013 Forward	3-10
2009 Harford County Priority Preservation Area Element Plan.....	3-11
2012 Land Use Element Plan	3-14
Land Use Tiers – Senate Bill 236 – Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012	3-15
Summary	3-16
Chapter 4: NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT	4-1
Introduction.....	4-1
State Goals for Natural Resource Conservation.....	4-1
Overall State Goals.....	4-1
Maryland GreenPrint Conservation Priorities.....	4-3
Natural Resource Conservation Goals of the 2005 Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan.....	4-9
Accomplishment in the Implementation of the 2005 LPPRP Goals	4-11
2008 Development Regulations.....	4-11
Watershed Planning	4-12
Current Implementation Program	4-16
Targeted Conservation Areas	4-16
Easement Acquisition	4-17
Regulatory Measures – Harford County.....	4-17
Regulatory Measures – State and Federal	4-19
Partnerships.....	4-20
Resource Conservation Policies and Strategies 2013 Forward.....	4-21
2009 Natural Resources Element Plan.....	4-21
2012 Land Use Plan	4-24
Chapter 5: RECREATION, PARKS, AND OPEN SPACE ANALYSIS	5-1
Introduction.....	5-1
Goals of State Plan.....	5-1
Parks and Recreation Goals of 2005 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan.....	5-2
Support of State Goals and Strategic Guidelines	5-5
Land Acquisition	5-5

	<u>PAGE</u>
Development of Facilities.....	5-6
Capital Improvement Programming	5-6
Funding Sources	5-7
Needs Analysis.....	5-9
Land.....	5-12
Facilities.....	5-12
Greenways and Blueways – The Link Between Land Preservation and Recreation	5-21
Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway	5-22
Recreation Programs.....	5-24
Role of Private Facilities	5-25
Public Participation	5-26
Chapter 6: LAND PRESERVATION, PARKS, AND RECREATION PLAN.....	6-1
Introduction.....	6-1
2012 Land Use Element Plan.....	6-2
Public Facilities, Services and Safety	6-2
Policy/Program Goals & Recommendations.....	6-2
Capital Recommendations and County Priorities	6-8
APPENDIX: HARFORD COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES	A-1
Table A-1	1
Constant Contact Survey Results.....	5
<i>Maps</i>	
2.1 Water Features.....	following 2-2
2.2 Woodlands & Steep Slopes.....	following 2-2
2.3 Prime Agricultural Soils	following 2-2
2.4 Unique Natural & Critical Areas.....	following 2-7
2.5 Development Patterns.....	following 2-10
2.6 Recreation Council Areas.....	following 2-23
3.1 Land Preserved by Program 2012.....	following 3-4
3.2 Land Use/Deer Creek Valley Priority Preservation Area	following 3-11
4.1 Green Infrastructure	following 4-6
4.2 Targeted Ecological Areas	following 4-6
5.1 Existing Recreation Sites.....	following 5-10
6.1 Land Preservation Plan	following 6-12
6.2 Parks and Recreation Plan.....	following 6-12

Tables

2.1	Urban and Rural Population, 2000-2010, Harford County and Maryland	2-9
2.2	Population Harford County 2000-2010	2-12
2.3	Projected Population, Harford County, 2010-2025	2-13
2.4	Population Growth, Baltimore Metropolitan Counties, 2000-2010	2-14
2.5	Population by Age, Harford County, 2000-2010	2-15
2.6	Median Age, Harford County, 2000-2010	2-17
2.7	Gender, 2000-2010, Harford County and Maryland.....	2-18
2.8	Housing Units, 2000-2010	2-19
2.9	Harford County Median Household Income.....	2-20
2.10	Recreation County Activities FY 2012	2-22
3.1	Preserved Land by Program, 1982-2012.....	3-6
3.2	Protected Land Deer Creek Valley Priority Preservation Area.....	3-13
5.1	Recreation and Parks Budget, FY 2010-2013	5-8
5.2	Recreation Sites Map Key	5-10
5.3	Recreation Land Classification and Need, 2011	5-13
5.4	Recreation Land Need, 2011-2025.....	5-13
5.5	Recreation Facility Supply, 2012	5-14
5.6	Recreation Facility Demand, 2011-2025.....	5-14
5.7	Recreation Facility Needs, 2011	5-15
5.8	Recreation Facility Needs, 2015.....	5-15
5.9	Recreation Facility Needs, 2020.....	5-16
5.10	Recreation Facility Needs, 2025.....	5-16
5.11	Recreation Activity, 2011-2012.....	5-25
6.1	Proposed Capital Improvements, 2014-2028.....	6-15

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Parks, recreation, and open space are key components of a community's quality of life. As part of the Baltimore, MD metropolitan area, Harford County has developed an outstanding parks and recreation system to serve its growing population. With the leadership of the Harford County Parks and Recreation Department, a strong partnership of County and municipal government, local recreation councils and other public and private organizations, has developed to meet the leisure service needs and interests of residents. With the addition of private fundraising and volunteer assistance, as well as, State and Federal funding programs, the recreation opportunities are far more extensive than those which could be provided by County resources alone.

To fulfill the requirements of Maryland's Program Open Space (POS), the *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* describes the County's current status and efforts in recreation and parks, as well as, agricultural preservation and natural resource conservation. The plan also presents a long-range capital improvements program for parks and recreation.

Chapters of the plan are:

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Framework
- 3 Agricultural Preservation Element
- 4 Natural Resource Conservation Element
- 5 Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Analysis
- 6 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan

The following summary provides a brief look at key information about Harford County and the recommendations of the plan.

FRAMEWORK

The plan framework includes information on the physical and demographic characteristics and current planning policies of Harford County. Key information includes the following:

- Land in Harford County is developed along two highway corridors:
 - I-95/U. S. 40, an east-west corridor through the southern part of the County
 - MD 24, a north-south corridor from I-95 to the Bel Air area

The County has identified a "Development Envelope", anchored by the two corridors. County policy strongly encourages development to take place within

the Development Envelope to make maximum, efficient use of public infrastructure, including water and sewer services, and roads.

- Harford County population increased from 218,590 in 2000 to 244,826 in 2010, which represents a 12 percent increase in 10 years. This was slower than projected in the 2005 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan but represented the second highest growth rate in the Baltimore Metropolitan Region. Population is expected to increase by an additional 13.2 percent to 277,320 by 2025.
- Recreation councils are critical partners in the recreation system for Harford County. Recreation councils are nonprofit organizations charged with assessing public needs, operating recreation programs, coordinating volunteer efforts, and identifying capital needs at recreation facilities throughout the County. Each council conducts fundraising, submits requests to the County for capital projects, and maintains its own officers and administrative structure. Harford County has a total of 23 recreation councils. Fifteen of the councils are based geographically¹—the council is responsible for operating programs and scheduling facilities in a specific geographic section of the County (Map 2.6). Eight councils are based functionally—the council is responsible for operating programs and promoting a single, major, unique recreation site:
 - Anita C. Leight Estuary Center (environmental education center)
 - Cedar Lane (regional complex to accommodate field sports)
 - Eden Mill Nature Center (environmental education and industrial history center)
 - Equestrian Center Committee (equestrian, agricultural, and other community-based events)
 - Liriodendron (historic and cultural center)
 - ACPR Gymnastics Council (countywide gymnastics focused program)
 - Tollgate Woodshop (countywide wood-working facility and programming)
 - Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding Center (equine-centered therapy services and programming for individuals with developmental and disability challenges)

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION ELEMENT

Four major programs are utilized for agricultural preservation in in Harford County:

- Harford County Agricultural Land Preservation Program (HALPP) – County
- Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) – State
- Maryland Rural Legacy Program– State
- Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) – State

¹ Council jurisdictions are general in nature. The boundaries shown on Map 2.6 are approximate and not legally defined. Furthermore, all programs are open to all County residents.

The Harford County Agricultural Land Preservation Program helps landowners preserve land through district establishment, which provides financial incentives to preserve land without a permanent commitment, and through easement acquisition, which prohibits development on the property. Harford County dedicates one-half of the 1% local real estate transfer tax to agricultural preservation. Additional options for easement acquisition include State funding in the MALPF and Rural Legacy programs and Federal funding under the Farmland Protection Program. Harford County also uses the County zoning code and other land use mechanisms, such as the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, to further agricultural land preservation. Through 2012, a total of 47,046 acres have been preserved using the various programs (Map 3.1, Table 3.1).

Two key planning documents now form the basis of the Harford County Agricultural Land Preservation Program – the 2009 Priority Preservation Plan and the 2012 Master Plan and Land Use Element Plan. Additionally, the Tier Map as required by Maryland Senate Bill 236 – Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 with its associated subdivision controls will also significantly impact land use in the agricultural area of the County. The 2009 Priority Preservation Plan established the Deer Creek Valley Priority Preservation Area and set forth the goal of preserving 80 percent of the land in this area through the acquisition of permanent easements and protected State and County parkland. The 2012 Land Use Element Plan quantified this goal at 500 acres preserved within the Priority Preservation Area. Other tools for enhancing agricultural preservation efforts include revisions to the Transfer of Development Rights Program and the initiatives designed to maintain the viability of agriculture through expanded opportunities for agricultural diversification and on farm production.

The Land Use Element plan focuses on four topical areas – Land Use; Economic Prosperity; Public Facilities, Services and Safety; and Sustainability. The Land Use Section set forth the County policies applicable to Agricultural Preservation. The relevant sections are summarized below and serve as the Goals and Objectives for the Agricultural Preservation Element of the 2013 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan. Only those strategies addressing agricultural preservation are included; therefore the numbers are not consecutive.

LAND USE

POLICY: *Guide future growth and development in a sustainable manner that maintains or enhances quality of life throughout the County.*

LAND USE THEME – *Manage growth in a sustainable manner.*

Implementation Strategies

1. Revise the County's Transfer of Development Rights Program to establish receiving areas within the County's designated growth areas and incentivize its use to the maximum extent possible.

8. Maintain the goal of preserving 500 acres per year within the Priority Preservation Area.
9. Identify additional areas to be proposed for inclusion in the Priority Preservation Area.
10. Continue to preserve agricultural and forested lands to meet the objectives of the Priority Preservation Area Program.
11. Maintain the County's Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation certification.

NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Both the State of Maryland and Harford County have policies and priorities for natural resource conservation as established through numerous plans, programs and regulations. The State utilizes its GreenPrint mapping and analysis tool to identify the most ecologically valuable areas and to focus conservation efforts in these areas. The most significant areas are classified as Targeted Ecological Areas (TEA's) (Map 4.2). It is within these areas that the Department of Natural Resources will focus Stateside Program Open Space funds for land acquisition.

Harford County policies and programs for natural resource conservation are set forth through several plans:

- *Harford County 2012 Master Plan and Land Use Element Plan*
- *Harford County 2009 Natural Resources Element Plan*
- *Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program*
- *Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP)*

Harford County targets the area outside of the Development Envelope for the preservation of large forested areas and sensitive habitats. The County contains several Sensitive Species Project Review Areas. Natural resource conservation efforts continue within the Development Envelope through protections required during the development review process. Regulatory measures are found at the Federal, State and local level to limit disturbance of sensitive areas. The Watershed Implementation Plan sets forth the program for stream restorations and other projects to address the Federal mandates regarding the reduction of pollutants in the Chesapeake Bay.

A critical element of natural resource conservation in Harford County is partnerships among government entities, nonprofit groups and private citizens. In addition to public actions, many other groups interested in preserving the natural environment work to protect land and water-based resources. The Harford Land Trust, the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, and the Manor Conservancy are among key partners in the County's efforts to preserve natural resources. The Eden Mill Nature Committee and the Otter Point Alliance are Recreation Councils who supplement the Department of Parks

and Recreation's efforts for environmental education and the development of a stewardship ethic among the citizens of the County.

The 2009 Sensitive Areas Element Plan contains the current goals and policies of Harford County regarding natural resource conservation. This Plan identified policies and key implementation strategies to protect the following sensitive areas:

1. Streams, wetlands, and buffers
2. 100-year floodplains
3. Rare habitats, steep slopes and other significant habitats
4. Forested resource protection areas
5. Agricultural resource protection areas

Sensitive Areas Policy 1: Preserve and protect streams, wetlands, and buffers to maintain high quality water and ecologically rich areas.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Continue to implement projects identified in watershed studies that improve water quality.
2. Promote low impact development and green building practices to decrease impervious surface and impacts to water quality.
3. Support conservation groups in their effort to protect streams and wetlands by offering technical assistance to assist in securing funding and supporting these groups in their efforts to provide public educational opportunities in regard to environmental stewardship.
4. Improve coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Maryland Department of the Environment to ensure wetland regulations are being implemented and enforced.
5. Implement outreach programs that target ecologically rich subwatersheds that educate property owners on the importance of maintaining high water quality.
6. Protect the water quality of Tier II streams during the development of County plans and programs.
7. Identify and prioritize for conservation the most ecologically rich areas of the County.

Sensitive Areas Policy 2: Preserve floodplains in their natural state to limit flood loss, protect human life and health, and to maintain biological values and environmental quality of our watersheds.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Review and update the County's Floodplain Management Regulations.
2. Implement hazard mitigation opportunities such as voluntarily acquiring repetitive loss properties.
3. Identify floodplain management practices that will improve the County's rating under FEMA's Community Rating System to reduce flood insurance costs for County residents.
4. Identify ways to improve mapping of existing approximate floodplain areas (Zone A) and, where appropriate, map and regulate new floodplain areas in the County.
5. Utilize better topographic information from new technologies such as Lidar for permitting purposes in the floodplain.
6. Identify grant or other funding opportunities to restudy existing mapped floodplain areas that appear to be outdated or inaccurate.
7. Complete a countywide soil survey utilizing the latest digital, GIS, GPS technologies available.

Sensitive Areas Policy 3: Improve the protection of the County's rare, threatened, and endangered species and their habitats and steep slopes.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Coordinate with the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) and local organizations to prioritize and target properties with high habitat conservation values for conservation easement consideration.
2. Coordinate with the Department of Natural Resources in promoting the Maryland Landowner Incentive Program.
3. Acquire grant funding to reassess Habitats of Local Significance in the County's Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program.
4. Identify projects through the County's watershed plans or other methods that will improve the habitat of rare species in the County.

Sensitive Areas Policy 4: Improve the protection of the County's forest resources.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Identify and map large contiguous forested areas in the County and investigate mechanisms to conserve these areas.

2. Research incentives for residential lot owners to maintain trees and enhance habitat.
3. Implement riparian buffer plantings that are identified in the County's various watershed management plans.
4. Promote existing forest conservation programs such as the Forest Stewardship Program and Woodland Assessment Program.
5. Work collaboratively with landowners, land trusts, watershed organizations, and other regional partners to develop innovative actions to support the retention and stewardship of forest lands of critical importance.
6. Explore opportunities to give additional ranking points to properties with significant forest habitats for properties applying to the Rural Legacy Program.
7. Work with DNR Forestry and the County Forestry Board to develop sustainable forestry practices for eligible landowners.
8. Collaborate with State agencies to apply the State's Conservation Model and Greenprint to County efforts for improving and protecting forest resources.
9. Identify inventory and rank potential afforestation, reforestation and Conservation Resource Enhancement Program (CREP) sites within each watershed and prioritize the identified sites as priority planting areas.

PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ANALYSIS

Harford County has met the challenge to provide high-quality facilities and services for a growing and changing population. The County's park system and the recreation programs, in partnership with local recreation councils, have provided residents with constructive, life-enriching leisure and educational activities for more than 40 years.

The State goals for recreation and parks focus on making a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities readily accessible to citizens, using parks and recreation facilities as amenities to make communities, counties, and the State more desirable places to live, work and visit and using the State investment in parks, recreation, and open space to support the broader goals and objectives of local comprehensive / master plans. Harford County has worked to support these and other State goals through its program on land acquisition, facility development and capital improvement programming.

Funding for the Department of Parks and Recreation include both operating funds and capital project funds. The operating budget for the Department in FY 2013 was \$9.7 million to pay for staff, building expenses, maintenance and other expenses. The Department's recent capital budgets have fluctuated between \$4.5 million in FY 2011 to and \$10.2 million in FY 2013. However, Capital projects include funds generated

through the recordation tax, State grant programs such as Program Open Space and County bond and paygo funds. The recent economic downturn has resulted in significant reductions in recordation tax revenues and State funds.

The Harford County public recreation system is comprised of sites owned by municipal, County, State, and Federal government, and the Harford County Board of Education. The public system includes the following areas and facilities (Table A-1):

- 177 sites
- 13,683.5 acres of land
- 183 baseball/softball diamonds
- 199 football/soccer/lacrosse/field hockey fields
- 8 volleyball courts
- 86 outdoor basketball courts
- 96 indoor basketball courts
- 81 tennis courts
- 115 playgrounds
- 546 picnic tables
- 31 pavilions
- 5 swimming pools
- 1,500 feet of beach
- 34.8 miles of trails
- 10 concession stands
- 217 restroom seats
- 8 large boat ramps
- 5 small boat ramps
- 246 boat slips
- 7,665 feet of shoreline for fishing
- 9.4 acres of ponds
- 9 horseshoe facilities
- 6,025 parking spaces

Program Open Space sets a goal of 30.0 acres of local recreation land for every 1,000 residents (ac/000). The needs analysis conducted as part of the *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* identified a current inventory of 29.8 acres/1000. This represents an increase from the ratio of 27.7 ac/000 in the 2005 LPPRP. In order to maintain the current level of 29.8 ac/000 and accommodate the anticipated increase in population, Harford County will need to acquire an additional 959.2 acres of local recreation land by 2025.

The needs analysis determined that the current supply of individual recreation facilities is sufficient to meet current demands (Table 5.7). However, changing trends in sports and other leisure activities often create a need within a specific area even when conventional analysis indicates that the total number of facilities is adequate. The Harford analysis suggests that the County may need an additional 20 diamonds, 6 tennis courts, 2 golf courses, 2 boat ramps, and 1 mile of trails by 2020 to accommodate future population increases (Table 5.10). This needs analysis is based on a demand model from 2003 and fails to consider several significant issues in recreation programming. These issues include the inclusion of school facilities in the inventory and the restrictions on use of those facilities; the use of multipurpose athletic fields for soccer, football, lacrosse and field hockey, creating scheduling issues; the overlap of multipurpose fields and baseball diamonds, limiting their use for lacrosse; the popularity of out-of-season sports and the need to limit play on fields to prevent damage. The need for additional sports facilities was supported by the response to the online survey done by the Department of Parks and Recreation to gather input from the public regarding recreation facilities and programs.

LAND PRESERVATION, PARKS, AND RECREATION PLAN

The plan itself is contained in the final chapter of the plan document and is composed of two maps (6.1 and 6.2), policy recommendations in parks/recreation/open space, and a

capital improvements program. The Parks and Recreation Policy recommendations will guide the actions of the Department through the fifteen year planning period.

- *PR-1 Acquire additional recreation land, including waterfront properties, to help meet the needs of current and future residents.*
- *PR-2 Develop integrated greenway/trail systems with both public and private segments.*
- *PR-3 Monitor usage trends and add recreational opportunities and facilities that meet the needs of all segments of the public.*
- *PR-4 Provide active and healthy lifestyle opportunities for Harford County residents.*
- *PR-5 Work with Recreation Councils to continue to address the safety of recreation program participants*
- *PR-6 Develop additional community centers in appropriate areas.*
- *PR-7 Incorporate sustainable development and conservation practices in all Parks and Recreation parks and facilities.*
- *PR-8 Improve existing facilities and develop complementary facilities in support of the destination recreation/sports tourism market.*

The capital recommendations of the plan include 73 projects totaling more than \$250.86 million to be completed by 2025 (Table 6.1). An additional 1,129 acres are proposed for acquisition with a cost of \$27 million. Over the 15 year planning period, a total of \$188 million would be needed for development of all the facilities shown in plan. An additional \$24.8 million is needed for rehabilitation of existing facilities as they age. Meeting the goals of the *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* will require a substantial investment of State, County and private resources so that the Department can increase services to meet the needs of an expanding population. If fully funded by the State legislature, Program Open Space may yield \$1.5 – \$2.0 million dollars to Harford County each year for a total of \$22.5–\$30.0 million over the planning period. Local recordation tax revenues are also based on property sales and have been yielding \$2.0–\$2.5 million per year, for a total of \$30–\$38 million over the planning period. Other grant opportunities may include the Federal Highway Administration for the segments of the Ma and Pa Trail and State funds for the intergenerational centers. The County must actively pursue other State and Federal grants, as well as private foundation grants where appropriate. Major land acquisitions and construction of multipurpose centers must also be supported by paygo and/or bond funds as approved by the Harford County Executive and the Harford County Council, who will carefully balance available financial resources with the wide variety of public service needs.

This page is intentionally blank.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Parks, recreation, and open space are key components of a community's quality of life. As part of the Baltimore, MD metropolitan area, Harford County has developed an outstanding parks and recreation system to serve a growing population. Aided by State and Federal funding programs, a strong network of local recreation councils and partnerships with other public and private organizations, the Harford County Parks and Recreation Department has met the leisure service needs of residents well beyond County resources. Opportunities for team sports, individual recreation and special events are available to the community at the many parks and facilities in the County. As the community grows and changes in the future, it is important to plan for future parks and facilities and for meeting the recreation needs of the population. This plan sets forth the goals and policies which will guide the actions of the Department of Parks and Recreation over the fifteen year planning period. These goals and policies will be implemented through the capital project recommendations for the short, medium and long range planning periods.

To fulfill the requirements of Maryland's Program Open Space (POS), the *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* describes the County's current status and efforts not only in recreation and parks, but in agricultural preservation and natural resource conservation as well. The following introduction to the plan presents the context for the plan, including local policies that have directed land preservation, parks, and recreation efforts and other circumstances that have had significant impacts on County leisure services.

PURPOSES OF THE PLAN

2010 State Guidelines

In 2003, the *Guidelines for Local Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plans* (LPPRP's) required the inclusion of agricultural and natural resources sections in local LPPRP's in addition to the traditional emphasis on recreation and parks. The purpose was to help clarify for State and local stakeholders the relationships and distinctions between these areas of public interest. For all areas, the goal was to examine the set of State and local efforts, determine if they are complementary or conflicting, identify shortcomings, and recommend improvements for State and local administrations and lawmakers. The *2010 Guidelines* were revised to define current program goals and objectives accordingly and to update major components of the 2005/2006 plans. The intent is to minimize the need to generate plan content, eliminate unnecessary work, and focus the effort on achieving plan goals. Because the 2005 LPPRPs were so comprehensive, the plan content requirements for the 2012 local LPPRPs are much more limited:

Recreation and Parks Element: The major focus of the 2012 LPPRP, this element will address the recommendations for parks and recreation made in the 2009 State LPPRP.

Agricultural Land Element and Natural Lands/Resources: Brief update on the progress of local programs since the 2005 LPPRP.

Historic Preservation Element: Optional

Local Agency Preparation of the Plan

The Harford County Parks and Recreation Department is the lead agency and driving force behind the *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan*. The department is the plan coordinator and will have the primary role in implementing recommendations related to recreation and park services. The section of the LPPRP which focus on agricultural preservation and natural resource conservation are drawn from existing sources and County policies. Implementation of recommendations regarding agricultural preservation and natural resource conservation will fall primarily to the Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning. The two departments coordinate efforts regarding priorities for acquisition of passive parkland and environmental preservation easements.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

Harford County Master Plan

The Harford County Charter requires the Department of Planning and Zoning to “prepare and propose Master Plans”. Furthermore, the Charter requires the inclusion of a series of elements or components in the Master Plan which “further advance the purposes” of the Master Plan. Each of these elements needs to “describe how it relates to the other elements” in achieving the overall goals of the Master Plan.

Harford County’s Master Plan establishes an overall vision for the County to guide its future growth. The Master Plan also addresses the “Visions” of the State’s 2009 Smart Green and Growing Local Planning Act and recognizes the County’s role in regional planning efforts. It establishes a series of Guiding Principles that will connect the element plans that support the Master Plan. The element plans include the Land Use Element Plan and a series of functional element plans.

The Land Use Element Plan is viewed as the core element of the Master Plan since it provides the primary direction for achieving the Master Plan’s goal and guiding principles. It also designates land use categories throughout the County, and prescribes basic strategies that will guide the County in directing the location and form of future growth in a sustainable manner. The Land Use Element Plan identifies designated growth areas that are suitable for more intensive development. These include the Development Envelope, an inverted “T” shape generally described as the MD Route

24/924 corridors north to MD Route 23, U.S. Route 1 in and just west of Bel Air, and the areas generally south of I-95, the municipalities, the Rural Villages, Harford Community College, the HEAT Center, and areas designated as Mixed Office. Because these areas are also recognized by the State as Priority Funding Areas (PFA), they will be given precedence over other areas to receive State funding for improvements to roads, water and sewer, and other growth related needs. The State's Smart Growth law carefully states these areas are not to be used to encourage growth in rural areas.

Element Plans

The other element plans present the framework for providing services for the growth outlined in the Land Use Element Plan, as well as measures to help preserve the County's heritage. The responsibility for many of the plans lies with the Department of Planning and Zoning; however the Water and Sewer Master Plan, and the Solid Waste Management Plan are developed by the Department of Public Works, and the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan by the Department of Parks and Recreation. The Consolidated Plan, prepared by the Department of Community Services, has also been adopted in accordance with Federal requirements from HUD.

- Water and Sewer Master Plan**
- Solid Waste Management Plan**
- Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan**
- Consolidated Plan**
- Transportation Element Plan**
- Historic Preservation Element Plan**
- Natural Resources and Water Resources Element Plan**
- Priority Preservation Area Plan**
- Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program**
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is a critical element of planning in Harford County. The goal of the public participation process for the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan is to obtain input from a broad base of the population regarding their recreation and land preservation priorities and interests.

To be effective, the public participation process must be adaptable to new ways of communicating ideas and comments. Educating the public on the Plans and the process is the first step in a successful public participation program. With the wide use of the internet to provide information and solicit feedback, the Department of Parks and Recreation developed a survey to receive public comment regarding the local park system and recreation programs. Respondents were asked questions and could provide information on any or all of the topical areas; team and active sports facilities, environmental and nature programming; community facilities and individual activities,

facilities or programs for senior citizens and facilities or programs for individuals with disabilities.

Invitations to participate in the survey were extended via email to County Advisory Board, the Recreation Council Presidents, County employees, the therapeutic recreation community and other interest groups, such as participants at the Senior Centers and the Ma and Pa Heritage Trail Foundation. The Recreation Council Presidents were encouraged to forward the survey invitation to all active participants. Access to the survey was highlighted on the Harford County website and a press release forwarded to the media to provide information to the general public.

While electronic communication was widely utilized for this survey, it is important to provide alternative opportunity for input so that the broadest segment of the population is reached. A public meeting was held in the summer of 2011 and attendees were offered information in the topical areas and given the opportunity to complete the survey or provide other comments and information.

The draft plan was distributed for review and comments and posted on the Harford County website. Presentations were given to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Planning Advisory Board, the Environmental Advisory Board, and the recreation council presidents and a general information meeting was held to elicit citizen comments. The final draft plan is being forwarded to the Harford County Council for adoption as an element of *Harford County Master Plan*. Harford County Council will hold a public hearing as part of the legislative approval process.

DEFINITIONS USED IN THE PLAN

County land preservation and recreation plans in Maryland analyze recreational land in several ways, including acreage, service area, and acres per thousand residents served. The following terms, some applicable to land preservation and some applicable to recreation/parks, are used throughout the *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan*:

- ***Agricultural Land Preservation District***: an area in which normal agricultural activities are protected and encouraged, and which is formally established through Article XVI of the Harford County Code.
- ***Community Parks***: Lands providing active and passive recreational opportunities for all neighborhoods within either a specific, geopolitically-defined area or a radius containing a large, developed area. Can also serve specific, organized sports groups.
- ***Regional or Countywide Parks***: Large, multipurpose parks that draw participants from throughout the County. Provide organized and unorganized sports, active and passive recreation and preservation of sensitive natural areas.

- **Development Right:** The right to develop one residential unit on a parcel in the AG Agricultural zoning district, as prescribed in section 267-53(D)(4) of the *Harford County Zoning Code*.
- **Easement:** An encumbrance on land that restricts the owner's rights to develop or otherwise use the land for other than specified uses, such as agriculture, recreation, or open space.
- **Neighborhood Parks:** Parks of smaller size with limited opportunities for active and/or passive recreation (usually playgrounds) that draw participants only from the immediate area—usually walking distance.
- **Purchase of Development Rights:** A transaction resulting in compensation to an owner of land in the AG Agricultural zoning district in return for placing an easement on the property prohibiting the exercise or sale of development rights from the property.
- **Semipublic Recreation:** Recreational opportunities which are privately-owned and require a membership to participate. Membership is open to the general public, and fees are set so as not to exclude large segments of the population.
- **Transfer of Development Rights:** The ability to develop properties within the residential, business and industrial districts using development rights from parcels within the AG zoning district.

This page is intentionally blank.

Chapter 2

FRAMEWORK

The framework for any plan describes the area for which the plan is written. The framework for the *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* includes information in five important areas:

- **Physical Characteristics**—Information on the County’s forests, woodlands, streams, wetlands, Critical Areas (associated with the Chesapeake Bay), soils, steep slopes, unique natural areas, and development patterns will help guide decision on future park sites and recreation services.
- **Demographic Characteristics**—Information on the County’s population, such as growth in number of residents, age, gender, and income will help analyze current and future demand for recreation services.
- **Recreation Councils**—Information on the independent non-profit Recreation Councils and their role in recreation programming is important in understanding how leisure services are provided.
- **Planning Framework**—Information on the planning policies and regulations governing Harford County is essential background material to understand the factors in park location and development.
- **Department Accomplishments**—Information on the work of the Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation since 2005 highlights the facilities and projects which implemented the goals of the 2005 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Harford County is located northeast of Baltimore, Maryland, near the source of the Chesapeake Bay. The County is bordered on the north by the Maryland/Pennsylvania State line, on the east by the Susquehanna River, and on the south by the Chesapeake Bay.

Information on the physical characteristics of Harford County is presented below. The following features are mapped to provide graphic information on the basic environment of the County. This is a starting place for decision making about planning and land use.

- Water features.
- Woodlands and steep slopes.

- Prime agricultural soils.
- Unique natural areas and Critical Areas.
- Preserved lands.

The *Harford County Critical Areas Plan* and the *2009 Natural Resources Element Plan* contain more detailed information and inventories of the County's natural features and habitats of rare, threatened, and endangered species.

Water Features

Water features are significant for all three components of the *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan*. Wetlands, both tidal and nontidal, must be preserved. Floodplains should also be preserved, wherever possible. Structures in floodplains should be severely restricted, with only infrastructure and low-intensity uses allowed. Occasionally, diamonds and athletic fields with no accessories may be located within floodplains. Hydric soils cannot percolate water as well as other soils, which also severely limits development for septic systems and for facilities which need well drained soils.

Most of Harford's water features are located in the southern portion of the County (Map 2.1). Floodplains and tidal wetlands are found along many of the creeks, particularly as the waterways branch out from the bay.

Woodlands and Steep Slopes

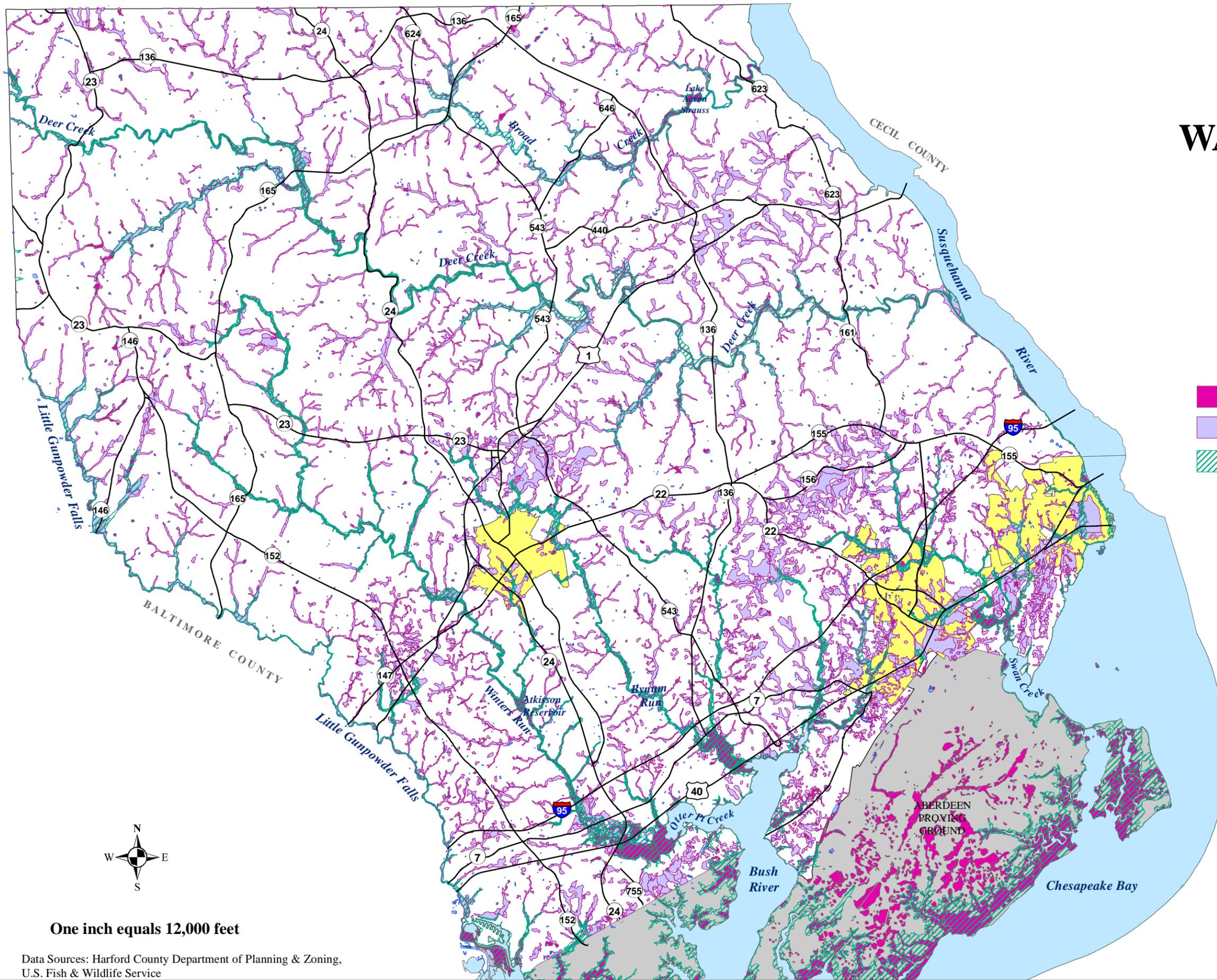
Woodlands cover large land areas scattered throughout Harford County (Map 2.2). Woodlands provide wildlife habitat, ecological balance, and, in some cases, recreation opportunities for residents. Much of the woodland cover is part of the Susquehanna State Park, along the Susquehanna River, and Rocks State Park, in the area of Jarrettsville.

Prime Agricultural Soils

Preserving agricultural land is a principal goal of both the *Harford County Master Plan* and the *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan*. Harford County has a significant amount of undeveloped prime agricultural soils, considering the development pressure outward from Baltimore. Prime soils are located throughout the County (Map 2.3), particularly near the Chesapeake Bay, in the Bel Air-Emmorton area, and in the northern sections of the County.

The classic land use dilemma centers on the fact the best land for agriculture is also the best land for development. Development along the I-95 corridor, where County policy focuses future growth, competes with agriculture for much of the prime land in the southern part of the County.

WATER FEATURES



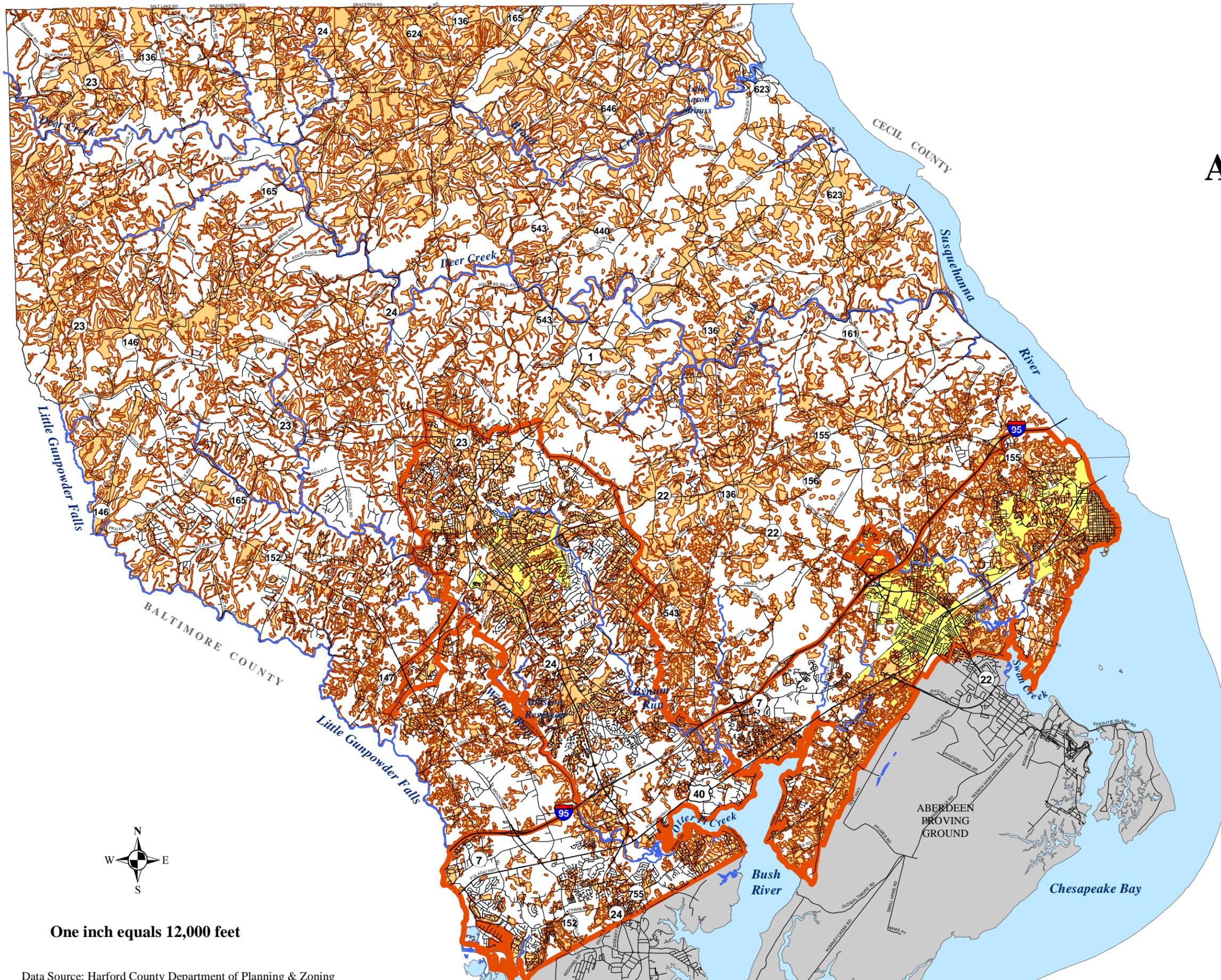
- National Wetlands Inventory
- Hydric Soils
- 100 Year Floodplain



One inch equals 12,000 feet

Data Sources: Harford County Department of Planning & Zoning, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

PRIME AGRICULTURAL SOILS



- Prime Agricultural Soils
- Development Envelope



One inch equals 12,000 feet

Unique Natural Areas and Critical Areas

Some lands should be preserved for unique natural characteristics or value in preserving special assets (Map 2.4). The Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Program is required by State law to manage land use within 1,000 feet of tidal waters and tidal wetlands. The program accomplishes two major purposes:

- Protects both water quality and natural habitat.
- Accommodates future growth while still respecting environmentally sensitive areas.

Critical Areas are divided into three management areas:¹

- Intensely Developed Areas
- Limited Development Areas
- Resource Conservation Areas

Each area permits varying types and intensities of development. The complete program is described in the *Harford County Critical Area Management Program* (Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning, February 2011).

Unique natural areas (Map 2.4) are home to species of plants and animals that are rare, threatened or endangered. Several areas in Harford County are habitats that are important to the local culture and history. In addition, large areas in the northern and central parts of the County and along major waterways are identified as Sensitive Species Project Review Areas (SSPRA), which are "...general locations of documented rare, threatened and endangered species".²

The Deer Creek Scenic River District (Map 2.4) is the area within 150 feet of either side of the creek. The district is established through the Maryland Wild and Scenic Rivers Program to preserve the natural beauty of the creek environment.

Development—Preservation Pattern

Land in Harford County is developed along two highway corridors (Map 2.5):

- I-95/U. S. 40, an east-west corridor through the southern part of the County
- MD 24, a north-south corridor from I-95 to the Bel Air area

The County has identified a "Development Envelope", anchored by the two corridors. County policy strongly encourages development to take place within the Development

¹ *Harford County Critical Area Management Program*, Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning, February 2011, pp. 1-2 through 1-4

² Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Heritage Service

Envelope to make maximum, efficient use of public infrastructure, including water and sewer services, and roads.

The U. S. Census Bureau defines “urban” and “rural” areas in terms of population density:³

- An “urban” area is a collective term referring to all areas that are urban. For Census 2010, there are two types of urban areas: urban clusters and urbanized areas. An “urbanized area” is an area consisting of a central place(s) and adjacent territory with a general population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile of land area that together have a minimum residential population of at least 50,000 people. An “urban cluster” is a densely settled territory that has at least 2,500 people but fewer than 50,000. The urban development pattern in Harford County is centered on the Development Envelope (Map 2.5).
- A “rural” area is any territory, population, and housing units not classified as urban.

Urban and rural areas typically have different recreation needs. Urban areas frequently have a sizeable population to participate in activities, but the denser development pattern makes land for recreation facilities much more scarce and valuable than in rural areas. In contrast, rural areas often have sufficient land for recreation facilities. However, the facilities often have only a small nearby service population, and many users must travel significant distances to use the facilities.

The population of Harford is more rural than in other parts of Maryland (Table 2.1). However, both Harford County and Maryland as a whole increased in urban population and decreased in rural population since 2000. In Harford, as elsewhere in the nation, the urban area continues to increase as the rural area decreases. One of the primary reasons for the increase in urban population is the location near to public services, such as recreation.

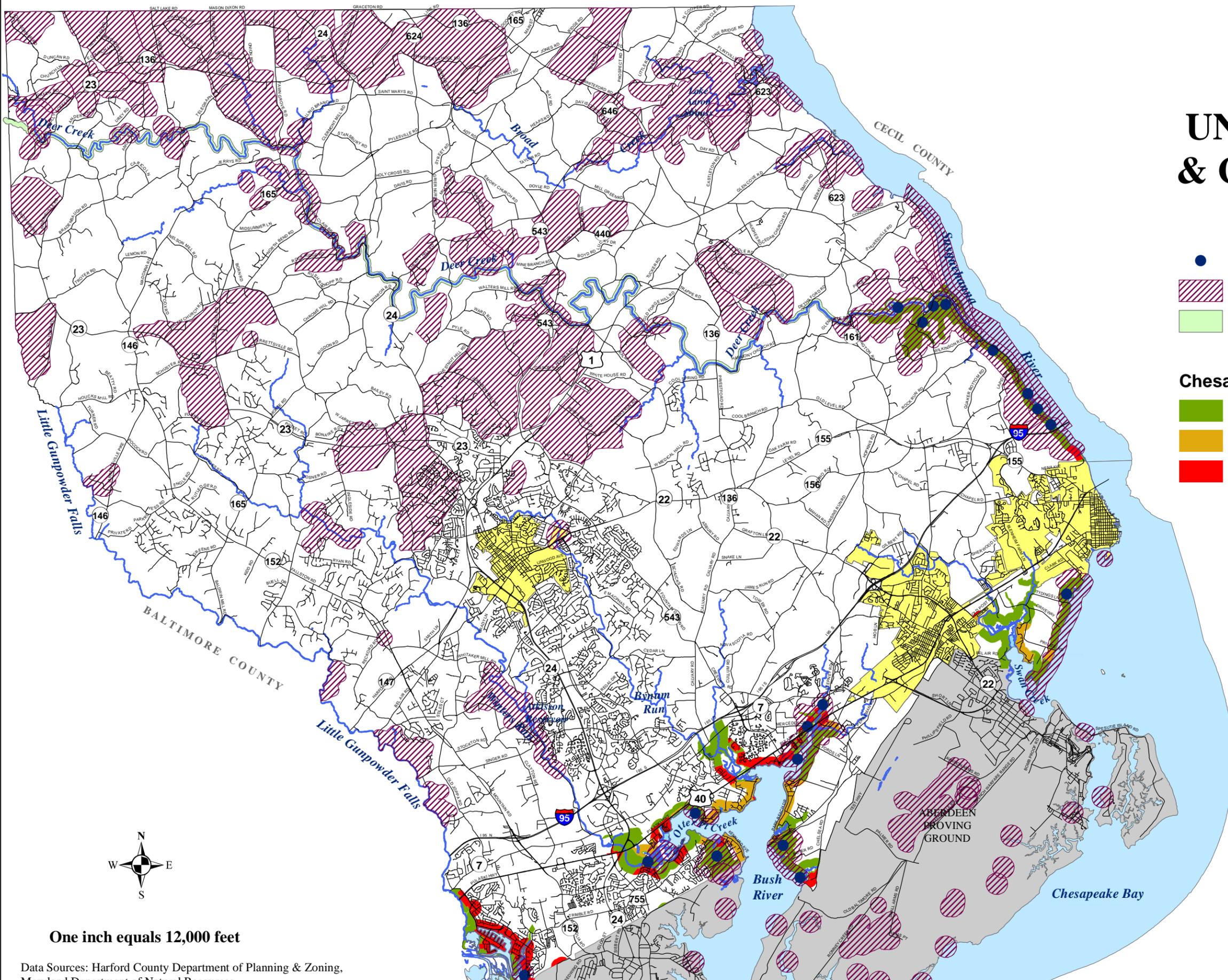
³ Definitions taken from the American Factfinder glossary, available at: http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en

UNIQUE NATURAL & CRITICAL AREAS

- Habitats of Local Significance
- Sensitive Species Project Review Areas
- Deer Creek Scenic River District

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program

- Resource Conservation Areas
- Limited Development Areas
- Intensely Developed Areas



One inch equals 12,000 feet

Data Sources: Harford County Department of Planning & Zoning,
Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Table 2.1
Urban and Rural Population, 2000 - 2010
Harford County and Maryland

Development Pattern	Harford County				Maryland			
	2000		2010		2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Urban	169,864	77.7	201,352	82.2	4,558,668	86.1	5,034,331	87.2
Rural	48,726	22.3	43,474	17.8	737,818	13.9	739,221	12.8
Total	218,590	100.0	244,826	100.0	5,296,486	100.0	5,773,552	100.0

Source: U. S. Census

County policy also strongly encourages land preservation outside of the Development Envelope. Both the State of Maryland and Harford County have programs that preserve agricultural land through easements. The Harford County program also includes “agricultural districts” in which farmers voluntarily enroll for possible tax abatements, eligibility to have development rights purchased, and other benefits. Several other programs utilize easements and other means to preserve land, including the Rural Legacy Program and the Maryland Environmental Trust. The Agricultural Preservation section of this plan provides detailed information on these program efforts since the 2005 Plan.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Demographics describe the people of an area using statistics. The *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* includes information on Harford County’s current and forecasted population, age, gender, income, and housing. Presentation and analysis of this information is needed by geographic area of the County. Where appropriate, the information is broken down and presented by recreation council service areas. Recreation councils are nonprofit organizations charged with assessing public needs, operating recreation programs, coordinating volunteer efforts, and identifying capital needs at recreation facilities throughout the County. Fifteen of the twenty-three recreation councils recognized by the Department of Parks and Recreation provide a variety of sports and other recreation activities for a defined geographic area. These areas are depicted on Map 2.6 and utilized for discussion of the demographics at a community level. Some of the information is reported by recreation council, using the geography noted on Map 2.6.

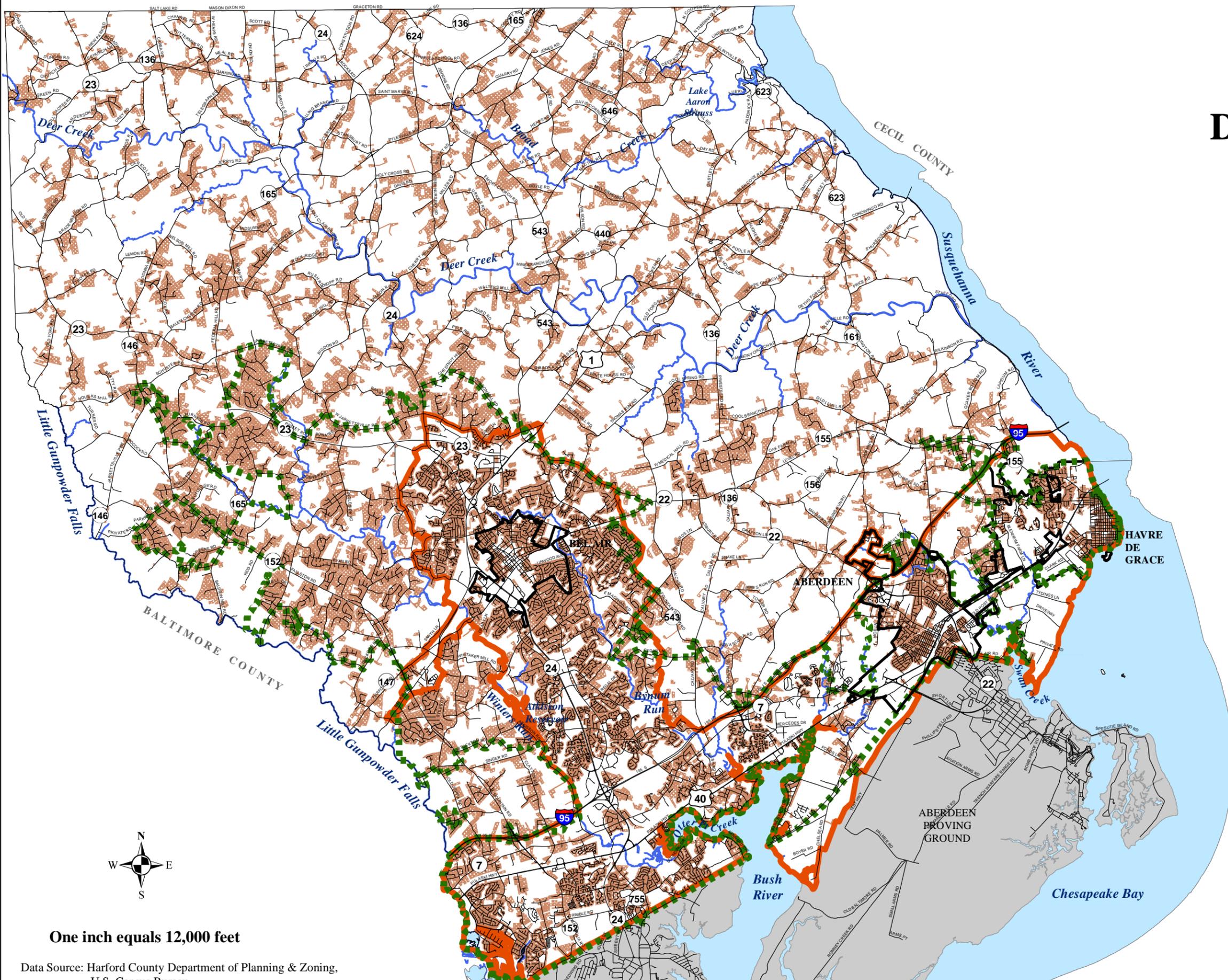
Population

The total population of Harford County was 244,826 in 2010 (Table 2.2). Population is larger in the southern portion of the County (e.g., Emmorton, Edgewood, Bel Air) in and along the development envelope near I-95 and proximity to the County seat of Bel Air.

Belcamp, Hickory/Fountain Green, Forest Hill and Emmorton remain the fastest growing recreation council areas since 2000, while Dublin-Darlington and Jarrettsville have grown the least. Several communities throughout the County experienced slower population growth (Table 2.2) due primarily to reduced household sizes associated with smaller families and an aging population.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

-  Development Envelope
-  Urban Areas
-  Residential Land Use
-  Municipalities



One inch equals 12,000 feet

Data Source: Harford County Department of Planning & Zoning,
U.S. Census Bureau

Table 2.2
Population
Harford County, 2000-2010

Recreation Council Area	2000	2010	Change: 2000-2010	
			Number	Percent Change
Aberdeen	16,622	17,827	1,205	7.2%
Bel Air	26,292	27,837	1,545	5.9%
Belcamp	9,471	11,442	1,971	20.8%
Churchville	10,545	11,500	955	9.1%
Dublin-Darlington	5,489	5,593	104	1.9%
Edgewood	27,052	31,096	4,044	14.9%
Emmorton	28,942	34,649	5,707	19.7%
Fallston	15,557	16,381	824	5.3%
Forest Hill	16,125	20,348	4,223	26.2%
Havre de Grace	13,634	15,341	1,707	12.5%
Hickory-Fountain Green	13,874	17,726	3,852	27.8%
Jarrettsville	9,260	9,596	336	3.6%
Joppatowne	10,976	11,580	604	5.5%
Norrisville	3,720	3,941	221	5.9%
North Harford	7,042	7,753	711	10.1%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>214,601</i>	<i>242,610</i>	<i>28,009</i>	<i>13.1%</i>
Aberdeen Proving Ground	3,989	2,216	-1,773	-44.4%
Total	218,590	244,826	26,236	12.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 & Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning.

Emmorton, Edgewood, and Bel Air will continue to be the recreation council areas with the highest population through 2025 (Table 2.3). Total County population is expected to increase by 13.3 percent by 2025. The largest numeric increases should occur in Emmorton, Edgewood, and Belcamp, likely because of development in the I-95 corridor.

Past growth in Harford County has, not surprisingly, followed a pattern of expanding the existing urban areas, such as Bel Air, often along major transportation arteries, such as MD 24 or U.S. 1. As a suburb of the Baltimore metropolitan area, Harford County has been concerned with rapid growth for several decades. From 2000 to 2010, the County's population grew by 12 percent. This growth rate is slower than previously expected. From 1990 to 2004, for example, the County's population grew by almost 30 percent, the second fastest rate among the six governments in the Baltimore Metropolitan Council. While the growth rate is lower than anticipated, Harford County continues

to grow (Table 2.4). Larger future population will require more recreation resources—such as land, facilities, programmers, and funding sources—to meet greater demand for leisure activities.

Table 2.3
Projected Population
Harford County, 2010-2025

Recreation Council Area	2010	2015	2020	2025	Change: 2010-2025	
					Number	Percent Change
Aberdeen	17,827	19,880	19,917	19,951	2,124	11.9%
Bel Air	27,837	28,200	29,137	30,045	2,208	7.9%
Belcamp	11,442	13,561	14,379	15,171	3,729	32.6%
Churchville	11,500	12,166	12,593	13,009	1,509	13.1%
Dublin-Darlington	5,593	5,944	6,064	6,180	587	10.5%
Edgewood	31,096	32,315	33,713	35,063	3,967	12.8%
Emmorton	34,649	35,556	37,924	40,218	5,569	16.1%
Fallston	16,381	16,605	16,911	17,208	827	5.0%
Forest Hill	20,348	20,594	21,916	23,201	2,853	14.0%
Havre de Grace	15,341	17,393	17,679	17,955	2,614	17.0%
Hickory-Fountain Green	17,726	18,235	19,664	21,056	3,330	18.8%
Jarrettsville	9,596	9,694	9,868	10,038	442	4.6%
Joppatowne	11,580	12,272	12,457	12,637	1,057	9.1%
Norrisville	3,941	4,092	4,237	4,378	437	11.1%
North Harford	7,753	8,028	8,304	8,573	820	10.6%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>242,610</i>	<i>254,534</i>	<i>264,764</i>	<i>274,683</i>	<i>32,073</i>	<i>13.2%</i>
Aberdeen Proving Ground	2,216	2,486	2,586	2,637	421	19.0%
Total	244,826	257,020	267,350	277,320	32,494	13.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 & Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning.

**Table 2.4
Population Growth
Baltimore Metropolitan Counties, 2000-2010**

County	Population		Change: 2000-2010	
	2000	2010	Number	Percent Change
Harford	218,590	244,826	26,236	12.0%
Anne Arundel	489,656	537,656	48,000	9.8%
Baltimore County	754,292	805,029	50,737	6.7%
Baltimore City	651,154	620,961	-30,193	-4.6%
Carroll	150,897	167,134	16,237	10.8%
Howard	247,842	287,085	39,243	15.8%
Total	2,512,431	2,662,691	150,260	6.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010.

Age

Age is a significant factor in recreation and parks planning. The recreation needs of young children and teens differ from those of adults and seniors. For instance, young children use playgrounds, while adults spend more time hiking or biking on trails. Emmorton, Edgewood, and Bel Air—the three recreation council areas with the greatest total population—also have the greatest number of children, teens, young adults, and adults (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5
Population By Age
Harford County, 2000-2010

Recreation Council Area	Children (0 - 9 years)				Teens (10 - 19 years)				Young Adults (20 - 39 Years)				Adults (40 - 64 Years)				Seniors (65 Years and Over)			
	2000	2010	No.	Percent Change	2000	2010	No.	Percent Change	2000	2010	No.	Percent Change	2000	2010	No.	Percent Change	2000	2010	No.	Percent Change
Aberdeen	2,334	2,323	-11	-0.5%	2,395	2,436	41	1.7%	4,296	4,352	56	1.3%	5,402	6,267	865	16.0%	2,195	2,449	254	11.6%
Bel Air	3,500	3,148	-352	-10.1%	3,974	3,753	-221	-5.6%	6,390	6,570	180	2.8%	8,771	9,876	1,105	12.6%	3,657	4,492	835	22.8%
Belcamp	1,717	1,729	12	0.7%	1,146	1,438	292	25.5%	3,348	3,661	313	9.3%	2,573	3,686	1,113	43.3%	687	927	240	34.9%
Churchville	1,431	1,185	-246	-17.2%	1,529	1,669	140	9.2%	2,372	1,931	-441	-18.6%	3,959	4,810	851	21.5%	1,255	1,905	650	51.8%
Dublin-Darlington	660	578	-82	-12.4%	801	736	-65	-8.1%	1,306	1,116	-190	-14.5%	1,985	2,225	240	12.1%	737	938	201	27.3%
Edgewood	4,753	5,021	268	5.6%	4,287	4,584	298	6.9%	8,267	8,859	592	7.2%	7,853	10,002	2,149	27.4%	1,892	2,630	738	39.0%
Emmorton	5,269	5,004	-265	-5.0%	3,743	4,685	943	25.2%	9,656	9,618	-38	-0.4%	8,328	11,923	3,595	43.2%	1,946	3,421	1,475	75.8%
Fallston	1,802	1,802	0	0.0%	2,355	2,414	59	2.5%	2,848	2,653	-195	-6.8%	6,527	6,790	263	4.0%	2,025	2,723	698	34.5%
Forest Hill	2,416	2,483	67	2.8%	2,562	3,253	691	27.0%	3,983	4,052	69	1.7%	5,457	7,785	2,328	42.7%	1,707	2,776	1,069	62.6%
Havre de Grace	1,991	1,714	-277	-13.9%	1,801	1,986	185	10.3%	3,664	3,398	-266	-7.3%	4,338	6,002	1,664	38.4%	1,840	2,240	400	21.7%
Hickory-Fountain Green	2,384	2,532	148	6.2%	2,357	3,268	911	38.7%	3,718	3,696	-22	-0.6%	4,430	6,765	2,335	52.7%	985	1,464	479	48.6%
Jarrettsville	1,174	910	-264	-22.5%	1,573	1,403	-170	-10.8%	1,852	1,639	-213	-11.5%	3,742	4,218	476	12.7%	919	1,425	506	55.1%
Joppatowne	1,356	1,374	18	1.3%	1,550	1,449	-101	-6.5%	3,035	2,900	-135	-4.4%	3,896	4,342	446	11.4%	1,140	1,516	376	33.0%
Norrisville	536	384	-152	-28.4%	588	603	15	2.6%	844	705	-139	-16.5%	1,343	1,688	345	25.7%	409	561	152	37.2%
North Harford	937	783	-154	-16.4%	1,157	1,184	27	2.3%	1,593	1,533	-60	-3.8%	2,591	3,160	569	22.0%	764	1,093	329	43.1%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>32,259</i>	<i>30,969</i>	<i>-1,290</i>	<i>-4.0%</i>	<i>31,817</i>	<i>34,861</i>	<i>3,044</i>	<i>9.6%</i>	<i>57,171</i>	<i>56,682</i>	<i>-489</i>	<i>-0.9%</i>	<i>71,195</i>	<i>89,539</i>	<i>18,344</i>	<i>25.8%</i>	<i>22,158</i>	<i>30,559</i>	<i>8,401</i>	<i>37.9%</i>
Aberdeen Proving Ground	1,001	358	-643	-64.2%	753	488	-265	-35.2%	1,803	1,147	-656	-36.4%	424	218	-206	-48.6%	8	5	-3	-37.5%
Total	33,260	31,327	-1933	-5.8%	32,570	35,349	2,779	8.5%	58,974	57,829	-1,145	-1.9%	71,619	89,757	18,138	25.3%	22,166	30,564	8,398	37.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 & Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning.

Changes in the age of a population will also modify the area's recreation needs. Age changes are illustrated by the change in the number of people in a specific age group. From 2000 to 2010:

- The numbers of teens, adults, and seniors increased in Harford County. The number of children and young adults decreased.
- Edgewood had the largest increase in number of children (age 0–9). Havre de Grace and Bel Air had the largest decreases.
- Most recreation council areas had an increased number of teens (age 10–19), with Bel Air, Dublin-Darlington, Jarrettsville, and Joppatowne experiencing a decrease.
- Belcamp also had the greatest increase in the number of young adults (age 20–39). Churchville had the greatest decrease in the number of young adults.
- Every recreation council area had an increased number of adults (age 40–64). Hickory-Fountain Green, Forest Hill, and Emmorton had the greatest increases.
- Every recreation council area had an increased number of seniors (age 65 and over). Emmorton and Forest Hill experienced the largest increases.
- The population of the Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) has significantly different age characteristics than the remaining population of Harford County.

Age changes can be broadly identified by changes in the median age of a population. The median age is the “middle” age: exactly half of the population is older than the median, and half is younger. Generally, if the median age increases, the population is getting older. If the median age decreases, the population is getting younger. Generally, the age of the Harford County population has increased since the 2000 Census (Table 2.6). The recreation council areas with the highest median age are Fallston, Jarrettsville, Norrisville, and Dublin-Darlington. The areas with the lowest median age are Edgewood, Belcamp, and Emmorton. The difference in age between the population of the APG and the remainder of Harford County is evident in the median age: 24.3 for APG, 39.4 for the remainder of the County.

Table 2.6
Median Age
Harford County, 2000-2010

Recreation Council Area	Median Age		Change	
	2000	2010	Years	Percent
Aberdeen	36.3	38.1	1.8	5.1%
Bel Air	37.4	41.1	3.7	9.9%
Belcamp	31.5	33.3	1.8	5.6%
Churchville	38.7	43.8	5.1	13.2%
Dublin-Darlington	38.8	44.0	5.2	13.3%
Edgewood	31.3	32.7	1.4	4.6%
Emmorton	32.3	35.1	2.8	8.6%
Fallston	40.5	44.7	4.2	10.3%
Forest Hill	36.1	41.2	5.1	14.1%
Havre de Grace	36.4	42.3	5.9	16.2%
Hickory-Fountain Green	33.6	35.7	2.1	6.4%
Jarrettsville	39.1	44.8	5.7	14.6%
Joppatowne	36.8	40.4	3.6	9.7%
Norrisville	37.5	44.0	6.5	17.2%
North Harford	37.7	42.9	5.2	13.7%
Aberdeen Proving Ground *	23.0	24.3	1.3	5.8%
Total	35.2	39.4	4.2	11.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010.

*Note: The population of Aberdeen Proving Ground resides and, largely, meets their recreation needs on the base.

Gender

Gender has traditionally been an important consideration in recreation. In recent years, both males and females are increasing participation in recreational activities. The proportion of females in both Harford County and the entire State increased slightly from 2000 to 2010 (Table 2.7). Harford has slightly larger proportion of males than other areas of the State.

Table 2.7
Gender, 2000 - 2010
Harford County and Maryland

Gender	Harford County				Maryland			
	2000		2010		2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Male	107,081	49.0%	119,693	48.9%	2,318,671	48.5%	2,791,762	48.4%
Female	111,509	51.0%	125,133	51.1%	2,462,797	51.5%	2,981,790	51.6%
Total	218,590	100.0%	244,826	100.0%	4,781,468	100.0%	5,773,552	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010.

Housing

Housing stock is also growing in Harford County (Table 2.8). As expected, the recreation council areas that have the greatest population (Emmorton, Edgewood, Bel Air) also have the largest housing stock. Conversely, the recreation council areas with the smallest population (Norrisville, North Harford, Dublin-Darlington) also have the fewest housing units.

Housing stock has grown at a faster rate than population (Table 2.8). The number of housing units in the 15 recreation council areas, which encompass all of Harford County except the Aberdeen Proving Ground, rose by 15.5 percent from 2000 to 2010, compared to a 12 percent increase in population. The faster rise in housing stock leads to two conclusions:

- The number of persons per housing unit is decreasing; in fact, from 2.62 in 2000 to 2.56 in 2010.
- While land values have declined since 2005 in conjunction with the overall economic recession, it remains more profitable for leading property owners to sell land for new residences and other developments rather than for less intense uses, such as parks, recreation, and open space.

Table 2.8
Housing Units, 2000 - 2010

Recreation Council Area	2000	2010	Change: 2000-2010	
			Number	Percent
Aberdeen	7,081	7,424	343	4.8%
Bel Air	10,443	11,717	1,274	12.2%
Belcamp	3,723	4,725	1,002	26.9%
Churchville	3,874	4,348	474	12.2%
Dublin-Darlington	2,146	2,254	108	5.0%
Edgewood	10,418	11,789	1,371	13.2%
Emmorton	10,990	13,630	2,640	24.0%
Fallston	5,566	5,995	429	7.7%
Forest Hill	5,800	7,441	1,641	28.3%
Havre de Grace	5,839	6,858	1,019	17.5%
Hickory-Fountain Green	4,775	5,930	1,155	24.2%
Jarrettsville	3,183	3,532	349	11.0%
Joppatowne	4,356	4,704	348	8.0%
Norrisville	1,317	1,465	148	11.2%
North Harford	2,481	2,875	394	15.9%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>81,992</i>	<i>94,687</i>	<i>12,695</i>	<i>15.5%</i>
Aberdeen Proving Ground	1,157	867	-290	-25.1%
Total	83,149	95,554	12,405	14.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010.

Income

Income can affect ability to participate in specific types of recreation, as well as the ability of recreation councils to fundraise. The recreation councils set fees for organized programs to cover instructors, referees and basic equipment. However, some activities require more personal equipment than others which can be a prohibitive expense for lower-income residents. Areas of higher income in Harford County are Fallston, Hickory/Fountain Green, Forest Hill, Jarrettsville, and Emmorton (Table 2.9). Recreation council areas of lower income are the Aberdeen, Havre de Grace, Dublin-Darlington, and Edgewood.

Table 2.9
Harford County Median Household Income

Recreation Council Area	Median Household Income	Relative to County Median
Aberdeen	\$51,800	-\$24,072
Bel Air	\$76,906	\$1,034
Belcamp	\$69,139	-\$6,733
Churchville	\$87,586	\$11,714
Dublin-Darlington	\$73,724	-\$2,148
Edgewood	\$60,578	-\$15,294
Emmorton	\$83,548	\$7,676
Fallston	\$95,366	\$19,494
Forest Hill	\$88,810	\$12,938
Havre de Grace	\$62,690	-\$13,182
Hickory-Fountain Green	\$93,550	\$17,678
Jarrettsville	\$95,131	\$19,259
Joppatowne	\$70,857	-\$5,015
Norrisville	\$96,915	\$21,043
North Harford	\$76,341	\$469
Aberdeen Proving Ground	\$49,438	-\$26,434
Total - Harford County	\$75,872	\$0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - 2005-2009 American Community Survey.

RECREATION COUNCILS

Recreation councils are critical partners in the recreation system of Harford County. Recreation councils are independent nonprofit organizations that focus on assessing

public needs, operating recreation programs, coordinating volunteer efforts, and identifying capital needs at recreation facilities throughout the County. Each council conducts fundraising, submits requests to the County for capital projects, and maintains its own officers and administrative structure. Council activities are coordinated through monthly meetings of the various recreation councils. The presidents of the recreation councils meet as a group regularly to address common issues and provide input on department initiatives and the capital budget. The Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation sets rules and regulations as operating guidelines for the recreation councils.

Harford County has a total of 23 recreation councils. Fifteen of the councils are based geographically⁴—the council is responsible for operating programs and scheduling facilities in a specific geographic section of the County (Map 2.6). Eight councils are based functionally—the council is responsible for operating programs and promoting a single, major, unique recreation site:

- Anita C. Leight Estuary Center (environmental education center)
- Cedar Lane (regional complex to accommodate field sports)
- Eden Mill Nature Center (environmental education and industrial history center)
- Equestrian Center Committee (equestrian, agricultural, and other community-based events)
- Liriodendron (historic and cultural center)
- ACPR Gymnastics Council (countywide gymnastics focused program)
- Tollgate Woodshop (countywide wood-working facility and programming)
- Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding Center (equine-centered therapy services and programming for individuals with developmental and disability challenges)

The recreation councils have a significant impact on the leisure services offered to Harford County residents. In 2012, recreation councils accounted for more than 4,200 programs with more than 115,000 registrants (2.10). Council budgets ranged from \$8,400 to a high of more than \$1 million.⁵ The Department also works in cooperation with community groups, such as the Ma & Pa Foundation, who provide volunteer services to the Department, but are not formal recreation councils. In 2012, 18 volunteers from the Ma & Pa Foundation provided 623 volunteer hours along the Ma & Pa trail segments. Additionally, some therapeutic recreation services are provided by the Department in conjunction with 328 volunteers, who provided 5,101 hours of services in 2012. All told, more than 18,000 volunteers logged over 539,000 hours of time to assist in recreation council activities. It is likely that figures in Table 2.10 understate the extent of council activity because of informal, and possibly inconsistent, volunteer registration. Clearly, volunteerism is alive and well in Harford County, and the recreation councils are a vital part in meeting the leisure service needs of County residents.

⁴ Council jurisdictions are general in nature. The boundaries shown on Map 2.6 are approximate and not legally defined. Furthermore, all programs are open to all County residents.

⁵ By comparison, the annual operating budget for the Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation is approximately \$9-10 million.

Table 2.10
Recreation Council Activities, FY 2012

Recreation Council Area	Programs	Registrants	Money Raised & Spent ¹	Volunteers	
				Number	Hours
Aberdeen	91	2,160	\$222,637.00	928	23,620
ACLEC	892	10,643	\$43,948.00	1,054	3,411
ACPR	20	3,123	\$299,734.00	80	975
Belcamp	26	1,048	\$69,847.00	219	4,762
Bel Air	435	13,503	\$1,157,084.00	3,230	106,545
Cedar Lane	0	0	\$411,994.00	8	1,200
Churchville	111	3,582	\$342,967.00	373	8,264
Dublin Darlington	46	943	\$58,952.00	147	5,847
Eden Mill	360	5,757	\$89,534.00	869	9,223
Edgewood	78	1,822	\$215,295.00	277	17,485
Emmorton	204	5,242	\$1,058,034.00	1,590	41,338
Equestrian Center	68	20,348	\$48,614.00	767	45,019
Fallston	224	9,908	\$867,542.00	2,040	52,090
Forest Hill	246	6,347	\$817,810.00	1,576	56,803
Havre de Grace	184	4,790	\$201,900.00	844	17,560
Hickory/Fountain Green	184	6,688	\$865,798.00	1,963	51,997
Jarrettsville	74	1,942	\$260,893.00	281	16,335
Joppatowne	98	2,802	\$343,674.00	613	28,254
Liriodendron	121	5,550	\$117,767.00	238	576
Norrisville	54	1,031	\$96,452.00	117	8,660
North Harford	123	2,846	\$452,637.00	392	31,365
Parks & Rec Woodshop	0	90	\$8,407.00	53	2,436
Total	3639	110,165	\$8,051,520.00	17,659	533,765

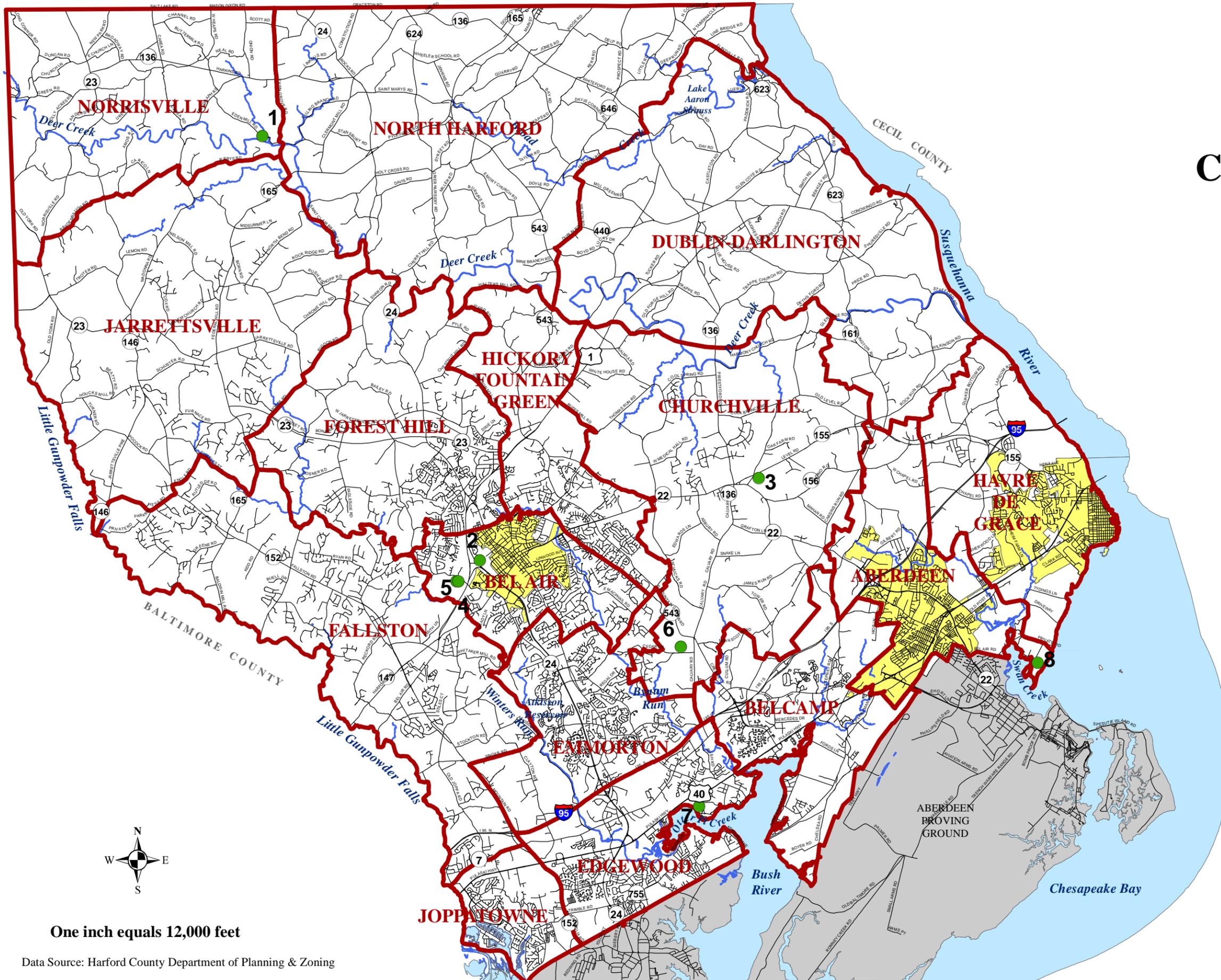
Note: Information is reported by the individual recreation councils. Differences in the amount of revenue, volunteers and volunteer hours are due in large part, to the mission, structure, service area and nature of activities offered by each council.

¹ Locally-raised funds, not including funding from Harford County n/a: not available

Source: Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation

This page is intentionally blank.

RECREATION COUNCIL AREAS



- Recreation Council Boundaries
- Special Committee Locations

1. Eden Mill Nature Committee
2. Liriodendron Foundation
3. All County Parks & Recreation Gymnastics
4. Equestrian Committee
5. Woodshop - Tollgate
6. Cedar Lane Sports Foundation
7. Otter Point Creek Alliance
8. Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding



One inch equals 12,000 feet

Data Source: Harford County Department of Planning & Zoning

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Introduced in the *1977 Harford County Master Plan*, the concept of the Development Envelope is the foundation for the planning policies of Harford County. The Development Envelope defined a geographic area for planned development—generally, the east-west corridor defined by I-95/ U.S. 40 and the MD 24 corridor north to Bel Air. Within the Development Envelope, public water and sewer services would be provided and more intense development focused. Other community facilities, such as roads, schools and parks and recreation would be constructed to serve the increased population. The concept was reinforced by the land use plans in 1988 and 1996, with minor modifications to the boundaries. The *2004 Master Plan and Land Use Element Plan* reconfirmed the Development Envelope as the Designated Growth Area and identified the need for revitalization and growth management efforts within the area. The *2012 Master Plan and Land Use Element Plan* identified an overall Plan, Goals and series of Guiding Principles. These Guiding Principles form the foundation for the Land Use Element Plan and in effect provide Harford County's vision for sustainability through growth management and resource conservation.

Outside the Development Envelope, preserving the rural character and the agricultural resources of the County has long been an integral part of the planning policies for Harford County. Agricultural preservation efforts coupled with agricultural economic development efforts have been a cornerstone of the master plan.

The County master plan and its functional elements integrate County policies regarding agricultural preservation, natural resource conservation, and parks/recreation to preserve community character. The plans establish the Development Envelope, focusing development within this area while preserving the rural character outside of the Development Envelope. Plan policies are written with a strong underlying environmental protection ethic and establish resource preservation as a high priority throughout the County. Furthermore, parks/recreation/ open space policies are critical to community desirability for the entire County population.

DEPARTMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since 2005, the Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation has worked diligently to implement the priorities set forth in the *2005 Harford County Land Preservation and Recreation Plan*. The department has developed successful partnerships with other County and State agencies as well as nonprofit organizations to construct three multipurpose facilities with another underway. The Havre de Grace Activities Center, an intergenerational recreation facility, opened in 2007 to serve as a senior center administered by the Harford County Office on Aging, a Boys and Girls Club, and a Parks and Recreation facility. Through cooperative efforts of the three entities, the Havre de Grace Center serves the community through the day and the

evening hours with a large multipurpose room, gymnasium, computer learning center, game and craft rooms.

The Edgewood Recreation and Community Center was expanded with a 10,500 square-foot gymnasium addition, doubling the overall building capacity and expanding its evening and weekend usage.

The Veronica “Roni” Chenowith Activity Center was constructed and opened in July 2010 and serves as an intergenerational recreation facility for the Fallston community. Through cooperative efforts with the Harford County Office on Aging, the center serves the community through senior programming, classes, and activities during the day and recreation council programming on the evenings and weekends.

To help serve the recreation needs of the growing Forest Hill and Hickory/Fountain Green communities, Harford County purchased an existing indoor arena and activity center. In addition to the soccer arena, the facility has two dance rooms, a large multipurpose room, meeting rooms and an pool facility. The pool is leased to a private contractor who is responsible for the day-to-day operations and programming for the pool area.

The Department also recognized a growing recreation program need with the construction of the Tollgate Woodshop and subsequent establishment of the Parks and Recreation Woodshop Recreation Council. This facility provides an array of small and large equipment to the woodworking public, in addition to skilled volunteers available for classes, training, and project advice.

In its effort to provide additional active space fields for the continuing local recreation demand, the Department constructed additional fields at new park facilities and expanded existing facilities. New sites included Rutledge Park, Prospect Mill Park, Chapel Road Park, and Graybeal Fields. Additional fields constructed at existing sites included Edgewood Park and Magnolia Elementary/Middle Schools.

Additionally, the Department partnered in the County Administration’s Synthetic Turf Field Initiative. This initiative, in conjunction with Harford County Public Schools, focused on replacement of natural grass high school stadium football fields with synthetic turf fields. Since 2008, 6 natural grass fields have been replaced with synthetic turf fields at County high schools. Through a memorandum of understanding with HCPS, these synthetic turf fields have been made available to local recreation councils outside of school use, adding fields which were previously not available.

The development of the Ma and Pa Heritage Trail began in the mid-1990s. The 2.0-mile Phase 1 segment opened in 1999, and the 1.75-mile Phase 2 segment opened in 2000. The trail has proven extremely popular with residents of all ages, including walkers, joggers, and bicyclists. A third segment (1.25 miles) connecting the trail to Edgeley Grove Park was constructed and opened to the public in 2008. The Department continues to actively pursue constructing a connection between the Bel Air and Forest

Hill sections of the trail. Additionally, the Department developed conceptual plans for a “northern” section of the trail in Whiteford for future consideration. However, numerous ecological concerns exist that must be addressed.

The 2005 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan emphasized the need to purchase additional land to serve both active and passive recreation needs. The County acquired a total of 460.7 acres of land between 2005 and 2012 through purchase and donation. One of the most significant purchases was the Preston property, a 28-acre property that will serve as the home of the future Jarrettsville Community Center, which, once constructed will provide a needed full-sized gymnasium to the recreation programs in the community.

The County also acquired several additional parcels to meet a variety of community recreation needs:

- The Vaughn property, a 43-acre addition to Eden Mill Nature Center and Park.
- Darlington Park, an 11.5-acre site to serve the active recreation needs of the Dublin/Darlington Recreation Council area.
- Dublin Community Park, a 63.8-acre site to serve the active recreation and community needs of the Dublin/Darlington Recreation Council area.
- Graybeal Fields, a 19.9-acre site, developed in conjunction with Red Pump Elementary School, to serve the active recreation needs of the Bel Air Recreation Council area.
- The Saddlevue Conservation Area, a 55.8-acre site in permanent protection, along a tributary of Winters Run.

The department also undertook numerous other small projects during the last six years to address a wide variety of recreation needs. With the cooperation and assistance of the Harford County Public Schools, the Department is working to replace outdated playground equipment at the County’s elementary schools. Additionally, the Department works with HCPS to maintain and improve the outdoor tennis and multi-purpose/basketball courts at school sites, as well as, recreation sites throughout the County.

This page is intentionally blank.

Chapter 3

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The 2010 Guidelines for the Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan noted that previous plans had described and evaluated local programs and issues related to the preservation of land for agriculture. MDP and MALPF have certified the farmland preservation programs of seventeen of Maryland's twenty-three Counties under the State Agricultural Certification Program. These certification applications and annual reports as well as similar information for the other six Counties provide the information needed about agricultural land preservation. The updates only need to address certain specific matters.

The Guidelines for the LPPRP set forth the two specific areas to be addressed:

The 2013 LPPRP should document the extent to which progress has been made toward achievement of the agricultural land preservation goals and objectives identified in the 2009 State LPPRP and the 2005 County LPPRP.

Provide reference to and summarize information from the County's comprehensive plan and implementing ordinances and programs as appropriate to provide content for this plan element.

GOALS OF STATE PLAN

Goals of the 2009 State of Maryland Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan regarding Agricultural Preservation

- Permanently preserve agricultural land capable of supporting a reasonable diversity of agricultural production.
- Protect natural, forestry, and historic resources and the rural character of the landscape associated with Maryland's farmland.
- To the greatest degree possible, concentrate preserved land in large, relatively contiguous blocks to effectively support long-term protection of resources and resource based industries.
- Limit the intrusion of development and its impacts on rural resources and resource based industries.

- Ensure good return on public investment by concentrating State agricultural land preservation funds in areas where the investment is reasonably well supported by both local investment and land use management programs.
- Work with local governments to:
 - Establish preservation areas, goals, and strategies through local comprehensive planning processes that address and complement State goals;
 - In each area designated for preservation, develop a shared understanding of goals and the strategy to achieve them among rural landowners, the public at large, and State and local government officials;
 - Protect the equity interests of rural landowners in preservation areas by ensuring sufficient public commitment and investment in preservation through easement acquisition and incentive programs;
 - Use local land use management authority effectively to protect public investment in preservation by managing development in rural preservation areas; and
 - Establish effective measures to support profitable agriculture, including assistance in production, marketing, and the practice of stewardship, so that farming remains a desirable way of life for both the farmer and the public at large.

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION GOALS OF 2005 LPPRP

The 2005 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan supported the County policies on agricultural preservation and emphasized the following four ideas:

- *A-1 Improve agricultural preservation programs so that preservation remains a viable option for landowners.*

Preservation programs must be improved continuously and marketed heavily to remain an attractive financial option for landowners. The county should pursue the following actions:

- 1. Enhance funding mechanisms that support the county's Purchase of Development Rights Program.*
- 2. Review the per acre price paid for easements annually to ensure that the pricing encourages participation in preservation programs.*
- 3. Ensure that preservation programs are implemented in a timely manner.*

4. *Focus preservation efforts in areas that will expand existing preserved areas.*
 5. *Increase the amount of land preserved to 55,000 acres by 2012.*
- *A-2 Promote other land conservation tools.*

In addition to the county's Purchase of Development Rights Program and Agricultural District program, several other tools are available to help the county preserve agricultural land. Specifically, the county should:

1. *Review and consider revision of the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) provisions as part of the comprehensive update of the zoning code proposed in the 2004 Harford County Master Plan and Land Use Element.*
 2. *Require that a preservation easement be placed on all or part of the sending parcel.*
 3. *Consider appropriate development standards for the receiving area as part of the proposed zoning code update.*
 4. *Review and consider revising the Conservation Development Standards (CDS) as part of the proposed zoning code update.*
- *A-3 Increase the use of buffers and right-to-farm requirements between agricultural and residential uses and promote land use patterns that support agriculture.*

One of the most important effective ways to maintain the attractiveness of farmland and the agricultural lifestyle is to minimize conflicts between farmers and residential neighbors. Harford County should pursue the following actions that will help both farmers and residents understand each other's needs:

1. *Propose a right to farm statement that would be required at the time of settlement and upon issuance of building permits to inform prospective buyers that the adjoining agriculturally zoned land may include to activities that may result in noise, dirt, odors, and the movement of farm equipment.*
 2. *Update the zoning code to require buffers on all properties being developed that adjoin agriculturally zoned lands.*
 3. *Evaluate rural road design standards to match the needs of agricultural industry.*
 4. *Implement land use polices and regulations that help maintain a critical mass of agricultural land to support that county's agricultural industry.*
- *A-4 Ensure that the agricultural district classification supports the agricultural industry.*

The agricultural district classification is intended to support farmers and agricultural activities. Several enhancements in both the regulations and their application can increase the support to local farmers. The county should:

- 1. Recognize agricultural support services as the primary economic base in the rural areas of the county by continuing to support the implementation of the Harford County Agricultural Economic Initiative.*
- 2. Revise the agricultural district regulations to ensure continuation and expansion of agriculture as a viable industry.*
- 3. Streamline the permitting process for commercial agricultural uses and value-added products at all levels of local government.*

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2005 LPPRP GOALS

As a basis for the review of Harford County's accomplishments in achieving the agricultural preservation goals of the State Plan and the 2005 LPPRP, a brief synopsis of the major land preservation programs utilized in Harford County is provided:

Preservation Programs

There are four major preservation programs used throughout the County; Harford Agricultural Land Preservation Program (HALPP), Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF), Rural Legacy Program and Maryland Environmental Trust (MET). These programs have protected over 47,000 acres in the County. The newest of these programs, the Rural Legacy Program, has protected over 2,317 acres while the HALPP Program has protected almost 28,473 acres. The MALPF has protected an additional 13,341 acres through October, 2012. The Maryland Environmental Trust has accepted 2,914 donated acres into their program. (Map 3.1, Table 3.1)

Harford Agricultural Land Preservation Program

The HALPP preserves farmland in two ways:

- Agricultural Districts – The County agricultural district program was established concurrent with the easement program in 1993. To participate in the district program, a farm must be at least fifty (50) acres in size with at least 50% of the land in prime agricultural soils (Class I, II, and III). Participation in the district program is typically the first step in the agricultural land preservation process. The program is voluntary, and property owners may withdraw from the program at any time. Property owners who place land in the district program receive a 50% credit toward the County portion of annual real estate taxes on the property as long as the property remains enrolled in the district.

2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan

**Table 3.1
Preserved Land by Program, 1982 – 2012**

Year	Land Preservation Program							TOTALS		
	Harford County PDR		MALPF		Rural Legacy		MET	Acres.	Easement Cost	Cost Per Acre
	Easement Acres	Easement Cost	Easement Acres	Easement Cost	Easement Acres	Easement Cost	Donated Acres			
Pre-1982			0	\$0			765	765	\$0	\$0
1982			232	\$107,972			458	690	\$107,972	\$156
1983			614	\$274,705			0	614	\$274,705	\$447
1984			69	\$67,045			42	111	\$67,045	\$604
1985			339	\$382,425			0	339	\$382,425	\$1,128
1986			561	\$236,250			196	757	\$236,250	\$312
1987			1,338	\$949,356			180	1,518	\$949,356	\$625
1988			510	\$388,656			0	510	\$388,656	\$762
1989			218	\$235,855			426	644	\$235,855	\$366
1990			446	\$678,970			50	496	\$678,970	\$1,369
1991			888	\$1,508,771			174	1,062	\$1,508,771	\$1,421
1992	207	\$314,824	122	\$206,193			55	384	\$521,017	\$1,357
1993	142	\$285,430	7	\$19,108				149	\$304,538	\$2,044
1994	1,687	\$3,458,764	660	\$1,131,161			13	2,360	\$4,589,925	\$1,945
1995	1,671	\$3,905,591	1,057	\$1,974,643			103	2,831	\$5,880,234	\$2,077
1996	4,804	\$9,918,238	728	\$1,449,191			59	5,591	\$11,367,429	\$2,033
1997	2,484	\$5,836,131	509	\$1,178,069				2,993	\$7,014,200	\$2,344
1998	2,845	\$6,405,820	260	\$535,570				3,105	\$6,941,390	\$2,236
1999	1,666	\$3,825,647	538	\$1,388,755				2,204	\$5,214,402	\$2,366
2000	974	\$1,823,129	740	\$1,847,769				1,714	\$3,670,898	\$2,142
2001	762	\$1,341,892	848	\$2,520,077	603	\$1,809,950	74	2,287	\$5,671,919	\$2,480
2002	923	\$2,257,093	640	\$2,412,014	393	\$1,294,293	230	2,186	\$5,963,400	\$2,728
2003	1,874	\$6,554,340	291	\$1,249,440	178	\$539,270		2,343	\$8,343,050	\$3,561
2004	1,255	\$4,432,305	389	\$1,272,175	247	\$1,060,165	74	1,965	\$6,764,645	\$3,443
2005	1,358	\$5,349,934	0	\$0	0	\$0	15	1,373	\$5,349,934	\$3,897
2006	763	\$4,510,771	0	\$0	121	\$449,054	0	884	\$4,959,825	\$5,614
2007	871	\$7,351,983	322	\$3,105,634	92	\$1,103,048	0	1,284	\$11,560,665	\$9,002
2008	2,971	\$31,734,018	339	\$4,422,191	107	\$1,141,790	0	3,418	\$37,297,999	\$10,913
2009	0	\$0	321	\$4,072,130	225	\$1,947,389	0	545	\$6,019,519	\$11,036
2010	0	\$0	199	\$1,420,323	0	\$0	0	199	\$1,420,323	\$7,137
2011	0	\$0	0	\$0	352	\$1,992,000	0	352	\$1,992,000	\$5,662
2012	1,216	\$7,193,903	156	\$1,025,000	0	\$0	0	1,373	\$8,218,903	\$5,987
Total	28,473	106,499,813	13,341	36,059,448	2,317	11,336,959	2,914	47,046	153,896,220	-----
Avg. Cost	\$3,740 per acre		\$2,703 per acre		\$4,893 per acre		-----	\$3,271 per acre		-----

Harford County Dept. of Planning and Zoning, revised 10/20/2012.

- Agricultural Easements – The County easement program has gained considerable recognition for timely settlements and innovative funding sources and payment options. The program has no minimum size as long as the farm has operated for the previous ten years and/or is located in a predominantly farming area and has development potential. Parcels submitted for easement do not have to be in an agricultural district.

Interested farm owners submit an application to the County. Applications are ranked on a point system that favors size, soil quality, percent of cropland, development potential, conservation practices, and connection to preserved properties. The landowner is notified of the property score and easement payment offering, and the parcel is placed on an open waiting list for funding.

Easement payment is based on the items in the ranking system. The maximum easement payment is adjusted each year after a review of demand and market conditions. The County dedicates half of the 1.0 percent real estate transfer tax to fund the program. The County further encouraged participation in the program by passing legislation granting landowners participating in the easement program a 100% County property tax credit up to \$50 per acre. (The County property tax credit is also available for easements in the State MALPF program.) Easement payments may also be made on an installment basis, which is attractive to the property owner in many circumstances.

Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation

The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation was established in 1978 to provide funds as an incentive to preserve private farmland. Individual farmers sell an easement to MALPF, restricting development of the property. The Governor and General Assembly allocate MALPF funds from the State transfer tax revenues.

Applications are submitted to a County coordinator, who forwards the application and recommendations of the local advisory board to the State. Easement values are established by appraisal, and property owners are encouraged to voluntarily discount the easement value (i.e., accept a lower amount of compensation than the appraisal indicates) in return for potential tax benefits. The State program previously included a district designation which was not permanent but made the property owner eligible for a 50% tax credit from Harford County. That program was discontinued but properties designated as MALPF districts could apply to become Harford County Districts.

Maryland Rural Legacy Program

The State of Maryland established the Rural Legacy Program in 1997 to encourage local governments and private land trusts to identify specific Rural Legacy Areas and competitively apply for funds to complement existing land preservation efforts or to develop new ones. Easements or fee estate purchases are sought from willing landowners in order to protect areas vulnerable to sprawl development that can weaken an area's natural resources, thereby reducing the economic value of farming, forestry,

recreation, and tourism. Rural Legacy Areas help to preserve contiguous parcels, including forested and meadow areas, as well as farmlands. Funding for the Rural Legacy Program is allocated each year by the Maryland General Assembly.

Two Rural Legacy Areas have been funded in Harford County. The Lower Deer Creek Rural Legacy Area was developed by a partnership of Harford County Government, the Deer Creek Watershed Association, and the Harford Land Trust. Administered by Harford County Government, the program in the Lower Deer Creek Rural Legacy Area encompasses 66,701 acres along the Deer Creek encompassing about 86% of the Deer Creek watershed from the Baltimore County/Pennsylvania line to the Susquehanna River. Applications are evaluated using a ranking system similar to the County program, and easement values are established accordingly.

The My Lady's Manor Rural Legacy Area straddles the Baltimore County/Harford County lines and includes about 6,300 acres in Harford County. The program for My Lady's Manor is administered by the Manor Conservancy.

Maryland Environmental Trust

Land preservation efforts in Maryland began in the 1970s with the establishment of the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET). MET accepts conservation easement donations from property owners. Donations are strictly voluntary and are utilized by landowners to protect natural resources and preserve scenic open space. The landowner who gives an easement limits the right to develop and subdivide the land, now and in the future, but still remains the owner. Easements are binding on future owners. Therefore, an easement assures that the land will never be used in a way contrary to the current owner's intent. Financial benefits in the form of tax deductions are also associated with easements. Easements often facilitate transferring land to family members without paying large estate taxes. MET may accept conservation easements on farmland as well as environmentally sensitive areas.

Funding for Easement Acquisition

Harford County dedicates one-half of the 1% local real estate transfer tax to agricultural preservation. Additional revenue sources for easement acquisition include State funding in the MALPF and Rural Legacy programs and federal funding under the Farmland Protection Program.

There are other programs that can be used to acquire easements for agricultural land preservation. These programs are:

- Farmland Protection Program – Federal
- Forest Legacy – Federal
- Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) – State
- National Scenic Byway Program
- Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network

Maryland Heritage Area Program

In addition, several private organizations in the County are active in land preservation. These include the Isaac Walton League, the Harford Land Trust, Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, and the Manor Conservancy. These private land trusts, however, may not require that a permanent easement be placed on the land.

2008 Development Regulations

In 2008, a comprehensive revision of the Harford County Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations was adopted to address many issues identified in the Land Use Element Plan and other element plan. Two components of the Zoning Code specifically implemented rural policy goals.

1. §267-30 Buffer Yards was added to the Zoning Code. This section established specific buffer requirements based on the zoning districts. The requirements identified widths and vegetation types. The updated Zoning Code requires a 100 foot buffer between private wells and agricultural uses on properties being developed residentially. The buffer must be located on the developing property. Also a 50 foot buffer is required on the agriculturally zoned land that is converted to residential use, and for projects utilizing the Conservation Development Standards (CDS) a minimum of 75% of the parcel will have to be preserved.
2. An improved right to farm statement was also added to the Subdivision Regulations to help minimize nuisance complaints.
3. The County's Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program was revised by requiring that development rights be transferred from agriculturally zoned lands to lands located within a Rural Residential or Rural Village designation on the Land Use Plan and limited the ability to transfer development rights between agriculturally zoned property. Also added was a requirement that properties being rezoned to Rural Residential (RR) or Village Residential (VR) after the effective date of the document (December 22, 2008) be located in a Rural Residential or Rural Village as designated on the most recent Land Use Plan Map. The 2008 Zoning Code update also prohibited the rezoning of agricultural land within the Priority Preservation Area to a residential classification. Subsequent to this, the Rural Residential land use designation was removed from the 2012 Land Use Element thereby prohibiting further reclassification of agriculturally zoned land to a Rural Residential designation. In 2010 the County also recorded its first Transfer of Development Rights under the new system adopted in 2009.

As recommended in the 2012 Land Use Element Plan, the Department of Planning and Zoning is developing an expanded TDR program. This program would create a market for development rights to generate income for property owners in return for the preservation of their agricultural land. The proposal includes a more comprehensive approach that establishes the Designated Growth Areas in the 2012 Land Use Plan as

receiving areas and the Agricultural Areas as sending areas and will look at options to permit certain types of development only if development rights are purchased.

County Agricultural Land Preservation Program Improvements and Challenges

Maintaining the viability of agricultural uses and of the preservation programs requires the development of new approaches to enhance existing programs. Legislative, financial and educational initiatives are needed. Harford County has implemented a number of the objectives from the 2004 Land Use Plan and the 2005 LPPRP. In 2007, the County adopted legislation which refined the Purchase of Development Rights Program to strengthen and clarify the code and provided the ability to adjust easement values through the administrative process. A title company and additional staff have been dedicated to the implementation of the program to expedite settlements. The County improved communication about the programs through the development of a Policy Guideline Fact Sheet. To promote agricultural preservation and local farmers of the County, the Buy Local campaign was widely promoted.

The 2004 Land Use Plan and the 2005 LPPRP set forth the County's goal of preserving 55,000 acres of agricultural land by 2012. The County preserved 1,284 acres of land in 2007, 3,418 acres in 2008, 546 acres in 2009, 199 acres in 2010, 352 acres in 2011 and 1,373 acres in 2012 bringing the total amount of preserved land to 47,046 acres. Due to the severe economic downturn which began in 2007, the 55,000 acre goal has not been achieved to date. The state and local property transfer tax revenues which are the primary funding mechanism for land preservation programs have been significantly reduced in recent years. Harford County did not settle on any HALPF easements in 2009-2011 although there were acres preserved under MALPF and Rural Legacy. The funding through MALPF was placed on a two year cycle in 2010, and the cash taken out of the program and backfilled with bond funds at a reduced amount. Rural Legacy funding has also dropped substantially statewide although Harford County has been successful in competing for these monies. Despite these challenges, Harford County has recently approved several purchases of development right which will preserve an approximately 300 acres when settled.

HARFORD COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION POLICIES AND STRATEGIES 2013 FORWARD

Two key planning documents now form the basis of the Harford County Agricultural Land Preservation Program – the 2009 Priority Preservation Element Plan and the 2012 Master Plan and Land Use Element Plan. The Tiers Map required by Maryland Senate Bill 236 – Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 and the associated subdivision controls will also significantly impact land use in the agricultural area of the County.

2009 Harford County Priority Preservation Area Element Plan

The Priority Preservation Area Plan focuses the County's Agricultural Preservation Program on a designated area. Maryland House Bill 2, the Agricultural Stewardship Act of 2006, required each County to establish a Priority Preservation Area boundary and set a goal of preserving 80% of the land within the Plan boundaries. The designed Priority Preservation Area should exhibit the characteristics noted in the Agricultural Stewardship Act. These are:

- Contain productive agricultural or forest soils, or be capable of supporting profitable agricultural and forestry enterprises where productive soils are lacking;
- Be governed by local policies that stabilize the agricultural and forest land base so that development does not convert or compromise agricultural or forest resources;
- Be large enough to support the kind of agricultural operations that the County seeks to preserve, as represented in the comprehensive plan; and
- Be accompanied by the County's acreage goal for land to be preserved through easements and zoning in the PPA equal to at least 80% of the remaining undeveloped areas of land in the area.

Harford County's Priority Preservation Area is located in the northeastern portion of the County and has the same boundaries as the Deer Creek Valley Rural Legacy Area. The area is designated Agricultural on the County's 2012 Land Use Map and is located outside the County's designated growth area. The area encompasses 66,701 acres, just about 86% of Harford County's portion of the Deer Creek watershed. Of these 66,701 acres, 51% (34,093 acres) have been protected with an additional 300+ acres awaiting settlement. This includes a combination of easements and protected park land. Three State Parks are located within the area – Rocks, Palmer, and Susquehanna. The majority of the easements are through the Harford County Agricultural Land Preservation Program, MALPF, or Rural Legacy with the Maryland Environmental Trust and Maryland Historical Trust holding the remainder. (Map 3.2)

In addition, there are 1,845 acres in Harford County Land Preservation districts. Participation in the district program is voluntary and is generally the first step in the preservation process. While in the district program, the property owner has the option to withdraw from the district or move on to the preservation program.

The selection of the Deer Creek Valley as a Priority Preservation Area clearly supports the State’s goals for land preservation. As previously stated, the area contains diverse agricultural activities that continue to evolve to meet the needs of a changing market. Combined with the area’s designation as a Rural Legacy Area, a portion of the area is a Certified Maryland Heritage Area. This demonstrates that the area not only contains but has also protected its natural, forest, and heritage resources, while maintaining its rural characteristics. A portion of the area is also included in Maryland’s Scenic Byway program, and efforts are underway to have it designated a National Scenic Byway. Both of these programs promote and support retaining the rural characteristics of the area.

Table 3.2
Protected Lands Deer Creek Valley Priority Preservation Area

Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF)	9,327
County Agricultural Preservation Program	16,979
Rural Legacy	2,317
Maryland Environmental Trust	461
Other Protected Lands	210
State Parks	4,158
County Parks	641
Total	34,093

Source: Harford County Dept. of Planning and Zoning, revised 10/20/2012.

As part of its regular efforts to promote agricultural preservation and rural heritage preservation, the County will develop a specific marketing campaign for the Deer Creek Valley Priority Preservation Area. This effort will emphasize not only the value of participating in the preservation program but also the variety of preservation options available.

The County will also work with the State to try and find a way to expedite the MALPF process for properties within the Priority Preservation Area. The length of the current process tends to discourage some landowners, and for others the timeframe is too long to address their more immediate financial issues.

Another important aspect of designating a Priority Preservation Area is addressing how changes to the area can be minimized while preservation efforts move forward. For property owners not interested in preservation, the changes to the Transfer of Development Rights program adopted in October 2008 expanded opportunities for utilizing their development rights. The changes provide for the transfer of development rights out of the agriculturally designated areas and also limited the percentage of rights that can still be transferred within the agricultural area. The changes also prohibit

additional rights from being established on the transferring property. These changes improve the viability of utilizing the TDR program plus they decrease the amount of new development that can occur within the Priority Preservation Area.

2012 Land Use Element Plan

The Harford County Master Plan and Land Use Element Plan was updated in 2012. This plan serves as the overall County policy regarding growth and development as well as preservation. With the full complement of element plans having been updated since the 2004 Master Plan and Land Use Element Plan, the 2012 Plan focused on the overall Plan, Goals and Guiding Principles. The Land Use Element plan focus on four topical areas – Land Use; Economic Prosperity; Public Facilities, Services and Safety; and Sustainability. The Land Use Section set forth the County policies applicable to Agricultural Preservation. The relevant sections are summarized below and serve as the Goals and Objectives for the Agricultural Preservation Element of the 2013 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan. Only those strategies addressing agricultural preservation are included; therefore the numbers are not consecutive.

LAND USE

POLICY: *Guide future growth and development in a sustainable manner that maintains or enhances quality of life throughout the County.*

LAND USE THEME – *Manage growth in a sustainable manner.*

Implementation Strategies

1. Revise the County's Transfer of Development Rights Program to establish receiving areas within the County's designated growth areas and incentivize its use to the maximum extent possible.
8. Maintain the goal of preserving 500 acres per year within the Priority Preservation Area.
9. Identify additional areas to be proposed for inclusion in the Priority Preservation Area.
10. Continue to preserve agricultural and forested lands to meet the objectives of the Priority Preservation Area Program.
11. Maintain the County's Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation certification.

Land Use Tiers - Senate Bill 236 – Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012

The Maryland General Assembly adopted the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 which required all counties to designate and adopt a countywide map that identifies four land use tiers by December 31, 2012. The establishment of these Tiers furthers the State's Smart Growth policy as envisioned in the 1992 Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act and the 2009 Smart, Green and Growing legislation. The goal is to reduce the impacts of large subdivisions with septic systems on farm and forest land, streams, rivers and Chesapeake and Coastal Bays. The Act provides an approach for planned development that will utilize on-site sewage disposal systems. In the fall of 2012, the Department of Planning and Zoning prepared the Tier Map in accordance with the standards of the legislation and provided opportunities for public comment prior to submittal to the State.

The legislation requires the creation of four Tiers of land use categories based on specific criteria. The Tiers identify where major and minor residential subdivisions may be located and what type of sewerage system will serve them.

Mapping Guidelines and Criteria:

Tier 1

Development within Tier 1 areas will be served by public sewerage systems. The intent of mapping Tier 1 is to identify areas for which public sewerage service is currently available. These areas are served by public sewerage systems and mapped as locally designated growth areas, or lie within a municipal corporation that is a Priority Funding Area and are served by public sewage systems;

Tier 2

The intent of Tier 2 areas is to recognize designated growth areas that are planned for future public sewerage service. These areas are planned to be served by public sewerage systems and shown in the Municipal Growth Element; or mapped locally designated growth areas; and include areas needed to satisfy demand for development at densities consistent with the long term development policy after consideration of the capacity of land areas available for development, including in-fill and redevelopment.

Tier 3

Tier 3 areas are planned for future development on septic systems. The intent of Tier 3 is to identify areas that are planned for large lot development, or are designated Rural Villages not served by public sewerage systems. These areas are not planned for sewerage service and not dominated by agricultural or forest land; and are not planned or zoned by a local jurisdiction for land, agricultural, or resource protection, preservation, or conservation; Tier 3 areas must be one of the following:

- a. Municipal corporations not served by a public sewerage system;

- b. Rural Villages as described in §5-7B-03(F) of the State Finance and Procurement Article;
- c. Mapped locally designated growth areas; or
- d. Areas planned and zoned for large lot and rural development.

Tier 4

The intent of Tier 4 is to identify areas where large lot development would conflict with the goals of the local jurisdiction for agricultural and natural resource land protection and with other areas of high rural resource value. Within Tier 4 areas, residential major subdivisions are prohibited, however minor residential subdivisions are allowed. Tier 4 areas are:

1. Areas planned or zoned by a local jurisdiction for land, agricultural, or resource protection, preservation, or conservation;
2. Areas dominated by agricultural lands, forest lands, or other natural areas; or
3. Rural Legacy areas, Priority Preservation Areas, or areas subject to covenants, restrictions, conditions, or conservation easements for the benefit of, or held by a State Agency, as defined in §9-206 of the Environment Article, or a local jurisdiction for the purpose of conserving natural resources or agricultural land.

The restrictions on subdivision in the Tier 4 areas will reduce opportunity for conflicts between agriculture and residential uses thus furthering agricultural preservation efforts. The Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 map may be viewed at <http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/PlanningZoning/Documents/641.pdf>

SUMMARY

By recognizing the Deer Creek Valley area as a Priority Preservation Area, the County has taken the first step toward establishing a preservation “belt” that creates a transition from the Development Envelope to the rural portions of the County. However, the designation of a Priority Preservation Area does not diminish the importance of preservation throughout the County. Rather, it recognizes the opportunity to expand existing contiguous areas of protected land, meet the requirements of HB2, and maintain the County’s MALPF certification. Thereby, ensuring land owners throughout the County the opportunity to select the MALPF program as a preservation option.

Because there will always be a demand for additional development within the Priority Preservation Area, the importance of setting and achieving an annual preservation goal increases in importance. Specific acreage goals can only be reached by educating landowners about the advantages of participating in preservation programs, and by continuing to offer them competitive market values for their land. Developing a new

Priority Preservation Area marketing program combined with the County's annual review of the per acre value established in the PDR program are essential.

Maintaining the viability of agriculture is closely tied to other elements of the local and regional economy. Expanding the opportunities for agricultural diversification and on-farm production are just part of the economic development strategies needed to provide farmers with more flexibility in a changing market. Value-added enterprises must also be recognized and supported as a valuable component of the County's agricultural base. Reevaluating the Agricultural Economic Development Initiative to identify ways to address these needs is an important part of maintaining agriculture in the Deer Creek Valley area and other areas of the County.

This page is intentionally blank.

Chapter 4

NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Guidelines for the Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plans focused on the Natural Resources Conservation Element as a way to examine congruency and differences between State and local conservation priorities and actions. The Department of Natural Resources and Planning are concerned whether State and local goals are complementary. If so, is the County supporting the achievement of those goals? If not, what can the State do to help? If local goals for resource protection encompass different geographies from the State's, what is the reason for those differences, and what steps are needed to reconcile and integrate priorities?

The local LPPRP should include the following content:

- A. What are the County's goals for natural resource lands and conservation?
- B. Local Priorities for Natural Lands and Resources
 1. Has the County established priority preservation and conservation areas for natural resources in its comprehensive plan?
 2. If so, do the boundaries of these areas differ from DNR's GreenPrint lands? If so, why? Please provide a map, if possible.
 3. What are the principle implementing ordinances and programs to achieve County goals for conserving natural lands and resources?
- C. Describe which parts of the program development strategy from the natural resources element of the last County LPPRP have been implemented and those that have not. Summarize changes in the County's intentions to conserve natural resources and priority lands.
- D. Provide reference to and summarize information from the County's comprehensive plan and implementing ordinances and programs as appropriate to provide plan content for this element of the LPPRP.

STATE GOALS FOR NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Overall State Goals

Achieving the State's goals for the conservation of natural resource lands depends on cooperation and coordination among federal and local governments, citizens, conservation organizations, and the private sector:

- Identify, protect, and restore lands and waterways in Maryland that support important aquatic and terrestrial natural resources and ecological functions, through combined use of the following techniques:
 - Public land acquisition and stewardship;
 - Private land conservation easements and stewardship practices through purchased or donated easement programs;
 - Local land use management plans and procedures that conserve natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas and minimize impacts to resource lands when development occurs;
 - Support incentives for resource-based economies that increase retention of forests, wetlands, or agricultural lands;
 - Avoidance of impacts on natural resources by publicly funded infrastructure development projects; and
 - Appropriate mitigation response, commensurate with the value of the affected resource.
- Focus conservation and restoration activities on priority areas, according to a strategic framework such as GreenPrint (which is not to be confused with the former easement program also called GreenPrint).
- Conserve and restore species of concern and important habitat types that fall outside the green infrastructure: rock outcrops, karsts systems, caves, shale barren communities, grasslands, shoreline beach and dune systems, mud flats, non-forested islands, etc.
- Develop a more comprehensive inventory of natural resource lands and environmentally sensitive areas to assist State and local implementation programs
- Assess the combined ability of State and local programs to:
 - Expand and connect forests, farmlands, and other natural lands as a network of contiguous green infrastructure;
 - Protect critical terrestrial and aquatic habitats, biological communities, and populations;
 - Manage watersheds in ways that protect, conserve, and restore stream corridors, riparian forest buffers, wetlands, floodplains, and aquifer recharge areas and their associated hydrologic and water quality functions;

- Adopt coordinated land and watershed management strategies that recognize the critical links between growth management and aquatic biodiversity and fisheries production;
- Support a productive forestland base and forest resource industry, emphasizing the economic viability of privately owned forestland; and
- Establish measurable objectives for natural resource conservation and an integrated State/local strategy to achieve them through State and local implementation programs.

The intention for this element of the LPPRP is that much of the required content be incorporated through reference to the County's comprehensive plan, implementing ordinances, program reports and procedures, and existing County maps. If the comprehensive plan and/or other documents and programs are in the process of being revised, the County, in consultation with MDP, can refer to existing draft plans and other ongoing planning activities as the best interim representation of the County's approach to natural resource land conservation.

Maryland GreenPrint Conservation Priorities

GreenPrint is a mapping and analysis tool developed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to identify the most ecologically valuable areas and to focus conservation efforts in these areas. This is an effort to keep portions of Maryland as ecologically sound as possible, to ensure healthy populations of plants and animals, to keep the State beautiful, and to conserve lands for future generations. Greenprint is based on the work of biologists at the Maryland Department of Natural Resources who have mapped where the most important natural places occur based on the analysis of over 30-years of collected data and the scientific expertise of agency ecologists.

Maryland's natural landscape is composed of many different types of natural resources ranging from forests, streams and rivers, bogs, coastal marshes, underwater nursery habitats and many others. Each of these different groups of natural resources require specialized approaches for conservation. DNR biologists have addressed this by creating several distinct GreenPrint Conservation Themes, each with its own set of maps, to identify where these valuable resources occur.

Themes

Maryland's natural resources have been grouped into the following five themes:

- Green Infrastructure and Forests Important for Protecting Water Quality - Green Infrastructure identifies the State's remaining large blocks of forest and wetlands (hubs) and the habitat pathways (corridors) that connect them. Forest Important for Protecting Water Quality identifies forests that are the most effective in preventing pollution to streams, rivers and bays. (Map 4.1)
- Wildlife and Rare Species Habitat - The *BioNet* map identifies areas that support
 - Rare, threatened, and endangered species;

- Rare and high quality plant and animal communities;
- Species of Greatest Conservation Need;
- Wildlife concentrations; and
- Important habitats needed for wildlife migration and movements related to climate change.
- Nontidal Streams and Fisheries – These watersheds are the most important for protecting Maryland’s freshwater aquatic biodiversity and include:
 - Stronghold Watersheds supporting high fish, amphibian, reptile and mussel biodiversity.
 - Sentinel Site Watersheds supporting high quality, long-term monitoring sites important for understanding the effects of environmental and land use change.
 - Tier II Watersheds supporting high quality streams under regulatory anti-degradation protection.
 - Cold Water Preservation Areas support aquatic species that require cool water to survive.
- Tidal Fisheries, Bay and Coastal Ecosystems - These areas provide high quality coastal habitat and are important for supporting productive anadromous fisheries like striped bass, shad, herring and perch. These areas include:
 - High Priority Blue Infrastructure Shorelines and Watersheds - high quality coastal habitat, critical natural resources and associated human uses in tidal waters and near-shore areas.
 - Priority Anadromous Spawning Watersheds - important spawning and nursery habitat for commercial and recreational anadromous fisheries
- Areas Important for Climate Change Adaption - As sea level rises, wetlands along the coastline will move landwards in response. This map of Wetland Adaptation Areas identifies areas likely to be important future wetland habitats

Targeted Ecological Areas (TEAs)

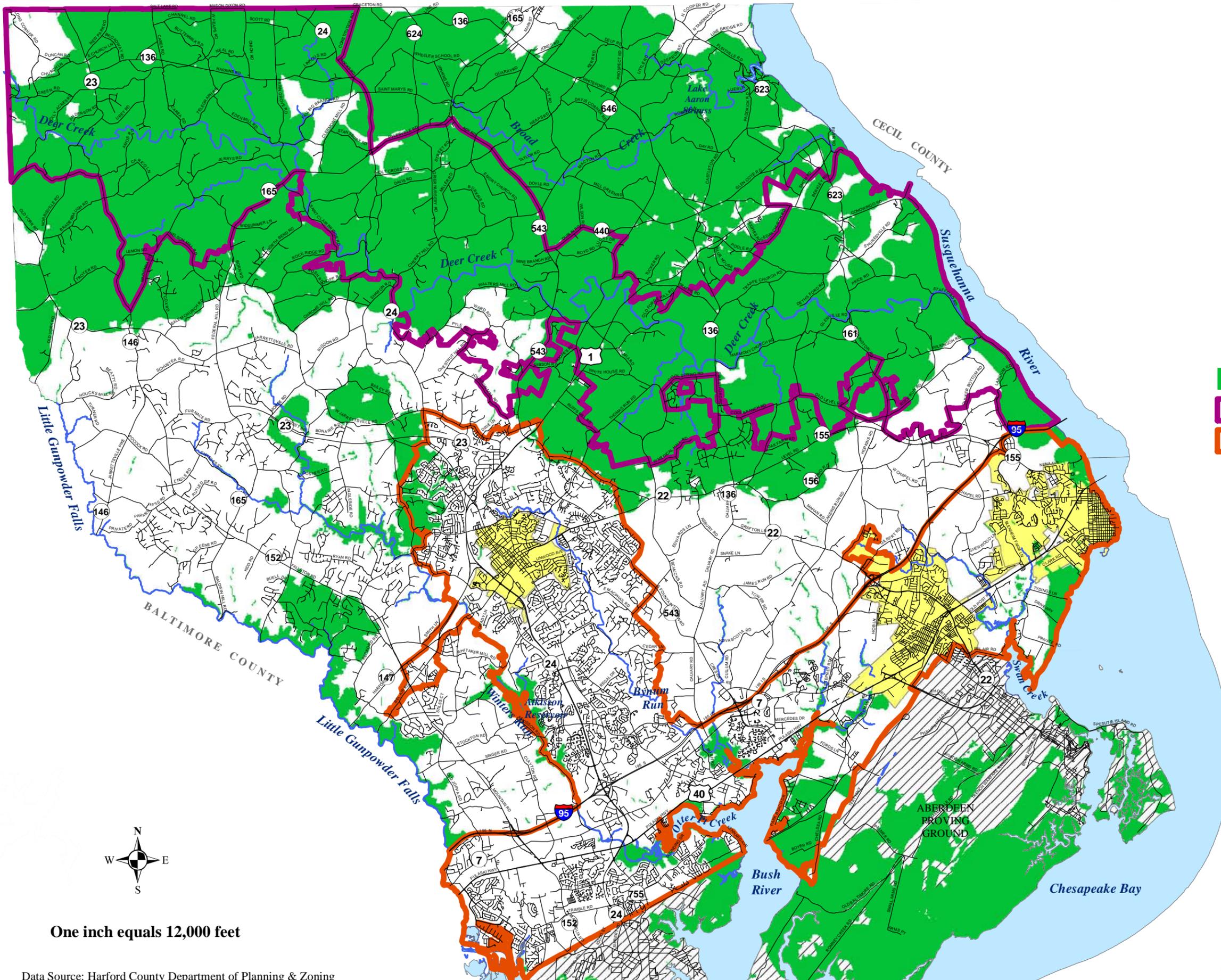
Targeted Ecological Areas (TEAs) are lands and watersheds identified by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources as the most ecologically valuable areas in the State. These areas focus efforts on the “Best of the Best” and are preferred for conservation funding through Stateside Program Open Space.

Each GreenPrint Conservation Theme also assigns ecological priorities so that the highest priority, or the most ecologically important areas, in each theme can be identified.

- The first step in identifying TEAs is to combine the most ecologically important areas from each GreenPrint map.
- Areas which have already been developed within a GreenPrint area were removed from the map as they would not be eligible for Stateside POS funding.
- Coastal areas subject to sea level rise within a 0-2 foot elevation zone were removed from the map to avoid spending limited funds in areas likely to be submerged. Based on current projections, sea level is expected to rise at least 1.7 feet by 2050.
- The TEA's are the most ecologically important areas in the State and are targeted for conservation through Stateside Program Open Space. For Harford County, the Targeted Ecological Areas were predominantly found in the Deer Creek Watershed. This area has been previously identified as the Priority Preservation Area for Agricultural Preservation and also included both Rocks and Susquehanna State Park. The natural resource conservation goals of both the State of Maryland and Harford County are closely aligned and complementary in this area. The combination of County and State programs for agricultural and resource conservation, such as the Harford Agricultural Land Preservation Program, MALPF, Rural Legacy with Stateside Open Space for State Park lands has been very successful in assuring the preservation of large areas in this watershed. (Map 4.2)

This page is intentionally blank.

TARGETED ECOLOGICAL AREAS



- Targeted Ecological Areas (2011)
- Priority Preservation Area
- Development Envelope



One inch equals 12,000 feet

NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION GOALS OF THE 2005 LAND PRESERVATION, PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

The Natural Resource Conservation section of the 2005 LPPRP focused on the Harford County policy on natural resource conservation as presented in the *Harford County 2004 Master Plan and Land Use Element Plan* and the *1998 Natural Resources Element Plan*. The following policies and implementation strategies regarding natural resource conservation were the focus of the plan and included the specific recommendations.

- *N-1 Develop and nurture strong partnerships to protect sensitive resources through easements, acquisitions, and coordinated planning practices.*

Harford County has many agencies and organizations that are concerned with natural resource conservation and the future of the county, including:

- *Nonprofit organizations, such as Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway and the Isaac Walton League.*
- *Land trusts, such as the Harford Land Trust, Manor Conservancy, Maryland Environmental Trust, and the Trust for Public Land.*
- *Government commissions, such as the Historic Preservation Commission.*
- *Site-specific entities, such as the Deer Creek Watershed Association, Deer Creek Scenic River Board, Otter Point Creek Alliance, and the Eden Mill Nature Committee, Inc.*
- *Government agencies and entities, such as the Maryland Departments of Natural Resources and Planning and the Harford County Departments of Planning/Zoning and Parks/ Recreation.*

Harford County should continue to be a strong, vocal advocate for land preservation. In addition to providing staff and funding for county projects, the county should serve as an information clearinghouse, staying abreast of land preservation activities throughout the county and alerting partners to appropriate land preservation opportunities.

- *N-2 Strengthen the county focus on natural corridor preservation with an integrated approach involving state, county, and nonprofit groups to protect natural resources, habitat areas, and historic sites and to develop waterway trails.*

Linear linkages, such as the Ma and Pa Trail and the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, increase public awareness and enjoyment of natural resources, natural areas, habitats, and historic resources. The unified trail network will be a significant element of the recreation system in Harford County. However, corridor development can be time-consuming and complicated because of the need to involve multiple landowners and stakeholders. State and local governments, nonprofit groups, and local landowners must work together to help develop the corridor network throughout Harford County.

- N-3 Support the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway.

The Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway (LSHG) lines the banks of the Susquehanna River in Harford and Cecil Counties from north of the Conowingo Dam to the head of the Chesapeake Bay—approximately 12,000 acres.¹ The county should support the work of LSHG in any way possible. Sample tasks include:

- Assist in the acquisition, funding, and construction of trail segments.
 - Work with LSHG and Exelon Power Company to identify trail and other recreational opportunities as Exelon moves through the federally-mandated re-permitting process.
 - Provide any necessary and requested support in LSHG’s applications to become part of the East Coast Greenway and to obtain federal heritage designation.
 - Consider integrating LSHG projects into the county’s capital improvements program.
 - Establish a site for LSHG shuttle/transit service at Swan Harbor.
- N-4 Foster a strong working relationship between the county and the state in areas of mutual interest.

Harford County and the State of Maryland have many common land preservation goals and targets. The county—through the Harford County Departments of Parks/Recreation, Planning/ Zoning, and Tourism—should work closely to strengthen efforts in areas of mutual concern, such as:

- Forest protection
 - Public access to water
 - Tourism
 - Wetland protection
 - Land preservation
 - Transportation enhancements
- N-5 Encourage the model development principles developed through the Builders for the Bay initiative.

The Builders for the Bay partnership/project began in 2002 through the cooperative efforts of the Center for Watershed Protection, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, and the National Association of Home Builders. The Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning and the Home Builders Association of Maryland worked with the partnership to review county subdivision and road codes to encourage better site design and more open space in residential and commercial development. The county should carefully consider the Builders for the Bay recommendations and make appropriate changes to the county code as part of the comprehensive review and revision to the code proposed in the 2004 Harford County Master Plan and Land Use Element Plan.

- N-6 Work to strengthen regulations to protect critical habitats.

Habitats of rare, threatened and endangered species are protected by 1) federal and state permit programs, such as the Joint 404 Wetlands Permit Program, and 2) local regulations in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area. However, the programs and regulations often leave upland habitats

¹ More information is available at www.lshgreenway.org.

unprotected. Harford County should work with the state to develop stronger regulations to protect critical upland habitats and biological communities. In addition, the county should strengthen the protection of critical habitats in the pending update to the zoning code.

- *N-7 Protect green infrastructure and contiguous forests or farmland by working with the state to support planning on a wider scale at both the state and county levels.*

The geographic scope of planning reviews, practices, and procedures is often limited to a specific site, municipality, or county even though the effects of land development are often felt far beyond parcel or municipal borders. The value of a reliable, safe water supply and the need to protect groundwater supply and quality and wellhead areas has made planning on the basis of watersheds increasingly important. Harford County should encourage the state to continue and strengthen support for watershed planning.

Natural Resource District and forest retention activities are strongly discouraged on individual lots. The review of the zoning code should establish clear standards to preclude NRD and forest regulations from applying to individual lots within the Development Envelope and to ensure that adequate unencumbered building areas are provided on all lots. Developers should be encouraged to protect sensitive areas on adjacent properties with open space and buffers.

Harford County should also consider the Rural Legacy and Forest Legacy areas a top priority for easement acquisitions. In addition, the county and state should maintain close communication and coordination regarding all lands to be added to state parks.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2005 LPPRP GOALS

2008 Development Regulations

In 2008, a comprehensive revision of the Harford County Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations was adopted to address many issues identified in the Land Use Element plan. Certain components of the Zoning Code specifically implemented resource conservation policy goals.

1. The Natural Resource District provisions of the Zoning Code were revised to prohibit the inclusion of any portion of the NRD within urban residential lots so that the NRD would remain undisturbed.
2. Permitted uses within the Natural Resource District were clarified to permit passive recreation and walking trails with minimum disturbance and the use of environmentally friendly materials.
3. The Forest Conservation provisions were revised to remove reforestation and afforestation from individual urban residential lots and to eliminate the payment of a fee in lieu of reforestation or afforestation as a result of development. Trees must be planted either on-site or off-site when required.

4. Design recommendations from the “Builders for the Bay” initiative were incorporated into the Zoning Code through the creation of maximum parking areas and the use of more panhandle lots. Both of these provisions resulted into the lower amounts of impervious surface and its associated water quality impacts.
5. New Water Source Protection District (WSPD) regulations were developed and included in the 2008 Zoning Code update. These regulations help protect the water supplies of community and nontransient/noncommunity water systems using groundwater.

Watershed Planning

Both Harford County and the State of Maryland have placed a high priority on the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay and the need for watershed protection and improvement.

Recent efforts to improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and the many tributary streams have focused on planning at the watershed level and development of strategies for restoration of streams which have been degraded by land use activities on the adjoining lands. Harford County had previously prepared the Bush River Management Plan which formed the basis for early stream restoration projects in that watershed. In 2005, the County focused watershed planning activities on the Deer Creek Watershed, long regarded as one of the most important ecological resources in the County.

Deer Creek Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS)

The Deer Creek Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS) was initiated by the Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning in 2005, through a grant from the State, to develop a watershed plan for the Deer Creek watershed. The goal of the WRAS is to protect water quality, conserve fish and wildlife habitats, and restore those areas found to be impaired. The Deer Creek watershed is a recognized local and State resource worthy of protection. Its many significant attributes resulted in its designation as a State Scenic River in 1973. Numerous sensitive species inhabit this watershed, including the endangered Maryland Darter, the bog turtle, and brook trout. Many of the streams are designated trout waters.

Deer Creek is the largest watershed in Harford County, covering 38 percent of the County’s land area. This rural watershed lies outside of the County “development envelope” and is an important agricultural area of the County. The entire watershed is approximately 109,400 acres, of which 86,000 acres are within Harford County. The remainder of the watershed is in York County, Pennsylvania (16,250 acres) and Baltimore County (7,150 acres). Major land uses are agriculture (54%) and forest (31%), with developed land making up a smaller percentage (15%). Almost 50% of the watershed in Harford County is currently protected as park land or through agricultural preservation easements.

As a part of the study, water quality and natural resource data in the watershed was collected to better understand the existing conditions and stressors that are impacting

water quality and habitat. Restoration and protection strategies were developed to protect and maintain the high quality areas, and restore areas that were found to be impaired. Local input and knowledge were valuable tools in developing these strategies.

A Deer Creek Stakeholder Committee was formed early in the process to assist the County in formulating the plan. Members on the Committee included interests from the agricultural, governmental, environmental, educational, and business communities. The Committee, along with public input, guided the development of action strategies in the plan. The Final WRAS was completed in July 2007, implementation has begun and periodic updates are posted on the Planning and Zoning webpage. For More Information: deercreekwras@harfordcountymd.gov

In 2010 Harford County, in partnership with the Harford Soil Conservation District, was awarded a \$400,000 grant from the US Natural Resource Conservation Service to implement the Deer Creek WRAS. Efforts have focused on the implementation of agricultural best management practices, including the establishment of riparian buffers, in the watershed. An outreach coordinator has been hired to hold workshops and promote good stewardship among the residents of the watershed. In addition, an in-depth assessment was done of Stout Bottle/Cabbage Run subwatershed to identify additional site-specific watershed restoration projects.

Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) July 2012

In response to the Environmental Protection Agency's requirements for the reduction of nutrients entering the Chesapeake Bay and the establishment of Total Maximum Discharge Loads (TMDLs) for the Bay, the State of Maryland allocated the reduction of nutrient loads among the various source sectors on an equity basis, so that each source sector in the County was given a specific reduction to be met in terms of pounds of nitrogen and phosphorus with 2009 as the baseline and targets set for 2017 and 2025. Nutrient reduction targets have been set by the State for agriculture, urban stormwater, septic systems, forests and major wastewater treatment plants and are to be met notwithstanding costs.

Harford County's approach to address the development of the Phase II Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) was to establish a Core Team of County, municipal, State and federal staff with expertise in the various nutrient source sectors. The Core Team met on a monthly basis to discuss current capacity, strategies to meet the nutrient load allocations, and two-year milestones. The agricultural source sector was addressed through an Agricultural Workgroup in the County and reported through the Maryland Department of Agriculture. The Core Team addressed the remaining source sectors and developed strategies to reduce nutrient loadings.

County Phase II WIP Strategies

The strategies presented were based on draft technical analysis developed by staff and represent theoretically viable options, which may not be technically feasible. The WIP has not been legislatively adopted by the governing body of the County and the municipalities, which will need to approve the commitments of resources to implement

these strategies. The finalization of a plan to be presented to the governing bodies will not occur until the requirements and objectives for the individual entities are clearly outlined by the State and EPA.

A. Wastewater Treatment Plants

Enhanced nutrient removal (ENR) will be installed at the County's major wastewater treatment plants. This advanced technology will significantly reduce nutrient loading in the effluent for both the Sod Run Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Joppatowne Wastewater Treatment Plant. Construction of ENR began at Sod Run in February 2012 and is anticipated to be completed by March 2015. Construction of ENR at Joppatowne began in February 2012 and is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2014. ENR was completed at the City of Havre de Grace WWTP in 2009. The upgrade of the Aberdeen WWTP is expected by 2013.

B. Septic Systems

Phase II WIP implementation strategies for septic systems will focus on two main practices, the installation of denitrifying septic systems and connection of septic systems to public sewer where feasible inside the public sewer service area.

C. Urban Stormwater

The County's and municipalities' strategy to address regulated urban stormwater is to continue implementation of the NPDES MS4 permit. Currently, the County is negotiating the conditions of the draft MS4 permit with MDE. Conditions should be clear and unambiguous, maximize water quality credits, and outline achievable goals considering costs. Subsequent to that renewal, the County will submit the required planning documents necessary to document restoration strategies to address the Chesapeake Bay TMDL.

1. Watershed Assessments

Harford County has been focusing on developing and implementing Small Watershed Action Plans (SWAPs). These plans help the County identify and prioritize projects within a small watershed and are a critical component of securing grant funding. SWAP's have been completed for Wheel Creek, Plumtree Run, Sam's Branch, Foster Branch.

Small Watershed Actions Plans will be developed for the watersheds listed below:

- Declaration Run
- Riverside Run
- Spenceola Run
- Mariner Run
- Rumsey Island

Little Gunpowder
Heavenly Waters
Shamrock Run and
Wright Creek
Bynum Run
Lower Winters Run

Harford County has been constructing watershed restoration projects as required by the previous MS4 permits since 2000. Numerous projects have been constructed in the Upper Chesapeake Bay and Bush River watersheds with two projects in the Lower Susquehanna Watershed. In 2013, projects are planned in the Little Gunpowder, Bush River and Bynum watersheds.

2. Planned projects

Numerous restoration projects are planned in the County Capital Budget. These projects lie in the Little Gunpowder and Bush River watersheds. As each SWAP is completed, capital projects are identified, prioritized and entered into the County's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Harford County anticipates an additional 20 capital projects will be placed in the CIP within the next five years.

3. Urban Nutrient Management

Harford County is currently exploring opportunities to reduce the urban nutrient loads on County-owned property by assessing housekeeping practices and identifying methods to harvest and/or infiltrate stormwater and impervious cover reduction. Based on the findings for County-owned property, Harford County will investigate implementing a program for private properties.

4. Public Education and Outreach

Harford County has an active public education and outreach program, as required by the MS4 permit. Outreach includes the development of a website, educational booths at various outreach events, such as Earth Day and the Wade-In, signage, stormwater management facility maintenance workshops, school presentation, and capital project-specific outreach.

5. Tracking

Harford County will continue to track progress toward meeting the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan through the MS4 permit reporting process. The County will track treated impervious cover and nutrient reduction as described by MDE's guidance document "Accounting for Stormwater Wasteload Allocation and Impervious Acres Treated", June, 2011.

Harford County recognizes there are many challenges to address in meeting the urban nutrient load allocation of the Chesapeake Bay Implementation Plan. Watershed planning efforts in the County have facilitated a targeted strategy to help meet the nutrient and sediment reduction goals of the Harford County Watershed Implementation Plan. Efforts will continue through a variety of programs and grant funded opportunities. For example, through a grant from the US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, the County is working closely with the Soil Conservation District to implement agricultural best management practices and promote streamside forested buffers in order to improve water quality and maintain habitat. In another step to meet these goals, the Maryland General Assembly required Harford County and other large counties to implement a stormwater remediation fee to fund the stormwater best management practices required under the MS4/NPDES permit. A Work Group of County staff and affected business entities has met to make recommendations on the implementation of this fee. Legislation will be forwarded to County Council for adoption by July 1, 2013.

CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The following section describes the tools Harford County uses to preserve natural resources. The section includes information on

- Targeted conservation areas
- Easement acquisition
- Regulatory measures
- Partnership

Targeted Conservation Areas

Harford County policies target the area outside the Development Envelope for land preservation efforts, particularly agricultural land preservation. Natural resources inside the Development Envelope are also preservation targets, particularly coastal areas, streams, and nontidal wetlands.

Harford County contains habitat for many sensitive species, as depicted on the Sensitive Species Project Review Areas map (Map 2.4). In addition, the County conducts targeted studies, such as the *2002 Updates for Habitats of Local Significance* and the *Perryman Special Area Management Plan*, whenever necessary resources are available. The County has a strong Geographic Information System (GIS) to support land preservation and resource conservation efforts.

The newest addition to targeted conservation areas in Harford County is the Deer Creek Forest Legacy Area. Deer Creek is a valuable recreational asset with both scenic beauty and excellent water quality. Protecting and managing forest cover through the Forest Legacy program will:

- Protect riparian habitat.
- Maintain scenic qualities.
- Maintain traditional forest uses.
- Maintain recreational opportunities.
- Promote forest stewardship.
- Maintain water quality for the endangered Maryland darter.

Easement Acquisition

Harford County works closely with the Harford Land Trust, the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET), DNR (for the Rural Legacy Program), and other organizations that acquire easements on land for natural resource conservation. The County itself provides no funding to acquire easements for natural resource conservation. Conservation tax credits up to \$500 per year are available to property owners who donate a conservation easement to a qualified conservation organization, such as MET or a land trust with a cooperative agreement with MET.

Regulatory Measures – Harford County

The Natural Resources District (NRD) in the Harford County Zoning Code provides for orderly development and use of land while protecting the ecology of the area by minimizing the soil disturbance and loss of natural ground cover and vegetation in sensitive areas. Lands within this district are:

- A. Steep terrain (areas of land exceeding 40,000 square feet with a slope in excess of 25%);
- B. Areas adjacent to streams and rivers (minimum distance of 75 feet or 150 feet on both sides of the stream depending on the stream classification); and
- C. Nontidal wetlands and their 75-foot buffers.

The Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Management Program and the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Overlay District are administered by the Department of Planning and Zoning as part of a coordinated State effort to improve water quality and wildlife habitat throughout the Chesapeake Bay. The program manages lands within 1,000 feet of tidal waters and also includes some additional floodplain, park, and rare species habitat areas. The program protects natural resources within this area including: tidal and nontidal wetlands, shoreline buffer, rare species habitats, anadromous fish breeding habitat, colonial waterbird nesting sites, waterfowl congregation areas, hydric and erodible soils, and steep slopes.

The Floodplain Management Regulations restrict building in areas subject to periodic flooding from streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. Floodplains are often described in statistical terms. The 1% annual flood is an area that has a 1% chance of being flooded in any given year; it is often referred to as the 100 year flood. Most of the floodplains with large drainage areas (greater than 100 acres) are mapped and subject to regulation, even though areas not identified on maps as floodplains may still flood.

The areas subject to the County's floodplain management program are depicted on flood maps available at the Department of Planning and Zoning. FEMA is currently updating the County's floodplain maps, with new maps expected in 2014. Concurrently the County will be updating its floodplain ordinance. By encouraging sound land use practices, the exposure of property to flood losses may be minimized; human life and health can be protected; and public expenditures for flood protection and relief minimized.

Water Source Protection Districts have been established in the Zoning Code to provide a safe drinking water supply and to maintain public health, safety and quality of life. Regulations were established in the Perryman wellfield district, community water system districts and nontransient-noncommunity water system districts. Uses that are considered to pose a high risk to groundwater and surface water are prohibited in these areas and impervious surface limitations may apply in some districts.

The Forest and Tree Conservation Provisions of the Harford County Zoning Code have been in place since 1991 to protect forest resources in the County. During the development approval process, natural features within a proposed development site must be identified and delineated by an approved professional forester or landscape architect. A portion of the existing forest resources on-site must be retained and a measure of the forest resources which are lost as a necessary element of the development process must be replaced.

The Deer Creek Scenic River District was established in 1978 to highlight the importance of Deer Creek's scenic and natural features, and to ensure the protection of private rights and the scenic river in a compatible, harmonious manner. Deer Creek is designated as a Scenic River under the State's Scenic River program. The local Deer Creek Scenic River Advisory Board (composed of nine members appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council of Harford County) was established to initiate and recommend policies and regulations to the County Council to enhance and protect the quality of Deer Creek.

Stormwater Management Regulations in Harford County address water quantity and quality management, specifically for the 2-year and 10-year storms. There are also requirements for 100-year storm management for development above Reckord Road in the Little Gunpowder watershed, and above Business Route 1 in the Bynum Run watershed. These regulations involve calculating the amount of stormwater runoff that would be created during these major storm events, and ensuring that proper management techniques are installed to handle these storms.

The NPDES Program is a Federally mandated program under the Clean Water Act. Under the 1987 Amendments to the Clean Water Act, permit requirements were established for stormwater discharges from municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) or storm drain systems for municipalities with populations over 100,000 people. Harford County obtained its first municipal NPDES permit in 1994, with resubmittal and recertification required every five years. Components of the County's NPDES permit include stormwater management, erosion and sediment control, illicit discharge

detection and elimination, road maintenance, and watershed assessment and planning. Once sources of pollutants are identified on a watershed basis, restoration projects are identified and implemented through the capital budget. Monitoring to determine the effectiveness of stormwater management and progress toward meeting water quality goals is an integral part of the NPDES program. Restoration of impaired waters is addressed through the development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) by Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). MDE has determined that jurisdictions that implement the requirements of their municipal NPDES permit are controlling stormwater to the maximum extent practical, thereby meeting the waste load allocations specified in the TMDL. Continued monitoring and NPDES program assessment ensure that progress toward meeting water quality goals is achieved.

Regulatory Measures – State and Federal

State Wetland Regulations are administered by the State of Maryland to protect tidal and nontidal wetlands. The State Wetlands Act was enacted to protect Maryland's tidal wetlands. This Act (COMAR 08.05.07) made waters below mean high tide the property of the State of Maryland. In 1988, the State entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) to create a Joint Permit Application for construction in any floodplain, waterway, or wetland area in the State of Maryland. The State Nontidal Wetlands Protection Act (COMAR 08.05.04) requires a State permit for clearing and/or construction in, discharge to, or dredging of nontidal wetlands or their 25 foot buffers. Joint Permit Applications are received at Maryland Department of the Environment and distributed among the cooperating agencies which review and comment on permit applications.

Federal Wetland Regulations are based on the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, and the Clean Water Act. Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers (Army Corps of Engineers or ACOE), is authorized to issue permits for the discharge of dredged or fill materials into wetlands, with program oversight by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA has the authority to make final determinations on the extent of the Clean Water Act. This authority covers regulation of tidal and nontidal wetlands. The ACOE also issues permits for filling, dredging, and other construction in certain wetlands under Section 10 of the Clean Water Act. Under authority of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service review applications for these Federal permits and provide comments to the ACOE on the environmental impacts of the proposed work.

State Endangered Species Regulations were enacted in the State through the Maryland Endangered Species Act of 1971 (Article 66C, Section 125, Annotated Code of Maryland), which became the first piece of State legislation to protect endangered species in Maryland. This legislation prohibits the taking, transportation, possession, processing, or sale within the State of Maryland of any wildlife appearing on the Federal lists of endangered, foreign or native fish and wildlife. Secondly, it mandated the Secretary of DNR to develop a list of fish and wildlife deemed to be threatened with statewide extinction in Maryland and provides for full protection from taking and

possession of those species. The DNR list includes all of the Federally listed species, and lists of species which are threatened or endangered within their range in Maryland. As of 2007, DNR tracks the status of over 1100 native plants and animals that are among the rarest in Maryland and in need of conservation efforts. DNR officially recognizes 607 species and subspecies as endangered, threatened, in need of conservation, or endangered extirpated in Maryland. Of these, 17 animals and 85 plants occur or once occurred in Harford County.

Federal Endangered Species Regulations, first enacted as the 1973 Endangered Species Act (ESA), provide a program for the conservation of endangered and threatened species and for the ecosystems upon which they depend. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) shares responsibility for endangered and threatened species with the National Marine Fisheries Service of the Department of Commerce (NMFS). The FWS has jurisdiction over all terrestrial and freshwater species and a few marine mammals, while the NMFS is responsible for most marine species. Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act provided for the development and maintenance of an official list of endangered and threatened species. Three species on the Federal threatened and endangered species list occur, or once occurred, within Harford County. These are the Maryland darter, the shortnose sturgeon, and the bog turtle.

Presidential Executive Order 13508-Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration mandates a comprehensive plan to restore the Chesapeake Bay. The Order requires Federal agencies to provide reports which make recommendations for restoring and protecting the Chesapeake Bay. The Order mandates that these reports address the issues of water quality improvement, targeting resources to better protect the Bay and its tributaries, strengthening stormwater management practices at Federal facilities and on Federal lands, assessing the impacts of changing climates, expanding public access and conserving the landscapes, strengthening scientific support for decision making for this area, and developing focused and coordinated habitat and research activities. Overall, Executive Order 13508 seeks to protect the national treasure known as the Chesapeake Bay by restoring this ecological, economic and cultural resource.

Partnerships

Harford County is fortunate to have several, strong partners, in addition to the State and federal governments, in its efforts to conserve natural resources. In addition to State and County professional staff, strong partners in Harford County's natural resource conservation efforts include:

- **Harford Land Trust** (www.harfordlandtrust.org) – The Harford Land Trust, founded in 1991, has protected more than 865 acres through ownership and stewardship. The trust's principal activities are purchasing open land to prevent development and offering private landowners information and confidential advice about various local and State programs to sell or donate development rights. The trust promotes a variety of tools to preserve land, including conservation easements, bargain sale, donation, or limited development

- **Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, Inc.** (www.lshgreenway.org) – The Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, Inc (LSHGI) is a private, nonprofit organization incorporated in 1997 and dedicated to the concepts of heritage tourism and greenway development in a 70-square mile area along the Susquehanna River in Cecil and Harford Counties. LSHGI is the area’s lead organization for heritage tourism development under Maryland’s Heritage Preservation and Tourism Areas Development Program. LSHGI works with area landowners, businesses, and other stakeholders to identify, enhance, develop, and promote the area’s historic, architectural, cultural, archeological, recreational, and natural/environmental resources. LSHGI has a full-time executive director and small staff.
- **Otter Point Creek Alliance** and **Eden Mill Nature Committee** – Both the Otter Point Creek Alliance and the Mill Nature Committee conduct environmental education programs at County facilities. Both organizations are established recreation councils and have volunteer staff which supplements the paid County staff.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION POLICIES AND STRATEGIES 2013 FORWARD

2009 Natural Resources Element Plan

In 2009 Harford County updated its Natural Resources Element Plan and further refined the County’s policies regarding resource conservation. This plan included additional “sensitive areas” section as required by the 2006 HB 1141 passed by the Maryland General Assembly and the required Water Resources Section as well as the update of the 1998 Natural Resources Element Plan. **The Sensitive Areas Section contains the current goals and policies of Harford County regarding natural resource conservation.** This Section identified policies and key implementation strategies to protect the following sensitive areas:

1. Streams, wetlands, and buffers
2. 100-year floodplains
3. Rare habitats, steep slopes and other significant habitats
4. Forested resource protection areas
5. Agricultural resource protection areas

Sensitive Areas Policy 1: Preserve and protect streams, wetlands, and buffers to maintain high quality water and ecologically rich areas.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Continue to implement projects identified in watershed studies that improve water quality.

2. Promote low impact development and green building practices to decrease impervious surface and impacts to water quality.
3. Support conservation groups in their effort to protect streams and wetlands by offering technical assistance to assist in securing funding and supporting these groups in their efforts to provide public educational opportunities in regard to environmental stewardship.
4. Improve coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Maryland Department of the Environment to ensure wetland regulations are being implemented and enforced.
5. Implement outreach programs that target ecologically rich subwatersheds that educate property owners on the importance of maintaining high water quality.
6. Protect the water quality of Tier II streams during the development of County plans and programs.
7. Identify and prioritize for conservation the most ecologically rich areas of the County.

Sensitive Areas Policy 2: *Preserve floodplains in their natural state to limit flood loss, protect human life and health, and to maintain biological values and environmental quality of our watersheds.*

Implementation Strategies:

1. Review and update the County's Floodplain Management Regulations.
2. Implement hazard mitigation opportunities such as voluntarily acquiring repetitive loss properties.
3. Identify floodplain management practices that will improve the County's rating under FEMA's Community Rating System to reduce flood insurance costs for County residents.
4. Identify ways to improve mapping of existing approximate floodplain areas (Zone A) and, where appropriate, map and regulate new floodplain areas in the County.
5. Utilize better topographic information from new technologies such as Lidar for permitting purposes in the floodplain.
6. Identify grant or other funding opportunities to restudy existing mapped floodplain areas that appear to be outdated or inaccurate.

7. Complete a countywide soil survey utilizing the latest digital, GIS, GPS technologies available.

Sensitive Areas Policy 3: Improve the protection of the County's rare, threatened, and endangered species and their habitats and steep slopes.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Coordinate with the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) and local organizations to prioritize and target properties with high habitat conservation values for conservation easement consideration.
2. Coordinate with the Department of Natural Resources in promoting the Maryland Landowner Incentive Program.
3. Acquire grant funding to reassess Habitats of Local Significance in the County's Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program.
4. Identify projects through the County's watershed plans or other methods that will improve the habitat of rare species in the County.

Sensitive Areas Policy 4: Improve the protection of the County's forest resources.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Identify and map large contiguous forested areas in the County and investigate mechanisms to conserve these areas.
2. Research incentives for residential lot owners to maintain trees and enhance habitat.
3. Implement riparian buffer plantings that are identified in the County's various watershed management plans.
4. Promote existing forest conservation programs such as the Forest Stewardship Program and Woodland Assessment Program.
5. Work collaboratively with landowners, land trusts, watershed organizations, and other regional partners to develop innovative actions to support the retention and stewardship of forest lands of critical importance.
6. Explore opportunities to give additional ranking points to properties with significant forest habitats for properties applying to the Rural Legacy Program.
7. Work with DNR Forestry and the County Forestry Board to develop sustainable forestry practices for eligible landowners.

8. Collaborate with State agencies to apply the State's Conservation Model and Greenprint to County efforts for improving and protecting forest resources.
9. Identify, inventory and rank potential afforestation, reforestation and Conservation Resource Enhancement Program (CREP) sites within each watershed and prioritize the identified sites as priority planting areas.

2012 Land Use Plan

As the 2009 Natural Resources Element Plan had fulfilled the requirements of the State of Maryland regarding the Sensitive Areas Element and the Water Resources Element, the 2012 Land Use Plan focused on broader themes related to resource conservation but did not reiterate the goals and strategies of the Natural Resources Element Plan. The relevant Themes and Implementation Strategies from Land Use Element Plan have been excerpted for emphasis in this document. Some numbering may not be consecutive.

LAND USE

POLICY: *Guide future growth and development in a sustainable manner that maintains or enhances quality of life throughout the County.*

LAND USE THEME – *Maintain and enhance quality of life throughout the County.*

4. Ensure that all new development is designed to have a minimum impact on agricultural areas, natural areas and other resources.

LAND USE THEME – *Manage growth in a sustainable manner.*

While Harford County and the municipalities have worked together to meet the requirements of the State's Smart Green and Growing legislation through the establishment of Municipal Growth Element Plans, Water Resource Element Plans, and a Priority Preservation Area Plan; they still face additional growth management challenges. The Environmental Protection Agency's Bay Restoration Program is being addressed through Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP). Harford County's Phase II WIP is being developed in coordination with the municipalities and must address the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements. These TMDL will influence the location and scale of development that can occur in the County since 60% of the targeted load reductions are to be met by 2017. Along with the Bay Program, other State programs will have a direct impact on growth, preservation, and other resources. These will require that the County reevaluate some of its programs to ensure that they are compatible with State goals.

Implementation Strategies

2. Work with the municipalities and other County agencies and departments to ensure that future growth is accomplished in a manner that is consistent with the Watershed Implementation Plan.
5. Ensure that potential impacts of sea-level rise and damage from flooding and other weather related events are included as part of the County's long range planning process.
- 7 Evaluate and update if necessary, the County's growth management policies in relation to the objectives of the Phase II Watershed Implementation Plan.

SUSTAINABILITY

POLICY: *Provide for sustainable development and conservation while managing the resources that define the County's identity, contribute to its economy, and quality of life.*

SUSTAINABILITY THEME: *Water Quality and Watershed Protection.*

A sustainable water resource is fundamental to the public's health and quality of life. It not only provides a safe drinking water supply, but also clean water for aquatic life and recreational pursuits. The quality of water is directly related to what is happening on the land. Stormwater runoff from the land may carry nutrients, sediment and other pollutants to a waterway. The velocity and quantity of stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces (in developed areas) can also lead to streambank erosion and degradation. In order to protect water quality in our local waterways the land use activities in a watershed must be considered. Watershed plans have been developed for the Bush River and Deer Creek watersheds.

Protection of water quality is also addressed through a variety of other County programs and regulations. Buffers to streams and nontidal wetlands are required through the County's Natural Resource District regulations. Stream buffers provide a natural filter to stormwater runoff and are a cost-effective means to achieve water quality. Stormwater management and sediment and erosion control regulations help protect the County's waterways from the negative impacts of development and increased impervious surfaces. Best management practices on farmland are extremely important to the protection of our water resources.

Water quality protection efforts over the last two decades have been driven, in part, by the restoration efforts for the Chesapeake Bay. The Federal Clean Water Act requires the establishment of water quality standards for all water bodies and the State of Maryland has established such standards. For any water body not meeting a water quality standard, a plan is required to be prepared addressing the total amount of a pollutant that a water body can assimilate and still meet water quality standards. This

plan is called a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDLs). TMDLs will be developed for those streams in Harford County that do not meet water quality standards. Concurrent with this process, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is developing a TMDL for the Chesapeake Bay for impairments to the Bay resulting from excess nutrients and sediment. Harford County will be addressing the needed reductions in nutrients and sediment to meet its share of the reductions required for the Chesapeake Bay TMDL. This in turn will benefit local waterways as well. It is evident that the current level of effort will not be sufficient to meet the required reductions by 2025; therefore, additional programs and strategies will be developed in the coming years.

Many streams and water bodies in Harford County are not impaired and are of good water quality. Streams that are of higher quality than the minimum water quality standards have been designated Tier II waters under the Clean Water Act and require protection to sustain the higher quality. Tier II watersheds are also designated as Priority Water Resource Areas by the State. Most of these designated streams occur in the Deer Creek and Little Gunpowder Falls watersheds. County efforts must be directed at protecting higher quality watersheds, as well as bringing impaired waters up to water quality standards.

Implementation Strategies

1. Identify new strategies, in coordination with the municipalities, to assure the County will meet its nutrient and sediment reduction targets for the Chesapeake Bay TMDL and local TMDLs.
2. Develop a tracking mechanism to monitor the best management practices being undertaken to improve water quality and meet nutrient and sediment reduction goals.
3. Explore enhancements to the County's Forest Conservation Program and Natural Resource District regulations as well as potential new programs, to increase the acreage of stream buffers and forests to benefit water quality and ecological health.
4. Develop incentives and promote low impact development and green building practices to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces and reduce impacts to water quality.
5. Establish policies in Tier II watersheds to protect surface water supplies and high quality streams.
7. Pursue the accelerated implementation of the Bush River and Deer Creek Watershed Plans to protect water quality and conserve natural resources.

Chapter 5

RECREATION, PARKS, AND OPEN SPACE ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

As part of the metropolitan Baltimore region, Harford County has met the challenge to provide high-quality facilities and services for a growing and changing population. The County's park system and the recreation programs, in partnership with local recreation councils, have provided residents with constructive, life-enriching leisure and educational activities. The following two chapters comprise the Recreation, Parks and Open Space Element of the 2013 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan. Chapter 5 presents information about the current park system and recreation programming in Harford County, and analyzes how the Department of Parks and Recreation has worked to support the State Goals for recreation and parks and the specific County policies set forth in the 2005 LPPRP. Chapter 6 will set forth Policies and Recommendations to guide the Department as it moves forward.

GOALS OF STATE PLAN

As was the case with the previous LPPRPs, local plans must incorporate the following State goals for recreation and parks, in addition to other local goals as appropriate for each jurisdiction:

Make a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities readily accessible to all of its citizens, and thereby contribute to their physical and mental wellbeing.

Recognize and strategically use parks and recreation facilities as amenities to make communities, counties, and the State more desirable places to live, work and visit.

Use State investment in parks, recreation, and open space to complement and mutually support the broader goals and objectives of local comprehensive / master plans.

To the greatest degree feasible, ensure that recreational land and facilities for local populations are conveniently located relative to population centers, are accessible without reliance on the automobile, and help to protect natural open spaces and resources.

Complement infrastructure and other public investments and priorities in existing communities and areas planned for growth through investment in neighborhood and community parks and facilities.

Continue to protect recreational open space and resource lands at a rate that equals or exceeds the rate that land is developed at a statewide level.

PARKS AND RECREATION GOALS OF 2005 LAND PRESERVATION, PARKS, AND RECREATION PLAN

The 2005 LPPRP set forth the following goals in the Parks and Recreation Element. These goals have guided the action of the Department for the last seven years. The accomplishments noted in Chapter 2 made significant progress towards these goals. These accomplishments include projects such as the construction of the Havre de Grace and Chenoweth Activity Centers, Rutledge Park, Prospect Mill Park and Chapel Road Park and the acquisition of land for future active and passive recreation sites

- *PR-1 Continue to acquire additional recreation land to help meet the needs of current and future residents.*

Harford County has done an excellent job of obtaining and developing recreation land in one of the fastest growing counties in the state. The pressure to add more parks and open space will only increase with growing population as the county continues to be a desirable location in the suburban Baltimore region. The job creation associated with the enhanced mission of the Aberdeen Proving Ground may accelerate residential growth in some areas of the county, necessitating additional parkland acquisition and development to serve new residents. The county should continue to work toward meeting the Program Open Space goal of 30.0 acres of local parkland per thousand population (ac/000) with a baseline commitment of acquiring additional open space at a level that will maintain the current benchmark of 27.7 ac/000. Land acquisitions should include regional park sites to serve countywide needs or multiple recreation council areas as well as community park sites to serve more localized needs.

- *PR-2 Develop a unified greenway/trail system with both public and private segments.*

Greenways and other trails are becoming an increasingly important part of the American landscape. Greenways have proven to serve many vital and useful functions, including:

- *Waterway preservation*
- *Habitat preservation*
- *Recreation*
- *Alternative transportation*
- *Community enhancement*
- *Parks interconnection*

Harford County already has many potential components of a greenway system. Winters Run, Bynum Run, Deer Creek, the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, Little Gunpowder Falls, and the Ma and Pa Trail should all be part of a comprehensive, countywide system of trails for public enjoyment and community enhancement.

The system should include connected sections with public access to encourage biking, walking, hiking, horseback riding, skating, and other fitness-related activities. However, public access need not be a requirement of all greenways. Some sections of greenway should be retained in a natural state, without public access, to preserve natural features, habitat, and community character. For example, the county's 1999 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan noted that

the Bynum Run area from Bel Air southeastward has limited land for donation or acquisition, poor access points, and a lack of logical termini. Nevertheless, the segment should be considered an important component of a Bynum-Winters Run Greenway for its natural setting and connection within the system.

In addition to the land appropriate for greenway/trail designation and development, Harford County also has many partners able to contribute to a unified greenway network, including land preservation organizations (such as the Harford Land Trust and the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway), state and local agencies (including DNR, MDP, and the county departments of Planning/Zoning and Parks/Recreation), and homeowners' associations (HOAs). Lands within HOAs can be an integral part of a trail network to connect population concentrations within the county to activity centers, particularly within the development envelope.

- *PR-3 Strengthen the development review process to ensure that future land dedications from homeowners' associations are appropriate additions to the county system of parkland and open space.*

The 2004 Harford County Master Plan and Land Use Element called for a comprehensive review and update to the county zoning code and subdivision regulations. The development review process is an opportunity for the county to coordinate the need for public and private open space. Open space within new neighborhoods will generally serve the localized recreation needs of the residents. Facilities should be provided based on the housing types and anticipated demographics of the residents. The open space provided within new neighborhoods is generally owned and maintained by the homeowners association. In some circumstances, donation of land and/or facilities to the county is the most appropriate option for fulfilling open space requirements and serving public recreation goals. The review of the zoning code and subdivision regulations should include parkland and open space issues and provide standards to ensure that appropriate recreation and open space is provided to help meet the needs of new residents.

- *PR-4 Acquire waterfront properties for public purposes, including access, viewshed preservation, environmental protection, and maintenance of community character.*

Waterfront property is highly-valued for many reasons. The estuarine environment—where land meets water—offers a unique perspective on natural resources and processes. Harford County has more shoreline than any other county in Maryland, but the vast majority is part of the Aberdeen Proving Ground—owned by the federal government and permanently unavailable for public use.

Public ownership (or control, through easements or other mechanisms) of waterfront property supports many public purposes, including watercraft launching, swimming (where appropriate), fishing, and even simple visibility. Public stewardship of water resources—so critically important in Maryland—is strengthened when people can see the water and personally experience the estuarine environment.

Surveys, interviews, anecdotal situations, and other indications suggest that the demand for public use of the waterfront in Harford County currently exceeds the supply. The county should look for any opportunity to increase public use and enjoyment of its water resources through acquisitions and partnerships.

- *PR-5 Review recreation councils and consider changes based on program demand, travel considerations for participants, and the desires and financial/organizational viability of each council.*

Recreation councils are a critical partner in helping to meet the recreation needs of Harford County residents. The 20 recreation councils in Harford County offer many program opportunities, provide guidance for youth in form of coaches and officials for organized sports, operate concessions, conduct fundraising, and perform other functions, including administration. Each council operates as a separate, private, nonprofit organization.

Most councils are based geographically, serving a specific area of the county. The council areas vary greatly in size and service population,¹ which directly affects the volunteer resources available to organize and administer council activities. While programs are open to all county residents, economies of scale make programs feasible in one area that cannot be offered in another. Furthermore, 501(c)(3) nonprofit status requires specific bookkeeping and other administrative requirements that may be onerous for some smaller councils.

The county should review the current recreation councils and discuss the activities and organizational health of each council with council personnel. Some recreation councils are so strongly rooted in the community that the council will want to continue with minimal, if any, changes even if the workload is falling heavily on a few dedicated volunteers. Others may want to consider creating new partnerships with other councils, as is currently done for some specific programs. Councils may also want to combine resources and work with the county to create and operate facilities that draw participation from throughout the county and the surrounding region, such as the proposed Cedar Lane Sports Complex. The county should encourage flexibility in all recreation council activities in order to maximize community benefits.

- *PR-6 Develop additional community centers in appropriate areas.*

Community centers in Harford County have been extremely successful not only in usage, but as examples of successful organizational partnerships. The McFaul (near Bel Air), Norrisville, and Edgewood Community Centers are all used as much or more than expected. All three were cooperative efforts among multiple public and/or private agencies.

Harford County should build on the success of the current community centers by assessing the need for centers in other areas of the county and developing where appropriate. The department is developing a similar facility in Havre de Grace. Havre de Grace is a population concentration in the county slightly removed from the service area of other centers. Other potential centers being considered include a library/recreation center in Churchville and a senior/youth center in Fallston/Jarrettsville. Long-term community center needs include a senior/youth center in the Edgewood/Joppatowne area.

- *PR-7 Continue to monitor usage trends and develop or remove facilities, as warranted.*

The number of public recreation facilities should always be modified in response to changes in public demand and popular trends in parks and recreation services. For example, the demand

¹ The geographically based recreation councils range in population from 3,874 in Norrisville to 30,019 in Emmorton (Table 2.3).

for football, soccer, and lacrosse fields and basketball courts has increased in recent years, while the demand for public tennis courts has leveled off.

Recent additions to the Harford County system—an equestrian trail, skate park, disc golf course, and dog park—have proven popular. The county should closely monitor usage at the new facilities to gauge interest in additional facilities. If additional facilities are warranted, the county should program new facilities as soon as practical. If the new facilities are not well used, county resources should be placed elsewhere.

- *PR-8 Work closely with the Harford County Sheriff's Office to ensure public safety at all county recreation sites.*

Safety was a key issue discussed at the public meetings for the 2005 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan. The department has an excellent safety record at public parks, due in large part to a high level of maintenance. The maintenance staff, the administrative staff, and the sheriff's office should continue to work together to ensure public safety at all recreation sites.

SUPPORT OF STATE GOALS AND STRATEGIC GUIDELINES

The 2010 Guidelines for State and Local Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Planning require that the Recreation and Parks section of the LPPRP describe the principal implementing programs, how they help to achieve the State and County goals and how they are consistent with the Strategic Guidelines for Recreation and Parks. The local plan should focus on how it will achieve these goals through its spending priorities for acquisition, facility development, and rehabilitation.

The Strategic Guidelines note that the majority of funding should be targeted to neighborhoods and communities where population and growth are concentrated. Parks and facilities should be provided in lands designated for agricultural and/or natural resource conservation only to serve needs of the existing population or to preserve significant natural resources. The plan should also describe how local parks and recreation efforts complement the resource conservation focus of stateside POS.

Land Acquisition

Harford County evaluates any potential acquisition for active recreation facilities regarding the location relative to population centers, such as the municipalities and the designated growth areas. In a perfect setting, acquisitions for active recreation would be focused within the designated growth areas, including the Rural Villages. However, sites located within the growth areas are scarce and very expensive. Sites lying just beyond the Development Envelope or on the edge of the Rural Villages have proven to be more appropriate opportunities for public acquisition. The “greenbelt effect” can provide an effective demarcation between the rural areas and the designated growth area. Land acquisitions within the Priority Preservation Area are done to provide facilities for the existing residents of the area.

Many sites are acquired to preserve the natural resources on the property while providing active recreation facilities on suitable land. This can encourage passive recreation and environmental education and stewardship in partnership with sports facilities. Harford County has worked cooperatively with the Department of Natural Resources to identify and coordinate efforts regarding resource conservation acquisitions and additions to the State Parks.

Since 2005, Harford County has acquired 460.7 acres of land, with 84 acres located within the Development Envelope. Several of these were properties adjoining existing park sites, such as the addition to the Liriodendron campus, the purchase of an infill residence at Friends Park and an addition to the Havre de Grace Promenade. Other acquisitions in the Development Envelope include Graybeal Fields, a twenty acre acquisition adjacent to a new elementary school and the Forest Hill/Hickory Activities Center, an existing indoor recreation venue. Other parcels lay on the perimeter of the Development Envelope or Rural Villages such as the acquisition near Jarrettsville and the addition to Prospect Mill Park.

Development of Facilities

The Department of Parks and Recreation strives to protect natural and cultural resources and to complement surrounding communities. Harford County designs active and passive recreation facilities in accordance with programs and regulations of federal, State and local government. Sites are planned so that the impacts on natural resources, such as wetlands, are avoided or minimized. The Department of Parks and Recreation is subject to all regulations of the *Harford County Zoning Code*, including those beyond State minimums, such as the 75-foot buffer to nontidal wetlands. County facilities are reviewed through the Development Advisory Committee with notice to adjoining property owners. The department strives to address concerns of neighbors through buffering, location of driveways, and other design modifications, as needed. The department is always cognizant of the cultural and historic integrity of potential acquisitions.

Capital Improvement Programming

One of the most important ways local government makes existing communities and planned growth areas more desirable is to identify the community's priority for recreational land and facilities. The Departments of Harford County Government have sought additional citizen involvement through a variety of venues, including broad-based community councils, design workshops, and public outreach during the development of the numerous Element Plans.

Harford County acquires parkland and constructs recreation amenities through the Capital Budget and Capital Improvement Program. In addition to department initiatives based on needs identified in the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan, the Department receives requests for capital improvement and acquisition projects from the 23 recreation councils throughout the County, which include the recreation committees of the three incorporated municipalities (Bel Air, Aberdeen, and Havre de Grace). The Recreation Councils represent the thousands of families and volunteers actively involved in the organized recreation programs. The Department also requests and receives input from the Harford County Department of Planning & Zoning, Planning

Advisory Board, Harford County Public Schools, Harford County Public Library, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and the Department of Parks and Recreation staff. Community surveys and contacts from HOAs, land trusts, or individual citizens may provide additional input.

The Department and the committee of recreation council presidents annually evaluate and choose capital projects based in large part on the following criteria that incorporate County goals and policies as well as individual needs:

1. Does the project support the goals and policies set forth in the *Harford County Land Preservation and Recreation Plan*?
2. Is the project included in the department's 5-year capital improvement program?
3. Is the project a priority for reasons of safety, maintenance, or environmental concerns?
4. Is the project a response to identified or expressed community needs or desires?
5. Is the project necessary to complete a previously approved project?
6. Should the construction be included with the initial phase of development for efficiency or practicality?

The Department formulates a proposed budget with recommendations of the Recreation Council Presidents after reconciling the estimated costs of projects with the anticipated funding level. Both the Planning Advisory Board and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board review the proposed budget and provide comments to the County Executive and County Council. The capital budget is incorporated into the County Executive's budget and forwarded to the Harford County Council for review, approval, and funding. The County Executive and County Council both seek additional public input during the budget process.

FUNDING SOURCES

Funding is critical to meet day-to-day operational needs and to acquire and develop parkland. The Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation uses a variety of revenue sources (Table 5.1). The operating budget covers current expenses of the department, such as personnel, supplies, vehicles, and equipment. The Harford County General Fund provides the money for the operating budget from property and income taxes as well as fees and other miscellaneous sources of revenue. Two county facilities—the Emmorton Recreation and Tennis Center and Swan Harbor Farm—have special revenue accounts established within the County budget and generate significant revenue through the collection of user fees to offset expenses for each specific facility. Revenues and expenses for other Parks and Recreation facilities, such as the adventure programming and ropes course and the skate parks, are managed through a third section of the revenue account.

Acquiring land and developing facilities are very expensive initiatives, requiring thousands, and sometimes millions, of local, State, and federal dollars. Harford County has been fortunate for many years to have a dedicated revenue source at the local level. Recordation taxes are charged at a rate of \$3.30 per \$500 valuation on the property being recorded. Of the \$3.30, \$0.55 must be deposited in a fund to purchase parklands and develop recreation facilities. This funding source has been impacted over the past several years by the slowed real estate market.

**Table 5.1
Recreation and Parks Budget, FY 2010–2013**

	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Operating Budget				
General Fund	\$9,169,977	\$9,166,709	\$9,492,032	\$9,747,344
Capital Budget				
Recordation Tax	995,000	1,735,000	1,700,000	1,327,000
Reappropriated	1,654,415	0	575,000	62,096
Bonds/Paygo	2,030,000	1,250,000	1,475,000	6,673,904
Program Open Space ¹	980,000	612,000	59,000	1,015,000
Federal Grants ¹	0	0	0	165,000
Other State ¹	809,000	860,000	650,000	250,000
Other funds ¹	2,240,000	100,000	1,460,000	775,000
<i>Total, capital budget</i>	<i>\$8,708,415</i>	<i>\$4,557,000</i>	<i>\$5,919,000</i>	<i>\$10,268,000</i>
Total, Operating and Capital Budgets	\$17,878,392	\$13,723,709	\$15,411,032	\$20,015,344

¹ Reflects the amount the County is authorized to accept (proposed funding) and does not reflect actual funding allocations, which may be less than the authorized amount.

Source: Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation

Other County revenue sources include “reappropriated” funds and bonds and “paygo” funds. Reappropriated funds are the funds remaining at the completion of a capital project. When a Parks and Recreation capital account is closed, the money reverts to the unappropriated fund balance and is available for future allocation through the capital budget process. Bond and paygo funding are provided by the County administration for major land purchases and for large projects that meet a variety of community needs, such as youth/senior centers and enlarged gymnasiums. Paygo funding is an allocation of current revenues, while bond funds are generated when the County sells general obligation bonds. The bonds are repaid over a 20- to 30-year time period.

Since 1969, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources has provided funds for open space and recreation through Program Open Space (POS). Funded through the State transfer tax, POS funds are allocated to the counties and Baltimore City in accordance with a formula that reflects population and transfer tax collection. Half of POS funds allocated must be spent for acquisition of additional open space lands. The balance can be used for either acquisition or parkland development. The transfer tax was established as a dedicated fund source for Program Open Space, agricultural preservation, and other needs. Recent state-level budget decisions dedicated a portion of the local Program Open Space allocation to the Maryland Park Service operating budget, reducing the available funds for local projects. In addition, POS funds have been diverted into the State General Fund with State bonds having been used for re-

payment. This repayment occurs over a period of 3 years after each fiscal year bond sale. As a result, the POS allocations for Harford County have fluctuated as follows:

FY 2009	\$726,920
FY 2010	247,439
FY 2011	495,000
FY 2012	286,000
FY 2013	833,129

The recent State budget decisions and the slowed real estate market have resulted in significantly less POS funding. The resulting loss of POS revenues to Harford County has significantly constrained the department's ability to acquire additional land. As previously noted in this plan, while land values have declined since 2005 in conjunction with the overall economic recession, it remains more profitable for property owners to sell land for new residences and other developments rather than for less intense uses, such as parks, recreation, and open space. The County should strongly urge the legislature to restore full POS funding as soon as possible.

Other funding sources include developers, recreation council contributions, and State waterway improvement funds, which are generated by boat registration fees. Waterway improvement revenues are used to develop facilities to serve the boating public, such as boat launching ramps. These funds have also been impacted by the slowed economy. Federal funds, such as the Transportation Enhancement Program, have provided significant resources but only for specific projects, such as trails.

NEEDS ANALYSIS

The *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* uses a supply/demand model to identify parkland and recreation facility needs. The current parks and recreation facilities represent the "supply" of service, while the desired use, or "demand" for parks and facilities is identified through other means, including surveys, meetings, interviews, and staff assessment.

Data on parkland and recreation facilities were obtained from the inventories in previous plans updated through field observations (Appendix A, Map 5.1, Table 5.2).

The Harford County public recreation system is comprised of sites owned by municipal, County, State, and federal government, and the Harford County Board of Education. The public system includes the following areas and facilities (Table A-1):

- 177 sites
- 13,683.5 acres of land
- 183 baseball/softball diamonds
- 199 football/soccer/lacrosse/field hockey fields
- 8 volleyball courts
- 86 outdoor basketball courts
- 96 indoor basketball courts
- 81 tennis courts
- 115 playgrounds
- 546 picnic tables
- 31 pavilions
- 5 swimming pools
- 1,500 feet of beach
- 34.8 miles of trails
- 10 concession stands
- 217 restroom seats
- 8 large boat ramps
- 5 small boat ramps
- 246 boat slips
- 7,665 feet of shoreline for fishing
- 9.4 acres of ponds
- 9 horseshoe facilities
- 6,025 parking spaces

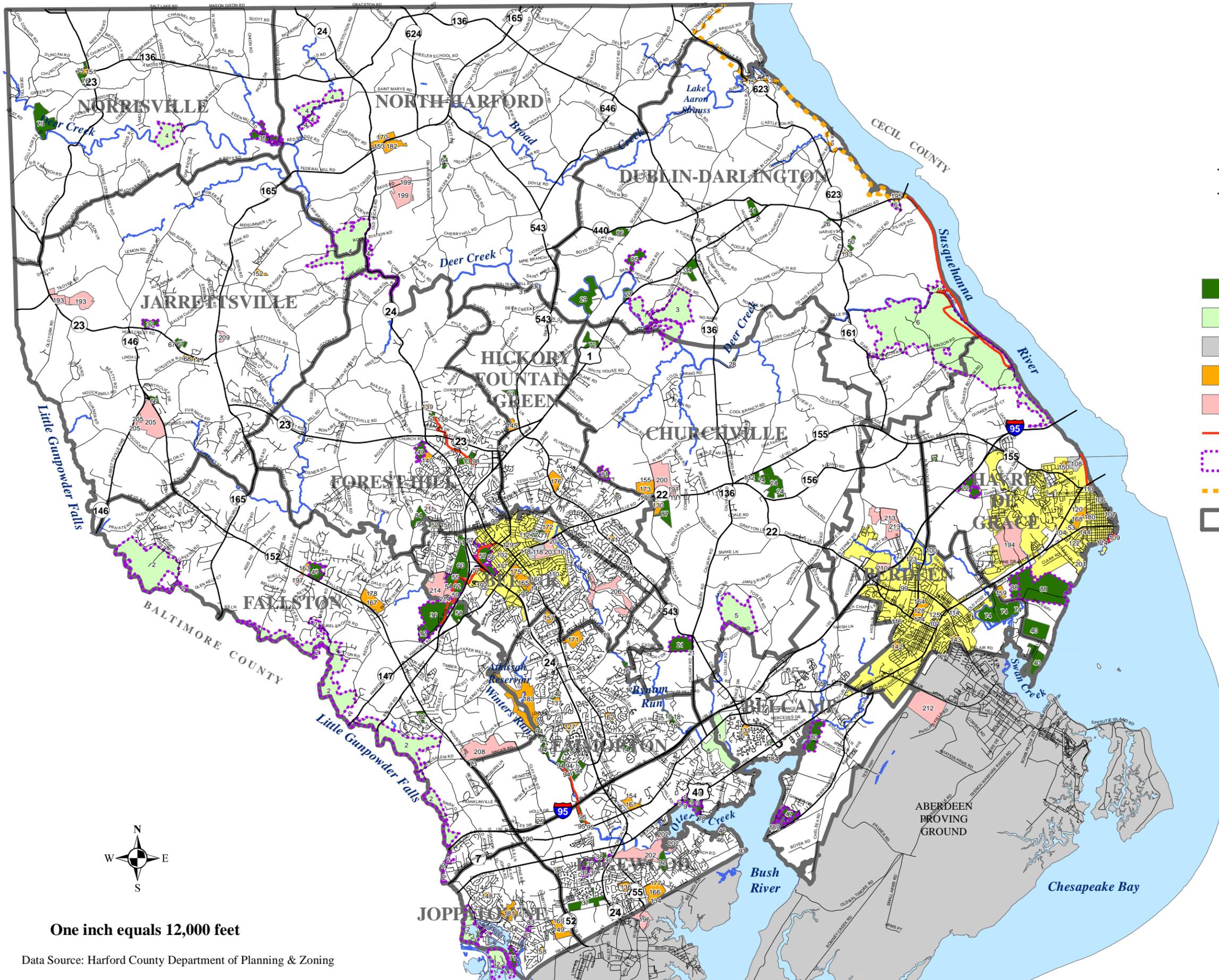
2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan

**Table 5.2
Recreation Sites Map Key**

1	Bush Declaration	73	Mountain Road Park	145	Hickory Elementary School
2	Gunpowder Falls State Park	74	Mullins Park	146	Homestead Elementary School
3	Palmer Site	75	Norrisville Library and Recreation Center	147	Jarrettsville Elementary School
4	Rocks State Park	76	Norrisville Recreation Park- Bragg Property	148	Joppatowne Elementary School
5	Stoney Forest	77	Oak Ridge Park	149	Magnolia Elementary School
6	Susquehanna State Park	78	Otter Point Landing	150	Meadowvale Elementary School
7	Alfred B. Hilton Park	79	Parker Conservation Area (Jolly Acres)	151	Norrisville Elementary School
8	Alice & William Longley Park	80	Perryman Park	152	North Bend Elementary School
9	Anita C. Leight Estuary Center (Leight Park)	81	Prospect Mill Park	153	North Harford Elementary School
10	Barksdale Park	82	Reckord Road Park	154	Old Post Road Elementary School
11	Belcamp Park	83	Robert Copenhaver Park (Incl Foster Run)	155	Prospect Mill Elementary School
12	Benson Fields	84	Saddleview Conservation Area	156	Red Pump Elementary
13	Blake's Venture Park	85	Scarboro Hills Disc Golf Course	157	Ring Factory Elementary School
14	Box Hill South	86	Scarboro Park	158	Riverside Elementary School
15	Broad Creek Public Landing	87	Schucks Road Regional Sports Complex	159	Roye-Williams Elementary School
16	Bynum Run Conservation Area (Broadview)	88	Swan Harbor Farm	160	Wakefield Elementary School
17	Bynum Run Conservation Area (Cedarday)	89	Tudor Hall	161	William Paca Elementary School
18	Bynum Run Conservation Area (Hookers Mill Rd)	90	Wade R. Tucker II Memorial Football Fields	162	William S. James Elementary School
19	Bynum Run Conservation Area (Patterson Mill Rd)	91	William N. McFaul Activities Center	163	Youth's Benefit Elementary School
20	Bynum Run Park	92	Willoughby Beach Park (Parks)	164	Aberdeen Middle School
21	Cedar Lane Park	93	Willoughby Beach Public Landing	165	Bel Air Middle School
22	Chapel Road Park	94	Winters Run Greenway-North	166	Edgewood Middle School
23	Chell Road Park	95	Winters Run Greenway-South	167	Fallston Middle School
24	Churchville Recreation Complex	96	Woodbridge Park	168	Havre de Grace Middle School
25	Clayton Road Conservation Area	97	Ma & Pa Heritage Trail, Bel Air Section	169	Magnolia Middle School
26	Darlington Park (Miller)	98	Ma & Pa Heritage Trail, Forest Hill Section	170	North Harford Middle School
27	Deer Creek Conservation Area (Rt. 1)	99	A. B. Demarco Memorial Park (Aberdeen)	171	Patterson Mill Middle/High School
28	Deer Creek Conservation Area (Rt. 136)	100	Aberdeen Family Swim Center (Aberdeen)	172	Southampton Middle School
29	Deer Creek Conservation Area (Sandy Hook Road)	101	Aberdeen Festival Park	173	John Archer School
30	Deer Creek Conservation Area (St. Anne Drive)	102	Alice Anne Park (Bel Air)	174	Aberdeen High School
31	Deer Creek Conservation Area (Walters Mill Road)	103	Aquila Scott Park (Bel Air)	175	Bel Air High School
32	Dr. James Rutledge Memorial Park	104	Bradford Green (Battery Village, Havre de Grace)	176	C. Milton Wright High School
33	Dublin Dell	105	Community Services Building (Aberdeen)	177	Edgewood High School
34	Dublin Park (Vest)	106	David Craig Park (Havre de Grace)	178	Fallston High School
35	Eden Mill Nature Center and Park	107	Frank J. Hutchins Memorial Park (Havre de Grace)	179	Harford Technical High School
36	Edgeley Grove Farm	108	Havre de Grace Community Center	180	Havre De Grace High School
37	Edgewood Recreation Park	109	Havre de Grace Promenade (Incl. Heritage Park)	181	Joppatowne High School
38	Edgewood Recreation/Community Center	110	Homestead Park (Bel Air)	182	North Harford High School
39	Edgewater Village Parks	111	Jean S. Roberts Memorial Park (Havre de Grace)	183	Harford Glen Environmental Education Center
40	Eleanor & Millard Tydings Park	112	Major's Choice Park (Bel Air)	184	Water's Edge
41	Emma Rocky Park	113	McLhinney Park (Havre de Grace)	185	Beechtree Estates HOA
42	Emmorton Park	114	North Deen Park (Aberdeen)	186	Monmouth Meadows
43	Emmorton Recreation and Tennis Center	115	North Park (Havre de Grace)	187	Tollgate Village
44	Erwin Drive Park	116	Plater Street Park (Aberdeen)	188	Greenbrier Hills
45	Fallston Recreation Complex/Chenowith Center	117	Plumtree Park (Howard Park, Bel Air)	189	Gablers Shore
46	Flying Point Park	118	Rockfield Park (Bel Air)	190	Joppa Forest Landing
47	Forest Greens	119	Shamrock Park (Bel Air)	191	Arena Club
48	Forest Hill/ Hickory Activity Center	120	Somerset Manor (Havre de Grace)	192	Bel Air Athletic Club
49	Forest Hill Recreation Complex	121	Swan Meadows (Aberdeen)	193	Blackhorse Golf
50	Francis Silver Park	122	Todd Field (Havre de Grace)	194	Bulle Rock Golf Course
51	Friends Park	123	Twin Oaks (Aberdeen)	195	Conowingo Pool
52	Graybeal Fields	124	Tydings Park (Incl Yacht Basin, Havre de Grace)	196	Exton Golf Club (Aberdeen Proving Ground)
53	Havre de Grace Activity Center	125	Veterans Park (Aberdeen)	197	Fallston Club Inc., The
54	Heavenly Waters Park - Administrative Offices	126	Victory Street Park (Aberdeen)	198	Fountain Green Swim Club
55	Heavenly Waters Park - Equestrian Center	127	Abingdon Elementary School	199	Geneva Farms Golf Club
56	Heavenly Waters Park - Kelly Fields	128	Bakerfield Elementary School	200	Harford County Community College
57	Heavenly Waters Park - Liriodendron	129	Bel Air Elementary School	201	Havre de Grace Little League Inc. (Stancil Park)
58	Heavenly Waters Park - Soma Property	130	Campus Hills Property	202	Izaak Walton League of America (Bosley Conserv.)
59	Heavenly Waters Park - Tollgate Fields	131	Church Creek Elementary School	203	John Carroll Catholic High School
60	Heavenly Waters Park - Tollgate Landfill	132	Churchville Elementary School	204	Joppatowne Swim Club
61	Heavenly Waters Park - Vale Road Park	133	Darlington Elementary School	205	Ladew Topiary Gardens, Inc.
62	Heavenly Waters Park - Wood Working Shop	134	Deerfield Elementary School	206	Maryland Golf and Country Club
63	Hickory Park	135	Dublin Elementary School	207	Mason-Dixon Trail
64	Highland Park	136	Edgewood Elementary School	208	Mountain Branch Golf Course
65	Hollywoods Park	137	Emmorton Elementary School	209	North Harford Swim Club
66	Jarrettsville Fox Meadows Complex	138	Forest Hill Annex	210	Ripken Stadium
67	Jarrettsville Recreation Center- Preston	139	Forest Hill Elementary School	211	Rock Spring Swim Club
68	Jarrettsville Recreation Complex	140	Forest Lakes Elementary School	212	Ruggles Golf Course (Aberdeen Proving Ground)
69	Line Bridge Landing	141	Fountain Green Elementary School	213	Wetlands Golf Course
70	Lyn Stacie Getz Creative Playground	142	George D. Lisby Elementary School	214	Winters Run Golf Club
71	Mariner Point Park	143	Hall's Cross Roads Elementary School		
72	Michael-Martin Farm	144	Havre De Grace Elementary School		

EXISTING RECREATION SITES

- County Recreation Land
- State Recreation Land
- Municipal Recreation Land
- Board of Education Land
- Private Land
- Recreation Trails
- Parks with Trails
- Mason Dixon Trail (#207)
- Recreation Council Boundaries



One inch equals 12,000 feet

Data Source: Harford County Department of Planning & Zoning

Land

The “default” State goal for Program Open Space (POS) is for each county to provide 30.0 acres of “local recreation acreage” for every 1,000 County residents (shown as “ac/000”).^{2,3} In determining the land eligible to be considered against the local goal, Program Open Space guidelines recognize the following types of recreation land based on ownership and the presence and importance of natural features:

- 100% of local recreation acreage, which includes school sites counted as either 100% of community recreation acreage on the site or 60% of the total site
- 1/3 of local natural resource acreage
- 100% of State and federal recreation land above 60 ac/000, up to a maximum of 15 ac/000

The 19,829.6 acres of total recreation and resource land in Harford County includes 7053.5 acres of State land and 7304.9 acres of local recreation and natural resource land eligible for calculation against the County’s Program Open Space requirement (Table 5.3). The amount of State land is not sufficient to meet the State goal of 60.0 ac/000, so no credit is available against the local goal. With a 2011 population of 245,460, **Harford County has a total of 29.8 acres of local land per thousand population.** Projected population increases will require an additional 354.3 acres of land by 2015 simply to maintain the current service level of 29.8 ac/000 (Table 5.4). By 2025, the County will need 959.2 additional acres to maintain the current service level. Recommendations and priorities for future acquisition are identified in chapter 6.

Facilities

The analysis of recreation facilities in Harford County is a comparison of the supply and demand for different types of facilities to determine the surplus or deficit of each type of facility. The analysis examines facilities for the following activities, which represent the highest priority recreation facilities as determined by the department:

- Diamonds (baseball, softball)
- Athletic fields (football, soccer, field hockey, lacrosse)
- Basketball courts
- Swimming pools
- Playgrounds
- Boating ramps
- Trails
- Tennis courts
- Golf courses

² The 2005 Harford County Land Preservation and Recreation Plan identified 27.7 ac/000 for local recreation land.

³ POS regulations require that at least 50% of a County’s annual allocation be spent on land acquisition, as opposed to park/facility development, unless the County has at least 30.0 ac/000, in which case the County may spend up to 100% of the allocation on development projects.

**Table 5.3
Recreation Land Classification and Need, 2011**

Category	Size (ac.)		Ac/000	
			2011 Pop.: 245,460	
	Total	Eligible	Total	Eligible
State lands	7053.5	0.0	29.1	0.0
County parks	4,496.7	4,496.7	18.3	18.3
Municipal parks	288.9	288.9	1.2	1.2
Board of Education	1,844.4	1,106.6	7.5	4.5
Major Semipublic and Private	1,907.8	0.0	7.8	0.0
HOA land	3,638.5	1,212.8	14.8	4.9
Local natural resource	599.8	199.9	2.4	.81
Total	19,829.6	7,304.9	81.1	29.8

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.
Source: Harford County Parks and Recreation

**Table 5.4
Recreation Land Need, 2011–2025**

	2011	2015	2020	2025
Population	245,460	257,020	267,350	277,320
Eligible acres	7,304.9	7,304.9	7,304.9	7,304.9
Acres per thousand (ac/000)	29.8	28.4	27.3	26.3
Acres needed to meet goal of 30.0 ac/000	58.8	405.7	715.6	1014.7
Acres needed to meet current 29.8 ac/000	-	354.3	662.1	959.2

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.
Source: Harford County Parks and Recreation

The facility needs analysis (Tables 5.5 through 5.10) includes some facilities that are not under County or municipal control. All facilities regardless of ownership or control help to meet recreation needs in Harford County. Facilities not under municipal or County control may meet the needs of only a specific population (e.g., school students or HOA residents).

The needs analysis uses the general unit of “user-occurrences” for several reasons:

- A person who participates in a recreation activity usually does so more than one time during the course of a season.
- A single recreation facility can accommodate users several times each day.
- Different recreation facilities accommodate different numbers of users simultaneously, depending on the size of the teams involved in the activity.

If the supply of user-occurrences for a specific facility exceeds the demand, the County has a surplus of the facility. If the demand exceeds the supply, the County has a deficit of the facility.

The 2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan compares the current supply of several types of public recreation facilities (Table 5.5) to the current

demand for each corresponding recreation facility (Table 5.6), which identifies the surplus or deficit of each type of facility (Table 5.7).

**Table 5.5
Recreation Facility Supply, 2012**

Activity	Facilities		Season Length (Days)	Daily Supply Per Facility (User-Occurrences)	Annual Supply Per Facility (User-Occurrences)	Total Annual Supply (User-Occurrences)
	Type	Total				
Softball/Baseball	Diamonds	183 ⁽¹⁾	84	30	2,520	461,160
Foot/FH/Soc/Lax	Fields	199 ⁽¹⁾	120	60	7,200	1,432,800
Basketball	Courts	182	180	40	7,200	1,310,400
Tennis	Courts	81	180	24	4,320	349,920
Golf	Courses	8 ^(2,3)	270	175	47,250	378,000
Swimming	Pools	29 ⁽⁴⁾	90	1,000	90,000	2,610,000
Playgrounds	Playgrounds	115 ⁽⁵⁾	240	75	18,000	2,070,000
Boating	Ramps	12 ⁽⁶⁾	210	48	10,080	120,960
Trails	Miles	34.8	300	100	30,000	1,044,000

- ⁽¹⁾ Includes diamonds and fields at public and private schools, which may only be available for limited public use.
- ⁽²⁾ All golf courses are in semipublic/private facilities.
- ⁽³⁾ Includes seven 18-hole courses and one 9-hole courses.
- ⁽⁴⁾ 28 pools are in schools or semipublic/private facilities, including HOAs, which are available for limited or no public use.
- ⁽⁵⁾ Assumes 2 playgrounds at each elementary school.
- ⁽⁶⁾ Excludes ramp at Eden Mill, which is too small for power boat launching.

Sources (Tables 5.4–5.9): Norris, Donald F. and Hanson, Royce, *Participation in Local Park and Recreation Activities in Maryland*, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, May 2003
Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation
Harford County Field Allocation Policy

**Table 5.6
Recreation Facility Demand, 2011–2025**

Activity	Participation Rate (Percent of Total Population)	Frequency Rate (Occurrences per User per Year)	Demand (User-Occurrences Per Year)			
			Current (2011) Population: 245,460	2015 Population: 257,020	2020 Population: 267,350	2025 Population: 277,320
Softball/Baseball	6.8%	27.07	451,833	473,122	492,127	510,480
Foot/FH/Soc/Lax	7.0%	27.16	466,669	488,646	508,286	527,241
Basketball	11.3%	19.60	543,645	569,248	592,127	614,208
Tennis	10.3%	13.11	331,452	347,062	361,011	374,474
Golf	17.2%	12.25	517,184	541,541	563,306	584,313
Swimming (Pools)	49.6%	11.57	1,408,626	1,474,966	1,534,247	1,591,462
Playgrounds	52.4%	9.06	1,165,307	1,220,187	1,269,228	1,316,560
Boating	7.2%	7.09	125,302	131,204	136,477	141,566
Trails	44.8%	7.00	769,763	806,015	838,410	869,676

Sources: see Table 5.5

**Table 5.7
Recreation Facility Needs, 2011**

Activity	Facility Types	Annual Supply		Current (2013)		
		(User-Occurrences)		Demand	Surplus/(Deficit)	
		Total	Per Facility	(User-Occurrences)	(User-Occurrences)	Facilities
Softball/baseball	Diamonds	461,160	2,520	451,833	9,327	4
Foot/FH/Soc/Lax	Fields	1,432,800	7,200	466,669	966,131	134
Basketball	Courts	1,310,400	7,200	543,645	766,755	106
Tennis	Courts	349,920	4,320	331,452	18,468	4
Golf	Courses	378,000	47,250	517,184	(139,184)	(3)
Swimming	Pools	2,610,000	90,000	1,408,626	1,201,374	13
Playgrounds	Playgrounds	2,070,000	18,000	1,165,307	904,693	50
Boating	Ramps	120,960	10,080	125,302	(4,342)	0
Trails	Miles	1,044,000	30,000	769,763	274,237	9

Sources: see Table 5.5

The facility analysis suggests that Harford County has sufficient facilities to meet all current needs (Table 5.7). Current projects at sites such as Schucks Road Regional Park, Darlington Park, Churchville Recreation Complex, and the Synthetic Turf Initiative are designed to augment the current system and will be discussed in Chapter 6. The analysis also suggests that the following additional⁴ facility needs may materialize as the County population increases:

- **by 2015:** (Table 5.8)
 - 5 diamonds
 - 1 tennis court
 - 4 golf courses
 - 1 boating ramp
- **by 2020:** (Table 5.9)
 - 12 diamonds
 - 3 tennis courts
 - 4 golf courses
 - 2 boating ramps
- **by 2025:** (Table 5.10)
 - 20 diamonds
 - 6 tennis courts
 - 4 golf courses
 - 2 boating ramps

**Table 5.8
Recreation Facility Needs, 2015**

Activity	Facility Types	Annual Supply		2015		
		(User-Occurrences)		Demand	Surplus/(Deficit)	
		Total	Per Facility	(User-Occurrences)	(User-Occurrences)	Facilities
Softball/baseball	Diamonds	461,160	2,520	473,122	(1 1,962)	(5)
Foot/FH/Soc/Lax	Fields	1,432,800	7,200	488,646	944,154	131
Basketball	Courts	1,310,400	7,200	569,248	741,152	103
Tennis	Courts	349,920	4,320	347,062	2,858	(1)
Golf	Courses	378,000	47,250	541,541	(163,541)	(4)
Swimming	Pools	2,610,000	90,000	1,474,966	1,135,034	13
Playgrounds	Playgrounds	2,070,000	18,000	1,220,187	849,813	47
Boating	Ramps	120,960	10,080	131,204	(10,244)	(1)
Trails	Miles	1,044,000	30,000	806,015	237,985	8

Sources: see Table 5.5

⁴ The facility deficits listed are cumulative, which assumes that previous deficits are not fully addressed. For example, the 20 diamonds needed by 2025 includes the 5 diamonds needed by 2015.

**Table 5.9
Recreation Facility Needs, 2020**

Activity	Facility Types	Annual Supply		2020		
		(User-Occurrences)		Demand	Surplus/(Deficit)	
		Total	Per Facility	(User-Occurrences)	(User-Occurrences)	Facilities
Softball/baseball	Diamonds	461,160	2,520	492,127	(30,967)	(12)
Foot/FH/Soc/Lax	Fields	1,432,800	7,200	508,286	924,514	128
Basketball	Courts	1,310,400	7,200	592,127	718,273	100
Tennis	Courts	349,920	4,320	361,011	(11,091)	(3)
Golf	Courses	378,000	47,250	563,306	(185,306)	(4)
Swimming	Pools	2,610,000	90,000	1,534,247	1,075,753	12
Playgrounds	Playgrounds	2,070,000	18,000	1,269,228	800,772	45
Boating	Ramps	120,960	10,080	136,477	(15,517)	(2)
Trails	Miles	1,044,000	30,000	838,410	205,590	7

Sources: see Table 5.5

**Table 5.10
Recreation Facility Needs, 2025**

Activity	Facility Types	Annual Supply		2025		
		(User-Occurrences)		Demand	Surplus/(Deficit)	
		Total	Per Facility	(User-Occurrences)	(User-Occurrences)	Facilities
Softball/baseball	Diamonds	461,160	2,520	510,480	(49,320)	(20)
Foot/FH/Soc/Lax	Fields	1,432,800	7,200	527,241	905,559	126
Basketball	Courts	1,310,400	7,200	614,208	696,192	97
Tennis	Courts	349,920	4,320	374,474	(24,554)	(6)
Golf	Courses	378,000	47,250	584,313	(206,313)	(4)
Swimming	Pools	2,610,000	90,000	1,591,462	1,018,538	11
Playgrounds	Playgrounds	2,070,000	18,000	1,316,560	753,440	42
Boating	Ramps	120,960	10,080	141,566	(20,606)	(2)
Trails	Miles	1,044,000	30,000	869,676	174,324	6

Sources: see Table 5.5

However, the supply/demand model used in the facility analysis, while useful in theory, is a necessarily simplistic tool used in an attempt to quantify the very complex concept of recreation demand. The vast differences in recreation activities and in the use of recreation facilities require that the analysis be supplemented by an explanation of the results for each activity/facility. The following sections provide a more thorough explanation of the specific results shown in Tables 5.7 through 5.10 for each recreation activity/facility.

The other source of information on local concerns about parks and recreation is the survey done by the Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation in 2011 via the County website. As noted in Chapter 1, this survey sought input from interested citizens regarding the current facilities and programs and the need for additional parks and facilities. Efforts were made to encourage a broad spectrum of residents to respond to the questions and 1029 responses were received. The survey provided opportunities for input in several topical areas: team and active sports facilities, environmental and nature programming; community facilities and individual activities, facilities or programs

for senior citizens and facilities or programs for individuals with disabilities. Of those responding, there was a strong emphasis on the areas of team and active sports facilities and individual sports and activities. Many of those responding expressed the need for additional fields and facilities in their communities. There was also a strong interest expressed in the environmental education facilities and programs.

Of those responding in all the interest areas, the majority understood that funding and volunteer support are critical to the expansion of services. They indicated that they would be willing to pay higher registration costs or user fees to see new facilities and program and/or would be willing to serve as a volunteer or do private fundraising.

Diamonds

The needs analysis shows a current surplus of 4 softball/baseball diamonds, but 69% of the diamonds (127 out of 183) are at school sites. Diamonds at schools meet the needs generated by school teams and events, which is a considerable portion of baseball/softball demand. Furthermore, most of the diamonds at schools are available for recreation councils in accordance with the joint use agreement, but school use takes priority.⁵ Therefore, the needs analysis may understate the need for diamonds. Reportedly, ***the supply of diamonds is currently sufficient to meet demand in season, but will begin to fall short in coming years as population and demand increase.*** The needs analysis reflects the future shortage, which is expected to reach 20 fields by 2025 *even with the inclusion of school facilities.*

Fields

The needs analysis shows a current surplus of 134 fields for football/soccer/lacrosse/field hockey. As with diamonds, the analysis significantly underestimates field needs for several reasons:

- The analysis includes school facilities, which account for 105 of the 199 fields in the Harford system. School facilities meet some recreation demand through school programs and teams. Fields at school sites are generally available for department use outside of school activities, but the use of the high school football fields may be limited unless synthetic turf has been installed.
- The same field shape (rectangle) is used for four different team sports—football, soccer, field hockey, lacrosse—which magnifies demand and complicates accurate analysis. Football fields are often dedicated to football, but soccer, field hockey, and lacrosse fields are typically shared.
- The County's public field inventory includes multi-purpose fields that are smaller than regulation size fields needed for games. While these smaller fields provide area for practice or clinics, they are not usable for game purposes.

⁵ The Harford County Board of Education and Department of Recreation and Parks have had a joint use agreement for school recreation facilities since the 1960s. Recreation programs offered by the department and the recreation councils are given second priority (behind school use) for all school facilities. Diamonds, fields, and courts at the schools are an integral part of the Harford County recreation system.

- Cedar Lane Regional Park provides dedicated field space for the Emmorton Recreation Council's football and baseball programs. However, the availability of remaining field space at the park to meet local recreation needs is impacted by the effort to attract larger out-of-county and out-of-state tournaments to this facility.
- Some field sports, which have historically been seasonal, are now operating through more than one season—in some cases, almost year round. Soccer has traditionally been a fall sport, but spring soccer is gaining in popularity.
- Fields also need to be rested and rotated in their use to maintain safe playing surface for users. Additionally, sports such as football and lacrosse are more damaging to natural turf fields compared to baseball and softball.

The number of fields available in some areas of the County are not sufficient to meet demands, due in part to the growing popularity of “out of season” sports, such as spring soccer, or extended seasons and tournaments for lacrosse. Future increases in population/demand will result in larger deficits, rather than the smaller surpluses indicated in the analysis. The department is acutely aware of the need for fields and is developing sports facilities with multiple fields to proactively address the identified need.

Issues Regarding Supply and Demand

Two current trends are having a significant impact on the supply and demand for fields and diamonds in Harford County:

- Lacrosse has emerged as a major spring sport for both boys and girls. Several recreation councils have added lacrosse in recent years, and the number of teams increases each year. A high percentage of Harford County's soccer/lacrosse fields are overlay fields and share the outfield of a baseball/softball diamond. Overlay fields have traditionally worked very well as an efficient use of land, since soccer was played in the fall and baseball and softball in the spring. The use of the field for lacrosse removes the baseball/softball option for scheduling—an issue which is not fully reflected in the needs analysis.
- Demand is growing for sports during traditional off-seasons, such as spring soccer or fall baseball. Scheduling guidelines for Harford County facilities give priority to the traditional sports schedule. A few recreation councils have sponsored such programs when fields or diamonds were available. Growths in “off-season” programs and interest by other recreation councils in establishing such programs have generated demand for additional facilities.

Basketball Courts

The needs analysis shows a current surplus of 106 basketball courts, which is a significant overstatement of supply (understatement of need) because 53% of the courts in the system are indoors and 90% of the indoor courts are in schools. Gymnasiums/Basketball courts are used year-round, not only for organized and casual

basketball, but for indoor soccer, cheerleading, and other activities. Harford County addresses some of the year-round need for courts through the use of school facilities under the joint use agreement. Furthermore, in response to the growing interest in a wide variety of indoor activities, the department is developing community centers which may serve multiple generations and agencies such as the Office on Aging as well as the Recreation Councils.

Tennis Courts

The needs analysis shows a surplus of 4 courts, which is a reasonable assessment of current need. A large part of tennis demand is met through school programs and semipublic/private facilities. After school hours, tennis courts at the schools are available for public use. The department uses school facilities for summer tennis programs as well as conducting programs at the Emmorton Recreation and Tennis Center. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence shows that tennis participation has stabilized or slightly declined in recent years. The needs analysis indicates that the current supply of tennis courts should be sufficient to accommodate the needs of residents through 2020.

Golf Courses

Harford County does not currently own or operate any golf courses. The analysis explains that all golf courses are in semipublic/private ownership. The level of greens fees and/or the financial requirements of membership are usually the primary determinants of public accessibility to golf courses. While the needs analysis shows a current deficit of courses in the County, recent closures of two private golf courses suggest the analysis overestimates the need for golf courses. The cost of golf in the recent economic downturn and a general decline in golf rounds nationwide since the date of the survey help explain this situation. It should also be noted that a semipublic/private activity is not limited to County boundaries and many Harford golfers enjoy courses elsewhere around the Baltimore metropolitan area.

Swimming Pools

The analysis shows a current surplus of 13 swimming pools and based on the needs-based analysis should remain a surplus through 2025. As with golf courses, determining the need for pools is complicated by the fact that most pools are in semipublic/private ownership, such as HOAs or swim clubs.

All of the public pools except the Aberdeen Family Swim Center and the small pool at Forest Hill Activity Center are in schools. Pools in schools are available for department use under the joint use agreement. Recreation councils use school pools in the summer, and family swim opportunities are provided on the weekends. Since school pools serve students and, through department and recreation council programs, some of the general public, and HOA pools help to meet the swimming needs of residents.

People will go wherever necessary to meet their personal demand for swimming facilities. The Conowingo Pool, though privately owned and remote from much of the County's population, is open to the public and is heavily used in season. School pools,

as with all school facilities, meet some of the demand through school programs and teams.

The indoor pool at the Forest Hill/Hickory Activity Center is a warm water therapy pool designed for swim lessons and therapeutic exercise programs. It provides year-round programs for these constituents but is not suitable for general swimming activities.

Playgrounds

The analysis shows a current surplus of 50 playgrounds. More than 63 percent of playgrounds are on school sites, and school-based playtime may account for the vast majority of school playground usage. However, the informal, short-term activity that occurs frequently at playgrounds makes need difficult to measure. The availability of playgrounds for parents and children to gather informally adds significantly to the local quality of life. Furthermore, general observations at sites such as Annie's Playground and the Lyn Stacie Getz Creative Playground suggest that the demand for playgrounds may be much greater than the analysis results indicate. The department is aware of the need to continue developing creative play facilities and updating existing facilities. Playgrounds are an important component in increasing active play among children.

Boating and Public Access to Water in Harford County

Public access to water, particularly for boating, is an important issue in Harford County. Population increases have spawned a large increase in demand for boating access to the Chesapeake. Boat owners have reacted to the higher price of fuel by downsizing boats from larger vessels that require major launching facilities to smaller craft, which has increased the demand for County boat ramps.

Harford County has ten public boat launching facilities. Six of the facilities—Broad Creek Landing, Eden Mill, Flying Point Park, Mariner Point Park, Otter Point Creek, and Willoughby Beach Landing—are owned and operated by the Harford County Department of Recreation and Parks. Two of the facilities—Havre de Grace Yacht Basin and Jean S. Roberts Memorial Park—are owned and operated by the City of Havre de Grace. The State of Maryland has the Lapidum boat launch in Susquehanna State Park and the Shuresville Landing boat launch in Darlington is available to the public as well.

The use of and demand for boat ramps are strongly linked to the availability of trailer parking. After a craft is launched, space must be available to park a car/truck-trailer combination. Mariner Point Park has approximately 60 trailer spaces, and the lot is usually full by 11 a.m. Parking at Flying Point Park has recently been expanded to 60 spaces.

The County has identified the Bush River/Otter Point Creek area, particularly with access from U. S. 40, as a high priority for additional launching facilities. The boat tie-up at Swan Harbor Farm provides some water access opportunities. The public ramp at Otter Point is the only boat launching access in the area, but the facility is small and includes only 11 car/trailer spaces.

Finding additional locations for boat ramps in Harford County is a difficult proposition for several reasons:

- The Federal government, through the Aberdeen Proving Ground, owns more than 70 percent of the County's shoreline.
- DNR requires a minimum of three acres of usable land to construct a boat launch.
- Much of the Harford shoreline is inaccessible from the water because of submerged aquatic vegetation—vegetation below the water surface, which must be protected. Water depth is also a consideration in locating launch sites, and some estuarine areas in the Route 40 corridor are too shallow to permit boat launching.

Trails

The needs analysis suggests a small surplus in trail facilities, although community input suggests that there is significant interest in additional trails. Trails are used for a variety of purposes (including fitness, environmental education, and quiet contemplation) and in several modes (such as walking, running, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding). The trail surplus might be slightly understated, since some of the trails under the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway are not technically in public ownership. If, as in the case of golf and swimming facilities, semipublic/private facilities are included, Harford County has a larger current surplus of trail mileage. The *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* recognizes the value of trails and supports the creation of a countywide trail system, including connections between activity centers, such as between residential developments, parks, and employment/shopping centers. The Department of Planning and Zoning is finalizing a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan with an emphasis on increasing pedestrian and bicycle activity throughout the County. The plan recognizes the need to provide and improve facilities including multi-use trails. Trails can be an integral part of the County's bicycle and pedestrian network, and the 2013 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan compliments and supports the trail initiatives put forth in this plan. Together, these plans will help to incorporate trail systems into the County's active transportation network, thus providing multiple benefits to the community.

Greenways and Blueways – The Link Between Recreation and Land Preservation

Land that is the subject of the *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan*—parks, recreation facilities, and land preserved for agriculture, natural features, and a host of other reasons—is found throughout the County. *Greenways are the linear corridors, often along streams or roads, that connect parks, recreation, and preserved land to each other and to other activity centers—schools, employment centers, shopping areas.* Greenways enhance the character of the County, provide opportunities for physical activity (e.g., walking, jogging) and alternative transportation (e.g. bicycles), and protect natural habitats for migratory birds and animals. Greenways include both private lands and public parks and trail systems.

Significant efforts are underway to enhance the greenway system in the County, by recognizing the ecological links and by identifying those greenways where public trail access is appropriate. The Department of Natural Resources has identified the “green infrastructure” statewide and incorporated that into the Targeted Ecological Areas to help preserve greenway elements. In addition, the Maryland Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Plan establishes eligibility for federal funding to preserve natural linkages. Many organizations, such as the Harford Land Trust and the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, Inc., are also dedicated to preserving land that can be used in a greenway system. Greenways and trails are frequently mentioned in surveys and public forums as a highly desirable amenity in the community. Greenways are an important part of Harford County, especially in the face of increasing development pressure, and will be discussed throughout the *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan*.

In addition to land based trails, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources is developing a series of blueways. These are water trails with routes along a river or across other bodies of water, such as a lake or salt water, for people using small beachable boats like canoes, kayaks or rowboats. The Maryland Water Trails and Public Access Planning Program works with project partners (including state, local and federal governments) to develop and promote water trails and public waterway access sites that provide recreational boating opportunities for people to enjoy. The Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway is currently working with Harford and Cecil Counties, to develop the Lower Susquehanna River Water Trail. The project area for this blueway stretches from the Pennsylvania line to Swan Harbor in Harford County and Mill Creek and the Susquehanna Flats in Cecil County. Preliminary planning and mapping has begun. Maps and additional information regarding Maryland Water Trails and Blueways can be found at the following sites:

<http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/boating/mdwatertrails/index.asp>
<http://dnr.maryland.gov/naturalresource/spring2008/blueways.pdf>

Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway

The concept of a “greenway” along the shores of the Lower Susquehanna River and Upper Chesapeake Bay in Harford and Cecil counties began as a community effort in 1992 with thoughts of creating a loop trail linking small communities to heritage resources with abundant recreational opportunities. The Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, a Certified Maryland Heritage Area, extends along both sides of the Susquehanna River from the Conowingo Dam south to the head of the Bay. The development of this Heritage Corridor is designed to link the cultural and historical resources of the area, while providing recreational and economic prosperity opportunities. On the Harford County side, Havre de Grace and the connection to Swan Harbor Farm are crucial links in the Greenway. The Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, Inc. has been formed as a nonprofit corporation to provide leadership in the promotion of the area as well as in project planning and development. LSHG, Inc. is recognized as the Heritage Area Management Entity for the Lower Susquehanna and Deer Creek Region of Harford and Cecil Counties and is supported through State, local and private funds. A comprehensive Management Plan was developed in 1997 and outlined a strategy to protect 58 miles of waterfront vistas. The plan outlined conservation strategies, 40 miles of trail development and an aggressive 5 year

business plan. Twenty – six (26) priority projects were initially identified by the waterfront communities of Havre de Grace, Perryville and Port Deposit. In 2012, this plan was updated with the development of a 5 year Management Plan in order to quantify accomplishments, record investment, update priorities and plan for future investment and development of the Upper Bay National Heritage Area and Byway.

From the recreation perspective, a major component of the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway in Harford County is its trail network. A trail is planned to eventually traverse from the Conowingo Dam south to Havre de Grace and Swan Harbor Farm. The trails in Susquehanna State Park are a major component in this linkage and expand the recreation opportunities linking the LSHG trails with the large acreage of protected land in the park and the trail network to Havre de Grace. Portions of the LSHG trail are already in place, but missing links still exist. It is important to continue supporting the mission of the Greenway including the completion of the planned trail network. Additional planned pedestrian and bicycle improvements include the establishment of a river crossing linking the trails in Harford County with the trails in Cecil County. Completion of this crossing will not only benefit the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, but it will be consistent with the goals of the East Coast Greenway plan to develop an urban trail from Maine to Florida.

Several national trails, including the Captain John Smith National Historic Trail, the Star Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and Byway and the Washington- Rochambeau National Trail all traverse the LSHG and provide expanded opportunities for trail development, historic preservation, expanded public access to recreation and to the water.

Looking to the future, the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway Inc. envisions the development of a nationally designated heritage area and byways that serves as the initial contact point for the millions of heritage tourists that traverse the area by the major transportation routes, such as Route 40 and Interstate 95. The Upper Bay will provide a gateway to these national historic trails and offer the ability to experience and enjoy the natural environment while sampling the history of the region.

Maps and additional information regarding the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway can be found on-line at www.hitourtrails.com.

Another major trail component passing through Harford County is the East Coast Greenway. The East Coast Greenway Trail Network is a multi-user trail network connecting urban centers along the East Coast of the United States. The trail will extend from Maine to Key West, Florida. The greenway route will consist of a series of locally managed segments. In Harford County, the proposed East Coast Greenway Trail will travel from the Susquehanna River at U.S. Route 40, then up along the river utilizing part of the LSHG trail network before going west across the County to connect with the Torrey Brown Trail in Baltimore County.

Impacts on Recreation Demand from BRAC

The Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) is a significant and changing presence in Harford County. APG experienced significant restructuring as a result of BRAC.

The net gain in civilian employees may have some impacts on recreation demand in Harford County. Civilian employees live off-base and may participate in public recreation activities. The influx of new residents may bring higher expectations and more demand for certain types of activities. Therefore, the impact on public recreation demand will continue to evolve during the transition to a more civilian-based work force.

In addition, the base itself has recreation facilities that may now be open to the public. Most are available only on a limited basis, if at all, but access to Ruggles Golf Course has been improved so that the public does not have to pass through the installation gates. The increase in civilian population may open some base recreation facilities to greater use by the County and the local recreation councils. Harford County will continue to monitor changes in the composition of APG population and the corresponding impacts on public recreation demand.

Harford County is working to meet the changing needs for recreation facilities in the County. County priorities are discussed in chapter 6, which also includes a capital program for land acquisition, capital development, and facility rehabilitation.

Recreation Programs

Recreation programs in Harford County are provided through the 23 separate recreation councils and the County. The offerings cover a full range of programming and include:

- Above & Beyond
- Aerobics
- Archery
- Arts & Crafts
- Arts Camp
- Badminton
- Ballet
- Baseball (Youth)
- Baseball (Adult)
- Basketball (Youth)
- Basketball (Adult)
- Baton
- Before/After School Program
- Bird Watching
- Board Games
- Bocce
- Bowling
- Bridge
- Card Games
- Canoeing
- Cheerleading
- Chesapeake Bay Programs
- Chess
- Christmas Celebration
- Community Band
- Computer Lab
- Concerts
- Dance (Ballroom)
- Dance (Clogging)
- Dance (Country, Square, Line)
- Dog Obedience Training
- Drama
- Drum Line
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Eden Mill Tour
- Environmental Activities/Games
- Etiquette
- Fencing
- Festivals
- Field Hockey
- Fitness Camp (Youth)
- Fitness (Adult)
- Football
- Gymnastics
- Halloween Celebration
- Hiking
- Horseback Riding Lessons
- Horseshoes
- Ice Hockey
- Independence Day Celebration
- Indoor Soccer
- Jazzercise
- Jump Rope Club
- Kayaking
- Lacrosse (Youth)
- Lacrosse (Adult)
- Martial Arts
- Model Airplane Flying Club
- Native American Programs
- Nature Center Exhibits
- Nature Programs
- Performing Arts
- Pilates
- Pointe
- Reading
- Roller Hockey (In Line)
- Rugby
- Scrapbooking
- Scuba Diving
- Senior Citizen Clubs
- Ski Clubs/Trips
- Soccer (Youth)
- Soccer (Adult)
- Softball (Youth)
- Softball (Adult)
- Sports Conditioning
- Step Aerobics
- Stream Studies
- Summer Recreation Center
- Swim (Youth)
- Swim (Adult)
- Teen Program
- Teen Youth Center
- Tennis (Youth)
- Tennis (Adult)
- Track & Field
- Volleyball (Youth)
- Volleyball (Adult)
- Water Aerobics
- Weightlifting
- Wrestling
- Yoga
- Youth Center

The Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation and the recreation councils offer programs for all ages and ability levels. Activities include programs that meet on a regular basis during a season/session, such as classes and team sports programs. Recreation council activities are offered to serve area residents, although all programs are open to all County residents (if, for instance, a desired program is not offered in the

participant’s home council). Other activities and events are operated by the professional staff of the Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation.

While recreation council activity declined from 2011 to 2012, as evidenced in table 5.11, this does not provide a full picture when compared to the 2005 Plan. Part of this difference is explained by the change in the type of information requested by the County Administration and County Council. This decision to focus on Recreation Council programs, registrations, money raised and spent, as well as, volunteer numbers and hours makes direct comparison to information provided in the 2005 Plan difficult.

Two areas of direct comparison that can be made are the number of programs and registrants. Information in the previous plan concerning FY 2004 recreation council activity showed a total of 1,899 programs and 81,907 registrants for that year. When comparing those numbers to FY 2012 (Table 5.11), the growth in recreation programming in Harford County becomes clearer. Since FY 2004, Harford County has experienced a growth of 1,740 recreation council programs, a 92% increase over that timeframe. Similarly, the number of registrants for programs since FY 2004 has increased by 28,258 people, a 35% increase over the same timeframe.

Most of the programs are run through the recreation councils, each of which is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Registration fees collected for the programs and other fundraisers must cover program costs, such as referees/umpires, instructors, and equipment. The recreation councils may also supplement departmental maintenance activities and do small capital projects.

**Table 5.11
Recreation Council Activity, 2011—2012**

	FY2011	FY2012	Change, 2011 & 2012	
			Number	Percent
Programs	4,765	3,639	-1,126	-24%
Registrants	131,289	110,165	-21,124	-16%
\$\$ Raised & Spent	\$8,791,499.00	\$8,051,520.00	-\$739,979.00	-8%
# of Volunteers	25,115	17,659	-7,456	-30%
Vol. Hrs.	660,833	533,765	-127,068	-19%

Source: Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation

Role of Private Facilities

The provision of recreation facilities is not solely the responsibility of the government. Homeowners associations, private entrepreneurs, membership clubs, and nonprofit organizations are key components in recreational opportunities for the Harford County citizens. Community open space and facilities can address many of the needs for informal play areas, small playgrounds, neighborhood trails, and natural open space. Community swimming pools and tennis courts serve large residential neighborhoods and may partner with recreation councils for summer swim team programs. Swim and tennis clubs and athletic clubs provide facilities to members and may be operated as either nonprofit or for-profit enterprises. Semipublic and private entities meet much of the current recreation demand in Harford County. Public swimming pools and programs

are offered at Edgewood, North Harford and Magnolia Middle Schools, and Exelon Power owns and operates an outdoor swimming pool near the Conowingo Dam.

The private sector meets many recreation needs through daily fee facilities, such as the public golf courses and driving ranges, which are privately owned and operated. Private facilities often work with the department to offer programs such as Senior Olympics and Junior Golf.

The priority for public sector recreation is, and must continue to be, providing facilities and programs where economics do not allow incentives for private sector involvement. Examples include the outdoor recreation facilities for a wide range of group and individual sports as well as sites for nature appreciation and the preservation of significant environmental resources.

Public Participation

The survey and other public participation in the preparation of the *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* is described in Chapter 1.

This page is intentionally blank.

Chapter 6

LAND PRESERVATION, PARKS, AND RECREATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* illustrates the strong link between 1) the public need for parkland and other sites for leisure activity and 2) the importance of preserving significant areas of land from development, specifically farmland and natural resources. The final chapter of the plan identifies the goals of the Parks and Recreation element and provides the guidance for implementation through both policy recommendations and capital improvements. Parks and Recreation system is an integral part of the community character and high quality of life enjoyed by Harford County residents. Maintenance and expansion of the system to address the leisure and fitness needs of both the current and future population within the framework of County land use policy will be needed throughout the planning period.

Recreation, agricultural heritage, and natural resource conservation all share the common characteristic of preserving land from development. The green infrastructure identified by the State works with the County zoning code, planning priorities, natural features, and recreation sites to create a network of land that defines the character of Harford County.

Policy/program recommendations regarding the Agricultural Land Preservation Element are contained in Chapter 3 and those regarding the Natural Resources Conservation Element in Chapter 4. The two maps in this chapter illustrate the effects of recent land preservation and recreation efforts in Harford County and provide guidance for future initiatives for all three elements. The land preservation plan (Map 6.1) shows the location of preserved land relative to the growth policy of the County. The Development Envelope and Rural Villages are locations that support more intense development than the agricultural areas. Most of the land that is either preserved (through easements or public ownership) or within which development is discouraged (through Rural Legacy, Forest Legacy, Scenic River, or Critical Area designation) lies outside of the identified development targets and areas of extensive residential development.

The Parks and Recreation Plan map (Map 6.2) illustrates the location of parks and recreation facilities relative to the areas targeted for growth by County policy. The plan shows recreation sites serving the entire County, including both population concentrations and rural areas. Sites throughout the County are programmed for capital improvements in the plan.

- The 2013 Harford County Land Preservation and Recreation Plan contains general policy recommendations as well as recommendations for specific capital improvements. The basis of this Plan is the Harford County Master Plan and Land Use Element Plan so the specific goals from the Land Use Element Plan are highlighted first.

2012 LAND USE ELEMENT PLAN

The 2012 Land Use Element Plan identified parks and open space as one of the essential public facilities that are important to the quality of life for County residents. The overall policy regarding these facilities and services is set forth below and forms the framework for the specific Parks and Recreation Goals which follow.

Public Facilities, Services and Safety

Policy: Provide the public facilities and services that are needed to serve the existing population and projected new growth in a safe, healthy, and sustainable manner.

As the population of Harford County increases, so does the need for public services and facilities. When planning for these, it is important to consider not only the size of the County's future population but also its age and geographic distribution. Seniors and school aged children, for example, may have very different service and facility needs. However, they can also share facilities as is evidenced by the joint use that occurs in various community and activity centers throughout the County. Consideration of providing combined use facilities should be a primary objective, and as facilities and services are provided they should be located in a manner that provides good community design, strengthens the area's sense of community, and supports a healthy lifestyle.

The facilities and services discussed in the Land Use Plan are those that are publicly managed and have a direct influence on the location of land uses, including water and sewer, solid waste management, transportation, police and emergency operation (EMS and Fire), schools (including higher education), libraries, and parks and open space. The plan notes that each of these has a guiding plan that establishes unique goals, policies, and strategies.

POLICY/PROGRAM GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Open space and natural landscapes are an important component of any community and contribute to its identity, livability and viability. Open space can be in the form of State or County Parks, recreational and passive natural land, as well as private recreational centers such as swim clubs and golf courses.

Within Harford County, there are four State Parks – Gunpowder Falls, Susquehanna, Rocks, and Palmer. These parks provide over 7,053 acres of public lands offering a combination of recreation and resource based activities. The County will continue to work with the State to ensure that adjoining land uses remain compatible with these public lands. Where appropriate, preservation initiatives will be pursued.

The Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation acts as stewards for County-owned public lands. As of 2012, the County owns and maintains 120 recreation facilities totaling over 4,785 acres of land. The County's park system ranges from small community parks such as Chell Road Park in Joppatowne to larger regional facilities such as Cedar Lane Park in Bel Air. The Department of Parks and Recreation also works with the Board of Education to provide recreational opportunities for local communities at school sites. Whereas community parks and school lands provide active recreational facilities, the County also has two parks, Eden Mill and Anita C. Leight Park that are devoted to nature studies and take advantage of the County's invaluable natural resources.

As the County's population continues to grow, so does the need for recreation and open space to maintain high quality communities. While the Department of Parks and Recreation's Land Preservation, Parks & Recreation Plan addresses the amount and types of land and facilities necessary to supply the needs of current and future residents, this Plan must also ensure that land uses adjacent to these sites minimize conflicts and provide pedestrian access where applicable.

- ***PR-1 Acquire additional recreation land, including waterfront properties, to help meet the needs of current and future residents.***

Harford County has done an excellent job of obtaining and developing recreation land in one of the fastest growing counties in the State. The pressure to add more parks and open space will only increase with growing population as the County continues to be a desirable location in the suburban Baltimore region. Waterfront property is especially high-value for many reasons. The estuarine environment—where land meets water—offers a unique perspective on natural resources and processes. The County should look for any opportunity to increase public use and enjoyment of its water resources through acquisitions and partnerships.

The County will continue to work towards meeting the Program Open Space goal of 30.0 acres of local parkland per thousand population (ac/000) with a baseline commitment of acquiring additional open space at a level that will maintain the current benchmark of 29.8 ac/000. Land acquisitions should include regional park sites to serve countywide needs or multiple recreation council areas as well as community park sites to serve more localized needs. The anticipated acquisition and development as a passive park site of the 71 acre Graham property in the Emmorton community is an example of an acquisition that will serve both local and countywide needs.

The Department will continue to strengthen the development review process to ensure that future land dedications from homeowners' associations are appropriate additions to the County system of parkland and open space. The development review process is an opportunity for the County to coordinate the need for public and private open space. Open space within new neighborhoods will generally serve the localized recreation needs of the residents, should be provided based on the housing types and anticipated demographics of the residents, as well as, generally be owned and maintained by the homeowners association. In limited circumstances, donation of land and/or facilities to the County may be the most appropriate option for fulfilling open space requirements and serving public recreation goals.

- ***PR-2 Develop integrated greenway/trail systems with both public and private segments.***

Greenways have proven to serve many vital and useful functions, including:

- Waterway preservation
- Habitat preservation
- Recreation
- Alternative transportation
- Community enhancement
- Parks interconnection

Harford County already has many potential components of a greenway system. The Ma and Pa Trail (both the North and South segments), Winters Run, Bynum Run, Deer Creek, the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, and the Little Gunpowder Falls should all be part of a countywide system of trails for alternative transportation, public enjoyment, and community enhancement. Efforts will be made to coordinate trail planning with adjacent counties or states to facilitate the connections between jurisdictions. For example, in recent years discussions have occurred with planners in York County, Pennsylvania to foster a continuous trail in the Whiteford/Cardiff/Delta area.

The system should include connected sections with public access and accommodations to encourage biking, walking, hiking, horseback riding, and other fitness-related activities. In addition to the land appropriate for greenway/trail designation and development, Harford County also has many partners able to contribute to a unified greenway network, including land preservation organizations (such as the Harford Land Trust and the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway), State and local agencies (including DNR, MDP, and the County departments of Planning/Zoning and Parks/Recreation), and homeowners' associations (HOAs). Lands within HOAs can be an integral part of a trail network to connect population concentrations within the County to activity centers, particularly within the development envelope.

However, public access need not be a requirement of all greenways. Some sections of greenway should be retained in a natural state, without public access, to preserve natural features, habitat, and community character. For example, previous County land preservation and recreation plans noted that the Bynum Run area from Bel Air

southeastward has limited land for donation or acquisition, poor access points, and a lack of logical termini. Nevertheless, the segment should be considered an important component of a Bynum-Winters Run Greenway for its natural setting and connection within the system.

- ***PR-3 Monitor usage trends and add recreational opportunities and facilities that meet the needs of all segments of the public.***

Over time, the number and types of public recreation facilities must be modified in response to changes in public demand and popular trends in parks and recreation services. For example, the demand for football, soccer, and lacrosse fields, as well as basketball courts, has increased in recent years; while the demand for public tennis courts and smaller baseball diamonds has leveled off. Current population trends show a growing adult County population. Given this fact, the Department will work with individual Recreation Councils to address localized needs in the area of adult programming, as well as partnering with the Office on Aging for senior programming. Additionally, the Department will continue to address and improve accessibility for individuals with disabilities at both existing facilities and new construction projects.

The Department will continue efforts to expand opportunities that go beyond the traditional recreation council programming. The department will work in partnership with the Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding Program to expand the number and types of therapeutic recreation services available to the County's developmentally and physically challenged citizens and their families. The Equestrian Center, the Tollgate Woodshop, the Liriodendron and Swan Harbor Farm, as well as the two environmental education centers, offer alternative types of activities and programs. As the Harford County Center for the Arts becomes a reality, the Department hopes to play an integral role in the development and programming of the facility.

Surveys, interviews, anecdotal situations, and other indications suggest that the demand for public use of the waterfront in Harford County currently exceeds the supply. Public ownership (or control, through easements or other mechanisms) of waterfront property supports many public purposes, including watercraft launching, swimming (where appropriate), fishing, and even simple visibility. Public stewardship of water resources is integral to the long term health of County waterways and the Chesapeake Bay.

- ***PR-4 Provide active and healthy lifestyle opportunities for Harford County residents.***

The Department places priority on providing options for residents of all ages, to play, enjoy and learn in the recreation environment. A primary recreation goal for the partnership of the Department and the Recreation Councils is to provide in-house recreation programs in a wide variety of sports so that all children in Harford County

have the opportunity to learn sports skills and to participate in team and individual activities.

Parks and Recreation is dedicated to addressing the increased importance of a healthy community. Working closely with the Recreation Councils, Parks and Recreation actively assesses the recreation needs in accordance with current trends, as stated in PR-3, and the need for additional activities to reduce the health issues associated with a sedentary lifestyle. These efforts include support for individual activities such as walking and for playgrounds at both parks and schools. The concept of community gardening has been raised and is under consideration by the Department for one or more sites in the Development Envelope. This effort would provide a healthy lifestyle choice for Harford County citizens while promoting sustainability and local community farming efforts.

Parks and Recreation promotes Healthy Harford Inc. and the Harford County Obesity Task Force, and looks to identify opportunities to increase obesity awareness, and provide activities to address the issue. The Report of the Obesity Task Force included recommendations from Built Environment Subcommittee that encourage the development of facilities for individual and independent use in future parks as well as for sports fields. For instance, facilities that benefit active seniors, such as pickleball and bocce, as well as individual activities and sports such as skateboarding, archery and disc golf should be integrated. Strong support was given to the design and construction of future multi-use trails to connect parks with community destinations. The Obesity Task Force also recommended that the Department increase Public information efforts to promote the availability of recreation facilities at County parks and public schools. Many citizens are unaware of the fact that outdoor school facilities such as tracks and playgrounds can be used by the public when not needed for school activities. Public outreach should advertise family activity programs at schools and recreation through a variety of outlets, including social media, websites, grocery stores and libraries.

As mentioned in PR-2, Parks and Recreation will continue its efforts to complete the Ma & Pa Heritage Trail and other greenway/trails systems in support of the 2012 County Master Plan efforts to create more walkable and bikeable communities. Furthermore, the Department will continue to add additional closed loop walking trails at park site to increase the hiking/walking fitness opportunities for Harford County citizens.

- ***PR-5 Work with Recreation Councils to continue to address the safety of recreation program participants***

The Department will work with the Recreation Councils to expand screening and formal background checks for council volunteers, in support of the paramount goal of participant safety.

In recent years, there have been improvements in the aftercare of sports head injuries. The Department follows Maryland State law regarding concussion awareness and management at school sites and parks in conjunction with the Harford County Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Harford County Board of Education, and the local Recreation Councils. Increased awareness and appropriate medical actions for all injuries will continue to be a focus in County sports programs.

The Department, in an effort to provide the most updated medical technology possible, will install automated external defibrillators (AED's) in all of the Recreation Centers, beginning with those facilities that offer regular senior programming.

- ***PR-6 Develop additional community centers in appropriate areas.***

Community centers in Harford County have been extremely successful in both usage and as examples of strong organizational partnerships. The multi-generational centers such as the William N. McFaul Activities Center, the Havre de Grace Activities Center and the Veronica "Roni" Chenowith Activities Center are utilized throughout the day and evening by senior citizen programs, Recreation Council programs, the Boys and Girls Club activities as well as the general public. They are outstanding examples of the cooperative efforts among multiple public and/or private agencies resulting in cost efficiencies as well as community building. Harford County should build on the success of the current community centers by assessing the need for centers in other areas of the County and developing where appropriate. Other potential centers being considered include North Harford/Whiteford and Joppatowne areas, as well as, an upgraded activity center in Aberdeen.

While multi-agency centers are preferred in many situations, specific community recreation needs may warrant a smaller facility. The Jarrettsville community has very active recreation programs, but lacks adequate indoor space due to the lack of a middle school or high school in this area of the County. A small community center is planned for this area under the capital program of Parks and Recreation. While this facility may not have formal partnerships with the Office on Aging or other agencies, efforts will be made to ensure that program scheduling at these type of center considers broader community needs.

- ***PR-7 Incorporate sustainable development and conservation practices in all Parks and Recreation parks and facilities.***

Great efforts have been made to integrate green practices in the operation of facilities and Recreation Council Programs. Currently Parks and Recreation practices single stream recycling in most offices and plans to integrate healthy environmental practices and single stream recycling in all parks, centers, offices, sports fields, and special events by the year 2015.

The Department supports the County's 2008 Environmental Stewardship Initiative in construction and renovation of facilities and promotes revitalization and reuse of old structures if possible and fiscally responsible. Additionally, Parks and Recreation strives to increase the use of green building technology, implement sustainable building practices and promote energy savings in construction of all of its buildings and facilities.

Additionally, the Department and its affiliated Recreation Councils educate and empower Harford County citizens on the topics of environmental stewardship, water quality and watershed protection at the two County run environmental education centers, Eden Mill and the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center. The Department, where appropriate, will integrate opportunities for environmental education and stewardship at individual project sites. These opportunities would include educational signage along site developments. These programs will continue to grow and expand to meet the needs of the Harford County citizenry.

The Department will follow the Maryland Department of Agriculture guidelines concerning herbicide and fertilizer use and management in compliance with the Fertilizer Use Act of 2011.

- ***PR-8 Improve existing facilities and develop complementary facilities in support of the destination recreation/sports tourism market.***

In recent years, destination recreation/sports tourism has grown significantly in Harford County. The 2011 Harford County Destination Market Study completed for the Greater Baltimore Committee identified Ripken Stadium and Cedar Lane Sports Complex as significant contributors to Harford County as a sporting event destination. This study indicated that additional investment is needed in Cedar Lane Regional Park for support services such as restrooms, locker rooms, and irrigation. These investments should include private fundraising by the Cedar Lane Sports Foundation as well as County investment. To further the efforts to attract regional tournaments as well as serving local recreation needs, additional fields are needed to complement Cedar Lane Regional Park. Like the Cedar Lane facility, the fields may be created as a revenue-based operation to recover a significant portion of the investment. Alternative financing options should be explored for this project as a private/public partnership.

Additionally, efforts should be made to maximize the impact of existing Department assets in other tourism markets, including eco-tourism and heritage tourism. The Department should work in cooperation with private sector partners and other County agencies to enhance interest in travel to Harford County. The new APG Credit Union Arena may offer opportunities for sports related programs and attractions as cooperative ventures. Measurement of the successfulness of the Department's efforts in this area should be part of any follow-up study to the 2011 Harford County Destination Market Study.

CAPITAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND COUNTY PRIORITIES

To establish priorities for acquisition, facility development and rehabilitation, the Department of Parks and Recreation must balance the need to maintain and improve current infrastructure with the need to construct new facilities. Many existing park amenities were constructed in the 1970s and have been in service for more than 35 years. Major renovations and rehabilitation efforts are necessary to ensure that facilities meet safety standards and ADA compliance and respond to current recreation trends. Attractive, well-maintained recreation facilities are an important component of community character and livability. The County makes a significant investment each year to simply rehabilitate existing tennis courts, multipurpose courts, and backstops and to resurface parking lots. In addition, replacing playgrounds at schools and parks is a vital factor in the fight against childhood obesity and antisocial behavior and requires funding from the County, Parent Teacher Associations, and other community groups.

Harford County will continue to acquire both active and passive parkland through the planning period. Meeting the State default goal of 30 acres per 1,000 persons (ac/000) would require an additional 1,015 acres of parkland. The goal is desirable, but current funding limitations make the goal challenging. The *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* sets a goal of acquiring 960 acres of land in the next 15 years. The goal provides 30 ac/000 for the additional 32,000 people expected in Harford County by 2025 and maintains the current ratio of 29.8 ac/000 countywide. This proposed goal is ambitious, given the competition for and the price of the available land. The County will focus acquisition efforts on land in the Emmorton and Joppatowne areas and waterfront property on the Oakington and Willoughby Beach peninsulas. Much of the active recreation needs will be satisfied by the proposed construction of additional community centers/parks to serve recreation council areas. In certain instances, the park sites may be located on the boundary of the Development Envelope due to the high price and limited availability of land within the Envelope. Additional passive recreation land and an environmental education facility are proposed along Deer Creek or the Susquehanna River.

The facility needs analysis in chapter 5 identifies deficiencies in baseball/softball diamonds, fields and trails. To address the demand for active recreation facilities, additional diamonds (baseball/softball) and fields (football/soccer/lacrosse) must be constructed throughout the County. Existing parks and school properties will be developed to full potential while maintaining sensitive environmental areas and adequate neighborhood buffers. New community centers/parks will be developed in phases, and the specific mix of facilities will be based on the programming needs of the community. In some instances, lighting of existing fields may be an appropriate method of addressing facility needs, provided surrounding neighborhoods can be protected. While the analysis is based on general survey information and existing facilities on a countywide basis, the current demand for facilities in specific recreation council service areas and trends in certain sports activities will guide the department in its development

of priorities. As previously discussed, the surging popularity of lacrosse as a spring sport for both boys and girls has led to declining registrations in baseball/softball in some areas. This trend reflects interest in the Orioles and the Aberdeen Ironbirds and is subject to change with the recent success of the professional teams. Even if interest in baseball/softball grows, the need for separating lacrosse fields and baseball/softball diamonds, along with the growing popularity of year-round programs in both soccer and baseball, remains a priority. This will be addressed in the development of parks as well as community facilities. Trends in leisure activities and the mix of sport facilities will be addressed in the project design phase in conjunction with the affected recreation councils and other community users. Development of an integrated community trail systems, such as the Ma and Pa Heritage Trail, continues to be a Departmental priority.

The capital recommendations also include several multiuse, intergenerational projects to provide services for all ages. The department has developed successful partnerships with the Harford County Public Library and the Harford County Office of Aging in developing recreation centers. The partnerships should be continued with construction of additional youth/senior centers in Aberdeen, Joppatowne and North Harford within the 15-year planning period. Other recreation centers, while not specifically identified as multi-generational centers, will include programs and opportunities for use by the community and partnership with other agencies will be a high priority.

In 2013 Harford County began the development of a comprehensive, multiyear Countywide Facilities Master Plan. This Master Plan will include Harford County Government facilities (including Parks and Recreation), Harford County Public Schools, Harford County Public Library, Harford Community College, Harford County Health Department, the Court system, the Sheriff's Office, and the Harford County Volunteer Fire Companies and is expected to be finished in 2014. It is anticipated that this document will provide a framework for sound decision making through an examination of current inventory, a facility condition assessment of each building, functional adequacy of existing programs, capacity and technology readiness. The document will provide data to define and determine short and long term capital investments needed to maintain facilities and amenities as safe, reliable, functional and more energy efficient and will detail and prioritize the most critical needs of the County.

The *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* includes the County's detailed recommendations for acquisition, facility development, and rehabilitation (Table 6.1). The long range Capital Improvement Program will be comprehensive yet practical. Current demands, critical facility renovations, as well as future needs assessments, will require flexibility and cost effective planning. Projects proposed in the mid-range (2019–2023) and the long-range (2024–2028) are general in nature and will be revised over time depending on recreation trends and financial constraints. The information and recommendations of the Countywide Facilities Master Plan will be incorporated in revisions of the project priorities through the Annual Capital Improvement Plan.

The program as shown in Table 6.1 includes 73 projects with a total cost of more than \$250.86 million, nonwaterway projects total \$240.7 million. An additional 1,129 acres are proposed for acquisition. The 68 park and recreation projects (excluding the 5 waterway improvements) breakdown as follows:

- Short-range (2014–2018): \$86,229,000 (36%)
- Mid-range (2019–2023): \$115,980,000 (48%)
- Long-range (2024–2028): \$38,540,000 (16%)

- Acquisition: \$27,045,000 (11%)
- Capital Development: \$188,820,000 (78%)
- Rehabilitation: \$24,884,000 (10%)

The 5 waterway improvement projects breakdown as follows:

- Short-range (2014–2018): \$2,292,000 (23%)
- Mid-range (2019–2023): \$3,680,000 (36%)
- Long-range (2024–2028): \$4,142,500 (41%)

- Acquisition: \$750,000 (7%)
- Capital Development: \$0 (0%)
- Rehabilitation: \$9,364,500 (93%)

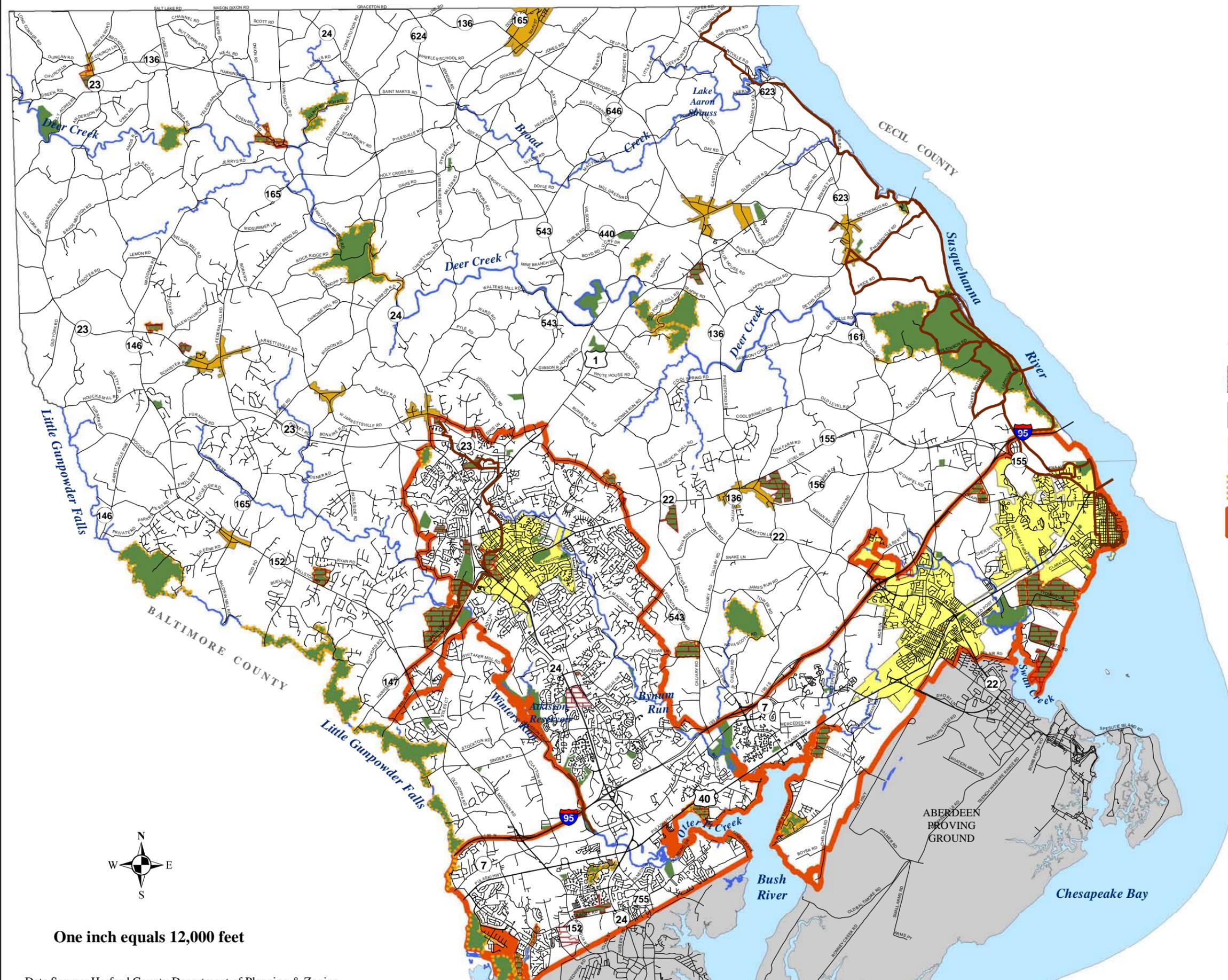
Meeting the goals of the *2013 Harford County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* will require a substantial investment of State, County and private resources. If fully funded by the State legislature, Program Open Space may yield \$1.5 – \$2.0 million dollars to Harford County each year, for a total of \$22.5–\$30.0 million over the planning period. Local recordation tax revenues are also based on property sales and have been yielding \$2.0–\$2.5 million per year, for a total of \$30–\$38 million over the planning period.¹ The combined revenues from POS and the local recordation tax would provide approximately 22 to 28 percent of the funds needed for non-waterway recreation acquisition and development. An additional \$4 to \$5 million could come from the Federal Highway Administration for the segments of the Ma and Pa Trail. The intergenerational centers may be eligible for funds through the Maryland Office of Aging and the Harford County Community Development Block Grant allocation because the centers will benefit eligible populations. The County must actively pursue other State and federal grants as well as private foundation grants where appropriate. Major land acquisitions and construction of multipurpose centers must also be supported by paygo and/or bond funds as approved by the Harford County Executive and the Harford County Council, who will carefully balance available financial resources with the wide variety of public service needs.

¹ Estimates are based on a relatively stable and healthy real estate market with the increase in property values offsetting a decrease in new home construction.

This page is intentionally blank.

PARKS & RECREATION PLAN

-  Trails & Greenways
-  Capital Improvements
-  Rural Villages
-  Parks (State, County, Municipal)
-  Parks with Trails
-  Development Envelope



One inch equals 12,000 feet

Table 6.1
Proposed Capital Improvements, 2014-2028

Project	Location/ Area Served	Description	Estimated Total Cost	Acres to be Acquired	Estimated Cost								
					2014 through 2018			2019 through 2023			2024 through 2028		
					Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation
COUNTYWIDE PROJECTS													
ADA Improvements	ALL	Renovation of existing facilities to ensure ADA compliance	\$600,000				\$200,000			\$200,000			\$200,000
Backstop Renovation	ALL	Renovation of existing backstops	\$400,000				\$50,000			\$150,000			\$200,000
Athletic Field Improvements	ALL	Installation of synthetic turf	\$11,350,000			\$5,350,000			\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000		\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
Bleacher Renovations	ALL	Replacement as needed	\$780,000				\$300,000			\$240,000			\$240,000
Enlarged Gymnasiums and Activity Rooms	ALL	Construction of full size gymnasiums and/or community activity rooms in conjunction with new or renovated elementary schools	\$3,900,000			\$1,200,000			\$1,200,000			\$1,500,000	
Facility Renovations	ALL	Renovation and repair at existing facilities	\$1,690,000				\$665,000			\$400,000			625,000
Natural Turf Improvements	ALL	Improvements to natural grass fields	\$2,300,000				\$800,000			\$600,000			900,000
Park Improvements	ALL	Recreation Council project support	\$990,000				\$330,000			\$330,000			330,000
Park Land Acquisition	ALL	Acquisition of land for active and passive park sites	\$9,045,000	150	\$2,575,000			\$3,235,000			\$3,235,000		
Parking Lot Paving	ALL	Resurfacing of existing parking lots	\$880,000				\$180,000			\$300,000			\$400,000
Playground Equipment	ALL	Replacement of existing playground equipment at parks and schools	\$2,785,000				\$1,035,000			\$750,000			\$1,000,000
SWM Pond Repair and Renovation	ALL	Repair of SWM ponds at various sites	\$1,600,000				\$1,200,000			\$200,000			\$200,000
Tennis/Multipurpose Court Renovations	ALL	Resurfacing of existing courts and replacement of fencing and nets	\$1,400,000				\$500,000			\$400,000			\$500,000
Trails and Linear Parks	ALL	Construction of Ma & Pa Trail through Bel Air. Construction of trail in North Harford.	\$5,250,000			\$2,000,000		\$750,000	\$2,500,000				
<i>Subtotals, Countywide Projects</i>			<i>\$42,970,000</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>\$2,575,000</i>	<i>\$8,550,000</i>	<i>\$5,260,000</i>	<i>\$3,985,000</i>	<i>\$5,200,000</i>	<i>\$5,070,000</i>	<i>\$3,235,000</i>	<i>\$3,000,000</i>	<i>\$6,095,000</i>

Project	Location/ Area Served	Description	Estimated Total Cost	Acres to be Acquired	Estimated Cost								
					2014 through 2018			2019 through 2023			2024 through 2028		
					Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation
REGIONAL PARKS AND SPECIAL FACILITIES													
Anita C. Leight Estuary Center Improvements	ALL	Maintenance and improvements at the Estuary Center	\$1,075,000				\$275,000			\$200,000		\$600,000	
Cedar Lane Sports Complex Improvements	ALL	Facility improvements at Cedar Lane Park including office building and restrooms	\$4,775,000			\$1,475,000			\$2,800,000				\$500,000
Deer Creek Environmental Education Center	ALL	Acquisition and development of passive recreation and environmental education facility along Deer Creek or Susquehanna River	\$6,000,000	100							\$2,000,000	\$4,000,000	
Disc Golf Course	ALL	Construction of disc golf courses at county facilities	\$175,000			\$50,000			50,000			\$75,000	
Eastern Regional Park	A, H	Construction of soccer/lacrosse fields and supporting facilities as regional park	\$9,600,000	80	\$1,600,000	\$2,000,000		\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000			\$2,000,000	
Eden Mill Park Rehabilitation	ALL	Renovation and improvements at historic mill and nature center	\$325,000				\$175,000			\$50,000			\$100,000
Emily Bayliss Graham Park	ALL	construction of a passive park in Emmorton	\$14,300,000	71		\$13,000,000			\$650,000			\$650,000	
Equestrian Center Improvements	ALL	Construct and renovate equestrian and farm fair facilities.	\$750,000			\$350,000			\$200,000				\$200,000
Fallston Maintenance Shop	ALL	Improvements at P & R maintenance facility	\$450,000				\$150,000			\$150,000			\$150,000
Fallston Recreation Complex Improvements	ALL	Improvements at Fallston recreation complex as needed	\$275,000				\$125,000			\$75,000			\$75,000
Harford Center for the Arts	ALL	Construction and development of the Harford Center for the Arts facility	\$60,000,000	40					\$60,000,000				
Liriodendron Improvements	BA	Replacement of the balustrade along front terrace and parking improvements	\$410,000				\$310,000			\$100,000			

Table 6.1
Proposed Capital Improvements, 2014-2028

Project	Location/ Area Served	Description	Estimated Total Cost	Acres to be Acquired	Estimated Cost								
					2014 through 2018			2019 through 2023			2024 through 2028		
					Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation
Northern Regional Park	NH, DD	Acquisition and construction of regional sports complex to serve northern area of the County	\$10,300,000	55	\$500,000	\$9,650,000			\$150,000				
Oakington Farm	ALL	construction of a therapeutic recreation riding facility & waterfront amenities	\$1,800,000			\$750,000			\$1,050,000				
Parks and Recreation Headquarters	ALL	Conversion of the Kelly House at Liriodendron to office space for P & R administrative staff	\$450,000				\$450,000						
Shucks Road Regional Sports Complex	HFG,Em,FH	Construction of indoor facility at complex	\$10,260,000			\$110,000			\$10,150,000				
Swan Harbor Farm Improvements	ALL	Development of a trail system and year-round indoor facility. Requisition of adjacent properties.	\$5,200,000	365		\$1,200,000					\$4,000,000		
Tudor Hall Rehabilitation	ALL	Improvements to Tudor Manor to improve public access	\$1,150,000				\$350,000			\$400,000			\$400,000
<i>Subtotals, Regional Parks and Special Facilities</i>				<i>711</i>	<i>\$2,100,000</i>	<i>\$28,585,000</i>	<i>\$1,835,000</i>	<i>\$2,000,000</i>	<i>\$77,050,000</i>	<i>\$975,000</i>	<i>\$6,000,000</i>	<i>\$7,325,000</i>	<i>\$1,425,000</i>
SITE-SPECIFIC PROJECTS													
Aberdeen Recreation Center	A	Construction of a multipurpose center in the Aberdeen community	\$11,750,000			\$11,250,000			\$500,000				
Aberdeen Park	A	Acquisition and construction of a park to include multipurpose and other amenities	\$3,000,000	21	\$2,200,000				\$800,000				
Benson Field Development	F	Construction of active recreation facilities at site adjacent to Edgeley Grove Farm	\$2,000,000			\$1,100,000			\$400,000			\$500,000	
Blakes Venture Park	FH	Construction of active recreation facilities at site	\$2,300,000			\$1,300,000			\$500,000			\$500,000	
Chapel Road Park Field Development	H	Construction of restroom facility at park site Acquisition of adjacent property.	\$850,000	1.5	\$300,000				\$550,000				

Project	Location/ Area Served	Description	Estimated Total Cost	Acres to be Acquired	Estimated Cost								
					2014 through 2018			2019 through 2023			2024 through 2028		
					Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation
Churchville Center Renovations	C	Renovation of existing building for expansion of gymnastics	\$450,000				\$300,000			\$50,000			\$100,000
Churchville Complex Development	C	Construction of indoor recreation facility and related amenities	\$4,400,000			\$4,400,000							
Darlington Park Development	D/D	Construction of restroom facility at park site	\$500,000						\$500,000				
David Craig Park Development	H	Development of facilities at park including fishing pier and pavilion	\$850,000			\$850,000							
Dublin Community Park Development	D/D	Development of active and passive recreation space in Dublin community	\$1,150,000						\$1,150,000				
Edgeley Grove Farm Development	F	Development of additional parking at facility	\$1,100,000						\$100,000			\$1,000,000	
Edgewood Recreation and Community Center	Ed	Renovation of existing facility	\$450,000				\$150,000						\$300,000
Edgewood Recreation Park	Ed	Development of park related amenities including storage and concession building	\$600,000			\$500,000			\$100,000				
Emmorton Development	Em	Acquisition and development of one or more community parks.	\$4,250,000	175	\$3,000,000						\$1,250,000		
Emmorton Recreation and Tennis Center	Em	Renovation and upgrading of facilities at indoor tennis and gymnasium	\$570,000			220,000			\$100,000				\$250,000
Friends Park Improvements	FH	Improvements to facilities at Friends Park	\$450,000							\$150,000			\$300,000
Havre de Grace Community Center Fields	H	Construction of the LSHG Trail at the Havre de Grace Community Center	\$600,000			\$600,000							
Havre de Grace Promenade	H	Rehabilitation of waterfront walkway	\$800,000										\$800,000
Heavenly Waters Park	BA	Maintenance and development of Heavenly Waters Park	\$350,000				\$350,000						

Table 6.1
Proposed Capital Improvements, 2014-2028

Project	Location/ Area Served	Description	Estimated Total Cost	Acres to be Acquired	Estimated Cost								
					2014 through 2018			2019 through 2023			2024 through 2028		
					Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation
Heavenly Waters Park - Soma	BA	Rehabilitation of historic barn, development of passive recreation amenities and trail connection to Edgeley	\$1,200,000				\$100,000					\$1,100,000	
Indoor Recreation Facility-Forest Hill/Hickory	FH/HFG	Renovations of the Forest Hill Hickory Activity Center	\$300,000				\$300,000						
James A. Rutledge Memorial Park	Ja	Construction of a restroom at community park	\$725,000			\$600,000		\$125,000					
Jarrettsville Recreation Center	Ja	Construction of a recreation center in the Jarrettsville community	\$7,350,000			\$7,100,000		\$250,000					
Joppatowne Youth/Senior Center	Jo	Construction of youth/senior center to provide both indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities for all ages.	\$12,300,000	40				\$12,300,000					
Magnolia Complex Development	Jo	Construction of restroom at the community/school	\$400,000			\$400,000							
Mariner Point Park Renovations	Jo	Renovations to the amenities at the facility	\$249,000				\$99,000		\$50,000				\$100,000
McFaul Activity Center Renovations	BA	Partial replacement of the roof at the activity center	\$250,000				\$250,000						
Norrisville Park	N	Development and construction of active fields on property adjacent to Norrisville Activity Center	\$1,850,000			\$1,200,000		\$150,000				\$500,000	
Perryman Park Development	B	Development of active fields and related amenities at community park	\$2,250,000					\$250,000				\$2,000,000	
Prospect Mill Park	HFG	Construction of restroom at park and trail to Harford Community College	\$1,100,000			\$600,000		\$500,000					
Red Pump Elementary School Facilities (Graybeal)	BA	Construction of storage buildings at facility	\$705,000			\$80,000		\$625,000					
Robert Copenhaver Park Improvements	Jo	Improvements to the park	\$575,000				\$75,000		\$500,000				

Project	Location/ Area Served	Description	Estimated Total Cost	Acres to be Acquired	Estimated Cost								
					2014 through 2018			2019 through 2023			2024 through 2028		
					Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation
Rockfield Park Improvements	BA	Improvement to Rockfield Park including walking trail system	\$260,000									\$260,000	
Vale Road Park	BA	Construction of active park facility including soccer and lacrosse fields	\$1,700,000					\$1,100,000				\$600,000	
Willoughby Beach Park Development	Ed	Construction of a community park facility in Edgewood	\$950,000					\$950,000					
Winters Run Greenway	Jo, Em	Construction of hiker/biker trail along stream valley	\$1,900,000	20							\$400,000	\$1,500,000	
<i>Subtotals, Site-Specific Projects</i>			<i>\$70,484,000</i>	<i>257.5</i>	<i>\$5,500,000</i>	<i>\$30,200,000</i>	<i>\$1,624,000</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$20,950,000</i>	<i>\$750,000</i>	<i>\$1,650,000</i>	<i>\$7,960,000</i>	<i>\$1,850,000</i>
WATERWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS													
Bulkhead Renovations	H	Replacement of deteriorated bulkhead at Tydings Island	\$1,300,000							\$575,000			\$725,000
Bush River Boat Ramp	Ed, B	Construction/acquisition of new boat launching facility	\$1,317,500	10							\$750,000		\$567,500
Bush River Dredging and DMP Site	Ed, B	Dredging of Bush River and Otter Point Creek to facilitate navigation	\$3,305,000							\$1,805,000			\$1,500,000
Havre de Grace Yacht Basin Dredging	H	Dredging of Havre de Grace Yacht Basin to maintain channel	\$1,150,000							\$550,000			\$600,000
Gunpowder River Dredging	Jo	Dredging of Gunpowder River and tributary area to maintain channel to existing facilities. Rehab of MPP DMP site.	\$3,042,000				\$2,292,000			\$750,000			
<i>Subtotals, Waterway Improvement Projects</i>			<i>\$10,114,500</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$2,292,000</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$3,680,000</i>	<i>\$750,000</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$3,392,500</i>
GRAND TOTALS			\$123,568,500	1,129	\$10,175,000	\$67,335,000	\$11,011,000	\$5,985,000	\$103,200,000	\$10,475,000	\$11,635,000	\$18,285,000	\$12,762,500
						\$88,521,000			\$119,660,000			\$42,682,500	
Nonwaterway			\$113,454,000	1,119	\$10,175,000	\$67,335,000	\$8,719,000	\$5,985,000	\$103,200,000	\$6,795,000	\$10,885,000	\$18,285,000	\$9,370,000
						\$86,229,000			\$115,980,000			\$38,540,000	

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----------|----|-------------------|----|-------------|-----|------------------------|----|---------------|
| A | Aberdeen | C | Churchville | Em | Emmorton | H | Havre de Grace | Jo | Joppatowne |
| BA | Bel Air | D | Dublin-Darlington | F | Fallston | HFG | Hickory/Fountain Green | N | Norrisville |
| B | Belcamp | Ed | Edgewood | FH | Forest Hill | Ja | Jarrettsville | NH | North Harford |
- Source: Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation

Appendix

Ownership / Name of Area	Map No.	Recreation Council(s)	Recreational Acreage				Natural Resource Acreage			Number and Type of Facilities																				Comments / Other Facilities						
			Active Recreation		Passive	Total	Recreation	Resource	Total	Ballfield / Diamond	Volley-ball Court	Multi-purpose Court	Football / Soccer / Lacrosse / Fld. Hock.	Basketball Courts		Tennis Courts	Golf Courses	Play-grounds	Picnic Tables	Pavilion	Swimming		Beach (Feet)	Trails (Miles)	Conces-sion	Rest-rooms (seats)	Boat Ramps		Boat Slips		Fishing / Hunting Feet (Shoreline or Pier)	Acres (Pond or Field)	Horse-shoe Courts	Parking Spaces		
			Developed	Undeveloped										Indoor	Outdoor						Area	Pool					Large	Small								
Homeowners Association (HOA) Sites																																				
Water's Edge	184	Ed		2.0		2.0																													Clubhouse	
Beechtree Estates HOA	185	B		5.8		5.8																													Clubhouse	
Monmouth Meadows	186	Em		2.0		2.0								1																					Tennis court, Clubhouse, pool.	
Tollgate Village	187	BA		0.5		0.5																												Clubhouse, pool, tot lot		
Greenbrier Hills	188	BA		2.4		2.4																														
Gablers Shore	189	B		3.1		3.1																														
Joppa Forest Landing	190	Jo		1.0		1.0																													Clubhouse	
All other HOA Land 2005-November, 30 2012																																				
Total HOA Land 2005 - November, 30 2012			Countywide																																	
HOA Land 1999-2005			Countywide																																	
Total—HOAs				16.9	0.0	0.0	16.9	0.0	0.0	3,638.5	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	1.0	0.0	0	0	
Major Semipublic and Private Sites																																				
Arena Club	191	C		10.3		10.3																														
Bel Air Athletic Club	192	BA		4.5		4.5																														
Blackhorse Golf	193	Ja		53.3	5.0	58.3																														Two soccer fields available for rental fee
Bulle Rock Golf Course	194	H		266.6		266.6																														
Conowingo Pool	195	D		5.1		5.1																														
Exton Golf Club (Aberdeen Proving Ground)	196	A		100.0		100.0																														
Fallston Club Inc., The	197	F		19.9		19.9																														
Fountain Green Swim Club	198	HFG		12.0		12.0																														
Geneva Farms Golf Club	199	NH		174.5		174.5																														
Harford County Community College	200	C		40.4		40.4																														1 track - acreage for recreation facilities only
Havre de Grace Little League Inc. (Stancil Park)	201	H		15.0		15.0																														
Izaak Walton League of America (Bosley Conserv.)	202	Ed		0.0		0.0																														
John Carroll Catholic High School	203	BA		70.7		70.7																														
Joppatowne Swim Club	204	Jo		4.5		4.5																														Club LLC
Ladew Topiary Gardens, Inc.	205	Ja		0.0		0.0																														Historic house, polo fields
Maryland Golf and Country Club	206	BA	HFG	180.2		180.2																														
Mason-Dixon Trail	207	NH	D H	39.8		39.8																														
Mountain Branch Golf Course	208	F	Em	267.0		267.0																														
North Harford Swim Club	209	Ja		19.0		19.0																														
Ripken Stadium	210	A		52.4		52.4																														Four diamonds available for rental fee
Rock Spring Swim Club	211	FH		10.9		10.9																														
Ruggles Golf Course (Aberdeen Proving Ground)	212	A		150.0		150.0																														
Wetlands Golf Course	213	A		201.6		201.6																														
Winters Run Golf Club	214	BA		205.1		205.1																														
Subtotal—Major Semipublic and Private				1,902.8	0.0	5.0	1,907.8	0.0	599.8	599.8	19	0	0	11	3	2	12	8	0	0	0	13	0.0	22.9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	
TOTALS - Entire Harford County System				4,225.1	771.8	9,877.5	15,608.2	0.0	599.8	4,238.3	202	8	53	210	99	88	94	8	115	546	31	0	29	1,500.0	57.7	11	217	8	5	266	7,666.0	9.4	9	6,025		

A Aberdeen C Churchville Em Emmorton H Havre de Grace Jo Joppatowne W Woodshop OPCA Otter Point Creek Alliance
BA Bel Air D Dublin-Darlington F Fallston HFG Hickory/Fountain Green N Norrisville L Liriodendron Foundation
B Belcamp Ed Edgewood FH Forest Hill Ja Jarrettsville NH North Harfor Eq Equestrian Center Committee

Constant Contact Survey Results

Survey Name: LPPRP

Response Status: Partial & Completed

Filter: None

Nov 21, 2011 9:45:32 AM

Where do you live in Harford County?		
	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Aberdeen	42	4.0%
Bel Air	318	30.9%
Belcamp (Riverside)	11	1.0%
Churchville	38	3.6%
Dublin-Darlington	62	6.0%
Edgewood	29	2.8%
Emmorton (Abingdon)	49	4.7%
Fallston	69	6.7%
Forest Hill	116	11.2%
Havre de Grace	38	3.6%
Hickory/Fountain Green	57	5.5%
Jarrettsville	34	3.3%
Joppatowne	32	3.1%
Norrisville	32	3.1%
North Harford (Whiteford, Street, Pylesville)	54	5.2%
No Responses	48	4.6%
Total	1029	100%

Within the past five (5) years, have you or someone in your household registered in team or individual sports through a Recreation Council?		
	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	711	69.0%
No	289	28.0%
No Responses	29	2.8%
Total	1029	100%

How many Recreation Council sponsored sports programs have you or someone in your household participated in during the last five (5) years?		
	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
0	5	<1%
1-4	289	28.0%
5-9	145	14.0%
10-14	99	9.6%
15 or more	117	11.3%
No Responses	374	36.3%
Total	1029	100%

Are there specific sports programs you would like to see offered in your Recreation Council/community area?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	307	29.8%
No	303	29.4%
No Responses	419	40.7%
Total	1029	100%

Are there additional sports facilities you would like to see the County develop? If so, where in Harford County?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	355	34.4%
No	246	23.9%
No Responses	428	41.5%
Total	1029	100%

Do you have specific concerns about an existing sports facility?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	207	20.1%
No	412	40.0%
No Responses	410	39.8%
Total	1029	100%

Within the past five (5) years have you or someone in your household attended any nature program?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	534	51.8%
No	394	38.2%
No Responses	101	9.8%
Total	1029	100%

**Within the past five (5) years have you or someone in your household attended nature programs at:
(Select all that apply)**

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Anita C. Leight Estuary Center	257	50.4%
Eden Mill Nature Center	350	68.7%
A State Park located in Harford County	250	49.1%
Total	509	100%

How many programs, courses or workshops have you participated in at these facilities?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
0	32	3.1%
1-4	317	30.8%
5-9	87	8.4%
10 or more	87	8.4%
No Responses	506	49.1%
Total	1029	100%

Are there additional environmental/nature facilities that you would like to see the County develop? If so, where in Harford County?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	175	17.0%
No	248	24.1%
No Responses	606	58.8%
Total	1029	100%

Within the past five (5) years, have you or someone in your household visited a Harford County park facility for individual activities? (i.e. trails, playgrounds, individual classes, boating facilities)

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	858	83.3%
No	52	5.0%
No Responses	119	11.5%
Total	1029	100%

How frequently have you visited Harford County park facilities for individual activities in the past five (5) years?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
0	3	<1%
1-5 times per year	202	19.6%
6-10 times per year	167	16.2%
11-25 times per year	187	18.1%
26 or more times per year	278	27.0%
No Responses	192	18.6%
Total	1029	100%

Are there specific classes or activities you are interested in that have not been offered in your area?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	165	16.0%
No	601	58.4%
No Responses	263	25.5%
Total	1029	100%

Are there additional facilities that you would like to see the County develop? If so, where in Harford County?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	274	26.6%
No	447	43.4%
No Responses	308	29.9%
Total	1029	100%

Do you have specific concerns about existing County parks and/or facilities?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	205	19.9%
No	549	53.3%
No Responses	275	26.7%
Total	1029	100%

Within the past five (5) years, have you or someone in your household registered for senior citizen programs or visited a Harford County Senior Center?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	111	10.7%
No	766	74.4%
No Responses	152	14.7%
Total	1029	100%

How often have you attended programs/classes or visited a Harford County Senior Center in the past five (5) years?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
0	25	2.4%
1-5 times per year	55	5.3%
6-10 times per year	9	<1%
11-25 times per year	11	1.0%
26 or more times per year	18	1.7%
No Responses	911	88.5%
Total	1029	100%

Are there specific classes/activities for seniors you would like to see in your area?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	21	2.0%
No	76	7.3%
No Responses	932	90.5%
Total	1029	100%

Are there additional senior facilities you would like to see the County develop? If so, where in Harford County?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	20	1.9%
No	83	8.0%
No Responses	926	89.9%
Total	1029	100%

Do you have any specific concerns about an existing senior center?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	14	1.3%
No	94	9.1%
No Responses	921	89.5%
Total	1029	100%

Within the past five (5) years, have you or someone in your household attended a therapeutic recreation (individuals with developmental disabilities) program at a Harford County facility?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	27	2.6%
No	845	82.1%
No Responses	157	15.2%
Total	1029	100%

How frequently have you attended therapeutic recreation programs at a Harford County facility in the past five (5) years?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
0	5	<1%
1-5 times per year	13	1.2%
6-10 times per year	4	<1%
11-25 times per year	5	<1%
26 or more times per year	1	<1%
No Responses	1001	97.2%
Total	1029	100%

Are there specific therapeutic recreation classes/activities you would like to see offered?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	15	1.4%
No	12	1.1%
No Responses	1002	97.3%
Total	1029	100%

Do you have specific concerns about an existing therapeutic recreation program?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	2	<1%
No	25	2.4%
No Responses	1002	97.3%
Total	1029	100%

If you would like new programs offered through Parks & Recreation, would you: (Select all that apply)

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Pay higher registration fees	402	50.6%
Volunteer to teach or coach a program	323	40.7%
Participate in private fundraising	250	31.5%
Not interested in any new programs in Parks and	170	21.4%
Other	49	6.1%
Total	793	100%

If you would like the County to develop additional park sites and/or facilities, would you: (Select all that apply)

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Volunteer at a park site/facility	364	46.1%
Participate in private fundraising	278	35.2%
Pay higher user fees	351	44.4%
Pay higher taxes	129	16.3%
developed	147	18.6%
Other	22	2.7%
Total	789	100%