



**Parks & Recreation**  
2012 AND BEYOND

# THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

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## SUMMARY

The 2012 *Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan* for Prince George's County is a compilation of information from adopted plans, primarily driven by a major planning process undertaken by the Department of Parks and Recreation in 2008 known as the *2010 and Beyond Plan*, that will be used to guide Prince George's County in areas related to parks, recreation, land preservation and resource protection. This *Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan* uses current statistical data, demographic information, and needs assessments to address park and recreation planning issues.

This Plan includes information about Prince George's County's current and projected population, economy, land use, facilities, and resources. The Plan presents recreation and resource inventories, describes public participation processes, identifies and evaluates existing program and policies, and sets priorities to guide the county's land preservation and recreation strategies and activities.

The *Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan* addresses planning for future park and recreation needs and recommends geographic-based land use proposals, including level of service analyses for acreage and outdoor recreational facilities. Goals, policies, and objectives related to the Department of Parks and Recreation are delineated in the Plan.

The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), a five-time National Gold Medal Award winner, manages a comprehensive park system that includes more than 27,000 acres of developed parkland, open space, stream valley, and conservation parcels. DPR is responsible for acquiring land for parks, developing park and recreational facilities, maintaining and policing park property, and conducting a wide-array of leisure activities.

Prince George's County has formulated a number of plans and documents to support the state guidelines. In October 2002, a *General Plan* was approved for Prince George's County to establish comprehensive recommendations for guiding future growth and development within the county, while providing for environmental protection and preservation of important lands.

As established in the *2002 Approved General Plan* for Prince George's County, a minimum of 15 acres of M-NCPPC local parkland (or the equivalent amenity in terms of parks and recreation service) and 20 acres of regional, countywide, and special M-NCPPC parkland shall be provided for every 1,000 residents. This goal is the basis for determining the size and location of all proposed parks during the revision of any area Master Plan. In Prince George's County, each planning area is divided into distinct planning communities – 32 separate communities. The population for these communities is obtained from the Planning Department's Research Section, and then the amount of required parkland is calculated. The existing parkland is subtracted and the balance is the amount of new parkland requested in the revised Master Plan.

The *General Plan* also contains a Development Pattern Element, which establishes three policy areas:

- The Developed Tier includes the area inside the Capital Beltway and is approximately 86 square miles. "The vision for the Developed Tier is a network of sustainable, transit-supporting, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, medium- to high-density neighborhoods."
- The Developing Tier includes the middle area between the Capital Beltway and US 301. It is 237 square miles in size and is the area of the county most subject to recent suburban expansion. "The vision for the Developing Tier is to maintain a pattern of low- to moderate-density subur-

ban residential communities, distinctive commercial centers, and employment areas that are increasingly transit serviceable.”

- The Rural Tier is comprised of the eastern and southern portions of the county in the Patuxent River, Potomac River and Mattawoman Creek watersheds. It is 150 square miles or 32 percent of the county, primarily east of US 301. “The vision for the Rural Tier is protection of large amounts of land for woodland, wildlife habitat, recreation and agricultural pursuits, and preservation of the rural character and vistas that now exist.”

The Approved *Countywide Green Infrastructure Functional Master Plan* is another tool that was developed to support the state guidelines. Green infrastructure is a network of large undisturbed land areas (hubs) connected by designated pathways for the movement of wildlife and humans (green corridors). The county plan currently in place, as recommended within the *General Plan*, is a functional master plan whose goals are to preserve designated green infrastructure elements and to protect and enhance the quality of life for county residents and workers.

The guidelines outlined in the *Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan* are intended to direct the distribution of capital, land, staff, and facilities for the extensive public park and recreation system in Prince George’s County. Acreage requirements and implementation priorities are also discussed. The policies, goals and actions identified in this Plan reflect the county’s strong commitment to land and resource preservation, park acquisition, and recreation to enhance the quality of life in Prince George’s County.

# CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purposes of the Plan

The 2012 *Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan* for Prince George’s County has been prepared for submission to the Maryland Office of Planning and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, in accordance with the requirements of Title 5, Subtitle 9 of the Natural Resources Article of the Annotated Code. Program Open Space legislation requires the preparation of land preservation and recreation plans by each local jurisdiction. As submitted by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) for Prince George’s County, this document is not a new, comprehensive land use plan. Instead, it is a synthesis of previously adopted plans, recommendations, goals, objectives, policies, updated statistical data and summaries of studies previously reviewed by the Prince Georges County Planning Board. The information included has been compiled, updated and summarized to conform to the state’s guidelines for Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Program content.

The *Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan* for Prince George’s County:

- Guides policies and actions throughout Prince George’s County to ensure that the recreational needs of county residents and visitors are met efficiently and cost effectively
- Ensures that local actions in Prince George’s County related to land preservation and recreation are an integral part of state and local growth management strategy
- Emphasizes the need for preserving and protecting valuable natural, agricultural, cultural and historical resources in Prince George’s County
- Promotes the significance of contributions that recreation and land preservation make to the economic, social, and physical well being of the citizens of Prince George’s County and the state of Maryland
- Contributes to the preparation of state plans, policies, and programs for land preservation and recreation
- Qualifies Prince George’s County for state Program Open Space grants pursuant to Title 5, Subtitle 9 of the Natural Resources Article of the Annotated Code to assist local governments with acquiring and developing park, recreation, open space and resource lands
- Provides a comprehensive overview of the plans, policies, guidelines and programs in Prince George’s County that implement the Twelve Planning Visions signed into law by Governor O’Malley as part of the Smart, Green & Growing Legislation of 2009

The Department of Parks and Recreation manages a comprehensive park system that includes more than 27,000 acres of developed parkland, open space, stream valley and conservation parcels. A five-time National Gold Medal Award winner, DPR is responsible for acquiring land for parks, developing park and recreational facilities, maintaining and policing park property, and conducting a wide array of leisure activities. In addition to the network of parks, county residents also enjoy first-rate recreation programs through community and arts centers, aquatic facilities, historic properties, an aviation museum, therapeutic recreation and senior programs, day camps, and nature programs. There are more than 167 miles of trails, hundreds of athletic fields, basketball and tennis courts, 43 community centers, and other special facilities.

The purpose, powers and duties of M-NCPPC are found in Article 28 of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Pursuant to this Article, M-NCPPC is empowered to:

- Acquire, develop, maintain and administer a regional system of parks defined as the Metropolitan District
- Prepare and administer a *general plan* for the physical development in the areas of the two counties defined as the Regional District
- Conduct a comprehensive recreation program for Prince George’s County

DPR is positioned to leverage new public and private partnerships and seek additional grant funding. The Department is partnering with the Board of Education to bring yet more educational programs to residents. There are 18 school/community centers in the county, and DPR has also collaborated with the Board of Education on many occasions to provide athletic fields and play areas on school property or on parkland next to a school. The Tennis Center at College Park and the Gardens Ice House are two additional examples of quality facility partnerships with private entities that are already operational. DPR also has several countywide partnerships, most notably with the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center and the National Children’s Museum. Additionally, the Department is focusing on the environment through continued land preservation along the Patuxent River, restoration efforts along the Anacostia River and expanded energy conservation.

## 1.2 Process for Preparing the Plan

The *Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan* for Prince George’s County includes goals, objectives, policies, planning guidelines and strategies based on adopted and approved plans prepared by different county agencies.

The Prince George’s County Planning Board directs the work of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) through the Prince George’s County Planning Department and the Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation. M-NCPPC’s activities in the county are determined by the Prince George’s County Council, which annually approves the operating budget and work program, with input and comments from the county executive.

The Prince George’s County Council is part of the legislative branch of the county. Consisting of nine members elected by the county’s registered voters, the County Council acts as the District Council on zoning and land use matters. The three main responsibilities of the Prince George’s County Council with regard to the planning process include setting policy, and approving and implementing plans. Applicable policies are incorporated into area plans, functional plans and the *General Plan*. After holding hearings on plans adopted by the Prince George’s County Planning Board, the County Council may approve the plan as adopted, approve the plan with amendments based on the public record, or disapprove the plan and return it to the Planning Board for revision. Implementation of approved plans is primarily accomplished through adoption of the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP), the Annual Budget, the Ten-Year Water and Sewerage Plan, and adoption of zoning map amendments.

### **Background**

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission was established by the Maryland General Assembly in 1927 to serve the bi-county area of Prince George’s and Montgomery counties. Organizationally, there are seven departments within the Commission, which include the Department of Planning



and the Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County. Montgomery County contains the Department of Parks and the Montgomery County Planning Department. The Central Administrative Services for both counties consist of the Department of Human Resources, the Finance Department and the Legal Department. The Commission acts collectively on regional and administrative issues, and divides into two respective county planning boards to conduct all other matters.

The Prince George's County Planning Department performs technical analysis and offers advice and recommendations on existing and future land use, and provision of public facilities and services. Planning Department staff work on projects and tasks annually set forth in a work program and budget adopted by the Prince George's County Council. The Planning Department works under the direction of the Prince George's County Planning Board to serve Prince George's County residents. The Planning Department concentrates on 11 major program areas which include Countywide Planning, Community Planning, Public Facilities Planning, Transportation Planning, Environmental Planning, Development Review, Countywide Database Management, Intergovernmental Coordination, County Trend Analysis, Community Outreach and Public Information, and General Administration and Supporting Services Management.

The Department of Parks and Recreation is responsible for the overall planning, supervision and coordination of all park services for a comprehensive park system of over 27,000 acres. This includes acquisition of land for parks, developing park and recreational facilities, maintaining and policing park property, and conducting a wide array of leisure activities. The mission of DPR is to "provide, in partnership with our citizens, comprehensive park and recreation programs, facilities, and services, which respond to changing needs within our communities. We strive to preserve, enhance, and protect our open spaces to enrich the quality of life for present and future generations in a safe and secure environment."

The Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation implements the policies of the Prince George's County Planning Board and serves as liaison to the Planning Board, the public, and state and local agencies. The Director provides overall program direction, policy guidance and administration for DPR. M-NCPPC staff members were tasked with preparation of the *2012 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan*. Designated staff includes Charles Montrie (Planning Supervisor), Carol Binns, Laura Connelly, Donald Herring, and Eileen Nivera (Planners) of DPR's Park Planning and Development Division, John Henderson and Edith Michel (Research and Evaluation Managers), and Howard Berger and Fatimah Hasan (Planner Coordinators) with the Planning Department.

The goal of the Park Planning and Development Division is to plan, design and construct quality park facilities for the general public and to meet the park and recreation needs for Prince George's County residents.

Headed by the Chief, who also serves as the county Program Open Space (POS) liaison, the Park Planning and Development Division is composed of five major functional sections, which include Management/Supervision, Engineering, Planning, Landscape Architecture, and Architecture. Land Acquisition is achieved through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), grants, mandatory dedication, and surplus property programs. The Division performs the regulatory functions of subdivision, site plan and zoning applications review to assure compliance with county codes and protect the interests and life quality of the citizens. Design, engineering and management of park and building construction including community/school centers are major functions of the Division.

The components of the *Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan* come from plans, policies and programs that have been reviewed, approved and adopted and/or implemented by the Prince George's County government.

## 1.3 Public Participation Program

The *2010 and Beyond Plan* is the result of the collective efforts of engaged residents, stakeholders, staff and leadership. Over 4,500 members of the public along with elected officials, staff and other stakeholders contributed to the vision and strategies laid out in the plan. At each stage of the planning process, community members and staff contributed their thoughts and ideas, helping to identify key issues and recommendations. Specific opportunities for input included the following:

### Survey

A statistically valid survey of residents in the county was conducted as part of the needs assessment for *2010 and Beyond*. The survey, which was available in English and Spanish, was mailed to 14,000 randomly selected county households (generally representative of the population distribution throughout the seven subareas or PUMA's – Public Use Microdata Areas) that comprise the county. Note that the Northwest subarea, originally consisting of two areas, was combined into one subarea during the questionnaire development phase to simplify analysis of results.

A link and an individually-assigned password (one per household) were also included in the mailed invitation, in order to allow recipients to complete the survey online, if preferred. This open-link web-based survey was available to any interested county resident or stakeholder, who could complete the questionnaire if they did not receive one by invitation in the mail. The open survey provided a broad-based opportunity for anyone to give input, and was determined to be a reliable method of obtaining input from non-users of the M-NCPPC parks and recreation system.

As responses to the open-link version of the questionnaire are self-selected and not a part of a randomly selected sample of residents, results from these questionnaires were analyzed separately. An additional 801 open-link surveys were completed resulting in a grand total of 1,429 completed surveys, with solid representation from each subarea of the county.

Extensive outreach undertaken by the county through numerous public meetings, focus groups, and coverage in the local media encouraged participation in the survey. Additional outreach efforts conducted by telephone contacted 425 of the non-respondents to the mail and web versions of the survey to further encourage participation in the survey. A robo-call mass telephone campaign, designed to encourage participation in the open-link version of the web survey, successfully reached 37,140 households.

**The distribution of total survey responses by subarea within the county is shown in the following table:**

SUBAREA	TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES
NORTHEAST	235
NORTHWEST	278
CENTRAL WEST	106
CENTRAL EAST	295
SOUTHWEST	93
SOUTHERN	371
UNKNOWN	51
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,429</b>

### **Focus Groups**

Meetings with 40 external focus groups were held in order to gain input from 400 stakeholders during the information-gathering phase of the 2010 and Beyond project. Input was gained from a variety of groups throughout the county with different interest areas: environmental, historical resources, arts and culture, education, sports associations, faith-based groups, alternative providers, homeowners’ associations, youth organizations and teens, seniors, disabled community, immigrant communities and governmental organizations.

In addition, input was gained from a cross-section of staff representatives during focus group meetings and individual interviews.

### **Public Meetings**

Fourteen public meetings were held throughout the county to encourage residents to share ideas and shape the 2010 and Beyond vision and plans.

Overall, the survey responses were positive and Prince Georgians indicated a high level of satisfaction with current facilities, services, and programs. Additional findings were as follows:

- A majority of program registrants and a significant number of drop-in participants are not using the centers closest to their homes, which calls into question the fiscal sustainability of DPR’s current service delivery model.
- Prince Georgians have a strong appreciation for the diverse program offerings and want them offered more equitably across the county.
- Safety and security are the top reasons given for not using M-NCPPC services or facilities.

### **The most important needs for *Outdoor* facilities:**

1. multi-purpose fields
2. playgrounds
3. picnic shelters

**The most important needs for *Indoor* facilities:**

1. youth/teen space
2. indoor tracks
3. senior space

**Top Program Needs:**

1. walking/biking
2. fitness/wellness
3. general/skills education

Other key findings from the survey are summarized in section **3.1 Recreation Needs Assessment Survey**, below.

***Envision***

The Department of Parks and Recreation was involved in the larger *Envision Prince George’s* initiative that involved creating a total vision for the future of the county, and was led by the Prince George’s County Planning Department. *Envision Prince George’s* participants repeatedly told us that parks and recreational opportunities are important in maintaining a high quality of life within the county. Residents appreciate the recreational attractions, historic sites, cultural museums, and large network of open space and parks. These amenities are key to attracting and retaining new residents.

The Envision process included participation in a number of community meetings and a Town Hall meeting with more than 1,000 community members. The feedback from these meetings resulted in adding Recreation, Health and Wellness as a major part of the plan.

## **1.4 Establishment of Themes, Goals and Strategies**

The *2010 and Beyond* needs assessment and community planning process identified a variety of key focus areas for continued improvement. These goals and focus areas are organized under a series of six broad themes. Goals and Strategies in support of the Themes are included in the County Action Plan. Below is a summary:

**THEME 1**

***Meeting diverse community needs through appropriate parks and facilities service levels***

**Goal 1: Provide an equivalent mix of facilities and public lands across the county to meet resident needs and desires.**

**Strategy 1.1**

Monitor land, facilities, programs and amenities service levels in all parts of the county and determine balance on a distribution and per population basis.

**Strategy 1.2**

Implement a Level of Service Model that produces an equivalent mix of indoor facilities throughout the county and ensures sustainable operations and maintenance.

**Strategy 1.3**

Create plans for new and improved parks and recreation facilities.

**Strategy 1.4**

Ensure that new developments incorporate parks and recreation facilities.

**Strategy 1.5**

Implement strategic analysis to plan for and include additional equivalent aquatics facilities as the county grows, provide quality improvements for existing facilities, and ensure sustainable operations and maintenance.

**THEME 2*****Preserving and protecting natural areas, trees and waters that endure and captivate***

**Goal 2: Preserve, protect, and enhance or restore woodlands, natural areas, open spaces, and waters managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County.**

**Strategy 2.1**

Acquire and protect environmentally sensitive properties and natural areas.

**Strategy 2.2**

Implement sound management practices to provide healthy and sustainable natural resources.

**Goal 3: Engage the community in outdoor and environmental activities.**

**Strategy 3.1**

Promote environmental stewardship and education.

**Strategy 3.2**

Promote eco-tourism and resource-based recreation.

**THEME 3*****Inspiring healthy lifestyles and a sense of community through recreation and culture***

**Goal 4: Implement a service delivery model that is responsive and relevant to county residents' leisure behaviors, interests and needs, as they cope with dynamic social and economic conditions.**

**Strategy 4.1**

Prioritize core areas with the greatest potential to impact countywide conditions.

**Strategy 4.2**

Focus of services to address emerging recreation and leisure trends and changing population characteristics.

**Strategy 4.3**

Evaluate and measure participant outcomes and countywide impacts of all programs and services.

**Goal 5: Position the Department as a collaborative provider of leisure service delivery.**

**Strategy 5.1**

Develop collaborations with other county leisure service providers whose values, visions and missions align with those of the Department to eliminate unnecessary duplication of services and responsibly use financial resources to reach the greatest number of residents.

**THEME 4**

***Emphasizing safe and accessible places and programs for play, relaxation, and enjoyment***

**Goal 6: Collaborate to maintain safe and accessible park and recreation facilities.**

**Strategy 6.1**

Emphasize safety and accessibility in the design, redevelopment, and construction of parks and recreation facilities.

**Strategy 6.2**

Pro-actively engage the community in crime prevention programs and activities.

**Strategy 6.3**

Collaborate with law enforcement agencies on countywide crime and safety issues (e.g., Safe Summer Program.)

**Goal 7: Enhance access to facilities and programs.**

**Strategy 7.1**

Develop a connected recreational trail system with access to community destinations.

**Strategy 7.2**

Ensure multiple transportation access opportunities to facilities and programs.

**THEME 5**

***Strengthening community engagement and collaborations that maximize resources***

**Goal 8: Provide opportunities for meaningful community engagement and partnering.**

**Strategy 8.1**

Strengthen relationships with local civic/community organizations, recreation councils and homeowner associations.

**Strategy 8.2**

Create and implement a partnership policy that creates mutual obligations and expectations.

**Goal 9: Enhance communications and outreach efforts to increase community awareness of and involvement in Department programs, services, and facilities.**

**Strategy 9.1**

Strengthen marketing, customer service and community relations practices and methods.

**Strategy 9.2**

Offer a variety of volunteer opportunities.

**THEME 6**

***Providing quality services and facilities for a sustainable organization***

**Goal 10: Adopt management practices that will produce long-term organizational sustainability while maintaining service quality.**

**Strategy 10.1**

Refine and broadly communicate organizational values, vision, and mission.

**Strategy 10.2**

Ensure that staff understand roles and responsibilities for maintaining a respectful, inclusive and productive work environment.

**Strategy 10.3**

Allocate appropriate staff resources to enable each Division to function effectively.

**Strategy 10.4**

Create integrated financial systems, processes and tools.

**Strategies 10.5**

Continually update and integrate technologies to create efficiencies and ongoing improvements to service.

**Strategy 10.6**

Develop comprehensive staff training and development to deliver quality programs and services.

**Strategy 10.7**

Set, follow and meet maintenance standards for the condition and quality of each land and facility type.

**Strategy 10.8**

Set, follow and meet standards for the design, construction and renovation of facilities and amenities.

**Strategy 10.9**

Evaluate the quality of parks and recreation facilities on an ongoing basis.

## 1.5 State of Maryland's 12 Visions



The 2012 Prince George's County *Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan* provides a comprehensive overview of the plans, policies, guidelines and programs in Prince George's County that implements the County's *General Plan* and the 12 Visions of the 2009 Planning Visions Law.

The 2009 Maryland Planning Visions Law established consistent general land use policies to be locally implemented throughout the state, which would promote sound growth and development. Adopted by the Maryland General Assembly, the Planning Visions address quality of life and sustainability, public participation, growth areas, community design, infrastructure, transportation, housing, economic development, environmental protection, resource conservation, stewardship, and implementation approaches. The 12 visions are:

1. **Quality of Life and Sustainability:** A high quality of life is achieved through universal stewardship of the land, water, and air resulting in sustainable communities and protection of the environment.
2. **Public Participation:** Citizens are active partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives and are sensitive to their responsibilities in achieving community goals.
3. **Growth Areas:** Growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to these centers, or strategically selected new centers.
4. **Community Design:** Compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character and located near available or planned transit options is encouraged to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources and preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas, and historical, cultural, and archeological resources.
5. **Infrastructure:** Growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sustainable manner.
6. **Transportation:** A well-maintained, multimodal transportation system facilitates the safe, convenient, affordable, and efficient movement of people, goods, and services within and between population and business centers.
7. **Housing:** A range of housing densities, types, and sizes provides residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes.
8. **Economic Development:** Economic development and natural resource-based businesses that promote employment opportunities for all income levels within the capacity of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities are encouraged.
9. **Environmental Protection:** Land and water resources, including the Chesapeake and coastal bays, are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems, and living resources.



10. **Resource Conservation:** Waterways, forests, agricultural areas, open space, natural systems, and scenic areas are conserved.
11. **Stewardship:** Government, business entities, and residents are responsible for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with resource protection.
12. **Implementation:** Strategies, policies, programs, and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, state, and interstate levels to achieve these Visions.

The 2002 Prince George’s County *General Plan* was in conformance with the eight visions that were previously established under the 1992 Planning Act for the state of Maryland. The *General Plan* is currently in the process of being revised, and will conform to the 12 visions subsequently established in 2009, as described above.

## 1.6 Park and Recreation Goals for Prince George’s County

The 2012 Prince George’s County *Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan* provides a logical, systematic framework of goals, objectives, and policy guidelines for the provision of parkland, open space and recreation opportunities, countywide; the classification system for categorizing and naming parkland according to acreage and facilities; and specifies levels of service standard that identify the need for parkland and recreation facilities by geographic region and allocate resources equitably.

It has become clear that, left unmanaged, current growth patterns in the county could jeopardize quality of life, endanger the natural environment and thereby reduce attractiveness of the county to residents, employers and investors. Recognizing the importance of this issue to its long-term economic, social and environmental vitality, the county in recent years has undertaken an extensive study of growth patterns, adequate public facility requirements, zoning regulations, and the existing development pipeline (approved but not built subdivisions.)

**The following six goals were developed by the state of Maryland, per the General Guidelines:**

- A variety of quality recreational opportunities shall be accessible to all of Maryland’s citizens, and thereby contribute to their physical and mental well-being.
- Parks and recreation facilities are amenities to make communities, counties, and the state more desirable places to live, work and visit.
- State investment in parks, recreation, and open space complement and support the broader goals and objectives of local comprehensive plans.
- Recreational land and facilities for local populations are conveniently located near population centers, are accessible without reliance on automobiles, and help to protect natural open spaces and resources.
- Investment in neighborhood and community parks and facilities complements infrastructure and other public investments in existing communities and in areas planned for growth.
- Parkland and resource land are protected at a rate that equals or exceeds the rate at which land is developed at a statewide level.

**The Department of Parks and Recreation will guide future development, operations, and**

maintenance of the Prince George's County parks and recreation system through the following 10 goals:

**Goal 1: Provide an equivalent mix of facilities and public lands across the county to meet residents' needs and desires.**

**Goal 2: Preserve, protect, and enhance or restore woodlands, natural areas, open spaces, and waters managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County.**

**Goal 3: Engage the community in outdoor and environmental activities.**

**Goal 4: Implement a service delivery model that is responsive and relevant to county residents' leisure behaviors, interests and needs, as they cope with dynamic social and economic conditions.**

**Goal 5: Position the Department as a collaborative provider of leisure service delivery.**

**Goal 6: Collaborate to maintain safe and accessible park and recreation facilities.**

**Goal 7: Enhance access to facilities and programs.**

**Goal 8: Provide opportunities for meaningful community engagement and partnering.**

**Goal 9: Enhance communications and outreach efforts to increase community awareness of and involvement in Department programs, services and facilities.**

**Goal 10: Adopt management practices that will produce long-term organizational sustainability while maintaining service quality.**

## **1.7 Relationship to the Comprehensive Planning Process**

The County's 2002 *General Plan* represents a comprehensive smart growth initiative that uses a system of growth tiers, corridors and centers to guide future land use and development in Prince George's County. The three tiers encompass the developed, developing and rural areas of the County. The highlights of this Plan in the categories of Housing, Public Facilities, Transportation Systems, Historic Preservation, Economic Development, Environmental Infrastructure and Green Infrastructure, Revitalization and Development Pattern are described below.

### ***Housing***

The county is meeting most of the housing objectives stated in the *General Plan*. The average home value has risen in absolute terms and also relative to similar jurisdictions. Opportunities have increased for higher density residential land uses in centers and corridors. The county has been successful in reducing high concentrations of distressed, low-income rental housing. The objective for locating new dwelling

units in mixed-use development was exceeded in 2005, but if the drop in the last two years continues, meeting the 2015 objective may be at risk.

### **Public Facilities**

The county is moving in the right direction to meet the public facilities objectives of the *General Plan*. As of 2006, the Police Department had more than twice the amount of facility space recommended in the *General Plan*. Some areas of the county fail to meet travel time objectives for fire and emergency medical service (EMS). One new fire/EMS station opened in 2005, and as of 2007, funding was approved for construction of seven more stations. The number of public schools operating at more than 100 percent capacity decreased between 2002 and 2007 at elementary and middle school levels but slightly increased at the high school level. There are still a substantial number of schools operating above capacity at all levels.

### **Transportation Systems**

The county has achieved mixed results to date in attaining *General Plan* objectives for transportation systems. There has been slight progress in attaining the core objectives such as decreasing single-occupant vehicle trips; increasing transit usage, particularly for the work commute; and increasing average occupancy per vehicle. Progress has also been somewhat mixed and has varied over the past six years in obtaining the needed funding, particularly from the private sector, for transportation infrastructure. The county has been successful in obtaining funding for the trail and bikeway projects included on the current joint signature letter on state transportation priorities.

### **Historic Preservation**

The county is on track to achieve the historic preservation objective. In the last six years, 42 historic site evaluations were conducted and 27 sites were designated. In addition, the Old Town College Park Historic District was designated in 2006, and design guidelines and a local advisory committee were established. Legislation and guidelines for archeological review were approved in 2005.

### **Economic Development**

Except for the median home sales price, which has risen relative to similar jurisdictions, the county is behind in meeting the economic development objectives of the *General Plan*. The county's jobs-to-population ratio has not improved. The average weekly wage has not risen relative to similar jurisdictions. The income and assessable base gaps between the county and similar jurisdictions have increased.

### **Environmental Infrastructure and Green Infrastructure**

Data is mostly lacking to monitor progress in environmental and green infrastructure categories because there was not enough time to monitor progress since the approval of the Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan in 2005. Where data were available, the county's progress was positive. As of 2005, the county was meeting or exceeding forest and tree cover goals of the *General Plan* in all tiers. Nearly all the required off-site woodland conservation mitigation banks were located within the Green Infrastructure Network.

### **Revitalization**

At this time, this objective cannot be measured because revitalization overlay areas have not yet been designated. There is a recommendation for an overlay area in the *Preliminary Branch Avenue Corridor Sector Plan*.

## **Development Pattern**

The county has made very limited progress towards achieving the *General Plan* objectives for the development pattern. Since 2002, dwelling unit growth in the Developed, Developing, and Rural Tiers has not been on target toward achieving these objectives. The share of residential growth within centers and corridors in both the Developed and Developing Tiers has been lower than the *General Plan* objectives. The county is moving in the right direction by incorporating transit-oriented and/or transit-supporting design features in new development within centers and corridors. Finally, although considerable land is preserved each year, the amount is much less than the *General Plan* objective.

## **1.8 Master Planning Process**

The Department of Parks and Recreation does not have a current master plan and recently initiated a functional master plan process. The master plan process will build upon the *Parks & Recreation: 2010 and Beyond* plan's extensive needs assessment and visioning project that was completed in 2009. The master plan will have a time horizon to the year 2040 and will be developed to meet the criteria of a functional master plan that, upon adoption by the District Council, will become part of the Prince George's County *General Plan*.

In contrast to the last master plan completed in 1981, this new functional master plan will be driven by the future need for recreation and leisure services as well as facility needs. An overarching theme of the plan will be matching existing and new facilities, indoor and outdoor, with programmatic needs. According to the *2010 and Beyond* plan, all county citizens should be serviced by an "equivalent mix" of programs, facilities, and services. This principle reflects the reality that desired levels of service standards for every key facility cannot be uniformly applied due to a variety of constraints, such as pre-existing development, topography, environmental concerns, and land and facility development costs.

In addition, the Plan will present a compelling and inspiring vision for the future and will build on several complementary thematic areas (vision elements) that will demonstrate the positive impacts the land, facilities, programs and services provided and managed by the Department will have on the lives of Prince Georgians. The vision elements have not been selected, but will build on the existing emphasis on services for youth and seniors. A few themes that are driving the plan include:

- Community Health and Wellness
- Cultural Diversity
- Environmental Stewardship
- Economic Development
- Community Capacity Building
- Transit Oriented Development

### ***The plan will also be a vehicle to promote visionary thinking on programs and facilities by:***

1. Continuing the Department's reputation as a national innovator
2. Enhancing the quality of life in the county
3. Stimulating economic development through tourism and investment decisions that lead to additional investment

***Lastly, the purposes for doing the Functional Master Plan are to:***

- Achieve consensus among key stakeholders on a future vision for the park and recreation system in Prince George’s County, Maryland.
- Develop a planning tool to assist and guide leaders and developers in making wise capital and operating investment decisions with respect to acquiring parkland, upgrading and modernizing existing facilities, and adding new programs and facilities.
- Adopt progressive state-of-the-art approaches to providing recreation and leisure services that will maintain and promote the Department’s reputation for innovation and excellence.

# CHAPTER 2 – PLANNING CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Prince George’s County is comprised of 487 square miles of land and 19 square miles of water. It is a suburban county immediately east of Washington, DC, with a growing population of over 863,000 people in 27 incorporated municipalities and unincorporated areas (see Map 1. Municipal Boundaries.) The land outside of the Capital Beltway, which held onto remnants of agricultural use into the end of the 20th Century, is being rapidly replaced by residential development, while areas inside the Beltway have been developing at a steady pace throughout the 20th Century. The county has significant natural resources, particularly sand and gravel deposits, tidal wetlands in the critical area, and non-tidal wetlands. Its land development history, the booming residential scene of the early years of the 21st Century, and land ownership of both federal and county governments will affect future park and recreation facilities and land conservation efforts.

## 2.1 Physical Characteristics

The Prince George’s County boundary is mostly defined by water: the Potomac River to the southeast, the Patuxent River along the entire eastern boundary, and Mattawoman Creek to the south. The county lies within the coastal plain. The transition to the Piedmont Plateau begins to occur toward its northern boundary with Montgomery County. Elevations range from sea level on the major rivers to 365 feet in the northern area of the county.

Soils in the county range from those found in the Piedmont with soils only a few feet above bedrock to coastal plain soils with hundreds of feet depth to hydric soils associated with floodplains and wetlands (see Map 2. Soils.) In the past, soils in the county were quite conducive to the production of tobacco, and they continue to supply sand and gravel to the burgeoning suburban development in the region. Agricultural practices dating back to colonial times accelerated erosion. Siltation in the Anacostia River due to erosion caused the demise of the Port of Bladensburg in the early 1800s. Erosion and siltation continues to be exacerbated by the urbanization of the county. Marlboro clays require special consideration for development. This clay layer found in areas between Bowie and Upper Marlboro is impermeable to water, and in heavy rains is prone to landslides.

Streams comprise three major watersheds of the Patuxent, Anacostia and Potomac Rivers. Approximately half of the county drains to the Patuxent River and the rest to the Anacostia/Potomac River watershed (see Map 3. Watersheds.) The major streams are sluggish and deposit large amounts of silt, which is particularly evident in Bladensburg on the Anacostia River. An increase in impermeable surfaces throughout the county has caused streams to display erosion of their stream banks, due to the erosive power of fast peak flows after storm events.

The rivers and streams have shaped the topography, creating broad stream valleys, gently rolling hills on plateaus, and steep ravines. Steep ravines are found near the Potomac and Patuxent Rivers, where streams have cut V-shaped valleys with short, steep slopes (see Map 4. Steep Slopes.)

The upland eastern deciduous forest, combined with the river system, have created several habitats including tidal wetlands of the Potomac, Patuxent, and Anacostia Rivers, non-tidal wetlands, and upland forests (see Maps 5. Woodlands, 6. Wetlands, and 7. Wildlife Habitats.) The native vegetation has been

affected by development either by removal, regeneration, ornamental plantings, and/or invasive species.

Initially, the pattern of suburban development radiated eastward from Washington, DC, generally along the railroads. Over time, suburban development displaced plantations and farms, which were the predominant land use of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The suburban areas inside the Capital Beltway are the oldest and most densely populated, followed by a ring outside the Beltway with many residential subdivisions. The least populated and most rural areas are the easternmost areas of the county along the Patuxent River, and especially the southeasternmost areas of Aquasco, Baden, and Croom (see Maps 8. Agricultural Land Use, and 9. Land Cover).

## 2.2 Natural Resources

One of the primary reasons for the creation of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission was for the acquisition and protection of the county's stream valley corridors. General land use regulations as well as the development review process are used by the county and M-NCPPC to promote greenway development and the county-wide walking, biking, and equestrian trail system (see Map 10. Greenway Corridors). Programs for the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area and Patuxent River Primary Management Area contribute significantly to river corridor protection efforts.

The *Green Infrastructure Plan*, approved in 2005, is a comprehensive vision for interconnecting environmental ecosystems within the county. The plan considers the ecological protection of significant sensitive habitats and the ways the environment interacts with quality of life and the local economy, and includes implementation recommendations. The purpose of the plan is to guide development, green space protection, and mitigation activities, and to implement a long-range vision for preserving, protecting, enhancing, and restoring a contiguous network of environmentally important areas in the county.

Prince George's County has a number significant natural features and resources, many of which are in public ownership. Other areas are located on private property and need protection either via fee simple transfer to public or nonprofit agencies, or conservation easements to limit development. The following are some of the significant natural features and resources located in Prince George's County:

- Patuxent River Wetlands and Regional Greenway
- Anacostia River south of Bladensburg
- Potomac River
- Natural Areas

### *Natural Features and Resources*

#### **Natural Areas**

There are several natural areas recognized by the state and county (see Map 11. Natural Areas and Wetlands). The following is a brief description of each.

**Wetlands of Special State Concern.** A group of nontidal wetlands in the Beltsville area designated by the Maryland Department of the Environment.

**Suitland Bog.** One of the last remaining bogs in the Washington Metropolitan area, this Coastal Plain magnolia bog is home to several carnivorous and insectivorous plant species that have

high educational and scientific value.

**Zekiah Swamp.** The county contains the northernmost reaches of the swamp, which is mostly located in Charles County. The swamp is the largest natural hardwood swamp in the state and is a valuable habitat for plants and animals.

**Mattawoman Creek.** The area includes the 100-year floodplain in both Prince George's and Charles Counties. It has extensive wooded swamps and is home to many mammals and a rare lotus species.

**Piscataway Creek.** The area includes the 100-year floodplain. The stream is noted for its significant herring run. It is the habitat for numerous plant and animal species.

**Broad Creek/Henson Creek Wetlands.** The wetlands at the mouth of Broad Creek are prime wildlife habitat and anadromous fish use the stream for spawning.

**Jug Bay Natural Area.** This 2,000-acre property is a complex of wetland and upland habitats containing some of the largest freshwater marshes in the state. Because of the variety of ecological habitats, Jug Bay supports an abundant variety of plant and animal species. In addition, it is located along the Atlantic Coast Flyway, which makes it a haven for bird life and waterfowl reproduction.

**Belt Woods.** The old trees found in this mature Tulip Poplar Mixed Upland Deciduous Forest make it unique in the region. It provides an opportunity for scientific research on old growth habitats. This nature reserve contains the 43-acre "South Woods," a National Natural Landmark constituting one of the last stands of virgin hardwood forest on the Atlantic coastal plain.

## **Sand and Gravel**

Because of the sandy-gravelly soils of the coastal plain, Prince George's County has several rich sources for sand and gravel that have contributed to the development of Metropolitan Washington. Sand and gravel deposits occur in the Patuxent Formation found in the Calverton and Beltsville areas in the north, and in the Brandywine Formation in the towns of Brandywine and Aquasco in the south. The Patuxent Formation has been the most important source of sand and gravel in Maryland, and the Brandywine Formation is the most productive in Prince George's County. As such, there are several mines in active operation, other mines have been closed, and operators continue to seek to open additional areas against considerable community opposition. Typically, open pit extraction is employed. By ordinance, sand and gravel areas must be reclaimed. Reclamation projects could include a variety of recreational facilities.

## **Fossil Deposits**

In addition to sand and gravel, there are fossils in the earth below Prince George's County. Exposed soils contain fossilized plants, invertebrates, marine creatures, and dinosaurs in a band of sediments stretching from Cecil County to Washington, DC through the northern half of the county. The Arundel Clays found between Beltsville and Muirkirk have proven to be one of the richest fossil sites ever found on the east coast, containing fossils from the Cretaceous period, about 144-65 million years ago. Teeth from the dinosaur *Astrodon johnstoni* were first discovered in the Arundel Clays of Muirkirk in 1858. The latest discovery was in 1991 when part of a femur of *Astrodon* was discovered. In 1998, *Astrodon johnstoni* was designated the State Dinosaur.



The marine cretaceous fossils are found in the Severn and Brightseat Formations from the Paleocene Epoch, about 65-55 million years ago. These formations are generally located in the central area of the county. Mollusks and shark teeth have shown up in these formations.

### **Wetlands**

There are approximately 18,865 acres of wetlands in Prince George's County, representing about six percent of the land area. Tidal wetlands of the Patuxent, Potomac, and Anacostia Rivers comprise about 30 percent of the wetland total. Non-tidal or scrub-shrub types of wetlands comprise the remainder. Wetlands in the county are in danger of disappearing or being degraded due to development activities.

### **Critical Area**

On tidal rivers and streams, the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area (15,600 acres) limits development within 1,000 feet of the mean high tide line. Prince George's County designates three conservation overlays in the Critical Area: Intense Development, Limited Development, and Resource Conservation. These overlays allow certain amounts and types of new development. (see Map 12. Stream Valley Parks and Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas).

### **Stream Valleys**

Prince George's County is blessed with three major rivers and many streams and creeks that create a complex of stream valleys within the county. Since its charter in 1927, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission has acquired about 15,483 acres of stream valley and continues to pursue major acquisitions along the Patuxent River and the Mattawoman, Piscataway, Collington, and Western Branches (see Map 12.) The stream valleys provide recreation and natural resource protection.

## **2.3 Historical and Cultural Resources**

The M-NCPPC is a partner in countywide efforts to preserve and conserve the rich historic and cultural heritage of Prince George's County. Through the coordinated efforts of the M-NCPPC, other public agencies, and resident groups, the availability of these valuable, irreplaceable resources will be assured for future generations.

A M-NCPPC objective is to participate in the conservation and preservation of the historic and cultural heritage of Prince George's County in cooperation with other agencies and residents.

The history of Prince George's County is found in its older buildings, in 19th century crossroad communities, in early 20th century streetcar suburbs, and in those still rural areas that recall the county's agricultural heritage of tobacco raising and horse breeding. The 18th century George Washington House in Bladensburg, part of a commercial complex which included a tavern and blacksmith shop, is a link to Colonial-era trade and industry. The Belair Stables in Bowie, built early in the 20th century, attests to Prince George's early association with the nation's thoroughbred horse breeding and racing. A picturesque Victorian house, built in Hyattsville in the 1890s, reflects the county's emerging suburbs, and the City of Greenbelt, laid out in the 1930s is internationally known as the first "greenbelt town" of the Roosevelt administration.

A county wide inventory in 1974 identified 550 properties as historically significant. They are linked to people, places, and events that helped shape the development and character of the county. In some cases, a building's significance lies in its architectural style, which may be representative of another

era, or in its method of construction. It may also be noteworthy because of the work of a highly skilled craftsman. Whether significance is based on historical or architectural merit (or both), Prince George's County's historic resources represent an important part of the county's cultural legacy. As such, they deserve special care and protection so that they can be useful for years to come as visible evidence of the county's proud history.

In 1981, the Prince George's County Council, in cooperation with the M-NCPPC, approved the *Prince George's County Historic Sites and Districts Plan*, a master plan for county preservation efforts. The master plan was updated in 1992 and again in 2010, and a description of the county's program, associated policies and guidelines, maps of historic sites and historic resources and identified historic communities as well as detailed inventories of those regulated historic properties including identified cemeteries. To implement the master plan, the County Council enacted a Preservation Ordinance (Subtitle 29 of the Prince George's County Code) to protect the identified historic resources.

The Ordinance established a nine-member Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) with the power to evaluate properties for designation as historic sites or historic districts; define environmental settings; review plans for exterior alteration, demolition or new construction; approve property tax credits for appropriate restoration and for new construction (within historic districts); and review nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.

Prince George's County now has 413 historic sites, 136 historic resources, and three county-designated historic districts. The HPC also reviews land use proposals affecting historic resources. Its staff, provided by the M-NCPPC/Prince George's County Planning Department, assists owners planning exterior alterations to historic buildings, maintains an ongoing survey and research program, and prepares National Register nominations. Members of the HPC are appointed by the County Executive and are knowledgeable in such areas as architecture, planning, real estate, and historic preservation.

Under the County's Historic Preservation Ordinance, the HPC can designate a property listed in the master plan's Inventory of Historic Resources, as a historic site if the property meets specific criteria of architectural or historical significance. Similarly, a group of historic properties can be designated as a Historic District.

The process of designation involves the preparation of a research report documenting the history and architectural characteristics of the building or district. This research may be initiated by the property owner or local citizens. The HPC holds a public hearing to receive the comments of residents and other interested parties, and then issues its decision.

Changes to the exterior of a historic site require a Historic Area Work Permit (HAWP), in addition to any other permits required by the county. Such changes include alterations, additions, demolition of exterior features, grading work, or landscaping that will affect the setting. Changes within a designated historic district require a permit as well. If a property is listed as a historic resource and alterations are planned, a property owner should request historic site evaluation. If the property is then classified as a historic site, the work may be subject to the HAWP application process.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance exempts work, which is considered ordinary maintenance, that is, work that will not alter the exterior features or the environmental setting of the historic property. A more detailed explanation of ordinary maintenance can be obtained from the Planning Department's Historic Preservation Section.

The HPC encourages owners to bring preliminary plans in for its review before applying for a HAWP. Staff can provide assistance on what can be approved as well as information on tax credits and preservation loan programs. The HPC's decision to approve an application and to grant a HAWP is based on its determination that the proposed work is compatible with the historic site or historic district, and that it will not destroy those features, which make the property significant.

Historic site and historic district designation recognizes and protects the character of the designated property or area. Designation can also protect property values by preventing incompatible alterations and the loss, through demolition or neglect, of significant buildings. Historic site owners are eligible for bronze plaques to place on their properties. In addition, owners may be eligible for a preservation tax credit on county property taxes. Owners may also be eligible for preservation loan programs.

A state income tax deduction of 20 percent of the cost of a certified rehabilitation over \$5,000 can be taken by owners of (1) designated Historic Sites; (2) properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places; (3) contributing properties within historic districts listed in the National Register; or (4) contributing properties within county-designated historic districts. The income tax deduction may be amortized over 10 years, and can be transferred to a new owner. A certified rehabilitation is one where the restoration plans comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, as determined by the Maryland Historic Trust.

When a historic district is designated, a Local Advisory Committee (LAC) to the Historic Preservation Commission may be appointed. The LAC is composed of district residents and representatives of interested organizations in the community. The LAC reviews and comments on HAWP applications and other proposals that could affect the district. The Local Advisory Commission mechanism provides residents with a greater voice in determining the future appearance of their neighborhood.

**The Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust** (a volunteer body whose members are appointed by the County Executive), in conjunction with the Historic Preservation Commission, has established a countywide organization of volunteers, the Friends of Preservation.

**Prince George's Heritage, Inc.**, is a committee of volunteers appointed by the state preservation agency, the Maryland Historical Trust. Prince George's Heritage and the Historical and Cultural Trust administer the Friends of Preservation grants program that awards small grants for research and restoration projects. Prince George's Heritage also inspects easements held by the Maryland Historical Trust and works closely with the Historic Preservation Commission on educational efforts.

**The Prince George's County Historical Society & Library** is a private, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to promoting an appreciation of Prince George's County heritage. The Society maintains a library of county history, publishes a monthly newsletter, holds programs and special events for members, conducts guided tours and educational activities for the public, and recognizes historical and preservation activities with annual awards.

**The National Register of Historic Places** is a list of properties acknowledged by the federal government as worthy of recognition and preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is maintained by the Secretary of the Interior and administered by the National Park Service. Properties listed in the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that are significant to their local community, state, or the nation. These resources contribute to an understanding of the historical and cultural foundations of the nation.

Prince George's County participates in the **Certified Local Government** program operated by the National Park Service. The County HPC enforces a local preservation ordinance, provides for public participation in its meetings, and maintains a historic sites inventory and survey program. One of the most important responsibilities of the Prince George's County HPC is the review of properties nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

At present, 82 individual Prince George's County properties (including archaeological sites) are listed in the National Register. Ten historic districts in Prince George's County are also listed in the National Register. Over the years, Planning Department staff members have prepared National Register nominations for 26 individual properties and three districts using Certified Local Government grants from the Maryland Historical Trust. In addition, as of January 2011, an additional five properties are being processed for listing in the National Register as part of the Planning Department's budget and work program.

Listing in the National Register provides the following benefits in preserving historic properties:

1. The prestige of national recognition that a property is of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and/or culture. Nomination involves a multiple-step review process that includes professional evaluations of the significance of the property.
2. Procedures require careful consideration of any impacts on National Register properties by projects involving federal and state funds, licenses, permits or tax benefits.
3. Eligibility for federal income tax benefits that include a:
  - 20 percent investment tax credit for certified rehabilitation of historic commercial, industrial, and rental residential buildings
  - Charitable donation deduction for the conveyance of a perpetual easement to a qualified preservation organization.
4. Eligibility for a Maryland income tax deduction for approved rehabilitation of owner-occupied residential buildings.
5. Eligibility for federal and state grants and low-interest state loans for historic preservation projects.

In 2001, the *Anacostia Trails Heritage Area Management Plan* was approved. The document is an amendment to the Prince George's County *General Plan* as a functional master plan for heritage tourism in northern Prince George's County. The Anacostia Trails Heritage Area (ATHA) is a Maryland certified heritage area. The management plan describes strategies for heritage tourism, interpretation, stewardship and linkages for the myriad of historical, cultural, recreational resources found in the 83.70 square miles including 14 municipalities within the ATHA.

Prince George's County takes pride in the rich cultural and natural resources of the Anacostia River watershed, particularly in the historic corridor created by the Washington-Baltimore Turnpike and the Route One corridor. The ATHA includes resources of statewide significance, eight historic districts, natural resources and protected open spaces, and recreational facilities and opportunities.

Much of the ATHA has been targeted for intensive revitalization, thanks to an outstanding level of local cooperation, commitment, and leadership. The area has been targeted for current and future economic revitalization efforts and has many tourism opportunities.

The historical, cultural, and natural resources within ATHA's boundaries are exceptional. Many distinctive themes are identified in the Heritage Area plan including historical events of importance to the history of

Maryland and the nation, transportation firsts of worldwide significance, War of 1812 history, commerce and early industrial history, aviation history, African-American cultural history and religious traditions, and urban greenway protection efforts.

The Anacostia Trails Heritage Area is based on linkages. The dendritic drainage pattern of the Anacostia watershed and its deep water access to the Potomac and the Chesapeake Bay had a profound impact on early settlement and subsequent land development. Those early linkages and their significance to Maryland history are reflected in the present day location of roadways, towns, protected historic landmarks, protected open spaces, and the Anacostia Tributary Trail System.

ATHA encompasses a unique collection of historical and natural resources in Prince George's County that are linked by an 18-mile trail system along the tributaries of the Anacostia River. The continuous greenway along the Anacostia River and its tributaries traverses a variety of natural environments from woodlands to open fields and includes many stream valleys and non-tidal wetlands where activities such as fishing, biking, bird watching, camping, and horseback riding can be enjoyed.

Many historic landmarks of the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area are linked by the Anacostia Tributary Trail System including the College Park Airport and Aviation Museum, Adelphi Mill, Riversdale, the Rossborough Inn at the University of Maryland, and the George Washington House. The location of ATHA along the Washington and Baltimore Route One corridor makes the tourism potential for this area unparalleled. The area's seven National Register historic districts and abundant historical landmarks, varied recreational facilities, diverse environmental settings, and rich cultural resources make it a singularly distinctive location as a Maryland recognized heritage area.

The Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, with its proximity to the highly populated urban centers of Washington, DC, Annapolis, and Baltimore, has the great advantage of being easily accessible to visitors from these popular tourist destinations. ATHA is distinctive in its high concentration of natural and historical resources that are physically linked by a scenic greenway in the form of the growing Anacostia Tributary Trail System.

## 2.4 Demographic Characteristics and Projections

The 2010 U.S. Decennial Census indicates that Prince George's County had an estimated population of 863,420 as of April 1, 2010. The Cooperative Forecast (Round 8) for Prince George's County indicates that the projected population for Year 2040 within the county will be 950,110. The Round 8 Cooperative Forecast is a joint effort by individual jurisdictions in the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Region to produce forecasts based on common assumptions regarding regional growth.

According to the *Demographic and Socio-Economic Outlook* prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning in November 2010 and revised in May 2011, the Prince George's County population is projected to grow to 895,750 in 2020, 928,300 in 2030, and 950,110 in Year 2040. The population over 65 years of age is expected to almost double in the next 30 years, while the population aged 5-19 is expected to increase only by about five percent from 2010 to 2040. By 2040, the non-white population is projected to be 77 percent of the total population, up from 72 percent in 2010. The per capita income in 2010 was \$35,609, and is projected to grow to \$48,133 in 2040, a 35 percent increase over 2010 levels. The population distribution reflects the county's change from an agricultural context to a suburban one. The communities inside the Beltway closest to the rail lines and major highways in the north grew first,

beginning in the late 1800s. After World War II, when the automobile became the favored choice for transportation and afforded the general population greater mobility, Bowie and areas inside the Beltway south of Washington, DC began to experience suburban population growth. Today, Bowie, with its sprawling land area, has a much larger population than any of the older municipalities inside the Beltway including Greenbelt, College Park, and Hyattsville. Bowie is within the area of fastest population growth located in the county, and includes the unincorporated area between the Beltway and US 301. Other rapidly suburbanizing areas in southern Prince George's County include the areas between Piscataway and Brandywine.

### **Growth and Distribution**

The 2002 Approved *General Plan* for Prince George's County recognizes three development tiers in the county. The area inside the Capital Beltway is the Developed Tier and contains approximately 86 square miles. The Developing Tier is the area between the Capital Beltway and US 301 and is 237 square miles in size. The Rural Tier is primarily east of US 301 and is 164 square miles in size.

As noted above, the 2010 population of Prince George's County was 863,420. Most growth is occurring in the Developing Tier, with new residential subdivisions occurring in the central and southern areas of the county. In the Developed Tier, residential growth will continue to be greatest along the US 1 corridor in College Park and around the metro stations.

The following table, Projected Population, prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning in November 2010, shows the county's estimated population growth and income over 10 year increments from 2010 to 2040. Maps 13 through 15 show the Population by Park Community, Dwelling Units per Park Community, and Personal Income per Park Community. Map 16 compares the Median Household Incomes by Park Community to M-NCPPC Parkland. Map 17 (Election Districts) is provided for comparison.

## Projected Population

YEAR	2010	2020	2030	2040
Total Population	863,420	895,750	928,300	950,110
Female	447,251	429,940	446,590	458,780
Male	416,169	465,820	481,700	491,310
White	165,776	231,070	226,000	219,770
Non-white	697,644	664,690	702,290	730,320
Age Groups				
0-4	62,166	60,490	60,040	61,850
5-19	214,128	181,000	185,450	188,200
20-44	281,561	286,020	305,570	308,280
45-64	223,541	231,630	197,440	202,540
65+	82,024	136,620	179,800	189,240
Total Households	307,450	331,125	348,800	360,100
Average Household Size	2.69	2.63	2.58	2.55
Per Capita Income	\$35,609	\$42,546	\$44,991	\$48,133
Personal Income, Total (million of constant 2005\$)	\$30,745.5	\$38,110.6	\$41,765.1	\$45,731.2

## General Plan Policy for Future Development

The 2002 Approved *General Plan* for Prince George's County established a development pattern that guides growth in the County. Areas within the three development tiers (Developed, Developing, and Rural) can be designated with overlays (Centers and Corridors) (see Map 18. Prince George's County *General Plan*.) These policy areas establish areas of significant economic development, residential development, and preservation. The population growth objective of the development tiers is that 33 percent of residential growth is to be located in the Developed Tier, 66 percent in the Developing Tier, and one percent in the Rural Tier.

Development of parks, recreation and green infrastructure is an important component of the county's general development plan as supported by regulations, functional master plans, and funding mechanisms. The mandatory dedication of parkland requirement in the Subdivision Ordinance is a major component of the parkland acquisition and facility development serving new residential growth in the county. The Capital Improvement Program, primarily funded through property taxes, sale of bonds, and Program Open Space, is the second component of parkland acquisition and facility development for the county's park system.

In June 2005, the Prince George's County Council approved the *Countywide Green Infrastructure Functional Master Plan*, the first comprehensive master plan ever developed for environmental ecosystems in Prince George's County. The plan will help guide acquisition of important ecological conservation areas

for open space and aid in the restoration and protection of all environmentally sensitive areas within the county.

The County *General Plan* states as a countywide goal to preserve rural, agricultural and scenic areas. To further this goal, the Plan identified the Rural Tier to protect large amounts of wetland areas, land for woodland, and wildlife habitat, while providing recreation and agricultural pursuits, and preservation of the existing rural character and scenic vistas.

The preservation of stream valleys in the park system, the protection of other environmentally sensitive areas identified in the green infrastructure plan, and the agricultural preservation in the Rural Tier are all intertwined to create a system of land preservation that serves park, recreation, and environmental stewardship purposes.

### ***Parks and Recreation Development***

With the dense population inside the Beltway, and the growth policy directing denser development around Metro Stations and the developing area outside the Capital Beltway, it is increasingly more difficult to acquire additional parkland for active recreation in the Developed Tier (see Map 19. M-NCPPC Parks and Open Space.) In addition, the expense of environmental cleanup and acquiring land in industrial areas or retrofitting channelized streams makes it prohibitive to acquire conservation areas along streams, such as the Beaver Dam Creek and Cabin John Branch in Cheverly, and Indian Creek in Beltsville.

In the developing areas of the county outside of the Beltway, the housing market is rapidly expanding onto former farmland. The M-NCPPC is in competition with developers who seek the same type of developable land that is appropriate for active recreation. Through the mandatory dedication requirement of the Prince George's County Subdivision Ordinance, conservation land can be acquired in residential developments. Acquiring land for active recreation will require negotiation with landowners and developers.

In the Rural Tier of the county, the mechanism for acquisition of land for active recreation varies. If an area falls within the Metropolitan District, where property taxes are levied on residential properties to fund M-NCPPC parks and recreation programs, recreation facilities may be provided. In addition, M-NCPPC has acquired much property along the Patuxent River outside of the Metropolitan District for conservation areas and passive recreational activities.

In the Rural Tier, properties zoned residentially that allow lots greater than one acre do not require dedication of parkland through the development approval process. Land must be acquired through other mechanisms.

The framework for developing park properties and recreation programs will be to upgrade existing parks to meet the changing needs of the population, to develop undeveloped parks with the cooperation of the surrounding community, and to seek collaborations with state and federal government to rehabilitate brownfields and other degraded landscapes for conversion into park, recreation or conservation areas. Properties will be pursued for acquisitions in stream valleys and targeted areas within the developing tier for future recreational facilities.

In addition, improving non-motorized vehicle accessibility to parks and recreation facilities will be a major component of the plan. Creating a comprehensive trail network is a priority. The health and environmental benefits of non-motorized transportation for recreation and commuting are numerous. The District Council approved the *Adopted Countywide Master Plan of Transportation* in November 2009. Sidewalks and trails, both on- and off-road, were identified as a major component of this transportation plan.



## **Environment and Natural Resource Conservation**

The vision of natural resource conservation as outlined in the *General Plan* includes preserving, enhancing or restoring environmentally sensitive features and ecological functions; restoring water quality in surface water and groundwater; preserving land from future development; reducing energy consumption; promoting wise use of natural resources; and educating the public and businesses about environmental stewardship.

In 2005, the County Council adopted the *Approved Countywide Green Infrastructure Functional Master Plan*, a functional master plan to the *General Plan*, which identifies strategies to achieve these goals. The plan builds upon the Maryland Green Infrastructure Plan theme of green corridors and hubs. It identifies areas for protection or enhancement, which will affect local acquisition programs. Existing streams, wetlands, woodlands, and storm water regulations and policies were reviewed and revised to effectively implement the goals. Implementation will be primarily through the land development process in concert with other master plans.

## **Agricultural Land Preservation**

The *General Plan* created the Rural Tier to balance agricultural pursuits and preservation of remaining environmentally sensitive features to maintain a rural character in the southeasternmost area of the county. The Rural Tier is the only place recognized in the county where agricultural preservation is likely to occur. The *General Plan* identifies several policies to maintain the rural quality of this area. Policies include developing and maintaining a transportation system that protects open space, rural character, and environmental features and discourages use of public funds, including funds for roads, water and sewer improvements that will aid in development.

## **2.5 Recreation and Leisure Trends**

Key trends that are important to evaluate and relevant for future planning efforts for Prince George's County were identified in the draft *Parks & Recreation 2010 and Beyond* study. These include:

- Nationally, parks and recreation agencies are becoming the key providers of entry-level fitness and wellness activities contributing to public health. The United Health Foundation ranked Maryland 26th in its 2008 State Health Rankings.
- Trails, parks, and playgrounds are among the five most important community amenities considered when selecting a home, according to a 2002 survey of recent homebuyers conducted by the National Association of Home Builders and the National Association of Realtors.
- According to the *Outdoor Industry Foundation*, 50 percent of Americans regard outdoor activities as their main source of exercise.
- Parks and recreation agencies are becoming more commonly identified as the primary after-school providers for youth. Participation in out-of-school activities and programs offer support for youth and working families, and benefit the youth socially, emotionally, and academically. After school programs and camps also provide a safe haven for youth and help decrease crime and delinquency.
- The top three sports activities for persons 65 years and older in 2007 were exercise walking, exercising with equipment, and swimming.
- There is an increasing trend towards providing larger regional multi-purpose facilities rather than smaller neighborhood facilities for both economic and retention purposes.
- Indoor leisure and therapeutic pools are becoming more popular as aquatic features. Additional

amenities such as spray pads are becoming increasingly popular as well.

- Environmental education programs were listed at the top of the 10 programs parks and recreation departments are planning to add within the next three years. Participation in environmental programs offered by M-NCPPC in Prince George's County is growing.
- National trends in the delivery of parks and recreation systems reflect an increase in partnerships for service delivery.

## 2.6 Inventory of Land and Facilities

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission was empowered by the state of Maryland in 1927 to preserve and protect the stream valleys within the metropolitan area around the District of Columbia, and to acquire, develop, maintain and administer a regional system of parks within Prince George's and Montgomery Counties. The Commission also provides land use planning for the development of property within those two counties.

The Commission administers a park system of over 27,000 acres within Prince George's County. This system is comprised of the stream valleys and other undeveloped park properties, large regional parks, community parks, park/schools, and a number of historic and unique amenities.

### *Sports Facilities*

The Commission's Department of Parks and Recreation operates, programs, and maintains a huge number of recreational amenities. The basic components of the parks system are the park buildings and athletic amenities such as sports fields and courts, which are distributed among 557 regional and community parks.

Forty-three staffed community centers and 27 unstaffed recreation buildings are located throughout Prince George's County. While the recreation buildings reside at small neighborhood parks and are designed to serve primarily the residents within that neighborhood, the community centers are often located at larger community parks or park/school sites, and by design they serve a larger sector of the community.

Countywide, the Commission has 27 baseball fields, 159 softball fields, 62 football fields, 39 soccer/futsal courts, 210 full and half basketball courts, and 19 volleyball courts. There are also 14 golf facilities, six pro shops/clubhouses, a boxing amateur training facility, 43 gymnasiums, two field houses, six ice rinks, 255 picnic shelters, 241 playgrounds, three dog parks, four senior activity centers, 59 camping spaces, 10 indoor and outdoor pools, 318 tennis courts, three running tracks, a trap and skeet facility, and many trails, including major regional connecting trails such as the Anacostia Tributary Trail System, the Henson Creek Trail, the Patuxent Water Trail, the WB&A Trail, and the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Trail.

In addition to traditional sports, the Commission also provides facilities for emerging sports that are not already within the system. In the Northern Area, there are several cricket fields to meet the expressed requests of the Hispanic community residing there. As enthusiasm for this sport spreads to other parts of the county, attempts are being made to meet the need. A cricket stadium has been included in the Master Plan for Phase Two of the Green Branch Athletic Complex. Other ball sports such as futsal and pickleball are beginning to become popular, and a few fields and courts sized for these new sports are in place, with more to be built in the near future. Another sport that is eliciting much conversation among enthusiasts is bicycling. Plans to build a beginners' bicycle pump track and a mountain bike skills training

area at the Horsepen Trailhead on the WB&A Trail in Bowie are in place. The Master Plan for Phase Two of the Green Branch Athletic Complex will include an advanced bicycle skills area and cycle-cross course.

The Commission maintains several regional “Special Sports Facilities” in its inventory. The flagship sports facility, located in the Central Area and known as the Prince George’s Sports and Learning Complex, contains an aquatics center featuring an indoor 50-meter competition pool and fun splash area, a field house, fitness center, gymnastics space, a learning center, and a children’s center, in addition to an outdoor track and sports field. The Fairland Sports and Aquatics Complex, located at Fairland Regional Park in the Northern Area, features aquatics, gymnastics, tennis and fitness centers, and a boundless playground. A third complex under construction in the Southern Area will be the Southern Regional Tech/ Rec Complex. This 37,000-square-foot facility will feature two gymnasiums with an elevated track, fitness center, aerobics area, an internet café and computer, learning, media, meeting and multipurpose rooms.

In addition to these regional sports complexes, the Commission has a number of regional parks, defined as being over 200 acres in size. In the Northern Area, Fairland Regional Park contains the Fairland Sports and Aquatics Complex, the Gardens Ice House, lighted ball fields, trails, and play areas.

Walker Mill Regional Park, which is undergoing a multi-million dollar renovation, is located in the Central Area. When complete, it will have upgraded lighted ball fields (including an artificial turf field), tennis and basketball courts, a new Imagination Playground, large group picnic shelters, a splash pad, a skate park, golf facility and clubhouse, a restroom/concession building, additional parking, and trail/bridge connections to adjacent neighborhoods. Concord Manor, a historic house on the northern part of the park, is being renovated and will be a convenient meeting space for the community. The new Park Police Headquarters is under design and will open on this site in the next few years.

Watkins Regional Park is also in the Central Area and includes the Watkins Nature Center, Old Maryland Farm, lighted ball fields, outdoor basketball and tennis courts, the Watkins Tennis Bubble, campsites, picnic areas, playgrounds, a trail, and a Summer Operations area featuring the Chesapeake Carousel, miniature golf, and a miniature train. Popular annual events such as the Festival of Lights, Kinderfest, and Summer Concerts on the Green occur at Watkins.

Cosca Regional Park has the Clearwater Nature Center, a lake/boathouse, the Cosca Tennis Bubble, lighted ball fields, outdoor tennis courts, picnic shelters, a tram train, campsites, and equestrian/nature trails. Cosca is located in the Southern Area.

In the Central Area, construction of a new regional facility called the Green Branch Athletic Complex is scheduled to begin next fiscal year. Located adjacent to the Baysox Stadium, Phase One of the Green Branch Athletic Complex will have softball and soccer fields, a multi-age Imagination Playground, picnic areas, a restroom/concession building, a loop trail, and parking. Phase Two of future development at this athletic complex is being master planned.

### ***Historic and Unique Facilities***

Over the years, the Commission has acquired many historic facilities. Some are formal rental sites available for weddings, receptions, and meetings. These include Oxon Hill Manor (notable for its beautiful English gardens, reflecting pool, architectural detailing, and views of the Potomac River), the elegant Newton White Mansion, Montpelier Mansion, Riversdale, Snow Hill Manor, Billingsley House (overlooking the Patuxent River), Darnall’s Chance, Dorsey Chapel, and the Prince George’s Ballroom, a former country club. Other historic facilities of interest are the Marietta House, Abraham Hall, the Patuxent

Rural Life Museums (a complex of museums, houses, and a blacksmith shop), the Seabrook Schoolhouse, the Ridgeley Rosenwald Schoolhouse, and the Surratt House. Archaeological sites include Mount Calvert Historical and Archaeological Park, the Northampton Slave Quarters, and Dinosaur Park.

The Commission also owns some truly unique facilities in Prince George’s County. The Prince George’s Equestrian Center/Show Place Arena includes a Victorian-style multipurpose facility with flexible exhibit space, banquet rooms, in-house catering, and seating for up to 5,800 people. Five art centers and galleries provide space to learn, create, and exhibit works of art. The Publick Playhouse is a restored theater that offers a variety of programs for all ages. The College Park Aviation Museum, located adjacent to the “World’s Oldest Continuously Operating Airport,” is a state-of-the-art facility that focuses attention on the many significant achievements that have occurred in aviation since the time of the Wright Brothers. Other unique amenities include nine memorial sites, tour boats, launches, and boat ramps, and a research center.

### **Partnerships**

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission often cooperates in partnerships in order to provide recreational amenities that may not otherwise be provided. Examples of this type of liaison include the Prince George’s (Baysox) Stadium in Bowie, the College Park Tennis Facility and the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at Maryland in College Park, the Bowie Center for the Performing Arts, and the Ice House at Fairland Regional Park. Successful partnerships with the EYA Gateway Arts Center and the Brentwood Arts Center are helping to revitalize the US 1 corridor south of East West Highway. The Commission also partners with the Prince George’s Boys & Girls Club to support their athletic programs and activities.

Future efforts could include the creation of a partnership to bring art and sculpture to an “art park” five to 10 acres in size at Walker Mill Regional Park, in response to resident requests for cultural amenities. World-class artists could be invited to this site to participate in this unique effort. Alternatively, an outdoor amphitheater and arts venue for the performing arts could be added to an existing Commission site or a new acquisition such as Wilmer’s Park in the Southern Area. Partnerships with the University of Maryland and NASA are encouraged in order to create venues that link science (robotics) and art via hands-on exhibits.

## **2.7 Facilities Classification**

Recreational land and facilities within the Parks inventory in Prince George’s County are divided into six distinct categories.

- Local Parks
- Regional Parks
- Stream Valley Parks and Natural Areas/Conservation Areas
- Countywide Parks
- Urban Parks
- Special Facilities

Local Parks are less than 200 acres in size, and they focus on providing service to the immediate community. These parks typically include some combination of a play area, picnic area, ball fields, and basketball/tennis/volleyball courts, depending on the size of the park. Some local parks also contain a recreation building, which is a small unstaffed building used for community meetings, birthday parties,

and family celebrations. Staffed community centers are usually considered to be a local amenity, with the exception of regional facilities such as the Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex. Community centers typically contain a gymnasium, a fitness area, and meeting spaces for activities for adults, teens, and children. Park/Schools and school community centers are also considered local parks.

Regional Parks are over 200 acres in size, serve the larger community and provide multiple recreation opportunities for families and groups. Fairland, Watkins, Walker Mill, and Cosca are the four regional parks in the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission system.

Stream Valley Parks and Natural/Conservation Areas are also regional. One of the reasons the Commission was originally chartered was to preserve the stream valleys within the county floodplains. Although stream valley parks are characteristically undeveloped, they sometimes contain small developed parks within them. Natural areas and conservation areas are maintained as undeveloped land, often with an educational component such as instructional signage. Examples of these areas are the Bladensburg Waterfront Park, Cheltenham Conservation Area, Dueling Creek Natural Area (in Colmar Manor Park), Lake Artemesia Conservation Area, School House Pond in Upper Marlboro, and the Suitland Bog Conservation Area.

Countywide Parks are regional facilities offering unique recreational opportunities such as historic sites (including some rental venues for weddings and business events), gardens, interpretive walks, and cultural arts facilities.

Urban Parks provide for active and passive recreation opportunities in urban settings.

Special Facilities include aquatic facilities, ice rinks, golf courses, airports, marinas, arenas, shooting, equestrian, and childcare centers. Special facilities in the Prince George's County park system include the College Park Airport, the Prince George's Equestrian Center/Show Place Arena, the Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex, the Prince George's Stadium in Bowie, and the Chesapeake Carousel and Miniature Train at Watkins Regional Park.

## CHAPTER 3 – RECREATION, PARKS, AND OPEN SPACE

### 3.1 Recreation Needs Assessment Survey

#### *Survey Process*

Outreach and data collection for the *Parks & Recreation: 2010 and Beyond* study began in early December 2008 and continued through the end of February 2009. A Recreation Needs Assessment Survey was conducted primarily through a mail-back survey, and was supplemented with an online version (both surveys were available in English and in Spanish). To further increase participation, two additional outreach efforts were also conducted by telephone – one directed at non-respondents to the mail and web versions of the survey, and another “robo-call” mass telephone campaign aimed at encouraging participation in the open-link version of the web survey (discussed below).

In total, the mail survey was sent to 14,000 randomly selected households located in Prince George’s County. The number of households selected was generally representative of the population distribution throughout the seven subareas or PUMA’s (Public Use Microdata Areas) that comprise the county (note that the Northwest subarea, originally consisting of two areas, was combined into one subarea during the questionnaire development phase to simplify analysis of results). A link and individually-assigned password (one per household) were also included in the mailed invitation, in order to allow recipients to complete the survey online, should they prefer.

The first outreach effort conducted by telephone contacted 425 of the non-respondents to the mail survey. The second phone outreach effort, a robo-call mass telephone campaign designed to encourage participation in the open-link version of the web survey, successfully reached 37,140 households.

Completed surveys received from the random mailing totaled 628 out of a net estimated 13,354 delivered (approximately 646 surveys out of the 14,000 originally mailed were returned “undeliverable” due to invalid addresses and/or residents who have moved and no longer reside at a particular address). Based upon the total sample size of 628 responses, overall results have a margin of error of approximately +/- 3.9 percentage points calculated for questions at 50 percent response. Also, note that the resultant database is weighted by age of respondent, ethnicity, and subarea population to ensure appropriate representation of county residents across different demographic cohorts in the overall sample.

The primary list source used for the mailing was a third party list purchased from Equifax, one of the three largest credit reporting agencies in the world. The list also included renters. Additionally, an open-link version of the online questionnaire was made available to all county residents, who could complete the questionnaire if they did not receive one by invitation in the mail. As noted above, the robo-call telephone campaign also directed residents to this survey. Additional, extensive outreach undertaken by the county (through numerous public meetings, focus groups, and coverage in the local media) also encouraged participation in the survey. A total of 801 open-link surveys were completed, resulting in 1,429 total completed surveys received.

As responses to the open-link version of the questionnaire are self-selected and not a part of the randomly selected sample of residents, results are kept separate from the mail and invitation web versions of the survey for the overall countywide analysis. The discussion and graphic illustrations of results that follow focus only on results from the randomly selected sample of residents. However, the summary and analysis of responses at the subarea level, included as a separate section of the report, combine the

open-link responses with the randomly selected responses in order to increase sample sizes and informational content at this level of analysis. This segmentation of the results helps to further explain local opinions and provides additional insight to parks and recreation issues in the area. Data tables showing these segmentations are provided as an appendix section.

Additionally, several of the questions on the survey form allowed respondents to write in their response or comment.

### ***Respondent Profile***

Based on current US Census data of the adult population (over 19 years old) for Prince George’s County, the age profile of residents is distributed as follows (which is, in part, the basis for the weighting of the survey data): 30 percent are under 35 years old, 22 percent between 35 and 44 years, 21 percent between 45 and 54 years, 15 percent between 55 and 64 years, and 13 percent 65 years or over. Sixty-four percent are African American, 18 percent Caucasian, 12 percent Hispanic/Latino, and 4 percent Asian or Asian American.

At least 46 percent of responding households have children living at home (33 percent couples with children at home plus 13 percent single with children at home), plus another eight percent who live in “multi-family” households. Fifteen percent are couples without children, 16 percent are single with no children, and 15 percent are empty-nesters (couples and singles with no children at home.)

Respondents have lived in the area for an average of almost 15 years, with 10 years being the median. More than one-third of respondents (37 percent) have lived in the area for five years or less. The population distribution by subarea or PUMA (which is also a basis for the weighting of the survey data) is as follows: 23 percent in the Northwest subarea, 15 percent Northeast, 13 percent Central West, 19 percent Central East, 16 percent Southwest, and 14 percent in the Southern subarea.

In regards to household income, 26 percent of responding households have annual incomes of less than \$50,000, 43 percent between \$50,000 and \$100,000, and 31 percent greater than \$100,000.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### ***Current Programs and Facilities***

**Usage levels.** Among the facilities and amenities available in Prince George’s County, neighborhood and community parks are used by the greatest proportion of respondents (72 percent of respondents have used a park at least once in the last 12 months), followed by community centers (67 percent of respondents), playgrounds (54 percent), and Watkins Regional Park (51 percent). Approximately 43-47 percent of the respondents have used trails, Prince George’s Sports & Learning Complex, athletic fields, historic sites and museums, and natural area parks.

Approximately 33-39 percent have used swimming pools, waterfront parks, Prince George’s Equestrian Center/Show Place Arena, and nature centers. The Fairland Athletic Complex, golf courses, senior centers, art centers, and gymnastics centers are used by the fewest people (all by 15-18 percent).

When asked about their frequency of use, respondents indicated the highest number of average uses per year to neighborhood and community parks (13.3 times per year, or a little over once per month), followed by community centers (8.6 times per year), playgrounds (8.1 times), athletic fields (6.3 times),

trails (6.2 times), and Prince George’s Sports & Learning Complex (6.0 times). Watkins Regional Park (3.9 times), swimming pools (3.8 times), and natural area parks (3.7 times) were also used relatively frequently throughout the year.

**Importance to the community.** Respondents were then asked to indicate how important each of these parks and recreation amenities are to the community. While the majority of facilities and amenities are rated as being relatively important to the community, neighborhood and community parks, community centers, and playgrounds were rated the highest (83-86 percent of respondents rated these facilities as “very important,” a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale). Golf courses were rated lowest in importance (45 percent very important, with 35 percent ratings of not important, a 1 or 2 on a 5-point scale). Also considered less important are ice rinks (21 percent not important), gymnastics centers (20 percent), and tennis courts/tennis bubbles (16 percent).

How well are parks, trails, recreation facilities, and programs currently meeting the needs of the community? Overall, most parks, facilities, and amenities available in Prince George’s County received relatively positive satisfaction ratings. Respondents indicated that the following facilities meet the needs of the community the most:

- Prince George’s Sports & Learning Complex
- Watkins Regional Park
- Athletic fields
- Neighborhood and community parks
- Community centers
- Prince George’s Equestrian Center/Show Place Arena
- Walker Mill Regional Park
- Fairland Athletic Complex

Although less important to the community as a whole, 19 percent of respondents rated golf courses as not meeting their needs very much or at all. Next were senior centers (17 percent needs not being met), art centers (16 percent), gymnastic centers (14 percent), and then ice rinks, tennis courts/tennis bubbles, historic sites and museums, and swimming pools (all with 12-13 percent response of needs not being met).

**Importance-Performance Matrix.** It is also instructive to compare and plot the importance scores against the performance scores in an “importance-performance” matrix. All of the facilities and services listed in the survey fell into the “high importance/low unmet need” quadrant (based on a 5-point scale, dividing the quadrants by the scale’s mid-point of “3”), with golf courses trending the closest to the lowest importance, but also highest unmet need. Golf courses are relatively unimportant to the community as a whole, but for those who use such facilities, they are very important.

It is also helpful to look at a smaller scale representation of the same data in order to determine more detailed positions of each amenity in comparison to each other. Note that many of the same facilities listed previously as meeting the needs of the community are also considered the most important to the community (neighborhood and community parks, community centers, playgrounds, and Prince George’s Sports & Learning Complex). As also previously identified, art centers, tennis facilities, gymnastics centers, ice rinks, and golf courses, while considered less important to the community as a whole, are not meeting the needs for many respondents.

When asked why they do not use M-NCPPC parks, facilities, services, or programs or what they think



is most in need of improvement, respondents indicated safety and security most often (37 percent), especially in the Central West and Southwest subareas. Following closely is no time/personal issues (34 percent) and lack of awareness of programs or facilities offered (33 percent of respondents).

A second tier of reasons includes hours of operation (26 percent), price/user fees (22 percent), condition of parks or facilities (21 percent), need for more restrooms (21 percent), location of facilities not convenient (20 percent), and customer service/staff knowledge (18 percent).

**Other recreation facilities used.** When asked what other organizations respondents and their household members use for recreation facilities and programs, 38 percent of respondents indicated that they use churches/houses of worship, followed by parks outside of the county (33 percent) and private or public schools (29 percent). Other facilities used include municipal, state, and national parks in the county (24 percent), private health and fitness clubs (24 percent), and trails outside of the county (21 percent).

**Current ratings of Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR).** Respondents were asked to rate a variety of aspects of the Department, such as maintenance, customer service, and quality of facilities and programs provided in the county. Overall, rating scores were very good. There are generally more 4’s (and sometimes 3’s) given than ratings of 5 on the 1 to 5 scale. Ratings of 4 and 5 generally average around 60 percent for most categories (with some slightly higher and some slightly lower), while rating scores of 1 and 2 tend to cluster in the 10 to 12 percent range (with a few categories closer to 17-20 percent).

Customer service of M-NCPPC staff and overall maintenance of parks rate the highest (68 percent of respondents rated these aspects as a 4 or 5 “Excellent” on a 5-point scale.) Next is “quality of parks” (65 percent), “maintenance of community centers” (62 percent), “quality of recreation programs offered” (61 percent), “quality of community centers” (61 percent), “number or amount of natural areas available” (60 percent), “number of parks” (60 percent), “number of community centers” (59 percent), and “variety of recreation programs offered” (59 percent).

“Restroom availability” received the lowest marks with 28 percent rating the category a 1 or 2. Other categories rated a 1 or 2 were “connectivity of trails” (20 percent), “number of trails available” (18 percent), “quality of signage” (17 percent), and “trail maintenance” (17 percent). While “number of parks” received a fairly high level of positive responses, 16 percent rated this aspect as a 1 or 2 on the 5-point scale.

**General activity and leisure time interests.** Respondents were asked to indicate their level of interest in a variety of general activity and leisure time pursuits. Traveling clearly has the greatest widespread interest (91 percent “really enjoy” or “do on a regular basis”). Next is attending music concerts (other than the symphony—79 percent) and going to museums (also 79 percent). Visiting historical sites (77 percent), attending live theatre productions (76 percent), participating in indoor sports or exercise activities (76 percent), attending community festivals (74 percent), participating in outdoor sports or exercise activities (72 percent), and attending live professional or semi-professional sporting events (70 percent) also have a large amount of interest. Of least interest is attending the opera (76 percent “avoid” or could “take or leave” it), attending the symphony (67 percent avoid/take or leave it), and participating in artistic or creative activities (42 percent avoid/take or leave it).

**Importance of adding, expanding, or improving indoor recreation facilities.** The survey provided a list of indoor facilities and amenities that could be added, expanded, or improved in Prince George’s County, and asked respondents how important each one is to them. The results show that respondents feel

designated space for youth and teen activities would be the most important (84 percent of respondents indicated it as “very important,” a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale), followed by fitness class space (81 percent), weight room and cardio fitness space (81 percent), designated space for seniors/older adults (80 percent), and indoor walking/running track (79 percent).

Indoor pool for fitness swimming/competition, indoor leisure pool, and multi-purpose gymnasium space also rate relatively important (75-76 percent of respondents indicating they are “very important”). Amenities such as a climbing wall, indoor racquetball, ice rink, indoor tennis, and arts and craft space were rated among the least important.

Respondents were also asked to indicate which of the potential facilities and amenities were the three most important to them and their household. This provides the opportunity to not only see what amenities are important to respondents, but also to get an idea of how the same amenities are viewed in relation to each other, allowing priorities to become more evident. Designated space for youth and teen activities remain the top priority (20 percent of respondents indicating that it is their top choice and 38 percent indicating that it is one of their top three priorities). Indoor walking/running tracks emerged as a second priority (10 percent top choice and 31 percent one of the top three priorities), followed by designated space for seniors/older adults (29 percent indicating it as one of the top three), weight room and cardio fitness space (27 percent), and indoor pool for fitness swimming/competition (25 percent). Next are indoor leisure pool (21 percent), fitness class space (21 percent), indoor athletic fields (20 percent), and multi-purpose gymnasium space (18 percent). A third tier of facilities includes community meeting rooms (13 percent), arts and crafts space (12 percent), gymnastics facility (10 percent), and performing arts space (10 percent).

**Importance of adding, expanding, or improving outdoor recreation facilities.** The survey provided a list of outdoor facilities and amenities that could be added, expanded, or improved in Prince George’s County. Respondents said picnic shelters, playgrounds, natural areas, and trails are the most important to add, expand, or improve (rating between 76 and 81 percent “very important” on the 1 to 5 scale). Outdoor swimming pool, historic sites, multi-purpose athletic fields for soccer and football, and public gardens are also relatively important (all with 68 to 72 percent of respondents indicating they are “very important”). Next are basketball courts, outdoor water features/spraygrounds, and amphitheatres (all with 62 to 65 percent “very important” ratings). Dog parks clearly rated the least important (37 percent ratings of “not at all important” vs. 41 percent “very important”).

As with the indoor facilities, respondents were asked to indicate which of the potential outdoor facilities and amenities were the three most important to them and their household. Multi-purpose athletic fields emerged as the top priority, with 21 percent of respondents listing it as their number one priority and 35 percent of respondents listing it as one of their top three priorities. Next were playgrounds (12 percent No. 1 priority/34 percent one of top three priorities) and picnic shelters (15 percent No. 1 priority/31 percent one of top three).

Twenty-five percent of respondents listed natural areas as one of their top three priorities, with trails following closely at 22 percent. Other top priorities for outdoor facilities and amenities include outdoor swimming pools (19 percent), public gardens (17 percent), basketball courts (15 percent), amphitheatres (15 percent), dog parks (15 percent), historic sites (14 percent), and outdoor water features/spraygrounds (12 percent). Note that while the dog parks rated lowest in the importance ratings, it ranks higher in the list of top three priorities (those who have a need for such a facility consider it very important).

## ***Trails and Natural Areas***

**Trails.** Respondents were asked to indicate how important various aspects of trail improvements are to them and their household. All five categories were relatively important to respondents overall. “Provide trail amenities (such as benches, trash containers, drinking fountains, dog pick-up bag dispensers and signage)” was most important to respondents (77 percent of respondents rating it as a 4 or 5 “very important.” Following closely is “improve trail maintenance” (71 percent) and “improve trail connections” (71 percent).

**Natural Areas.** Respondents were also asked to indicate what they think are the most important functions of undeveloped open space/natural areas. As shown in the following figure, “protect rivers, creeks, canal corridors, and wetlands (reduce flood potential)” was rated the highest (86 percent of respondents indicating it as a 4 or 5 “very important,” followed by “minimize the impact of housing density and traffic” (84 percent), “create buffers between adjacent communities” (83 percent), “provide access for people to natural areas” (81 percent), and “preserve wildlife habitat” (80 percent).

## ***Programs, Activities, and Special Events***

**Programs and Activities.** The survey listed a variety of programs, activities, and special events and asked respondents to indicate where their household has a need. Then, of the programs for which they have a need, respondents were asked to rate how well those programs currently available in Prince George’s County are meeting their needs, using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means “none of your needs are being met” and 5 means “100 percent of your needs are being met.”

The programs and activities with the largest amount of need include walking, biking, and hiking (67 percent of households have a need), and fitness and wellness programs (also 67 percent). Next is general skills education (computers, cooking and babysitting) with 58 percent, followed by nature and environmental programs, cultural/arts programs, and swimming programs/lessons (all with 52 percent response). After these top six responses, next are children/youth activities (49 percent), history programs (48 percent), community events and festivals (44 percent), volunteer programs (44 percent), and day camp/playground programs (44 percent).

Of the respondents who indicated a need for each of these programs or activities, the level at which their need is being met is rated relatively low for most programs. Most rating scores average around “3” (or lower), where 1 means “none of your needs are being met,” 5 means “100 percent of your needs are being met,” and a value of “3” would be “50 percent of your needs are being met.”

Rated the highest were athletic leagues for youth and day camp/playground programs (both with average scores of 3.3 on the 1 to 5 scale). Next are children/youth activities (3.2), walking, biking, hiking (3.1), and fitness and wellness programs (3.0). These five programs/activities were the only categories where a higher percentage of respondents indicated their needs were being met in comparison to the percent that indicated their needs are not being met.

After these five programs/activities came community events and festivals (3.0), programs for seniors/older adults (3.0), and gymnastics programs (3.0). Among the programs/activities with the lowest scores were hunting programs, fishing programs, therapeutic recreation/inclusion services, golf programs, volunteer programs, tennis programs, pre-teen/teen activities, general skills education, after-school programs, and athletic leagues for adults (all scoring 2.2 to 2.8).

## **Transportation and Communication**

**Transportation.** Although the majority of respondents currently use their car to get to parks and recreation facilities and programs in Prince George’s County (94 percent), and while many would still prefer to use their cars in the future (74 percent), many also show interest in alternative means of transportation than what is currently used. In addition to driving, 33 percent also walk to parks and recreation facilities and programs, but 48 percent would prefer to walk. Only 15 percent ride their bikes to parks and recreation facilities and programs, but 34 percent would prefer to ride their bikes. Thirteen percent use public transportation to get to parks and recreation facilities and programs, but 28 percent would prefer to use public transportation.

**Communication.** The most widely used sources that respondents use to get information on parks, recreation facilities, services, and programs (whether run by the Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation or not) are program guides (44 percent), at the recreation facilities/program location (41 percent), flyer or brochure (38 percent), and the internet/websites (34 percent). Other sources of information include word of mouth (29 percent), local newspapers (28 percent), through the schools (15 percent), email (14 percent), TV (12 percent), and radio (11 percent).

When asked how the county can best communicate with them, e-mail was mentioned the most (by 37 percent of respondents), followed by internet/websites (16 percent), program guides (12 percent), and flyers or brochures (11 percent). Compared to the proportion receiving information through e-mail, the relatively large proportion of residents who would like to get their information through e-mail is notable, and poses a potential opportunity for the county to explore improvements in future communications.

Respondents were asked to rate how good of a job M-NCPPC does in communicating with them information about recreation facilities, parks, open space, trails, and programs. Overall, the average rating was 3.3 (on a 5-point scale), with 27 percent of respondents rating it as a “3,” 35 percent rating it as a “4,” and 15 percent rating it as a “5 – Excellent.”

## **Financial Choices**

It was explained in the survey that “M-NCPPC recreation programs are financially supported by taxes and user fees.” Respondents were then asked what their opinion is concerning the amount of money currently charged for user fees by M-NCPPC for Prince George’s County recreation programs and services. Overall, about half of respondents (49 percent) indicated that the amount being charged is “about right,” while 17 percent said that it is “too much,” and only two percent think that it is “too little.” There is a high percentage of respondents who are also unsure about how much is currently being charged (32 percent).

**Priorities for budgeting department funds.** As another broad measure of resident priorities, it was explained in the survey that “the M-NCPPC is responsible for developing and managing a variety of park and recreation services and facilities. If you were responsible for budgeting \$100 of the county’s funds for new parks and recreation development or improvement projects, how would you spend it?” Residents distributed the greatest share to improvements to existing parks, trails, and open space (\$23 or 23 percent of their total \$100 allocation) and to community centers (\$20). Allocations to other categories include sports facilities (\$15), new parks (\$11), cultural arts (\$10), additional trails and trail connections (\$9), and additional programs (\$8). Included in the “other” category (\$4) were a number of written-in suggestions, including security, dog parks, art programs, music, theatre, dance, lighting on walking tracks, senior centers, pools, local museums, playground equipment and maintenance.

## **Respondent Comments**

To further probe satisfaction and desires of what is currently available in Prince George's County, respondents were asked in an open-ended question if they had any comments or suggestions regarding facilities, services, and programs provided in the county. A number of suggestions were offered that ranged from more general feedback about what is currently offered throughout the area to more specific suggestions and desires for programs, facilities, and parks for certain users (according to age groups or individual interests) or specific areas of the county. In general, comments from the open-link survey sample of respondents tended to track with those provided by the randomly selected sample of respondents.

Overall, safety and security at facilities, parks, and trails emerged as a significant consideration from the open-ended comments. Some respondents indicated a desire for better lighting and layout of trails and parks in order to increase the feeling of security, as well as increased surveillance and monitoring at the facilities. Along the same lines, there was the desire for improved maintenance and upkeep of the existing facilities and parks to increase safety and usability.

Another aspect that was evident in the comments was the need for increased and improved advertising and communication about what facilities, parks, trails, and programs are available in the county. Suggestions included updating the website, offering more information via email and the Internet, and providing maps of the parks and trails available in the area.

A wide variety of comments were also offered regarding the programs currently available in the county. Many respondents indicated a desire for additional youth, teen, adult and senior programs, depending on their own personal needs.

## **Subarea Analysis**

As a general comment, most of the overriding themes and findings at the county level discussed in previous sections of the report tend to be consistent across the six subarea regions analyzed. Variations exist in the percentage response for the priorities from subarea to subarea, but for the most part, the top priorities tend to be the same in each of the subareas, just in different rank order. Specific unique characteristics of each subarea are summarized below.

**Northeast.** The Northeast is distinguished by its frequent use of trails and natural areas within the county, as well as municipal, state, and national parks within the county. Residents of the Northeast subarea are also frequent users of parks and trails outside of the county. Likewise, natural areas and trails are considered the most important priorities for future outdoor improvements in Prince George's County. After natural areas and trails in priority come multi-purpose athletic fields, playgrounds, and picnic shelters.

In terms of indoor facilities, designated space for youth and teen activities is clearly the most important (the strongest response of any subarea), followed by designated space for seniors / older adults, an indoor walking/running track, and an indoor pool for fitness swimming and competition.

In terms of programs, greatest need is indicated for walking, biking, and hiking, fitness and wellness programs, nature and environmental programs, cultural/arts programs, and history programs. Similar to the overall county level analysis, the majority of residents in the Northeast consider the current users fees charged to be about right (53 percent).

**Northwest.** The Northwest is also distinguished by its frequent use of trails and natural areas within the

county, as well as municipal, state, and national parks within the county. Residents of the Northwest subarea are also frequent users of parks and trails outside of the county. Natural areas and trails are considered the most important priorities for future outdoor improvements in Prince George's County (the strongest response of any subarea). After natural areas and trails in priority order come multi-purpose athletic fields, playgrounds, and public gardens. Picnic shelters, however, were mentioned less in the Northwest as compared to any other region.

In terms of indoor facilities, designated space for youth and teen activities was the most important (although not to the extent as mentioned in other subareas), followed by an indoor pool for fitness swimming and competition, weight room and cardio fitness space, fitness class space, an indoor walking/running track, and designated space for seniors/older adults.

In terms of programs, the greatest need is indicated for walking, biking, and hiking, fitness and wellness, nature and environmental, cultural/arts and history programs.

Similar to the overall county level analysis, the majority of residents in the Northwest consider the current users fees charged to be about right (53 percent). The Northwest also had the smallest percentage of respondents who said user fees are too much (only 10 percent).

**Central West.** Similar to the Southwest subarea, the Central West subarea had the largest percentage of respondents who expressed concerns over safety and security as a reason for not using M-NCPPC facilities in Prince George's County (46 percent). Price and user fees were also a more frequent issue here (28 percent), as was lack of transportation to reach county facilities (24 percent). Residents of the Central West region are the most likely of any region to use private health and fitness clubs as alternative providers (31 percent).

In terms of priorities for indoor facilities, designated space for youth and teen activities was the most important, followed by indoor walking/running track (the strongest response of any subarea), an indoor pool for fitness swimming and competition (also the strongest response of any subarea), designated space for seniors/older adults, and weight room and cardio fitness space.

In terms of priorities for outdoor facilities, picnic shelters were clearly the most important priority identified (45 percent), mentioned more frequently, by far, than any other subarea. After picnic shelters come multi-purpose athletic fields, playgrounds, natural areas, trails, and basketball courts (21 percent—the strongest response of any region for basketball courts).

In terms of programs, greatest need is indicated for fitness and wellness programs (one of the strongest responses), walking, biking and hiking, general skills education (one of the strongest), swimming programs/lessons (the strongest of any subarea), children/youth activities (the strongest), and then nature and environmental programs.

Similar to the overall county level analysis, the majority of residents in the Central West consider the current users fees charged to be about right (51 percent), but it also has one of the largest number of respondents who consider user fees to be too much (19 percent).

**Central East.** Along with the Southern subarea, the Central East subarea is characterized by the largest number of respondents who use churches/houses of worship as alternative providers (44 percent), with use of private or public school facilities also quite high (38 percent). The Central East also tends to be

the most closely aligned with overall findings discussed at the county level, with fewer deviations from overall patterns tending to exist.

One exception to this observation, however, is the apparent much greater use of M-NCPPC athletic fields (10.2 times in the last 12 months) and community centers (16.5 times) in the Central East compared to other subareas. Likewise, multi-purpose athletic fields is mentioned just slightly more often than any other subarea as the most important priority for future outdoor improvements (36 percent), just behind picnic shelters at 37 percent. After picnic shelters and fields come playgrounds, an outdoor amphitheatre (along with the Southwest subarea, more than any other region), natural areas, trails, and an outdoor swimming pool. Although farther down the list of priorities, it should also be noted that a skate park also has moderate support in the Central East subarea as compared to the other subareas (16 percent).

In terms of priorities for indoor facilities, designated space for youth and teen activities was also the most important here, followed by indoor walking/running track, weight room and cardio fitness space, fitness class space, designated space for seniors/older adults, and an indoor pool for fitness swimming and competition.

In terms of programs, greatest need is indicated for fitness and wellness programs, walking, biking, and hiking, cultural/arts programs (strongest of any subarea), swimming programs/ lessons, children/youth activities, and general skills education.

Similar to the overall county level analysis, the majority of residents in the Central East consider the current users fees charged to be about right (57 percent—one of the strongest levels), but it also has one of the largest number of respondents who consider user fees to be too much (19 percent).

**Southwest.** Along with the Central West region, the Southwest subarea had the largest percentage of respondents who expressed concerns over safety and security as a reason for not using M-NCPPC facilities in Prince George’s County (47 percent). Price and user fees were also a more frequent issue here (30 percent—the most of any region), as was a whole host of other reasons for not using M-NCPPC facilities, including not aware of programs and facilities offered (34 percent), condition of parks and facilities (33 percent), location of facilities not convenient (32 percent), the need for more restrooms (29 percent), hours of operation (26 percent), customer service/staff knowledge (25 percent), and lack of facilities and amenities (22 percent).

Use of both church- and school-owned facilities is also quite prevalent in the Southwest, although not quite to the extent as in the Central East and Southern subareas.

In terms of priorities for indoor facilities, designated space for youth and teen activities was the most important here, followed by designated space for seniors/older adults (the strongest of any subarea), weight room and cardio fitness space (also the strongest of any subarea), an indoor walking/running track, and then fitness class space and community meeting rooms.

In terms of priorities for outdoor facilities, picnic shelters were the most important priority identified, followed by playgrounds, public gardens (26 percent—the strongest of any subarea), multi-purpose athletic fields (22 percent—the smallest percentage of any subarea), an outdoor amphitheatre (21 percent—the strongest), and a dog park (21 percent—also the strongest). Although farther down the list of priorities, it should also be noted that a skate park has moderate support in the Southwest subarea as compared to the other subareas (15 percent).

In terms of programs, greatest need is indicated for fitness and wellness programs, general skills education (the strongest of any subarea), walking, biking, and hiking, nature and environmental programs (strongest of any subarea), cultural/arts programs, and then programs for seniors/older adults (the most any subarea). It is worth noting that the Southwest also indicated more need for volunteer programs than any other subarea (54 percent).

While the majority of residents in the Southwest consider the current users fees charged to be about right (48 percent), it also has the largest number of respondents of any subarea who consider user fees to be too much (22 percent).

**Southern.** Along with the Central East subarea, the Southern subarea is characterized by the largest number of respondents who use churches/houses of worship as alternative providers (47 percent), with use of private or public school facilities also quite high (37 percent). At the same time, the Southern subarea is also characterized by relatively frequent use of M-NCPPC athletic fields (9.0 times in the last 12 months) and community centers (12.2 times) compared to the other subareas. In turn, multi-purpose athletic fields are mentioned most often as the most important priority for future outdoor improvements (34 percent), followed by picnic shelters at 32 percent. After fields and picnic shelters come playgrounds, trails, and natural areas (similar to the priorities of the other subareas). A third tier of priorities include an outdoor swimming pool, historic sites, and an outdoor amphitheatre.

Designated space for youth and teen activities was the most important priority for indoor facilities, followed by indoor walking/running tracks, weight room and cardio fitness space, an indoor pool for fitness swimming and competition, fitness class space, designated space for seniors/older adults, and community meeting rooms.

In terms of programs, greatest need is indicated for fitness and wellness programs (74 percent—the most of any subarea), walking, biking and hiking, cultural/arts programs, swimming programs/lessons, general skills education, history programs, and nature and environmental programs.

Similar to the overall county level analysis, the majority of residents in the Southern subarea consider the current users fees charged to be about right – 59 percent – the strongest level of any subarea.

There was also a general sense expressed by residents in the open-ended comments that the South County area has received appropriate increased services relative to the population growth in that area, nor when compared to the amount of facilities that exist in the northern part of the county. Indeed, responses to the question of why residents do not use M-NCPPC facilities in Prince George's County focus on issues such as the location of facilities is not convenient (32 percent – most of any subarea along with the Southwest), condition of parks and facilities (33 percent – most of any subarea along with the Southwest), don't have the programs residents want (21 percent – most of any subarea), and lack of facilities and amenities (20 percent – most of any subarea along with the Southwest).

In conclusion, the survey responses overall were positive and Prince Georgians indicated a high level of satisfaction with current facilities, services, and programs.

## 3.2 Parkland Goals

As outlined in the 2002 Approved *General Plan* for Prince George's County, a minimum of 15 acres of



M-NCPPC local parkland (or the equivalent amenity in terms of parks and recreation service) and 20 acres of regional, countywide, and special M-NCPPC parkland shall be provided for every 1,000 residents.

This goal is the basis for calculations that are performed to determine the size and location of all proposed parks during the revision of any area Master Plan. In Prince George’s County, each planning area is divided into distinct planning communities. The population for these communities is obtained from the Planning Department’s Research Section, and then the amount of required parkland can be calculated. The existing parkland is subtracted and the balance is the amount of new parkland requested in the revised Master Plan.

The current number of acres of local M-NCPPC parkland in Prince George’s County is 27,002 acres. This includes local, regional, countywide, and special MNCPPC parkland, but does not include federal or state properties, or local natural resources unless owned by the Commission. Given an existing 2010 population of 863,420, the following calculation yields a current Level of Service for parkland of 31.27 acres per 1,000 residents. An additional 3,220 acres are needed to fulfill the acreage goal. An additional 86,690 people are projected to be added to the county’s population by 2040, and they will require an additional 3,034 acres of parkland to meet the current acreage goal.

	COUNTY POPULATION	EXISTING PARKLAND	ADDITIONAL PARKLAND NEED-TO-MEET GOAL
2010	863,420	27,002 acres	3,220 acres
2040	950,110	–	6,254 acres

### 3.3 Acquisition Priorities

Priorities for the acquisition of parkland within Prince George’s County include completing the land acquisition of the Stream Valley Parks (particularly the Patuxent River Park), creating larger local parks designed for active recreation, and the development of an additional regional park in the Southern Area, to meet additional population growth expected in that part of the county.

### 3.4 Facilities and Facility Improvement Priorities

#### Introduction

In April 2011, a Property Condition Assessment of the facilities and properties owned and operated by the Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation was completed by EMG Corporation. As noted in Chapter Two of the study, DPR has 43 staffed community centers and 27 unstaffed parks buildings in its inventory, in addition to 23 historic structures. This assessment determined that 61 percent of the community centers are at least 25 years old, and 70 percent are over 20 years old. The youngest historic structure is 80 years old and the oldest is over 300 years in age. The maintenance of this large number of structures, and especially the historic structures, is a complex endeavor.

The Department’s approach to providing maintenance services to its facilities falls into four categories:

- Annual vs. Ongoing
- Reactive vs. Proactive

- Incremental vs. Integrated
- Staff vs. Contracted

Preventive maintenance is the most cost-effective method to retain the value of a physical asset. Therefore, DPR needs to move towards a maintenance system that provides continuous and protective care of facilities on a regular basis, rather than reacting to maintenance issues only when a problem arises. The upgrading and maintenance of the building systems at a high level of care will allow DPR to meet today’s and tomorrow’s program needs. Although there are situations when a new building needs to be constructed in order to meet customer needs and desires, there should be a balance between creating new facilities and upgrading the existing facilities.

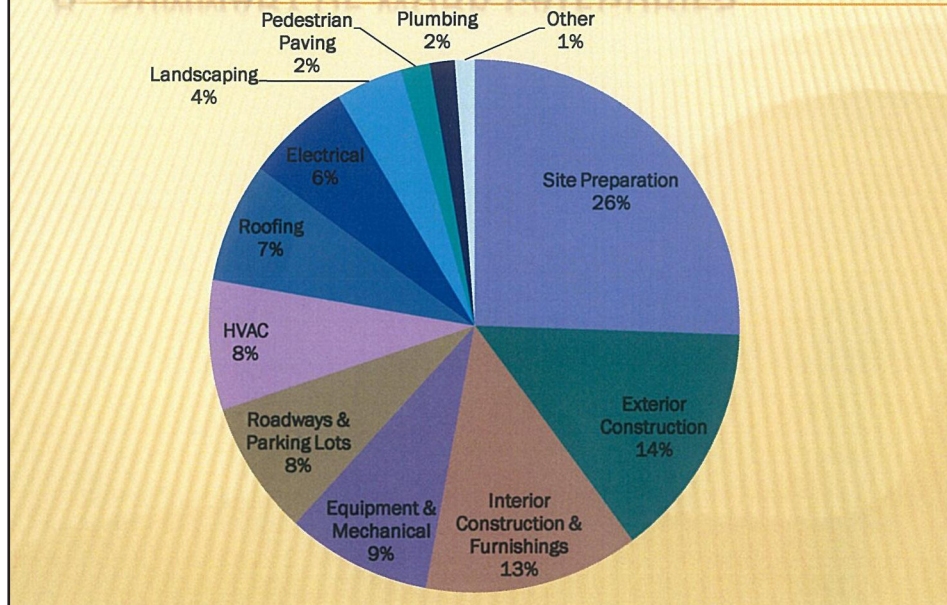
### Assessments

**Property Condition** – The Property Condition Study involved the comprehensive evaluation of building components at 127 individual sites within the DPR inventory. This Study provides a baseline commentary of current repairs, replacement needs, costs and life cycle data.

As illustrated in the following charts, site preparation consumes over one-quarter (26 percent) of the annual allocated maintenance budget. The projected maintenance costs for Years 2010-2015 are \$73,000,000. For Years 2016-2030, the projected maintenance costs are \$200,000,000 (estimated \$10M to \$19M per year.)

A. DEFINITION OF WORK CATEGORIES	
<b>Exterior Construction</b> Doors Windows Brickwork Pointing & Painting	<b>Roadways &amp; Parking Lots</b>  <b>Equipment &amp; Mechanical</b> Conveyance Appliance Scoreboards
<b>Site Preparation</b> Drainage Play Grounds Ball Fields & Courts	<b>HVAC</b> <b>Roofing</b> <b>Electrical</b> <b>Landscaping</b>
<b>Interior Construction &amp; Furnishings</b> Carpets & Flooring Ceiling Tiles Walls & Doors Door & Window Hardware Cabinets	<b>Pedestrian Paving</b> Trails Sidewalks  <b>Plumbing</b>

## B. SUMMARY OF WORK CATEGORIES



## C. ASSOCIATED MAINTENANCE & REPAIR COSTS

WORK CATEGORY	COST 2010-2015	PERCENTAGE
Site Preparation	\$18,600,700	26%
Exterior Construction	\$10,472,800	14%
Interior Construction and Furnishings	\$9,474,000	13%
Equipment and Mechanical	\$6,405,400	9%
Roadways & Parking Lots	\$5,940,700	8%
HVAC	\$5,737,700	8%
Roofing	\$5,334,000	7%
Electrical	\$4,661,600	6%
Landscaping	\$2,983,500	4%
Pedestrian Paving	\$1,269,800	2%
Plumbing	\$1,084,300	2%
Other	\$871,400	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$72,836,000*</b>	

\* Permit & design costs not included

**Energy Management Audit** – This portion of the Assessment Study was an audit of the 20 buildings with the highest total utility costs. The audit identified energy usage improvements that could be undertaken, and a cost benefit analysis that would be realized upon the implementation of these improvements.

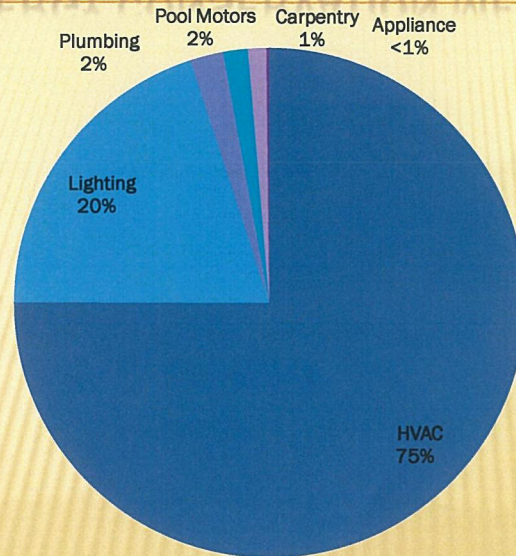
The following charts show the conservation categories where the majority of the energy dollars are spent, and costs spent in each category. The areas where the most money could be saved upon the implementation of these energy conservation proposals are HVAC and Lighting. Two examples of energy conservation where the Commission expects to get the “biggest bang for the buck” are:

- Replace light fixtures and bulbs with more efficient CFL models (spending \$844,000 could result in a savings of \$2,200,000 over 15 years)
- Change plumbing fixtures (spending \$89,000 could result in a savings of \$610,000 over 15 years.)

**A. DEFINITION OF CONSERVATION CATEGORIES**

<b>HVAC</b> Replace components with more energy efficient ones; putting timers on fans; temperature adjustments; adding programmable thermostats	<b>Pool Motors</b> Replacing existing ones with more efficient ones
<b>Lighting</b> Replace bulbs/fixtures with more energy efficient ones and adding motion sensors.	<b>Carpentry</b> Caulking/sealing or replacing windows/insulation
<b>Plumbing</b> Replace water heaters with more efficient ones; water flow control valves; cool misers for fountains	<b>Appliances</b> Recommendation is to replace the existing appliances with Energy Star appliances

## B. ENERGY CONSERVATION MEASURES



## C. ENERGY CONSERVATION COSTS

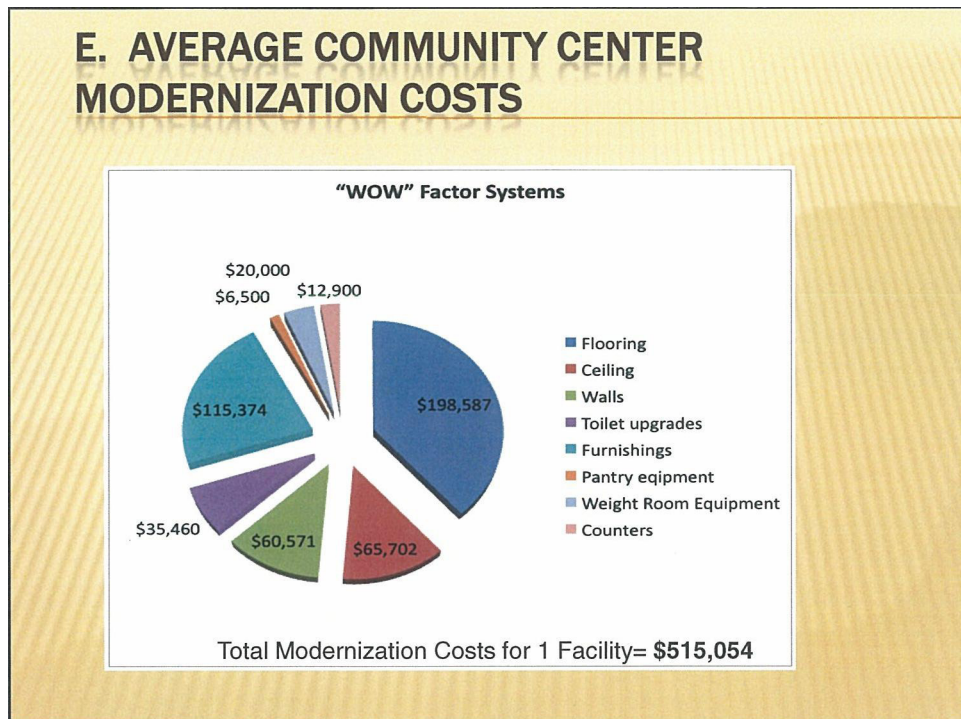
WORK CATEGORY	Life Cycle Cost Savings	COST 2010-2015	PERCENTAGE of Cost
HVAC	2,918,000	\$3,176,000	75%
Lighting	2,212,000	\$844,000	20%
Plumbing	610,000	\$89,000	2%
Pool Motors	305,000	\$66,000	2%
Carpentry	35,000	\$49,000	0.5%
Appliance	11,000	\$7,000	0.1%
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$4,200,000</b>	

**Modernization to Meet Program Requirements** – In 2008, a modernization initiative was put into place. Named the “Wow!” Factor, the emphasis of this program was to go into the older centers and other facilities and update outdated finishes to current tastes and user expectations, and thereby increase

customer satisfaction. The goal is to offer similar facilities and programming that is equal to those in the commercial fitness and recreation market in order to maintain and even increase patronage.

Efforts to modernize facilities and get to “Wow!” focus on upgrading finishes and re-configuring space. So whenever a building is closed for general repairs and ADA upgrades, a team goes in to that space and replaces the carpets, counters, ceiling, wall and floor tiles, and paints the interiors. When possible, space is re-designed to meet current programming standards. So larger multipurpose rooms, more weight room equipment, aerobic rooms, surveillance equipment, collegiate-sized gymnasiums, and new restroom fixtures and partitions are added.

The following two charts demonstrate the average modernization costs of a typical community center and a cost summary.



## COST SUMMARY

Assessment Type	Estimated Cost	Comment
Property Condition Assessment	\$73,000,000	127 Facilities
Energy Conservation Audit	\$4,200,000	20 Facilities
IT & Communication Infrastructure	\$4,000,000	115 Facilities
Modernization	\$21,000,000	20 Community Centers
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$102,200,000</b>	

\*\* Note: Initial Snapshot

### Challenges and Recommendations

Challenges include funding allocation, capacity and prioritization.

- Funding
  - Funding comes from Major Maintenance and the Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
  - Funding to address the costs associated with maintenance and upgrades identified by the Property Condition Assessment, Energy Conservation Audit, IT and Communications Assessment, and Modernization Needs studies was not identified in the approved FY11-FY16 CIP
- Capacity
  - Staffing resources
  - Processes: design, permiting, procurement, legal
- Prioritization
  - Establish criteria
  - Timelines and facility closure constraints

Priorities for action in regard to these same three categories are listed below.

- Funding
  - Redefine budgets (Major Maintenance vs. CIP)
  - Proposed Infrastructure Improvement Fund
  - Proposed IT and Communications Fund
  - Proposed Environmental Sensitivity Fund
- Capacity
  - Re-organize, re-structure and relocate for efficiencies given current staffing levels
  - Consider establishing a specialized procurement/legal unit
- Prioritization

- Public health and safety
- Buildings to accommodate Programming Priority Categories
  - Core programs
  - Programs most in demand
  - Specialized programs
  - Complimentary programs with other providers
- Apply studies to projects currently under way
- Energy efficiency savings and sustainability
- Cost/benefit analysis
  - Usage patterns
  - Life cycle costs
  - Recreational needs

### 3.5 Level of Service Standards

Level of Service is typically defined in parks and recreation plans as the capacity of the various components and facilities within the parks system to meet the needs of the public. This is often expressed in terms of the size or quantity of a given facility per population. In September of 2008, the Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation embarked on a community needs assessment and strategic planning project called *Parks & Recreation: 2010 and Beyond*. This project included two deliverables: (1) to identify Prince George’s County’s recreation programs, parks, trails and open space needs as they exist now, and (2) to make recommendations for future needs for the next 30 years.

#### 3.5.1 Athletic Fields (Rectangular and Diamond)

##### *Existing Conditions*

Athletic Fields are divided into two main field types: rectangular and diamond. Rectangular fields serve the sports of football, soccer and lacrosse. Diamond fields serve baseball and softball. While there are certainly different field dimensions for each sport, for the purpose of this analysis, these two categories will suffice. There are 152 rectangular fields and 186 diamond fields in the Department of Parks and Recreation system. Based on existing and future population projections, the following fields-to-population ratios are derived:

TYPE OF FIELD	NUMBER OF FIELDS	POP/FIELD – 2010	POP/FIELD – 2040	NATIONAL AVERAGE
Rectangular	152	5,680	6,250	5,057
Diamond	186	4,642	5,108	3,406

##### *Trends and Benchmarking*

The National Recreation and Park Association Reporting System lists the average ratios for rectangular and diamond fields as shown in the table. Athletic field ratios in Prince George’s County are below national averages. To achieve national benchmark averages in Prince George’s County would require an additional 20 rectangular fields and 67 diamond fields. While there is a clearly demonstrated need for additional capacity of rectangular fields based on use observations and public testimony at budget hearings, the



same does not hold true for diamond fields, where use has been declining in the last decade. This is further supported by survey data in the Department’s 2010 Needs Assessment Report, where respondents indicated that football/soccer fields were ranked third among the outdoor recreation facilities most needed (with 34 percent of respondents listing the category), compared to only 4 percent of respondents saying that baseball/softball fields were needed.

### **Recommendations**

- Create additional artificial turf rectangular fields. Given the limited ability to purchase adequate acreage for new fields in urbanizing and developed suburban areas, artificial turf fields provide the ability to substantially increase field capacity and the quality of the fields.
- Lighting of existing football/soccer fields, where appropriate, will also serve to increase capacity and provide for much-needed weekday practice time during the fall season.
- Create “Futsal” courts to increase the capacity for smaller, informal soccer play. This is especially important for the rapidly growing Latino population in the Northern portion of the county.

## **3.5.2 Athletic Courts (Tennis and Basketball)**

### **Tennis Courts – Background**



There are 318 tennis courts available for community use in the Department of Parks and Recreation’s system. This includes 295 outdoor courts and 23 indoor courts. Based on a 2010 US Census population of 863,420 residents, this equates to one tennis court for every 2,715 residents. In comparison, results from the National Benchmarking Study of Park Agencies (2006 Report) indicated that Montgomery County has one outdoor tennis court for every 3,063 residents. According to the Prince George’s County Planning Department’s Round 8.0 Cooperative Forecast, the county’s population is estimated to reach 950,110 by 2040.

The park system is divided into three major recreational planning areas (Northern, Central, and Southern), and each area contains a tennis bubble for indoor play. Other tennis providers not included in the LOS calculations are as follows:

- Municipalities
- Public Schools
- Homeowners Associations
- Churches/Houses of Worship
- United States Tennis Association
- Prince George’s Community College
- Private Operations (Sport Fit, Lake Arbor Country Club, Perrywood)

- City of Greenbelt
- Universities/Colleges
- Junior Tennis Champions Center at College Park

### **Findings**

A survey was conducted as part of the needs assessment for the Parks & Recreation: 2010 and Beyond project. For the LOS analysis study, the county was divided into seven sub-areas -- Northeast, Northwest A, Northwest B, Central West, Central East, Southwest, and South. Countywide, 53 percent of the residents expressed the importance of tennis as an outdoor recreation facility that could be added, expanded, or improved. Five percent indicated that outdoor tennis courts were the most important outdoor facility to be added, expanded, or improved. Additionally, the survey revealed that 31.3 percent of households expressed a need for tennis programs.

According to the 2003 Participation in Local Parks and Recreation Activities in Maryland study, 16.7 percent of households statewide participate in tennis.

### **Trends and Benchmarking**

In the summer of 2010, a Tennis Focus Group was developed to evaluate the use of the existing tennis courts in the inventory. The Focus Group consisted of representatives from the United States Tennis Association, Prince George’s County Public Schools, the Tennis Center of College Park, Prince George’s Tennis Education Foundation, tennis users/ citizens, Planning Department, and DPR staff. It became evident that a major shift has occurred regarding usage trends for tennis. Multiple-court venues are in demand based on the large amount of league play. Single courts, which are often found at smaller neighborhood parks, are underutilized and are often used for other sport activities.

The current inventory is based on a four-court system at regional parks and a two-court system at smaller local parks. Players enjoy the access to all tennis courts in the county, but because of concentrated popularity and limited access to four-court systems, level of service is still not adequate. Two-court facilities are less desirable since restroom facilities aren’t readily available and large crowds cannot be accommodated.

Tennis is increasingly being viewed as a family activity. Many programs encourage and sometimes require parental participation as a way of sustaining growth and commitment to tennis. Tennis is a social activity for seniors, and most are more likely to play doubles. Seniors enjoy playing tennis year round, but indoor tennis courts are only used when the weather is inclement. The outdoor tennis courts at Allentown Aquatic and Fitness Center (Padgett’s Corner) are viewed as a good model. The facility consists of six outdoor lighted tennis courts that offer the ability to observe tennis matches. Restrooms, parking and picnic tables are available. Tennis is not an AAU sport and therefore participation during teenage/high school years is low. Non-profit organizations, such as Prince George’s Tennis Education Foundation, are dedicated to providing tennis opportunities for youth and are experiencing a high demand in participation in tennis programs.

### **Recommendations**

- Repurpose underused single tennis courts. DPR has overbuilt for tennis and will explore the repurposing of underutilized tennis courts that are located in smaller parks. Some of these courts are being used for other activities, which have negative impacts on nets and fencing. For

example, courts inside the Beltway in the Northern area have experienced more skateboarding and soccer play. Repurposing of these underused courts for skate parks, futsal or even basketball courts will be considered.

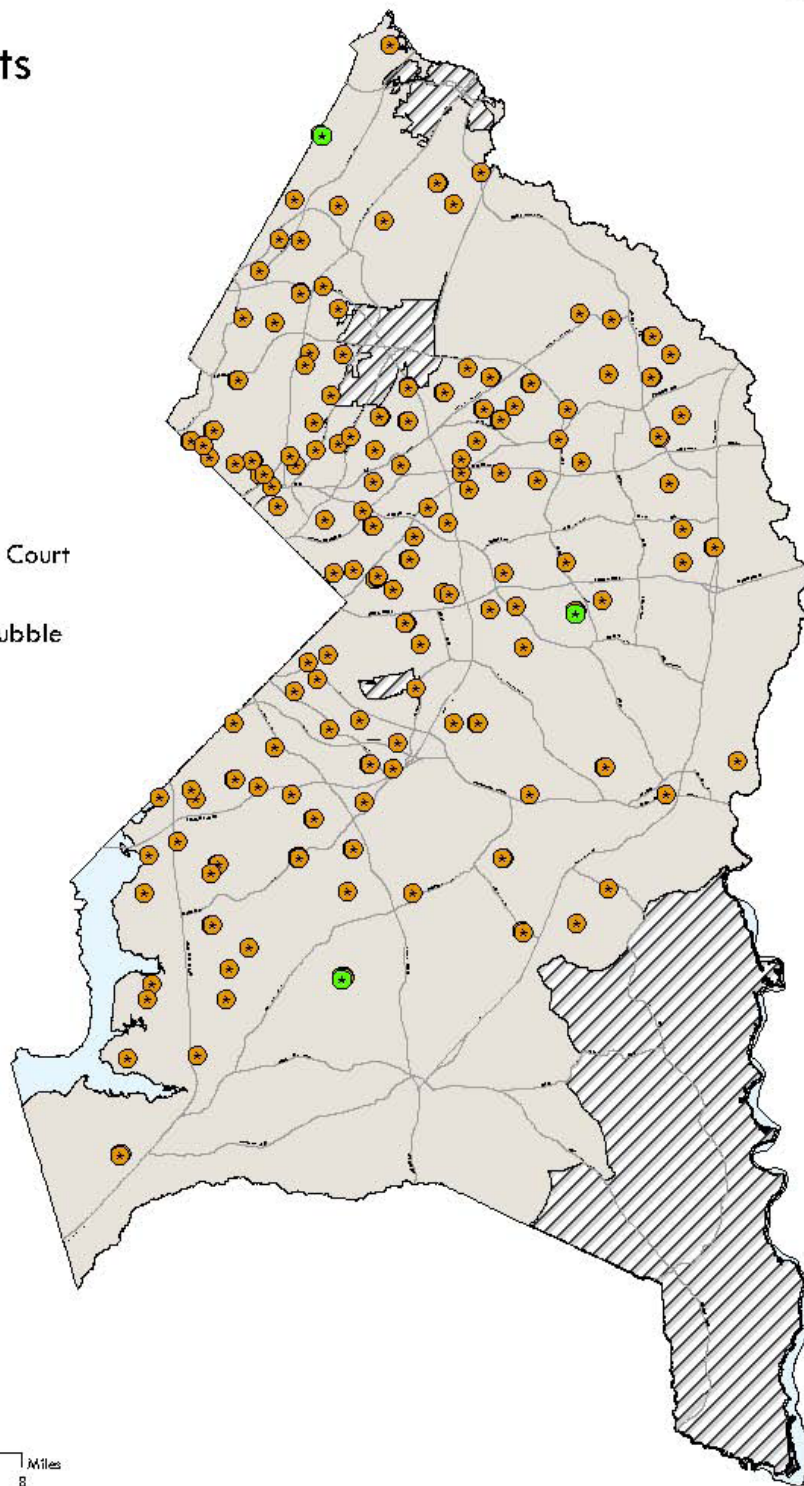
- Maintain a LOS of one tennis court for every 3,000 residents. This is comparable to Montgomery County. DPR currently exceeds that amount by providing one court for every 2,715 residents. Based on a projected 2040 population of 950,110 residents, the current inventory would still provide one court for every 2,987 residents.
- Create regional outdoor tennis facilities in each recreational planning area. The trend for outdoor tennis in Prince George’s County is moving toward the regional tennis facility model, which consists of locations with five or more lighted outdoor courts. Facilities should also contain water fountains, restroom facilities and seating for spectators. One regional tennis facility should be built in each recreational planning area. DPR will look for opportunities to implement the new facility model adjacent to existing indoor tennis facilities.
- Explore use of alternative indoor tennis structures. During significant storm events, tennis bubbles require collapsing as a preventive measure, which results in high maintenance costs. A shift from indoor tennis bubbles to permanent “butler-style” buildings will be considered. Maintenance of indoor and outdoor tennis courts will be closely examined.
- Enhance marketing efforts for tennis in the county. DPR will explore collaborations and partnerships with various organizations such as the U.S. Tennis Association, Prince George’s County Public Schools, Boys and Girls Clubs and Prince George’s Tennis Education Foundation in an effort to increase tennis opportunities to Prince George’s County youth. Also, DPR will incorporate additional marketing strategies to promote tennis as a fun family activity.

The map on the next page indicates the locations of the three regional indoor tennis bubbles, as well as the outdoor tennis courts that are available for play.

# M-NCPPC Tennis Courts



- Outdoor Tennis Court
- Indoor Tennis Bubble



## **Basketball Courts – Background**

There are 210 outdoor basketball courts within the park system available for community use, including 131 full courts and 79 half courts. Additionally, there are 36 indoor basketball courts within the park system. Based on the current population of 863,420, this equates to one basketball court for every 3,510 residents. In comparison, results from the National Benchmarking Study of Park Agencies (2006 Report) indicated that Montgomery County has one outdoor basketball court for every 8,060 residents.

Three new facilities are under construction and scheduled to open in the summer of 2012:

- Southern Regional Technology and Recreation Complex
- Fort Washington Forest School Community Center
- North Forestville Gymnasium

Each facility will contain an indoor gymnasium with the exception of the Southern Regional Technology and Recreation Complex, which will have two gymnasiums.

## **Findings**

Similar to tennis, a survey was conducted for basketball as part of the Parks & Recreation: 2010 and Beyond assessment. Countywide, 65 percent of the residents expressed the importance of basketball as an outdoor recreation amenity that could be added, expanded, or improved. Fifteen percent indicated that outdoor basketball courts were the most important outdoor facility to be added, expanded, or improved. Of the seven subareas surveyed, residents in the Central West expressed the highest need for outdoor basketball courts with 21 percent responding, followed by the Southwest at 17 percent.

According to the 2003 *Participation in Local Parks and Recreation Activities* in Maryland study, basketball was the only court or field sport that ranked among the top 10 activities of Maryland parks users. The study also reports that basketball is one of the 10 most popular activities of Maryland households. Twenty-five percent of households statewide participate in basketball.

## **Trends and Benchmarking**



A Listening Session was held in the summer of 2010 to evaluate the existing use of basketball courts within the park system. It became evident that the demand for pick-up basketball is increasing. In addition to DPR, the major providers for pick-up basketball are as follows:

- Schools
- Fitness Centers
- Churches
- Homeowners Associations
- Municipal Facilities

Although the demand for indoor basketball is increasing, alternative programs and classes are being offered in gymnasiums, which limit usage of the space for basketball. The popularity of basketball, in

particular AAU basketball, has produced the need for more indoor gymnasium space. This, coupled with programs offered by the Boys and Girls Clubs and DPR, places gymnasium space at a premium. Basketball is no longer viewed as a seasonal sport, but as a year-round activity.

As with tennis, there is a need for spectator seating at outdoor basketball courts. Based on information received at the listening session, outdoor basketball tournaments are becoming more popular in the area. Often, professional players are invited to participate in celebrity basketball events. Additionally, a shift from back-to-back outdoor half-courts and the creation of more full-court basketball play is desired.

### **Recommendations**

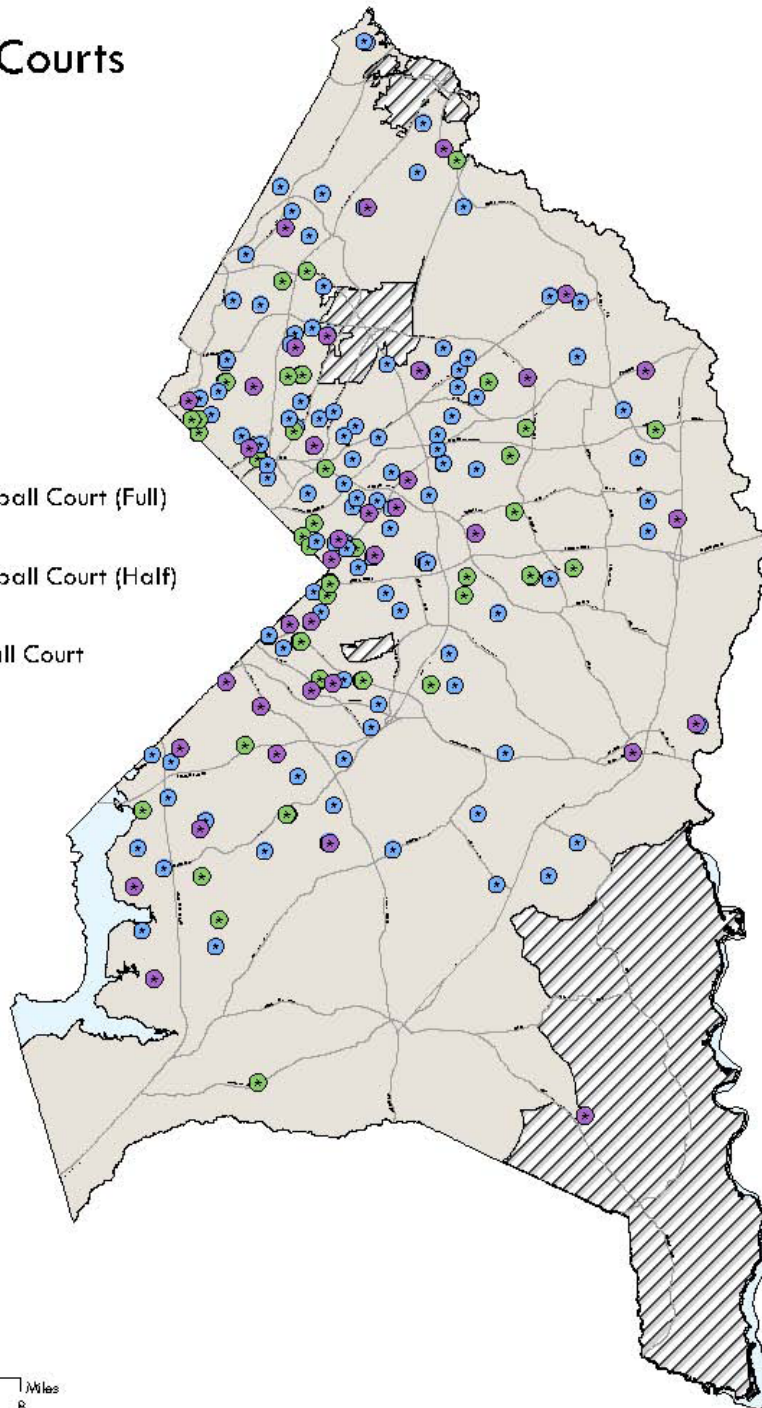
- Establish an outdoor basketball venue for each recreational planning area. Each facility should contain a minimum of two full courts with lighting and spectator seating. The venue should also include water fountains and restrooms. DPR will look at opportunities to locate the new basketball facility near existing park amenities, such as modifications to the existing two full courts at Tucker Road Athletic Complex.
- Provide a LOS of one basketball court for every 4,000 residents. Based on a projected 2040 population of 950,110 residents, the current inventory would still provide one court for every 3,862 residents. In comparison, results from the National Benchmarking Study of Park Agencies (2006 Report) indicates that Montgomery County has one outdoor basketball court for every 8,060 residents.
- Explore the feasibility of an indoor multi-court basketball facility. DPR will explore opportunities to acquire a facility that would offer multiple courts and spectator seating for the purpose of hosting tournaments. The facility would also accommodate pick-up basketball during non-tournament play. Facility hours of operation would run from the early morning to late at night, which would afford residents with non-traditional work schedules the opportunity to play basketball. Similar to DPR's Safe Summer League that was offered this past summer, the venue would also offer youth and teens a secure and safe environment in which to play basketball. Park Police presence would be available to accommodate the extended hours of operation.

The basketball map indicates the locations of all indoor and outdoor basketball courts, both half-courts and full-courts, in the inventory.

# M-NCPPC Basketball Courts



- Outdoor Basketball Court (Full)
- Outdoor Basketball Court (Half)
- Indoor Basketball Court



### 3.5.3 Picnic Areas

#### *Existing conditions*

A basic component of any developed park within the Commission's inventory is a picnic area, defined as a grouping of one or more picnic tables within a park setting. This may be as simple as a single table and benches near a play area, where a parent and child could enjoy a meal or snack in combination with the playground, or it could be a large group picnic area at a regional venue. For example, the picnic area at Patuxent River Park seats at least 180 people under a permanent shelter and can accommodate many more people at temporary tables in the adjacent meadow.

Often, smaller parks tucked back in a neighborhood provide a small picnic area with one or two grills and a trashcan, and perhaps a shelter or gazebo with tables placed underneath. Regional parks usually contain groupings of small (seating less than 50 people) picnic shelters located near each other, perhaps around a central playground, or a large (seating more than 50 people) group picnic area with multiple tables, grills, and trashcans. Group picnic shelters at regional parks can be reserved for a fee via a permit system for family celebrations, sports events, corporate business affairs, or other gatherings.

Group picnic facilities that can be rented for use offer stand-alone restrooms or portable comfort stations. Ancillary recreational facilities within a group environment could include a large multi-age play area and open space for fun activities such as basketball, sand volleyball, baseball/softball, kickball, shuffleboard, or horseshoes. Some of regional parks also have miniature golf, a train, a nature center, a lake with boating facilities, and even a petting zoo and carousel within close proximity to the group picnic area.

Within Prince George's County, the Commission has 21 group picnic areas, defined as seating at least 50 people. Many of these, especially at regional parks such as Cosca Regional Park and Watkins Regional Park, are in need of renovation or replacement.

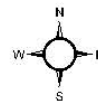
#### *Recommendations*

- Explore the feasibility of developing an Executive Group Picnic Areas within each area (Northern, Central and Southern) of the county. This special type of group picnic area is a high-end venue available for rent exclusively for casual business events. The Department of Parks and Recreation anticipates adding at least one Executive Group Picnic Area within the county in the next few years. Space has been identified at the Green Branch Athletic Complex near Bowie, but funding is not yet available.

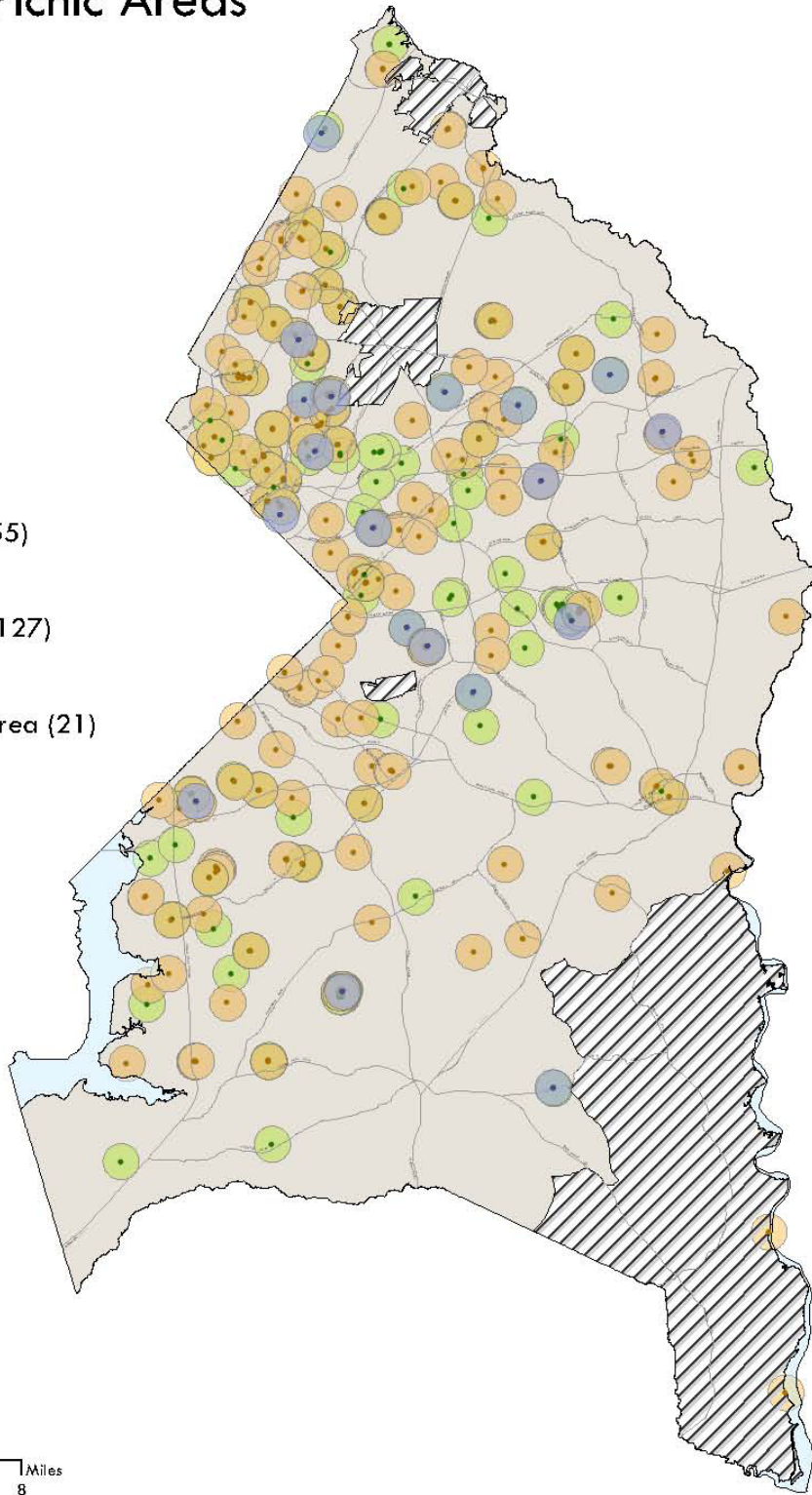
The following map shows the existing Picnic Areas, Picnic Shelters, and Group Picnic Areas within the county.



# M-NCPPC Picnic Areas & Shelters



-  Picnic Area (255)
-  Picnic Shelter (127)
-  Group Picnic Area (21)



0 2 4 8 Miles

## 3.5.4 Playgrounds

### *Existing Conditions*

The mission of the 2006 *Maryland Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention Program* is to prolong the length and quality of life of Maryland citizens through healthy eating and increased activity. The goals of this state plan are to encourage and enable Maryland citizens to adopt and maintain healthy eating habits and to lead physically active lifestyles throughout their lives.

The *Maryland State Advisory Council on Physical Fitness* recommends at least 30 minutes per day of structured physical activity for toddlers and 60 minutes per day for preschoolers. Under these guidelines, toddlers and preschoolers should also engage in over 60 minutes of *unstructured* daily physical activity. Elementary school-aged children require at least 30 to 60 minutes of age- and developmentally-appropriate physical activities each day. One of the “Targets for Change” to accomplish these goals is to increase the percentage of Maryland residents participating in regular and sustained physical activity from the Year 2000 state baseline of 22 percent. A strategy to meet this target is to dedicate funding and resources to build new playgrounds for the youngest members of society.

One of the basic components of any developed park in Prince George’s County is a play area. This may be a simple composite play structure serving ages 2-12, or it may be separate play areas for preschool ages 2-5, school age 5-12 youth, teens, and even fitness structures for the adult and senior populations. As a recreation provider, DPR realizes the importance of play in childhood development and is most concerned with providing safe, challenging and fun play environments that will fulfill this need.

In recent years, the design of play structures has advanced from wooden structures with chipped wood mulch safety surfacing to imaginative and challenging destination play spaces featuring rubberized impact-attenuating safety surfacing, which cushions a child’s fall from a play structure and helps to reduce injuries. Complex play environments are more exciting and incorporate sensory play elements, nature-inspired play (tree houses), adventure play (rock walls, climbing nets, track lines, and sound elements), active and passive play opportunities, fitness training, and thematic play.

Play areas are completed with shade structures and/or shade trees, benches for parents and caretakers, and trash cans, and can also contain other amenities such as restroom facilities, water fountains, and tricycle loops.

Playgrounds that are designed and built today must comply with the safety standards of the Certified Playground Safety Inspection program, which are set by the American Society of Testing Materials, an international standards organization that develops and publishes technical standards for a wide range of products, and the Consumer Product Safety Commission, an independent agency created to protect against unreasonable risks of injury associated with consumer products.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission inspection program provides guidelines to reduce play hazards and risks by identifying safety zones and fall zones around each piece of play equipment. This program and its trained inspectors also work toward the elimination of tripping, choking, head entrapment and other playground safety hazards.

Manufacturers of play equipment today are mindful of the safety standards applied to their products, and are creating sustainable pieces created from recycled materials. Play equipment is installed with attention to the fall and safety zones prescribed by the National Playground Safety Institute. As man-

dated by federal guidelines prescribed by the Justice Department in the Americans with Disabilities Act, all new playgrounds are now being designed to be all-inclusive for children of all capabilities.

### ***Trends: Imagination Playgrounds***

Recently, the Park Planning and Development Division of the Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation has begun designing "Imagination Playgrounds." These are large custom play areas intended to increase the play value at community centers, regional parks, and some smaller parks by creating an evocative atmosphere that will encourage and nourish the imaginations of children. Examples of completed themed playgrounds to date are: 1) Medieval Dragon at South Bowie Community Center, 2) Frontier Fort at Good Luck Community Center, 3) Sports Fitness Gym Playground at Glenarden Community Center, 4) Viking Ship at Mellwood Hills, 5) Nature Playground at Meadowbrook, 6) Pirate Island at Marlton, 7) Safari Hut at Windsor Park, and 8) Green Garden at Mount Rainier-Upshur.

The Green Garden is a unique park that features Maryland native plantings, botanical signage, educational rain garden panels, and a community flower garden. A Green Garden storybook was produced with the help of the local elementary school children. The story is as imaginative as the playground, providing a message of earth, environment, and education.

By the end of 2012, the following Imagination Playgrounds are also scheduled to be installed:

- Equestrian Winner's Circle at Horsepen Trailhead
- Indian Creek Village at Berwyn Heights Park
- Shipwreck Voyage at Tucker Road Community Center
- Farm History Theme at Green Branch Athletic Complex
- Enchanted Woodland Theme at Walker Mill Regional Park
- Little Critters Theme at Mitchellville South Park

Designed to be a destination attraction, the Little Critters Theme playground at Mitchellville South Park is of particular interest. Located next to the C.E. Reig Special School for disabled children, it will be an accessible playground designed to meet the needs of those children as well as the children of the greater community. The rubberized safety surfacing will depict a woodland with a lake full of lily pads and fish. Exciting features include animal footprints in the path, colorful shade structures to minimize sun exposure on skin, and educational environmental signage at the rain garden.

### ***Benchmarking***

According to the National Recreation and Park Association 2011 PRORAGIS National Inventory System, the nationwide median of playground supply is one playground per 3,213 people. Previously, results from the 2006 National Benchmarking Study of Park Agencies suggest that this county should have one playground for every 3,356 residents.

In Prince George's County, there are 224 playgrounds in the M-NCPPC park system. Using the current population per the 2010 US Census (863,420), there is one playground per 3,854 residents in the park system within Prince George's County. The PRORAGIS data indicates a need for 268 playgrounds. Therefore, the county is below the current recommendations and an additional 44 new playgrounds will need to be added to the system in order to meet the benchmark standard.

If no new playgrounds are added to the park system by 2040 and the existing 224 playgrounds are maintained, the county will have one playground for every 4,241 residents, using the 2040 projected

population of 950,110 residents in the county. This will be below the benchmark requirements. In order to achieve the recommended benchmark of one playground for every 3,213 residents, the Department of Parks and Recreation will need to add at least 71 more playgrounds (for a total of 295) to the parks system by 2040. Although this does not take into account private play areas owned by Homeowners' Associations or other private, municipal or county entities such as schools, these existing public and private play areas can mitigate some of this deficit. And the addition of the new Imagination Playgrounds provide a higher play value that can also mitigate this need.

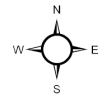
In addition to this analysis, the Department of Parks and Recreation has determined that a reasonable standard is one playground within one-half mile of each residence throughout the county. Currently, 464,127 people live within a half-mile of an M-NCPPC playground.



### ***Recommendations***

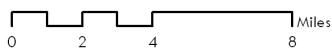
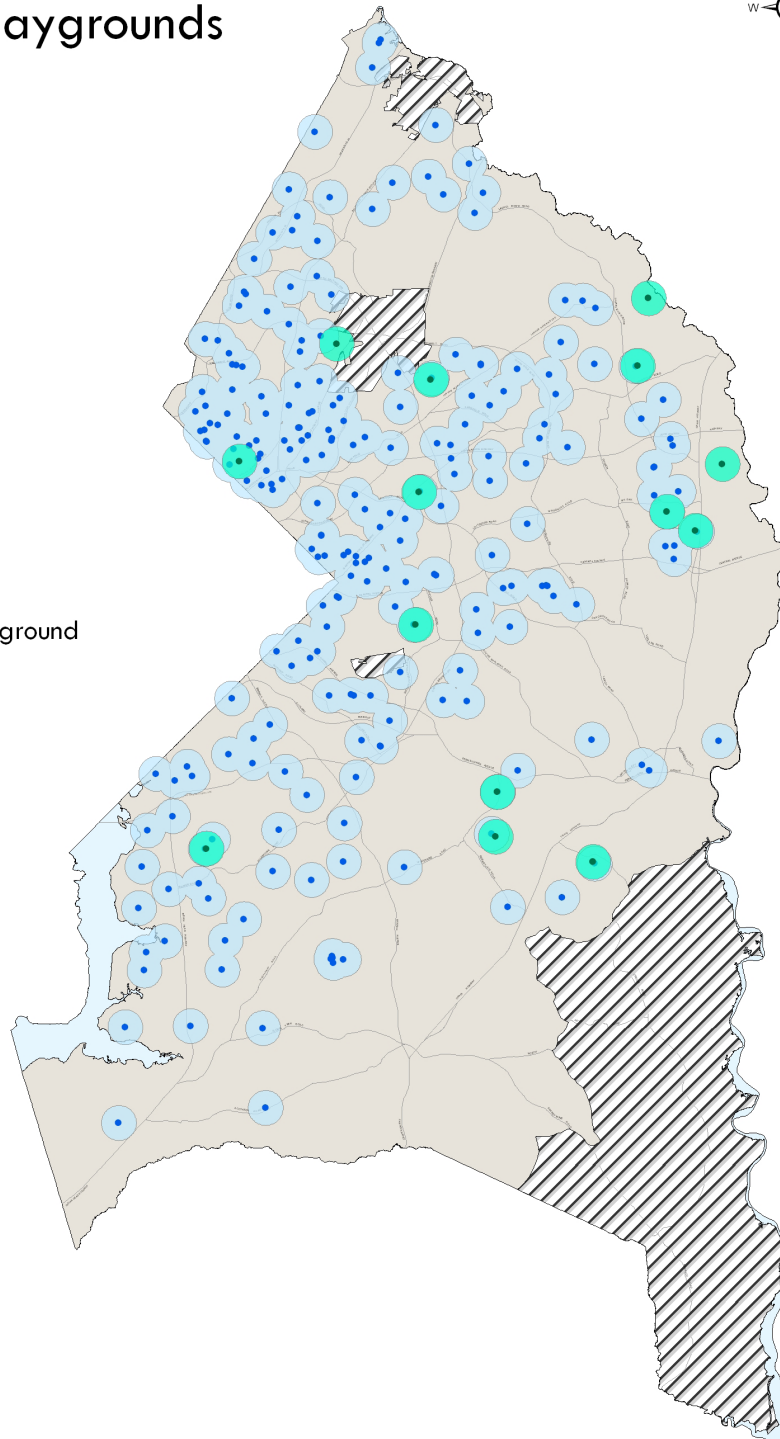
- To meet current standards, add 44 new playgrounds in 2012
- By 2040, add 71 new playgrounds

The following map depicts the 224 playgrounds within the county, as well as the additional 71 playgrounds that will be needed in order to meet this new standard in 2040.

# M-NCPPC Playgrounds



-  Playground
-  Imagination Playground



## 3.5.5 Dog Parks (Off-Leash Dog Exercise Areas)

### Existing Conditions



In Prince George’s County, there are six off-leash dog exercise areas, commonly known as dog parks (see “Prince George’s County Off-Leash Dog Areas” Map). Three are located on M-NCPPC parkland. The others are located in Greenbelt, Bowie, and Laurel, and are operated by the respective municipalities. Dog parks require oversight to provide a safe and enjoyable user experience. Currently, there are two methods that are employed to manage the three dog parks located on M-NCPPC parkland. The first dog park in the M-NCPPC park system is located in College Park at Acredale Park. It

is managed by an organization under an agreement with M-NCPPC. The organization oversees the daily operation of the park, enforces rules, provides waste bags, and charges an annual membership to offset expenses. Entry into the dog park is controlled by a locked gate that members open with the combination number that is provided with membership. Per the agreement, the Department of Parks and Recreation funded and constructed capital improvements and is responsible for mowing and repair and replacement of the capital improvements.

In contrast, the dog park in Heurich Park in Hyattsville is managed without a membership group and is open to the public without registration. Park rules are posted at the entrance and enforcement is by peer, Park Ranger or Park Police. The Department of Parks is responsible for all aspects of operation and maintenance.

The third dog park is located in Oak Creek West Park at Cameron Grove. The developer of the adjacent retirement community built this dog park. The park is open to the public without registration, but is not well-known and is therefore underused. DPR is responsible for all aspects of operation and maintenance. Because of its underutilization, it is threatened by conversion into other park facilities, such as a community garden.

### Findings

The Humane Society of the United States estimates that 39 percent of US households own at least one dog. Additionally, the number of dogs per household averages 1.7 dogs per household. At these rates, it is estimated there are 201,579 dogs in Prince George’s County.

The 2003 *Participation in Local Park and Recreation Activities in Maryland* reports that 21 percent of households statewide participate in dog exercising.

The NRPA 2011 *PRORAGIS National Inventory System* reports there is one dog park per 63,009 people. With the six existing dog parks in Prince George’s County, there is one dog park per 145,000 people, or one dog park per 50,700 households. In comparison, Montgomery County has seven dog parks or one dog park per 139,000 people (one dog park per 49,000 households), and Fairfax County has nine dog parks or one dog park per 120,000 people (one dog park per 40,900 households.)

Fifteen percent of people responding to the *2010 and Beyond Needs Assessment Survey* considered dog

parks among their three most important outdoor facilities. Dog parks were tied in eighth place with basketball courts and amphitheaters as outdoor facilities survey respondents considered most important.

All of the existing dog parks in the Prince George’s County are located in the northern half of the county. Only the City of Greenbelt restricts the use of their dog park to city residents. The location of existing dog parks correlates with where the majority of the municipalities exist in the county. Unincorporated areas are at a disadvantage without the organizational structure of municipal government to lobby for dog parks. For example, funding was allocated in the FY 2012 Capital Improvement Program for a new dog park in the Town of Riverdale Park.

### **Trends**

People are requesting dog parks within walking distance from their homes. For example, the municipalities of Berwyn Heights and Riverdale Park have each requested a dog park, even though dog parks are located in the neighboring towns of College Park and Hyattsville.

Nationally, dog parks are becoming more amenitized with water features, agility equipment, and shade structures, constructed with higher quality materials and more thought to design. They are designed to meet not only functional needs, but to be attractive places to fit into their surroundings, to be a fun place for dogs, and to provide comfort for dogs and humans.

### **Recommendations**

1. Provide one dog park per 40,000 households. This is in line with Montgomery and Fairfax Counties, which have similar geographic size and development patterns as Prince George’s County. This rate allows for development of new dog parks in the southern half of the county. The number of dog parks needed in the future is as follows:

YEAR	2010	2040
Households	304,042	360,110
Number of parks needed (1/40,000 households)	7	9

2. Because no dog parks are located in the southern half of the county, place priority on constructing two dog parks capable of serving large geographic areas in the Southern Area. Ideally, they should be located along the MD 210 and MD 301/5 corridors or in Cosca Regional Park in the southern half of the county. These dog parks should be well-amenitized to attract a wide audience.
3. The dog park at Oak Creek West Park at Cameron Grove should be relocated to Watkins Regional Park or another Central Area park where better vehicle access and visibility would substantially increase use.
4. Funding should be allocated for the design and installation of new regional dog parks that are fully amenitized to maximize their potential to attract visitors.
5. When a dog park is requested to serve local neighborhood needs, the requesting group should have the responsibility of handling operating expenses and management of the dog park.

6. New dog parks should meet requirements for location.
7. Establish a formal process for review and approval for each proposed dog park location, such as the following steps:
  - Establish a dog park “Friends Group” to sponsor and oversee the dog park.
  - Identify an appropriate site (see Location Requirements).
  - Submit a Letter of Intent to the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, communicating the group’s desire to sponsor and manage a dog park. DPR staff will work with the group to determine the feasibility of the site.
  - If the site is deemed feasible, hold an advertised public meeting to get input from the neighborhood and park users
  - Ability to join the dog park must be open to all residents of Prince George’s County
  - Enter into an agreement via a Memorandum of Understanding with DPR
  - Secure the necessary funding that will cover the construction costs for all dog park features and amenities, including walking paths to access the facility, parking if it does not already exist, water hook-up fees, permitting fees, and installation costs
  - Once funding is secured, Park Planning and Development staff will develop the site design and secure grading permits, if required
  - M-NCPPC will complete the construction, holding costs within the available budget
  - Open the dog park
8. An important consideration for a dog park is the willingness of a “Friends of the Dog Park” group or municipality to assume responsibility for oversight. At a minimum, a Friends Group or municipality’s responsibilities should include acting as a liaison between DPR, Park Rangers, Park Police, neighbors, and users; monitoring the facility and reporting maintenance needs; educating users and enforcing rules; and raising funds for operational expenses and dog park amenities and improvements.

### ***Funding / Implementation Schedule for Dog Parks***

<b>PARK</b>	<b>SERVICE AREA</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING</b>
Riverdale Recreation Park	North	2012-2016	Approved CIP FY 2012
Park to be determined	Central	2022 + beyond	Not identified
MD 210 Corridor (Park to be determined)	South	2017-2021	Not identified
MD 5/301 Corridor (Park to be determined)	South	2022 + beyond	Not identified



## **Dog Park Site Location Selection Criteria**

The following is a site selection matrix to aid in the selection of a location for a dog park. The intent of the matrix is to provide guidance in the relative strength or weakness of a site. It is not intended to serve as the final determinant for site selection.

### **1. Site Control.**

10 points	Site controlled by M-NCPPC
5 points	Other public ownership
1 point	Private ownership

**2. Environmental Impact.** The site should not impact woodland, floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes and associated buffers including stream and wetland buffers.

10 points	Site with no wetlands, floodplains, woodlands, associated buffers, or steep slopes
5 points	Site in a floodplain
0 point	Presence of woodlands, wetlands, steep slopes, or stream buffers

**3. Access.** The dog park must be accessible to personal and maintenance vehicles. Locating the dog park in an existing park that enjoys easy vehicle access will increase use. Walking access to a long-distance trail or connector trails or sidewalks to a neighborhood is an added bonus.

10 points	Vehicular and trail/path access
7 points	Vehicular access
0 point	No access

**4. Site Size.** The dog park should be a minimum of one-half acre in size if natural turf is used. Larger areas allow separate enclosures for small and large dogs. A larger area with natural turf allows use to be spread over a larger area to reduce the percentage of the dog park that becomes muddy due to wear. For smaller areas artificial turf should be considered, but it substantially increases capital and operation costs because it will require regular spraying to maintain a sanitary condition.

10 points	One acre or larger
7 points	One-half acre to one acre
0 points	Less than one-half acre in size

**5. Parking.** Nearby parking that is shared with other park facilities is ideal. The dog park must be served with an Americans with Disabilities-compliant accessible path.

10 points	Ten to 20 existing off-street parking spaces within walking distance (200 feet)
7 points	Ten to 20 existing off-street parking spaces in the park within 500 feet
0 points	No off-street parking

**6. On-Site Amenities.** Add points for each amenity.

10 points	Water line service to serve a drinking fountain in the dog park
10 points	Existing trees to cast shade on the dog park
3 points	Toilets

**7. Sound and Odor Control.** A distance over 200 feet or more will dissipate the sound of a barking dog.

10 points	Two hundred feet or greater to closest residence
0 points	Less than 200 feet to closest residence

**8. Visibility.** Visibility of the dog park aids in security and helps to advertise the dog park.

10 points      Visibility from three or more sides

7 points      Visibility from two sides

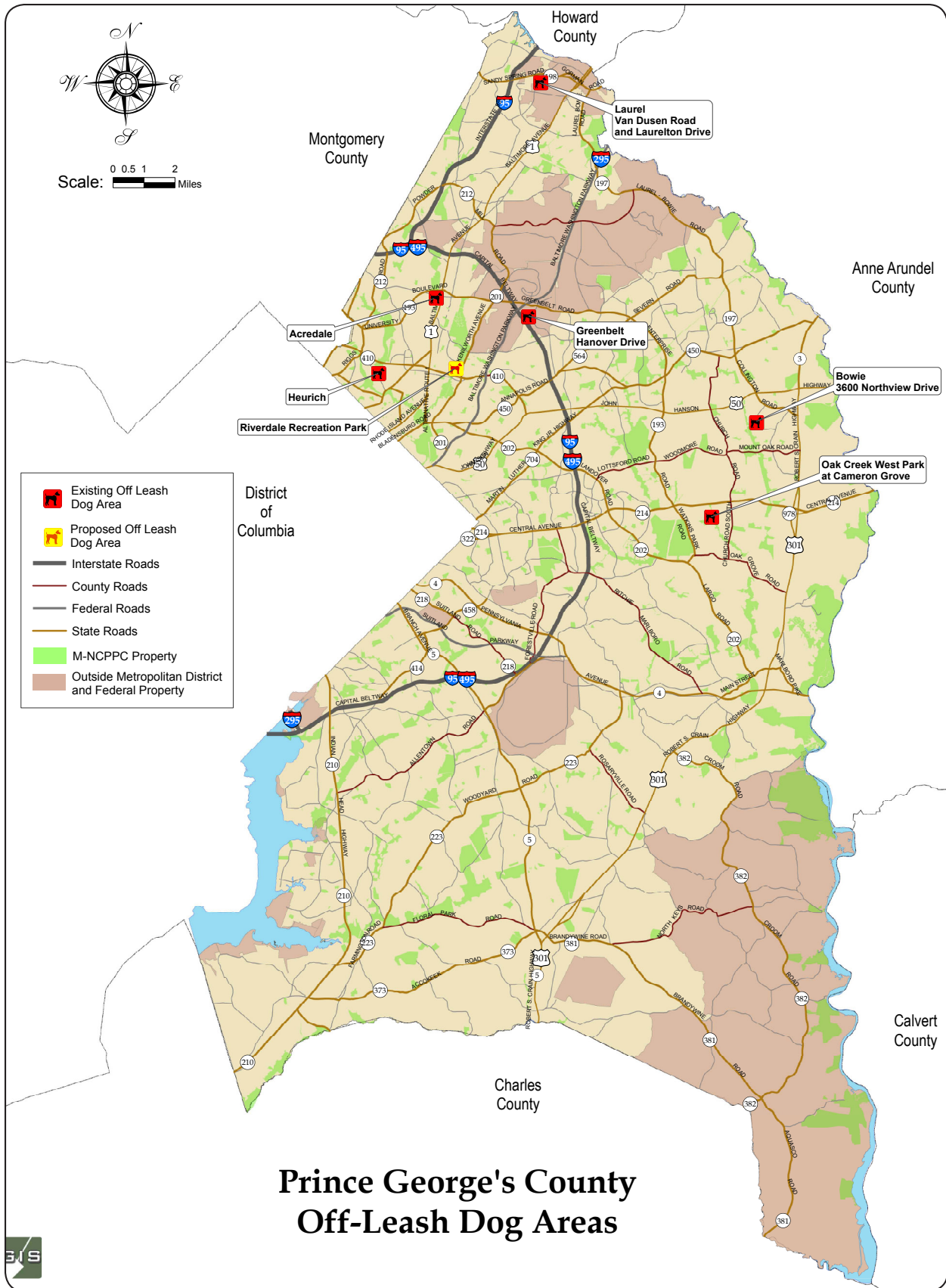
5 points      Visibility from one side

**9. Proximity to other locations (aerial distance).** Dog parks should be equally distributed throughout the county. Currently, all the dog parks are located in the northern half of the county. Each dog park should serve several communities. The proximity distances are for dog parks that do not limit access due to residence requirements, such as the dog park in the City of Greenbelt.

10 points      More than 7.5 miles

5 points      Five to 7.5 miles

0 point      Less than five miles



# Prince George's County Off-Leash Dog Areas



## 3.5.6 Skate Parks

### *Existing Conditions*

A skate park is a designated location where people are allowed to use skateboards and in-line skates on various terrain and obstacles. A skate park may be as small as a single “skate-able” feature to areas several acres in size.

Today, there are three skate parks in Prince George’s County. The cities of Greenbelt and Bowie have concrete skate parks featuring bowls that are 7,000 and 10,000 square feet in size, respectively. The third existing skate park is a 5,000-square-foot plaza-style park on M-NCPPC property located at Mount Rainier South Park.

Four more skate parks are in various stages of planning, design, and construction. Three new skate parks are scheduled to be completed in 2012 by the Department of Parks and Recreation including a 5,000-square-foot park in Melrose Park, a 7,000-square-foot park in Sunnyside Park, and a 12,000-square-foot park in Cosca Regional Park. By the end of 2012 there will be 46,000 square feet of skateable terrain in Prince George’s County.

Another skate park is planned for Walker Mill Regional Park and will be built in the near future if funding remains available. This skate park is planned to be approximately 10,000 square feet.

Skate parks in local parks, such as the existing Mount Rainier skate park and the two to be built at Sunnyside and Melrose Parks, will be unsupervised. They are intended for beginners to learn and hone their skills so they can graduate to skate parks that offer more terrain and challenge, such as the skate parks in Greenbelt and Bowie. At unsupervised skate parks, signs are posted that list rules and recommend the use of protective gear. In Cosca Regional Park, the skate park will not be directly supervised, but will benefit from supervised facilities that are nearby and staff who are already in the park.

The existing skateboarding facilities in Prince George’s County are located within a small geographic area along the US 1 corridor from College Park to Mount Rainer. Future development of facilities should expand southward to provide more equitable distribution across the service area.

### *Trends and Benchmarking*

While there continues to be data indicating increases in skateboarding participation, many skateboarders and those in the skate park design industry acknowledge that skateboarding is cyclical and that there will be high and low points in popularity. The 2010 Skateboarding Report for the Sporting Goods Manufacturers’ Association (SGMA) estimated 7,352,000 participants in the U.S. (2.6 percent of the national population) This was a surprising decline of 30 percent from 3.7 percent in 2006. The National Sporting Goods Association reported an estimated 7,700,000 participants in 2010. This represents a 21 percent decline from their 2006 estimate of 9,700,000.

Even at these decreased numbers, access to facilities remains woefully behind other sports, particularly on the East Coast. As skateboarding grew in popularity in the mid-2000s, the development of new facilities did not follow the same pace. Using 2010 participation data from the NSGA and facilities data from Prince George’s County, the disparity between users and facilities is revealed below:



**Ratio of Facilities to Participants:**

Tennis	1: 300
Basketball	1: 1,000
Baseball	1: 4,000
Skateboarding	1: 10,000

**Number of Skateboarders**

The methods developed for projecting the size of skate park systems vary widely. Four major U.S. cities have developed master plans for skate park systems – Seattle, WA; Portland, OR; Philadelphia, PA, and Arlington, TX. The Skater’s for Public Skate Parks, a national non-profit that advocates for skate park development, has issued guidelines for sizing skate park facilities.

Each of these plans uses a methodology that begins with estimating the number of skateboarders, and then projecting the skating area needs based on the number of users. The Seattle Plan (2007) estimated that skateboarders comprised 3.58 percent of the population, and the Portland Plan (2008) estimated 3.66 percent. The Arlington Plan (2010) estimated 4.9 percent of their population to be skateboarders.

The Philadelphia Plan recognized that using a percentage of participation based on overall national population overstates the true load on a skate park system. The reasons for this are as follows: 1) it counts those who have skated only a single time; and 2) it does not address geographic factors that impact participation.

The SGMA Report provides more in depth statistics that include core skateboarding participation, which is defined as the estimate of those who have skateboarded 26 times or more in one year. The SGMA data also adjusts participation rate to geographic regions. These two factors create a more accurate estimation of skateboarding participation.

The SGMA 2010 core skateboarding percentage of 1.1 percent for the Mid-Atlantic Region is used to estimate skateboarding population for Prince George’s County. Assuming this rate remains consistent, applying it to the 2040 projected population of 950,110 results in an estimate of 10,451 skateboarders.

**Area Needed per Skateboarder**

There is no single consensus document describing the range of skateboarding styles and terrain. The skateboarding plan for Arlington, Texas identifies six different styles of skateboarding. The skateboarding plans developed for the four major cities offer the following range of square feet per skateboarder:

**Square Feet per Skateboarder:**

CITY	MINIMUM SQUARE FEET	MAXIMUM SQUARE FEET
Seattle, WA	12.73	None provided
Portland, OR	4.25	8.25
Arlington, TX	12	18
Philadelphia, PA	10	40

For the purpose of skate park planning, there are four types of skate park terrain: 1) Street, 2) Transition, 3) Mixed, and 4) Vertical. Each terrain type requires an increasingly larger area as the size and spacing of skating obstacles grows.

### **Terrain Definitions**

**Street Terrain** – A style of skateboarding that utilizes elements typically found in downtown, urban environments such as benches, stairs, walls, curbs and planter edges. Skaters typically proceed in straight lines along and towards the terrain as they skate it. Most elements are two feet tall or lower. This style has grown dramatically in popularity in the last decade. For Street Terrain, 10 square feet per skateboarder is recommended.

**Transition Terrain** – Transition Terrain uses flowing, curvilinear forms, similar to those found in concrete swimming pools. Skating transition terrain happens in a continuous line as the skateboarder uses his momentum to move around the space. The earliest skate parks were designed in this style. Most elements are four feet or less in height. For Transition Terrain, 15 square feet per skateboarder is recommended.

**Mixed Terrain** – Mixed terrain is a combination of street and transition elements. The skating lines are long and straight like street skating, but the introduction of slopes and banks allows the skateboarder to gain additional momentum and requires less flat ground between elements. For Mixed Terrain, 20 square feet per skateboarder is recommended.

**Vertical Terrain** – This is a transition-style skate park that has larger changes in vertical elevation. This kind of facility is typically for advanced skaters who have mastered the other park styles. For Vertical Terrain, 40 square feet per skateboarder is recommended.

### **Site Selection Criteria**

In order to facilitate an equitable evaluation of sites for future skateboarding facility development, a site selection matrix has been developed. The intent of the matrix is to provide guidance on the relative strength or weakness of proposed site(s), not to serve as a final determinant for site appropriateness. There are 10 items to be considered:

#### **1. Site Control.**

Skateboarding locations can be most quickly developed when land acquisition is not needed. Property already under control of the M-NCPPC or owned by a local municipality should be considered. In some cases, private land can be acquired. Priority should be placed on easily-acquired property.

- 10 points: Site controlled by M-NCPPC
- 5 points: Other public ownership
- 1 point: Private Ownership

#### **2. Current Condition.**

Forested areas in existing parks should be preserved as much as possible. Wherever possible, new skateboarding facilities should be developed on previously-paved or developed land. Under-utilized parking lots, basketball courts, tennis courts, or lawn areas are good candidates.

- 10 points: Paved but unused spaces
- 5 points: Green space

### **3. Connections.**

In suburban communities where public transit is not a viable option, providing safe access to skating locations can be difficult. Young people need facilities within walking distance of their homes. Ideally, skateboarding locations are within a half mile of a school, community center, or local shopping area.

- 10 points: Three of three connections
- 7 points: Two of three connections
- 5 points: One of three connections
- 0 points: No connections

### **4. On-Site Facilities.**

Existing recreational venues are ideal locations for the addition of skateboarding facilities. The existing recreation facilities could include a community center, playground, and ball fields or courts.

- 10 points: Three of three facilities
- 7 points: Two of three facilities
- 5 points: One of three facilities
- 0 points: No facilities

### **5. Amenities.**

While not required and not necessarily supported as a standard practice, many skate park users do request additional amenities. Those include toilets, drinking fountains, and shade.

- 10 points: Three of three facilities
- 7 points: Two of three facilities
- 5 points: One of three facilities
- 0 points: No facilities

### **6. Sound Control.**

Noise from skateboards and participants can carry some distance from a skate park. The Portland, Oregon skate park plan included research recommending a 200-foot limit for noise to dissipate. Separation from adjacent residential dwellings is preferable.

- 10 points: 200 feet or greater to closest residence
- 0 points: Less than 200 feet to closest residence

### **7. Nearby Parking.**

- 10 points: Walking distance to a nearby parking lot
- 0 points: No dedicated parking

### **8. Visibility.**

Best practices call for skate parks to be located in visible areas within parks and public space, based on experience of existing skate parks in other areas of the country. In the past, poor siting led to skate parks that were concealed from view and became opportunities for vandalism and other undesirable activity. Ideal sites are highly visible.

- 10 points: Visible from three or more sides
- 7 points: Visible from two sides
- 5 points: Visible from one side
- 0 points: Not visible

## 9. Storm Water Management/Utilities.

Ground disturbance over 5,000 square feet may require the provision of stormwater management facilities. Sharing an existing facility or designing a new one to accommodate other recreation facilities in the park is desirable. Additionally, skate parks located in regional parks or parks where other outdoor facilities are lighted may be a desirable option. Lighting is not a requirement, but the presence of electric service may be desirable.

- 10 points: Access to stormwater management facilities and electric service
- 5 points: Access to one
- 0 points: Access to none

## 10. Proximity to Other Skate Park Locations.

The ideal situation is to develop skate parks throughout the county. Consideration of current skate park locations must be part of the selection methodology.

- 10 points: More than five miles to another skate park
- 5 points: Five miles or less
- 0 points: One mile or less

Once a potential site is scored, these criteria can be used to aid discussion in comparing sites. The scoring is a guideline to understanding the potential for site development, and should not be used as the final determinant for ranking sites. Sites that are highly supported by community members or local users must be taken into consideration as well.

## Recommendations

Based on the Skateboarding Focus Group held on July 21, 2011, it is clear that the skateboarding community in Prince George's County has well-established, long-time skaters. Focus group participants expressed interest in facilities that accommodate all skills levels, so that more expert skaters could mentor the less-experienced. This necessitates a mixed approach to terrain where various styles are combined into a single park. This kind of approach will help develop a strong social culture and provide a positive outlet for engagement of children with young adults.

1. For nearly 10 years, the fastest growing type of skateboarding terrain was street style. Since the skating obstacles include low curbs and site walls, they are more accessible to beginners. These parks are also less intrusive to the physical environment as they mimic the design of spaces in the public realm. It is projected that this style of terrain will continue to be in high demand and is also the best terrain to foster continued growth of a skateboarding community. Given these factors, it is recommended that the skate park system should be sized to accommodate two-thirds of the skateboarders skating mixed-terrain and one-third skating street-style terrain.
2. Street-style parks can be constructed as small skatespots (not less than 1,200 to 1,500 square feet) and distributed throughout the community to provide better exposure to first-time skaters. This style of terrain should be an option for residential development during the development's review under the Mandatory Dedication of Parkland regulations. Since no parks smaller than 5,000 square feet exist, it is recommended that a network of small, street-style skate spots be built throughout Prince George's County.
3. Most Prince George's County skate parks are relatively small in size. Combined with the recommended series of even smaller skate spots, this creates a need for an intermediate-sized level of



park. This will allow for a hierarchy that mirrors the format of other skate park systems in the nation and would also better distribute skaters across the county as their skills develop. It is recommended to build three skate parks at 15,000 square feet each that are distributed geographically across the service area.

4. In the Focus Group session, attendees discussed a “magnet” skateboarding facility that would serve as a place to host major competitions or gatherings of the skateboarding community. This would be a larger facility intended to garner attention beyond the county. There are positives and negatives to this approach. Facilities that strive to be destination parks are often seen by constituents as not serving their needs. Additionally, when outside users are invited into the community, residents are sometimes afforded less opportunity to use the park. A large facility like this will certainly require ample parking and other supporting amenities. On the upside, because of the proximity to Washington, DC, a destination facility could become known as the region’s premier site to host skateboarding events. While the District of Columbia has a small plaza under way for the Maloof Money Cup, the Washington Metropolitan area has a major gap in this type of venue. The inclusion of a destination skate park should be a consideration, especially in combination with one of the large community/aquatic recreation facilities being recommended.
5. There is an inherent conflict between the spatial needs of skateboarders and BMX bikers. Because bikes travel at a higher speed, are dimensionally larger, and weigh considerably more than skateboards, collisions between bikers and boarders pose a real problem. A second major issue is that bike peg impacts can damage even properly detailed ledges (with edge protection). For these reasons, many West Coast cities have banned BMX bikes from skate parks and are moving to develop “bike only” parks. It is recommended that BMX activity in the skate parks be prohibited. Grindable ledges in skate parks can be designed with “stepped” edges to limit BMX pegs from grinding along them.
6. Today, skate parks are being developed at a wide range of costs and scales. Small parks, done with design-build delivery methods, can be developed starting at \$15 to \$17 per square foot. Larger parks with landscaping, material variety, lighting and other site development can approach \$50 per square foot. Skate parks smaller than 10,000 square feet are suitable candidates for the design-build delivery method. Destination parks and larger parks should be done with a traditional design and bid approach led by a team of design professionals, including a skate park designer.
7. The following table provides the total area for each skate park needed by 2040 in Prince George’s County. This figure is based on the percentage of core skateboarders who participate more than 26 times per year, which is 1.1 percent of the population today. It further divides the total area or skate park by terrain type.

### **SKATE PARK AREA (SQURE FEET) NEEDED**

<b>950,110</b>	<b>Projected 2040 County Population</b>
1.10%	Core Skateboarder Percentage
<b>10,451</b>	<b>Estimated Skaters in 2040</b>

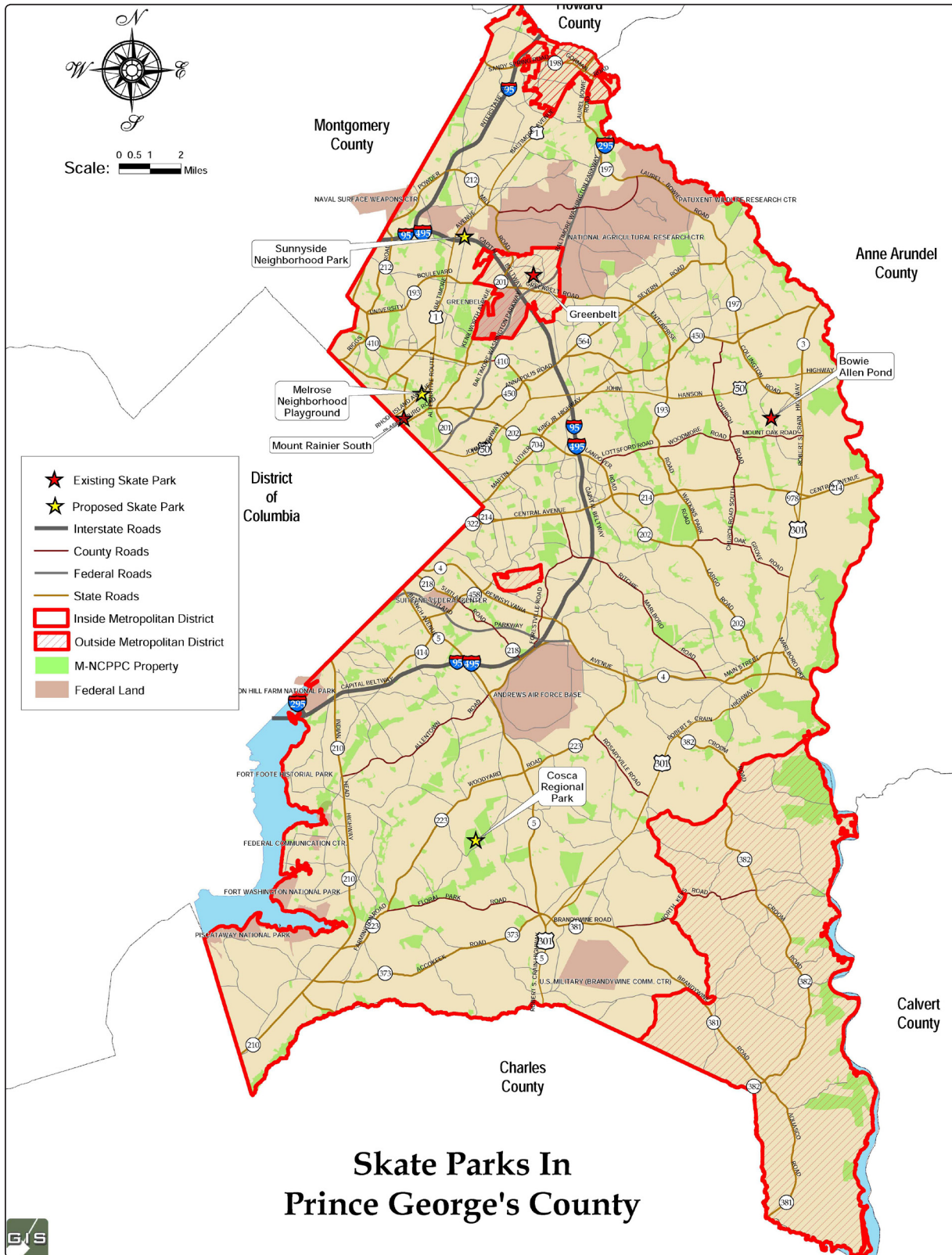
NUMBER OF SKATERS	PERCENTAGE OF SKATERS OF TOTAL	TERRAIN TYPE	SQUARE FEET PER TERRAIN TYPE	TOTAL (SQUARE FEET)
6,960	66.6%	Mixed	15	104,400
3,480	33.3%	Street	10	34,800
			<b>Total Skate Park Area Needed</b>	<b>139,200</b>

### FUNDING/IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE FOR SKATE PARKS

PARK	SERVICE AREA	IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	SKATE PARK AREA (SF)	TOTAL AREA
<b>Existing Skate Parks:</b>				
City of Bowie	Central	Complete	10,000	
City of Greenbelt	North	Complete	7,000	
Mt. Rainer South Park	North	Complete	5,000	
			<b>Existing Total</b>	<b>22,000</b>
<b>Planned &amp; Proposed Skate Parks</b>				
Destination Park	NA	2022 + beyond	<b>Destination Total</b>	<b>35,000</b>
<b>Regional Parks</b>				
Regional Skate Park	North	2022 + beyond	11,000	
Walker Mill Regional Park	Central	2017-2021	10,000	
Cosca Regional Park	South	2012-2016	12,000	
			<b>Regional Total</b>	<b>33,000</b>
<b>Mid Size Parks</b>				
Melrose Park	North	2012-2016	5,000	
Sunnyside Park	North	2012-2016	7,000	
Park TBD	Central	2022 + beyond	5,000	
Park TBD	South	2022 + beyond	7,000	
			<b>Mid Size Total</b>	<b>24,000</b>

SKATESPOTS:	SERVICE AREA	IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	SKATE PARK AREA (SF)	TOTAL AREA
1) Skate spot	Central	2017-2021	1,500	
2) Skate spot	Central	2017-2021	1,500	
3) Skate spot	Central	2017-2021	1,500	
4) Skate spot	Central	2022 + beyond	1,500	
5) Skate spot	Central	2022 + beyond	1,500	
6) Skate spot	Central	2022 + beyond	1,500	
7) Skate spot	Central	2022 + beyond	1,500	
8) Skate spot	South	2017-2021	1,500	
9) Skate spot	South	2017-2021	1,500	
10) Skate spot	South	2017-2021	1,500	
11) Skate spot	South	2022 + beyond	1,500	
12) Skate spot	South	2022 + beyond	1,500	
13) Skate spot	South	2022 + beyond	1,500	
14) Skate spot	South	2022 + beyond	1,500	
15) Skate spot	South	2022 + beyond	1,500	
16) Skate spot	South	2022 + beyond	1,500	
17) Skate spot	South	2022 + beyond	1,500	
			<b>Skate Spot Total</b>	<b>25,500</b>
			<b>Total Area</b>	<b>139,500</b>

The intent of this chapter is to outline a possible framework for future skate park development based on the best information available at this time. The overall square footage of future development as shown in the table is the most significant number to maintain. The individual park allocations and sizes can be rebalanced at the discretion of the M-NCPPC.



## 3.5.7 Recreational Trails

### Overview

Trails accommodate a variety of users, including walkers, runners, bicyclists, birders, paddlers, equestrians, skaters, hikers, skiers, families, seniors, and children. Trail users have different uses (recreation, travel, competition, commuting, fitness, environmental education, nature appreciation, socializing, or relaxation) and seek certain experiences (urban, suburban, or wilderness). Trail users have different physical capabilities: a child learning to ride a bike, an adult recovering from surgery or illness, a wheelchair athlete training for competition, a “newbie” to bicycle touring, or a horse becoming acclimated to trail riding. Additionally, people reach trails by different means: walking, biking, or driving. These factors influence how trails are planned, where they are located, what the trail surface is, what amenities are provided, how they are maintained, and how much they cost to build and maintain.

In Prince George’s County, trails are provided and maintained by several entities including the federal government (U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the National Park Service), Maryland State Highway Administration, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Prince George’s County Department of Public Works and Transportation, municipal governments, homeowner associations, and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Typically, the owner of the land builds and maintains the trail. In some instances, however, rights-of-way or permits are granted to an agency to construct and operate a trail that traverses property owned by others. This enables one agency to build or maintain a trail its entire length even though the trail is on property owned by a different entity.

This chapter provides recommendations for the trail system managed by M-NCPPC in Prince George’s County. The M-NCPPC’s trail system is comprised of several different types of trails and each type will be examined in this chapter. They include:

- Long distance trails
- Walking loop trails
- Natural surface trail systems
- Water trails

The chapter will also include recommendations to improve the interconnectedness of M-NCPPC trails with other trails and bikeways that are managed by other entities within the county and adjacent jurisdictions.

### Findings

The 2002 *Prince George’s County General Plan* and the *Parks & Recreation: 2010 and Beyond* study recognize common themes and values that are shared with the goals for developing a recreational trail system – promoting public health, safety, and welfare; sustainability; environmental quality; economic development; socio-economic diversity, accessibility, innovation, and community engagement.

The community survey completed for *Parks & Recreation: 2010 and Beyond* found that trails ranked in the top five outdoor facilities people wanted to expand or improve in the county. The report also found that:

- People surveyed in the Northwest A Subarea (Hyattsville, College Park, and Adelphi areas) listed trails higher in importance than those residing in other parts of the county.
- Overall, 30 percent of county residents have access to a trail within one mile of their residence. In contrast, 82 percent of the residents in Northwest A Subarea are within one mile of a trail,

which is the highest percentage in the county. This may account for trails being ranked higher in importance in this area.

- Most trails in the M-NCPPC inventory are fragments.
- The Northeast Branch provides a high degree of connectivity and access.
- The trailshed in the Central East Subarea (Glenn Dale, Largo, Bowie, Mitchellville, Westphalia, and Upper Marlboro) has the potential for a high level of service if the segments were connected.
- The Central West (Cheverly, Landover, Seat Pleasant District Heights), South, and Southwest (inside the Beltway south of MD 4) Subareas have the highest need for trails.
- Thirty-seven percent of persons surveyed identified safety and security concerns as a top reason for not using trails and parks.
- Fifteen percent of respondents ride their bikes to parks and recreation facilities and an additional 34 percent said they would like to do so. Likewise, 33 percent say they walk to park and recreation facilities and 48 percent would like to walk to parks and facilities.
- When asked to rate aspects of the parks and facilities, including customer service and maintenance, survey respondents rated lower the connectivity of trails, trail maintenance, and number of trails available.
- Twenty-two percent of survey respondents listed trails as one of the top three outdoor facilities important to them.
- Survey respondents rated highest the need to provide more trail amenities (benches, trash containers, drinking fountains, dog pick up bag dispensers, signage). The second highest rated need was improvement of trail maintenance and providing more trail connections.

### **Trail Counters**

In 2009, three trail counters were placed on the Northwest Branch Trail in the vicinity of the West Hyattsville Metro Station. The counters were placed to determine the Total Average Daily Trips being generated on the trail and when trail use was heaviest. Park Police use the counter information to deploy their forces more efficiently. Since 2009, four additional counters were added and more will be installed.

The counters operate on an infrared beam set approximately three feet about the ground. When the beam is broken, it will record one use with the date and time. Due to the nature of the counter, it cannot distinguish between a pedestrian or bicyclist nor an animal or a group of people together. The counters produce useful information about patterns and trends on trail usage, such as:

- Some trails are used 24 hours a day while others are limited to daytime use.
- Peak times on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Trail are summer weekend mornings when there may be up to 150 to 240 people on the trail per hour. July 4, 2011 produced the highest daily count with over 1,500 people using the trail.
- The Northeast Branch Trail in Riverdale Park generates as much traffic on weekdays around lunch hour than during the weekend because it is located next to an employment park.
- A trail will show a specific use pattern. The Northwest Branch Trail in the vicinity of the West Hyattsville Metro Station can be viewed as “commuter-oriented” because the peak uses occur during the morning and afternoon rush hours. While others show a more recreation-oriented nature with heaviest use occurring on the weekends.

### **Issues**

Input from various community forums, the Prince George’s County Bicycle and Trails Advisory Group, and agency staff have identified additional issues that must be addressed to improve the trail system in the future. These include:

- Acquisition—of trail right-of-way through dedication, fee simple, or easements to complete long distance trails—must proceed well in advance of trail design. Right-of-way acquisition is time consuming given the number of properties that may be involved over the length of a trail.
- Highways, railroads, and waterways create barriers to the continuity of trails. Solutions to cross these barriers with dedicated trail facilities, such as bridges or tunnels, are costly to build and maintain.
- Environmental regulations for wetlands and forest conservation greatly affect the location of trails and the mitigation for these environmental impacts greatly affects construction cost.
- Some trails are commuter oriented especially those providing access to transit stations. Lighting, security cameras, call boxes, police patrol, and snow plowing are important considerations on trails that are used for commuting.
- The “Not in My Back Yard” (NIMBY) factor may create barriers to trail completion. This is especially true when houses are occupied before adjacent trails are constructed.
- More information about trails, trail maps, and amenities are needed on the pgparks.com website.
- Trail infrastructure, including surface and signage, must be inspected and maintained on a regular basis.
- Trailhead amenities are needed, such as drinking fountains, parking, signage, restrooms, bike racks, benches, and shade.
- Wayfinding information, such as directional signage and maps, is needed along the trails.
- Opportunities to use green or sustainable technologies should be explored for the construction and operation of trails. Technologies include: permeable pavement, recycled materials, and solar lighting.

## Goals

There are an array of regional and local policies and master plans that govern the development of the regional trail system including:

- The Department of Parks and Recreation “2040 Vision and Framework”
- 2009 Prince George’s County “Master Plan of Transportation”
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources statewide trail system that is “Second to None”
- Maryland Department of Transportation “Maryland Trails: A Greener Way to Go”
- Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments “2010 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region”

In addition, every other year the Prince George’s County Executive and the Council Chairperson jointly send to the Maryland Secretary of Transportation, the county’s list of transportation priorities that include trail and bikeway projects. While each of these plans may have a specific focus, they all share the goals of improving transportation, promoting health and wellness, and providing recreation. Developing the trail system in the Prince George’s County Parks System will implement the recommendations found in these plans and policies.

Based on the recommendations from these policy documents and supplemented with the findings from the resident survey completed for the “2040 and Beyond Plan”; the Department of Parks and Recreation should place resources toward building a premier countywide recreational trail system by accomplishing the following:

- Provide convenient access to trails to more county residents by constructing more trails in the Central and Southern Areas of the county and by connecting existing trail segments.

- Prioritize trail construction by taking advantage of funding opportunities and partnerships.
- Improve amenities along trails and at designated trailheads for user comfort.
- Build more walking loop trails for fitness in the local and regional parks.
- Improve the natural surface trail systems in the regional and conservation parks.
- Promote and improve the infrastructure for water trails.
- Improve information provided about trails on [www.pgparcs.com](http://www.pgparcs.com) website.

The following sections will discuss each type of trail managed by the M-NCPPC and strategies toward fulfilling these goals. Trails managed by the M-NCPPC include long distance, walking loop, water, and natural surface trails.

### **1) Long Distance Trails: Stream Valley and Rail Trails**

A long distance trail is not confined to a single park, but may connect to several parks and communities. They accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists of all capabilities and purposes. Additionally, several trails accommodate equestrian trail riding in the grassy shoulders adjacent to the trails.

Long distance trails have the potential of becoming destinations that will draw users across the region. By connecting trails into neighboring jurisdictions, they become part of the Washington Metropolitan regional network of trails and are incorporated into national trail routes, such as the East Coast Greenway and American Discovery Trail. With distance and interconnectivity to employment centers and transit stations, trails serve commuters as well as recreational users. Opportunities for long distance trails exist primarily in the stream valley parks and along abandoned railroad corridors. Use of high voltage electric transmission rights-of-way have been closed to public use due to security concerns.

In addition to the many benefits of an established network of long distance trail, there are challenges and complexities inherent in their design and construction, particularly through existing developed areas including the cost of land acquisition; barriers, such as, highways and railroads; opposition by neighbors; environmental impacts; and construction costs.

It takes many years to complete a trail through a stream valley park or abandoned rail corridor. In several parks, there are just segments of long distance trails. In other stream valley parks, construction of planned trails has not begun while in some areas the long distance trails are nearly complete. In some cases, completion of a long distance trail will depend on bikeways outside of the M-NCPPC park system.

### **Characteristics**

Long distance trails should have the following features and amenities:

- Durable surface consisting of asphalt, concrete, crushed stone, or boardwalk
- Trailheads that provide parking, equestrian trailer parking, drinking fountain, benches, bike racks, shade. Restroom facilities should be a consideration. Trailheads should be located in parks with access from major roads.
- Connector trails that lead to neighborhoods, commercial areas, and transit stations
- Wayfinding signage including directional signs and location maps
- Rest areas with benches or picnic tables, shade, and where possible, a drinking fountain. Rest areas should be two miles apart.
- Lighting for commuter-oriented trails where the trail connects residential and employment areas to transit stations



For specific design details of trails and amenities, refer to the “Parks and Recreation Facility Guidelines.”

### Inventory of Existing Long Distance Trails

The following table lists planned long distance stream valley and rail trails as identified in the 2009 Prince George’s County Master Plan of Transportation. The table indicates the planned overall and completed trail distance. In some cases, the overall and completed distances will include sections of trail that are not managed by the M-NCPPC.

### Existing Long Distance Hiker/Biker Trails

TRAIL	PLANNED DISTANCE (MILES)	DISTANCE COMPLETED (MILES)	SERVICE AREA	COMMENTS
Anacostia Trail	2.7	2.5	North	0.2 miles to be completed to DC
Anacostia River to WB&A Connector	8.0	1.3	North	
Back Branch Trail	3.5	1.5	Central	
Bald Hill Branch Trail	6.5	0.3	Central	
Barnaby Run Trail	1.5	0.0	South	
Burch Branch Trail	3.6	0.0	South	
Butler Branch Trail	3.1	0.4	South	
Cabin Branch Trail	9.5	0.0	Central	
Cattail Branch Trail	3.1	0.0	Central	
Charles Branch Trail	9.4	0.0	South	
Chesapeake Beach Rail Trail	14.1	0.9	Central/South	
Collington Branch Trail	8.8	1.7	Central	
Cross Creek Trail				See Little Paint Branch Trail
Folly Branch Trail	6.0	2.8	Central	
Henson Creek Trail	9.7	6.6	South	
Indian Creek Trail	1.6	1.6	North	2.8 miles Planned total
Little Paint Branch Trail	7.7	5.6	North	Includes Cross Creek Trail (1.4 miles)
Lottsford Branch Trail	5.6	0.0	Central	

TRAIL	PLANNED DISTANCE (MILES)	DISTANCE COMPLETED (MILES)	SERVICE AREA	COMMENTS
Lower Beaverdam Creek	3.1	0.0	North	
Mattawoman Creek	15.8	0.0	South	
Northeast Branch Trail	3.4	3.4	North	
Northwest Branch Trail	7.0	7.0	North	1 mile in Montgomery County
Oxon Run Trail	3.9		South	
Paint Branch Trail	5.1	4.1	North	
Patuxent River Trail - Governors Bridge to Cedar Haven	23.0	0.0	Central & South	Completed Trail See Natural Surface Trails
Pea Hill Branch	3.2	0.0	South	
Piscataway Creek Trail	14.8	0.9	South	
Ritchie Branch	2.7	0.0	Central	
Sligo Creek Trail	1.7	1.7	North	
Southwest Branch Trail	7.7	0.5	Central	
Timothy Branch Trail	4.0	0.0	South	
Tinkers Creek Trail	8.8	0.0	South	
Rhode Island Ave Trolley Trail - Greenbelt Road to Armentrout Drive	3.8	1.6	North	0.3 miles existing M-NCPPC
WB&A Trail	7.0	6.0	Central	
Western Branch Trail	16.7	0.9	Central	
Woodrow Wilson Bridge Trail- MD Line to Oxon Hill Rd	2.1	2.1	South	3.33 miles total including DC, VA, MD
<b>Total</b>	<b>238.0</b>	<b>53.4</b>		

## Recommendations to Implement and Improve Long Distance Trails

1. Acquire trail right-of-way and construct “spine” or main line trails in the Central and Southern Areas.
2. Create an interconnected network of trails in each service area that is similar to the existing

Anacostia Tributary Trails System in the Northern Area. In the Central Area, the Western Branch Trail is the major spine trail. In the Southern Trail, the Piscataway Creek and Henson will be the major spine trails.

3. Create trail branches from the main spine trails following the tributaries to the “main” stream valley park trail. For example, the Folly Branch Trail will connect to the main Western Branch Trail.
4. Connect each trail system to each other across service areas. For example, connect the Anacostia Tributary Trail System to the WB&A Trail. This connection will require connection via bike-ways that are part of the road system. Another example is the Patuxent River Trail from US 50 to Cedar Haven Park and the Chesapeake Beach Rail Trail will be the major spine trails connecting the Central Area to the Southern Area.
5. Construct trail segments or “missing links” that connect existing segments of trails as identified in the “Implementation and Funding Schedule for Missing Links along Existing Trails” table.
6. Provide supporting amenities for trails. Trailheads should be located to provide safe, convenient access to the trail and road. The trailhead should be located to provide visibility for security and to avoid adversely impacting neighbors. The trailhead should provide parking and equestrian trailer parking where appropriate, location map, directional signage, bike racks, benches, picnic areas, restrooms, and drinking fountain. Co-locating the trailhead at an existing park with these amenities is advantageous. Along the trail, provide directional signage, location maps and rest areas with benches or picnic tables. Providing interpretive signs will be appropriate in cultural, historical, or environmentally significant areas.
7. Identify trails that are used or will be used for commuting. These include trails located between residential areas and transit stations, employment areas, and universities. These trails may require additional safety features such as lighting, call boxes and cameras. Additionally, they will require after dark police patrol. The Woodrow Wilson Bridge Trail and sections of the Northwest Branch Trail in the vicinity of the West Hyattsville Metro Station have been outfitted with trail lighting and call boxes. Future candidates for designation as commuter trails include the Paint Branch Trail at the University of Maryland from Lot Four to Cherry Hill Road, and the planned trail extension to Beltsville Community Center. The University of Maryland has provided trail lighting and call boxes from US 1 to the University View apartments.
8. Identify trails that are conducive for equestrian trail riding. These trails will have wide, stable grass areas that are unimpeded by trees, utilities, and other obstructions and do not require use of the parallel asphalt trail or roads. These trails should provide trailer parking in parking lots.
9. Maintain annual funding in the Capital Improvement Program to repave long distance trails.
10. Complete long distance trails inventory and GIS attributes of existing, funded to be built by developer with or without executed recreational facilities agreement.
11. Increase and improve the type of trail information provided on the Department of Parks and Recreation website, [www.pgparcs.com](http://www.pgparcs.com).

## Implementation and Funding Schedule for Long Distance Trails

TRAIL	SERVICE AREA	LENGTH (MILES)	TIMEFRAME	COMMENTS
Chesapeake Beach Rail Trail - Walker Mill Regional Park	Central	0.5	2012-2016	Approved CIP funding
Chesapeake Beach Rail Trail - Brown Road to Brooke Road through the Brown Station Road Landfill	Central	1.5	2022 + beyond	Acquisition of trail ROW through landfill from Prince George's County is needed
Folly Branch Trail - MD 450 to Vista Gardens Shopping Center and Lakeview	Central	0.2	2012-2016	Approved CIP funding
Folly Branch Trail - Glenn Dale to MARC Station	Central	1	2017-2022	
Western Branch Trail -Watkins RP to Enterprise Park	Central	2	2022 + beyond	
Piscataway Trail - National Park Service Property	South	1	2012-2016	Approved CIP funding. NPS will design and construct per agreement
Piscataway Trail - Piscataway Road to Brandywine Road	South	4	2022 + beyond	New Trailhead Parking at MD 223 & Floral Park Road. Three acquisitions needed.

## Implementation and Funding Schedule for Missing Links along Existing Trails

TRAIL SEGMENT OR MISSING LINKS	SUBAREA	DISTANCE (MILES)	TIMEFRAME	COMMENT
Little Paint Trail - Cherry Hill Road to Beltsville Community Center	North	2	2012-2016	Approved CIP Funding
WB&A Trail - Horsepen Spur	Central	1	2012-2016	Approved CIP Funding
WB&A Trail - Patuxent River Bridge to Anne Arundel County	Central	1.5	2017-2022	Pending Alignment In Anne Arundel County
Anacostia River Trail to WB&A	Central to North	8	2022 + BEYOND	Alignment Under Study
Henson Creek Trail - Southern Regional Tech Rec Connector	South	0.5	2012-2016	Approved CIP Funding
Henson Creek Trail - Temple Hills Road to Branch Avenue Metro Station	South	2	2022 + BEYOND	
Prince George's Connector Trail - Chillum Road to Russell Street	North	0.5	2022 + BEYOND	
Rhode Island Trolley Trail - Cafritz Property	North	0.3	2022 + BEYOND	Pending Approval Development Proposal
Rhode Island Trolley Trail - Tuckerman Street to Farragut Street	North	2	2012-2016	Approved CIP Funding
Rhode Island Trolley Trail - Farragut Street to NW Branch Trail at Armentrout Drive	North	1	2022 + BEYOND	
Oxon Run - Southern Avenue Metro to Naylor Road Metro	South	1	2022 + BEYOND	Connect To Hillcrest Heights CC. Pending Completion Of Trail In DC.
Oxon Run - Forest Heights	South	0.3	2022 + BEYOND	Pending Completion Of Trail In DC
Patuxent River Trail - Across MD 214	Central	1.2	2012-2016	Pending Agreement With DNR
Patuxent River Trail - MD 4 to Chesapeake Beach Rail Trail	South	2.2	2017-2022	
Patuxent River Trail - Rogers Property to 4-H Center	Central	2.5	2012-2016	

## 2) Walking Loop Trails

A walking loop trail is typically located in a single park and is primarily used for fitness walking and running. The purpose of a loop trail is to encourage walking and should appeal to the most reluctant exerciser. Depending on its width and length, a loop trail may be attractive to bicyclists as well. Young children and their parents may enjoy bicycling shorter loops, while longer loops may be enjoyed by all. Accommodating bicycles on a loop trail is possible if the trail is wider than six feet. Every community should have access to a walking loop, and its location, visibility, and design should entice people to use it.

### Characteristics

The walking loop should be readily apparent as to its purpose and direction. It should avoid crossing busy driveways and conflicts with other facilities, activities, and park users. There is no standard length for a loop trail. It should take advantage of existing features in the park, such as ponds, views and shade, whenever possible. It may connect to long-distance trails or other paths within the park. Several opportunities exist for putting loop trails around ball fields, especially soccer and football fields. The addition of fitness equipment adds another dimension by providing an opportunity for strength and cardiovascular training. Walking loops should:

- Be six feet wide at minimum
- Have durable surface so it can be used soon after inclement weather
- Meet guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Have a high degree of visibility for safety purposes
- Feature signage with distance information
- Connect to paths from the parking area, other park facilities, sidewalks or trails
- Feature fitness equipment located either clustered and/or dispersed along the loop trail
- Offer rest area with benches and shade
- Provide access to a drinking fountain

### Inventory of Existing Walking Loop Trails

The following table lists the existing walking loop trails in the county managed by M-NCPPC.

#### Existing Walking Loop Trails

PARK NAME	DISTANCE (MILES)	SERVICE AREA	SURFACE TYPE	EXERCISE STATIONS AVAILABLE
Bedford Park	0.3	North	Asphalt	No
Birchwood City Park	0.54	South	Asphalt	No
Bladensburg Waterfront Park	0.36	North	Concrete	No
Brandywine North Keys	0.55	South	Asphalt	No
Buck Lodge Park/School	0.75	North	Asphalt	Yes
Camp Springs Park	0.12	South	Asphalt	No
Captain's Cove Park	0.4	South	Asphalt	Yes
Carsondale Park	0.1	Central	Asphalt	Yes
Cherryvale Park	0.25	North	Asphalt	No
Chestnut Hills Park	0.18	North	Asphalt	No

PARK NAME	DISTANCE (MILES)	SERVICE AREA	SURFACE TYPE	EXERCISE STATIONS AVAILABLE
Chillum Hills Park	0.16	North	Asphalt	No
College Park Woods Park	0.2	North	Asphalt	Yes
Cottage City Neighborhood Park	0.1	North	Asphalt	Yes
Daisy Lane Park	0.35	Central	Asphalt	No
Enterprise Estates Park	0.25	Central	Asphalt	No
Glenridge Community Park	0.5	North	Asphalt	Yes
Junior Tennis Champions Center	0.6	North	Various	No
Kings Grant Park	0.47	South	Asphalt	No
Lake Artemesia Conservation Area	2.6	North	Asphalt	No
Lakeland Park	0.3	North	Asphalt	Yes
Largo-Northampton Park	0.25	Central	Asphalt	No
Lincoln-Vista Park	0.3	Central	Asphalt	No
Little Washington Park	0.25	Central	Asphalt	No
Marleigh Park	0.15	Central	Asphalt	Yes
Millwood Recreation Center	0.33	Central	Asphalt	No
Northridge Park	1.2	Central	Asphalt	No
Old Port of Bladensburg Park	0.18	North	Asphalt	Yes
Parks and Recreation Administration Building	0.1	North	Flagstone	No
Peppermill Village Community Center Park	0.25	Central	Asphalt	Yes
Pheasant Run Park	0.32	North	Asphalt	No
Realtors Park at Campus Woods Park	0.25	Central	Asphalt	No
School House Pond Conservation Area	0.73	South	Boardwalk/Asphalt	No
Seat Pleasant Park	0.23	Central	Asphalt	No
Summerfield Community Park	0.62	Central	Asphalt	Yes
Sunnyside Neighborhood Park	0.32	North	Asphalt	No
Tanglewood Community Park/School	0.5	Southern	Asphalt	Yes
Tantallon North Park	0.36	South	Asphalt	No
Templeton Knolls Park School	0.2	Northern	Asphalt	No
Thomas Seabrook Park	0.25	Central	Asphalt	No
Tucker Road Athletic Complex	0.5	South	Asphalt	Yes

PARK NAME	DISTANCE (MILES)	SERVICE AREA	SURFACE TYPE	EXERCISE STATIONS AVAILABLE
University Hills Park	0.34	North	Asphalt	No
Watkins Regional Park	1.7	Central	Asphalt	No
Willow Grove Park	0.15	Central	Asphalt	No
Woodberry Forest Park	0.49	South	Asphalt	No
<b>Total</b>	<b>19.1</b>			

## Recommendations to Implement and Improve Walking Loop Trails

1. Create an annual Capital Improvement Fund to develop and rehabilitate walking loops and fitness equipment along these trails.
2. Include walking loop trails in the design of new parks and park renovation projects requiring grading permits. It will be most cost-effective to design the loop trail under one permit with the overall park project instead of creating a stand-alone project just for the loop trail.
3. In some parks, a loop trail can be completed by constructing a trail segment to join existing trails or paths. In other parks, new loop trails should be created especially around ball fields or other park amenities.
4. Add fitness equipment to existing or new walking loops when funding opportunities arise.

## Implementation and Funding Schedule for Loop Trails

PARK	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS EQUIPMENT	SERVICE AREA	TIMEFRAME	COMMENTS
Enterprise Park	Add new loop		Central	2017-2022	
Walker Mill Regional Park	Complete loop around ball-fields	Add	Central	2012-2016	Approved CIP funding for trail only
Westphalia Park	Complete loop around ball-field	Add	Central	2012-2016	Approved CIP funding for trail and fitness equipment
Mellwood Parke	Add new loop	Add	Central	2017-2022	
Green Branch Athletic Complex	Add new loop	Add	Central	2022 + beyond	
Kenilworth Park at Belair	Add new loop		Central	2022 + beyond	
Sandy Hill Creative Disposal Area	Add new loop on top of the landfill	Add	Central	2022 + beyond	
Concord Historic Site	Add new loop for art walk		Central	2012-2016	Pending Maryland Historical Trust Approval



PARK	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS EQUIPMENT	SERVICE AREA	TIMEFRAME	COMMENTS
Brownings Grove Park			North	2022 + beyond	
Calverton Park School	Complete loop		North	2022 + beyond	
South Laurel Park	Complete loop	Add	North	2017-2022	
Vansville Rec Park	Complete loop trail	Add	North	2017-2022	
Adelphi Mill -NW Branch Trail	Complete loop around ball fields	Replace	North	2017-2022	
Laurel Beltsville SAC	Replace fitness equipment		North	2012-2016	
Heurich Park	Complete loop	Add	North	2022 + beyond	
Good Luck CC	Complete loop	Add	North	2022 + beyond	
Prince George's Plaza CC	Complete loop	Add	North	2022 + beyond	Add during center addition
Riverdale Rec Park	Add new loop		North	2022 + beyond	
Colmar Manor Community Park	Complete loop around ball field	Add	North	2022 + beyond	
Kentland CC	Complete loop around ball fields	Add	North	2022 + beyond	
Accokeek East Park	Complete loop around ball field		South	2012-2017	Part of existing loop is in the parking lot
Pleasant Springs Park	Complete loop	Add	South	2017-2022	
Hillcrest Heights CC	Add new loop	Add	South	2012-2016	Approved CIP funding, in design
Southern Regional Tech Rec Center	Add new loop		South	2017-2022	
Mellwood Hills Park	Add new loop around ball field	Add	South	2012-2016	Approved CIP funding

PARK	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS EQUIPMENT	SERVICE AREA	TIMEFRAME	COMMENTS
Abbott Drive and North Barnaby Parks	Add new loop		South	2022 + beyond	
Beech Tree West Park	Add new loop	Add	South	2022 + beyond	
Cosca Regional Park	Add new loop		South	2017-2021	
Cheltenham Conservation Area	Complete loop around lake		South	2017-2021	

### 3) Natural Surface Trails

Natural surface trails serve hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians. “Natural surface” refers to the ground in situ. A well-sited and designed natural surface trail does not require additives to its surface, such as gravel or mulch. A well-designed trail provides dry passage in most conditions, and does not suffer from erosion or sediment collecting on its surface. These trails generally are part of an interconnected system of trails located in undeveloped areas of regional parks or conservation areas, such as Fairland Regional Park and Patuxent River Park. These trails afford the user an opportunity to experience nature intimately.

Natural surface trails are typically multiuse trails where hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians share the same trail. However, a natural surface trail may be designated for a single use. For example, an interpretive nature trail may be designated solely for hikers. Natural surface trails should provide:

- Trailhead amenities, including parking for cars and equestrian trailers, directional signage, maps, benches, shade, and access to drinking water
- Informational and wayfinding signage along the trails
- Access to other park facilities and connection to long distance trails where they exist

### Inventory of Existing Natural Surface Trail Systems

The following table lists the existing natural surface trail systems in the county managed by M-NCPPC.

EXISTING NATURAL SURFACE MULTI-USE TRAIL SYSTEMS			
PARK NAME	DISTANCE (MILES)	SURFACE TYPE	COMMENT
Cosca Regional Park	5.9	Natural	
Fairland Regional Park	1.7	Natural	
Patuxent River Park - Governors Bridge	2.4		
Patuxent River Park - Jug Bay	13.0	Natural	
Patuxent River Park - Queen Anne	3.3	Natural	

EXISTING NATURAL SURFACE MULTI-USE TRAIL SYSTEMS			
PARK NAME	DISTANCE (MILES)	SURFACE TYPE	COMMENT
Patuxent River Park - Marlboro Unit (Rogers Property)	1.1	Natural	
Patuxent River Park - Marlboro Unit (Swanson)	2.7	Natural	Additional trail pending
Patuxent River Park - Marlboro Unit (Sasscer)	0.0	Natural	Additional trail pending
Watkins Regional Park	8.3	Natural/Asphalt	
<b>Total</b>	<b>46.7</b>		

**Recommendations to Implement and Improve Natural Surface Trails**

1. Designate a trail manager to build and maintain natural surface trails, to develop and maintain a wayfinding sign system, to oversee volunteers, and to provide regular trail inspections. Currently, the Park Rangers have been filling this role.
2. Allocate annual operating funds to develop new and improve existing natural surface trails.
3. Provide informational and wayfinding signage for each trail system in the regional and conservation parks.
4. Provide wayfinding and informational signage for each natural surface trail system.
5. Create a map for each trail system that is printed and available on the Prince George’s County Parks website, [www.pgparcs.com](http://www.pgparcs.com).
6. Provide trail managers training in sustainable design, trail management, permitting and accessible/universal trail design.
7. Map the natural surface trail system and gather and update trail attributes for the GIS and park inventory.
8. Assess each natural surface trail for connectivity, condition, slope, erosion, hazardous conditions, user access points, trailheads, impacts to sensitive environmental or cultural resources, views and amenity needs. Plan re-routes of hazardous trail segments and address deficiencies in priority order.
9. Provide information on signs and the [www.pgparcs.com](http://www.pgparcs.com) website for the public to report maintenance concerns to the trail manager.
10. Improve amenities for equestrian trail riders.
11. Complement natural surface trails provided by other agencies such as WSSC, MD-DNR, and federal recreational lands.
12. Publicize the trails by providing locations map and trail information in brochures and at [www.pgparcs.com](http://www.pgparcs.com)

***Implementation and Funding Schedule for Natural Surface Trails***

TRAIL	DESCRIPTION	SERVICE AREA	TIMEFRAME	COMMENTS
Patuxent River Park - Queen Anne	Complete loop and spine trail across MD 214	Central	2012-2016	
Patuxent River Park - Fran Uhler	Complete connections to DNR property, Bowie State University, and WB&A Spur	Central	2017-2022	
Patuxent River Park - Marlboro Unit	Complete loop system on Swanson Property	South	2012-2016	
Patuxent River Park - Marlboro Unit	Complete loop system on Sasscer Property	South	2012-2016	
Green Branch Athletic Complex	Plan System	Central	2022 + beyond	Include in Phase 2 of park development
Cosca Regional Park	Complete system to AH Smith Tract	South	2017-2022	

**4) Water Trails**

Water trails provide boaters, motorized and/or self-propelled, a route on navigable rivers and streams. The route may include features such as boat landings or ramps, toilets, drinking water, boat storage, interpretation of natural or cultural history, directional signage, and primitive camping areas. On the longest rivers, the water trail will be multi-jurisdictional and allow opportunity for multi-day trips.

Because of the multi-jurisdictional nature of water trails, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources has coordinated the development of water trails in the state by partnering with local agencies to develop and promote water trails. The Department of Natural Resources maintains a webpage ([www.dnr.state.md.us/boating/mdwatertrails/](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/boating/mdwatertrails/)) that provides information about designated water trails in the state, including on the Patuxent, Potomac, and Anacostia Rivers.

The Patuxent River Trail will be the longest water trail in Prince George’s County. M-NCPPC owns several properties along the 55-mile stretch of river in the county. The water trail is contiguous from Governor’s Bridge Road to Chalk Point in Prince George’s County and continues to the Chesapeake Bay through southern Maryland. North of Governor’s Bridge, the river is often impassable due to downed trees. M-NCPPC has been active in developing boating facilities on parkland from Governor’s Bridge to Cedar Haven that complement the facilities available on the opposite shore in Anne Arundel County. A website and a map have been developed to provide information for the public ([www.patuxentwatertrail.org](http://www.patuxentwatertrail.org)).

There are fewer opportunities for M-NCPPC to develop boating facilities for the Potomac River Water Trail because there is much less M-NCPPC parkland along the Potomac River. Opportunities do exist at the Potomac River Waterfront Park at National Harbor and Potomac River Waterfront Conservation Area when these properties are developed with park facilities. The Kingfisher Canoe Trail is located on the Anacostia River and is managed by the Anacostia Watershed Society. The trail is approximately eight miles long from Bladensburg to the Potomac River in Washington, DC. Approximately one mile of the trail is in Prince George’s County where M-NCPPC owns the majority of the property along the river. The node of boating activity on the Anacostia River in Prince George’s County is located at the Bladensburg

Waterfront Park, where boaters will find a full range of supporting facilities.

A comprehensive guide “Anacostia River Water Trail Guide, a Voyage Through Time: From Captain John Smith to the Modern Day” is available through the Anacostia Watershed Society website [www.anacostiaaws.org](http://www.anacostiaaws.org). It provides maps, location of boater services, and historic and environmental interpretation for the entire Anacostia River.

## Inventory of Existing Water Trails

The following lists the existing water in the county.

### Existing Water Trails

NAME	DISTANCE (MILES)
Anacostia River Trail – Bladensburg Waterfront Park to DC Line	1.1
Patuxent River Trail – Governors Bridge to Chalk Point	35.5
Potomac River Trail – DC Line to Charles County Line	12.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>48.6</b>

## Recommendations to Implement and Improve Water Trails

1. Focus on improving facilities along the water trails. Consider using sustainable technologies in the design, construction and operation of facilities, especially for wastewater treatment.
2. Continue to protect the greenway corridor adjacent to water trails through park land acquisitions and conservation easements.
3. Improve interpretation of the natural, cultural and historical environment.
4. Improve wayfinding maps for water trails. Incorporate new technologies through dissemination of information, for example, by providing GPS points in informational materials to locate facilities such as boat landings.
5. Explore the feasibility of new water trails where rivers or streams are passable during the summer, when most use is anticipated and where there are locations for land based facilities (parking, restrooms, landings).

## Implementation and Funding Schedule for Water Trails

TRAIL	DESCRIPTION	SERVICE AREA	TIMEFRAME	COMMENT
Anacostia River Trail-ANA 11	Construct boat landing	North	2012-2016	Approved CIP funding
Patuxent River Trail – White’s Landing	Construct boat landing	South	2022 + beyond	
Patuxent River Trail – Cedar Haven	Construct boat ramp at Cedar Haven	South	2022 + beyond	Land acquisition needed

TRAIL	DESCRIPTION	SERVICE AREA	TIMEFRAME	COMMENT
Potomac River Trail – Potomac River Waterfront Park (National Harbor)	Construct pier and boat landing	South	2012-2016	Approved CIP funding
Potomac River Trail – Potomac River Waterfront Park (National Harbor)	Construct boat ramp	South	2022 + beyond	

## 3.5.8 Regional Centers

### *Analysis of Indoor Facilities*

#### *A. Community Input Related to Indoor Spaces*

The *Parks & Recreation: 2010 and Beyond* project included a statistically-valid survey, review of other existing surveys, focus groups, public meetings, and input from staff and other key stakeholders. The following sections highlight key points related to indoor facilities and aquatics facilities.

#### **Public Meetings**

Interestingly, specific facilities were not overly emphasized in the public meeting input. Some people did request a pool or center near their home, but there was not overwhelming consensus. In terms of facilities, the top desires related to indoor facilities were:

- Develop more “destination” facilities (like the Prince George’s Sports & Learning Complex).
- Renovate aging facilities.
- Add more indoor spaces as communities grow.
- Improve fitness facilities.

#### **Focus Groups**

A summary of the comments from the broad-based and specific focus groups included desires to:

- Improve transportation and access to community centers and park and recreation events outside of neighborhoods. For people who lack transportation, access to services and facilities is a barrier. Seniors, in particular, expressed the need for transportation.
- Develop a more thorough understanding of the demographics (including the cultures) of the area surrounding community centers to better integrate programs that meet the interests and needs of the residents, and create facilities that reflect the cultural mixture of the county.
- Have more facilities available to them (expressed by many residents from the southern subareas).
- Improve senior centers.
- Improve signage and wayfinding signs to facilities.
- Use community centers as information centers to find more government services.
- Focus on partnerships with schools, neighboring businesses, private, and faith-based organizations.

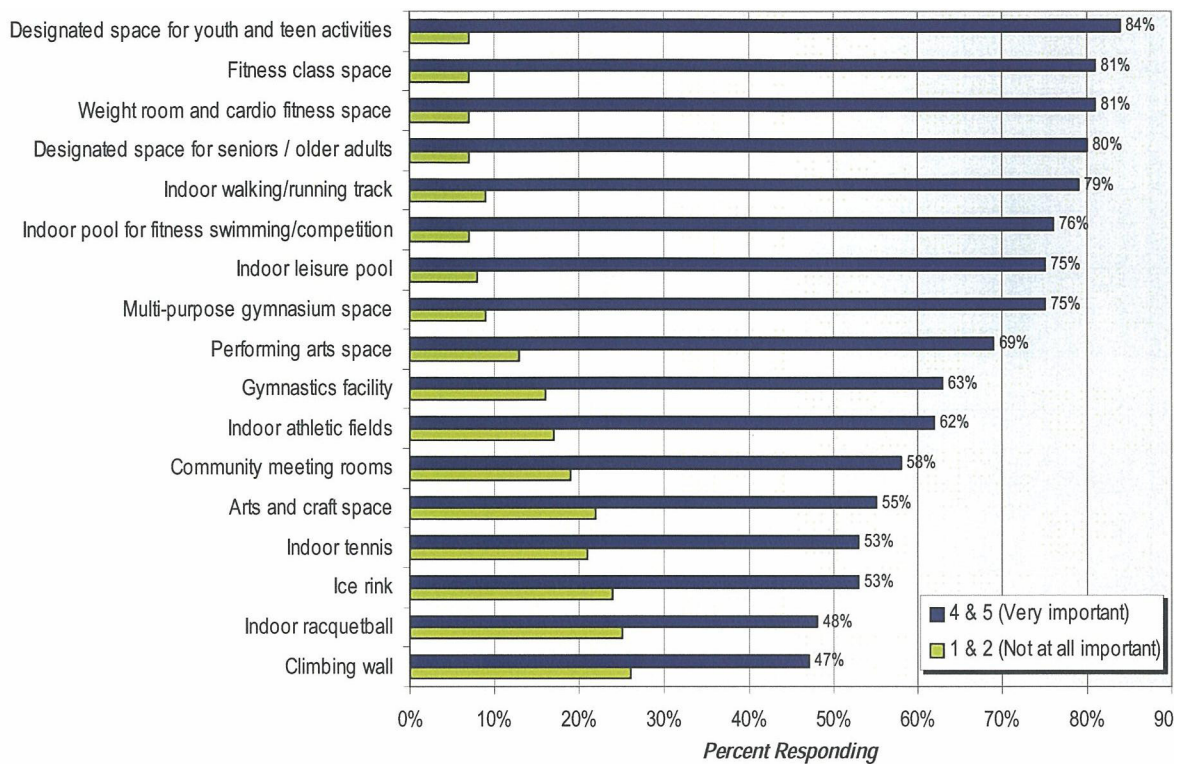
## Statistically-Valid Survey

The primary reasons given for not using facilities more often include:

- Perception of safety and security issues.
- Time-related issues such as lack of time or conflicts with hours of operation.
- Low awareness of the program or facility offerings.

These points are very important to keep in mind during facilities planning, as they affect programming, staffing, control points, marketing, signage, and design for safety. The location of facilities and lack of transportation to facilities did come up, but they were ranked 8th and 11th respectively – not at the top of the list.

Surveyed Most Important Indoor Facilities to Add/Expand/Improve in order of ranking:



Indoor Programs reported in 2010 and Beyond as most needed (in descending order):

- Fitness and wellness programs
- Walking
- General skills education (computers, cooking, babysitting)
- Nature and environmental programs
- Cultural and arts programs
- Swimming programs/lessons
- Children and youth activities
- History programs
- Community events and festivals

- Volunteer programs
- Day camp and playground programs
- Programs for seniors and older adults

Given a hypothetical \$100 to allocate for overall parks and recreation priorities, survey respondents replied that they would give \$20 to community centers, \$15 to sports facilities, and \$8 to additional programs.

### Subarea Analysis by Survey

Across subareas, the most important needs for indoor facilities were similar with minor variations in order. Spaces for youth and teen activities ranked highest in all subareas. Detailed information regarding each subarea’s findings can be found in the **Volume 1: Needs and Resource Assessment** document.

Surveyed Most Important Needs For Indoor Facilities Space by Subarea					
Subarea	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Northeast	Youth/Teen	Seniors	Indoor Track	Indoor Pool	Fitness Class
Northwest*	Youth/Teen	Indoor Pool	Weight/Cardio Fitness	Fitness Class	Indoor Track
Central West	Youth/Teen	Indoor Track	Indoor Pool	Seniors	Weight/Cardio
Central East	Youth/Teen	Indoor Track	Weight/Cardio Fitness	Fitness Class	Seniors
Southwest	Youth/Teen	Seniors	Weight/Cardio Fitness	Indoor Track	Fitness Class
South	Youth/Teen	Indoor Track	Weight/Cardio Fitness	Indoor Pool	Fitness Class
<i>*Note - for purposes of the survey, Northwest A and Northwest B were combined.</i>					

It is important to note that spaces for youth/teens are almost universally reported across the nation as important, but this is often a “politically-correct” response from adults – “we want spaces for our kids to go.” However, there is a strong difficulty in simply building designated spaces for teens. It is not as simple as “build it and they will come” like most other types of spaces. Youth and teen spaces must be heavily programmed and supervised in a way that makes the youth/teen demographic want to use them.

### Key Components for Community Centers

Spaces for youth and teens, along with spaces for seniors, can generally be accommodated in rooms designed for multi-purposes. It is not necessarily a design difference, but can simply be a decorating and programming difference in use of multi-purpose space. Therefore, key components for centers across the county include:

- Multi-purpose meeting rooms
- Gyms
- Fitness and Cardio spaces
- Indoor Pools
- Indoor Walking Tracks (typically located above gyms or around building perimeters).

### B. Categories of Current Indoor Spaces

In looking at indoor spaces, it is important to first identify what to include in the analysis. The M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George’s County manages a large array of indoor facilities.

For purposes of this analysis, the facilities being addressed include those that are owned and managed



by the Department (including a few future facilities that have already been planned and funded), and that offer public space for recreation, programs and/or public rental activities such as birthday parties or civic meetings. This current classification system includes 1,024,252 square feet of space consisting of:

- Three “nature centers” (specific use but also include multi-purpose space for programming.)
- One stand-alone designated “senior activity center.”
- Three regional “specialty sports centers” with multi-purpose facilities.
- Twenty-six “recreation centers” (smaller centers, typically with only multi-purpose programming and/or community meeting spaces.)
- Forty-two “community centers” (typically have multi-purpose spaces and some other programming or sports spaces) – these are the primary centers used for programming and drop-in activities.

Note that designated historical spaces used for interpretation and/or specialty rentals, specialty athletic facilities such as ice arenas and tennis centers, and stand-alone cultural arts centers were not included in the analysis, as they are not typically available for general programming and multi-purpose uses.

### Indoor Centers

The following is a listing of current indoor centers managed by M-NCPPC:

Nature Centers		Sq Ft
O96	Watkins Nature Center	10,080
Q97	Clearwater Nature Center	10,851
N61	Mt. Rainier Nature/Recreation Center	6,779

Senior Activity Centers		Sq Ft
S26	Beltsville Laurel Senior Center	22,000

Special Sports Facilities		Sq Ft
M68	Fairland Athletic Center	24,475
P92	Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex	210,000
	South County Sports & Technology Learning Center (UNDER PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION)	36,410

<b>Recreation Centers</b>		<b>Sq Ft</b>
N63	Adelphi Manor Community Recreation Center	1,570
N50	Adelphi Neighborhood Park/School	2,184
O09	Ardmore Neighborhood Recreation Center	2,785
Q16	Birchwood City Community Recreation Center	1,989
P60	Bradbury Community Recreation Center	1,507
P20	Brooke Road Neighborhood Recreation Center	3,300
S13	Edmonston Neighborhood Recreation Center	1,900
Q36	Fort Foote Neighborhood Recreation Center	1,664
Q42	Fort Washington Forest Neighborhood Park/School	2,728
N68	Green Meadows Community Recreation Center	1,981
P30	Jesse J. Warr, Jr. Neighborhood Recreation Center	1,577
P29	Kentland Neighborhood Recreation Center	1,577
N71	Lane Manor Community Recreation Center	1,507
Q14	Lynnalán Neighborhood Recreation Center	1,900
Q66	Marlow Heights Community Center Park	10,811
P23	Millwood Neighborhood Recreation Center	1,900
N61	Mt. Rainier Neighborhood Recreation Center	1,900
M14	Oakcrest Neighborhood Recreation Center	1,600
N72	Parklawn Community Recreation Center	1,525
N73	Riverdale Community Recreation Center	1,498
O41	Seabrook Neighborhood Recreation Center	1,507
M61	T. Howard Duckett Community Recreation Center	5,485
M15	Vansville Neighborhood Recreation Center	4,083
N42	Vera Cope Weinbach Neighborhood Recreation Center	1,950
N47	West Lanham Hills Neighborhood Park	2,785
N49	Woodlawn Neighborhood Recreation Center	1,507

<b>Community Centers</b>		<b>Sq Ft</b>
R58	Baden	7,000
M62	Beltsville	15,718
N75	Berwyn	8,480
N18	Bladensburg	14,055
O58	Bowie	18,840
P44	Cedar Heights	22,000
S64	College Park	16,906
P65	Columbia Park	6,705
M58	Deerfield Run	12,000
	Fort Washington Forest (UNDER CONSTRUCTION)	22,300
Q43	Glassmanor	9,780
P61	Glenarden	14,055
O55	Glenn Dale	16,800
O64	Good Luck	10,300
Q96	Harmony Hall	9,725
Q77	Hillcrest Heights	24,080
O69	Huntington	20,000
P66	John E Howard	10,200
P68	Kentland	9,173
O60	Lake Arbor	15,200
S58	Langley Park	19,355
Q66	Marlow Heights	10,811
N58	North Brentwood	10,066
	North Forestville (UNDER CONSTRUCTION)	16,300
P62	Oakcrest - William Hall ES	40,000
P63	Palmer Park	10,948
R20	Patuxent	11,000

P64	Peppermill	9,698
V70	Perrywood-Kettering	25,494
Q72	Potomac Landing	4,000
N59	Prince George's Plaza	13,065
S10	Rollingcrest-Chillum	12,410
P67	Seat Pleasant	23,000
O65	South Bowie	22,000
	South Clinton (UNDER DESIGN)	22,000
Q70	Stephen Decatur	13,196
P50	Suitland - Samuel Massie ES	40,000
Q67	Temple Hills	12,819
Q68	Tucker Road	10,725
R64	Upper Marlboro	14,950
M26	Vansville School	4,083
P38	William Beanes	9,700
	<b>Total SF</b>	<b>1,024,252</b>

### ***C. Space Utilization, Programming, and Participation***

Most of the recreation buildings are less than 5,000 square feet, and many are not used for programming. There are some opportunities for classes at these centers, but they are primarily used just as neighborhood meeting spaces. The community centers are more like multi-purpose recreation centers, but many are still very small, and feature primarily multi-purpose meeting spaces, classrooms or gyms.

#### **Trends in the Industry Related to Indoor Spaces**

There are many trends in the national parks and recreation industry that inform the analysis of the indoor spaces. The following are a few key trends that should be considered in planning.

The current national trend is toward a “one-stop” facility to serve all ages. Large, multi-purpose regional centers help increase cost recovery, promote retention, and encourage cross-use. Amenities that are becoming typical are:

- Multi-purpose, large regional centers (65,000 to 125,000+ sq. ft.) for all ages and abilities. This design saves on staff costs, encourages retention and participation, and saves on operating expenses due to economies of scale.
- Leisure and therapeutic pools.
- Weight and cardiovascular equipment.

- Interactive game rooms.
- Nature centers, outdoor recreation, and education centers.
- Regional playgrounds for all ages.
- Indoor walking tracks.
- Themed décor.
- Gymnasium space.
- Green design techniques and certifications such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®). In a recent survey, 52 percent of the recreation-industry survey respondents indicated they were willing to pay more for green design knowing it would reduce utility costs and reduce or eliminate the negative impact of buildings on the environment and occupants.

*Recreation Management* magazine stated in the June 2008 *State of the Industry Report* that the following list includes the most popular amenities planned to be added to recreation facilities:

- Bleachers and seating
- Climbing walls
- Playgrounds
- Park structures, such as shelters and restroom buildings
- Dog parks
- Fitness centers
- Splash play areas
- Trails and open spaces, such as gardens and natural areas
- Concession areas
- Classrooms and meeting rooms

The *Recreation Management* report indicated that the top 10 program options most commonly planned for addition over the next three years are:

1. Programs for active older adults
2. Day and summer camps
3. Nutrition and diet counseling
4. Educational programs
5. Holidays and other special events
6. Fitness programs
7. Environmental education
8. Sports tournaments and races
9. Mind-body balance
10. Individual sports activities

Additional trends related to participation and programming can be found in the **Volume 1: Needs and Resource Assessment** document provided as part of the *Parks & Recreation: 2010 & Beyond* project.

## Current Space Usage

To analyze how much space an agency needs, it is important to evaluate current uses of space. Most of the programmed and drop-in (card-scan) use for the Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County occurs in the Community Centers, so the bulk of this analysis is focusing on those centers. The Department uses SMARTlink to capture registration and card-scan data for the Community

Centers, as shown in the following chart. It is important to note that not all centers capture drop-in usage in the same way, so this variance must be considered.

### ***Key Findings on Community Center Usage***

To examine the system overall, it is important to look more closely at several factors that the usage chart portrays:

- For drop-in usage (card scans), only 41 to 71 percent of the participants are from within the nearby service area of the centers. The high of 71 percent is in the Northwest B Subarea, which is the most densely populated subarea with one of the lowest average incomes.
- For registered activities, only 21 to 30 percent of participants are using the centers closest to their homes. This means that participants are either driving or using other means of transportation to access centers that are not the closest to their homes. Appendix A includes a complete set of geo-coded maps indicating where participants are coming from based on their registration data. This analysis suggests that the usage of most centers is not primarily neighborhood-focused.
- It is acknowledged that many centers are not consistently tracking drop-in usage, especially for spectators and/or lower income neighborhoods where youth may not have their ID cards. It would be helpful to focus on implementing a consistent set of policies and procedures for tracking drop-in participation for future analysis.
- It is unknown from available data why participants are driving to centers farther away from their homes. A detailed study of the centers, components within those centers, and surveys of participants would help to identify the reasons behind this trend, and help to plan future centers.

## Current Community Center Drop-In and Registered Usage

Sub-Area	Community Center	Sq ft	Individual Card Scans FY07-09					Registrants FY08-09	
			FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	total	% in service area	Registrations FY2008-FY2009	% in service area
NW A	Berwyn	8,480	10312	11486	17139	38,937	41%	474	20%
NW A	College Park	16,906	409	500	1371	2,280	21%	1,298	8%
NW A	Langley Park	19,355	1032	1061	2516	4,609	71%	520	36%
NW A	Prince Georges Plaza	13,065	15815	17948	26953	60,716	31%	666	26%
NW A	Rollingcrest-Chillum	12,410	7693	15989	15238	38,920	45%	1,186	32%
		70,216				average:	41%	average:	24%
NE	Beltsville	15,718	19725	20870	20260	60,855	58%	1,678	42%
NE	Deerfield Run	12,000	2094	1457	1485	5,036	76%	1,089	63%
NE	Good Luck	10,300	13030	13376	12598	39,004	55%	2,424	40%
NE	Huntington	20,000	5622	3823	3253	12,698	51%	1,001	17%
NE	Vansville School	4,083			7192	7,192	0%	267	0%
		62,101				average:	48%	average:	32%
NW B	Bladensburg	14,055	3308	5482	9305	18,095	68%	941	38%
NW B	North Brentwood	10,066	5307	3700	6492	15,499	74%	267	23%
		24,121				average:	71%	average:	30%
CW	Cedar Heights	22,000	3753	5262	7940	16,955	34%	632	12%
CW	Columbia Park	6,705	11	1899	3187	5,097	21%	407	4%
CW	Glenarden	14,055	530	1170	1677	3,377	52%	978	15%
CW	John E Howard	10,200	3956	1303	5160	10,419	77%	389	41%
CW	Kentland	9,173	97	1083	469	1,649	76%	344	28%
CW	North Forestville	16,300							
CW	Oakcrest	40,000	7196	6838	10690	24,724	38%	641	34%
CW	Palmer Park	10,948	747	819	2796	4,362	72%	592	18%
CW	Peppermill	9,698	816	1874	3122	5,812	64%	730	27%
CW	Seat Pleasant	23,000	4913	5494	5469	15,876	24%	815	9%
		162,079				average:	51%	average:	21%
CE	Bowie	18,840	5339	21750	21644	48,733	43%	3,025	25%
CE	Glenn Dale	16,800	11819	9901	9517	31,237	24%	2,373	30%
CE	Lake Arbor	15,200	17636	18373	21149	57,158	41%	3,481	27%
CE	Patuxent	11,000	417	583	514	1,514	69%	648	22%
CE	Perrywood-Kettering	25,494	7648	8849	16797	33,294	38%	2,690	28%
CE	South Bowie	22,000	5617	3637	3828	13,082	53%	485	33%
CE	Upper Marlboro	14,950	18868	8853	5860	33,581	57%	677	49%
		124,284				average:	46%	average:	30%
S	Baden	7,000	2488	2313	3534	8,335	61%	448	42%
S	Fort Washington	22,300							
S	Harmony Hall	9725	18584	19935	19377	57,896	26%	2,274	13%
S	Potomac Landing	4,000	1968	346	1937	4,251	61%	903	38%
S	South Clinton	22,000							
S	Stephen Decatur	13,196	2141	3807	8176	14,124	64%	1,834	42%
S	Tucker Road	10,725	9555	12436	18649	40,640	20%	1,705	14%
		88,946				average:	46%	average:	30%
SW	Glassmanor	9,780	1650	3297	9643	14,590	82%	204	65%
SW	Hillcrest Heights	24,080	18950	11708	1136	31,794	41%	949	28%
SW	Marlow Heights	10,811	10659	11820	18864	41,343	24%	1,372	13%
SW	Suitland	40,000	9518	8015	9225	26,758	40%	1,601	24%
SW	Temple Hills	12,819	11531	15946	18951	46,428	49%	3,728	27%
SW	William Beanes	9,700	797	149	423	1,369	34%	408	25%
		107,190				average:	45%	average:	30%
CW	PGS&LC	210,000	126778	126621	132633	386,032	N/A	13,108	N/A
NE	Fairland	24,475	67335	75380	83785	226,500	N/A	9,028	N/A

## D. Square Footage Analysis

Currently, there are no nationally accepted standards for the level of service of indoor centers. One type of analysis that is fairly common is to look at Square Footage per Population (SF/Pop) as a way to determine how much indoor space a community needs. Typically, communities range from 1-2 SF/population, with larger older systems having lower numbers and newer suburban systems (especially in the west and colder climates) having higher numbers. For example, Colorado has a relatively high ratio, probably the highest in the nation, above 2.3 SF per population for most communities (except for Denver with its older and more urban system). Cities like New York and Boston are on the very low end. Cumulative data for all cities is not yet available but there are organizations studying and assembling this information for comparative analysis in the future.

The following chart analyzes SF/population for the county overall by subarea, and as compared to some other communities' standards. This SF includes the community centers and the specialty sports centers, but does not include recreation buildings or other centers.

### Square Footage Analysis

Subarea	2007* Population	SF of Ctrs.	SF/pop.
NW A	101,214	70,216	0.7
NE	119,830	86,576	0.7
NW B	102,760	24,121	0.2
CW	101,228	372,079	3.7
CE	165,278	124,284	0.8
S	139,868	88,946	0.6
SW	98,592	107,190	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>828,770</b>	<b>873,412</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>2040 Pop.**</b>	<b>992,701</b>	<b>1,091,971</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>SF needed to maintain current LOS</b>		<b>218,559</b>	
<b>Comparative Target SF/Pop Standards</b>			
Arlington County, VA			2.0
Brookline, MA (Boston)			1.0
Denver, CO			1.2
Washington DC			1.2
<b>SF Needed 2040 for 1.4 SF/Pop</b>	<b>1,389,781</b>	<b>397,080</b>	<b>1.4</b>

\* 2007 population provided by U.S. Census by subarea

\*\* 2040 projected population provided by M-NCPPC

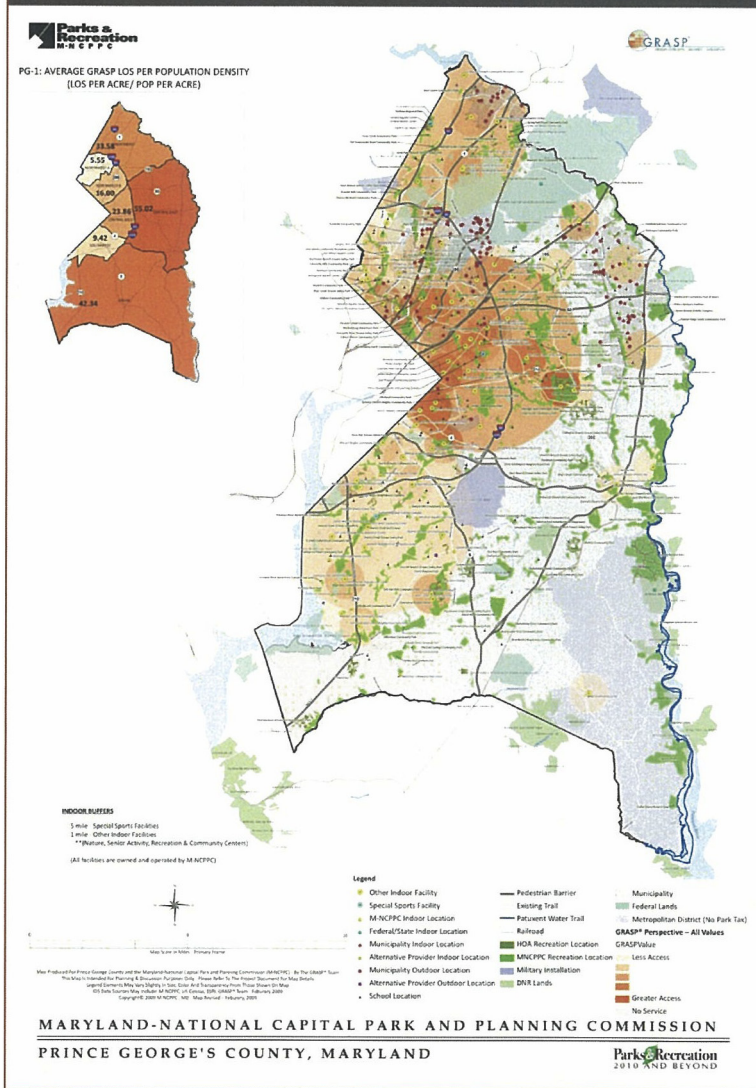


This analysis indicates that to maintain LOS at current levels, the county will need to add 218,559 SF of space by 2040. If a modest increase in service standards is desired (to 1.4 SF/Pop), 397,080 SF should be added. At an approximate cost of \$275 per square foot, this amounts to a cost of \$109 million in 2009 dollars. Note that \$275 per square foot is a standard conceptual cost for building general recreational facilities in 2009, but specialized facilities such as aquatics areas may be higher and these estimates will need to be adjusted for inflation in future years.

### ***E. Geographic Location and Access to Indoor Facilities***

Another type of analysis for indoor spaces includes a review of how residents are receiving service for indoor spaces. This project included Composite Values Level of Service Analysis using the Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Process (GRASP®) method. The following analysis map, *Perspective G* (see below), includes a geographic-based service analysis provided by existing indoor facilities, with a one-mile buffer for nature, senior, recreation, and community centers, and a five-mile buffer for the three specialty sports facilities. A full size 36"x54" map is available from the Park Planning and Development Division. Darker shades show where service levels are higher, and lighter shades and gray areas show the parts of the county that have lower or no service from indoor facilities.

PERSPECTIVE G: NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESS TO INDOOR FACILITIES



**PERSPECTIVE G**

The Composite-Values Level of Service Analysis also allows us to look at percentages of areas that are being served. From this analysis, the percentage of residents that are receiving service within one mile of their home varies by subarea from a low of 15.6 percent in the South subarea, to a high of 94.9 percent within the Northwest B subarea.

In addition, the smaller inset map on *Perspective G* looks not only at absolute Level of Service, but also adjusts it for population density (level of service per acre/population per acre).

SUB-AREA	Percentage of sub-area within identified service of indoor facility
South	15.6%
Southwest	77.0%
Central West	84.1%
Central East	36.4%
Northeast	45.6%
Northwest A	92.8%
Northwest B	94.9%
<b>County</b> (in M-NCPPC tax area)	<b>43.2%</b>

SUB-AREA	Average LOS per Population Density
South	42.34
Southwest	9.42
Central West	23.86
Central East	55.02
Northeast	33.58
Northwest A	5.55
Northwest B	16.00
<b>County -wide</b>	<b>35.30</b>

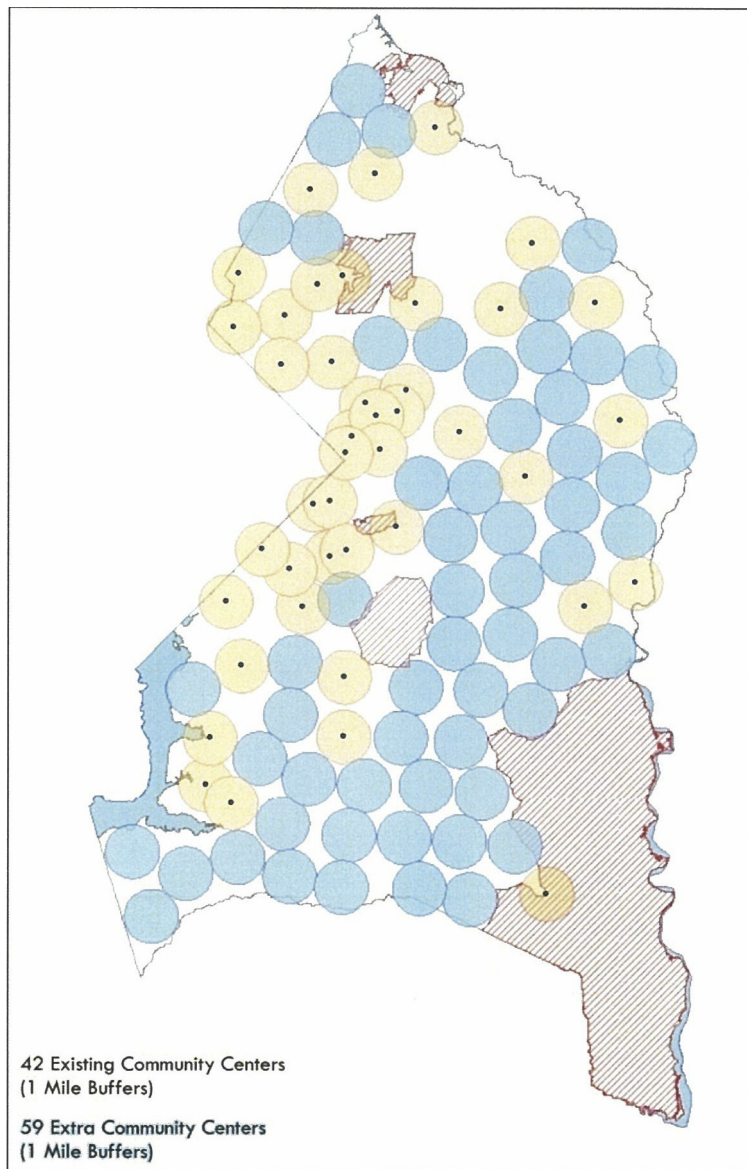
Note that these scores represent a quantified numeric value for the indoor components analyzed. Details on this scoring process are available in the **Volume 1: Needs and Resource Assessment** document provided as part of the *Parks & Recreation: 2010 & Beyond* project.

When adjusted for population densities, the South subarea is actually second highest in provision of service, due to the area’s low population density, while Northwest A, Northwest B, and the Southwest have the lowest levels.

### **F. Analysis of Neighborhood Access to Indoor Facilities**

Historically, there has been a strong desire to locate recreation and community center spaces within neighborhoods, and often there is an anecdotal and perhaps political expectation that all residents desire a center to which they can walk. The majority of residents that are using any given community center are driving there from other neighborhoods, often due to the specific programming offered at that center. It is also apparent that most of the centers are smaller, less than 25,000 square feet.

An additional analysis was performed to determine how many centers would need to be built under the current provision of smaller neighborhood centers with a goal of one mile access for all residents. Staff ran an analysis map to examine the current approximate coverage and what the coverage would need to be. The following graphic shows both current (orange) and projected future service buffers (blue) to cover the county in this type of model.



Note that this is not a precise exercise, but it does give a very rough estimate. To cover the county with centers within one mile of each resident (excluding non-district areas), an additional approximately 59 community centers would need to be built. With a current average of about 25,000 SF per center at \$275 per SF cost, this would amount to needing a capital outlay of \$405,625,000 in 2009 dollars.

### ***Recommendations for the Future Provision of Indoor Facilities***

Based on the findings and the analysis in the previous sections, there are strong indicators that support a regional center approach, including:

- Desire from the community for increased facility provision for the future. This includes a desire for equitable distribution of indoor facilities across the county.

- An industry trend to provide larger multi-purpose regional centers. The most important key components of indoor centers identified include:
  - Multi-purpose classrooms for programming for all ages
  - Gyms
  - Fitness classes, cardio and weight rooms
  - Indoor pools
  - Indoor walking tracks
- The majority of program registrants and a significant amount of drop-in participants are not using the centers closest to their homes, but are driving or taking other forms of transportation to other centers.
- Based on basic financial calculations, a continuation of the current and historic model is not a feasible way to provide a similar level of service throughout the county as the population grows over the next 30 years.
- Based on the current center average of approximately 25,000 square feet per center, provision of similar centers within one mile of all residents for each neighborhood that does not have service now would cost approximately \$405 million in 2009 dollars.
- Using Square Footage analysis, this study indicates that to maintain LOS at current levels, the county will need to add 218,559 square feet by 2040. If a modest increase in service standard is desired (to 1.4 SF/Pop), 397,080 square feet should be added. At an approximate cost of \$275 per SF, this amounts to an approximate cost of \$109 million in 2009 dollars.
- The current parks/schools partnership model has been successful, and there is support to expand this model.
- There is not enough information known about the qualitative and functional aspects of the existing centers, or the reason that participants are using centers that are farther away from their homes in many instances. A detailed analysis of center by center users and quality of functional spaces beyond the information collected thus far could help to identify further which programs and spaces are causing the most draw.

Research shows that larger multi-purpose recreation centers have higher participation rates, greater cross-use by all ages, higher retention and frequency of use, along with higher rates of cost recovery, especially in larger urban communities. Current practices in building public recreation centers include attention to potential revenue, control points, safety, and maximum efficient use of public subsidy dollars. It is DPR's recommendation that the county should move toward a Regional Center model and eliminate the Neighborhood Center model. The Regional Center model would create a more sustainable system, while still providing the types of facilities, programming and services desired by customers in a convenient centralized location.

### ***Priority Location Areas for New Indoor Facilities***

To look at future potential priority locations of regional centers, a summary of key known subarea indicators has been compiled:

Sub Area	2007 Population*	SF of Ctrs	SF/pop.	% w/in 1 mile	LOS pop density	LOS-Pop Gaps	**Pop Growth	Priority for new facilities
Northwest A	101,214	70,216	0.7	92.8%	5.55	no	14%	Secondary
Northeast	119,830	86,576	0.7	45.6%	33.58	yes	8%	Secondary
Northwest B	102,760	24,121	0.2	94.9%	16.00	no	4%	Higher
Central West	101,228	372,079	3.7	84.1%	23.86	no	3%	Lower
Central East	165,278	124,284	0.8	36.4%	55.02	yes	23%	Higher
South	139,868	88,946	0.6	15.6%	42.34	yes	29%	Higher
Southwest	98,592	107,190	1.1	77.0%	9.42	no	6%	Secondary
<b>Total</b>	<b>828,770</b>	<b>873,412</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>43.2%</b>	<b>35.30</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>12%</b>	

\*2007 population provided by U.S. Census by subarea

\*\*2040 projected population growth provided by M-NCPPC

### Northwest A

While this subarea has the lowest LOS per population, with a moderate anticipated growth rate and a high percentage of population located within a one-mile radius, this subarea is a secondary priority for new facilities. A detailed analysis of current facilities can guide renovation priorities.

### Northeast

This subarea has a lower SF/pop and a moderate lower growth rate. There are some geographic gaps indicated, but this also has a large amount of non-residential zoning. This area is a secondary priority for new facilities. A detailed analysis of current facilities can guide renovation priorities.

### Northwest B

While there is good coverage of LOS from a geographic standpoint, this area has the lowest SF/pop. Though there are centers, they are very small. This area is a higher priority for new facilities and renovations. There is not much land available, so this subarea may be higher priority for renovation of certain facilities to make them larger, or potentially re-purposing or closing other facilities to minimize geographic LOS overlay. A detailed analysis of current facilities can guide renovation priorities, and a detailed feasibility study and business planning for new facilities can guide future space planning.

### Central West

This subarea has lower geographic gaps, a low projected growth rate, and the highest SF/pop. This area is lower in priority for new facilities. As in Northwest B, there are a lot of small centers that may benefit from remodeling and potential co-location. A detailed analysis of current facilities can guide renovation priorities.

### Central East

This subarea has a high gap in geographic location, high growth, and lower SF/pop. It is higher priority for new facilities.

### South

This area has the largest gap in geographic coverage and a very low SF/pop. This subarea has more rural zoning, and several areas that are not in the District. It is higher priority for new facilities, and would benefit most from larger regional facilities.

## Southwest

This subarea has a moderate growth rate, a moderate SF/pop, and a lower LOS per population. It is secondary priority for new facilities. A detailed analysis of current facilities can guide renovation priorities.

### *Summary of Recommendations for Indoor Facilities*

Based on the findings, analysis, and key indicators, the following recommendations are suggested.

#### Strategy

Implement a Level of Service Model that produces an equivalent mix of indoor facilities throughout the county and ensures sustainable operations and maintenance.

#### Objective 1:

Primarily establish a regional indoor recreation centers model that includes multi-purpose, multi-generational functions, and a regional Level of Service.

#### Actions:

- For new facilities, focus on providing regional recreation/community centers with the key identified components (e.g. multi-purpose classroom and programming spaces, gyms, fitness facilities, indoor aquatics, and other spaces). The following chart gives an example of a potential regional center at \$275 per SF cost.

<b>Sample Medium-sized Regional Multi-Purpose Recreation Center</b>	
<b>Components</b>	<b>SF</b>
2 classrooms	2,000
wet class/party room	1,000
aquatics	15,000
2 gyms	14,000
cardio fitness	3,500
weights	3,000
fitness/dance	3,000
child care	1,500
support space/storage	15,000
offices	10,000
<b>Total SF</b>	<b>68,000</b>
cost @ \$275 SF	\$ 18,700,000

Note that other components may be added to each center, such as walking tracks, catering kitchens, performing or visual arts space, climbing walls or other specialty facilities, as deemed appropriate at each location. Co-location of components is desired whenever possible to create a regional draw.

- Conduct detailed feasibility, siting, and schematic design studies for each regional center.
- The following subareas have the highest identified priority for additional regional centers: Northwest B, Central East, and South. Placing new regional centers within these subareas will also increase LOS in adjacent subareas.
- Planning for all of these centers should include a detailed site analysis, feasibility studies, busi-

ness and management planning, along with an operational pro-forma prior to completion of schematic and construction documents to achieve desired cost recovery. Sizes for the centers can be adjusted for the specific site and revenue goals, but should be between 60,000 to 80,000 square feet at a minimum.

**Objective 2:**

Using this additional detailed information, develop and adopt a master plan for the identification and acquisition of sites for the new key regional recreation facility and maintenance components.

**Actions:**

- Set an acceptable goal for SF/pop for the county. A range of 1.3 to 1.4 square feet per population is recommended.
- Focus on locating three to five regional multi-purpose recreation/community centers in the priority and potentially secondary focus subareas. At an average of 70,000 square feet per center, total capital outlay will be approximately \$60 to \$109 million to meet these regional county-wide goals. Level of service will increase substantially and equitably, but at a much lower cost (approximately 25 percent of the cost) than if the current smaller community center model is continued. Operational and maintenance costs will also be much lower.

2040 Population	Total SF with 3 new ctrs.	SF/pop	Total SF with 5 new ctrs.	SF/Pop
992,701	1,300,000	1.3	1,425,000	1.4
Cost at \$275 SF		\$57,750,000		\$109,190,000

- Focus on co-location of components and potential partnerships, including those with schools or other organizations, to enhance the reach, operations, and minimize financial impacts whenever possible.
- Conduct detailed feasibility and schematic design studies for any designated new or renovated facilities.
- Identify site options with a regional and transportation access focus.

**Objective 3:**

In subareas where level of service enhancements are not accomplished through the addition of regional centers, enhance current community center provision and establish additional community centers, if needed.

**Actions:**

- Enhance and enlarge existing community centers first and include co-location of more of the key components, e.g., those spaces that provide multi-purpose programming spaces (especially a gym and space for youth and/or senior activities.) Conduct a detailed study of the users and functionality of the existing centers to determine priorities for remodel and renovations.
- Determine other providers of community center-type spaces. This can include rooms and spaces open for public programming in libraries, municipal buildings, schools, and other private and non-profit providers.
- Seek to have community center-type programming spaces located within one-mile of all county residents in areas designated for higher density development, especially in the vicinity of metro stations. This does not mean that the Department must provide this space, but the Department



can facilitate access to spaces owned by other providers specifically for programming and public gathering purposes.

**Objective 4:**

Address other specialty indoor centers separately on a regional basis including nature centers, historic centers, stand-alone specialty functions (such as a tennis center or performing arts center.)

**Actions:**

- Evaluate any natural or historic resource acquisition for the potential location of a nature center or historic center.
- Co-locate specialty centers with regional centers whenever possible.
- Consider the location of one regional teen/youth center to act as a primary hub for youth and teen activities in the county. This could be co-located or stand-alone, perhaps in a remodeled existing community center, as part of a school partnership, or as a repurposed other type of building.

### 3.5.9 Pools

*The Parks & Recreation: 2010 and Beyond* project was a strategic planning and visioning effort for the Department overall. During the initial information gathering stages and community input, pools were not identified as key issues. They were in the top 10 components requested, but did not overwhelmingly out-rank other components such as trails, indoor facilities, and other standard amenities, which are more highly desired. Therefore, specific analysis of aquatics components was not performed as the standard analysis and recommendations process for the project.

During the presentations of the draft plan, it was identified that there had been additional focus on pools from some segments of the resident populations and key decision-makers. Therefore, as part of a value-added portion of the project, an outline of the analysis that can be made from the tools created and made available during the *Parks & Recreation: 2010 and Beyond* project is included, along with suggestions for how this and any other component which becomes a priority in the future can be addressed with these tools now in place.

#### A. Community Input

##### Statistically-Valid Survey

There were several questions on the survey related to pools, both indoor and outdoor. As described in the section on indoor facilities, pools are in the top amenities that residents want in indoor centers.

- Overall, 76 percent responded that an indoor pool for fitness and competitive swimming is important, and 25 percent put it in the top three most important components.
- Seventy-five percent responded that an indoor leisure pool is important, and 21 percent put it in the top three.
- For outdoor pools, 72 percent stated it was important, and 19 percent put pools in the top three components.
- By subarea, outdoor pools ranked as the 6th to 8th most important amenity, while indoor pools ranked from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> most important.

## Ranking Of Pools In Importance Relative To Other Amenities

Sub Area	Outdoor		Indoor	
	Rank	%	Rank	%
Northeast	8th	15%	4th	26%
Northwest*	9th	12%	2nd	27%
Central West	8th	19%	3rd	29%
Central East	7th	18%	6th	22%
Southwest	7th	18%	7th	19%
South	6th	18%	4th	28%

Note: The percentages are relative - outdoor pools to other outdoor amenities, and indoor pools relative to other indoor amenities - not outdoor to indoor.

### Focus Groups and Public Meetings

Some individual stakeholders expressed interest in having pools in their neighborhoods, but there was not strong input related to a need for them relative to other components discussed.

### ***B. Industry Trends Relative to Pools and Aquatic Features***

Access to water and pools is a key feature of most public parks and recreation departments. They are important from not only an enjoyment, fitness, competition, and recreation standpoint, but also in providing a safe location for community members to learn to swim.

Most community departments recognize that the majority of fitness/competitive pools require a higher subsidy to operate. With the advent of leisure pools, potential cost recovery for pools increased, and many communities are either adding or building new leisure or warm-water components with any aquatics facility that is built in order to increase the revenue potential. High-end leisure facilities and water parks are one of the few public amenities that can have positive cost recovery if they are designed correctly. However, pools are typically regional facilities that serve a minimum three- to five-mile radius.

Special attention should be paid to the provision of leisure pool and water park amenities. As mentioned earlier, inclusion of these components can strongly increase revenue and draw for aquatics facilities. It is still important to include fitness and lap lanes and to have some facilities for competitive swimming, potentially co-located with schools and/or universities. Spraygrounds are a newer aquatics amenity that can also enhance pools or stand alone in parks and public areas to increase traffic at a lower subsidy level.

### ***C. Comparative Analysis and Setting Capacity Standards for Pools***

Standards analysis for pools is not generally conducted on indoor and outdoor pools separately, and there is not much information available nationwide on standards relative to pools per population. The GreenPlay team has compiled some similar communities for comparison on the following page. Note that the Department is currently at a provision of one aquatics location per 79,274 residents. Also note that an aquatics location may include an indoor pool, an outdoor pool, a warm-water pool, competitive pool, and/or a therapy pool. All are equally weighted. Current locations include:

**Indoor Pools**

- 1 - Allentown
- 2 - Fairland
- 2 - Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex
- 2 - Rollingcrest
- 1 - Theresa Banks

**Outdoor Pools**

- 1 - Allentown
- 1 - Ellen E. Linson
- 2 - Glenn Dale (one large and one kids')
- 1 - Hamilton
- 1 - J. Franklyn Bourne
- 1 - Lane Manor
- 1 - North Barnaby

## M-NCPPC - 2010 and Beyond

<b>Pools Analysis on Capacity Basis Only</b>	Pools (Indoor & Out)
Total MNCPPC Current Aquatics Locations	11
<b>CURRENT LEVEL OF SERVICE (per 1000 population)</b>	
<b>CURRENT POPULATION</b>	<b>828,770</b>
Current Level of Service (capacity-basis)	0.013
<b>Current Population per Component</b>	<b>79,274</b>
<b>PROJECTED POPULATION - YEAR 2040</b>	
	<b>992,701</b>
Total # needed to maintain current LOS of all existing facilities at projected population	13
<i>Number that should be added to achieve current LOS at projected population/component</i>	2
<b>COMPARATIVE LEVELS OF SERVICE (per 1000 population)</b>	
Arlington County, VA	0.03
Arlington target population/component	33,333
Brookline, MA (Boston)	0.04
Brookline target population/component	25,000
Washington DC	0.06
Wash. DC target population/component	17,241
Denver, CO	0.07
Denver target population/component	14,706
LOS target from Previous NRPA Publications	0.05
Historically suggested target ratio	20,000
<b>IF LOS Target was at 1/20,000</b>	
Population per component	20,000
Total needed at Suggested Target LOS at Current pop.	44
Current Need: at Target LOS for current pop.	33
2040 NEED: Total # needed in place to attain target standard in year 2040	50
<i>Number to be added to achieve target LOS at 2040 population</i>	39
<b>Recommended Target LOS</b>	<b>0.02</b>
<b>Population per component</b>	<b>50,000</b>
Total needed at Suggested Target LOS at Current pop.	17
Current Need: at Target LOS for current pop.	6
2040 NEED: Total # needed in place to attain target standard in year 2040	20
<i>Number to be added to achieve target LOS at 2040 population</i>	9

Other communities range from a ratio of more than one pool per 20,000 to less than one per 50,000. Projected target ratio analysis was completed to see which ratio may make the most sense for Prince George's County, specifically looking at how a ratio of 1/20,000 would affect service. If such a ratio was adopted, approximately 39 new aquatics locations would be needed.

Similar to the analysis on indoor centers, there is a strong industry and financial rationale for looking at fewer but larger regional aquatics locations that may include a variety of pool basins at any given location. Detailed study needs to be conducted to ascertain the best types of pool amenities for any given location. Given the input from the community needs assessment and current and future provisions, a broad target standard for both indoor and outdoor regional locations of one per 50,000 residents is now recommended for Prince George's County.

This ratio, when evaluated separately, indicates that there is a current need for six additional regional aquatics locations at this time, and as the community grows through 2040, an additional three more aquatics facilities will be needed, for a total of nine more, to reach 20 regional locations throughout the county.

#### ***D. Pool Type and Usage Detail Analysis***

Projecting a total number of locations does not tell us whether indoor or outdoor facilities are needed. The community input indicated a slightly higher demand for indoor facilities, and the indoor analysis has recommended that each of the three to five new regional centers contain an indoor pool.

As outdoor facilities can be a strong community draw, each of the indoor facilities could include a potential co-location of a seasonal outdoor pool, possibly with an indoor/outdoor configuration. A detailed Aquatics Facilities Plan is necessary to help evaluate the specific inclusions at each new location, and should include an analysis of:

- Review of functionality, capacity, condition, size, participation, and user profiles for each existing location
- Best specific location for new facilities
- Nearby and regional participation projections
- Transportation and access options
- Specific pool basin preferences for each location to determine what should be included such as: indoor, outdoor, competitive, leisure, therapy, warm water, waterpark amenities, sprayground features, and support spaces
- A business and marketing plan for each location
- An operational and maintenance pro-forma for each location
- Anticipated capital costs for each location

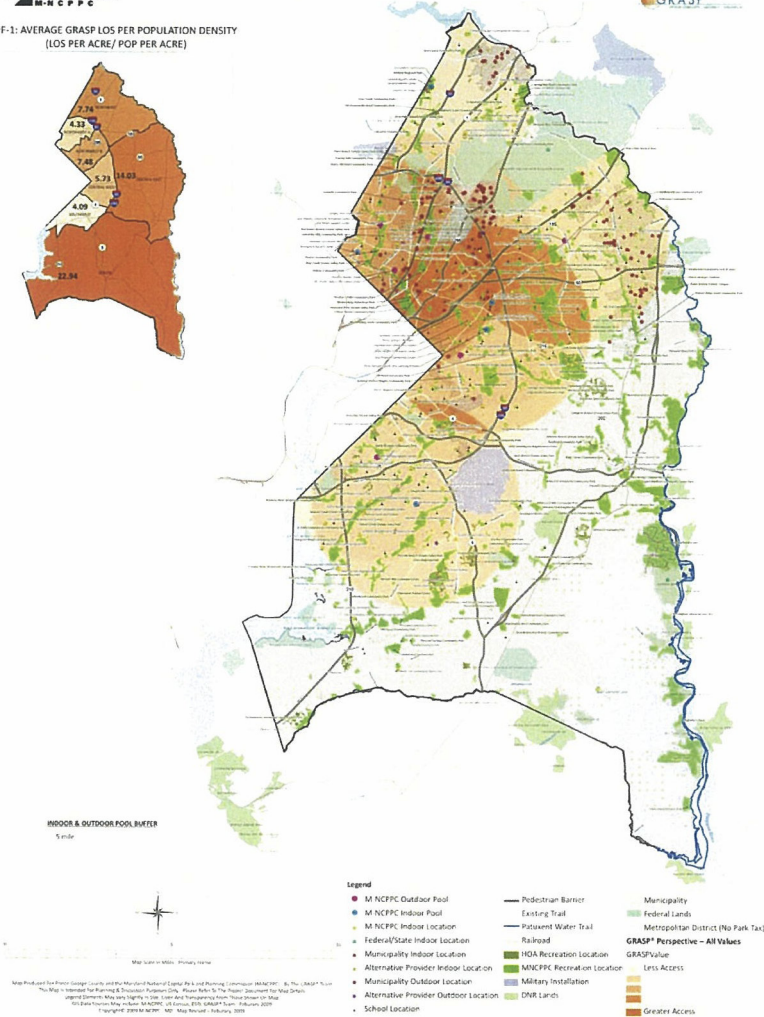
#### ***E. Geographic Location and Access to Pools***

As part of the analysis, a composite-values level of service analysis using the GRASP® Level of Service method was completed specifically for pools. This can be done for any set of specific components in the dataset, as needs and additional key issues arise.

PERSPECTIVE F: NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESS TO INDOOR & OUTDOOR POOLS



PF-1: AVERAGE GRASP LOS PER POPULATION DENSITY (LOS PER ACRE / POP PER ACRE)



MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND



**PERSPECTIVE F**

A larger version of this Perspective F can be found in Appendix B, and full-size maps are available from the Park Planning and Development Division. The darker shades indicate areas with higher levels of service. The inset map includes an analysis of Level of Service per population, thus normalizing the analysis for population density. As shown on the Perspective, the western subareas have more pools, but when normalized for population, the eastern subareas actually have higher values for service.

## Indications by Subarea

The following analysis charts analyze level of service quantitatively by subarea.

Access To Indoor & Outdoor Pools											
Sub-Area	Total Acres	Acres With LOS	Percent of Area With LOS	Average LOS Per Acre Served	Acres W/O LOS	Acres Below Target Minimum Score	Percent Total Area Below Target Minimum Score	Percent LOS Area Below Target Minimum Score	Acres Above Target Minimum Score	Percent Total Area Above Target Minimum Score	Percent LOS Area Above Target Minimum Score
EntireArea	318925.3	164266.0	51.5%	30.22	154659.26	732.64	0.2%	0.4%	163533.4	51.3%	99.6%
NORTHEAST	41592.9	39731.6	95.5%	22.28	1861.38	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	39731.6	95.5%	100.0%
NORTHWEST A	10541.9	10541.9	100.0%	41.56	0.00	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	10541.9	100.0%	100.0%
NORTHWEST B	12584.3	12584.3	100.0%	61.11	0.00	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	12584.3	100.0%	100.0%
CENTRAL WEST	15211.7	15211.7	100.0%	38.10	0.00	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	15211.7	100.0%	100.0%
CENTRAL EAST	74943.2	37353.3	49.8%	31.01	37589.81	732.64	1.0%	2.0%	36620.7	48.9%	98.0%
SOUTH	149110.6	33902.5	22.7%	21.56	115208.07	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	33902.5	22.7%	100.0%
SOUTHWEST	14940.7	14940.7	100.0%	27.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	14940.7	100.0%	100.0%

Subarea	2007 Population*	LOS pop density	LOS-Pop Gaps	**Pop Growth	Priority for new facilities
Northwest A	101,214	4.33	no	14%	Secondary
Northeast	119,830	7.74	yes	8%	Secondary
Northwest B	102,760	7.48	no	4%	Secondary
Central West	101,228	5.73	no	3%	Lower
Central East	165,278	4.09	yes	23%	Higher
South	139,868	22.94	yes	29%	Higher
Southwest	98,592	4.09	no	6%	Secondary
<b>Total</b>	<b>828,770</b>	<b>11.62</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>12%</b>	

While all of the subareas have service, the south, central east, and northeast subareas have lower service, and also have geographic gaps in service.

The need in the central east and south corresponds well with the findings on indoor centers, and further justifies the recommendation to co-locate indoor pools with the regional indoor centers. Provision of a pool in the northern areas could be located with a new regional center and/or renovations to existing facilities. To enhance services in the west, renovations of centers could include a study of the potential enhancements and/or partnerships for pools – both indoors and outdoors.

# CHAPTER 4 – AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION

## 4.1 Statewide Goals for Agricultural Land Preservation

Maryland has a long-standing goal to protect recreational open space and resource lands at a rate that equals or exceeds the rate at which land is developed. The over-arching state of Maryland agricultural initiatives target:

- Permanent preservation of agricultural land capable of supporting a reasonable diversity of agricultural production
- Protection of natural, forestry, and historic resources and the rural character of the landscape associated with Maryland’s farmland
- To the greatest degree possible, concentrating preserved land in large, relatively contiguous blocks to effectively support long-term protection of resources and resource-based industries
- Limiting the intrusion of development and its impacts on rural resources and resource-based industries
- Ensuring good return on public investment by concentrating state agricultural land preservation funds in areas where the investment is reasonably well supported by local investment and land use management programs

In conjunction with cooperation from all local jurisdictions, the state of Maryland aspires that all counties will:

- Establish preservation areas, goals and strategies through local comprehensive planning processes that address and complement state goals
- Develop in each area designated for preservation, a shared understanding of goals and the strategy to achieve them among rural landowners, the public, 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
- Manage development in rural preservation areas and protect public land preservation investment by using local land management authority effectively
- 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 the farmer and the public

In addition to these markers, the Maryland General Assembly passed a resolution in 2002 establishing a statewide goal to preserve approximately 1,030,000 acres of productive agricultural land by 2020. The resolution recognized that the productive agricultural land preservation through the combined efforts of MALPF, Rural Legacy, GreenPrint and local easement acquisition programs.



## 4.2 Prince George's County Supporting Goals

### *The Biennial Growth Plan*

The Prince George's County Council adopted the *Biennial Growth Policy Plan* in November 2000. This plan was replaced by the *Approved General Plan* in October 2002. However, rather than abandon the *Biennial Growth Plan*, beginning in 2003 and continuing every two years thereafter, Prince George's County produces a document called the *Biennial Growth Policy Update* to measure the implementation progress of the *General Plan*.

The original *Biennial Growth Plan* identified goals, objectives, policies, and strategies that were to be used to evaluate all future planning and development decisions within the county. The following goals were included in the *Biennial Growth Plan*:

- Encourage quality economic development
- Make efficient use of existing and proposed local, state and federal infrastructure and investment
- Enhance quality and character of communities and neighborhoods
- Preserve rural, agricultural and scenic areas
- Protect environmentally sensitive lands

The *Biennial Growth Plan* established 10 priorities that served to balance competing objectives in Prince George's County, including:

- High-quality schools
- Quality economic development
- Infill and revitalization
- Existing neighborhood integrity
- Adequate public facilities
- Environmental protection
- Transit support
- Socio-economic diversity
- Farmland preservation
- High-quality housing

The 2008 *General Plan Growth Policy Update* includes two main objectives, which originated from the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan* and support agricultural and natural resource land:

- Capture less than one percent of the county's dwelling unit growth by 2025 in the Rural Tier
- Protect a countywide average of 1,500 acres per year of agricultural, strategic forest, or other sensitive lands through the use of the Rural Legacy Program, county-funded acquisitions, and other conservation programs.

Taken together, the countywide goals and priorities have provided a basis for creating more specific goals and policy options with regards to the future of agricultural lands in Prince George's County. These are best summarized and defined in the *Prince George's County Approved General Plan*.

## **Prince George's County Approved General Plan**

In October 2002, the District Council for Prince George's County adopted the revised *Prince George's County General Plan*. The *General Plan* is a tool to manage growth by linking growth policies, capital improvements, economic development, and environmental protection. This plan establishes goals, policies and measurable objectives that will allow a biennial examination of the plan's overall success.

The *General Plan* contains a Development Pattern Element that establishes the three policy areas:

1. Developed Tier – the area inside the Capital Beltway and the City of Greenbelt
2. Developing Tier – approximately the middle third of the county
3. Rural Tier – the eastern and southernmost portions of Prince George's County.

These policy areas designate regions of significant economic development, residential development and preservation. The growth objective of the plan is that 33 percent of the county's residential growth over the next 25 years is to be located in the Developed Tier, 66 percent in the Developing Tier, and one percent in the Rural Tier.

In terms of permanently preserving agriculture, protecting a reasonable diversity of agriculture, and designated preservation areas, the *General Plan* describes the following objective:

- Protect a countywide average of 1,500 acres per year of agricultural, strategic forest, or other sensitive lands through the use of the Rural Legacy Program, county-funded acquisitions, and other conservation programs.

### **The Rural Tier**

The Rural Tier encompasses approximately 150 square miles, or 32 percent of the county's land area. The community structure dates back more than 300 years. Historic roads and structures dot the landscape. Publicly-held lands account for large portions of the landscape. With over 10,000 acres in public ownership, more than 10 percent of this Tier is protected.

The Rural Tier comprises the eastern and southern regions of the county, as well as the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, which stretches across the northern part of the county. This is by far the most scenic portion of the county and is generally characterized by fine landscapes, agricultural farmlands, extensive woodlands, numerous streams, and a diverse wildlife habitat. The area also includes surface mining and large lot residential home sites. Transportation system policies seek to ensure the operational integrity of the road network for a development pattern that is envisioned as remaining essentially as it does today.

The vision for the Rural Tier is protection of woodlands, wildlife habitat, recreation and agricultural pursuits, and preservation of the rural character and vistas that now exist. Land use, environmental, transportation and public facilities policies recommended for the Rural Tier are intended to balance the ever-increasing pressure for residential development and landowner's equity with the desire to maintain rural environments and character. The policies address retaining or enhancing environmentally sensitive features and agricultural resources; designing future development to retain and enhance the rural character; providing for a transportation system that helps protect open space, rural character and environmental features and resources; and assigning minimal priority to the public sector capital improvements.

The *General Plan* sets forth these goals that are specific to the Rural Tier:

- Preserve environmentally sensitive features
- Retain sustainable agricultural lands
- Maintain rural character
- Allow large-lot residential home sites
- Limit nonagricultural land use
- Protect homeowners' equity in their land
- Maintain the integrity of a rural transportation system

Historically, the main features of the rural areas yielding their distinctive character are the farms and forests. In metropolitan settings, these areas are increasingly composed of large residential home sites for those who do not farm, or those who do not rely solely on the land for income.

The policies outlined in the *General Plan* encourage residential development to occur in ways that help preserve the features that contribute to a more rural character. The *General Plan* makes the following policies with regard to agricultural land preservation:

**Policy 1:**

Retain or enhance environmentally sensitive features and agricultural resources.

**Policy 2:**

Design future development to retain and enhance rural character.

**Policy 3:**

Provide for a Rural Tier transportation system that helps protect open space, rural character and environmental features and resources.

**Policy 4:**

Public funds should not encourage further development in the Rural Tier.

Regarding economic development within Prince George's County, the *General Plan* does have a policy to retain and enhance the county's existing businesses. Strategies toward this end include fostering the retention and promotion of the agricultural sector.

### ***The Priority Preservation Area Functional Master Plan (Preliminary Draft)***

In June-July 2010, the Planning Board and Prince George's County Council, sitting as the District Council, facilitated and approved the initiation of a new functional master plan for the county's Priority Preservation Area (PPA). The goals, policies and strategies necessary for a continued vibrant and viable agricultural community in the Rural Tier are provided for in this plan. The plan, in preliminary draft form, includes a summary of agricultural preservation programs that have been implemented, and some potential tools and programs that enable the county to meet the new state planning requirement for a priority preservation area element. This plan reaffirms the *General Plan* vision and objective for the Rural Tier, and establishes a goal:

Preserve 80 percent of the remaining undeveloped land within the priority preservation area while maintaining and enhancing agricultural and forestry production on already protected farm and forest lands.

The policies relating to agricultural preservation in the PPA are as follows:

**Policy 1:**

Seek opportunities to increase the value of farm and forest land used for agricultural production, agritourism, and agricultural support services.

**Policy 2:**

Seek available federal, state, local, and other sources of funding to achieve preservation of 80 percent eligible lands.

**Policy 3:**

Minimize development in areas of prime farm and forest acreage to preserve critical masses of the agricultural land base.

**Policy 4:**

Preserve farm and forest land as important natural resources for their environmental and economic value.

**Policy 5:**

Identify valuable mineral resources, seek methods to protect and manage access, and reclaim these areas where possible for future farm or forest enterprises, or agricultural support services.

**Policy 6:**

Support profitable agricultural operations in the PPA by encouraging new farm and forest enterprises that complement the existing agricultural industry.

## 4.3 Implementation of Preservation Goals

This section includes the programs and mechanisms currently operating in the county to achieve local and/or state agricultural land preservation goals.

### *Overview and Summary*

This section is intended to provide a brief overview and summary of the main elements in place in this county as defined in the previous section. This description will provide a frame of reference of the program evaluation provided in Section 4.4 of this chapter.

*Designated Preservation Areas* are areas identified and designated for agricultural land preservation by the county and established in the comprehensive plan, in which the county actively seeks to permanently preserve land. These include the Rural Tier as defined in the *Prince George's County Approved General Plan*, the Rural Legacy Area, the Patuxent River Primary Management Area, current lands owned by public agencies including the state and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and designated woodland conservation areas as defined by Approved Tree Conservation Plans.

For more than 100 years, Prince George's County has seen countless acres of farmland disappear in favor of the suburban community development associated with the expansion of the nation's capital. Private farming within the county has not enjoyed an attractive reputation, unlike neighboring counties such as Montgomery and Howard, which are known for their rolling horse farms and large cattle grazing

holdings. Farming in this county was centered on growing tobacco as a regionally dominant crop, until the Tobacco Buyout Program provided payments between 2001 and 2012 to farmers to cease growing tobacco. These farms have traditionally been small (100 acres or less), compared to other parts of the state. However, there are notable exceptions.

Today, Prince George's County has more than 60,000 acres of farm land, including 20,000 acres of non-private farms. According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, the top crops by acreage include corn for grain, hay, soybeans, wheat and vegetables; the market value of crops sold amounted to \$17.1 million. The top livestock inventory items were cattle and calves, hens (layers), chickens for consumption, horses and goats. As of 2007, there were 375 farms in the county and the average size of a farm was 99 acres. Prince George's County is home to four of the most unique and reputable farms in the nation, if not the world. Collectively, these four farms contribute almost 10,000 acres of productive cropland:

- The Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC), a world leader in agricultural research, comprises more than 8,500 acres of contiguous farmland, woodland, stream and sensitive habitat. Owned by the federal government for the purposes of completing agricultural-related research, BARC is the largest and most diversified agricultural research complex in the world. Thousands of international visitors come to BARC each year to benefit from its research, designed to develop and transfer solutions to agricultural problems of high national priority, and provide access to information in order to:
  - Ensure high-quality safe food and other agricultural products
  - Assess Americans' nutritional needs
  - Sustain a competitive agricultural economy
  - Enhance the natural resource base and the environment
  - Provide economic opportunities for rural citizens, communities, and society
- The University of Maryland Experimental Station is a 202-acre facility located near Upper Marlboro that provides support for the research and extension initiatives investigating alternative agricultural opportunities for southern Maryland. Research focuses on investigating horticultural and agronomic crops such as cut flowers, vegetables, melons, pumpkins, raspberries, marley, barley, and edible soybeans, which may offer an alternative to tobacco production.
- The National Colonial Farm, owned by the National Park Service and surrounded by Piscataway National Park, is a 200-acre middle-class farm and outdoor living history museum dating to 1775. It is a recognized leader in the field of historic plant preservation. While many historical museums focus on the prosperous lifestyles of early farmers, this particular venue gives a nice depiction of how a typical family of the late colonial period would have lived. Structures on the site include a 1780 farm dwelling, an 18th century tobacco barn, smokehouse, necessary and out-kitchen. The farm is owned and operated by the Accokeek Foundation.
- Finally, Oxon Cove Park and Oxon Hill Farm is an actual working farm from the early 20th century. It exhibits basic farming principles and techniques as well as historical agricultural programs for visitors to develop an appreciation of cropping and animal husbandry. The site consists of more than 500 acres of land located at the county's border with the District of Columbia, providing a scenic transition for the southern gateway of the nation's capital. It is an excellent resource for environmental studies and wildlife observation. The site also enjoys easy access from the Potomac River, which allows other recreational activities as well.

***Easement Acquisition Mechanisms and Funding*** — (encompasses all programs that the county implements to purchase and/or transfer development rights from agricultural land in designated areas or provide other forms of financial incentives to landowners to preserve their land. Funding for easement acquisition comes from a variety of sources.) These programs include:

- The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) is one of the most successful agricultural land preservation foundations in the country. It functions within the Maryland Department of Agriculture to purchase permanent agricultural preservation easements on productive farm and forest land that meet a specific set of criteria. Since 2004, Prince George’s County has placed 1,200 acres under easement through MALPF.
- The Historical Agricultural Resources Preservation Program (HARPP) and the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program were established to acquire conservation easements voluntarily offered by landowners, but they use different funding sources. According to Council Bill CB-47-2006, a PDR program would be established to allow the acquisition of conservation easements for the purpose of protecting farm and forest lands, ecologically fragile watersheds and floodplains, and scenic vistas in certain zones. As of November 2010, 1,295 acres have been preserved under this program. From 2008 through 2010, properties were settled with \$7.8 million in HARPP funding.
- The Rural Legacy Program has been a source of funding for protecting large, contiguous tracts of land and other strategic areas from sprawl development through the acquisition of easements and purchases from willing landowners among other mechanisms. Under the fee simple acquisition program, agricultural-based business does not have to cease once the land changes ownership. Under this program, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission has negotiated life tenancy, long-term lease agreements, curatorships, and many other unique agreements that will allow agricultural-based businesses to continue. Arrangements like life tenancy and low-fee agricultural leasing ensure preservation of the land and provide maximum benefit to the landowner. This acquisition method in developing counties allows many acres of prime agricultural land to be obtained while land prices are still relatively low.  
The Soil Conservation District took over the administration of the Rural Legacy Program in 2007 and began submitting easement applications. The Patuxent River Rural Legacy Area, which stretches from the southern tip of the county along the eastern boundary to US 50, includes the Patuxent River Park, the Patuxent River Natural Resource Management Area, and the Merkle Wildlife Management Area at Jug Bay. Approximately 34,984 acres are in the Prince George’s County Rural Legacy Area. Between 1999 and 2011, 1,036 acres of land has been acquired using Rural Legacy funds.
- Program Open Space is a nationally recognized program with two components, – a local grant for recreation land or open space areas, and a component that funds acquisition and recreation facility development by the state of Maryland. The program has preserved 682 acres in the county for a variety of purposes from 2002-2010. Approximately 118 acres were preserved for agricultural purposes, including acquisition of a 63-acre former plantation farm known as the Sasscer Property near Upper Marlboro, and a stateside acquisition of a 54-acre property at Patuxent River Greenway.
- The Woodland Conservation Banking sites in the county have been established on 145 unique sites, a total of 8,455 acres, to mitigate the impacts of woodland removal for development. The county’s Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance enforces the state Forest Conservation Act, and requires that woodland conservation be provided as close to the development proposed as possible. Off-site woodland conservation banking sites are located county-wide, with 4,007 acres, or 47 percent, located in the PPA.

**Land Use Management Authority** refers to the land use management tools, including the comprehensive and other plans, zoning and subdivision, and development ordinances and their related guidelines and procedures, designed and used by the county to protect agricultural lands from subdivision to non-agricultural uses in designated areas. The county has the following land use management tools to protect agricultural land from subdivision:

- The Biennial Growth Plan
- The Prince George's County Approved *General Plan*
- Various Master Plans and Sector Plans including approved master plans for Subregions 1, 5, and 6, which have designated priority preservation areas within their boundaries
- The Green Infrastructure Plan
- Reserved Open Space Zoning and Agricultural Preservation Development Zoning

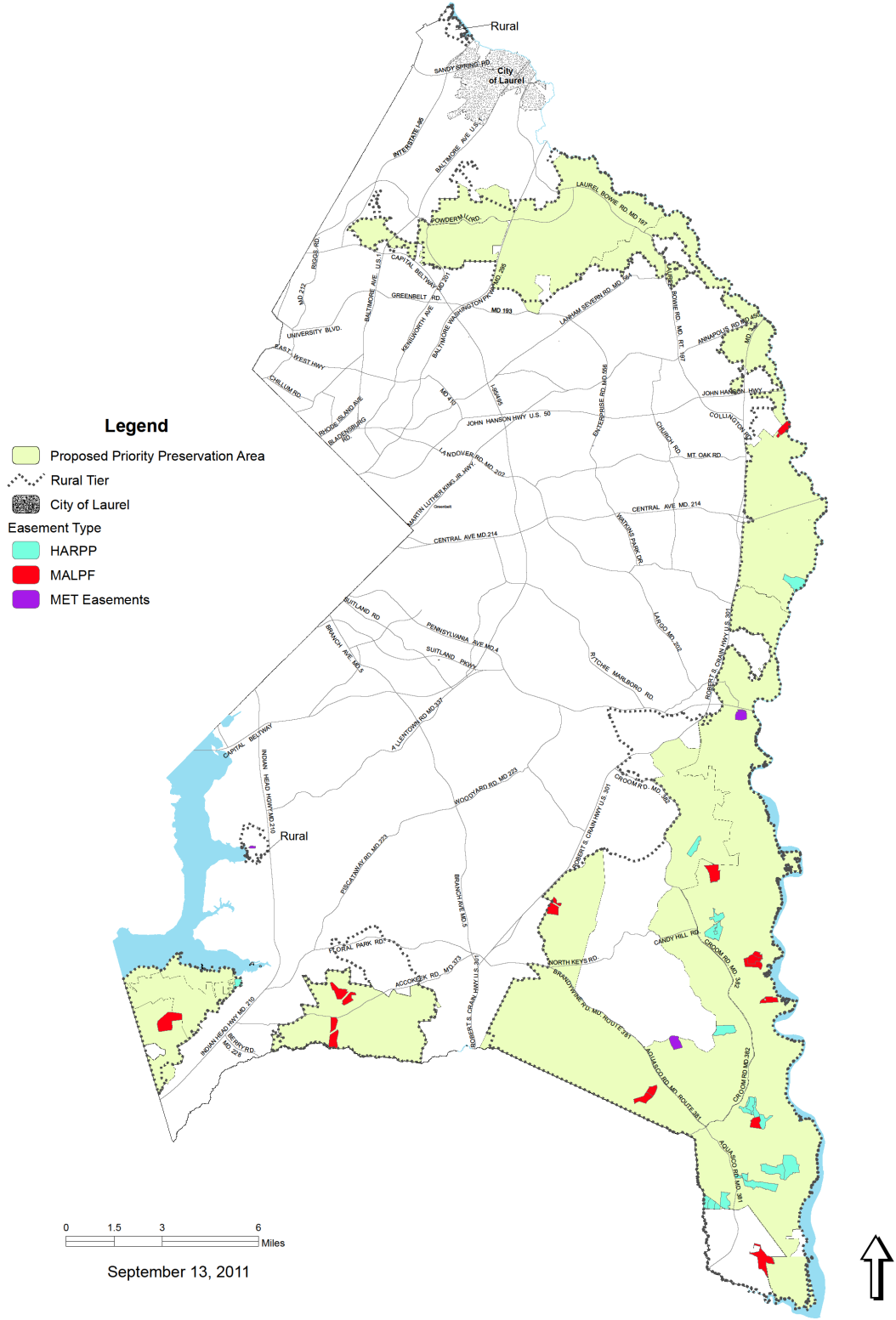
**Farming Assistance Programs** are designed to support productive agriculture, alternative production, marketing sales and other activities needed to realize success of farmers and the agricultural industry. Currently, Prince George's County, through the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, provides land to farmers at low lease rates. These lease areas allow farmers to gain additional acres for agricultural purposes without additional tax expense. Leases range from short term (one year) to a maximum of 40 years. Lease rates and terms vary. However, in most cases, agricultural land can be acquired for an average of \$25 per acre.

The 2005 report, *The Future of Agriculture in Prince George's County*, was prepared by the Planning Department and describes the transformation and potential of agriculture in Prince George's County. The report provides information on farmland protection and profitable farming. Recommendations concerning local right-to-farm laws are contained in the *Future of Agriculture* report. A county bill was proposed in 2010, CB-86-2010, for the purpose of amending and adding to the Right-To-Farm provision, and generally regarding agriculture, but was postponed until after a thorough review by the Council's Agricultural Preservation Work Group. The Maryland Right-to-Farm statutes, Maryland Annotated Code § 5-403 (Actions against farms for nuisance), applies statewide. Currently, county legislation is being considered to strengthen the Right-To-Farm provision.

The 2009 *Strategic Program for Agricultural Development* is a Technical Bulletin to the 2009 *Approved and Adopted Subregion 6 Master Plan*. It provides recommendations for supporting business, market, and broader economic development opportunities in the county. In addition, it offers recommendations for regulatory changes to allow a broader range of modern agricultural endeavor. Citizens who provided input on the strategic program ranked regulatory reform as the first priority for action.

The county's PPA Plan is in a preliminary stage of development, but it does propose a PPA for the county, which is inconsistent with the GreenPrint and AgPrint lands. A map of the PPA is attached. The county is interested in increased coordination with Maryland state agencies: the Department of Natural Resources, the Maryland Department of Planning, and the Maryland Department of Agriculture, to correct the inconsistencies and provide clarity on how county and state goals can become more aligned.

# Easements and Countywide Proposed Priority Preservation Area





## State and Federal Programs

The following state and federal programs are active in the county. Those related to fee-simple acquisitions including Program Open Space and Rural Legacy have been most effective. The other programs listed are in effect, but to a lesser degree. In most cases, these programs are handled directly by the state and the landowner, or through local intervention by the Prince George's County Soil Conservation District.

- State Land Acquisition Funding including Stateside Program Open Space and Rural Legacy
- Maryland Environmental Trust: Conservation Easement Program and Local Land Trust Assistance
- Forest Stewardship Plans
- Woodland Incentives Programs
- Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program
- Forest Conservation and Management Program
- Maryland Agricultural Cost Share Program
- Forest Land Enhancement Program
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program

## Data Sharing

One of the objectives of *the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan* planning processes has been to share state and local data. This data will include information for planning, tracking and evaluating land preservation programs and expenditures.

Currently, Prince George's County does not have one electronic database that describes the desired data. Because the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission has been collecting and preserving land since the 1930s, many acquisition records are still kept in paper databases. Desired acquisitions are shown on master plans and kept in a variety of forms. However, no single database exists.

## 4.4 Evaluation of Agricultural Land Preservation Efforts

Evaluating land preservation programs and associated expenditures is routinely done. However, most of the information is completed and categorized on a program-by-program basis, or in broad terms. For example, the county may report that Program Open Space has provided \$40 million for land acquisition and preservation enhancements, including the Henson Creek Stream Valley Park, Fairland Regional Park, Watkins Regional Park, Walker Mill Regional Park, and many others. However, since this funding is only a portion of a particular stream valley or regional park, and new acquisitions are frequently added, the tracking and evaluation of one funding source becomes difficult.

Prince George's County has some of the most scenic, historic, and environmentally sensitive areas, including some of the most productive farmland, in Maryland. Because of its location adjacent to Washington, D.C., the county has had to contend with intense development pressure. The Soil Conservation District Office has a full-time agriculture conservation planner. Interest in agricultural land preservation has increased since 2004, and continues to grow, along with the increase in demand for locally grown

food and specialty items such as local wines, herbs and cheeses. Funding sources have lagged and have not kept pace with demand. The county could be in a better position to preserve agricultural land if there were more acres of good quality soil, large tracts of contiguous farmland, and more access to state roads in rural areas. However, the county has a waiting list of farmers that would like to purchase a preservation easement on their farm. More sources of funding need to be identified, and the county needs to broaden its participation in programs funded by land trusts, national preservation organizations, and federally funded programs. Information dissemination is being enhanced by including a Technical Bulletin to be released in conjunction with the Preliminary *PPA Master Plan*. The Bulletin has a listing of federal, state and local sources of funding for easement acquisition, as well as a listing of Natural Resources Conservation Service programs and other helpful organizations for improving farm and forestland.

Prince George's County has policies in place that are consistent with the goals of preserving farmland and open space for its citizens to enjoy. However, the continued implementation and expansion of effective county policies requires additional funding in order to be successful. Thus, in an effort to qualify for the financial support that is needed to strengthen existing programs, the county has in recent years taken actions that will enhance the viability of agricultural and natural resource-based businesses, including:

- Adoption of agriculture-related county legislation, such as the following bills:
  - CR-8-2010: A resolution to reconvene an agricultural work group for the purpose of reviewing and evaluating agricultural preservation policies and recommending to the County Council appropriate revisions to existing policies and laws
  - CB-36-2009: A bill for the purpose of permitting farm wineries in residential zones assessed for agricultural use
  - CB-39-2009: A bill for the purpose of defining agritourism and bed-and-breakfast inns, and permitting these uses in certain residential zones
  - CB-43-2009: An ordinance concerning R-R Zone for the purpose of modifying the minimum lot size requirements of certain lots in the R-R Zone recorded prior to November 29, 1949
  - CB-47-2009: An ordinance concerning O-S Zone for the purpose of amending net lot area for one-family detached dwellings in the O-S Zone
- Revisions to the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance that may include definitions of appropriate allowed uses, including agricultural-related uses that support farm and forest enterprises, to be permitted in specific areas of the county corresponding to the Rural Tier and the PPA.
- Designating more than 85 percent of the Rural Tier to be included in the Priority Preservation Area Functional Master Plan from Subregions 1, 5, and 6, with other areas (including in Bowie and vicinity) to be identified in the Preliminary PPA Plan.
- Designating in the *Subregion 1 Preliminary Master Plan* and Proposed Sectional Map Amendment, the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center and other federal properties to be included in the PPA, which represents an opportunity to maximize the productive use of the soils that are fertile and representative of the region. The county recognizes the strategic advantage of the location of BARC within an urban area, conveniently located for researchers, students, employees, owners of agricultural-related businesses, and farmers in a county and region that enjoy a long history and rich culture of farm and forest enterprises. The county appreciates its ability to serve as a foundation for technology transfer and business development related to agricultural research, and its value as a natural resource to be preserved for its environmental value.
- Hiring of an agricultural marketing specialist for Prince George's County through the University of Maryland Extension.
- Engaging Rural Tier landowners, emphasizing their acceptance of the land preservation concept and appreciation for the intrinsic value of their farms.

- Approving several subregion plans encompassing more than half of the county that contain clear goals, policies, and strategies in support of maintaining agriculture as a way of life in the Rural Tier.
- Approving the *Strategic Program for Agricultural Development* with policy recommendations for market development, business development, economic development, and regulatory reform.
- Collaborating with national and local agricultural preservation groups such as Blackwater Land Trust, Accokeek Foundation, Trust for Public Lands, Conservation Fund, the Maryland Agriculture and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO), the Pinchot Institute for Conservation, and the Bay Bank (an ecosystem services marketplace for the Chesapeake Region.)
- Enforcement of impact fees, surcharges, and the overall development process that discourages development in the Rural Tier.
- Exercise of the authority of the 2008 *Water and Sewer Plan* and its prohibition of extending public water and sewer service into the Rural Tier, in effect discouraging development in the Rural Tier.
- Enforcement of the conservation subdivision section of the zoning ordinance in the Rural Tier, which has resulted in discouragement of development, even though only one conservation subdivision has been approved and no final plats have been submitted to date.
- Establishment of the *Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan*, which protects natural resource lands from encroaching development.
- Drafting of environmental laws to implement recommendations of the *Green Infrastructure Plan*, including widening minimum stream buffers, addressing design of woodland conservation areas, and simplifying woodland banking.
- Developing the *PPA Plan*, which brings the county closer to a state-certified agricultural land preservation program, would allow the retention of 67 percent of the agricultural transfer tax funds as opposed to the current 33.3 percent capture level.

The county needs to revise the Zoning Ordinance to be more supportive of agriculture. There is a need to strike a balance between perceptions that preserving the Rural Tier signifies stripping away property value, and awareness among Rural Tier landowners of the many preservation easement programs that allow them to benefit from their land's value for agricultural resource conservation.

## 4.5 Program Development Strategy for Agricultural Land Preservation

This section is intended to describe the steps the county is taking to overcome weaknesses and achieve state and local agricultural preservation goals. The following information is as specific as possible and includes recommendations to state programs that will better support the county's preservation strategies.

Based on the goal of protecting a countywide average of 1,500 acres per year of agricultural, strategic forest and other sensitive lands, the county will contribute 25,000 acres, or 2.5 percent, to the state's 1,030,000-acre agricultural preservation goal by the year 2022.

The following recommendations are based on the evaluation and needed improvements identified:

- Implement the recently approved county area plans in Subregions 1, 5, and 6 for the Rural Tier areas in such a way as to consider the state's agricultural goals and achieve the agricultural preservation goals of the *General Plan*.

- Continue to implement the *Strategic Program for Agricultural Development* in the following ways:
  - Market development to improve access to local and regional agricultural markets at the wholesale and retail levels
  - Business development to enhance the capability of individual farm operations
  - Economic development to implement policies and infrastructure to support industry sector growth
  - Regulatory reform to address land use and environmental policy changes needed to bring local conditions in line with regional jurisdictions and enhance sector competitiveness.
- Consider and evaluate the possibility of more restrictive zoning in the Rural Tier that will result in fewer lots and lower densities. This zoning should not change the existing landowner's equity.
- Implementation of the PPA Plan, which establishes the priority preservation area. The PPA can be considered as an agricultural zone that can be added to the county's revitalization overlay area. This area would receive targeted revitalization assistance and be specific to overcoming the loss of tobacco farming and reviving the physical, social and economic vitality of the farming community. Needed infrastructure including agricultural stores, grain storage facilities and assistance with program implementation would be a part of this area.
- Work with the county to administer the Rural Legacy Program funding. A reasonable compromise must be achieved so that funding of this important land acquisition program will continue and most willing landowners will benefit.
- Limit development in the Rural Tier to less than 1 percent of the growth through Year 2025.
- Ensure all regulatory controls are fair and equitable.
- Monitor development activity since the previous *Biennial Growth Policy* as well as development approvals through zoning and subdivision approvals.
- Monitor changes in the trends that affect county policies.
- Evaluate the impact of new and approved county development on the existing public facilities.
- Determine whether the objectives established by the *General Plan* have been met.
- Make recommendations for future actions to help implement county policies, and engage the County Council to help preserve agricultural land by approving development in Smart Growth areas of the county where valuable infrastructure such as roads, schools, and police and fire protection already exist.
- Prepare new plans and update existing ones, and include changes to regulations, redirecting capital improvements and directing other efforts toward implementation of the county's agricultural preservation plans.

The biennial review process represents a shift in emphasis for Prince George's County. With the review, there will be a public accounting of the county's implementation efforts and a focusing of implementation efforts on the county's priorities. Throughout this effort, the goals, guiding principles and priorities set forth in the *General Plan* will guide future analyses and recommendations.

## CHAPTER 5 – NATURAL RESOURCE LAND CONSERVATION

Environmental and Natural Resources in Prince George’s County are a priority. In fact, the county has many programs to protect and enhance these resources, whether they are related to implementing cutting-edge storm water management techniques, or recognizing the county to be the first in the nation to adopt a woodland conservation ordinance directly tied to the land development process. Specifically, this chapter suggests further identification of those resources worth protecting, and focuses attention on the programs related to the acquisition and long-term protection of these lands.

County Program Development Strategies for Natural Resource Conservation that were proposed in the 2006 LPPRP are in the process of being implemented. The parkland acquisition goals established in the 2002 General Plan have not been met. However, the parkland priorities and goals remain unchanged.

### *Physiography*

Similar to almost 50 percent of the state of Maryland, most of Prince George’s County lies in the Atlantic Coastal Plane physiographic province. A small portion of the northern part of the county, west of Route One, is considered to be in the Piedmont province. The different geologic conditions create a slight variation in landscape that barely influence open space and recreation patterns. True to the typical conditions of the Atlantic Coastal Plane, Prince George’s County is mostly characterized by low, level land and an intricate system of waterways. Unconsolidated sand and clay with underlying amounts of gravel and marl are common.

In the Piedmont area near Laurel, the land rises more sharply and bedrock becomes apparent in the stream bottoms. Because of these conditions, the county is well-suited to a wide variety of development and recreational pursuits.

### *Forests*

The county’s geography, climate and soils provide the medium for a diversified forest cover. The entire county has an estimated 59 percent of tree canopy coverage, according to a recent survey. These numbers are impressive considering the jurisdiction’s metropolitan location and growing population of more than 850,000 people.

The Coastal Plain portions of the county provide the best forest opportunities and contain large sweeping tracts of forested land along portions of the Patuxent River and the areas east of MD 301. These areas are known habitat for Forest Interior Dwelling Birds and other important species. The Piedmont region has more fragmented and smaller pockets of woodland. This pattern is the result of man’s need of the land for other uses, such as agriculture and urban areas.

Surprisingly, a survey of the northern portions of the county within the Anacostia River Watershed and outside of the Capital Beltway yielded less than 70 sites suitable for forest retention. The Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission developed a GIS-based inventory of all forested properties located outside the Capital Beltway and in the Anacostia River Watershed. Only 61 parcels are identified for possible acquisition for future woodland conservation. More surprising, these parcels total approximately 1,126 acres of potential preservation area, or roughly a little more than 18 acres per site.

While forested areas in the northern portion of the county may be limited, a visual assessment of the county's aerial images depicting the past 70 years show a notable increase in forested coverage. This is attributed to several reasons, including stricter regulations and more awareness of the importance of stream buffers, the abandonment of tobacco farming, an attraction to woodland conservation banking, and the aging population in the Rural Tier areas including those residents who are no longer involved in farming. The population in this area is estimated to be more than 50 years of age.

## **Water**

Prince George's County has exceptional water resources including the Mattawoman Creek and the Anacostia, Patuxent and Potomac rivers. There are 71 streams within the county's borders. All of these, with the exception of Paint Branch, are warm water streams.

### **Anacostia River**

While the Anacostia continues to be the focus of varied restoration efforts, there is notable progress being made. Recent projects in this basin include the construction of the largest tidal wetland in Maryland along the Anacostia's main stem, and the reopening of 22 miles of fish habitat along the Northwest Branch. Most recently, significant restoration efforts were completed along Paint Branch and Indian Creek tributaries and more projects are actively being planned or are near to construction. One of the best opportunities to reconnect Paint Branch Stream to its active floodplain will occur in the fall of 2012. Undertaken Maryland's transportation funding, this project will create almost 15 acres of forested wetland area and joins two previously disconnected woodland sites.

As a result of efforts by federal, state, and local government entities, including the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and a wide array of participants, the Anacostia River Restoration Plan is in progress. One important phase of this project identifies thousands of restoration opportunities within the watershed.

### **Patuxent River**

A wide variety of flora and fauna are found along the Patuxent River in Prince George's County. Most notably, the Patuxent River Marshes, a system of marshes protected by COMAR, were recently purchased from private interests by M-NCPPC. The Patuxent River Marshes contain more than a half-dozen species of rare, threatened and endangered species in need of protection. Also, the largest public land holdings in the county are spread along the Patuxent shorelines. Totaling almost 20,000 acres, this ensemble of federal, state and local land interests is the best emerging greenway in the metropolitan region.

Potentially, the pinnacle of the Patuxent River accomplishments within Prince George's County is the well-recognized relationship M-NCPPC cultivates with the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System. As a result of this effort, the Patuxent River Park in Prince George's County is one of 27 sites nationwide designated under a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration program to use protected critical river systems as laboratories for scientific research, education and stewardship. Additionally, M-NCPPC has ushered the park into the Chesapeake Bay Greenways Network, a National Park Service partnership of parks, refuges, museums, historic sites and trails where visitors can experience and learn about the Chesapeake Bay.

The Patuxent River area is available to natural surface trail hiking, geo-caching, picnicking, nature study, bird-watching, horseback riding, archaeological pursuits, canoeing, kayaking relaxing and more. Almost 7,600 acres of the publically owned lands along the Patuxent are owned by the M-NCPPC. Another

6,500 are owned by the state. This continuing partnership to acquire and protect lands along the Patuxent River in Prince George's County is highly valued and making notable impacts.

### ***Chesapeake Bay Critical Area***

There are three mapped areas designated as being within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area. These areas are associated with the Anacostia, Potomac and Patuxent Rivers. In the Anacostia, the area considered to be the Critical Area is intensely developed and contains much of the Army Corp of Engineer levee system. The Critical Area, within the levee, is highly regulated and consists mostly of mowed fescue grass. There is little opportunity for preservation or reforestation. Along the Potomac, the Critical Area consists of the land immediately adjacent to the Potomac River main stem and extends up the Oxon Creek tributary to the Forest Heights Elementary School. This zone is described as thinly wooded and contains large lot development with large lawn expanses, development related to National Harbor, and the intensely developed areas adjacent to the District of Columbia. Along the Patuxent River, the Critical Area is mostly wooded and is publicly owned. There are few, if any, spots remaining where reforestation opportunities exist on the publicly-owned land. The Critical Area includes the Patuxent River shoreline to Queen Anne Bridge Road in Prince George's County.

### ***Fish and Wildlife***

Most of the streams within Prince George's County are slow-moving, warm water streams. These streams are home to an abundant number of common fish species like yellow perch, sunfish, pickerel, bullhead, catfish and carp.

During the early spring months, anadromous fish runs have been observed in streams in the Anacostia River watershed, Henson Creek, and the Patuxent River. Fish species include yellow perch, white perch, alewife, blueback herring, hickory shad, American shad and striped bass.

Wildlife, like aquatic life, is still quite diverse throughout Prince George's County. Forest wildlife includes deer, squirrel, grouse, and turkey. Wildlife found in upland areas include mourning doves, pheasants, quail, rabbit, and fox. Waterfowl ranges widely and include a variety ducks, geese, swans, coot and rail birds. Fur-bearing and aquatic wildlife include beaver, muskrat, and river otter. While nutria have been reported in other areas of the state, these invasive animals seem to be largely absent in local water sources. High populations of snake head have been noted, especially in the Anacostia River watershed area. Other wildlife common to Prince George's County are also found throughout Maryland and include skunk, fox, mink, raccoon, possum and a wide variety of bird species. Avid bird watchers around the Schoolhouse Pond located adjacent to the County Administration Building in Upper Marlboro have recorded more than 100 different bird species frequenting this location over the past 10 years. More than nine eagle nests on public property are actively tracked by M-NCPPC on an annual basis. Private landowners also report new nests each year. While the eagle is no longer officially tracked by the Department of Natural Resources, Prince George's County does put some effort into recording the local population. Sometimes nesting sites may be highlighted in the many interpretive programs sponsored by park naturalists.

Since preservation of wildlife is an important objective, habitat areas should be conserved and protected. Preservation is especially important to those species that are endangered.

Deer management has become an issue in recent years. Park naturalists have noticed considerable damage to forest understory in many areas of the park system. As a result, this year the Department of Parks and Recreation has developed a Deer Management Plan to address concerns with the growing popula-

tion. Cameras have been strategically placed through the park system to gain more information on the existing herd size and Geographic Information System (GIS) data is actively tracking the number of accidents due to collisions with whitetail deer. This recently developed Deer Management Plan is included at the end of this chapter.

### **Unique Natural Areas**

Prince George's County has a wide array of unique natural areas. These areas are defined by areas where natural processes predominate and are not significantly influenced by man. The diverse sites are identified and grouped into the following categories:

- Archaeological
- Paleontological
- Champion Trees
- Natural Areas
- Lake or Large Ponds
- Nesting Sites
- Outcrops
- Scenic Area
- Stream Valleys
- Wetlands

While most are self-explanatory, there are many ordinances and regulations that protect these specific resources. As the owner of almost 10 percent of the county land area, M-NCPPC retains many of these valuable areas in public ownership.

Natural resources, like those mentioned above, are protected through a variety of regulations and plans within the county framework. The *Prince George's County Approved General Plan* for 2002 identifies the following goals:

1. Encourage quality economic development.
2. Make efficient use of existing and proposed county infrastructure investment.
3. Enhance quality and character of communities and neighborhoods.
4. Protect environmentally sensitive lands.

The *Biennial Growth Policy Plan*, adopted by the Prince George's County Council in November of 2000 also establishes environmental protection and farmland preservation as county priorities. The Development Pattern element of the *General Plan* in Prince George's County establishes three policy areas: Developed, Developing and Rural Tiers. Within the Tiers, there are overlay designations of established Centers and Corridors. The combination of these areas within Prince George's County designates areas of significant economic development, residential development and preservation. The future growth objective suggests that in the next 25 years, 33 percent of the county's residential growth will occur in the Developed Tier, 66 percent in the Developing Tier and 1 percent or less of all residential growth will occur in the Rural Tier.

The Developed Tier is the 86-square-mile area located along the borders of the District of Columbia and the area defined by the Capital Beltway (Interstates I-95/495). The Developing Tier can be described as the middle section of the county and is approximately 237 square miles in size. This region is generally considered to be suburban. The Rural Tier, consisting of approximately 150 square miles, lies within the



eastern and southern portion of Prince George’s County, and is equal to 32 percent of the county’s land area. This Tier contains the majority of open space and woodlands. The preservation of the remaining environmentally sensitive features in the Tier is a priority for any future development.

The vision for the Rural Tier includes protecting large amounts of woodland, wildlife habitat, recreation and agricultural pursuits, and the preservation of the rural character and vistas. In this area, the policies address retaining or enhancing environmentally sensitive features and agricultural resources; designing future development to retain and enhance the rural character; providing for transportation systems that help to protect open space, rural character and environmental features and resources; and assigning minimal priority to public sector capital improvements.

The Rural Tier goals are to:

1. Preserve environmentally sensitive species
2. Retain sustainable agricultural land
3. Maintain rural character
4. Allow large lot subdivision
5. Limit non-agricultural uses
6. Protect landowners’ equity in their land
7. Maintain the integrity of the rural transportation system

Strategies to achieve this effort as outlined in the *General Plan* propose:

- Consideration for revisions to tax regulations to provide for a reduced tax assessment for all protected, not just agricultural, land in the Rural Tier
- Consider creating a Transfer Development Rights program
- Investigate options for establishing a transfer of developments rights program that will protect land in the Rural Tier and important environmentally sensitive properties in other areas of the county.

### **Environmental Infrastructure**

The Environmental Infrastructure element of the *General Plan* emphasizes the need to protect important environmental assets and make wise use of the county’s resources. Additionally, the plan recognizes and includes policies important to sustainable, livable communities. Preserving ecological function, providing for energy conservation, reducing light pollution, and encouraging construction that uses green building techniques are important sustainable design initiatives.

The plan even goes as far as setting tree canopy coverage goals within each Tier by the 2025 milestone (Developed 26 percent, Developing 38 percent and Rural 60 percent desired canopy coverage.)

### **Green Infrastructure Plan**

Approved on June 14, 2005, the *Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan* is the first functional master plan to be developed for ecosystems in Prince George’s County. This plan sets the long-range vision for conserving environmental resources in the county. Prepared to meet the goals set forth in the *General Plan* this document is intended to provide a larger context for which land management and policy decisions are made.

The purpose of this plan is to guide development, green-space protection and mitigation activities, and

to implement a long-range vision for preserving, protecting and enhancing and/or restoring a contiguous network of environmentally important areas in the county by the year 2025.

One of the important elements of the plan is identification of specific Special Conservation Areas including:

1. Beltsville Agricultural Research Center
2. Patuxent Research Refuge
3. Greenbelt Natural Park
4. Anacostia River
5. Belt Woods
6. Suitland Bog
7. Patuxent River Corridor
8. Jug Bay Complex
9. Piscataway National Park
10. Mattawoman Creek Stream Valley
11. Cedarville State Forest/Zekiah Swamp Watershed
12. Potomac River Shoreline
13. Broad Creek

While most of these areas are already under active preservation, or are owned by federal, state and local agencies, there are some areas under private entity control.

### ***Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Policy Ordinance***

It is the policy of Prince George's County Government and the Prince George's County Planning Board to conserve and protect trees, woodlands, and wildlife habitat. Most often, these requirements include site planning techniques and construction practices that prevent adverse effects on the land, trees and forests. This policy is expressed in the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Policy, which is also known as the "Woodland Conservation Ordinance." In 1989, the County Woodland Conservation Ordinance was enacted. Shortly afterwards, the state followed suit and the Maryland State Forest Conservation Act was signed into law. The state act was modeled after the successful county ordinance and established a statewide forest conservation requirement. By working with property owners and developers through a negotiated tree preservation plan, setting site specific woodland conservation requirements and making commitments to use proper techniques for saving trees, the irreplaceable loss of woodland habitat has been significantly reduced in the county and the state. Compliance with the Woodland Conservation Ordinance is addressed during the development review and permitting processes.

In some cases, landowners, especially in the Rural Tier, are taking full advantage of this policy and putting large tracts of land into tree conservation easements to benefit private development interests. This ordinance, coupled with the downfall of tobacco farming, is changing the agricultural base in Prince George's County.

The following efforts have recently been undertaken by Prince George's County since the last submittal of the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan. These initiatives fully support the Natural Resource Land Conservation efforts at the local level.

### **Functional Water Resources Plan**

This report, known as the *Approved Water Resources Functional Master Plan* (Water Resources Plan) amends Prince George's County's *2002 General Plan*. The Water Resources Plan provides information relating to county water and sewer service capacity relative to planned growth to 2030, summarizes and provides a technical model to estimate the nutrient loadings on watersheds from existing and future conditions, and identifies the policies and strategies to amend the *General Plan* that are needed to maintain adequate drinking water supply and wastewater treatment capacity to 2030 and to meet water quality regulatory requirements as the county continues to grow. It also satisfies the requirements of MD House Bill 1141.

### **Transfer Of Development Rights**

Although a strategic recommendation of the *General Plan*, this land conservation program has not been adopted by Prince George's County. In an effort to use a full complement of land protection strategies, the county will continue to explore methods to make this program work. Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs can address many goals but research has shown that successful programs have straightforward and clearly-defined goals. Traditionally, TDR programs arise in response to a specific goal, such as farmland preservation, habitat conservation, or regional water quality management.

Common challenges of creating interest in a TDR program are balancing the incentives for sending and receiving area landowners. Also, an initial investigation on how much a developer is willing to pay for added density would help provide rural landowners with a better idea if selling their development rights is comparable to selling their land for development. This is crucial for obtaining initial support for TDR programs among rural landowners.

Creating a TDR program that is simple to understand by all parties, has a streamlined application process, and is financially feasible is necessary for long-term success of the program. TDR programs are a mix of voluntary participation and regulatory enforcement, and finding a balance between these two forces is imperative to sustaining a healthy market. If a program is too financially burdensome, either for the government to administer or for the developer to participate in, then the program will likely fail.

Consistency within the decision-making process is common to a successful TDR program. Receiving density bonuses via the purchase of development rights should be the only way a developer can receive additional density. Offering alternatives for granting density, such as permitting "up-zoning" or by providing density bonuses for affordable housing, will undermine the legitimacy of a TDR program.

Prince George's County has *not* been able to approve a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program. In lieu of a TDR program, we have established the Historic Agricultural Resource Preservation Program (HARPP) to preserve historic agricultural, rural, and natural resources in the county's Rural Tier, and the Priority Preservation Areas. State changes in the septic regulations will reduce development density in the Rural Tier. Currently, Rural Tier Development is limited to 1 percent of development permits issued countywide.

### **Historical Agricultural Resource Preservation Program**

The purpose of this locally-administered program is to implement the recommendations of Commission 2000, as adopted by CB-80-2000, and to provide regulatory incentives to preserve historic agricultural, rural and natural resources in the Rural Tier. The Prince George's County Council recognizes the public value in protecting certain historic viewsheds, vistas, rural culture and character, as well as longstanding agricultural enterprises in the Rural Tier in perpetuity through the acquisition of easements.

The Historical Agricultural Resource Preservation Program, which is codified in Subtitle 29 of the Prince George's County Code, indicates this program will implement the policies of the Prince George's County *General Plan* and the *Green Infrastructure Plan* as they relate to the Rural Tier. Additionally, there are four other goals of the program, including:

1. Preserve, protect and enhance properties that provide historic agricultural character, culture and practices.
2. Encourage others to preserve, protect and enhance properties that provide historic agricultural character, culture and practices.
3. Promote interest in and the study of historic properties, and properties that provide historic agricultural character, culture and practices.
4. Maintain historic rural character and way of life through the limitation of non-agricultural uses, and the preservation of scenic viewsheds, vistas and related natural resources.

Finally, the nature of this program is declared to be of general benefit to the citizens of this county and charitable in nature.

### ***The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation***

The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) program, in existence since 1977, is one of the most successful programs of its kind in the country. Its primary purpose is to preserve sufficient agricultural land to maintain a viable local base of food and fiber production for the present and future citizens of Maryland. MALPF provides a unique opportunity to assure that agricultural land will remain in the county through permanent preservation by the purchase of agricultural preservation easements on properties.

MALPF's program, locally managed by the Prince George's County Soil Conservation District is closely tied to state statute. Every year, different aspects of the program are subject to public discussion and revision during the legislative session. Prince George's County is in the process of receiving agricultural certification that will provide additional monies from the county agricultural real estate transfer tax to be used in the county for MALPF easement purchases. To date, Prince George's County transfer taxes have been used to purchase agricultural easements statewide.

In order to gain MALPF certification, one of the steps the county must complete is the successful establishment of a Priority Preservation Area in the county. Through the efforts of the M-NCPPC Planning Department and the Soil Conservation District, this step should be completed by the end of 2012.

### ***Priority Preservation Area***

The proposed Priority Preservation Area (PPA) in Prince George's County encompasses a large portion of the Rural Tier. If approved, the PPA in Prince George's County would be preserved for the purpose of maintaining a stable land base appropriate for agricultural, forestry, and mineral extraction uses, as well as for protection of wildlife and habitat, and the scenic and historic vistas that characterize its rural character. The PPA is defined as an area that is large enough to support profitable agricultural and forestry enterprises, that may or may not contain productive agricultural or forest soils, and that is governed by local policies established for the purpose of preventing development from encroaching or compromising these resources. The PPA is included in the land mass that constitutes 80 percent of the undeveloped land in the county, and that is targeted for preservation through easements and zoning.

In the northern regions of the county, publicly-owned properties and large federal research facilities such

as the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center and the Patuxent Research Refuge are in the Rural Tier and would be part of the PPA. In the southwest portion of the county, the PPA amounts to 8,950 acres, or 69 percent of the Rural Tier in that sub-region. There is another 39,000 acres, or 58 percent of the Rural Tier, in the southeastern portion of the county, also known as Subregion 6, which is also included. Lands within the proposed PPA would be preserved using a number of funding tools, including the purchase of development rights or agricultural easements, such as the Historical Agricultural Resource Preservation Program.

### ***Rural Legacy Program***

The Rural Legacy Program was established by an act of the Maryland General Assembly in 1997. The program encourages local governments and private land trusts to identify Rural Legacy areas and to 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 jeopardizing the economic value of farming, forestry, recreation and tourism. Through the use of easements and fee estates, the program enhances agriculture, natural resources, forestry and environmental protection. The purpose of the Rural Legacy Program is to protect and conserve strategic natural resources, large contiguous tracts of land, and other areas from sprawl development. In Prince George's County, the Rural Legacy area is designated as the land along the Patuxent River corridor. The Rural Legacy Area is 34,984 acres and it is a local goal to have 75 percent of that, or more than 26,000 acres, in some form of protection by 2017. The estimated costs to complete this effort are in excess of \$30 million.

Since 1997, the M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Planning have administered the Rural Legacy land preservation program. Under the purview of M-NCPPC, more than 11 properties and 900 acres of land were put into preservation. These preserved areas are still producing crops while non-farmable portions of the properties afford access for passive recreation opportunities to the general public.

In 2007, the Soil Conservation District took over administration of the Rural Legacy Program and has added to the overall acreage. The total acreage in Prince George's County under the Rural Legacy program in Prince George's County is more than 1,200 acres.

### ***Maryland Environmental Trust***

The Maryland Environmental Trust is a statewide land trust governed by a citizen board of trustees. It was created by the General Assembly in 1967. The goal is the preservation of open land, such as farmland, forest land, and significant natural resources. The primary tool to achieve this is through conservation easements, a voluntary agreement between a landowner and Maryland Environmental Trust.

A conservation easement is a tool for landowners to protect natural resources and preserve scenic open space. A landowner who gives an easement limits the right to develop and subdivide the land, now and in the future, but still remains the owner. The organization accepting the easement agrees to monitor it forever to ensure compliance with its terms. No public access is required by a conservation easement.

### ***Program Open Space***

Established under the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in 1969, Program Open Space (POS) symbolizes Maryland's long-term commitment to conserving natural resources while providing exceptional outdoor recreation opportunities for citizens. POS Stateside funds are used for the acquisition of parklands, forests, wildlife habitat, natural, scenic and cultural resources for public use. To improve the

strategic use of these limited funds, DNR developed a new POS Targeting Land Conservation System, which is based first on protecting targeted ecological areas, the most ecologically valuable lands in the state. The program also has funds that it distributes to local governments (POS Localside) for conserving recreational open space. These funds, in addition to other county and municipal conservation efforts, are used for preservation.

Today there are more than 5,000 individual county and municipal parks and conservation areas that exist because of the program. Almost all of the land purchased by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources in the last 40 years was funded at least in part through POS.

### ***GreenPrint/GreenPrint Maryland***

This state-funded program operated from 2001 until 2006, but is no longer active. The funds were targeted for the protection of Green Infrastructure. However, GreenPrint has been reintroduced into the state of Maryland in a different interactive mapping format. GreenPrint Maryland is a first-in-the-nation “web-enabled map.” This map shows the relative ecological importance of every parcel of land in the state.

Combining color-coded maps, information layers and aerial photography, this valuable new tool applies the best environmental science and geographic information systems to preserving and protecting environmentally sensitive lands statewide. GreenPrint is designed to provide information about land conservation and sustainable growth decisions.

### ***Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program***

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a voluntary, incentive-based federal program that pays farmers and farm landowners attractive incentives for putting their least-productive lands into conservation practices that benefit wildlife, improve water quality, and conserve soil.

Under CREP, farmers place a portion of their farm under a 10- or 15-year contract that requires the land to be put into the conservation cover the farmer chooses. Farmers can establish forest, native warm-season grasses, or cool-season grasses. In return, the farmer receives cost-share, annual rental payments and generous bonus payments.

Generally, agricultural land (crop land or pasture) adjacent to converted wetlands qualifies for the program. Local DNR foresters and wildlife biologists can help enroll participants. Participants can also enter the CREP program in conjunction with Rural Legacy, MALPF, or donated easement programs such as MET.

### ***Land and Water Conservation Fund***

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) creates parks and open space, protects wilderness, wetlands and refuges, preserves wildlife habitat, and enhances recreational opportunities from two complementary programs: a federal program and a state matching grants program. The federal program provides funds to purchase land and water resources for national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and other public lands, while the state matching grants program provides federal funds to states to assist in the acquisition of more urban open space and creation of local recreation facilities. The success of the LWCF has helped create parks for people to enjoy in 98 percent of the counties in the U.S., and has provided protection for more than five million acres of land and water areas across the country.

The Maryland State Highway Administration asked the LWCF to coordinate a Natural Resources Work Group with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The

work group is using a green infrastructure approach to strategically prioritize conservation and restoration projects that provide environmental benefits to the communities affected by a planned road improvement.

The 2008 Farm Bill 10 received wide support from agriculture, nutrition and conservation groups because it brings meaningful change to current farm policy, protects farmers, and increases funding and support for conservation programs through its Conservation Reserve Program. The 2008 Farm Bill includes a U.S. Department of Agriculture program, the Specialty Crop Research Initiative, which has made available more than \$28 million to provide solutions to problems such as plant breeding, pests, and diseases that pertain to specialty and other crops. The programs within the Farm Bill bolster industries that thrive on undeveloped land and help preserve its future productivity.

### **Summary and Recommendations**

Because over half of the county is developed, a major focus must be placed on restoration of existing urbanized areas. Areas with a high percentage of undeveloped land, on the other hand, hold significant potential for protecting and preserving existing natural systems so they can continue to serve their intended function, particularly where development is imminent.

Natural forest cover is good for the health of a watershed because of its inherent abilities to intercept rainwater, remove pollutants, promote surface water infiltration and groundwater recharge, and provide wildlife habitat. The Lower Potomac has the highest percentage (57 percent) of natural forested land, while the Lower Patuxent has the highest percentage of active agricultural land in the county.

Recent growth trends in Prince George's County suggest a more aggressive management approach is needed to direct growth in a way that is truly protective of all natural resources, including active productive farming, and not just timber-related industries.

Designation of a countywide priority preservation area is a promising step in the protection of areas that have countywide significance and contribute positively to protecting these resources. Development that recognizes the benefits and adheres to the principles for the preservation of a green infrastructure network, as identified in the Green Infrastructure Plan, is also a critical part of the solution suite that must be incorporated in order to meet the county's natural resources conservation goals.

### **Conservation Priorities**

Conservation strategies form a key element in the sustained success policy. Providing adequate quantities of open and natural lands necessary to perform the ecological services that sustain the health and functionality of healthy environmental, social and economic systems is the responsibility of Prince George's County's Planning Department, Planning Board, county agencies, and elected officials. Several regulatory requirements required by the state are in place to support this goal including:

- **Priority Funding Areas**—The state and county have designated priority funding areas (PFA), that consist of communities, municipalities and places where local governments want state investment to support future growth. The PFA boundaries were established before the county adopted the three tiers in the *General Plan*. SB-276, passed in the 2009 Maryland legislative session, sets a statewide land use goal of increasing the percentage of growth in Priority Funding Areas and decreasing the percentage of growth outside of PFAs.
- **Priority Preservation Areas**—A PPA is defined by the state in HB2-2006 as an area that is large enough to support profitable agricultural and forestry enterprises, that may or may not contain productive agricultural or forest soils, and that is governed by local policies established for the

purpose of preventing development from encroaching or compromising these resources. This area is being preserved for the purpose of maintaining a stable land base appropriate for agricultural and forestry, as well as for protection of wildlife and habitat and the scenic and historic vistas that characterize its rural character. Lands within a PPA are being preserved using a number of funding tools, including the purchase of development rights or agricultural easements and other types of easements. This effort is underway in the county.

- **The County's Green Infrastructure Plan**—This Plan identifies a potential green infrastructure network of approximately 167,000 acres or 54 percent of the county. About 32 percent of the network is categorized as regulated and includes features such as floodplains and steep slopes and is protected during the land development process. The remaining 68 percent comprises a variety of other environmentally sensitive features but is generally not regulated or protected. This remaining 68 percent represents a significant opportunity to target preservation for water quality improvement.
- **The 2008 Water and Sewer Plan**—*The 2008 Water and Sewer Plan for Prince George's County* documents existing water resources and wastewater treatment capacities and identifies mechanisms needed to meet future demand. The sewer envelope defines the boundary beyond which no community water and sewer facilities will be approved, except in cases of public health and safety. Although the existing water and sewer boundaries established in the 2008 Water and Sewer Plan were established to conform to the *General Plan* Tier designations, excluding and/or limiting public water and sewer infrastructure in the Rural Tier, some discrepancies do exist. Notably, some M-NCPPC properties inside the sewer envelope are not on a public wastewater system. This plan recommends the use of composting toilets at the public restroom facilities to eliminate private septic use within the sewer envelope.

Strategically, the county has many programs focused on succeeding in its Natural Resource Conservation goals. These on-going efforts are further defining the area of concentration for large contiguous blocks of land to be preserved as being in the Rural Tier.



# CHAPTER 6 – HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION

## 6.1 Introduction

Prince George’s County was named for Prince George of Denmark, husband of England’s Queen Anne, and is steeped in notable history. History buffs can learn more about this county’s intriguing past by visiting the many homes, mansions and historic sites that have been restored and preserved for public use. In addition, many unique and historically-oriented programs have been developed to bring Prince George’s County’s history to vibrant life. Special events allow visitors from all over to get a taste of the lives of past residents with lectures, workshops, guided tours, and special events such as period dinners, living history encampments, teas, hands-on history activities, lectures, and archaeological explorations, to name a few.

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission’s Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George’s County manages a number of historic sites and museums that celebrate Prince George’s County’s rich history. The M-NCPPC is the best known source for the operation, oversight and protection of historic resources in Prince George’s County. From initial planning, identification, and regulation to restoration and protection, M-NCPPC provides this oversight of and input to the citizens of the county. Some of the sites (See Figure 1.0 – Map of Publically-Owned Historical Resources in Prince George’s County) open to the public in the M-NCPPC inventory include:

- Abraham Hall
- Adelphi Mill
- Billingsley House Museum
- Bladensburg Balloon Park
- Chelsea
- Cherry Hill Cemetery
- College Park Airport
- College Park Aviation Museum
- Compton Bassett Historic Plantation
- Columbia Air Center
- Concord Manor Plantation House
- Cottage at Warrington
- Darnall’s Chance in Upper Marlboro
- Dinosaur Park
- Dorsey Chapel in Glenn Dale
- Dueling Grounds of Colmar Manor
- Hazelwood
- Marietta House Museum in Glenn Dale
- Mary Surratt House
- Montpelier Mansion in Laurel
- Mount Calvert Historical and Archaeological Park
- Newton White Mansion
- North Hampton Plantation Slave Quarters
- Patuxent Rural Life Museum

- Peace Cross at Bladensburg
- Publick Playhouse
- Queen Anne Bridge
- Oxon Hill Manor
- Ridgeley Rosenwald School
- Riversdale in Riverdale Park
- Riverview Road Archaeological Site
- Seabrook Schoolhouse
- Snow Hill Manor
- Surratt House Museum in Clinton
- Thrift Road School House
- Nottingham School House
- Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Railroad Bridge
- Woodyard Site

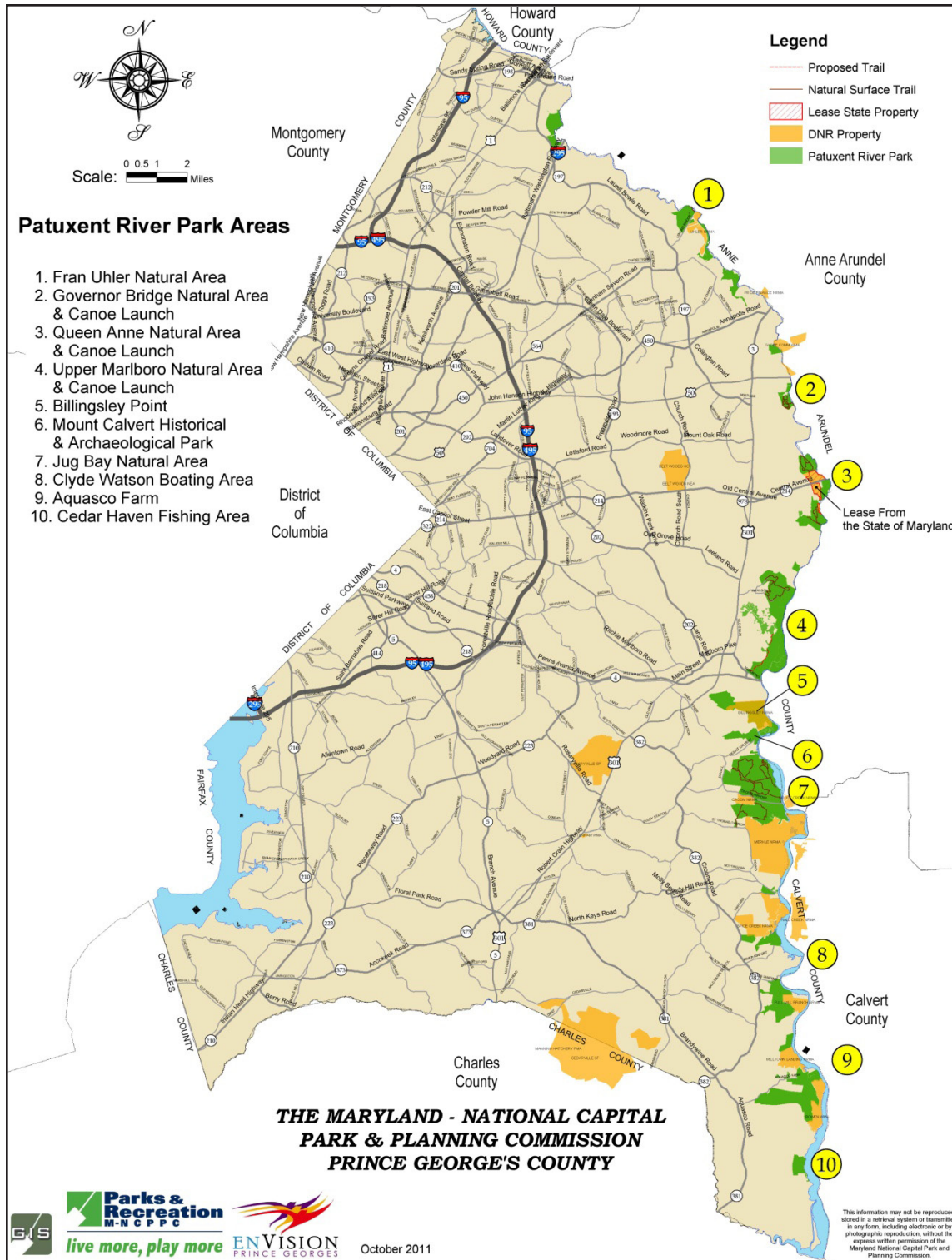


Figure 1.0. Map of Publicly-Owned Historical Resources in Prince George's County

## 6.2 Existing Preservation Framework

### **Subtitle 29 – Prince George’s County Code**

Enacted in 1981, the Prince George’s County Historic Preservation Ordinance is contained in Subtitle 29 of the County Code. The purpose of this Subtitle is to provide for the identification, designation, and regulation, for purposes of protection, preservation, and continued use and enhancement of those sites, structures (including their appurtenances and environmental settings), and districts of historical, archaeological, architectural, or cultural value. It is also the purpose of this Subtitle to preserve and enhance the quality of life and to safeguard the historical and cultural heritage of the county; strengthen the local economy, and stabilize and improve property values in and around such historic areas; foster civic beauty; and preserve such sites, structures, and districts for the education, welfare, and continued utilization and pleasure of the citizens of the county, the state of Maryland, and the United States of America.

As a result of the protection afforded by this ordinance, today there are more than 500 properties, including 325 historic sites and two locally designated historic districts, in Prince George’s County. National Register of Historic Places listings for the county include 75 individual properties and nine historic districts.

### **Historic Preservation Commission**

Prince George’s County has its own Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). This nine-member board appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council has the responsibility for evaluating and designating historic sites, and for authorizing tax credits for building alterations, demolition or new construction. The HPC serves as an advisory board to the Prince George’s County Planning Board and to other agencies in reviewing zoning applications, subdivisions, and other development projects, and legislation. Overall, HPC responsibilities can be divided into four general categories including: Survey and Designation; Review; Recommendations; and Advise and Education. The HPC holds monthly public meetings on the third Tuesday of every month.

### **The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Planning**

In Prince George’s County, the Historic Preservation Commission administers the county’s historic preservation ordinance and fosters the preservation and appreciation of the county’s historic environment and archaeological sites. The HPC does this with members of the Historic Preservation Section staff within the M-NCPPC Department of Planning. Together, the HPC and Historic Preservation Section work in partnership with property owners, business owners, developers, and municipalities to protect the collective county resources.

The Historic Preservation Section is within the Countywide Planning Section of the Department of Planning. This group of talented individuals is responsible for the day-to-day review of issues related to land development and potential impact to historic structures and resources. This group helps shape livable communities through the protection and stewardship of the county’s historic resources and by addressing key infrastructure needs, gathering data, and analyzing economic and other conditions. This section offers a diverse level of professional expertise to provide planning services and technical support to communities, public officials, and other government agencies. These functional elements are the key to effective community and countywide planning projects and to the development review processes. Community engagement is strongly encouraged and important to these planning efforts.

The Historic Preservation Section updates and keeps the historic properties database for Prince George’s County. This system provides preservation planners with information that assists with both routine infor-

mation requests and long-range planning projects. The database contains a complete inventory of all historic sites, historic resources, and documented properties. The database also includes photographs and general data related to the historic architectural and archaeological character of a property. There is also a list of outbuildings, properties and cemeteries and a listing of evaluation criteria used to designate the property, a summary of development referrals, historic area work permits and the preservation tax credits or other easements affecting the property.

Other accomplishments by the Historic Preservation Section include the creation and inclusion of multiple layers within the county's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database. The GIS layers include historic resources, historic sites, county historic districts, environmental settings, individual National Historic Places properties, and National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) historic districts. These layers are available to the general public and provide baseline information for anyone interested in basic information about cultural resources, including location, delineated environmental settings, or the boundaries of county and NRHP Districts.

### ***Department of Planning Historic Resources Preservation Accomplishments:***

- Continued historic surveys, National Register nominations, and historic site evaluations
- Establishment of the Old Town College Park Historic District
- Development review procedures to protect environmental settings and cultural landscapes
- Experience in protecting environmental settings
- Passage of archaeology regulations in 2005
- Architectural and engineering assessments
- Establishment and administration of historic property grant program
- Continued historic preservation tax credit review and approval
- Continued community outreach and work with educational institutions

### ***Department of Parks and Recreation, Natural and Historic Resources Division***

M-NCPPC has a long tradition of stewardship of historic properties, beginning with the purchase of the Riversdale Mansion in 1949. Today, M-NCPPC owns more than 20 historic properties in Prince George's County, all managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation. These special properties come under the direct purview of the Natural and Historic Resources Division (NHRD).

The overarching mission of the Natural and Historic Resources Division is to provide the public with professional natural and historic resource management services, including interpretive programs, museums, parks and special facilities. These efforts encourage and provide educational awareness of the diverse natural and historic heritage of Prince George's County.

Each year this Division of the M-NCPPC serves thousands of residents, visitors and guests with hundreds of programs, activities and special events. These programs are innovative and have gained a national reputation for excellence. NHRD not only provides natural and historical interpretation and conservation educational programs, but also manages the 20 historic sites and operates five historic museums (Darnell's Chance, Marietta, Montpelier, Riversdale and the Surratt House) for historic interpretation. NHRD oversees the operation of notable sites like Dorsey Chapel, the Patuxent Rural Life Museums, Nottingham Schoolhouse, Cherry Hill Cemetery, Seabrook Historic Schoolhouse and Abraham Hall. The Mount Calvert Historical and Archaeological Park and the Northhampton Slave Quarters Archaeological Park provide opportunities for unique interactive programs and emphasize the increasing commitment to African-American culture and heritage.

On any given day of the week, there are interpretive tours, audiovisual programs, educational exhibits, lectures, seminars, hands-on workshops, living encampments, reenactments, demonstrations, crafts, dinners, music, oral and video history projects, volunteer programs, youth mentoring, historic research, commemorative and special events, holiday candle and ghost tours, and public archaeological opportunities geared towards providing information about historic and cultural resources.

The NHRD also houses some of the most complete antique farm equipment and tool museums in the state of Maryland. These relics are a testament to the county's agrarian roots. The NHRD staff provide information and assistance with historic restoration of M-NCPPC resources, teacher training workshops, and professional resources to agencies, students, scholars, conferences, symposiums, on-going research at the local, state, national and international levels. Staff participates in leadership roles within the museum community and provides insight to tried and tested preservation techniques.

### **Abraham Hall – Black History Program Headquarters**

The objective of this site is to preserve the heritage of the surrounding communities it has historically served, and provide a home to the M-NCPPC Black History Program. This program conducts research, planning programs, and provides a series of rotating exhibits at the Abraham Hall site. The site is dedicated to developing the interpretive and educational resources of African-American history and making these resources available to the public.

### **Archaeology Program**

The Archaeology Program studies, interprets and preserves the archaeological resources of the past through active excavation, exhibits, and public programming for the benefit of Prince George's County. Since 1998, this program has explored the county's diverse archaeological resources. A wide variety of programs and hands-on activities is available. The qualified staff assist other department sites and development projects, the Department of Planning efforts, local, county, state and federal agencies, the State Attorney's Office, and the land development community on a regular basis. These efforts result in aiding the compliance with the Archaeological ordinance, and the most acceptable practices for compliance with state and federal standards relating to archaeology. Staff also assist with the Development Review process, provide conference review papers, and participate or are involved with many special events and projects.

New to the program is the Dinosaur Park. Dedicated in October 2010, this interactive interpretive area located near Laurel is producing fossils from the early crustacean era. Dinosaur bones, teeth, and the remains of early flowering plants continue to be found by experts and novices on this unique site. Citizens ranging from tots to seniors have the ability to explore Prince George's County prehistory.

### **Black History Program**

The Black History Program began in 1982 as a survey project designed to inventory African-American sites in the county. The original impetus came from community activists and residents who were concerned that buildings and sites significant to African-American communities were being lost to neglect or development. The program conducts document research such as census records, deeds, and certificates of freedom, and serves as a resource to many groups and individuals. Acting as a liaison to community groups and local historic societies such as North Brentwood Historical Society, Lakeland Heritage Community Project, Fairmount Heights Local History Project and the Glenarden Pioneers, the Black History Program assists each with programming, researching, and displaying their histories. The program provides the most comprehensive collection of African-American history in Prince George's County.

### **Historic Resources Program**

The Historic Resources Program was created in January of 2009 to provide historical research assistance to staff and the general public. This group of talented staff also maintains the NHRD's artifact collection and provides entertaining and educational trips and excursions for the public. Staff has developed history brochures, keeps an inventory of the M-NCPPC historic sites, and prepares detailed reports related to each property. More than 5,000 artifacts and 2,500 photographs of the county's historic landscape are kept by the staff in this unit.

### **Historic Properties Maintenance Unit**

The Historic Properties Maintenance Division was created in 1999. Staff members in this unit possess unique qualifications and knowledge related to repair and continual upkeep of the M-NCPPC historic resource structures. The group also provides support with regards to special events, furniture repair, and custodial duties. This unit is routinely assigned complex renovations to historic properties and has supported more than 45 public participation events and programs. Tasks range from matching historic paints and replacing detailed woodwork to installing custom flooring and new interpretive signs.

### **Museum Exhibit and Support Unit**

The Museum and Exhibit Support Unit provides exhibit and graphic support for the facilities of the NHRD. The focus of this office is to provide interpretive opportunities in all forms while continuing to produce and update program and event sign information. Their expertise includes exhibit design, fabrication and installation of all forms of information. Property signage, event and program signs, publications and materials come under the purview of this staff.

### ***Department of Parks and Recreation Historical and Cultural Accomplishments in 2010***

With this support and effort towards cultural and historical resources, the Department of Parks and Recreation also had several notable accomplishments in 2010:

- Awarded the 2010 Maryland Preservation Award for *Stewardship of Historic Resources by a Government Agency* by the Maryland Historic Trust
- The National Park Service accepted the Darnell's Chance House Museum into the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom
- Awarded an \$850,000 grant to assist with the purchase and acquisition of the Compton Bassett Historic Plantation. Acquisition of this important house and surviving dependencies was completed in late 2010;
- Celebrated the centennial of the College Park Airport with more than 4,000 supporters at the AirFair 100 program
- Restored and refurbished the Ridgeley Rosenwald School in Capitol Heights, Maryland
- Added the Peace Cross, Cherry Hill Cemetery, Thrift Schoolhouse and Nottingham Schoolhouse to the county's historic inventory
- Restored the grand salon of the Riversdale Mansion
- Dedicated the Columbia Air Center Park located in the Patuxent River Park near Croom. This site commemorates the first African-American operated air park in the nation
- Initiated and completed the first phase of structural repairs to the Chelsea historic house

## 6.3 Future Historic Preservation and Planning

In June of 2010, the Prince George's County Planning Board of the M-NCPPC adopted the *Approved Historic Sites and Districts Plan*. This plan formally amends the county's *Approved General Plan for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District* within Prince George's County, and amends the 1992 Historic Sites and Districts Plan.

The *Approved Historic Sites and Districts Plan* provides the citizenry with a set of goals, policies, and strategies to guide future preservation and planning efforts as it relates to historic resources within Prince George's County. The plan also contains an initial set of implementation priorities and a proposal for a strategic plan of implementation. Lastly, the approved plan contains a set of appendices that provide updated county and community histories; a summary of historic themes; and lists of cemeteries, organizations, and sources of other additional information. Basically, the *Historic Sites and Districts Plan* serves as a blueprint to assist in implementing effective historic preservation policies and strategies.

Policy guidance for this plan came from the county's approved *General Plan*. An extensive planning effort to prepare the plan included engaging historic property owners, citizens, residents and other stakeholders in public participation activities. More than 30 meetings occurred throughout the public participation process. More than 1,700 individuals and 200 affiliations are entered into the contact database associated with this process.

This effort resulted in valuable input to the plan. In response to a county non-profit organization and the citizens at large, a draft plan was distributed for widespread review and comment. This effort occurred nine months before the formal adoption of the plan. The plan represents an effort to chart the direction of future historic preservation policy in Prince George's County.

### **Historic Sites and Districts Plan Highlights**

The *Historic Sites and Districts Plan* is divided into four parts. Part One includes the introduction and heritage themes. These represent the important aspects of the county's history, culture, and heritage. This part also provides an analytical framework for evaluating the significance of individual properties. Part Two of the plan relates to the 12 plan goals that have been established by the Prince George's District Council. Part Three is a comprehensive list of properties covered by the historic preservation ordinance. This resource is also produced on an overall map of Prince George's County, which is included in the Plan. This is an invaluable tool as it relates to the land development process and public site acquisition. Part Four consists of the plan Appendices. These appendices provide a great deal of useful information including a history of the county, a statement of prehistoric archaeological context, a summary of the 58 documented historic communities, an inventory of historic cemeteries, a list of preservation organizations, and a more detailed explanation of the historic district documentation and designation process.

Overall, this plan presents goals, policies and strategies that will be realized through the development of a strategic plan for implementation. Potential implementation may include future legislative changes to existing ordinances, capital improvement program commitments, operating budget initiatives, and the inclusion of policy guidance in master plans and sector plans.

In summary, this is a well put together tool to be used by planners, land developers and individuals who have an interest in learning more about Prince George's County history. The document is a thorough inventory of the county and provides a wealth of information in one place.



## 6.4 Consistency with Other Plans

The purpose of the county's 2002 approved *General Plan* is to provide broad guidance for the future growth and development of the county and to lay the foundation for all future planning and development activities. The historic preservation goal identified in the *General Plan* is to "Identify and evaluate all historic resources for designation as historic sites or as contributing to historic districts." There are also three specific policies identified in the *General Plan* relating to historic preservation:

1. Integrate historic sites and districts into the county's development pattern
2. Protect historic resources through appropriate regulation and enforcement measures
3. Encourage stewardship and adaptive reuse of historic sites and districts

Preservation planning has been part of the master and sector planning process since the adoption of the 1981 *Historic Sites and Districts Plan*. The goals, policies and strategies for implementation outlined in the adopted planning documents are public policy.

Linking the past to the present through the preservation of historic structures and older neighborhoods is a primary goal of historic preservation. It is an attempt to enhance the public welfare, which is a justified governmental concern. Historic preservation encompasses a range of federal, state and county regulations.

Prince George's County, through the M-NCPPC and ongoing private outreach efforts, is making notable strides in ensuring that all historic resources are protected for future generations. Since the enactment of the county's Historic Preservation Ordinance in 1981, the county's preservation program and the field of preservation have benefitted from significant regulatory and technical advances. The county has also made significant financial commitments towards these efforts, and the public directly benefits from ongoing programming and interpretive efforts.

Historical interests are increasing and the plans being acted on within the county are consistent and meet existing regulations to the extent possible. Historical review is a part of every local plan implementation process. The goals and concerns are clear.

## 6.5 Trends, Challenges and Opportunities

As fewer young people are exposed to history and the treasured past, they are less likely to partake in activities such as tours and historical celebrations. This not only affects the use rates of historic sites and the park system, but can also affect their future support and advocacy for parks when they become adults. The M-NCPPC in Prince George's County, through the Natural and Historical Resources Division, approaches this challenge from multiple angles with hundreds of different and interesting outreach programs, special events, unstructured offerings and many other types of efforts.

## 6.6 Assessment of Local Program and Recommendations

Prince George's County provides a fine cultural and historical resources preservation program. This effort has to be one of the best the state has to offer. The regulatory oversight and ownership of historic properties by the M-NCPPC are key elements in the preservation and maintenance of this county's cultural heritage, for the benefit of generations to come. Although it is often suggested that the county should continue to grow and acquire more properties, two fundamental questions remain: how much more regulation, and how many additional properties should be owned and maintained by public agencies such as the M-NCPPC? Over the long term, what is the most effective means to ensure long-term preservation?

### ***Potential recommendations include:***

1. Identify historic and cultural resource survey activities as a priority in order to provide data needed to inform local and statewide planning decisions and assist developers and project planners to more easily comply with federal, state and local laws.
2. Synthesize Maryland's archaeological data and make it available in the form of a searchable database.
3. Launch a web-accessible comprehensive statewide inventory of historic properties that provide up-to-the-minute data on historical and cultural resource documentation.
4. Provide better guidance to local jurisdictions about including historic preservation in the comprehensive planning process, and encourage active involvement in the Maryland Historical Trust during the draft process.
5. Create a pay-for-performance grant program through which the state can support local government-sponsored heritage preservation programs that will greatly enhance the identification, documentation, and protection of historic resources of significant local communities, the state and the nation. Such a program will provide local governments with financial and human capital needed to undertake new or expanded historic preservation initiatives and provide incentives to communities to provide professional, well-run, effective programs benefiting the citizens of Maryland.
6. Better coordination between the Planning Department and the Department of Parks and Recreation is essential to the continued preservation-related activities that affect publicly-owned properties. As the DPR is subject to the regulations associated with the county's historic preservation ordinance, they also do not benefit from most available grant programs or other local financial incentives available to historic property owners.
7. Hold local biennial summits that review implementation progress until the next *Historic Sites and District Plan* amendment process. Include a wide variety of participants from the land development community, regulatory review agencies, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County, elected, historic property owners, and general public participants.

For a detailed thorough discussion of issues, goals, and strategies associated with cultural and historic resources preservation in Prince George's County, consult the ***Approved Historic Sites and Districts Plan*** produced by M-NCPPC in June, 2010.

# Appendix A – Calculation of the Default State Recreational Acreage Goal

The state goal for the provision of parkland for the residents of the state of Maryland is 30 acres per 1,000 residents. The county goal for Prince George’s County is 35 acres per 1,000 residents.

YEAR	POPULATION IN PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY	NUMBER OF ACRES TO BE PROVIDED PER STATE GOAL (30 ACRES/1,000 RESIDENTS)	NUMBER OF ACRES TO BE PROVIDED PER PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY GOAL (35 ACRES/1,000 RESIDENTS)
2010	863,420	25,902	30,219
2040	950,110	28,503	33,253

# Appendix B – Recreation and Parks Supply and Demand Analysis: An Approach

## Supply and Demand Methodology

	NUMBER OF FACILITIES	SEASON LENGTH	DAILY CARRYING CAPACITY	ANNUAL CARRYING CAPACITY	TOTAL SUPPLY	2010 POPULATION	PARTICIPATION RATE		FREQUENCY RATE	2010 DEMAND	UNMET NEED
							2008 STATE	2011 NSGA			
Football/Soccer	152	220	60	13,200	2,006,400	863,420	8.5	4.8	16.34	1,199,204	0
Baseball/Softball	186	190	54	10,260	1,908,360	863,420	7.1	4.5	16.57	1,015,787	0
Tennis Courts	318	190	32	6,080	1,933,440	863,420	12.1	4.4	13.16	1,374,875	0
Basketball Courts	210	215	40	8,600	1,806,000	863,420	18.0	9.6	19.43	3,019,725	141
Group Picnic Areas	17	235	120	28,200	479,400	863,420	40.4	–	3.74	1,304,593	29
Playgrounds	224	235	120	28,200	6,316,800	863,420	55.4	–	8.95	4,281,095	0
Skate Parks	3					863,420					
Dog Parks	3					863,420					

### Benchmarking Ratios

	NATIONAL AVERAGE	PRINCE GEORGE'S EXISTING RATIOS	NUMBER NEEDED TO MEET NATIONAL AVERAGE
Football/Soccer	5,057	5,680	170-152=18
Baseball/Softball	3,406	4,642	253-186=67
Tennis Courts	4,500	2,715	0
Baseball Courts	7,983	4,111	0
Group Picnic Area	-	-	-
Playgrounds	3,213	3,854	286-224=44
Skate Parks	-	-	-
Dog Parks	63,009	287,806	13-3=10

# Appendix C – Acquisition, Development and Rehabilitation Priorities

## Projects (in thousands of dollars)

PARK NAME	DESCRIPTION	Estimated Short-Range (2012) Cost			Estimated Mid-Range (2017) Cost			Estimated Long-Range (2022) Cost		
		Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation
Ammendale Road Acquisition	Acquisition of Land							750		
Arts District Acquisition Sites	Acquisition in Arts District							275		
Contee Road Acquisition	Acquisition of Land							750		
Countywide Local Park Acquisition	Acquisition of land for Community and Neighborhood Parks	1500			4500			9500		
Historic Agricultural Resources Preservation	Agricultural Easements	3949			9000			10000		
Regional/Stream Valley Park Acquisition	Acquisition of land for Regional Parks and Stream Valleys	1500			4500			8500		
Blue Ponds Conservation Area	Feasibility Study					250				
Fairland Regional Park	Road, Soccer/Football Field (FY09); Building Renovation (FY14/15)						1000			
Longwood CP (Dinosaur Park)	Dinosaur Park Development					250				
Montpelier Arts Center	Outside Studio (FY10), Pottery Classroom (FY11), Renovations (FY12 &15)			1000			300			
Montpelier Historic Site	Mansion Renovation and Site Improvements			1700						
Montpelier Neighborhood Park	Park renovation									100
North College Park Community Center	Feasibility Study for new community center					5050				
Northern Area Sports Park	Park Development near Konterra									3592
African American Museum and Cultural Center	New Cultural Museum					5000				
Heurich Community Park	Artificial Turf Field and related park amenities		225							
Langley Park Multi-Cultural Service Center	Redevelopment to serve community									360
North Brentwood CCP	Code compliance & renovation									800
Northwest Branch Trail @ Ford	Replace bridge, repave trail									125
College Park Airport	Airport Operations Building		4000							
Good Luck CC	Expansion. (5,400 s.f.) Ballfield and Basketball Renovation						175			1400
Landover Hills Community Center	Facility Planning					100				
Paint Branch Golf Complex (First Tee)	Pond reconfiguration, short course installation, practice green enlargement									300
Collingbrook CP	Park Development								700	
Collington Branch SVP	Trail to South Bowie Library		100							
Glenn Dale CC	Code Compliance, Renovations & Expansion (1,500 s.f.)						2200			
Queen Anne Bridge Fishing Area	Restoration of Historic Bridge									350
Cedar Heights CC	Code Compliance, EMG Renovation, Trail & Bridge (FY12)			180						
Columbia Park CC Park	Expansion									318
Enterprise Golf Course	Driving Range and First Tee								1086	
Folly Branch SVP	Trail Development & MARC Connection (FY14&15)								3340	
Publick Playhouse Cultural Arts Center	Reconstruction									11000
Regent Forest CP	New Park Development								832	
Concord Historic Site	Renovation and new assembly room (FY13)						2515			
Fairwood East Community Park	Feasibility Study					800				
Ritchie Run NP	New Park Development								748	
Walker Mill RP	Park Renovation						700			2000
Watkins Regional Park	Park Master Plan Upgrade/Park Development & Renovation						2075			
Barnaby Manor Recreation Center	New Recreation Building								2000	
Bradbury Community RC	Park Renovation									100
District 7 Development Reserve	Recreational Facilities								3150	
J. Franklyn Bourne Aquatic Center	Facility planning									50
Park Berkshire NP/S	Park renovation			200						
Peppermill Village CC Park	Community center expansion									1244
Rollins Avenue NP	Park Development		50							
Henson Creek SVP & Trail	Trail extension & stream renovation			100			200			
Oxon Hill Manor Historic Site	Tent and Elevator						300			
Potomac Waterfront CP - Rosalie Island	New Park Development; Visitor Center (Park Police Substation)								5400	
Riverview CP	Park Enhancements			20						
Accokeek East CP	Recreation Center Design								1641	
Cheltenham Conservation Area	Boardwalk Replacement - Park Enhancements						100			
Cosca Regional Park	Park Renovation			1000						

## Projects (in thousands of dollars)

PARK NAME	DESCRIPTION	Estimated Short-Range (2012) Cost			Estimated Mid-Range (2017) Cost			Estimated Long-Range (2022) Cost		
		Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehabilitation
Darnall's Chance	New Windows					250				
District 9 Development Reserve	Various Park Development Projects								450	
Fort Washington Forest NP/S	Field lighting		100							
Holloway Estates NP	Field lighting		100							
Mellwood Pond Park	Modification of Weir Structure						100			
Park Police Cosca Substation	Facility improvements									200
Patuxent River Park (Jug Bay)	Maint. Building (FY18); Campground (FY11); Trails (FY12); Bridge (FY14)		100			300			350	
Piscataway Creek SVP	Extension of trail, play area at Hermit Street									600
Pleasant Springs CP	New Community Park Design and Development								2200	
Police Fire Arms Range	Safety improvements (FY08-10); New Indoor Facility (FY12-13)			1000						10000
Prince George's Equestrian Center	Roof Replacement and Building Upgrades						150			
South Clinton CC	New Community Center		3900							
Tanglewood CP/S	Field lighting		100							
Upper Marlboro CC	Renovation						400			
Woodyard Historic Site	Archeological Park Development					100				
Agricultural Building Fund	Barn Repair/Construction						100			
Aquatic Facility Renovation Fund	Pool Renovation			500			500			
Art in Public Spaces	Public Art								400	
Artificial Turf Fields	Artificial Turf Athletic Fields throughout the County					100			3000	
Community Center Expansion	Various Community Center Additions			1126						
Consolidated Headquarters Building	Design and Construction of New Office Building (P&R, Planning & EOB)		23400						6600	
Court Renovation Fund	Basketball & Tennis Court Renovation			100						
Environmentally Sensitive Facility Fund	LED Certification					500			500	
Geographical Information Systems	Planning Department GIS System Update			50			50			
Information Technology Communication	IT and Communications Funding for Facilities		500						500	
Infrastructure Improvement Fund	EMG Report Recommendations		8000			18000				
Lighting Renovation Fund	Parking, Sports Field, & Security Lighting						1000			1000
Playground Equipment Replacement	Code Compliance						4500			
Public Right-of-Way Improvements	DPWT& SHA required road improvements									1300
Recreation Facility Planning	Planning and Development of recreational facilities					700				
Reserve Fund	Development Projects		100			100				
Site Remediation Fund	Environmental Clean-up		300							
Southern Area Aquatic Center	New Indoor Aquatic Facility		500			16500				
Trail Renovation Fund	Trail Reconstruction			150			450			

# ***Appendix D – Parks & Recreation 2010 and Beyond; Volume 1: Needs and Resource Assessment***

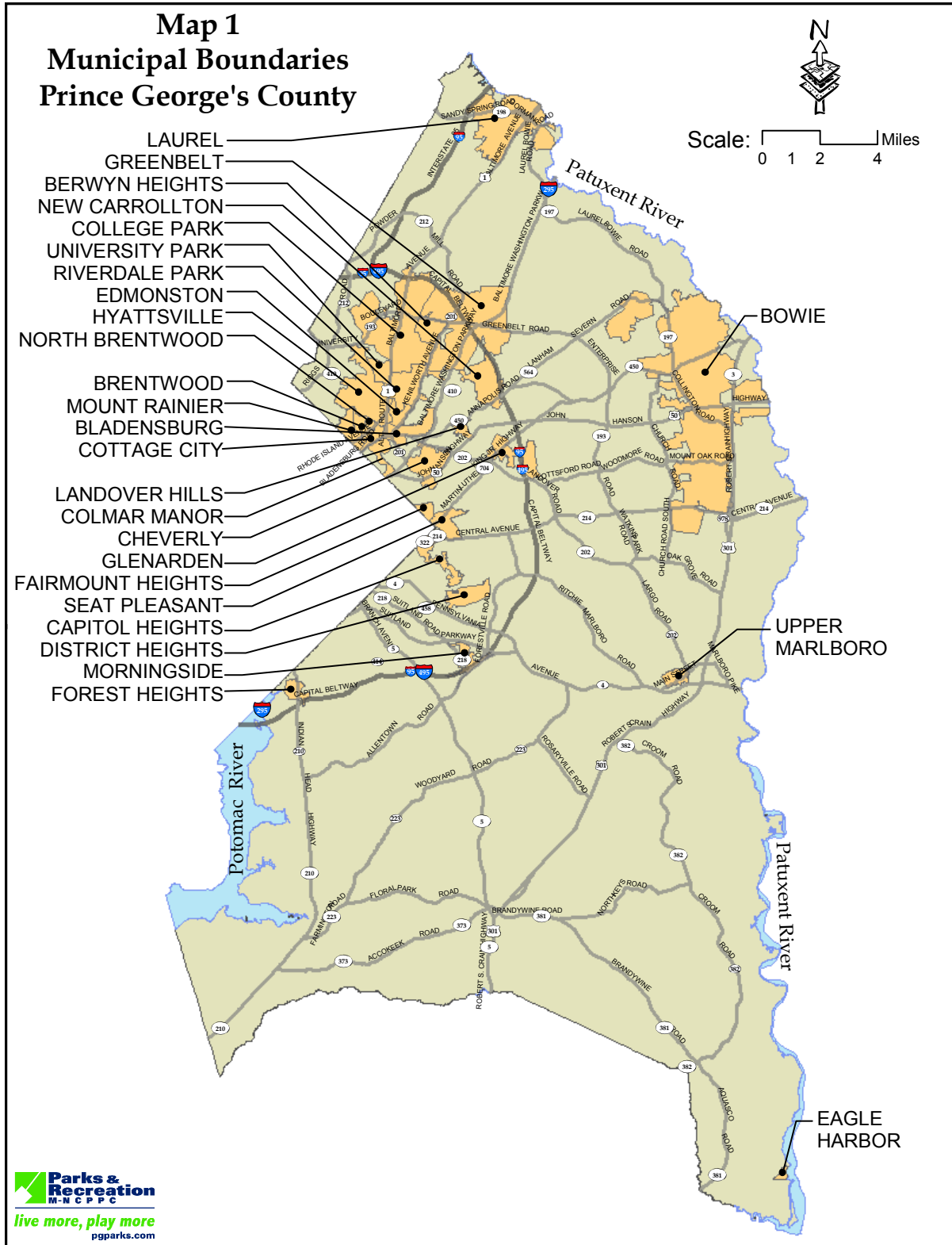
See Supplemental Document.



# ***Appendix E – Parks & Recreation 2010 and Beyond; Volume 2: 2040 Vision & Framework***

See Supplemental Document.

# Appendix F – Maps



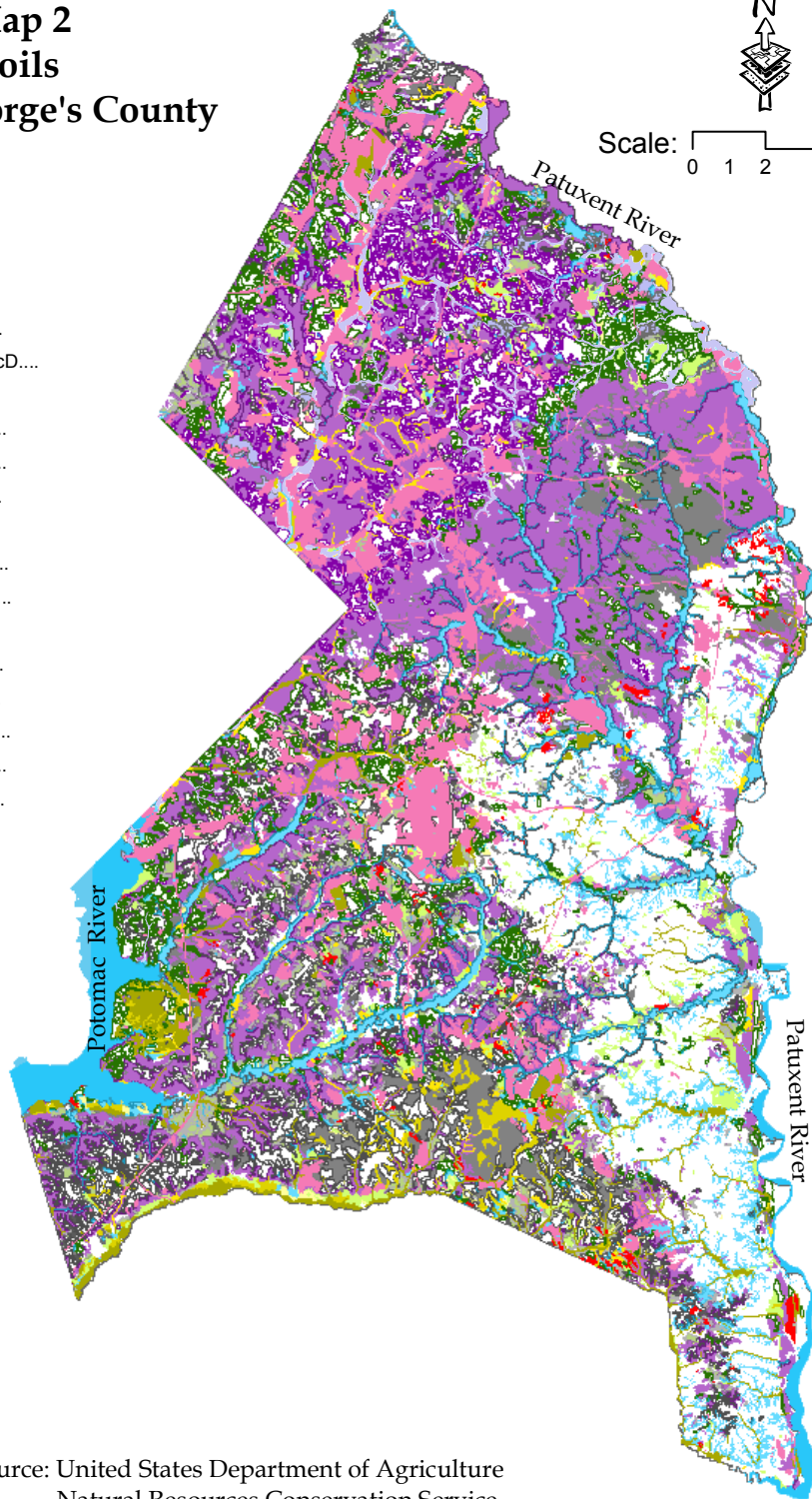
# Map 2 Soils Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles

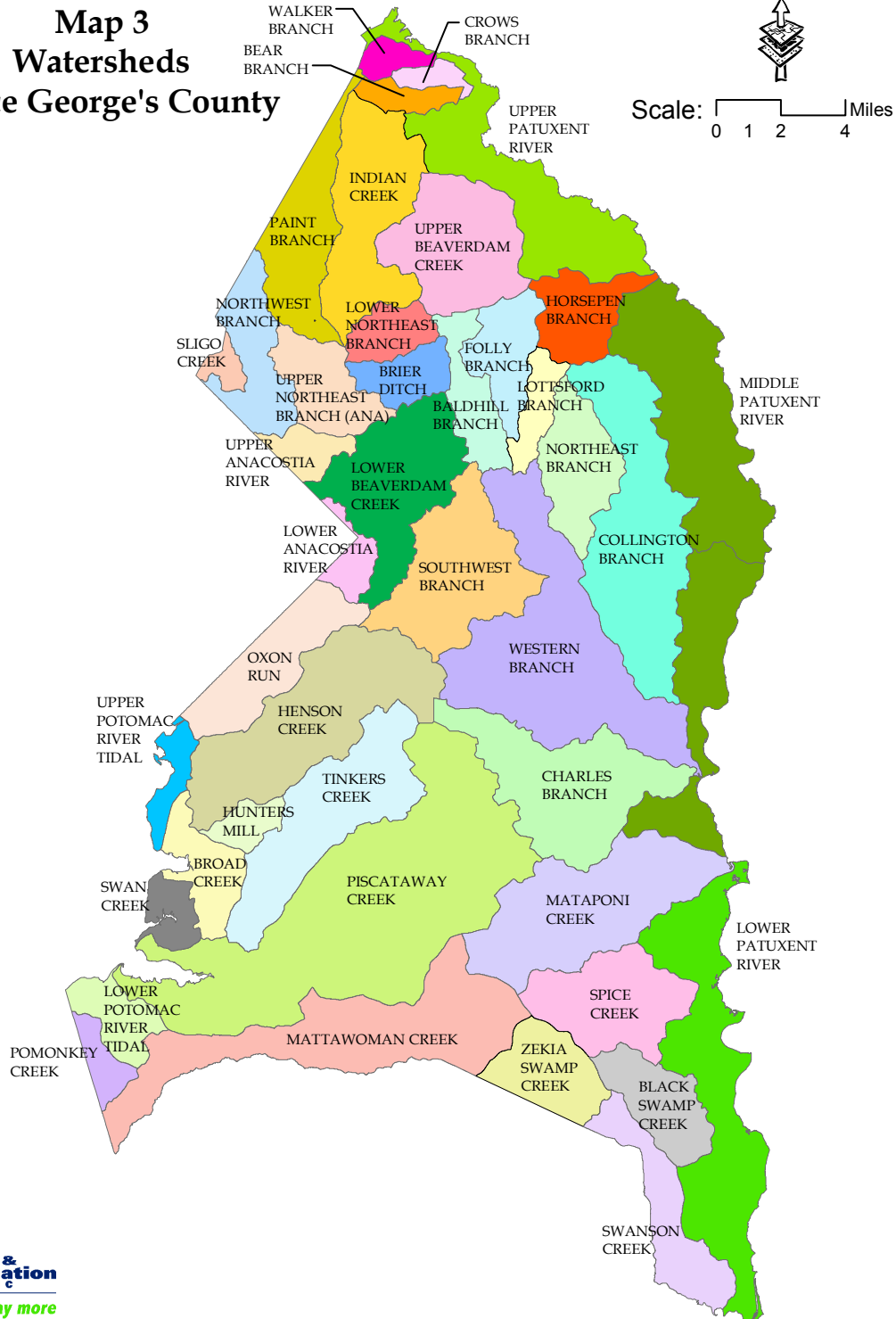
## Legend MAPSYMBOL

- Zn, ZS
- W, WDF, WDF....
- UdaF, UdbB, UdcD....
- PoA, PrB, PT....
- SaA, SaB, SaC....
- RcA, RcB, RuB....
- LQA, LsA, LxD....
- InA, Is, lu....
- HaA, HgB, HnB....
- GaC, GdB, GcB....
- FaA, FbB
- EkA, EnA, EsA....
- Dam, DfA, DfB....
- CaB, CaC, CaD....
- BaA, BaB, BaC....
- AaB, AcA, AdA....



Source: United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

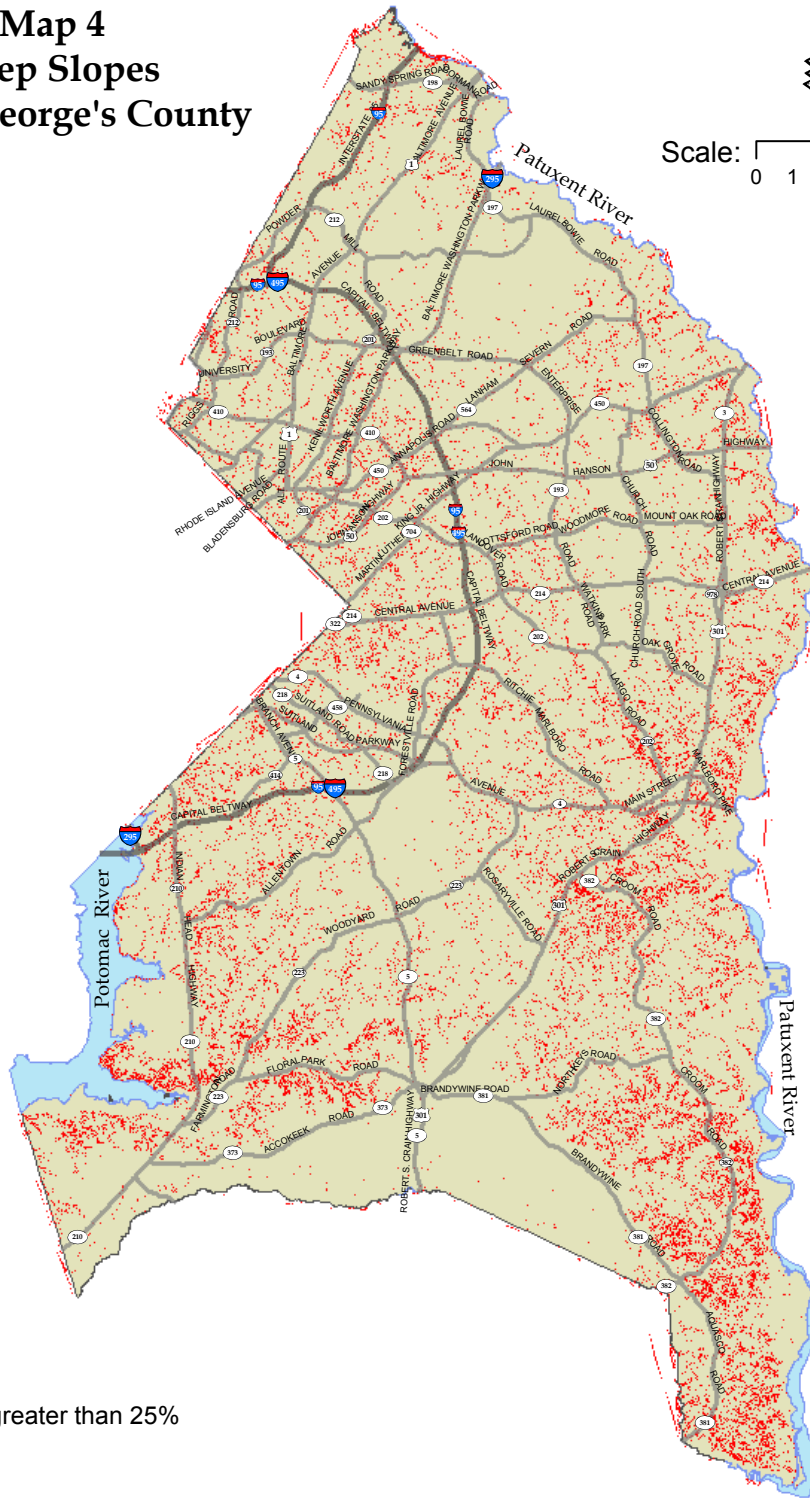
# Map 3 Watersheds Prince George's County




# Map 4 Steep Slopes Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles



 Slopes greater than 25%



# Map 5 Woodlands Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles

# Map 6 Wetlands Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles





 DNR Wetland

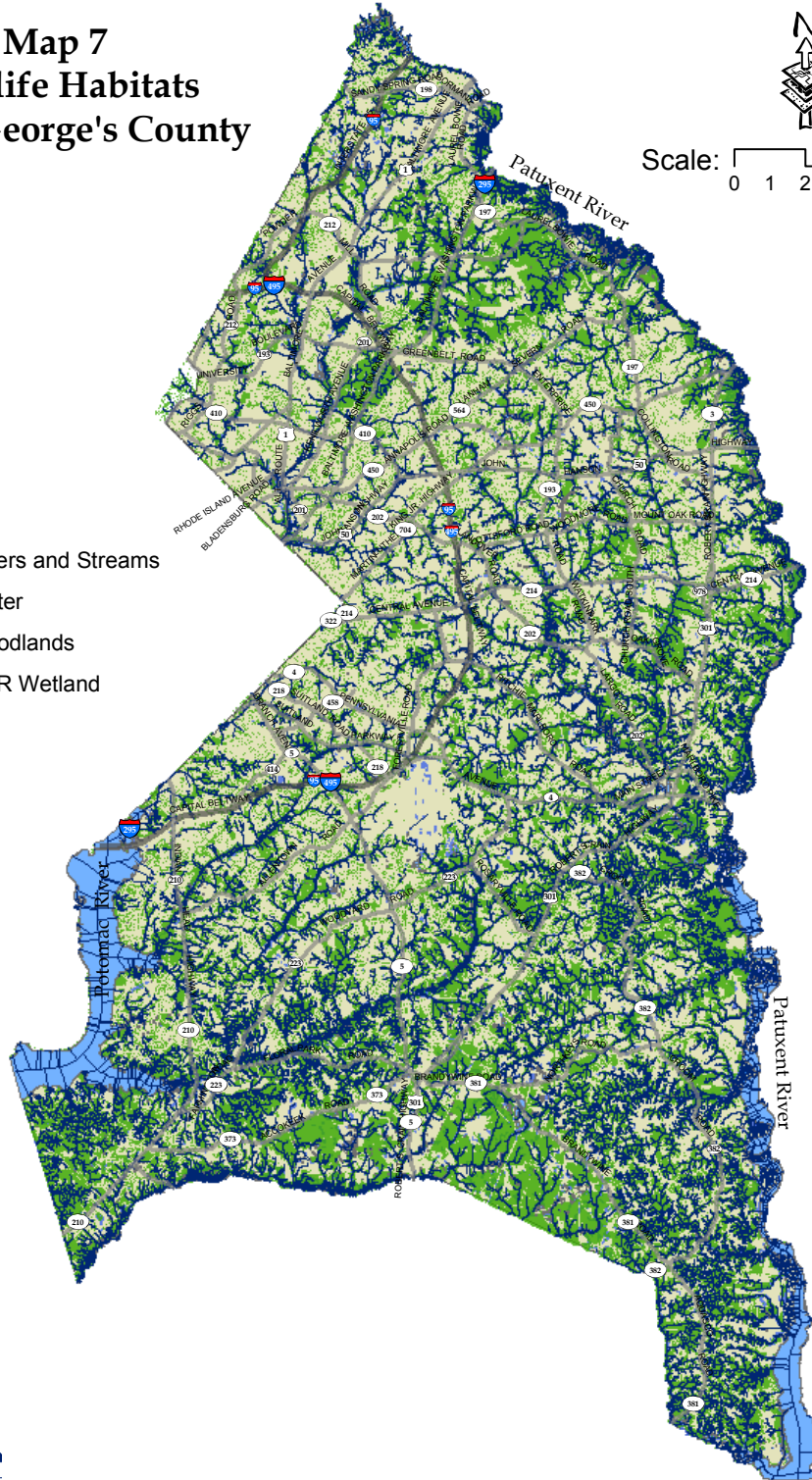


# Map 7 Wildlife Habitats Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles

-  Rivers and Streams
-  Water
-  Woodlands
-  DNR Wetland



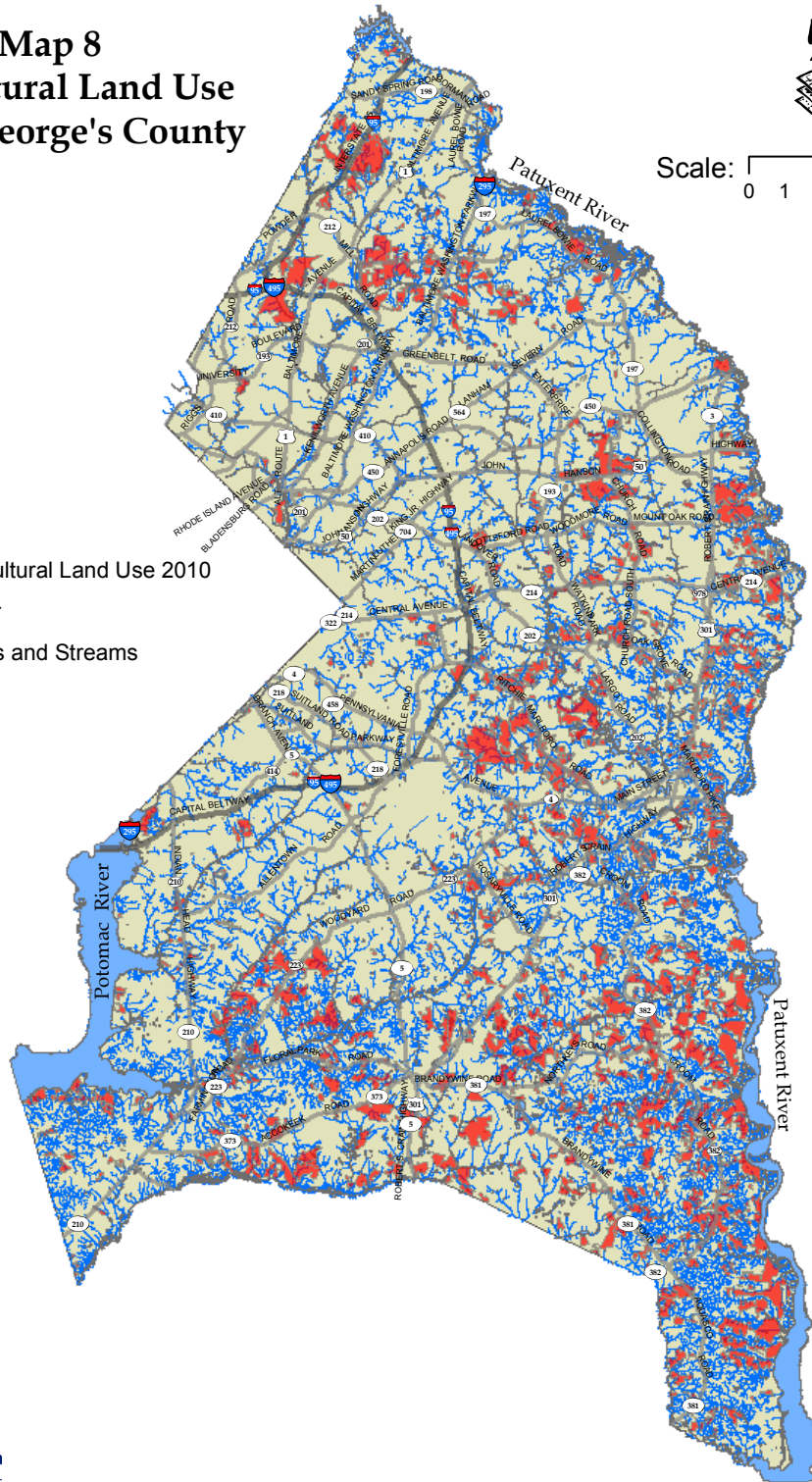


# Map 8 Agricultural Land Use Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles

- Agricultural Land Use 2010
- Water
- Rivers and Streams

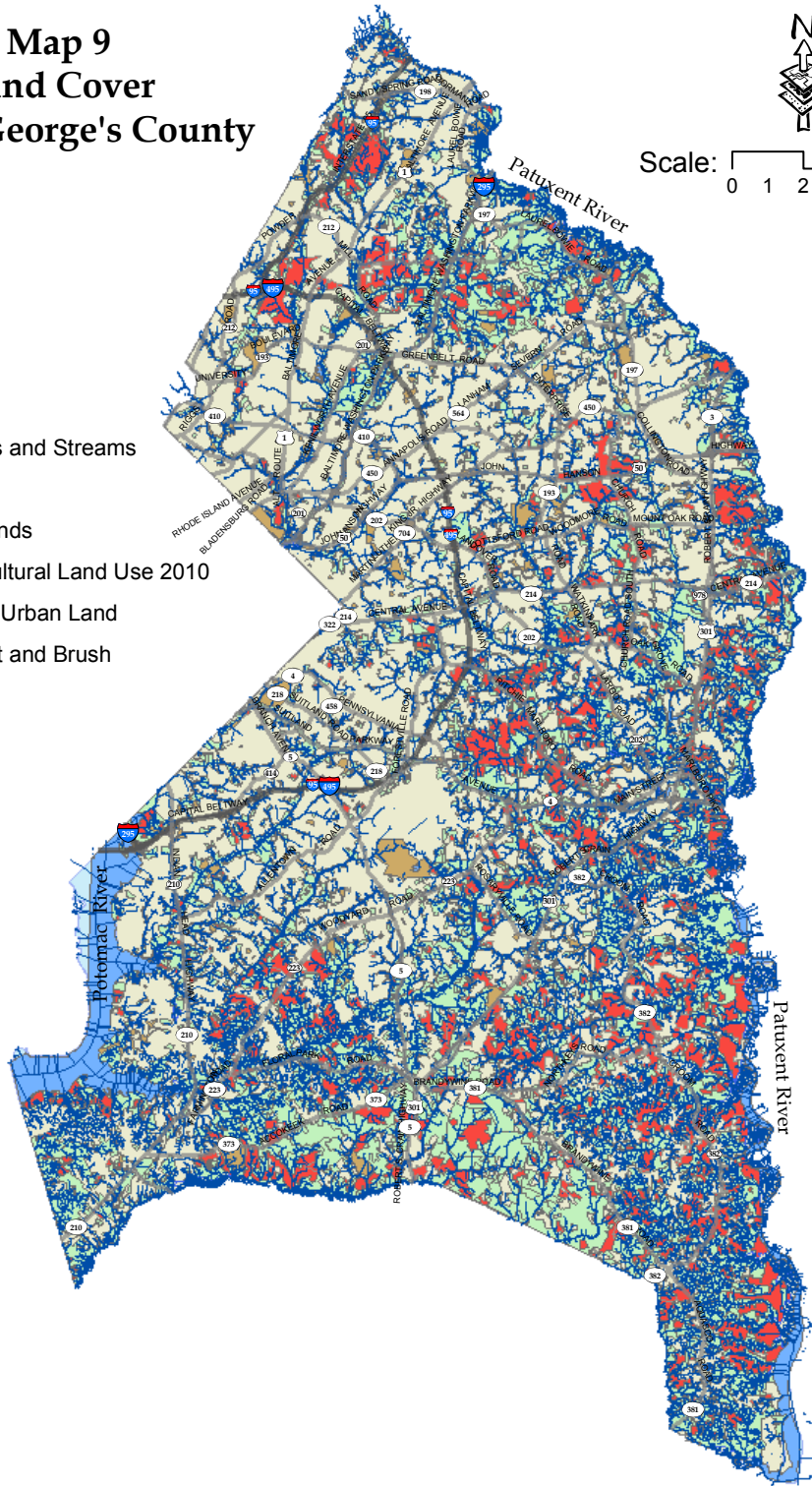


# Map 9 Land Cover Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles

-  Rivers and Streams
-  Water
-  Wetlands
-  Agricultural Land Use 2010
-  Open Urban Land
-  Forest and Brush



# Map 10 Greenway Corridors Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles

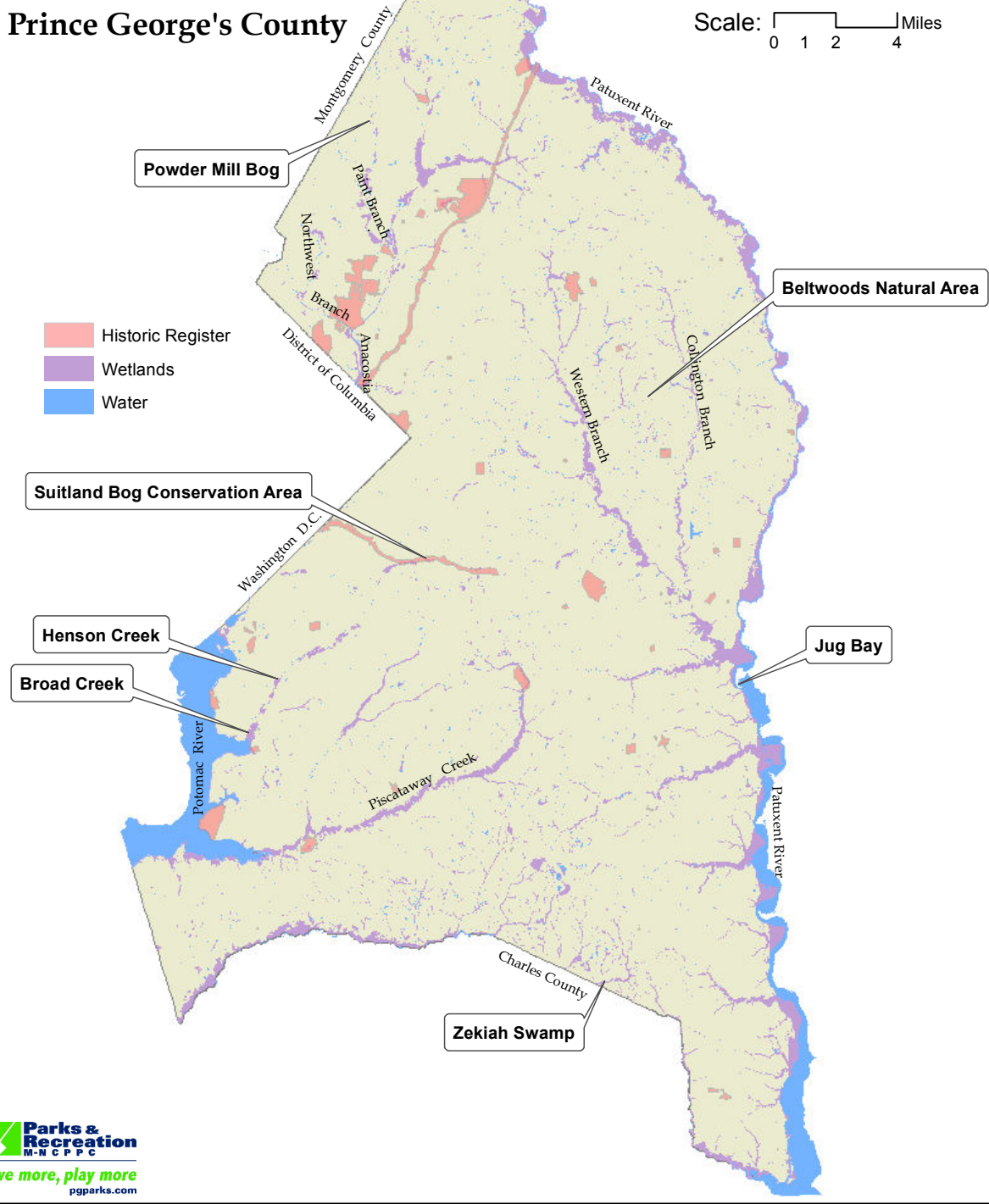
- GREENWAY**
- EXISTING
  - POTENTIAL
  - WATERTRAIL



# Map 11 Natural Areas and Wetlands Prince George's County






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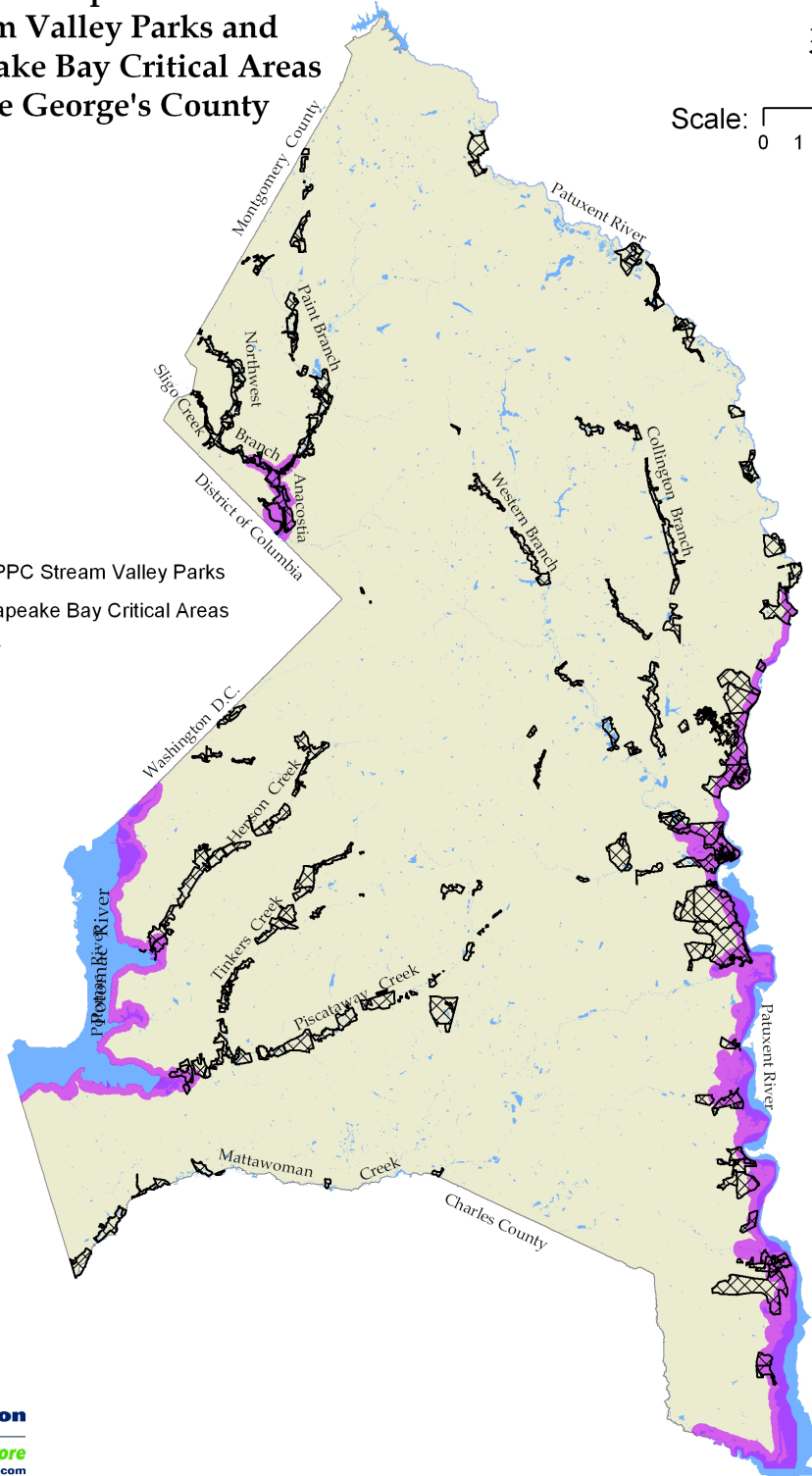


# Map 12 Stream Valley Parks and Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles

-  MNCPPC Stream Valley Parks
-  Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas
-  Water

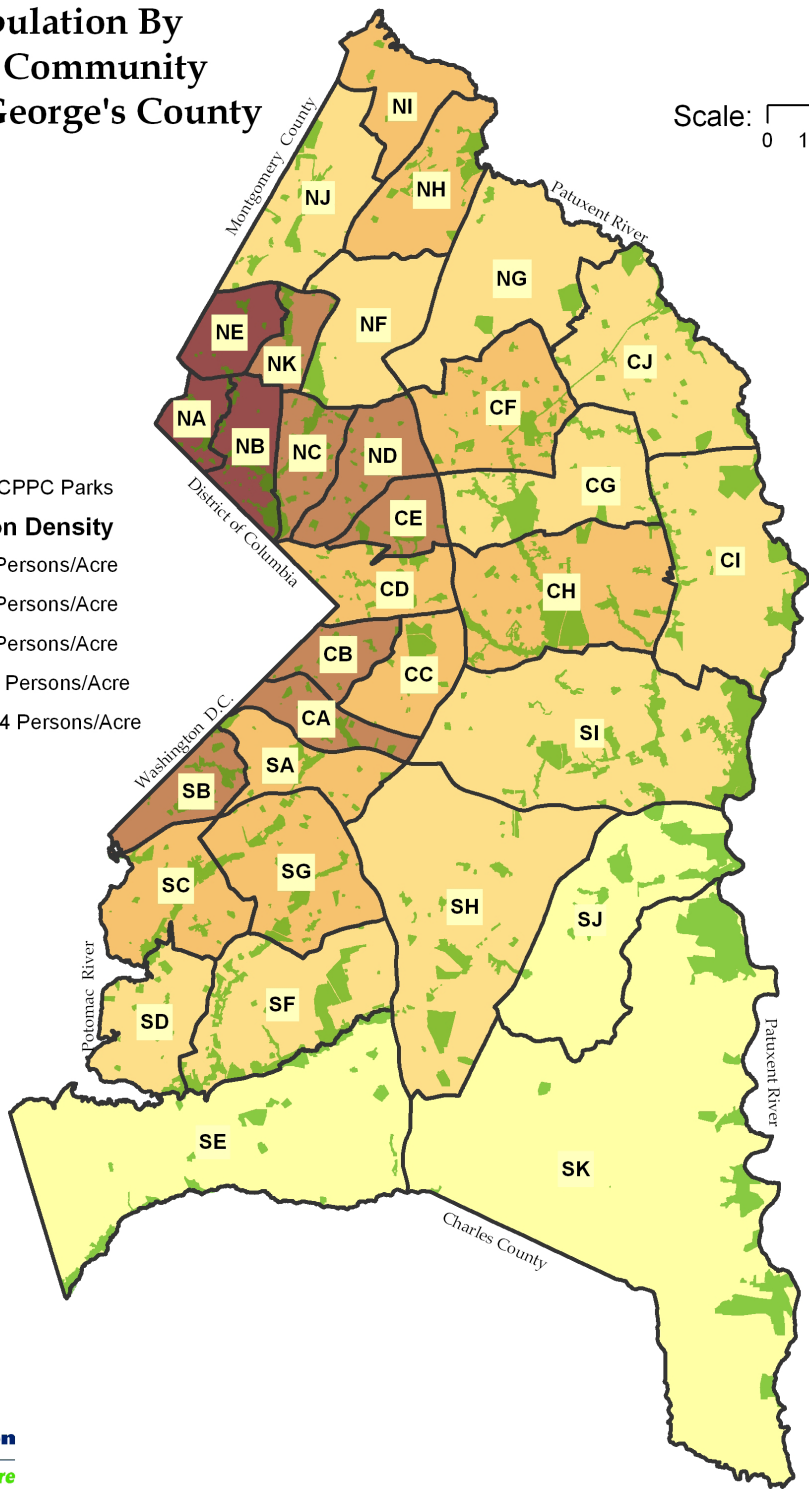


# Map 13 Population By Park Community Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles







- M-NCPPC Parks
- Population Density**
- 0-1 Persons/Acre
- 2-3 Persons/Acre
- 4-7 Persons/Acre
- 8-10 Persons/Acre
- 11-14 Persons/Acre

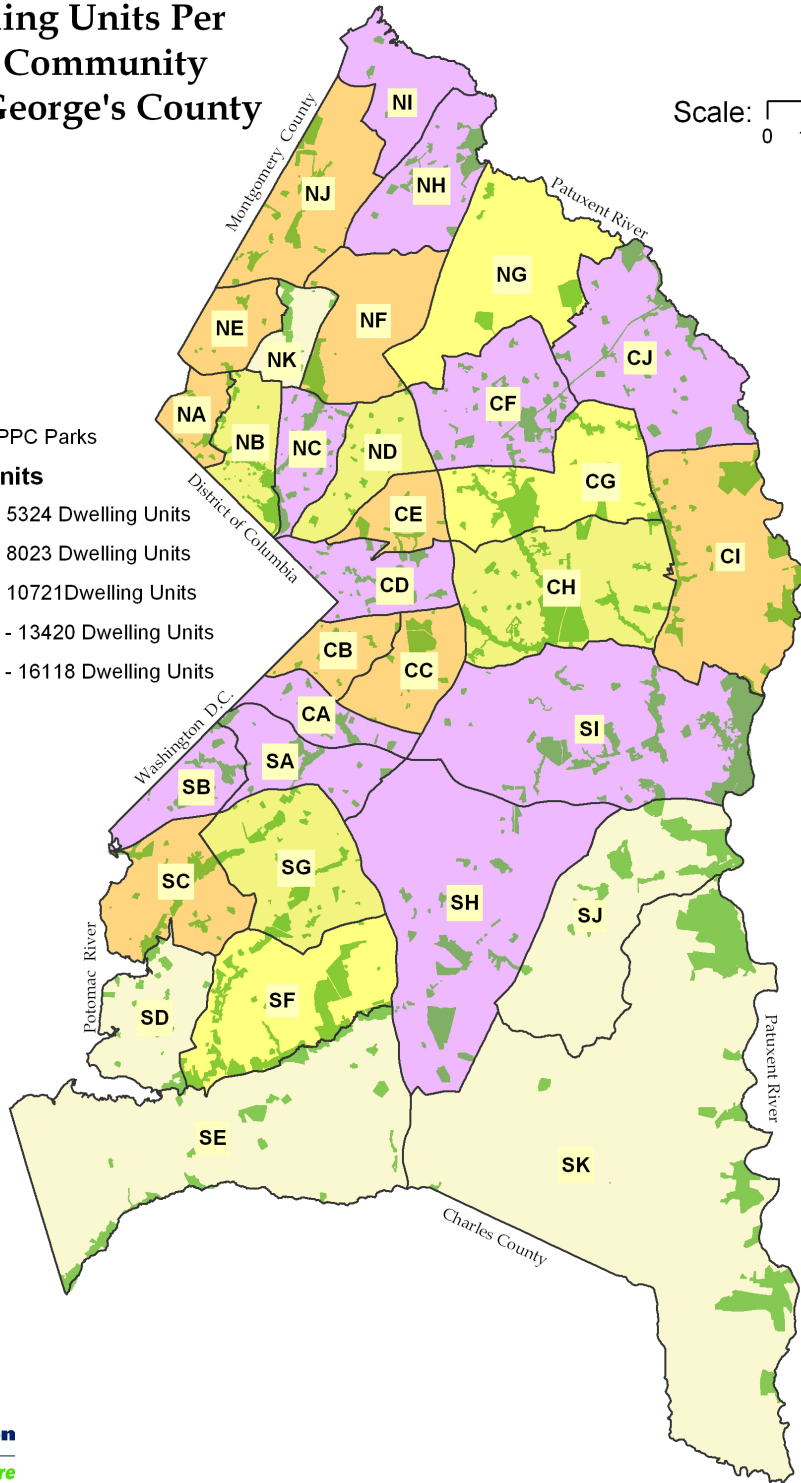


# Map 14 Dwelling Units Per Park Community Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles

-  M-NCPPC Parks
- Dwelling Units**
-  2626 - 5324 Dwelling Units
-  5325 - 8023 Dwelling Units
-  8024 - 10721 Dwelling Units
-  10722 - 13420 Dwelling Units
-  13421 - 16118 Dwelling Units

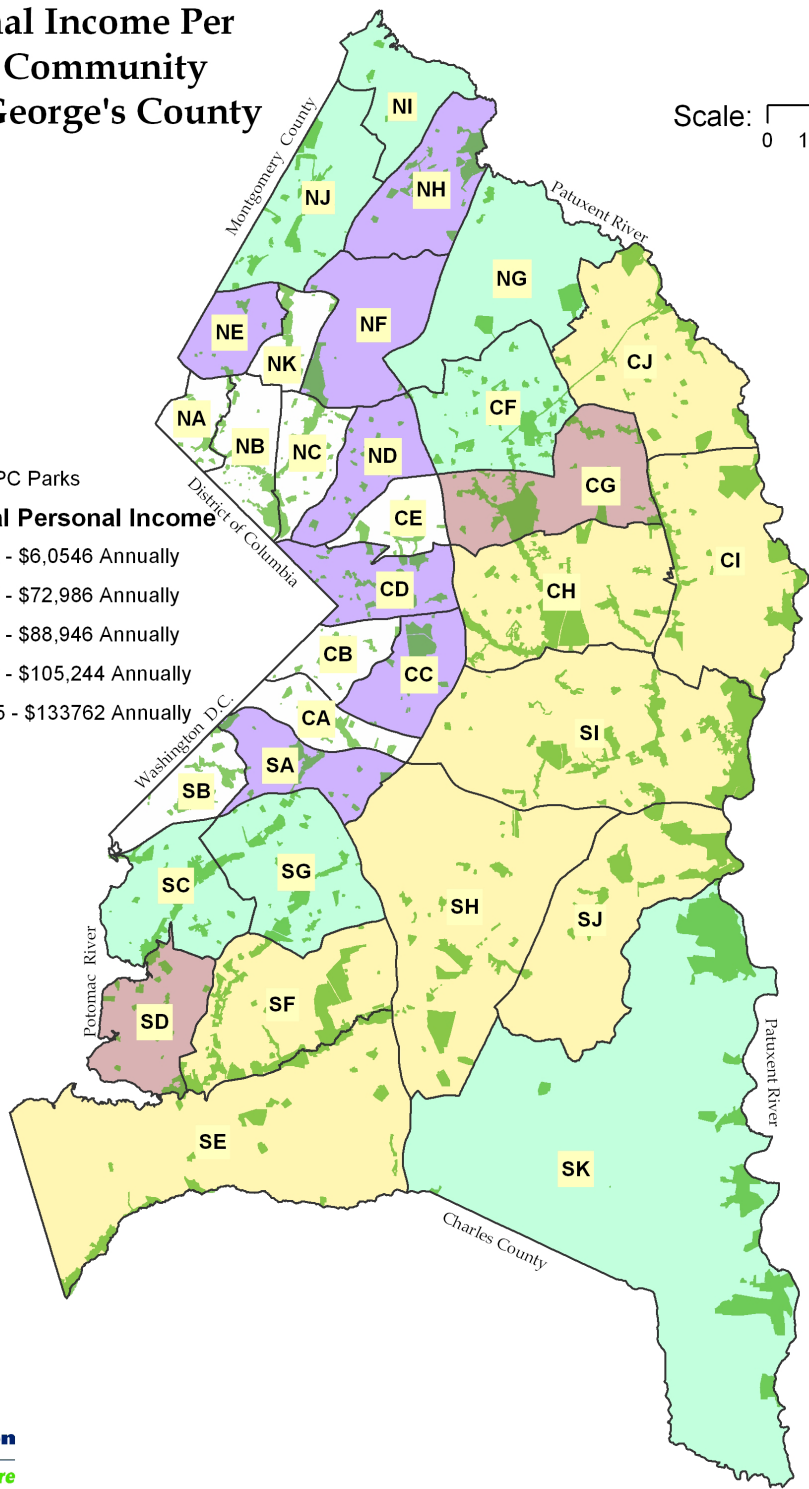


# Map 15 Personal Income Per Park Community Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles

- M-NCPPC Parks
- Mean Annual Personal Income**
- \$5,4658 - \$6,0546 Annually
- \$6,0547 - \$72,986 Annually
- \$72,987 - \$88,946 Annually
- \$88,947 - \$105,244 Annually
- \$105245 - \$133762 Annually



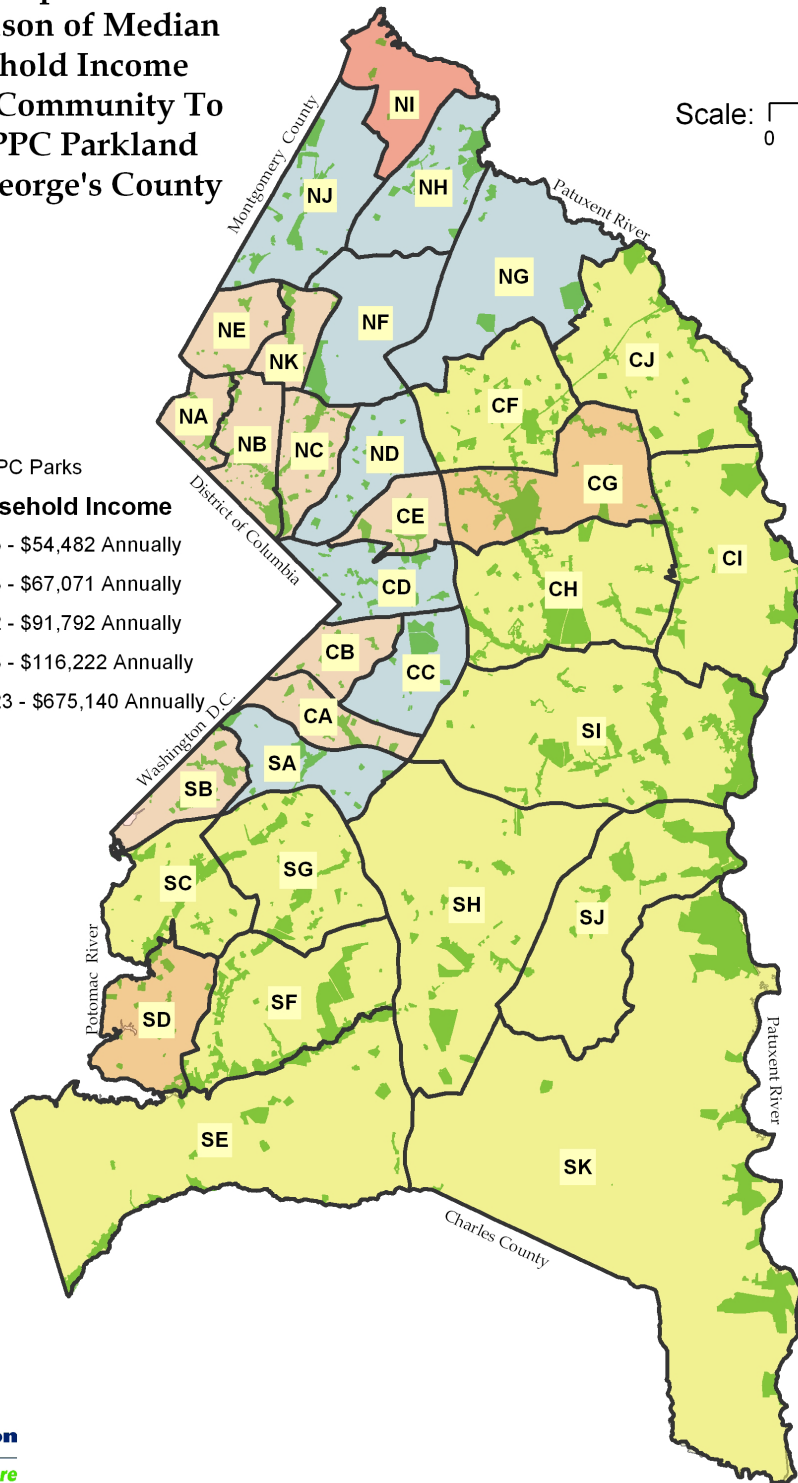


**Map 16**  
**Comparison of Median Household Income**  
**By Park Community To**  
**M-NCPPC Parkland**  
**Prince George's County**



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles


- M-NCPPC Parks
- Median Household Income**
- \$47,425 - \$54,482 Annually
- \$54,483 - \$67,071 Annually
- \$67,072 - \$91,792 Annually
- \$91,793 - \$116,222 Annually
- \$116,223 - \$675,140 Annually

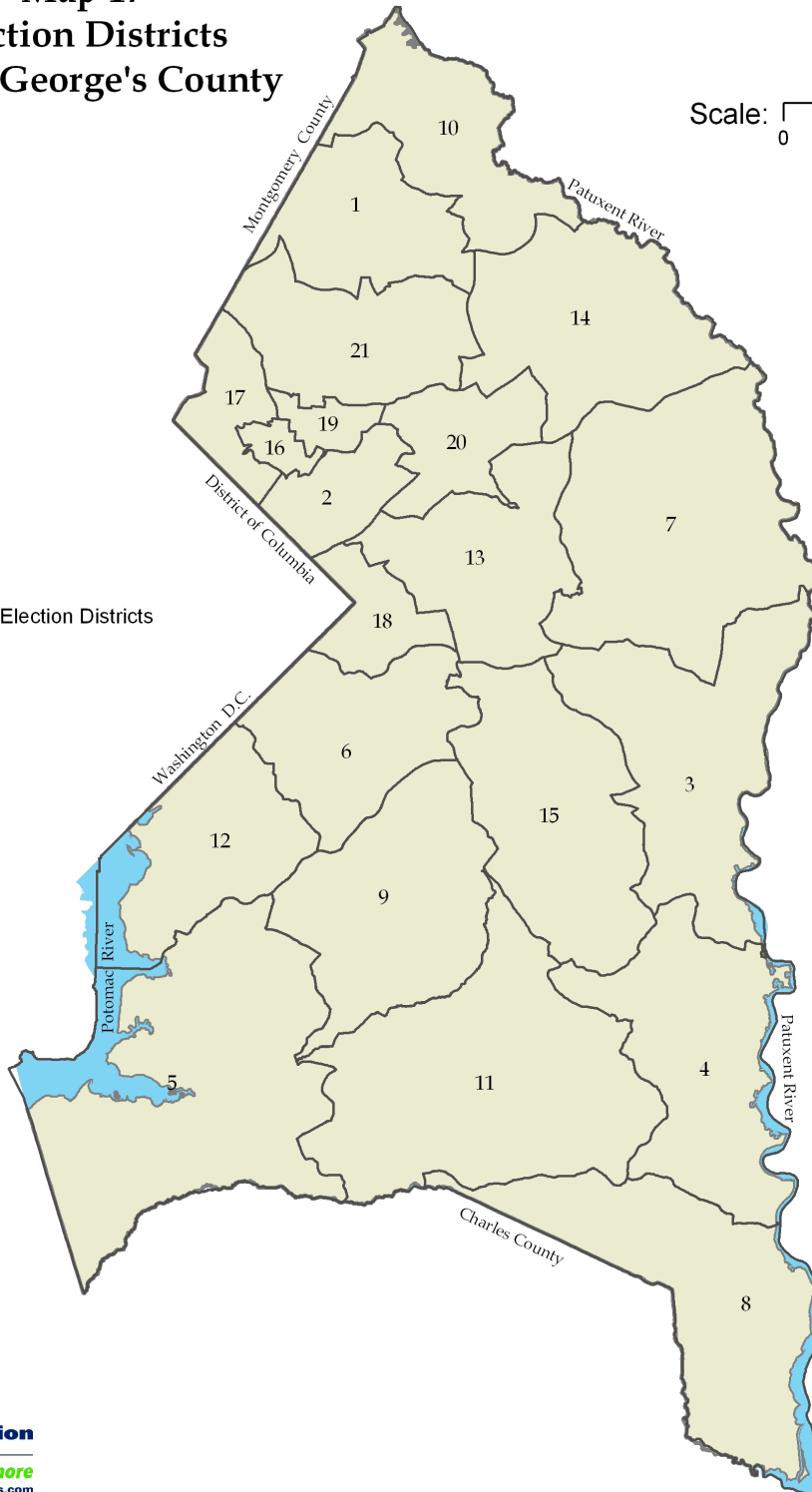


# Map 17 Election Districts Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles

 Election Districts

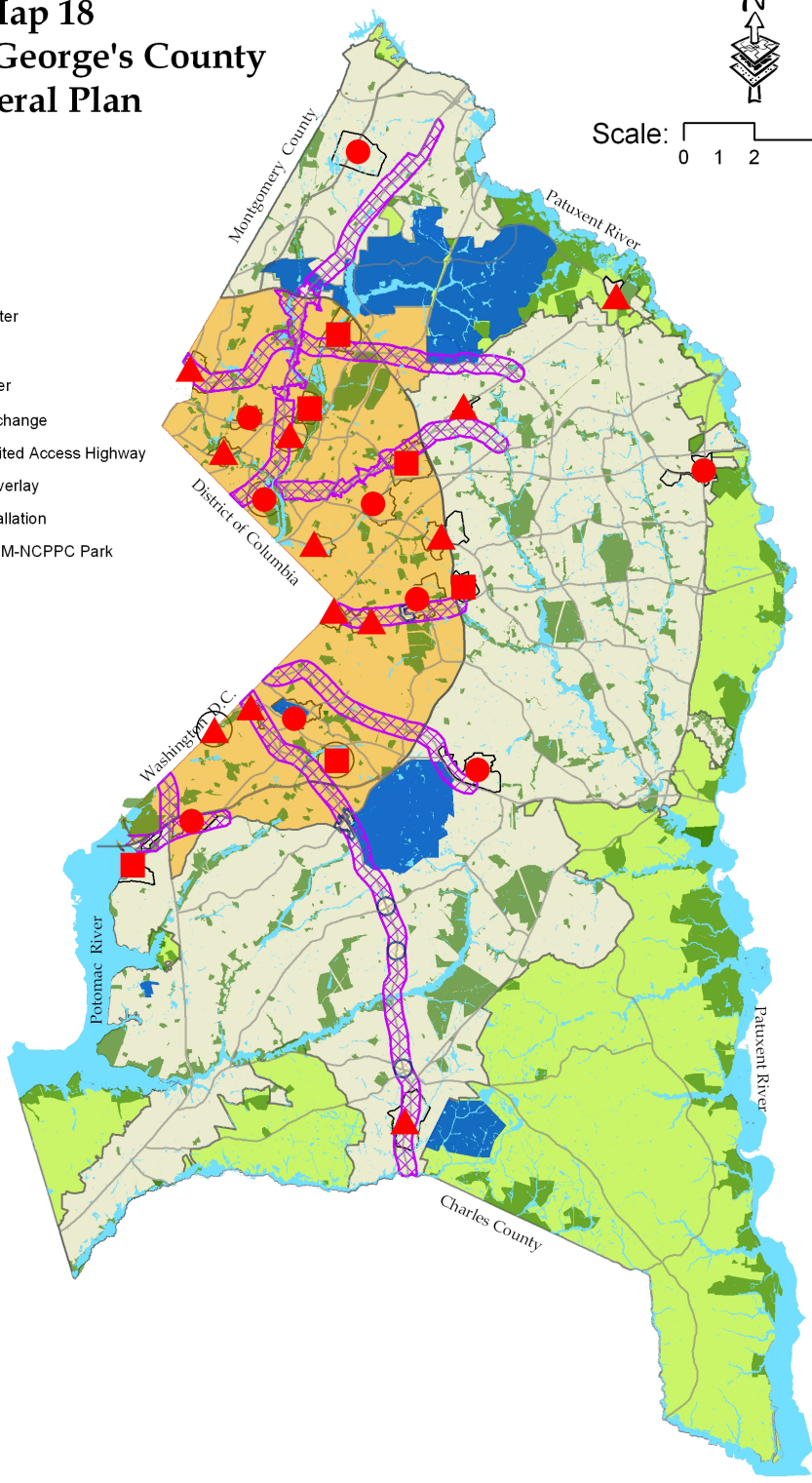


# Map 18 The Prince George's County General Plan



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles

- Metropolitan Center
- Regional Center
- ▲ Community Center
- Designated Interchange
- Corridor with Limited Access Highway
- Environmental Overlay
- Government Installation
- Federal, State or M-NCPPC Park
- Rural Tier
- Developing Tier
- Developed Tier

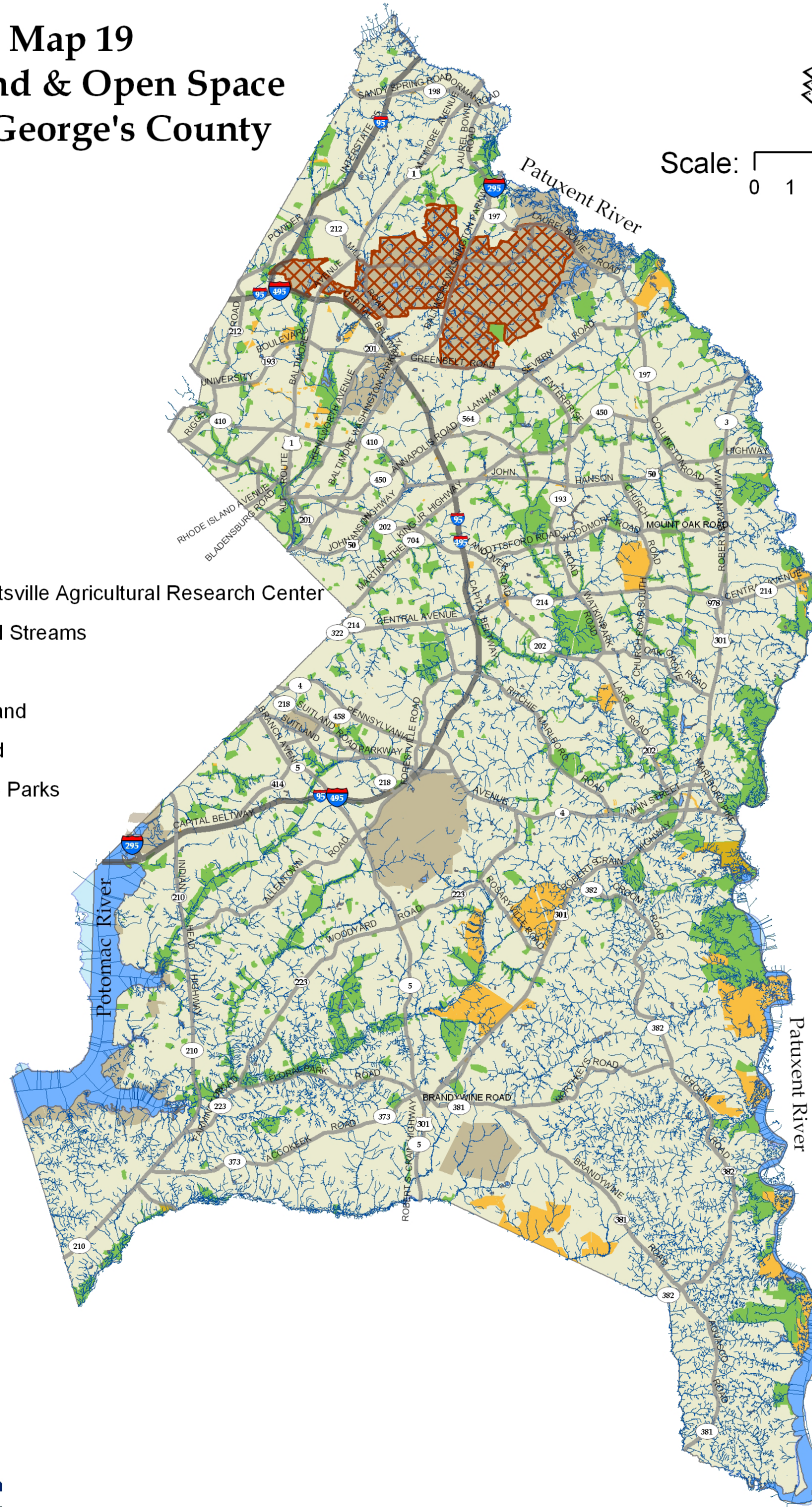


# Map 19 Park Land & Open Space Prince George's County



Scale: 0 1 2 4 Miles

-  USDA Beltsville Agricultural Research Center
-  Rivers and Streams
-  Water
-  Federal Land
-  State Land
-  M-NCPPC Parks



# Appendix G – Definitions

The words defined here are intended to clarify the meanings and terms used in this document. In many cases, they are a synthesis of definitions from several different sources.

**ACCESSIBILITY:** The quality of a property permitting it to be easily approached or used by people.

**ACQUISITION:** The act of obtaining property or property rights by purchase, donation, exaction, or escheat.

**ADA (The Americans with Disabilities Act):** Landmark civil rights legislation, passed in 1990, prohibiting discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

**AREA PLAN:** A detailed master plan, for a portion of the area covered by the *General Plan* and officially designated as a planning area by the county, based on a precise examination and study of local characteristics.

**AREAS OF EMPHASIS:** Those facets of the park and recreation system which are stressed or given preference.

**BUFFER:** An area of land designated or managed for the purpose of separating and insulating two or more land areas whose uses conflict or is incompatible.

**CAPITAL:** The monies available for allocation.

**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP):** Schedule of acquisition and development projects prepared annually with the associated cost estimates.

**CAZ (COG ANALYSIS ZONE):** Geographical area defined according to major physical features by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments in cooperation with Prince George's County and other local jurisdictions.

**CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE:** An ad hoc group of residents formed to study a specific topic and proffer advice to the parent organization.

**CLASS PROGRAMS:** Structured recreation activities taught by instructors at set times, for which registration is required prior to attending.

**CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM:** An arrangement of park and recreation facilities and areas into groups or categories.

**COG:** Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

**COMMERCIAL:** Made and/ or performed primarily for profit.

**COMMISSION:** The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

**COMMUNITY:** Aggregation of COG Analysis Zones (CAZ's), within a 15-minute driving time of community park and recreation facilities.

**COMPATIBILITY OF USES:** Consideration of resource uses that are in harmony with one another.

**COMPREHENSIVE DESIGN ZONE:** Provisions enacted in the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations,

providing landowners the opportunities to comprehensively plan all aspects of a development, from zoning and land use to the final specific details of the site, architecture, and landscaping.

**CONDEMNATION:** A legal process by which private property is acquired for public use.

**CONSERVATION:** Rational use, renewal, increase and protection of resources and those practices which maintain or improve the quality of the environment.

**CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT:** A written contract which the Commission has entered into with either the private or the public sector, which is legally binding.

**CRITICAL AREA:** An area where conditions or characteristics are ultra-sensitive to change, in which the essential nature is threatened by change, and special study and planning are required. This term is often used in an environmental context to denote an area possessing unique and desirable ecological or physical values, which can be reasonably well maintained only through the application of strict management policies.

**DEDICATION:** An appropriation of land to some public use made by the owner, and accepted by or on behalf of the public.

**DEPARTMENT:** The Department of Parks and Recreation (Prince George's County).

**DEPARTURE FROM DESIGN STANDARDS:** Exceptions to physical construction requirements as defined by the zoning ordinance.

**DISTURBED AREA:** Land which has undergone removal of ground cover by grading.

**ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA:** Measures of evaluation by which the usefulness of land for park and recreation purposes is determined.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:** The consequence of actions or proposed actions affecting man and his surroundings.

**EXPRESSED RESIDENT INTEREST AND PRIORITIES:** Specific park and recreation needs and desires requested by a large number of residents of an area.

**FEDERATION OF PARK AND RECREATION COUNCILS:** Organization of representatives of individual park and recreation councils serving as a forum for countywide park and recreation concerns.

**FEE-SIMPLE:** Complete ownership title of real property.

**FLOODPLAIN:** The relatively flat or low lying area adjoining the channel of a river, stream, lake or other body of standing water, which has been or may be covered by flood water.

**FUNCTIONAL PLAN:** A plan for a specific public service element of the *General Plan*, such as highways, schools, hospitals, or parks and recreation.

**GENERAL PLAN:** A set of written and mapped proposals, adopted by a public agency, intended to provide a generalized long-range guide to the public and to private agencies and individuals, with regard to the interrelationship of land use, transportation, public facilities, environment, population growth, and economy of the area.

**GRADING:** Any stripping, excavating, filling or stockpiling, and conditions resulting from these actions.

**GUIDELINE:** (See POLICY GUIDELINE)

**HISTORIC AND CULTURAL HERITAGE:** Values and traditions which have evolved from American history; contemporary society has acknowledged historic and cultural heritage mostly in the form of rehabilitated sites, buildings, and districts which have been deemed significant enough to warrant special consideration and designation.

**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** A collection of buildings, structures, sights, objects and spaces that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION:** The protection, rehabilitation, restoration, reconstruction and designation of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects significant in Prince George's County history, architecture, archaeology and/or culture.

**HISTORIC SITE:** An area and/or structure, with its appurtenances and environmental settings, of historical, archaeological, or early architectural value.

**LANDFILL:** (See SANITARY LANDFILL)

**LEVEL OF SERVICE:** A quantitative measure of the amount of capital, land, facilities, programming and staff administered by the Department of Parks and Recreation.

**LIFE CYCLE COST:** The present value of money required to construct and operate a facility over its total projected time span.

**MANDATORY DEDICATION:** A Subdivision Regulation requiring the deeding and platting of land to The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission by the owner for park, recreation and open space purposes.

**MARYLAND-WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN DISTRICT:** As established in the Maryland Washington Metropolitan District Act, the geographical area (within the Regional District) for which the M-NCPPC has parks-only responsibility.

**MARYLAND-WASHINGTON REGIONAL DISTRICT:** As established in the Maryland Washington Metropolitan District Act, the geographical area for which the M-NCPPC has subdivision authority and planning and zoning advisory responsibility.

**METROPOLITAN DISTRICT:** (See MARYLAND-WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN DISTRICT)

**MULTIPLE USE RESOURCE:** Capital, land, staff and/or facilities with more than one potential or existing use.

**NATURAL RESOURCES:** Capacities, or material supplied by nature.

**NEIGHBORHOOD AREA:** COG Analysis Zone (CAZ) as established by the Council of Governments in cooperation with Prince George's County..

**OBJECTIVE:** A specific measurable level of accomplishment to be achieved, in order to move toward the achievement of a goal.

**OFF-SITE:** Contiguous to or affecting parkland.

**ON-SITE:** Within parkland.

**OPEN SPACE:** Land or water areas in a natural or vegetative state.

**OTHER PUBLIC AGENCY AVAILABILITY:** The provision of non-Commission public recreation services and facilities within Prince George's County.

**PARK:** An area of public land or water dedicated to one or more of the following functions: leisure use, preservation, conservation.

**PARK AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD:** A legally constituted body of residents appointed by the County Executive and County Council whose members advise the Prince George's County Planning Board on park and recreation matters.

**PARK ENTERPRISE:** Governmental facilities and services which are entirely or predominately self-supported by user charges.

**PARKLAND ENCROACHMENT:** The physical impingement on parkland, or the impact on parkland resulting from the actions of others.

**PARK PROPERTY:** Any land or water, devoted to park or recreational uses, owned, operated or established by the Commission, and all vegetation or natural substances, buildings, fixtures, monuments, structures and their contents located thereon.

**PERMIT REVIEW:** A method by which the Department of Parks and Recreation oversees private development for potential park and recreation impacts.

**PHYSIOGRAPHIC FEATURES:** Characteristics of the natural landscape.

**PLANNING:** Development of an organized procedure for investigating the best possible use of resources; a tool for decision-making.

**PLANNING AREA:** The smallest geographical area for which an Area Master Plan is prepared.

**POLICY GUIDELINE:** A principle utilized in making a judgment or establishing a course of action.

**POTENTIAL FOR PERMANENT LOSS OF OPPORTUNITY:** A particular chance to provide a good or service which will be lost to present and future generations if immediate action is not taken.

**PRESENT VALUE (of a future cash flow):** An amount to be paid or received in the future, discounted in the present at some rate of interest believed to be suitable to the circumstances.

**PRESERVATION:** Protective action taken to ensure that living and nonliving features of an area are not de-



graded or destroyed by man, including the establishment of reserved areas, the enforcement of regulations and the application of wildlife habitat, forests and fire management techniques.

**QUASI-PUBLIC:** Privately owned/operated; containing characteristics of public service.

**REAL PROPERTY:** Land and whatever is erected, growing upon, or affixed to it.

**RECREATION PARTICIPATION RATES:** Estimated number of people who actively engage in recreation pursuits within a specific area, based on the best available data collected.

**RESERVED AREAS:** Land or water areas specifically set aside to be retained in their natural character.

**RESOURCES:** Capital, land, staff and facilities.

**RESOURCE ALLOCATION:** The distribution of capital, land, people and facilities over time and space.

**RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT:** The design and construction of park and recreation facilities.

**RESOURCE OPERATIONS:** The programming, security, management and maintenance of the park and recreation system.

**RESOURCE PRIORITIES:** Designation of the relative importance assigned to the distribution of resources including land, money, facilities and staff.

**REVENUE PRODUCING CAPABILITY:** The potential ability for a facility or program to accrue funds above those needed to operate and maintain the facility.

**SANITARY LANDFILL:** A planned systematic method of refuse disposal whereby the waste material is placed in the earth in layers, then compacted and covered with earth or other approved cover material at the end of each day's operation.

**SECTIONAL MAP AMENDMENT:** Intended to implement the land use recommendations of a proposed master plan for the foreseeable future, generally considered 6 to 10 years. Comprehensive rezoning through the SMA is a necessary implementation step in the land use planning process. It attempts to ensure that future development policies, reflecting the County's ability to accommodate development in the foreseeable future.

**SEDIMENTATION:** The act or process of depositing solid material, both mineral and organic, that is in suspension, is being transported, or has been moved from its site of origin by air, water, gravity, or ice and has come to rest on the earth's surface.

**SELECTIVE ENFORCEMENT:** The deploying of active security resources in ways to most efficiently cope with existing or anticipated problems. (See ACTIVE SECURITY)

**SITE PLANNING:** The art of arranging the external physical environment to support human behavior.

**SITE PLAN REVIEW:** A procedure by which the planning staff and the Planning Board review an applicant's proposed site development plan to assure that it: 1) meets the zone's stated purposes, standards and/or criteria in encouraging ingenuity and originality in individual site design, 2) provides adequately for necessary

facilities, and 3) protects certain physiographic features, as well as adjacent properties.

**SLOPE:** The inclination of the land surface from the horizontal. Percentage of slope is the vertical distance divided by horizontal distance, and then multiplied by 100. Thus, a slope of 20 percent is a drop of 20 feet vertically in a horizontal distance of 100 feet.

**SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:** Criteria used to override, implement, or supplement the major categories of resource allocation criteria.

**SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS:** Uses permitted in certain zones with additional County Government approval.

**SPECIAL POPULATION GROUPS:** Individuals with disabilities.

**STAFF:** M-NCPPC employees.

**STANDARDS:** Norms established by authority, research, custom or general consent to be used as criteria and guides.

**STORMWATER MANAGEMENT:** The application of engineering and planning principles to detain, retain, control, direct or influence in an acceptable way, time distribution and rate flow of storm water runoff.

**STREAM:** A watercourse having a source and terminus, banks, and channel through which waters flow at least periodically, usually emptying into other streams, lakes or the ocean, but never losing its character as a watercourse.

**STREAM VALLEYS:** Floodplains and adjacent slope areas directly associated with a stream.

**SUBDIVISION:** A parcel of land divided into a block or blocks, lot or lots, or plot or plats for immediate or future use or sale, or for building developments.

**SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS:** The law governing the division of land into a block or blocks, lot or lots, plot or plots for immediate or future use or sale, or for building developments.

**SUBJECTIVE CRITERIA:** Measures of evaluation that lend themselves to non-analytical interpretation.

**SUBREGION:** A grouping of planning areas into a larger portion of a regional area. Prince George's County is divided into seven sub-regions.

**SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING POTENTIAL:** Possibility or likelihood for capital from sources outside the Commission.

**TARGET POPULATION:** Total number of people within a COG Analysis Zone (CAZ) or community.

**WATERSHED:** An area, usually surrounding a river or stream, such that water from all points in this area flows through a common point.

**WETLAND:** An area in which standing water, seasonal or permanent, has a depth of six feet or less and where the wet soil retains sufficient moisture to support aquatic or semi-aquatic plant growth.

**ZONING:** The classification of land by types of uses permitted and prohibited, and by densities and intensities

permitted and prohibited. Euclidean Zoning is a traditional land use classification system in which only one type of land use is permitted in a given area. Also, see COMPREHENSIVE DESIGN ZONE.

**ZONING REVIEW:** Analysis, assessment and recommendation related to a specific proposed land use change.