



Cecil County
2022 Land Preservation,
Parks and Recreation Plan

Draft Adopted January 31 , 2022

Acknowledgements

County Executive
Danielle Hornberger

Board of Parks and Recreation

Don Harmer, Chairman	Brian Morgan, Vice Chairman	Bernard Brown
Jennifer Callaghan	Matthew Morris	Megan Coleman
Amy Sexton, Board of Ed Rep		

Office of Planning and Zoning
Stephen J. O'Connor

Office of Information Technology
David Black

Department of Parks and Recreation
Clyde VanDyke, Director
Ella Briones, Business Coordinator

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	ES-1
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION.....	I-1
A. Purposes of the Plan.....	I-1
B. Local Agency Preparation of the Plan	I-2
C. The Plan’s Relationship to the Comprehensive Planning Process.....	I-2
CHAPTER II RECREATION, PARKS, AND OPEN SPACE	II-1
Introduction	II-1
A. Recreation and Parks Programs	II-1
B. Needs Analysis and County Priorities for Lands, Facilities, and Rehabilitation	II-8
C. Park Equity Analysis.....	II-14
D. Park Proximity Analysis	II-26
E. County Priorities	II-43
F. Land Acquisition Goal	II-44
G. Public Participation	II-50
H. Summation.....	II-50
CHAPTER III FRAMEWORK.....	III-1
A. Physical Characteristics	III-1
B. Demographic Characteristics	III-8
C. Comprehensive Plan Framework	III-9
CHAPTER IV AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION	IV-1
Introduction	IV-1
A. Goals	IV-2
B. Current Implementation Program	IV-8
C. Evaluation of Agricultural Land Preservation Program/Policy Implementation	IV-14
D. Program Development Strategy	IV-17
CHAPTER V – NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION	V-1
Introduction	V-1
A. Goals for Natural Resource Land Conservation	V-1
B. County Implementation Program for Natural Resource Land Conservation	V-3
C. Evaluation of the Natural Resource Land Conservation Program	V-12
D. Program Development Strategy For Natural Resource Conservation	V-15
APPENDIX	
A. Cecil County State Goals Park Equity Analysis	
B. Cecil County State Goals Park Proximity Analysis	
C. Cecil County Survey Results	
D. Cecil County Park Inventory	
E. Cecil County Municipal Data	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

Introduction

Updated County Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plans (LPPRP) are required to be submitted to the State of Maryland every five years, effective July 1, 2011. This 2022 round of LPPRPs is intended to provide a common benchmark to assist the State's evaluation of each county's land preservation and recreation programs and thereby ensure good return on public investment. The LPPRPs support the State's planning visions and qualify local governments for State Program Open Space (POS) funds and other programs related to the plan's objectives for three land resource elements:

- Recreation and Parks
- Agricultural land preservation
- Natural resource conservation

The LPPRP also serves as a guide for County park acquisition and land preservation projects.

The LPPRP was prepared by the Cecil County Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Information Technology, and Office of Planning and Zoning. Information provided by the towns of Cecilton, Chesapeake City, Charlestown, Elkton, North East, Perryville, Port Deposit and Rising Sun was also used to prepare the plan.

Cecil County

Cecil County is located at the north end of the Chesapeake Bay. The County's 350 square mile (223,000 acres) land area is shaped by several peninsulas formed by the North East, Elk, Bohemia, and Sassafras Rivers. Major north/south access is via I-95, US 40 and US 1 on the western shore and MD 213 on the eastern shore. In 2010, the most recent year for which County wide physical land use data is available, an estimated 170,876 acres (76.6% percent of the County's total land area) was considered resource lands by the Maryland Department of Planning. Agricultural uses accounted for 85,625 acres (38 percent of total land cover), forest uses accounted for 81,325 acres (36%), wetlands accounted for 2,972 acres (1%), and extractive/barren land uses accounted for 955 acres (0.4%).

Per July 2014 population projections prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning, Cecil County's population is estimated at 103,600 persons, a 2.5% increase over the 2010 population of 101,108 persons enumerated by the US Census Bureau. The County's 2040 population is projected to be 139,650 persons, a 38 percent increase over the 2010 population. In 2010, the US Census Bureau found that 71,779 persons (71%) of county residents lived in unincorporated areas and 29,329 persons (29%) lived in the eight incorporated towns.

Demographic Breakdown*

Cecil County, MD Gender Breakdown			
Gender	Number	Percent	National Avg
Female	51,413	50%	50.8
Male	51,190	50%	49.2
Total Population	102,603		323,128,000

Cecil County, MD Age Breakdown

Age Group	Number	Percent	National Avg
Under 5 Years	5,533	5.4%	6.1
5 to 9 Years	7,109	6.9%	6.3
10 to 14 Years	6,678	6.5%	6.4
15 to 19 Years	6,366	6.2%	6.7
20 to 24 Years	6,395	6.2%	6.9
25 to 34 Years	13,064	12.7%	13.7
35 to 44 Years	12,660	12.3%	12.6
45 to 54 Years	14,614	14.2%	13.2
55 to 59 Years	8,275	8.1%	6.7
60 to 64 Years	6,928	6.8%	6.1
65 to 74 Years	9,473	9.2%	8.9
75 to 84 Years	3,536	3.4%	4.4
85 Years and Over	1,972	1.9%	1.9

Age Statistics	Number	Percent	National Avg
18 Years and over	78,943	76.9%	77.2
Female	40,139	50.8%	51.3
Male	38,804	49.2%	48.7
21 Years and over	76,027	74.1%	73.1
62 Years and over	19,020	18.5%	18.8
65 Years and over	14,981	14.6%	15.2
Female	7,863	52.5%	55.8
Male	7,118	47.5%	44.2
Median Age (years)	40	0.0%	0.0

Cecil County, MD Race Breakdown

Race	Number	Percent	National Avg
One Race	100,326	97.8%	96.8
White	89,580	87.3%	72.6
Black or African American	7,411	7.2%	12.7
American Indian and Alaska Native	0	0.0%	0.8
Asian	1,512	1.5%	5.4
Asian Indian		1.2	
Chinese		1.3	
Filipino		0.9	
Japanese		0.2	
Korean		0.4	
Vietnamese		0.6	
Other Asian		0.8	
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	34	0.0%	0.2
Native Hawaiian		0.1	
Guamanian or Chamorro		0.0	
Samoan		0.0	
Other Pacific Islander		0.1	
Some Other Race	1,789	1.7%	5.1
Two or More Races	2,277	2.2%	3.2

Cecil County, MD Educational Attainment

Education Level	Number	Percent	National Avg
Less than 9th grade	1,716	2.4%	5.4
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	6,292	8.9%	7.2
High school graduate (includes equivalent)	25,122	35.6%	27.2
Some college, no degree	16,035	22.7%	20.6
Associate's Degree	4,470	6.3%	8.4
Bachelor's Degree	10,125	14.4%	19.3
Graduate or professional degree	6,762	9.6%	11.9

Education Summary	Number	Percent	National Avg
< High School Graduate	8,008	11.3%	12.6
High School Graduate or Higher	62,514	88.6%	87.4
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	16,887	24.0%	31.2

Cecil County, MD Household Income

Household Income	Number	Percent	National Avg
Less than \$10,000	1,583	4.2%	6.7
\$10,000 to \$14,999	233	0.6%	4.8
\$15,000 to \$24,999	2,906	7.8%	9.7
\$25,000 to \$34,999	3,028	8.1%	9.5
\$35,000 to \$49,999	5,061	13.6%	13.0
\$50,000 to \$74,999	6,054	16.2%	17.7
\$75,000 to \$99,999	5,481	14.7%	12.3
\$100,000 to \$149,000	7,414	19.9%	14.0
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3,445	9.2%	5.8
\$200,000 or more	2,091	5.6%	6.4
Median household income	74,221		57,617
Per capita income	33,412		31,128

*<http://www.homefacts.com/demographics/Maryland/Cecil-County.html>

Comprehensive Plan

The County Comprehensive Plan, adopted April 13, 2010, divides the county into eleven land use districts as the framework for directing growth and development, infrastructure investment, and community enhancements. Under the plan, future growth is directed primarily to the employment mixed use area, residential mixed use area, low density growth area, medium density growth area, medium high density growth area, high density growth area, employment area, and incorporated towns, most of which are located in or near the I-95/US 40 corridor. The Plan seeks to protect rural character by designating Rural Conservation Districts (RCD) north of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal and on much of the Elk Neck peninsula, and a Resource Protection District (RPD) south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. No text amendments have been approved since the Comprehensive Plan was adopted on April 13, 2010.

Recreation and Parks

The County used its GIS data bank to update its inventory of recreation and open space land and facilities. The County, together with its municipalities and Board of Education, provides approximately 1,600 acres of public park, recreation, and open space land. This acreage includes 17 community parks, 14 mini-parks, eight sports complexes, 7 special use areas and 8 undeveloped parks.

Of the land found in the County, defined as recreation open space, approximately 14,500 acres are state natural resource lands, which includes (amongst others) the Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area, the Elk Neck State Park, and the Elk Neck State Forest. Federal land in the County totals a little over 2,800 acres. These federal lands include managed hunting areas and dredge disposal sites also used as wildlife management areas.

A Park Equity analysis was created and shows the demand for recreation land by sub-areas of the County. The need for Parks and Recreation opportunities are based on distance to a County park, population, age, and income. It should be noted that the Park Equity data used did not include the Phase I development of Calvert Regional Park. Therefore, the current deficiency shown in the North East, Rising Sun, and

northern Elkton service areas are met by this resource. Thus, leaving the highest demand south of the Route 40 corridor in the southern Elkton and Bohemia Manor service areas.

Current primary deficits are:

- Synthetic Turf Fields
- Paved Trails
- Aquatic Features

The LPPRP sets out the County's Parks and Recreation priorities for meeting its land acquisition, facility development and rehabilitation needs through 2027. The overall program would cost approximately \$1,035,000 for facility development projects. There are no new land acquisitions planned. Highlights of the program are:

- The installation of pickleball courts and sensory playground equipment at the Calvert Regional Park.
- A supplemental indoor multi-use structure at the Cecil Arena.
- The replacement of the athletic floor at the Cecil Arena.

The 2005 LPPRP recommended the County incorporate a leadership role in the overall organization of recreation in Cecil County. The County fulfilled this goal with the implementation of a Department of Parks and Recreation in 2006. The 2012 LPPRP recommended the County begin development of a Regional Park facility to better serve citizen needs. This step was conceived in 2015 with Phase 1 development of Calvert Regional Park with Phase 2 being completed in 2018 and Phase 3 in 2021.

Agricultural Preservation

Most of the County's agricultural lands are in two broad areas: one north of the I-95 corridor, running east-west across the width of the County, and the other south of the Chesapeake and Delaware canal. As mentioned previously, in 2010, the most recent year for which County wide physical land use data is available, an estimated 170,876 acres (76.6% percent of the County's total land area) was considered resource lands by the Maryland Department of Planning. Agricultural uses accounted for 85,625 acres (38 percent of total land cover).

The preservation of open spaces, rural character and agricultural activities is a recurring theme of the Cecil County Comprehensive Plan. Several of the Plan's goals specifically address agricultural land preservation. In 2000 Cecil County adopted farmland preservation goals of 30,000 acres in the Comprehensive Plan's Resource Protection District, and 25,000 acres in the Rural Conservation District by the year 2025. This goal was re-emphasized in Section 7.3.2 of the current, 2010 Comprehensive Plan. The State has designated two rural legacy areas (RLA) in the County, the Sassafras RLA in the RPD and the Fair Hill RLA in the RCD. 12,305 acres of the 30,986 acre Fair Hill RLA has been protected (39.7%) and 4,424 acres of the 8,233 acre Sassafras RLA (53.7%) has been protected.

The primary easement acquisition mechanisms operating in the County are the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF), land trusts (mainly the Maryland Environmental Trust and the Cecil Land Trust) and the Rural Legacy Program. As of March 2016, 26,383 acres were under easement in Cecil County. In addition to the easements, there are approximately 4,122 acres in agricultural districts on which development rights have not been sold. Between 2012 and 2016 approximately \$10.6 million from different sources (including MALPF and others) was spent to acquire easements on 2,036 acres in Cecil County. Thus, the average price of development rights sold in the County between 2012 and 2016 was \$5,206 per acre.

Cecil County's preservation strategy contains many of the elements to be effective in securing a land base for the agricultural industry and, in doing so, protect the agricultural heritage and rural character of the

County. However, implementation of the strategy is ongoing, and reaching the County's preservation goals shall require effort on the part of multiple parties.

With no dedicated funding stream for easement acquisition on the County level, current state funding levels will be insufficient to meet County goals. With 47,761 acres of total protected lands (including both easements and fee simple acquisitions), protection of at least 7,239 acres of additional land will be required if the County is to meet its 55,000 acre goal. At the 2011-2015 average easement price of \$5,206 per acre, preserving 7,239 additional acres shall require over \$37.5 million dollars. Lacking a significant change in funding philosophy, achieving the 55,000 acre goal is highly unlikely. Quite simply, although there remains significant interest in selling easements, lack of funds will make the next few years critical for agricultural land preservation.

The County's key land use management tools for agricultural land preservation are the NAR and SAR zoning districts. With residential density permitted in these districts at one dwelling unit per ten acres (NAR) and one dwelling unit per twenty acres (SAR), these districts proved effective in supporting agricultural land preservation from 2011-2015. During this time frame, only 84 lots received final major subdivision plat approval and were recorded in the NAR zone. Even better, only two lots received final major subdivision plat approval and were recorded in the SAR zone.

Cecil County's program development strategy for agricultural land preservation includes:

1. Continue implementing a Transfer of Developments Rights (TDR) Program.
2. Provide attractive development opportunities in designated growth areas.
3. Increase State funding for the MALPF program (**STATE ACTION**).
4. Continue implementing a County Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program.
5. Consider providing local incentives for donated easements.
6. Ramp up the pace of easement acquisitions.
7. Monitor permitted rural residential development densities to ensure congruence with agricultural land preservation goals.
8. Increase business development assistance, marketing capacity, and access to financing and capital for resource-based industries. **STATE and COUNTY ACTION.**

Natural Resources Conservation

Three of the Comprehensive Plan's eleven land use districts particularly emphasize land conservation and resource protection; the rural conservation district, the resource protection district, and the mineral extraction district. In addition, through the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program, the County limits growth in over 29,200 acres of sensitive Critical Area lands. Greenways are incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan, specifically in Sections 2.5.1, 3.6.5, 5.4, and 7.2.2.

Over 18,000 acres of the County's recreation and open space inventory are federal, state, county and locally owned natural resource lands. The County's designated conservation areas together with agricultural preservation easement areas form a good basis for the County's natural resource conservation efforts. Combined, these areas account for approximately 21% of the County's land area (47,761 acres).

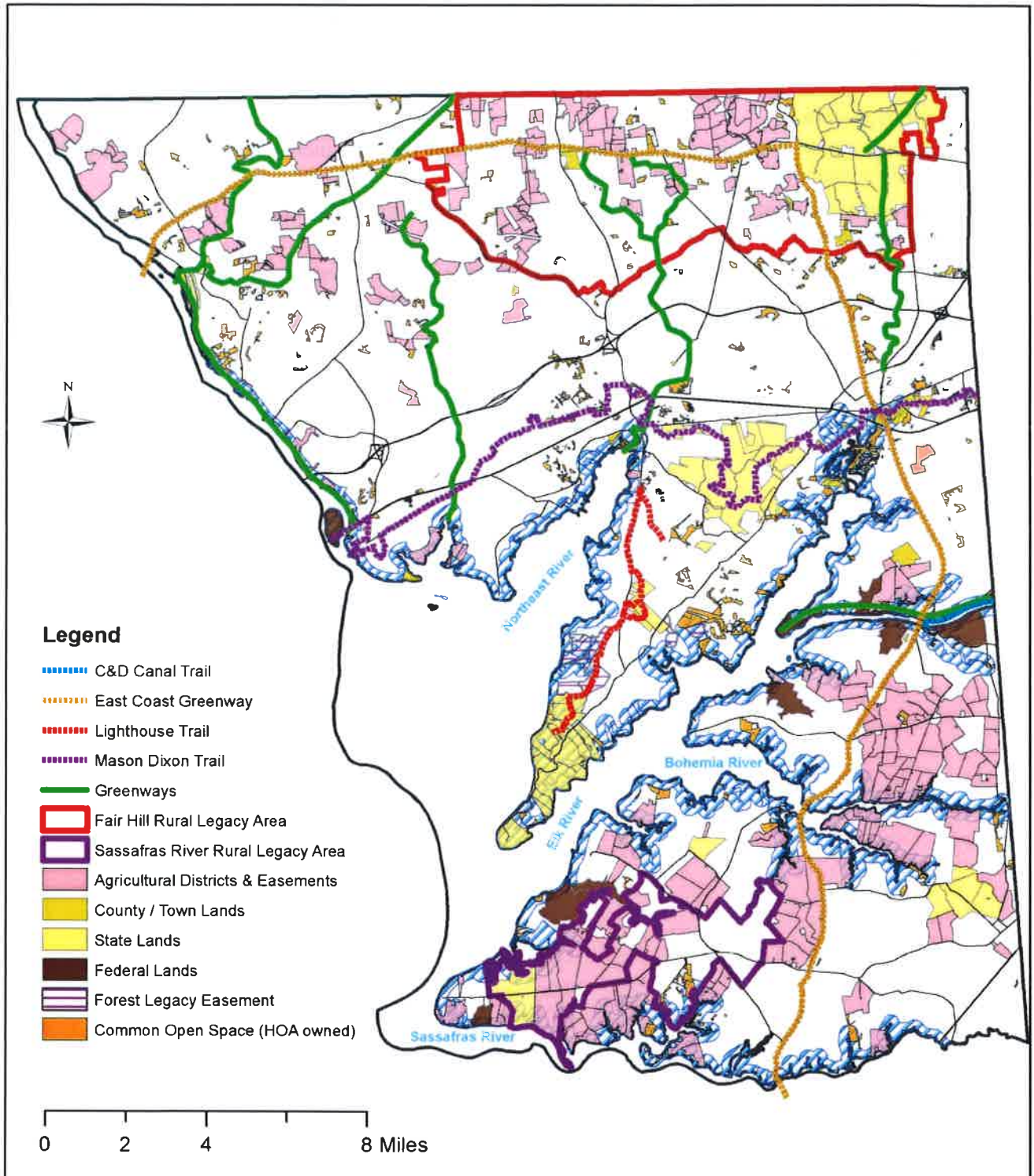
The Comprehensive Plan adopted on April 13, 2010 strengthened and formalized County policy for concentrating development in designated growth areas and encouraging land conservation in rural areas. Cecil County's program development strategy for natural resources land preservation is:

1. Continue implementing the objectives of Chapter 7 ("Sensitive Areas") of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. Strive to perform the actions, and complete the visions, listed in Section 7.4 of the Comprehensive Plan,
3. Incorporate small area and watershed-based planning into the County's comprehensive planning program. **STATE and COUNTY ACTION.**
4. Adopt a broad, countywide approach to natural resource conservation, connecting the County's existing protected areas into a broader, interconnected framework of protected lands (see Figure ES-1).

5. Fully fund and equip the County's geographic information system (GIS) efforts to support and facilitate both small area and watershed-based planning.
6. Improve the coordination of development review for rare, threatened and endangered species (RTES) with the Department of Natural Resources.
7. Complete protection of the County's two rural legacy areas – Sassafras and Fair Hill **STATE and COUNTY ACTION.**
8. Increase state funding for natural resource conservation **STATE ACTION.**
9. Continue to support land trusts.
10. Develop measurable objectives to assess natural resource conservation implementation. **STATE and County Action.**
11. Integrate greenways and the State's Green Infrastructure concepts more comprehensively into the County's planning and development review processes.
12. Encourage continuation of a coordinated and proactive partnership among the State, County, and municipalities to attract tourists.

Figure ES-1 is the synthesis map from Chapter VI that brings together the three key figures from the recreation, agricultural land, and natural resource conservation chapters. The blue cross hatched area represents the extent of the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area.

**Figure ES-1
 Synthesis
 Cecil County Land Preservation,
 Parks, and Recreation Plan**



The following elements stand out on Figure ES-1.

1. The extensive amount of protected land in large blocks south of the C&D Canal and on the Elk Neck Peninsula. These blocks form a very strong foundation, and future efforts should build upon them.
2. The somewhat scattered pattern of protected lands in the rural conservation district north of I-95 to the west of the Fair Hill Rural Legacy Area. While a good number of preserved land exists outside of the rural legacy area in the RCD, the protected lands are scattered throughout. Major efforts will be needed to preserve significant blocks of land in this area, especially given the smaller sizes of individual parcels in this area and the fragmented nature of the existing protected land base.
3. The relatively minor contribution of county and town park land to overall land preservation except in the immediate vicinity of Elkton. While recreation land can and should support broader land preservation efforts, its contribution will likely remain small.
4. The Critical Area (29,200 total acres), encompasses over 12 percent of the County and is particularly extensive south of Elkton, adding additional protection to the rural conservation and resource protection districts.
5. The potential to interconnect the large blocks of agricultural and natural resource lands via natural corridors (green infrastructure) and the greenways designated in the County's Comprehensive Plan. While these connections look feasible on the map, actually creating these interconnections on the ground will take considerable effort.
6. The potential to create an extensive on-road and off-road recreational trail system serving much of the County and connecting many of the County's large blocks of protected lands. This system has the potential to be a major asset to the County, but again will take a significant effort to make real on the ground.

Cecil County is at an important crossroads:

- While Cecil County's population growth between 2000 and 2010 was significant (17.6%), its estimated population growth between 2010 and 2014 has slowed considerably (2.5%). While growth rates and subdivision pressures are low, farmland protection efforts should increase, buying acreage at lower prices per acre than are possible during times when growth rates and subdivision pressures are high.
- The next few years will be critical to the farmland protection effort if Cecil County is to achieve its farmland protection goal of 55,000 acres. At least 7,239 acres of protected lands will be required over the next eight years if the County is to meet its 55,000 acre goal by the year 2025.
- The County's past model for recreation provision will likely not provide an adequate level of recreation service for the County's population.
- Through the Comprehensive Plan the County has agreed conceptually to pursue watershed plans, groundwater protection, and greenways. While there is significant grassroots interest in the County in watershed planning and protection and in natural resource conservation initiatives, the County has yet to define in detail the direction it will take on natural resource conservation.

By pursuing the program development strategies set forth in this LPPRP, Cecil County will be able to continue to meet both its and the State's goals for recreation, agricultural land preservation, and natural resource conservation.

CHAPTER I

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the purpose and context for preparing the 2022 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP), its objectives and legal framework.

A. Purposes of the Plan

Updated County Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plans (LPPRP) are required to be submitted to the State of Maryland every five years, effective July 1, 2011¹. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources will develop a statewide plan incorporating all county plans within one year after county plans are due. That plan will provide the framework for the State to implement an integrated and coordinated approach to the provision of recreational lands and facilities, including the protection of natural resources and agriculture.

This 2022 round of LPPRPs is intended to provide a common benchmark to assist the State's evaluation of each county's land preservation and recreation programs and thereby ensure good return on public investment. The LPPRPs support the State's seven land use planning visions contained in the 1992 Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act and an eighth vision added in 2000. In addition, LPPRP's qualify local governments for State Program Open Space (POS)¹ grants and other programs related to the plan's objectives for three land resource elements:

- Recreation and Parks,
- Agricultural land preservation, and
- Natural resource conservation.

To achieve this purpose, this LPPRP planning process:

- Evaluates State and County land preservation goals and objectives for the three land resource elements and identifies where they are the same, complementary, or different;
- Evaluates the ability of implementation, programs and funding sources to achieve goals and objectives for each element;
- Recommends changes to policies, plans and funding strategies to better implement goals and leverage return on public investment in the three land preservation elements;
- Identifies the needs and priorities of current and future County residents for recreation; and
- Ensures that public investment in land preservation and recreation supports the County's Comprehensive Plan, State planning policy, and State and local programs that influence land use and development.

The 2022 LPPRP for Cecil County was prepared in accordance with guidelines developed by the Maryland Departments of Planning and Natural Resources. The LPPRP examines progress since adoption of the 2017 Cecil County Land Preservation and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) and sets overall policy to guide decision making over the 2022 to 2027 period. The 2022 LPPRP replaces the 2017 LPPRP.

¹ Program Open Space: § 5-905 of the Natural Resources Article, Maryland Annotated Code.

B. Local Agency Preparation of the Plan

Cecil County Government is responsible for the preparation of the LPPRP. The effort was led by the Cecil County Department of Parks and Recreation and the Office of Planning and Zoning. In addition, the following agencies and organizations contributed to preparation of the plan:

- Cecil County Board of Parks and Recreation provided input related to recreation elements and programs;
- Cecil County Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board provided input related to issues concerning agricultural preservation;
- The Towns of Cecilton, Charlestown, Chesapeake City, Elkton, North East, Perryville, Port Deposit, and Rising Sun provided input primarily related to recreational facilities and needs.

C. The Plan's Relationship to the Comprehensive Planning Process

The LPPRP is one of a series of companion plans, regulations, and guidance documents that together form Cecil County's planning program. Chief among these documents is the Cecil County Comprehensive Plan which guides land use management policies and decisions. The current Comprehensive Plan was adopted on April 13, 2010.

This LPPRP has been prepared to be consistent with County policies, goals and objectives, including potential amendments to the existing Comprehensive Plan.

CHAPTER II

CHAPTER II - RECREATION, PARKS, AND OPEN SPACE

Introduction

Understanding that the 2022 LPPRP will cover a five-year time span, Cecil County's plan may seem small in scope. Since the 2017 plan, Cecil County has completed Phase III construction of Calvert Regional Park, purchased 148 +/- acres of additional open space, began development of Brantwood Regional Park and provided three County High Schools with synthetic turf fields. Project focus over the next five years will consist of small-scale improvements throughout various county facilities.

Cecil County is abundant in natural resources, i.e., open space, resource lands, parks, water access points, trails, and more. These resources are owned by the County, Municipalities, State and Federal Governments. Covering a land mass of over 18,398 acres, these lands afford a variety of recreation opportunities for residents and generate millions of dollars in tourism revenues.

Cecil County houses 689 acres of land in its open space inventory. Of that acreage, 190 is currently undeveloped land. With the remaining balance, the County has 2 Regional Parks (Calvert/Brantwood), 5 Community Parks, 2 Sports Complexes, and 3 Boat Launches. These parks provide both active and passive recreation. County owned parks contain 6.5 miles of paved trails, 7 baseball/softball fields, 4 tennis courts, 21 multi-purpose fields, 6 playgrounds, 3 outdoor basketball courts, 8 pavilions, and 1 curatorship. Indoor facilities include the Community Center and the Cecil Arena. While the Community Center is reserved for local social events and recreation programming, the Cecil Arena hosts indoor sports leagues and activities for youth and adult populations.

Since the 2017 data was released, the County has taken aggressive steps to increase its inventory of offerings by dedicating over \$3 million in local Open Space funding to acquire, develop and rehabilitate county parks. In 2021, Phase III of Calvert Regional Park was completed. This facility affords residents new multi-purpose fields, paved walking trails, playgrounds and environmentally sensitive areas used for academic and educational purposes. This resource also provides space to conduct Sports Tourism events, thus generating revenue into the local economy. With the acquisition of Brantwood Regional Park, residents south of the Route 40 corridor have access to trails, a playground, an 18 hole disc golf course and open space.

Moving forward, funding will need to exceed current levels, new revenue sources will need to be created, and new private/public partnerships will need to be established.

A. RECREATION AND PARKS PROGRAM

1. Goals

This section discusses interrelationships between the County Comprehensive Plan and State goals for recreation and parks.

a. State Goals

The State's goals for recreation, parks, and open space are:

1. Make a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities readily available to all citizens, and thereby contribute to their physical and mental well-being.

2. Recognize and strategically use parks and recreation facilities as amenities to make communities, counties, and the State more desirable places to live, work and visit.
3. Use State investment in parks, recreation and open space to complement and mutually support the broader goals and objectives of local comprehensive master plans.
4. To the greatest degree feasible, ensure that recreational land and facilities for local populations are conveniently located relative to population centers, are accessible without reliance on the automobile, and help protect natural open spaces and resources.
5. Complement infrastructure and other public investments in neighborhood and community parks and facilities.
6. Continue to protect recreational open space and resource lands at a rate that equals or exceeds the rate that land is developed at a statewide level.

b. County Goals

The 2010 Comprehensive Plan has a single goal directly pertaining to Recreation and Parks:

“Acquire park land and develop recreation facilities for all major user groups.”

More specific goals were set forth in the 2017 LPPRP. These goals remain valid in 2022 and are incorporated as goals into this LPPRP. The County goals that follow, like State Goals 1 and 4, seek to provide adequate amounts of park land and recreation facilities located convenient to residents. However, at a more local level, the County’s goals place emphasis on efficient management and delivery of park and recreation services and programs (Goals 1, 2, 5 and 6) that are similar to, or complement State Goals 1 and 5.

- 1. Create a leadership role for the County in the overall organization of recreation in Cecil County**
- 2. Improve methods by which information about recreation programs is gathered and disseminated in Cecil County.**
- 3. Provide adequate amounts of recreation land/open space to serve residents throughout the County.**
- 4. Develop additional recreation facilities to meet specific demands.**
- 5. Improve the countywide coordination and provision of recreational programming.**
- 6. Provide an adequate level of recreation services while keeping the cost to government as low as possible.**

The 2017 LPPRP identified the following policies to guide future land acquisitions, and these policies are also incorporated into this 2022 LPPRP:

- **Ensure maximum use of existing facilities including school sites and existing recreation land.**
- **Add onto existing sites wherever possible.**
- **Locate new recreation facilities convenient to towns and the county's designated development district when plausible.**
- **Continue to meet existing unmet demand in suburban and rural areas provided this does not contribute to sprawl development.**
- **Enhance partnership with the Board of Education in incorporating joint uses of school sites and facilities, especially when renovating schools or building new facilities.**

- **Develop a partnership with community organizations to better utilize existing facilities for all populations.**

These policies support the County’s goals and place emphasis on efficient management and joint utilization of park and recreation facilities. The policies support and are consistent with State Goals 2, 4, and 5 that emphasize facilities as community amenities; providing facilities close to population centers; and as facilities that complement other infrastructure and public investment.

Goals accomplished since the 2017 LPPRP include:

- Completion of Phase III of Calvert Regional Park.
- Completion of Synthetic Turf fields at 3 County High Schools.
- Expanded Sports Tourism facilities.
- Acquired 126 additional acres of open space in the Southern part of the County.
- Constructed 2 18-hole disc golf courses.

2. Implementing Programs and Procedures

a. Organization and planning procedures

The Cecil County Code requires that the County Executive appoint a Board of Parks and Recreation. The Board comprises eight-members, including one ex-officio County Council member. The Board is authorized in the Code to develop and provide “a comprehensive program of public recreation in schools, parks, or other lands or buildings, either publicly or privately owned” § 16-11.

The Board’s primary function is to assist staff with implementing policies and procedures, CIP development, and grass roots advocacy. The County Executive retains approval authority for plans and funding recommended by the Board.

The Director of Parks and Recreation is also established in the County Code. Currently the Department of Parks and Recreation is comprised of a Director, 2 Chiefs, 10 other supporting staff, and approximately 50 seasonal employees and volunteers.

The following procedures have been established to manage the recreation and parks program and provide for public involvement:

- The Department of Parks and Recreation and Board of Parks and Recreation generally meet monthly. Meetings are public and are primarily devoted to reviewing County projects and program goals, needs and accomplishments. The Board will also discuss policy and implementation progress, funding for the Department of Parks and Recreation, and other departmental issues.
- The Director provides quarterly department reports to the Board of Parks and Recreation and the County Executive.
- Information about recreation programs in Cecil County is collected and distributed by five main conduits: Cecil County Parks and Recreation Social Media (such as the County Website and Department Facebook page), Cecil County Public Schools, the Cecil County Library, and Cecil County newspapers.
- The 2005 LPPRP recognized Cecil County’s lack of a centralized park and recreation planning and programming structure and recommended that the County take more of a leadership role. Thus, in 2006, Cecil County Government established the first Department of Parks and Recreation. The department currently organizes over 200 programs to Cecil County residents throughout the year while managing 689 acres of open space. The department continues to work closely with private, non-profit organizations such as Friends of Cecil County Parks and Recreation, Cecil Soccer, Cecil County Jr League Football, Little League, Cecil County Public Schools, Cecil County Public Library, etc.

b. Funding

Operating Funds

The County’s FY 2022 operating budget for the Department of Parks and Recreation is approximately \$1,496,752 derived from the County’s general fund. The Department of Parks and Recreation produces significant revenue from program user fees, facility rental fees, sports tourism, and the County’s three public boat launch ramps. Fee revenues are returned to the general fund, however all programs are monetarily self-sustaining.

Capital Funds

Summary of Cecil County’s Program Open Space Local Share Apportionments from 2011 to 2022

Fiscal Year	Total POS Funds	Acquisition Amount	Development Amount
2022	748,577	187,144	561,433
2021	613,398	153,350	460,048
2020	672,244	168,061	504,183
2019	727,572	181,893	545,679
2018	506,326	253,163	253,163
2017	295,128	147,564	147,564
2016	298,700	149,350	149,350
2015	275,420	137,710	137,710
2014	374,420	187,210	187,210
2013	283,838	141,919	141,919
2012	99,000	49,500	49,500
2011	173,000	86,500	86,500
Total	5,067,623	1,843,364	3,224,259

The majority of park acquisition, and facility development and rehabilitation funding comes from the State’s Program Open Space (POS) program. The FY 2022 POS allocation for Cecil County is \$748,577. The County holds these POS funds in a capital account along with any general funds appropriated to cover the County’s share of development costs for specific POS funded projects it is managing. As of July, 2021, this fund contains approximately \$1,557,555, \$508,555 in acquisition funding and \$1,049,000 in development funding.

Since 2017, POS allocations have totaled approximately \$3,563,246 (for acquisition and development). All of these funds remained with the County to further develop county facilities (first Regional Park), to meet present and future demands. The 8 municipalities have relied heavily on other sources of funding such as Community Parks and Playgrounds to meet their localized needs.

As of July 2021, the County had only 4 POS funded project proposed, the implementation of synthetic turf fields at the 2 remaining high schools, the inclusion of sensory playgrounds, and development of pickle ball courts.

c. Planning

The County Comprehensive Plan provides little guidance for Parks and Recreation planning other than its stated goal to “acquire park land and develop recreation facilities for all major user groups.” In a countywide context, however, the Comprehensive Plan provides the broad policy framework in which all public investment decisions are made.

Since 2006, Recreation planning has been traditionally centralized and is conducted through the Departments Director and staff. The LPPRP is an important document in setting long-term planning objectives so projects can be viewed for consistency with its recommendations.

d. Programs and Benefits

Cecil County Parks and Recreation provides county residents with both passive and active recreation opportunities year-round. As of 2020, census data shows that Cecil County’s population is approximately 103,725. Other than a few private sector entities, (YMCA, etc.), the aforementioned lands and facilities enhance the quality of life for Cecil County residents in the following categories: social, economic, educational, environmental, and health/wellness.

In a County as diverse as Cecil, facilities, programs, and open space are detrimental to combating not only local, but nationwide epidemics such as drug abuse, alcohol abuse, obesity, crime, heart disease, teen pregnancy, and physical inactivity. As of 2021, Cecil County ranked in the top 10 in the State of Maryland in all the above categories, per www.countyhealthrankings.org. As with the entire state, Cecil County continues to suffer from a growing drug epidemic. The primary demographic served by the Parks and Recreation Department consists of those in the 2- to 18-year-old range. Programs are offered to adult and senior populations, but not on the same scale. The Department of Community Services provides activities for the aging population through the 55+ Healthy Lifestyles Fitness Center and the Elkton Center which offers seniors (over 60 years of age) a hot, nutritious lunch, social and recreation activities, trips, educational presentations, exercise classes, arts and crafts instruction, preventive health education and health screening sessions.

Since the County is no longer bound by the states formulated mandate of 30 acres per 1,000 residents, it feels the inclusion of the additional 148 +/- acres will sustain the population needs for the foreseeable future. With this new acquisition and the inclusion of State and Federal lands, the ratio of acres to residents will be approximately 180 per 1,000.

With the County’s increased funding in Parks and Open Space, there is an anticipated level of return expected on the investment. A heightened sense of community pride, health/wellness, social and public connectivity, job creation, environmental awareness, economic growth, sports tourism, and program based fees, are just a few of the benefits afforded by Parks and Recreation resources.

Over 200 types of youth, adult and family programs are offered throughout the year. Programming varies by season and social media conduits detailing specifics of upcoming activities are updated daily, and scholarship opportunities are available for all programs. Pages II-6 through II-9 list the types of programs held in the Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter. While this is not a complete listing, major offerings are highlighted. A complete list of programs can be found on the Cecil County Government website at <http://www.ccgov.org/government/parks-and-recreation>.

While there is no specific “Children in Nature” partnership, outdoor classrooms are planned for Calvert and Brantwood Regional Parks. Classes from local schools have visited the wetlands area of the park to discuss eco-systems, habitat and native species. Partnerships with the Friends of Cecil County Parks and Recreation, the Master Gardner’s and the Library have afforded county youth a plethora of opportunities....

Cecil County Parks and Recreation also offers passive recreational activities. Parks located at Stemmer's Run, Elk River Park, and Fredericktown, offer boating, fishing, and bird watching. Approximately 650 boating permits are sold throughout the calendar year, generating over \$13,000 in revenue.

Cecil County Parks and Recreation offers a wide variety of programming and special events.

Cecil County

Program Guide!

Fall 2021

Parks and Recreation

The image shows a collage of photos: a basketball game, a soccer field with players, and a person walking a dog on a trail.

Elementary Movers Soccer

Cecil County Parks and Recreation in partnership with Cecil County Public Schools is proud to present Elementary Movers Soccer this Fall!

Elementary Movers soccer will be offered for 6 weeks in the fall, **starting the week of October 11th**. Movers will consist of 6 weeks of practices, 1 practice per week, with a play day at the end of the 6th week on a Saturday morning.

Practices will run **from dismissal until 5 pm** at the school. **Practices will be held one day a week after school for 6 consecutive weeks.**

Teams will have a maximum of 20 players, so register early to ensure your child's spot!

The Play Day will be Saturday, November 20th at a location/time TBD later.

The cost of the program is \$32 and includes a Team T-Shirt for use during the Play Day.

Participating Schools:
 Bainbridge ES - Thursday's
 Charlestown ES - Monday's
 Chesapeake City ES - Tuesday's
 Conowingo ES - Tuesday's
 Holly Hall ES - Tuesday's
 Leeds ES - Thursday's
 Rising Sun ES - Wednesday's
 Perryville ES - Monday's

Grades: 4th - 5th

For special accommodations or questions regarding this program please call (410) 656-5125, or by sending an email to jhough@ccgov.org

To Learn More About This Program, or Registration, Please Visit Us Online...
 On Facebook or at cecilrec.recdesk.com

Cost: \$32

2021 - Fall Programs

Adult Soccer League (Fall)
 The Adult Soccer League will begin playing games on Sunday, September 12th at the Calvert Park turf. Games will be played on Sunday nights beginning at 8 pm. Rosters, with a signed waiver for each player, and \$400 registration are due before teams will be scheduled. Teams will also pay ref fees of \$20 per game, due to staff on-site at time of game. Team Registration Deadline is September 8th.
 Cost: \$400 per team + ref fees Location: Calvert Park Turf Start Date: September 12th

Basketball Clinic (ages 6-13)
 The Basketball Clinic will focus on teaching and developing fundamentals within children ages 6-13. The camp will run from 12 pm - 2 pm every Saturday from September 4th - September 25th. Participants will practice and learn on a lower basket to encourage confidence and proper technique. The camp will be held on the Rising Sun Community Center tennis courts, located behind the Rising Sun Community Center.
 Cost: \$40 per player Location: Rising Sun Tennis Courts Start Date: September 4th

Chinese Kenpo Karate (ages 6-70)
 All youth and adult martial arts training with stretching, light exercise, and techniques in striking and defending will be taught in this class. Instruction will be from Matt Brollo a second-degree black belt in Chinese Kenpo with over ten years of teaching experience. 8 weeks, on Tuesdays, starting September 7th.
 Cost: \$60 per participant Location: Rising Sun Community Center Start Date: September 7th

Crafty Creations (ages 8-13)
 Come on out and join us for 6 weeks of Crafty Creations! Open to ages 8-13, this class is a great way to explore your crafty side whether it's making bracelets, decorating mason jars, or creating canvas art. 6pm - 7pm.
 Cost: \$40 per participant Location: Rising Sun Community Center Start Date: September 8th

Fitness Boot Camp (ages 18+)
 Some people want it to happen. Some people wish it would happen. Boot Campers make it happen! Come battle through our 1-hour fitness boot camp on Monday mornings at 7 am. Located at the Cecil Arena, the 6-week boot camp will be circuit training using free weights, medicine balls, exercise bands, body weight, etc. Cost of the boot camp is \$50. Drop-ins are also welcome at \$10/week.
 Cost: \$50 per participant Location: Cecil Arena Start Date: September 13th

For more information about each program or to register, please visit us at cecilrec.recdesk.com or call our office at (410) 656-5125

Halloween Glow Zumbathon!!! (ages 18+)

Zumba is an aerobic fitness program featuring movements inspired by various styles of Latin American dance and performed primarily in Latin American dance music. The class is designed to burn up to 1200 calories. Instructor Danielle Ford will lead a Halloween Glow Zumbathon on Friday, October 22 from 7-8 pm at the Rising Sun Community Center.
 Cost: \$15 per participant Location: Rising Sun Community Center Start Date: October 22nd

Intro to Crochet (ages 13+)
 Learn the foundational basics to crochet and begin your crafty adventure into the world of fiber arts. Learn a life skill and make pretty things! Absolute beginners crochet, no experience necessary. Who knew we could make things out of strings?? The program will be held at the Rising Sun Community Center for anyone ages 13+, starting Thursday, September 9th from 6-7 pm and will continue for 6 weeks. All supplies will be provided.
 Cost: \$40 per participant Location: Rising Sun Community Center Start Date: September 9th

Girl's Lacrosse Training (Grades K-5)
 Cecil County Parks and Rec will be offering a girl's lacrosse training for girls in grades K-5 this fall on the grass field behind the Cecil Arena. Training will be held on Thursday nights from 5:30-6:30 pm starting September 9 and running for 6 consecutive weeks. Cost of the training is \$50.
 Cost: \$50 per participant Location: Grass Field behind Cecil Arena Start Date: September 9th

Speed and Agility Clinic Grades K-5 (Session 1)
 Cecil County Parks and Rec will be offering a speed and agility clinic for boys and girls in grades K-5th this fall at the Cecil Arena. Training will be held on Tuesday nights from 6:30-7:30 pm starting September 14 and running for 6 consecutive weeks. The cost of the clinic is \$50.
 Cost: \$50 per participant Location: Cecil Arena Start Date: September 14th

Speed and Agility Training Grades 6-8 (Session 1)
 Cecil County Parks and Rec will be offering speed and agility training for boys and girls in grades 6-8 this fall at the Cecil Arena. Training will be held on Tuesday nights from 7:30-8:30 pm starting September 14 and running for 6 consecutive weeks. The cost of the clinic is \$50.
 Cost: \$50 per participant Location: Cecil Arena Start Date: September 14th

For more information about each program or to register, please visit us at cecilrec.recdesk.com or call our office at (410) 656-5125

Tennis, Youth Advanced (M/W) - (ages 10-99)

Advanced tennis will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays at 5:00 pm at the Cecil Community Center Tennis Courts. Basic instruction in ground strokes, proper racquet control, body positioning, service and game play. 8 classes/\$100.00. Classes start on September 6th.

Cost: \$100 Location: Rising Sun Tennis courts Start Date: September 6th

Tennis, Youth Beginner (T/TH) - (ages 5-18)

Beginner tennis will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:00 pm at the Rising Sun Community Center Tennis Courts. Basic instruction in groundstrokes, proper racquet control, body positioning, service, and gameplay. 8 classes/\$100.00. The class starts on August 31st.

Cost: \$100 Location: Rising Sun Tennis courts Start Date: August 31st

Track and Field Clinic (Grades K-5)

Come join us for our fall Track and Field Clinic! Clinic begins September 22 and runs through October 27 from 6:30-7:30 pm. This six week program is designed for beginner runners who want to learn something new and be active. The Track and Field clinic will be held on Wednesdays for six weeks, meeting at the track at Perryville High School. Training in various events: running heats, sprints, distance, long jump, softball throw and relays.

Cost: \$45 Location: Perryville HS Turf Start Date: September 22nd

Prenatal Yoga

Prenatal Yoga includes poses, deep breathing, relaxation, and meditation that may be practiced through all trimesters (clearing any medical issues with the care provider beforehand). Prenatal Yoga is a great way to connect with other mothers-to-be and establish friendships that go far beyond birth. The gentle exploration of prenatal yoga will help guide you and your unborn into a sense of relaxation and bonding. Join us for 5 weeks of 45-minute classes. Mommy time has never been more necessary. The program begins on October 6 and runs each Wednesday from 11-11:45 am for 5 weeks at the Rising Sun Community Center.

Cost: \$75.00 Location: Rising Sun Community Center Start Date: October 6th

For more information about each program or to register, please visit us at cecilrec.recdesk.com or call our office at (410) 656-5125

Special Events

Pack the Park 5K Fun Run/Walk

Join the Friends of Cecil County Parks and Recreation for their first ever Pack the Park 5K Fun Run/Walk at Calvert Regional Park on Saturday, September 18th, 2021 starting at 9:00 am.

Make a family fun day out of it and enjoy the park with a selection of vendors on-site (TBD).

****The first 50 participants to register to receive a Shirt**

****Rain Date: Sunday, Sept. 19th - 9:00 am Start Time**

****Cost: \$15 - all proceeds will be donated to the Friends of Cecil County Parks and Recreation**

To Learn More About This Program, or Registration, Please Visit Us Online...

On Facebook or at cecilrec.recdesk.com

All Ages are Encouraged to Participate.

For special accommodations, or questions regarding this event please call 410-656-5125.

Special Events

Puppy Fun Run

Grab a leash and your best friend, and get ready for Cecil County Parks and Recreation's first-ever Puppy Fun Run!

In-Person Registration on the day of the event

COST \$15

Where: Calvert Regional Park
 Distance (Optional): 1-3 Miles
 When: Saturday, September 25th
 Check-in: 8:15am-9:00am
 Start/End: 9:05am - 11:00am (finish)

Includes a Matching T-Shirt and a Bandana (For the first 50 registrants) - Sizes for shirts are limited so register early!

For special accommodations or questions regarding this program please call (410) 656-5125 or by sending an email to thou@ccgov.org

To Learn More About This Program, or Registration, Please Visit Us Online...
 On Facebook or at cecilrec.recdesk.com

For more information about each program or to register, please visit us at cecilrec.recdesk.com or call our office at (410) 656-5125

we want your feedback

Thou@ccgov.org

www.facebook.com/cecilrec

B. NEEDS ANALYSIS AND COUNTY PRIORITIES FOR LANDS AND FACILITIES

County priorities for land acquisition and facility development are based on consideration of identified needs in the context of State and County goals, Park Equity analyses, our 2021 survey results¹ of existing facilities, goals, policies, and actions from the previous LPPRP's.

A program for open space acquisition and facility development is outlined for the calendar years 2022-2027 in section D on page II-44.

1. Supply

Recreation/Resource lands in Cecil County

Including public schools and the 8 incorporated municipalities, Cecil County offers approximately 1,178 acres of recreation lands. This acreage includes 17 community parks, 14 mini-parks, 9 sports complexes, 9 special use areas and 7 undeveloped parks. State and Federal recreation lands include an additional 6,789 acres. It needs to be noted that these are the acres available for public recreation.

All total between County, State, and Federal, there are an additional 11,040 acres of resource (non-recreation) land.

County, public schools, and municipal lands offer citizens traditional recreation opportunities, i.e., athletic fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, playgrounds, pavilions, trails, boat launches, bird watching etc. State and Federal lands offer mountain biking, horseback riding, fishing, hiking, and managed hunting.

Since the adoption of the 2017 LPPRP the County has completed Phases 2 and 3 of Calvert Regional Park. This 112-acre site offers both active and passive recreation, while also providing a venue for sports tourism and special events.

All these resources provide endless benefits for Cecil County residents and attract tourist nationwide.

The largest parks are Calvert Regional Park (112 acres), Brantwood Regional Park (126), Perryville Community Park (193 acres), and John Stanley Meadow Park West and Meadow Park East in Elkton (92 acres and 111 acres respectively). Approximately 160 acres of Meadow Park West and East are classified as natural resource lands as they are routinely subject to flooding and often unavailable for recreation because of wet soil conditions, making scheduling of activities extremely difficult. County community parks consist of the Cecil Community Center, Harborview, Conowingo Park, and Elk Mills.

Sports complexes play an important role in recreation in Cecil County. They are:

- Perryville Little League Complex
- Chesland Park
- Chesapeake City Park
- Cecil Sports Complex
- Eder Park (Little League)
- North East Little League Park
- Cecil Arena
- Conowingo Park
- Rising Sun Little League
- Calvert Regional Park
- Cecil Community Center
- Town of Elkton Community Center

¹ 2021 Cecil County Parks and Recreation User Survey Appendix A

The first Regional Park in Cecil County, Calvert Regional Park, is housed on 112 acres and offers 16 multi-purpose fields (1 synthetic & 15 natural grass), 3 basketball courts, playgrounds, 18-hole disc golf course, and paved walking trails. This site is also used for inner department leagues, camps, clinics, as well as sports tourism events. This facility is the County's highest revenue producing park.

Brantwood Regional Park, acquired in 2017, is located south of Rt. 40 along the Elkton, Chesapeake City corridor. This site affords over 3 miles of walking trails, a playground, and an 18-hole disc golf course. It is important to disclose that both Calvert and Brantwood Parks are utilized by Cecil County Public Schools for athletic events.

Cecil County's community parks range in size from 0.2 to 32 acres and offer walking trails, pavilions, tennis courts, playgrounds, soft-launches and fishing ponds. Pickle ball courts and sensory playgrounds are planned additions to County Community parks.

There are three sports complexes owned by the County, Cecil Sports Complex, Conowingo Park and Chesland Park. The Sports Complex and Conowingo Park are used by the department and local youth organizations for baseball/softball, lacrosse and soccer activities. A paved walking trail is also available at Conowingo Park. Currently Cecil Soccer League utilizes Chesland Park for leagues and 2 seasonal tournaments. Further development of Chesland Park should be considered. Once completed, this site could generate considerable revenues through sports tourism events.

Cecil County owns and operates 2 indoor facilities, the Cecil Arena and Cecil Community Center. The Arena is utilized for youth and adult sports leagues, birthday parties, training, and camps. The Community Center is reserved for in house programming, birthday parties, and other public/social events. A paved walking trail is also available.

Elk River, Stemmers and Fredericktown are the three County operated boat launches. All 3 of these facilities allow for non-motorized and motorized watercraft. These 3 launches allow boaters to navigate the Elk, the Sassafras, Bohemia Rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay water ways.

Cecil County's investment in Parks, Recreation, and Open space is very important and should not be taken lightly. These funds create safe, healthy, and active places for children and families to congregate, play, explore, exercise, and learn. Facilities create jobs and generate new revenue streams through rental, user and program fees, and sports tourism fees. They also promote a sense of community pride and stewardship.

Ownership and Acreage of Cecil County’s Park and Recreation Lands

Owner	Acres		
	Recreation	Resource	Total
County	494	190	684
Town of Elkton	89	277	366
Town of Charlestown	6		6
Town of Perryville	196	2	198
Town of Port Deposit	82		82
Town of Rising Sun	21		21
Town of North East	13		13
Town of Chesapeake City	22		22
Town of Cecilton	26		26
Board of Education Recreation Land	229		229
Total Local	1,178	469	1,647
State	6,256	8,257	14,513
Federal	533	2,314	2,847
Total State and Federal	6,789	10,571	17,360
Grand Total	7,967	11,040	19,007

Source: Appendix C. Note: excludes privately-owned lands.

Acquired in 2017: 126 acres south of Route 40 on the Route 213 corridor (Brantwood Regional)

School recreation areas. The Board of Education is an important provider of recreation land in the County. School recreation parks totaling 229 acres are located at 26 elementary, middle, and high school sites. These sites and facilities are used by a variety of sport teams and community leagues for athletic and health/wellness activities.

A Memorandum Of Understanding (M.O.U.). has been completed (2017) with the Board of Education/Cecil County Public Schools that has developed a regionalized effort in facility and programming delivery needs. This LPPRP will help bridge the divide between residents and County resources while promoting safe, healthy, and active communities.

Undeveloped Lands. The following parks are undeveloped.

- Hopkins Quarry, 68 acres in Port Deposit
- Stony Run Park, 30 acres near North East
- Wallace Carter Mill Park, 28 acres north of Elkton
- Church Street Park, 0.3 acres in Cecilton
- Mackall Street Park, 2 acres in Elkton
- Charlestown Meadows, 0.3 acres in Charlestown
- Chesland Park, 76 acres
- Elk River, 28 acres
- Perryville, 10 acres

State and Federal Land

The State provides over nearly 6,200 acres of recreation lands at Elk Neck State Park, Elk Neck State Forest, Bohemia River State Park, and Susquehanna State Park (Cecil County portion). Fair Hill, 5,656 acres, is classified as a Natural Resources Management Area, although it does provide extensive recreation opportunities such as hiking, biking, horse riding, and nature viewing.

Federal holdings in the County total a little over 2,800 acres. Approximately 500 acres of these are managed hunting areas and contribute to recreation in the County. The other lands are dredge disposal sites also used as wildlife management areas.

Private Land

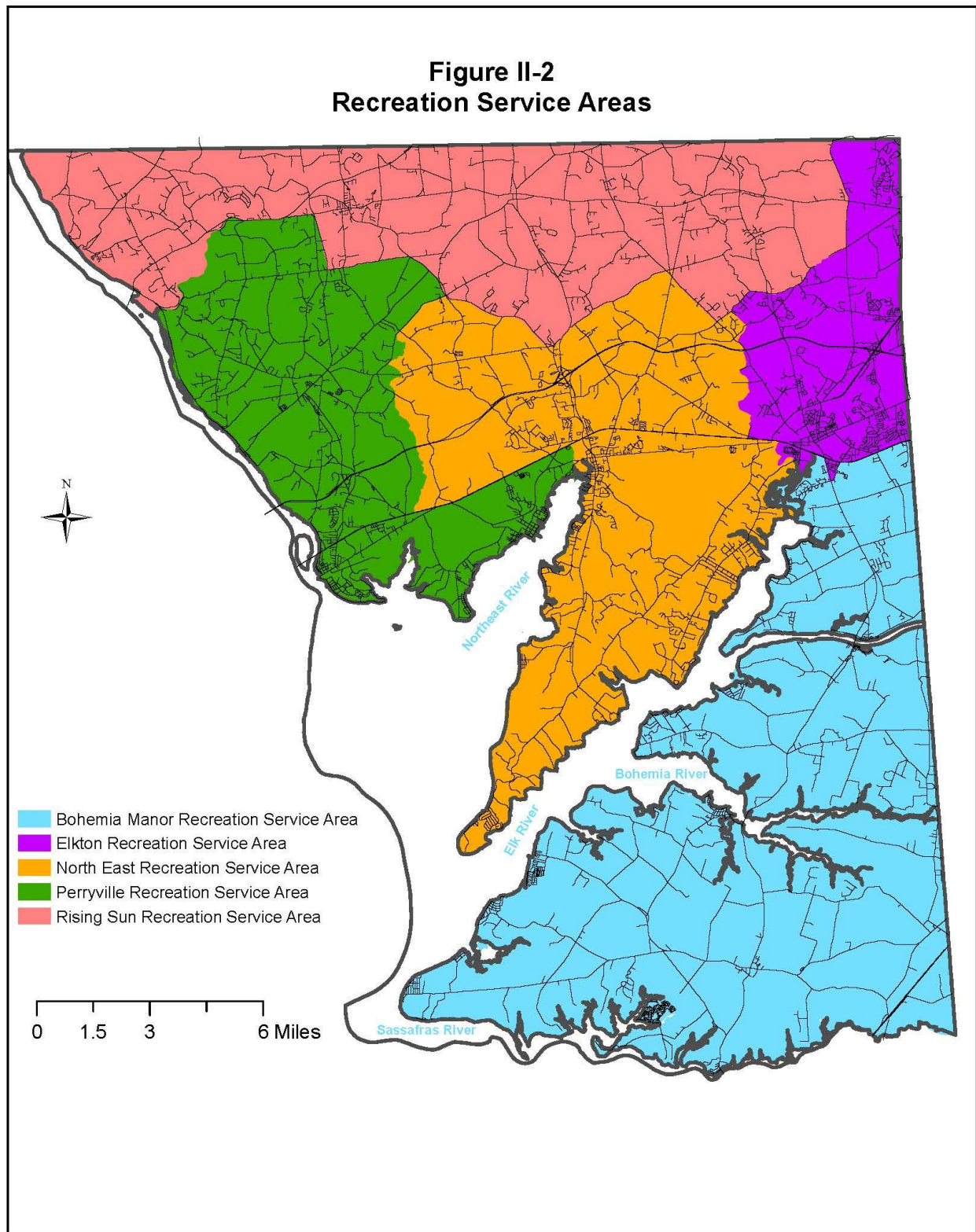
Privately owned recreation sites totaling approximately 52 acres help meet community recreation needs: Eder Park and North East Little League fields, and the YMCA in Elkton. In addition, there are 3 private golf courses in the County that are open to the public for a fee. This acreage is not included in the Ownership Acreage Table above.

Water Access

There are 16 publicly owned boat ramps/soft launches at eight locations in the County, including three County-owned or leased facilities at Fredericktown, Stemmers Run and Elk River. The other ramps are in Elk Neck State Park, the Stemmers Run Federal property, the North East Community Park, Charlestown Veterans Park, US Reserve on the Canal (C&D Canal Museum), and Port Deposit Marina Park.

Elk Neck State Park has a swimming beach, the only publicly owned beach in the County, and there are several fishing ponds and shoreline fishing areas.

Figure II-2 Recreation Service Areas



2. Demand/Needs Analysis

Park Equity analysis was utilized to determine needs by population, income, age, and distance from existing County parks.

Local survey results were also used as the basis for determining the demand for current recreational facilities and future programming². Results are based on responses from 273 households in Cecil County.

Additional information was provided through the LPPRP public participation process, including numerous personal interviews with County and municipal staff, members of the Cecil County School Board, and recreation providers regarding the supply, acreage, location, and recognized need for facilities in each municipality and in the County.

This information was used to identify County priorities for land acquisition, facility development and rehabilitation.

Survey results, staff meetings, and resident feedback all conclude that the County's four primary deficiencies are:

- County Special Events
- Paved Walking Trails
- Pickle Ball Courts
- Indoor Athletic Space

The County appreciates citizen input and has concluded that these deficiencies will be rectified in the following manner.

1. Implementation of farmers markets, car shows, and festivals in county parks.
2. Funds will be requested in future budgets to pave existing trails where amenable with storm-water facilities.
3. Construction of 4-8 pickleball courts
4. Construction of an indoor multi use building.

It is the county's intent to successfully abate these deficiencies prior to the 2027 LPPRP submittal. Although matching funds will be required, Program Open Space funding should be supportive of such efforts.

² 2021 Cecil County Parks and Recreation User Survey Appendix A

C. INTRODUCTION PARK EQUITY ANALYSIS

A. Park Equity Analysis

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources' guidelines for 2022 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plans recommend that said plans "should include...*equity analyses* to identify deficiencies and opportunities for meeting recreational goals and addressing deficiencies." In order to facilitate said recommendation, DNR developed an interactive, GIS based "Park Equity Mapper" application. Said application is available at <https://dnr.maryland.gov/pages/parkequity.aspx> and <https://p1.cgis.umd.edu/mdparkequity/>

Defined as the quality of being fair and impartial, an equity analysis examines the spatial distribution of parks and recreation opportunities relative to groups of persons having similar characteristics. Essentially, an equity analysis seeks to ensure that access and opportunity are provided for all. These opportunities include access to amenities such as water recreation, natural areas, picnicking, trails, hunting, fishing, etc. Historically, communities of color and low wealth communities have had less access to parks and recreation amenities.

In order to facilitate these equity analyses, DNR provided County and local governments with census block group level GIS data that includes rankings/scores in such categories as:

- **Low wealth** – a ratio of households at or below 185% of the County's poverty level (Higher values represent areas having concentrated poverty).
- **Youth** – The ratio of children to the entire population of a given census block group. (Higher values represent areas with more children under the age of 17.)
- **Adults over 65** – The ratio of older adults to the entire population of a given census block group. (Higher values represent areas with more adults over the age of 65.)
- **Population Density** – Defined as the number of people per unit of area, higher values represent higher densities.
- **Walkability** – Measuring the accessibility of recreational opportunities to individuals without access to private vehicles, higher values indicate that a census block group is less walkable.
- **Public Transit** – Again measuring the accessibility of recreational opportunities to individuals without access to private vehicles, higher values indicate less access to public transit opportunities.
- **Non-White** – Higher values represent a higher concentration of non-white individuals.
- **Park Distance** – Greater distances to parks are signified by larger values. Lower values in this category indicate less distance to parks and recreation opportunities.
- **Linguistic Isolation** – Higher values indicate an increased number of non-English speaking residents.

Using these nine values, DNR then developed a "total equity score" for each census block group.

The sections and maps that follow provide an overview of DNR's Cecil County specific data and discusses the data's implications to parks and recreation opportunities.

B. Census Block Groups

Cecil County contains 57 census block groups. Smaller sized block groups are found in the more urbanized areas of the County (i.e. the Towns of Elkton, North East, and Perryville). Larger sized block groups are found in the more rural parts of the County (i.e. Conowingo, Earleville, and Warwick).

DNR's park equity data is compiled on the census block group level, and the figure below depicts the geographic locations of Cecil County's census block groups.

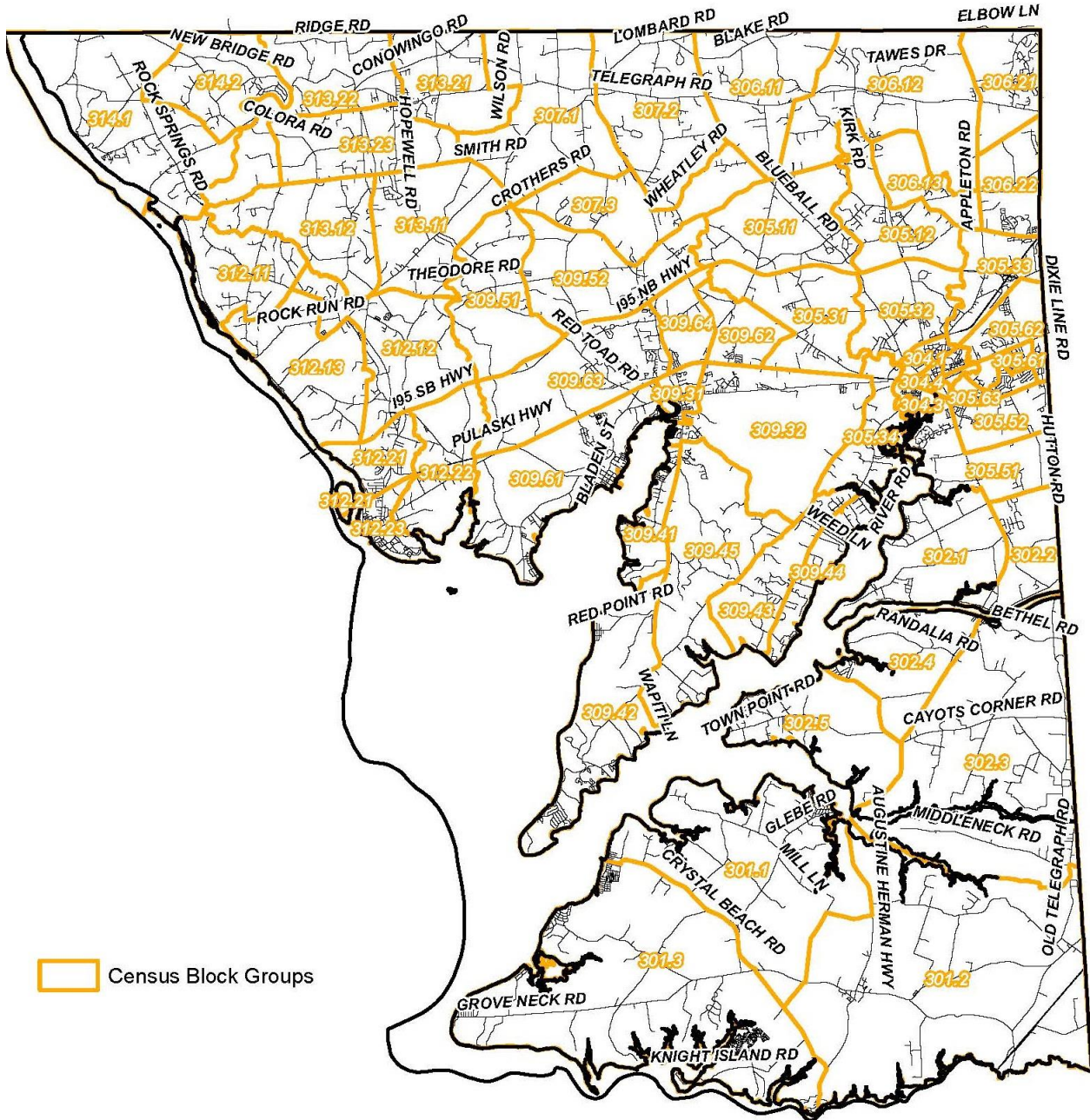


Figure A-1 Cecil County Census Block Groups

C. Low Wealth

DNR's park equity data shows areas of concentrated poverty in and around the Towns of Elkton, North East, and Perryville. Some might argue that poverty is concentrated within the Route 40 and I-95 corridors of Cecil County. Areas of rural poverty exist, however, in southern Cecil County and areas near the towns of Rising Sun and Port Deposit.

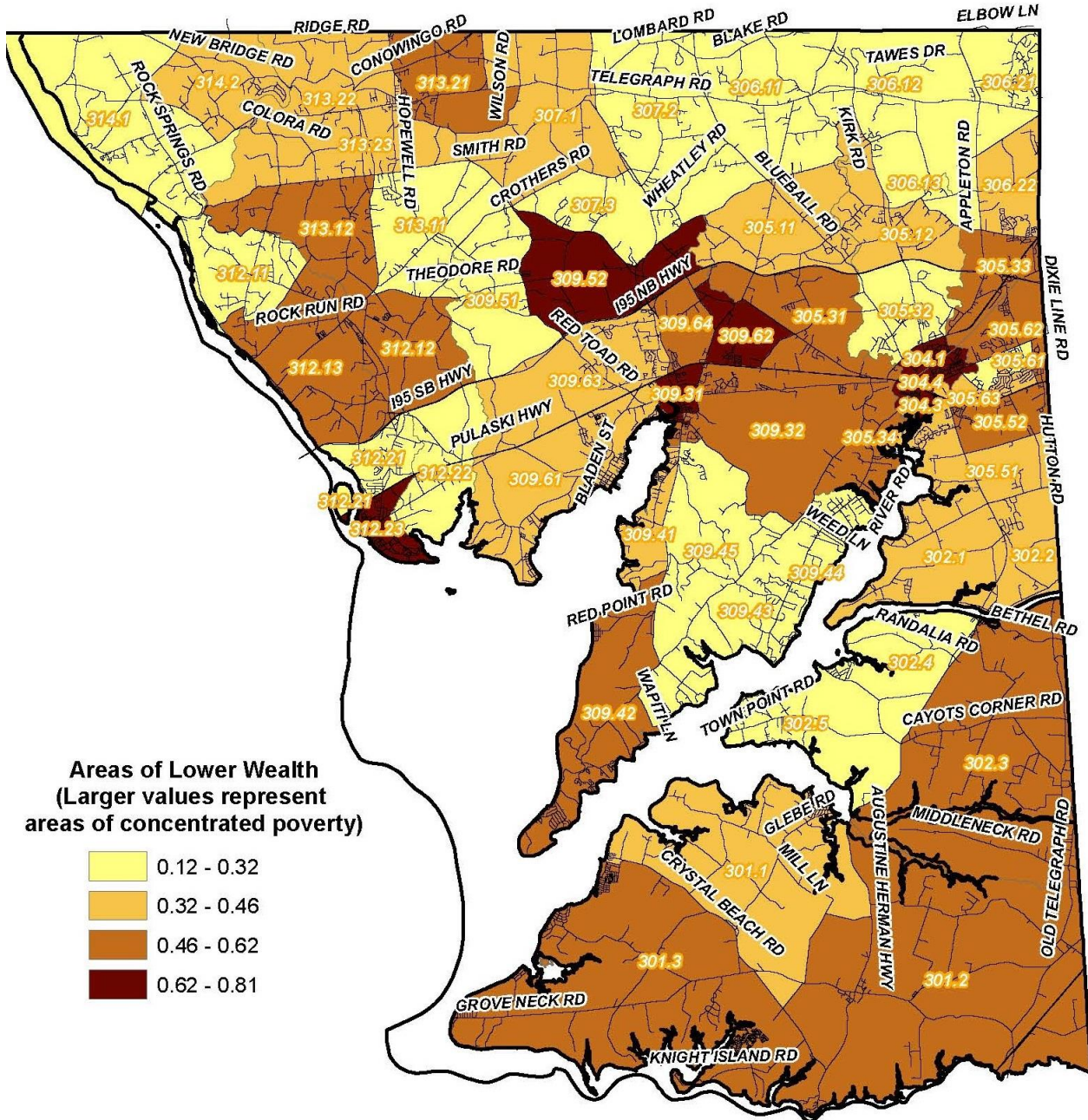


Figure A-2 Areas of Lower Wealth

D. Youth

Perhaps unsurprisingly, areas with larger concentrations of children tend to correlate with recent subdivision activity. Census Block Groups 309.63 (with the Bedrock, Northwoods, and Chesapeake Ridge subdivisions) and 309.52 (with the Bay View Woods, Beaver Lodge, and Mongtomery Oaks subdivisions) lead the way, with the highest scores in Cecil County. Large scores are also present in the 305.51 (Kensington Courts) and 305.62 (Patriots Glen) census block groups.

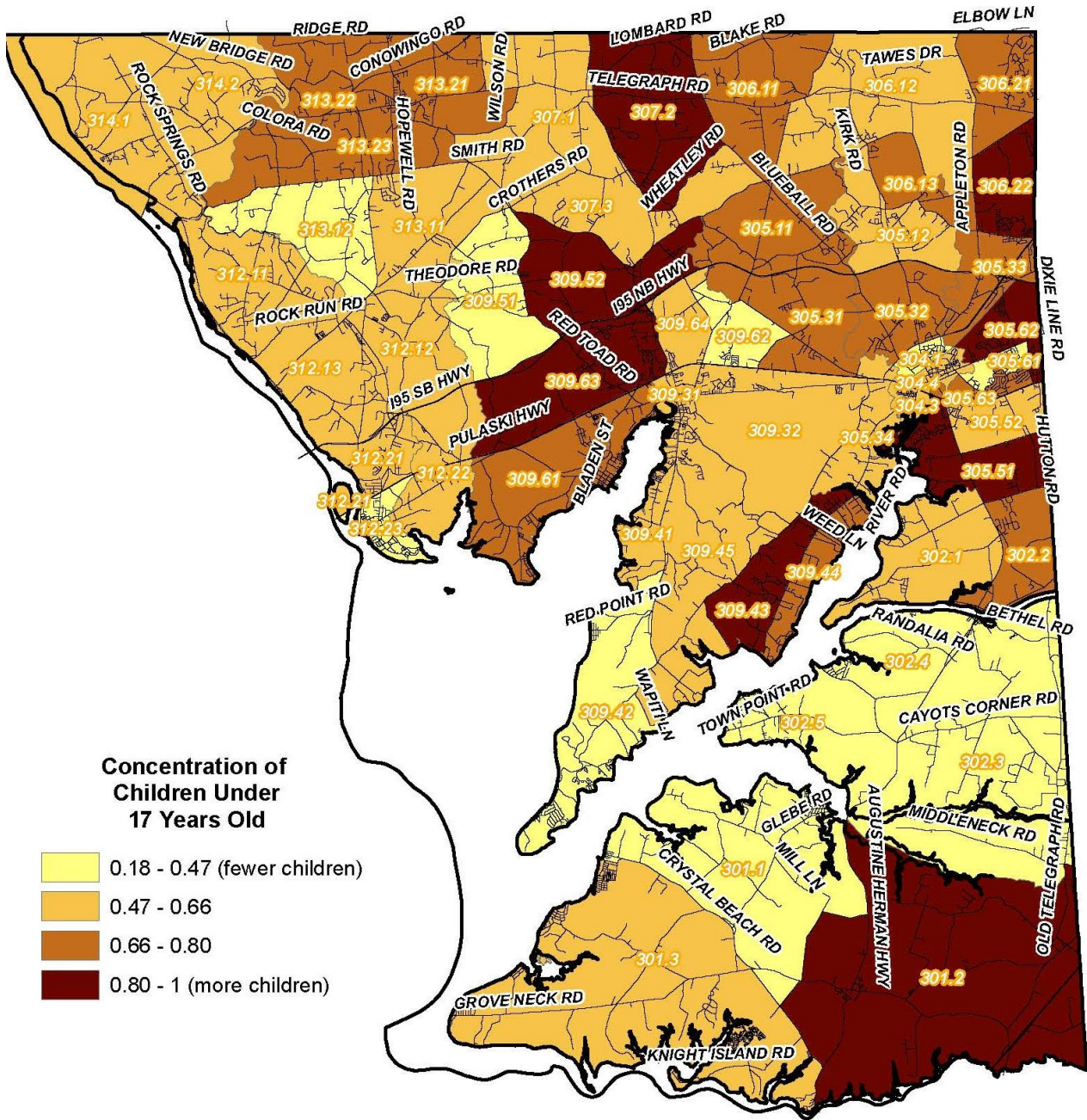


Figure A-3 Children Under 17 Years Old

E. Adults over 65

The distribution of older county residents has no discernable pattern. With portions of Warwick (301.2), the Elk Neck Peninsula (309.42), and Perryville (321.23) having high concentrations, recreational opportunities geared towards this age group should be offered in these areas.

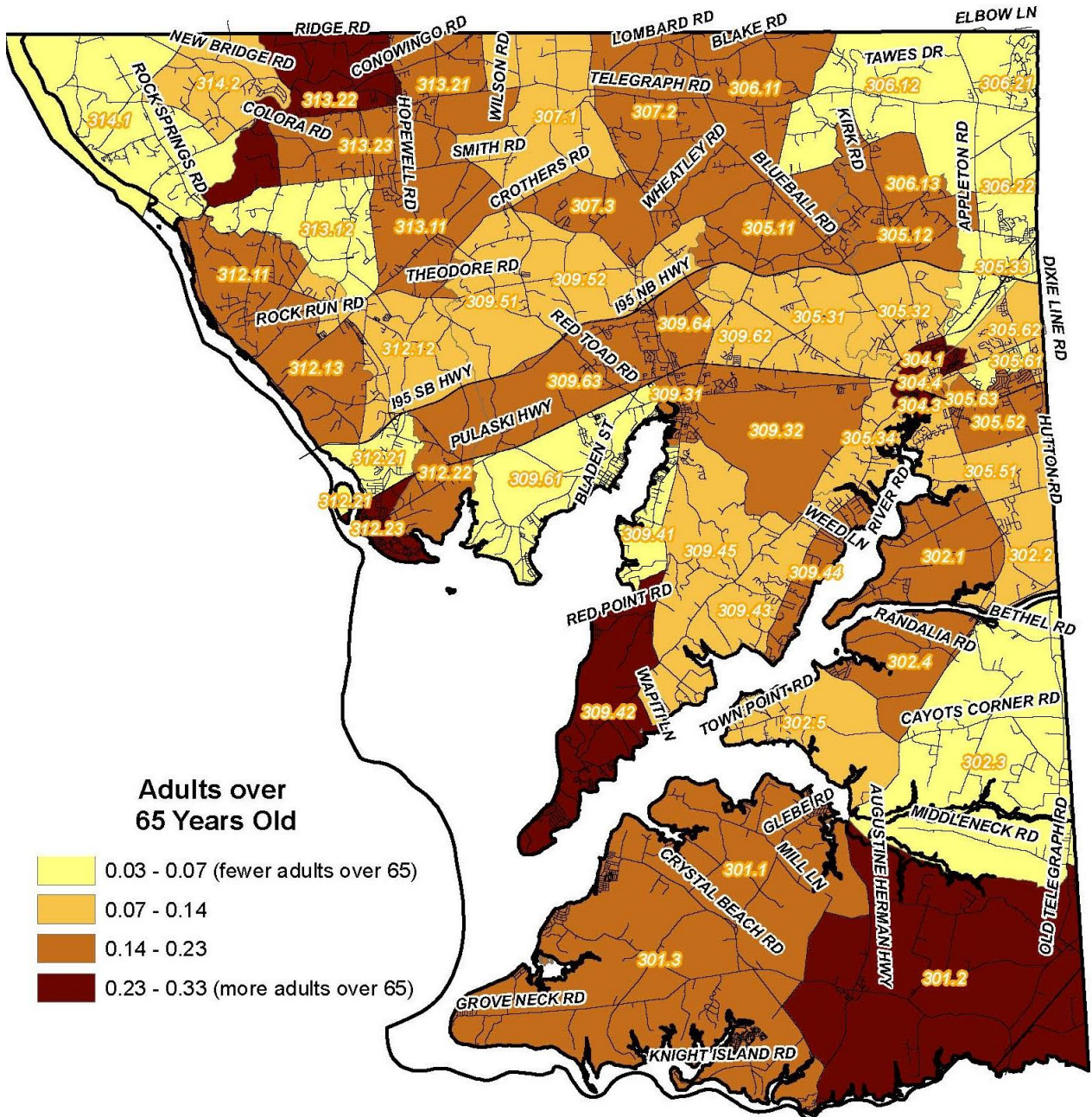


Figure A-4 Adults Over 65 Years Old

F. Population Density

Nicely mirroring the land use map from Cecil County’s current comprehensive plan, DNR’s population density equity data shows concentrated populations within the Route 40 and I-95 growth corridor. Transition areas of medium density radiate outwards, forming a transition between the urban growth corridor and the rural conservation district (in the north) and resource preservation district (in the south).

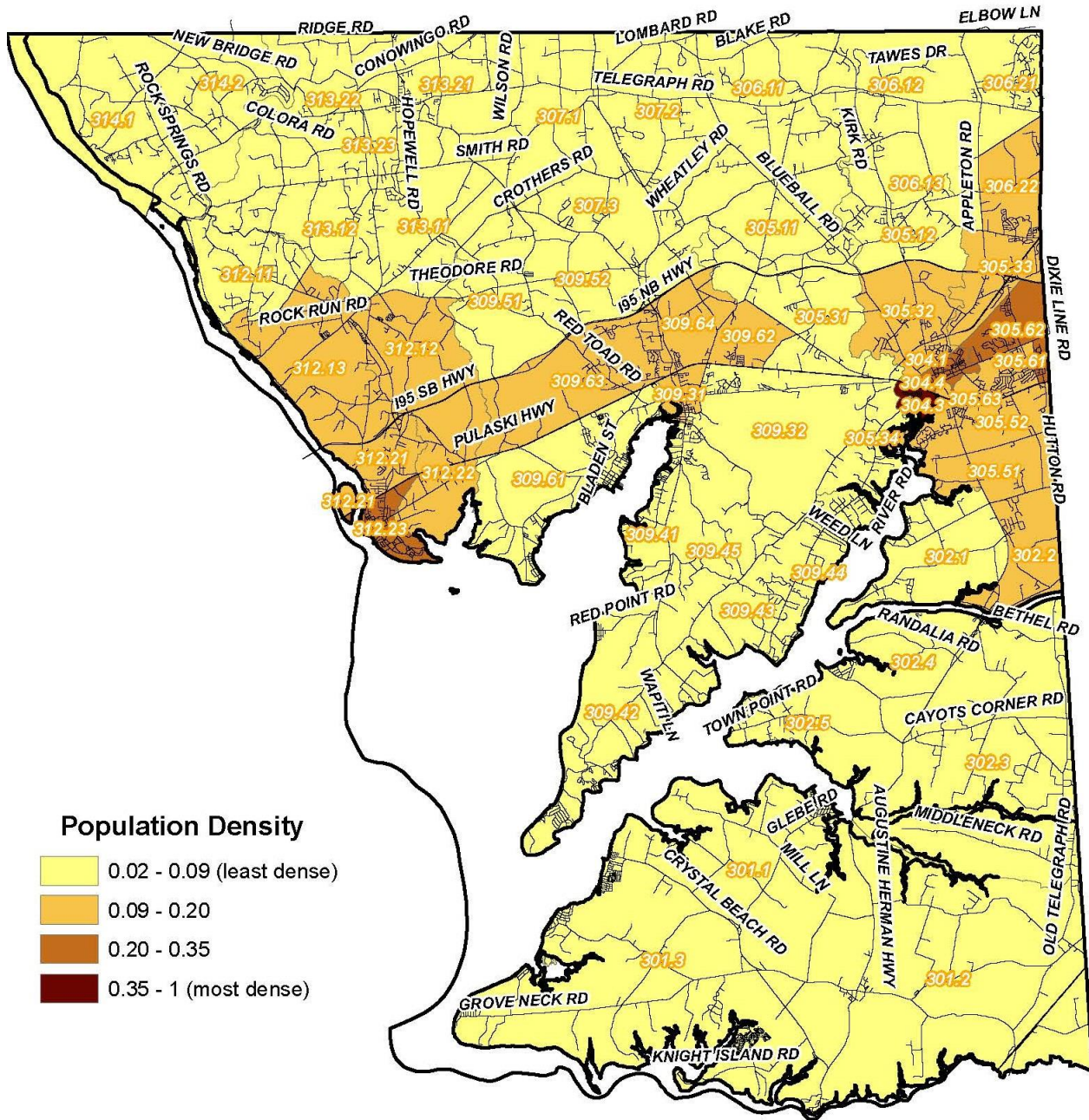


Figure A-5 Population Density

G. Walkability

Of Cecil County’s 57 census block groups, 49 fall within the two “least walkable” categories. Only four of the census block groups are within the “most walkable” category. They include block groups 304.1, 304.2, 304.4 (all in the downtown Elkton area) and block group 312.23 (located in the downtown Perryville area).

Not surprisingly, the rural development patterns in southern Cecil County, the Elk Neck Peninsula, and the Conowingo, Colora, and Rising Sun zip codes make these areas difficult to traverse for persons on foot.

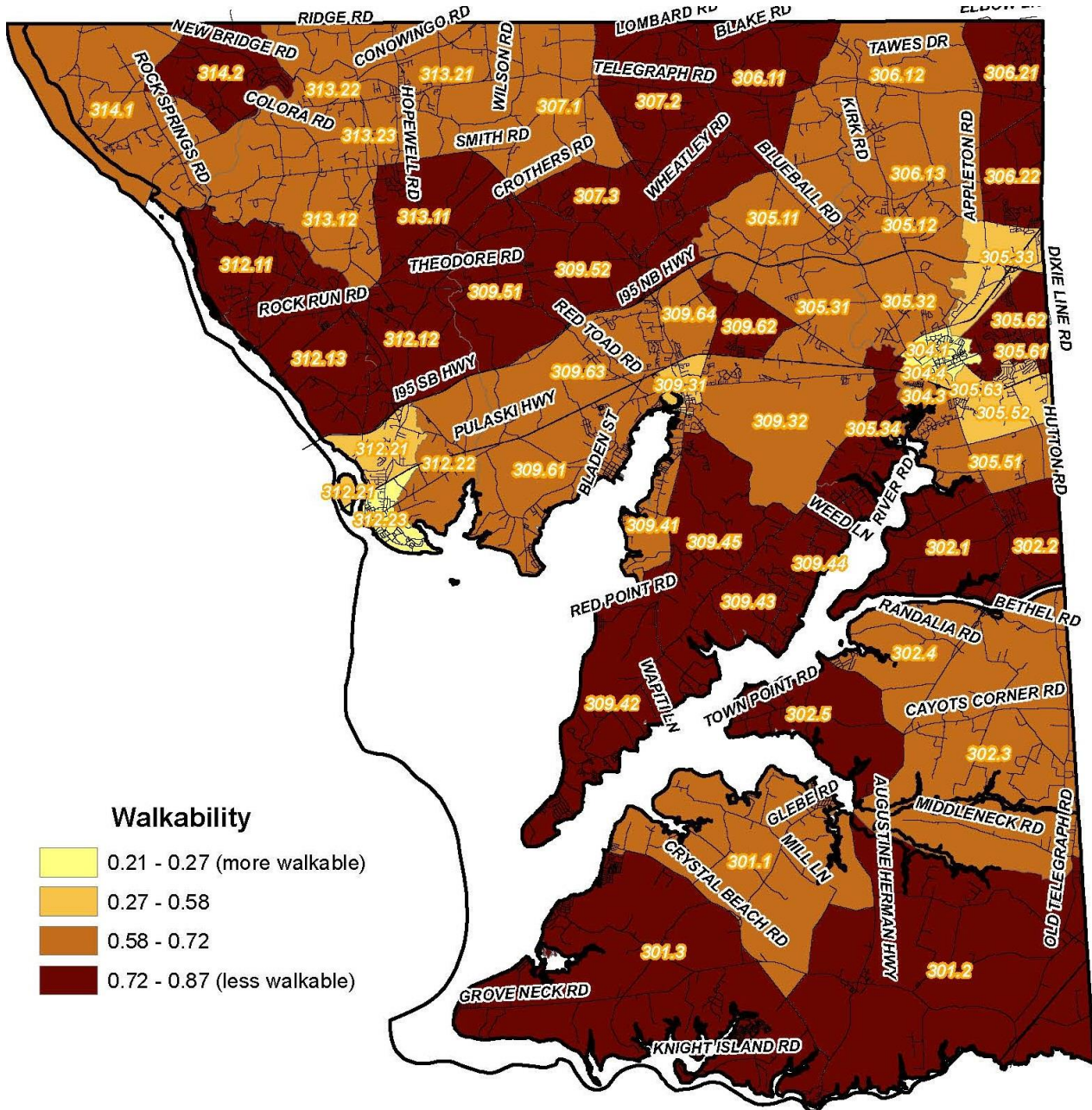


Figure A-6 Walkability

H. Public Transit

With lower values representing more access to public transit opportunities, equity scores again mirror the land use map from Cecil County’s current comprehensive plan. The majority (if not all) public transit opportunities exist within the Route 40 – Route 7 – I-95 growth corridor connecting the incorporated towns of Perryville, North East, and Elkton. Public transit is nonexistent in the Conowingo, Earleville, and Warwick zip codes located in the extreme north and south ends of the County. Cecil Transit, which provides the majority of Cecil County’s public transit, makes its route maps and schedules available online at <https://www.ccgov.org/government/community-services/cecil-transit>

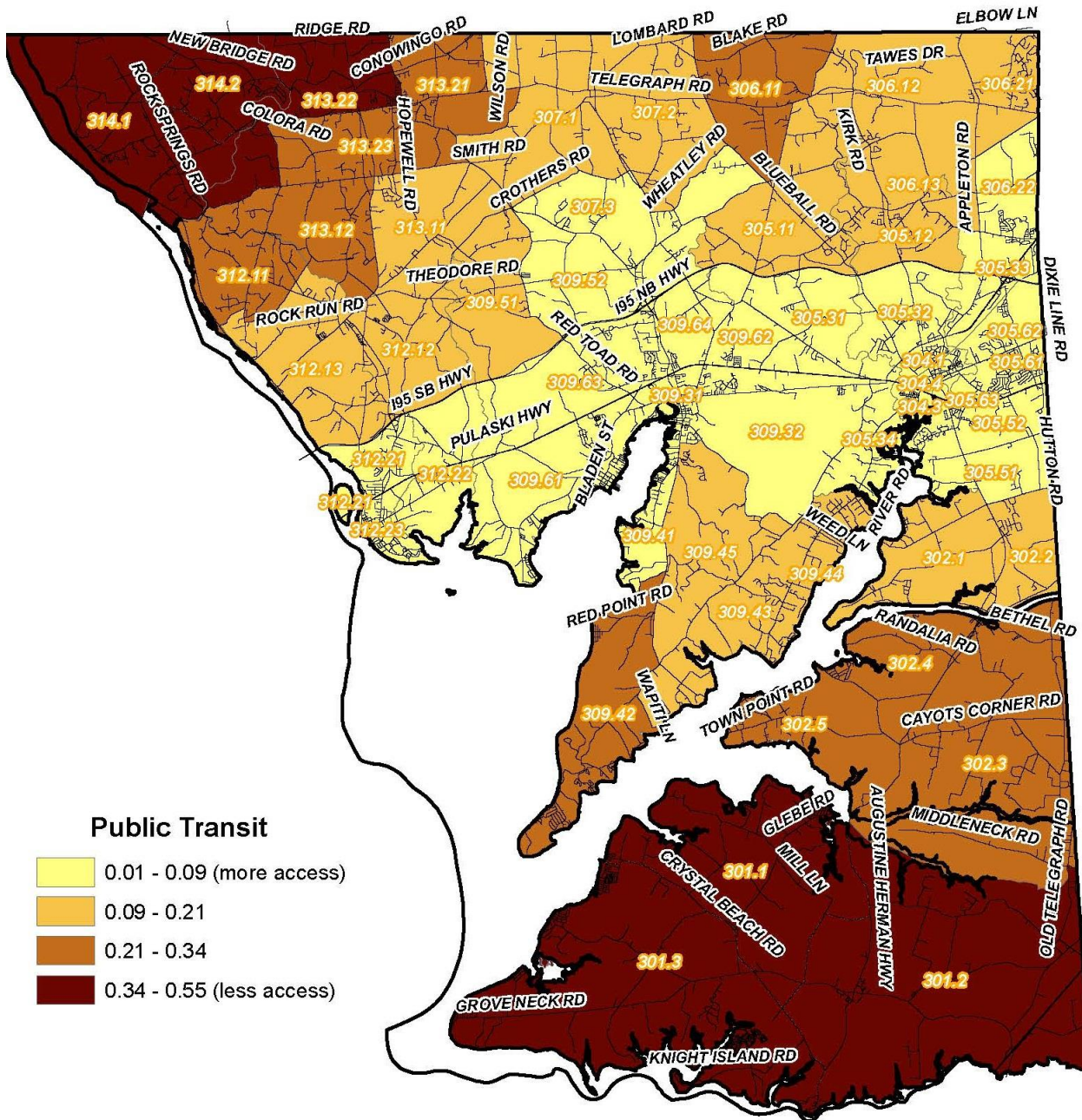


Figure A-7 Public Transit

I. Non-White Population

The 2019 American Community Survey estimates that Cecil County has 102,855 residents. 90,902 residents (88%) are white, and the remaining 11,953 residents (12%) belong to a non-white race. The DNR equity data, and the map below, bear this fact out. 41 of the 57 Census Block Groups are classified within the first two “most white” categories. The largest concentrations of non-white population occur in the census block groups east and north of the incorporated Town of Elkton (i.e. 304.2, 305.62, and 306.22).

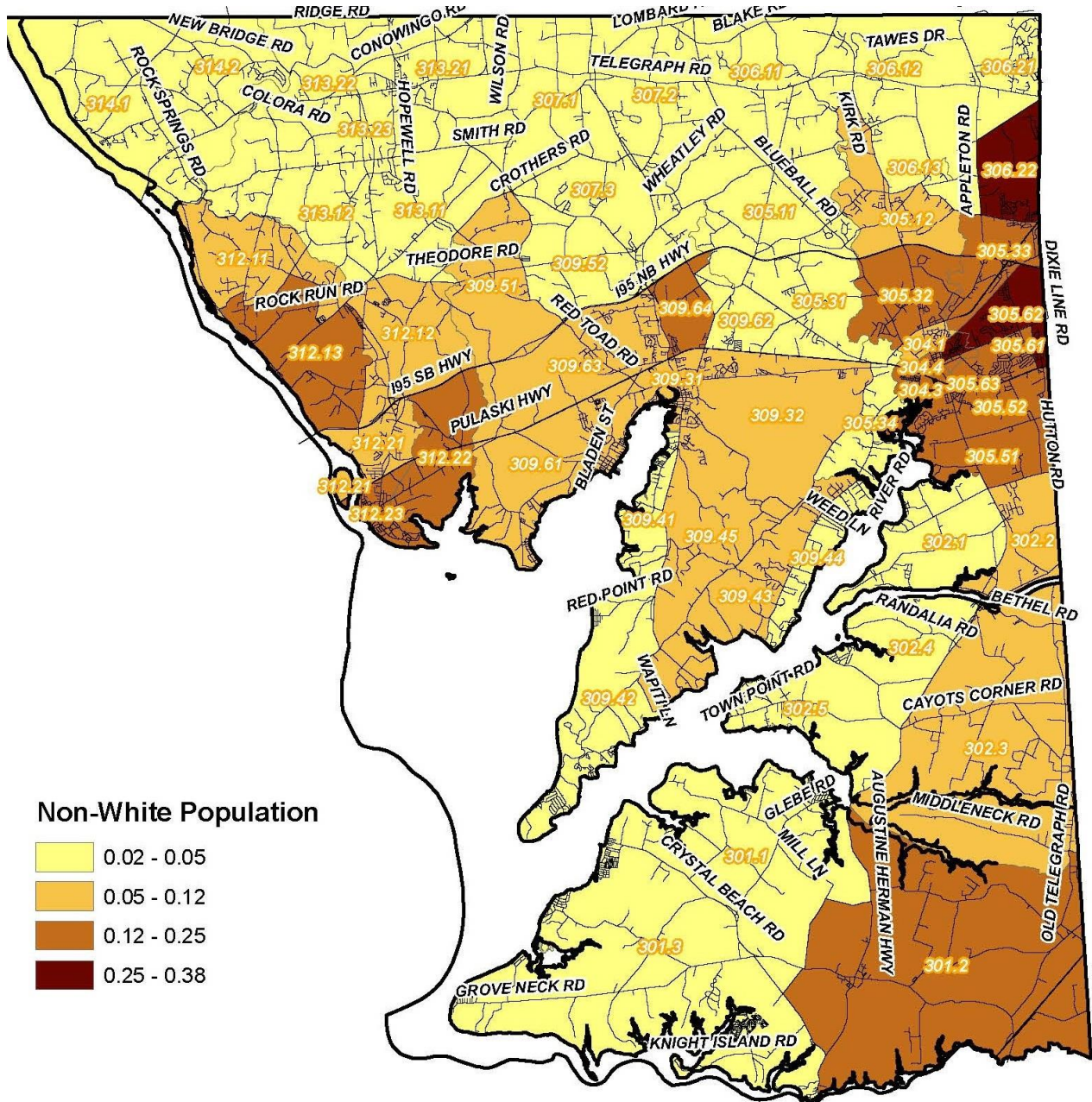


Figure A-8 Non-White Population

J. Park Distance

With darker colors representing greater distances from parks and recreation opportunities, visual depiction of this aspect of park equity is baffling. Many of the Census Block Groups having “greater distance” values have parks or wildlife management areas within them. Examples include Block Group 301.2 (which contains the 1,040 acre Old Bohemia Wildlife Management Area and town parks in Cecilton), Block Group 302.3 (which includes Bohemia River State Park and town parks in southern Chesapeake City), and Block Group 309.52 (which includes the Bard Cameron sports complex).

County staff recommends that this variable be calculated more carefully in future equity analyses.

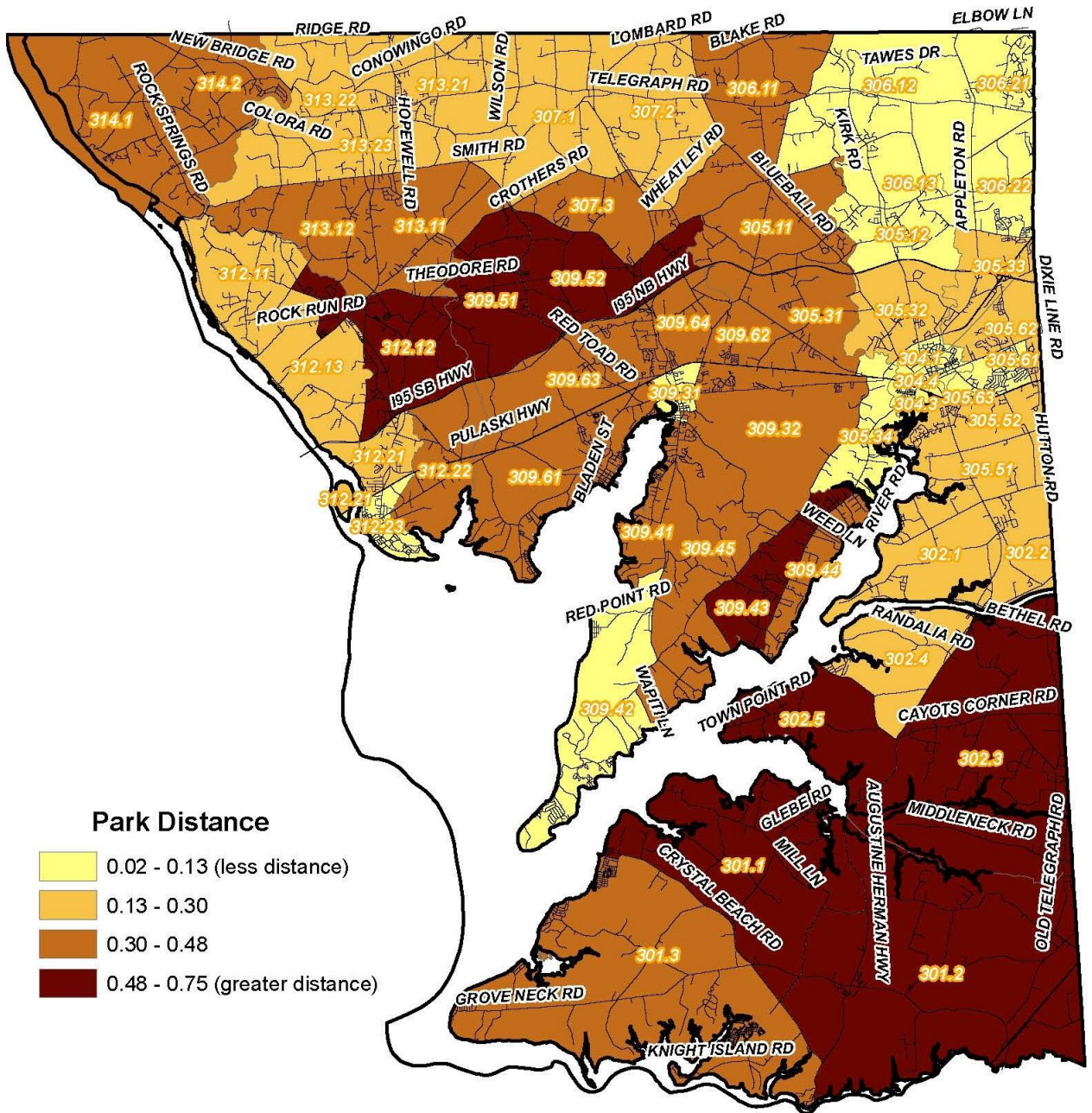


Figure A-9 Park Distance

K. Linguistic Isolation

Table S0601 of the 2019 American Community Survey indicates that 94% of Cecil County’s total population speaks English “very well.” The park equity data agrees with this finding. 54 of 57 Census Block Groups are considered “not isolated” by language. The most linguistically isolated census block group is 302.3, located in the Cayots Corner Rd corridor of the Chesapeake City zip code. The equine and industrial agriculture sectors’ reliance on migrant labor likely contributes to the linguistic isolation of this area.

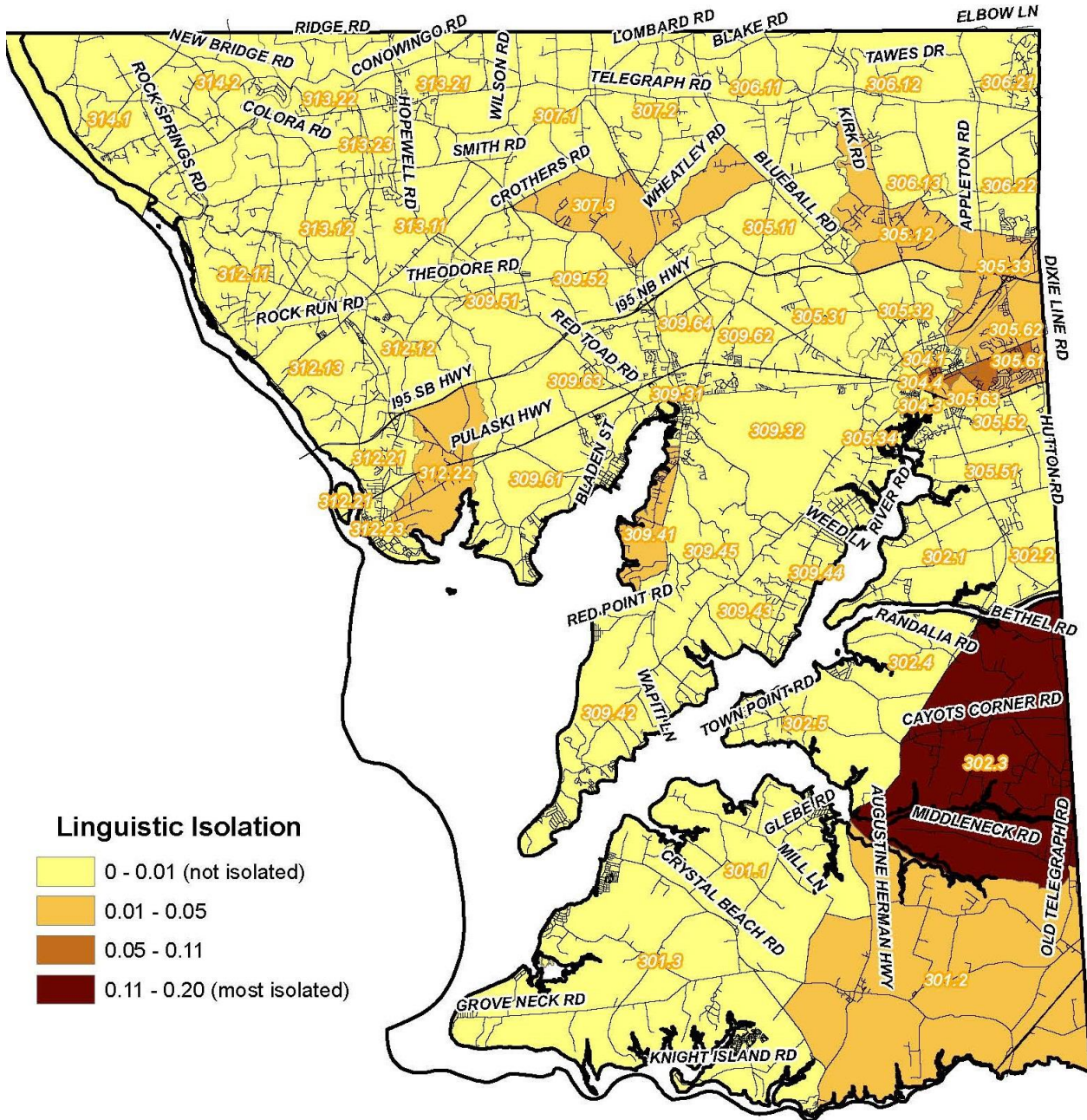


Figure A-10 Linguistic Isolation

L. Total Equity Score (Conclusion)

An equity analysis seeks to ensure that access and opportunity are provided for all persons, regardless of income, race, language spoken, age, etc. The map below depicts areas of high recreation need (the “low equity” numbers shown in the darker colors) and low recreation need (the “high equity” numbers shown in the lighter yellow colors).

The sum of the nine individual components discussed previously, this map indicates that more equitable parks and recreation opportunities are needed in southern Cecil County (Census Block Groups 301.1, 301.2, and 302.3) and the Theodore Rd corridor (Census Block Groups 309.51, 309.52, and 312.12). High equity already exists in the Fair Hill Area (306.12, 306.13, and 306.21), parts of Elkton (305.61), and the southernmost point of the Elk Neck Peninsula (309.42).

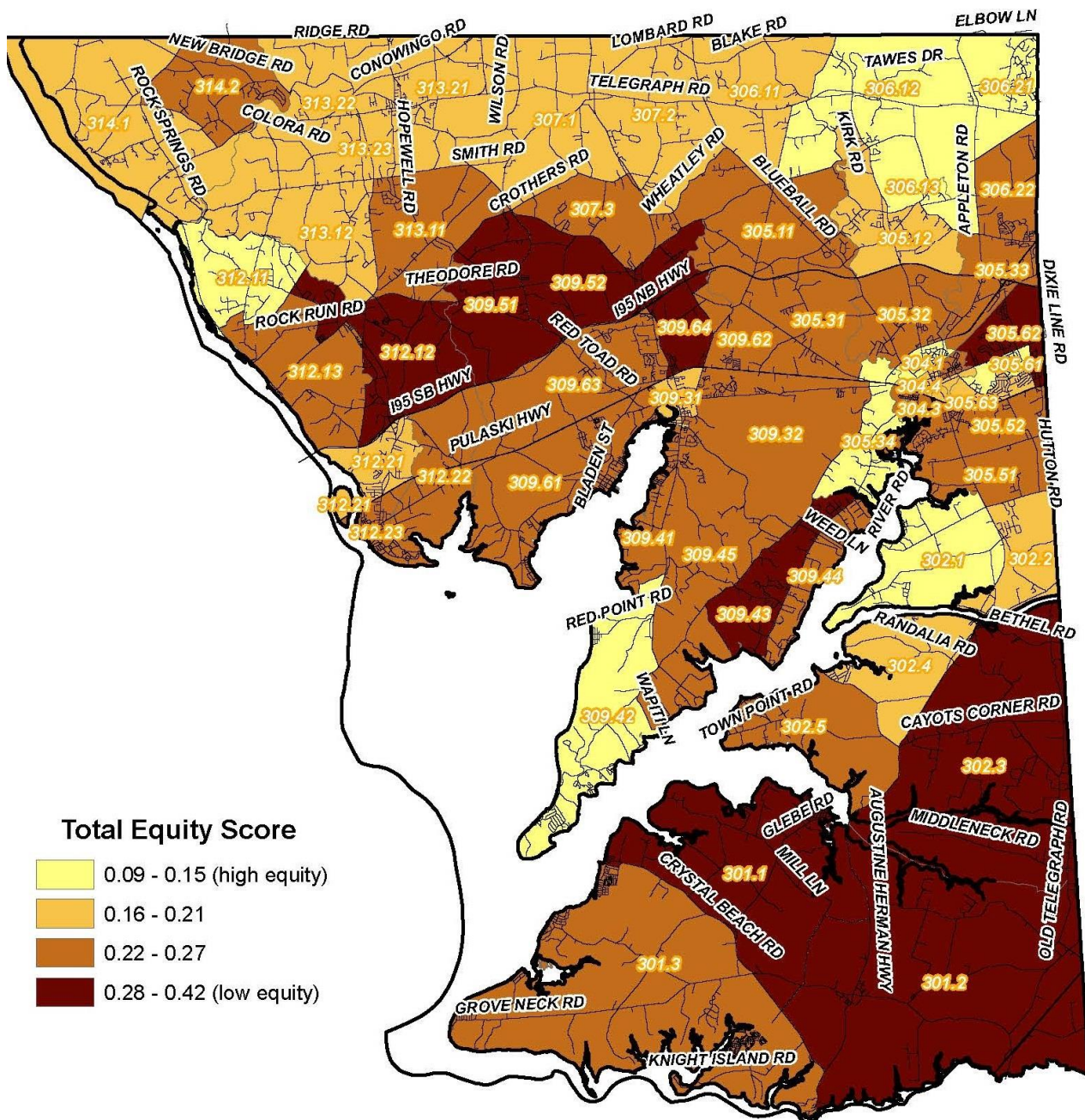


Figure A-11 Total Equity Score

D. INTRODUCTION PARK PROXIMITY ANALYSIS

A. Park Proximity Analysis

Also known as a “level of service” analysis, a park proximity analysis provides insight into where citizens have greater or lesser access to public parks and recreational sites. Conducting a park proximity analysis has five steps:

- 1) Map the locations of all parks and recreational sites;
- 2) Identify available amenities (i.e. trails, water recreation, picnicking, etc.) at each site;
- 3) Define a catchment area (the area from which a given park attracts a population that uses its service);
- 4) Examine the extent to which park catchment areas include the entire population. (For example, residents located outside of catchment areas do not have easy access to the type of recreation site being examined.); and
- 5) Develop recommendations to resolve any identified deficiencies.

Cecil County staff followed these five steps in completing the park proximity analysis for the 2022 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan.

B. Map the locations of all parks and recreational sites

The 2017 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan contained a map of all available parks and recreation locations in Cecil County. Staff updated said map for the 2022 plan by adding and new parks developed since then. The result is shown in Figure B-1, and specific additions include:

- 1) *Bohemia River State Park* – Roughly 460 acres in size, the Department of Natural Resources purchased the land for this park in September 2017. While not fully open to public use, the park has 14,000 feet of water frontage on the Bohemia River and permits deer hunting in specified areas.
- 2) *Brantwood County Park* – A former golf course, Cecil County Government purchased Brantwood in March 2018. Divided by Williams Road, the north side is open to the public for passive recreation (walking, hiking, biking, and nature observation). On the south side, the former golf cart paths provide great walkways and running trails.
- 3) *South Stream Park* – Purchased by the Town of Elkton in September 2018, this 46 acre parcel is located north of South Stream Drive and west of Manor Rd. Currently unimproved and fully forested, plans to connect this parcel to other lands owned by the Town along Big Elk Creek (including Marina Park) may be considered in the future.
- 4) *Mackall Street Park* – Overlooked by previous plans, this two acre parcel in the 200 block of Mackall St is owned by the Town of Elkton. Consisting of mowed grass and forest, no amenities are present on site.
- 5) *Rising Sun Community Pond* – Also inadvertently excluded by previous plans, this 2.4 acre parcel owned by the State of Maryland Game and Inland Fish Commission contains a large pond stocked with trout and other fish species. The parcel has a small parking area and benches near the pond where anglers may sit and fish.

2022 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan Available Parks & Recreation Locations in Cecil County, Maryland

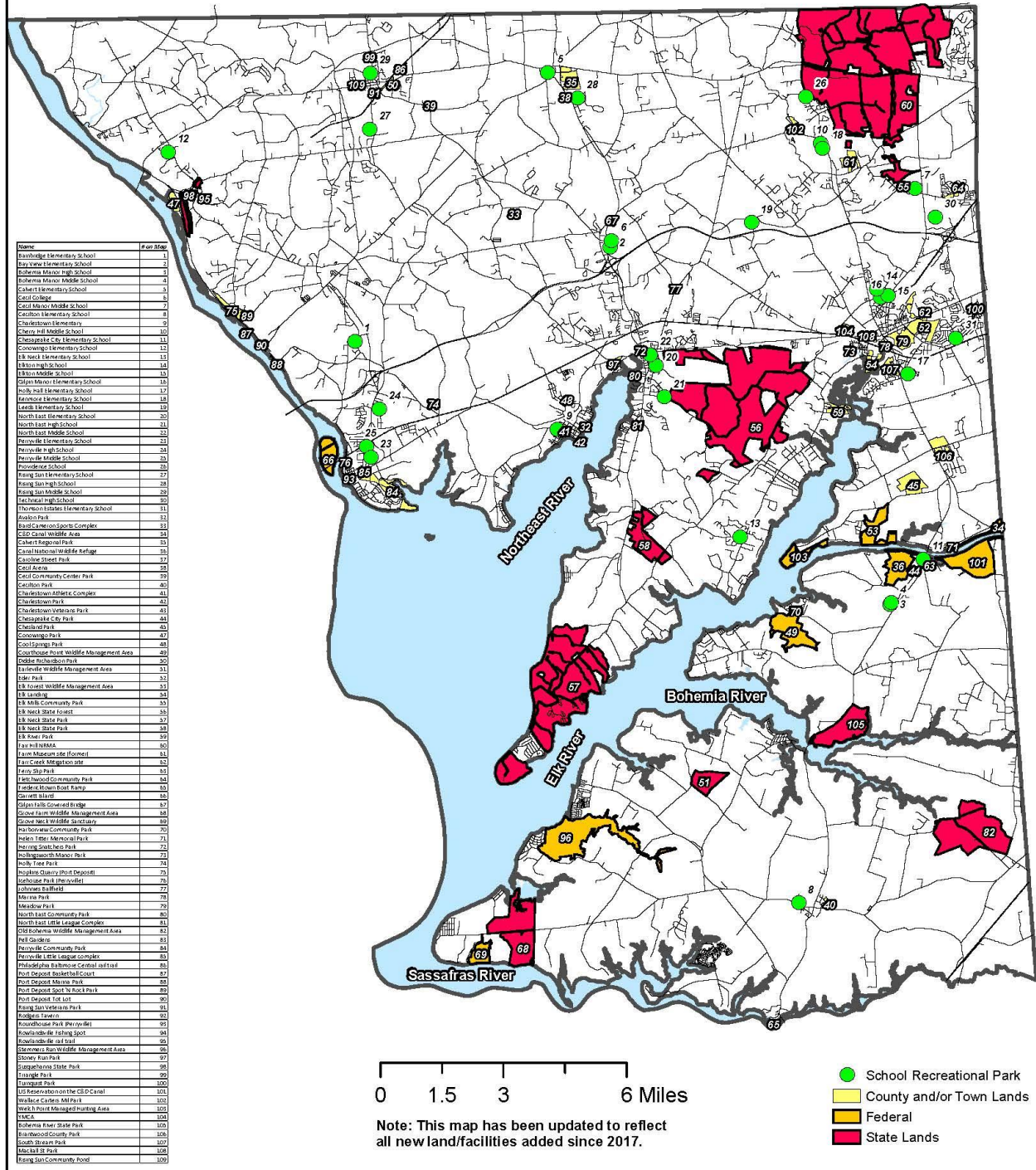


Figure B-1 Available Parks & Recreation Locations in Cecil County, Maryland

In addition to these new parks, County staff notes that a few existing parks (such as Calvert Regional Park and the Elk Neck State Forest) grew in size during 2017-2022. As acreage on the periphery became available, decision makers purchased adjoining lands in order to enlarge the existing parks' sizes. In no case, however, did the purchase of adjoining lands significantly alter the types of available amenities.

C. Identify available amenities at each site

The State of Maryland's 2019-2023 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan identifies six types of amenities. They include:

- 1) *Natural Areas* – Areas left to nature, these areas typically favor passive recreation over active recreation.
- 2) *Water and Fishing Recreation* – Parks having boat ramps, beaches, canoeing, or swimming opportunities are included in this amenity category. The State plan included “fishing” as a separate amenity category, but due to fishing’s considerable overlap with the “water recreation” category, County staff combined the two.
- 3) *Picnicking* – Somewhat difficult to categorize, any park having a picnic table or a sufficient grassy area for spreading a blanket met the “picnicking” qualification.
- 4) *Hunting* – Usually larger parks or wildlife areas, these parks have designated hunting areas and/or regulated hunting seasons.
- 5) *Trails* – A trail can be for hikers, horses, or cyclists. Any park having any sort of trail was included.
- 6) *Active Recreation* – Whether it be a basketball court, soccer field, or baseball field, active recreation sites have significantly different design characteristics compared to passive recreation sites.

A park can have one type of amenity, or it can have multiple. Recognizing that all parks provide valuable recreational opportunities, albeit different ones, County staff categorized all 100+ identified parks.

All “school recreational parks” (as shown on Figure B-1) were categorized as active recreation sites. The remaining parks and recreation areas are categorized into at least one (but usually multiple) amenity category. For example, Welch Point Managed Hunting Area is categorized as having natural area and hunting amenities.

Figure B-2 lists the amenity categorization for each parks and recreation site.

Figure B-2 – Amenity Categorization

Label	Name	Amenity Types					
		Natural Areas	Water and Fishing	Picnic	Hunting	Trails	Active Recreation
1	Bainbridge Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
2	Bay View Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
3	Bohemia Manor High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
4	Bohemia Manor Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
5	Calvert Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
6	Cecil College	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
7	Cecil Manor Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
8	Cecilton Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
9	Charlestown Elementary	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
10	Cherry Hill Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
11	Chesapeake City Elementary	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
12	Conowingo Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
13	Elk Neck Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
14	Elkton High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
15	Elkton Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
16	Gilpin Manor Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
17	Holly Hall Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
18	Kenmore Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
19	Leeds Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
20	North East Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
21	North East High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
22	North East Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
23	Perryville Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
24	Perryville High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
25	Perryville Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
26	Providence/ Cecil Co. High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
27	Rising Sun Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
28	Rising Sun High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
29	Rising Sun Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
30	Technical High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
31	Thomson Estates Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

Figure B-2 – Amenity Categorization (page 2)

		Amenity Types					
Label	Name	Natural Areas	Water and Fishing	Picnic	Hunting	Trails	Active Recreation
32	Avalon Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
33	Bard Cameron Sports Complex	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
34	C&D Canal Wildlife Area	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
35	Calvert Regional Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
36	Canal National Wildlife Refuge	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
37	Caroline Street Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
38	Cecil Arena	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
39	Cecil Community Center Park	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
40	Cecilton Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
41	Charlestown Athletic Complex	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
42	Charlestown Park	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
43	Charlestown Veterans Park	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
44	Chesapeake City Park	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
45	Chesland Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
47	Conowingo Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
48	Cool Springs Park	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
49	Courthouse Point Wildlife Management Area	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
50	Diddie Richardson Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
51	Earleville Wildlife Management Area	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
52	Eder Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
53	Elk Forest Wildlife Management Area	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
54	Elk Landing	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
55	Elk Mills Community Park	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
56	Elk Neck State Forest	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
57	Elk Neck State Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
58	Elk Neck State Park	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
59	Elk River Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
60	Fair Hill NRMA	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
61	Farm Museum site (former)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
62	Farr Creek Mitigation site	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

Figure B-2 – Amenity Categorization (page 3)

		Amenity Types					
Label	Name	Natural Areas	Water and Fishing	Picnic	Hunting	Trails	Active Recreation
63	Ferry Slip Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
64	Fletchwood Community Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
65	Fredericktown Boat Ramp	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
66	Garrett Island	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
67	Gilpin Falls Covered Bridge	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
68	Grove Farm Wildlife Management Area	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
69	Grove Neck Wildlife Sanctuary	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
70	Harborview Community Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
71	Helen Titter Memorial Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
72	Herring Snatchers Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
73	Hollingsworth Manor Park	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
74	Holly Tree Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
75	Hopkins Quarry (Port Deposit)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
76	Icehouse Park (Perryville)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
77	Johnnies Ballfield	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
78	Marina Park	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
79	Meadow Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
80	North East Community Park	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
81	North East Little League Complex	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
82	Old Bohemia Wildlife Management Area	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
83	Pell Gardens	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
84	Perryville Community Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
85	Perryville Little League complex	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
86	Philadelphia Baltimore Central rail trail	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
87	Port Deposit Basketball Court	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
88	Port Deposit Marina Park	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
89	Port Deposit Spot N' Rock Park	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
90	Port Deposit Tot Lot	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

Figure B-2 – Amenity Categorization (page 4)

Label	Name	Amenity Types					
		Natural Areas	Water and Fishing	Picnic	Hunting	Trails	Active Recreation
91	Rising Sun Veterans Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
92	Rodgers Tavern	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
93	Roundhouse Park (Perryville)	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
94	Rowlandsville Fishing Spot	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
95	Rowlandsville rail trail	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
96	Stemmers Run Wildlife Management Area	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
97	Stoney Run Park	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
98	Susquehanna State Park	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
99	Triangle Park	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
100	Turnquist Park	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
101	US Reservation on the C&D Canal	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
102	Wallace Carters Mil Park	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
103	Welch Point Managed Hunting Area	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
104	YMCA	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
105	Bohemia River State Park	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
106	Brantwood County Park	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
107	South Stream Park	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
108	Mackall St Park	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
109	Rising Sun Community Pond	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

D. Define a catchment area

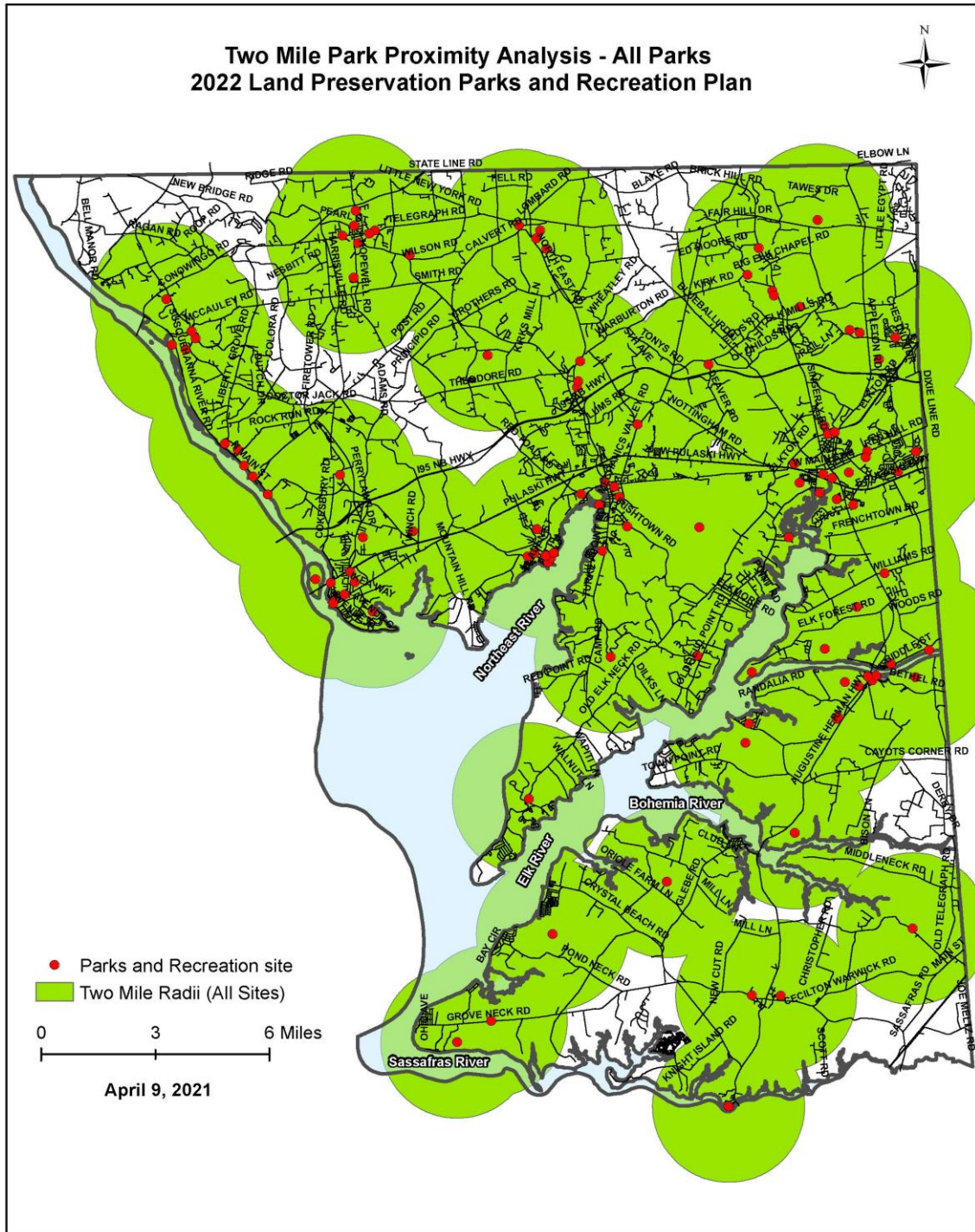
The State of Maryland’s 2019-2023 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan suggests that catchment areas for rural counties (such as Cecil County) be created from five mile “as the crow flies” radii. The five mile radii is equivalent to a fifteen minute drive according to State Department of Natural Resources’ guidelines.

After performing a proximity analysis using five-mile radii, County staff found that the entirety of Cecil County is located within five miles of an existing park/recreation site. This can mean that either:

- 1) Cecil County contains an adequate number of spatially distributed parks and recreation sites; or
- 2) The five-mile radii is too large to provide meaningful insight.

Assuming the latter, County staff performed proximity analyses using smaller sized radii. Only when the radii are reduced to two miles do results show anything meaningful. As shown in Figure B-3, portions Conowingo, Glen Farms, Colora, southern Chesapeake City, Grove Neck Rd, and the portion of Cecil County south of Route 301 are the outside the two-mile radii.

Figure B-3 – Two Mile Radii – All Parks



At a one mile radius level, as shown in Figure B-4, the regional draw of a majority of Cecil County’s parks (i.e. Calvert Regional Park, Elk Neck State Park, Fair Hill NRMA, etc) is not depicted realistically. In fact, DNR suggests that radii of one mile or a half mile are more suited to urban areas in which individuals do not have access to automobiles.

For these reasons, County staff decided to use two mile radii to adequately depict the spatial area from which a given park attracts a population that uses its service. The spatial analysis of park amenities that follows is based on two mile radii.

E. Analysis of catchment area by amenity type

Recognizing that all parks provide valuable recreational opportunities, albeit different ones, proximity analyses were performed for each of the six amenity types discussed in Section C (i.e. natural areas, water and fishing recreation, picnicking, hunting, trails, and active recreation. Results are shown in Figures B-5 through B-10.

Figure B-5 – Natural Areas

Of the 108 parks and recreation sites, 38 have amenities meeting the “natural areas” criteria. The opposite of active recreation sites, the purpose of natural areas is primarily passive recreation (i.e. the enjoyment of nature). Sufficient natural areas amenities exist in park sites located in Chesapeake City, Elkton, Fair Hill, the Elk Neck Peninsula, and southern Cecil County. The western part of Cecil County (i.e. Rising Sun, the Theodore Rd corridor, and the Tome Hwy corridor) lack parks with natural area amenities. Other than the large land holdings of York Building Products and Principio Iron Company, the fragmented and smaller sized parcels in these areas will make the creation of a natural area park site difficult and expensive.

Figure B-6 – Water and Fishing Recreation

As one might expect, the 17 parks and recreation sites having water and fishing recreation amenities are almost exclusively located along Cecil County’s five major rivers. (The sole exception is the Rising Sun Community Fishing Pond located on Rising Sun Rd). Supplemented by numerous private marinas, Cecil County doesn’t lack for sites at which residents and tourists can access the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Figure B-7 – Picnicking

An amenity with an ambiguous definition, picnicking amenities are available at 37 of the 108 parks and recreation sites. Ample picnicking opportunities exist in the Perryville, Port Deposit, North East, and Elkton areas. Southern Cecil County, the Elk Neck Peninsula, and Conowingo lack opportunities.

Figure B-8 – Hunting

Primarily located on the Elk Neck Peninsula and southern Cecil County (i.e. Chesapeake City, Warwick, and Earleville), Cecil County’s hunting sites are spatially clustered. As shown in Figure B-8, almost the entire portion of Cecil County located west of the Town of North East lacks publicly owned hunting parks and recreation sites. As larger, forested tracts of land become available in the western part of the County, their use as potential hunting focused parks and recreation sites should be investigated.

Figure B-9 – Trails

Twenty three of Cecil County’s parks and recreation sites have trails amenities. With adequate coverage in the Calvert, Perryville, Fair Hill, Elkton, and Chesapeake City portions of the County, trails are typically associated with the regional County owned parks or the larger State owned parks. Almost all the existing parks with trails amenities have “internal focused trails,” meaning that the trails do not extend offsite. Only one of the County owned sites (the mostly undeveloped Philadelphia Baltimore Central Rail Trail) has the potential to connect multiple sites. Portions of regional trails exist in Cecil County. These include the:

- C&D Canal Trail (part of site #34, the C&D Canal Wildlife Area);
- East Coast Greenway (located on parts of Route 1 and Route 213); and
- Mason Dixon Trail (located in the Route 40 and Route 7 corridors).

Figure B-10 – Active Recreation

Over half of Cecil County’s recreation sites (62 out of 108) have active recreation components. Almost mirroring the overall spatial distribution of recreation sites, deficiencies exist only in the Earleville and Warwick zip codes.

F. Conclusion

Cecil County Government’s two-mile radii park proximity analysis shows that portions Conowingo, Glen Farms, Colora, southern Chesapeake City, Grove Neck Rd, and areas south of Route 301 are distant from existing parks and recreation sites. However, increasing the distance to five mile radii results in the entirety of Cecil County being located within a fifteen minute drive of an existing park/recreation site. Classifying park sites by the types of amenities offered provides more meaningful insight, as discussed more fully in Section E.

Figure B-5 – Two Mile Radii – Natural areas

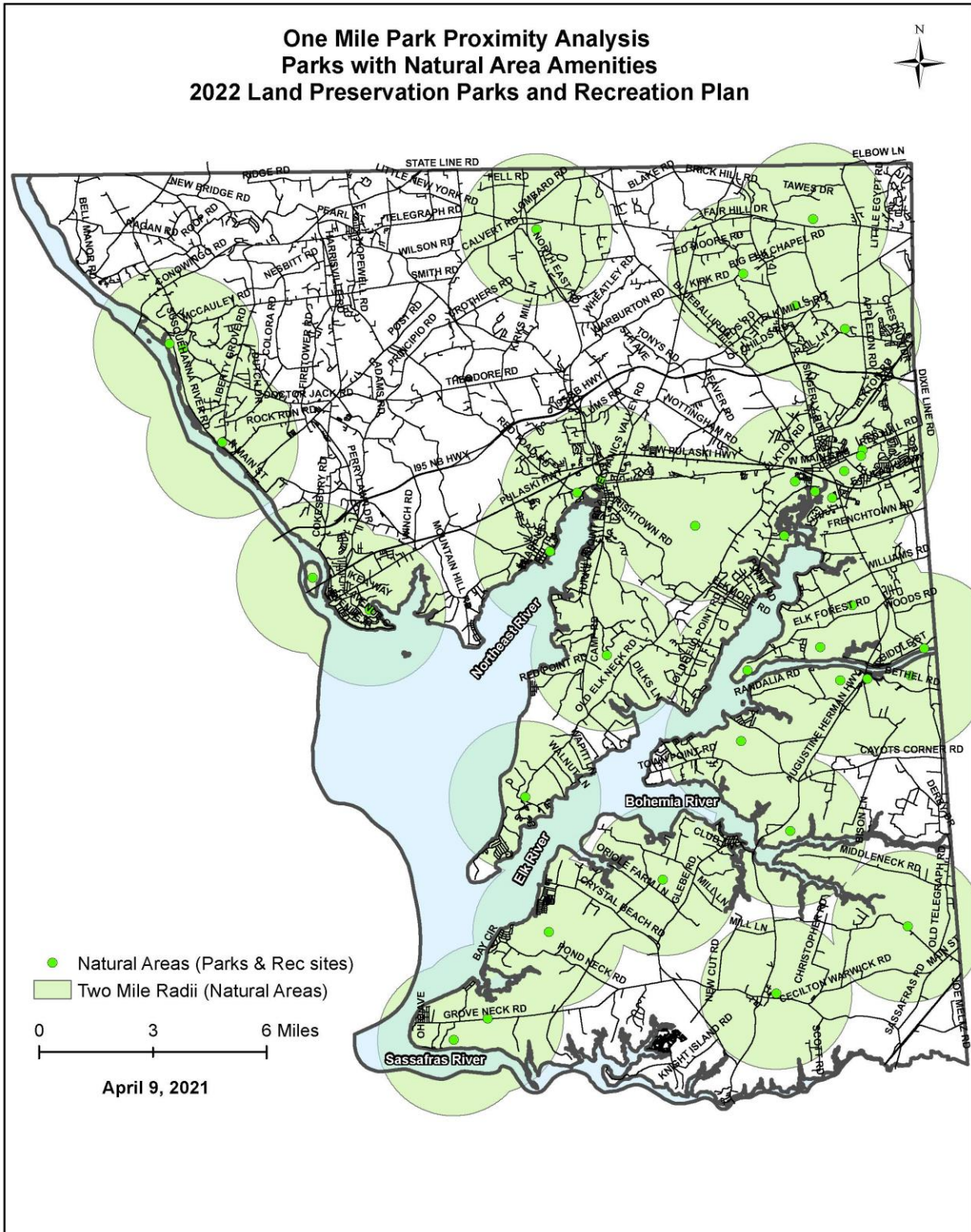


Figure B-6 – Two Mile Radii – Water and fishing recreation

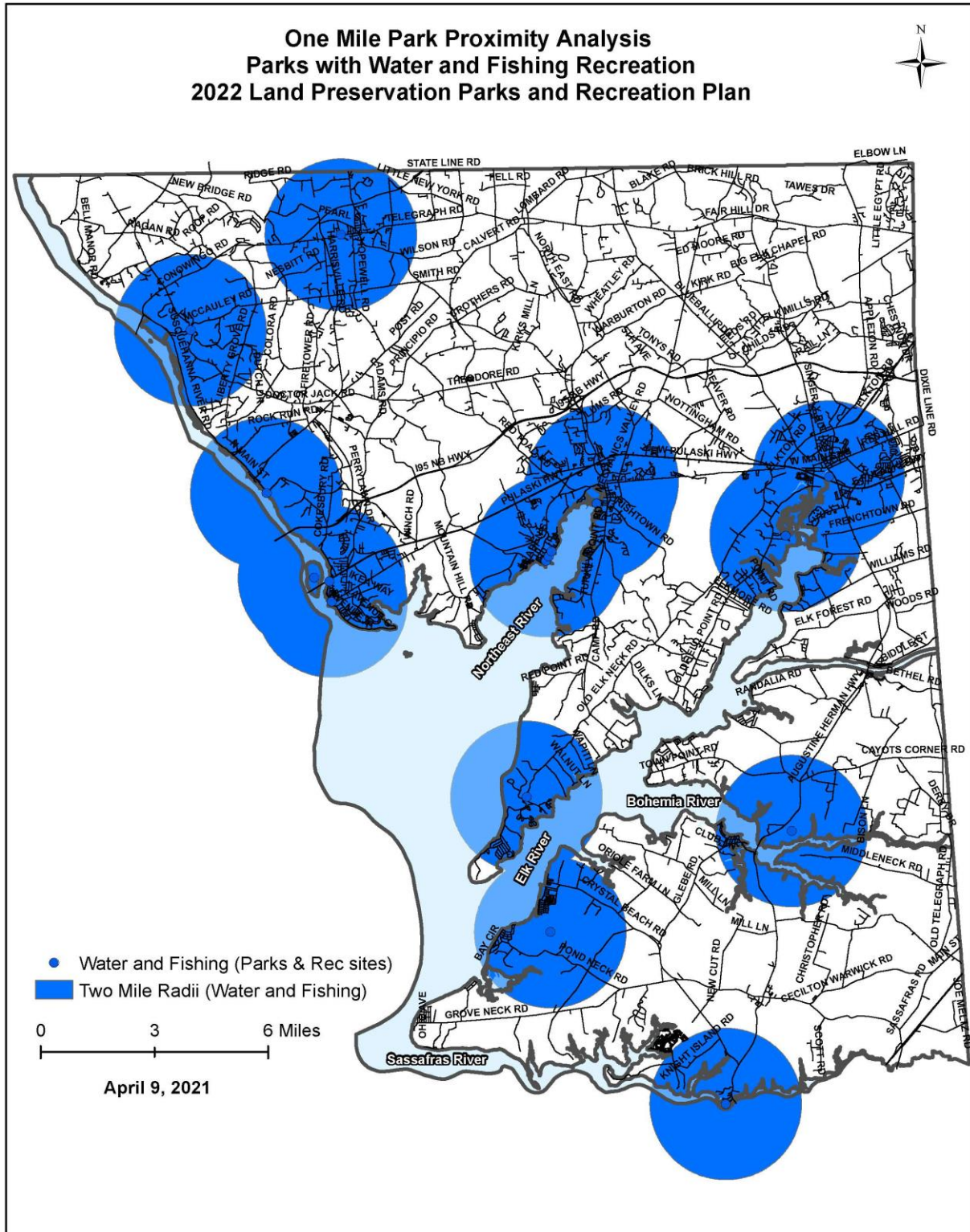


Figure B-7– Two Mile Radii – Picnicking

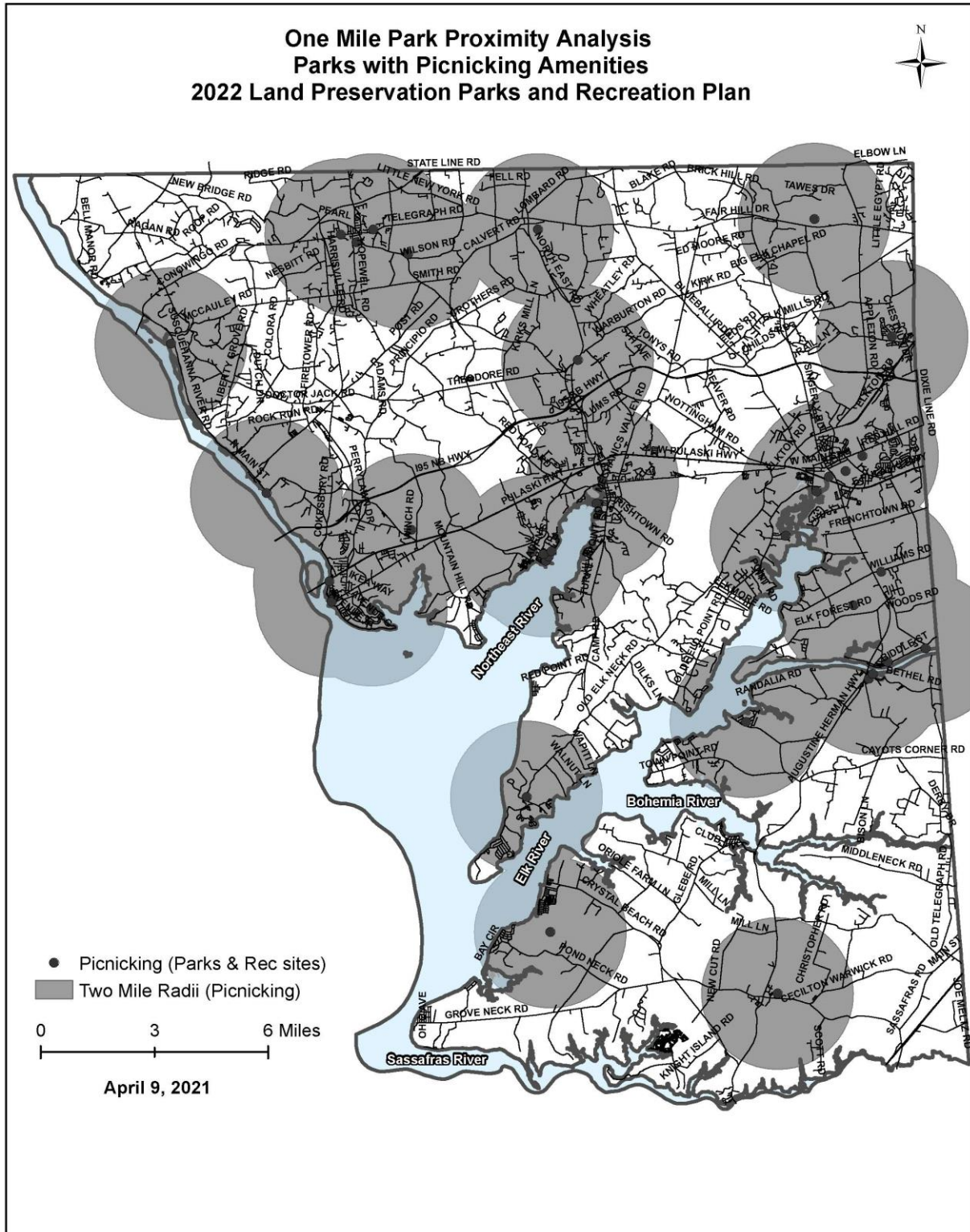


Figure B-8– Two Mile Radii –Hunting

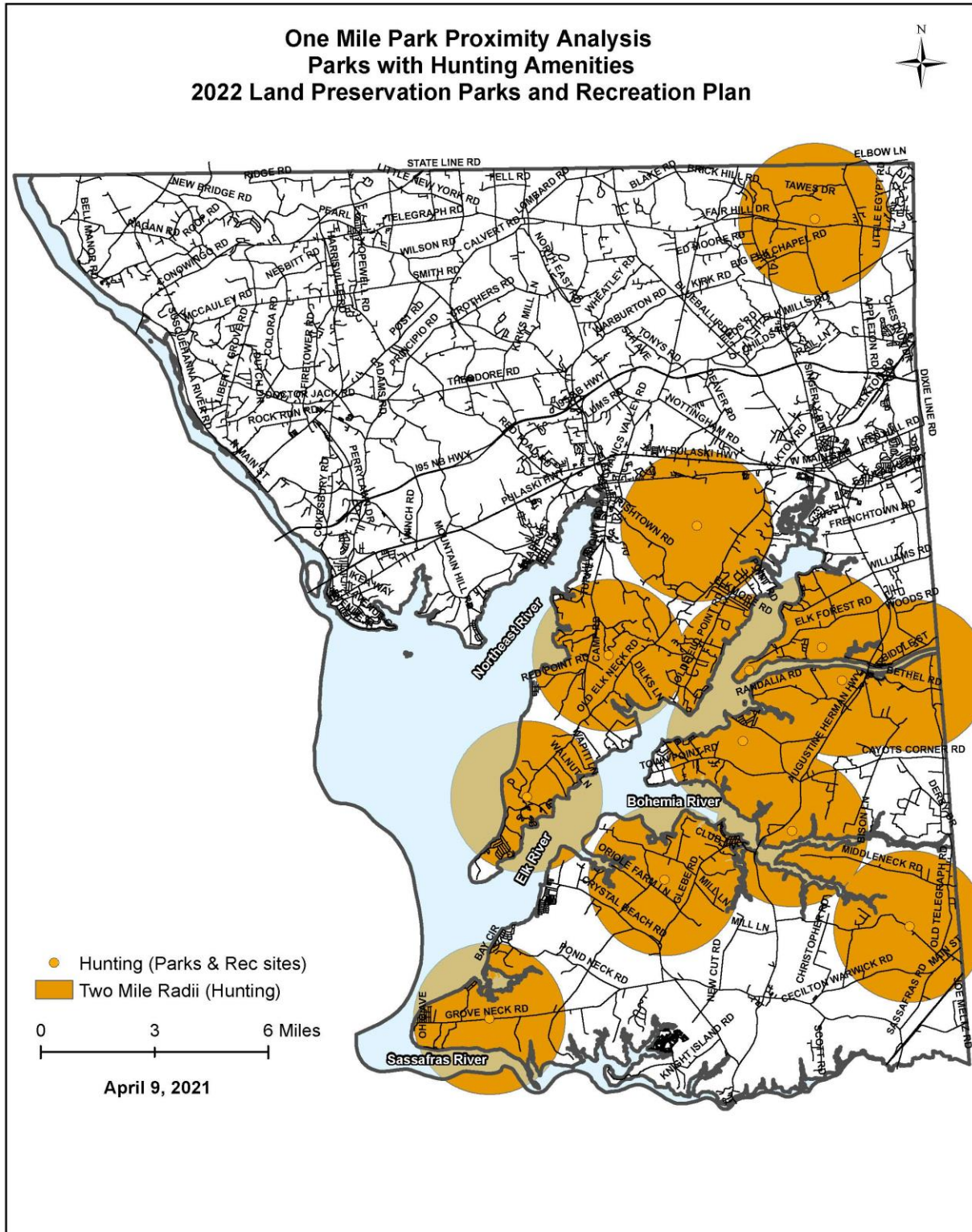


Figure B-9– Two Mile Radii –Trails

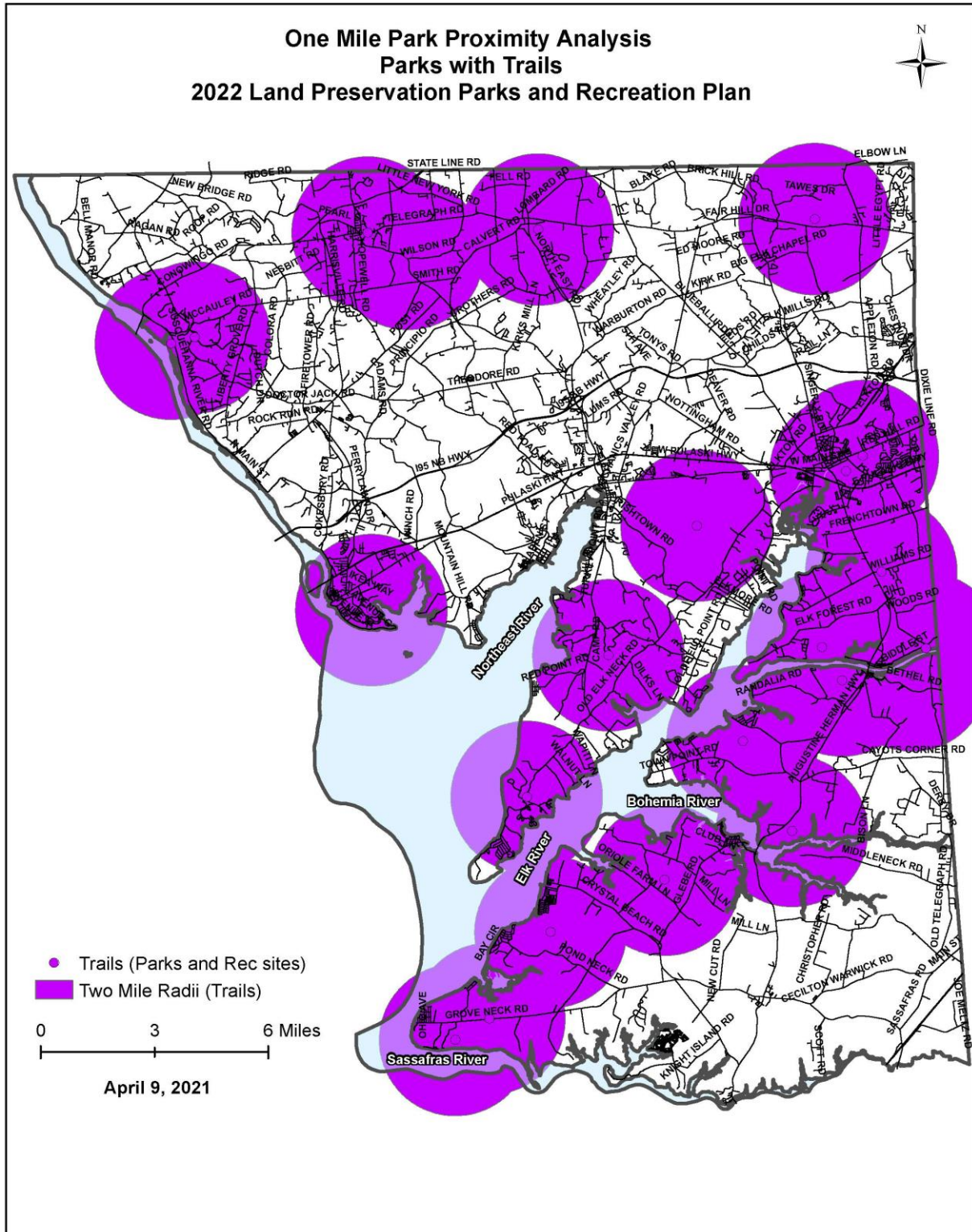
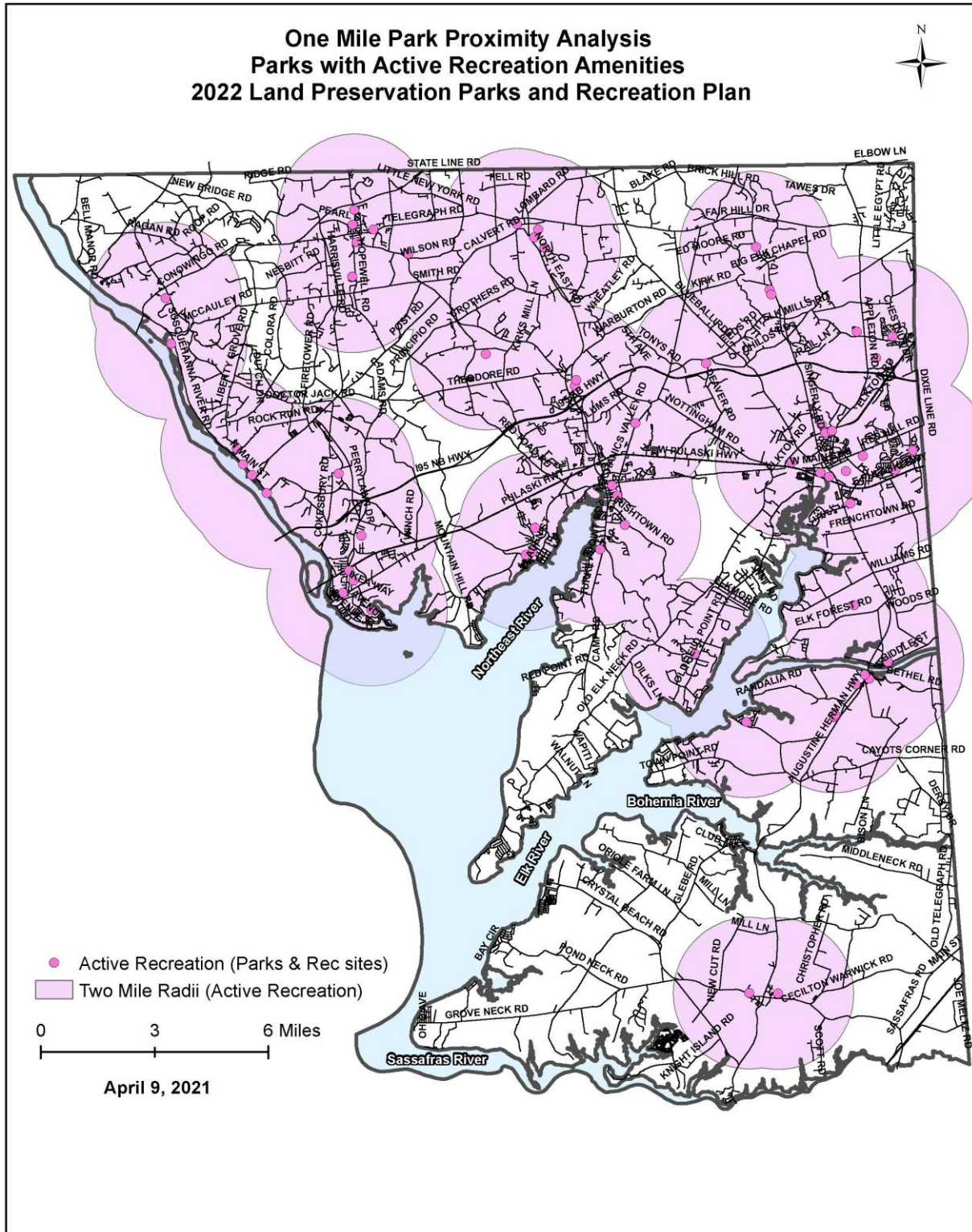


Figure B-10– Two Mile Radii –Active Recreation



E. COUNTY PRIORITIES

The Land Acquisition and Facility Development on the next page lists the County's Park and Recreation priorities for meeting its land acquisition and facility development needs through 2022. In developing the priorities consideration was given to need relative to:

- The supply and demand analysis and how the County can prioritize acquisition and facility development projects to meet identified needs.
- Needs by recreation service areas and how investment in land and facilities can be used to support County goals for locating facilities convenient to population centers while ensuring that all areas of the County are served by facilities.
- How a project can best satisfy recreational facility or activity needs in terms of meeting identified needs and in being located to maximize utilization.
- How a recreation need can best be accommodated by facilities such as through joint use agreements, and M.O.U.'s.
- How a project relates to the State's and County's broader visions and goals to use parks and recreation elements to complement County efforts in reinforcing designated growth areas as more desirable locations in which to live and to complement other open space investments in preserving rural and resource lands.

Acreage Per Capita Goal

According to the latest research data, Cecil County provides just over 184 acres of local, State and Federal open space per 1,000 residents. In total, Cecil County will house 19,007 acres of open space and park land.

With the development of Calvert Regional Park being completed and with the acquisition of Brantwood Regional Park, the County now has not only met, but exceeded its Open Space requirement for its residents. With the County's open space acquisition goals being obtained, funding priorities will primarily concentrate on development projects. Providing open space only accomplishes part of the County's strategic plan. Developing those open spaces to provide both active and passive recreation opportunities is equally important.

Based on the quality and location of the 19,007 acres of open space housed in Cecil County, whether it be State, Federal, or local, we have successfully met our goal of providing recreation opportunities for all populations and geographic locations of the County.

F. LAND ACQUISITION AND FACILITY DEVELOPMENT GOAL

Land Acquisition and Facility Development Recommendations								
Projects	Location (area)	Description of Land Preservation and Recreation Recommendations	Estimated Total Cost (\$1,000's)	Fiscal Year Programmed	Acres to be Acquired	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehab
LAND ACQUISITION and DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS								
			\$ -			\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
			\$ -					
			\$ -					
FACILITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS								
Calvert Regional Park	Rising Sun/North East	Pickleball Courts	\$ 160	2023			\$ 160	
Calvert Regional Park	Rising Sun/North East	Sensory Playground Equipment	\$ 240	2023			\$ 240	
Cecil Arena	Rising Sun/North East	Supplemental indoor multi-use structure	\$ 550	2023			\$ 550	
Total			\$ 950		0	\$ -	\$ 950	\$ -
FACILITY REHABILITATION PROJECTS								
Cecil Arena	North East/ Rising Sun	Athletic floor replacement	\$ 85	2023				\$ 85
			\$ -					\$ -
Total			\$ 85					\$ 85
Grand Total			\$ 1,035		0	\$ -	\$ 950	\$ 85

1. Facility Development Projects (no new land acquisition)

- a. **Calvert Regional Park.** Install of Pickleball Courts.
- b. **Calvert Regional Park.** Install of Sensory Playground Equipment.
- c. **Cecil Arena.** Construction of Supplemental Indoor Multi Use Building.
- d. **Cecil Arena.** Replacement of Athletic Floor Surfacing.

2. Other projects

Expanded use of existing school facilities upon renovation or expansion. As new or expanded school facilities are planned, they provide opportunity for the County to provide additional land and recreational facilities. By building larger gymnasiums and/or adding community space, these schools can play an important role in meeting local recreation demand and save money that would otherwise be spent in developing separate recreation facilities. Many other Maryland counties are following this strategy.

3. Trails

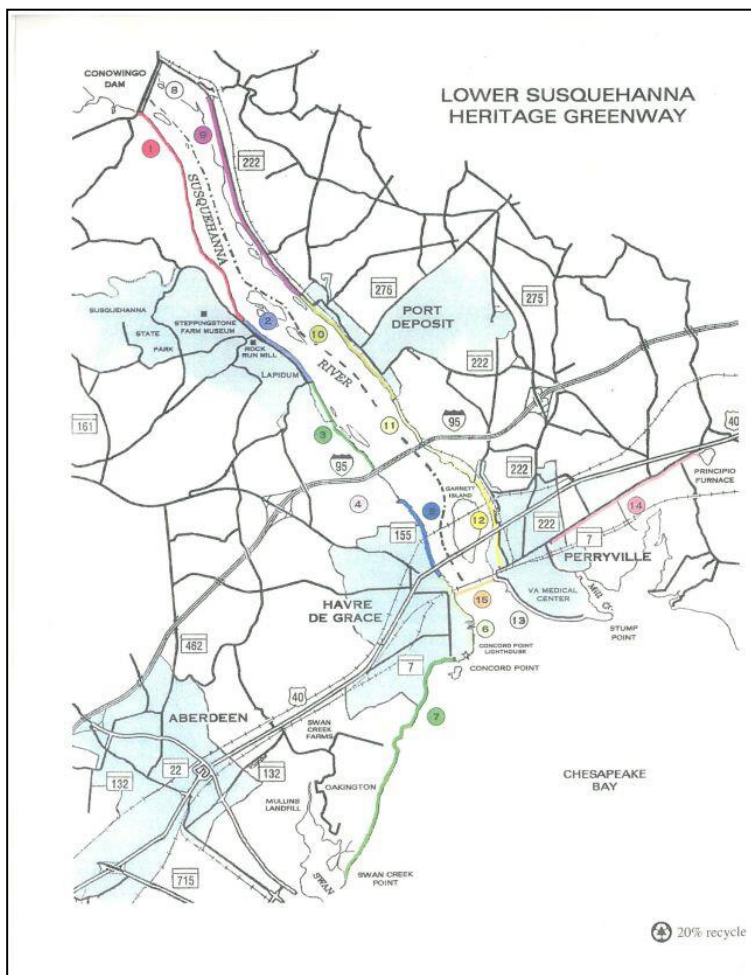
Overall the County has approximately 120 miles of natural trails, but a large portion of these are located in Fair Hill, Elk Neck State Forest, and Elk Neck State Park, and not easily accessible to many residents.

The County is very rural in nature and faces connectivity challenges. Although a countywide trail system providing connectivity to schools and municipalities is welcomed, monetary constraints preclude further mention of such resources for a five-year plan.

- a. **Elk Neck Trail.** This partially completed 12-mile long nature trail runs from Elk Neck State Forest to Elk Neck State Park. The Elk Neck Trails Association is a non-profit and volunteer effort dedicated to completing the missing four-mile trail segment. This facility is envisioned to be a soft surface trail with approximately one mile of paved surface in the Elk Neck State Forest to be handicapped accessible. The trail is being financed by donations, and volunteers build and maintain trail segments.
- b. **Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway Trail.** The Cecil County portion of this trail is approximately 16.5 miles between Perryville and Conowingo.

The Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway (LSHG) was approved in 2000 to promote heritage tourism and greenway development in Harford and Cecil counties. Cecil County comprises approximately one-third of the 45,532 acre LSHG.

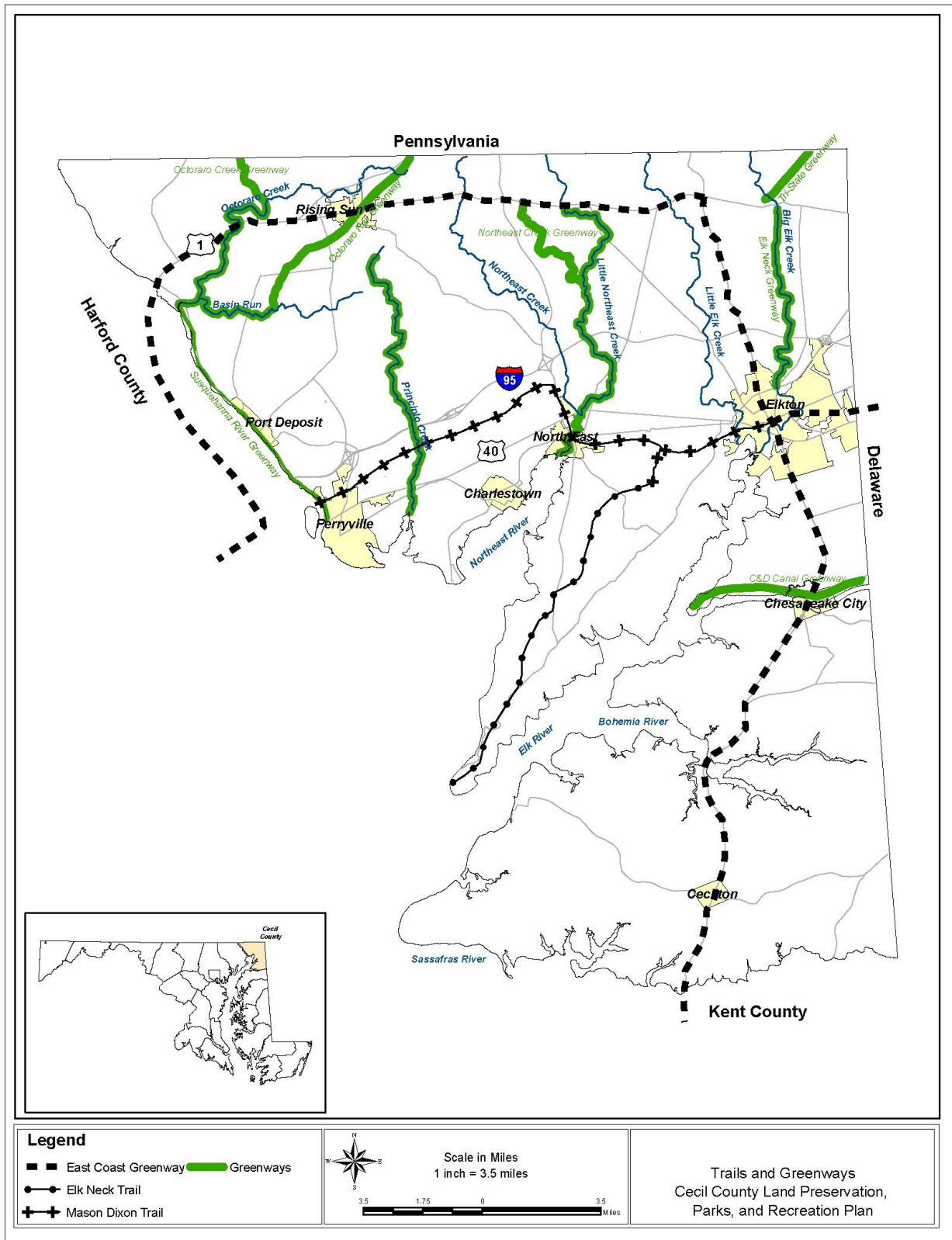
The Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway



The LSHG Plan outlines strategies for enhancing historic, archeological, heritage, cultural, environmental, and recreational resources for the purpose of increasing tourism and compatible economic development that can help improve stewardship and insure long-term preservation and protection of these resources.

In Cecil County, the proposed trail begins at Conowingo Dam and connects the Towns of Port Deposit and Perryville, using both on and off-road trails, before connecting to the last segment leading to Principio Furnace. Pedestrian bridges over the Susquehanna would connect Cecil County with Harford County.

Figure II-8 Cecil County's Recreational Trails/Greenway Concept



East Coast Greenway. The East Coast Greenway (ECG) is a planned 2,600-mile-long trail geared to both bicyclists and hikers that would link the east coast cities from Maine to Florida. Portions of the trail, using existing trails, are complete but a complete designated ECG route does not yet exist. ECG planners hope to use off-road trails to the greatest extent possible and estimate that the trail will be 80 percent complete by 2010. The ECG has two routes in Cecil County, a western shore route and an eastern shore. The west shore route follows the Susquehanna Greenway on the Harford County side and enters the County across the Susquehanna River at Conowingo. It then follows US Route 1 north and east to MD 273, before looping south to the Town of Elkton and north into Delaware. The eastern shore route comes up from Kent County and meets the west shore route in Elkton.

Figure II-9 East Coast Greenway



- c. **Mason Dixon Trail.** The Mason-Dixon Trail runs from Pennsylvania to Delaware. The segment in Cecil County is an existing informal 20-mile trail from Perryville to the Elkton area. It is not officially sanctioned and portions of it follow an easement owned by AT&T. Although some easements exist along the trail route, the trail is not identified as a greenway in the Comprehensive Plan. Any pursuit of this trail will require resolving issues related to access, use, and maintenance with the utility owner and other property owners.

4. Funding

Although the County has supported funding for Recreation and Parks since FY2006, continued growth will require a greater investment to meet service area demands. The County primarily relies on State POS funding and provides limited matching funds for C.I.P. projects. The Department’s operating budget is approximately .05% of the county’s overall budget. With Parks and Recreation Department revenues from 2021 exceeding \$600,000 (to the general fund) it is obvious there is a positive return on investment.

Proposals shown for the 2022-2027 timeframe will most likely be funded by POS and County funds. The established 501c3 will assist in park beautification and youth scholarship endeavors.

The County’s growing population is also creating demand for expanded/renovated and new schools. A new Technical High school was purchased and opened in FY2015. This site is not expected to add any recreation lands to the County’s Park land inventory. More important, however, is the potential that school expansions and renovations can add additional indoor recreational facilities to help ease demand. There are 2 schools in the Cecil County Public School’s list of “Potential Mid-Range Projects” proposed for construction. These facilities will create a major draw on the County’s capital budget reducing available funding for other areas such as recreation. A positive aspect, however, is the potential to create new school recreation facilities that can also serve public recreation needs. Economies of scale could be realized by leveraging County Recreation and Park funds with educational funding to implement a coordinated park/school concept, as many counties are now doing.

Cecil County will continue to rely on the POS annual allocation for all development projects.

5. Organization and Staffing

Since the development of the 2005 LPPRP, a Department of Parks and Recreation was established that now consists of 13 full time employees and 50 part time staff and volunteers. The Department is responsible for implementation, oversight, facilitation and evaluation of the County's programs, facilities, and properties. The 2017 LPPRP recommended the following goal which has been incorporated into this LPPRP (see Section A,1.b.):

Create a leadership role for the County in the overall organization of recreation in Cecil County.

The plan noted that because coordination is needed countywide, county government is the only body that can truly fulfill this role. To implement this goal the following actions were taken.

- Part-time staff have been added to meet programming and service delivery needs.
- An M.O.U has been completed with the school system.
- New programs have been added and inherited from other service providers.
- A 501 board has been established to help provide scholarships, implement special interest programs and provide grass roots advocacy.

Define the role of the Parks and Recreation Board within the organizational structure. The Board's primary function is to assist staff with implementing policies and procedures, CIP development, County project oversight and grass roots advocacy.

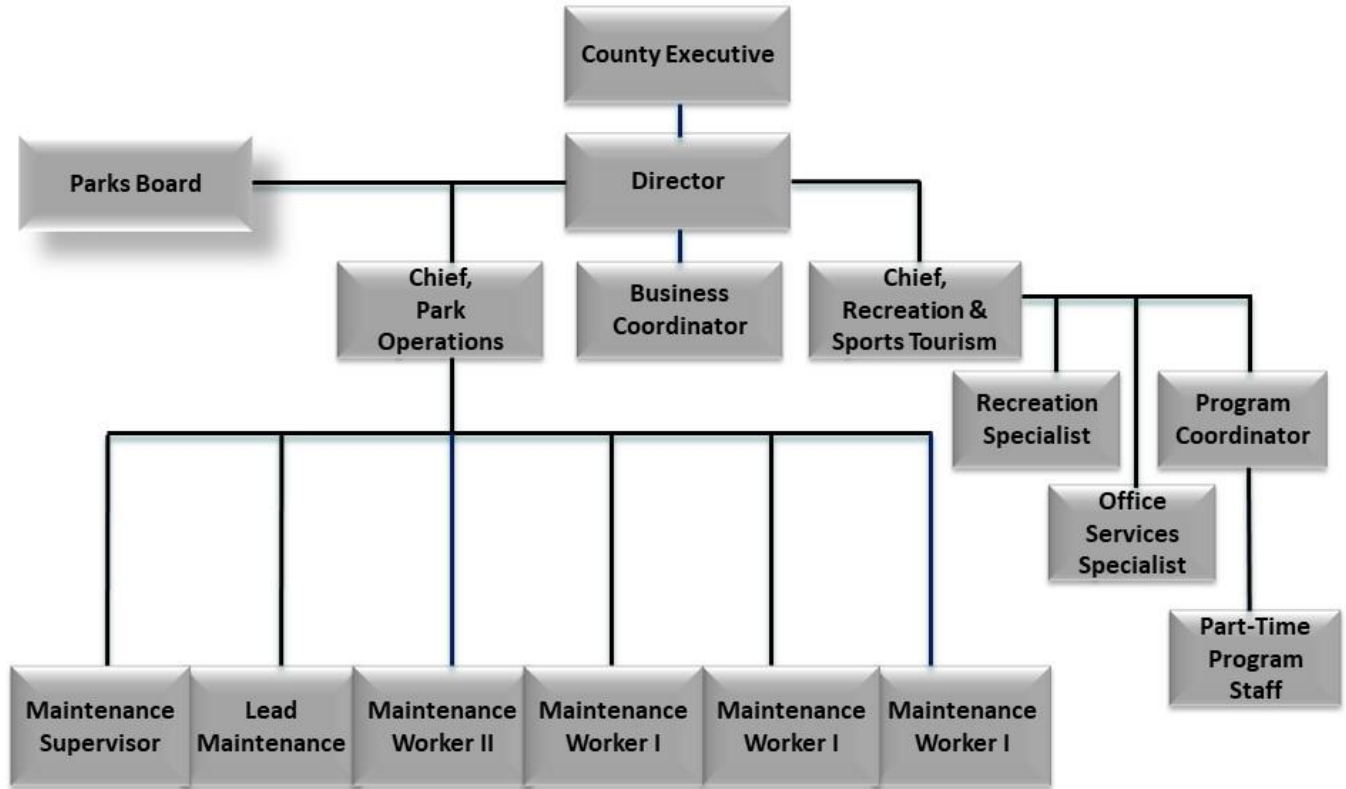
Additional roles are being explored.

- Provide additional staff for continued growth and to meet County wide Recreation demand/needs.

Since the 2017 LPPRP, 5 full-time positions have been added. As County programs, parks, services, and sports tourism demands increase, the need for additional staff will be required.

Current Organizational Chart

**CECIL COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**



G. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation in preparation of the LPPRP. It is important to note that all Parks Board meetings are open to the public. Historically, Cecil County residents do not attend public meetings. The needs and wants of residents are voiced through phone calls, communications with Parks Board members, public officials, staff, and social media.

Public Participation Summary

Invitees	Summary of Participation	Date	Comments
Parks & Recreation Planning and Zoning Office	Reviewed document and made updates to text, charts and graphs.	March 2021	Sent to Planning and Zoning office for review and update of documents.
Board of Parks & Recreation	Planned	February 2022	
All Cecil County Municipalities	Contacted 8 municipalities and survey completed.	May/June 2021	Surveys attached in Appendix B.
Parks and Recreation Planning and Zoning Office	Planned after DNR review of Draft	March 2022	
County Executive	Final Review		

H. SUMMATION

In 2006 Cecil County adopted a new vision of building safe, healthy, and active communities for its residents. From this vision the Department of Parks and Recreation was conceived and the mission of enhancing the quality of life in Cecil County was launched. A county that invested very little in providing the services, programs, facilities, and open spaces that are required for successful, healthy, and enjoyable living, initiated a new movement. A monetary commitment was made to hire staff, acquire open space, renovate outdated improvements, construct parks, develop programming, and create partnerships. The dividend on investment has been unparalleled.

Since 2017, the County Department of Parks and Recreation has acquired an additional 150 acres of open space, expanded the Elk River DMP, completed phase 3 of Calvert Regional Park, installed 3 synthetic turf fields at county high schools, renovated Conowingo Park and the Cecil Sports Complex, erected a playground in Brantwood Regional, increased program offerings to exceed 200 annually, and launched a successful sports tourism campaign. These projects and acquisitions were completed with County and POS funds.

With the Brantwood acquisition the department now provides 97 percent of county residents some form of recreation and open space within 10 miles of their home.

Due to the tremendous growth in the aforementioned areas since 2006 the county has decided to alter its course. Over the next 5 years the department will strive to maintain and enhance its current inventory of recreation assets. Staffing in the Park Operations division will be evaluated to determine the numbers required to maintain the current level of user standards. The departments staffing needs in the programming division will be evaluated as well. Should support be garnered, positions would be implemented to incorporate a Special Events Coordinator and a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist. With these 2 positions, park resources would be utilized to generate new revenues, attract tourists, and meet demands of an underserved demographic.

The most significant Capital Improvement Projects (C.I.P.) in the county's 5-year plan will be the possible installation of synthetic turf fields in the 2 remaining high schools, development of pickle ball courts, the

inclusion of sensory playgrounds, and the construction of an indoor multi use structure. Long range goals should consider the development of an indoor recreation center and the further development of Chesland Park.

The Parks and Recreation Department takes tremendous pride in its public open space, facilities, and program offerings. These resources are utilized not only to enhance the quality of life for current residents, but to attract potential new homeowners and visitors alike. Safe, healthy, and active communities foster an environment of unity, pride, and stability. Through rentals, programs, and sports tourism events the department has, and should continue to create jobs and generate supplemental revenues into the foreseeable future. Success will be contingent upon end user demand, grass roots advocacy, current/new partnerships, political leadership, and a dedicated staff.

CHAPTER III

Chapter III Framework

A. Physical Characteristics

1. Location

Cecil County is located at the north end of the Chesapeake Bay and extends easterly from the Susquehanna River, following borders with the States of Pennsylvania and Delaware, to the Sassafras River on the south (Figure III-1). The County’s 350 square mile land area is shaped by several peninsulas formed by the Northeast, Elk, Bohemia, and Sassafras Rivers. Major north/south access is via I-95, US 40 and US 1 on the western shore, and MD 213 on the eastern shore.

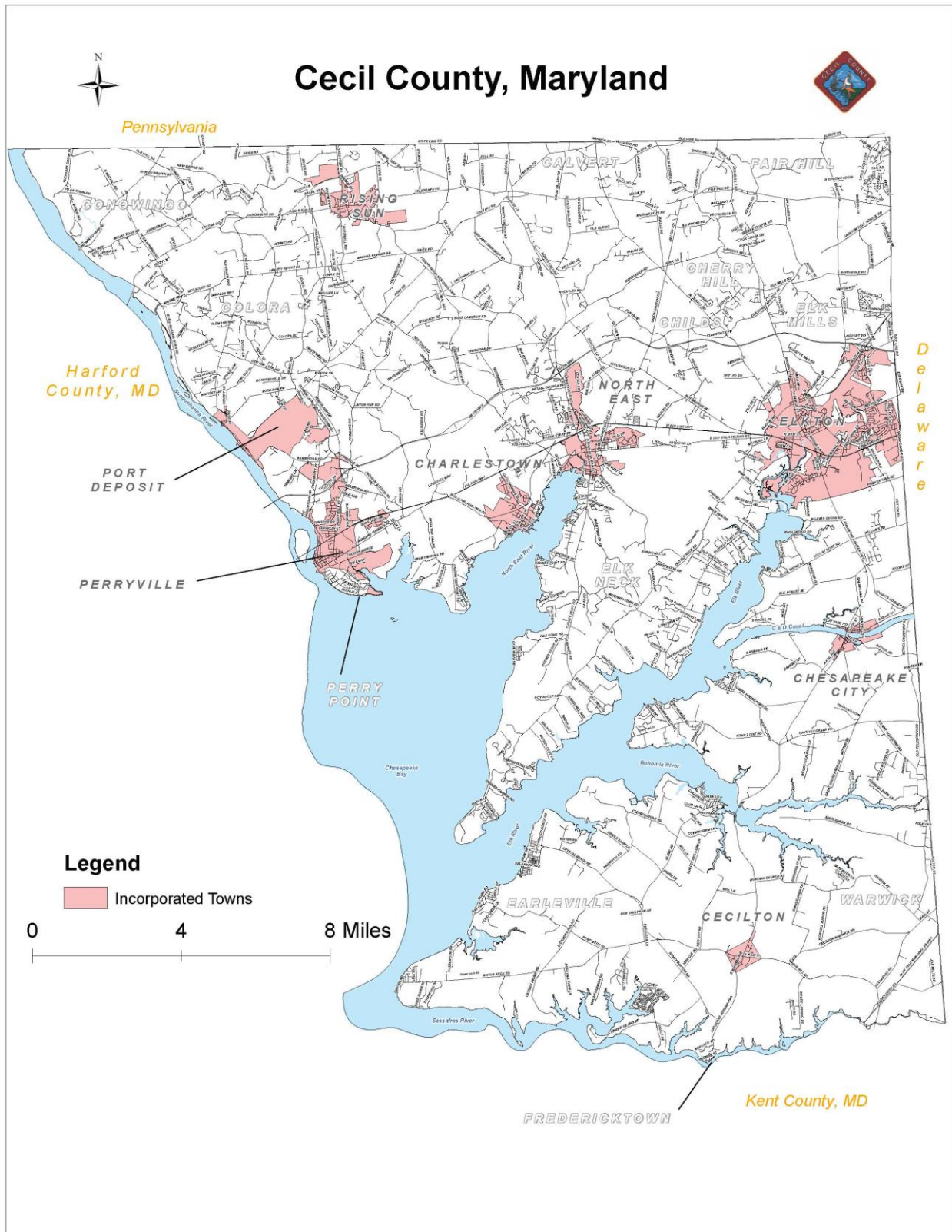
2. Land Cover

The most recent physical land use / land cover data released by the Maryland Department of Planning was issued in 2010. Said dataset divides Cecil County into the following categories:

Table III-1 Cecil County Physical Land Use (2010, MDP)

<i>Land Use Type</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Residential (low, medium, and high densities)	26,724	9.8%
Large lot subdivision (agriculture and forest)	13,987	5.1%
Commercial	2,983	1.1%
Industrial	1,825	0.70%
Institutional	2,503	0.93%
Extractive	1,849	0.68%
Open Urban Land	1,309	0.48%
Cropland	80,000	29.6%
Pasture	2,254	0.83%
Orchards and vineyards	1,200	0.44%
Feeding operations	500	0.18%
Agricultural buildings and facilities	1,303	0.48%
Row and garden crops	367	0.14%
Forest (deciduous, evergreen, and mixed)	78,118	28.9%
Brush	3,207	1.19%
Water and Wetlands	50,419	18.65%
Bare Ground	955	0.35%
Transportation	885	0.32%
Total	270,388	100%

Figure III-1 Location Map



As shown in Table III-1 and Figure III-2, resource lands (agriculture, forest, extractive, and water/wetland land uses) accounted for 81% of Cecil County’s total acreage in 2010.

In 2016 and 2020, the Chesapeake Conservancy developed physical land use / land cover datasets for the State of Maryland. As of this writing (March 2021), the 2020 dataset has yet to be released. While its land cover / land use categories unfortunately differ from those of the 2010 MDP study (thus making direct comparisons difficult), the 2016 Chesapeake Conservancy dataset divides Cecil County into the following categories:

Table III-2 Cecil County Physical Land Use (2016, Chesapeake Conservancy)

<i>Land Use Type</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Tree canopy and forest	104,779	39.6%
Low vegetation and shrubland	100,605	38%
Water and Wetlands	44,750	16.9%
Impervious structures, surfaces, and roads	13,335	5%
Barren	1,259	0.5%
Total	264,728	100%

Compared to the 2010 MDP data (28.9%), the 2016 Chesapeake Conservancy data (39.6%) appears to overestimate the total amount of tree canopy and forest in Cecil County. Conversely, the 2016 data appears to underestimate the amount of water and wetlands (16.9%) compared to the 2010 data (18.65%).

Again, direct comparisons between the 2010 and 2016 datasets are difficult due to differences in methodology and study approach. Assuming that the 2020 Chesapeake Conservancy data (when released) has the same land use categories as the 2016 Chesapeake Conservancy data, comparisons will be possible in the future.

Figure III-3 visually depicts the land use categories from the 2016 Chesapeake Conservancy dataset.

Figure III-2 Physical Land Use – 2010 MDP data

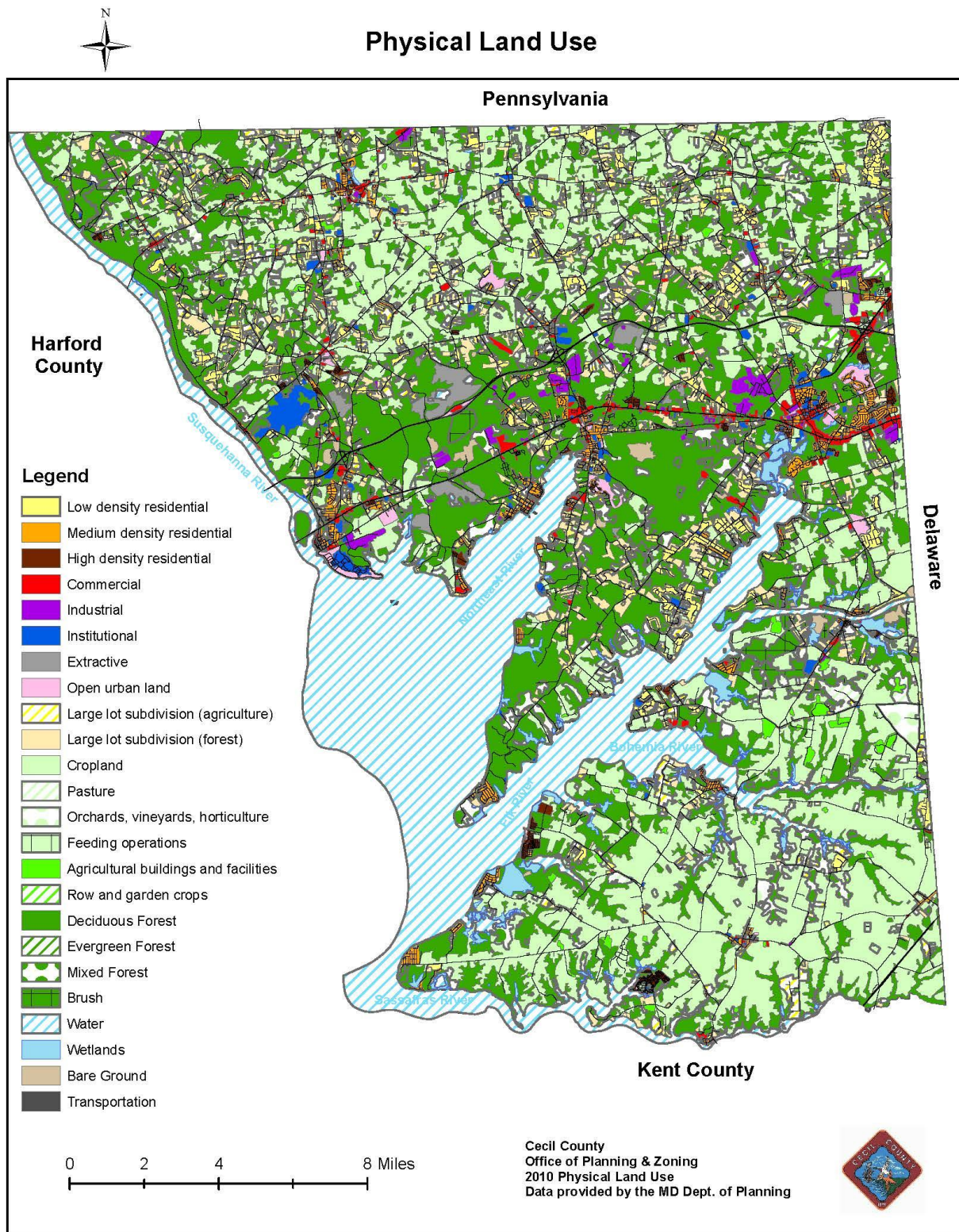
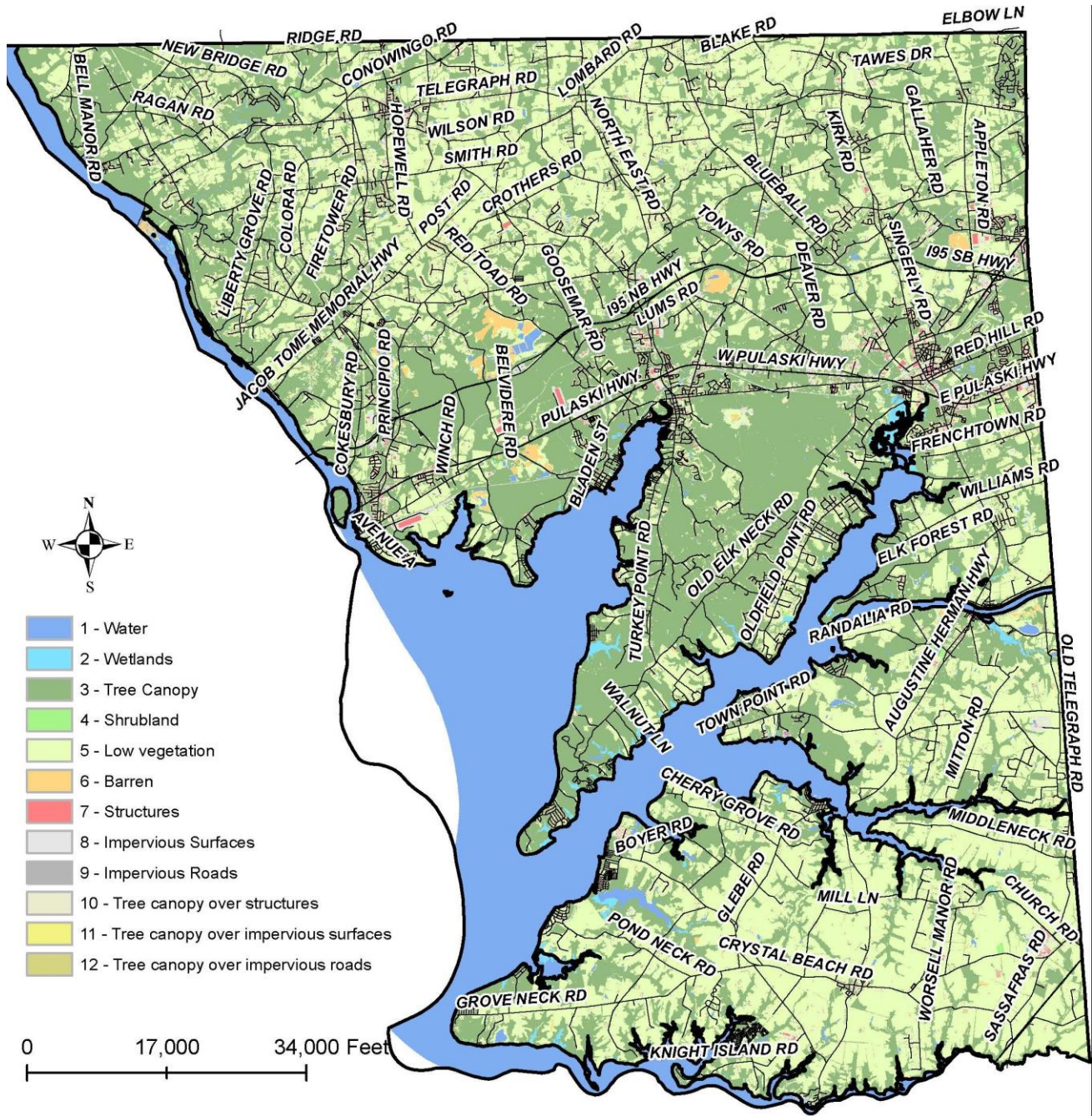


Figure III-3 Physical Land Use / Land Cover – 2016 Chesapeake Conservancy data



3. Natural Resources

Environmentally sensitive areas occur throughout Cecil County, including floodplains, streams and their buffers, the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area, wetlands, and steep slopes (Figure III-4).

Cecil County’s five major rivers (the Susquehanna, Northeast, Elk, Bohemia and Sassafras) and their tributaries form a series of peninsulas (also known as “necks”) that contribute to the extensive shoreline of the Chesapeake Bay. Approximately 29,685 acres (12%) of the county is in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area which adjoins the shorelines generally to the head of tide. There are twelve major (8 digit) watersheds in the County (Table III-3 and Figure III-4(b)).

Table III-3 Major Watersheds

Number	Watershed	Acres
	Name	
02120203	Octoraro Creek	22,196
02130609	Furnace Bay	13,623
02130608	Northeast River	40,377
02130605	Little Elk Creek	15,670
02130606	Big Elk Creek	10,933
02130603	Upper Elk River	19,872
02130601	Lower Elk River	25,388
02130604	Back Creek	8,729
02130602	Bohemia River	26,502
02130610	Sassafras River	48,326
02120201	Lower Susquehanna River	19,885
02120204	Conowingo Dam Susquehanna River	11,676
Total		263,177

Note: Acres for watersheds are for the entire watershed, which may include portions of other counties. Therefore the total acreage differs from total land areas shown in Tables III-1 and III-2. For example, the Lower Susquehanna River and Conowingo Dam Susquehanna River watersheds drain portions of Harford County.

a. Topography

Cecil County is divided into two major physiographic regions along the Fall Line, which lies just north of the I-95/US 40 corridor.

The southern two-thirds of the County are in the Atlantic Coastal Plain. Generally this land shows little relief; its streams are small and sluggish and marshes and wetland areas are common. Underlying sediments are easily eroded, and wave action from the Chesapeake Bay, in addition to surface runoff, have created local areas of steep slopes and bluffs from 20 to nearly 100 feet in height.

Figure III-4 Selected Natural Resources

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area

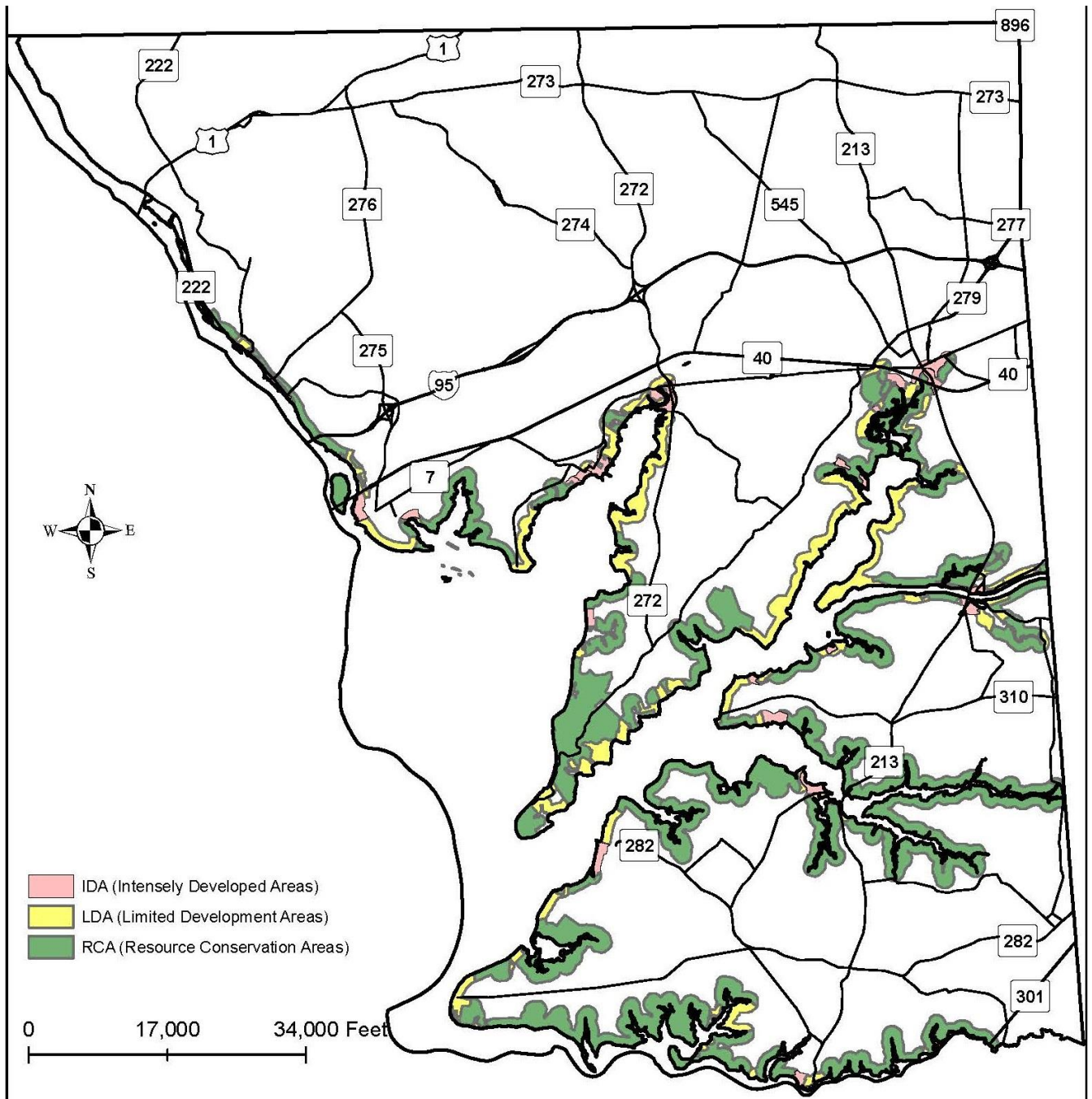


Figure III-4(b) Selected Natural Resources

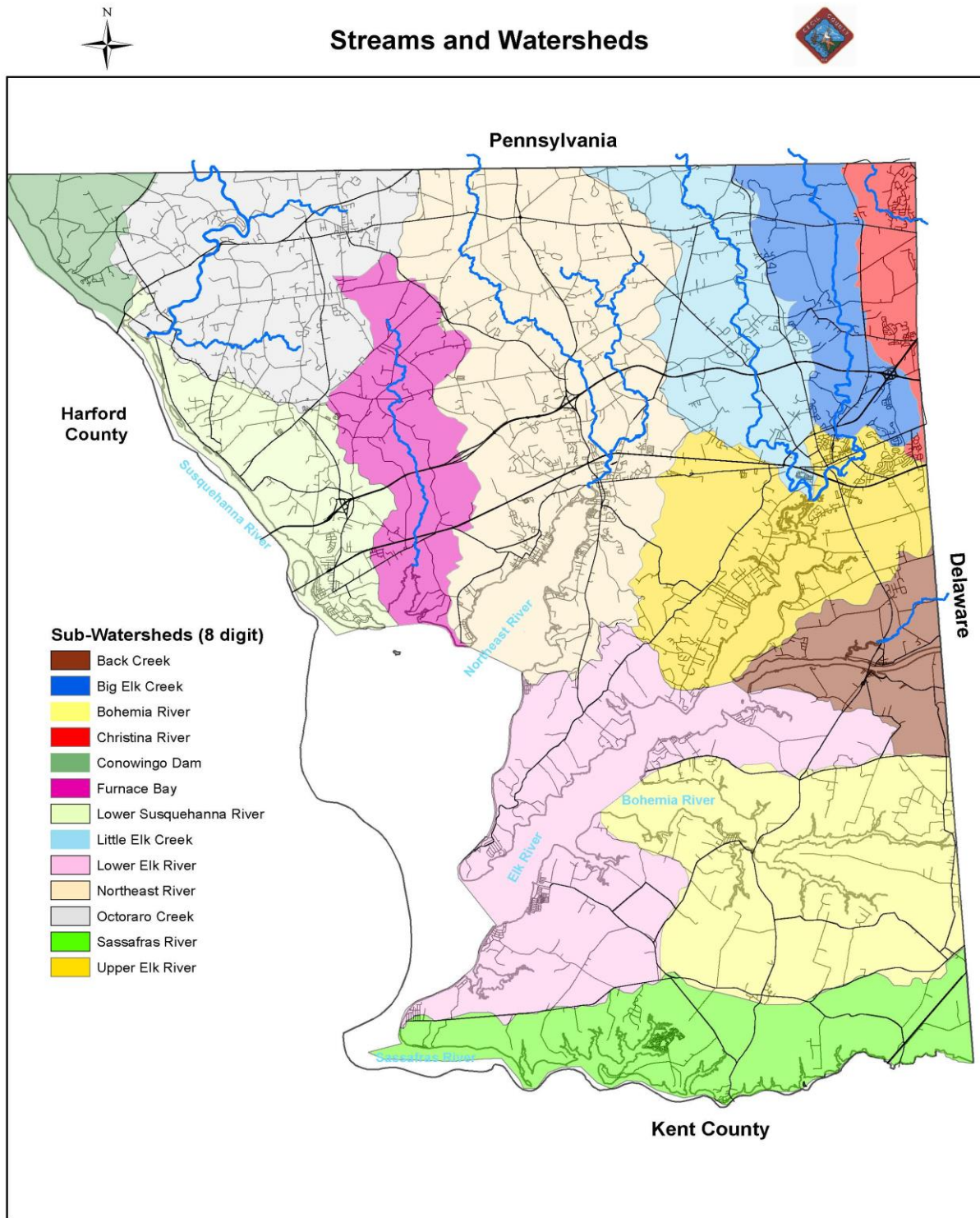


Figure III-4(c) Selected Natural Resources

100 Year Floodplain

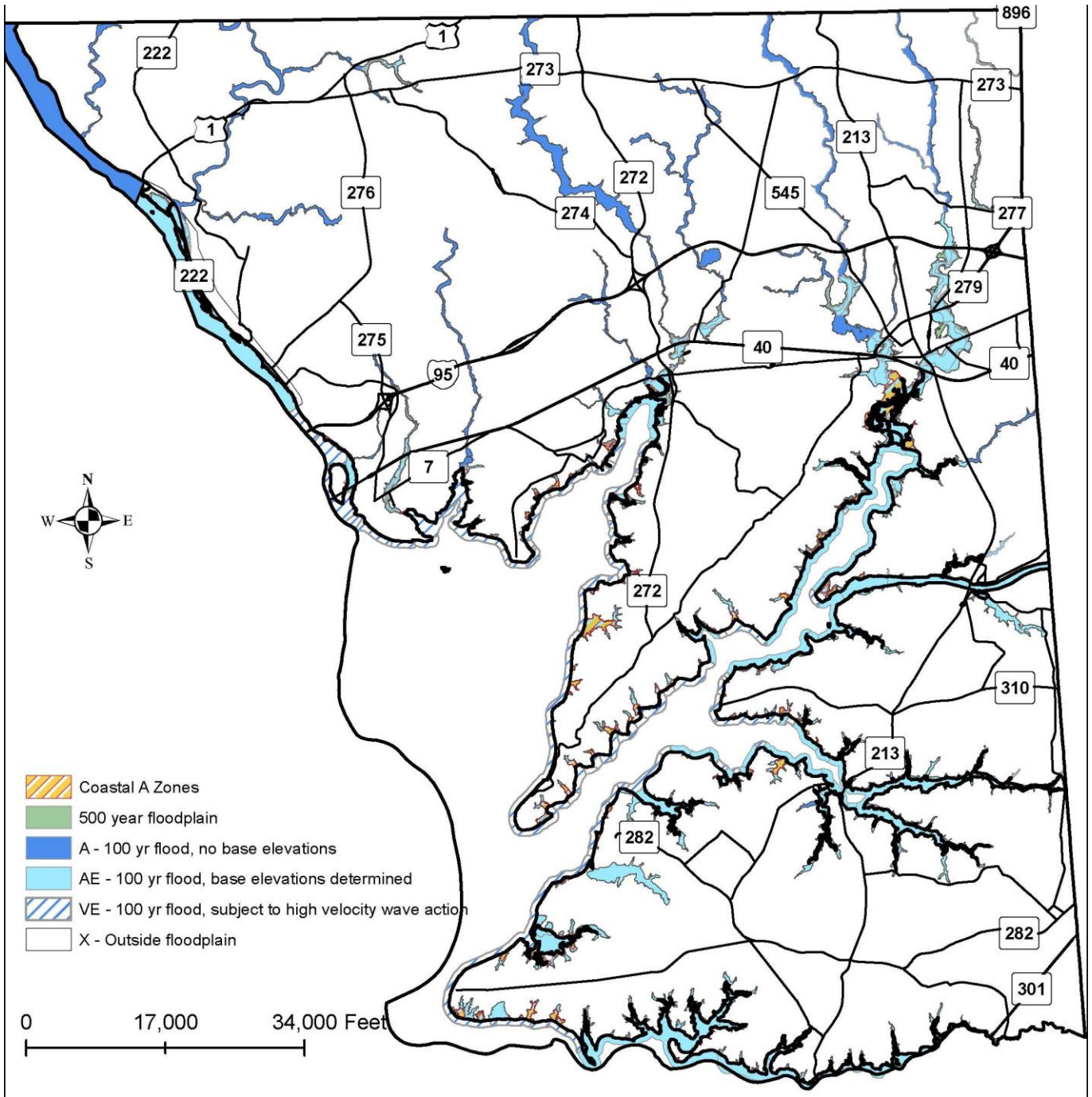
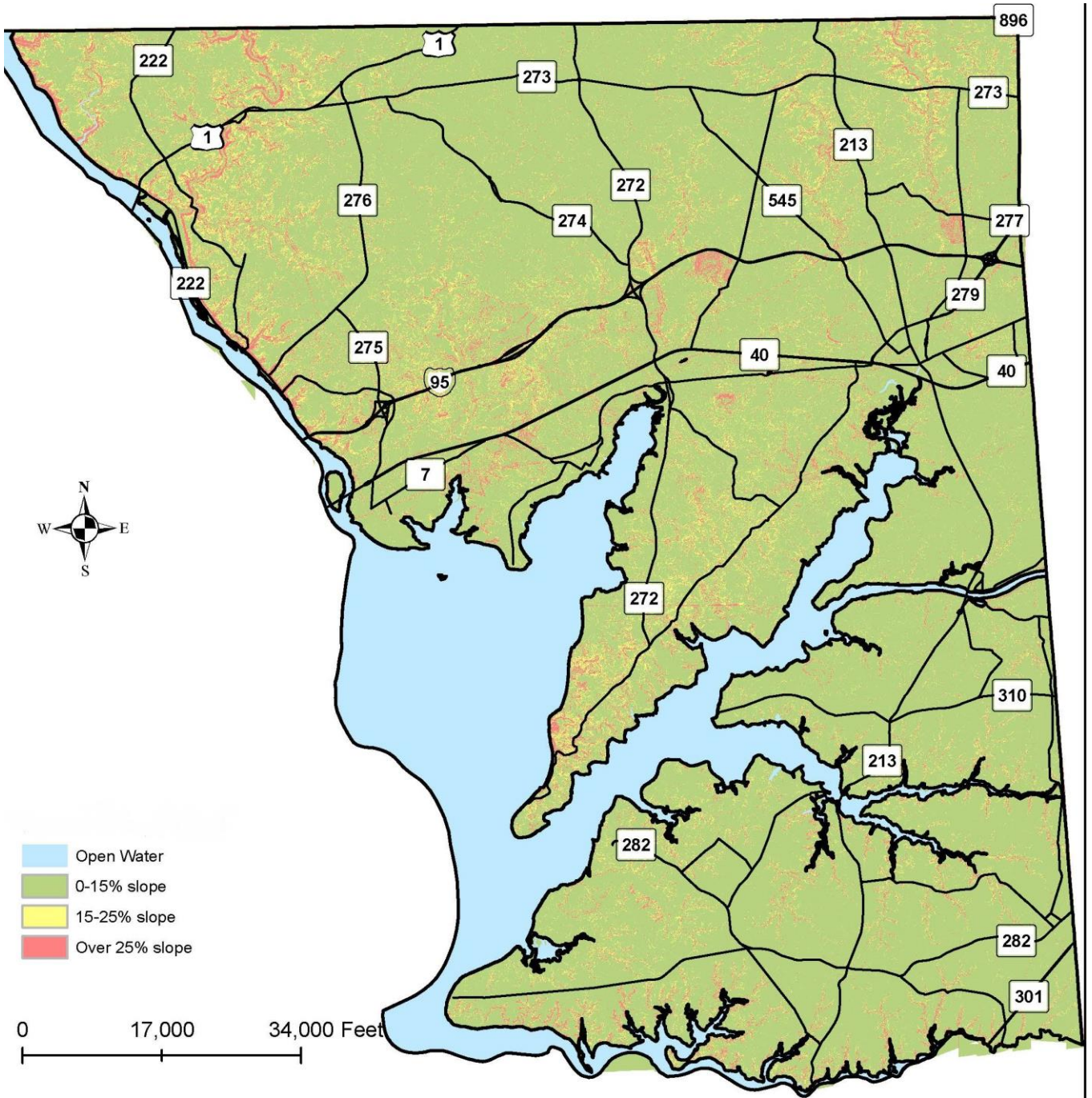


Figure III-4(d) Selected Natural Resources

Steep Slopes



The northern third of Cecil County lies within the eastern Piedmont, and is characterized by an uneven, hilly terrain punctuated by small-scale gorges, cliffs, and ridges. The northeastern portion of the County is moderately hilly, with the greatest relief provided by the gorges of the major stream valleys. The north-central section of the County is only slightly hilly with wide valleys and large-scale undulations in the terrain. The northwest section of the County provides the most varied topography. Near Port Deposit along the Susquehanna River, for example, are granite cliffs. Further north, the Octoraro and Conowingo Creeks form deep gorges as they flow to the Susquehanna. This region has the highest elevation in the County; 535 feet above sea level near Rock Springs.

b. Forest Land

As noted in Table III-2, 39.6% of the County was forested in 2016. Forested areas occur throughout the County, including several large contiguous blocks in the Elk Neck peninsula that are in public ownership; Elk Neck State Forest and Elk Neck State Park. Another large forested area is located between the Towns of Perryville and North East along the I-95/US40 corridor.

c. Floodplains and Streams

As defined by the Cecil County Zoning Ordinance, floodplains are “lands typically adjacent to a body of water with ground surface elevations that are inundated by the base flood (the 100 year frequency flood event as indicated on the most recent flood insurance study).” Cecil County has both tidal and non-tidal floodplains. The 100-year floodplain is shown in Figure III-4(c). Most non-tidal flooding occurs in August and September as a result of high intensity rainfall from hurricanes, tropical storms, and severe thunderstorms. Most tidal flooding is attributed to tidal surges and high coastal waters due to strong winds also associated with such storms.

d. Significant Habitat Areas

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources has identified one Natural Heritage Area (NHA) in Cecil County (<https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/NaturalAreas/Natural-Areas-Statewide-Map.aspx>). As one of the “best remaining natural areas found within the State,” the Plum Creek Natural Heritage Area is designated for special protection, pursuant to state rare, threatened and endangered species regulations for plants or wildlife. Located in and around the Elk Neck State Forest, the Plum Creek Natural Heritage Area (<https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/NaturalAreas/Central/Plum-Creek.aspx>) contains a fire dependent pitch pine ecosystem with seepage wetlands and vernal pools.

B. Demographic Characteristics

The 2010 United States Census found Cecil County’s population to be 101,108 persons. As of this writing (March 2021), data from the 2020 U.S. Census has yet to be released.

December 2020 population projections prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning (https://planning.maryland.gov/MSDC/Pages/s3_projection.aspx) estimate the County’s population at 103,100 persons, a 1.97% increase over the 2010 population.

Table III-4 contains population projections, in five year increments, through the year 2045.

Table III-4 Population Projections for Cecil County, Maryland

Year	Population	% change from 2020 population
2020	103,100	-
2025	106,100	2.9%
2030	112,050	8.7%
2035	119,200	15.6%
2040	125,450	21.7%
2045	131,550	27.6%

Source: Maryland Department of Planning, State Data Center

The 2045 population is projected to be 131,550, a 27.6% increase over the 2020 population. The projected growth reflects the central location and attractiveness of Cecil County along the I-95/US 40 corridor, its relative affordability, and its proximity to Pennsylvania and Delaware.

County and town population change between 2010 and 2019 is shown in Table III-5. In 2010, 70 percent of County residents lived in unincorporated areas and 30 percent lived in the eight municipalities. This percentage remained more or less constant in 2019, as the towns maintained their share of total county population.

Table III-5 County and Town Population, 2010 and 2019

	2010		2019		Change from 2010 to 2020
	<i>Population</i>	<i>% of County Total</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>% of County Total</i>	<i>Number</i>
Cecilton	663	1%	670	0.65%	7
Charlestown	1,183	1%	1,196	1.16%	13
Chesapeake City	673	1%	691	0.67%	8
Elkton	15,443	15%	15,622	15.19%	179
North East	3,572	4%	3,642	3.54%	70
Perryville	4,361	4%	4,419	4.29%	58
Port Deposit	653	1%	763	0.74%	110
Rising Sun	2,781	3%	2,781	2.7%	0
All Towns	29,329	30%	29,784	28.96%	455
Unincorporated Area	71,779	70%	73,071	71.04%	1,292
Cecil County Total	101,108	100%	102,855	100%	1,747

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010 data) and Maryland Dept. of Planning (2019 data)

Cecil County’s age distribution is projected to change slightly through 2045 (Table III-6). The population age 19 and under is projected to increase by approximately 9,454 persons, but said age group will only post a modest 2.1% increase compared to the overall County population. The “middle ages” of 20-64 years old will see a decline, from 59.7% to 52.3% of the population. Posting the largest (5.3%) gain, the number of persons over age 65 will increase significantly. Specific impacts of this change in age demographics on land preservation and parks and recreation programming remain to be seen.

Table III-6 Population Projections by Age for Cecil County

Age	2020	% 2020	2035	% 2035	2045	% 2045
0-19	24,451	23.7%	28,041	23.5%	33,905	25.8%
20-64	61,511	59.7%	63,667	53.4%	68,889	52.3%
65+	17,136	16.6%	27,496	23.1%	28,755	21.9%
Totals	103,098		119,204		131,549	

Source: December 2020 population projections by the Maryland Department of Planning. https://planning.maryland.gov/MSDC/Pages/s3_projection.aspx

C. Comprehensive Plan Framework

The Cecil County Comprehensive Plan adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on April 13, 2010 provides the policy framework for land use management policies and decisions. The Comprehensive Plan contains several goals related to agriculture and the protection of natural resources and, to a lesser extent, parks and recreation. The plan also contains performance standards and guidelines intended to prevent conflicts between land uses, protect natural resources, and manage stormwater quality.

Implementation of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan occurs primarily via the County’s Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations.

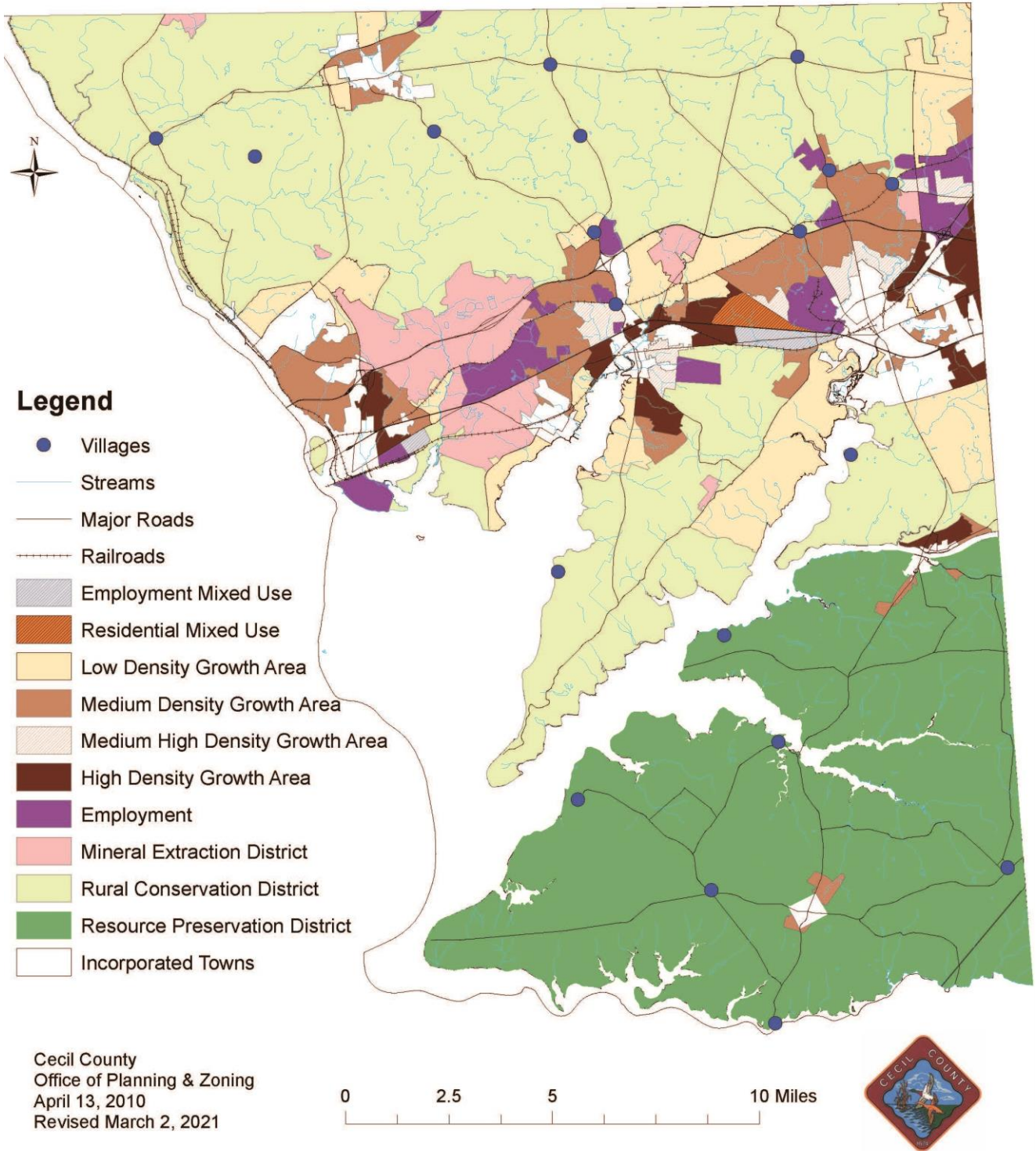
General Planning Strategy and Context

The Comprehensive Plan divides the county into eleven land use districts as the basis for directing growth and development, infrastructure investment, and community enhancements. Under the plan, future growth is directed primarily to the Employment Mixed Use, Residential Mixed Use, Low Density Growth Area, Medium Density Growth Area, Medium High Density Growth Area, High Density Growth Area, and Employment districts (Figure III-5). Other Comprehensive Plan policies are intended to preserve open spaces, rural character and agricultural activities. The County’s general land use planning framework and strategy has four basic elements:

1. **Encourage intensive development within designated Growth Areas.** The growth areas around the Towns of Elkton, North East, Perryville and Port Deposit are intended for high density development supported by available or planned water and sanitary sewer infrastructure. Smaller sized growth areas around Rising Sun, Chesapeake City and Cecilton are intended to be served by water and sanitary sewer infrastructure to serve new development that is compatible with each town’s existing character. The growth areas are to be defined by surrounding farm and forest lands which complement the surrounding rural character and function as a transition between developed enclaves and rural areas. By concentrating growth in these areas, Cecil County’s strategy is to relieve development pressure in the rural districts where public water and sewer is not planned and to discourage other significant public facility investment.

Figure III-5 Cecil County Comprehensive Plan Map

CECIL COUNTY LAND USE MAP 2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



2. **Provide opportunities for development in historically settled areas outside of the Growth Areas.** This is accomplished by designating Village Districts to protect the character of the County’s historic villages by separating them from surrounding rural or developed areas. Villages are classified into two categories: crossroad villages and waterfront villages. Crossroad villages are located at intersections of existing historic roads, and waterfront villages are located along the shorelines of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes 19 villages, and the villages make up less than one percent of the County’s land area, approximately 1,600 acres.

3. **Protect rural character by designating Rural Conservation Districts and a Resource Protection District.** This strategy encourages agricultural and forest resource protection while discouraging development of rural areas. The Rural Conservation District (RCD) generally encompasses agricultural areas north of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal and also includes much of the Elk Neck area south of the Town of North East. The RCD comprises approximately 43 percent of the County’s land area. The primary purpose of this District is to maintain the rural character of the County by encouraging agricultural and forestry uses.

The Resource Protection District (RPD) encompasses most areas south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal except for Chesapeake City, Cecilton, and some small village districts. The RPD covers about 28 percent of the County’s land area. The primary purpose of the RPD is to encourage retention of agricultural land and agricultural related activities and to support the County’s agricultural economy. These areas are intended to be protected through zoning, the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, and various land preservation programs.

4. **Protect environmentally sensitive resources in all areas of the County.** This strategy relies on regulatory controls to protect sensitive resource lands such as floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, and forest land. The Comprehensive Plan provides performance standards and guidelines to protect sensitive lands and natural resources. These standards are implemented through the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.

Designated Conservation Areas

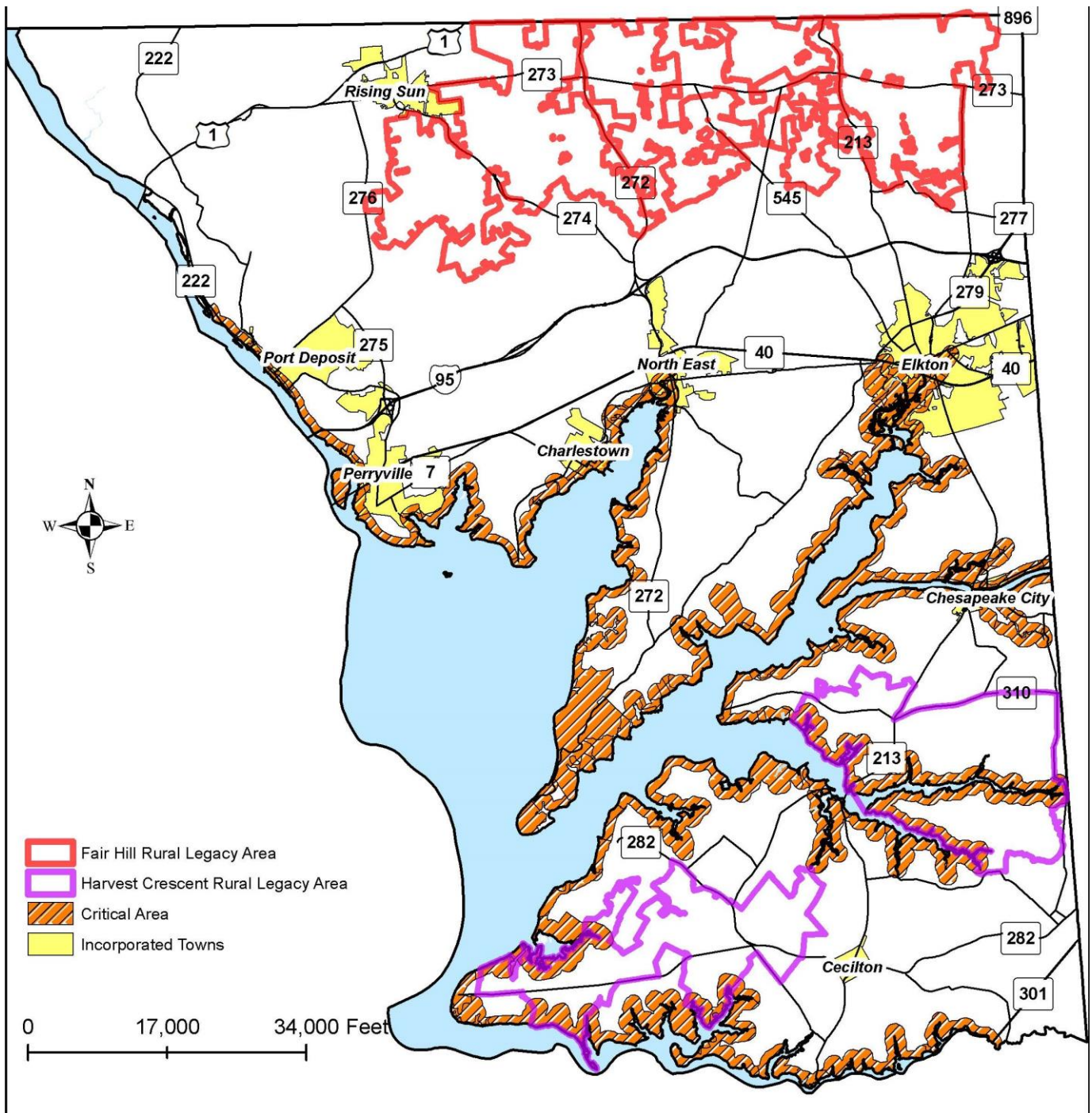
Figure III-6 shows Cecil County’s designated conservation areas. These are the Fair Hill Rural Legacy Area and the Harvest Crescent (formerly Sassafra) Rural Legacy Area. Rural Legacy is a community driven program that leads to designation of large, contiguous blocks of rural lands, including agricultural, natural, cultural, and forestry resources after specific criteria are met. In rural legacy areas, land conservation is emphasized through the encouragement of fee-simple and easement purchases of land for permanent conservation. The Fair Hill RLA encompasses 27,307 acres, and the Harvest Crescent RLA contains 20,415 acres.

The Harvest Crescent RLA is part of a larger rural legacy area known as the mid-shore Agricultural Security Corridor. The purpose of this RLA is to focus local, regional, and national efforts on one of the largest contiguous blocks of highly productive farmland in the rapidly developing mid-Atlantic region.

The Fair Hill RLA is one of the County’s most productive and economically important agricultural areas and much of it is under various forms of protection. The goal for the RLA is to improve water quality in the Big and Little Elk Creek watersheds while buffering and expanding the state-owned Fair Hill Natural Resource Management Area.

The Chesapeake Bay Critical Area contains approximately 29,685 acres of sensitive shoreline and streams, and it is subject to regulatory controls regarding land use, development, and natural resource disturbance in the County’s zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.

Figure III-6 Designated Conservation Areas



CHAPTER IV

Chapter IV - Agricultural Land Preservation

Introduction

Resource lands are the dominant land use in Cecil County as 76 percent of land is comprised of agriculture, forest, & wetland uses¹. The growth of Cecil County since the first European settlers arrived in 1608 has been based on the products derived from these land uses. Even today, agriculture is the County's largest industry, generating \$136.8 million dollars annually². Cecil County has planned for preserving farmland since the adoption of its first Master Development Plan in 1962. Said plan states *"...agricultural land and open space should be preserved through zoning for only farms and recreational uses in certain areas."* Thus, Cecil County has been, and continues to be, committed to the agricultural industry and planning for its future protection and success.

The location of the county's major agricultural areas are:

- Northern - A large area bounded by the Susquehanna River to the west; Interstate 95 to the south until it intersects with Maryland Route 213; Route 213 then serves as a part of the southeastern boundary through, but not including, the village of Cherry Hill; then leaving Cherry Hill and following Elk Mills and Brewster Bridge Roads south to Appleton Road; then following Appleton Road as the eastern boundary through and including the Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area (Fair Hill NRMA). The Pennsylvania border serves as the northern agricultural area's northern boundary.
- Southern - A large area bounded by the Chesapeake and Delaware (C & D) Canal to the north; the Elk River to the west; the Sassafras River to the south; and the Delaware border to the east. Excluded from this area are the Town of Cecilton and the southern half of the Town of Chesapeake City.
- Elk Neck Peninsula - A large area south of the towns of North East and Elkton bounded by the Elk & North East Rivers.

In the County's current Comprehensive Plan all rural areas north of the C & D Canal, including the Northern and Elk Neck Peninsula areas, are in the Rural Conservation land use District (RCD). The RCD is intended to encourage the retention of agricultural and forestry uses to support the County's agricultural industry. Low density residential development is permitted in order to maintain the rural character of this area of the County. The areas south of the C & D Canal are in the Resource Protection land use District (RPD). The RPD is intended to encourage the retention of agricultural land and agricultural-related activities to support the County's agricultural industry. Very low residential development is permitted to maintain rural character.

The USDA Census of Agriculture defines a farm as *"any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, in the census year."* The 2017 Census of Agriculture counted 73,793 acres of farmland in Cecil County. Compared to the

¹ Source: Table 3-1 - Cecil County Comprehensive Plan - Adopted April 13, 2010

² Source: 2017 Census of Agriculture

previous Census of Agriculture, this represents a decrease of 3.75% (from 76,667 acres). Other than the "Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold" in Cecil County increasing to \$136.8 million from \$113.8 million, the 2017 Census of Agriculture indicates that farming is on a decline in Cecil County.

The purpose of this chapter includes the following:

- 1) To review the goals and objectives of the State and County's goals for agricultural land preservation;
- 2) To identify where the goals are common, complementary, or simply different;
- 3) To evaluate the ability of implementation programs and funding sources to achieve goals and objectives; and
- 4) To identify and recommend to State and County legislatures and governing bodies changes needed to overcome shortcomings, achieve goals, and ultimately ensure a good return on public investment.

To address these issues, this chapter will be divided into the following four sections:

- A. Goals*
- B. Current Plan Implementation*
- C. Evaluation of the Implementation Program, and*
- D. Strategy for Future Program Development*

A. Goals

1. State Goals

There are a variety of easement acquisition programs that invest in agricultural land preservation. They include the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF), the Rural Legacy program, the Maryland Environmental Trust, and the Forest Legacy program. Each program and associated funding source has its own specific goals articulated in enabling legislation or in supporting program statements.

In addition, 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. In 2021, the Maryland General Assembly passed a bill to extend that deadline to 2030, include acres preserved through the Maryland Environmental Trust as contributing towards the goal, and establish the goal in statute, effective October 1, 2021. The resolution recognized the importance of protecting productive agricultural land through the combined efforts of State, County, and non-profit easement acquisition programs. The expectation behind the 1.03 million acre goal is that it will provide a long-term frame of reference for funding and improving land preservation efforts by State and County governments.

Overall, the state's goals for agricultural land preservation are:

- Permanently preserve agricultural land capable of supporting a reasonable diversity of agricultural production;

- Protect natural, forest, and historic resources associated with the rural character of Maryland's farmland;
- Concentrate preserved land, to the greatest degree possible, in large, relatively contiguous blocks to effectively support long-term protection of resources and resource based industries;
- Limit the intrusion of development and its impacts on rural resources and resource-based industries;
- Ensure good return on public investment by concentrating state agricultural land preservation funds in areas where the investment is reasonably well supported by both local investment and land use management programs; and
- Work with local governments to achieve the following:
 - 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-at-large, and state and local government officials;
 - Protect the equity interests of rural landowners in preservation areas by ensuring public commitment and investment in preservation through easement acquisition and incentive programs.
 - Use local land use management authority effectively to protect public investment in preservation by managing development in rural preservation areas; and
 - Establish effective measures to support profitable agriculture, including assistance in production, marketing, and the practice of stewardship, so that farming remains a desirable way of life for both the farmer and public at large.

2. County Goals

Cecil County's land preservation goals recur throughout a variety of adopted planning documents including the 2010 Cecil County Comprehensive Plan, the agricultural zoning included in the 2011 Cecil County Zoning Ordinance, and the 2014 Cecil County Strategic Plan.

Cecil County Comprehensive Plan - April 2010

Agricultural protection is discussed in chapters 3 and 7 of the Cecil County Comprehensive Plan. Two rural areas, Rural Conservation and Resource Protection, are established in the land use chapter. The Rural Conservation district (located north of I-95 but including the Elk Neck peninsula) seeks to maintain the rural character of the area and allow very low density development (1 du/10 ac). The Resource Protection District (located south of the C&D Canal), seeks to protect agriculture and has the most restrictive zoning at 1du/20acres. The plan notes that the biggest challenge to agriculture related economic development is generational. Specifically, younger members of farm families are generally less interested in farming and are attracted to more lucrative opportunities found in metropolitan areas. The

Priority Preservation Area (PPA) map contained in Chapter 7 of the Comprehensive Plan is included as an interim map with plans for further refinement. The map places most of the RCD and RPD districts, which the exception of portions of the Rural Legacy Areas, into the interim PPA.

Chapter 3 of the County Comprehensive Plan (Land Use)

Chapter 3 of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan discusses the county's rural areas in depth, noting that they make up approximately 71 percent of the County. The County intends for these areas to remain rural for the agricultural and other natural resources within them to remain viable and economically productive. The County will continue to support the permanent preservation of these areas via the County's purchase of development rights program, transfer of development rights program, or by supporting easement acquisitions by government agencies and private organizations.

Chapter 3 describes the two major land use categories with their current conditions and envisioned future. The Rural Conservation District (RCD) is intended to encourage the retention of agricultural land and support the County's agricultural industry. A very low residential development density, one dwelling unit per ten acres, is permitted in the RCD to maintain the area's rural character. The Resource Protection District (RPD) is intended to retain agricultural land and agricultural-related activities and to support the County's agricultural industry. A restrictive residential development density, one dwelling unit per twenty acres, is permitted in the RPD to maintain the rural character of this area.

The discussion in Chapter 3 continues by describing mechanisms to maintain community character in rural areas through clustering residential development, protecting open spaces, creating an effective Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, and protecting private property rights. As stated in the plan, *"... it has been the goal of the County to balance the need to manage growth with the rights of private property owners. Although achieving such as balance is a challenge, this plans seeks to protect property rights to the extent possible as it address the County's need to manage future residential, commercial, and industrial growth for the County's overall benefit."*

The goals applicable to agricultural land preservation include:

- Incentivize development within Growth Areas;
- Discourage development outside of Growth Areas;
- Encourage the conservation of agricultural and forested lands;
- Encourage sustainable agribusiness and other natural resource based industries;
- Maintain the equity value of agricultural land;
- Maintain the rural character of the County; and
- Protect private property rights.

The policies and actions applicable to agricultural land preservation include:

- Review the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, including the sending and receiving rates, to incentivize its use to the greatest degree possible; and

- Continue to use all means to preserve land in the rural areas for agricultural and natural resource pursuits.

Chapter 7 of the County Comprehensive Plan (Sensitive Areas)

This chapter includes: discussion of sensitive areas such as agricultural and forestland, the County's preservation acreage goals (discussed later), and the Priority Preservation Areas (PPAs). PPAs can include forestland being preserved for its environmental values. In these areas, the emphasis is on forest conservation rather than silvaculture.

Cecil County has three distinct unrefined placeholder PPAs; the Northern, the Elk Neck, and the Southern. In total, these three PPAs cover approximately 125,800 acres, or 57% of Cecil County. The total preservation goal of these three areas is approximately 79,000, which represents 80% of the undeveloped lands within the designated PPAs. Currently, approximately 43,000 of those acres are not yet protected. The preservation goal of the PPAs (79,000 acres) exceeds the County's current agricultural preservation goal (55,000 acres). The County is currently working on refining the PPAs as recommended by the 2010 Cecil County Comprehensive Plan.

The goals applicable to agricultural land preservation include:

- Protect 80% of the remaining undeveloped land in the designated Priority Preservation Area; and
- Conserve agricultural and forest resource land, with special focus on the County's Priority Preservation Area.

The applicable policies and actions include:

- Refine the Priority Preservation Area map and acreage goals as part of the recertification of the County's agricultural land preservation program;
- Review the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program. Aggressive use of the TDR program will be critical to preserving the PPA especially in the Rural Conservation District, which has less protective zoning than the Resource Protection District.
- Continue to participate in land preservation programs including the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, Program Open Space, Rural Legacy, Forest Legacy, and those operated by land trusts and other land preservation organizations.
- Continue to fund the County's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program and seek to increase funding.
- Consider other types of land preservation, including PDR by parties other than the county or state.

2020 Strategic Plan

The Cecil County 2020 Strategic Plan represents the County's vision, mission, values, and priorities for the near future. The Strategic Plan is the overarching framework that drives tactical planning advanced through departments, agencies, and organizations throughout the County. Agricultural preservation is part of the plan in the following goals:

Infrastructure Priority

Goal 4.1 - *Promote and use the local, state, federal, and private agricultural land preservation programs to keep farming viable in the County.*

Goal 4.4 - *Cecil County will implement improvements in infrastructure, consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan, that result in creating an enhanced quality of life for citizens and opportunities for residential and economic development while protecting rural character and the environment.*

Economic Development Priority

Goal 5.1 - *Support efforts to expand the agriculture business sector.*

Fiscal Stability Priority

Goal 2.2 - *Advance budget strategies that consider the needed support to advance priorities in the County's Strategic Plan.*

Goal 4.2 - *Provide priority consideration to the funding needs associated with the County's Strategic Plan.*

Agricultural Preservation Protection Goals

In September 2000, the Cecil County Board of County Commissioners adopted a resolution that set a goal of preserving 55,000 acres of farmland (25,000 in the RCD and 30,000 in the RPD) by 2025.

In order to facilitate this goal, the County's Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board adopted the following goals and objectives on November 12, 2015 to shape and form the policies on the County's agricultural land preservation programs.

Mission

Preservation of agricultural lands provides the base for which the economic, environmental, and societal benefits are sustained in Cecil County for current and future generations.

Goals & Objectives

Goal I - Preserve a land base for agriculture with the advantageous location relative to the Delmarva Peninsula and Lancaster farming communities.

- A. Protect agrarian lands to maintain the agricultural presence for future generations.
- B. Recognizing the strength of agriculture to the economic stability of Cecil County, an investment in land preservation provides the opportunity for agriculture to continue as a top industry.
- C. Maintain the rural character and equity value of land.

Goal II- Pursue agricultural lands of the highest quality.

- A. Preserve lands with the highest quality soils.
- B. Preserve contiguous acres of farm land.
- C. Maintain proper nutrient management, soil conservation, and water quality.

Goal III - Safeguard the Cecil County taxpayers' investment.

- A. Acquire a dedicated revenue source that provides consistent funding so that use of taxpayer dollars can be planned, be more efficiently used, and leveraged to obtain other public and private funding sources.
- B. Incentivize landowners to sell development rights in a manner that is fair to both the landowner and taxpayer.
- C. Cultivate resident awareness that protecting agricultural properties keeps property taxes down for all citizens.

Goal IV - Meet the 55,000 acre agricultural preservation goal by 2025.

- A. Set interim acreage marks for continual assessment of the program's needs.
- B. Setup or refine a secondary program that purchases easements to achieve the acreage goal by 2025.
- C. Encourage and support other active land preservation programs to protect Cecil County agriculture.

Consistency between County and State Goals

Overall, County and State goals are complementary to each other. The County and State share the goals of preserving lands to support agricultural pursuits, protect rural character, preserve large relatively contiguous blocks of land, limit the intrusion of development, and ensure a good return on public investment.

The State and County have different philosophies on similar goals. The State's goal to "*Protect the equity interests of rural landowners in preservation areas by ensuring public commitment and investment in preservation through easement acquisition and incentive programs,*" and the County's goal of protecting private property rights (as stated in the County's comprehensive plan) initially appear not to conflict. However, it is difficult to reconcile these philosophies with the State's recent legislation and administrative initiatives that have sought to protect farmland by regulation rather than through easement acquisition and incentive programs. The County believes that having a truly voluntary program that incentivizes landowners to place their properties in preservation provides a partnership to accomplish the land preservation goals together. This reinforces the notion that there exists a public commitment to land preservation and that the taxpayers' investment is supported.

B. Current Implementation Program

The implementation program, as defined for purposes of this plan, is comprised of all of the programs and mechanisms currently operating in Cecil County to achieve County and State agricultural land preservation goals.

1. Designated Preservation Areas

Fair Hill Rural Legacy Area – The FHRLA is located in the northeastern part of Cecil County. Properties within can qualify for preservation easements through the Rural Legacy Program.

Priority Preservation Area – There are three separate areas designated as Priority Preservation Areas on the interim PPA map contained in the County’s Comprehensive Plan. These areas consist of over 125,000 acres.

Agricultural Security Corridor – Harvest Crescent Rural Legacy Area – Also known as the Harvest Crescent Rural Legacy Area, this area is located in the southern part of Cecil County. Properties within can qualify for preservation easements through the Rural Legacy Program.

2. Easement Acquisition Mechanisms

Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) - Started in 1967, MET is operated by Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff, but easements are accepted by donation only. MET provides support to smaller land trusts throughout the state. Interested in easements on lands having scenic value, MET’s goal is “to conserve, improve, stimulate, and perpetuate the aesthetic, natural, health and welfare, scenic, and cultural qualities of the environment, including, but not limited to land, water, air, wildlife, scenic qualities, [and] open spaces.”

Program Open Space (POS) - Established in 1969, Program Open Space epitomizes Maryland’s long-term commitment to conserving natural resources while providing exceptional outdoor recreation opportunities. POS preserves natural areas for public recreation and wildlife protection across Maryland through the purchase of fee-simple and easement acquisitions. Fee simple purchases are funded by DNR and administered as State Parks, Forests, and Wildlife and Fisheries Management Areas.

Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) - Started in 1977, MALPF is the most popular agricultural preservation program in Cecil County. Funded through the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), MALPF focuses on preservation of productive agricultural land. Between 2015 and 2020 the average appraisal price for an easement was \$7,136.21 per acre.

Land Trusts

Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC) - ESLC was founded in 1990 as a result of widespread concern that the Eastern Shore’s important wildlife habitat and prime farmland were being consumed by sprawling development. The decision was made by the founders to preserve land on Maryland’s Eastern Shore in order to keep prime farmland in agriculture, to protect

unique natural areas, and to perpetually monitor those lands to ensure that preservation is permanent. ESLC is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. In Cecil County, the ESLC works solely in areas south of the C&D Canal.

Cecil Land Trust (CLT) - Founded in 1999, CLT is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that provides assistance to landowners wanting to preserve their properties. Working solely in areas north of the C&D Canal, CLT seeks easements that preserve farmland, woodlands, natural habitat, and historic rural communities in Cecil County.

Rural Legacy Program - Established in 1997, Maryland's Rural Legacy Program provides funding to preserve large, contiguous tracts of land and to enhance natural resource, agricultural, forestry and environmental protection while supporting a sustainable land base for natural resource-based industries. Land conservation investments are targeted to protect the most ecologically valuable properties that most directly impact Chesapeake Bay and local waterway health. This program is funded by DNR. Cecil County has two Rural Legacy Areas.

Fair Hill RLA - The CLT is the sponsor of this area.

Agricultural Security Corridor – Harvest Crescent Rural Legacy Area - The ESLC is the sponsor of this area.

Purchase of Development Rights - Established in 2005 by the Cecil County Board of County Commissioners, the program's purpose is to provide landowners with another option to preserve their land. Its mission is to provide the base through which the economic, environmental, and societal benefits are sustained in Cecil County for current and future generations. Funding, which comes from a portion of the recordation tax, can include up to one million dollars per year, but actual funding levels are subject to County Council budgetary decisions each year.

Transfer of Development Rights - There are currently two methods to execute the TDR program:

TDR through the development process - A developer seeking extra density in areas of the County where growth is desired (receiving area) will buy development rights from a landowner where preservation is desired (sending area). To incentivize the sending area landowner, they can sell more development rights than what would be permitted if the property was actually subdivided. Similarly, the receiving area developer gains additional density if TDRs are used.

TDR Bank - The County may purchase development rights from a sending area landowner to sell, hold, or retire. The receiving area landowner then may buy the development rights from the County for up to 120% of fair market value. Initially planned to be funded through Video Lottery Terminal and Budgetary outlays, the program is envisioned as ultimately being self-sustaining through the acquisition and sale of development rights.

Preservation District - Until 2007 enrollment in this program was required in order for a property to be considered for a MALPF easement, but that requirement has since been eliminated. Cecil County Government has continued the program to provide landowners a tax incentive to get into the preservation program. Enrollment shows a commitment by the landowner towards preservation, and studies have shown that preservation districts keep landowners interested in preservation six years longer than those

not in a district. Landowners in this program are provided a 50% property tax credit on their property's land value, and in return, they voluntarily commit not to develop their properties for a minimum of five years. After completion of the five year commitment, landowners may opt to continue or to exit the program.

3. Funding for Easement Acquisition

Funding for MALPF, Rural Legacy, POS, and the administrative costs for MET come from Program Open Space funds. These funds come from a 0.5 cents tax on the consideration associated with land transfers throughout the state. Program Open Space monies also fund parks and trail programs for local jurisdictions.

Funding for the County's PDR and TDR programs can come from the County's recordation tax. Eighty cents of every \$500 of consideration, up to 1 million dollars per year, may be used for land preservation. The County is also certified which allows 75% of agricultural transfer tax revenues to remain in Cecil County for land preservation programs. In the past, the County has also used funds generated from the video lottery terminals (VLT) in Perryville to fund the program.

The ESLC and CLT are non-governmental organizations that receive their funding through non-government sources. Easement acquisitions for these programs are either through donation, grant funds, matching programs, or a mix of the aforementioned sources.

Table IV - 3 Summary of Funds for Acquisition

The table below summarizes the various sources of funding used for land preservation efforts in Cecil County over the past 21 years.

Fiscal Year	Agricultural Transfer Tax	County General Fund	MALPF	County Purchase of Development Rights	Federal Farmland Protection Program	Other	Rural Legacy - Harvest Crescent	Rural Legacy - Fair Hill	Program Open Space (Stateside)	Total
2000	\$156,697		\$1,505,122							\$1,661,819
2001	\$197,015	\$50,000	\$1,042,280			\$280,000	\$529,886			\$2,099,181
2002	\$185,449	\$50,000	\$742,007		\$132,250	\$571,368	\$1,314,588	\$1,377,340		\$4,373,002
2003	\$220,386	\$60,000	\$2,088,073		\$220,100		\$630,792			\$3,219,351
2004	\$207,489	\$130,000	\$2,695,027		\$397,400		\$789,931			\$4,219,847
2005	\$528,042			\$1,000,000	\$310,800					\$1,838,842
2006	\$1,020,756		\$96,480	\$1,074,250	\$559,826					\$2,751,312
2007	\$586,816		\$3,307,470	\$1,000,000	\$844,433					\$5,738,719
2008	\$773,834		\$3,414,460	\$500,000						\$4,688,294
2009	\$89,440		\$3,802,760		\$630,541					\$4,522,740
2010	\$25,132		\$865,607				\$3,504,961	\$1,885,095		\$6,280,796
2011	\$23,841		\$2,195,837				\$2,371,639			\$4,591,318
2012	\$9,579				\$132,074	\$500,000			\$5,017,813	\$5,659,466
2013	\$15,792		\$1,257,540		\$244,000	\$400,000				\$1,917,332
2014	\$14,053		\$1,295,260		\$720,000					\$2,029,313
2015	\$10,893								\$1,174,734	\$1,185,627
2016	\$26,144.25									\$26,144
2017	\$57,480.50		\$471,750							\$529,231
2018	\$8,491.50		\$1,488,492							\$1,496,984
2019	\$71,233.66		\$821,224			\$89,000		\$1,606,230		\$2,587,688
2020	\$95,658		\$697,291				\$2,800,000	\$1,374,673		\$4,967,622
2021			\$710,611	\$497,915*				\$910,280		\$1,620,891
Total	\$4,324,221	\$290,000	\$27,786,678	\$3,574,250	\$4,191,424	\$1,840,368	\$11,941,797	\$6,243,338	\$6,192,547	\$68,005,515

In addition, Table IV-4 (shown on the following page) lists the amount of yearly acreage of easement acquisitions that have occurred in Cecil County since 1980.

Table IV-4 - Easement acquisitions by program each year (all numbers are in acres)

	Yearly Total	MALPF	PDR	Rural Legacy - ASC- Harvest Crescent Area	Rural Legacy - Fair Hill Area	Forest Legacy	MET	CLT	ESLC	Program Open Space	Other Easements
1980	544						400				144
1984	131						131				
1985	33										33
1986	221						210				11
1987	102	102									
1988	194	194									
1989	284	30					254				
1990	919	822					97				
1991	1,281	183					1,099				
1993	771	647					125				
1994	1,089	1,076									13
1995	1,205	896					55				254
1996	1,827	1,827									
1997	672	672									
1998	754	425					181	148			
1999	2,074	1,374				668	31				
2000	568	454						114			
2001	909	277		87			179	87	279		
2002	3,067	1,753		879	243			192			
2003	1,231	979		147			42		63		
2004	1,191	540		387			198	66			
2005	266	80				186					
2006	250		108		137						5
2007	1,648	607		479	171		117	64	209		
2008	1,682	718	202		172		590				
2009	550	142			52				355		
2010	872	308	146		303			115			
2011	577									577	
2012	370	220						143			7
2013	483							483			35
2014	617	307					139			171	
2015											
2016	662	120	542								
2017	349						347	2			
2018	1,516	486			554			29			447
2019	206				206						
2020	1,028	219		441	368						
2021											
	30,143	15,456	998	2,420	2,207	854	4,196	1,443	907	748	949

4. Land Use Management Authority

Zoning

The Comprehensive Plan’s Resource Protection District and Rural Conservation District are implemented through the County’s Zoning Ordinance. The Southern Agricultural-Residential District (SAR) largely follows the RPD, and the Northern Agricultural-Residential District (NAR) largely follows the RCD. The purposes of the zoning districts are as follows:

NAR “...maintain the existing rural character of the County by encouraging the continuation of agricultural and forestry uses.....Low density residential development is permitted.”

SAR “...encourage the retention and maintenance of agricultural land, agricultural industry and agriculturally-related uses, forestry and compatible rural uses to support the agricultural economy of the County..... Low density residential development is permitted.”

The table below summarizes the permitted residential development densities in these districts.

Table Summary of Permitted Residential Development Density in Agricultural-Residential Districts

Zoning District	Minor Subdivision (up to 5 lots from the 1976 lot of record)	Major Subdivision (anything over 5 lots from the 1976 lot of record)	
		Standard	Permitted density with additional Open Space
NAR	1 du per acre	1 du per 10 acres	No bonus density permitted.
SAR	1 du per acre	1 du per 20 acres	No bonus density permitted.

du = Dwelling unit.

Right-to-Farm

Cecil County’s Zoning Ordinance first included right-to-farm legislation in 1993. It was amended in 2000 to create an Agricultural Reconciliation Committee to arbitrate and resolve disputes, and it requires that purchasers or lessees of property sign a disclosure statement regarding the existence of the right-to-farm ordinance.

5. Farming Assistance Programs

In 2000 an agricultural coordinator position was established in the Cecil County Office of Economic Development to assist in the development and marketing of Cecil County agricultural products. In 2002 an Agricultural Advisory Board was established as part of the County’s Economic Development Commission to work with the agricultural coordinator. Also in 2002 an equine industry task force was established to measure and track the economic impact of this industry on the County.

Among the coordinator’s achievements have been establishing two farmers’ markets in Fair Hill and in Chesapeake City, establishing an internet web site (www.cecilbusiness.org), marketing new agricultural businesses, and working with the County Commissioners on changes to agricultural fees and permits.

C. Evaluation of Agricultural Land Preservation Program/Policy Implementation

1. Overall strategy

Cecil County’s overall preservation strategy contains many of the elements necessary to be effective in securing a land base for the agricultural industry and, in doing so, protect the agricultural heritage and rural character of the County. However, full implementation of the strategy is not yet complete and much work remains to be done.

Cecil County has made incremental strides since the 2017 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan. Specifically, the County has:

- Maintained its State certification of the County’s agricultural land preservation activities;
- Permanently preserved approximately 6,198 acres of farmland since the 2017 report.
- Continued support of preservation within the County’s two rural legacy areas.
- Provided exactly \$215,712.13 in tax credits to landowners in MALPF easement or district properties since FY 2017.

2. Funding

Current funding levels will be insufficient to meet County goals. Based on current funding levels, it would take the County 98.05 years to acquire easements on an additional 24,716 acres (Table IV-5). There is significant interest in selling easements. Between 2016 and 2021 there were 98 applicants to the MALPF program and 8 preservation districts established in Cecil County.

Table IV-5 Funding Analysis

Need/ Funding		Explanation/Source
Acres required by 2025	24,716	55,000-acre goal (30,284 acres are already preserved.)
Average easement cost	\$7,136.21 per acre	Average of all appraisals for the MALPF program in FY15, FY17, FY19 & FY20.
Total need	\$176,378,566.36	24,716 acres x \$7,136.21 per acre
Average annual funding FY15 to FY20	\$1,798,882	Table IV-3.
Years required	98.05	\$176,378,566.36/\$1,798,882

3. Land Use Management Tools

As described in Section B (Current Implementation Program) Cecil County's key land use management tool for agricultural land preservation are the NAR and SAR zoning districts. Residential densities permitted in these districts are one dwelling unit per ten acres and one dwelling unit per twenty acres, respectively.

In 2010, the Cecil County Planning Commission adopted a new Comprehensive Plan. The Commission made several major recommendations relating to agricultural land preservation. The Planning Commission's recommendations recognize that setting the conditions for and encouraging growth in designated growth areas is a necessary complement to land preservation.

Since that time Cecil County has adopted a new Zoning Ordinance that continues the residential densities of the NAR and SAR zoning districts. A tier map as required by the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 has been adopted, and a new Master Water & Sewer Plan was adopted (August 2015) to further plan for growth in the appropriate areas of the County.

In addition to the County's designated preservation areas (see IV.B.1), these land management tools work together to encourage the conservation of agricultural and forested lands; encourage sustainable agribusiness and other natural resource based industries; maintain the equity value of agricultural land and the rural character of the County; and protect landowners' property rights.

4. Combined performance of preservation tools

The tools Cecil County currently uses are partially successful in preserving farmland. Since 1980 almost 30,300 acres of farmland have been permanently protected in Cecil County, and the rate of farmland loss has been less than in other counties. However, trends indicate that unless much more is done, Cecil County will not achieve its farmland protection goal.

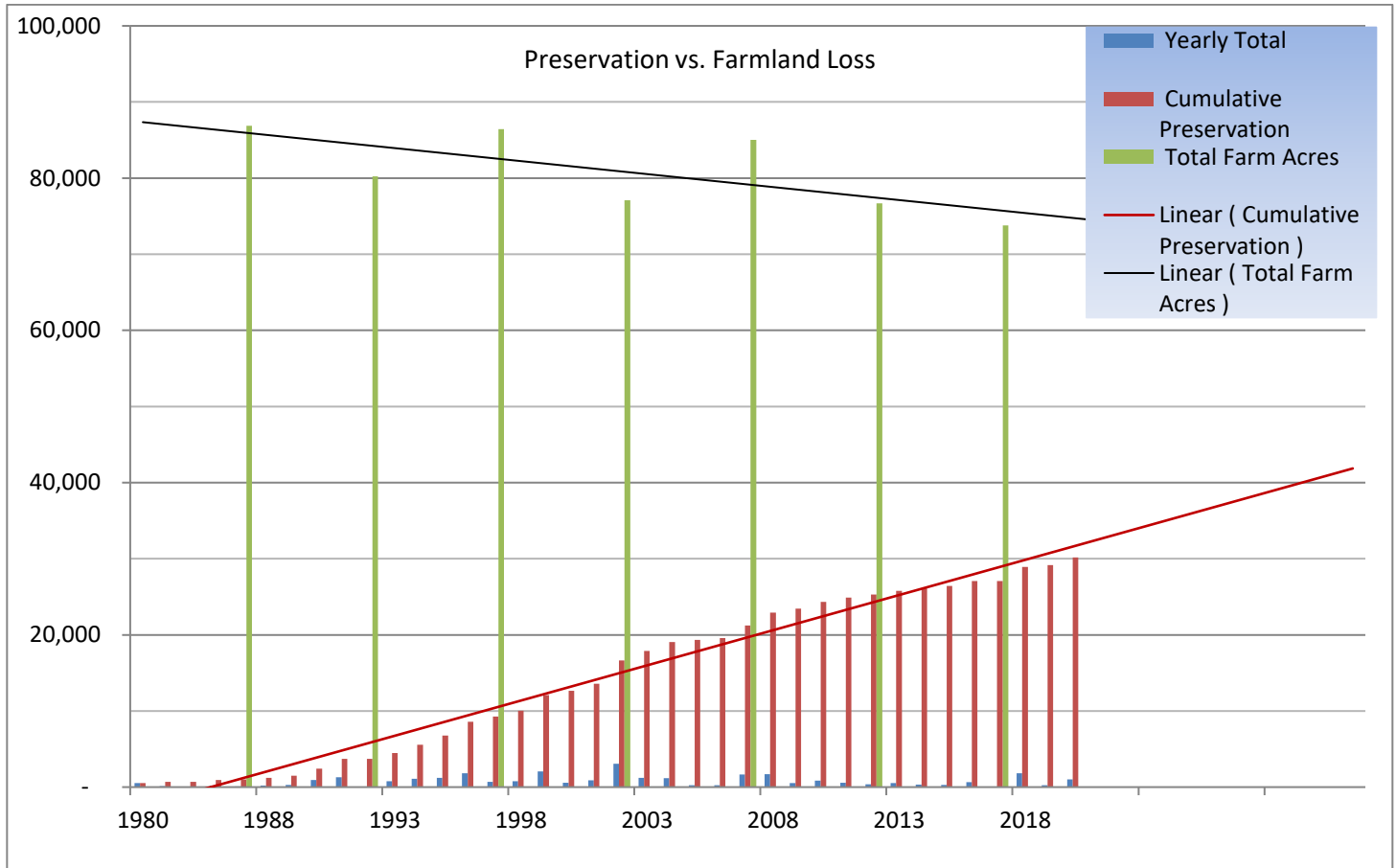
To illustrate this, Figure IV-4 shows trends in preservation versus loss of farmland. Taken from the Census of Agriculture, farmland acreage is shown from 1982 to 2017. The rate of farmland loss is projected over time along with the current rate of easement protection of agricultural land. The County's goal of 55,000 acres by 2025 is noted and the timeframe (2022) relates to the State of Maryland's target date to have protected 1.03 million acres of farmland statewide.

Conclusions from the analysis are as follows:

- Cecil County will not achieve its farmland protection goal unless the rate of easement acquisition increases substantially.
- In 1982, there were 94,866 acres of farmland in Cecil County.
- While the data provided by the Census of Agriculture varies, between 1982 and 2017 over 22% of the County's farmland has been lost. Conversely, over 31% of farmland has been permanently protected.

- The County's goal is to preserve an additional 30% of the 1982 acreage. If successful this would leave 16% unprotected farmland in Cecil County. It took the county over 40 years to protect 31%, while in the same period 22% of farmland was lost. If this trend continues, the County will no longer have a pool of farmland sufficient to meet its goal.

Figure IV-4 Preservation Versus Loss of Farmland



Source: Cecil County Department of Planning, Zoning; NASS, US Department of Agriculture

5. Farming and farming assistance programs

The County's farming assistance activities are diverse. They include the work of the Soil Conservation District, the Cecil County Farm Bureau, the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service, Cecil County Farmers' Market Association, and the Office of Economic Development. Advisory boards and commissions include the Economic Development Commission (EDC), Agricultural Advisory Board, Equine Industry Task Force, the Business and Education Partnership Advisory Council, and the Career Preparedness Education Committee (CPEC).

6. Summary of needed improvements in the implementation program

In summary, the needed improvements in the implementation program are as follows:

1. Acquire a dedicated revenue source that provides a consistent funding source so that the use of taxpayer dollars can be planned, be more efficiently used, and be leveraged to obtain other private and public funding sources;
2. Increase preservation acquisitions through the County's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs;
3. Increase MALPF funding for agricultural easement acquisition to meet the demand to sell easements;
4. Refine and increase funding for the County's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program;
5. Review and refine the County's Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program; and
6. Continue to work with partner organizations to meet mutually beneficial acreage and land use goals.

D. Program Development Strategy

This section describes Cecil County's program development strategy for agricultural land preservation. Recommended actions on the part of the State are noted. The program strategy is based in part on the evaluation in this chapter, but it relies heavily on the extensive research, planning, and analysis conducted over the past three years in the following efforts:

- 2010 Cecil County Comprehensive Plan
- Purchase of Development Rights program
- Transfer of Development Rights program
- Cecil County 2018 Recertification Report.
- Cecil County Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board 's 2015 Land Preservation Program Review.
- Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Committee Report, February 2016 - Maryland Department of Planning.

1. Land use management

a. Continue to support and refine the Transfer of Developments Rights (TDR) Program.

TDR is a tool that allows a landowner to transfer the right to develop a property located in one part of the County to another property located in another part of the County. A key benefit of a TDR program is that it can preserve agricultural land at zero public cost. Cecil County's TDR program was adopted in 2007, and it continues to need refinement to incentivize its use. The Maryland Department of Planning formed a committee in 2015-2016 to study the use of TDRs throughout the state. Cecil County staff served on this committee which resulted in a final report that outlines the necessary elements and best practices of a successful TDR program. Cecil County should review its land use policies necessary to implement a successful TDR program.

b. Incentivize development opportunities in designated growth areas.

While the pressure to develop rural land has slowed since the downzoning of 2007, using tools to guide growth to desired areas is just as vital to protecting agricultural lands. Growth is inevitable, and thus, guiding where it occurs has long term benefits to the County. The key to guiding growth is having adequate water and sewer infrastructure. The most recent Cecil County Master Water & Sewer Plan (MWSP) provides for immediate expansion within the County's designated growth corridor. Multiple private and public entities have water and/or sewer facilities that can accommodate the growth. It is important that expansion of these systems occur in a coordinated manner.

c. Reconsider permitted development policies.

While there is success in keeping growth to a minimum in the NAR & SAR zoning districts, there is a significant number of approved, but un-built subdivisions in these areas. The County's 2018 certification report found that while only five new lots were created between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2017, there is a backlog of 591 proposed lots within the PPA. Approved by the Planning Commission prior to the recent recession, certain approvals associated with these lots do not expire. A review of the County's development policies should be completed to ensure that development proposals meet the County's land use goals at the time of construction.

2. Easement acquisitions

a. Increase State funding for the state land preservation programs.

In the 2016 the Maryland General Assembly passed a bill that repays \$60 million dollars diverted from land preservation programs during the recession. While this does not represent full payback of the diverted funds, it does assist the programs to get back on track. MALPF's FY2017 cycle was the last time that applications were accepted on a biennial basis. In subsequent fiscal years, application cycles have returned to an annual basis. The Rural Legacy program experienced years where no money was set aside for acquisitions but has been funded consistently in recent years.

Cecil County can assist in MALPF efforts via MALPF's matching funds program. For every two dollars that the County contributes to a MALPF application cycle, the state adds an additional 150% to that amount. Normally, Cecil County has used funds collected through the agricultural transfer tax for this purpose, but in years prior to the recession, operating budget funds were added to that contribution. In order to acquire additional MALPF easements, Cecil County should return to said policy. Increased funding would enable the County to ramp up the pace of easement acquisition.

b. Acquire a dedicated revenue source for County Programs

A dedicated revenue source requires setting aside funds from a specific revenue stream solely for expenditures associated with land preservation. The most successful programs have a dedicated revenue source. The State of Maryland uses a half penny transfer tax to fund Program Open Space, of which the

land preservation programs are a part. Harford County uses half of the County transfer tax for land preservation efforts (the other half goes toward new school construction). Currently the PDR program may be funded using a portion of the recordation tax, but it is subject to annual budgetary decisions.

The PDR program was redesigned in 2020 to allow for optimum use of funds. Applications would be ranked according to percentage of discount between the owner's asking price and the average value of two appraisals. As funding allows, the highest discounted properties would be ranked highest. As funding allows, the highest discounted properties would be ranked highest. The offers extended would be either the owner's asking price, or the average of the two appraisals – whichever is lower. Without a dedicated revenue source, however, the PDR program has not been able to acquire any easements since Fiscal Year 2015.

There are several options for the County to use as a dedicated revenue source, but since doing so requires legislative and budgetary action, the County Council of Cecil County must approve it.

c. Ramp up the pace of easement acquisitions

As noted in Section C.4, because of the rate of farmland loss, the next few years will be critical to agricultural land preservation efforts. Increased funding as described above, together with an aggressive outreach program, will be needed to increase the pace of easement acquisitions.

CHAPTER V

CHAPTER V – NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION

Introduction

This chapter evaluates Cecil County’s implementation strategy to achieve State and County goals for protecting and conserving natural resource lands. These lands contain the forests, wetlands, floodplains, stream buffers and other sensitive natural features identified in Chapter III that help create the County’s rural character.

Natural resource lands provide significant benefits. They help maintain the County’s rural character, the physical attractiveness of developed areas, and provide wildlife habitat, natural filtration for air and water pollutants, and opportunities for resource-based recreation. They form the natural framework around which the built environment is planned and developed, and help provide flood, erosion and sediment control. In return, natural resource lands require few government services, provide opportunities for eco-tourism, and help enhance property values in developed areas.

A. Goals for Natural Resource Land Conservation

This section describes the State’s and County’s goals for natural resource conservation.

1. State Goals

The State of Maryland’s goals for conservation of natural resource lands include:

1. Identify, protect and restore lands and waterways in Maryland that support important natural resources and ecological functions, through combined use of the following techniques:
 - Public land acquisition and stewardship;
 - Private land conservation easements and stewardship practices through purchased or donated easement programs;
 - Local land use management plans procedures that conserve natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas and minimize impacts to resource lands when development occurs;
 - Incentives for resource-based economies that increase the retention of forests, wetlands or agricultural lands;
 - Avoidance of impacts on natural resources by publicly funded infrastructure development projects; and
 - Appropriate mitigation response, commensurate with the value of the affect resource. .
2. Focus conservation and restoration activities on priority areas, according to a strategic framework such as Targeted Ecological Areas (TEAs) in GreenPrint (which is not to be confused with the former easement program also called GreenPrint).
3. Conserve and restore species of concern and important habitat types that may fall outside of designated green infrastructure (examples include: rock outcrops, karst systems, caves, shale barren communities, grasslands, shoreline beach and dune systems, mud flats, not forested islands, etc.)
4. Focus conservation and restoration activities on priority areas within the statewide green infrastructure.
5. Develop a more comprehensive inventory of natural resource lands and environmentally sensitive areas to assist State and local implementation programs.

6. Establish measurable objectives for natural resource conservation and an integrated state/local strategy to achieve them through state and local implementation programs.
7. Assess the combined ability of State and local programs to achieve the following:
 - Expand and connect forests, farmlands, and other natural lands as a network of contiguous green infrastructure;
 - Protect critical terrestrial and aquatic habitats, biological communities, and populations;
 - Manage watersheds in ways that protect, conserve, and restore stream corridors, riparian forest buffers, wetlands, floodplains, and aquifer recharge areas and their associated hydrologic and water quality functions;
 - Adopt coordinated land and watershed management strategies that recognize the critical links between growth management and aquatic biodiversity and fisheries production; and
 - Support a productive forestland base and forest resource industry, emphasizing economic viability of privately owned forestland.

2. County Goals

Cecil County's Comprehensive Plan provides the framework and foundation for the County's natural resource conservation goals and strategies. These goals in turn form the basis for policies, resource protection performance standards and guidelines in the zoning ordinance subdivision regulations, and regulations for wetlands, floodplain protection, stormwater management, sediment and erosion control, etc. Together, each contributes to a framework for natural resource conservation that is compatible with State goals.

Cecil County's efforts to protect natural resources are grounded in following the Comprehensive Plan's major goal statements for natural resources. These goals complement the State's goals pertaining to protection of waterways; using land use management techniques and regulations to protect sensitive areas; and working with others to achieve natural resource goals. Chapter 7 of the Comprehensive Plan lists specific goals and objectives, including:

- Protect environmentally sensitive resources and natural features in all areas of the County, comprising steep slopes, streams, wetlands, floodplains, and habitat including the habitats of threatened or endangered species;
- Protect 80 percent of the remaining undeveloped land in the designated Priority Preservation Area;
- Conserve agricultural and forest resource land, with special focus on the County's Priority Preservation Area;
- Develop a systematic approach to protect the County's green infrastructure resources; and
- Manage watersheds in ways that protect, conserve and restore their hydrologic and water quality functions.

Three of the Comprehensive Plan's eleven land use districts particularly emphasize land conservation and resource protection (see Figure III-5).

- The Rural Conservation District (RCD) covers most of the Elk Neck peninsula and rural areas north of the I-95/US 40 corridor. This district contains approximately 43% of the County's land area. The primary purpose of the RCD is to "encourage the retention of agricultural and forestry uses and to support the County's agricultural industry."
- The Resource Protection District (RPD) located south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal comprises about 28% of the County's land area. This area's focus involves "encouraging retention of agricultural land and agricultural related activities to support the County's agricultural industry."

- The Mineral Extraction District (MED), the majority of which is within the I-95/US 40 corridor, contains 8,400 acres. The MED serves to protect the County’s economically important mineral resources, protect surrounding land uses from the effects of mining, and provide for the restoration of mineral extraction sites after mining.

In addition, through the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program, the County limits growth in approximately 29,200 acres, or 12 percent of the County’s land area, of sensitive Critical Area lands to help minimize impacts on water quality and habitat.

The Comprehensive Plan also contains performance standards for natural resource and stormwater management goals. These standards are implemented through the County’s zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations and help support State goals. The goals and standards restrict development in floodplains, on steep slopes, and in other sensitive areas to protect water quality and plant and animal habitat. The performance standards address stream, wetland, and sensitive soils setbacks and buffers, steep slopes, rare, threatened and endangered species, forest cover, and habitat enhancement. The zoning ordinance includes provisions pertaining to natural resources, such as:

- Establishment of a 110 foot perennial stream buffer (with expansion to 160 feet in certain instances) and a 25 foot intermittent stream buffer;
- Restricting development on steep slopes;
- Protection of rare, threatened and endangered species (RTES);
- Requiring afforestation and/or reforestation in new subdivisions;
- Establishment of resource protection policies to concentrate development in cluster subdivisions while encouraging measures such as wildlife corridors, open space, forest retention, farmland preservation, and stormwater protections as essential underpinnings of policies to protect the Chesapeake Bay; and
- Establishment of a greenways policy of open space corridors to provide for water quality protection, wildlife habitat, aesthetic relief, recreation, pedestrian transportation and environmental education.

These policies support the State’s green infrastructure goals and help implement State goals to preserve cultural and economic values of natural resource lands.

The 2010 Comprehensive Plan further includes, as incorporated by reference, the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway Management Plan. Said plan promotes heritage tourism and greenway development in Harford and Cecil Counties, and it suggests several methods of pursuing acquisition of easements or land.

The 2010 Comprehensive Plan also includes elements relating to watershed protection, groundwater resources, rural legacy areas, greenways, and tourism.

B. County Implementation Program for Natural Resource Land Conservation

This section discusses major policy components of the County’s implementation program for natural resources conservation.

1. Comprehensive Planning

The Comprehensive Plan establishes the countywide framework for planning and regulatory functions. The framework has three basic elements: concentrating development in designated areas; preserving open space in rural areas; and protecting sensitive areas.

a. Concentrating development in designated Growth Areas

The designated growth areas contain 24% of the County’s land area (see Table 3.5 of the Comprehensive Plan). The Comprehensive Plan’s land use designations are intended to direct growth toward existing population centers and areas adjacent to these centers by setting appropriate densities and coordinating growth with public infrastructure. All designated growth areas ultimately could be served by public sewer, but some areas (i.e. the low density growth areas) are not anticipated to be served by public sewer or water by the current Master Water and Sewer Plan. In general, high growth areas are located along major roads and adjacent to towns, with step down areas (i.e. medium-high, medium, low) that transition to the edges of the designated growth areas.

The strategies espoused by the Comprehensive Plan to concentrate development in the County’s designated growth areas, and conversely discouraging development in rural areas, have been incorporated into the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.

b. Preserving open space in rural areas

Approximately 95,800 acres (43% of the County’s total land area) are in the Rural Conservation District (RCD), and 63,500 acres (28%) are in Resource Protection District (RPD). The best opportunities to preserve open space and natural resources are in these less developed areas of the County. The Comprehensive Plan’s intent is to preserve these areas from development and encroachment in order to maintain the County’s rural character and agricultural land base. In 2020, only 36 building permits for new dwellings, 18% of the total number of similar permits, were issued within these areas.

c. Protecting sensitive areas.

The County’s sensitive area resource protection regulations address protection of steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, streams and their associated buffers, hydric soils, and habitats of rare, threatened, and endangered species (see Section B.5 of this chapter for further details).

Green Infrastructure

The County has some large and contiguous areas of green infrastructure that have remained intact from development. An action item from the Sensitive Areas chapter of the Comprehensive Plan was to consider appointing a broad-based committee to study and evaluate the County’s Green Infrastructure Plan. The 2007 Green Infrastructure Plan was replaced in August 2019. As seen on Map 1 of that plan (see Figure V-1), the largest core areas in the county are:

- The Elk Neck peninsula including Elk Neck State Park, Elk Neck State Forest and the Plum Creek Natural Heritage Area
- The Mineral Extraction District west and north of the Town of Charlestown
- Along the banks of the Susquehanna River in Pilottown, Conowingo, and Port Deposit; and
- Along some the County’s larger streams, especially Octoraro Creek, Northeast Creek, Elk Creek, and the Bohemia and Sassafra Rivers.

Greenways are incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan, as evidenced by Sections 5.4 and 7.2.2 of said plan. Additionally, the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway Management Plan is incorporated by reference.

An oft overlooked “green” asset owned by the County is the railbed of the former Philadelphia and Baltimore Central Railroad. Beginning at the Maryland-Pennsylvania state border near Sylmar Road, the roughly 9 mile railbed connects to another inactive railbed owned by the Bainbridge Development Corporation in Port Deposit. In addition to having value as wildlife habitat, the railbed is planned to become a corridor for walking and hiking enthusiasts.

2. Use of resource data and inventories

The County's planning and development review process uses available State and County inventories of land cover, natural resource lands, protected lands, habitats of rare, threatened and endangered species, and other environmental features. Forest stand delineation plans require review by the Department of Natural Resources to identify the presence habitats of rare, threatened and endangered species (RTES). If RTES are identified, the County requires habitat studies prior to any development approvals.

3. Designated conservation and other natural resource areas

Cecil County's designated conservation areas are the Fair Hill and Harvest Crescent Rural Legacy Areas (RLA) and the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area (see Figure III-6).

The Fair Hill and the Harvest Crescent RLAs were discussed in Chapter IV as their goals are primarily agricultural preservation related.

4. Easements and Funding

Cecil County has established the goal of protecting 80% of the remaining undeveloped land in its designated Priority Preservation Area. As discussed in Chapter IV, the County's easement acquisition efforts have been geared primarily to agricultural land preservation. This is due to the Board of County Commissioners adopting, in the year 2000, a farmland preservation goal of 55,000 acres by 2025:

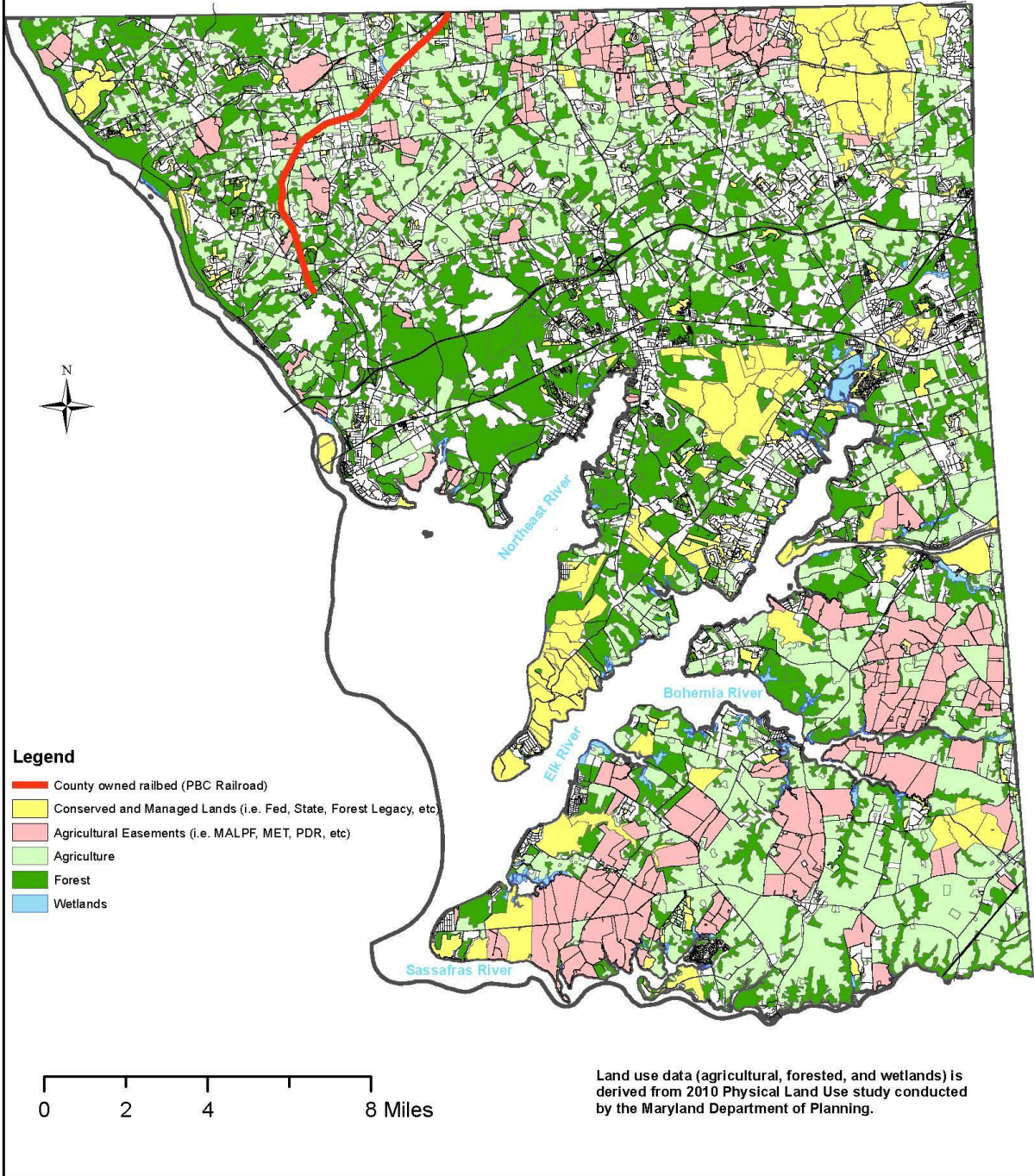
Of a total of approximately 51,884 acres of protected lands in the County, approximately 29,328 acres are primarily agricultural lands. Easements on natural resource lands include 854 acres of forest legacy easements, 4,225 acres of common open space, and 18,542 acres of easements and fee simple holdings held by various government entities.

The Rural Legacy Program has been valuable in that it has enabled the conservation of both farmland and natural resource land. As of February 2021, over 4,626 acres of land has been preserved using Rural Legacy funding.

Of the land in the County's recreation and open space inventory (Appendix D), approximately 14,219 acres are state and federal natural resource lands including 5,613 acres in the Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area and 5,718 acres in the Elk Neck State Park and State Forest.

No County funds are currently specifically dedicated for natural resource land easement acquisition or easement protection, although agricultural easements frequently also contain natural resource land. For example, an easement purchased on an agricultural property via the County's PDR program may contain woodlands, wetlands, or sensitive habitats.

**Figure V-1
Green Infrastructure**



5. Planning and Land Use Management Authority

The major components of the County's planning strategy to implement natural resource goals are its land use management, zoning and subdivision authority, and various easement acquisition programs.

Key zoning and subdivision regulations relating to natural resources protection are summarized in Table V-1. As development occurs, these regulations help protect sensitive resource lands, and provide opportunities to add to the County's greenways network.

Some natural resource and watershed inventory and assessment work has been completed by the State and by others that, in combination with the County's existing green infrastructure, provides a basis for achieving the County's natural resource protection goals.

Subwatersheds

A watershed is a land area that contributes runoff to a particular waterway. Because watersheds for large water bodies (such as the Chesapeake Bay) can be extensive, watersheds are broken down into smaller geographic units called subwatersheds. The County's subwatersheds are identified in Table III-3.

According to Maryland's Searchable Integrated Report Database (sometimes known as the Combined 303(d)/305(b) List), Cecil County's watersheds exhibit a range of health characteristics. The database describes five different categories of water quality, including:

Category 1 - waters attaining all standards;

Category 2 - waters attaining some standards;

Category 3 - waters with insufficient information to determine if water quality standards are attained;

Category 4 – impaired or threatened waters that do not need or have already completed a TMDL; and

Category 5 - impaired waters for which a TMDL (total maximum daily load) is required.

None of Cecil County's subwatersheds have a Category 1 rating, but however, seven subwatersheds (Big Elk Creek, Conowingo Dam, Furnace Bay, Lower Susquehanna River, Northeast River, Octoraro Creek, and the Sassafras River) have a Category 2 rating, according to data from 2014. The remaining six subwatersheds (Back Creek, Bohemia River, Christina River, Little Elk Creek, Lower Elk River, and Upper Elk River) all have a Category 3 rating.

Specific TMDLs exist for high water temperature (Furnace Bay, Lower Susquehanna River, and Octoraro Creek) and PCB found in fish tissue (Conowingo Dam and Lower Susquehanna River).

Tributary Strategies

Tributary Strategies are State coordinated programs that describe ways in which nutrient pollution loads can be reduced in subwatersheds that drain into the Chesapeake Bay. Cecil County is at the head of the Chesapeake Bay and is thus located in two tributary watersheds: the Upper Eastern Shore Watershed and the Upper Western Shore Watershed.

Table V-1 Cecil County Natural Resources Protection Regulations Summary

Subject	Code Reference	Criteria
Environmental Standards	Zoning Ordinance Article IX, Section 174	<p>For the actual wording of the requirements, please see Cecil County’s Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes 110 foot perennial stream and 25 foot intermittent stream buffers, expandable to 160 feet if associated with hydric or highly erodible soils and slopes greater than 15 percent; dedication to the County is required if land is designated on Greenways Plan. • Requires a minimum 25-foot non-tidal wetlands buffer. • Prohibits development on slopes over 25 percent and restricts development on 15-25 percent slopes; • Protects all rare, threatened and endangered species designated in MD DNRs Natural Heritage Program; and • Requires meeting forest conservation standards.
Chesapeake Bay Critical Area (CBCA)	Zoning Ordinance, Article XI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires maximum protection of natural resources and shoreline areas within the designated CBCA by establishing minimum 110 foot buffers beyond the Critical Area boundary; applies to all land and water within 1,000 feet beyond private wetland and heads of tide boundaries • Many other requirements such as land use, density limits, habitat and greenway corridor protections, and buffer requirements apply in the CBCA’s three designated areas: Intensely Developed, Limited Development, and Resource Conservation Areas.
Floodplains	Zoning Ordinance, Part III, Sections 224-244	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires site plans, stormwater management, erosion and sediment control plans, and permits for all development within the 100-year flood elevation for tidal and non-tidal areas. Sediment and stormwater management and ground cover remediation plans are required for any disturbances to floodplains. • Requires a Flood Protection Setback for waters of the State. 100 foot minimum setback if a floodplain; 50 feet from all other tributaries.
Greenways	Zoning Ordinance Section 183	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires any minor or major subdivision, or site plan, proposing development on land shown on the County’s Greenways and Unofficial Bikeways Map to dedicate the necessary portion of land for public use or provide an easement.
Open Space	Zoning Ordinance Sections 176-182	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires open space in all major subdivisions over 10 units and all planned unit developments to serve recreational purposes, preserve significant site features and open space; • Must consider natural, and cultural/historic features. May include up to 40 percent nontidal or tidal wetlands; • May require dedication if deemed necessary for general public use.
Cluster Subdivision	Subdivision Regs, Article VI, Section 6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cluster subdivisions are intended to encourage the set aside of usable open space by allowing smaller lot sizes on land not preserved for open space. Cluster subdivision design is often used in the Northern and Southern Agricultural Residential zoning districts where preserving 60 percent of the subdivision as permanent open space is required.
Forest Conservation	Subdivision Regs, Article VI, Section 7.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forested lands to be subdivided must have Soil Conservation District approved sediment control plans, County grading permits and must comply with specific reforestation and/or afforestation plans. The county has a Forest Conservation Technical Manual that establishes performance standards for preparing forest stand delineations and conservation plans.

Other Initiatives

Several non-regulatory initiatives and approaches to natural resource conservation have been pursued both by Cecil County Government and by private organizations. While the private organizations listed herein are not endorsed by the County, they are included here as examples of initiatives in which the County could partner in the future (see Section D. Recommendations).

Subwatershed Assessments and Plans

The Cecil County Department of Public Works, as part of its Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) strategy, has prepared subwatershed assessments for many of the County's subwatersheds. As a precursor to these more detailed plans, land use assessments for each subwatershed were conducted. These land use assessments provide valuable "information at a glance" including population, total acreage, and the acreage associated with fourteen standardized physical land uses.

Since the last Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan, the following detailed subwatershed assessments have been conducted:

- Northeast River watershed (March 2013; **June 2019 Update**)
- Back Creek, Bohemia River, and Lower Elk River (July 2016)
- Christina River; Conowingo & Octoraro Creek watershed (June 2017)

Additionally, since the last LPPRP the County has used previous assessments to obtain grant funding to commence in creating the North East Creek Master Watershed Plan with an anticipated in 2022.

Watershed Associations

These non-governmental organizations, comprised of civic minded and environmentally conscious citizen volunteers, are dedicated to protecting and conserving the natural resources of individual watersheds. With varying membership sizes and various interests, the watershed associations in Cecil County include:

- Elk and North East Rivers Watershed Association <http://www.elkandnortheastrivers.org/>
- Friends of the Bohemia, Inc. <http://www.friendsofthebohemia.org/>
- Sassafras River Association <http://www.sassafrasriver.org/>
- The Octoraro Watershed Association <http://theowa.org/>

Watershed Stewards Academy (WSA)

Begun in 2014 as a cooperative effort between the Cecil County Department of Public Works and the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension, the WSA is a program that trains adult community leaders in ways to reduce polluted stormwater runoff, improve local water quality, and help Maryland to meet its requirements for reductions in nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment under the Chesapeake Bay TMDL.

WSA participants complete an intensive 16-course training program consisting of classroom and hands-on field work, a class project, and an individual capstone project. Once trained, Master Watershed Stewards work with other members of their communities to:

- Assess watersheds to help identify sources of pollution and restoration opportunities;
- Educate their community on pollution sources and how to reduce them;

- Implement small-scale stormwater management practices such as installing rain barrels or constructing rain gardens;
- Inspect and/or maintain small-scale stormwater management Best Management Practices (BMP's); and
- Connect communities with environmental resources and people who can help restore watersheds.

6. Other Programs, Eco-Tourism and Resource-Based Recreation

The Comprehensive Plan encourages both heritage tourism and resource-based recreation in support of State goals.

Both activities are complementary components to the County's natural resource conservation program strategy. The Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway Management Plan's incorporation into the Comprehensive Plan documents the Susquehanna River's cultural, natural, and recreational resources and is designed to increase and enhance visitation in the region.

Cecil County has an active historic preservation program. There are approximately 1,100 historic sites and structures, of which 50 are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

C. Evaluation of the Natural Resource Land Conservation Program

This section examines the ability of the County to achieve natural resource goals by evaluating strengths and weaknesses of both the County's and State's natural resource implementation strategies and programs.

1. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Natural Resources Implementation Program

a. Comprehensive planning process

Strengths

Natural resource conservation goals, objectives and polices are well integrated into the comprehensive planning process. Although qualitative in nature, they provide the framework in which to implement planning strategies, programs, regulations, and decision-making. Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan's policies and action items (page 11-9) seeks to ensure that standards derived from the Comprehensive Plan goals are measurable and can be translated into reality (see Table V-1 for a summary of standards used to regulate development). The County's natural resource goals and policies are compatible with the State's goals.

In the future, the County's Comprehensive Plan amendment process can also provide opportunities to incorporate new policies that can assist with natural resource conservation. There are currently no recommended revisions to the Comprehensive Plan, as the plan was adopted twelve years ago.

Weaknesses

The Comprehensive Plan is a countywide policy plan that establishes general goals and objectives. It does not provide detailed guidance to direct development in specific areas other than establishing general land use policies for the eleven districts designated in the plan. The comprehensive planning program does not include more detailed small area planning efforts in which natural resource protection can be integrated into the broader planning scheme for development, agricultural preservation, and public facilities such as transportation, schools, and recreation. Presently, development proposals are only reviewed against existing zoning and subdivision regulations as they apply to individual properties, with little emphasis on tracking cumulative effects on a watershed or small area basis. Regulations and performance standards only apply to individual developmental submittals and do not facilitate comprehensive reviews based on area-wide objectives, such as tributary strategies or watershed impacts.

b. Use of resource data and inventories

Strengths

With limited resources, the County has built a commendable geographic information system (GIS) of relevant land use and natural resource inventory information. The County has a comprehensive, parcel-based GIS that can support and facilitate the type of small area or watershed-based planning that is recommended by the Comprehensive Plan and this plan. The County has the ability to easily create accurate maps showing environmental features such as wetlands, steep slopes, hydric and highly erodible soils in relation to other natural and man-made features.

In 2019, the County adopted a Green Infrastructure Plan which inventoried Cecil County’s natural resources to assist in the decision-making process.

Weaknesses

Although the County has a good working relationship with the Department of Natural Resources in tracking rare, threatened and endangered species impacts, the County has found that the review process is often not timely. Accordingly, there is a need to speed DNR’s development review time for RTES.

c. Designated conservation and other natural resource areas

Strengths

The County’s designated conservation areas together with other large protected natural resource areas form a good basis for the County’s natural resource conservation efforts. Combined, these areas account for approximately one third of the County’s land area and form a largely continuous north-south swath through the central portion of the County (Table V-2)

These areas can be connected with the greenways designated in the Comprehensive Plan and the stream buffer protection regulations to form an interconnected network of natural resource land, consistent with State goals for creating a green infrastructure network (see Chapter VI).

Table V-2 Summary of Designated Conservation and Major Natural Resource Areas

	Acres
Fair Hill Rural Legacy Area	30,987
Sassafras Rural Legacy Area	8,290
Critical Area	29,200
Elk State State Forest	3,856
Elk State Park	2,127
Bohemia Manor Wildlife Management Areas	1,864
Total	76,324
<i>Total County</i>	<i>223,000</i>

Weaknesses

The major weaknesses in implementing the network described above are i) completing protection of the two rural legacy areas and ii) the need for better integration of the areas listed in Table V-2 with the greenways designated in the this plan (Figure III-4).

Approximately 50.8% (13,860 acres/27,307 acres) of the Fair Hill Rural Legacy Area has been protected, and roughly 52.8% (10,641 acres/20,415 acres) of the Harvest Crescent Rural Legacy¹ Area has been protected. Greater efforts and funding will be needed to fully protect these areas. The greenways designated in this plan are very conceptual in nature. Policies need to be established regarding the proposed uses for these greenways (conservation versus recreation, for example) and more detailed maps need to be prepared showing areas already protected and areas that should be targeted for protection.

d. Easements and funding

Strengths

Largely through the efforts of the MET and the CLT, some easements have been acquired on natural resource land but, as noted above, the County's easement acquisition efforts have been geared primarily toward agricultural land preservation.

Weaknesses

Lack of funding for explicit natural resource conservation, especially for fee simple and easement acquisitions, is a major weakness.

Program Open Space (POS) funding has been limited in recent years. Although the County would like to conserve natural resource lands through POS, it has primarily used these funds to acquire park land to meet the increasing demand for recreation.

e. Planning and land use authority

Strengths

The County's zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations' natural resource protection requirements are generally effective in addressing impacts related to specific development projects. The regulations address all required sensitive resources, as summarized in Table V-1.

Weaknesses

Greenways are integrated into the County's planning process through the Comprehensive Plan and the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. However, green infrastructure, watershed protection, restoration strategies, and related initiatives are not. The County needs to develop better integration between these initiatives and the comprehensive planning process. Striving to fulfill the recommendations contained in the detailed sub watershed assessments (mentioned in page V-9) would be a good starting point towards improved integration. It should be noted, however, that the County has limited financial resources and will thus need to prioritize the recommended initiatives.

f. Other programs, eco-tourism and resource-based recreation

Strengths

The County's historic sites, together with the many heritage tourism programs and projects contained in the Lower Susquehanna Greenway Management Plan, provide a solid base for eco-tourism and resource-based recreation.

The County's recreation sites inventory (Appendix D) includes many sites that either currently offer or could offer significant resource-based recreational opportunities (e.g., Calvert Park, Elk River Park, Stoney Run, Conowingo Park, Wallace-Carters Mill Park, and the County owned railbed of the former Philadelphia and Baltimore Central Railroad).

¹ This area was amended and expanded in 2019 thus the decrease in protected land percentage.

Weaknesses

The major weakness is the slowness in implementing capital projects in the Susquehanna Heritage Area Management Plan, Town of Elkton, and other locations due to lack of funding and competing priorities. The Comprehensive Plan recommends developing a coordinated and proactive partnership among the State, County, and municipalities to attract tourists.

2. Summary of Needed Improvements in the Implementation Program

The County has the basic physical structure, planning, and regulatory framework in place to achieve both its and the state's goals for natural resource conservation. The large State parks and forests, two Rural Legacy Areas, stream valleys, Chesapeake Bay Critical Area, and designated greenways provide the physical structure, while the Critical Area and other zoning and subdivision regulations provide the regulatory framework. Easement acquisition and other land preservation programs are in place but lack copious funding from both the State and the County.

In summary, the needed improvements in the implementation program are as follows:

- County support for small area planning efforts in which natural resource protection can be integrated into the broader planning scheme.
- Better integration of green infrastructure concepts, greenways, and watershed protection goals and policies into the zoning and subdivision ordinances.
- A more proactive, leadership role on the part of the County with respect to grassroots natural resource protection initiatives.
- Completing protection of the County's two rural legacy areas.
- Increasing funding for natural resource lands conservation.
- Increasing use of GIS data to support and facilitate small area and watershed-based planning.
- Improving coordination of development review for RTES with the Department of Natural Resources.
- Improving coordination among the State, County, and municipalities to attract tourism.

D. Program Development Strategy for Natural Resource Conservation

This section describes Cecil County's program development strategy for natural resource conservation based on the evaluation in this chapter. Recommended actions on the part of the State are noted.

1. Comprehensive planning

- a. Review development proposals with increased emphasis on tracking cumulative effects on a watershed or small area basis.*

As discussed in Section C.1, the comprehensive planning program does not include more detailed small area planning efforts in which natural resource protection can be integrated into the broader planning scheme for development and agricultural preservation. Presently, development proposals are only reviewed against existing zoning and subdivision regulations as they apply to individual properties.

- b. Incorporate small area and watershed-based planning into the County's comprehensive plan.*

As discussed above, the County’s comprehensive planning program does not include small area planning efforts in which natural resource protection can be integrated in a detailed fashion into the broader planning scheme for development, agricultural preservation, and public facilities such as transportation, schools, and recreation. This LPPRP recommends the County develop such plans. Planning efforts should begin in candidate areas that have demonstrated needs and that also have grassroots support.

For example, candidate areas could include watersheds that have both a recent subwatershed assessment and an active non-governmental watershed association. Such watersheds include the Northeast River and Elk River, both of which have assessments that are less than three years old and an active association in the Elk and North East Rivers Watershed Association.

c. Adopt a broad, countywide approach to natural resource conservation.

To date, the County’s approach to natural resource conservation has been largely site and area-specific – focused on protecting specific resources such as stream buffers. Through this LPPRP a broader strategy has been identified connecting the County’s existing protected areas (state parks and forests, Critical Areas, wildlife management areas) into a broader, interconnected framework of protected land (RLAs, greenways, agricultural lands, and parks and recreation areas). This framework is described in Chapter VI.

2. Resource data

a. Develop a secure funding source for the geographic information system (GIS) data used to support and facilitate both small area and watershed-based planning

With limited financial resources the County has developed a commendable wealth of GIS data related to development and natural resource protection. Securing a long term funding source for continued maintenance and upkeep of the data, and the GIS system as a whole, would enable the County to support small area and larger scale planning well into the future. Benefits would include the easy creation of accurate maps and analyses showing environmental features such as wetlands, steep slopes, hydric and highly erodible soils in relation to other natural and man-made features.

b. Improve the coordination of development review for RTES with the Department of Natural Resources

Although the County has a good working relationship with the Department of Natural Resources in tracking rare, threatened and endangered species impacts, the County has found that the review process is often not timely. Accordingly, there is a need to speed DNR’s development review time for RTES.

3. Designated conservation and other natural resource areas

Complete protection of the County’s two rural legacy areas – Harvest Crescent and Fair Hill STATE and COUNTY ACTION

Efforts to protect the RLAs need to continue. Special emphasis should be placed on Fair Hill, which has a smaller percentage of overall area protected than the Harvest Crescent Rural Legacy Area.

4. Easements and funding

a. Increase state funding for natural resource conservation STATE ACTION.

County funding for land preservation is extremely limited. Local funds that are allocated for land preservation are targeted to agricultural land preservation which, as discussed in Chapter IV, is in immediate need of attention. Increasing state funding for natural resource conservation through various existing programs is critical to escalate the pace of natural resource conservation.

b. Continue to support land trusts

Land trusts have proven very effective in Cecil County with over 6,100 acres of agricultural and natural resource land preserved by the Maryland Environmental Trust, Cecil Land Trust, Eastern Shore Land Conservancy and others. Further, land trusts often protect land at little or no cost, since easements are frequently donated.

*c. Develop measurable objectives to assess natural resource conservation implementation **STATE and COUNTY ACTION.***

This LPPRP recommends the incorporation of measurable objectives into County plans that can be used to assess natural resource conservation implementation and achievement of goals.

The State can help the County develop measurable natural resource objectives by working with the County to translate qualitative concepts into county-specific and area specific objectives. Such objectives could be incorporated into future Comprehensive Plans or the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. This strategy has the added benefit of facilitating and coordinating efforts with the County's Watershed Implementation Plan.

5. Planning and land use authority

a. Integrate greenways and the State's Green Infrastructure concepts more comprehensively into the County's planning and development review processes.

While greenways designated in the Comprehensive Plan are integrated into the County's zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations, the level of integration is limited. As discussed in Section C.1.c. the greenways concept needs to be expanded beyond the simple lines on a map to:

- Establish uses for these greenways (conservation versus recreation, for example),
- Incorporate the state's green infrastructure concepts, and
- Form the basis for a stronger emphasis on greenways in subdivision and land development review and approvals.

6. Eco-tourism and resource-based recreation

Develop a coordinated and proactive partnership among the State, County, and municipalities to attract tourists.

This recommendation is consistent with Table 11.2 of the Comprehensive Plan.

Appendix

A. Cecil County State Goals Park Equity Analysis

B. Cecil County State Goals Park Proximity Analysis

C. Cecil County Survey Results

D. Cecil County Park Inventory

E. Cecil County Municipal Data

APPENDIX A

Appendix A – Park Equity Analysis

A. Introduction

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources’ guidelines for 2022 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plans recommend that said plans “should include...*equity analyses* to identify deficiencies and opportunities for meeting recreational goals and addressing deficiencies.” In order to facilitate said recommendation, DNR developed an interactive, GIS based “Park Equity Mapper” application. Said application is available at <https://dnr.maryland.gov/pages/parkequity.aspx> and <https://p1.cgis.umd.edu/mdparkequity/>

Defined as the quality of being fair and impartial, an equity analysis examines the spatial distribution of parks and recreation opportunities relative to groups of persons having similar characteristics. Essentially, an equity analysis seeks to ensure that access and opportunity are provided for all. These opportunities include access to amenities such as water recreation, natural areas, picnicking, trails, hunting, fishing, etc. Historically, communities of color and low wealth communities have had less access to parks and recreation amenities.

In order to facilitate these equity analyses, DNR provided County and local governments with census block group level GIS data that includes rankings/scores in such categories as:

- **Low wealth** – a ratio of households at or below 185% of the County’s poverty level (Higher values represent areas having concentrated poverty).
- **Youth** – The ratio of children to the entire population of a given census block group. (Higher values represent areas with more children under the age of 17.)
- **Adults over 65** – The ratio of older adults to the entire population of a given census block group. (Higher values represent areas with more adults over the age of 65.)
- **Population Density** – Defined as the number of people per unit of area, higher values represent higher densities.
- **Walkability** – Measuring the accessibility of recreational opportunities to individuals without access to private vehicles, higher values indicate that a census block group is less walkable.
- **Public Transit** – Again measuring the accessibility of recreational opportunities to individuals without access to private vehicles, higher values indicate less access to public transit opportunities.
- **Non-White** – Higher values represent a higher concentration of non-white individuals.
- **Park Distance** – Greater distances to parks are signified by larger values. Lower values in this category indicate less distance to parks and recreation opportunities.
- **Linguistic Isolation** – Higher values indicate an increased number of non-English speaking residents.

Using these nine values, DNR then developed a “total equity score” for each census block group.

The sections and maps that follow provide an overview of DNR’s Cecil County specific data and discusses the data’s implications to parks and recreation opportunities.

B. Census Block Groups

Cecil County contains 57 census block groups. Smaller sized block groups are found in the more urbanized areas of the County (i.e. the Towns of Elkton, North East, and Perryville). Larger sized block groups are found in the more rural parts of the County (i.e. Conowingo, Earleville, and Warwick).

DNR's park equity data is compiled on the census block group level, and the figure below depicts the geographic locations of Cecil County's census block groups.

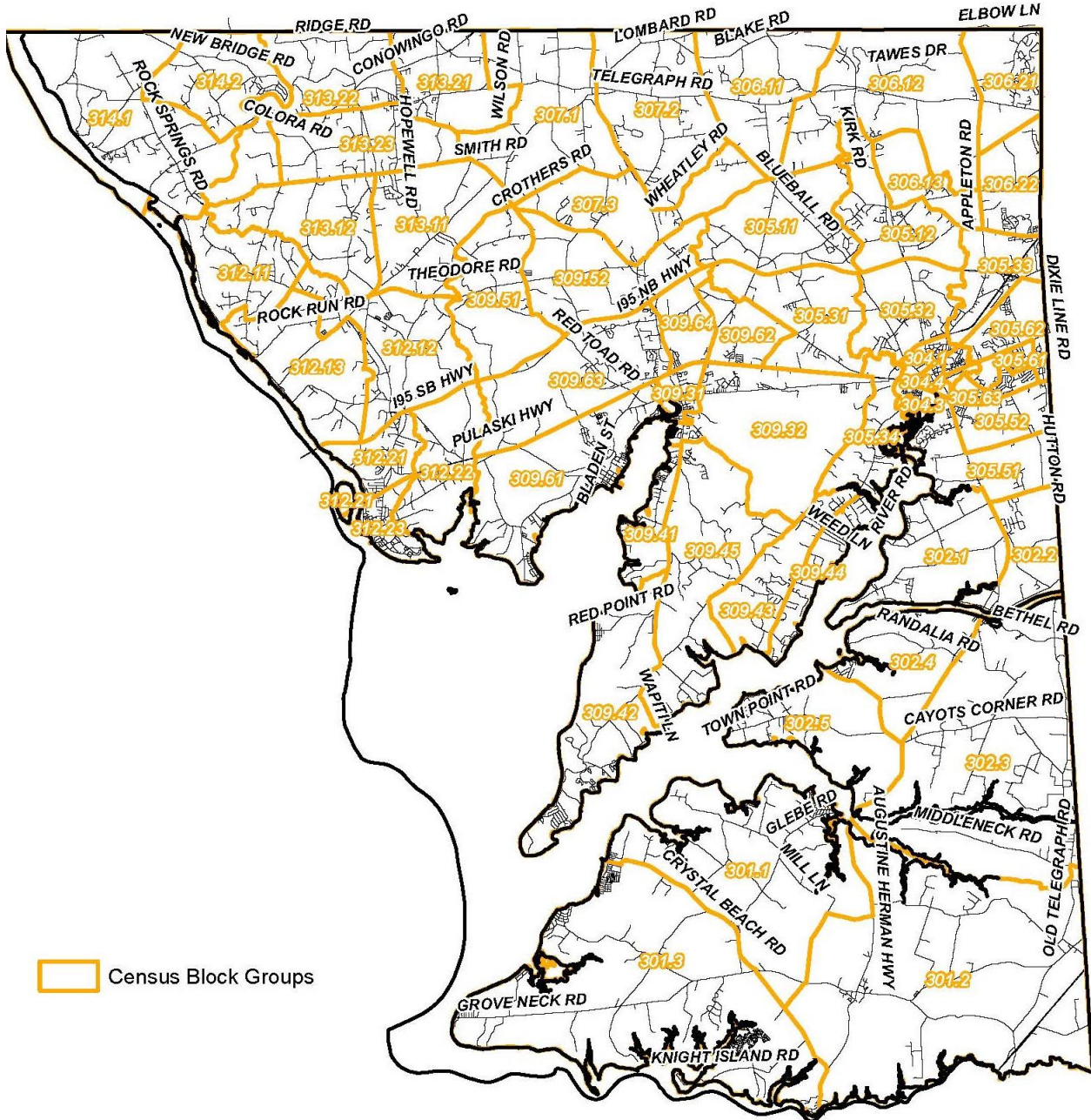


Figure A-1 Cecil County Census Block Groups

C. Low Wealth

DNR's park equity data shows areas of concentrated poverty in and around the Towns of Elkton, North East, and Perryville. Some might argue that poverty is concentrated within the Route 40 and I-95 corridors of Cecil County. Areas of rural poverty exist, however, in southern Cecil County and areas near the towns of Rising Sun and Port Deposit.

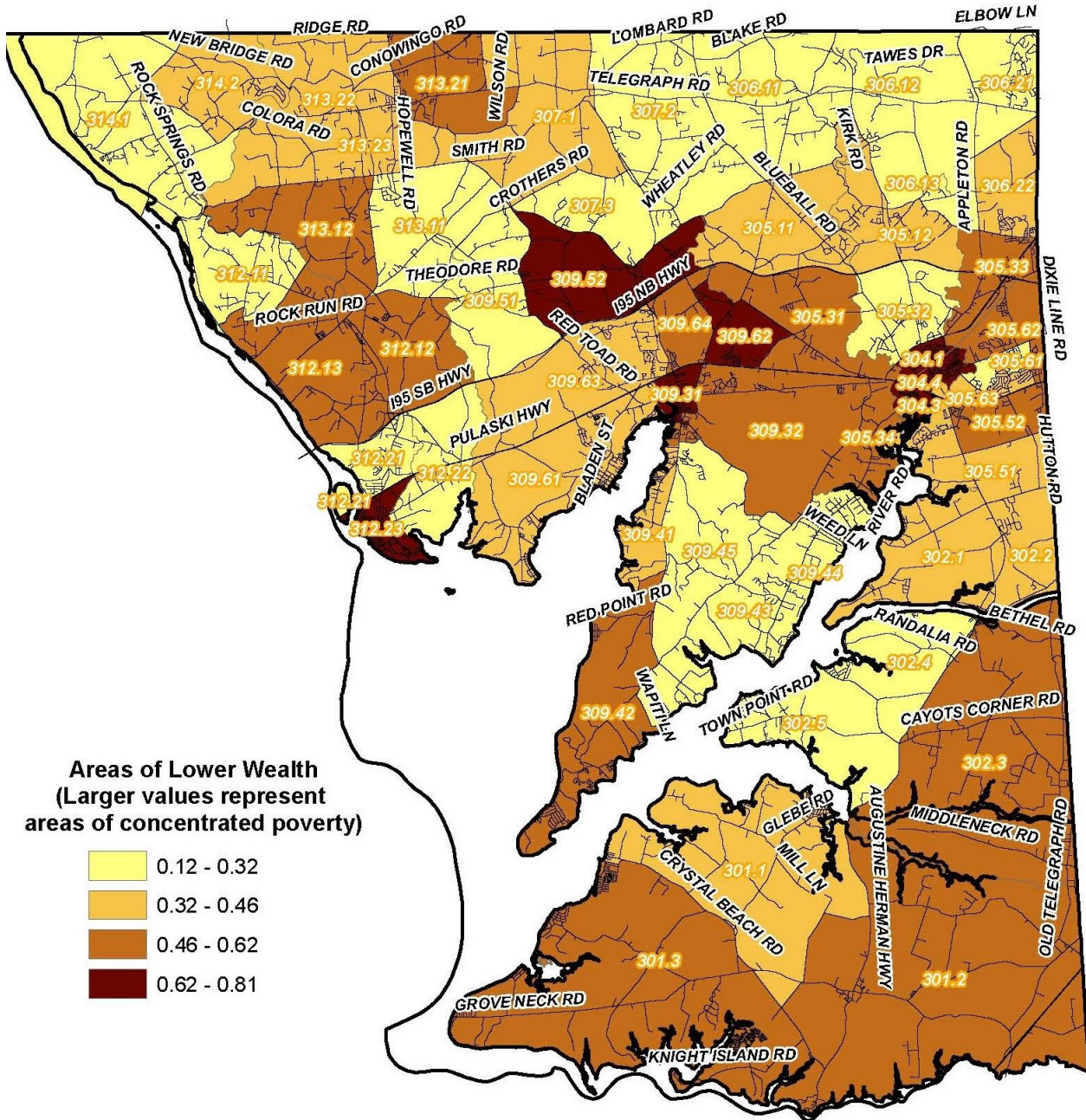


Figure A-2 Areas of Lower Wealth

D. Youth

Perhaps unsurprisingly, areas with larger concentrations of children tend to correlate with recent subdivision activity. Census Block Groups 309.63 (with the Bedrock, Northwoods, and Chesapeake Ridge subdivisions) and 309.52 (with the Bay View Woods, Beaver Lodge, and Montgomery Oaks subdivisions) lead the way, with the highest scores in Cecil County. Large scores are also present in the 305.51 (Kensington Courts) and 305.62 (Patriots Glen) census block groups.

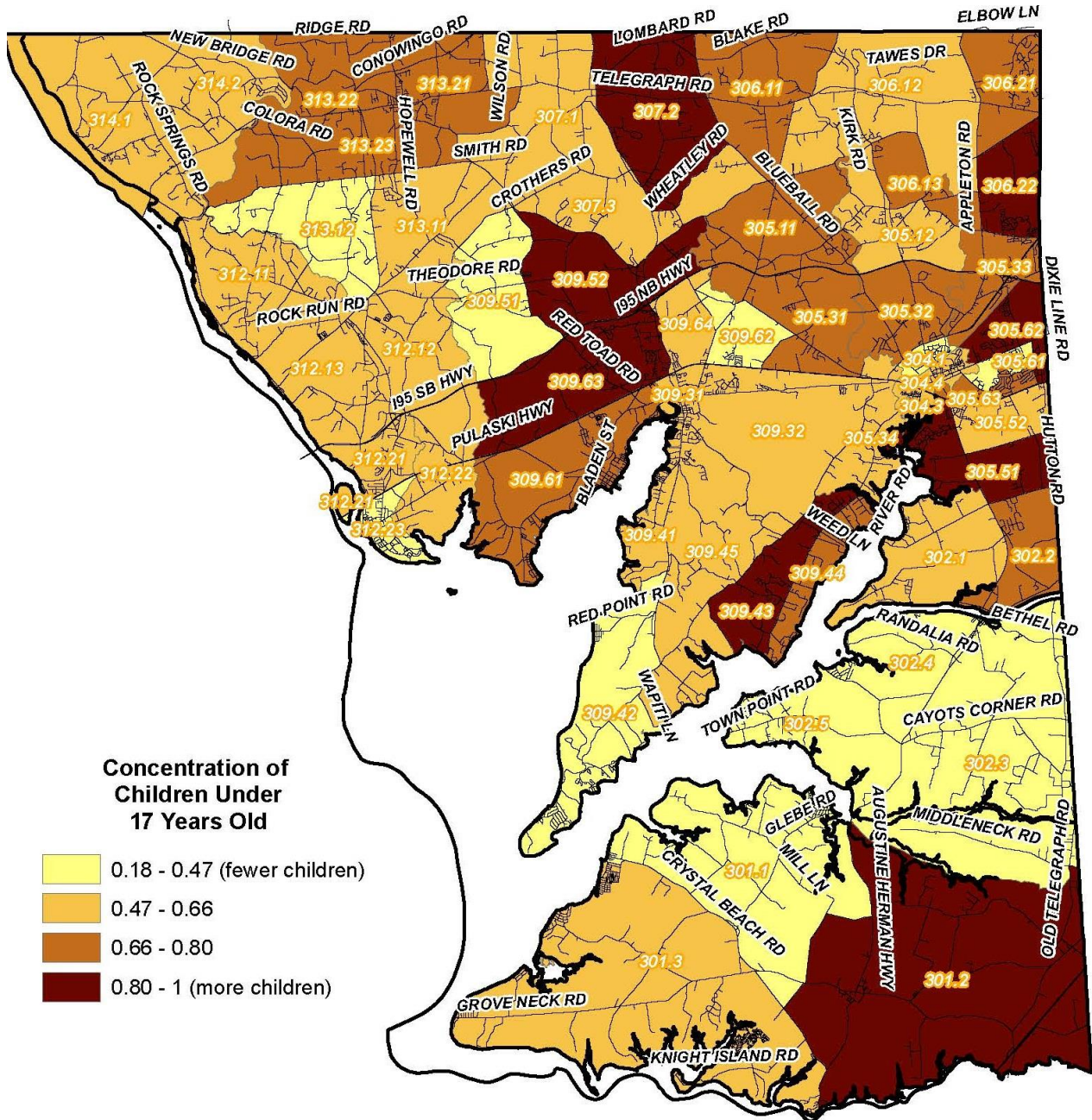


Figure A-3 Children Under 17 Years Old

E. Adults over 65

The distribution of older county residents has no discernable pattern. With portions of Warwick (301.2), the Elk Neck Peninsula (309.42), and Perryville (321.23) having high concentrations, recreational opportunities geared towards this age group should be offered in these areas.

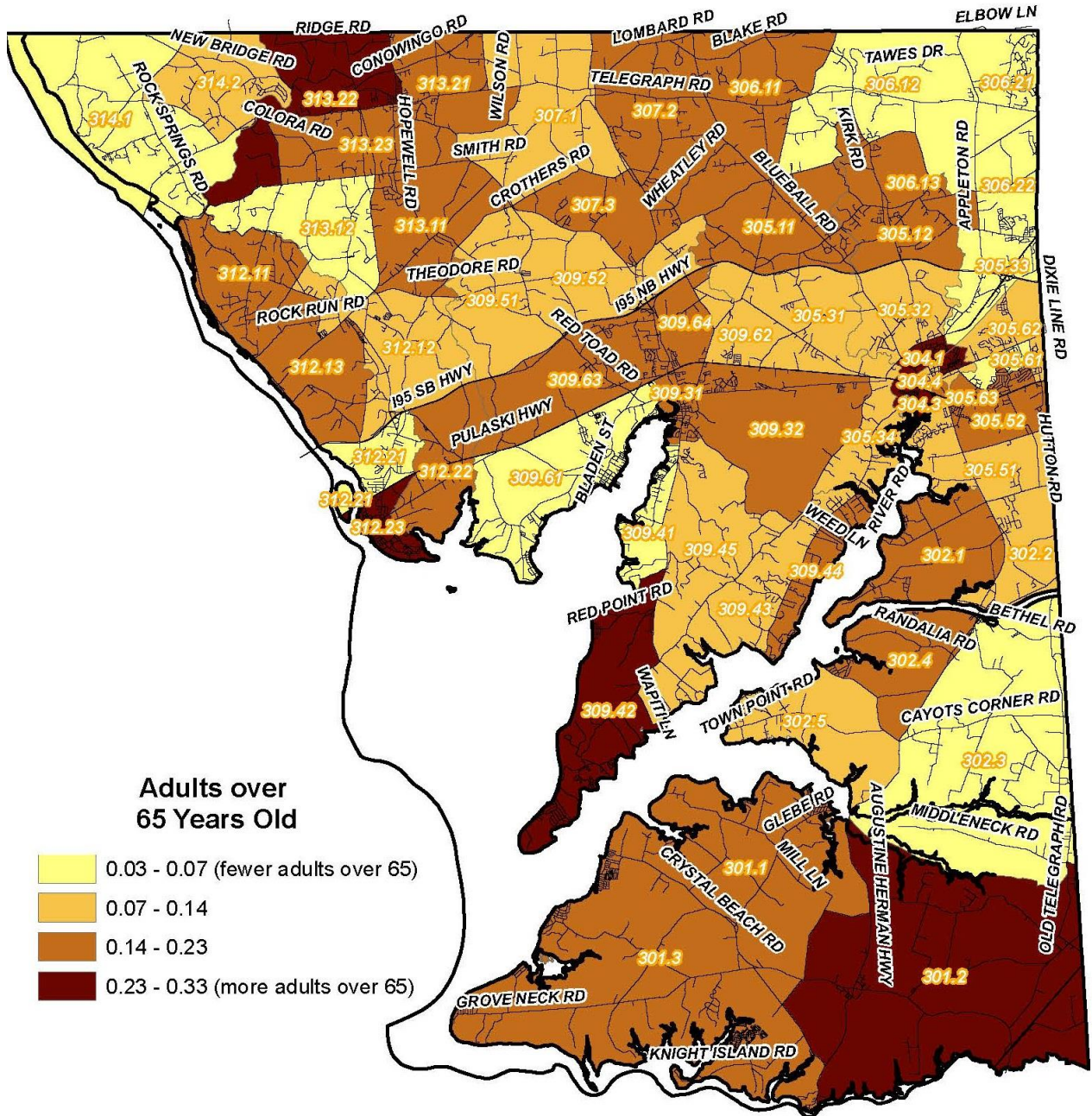


Figure A-4 Adults Over 65 Years Old

F. Population Density

Nicely mirroring the land use map from Cecil County’s current comprehensive plan, DNR’s population density equity data shows concentrated populations within the Route 40 and I-95 growth corridor. Transition areas of medium density radiate outwards, forming a transition between the urban growth corridor and the rural conservation district (in the north) and resource preservation district (in the south).

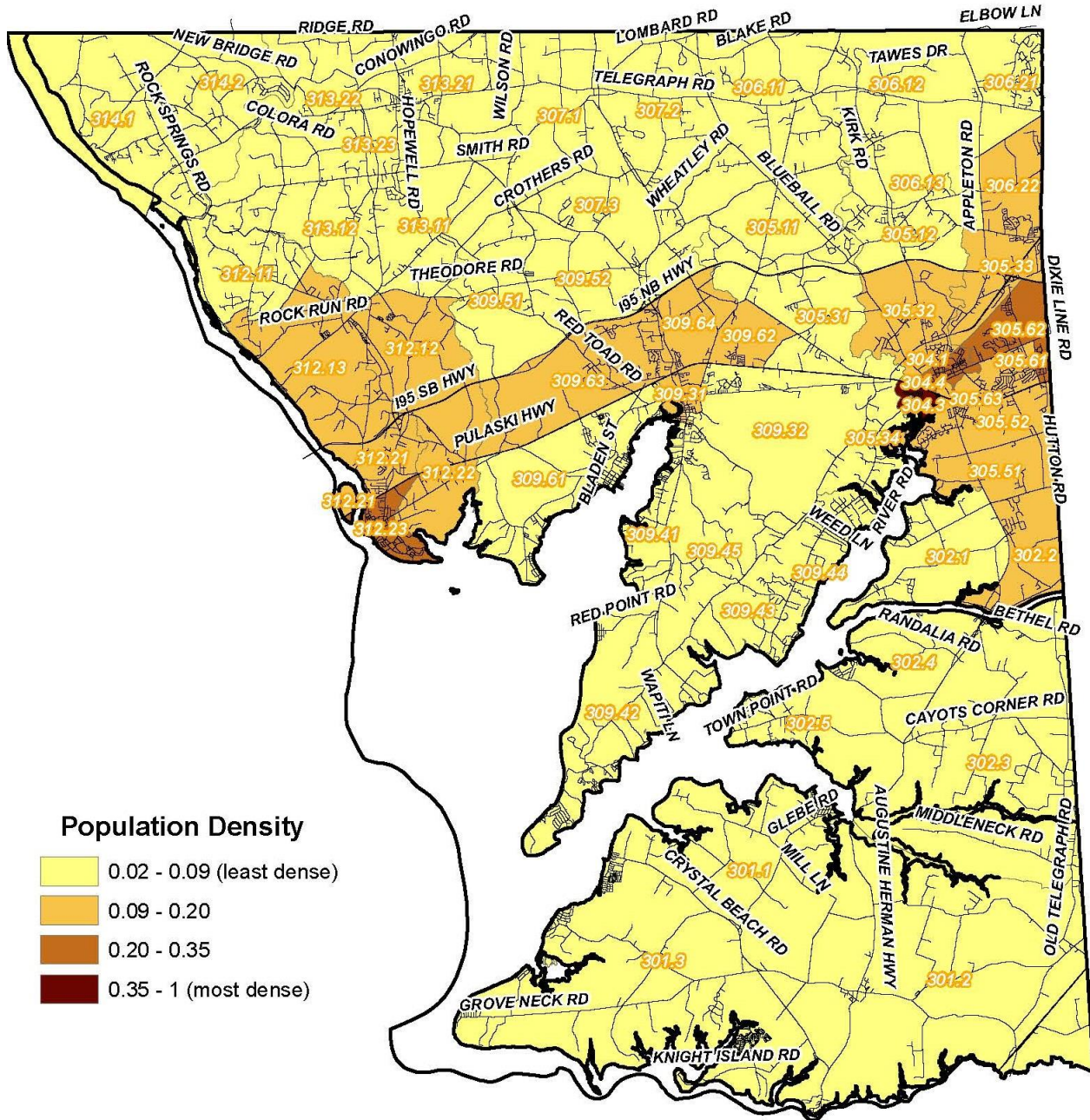


Figure A-5 Population Density

G. Walkability

Of Cecil County’s 57 census block groups, 49 fall within the two “least walkable” categories. Only four of the census block groups are within the “most walkable” category. They include block groups 304.1, 304.2, 304.4 (all in the downtown Elkton area) and block group 312.23 (located in the downtown Perryville area).

Not surprisingly, the rural development patterns in southern Cecil County, the Elk Neck Peninsula, and the Conowingo, Colora, and Rising Sun zip codes make these areas difficult to traverse for persons on foot.

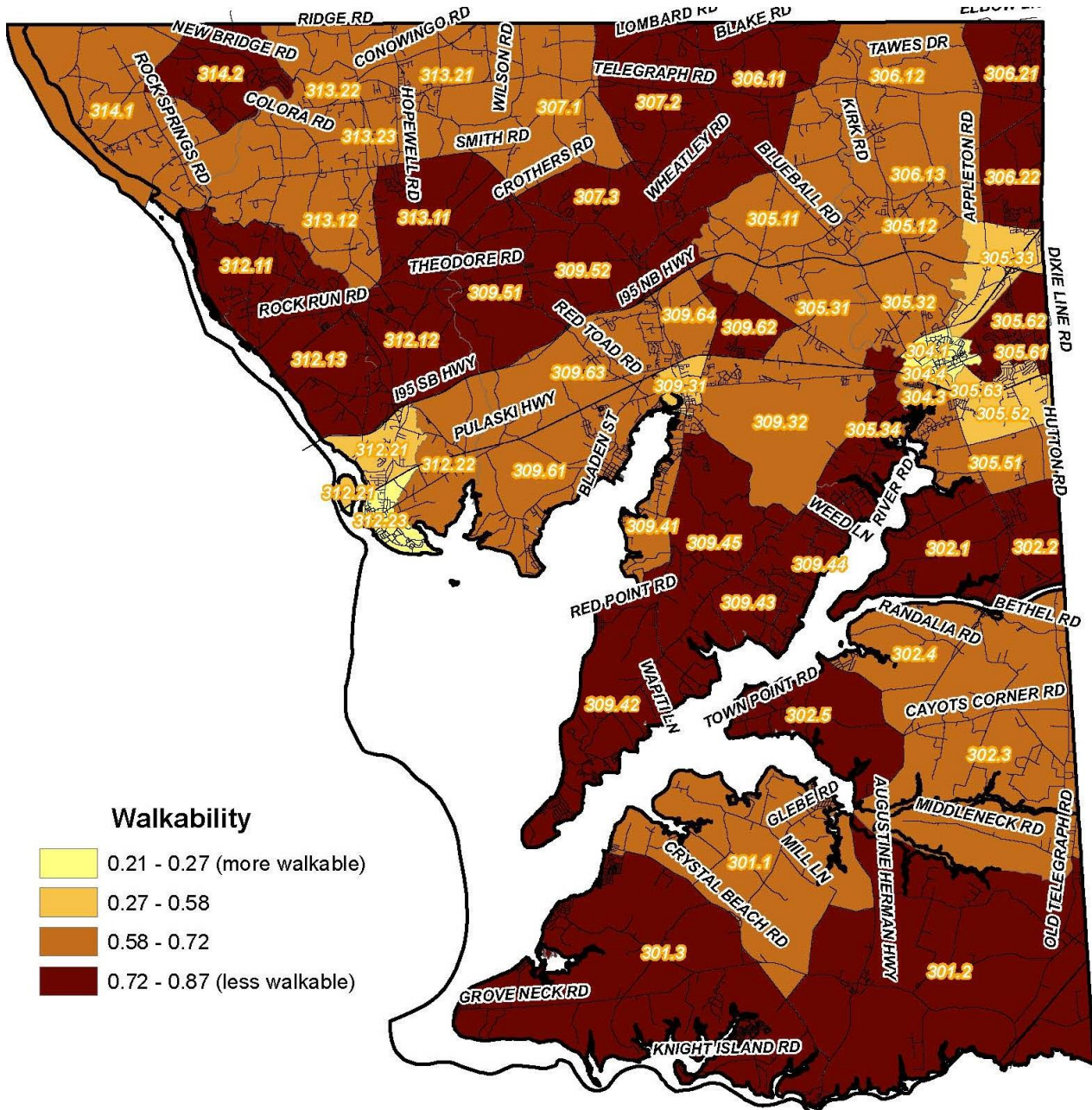


Figure A-6 Walkability

H. Public Transit

With lower values representing more access to public transit opportunities, equity scores again mirror the land use map from Cecil County’s current comprehensive plan. The majority (if not all) public transit opportunities exist within the Route 40 – Route 7 – I-95 growth corridor connecting the incorporated towns of Perryville, North East, and Elkton. Public transit is nonexistent in the Conowingo, Earleville, and Warwick zip codes located in the extreme north and south ends of the County. Cecil Transit, which provides the majority of Cecil County’s public transit, makes its route maps and schedules available online at <https://www.ccgov.org/government/community-services/cecil-transit>

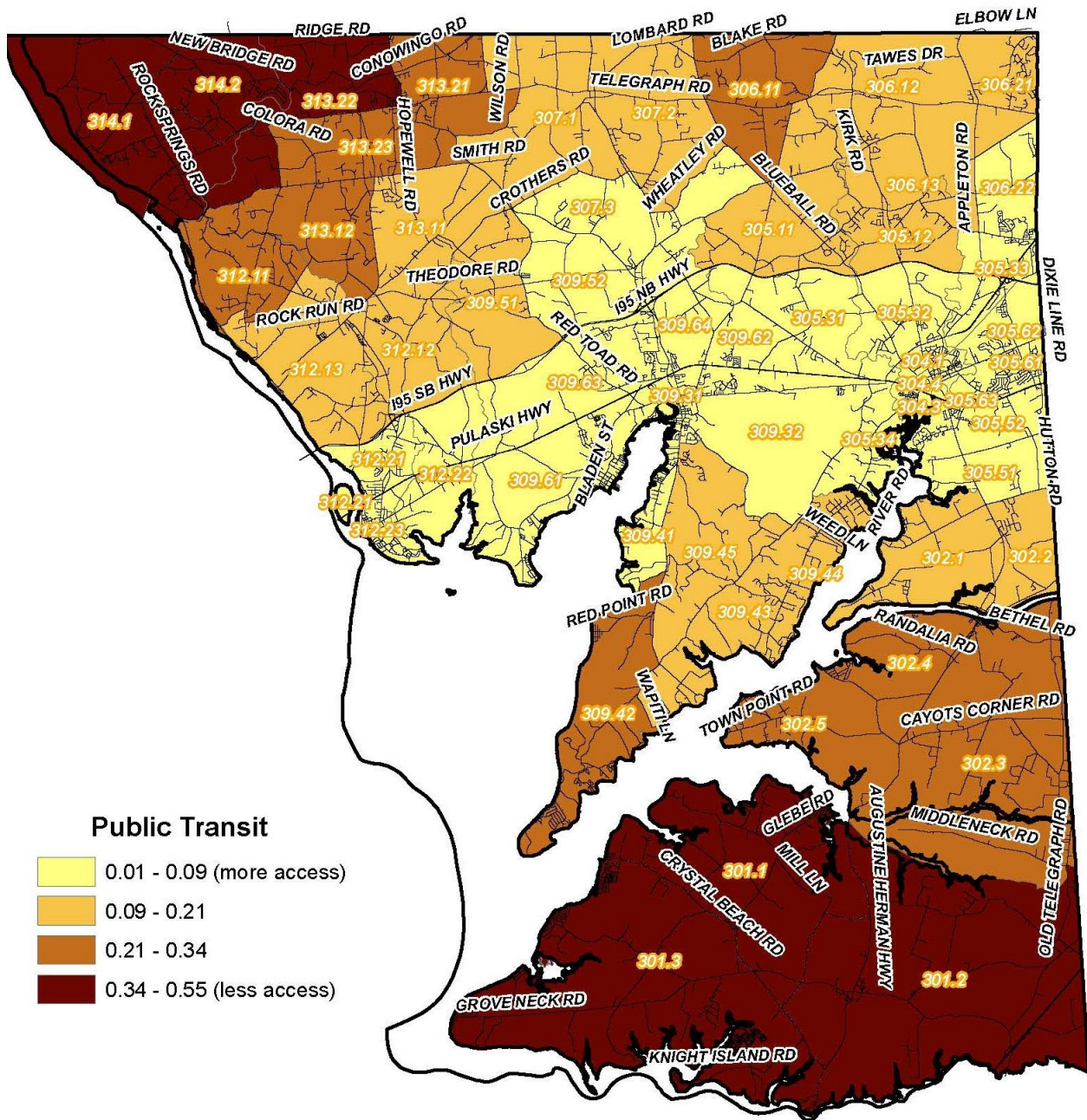


Figure A-7 Public Transit

I. Non-White Population

The 2019 American Community Survey estimates that Cecil County has 102,855 residents. 90,902 residents (88%) are white, and the remaining 11,953 residents (12%) belong to a non-white race. The DNR equity data, and the map below, bear this fact out. 41 of the 57 Census Block Groups are classified within the first two “most white” categories. The largest concentrations of non-white population occur in the census block groups east and north of the incorporated Town of Elkton (i.e. 304.2, 305.62, and 306.22).

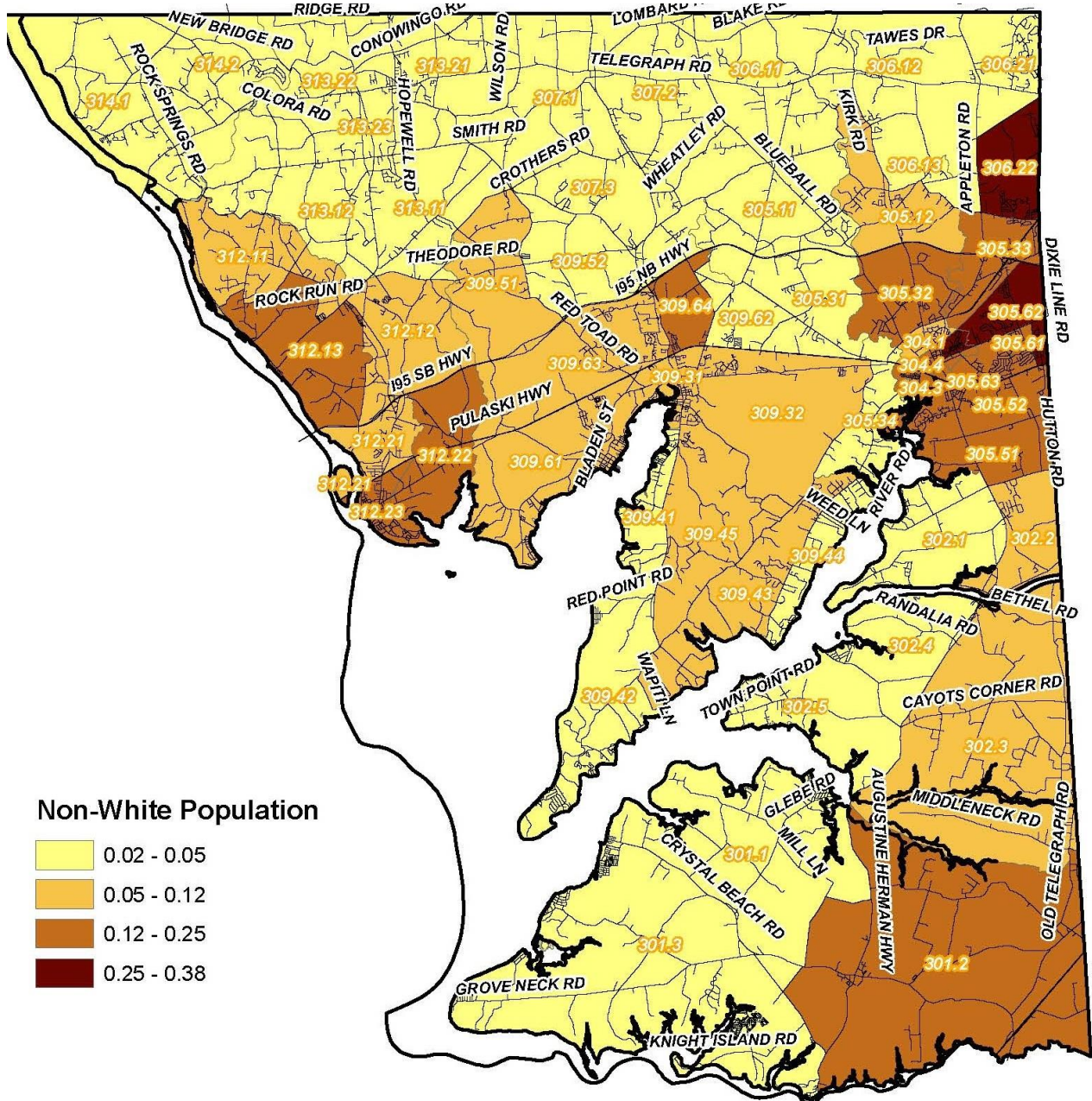


Figure A-8 Non-White Population

J. Park Distance

With darker colors representing greater distances from parks and recreation opportunities, visual depiction of this aspect of park equity is baffling. Many of the Census Block Groups having “greater distance” values have parks or wildlife management areas within them. Examples include Block Group 301.2 (which contains the 1,040 acre Old Bohemia Wildlife Management Area and town parks in Cecilton), Block Group 302.3 (which includes Bohemia River State Park and town parks in southern Chesapeake City), and Block Group 309.52 (which includes the Bard Cameron sports complex).

County staff recommends that this variable be calculated more carefully in future equity analyses.

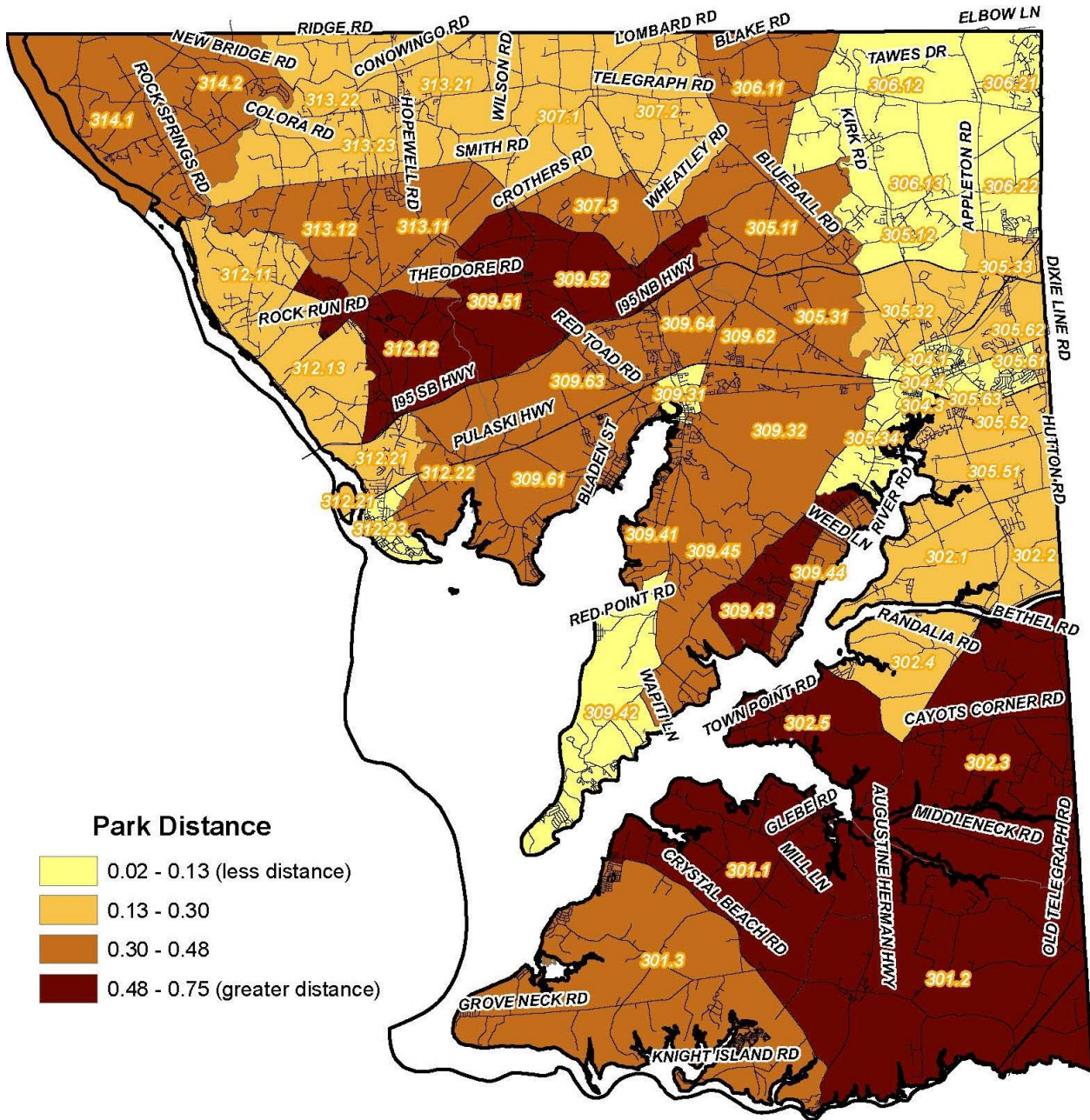


Figure A-9 Park Distance

K. Linguistic Isolation

Table S0601 of the 2019 American Community Survey indicates that 94% of Cecil County’s total population speaks English “very well.” The park equity data agrees with this finding. 54 of 57 Census Block Groups are considered “not isolated” by language. The most linguistically isolated census block group is 302.3, located in the Cayots Corner Rd corridor of the Chesapeake City zip code. The equine and industrial agriculture sectors’ reliance on migrant labor likely contributes to the linguistic isolation of this area.

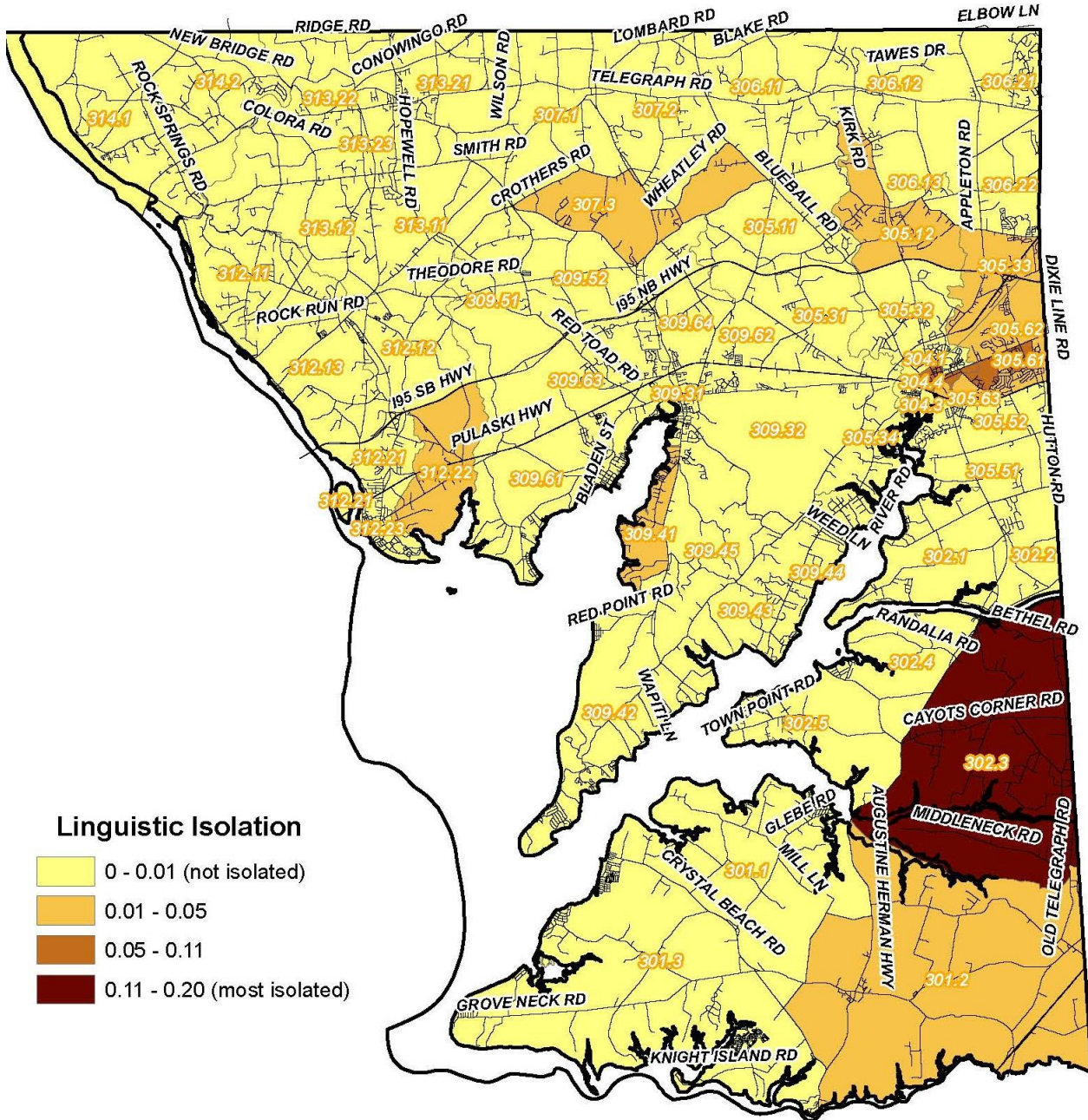


Figure A-10 Linguistic Isolation

L. Total Equity Score (Conclusion)

An equity analysis seeks to ensure that access and opportunity are provided for all persons, regardless of income, race, language spoken, age, etc. The map below depicts areas of high recreation need (the “low equity” numbers shown in the darker colors) and low recreation need (the “high equity” numbers shown in the lighter yellow colors).

The sum of the nine individual components discussed previously, this map indicates that more equitable parks and recreation opportunities are needed in southern Cecil County (Census Block Groups 301.1, 301.2, and 302.3) and the Theodore Rd corridor (Census Block Groups 309.51, 309.52, and 312.12). High equity already exists in the Fair Hill Area (306.12, 306.13, and 306.21), parts of Elkton (305.61), and the southernmost point of the Elk Neck Peninsula (309.42).

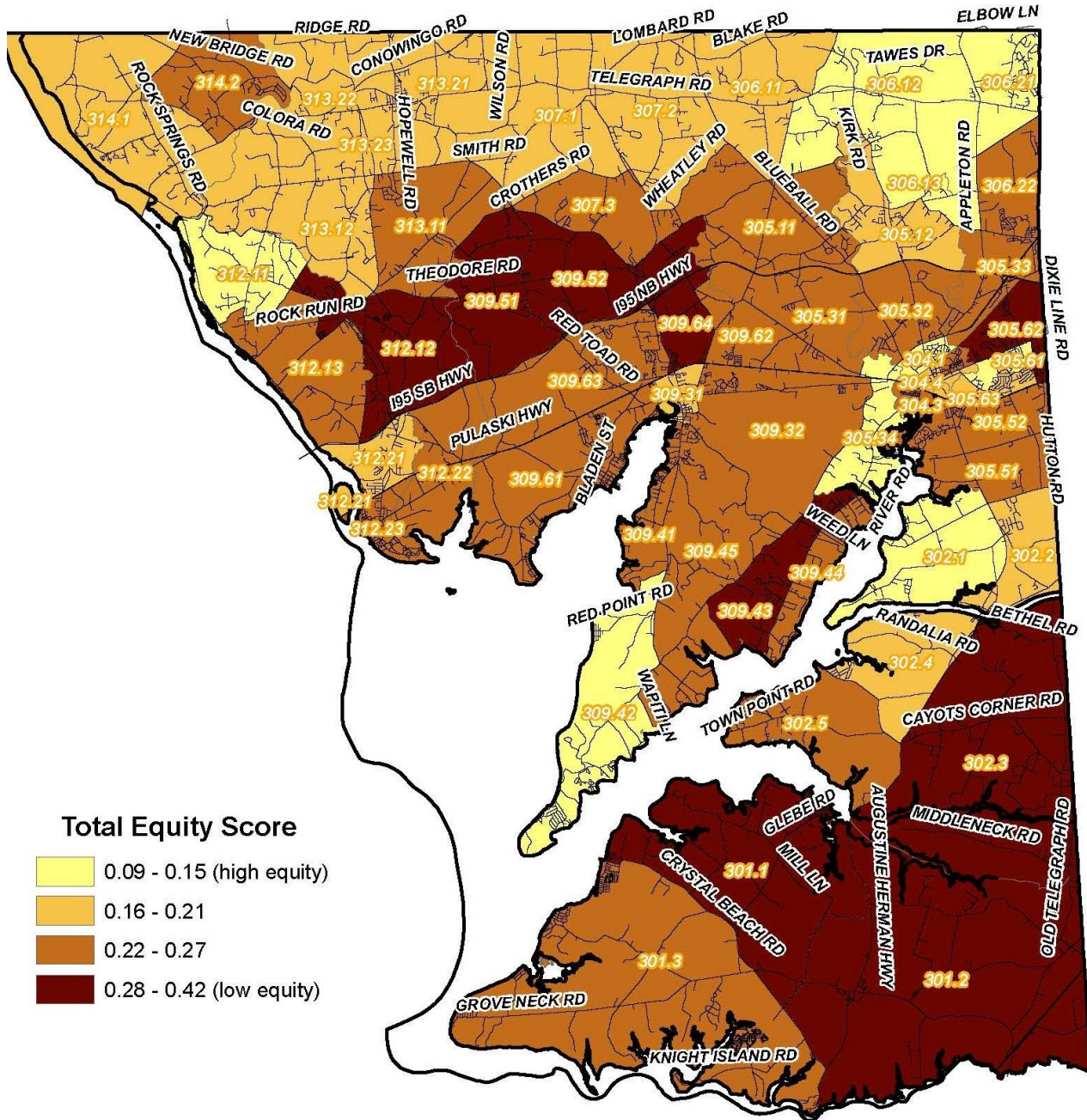


Figure A-11 Total Equity Score

APPENDIX B

Appendix B – Park Proximity Analysis

A. Introduction

Also known as a “level of service” analysis, a park proximity analysis provides insight into where citizens have greater or lesser access to public parks and recreational sites. Conducting a park proximity analysis has five steps:

- 1) Map the locations of all parks and recreational sites;
- 2) Identify available amenities (i.e. trails, water recreation, picnicking, etc) at each site;
- 3) Define a catchment area (the area from which a given park attracts a population that uses its service);
- 4) Examine the extent to which park catchment areas include the entire population. (For example, residents located outside of catchment areas do not have easy access to the type of recreation site being examined.); and
- 5) Develop recommendations to resolve any identified deficiencies.

Cecil County staff followed these five steps in completing the park proximity analysis for the 2022 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan.

B. Map the locations of all parks and recreational sites

The 2017 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan contained a map of all available parks and recreation locations in Cecil County. Staff updated said map for the 2022 plan by adding and new parks developed since then. The result is shown in Figure B-1, and specific additions include:

- 1) *Bohemia River State Park* – Roughly 460 acres in size, the Department of Natural Resources purchased the land for this park in September 2017. While not fully open to public use, the park has 14,000 feet of water frontage on the Bohemia River and permits deer hunting in specified areas.
- 2) *Brantwood County Park* – A former golf course, Cecil County Government purchased Brantwood in March 2018. Divided by Williams Road, the north side is open to the public for passive recreation (walking, hiking, biking, and nature observation). On the south side, the former golf cart paths provide great walkways and running trails.
- 3) *South Stream Park* – Purchased by the Town of Elkton in September 2018, this 46 acre parcel is located north of South Stream Drive and west of Manor Rd. Currently unimproved and fully forested, plans to connect this parcel to other lands owned by the Town along Big Elk Creek (including Marina Park) may be considered in the future.
- 4) *Mackall Street Park* – Overlooked by previous plans, this two acre parcel in the 200 block of Mackall St is owned by the Town of Elkton. Consisting of mowed grass and forest, no amenities are present on site.
- 5) *Rising Sun Community Pond* – Also inadvertently excluded by previous plans, this 2.4 acre parcel owned by the State of Maryland Game and Inland Fish Commission contains a large pond stocked with trout and other fish species. The parcel has a small parking area and benches near the pond where anglers may sit and fish.

2022 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan Available Parks & Recreation Locations in Cecil County, Maryland

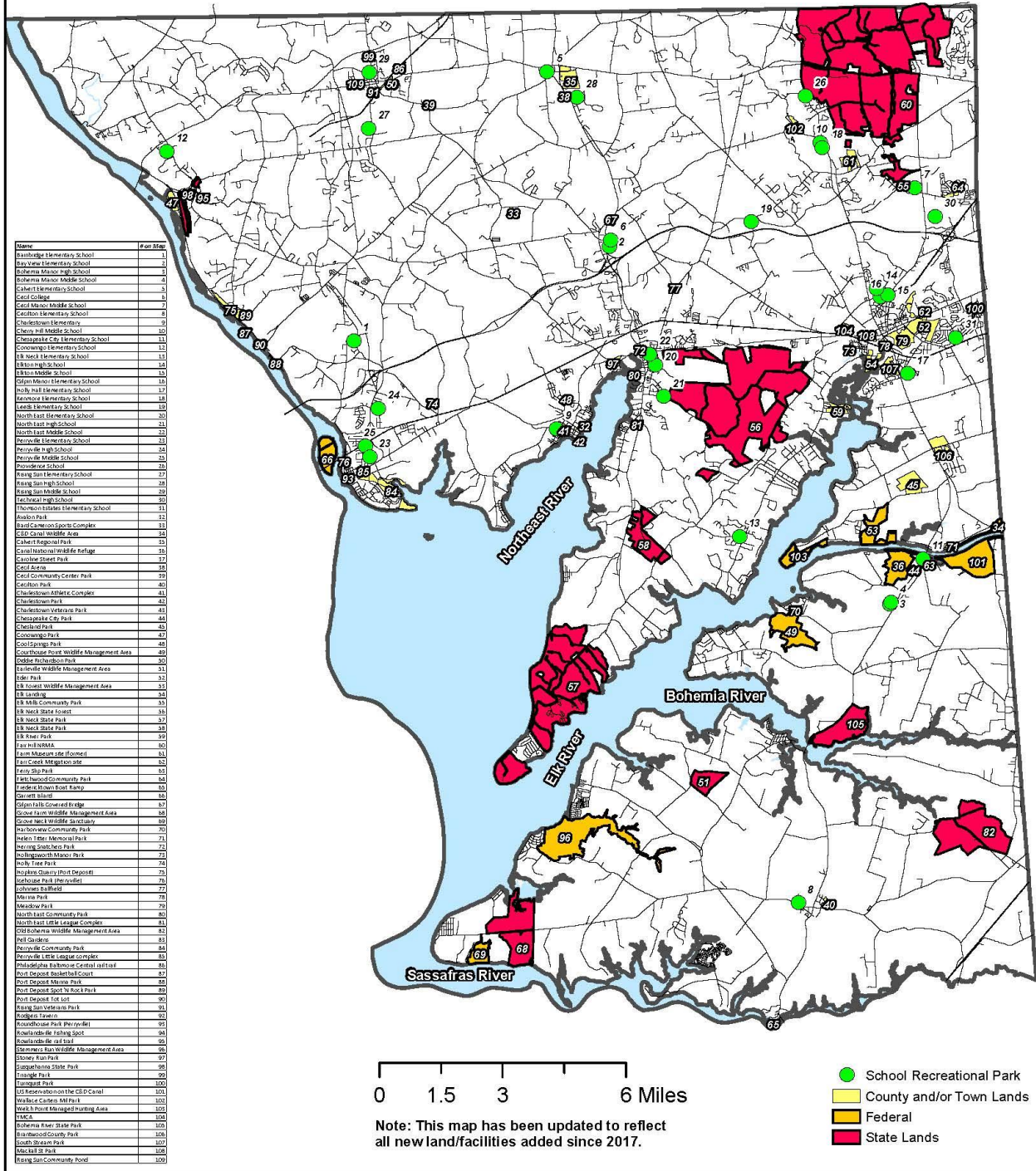


Figure B-1 Available Parks & Recreation Locations in Cecil County, Maryland

In addition to these new parks, County staff notes that a few existing parks (such as Calvert Regional Park and the Elk Neck State Forest) grew in size during 2017-2022. As acreage on the periphery became available, decision makers purchased adjoining lands in order to enlarge the existing parks' sizes. In no case, however, did the purchase of adjoining lands significantly alter the types of available amenities.

C. Identify available amenities at each site

The State of Maryland's 2019-2023 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan identifies six types of amenities. They include:

- 1) *Natural Areas* – Areas left to nature, these areas typically favor passive recreation over active recreation.
- 2) *Water and Fishing Recreation* – Parks having boat ramps, beaches, canoeing, or swimming opportunities are included in this amenity category. The State plan included “fishing” as a separate amenity category, but due to fishing’s considerable overlap with the “water recreation” category, County staff combined the two.
- 3) *Picnicking* – Somewhat difficult to categorize, any park having a picnic table or a sufficient grassy area for spreading a blanket met the “picnicking” qualification.
- 4) *Hunting* – Usually larger parks or wildlife areas, these parks have designated hunting areas and/or regulated hunting seasons.
- 5) *Trails* – A trail can be for hikers, horses, or cyclists. Any park having any sort of trail was included.
- 6) *Active Recreation* – Whether it be a basketball court, soccer field, or baseball field, active recreation sites have significantly different design characteristics compared to passive recreation sites.

A park can have one type of amenity, or it can have multiple. Recognizing that all parks provide valuable recreational opportunities, albeit different ones, County staff categorized all 100+ identified parks.

All “school recreational parks” (as shown on Figure B-1) were categorized as active recreation sites. The remaining parks and recreation areas are categorized into at least one (but usually multiple) amenity category. For example, Welch Point Managed Hunting Area is categorized as having natural area and hunting amenities.

Figure B-2 lists the amenity categorization for each parks and recreation site.

Figure B-2 – Amenity Categorization

Label	Name	Amenity Types					
		Natural Areas	Water and Fishing	Picnic	Hunting	Trails	Active Recreation
1	Bainbridge Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
2	Bay View Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
3	Bohemia Manor High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
4	Bohemia Manor Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
5	Calvert Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
6	Cecil College	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
7	Cecil Manor Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
8	Cecilton Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
9	Charlestown Elementary	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
10	Cherry Hill Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
11	Chesapeake City Elementary	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
12	Conowingo Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
13	Elk Neck Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
14	Elkton High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
15	Elkton Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
16	Gilpin Manor Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
17	Holly Hall Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
18	Kenmore Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
19	Leeds Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
20	North East Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
21	North East High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
22	North East Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
23	Perryville Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
24	Perryville High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
25	Perryville Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
26	Providence/ Cecil Co. High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
27	Rising Sun Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
28	Rising Sun High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
29	Rising Sun Middle School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
30	Technical High School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
31	Thomson Estates Elementary School	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

Figure B-2 – Amenity Categorization (page 2)

Label	Name	Amenity Types					
		Natural Areas	Water and Fishing	Picnic	Hunting	Trails	Active Recreation
32	Avalon Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
33	Bard Cameron Sports Complex	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
34	C&D Canal Wildlife Area	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
35	Calvert Regional Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
36	Canal National Wildlife Refuge	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
37	Caroline Street Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
38	Cecil Arena	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
39	Cecil Community Center Park	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
40	Cecilton Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
41	Charlestown Athletic Complex	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
42	Charlestown Park	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
43	Charlestown Veterans Park	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
44	Chesapeake City Park	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
45	Chesland Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
47	Conowingo Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
48	Cool Springs Park	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
49	Courthouse Point Wildlife Management Area	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
50	Diddie Richardson Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
51	Earleville Wildlife Management Area	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
52	Eder Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
53	Elk Forest Wildlife Management Area	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
54	Elk Landing	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
55	Elk Mills Community Park	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
56	Elk Neck State Forest	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
57	Elk Neck State Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
58	Elk Neck State Park	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
59	Elk River Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
60	Fair Hill NRMA	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
61	Farm Museum site (former)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
62	Farr Creek Mitigation site	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

Figure B-2 – Amenity Categorization (page 3)

Label	Name	Amenity Types					
		Natural Areas	Water and Fishing	Picnic	Hunting	Trails	Active Recreation
63	Ferry Slip Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
64	Fletchwood Community Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
65	Fredericktown Boat Ramp	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
66	Garrett Island	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
67	Gilpin Falls Covered Bridge	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
68	Grove Farm Wildlife Management Area	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
69	Grove Neck Wildlife Sanctuary	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
70	Harborview Community Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
71	Helen Titter Memorial Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
72	Herring Snatchers Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
73	Hollingsworth Manor Park	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
74	Holly Tree Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
75	Hopkins Quarry (Port Deposit)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
76	Icehouse Park (Perryville)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
77	Johnnies Ballfield	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
78	Marina Park	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
79	Meadow Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
80	North East Community Park	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
81	North East Little League Complex	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
82	Old Bohemia Wildlife Management Area	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
83	Pell Gardens	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
84	Perryville Community Park	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
85	Perryville Little League complex	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
86	Philadelphia Baltimore Central rail trail	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
87	Port Deposit Basketball Court	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
88	Port Deposit Marina Park	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
89	Port Deposit Spot N' Rock Park	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
90	Port Deposit Tot Lot	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

Figure B-2 – Amenity Categorization (page 4)

Label	Name	Amenity Types					
		Natural Areas	Water and Fishing	Picnic	Hunting	Trails	Active Recreation
91	Rising Sun Veterans Park	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
92	Rodgers Tavern	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
93	Roundhouse Park (Perryville)	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
94	Rowlandsville Fishing Spot	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
95	Rowlandsville rail trail	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
96	Stemmers Run Wildlife Management Area	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
97	Stoney Run Park	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
98	Susquehanna State Park	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
99	Triangle Park	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
100	Turnquist Park	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
101	US Reservation on the C&D Canal	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
102	Wallace Carters Mil Park	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
103	Welch Point Managed Hunting Area	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
104	YMCA	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
105	Bohemia River State Park	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
106	Brantwood County Park	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
107	South Stream Park	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
108	Mackall St Park	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
109	Rising Sun Community Pond	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

D. Define a catchment area

The State of Maryland’s 2019-2023 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan suggests that catchment areas for rural counties (such as Cecil County) be created from five mile “as the crow flies” radii. The five mile radii is equivalent to a fifteen minute drive according to State Department of Natural Resources’ guidelines.

After performing a proximity analysis using five mile radii, County staff found that the entirety of Cecil County is located within five miles of an existing park/recreation site. This can mean that either:

- 1) Cecil County contains an adequate number of spatially distributed parks and recreation sites; or
- 2) The five mile radii is too large to provide meaningful insight.

Assuming the latter, County staff performed proximity analyses using smaller sized radii. Only when the radii is reduced to two miles do results show anything meaningful. As shown in Figure B-3, portions Conowingo, Glen Farms, Colora, southern Chesapeake City, Grove Neck Rd, and the portion of Cecil County south of Route 301 are the outside the two mile radii.

Figure B-3 – Two Mile Radii – All Parks

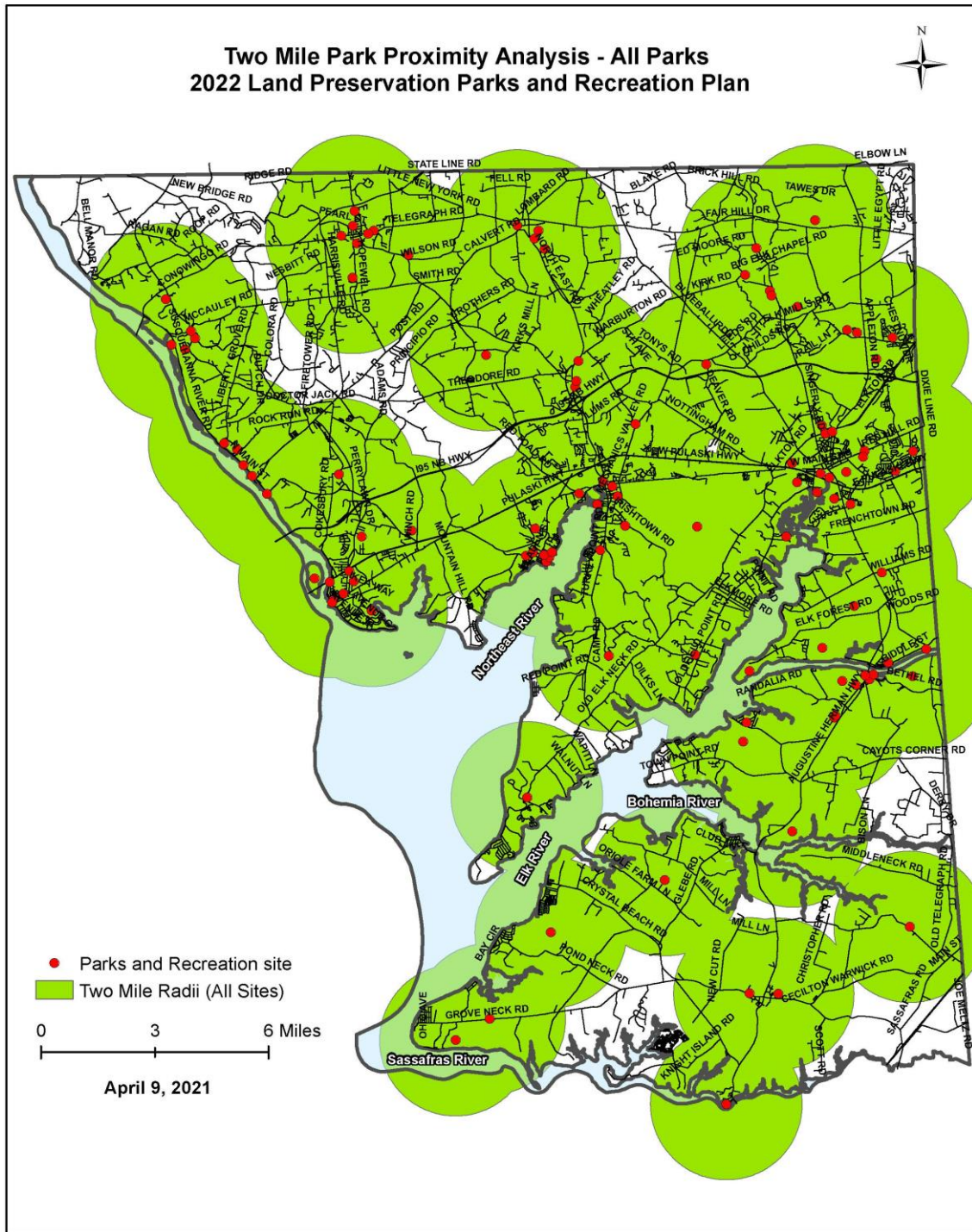
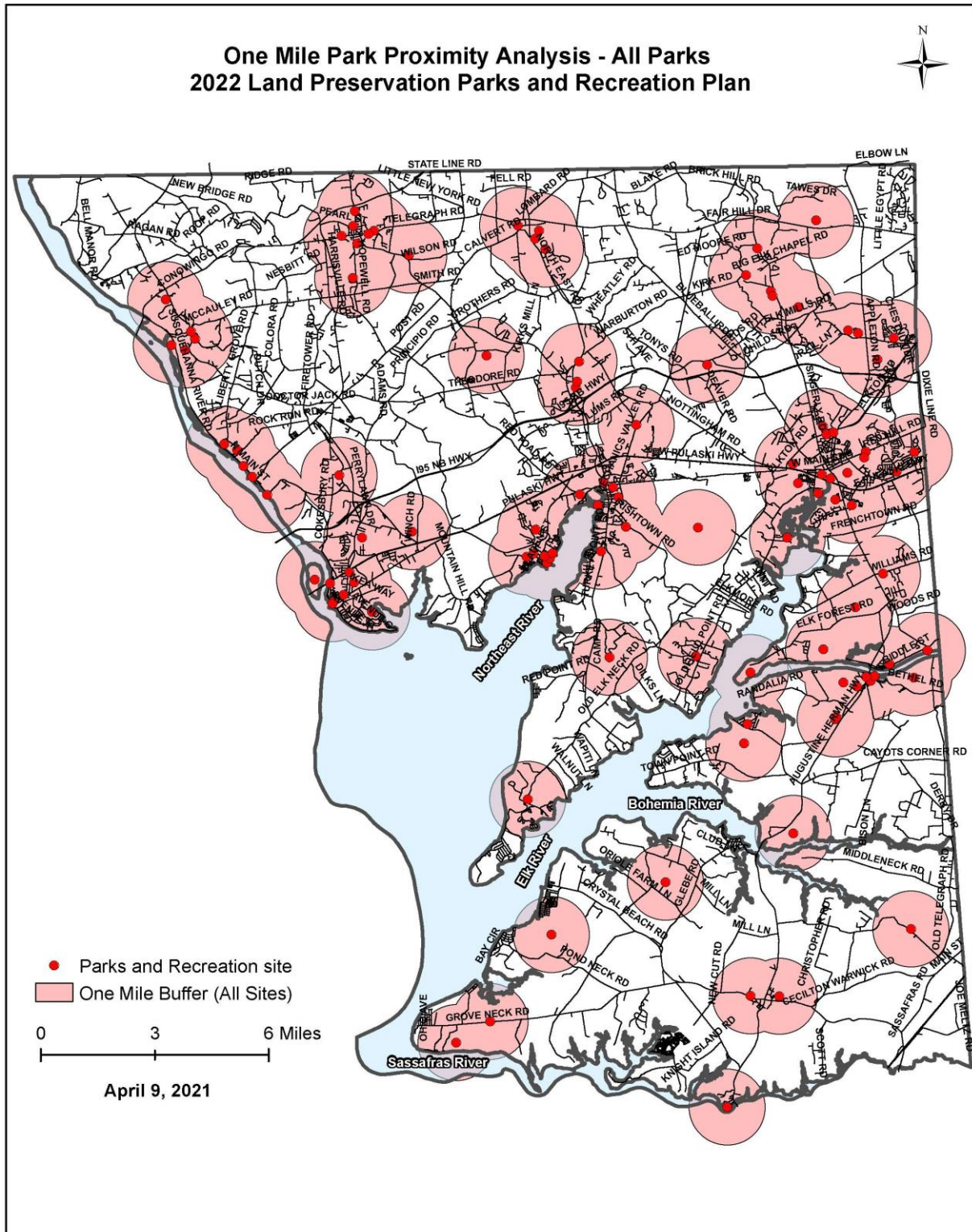


Figure B-4 – One Mile Radii – All Parks



At a one mile radius level, as shown in Figure B-4, the regional draw of a majority of Cecil County’s parks (i.e. Calvert Regional Park, Elk Neck State Park, Fair Hill NRMA, etc) is not depicted realistically. In fact, DNR suggests that radii of one mile or a half mile are more suited to urban areas in which individuals do not have access to automobiles.

For these reasons, County staff decided to use two mile radii to adequately depict the spatial area from which a given park attracts a population that uses its service. The spatial analysis of park amenities that follows is based on two mile radii.

E. Analysis of catchment area by amenity type

Recognizing that all parks provide valuable recreational opportunities, albeit different ones, proximity analyses were performed for each of the six amenity types discussed in Section C (i.e. natural areas, water and fishing recreation, picnicking, hunting, trails, and active recreation). Results are shown in Figures B-5 through B-10.

Figure B-5 – Natural Areas

Of the 108 parks and recreation sites, 38 have amenities meeting the “natural areas” criteria. The opposite of active recreation sites, the purpose of natural areas is primarily passive recreation (i.e. the enjoyment of nature). Sufficient natural areas amenities exist in park sites located in Chesapeake City, Elkton, Fair Hill, the Elk Neck Peninsula, and southern Cecil County. The western part of Cecil County (i.e. Rising Sun, the Theodore Rd corridor, and the Tome Hwy corridor) lack parks with natural area amenities. Other than the large land holdings of York Building Products and Principio Iron Company, the fragmented and smaller sized parcels in these areas will make the creation of a natural area park site difficult and expensive.

Figure B-6 – Water and Fishing Recreation

As one might expect, the 17 parks and recreation sites having water and fishing recreation amenities are almost exclusively located along Cecil County’s five major rivers. (The sole exception is the Rising Sun Community Fishing Pond located on Rising Sun Rd). Supplemented by numerous private marinas, Cecil County doesn’t lack for sites at which residents and tourists can access the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Figure B-7 – Picnicking

An amenity with an ambiguous definition, picnicking amenities are available at 37 of the 108 parks and recreation sites. Ample picnicking opportunities exist in the Perryville, Port Deposit, North East, and Elkton areas. Southern Cecil County, the Elk Neck Peninsula, and Conowingo lack opportunities.

Figure B-8 – Hunting

Primarily located on the Elk Neck Peninsula and southern Cecil County (i.e. Chesapeake City, Warwick, and Earleville), Cecil County’s hunting sites are spatially clustered. As shown in Figure B-8, almost the entire portion of Cecil County located west of the Town of North East lacks publicly owned hunting parks and recreation sites. As larger, forested tracts of land become available in the western part of the County, their use as potential hunting focused parks and recreation sites should be investigated.

Figure B-9 – Trails

Twenty three of Cecil County’s parks and recreation sites have trails amenities. With adequate coverage in the Calvert, Perryville, Fair Hill, Elkton, and Chesapeake City portions of the County, trails are typically associated with the regional County owned parks or the larger State owned parks. Almost all of the existing parks with trails amenities have “internal focused trails,” meaning that the trails do not extend offsite. Only one of the County owned sites (the mostly undeveloped Philadelphia Baltimore Central Rail Trail) has the potential to connect multiple sites. Portions of regional trails exist in Cecil County. These include the:

- C&D Canal Trail (part of site #34, the C&D Canal Wildlife Area);
- East Coast Greenway (located on parts of Route 1 and Route 213); and
- Mason Dixon Trail (located in the Route 40 and Route 7 corridors).

Figure B-10 – Active Recreation

Over half of Cecil County’s recreation sites (62 out of 108) have active recreation components. Almost mirroring the overall spatial distribution of recreation sites, deficiencies exist only in the Earleville and Warwick zip codes.

F. Conclusion

Cecil County Government’s two mile radii park proximity analysis shows that portions Conowingo, Glen Farms, Colora, southern Chesapeake City, Grove Neck Rd, and areas south of Route 301 are distant from existing parks and recreation sites. However, increasing the distance to five mile radii results in the entirety of Cecil County being located within a fifteen minute drive of an existing park/recreation site. Classifying park sites by the types of amenities offered provides more meaningful insight, as discussed more fully in Section E.

Figure B-5 – Two Mile Radii – Natural areas

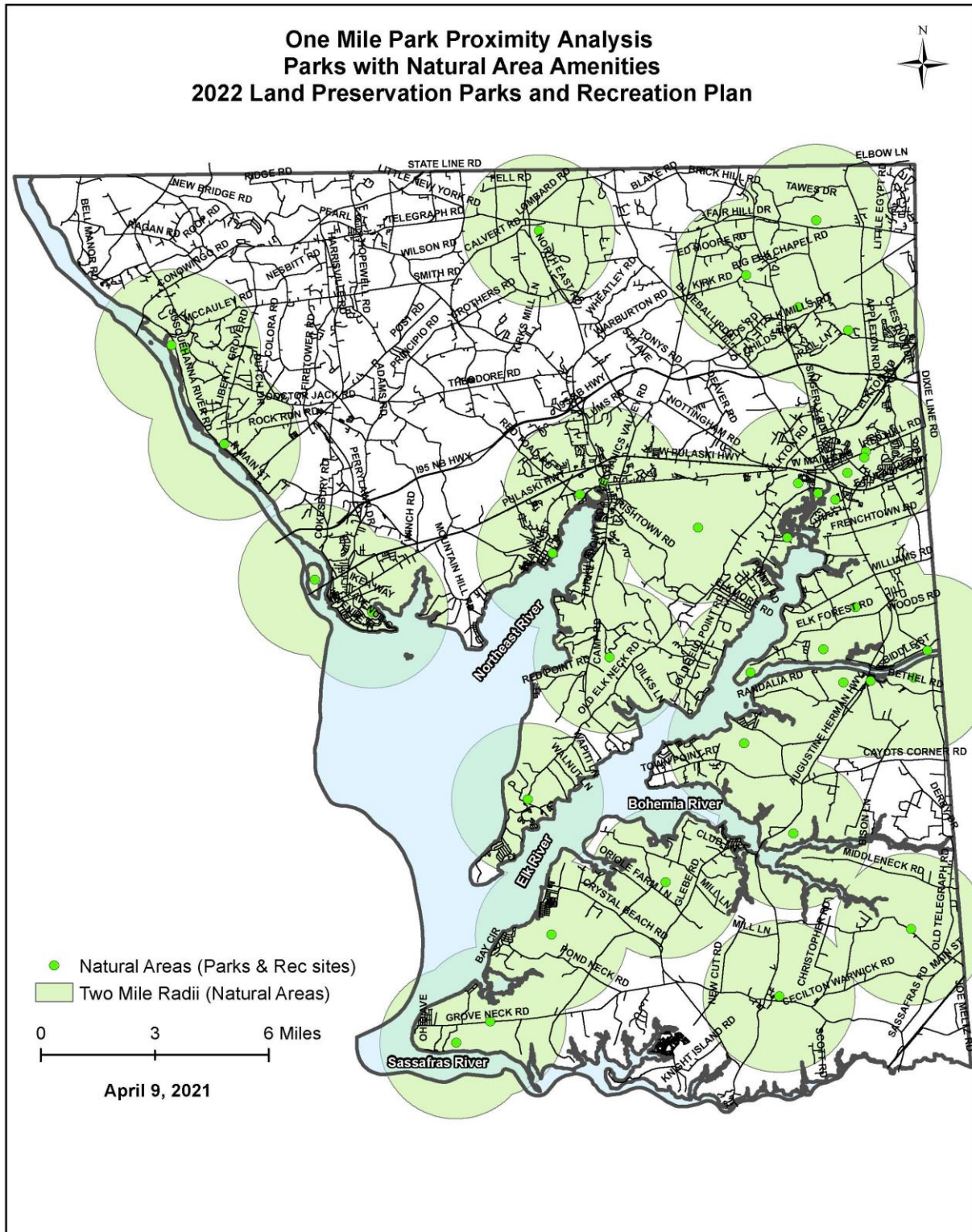


Figure B-6 – Two Mile Radii – Water and fishing recreation

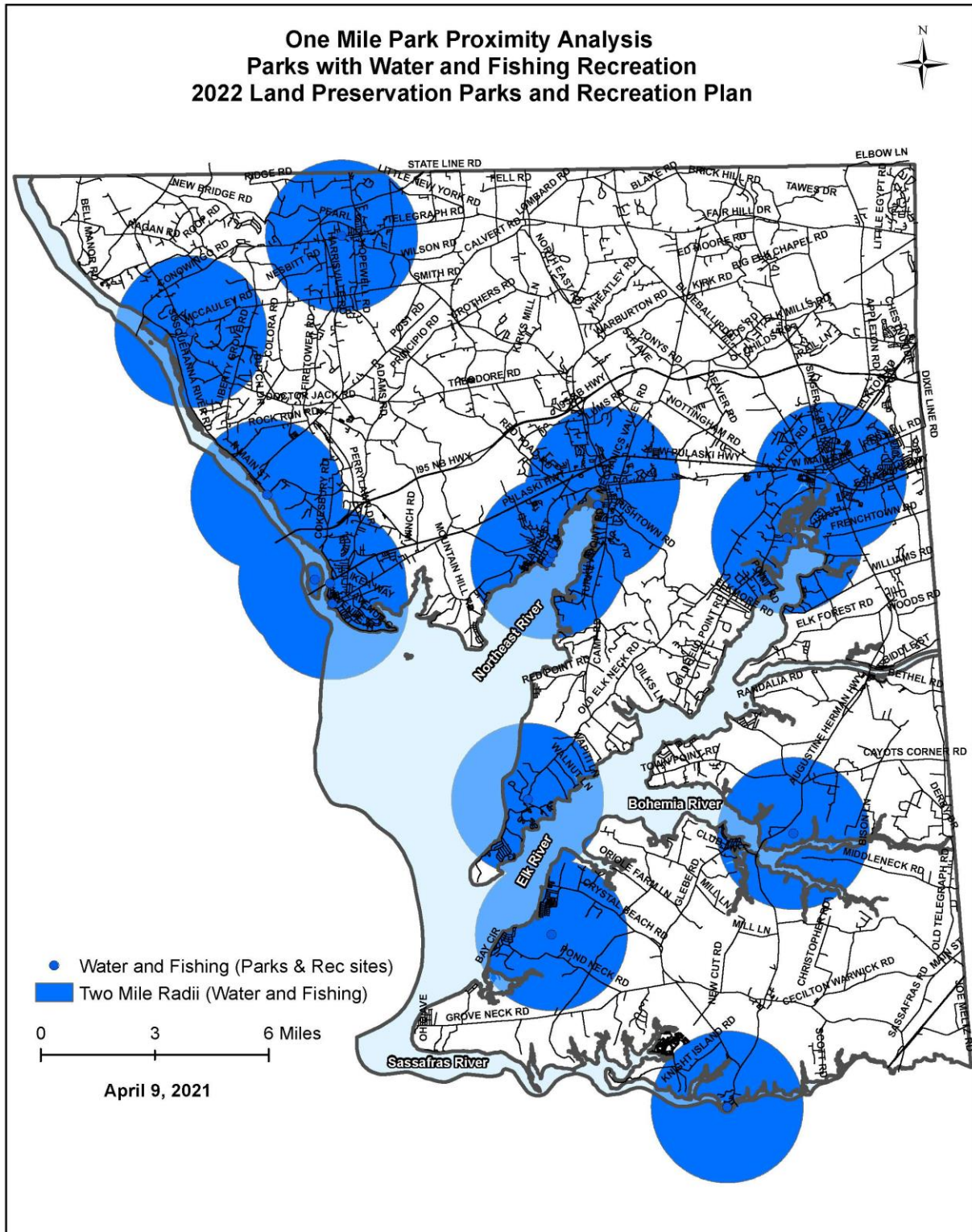


Figure B-7– Two Mile Radii – Picnicking

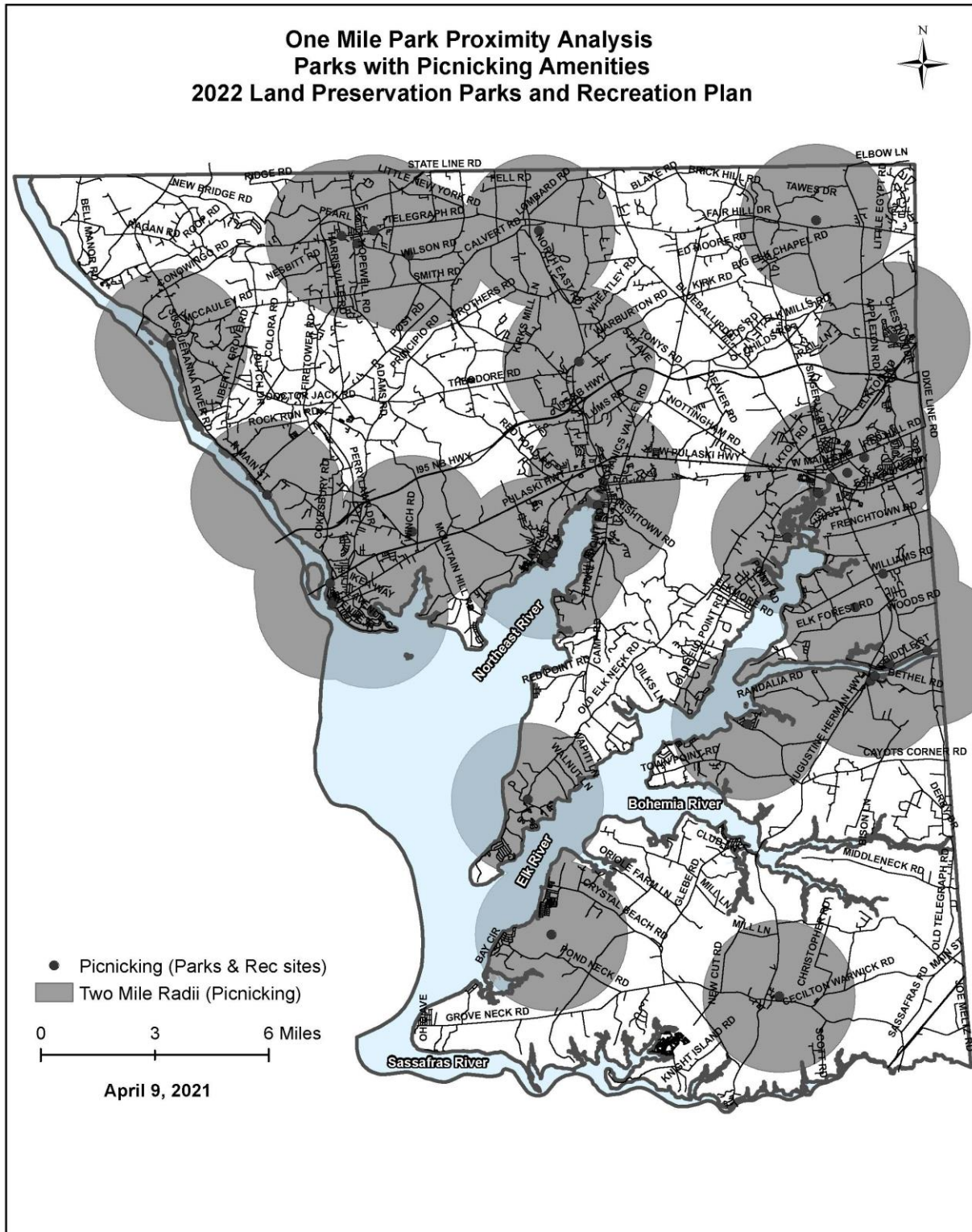


Figure B-8– Two Mile Radii –Hunting

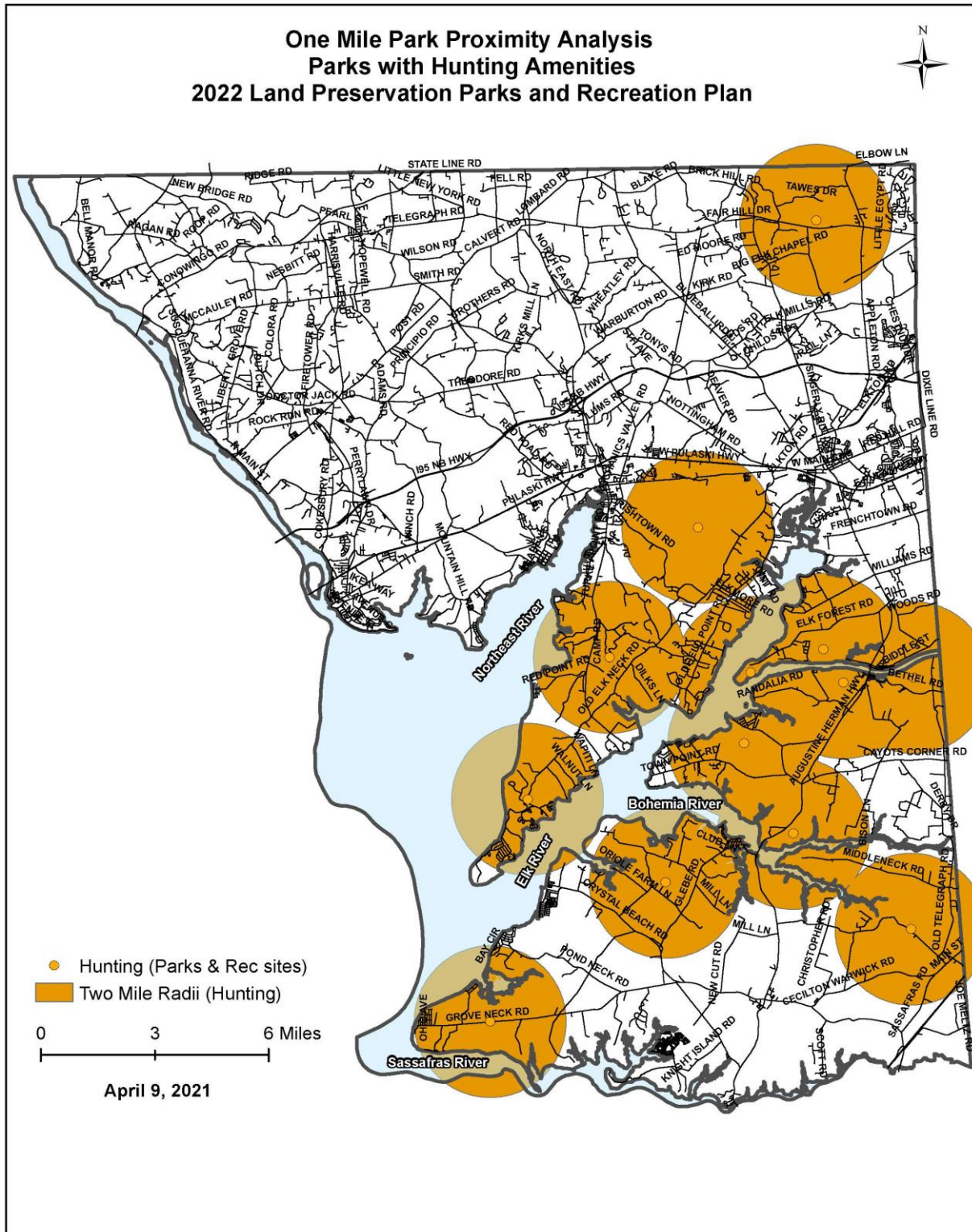


Figure B-9– Two Mile Radii –Trails

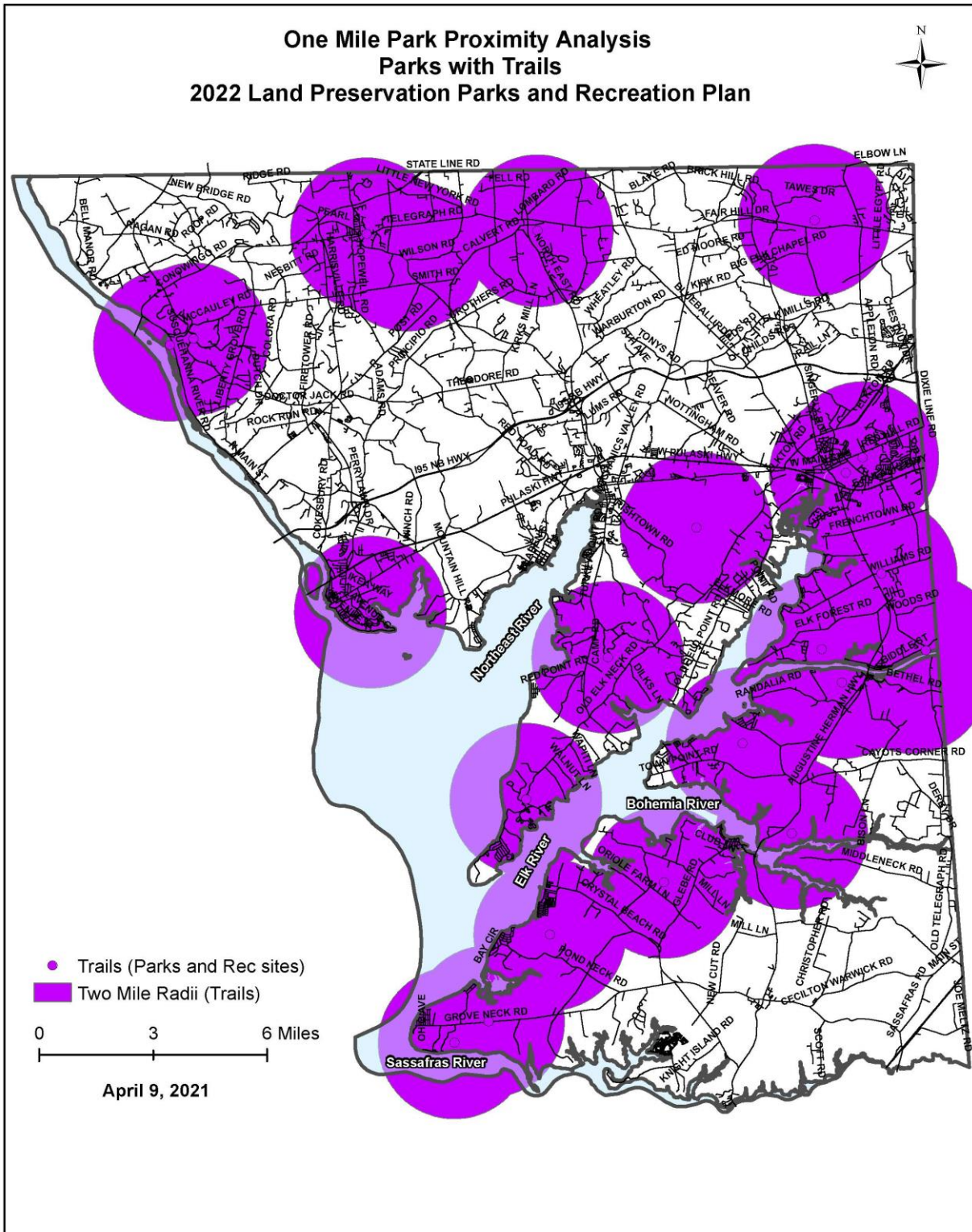
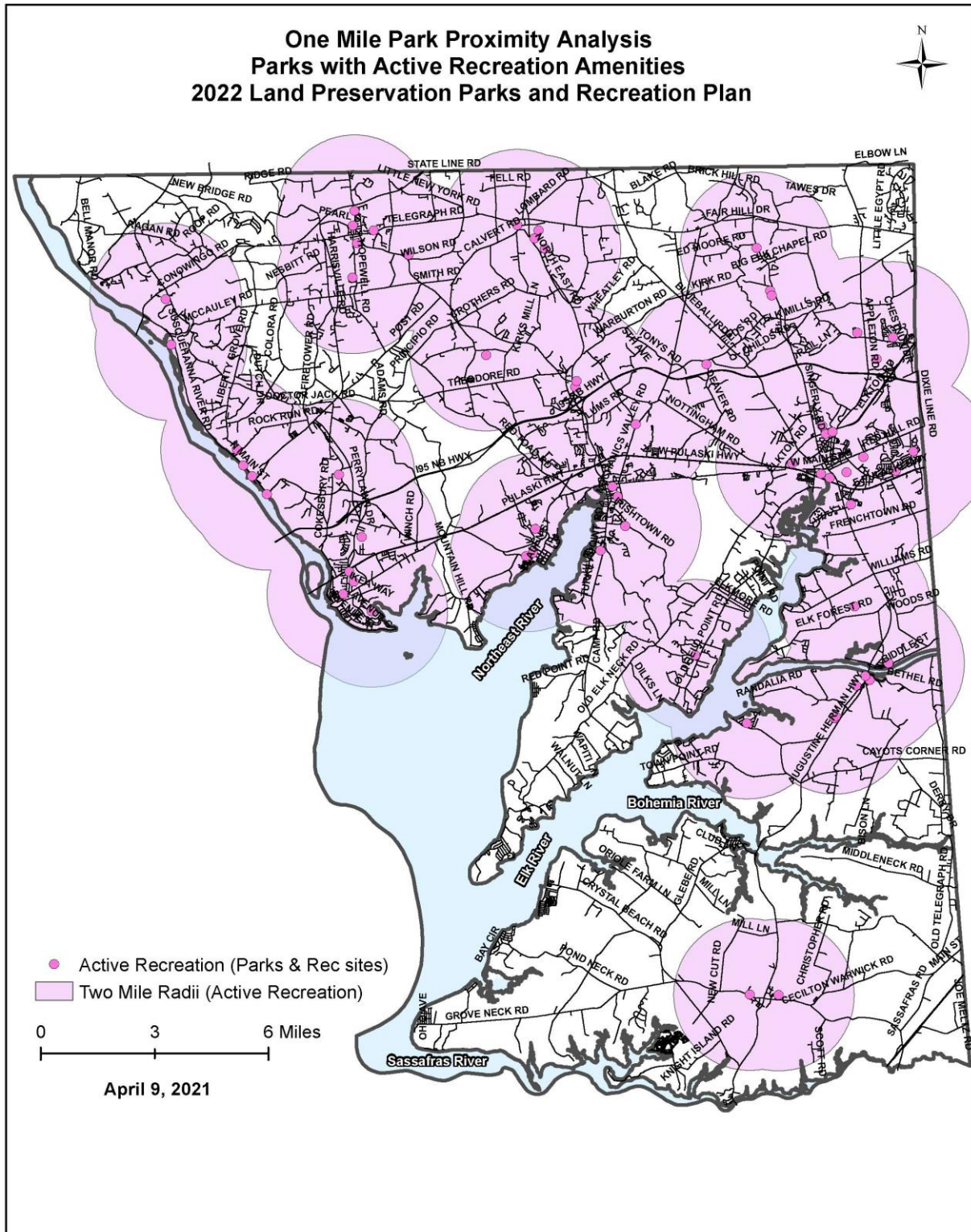
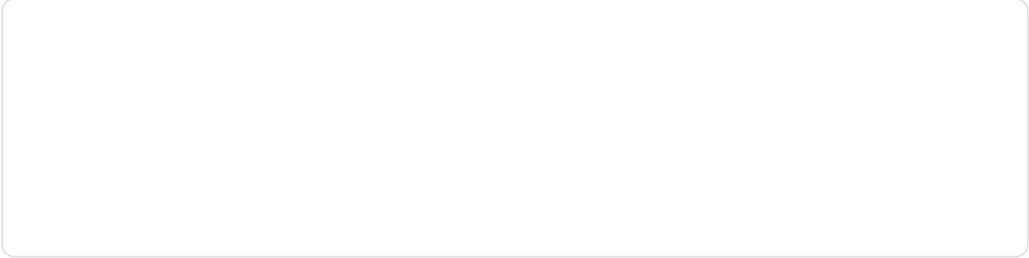


Figure B-10– Two Mile Radii –Active Recreation



APPENDIX D



Cecil County Parks and Recreation Survey

273 responses

[Publish analytics](#)

What is your first name

273 responses

Sarah

Jennifer

Jessica

Amanda

Ashley

Melissa

Tracy

Lisa

Rachel



What is your last name

273 responses

Brown

Moore

Martin

Adams

Myers

Jarrell

Solomon

McClure

Rollins

What is your primary e-mail address?

273 responses

Heatherjarrell72@gmail.com

elegrecoates@gmail.com

Jakehough1398@gmail.com

willowcroftmelody@gmail.com

bauermegan37@gmail.com

emvannostrand@ccps.org

sarah.e0414@gmail.com

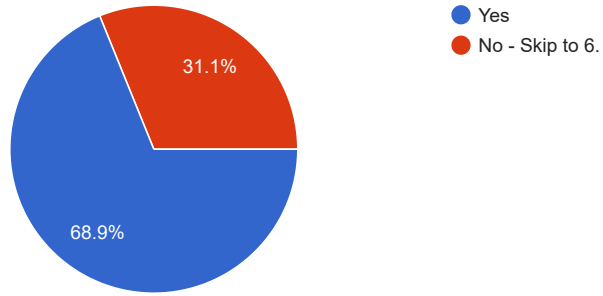
Bryncsea@aol.com

ccantor@ccgov.org



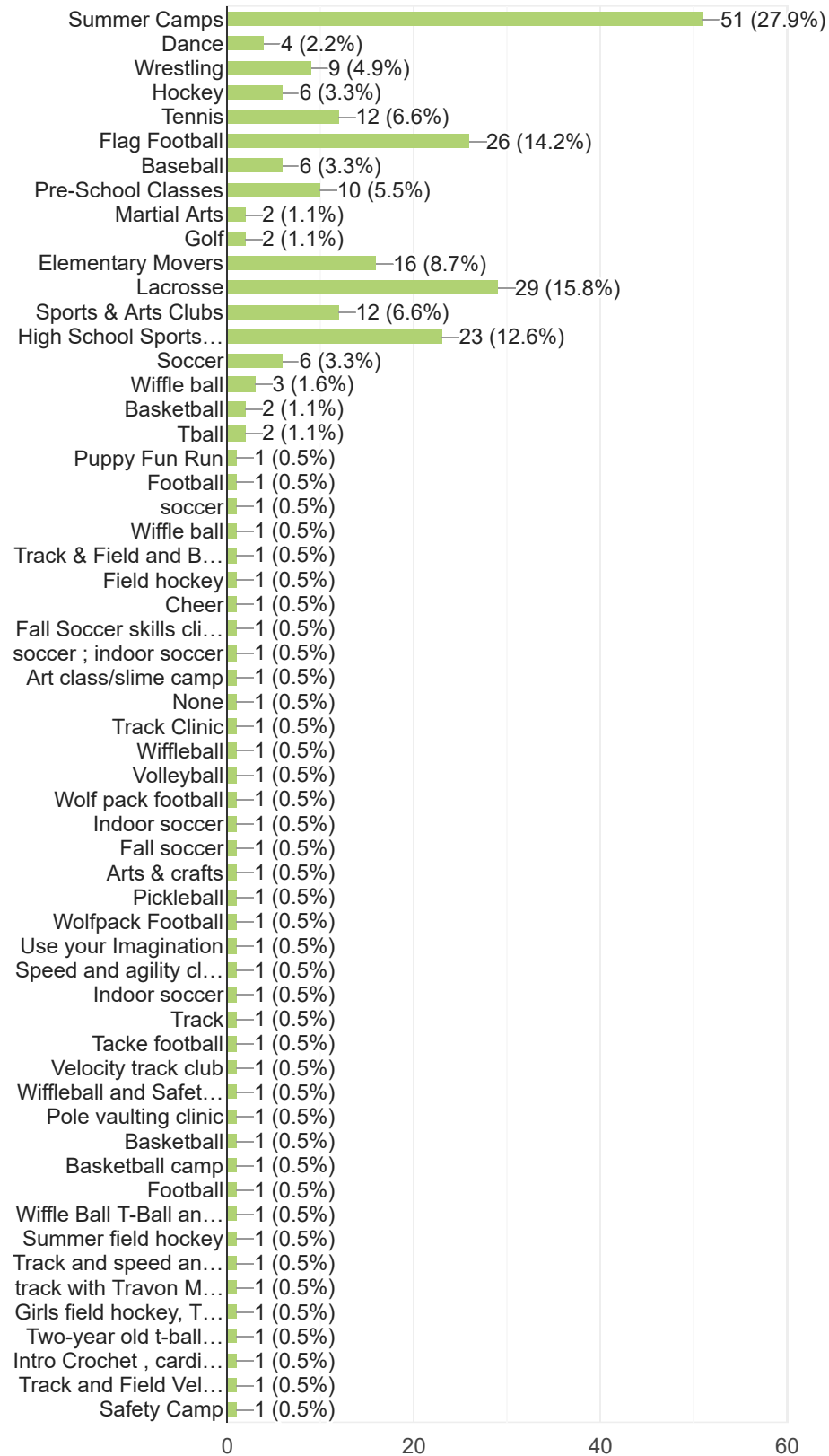
Did you, or members of your family, participate in Cecil County Parks and Recreation Programs during the past year?

273 responses



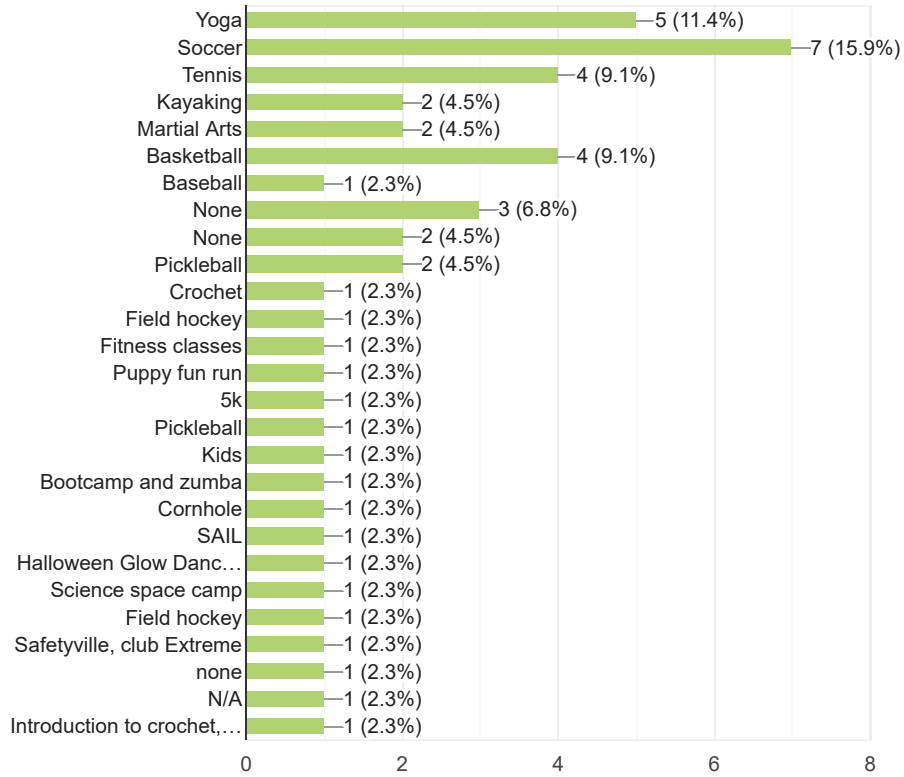
1.) What youth program(s) did your family participate in this year?

183 responses



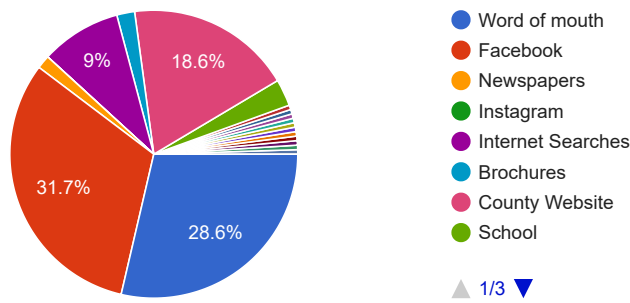
2.) What adult program(s) did your family participate in?

44 responses



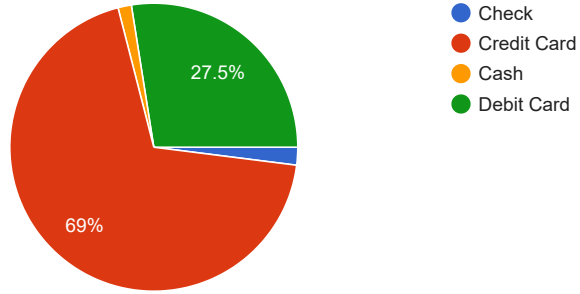
3.) How do you usually hear about Parks and Recreation events and programs?

199 responses



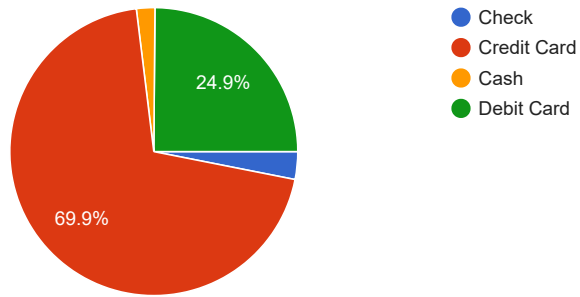
4.) If there is a fee for a program, what would be the most convenient way for you to pay?

200 responses



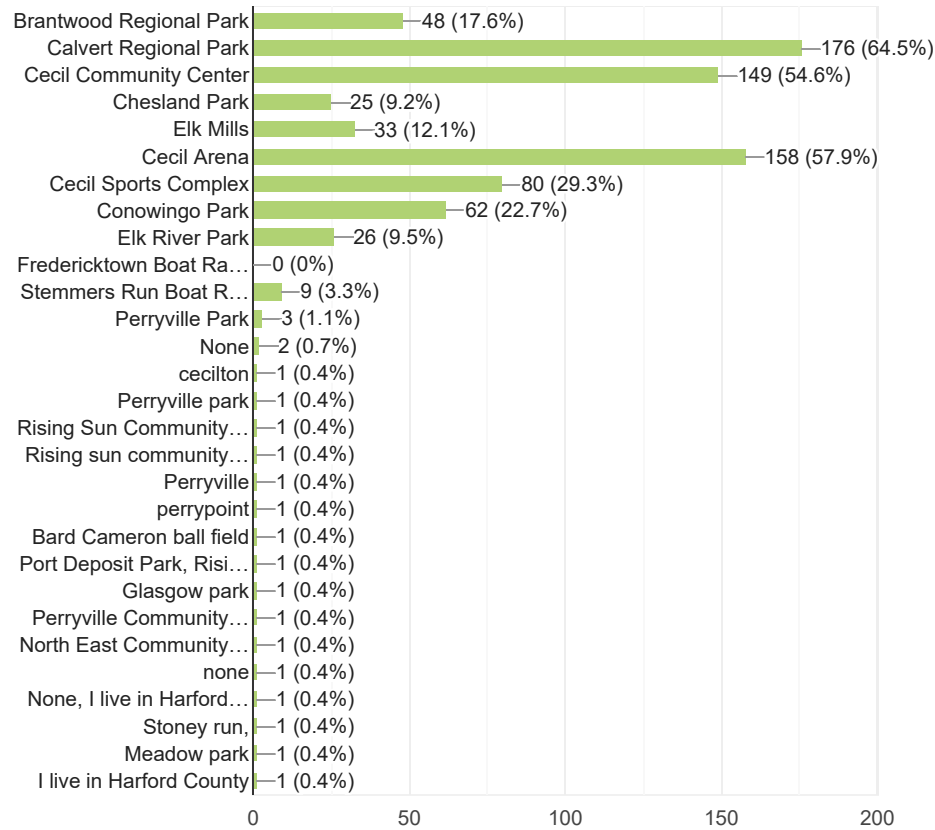
5.) If there is a fee for a program, what would be the most convenient way for you to pay?

193 responses



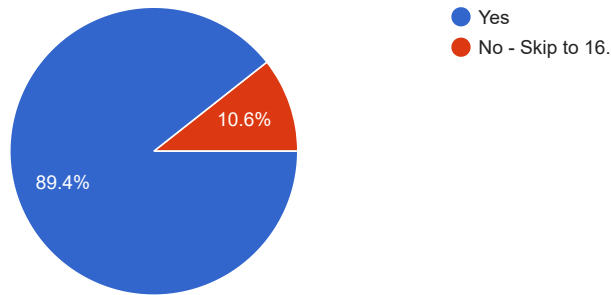
6.) Please select the County Park(s) that are located within 10 miles of your residence.

273 responses



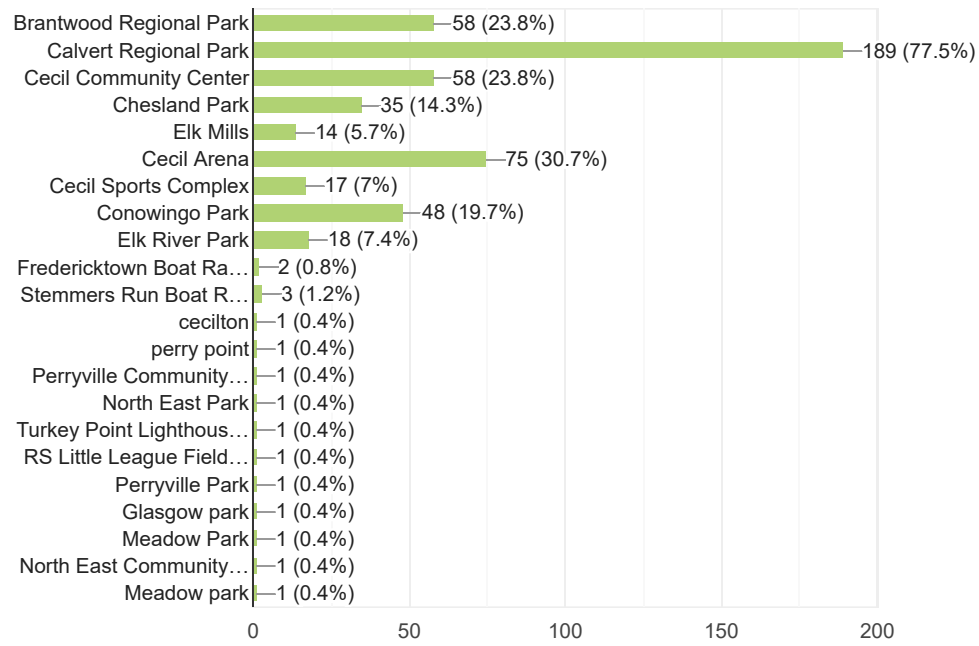
7.) Do you or a household member use any of the County Parks?

273 responses



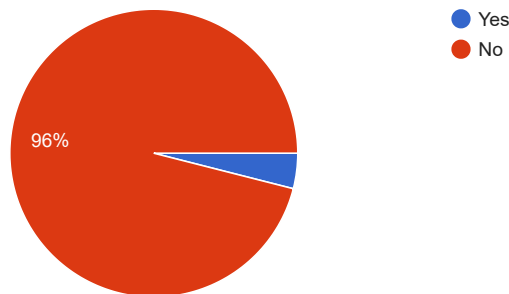
8.) Please select the County Park(s) you use.

244 responses



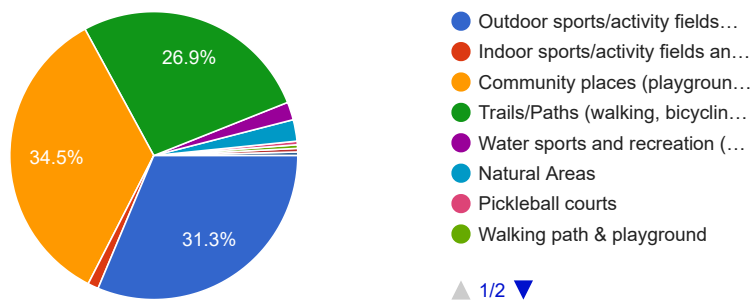
9.) Do you or any members of your household have any disabilities that require a need for ADA - accessible facilities or services?

252 responses



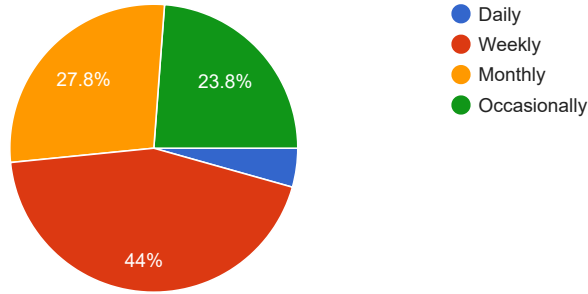
10.) What facilities or amenities do you use most often when you visit a park?

249 responses



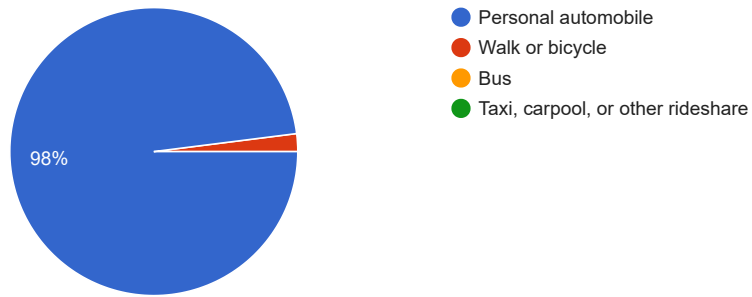
11.) How often do you visit our County Parks?

252 responses



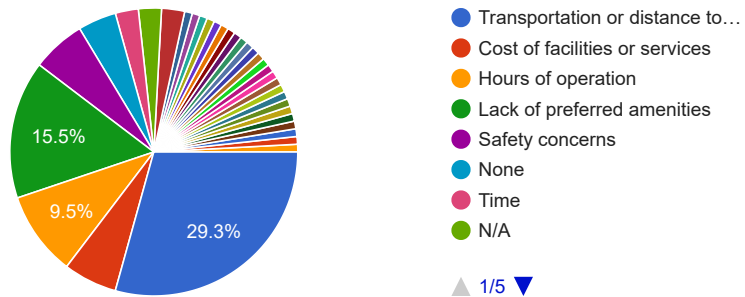
12.) What mode of transportation do you use most frequently to access parks or recreation facilities?

250 responses



13.) Are there any obstacles that prevent you from using parks or facilities more frequently?

116 responses



14.) What additional activities/ events would be of interest to you in County Parks?

- Please List:

119 responses

Soccer

None

Kids events

Racquetball

Community building days

more parks near earleville

Musical

Family nights

Need activity center in Port Deposit Perryville area

15.) What additional facilities/amenities would you like to see in our parks? -

Please List:

120 responses

Restrooms

Dog park

Recreational center

Tree house

yyy

updated playground

Pavillion at calvert

pool, bouncy park arena, more parking

Batting Cages in Perryville area



16.) How would you like to see undeveloped parkland used?

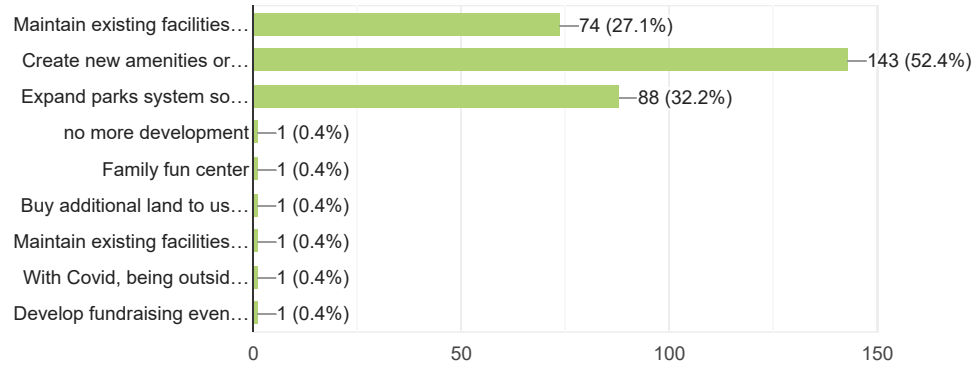
273 responses

- Trails
- Walking trails
- trails
- Nature trails
- Hiking trails
- Walking trails
- ?
- Leave it undeveloped
- Playgrounds



17.) If you were in charge of funding for parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services, what would your priorities be? Please check the most important statement below: (Budget impact in parentheses)

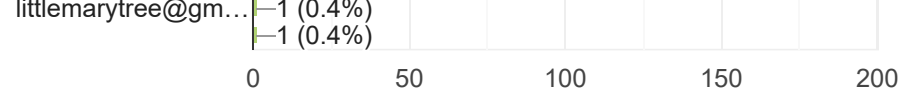
273 responses



18.) Would you be willing to volunteer for park maintenance work days?

273 responses

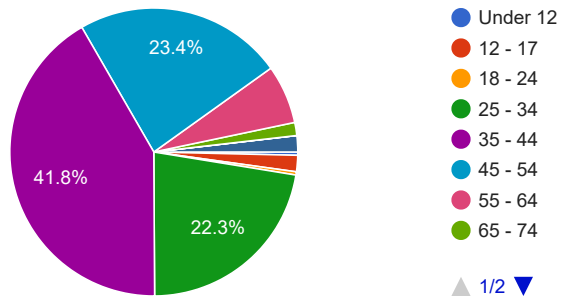




Demographics

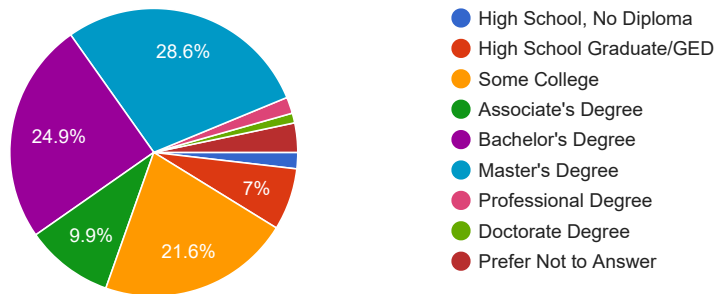
Age

273 responses



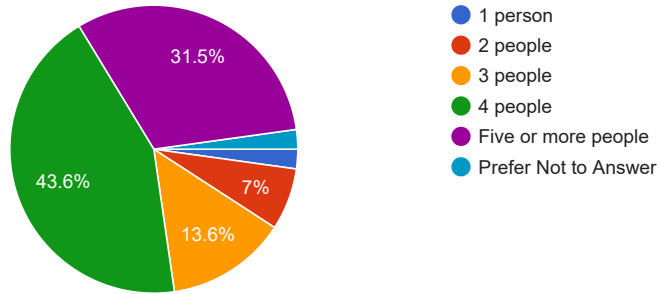
What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled, mark the previous grade or highest degree received.

273 responses



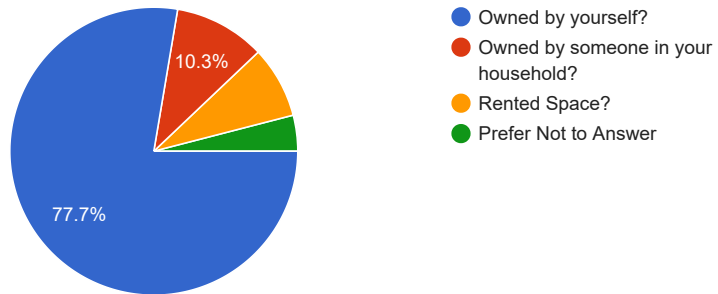
Please list the number of people, including yourself, living in your household.

273 responses



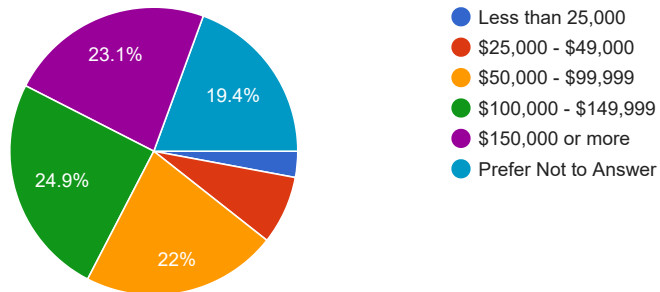
Is your Home:

273 responses



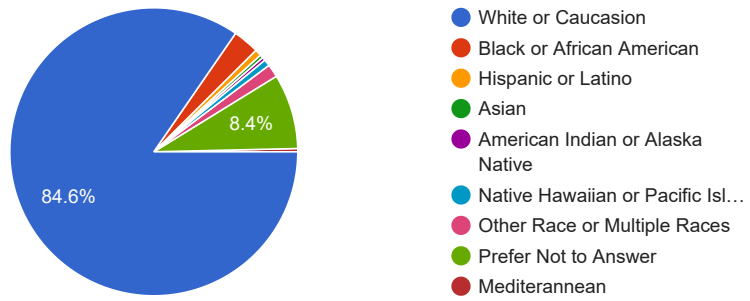
What is your total household Income?

273 responses



What is your race or ethnicity

273 responses



This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google. [Report Abuse](#) - [Terms of Service](#) - [Privacy Policy](#).

Google Forms



APPENDIX D

Apendix D - Cecil County Park Inventory

Site Name	Acres	Indoor Facilities	Picnic Facilities	Playgrounds	Trails	Boat Ramp	Fishing	Multi-Purpose Fields	Baseball/Softball Field(s)	Basketball	Tennis	Dog Park	Other
Cecil County													
Brantwood Regional Park	126.9			X	1		X						Disc Golf
Calvert Regional Park	105		X	X	1			X		X			Synthetic Turf Field, Tournament Venue
Calvert House	10.6												
Cecil Arena	7.1	X						X					Indoor Synthetic Turf, Meeting Space
Conowingo Park	32.57		X	X	1			X	X				
Cecil Sports Complex	20.5		X					X	X				
Johnnies Ballfield	5.6								X				
Cecil Community Center	17.5	X	X	X	0.5		X		X		X		
Chesland Park	164.5		X	X				X					
Elk Mills Community Park	6		X	X									
Fletchwood Community Park	25.2		X	X						X			
Harbor View Community Park	0.2			X						Half Ct.			
Holly Tree Park	1.1												Christmas Tree Lighting Dec-Jan
Elk River Park	68.9		X	X		X	X						
Stemmers Run Boat Ramp	22.5					X	X						
Fredericktown Boat Ramp	0.1					X	X						
Rowlandsville Fishing Park	0.13						X						
North East High School Synthetic Turf	2												
Bo Manor High School Synthetic Turf	2												
Perryville High School Synthetic Turf	2												
Patterson Property Perryville	10.8												
Stoney Run Park	30.5												Open Space
Wallace-Carters Mill Park	27.6												Open Space
Municipalities													
Cecilton													
Cecilton Town Park	33		X	X					X	X	X		Concessions, Exercise Area
Charlestown													
Stone Wharf	0.8						X						Wedding Venue
Veterans Park	1.1		X			X							Beach
Athletic Complex	4.75				1				X	X	X		Fitness Stations
Fairgreen Park	0.75			X									
Foot Log	1.3												Beach, Swimming
Trinity Woods Playground	0.5			X									
Lot B	1.3												Parking/Open Space
Avalon	5.3												Open Space
Dead End Beach	0.2												Beach, Swimming
630 Water Street	0.6												Boat Pier, 36 Slips
Chesapeake City													
Ben Cardin Trail					1.8								
Chesapeake City Park	11.5			X					X				
Pell Garden													Band Shell
Elkton													
Elkton Communit Center	2.382	X								X			Indoor Community Center
Marina Park	18									X	X		
John P Stanley Memorial Park	92		X	X	0.85			X		X			Sand Volleyball Ct
Mackall Street Park	2												
J. Evans McKinney/Hatchery Park	110			X				X				X	
Turnquist Park	0.1			X									
Delancy Village Park	4.4			X									
Hollingsworth Manor Park	11			X									
Howard's Pond	26.8		X				X						

Appendix D - Cecil County Park Inventory

Site Name	Acres	Indoor Facilities	Picnic Facilities	Playgrounds	Trails	Boat Ramp	Fishing	Multi-Purpose Fields	Baseball/Softball Field(s)	Basketball	Tennis	Dog Park	Other
North East													
North East Community Park	10.44		X	X	0.21		X	X					ADA Playground, Grills, Floating Pier, Soft Launch, Rest Rooms
Herring Snatcher Park	2.6		X										
Turner Park	3.61								X	X			
Perryville													
Perryville Community Park	168.5		X	X	1.8		X	X	X	X	X		Soft Launch
Boat Ramp Park	1.8				0.13	X							ADA Restrooms
Lower Ferry Park	1.84			X	0.3								Bandshell, ADA Restrooms
Rodgers Tavern/Lower Ferry Pier	2.17				0.25		X						Pier, 14 Finger Slips, Restrooms
Perryville Mini Park													Closed
Ice House Park	5.45		X		0.1		X						
Port Deposit													
Marina	3.88			X	1	X	X						Visitors Center, Map Turtle Research Center, Comfort Station
Tot Lot	0.25			X									
Mid-Town Basketball Court	0.08									X			
Earline Brown Park	0.45		X	X									Grills
Rising Sun													
Richardson Park	1.9			X									
Rising Sun Community Pond	2.4						X						
Triangle Dog Park	9.91											X	
Veterans Community Park	9.9		X	X									
State													
Earleville WMA	196.354												Hunting, wildlife viewing, hiking
Elk Mills Community Park	25.258												Open Space
Elk Neck State Forest	3328.190				28								Shooting range, hunting, hiking, wildlife viewing
Elk Neck State Park	2508.600		X		12	X	X						Camping, hiking, wildlife viewing, swimming
Fair Hill NRMA	5516.590	X	X		80		X						Turf course, hunting, hiking, wildlife viewing
Grove Farm WMA	739.870												Hunting, wildlife viewing, hiking
Old Bohemia WMA	994.940												Hunting, wildlife viewing, hiking
Susquehanna State Park	126.740												Wildlife viewing, hiking
Bohemia	460.000												Development for Strategic Plan has been initiated
Federal													
C&D Canal Wildlife Area	47.550												Wildlife viewing
Canal National Wildlife Refuge	277.900						X						Hunting, wildlife viewing, fishing,
Courthouse Point WMA	352.570						X						Hunting, wildlife viewing, fishing
Elk Forest WMA	240.340						X						Hunting, wildlife viewing, fishing
Garrett Island	177.470						X						Wildlife viewing
Grove Neck Wildlife Sanctuary	136.860												Waterfowl hunting in approved blinds
Stemmers Run WMArea	844.800						X						Hunting, wildlife viewing, fishing
US Reservation on the C&D Canal	454.370						X						Wildlife viewing
Welch Point Managed Hunting Area	143.910						X						Hunting, wildlife viewing, fishing

APPENDIX E

**Cecil County 2022 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan
LPPRP Content Overview**

The data collected from this survey will be instrumental in the County's comprehensive Parks and Recreation planning efforts for the next five years. The validity and reliability of the information provided will be crucial to future funding allocations, open space acquisitions, and facility development projects for both the County and the Municipalities that reside within.

- I. Municipality: Cecilton

- II. Parks and Recreation Administrative Body:
 - a. Parks and Recreation Board: Y / N
 - b. Parks and Recreation Department: Y / N

- III. Inventory of Existing Public Parks and Recreation Facilities
 - a. Please provide existing public Parks and Recreation facilities owned and maintained by your Municipality. Please see the Parks/Facility Audit Form on page 2.

- IV. Financials
 - a. Annual Budget allocated toward Parks and Recreation: \$ ∅ General Maintenance
 - b. Grant Funding Sources Utilized: N/A

- V. Include updated user demand analyses (estimated):
 - a. Demographic served
 - b. Annual user rate
 - c. Peak user days
 - d. Peak user times

- VI. Include quantitative data measuring deficiencies in levels of service and opportunities, examples to include:
 - a. Budget constraints
 - b. Staffing constraints
 - c. Marketing

- VII. Goals and Strategies to address deficiencies and improve user experience.

- VIII. Current projects: ∅

- IX. What Park or Facility would you like to complete if funding were available in the next 5 years?
Fishing Pond
Skate Park

Cecil County 2022 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan Park/Facility Audit

Number of Parks: 1
Total Number of Acres: 26.074

Park/Facility Features	Yes	No	Total Number	
Softball/Baseball Fields	✓		4	
Multi-Purpose Fields		✓		
Tennis Courts	✓		1	
Basketball Courts Outdoor	✓		2	
Basketball Courts Indoor		✓		
Tot Lots (3-5 y/o)	✓		2	
Playgrounds (5-12 y/o)		✓		
Sensory Playgrounds		✓		
Walking Paths/Trails (miles)		✓		Total Miles: N/A
Volleyball Courts		✓		
Pavilions	✓		1	
Pickleball Courts		✓		
Farmers Markets		✓		
Rest Rooms With Running Water		✓		
Concessions		✓		
Boat Ramps		✓		
Soft Launches Kayak/Canoe		✓		
Beaches		✓		Total Feet: N/A
Fishing Piers		✓		
Skate Parks		✓		
Fishing Ponds		✓		
Community Gardens		✓		
Dog Parks		✓		
Pools		✓		
Amphitheater		✓		
Community / Rec Center	✓		1	

Comments: _____

Feel free to include any park/facility photos you would like added to the 2022 LPPRP.

**Cecil County 2022 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan
LPPRP Content Overview**

The data collected from this survey will be instrumental in the County's comprehensive Parks and Recreation planning efforts for the next five years. The validity and reliability of the information provided will be crucial to future funding allocations, open space acquisitions, and facility development projects for both the County and the Municipalities that reside within.

- I. Municipality: Town of Charlestown

- II. Parks and Recreation Administrative Body:
 - a. Parks and Recreation Board: Y / N
 - b. Parks and Recreation Department: Y / N

- III. Inventory of Existing Public Parks and Recreation Facilities
 - a. Please provide existing public Parks and Recreation facilities owned and maintained by your Municipality. Please see the Parks/Facility Audit Form on page 2.

- IV. Financials
 - a. Annual Budget allocated toward Parks and Recreation: \$ 123,670
 - b. Grant Funding Sources Utilized: Town Budget as expense.
No grants currently.

- V. Include updated user demand analyses (estimated):
 - a. Demographic served
 - b. Annual user rate
 - c. Peak user days Friday, Saturday, Sunday + Monday
 - d. Peak user times

- VI. Include quantitative data measuring deficiencies in levels of service and opportunities, examples to include:
 - a. Budget constraints
 - b. Staffing constraints
 - c. Marketing

- VII. Goals and Strategies to address deficiencies and improve user experience

We have budget constraints as we try to have ^{Musical Acts} bands & activities for our residents. We do not have any staff for Recreation + we use our town Hall Admin staff for marketing on our website + facebook

- VIII. Current projects: Setting up a small skate park + Acquiring equipment for our events.

- IX. What Park or Facility would you like to complete if funding were available in the next 5 years?

We would like to develop Avalon Park for weddings + other events. We would like to use The Building at Park for children's Nature events

Cecil County 2022 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan Park/Facility Audit

Number of Parks:	8
Total Number of Acres:	

Park/Facility Features	Yes	No	Total Number	
Softball/Baseball Fields	✓		1	
Multi-Purpose Fields	✓		1	
Tennis Courts	✓		2	
Basketball Courts Outdoor	✓		2	
Basketball Courts Indoor		✓		
Tot Lots (3-5 y/o)		✓		
Playgrounds (5-12 y/o)	✓		2	
Sensory Playgrounds		✓		
Walking Paths/Trails (miles)				Total Miles: .026
Volleyball Courts		✓		
Pavilions	✓			
Pickleball Courts	✓		2	
Farmers Markets		✓		
Rest Rooms With Running Water	✓		1	
Concessions		✓		
Boat Ramps	✓		1	
Soft Launches Kayak/Canoe	✓		1	
Beaches	✓			Total Feet: 697
Fishing Piers	✓		1	
Skate Parks		✓		<i>But getting gone</i>
Fishing Ponds		✓		
Community Gardens		✓		
Dog Parks		✓		
Pools		✓		
Amphitheater		✓		
Community / Rec Center		✓		

Comments: _____

Feel free to include any park/facility photos you would like added to the 2022 LPPRP.

Ella Briones

From: f.vari@chesapeakecity-md.gov
Sent: Monday, April 26, 2021 2:34 PM
To: Ella Briones
Subject: FW: RE: Cecil County Parks and Recreation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of Cecil County IT Network Systems. **Reminder:** DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know that the content is safe. Report any suspicious activities to the IT Department.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of Cecil County IT Network Systems. **Reminder:** DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know that the content is safe. Report any suspicious activities to the IT Department.

Ms. Briones here is a list that you requested.

Ferry Slip Park

- Children's playground
- Picnic area
- Horseshoe pits

Becks Landing

- Waterfront promenade with gardens
- Transient boating
- Water taxi (to north side of canal)

Chesapeake City Boat Ramp

- Town is managing boat ramp for Corp of Engineers

Chesapeake City Little League Complex

- Little League fields, concession stand, and bathrooms
- Children's playground

Ben Cardin Trail

- Biking hiking trail to Delaware City
- Water taxi (to south side of canal)

Union Street Park

- Waterfront park and overlook

Helen Titter Park

- Children's playground

- Basketball court
- Baseball and soccer field
- Restroom
- Pavilion and picnic area
- Hiking Trails

If there is anything else i can help you with please feel free to contact me.

Frank Vari, Town Council - Parks & Rec
Chesapeake City
302-563-6360/410-885-2161

The Hidden Treasure of the Chesapeake

From: f.vari@chesapeakecity-md.gov <f.vari@chesapeakecity-md.gov>
Sent: Friday, April 23, 2021 9:43 AM
To: r.bernstine@chesapeakecity-md.gov
Subject: FW: Cecil County Parks and Recreation

Rob, we need respond to this. Can you make me a list of each park with a inventory.

Thank You Frank V.

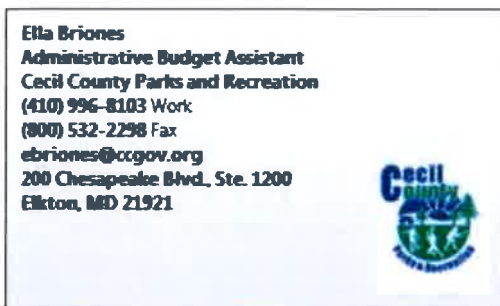
-----Original Message-----

From: "Ella Briones" <EBriones@ccgov.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 22, 2021 8:40am
To: "f.vari@chesapeakecity-md.gov" <f.vari@chesapeakecity-md.gov>
Subject: Cecil County Parks and Recreation

Good Morning Frank,

Cecil County Parks and Recreation is working on the 2022 Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan. The LPPRP allows local jurisdictions to plan for improving natural resources and agricultural land preservation. One of the items we'll need to provide is an inventory of parks, amenities, and recreation facilities for each municipality. Would you have some availability to speak by phone next week?

Thank you.



**Cecil County 2022 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan
LPPRP Content Overview**

The data collected from this survey will be instrumental in the County's comprehensive Parks and Recreation planning efforts for the next five years. The validity and reliability of the information provided will be crucial to future funding allocations, open space acquisitions, and facility development projects for both the County and the Municipalities that reside within.

- I. Municipality: Town of Elkton

- II. Parks and Recreation Administrative Body:
 - a. Parks and Recreation Board: Y / N
 - b. Parks and Recreation Department: Y / N

- III. Inventory of Existing Public Parks and Recreation Facilities
 - a. Please provide existing public Parks and Recreation facilities owned and maintained by your Municipality. Please see the Parks/Facility Audit Form on page 2.

- IV. Financials
 - a. Annual Budget allocated toward Parks and Recreation: \$ 430,000.
 - b. Grant Funding Sources Utilized: Community Parks and Playgrounds, CDBG

- V. Include updated user demand analyses (estimated):
 - a. Demographic served - all ages, races, gender
 - b. Annual user rate - TBD with opening of NCC - currently 200+ users per week
 - c. Peak user days Monday - Saturday
 - d. Peak user times 8am - 9pm

- VI. Include quantitative data measuring deficiencies in levels of service and opportunities, examples to include:
 - a. Budget constraints
 - b. Staffing constraints --
 - c. Marketing

- VII. Goals and Strategies to address deficiencies and improve user experience.

- VIII. Current projects: _____

- IX. What Park or Facility would you like to complete if funding were available in the next 5 years?
Neighborhood Community Center
Meadow Park

**Cecil County 2022 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan
Park/Facility Audit**

Number of Parks: 8
Total Number of Acres: 257 +

Park/Facility Features	Yes	No	Total Number	
Softball/Baseball Fields		X		
Multi-Purpose Fields	X		8	
Tennis Courts	X		6	
Basketball Courts Outdoor	X		2	
Basketball Courts Indoor	X		1	
Tot Lots (3-5 y/o)	X		2	
Playgrounds (5-12 y/o)	X		2	
Sensory Playgrounds		X		
Walking Paths/Trails (miles)	X			Total Miles: ^{Paved} 0.8 mi
Volleyball Courts	X		3	
Pavilions	X	5		
Pickleball Courts	X		6	
Farmers Markets		X		
Rest Rooms With Running Water	X		4	
Concessions		X		
Boat Ramps		X		
Soft Launches Kayak/Canoe	X		1	
Beaches		X		Total Feet:
Fishing Piers		X		
Skate Parks		X		
Fishing Ponds	X		2	
Community Gardens		X		
Dog Parks	X		1	
Pools		X		
Amphitheater		X		
Community / Rec Center	X		1	

Comments: _____

Feel free to include any park/facility photos you would like added to the 2022 LPPRP.

**Cecil County 2022 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan
LPPRP Content Overview**

The data collected from this survey will be instrumental in the County's comprehensive Parks and Recreation planning efforts for the next five years. The validity and reliability of the information provided will be crucial to future funding allocations, open space acquisitions, and facility development projects for both the County and the Municipalities that reside within.

- The Town of North East
- I. Municipality: _____

 - II. Parks and Recreation Administrative Body:
 - a. Parks and Recreation Board: Y / N
 - b. Parks and Recreation Department: Y / N

 - III. Inventory of Existing Public Parks and Recreation Facilities
 - a. Please provide existing public Parks and Recreation facilities owned and maintained by your Municipality. Please see the Parks/Facility Audit Form on page 2.

 - IV. Financials
 - a. Annual Budget allocated toward Parks and Recreation: \$ 90,250.00
 - b. Grant Funding Sources Utilized: DNR-playground equip. (within last 5 years)
There was grant funding years ago for the other parks, but source unknown

 - V. Include updated user demand analyses (estimated):
 - a. Demographic served Local residents, adjoining town residents, tourists
 - b. Annual user rate 50,000
 - c. Peak user days All days, however, summer events have increased population on weekends
 - d. Peak user times 7:00 am to dusk

 - VI. Include quantitative data measuring deficiencies in levels of service and opportunities, examples to include:
 - a. Budget constraints
 - b. Staffing constraints
 - c. Marketing

 - VII. Goals and Strategies to address deficiencies and improve user experience.
 - Critical Area Circuit Rider Grant-to employ someone to obtain and manage grants
 - Sustainable Community Status with the Maryland Dept. of Planning (DHCD)

 - VIII. Current projects: 59 Acre Nature Preserve: Currently raw land which was recently deeded to the Town. Also, North East Community Park, Rain Garden extension

 - IX. What Park or Facility would you like to complete if funding were available in the next 5 years?
 - 59 Acre parcel: Preservation Park with passive recreation
 - Turner Park: Update ballfield to include H/C accessibility and bleachers, etc.
 - Both will need funding for concept plans and subsequent implementation.

**Cecil County 2022 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan
Park/Facility Audit**

NE Community Park @10 acres
Turner Park 3.6 acres
Herring Snatchers Park 2.6 acres
Newly acquired land 59 acres

Number of Parks: 4
Total Number of Acres: 75

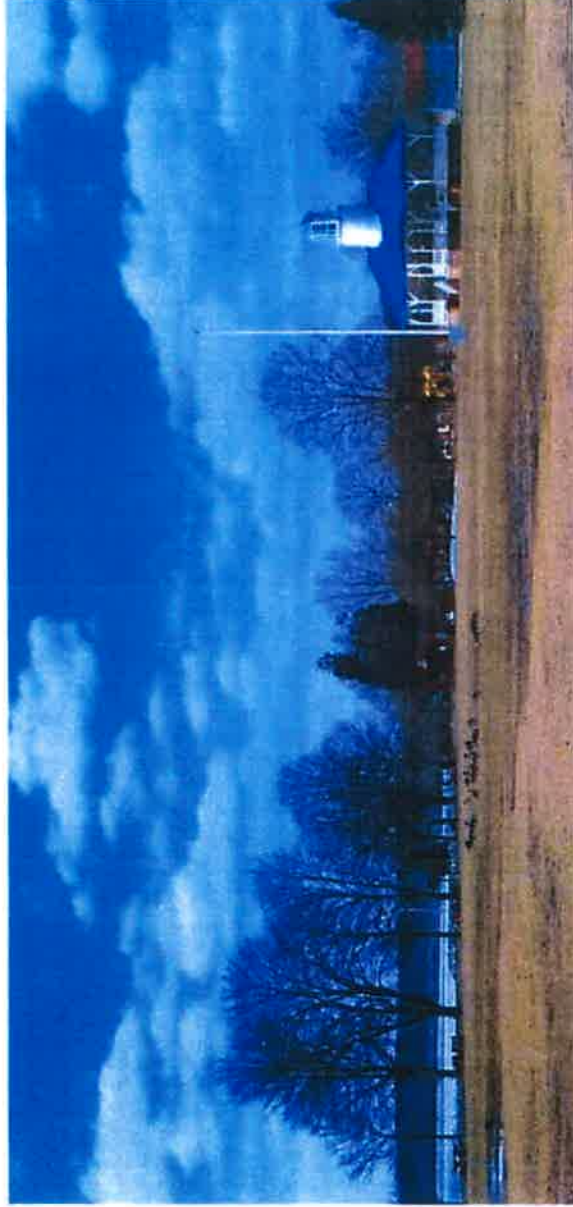
Park/Facility Features	Yes	No	Total Number	
Softball/Baseball Fields	✓		1	
Multi-Purpose Fields	✓		1	
Tennis Courts		✓		
Basketball Courts Outdoor		✓		
Basketball Courts Indoor		✓		
Tot Lots (3-5 y/o)	✓		1	
Playgrounds (5-12 y/o)	✓		1	
Sensory Playgrounds		✓		
Walking Paths/Trails (miles)	✓		1	Total Miles: 1-2
Volleyball Courts	✓		1	
Pavilions	✓		3	
Pickleball Courts		✓		
Farmers Markets		✓		
Rest Rooms With Running Water	✓		1	
Concessions		✓		
Boat Ramps		✓		
Soft Launches Kayak/Canoe	✓		1	
Beaches		✓		Total Feet:
Fishing Piers	✓		1	
Skate Parks		✓		
Fishing Ponds		✓		
Community Gardens		✓		
Dog Parks		✓		
Pools		✓		
Amphitheater		✓		
Community / Rec Center		✓		

Comments: _____

Feel free to include any park/facility photos you would like added to the 2022 LPPRP. PHOTOS ATTACHED

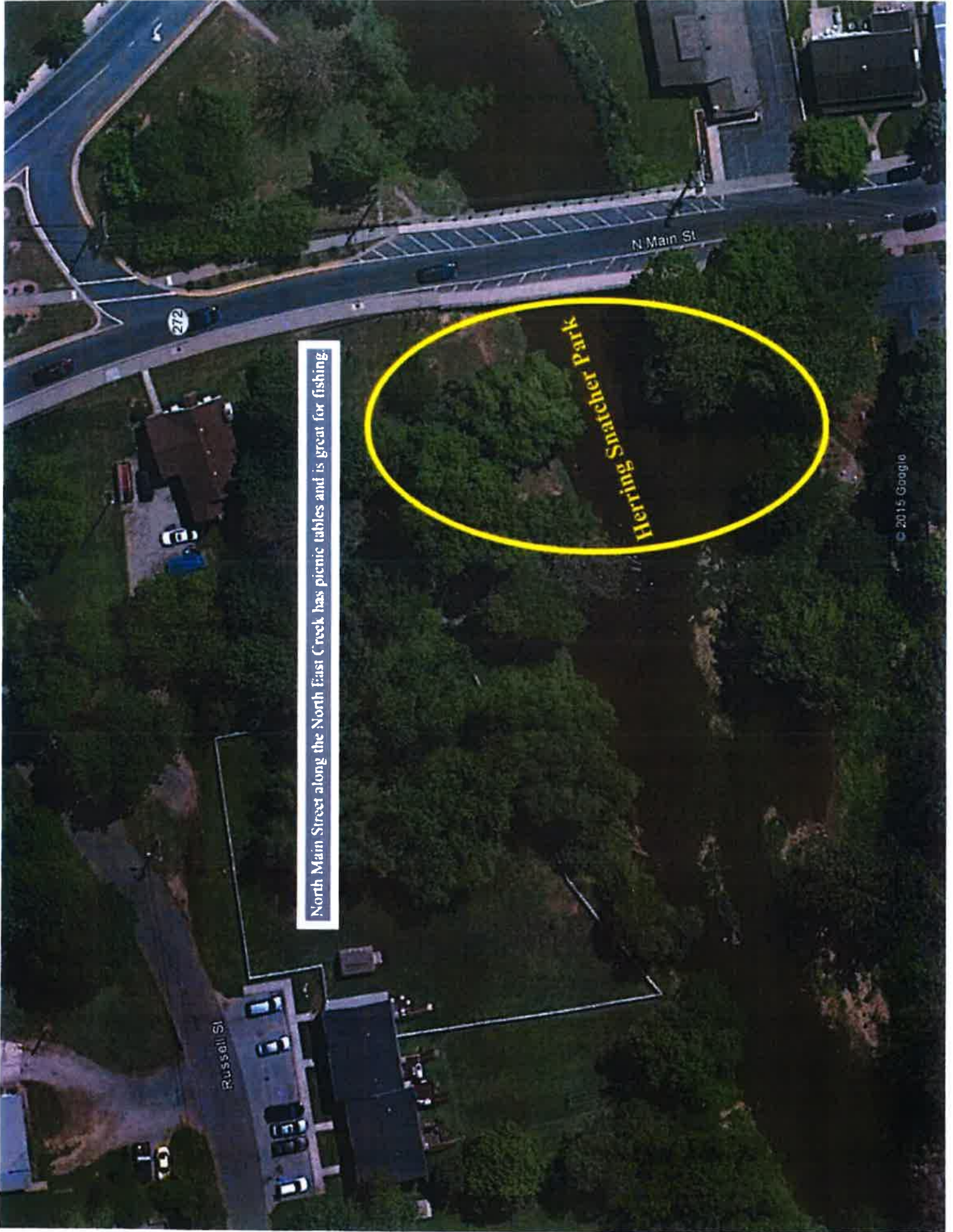
at the end of Walnut Street on the Northeast River, this is a 10 acre park with three picnic pavilions - the Crouch (larger of the three next to the playground), Benjamin, and Levy, which can be rented for \$25.00 per day for Town residents or \$50 for non-residents, and the Gilbert Lighthouse Pavilion, primary playgrounds, which can be rented for \$150.00 a day. The North East Community Park has restrooms (open April - November), a volleyball court, a children's playground, ample space for fishing and docking by the Upper Bay Museum. The park also has paved walkways throughout and ample benches for resting.





North East Town Park

Our Town Park is located on the picturesque North East River. The North East River which is a tributary of the Chesapeake Bay is well known for fishing, crabbing, bird watching, kayaking and boating. The North East Town Park is well loved by the residents and visitors for its location and amenities such as the free fishing area, pavilions, playground, kayak & canoe launch and beach. In addition, the park hosts the Upper Bay Museum and the Upper Chesapeake Boat Builders School. This year North East hosted the 2015 HUK Performance Fishing Bassmaster Elite August 13 – 16, 2015 at the Town Park.



North Main Street along the North East Creek has picnic tables and is great for fishing.

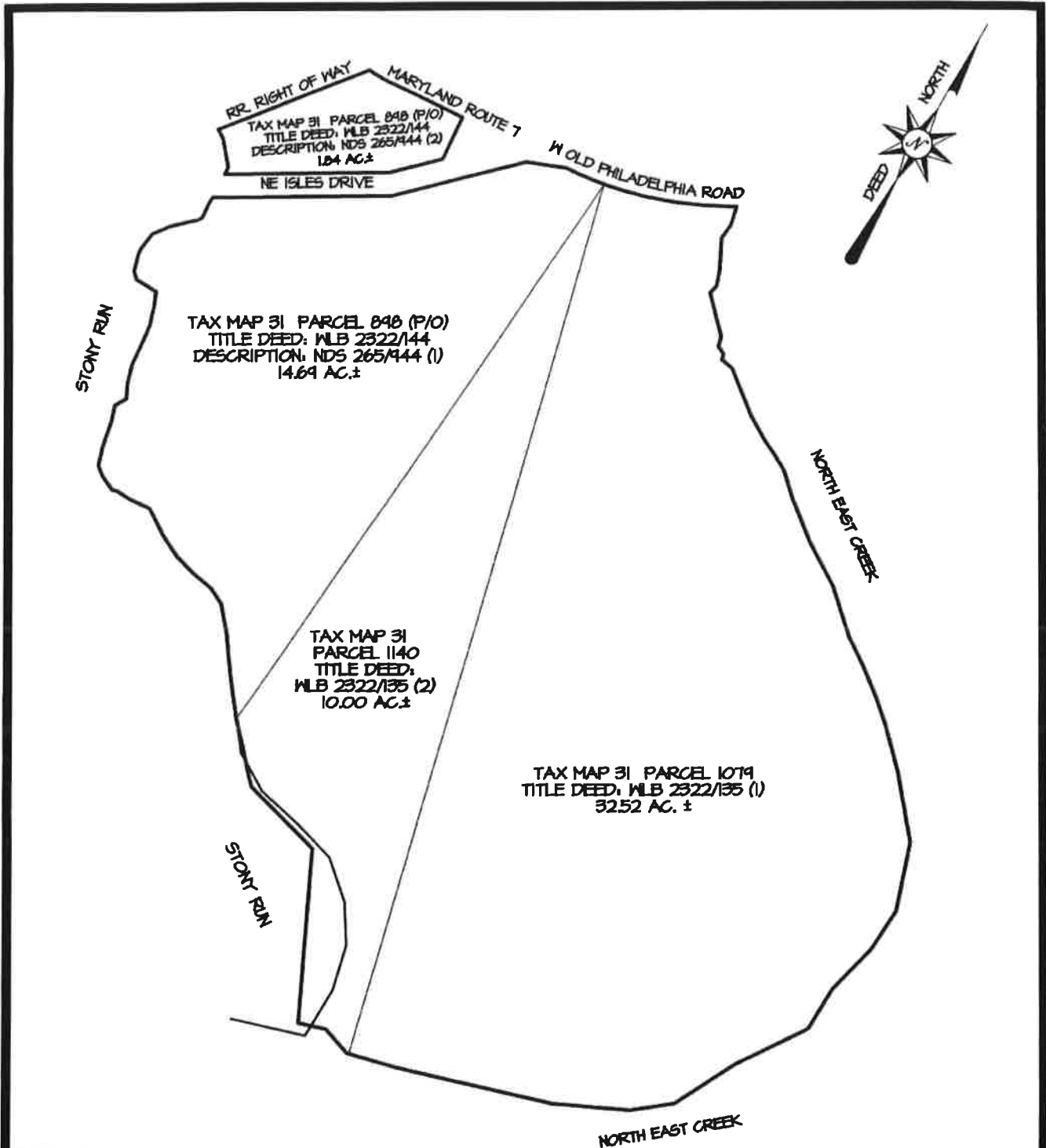




located off of West Street. Has a baseball diamond available for public use.

Turner Park





AREAS BASED ON SURVEY BY VANDEMARK & LYNCH, INC.

TOTAL AREA = 54.05 AC.±



MORRIS & RITCHIE ASSOCIATES, INC.
ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS, PLANNERS, SURVEYORS & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

3445-A Box Hill Corporate Center Drive
Abingdon, Maryland 21009
Phone: 410-515-9000
Fax: 410-515-9002

EXHIBIT PLAT - THREE PARCELS
OF LAND TO BE CONVEYED TO

**THE TOWN OF
NORTH EAST**

TOWN OF NORTH EAST
FIFTH ELECT. DISTRICT - CECIL COUNTY, MD.

SCALE: 1"=300'

DATE: 1/24/2020

DRAWN BY: EFK

CHECKED BY: EFK

JOB NO: 15502

**Cecil County 2022 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan
LPPRP Content Overview**

The data collected from this survey will be instrumental in the County's comprehensive Parks and Recreation planning efforts for the next five years. The validity and reliability of the information provided will be crucial to future funding allocations, open space acquisitions, and facility development projects for both the County and the Municipalities that reside within.

- I. Municipality: Town of Perryville

- II. Parks and Recreation Administrative Body:
 - a. Parks and Recreation Board: Y / N
 - b. Parks and Recreation Department: Y / N

- III. Inventory of Existing Public Parks and Recreation Facilities
 - a. Please provide existing public Parks and Recreation facilities owned and maintained by your Municipality. Please see the Parks/Facility Audit Form on page 2.

- IV. Financials
 - a. Annual Budget allocated toward Parks and Recreation: \$ 269,962.00
 - b. Grant Funding Sources Utilized: Program Open Space,
Community Legacy Grant, DNR, MHAAGrant

- V. Include updated user demand analyses (estimated):
 - a. Demographic served - Families
 - b. Annual user rate - 70,000
 - c. Peak user days - Saturday & Sunday
 - d. Peak user times - 7am-9am 5pm-8pm

- VI. Include quantitative data measuring deficiencies in levels of service and opportunities, examples to include:
 - a. Budget constraints
 - b. Staffing constraints
 - c. Marketing

- VII. Goals and Strategies to address deficiencies and improve user experience.

- VIII. Current projects: None

- IX. What Park or Facility would you like to complete if funding were available in the next 5 years?
Ice House Park

Cecil County 2022 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan Park/Facility Audit

Number of Parks: 3
Total Number of Acres: 168.5

Park/Facility Features	Yes	No	Total Number
Softball/Baseball Fields	✓		5
Multi-Purpose Fields			
Tennis Courts	✓		2
Basketball Courts Outdoor	✓		2
Basketball Courts Indoor			
Tot Lots (3-5 y/o)	✓		1
Playgrounds (5-12 y/o)	✓		1
Sensory Playgrounds			
Walking Paths/Trails (miles)	✓		
Volleyball Courts	✓		2
Pavilions	✓		2
Pickleball Courts			
Farmers Markets	✓		1
Rest Rooms With Running Water	✓		
Concessions			
Boat Ramps	✓		1
Soft Launches Kayak/Canoe	✓		1
Beaches			
Fishing Piers	✓		1
Skate Parks			
Fishing Ponds			
Community Gardens	✓		1
Dog Parks			
Pools			
Amphitheater	✓		1
Community / Rec Center			

Total Miles: 3.50

Total Feet: 0

Comments: _____

Feel free to include any park/facility photos you would like added to the 2022 LPPRP.

Cecil County 2022 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan

LPPRP Content Overview

The data collected from this survey will be instrumental in the County's comprehensive Parks and Recreation planning efforts for the next five years. The validity and reliability of the information provided will be crucial to future funding allocations, open space acquisitions, and facility development projects for both the County and the Municipalities that reside within.

- I. Municipality: Town of Port Deposit

- II. Parks and Recreation Administrative Body:
 - a. Parks and Recreation Board: **Y / N (however, there is a P&R Committee of 2 Council members.)**
 - b. Parks and Recreation Department: **Y / N**

- III. Inventory of Existing Public Parks and Recreation Facilities
 - a. Please provide existing public Parks and Recreation facilities owned and maintained by your Municipality. Please see the Parks/Facility Audit Form on page 2.

Marina Park – South Main Street
Rice Tot Lot (and Dog Park 6/1/2021) – North Main Street
Basketball Court – North Main Street
Spot in the Rock – Race Street
Hopkins Quarry Property – North Main Street to VFW – no development plans at this time

- IV. Financials
 - a. Annual Budget allocated toward Parks and Recreation: \$5,000 – depends on project – maintenance is included in the Public Works budget

 - b. Grant Funding Sources Utilized: DNR Program Open Space and DNR Community Parks and Playground

- V. Include updated user demand analyses (estimated):
 - a. Demographic served: 650 residents plus surrounding area and out of State visitors for boat launch
 - b. Annual user rate: Annual parking permit for boat trailers in Marina Park \$50/year or daily pass \$10
 - c. Peak user days: Friday through Sunday
 - d. Peak user times: dawn to dusk

- VI. Include quantitative data measuring deficiencies in levels of service and opportunities, examples to include:
 - a. Budget constraints:
Replacement cost for playground surfacing material – very expensive and surface maintenance is required in all playgrounds annually.
Funding for planning – specifically new design for Marina Park based on Master Waterfront Plan recommendations and Hopkins Quarry
Weed Control – struggle with weed control and finding resources to meet the spraying requirements in public areas

- b. Staffing constraints:
 - Operation of the Visitor Center in Marina Park – difficult to recruit volunteers to open the Visitor Center on weekends – no budget to hire employee. Towson University students are in the Visitor Center during the turtle’s nesting season and are willing to provide education for visitors; however, they are not willing to “work” the Visitor Center.
 - Town has 2 public works employees who are responsible for all park maintenance including the comfort station.
 - Limited staff resources with public park knowledge or expertise to operate effectively or efficiently.
 - Annual Clean-up – Rely on volunteer effort to do annual turtle beach and park clean-up.
- c. Marketing:
 - No funding or resources for marketing other than the town media sites.
 - No funding for new park signage, welcome to town signage, street banners, etc.

VII. Goals and Strategies to address deficiencies and improve user experience.
The deficiencies are an ongoing struggle to address. We do not have a “pro-active” approach to seeking solutions to these issues. Problems are addressed on an emergency basis to meet minimum requirements. Limited staff resources with public park knowledge or expertise to operate effectively and efficiently.

VIII. Current projects: Public dog park area addition to the Rice Tot Lot on North Main Street – anticipate completion by June 1, 2021.
Park improvements to Spot in the Rock off Race street for repair to the pedestrian bridge and Rock Run embankment, repair and restoration of 2 wood park benches, and installation of court lines on the outdoor basketball court.
Grant application submitted to Delmarva Sustainable Community Program for 8 new picnic tables along the waterfront in Marina Park.

IX. What Park or Facility would you like to complete if funding were available in the next 5 years? Follow up on the Master Waterfront Plan for Marina Park to develop plans to move the boat launch, repair/replace retaining wall along the Susquehanna River, install fishing pier and improve fishing area along the shoreline, and reduce nuisance flooding of the promenade and playground.
Start planning effort for new park on the Hopkins Quarry property off North Main Street.
Acquire vacant and abandoned property at 41 N. Main Street from Cecil County for demolition to add to the Rice Tot Lot. This would provide access to the park area directly from Main Street.

Park/Facility Audit

Number of Parks: 6
Total Number of Acres: approximately 35 including undeveloped Hopkins Quarry park area.

Park/Facility Features	Yes	No	Total Number	
Softball/Baseball Fields		X		
Multi-Purpose Fields		X		
Tennis Courts		X		
Basketball Courts Outdoor	X		2	
Basketball Courts Indoor				
Tot Lots (3-5 y/o)	X		2	
Playgrounds (5-12 y/o)	X		2	
Sensory Playgrounds		X		
Walking Paths/Trails (miles)	X*		1	Total Miles: ½
Volleyball Courts		X		
Pavilions	X		1	
Pickleball Courts		X		
Farmers Markets		X		
Rest Rooms With Running Water	X		1	
Concessions		X		
Boat Ramps	X		2	
Soft Launches Kayak/Canoe	X*		1	
Beaches		X		Total Feet:
Fishing Piers	X*		1	
Skate Parks		X		
Fishing Ponds		X		
Community Gardens		X		
Dog Parks	X*		1	
Pools		X		
Amphitheater		X		
Community / Rec Center	X*		1	

Comments: Waterfront walkway from Marina Park to Vannort Drive.

Exelon owns Rock Run Park off N. Main Street along the waterfront with a small boat launch for small boats, kayaks, and canoes. Water is shallow in this area with a sandy area for soft launch.

The town has one fishing pier and fishing is permitted along the shoreline in Marina Park.

The dog park will be completed in the Rice Tot Lot on N. Main Street by June 1, 2021.

Town purchased the Hopkins Quarry property that runs from North Main Street to the VFW. No park amenities exist on the property and there are no plans for development at this time.

Community Connecting Us community center is a non-profit organization on N. Main Street.

Feel free to include any park/facility photos you would like added to the 2022 LPPRP.





**Cecil County 2022 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan
LPPRP Content Overview**

The data collected from this survey will be instrumental in the County's comprehensive Parks and Recreation planning efforts for the next five years. The validity and reliability of the information provided will be crucial to future funding allocations, open space acquisitions, and facility development projects for both the County and the Municipalities that reside within.

- I. Municipality: Rising Sun

- II. Parks and Recreation Administrative Body:
 - a. Parks and Recreation Board: Y / **N**
 - b. Parks and Recreation Department: **Y** / N

- III. Inventory of Existing Public Parks and Recreation Facilities
 - a. Please provide existing public Parks and Recreation facilities owned and maintained by your Municipality. Please see the Parks/Facility Audit Form on page 2.
Veteran's Park of Rising Sun
Triangle Dog Park and Trails
Diddie Richardson Park

- IV. Financials
 - a. Annual Budget allocated toward Parks and Recreation: \$ \$79,489.85
 - b. Grant Funding Sources Utilized: \$0

- V. Include updated user demand analyses (estimated):
 - a. Demographic served: Families and Dog Owners
 - b. Annual user rate: 30,000
 - c. Peak user days: Weekends
 - d. Peak user times: Dog Park – mornings; Veteran's Park - afternoons

- VI. Include quantitative data measuring deficiencies in levels of service and opportunities, examples to include:
 - a. Budget constraints: Most funding is maintenance, town events are also in funding
 - b. Staffing constraints: Staffing is from Public Works. Small portion of time to parks
 - c. Marketing: Primarily Facebook

- VII. Goals and Strategies to address deficiencies and improve user experience.

- VIII. Current projects: Trail System in Veteran's Park

- IX. What Park or Facility would you like to complete if funding were available in the next 5 years? Bathrooms at Veteran's Park, Octoraro Rail Trail, Bathrooms at Dog Park, Scout Cabin in Veteran's Park, Pavilion Replacement at Veteran's Park

**Cecil County 2022 Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan
Park/Facility Audit**

Number of Parks: 3
Total Number of Acres: 20

Park/Facility Features	Yes	No	Total Number	
Softball/Baseball Fields		X		
Multi-Purpose Fields		X		
Tennis Courts		X		
Basketball Courts Outdoor	X		1	
Basketball Courts Indoor		X		
Tot Lots (3-5 y/o)	X		1	
Playgrounds (5-12 y/o)	X		2	
Sensory Playgrounds		X		
Walking Paths/Trails (miles)	X		2	Total Miles: ¼ mile
Volleyball Courts		X		
Pavilions	X		1	
Pickleball Courts		X		
Farmers Markets		X		
Rest Rooms With Running Water		X		
Concessions		X		
Boat Ramps		X		
Soft Launches Kayak/Canoe		X		
Beaches		X		Total Feet:
Fishing Piers		X		
Skate Parks		X		
Fishing Ponds		X		
Community Gardens		X		
Dog Parks	X		1	
Pools		X		
Amphitheater		X		
Community / Rec Center		X		

Comments: _____

Feel free to include any park/facility photos you would like added to the 2022 LPPRP.