



Dorchester County 2022 Land Preservation, Parks & Recreation Plan July 2022

DRAFT FOR REVIEW



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CHAPTER I FRAMEWORK

1. Purpose of the Plan

Every five years each county in Maryland is required to submit an updated Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) to the State of Maryland. The plans are intended to provide a common benchmark to assist the State's evaluation of each county's land preservation and recreation programs and to assist in guiding public investment in land preservation, parks and recreation. LPPRPs qualify local governments for State Program Open Space (POS) grants.

The Maryland Department of Planning uses the information gathered through the county LPPRPs to develop a statewide plan, the Land Preservation and Recreation Plan (LPRP). The LPRP is required for Maryland's participation in the Land & Water Conservation Fund, a critical funding source for land preservation and conservation efforts across the State.

The LPPRP planning process:

- Allows county and municipal jurisdictions to plan for parks and recreation in each county as well as planning for improving natural resource and agricultural preservation.
- Evaluates County preservation goals and objectives in relation to State goals for parks, recreation and open space as well as for agricultural land preservation and natural resource conservation and identifies where they are complementary or different;
- Evaluates the ability to implement programs and identify 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 as it relates to land development and management; and
- Ensures that public investment in land preservation and recreation supports the County's Comprehensive Plan, State goals, and State and local programs that influence land use and development.

The County's Recreation & Parks staff use the development of this plan to analyze the recreation needs of the County as it relates to program planning and implementation. Upon adoption by the Dorchester County Council, the 2022 LPPRP becomes an amendment to the 2021 Dorchester County Comprehensive Plan.

The 2022 LPPRP for Dorchester County was prepared in accordance with guidelines developed in 2020 by the Maryland Departments of Planning and Natural Resources. The Dorchester County government is responsible for the preparation of the LPPRP. The multi-department effort was led by Recreation & Parks, with assistance from Planning and Zoning and the Office of the County Council. Advisory leadership is provided by a ten-person volunteer panel entitled the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board. This Board assists in identifying goals and objectives based on the needs of the County. Additionally, the Board seeks support through volunteer efforts to deliver programs. Shore Strategies LLC, a Midshore consulting firm, was contracted to work with Dorchester County to develop the plan.

2. Physical Characteristics

A. Location

Dorchester County, the largest Eastern Shore County, extends into the Chesapeake Bay as a broad peninsula surrounded by the waters of the Chesapeake Bay, the Choptank, and Nanticoke Rivers. Talbot County lies to the north across the Choptank River and Caroline County to the east; southeast across the Nanticoke River is Wicomico County. The eastern edge of Dorchester County borders the state of Delaware for almost five miles. The County consists of approximately 357,000 acres of land marked by many bays, creeks, and rivers that constitute approximately 83,000 acres. More than 40 percent of the entire state of Maryland's wetlands are located in Dorchester County (Table I-1).

The physical characteristics of Dorchester are some of Maryland's most beautiful. Members of the Algonquin nation, Choptank and Nanticoke tribes called this area home long before explorers or traders from England and Spain landed on these shores. Settlers from England began to claim lands in the mid-1600s under land grants from Lord Baltimore, and by 1669 the region was recognized as Dorchester County. It is called "The Heart of the Eastern Shore" because of its Midshore location, and heart-shaped geographic configuration.

There are nine incorporated municipalities in the County. The largest is the county seat, Cambridge, located in the central part of the County. The city developed at the mouth of the Choptank River. It has served as a deep channel port throughout its history. It is bisected by U.S. Route 50, the primary route for traffic between the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Ocean City, on the Atlantic coast. The Town of Hurlock, in the northern part of the county, grew with the railroad and remains an active rail depot for

Table I-1: Land Use/Land Cover Data

Land Type	Land Use in Acres		Land Use Change	
	2002	2010	2002-2010	
Very Low Density Residential	5,750	6,233	483	8.4%
Low Density Residential	8,956	9,975	1,019	11.4%
Medium Density Residential	1,755	1,904	149	8.5%
High Density Residential	411	431	20	-4.8%
Commercial	1,172	1,244	71	6.1%
Industrial	944	993	49	5.2%
Other Developed Lands/ Institutional/ Transportation	2,141	2,375	234	10.9%
Total Developed Lands	21,129	23,154	2,025	9.6%
Agriculture	116,426	114,886	-1,540	-1.3%
Forest	127,209	126,705	-504	-0.4%
Extractive/Barrers/Bare	151	228	77	51.2%
Wetland	90,325	90,267	-58	-0.1%
Total Resource Lands	334,111	332,086	-2,025	-0.6%
Total Land	355,240			
Water	258,790			

Source: Maryland Department of Planning

shipping agricultural commodities including corn and soybeans. Other municipalities include Brookview, Church Creek, East New Market, Eldorado, Galestown, Secretary and Vienna.

In addition to its incorporated towns, Dorchester County also contains a number of rural villages of varying sizes. These include traditional fishing villages such as Hooper's Island and Taylor's Island, Woolford, Madison, Fishing Creek, Crapo, Toddville, and Wingate.

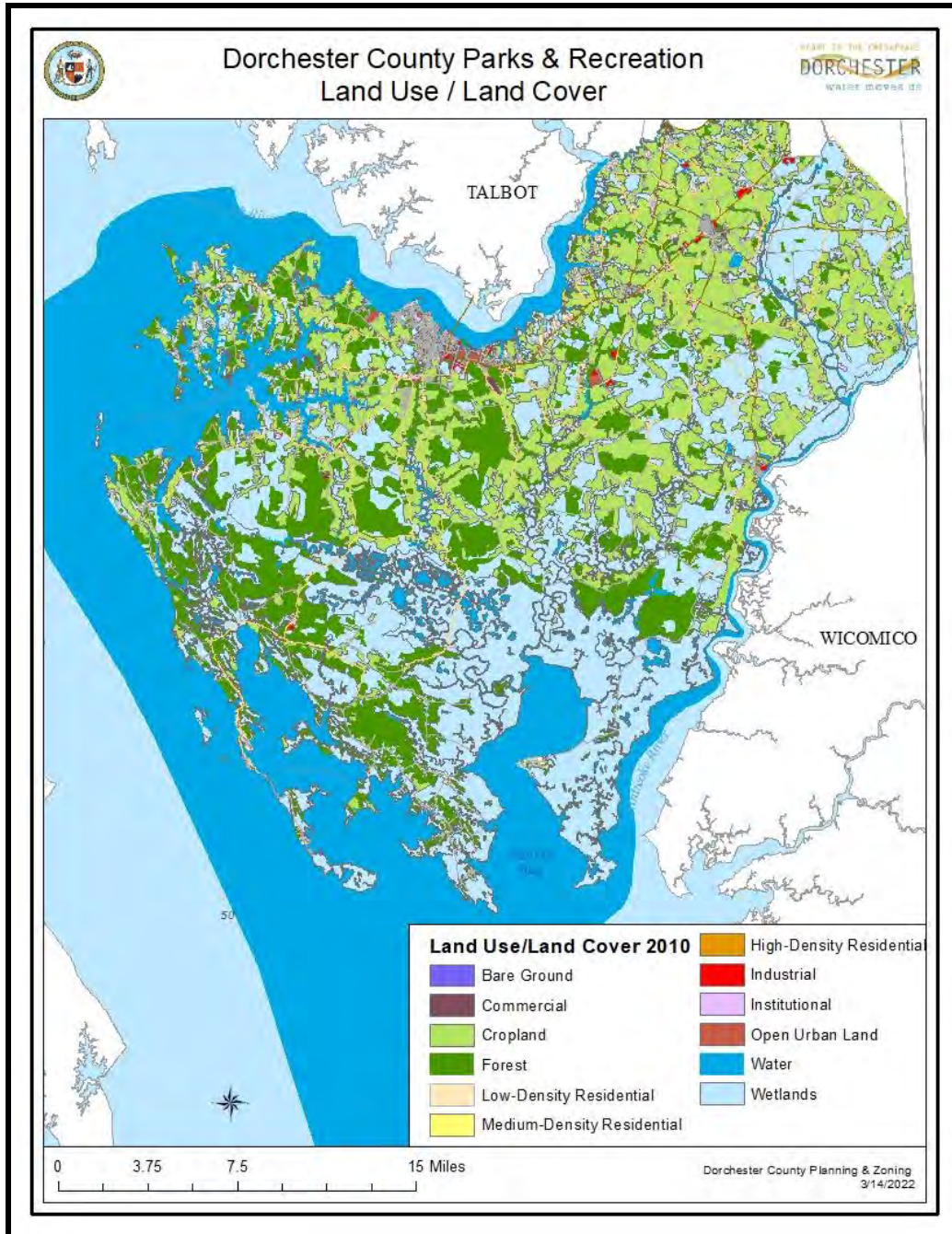
Map I-1 Dorchester County, Maryland



B. Land Use

The 2021 Comprehensive Plan indicates that between 2002 and 2010, there was little change in either the amount of developed land or the general land use in the County. Map I-2 Dorchester County Land Use/Land Cover indicates the trend of large lot development which comprise 70% of all developed lands. Three quarters of the County's total land area is protected lands or wetlands.

Map I-2 Land Use/Land Cover



Dorchester County intends to promote and maintain a well-planned pattern of land and water resource use which minimizes environmental impacts, retains the County's overall rural character, and anticipates growth occurring in locations with suitable public and private community services. Most business and residential development will be guided into the incorporated towns and Designated Growth Areas consistent with the principles of smart growth.

Dorchester County's most recent Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2021 and focuses on several major planning themes. Those that directly correlate with the LPPRP include the following:

- Concentrate anticipated growth in appropriate locations with suitable public and private community services and in a way that maintains the County's small town maritime way of life.
- Utilize sector planning for the northern county area along Highway 16 and between Hurlock, Secretary and East New Market to evaluate and design development patterns.
- Continue to review, evaluate, update and implement county studies/plans that address sea level rise resiliency, coordinate with Federal, State and non-profit organizations to ensure consistency in adaptation and mitigation efforts.

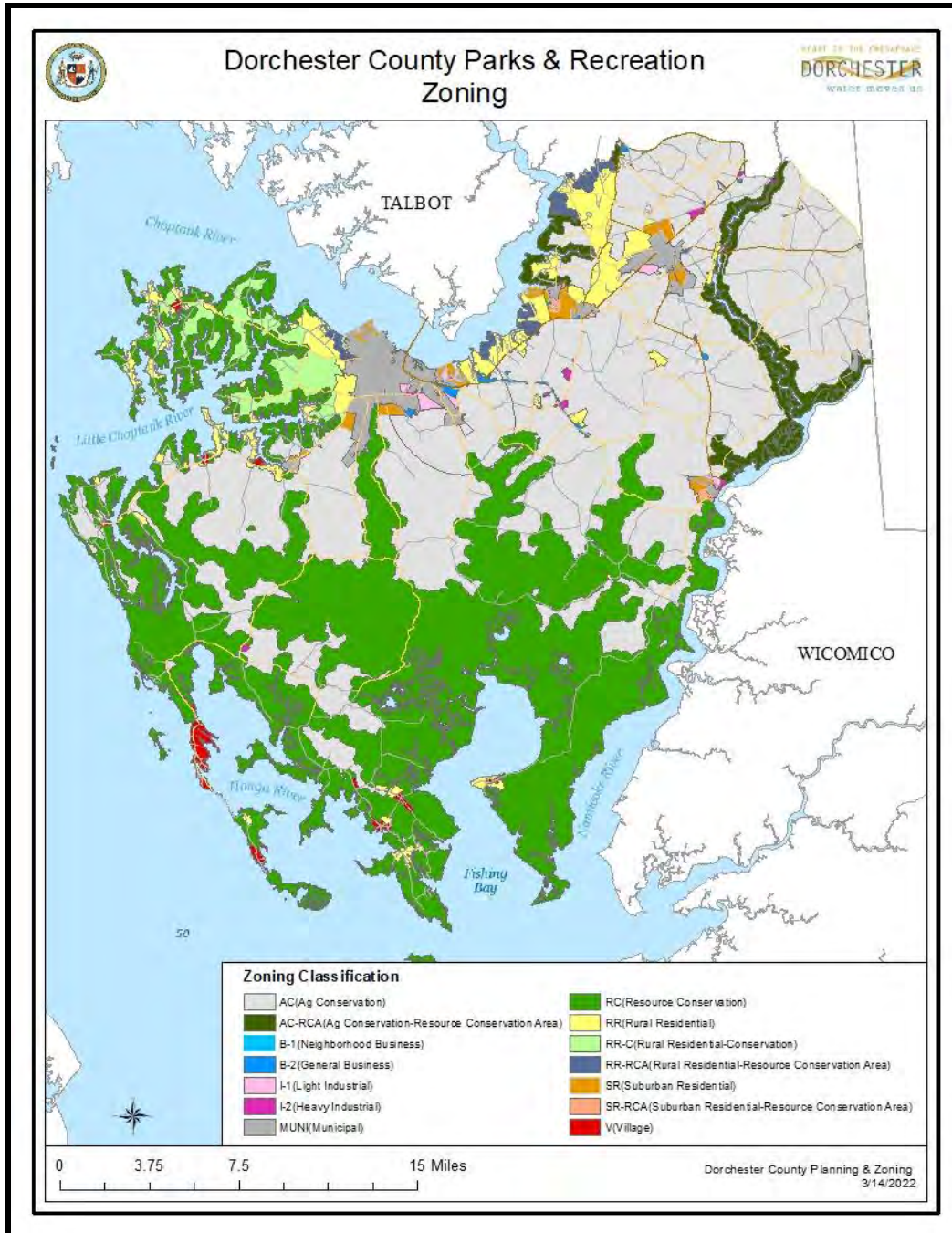


- Improve and expand upon eco-tourism and heritage tourism, building upon its existing features that attract visitors including trails, bike routes, water access and natural resources.
- Conserve and protect the County's natural resources, recognizing them as its most valuable and attractive assets.
- Maintain a strong commitment to the economic development of the seafood industry and forest products industry in ways that advance sustainable harvesting as well as supporting the local industries that play a role in natural resource management.
- Preserve and enhance the County's rich maritime cultural heritage.

The Land Use Plan described in the 2021 Comprehensive Plan provides for future development to be located in designated growth areas and to be of compact design that demonstrates efficiency and reduces the impacts on natural resources and a natural resource-based economy. Designated Growth Areas comprise 6% of the County's land area and 94% is in Conservation Areas, primarily Agricultural Conservation and Resource Conservation (Map I-4). The Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of public services, especially water and sewer, in determining the extent and type of growth the County will experience. The Plan supports expansion of public water and sewer systems in the towns to accommodate future development and within the County in cases where failing systems create a threat to public health and safety as well as potential harm to the environment and water quality. Comprehensive Plans are available for Dorchester County municipalities that have planning and

zoning authority. This includes Hurlock, Vienna, East New Market, Cambridge and Church Creek . Each town has included recreation and open space planning in its Comprehensive Plans to some degree. Municipal comprehensive plans can be found at Maryland Department of Planning: [View Comprehensive Plans](#)

Map I-3 Dorchester County Zoning



Map 1-4 Priority Funding Areas



C. Natural Resources

Dorchester County's natural resources are its most valuable assets. As demonstrated in the 2021 Comprehensive Plan, the County's goals are to preserve the County's open and rural character. As noted earlier its future land use plans include protections for 96% of its lands through either agricultural or resource conservation zoning. Of its 355,000 acres of total land area, three-quarters of it or approximately 260,000 acres are protected public lands or wetlands. This includes 187,000 acres that

are permanently protected through conservation easements on agricultural or forested lands or as parks, open space, and other public lands.

1. Chesapeake Bay Critical Area

Nearly half (48%) of the County’s land area is within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area. The Critical Area includes all lands and waters within 1,000 feet landward of the boundaries of State or tidal wetlands and the heads of tides. It encompasses 178,176 acres. These areas are an important environmental, recreational and scenic resource. Portions of the County are subject to severe soil erosion caused by wind and wave action, both along river banks as well as along the shoreline of the Chesapeake Bay. Some losses have been as much as 18 feet per year.

2. Land Preservation and Sea-Level Rise

Water is Dorchester County’s most impressive physical feature with the County virtually surrounded by the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The County has approximately 1,700 miles of shoreline.

Adjacent to the County waterways are wetlands. Wetlands are areas where the water table is usually at, or near, the surface of the soil or substrate, and covered by shallow water. These wetlands are referred to as marsh, marshland, salt marsh, and swamp. The importance of wetlands and their continued existence is recognized by increasingly stringent Federal and State laws regulating this resource.



Dorchester County contains 82,000 acres of tidal wetlands and 125,000 acres of non-tidal wetlands that represent 58% of the total county area. These wetlands account for approximately 39% of all existing State wetlands. Most, but not all, of Dorchester’s wetlands are found in the southern part of the county where the altitude is between 0 to 2 feet above sea level. The State and Federal governments are attempting to preserve these lands through acquisition.

Combined, the State and Federal government have acquired at least 50,480 acres, approximately 20% of the land in South Dorchester, comprising mostly Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (BNR), Tar Bay, LeCompte and Fishing Bay Wildlife Management Area.

Dorchester County’s natural resources and sensitive areas and habitats are impacted by sea level rise and shoreline erosion. Dorchester County is one of the most vulnerable areas to flooding along the mid-Atlantic seaboard.

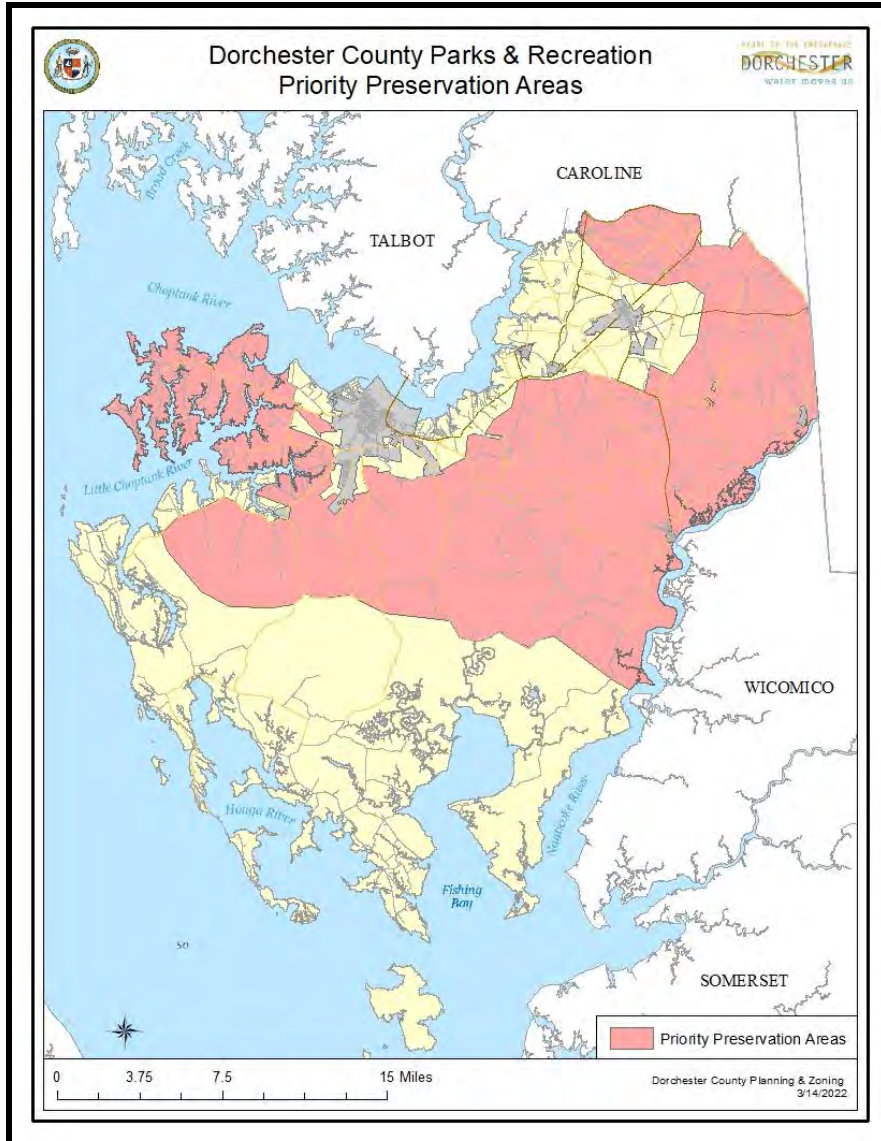
3. Cultural and Historic Preservation

Dorchester County’s cultural and archeological sites are significant both locally and nationally. The County is the birthplace to Harriet Tubman. Dorchester is home to the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument and National Historic Park, the starting point for a 125 mile self-guided driving tour of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway (UGGR). Archeological sites, historic buildings and historical landscapes are important historic and cultural resources for the County and play an important role in tourism as an economic driver for the County. In addition to the UGGR Byway, Dorchester County, along with neighboring counties,



has been recognized by the State and federal governments through the designation of the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway as an All American Road. Additionally, along with its neighbors, Talbot, Queen Anne's, Caroline, Kent Counties, Dorchester County is a part of the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area.

Map I-5 Priority Preservation Areas



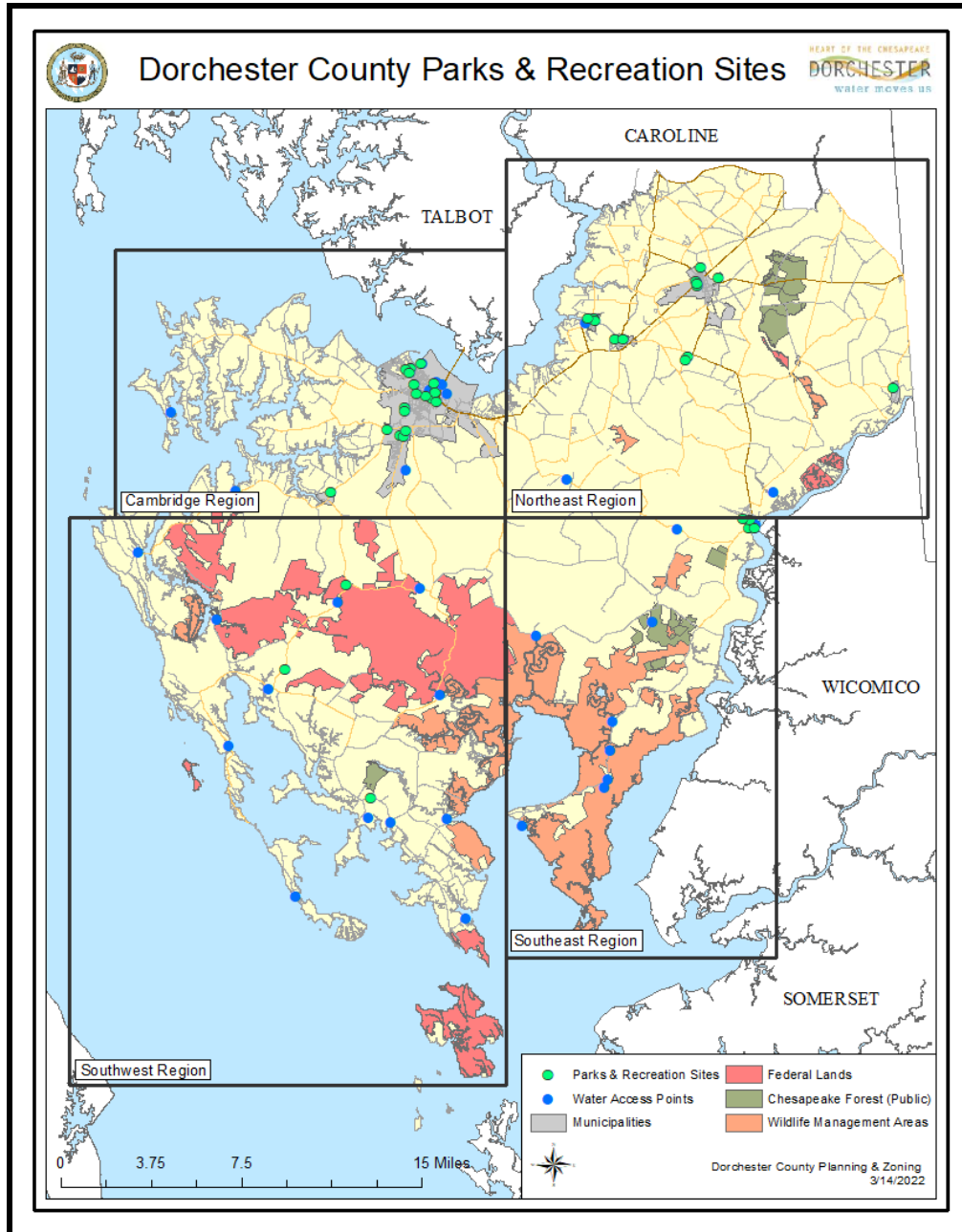
3. Overview of Parks System

Dorchester County's system of parks and open spaces provides access to county residents and visitors for active and passive recreation. Regional and community parks in the more populated areas of the County are used for youth and adult recreation and family activities. Dorchester County's natural resource lands, in particular, Blackwater National Refuge and the Harriet Tubman Park are an attraction for visitors and prospective residents as well as those who have made Dorchester their home for

generations. Municipal parks round out the system of parks and also offer a mix of opportunities for active and passive recreation. Dorchester County annually hosts the IRONMAN® Triathlon with the starting point at Gerry Boyle Memorial Park at Great Marsh in Cambridge.

Map I-6 demonstrates the broad scope of the parks and natural resource lands in the County. Each region of the County is described and mapped in more detail in Chapter II. Parks indicated in green are primarily located in the more populated areas of the county around municipalities. Water access is available throughout the County along the Chesapeake Bay, rivers, and larger creeks.

Map I-6 Dorchester Parks & Conserved Open Spaces



4. Demographic Characteristics

A. Population Growth

Dorchester County’s population in 2020 was 32,110, a decrease of 1.6% (Table I-2) since 2010. Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) projects that by 2045 Dorchester’s population will grow by 17.2% over the 2010 population. Real population growth since 2010 has not aligned with original projections and demonstrates an overall slight downward trend in the total population of the County, therefore the County may not reach the projected growth.

Table I-2 Dorchester County Population

Year	Population	Percent Change in Population		
		Since 2010	Since 2015	Since 2020
2010	32,618	NA	NA	NA
2015	32,250	-1.1%	NA	NA
2020	32,110	-1.6%	-0.4%	NA
2025*	33,850	3.8%	5.0%	5.4%
2030*	35,160	7.8%	9.0%	9.5%
2035*	36,400	11.6%	12.9%	13.4%
2040*	37,300	14.4%	15.7%	16.2%
2045*	38,240	17.2%	18.6%	19.1%

Source: Maryland Department of Planning
*Indicates projections published December 2020

B. Population Distribution

Table I-3 Dorchester County Population by Incorporated Place in Maryland, 2020

Municipality	Total Population	Percent Population of County
Brookview	51	0.2%
Cambridge	12,300	37.7%
Church Creek	75	0.2%
East New Market	323	1.0%
Eldorado	76	0.2%
Galestown	72	0.2%
Hurlock	2,390	7.3%
Secretary	497	1.5%
Vienna	423	1.3%
Balance of County	16,612	44.0%

Source: 2020 American Community Survey

In 2020, more than half (56%) of Dorchester County residents lived in one of the County’s nine incorporated municipalities (Table I-3).

Cambridge, with a population of 12,300, accounts for 37.7% of the total population in Dorchester County. Hurlock is the next largest population center with 2,390 residents, 7.3% of the County’s population. Since 1970, Hurlock has more than doubled in population from 1,056. The towns of East New Market and Secretary, also in the northern part of the County, are the next largest. Combined, their population is 820 and accounts for 2.5% of the County’s population. The remaining 2.1% of County residents living in incorporated towns are distributed across Brookview (.2%), Church

Creek (.2%), Eldorado (.2%), Galestown (.2%), and Vienna (1.3%).

In addition to these small incorporated towns, Dorchester County has a number of rural villages that serve as small population centers but are not incorporated. The majority of these are fishing villages located in the South Dorchester and in the region known as the “Neck.” These include Woolford, Madison, Taylor’s Island, Fishing Creek, Hooperville, Crocheron, Wingate, Toddville, Crapo and Elliott. These small communities are also those most likely to be adversely impacted by sea level rise in the future.

C. Age

While the County, State, and Upper Eastern Shore region are all experiencing an aging of the population, Dorchester's County's older population has not grown as significantly as neighboring counties. In 2010, 31.9% of Dorchester's population was 55 or older. In 2020, 36.8% of the population was 55 or older. There has been little change in the number of children in the County. In 2010 children 19 and under made up 23.9% of the population and in 2020 accounted for 23.3% of the population (Table I-4). In real numbers there were 7,472 children and youth in the County, 12,834 between 20 and 54 years old and 11,799 residents aged 55 and up (Table I-5).

Table I-4 Dorchester County Percent Population Estimates and Projections by Age

	Years of Age										
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
2010	6.2%	5.8%	5.7%	6.2%	5.5%	10.8%	11.9%	15.9%	14.2%	9.8%	7.9%
2015	5.6%	6.4%	6.1%	5.2%	5.1%	11.6%	11.2%	14.3%	15.5%	11.0%	8.0%
2020	5.2%	5.7%	6.7%	5.7%	4.4%	11.1%	12.0%	12.5%	16.2%	11.9%	8.7%
2025*	5.3%	5.4%	5.9%	6.5%	5.1%	9.8%	12.8%	11.9%	14.6%	13.2%	9.5%
2030*	5.5%	5.5%	5.6%	5.6%	5.7%	9.8%	12.3%	12.7%	12.9%	13.9%	10.4%
2035*	5.8%	5.7%	5.6%	5.4%	4.9%	11.1%	11.0%	13.6%	12.4%	12.6%	11.8%
2040*	5.9%	5.9%	5.9%	5.4%	4.7%	11.0%	11.0%	13.1%	13.2%	11.3%	12.6%
2045*	5.7%	6.0%	6.1%	5.6%	4.7%	10.0%	12.6%	11.8%	14.3%	10.8%	12.4%

Source: US Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning

*Indicates projections published December 2020

Table I-5 Dorchester County Population Estimates and Projections by Age

	Years of Age										
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
2010	2,037	1,902	1,855	2,035	1,803	3,537	3,872	5,181	4,625	3,186	2,585
2015	1,795	2,054	1,963	1,686	1,647	3,739	3,620	4,614	5,012	3,552	2,564
2020	1,669	1,842	2,135	1,826	1,397	3,563	3,846	4,028	5,193	3,827	2,779
2025*	1,801	1,838	1,981	2,188	1,712	3,329	4,334	4,041	4,944	4,458	3,226
2030*	1,947	1,928	1,967	1,970	2,016	3,446	4,321	4,455	4,551	4,890	3,564
2035*	2,105	2,070	2,056	1,952	1,799	4,050	3,995	4,961	4,528	4,598	4,286
2040*	2,183	2,207	2,188	2,014	1,749	4,097	4,105	4,899	4,933	4,204	4,717
2045*	2,183	2,300	2,336	2,158	1,802	3,806	4,810	4,508	5,465	4,126	4,750

Source: US Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning

*Indicates projections published December 2020

D. Race

Dorchester County's racial diversity more closely reflects the State's racial make-up than its neighboring Counties. White residents are 61.1% of the County's population in comparison to 47.2% of the State. In neighboring Talbot County, 83% of the population is White and White residents represent 80% of Caroline County's population. Black residents represented 27.7% of Dorchester County's population. Asians, people of 2 or more races and people who identified as some other race increased. Hispanics currently represent 5.5% of the population, an increase from 3.2% in 2010. (Table I-6).

Table I-6 Population by Race Dorchester County and State of Maryland

Race/Ethnicity	Dorchester						State of Maryland					
	2010		2015		2020		2010		2015		2020	
Total population	32,287	% Pop	32,534	% Pop	32,531	% Pop	5,696,423	% Pop	5,930,538	% Pop	6,177,224	% Pop
White	22,014	68.2%	21,754	66.9%	19,891	61.1%	3,396,216	59.6%	3,416,107	57.6%	2,913,782	47.2%
Black or African American	8,962	27.8%	9,118	28.0%	9,017	27.7%	1,665,235	29.2%	1,750,916	29.5%	1,795,027	29.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	97	0.3%	14	0.0%	91	0.3%	16,213	0.3%	15,579	0.3%	12,055	0.2%
Asian	301	0.9%	328	1.0%	355	1.1%	304,574	5.3%	357,616	6.0%	417,962	6.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	8	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	0.0%	2,977	0.1%	2,754	0.0%	2,575	0.0%
Some other race	415	1.3%	623	1.9%	130	0.4%	178,952	3.1%	211,914	3.6%	35,314	0.6%
2 or more races	490	1.5%	697	2.1%	1,264	3.9%	132,256	2.3%	175,652	3.0%	270,764	4.4%
Not Hispanic or Latino	31,263	96.8%	31,121	95.7%	30,754	94.5%	5,266,477	92.5%	5,396,867	91.0%	5,447,479	88.2%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	1,024	3.2%	1,413	4.3%	1,777	5.5%	429,946	7.5%	533,671	9.0%	729,745	11.8%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Public school enrollment data provides additional information about the changing racial demographics of the County. White students account for 41.6% of enrollment as compared to 61.1% of the total County population. Black students make up 40.4% of the student population compared to 27.7% of the total population. Students identifying as Hispanic account for 9.2% of students as compared to 5.5% of the total population (Table I-7). The percentage of the population made up of People of Color will continue to increase and the percentage of the population that is White will continue to decrease.

Table I-7 School Enrollment Disaggregated by Race Dorchester County Public Schools vs. Dorchester County Demographics

Race/Ethnicity	DCPS Student Enrollment		Dorchester County		Difference %
	2020		2020		
Total population	4,710	% Pop	32,531	% Pop	
White	1,959	41.6%	19,891	61.1%	-32.0%
Black or African American	1,904	40.4%	9,017	27.7%	45.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0	0.0%	91	0.3%	-100.0%
Asian	70	1.49%	355	1.1%	36.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%	6	0.0%	0.0%
Some other race	0	0.0%	130	0.4%	-100.0%
2 or more races	337	7.2%	1,264	3.9%	84.1%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	433	9.2%	1,777	5.5%	68.3%

Source: Maryland Report Card
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

E. Household Economics

Dorchester County's median household income is \$52,917, the lowest in the Midshore region. Table I-8 presents selected income characteristics for Dorchester County, its bordering counties, and the State. Dorchester County household median income is 38% of the State's median's income. Per capita income in Dorchester was \$30,293 in 2019, lagging behind the State per capita income by nearly \$12,000. In 2019, 15.8% of Dorchester County residents lived below the poverty threshold as compared to 9.2% of the State population, double that of neighboring Talbot County and slightly higher than neighboring Caroline County.

Table I-8 Income Characteristics of the Midshore

Location	Median Income				Per Capita Income				Percent Below Poverty Level			
	2015	2017	2020	Change	2015	2017	2020	Change	2015	2017	2020	Change
Caroline County	\$52,465	\$52,469	\$59,042	13%	\$24,943	\$25,355	\$29,814	20%	15.8%	16.5%	13.3%	-15.8%
Dorchester County	\$47,093	\$50,532	\$52,799	12%	\$27,870	\$28,911	\$29,860	7%	16.5%	15.4%	16.2%	-1.8%
Kent County	\$58,147	\$56,638	\$60,208	4%	\$30,081	\$32,217	\$37,699	25%	11.2%	13.1%	11.0%	-1.8%
Queen Anne's County	\$85,963	\$89,241	\$96,467	12%	\$38,733	\$40,553	\$45,228	17%	7.5%	6.4%	6.2%	-17.3%
Talbot County	\$58,228	\$65,595	\$73,102	26%	\$38,317	\$44,785	\$49,193	28%	11.2%	10.0%	8.7%	-22.3%
Maryland	\$74,551	\$78,916	\$87,063	17%	\$36,897	\$39,070	\$43,352	17%	10.0%	9.7%	9.0%	-10.0%

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey

The percentage of Dorchester County children who receive Free and Reduced Meals (FaRM) is also significantly higher than other Midshore counties and the state. In 2021, 83% of Dorchester County students were eligible for free or reduced meals. This is an increase of 16% from the 2020 school year when 67% of students were eligible for FaRM (Table I-9). While some of this increase may be due to changes in how eligibility is determined, more than half of Dorchester students have been eligible for FaRM since 2008.

Table I-9 Free & Reduced-Priced Meals in Public Schools Midshore

Locale	School Year Dataset					Change SY2008 - SY2020
	SY2008	SY2012	SY2016	SY2020	SY2021*	
Maryland	34%	42%	45%	42%	48%	45%
Caroline County	45%	56%	57%	52%	59%	31%
Dorchester County	50%	62%	67%	67%	83%	67%
Kent County	40%	52%	55%	56%	66%	67%
Queen Anne's County	15%	25%	26%	25%	29%	88%
Talbot County	29%	38%	44%	47%	50%	72%

Source: Maryland State Department of Education
*Note discrepancy due to documentation requirements in pandemic

Another way of evaluating household sufficiency is the Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed (ALICE) data (Tables I-10 & I-11). In 2019, 30% of Dorchester County households were considered ALICE but were above the poverty threshold. These households earn above the Federal Poverty Level but less than the cost of living in their County which is calculated using the ALICE

TABLE I-10 Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed (ALICE) Mid Shore

County	Households	% Below ALICE
Caroline	12,081	42%
Dorchester	13,264	45%
Kent	7,910	44%
Queen Anne's	18,148	38%
Talbot	16,627	35%

Source: United for Alice

Table I-11 Households by Income, Percentages, Dorchester County, MD 2010-2018

Households	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018
Above ALICE Threshold	64%	58%	56%	58%	55%
ALICE	24%	25%	29%	27%	30%
Poverty	12%	17%	15%	15%	15%

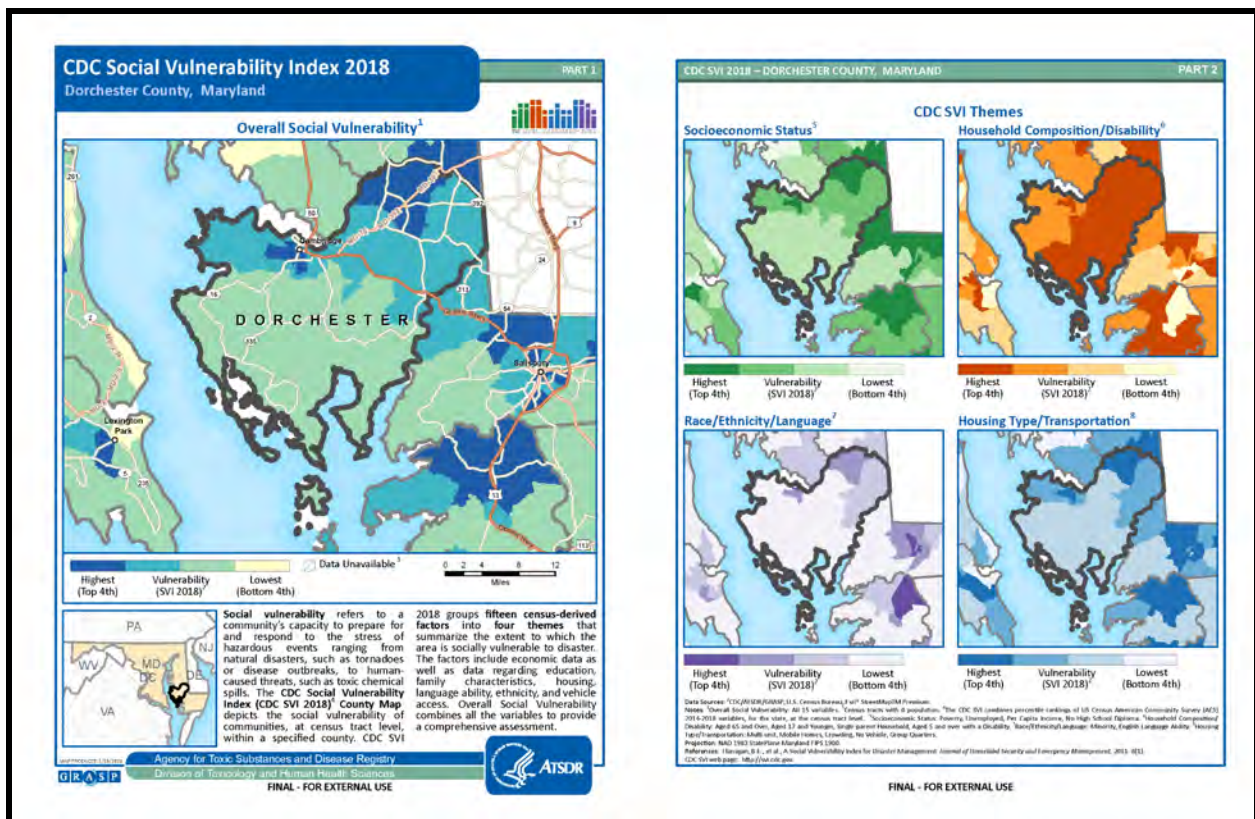
Source: United for Alice

Essentials Index, which includes essential household items (housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and a smartphone plan). Both the number of households who meet the ALICE definition and

those below the poverty level have increased since 2010. In 2010 64% of households were above the ALICE threshold. In 2018, this percentage had dropped to 55% meaning that Dorchester County households are losing ground, due to wage stagnation and increased cost of living.

In 2018, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) created a Social Vulnerability Index for every jurisdiction in the country. Social vulnerability demonstrates a community's capacity to prepare for and respond to the stress of hazardous events. It also demonstrates where residents are generally more vulnerable. The index uses fifteen census-derived factors grouped in four themes to display which areas of the County are most socially vulnerable to disaster. As Image I-1 below shows, overall, Dorchester is in the moderate vulnerability levels. However, the population dense areas around Cambridge and Hurlock are indicated as having high vulnerability based on the four themes considered: socioeconomic status, household composition/disability, race/ethnicity/language, and housing type/transportation. These data visualizations provide only a broad generalization of the distribution of individuals and households across the County. As discussed in the park equity analysis in Chapter II, awareness of these demographics can also be an important consideration for park planning.

Image I-1 CDC Social Vulnerability Index



F. Employment

There were 709 employers in Dorchester County in 2019, employing a total of 11,442 workers (Table I-12). The largest number of jobs (9,132) were in the private sector including 3,325 in goods producing industries and manufacturing (2,685). Wages in the government sector exceeded all industries. The two highest wage earning industries within the private sector were financial activities and goods producing industries. The average weekly pay per worker was \$796. Highest wages were in the federal government (\$1,449). The lowest wages were in leisure and hospitality (\$417).

Table I-12 Employment by Industry Dorchester County, 2019 Calendar Year

Industry	Average Number of Reporting Units	Annual Average Employment	Total Wages	Average Weekly Wage Per Worker
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	709	11,442	\$473,465,110	\$796
GOVERNMENT SECTOR TOTAL	50	2,310	\$121,043,557	\$1,008
Federal Government	19	173	\$13,045,061	\$1,449
State Government	8	836	\$45,725,825	\$1,052
Local Government	23	1,301	\$62,272,671	\$920
PRIVATE SECTOR TOTAL	659	9,132	\$352,421,553	\$814
GOODS PRODUCING	140	3,325	\$145,484,832	\$842
Natural Resources and Mining	20	160	\$5,791,072	\$696
Construction	83	479	\$20,912,746	\$839
Manufacturing	36	2,685	\$118,781,014	\$851
SERVICE PROVIDING	519	5,808	\$206,936,721	\$685
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	172	1,918	\$69,097,849	\$693
Information	6	140	\$3,758,337	\$515
Financial Activities	53	283	\$13,421,788	\$912
Professional and Business Services	80	383	\$16,175,529	\$812
Education and Health Services	63	1,497	\$68,602,476	\$881
Leisure and Hospitality	75	1,301	\$28,211,732	\$417
Other Services	67	285	\$7,669,010	\$517

Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation Industry Series Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) - OWIP

In 2020, the Dorchester County unemployment rate was 7.3% after steadily improving from a high of 13.2% in 2013, according to the U.S. Census American Community Survey (Table I-13). The Maryland Department of Labor reported the 2020 unemployment rate as 6.7% and in Q4 of 2021, the unemployment rate was 4.4%. (Table I-14).

Table I-13 Unemployment Rate for Population 16 Years and Over

Locale	2011	2013	2015	2017	2020	Change 2011 - 2019
Maryland	7.3%	8.2%	7.4%	6.1%	5.20%	-29%
Dorchester	12.1%	13.2%	10.4%	8.3%	7.3%	-40%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

According to the 2021 Comprehensive Plan, citing 2017 data from the US Census Bureau's Center for Economic Studies, 68% of the 15,629 employed residents, commuted outside the county for employment. Overall, 5,576 workers commute into the County, while just under 5,045 commute out of the county.

Table I-14 Dorchester County Local Area Unemployment Statistics

2019 Q4	2020 Q1	2020 Q2	2020 Q3	2020 Q4	2021 Q1	2021 Q2	2021 Q3	2021 Q4
3.8%	5.2%	7.7%	6.3%	7.2%	6.4%	6.9%	5.8%	4.4%

Source: Maryland Department of Labor

G. Educational Attainment

In 2020, 87% of the Dorchester County population aged 25 years and older held a high school diploma or higher (See Table I-15). The percentage of the population without a high school diploma dropped from 19% in 2010 to 13% in 2020. The percentage with a bachelor's degree or higher also increased by 3.4%. In 2020, nearly one in five (19.9%) held a bachelor's degree or higher. In comparison to the State, Dorchester County continues to significantly lag behind in the percentage of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher. Overall, 40.9% of the State's population hold bachelor's degrees or higher. For young people, 18 to 24, there has been a decrease in the percentage of the population who have some college or an Associate's degree.



Table I-15 Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Over

Highest Level of Educational Attainment	Dorchester County			Maryland		
	2010	2015	2020	2010	2015	2020
No High School Diploma	19.0%	15.0%	13.0%	12.2%	10.7%	9.5%
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	40.0%	38.3%	38.4%	26.4%	25.5%	24.2%
Some College, No Degree	19.4%	20.1%	22.0%	19.3%	19.5%	18.7%
Associate's Degree	5.2%	6.3%	6.7%	6.3%	6.4%	6.8%
Bachelor's Degree	9.7%	12.1%	11.6%	19.8%	20.6%	21.8%
Graduate or Professional Degree	6.8%	8.1%	8.2%	16.0%	17.3%	19.1%
High School Graduate or Higher	81.0%	85.0%	87.0%	87.8%	89.4%	90.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	16.5%	20.2%	19.9%	35.7%	37.9%	40.9%

Source: US Census Bureau

Table I-16 Educational Attainment for Population 18-24 Years Old

Educational Attainment	Dorchester			Maryland		
	2010	2015	2020	2010	2015	2020
Less Than High School Graduate	15.5%	21.2%	13.1%	14.5%	12.0%	11.8%
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	37.1%	29.0%	38.5%	31.7%	29.1%	30.6%
Some College or Associate's Degree	39.5%	43.4%	37.4%	41.0%	46.2%	41.5%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	8.0%	6.5%	11.1%	12.9%	12.7%	16.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Communities Survey

This demographic information about the residents of Dorchester County and its municipalities is important to consider within the context of providing access to parks and recreation and to land preservation efforts as well. Other considerations to be undertaken in Chapter II of this plan include analysis of equitable accessibility of parks and open space for all residents, particularly for those who have been marginalized by race, socioeconomics and other factors.

4. Comprehensive Planning Framework

The County's physical features, demographics, and planning framework have implications for land preservation and recreation policies. In brief, the major characteristics of the County detailed above that impact the LPPRP are as follows:

Natural Resources and Planning Framework

- Dorchester County is predominantly rural with the small City of Cambridge serving as its county seat and primary industrial, service and retail area.
- Fishing and farming are important industries within the County and also play a role in the County's attractiveness as a tourist destination.
- The Chesapeake Bay and its watersheds are important environmental and recreational resources.
- Sea level rise is a significant concern for large areas of the County, particularly in southern and northwestern areas. Much of this land is owned and preserved by the state or federal government.
- With nearly 75% of its land area in various forms of conservation Dorchester County is a State leader in land preservation.

Demographic Characteristics

- County population has decreased very slightly since 2010 despite earlier growth projections. The Maryland Department of Planning continues to project overall growth to be 17% above 2010 population by 2045.
- Median household incomes in the County are the lowest in the midshore. Poverty levels are correspondingly higher.
- The proportion of the population over the age of 55 is expected to increase at a moderate rate, while the 35-54 population is expected to decline. The proportion of younger age groups is expected to change little.
- Racial and ethnic diversity is expected to increase. The diversity of the school-age population is significantly higher than the total population.
- The County is a travel destination that attracts a diverse range of visitors from many different places.





Chapter II Recreation, Parks, and Open Space

1. Executive Summary

This chapter identifies Dorchester County’s goals for parks and recreation and evaluates them in the context of the future needs and priorities for parks and open space acquisition, facility development, and programming. The County’s goals and priorities are based on:

- User demand
- A proximity and equity analysis
- Engagement with local leadership including the Recreation & Parks Advisory Board
- Dorchester County Comprehensive Plan, updated in 2021
- Municipal Comprehensive Plans
- State goals for recreation and parks

Overarching Concepts for Land Preservation & Recreation

The County’s physical features, demographics, and planning framework have implications for land preservation and recreation policies. Overarching concepts are as follows:

- The County is committed to protecting the County’s rural and agricultural setting, its small towns and coastal villages and the Chesapeake Bay cultural heritage.
- Farmland is interspersed with forests and water resources (bay, rivers, streams, and wetlands). This land use pattern requires a coordinated approach to land preservation that addresses both natural resource land conservation as well as agricultural land preservation.
- The natural environment and the thousands of acres of preserved lands are an attraction for visitors and prospective residents and serve as the foundation for economic development related to tourism.
- Sea level rise and shore erosion are important considerations for future planning. Planning for the future will include the need for mitigation and is an important factor in encouraging growth within existing municipal areas where water and sewer infrastructure are available.



- In the future, municipalities can play an increasing role in the provision of recreation facilities and services in the County.
- Recreational spaces and programming, particularly for youth, is important to residents.

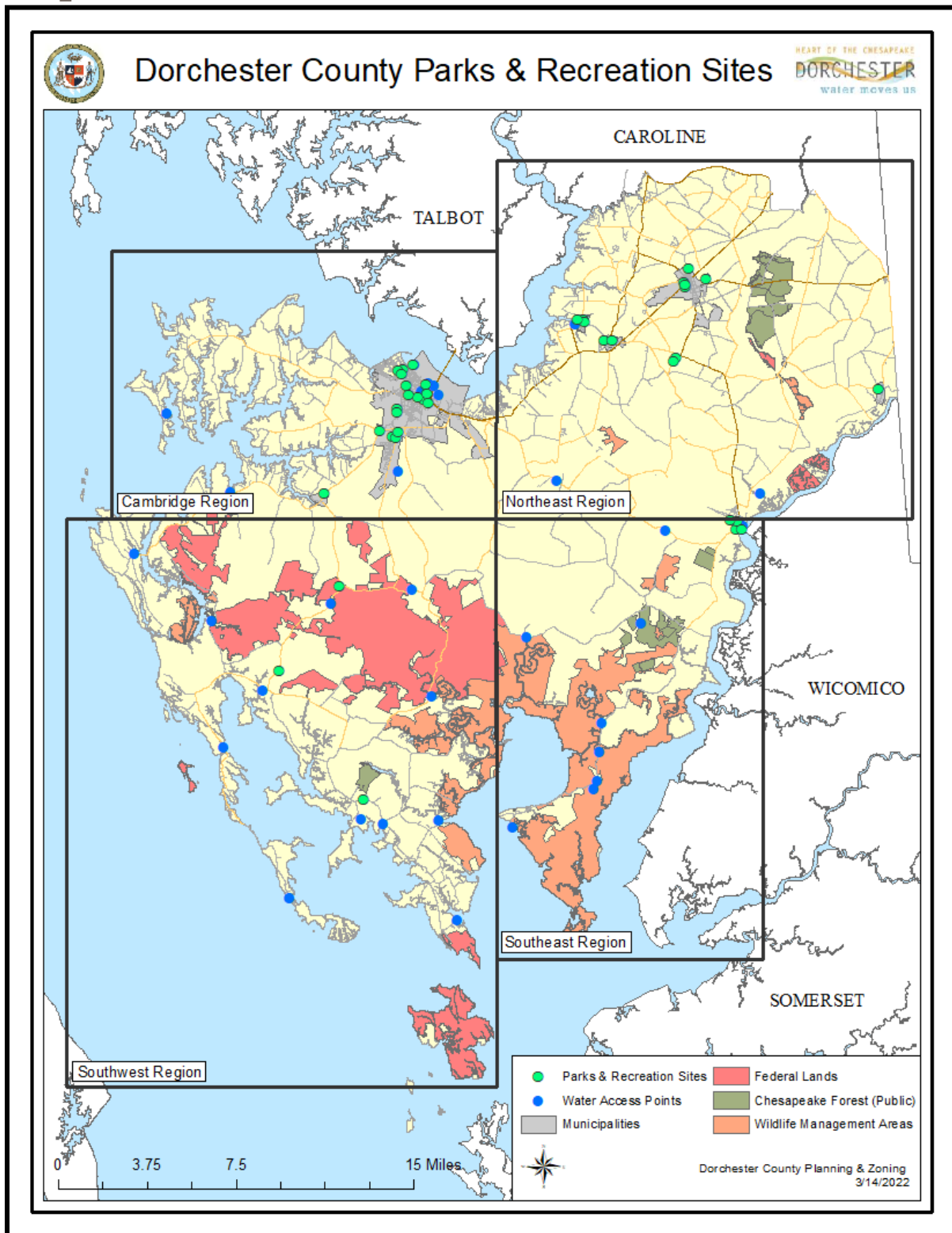
2. Park Land and Recreation Inventory

The County has updated its inventory of parks and recreation land. Map II-1 includes the locations of this inventory across the County and Maps II-2 through II-5 provide the same inventory by region. Included are public lands owned by the County, State and municipal governments. These parks and open spaces offer a variety of features and amenities at each location, including athletic fields and sport courts, swimming facilities, recreation centers, picnic facilities, playgrounds, trails and paths, and public landings/water access. It also includes natural resources and agriculturally preserved lands. A detailed inventory with additional information about parks and open space parcels can be found in Appendix B. Table II-1 indicates total Recreation and Resource Land by Owner.

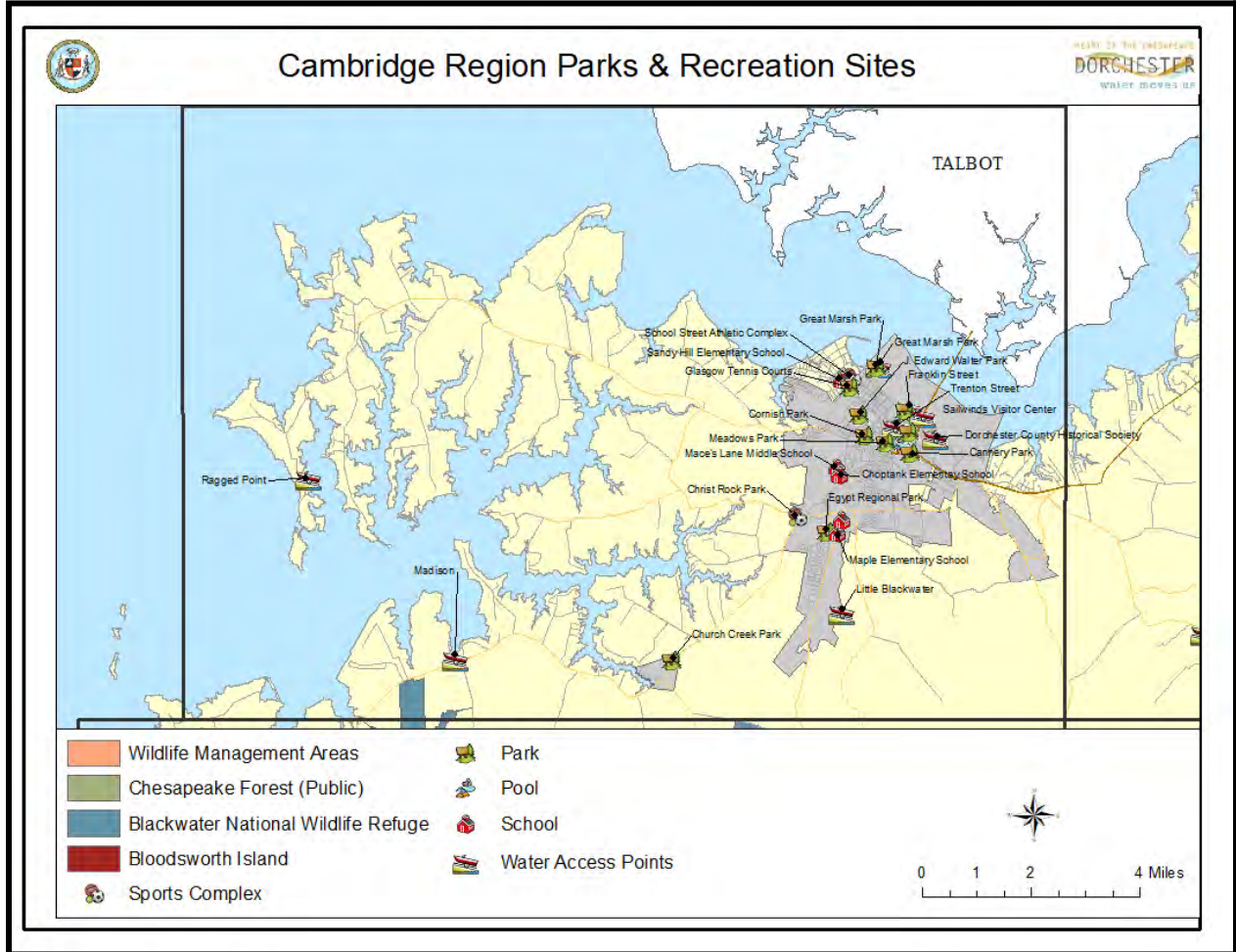
Table II-1 Recreation and Resource Land by Owner in Acres

Owner	Recreation	Resource	Total
Local Recreation and Resource Lands Total			
Dorchester County	297.6		297.6
Cambridge	24.6		24.6
Church Creek	2.3		2.3
East New Market	6.0		6.0
Galestown	1.0		1.0
Hurlock	22.4		22.4
Secretary	4.4		4.4
Vienna	9.8		9.8
Total Acres	368.1	0.0	368.1
State Recreation and Resource Lands Total			
	17.4	46916.9	46934.3
Total Acres	17.4	46916.9	46934.3
Federal Recreation and Resource Lands Total			
	480.0	34909.0	35389.0
Total Acres	480.0	34909.0	35389.0
Quasi Public Recreation and Resource Lands Total			
Board of Education	65.4		65.4
Total Acres	65.4		65.4
Total Recreation and Resource Lands	930.9	81825.9	82756.8

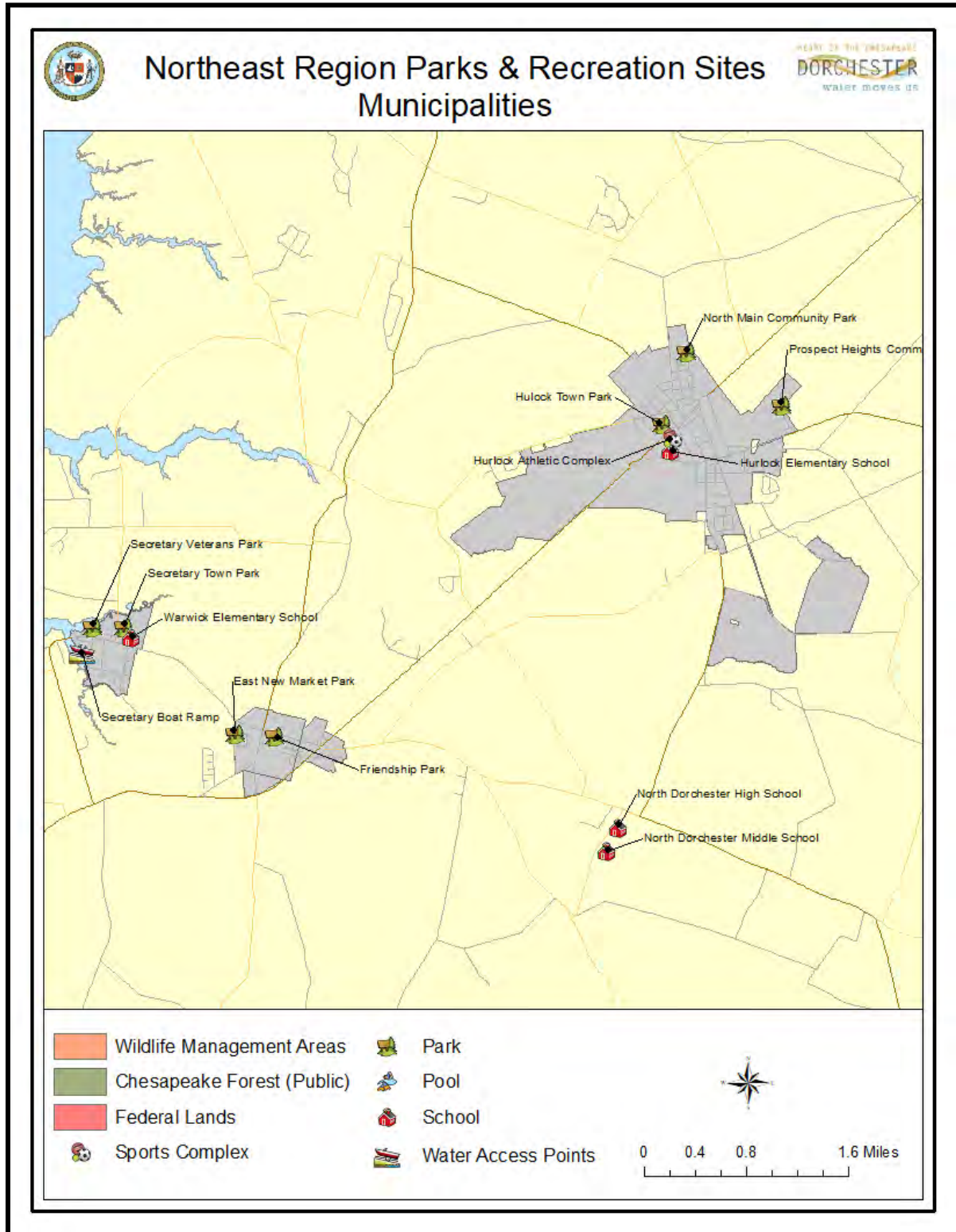
Map II-1 Recreation & Parks Sites



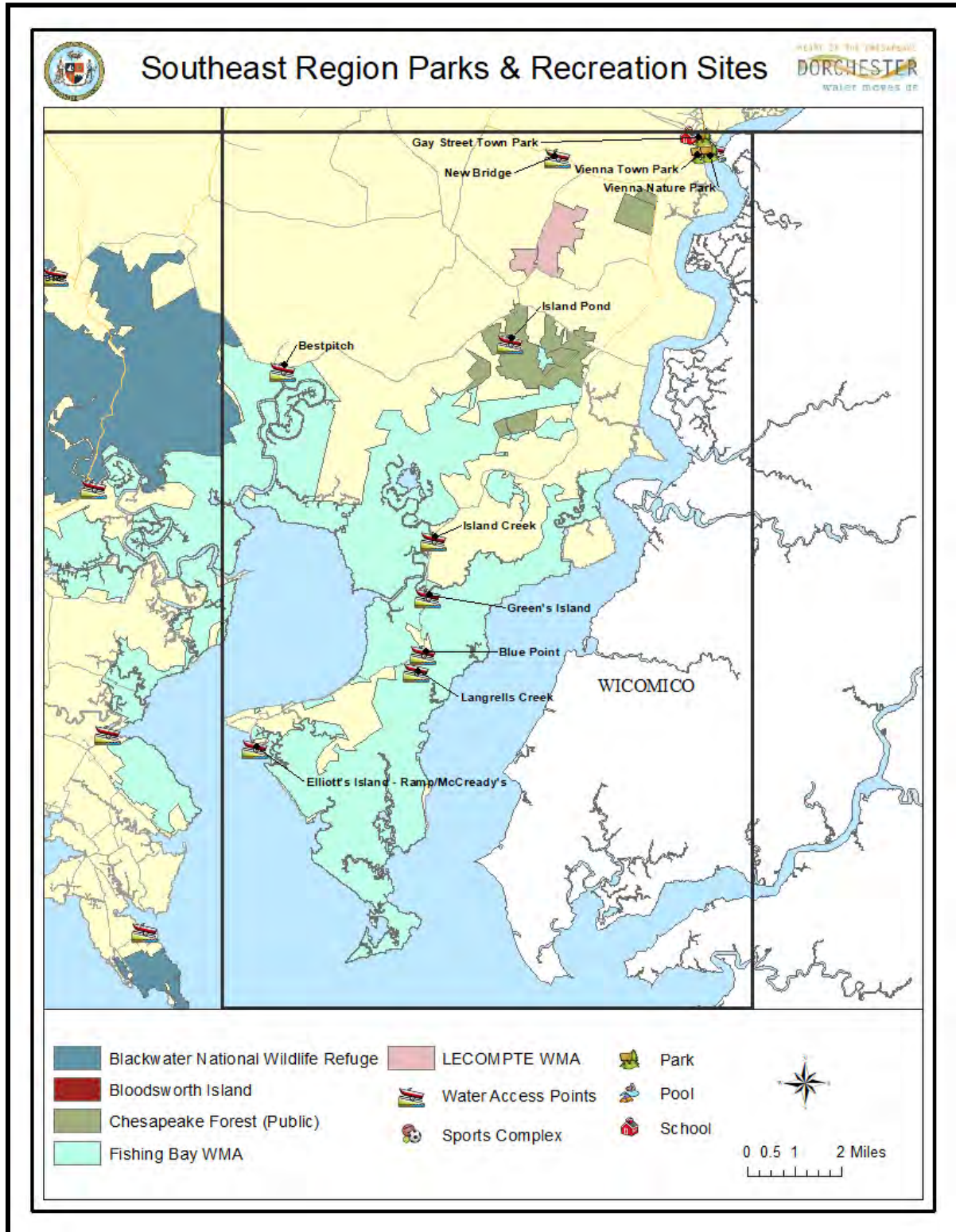
Map II-2 Cambridge Region Recreation & Parks Sites



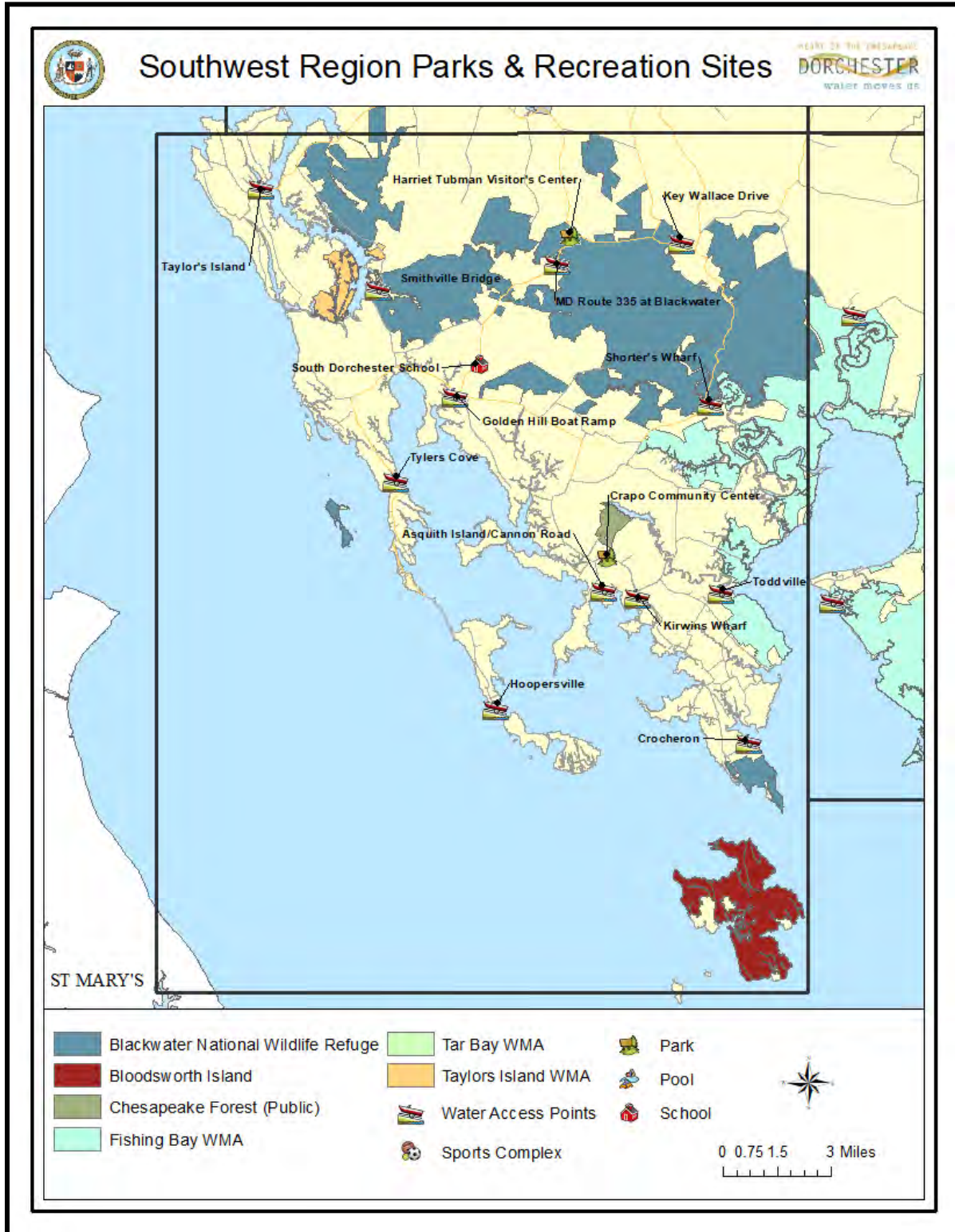
Map II-3 Northeast Region



Map II-4 Southeast County Sites



Map II-5 Southwest Region



A. Federal Land

The flagship of the County's park system is the federal lands that make up Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, which includes 28,896 acres of preserved lands. Additionally, the Harriet Tubman National Historic Park adds an additional 480 acres of preserved federal lands and Key Wallace Hiking Trail provides an additional 9.0 acres. Bloodworth Island archipelago makes up an additional 6,013 acres.

B. State Land

Resource lands are primarily owned by the State and include 46,916.9 acres of natural resource lands.

State Parks in Dorchester include the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park and the Bill Burton Fishing Pier.

State resource land is shown in Table II-1 but is described in more detail in Chapter III Natural Resource Land Conservation. This chapter focuses on recreation land.

C. County & Municipal Parks and Open Spaces

Dorchester County maintains 297 acres of land developed for recreational use. This includes all developed County parks. Since 2017 the County has added 2.89 acres with the purchase of the Dorchester County Recreation Center, previously a private tennis club, on Leonard Lane, Cambridge. Parks and open space are distributed across the county and discussed below in further detail by region.

1. North Dorchester

- **Hurlock Athletic Complex** is a regional park owned and maintained by Dorchester Recreation & Parks. It is dedicated primarily to youth and adult sports. Its features include two lighted ball diamonds, two unlighted diamonds, three multipurpose fields, three tennis courts, a pavilion, concession stands and restrooms.
- The Town of Hurlock also maintains three parks: **Hurlock Town Park** a small park with benches and a small tot lot; **Prospect Heights Community Park** which offers a full basketball court, bleachers, playground and pavilion; **North Main Community Park** contains play equipment, benches and picnic table.
- The Town of East New Market provides two parks for residents including **East New Market Park** which offers a tennis court, basketball court, pavilion, tot lot, ball diamond and picnic tables. **Friendship Park** is a small pocket park in the town and includes a walking path.
- The Town of Secretary provides two parks for its residents. **Secretary Park** includes tennis courts, a pavilion, playground, picnic tables and outdoor grill as well as water access for fishing. **Veterans Park** is a visual memorial to veterans and includes a walking area, pavilion and benches.



2. Cambridge Area

The City of Cambridge serves as the county seat and the retail and activity center of the county. The following parks and facilities are owned and maintained by Dorchester County Recreation & Parks within Cambridge..

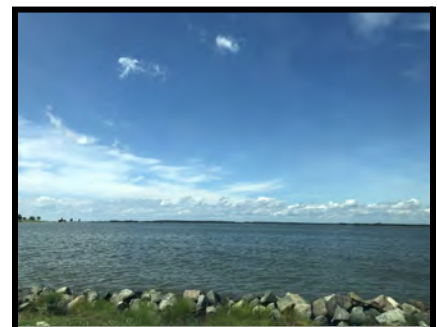
- **Dorchester Recreation Center**, located on Leonard Lane, is the new home for Dorchester County Recreation & Parks. Once a private indoor tennis club, the facility is currently under renovation and will include multipurpose space and basketball court as well as indoor tennis/pickleball courts. It is also the home of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Baltimore..
- **Dorchester County Swimming Pool** is an outdoor pool located in the heart of Cambridge on a 3 acre parcel of land. In addition to the pool, there is a concession stand and playground at the location.
- **J. Edward Walter Park** includes a lighted ball diamond, two multipurpose fields, picnic tables and restrooms as well as a building that housed the Recreation & Parks offices until 2021.



- **Egypt Road Regional Park** is a 96 acre park that provides opportunities for passive recreation including a nature trail and picnic tables.
- **Christ Rock Park** is a regional sports park with two basketball courts, two ball diamonds, and one multipurpose field.
- **Glasgow Athletic Complex** includes one full basketball court, 10 tennis courts, four ball diamonds and three multipurpose fields.
- **Sailwinds Park**, just off Route 50, on the Choptank River, includes a small beach, picnic facilities, walking trails, playground equipment, and fishing access.
- **McCarter Park** is a 2.5 acre community park that provides a picnic area and playground.

The City of Cambridge also maintains a comprehensive inventory of parks and open spaces for recreational use:

- **Cannery Way** is the newest addition to the city's parks inventory. It is a 6.6 acre property that includes a Rails to Trails walking path, natural areas, and a dog park. Once completed there will also be picnic areas and a playground.
- **Gerry Boyle Park at Great Marsh** is a 5.67 acre property on the Choptank River and offers natural areas, water access, picnic facilities, a trail and pavilion. It is the starting and ending point for the annual IRONMAN® Triathlon.



- **Long Wharf Park & Marina** offers scenic views, a walking path and fishing.
- **Calvin Mowbray Park, Cosby Avenue Park, Meadow Avenue Park** and **North Drive Park** are small community parks with varied amenities.

3. South Dorchester Region

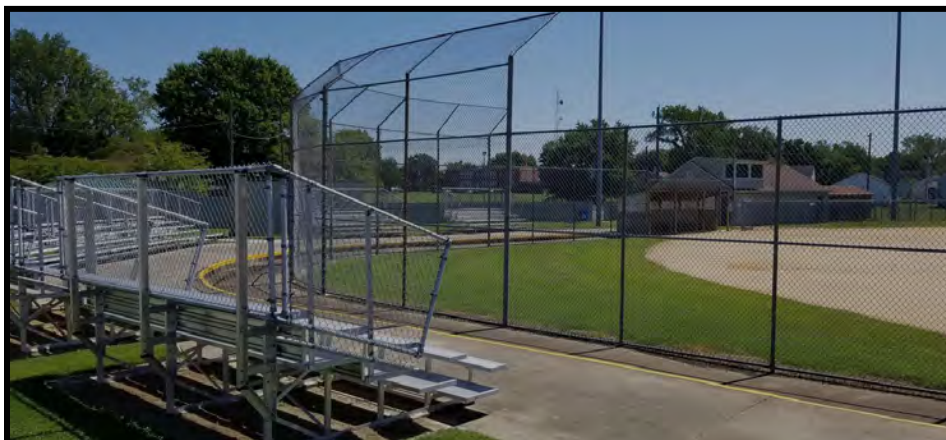
In addition to Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge and the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State and Federal Parks, South Dorchester offers several additional parks for residents and visitors to enjoy.

- The **Crapo Community Center** offers multipurpose fields in addition to the community center facility.
- The **Church Creek Park** provides local residents with sports fields, playground equipment and a gazebo for outdoor activities.
- The Town of Vienna provides three community parks. **Vienna Town Park** with multipurpose fields, a playground, basketball and tennis courts as well as restroom facilities. **Gay Street Park** is a small ½ acre pocket park with a walking path, fishing, and a gazebo. The **Vienna Nature Park** also provides 2.8 acres of open space and includes a walking path and gazebo as well as scenic water access and fishing.



D. Private Quasi-Public land and Facilities

Private/quasi-public areas are not always available to the public and may be fee-based for use. Board of Education property accounts for an additional 64 acres of recreational land. Additionally, there are several natural resource conservation properties that have limited accessibility for public use. These lands are privately owned but are accessible to the general public at times. In particular, this includes Board of Education outdoor areas that are available for outdoor community use. These provide outdoor playing fields, playgrounds, grass areas, paths, parking areas, etc.



E. Water Access

Public access to the bay, rivers and streams for boating and fishing is an important component of the County's recreation facilities. Table II-2 summarizes available public landings. There are a total of 34 publicly owned water access points in the County. These vary from undeveloped access points at the end of a road to commercial boat ramps with piers and boat slips.

Table II-2 Dorchester County Public Landings

Landing	Location	Boat Ramp	Available Parking
Secretary	Warwick River	2	Y
Hoopersville	Muddy Hook Creek	1	Y
Tylers Cove	Fishing Creek	1	Y
Golden Hill	Wallace Creek	1	Y
Crocheron	Tedious Creek	1	Y
Toddville	Farm Creek	1	Y
Kirwins Wharf	Insley Cove	1	Y
Shorter's Wharf	Blackwater River	1	Y
Smithville Bridge	Beaver Dam Creek	1	Y
Taylor's Island	Slaughter Creek	1	Y
Madison	Madison Bay	2	Y
Vienna	Nanticoke River	1	Y
New Bridge	Chicamacomico River	1	Y
Island Creek	Island Creek	1	Y
Elliott's Island - Ramp/McCready's	Fishing Bay	1	Y
Langrells Creek	Langrells Creek/Nanticoke River	1	Y
Bestpitch	Transquaking River	1	Y
Great Marsh Park	Choptank River	2	Y
Franklin Street	Choptank River	6	Y
Ragged Point	Brooks Creek	1	Y
MD Route 335 at Blackwater	Blackwater River	0	Y
Asquith Island/Cannon Road	Lakes Cove/Honga River	1	Y
Trenton Street	Cambridge Creek	1	Y
Transquaking River Access	Transquaking River	1	Y
Sailwinds Visitor Center	Choptank River	0	Y
Dorchester County Historical Society	Shoal Creek	0	U
Key Wallace Drive	Little Blackwater River	0	Y
Island Pond	Island Pond	0	Y
Little Blackwater	Little Blackwater River	0	Y
Chicone Creek	Chicone Creek	0	N
Blue Point	Blue Point Branch	0	
Green's Island	Pokata Creek	1	

Survey responses came from across the County. Chart II-1 demonstrates the geographic distribution of respondents by region and zip code. The majority (62.2%) from the Cambridge (21613) zip code. Another 26% were from zip codes in the northern region of the county, which includes Hurlock, East New Market, Secretary, and Rhodesdale. The remaining responses from Dorchester residents were from southern Dorchester and the Neck District. These included the towns of Church Creek, Fishing Creek, Madison, Taylors Island, Toddville, Woolford, Linkwood, and Vienna. There were no responses from the towns of Crapo, Crocheron or Wingate. Survey participants, for the most part, accessed and utilized parks and open spaces in the County (Chart II-2). Nearly half (48.8%) or respondents visited a park or green space at least once per week; while only a few had not visited a park in the last year.

Chart II-1 Respondents by Location

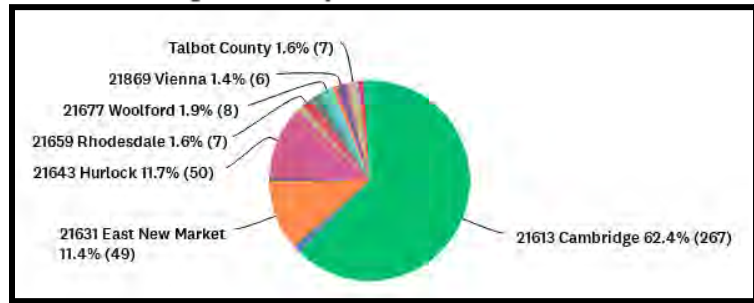
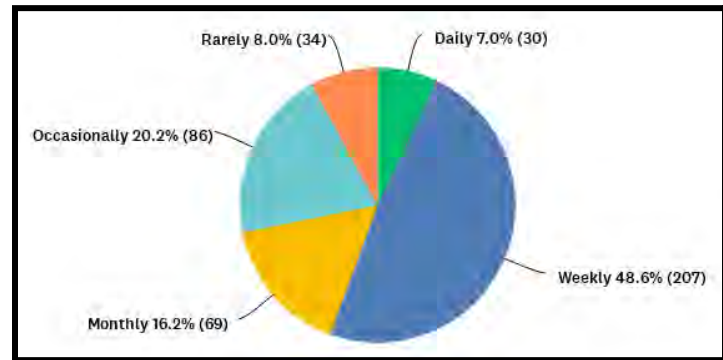


Chart II-2 Park Visitation Frequency



Parks were most frequently visited for passive outdoor use or for organized team sports followed by open access to sports courts and fields.

The focus group Community Conversation prompts focused on these basic questions:

- Are parks/open spaces available and accessible?
- Do they offer the features and amenities desired by users?
- Are recreation programs and activities available and accessible?
- Do recreation programs and activity opportunities meet the varied recreation needs of County residents?

1. Parks are Available & Accessible

Dorchester County has a network of outdoor parks and open spaces. As Maps II-2 through II-6 (pages 3-6) indicate, community and neighborhood parks are situated in the population centers of municipalities and larger municipalities. Regional parks with sports fields are located near communities with more population. Access to federal and state conservation areas for passive recreation, hunting and fishing is also available. Water access points are well distributed across the county. It is important to note that large areas of South Dorchester are protected conservation areas. The population is sparse and widely distributed and sea level rise and other factors are shifting population out of these communities.

Half of survey respondents were satisfied with the geographic distribution of parks in the County, about 35% were not satisfied with the distribution, and 15% were unsure about the distribution. (See Chart II-3.)

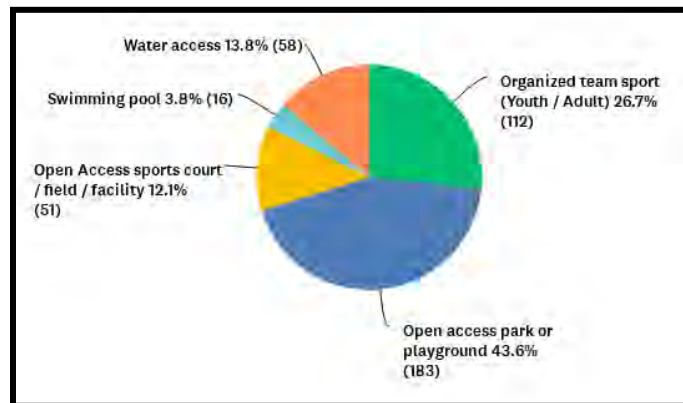
2. Features, Amenities, and Accessibility

Features - The features that survey respondents want in their parks directly correlates to what activities they and family members participate in.

The most used facilities by respondents during the past year included:

1. Open Access or Playground Use
2. Organized Team Sports
3. Open Access Sports Court/Field Use
4. Swimming Pool
5. Water Access

Chart II-3 Facility and Program Usage



Features noted as not adequate across the County's network of parks included:

- Additional play areas and athletic fields for youth.
- More, longer and varied types of trails

In focus group discussions and written responses to open-ended survey questions, respondents identified several deficits related to availability of parks and related features. In particular, in the northern part of the county, additional indoor space for youth programming was discussed as well as replacement of existing court surfaces for basketball, tennis and the addition of pickleball. Focus group participants in the southern part of the county were interested in maintaining their community parks, replacing equipment as it reached its lifespan and keeping community parks accessible for the small towns that dot the region. In the Cambridge area focus group participants discussed location and safety of community parks and the community center as a concern.

Amenities - In surveys and focus groups, respondents identified their top priorities for amenities was the maintenance and addition or built restrooms wherever possible. Trash receptacles and cleanliness of the park facilities were noted by multiple participants.

Accessibility within the parks was an area mentioned in focus groups and written responses on the community survey. Playground equipment for differently abled children was also identified as a feature that should be available in more parks. More playgrounds do not have these types of equipment than playgrounds which do.

3. Recreation Availability and Accessibility

Overall, more than 90% of community survey respondents who used the parks, fields and facilities in the county indicated that they were satisfied with the network of parks. Less than 10% were unsatisfied. Of those who responded that they had participated in a program offered by Recreation & Parks, 85% were satisfied with the quality of the programs. However, nearly half of respondents had not participated in a program.

Survey respondents identified these priorities for parks, programming and land preservation:

Parks Priorities

1. Creating multi-use trails
2. Creating play areas & recreation for youth
3. Creating new parks/open spaces
4. Creating additional athletic fields for youth

Programming Priorities

1. Creating recreation opportunities for youth
2. Creating more adult recreational programming
3. Creating more recreational programming for seniors

Preservation Priorities

1. Preserving environmentally sensitive areas
2. Protecting farmland from development
3. Creating more cultural/historical attractions

Table II-3 Dorchester County Survey Respondents Priority Rankings

With a rank of 5 being highly important at this time and a rank of 1 being not important at this time, please indicate the importance of each of the following goals.

Goal	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Creating new parks / open spaces	5.0% 21	7.3% 31	16.8% 71	20.1% 85	49.5% 209	1.2% 5	4.03
Creating more public access to water	10.1% 42	11.8% 49	21.6% 90	19.0% 79	32.9% 137	4.6% 19	3.55
Creating multi-use trails	3.8% 16	4.8% 20	14.3% 60	21.0% 88	53.5% 224	2.6% 11	4.19
Creating play areas / recreation for youth	2.4% 10	4.0% 17	11.9% 50	22.9% 96	56.0% 235	2.9% 12	4.3
Creating more cultural / historical attractions	12.7% 53	12.7% 53	24.5% 102	17.5% 73	28.8% 120	3.6% 15	3.38
Creating more adult recreational programming	6.7% 28	8.9% 37	26.2% 109	21.6% 90	31.7% 132	4.8% 20	3.66
Creating more recreational programming for seniors	11.2% 47	8.4% 35	22.7% 95	21.5% 90	28.9% 121	7.2% 30	3.52
Developing additional athletic fields for youth	7.0% 29	10.2% 42	19.6% 81	23.0% 95	34.6% 143	5.6% 23	3.72
Preserving environmentally sensitive areas	7.9% 33	5.5% 23	17.2% 72	21.1% 88	44.7% 187	3.6% 15	3.93
Protecting farmland from development	8.2% 34	7.2% 30	17.3% 72	19.7% 82	43.0% 179	4.6% 19	3.86

Maintenance & Upkeep - In both focus groups and written comments, maintenance and safety were mentioned as important priorities as well.

4. Written Survey Comments

The community survey's last questions were open-ended and asked about what improvements could be made to existing parks or programs and what new amenities or programs the county should work to provide. In total, the questions received 262 written responses. Takeaways from these responses were in alignment with responses to the rest of the survey.

The majority of requests repeated multiple times, and included: construct a dog park, add more and longer trails for walking, hiking and biking, improve/provide new hard court surfaces for basketball and

pickleball, provide more indoor and outdoor recreation spaces for youth, adults and families, particularly teens.

6. Trends in County Recreation Program and Facility Utilization

Analysis of registration data from Recreation & Parks was not possible as the County experienced a data breach in 2019 and all historical data was lost. The Department did not operate programming during the pandemic. Additionally, the department experienced tremendous staff turnover between 2017 and 2022, including three director leadership changes with vacancies between directors. One of the goals for the Department for 2022-27 will be to establish baselines and track program and facility utilization data.

B. Priorities from Community Feedback

The following key points emerge from the analyses of need and demand and current usage trends provided in this section.

1. User Satisfaction

County parks are perceived as important assets to the County. Expansion of features and amenities are considered primary concerns when considering capital investments in parks and open spaces in the County. Program users are generally satisfied with the quality of the programs but there is a desire for more and varied program offerings.

2. Land Acquisition Needs

As shown in Table II-1 (page 2), the County and its municipalities currently have 368.1 acres of parks and open space land. Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) population trends indicate that Dorchester County's population will experience little population change in population over the next 10 years. Through the community engagement process, Dorchester residents indicated a desire for the redevelopment of features and addition of amenities within existing parks, particularly playground equipment, court surfaces and the addition of bathrooms. They also identified additional trails and types of trails as desirable.

3. Program Priorities

Responses from the community engagement process indicate that the County should focus on providing additional access to places and spaces that support physical activity as well as social and emotional health and wellness for County residents. This includes:

- Expanding program offerings for all ages.

Chart II-4 Park and Facility User Satisfaction Rating

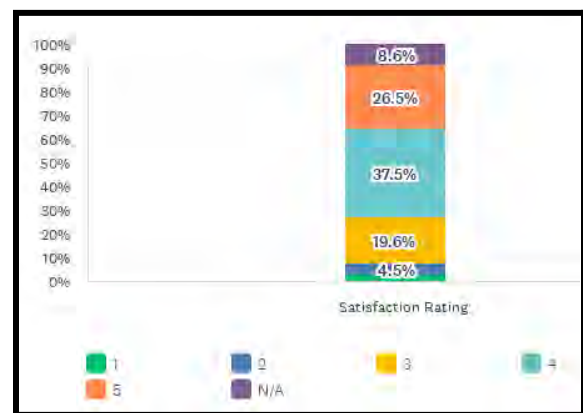
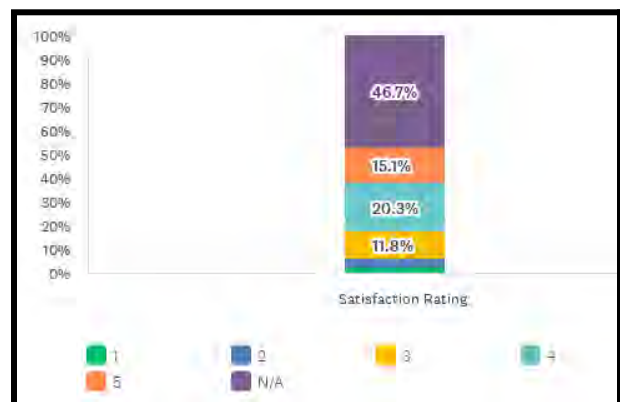


Chart II-5 Satisfaction Rating of Recreation & Parks Programming



- In particular, expanded opportunities for youth in the northern part of the county, centered around Hurlock and the North Dorchester Middle-High School complex.
- Additional adult program opportunities, including reinvigorating adult softball leagues.
- Creative ways to provide programming for the towns in South Dorchester and the Neck District to meet the needs of isolated communities where access to transportation is a barrier for participation.
- Continue to work as a community to address the violence and safety concerns in the City of Cambridge which is a barrier to parks and open space usage. This is discussed in further detail in the section of this chapter which discusses Proximity and Equity.

4. Facility Needs

The community-wide recreational facility needs as identified through the Community Engagement process include:

- Indoor and outdoor facilities to meet youth and adult programming needs, particularly rehabilitation and/or addition of new basketball and tennis/pickleball courts.
- Longer multi-use trails (rails to trails type)
- New and replacement playground and picnic facilities, especially the addition of ADA accessible areas and equipment
- Dog Park
- Skate park

C. Local & State Related Research

1. 2021 Dorchester Comprehensive Plan Update

Dorchester County Commissioners updated its Comprehensive Plan in 2021, the first update since 1998. The Comprehensive Plan identified several strategies linked to the network of recreation and parks in the county. Outdoor recreation is identified as an economic driver for the county, including hiking, biking, boating, hunting and fishing. Cultural and heritage tourism is also identified in the plan update as part of the overall tourism and economic development plans for the County's future. In addition to the 2021 Dorchester Comprehensive Plan. The Plan is also supported by goals outlined in the [HEART OF CHESAPEAKE COUNTRY HERITAGE AREA](#) Master Plan Update completed in 2018 for 2019-2024.

2. Economic Impact

In December 2019, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Maryland Department of Commerce released the [Maryland Outdoor Recreation Economic Commission Final Report](#), which resulted in the creation of the Governor's Office of Outdoor Recreation in September 2021. This report found that outdoor recreation in Maryland is an economic engine. Dorchester County's water access, natural resource and agricultural lands, and various recreation opportunities make Dorchester County a

potential destination for outdoor recreation enthusiasts. In the last Statewide survey of residents regarding outdoor recreation participation, completed in 2018 as part of the [2019 – 2023 Maryland Land Preservation and Recreation Plan](#), respondents identified their favorite activities as walking, hiking, biking, playgrounds, team sports, and running/jogging,

The most recent Statewide economic impact study of parks was completed in 2010. The [2010 Maryland State Parks Economic Impact and Visitor Study](#) surveyed approximately 3,400 Maryland State Park visitors, including visitors to Tuckahoe and Martinak State Parks. Respondents at the time ranked hiking/walking as the most popular activity in the State parks. This report study also identified that for every \$1 the State invests in State parks, \$29.27 is generated in economic activity.

The study demonstrated the substantial economic benefit of State parks by gathering data on spending by park visitors within the communities outside the park. Seventy percent of spending impacts were found to be concentrated within a 20-minute drive of parks. Statewide, the average daily spending outside of the park was \$37 per person for day visitors and \$53 per person for overnight visitors.

Extrapolating from the state survey results indicated that parks in the Eastern Region, in which Dorchester is a part, resulted in \$82 per person for day visitors and \$61 per person for overnight spending. It is important to note that the Eastern Region includes the beach areas of Worcester County.

3, Recreation & Parks and Health & Wellness

According to the [National Recreation and Parks Association](#) (NRPA), physical activity is just one way that health and wellness benefit from access to parks and recreation. Parks and recreation opportunities are key building blocks in building sustainable health communities. Participation in programs and time spent outside in parks offer multiple health related benefits: reduce obesity, provide a connection to nature that relieves stress levels and improves mental health and generally foster overall wellness and healthful habits. They also offer an environment for social connection and engagement which have been found to have lasting positive impact on health outcomes. There is extensive science research supporting the need for individuals of all ages to have access to greenspaces for both active and passive recreation and time in nature. In 2006, the Trust for Public Land published a white paper, [The Health Benefits of Parks](#), which outlined how parks support physical activity and improve outcomes for individuals with chronic diseases linked to sedentary lifestyles: diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure and cholesterol. Parks and greenspaces have also been linked to positive outcomes for individuals with sensory disorders as well as psychological diagnosis. A 2022 review of literature, [The Health Benefits of Parks and their Economic Impacts | Urban Institute](#), found that four dimensions of health: physical, mental, social and environmental are demonstrated to be positively impacted by availability and accessibility to parks and open spaces.

By participation, the most popular outdoor activities nationally are running, hiking, fishing, biking, and camping. According to the [2020 Outdoor Participation Report](#) published by the Outdoor Foundation, in 2020, 53% of Americans age 6+ participated in outdoor recreation activity at least once, the highest participation rate on record. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased outdoor recreation to its highest level ever. Participation in outdoor activities had already been trending up prior to the pandemic, increasing 3% annually between 2017 and 2020. While participation overall has increased, the frequency of participation has continued to fall. Whites still participate in outdoor activities far more than other races. Three in four outdoor participants (75%) are White as compared to 60% of the American

population. Participation in outdoor activities among children ages 6 to 17 continues to trend down, on average children spent time in outdoor activities 77 times in 2020 compared to 91 in 2012.

According to the [Youth Sports Facts: Participation Rates — The Aspen Institute Project Play](#), 61% of children ages 6 - 12 played some team sport at least casually. However, the percentage of children who participated on a regular basis has continued to fall from 41.4% in 2012 to 38.1% in 2019. Before the COVID-19 shutdown, there had been participation gains in a number of sports. Baseball, after a significant decline, was up 6% with its highest rate since 2011. Soccer was up 3%. Tackle football, after years of drops in participation over concussion concerns, increased participation 5%. Children from higher income families continue to be more likely to play organized sports. There was a 21.6% difference in participation between children from households with incomes under \$25,000 as compared with households with incomes above \$100,000 during 2019. This gap has continued to widen since 2012 when it was 15 points.

The transition from elementary to middle school has been a turning point in youth sports participation for years. In 2019, significant decreases in participation occurred in baseball, soccer, gymnastics, and basketball between ages 11 and 13. Sports that experienced minimal increases at the elementary to middle school junction included wrestling, field hockey, and tennis.

One additional consideration in the report indicates trend changes may occur with COVID-19 with a shift to more outdoor individualized (cycling/hiking) or smaller team sports tennis/pickleball because it is easier to accommodate social distancing,

The Aspen Institute [State of Play 2020](#) report includes recommendations for stakeholders in youth sports. It calls on community recreation groups and local recreation providers to “proactively build programs that represent its diversity.” The authors suggest allocating free/reduced roster spots or facility space based on Free and Reduced Meal (FaRM) rates within communities.

Additionally, the authors suggest ensuring that funding of open space development supports the development of parks and recreation spaces that are open and accessible to all youth, carefully taking into consideration not only proximity but also equity. Finally, they encourage a collective impact model in designing community sports and recreation opportunities for youth that engage the entire community.

4. Parks as Places for Social Change

According to an article published by the National Institute of Health [The Relationship between Social Cohesion and Urban Green Space: An Avenue for Health Promotion - PMC](#), studies have identified that green spaces in urban areas can have a positive impact as places that offer opportunities for social cohesion to occur.

4. Level of Service Analysis

A. Proximity Analysis

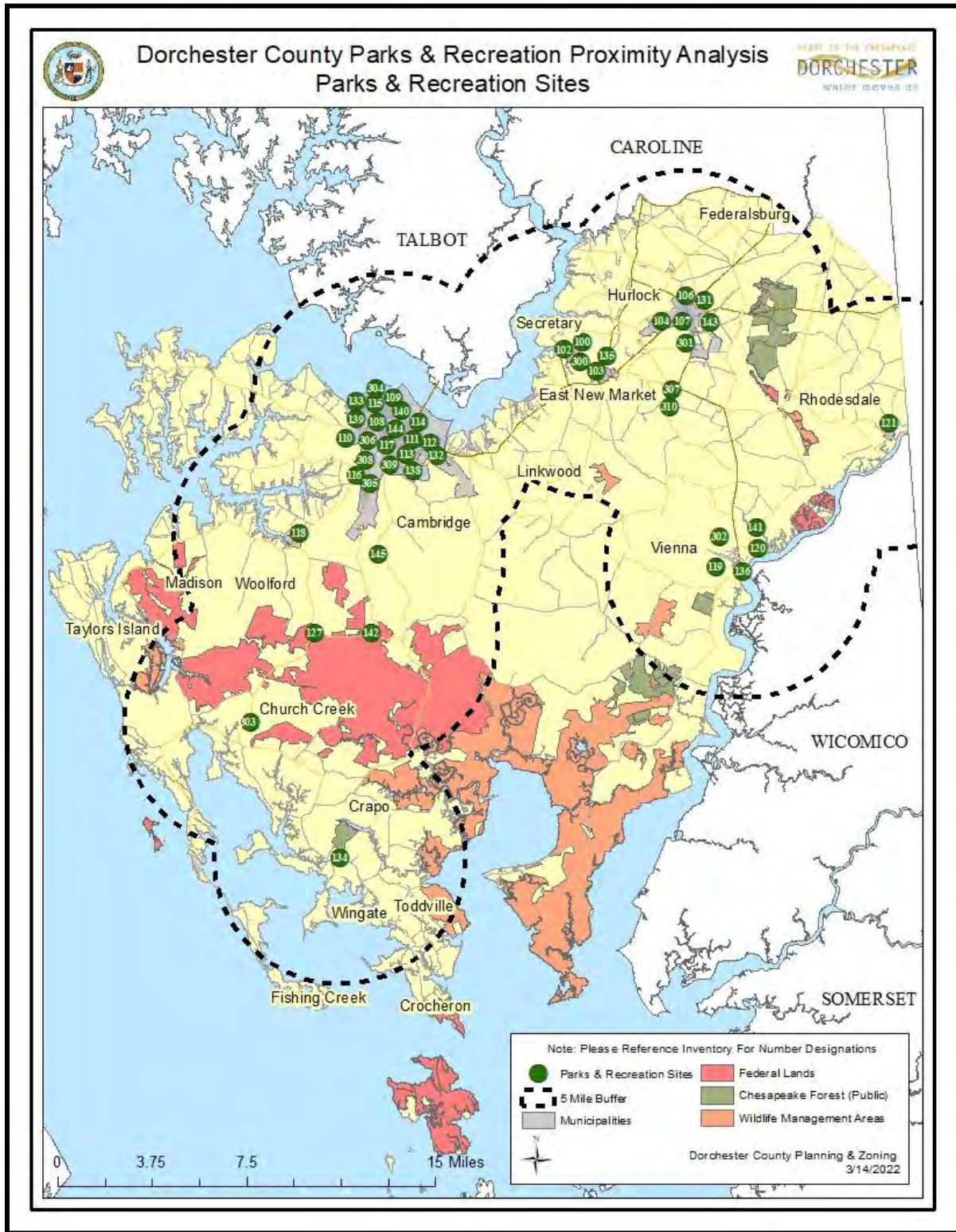
This section evaluates the extent to which residents in all areas of Dorchester County have access to parks and recreation facilities. It examines whether parks and recreation facilities are concentrated in a few areas of the County or in a few towns, and whether the facilities support the County’s land use policies.

Dorchester County's network of parks is distributed throughout the County, primarily located in either municipalities or larger rural villages. Map II-6 includes all park and natural resource locations in the County. It is clear that there are large portions of the county that are not within five miles of a county or municipal park or facility. This must be taken in the context that much of Dorchester County is sparsely populated and is located on land that is either in natural resource or agricultural preservation. More than $\frac{2}{3}$ of Dorchester County lies within areas identified for preservation. Many of the small towns located along the Chesapeake Bay are shrinking in population and facing the threat of extinction with sea level rise and mitigation efforts which include discouraging additional residential development in these areas and relocation of the current populations in these areas to areas of the county that are able to be served by public water and sewer systems. The proximity of parks to the more densely populated areas aligns with the recommendations of the 2021 Comprehensive Plan update. Dorchester's land use policies have been established to maintain large swaths of contiguous agricultural acreage and natural resource corridors throughout much of the County and the County is currently beginning to undertake the comprehensive review of its current zoning to determine its alignment with the updated Comprehensive Plan recommendations.

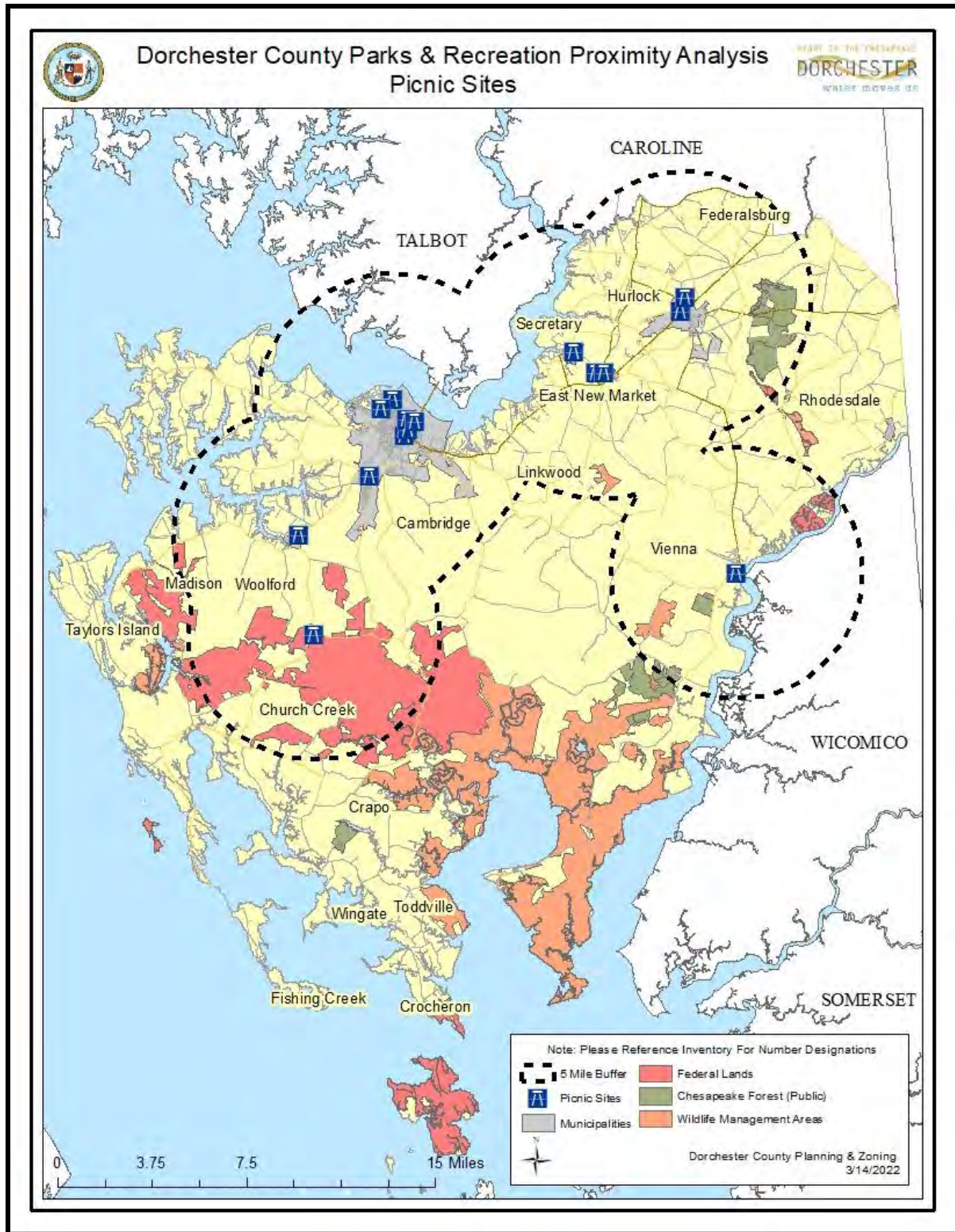
Review of Maps II-8 through II-12 lead to the following observations regarding proximity of parks to where people live and work:

- Picnic Areas and Playgrounds (Maps II-8 and II-9) - picnic areas and playgrounds are well situated throughout the more densely populated areas of the County. There are large areas of the county that do not have picnic areas or playgrounds, however these are areas with low population density.
- Multipurpose sports fields and ball fields (Map II-10) are situated in or near municipalities with the largest number in the Cambridge area, the population center of the County. North Dorechester, including Hurlock, Secretary and East New Market have access to sports fields within five miles. Vienna also provides access to sports fields within five miles of this population center.
- Water Access (Map II-9) is available along all the major waterways in the County including the Chesapeake Bay, the Choptank and Nanticoke Rivers as well as along smaller creeks. There are a total of 32 water access points throughout the County.
- State and federal conservation/natural resource areas provide additional access to green space for County residents and visitors.
- County school sites provide additional outdoor play space and school fields are used for youth sports league play as well.
- Trails for walking, biking, and hiking are less available and are not well mapped. It would be beneficial for the County to identify where trails are located throughout the county.
- Areas of the County that do not have parks within five miles are primarily located in the western areas of the County, along the Chesapeake Bay and in the very southern tips of County also along the Bay where population is sparse and where small rural towns and villages are losing population.

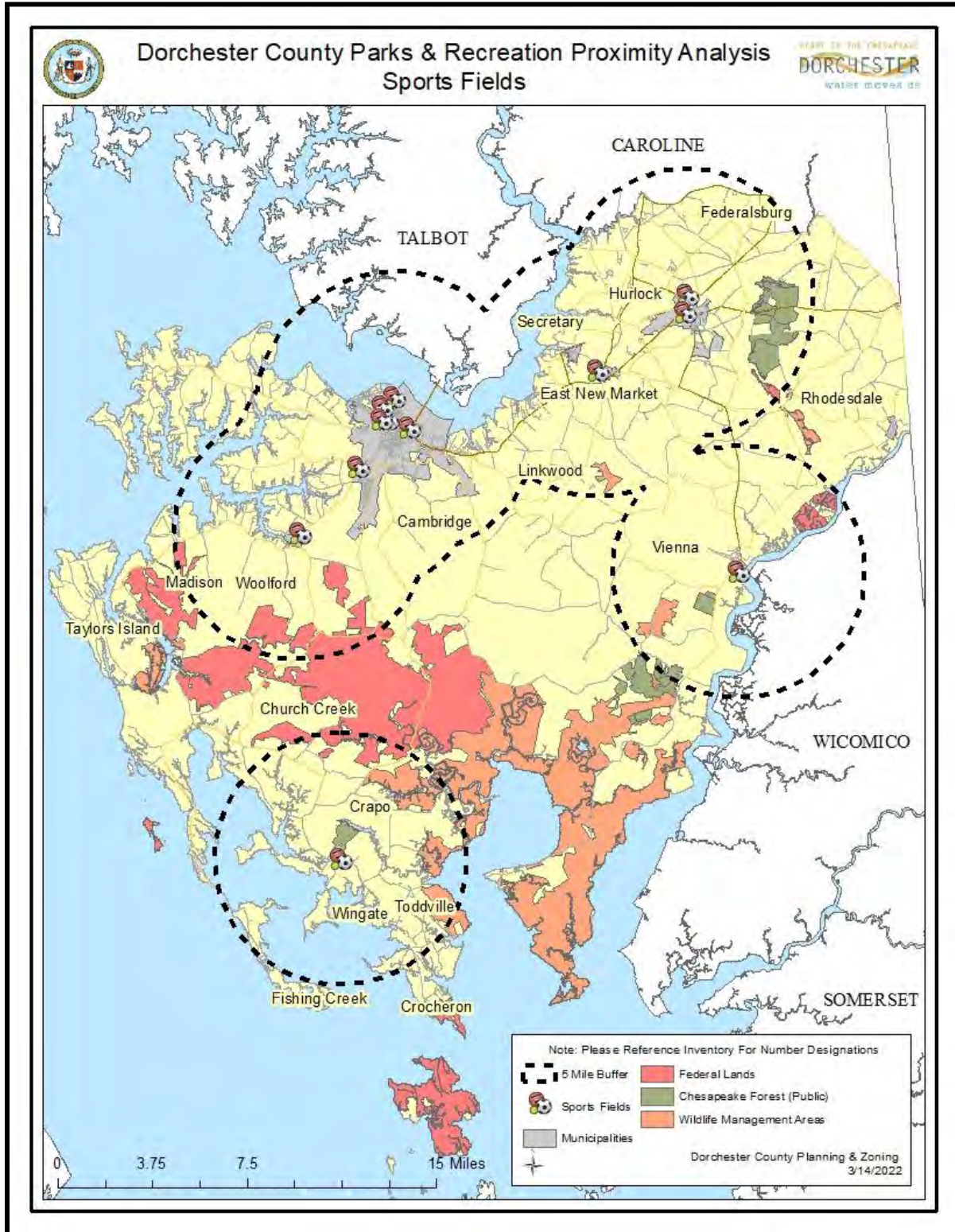
Map II-6 Proximity Analysis County Parks Sites



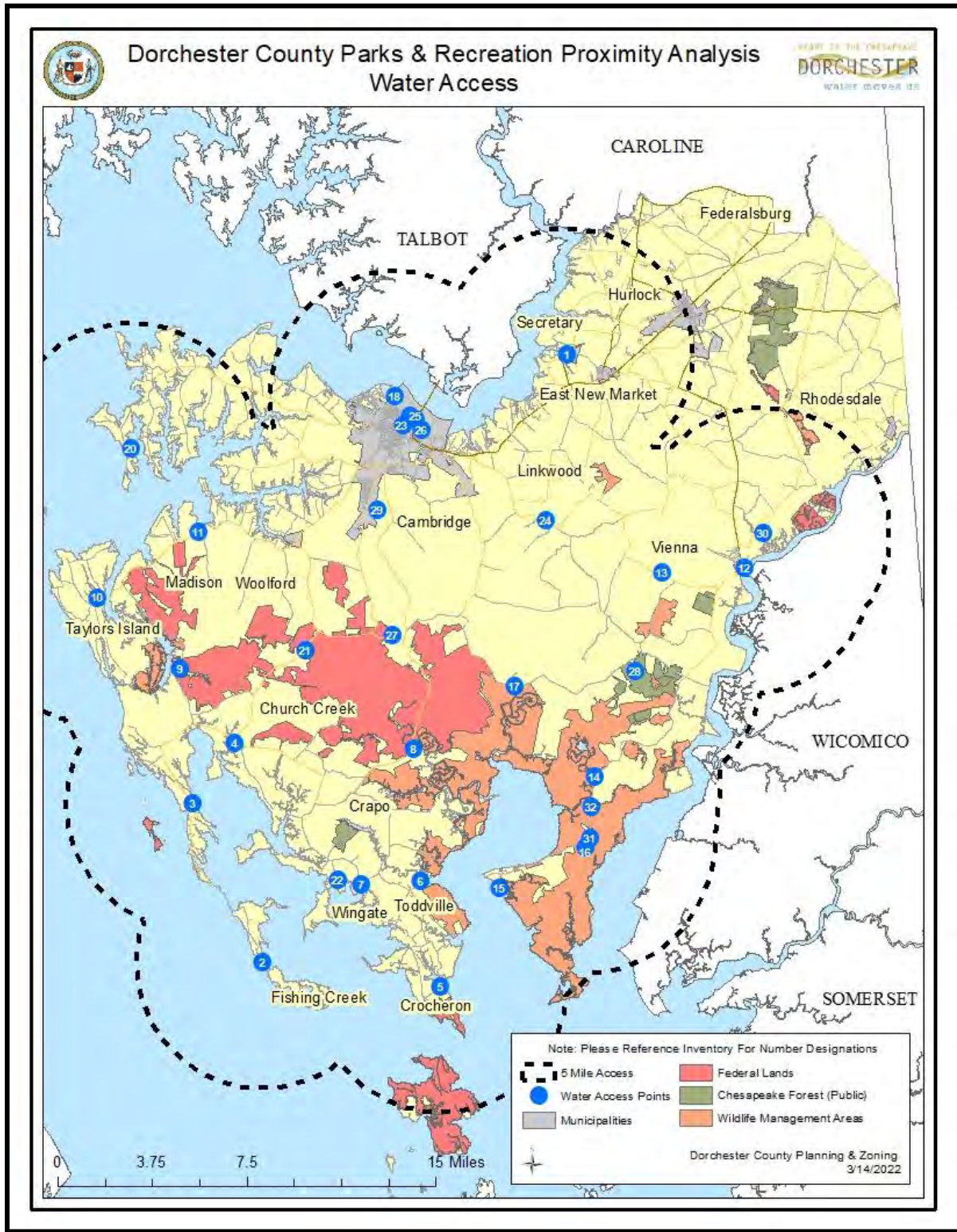
Map II-7 Areas within Five Miles of Recreation Facilities with Picnic Areas



Map II-8 Areas within Five Miles of Sports Fields



Map II-9 Areas within Five Miles of Public Water Access



B. Park Equity Analysis

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources has provided a tool to assist in the evaluation of park land needs. The “Park Equity Analysis” uses Census data in conjunction with mapped GIS layers showing State and local parks to prioritize park land needs based on four factors:

- Concentration of children under age 17;
- Concentration of older adults;
- Concentration of the population with incomes below the poverty threshold; and
- Population density.

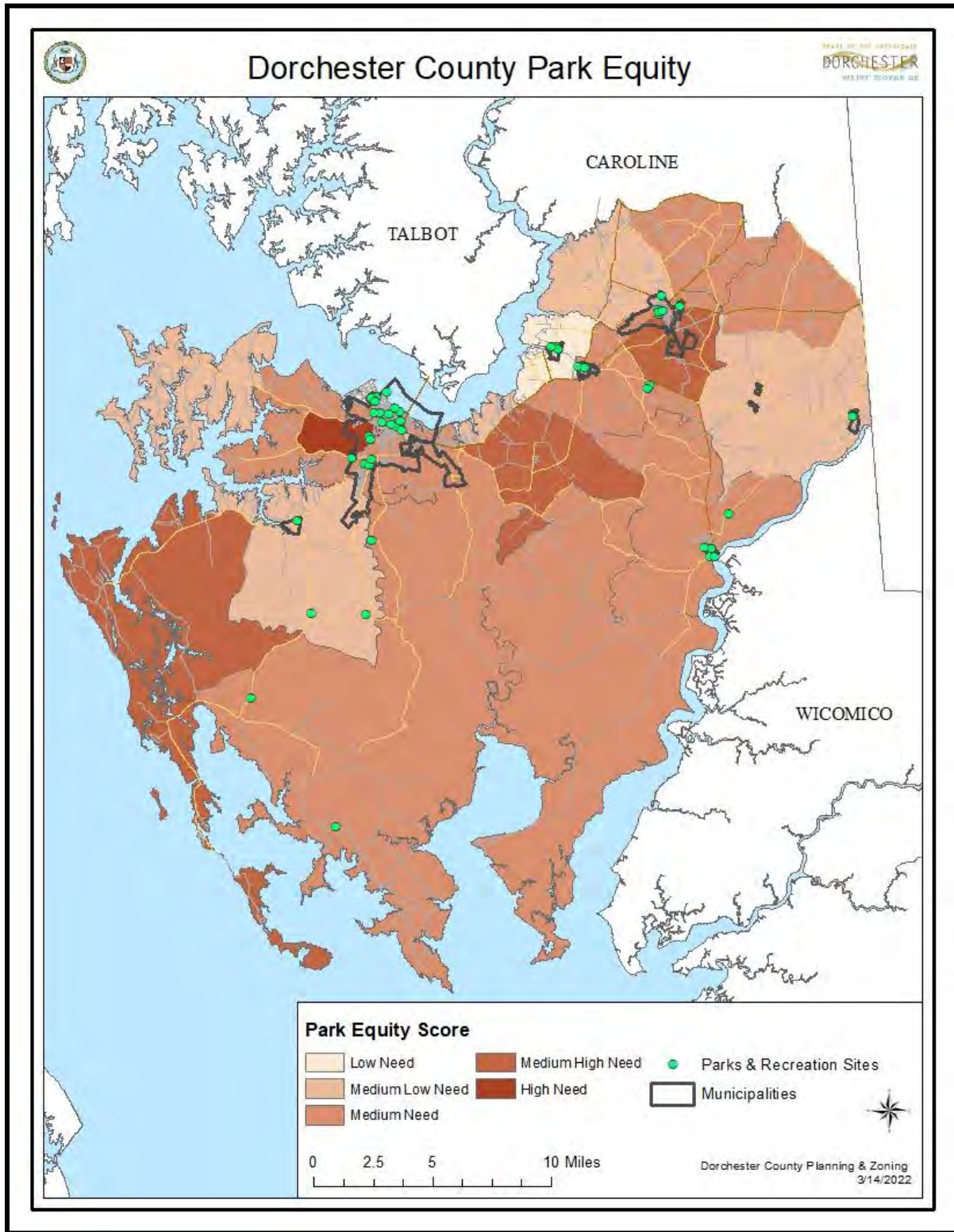
Dorchester County’s overall population density is very low outside of its two largest population centers - the City of Cambridge and the Town of Hurlock. The countywide Park Equity Map (Map II-10) demonstrates that there is one small area of the County that demonstrates high need and three areas that demonstrate medium high need. The majority of the County demonstrates medium need or lower.

Cambridge (Map II-11) is the County’s largest municipal area with 12,300 residents (37.7% of the county population) living within its boundaries. Based on the State equity layers of concentrations of children and older adults, and households with income levels below the poverty threshold, combined with ½ mile buffers around parks, there is one area that does not have parks within ½ mile. This area of Cambridge is for the most part undeveloped land. Within the densely populated areas of the city where there are a number of low income housing developments as well as older single family homes, community and neighborhood parks are well distributed and the newly acquired recreation center on Leonard’s Lane is accessible on foot as is the county’s swimming pool. Consideration should be given to other factors which could pose barriers including walkable routes to parks and community safety. Safety both in parks and enroute to parks was a topic of discussion during the Cambridge Community Conversation focus group. There are also several redevelopment projects within the city which will bring expanded open space including the development of Cannery Park and Cannery Way and the completion of the first leg of a Rails to Trails project. There is also a private redevelopment of the closed hospital which includes plans for outdoor quasi public open space along the banks of the Choptank River and adjoining Sailwinds Park.

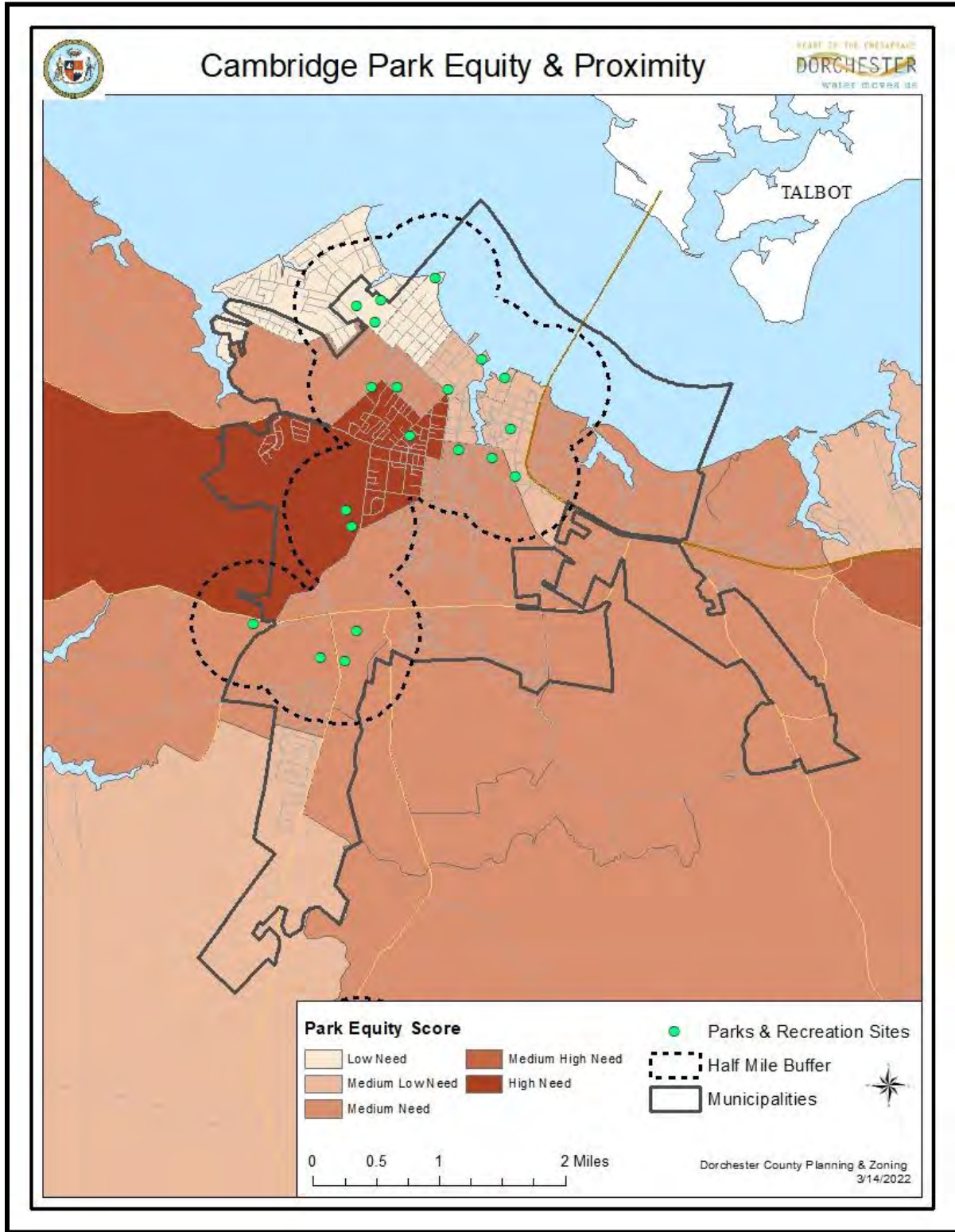
The Town of Hurlock in the northern part of the county is the second largest population center with 2,390 residents, 7.3% of the county population. As Map II-12 demonstrates, Hurlock is located in an area of Medium to Medium High Need. There are five parks within the town limits including one of the county’s two regional parks. These parks provide accessibility within walking distance of the most densely populated areas of the town. According to written responses to the survey and to discussion during the Hurlock Community Conversation focus group, paved court surfaces need complete refurbishment or replacement. The town received an FY23 Community Parks & Playground grant for the development of a new park located on North Main Street on the outskirts of town. Additionally, there was discussion of a need for indoor recreation space for residents of the town and surrounding areas.

The seven other incorporated towns in Dorchester have populations ranging from a low of 51 in Brookview to a high of 497 in Secretary. Of these small towns, East New Market, Secretary and Vienna all have at least one park within town limits and within ½ mile walking distance of residents.

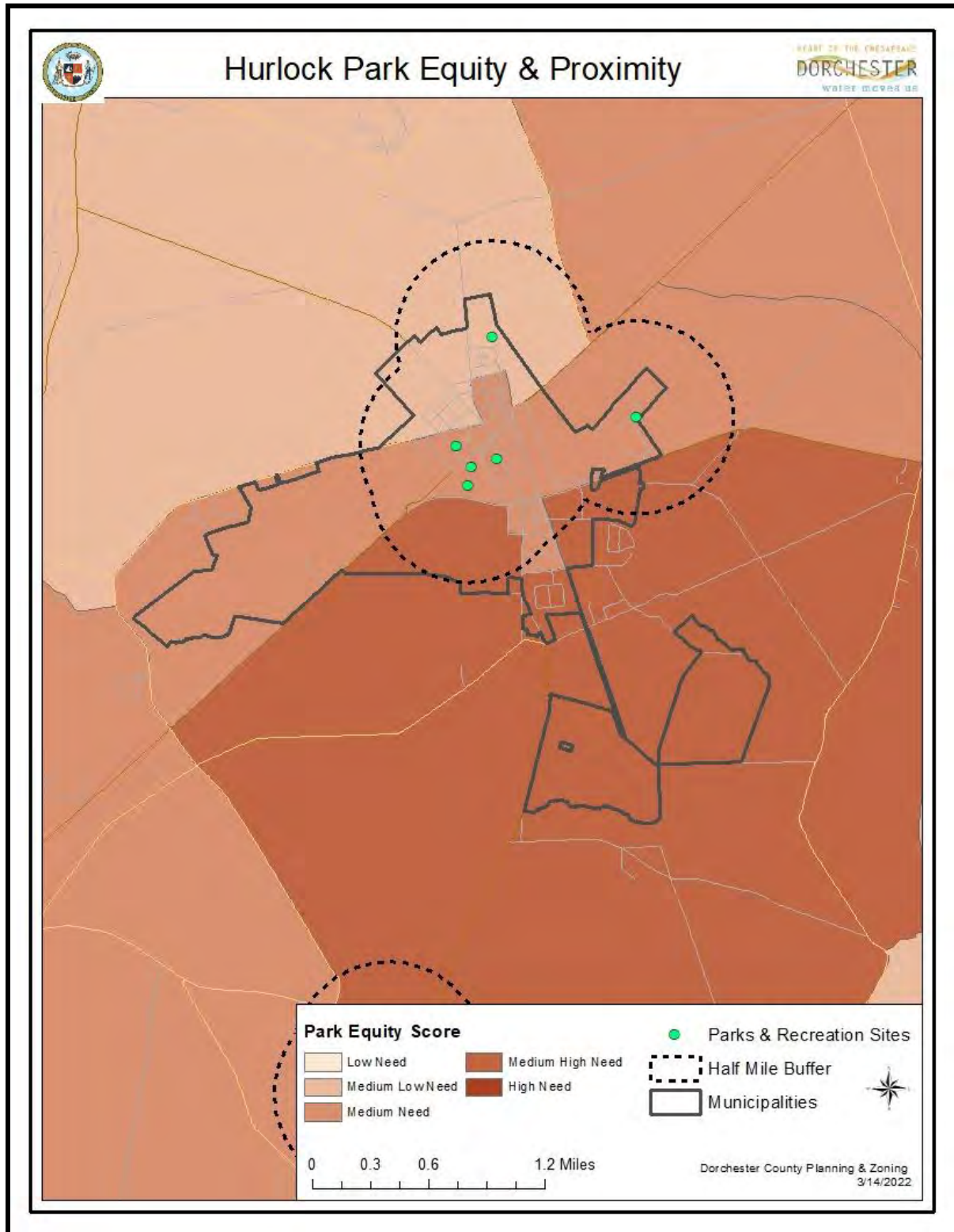
Map II-10 Park Equity in Dorchester County



Map II-11 Park Proximity & Equity in Cambridge



Map II-12 Park Proximity & Equity in Hurlock



5. Goals & Objectives for Recreation & Parks

A. County Goals

Dorchester County’s recreation and parks system supports and reinforces the County’s vision to preserve its agricultural and natural resource heritage in alignment with its comprehensive land use planning while meeting the recreational needs of residents. This includes providing access to recreation and parks facilities and activities that meet community needs.

B. Updates to 2017 Goals

In 2017 Dorchester County identified five goals for parks and recreation in the county. These goals are ongoing and while progress was made, not as much progress was made as was anticipated due to the impact of COVID-19 and on significant staff turnover in the Recreation & Parks leadership. Between 2017 and 2022 the Director position was held by three different directors and at the time of this writing the Director position remains vacant.

2017 Goals	Updates
1. Continue to work with local municipalities to plan for future development, and land acquisition as well as renovate or repair current facilities.	County Recreation & Parks leadership worked closely with the City of Cambridge to support the Cannery Park Rails to Trails Project. The County also acquired an old indoor tennis facility on Leonard's Lane to provide additional recreational opportunities. Renovations of the building have begun to include indoor basketball courts and multipurpose spaces
2. Build upon the partnership with DCPS to maximize further use of both school and County owned properties.	DCRP and DCPS maintain a joint use agreement for shared usage of facilities.
3. Strengthen partnerships with non-profit and private organizations to aid in identifying community needs, and build resources and services accordingly.	DCRP continued to work closely with nonprofits to meet community needs including forming a partnership with Boys & Girls Club to establish a Club in the newly acquired Recreation Center. In addition, DCPR continues to be involved in the planning and redevelopment at Sailwinds Park, working closely with CWDI, a private venture responsible for the future of the old Cambridge Hospital property.
4. Maintain an up-to-date inventory of public land, recreation facilities, and programmatic resources to inform both the development process for future plans and the general public for scheduling purposes.	The County Planning Division has updated its inventory of all public lands including parks lands.
5. Continually review assets and programs against the input of citizens in order to build opportunities and spaces that are not currently available, or eliminate those that have lost their relevance.	Despite staff leadership transitions in the Rec & Parks department, the County has continued to be active in working with the community to stay abreast of changing needs and trends within the county.

Goals in Alignment with State Goals

In 2022, Dorchester County’s goals for parks and recreation reflect the County’s Land Use Policies as reflected in the 2021 Comprehensive Plan. These goals also align with and complement the State’s goals for recreation, parks, and open space.

State Goal	County 2022-2027 Goals and Strategies
1. Make a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities readily available to all its citizens and thereby contribute to their physical and mental well-being.	<p>Goal 1: Continue to work with local municipalities to plan for development and rehabilitation of current facilities.</p> <p>Goal 2: Maximize the partnership with DCPS to maximize usage of existing fields and facilities to meet community needs for recreational space.</p> <p>Goal 3: Develop parks and facilities close to population centers in alignment with Dorchester County Land Use Policies.</p> <p>Goal 4: Maintain an up-to-date inventory of public land, recreation facilities and programmatic resources to inform both the development process for future plans and the general public for scheduling purposes.</p> <p>Goal 5: Incorporate cost efficient natural resource conservation best practices into parks/facilities capital development.</p>
2. Recognize and strategically use parks and recreation facilities as amenities to make communities, counties, and the State more desirable places to live, work, play 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 possible, ensure that recreational land and facilities for local populations are conveniently located relative to population centers, are accessible without reliance on the automobile, and help to protect natural open spaces and resources.	
5. Complement infrastructure and other public investments and priorities in existing communities and areas planned for growth through investment in neighborhood and community parks and facilities.	
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.	

6. County Implementation Program

This section describes the framework in which Dorchester County plans, acquires, develops, and operates recreation and parks facilities and open space, including sources of funding.

A. Organizational Structure

1. Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

The Advisory Board is a ten-person volunteer panel that assists in identifying goals and objectives based on the needs of the County. Additionally the Board assists with volunteer recruitment and program delivery.

2. Recreation & Parks Department

The Recreation and Parks department functions under the day-to-day leadership of a Director appointed by the County Council. Other full time staff include two program coordinators and two maintenance staff. Program coordinators are responsible for the management and execution of recreation programming in the County and supervise more than a hundred part-time seasonal program staff. The maintenance team is responsible for the maintenance of County parks and facilities.

3. Incorporated Towns

The incorporated towns in Dorchester maintain their own parks and are an important part of the network of parks and open spaces throughout the County.

B. Funding

Traditionally, funding for capital and development projects within parks has been based on Program Open Space yearly allocations and the County's required matching funds. The construction of future projects are dependent on funding options including Program Open Space, additional State, federal, and private funding opportunities (depending on the nature of projects). The County's allocation from the Program Open Space Grant program for 2017-2022 has been \$1,074,475. In addition, the County received a one-time Local Parks & Playground Infrastructure allocation of \$1 million in FY2022.

**Table II-4 Dorchester County
Program Open Space
Apportionments, FY 2017-2022**

Year	PDS Apportionment
2017	--
2018	\$ 22,500
2019	\$ 158,875
2020	\$ 470,500
2021	\$ 79,000
2022	\$ 343,600
TOTAL 2017-2022	\$ 1,074,475

1. Cost Estimates

The program priorities through 2026 (Table II-9) include seven County projects that would cost approximately \$2 million. Cost estimates are approximate and based on recent project and facility development and rehabilitation costs. The largest project in this Capital Improvement Plan is the renovation of the Recreation Center..

2. County and State Funds

The County expects to rely heavily on existing funding sources to meet recreation facility needs, especially Program Open Space and County capital budget funds.

3. Diversifying Funding

As noted above in section B, the County will also investigate new and varied funding sources to support ongoing park development.

7. Capital Improvement and Acquisition Priorities

A. Capital Projects

Table II-5 outlines a program for development of parks and recreation facilities, including estimated costs. A five-year time frame is included in this table. Based both on spatial analysis of proximity to parks throughout the County and within municipalities, Dorchester’s parks are well-distributed in populated areas of the county. Included in this spatial analysis was proximity of locations that offered the top parks and recreation features desired by residents as identified through both the community survey and focus groups. Top priority parks’ features are access to additional and longer trail systems, replacement of playgrounds that have met their 20 year lifespan, a skate park and dog park. Additional analysis using the Equity Mapper Tool demonstrates that Dorchester County and the two largest population centers, Cambridge and Hurlock, both offer parks within a ½ mile of residents. Community residents, through both completion of the on-line survey and in focus groups, indicated that park distribution is adequate, however features and amenities within parks are not. Therefore, Dorchester County’s Recreation & Parks leadership have determined that Dorchester does not currently have a need to acquire additional parcels of land.

Table II-5 Dorchester County 2022 LPPRP CIP Priority Projects Based on Allocation Estimates through 2026

Project	Location	Description of Land Preservation and Recreation Park Recommendations	Estimated Total Cost*
Community Pool	Cambridge	Renovate Concession Stand, bathrooms,	\$ 500,000
Christ Rock Park	Cambridge	Park development *(playground structures, basketball courts, parking lot resurface)	\$ 250,000
Recreation Center	Cambridge	Full facility renovation	\$ 500,000
School Street Athletic Complex	Cambridge	Refurbish existing basketball courts, add additional court. Fencing, stadium lighting, parking	\$ 400,000
Maple Dam Property	Cambridge	Master Plan for Site Development, soft kayak launch	\$ 100,000
Crapo Community Center	Crapo	Installation of Playground	\$ 75,000
Hurlock Community Park	Hurlock	Tennis Court/Pickleball Resurfacing (3 courts), addition of benches, picnic tables	\$ 150,000
Church Creek Park	Church Creek	Park Redevelopment with Town for site development surfacing, erosion control, facility, equipment	\$ 75,000
TOTAL			\$ 2,050,000

*Projects included without anticipated cost indicated that they are in longer range planning with projected start dates after 2027

Table II-6 Dorchester Municipal 2022 LPPRP CIP Priority Projects Based on Allocation Estimates through 2026

Project	Location	Description of Land Preservation and Recreation Park Recommendations	Estimated Total Cost*
Cornish Park	Cambridge	Refurbish basketball courts, new fencing	\$ 343,000
Cannery Park	Cambridge	Rails to Trails - Phase 2	
Church Creek Park	Church Creek	Playground replacement	\$ 100,000
North Main Street Park	Hurlock	Park Development	\$253,300
Triangle Park	Hurlock	Playground and Gazebo	\$ 140,000
Secretary Town Park	Secretary	Resurface tennis courts, renovate pavilion, park signage	
Friendship Park	ENM	Playground Installation	\$ 160,000
Vienna Town Park	Vienna	Playground Upgrade	\$ 137,000
Vienna Town Park	Vienna	Baseball/Softball Field development/installation	\$ 208,000
TOTAL			\$ 1,088,000

*Projects included without anticipated cost indicated that they are in longer range planning with projected start dates after 2027

B. Acreage Goals

Based on the community engagement, proximity, and equity analysis completed as a part of this planning process, Dorchester County has determined that it does not currently have any acquisition needs and will focus on development of existing properties within its inventory. Municipalities are also focusing efforts on development of existing properties.

Table II-7 Dorchester County 2017 Parks and Recreation Acreage Goals Updates

Open Space and Parks and Recreational Land Goals Established in 2017	Type and Specific Location	Acreage Needed	Acreage Acquired
In 2017, Dorchester County included one proposed land acquisition. While this acquisition did not occur, the County did acquire the 2.89 acre property at 515 Leonard's Lane, Cambridge to renovate an existing tennis facility into a community center with tennis/pickleball courts, multipurpose space and basketball courts.	North Dorchester	Not specified	No

Table II-8 Dorchester County 2022 Land Acquisition Goals Plan

Open Space and Parks and Recreational Land Goals 2022	Type and Specific Location	Acreage Needed	Plan for Meeting Need
<p>County has not set any acquisition goals for the period covered in this LPPRP. Based on geographic distribution of parks, near population centers, responses to the community engagement process, and the planning goals for the County, Dorchester County Recreation and Parks will focus on rehabilitation of existing parks and development of existing parcels that are currently owned by the County but where there has been no development.</p>	<p>---</p>	<p>---</p>	<p>---</p>



CHAPTER III NATURAL RESOURCE LAND CONSERVATION

1. Executive Summary

Dorchester County's picturesque landscape and natural resources are its most valuable assets. In the 2021 update to the County Comprehensive Plan, the overall goals for the County are to: preserve the open and rural character of Dorchester County, support natural resource-based industries, protect maritime cultural heritage and ensure safety from natural hazards. These goals are dependent on protecting the natural resource areas of the County including farmland, forest, wetlands and open water. Additionally, ongoing review of goals and objectives is vital to sustainable practices that create the right balance between land use and development within the larger perspective of land conservation efforts. Additionally, natural resource land preservation protects water and soil resources that can impact residents' physical health. Access to natural areas has also been found to have a positive effect on mental health. Long term, preservation of natural resource lands will assist Dorchester County in offsetting the impact of climate change and sea level rise by protecting shorelines and wetlands.



Land use and growth management plans, zoning, development regulations, and procedures that conserve resource lands and minimize impacts to those lands are paramount to the success of conservation efforts. Dorchester County's natural resource protection strategies are designed to support sustainable natural resource-based industries such as farming, forestry, fishing, hunting, trapping and eco-tourism. Of particular importance for the long term sustainability of the

County’s social and economic well-being is addressing the areas of the County that are susceptible to sea level rise and shoreline erosion as well as high hazard and flood mitigation areas. The County’s strategy for natural resource land conservation is to continue to support and promote the goals and strategies outlined in its [Comprehensive Plan](#), [Land Use Plan](#), [Watershed Implementation Plan \(WIP\)](#); [Dorchester County Historic & Cultural Resources Hazard Mitigation & Risk Plan](#), [Maryland's 2016-2017 TMDL Milestone Goals](#), and [Final TMDLs Lower Choptank River](#).

2. Natural Resource Land Conservation Goals

A. 2017 Goals & Updates

This section outlines the County Goals related to natural resource conservation. It provides a brief summary of the work done since 2017 in areas related to natural resource land conservation as well as outlines the 2022 local goals in relation to State goals.

The 2017 LPPRP included a total of 13 goals and recommendations for natural land conservation. Over the past five years the County has accomplished or is making progress on a number of these goals.

2017 Goals & Recommendations Summary	Progress toward 2017 Goals & Recommendations
Complete the update to the County Comprehensive Plan to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● review of the effects of development ● consideration of stronger agricultural zoning to ensure that development does not supersede land protection, ● development of a Transfer of Development Rights and Purchase of Development Rights Program, 	The County Council adopted the updated Comprehensive Plan in July 2021. The Plan includes a comprehensive review and recommendations related to the effects of development and considerations for new zoning plans that ensure land protections. The Comprehensive Plan also reiterates the recommendation that Dorchester County develop a Transfer of Development Rights and Purchase of Development Rights Program.
Increase local funding when feasible, for park improvement projects, maintenance and programs. Continue to apply for grants and Program Open Space funds to support parks and recreational land development.	Funding for parks improvements and natural resource conservation continues to rely heavily on state and federal funding sources.
Prioritize public access to waterfront property, particularly along the Nanticoke River.	Priority has shifted to master planning for additional access to the Little Blackwater from the property located on Maple Dam Road. It will include a kayak/canoe launch.
Collaboration with Economic Development to develop programs that assist the agricultural industry.	The Comprehensive Plan includes continued emphasis on the agricultural industry’s role in the economic health of Dorchester County.

B. 2022 Natural Resource Land Conservation Goals

The County goals, recommendations and strategies outlined in the Comprehensive Plan align with the State's 2022 Natural Resource Land Conservation Goals as indicated below.

State Goals	County Goals
<p>Goal 1: Identify, protect and restore lands and waterways in Maryland that support important aquatic and terrestrial natural resources and ecological functions through combined use of the following techniques:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public land acquisition and stewardship ● Private land conservation easements ● Local land use management plans to conserve natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas/minimize impacts to resource lands ● Support incentives for resource-based economies that increase the retention of forest, wetlands or agricultural lands ● Avoidance of impacts on natural resources by publicly funded infrastructure development projects ● Appropriate mitigation response, commensurate with the value of the affected resource. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conserve waterways, forests by encouraging good forest management practices, farmland, open space, natural habitats, scenic areas and recreational and cultural opportunities. ● Guide growth and higher density development near municipalities, while preserving agricultural and rural character. ● Create resilient communities that are prepared for natural hazards. ● Prepare and plan for future mitigation efforts related to natural hazards, particularly flooding, coastal erosion and sea level rise. ● Ensure growth areas have the public facilities, services and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansions in an orderly, efficient and environmentally sustainable manner. ● Protect the quality of the air, water, and land from the adverse effects of development and growth. ● Coordinate growth management policies and implementation strategies. ● Preserve agriculture and forestry as viable industries and accommodate appropriate non-agricultural uses. ● Preserve the Resource Conservation Areas' open, natural, unspoiled character. ● Protect the diversity of natural resources, with special attention given to habitats of threatened and endangered species and other unique ecosystems. ● MALPF and Rural Legacy programs will continue to expand green infrastructure. The County is committed to working with land conservancies, municipalities and other partners to create a green infrastructure network.
<p>Goal 2: Focus conservation and restoration activities on priority areas such as the Targeted Ecological Areas.</p>	
<p>Goal 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, non-forested islands, etc.)</p>	
<p>Goal 4: Develop a more comprehensive inventory of natural resource lands and environmentally sensitive areas to assist State and local implementation programs.</p>	
<p>Goal 5: Establish measurable objectives for natural resource conservation and an integrated state/local strategy to achieve them through State and local implementation programs.</p>	
<p>Goal 6: Assess combined ability of State and local programs to achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expand and connect forests, farmland and other natural lands as a network of contiguous green infrastructure. ● Protect critical terrestrial and aquatic habitats, biological communities and populations. ● Manage watersheds in ways that protect, conserve and restore stream corridors, riparian forest buffers, wetlands, floodplains and aquifer recharge areas and their associated hydrologic and water quality functions. ● Adopt coordinated land and watershed management strategies that recognize the critical links between growth management and aquatic biodiversity and fisheries production. ● Support a productive forest land base and forest resource industry, emphasizing the economic viability of privately owned forestland. 	

Objectives

Dorchester County has also established objectives to ensure the protection of natural resources, including:

- Define, identify and protect sensitive and other environmentally significant areas as part of the comprehensive planning and zoning process.
- Direct growth away from sensitive areas so that impacts are avoided altogether.
- Establish a network of streams and other natural areas which connect and protect sensitive areas and other environmental features determined to be of importance.
- Integrate and coordinate sensitive areas protection with other locally adopted environmental and growth management programs such as stream valley protection, forest conservation, Chesapeake Bay Critical Area protection, watershed management and protection, rural conservation, economic development, greenways, open space and recreation, water and sewerage, transportation and community design.
- Discourage random-pattern and sprawl development to enhance sensitive areas and other environmental resource protection capabilities in rural areas.
- Prioritize and support preservation efforts in Rural Legacy Areas.



3. Natural Resource Land Inventory

Dorchester has 260,000 acres of protected public lands or wetlands. This is approximately 75% of Dorchester's 355,000 acres of total land area.

Dorchester County Resource Conservation Area totals about 179,000 acres, over half of the county's total land area. These areas are located primarily in southern Dorchester County with smaller areas along the Choptank, Marshyhope and Nanticoke Rivers. The intent of these

areas is to encourage activities that help preserve the long-term use of the natural resource area for agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

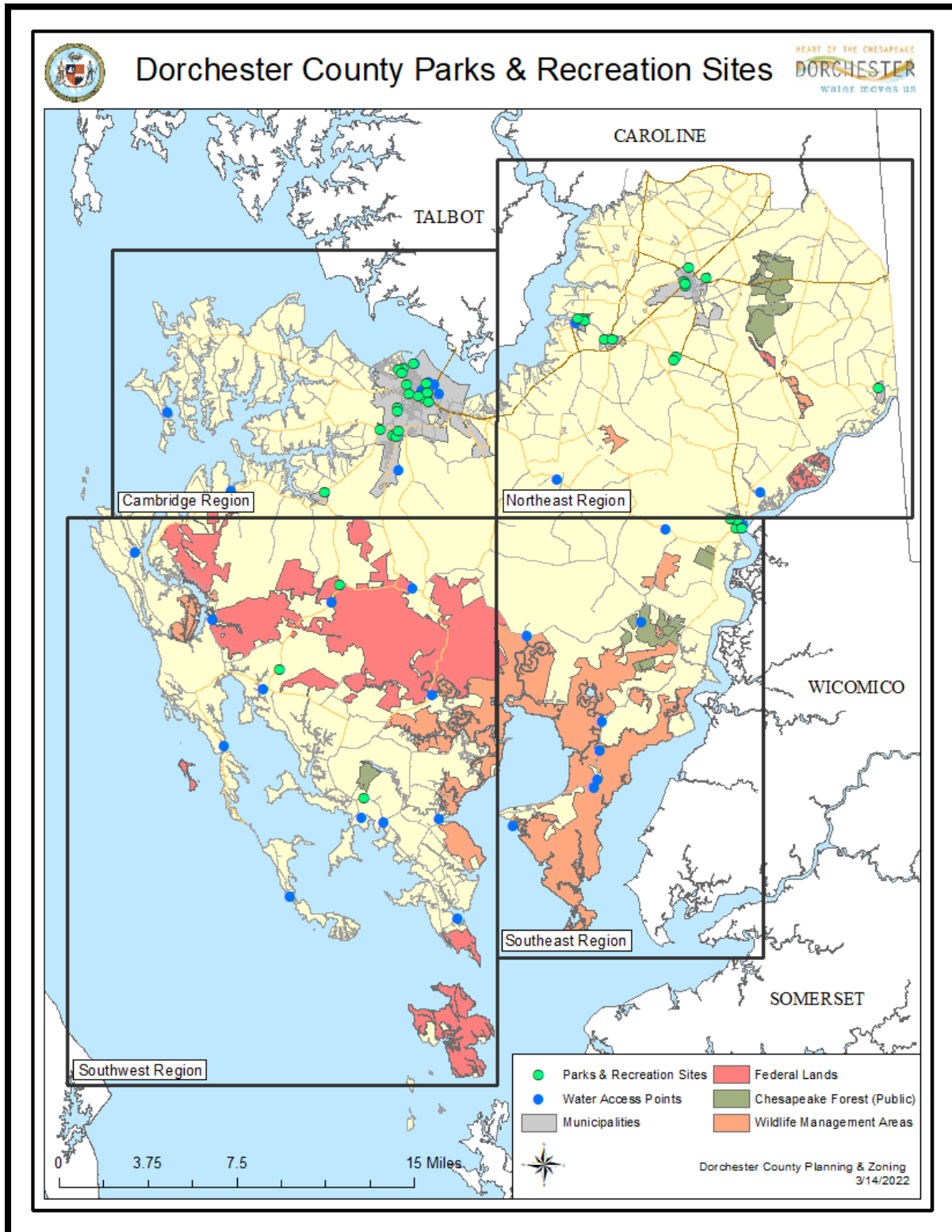
Dorchester County’s natural resource lands inventory includes primarily federal and state lands.

Table III-1 Inventory of Natural Resource Lands

Site Name	Acres	Trails	Water Access	Notes
Federal Lands				
Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge	28,896	X	X	hunting, fishing, trapping (by permit only), biking, boating, hiking, birdwatching, auto-tour , wildlife watching and photography
Bloodsworth	6,013		X	waterfowl hunting (by permit only), no public access
Federal Lands Total Acreage 34,909				
State Lands				
Cambridge Marine Terminal	1		X	
Chesapeake Forest Lands	13,215	X	X	hunting in limited areas, various access points
Church Creek State Forest -Fire Tower	4			
Fishing Bay WMA	29,998	X	X	hunting, trapping, fishing, crabbing, walking, hiking, birdwatching and photography
Fred W. Besley Demonstration Forest	1,043	X		hunting, walking, hiking, birdwatching and photography
Harriet Tubman State Park	17	X		trails, picnic pavillion, legacy garden, art installations, museum store , trailhead for Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway
LeCompte WMA	747	X	X	fishing, hunting, trapping (by permit only), walking, hiking, birdwatching and photography
Linkwood WMA	313	X		hunting, trapping (by permit only), walking, hiking, birdwatching and photography
Nanticoke WMA	470	X	X	hunting, fishing, walking, hiking, birdwatching and photography
Shiloh State Forest-Fire Tower	1			
Tar Bay WMA	12		X	hunting, trapping (by permit only), fishing, birdwatching, and photography, accessible only by boat
Taylor's Island WMA	1,114	X	X	hunting, trapping (by permit only), crabbing, fishing, bating, walking, hiking, birdwatching and photography, much of WMA only accessible by boat
State Lands Total Acreage 46,934				

Source: Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Fiscal Year 2021 DNR Owned Lands Acreage

Map III-1 Natural Resource Land Inventory



A. Federal Lands

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge

is a waterfowl sanctuary for birds migrating along the Atlantic Flyway. Blackwater NWR is 28,000 acres and is located south of Cambridge. It consists of tidal wetlands, freshwater impoundments, open fields and mixed evergreen and deciduous forests. There is a visitor center, a driving tour and a number of hiking and paddling trails in the refuge. Half of the refuge is designated at Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument.



Bloodsworth Island Range consists of Bloodsworth, Pone, Adam, Northeast Island and Great Cove Island (now submerged). It is owned by the United States Navy and was used from 1940 until 1996 as a navy shore bombardment and bombing range. It is not open to the public however there are 10 waterfowl hunting sites in the range available by permit only through the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park was established on land transferred to the National Park Service from US Fish & Wildlife. The Harriet Tubman National Historical Park includes a museum as well as outdoor exhibits, outdoor walking/hiking and picnic areas.



James & Barren Islands are close to the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay and are within Dorchester County. The two islands are the site for the Mid-Bay Restoration Project which will use dredge materials from Chesapeake Bay approach channels including Port of Baltimore and the Chesapeake and Delaware canal to build up the islands creating approximately 2,144 acres of wetlands and upland habitat for a variety of species. The restored islands will also provide shoreline protection for the mainland and reduce the impact of storms. *These islands are not currently included in the natural resource land inventory for Dorchester County.*

B. State Lands

Chesapeake Forest Lands in Dorchester County

There are Chesapeake Forest Lands located in six counties on the Eastern Shore and total 75,376 acres. There are a total of 58,000 acres in Dorchester County. In Dorchester County III-7 Dorchester County LPPRP - Chapter III Natural Resource Land Conservation

half the land is in a leased hunting program. The other half is accessible to the public. They also include more than 6,000 acres of wetlands and many are a high priority for conservation action within the Maryland Clean Water Action Plan. They are also home to more than 150 species including Delmarva fox squirrels and bald eagles. More information on the Chesapeake Forest Lands can be found at

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/pages/chesapeakeforestlands.aspx>

Fred W. Besley Demonstration Forest is named for the first State Forester, Fred Besley. The State acquired the 1,036 acres from the company Besley and Rogers, Inc. The tract is located on Taylors Island. They serve as habitat for bald eagles, peregrine falcons and Delmarva fox squirrels. It also includes hundreds of acres of non-tidal wetlands and marshland along several creeks that are a critical part of the Chesapeake watershed.

Wildlife Management Areas in Dorchester County



Wildlife Management Areas are located across the State. There are six in Dorchester County. Managed by the Wildlife and Heritage Services, WMA's offer protection of wildlife habitat by managing their ecosystems. This includes use of a variety of management techniques including herd and flock management using licensed hunting and trapping programs. WMAs also offer recreational opportunities including fishing, walking/hiking, birdwatching

and nature photography.

Fishing Bay WMA is the State's largest wildlife management area and the largest parcel of publicly owned tidal wetlands in Maryland. Wetlands make up 80% of the area's 29,000 acres. It is located adjacent to Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge. The area is home to white tailed and sika deer as well as bald eagles, osprey, bobwhite quail, waterfowl and shorebirds. It is also home to Nutria, a large rodent originally from South America which now threatens the balance in the ecosystem because of the population size and the animals' appetite for marsh plants. Saltwater fishing and crabbing in this wildlife management is also permitted. Fur trapping is also offered by yearly lease.

LeCompte WMA - contains 485 acres of mature oak and loblolly pine forests set aside to provide refuge for the native delmarva fox squirrel. In addition to the fox squirrel, LeCompte is habitat to wild turkeys, rabbits, quail and woodcock and these species can be seen from walks through the forested trails and along the agricultural areas maintained by state wildlife biologists.



Linkwood WMA - contains 313 acres and is a remnant of a larger forest ecosystem of oaks, maple, black gum and loblolly pine and supports a wide range of forest animals as well as various migrating birds including the scarlet tanager which migrates here from Central and South America to nest.

Nanticoke WMA - contains areas on both the Wicomico and Dorchester Counties sides of the Nanticoke River. In Dorchester County it includes the 55 acre Calloway Wharf area and the 415 acre Lower Marshyhope Swamp. Visitors will see a variety of wading birds and waterfowl, wild turkeys, and Sika Deer as well as Bald Eagles. Hunting, fishing, hiking and birding are all popular here.

Tar Bay WMA - is a 12 acre marsh island located off the northeast end of Barren Island. Both waterfowl hunters and birdwatchers visit the area which is only accessible by boat from the Fishing Creek boat ramp.

Taylor’s Island WMA is a 1,120 acre island made up of a mix of marsh, forests and fallow fields. It is home to raccoons, muskrats and river otters as well as both white tail and sika deer. Osprey and bald eagles fix here and other waterfowl including a variety of ducks and wading birds feed along the shallows.

C. Rural Legacy Areas

Eastern Shore Heartland Rural Legacy Area is formerly the Marshyhope Focus Area and part of the Agricultural Security area. It totals 91,000 acres located in Dorchester and Caroline County. It is primarily defined by the Marshyhope River corridor and its prime farm soil. Nearly 28% of the property located in this rural legacy area is already under easement.

Table III-2 Rural Legacy Areas Preserved by Easements

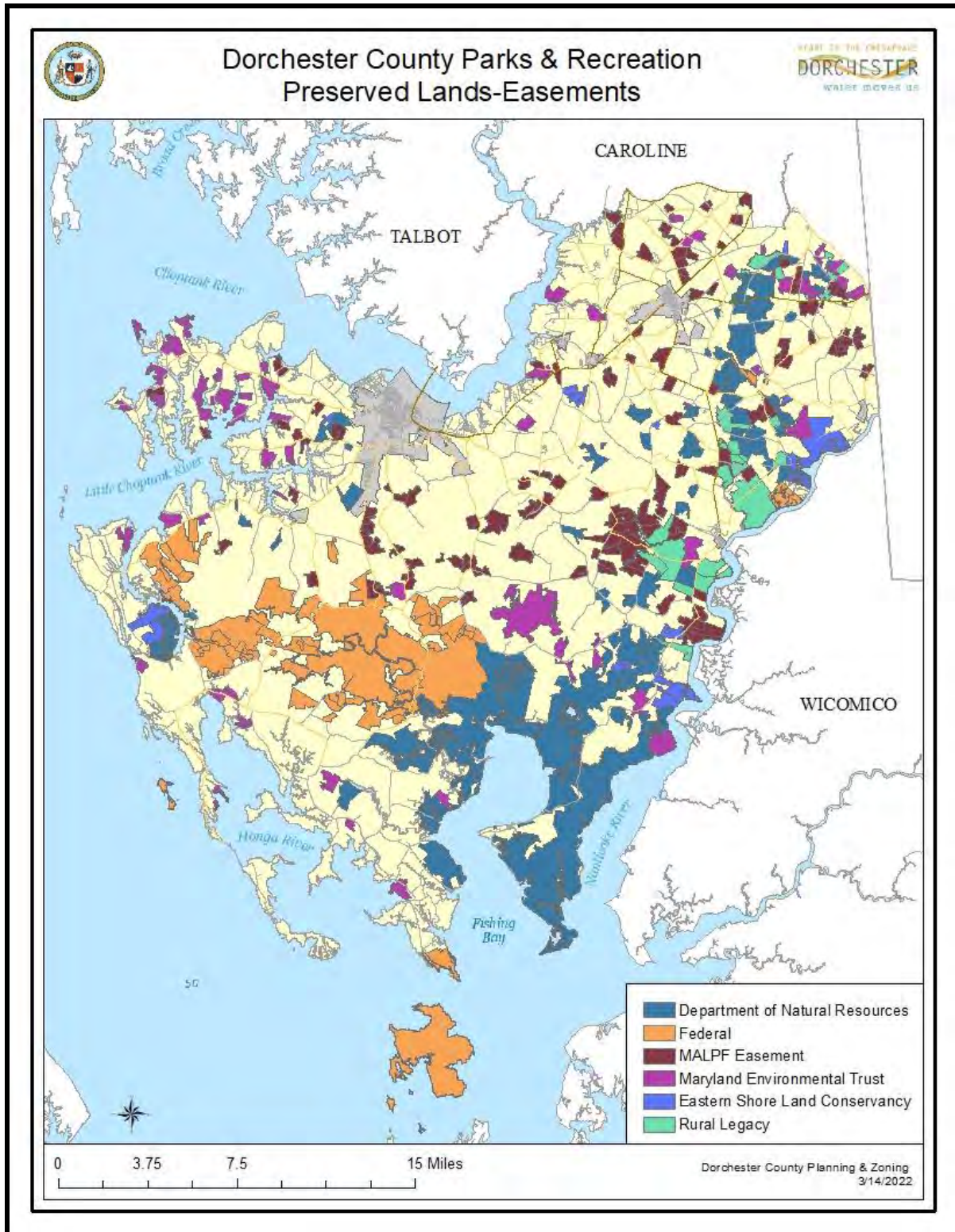
Site Name	Acres Under Easement
Eastern Shore Heartland Rural Legacy Area	5,617.34
Harriet Tubman Rural Legacy Area	7,033.32
Nanticoke Rural Legacy Area	23,749.19
Rural Legacy Total	36,399.85

Harriet Tubman Rural Legacy Area is 28,300 acres adjacent to Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge. This area is the center of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Historic Area. Rural Legacy will protect and conserve working lands that reflect the natural, cultural and historic landscape of Harriet Tubman’s life and legacy.

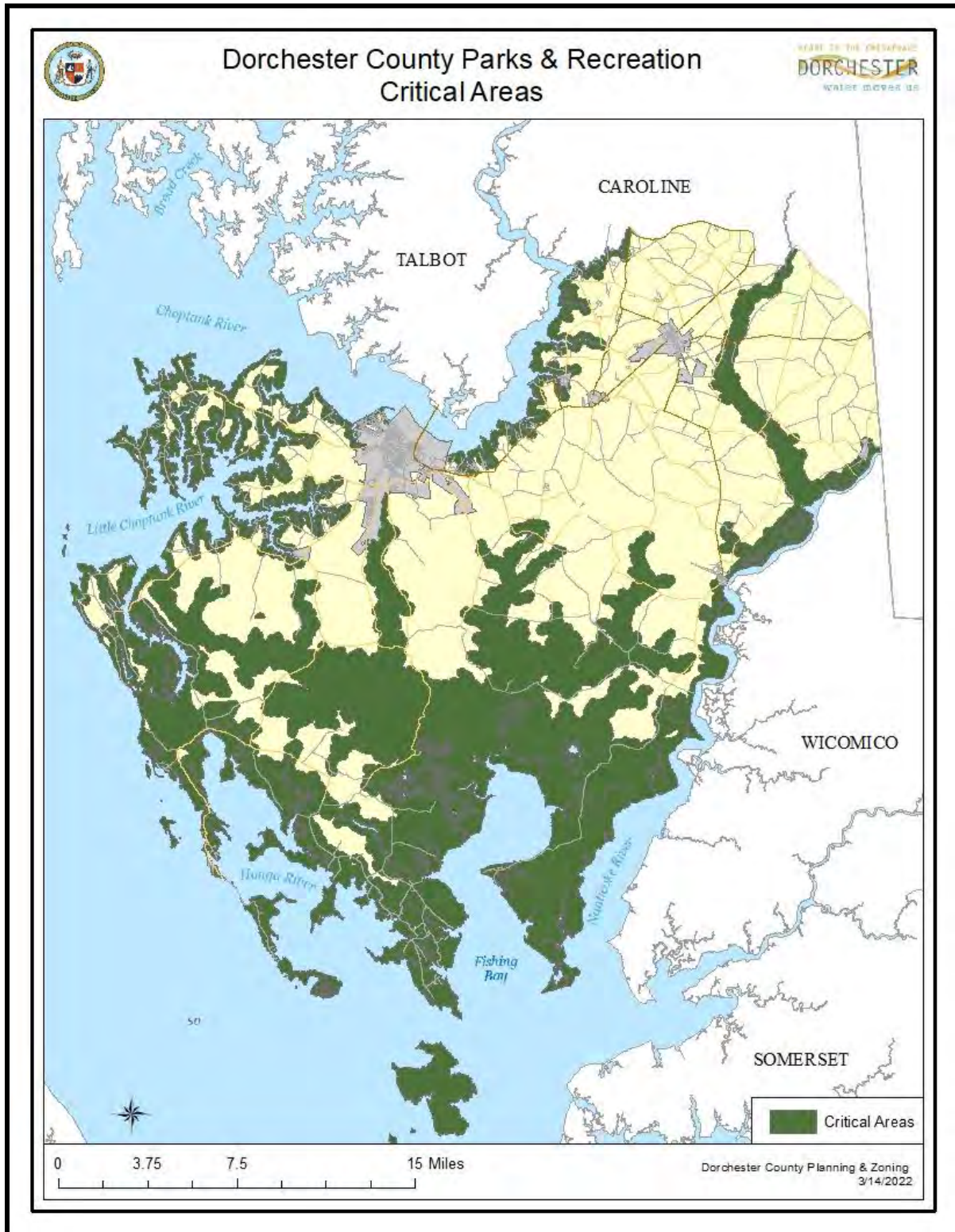


Nanticoke Rural Legacy Area is sponsored by the Nature Conservancy and the Conservation Fund. A 50 mile corridor along the River protects the river from intense development. This area links the Fishing Bay Wildlife Management Area, Blackwater National Refuge, the State of Delaware Nanticoke Wildlife Area and the Eastern Shore Heartland Rural Legacy Area.

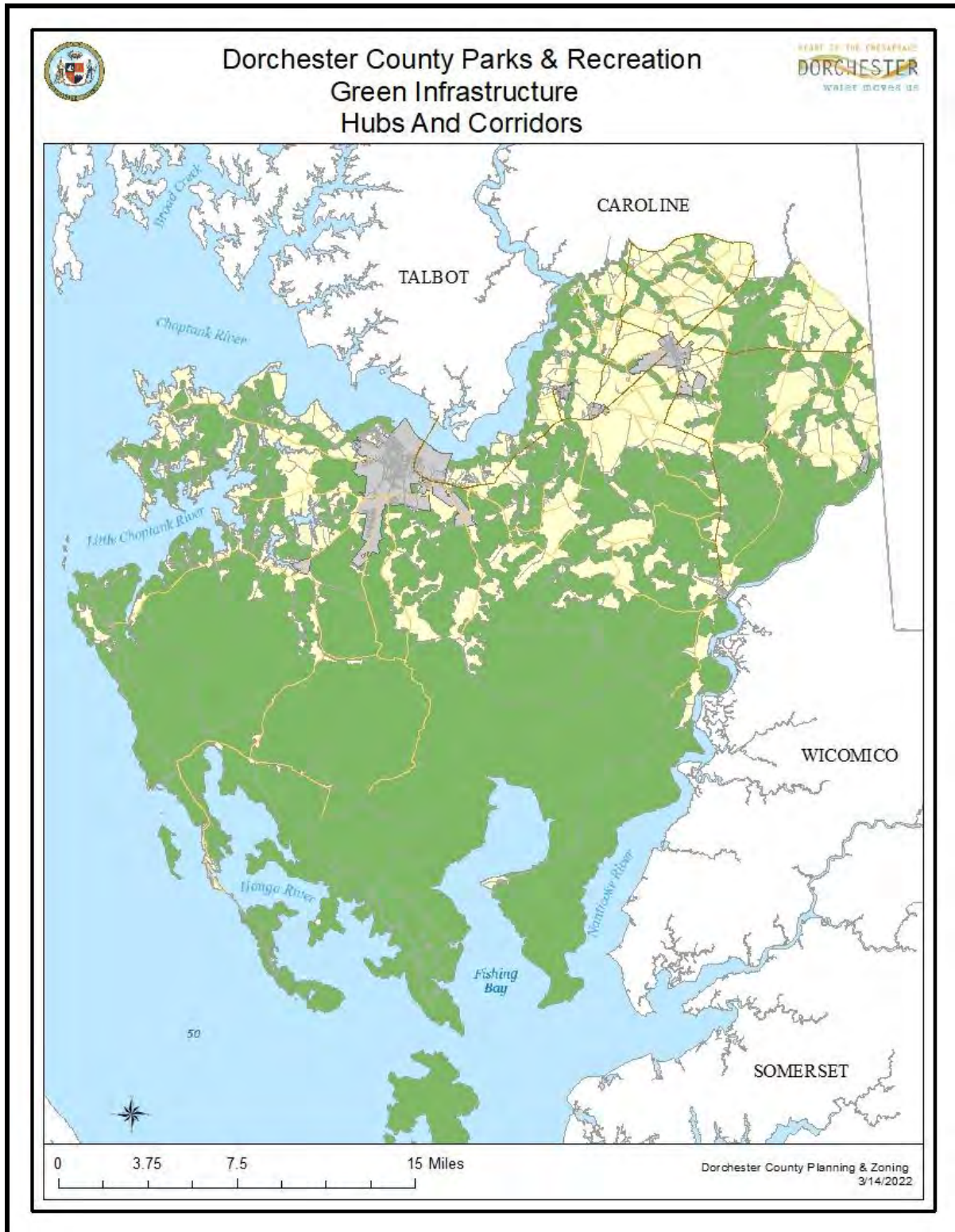
Map III-2 Preserved Lands - Easements



Map III-3 Critical Areas



Map III-4 Green Infrastructure Hubs & Corridors



4. Current Implementation Program

The primary components of Dorchester County's strategy to implement its natural resource goals are its land use authority, watershed restoration action strategies, the Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP), Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), and Hazard Mitigation Plans. In Dorchester, in addition to the plans above, county planners have relied heavily on a series of reports and plans specifically related to evaluate and make recommendations related to sea level rise vulnerabilities within Dorchester County. These include:

- [Preparing for Increases in Extreme Precipitation Events in Local Planning & Policy on Maryland's Eastern Shore](#)
- [Mainstreaming Sea Level Rise Preparedness in Local Planning and Policy on Maryland's Eastern Shore](#)
- [Prioritizing Local Climate Adaptations Through Regional Collaboration on Maryland's Eastern Shore](#)
- [Sea-level Rise Projections for Maryland, 2018](#)
- [Dorchester County Historic & Cultural Resources Hazard Mitigation Plan 2018](#)
- [Dorchester County Flood Mitigation Plan, 2017](#)
- [Maryland Coastal Resiliency Assessment, 2016](#)
- [TMDLs and Water Quality Plans fo the Lower Shore](#)
- Along with several more.

The 2021 Comprehensive Plan outlines several strategies to address sea level rise issues. Among these are several directly related to natural resource land inventory. These include: Evaluate the potential use of conservation easements as a direct tool for supporting coastal



resiliency by limiting development along shorelines that are vulnerable to sea level risk. This tactic both eliminates the need to protect homes and other structures from future storms and other sea level rise related impacts, it protects conservation land acreage that is critical to meeting other demands on natural resources including the role of preserved lands in eco tourism and other economic drivers as well as its role in alleviating the impact of climate change and need for resiliency.

Another key component to the future success of Dorchester's efforts to protect natural resource lands is its partnerships with federal and state agencies as well as private organizations such as Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, Friends of the Nanticoke, the Nature Conservancy and other conservation organizations working to put in place permanent easements on both natural resource and agricultural lands.

Easements & Funding

The County's easement programs are geared toward agricultural lands. As these acquisitions are made they bring acreages that are not only farmland but also natural resource areas. The County participates in the MALPF Program and Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) as well as the Ranchland Preservation Program, the Maryland Rural Legacy Program as well as private conservancy organizations. The MALPF and MET program will be discussed in further detail in Chapter IV.

Accomplishments & Challenges

The greatest challenge for natural resource lands in Dorchester County is the continuing impact of climate change and coastal flooding. According to a [Prioritizing Local Climate Adaptation through Regional Collaboration on Maryland's Eastern Shore](#) published in 2017 by the Eastern Shore Climate Adaption Partnership and Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, the Maryland Scientific and Technical Working Group recommends that "it is prudent to plan for 2.1 feet of sea level rise by 2050." Nuisance flooding caused by the increased high tides that exceed the mean high water marks is increasing. According to the same report, Cambridge has experienced a fivefold increase in the number of days per year with nuisance flooding. This has the potential to impact 7% of Dorchester County, or 24,320 acres.

Dorchester County has benefitted from investment of the federal and state government in preserving large areas of the County. In all more than 2/3 of the County's lands are preserved through public ownership and/or easements.

5. Summary & Recommendations Related to Parks & Open Space

Dorchester County leadership is committed to supporting natural resource land preservation as well as natural resource conservation. They, along with community engagement participants, recognize that the county's natural resources play a critical role in economic development to preserve the county's natural assets, agricultural soils, wetlands and wildlife habitats and waters. Dorchester County leadership also recognizes that protections for natural resources must also be balanced with the needs of the fishery and timber industries as well as with agricultural needs.

The County has consistently required that, in order to protect its resources as well as to meet State requirements, all future development will be subject to minimum performance standards for environmental protection and natural resource land conservation.

The County continues to pursue land preservation through funding from both the County and State and Federal programs including Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Fund (MALPF), Rural Legacy, Program Open Space, Heritage Areas, as well as preservation efforts through private organizations like Eastern Shore Land Conservancy and the Nature Conservancy.

As a part of this Land Preservation Parks & Recreation Plan, the following recommendations from the 2021 Comp Plan should be considered as they relate to protecting natural resource lands and developing accessible access to places for residents and visitors to connect with their natural world.

- Ensure that natural resource land preservation and natural resource best practices are incorporated into master planning and site planning for all projects undertaken by the Department of Recreation & Parks.
- Complete the Critical Area mapping efforts and approve the updated maps and remove Critical Area designations from the base zoning designations and re-create as overlay zones.
- Adopt the Growth Tier Maps required by the 2012 Maryland Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act.
- Complete a comprehensive review and update of current Zoning ordinances in relation to recommendations made in the 2021 Comprehensive Plan update.
- Continue to support the efforts of State, Federal and non-profit organizations to preserve natural resources, including productive agricultural land.
- Continue to partner with the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, the Nature Conservancy and other private land preservation organizations to carry out shared goals and strategies set forth in existing plans.
- Maximize MALPF funds to purchase farmland development rights to preserve farms in perpetuity.
- Purchase development rights on farms near other protected farms in agricultural communities to encourage the preservation of agriculture as a business and to continue to develop perpetual greenways.





CHAPTER IV AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION

1. Executive Summary

Dorchester County’s rural character and its long agricultural and maritime history along with its vast natural resource lands and pastoral landscapes are the mainstays of how the County is distinguished by residents and visitors alike. Along with forestry and maritime industries, agriculture remains the County’s primary land use. It has served as the cultural foundation for the County and is planned to continue its importance. The 2021 Comprehensive Plan identifies farming as a tradition and a way of life that goes beyond its monetary value. The agricultural character contributes to making the County attractive to employers, residents, and visitors.

Table IV-1 presents the total acreage of lands protected through the various land preservation programs in Dorchester County as reported on the Maryland Protected Lands Dashboard as of March 31, 2022.

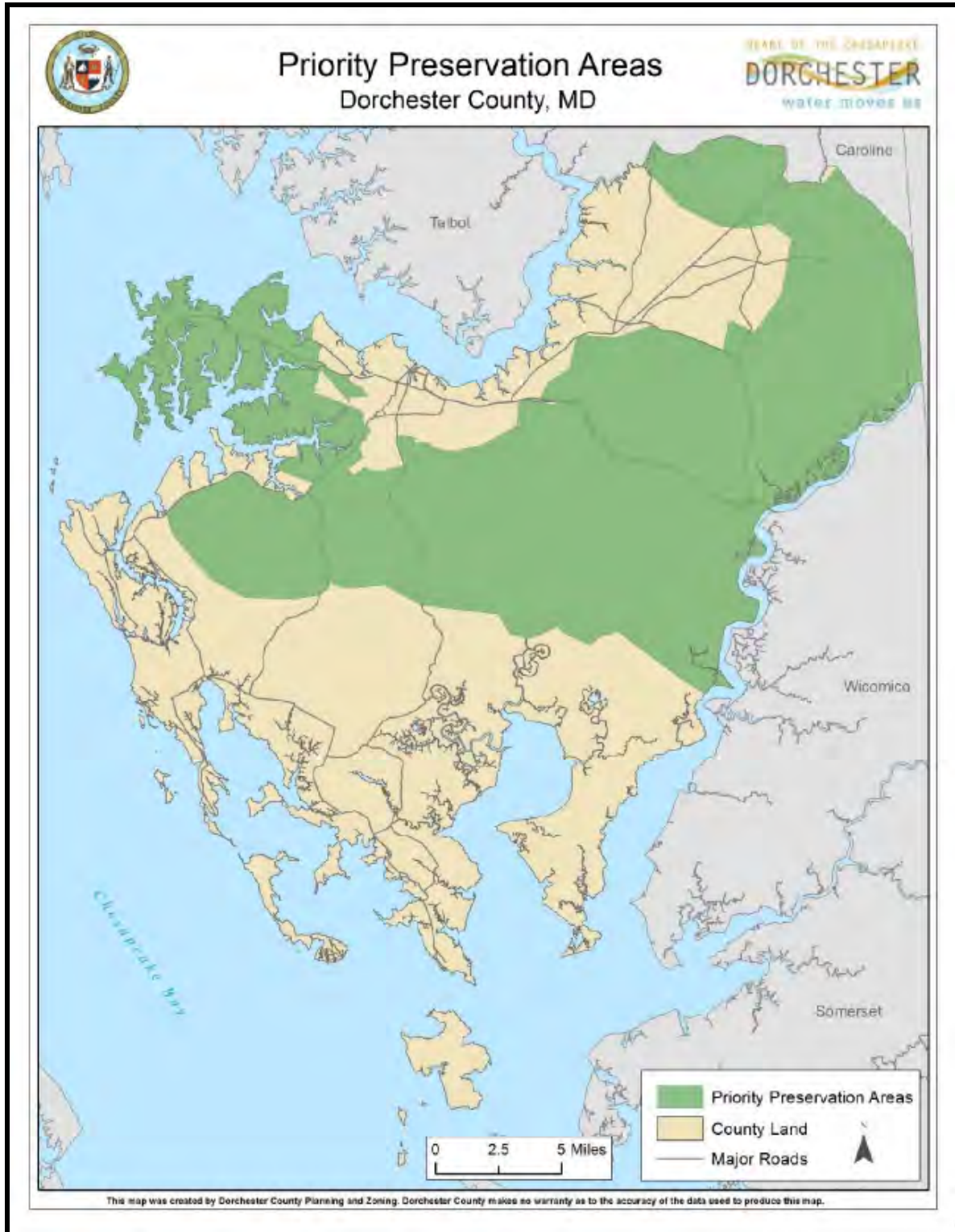
Table IV-1: Maryland Protected Lands Dashboard-Dorchester County

Land Preservation Program	2020 Total Acres
Local Parks	236.00
Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF)	15,993.00
Maryland Environmental Trust/Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (MET/ESLC)	13,678.00
Rural Legacy	11,744.00
USDA Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	1,064.00
Blackwater Wildlife Rescue US Fish and Wildlife Service	23,504.00
DNR State Land Inventory	47,161.00
Program Open Space-Stateside	8,125.00
Other private preserved lands	5,437.00
Total Preserved Lands	126,942.00

[Maryland Protected Lands Dashboard](#)

The 2021 Comprehensive Plan encourages updating Dorchester's Land Uses to simplify the current land use categories into Growth Areas and Conservation Areas. (Map IV-1).

Map IV-1 Priority Preservation Area



IV-2 Dorchester County LPPRP - Chapter IV Agricultural Land Preservation

The 2017 Census of Agriculture found that the land in farms and average farm size decreased from the 2012 Census. The 2017 Census reported 132,166 acres, approximately one-third of Dorchester County's land area, is zoned for agriculture. The total number of farms was 371 and the average farm size was 356 acres. The market value of production was \$188,673,000, an increase of 1% from 2012. Crop sales accounted for \$57.55 million. Livestock sales totaled \$131.12 million, including \$124 million in poultry and egg sales alone.

Protecting the County's rural and agricultural setting, its small towns, and coastal villages and the Chesapeake Bay cultural heritage is primary to the 2021 Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan emphasizes the preservation of the County's rural character and agricultural resources. Agriculture is viewed as a permanent and preferred land use which is reflected in the goals and strategies within the current 2021 Comprehensive Plan and the regulations within the *Land Use Ordinance*. Concentrating growth in and around municipalities and the preservation of agricultural lands, along with forests and wetland areas, form the foundation for the intended future growth of the County.

A consideration in the Comprehensive Plan is the importance of preserving agriculture as Dorchester's land use becomes increasingly valuable as an economic and social asset. Preserving an adequate agricultural land base supports the industry and related businesses. Over the past 20 years the County has taken steps to conserve farmland and to encourage agricultural activities to ensure that commercial agriculture will continue as a long-term land use and viable economic activity. The County's Right to Farm ordinance, adopted in 1998, limits the circumstances under which agriculture operations may be deemed to constitute a nuisance.

Overall, 260,000 acres (75%) of the County's 355,000 acres of total land area are protected public lands or wetlands. About 187,000 of these are permanently protected through conservation easements on agricultural or forested lands, or as parks, open space and other lands. These protected lands are anticipated to continue to grow.

Table IV-2 Top Crops & Livestock

Top Crops in Acres	
Soybeans for beans	47,140
Corn for grain	23,688
Wheat for gran, all	16,641
Vegetables harvested, all	8,195
Sweet corn	3,020
Livestock Inventory (December 2017)	
Broilers and other meat-type chickens	4,997,456
Cattle and calves	260
Goats	88
Hogs and pigs	412
Horses and ponies	170
Layers	864
Sheep and lambs	69

U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2017

Table IV-3 Total and Per Farm Overview 2017

Dorchester County	2017	% Change since 2012
Number and Acreage of Farms		
Number of Farms	371	-12%
Land in farms (acres)	132,166	+5%
Average farm size (acres)	356	+19%
Total Market Value		
Market Value of Products Sold	\$188,673,000	+1%
Government Payments	\$4,484,000	+79%
Farm-related Income	\$4,169,000	-3%
Total Farm Production Expenses	\$141,732,000	+3%
Net Cash Farm Income	\$55,595,000	<-1%

U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2017

Table IV-4 Market Value of Top Agricultural Products Sold in Dorchester County

Agricultural Product	Sales (\$1,000)	Rank in State	Counties Producing Items
Crops			
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, dry peas	\$43,387	5	23
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, sweet potatoes	\$12,303	1	23
Livestock, Poultry, and Products			
Poultry and eggs	124,031	5	23
Cattle and calves	95	23	23
Hogs and pigs	116	10	22

U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2017

2. Agricultural Land Preservation Goals

A. 2017 Goals & Updates

Dorchester County's Agricultural Preservation Program does not have a certified Agricultural Plan. However, the County recognizes the important economic role and other long-term benefits of agriculture and shares the State of Maryland's goals for farmland protection:

- Permanently preserve agricultural land capable of supporting a reasonable diversity of agricultural production.
- Protect natural, forestry and historic resources and the rural character of the landscape associated with Maryland's farmland.
- To the greatest degree possible, concentrate preserved land in large, relatively contiguous blocks to effectively support long-term protection of resources and resource-based industries.
- Limit the intrusion of development and its impacts on rural resources and resource-based industries.
- Ensure good return on public investment by concentrating State agricultural land preservation funds in areas where the investment is reasonably well supported by both local investment and land use management programs.
- Work with local governments to achieve the following:
 - Establish preservation areas, goals and strategies through local comprehensive planning processes that address and complement State goals;
 - In each area designated for preservation, develop a shared understanding of goals and the strategy to achieve them among rural landowners, the public-at-large and State and local government officials;
 - Protect the equity interests of rural landowners in preservation areas by ensuring sufficient public commitment and investment in preservation through easement acquisition and incentive programs;
 - Use local land use management authority effectively to protect public investment in preservation by managing development in rural preservation areas;
 - 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.



Since the 2017 LPPRP, Dorchester County has continued to support the State of Maryland's goals for farmland protection. Until the updated Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2021, Dorchester relied upon the 1996 Comprehensive Plan to prioritize development away from agricultural lands. In 2002, the Maryland General Assembly passed a resolution to preserve approximately one million acres of productive agricultural land by 2020. Based on this, Dorchester County set its goal at 100,000 acres. According to the Maryland Protect Lands Dashboard, Dorchester has a total of 126,942 acres of protected lands as of its last update on March 31, 2022.

B. 2022 Agricultural Land Preservation Goals

State Goals	County Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Permanently preserve agricultural land capable of supporting a reasonable diversity of agricultural production. ● Protect natural, forestry, and historic resources and the rural character of the landscape associated with Maryland's farmland. ● To the greatest degree possible, concentrate preserved land in large, relatively contiguous blocks to effectively support long-term protection of resources and resource-based industries. ● Limit the intrusion of development and its impacts on rural resources and resource-based industries. ● Ensure good return on public investment by concentrating state agricultural land preservation funds in areas where the investment is reasonably well supported by both local investment and land use management programs. ● Work with local governments to achieve the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish preservation areas, goals, and strategies through local comprehensive planning processes that address and complement State goals; ○ In each area designated for preservation, develop a shared understanding of goals and the strategy to achieve them among rural landowners, the public-at-large, and State and local government officials; ○ Protect the equity interests of rural landowners in preservation areas by ensuring sufficient public commitment and investment in preservation through easement acquisition and incentive programs; ○ Use local land use management authority effectively to protect public investment in preservation by managing development in rural preservation areas; and ○ Establish effective measures to support profitable agriculture, including assistance in production, marketing, and the practice of stewardship, so that farming remains a desirable way of life for both the farmer and the public-at-large. ○ Examine opportunities to create additional incentives to preserve farmland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preserve agriculture and forestry as viable industries. ● Increase farm values. ● Minimize conflicts between agricultural and residential uses. ● Accommodate appropriate non-agricultural uses. ● Prevent sprawl development. ● Maximize use of agriculture presentation programs. ● Continue the existing Agricultural zoning. ● Explore implementation of a transfer of development rights (TDR) program with bonus density incentives as a long-term strategy for agriculture preservation.

3. Current Implementation Program

A. Land Use Management

The County considers agriculture to be the preferred and primary use in the Agricultural Conservation Area and the Resource Conservation District (RCD). The Land Use Ordinance limits the use of these lands for non-agricultural purposes. The 1996 Dorchester County Comprehensive Plan was critical to the preservation of agricultural land. Growth was encouraged in the municipalities, adjacent to municipalities, and in three designated growth areas as established by the Growth Act. The density of development in the Agricultural District was reduced from 1 dwelling unit per 40,000 sq. ft. to 3 dwelling units + 1 dwelling unit per 15 acres, or 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres if clustered. This reduction in density,

along with the County's new road classification system, limiting access on major and minor collectors, appears to have succeeded as a deterrent to sprawl development.

The 2021 Comp Plan encourages the County to review this growth plan as it still provides opportunity for large lot development which is a deterrent for agricultural and natural resource land preservation incentives. The 2021 update recommends a number of changes related to land use management. It recommends a change in the Land Use categories to use Growth Areas and Conservation Areas, and to further delineate these into: municipal growth areas, suburban growth areas, rural residential growth areas, agricultural conservation areas, resource conservation areas, and village conservation areas. These categories align with the overall goal to promote residential and industrial growth to occur in and around municipal areas. These changes would support the overall goals of the County to protect open spaces and to limit the impact of residential water and sewer needs on the County. In addition, the Comp Plan encourages investigating a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program, particularly related to areas that are low lying and could be lost to sea level rise.

Maryland's Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 required the adoption of a Growth Tier Map, which designates all land into one of four tiers. Within Tier IV, which are resource areas, major subdivisions are prohibited unless an exemption is granted by the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP).

B. Designated Preservation Areas

The Dorchester County Agricultural Land Preservation Program was established in January 1979 under the State's Agricultural Land Preservation Program. The local Planning and Zoning Office and a five member board appointed by the County Council oversee the local program. The program is voluntary and was established in order to preserve agricultural land and woodland in order to:

- provide sources of agricultural products within the state for citizens,
- control urban expansion,
- curb urban blight and deterioration, and
- protect agricultural land and woodland open space.

The program is open to any owner with eligible farmland. The basic eligibility requirements are 50 contiguous acres, 50% of soils Class I, II, and III, and a current Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plan. The owner is then eligible to offer for sale a development rights easement to the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF). Currently, under easement, there are 101 farms that total 15,983.77 acres of farmland in the county which are in the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Program. Dorchester County does not have a State-certified Agricultural Preservation Program and does not intend to seek certification for the foreseeable future. As such, the 2021 Comprehensive Plan and this LPPRP do not officially designate Priority Preservation Areas.

C. Easement Acquisition Mechanisms

Dorchester County relies primarily upon three programs to purchase/extinguish development rights on farmland.

1. Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation

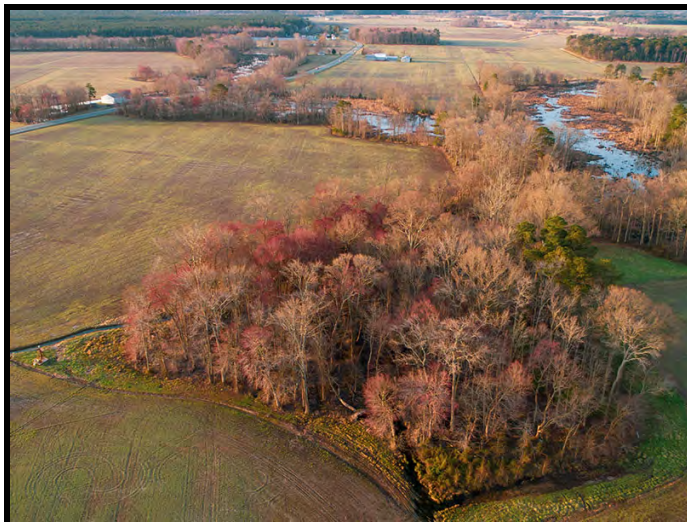
The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) program is a voluntary purchase of development rights program. The property must meet certain size, location and soil requirements.

As of June 30, 2021, Dorchester County had 15,983.77 acres enrolled in Dorchester has participated in the MALPF Program since 1979 and interest continues to remain high.

Easement Holder	# of Properties	Acres
MALPF	101	15,983.77
Rural Legacy	58	12,987.25
METS	74	13,448.07
TOTAL	233	42,419.09

2. Rural Legacy

The goal of the Rural Legacy program is the protection of areas that are rich in agricultural, natural and cultural resources, thereby preserving resource-based economies, greenbelts and greenways. The Rural Legacy Program provides the funding necessary to protect large contiguous tracts of farms,

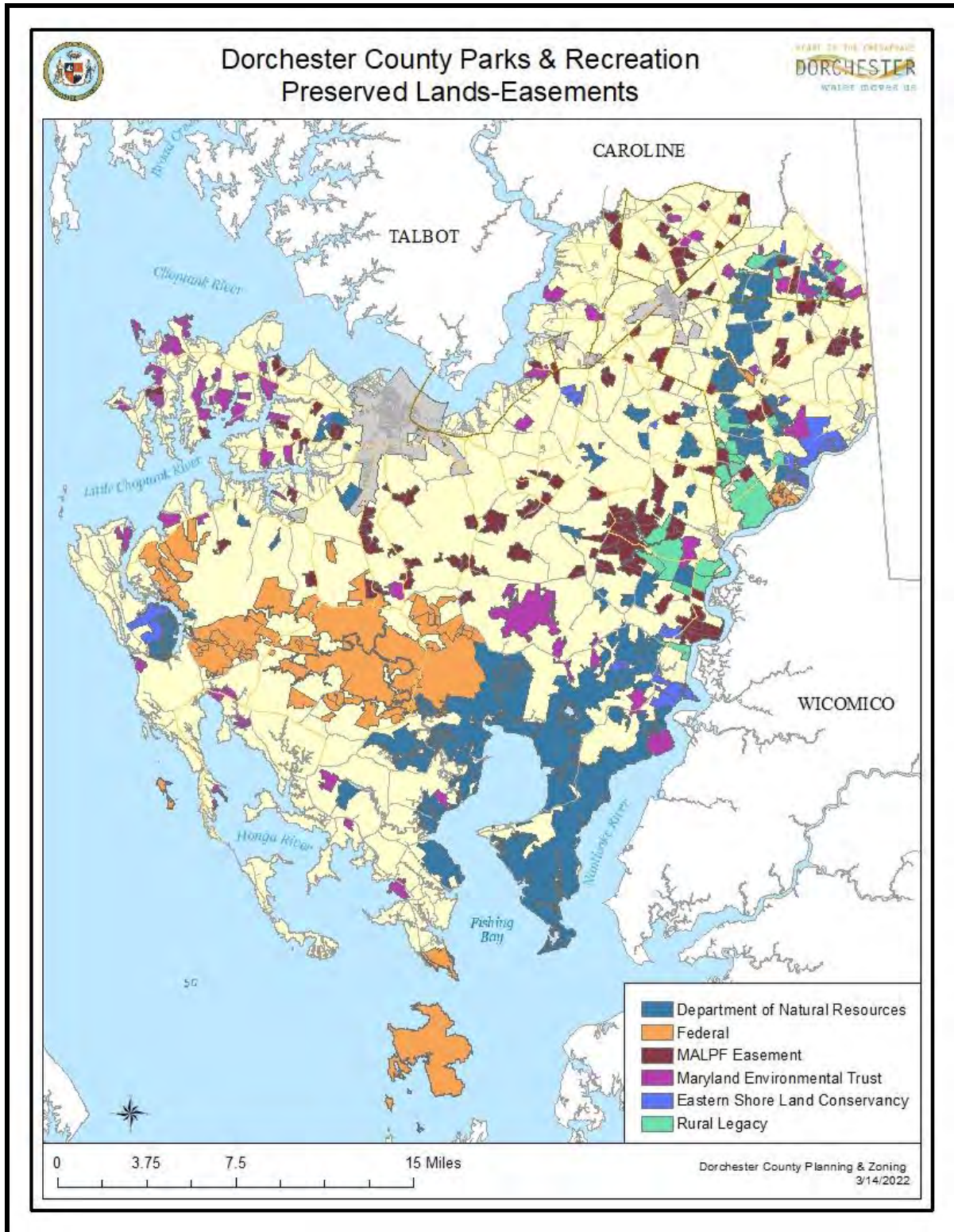


forests and natural areas through cooperative grant agreements with the State and a local sponsor. The protection of natural resources is accomplished through the voluntary acquisition of property through easement or fee simple purchase. There are 12,987.25 acres protected by Rural Legacy easements in three Rural Legacy Areas in the county: Eastern Shore Heartland Rural Legacy Area, Nanticoke Rural Legacy Area and Harriet Tubman Rural Legacy Area. In addition to acreage protected by Rural Legacy easements, there are an additional 22,951.93 protected by other types of easements including MET and MALPF.

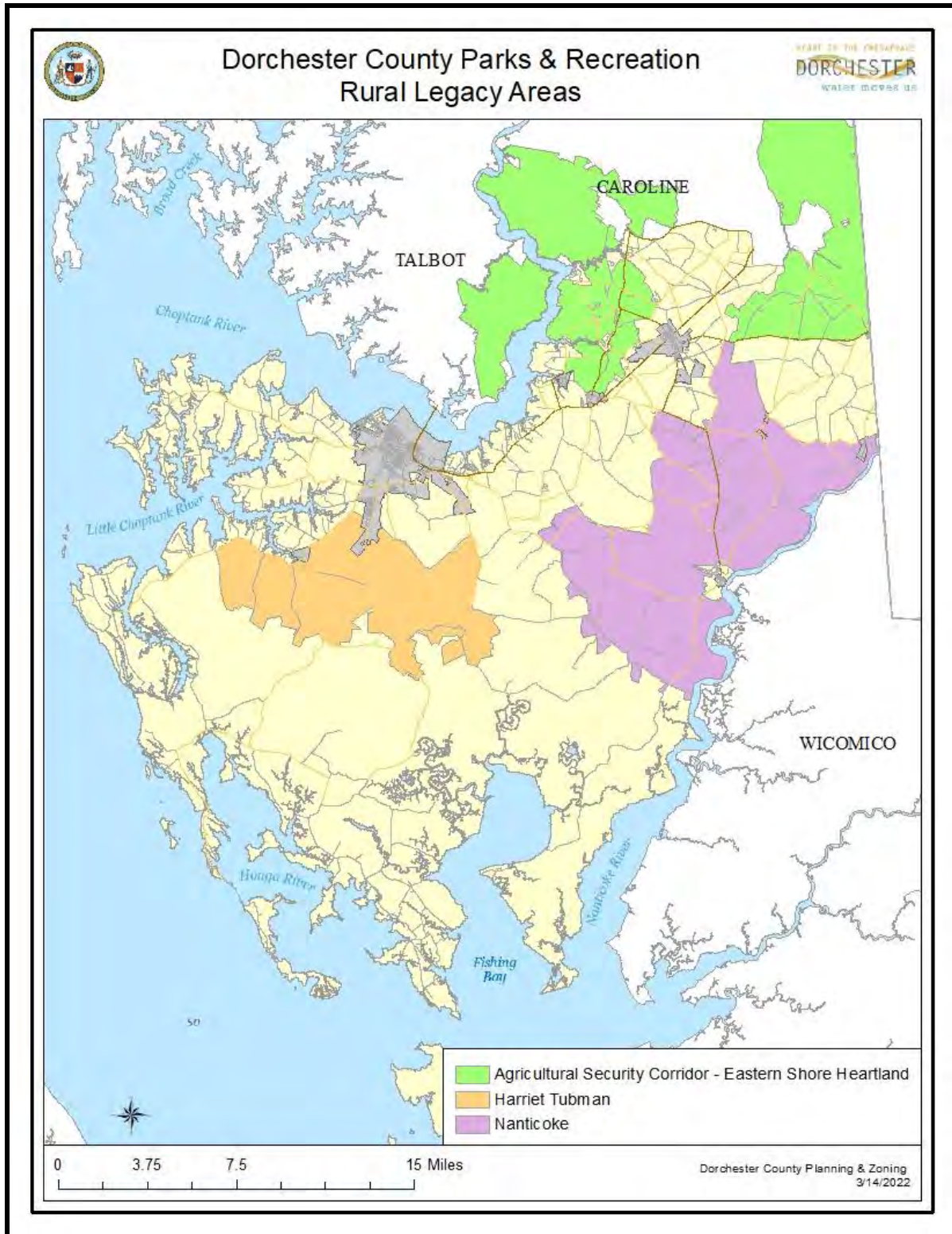
3. Land Trusts and Other Private Conservation Efforts

Conservation groups have pursued the preservation of agricultural and environmental lands throughout Dorchester County. The groups have used various preservation methods including conservation easements. Dorchester County works closely with the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) and the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC) in obtaining donated conservation easements. The Eastern Shore Land Conservancy is a non-profit organization founded in 1990 to preserve farmland and unique natural areas on Maryland's Middle Eastern Shore. Friends of the Nanticoke River and the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance also work closely with communities to support natural resource and agricultural land preservation efforts. They work with a variety of public and private agencies to advance their missions of protective land conservation practices.

Map IV-2 Preserved Lands - Easements



Map IV-3 Rural Legacy Areas



D. Funding for Acquisition

Placing conservation easements on private land from willing landowners is the chief mechanism for permanently protecting agricultural land in Dorchester County. The majority of these easements have been purchased through Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Fund (MALPF) or Rural Legacy with the State of Maryland providing a large majority of the funding.

E. Farming Assistance Programs

Since 1979 Dorchester County has had an Agricultural Land Preservation Board appointed by the County Council. The Board advises the County Council on the establishment of agricultural districts and the approval of purchases of easements within the County by MALPF. The Dorchester County Agricultural Land Preservation Board has designated the area between Federalsburg and Vienna; south of Rt. 50 between Maple Dam Road and Linkwood; and along the Rt. 50 corridor to Vienna for future easement acquisition. In addition, the Neck District west of Cambridge is ideal for easement acquisition due to the number of farms under Conservation Easements with the Maryland Environmental Trust. These areas are shown on Map IV-1 Priority Preservation Area.

Farming assistance programs mainly exist in State and federal agencies, such as the Dorchester County Soil and Water Conservation District, the University of Maryland Extension and the [USDA Farm Service Agency](#).

[Soil and Water Conservation Districts](#) support the Maryland Watershed Implementation Plan to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay by 2025. They work closely with the Department of Agriculture and Department of the Environment to address cases of water pollution by agriculture. Farmers may seek free technical or engineering assistance to design and install best management practices on their farms or to develop Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plans.

[University of Maryland Extension - Dorchester County](#) provides educational programs and problem-solving assistance based on the research and experience of land grant universities on agricultural production, natural resources, food safety, nutrition, and healthy lifestyles, youth development, volunteer development, and agricultural nutrient management.

<https://extension.umd.edu/locations/dorchester-county>

[The Wye Research and Education Center](#) (WREC) of the University of Maryland serves the State of Maryland through its work as an innovative research, extension, and education center focusing on cattle breeding and genetics, integrated pest management, plant breeding and genetics, energy development, usage and conservation, and interaction of land and water agriculture/aquaculture. Maryland Extension also serves the eastern shore of Maryland providing education and outreach services regarding water quality and agronomy, commercial horticulture, forestry and wildlife management and fruit/vegetable crops.

[The Eastern Shore Land Conservancy](#) provides support to farmers expanding their operation or getting started in the industry.

4. Evaluation of the Land Preservation Program

A. Overall Strategy

Dorchester County values its agricultural lands as a part of its cultural and economic heritage. The 2021 Comprehensive Plan update reaffirms the value placed on Dorchester's Agricultural lands. The Plan recommends evaluating several new tools to support agricultural land preservation in the future, including review of the current land use categories, recommendations for a simplified system that directs residential and industrial growth through Growth Areas in and around municipal areas, and protection of natural resource and agricultural lands through Conservation Areas. With the assistance of the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy and the Rural Legacy Program, there are now three Rural Legacy Areas that include portions of Dorchester County and create contiguous areas where landowners may benefit from permanent easements through the Rural Legacy Program. Farms protected by MALPF and Rural Legacy tend to be located along the water, in particular in the northeastern part of the county along the Marshyhope and in the south eastern part of the county along the Nanticoke. The protection of these sensitive lands ensures that important wildlife habitat will remain intact and will have access to green corridors. Farms protected by the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation and Rural Legacy are located primarily in the central part of the County, which will help maintain the agricultural infrastructure.



B. Funding

Dorchester County has limited financial resources, but remains committed to agricultural preservation and participates in all available programs. As land values continue to rise, the dollars available will buy fewer acres and this may limit the number of acres that can be preserved. Dorchester is currently not a certified Agricultural Preservation County and does not provide matching funds for the MALPF program. The County relies on private and other state and federal funds for preservation efforts.

C. Land Management Tools

In combination with relatively low development pressure, Dorchester County's zoning has been generally effective in helping to protect the County's agricultural land base. The 2021 Comprehensive Plan recommends growth to be directed toward municipalities through infill growth and encourages review and updates to the Land Use Ordinances and consideration of the implementation of a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program to protect agricultural and natural resource lands, as well as to minimize the potential impact of sea level rise on landowners and county infrastructure.

D. Effects of Potential Development on Land Markets

Since 2002 overall development has slowed. Loss of agricultural and forestlands is related to low-density rural development which primarily occurred between 1973 and 2002, during which time the County lost 17,000 acres of agricultural and forestland to large-lot low-density development. This has slowed to 2,000 acres between 2002 and 2010 and continues this trend. Three quarters of the County's total land area is protected lands. The County's goals and policies for new development should consider that the trend that development has primarily occurred with large lot, low density parcels, development will more quickly consume available land and will increase the need for infrastructure investment to reach areas further from development centers as well as result in the loss of natural environment and natural resource based economics. In both the incorporated towns and unincorporated villages direct growth should occur at a rate and scale that is compatible with our rural heritage.

5. Program Development Strategy

This section describes Dorchester County's development strategy for agricultural land preservation. The following on-going actions are recommended:

- Continued implementation of the County's Comprehensive Plan;
- In alignment with the 2021 updated Comprehensive plan, adopt new Agricultural and Resource Conservation Area
- Maintain zoning that would decrease the development density in Agricultural Resource Areas.
- Develop a transfer of development rights (TDR) program that would allow landowners to transfer development rights at a higher density than would be permitted if development.
- Maximize use of agricultural land preservation programs.
- Continued landowner outreach regarding available land protection options. This includes landowner meetings, mailings and press releases;
- Continued and ongoing coordination to direct growth to the towns and villages;
- Support, to the extent possible, programs that assist the agricultural industry in economic development;
- Continue to support and work collaboratively with the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy.

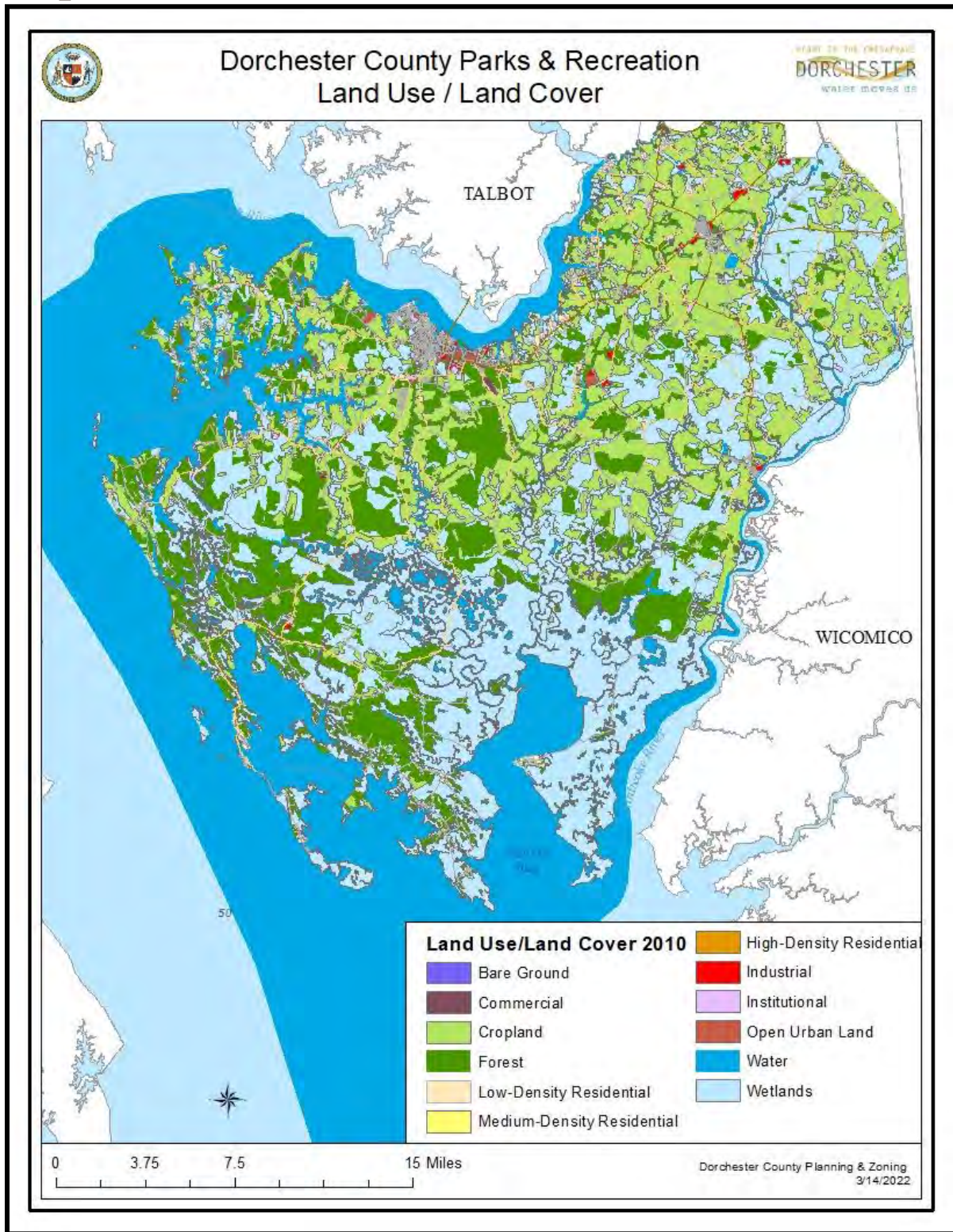
**Appendix A:
Dorchester County
2022 LPPRP Maps**

Chapter I: Framework

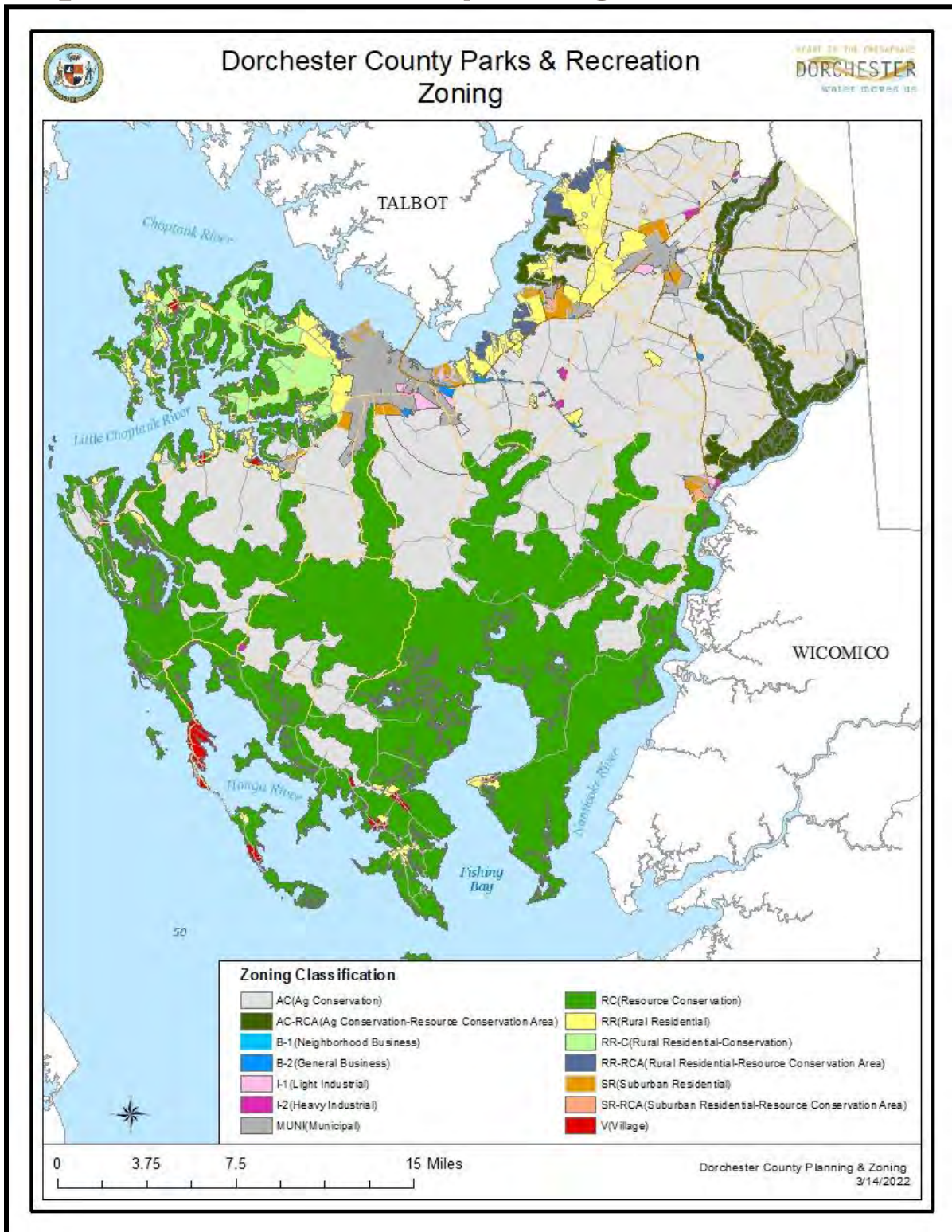
Map I-1 Dorchester County, Maryland



Map I-2 Land Use/Land Cover



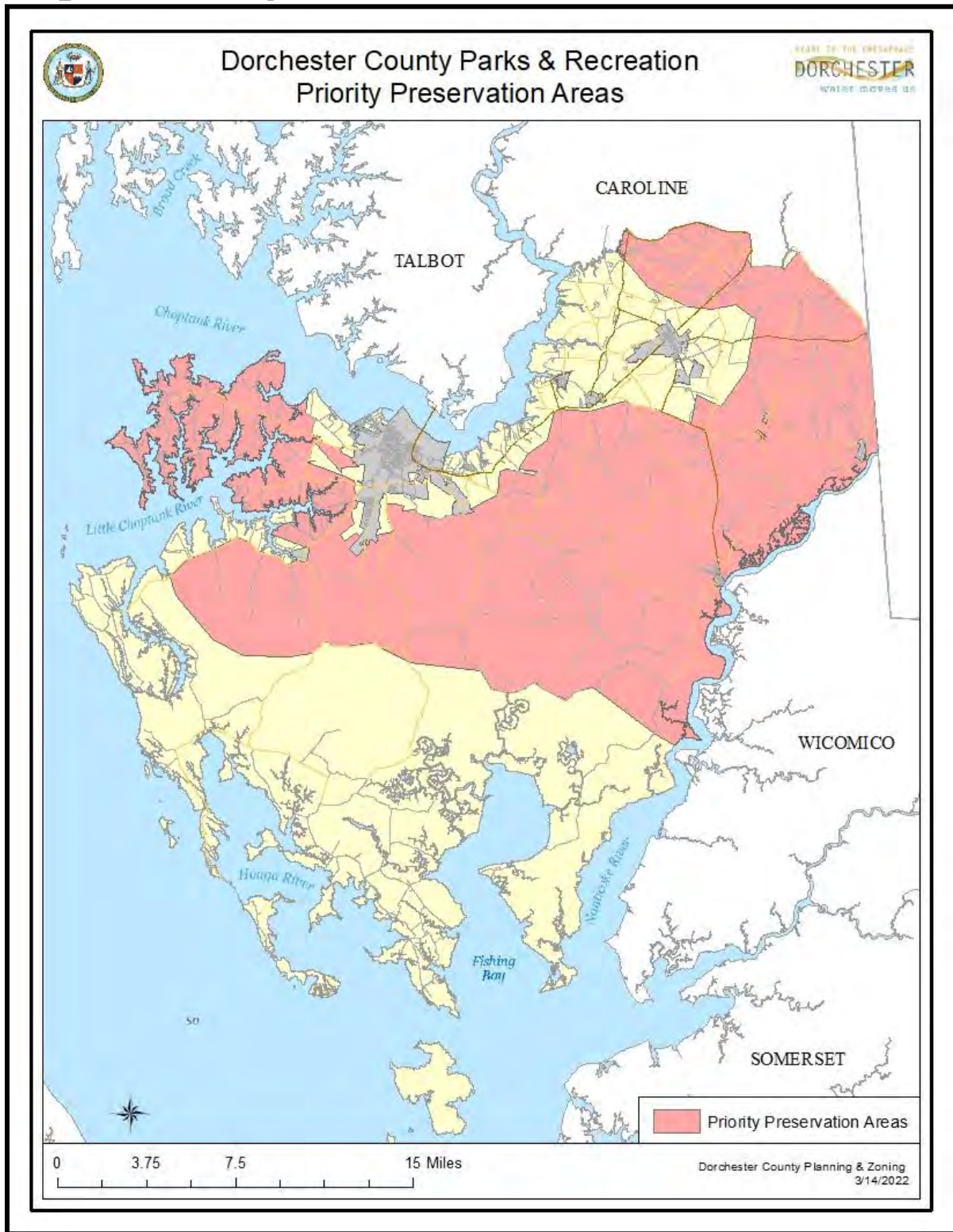
Map I-3 Dorchester County Zoning



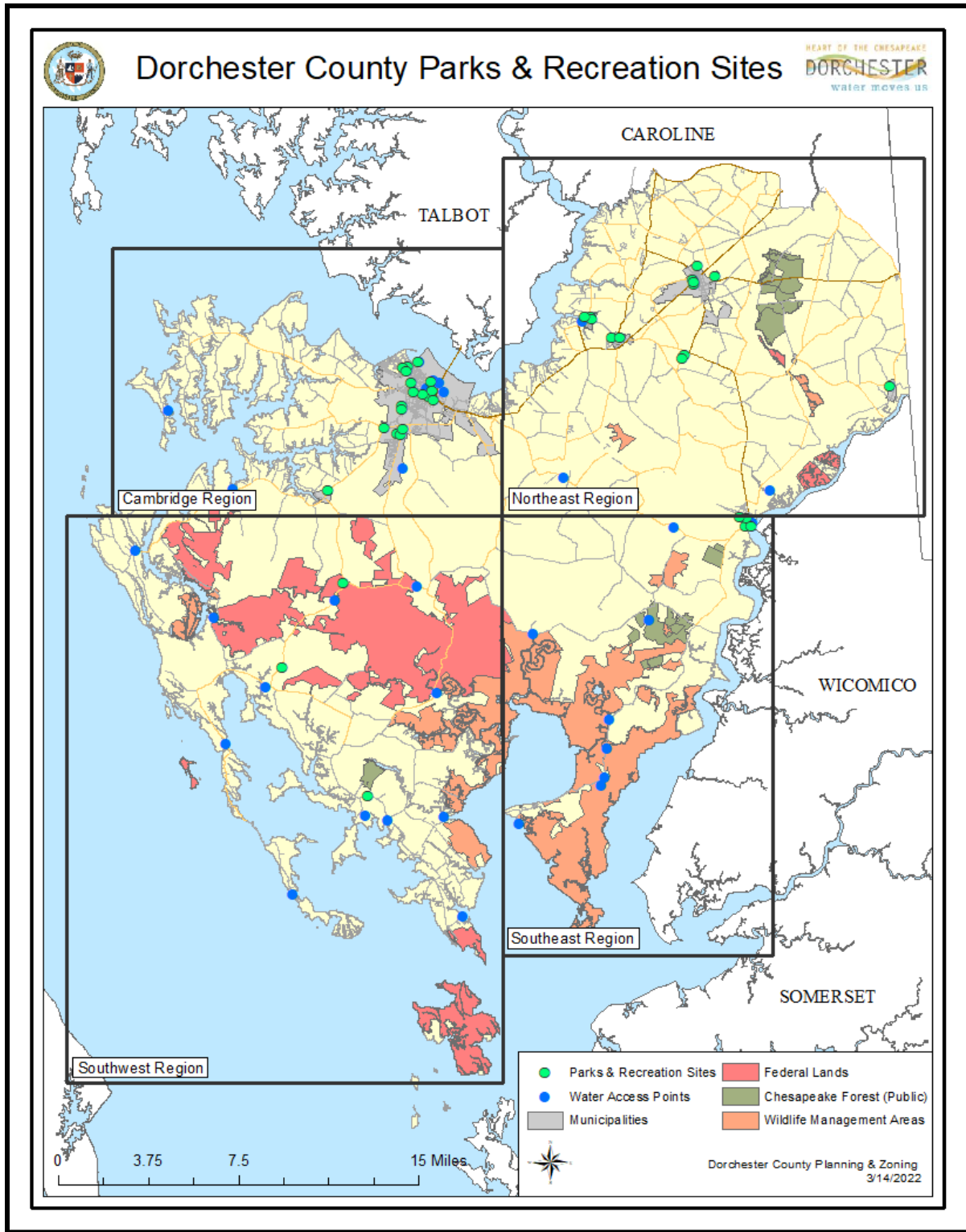
Map 1-4 Priority Funding Areas



Map I-5 Priority Preservation Areas

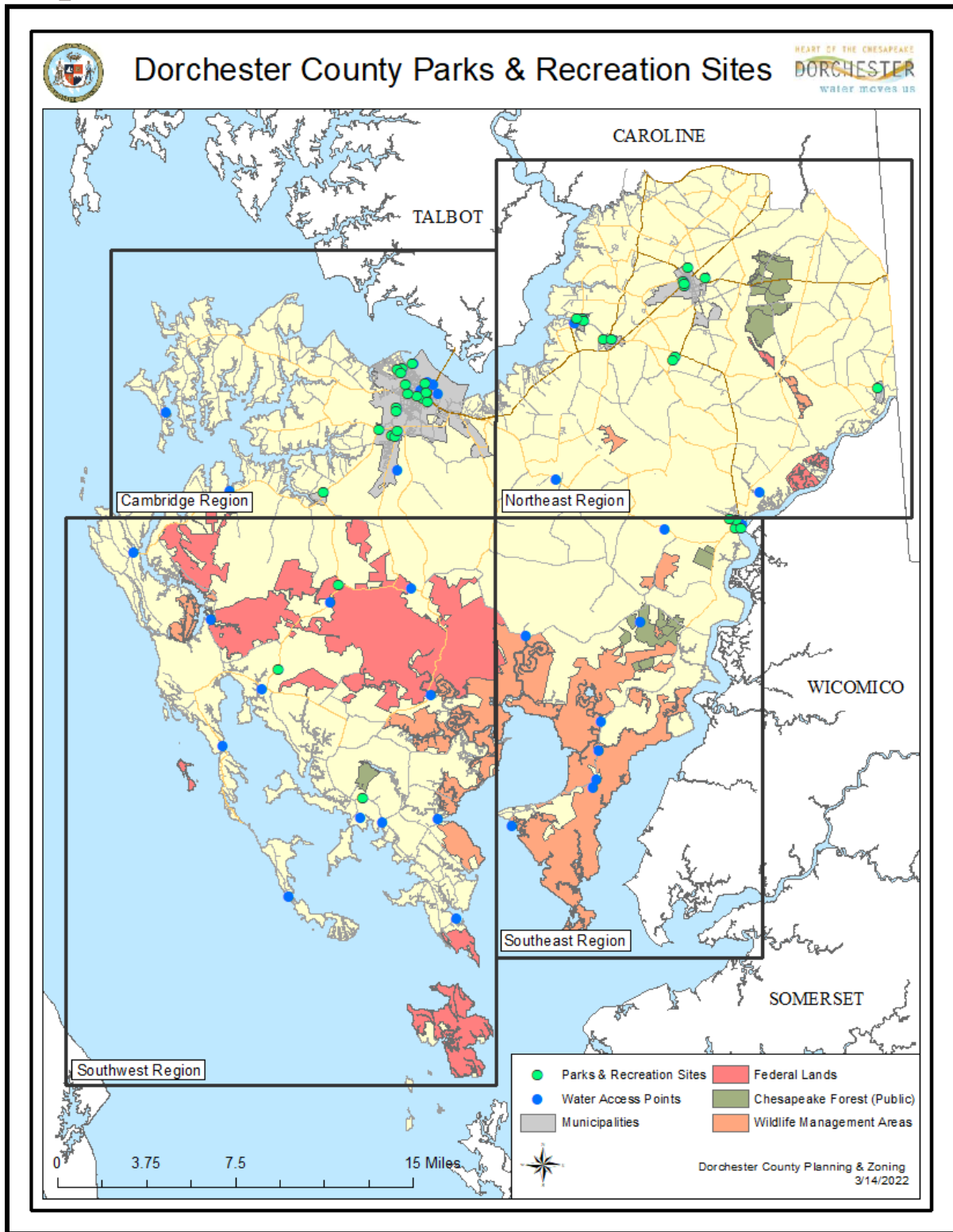


Map I-6 Dorchester Parks & Conserved Open Spaces

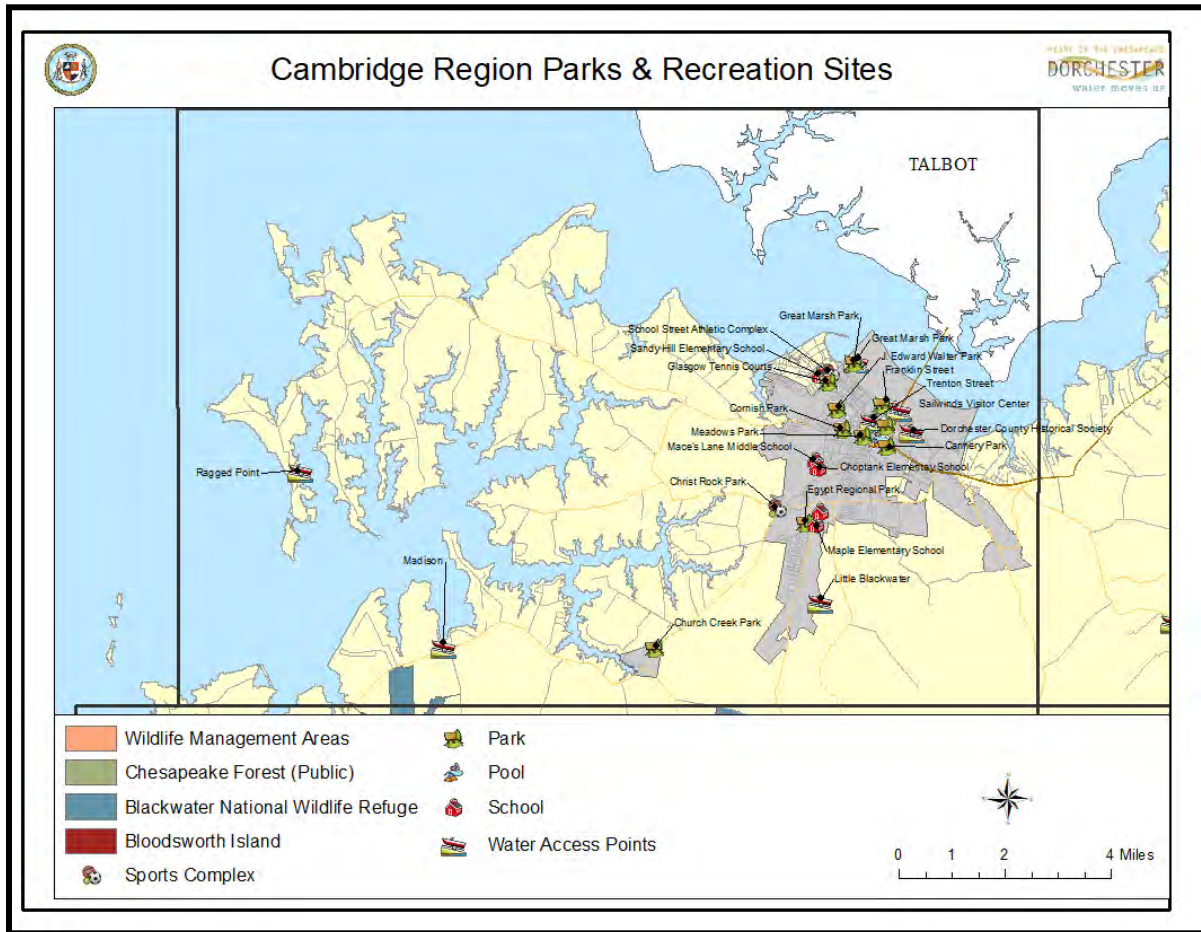


Chapter II: Recreation, Parks and Open Space

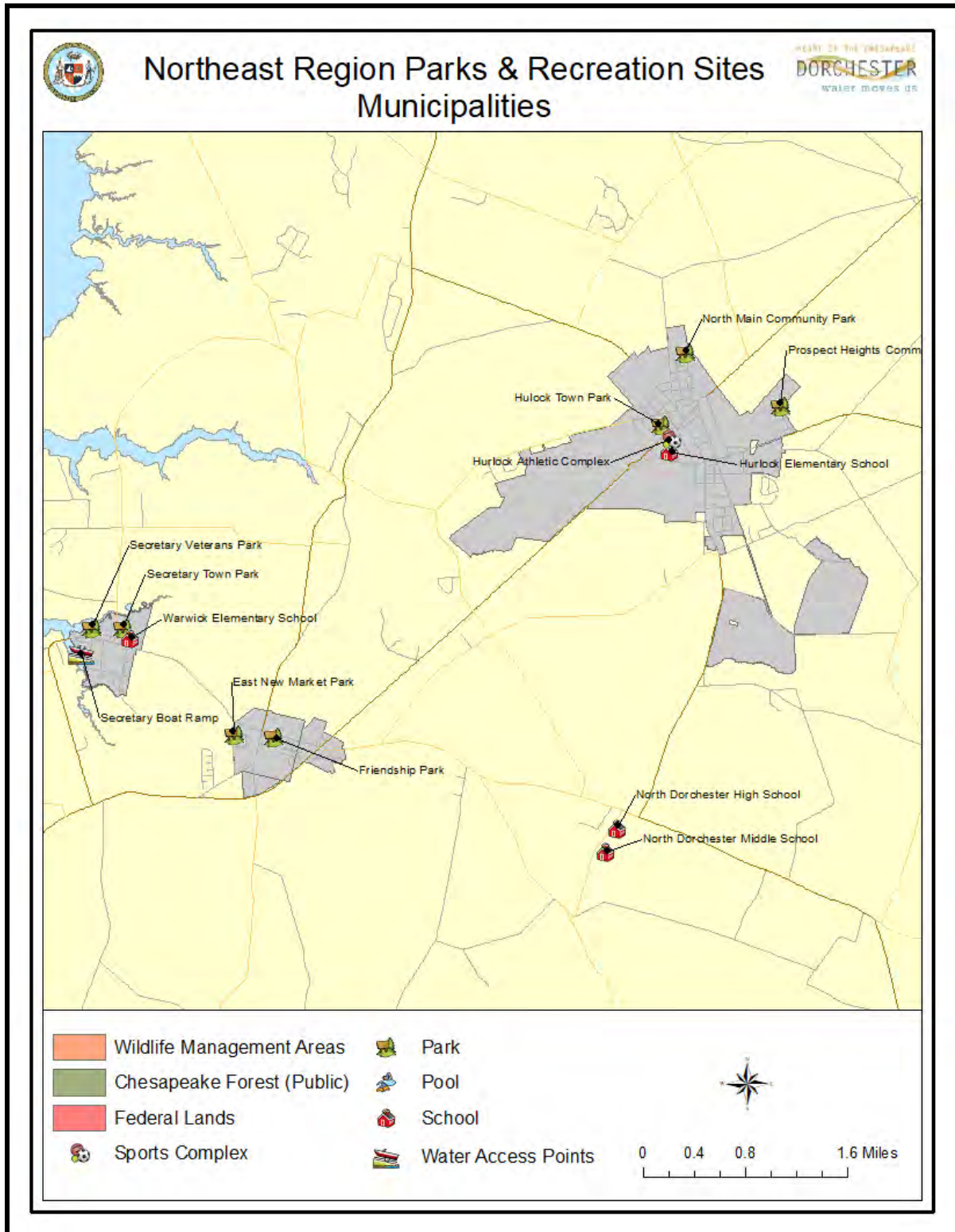
Map II-1 Parks & Recreation Sites



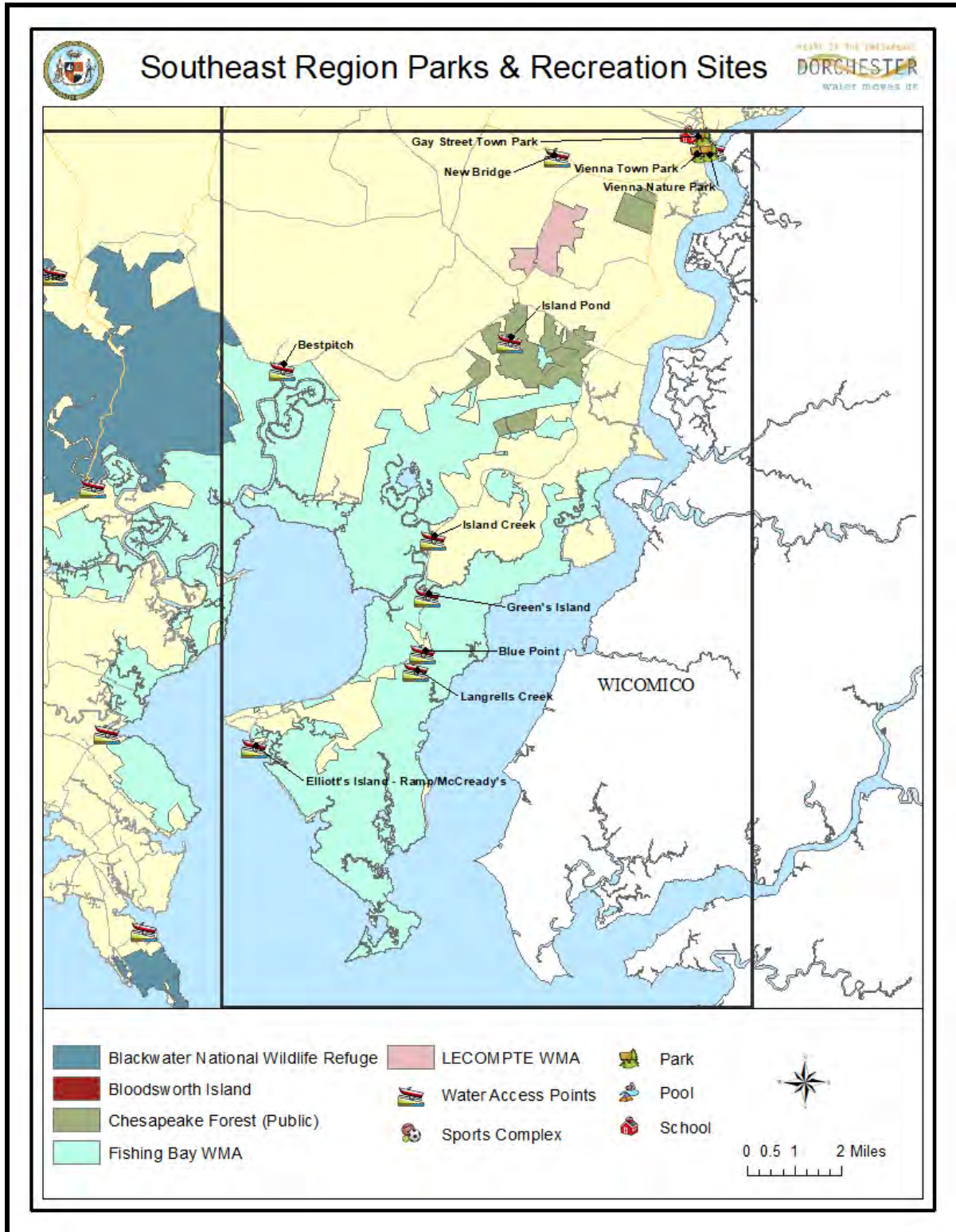
Map II-2 Cambridge Region Parks & Recreation Sites



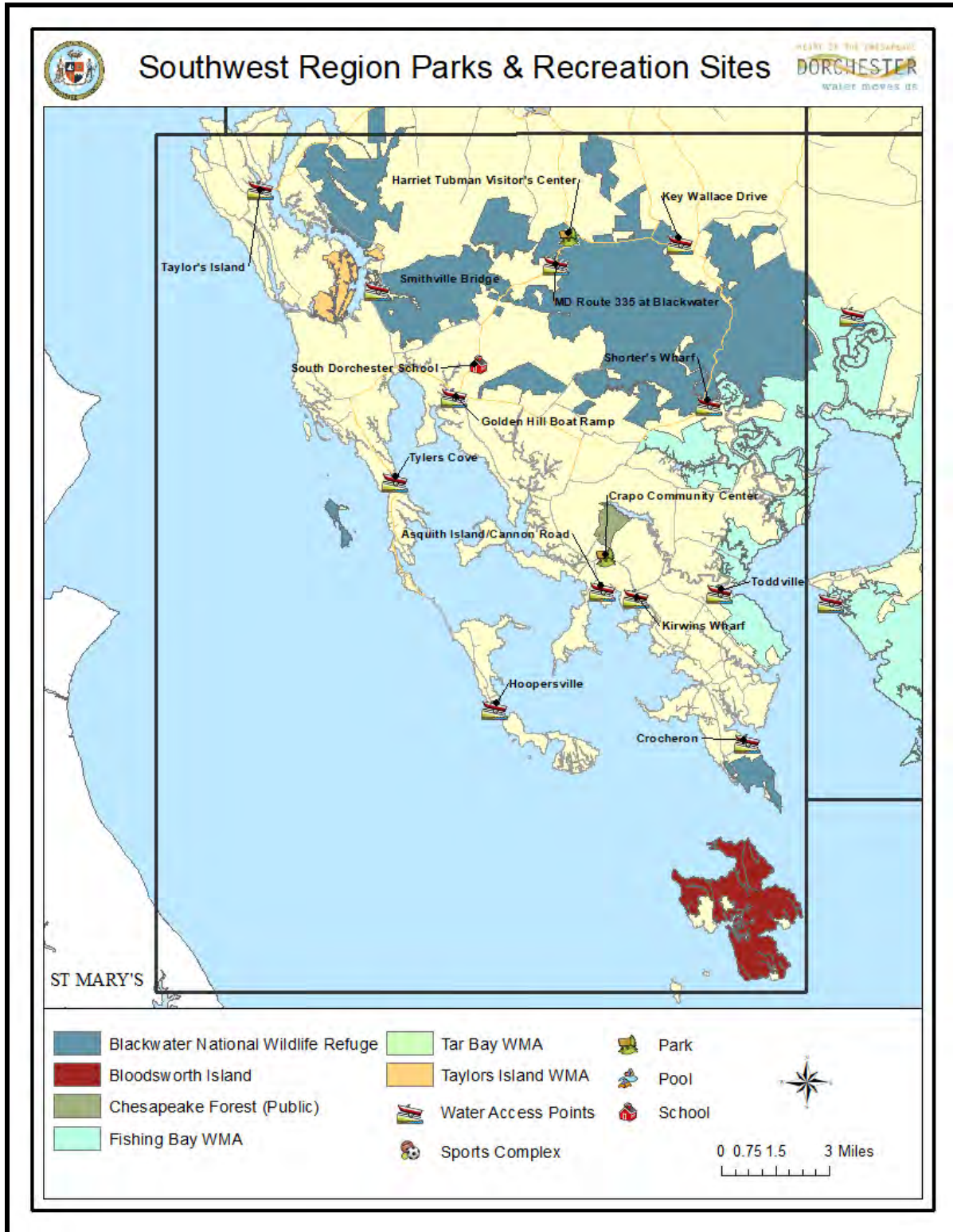
Map II-3 Northeast Region



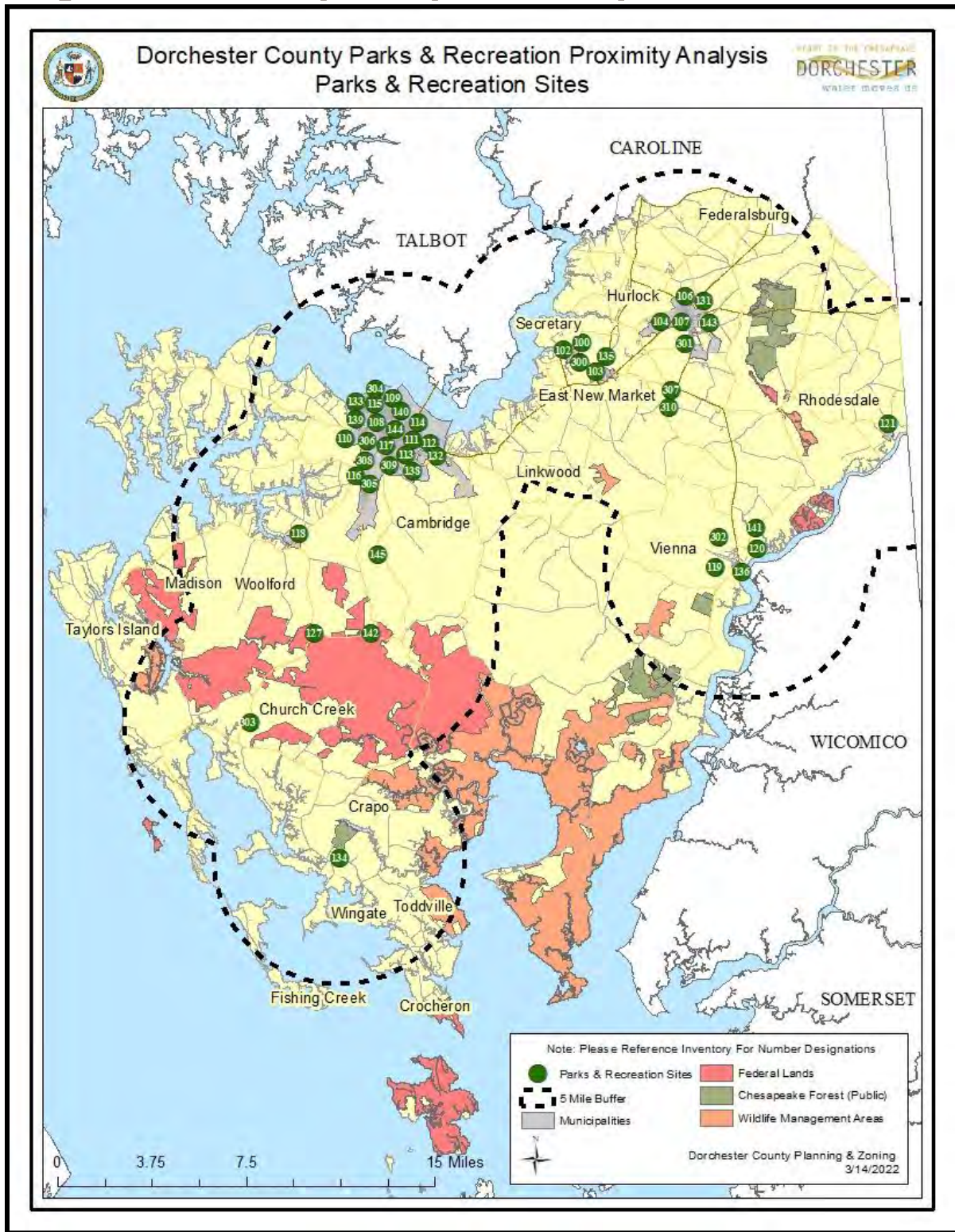
Map II-4 Southeast County Sites



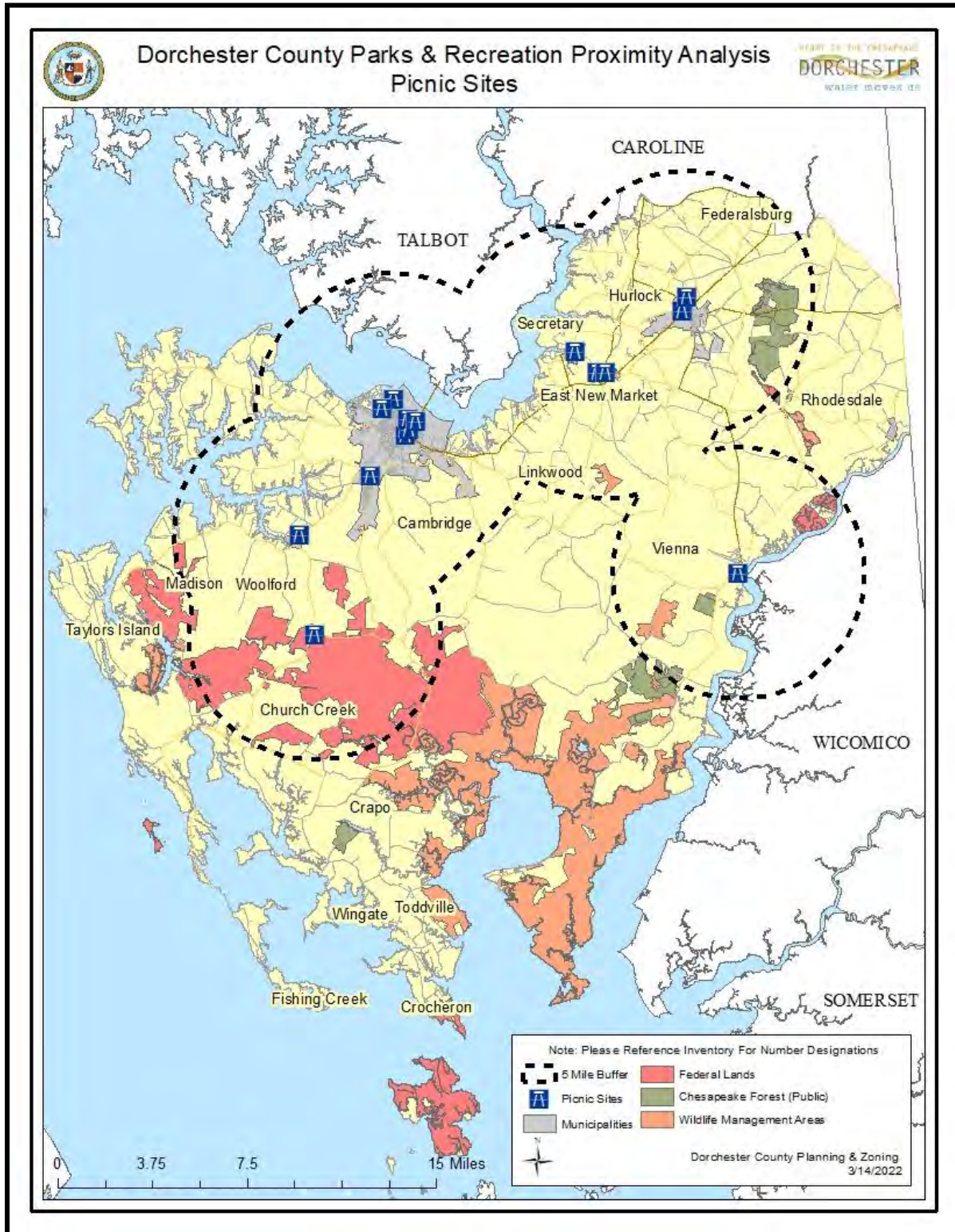
Map II-5 Southwest Region



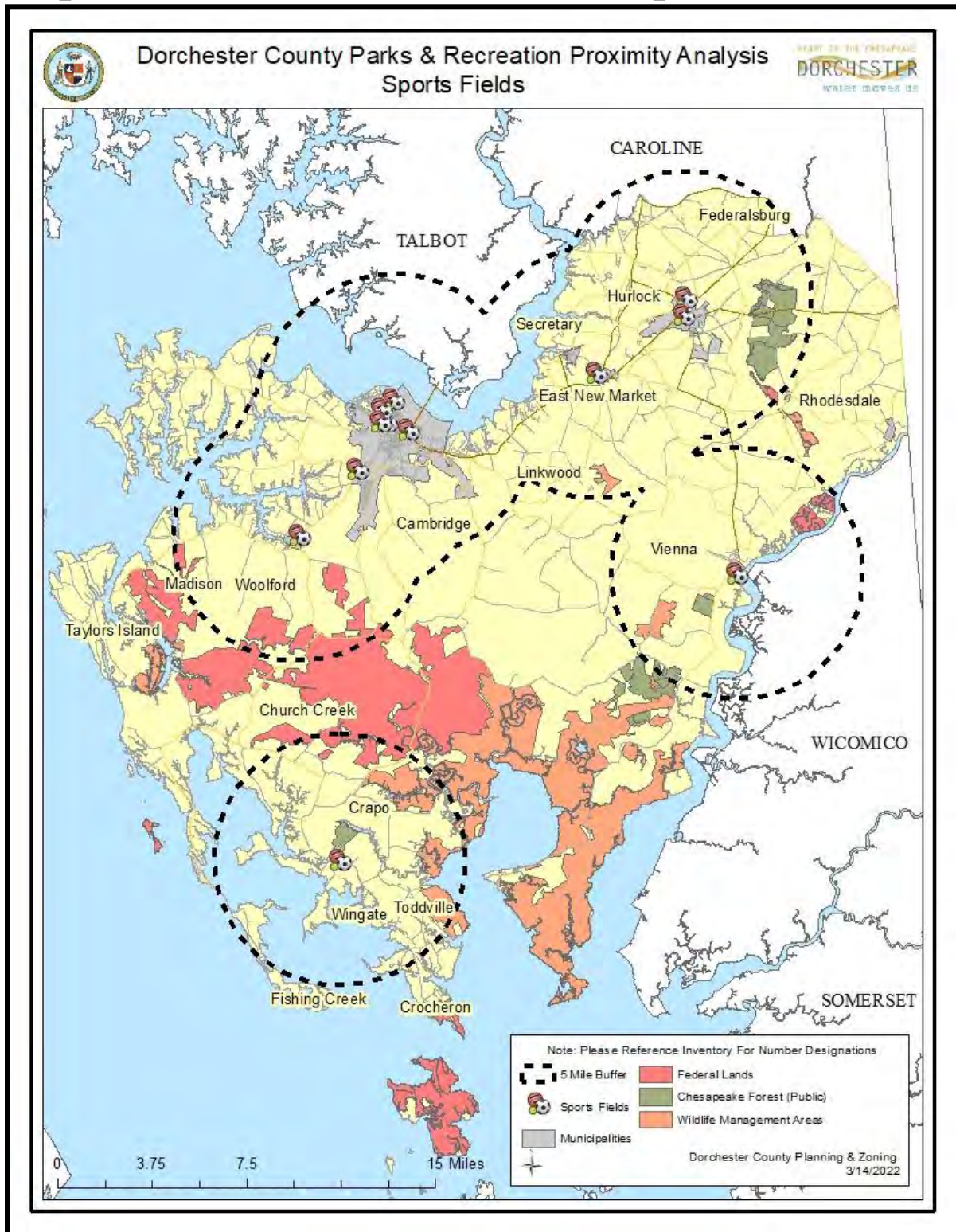
Map II-6 Proximity Analysis County Parks Sites



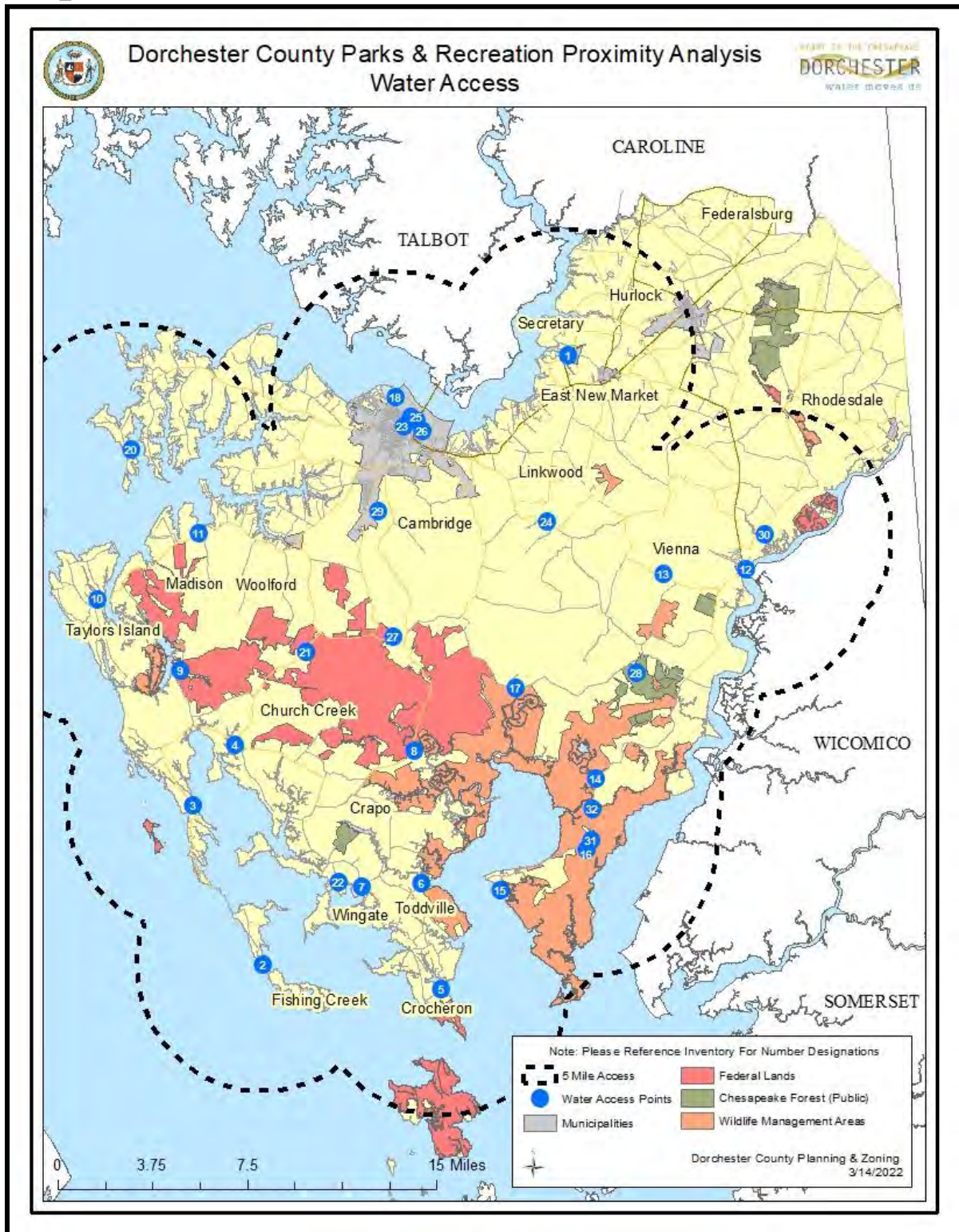
Map II-7 Areas within Five Miles of Recreation Facilities with Picnic Areas



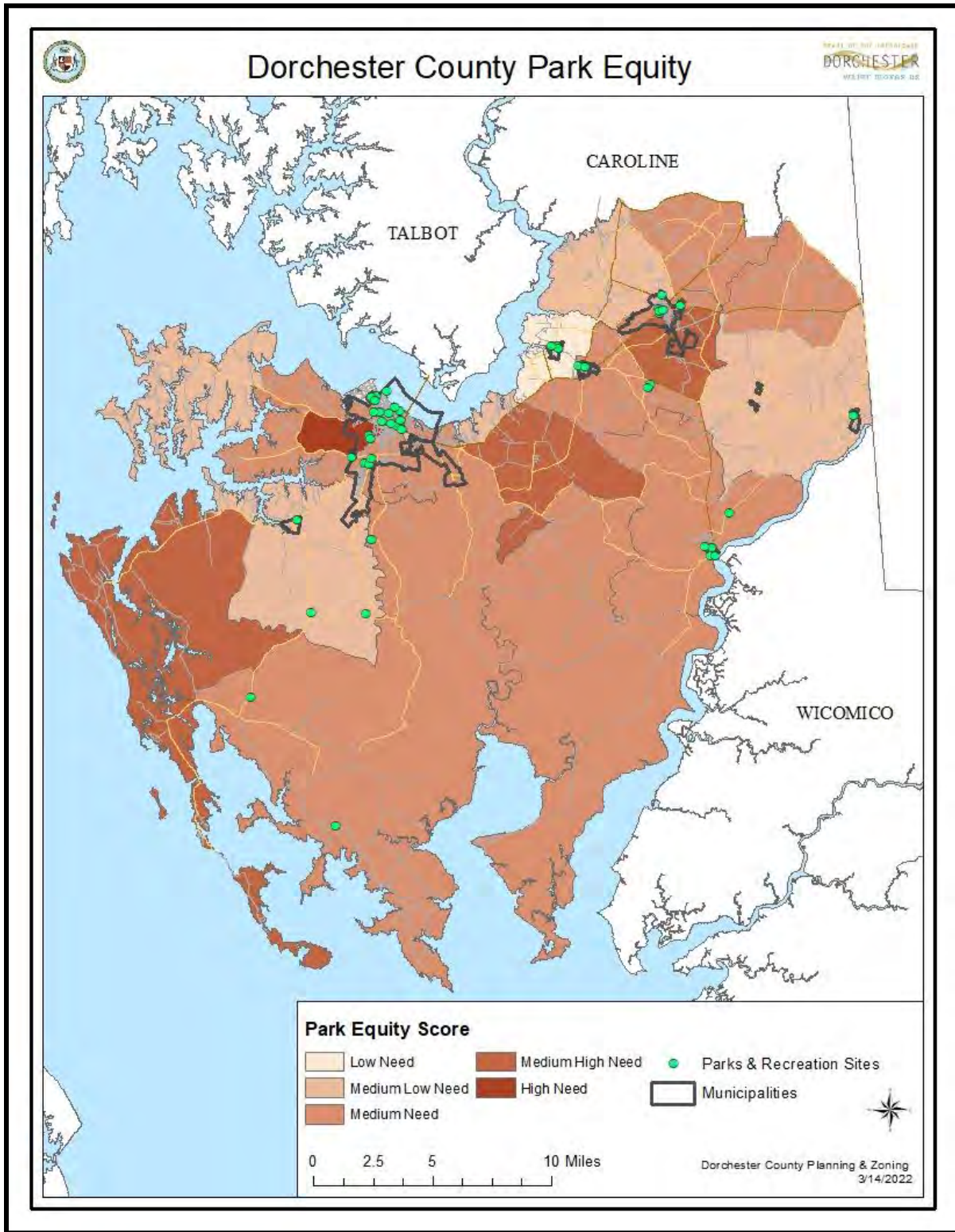
Map II-8 Areas within Five Miles of Sports Fields



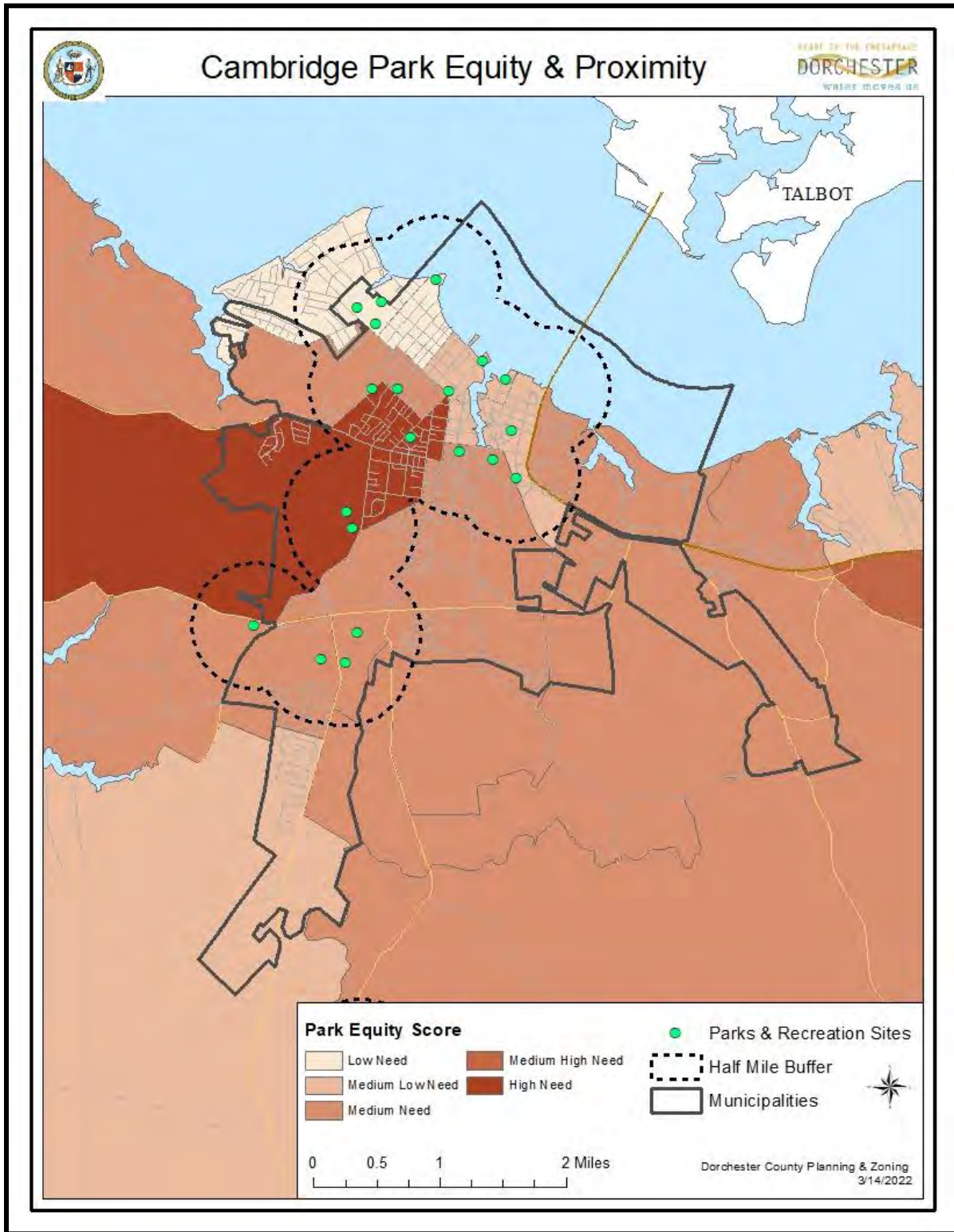
Map II-9 Areas within Five Miles of Public Water Access



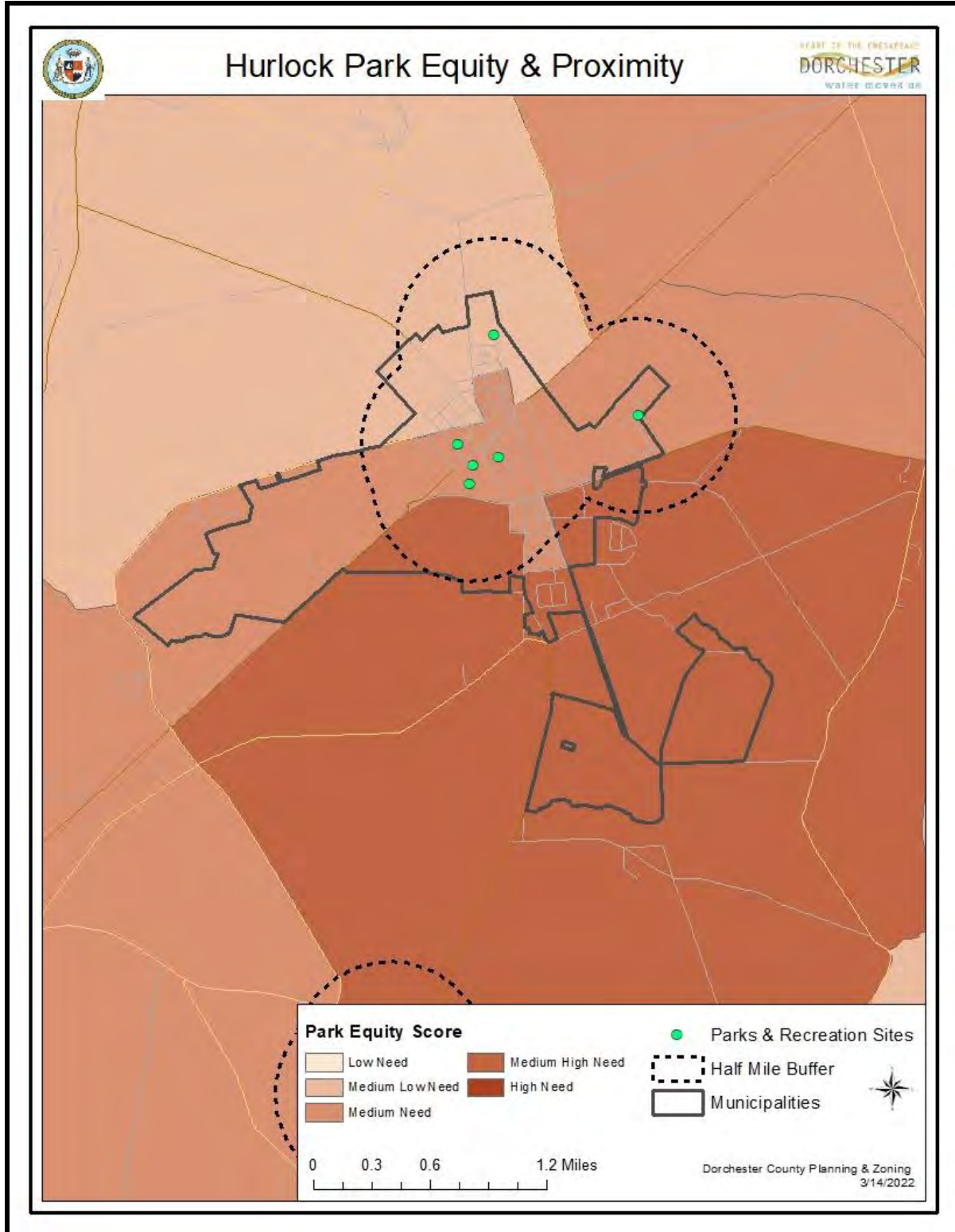
Map II-10 Park Equity in Dorchester County



Map II-11 Park Proximity & Equity in Cambridge

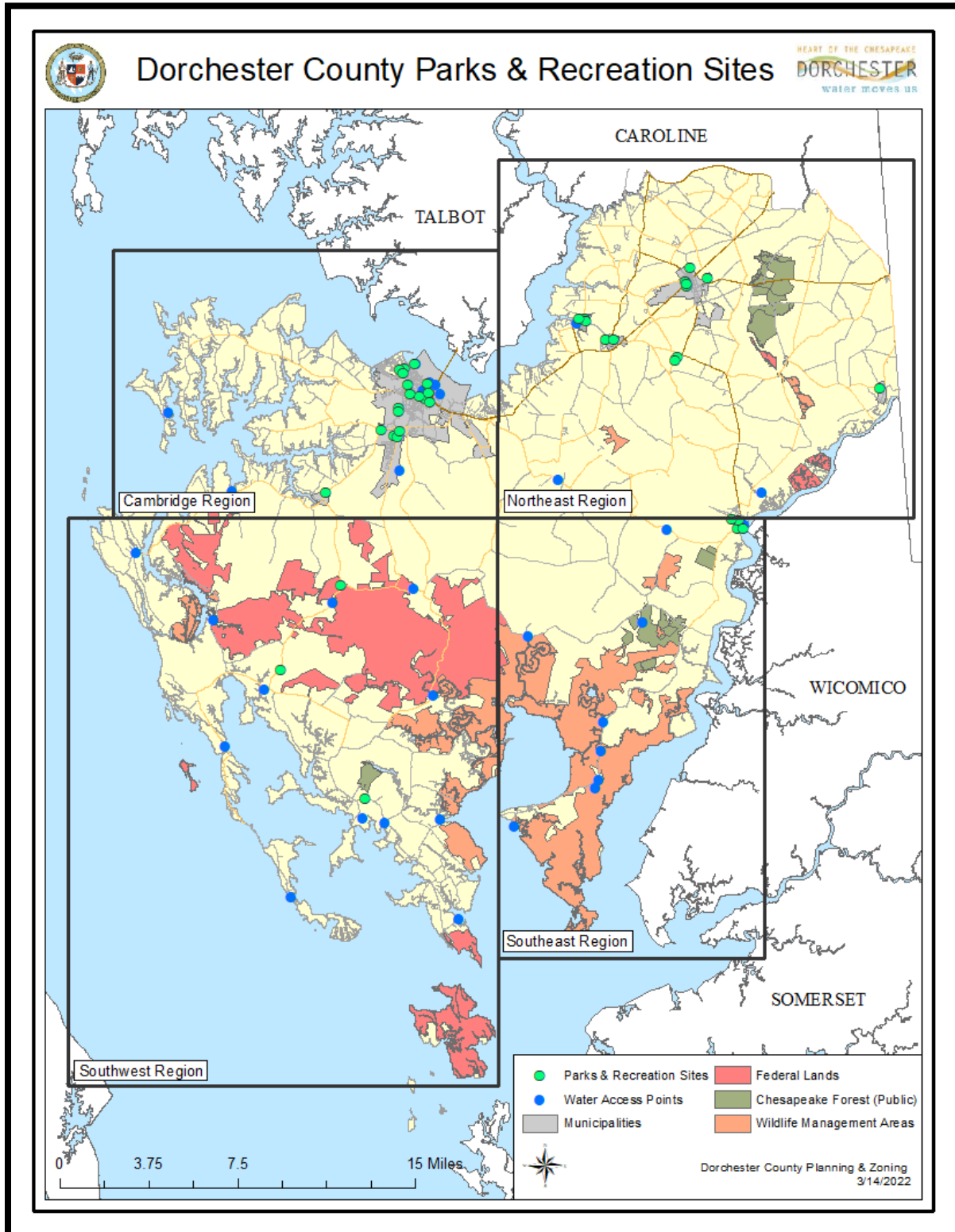


Map II-12 Park Proximity & Equity in Hurlock

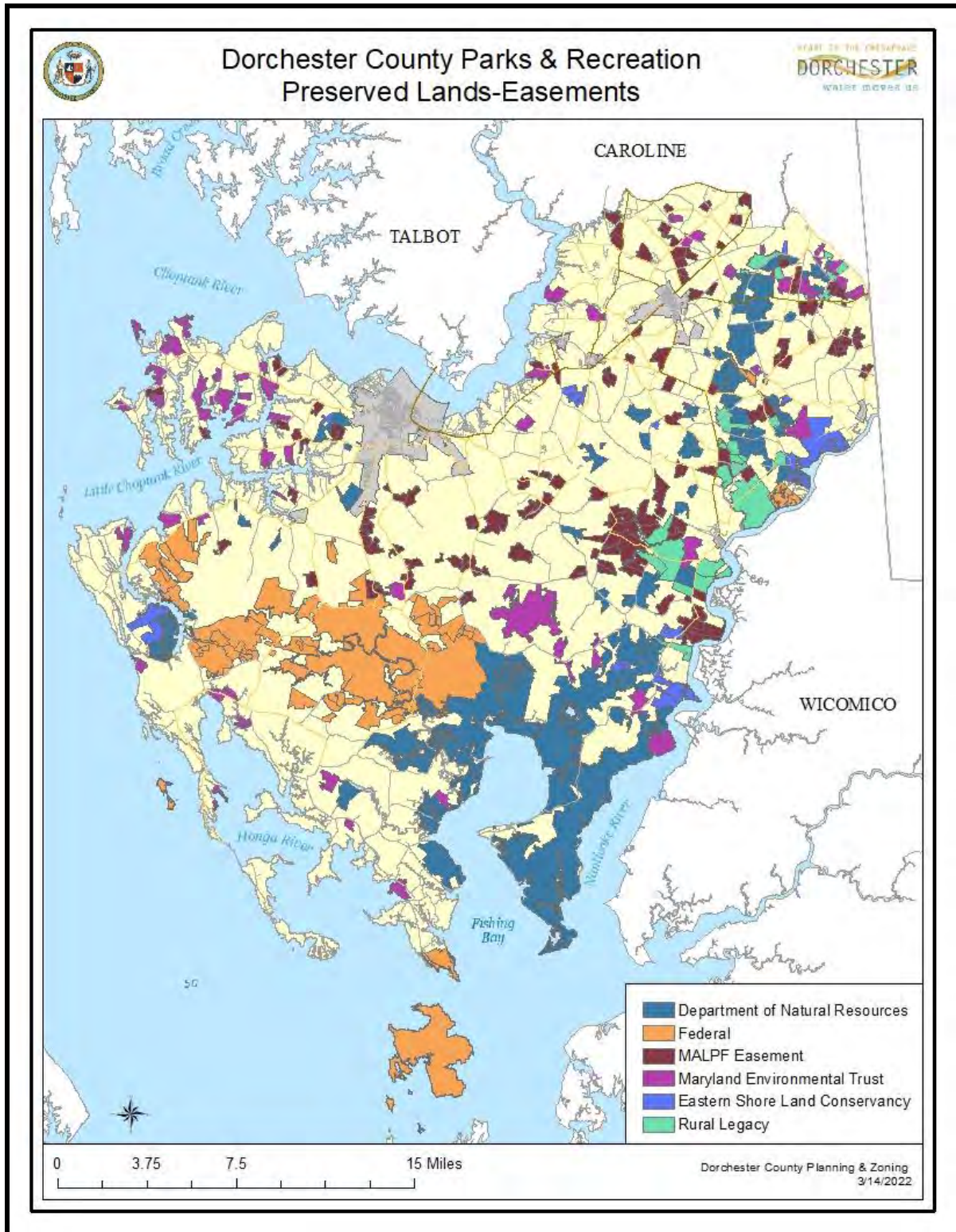


Chapter III: Natural Resource Land Conservation

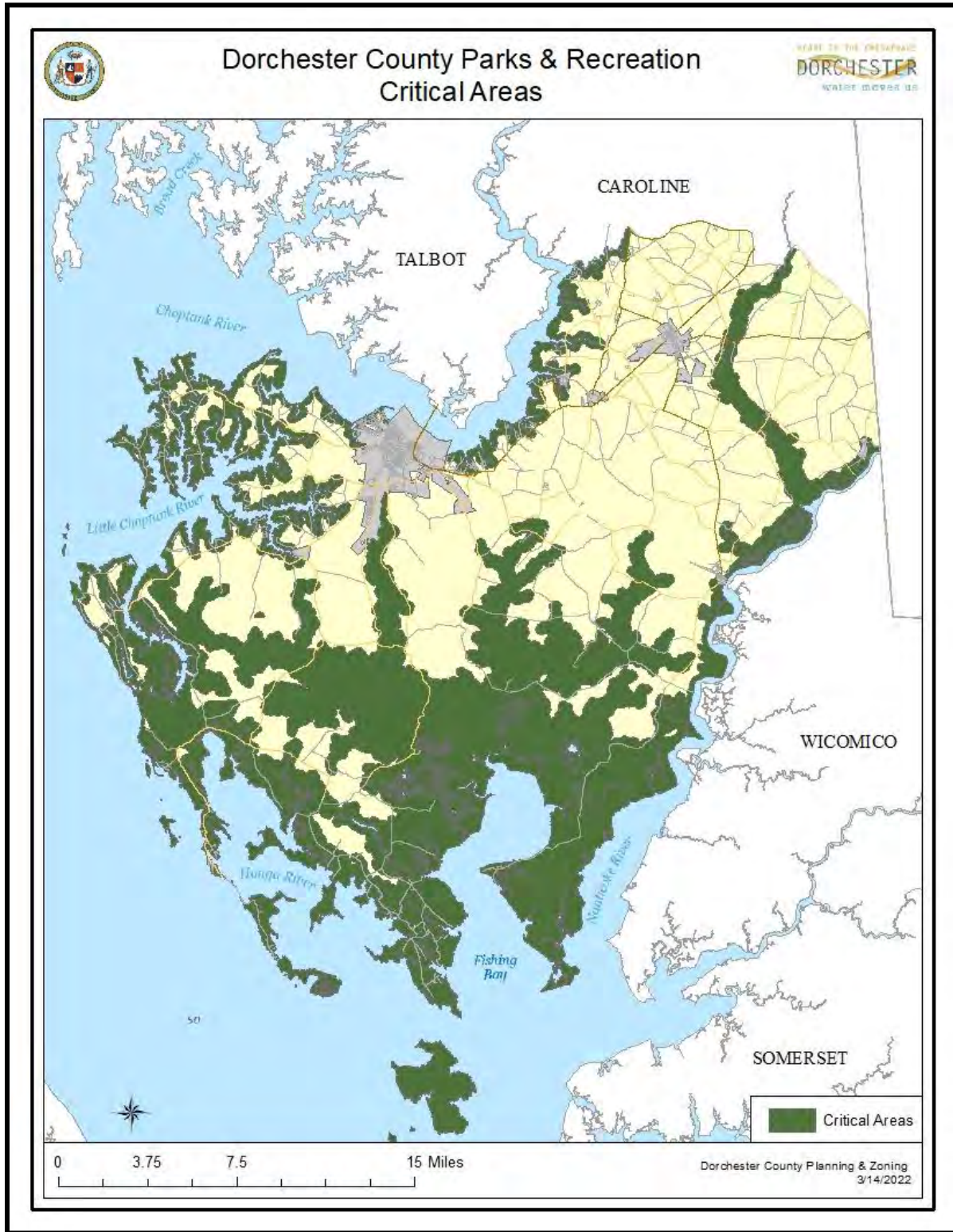
Map III-1 Natural Resource Land Inventory



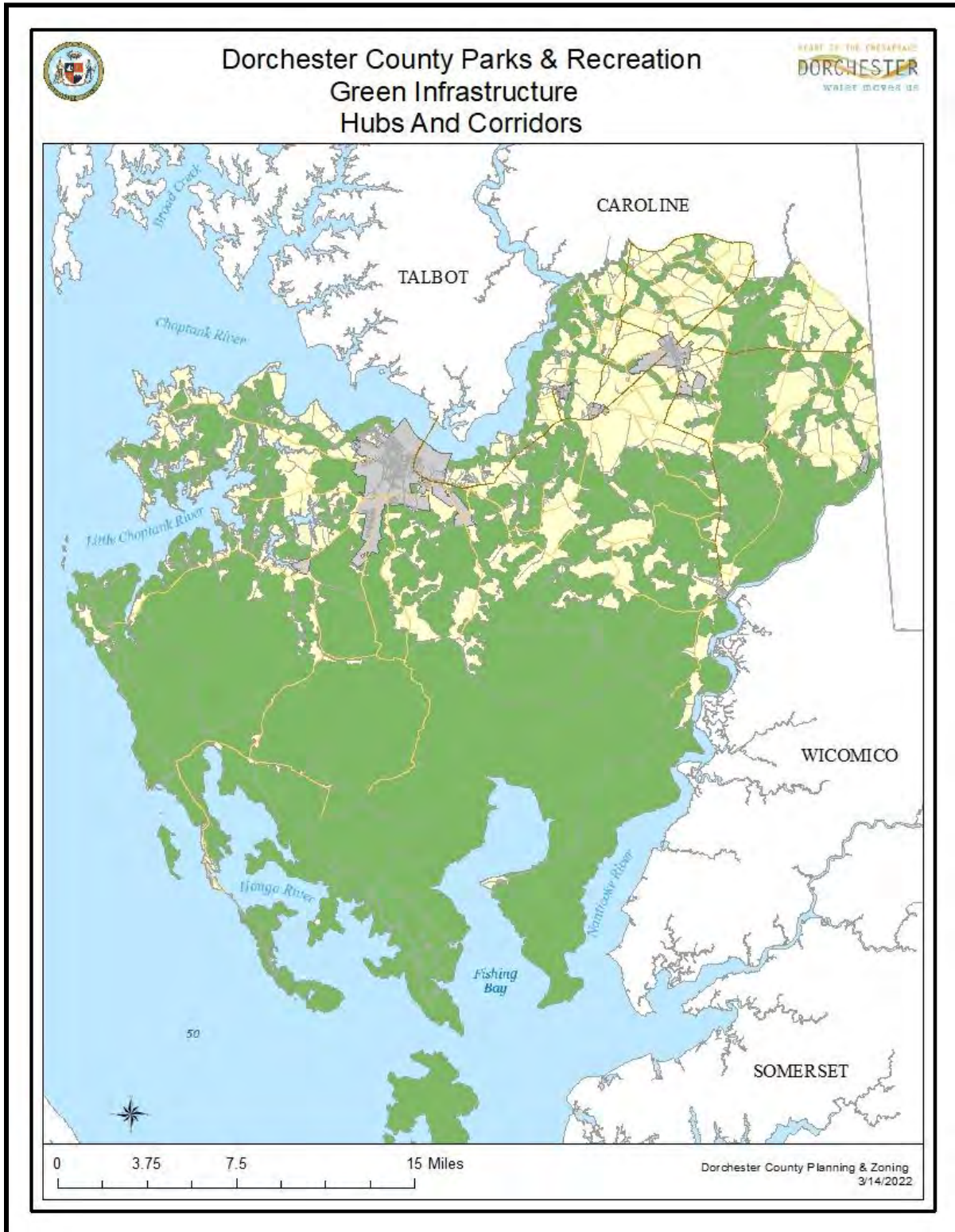
Map III-2 Preserved Lands - Easements



Map III-3 Critical Areas



Map III-4 Green Infrastructure Hubs & Corridors

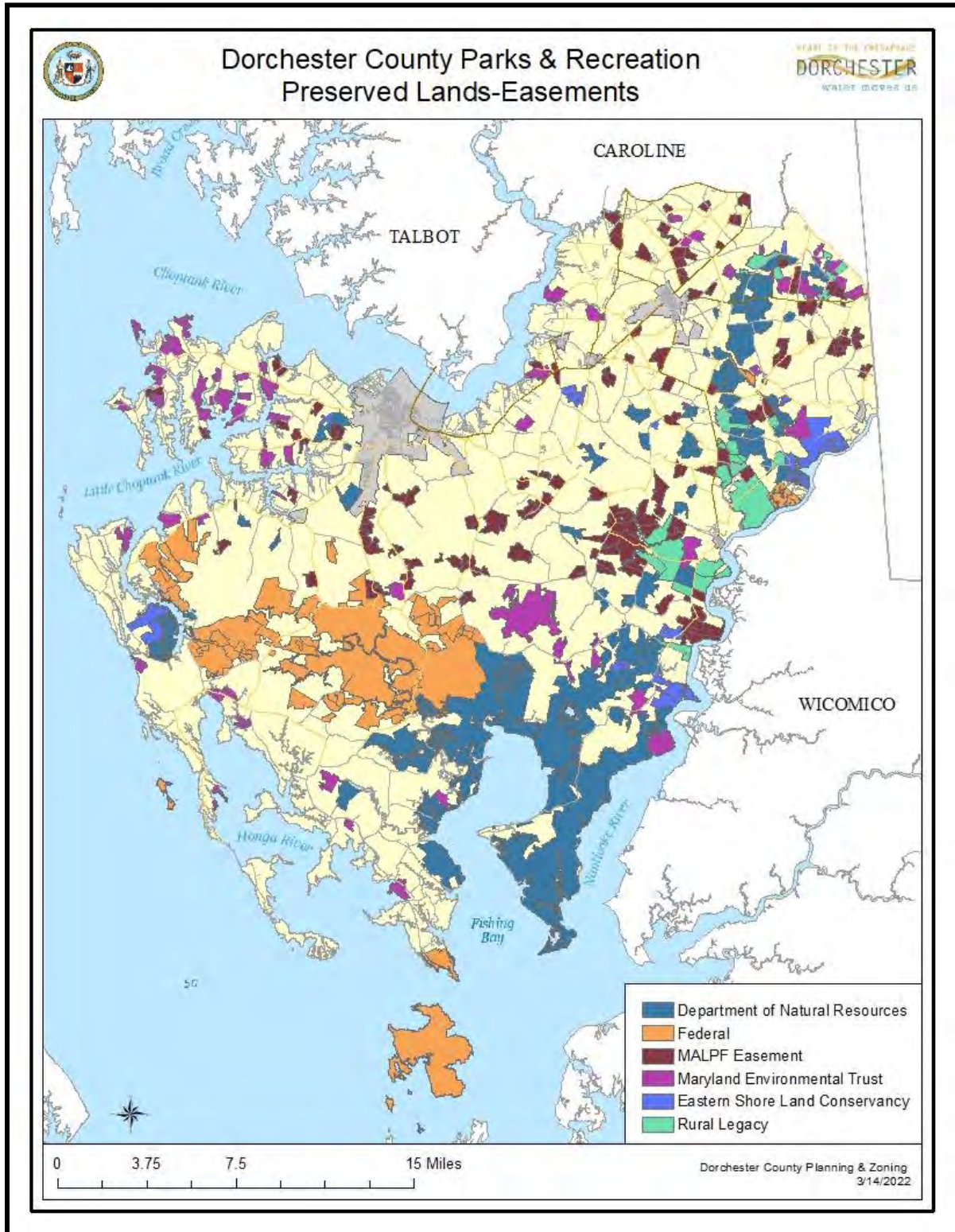


Chapter IV: Agricultural Land Preservation

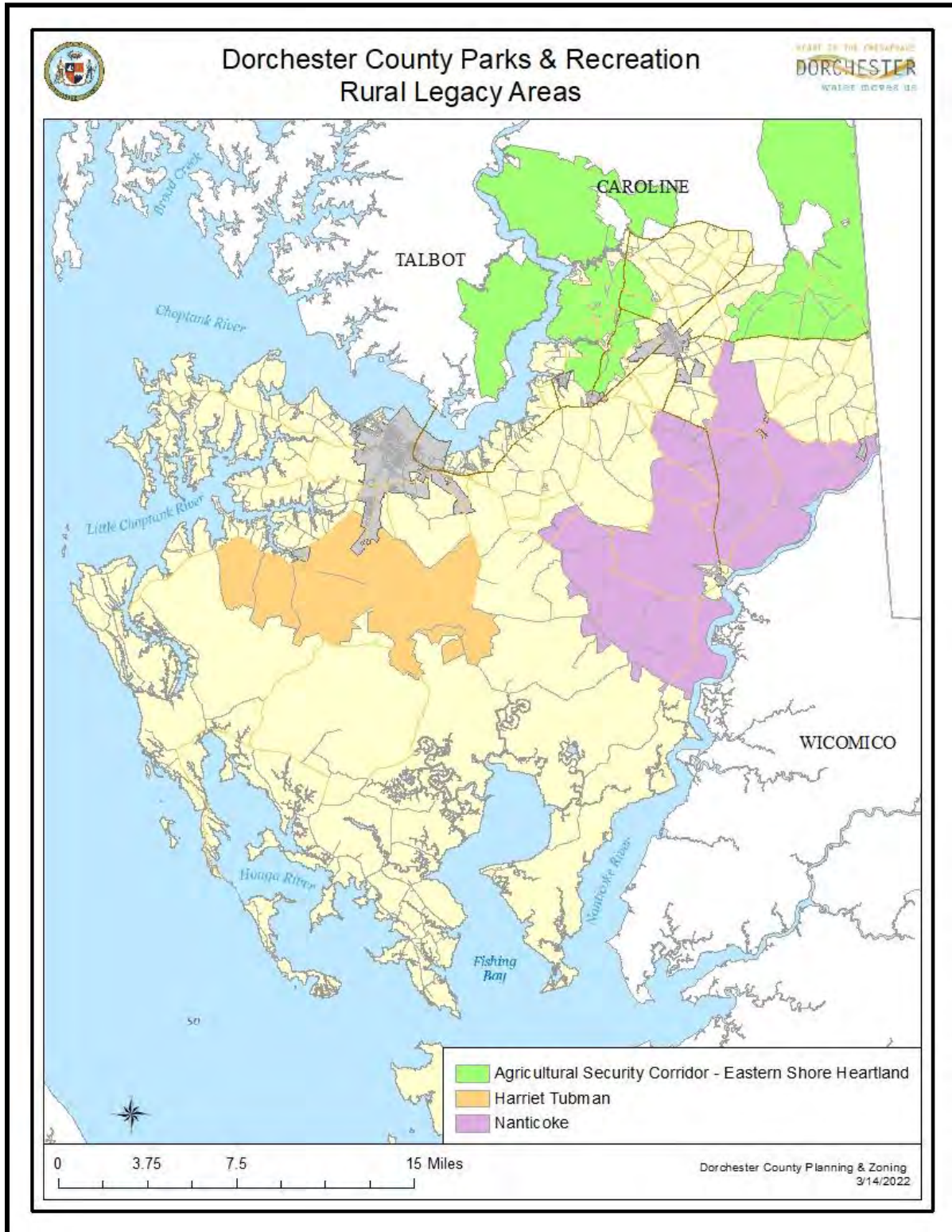
Map IV-1 Priority Preservation Area



Map IV-2 Preserved Lands - Easements



Map IV-3 Rural Legacy Areas



Appendix B: Dorchester County LPPRP Inventory Spreadsheet

Facility ID	Parks and Recreation Inventory			Outdoor Recreation Amenities:							Field/Facility Based Recreation Amenities:							Notes:
	Site Name:	Property Address	Property Size (Acres)	Outdoor Recreation Area (acres):	Natural Areas	Water Access	Picnic Facilities	Trails	Hunting/ Fishing	Other	Field/Facility Recreation Area (acres)	Sports Fields	Playground/ Play Structure	Basketball	Tennis	Activity Building/ Recreation Center		
County Parks and Recreation																		
101	Christ Rock Park	Route 16 and Dailsville Rd.	10.5	10.5							10.5	x		x				
102	Crapo Community Center	Lakesville Crapo Rd., Crapo	6.7	6.0							6.0	x				community center		
103	Egypt Road Park	Egypt Road, Cambridge	95.0	95.0	x	x	x	x	x	fishing, bird watching								
104	Glasgow Street Athletic Complex	1405 Glasgow Street, Cambridge	27.2	27.2			x				27.2	x	x	x	x	4 baseball, 3 multipurpose, adjacent to Glasgow Tennis Courts		
105	Hurlock Athletic Complex	Poplar Street, Hurlock	17.1	17.1							17.1	x			x	4 baseball/softball fields		
106	J Edward Walter Park	446 Willis Street, Cambridge	5.8	5.8							5.8	x				baseball field		
107	Little Blackwater River - Maple Dam Property	Maple Dam Road	124.2	124.2	x	x			x							Kayak launch to be developed		
108	McCarter Park	LeCompte & Aurora St. Cambridge	2.5	2.5			x				2.5	x	x			Pavilion		
109	Sailwinds Park	200 Bym Street, Cambridge	2.7	2.7		x	x	x	x	fishing			x			Goose Monument rehab in process		
110	Dorchester Recreation Center	515 Leonard Lane, Cambridge	2.9													basketball, tennis, Boys & Girls Club, recreation programming		
111	Dorchester County Swimming Pool	107 Virginia Ave, Cambridge	3.0	3.0			x				3.0		x			Swimming Pool		
County Parks and Recreation Total:			297.6	294.0							72.1							
Municipal Parks and Recreation																		
Cambridge																		
201	Calvin Mowbray Park	Private Open Space (?)	1.6	1.6			x				1.6		x	x		community park		
202	Cannery Park & Rails to Trails	Washington & Route 50	6.6	6.6	x			x		walking path	6.6					Rail to Trail with additional 2.3 acres		
203	Cornish Park	Douglas & Wells St.	0.8	0.8		x					0.8		x	x		pavilion		
204	Cosby Avenue Park	High St, Cambridge																
205	Dorchester Arts Center	High St, Cambridge																
206	Jerry Boyle Park at Great Marsh	Somerset Ave., Cambridge	5.7	5.7	x	x	x	x	x	fishing, beach	5.7	x	x			boat ramp, pavilion, benches		
207	Long Wharf Park & Marina	100 High St, Cambridge	7.3	7.3	x				x	fishing						Lighthouse		
208	Meadow Avenue Park	Meadow Avenue	1.0	1.0			x				1.0		x	x				
209	North Drive Park	Private Open Space	1.7	1.7							1.7		x	x		community park		
Cambridge Total Acreage			24.6															
Church Creek																		
210	Church Creek Park	Route 16, Church Creek	2.3	2.3			x				2.3	x	x			gazebo		
Church Creek Total Acreage			2.3															
East New Market																		
211	East New Market Park	Creamery Road, ENM	3.1	3.1		x	x			gazebo	3.1	x	x	x	x			
212	Friendship Park	Railroad Rd, ENM	2.9	2.9			x	x		walking path	2.9							
East New Market Total Acreage			6.0															
Galestown																		
213	Galestown Playground	Old School House Rd., Galestown	1.0	1.0							1.0		x					
Galestown Total Acreage			1.0															
Hurlock																		
214	Hurlock Town Park (Triangle Park)	Elm St, Hurlock	1.5	1.5	x		x				1.5		x	x				
215	Prospect Hills Community Park	Douglas Drive, Hurlock	0.6	0.6							0.6		x	x		pavilion, bleachers		
216	North Main Community Park	North Main St., Hurlock	19.3	19.3	x		x				19.3	x	x					
217	Veterans Community Park	North Main St., Hurlock	1.0	1.0	1					memorial						benches only		
Hurlock Total Acreage			22.4															
Secretary																		
218	Secretary Park	Linden Ave., Secretary	3.9	3.9	x		x		x	grill, pavilion	3.9		x					
219	Secretary Veteran's Park	Main St, Secretary	0.5	0.5					x	pavilion, benches,	0.5							
Secretary Total Acreage			4.4															
Vienna																		
220	Vienna Town Park	Market St., Vienna	6.5	6.5			x				6.5	x	x	x	x	restrooms		
221	Gay Street Town Park	Gay St, Vienna	0.6	0.6				c	x	benches, walking path	0.6		x					
222	Vienna Nature Park	Water St., Vienna	2.8	2.8	x				x	walking path, gazebo								
Vienna Total Acreage			9.8															
Municipal Parks and Recreation Total:			70.4	68.8							59.4							

CIP ~ COUNTY PARK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT SCHEDULE

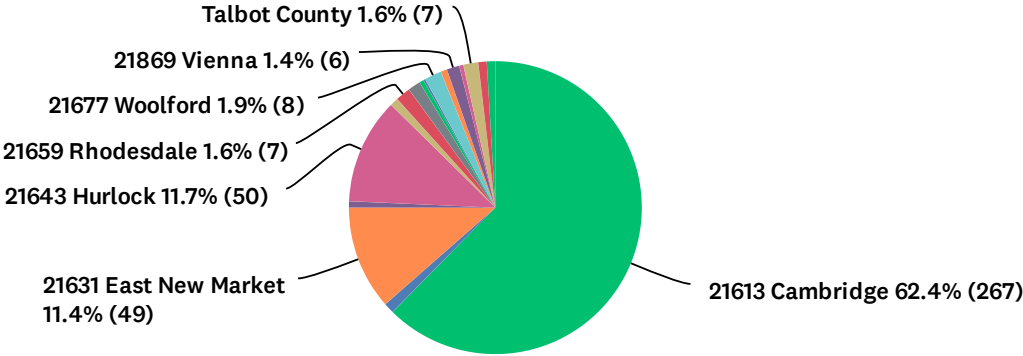
NOTE: Project listing is in alphabetical order. It does not imply priority. Budget values reflect a combination of capital grant funds and general tax funds

Location (area)	Projects	Description of Land Preservation and Recreation Park Recommendations	Estimated Total Cost (\$1,000's)	Relative Priority/Capital Plan	Acres to be Acquired	Estimated Short-Range (2022-2024) Cost (\$1,000s)			Estimated Mid-Range (2025-2027) Cost (\$1,000s)			Estimated Long-Range (2028-2030) Cost (\$1,000s)		
						Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehab	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehab	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehab
C A M B R I D G E	Dorchester County Community Pool	Renovate Concession Stand	\$300				\$300							
		Renovate Restrooms	\$200				\$200							
	Christ Rock Park	Park Development (playground structures, basketball courts, new goals, parking lot resurface)	\$250					\$250						
	Dorchester County Recreation Center	Renovation	\$500						\$500					
	School Street Athletic Complex	Refurbish Paved Courts / New Goals & Multi Use Fields, Fencing	\$150						\$150					
		Stadium Lighting & Parking	\$250					\$250						
	Little Blackwater-Maple Dam Property	Master Plan for Nature Park w/kayak-canoe launch	\$100					\$100						
HURLOCK	Hurlock Community Park	Add benches and picnic tables	\$25				\$25							
		Tennis Court /Pickleball Resurfacing (3 courts)	\$125						\$125					
CRAPO	Crapo Community Center	Playground Development	\$75				\$75							
CHURCH CREEK	Church Creek Park	Park Redevelopment with Town for site development surfacing, erosion control, facility, equipment	\$75							\$75				
Totals			\$2,050				\$1,200	\$775		\$75				

Appendix D: Community Engagement

Q1 What is your Zip Code in Dorchester County or your location out of County?

Answered: 428 Skipped: 0

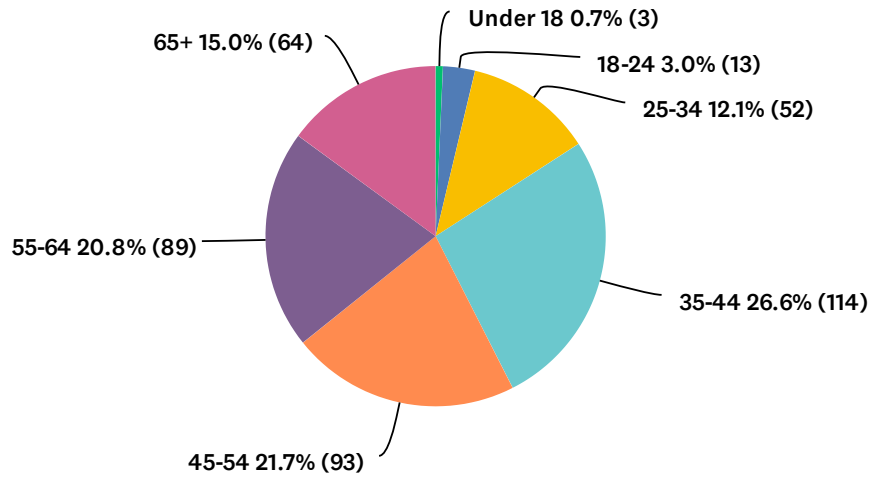


Dorchester Recreation & Parks

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
21613 Cambridge	62.4%	267
21622 Church Creek	1.2%	5
21626 Crapo	0.0%	0
21627 Crocheron	0.0%	0
21631 East New Market	11.4%	49
21634 Fishing Creek	0.7%	3
21643 Hurlock	11.7%	50
21648 Madison	0.9%	4
21659 Rhodesdale	1.6%	7
21664 Secretary	1.4%	6
21669 Taylors Island	0.5%	2
21672 Toddville	0.2%	1
21675 Wingate	0.0%	0
21677 Woolford	1.9%	8
21835 Linkwood	0.7%	3
21869 Vienna	1.4%	6
Caroline County	0.5%	2
Talbot County	1.6%	7
Wicomico County	0.9%	4
Delaware	0.0%	0
Other	0.9%	4
TOTAL		428

Q2 What is your age?

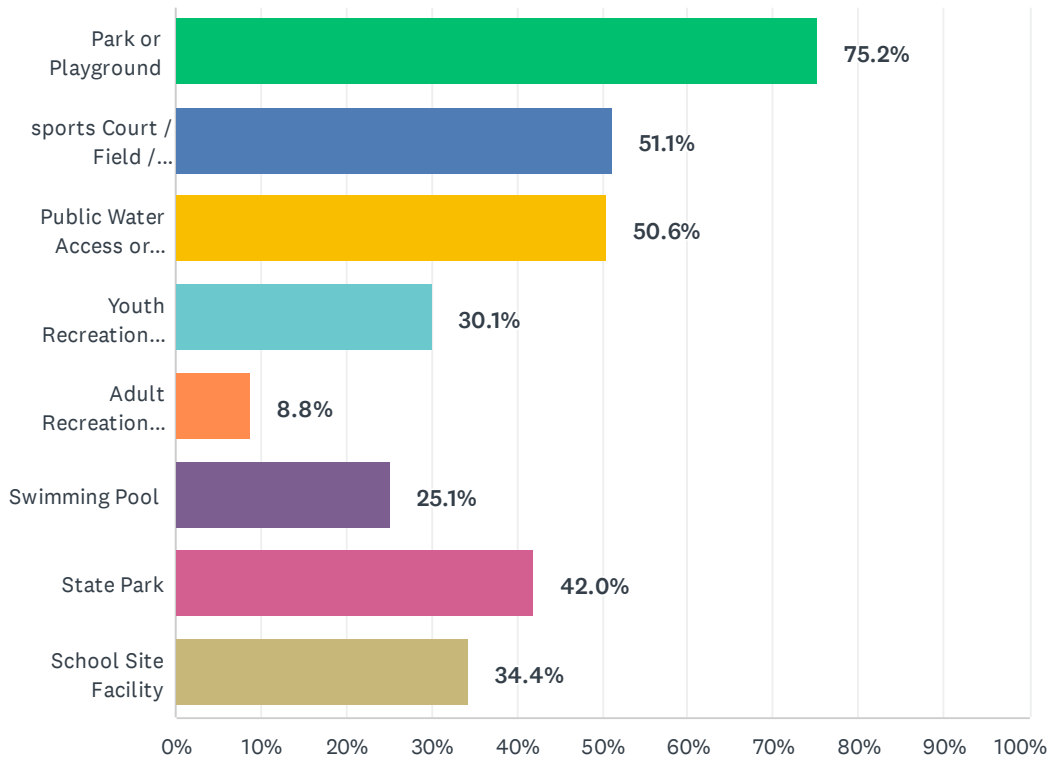
Answered: 428 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	0.7%	3
18-24	3.0%	13
25-34	12.1%	52
35-44	26.6%	114
45-54	21.7%	93
55-64	20.8%	89
65+	15.0%	64
TOTAL		428

Q3 In the past year what Recreation and Parks facilities and / or programs have you or someone in your immediate family used? (Check ALL that apply)

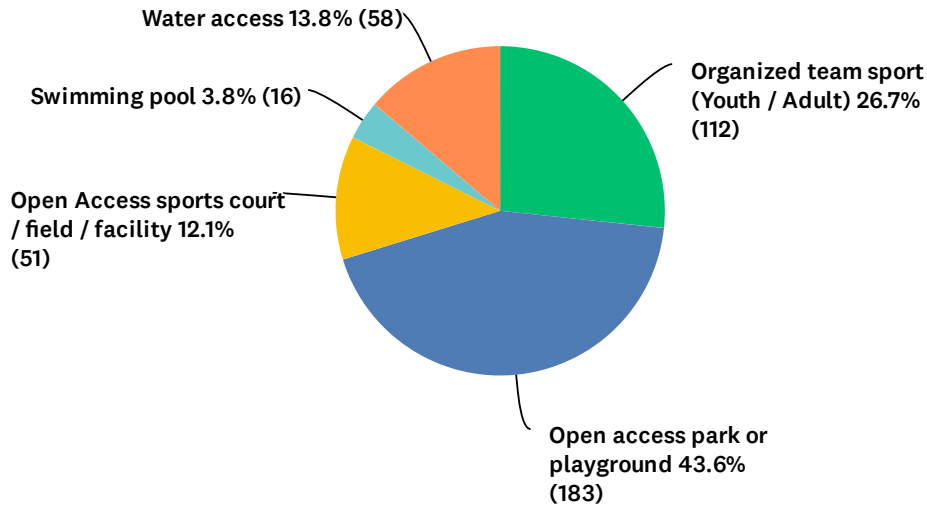
Answered: 419 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Park or Playground	75.2%	315
sports Court / Field / Facility	51.1%	214
Public Water Access or Landing	50.6%	212
Youth Recreation Program	30.1%	126
Adult Recreation Program	8.8%	37
Swimming Pool	25.1%	105
State Park	42.0%	176
School Site Facility	34.4%	144
Total Respondents: 419		

Q4 What type of facilities and / or programs do you and your immediate family use most frequently?

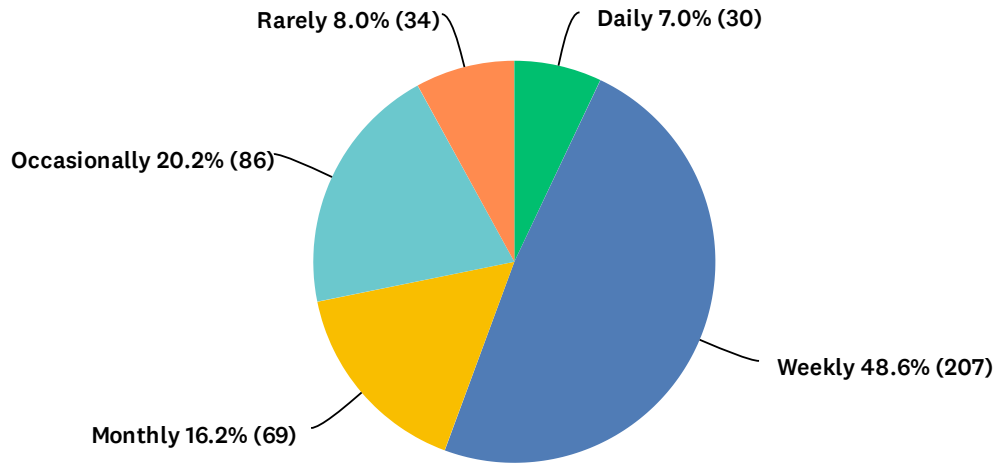
Answered: 420 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Organized team sport (Youth / Adult)	26.7%	112
Open access park or playground	43.6%	183
Open Access sports court / field / facility	12.1%	51
Swimming pool	3.8%	16
Water access	13.8%	58
TOTAL		420

Q5 How often do you or those in your immediate family visit Dorchester County parks or recreational facilities?

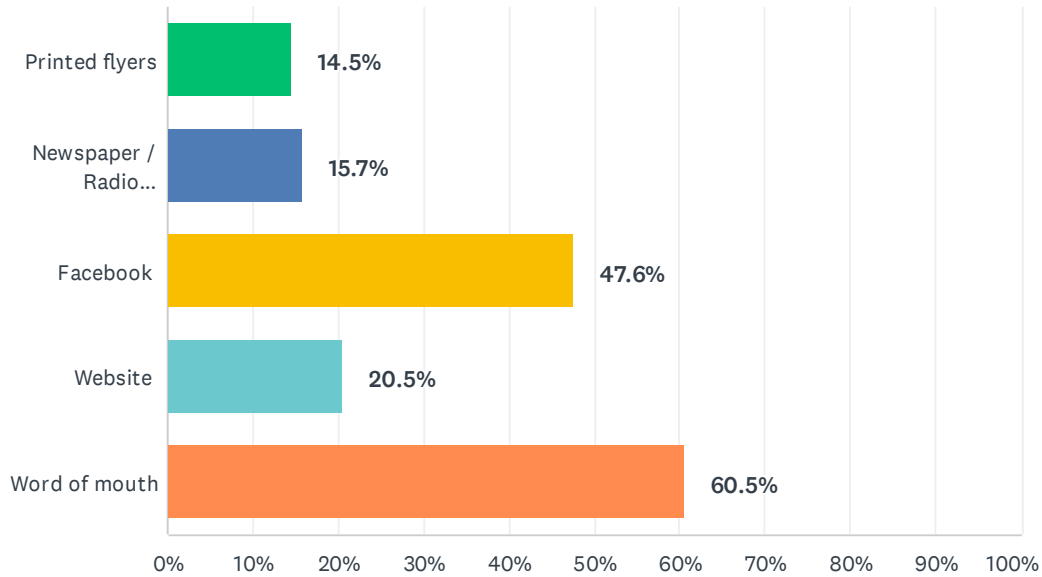
Answered: 426 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	7.0%	30
Weekly	48.6%	207
Monthly	16.2%	69
Occasionally	20.2%	86
Rarely	8.0%	34
TOTAL		426

Q6 How do you usually hear about Dorchester County Recreation and Parks programs? (Check ALL that apply)

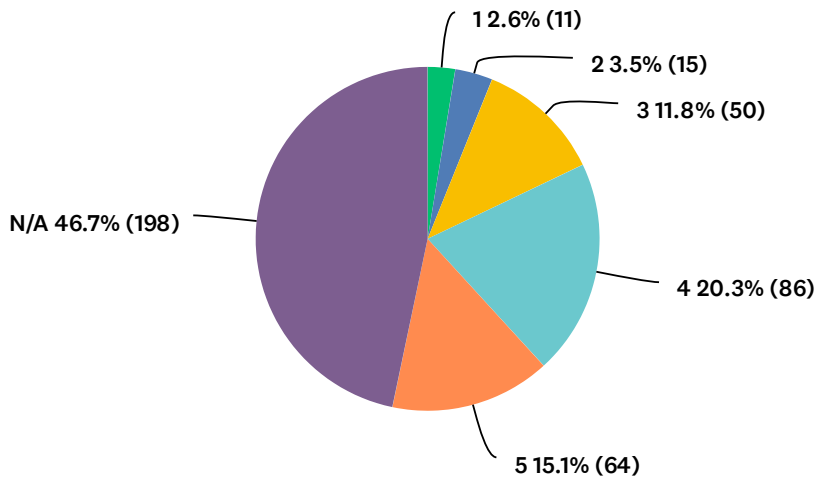
Answered: 420 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Printed flyers	14.5%	61
Newspaper / Radio announcements	15.7%	66
Facebook	47.6%	200
Website	20.5%	86
Word of mouth	60.5%	254
Total Respondents: 420		

Q7 On a scale from 1 - 5, with 5 being highly satisfied and 1 being not at all satisfied, if you or an immediate family member participated in a Recreation and Parks sponsored program in the last year, how satisfied were you with the quality of the program?

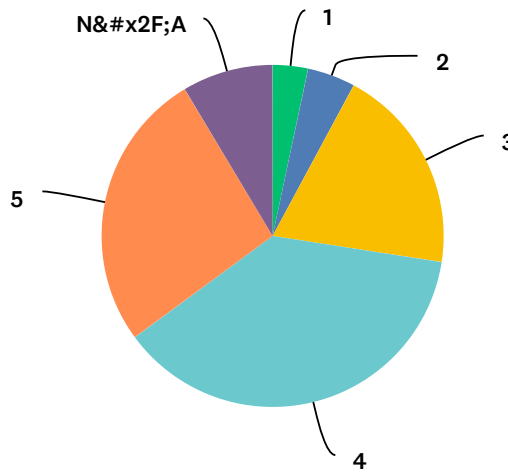
Answered: 424 Skipped: 4



	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	2.6%	3.5%	11.8%	20.3%	15.1%	46.7%	424	3.78
	11	15	50	86	64	198		

Q8 On a scale from 1 - 5, with 5 being highly satisfied and 1 being not at all satisfied, if you or an immediate family member used a public park or facility in the last year, how satisfied were you with the quality of the park or facility?

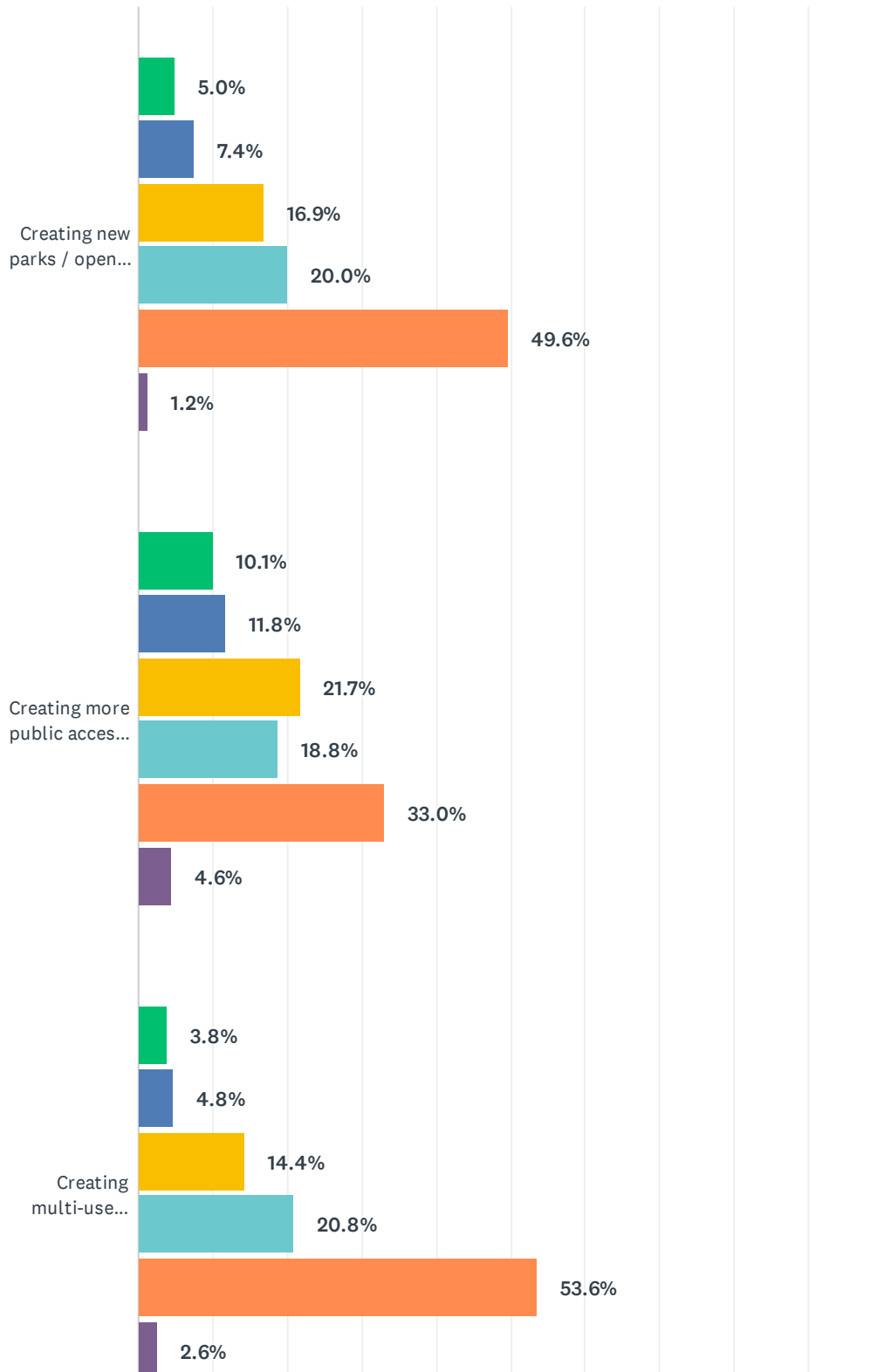
Answered: 419 Skipped: 9



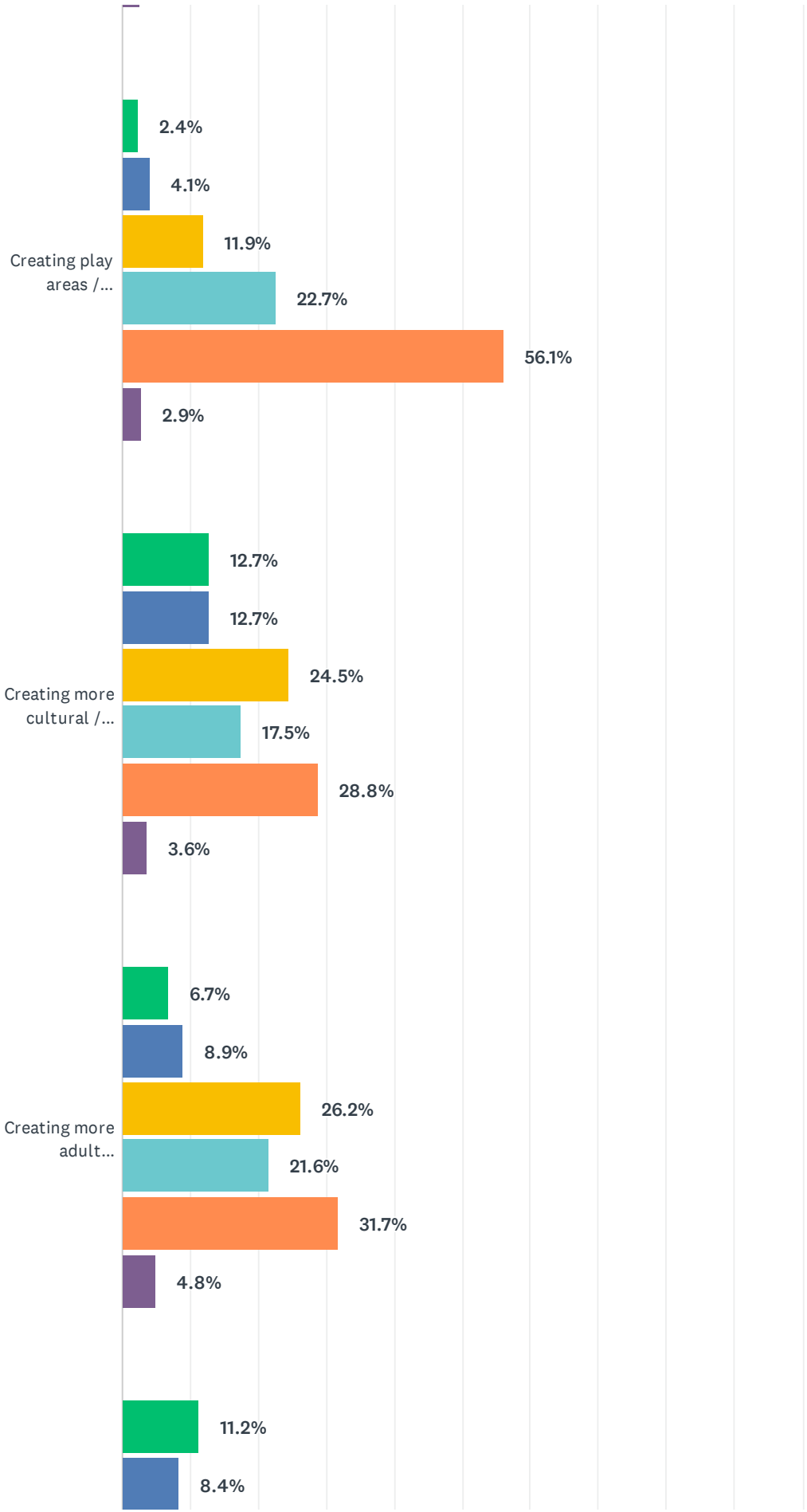
	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	3.34%	4.53%	19.57%	37.47%	26.49%	8.59%	419	3.87
	14	19	82	157	111	36		

Q9 With a rank of 5 being highly important at this time and a rank of 1 being not important at this time, please indicate the importance of each of the following goals.

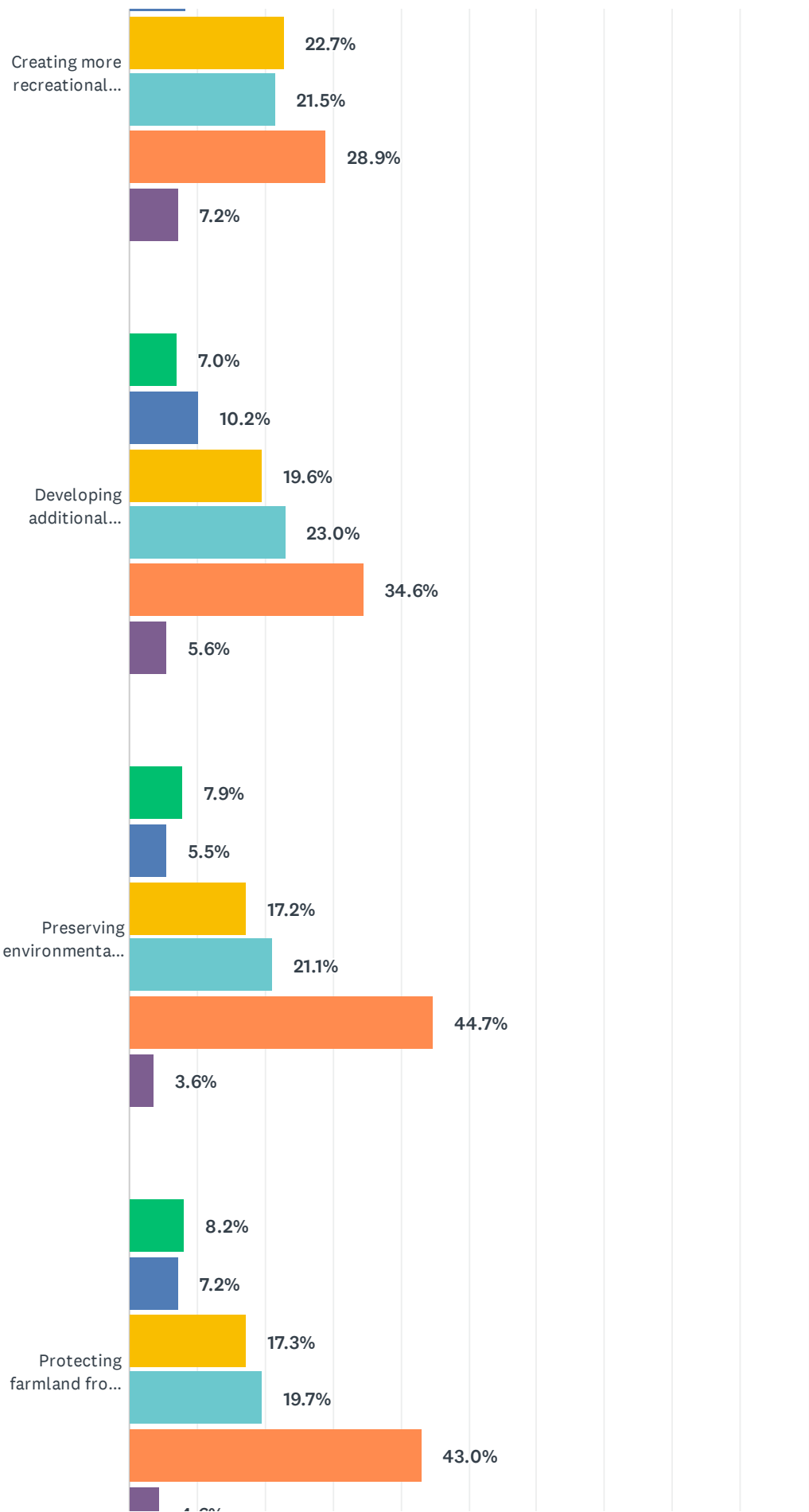
Answered: 425 Skipped: 3



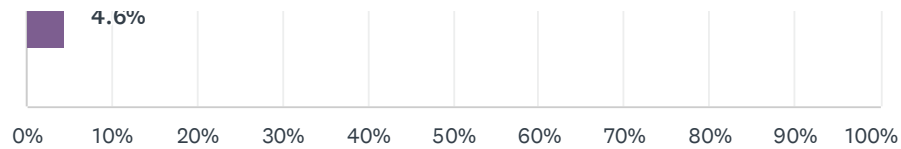
Dorchester Recreation & Parks



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	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Creating new parks / open spaces	5.0% 21	7.4% 31	16.9% 71	20.0% 84	49.6% 209	1.2% 5	421	4.03
Creating more public access to water	10.1% 42	11.8% 49	21.7% 90	18.8% 78	33.0% 137	4.6% 19	415	3.55
Creating multi-use trails	3.8% 16	4.8% 20	14.4% 60	20.8% 87	53.6% 224	2.6% 11	418	4.19
Creating play areas / recreation for youth	2.4% 10	4.1% 17	11.9% 50	22.7% 95	56.1% 235	2.9% 12	419	4.30
Creating more cultural / historical attractions	12.7% 53	12.7% 53	24.5% 102	17.5% 73	28.8% 120	3.6% 15	416	3.38
Creating more adult recreational programming	6.7% 28	8.9% 37	26.2% 109	21.6% 90	31.7% 132	4.8% 20	416	3.66
Creating more recreational programming for seniors	11.2% 47	8.4% 35	22.7% 95	21.5% 90	28.9% 121	7.2% 30	418	3.52
Developing additional athletic fields for youth	7.0% 29	10.2% 42	19.6% 81	23.0% 95	34.6% 143	5.6% 23	413	3.72
Preserving environmentally sensitive areas	7.9% 33	5.5% 23	17.2% 72	21.1% 88	44.7% 187	3.6% 15	418	3.93
Protecting farmland from development	8.2% 34	7.2% 30	17.3% 72	19.7% 82	43.0% 179	4.6% 19	416	3.86

Q10 What improvements can we make to our existing parks or programs, and what additional park amenities or new programs do you think our County should work to make available?

Answered: 262 Skipped: 166

Q10 What improvements can we make to our existing parks or programs, and what additional park amenities or new programs do you think our County should work to make available?

Answered: 262 Skipped: 166

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	At pool make they stop overcharging customers. We're not dumb. I was charged 12 dollars for one person. 06/20/22 at 215. And this is not only time I've heard of this. It's ridiculous Fix it.	6/20/2022 3:58 PM
2	Dog park.	6/11/2022 9:29 AM
3	Single Swings for young youth at Sailwinds. Shaded play area. Toddler areas for safe play that is gated for active learning runners.	4/14/2022 7:36 AM
4	Youth volleyball and middle school volleyball which could help when they enter high school	4/10/2022 7:51 PM
5	Regular/budgeted/scheduled litter clean up and maintenance of existing trees and beds. Sailwinds Park, our "welcome center" is a littered gateway with trees and beds planted and rarely maintained. Keep what we have and nurture it. This is a rare gem, let's treat it that way and keep litter out of our waterways!	4/7/2022 11:41 AM
6	Cambridge has no Parks & Rec department or a staff. The current Public works department that takes care of he parks need more staff please and assistance.	4/5/2022 6:37 PM
7	Need more programs for 3yo. Not just soccer in the spring.	4/5/2022 11:34 AM
8	A dog park!!! I also heard fabulous things about your karate programs!	4/4/2022 6:59 PM
9	Paved walking trails!	4/4/2022 6:11 PM
10	We need large, safe dog parks throughout the county	4/3/2022 10:51 PM
11	bathroom facilities (or clean ones, where they are present); instruction/coaching on fitness programs/sports; consolidated booklet/website of all parks and available programs	4/3/2022 5:50 PM
12	Adding restrooms, rubberized surface vs mulch, trash pickup, more trash cans, more outdoor pools or a water park, splash pads.	3/31/2022 6:09 PM
13	I'd like to see the pool open for longer not just during the summer break from public schools, also there have been several times that we have shown up during posted hours and the doors are locked, with no notice on the door or on social media. I think we could do more to improve the fields and facilities that are currently managed by the county. Multi use trail systems are highly desirable and there is a significant lack of that present in the county.	3/31/2022 4:24 PM
14	Clean them up and update them the academy st park is not safe for the children it is intended for	3/31/2022 3:19 PM
15	There are no programs for youth 14 and up. Once youth graduate from HS there are no community programs for them to participate in.	3/31/2022 1:29 PM
16	Youth Basketball and fix the fishing pier	3/31/2022 12:42 PM
17	A better location for the Parks and Recs building - it is not a safe location especially to be at dark. Also the facility itself needs MAJOR improvements it looks exactly like it did in the 90s when it was the racquet club.	3/31/2022 11:13 AM
18	Over all the facilities are good, but the programs could be revved up- especially outside of Cambridge.	3/31/2022 8:41 AM
19	It would be nice to see more access to playgrounds for the little kids. Due to safety, we don't have access to school playgrounds and kids need more play space. We would also love to see more walking/ hiking/ interpretive trails. Many roads in the are have no shoulders or safe places to just walk/ exercise. Having these trails fulfills many healthy choices. I would also	3/31/2022 8:33 AM

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like to see water fountains open up again with perhaps a warning that drinker is responsible for their own health. Everyone needs water. Thank you

20	Need an appropriate budget and enough employees to provide good programs. Get community input, change some new faces on to board. Stagnant water stinks, and the commitment to youth sports has a direct affect in our schools and communities. Commit to making Sandy Hill fields a true complex because right now that is all we have.	3/31/2022 7:50 AM
21	Encourage bike paths that are separate and safe from auto traffic. Connect parks and playgrounds by bike trails.	3/31/2022 7:46 AM
22	Advertising for programs for children	3/31/2022 5:32 AM
23	n/a	3/30/2022 8:52 PM
24	More programs for youth Parks/recreational areas in the north county	3/30/2022 7:52 PM
25	Make the activities known	3/30/2022 7:34 PM
26	More places for kids indoors for winter to keep them busy and off the roads	3/30/2022 7:16 PM
27	A park with the outside exercise equipment and playgrounds with that new soft bouncy stuff under them instead of mulch. Use Blandair Park in Columbia MD for a reference	3/30/2022 6:50 PM
28	Fences around playgrounds for parents with multiple children.	3/30/2022 6:37 PM
29	Updated website, more community activities, more jobs for our youth through recs and parks	3/30/2022 5:21 PM
30	Clean the public port a potty at great marsh park. Most times I have seen it overflowing. It's absolutely filthy and terrible if someone needs to use it.	3/30/2022 5:07 PM
31	Programs - Keep in touch. I have joined the same program several years...but have missed it a couple of times because I heard about it too late. Parks and Recs should reach out to previous customers to inform them of dates and times of upcoming programs they know I will be interested in.	3/30/2022 4:57 PM
32	Love seeing the new playgrounds! Walking tracks would be nice. Our track in ENM is a dirt track and hard to push a stroller on.	3/30/2022 4:45 PM
33	More for older kids	3/30/2022 4:42 PM
34	Offer more programs and send out more letters	3/30/2022 4:33 PM
35	Self defense/martial arts programs for youth Improved parking at the School St fields SOMETHING needs to be done regarding American Legion Park downtown. It isn't remotely safe to utilize.	3/30/2022 4:33 PM
36	Community events in the parks for different age groups. I.e. egg hunt, scavenger hunt, etc. Enjoyed the art center activities hosted at the parks over the summer!!	3/24/2022 1:01 PM
37	Lower cost for youth programming	3/22/2022 9:14 AM
38	Youth and adult volleyball	3/21/2022 8:21 PM
39	Would love to see a sand volleyball ball court added. The only place in Dorchester county that has a sand volleyball court is the Hyatt. Please please add a court! It would certainly be put to good use!!!!	3/21/2022 5:34 PM
40	Currently we travel to other counties in order to enjoy the parks as there isn't many great options in dorchester county. There is no easy access walking trails in view of a playground, no skate parks of any kind, limited fields to toss a ball around. Unless you play softball or baseball as a kid I this county there isn't much option for others	3/20/2022 4:39 PM
41	More youth sport choices, summer camps/clinics, swimming lessons, using recycled materials at parks, equipment for all ages (young toddlers, preschoolers, older kids) activities/events for middle and high schoolers to keep them engaged in something	3/12/2022 12:14 PM
42	Turf fields, multi-purpose fields, more tennis clinics, basketball clinics	3/5/2022 9:22 AM
43	Adding more open facilities for people to play sports or workout without issue. An indoor facility could be recommended as well as a potential outdoor calisthenics ground	3/2/2022 5:17 PM

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44	Volleyball court with sand	3/2/2022 3:20 PM
45	Sand volleyball court, updated / nicer soccer fields	3/2/2022 3:19 PM
46	Please add a sand volleyball court somewhere! The only one we have access to is the Hyatt and sadly I've been kicked out multiple times because we are staying there! There are tons of people that I know around the dorchester area that would love this! I certainly would use it almost 24/7!	3/2/2022 2:43 PM
47	Clean and maintain	2/28/2022 9:37 AM
48	Indoor soccer facility	2/24/2022 1:10 PM
49	Better basketball areas	12/27/2021 10:02 AM
50	Make recreational sports facilities for children that are in decent locations where parents feel comfortable taking their kids!!	10/19/2021 9:36 AM
51	Kids/teens rollerskating, adult roller derby, fishing club for kids and adults (not all kids like sports), yoga, low impact cardio for seniors	9/6/2021 1:14 PM
52	The pool so operate at full capacity. Been there they close early, not enough life guards, and attractions are not operating	8/29/2021 6:23 PM
53	Dog park, skate park, indoor skating rink	7/16/2021 4:23 PM
54	You have to fix the pool it's a nightmare....been that way since you out sourced it's care	6/28/2021 8:20 PM
55	Improve the website. Difficult to navigate and not efficient.	6/13/2021 11:52 AM
56	I am new to the area and I am looking to start a youth basketball program for the community. Christ Rock park is an extremely under utilized location. The basketball court in particular is falling apart. The rims are rusted and drooping over. Weeds are growing in between the cracks of the court. The court is full of gravel and there are no benches or sitting area's with shade. Please consider revamping the basketball court at Christ Rock Park. I have some suggestions that I believe would bring life to the area and most importantly, a fun space to play. 1) Expand the size of the basketball court to accommodate two full size basketball courts (4 rims) 2) Consider an alternative flooring material besides concrete so the county can reduce its maintenance cost over the years. 3) New hoops with glass backboards. 4) Energy efficient lights that can be turned on at night time and automatically turn off. (Please search Ewald Park in Alexandria Virginia for an example). 5) Consider having the court fenced in and with sitting benches (It will protect the court and mitigate playing with a wet basketball) I hope the county would consider my request. I believe I speak on behalf of all basketball enthusiasts in the area. The above mentioned has become the standard outdoor modeled court in many locations outside of the eastern shore. If you would like to reach out to me, you can email me at JNP1989@outlook.com. Thank you! Jordan	5/27/2021 10:18 AM
57	Free of charge summer camps for low income families.	5/26/2021 3:33 PM
58	None	5/20/2021 6:48 PM
59	communication and adding track team	4/3/2021 10:03 PM
60	Na	4/2/2021 8:32 AM
61	Send out flyers to families about upcoming sports for kids. We missed it this year but was refunded the year before so we should've been informed when Tball was starting this year.	3/26/2021 5:38 AM
62	Existing programs -I would propose coordination with the schools and newly acquired Racquet Club for increased productivity for our youth basketball program. i.e. More court space and time to allow coaches to practice. More time for kids to actually build skills, instead of just playing in game - or not playing if they aren;t one of the better players. Additionally, the Racquet Club provides for the opportunity to conduct skills clinics, for any sport, to improve their actual skills and gain confidence. -I would suggest that looking for individuals to "lead" these skills clinics, strategically, would provide chances for kids and coaches to grow. Meaning, go find a well-known individual to conduct a one-time skills clinic where coaches can "see" how to coach productively.	2/28/2021 12:12 PM
63	Making sure people know what programs , activities and sports are available. Many don't know until things have already started or never knew at all.	2/26/2021 5:06 PM

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64	Outdoor workout equipment at park.	2/7/2021 3:16 PM
65	Litter pick up, general maintenance of ditches, drainage to use as an example of what citizens should be doing	2/6/2021 9:53 AM
66	Please, please please organize adult tennis leagues and singles challenge ladders. Create more pickle ball leagues.	1/23/2021 2:45 PM
67	Please keep the trash cans scattered around the Sandy Hill fields and add some to Egypt Rd park.	1/22/2021 11:58 AM
68	Programs and activities at the community center/s	1/11/2021 1:58 PM
69	More organized youth sports	12/18/2020 8:44 PM
70	Keep the racquet ball court available for indoor softball practice.	12/18/2020 12:47 PM
71	I think we need a boys and girls club for our children. A bike park would be amazing. Our youth often get in trouble in their bikes. Why not give them an area where they can ride and not get fussed at?	12/17/2020 8:11 PM
72	So glad you have sports and the drama camp is excellent. Would like to see more in the music and art realm, especially outdoor art experiences, i.e. painting, drawing, music, instrumental and singing. Bocce would be welcome as well, as that crosses multiple populations including the young, seniors and the disabled.	12/17/2020 1:10 AM
73	Create more open space!	12/9/2020 6:35 PM
74	Just keep them neat and clean. Maybe add in art programs or public art.	12/7/2020 8:11 PM
75	Bathrooms!!! The playground in Easton has a bathroom why can't we have bathrooms at our playgrounds? And the playgrounds need some upkeep- most are made of metal and on the water- the metal parts need rustoleum.	12/6/2020 9:56 PM
76	I didn't know Dorchester county had a parks and Rec program! I put website as my answer on an earlier question because it didn't have n/a.	12/6/2020 3:09 PM
77	Hiking trails, more (and emptied) trash cans with bags for dogs, designated dog park	12/6/2020 8:28 AM
78	Skatepark or something else for kids in this area!	12/5/2020 11:36 PM
79	For existing parks, I feel a real need for rules to be made and enforced that all who use the parks pick up their own trash.	12/5/2020 7:02 PM
80	Youth sports should be played acc to regulations of field size and number of players. Recruit adult involvement sooner for youth activities. Expand activities for seniors- partner with other organizations.	12/4/2020 8:40 AM
81	More use of Sailwinds for various activities. More over 55 activities	12/4/2020 4:21 AM
82	A pavilion for outdoor live music. Free for the community. Get sponsors from car dealerships or local businesses. I use to work at the Avalon in Easton and virtually all of Army, Navy bands are Free and they bring their own equipment. They just need something to plug in to. It's a great pick me up for the community.	12/4/2020 3:29 AM
83	Keep them clean.	12/3/2020 8:52 PM
84	More Trash Cans in the Parks, Public Restroom at Great Marsh Park, Outdoor Concert Venue.	12/3/2020 7:40 PM
85	New basketball courts outside	12/3/2020 7:35 PM
86	A rail trail from Cambridge to Hurlock on the old rail line would be a wonderful asset for our community	12/3/2020 7:31 PM
87	There needs to be an indoor space for youth to hang out, sports, exercise, etc	12/3/2020 7:29 PM
88	Multi use trails	12/3/2020 7:27 PM
89	Soft launch access for SUP and Kayaking	12/3/2020 7:14 PM
90	Fitness stations at gerry boyle park	12/3/2020 7:12 PM
91	need more seating	12/3/2020 6:14 PM

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92	Create adult recreation opportunities, kayak launch areas, rails to trails trails	12/3/2020 5:48 PM
93	Need new trails and linkages to existing resources/rec areas run by county or city. Maximize opportunities at existing county sites/rec properties. Coordinate with "like" partners in the community and not compete or duplicate programs. Partner with other departments and non profits to better publicize what all Dorchester has. P&R is an asset to sell the community to potential new businesses and residents. Don't be limited by what has always been done.	12/2/2020 1:27 PM
94	Pickleball courts that are exclusively pickleball. With fencing or barriers around each court for ball retention.	11/30/2020 11:06 AM
95	More permanent pickleball courts at Glasgow and throughout the county	11/29/2020 8:02 AM
96	skateboard/bmx park	11/28/2020 10:50 AM
97	Keep the luminaries	11/25/2020 10:09 PM
98	Dedicated pickleball courts. Running/walking/biking trail surrounding the school street ball fields. Soft surface, such as gravel. Include exercise stations? Gravel trail system for bikes. Do something with woods behind sandy spring elem. Pickleball training. Since the ball fields aren't used much these days, convert some to something else. Build a dirt hill or "mountain" to climb/walk/ride up/around, perhaps sandy hill ball fields or snows turn. park. Adult tennis training.	11/25/2020 9:33 AM
99	It would be great if you could turn some of the Glasgow tennis courts into permanent pickleball courts. While underused for tennis, at least four courts are used 3-4 times per week for pickleball. It would be nice if we didn't have to put up and take down the nets each time we play.	11/24/2020 4:14 PM
100	Glasgow Courts: 1) Add additional 4-6 parking spots at ends of existing parking areas (gravel or blacktop) Est Cost= \$300 2) Place fill dirt where picnic table is to direct water away from where people sit. Est Cost= \$100 3) Install at least 1 extra bench for every bench there Est Cost= \$1000? 4) provide storage box and 2 pickleball nets for court areas recently painted. Est Cost= \$200 (box) + \$300 (nets) 5) Place solar spot-lights at pickleball mid-court lines for evening play (Tall fence post at transition from short to tall are almost perfectly aligned for this purpose). Est cost = \$50 per court.	11/24/2020 3:43 PM
101	Dedicated and safe walking/biking trails	11/24/2020 3:06 PM
102	With the growth of Pickleball in the County and specifically in the Cambridge area we need permanent netting for at least four courts.	11/24/2020 8:27 AM
103	Pickle ball courts in North Dorchester area.	11/24/2020 7:35 AM
104	To make youth sports fun and fair for all kids and coaches	11/23/2020 11:11 PM
105	Create dedicated, permanent pickle ball courts in Cambridge area.	11/23/2020 1:22 PM
106	Construct 4 permanent pickleball courts at the Glasgow Street complex.	11/23/2020 7:51 AM
107	It would be nice to have permanent pickleball courts in cambridge that were not tennis courts. It would be great to have pickleball courts with access to toilets and water fountains.	11/23/2020 7:24 AM
108	Creating permanent pickle ball courts either by building new courts or converting several of the tennis courts Cambridge Tennis Park. Pickle ball is fastest growing racket sport attracting ALL age groups!!!	11/22/2020 8:27 PM
109	Get some permanent Pickleball courts at Glasgow	11/22/2020 8:06 PM
110	Permanent pickleball courts at Glasgow St	11/22/2020 5:42 PM
111	We need Pickle ball courts in Cambridge and East New Market for Seniors!	11/22/2020 5:40 PM
112	Permanent Pickleball courts would be great	11/22/2020 4:26 PM
113	Pickleball courts and program	11/22/2020 4:24 PM
114	Lighted Pickleball courts with permanent nets	11/22/2020 3:58 PM
115	The County has become more Pickleball friendly. It would be nice to have a few courts already set up to play. There are plenty of tennis courts available, maybe a few could be transformed	11/22/2020 2:14 PM

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into Pickleball courts.

116	Keep public clean bathrooms available around the tennis and pickle all courts year round (not just when school is open.) very much needed in the Summertime	11/22/2020 2:12 PM
117	Pickle ball is the fastest growing recreational sport in the country, and a large number of us play pickle ball on an almost daily basis on the converted Glasgow tennis courts with temporary nets that must be broken down and rebuilt each time we play. It is time that permanent nets and courts be established in the county, or, at least, place permanent pickle ball courts with nets in the Glasgow tennis courts which is little utilized for tennis.	11/22/2020 1:45 PM
118	Cleanliness	11/22/2020 12:05 PM
119	More pickle ball courts	11/22/2020 11:49 AM
120	Permanent indoor and outdoor pickleball courts	11/22/2020 11:17 AM
121	More walking trails, especially along the water.	11/20/2020 9:03 AM
122	Add equipment to the parks that middle school to adults would be interested in using, other than a basketball court.	11/19/2020 7:04 PM
123	School Street needs to be developed. Many youth go outside the county for team sports and tournaments. We have a gem right there. Very concerned about the decline in sports in our high schools. We need feeder programs - volleyball, field hockey, basketball, football.	11/18/2020 9:33 PM
124	Just keep them updated n clean	11/18/2020 5:28 PM
125	encourage our political leaders to fully support our environmental gifts	11/18/2020 5:10 PM
126	make water facilities better; create a mini water park like at the Inner harbor in Baltimore with paddle boats for rent, a little ferry from Sailwinds to Long Wharf, other rentals such as kayaks, paddle boards, more water activities for locals and tourists.	11/18/2020 5:02 PM
127	Idk	11/18/2020 1:41 PM
128	Swimming/beach access; camping; hiking trails; bike paths/rails to trails	11/18/2020 11:41 AM
129	Keeping the public playground areas clean cutting the grass keeping the walking track clean adding more stones when needed a water fountain would be nice . It would be nice also to have a basketball court at the north main park for the kids on our end to have somewhere to go other than playing on the street in front of the houses	11/17/2020 8:59 PM
130	Little communication about adult recreation programs. Nothing on parks.	11/17/2020 8:38 PM
131	Should be focusing on downtown Cambridge pocket parks in concert with the City	11/17/2020 8:29 PM
132	Restroom facilities. More public access beaches.	11/17/2020 4:22 PM
133	open pickleball/tennis court in Hurlock	11/17/2020 3:10 PM
134	I think a skate boarding park or some bike riding trails would be good.	11/17/2020 2:25 PM
135	Bathroom facilities that are clean and supplied. More walking trails.	11/17/2020 1:26 PM
136	We should look to revitalize our current playgrounds, state parks and recreational areas. One big think is, we should open a skateboard park as soon as possible. There are a lot of young and old skateboarders who do not have a safe place to skate.	11/17/2020 12:27 PM
137	Designated Dog Park would be good to have. Some improvements to Great Marsh Park would be appreciated (raised trails, re-pave roadway).	11/17/2020 12:24 PM
138	Make sure beach area by Visitors Center is free from burrs. OUCH!	11/17/2020 11:57 AM
139	More parks with walking trails please!	11/17/2020 10:31 AM
140	More walking trails would be greatly welcomed. Also, safe outdoor options for children that no longer have physical education in school (other than sports teams).	11/17/2020 9:49 AM
141	I believe Rec and Parks does a great job of facilitating. We need to find ways to get more residents to participate and feel the programs are inclusionary.	11/17/2020 9:18 AM
142	Develop School Street fields into sports complex. There are already tennis courts and baseball	11/17/2020 7:57 AM

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fields. Develop soccer and lacrosse fields, and add some lights.

143	I enjoyed being able to reserve balls, nets for outdoor events. And, it's important to have variety for each age group.	11/17/2020 6:43 AM
144	Lighting, trash collection, bathrooms	11/16/2020 11:28 PM
145	I think it would be important to resurface the tennis courts to ensure the courts don't become dead. Also, I think it's important to get girls field hockey in place as well. Increased community involvement is crucial for all things to work!	11/16/2020 11:06 PM
146	Diverse areas for bikes, skateboarding, frisbee golf, for example.	11/16/2020 10:44 PM
147	Dog park	11/16/2020 7:03 PM
148	Add more seating and picnic tables.	11/16/2020 6:53 PM
149	More safety at soccer field	11/16/2020 6:31 PM
150	Existing parks need better facilities management, ie- cleaning and trash maintenance.	11/16/2020 6:00 PM
151	N/A	11/16/2020 5:53 PM
152	Programs and accessibility for seniors	11/16/2020 5:50 PM
153	Comprehensive programs for youth in Cambridge	11/16/2020 5:48 PM
154	Please build more basketball courts. Especially near the historically and majority-black neighborhoods. Please invest in turning some of the vacant lots into small parks or community gardens. Let's do this! Let's make Cambridge green and accessible! Thank you for the great parks that are already maintained.	11/16/2020 5:05 PM
155	More free programs for people to participate in	11/16/2020 5:01 PM
156	more of a beach at Great Marsh please! More picnic tables, mosquito spraying!	11/16/2020 11:45 AM
157	Na	11/15/2020 10:25 PM
158	Keep indoor tennis in. Cambridge.	11/15/2020 1:42 PM
159	bathrooms at every park. keep up equipment.	11/15/2020 12:53 PM
160	Skate park/ trails/ inclusive parks	11/15/2020 12:09 PM
161	Our county (especially Cambridge) REALLY needs a dog park!!	11/15/2020 9:32 AM
162	N/A	11/15/2020 9:06 AM
163	I have no ideas.	11/15/2020 8:17 AM
164	more adult sport leagues and high school league	11/15/2020 7:19 AM
165	Skate park, bike park, and or better parks. Seesaws, more swings, and basketball courts.	11/15/2020 7:02 AM
166	Clean up litter and develop an anti litter campaign - parks, steams and open areas are defiled by trash. Develop programs for kids so they are occupied, not roaming. Covid is making it tough but increased programming in better times must be prioritized. Get ideas from MRPA - surely there are network opportunities and mentors from other cities and counties our Rec Dept could learn from.?	11/14/2020 10:26 PM
167	1. I would like to see boat rentals made available, perhaps at the city's dock. 2. Also, add some pickle ball courts created and lessons for adults. 3. I'd like to see tennis instruction for adults...maybe some for seniors (the courts don't seem to be used very much). 4. With so many walkers in Cambridge, it would be nice if the city would take on repairing sidewalks in areas that are heavy walking routes.	11/14/2020 7:27 PM
168	Clean up trash	11/14/2020 5:07 PM
169	Picnic areas so seniors can go to parks and sit outside and have lunch	11/14/2020 4:27 PM
170	Soft launches for Kayakers!	11/14/2020 1:41 PM
171	Make certain grass is cut and trash is picked up at each area. Add canoe/kayak launch sites	11/14/2020 1:19 PM

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at Great Marsh, Sailwinds, Long Wharf, and other county sites.

172	Bathrooms at Great Marsh Park.	11/14/2020 11:54 AM
173	New to the area and if it wasn't for a neighbor would not have know about swimming pool. Need more exposure	11/14/2020 9:01 AM
174	Update or overhaul existing facilities and fields. Promote existing programs more, include ALL areas of the county not just Cambridge. Incorporate with local schools to push youth programs.	11/14/2020 8:34 AM
175	More parking at some remote locations.	11/14/2020 8:14 AM
176	A way for programs to be available for those who can't afford the fees associated with the program including equipment assistance. Also, better patrol of the pool. The pool is a great asset to the community, but it gets rowdy and no one seems to be in control or can take control of the situation	11/14/2020 7:43 AM
177	There really needs to be development or regional adult pleasure athletic leagues for soccer, volleyball, etc. I think the ES p&R teams should work together to form this opportunity. Adults need a team outlet to get and stay healthy through adulthood.	11/14/2020 3:50 AM
178	The children need a new location for soccer. The field in Cambridge is dangerous for families.	11/14/2020 12:12 AM
179	Hiking, biking horseback riding trails	11/13/2020 9:46 PM
180	We need new public parks with forested walking trails and native vegetation. "Open space" is not green space if it is athletic fields or farm fields or golf courses. More native trees, trees, trees! Almost all access to water is limited to private landowners. We need to provide education and incentives to homeowners and businesses to replace their lawns with natural habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, which is also good for people.	11/13/2020 2:51 PM
181	More access, better lighting	11/12/2020 7:30 PM
182	Bike and walking trails.	11/12/2020 5:57 PM
183	More organized activities and better facilities for our youth.	11/12/2020 4:17 PM
184	Camping and vendor rentals would be great for our open spaces.	11/12/2020 11:54 AM
185	More nature programs that emphasize importance of wetlands and marshes for wildlife and the Bay. Dorchester has the BEST marshes in Maryland and among the best the mid-Atlantic region.	11/12/2020 11:16 AM
186	Water aerobics at the County Pool for adults for an exercise class in the evenings for those that work or early morning for retired persons. Not everyone wants to pay the price for the YMCA just to use the pool area.	11/12/2020 10:56 AM
187	Multiple seasons for all sports	11/12/2020 9:38 AM
188	More usages with supervision	11/12/2020 9:16 AM
189	More maintenance done to repair broken metal at great marsh park	11/12/2020 5:51 AM
190	Longer Walking trails/bike trails closer to town, black water is nice but need something new different and intriguing down there lived here a long time, parks are important I have 2 boys love sailwinds the beach and hill especially, Another playground with fun equipment climbing, monkey bars, swings	11/12/2020 12:44 AM
191	I was very upset that my child had a huge delay in her final games because of town violence in the area	11/11/2020 10:18 PM
192	Upgrade some of the old equipment at the parks	11/11/2020 7:39 PM
193	Parks	11/11/2020 6:51 PM
194	Keep them clean, keep maintenace up	11/11/2020 6:26 PM
195	Restroom facilities, easier/more public water access areas for those parks on the water. More trash pick up in high use areas.	11/11/2020 2:24 PM
196	Connect our existing parks, athletic fields, recreational facilities, and the public waterfront with multi-use trails.	11/11/2020 12:03 PM

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197	I like all of the existing. It would be goid to see some new programs that would assist kids with life skills...cooking, babysitting, building. Workshops that could be replicated and sustainable so that kids had skills outside of just sports.	11/11/2020 11:58 AM
198	I am interested in starting a youth field hockey program for the county's children. I am also interested in helping the already established programs for youth in any way possible. My email: atravers510@outlook.com	11/11/2020 9:48 AM
199	Activities for kids...	11/11/2020 9:24 AM
200	JEW Park needs to be regulated so our kids aren't in danger. Parks need to be cleaner, tired of finding needles on the playground. Get organized when you're setting up league play. COMMUNICATE and be consistent!	11/11/2020 8:42 AM
201	Like to have some rail trails	11/11/2020 7:59 AM
202	Add a community park to West Vienna	11/11/2020 7:56 AM
203	Upgrade boat launch facilities (and try to attract vendors, including food and marine supplies) to the launch sites.	11/11/2020 7:43 AM
204	Build multi use trails	11/11/2020 7:27 AM
205	More diverse and safe biking, hiking and walking trails. Explore addition of horseback riding facilities. Partnerships with instructors / Chesapeake College. Partnership to build multi-use, youth and adult athletic facilities (not YMCA) and fields. With schools, local governments and private entities. Beautification, preservation and expansion of existing fields. Upgrade of smaller, outlying parks. Addition of amenities, features and/or concessions at existing parks (i.e., paddle board or kayak rental at Sailwinds, a mandala or labyrinth at Great Marsh, etc.). I believe the Parks department should be a crown jewel in Dorchester with a proactive, forward-looking plan to create integrated network of highly regarded and lauded outdoor and indoor spaces.	11/11/2020 7:24 AM
206	A children's nature playground would be great. A fitness trail for athletes to run and exercise is much needed and would get lots of use if placed along the water. More water access specifically for kayakers and canoes. Open water swim access for athletes training for Ironman. A bouldering wall would be a unique feature that could get kids involved in nontraditional sports.	11/11/2020 6:36 AM
207	A true park that people can walk, run, exercise etc. look at Centennial Park in Columbia. A lake to fish or kayak, paved trails around the lake to walk or run, tennis courts, all in one location that is SAFE	11/11/2020 6:12 AM
208	Keep the parks clean- lots of trash around and the playgrounds are rusty (dangerous for kids). I'd suggest looking into natural playgrounds. Consider opening a dog park Mommy and me classes	11/11/2020 5:55 AM
209	That there be NO favoritism and have all children play equally.	11/11/2020 3:42 AM
210	STREET LIGHTS. Well lit parks!!!! Signs don't stop stupidity!!! Well lit parks and safer equipment does!!!	11/10/2020 11:16 PM
211	Skateboard and bike park and dirt bike park	11/10/2020 11:13 PM
212	I would like to see more trails. Specifically multi use trails on some of the county chesapeake forest lands.	11/10/2020 11:04 PM
213	As listed above, the original plans designed by City Marina manager and parks supervisor employees looked far better then that of outside designs and engineer plans. PLEASE revisit, it looks terrible down there. Its hard enough to draw Super Yachts to dock on a public parking lot, let alone a overgrown set of ponds that are failing in their intended use and collect trash left from the public using free fishing area.	11/10/2020 11:01 PM
214	Involve the community groups and organizations to help with clean up.	11/10/2020 10:42 PM
215	Long walking trails. Off-leash dog parks.	11/10/2020 10:42 PM
216	More areas for the youth and bathroom at the parks	11/10/2020 10:36 PM
217	Better fields.	11/10/2020 10:36 PM

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218	Better water access for public swimming.	11/10/2020 10:35 PM
219	Offer a girls soccer program. The girls will learn to work together and be a feeder program for the high school. It is so different playing against other girls than playing coed.	11/10/2020 9:19 PM
220	I would love soccer for a younger age group than what you do currently, so the kids don't have to use the Y program. A tennis program in the summer in Cambridge that is doable for working parents. A theatre class or program, art programs.	11/10/2020 8:46 PM
221	Bathrooms	11/10/2020 8:07 PM
222	Have the sports teams not just in Cambridge but also the north Dorchester area	11/10/2020 7:57 PM
223	Organized adult and youth recreation complex	11/10/2020 6:33 PM
224	Flag football Baseball for 16-18 year olds	11/10/2020 6:30 PM
225	Parking, updated fields, updated playgrounds and boat launches	11/10/2020 6:26 PM
226	better promotion of children's sports programs. We tend to hear about them after registration is closed.	11/10/2020 5:55 PM
227	Educational programs such as nature walks guided by educators who can help promote environmental stewardship in the county. I also think there needs to be more of a focus on litter prevention programs because often parks and water access points are littered and unappealing to visitors, especially visitors with children.	11/10/2020 5:48 PM
228	Expand opportunities at existing facilities. Support teaching water safety and swimming, stop letting 3 people run all the youth sports teams and make opportunities for the black and hispanic communities and youth.	11/10/2020 5:46 PM
229	Soccer Fields for hosting tournaments can serve as revenue generator	11/10/2020 5:29 PM
230	Not sure	11/10/2020 5:21 PM
231	Better advertisement	11/10/2020 5:14 PM
232	Update	11/10/2020 5:00 PM
233	Make sure that all parks come equipped with year round public bathrooms	11/10/2020 4:48 PM
234	Better advertising of the programs available. Emails sent out to potential returning families about sign ups. More advertising on social media.	11/10/2020 4:44 PM
235	It has been really nice having soccer in Hurlock. Games throughout the season should at least be split 50/50	11/10/2020 4:43 PM
236	Restrooms in parks	11/10/2020 4:41 PM
237	More youth programs	11/10/2020 4:41 PM
238	More events and activities. Improve the website calendar. Update some playgrounds/equipment.	11/10/2020 2:26 PM
239	wheelchair accessibility access	11/10/2020 2:13 PM
240	Programs when we can socialize again	11/10/2020 1:30 PM
241	Biking and Hiking trails. More and improved tennis courts. Trash cans at parks. More and improved public water access.	11/10/2020 12:54 PM
242	Not sure at this time.	11/10/2020 12:52 PM
243	No answer	11/10/2020 12:50 PM
244	Longer, multi-use trails would be phenomenal, as well as creating real dog parks where dogs can play off leash.	11/10/2020 12:19 PM
245	Basketball courts in the Hurlock area. Rails to trails system in ND area. Recreational facility in Hurlock	11/10/2020 11:47 AM
246	More exercising programs for adults. more walking/biking trails.	11/10/2020 11:14 AM

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247	We need to have cohesive multi use trails between our parks. County paid lifeguard at the beach at Sailwinds. Purchase the former racquet club and make it a youth center for all you in the area. Possibly buy land around it to expand basketball courts etc. it can be year round facility. Further enhance our existing parks with more equipment. Quality of life is crucial to this county.	11/10/2020 10:50 AM
248	Dog parks!!!	11/10/2020 10:28 AM
249	We need enclosed, well-maintained dog parks.	11/10/2020 9:57 AM
250	Great Communication	11/5/2020 1:24 PM
251	Rec's and P. need to think in the teens and young adults population create programs that draw their attention and interest. Let's put aside your political and cultural biases lets focus in the real problems that we have now days in our community. The fields in Cambridge they must be lighted up, it is illogical that Hurlock Has three fields with lights and our main fields in Cambridge Christ Rock and School Street are not lighted up why is this? can we find alternatives and solutions to this matter? Please how do we want teens and young adults out of streets, drugs, violence and gangs if we do not offer, foster and make facilities and programs who they could be interested? if it is not the schools or the YMCA or the hoods courts we do not have a place where we can play basketball if it si not those places previously mentioned, it is like we are disregarded and ignored we would love to have something to feel proud about. Why we can not have a gym for the community? why we do not have courts like the tennis courts? Why the tennis courts are not lighted up so people can go and have some fun during the fall evenings?	11/5/2020 12:05 PM
252	Increase toilet availability at parks and playgrounds.	11/4/2020 6:05 PM
253	Various non-athletic classes (i.e. archery, chess, tutoring) Activities for families	11/4/2020 5:49 PM
254	Youth track	11/4/2020 4:47 PM
255	More youth sports acitivities	11/4/2020 4:33 PM
256	A safer place for youth sports.	11/4/2020 4:24 PM
257	More adult classes like the ones with Chef Zinnel	11/4/2020 4:16 PM
258	Centrally locates fields, greater Emphasis on youth sports - somehow more community involvement. More advertisement of youth football league registration etc . Overall tho a great year of youth soccer.	11/4/2020 4:13 PM
259	Indoor facility for winter programs. Softball baseball soccer lacrosse basketball	11/4/2020 4:10 PM
260	I really enjoyed the cooking classes and would like to see more offered. I would also like to see more activities that involve our water access (Like fishing)	11/4/2020 2:50 PM
261	Addition of Multi use trails Additional youth playing fields (safe) The more youth play areas/playgrounds the better!	11/4/2020 2:15 PM
262	Greater access for indoor recreational activity remains a priority.	11/4/2020 1:46 PM

**Appendix E:
Dorchester County**

2021 Comp Plan

&

2017 LPPRP

