



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

DRAFT FOR REVIEW



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Greg Gannon

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Sarah M. Everhart

John M. Sewell

Department of Planning and Codes

Miguel Salinas, *Planning Officer*

Brennan Tarleton, *Assistant Planning Officer*

Anne Roane, *Planner*

Mark Cohoon, *GIS Manager*

Department of Parks & Recreation

Preston Peper, *Director*

Emily Gilmer, *Recreation Manager*

Ryan Colman, *Landings Officer*

Mark Stevens, *Facility Manager*

Brian Harris, *Assistant Facility Manager*

Jessica Starke, *Administrative Assistant*

Ed Fontana, *Maintenance*

Dave Larmore, *Maintenance*

Ricky Veasal, *Maintenance*

Consultant Support

Kat Stork Blaher, Shore Strategies LLC, *Principal*

Kim Duncan, *Partner*

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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 Parks and Recreation 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 Talbot County Council, the 2022 LPPRP becomes an amendment to the 2016 Talbot County Comprehensive Plan.

The 2022 LPPRP for Talbot County was prepared in accordance with guidelines developed in 2020 by the Maryland Departments of Planning and Natural Resources. Talbot County government is responsible for the preparation of the LPPRP. The multi-department effort was led by Parks and Recreation and its Advisory Board, with assistance from Planning and Zoning, and Public Works. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board is made up of local citizens who represent the five incorporated towns in Talbot County as well as other rural villages. Shore Strategies LLC, a Mid-Shore Consulting firm, was contracted to work with Talbot County to develop the plan.



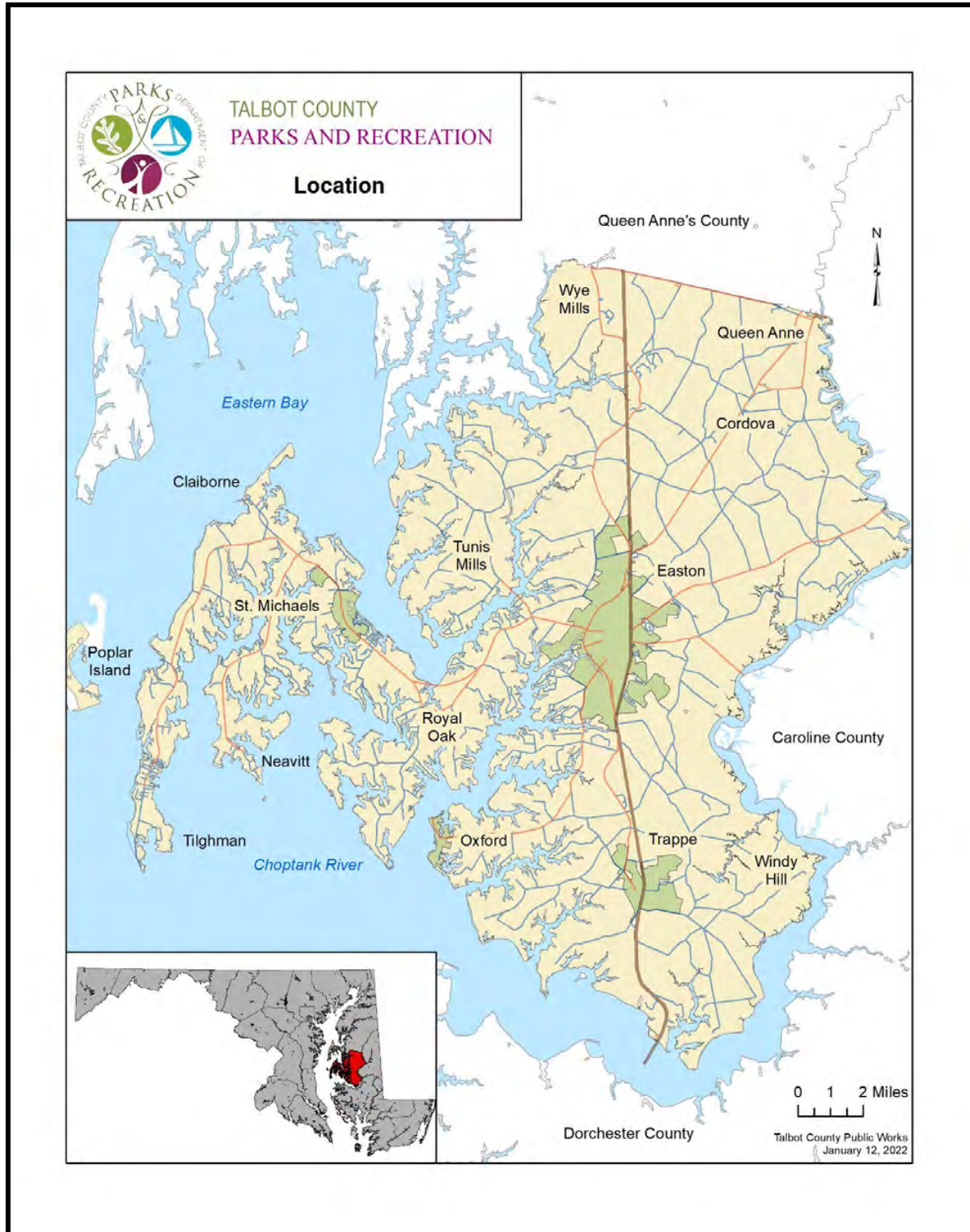
2. Physical Characteristics

A. Location

Talbot County is situated on the eastern shore of Maryland (Map I-1). Its most notable feature is its proximity to the Chesapeake Bay and its 600 miles of shoreline. Talbot is bordered by the Chesapeake Bay to the west, Eastern Bay to the northwest, the Tuckahoe River to the northeast, and the Choptank River to the south and east. It is nearly

surrounded by tidal waters. Along its western edge, its topography includes numerous peninsulas, necks, coves and creeks. It borders Queen Anne’s County to the north, Caroline County to the west, and Dorchester County to the south.

Map I-1 Talbot County, Maryland



Founded in 1662, Talbot is one of the oldest centers of European settlement in the mid-Atlantic. Prior to European colonization, the area was inhabited by members of the Choptank tribe. Early European settlers were drawn to the area for the access it provided to waterways that facilitated travel and transport and to the rich soil. Beginning in the 1630's early English settlers established tobacco plantations along the shore of the Bay and its many tributaries. From its beginning as an English colony, Talbot County has benefitted from the rich and plentiful agriculture and aquaculture resources. The farming and maritime industries helped Talbot become a center for trade. These resources continue to play a role in both the culture and economy of the County. The water and land of Talbot County also now play a critical role in the tourism industry which includes sailing, sportfishing, and cycling among other reasons tourists visit Talbot County.

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***	8,542	9,269	727	8.5%
Low Density Residential	12,072	13,235	1162	9.6%
Medium Density Residential	2,726	3,116	391	14.3%
High Density Residential	403	438	35	8.6%
Commercial	2065	2262	197	9.6%
Industrial	227	279	53	23.2%
Other Developed Lands/ Institutional/ Transportation***	1,952	2,055	103	5.3%
Total Developed Lands****	27,987	30,654	2,667	9.5%
Agriculture	97,739	95,662	-2077	-2.1%
Forest	41,270	40,513	-757	-1.8%
Extractive/Barren/Bare	281	489	208	73.9%
Wetland	4,380	4,339	-41	-0.9%
Total Resource Lands****	143,670	141,002	-2,667	-1.9%
Total Land	171,657		0.0%	
Water	129,750		0.0%	

Source: Maryland Planning

Many of the Europeans who settled in Talbot County were Quakers and the Third Haven Meeting House built around 1682 remains the oldest active house of worship in the United States. Other early arrivals were Puritans from Virginia. The large tobacco plantations in Talbot County relied on the labor of enslaved Blacks brought to the area to work the fields. Early English farmers, merchants, and boatbuilders also relied on the labor of indentured Scots and Irish who bought their Atlantic passage with their servitude.

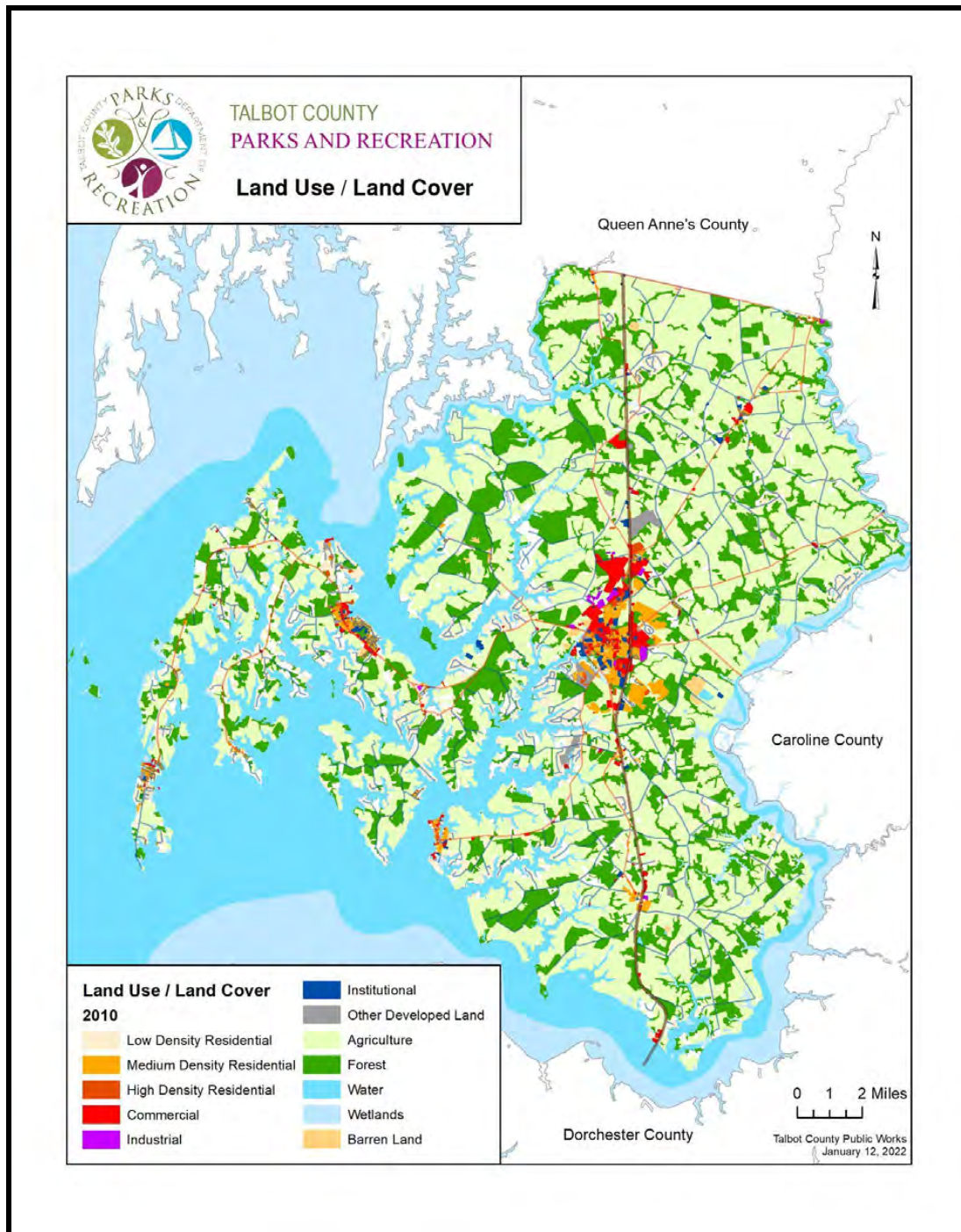
There are five incorporated municipalities in Talbot County - Easton, St. Michaels, Oxford, Trappe and Queen Anne. Easton is the largest town and serves as the county seat and center of commerce and services for the County. It is centrally located in the County and is bisected by U.S. Route 50, the primary route for traffic between the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Ocean City, on the Atlantic coast. Oxford and St. Michaels were active ports for much of their history. More recently they have transformed into waterfront communities that attract new residents and visitors alike. Queen Anne and Trappe both developed around active crossroads and were situated along rail lines during the 19th century.

In addition to its incorporated towns, Talbot County also contains 22 villages of varying sizes. Most notably are Tilghman and Cordova, which both include an elementary school, post office, volunteer fire department, a small commercial/industrial district and residential subdivisions located in or near them.

B. Land Use

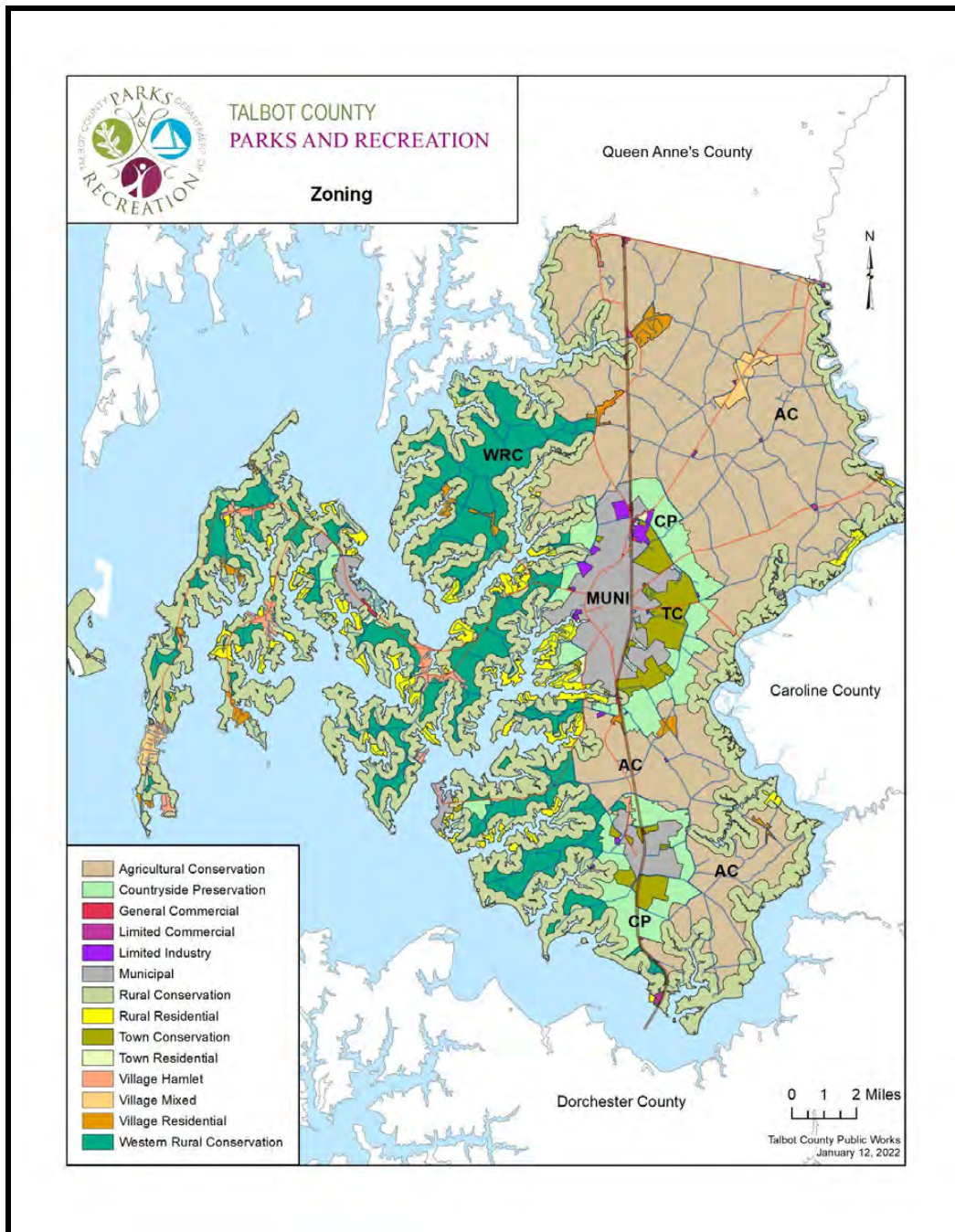
The 2016 Comprehensive Plan indicates that between 2002 and 2010, there was little change in either the amount of developed land or the general land use in the County. Maps I-1 and I-2 illustrate that the minimal residential development that has occurred has been concentrated in the incorporated towns. Other development is concentrated around the County's rural villages.

Map I-2 Talbot County Land Use/Land Cover



Talbot 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. Talbot’s Countryside Preservation designation, with its limited development allowance, surrounds the towns and creates a distinct boundary between urban and rural landscape. (See Map I-3).

Map I-3 Zoning



Talbot County's most recent Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2016 and provides a framework for decision making that is consistent with the vision for the County's future. Rather than one comprehensive vision, Talbot County's framework for the future includes specific visions and goals for land use, community services and facilities, agricultural and rural conservation, natural resource conservation, economic development, tourism and historic preservation. Each of the County's goals relate to the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan:



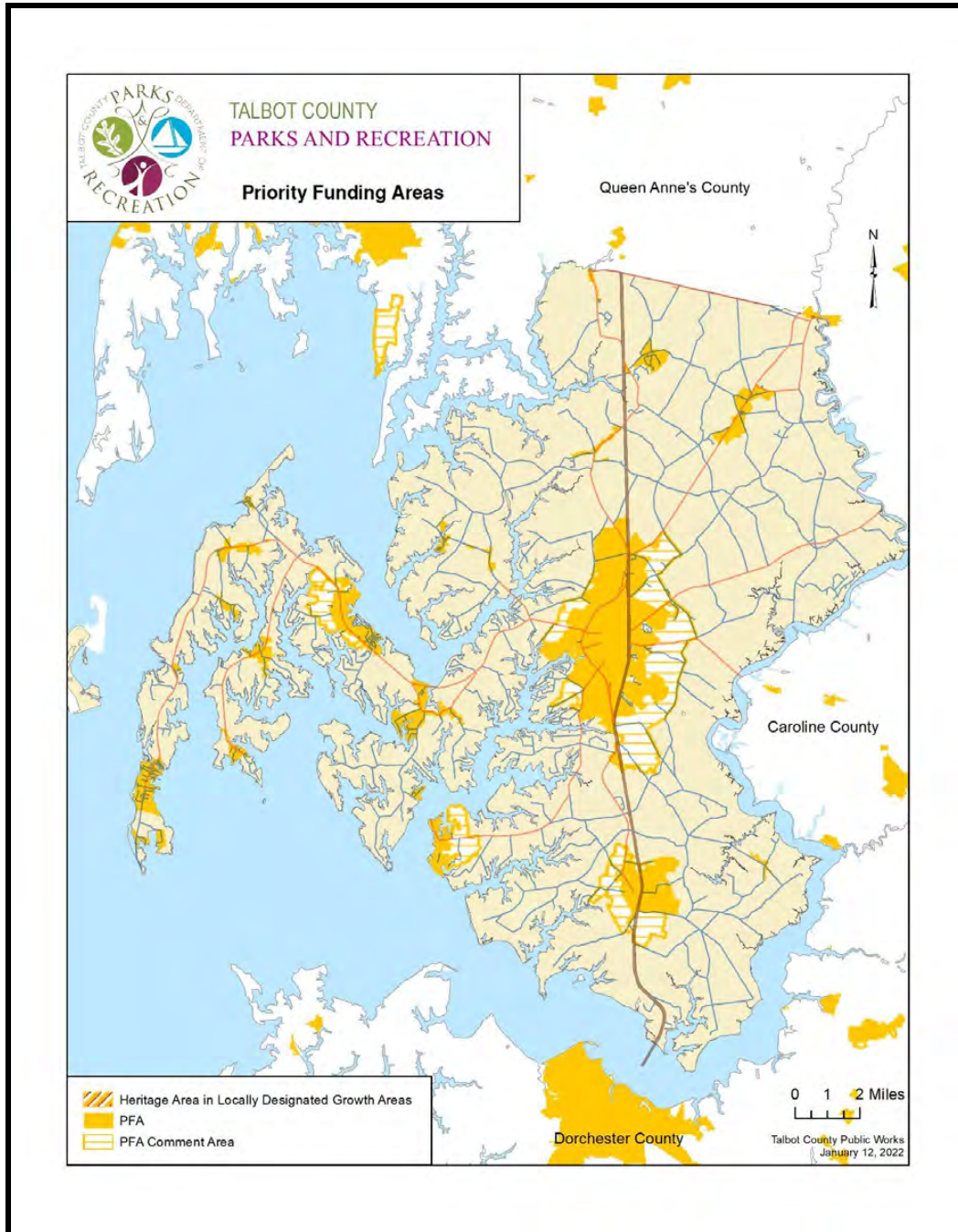
- Promote and maintain a well-planned pattern of land and water resource use, compatible with efficient development concentrated in areas where environmental impacts will be minimized, the rural character is retained and anticipated growth occurs in appropriate locations with suitable public and private community services.
- Provide an equitable and resilient system of public facilities including enhancing the system of parks and recreation facilities based upon residents' needs.
- Conserve the County's agricultural land base and preserve its rural character by directing growth to existing population centers and securing permanent conservation easements in predominantly rural areas.
- Conserve and protect the County's natural resources, recognizing them as its most valuable and attractive assets.
- Diversify and expand the County's economic base to provide a broad range of employment opportunities. This includes supporting a healthy tourism industry tied to its natural resources and its recreational opportunities.
- Preserve and enhance the County's rich cultural heritage.



The County's land use goals direct development to growth centers while seeking to preserve the rural character of the surrounding landscape. The Comprehensive Plan identifies the four towns of Easton, St. Michaels, Oxford and Trappe as the Designated Growth Areas. 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. Policies support expansion of public water and sewer systems in the towns to accommodate future development.

The Comprehensive Plan also identifies that development of major public and private facilities including industrial and retail commercial facilities as well as health care facilities, schools and other facilities that support the public will be directed toward the growth areas in towns. Additionally there are 22 villages in the County. Several of these have been identified as Priority Funding Areas (Map I-4) where the State may make economic infrastructure investments to support sustainable development. Within the County policies, these Village Planning Areas “will support the primary goal of the Plan to preserve the existing rural character of the County.”

Map I-4 Priority Funding Areas



The Comprehensive Plans for Talbot County's towns were last updated as follows: Easton, Oxford and Trappe (2010) and St Michaels (2015). 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: [Pages - Local Government Planning](#). In addition, several of the County's larger villages have also recently completed Master Plans. These include: [Cordova](#), [Tilghman](#) and [Bellevue](#).

C. Natural Resources

Talbot County, with its miles of shoreline and abundant waters, focuses its efforts on taking the necessary steps to reduce runoff and other pollutants entering its waters. (See Map I-5).

1. Chesapeake Bay Critical Area

Uniquely, over one third 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 65,260 acres, or about 38 percent of the county's total land area. 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. Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources

The natural resources important to Talbot County are clean air, the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and the County's rivers. In addition, the County includes prime agricultural land, tidal marshes, non-tidal wetlands, woodlands, large forests, ground water, as well as ponds, mineral resources, picturesque landscapes of waterfront and natural and agricultural lands. There are also many historic sites throughout the County that are connected to its Natural Resources.

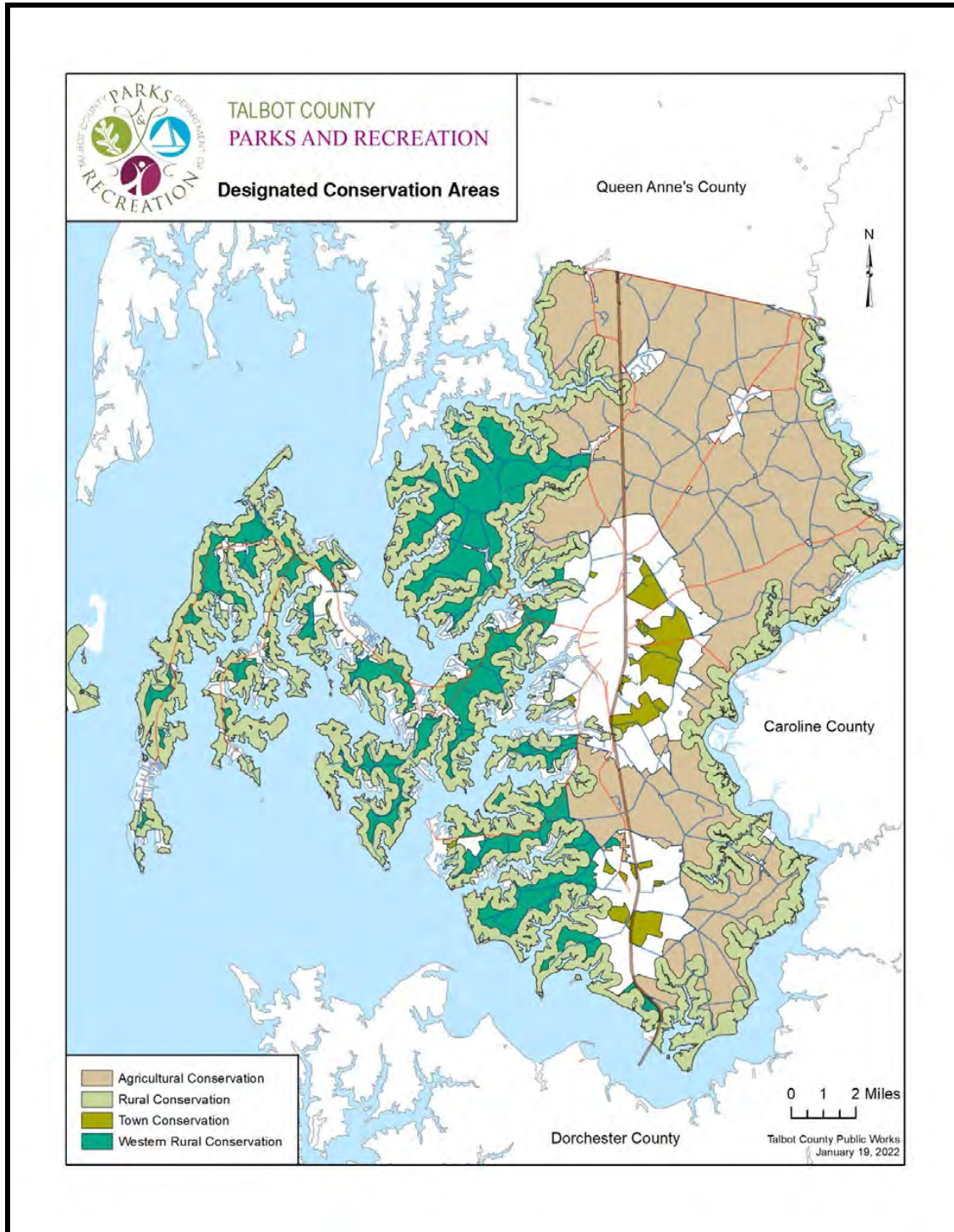
The County values its diverse ecosystems. Talbot has cropped fields, shorelines, meadows, forests, wetlands, submerged aquatic vegetation, and other plants. The varied wildlife includes deer, small mammals, reptiles and amphibians, waterfowl, game birds, songbirds, colonial nesting waterbirds, raptors, fish, crabs, and many species of shellfish.

The Chesapeake Bay, Choptank, Tuckahoe, Miles and Tred Avon Rivers and their major tributaries are the most significant water bodies in the County. County rivers, streams and their buffers are important resources supporting recreational fishing and serving as spawning areas for commercial fish stock. They are home to countless species of animals and plants and transport valuable nutrients. The floodplains, wetlands, and wooded slopes along the streams are important parts of the stream ecosystem.

Archeological sites, historic buildings, old churches, and traditional landscapes are all evidence of Talbot County's long and significant history. The importance of these resources has been recognized by the State and federal governments through the designation of the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway as an All American Road. Along with its neighbors, Queen Anne's, Caroline, Kent and Dorchester Counties, Talbot County is

a part of the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area. Talbot's history includes important connections to the history of Black Americans. The Hill Community Project in Easton is restoring one of the oldest free African American neighborhoods in the United States. The County's Lewistown Park was recently renamed to honor the hero Frederick Douglass who was born in the vicinity of the Park.

Map I-5 Designated Conservation Areas



3. Demographic Characteristics

A. Population Growth

Talbot County’s population in 2020 was 37,550, a decrease of .6%. (See Table I-2). Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) projects that by 2045 Talbot’s population will grow by 9.7% 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.

Table I-2 Talbot County Population

Year	Population	Percent Change in Population		
		Since 2010	Since 2015	Since 2020
2010	37,782	NA	NA	NA
2015	37,600	-0.5%	NA	NA
2020	37,550	-0.6%	-0.1%	NA
2025*	38,750	2.6%	3.1%	3.2%
2030*	39,650	4.9%	5.5%	5.6%
2035*	40,550	7.3%	7.8%	8.0%
2040*	41,000	8.5%	9.0%	9.2%
2045*	41,440	9.7%	10.2%	10.4%

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



B. Population Distribution

In 2020, more than half (53.5%) of Talbot County residents lived in one of the County’s five incorporated municipalities, while 46.5% of County residents lived in unincorporated areas (See Table I-3). Easton, with a population of 16,589, accounts for 44.2% of the total population in the County. The remaining 9.4% of County residents living in towns include St. Michaels (3.5%), Trappe (3.1%), Oxford (2.2%) and Queen Anne (0.6%). Residents of the 22 rural villages in Talbot County are included in the 50.3% rural balance of the County.

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

Municipality	Total Population	Percent Population of County
Easton	16,589	44.2%
Oxford	827	2.2%
Queen Anne (pt.)	213	0.6%
St. Michaels	1,311	3.5%
Trappe	1,153	3.1%
Balance of County	17,433	46.5%

Source: 2020 American Community Survey

C. Age

The County, State, and Upper Eastern Shore region are all experiencing an aging of the population, as demonstrated by growth in the number of residents aged 55 and older (See Table I-4). In 2010, 38.9% of Talbot's population was 55 or older. Children 19 and under made up 16% of the population. In 2020, 45.5% of the population was 55 or older. Children and youth 19 and under accounted for 19.8% of the population. In real numbers there were 7,488 children and youth in the County, 17,471 between 20 and 54 years old and 17,072 residents 55 and up, including 5,352 residents 75 and above (See Table I-5).

Table I-4 Talbot 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	4.9%	5.5%	5.5%	5.6%	4.6%	9.2%	11.1%	14.7%	15.1%	13.0%	10.8%
2015	4.4%	5.3%	5.8%	4.8%	4.1%	9.7%	9.9%	13.6%	15.2%	15.2%	12.0%
2020	4.3%	4.7%	5.6%	5.2%	3.6%	9.2%	10.0%	11.9%	15.4%	15.8%	14.3%
2025*	4.4%	4.7%	4.9%	5.2%	4.5%	8.2%	10.8%	10.5%	14.4%	16.1%	16.3%
2030*	4.5%	4.9%	4.9%	4.5%	4.4%	8.6%	10.4%	10.6%	12.6%	16.9%	17.6%
2035*	4.6%	5.1%	5.2%	4.6%	4.0%	9.5%	9.5%	11.4%	11.3%	15.9%	19.0%
2040*	4.7%	5.2%	5.3%	4.8%	4.0%	9.0%	10.0%	11.2%	11.4%	14.1%	20.3%
2045*	4.6%	5.3%	5.5%	5.0%	4.2%	8.6%	11.0%	10.4%	12.6%	12.6%	20.2%

Source: US Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning

*Indicates projections published December 2020

Table I-5 Talbot 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	1,861	2,091	2,061	2,124	1,746	3,459	4,209	5,555	5,718	4,894	4,064
2015	1,642	1,985	2,174	1,820	1,529	3,653	3,726	5,120	5,733	5,697	4,523
2020	1,611	1,777	2,087	1,963	1,360	3,444	3,767	4,450	5,796	5,944	5,352
2025*	1,722	1,831	1,911	2,002	1,727	3,193	4,180	4,054	5,570	6,254	6,306
2030*	1,800	1,955	1,949	1,801	1,757	3,417	4,121	4,186	4,990	6,687	6,990
2035*	1,881	2,061	2,089	1,849	1,605	3,835	3,856	4,638	4,571	6,453	7,711
2040*	1,919	2,155	2,193	1,965	1,620	3,686	4,087	4,606	4,675	5,776	8,336
2045*	1,926	2,194	2,278	2,079	1,752	3,544	4,569	4,304	5,206	5,207	8,385

Source: US Census Bureau, Maryland Department of Planning

*Indicates projections published December 2020

D. Race

In 2020, 75.8% of the County's population was white in comparison to the State of Maryland where 47.2% of the population was White and 52.8% were Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC). The percentage of the population that is White decreased 6.6% between 2010 and 2020. The Black population decreased by 18.7%, while those identifying as 2 or more races increased 136.2%. In Talbot, the number of Black/African Americans in the County has decreased by 18.7%. This represents 11.3% of the County population, down from 14% of the total population in 2010. (See Table I-6). There has been a 86.2% increase in the number of residents who identify as Hispanic. In 2010 4.8% of the population identified as Hispanic; in 2020 that number grew to 8.9% of the total population.

Table I-6 Change in Population by Race Talbot County (2010-2020)

Race/Ethnicity	2010	2015	2020	% Change since 2010
Total population	37,361	37,799	37,526	0.4%
White	30,438	31,083	28,436	-6.6%
Black or African American	5,229	4,493	4,249	-18.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native	40	42	146	265.0%
Asian	380	560	538	41.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	74	23	12	NA
Some other race	252	266	1,906	656.3%
2 or more races	948	1,332	2,239	136.2%
Not Hispanic or Latino	35,561	35,543	34,174	-3.9%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	1,800	2,256	3,352	86.2%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

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

Race/Ethnicity	TCPS Student Enrollment		Talbot County		Difference %
	2020	% Pop	2020	% Pop	
Total population	4,703	% Pop	37,526	% Pop	
White	2,579	54.8%	28,436	75.8%	-27.6%
Black or African American	727	15.5%	4,249	11.3%	36.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0	0.0%	146	0.4%	-100.0%
Asian	94	2.00%	538	1.4%	39.4%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%	12	0.0%	0.0%
Some other race	0	0.0%	1,906	5.1%	-100.0%
2 or more races	266	5.7%	2,239	6.0%	-5.2%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	1,033	22.0%	3,352	8.9%	145.9%

Source: Maryland Report Card

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

While Talbot County is predominantly White when all ages are considered, the racial demographics for Talbot County Public Schools is more diverse than the overall County population (See Table I-7). Public school enrollment data provides additional information about the changing racial demographics of the County. In 2020, 54.8% of the student population was White as compared to 75.8% of the total County

population. Black/African American students made up 15.5% of the student population compared to 11.3% of the total population. Students identifying as Hispanic accounted for 22% of students as compared to 8.9% of the total population.

E. Household Economics

Talbot County is one of the wealthier counties in the Midshore region. Table I-8 presents selected income characteristics for Talbot County, its bordering counties, and the State. Talbot County has one of the highest median incomes of the Midshore counties; however, it still lags behind the State’s median income of \$87,063. The estimated median household income in Talbot County in 2020 was \$73,102, a 26% increase over the median household income reported in 2015. Talbot County’s mean per capita income of \$49,193 is an increase of 28% since 2015 and is the highest of all Midshore counties.

In 2020, the percent of the people living in Talbot County who had income below the poverty level within the past 12 months (See Table I-8) decreased to 8.7% as compared to 11.2% in 2015. It is below Maryland’s overall 9%.

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

A similar pattern can be seen among the percent of students who receive Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FaRM) in public schools (See Table I-9). Half (50%) of Talbot County students are eligible for FaRM, a percentage that has steadily increased since School Year 2008 when 29% of the population were eligible for FaRM. (Some of this increase may however be due to changes in how eligibility can be determined. Additionally, in SY2021, eligibility changed due to a change in documentation requirements.)

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

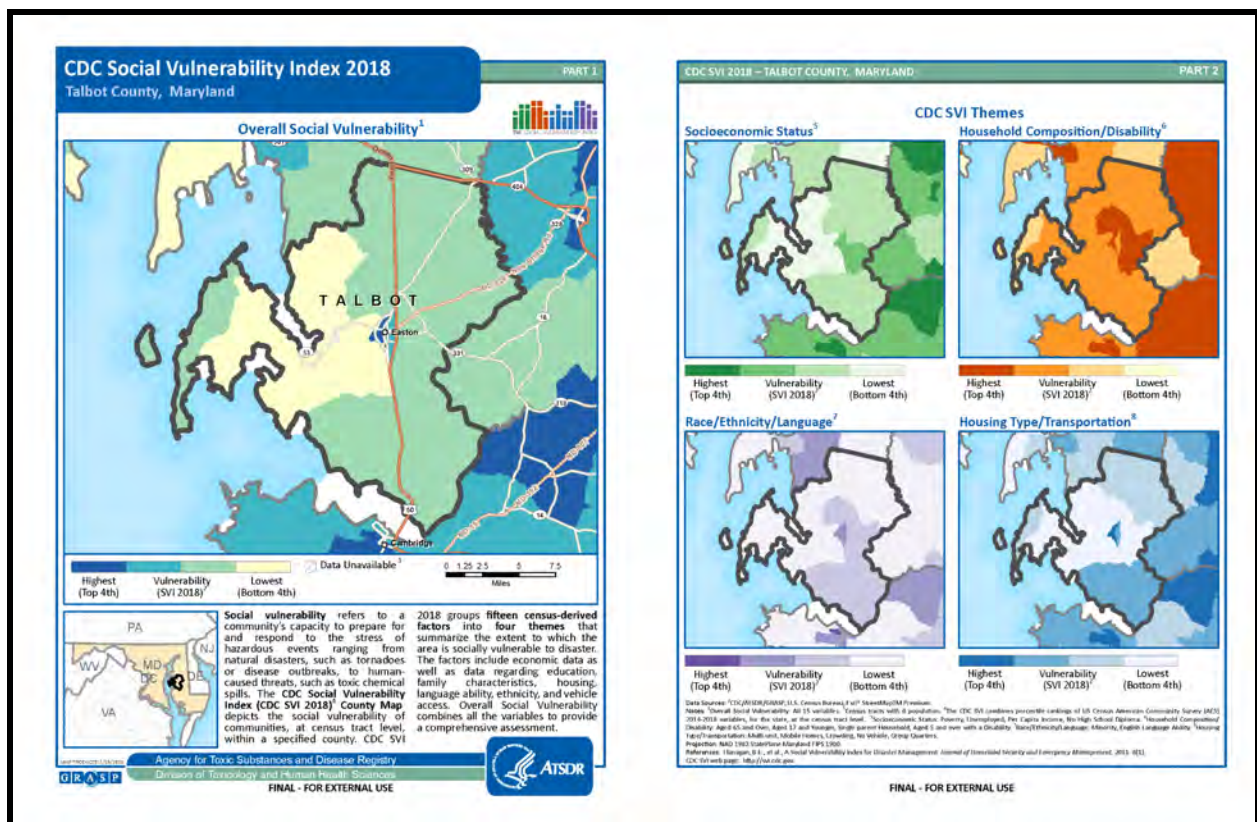
Locale	School Year Dataset					Change SY2008 - SY2020
	SY2008	SY2012	SY2016	SY2020	SY2021*	
Maryland	34%	42%	45%	42%	48%	45%
Caroline County	45%	56%	57%	52%	59%	31%
Dorchester County	50%	62%	67%	67%	83%	67%
Kent County	40%	52%	55%	56%	66%	67%
Queen Anne's County	15%	25%	26%	25%	29%	88%
Talbot County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

Source: Maryland State Department of Education

**Note discrepancy due to documentation requirements in pandemic*

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, Talbot is in the low to moderate vulnerability levels. Within the four themes considered, Talbot has scores that demonstrate higher vulnerability within the Town of Easton, particularly as it relates to housing type and transportation. Socioeconomically the County does not demonstrate high social vulnerability. These data 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 1,567 employers in Talbot County in 2019, employing a total of 18,451 workers (See Table I-10). The largest number of jobs were in service provision, including the largest employer by industry - education and health services (3,660) followed by trade, transportation and utilities (3,330); leisure and hospitality (3,118), professional and business services (2,761). Goods producing employers provided 1,795 jobs. Wages in the

government sector exceeded all industries except financial activities and construction, the two highest wage earning industries within the private sector.

Table I-10 Employment by Industry Talbot County, 2019 Calendar Year

Industry	Average Number of Reporting Units	Annual Average Employment	Total Wages	Average Weekly Wage Per Worker
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	1,567	18,451	\$803,495,130	\$837
GOVERNMENT SECTOR TOTAL	45	1,887	\$101,937,086	\$1,039
Federal Government	18	194	\$13,064,614	\$1,291
State Government	8	239	\$11,006,535	\$884
Local Government	18	1,452	\$77,865,937	\$1,031
PRIVATE SECTOR TOTAL	1,522	16,565	\$701,558,044	\$814
GOODS PRODUCING	245	1,795	\$92,043,328	\$986
Natural Resources and Mining	20	87	\$3,626,154	\$800
Construction	192	1,114	\$59,369,665	\$1,025
Manufacturing	32	594	\$29,047,509	\$940
SERVICE PROVIDING	1,276	14,770	\$609,514,716	\$794
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	301	3,330	\$119,501,636	\$690
Information	8	239	\$10,640,075	\$857
Financial Activities	131	834	\$61,245,820	\$1,412
Professional and Business Services	277	2,761	\$126,401,678	\$880
Education and Health Services	181	3,660	\$188,093,502	\$988
Leisure and Hospitality	181	3,118	\$71,778,666	\$443
Other Services	195	828	\$31,853,339	\$740

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

Table I-11 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%	5.2%	-29%
Talbot	6.7%	8.4%	6.7%	4.4%	2.9%	-57%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

According to the 2016 Talbot County Comprehensive Plan, just over 38% of Talbot County workers live outside the County. Overall, more than 8,000 workers commute into the County, while just under 5,000 commute out of the county.

In 2020 Talbot County unemployment rate was 2.9% after steadily improving from 6.7% in 2011, according to the U.S. Census American Community Survey (See Table I-11). In Q3 of 2021, the unemployment rate was 5%. recovering from 8.3% In the second quarter of 2020, following stay-at-home orders due to the COVID-19 pandemic, (See Table I-12).

Table I-12 Talbot County Local Area Unemployment Statistics

2019 Q4	2020 Q1	2020 Q2	2020 Q3	2020 Q4	2021 Q1	2021 Q2	2021 Q3
3.0%	4.5%	8.3%	6.4%	6.1%	5.6%	6.6%	5.0%

Source: Maryland Department of Labor

G. Educational Attainment

In 2020, 90.6% of the Talbot County population aged 25 years and older held a high school diploma or higher (See Table I-13). Over one-third, 39.7% of the County’s population held a bachelor’s degree or higher. In comparison to the State, Talbot remains behind in educational attainment. Overall, 40.9% of the State’s population hold bachelor’s degrees or higher.

Table I-13 Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Over

Highest Level of Educational Attainment	Talbot County			Maryland		
	2010	2015	2020	2010	2015	2020
No High School Diploma	12.1%	11.5%	8.9%	12.2%	10.7%	9.5%
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	27.7%	27.9%	23.1%	26.4%	25.5%	24.2%
Some College, No Degree	20.4%	20.2%	20.0%	19.3%	19.5%	18.7%
Associate's Degree	7.2%	6.5%	8.3%	6.3%	6.4%	6.8%
Bachelor's Degree	17.1%	18.2%	21.2%	19.8%	20.6%	21.8%
Graduate or Professional Degree	15.6%	15.7%	18.5%	16.0%	17.3%	19.1%
High School Graduate or Higher	88.0%	88.5%	91.2%	87.8%	89.4%	90.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	32.7%	33.9%	39.7%	35.7%	37.9%	40.9%

Source: US Census Bureau

Table I-14 Educational Attainment for Population 18-24 Years Old

Educational Attainment	Talbot			Maryland		
	2010	2015	2020	2010	2015	2020
Less Than High School Graduate	15.9%	16.1%	11.5%	14.5%	12.0%	11.4%
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	47.5%	39.9%	43.4%	31.7%	29.1%	30.9%
Some College or Associate's Degree	27.7%	28.7%	40.4%	41.0%	46.2%	43.1%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	8.9%	15.9%	4.7%	12.9%	12.7%	14.6%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Communities Survey

This demographic information about the people and municipalities in Talbot County 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 for LPPRP

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

Natural Resources and Agricultural Preservation Planning Framework

- Talbot County is rural with a large population density in the central part of the county in and around the Town of Easton.
- Agriculture and aquaculture are important industries within the County and also play a role in the County's attractiveness as a tourist destination.
- The Chesapeake Bay, rivers and streams are important environmental and recreational resources.
- The municipalities provide services, varied housing, and opportunity for limited new growth for the County.
- The area of greatest residential growth potential is in and around its towns.

Demographic Characteristics

- County population has decreased very slightly since 2010 despite earlier growth projections. The Maryland Department of Planning continues to project approximately 10% growth by 2045.
- Median household incomes in the County are among the highest in the Midshore but lower than the State. Poverty levels are correspondingly lower than the State and three of its four neighboring counties.
- 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.
- The racial demographics of the County are changing with 22% of school age residents identified as Hispanic/Latino as compared to only 6.8% of the overall population. White residents make up 82.9% of the County's overall population but only 54.8% of the student population.
- Racial and ethnic diversity is expected to increase. The diversity of the school-age population is significantly higher than the total population.
- The Town of Easton is a regional hub for employment as well as healthcare and retail services, particularly for residents of Caroline County.

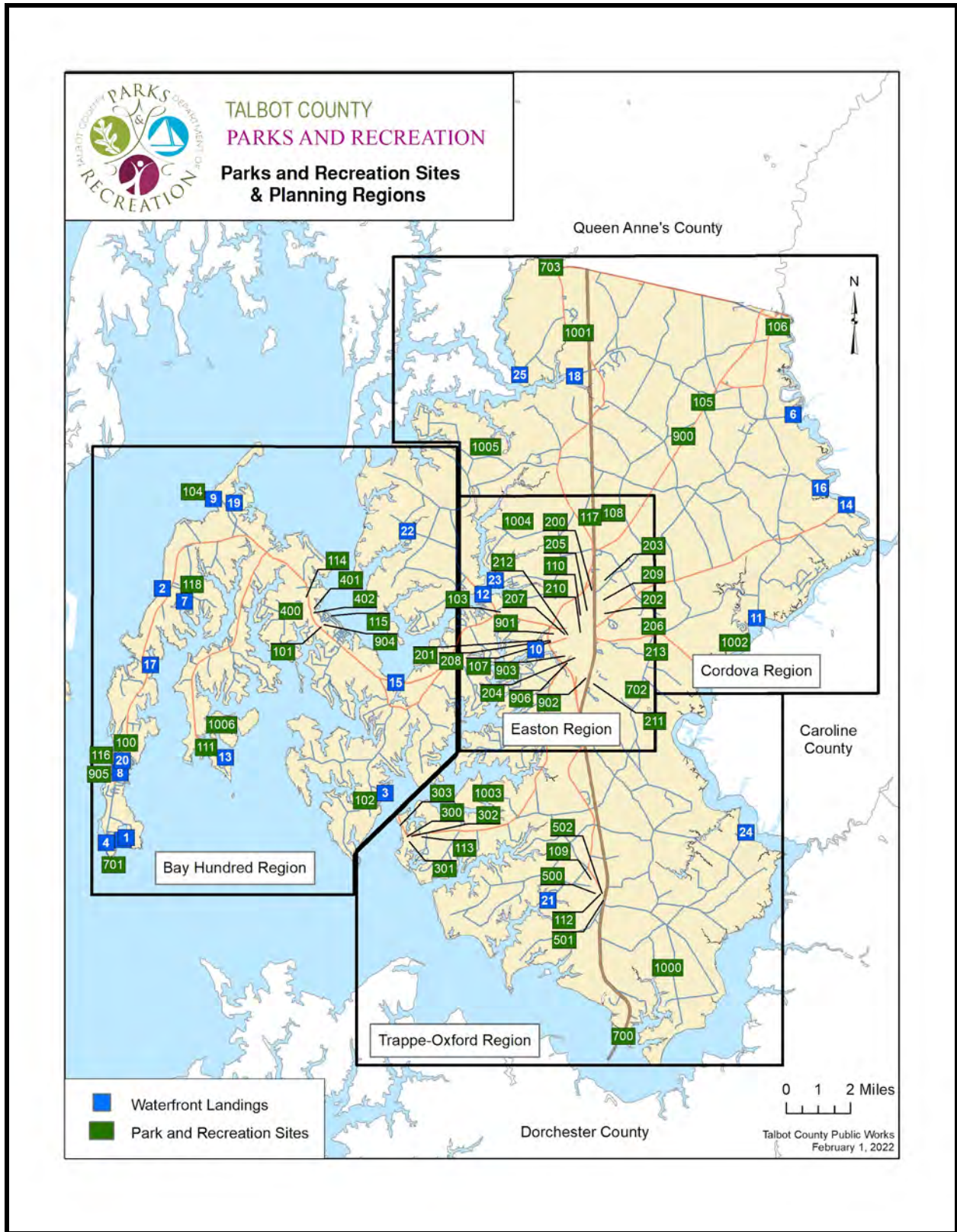
5. Role of Parks & Recreation

Parks play an important role in providing access to county residents and visitors for active and passive recreation. Regional parks and the community parks in municipalities and large villages are a part of the culture of the County. Various community events that attract residents and visitors are hosted in these locations and they often serve as a critical component of the community's social fabric.

The County's physical features, demographics, and planning framework interact with the role of parks and recreation in the County. Talbot County's system of parks and public open spaces is well dispersed and includes four regional parks, six county-owned community parks, and several other unique public recreation sites and amenities. The flagship of the county parks system is the Talbot County Community Center located in the middle of the county and easily accessible from U.S. Route 50. The indoor facility includes an ice rink and multipurpose space and will be opening a new gymnasium within the next year. The county also maintains two municipal swimming pools located in municipal parks in Easton and in St. Michaels. In addition to county parks and facilities, the Town of Easton, located in the center of the County, maintains 16 parks. The smaller municipalities of St. Michaels, Trappe, Oxford and Bellevue all have at least one community park. Public water access is available at 29 locations around the county.

Talbot County is home to two state parks - Bill Burton State Park and Wye Oak State Park. Both are small with limited features and amenities. There is one state natural resource management area and one Demonstration Forest totalling 183 acres. There are no federal natural resource or recreation lands in the county. Additionally, there are a number of quasi public conservation sites including Pickering Creek Audubon Center which offer some level of public access. See Map I-6 for a comprehensive visual representation of the system of parks and recreation available for public use. Additional Maps can be found in Appendix A.

Map I-6 Talbot County Parks & Recreation Sites



Talbot County Parks & Recreation Sites Map Key

Park/Recreation Site	Map ID	Park/Recreation Site	Map ID	Landings	Map ID
Back Creek Park	100	Thompson Park	212	Bar Neck Landing	1
Bay Hundred Pool	101	Waylands Neighborhood Park	213	Bayshore	2
Bellevue Park	102	Causeway Park	300	Bellevue Landing	3
Carroll's Market	103	Dog Park	301	Black Walnut Point	4
Claiborne Jetty	104	Oxford	302	Fairbank	5
Cordova Park	105	Oxford Town Park	303	Coveys Landing	6
Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe	106	Bradley Park, St. Michaels	400	Cummings Creek	7
George Murphy Pool	107	Hollis Park, St. Michaels	401	Dogwood Harbor	8
Hog Neck Golf Course	108	Muskrat Park, St. Michaels	402	Claiborne Landing	9
Home Run Baker Park	109	Lakeview Park	500	Easton Point	10
Mt. Pleasant Practice Fields, Easton	110	Nace's Park	501	Kingston Landing	11
Neavitt Park	111	Veterans Memorial Park	502	Miles River Bridge	12
Old Trappe Park	112	Bill Burton Fishing Pier State Park	700	Neavitt Landing	13
Oxford Conservation Park	113	Black Walnut Point NRMA	701	New Bridge Landing	14
Perry Cabin Park	114	Seth Demonstration Forest	702	Oak Creek Landing	15
Sam Shores Park	115	Wye Oak State Park	703	Resse's Landing	16
Sinclair Park	116	Chapel Elementary School	900	Sherwood Pier	17
Talbot County Community Center	117	Easton Elementary School	901	Skipton Landing	18
Wittman Park	118	Easton High School	902	Tilghman Creek	19
A. James Clark North Easton Sports Complex	200	Easton Middle School	903	Tonger Basin	20
Easton Point Park	201	St. Michaels High School	904	Trappe Landing	21
Golton Neighborhood Park	202	Tilghman Elementary	905	Tunis Mills Bridge	22
Ian Mac Morrell Park	203	Chesapeake YMCA	906	Villa Road Landing	23
Idlewild Park, Easton	204	Bolingbroke Park - Izaak Walton League	1000	Windy Hill Landing	24
John F. Ford Park (formerly RTC)	205	MOS - Mill Creek Sanctuary	1001	Wye Landing	25
Matthewstown Run Park	206	Nature Conservancy - King's Creek	1002		
Memorial Walk, 100 W. Dover St.	207	Nature Conservancy - Otwell Woodland	1003		
Moton Park	208	Nature Conservancy - Third Haven Woods	1004		
Mulberry Station Park	209	Pickering Creek Audubon	1005		
Railroad Station Park	210	Point Pleasant Farm	1006		
Stoney Ridge Park	211				

Chapter II Recreation, Parks, and Open Space

1. Executive Summary

This chapter identifies Talbot 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
- Talbot County Comprehensive Plan, 2016
- 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. Additionally, the value of parks and open space in addressing the positive physical and mental health benefits provided through access to parks and open spaces is well documented and serves as part of the planning framework as well. Overarching concepts are as follows:

- The Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries contribute greatly to the sense of place in the County, and are a significant recreational and natural resource asset.
- 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 County intends to provide parks and recreation services that are distributed throughout the County and accessible for all County residents.
- Access to the natural environment is a primary factor for individuals who choose to visit and reside in Talbot County and plays an important role in the economic well-being of the County.
- Trails systems and waterway access are highly valued by residents.
- The towns play a role in the provision of recreation facilities and services in the County. Pedestrian access to parks in the towns is important in the towns.

The greatest community condition impacting the provision of public parks and corresponding recreation features and amenities is related to the tax structure of the County. While residents often compare the county’s offerings to those of its sister counties of Queen Anne and Anne Arundel, it is important to note that Talbot County does not have a comparable tax base to these counties, which limits capital investment in more inventory and operational maintenance capacity for additional inventory.

2. Park Land and Recreation Inventory

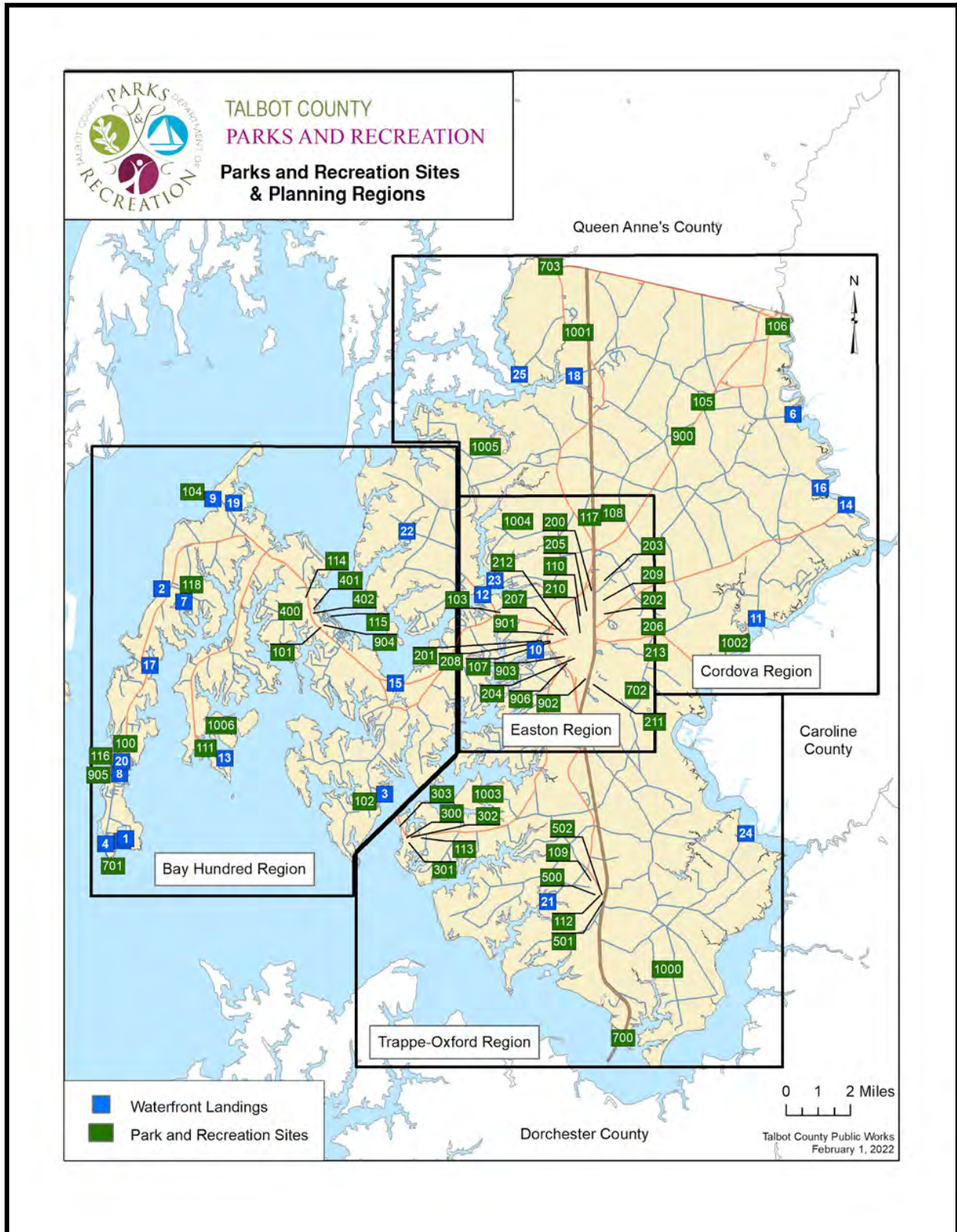
The County has updated its inventory of parks and recreation land. Map II-1 includes the locations of this inventory across the County and Maps II-2 through II-5 provide the same inventory by region. Included are public lands owned by the County, State and municipal governments. These parks and open 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

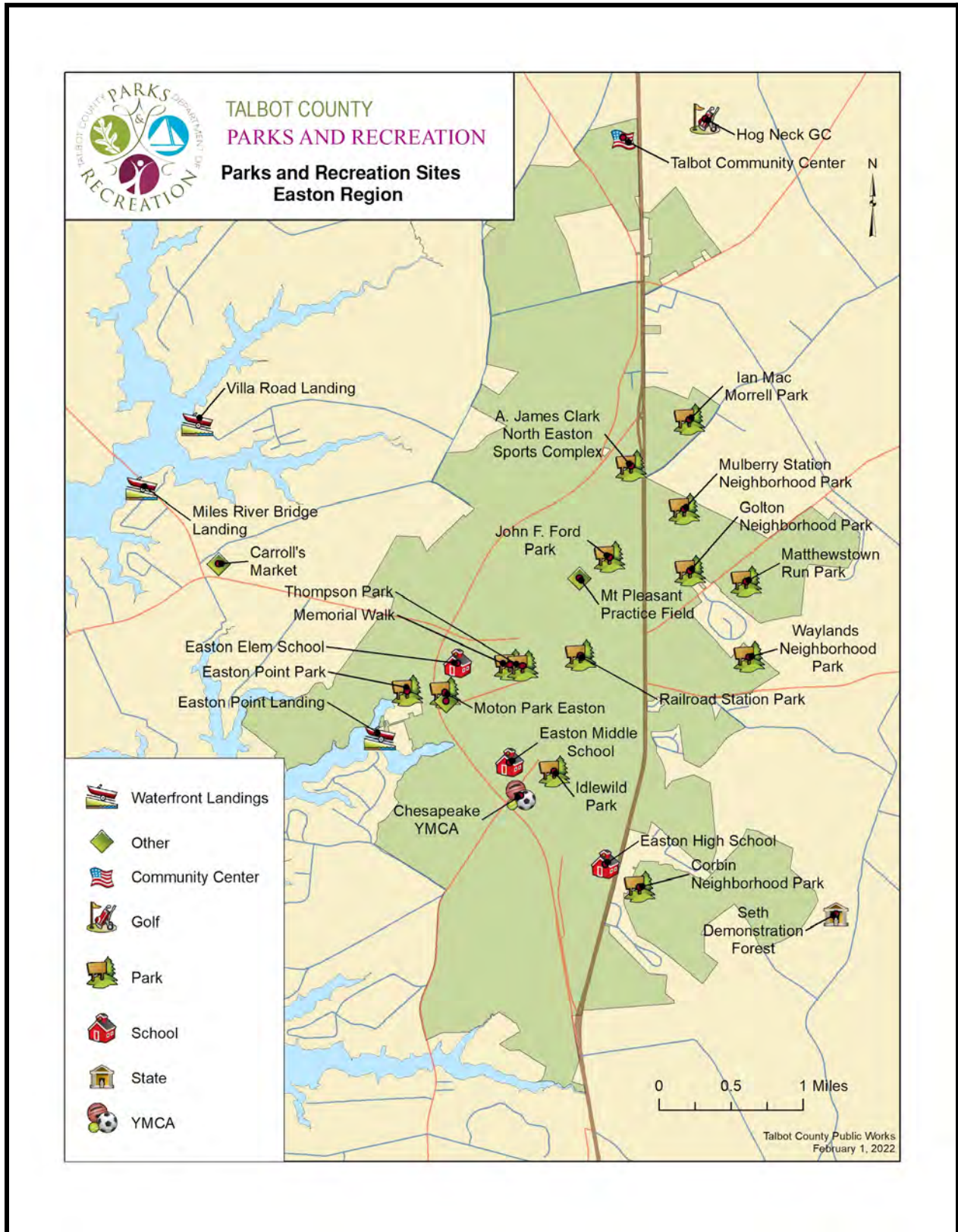
Owner	Recreation	Resource	Total
Local Recreation and Resource Lands Total			
Talbot County	576.5	20.0	596.5
Easton	148.6		148.6
Oxford	14.5		14.5
Queen Anne	0.0		0.0
St. Michaels	5.0		5.0
Trappe	3.0		3.0
Total Acres	747.6	20.0	767.6
State Recreation and Resource Lands Total			
State		236.0	236.0
Total Acres		236.0	236.0
Private/Quasi-Public Recreation and Resource Lands			
Board of Education*	71.0		71.0
YMCA	10.0		10.0
Private Natural Resource Conservancies		2400.0	2400.0
Total Acres	81.0	2400.0	2481.0
TOTAL - ALL RECREATION & RESOURCE LANDS	828.6	2656.0	3484.6

Map II-1 Talbot County Parks & Recreation Sites*

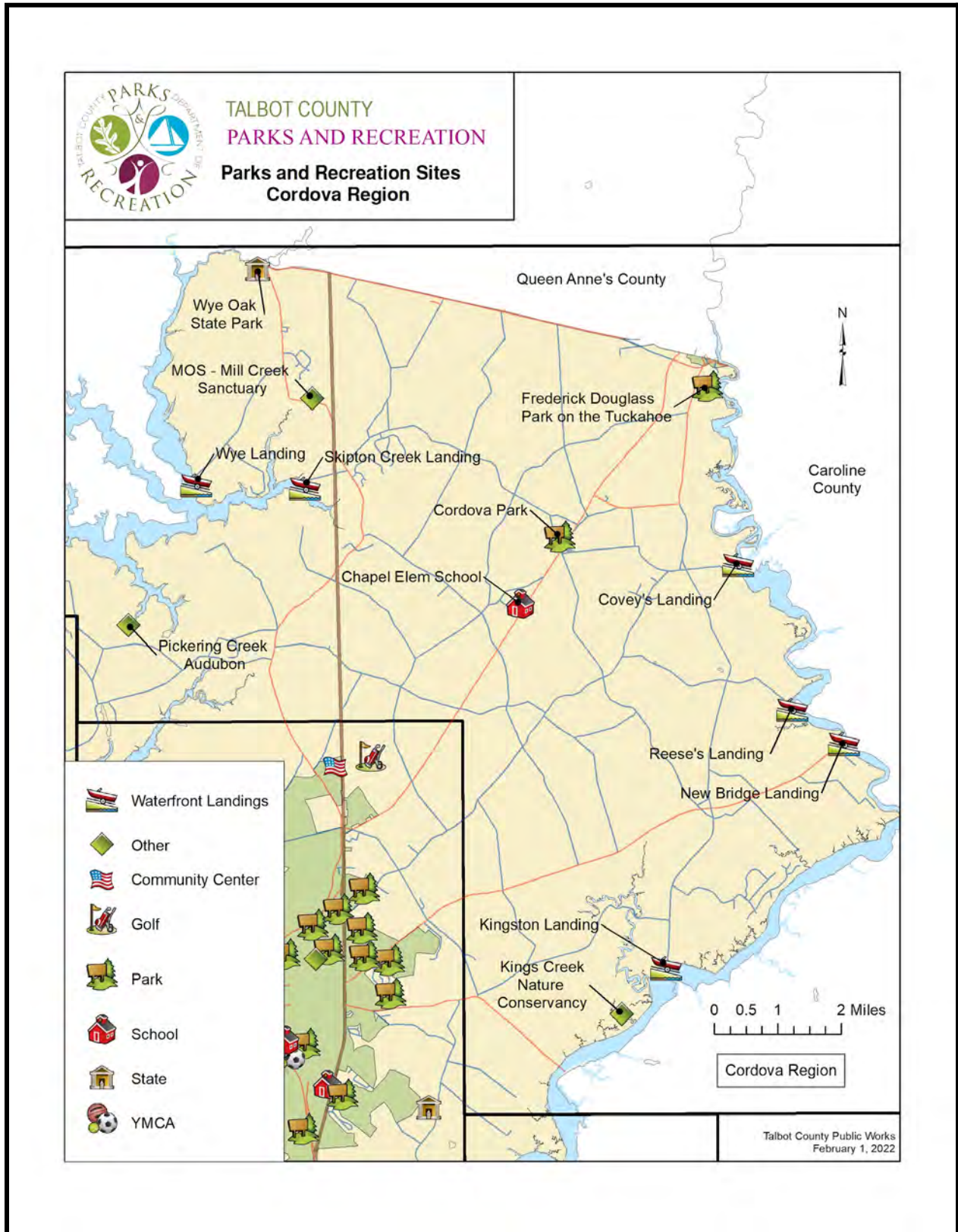
*Legend can be found in Chapter I or in Appendix A



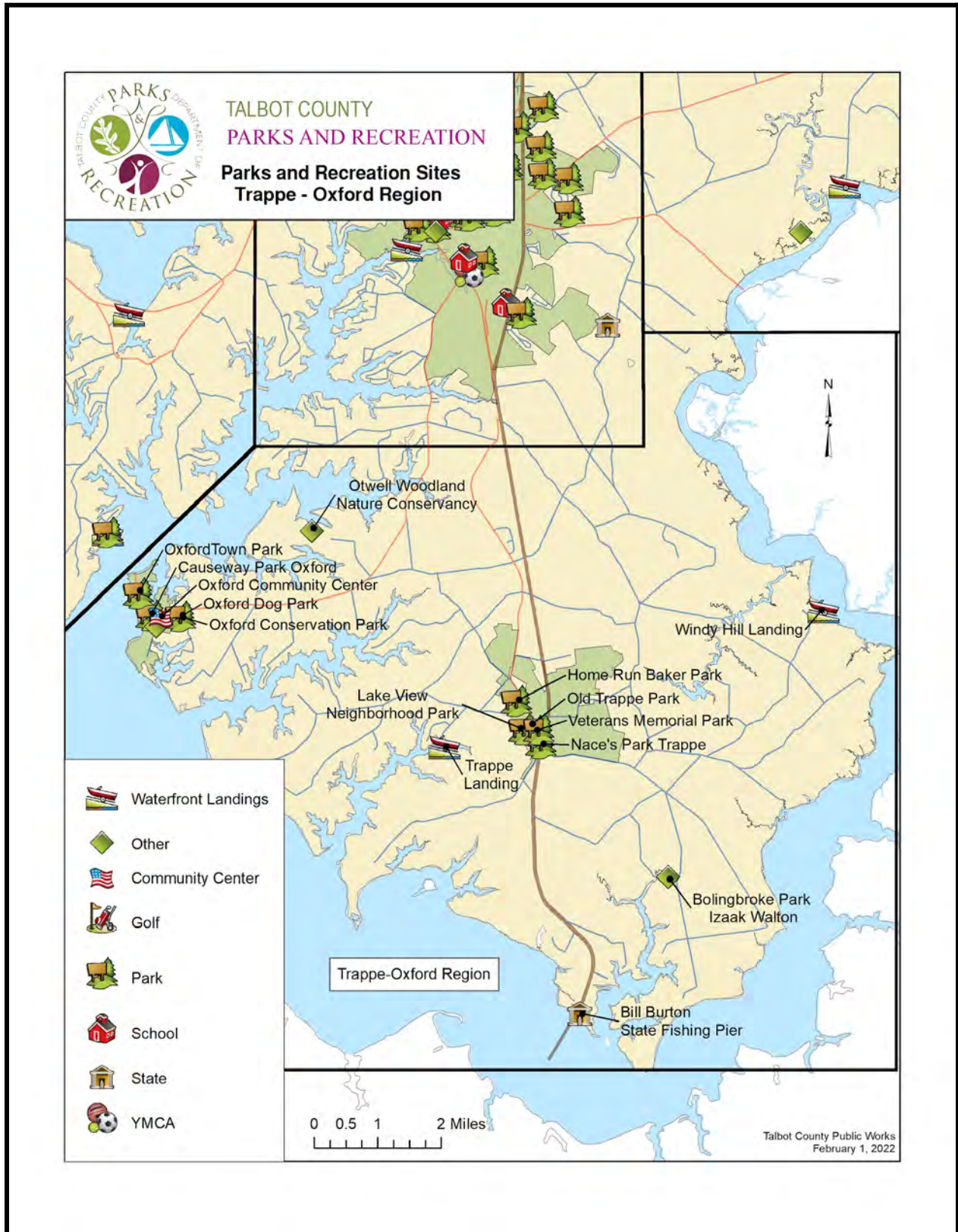
Map II-2 Easton Region Parks & Recreation Sites



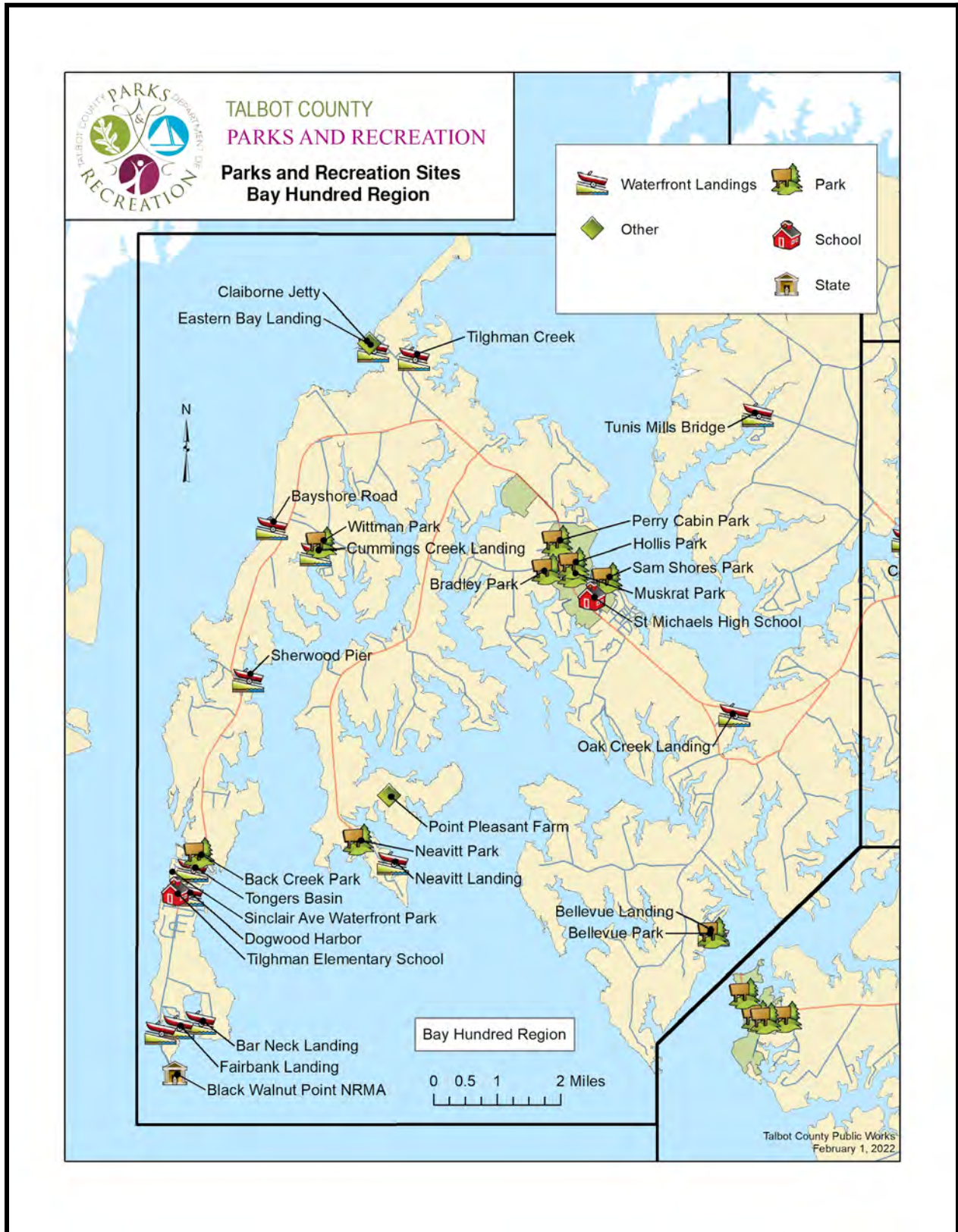
Map II-3 Cordova Parks & Recreation Sites



Map II-4 Oxford/Bellevue/Trappe Parks & Recreation Sites



Map II-5 Bay Hundred Parks & Recreation Sites



County and Municipal Land: Recreation land is currently developed for public use. This includes Special Use acreage. Currently there are 706.6 acres of recreation land maintained by the County and its municipalities. **Resource lands** are primarily owned by the State and include 236 acres.



State Land: The State maintains two state parks in Talbot County as well as several wildlife management and conservation areas.

Federal: There are no federally owned natural resource properties in Talbot County.

Private/Quasi-public: 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. Also included is the 10 acre YMCA property in Easton which provides limited public use.

State and quasi-public resource land is shown in Table II-1 but is described in more detail in Chapter III Natural Resources. This chapter focuses on recreation land.

A. County Parks and Open Spaces

Talbot County maintains 576.5 acres of land developed for recreational use. This includes all developed County parks. There has been no change since the 2017 Plan in the number of recreational acreage owned by the County.

1. Regional Parks

County owned and maintained regional parks provide a wide variety of recreation opportunities including ball fields, paved courts, picnic areas, and playgrounds. The County has four regional parks primarily designed for county-wide sports use.

- Talbot County Community Center and Park is centrally located in the County, within the boundary of the Town of Easton, and accessible from Route 50. The 50 acre property includes the community center with a seasonal ice rink and curling rink as well as meeting room space. Outdoor features include multi-purpose fields, ball diamonds, picnic area, and playground. A new gymnasium facility will be added to the inventory in 2023 when construction is complete.
- Home Run Baker Sports Complex is a 14 acre park in Trappe which includes sports fields, a walking trail, and exercise stations.



- Perry Cabin Park & Sports Complex in St. Michaels includes sports fields, a playground, concession stand, and picnic pavilion.
- Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe is a 107 acre park located off Lewistown Road along the Tuckahoe River. Currently it is an undeveloped passive park. In September 2021 the County shared a long-range [Master Plan](#).

2. Community and Neighborhood Parks

The County also offers several community and neighborhood parks located in municipalities or rural villages that provide ball fields (baseball, softball, and multi-purpose), paved basketball and tennis courts, and playgrounds and picnic areas. There are six County-owned community/neighborhood parks including:

- Back Creek Community Park, Tilghman, includes a picnic area with a pavilion and grills, walking, trail, lookout deck, and kayak launch.
- Bellevue Community Park, Bellevue, includes a playground, basketball court, and pavilion, as well as a boat ramp. The Oxford-Bellevue Ferry also operates from the park.
- Cordova Community Park, Cordova, includes a picnic area with pavilions and grills, walking trail, exercise stations, concession stand, sports fields, and tennis courts.
- Neavitt Community Park, Neavitt, includes a picnic area with pavilion and playground.
- Old Trappe Park, Trappe, includes a picnic area, playground, shade structure, and sports fields.
- Wittman Community Park, Wittman, includes a playground, pavilion, baseball diamond, and sports fields.



3. Other County Recreation Sites



In addition to traditional community and neighborhood parks, Talbot County also maintains parks dedicated primarily to water access. Several also have short trails. (See Map II-6.) These include:

- Black Walnut Point includes a stone bulkhead, fishing access, and bird watching opportunities.
- Claiborne Jetty, an undeveloped open space, provides access for fishing and crabbing.

- Oxford Conservation Park provides walking trails and open landscapes for waterfront and wetland views and bird watching.
- Seymour Avenue Park in St. Michaels provides waterfront views and fishing access.
- Sinclair Avenue Park in Trappe provides waterfront views and fishing access.
- Talbot County parks and open space inventory also includes Hog Neck Golf Course, a 255 acre 27 hole public course located outside Easton.



B. Municipal Parks and Open Spaces

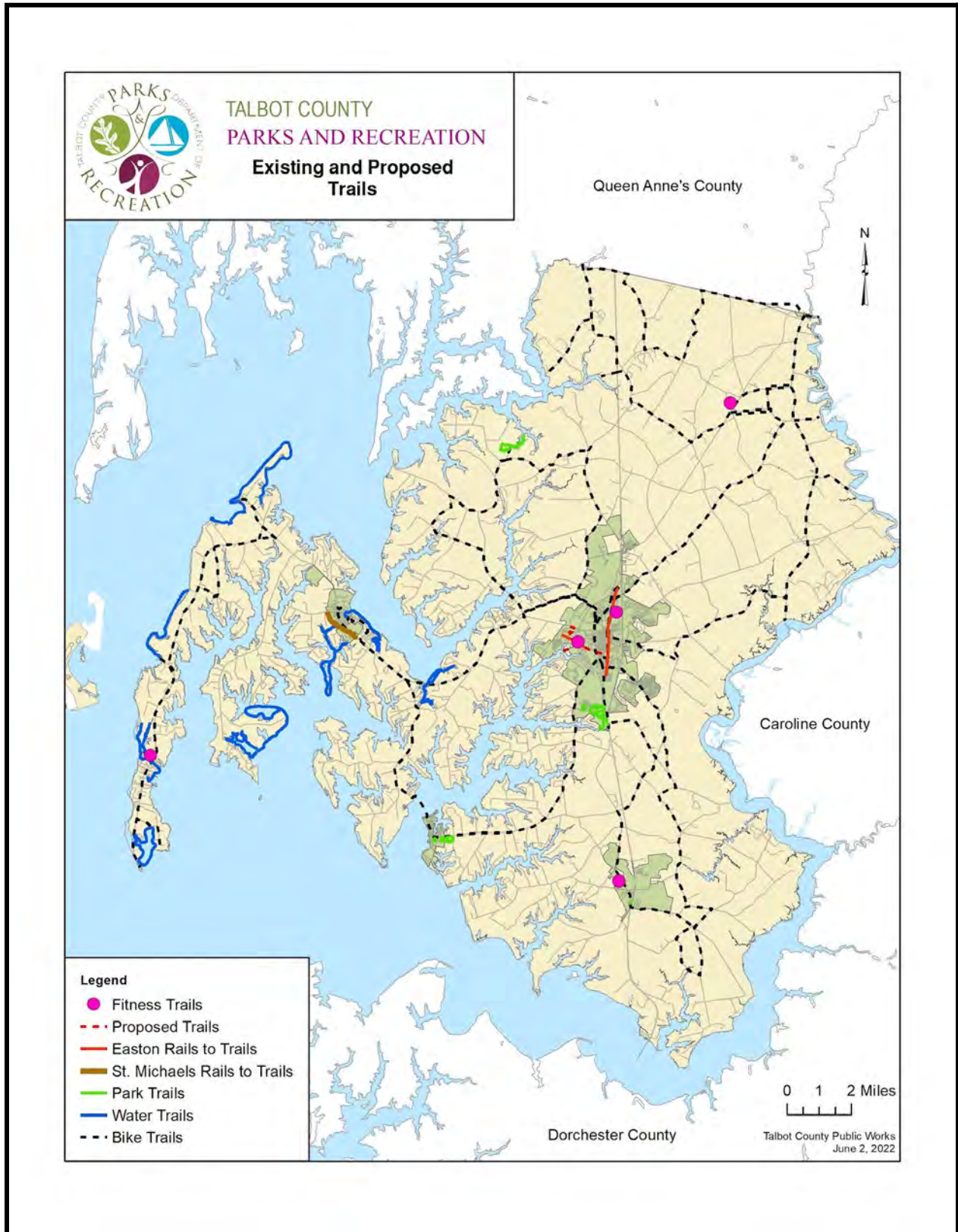
Talbot County includes five municipalities, four of which maintain their own network of parks. The largest of these municipalities is the Town of Easton, which maintains 16 community and neighborhood parks and open spaces. Several of these parks are destinations not only for town residents but for Talbot County residents and visitors.



- Idlewild Park is a 12 acre park that includes picnic facilities, a walking trail, playgrounds, basketball and tennis courts.
- A. James Clark North Easton Sports Complex is a 23 acre site dedicated to field sports and includes lighted multipurpose fields for soccer and lacrosse. It also includes the only skate park in the County.
- John F. Ford Park, formerly called RTC Park, is a 58 acre passive park located along Easton's Rail-to-Trail. It provides a picnic area.

St. Michaels, Trappe, and Oxford all have small municipal parks that offer a mix of features including playgrounds, picnic areas, perimeter walking/fitness trails, and sports fields.

Map II-6 Talbot County and Town Trails



C. State Land

There are 236 acres of land owned by the State in Talbot County. These include Black Walnut Point Natural Resource Management Area and Seth Demonstration Forest. These state natural resource conservation lands are described in more detail in Chapter III. Also included in this acreage are two state parks:

- Bill Burton Fishing Pier State Park is a 24-acre park located on the Choptank River. The State Park includes approximately 1 mile of walking trail along the Choptank River and Bolingbroke Creek as well as picnic areas with grills. The fishing pier is available from both sides of the Choptank, approximately 1 mile of pier accessible from the Talbot side and ½ mile from the Dorchester side. The fishing pier is currently closed to the public.
- Wye Oak State Park is located in Wye Mills and was created to protect the Wye Oak, which stood for more than 460 years before toppling in a storm in 2002. The park includes limited picnic facilities.



D. Private Quasi-Public land and Facilities



Private/quasi-public lands make a significant contribution to recreational opportunities in Talbot County. These private/quasi-public areas are not always available to the public and may be fee-based for use of the facility. Board of Education property accounts for an additional 71 acres of recreational land. Additionally, there are several natural resource conservation properties that have limited accessibility for public use. These are detailed in Chapter III.

E. Water Access

Public access to rivers and streams for boating and fishing is an important component of the County's recreation facilities. Table II-2 summarizes County-owned public landings. These are managed by Talbot County Parks & Recreation (TCPR). There are a total of 25 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 Talbot County Public Landings

Facility ID	Landing	Location	Boat Ramp	Pier	Bulkhead	Boat Slips	Vehicle Parking Spaces	Trailer Parking Spaces	Additional Information
1	Bar Neck Landing	Tilghman	0	1	0	0	0	0	Small Floating Pier, Kayak Access, no parking, no boat access
2	Bayshore	Wittman	0	0	0	0	1	0	no parking, kayak access, no parking, no boat access
3	Bellevue Landing	Bellevue	1	1	3	25	28	11	Paved boat ramp 2 boat access, parking, boat slips
4	Black Walnut Point	Tilghman	0	0	0	0	75	0	no water access, no boat access, fishing from Rip-Rap
5	Fairbank	Tilghman	0	1	0	0	2	0	Fishing Pier. No boat access
6	Coveys Landing	Cordova	1	1	0	0	5	3	Paved boat ramp 1 boat access, parking
7	Cummings Creek	Wittman	1	1	1	5	5	2	Paved boat Ramp 1 boat access, parking, Boat Slips
8	Dogwood Harbor	Tilghman	1	1	3	29	40	5	Paved boat ramp 2 boat access, parking, boat slips
9	Claiborne Landing	Claiborne	1	1	1	4	13	14	Paved boat ramp 2 boat access, parking, boat slips
10	Easton Point	Easton	1	1	1	0	8	10	Paved boat ramp 2 boat access, parking
11	Kingston Landing	Easton	1	1	0	0	4	2	Paved boat ramp 1 boat access, parking
12	Miles River Bridge	Easton	0	0	0	0	0	0	undeveloped soft landing-no parking
13	Neavitt Landing	Neavitt	1	0	1	14	17	6	Paved boat ramp 2 boat access, parking, boat slips
14	New Bridge Landing	Easton	1	0	1	0	4	0	Paved boat ramp 1 boat access, parking
15	Oak Creek Landing	Neavitt	2	2	2	28	20	16	Paved boat ramp 2 boat access, parking, boat slips
16	Resse's Landing	Cordova	0	0	1	0	2	0	no parking, kayak access, no parking, no boat access
17	Sherwood Pier	Sherwood	0	1	1	0	0	0	long fishing pier no parking, kayak access, no parking, no boat access
18	Skipton Landing	Skipton	1	1	0	0	5	2	Paved boat ramp 1 boat access, parking
19	Tilghman Creek	Claiborne	0	1	1	0	5	0	fishing pier, street parking, no boat access
20	Tonger Basin	Tilghman	0	0	3	9	25	0	no boat ramp. no pier, bulkhead boat rafting, boat slips, parking
21	Trappe Landing	Trappe	1	1	1	11	6	3	Paved boat ramp 1 boat access, parking,boat slips
22	Tunis Mills Bridge	Tunis Mills	1	0	0	0	0	0	no parking, kayak access, no boat access
23	Villa Road Landing	Easton	1	0	0	0	0	0	boat access, paved road to water, no parking
24	Windy Hill Landing	Bruceville	1	1	0	0	4	2	Paved boat ramp 1 boat access, parking
25	Wye Landing	Wye Mills	2	1	1	4	10	17	Paved boat ramp 2 boat access, parking, boat slips

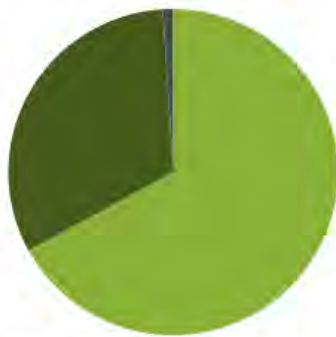
- Virtual community conversations/focus groups held over a one week period of time included sessions for Bay Hundred/St Michaels, Trappe, Oxford and Easton, and Wye Mills, Cordova, Queen Anne and Easton areas.

Survey responses came from across the County. Table II-3 demonstrates the geographic distribution of respondents by region and zip code. Chart II-1 represents the breakdown between whether respondents indicated they lived within their town boundaries or in the County. Sixty-seven percent of respondents lived in towns as compared to 49.7% of the County's total population. The majority of responses were from females (77%) whites (84%), and were over the age of 34. The largest number of respondents, 57%, were between the ages of 35 and 54 and 28% were 55 and older. Survey participants, for the most part, accessed and utilized parks and open spaces in the County (Chart II-2). Nearly one in four 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.

Table II-3 Community Survey Participants by Zip Code

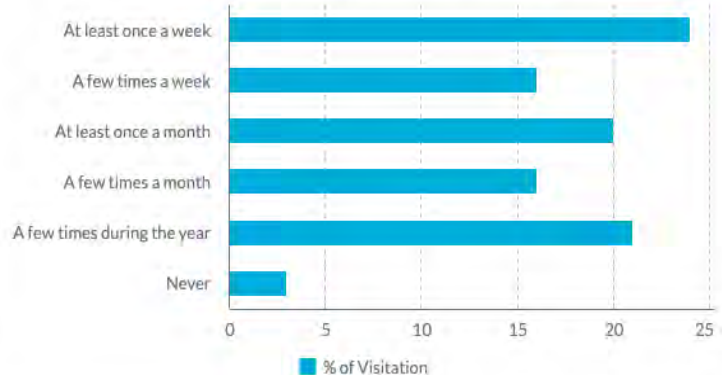
Zip Code	Town	Survey Respondents	Percent Total Respondents
21601	Easton	180	45.9%
21612	Bozman	1	0.3%
21624	Claborne	0	0.0%
21625	Cordova	27	6.9%
21647	McDaniel	1	0.3%
21652	Neavitt	2	0.5%
21653	Newcomb	0	0.0%
21654	Oxford	6	1.5%
21655	Sherwood	5	1.3%
21662	Royal Oak	4	1.0%
21663	St. Michaels	40	10.2%
21671	Tilghman	49	12.5%
21673	Trappe	25	6.4%
21676	Wittman	3	0.8%
21679	Wye Mills	4	1.0%
Various	Outside of Talbot County	45	11.5%
Total		392	100.0%
<i>Bay Hundred Region</i>			

Chart II-1
Respondents Living in Town/Municipality



■ Yes (67%) ■ No (32%) ■ Not Sure (1%)

Chart II-2
Visitation of Green Spaces in Last 12 Months



■ % of Visitation

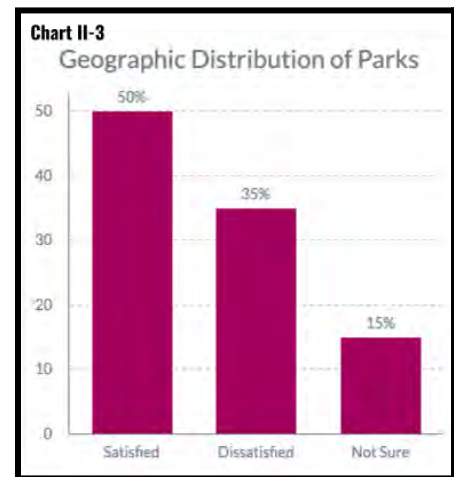
Community Conversations and survey prompts focused on these basic questions:

- 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

Talbot County has a network of outdoor parks and open spaces. As Maps II-1 through II-4 (pages 3-6) indicate, there are parks/open spaces available across the County. Community and neighborhood parks are situated in the population centers of municipalities and larger rural villages. Regional parks with sports fields are located near communities with more population.

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.) A large number of survey respondents were not sure about what was available to Talbot County residents. This was evident in the responses to many of the survey questions. Features that at least half of respondents were unsure about included: pickleball and volleyball courts (59%), lacrosse and football fields (51%), ball diamonds (50%). More than 40% were unsure about basketball courts, skateparks, soccer fields, and splash pads.

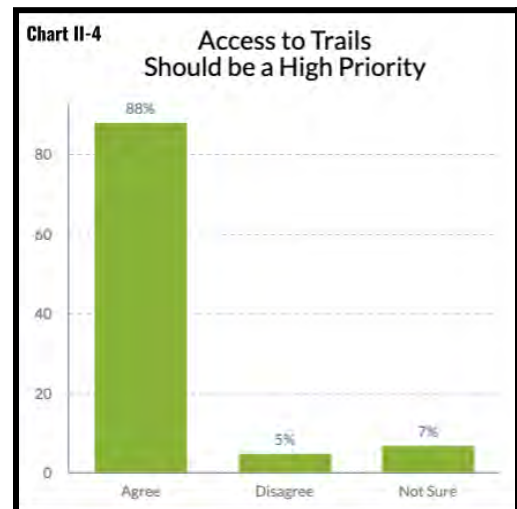


2. Features, Amenities, and Accessibility

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:

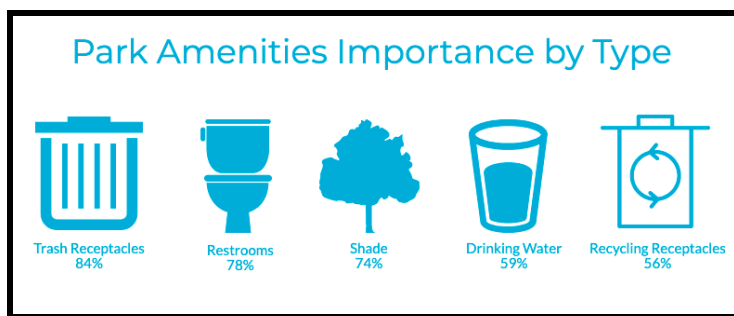
1. Walking/Hiking/Biking Trails
2. Playgrounds
3. Ice rink
4. Waterway access for boating, kayaking, canoeing
5. Picnic areas



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

- Longer hiking/walking/bike trails
- Additional water access
- Greenspace parks that preserve natural spaces

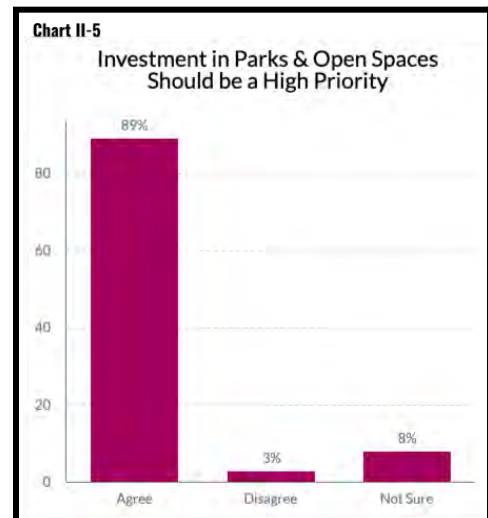
In focus group discussions and written responses to open-ended survey questions, respondents identified several deficits related to availability of parks and related features. In particular, half of respondents indicated there were not enough trails available and 88% indicated trails should be a high priority. Focus group participants were most interested in additional, longer distance, and varied walking and hiking trails around the County, and placed high importance on access to trails (Chart II-4).



Amenities - In surveys and focus groups, respondents identified their top priorities as trash receptacles, restrooms, shade, recycling, and drinking water.

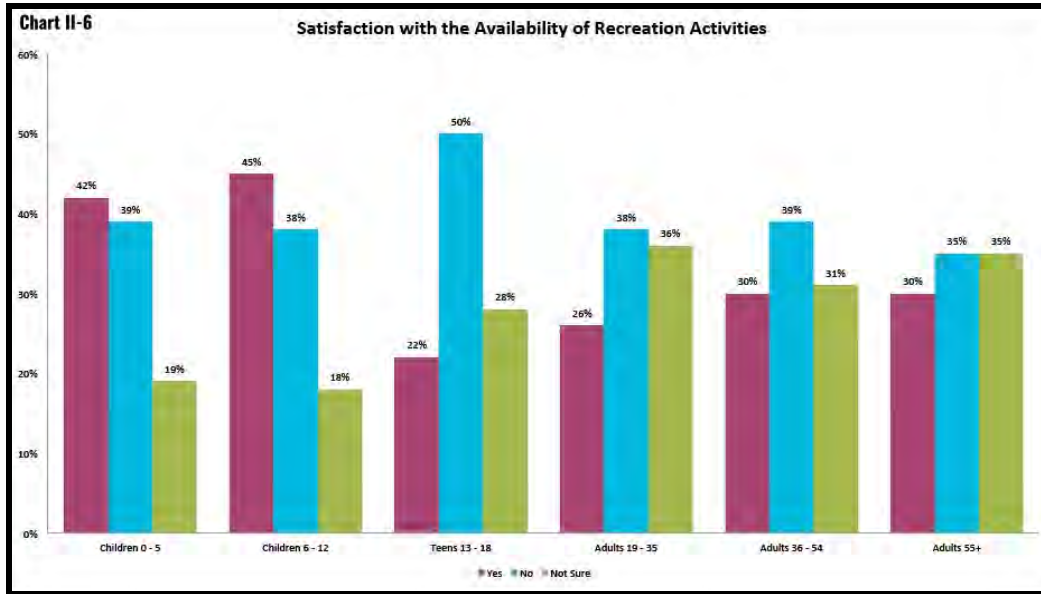
Accessibility within the parks was an area mentioned in focus groups and written responses on the community survey. Playground equipment for differently abled children was also identified as a feature that should be available in more parks. More playgrounds do not have these types of equipment than playgrounds which do. Water access for differently abled was also raised as an accessibility concern. This included shoreline access as well as access to kayak launches designed for users with special physical needs. With an increasing aging population, this was of particular concern to older residents who participated in focus groups and who want to be able to continue to access parks and open spaces as they continue to age.

Overall, 89% of survey respondents indicated that parks should be a priority for the County (See Chart II-5.)



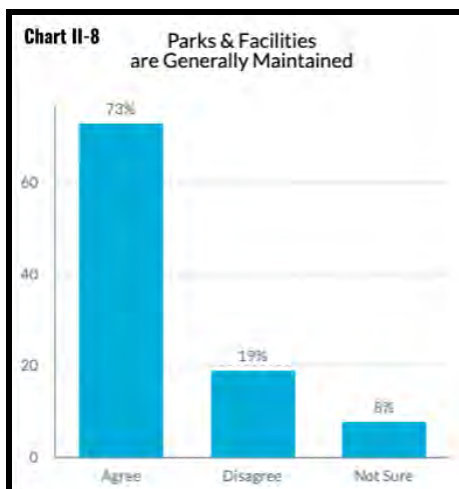
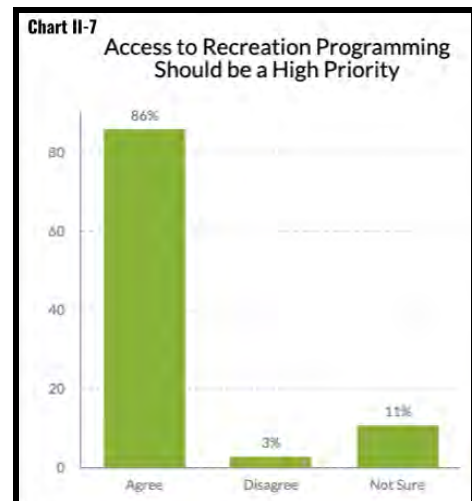
3. Recreation Availability and Accessibility

Overall, 40-45% of community survey respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the activities available for preschool and elementary age youth. Half of survey respondents (50%) indicated that there were not enough available recreation offerings for teens and 35 - 40% of respondents were not satisfied with what was available for adults. (See Chart II-6.)



Overall, 86% of survey respondents indicated that recreational programming should be a high priority for the County. (See Chart II-7.)

Maintenance & Upkeep - The majority (73%) of community survey responses demonstrated that County residents are generally satisfied with the maintenance at parks and facilities, 19% were not satisfied and 8% were unsure. In focus groups there were recommendations that existing parks, fields, and facilities need upgrades. Specifically cited by participants were playground equipment, court surfaces, and the addition of restroom facilities or ensuring that restrooms were kept unlocked. (See Chart II-8.)



4. Written Survey Comments

The community survey's last two questions were open-ended. In total, the questions received 334 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: add and rehabilitate playgrounds (particularly Back Creek Park, Tilghman), construct a dog park, extend the ice rink season, add more and longer trails for walking, hiking and biking, provide more access to water for shoreline activities, and provide additional programming for youth, particularly teens.

5. Staff Observations

To provide a comprehensive perspective on parks and recreation, Shore Strategies held staff level focus groups in January 2022. Staff input focused on:

- Rehabilitating/enhancing parks currently in the inventory before adding additional parks.
- Expanding facilities at Talbot Community Center to allow for lengthening the ice rink season. This will be accomplished with the opening of the gymnasium scheduled for completion in 2023. Currently the ice rink is also used for multiple purposes including summer camps. The addition of the gymnasium will alleviate this need.

6. Trends in County Recreation Program and Facility Utilization

Program offerings include an array for all ages from preschool through senior adults. Swimming lessons, summer camps, and youth basketball are consistently filled. Analysis of registration data from (TCPR) demonstrates that the department routinely fills its classes and programs and often carries waiting lists for participation, particularly in programs like youth summer camp. (See Table II-4.) Programs are designed based upon

Program Type	2017 Programs				2019 Programs				Change 2017-2019			
	Participants	Spectators	Visits	Total	Participants	Spectators	Visits	Total	Participants	Spectators	Visits	Total
Events												
Halloween BOQanza	255	510	1	765	300	600	1	900	17.6%	17.5%	0.0%	17.6%
Skate with Santa	90	180	1	270	175	350	1	525	94.4%	94.4%	0.0%	94.4%
Daddy Daughter Skate	201	172	1	373	172	344	1	516	-14.4%	100.0%	0.0%	38.3%
Decoy Tailgate Show	82	164	3	738	69	138	3	621	-15.9%	-15.9%	0.0%	-15.9%
Community Yard Sale	29	145	1	174	29	145	1	174	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Programs												
Youth Basketball	268	536	18	14,472	209	418	18	11,286	-22.0%	-22.0%	0.0%	-22.0%
Fall Field Hockey	176	352	20	10,560	178	356	20	10,680	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%	1.1%
Spring Field Hockey Camp	29	58	6	527	82	164	6	1,476	182.8%	182.8%	0.0%	182.8%
Summer Soccer Camp	40	80	6	720	51	102	6	918	27.5%	27.5%	0.0%	27.5%
Summer Volleyball Camp					38	76	6	684	NA	NA	NA	NA
Summer Basketball Camp	33	66	6	594	59	118	6	1,062	78.8%	78.8%	0.0%	78.8%
Summer Dance Program	36	72	6	648	56	112	6	1,008	55.6%	55.6%	0.0%	55.6%
Summer Camp	50	50	50	5,000	70	70	50	7,000	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	40.0%
Wrestling Clinic	0	39	1	39	40	35	1	73	NA	-15.4%	0.0%	87.2%
Learn to Skate	531	1,062	18	28,674	591	1,182	18	31,914	11.3%	11.3%	0.0%	11.3%
Liamie Webb Hockey	139	278	18	7,506	169	338	18	9,126	21.6%	21.6%	0.0%	21.6%
Showtime Figure Skating	19	38	10	570					-100.0%	-100.0%	-100.0%	-100.0%
Power & Edges Skate Class	28	56	16	1,344	28	56	16	1,344	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Home School Skate Lessons	41	82	18	2,214	89	178	18	4,806	117.1%	117.1%	0.0%	117.1%
Adult Hockey League					24	1	15	375	NA	NA	NA	NA
Adult Hockey Tournament	180	360	3	1,620	150	150	3	900	-16.7%	-58.3%	0.0%	-44.4%
Talbot Figure Skating Team	43	86	44	5,676	42	84	44	5,544	-2.3%	-2.3%	0.0%	-2.3%
TFST Events	180	360	3	1,620	177	354	3	1,593	-1.7%	-1.7%	0.0%	-1.7%
ESHA Practices	200	400	44	26,400	200	400	44	26,400	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
ESHA Games	400	800	12	14,400	400	800	12	14,400	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Curling Membership	80	80	36	5,760	80	80	36	5,760	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Curling Tournaments	80	400	3	1,440	80	400	3	1,440	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Totals	3,210	5,946	306	132,099	3,558	6,569	317	140,525	10.8%	10.5%	3.6%	6.4%

Program Data provided by Talbot County Parks & Recreation

a combination of staff/instructor capacity as well as facility availability. The Talbot County Community Center is well utilized. In particular the Community Center provides the only ice rink on Maryland’s Eastern Shore and draws hockey teams and figure skaters from well beyond Talbot County. In addition, the Community Center has a curling rink, unique for this area as well. Available ice time is limited by the hours ice is available and how that aligns with when need is greatest. As noted earlier, scheduling for ice time is at a premium and community response included many requests for expanded hours for usage not only for team practices and private skate lessons, but also for general public skating opportunities open to all. Without the physical expansion of available ice by building an additional rink designed and constructed to maintain appropriate temperatures for ice to extend the season, there is no capacity to meet the high demand for ice time.

TCPR also manages the public boat ramps and slips for the County. Boat ramp usage is by trailer permit. Table II-5 demonstrates that Talbot County’s boat ramps are heavily utilized. Sales are consistent year over year.

Year	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	Change FY2017-FY2021
Boat Ramp Permit Sales	3,957	3,581	3,540	3,531	3,745	-5.4%

TCPR does not currently have a system that tracks utilization of parks over time, however, anecdotal discussions with staff indicate that parks usage as measured by pavilion reservations has been consistent between 2018 and 2021, except during the height of COVID in 2020. From mid-April through mid-October the sports fields at the Community Center are reserved by youth and adult sports leagues and are utilized extensively. Staff observation of field usage around the county, including fields managed by municipalities as well as the county-owned fields, is that they are very busy throughout the week for practices, but are less used on the weekend when travel teams attend tournaments outside the county. TCPR will continue to explore how to implement usage tracking mechanisms for casual unscheduled use of parks.

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 and programs are well-used and are an important asset to the County. Expansion of features and amenities are primary concerns when considering capital investments in parks and open spaces in the County.

The numbers of community survey respondents unfamiliar with the availability of a variety of features within parks may point to a need to do additional outreach and awareness building. This goal is to ensure community residents are fully aware of what Parks facilities and amenities are available, as well as what recreation programming opportunities are available. According to community survey responses, residents rely on word of mouth and social media for information about activities and programs sponsored by TCPR.

2. Land Acquisition Needs



As shown in Table II-1 (page 2), the County and towns currently have about 767 acres of parks and open space land. Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) population trends indicate that Talbot County will experience small gains in population over the next 10 years, although the trends from the past decade demonstrate a slight decrease in population. Through the community engagement process, Talbot residents indicated a desire for the redevelopment of features and amenities within existing parks, particularly playground equipment. They also identified additional trails and public access to the water as desirable. At this time TCPR has not identified specific

additional acquisitions. However, the leadership will continue to monitor the need for additional land as it relates specifically to meeting additional trail and water access needs.

3. Program Priorities

Responses from the community engagement process indicate that the County, in concert with the towns, should focus on providing additional access to places and spaces that support the health and wellness of County residents as well as meet their recreational programming needs. This includes:

- Expanding access to programs for middle school age youth and teens
- Expanded access to programs for adults of all ages



4. Facility Needs

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



- Longer multi-use trails (rails to trails type)
- New and replacement playgrounds, especially the addition of ADA accessible areas and equipment
- Expanded ice rink season and potentially another rink
- Dog Park

C. Local & State Related Research

1. Environmental

In 2021 Talbot County released a draft of the update to its 2004 Green Infrastructure Plan, [Cleaner Greener Talbot](#). Several priorities in the plan are directly related to parks and recreation. In particular, the plan prioritizes the need for additional water access and recommends a waterfront park in Talbot County. There are also a number of conservation projects included in the Plan that could provide opportunities for passive recreation linked with conservation efforts.

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. Talbot County's water access, natural resource and agricultural lands, and various recreation opportunities make Talbot 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 Talbot 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. Health Benefits

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 linked to improved 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. 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.

D. National Trends in Outdoor Program Participation and Organized Youth Sports



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. Level of Service Analysis

A. Proximity Analysis

This section evaluates the extent to which residents in all areas of Talbot 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.

Talbot County's network of parks is distributed throughout the County, primarily located in either municipalities or larger rural villages. Map II-7 includes all park and natural resource locations in the County and demonstrates that there is access to some type of park/open space within 5 miles of nearly every point in the County. Additionally, the proximity of parks to municipalities or larger villages aligns with Talbot County's land use policies which have been established to maintain large swaths of contiguous agricultural acreage and natural resource corridors throughout much of the County. Residential development has been directed toward the municipalities and to some extent toward the larger rural villages. Through the community survey and community discussions, residents shared information about the features they most want in their parks, including picnic areas, playground, trails, water access, and multipurpose sports field. Review of Maps II-8 through II-12 lead to the following observations:

- 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. Multipurpose sports fields (Map II-10) are situated in or near municipalities with the largest number in, or near, Easton, the population center of the County. St. Michaels and Trappe also offer sports fields for organized youth sports as well as for informal play.
- Water Access (Map II-11) is available along all the major waterways in the County including the Chesapeake Bay, Tuckahoe, and Choptank Rivers as well as along smaller creeks. There are a total of 25 public landings throughout the County. While water access for boat launching is available, fewer access points provide shoreline access for fishing, wading, and other water shoreline water play.
- Trail Access (Map II-12) was identified as a priority within community responses. There are trails located within a five mile radius of most points within the County, however the overall number of trails is limited. Easton's 3.5 mile Rail-to-Trail path is the longest trail in the County. St Michaels also has a short Rail-to-Trail. Talbot County also offers miles of road and water trails. Maps can be found at <https://tourtalbot.org/resources/maps-brochures/>



- Regional facilities: Talbot County maintains several regional parks. In particular, the Talbot County Community Center is located approximately 3.9 miles from the center of Easton and is accessible from Route 50. In addition to the Community Center, this 50 acre property includes multipurpose fields, picnic areas, and a playground.

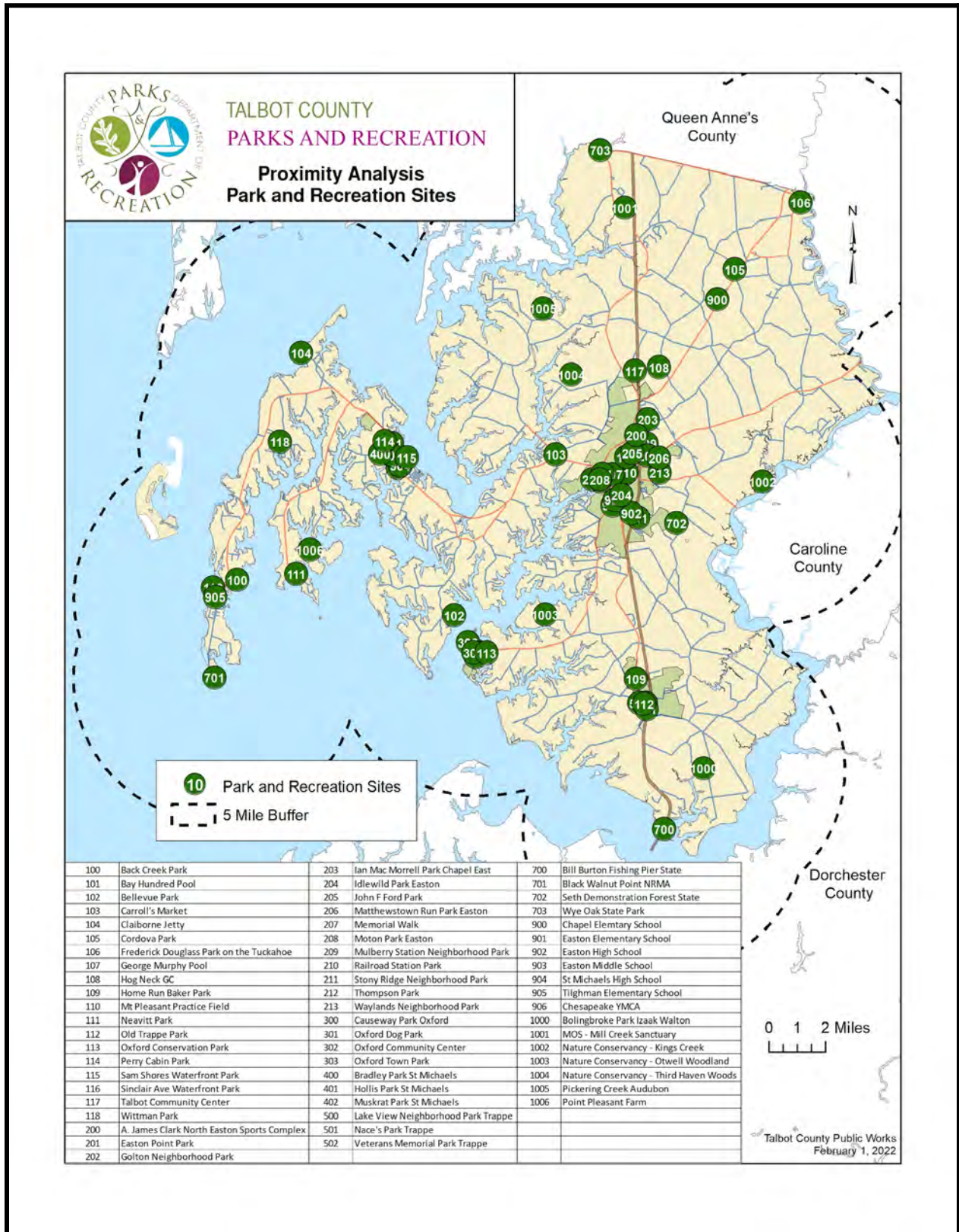


- Talbot County’s other large parks are both passive conservation parks and include the 87 acre Oxford Conservation Park with its natural areas, a walking trail, picnic area, and waterview observation areas. The Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe is a 107 acre passive park to be further developed with trails and picnic areas over the next five years.
- Community Parks: The four County-owned and maintained community parks that include sports fields and playgrounds are located in or near municipal centers. These include: Cordova Park, Home Run Baker Park (Trappe), and Perry Cabin Park (St. Michaels) as well as the Community Center. These parks provide space for both structured and unstructured youth sports.
- Neighborhood Parks: The County also maintains neighborhood parks in several rural villages including Bellevue, Neavitt, and Tilghman (Back Creek Park).

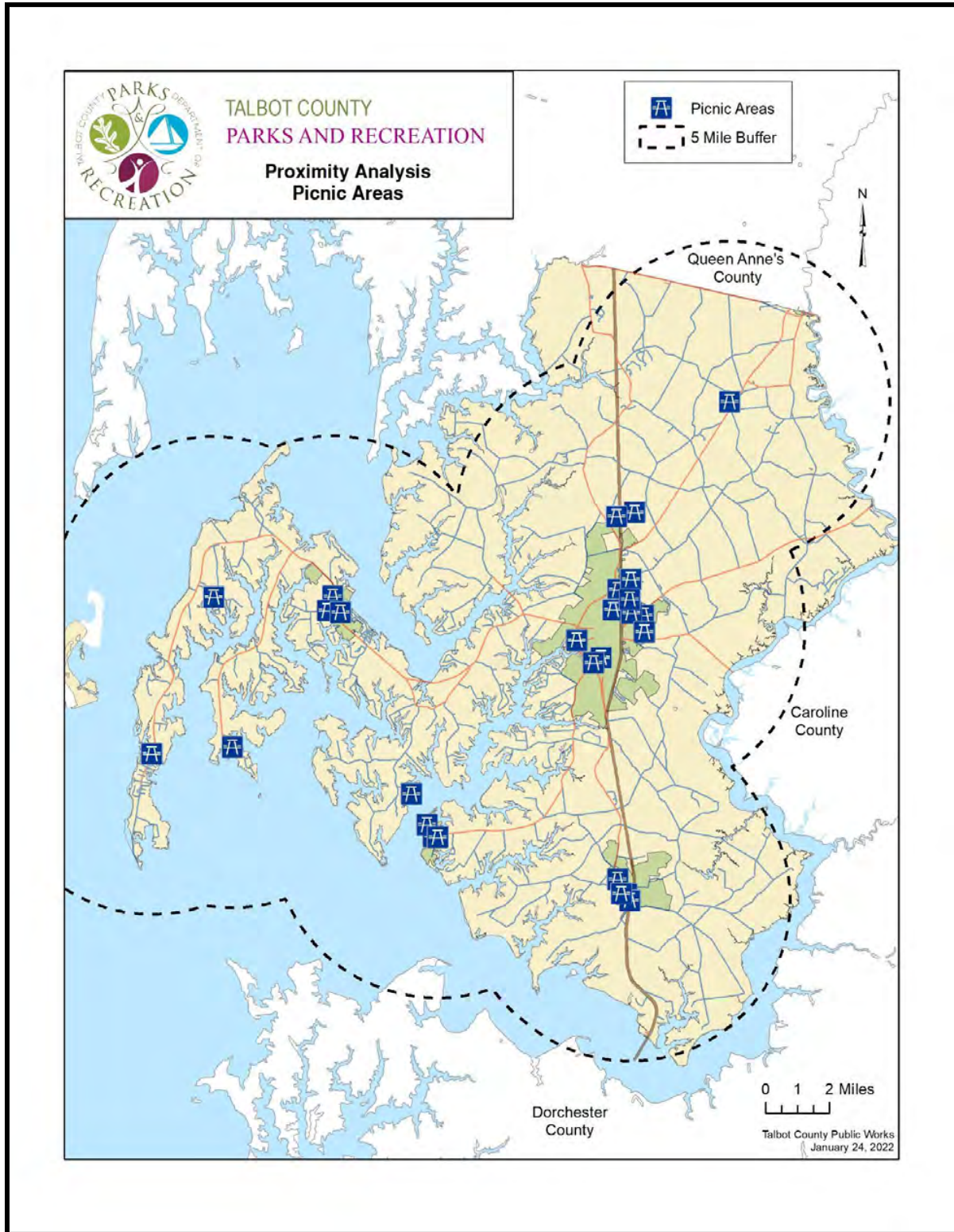


- The majority of County and municipal parks offering active recreation are appropriately located within or near the incorporated municipalities and larger rural villages, in proximity to the largest share of population.
- State and private/quasi private conservation/natural resource areas provide additional access to green space for County residents and visitors.
- County school sites provide additional outdoor play space and school fields are often used for youth sports league play as well.
- There are very small areas that do not have access to the various park features included for the proximity analysis. These areas are located along the far northwest and northeast boundaries of the county where population density is very low and land usage is predominantly agricultural. The uncovered area along the Tuckahoe River between Talbot and Caroline is part of a Rural Legacy Area.

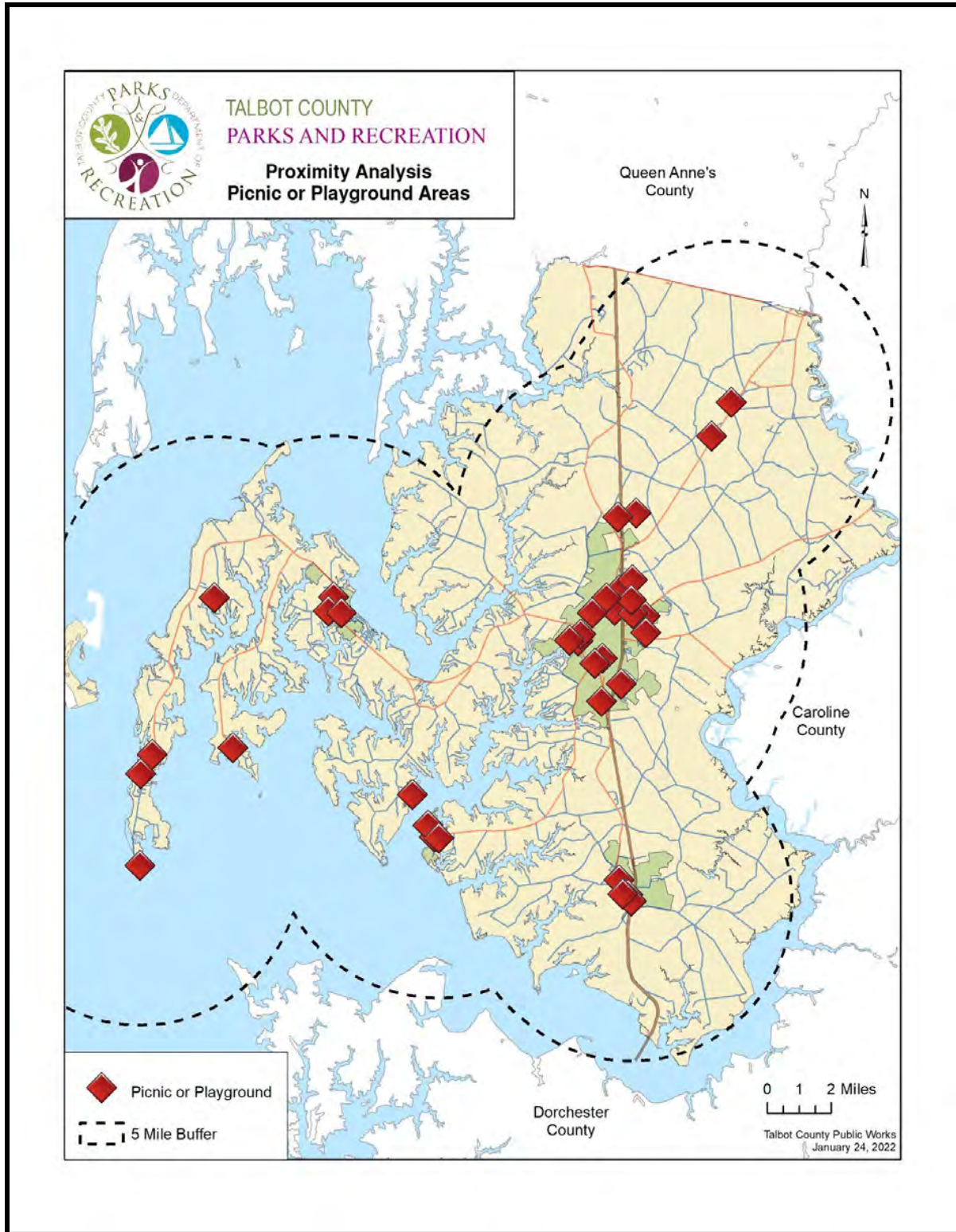
Map II-7 Proximity Analysis Talbot County Parks & Recreation Sites



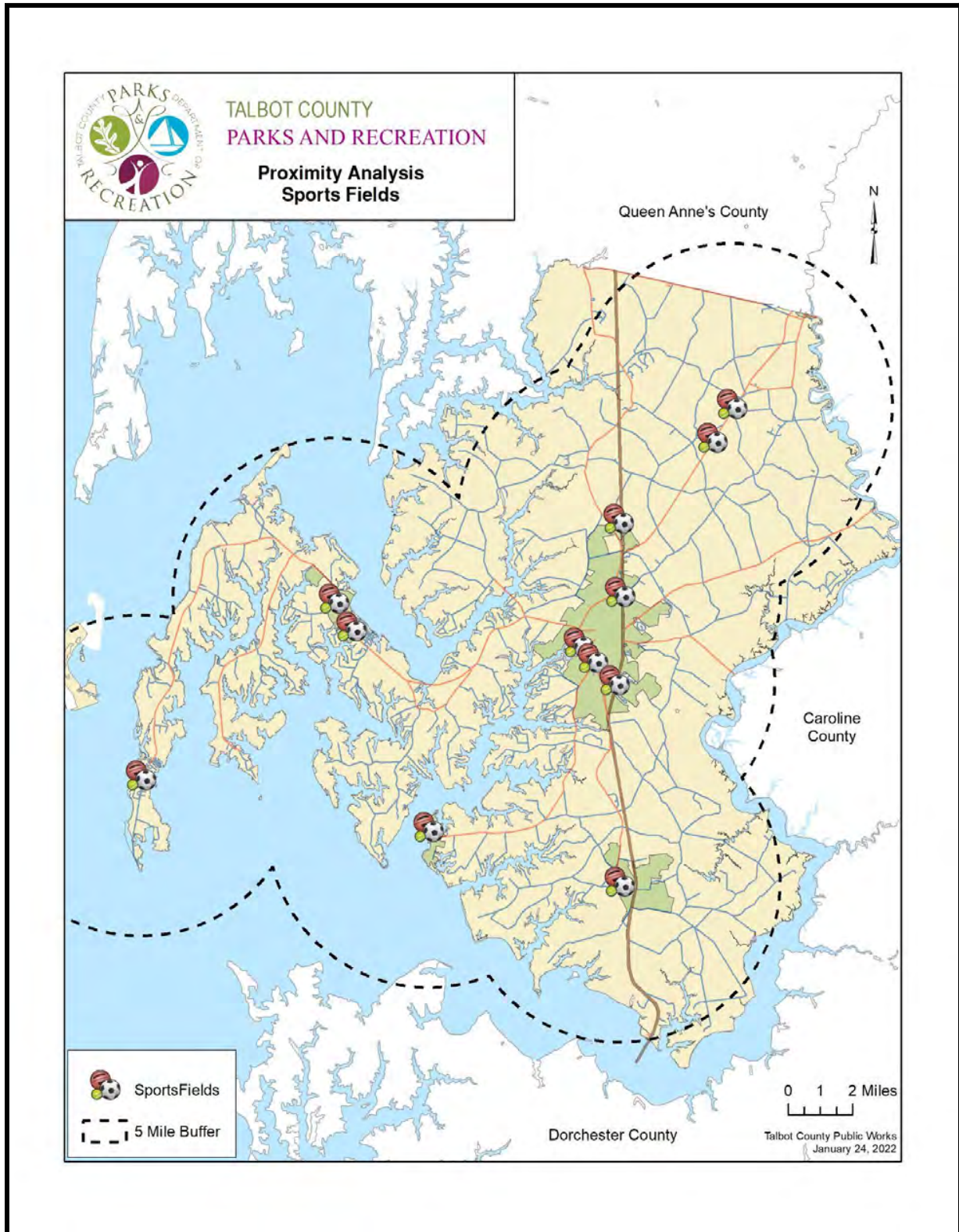
Map II-8 Proximity Analysis Picnic Areas



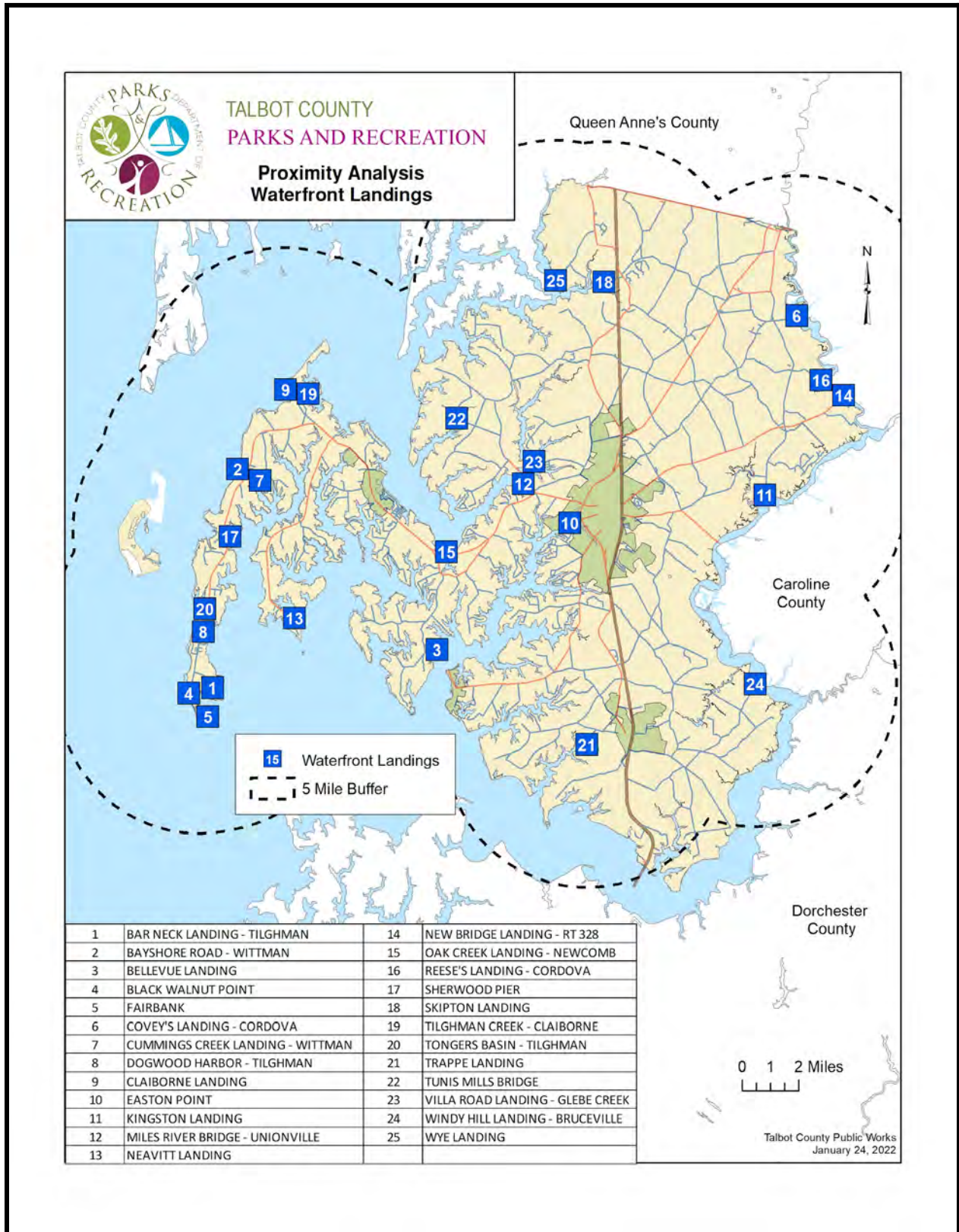
Map II-9 Proximity Analysis Playgrounds



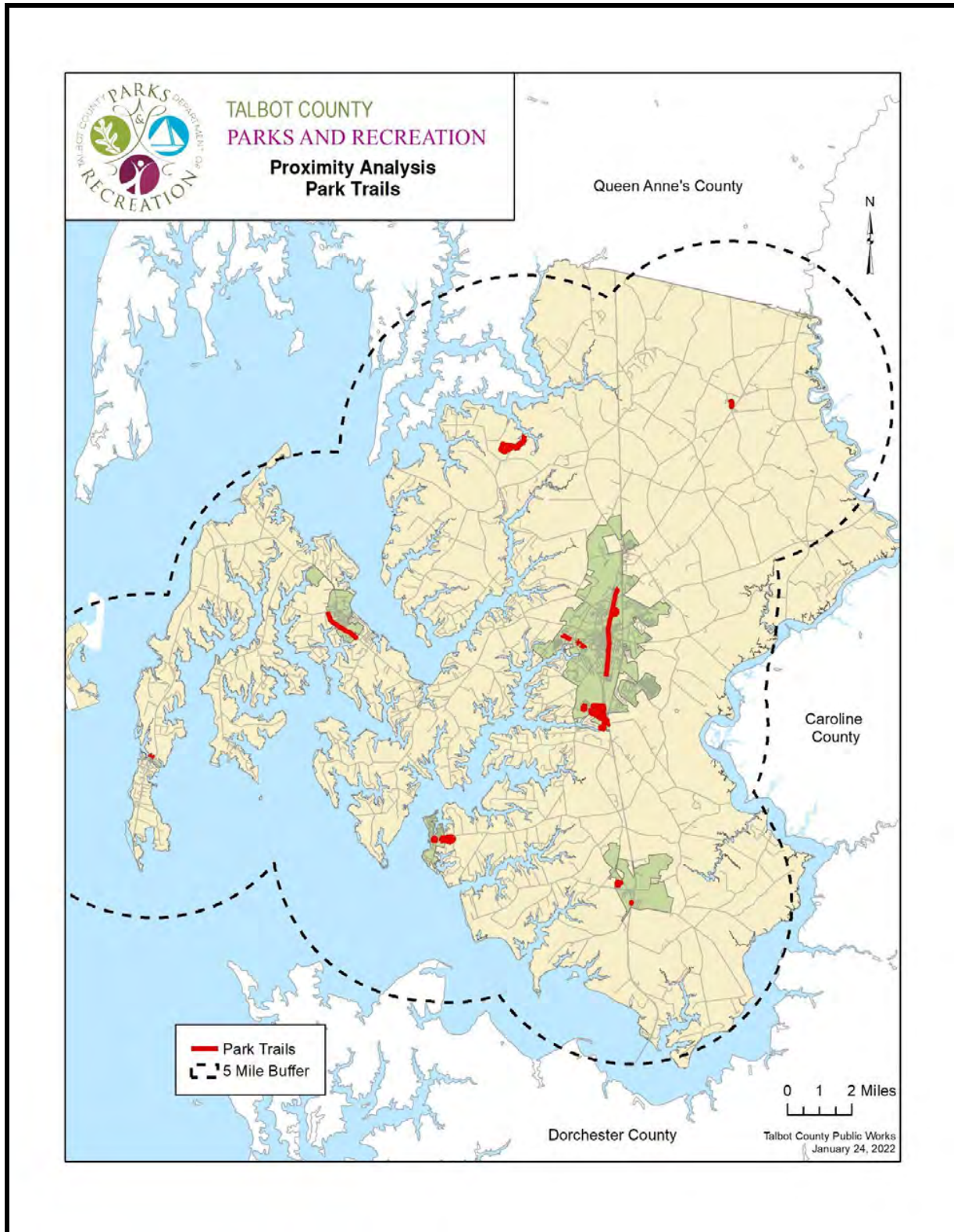
Map II-10 Proximity Analysis Multipurpose Fields



Map II-11 Proximity Analysis Public Landings



Map II-12 Proximity Analysis Park Trails



B. Park Proximity & Equity Analysis by Municipality

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources has provided the “Park Equity Analysis” tool which 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.

Talbot County’s overall population density is low outside of the population centers in and around its municipalities. The Park Equity Mapper demonstrates that overall the County’s parks are primarily located within areas of Medium-low to Medium High Need and that the majority of these areas have parks within a ½ mile of any point in the municipality.. There are no areas of the County with High Need. Large portions of the County are considered Low Need as well.

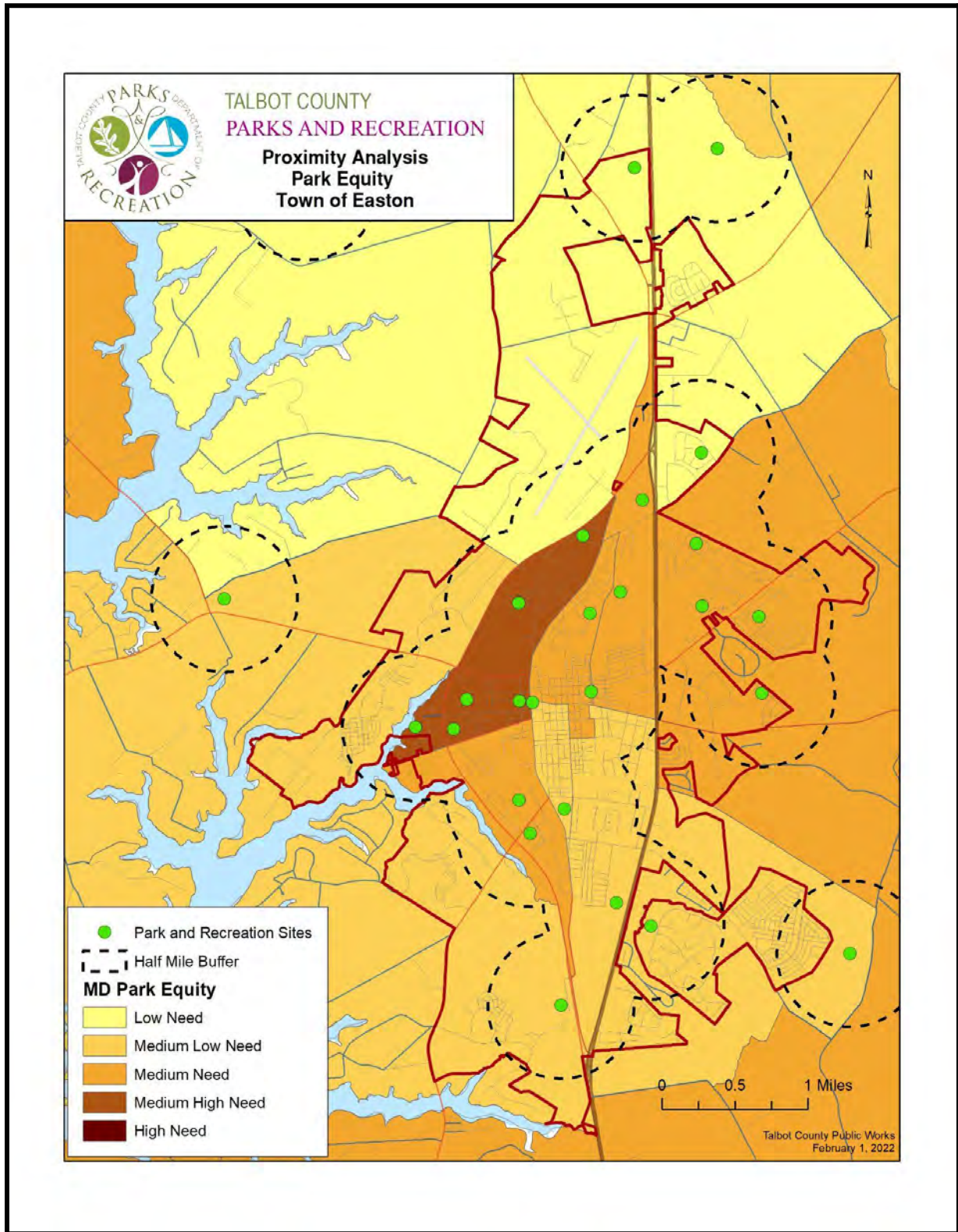
Easton (Map II-13) is the County’s largest municipal area with 44.2% of the population living within its boundaries. Based on the State equity layers of concentrations of children and older adults, and households with income levels below the poverty threshold, there is one area of Easton that is considered Medium High Need. Within this area, there are well distributed park locations which offer a variety of amenities and features. Other areas of Medium to Medium Low need also have access to parks within a ½ mile radius. Overall, Easton’s network of parks provides equitable access to parks and open space for its residents, particularly within the population centers where need is higher, there are few barriers to access. These parks provide access to sports fields, playgrounds, and a public swimming pool. Consideration should be given to other factors which could pose barriers including walkable routes to parks. The town is currently involved in developing a master plan of walking trails that will connect more areas of the town and increase access to parks and open spaces. Easton’s Rail to Trail also provides access between the population centers and the town’s sports field complex located on the western edge of the town.

Oxford (Map II-14) is entirely in a low need area. It does however have a small area that is outside a ½ mile of a park location. The properties located in this area are primarily large waterfront parcels with luxury homes.

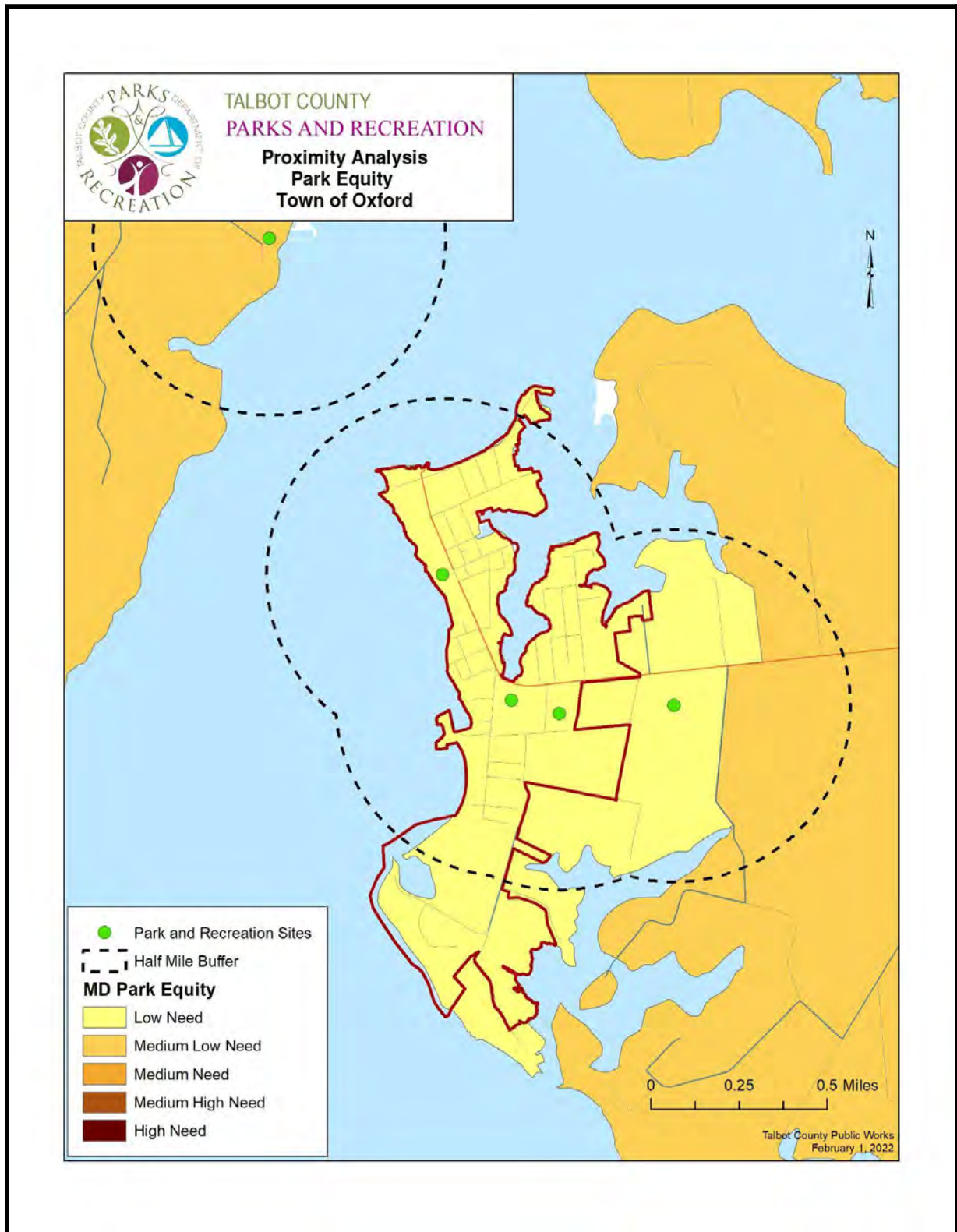
St Michaels (Map II-15) has areas that are identified as Medium Need using the Equity Mapper. Park locations within the town are all within a half mile of this area and two of the parks are located directly within the medium need area. These parks provide access to playgrounds, open space, picnic areas, ball fields, and a public swimming pool.

Trappe (Map II-16) demonstrates a larger area of Medium Need and is surrounded by an area of Medium Low need. The parks are all located on the east side of Route 50 making them difficult to access on foot or bicycle from the west side of Route 50. There is a large development currently under construction on the east side of Route 50 that will significantly increase the town’s population. This area should be considered for additional park development to meet emerging needs.

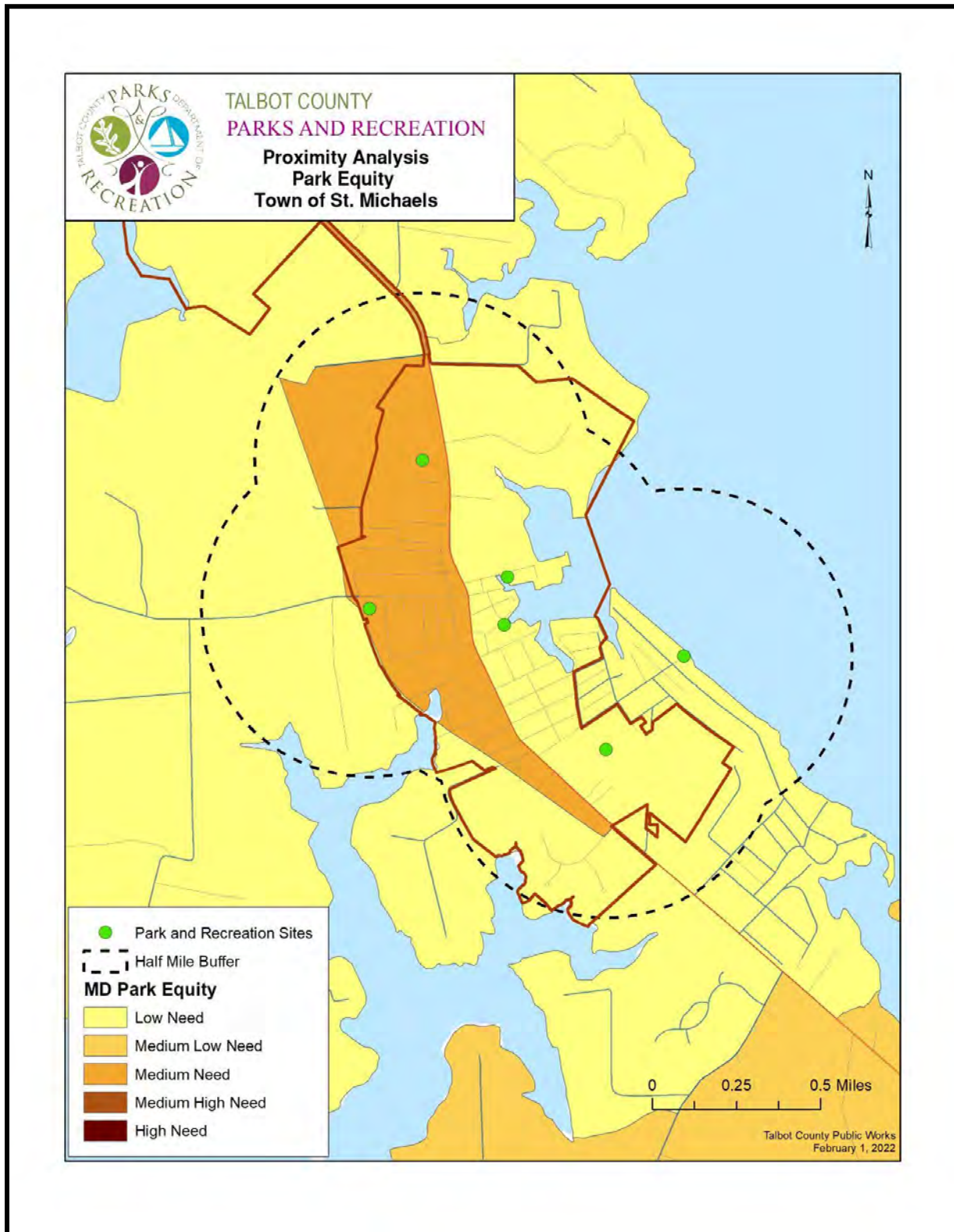
Map II-13 Park Proximity & Equity in Easton



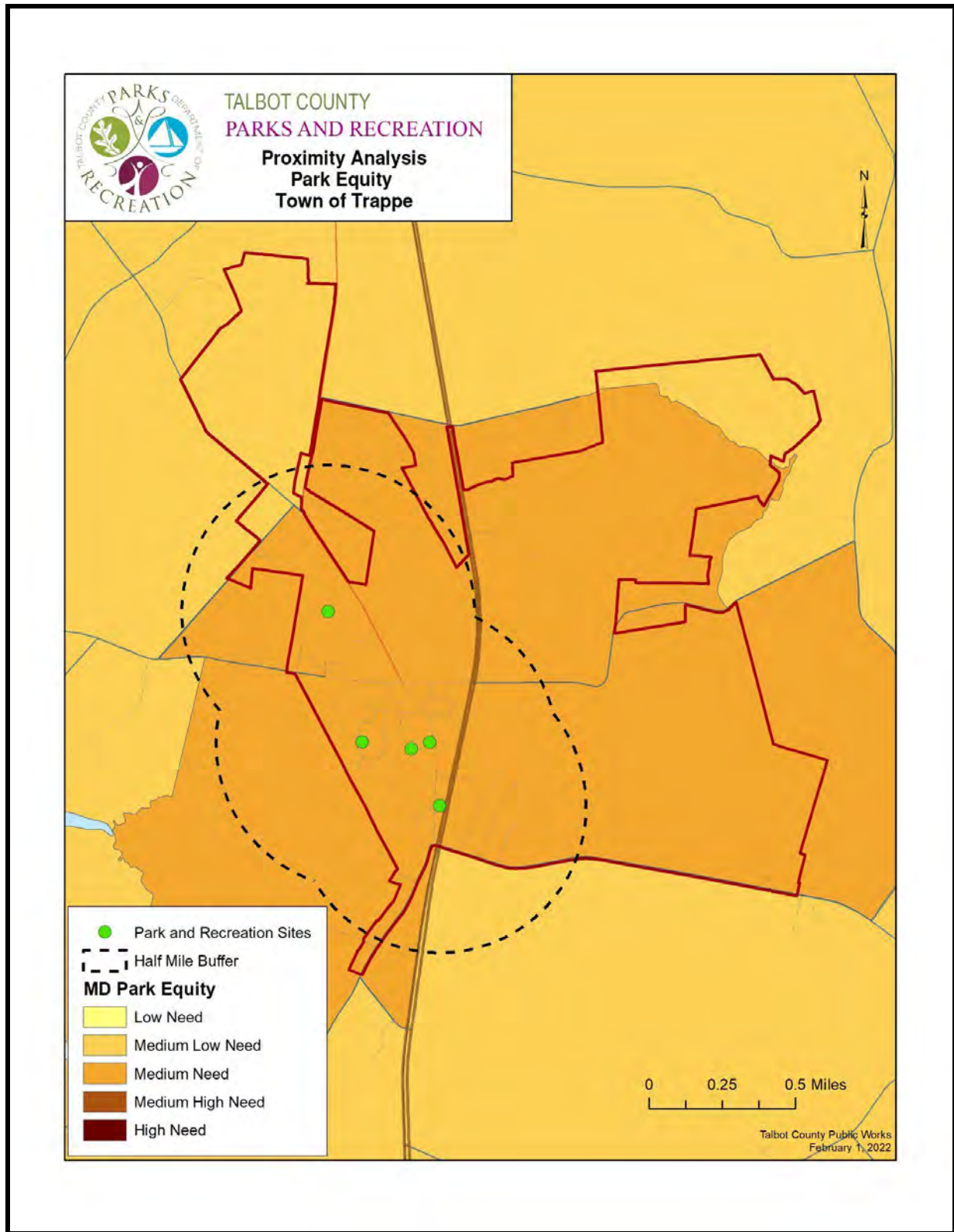
Map II-14 Park Proximity & Equity in Oxford



Map II-15 Park Proximity & Equity in St. Michaels



Map II-16 Park Proximity & Equity in Trappe



5. Goals & Objectives for Parks & Recreation

A. County Goals

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

Since the last LPPRP in 2017, accomplishments of note occurred in the following goal areas:

- Create a park with historical value to tell the story of one of Talbot County’s historic figures. The park will be designed, constructed and maintained in conjunction with state, local, and private funding.
 - Rededicated Lewistown Park, located along the Tuckahoe River, as the Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe. This master plan is available at [Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe - Talbot County, Maryland](#)
- Develop a feasibility study as to the creation of a recreational bike trail from Easton to Cordova area to Tuckahoe State Park utilizing the existing rail system. This trail will not only be of recreational value but also historic and eventually part of a statewide trail system.
 - Talbot County has worked closely with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources with technical assistance from the National Park Service to develop a plan for extending the Rails to Trails system from Easton to Cordova and beyond. The project is currently under review at the Department of Natural Resources.
- Begin plans and development of a gymnasium expansion of the Community Center to satisfy the needs of residents and visitors.
 - Groundbreaking for the gymnasium at the Community Center is scheduled for Spring 2022. Construction is anticipated by Spring 2023.
 - Eight pickleball courts installation at Community Center anticipated by Spring 2023.



B. Goals in Alignment with State Goals

In 2022, Talbot County’s goals for parks and recreation reflect the County’s Land Use Policies as reflected in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. These goals also align with and complement the State’s goals for recreation, parks, and open space.

Table II-6 State Goals and Complementary County Goals

State Goal	County Goals
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: Maintain and enhance the system of parks and recreation facilities based on residents’ needs.</p> <p>Goal 2: Provide public access to recreation programs and spaces that are responsive to residents’ needs for both active and passive recreation activities.</p> <p>Goal 3: Develop parks and facilities close to population centers in alignment with Talbot County Land Use Policies.</p> <p>Goal 4: Promote recreation and open space opportunities to ensure residents’ are aware of available parks and recreation activities.</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 feasible, ensure that recreational land and facilities for local populations are conveniently located relative to population centers, are accessible without reliance on the automobile, and help to protect natural open spaces and resources.	
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 Talbot County plans, acquires, develops, and operates recreation and parks facilities and open space, including sources of funding.

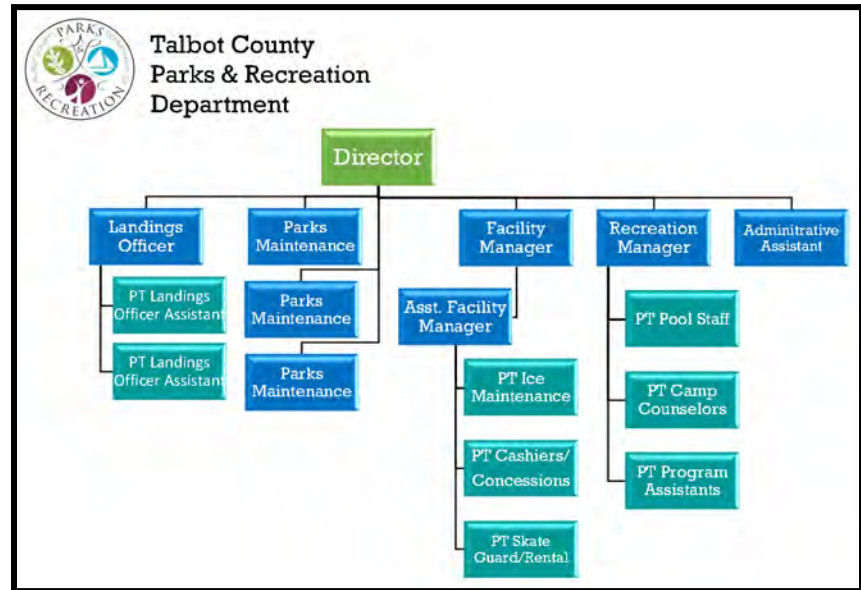
A. Organizational Structure

1. Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

The Talbot County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board provides recommendations to the County Council and the County Parks Department relating to plans and policies for public recreation, the organization of recreation councils, the establishment of recreational programs, and plans for the acquisition of land or public recreation and open space. This Board includes appointees from both the County and the incorporated towns and is involved with the administration, long-range planning, and policy direction for the Talbot County Community Center and Park System. The Board is appointed by the County Council and recommends policies and administrative guidelines, prepares annual reports, and submits budget requests for these recreation facilities.

2. Parks & Recreation Department

The Department of Parks and Recreation is responsible for the administration and programming of recreational facilities and activities for Talbot County. The Department maintains and schedules activities at recreational facilities and coordinates park, open space, and recreational activities between the County and the incorporated towns. The Department provides technical assistance and encourages towns to participate in the local programming, acquisition, and development of recreation facilities.



3. Incorporated Towns

The incorporated towns in Talbot maintain their own parks systems and are an important part of the network of parks and open spaces throughout the County. As noted earlier, Easton, with the largest population in the County, maintains 16 parks properties including regional destinations, Idlewild Park, and the North Easton Athletic complex.

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 2017-2021 has been \$1,550,496. In addition, the County received a one-time Local Parks & Playground Infrastructure allocation of \$1 million in FY2022.

Table II-7 Dorchester County Program Open Space Apportionments, FY 2017-2022

Year	POS Apportionment
2017	\$ 161,411
2018	\$ 274,246
2019	\$ 410,271
2020	\$ 366,824
2021	\$ 337,744
2022	\$ 397,500
TOTAL 2017-2022	\$ 1,947,996

Table II-8 Talbot County Waterway Improvement Grant Funding, FY2017-2022

Fiscal Year	Grant Funding
2017	\$0
2018	\$100,000
2019	\$100,000
2020	\$125,000
2021	\$100,000
2022	\$80,000
TOTAL 2017-2022	\$505,000

Public waterway access is managed by TCP&R. A number of the public waterway accesses/boat ramps are located in park locations and all public water access points enhance both the residents’ and visitors’ opportunities to experience Talbot County’s waterways and 600 miles of shoreline. These are supported through County general funding allocations and through Waterway Improvement funding. The total Waterway Improvement allocation for 2018-2021 was \$425,000.

1. Cost Estimates

The program priorities through 2026 (Table II-9) include six County projects that would cost approximately \$4.7 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 addition of the gymnasium at the Talbot Community 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-9 outlines a program for development of parks and recreation facilities, including estimated costs. A five-year time frame is included in this table. For the longer capital improvement plan see Appendix C. Based both on spatial analysis of proximity to parks throughout the County and within municipalities, Talbot’s parks are well-distributed. 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, and additional water access for the general public. Additional analysis using the Equity Mapper Tool demonstrates that Talbot County and its municipalities provide equitable access to parks and open spaces. 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, Talbot County’s Parks & Recreation leadership have determined that Talbot does not currently have a need to acquire additional parcels of land unless the development of a longer trail system requires acquisition or an opportunity to acquire waterfront property at below market value becomes available.

Table II-9 Talbot 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 Center Concession Stand Replacement	Easton	Rehabilitation of a 20 year old concession stand	\$ 75,000
Community Center Gymnasium Expansion	Easton		\$ 4,000,000
Community Center Irrigation & Bermuda Seeding	Easton	Installation of irrigation and bermuda fields on the athletic fields at the Community Center	\$ 125,000
Community Center Playground Replacement	Easton	Replacement playground (20 years old)	\$ 170,000
Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe Development	Queen Anne	Construction of pollinator meadow, scenic overlooks and walking trails	\$ 120,000
Pickleball Courts	Easton	Construction of 8 pickleball courts for recreational/competitive use	\$ 250,000
TOTAL			\$ 4,740,000

Table II-10 Talbot County Community Parks & Playground Projects 2018-2023

Project	Location	Year	Estimated Total Cost*
Oxford Community Central Park	Oxford	2020	\$ 122,400
Easton Point Park	Easton	2020	\$ 200,000
Moton Park Playground	Easton	2021	\$ 135,145
Oxford Causeway Basketball Pickleball Court	Oxford	2023	\$ 40,000
TOTAL			\$ 497,545

In addition to current and upcoming capital projects, several municipalities have Community Parks & Playground projects in process or starting in the near future.

B. Acreage Goals

Based on the community engagement, proximity, and equity analysis completed as a part of this planning process, Talbot 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-11 Talbot 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, Talbot County did not have any acquisition goals. At the time the Report was completed, according to the 30 acre/1,000 resident formula, Talbot had met its acquisition goals and focused its efforts on capital improvement to properties in the county inventory.	---	---	---

Table II-12 Talbot 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
Talbot County has not included any specific acquisition goals for the period covered in this LPPRP. Based on geographic distribution of parks, the equitable distribution of parks in denser population areas and community responses in the community engagement process, Talbot County Parks and Recreation will focus on development and rehabilitation of existing parks. While Talbot County has identified no significant deficits in parks inventory, if appropriate land parcels become available to expand trails or provide water access points, the County will consider acquisitions.	---	---	---

Chapter III: Natural Resource Land Conservation



1. Executive Summary

This chapter describes Talbot County's goals and strategies for natural resources in relation to: a. the State goals for protecting and conserving natural resource lands and b.b. parks and open space planning. Talbot County's 2016 Comprehensive Plan identifies the county's natural resources and sensitive areas as critical to the quality of life in Talbot County. In particular, the plan identifies the important role of access to clean and abundant waters as a key component of its local economy.

Talbot County's proximity to the Chesapeake Bay and its 600 miles of irregular shoreline are its most notable features. The County, nearly surrounded by tidal waters, is bordered by the Chesapeake Bay to the west, Eastern Bay to the northwest, the Tuckahoe River to the northeast, and the Choptank River to the south and east. Along its western edge are numerous peninsulas, necks, coves and creeks.

Natural resource lands provide important wildlife habitats, natural filtration for air and water pollution, and access to resource-based recreational opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts. 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 \(WIP\)](#); [Climate Change and Sea Level Rise Adaptation Report](#), [Hazard Mitigation Plan](#), and the [Talbot County Total Maximum Daily Load \(TMDL\) standards](#).

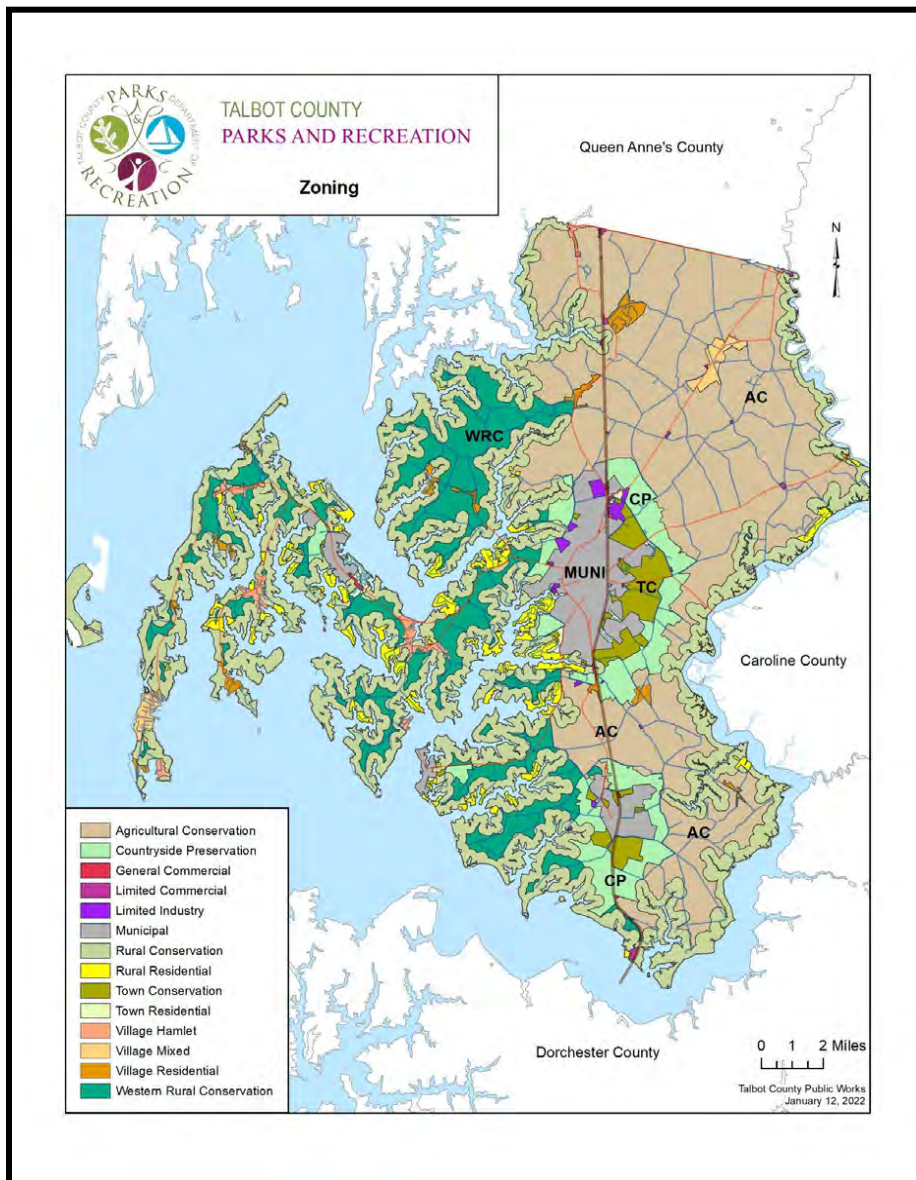
Since the 2017 LPPRP was released, Talbot County has continued to work to develop its approach to conservation and environmental land preservation. One of the recommendations in the 2016 Comprehensive Plans was for Talbot County to update the Cleaner Greener Talbot Plan developed in 2004. In 2021 Talbot County Planning Department released [Cleaner Greener Talbot: A Plan for Future Livability](#). The plan

outlines a series of goals and proposed projects for the county to pursue in its approach to environmental stewardship.

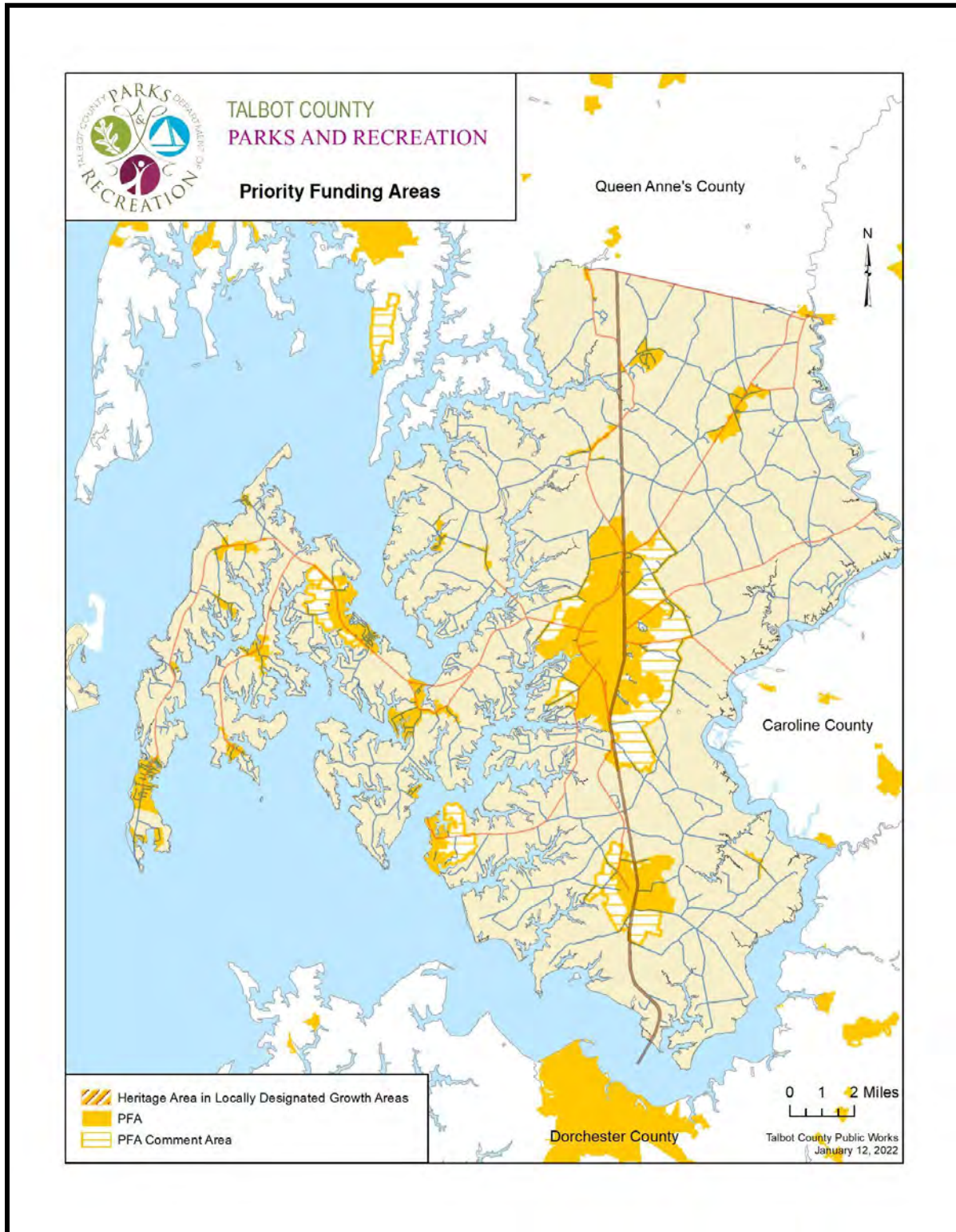
Maps III-1 through III-3 demonstrate Talbot's zoning protections for rural and agricultural conservation. County zoning directs development to populated areas and maintains large areas for conservation of rural agricultural and natural resources uses.

The acres of preserved lands in Talbot County is growing slowly. Landowners are encouraged to place their land in one of the various easement programs. However, the county remains behind on targets set for preservation, primarily due to the lack of funds available to incentive landowners to enter easement programs or to purchase properties for preservation.

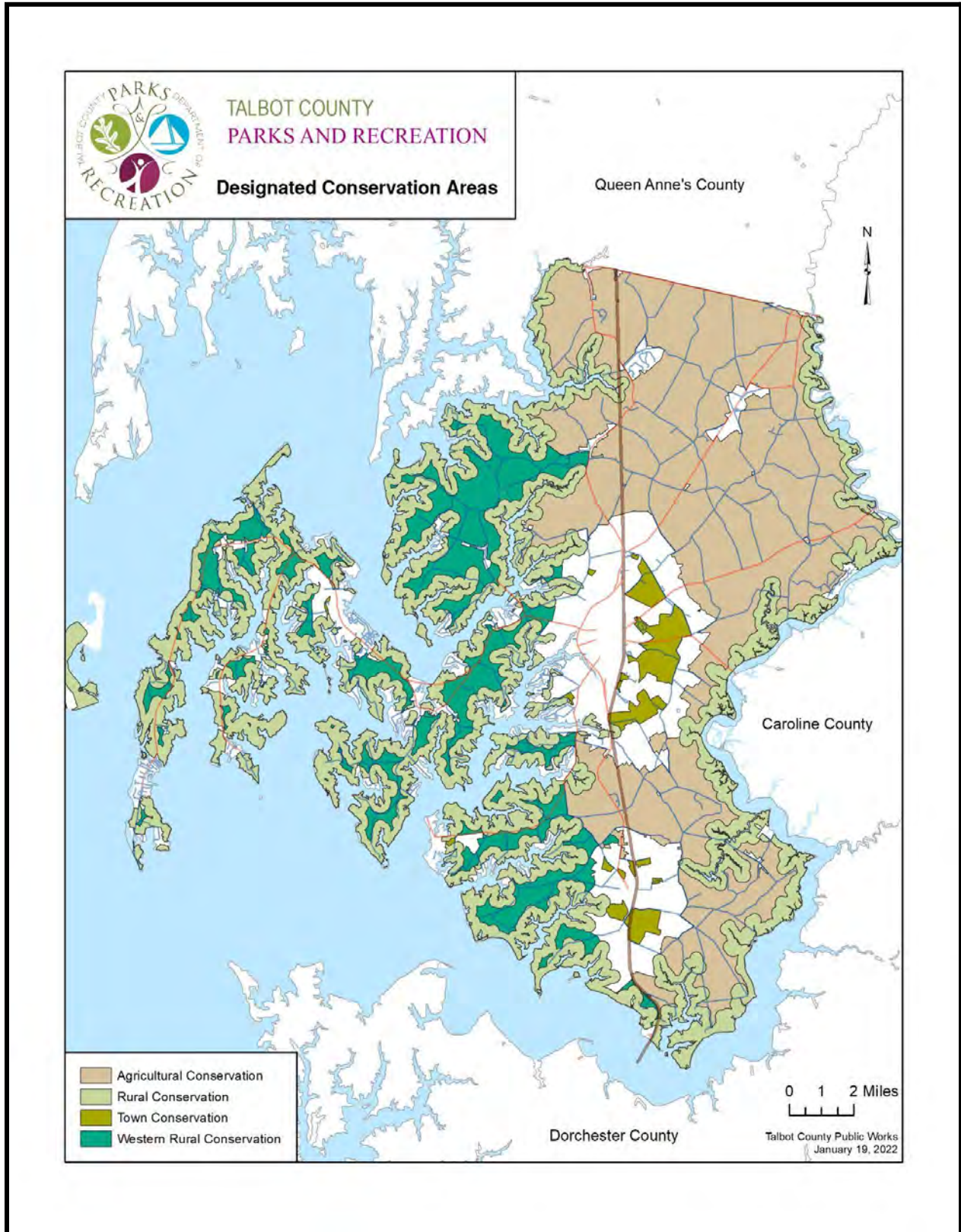
Map III-1 Zoning



Map III-2 Priority Funding Areas



Map III-3 Designated Conservation Area



2. Natural Resource Land Conservation Goals

Talbot County has adopted policies to guide its natural resource land conservation and protection effort and has established goals that align with the Maryland State Goals for Natural Resource Land Conservation. Talbot County’s environmental protection measures are intended to ensure that development occurs without impairing the environmental sustainability of sensitive areas.

The 2017 LPPRP identified a series of goals developed from the County Comprehensive Plan update completed in 2016. The County’s policies ensure that these goals remain central to the work completed in these areas. Below is a table with the 2017 LPPRP goals and updates.

Talbot County 2017 Natural Resource Land Preservation Goals Updates

2017 Goals	Updates
Conserve and protect Talbot County’s most valuable and attractive assets, its natural resources.	The County has continued to work directly with property owners to encourage participation in easement programs (MALPF, METS) and continues to work closely with Eastern Shore Land Conservancy to secure state support for funding for the Rural Legacy program.
Maintain, in cooperation with the local municipalities, a safe and adequate water supply and adequate amounts of wastewater treatment capacity.	This is on-going and in accordance with the County’s WIP II. The County will be writing its WIP III during this LPPRP cycle.
Take steps to protect and restore water quality, and to meet water quality requirements in rivers and streams.	
Conserve major accessible mineral resource deposits for future extraction while safeguarding the public by minimizing the environmental impacts of resource extraction and transport.	This remains an on-going goal and aligns with Talbot County’s policies regarding mineral resource extraction.
Establish and enforce programs and regulations to ensure preservation of natural resources, provide tax, financial and any other incentives for compliance while allowing for moderate planned growth and development on existing lots of record.	The County encourages local farmers to participate in the MALPF program. Annual tax bill mailings include Talbot’s brochure about the MALPF program.

Talbot County’s natural resource land conservation goals are carried forth from the 2016 update to the County Comprehensive Plan as well as the 2017 LPPRP. These align with the State’s goals for natural resource conservation. In particular, the County will continue to focus on protecting and restoring lands and waterways that are valuable assets for the County as well as encouraging development within existing population areas and limiting development in rural areas.

<p style="text-align: center;">State of Maryland 2022 Goals for Natural Resource Land Conservation</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2022 Talbot County Goals</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Public land acquisition and stewardship; ○ Private land conservation easements and stewardship practices through purchased or donated easement programs; ○ Local land use management plans and procedures that conserve natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas and minimize impacts to resource lands when development occurs; ○ Support and incentives for resource-based economies that increase retention of forests, wetlands, or agricultural lands; ○ Avoidance of impact on natural resources by publicly funded infrastructure development projects; and ○ Appropriate mitigation response, commensurate with the value of the affected resource. ● Focus conservation and restoration activities on priority areas, according to a strategic framework such as the Targeted Ecological Areas (TEAs) in GreenPrint (which is not to be confused with the former easement program also called GreenPrint). ● Conserve and restore species of concern and important habitat types that fall outside the green infrastructure (examples include: rock outcrops, karst systems, caves, shale barren communities, grasslands, shore line beach and dune systems, mud flats, non-forested islands, etc.) ● Develop a more comprehensive inventory of natural resource lands and environmentally sensitive areas to assist State and local implementation programs. ● Assess the combined ability of State and local programs to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expand and connect forests, farmlands, and other natural lands as a network of contiguous green infrastructure; ○ Protect critical terrestrial and aquatic habitats, biological communities, and populations; ○ Manage watersheds in ways that protect, conserve, and restore stream corridors, riparian forest buffers, wetlands, floodplains, and aquifer recharge areas and their associated hydrologic and water quality functions; ○ Adopt coordinated land and watershed management strategies that recognize the critical links between growth management and aquatic biodiversity and fisheries production; and ○ Support a productive forest land base and forest resource industry, emphasizing the economic viability of privately owned forestland. ● Establish measurable objectives for natural resource conservation and an integrated State/local strategy to achieve them through State and local implementation programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conserve and protect Talbot County’s most valuable and attractive assets, its natural resources. ● Maintain, in cooperation with the local municipalities, a safe and adequate water supply and adequate amounts of wastewater treatment capacity that limits runoff.. ● Take steps to protect and restore water quality, and to meet water quality requirements in rivers and streams. ● Conserve major accessible mineral resource deposits for future extraction while safeguarding the public by minimizing the environmental impacts of resource extraction and transport. ● Establish and enforce programs and regulations to ensure preservation of natural resources, provide tax, financial, and any other incentives for compliance while allowing for moderate planned growth and development on existing lots or record.

3. Natural Resource Land Inventory

Talbot County’s natural resource lands are primarily State and privately owned lands and include a total of 2,611 acres.

State lands include Black Walnut Point Natural Resource Management Area and the Seth Demonstration Forest as well as the Bill Burton Fishing Pier State Park and the Wye Oak State Park. State lands total 228 acres.



- **Black Walnut Point NRMA** (58 acres) is open to the public for walking, fishing, and birding, however it has limited access.
- **Seth Demonstration Forest** (125 acres) is a public hunting tract for bow hunting only as well as a popular walking destination with a network of forest roads.

- **The Wye Oak State Park** was originally created to conserve and protect the Wye Oak, which fell in 2002. The park contains 29 acres that protect the stream valley behind the park from development, according to the Department of Natural Resources website.
- In addition there are a number of privately owned nature conservation properties. The Nature Conservancy holdings include **Otwell Woodland** (94 acres), **King’s Creek** (250 acres) and **Third Haven Woods** (500 acres). **The Izaak Walton League** maintains **Bolingbroke Park** (50



acres) and the **Maryland Ornithological Society** maintains the **Mill Creek Sanctuary** (156 acres) **Pickering Creek Audubon Center** offers 400 acres of natural lands that are accessible for bird watching, youth camping, kayaking and canoeing. It is maintained and operated by the Chesapeake Audubon Society. **Point Pleasant Farm** provides 950 acres of natural conservation lands.



Table III-1 Inventory of Natural Resource Lands

Site Name	Property Size (Acres)	Outdoor Recreation Amenities	Trails/ Interpretive Trails	Water Access	Other
State Lands					
Bill Burton Fishing Pier State Park	24	Natural Areas - walking trail, fishing	Yes	Yes	Currently the Fishing Pier is closed to the public.
Black Walnut Point NRMA	58	Natural Areas - walking, views of the bay, birdwatching, fishing	Yes	Yes	Views of the Bay,
Seth Demonstration Forest	125	Natural Areas - Hiking, walking	Yes	No	Public forest land
Wye Oak State Park	29	Natural Areas - Picnic tables, interpretative displays	No	No	Memorial to 400+ year old oak tree destroyed by storm in 2002
Private/Quasi-Public					
Bolingbroke Park - Izaak Walton League	50	Natural Areas - walking trails, pavilion, picnic area, archery range	Yes	Yes	natural area along Bolingbroke Creek, mature woods, used for environmental education
MOS - Mill Creek Sanctuary	156	Natural Areas - Trail, Picnic Shelter	Yes	No	Deciduous forest, home to number of protected species
Nature Conservancy - King's Creek	250	Natural Areas - No Amenities	No	Yes	Brackish Marsh, only accessible by boat
Nature Conservancy - Otwell Woodland	94	Natural Areas - Closed to the Public	No	No	Not open to public without MD Nature Conservancy permission
Nature Conservancy - Third Haven Woods	500	Natural Areas - No Amenities	No	No	Remnant of the forests that once covered the Delmarva Peninsula = natural walks and birdwatching
Pickering Creek Audubon	400	Welcome Center, Canoe/Kayak Launch, Gardens, Pond	Yes	Yes	Bird watching, youth camps, kayak/canoe, wetland, hardwood forest
Point Pleasant Farm	950	Natural Areas = Usage is by reservation	No	Yes	Important breeding grounds for waterfowl/bird habitat
State Lands Total Acreage	236				
Private/Quasi-Public Lands Total Acreage	2,400				
Natural Resource Lands TOTAL	2,636				

4. Land Use Plan & Natural Resource Policies

The Talbot County Land Use Plan is the primary tool the County uses to work toward the goals outlined in the previous section. The County's land use policies take into consideration the County's ecology and its intimate connection to the health of the Chesapeake Bay as well as its farm land, marshes, and forests.

A. Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)

Maryland and its counties are required by Section 303 (d) of the federal Clean Water Act to assess and identify impaired waters and set Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) restoration goals. Talbot County's, like the rest of the State's, major waters are classified as impaired for nutrients, sediments and in some areas fecal contamination and so, by definition, are not suitable receiving waters. Talbot County has produced its Watershed Implementation Plan which contains a scenario of currently accepted best management practices that numerically achieve the improvement standards for the Bay TMDL. This scenario will be refined as more cost effective Best Management Practices are vetted and accepted by the State and the Environmental Protection Agency.



Talbot County expects that its Watershed Implementation Plan will use adaptive management to produce the greatest pollution reduction for each dollar of investment. For this reason, the County will pursue no and low cost Best Management Practices as a first priority. One such approach may include participation in the State's nutrient trading program. The County will also pursue lawn

fertilizer management programs to meet its nutrient reduction goals. According to approved TMDLs for Talbot County established by the State, point source caps for nitrogen and phosphorus have been set for both the St. Michaels and Easton WasteWater Treatment Plants (WWTPs); a phosphorus cap has been set for Trappe and a nitrogen cap for Oxford.

The majority of residential properties in the county are served by individual on-site septic systems. Permits for these systems are reviewed and approved by the Talbot County Health Department as an agent of the Maryland Department of Environment. Soil and water table conditions generally determine the suitability of subsurface disposal systems.

The County Groundwater Protection Plan has delineated soils in the area mainly to the east of U.S. 50 as suitable for sub-surface discharge of wastewater, except in areas with a high water table. The historic riverfront Town of Queen Anne is an exception, with generally less suitable soils for on-site septic systems.

The groundwater protection plan has designated most areas to the west of U.S. 50 as susceptible to subsurface system failures because of high water tables, low elevations, and soils with low permeability.

Communities in this area are impacted by failing septic systems, groundwater infiltration or concentrations of small lots on poorly drained soils; the communities include the Villages of Williamsburg, Sherwood, Wittman, McDaniel, Bozman, Neavitt, Claiborne, Fairbank and Bar Neck. The County will work to revise sewer connection and allocation policies to concentrate available capacity on addressing existing failing or polluting septic systems in villages, and allow for moderate planned growth and development on existing lots of record within established sewer service areas.

Plans to extend sewer service to these areas have been drafted while funding is being pursued. Connecting communities to effective wastewater treatment plants will help achieve the County's water quality improvement and environmental health objectives.

B. Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas

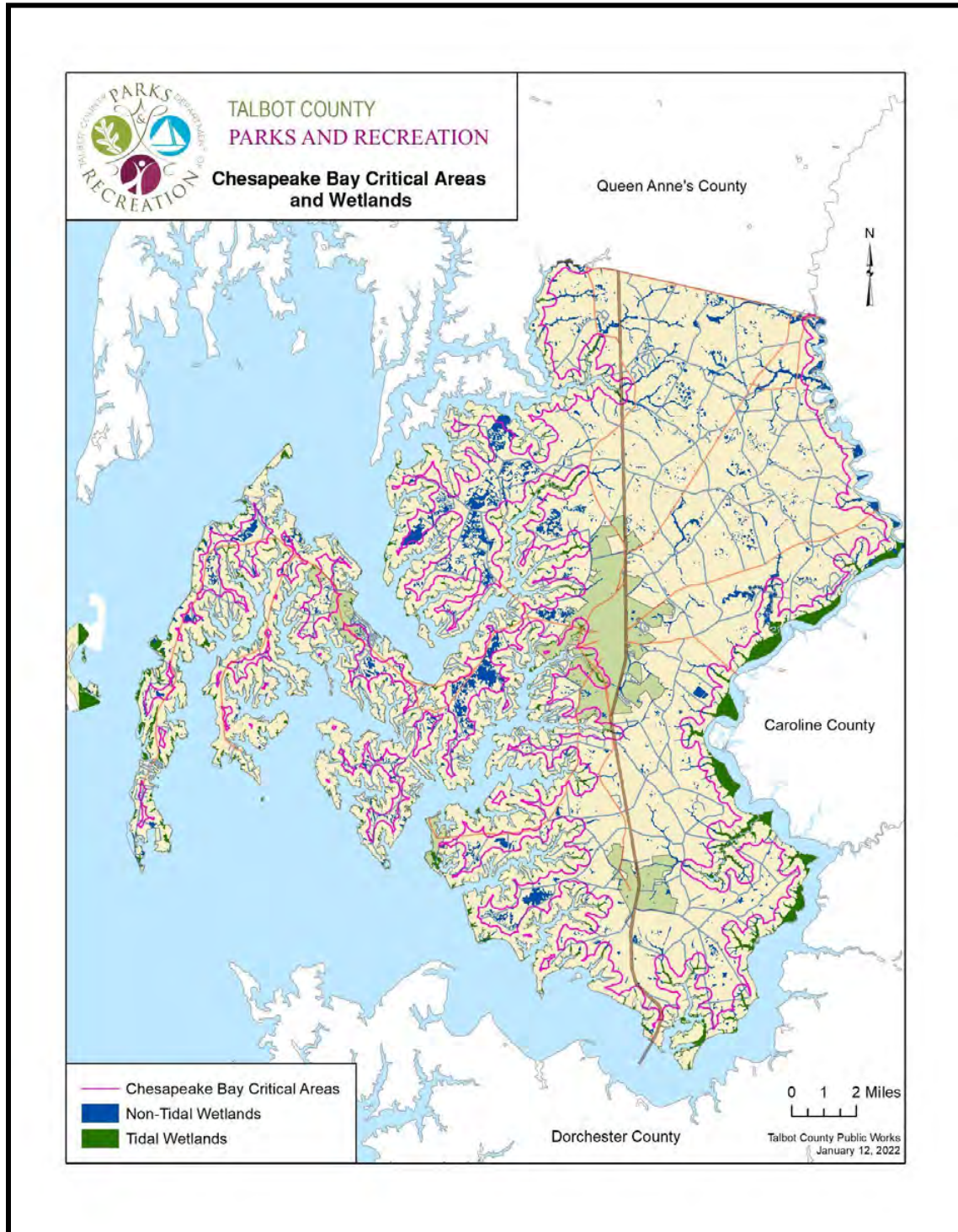
The Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Protection Program was passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 1984 to address concerns about the decline of the health of the Chesapeake Bay. This legislation required each Maryland county and municipality adjacent to the Bay or its tributaries to adopt a local Critical Area Plan and corresponding development ordinances. Local Plans are required to meet land use and development criteria established by the Maryland Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission and are intended to minimize impacts on the Bay's water quality and plant, fish and wildlife habitat. 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 65,260 acres, or about 38 percent, of the county's total land area. The 600 miles of shoreline are an important environmental, recreational and scenic resource.



Portions of Talbot County are subject to severe soil erosion caused by wind and wave action. The western-most part of the county is subject to the direct wave action of the Chesapeake Bay and some shoreline reaches can incur losses of as much as 18 feet of land per year.

Talbot County adopted its Critical Area Program in 1989. The County Zoning Ordinance and maps are tied to Critical Areas maps and were revised to incorporate boundaries. Local zoning and other regulations implementing Critical Area Program policies are also updated as necessary; most recently in the fall of 2014.

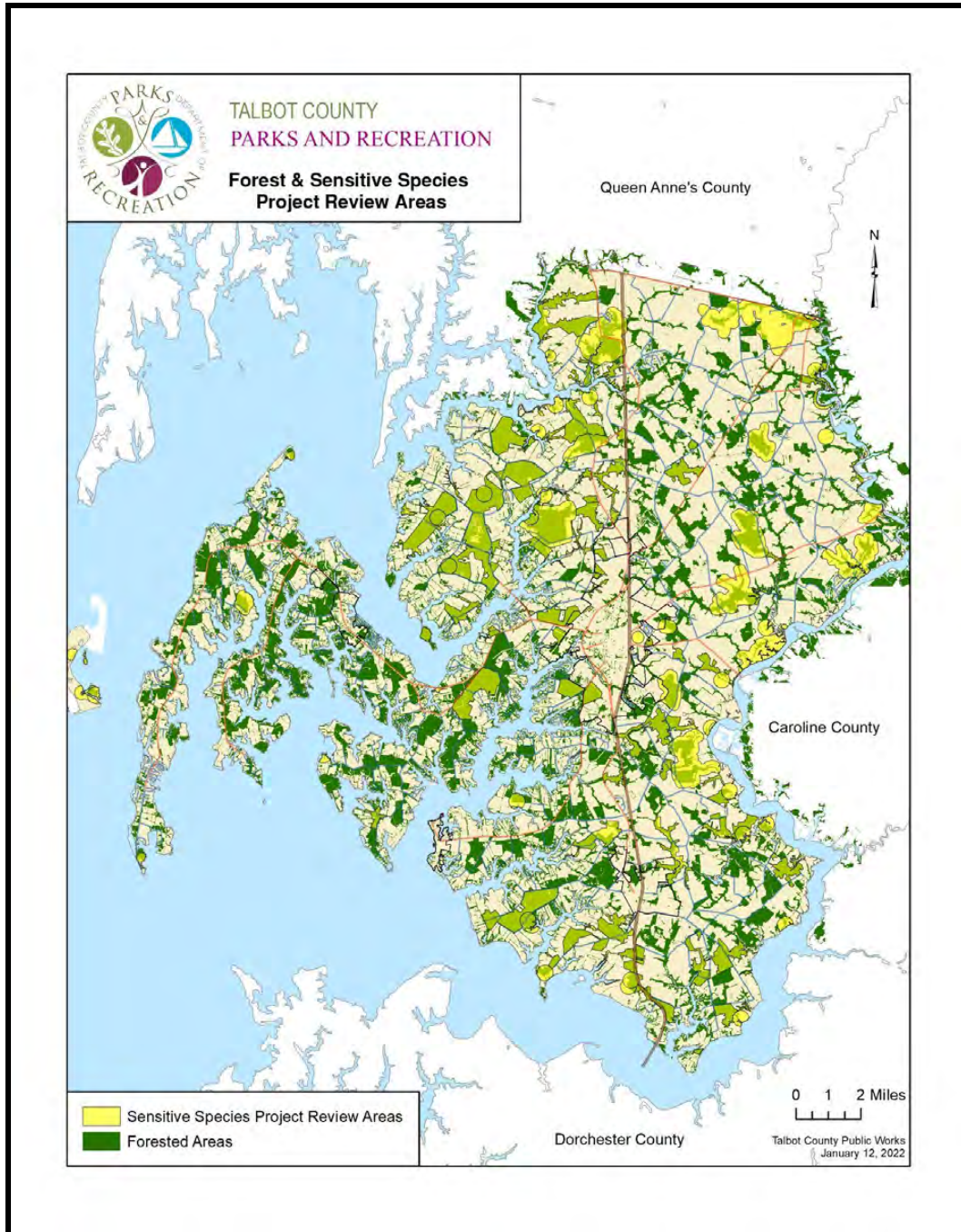
Map III-4 Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas and Wetlands



C. Sensitive Area Protection

The State of Maryland requires local comprehensive plans to contain a Sensitive Areas element which describes how the County will protect streams and stream buffers; 100-year floodplains; habitats of threatened and endangered species; and steep slopes. In Talbot County, these sensitive areas are protected through a variety of means, including agricultural zoning; Priority Preservation Area designation and Tier IV designation.

Map III-5 Forest and Sensitive Species Project Review Area



Rivers, Streams and Stream Buffers



County streams and their buffers are important resources supporting recreational fishing and serving as spawning areas for commercial fish stock. Streams and their adjacent buffers are home to countless species of animals and plants and transport valuable nutrients to rivers and creeks, and in turn the Chesapeake Bay. The floodplains, wetlands, and wooded slopes along streams are important parts of the stream ecosystem.

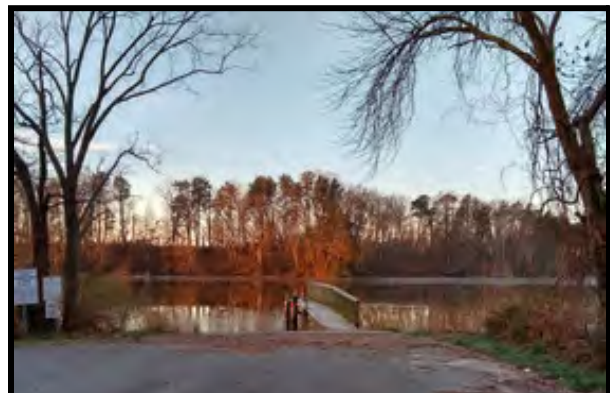
Stream buffers serve as protection zones and reduce sediment, nitrogen, phosphorus, and other runoff pollutants by acting as a filter, thus minimizing stream damage. The effectiveness of buffers to protect stream water quality is influenced by their width, the type of vegetation within the buffer, as well as proper maintenance. Other aspects of buffer effectiveness include contiguous or nearby slopes, soil erodibility, or the presence of adjacent wetlands or floodplains.

Buffers also provide habitat for wetland and upland plants which form the basis of healthy biological communities. A wide variety of animals use the natural vegetation as travel corridors, for food and for cover. A natural buffer system provides connections to support wildlife movement between remaining patches of forest in the county.

Tributary stream buffers in the Critical Area must be at least 100 feet wide, and may be expanded beyond that distance to include contiguous sensitive areas. For waterways outside the Critical Area, the County requires a 100 foot natural buffer for perennial streams and a 50 foot natural buffer for intermittent streams.

Maryland's anti-degradation policy significantly limits new discharge permits that would degrade water quality in Tier II (high quality) waters, as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Four stretches of Tier II waters have been identified in Talbot County; portions of Highfield Creek, Jadwins Creek, Kings Creek, and Skipton Creek.

New nutrient discharges can be permitted in these areas, as long as they do not degrade existing water quality below water quality standards. All development activities near these rivers and streams are required to provide a natural buffer.

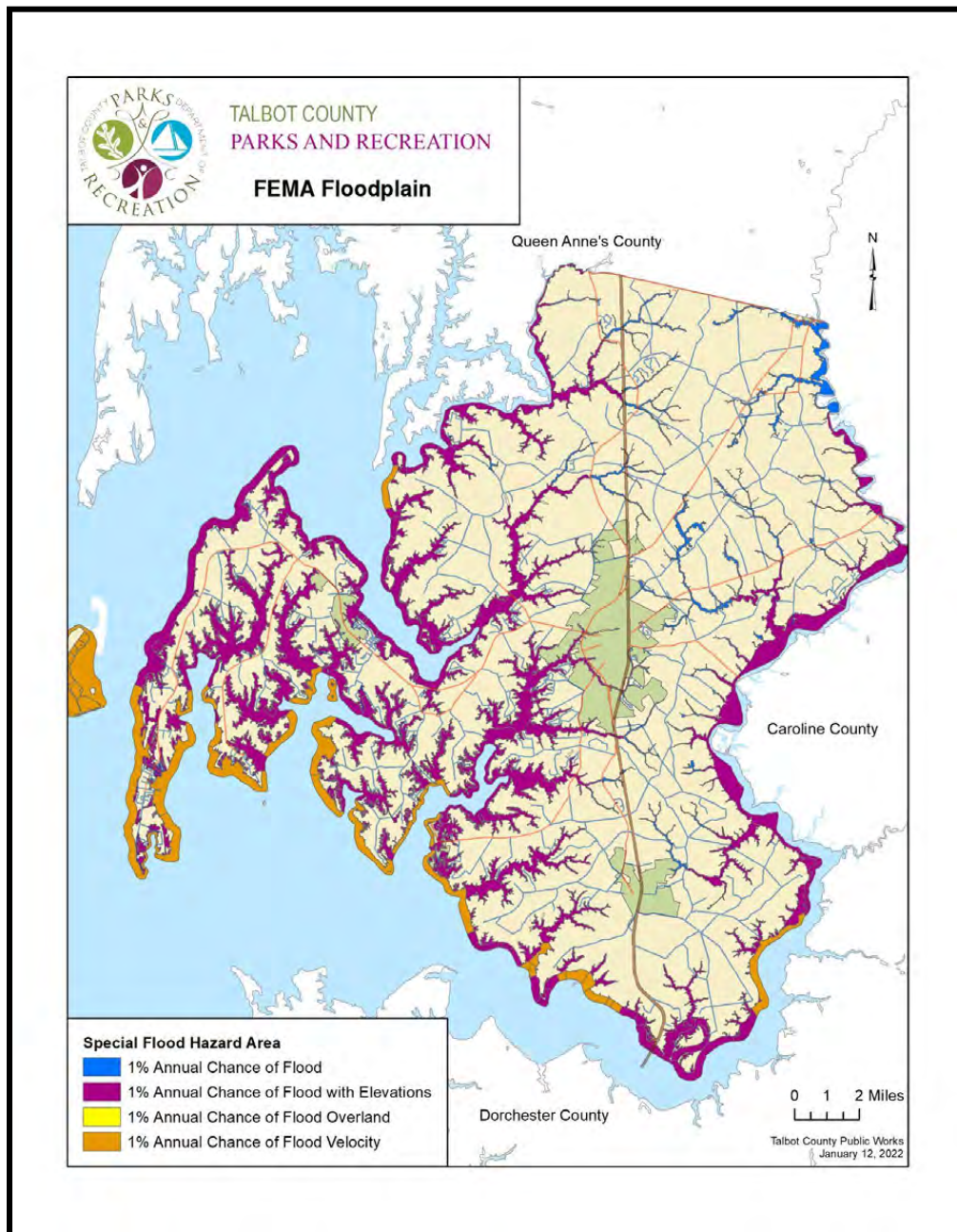


Floodplains

Certain areas of the County are subject to periodic flooding which pose risks to public health and safety, and potential loss of property. Two types of flooding occur within the County, riverine and coastal. Non Tidal areas of the County are subject to riverine

flooding. In these areas, stream buffers will provide substantial protection to nearby floodplain resources. Floodplains moderate and store floodwaters, absorb wave energy, and reduce erosion and sedimentation. Wetlands within floodplains help maintain water quality, recharge groundwater supplies, protect fisheries, and provide habitat and natural corridors for wildlife. The average amount of natural resources which are at risk from a one-foot sea level rise across the County's census blocks is 5%, with a median of 2.5%. Nearly 11% of the total land area of census blocks with any amount of natural resources are at risk from a category 1 storm surge. The majority of census blocks with a medium to high rating are concentrated along the Choptank River and Tuckahoe Creek.

Map III-6 FEMA Floodplain



Steep Slopes

Slopes precipitate movement of soil and pollutants when land disturbances occur. Control of erosion potential is usually achieved through regulation of development on steep slopes because such areas represent the greatest danger for accelerated soil loss and resultant sedimentation and stream pollution.

Threatened and Endangered Species

As a basis for establishing habitat protection measures for threatened and endangered species in Talbot County, habitat is defined as *'Areas which, due to their physical or biological features, provide important elements for the maintenance, expansion, and long-term survival of threatened and endangered species listed in COMAR 08.03.08. Such areas may include breeding, feeding, resting, migratory, or overwintering areas.'*



The key to protecting threatened and endangered species is protecting the habitat in which they exist. The Maryland Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act provides definitions of threatened and endangered species. Twelve animal and 32 plant species are considered to be rare, threatened, or endangered in Talbot County, as of 2010. (Though the status of at least two species may have been changed from endangered to threatened or rare, State regulations and documents have not been revised to date, and the two species remain a conservation concern.) Habitat destruction and degradation is estimated to threaten some 400 native Maryland species with extinction.

Wetlands

Wetland areas are valuable natural resources for the ability to act as collectors and filters of excess nutrients. Wetlands also reduce floodwater peaks by storing water and reducing velocity, serve as groundwater discharge and recharge areas, improve water quality and provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife. Wetlands are recreational and aesthetic resources as well.



Development activities in wetland areas are regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Maryland Department of the Environment. Tidal wetlands are protected by a 100 foot natural buffer and nontidal wetlands are protected by a 25 foot natural buffer. No development activities are allowed within the wetlands or buffer areas without all required federal, State and County approvals and permits, and compliance with all mitigation requirements.

Forest and Vegetation



Approximately 25 percent of the County is in forest cover. Forests are the ideal land use for maintaining water quality because they generate low levels of pollutants while filtering pollutants from both surface and subsurface flows. Trees serve as natural habitat for wildlife, and are important to the carbon and oxygen cycle. Forest areas also provide a cooling effect and visual buffer in both developed and undeveloped areas.

The Forest Conservation Act of 1991 was enacted to protect the forests of Maryland by making forest conditions and character

an integral part of the site planning process. The Act is regulated by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, but implemented and administered by local governments. The Forest Conservation Chapter (73) of the Talbot County Code was most recently amended in July, 2011 to conform to the most recent State legislation.

Regulations require that any person making an application for subdivision of a tract of land 40,000 square feet or greater, or disturbing more than 40,000 square feet of forest in conjunction with a project plan, building permit or sediment and erosion control plan; must submit a Forest Stand Delineation and Forest Conservation Plan to the Planning Department for review and approval. Mitigation for forest removal and forest establishment are both required by the act under specified circumstances.

Soils

Prime farmland is the foundation of the county's agricultural industry, one of Talbot's largest and most valuable economic sectors. The importance of agriculture in the County's economy and lifestyle makes high quality soils an especially important resource which, once lost, cannot be reclaimed. Therefore the County strives to maintain the soil that supports farming. Prime agricultural soils are those best suited for continuous agricultural use and account for approximately 51 percent of the county's soils. They are usually found in areas that are nearly level and well drained and watered. The strategy for addressing conservation of this resource correlates with policies in the agriculture chapter.



Mineral Resources

The sand and gravel extraction industry in Talbot County provides basic raw materials for the construction and paving industries and plays an important role in supporting local growth and development. Talbot County's mineral resources consist primarily of sand and to a lesser extent, gravel. Mineral extraction is permitted by special exception in the Agricultural Conservation (AC), Countryside Preservation (CP), Western Rural Conservation (WRC) and Rural Conservation (RC) zoning districts. The County has enacted policies prohibiting mining activities in the Critical Area and designated habitat protection areas. Proposals for new mining operations are subject to site plan review for compliance with environmental protection regulations.



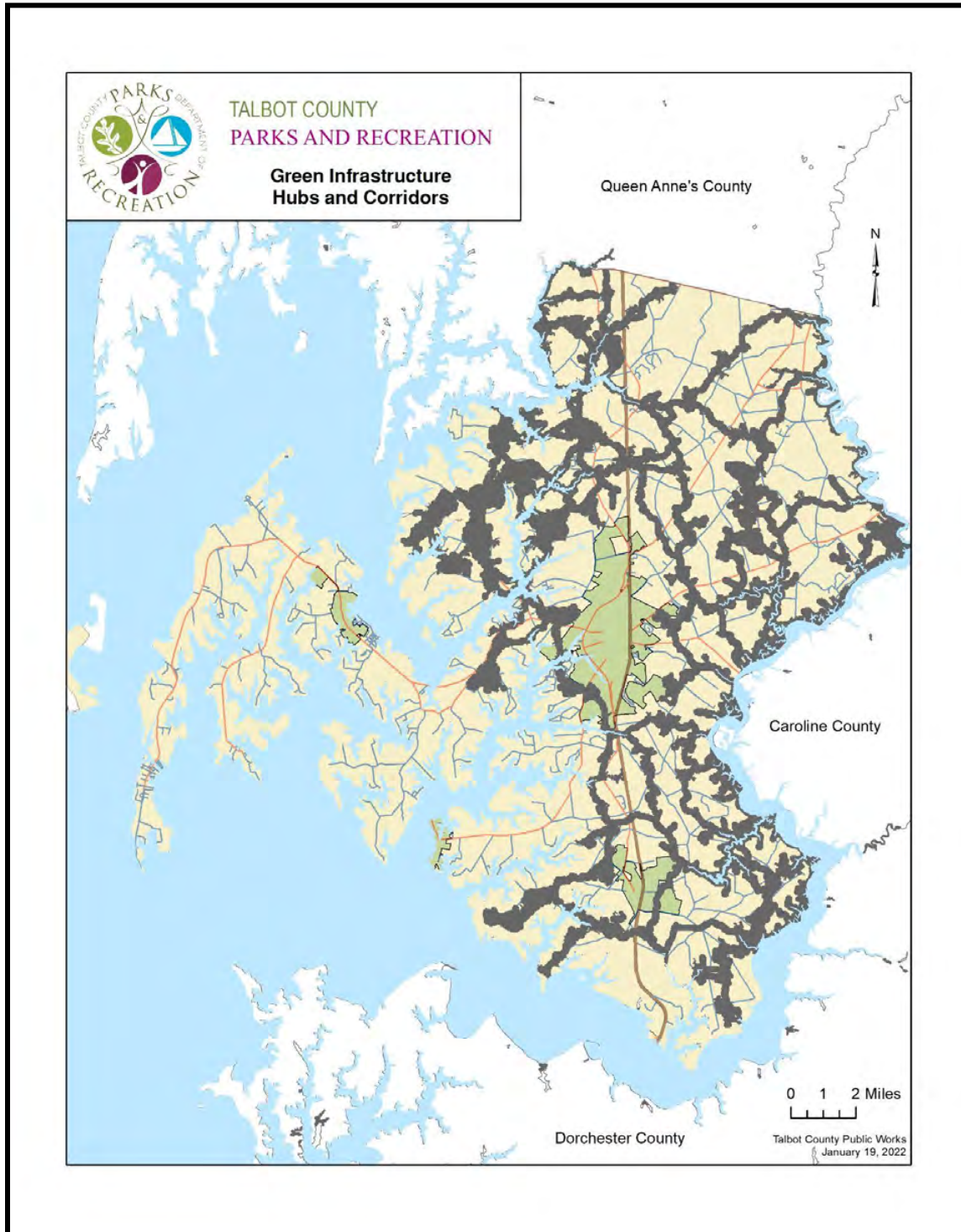
To ensure mining sites are restored to a usable state, appropriate action must be taken before, during, and after extraction. Currently, the licensing process for an extraction permit requires reclamation plans for any site mined. As part of the application process, the post-extraction intended use of the property must be identified. The restoration plan should be consistent with the future land use of the site.

The County recommends the following post-extraction uses:

- Recreational land uses: parks and lakes
- Forestry
- Aquaculture
- Residential Development
- Disposal of non-toxic solid fill material, clean fill material, and inorganic solid fill material originating from Talbot County.

Bonds are required to be posted to assure the availability of funds for reclamation should an operator abandon the site. Restoration guidelines and regulations have been successful in ensuring the remediation of sites where extraction has taken place since the licensing process was established.

Map III-7 Talbot County Green Infrastructures Hubs & Corridors



5. Summary & Recommendations Related to Parks & Open Space

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. Talbot County lags behind bordering counties in the number of acres in conserved easements. In order to address this, the County will need to consider various incentives for landowners as well as consider additional programs to expand the funding available for the purchase of easements.

In 2020-21, in response to recommendations in its 2016 Comprehensive Plan update, Talbot County Planning Department updated the 2004 Green Infrastructure Plan, drafting the Cleaner Greener Talbot plan. There are a number of goals in this project with specific impacts on County Parks. Among five recommended pilot projects included in this Plan, is the acquisition and development of a waterfront park that would provide opportunities for public water access, passive recreation, habitat protection and land preservation. The Plan also includes recommendations for additional preservation of natural resource lands around the Frederick Douglass Park on Lewistown Road with Tuckahoe River frontage. The County maintained Claiborne Jetty & Beach is also a recommended site as a part of a larger Mid Bay Barrier Island Restoration project. Additional development at county parks and open spaces will be designed and developed in accordance with the County's Natural Resource Land Conservation Policies and industry standards and best practices.



Other natural resource land conservation strategies include:

- Continue to require conservation subdivision techniques for new subdivisions
- Support a no net forest loss strategy
- Prepare the next phase of the WIP.

Talbot County lags behind neighboring counties in preservation of natural resource lands. In order to preserve additional lands, the County needs to consider additional incentives for landowners and continue to work closely with the State of Maryland funding sources for land preservation as well as independent private organizations like Eastern Shore Land Conservancy to place additional properties under conservation easements.

Chapter IV: Agricultural and Rural Conservation

This Chapter replicates Chapter 5 in the 2016 Talbot County Comprehensive Plan. The only change is the addition of the Executive Summary which provides updated agricultural preservation and conservation acreage totals, as well as updates to Maps IV-1, IV-2 and IV-3 to show parcel changes. Goals were updated to reflect 2022 goals.



1. Executive Summary

Agriculture remains the primary land use in Talbot County. According to the most recent [Census of Agriculture](#) completed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 2017, there are 317 farms in the County, down slightly from the 2012 Census. In total, there were 93,622 acres in agricultural land. While the number of acres in agriculture use has trended down over the past few decades, agriculture continues to make up more than half of the land acreage of the County and aligns with long standing land use policies that have protected farmland and open space from development.

In alignment with the State goals for agricultural and natural resource land conservation, Talbot County encourages property owners to participate in land preservation easement programs. Since 2012, the County has added 1,269 acres to its Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) preserved lands, bringing the total acreage preserved through MALPF to 12,174 as of June 30, 2020. An additional 14,678 acres have been preserved through Rural Legacy, Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) and the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC).

If the County continues to secure MALPF easements at the current rate it will take more than 100 years to reach its agricultural land preservation goals.

Vision

Talbot County’s undeveloped and working agricultural lands are precious resources that are critical to the rural character and quality of life which the Comprehensive Plan seeks to preserve. Residential and commercial development pressures are no longer in conflict with preservation of the rural landscape, thanks to the land use policies put in place to direct growth toward designated areas and otherwise preserve agricultural and forest lands.

The keystone preservation strategy is for critical tracts of undeveloped land to be placed under conservation easements. Comprehensive planning that designates preservation and growth areas, combined with rigorously enforced zoning ordinances and a range of land preservation incentives, maintain a balance of land uses and foster agricultural operations.



Goals

The 2017 LPPRP carried forward the Agricultural and Rural Conservation goal identified in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update.

Talbot County 2017 Agricultural and Rural Conservation Goals Updates

2017 Goal	2022 Updates
<p>Conserve Talbot County's agricultural land base and preserve its rural character by directing growth to existing population centers and securing permanent conservation easements in predominantly rural areas.</p>	<p>The County's planning and zoning policies continue to support this goal. In particular, agricultural and forestry activities are the primary land use activity in rural areas of the County. Conservation easements are encouraged through a variety of programs and efforts. Most notably, through the work of the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy and the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF).</p>

The 2022 LPPRP carries forward the Agriculture Land Preservation goal identified in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. This goal aligns with the State of Maryland goals for

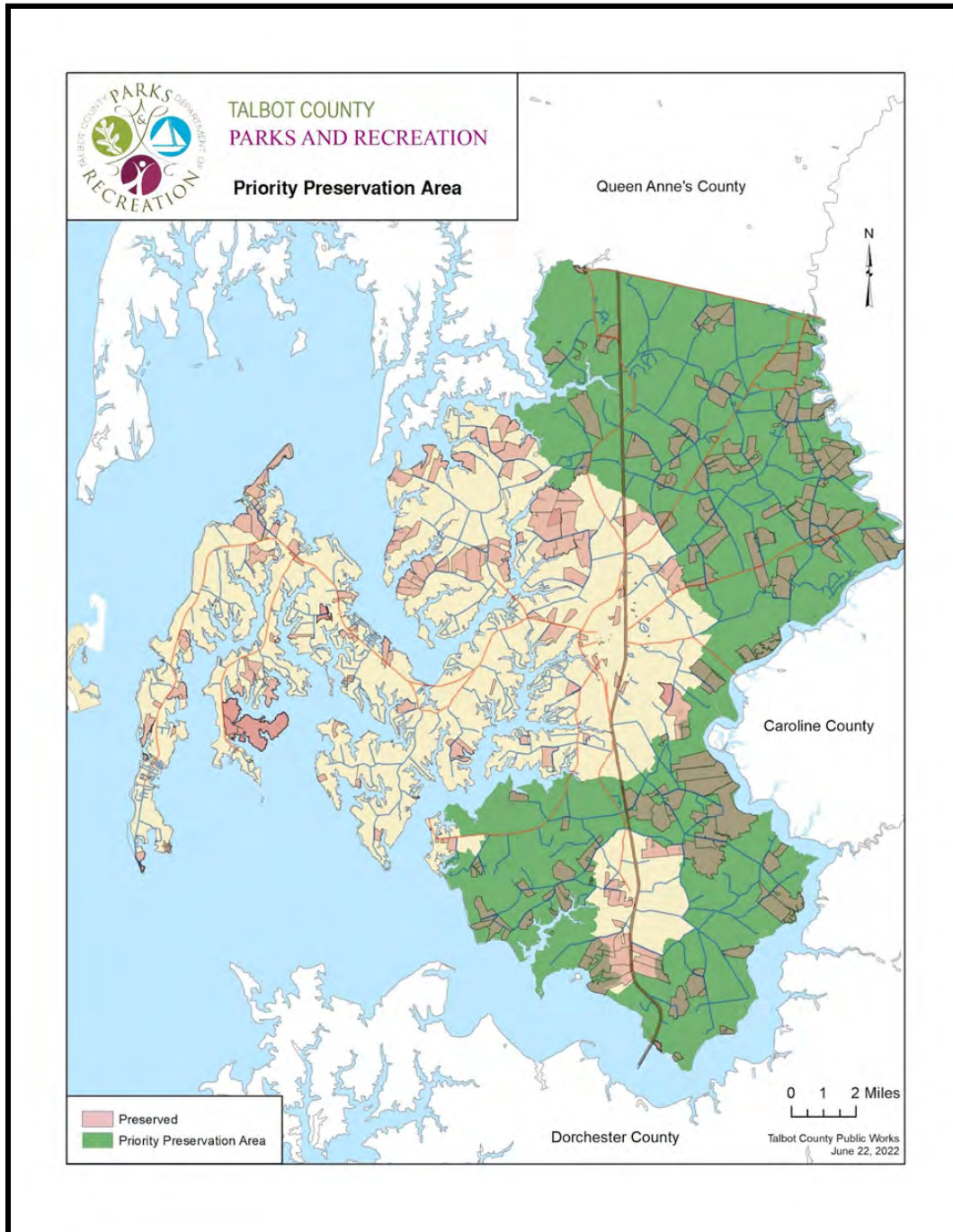
agricultural land preservation as demonstrated below. While the County maintains one general goal for agricultural preservation, the County’s policies provide additional detail about the County’s approach to preserving agricultural land.

<p align="center">2022 State of Maryland Goals for Agriculture Land Preservation</p>	<p align="center">2022 Talbot County Goals</p>
<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"> ● Conserve Talbot County’s agricultural land base and preserve its rural character by directing growth to existing population centers and securing permanent conservation easements in predominantly rural areas. ● Related County Land Use Policies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agricultural and forestry activities are the primary and preferred land use activity in rural areas of the county. 2. Agricultural and forestry activities should be conducted in accordance with best management practices for soil and water conservation which are approved by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. 3. Agriculturally-related uses are permitted in non-Critical areas of the county, provided these uses can be compatible with surrounding land uses and do not adversely impact environmentally sensitive areas. 4. Low density single-family residential construction is permitted in agricultural areas. Development design standards for rural residential development should ensure the conservation of agricultural lands, open space, woodlands, environmentally sensitive areas and rural character. 5. Rural landowners should be provided the opportunity to transfer development rights from a property in order to maintain development equity and conserve agricultural lands and open space. 6. The county should encourage rural property owners to participate in land preservation easement programs offered by national, State, regional and local land trust organizations. 7. The County should work with local farmers and the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation to encourage the greatest possible participation in the program. 8. The County should monitor for effectiveness of current incentives designed to preserve working farmland and open space by reviewing land use changes in the Rural Reserve planning area. 9. The County should examine opportunities to create additional tax or other incentives to preserve farmland. 10. The County will maintain a Priority Preservation Area program that specifies goals, an implementation program, program evaluation and program development strategy.

2. Introduction

Agriculture is a significant part of Talbot County life, both as a major industry and as an important contributor to the county's distinctive character. Working farmland is a valuable and limited natural resource that once developed, cannot be reclaimed for agricultural use.

Map IV-1 Preservation Areas



Conservation of working land is an important component of support to the agricultural industry. In spite of increasing development pressure on agricultural and open space lands, Talbot County continues to derive benefit from conserving these elements of rural character.

In order to preserve agricultural land and open space, the County, in 1991, adopted a comprehensive rezoning of rural and agricultural lands, reducing the density permitted in agricultural areas from one dwelling unit per two acres. In its place, zoning now allows a variable density somewhat less than one unit per twenty acres on most farmland. This density has been modified by SB236. To maintain the commercial viability of agriculture, clustering of subdivided lots is generally required. Code amendments passed in 2007 eliminated the opportunity to increase development intensity through the use of Transferable Development Rights (TDRs).

To further protect agriculture as a land use activity, a Right to Farm ordinance was enacted in 2000, stressing the County’s commitment to agriculture and helping to protect farmers from unwarranted nuisance complaints. The most current Census of Agriculture reports an increase in area and number of farms from 2002 to 2007, and again in 2012. New calculations bring numbers close to the farm acres from 1982. The average farm size remains below the historic high in 1997.

Some of these fluctuations may be due to changes in the definition of farming operations or the way census data were gathered. The period was also one of industry consolidation, followed by a recent interest in the establishment of smaller specialty farms. Changes in farmland acreage over the past 50 years are shown in Table IV-1.

Table IV-1 Talbot County Farm Statistics, 1982-2017

Farm number and size	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	2017
Number of farms	350	280	250	240	288	305	328	317
Average size (acres)	342	389	423	457	367	357	364	295
Land in farms (acres)	119,684	109,032	109,108	109,572	105,729	109,002	119,481	93,622

Source: United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service

3. Existing Land Preservation Programs

A. MALPF

Founded in 1977, the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) is one of the oldest and most successful programs of its kind in the nation. The MALPF program is intended to permanently protect farmland by offering landowners financial incentives to voluntarily sell development rights. The Foundation’s purpose is to preserve sufficient agricultural land to maintain a viable food and fiber production capacity for present and future citizens of Maryland. The program is administered by the County and State in an equitable partnership.

Table IV-2 Talbot County Easements

Easement Holder	# of Properties	Acres
ESLC	14	1625.3
MET	150	24691.6
MALPF	82	12784
Forest Conservation	10	113
Rural Legacy	8	1748.1
Maryland Historic Trust	19	1904
DNR	6	??

Talbot County has a moderately successful MALPF program. Community participation has been steadfast and increasing. Landowners have applied to establish easements on an increasing number of farms in every application period. Each annual round of easement purchases has been highly competitive, with only the highest quality farmland purchased in any year.

As of 2022, Talbot County's MALPF holdings consist of 12,784 acres in 82 easements. As a MALPF Certified County, Talbot is qualified to retain a portion of agricultural transfer taxes collected in the county, to be reserved for land preservation. The County has used, and intends to use, all retained funds to purchase development rights, supplement MALPF payments, or promote the sale or purchase of easements. Certification allows Talbot County to retain 3/4 of all agricultural transfer tax revenues collected, for the sole purpose of purchasing agricultural easements in the county.

Easement applications reached a record high in 2006, as State funds for land preservation peaked. Most of the decade was characterized by dramatic increases in land value, and a corresponding increase in easement acquisition costs. The net effect was a greater per-acre cost to purchase agricultural easements.

By 2008, land preservation in the County and State came to a halt, due to the economic recession and its impact on tax revenues which fund the MALPF program. With little funds available to purchase easements, progress in land preservation has slowed considerably.

In order to add predictability and a greater degree of local control, the County should pursue additional sources of funding, both public and private, to acquire conservation easements.

Talbot County remains committed to assisting local property owners who are interested in participating in MALPF or other local, regional, state and national conservation programs. The County will continue to work with the State to actively encourage more farmers to participate in MALPF and other programs.

B. Conservation Programs

Land Trusts

Non-profit land trusts play an invaluable role helping to protect the county's rural and agricultural landscape. Unlike MALPF, which purchases easements for cash, land trusts typically accept donated easements in exchange for federal and State income tax credits and deductions.



Over one half of the land that is preserved from future subdivision and development in the county has been protected (at no cost to the County) by two such organizations the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC) and the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET). These organizations craft conservation easements that extinguish legal development rights and hold easements on preserved lands. The easements are recognized as tax deductible donations. Property owners who wish to voluntarily conserve land agree to

deed restrictions that preserve farmland, forests, streams, shorelines and other important resources.

As of this report, ESLC and MET account for 164 easements protect about 26,317 acres of land within the county. Most properties are in areas designated for limited development and environmental conservation in County land preservation plans. The County should continue to support these organizations with data sharing and other resources in their efforts to acquire conservation easements.

Historically, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Nature Conservancy have also acquired land or easements to protect critical resources such as old growth forests and marshland. These sensitive resources are valued habitat protection areas for threatened and endangered species and the ecological diversity they preserve.

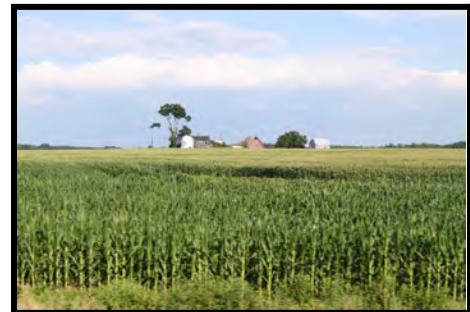
Rural Legacy and Program Open Space

The Agricultural Security Rural Legacy Area was developed by the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, in cooperation with Talbot and other Midshore counties, in order to preserve lands bordering waterways such as the Tuckahoe River in the northeast corner of the county. See Appendix G: Talbot LPPRP Rural Legacy Report produced by ESLC. (See Map IV-2, IV-3).

The Talbot portion on the Tuckahoe is part of an upper shore Agricultural Security Corridor, established to help safeguard the Eastern Shore’s agricultural economy. The northeast quadrant of the county is a hub of agricultural production and investment, stressing the importance of land preservation. About 1,748 acres in the county have been preserved through Rural Legacy easements. Future Rural Legacy Areas may provide for additional protection of farmland paralleling MD Route 404, in cooperation with Queen Anne’s County, in an effort to maintain the Corridor’s Rural Character in spite of ongoing transportation system improvements.

DNR Lands

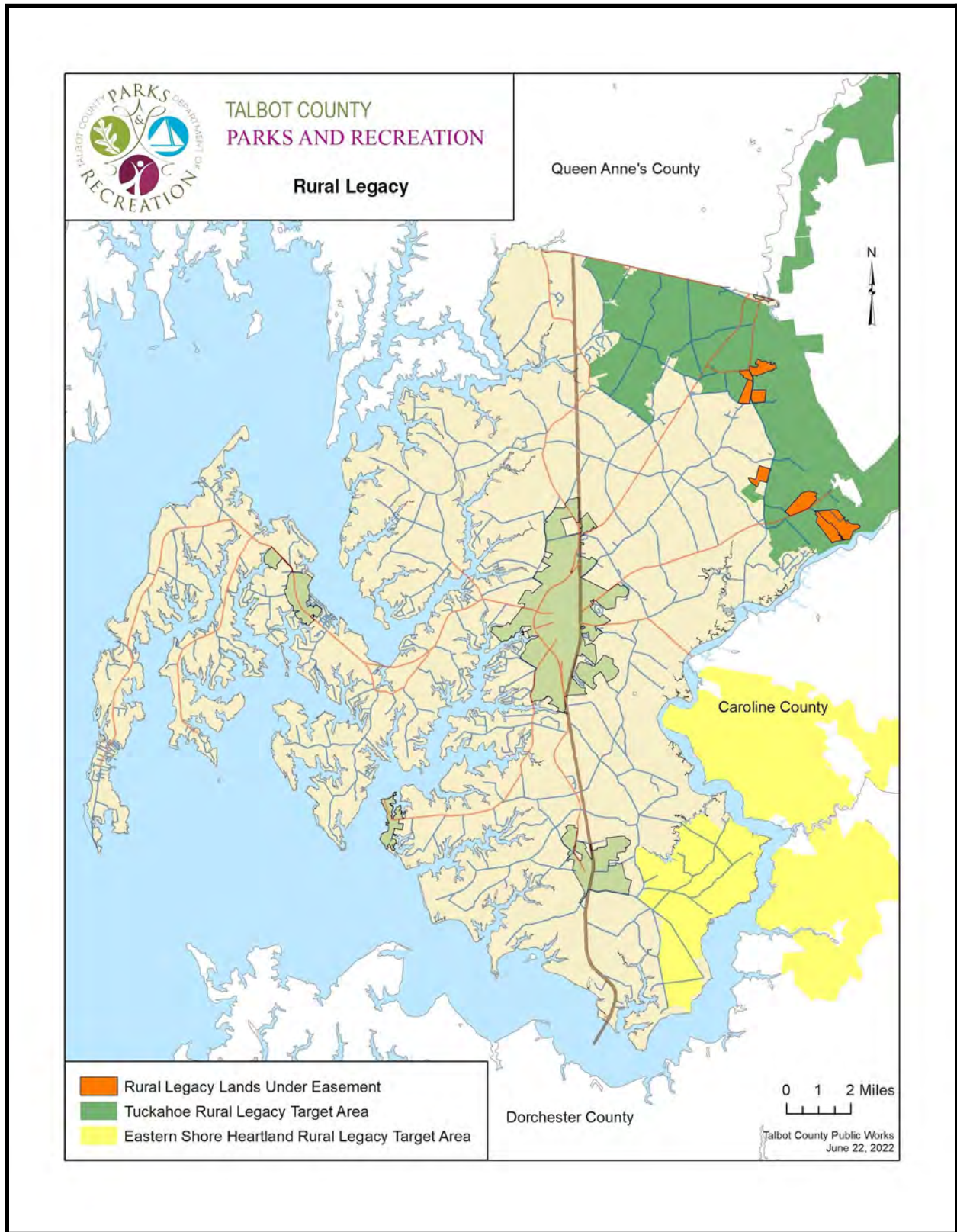
The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages several publicly owned parks and protected sites in Talbot County. These 238 acres of public lands include Black Walnut Point Natural Resource Management Area, Bill Burton Fishing Pier State Park, Wye Oak State Park and Seth Demonstration Forest. The sites provide recreational water access, passive recreational opportunities and natural resource services to local residents and visitors alike.



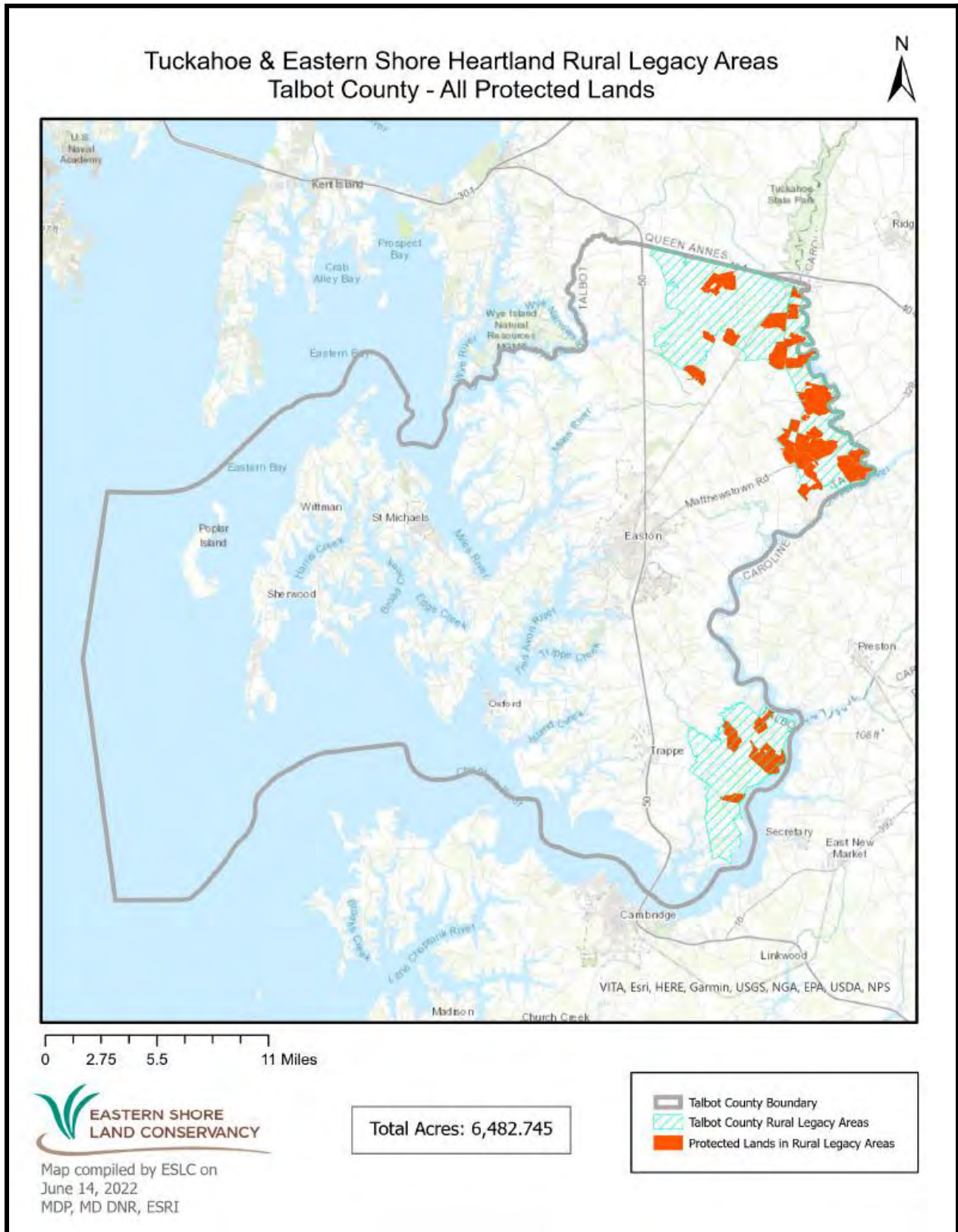
TDR Lands

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) lands are properties that have participated in a County managed TDR program and have sold or transferred development rights from one property to another, preserving land as open space or agricultural lands. The County does not permit TDRs at present.

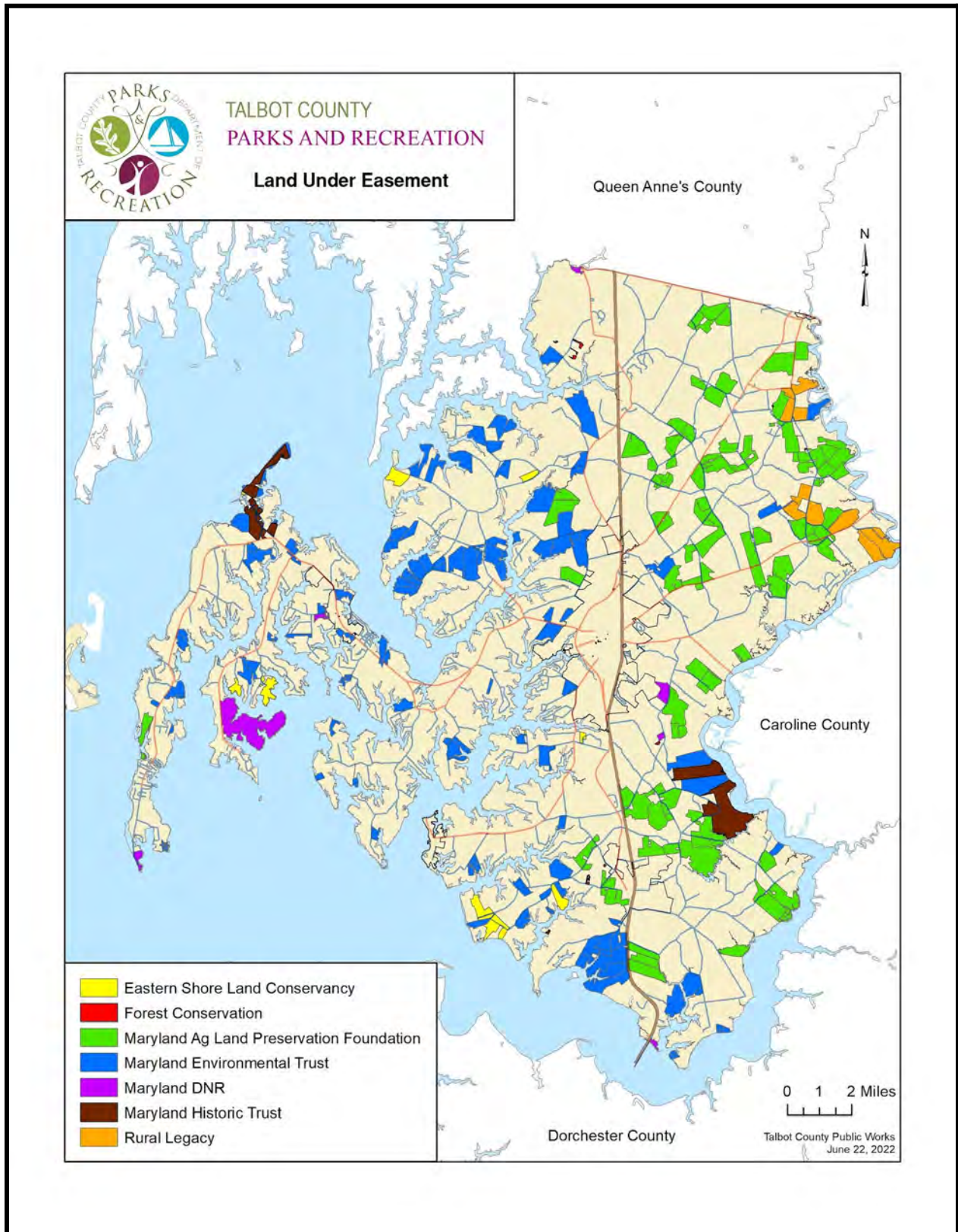
Map IV-2 Rural Legacy



Map IV-3 Rural Legacy Area Protection



Map IV-4 Land Under Easement



C. Priority Preservation Areas



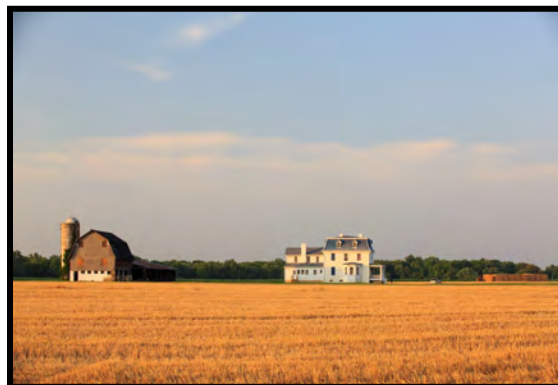
The Talbot County Department of Planning and Zoning adopted a Priority Preservation Area (PPA) plan as an element of the Comprehensive Plan, in 2009 and was retained in the 2016 Plan. The element was required for counties with certified MALPF programs. The intent was to assure that State funds were used in a strategic fashion to meet local goals.

The Talbot County PPA encompasses approximately 83,000 acres and includes the majority of existing MALPF easements and prospective properties, the Tuckahoe Rural Legacy area, and several conservation easements.

(See Map IV-3). The PPA is home to a high percentage of local farm owners/operators. Farm operations are diverse, ranging from grain and poultry, to aquaculture, greenhouse and hydroponic growers, wine grapes, artisan cheeses and specialty produce. The area hosts a variety of agricultural support services including grain storage facilities, agricultural equipment dealers and a network of specialized service providers.

The PPA also contains high concentrations of the most productive soils in the county and is capable of supporting profitable agricultural and forestry enterprises. In 2004, Talbot County partnered with The Conservation Fund to develop a Green Infrastructure Plan identifying and evaluating areas of high natural resource and agricultural value. This research provided important background toward establishing a viable priority area.

Virtually all land in the PPA is designated for agriculture in the County Zoning Ordinance. **Agricultural Conservation (AC)** zoning predominates, with slightly more restrictive **Rural Conservation (RC)** zoning in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area. The County has no plans to extend sewer or water into the PPA.



Almost all of the PPA has been designated Tier 4 in accordance with the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act. Tier 4 is designated for limited development, and each parcel is limited to seven new subdivisions, regardless of the acreage of the parent parcel. Zoning places other constraints and restrictions on non-agricultural development activities in order to minimize conflicts with agriculture.

Among the uses not permitted in the PPA are Auto Service Stations, Hospitals, Hotels, Manufacturing, Nightclubs, Offices, Indoor Recreation Facilities, Major Retail and Solid Waste Disposal. Prohibiting large or intensive non-residential development will minimize the threats of conflicting uses, heavy traffic and the lure to take land out of agricultural production.

The County has worked to minimize constraints or restrictions on farm related activities by amending zoning regulations to accommodate a range of contemporary uses. For example, farm markets, produce stands, wholesale and retail greenhouses, fish and game hatcheries, and riding stables are all permitted uses in agricultural areas.

The PPA is bound and bisected by major traffic and tourism routes to Maryland and Delaware beaches. Despite the obvious attraction to develop these byways, non-agricultural development has been restricted almost exclusively to the incorporated towns along the highways.

Priority Preservation Area goals are shown in Table IV-2.

Land Type	Acres	Farms (est.)	% of Farmland
Farmland (Census of Agriculture, 2017)	93,622	317	100%
MALPF Preserved Land (2022)	12,784	82	10%
MALPF Eligible Land in PPA	70,000	488	64%
20 Year MALPF Preservation Goal	56,000	391	51%

Also included in the PPA are the villages of Cordova, Bruceville, Ivytown, Williamsburg and Wye Mills, which are emblematic of Talbot County’s agricultural heritage. For example, Wye Mills traces its roots to the Colonial period when the extant grain mill was first established. Cordova’s history dates to the 20th Century commodity-based agricultural boom and remains central to grain and poultry production.

There are approximately 4,130 parcels of record in the PPA. Of those, about 650 parcels are 50 acres or greater; 488 of those MALPF-qualifying parcels are not yet preserved or enrolled in a preservation program. The parcels that would qualify for the MALPF program amount to approximately 70,000 acres of farm and forest land.



Talbot County has retained a ‘district’ registration system based on the former statewide requirement, with a nonbinding 3 year program commitment. The Department of Planning and Zoning encourages registration as a district to assure that a parcel meets program requirements and that landowners are contacted during each application cycle.

4. Summary

If Talbot County continues to secure MALPF easements at its historic rate, it will take over 100 years to reach agricultural land preservation goals. In order to achieve a 20-year preservation goal of 56,000 additional acres, easements would need to be acquired at a rate of 2,800 acres per year.

Adequate funding is the most significant impediment to achieving County preservation goals. Funds are scarce at every possible level of source. Interest in land preservation has remained strong through periods of scarce funding and episodes of extraordinary fluctuations in land and easement values.

To the public, there is no apparent difference between permanently preserved land and other farm property. Whether land remains in agriculture because commodity prices are high, or because the demand for new housing is low, County policies appear to be working when new residential subdivisions are not emerging on the landscape.

Talbot County is not unique in this respect. All Maryland counties face challenges and tradeoffs in their efforts to manage land development while working cooperatively with landowners. As development restrictions increase, the motivation for landowners to participate in preservation programs diminishes.

State legislation establishing Priority Preservation Areas and limiting the number of subdivisions allowable on septic systems have added greater focus to the goals of preserving viable agricultural areas and limiting a pattern of sprawling development. The challenge for Talbot County is to combine such regulations with policies that support farm families and businesses in their endeavors.

To a great extent, County policies have been working. A combination of ‘moderately protective’ zoning, land use priorities backed by incentives and regulations, and Right to Farm legislation all serve to keep agriculture viable. Talbot County will continue to work with ESLC and other private land conservancy organizations to preserve additional parcels. The County will also continue to promote participation in MALPF and METS programs by including information in tax bills when they are sent each year as well as maintaining a list of interested property owners to contact when various programs become available. In particular, the County will work to inform landowners of priority properties about various easement acquisition cycles and available funding sources..

Thanks to Talbot County’s long standing local traditions, affinity for a rural landscape, and a healthy regional market for agricultural products, the motivation to preserve agricultural land and agricultural industry remains strong.



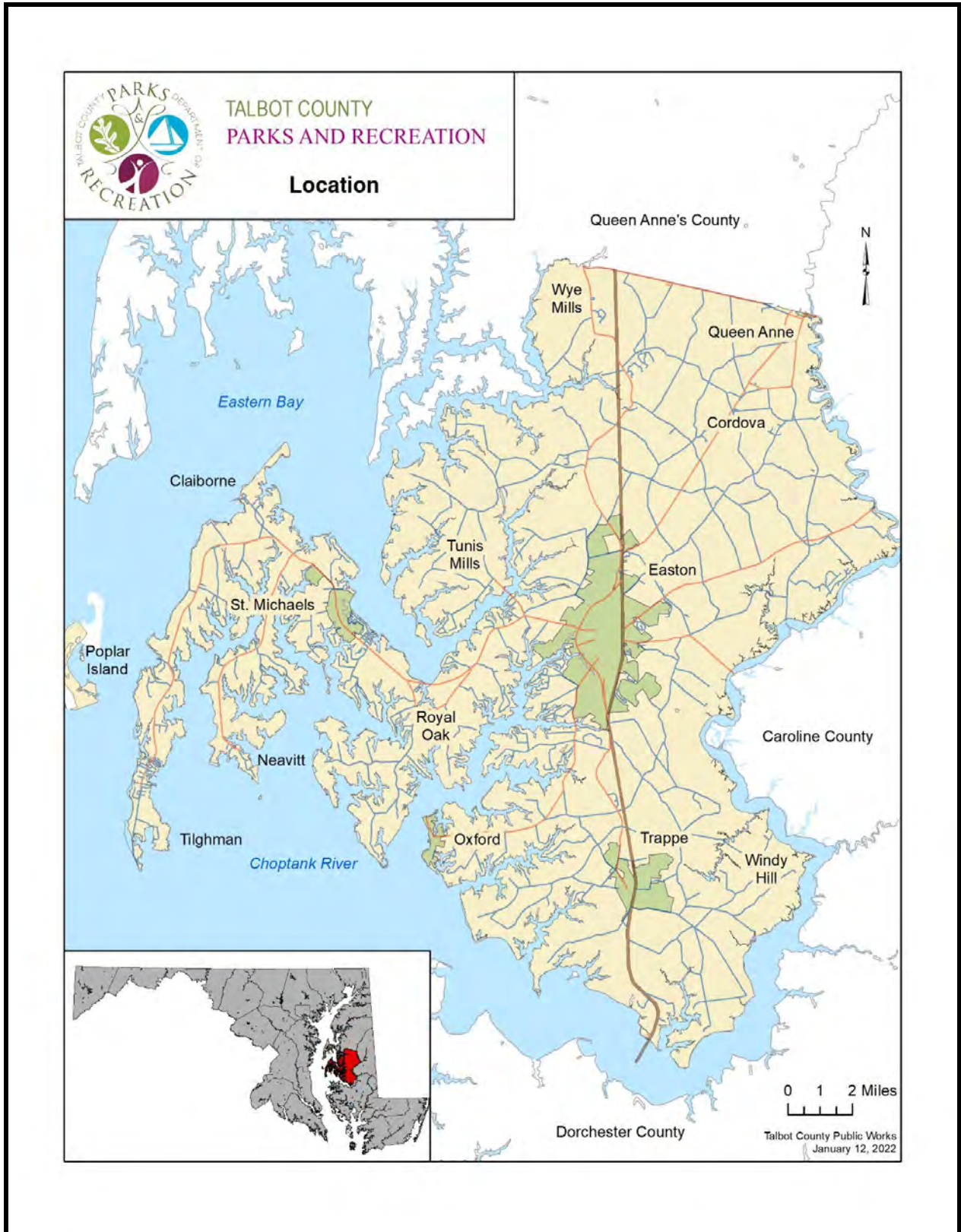
APPENDIX A: Talbot County LPPRP Maps

CHAPTER I

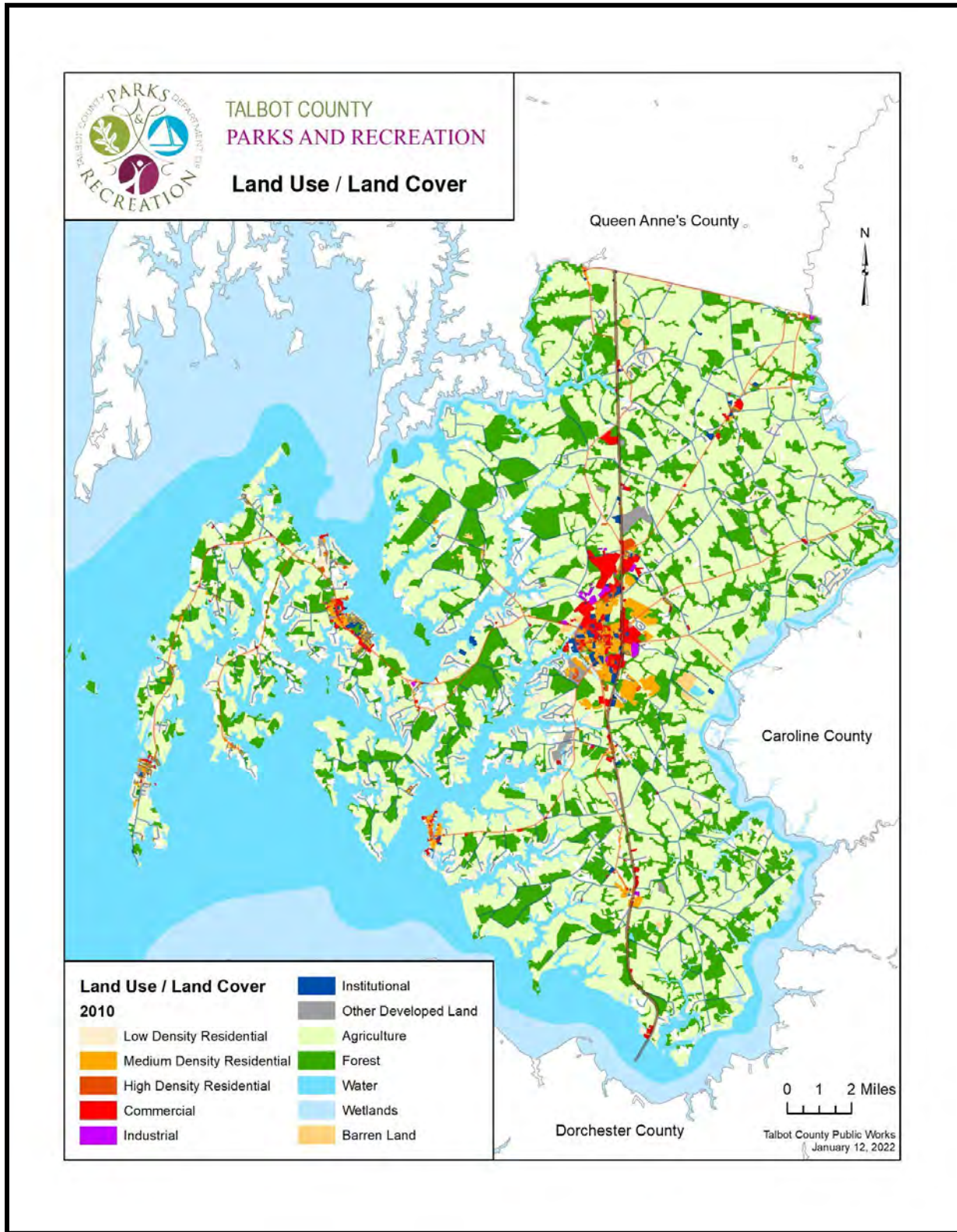
FRAMEWORK

MAPS

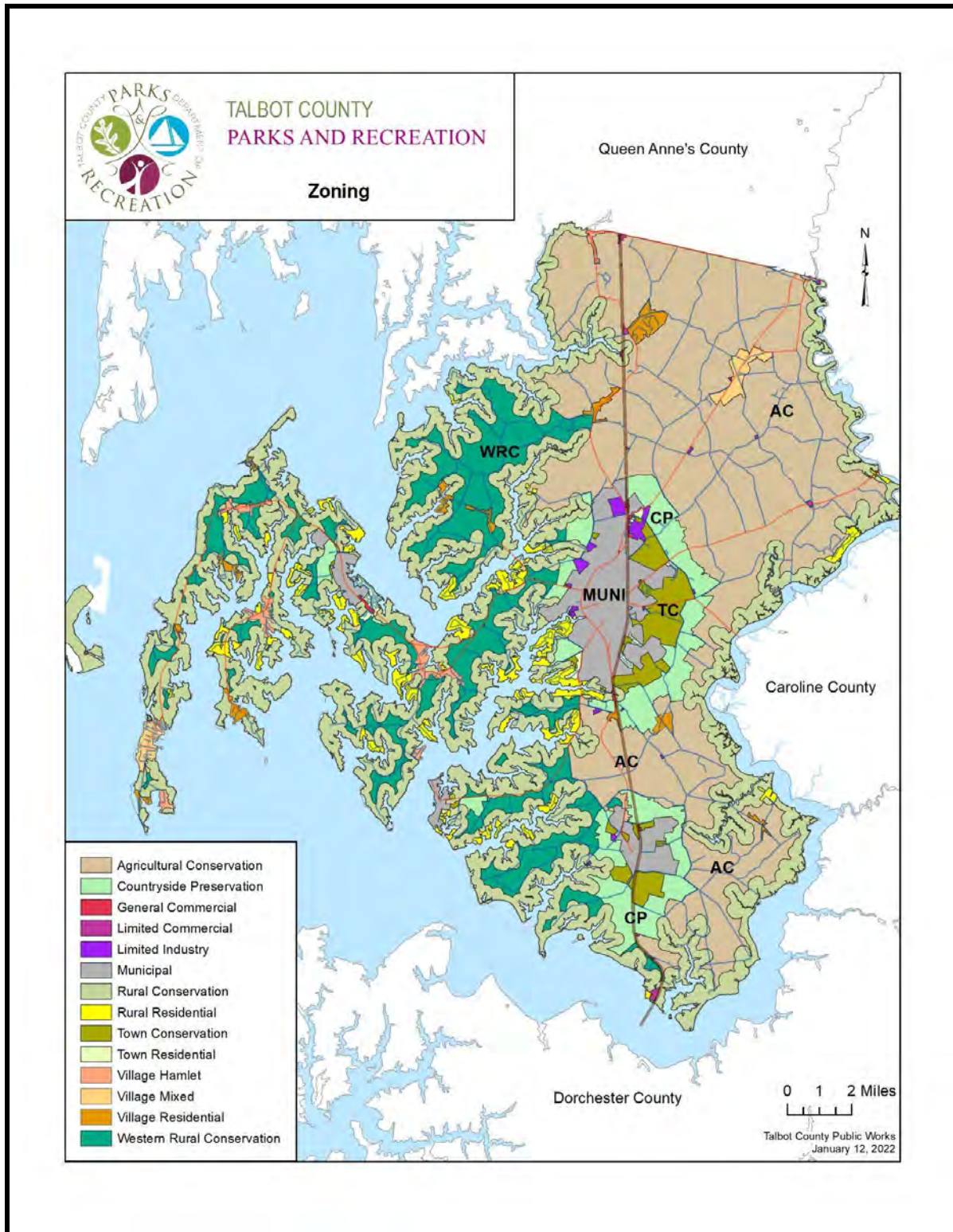
Map I-1 Talbot County, Maryland



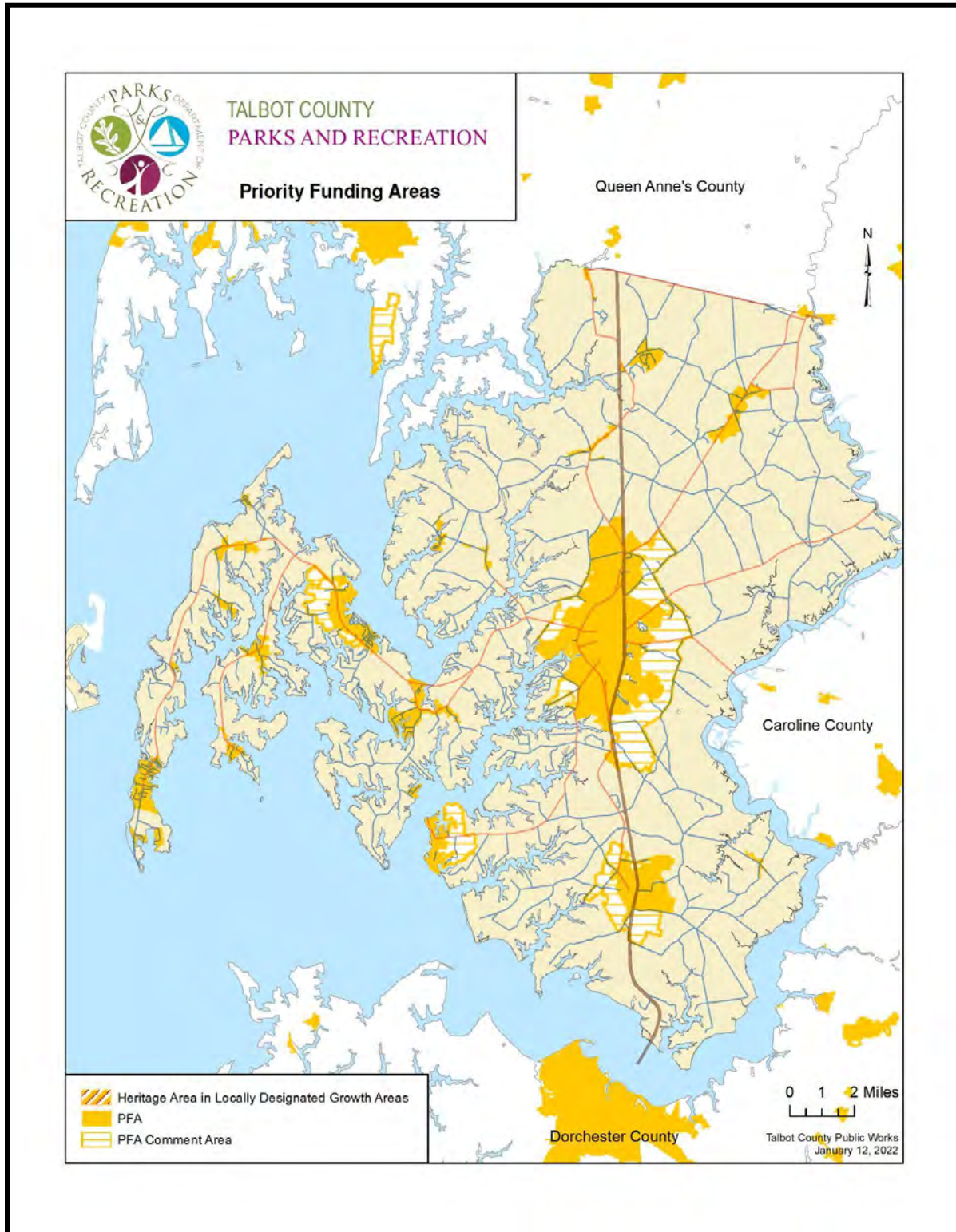
Map I-2 Talbot County Land Use/Land Cover



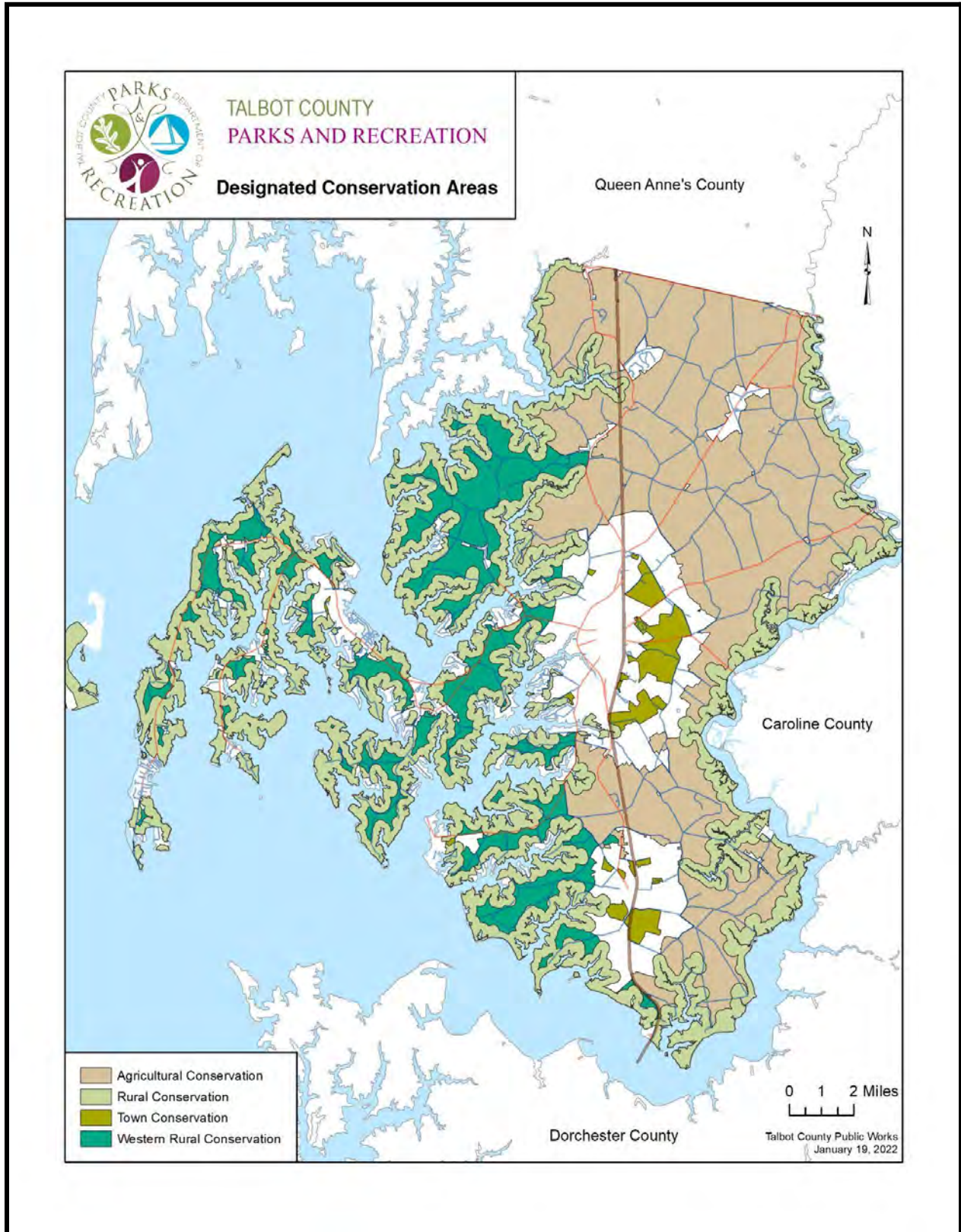
Map I-3 Zoning



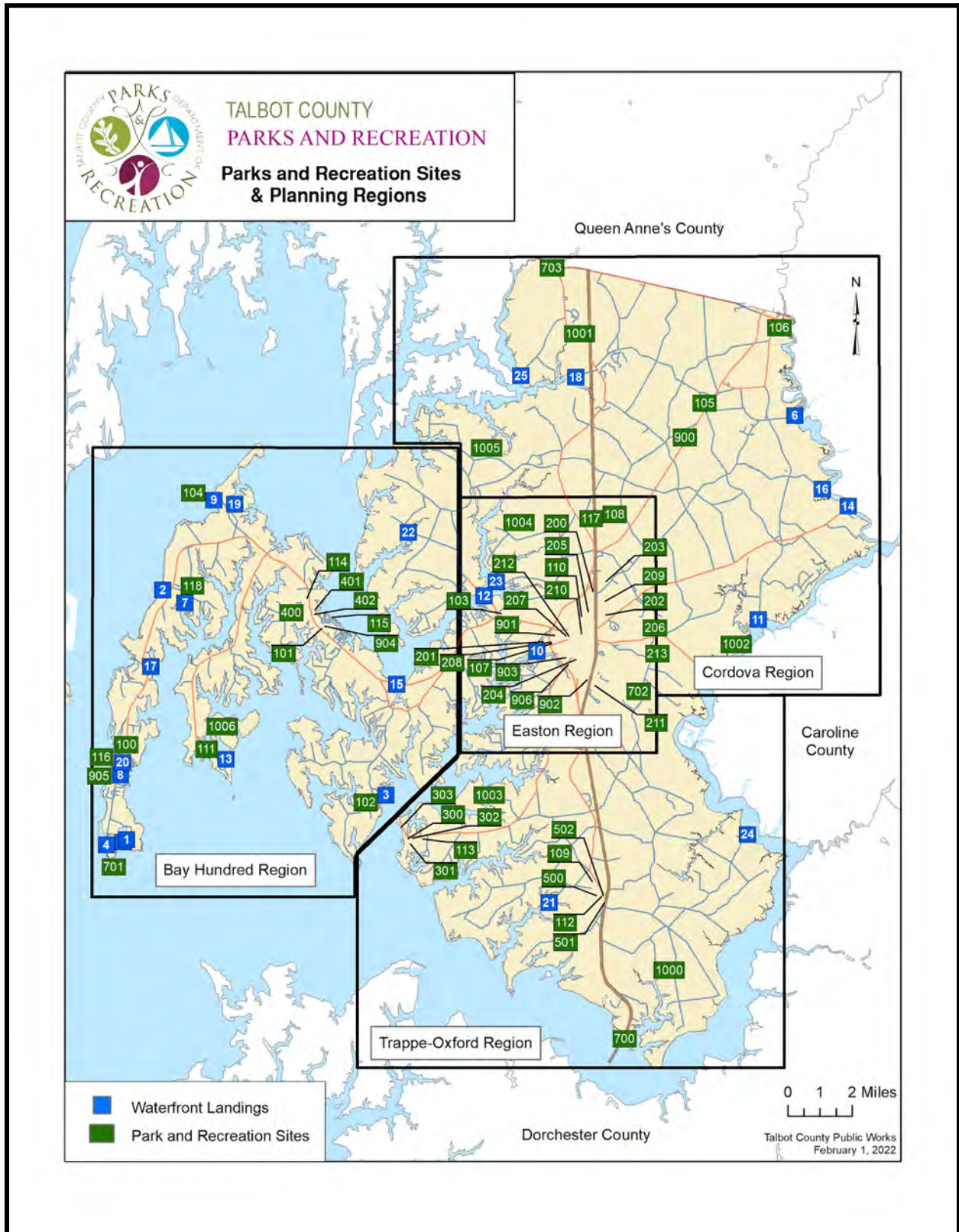
Map I-4 Priority Funding Areas



Map I-5 Designated Conservation Area



Map I-6 Talbot County Parks & Recreation Sites



Talbot County Parks & Recreation Sites Map Key

Park/Recreation Site	Map ID	Park/Recreation Site	Map ID	Landings	Map ID
Back Creek Park	100	Thompson Park	212	Bar Neck Landing	1
Bay Hundred Pool	101	Waylands Neighborhood Park	213	Bayshore	2
Bellevue Park	102	Causeway Park	300	Bellevue Landing	3
Carroll's Market	103	Dog Park	301	Black Walnut Point	4
Claiborne Jetty	104	Oxford	302	Fairbank	5
Cordova Park	105	Oxford Town Park	303	Coveys Landing	6
Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe	106	Bradley Park, St. Michaels	400	Cummings Creek	7
George Murphy Pool	107	Hollis Park, St. Michaels	401	Dogwood Harbor	8
Hog Neck Golf Course	108	Muskrat Park, St. Michaels	402	Claiborne Landing	9
Home Run Baker Park	109	Lakeview Park	500	Easton Point	10
Mt. Pleasant Practice Fields, Easton	110	Nace's Park	501	Kingston Landing	11
Neavitt Park	111	Veterans Memorial Park	502	Miles River Bridge	12
Old Trappe Park	112	Bill Burton Fishing Pier State Park	700	Neavitt Landing	13
Oxford Conservation Park	113	Black Walnut Point NRMA	701	New Bridge Landing	14
Perry Cabin Park	114	Seth Demonstration Forest	702	Oak Creek Landing	15
Sam Shores Park	115	Wye Oak State Park	703	Resse's Landing	16
Sinclair Park	116	Chapel Elementary School	900	Sherwood Pier	17
Talbot County Community Center	117	Easton Elementary School	901	Skipton Landing	18
Wittman Park	118	Easton High School	902	Tilghman Creek	19
A. James Clark North Easton Sports Complex	200	Easton Middle School	903	Tonger Basin	20
Easton Point Park	201	St. Michaels High School	904	Trappe Landing	21
Golton Neighborhood Park	202	Tilghman Elementary	905	Tunis Mills Bridge	22
Ian Mac Morrell Park	203	Chesapeake YMCA	906	Villa Road Landing	23
Idlewild Park, Easton	204	Bolingbroke Park - Izaak Walton League	1000	Windy Hill Landing	24
John F. Ford Park (formerly RTC)	205	MOS - Mill Creek Sanctuary	1001	Wye Landing	25
Matthewstown Run Park	206	Nature Conservancy - King's Creek	1002		
Memorial Walk, 100 W. Dover St.	207	Nature Conservancy - Otwell Woodland	1003		
Moton Park	208	Nature Conservancy - Third Haven Woods	1004		
Mulberry Station Park	209	Pickering Creek Audubon	1005		
Railroad Station Park	210	Point Pleasant Farm	1006		
Stoney Ridge Park	211				

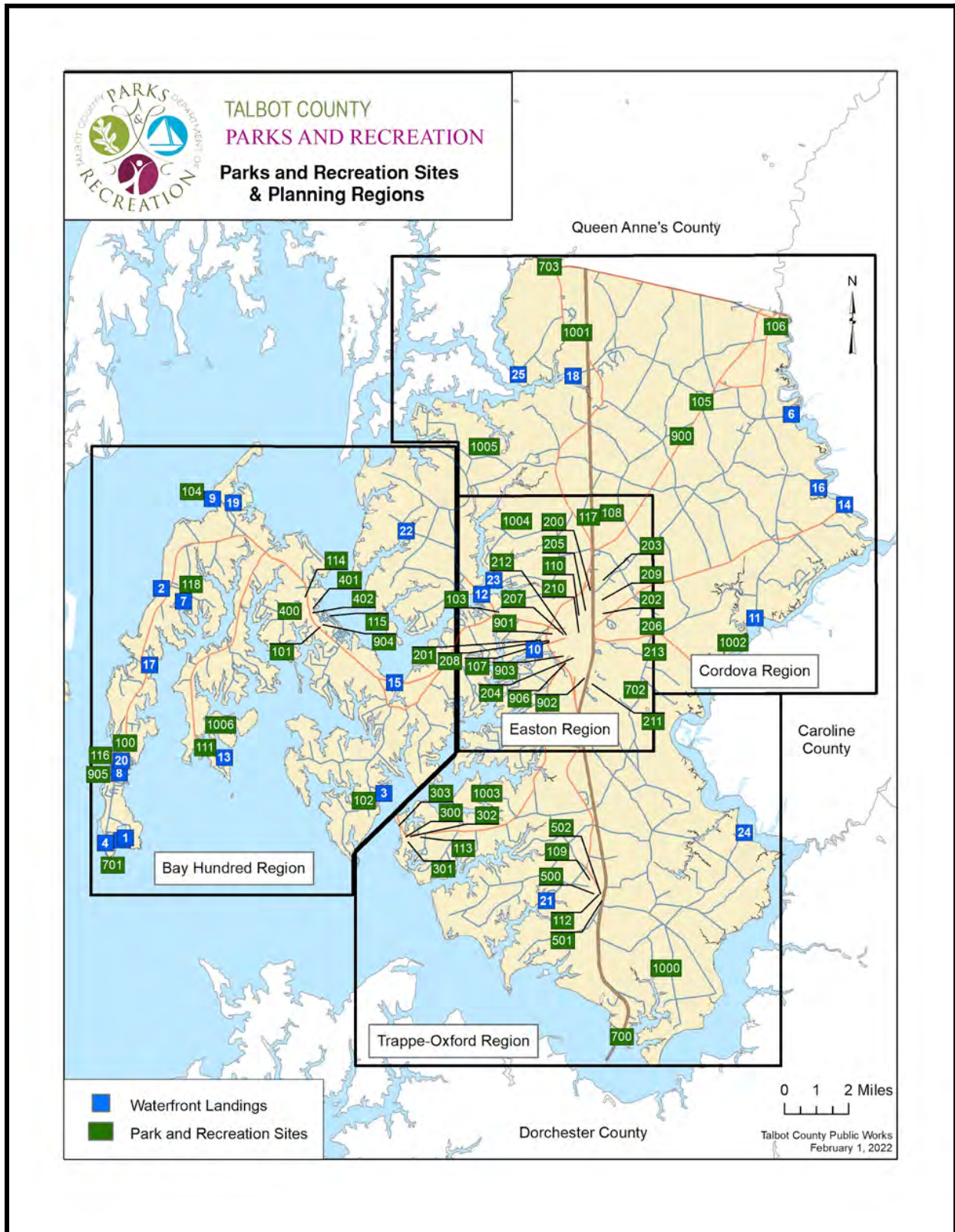
CHAPTER II

RECREATION,

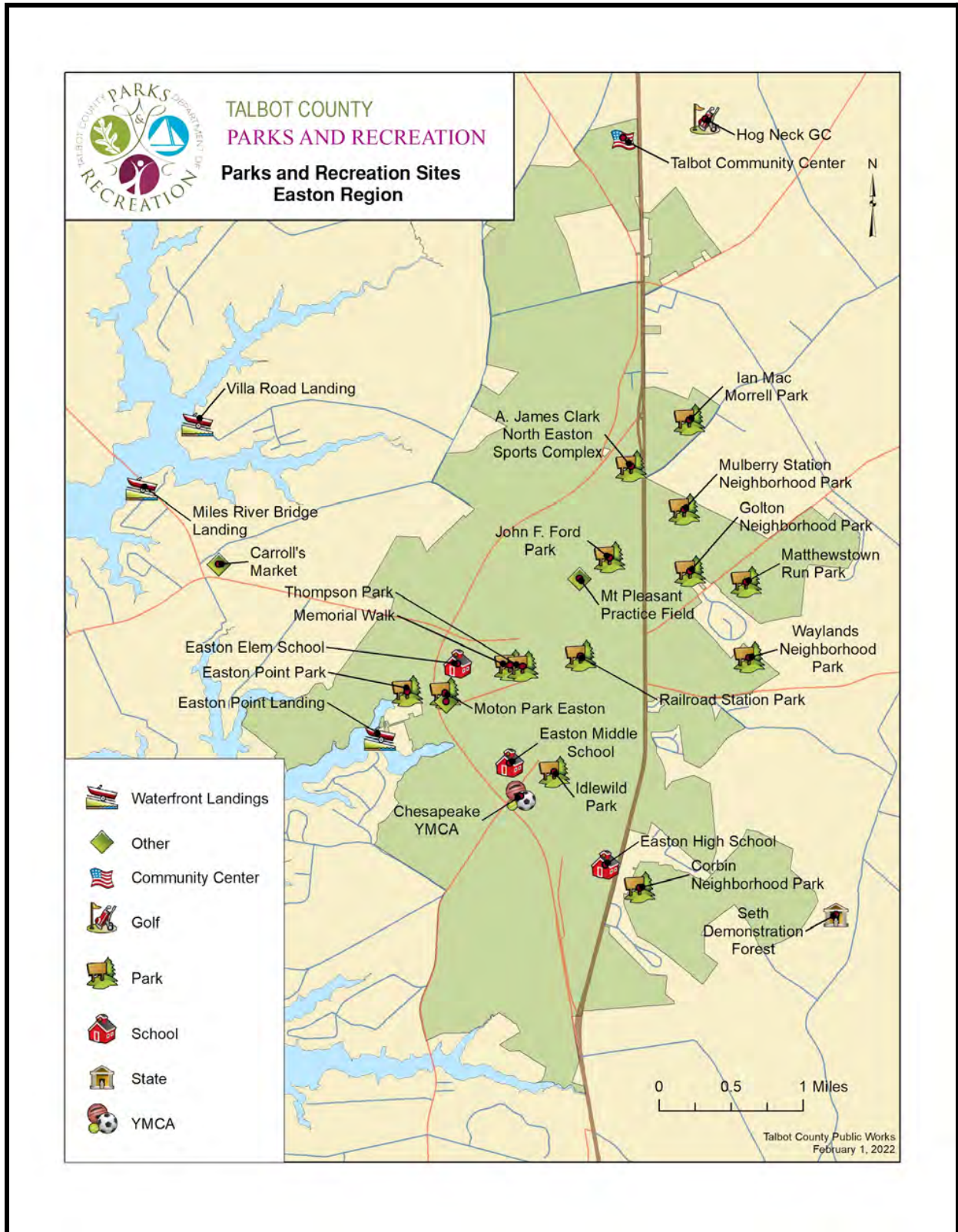
PARKS, & OPEN

SPACE MAPS

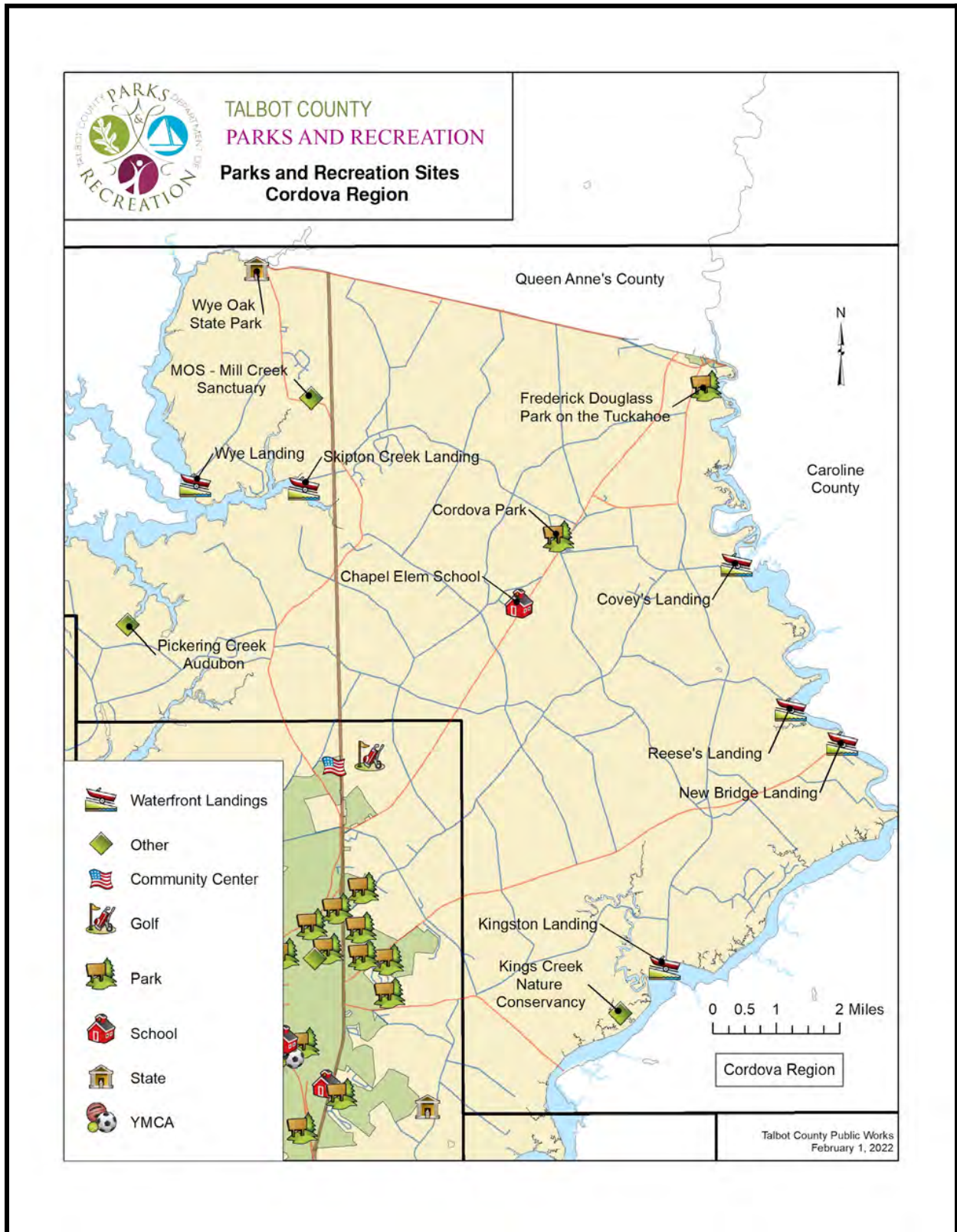
Map II-1 Parks & Recreation Sites



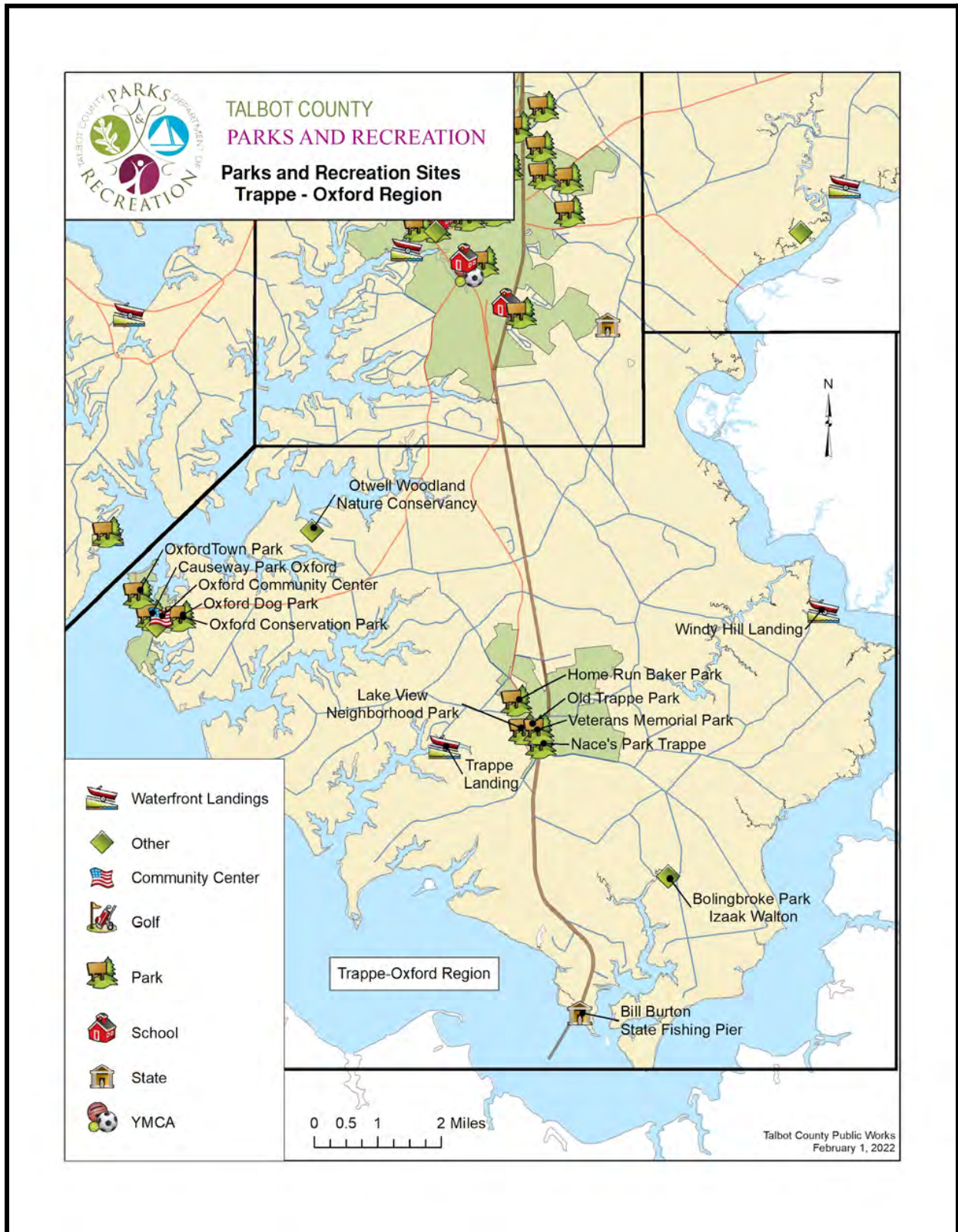
Map II-2 Easton Region Parks & Recreation Sites



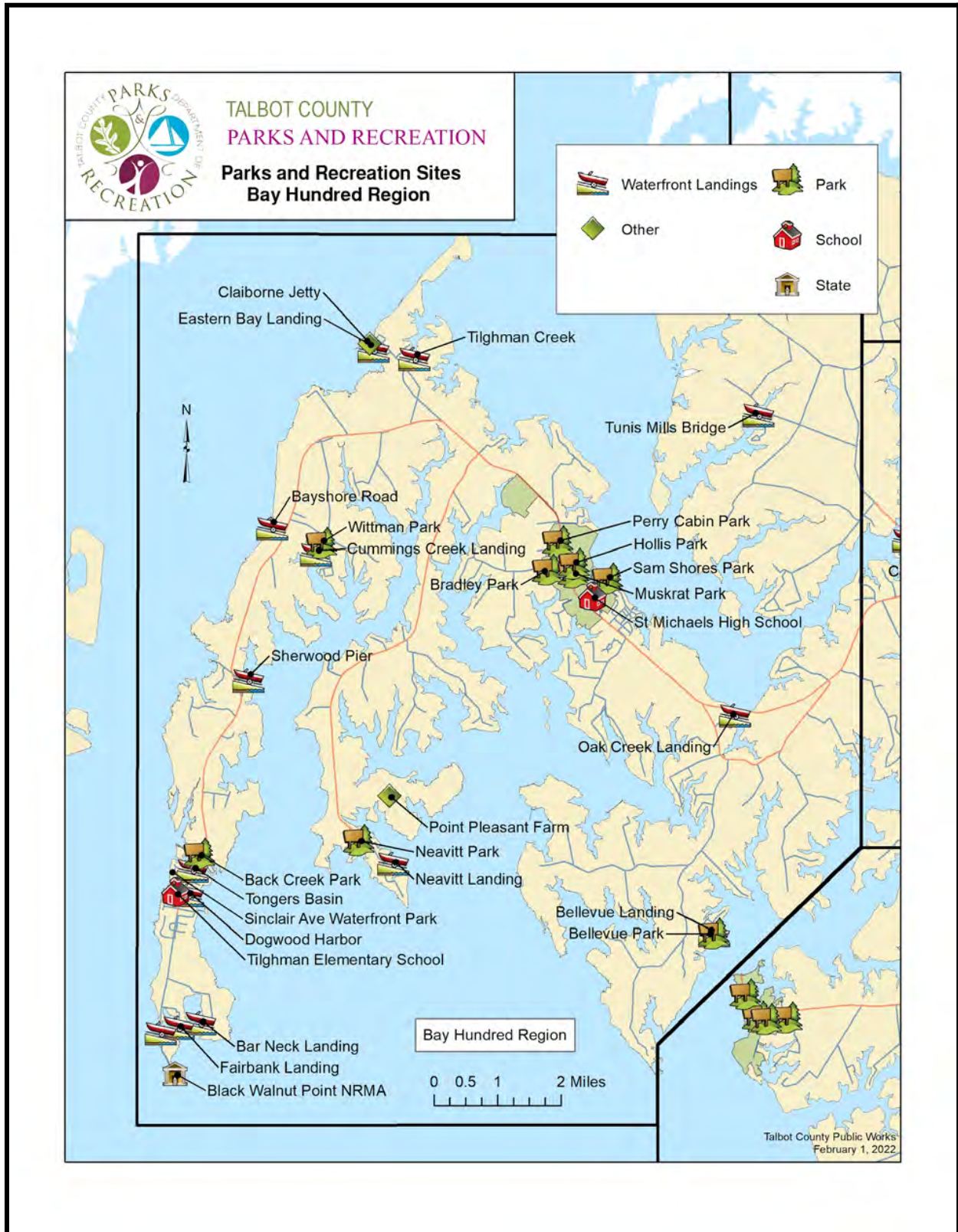
Map II-3 Cordova Parks & Recreation Sites



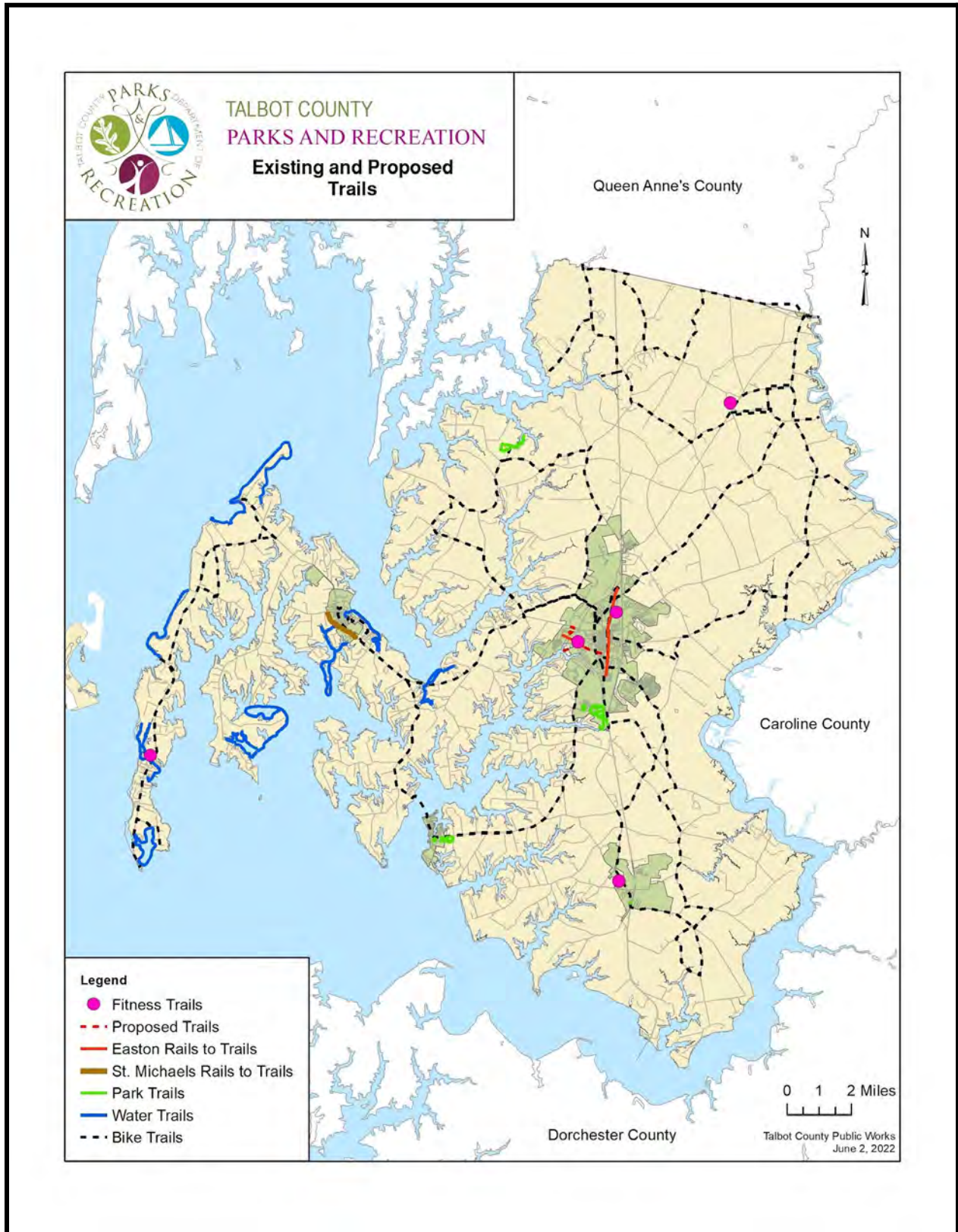
Map II-4 Oxford/Bellevue/Trappe Parks & Recreation Sites



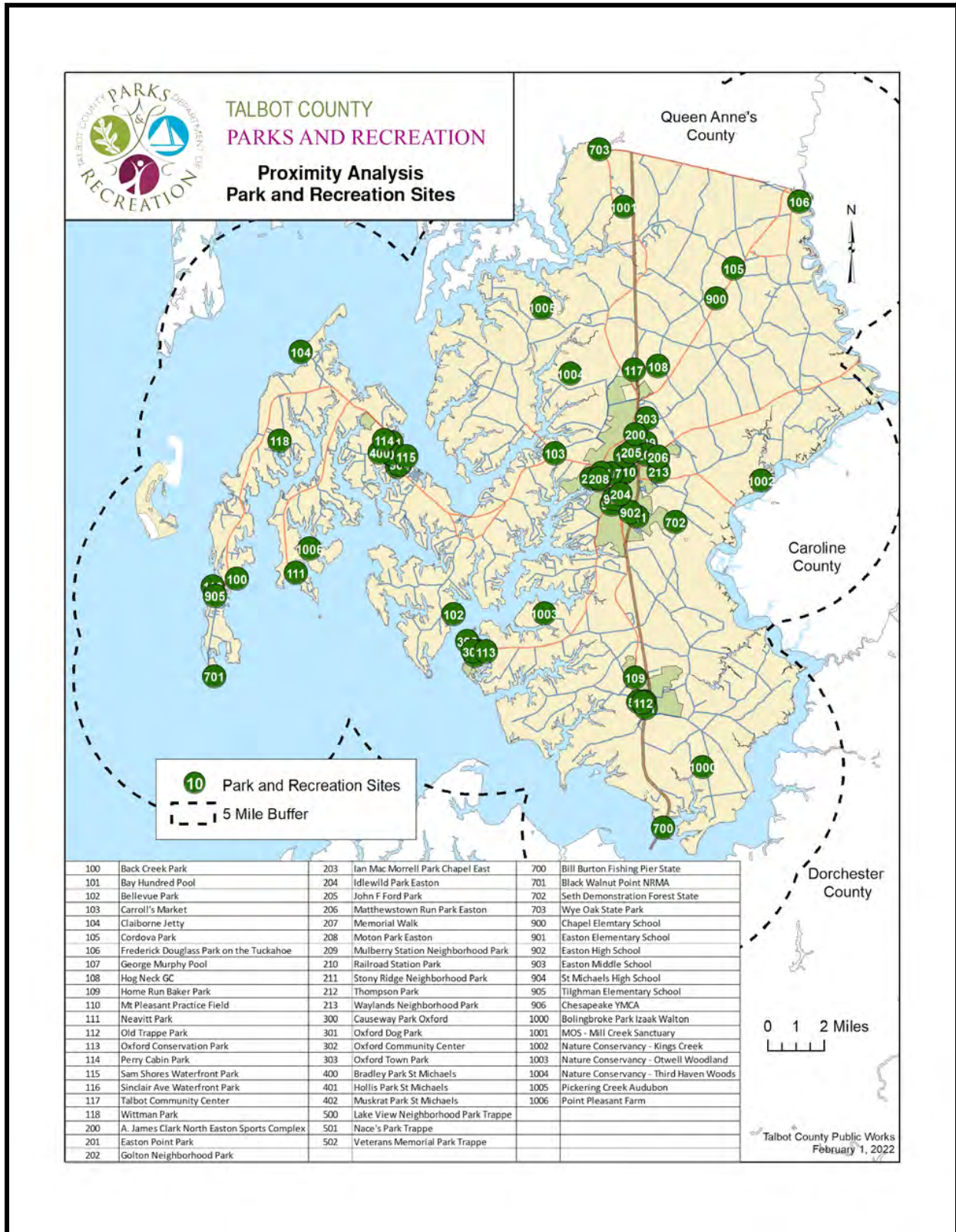
Map II-5 Bay Hundred Parks & Recreation Sites



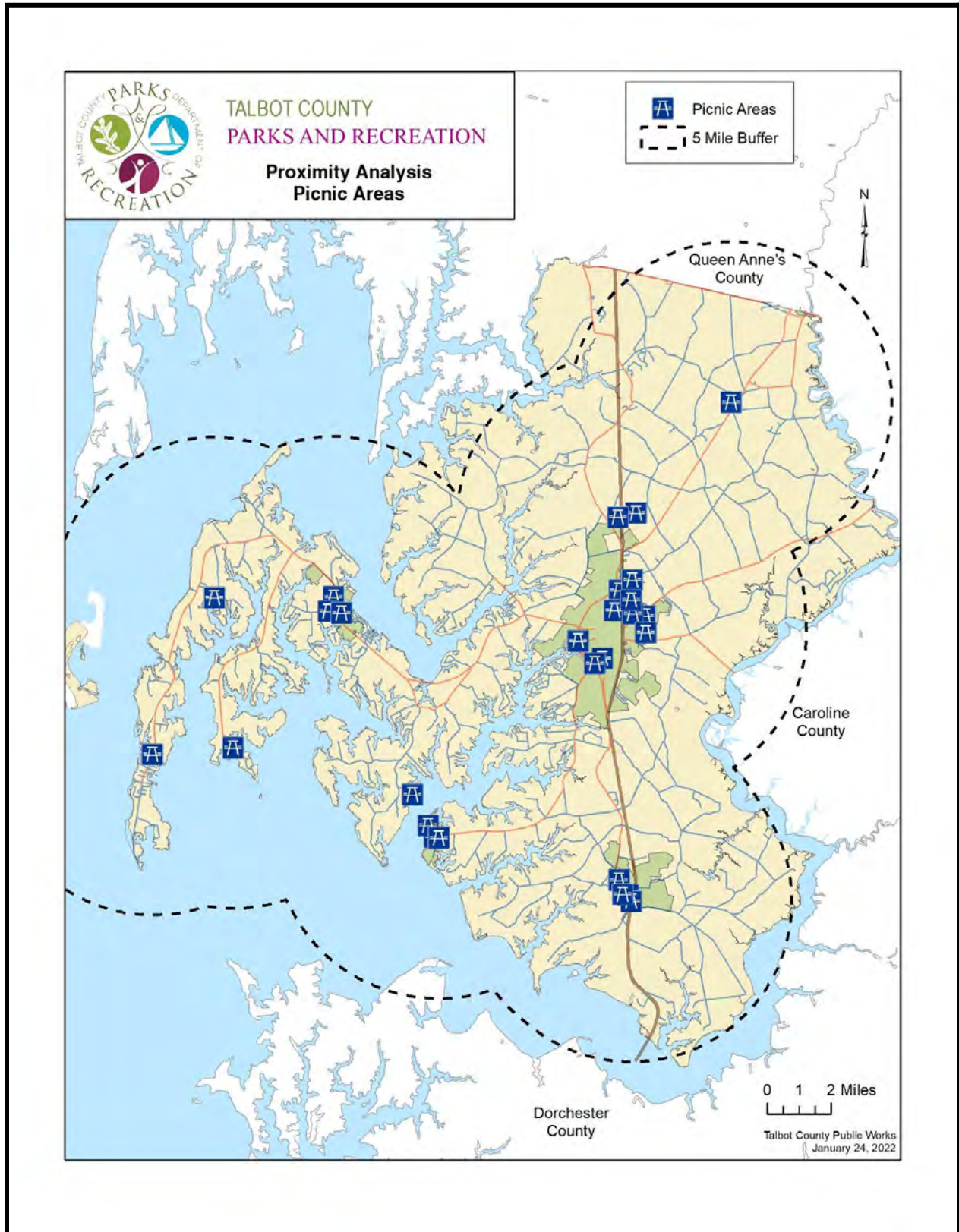
Map II-6 Talbot County and Town Trails



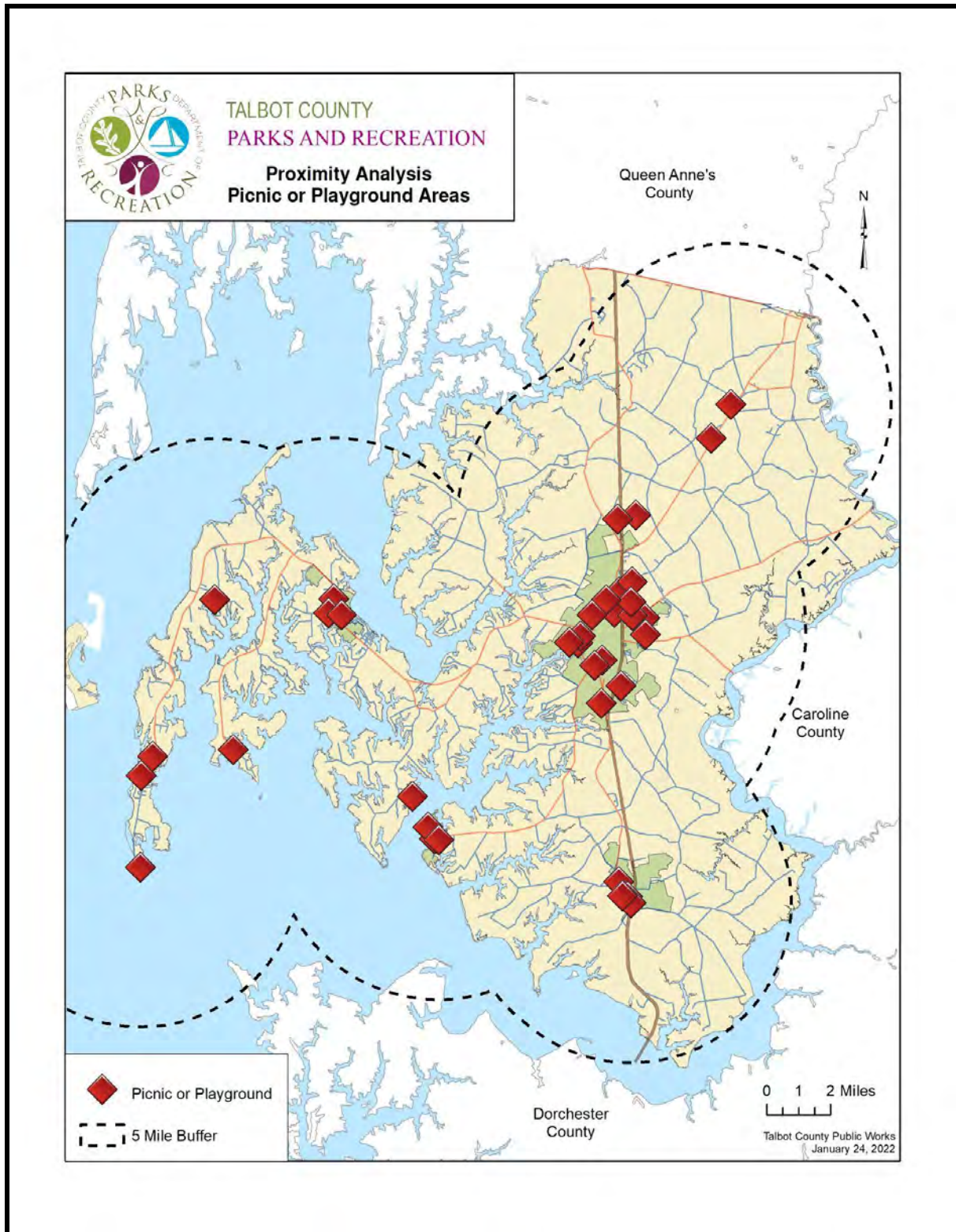
Map II-7 Proximity Analysis Parks & Recreation Sites Overview



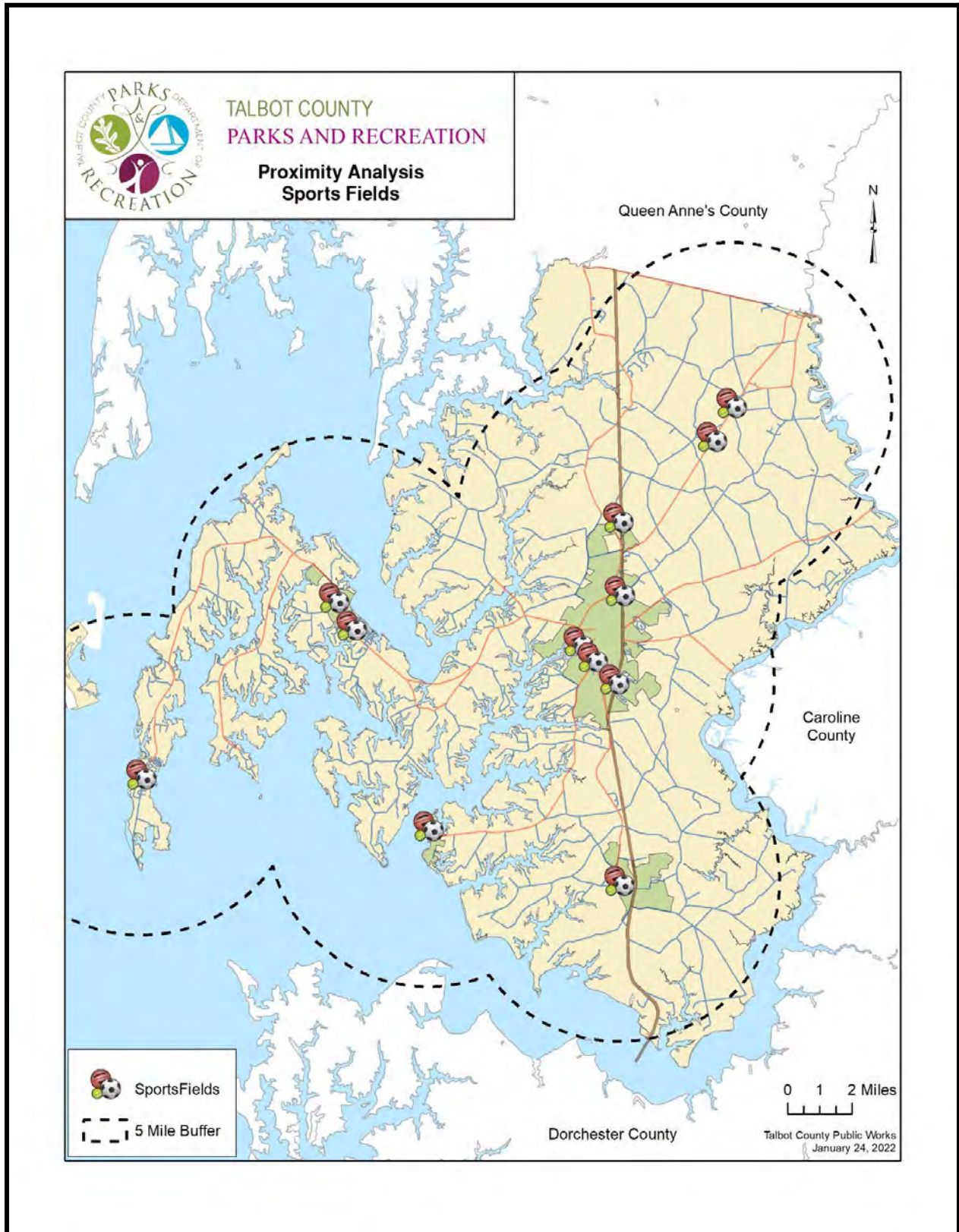
Map II-8 Proximity Analysis Picnic Areas



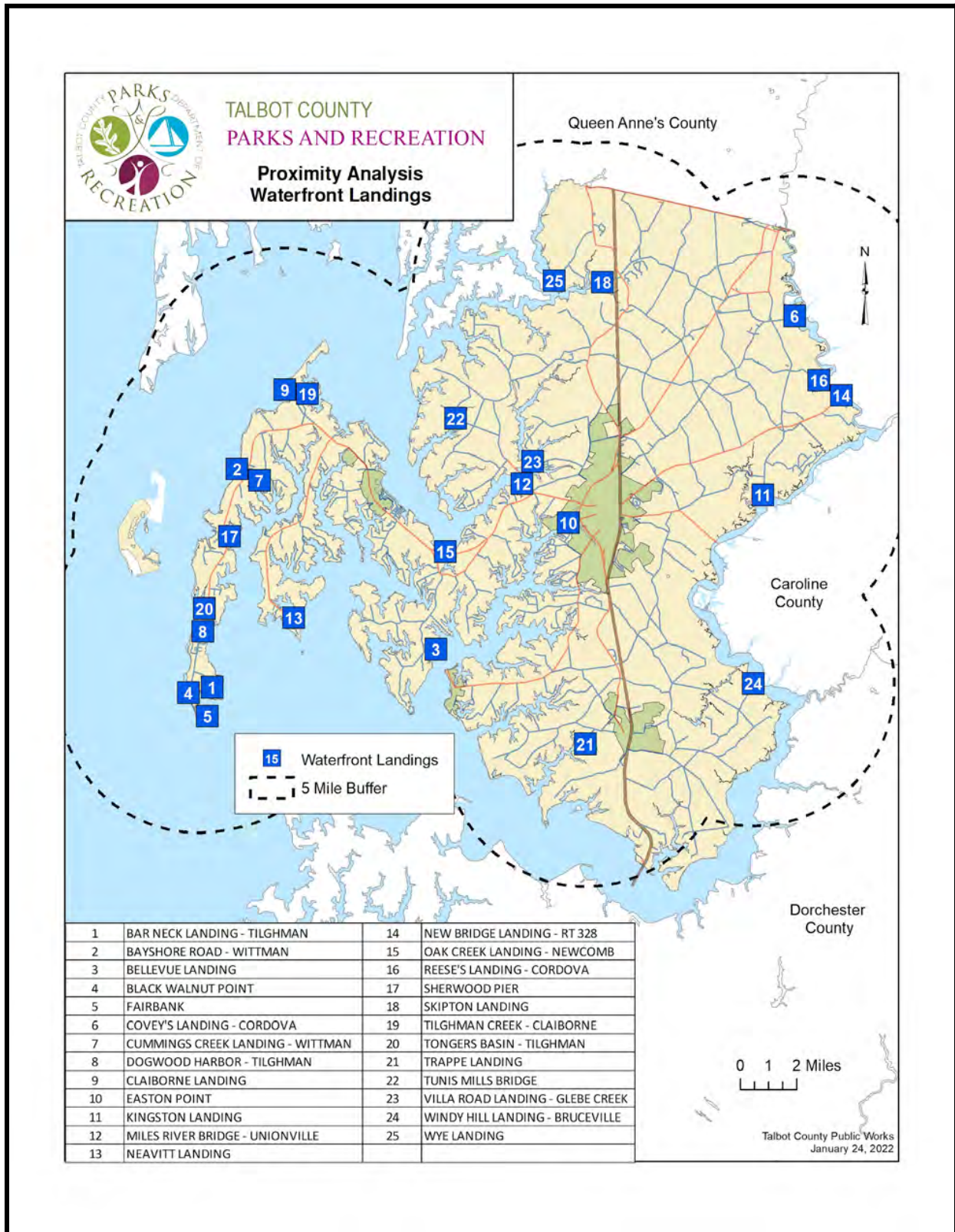
Map II-9 Proximity Analysis Playgrounds



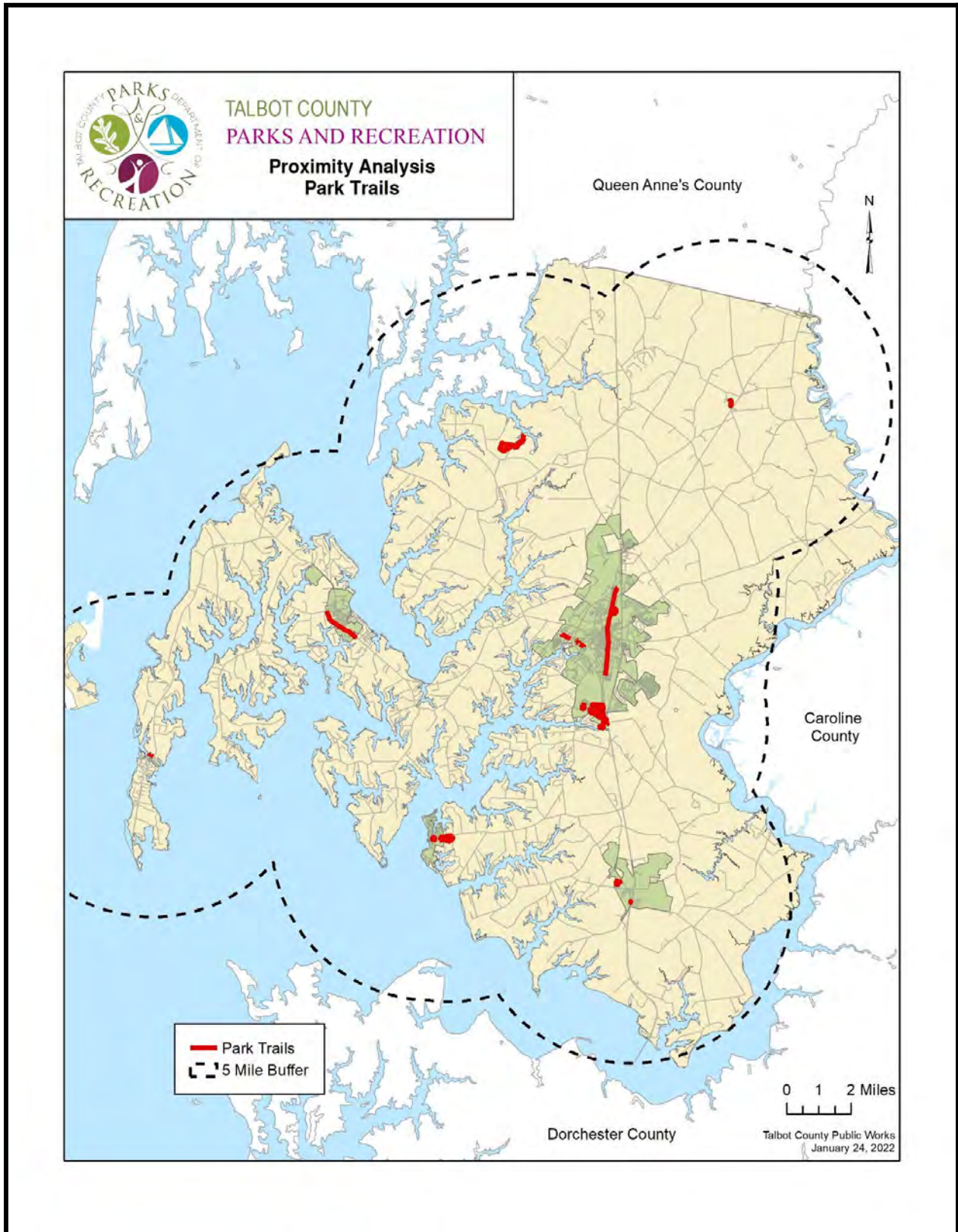
Map II-10 Proximity Analysis Multipurpose Fields



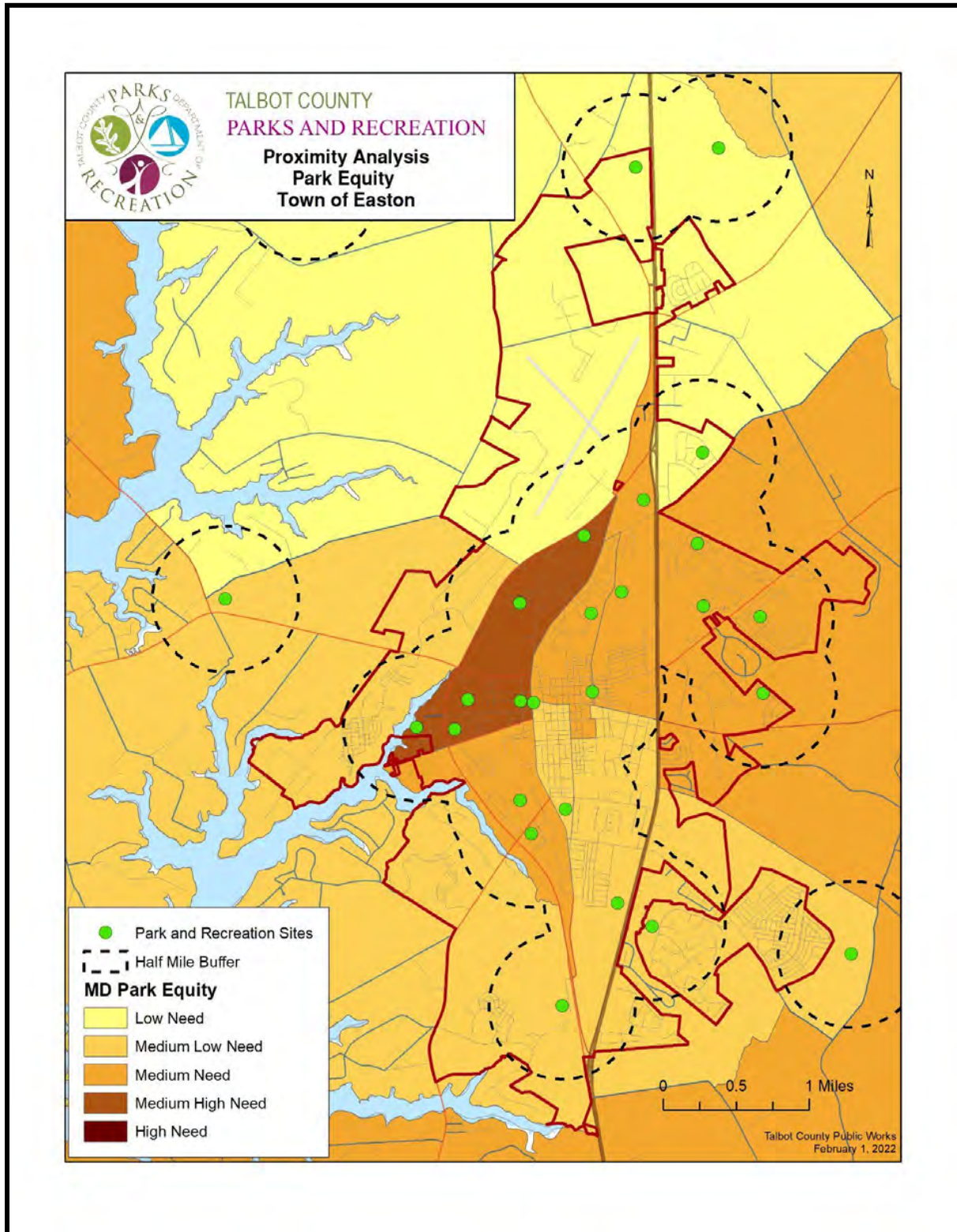
Map II-11 Proximity Analysis Public Landings



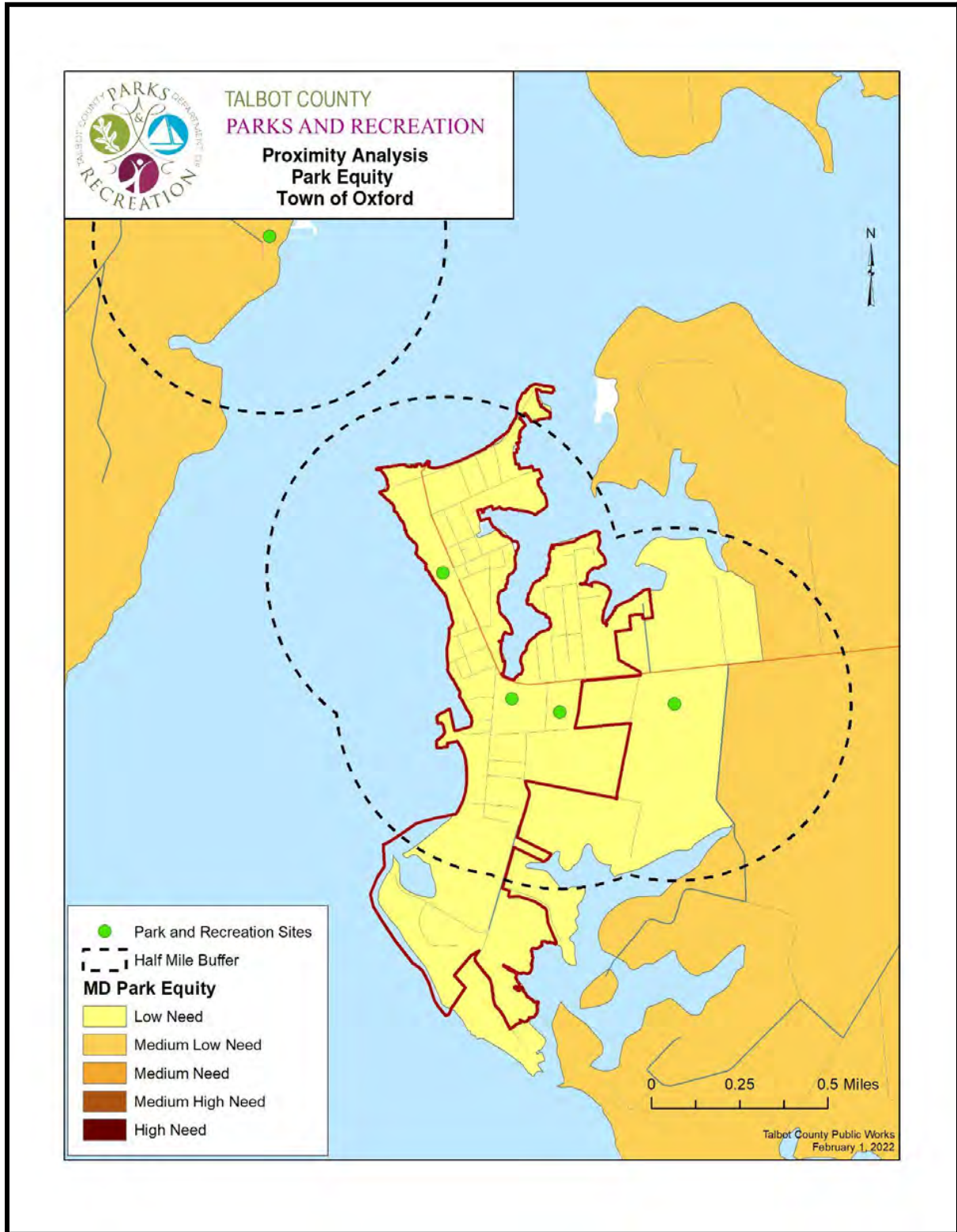
Map II-12 Proximity Analysis Park Trails



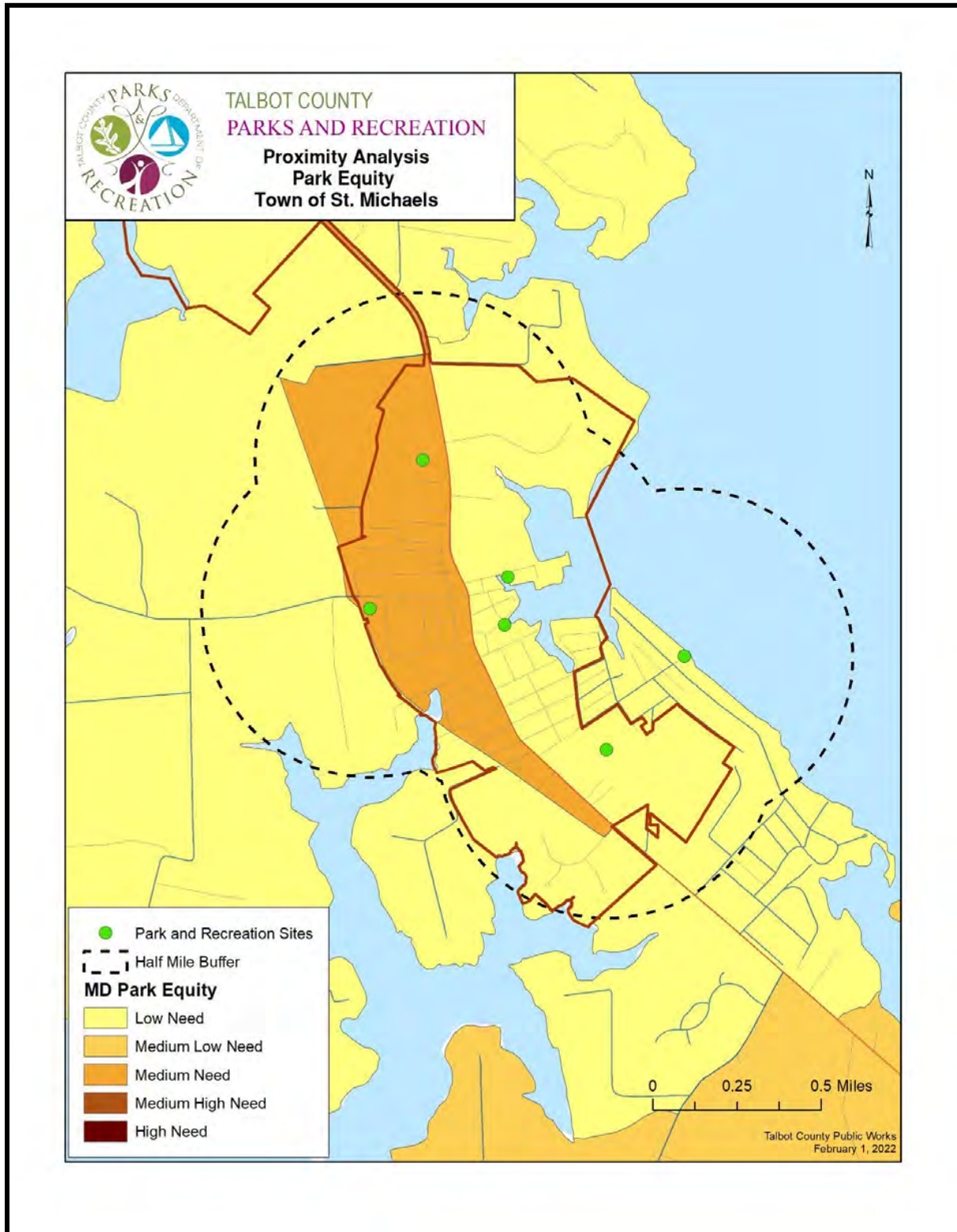
Map II-13 Park Proximity & Equity in Easton



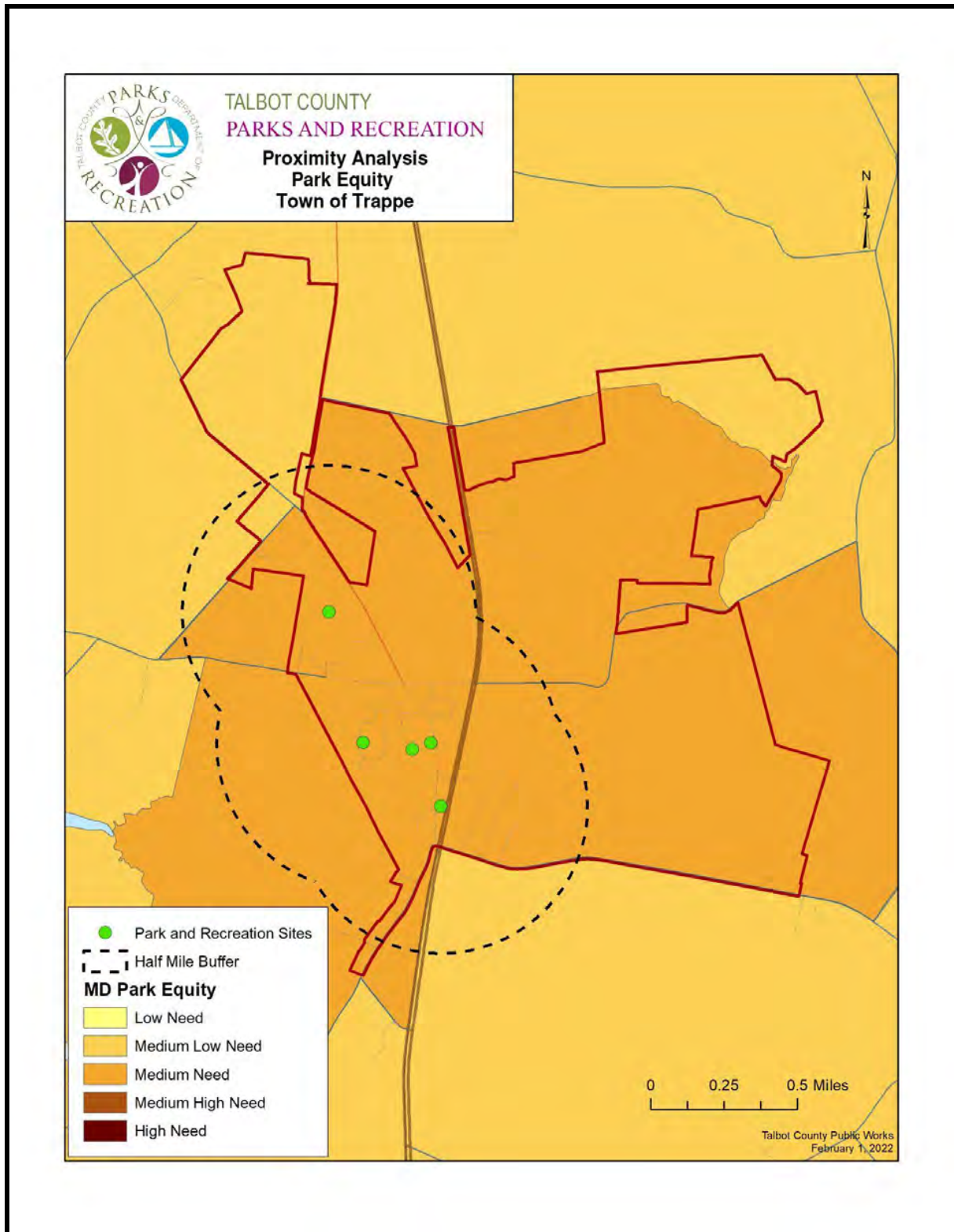
Map II-14 Park Proximity & Equity in Oxford



Map II-15 Park Proximity & Equity in St. Michaels



Map II-16 Park Proximity & Equity in Trappe



CHAPTER III

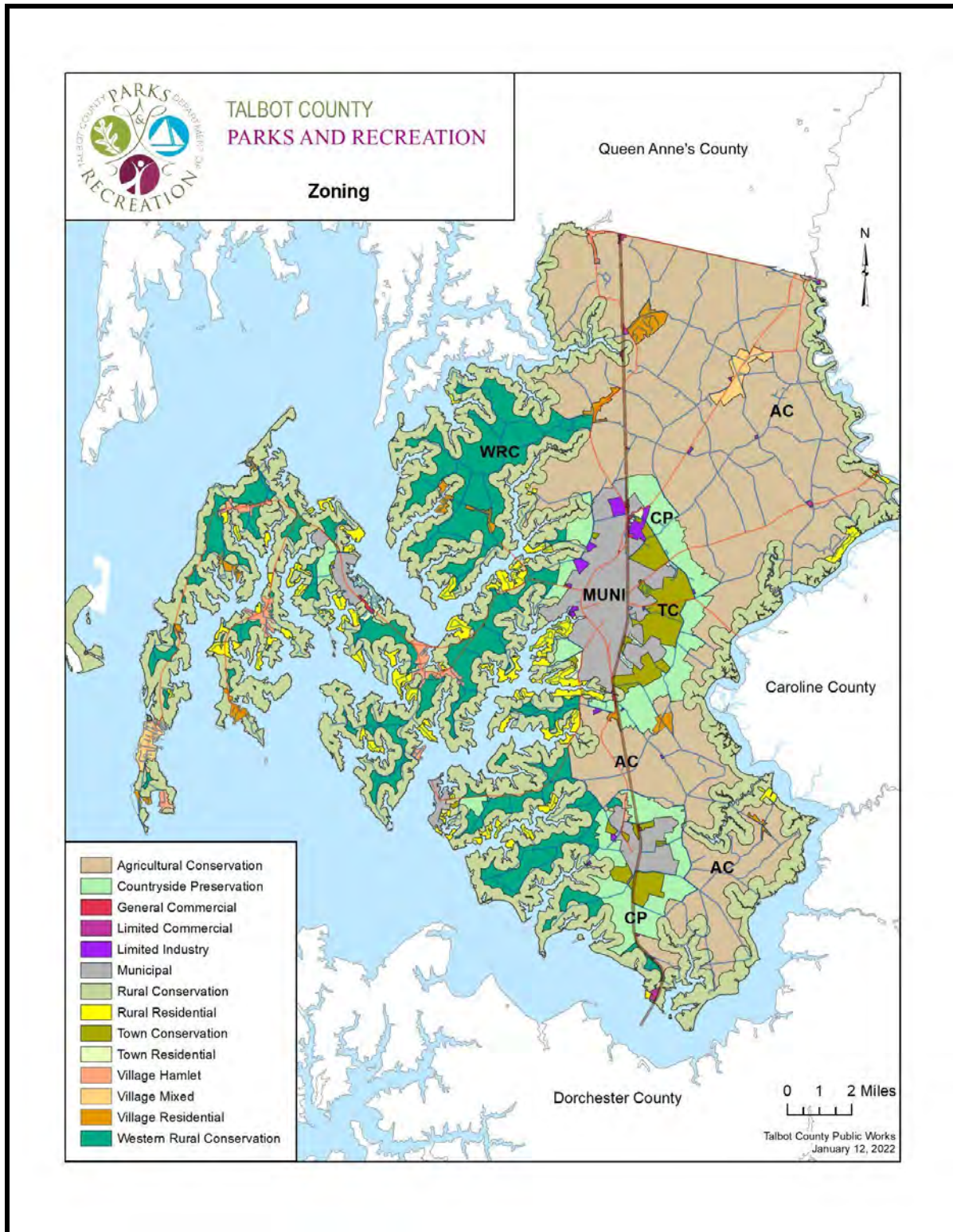
NATURAL

RESOURCE

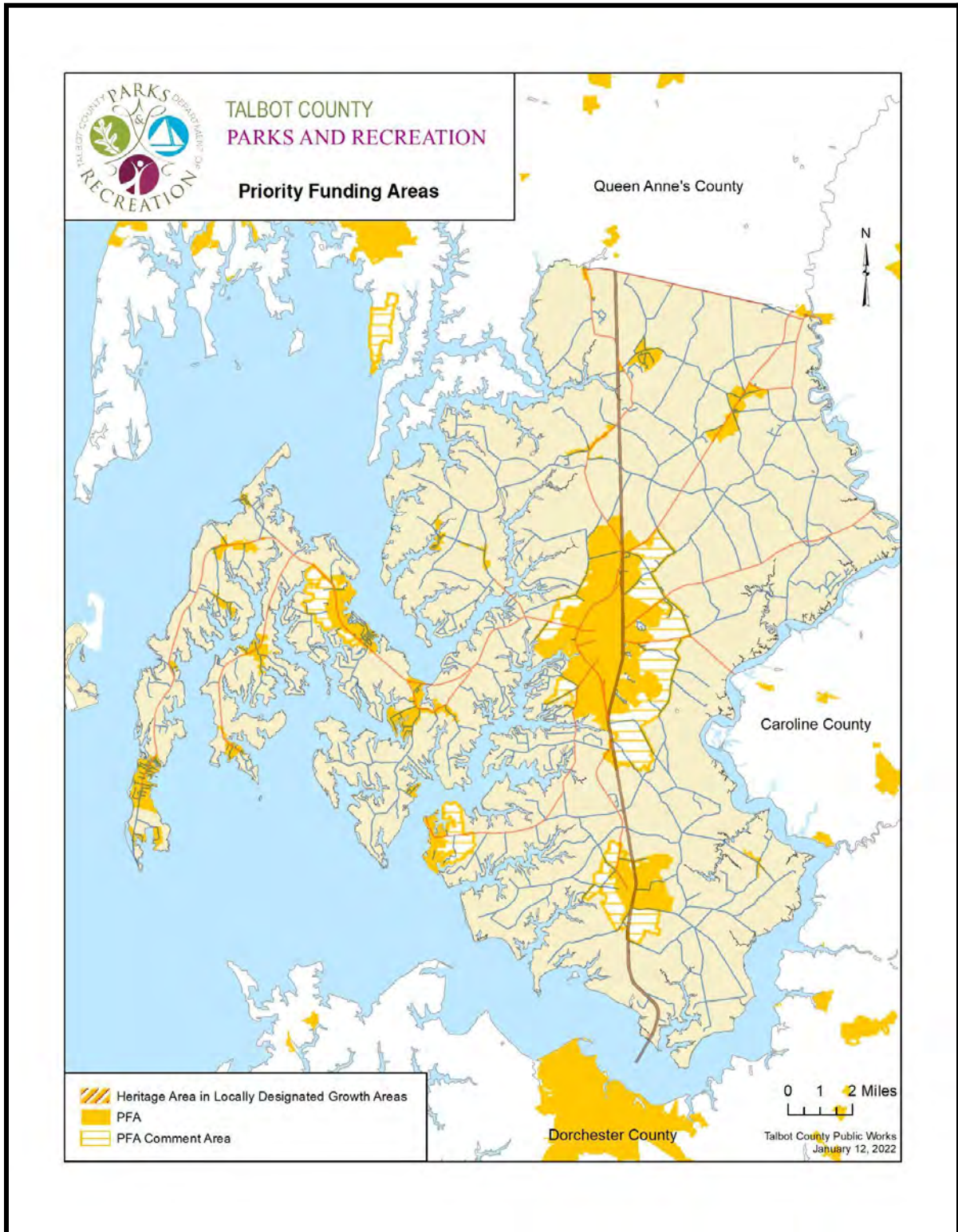
CONSERVATION

MAPS

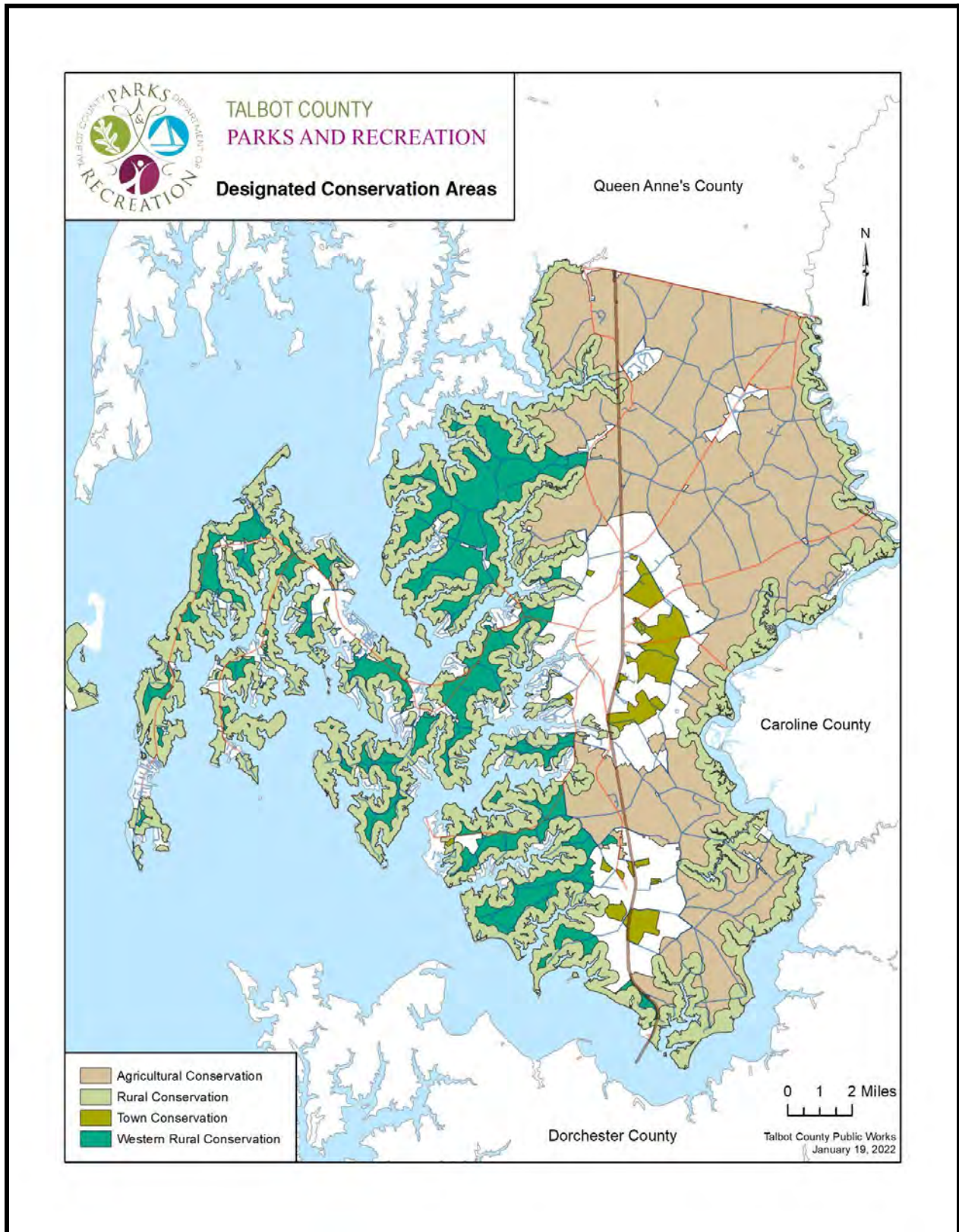
Map III-1 Zoning



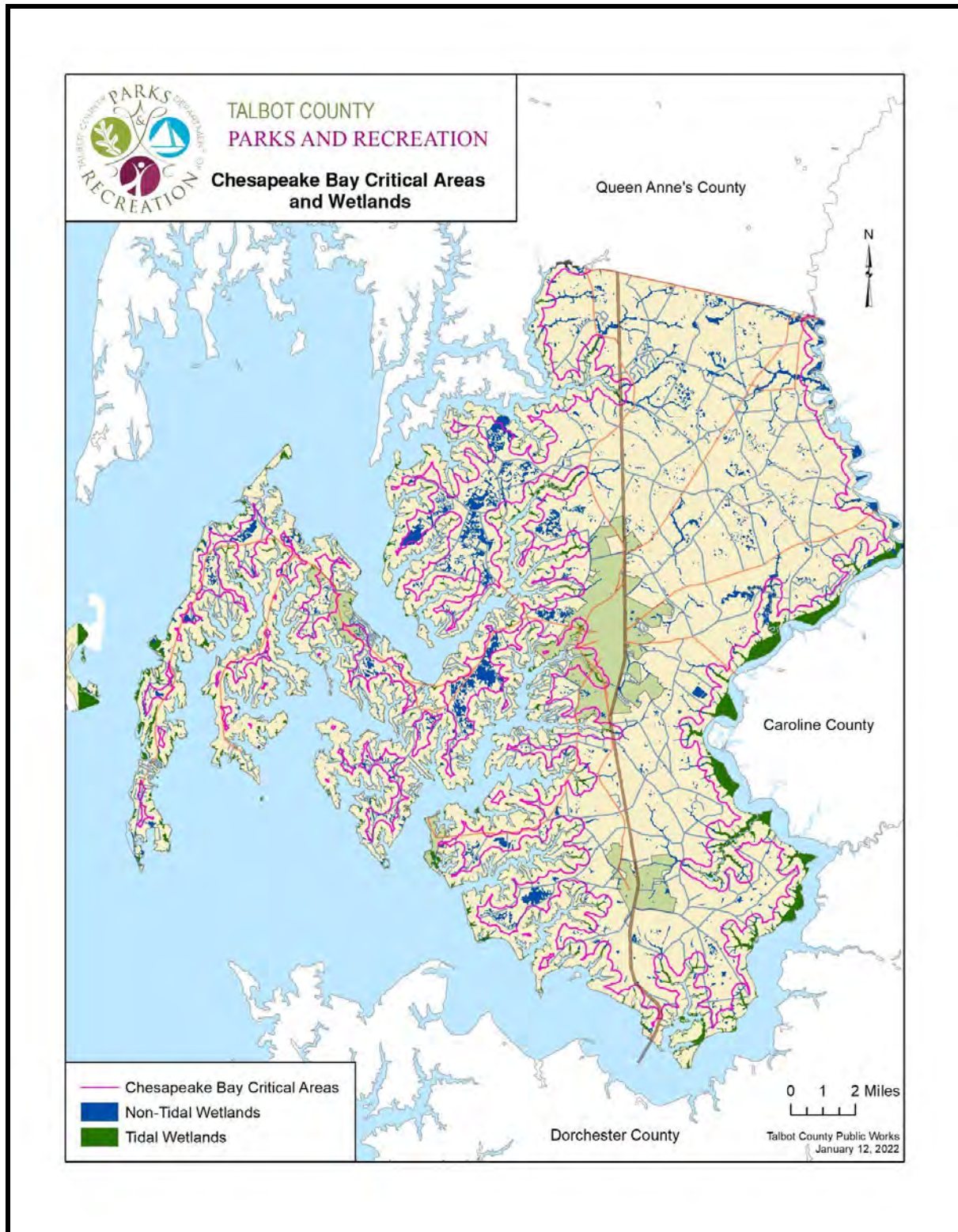
Map III-2 Priority Funding Areas



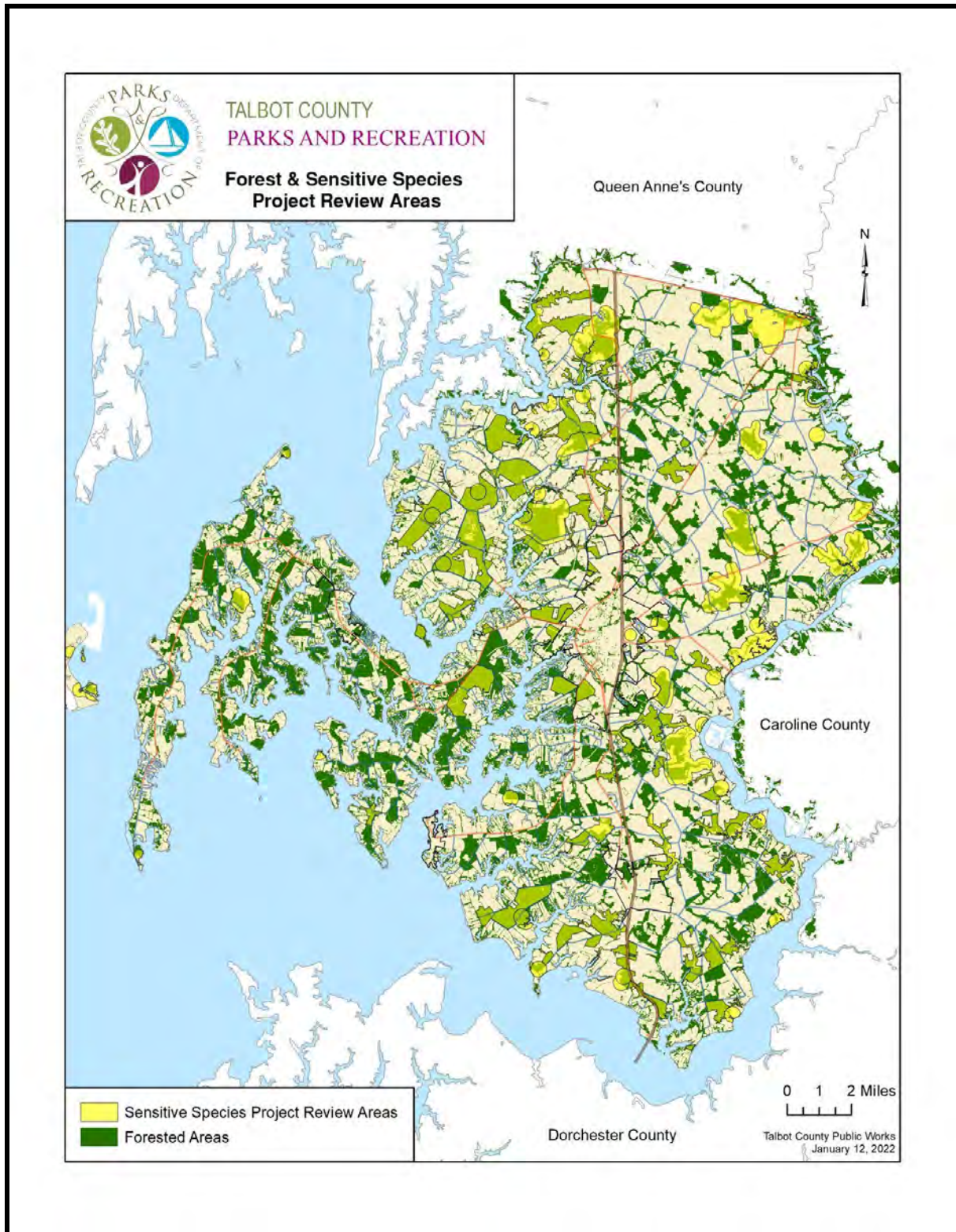
Map III-3 Designated Conservation Area



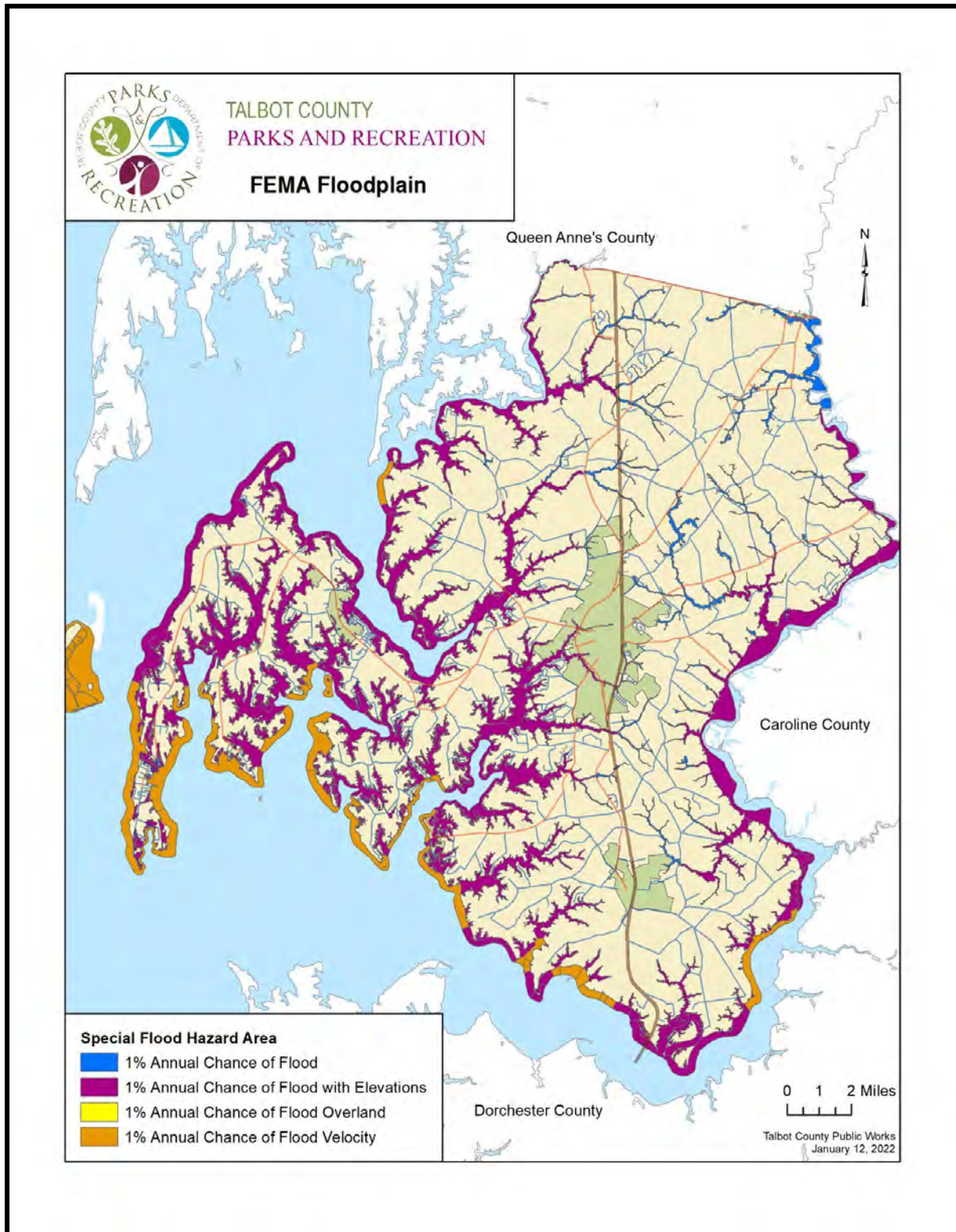
Map III-4 Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas and Wetlands



Map III-5 Forest and Sensitive Species Project Review Area



Map III-6 FEMA Floodplain



Map III-7 Talbot County Green Infrastructures Hubs & Corridors



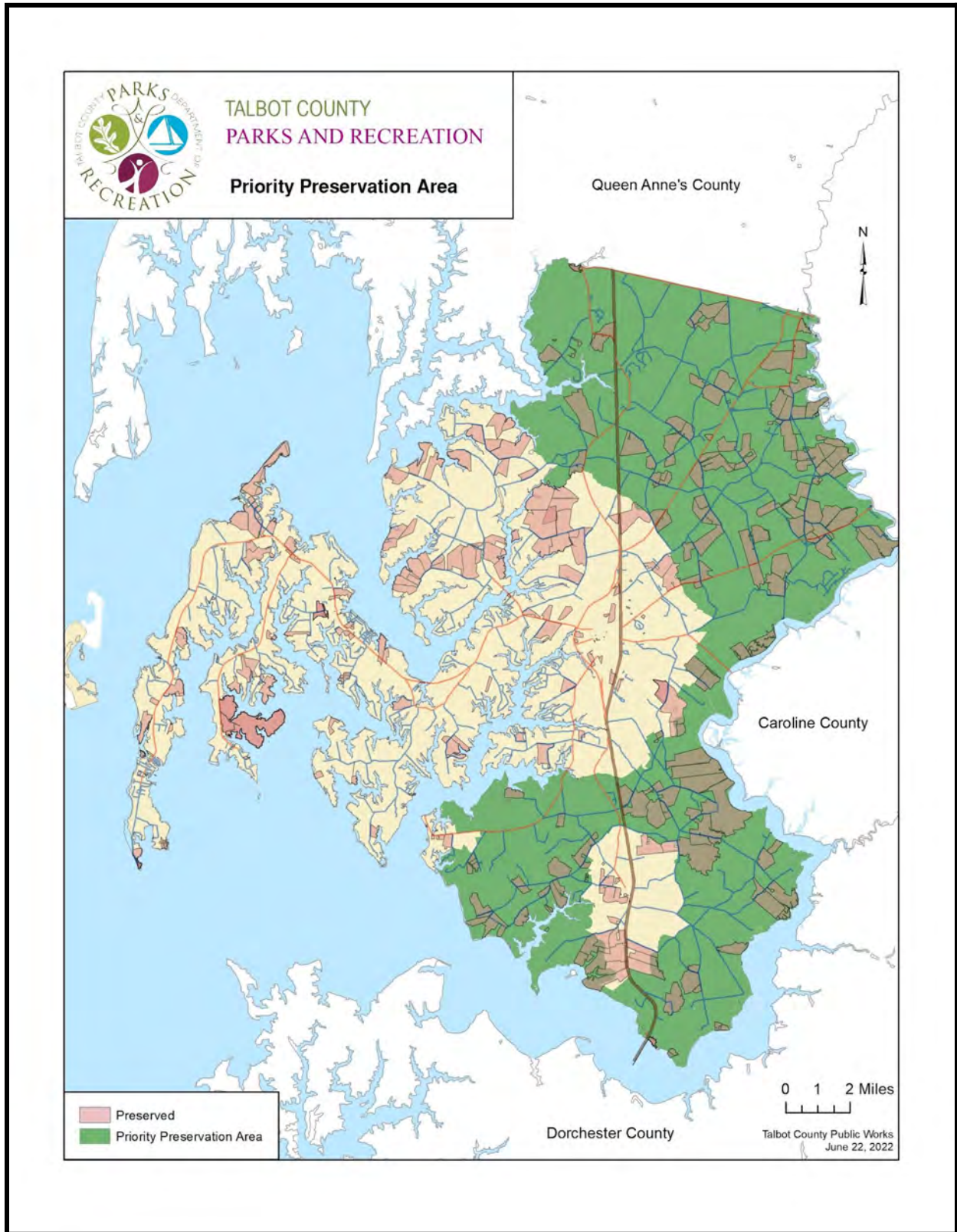
CHAPTER IV

AGRICULTURAL

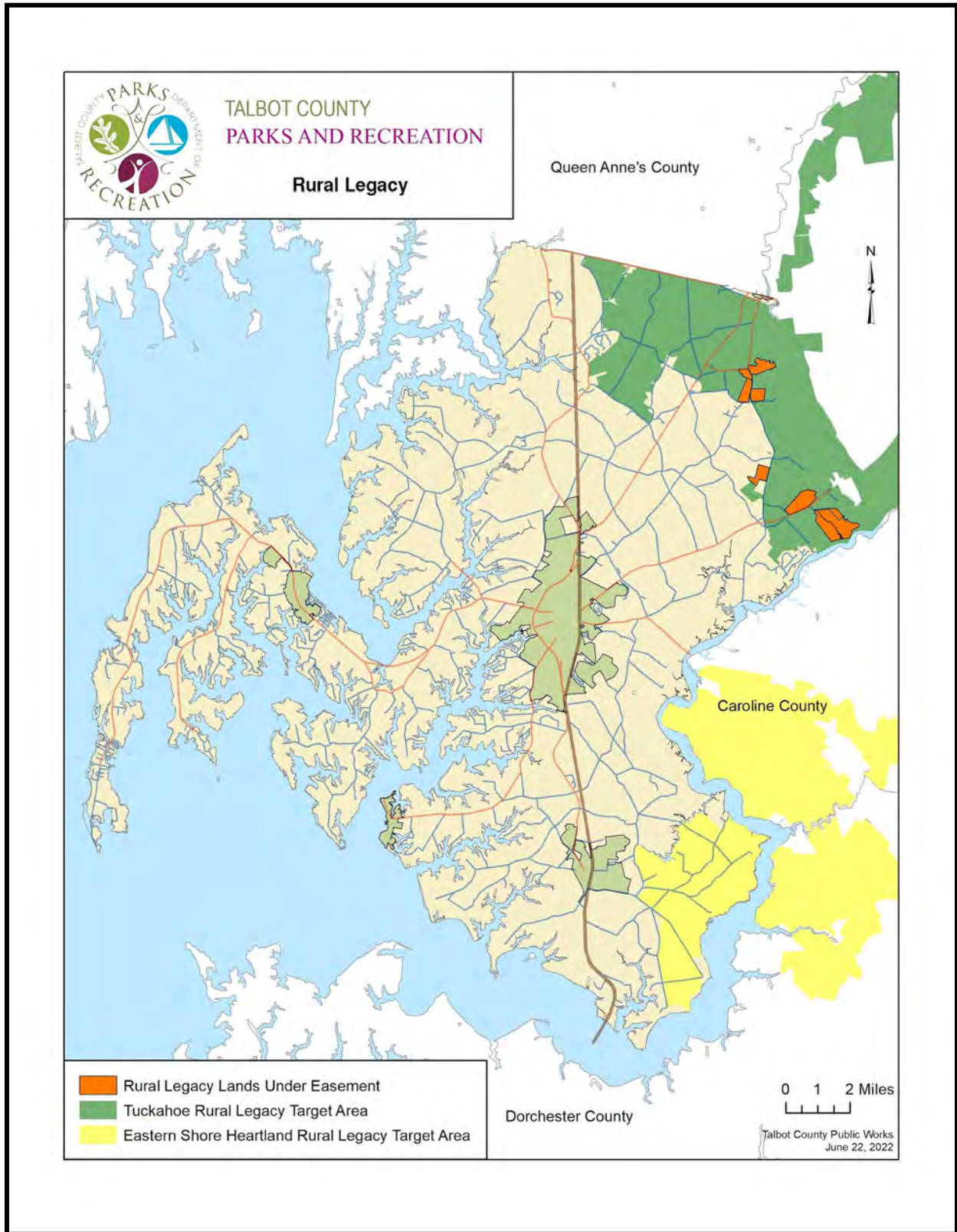
PRESERVATION

MAPS

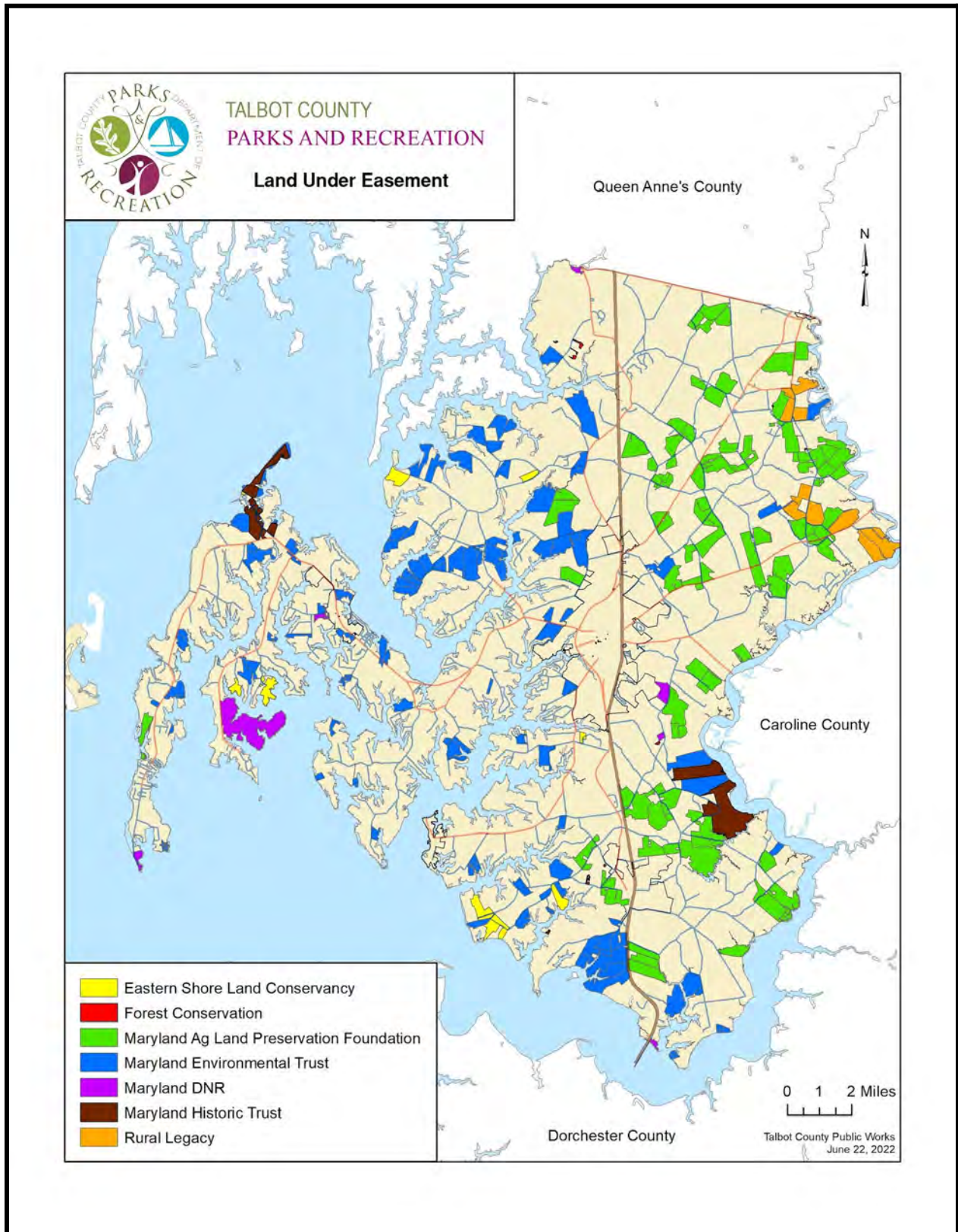
Map IV-1 Preservation Areas



Map IV-2 Rural Legacy



Map IV-4 Land Under Easement



APPENDIX B: LPPRP Reference Links by Chapter

Item	Link	Chapter
Talbot County Local Government Planning	https://planning.maryland.gov/Pages/OurWork/CountyDashboard.aspx?County=Talbot%20County	1
Cordova Master Plan	https://talbotcountymd.gov/uploads/File/council/Cordova_Master%20Plan%20Dec%203%202020.pdf	1
Bellevue Master Plan	https://talbotcountymd.gov/uploads/File/council/Bellevue%20Village%20Master%20Plan%20Final.pdf	1
Tilghman Master Plan	https://talbotcountymd.gov/uploads/File/PlanningPermits/PZ/Village%20Master%20Plan/Final%20Plans/TALB%20Tilghman%2009%202017%20Final%20Plan.pdf	1
Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe Tuckahoe	https://talbotcountymd.gov/Topics-Of-Interest/frederick-douglass-park-on-the-tuckahoe	2
MORE Final Report	https://dnr.maryland.gov/pages/more/home.aspx	2
2018-23 LPRP	2018-23 LPRP	2
Maryland State Parks Economic Impact Study 2010	https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Documents/EconomicImpactStudy2010.pdf	2
Trails Brochure	https://tourtalbot.org/resources/maps-brochures/	2
2017 Talbot County Comprehensive Plan	https://talbotcountymd.gov/uploads/File/PlanningPermits/PZ/Comprehensive%20Plan/2016%20Comprehensive%20Plan/Acknowledgment_8_16_F.pdf	3
Maryland's Phase II Watershed Implementation Plan for the Chesapeake Bay TMDL	https://mde.state.md.us/programs/Water/TMDL/TMDLImplementation/Pages/FINAL_PhaseII_WIPDocument_Main.aspx	3
Maryland's 2016-2017 TMDL Milestone Goals	https://mde.state.md.us/programs/Water/TMDL/TMDLImplementation/Pages/MD_Milestone_Goals_2016-2017.aspx	3
Talbot County TMDL Standards	https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/water/tmdl/approvedfinaltmdls/pages/index.aspx	3
Talbot County Climate Change and Sea Level Rise Adaptation Report	https://www.esrqc.org/documents/resources/reports/GIS%20SLC%20Report%20-%20Talbot.pdf	3
Cleaner Greener Talbot	https://www.nextstep190.com/_files/ugd/d630ab_6e932ebe72384c3f9fca929cc34d4005.pdf	3
Land Use Plan	https://talbotcountymd.gov/uploads/File/PlanningPermits/PZ/Trash%20File%20Do%20not%20Delete/2_Land%20Use_CC_4_16_compresse.pdf	3
Hazard Mitigation Plan	https://www.talbotdes.org/uploads/file/2017_Talbot_County_Hazard_Mitigation_Community_Resilience_Plan.pdf	3
Census of Agriculture	https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Maryland/	4

Appendix C

Talbot County Easements by Type

Easement Holder	Name Or ACCT ID	Acres Preserved	Date	File Number
ESLC	2101039806	208.4	12/28/1998	ESLC039806
ESLC	2102082578	73.9	12/27/1994	ESLC082578
ESLC	2102084759	200.0	12/30/1998	ESLC084759
ESLC	2103154416	99.3	5/20/2000	ESLC154416
ESLC	2103154238	30.7	12/29/1998	ESLC154238
ESLC	2103121348	140.3	12/27/2000	ESLC121348
ESLC	2103146200	46.4	12/15/2005	ESLC146200
ESLC	2103131742	188.7	2/20/2004	ESLC131742
ESLC	2105183510	7.2	12/16/2004	ESLC
ESLC	2101108646	170.0	6/12/2007	ESLC108646
ESLC	2101043978	65.0	2007	N&E.TALB.07
ESLC	2103130703	32.0	2004	TRI.TAL.04
ESLC	2104150139	143.7	2010	HUT.TAL.10B
ESLC	2104147642	219.5	2010	HUT.TAL.10A
TOTAL ESLC ACRES		1625.3		
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MET	MET	165.0	0/00/0000	0271SCH93.TALB
MET	MET	146.8	0/00/0000	0244SCH93.TALB
MET	MET	110.0	0/00/0000	0239CLA92.TALB
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MALPF	MALPF	68.4	2018-01-24	20-17-01
MALPF	MALPF	91.8	2018-08-23	20-17-04
MALPF	MALPF	42.0	2001-05-01	20-96-01Ae
MALPF	MALPF	28.9	2001-07-24	20-81-04Be
MALPF	MALPF	185.0	2002-10-08	20-01-08ce
MALPF	MALPF	100.2	2007-11-19	20-01-09c
MALPF	MALPF	100.0	2004-05-13	20-01-03e
MALPF	MALPF	164.5	2020-08-12	20-19-02
MALPF	MALPF	27.9	2020-09-16	20-19-04
MALPF	MALPF	146.1	2020-08-27	20-19-06
MALPF	MALPF	341.0	2020-11-17	20-20-05
TOTAL MALPF ACRES		12784.0		
Forest Conservation	Callahan, Parker subdivision	21.4	2008-11-25	M1058
Forest Conservation	Callahan, Parker subdivision	21.4	2008-11-25	M1058
Forest Conservation	Lyons, Michael subdivision	3.0	2009-07-23	M1011
Forest Conservation	Gatton, subdivision	10.0	2009-05-12	M1061
Forest Conservation	McShell Glenn subdivision	6.3	2008-10-06	M1084
Forest Conservation	Collins, John subdivision	1.9	2008-08-15	M1085
Forest Conservation	Sauca, interfamily subdivision	2.9	2008-10-31	M1079

Forest Conservation	Clow subdivision	3.3	2008-10-07	M1088
Forest Conservation	Callahan, Parker subdivision	21.4	2008-11-25	M1058
Forest Conservation	Callahan, Parker subdivision	21.4	2008-11-25	M1058
TOTAL FOREST CONSERVATION ACRES		113.0		
Rural Legacy Program	2104154665	255.4	9/4/2002	
Rural Legacy Program	2104154673	335.0	9/3/2003	
Rural Legacy Program	2104151844	207.3	9/3/2003	
Rural Legacy Program	2104151887	240.7	7/24/2002	
Rural Legacy Program	2104148010	211.4	2/1/2006	
Rural Legacy Program	2104147634	219.5	2/24/2010	
Rural Legacy Program	2104147634	143.7	2/24/2010	
Rural Legacy Program	2104147634	135.1	2/24/2010	
TOTAL RURAL LEGACY PROGRAM ACRES		1748.1		
Maryland DNR	DNR Held Conservation Easement		0/00/0000	1279
Maryland DNR	CREP - Eastern		0/00/0000	
Maryland DNR	CREP - Eastern		0/00/0000	
Maryland DNR	DNR Held Conservation Easement		0/00/0000	
Maryland DNR	CREP - Eastern		0/00/0000	
Maryland DNR	CREP - Eastern		0/00/0000	
TOTAL MARYLAND DNR ACRES				
Maryland Historic Trust	Freedom's Friend Lodge, 1024	0.1	5/12/1992	E-342
Maryland Historic Trust	Lloyd's Landing	1107.6	6/8/1977	E-38
Maryland Historic Trust	Compton	3.5	6/14/1978	E-63
Maryland Historic Trust	Rich Neck Manor	787.0	12/19/1988	E-288
Maryland Historic Trust	Third Haven Meeting House	0.4	3/3/1989	E-293
Maryland Historic Trust	Academy of the Arts	0.6	1/3/1990	E-306
Maryland Historic Trust	Avalon Theater	0.1	7/19/1990	E-314
Maryland Historic Trust	Pinkney House	0.1	9/17/1984	E-199
Maryland Historic Trust	Bethel A.M.E. Church	0.1	6/5/1989	E-295
Maryland Historic Trust	Small Boat Exhibit Shed	0.3	6/27/1980	E-119
Maryland Historic Trust	Christ Episcopal Church	0.7	1/30/1991	E-324
Maryland Historic Trust	Easton Armory	0.4	1/7/1997	E-417
Maryland Historic Trust	Easton Railroad Station	1.0	2/24/1994	E-374
Maryland Historic Trust	KATHRYN M. LEE, Oyster Schooner	0.0	3/21/2002	E-517
Maryland Historic Trust	107 South Hanson Street	0.2	8/10/2004	E-598
Maryland Historic Trust	Wye Mill	0.9	2/3/1989	E-292
Maryland Historic Trust	John Wesley Church (Oxford)	0.1	10/18/2007	E-611
Maryland Historic Trust	Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church	0.2	10/25/2013	E-695
Maryland Historic Trust	McCord Laundry Building	0.9	2/20/2015	E-714
TOTAL MARYLAND HISTORIC TRUST ACRES		1904.0		

**Appendix C
Talbot County LPPRP Inventory Spreadsheet**

Parks and Recreation Inventory

Outdoor Recreation Amenities:

Field/Facility Based Recreation Amenities:

Site Name:	Property Address	Facility ID	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	Notes:
County Parks and Recreation																	
Back Creek Park	6204 Tilghman Island Rd Sherwood, MD 21665	100	6.5	6.5		X	X	X			6.5						
Bay Hundred Pool	911 S. Talbot St. St. Michaels, MD 21663	101	1	1							1						Swimming Pool
Bellevue Park	5536 Bellevue Rd Royal Oak, MD 21662	102	5	5		X	X				5		X	X			
Carroll's Market	27748 St Michaels Rd Easton, MD 21601	103	20	0						Agricultural	0						
Claiborne Jetty	10500 Bayside Dr Claiborne, MD 21624	104	9.5	9.5		X					9.5						
Cordova Park	31028 Skipton Cordova Rd Cordova, MD 21625	105	7.5	7.5			X	X			7.5	X	X	X	X		
Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe (formerly Lewistown Road Park)	13211 Lewistown Rd Queen Anne, MD 21657	106	107	107	X	X				Passive Park	107						Property now includes additional 40.2 acres (added in 2011) George C. & Naomi H. Moore Nature Preserve
George Murphy Pool	501 Port Street, Easton, MD 21601	107	1	1							1						Swimming Pool
Hog Neck Golf Course	10142 Old Cordova Rd Easton, MD 21601	108	255	255			X	X		27 Hole Golf course	255						27 Hole Golf Course
Home Run Baker Park	4200 North Main Street Trappe, MD 21673	109	14	14			X	X			14	X	X				
Mt. Pleasant Practice Fields, Easton	Magnolia St Easton, MD 21601	110	6.5	6.5							6.5						
Neavitt Park	6350 Bozman Neavitt Rd Neavitt, MD 21652	111	3.5	3.5			X				3.5		X	X			
Old Trappe Park	3924 Main St Trappe, MD 21673	112	6.5	6.5			X				6.5		X				
Oxford Conservation Park	4890 Boome Creek Road Oxford, MD 21654	113	87	87	X			X		Passive Park	87						
Perry Cabin Park	308 Walkins Ln St Michaels, MD 21663	114	11	11			X				11	X	X				
Sam Shores Park	Symour Ave St. Michaels, MD 21663	115	1	1					X	Park Bench	1						Water view, fishing access, no access for kayaks or boats
Sinclair Park	21350 Sinclair Ave Tilghman, MD 21671	116	1	1					X	Park Bench	1						Water view, fishing access, no access for kayaks or boats
Talbot County Community Center (Park)	10028 Ocean Gateway Easton, MD 21601	117	50	50			X				50	X	X			Community Center	Recreation Center, meeting rooms, Seasonal Ice Rink, Seasonal Curling Rink, Multi-Purpose fields for Baseball/Softball/ Soccer/Field Hockey
Wittman Park	8800 Howeth Rd Wittman, MD 21676	118	4.5	4.5			X				4.5		X	X			
County Parks and Recreation Total:			597.5	577.5							577.5						
Municipal Parks and Recreation																	
Easton																	
A. James Clark North Easton Sports Complex	1078 North Washington St Easton, MD 21601	200	23	23			X				23	X	X				
Easton Point Park	672 W. Glenwood Easton, MD 21601	201	10	10	X					Community/Passive	10						work in progress
Golton Neighborhood Park	29416 Golton Drive Easton, MD 21601	202	1	1							1		X				
Ian Mac Morrell Park (Chapel East)	29452 Zinnea Court Easton, MD 21601	203	3.3	3.3			X				3.3		X				
Idlewild Park, Easton	116 Idlewild Ave Easton, MD 21601	204	12	12			X	X			12	X	X	X	X		
John F. Ford Park (formerly RTC)	100 Plum St Easton, MD 21601	205	58	58	X		X	X		Passive Park	58		X				
Matthewstown Run Park	9650 Alden St Easton, MD 21601	206	1.5	1.5			X				1.5	X	X				
Memorial Walk, 100 W. Dover St.	100 W. Dover St Easton, MD 21601	207	1	1						Passive	1						
Moton Park	501 Port St Easton, MD 21601	208	12	12			X				12	X	X	X			volleyball
Mulberry Station Neighborhood Park	8764 Mulberry Dr Easton, MD 21601	209	4	4			X				4		X				
Railroad Station Park	46 Pennsylvania Ave Easton, MD 21601	210	1	1						Passive	1						
Stoney Ridge Park	29288 Corbin Parkway Easton, MD 21601	211	19.8	19.8	X					Neighborhood	19.8		X				
Thompson Park	30 W. Dover St Easton, MD 21601	212	1	1						Passive	1						

**Appendix C
Talbot County LPPRP Inventory Spreadsheet**

Parks and Recreation Inventory

Outdoor Recreation Amenities:

Field/Facility Based Recreation Amenities:

Site Name:	Property Address	Facility ID	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	Notes:
Bolingbroke Park - Izaak Walton League	2665 Money Make Rd, Trappe, MD 21663	1,000	50	Nature Center	X	X											
MOS - Mill Creek Sanctuary	059 MD-662 Wye Mills, MD 21679	1,001	156	Shelter/Picnic Tables	X												
Nature Conservancy - King's Creek	Easton, MD 21601	1,002	250														Brackish Marsh, only accessible by boat
Nature Conservancy - Otwell Woodland	Otwell Rd Oxford, MD 21654	1,003	94														Not open to public without MD Nature Conservancy permission
Nature Conservancy - Third Haven Woods	Goldsborough Neck Rd Easton, MD 21601	1,004	500														No Amenities or parking
Pickering Creek Audubon	11450 Audubon Ln Easton, MD 21601	1,005	400	Welcome Center, Canoe/Kayak Launch, Gardens, Pond	X	X											Bird watching, youth camps, kayak/canoe, wetland, hardwood forest
Point Pleasant Farm	22776 Wells Point Ln Bozman, MD 21612	1,006	950			X											Important breeding grounds for waterfowl/bird habitat
Totals:			2,400														

EASEMENT HOLDER	# OF PROPERTIES	ACRES
ESLC	14	1625.3
MET	150	24691.6
MALPF	82	12784.0
Forest Conservation	10	113.0
Rural Legacy	8	1748.1
Maryland Historic Trust	19	1904.0

APPENDIX D - 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						Estimated Short-Range (2022-2024) Cost (\$1,000s)			Estimated Mid-Range (2025-2027) Cost (\$1,000s)			Estimated Long-Range (2028-2030) Cost (\$1,000s)		
Projects	Location (area)	Description of Land Preservation and Recreation Park Recommendations	Estimated Total Cost (\$1,000's)	Relative Priority/Capital Plan	Acres to be Acquired	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehab	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehab	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehab
Community Center Concession Stand Replacement	Easton	Rehabilitation of a 20 year old concession stand	\$ 75							\$ 75				
Community Center Gymnasium Expansion	Easton		\$ 4,000				\$ 4,000							
Community Center Irrigation & Bermuda Seeding	Easton	Installation of irrigation and bermuda fields on the athletic fields at the Community Center	\$ 125				\$ 125							
Community Center Playground Replacement	Easton	Replacement playground (20 years old)	\$ 170				\$ 170							
Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe Development	Queen Anne	Construction of pollinator meadow, scenic overlooks and walking trails	\$ 125				\$ 125							
Pickleball Courts	Easton	Construction of 8 pickleball courts for recreational/competitive use	\$ 250				\$ 250							
Playground Replacement	Back Creek Park	Replacement playground (20 years old)	\$ 175							\$ 175				
Playground Replacement	Bellevue	Replacement playground (20 years old)	\$ 175										\$ 175	
Playground Replacement	Cordova	Replacement playground (20 years old)	\$ 175										\$ 175	
Playground Replacement	Neavitt	Replacement playground (20 years old)	\$ 175										\$ 175	
Playground Replacement	Old Trappe Park	Replacement playground (20 years old)	\$ 175										\$ 175	
Playground Replacement	Perry Cabin	Replacement playground (20 years old)	\$ 175										\$ 175	
Playground Replacement	Home Run Baker Park	Replacement playground (20 years old)	\$ 175							\$ 175				
Playground Replacement	Wittman	Replacement playground (20 years old)	\$ 175										\$ 175	
TOTAL COST			\$ 6,145		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,670	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 425	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,050	\$ -

FY 23 Waterway Improvement Projects			
Easton Point Boat Ramp	Easton	Parking Lot Improvements	50
Harbor Road Marina Boat Slip Improvements	St. Michaels		30
Total Cost			80

APPENDIX E: Community Survey Data

Default Report

Explore the data behind your survey responses. Gain a better perspective of your survey data and uncover insights for further planning.

 Visited

798

 Started


516

 Avg. Time to Complete

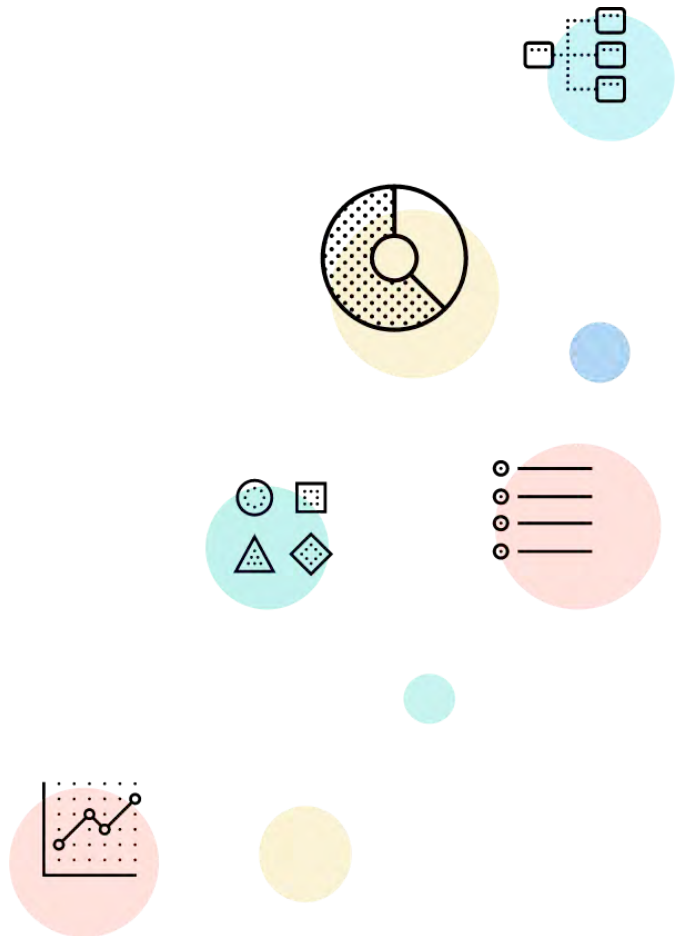
17m

 Completed

401

 Completion Rate

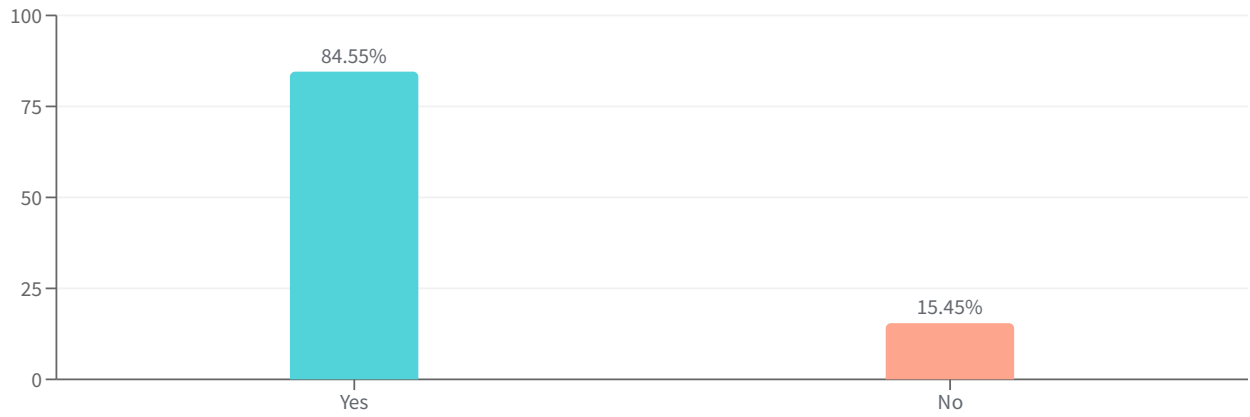
77.71%



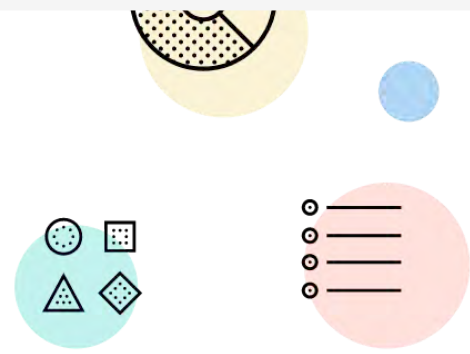
QUESTION 01 | YES OR NO

Do you live in Talbot County?

Answered: **505** Skipped: **6**



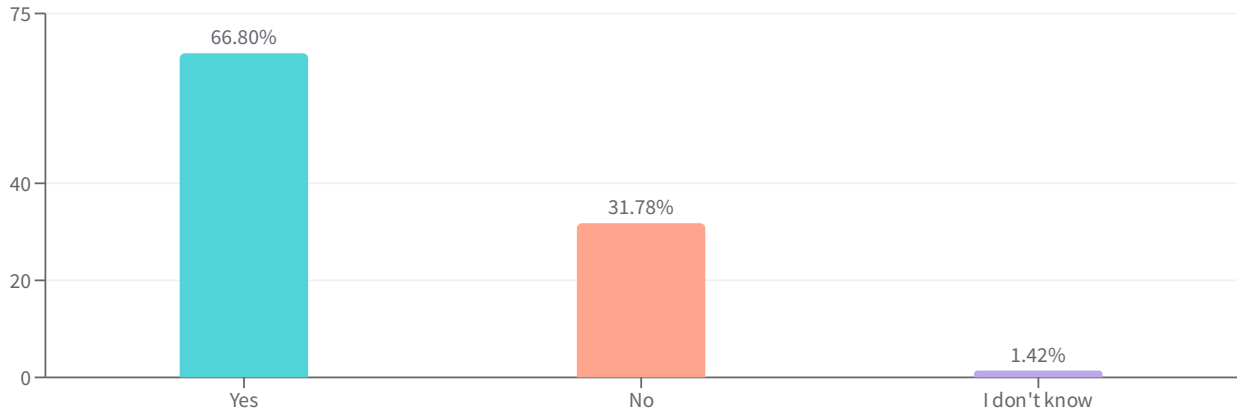
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Yes	427	84.55%
No	78	15.45%



QUESTION 03 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

Do you live in a town?

Answered: **494** Skipped: **10**



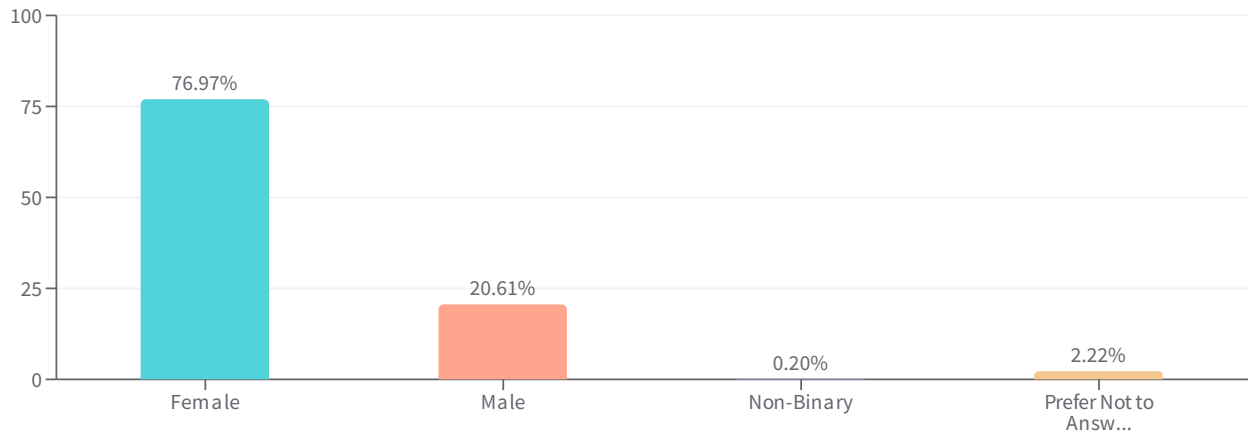
ANSWER CHOICES ▾	RESPONSES ▾	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE ▾
Yes	330	66.80%
No	157	31.78%
I don't know	7	1.42%



QUESTION 04 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

To which gender identity do you most identify?

Answered: 495 Skipped: 7

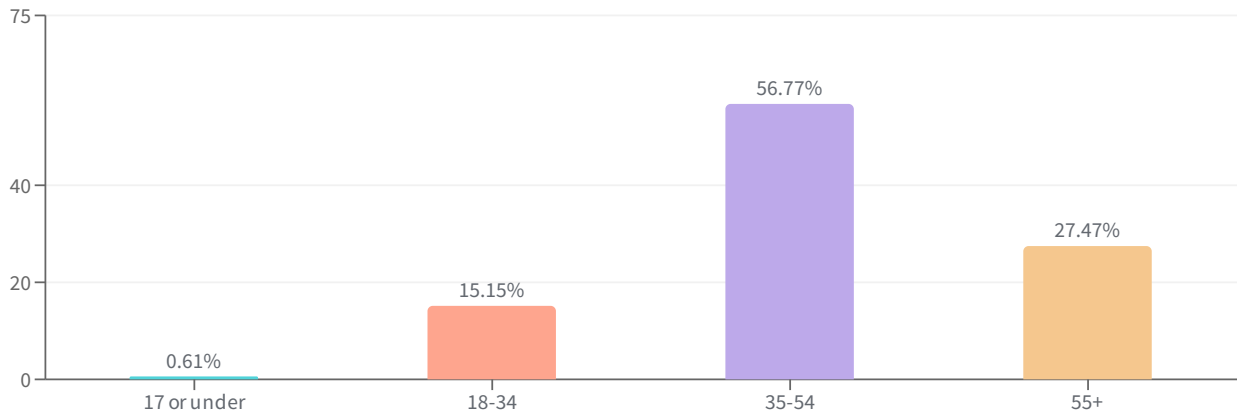


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Female	381	76.97%
Male	102	20.61%
Non-Binary	1	0.20%
Prefer Not to Answer	11	2.22%



What is your age?

Answered: 495 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
17 or under	3	0.61%
18-34	75	15.15%
35-54	281	56.77%
55+	136	27.47%

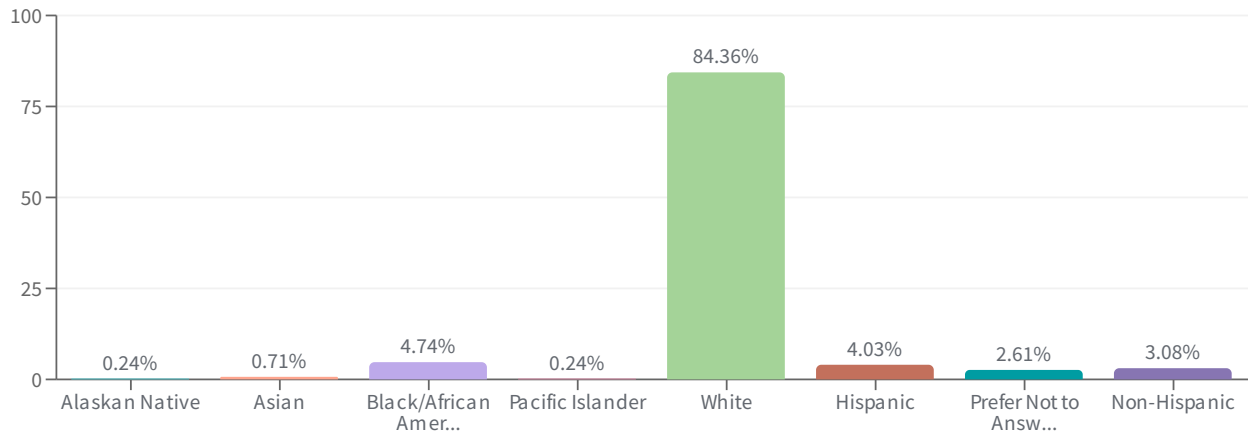


QUESTION 06 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

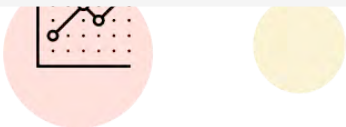
What is your race/ethnicity?

Check all that apply.

Answered: **406** Skipped: **21**



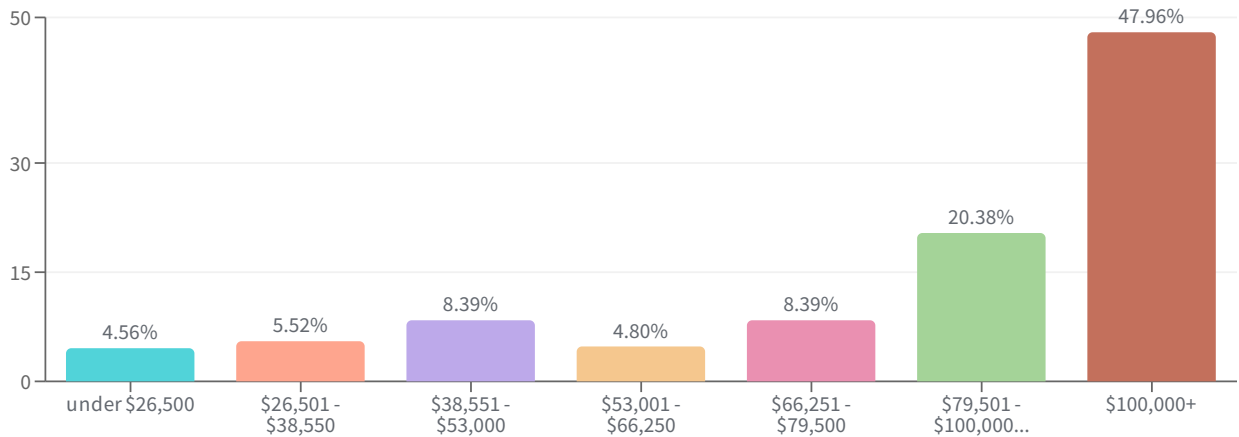
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Alaskan Native	1	0.24%
Asian	3	0.71%
Black/African American	20	4.74%
Pacific Islander	1	0.24%
White	356	84.36%
Hispanic	17	4.03%
Prefer Not to Answer	11	2.61%
Non-Hispanic	13	3.08%



QUESTION 07 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

What is your household income?

Answered: 417 Skipped: 76



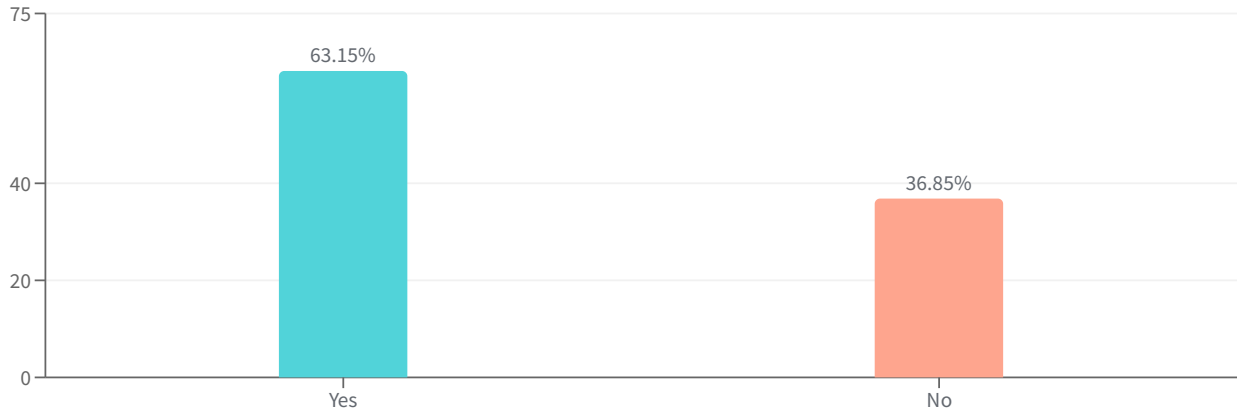
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
under \$26,500	19	4.56%
\$26,501 - \$38,550	23	5.52%
\$38,551 - \$53,000	35	8.39%
\$53,001 - \$66,250	20	4.80%
\$66,251 - \$79,500	35	8.39%
\$79,501 - \$100,000	85	20.38%
\$100,000+	200	47.96%



QUESTION 08 | YES OR NO

Do you have children under age 19 living in your household?

Answered: **483** Skipped: **10**



ANSWER CHOICES ▾	RESPONSES ▾	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE ▾
Yes	305	63.15%
No	178	36.85%

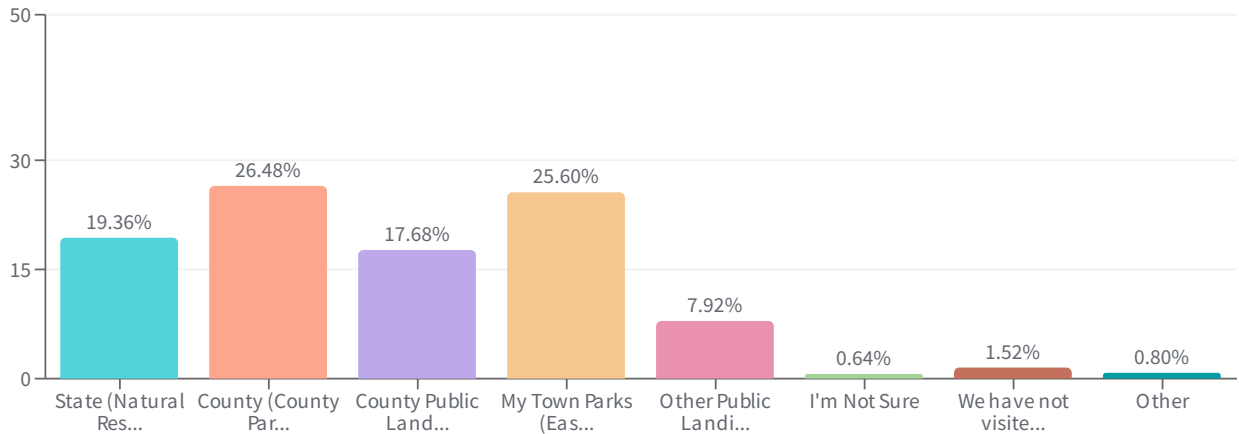


QUESTION 09 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

Have you or members of your household visited any of the following parks or open spaces during the past 12 months?

Please check all that apply

Answered: **423** Skipped: **5**

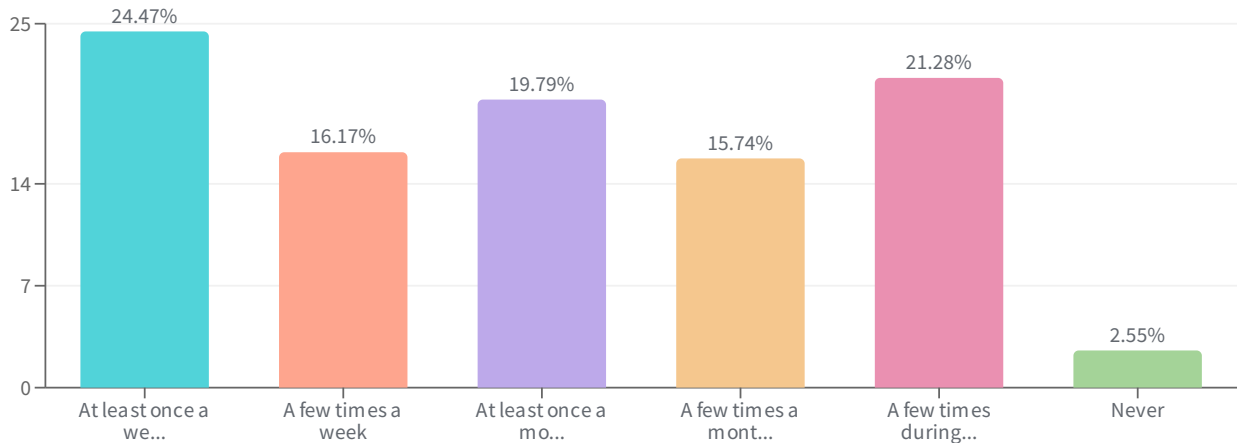


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
State (Natural Resource Management Areas)	242	19.36%
County (County Parks & Recreation)	331	26.48%
County Public Landing/Boat Ramp	221	17.68%
My Town Parks (Easton, St. Michaels, Trappe, Oxford, Queen Anne)	320	25.60%
Other Public Landing/Boat Ramp	99	7.92%
I'm Not Sure	8	0.64%
We have not visited any parks	19	1.52%
Other	10	0.80%

QUESTION 10 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

How often did you or members of your household visit a park/green space during the past 12 months?

Answered: 470 Skipped: 7



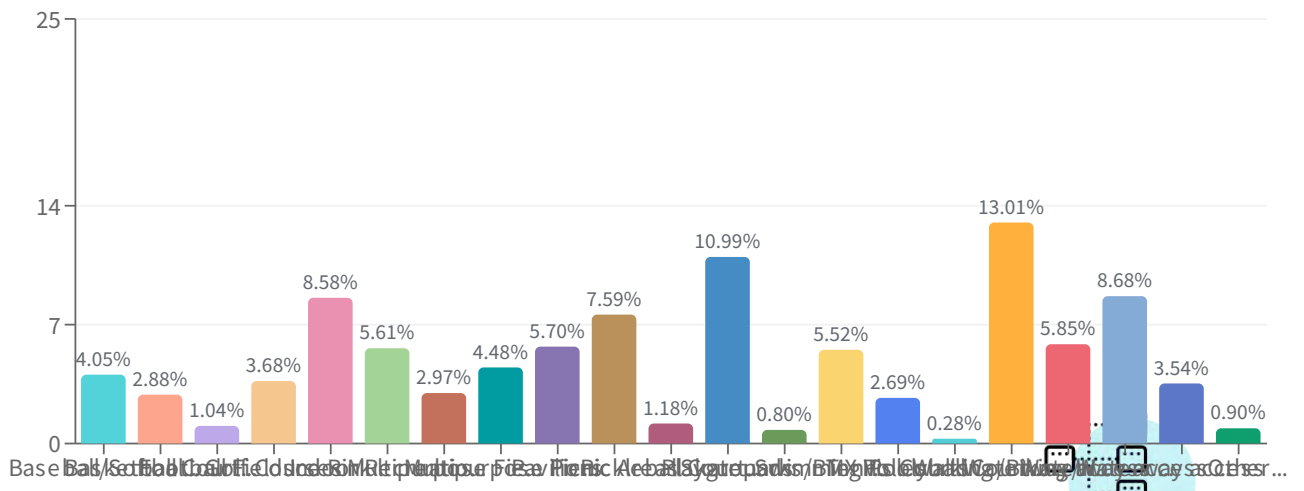
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
At least once a week	115	24.47%
A few times a week	76	16.17%
At least once a month	93	19.79%
A few times a month	74	15.74%
A few times during the year	100	21.28%
Never	12	2.55%



QUESTION 11 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

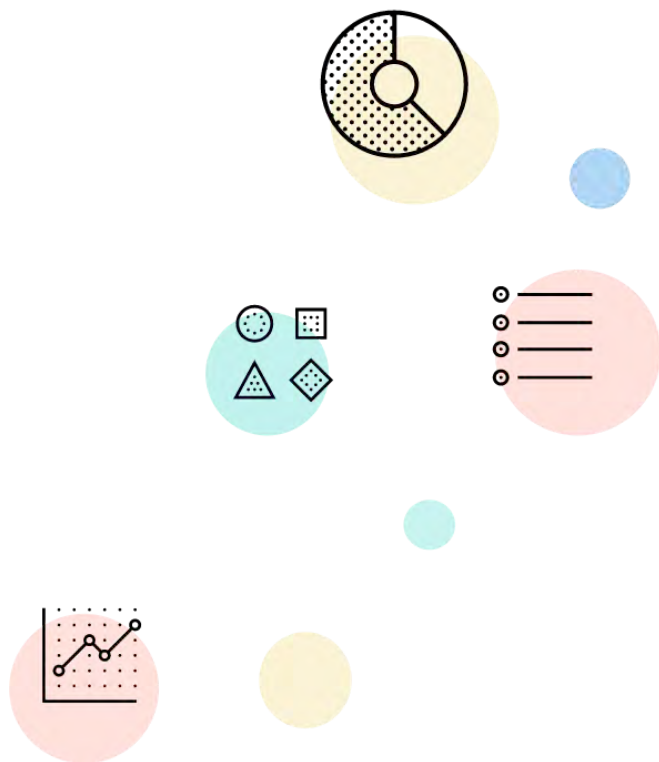
From the following list, please check ALL of the recreation facilities that you or members of your household have used in the past 12 months?

Answered: **405** Skipped: **12**



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Baseball/Softball Fields	86	4.05%
Basketball Courts	61	2.88%
Football Fields	22	1.04%
Golf Courses	78	3.68%
Ice Rink	182	8.58%
Indoor Recreation/Community Center	119	5.61%
Multipurpose Fields (Lacrosse)	63	2.97%
Multipurpose Fields (Soccer)	95	4.48%
Pavilions	121	5.70%
Picnic Areas	161	7.59%

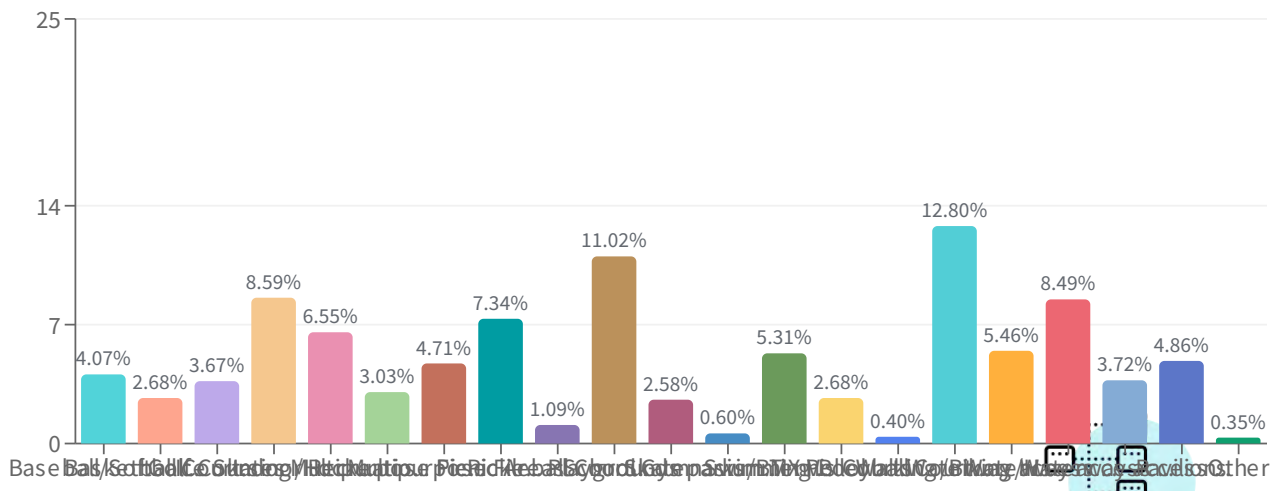
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Pickleball Courts	25	1.18%
Playgrounds	233	10.99%
Skateparks/BMX Parks	17	0.80%
Swimming Pools	117	5.52%
Tennis Courts	57	2.69%
Volleyball Courts	6	0.28%
Walking/Biking/Hiking Trails	276	13.01%
Waterway access for fishing, crabbing	124	5.85%
Waterway access for boating, kayaking, canoeing	184	8.68%
Waterway access for swimming, wading	75	3.54%
Other	19	0.90%



QUESTION 12 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

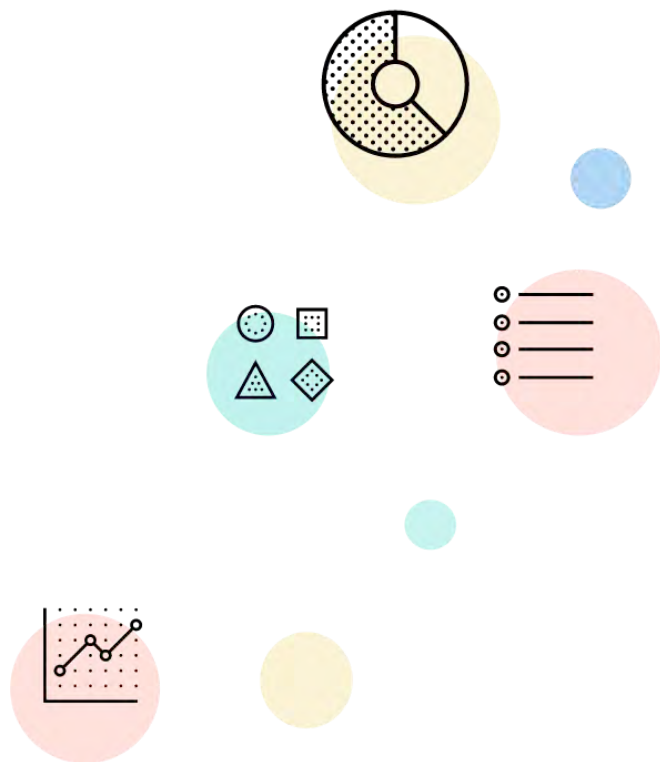
From the following list, please check ALL of the Talbot County recreation facilities that you or members of your household have used in the past 12 months?

Answered: **401** Skipped: **13**



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Baseball/Softball Fields	82	4.07%
Basketball Courts	54	2.68%
Golf Courses	74	3.67%
Ice Skating/Hockey Rink	173	8.59%
Indoor Recreation/Community Center	132	6.55%
Multipurpose Fields (Lacrosse)	61	3.03%
Multipurpose Fields (Soccer)	95	4.71%
Picnic Areas	148	7.34%
Pickleball Courts	22	1.09%
Playgrounds	222	11.02%

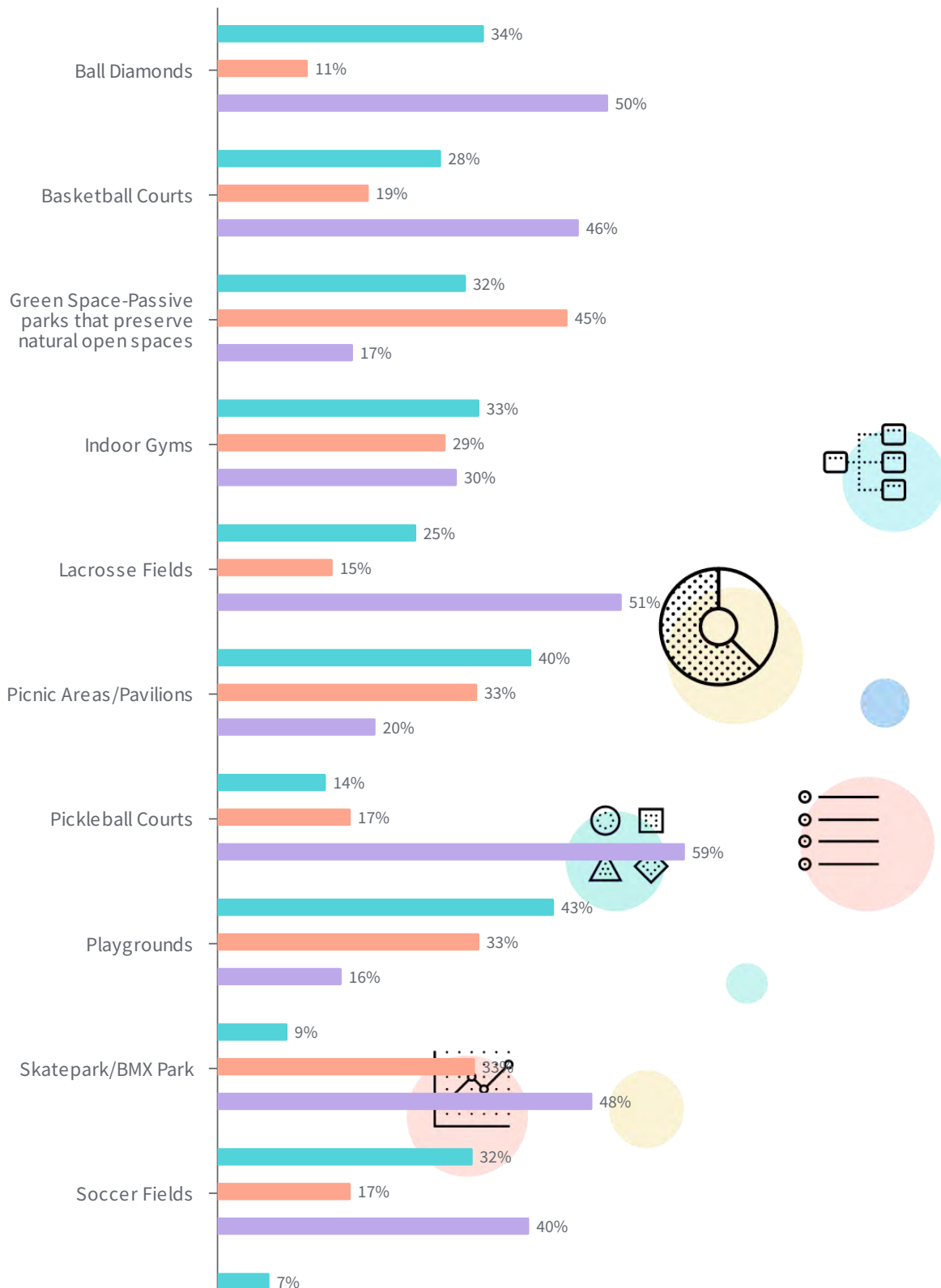
ANSWER CHOICES ▾	RESPONSES ▾	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE ▾
School Gymnasiums (for non-school sponsored event)	52	2.58%
Skateparks/BMX Parks	12	0.60%
Swimming Pool	107	5.31%
Tennis Courts	54	2.68%
Volleyball Courts	8	0.40%
Walking /Biking/Hiking Trails	258	12.80%
Waterway access for fishing, crabbing	110	5.46%
Waterway access for boating, kayaking, canoeing	171	8.49%
Waterway access for swimming, wading	75	3.72%
Pavilions	98	4.86%
Other	7	0.35%

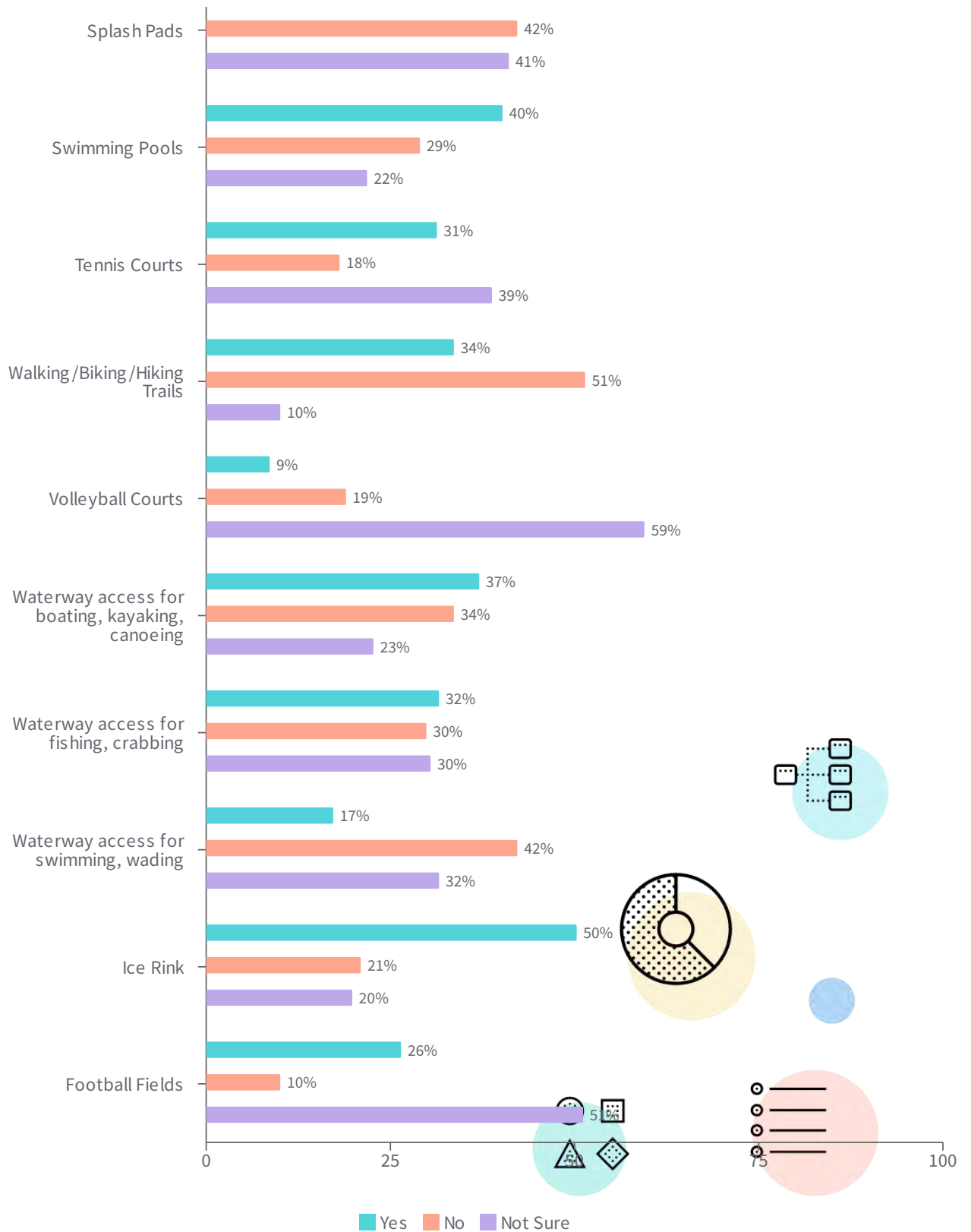


QUESTION 13 | MATRIX

Do you feel there is adequate availability of the following facilities in Talbot County?

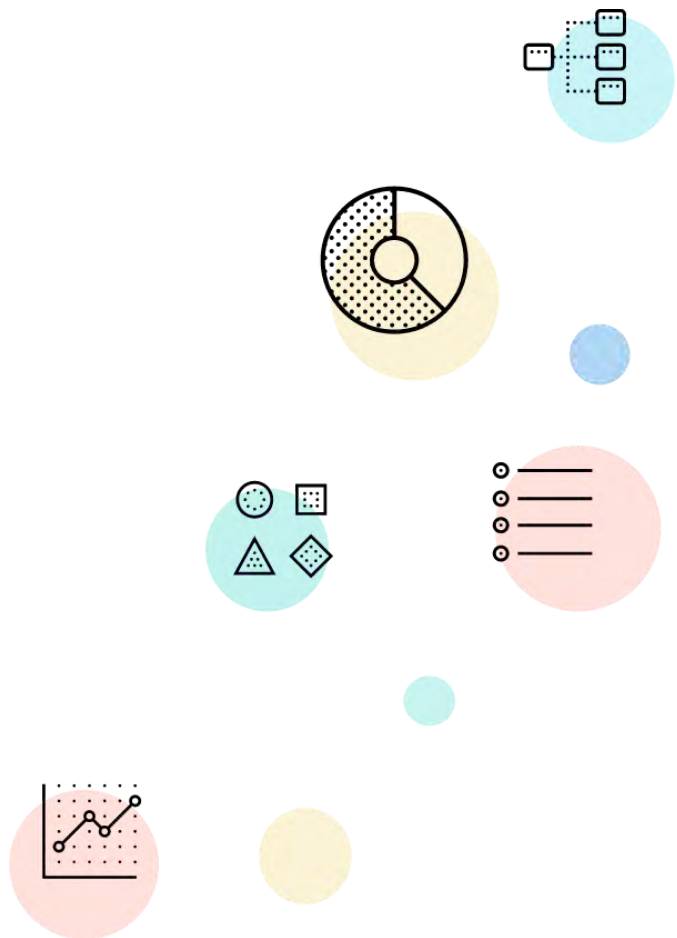
Answered: **348** Skipped: **12**





	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Ball Diamonds	118 (33.91%)	40 (11.49%)	173 (49.71%)
Basketball Courts	99 (28.45%)	67 (19.25%)	160 (45.98%)

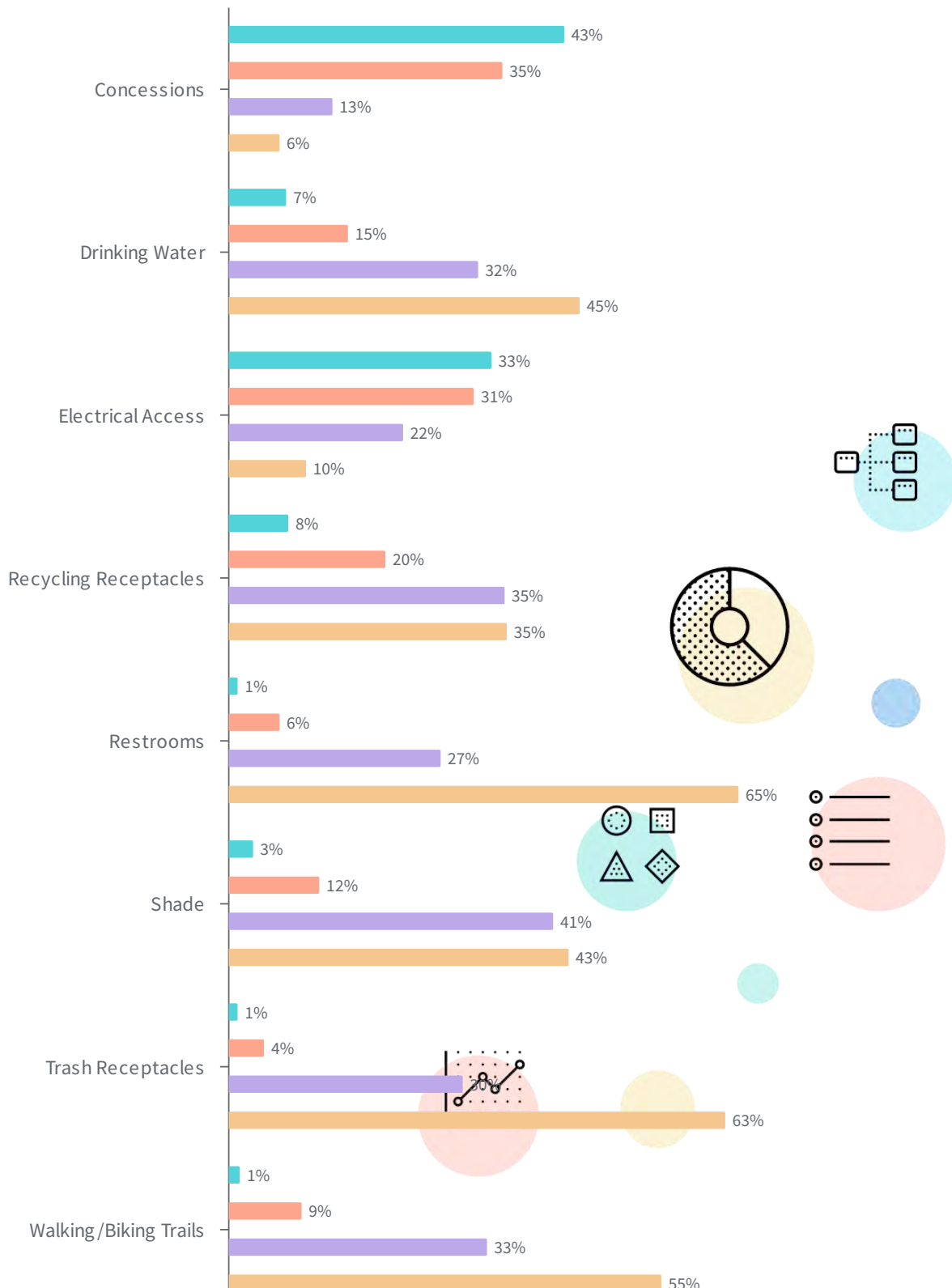
	 YES	 NO	 NOT SURE
Green Space-Passive parks that preserve natural open spaces	110 (31.61%)	155 (44.54%)	60 (17.24%)
Indoor Gyms	116 (33.33%)	101 (29.02%)	106 (30.46%)
Lacrosse Fields	88 (25.29%)	51 (14.66%)	179 (51.44%)
Picnic Areas/Pavilions	139 (39.94%)	115 (33.05%)	70 (20.11%)
Pickleball Courts	48 (13.79%)	59 (16.95%)	207 (59.48%)
Playgrounds	149 (42.82%)	116 (33.33%)	55 (15.80%)
Skatepark/BMX Park	31 (8.91%)	114 (32.76%)	166 (47.70%)
Soccer Fields	113 (32.47%)	59 (16.95%)	138 (39.66%)
Splash Pads	23 (6.61%)	147 (42.24%)	143 (41.09%)
Swimming Pools	140 (40.23%)	101 (29.02%)	76 (21.84%)
Tennis Courts	109 (31.32%)	63 (18.10%)	135 (38.79%)
Walking/Biking/Hiking Trails	117 (33.62%)	179 (51.44%)	35 (10.06%)
Volleyball Courts	30 (8.62%)	66 (18.97%)	207 (59.48%)
Waterway access for boating, kayaking, canoeing	129 (37.07%)	117 (33.62%)	79 (22.70%)
Waterway access for fishing, crabbing	110 (31.61%)	104 (29.89%)	106 (30.46%)
Waterway access for swimming, wading	60 (17.24%)	147 (42.24%)	110 (31.61%)
Ice Rink	175 (50.29%)	73 (20.98%)	69 (19.83%)
Football Fields	92 (26.44%)	35 (10.06%)	178 (51.15%)
Total	1996 (28.68%)	1909 (27.43%)	2452 (35.23%)

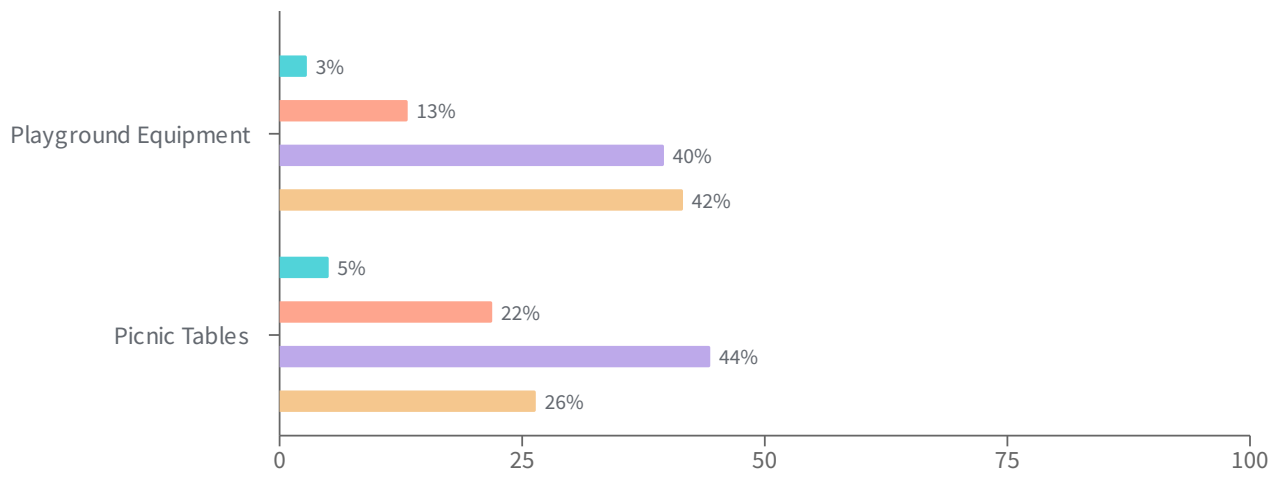


QUESTION 14 | MATRIX

In general, how important to you is availability to the following amenities within parks?

Answered: 356 Skipped: 13





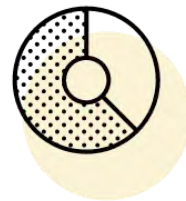
■ Not Important (1)
 ■ Slightly Important (2)
 ■ Important (3)
 ■ Extremely Important (4)

	■ NOT IMPORTANT (1)	■ SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT (2)	■ IMPORTANT (3)
Concessions	152 (42.70%)	124 (34.83%)	47 (13.20%)
Drinking Water	26 (7.30%)	54 (15.17%)	113 (31.74%)
Electrical Access	119 (33.43%)	111 (31.18%)	79 (22.19%)
Recycling Receptacles	27 (7.58%)	71 (19.94%)	125 (35.11%)
Restrooms	4 (1.12%)	23 (6.46%)	96 (26.97%)
Shade	11 (3.09%)	41 (11.52%)	147 (41.29%)
Trash Receptacles	4 (1.12%)	16 (4.49%)	106 (29.78%)
Walking/Biking Trails	5 (1.40%)	33 (9.27%)	117 (32.87%)
Playground Equipment	10 (2.81%)	47 (13.20%)	141 (39.61%)
Picnic Tables	18 (5.06%)	78 (21.91%)	158 (44.38%)
Total	376 (10.56%)	598 (16.80%)	1129 (31.71%)

	■ EXTREMELY IMPORTANT (4)
Concessions	23 (6.46%)
Drinking Water	159 (44.66%)

**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
(4)**

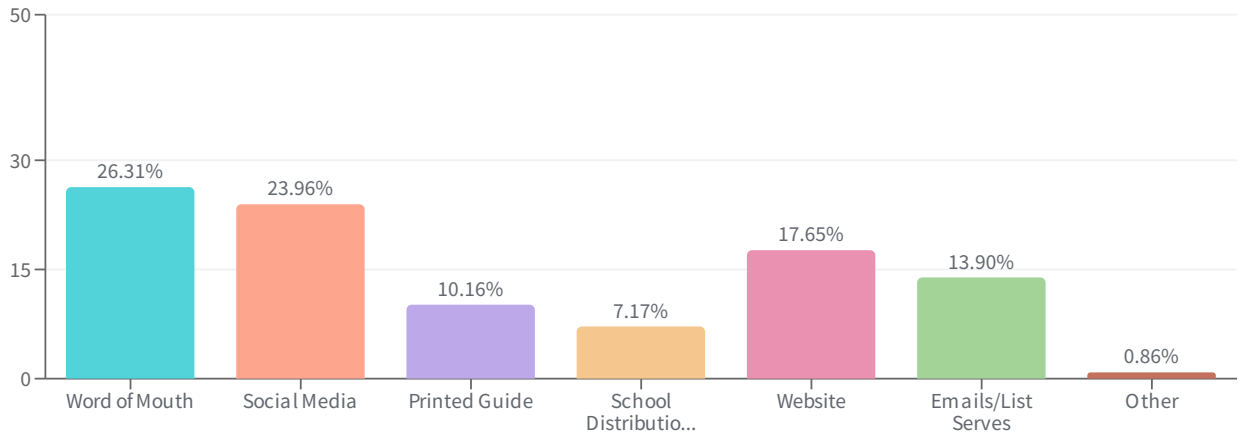
Electrical Access	35 (9.83%)
Recycling Receptacles	126 (35.39%)
Restrooms	231 (64.89%)
Shade	154 (43.26%)
Trash Receptacles	225 (63.20%)
Walking/Biking Trails	196 (55.06%)
Playground Equipment	148 (41.57%)
Picnic Tables	94 (26.40%)
Total	1391 (39.07%)



QUESTION 15 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

How do you learn about recreation programming opportunities in your community?

Answered: **379** Skipped: **11**



ANSWER CHOICES ▾	RESPONSES ▾	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE ▾
Word of Mouth	246	26.31%
Social Media	224	23.96%
Printed Guide	95	10.16%
School Distribution	67	7.17%
Website	165	17.65%
Emails/List Serves	130	13.90%
Other	8	0.86%

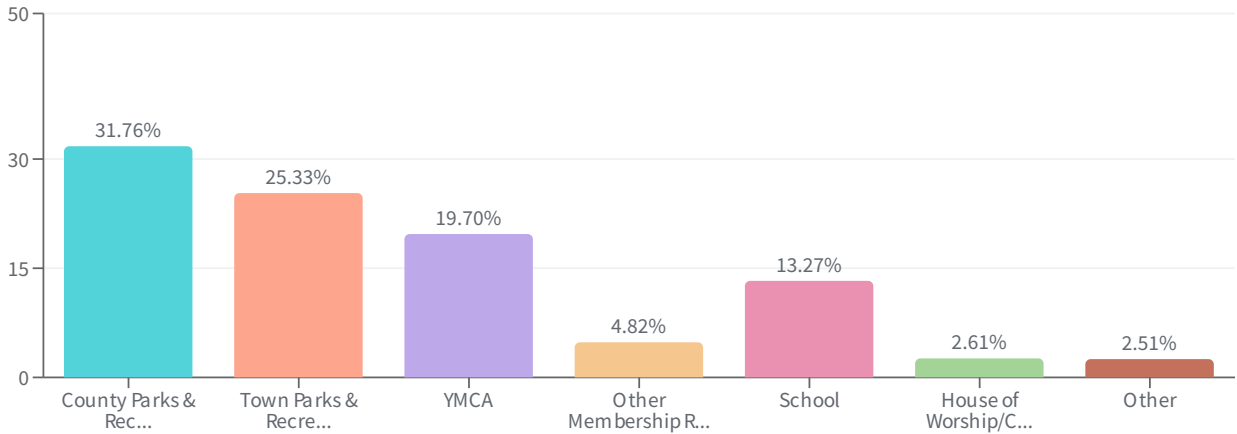


QUESTION 16 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

Where do you participate in recreation activities?

Check all that apply

Answered: **373** Skipped: **13**



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
County Parks & Recreation Facilities	316	31.76%
Town Parks & Recreation Facilities	252	25.33%
YMCA	196	19.70%
Other Membership Recreation Facility	48	4.82%
School	132	13.27%
House of Worship/Church Facility	26	2.61%
Other	25	2.51%

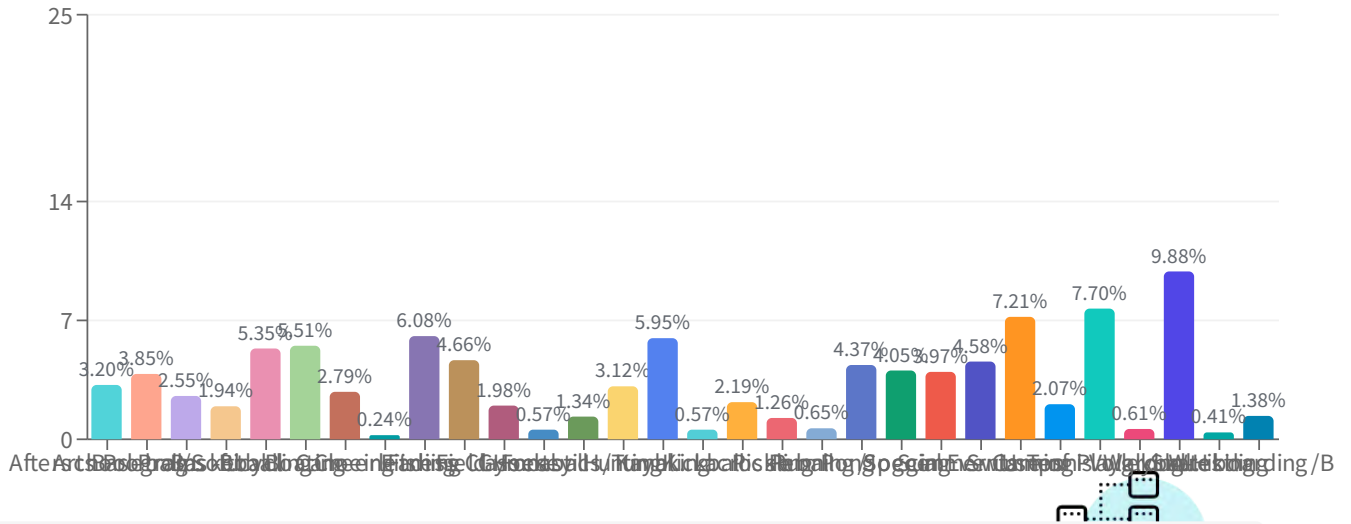


QUESTION 17 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

In what recreation activities do you and members of your household participate?

Check all that apply.

Answered: **357** Skipped: **18**



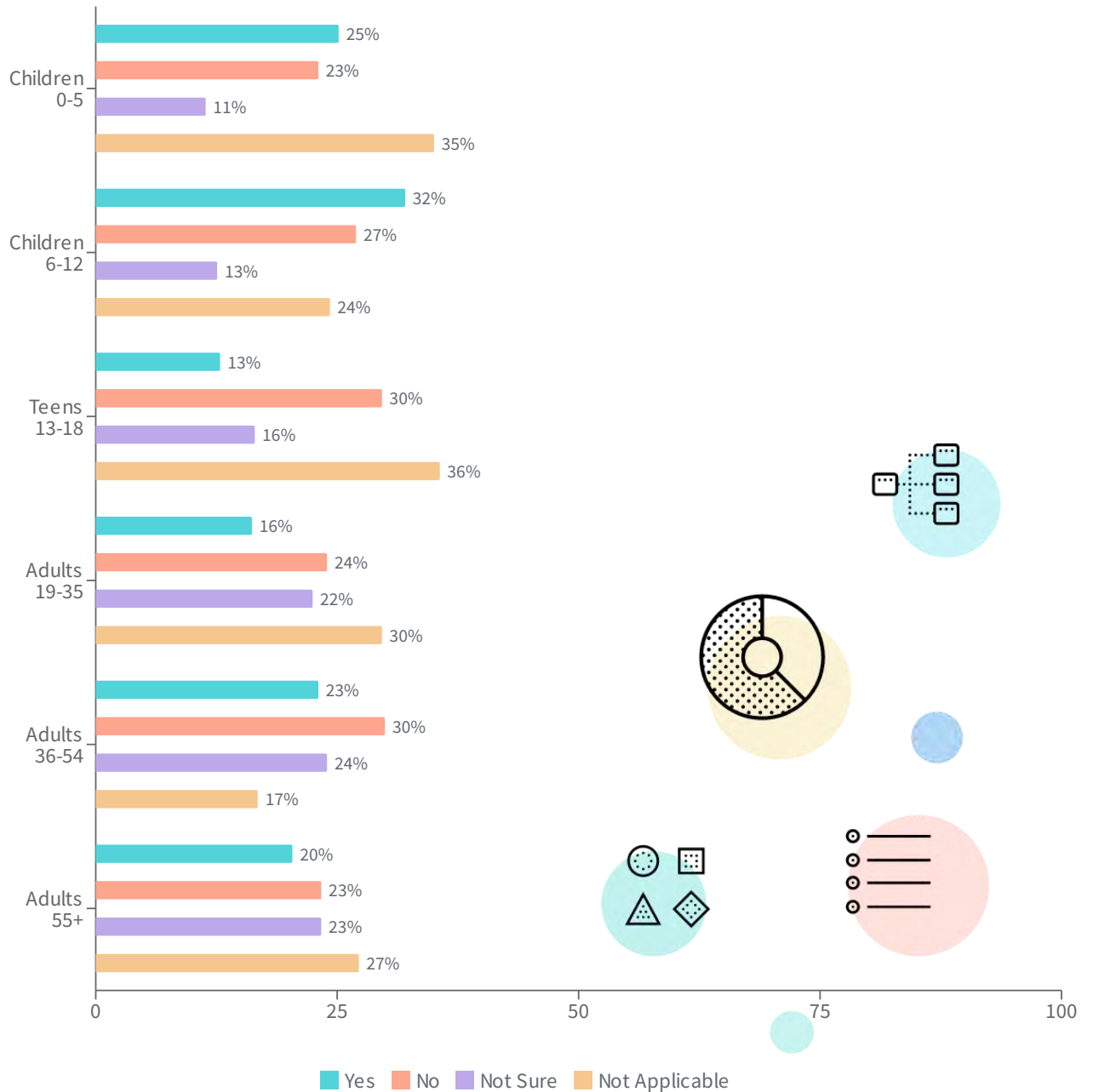
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Afterschool Programs	79	3.20%
Arts Programs - Dance, Theater, Music, Drawing, Painting, Sculpting, Etc.	95	3.85%
Baseball/Softball	63	2.55%
Basketball	48	1.94%
Bicycling	132	5.35%
Boating	136	5.51%
Canoeing	69	2.79%
Cheerleading	6	0.24%
Fishing	150	6.08%
Fitness Classes	115	4.66%

ANSWER CHOICES ▾	RESPONSES ▾	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE ▾
Field Hockey	49	1.98%
Football	14	0.57%
Gymnastics/Tumbling	33	1.34%
Hunting	77	3.12%
Kayaking	147	5.95%
Kickball	14	0.57%
Lacrosse	54	2.19%
Pickleball	31	1.26%
Ping Pong	16	0.65%
Running/Jogging	108	4.37%
Soccer	100	4.05%
Special Events	98	3.97%
Summer Camps	113	4.58%
Swimming	178	7.21%
Tennis	51	2.07%
Use of Playground Equipment	190	7.70%
Volleyball	15	0.61%
Walking-Hiking	244	9.88%
Wrestling	10	0.41%
Skateboarding/BMX	34	1.38%




QUESTION 18 | MATRIX


Are you satisfied with the recreation activities available for the following age groups?

Answered: 334 Skipped: 18



	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Children 0-5	84 (25.15%)	77 (23.05%)	38 (11.38%)

	 YES	 NO	 NOT SURE
Children 6-12	107 (32.04%)	90 (26.95%)	42 (12.57%)
Teens 13-18	43 (12.87%)	99 (29.64%)	55 (16.47%)
Adults 19-35	54 (16.17%)	80 (23.95%)	75 (22.46%)
Adults 36-54	77 (23.05%)	100 (29.94%)	80 (23.95%)
Adults 55+	68 (20.36%)	78 (23.35%)	78 (23.35%)
Total	433 (21.61%)	524 (26.15%)	368 (18.36%)

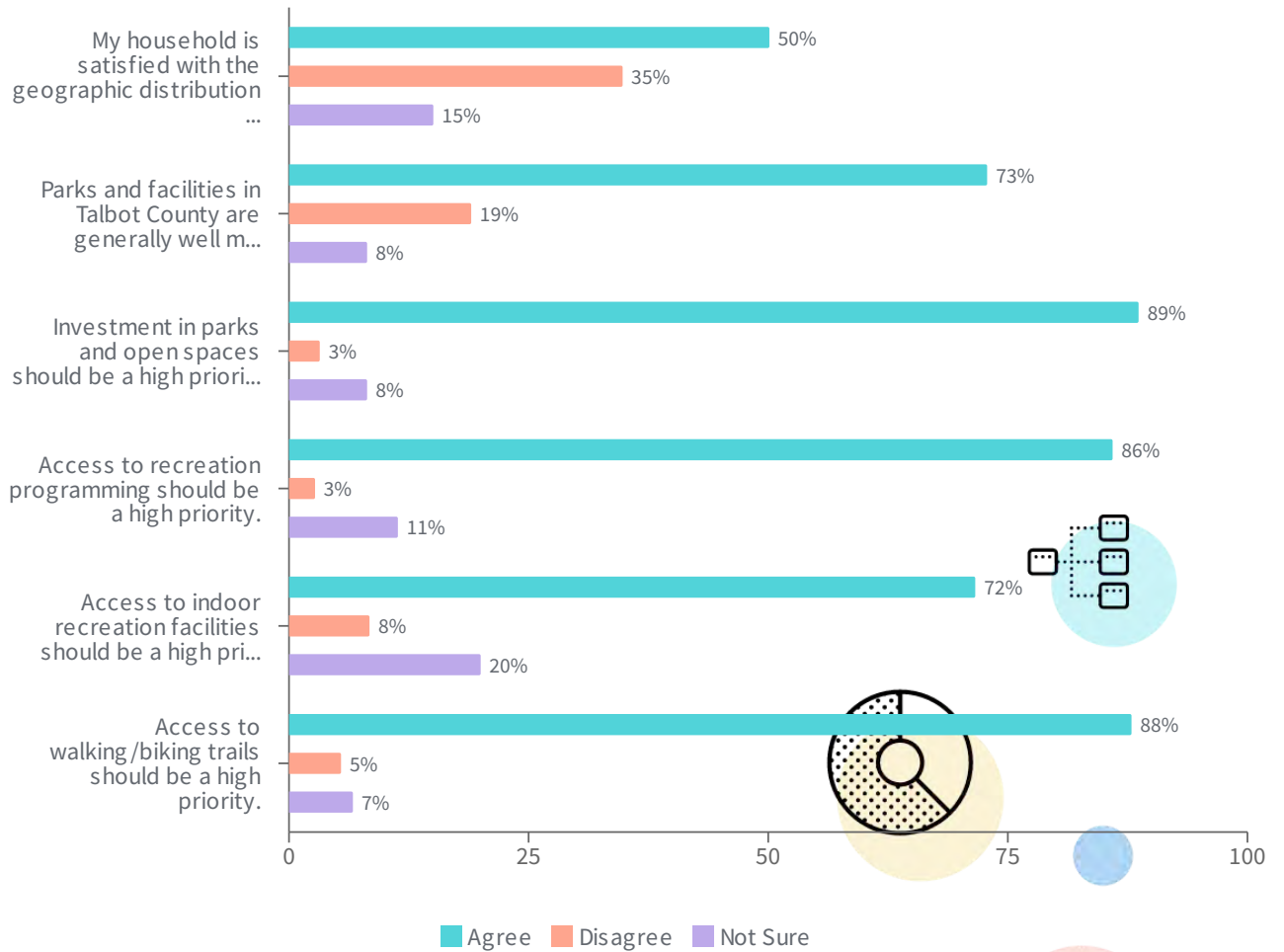
	 NOT APPLICABLE
Children 0-5	117 (35.03%)
Children 6-12	81 (24.25%)
Teens 13-18	119 (35.63%)
Adults 19-35	99 (29.64%)
Adults 36-54	56 (16.77%)
Adults 55+	91 (27.25%)
Total	563 (28.09%)






QUESTION 19 | MATRIX

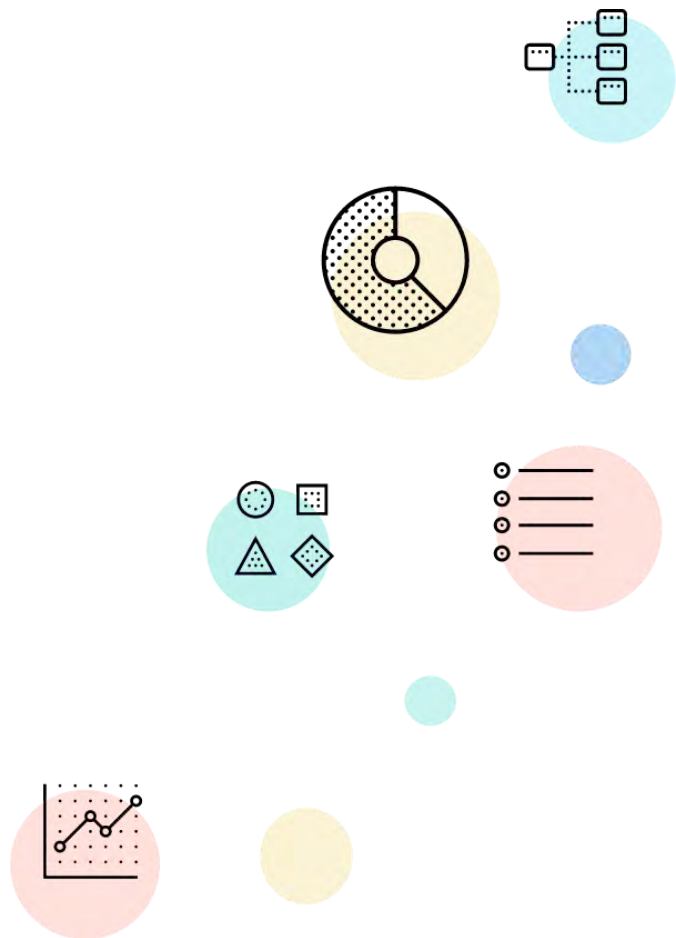
Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

Answered: 405 Skipped: 0



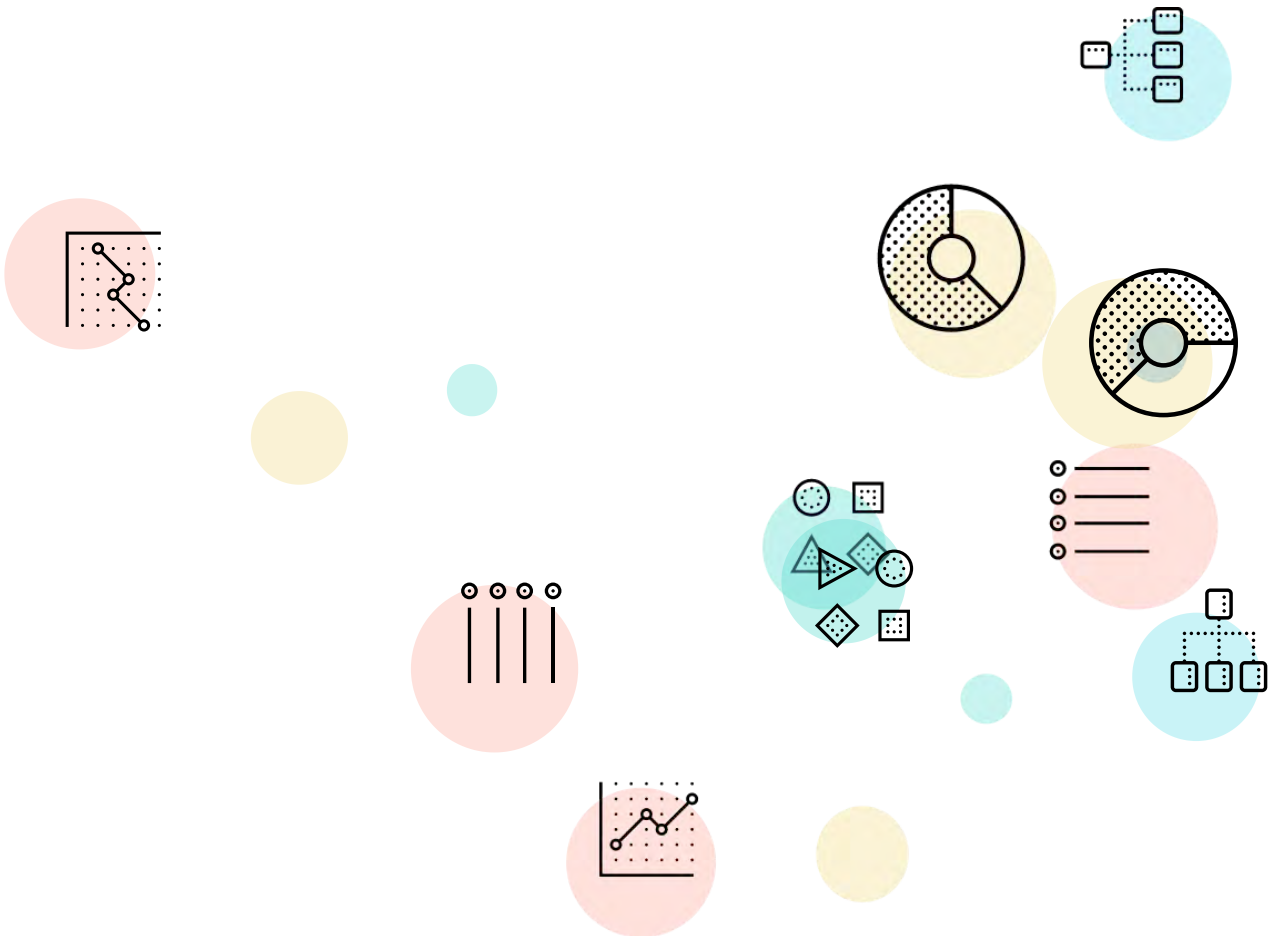
	AGREE	DISAGREE	NOT SURE
My household is satisfied with the geographic distribution of parks and recreation facilities in Talbot County.	203 (50.12%)	141 (34.81%)	61 (15.06%)
Parks and facilities in Talbot County are generally well maintained.	295 (72.84%)	77 (19.01%)	33 (8.15%)

	 AGREE	 DISAGREE	 NOT SURE
Investment in parks and open spaces should be a high priority.	359 (88.64%)	13 (3.21%)	33 (8.15%)
Access to recreation programming should be a high priority.	348 (85.93%)	11 (2.72%)	46 (11.36%)
Access to indoor recreation facilities should be a high priority.	290 (71.60%)	34 (8.40%)	81 (20.00%)
Access to walking/biking trails should be a high priority.	356 (87.90%)	22 (5.43%)	27 (6.67%)
Total	1851 (76.17%)	298 (12.26%)	281 (11.56%)



Thank You !

We really appreciate your time and feedback.



APPENDIX F: Community Survey Written Comments

Please provide any additional written comments or suggestions you have about parks and facilities available in the county.

1. At this time, with high community spread of Covid 19, masks should be required while inside a county facility such as the Ice Rink. 2. County residents need more access (parking spaces) at public launches and boat ramps. Limiting parking and writing \$50 tickets to access waters that we own is unacceptable. I'm happy to pay for a county ramp sticker to launch my roof top boats but ticketing county residents at ramps is flat out wrong. 3. A county such as Talbot, with as much waterfront as any county in the state should have more public access to our waterways. Our waters are our natural heritage and access should be equitable for all residents.

A dog park would be an enormous asset even with the possible drawbacks. Everything will have negatives but doesn't mean it can't be done.

A dog park would be great. Also, the YMCA is a great organization but for older adults who work during the week there are no classes available. Everything is during the day.

A lot of the soccer fields aren't accessible to the public without a permit so we have to play on not so nice fields.

A playground is needed on tilghman island!

A teen center would be great for the summer. With access to sports and games

A year-round ice rink would be amazing for my three children. We have to travel to other rinks (Bowie, Piney Orchard, Delaware) in order to allow my kids to practice ice skating and hockey during the spring and summer months. It would be amazing to have more of an opportunity to access a closer rink (and their home rink) on this side of the bridge all year long.

A year-round indoor pool facility would be most welcome.

Access to playground areas needs improvement at North park as well as the equipment needs upgrades. More public fishing access areas, with spent fishing line receptacles. More sidewalk access to parks from town. More public notice about parks and rec activities, like a seasonal mailer to all residents.

accessibility to current resources is lacking. Most of the water access is privately owned.

All parks should have restrooms available during the weekends

Allow for a longer ice season at TCCC—year-round would be great!

better biking/running/walking paths and trails. I don't feel safe along the 33 even though it's a designated bike lane. Also, more dog parks.

Bicycle trails from Tilghman to Easton and beyond would be amazing

Biggest two things for our family are:

(a) more trails - trails of all kinds (walking, jogging, cycling, hiking)

(b) bicycle infrastructure - repair stations, trails, bike lanes, signage

boat ramps,we need more parking.claiborne beach access & dredging the channel.Parking at neavitt ramp needs to be expanded into the spoil area.

Build up the skate park !
Cameras should be installed at Idlewild park and restrooms should be open year round. We use the park even in the winter, and need a restroom.
Children in my family play ice hockey. It would be great if ice were available year round. Also a second sheet of ice would provide greater opportunity for Easton to host tournaments and conference play off games. This would bring more visitors to Talbot County and could benefit its hotels, restaurants, and shops.
Clarification to question maintenance of facilities. The facilities typically look nice and are well taken care of. However, the bathrooms at parks and fields are often not accessible or clean. Locations should be kept unlocked when the parks and fields are open. As well, regular cleaning schedules should be kept at bathroom facilities during open to public hours. Thank you for taking care and providing for our community.
Concessions should be sold at the Easton Pool
Continue to take good care of Idlewild Park! Could use another swimming pool across Route 50.
Didn't include ice skating on the list of activities.
Dog Parks PLEASE!!!!
Don't build the new visitor center/park. Focus on family and youth activities and sports
Find a way to keep the ice rink open year round. It would generate funds and be a great opportunity for everyone to use for camps, learn to, public sessions, league play, ect
Frequent visitor options for open ice skating such as discounts our earning toward a free visit would be appreciated
Green areas should be free for the public to use when they want to use them. Example for soccer games, either for adults and children.
Gym, pickleball, trails
Hard to answer high priority unless you know compared to what. Government's first job is keeping citizens safe so law enforcement is high priority
Having proper outdoor activities should be important to all communities. It keeps people active and engaged. I would like to see more pickle ball courts since those are hard to find and the sport is so popular with the 35+ age set -and more dog parks. I see so many dogs in Talbot county(I have two) but relative to how many people have dogs there so few resources to allow dogs to play. Dog parks are also a very nice social places to meet others.Love to see more
hiking trails are sorely lacking in Talbot County, especially withing eyesight of water. Rails to trails is nice, but not nearly enough.
Hobbyist classes would be great for adults, teens, and kids alike. There is alot for small children in the area, but not other age groups. A large portion of the county is not being served. There is YMCA and private gyms/classes, but that can be too expensive for alot of tax paying families. Residents deserve more.
I am worried about the town boat access and kyack access at Easton Point. If it is privately owned, we need to make sure that we have something available. Also, will the parking be gone? I have my Mom living with me and I take her down to the parking area of Easton Point and we watch the boats/birds. Will this remain? I would hate to see it taken away for the purpose of only the ppl who will eventually live there.
I believe that rebuilding the playground at Back Creek Community Park in Tilghman should be a priority.
I believe we need more Lacrosse and soccer fields with sufficient parking. We have restaurants and hotels that would benefit from Talbot County hosting lacrosse tournaments. Approximately 3 turf fields in Easton and

<p>maybe 2 turf fields in St. Michaels would increase business income. We also need more access for kayaks.</p>
<p>I belong to an enthusiastic group of soccer players and it's a pity that we have to look for places to practice our sport, and even worse that in winter there are no indoor facilities available, all of us are taxpayers and it's shameful that we don't have facilities to play .</p>
<p>I feel that many improvements are needed to baseball field as several fields in our county are aging and in need of major repairs as they are raising safety concerns.</p>
<p>I feel that more could be done to support sports for girls. Baseball seems to take priority over softball. More softball field would be nice. I feel that the field hockey fields could also use some attention. They are bumpy and the Hog Neck fields are run down. Concession stand is in bad shape and never used.</p>
<p>I feel that there are some are in Talbot County that lack parks and open spaces. Is love to see a SAFE bike trail from Easton to perhaps St Michael's or Oxford or maybe even Cordova. There are a lot of bikes riding on back roads, very unsafe.</p>
<p>I feel there is adequate access to parks and other recreational facilities but some of the spaces i have visited are in need or better upkeep. Some parks have old mulch that has turned to dust and becomes an issue for my kids. I feel the bedding is unsafe at some parks especially for younger kids. i know it is costly but it would be really nice if each park had the flooring like the park at Idlewild. Also the baseball/softball fields at Idlewild are a complete disaster. The infield is unsafe to work ground balls and the bases have completely fallen apart so i have had to supply my own bases for organized practices through Easton Little League.</p>
<p>I have previously contacted parks & rec about the poor condition of the basketball courts in St. Michaels and Bellevue. It is a community investment to build these courts, they should be properly maintained. The Bellevue courts were no longer playable due to the weeds growing through the asphalt. A few of the playgrounds are in need of maintenance also. Broken boards, peeling paint, missing features have been evident in my recent visits. On another note. Can you please stop the daddy-daughter/mother-son events and just make them family events? We shouldn't be keeping people from participating in events.</p>
<p>I love all the parks in our area! I do find that often times the trash bins are overflowing which leads to trash on the ground, blowing away into water streams, etc. This has been the case more then once at Perry Cabin Park. I have noticed increased trash cans in some locations, such as at Claiborne Jetty, but am sometimes concerned at how quickly they fill and overflow.</p>
<p>I love Rails to Trails but along the trail and throughout Easton there is a huge problem with invasive plants, especially porcelain berry. There needs to be regular removal and prevention because the trees are threatened by the weight and shading of the aggressive vine.</p>
<p>I think the playground equipment needs to be brought back to Tilghman park. It was taken down 2 years ago. Why? It has never been brought back. Tilghman park deserves playground equipment like Wittman and other areas. Also the porta potty was recently removed from Tilghman. Why? That needs to be brought back also. There is also a need for trash cans at the end of Tilghman island where everyone fishes. There are porta potties there but no trash cans. Why? Tilghman needs to be given some of this money to bring it up to par with other County parks. Particularly please give us back our playground!</p>
<p>I think the programs and activities are there but people can not afford the fees to participate</p>
<p>I think we can do more for our middle - aged to older age groups with regards to safety with our walking trails and to offer biking trails other than our public roads.</p>
<p>i want to participate, been volunteer for over 25 yrs for the YMCA and Parks n Rec..had to start my own company just to provide activities for the youth in our area..if you look at Wicomico, AA County or even QA Parks n Rec, they offer so much more especially for adults..its hard to operate as an non profit when you can't use or have access to fields and indoor courts..i have to host all my events in QA county just for that purpose</p>

3 Appendix F: Community Survey Written Comments

but have been paying tax dollars to Talbot for 30 years..walkerenterprises4@yahoo.com, i would love to talk and help out in anyway..
I wish more activities were through Parks & Rec and not the moneygrubbing YMCA. I am very disappointed that the Parks & Rec Fields are not used for Soccer and Field Hockey in all the small towns. It is a terribly run program by the Y and it is all for money. The coaches, kids and referees are not learning the correct way. Obviously not a fan of the YMCA
I wish there were more adult classes. I particularly would like a Bone Builders course.
I would like to GRP the sport of curling in Talbot County and surrounding counties.
I would like to see a Talbot County Pickleball Facility. Fastest growing sport in the US and it can be played by kids, adults and Seniors.
I would like to see more pick up hockey times and slots for ice hockey and I would love to see more even teams in are men league on a Monday
I would like to see move biking routes that are safe
I would love an enclosed dogbpark
I would love to see a small splash park for young kids
I would love to see more public water access with boats to rent and more natural parks in the county! Trash and recycling can be "carry in carry out" policy if it's made clear with signage to cut down on costs for collecting waste.
I'd like to see a few more dog parks in our county...especially in St. Michaels!
I'd love for the ice rink to stay open year round!
Ice Hockey and Figure skating were not included in the list
Ice hockey not available as an option for what my family participates in
Imperative to obtain turf fields in this county. They could be used for so many of the outdoor sports (girls hockey, lacrosse, soccer). I feel that they could also be used for tournament purposes which would bring money/revenue to the county and local businesses. We also believe that we need more than one sheet of ice for the winter sports and to use for recreational purposes. The ice also needs to be down longer than the short period with which it is currently. People hate to travel over an hour away starting in early March to be able to access open rinks and that is a disservice to this group.
Increase in handicap accessibility at local parks with sidewalks for ease of walking and wheel chair use.
It is becoming increasingly apparent to me that Talbot as the fewest parks/fields and the ones in the worst condition when compared to neighboring counties and states. I have been a volunteer coach in Talbot for the past 7 years and I find that I have to apologize to visiting coaches for the state of our fields (specifically lax). Even after the fields were renovated I would find chunks of cement THROUGHOUT the field from the installation of the new lights. Extremely disappointed that so much money was spent on lights that only shine down on horrific playing conditions. 1. invest in amazing fields THEN - 2. shine lights on the already amazing fields.
It is nice for families to have activities and sports to participate in.
It would be advantageous for St.Michaels to build a dog park for both small and large dogs.
It would be beneficial to have the ice rink open throughout the year -- would benefit figure skaters, ice hockey and perhaps the county could start fitness classes on ice?

<p>It would be great if we could have a few turf fields for the local teams. It would be even better if we were to take a page from Howard County and mimic one of their athletic parks. They attract national events to their parks and there is no reason that we could not build a similar program here in Talbot.</p>
<p>It would be great if you did some outdoor fitness parks. Not everyone can afford gym memberships. Also, a dog park in St Michaels would be great.</p>
<p>It would be nice if the ice rink could be utilized year-round. The space is always occupied and would get high occupancy during the summer months as travel hockey programs, figure skating, and outside hockey programs could utilize it. While I realize it is used for day camps, another space should be made available for those programs. I have attended the roller skating part of the summer recreation program and sadly, these events are very poorly attended. If this is not an option, the county should look to add an additional sheet of ice. Revenue is being lost by the many youth who travel over the bridge or out of state in order to play hockey. Youth hockey is one of the fastest growing sports in the country and unfortunately our county is not keeping up with its growth.</p>
<p>It would be nice to have electric car chargers at the major parks. There are very few public chargers in the county. Charge while you walk or exercise. Bonus points if the shade pavilions are solar canopies like at Chesapeake College.</p>
<p>It would be wonderful if the RTT could be extended to CorDOVA, or even further up to connect at Tuckahoe State Park.</p>
<p>Kayak access was taken away by P&R.</p>
<p>Keep playgrounds clean and maintained. Specifically Bradley Park in St Michaels is often in bad shape</p>
<p>Landings: parking for non-trailers is inadequate.</p>
<p>Love the rail trail!</p>
<p>LTS ice skating and TFST team skating is a big part of our lives. Would love to see the rink season longer into April. My daughter skates as a tween, and I am also an adult member who competes. The rink is always clean. But the rink closes before our last competition. The LTS lessons and coaches are wonderful and deserve great recognition.</p>
<p>Many of us do activities with our dogs but the off-leash areas are few and far between. Yes, I am aware some dog owners abuse the privilege by not picking up after their dogs. Not exactly sure why all are punished for this.</p>
<p>Monthly ice skating subscription?</p>
<p>Kindergym with mommy and me</p>
<p>Year round roller skating.</p>
<p>Indoor music pavilion?</p>
<p>More activities that cater to adults/families with older children</p>
<p>More hiking/walking trails in parks - indoor gymnasium important to have especially for older youth who are looking for a safe place to hang out and be active</p>
<p>More Ice time per year beyond March</p>
<p>More opportunities for elderly/disabled. Places to meet i.e. my chess club currently meets at St. Michaels Library. If not for them, we would have no place to meet.</p>
<p>More outdoor and nature-based programs would be fantastic.</p>

5 Appendix F: Community Survey Written Comments

More parking for single car/kayakers at the water access
More parks/ walking trails/ and activities would be great. We also need well maintained bathrooms. The one at Idlewild park is not well maintained. Our children need activities. We need safe things to do outside without worrying about traffic.
More soccer and lacrosse fields are needed. There is not enough space. An indoor soccer facility is needed. At least one.
More trails for walking/hiking are needed.
More waterfront parks please, particularly for the towns. Easton has no real access to the water.
Most sites listed for water access are not really accessible due to lack of parking or inability to launch a canoe or kayak.you need to really visit every one that you call water accesss and anaylse
Motion park is in an unsafe location and floods. Pool there is disgusting and the behavior of kids there is appalling. Ice rink needs more availability.
My family enjoys the roller skating and ice skating that is available at our community center however, we feel there needs to be more times available for skating.
My main gripe is the tilghman back creek park. There has not been any sort of playground there for several years now. It is much needed and every other small town has very nice facilities but here.
My major concern is the continuing lack of parking and limited water access for kayaking and other non-trailer linked boating in the county. Administrators have thus far failed to address this issue adequately.
Need artificial turf fields, more programming through county.
need better field maintenance
Need more indoor programs for winter, and upkeep needs to be better for current outdoor equipment and parks
Need more public water access. More places for kids to crab, and more kyack parking & launching places such as at Miles creek -o , Peachblossom & Trippes creek , Goldsborough creek (upper Miles river), Woodland creek, and the upper Miles near Ashby/Bantry. Also need bike trail from Easton to St Micheals that is not on rt 33.
Need more weekend and evening activity for young children, especially indoors. Some type of indoor gym, kindergym, indoor pavilion with open access and indoor playground.
There are no weekend or evening adult activities: dance classes (tap, ballet, swing). No pottery classes. No cooking classes. Something fun and available to adults, particularly creative arts or hands on learning.
More hours for the ice rink would be nice. Only two hours on a Friday evening when you are packed in with middle schoolers doesn't necessarily make for a super fun evening for adults.
Need newer and more playground for all agws in talbot county.
Need something in the outlying areas surrounding Easton. I have to drive everywhere.
Not enough soccer fields. Also no indoor availability
Not happy that we can no longer hunt the waters at our parks!
One or two outdoor public ping pong tables would be great, in Idewild, for example
Open skate should be seven days a week.
Open the ice rink up for summer camps. Ice skating or hockey camps.

Our family is very vested in soccer and during the fall it is great. However, during the spring it is embarrassing when we are moved to an unsuitable field for both practice and games. It's crazy that there are no restroom facilities at the Elks field, the "field" isn't maintained, no lights available. Talbot county needs to step it up-we travel for soccer and go to gorgeous facilities and then the teams come here and we dodge the inevitable question from the visiting teams of "where are the restrooms"..we have to tell them to get in their car and drive to Royal Farm. The players/coaches don't have a facility to use during practice either. We realize we are a travel team, but we spent years with rec soccer through Talbot and had the same issues. We have to share the fields with lacrosse which ain't fair to either lacrosse or soccer. Baseball has a beautiful facility with lights, stands, restrooms and concessions. Why aren't soccer and lacrosse given the same? Please, please give these two very popular sports their own facility and show others that coming to Talbot is a good thing and not an embarrassing thing. Thank you!

Our playing fields are very limited and their conditions are terrible and unsafe. Turf fields need to be built in our community. The resources and demographics of this community do not line up with the quality of fields provided for our kids.

Outdoor basketball courts are needed at the St Michaels school campus.
Playground equipment needs to return to park in Tilghman

Swings at least, are needed at park in Newcomb

Residents at the end of East Side Ave in St Michaels have decided that the end of the street/water side is private property. It is county property and we would like it maintained as such with a boardwalk for access to the water. Great location for canoe/kayak access.

Skate park needs to return to bay hundred area

Outdoor futsal court

Park facilities, especially playground equipment at Back Creek on Tilghman need to be reinstated

Park planning should include planting more trees, correcting runoff problems if near water, using native plants, and other tactics to protect our area from climate change.

Perry Cabin Park is in need of a total facelift to resemble North Easton Park. The baseball fields and basketball court need a total redo and at least one or two soccer fields need to be added. Lights for night games and expanded parking would be nice. The recycling station needs to be relocated so it doesn't take up valuable parking. St. Michaels and the Bay Hundred deserves a park to the caliber as North Easton Park. More space needs to be added at Newcomb for people to leave their car. That is a park/ride spot that needs more space for that purpose.

playground at Tilghman park is a high priority

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM TILGHMAN ISLAND AND THERE HAS BEEN NO MOVEMENT OR INTEREST IN REPLACING IT. WE HAVE CLOSE TO 200 CHILDREN OF PRESCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY AGE WHO HAVE NO PLAYGROUND ACCESSIBILITY EXCEPT FOR THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (WHICH CANNOT BE USED FOR THE PRESCHOOLERS DURING SCHOOL HOURS!

PLEASE bring back the children's playground at Back Creek Park, Tilghman Island park near the bridge.

Please bring playground back to Tilghman

Please bring the playground back to Tilghman.

Please consider fixing Tilghman Island park and playground for their community.

Please consider reopening the park in Tilghman. It is greatly needed there.

<p>Please maintain existing parks. It seems that outside of Easton, the parks are an after thought. Letting the YMCA dictate recreational sports is a disaster.</p>
<p>The county desperately needs a dog park. The park should accommodate dogs of varying sizes with separation for larger and smaller dogs.</p>
<p>Please make more bike trails not split up by road crossing</p>
<p>PLEASE make the ice skating rink YEAR ROUND. We spend SO much time and money here. And instead of driving to bowie or DE we could use our facility.</p>
<p>Please please clean up parks in Talbot County and maintain the bathrooms, trash receptacles and grass. St. Michaels parks are often dirty, trash is over flowing, the bathrooms are dirty and gross and the grass is not maintained. The Hog Neck bathrooms are also never clean and never stocked with basic supplies. Please make these things a priority. Also, the YMCA should be able to use the soccer fields at Perry Cabin, we as residents of SM should not have to drive to Easton for sports that have entirely SM and Tilghman teams.</p>
<p>Please provide water fountains for dogs at all parks where dogs are permitted! And, providing a decent, well maintained dog park is also very important to many people in this County.</p>
<p>Please start sending flyers to school again</p>
<p>Please stop requiring masks</p>
<p>Preference should be given to Talbot County-based programs for your facilities, not just first come first served. I'm not exactly sure of all of the intricacies involved in that, however, I believe that a counties residents should get first priority in booking facilities, considering it is our tax money that subsidies those facilities. It's how our EMS/Police/Fire/Town+county governments work, and while the TCP&R should do what it can to make a profit, prioritizing Talbot County-based organizations and residents is paramount. Thank you for all that you do; TCP&R is a fantastic org.</p>
<p>Programs for kids under 12 should be a bigger priority and getting kids outside and ingaged in safe, appropriate activities is the most important part of a community for me! Community gardening or farming for kids to be involved and enjoy and learn from the green spaces. I would also love to see equestrian barn add to talbot county.</p>
<p>Programs for youth need to be a priority. Communication needs to be available in English and Spanish and accessible to all income types. The learn to swim programs are great, but families that can afford, should pay. The swim team should be sponsored by parks and rec so that more families get involved in the program. Youth soccer, lacrosse, field hockey, swim team, and baseball should be a priority at elementary and middle school ages. So many kids have been isolated during the pandemic and families need to be encouraged to join. Leaders from parks and Rex need to show up in the schools to get kids excited about extra curricular activities. Hand out swag, flyers, and answer kids questions. Organize family fun events at parks - fun runs, movies under the stars, pool parties! Get involved in the community and encourage active health kids!</p>
<p>Programs we've been to have been wonderful at the ice rink. Would be nice to have a skateboard park as well for kids who don't do the typical tball/ soccer. A kayak ramp aimed at easy access for families would also be great- my 4 and 7 year both love to go with me and mainstream ramps for boats etc can be hard to maneuver for small craft. Thanks so much for all the hard work!</p>
<p>Public restrooms in park and playground should be well maintained.</p>
<p>Question 17 did not offer the opportunity to respond regarding ice sports i.e. skating, hockey, curling etc</p>
<p>Question 17 didn't include ice skating as one of the options for programs.</p>
<p>REINSTALL THE PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT AT BACK CREEK PARK -- IMPROVE CLEANUP AT DOGWOOD</p>

HARBOR TO THE LEVEL OF WHEN TAMMY WAS IN CHARGE
Restrooms are needed for downtown Easton, near Thompson Park
Safe walking trails are huge interest for my family with nature involved
Shade and parks that allow dogs (on leashes) are important for recreational areas
St Michaels needs a dog park within walking distance from town. (Dog parks aren't even addressed by this survey.) We also need more indoor pickleball ball courts.
Talbot County (Easton) needs a skate park for skateboarding and bikes. The addition to a BMX facility would also be great, but is less likely. My family was devastated when the town took out the small park we had in Idlewild and sat as a field for the past 10 years. We now travel to Ridgley, Annapolis, or VA Beach; which has over 20 public skate parks.
Talbot County has the space and availability to put in a year round ice rink. The hockey program brings in significant revenue and needs to be treated as such
Talbot County has very limited public access to the waterways even though it's surrounded by water. Parks that are open space, but not ballfields or highly manicured are lacking in the county.
Talbot County is a county that continues to grow yet we have no real outdoor/indoor accessibility for the soccer community. I am a part of a recreational soccer groupchat where we (as members of talbot county) play on the side of the YMCA in terrible grass and a slanted field and have bought our own goals out of our own pocket. We have no real access to a nice indoor or outdoor soccer dedicated field. If there are any, they are private, or being used my clubs or the Ymca. Therefore , we can't use it. This is for all the demographics from 15 years up to 60.
Talbot county needs an indoor sports building like other counties for multiple simultaneous games of soccer, lacrosse, volleyball or other similar team sports.
Teens seem to always be forgotten. We need more accessible activities for teens.
thank you
Thanks for doing a wonderful job...
The area would benefit offering a fenced, dog park. Similar to Levels Road Park in Middletown, DE. The Oxford dog park is small and not adequately maintained.
The ball and sport utility fields here are by far the worst of any other are we play. If the county gave a shit about the kids and parks as much as the airport we would certainly be a travel destination. The fields are unsafe because they are not maintained and have holes in them. The parks and rec department lacks knowledge and people who can program and get info out to people. The amount of air traffic is terrible over neighborhoods, the fields and the golf course.
The Bay Hundred pool needs many repairs and updates. It is very sad for a town with the amount of money the people in the community have. The landscape is always in poor shape/poor quality as well.
The community center fields are very poorly managed and are not taken care of at all. Weeds all in the playground, batting cage and grass is always to tall
The county is missing the boat when it comes to tournament level fields for lacrosse and soccer. Travel ball in both is a tremendous income producer in other areas such as DE Turf and the one being considered in Ocean Pines. Next, kids should have more regular access to ice and roller skating and skateboard parks. The demographics have greatly shifted away from Boomers. Families with kids should be this counties' priority and strongly feel the county could use other Maryland and Delaware counties as examples of the potential.
The existing parks are always well taken care of. More playgrounds areas, perhaps a dog park, a skate park,

basketball, and tennis options would be great.
The fields really could use an upgrade. We could bring in more revenue to the area by hosting soccer and lacrosse tournaments with a better turf field.
The ice rink has poor hours & front desk help is awful, also why can't someone join a call late and gave it pro-rated? What if you're on vacation or sick and can't make 2 classes and then sign up...? Pro-rate it! I don't mean pro-rate if you're a no show or something like that.... But when I new person comes to town, just hears about a skate class and they're a week late pro-rate it instead of telling them they have to pay for the 1st class! A private organization would want the business and pro-rate it but government is wasteful and so the parents say "maybe next time!" Also, on the mom n me skate.... It has an age limit for the kids! There's a HUGE homeschool population that would meet to ice skate (outside of homeschool ice skating classes) There's a 25% increase in homeschoolers since Covid.... Cater to them, offer a homeschool skate even if it's just 1 time per month.
The ice rink is only available for 7 months out of the year. Extending the ice season into the spring would align more with what other ice facilities offer.
The ice rink needs to be open all year. Another swimming pool would be nice. Each landing should have an area of "beach" access for wading. A gym area at the community center would be great for parents to access during their childs rec sports. A trail around the ball fields at chapel district ball fields similar to HRB park would be a great asset. Each field should have bathroom and water access like easton north park.
the ice skating rink could use more free skating time as well as open skate, maybe using age brackets. Example kids 13-18, etc. Having a longer ice skating season will be very beneficial too.
The Idlewild playground needs updated. Playground equipment has been vandalized and is starting to look unstable
The lack of adequate parking for car top carrier(kayak/canoe/SUP) autos is extremely frustrating for those of us who like to meet up during weekday paddles. Many spaces at the landings are now designated for trailer parking only. These spaces are not being filled during the weekday by autos with trailers. It would be helpful to allow car and or trailer parking on a first come basis during the week at these spaces.
The largest unheard demographic of Talbot County is also the one that works full time, raising kids and rarely has the chance to have their voice heard. More is needed for KIDS & TEENS in our area.
The park in Tilghman had playground equipment that was removed for no reason. The children have no place to play and learn to socialize with their peers. It is a very important part of their development.
The playground at Back Creek Park on Tilghman Island needs to be replaced.
The playground equipment needs to be reinstalled at the Tilghman Island Back Creek Park.
The playground equipment needs to be replaced at Back Creek Park in Tilghman. I have attended multiple community events held there for children since the equipment was removed and it's sad. The event hosts have relied on inflatable bounce houses to fill the absence of playground equipment. It's not the same, the children do not get to experience imaginary play or participate in large group play like they would with playground equipment. The children in this community deserve to have playground equipment at their park. Please consider allocating funds to replace the playground equipment at Back Creek Park.
The playground equipment should be replaced at Back Bay Park in Tilghman
The playground needs to be returned to Back Creek Park. I miss the playground as my grandchildren and neighbor school children.
Also need more kayak launch areas.

Space to wade and/or take dog to swim, Talbot has lots of waterfront, but very little public access.
The Rails to Trails in Easton are great. Could use more trash cans at along the trail and not in grassy areas prone to water overflow after storms. Could use more benches to give older people and young families a place to take a break. Public landings could use more trash cans, info to nearest drinking water, public bathrooms, etc.
The Tilghman area has very limited recreation facilities and most particularly needs a new playground for children.
The trails are a jewel of the community.
There are not many preschool recreational opportunities that take place in the evening for working parents whose childre are in daycare.
Separately, I hope TC Parks and Rec will reevaluae its branding to be inclusive of all families. Father-daughter and mother-son branded events do not welcome all families, even if the organizers may feel they are welcoming at the door.
there needs to be more things to do during the off-season. all teens really get to do is go to target, movies, etc.
There should be a sports complex. Multi use fields, restrooms, concessions. There is need for indoor fields.
These past couple years have been difficult for us no doubt. Trying to give our kids some kind of normal activity or sport is soo important. Some sports have been cancelled due to lack of registration. I wish the willing participants could still play the sport in some way.
Tilghman has been asking for a playground replacement at back creek park for two years. Multiple county reps/council members have been down to talk and support it. But there is no action. We've been told to use the school playground, but THAT IS NOT ALLOWED! We need a public playground.
Tilghman is in desparate need of replacement playground equipment at the park. Not all times are the school's equipment available. I think we are the only area that does not have park equipment.
Tilghman Island has lost it's playground equipment. Please make that park a priority. It's a pain to have to drive to Saint Michaels just to push a kid in a swing. That said, Saint Michaels does have wonderful parks and playgrounds for kids. I commend your work there and hope we can get the same on Tilghman.
Tilghman Island needs its own park with a playground and sports fields.
tilghman island park was taken out because it was never property maintained . The equipment as well as the grass/ trees/ mulch were neglected.
Tilghman needs a park outside of the school. Also a dog park
Tilghman needs playground equipment back for our kids. The kids don't have anywhere to play. The school system doesn't want our kids playing at their playground! Our kids have nowhere to play
Tilghman needs the playground back in Back Creek Park!
Tilghman park should be expanded
Tilghman's backcreek park is still missing a play ground. These children deserve a playground near their homes, not miles away. They cannot use the school equipment when school is in session, and some have been told (after school hour)to leave and not return. If anyone deserves money spent on a park it should be in the areas that are lacking one. Talbot County is more than Easton.
To be honest I think more is probably offered than we even know about ... I just don't know where to go to get info. I think if information was streamlined and dispersed in a more sufficient way then my answers to some of these questions would change

<p>Toddler and Preschool age indoor activities are highly lacking. An indoor tumbling space. Something between an indoor playground and soft running/open play space but indoors. Indoor running/walking track would be fantastic (stroller friendly). More hours for roller skating. Roller skating programs to get people interested. WEEKEND toddler/preschool dance/ice skating/music classes. Midday work week classes leave out an entire population of available parents.</p> <p>I highly suggest some type of indoor recreation center with decent hours. Large open play/exercise areas for group fitness classes, mommy and me, letting children run around to get out energy. Walking running track, etc.</p>
<p>Upgrade baseball field , restrooms and concession stand at Talbot Community Center. Porta Potty is bush league!!!!</p>
<p>Very disappointed that Back Creek Park in Tilghman has No playground!!</p>
<p>Very satisfied with talbot county rec programs for children. Need more for adults(bus trips) etc.</p>
<p>Water aerobics at Bay 100 pool is extremely important to senior women!</p>
<p>WATERFRONT. Please make public spaces on the water where we can SEE it, VISIT it. Please, please, please.</p>
<p>We are missing opportunities to upgrade fields to host travel tournaments; softball, baseball, soccer and lacrosse. It would draw families traveling to stay in our hotels and eat in our restaurants. The old Shorthall building would be a great space for an indoor facility; Hog Neck needs repair and is underutilized for soccer while the YMCA program has to jam into the middle school fields. Cordova has a great picnic/pavilion layout but needs cleaned up and repaired. AEDs are essential at all parks and the concession stands need repair at Hog Neck. We have beautiful spaces; we need to update them abs make them work for our county as well as serve our local families</p>
<p>We could use a year round ice rink, it would bring people into our county instead of having to spend money to go over the bridge , the shore has nothing like that! An indoor turf field that can be used year round , there is nothing in this area without driving 45 minutes, they could have club and sports teams practice year round , without giving money to other counties . The fields that are available need to be better maintained, the field hockey fields are terrible! Filled with holes and the grass isn't cut enough! This is one of the richest counties in MD and it needs to do better!</p>
<p>We have a beautiful community and we NEED more activities for our kids other then sports. More afterschool activities and affordable summer programs. Being middle aged I'd love to see more activities that include wellness again that is affordable. I'm a single mother who makes a decent living but I STRUGGLE to live in Talbot County. There is no affordable housing for middle class and there are few opportunities that our kids or myself qualify for because we make too much! To live in Talbot County you either have to be rich or poor there is no in between.</p>
<p>We live in Tilghman and have been very disappointed in the park that was maintained (or less than) and then taken from here. Our children were taken to that park many times when they were a baby and then were not even able to enjoy it as children due to it falling apart from non-maintenance upkeep and then it being taken away. I am not sure why our area is expected to drive 25 minutes to get to park with playground when we have the perfect location here if they would just maintain and keep it as a playground park.</p>
<p>We live on Tilghman Island and have our grandchildren visit often. I don't understand why the playground was removed from Backcreek park. We used to go there all the time. There is plenty of space and in addition many residents would love a dog park.</p>
<p>We love idlewild playground, but a lot of the original artwork and paint is looking shabby. Maybe a community</p>

volunteer day to spruce it up?
We love the ice skating but only having one afternoon on the weekend available makes it hard for the little kids to get to go. I don't want my 8 year old skating with the older kids at night. We really miss the Saturday afternoon session. Please consider bringing it back! :)
We love the ice skating rink. We love Idewild park.
We love the parks in TC
We need a multipurpose turf field that will not charge a arm and a leg
We need a skateboard park and dog park in EASTON and St Michaels. Also more advertising of what is happening in the parks.
We need an indoor soccer facility
We NEED better athletic fields!
We need better fields and more of them with field turf, overall better facilities for youth sports... both lacrosse, soccer, football and softball. A men's softball league folded because the ONE field was closed for the season.
We need better parking for kayaking. Take down the ugly no parking signs.
We need better sports fields in Talbot county (and more of them)! Our youth only have one or two good fields to play soccer and lacrosse on. We should be a destination for games and tournaments on the Eastern shore.
We need more soccer fields because I extremely believe that soccer is growing in the community but we don't have field to practice as indoor soccer , and soccer fields in good condition to practice this sport that is growing tremendously in talbot county
We need playground equipment in back creek park on Tilghman
We need playground equipment replaced on Tilghman and we need a small dog park at back creek park. The playground equipment was removed and it appears that the county is not interested in replacing it and our young population is increasing. The school equipment is not available during the day .
We need the county to replace the playground equipment in Back Creek Park
We need to focus on getting the Trappe Water Treatment plant up to code. This should be a priority over parks & recreation as it is an important part of the infrastructure and is required for quality of life for the residents. It is shameful that tax funds are not redirected to handle this.
We need to invest in the Youth of Talbot County. My children primarily play field hockey and we are driving out of state or across the bridge to provide them with opportunities so that they can compete on the same level as other athletes. There is a strong desire and need to bring turf fields to this community. We need to work together to provide a large venue that can house ALL sports so that we can have a cohesive experience for all athletes. We are fortunate that our children have talented coaches so that our kids are prepared, but we do not have a strategically placed facility to host large tournaments/games. This could be a tremendous revenue generator for the county.
We need to maintain open green spaces and stop pushing housing development. I would not recommend building new parks until the existing ones are better maintained. St Michaels parks are neglected. I've been to them with grass that hasn't been cut in months, weeds growing on the playground floor. Just embarrassing. Please work on maintaining and upgrading current parks and mainting green space.
we need turf fields on the eastern shore

<p>We really need a Parks and Rec maintained baseball/softball field in Cordova. There is a Cordova park with ball fields but they are not maintained at all and not in accordance with baseball safety guidelines (i.e. the backstop and fencing). I would love to see the ball fields at Cordova Park renovated so that we can use them in the future! What a great space that is being wasted at this time.</p>
<p>We really need the ice rink to remain open throughout the year. 6 months is hardly adequate to advance figure skating and hockey teams. The figure skating competition season begins in March at the exact time our rink closes. Many competitions cannot be attended because we lack practice ice. We lose many skaters to other rinks because they stay open and have more competitive programs. Both hockey and figure skaters as well as curlers, have to find ice at other rinks for 6 months out of the year. We are in desperate need of more ice. Please help us and our skaters.</p>
<p>We would like more support with trash and after hours enforcement on Black Walnut Point.</p>
<p>Why is the ice rink closed for holidays when the public/private schools are closed. (MLK day) Extend the rails/trails path into Cordova.</p>
<p>Wish there were more sports programs for the kids through park and recs and sports camps</p>
<p>With the new restrictions on parking at TC Public Landings, access to Talbot's waters for car-topped boats (kayaks, canoes, paddle boards), as well as recreational shoreline crabbing and fishing, is negligible. Parking slots that should be for general public use are designated for trailered boats only, and too often are left unused under threat of fines.</p>
<p>Would be wonderful for st Michael's, Claiborne, or tilgman to have a beach which includes an area for sup/kayak launch.</p>
<p>Would highly recommend more adult sports league. Especially adult (mens/coed) softball leagues.</p>
<p>Would like a dog park</p>
<p>Would like more access to safe biking trails and paths for community use</p>
<p>Would like the ice rink open year round, and every day of the week. Thanks!</p>
<p>Would love a paved bike trail besides Easton. And better/larger playgrounds. We need more outdoor space to do things now than we did before.</p>
<p>Would love more pickleball courts, playgrounds. Very satisfied with and use the ice rink often.</p>
<p>Would love to have a dog park on Tilghman Island</p>
<p>Would love to see a fitness option at the talbot community center. And to see the ice rink open longer (open earlier / close later).</p>
<p>Would love to see an additional ice rink added to the county that is open YEAR ROUND.</p>
<p>Year round ice rink for ice hockey Membership to the community center for free skate. Or a discount for hockey players, punch cards for skating.</p>
<p>Year round ice skating would be greatly appreciated</p>
<p>You left ice skating and ice hockey off of the list of activities and I feel those are the most important activities that are offered. The county could benefit highly from a second sheet of ice at the rink or leaving our current rink open year round! The rink also needs a pro shop, better skate sharpening services and an improved concession stand.</p>
<p>You listed BMX/ Skateboard Parks in the survey, but I do not know of any in Talbot County. We should build one in Easton and in St. Michaels for children.</p>
<p>You need to fix your misguided parking restrictions at boat ramps</p>

You removed the only public playground equipment in tilghman without replacing it. I helped build that at a teenager. It was not you, it was us. Yes it needed to be refreshed. But you never replaced it. Easton gets a beautiful giant park, and it was updated. I think you just forgot about us down here. Please replace what you took down. My children need a safe place to play. We do not have a yard suitable for playground equipment. Thank you for the consideration.

You took the playground equipment from Back Creek Park at North Tilghman never replaced it and it is a disgrace that the county has let this go for two years. And I mean disgrace and I personally think that this should be the first thing on top of your list to do. Next we have over 600 miles of waterfront in Talbot County and what is available to the public is another disgrace. You also need to put trash receptacles at Black Walnut Point and Claiborne Dock and see that they are emptied on a weekly basis instead of trash blowing around and the neighbors having to pick it up. You need to get in touch with the state to make the opening larger so people can get the state park at Black Walnut Point. I called to find out how to get there and they told me to go around the fence you can't get around the fence without being terribly scratched up from the trees and shrubs. So that would be easy I think for you to work in conjunction with them. I have many other ideas to much to go into here. But these I think are PRIORITIES!

Youth rec lacrosse like the field hockey program in the fall. Ice left on the rink year round

Youth Sports fields need to be upgraded, there are many that are not safe.

Please provide any additional written comments or suggestions you have about the recreation activities or programming offered in the county.

A fenced in dog park is needed on tilghman island

Activities seemed to be geared towards the really young or the senior population. If you're between the ages of 21 and 45 there's not really much offered for you.

Adult classes or programs should be added. Additional freestyle or public ice skating times. Turn on the heaters for spectators during ice lessons, games and shows. Wonderful job maintaining the landings, each landing should have an AED available. Fantastic events like skate with santa, daddy daughter skate. If no ice in the summer do roller skating events or dances.

Adult sports, pickleball, tournaments

All programs through parks and recs. should have open access to all members of the community. Accommodations to prices or financial applications should be made in order for all members to have equal opportunity.

Also space is limited with in some communities

Be responsive when issues are brought to your attention.

Bus trips are of interest for my age group and my elderly family members.

Community center in Easton needs to offer more than just sports. A variety of classes spanning different subjects.

County and towns need to live within budget. Developers and HOA need to do their share rather than taxpayers.

Easton needs a dog park
Easy access to all kinds of activities for kids is needed including summer programs, skating (of all types) and more focus on ways for kids to do things around here that are safe, active and hopefully don't require transportation. Where I grew up, at each of the schools was a summer program that had arts and crafts, kickball and dodgeball, archery, 4 square and more. It was free and open to neighborhood kids. Was a fantastic program and would be very worthwhile for this county to investigate.
Facebook page for Talbot County Parks would be a useful resource
have the ground people do better and actually do work
HAVE YOUR DIRECTOR GET IN THE FIELD AND TALK WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS
I believe that we need soccer fields for the kids who likes practice the soccer because I think the only place I have seen practicing is on the Easton middle school and that's all!
I have no extra comments except that we need more ice.
I like the new park area with the Bridge. Keep that. Add to it. It would be nice if there was adequate parking there as well.e
I think I have done that, I don't use the playground equipment or the after school programs. Supported the after school program as Master Gardner and support TAYA at Tilghman financially. I am a native of Tilghman even though I have lived in St.Michaels for 52 years I am very involved with my home community. I am hear to say that it has always been the last thing the county has thought about. I can tell you the true story about the rip rap at Black Walnut Point. The county should have a sign there thanking Karen Craig (deceased) for it. Because if it wasn't for her it would never be there. The county fought her tooth and nail but when she finally got support the county council jumped in as if they had really done something and had their pictures taken with the shovels. So there is something I would appreciate a sign dedicating and thanking Karen for the Rip Rap that everyone now enjoys as a park.
I think we need more for younger kids besides team sports.
I think we need to offer more opportunities for adults and seniors.
I would like to see flag football be available as a recreation activity for kids.
I would like to see more fitness and yoga classes available for middle aged and seniors, especially mid day. More walking and biking trails.
I would love to see more pick up hockey slots and more even teams in are men league so it's not a blow out every night on Monday
I'd like more to be offered with regards to recreation and park amenities. Walking trails and an indoor/outdoor gym would be great for adult and children's recreation.
I'd love to skate/BMX opportunities in Easton- as well as Covid safe options for seniors.
I'd love more soccer fields and indoor facilities available
Ice skating and ice hockey should be available year round
Ice skating is great! Maybe cooking classes for teens and adults

Indoor futsal court
It is important to have free and public access to indoor and outdoor community spaces for ALL members of our community
It would be great if Cordova Park was used for at least one week of day camp.
It would be nice if the boat ramps could be rented by food truck vendors for both the busy times of the year and the off season.
It would be nice if the county maintained the parks we have, even if they are far away from Easton.
Keep ice rink open longer
Longer ice rink season would be helpful. LTS lessons are great, please keep them going.
Longer ice season!!!
Maybe add some more public fitness classes that are only a few weeks long. They should also be unique (silk yoga) to draw in possibly college-aged adults
More homeschool programs
More ice time beyond March
More outdoor activities will be great too. Easy to find hiking trails with activities for kids and teens throughout the year. Obstacle courses, guided hikes catered to kids and teens, horseback riding lessons, kayaking or canning lessons, crabbing teams or lessons. More leadership teams groups for park rangers.
More programs for elderly.
More times for ice skating and hockey
More/ better advertising for activities geared for ages 55+
Nearly all kids activities are centered around Easton. More activities in St. Michaels or other areas would be beneficial for some.
Need a dog park.
Need biking trails other than our public roads and more walking trails
Need more weekend and evening activity for young children, especially indoors. Some type of indoor gym, kindergym, indoor pavilion with open access and indoor playground.
There are no weekend or evening adult activities: dance classes (tap, ballet, swing). No pottery classes. No cooking classes. Something fun and available to adults, particularly creative arts or hands on learning.
More hours for the ice rink would be nice. Only two hours on a Friday evening when you are packed in with middle schoolers doesn't necessarily make for a super fun evening for adults.
need turf fields
Need year round ice and another sheet of ice.

Never any info on the facility on fifty, should be programming for all adults during the day at free or very reasonable rates, we definitely need water access areas with beach area for all. Rest rooms are mostly not available and are really needed. Free parking places for kayakers to launch from all county ramps.
No year round availability of soccer fields. No indoor facilities. No nets available on the fields year round. Also you should have nets of various sizes.
Not sure why race and income are part of this survey.
Offer mens/coed adult softball leagues.
offer more variety for more age groups.
Overall satisfied
PLayground equipment in Backcreek Park please
Please consider building one of those "bubbles" that has a turf so people can plan inside all year long on turf. -There needs to be more programming offered for the younger child (more dance, tumbling, karate, swimming) at an affordable price for families Is there any way to make a green space or offer a soccer field or basketball court over by the homes close to South Street?
Please consider having more opportunities in the Bay Hundred area.
Please stop requiring masks
Please take a hard look at renovations to our local baseball fields. Especially those located on school grounds which have not been allocated any funding for repairs in many years.
Previously noted
Programs need to be offered in the Bay Hundred sometimes. This should include sports to allign with those offered at St. Michaels High School to include field hockey, basketball, wrestling, tennis, and soccer. Soccer should be strongly considered. Transportation is often a factor for families l. Tilghman (and more remote places) to get to Easton for every recreational activity.
Safer bike routes/trails
Same as other comments
See previous answer
See previous response.
Should be more accessible for low income families
Some more programming for 55+ would be appreciated.
Talbot counties fields are an embarrassment. I have been to nearly every sports field within 100 miles and our fields are wholly lacking in comparison. There are no turf fields available and Talbot county is missing out on a tremendous opportunity that exists in sports tourism. Further there are a number of residents that regularly leave Talbot county to utilize Turf fields that allow for continued practice and play in nearly any weather.

Thank you for all that you do!
Thank you for your time and consideration.
The county could offer significantly more of its very popular skating and hockey programs if the county's ice rink were open for additional months each year. Closing the rink in March forces popular programs to be on a much shorter schedule than they need be. For hockey and skating teams that rely on the ice, it severely limits their opportunities to develop programs and athletes, as these teams have to skip opportunities to train and compete through the busy spring months.
The county has done a fairly good job with the recreational programs offered but do feel they could expand. Our family has participated for numerous years in Lacrosse (Rec, Club & Travel), Field Hockey, Swim Team, Roller and Ice Skating. We have enjoyed all of them. Do feel there could be some improvement with as I've mentioned, creating larger field complexes for tournaments (with significantly improved field conditions) and more frequent public ice and roller skating sessions. The County needs to be more forward Family activities oriented. Less Senior citizen.
THE COUNTY NEEDS TO REPLACE THE PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT AT BACK CREEK PARK AND CONSIDER THE SIMPLE CONSTRUCTION OF A SMALL DOG PARK AS WELL.
The Tilghman area desperately needs recreation facilities, especially a new playground for children.
There are lots of children on Tilghman Island - please provide for them.
There are not many preschool recreational opportunities that take place in the evening for working parents whose childre are in daycare.
Separately, I hope TC Parks and Rec will reevaluae its branding to be inclusive of all families. Father-daughter and mother-son branded events do not welcome all families, even if the organizers may feel they are welcoming at the doo
There's always room for improvement with better transportation access to facilities for those without vehicles and improved information to the communitiy of all the wonderful resources Talbot County has to offer.
Tilghman gets the shirt end of the stick all the time
Tilghman needs parks
Toddler and Preschool age indoor activities are highly lacking. An indoor tumbling space. Something between an indoor playground and soft running/open play space but indoors. Indoor running/walking track would be fantastic (stroller friendly). More hours for roller skating. Roller skating programs to get people interested. WEEKEND toddler/preschool dance/ice skating/music classes. Midday work week classes leave out an entire population of available parents.
I highly suggest some type of indoor recreation center with decent hours. Large open play/exercise areas for group fitness classes, mommy and me, letting children run around to get out energy. Walking running track, etc.
We appreciate the activities available

We have a great variety of sports activities in Talbot.
We love the swimming classes for kids!
We need a multipurpose turf field
We need a playground on Tilghman Is. Please replace the one that was taken away from us.
We need alot more activities for adults
We need more casual pick up/ rec leagues for young adults
We need our playground at Back Creek Park. Greatly missed by community. Public access to water too.
We need playground equipment and a dog park in North Tilghman
We really need a Parks and Rec maintained baseball/softball field in Cordova. There is a Cordova park with ball fields but they are not maintained at all and not in accordance with baseball safety guidelines (i.e. the backstop and fencing). I would love to see the ball fields at Cordova Park renovated so that we can use them in the future! What a great space that is being wasted at this time.
Wish there were more long biking trails like the rails to trails.
Would like more information available about programs or classes.
Would love a dog park
Would love a year round ice rink
Year round skating rink.
Yes.Please offer a lifetime fishing license for a fee or for seniors.
Yoga classes and other fitnesses classes offered in Tilghman or St. Michaels would be greatly appreciated, particularly if offered during the morning hours. Talbot County Rec Center is far to drive for those in the Bay Hundred area.
You need to do more for good kids who get bored in a rural area. Please.
You should be working to acquire more parkland before developers build on everything.
You should consider becoming more present on social media.
Younger age groups- before school age, most activities do not suite working families