



MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
Prince George's County Planning Department

● Building Healthy, Sustainable, and Resilient Communities

Session 5

Prince George's County
Neighborhood Planning Academy

November 5, 2025

SESSION 4

REFLECTION



AGENDA

- Introductions
- Defining environment, sustainability, and stewardship
- Lecture
 - Exploring Prince George's County's Environment
 - Planning for Sustainability
 - Federal, State, and Local Policies
- Scenario Planning Exercise
- Post-Session Homework

INTRODUCTIONS

PRESENTERS/GUEST SPEAKERS



Megan Reiser

Planner IV, Environmental Planning
Countywide Planning Division



Marian Honecny

Planner III
Countywide Planning Division

SUSTAINABILITY

& ENVIRONMENT

DEFINING ENVIRONMENT

- What are characteristics of environment?

A misty landscape with trees and a bridge reflected in water. The scene is captured in a soft, hazy light, likely during dawn or dusk, with the water in the foreground acting as a perfect mirror for the trees and the bridge in the distance. The overall mood is serene and quiet.

DEFINING ENVIRONMENT

- The aggregate of surrounding things, conditions, or influences (such as environs or locale).
- The air, water, minerals, organisms, and all other external factors surrounding and affecting a given organism at any time.
- The social and cultural forces that shape the life of a person or a population.
- An indoor or outdoor setting characterized by the presence of environmental art that is designed specifically to make use of that site.

Dictionary.com

DEFINING SUSTAINABILITY

- What are characteristics of sustainability?



DEFINING SUSTAINABILITY

WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING?



ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING



Legislation



Implementation



Long-Range Planning



Environmental Planning LEGISLATION



Environmental Legislation and Plans



POLICIES AND REGULATIONS



Federal

- The Clean Water Act
- The Clean Air Act



State

- Tree Solutions Now Act of 2021 (HB 991-2021)
- The 2030 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act Plan of 2021
- Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022
- Natural Resources – Forest Preservation and Retention Act of 2023 (SB 526/ HB 723-2023)
- Forest Conservation Act – Modifications of 2024 (HB 1511-2024)



Local

- Plan 2035
- Resource Conservation Plan
- Area Master Plans
- DRAFT Climate Action Plan

History of the Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance

(Subtitle 25. Division 2)



In 1989, the Prince George's County Council enacted the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance (WCO), effective January 1, 1990



In 1991 the State Forest Conservation Act (FCA) was passed making woodland conservation a state-wide requirement



The FCA created statewide requirements for the conservation of woodlands during public and private development on sites



In Prince George's County this applies on lots larger than 40,000 square feet



The most recent major revision to the Prince George's County ordinance became effective on September 1, 2010, and Division 3 for Tree Canopy Cover was established

Tree Canopy Cover Ordinance

(Subtitle 25. Division 3)

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Ordinance

The Critical Area includes all land within 1,000 feet of Maryland's tidal waters and tidal wetlands.



Environmental Planning IMPLEMENTATION

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Office of the Planning Director

Human Resources —●— Finance

Community Planning Division

- Long Range Planning
- Master Plans and Studies
- Neighborhood Revitalization
- Placemaking

Countywide Planning Division

- Environmental Planning
- Historic Preservation
- Transportation Planning
- Special Projects

Development Review Division

- Urban Design Review
- Subdivision Review
- Zoning Review

Intake Regulatory Review Division

- Applications
- Permit Review
- Planning Information Services

Information Management Division

- Data Resources
- Data Systems
- Geographic Information Services
- Network Support
- Research

Management Services Division

- Facilities Management
- Office Services
- Publications and Graphics
- Visual Media Services
- Web Development

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Seven major elements



1

Master
Planning



2

Zoning



3

Subdivision



4

Site plans



5

Final Plat



6

Permits



7

Enforcement



WHO PLAYS A ROLE in Environmental Planning in Prince George's County?

Federal Agencies



Environmental
Protection
Agency (EPA)



US Army Corps
of Engineers
(USACE)



US Fish and
Wildlife Service
(USFWS)



US Department of
Agriculture – Natural
Resources Conservation
Service (USDA NRCS)



WHO PLAYS A ROLE in Environmental Planning in Prince George's County?

State Agencies



Maryland Department
of the Environment (MDE)



Maryland Department of
Natural Resources (DNR)



WHO PLAYS A ROLE in Environmental Planning in Prince George's County?

Prince George's County Agencies



Health
Department



Department
of the
Environment
(DOE)



Department
of Permitting,
Inspections
and
Enforcement
(DPIE)



Department of
Public Works
and
Transportation
(DPW&T)



Prince
George's Soil
Conservation
District (SCD)



Department
of Parks and
Recreation
(DPR)



Office
of Law



WHO PLAYS A ROLE in Environmental Planning in Prince George's County?

- Municipalities
- Environmental Organizations
- Citizens
- Environmental Committees



THE MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE
The Association of Cities and Towns



Implementation of Environmental Laws



Review Processes

- Development Review Division Applications for Entitlement Cases
- Mandatory Referral Applications for public projects
- Stand Alone Applications for Use-By-Right
- Permit Applications
- Violation Mitigation Applications



Plans

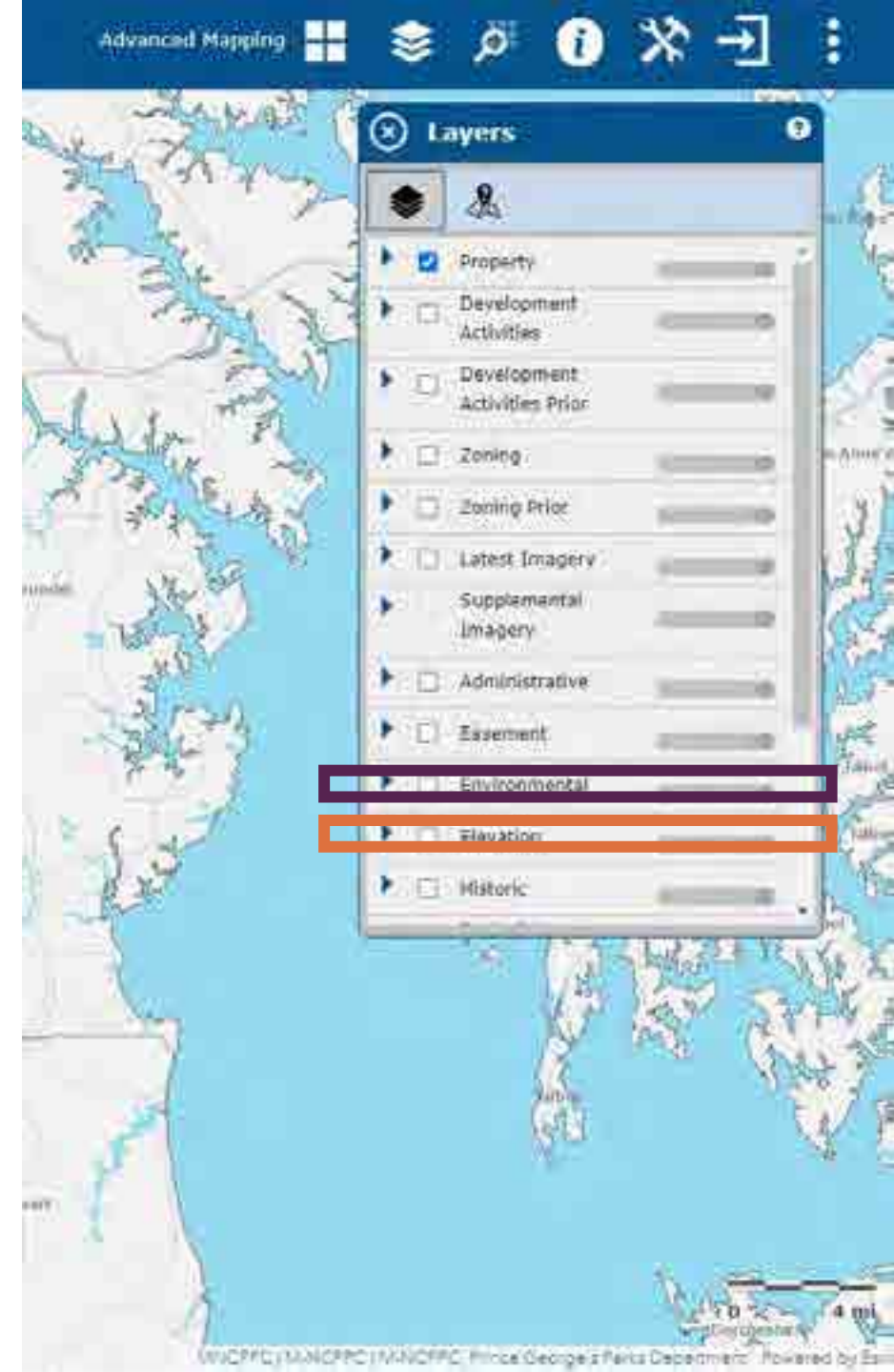
- Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)
- Type 1 Tree Conservation Plan (TCP1)
- Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan (TCP2)
- Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Conservation Plan (CP)

EXPLORING ENVIRONMENT IN GIS LAYERS

www.pgatlas.com

Mapping Layers

- Environmental
 - Streams, wetlands, and floodplains
 - Watersheds
 - Sensitive Species Review Areas
 - Soils
 - Tree Canopy
 - Forest Interior Dwelling Species Habitat
 - Green Infrastructure Network
 - Woodland Conservation Easements
 - Plans (NRI, TCP1, TCP2)
- Elevation
 - Topography and Steep Slopes



STREAMS AND WETLANDS



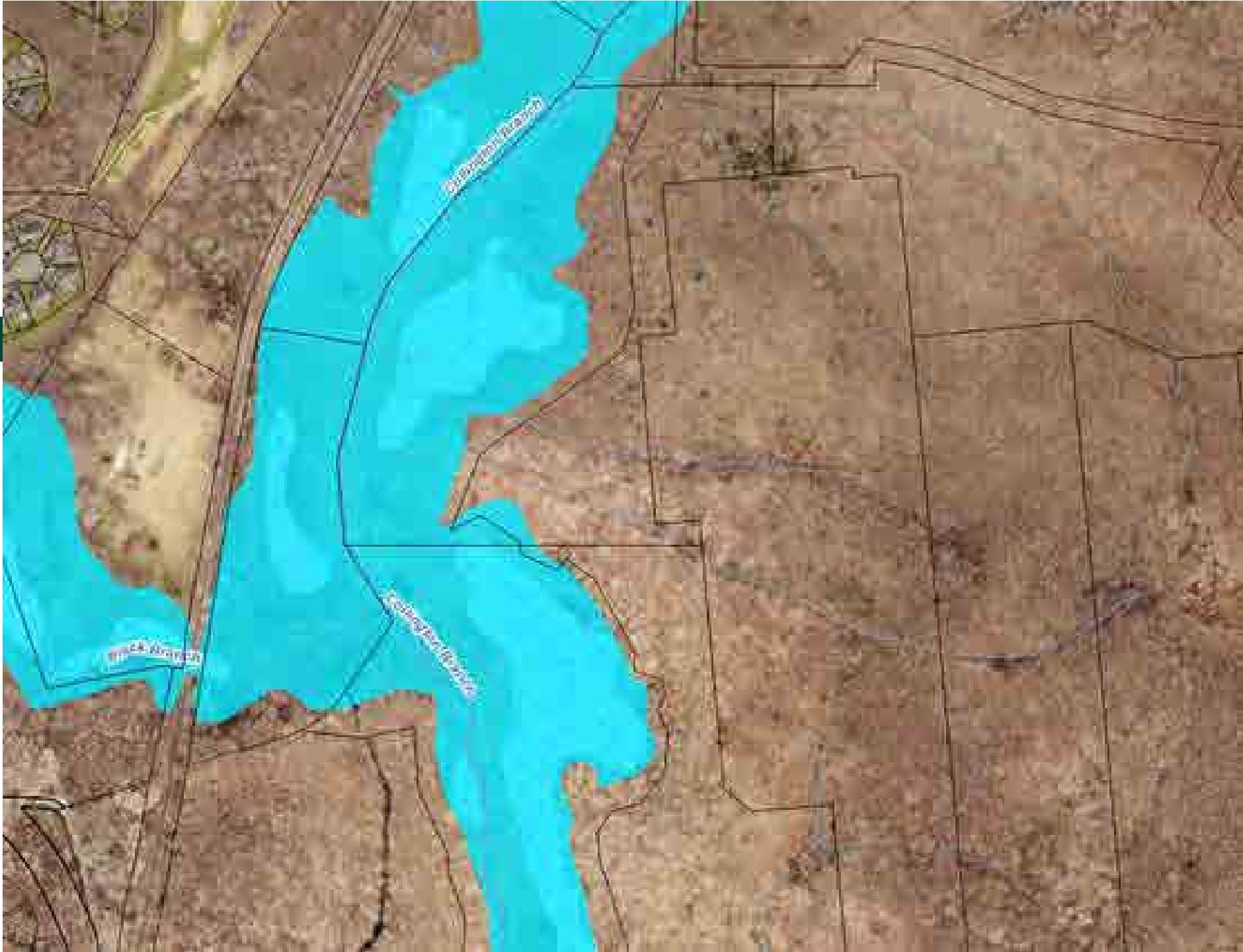
FLOODPLAIN



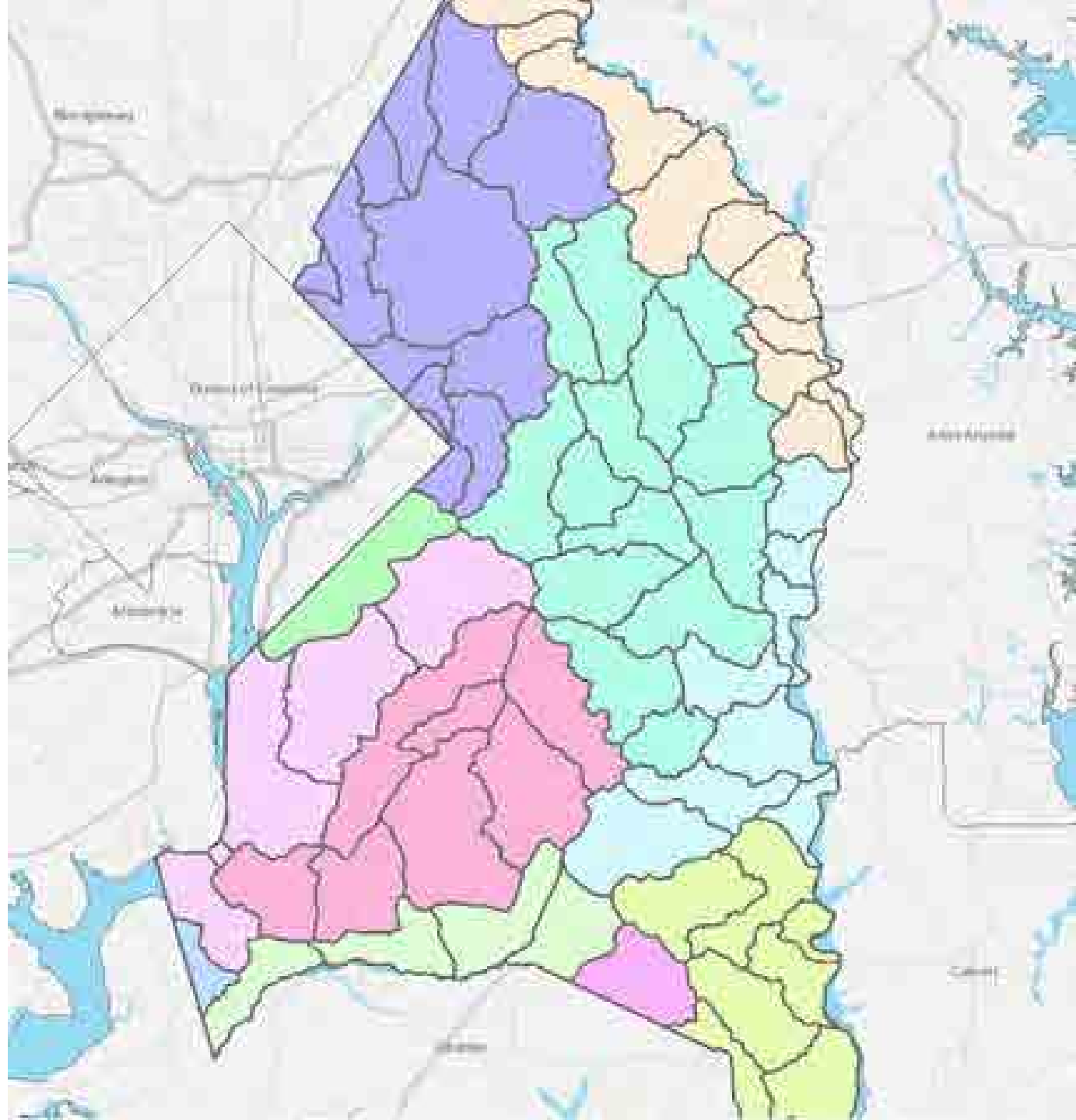
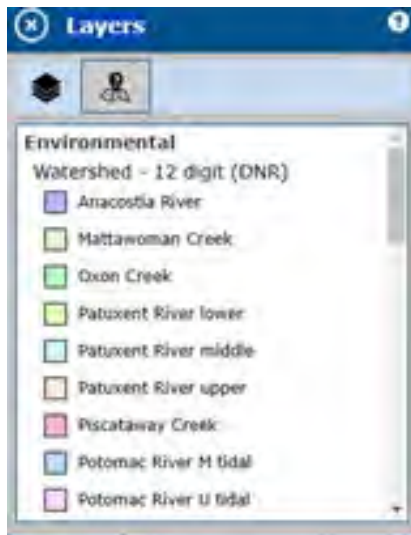
2011 Flood, Central Administration Building (CAB)
Source: Prince George's County Planning Department



100-year floodplain



WATERSHEDS

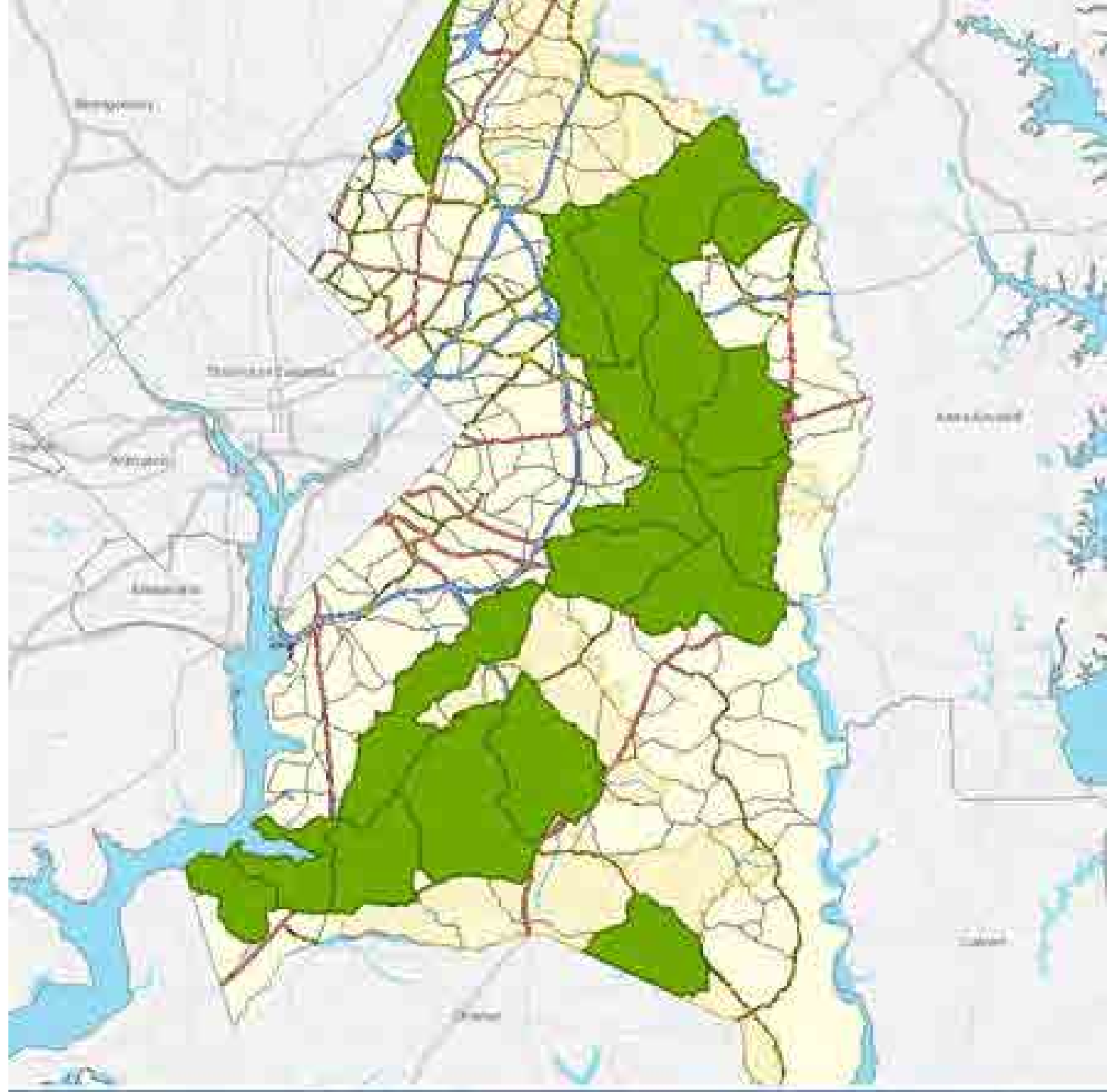


TIER II AND STRONGHOLD WATERSHEDS

Layers

Environmental

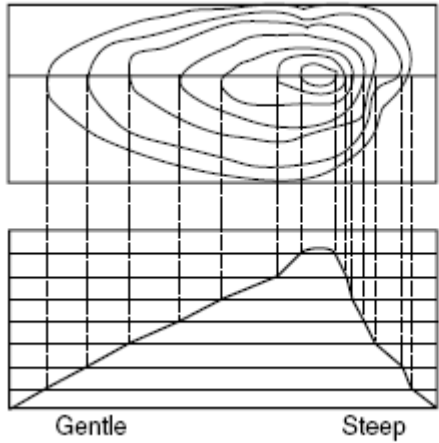
- Stronghold Watershed (DNR)
1; 2
- Tier II Catchment (MDE)
- Tier II Stream Segment (MDE)



SENSITIVE SPECIES PROJECT REVIEW AREA (SSPRA)



TOPOGRAPHY



Hill as shown
on map.

Projection
shows hill as it
would look from
the ground.

Source: National Wildfire Coordinating Group



STEEP SLOPES

Layers

Environmental

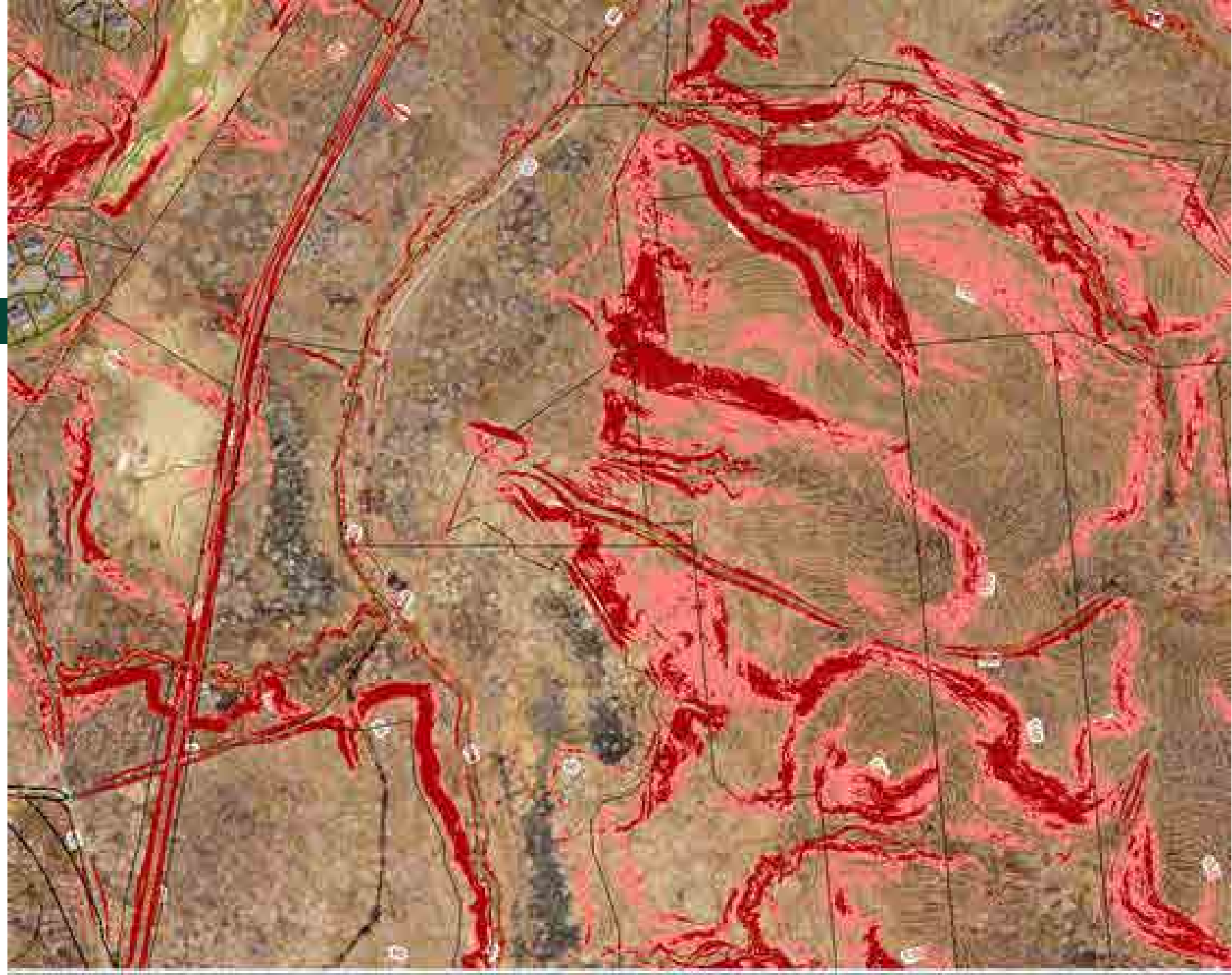
Slope (2021)

-  Slopes between 15% and 25%
-  Slopes greater than 25%

Elevation

Contour - 2 Ft (2021)

-  7101 (Index Contour)
-  7102 (Intermediate Contour)
-  7103 (Index Depression Contour)
-  7104 (Intermediate Depression Contour)



SOILS

Layers

Environmental

Marlboro Clay

- Evaluation_Zone
- Present

Soil (NRCS)

-



TREE CANOPY COVER



Layers

Tree Canopy (2020)



FOREST INTERIOR DWELLING SPECIES HABITAT (FIDS)



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK



Layers

Property
 Road Casings
 Property

Environmental
 Green Infrastructure Plan (2017)
 Regulated Area
 Evaluation Area

Default
 Property Base Fill

Map 1. 2017 Countywide Green Infrastructure Network

Regulated Areas represent a conceptual delineation of connected regulated environmental features including streams, wetlands and their buffers, the 100-year floodplain, and their adjacent steep slopes. The features shown are the known locations of regulated features at a large scale. This delineation should not be used for land development purposes. Approval of a Natural Resource Inventory is required to confirm the locations of regulated environmental features (streams, wetlands, floodplains).

Evaluation Areas include patches of land known to contain one or more sensitive environmental features of concern such as interior forests (to focus connectivity on the largest remaining blocks of forests), areas of predicted wetland migration (to address climate change), and protected lands (to ensure connectivity to previous conservation efforts). Evaluation Areas are used to look more closely at the role the location plays in conserving sensitive resources and preserving or establishing land-based connections within the network.

Mapping Criteria for Evaluation Area:
 To be included in the Evaluation Area, patches must be:
 a. 1-acre greater in size
 b. within 200 feet of another patch inside the highway
 c. within 600 feet of another patch outside the highway
 and
 d. at least 50 feet wide outside the highway and continuous with inside the highway



Legend

- Regulated Area
- Evaluation Area
- Plan 2021 Growth Boundary
- Inside the Highway
- Outside the Highway, within the Growth Boundary
- Outside the Growth Boundary (Forest and Agricultural Use)

EASEMENTS

Layers

Property

Road Casings

Property

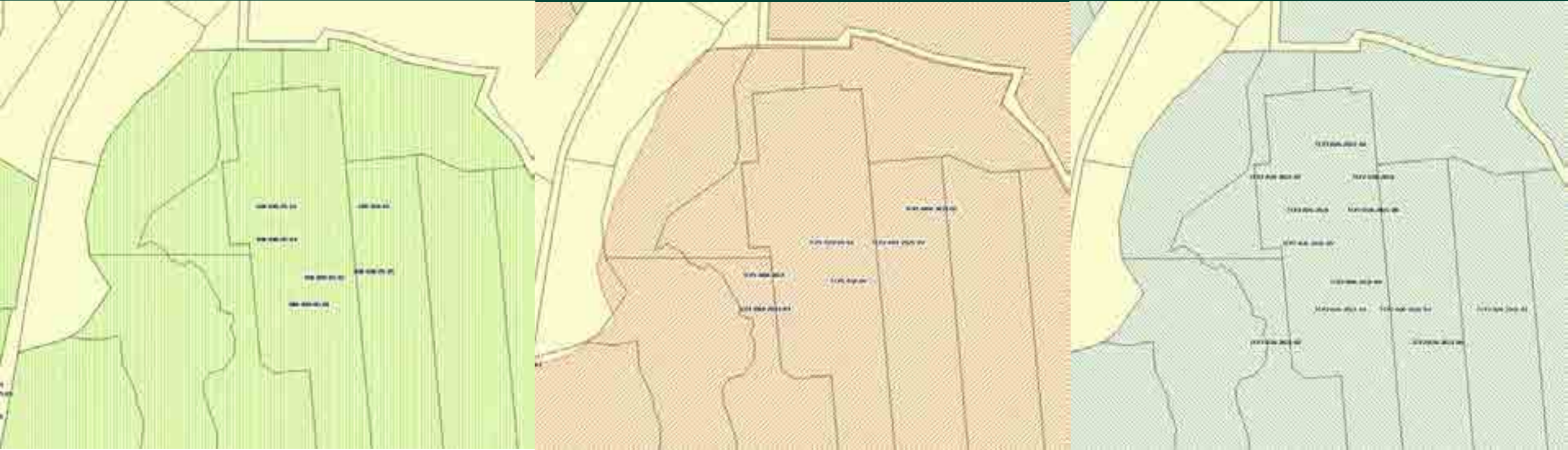
Easement

Environmental and Cultural (Platted)

- Conservation
- Floodplain
- Landscape



ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS



 Natural Resources Inventory Plan (NRI)

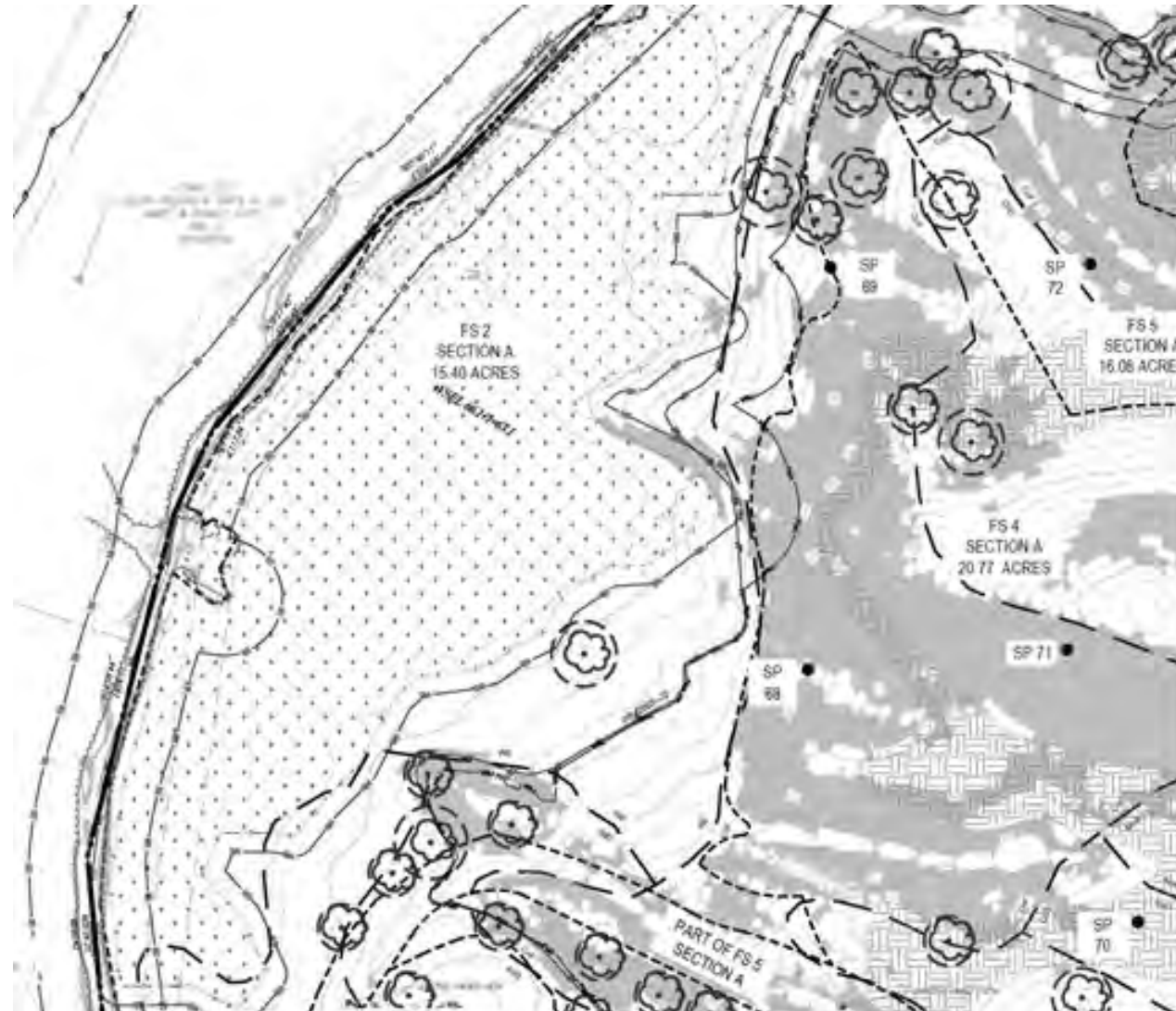
 Type 1 Tree Conservation Plan (TCP1)

 Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan (TCP2)

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS



Natural Resources Inventory Plan (NRI)



MATCHLINE - SHEET 4

LEGEND	
SP 1	FIRST ENCUMBRANCE POINT
---	TOURIST PARK ROAD
---	EXISTING 100' L&L
---	EXISTING 100' WITH FOOT END
---	ADJACENT WETLAND STRIP
---	PERMANENT STREAM
---	PERMIT MANAGEMENT AREA
---	STREAM BUFFER TO FISH HED
---	NON-TIDAL WETLAND BOUNDARY
---	NON-TIDAL WETLAND BUFFER (30' BUFFER)
---	10' BUFFER FLOOR PLANTS
---	10' BUFFER W/ 10' L&L
---	30' BUFFER - BUFFER TO FISH
---	WETLAND BOUNDARY
---	FOREST BUFFER W/ 10' BOUNDARY
---	WATERWAY AREA
---	SP 100 LOCATION

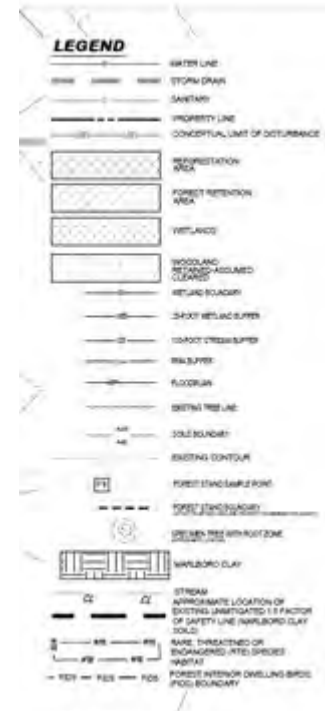
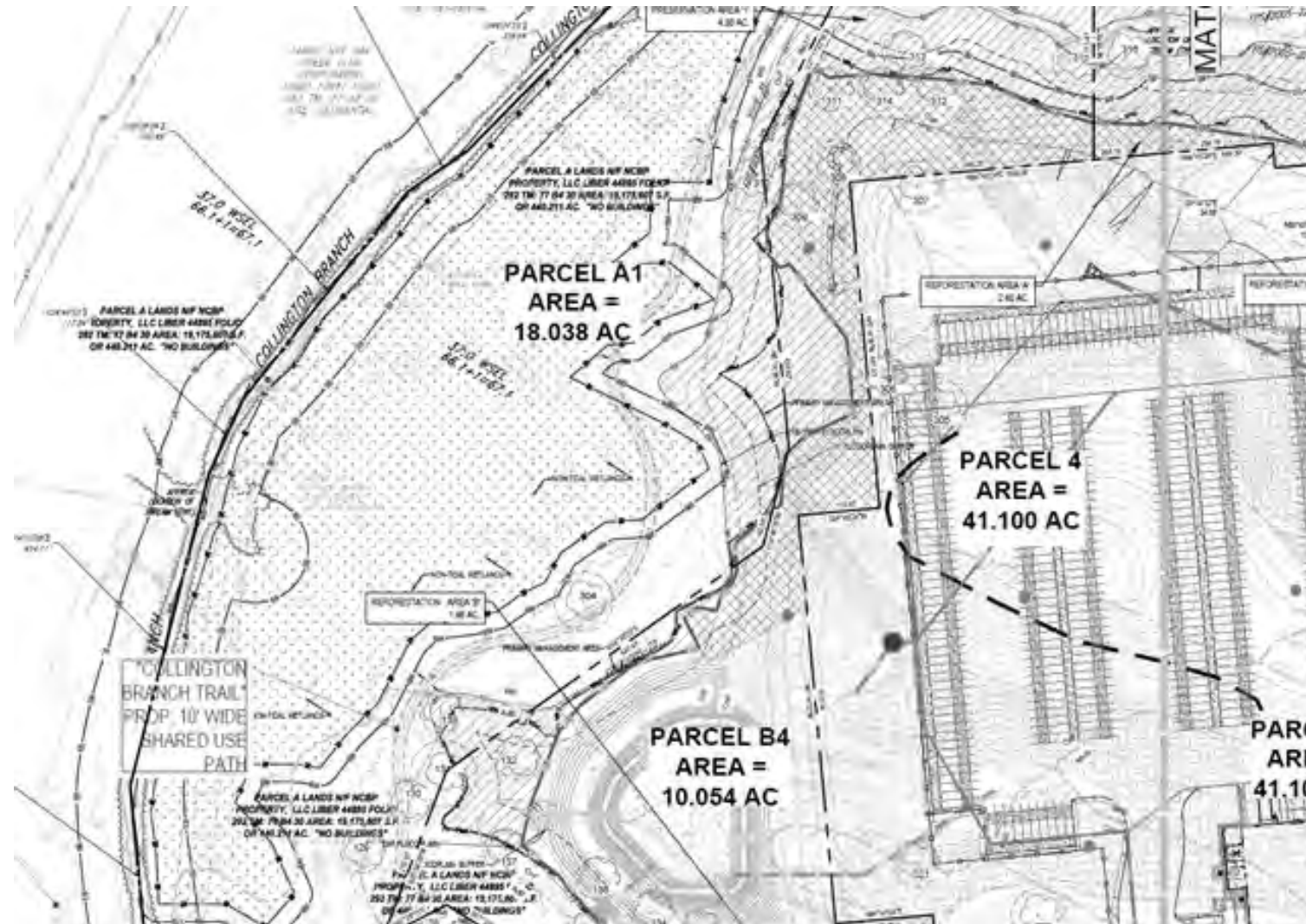
THE SATURNITE RIVER PRIMARY MANAGEMENT AREA (PMA) SHOWN ON THIS PLAN HAS BEEN REVISED TO ACCOMMODATE A 100 FOOT WIDE PROTECTION BUFFER FOR PAIR, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES FOR ALL STREAMS AND NON-TIDAL WETLANDS ON THE SITE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CONDITION 22 OF FIGURE NO. 28-013 AND SECTION 2A-101 (1)(b) OF THE SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE.



ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS

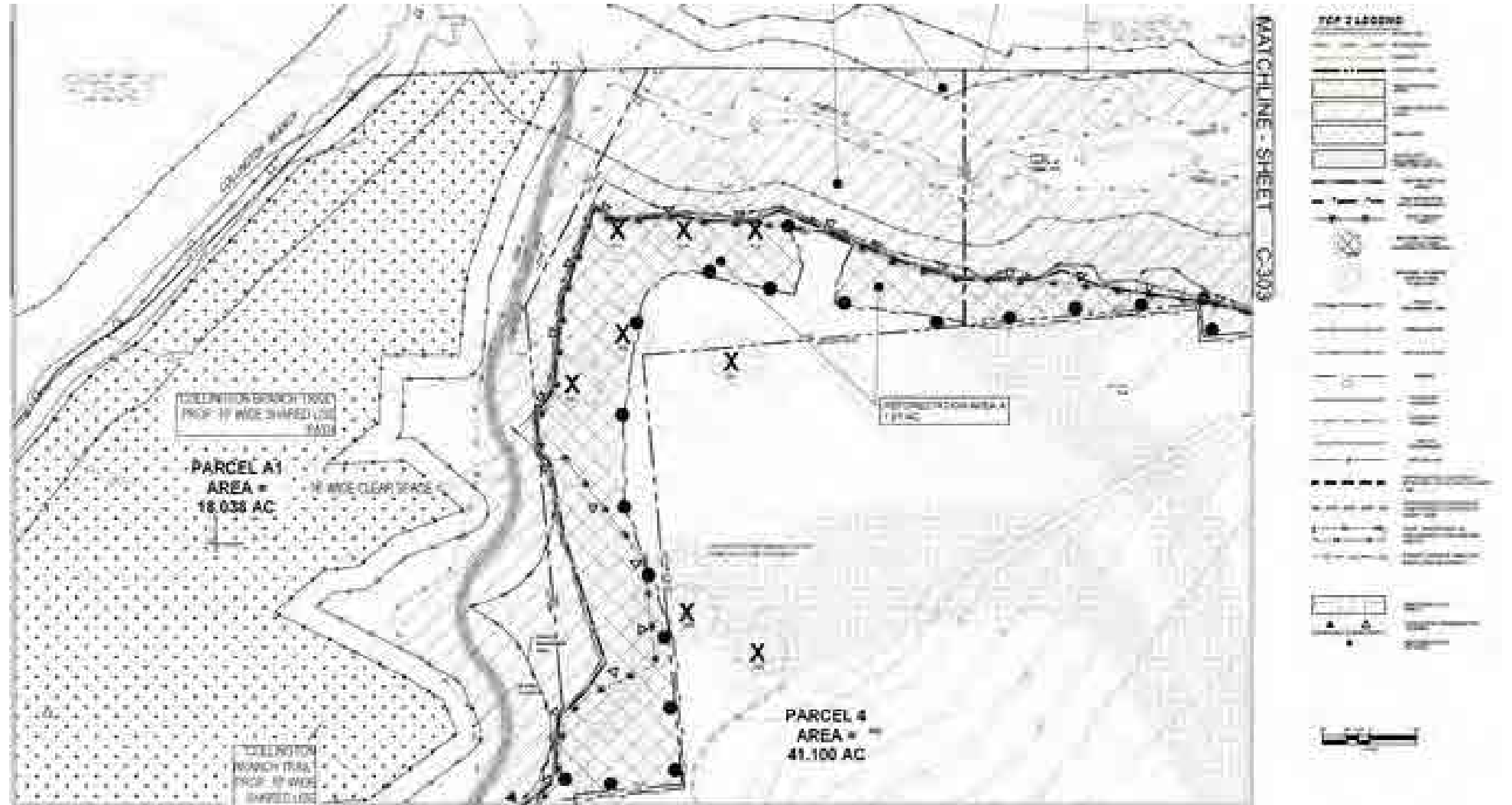


Type 1 Tree Conservation Plan (TCP1)



ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS

Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan (TCP2)



Grading Operation
and Tree Preservation
(2023 Aerial)



Grading Operation and Tree Preservation (Ground Level)



Mitigation Techniques



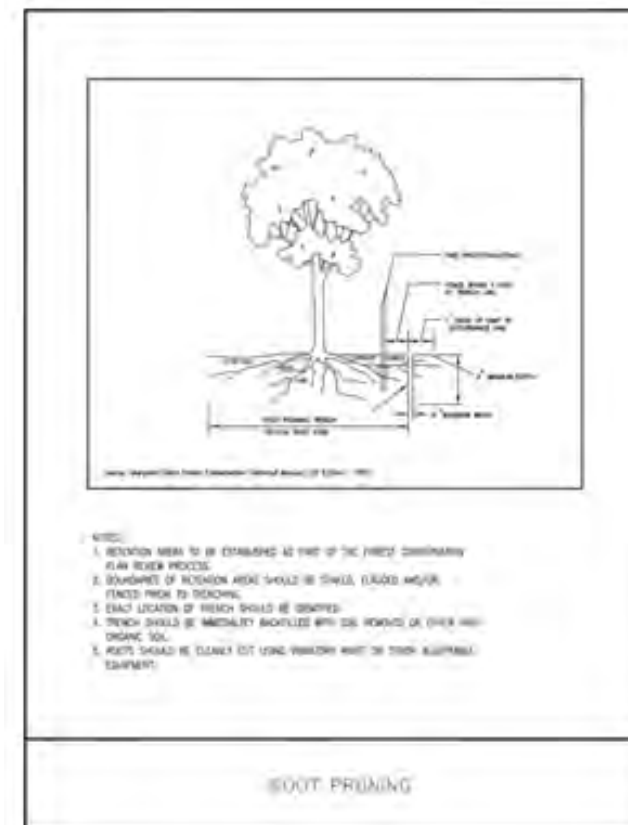
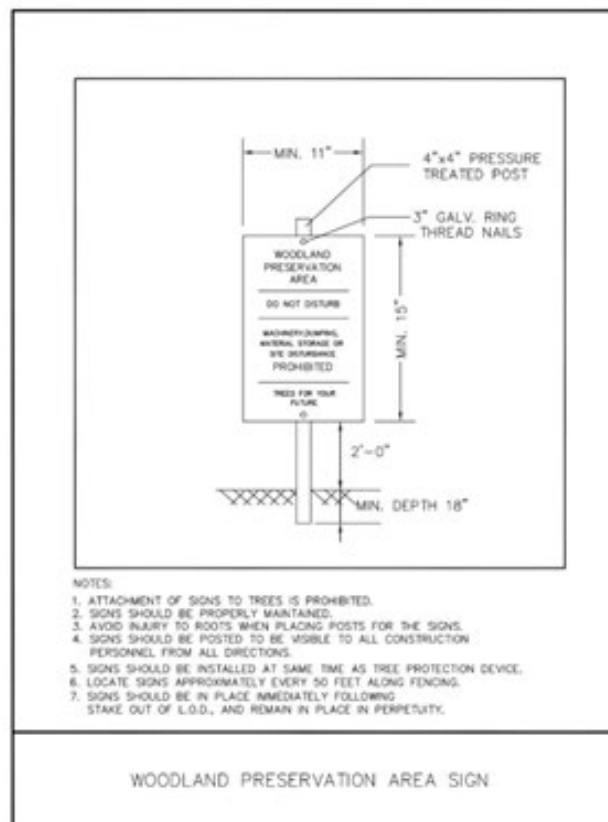
2018 Environmental Technical Manual



The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Prince George's County Planning Department

Approved by the Prince George's County Planning Board July 26, 2018

Edited by Publications as of November 2018



Permits & Violations



Environmental Planning LONG-RANGE PLANNING

TYPES OF PLANS



Comprehensive Plan

1

Countywide



Functional Master Plans

8

Countywide



Area Master Plans

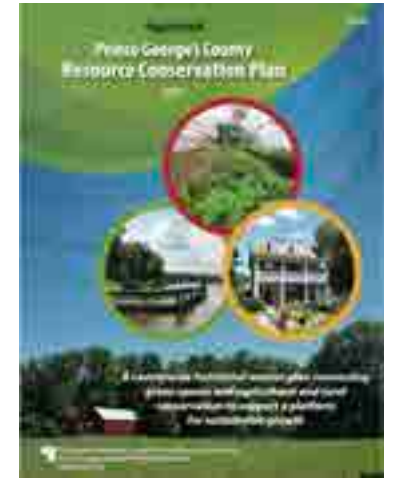
38

Specific areas

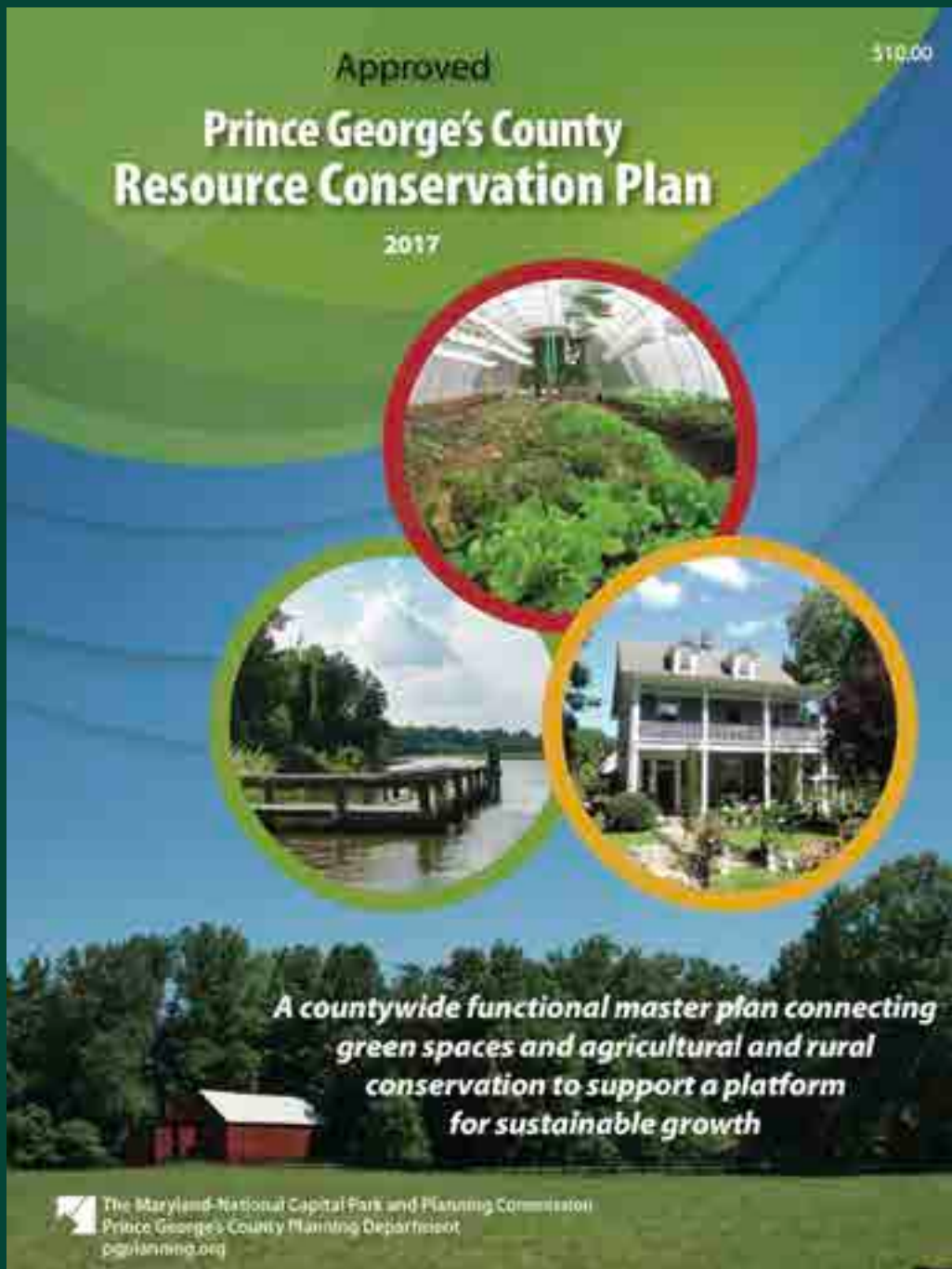
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY VISION



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN



These plans outline the County's goals for conservation, emphasizing the importance of integrating environmental elements into all stages of planning and development.



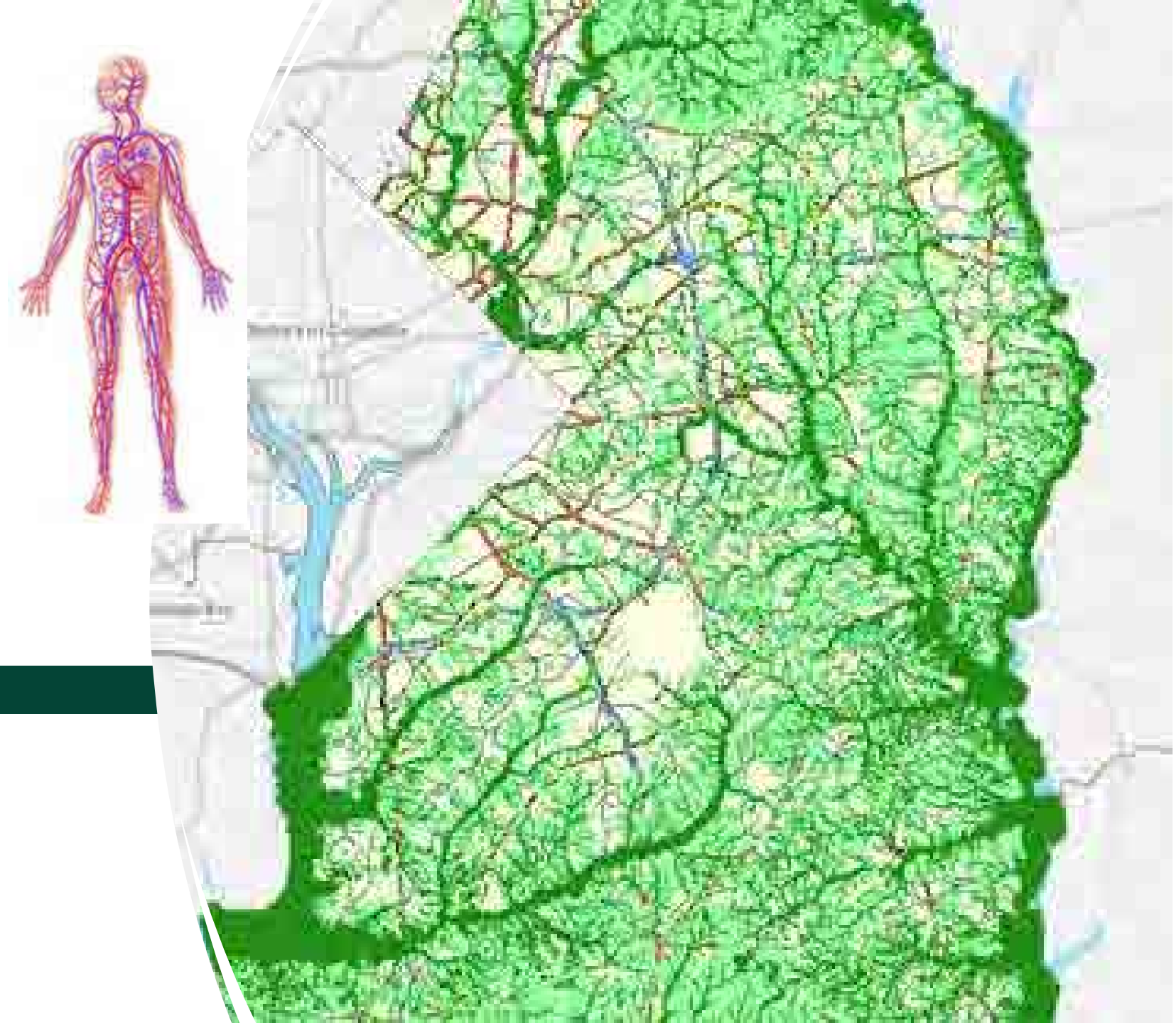
Resource Conservation Plan (2017)

Includes three functional master plans:

- Green Infrastructure Plan
- Agricultural Conservation Plan
- Rural Character Conservation Plan

The purpose of the RCP is to provide broad countywide strategies and recommendations as a tool to guide future development activity and preservation.

Countywide Green Infrastructure Network (2017)

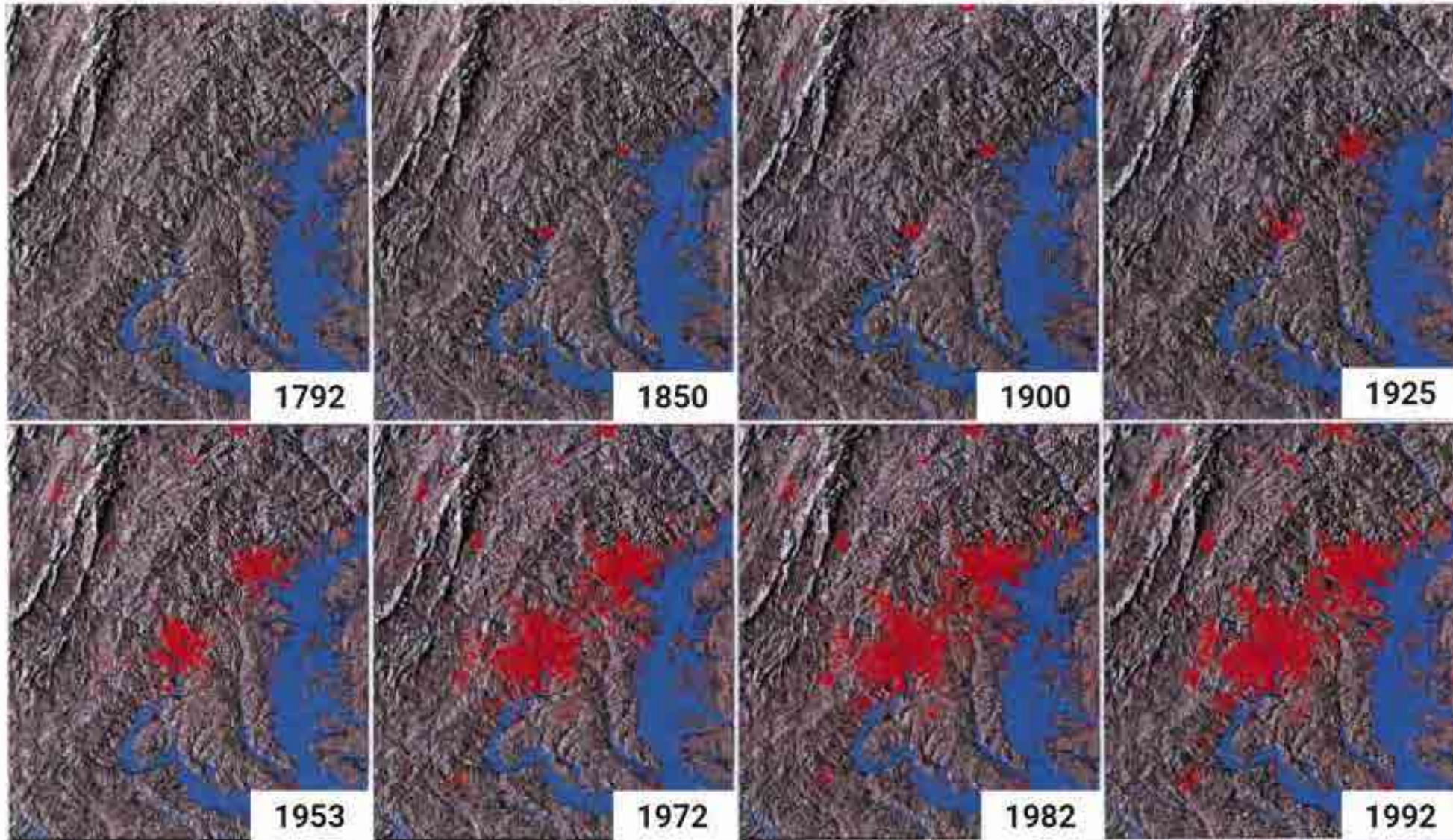


WHY

do we do Environmental Planning?



Sprawl in 1950s



"People wanted to live outside of the city centers to avoid traffic, noise, crime, and other problems, and to have homes with more square footage and yard space."

-- Resnick, 2010.

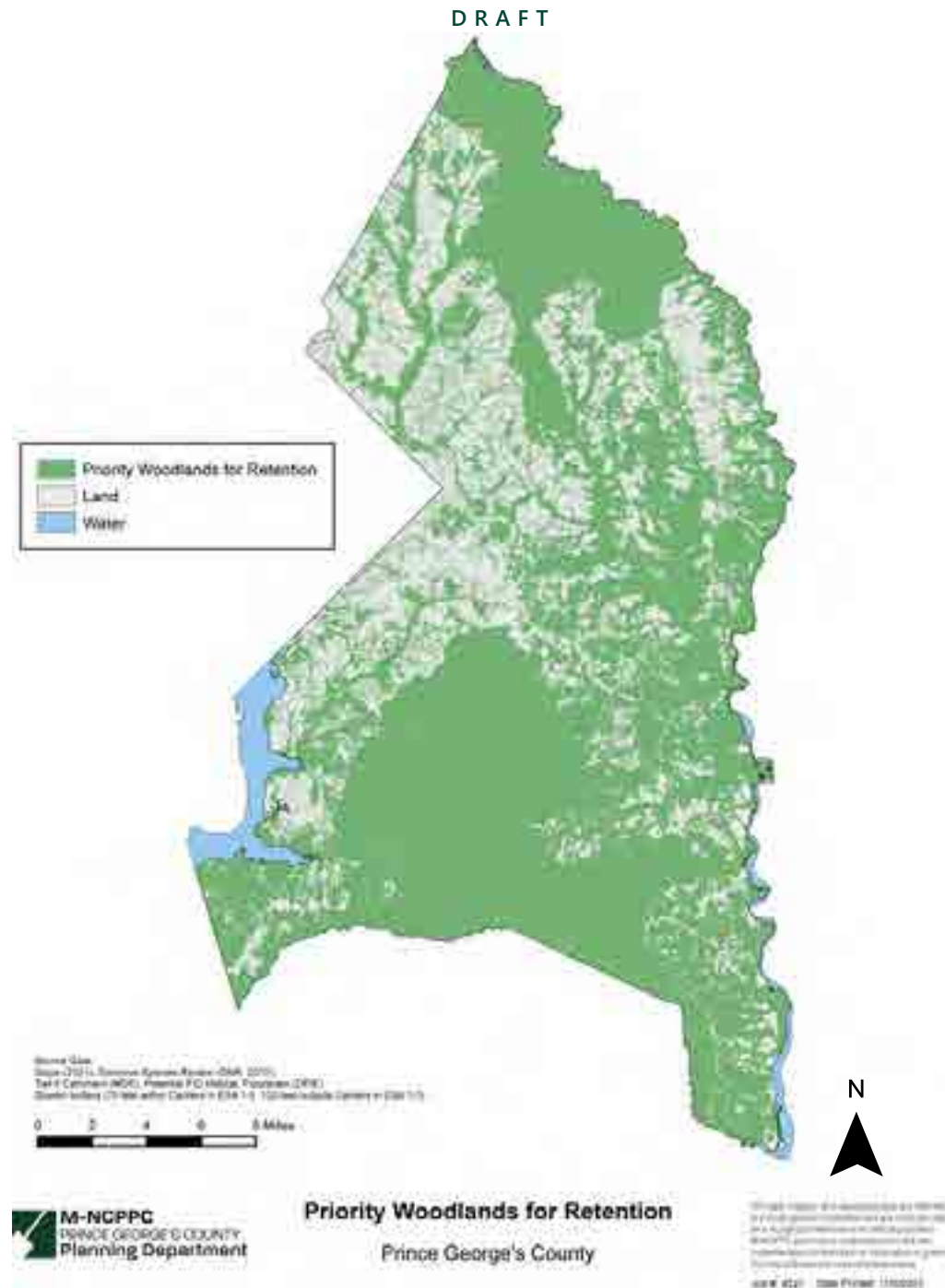
Plan 2035

Transit-Oriented Centers



5-1607(c)

Priority Retention Areas



The following is a summary of the elements that comprise priority retention areas:

- 100-year floodplains
- Streams and their buffers
- Steep slopes
- Critical habitat
- Contiguous forest that connects the largest undeveloped or most vegetated tracts of land within and adjacent to the site
- Forest Interior Dwelling Species (FIDs) habitat
- Forest located in Tier II and III watersheds (Tier III N/A)
- Water resource protection zones, reservoir or wellhead protection areas (N/A)
- Forests in urban areas (TBD by DNR)
- Sensitive species project review areas (rare, threatened, and endangered species habitat)
- Trees that are part of a historic setting
- Specimen and champion trees

Environmental Ecosystem

"A system, or a group of interconnected elements, formed by the interaction of a community of organisms with their environment." Dictionary.com



Tree Canopy Cover

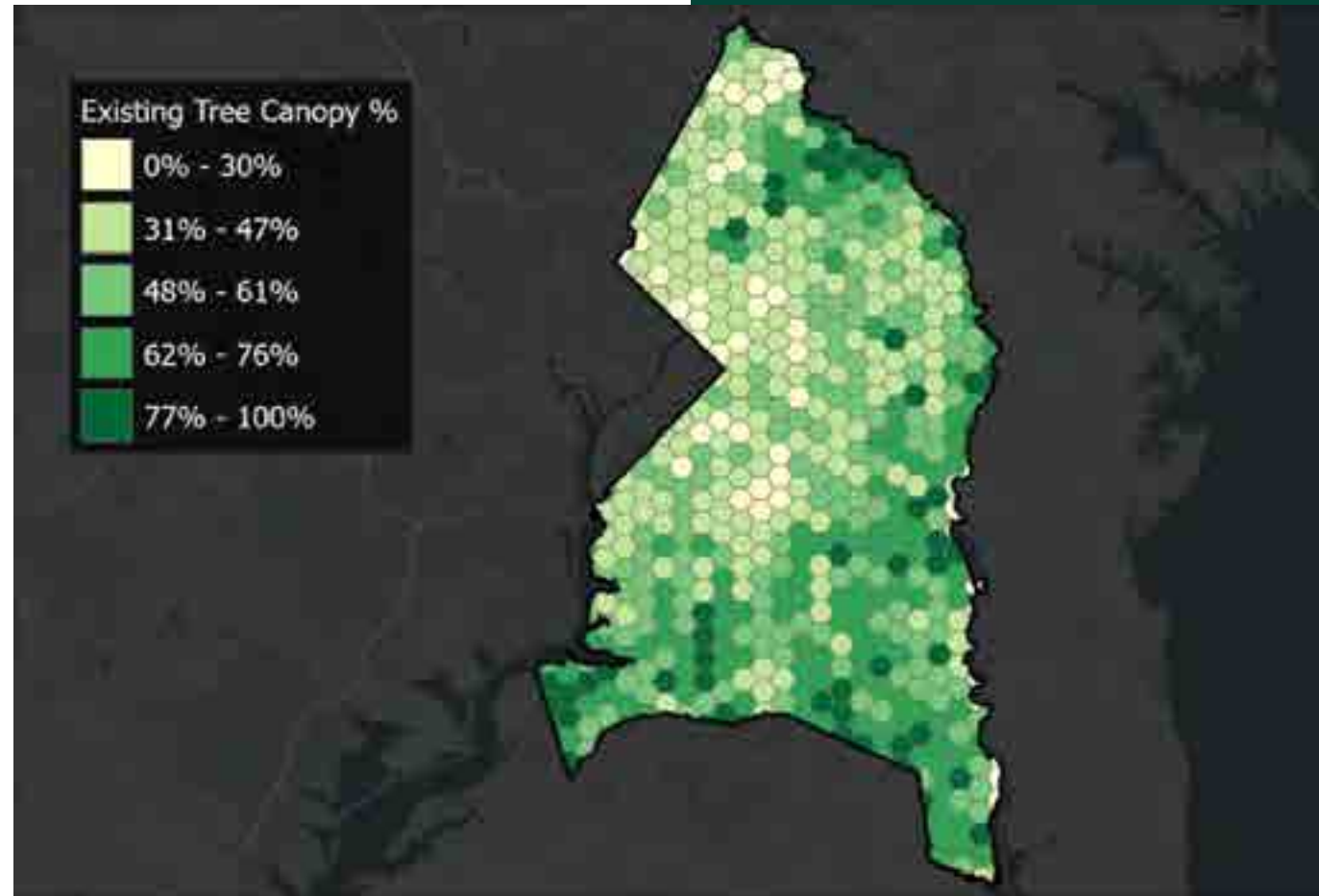


Prince George's County

2023 Tree Canopy Assessment

Existing tree canopy percentage for 2020 conditions summarized using 250-hectare hexagons. For each of the hexagons, the percent tree canopy was calculated by dividing the amount of tree canopy by the land area, which excludes water.

Using hexagons as the unit of analysis provides a standard mechanism for visualizing the distribution of tree canopy without the constraints of other geographies that have unequal area (e.g., zip codes).

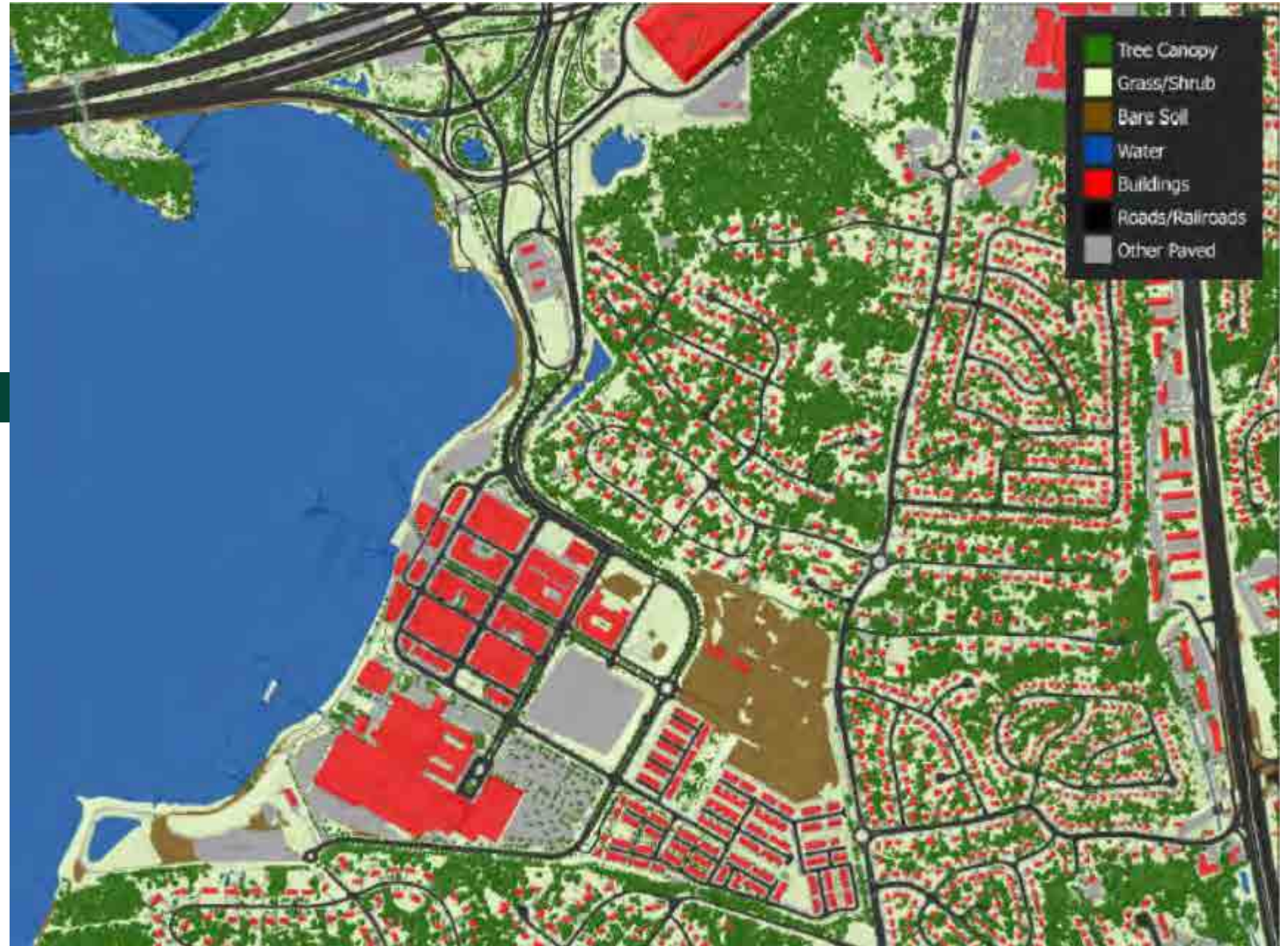


Prepared by
The University of Vermont

Prepared for
Prince George's County Planning Department

November 2023

Landcover



Tree Canopy Assessment

Prepared by
The University of Vermont

Prepared for
Prince George's County Planning Department

November 2023

Tree Canopy By the Numbers



53

Percent of tree canopy (2020)



164,121

Acres of tree canopy (2020)



2%

Percentage point change in tree canopy from 2009-2020.

Gain: 20,490 acres

Loss: 17,342 acres



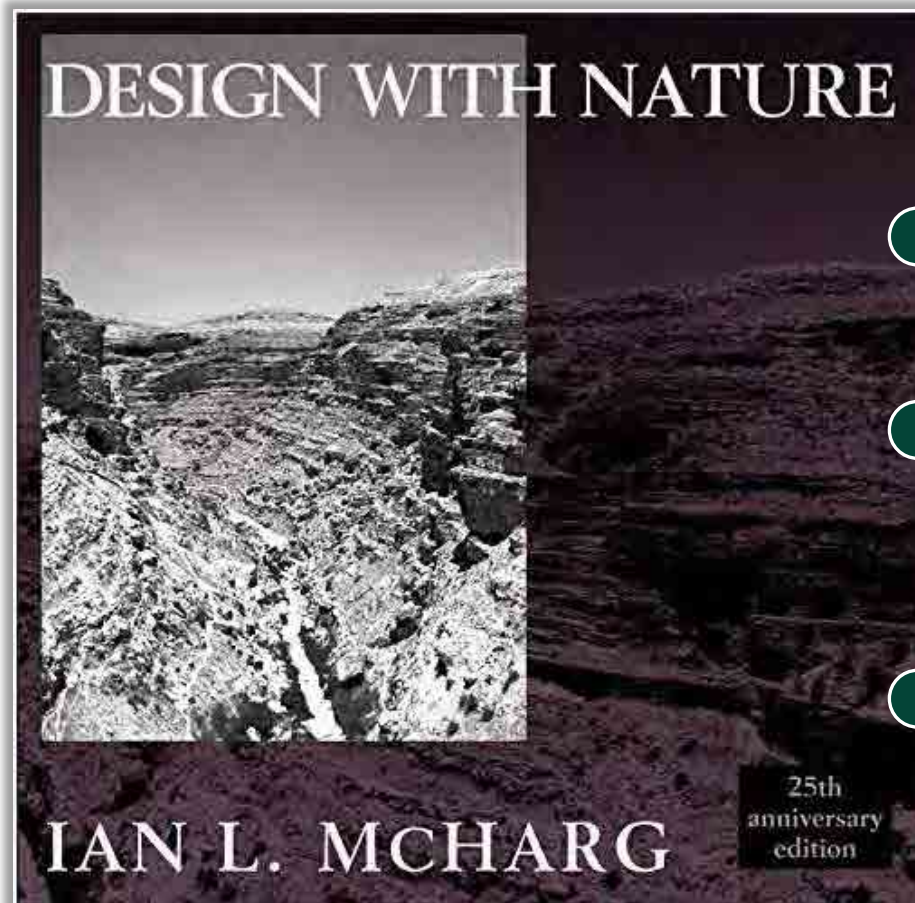
6,393,800

Estimated number of trees in the County in 2020

QUESTIONS?

BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

HISTORY OF PLANNING for people



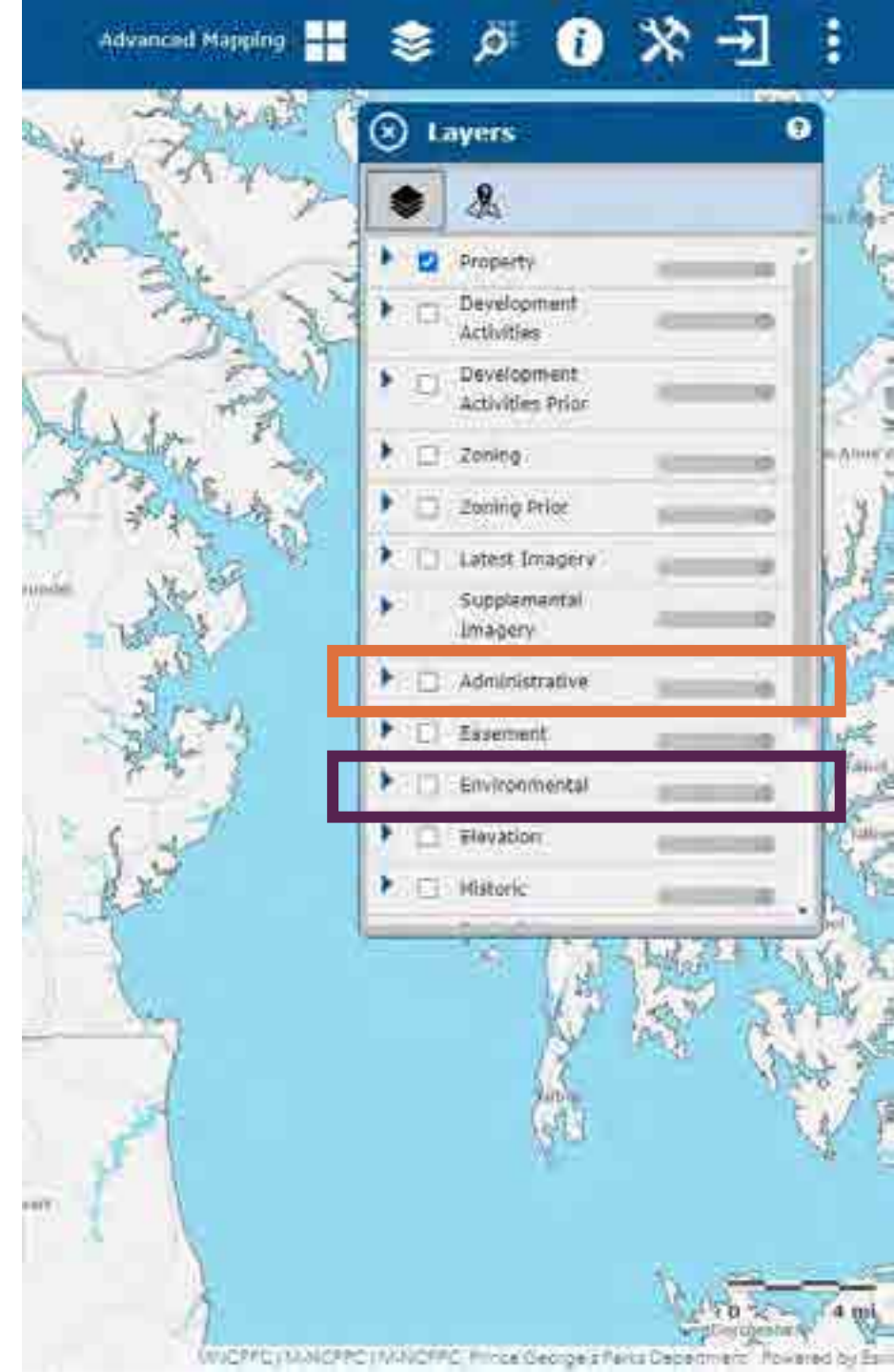
- Ecological Planning
- Nexus of Landscape Architecture, Urban Planning, and Policy
- “Sustainability analysis” that was a precursor to GIS, which involved layering maps over each other

EXPLORING ENVIRONMENT IN GIS LAYERS

www.pgatlas.com

Mapping Layers

- Major landscape features
 - Topography
 - Tree Canopy
 - Rivers, lakes and watersheds
 - Floodplains (define 100 year, 500 year floodplains)
- Built Environment
 - Impervious coverage (define)
 - Roadways



DESIGNING PERSPECTIVE

THEN



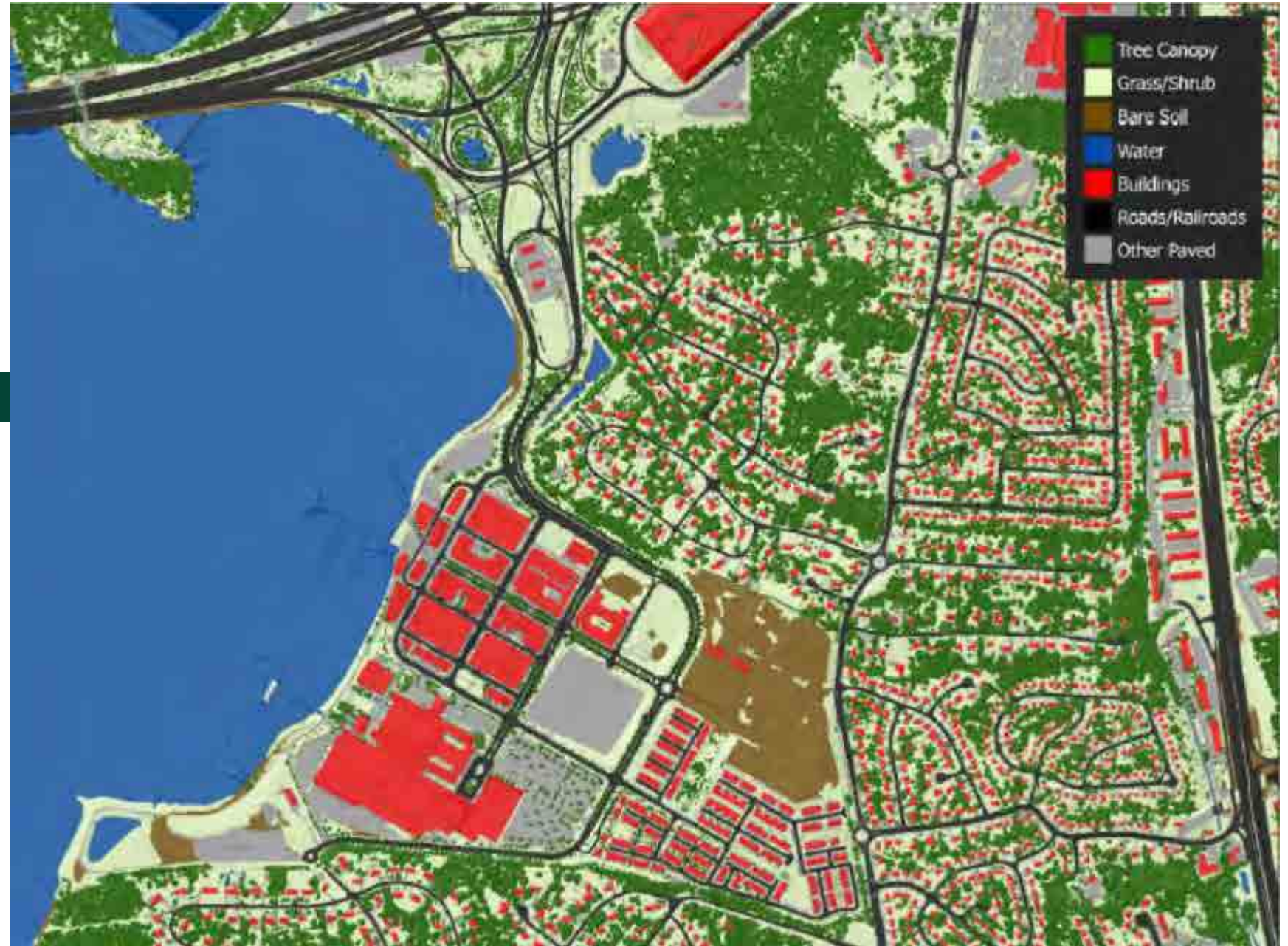
NOW



GREEN AND COMPLETE STREETS



Landcover



Tree Canopy Assessment

Prepared by
The University of Vermont

Prepared for
Prince George's County Planning Department

November 2023

HEALTH IS EMBEDDED IN PLANNING

- A proactive vision using planning tools
 - Health impact assessments (HIAs) or environmental impact assessments (EISs)
 - Complete streets planning
 - Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED)
 - Planning for abundant parks and recreational facilities, and agricultural resources
 - Planning for adequate public facilities like police and fire protection
 - Watershed planning

Our Vision for the Future



SOCIAL: PUBLIC HEALTH

What is Health?

The culmination of all interactions that an individual experiences within the built, natural, and social environment.



SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

■ More than 50% are built into the Community



Tobacco use



Diet & Exercise



Alcohol & Drug Use



Sexual Activity



Access to Care



Quality of Care



Education



Employment



Income



Family & Social Support



Community Safety



Air & Water Quality



Housing and Transit

SOCIAL: FAIR HOUSING

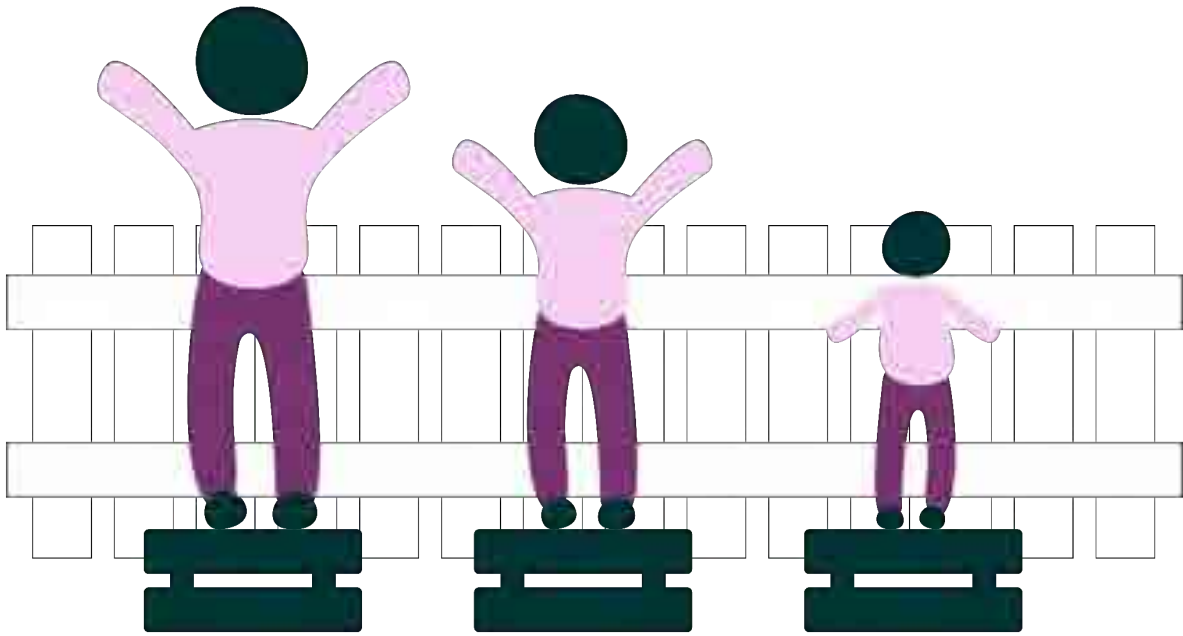


“Regardless of your age, race, religion, family situation, or level of ability, you have the right to choose the housing that’s best for your needs—with no outside preferences or stereotypes being imposed.”

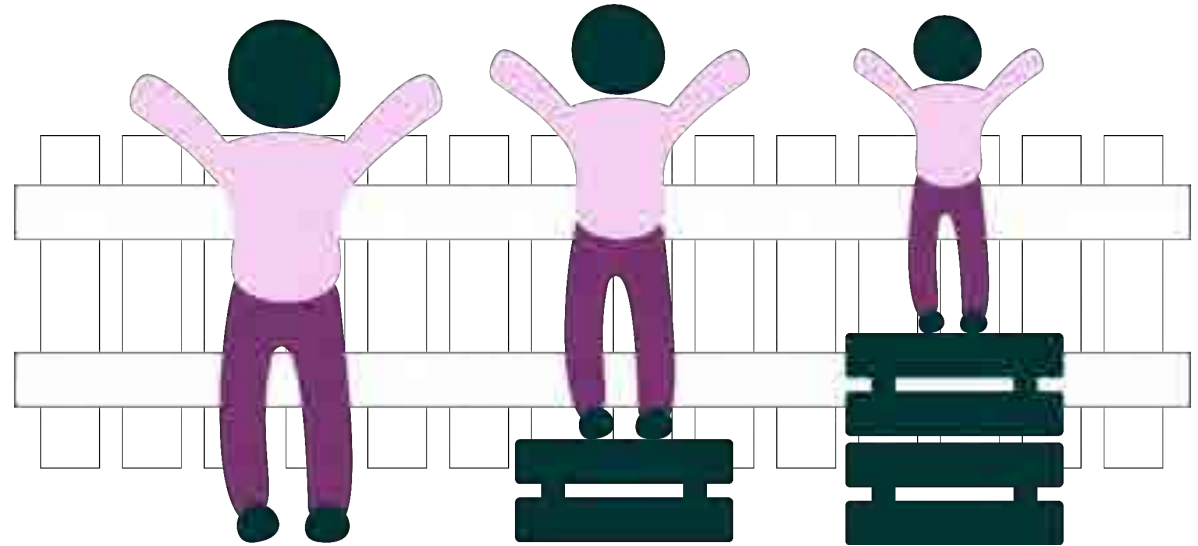
- *What Is Fair Housing? | FHCWM.org*

“Ensuring that members of society have a home in which to live, whether this is a house, or some other kind of dwelling, lodging, or shelter.”

- *Housing - Wikipedia*



EQUALITY



EQUITY

SOCIAL: EQUITY

“The absence of avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically or geographically.”

- *World Health Organization*

SOCIAL: FAIR HOUSING

Missing middle housing describes homes between detached single-family and large multi-family buildings



SOCIAL: FAIR HOUSING

HOUSING Programs



Scan for more info!



M-NCPPC Parks and Recreation



The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

Comprehensive Recreation Programming Plan (CRPP)

Department of Parks and Recreation
Prince George's County
Montgomery County Department of Parks

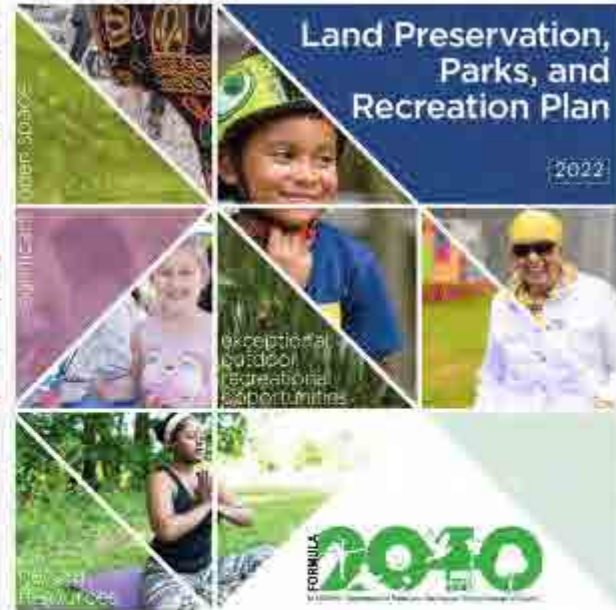
FY25 - FY30

Comprehensive
Recreational Program Plan



**FUNCTIONAL MASTER PLAN FOR
PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE**

Functional Master Plan For
Parks, Recreation & Open
Space 2040



**Land Preservation,
Parks, and
Recreation Plan**

2022

Land Preservation, Parks
and Recreation Plan 2022



YOUR GUIDE

PARKS & TRAILS

FACILITIES & RENTALS

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

GET INVOLVED

NEWS

SAFETY & POLICY

ABOUT



Fall Into Fun... With Your Fall Guide

Register Now



Find a Park



Find a Trail



Find a Class & Activity



Find a Facility



AGRICULTURE PLANNING



Bloomin' PGC
Urban. Local. Fresh.

PRESENTING...
URBAN FARMERS OPEN MIC NIGHT
CONNECT. LEARN. PROBLEM SOLVE.
Network with Prince George's County's Urban Farmers & Growers!
SELECT THIRD TUESDAYS!

VISIT PGCC.ORG FOR DETAILS

Prince George's County
Economic Development Corporation
Food Desert Relief Plan



January 18, 2017

EDC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

Healthy Food for All Prince Georgians
An assessment of access to healthy food
in Prince George's County, Maryland

- Accessibility
- Affordability
- Cultural Variety
- Customer Service
- Quality Assurance

Prince George's County Food System Study
November 2015

The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Prince George's County Planning Department
www.pgplanning.org



Adequate Public Facilities



POLICIES AND REGULATIONS



Federal

- The Clean Water Act
- The Clean Air Act



State

- Tree Solutions Now Act of 2021 (HB 991-2021)
- The 2030 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act Plan of 2021
- Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022
- Natural Resources – Forest Preservation and Retention Act of 2023 (SB 526/ HB 723-2023)
- Forest Conservation Act – Modifications of 2024 (HB 1511-2024)



Local

- Plan 2035
- Resource Conservation Plan
- Area Master Plans
- DRAFT Climate Action Plan

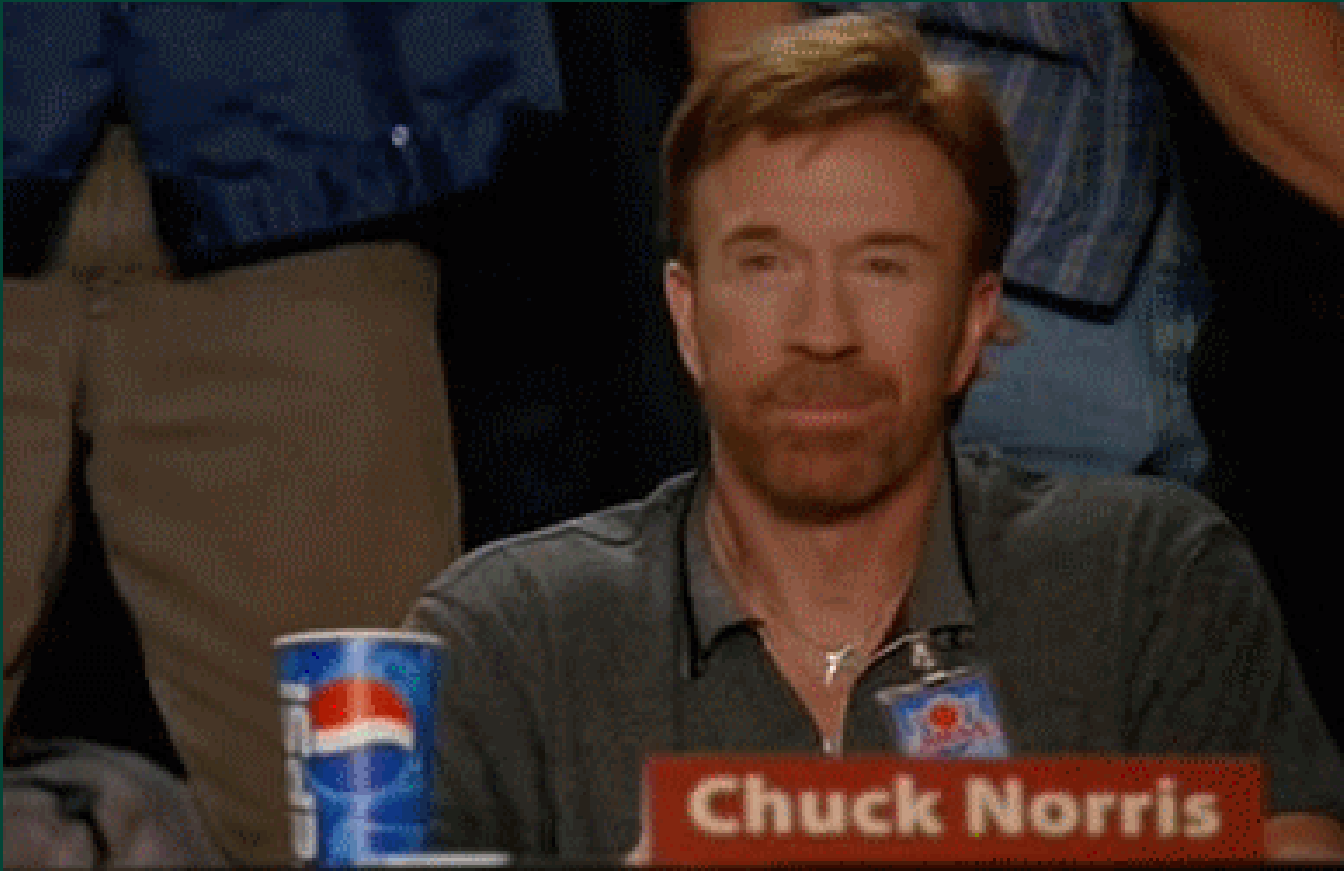
QUESTIONS?

YOUR ROLE IN --- PLANNING

YOUR ROLE IN PLANNING

- Subtitle 25 Update – Change regulations on woodland conservation and tree canopy by July 2024
pgplan.org/subtitle25
- Mandatory Referrals – If you receive a notification, sign up to provide comments; attend the Planning Board hearing
<https://www.mncppc.org/544/Mandatory-Referral>
- Agricultural Resources Advisory Committee (ARAC): Meetings open to the public.

GET INVOLVED



Things you can do at **any time** to be a part of the process:

- Citizen Registry at pgplan.org/record
- Civic Association Registration at pgplan.org/association
- Weekly Development Activity Notification at notify.pgatlas.com
- Join our email lists at pgplan.org/email
- Contact DPIE at: 301.636.2000
- Follow us on social media @PGPlanningMD



SPEAK AT A MEETING



Planning Board

• Virtually - Register to speak by **noon** Tuesday before the weekly Thursday meeting at pgplan.org/speak
Join us at Largo Headquarters the day of the meeting.

Joint Public Hearing

Register to speak by 3 p.m. the day prior to the meeting at pgccouncil.us/Speak

SDRC Meetings

Virtual, every other Friday at 9:30 a.m. Meetings are open to the public, but not for public comment. Please contact staff directly with comments/questions. Attend the meeting at pgplan.org/sdrc

HOMework

HOMework



How could you travel to your workplace, doctors' office, or other location **without the use of a car.**

- Possible from your neighborhood?
- How long would it take?
- What is the walk, bike, and transit score for the location you chose at www.walkscore.com?

PROJECT MILESTONES



- **Week 1:** Pick an issue, challenge, or concern (topic) in your community.

- **Week 2:** Research and analyze Plan 2035, Master or Sector Plan.

- **Week 3:** Consider how, when, and who you might engage to implement a solution.

- **Week 4:** Consider possible solutions, tradeoffs, and other perspectives.

- **Week 5:** Complete a rough draft of the project.

- **Week 6:** Finalize presentation and email project to PGCNPA@ppd.mncppc.org



WEEKLY FEEDBACK

- academy.pgplanning.com/fall2025
- Password: NPAfall2025

END OF SESSION

If you need assistance before our next meeting,
email us at PGCNPA@ppd.mncppc.org