



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

April 1, 2026

# SESSION 4

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# REFLECTION



# AGENDA

● Introductions

● Defining environment, sustainability, and stewardship

● Lecture

- Exploring Prince George's County's Environment
- Planning for Sustainability
- Federal, State, and Local Policies

● Homework

# INTRODUCTIONS

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# PRESENTERS/GUEST SPEAKERS



**Megan Reiser**

Planner IV, Environmental Planning  
Countywide Planning Division



**Marian Honeczy**

Planner III  
Countywide Planning Division

# SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT

# DEFINING ENVIRONMENT

- What are characteristics of environment?



# 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

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# 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

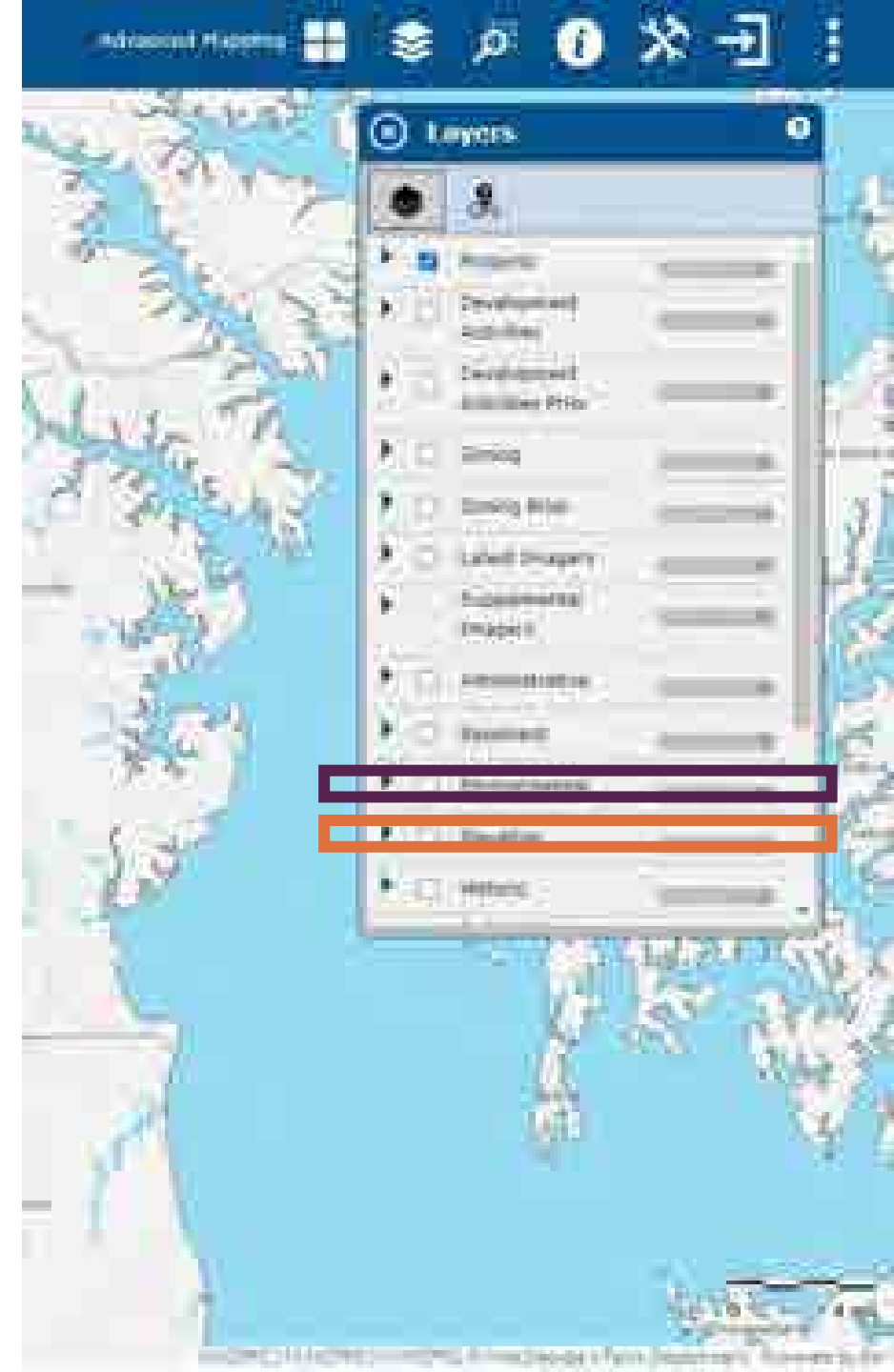
- Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)
- Type 1 Tree Conservation Plan (TCP1)
- Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan (TCP2)
- Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Conservation Plan (CP)

# EXPLORING ENVIRONMENT IN GIS LAYERS

[www.pgatlas.com](http://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



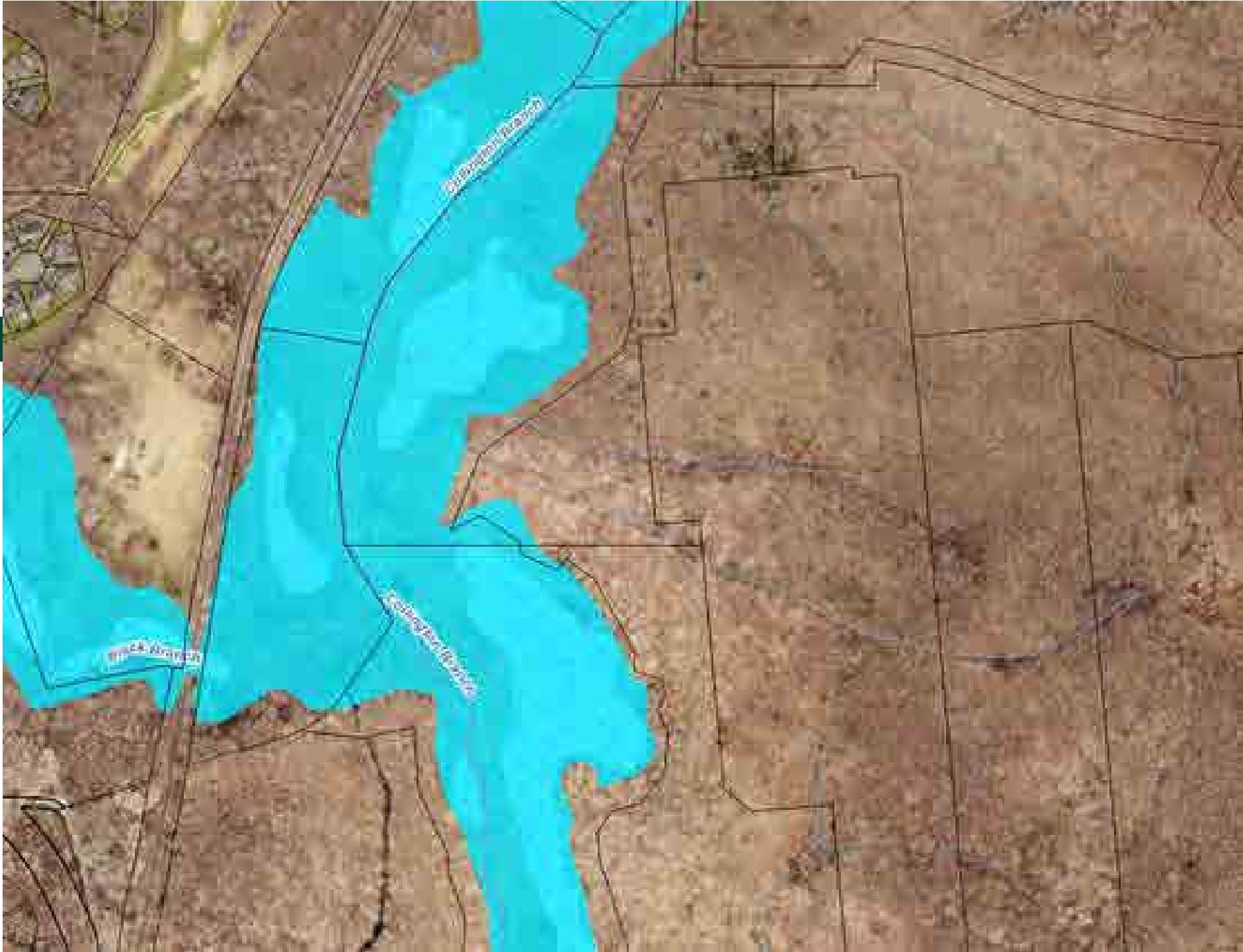
# FLOODPLAIN



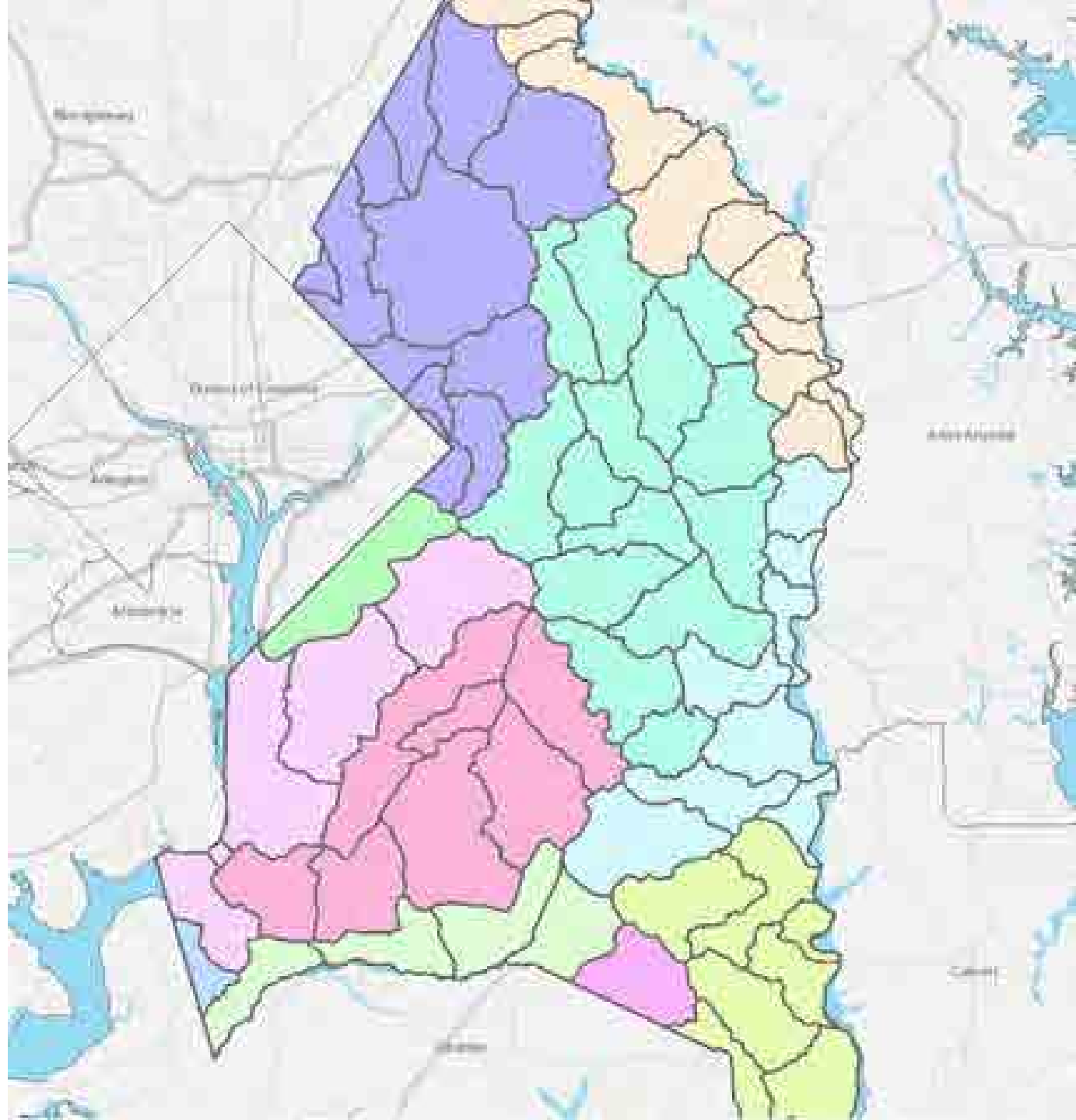
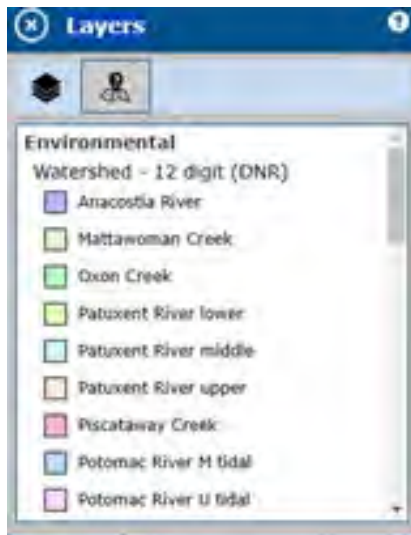
2011 Flood, Central Administration Building (CAB)  
Source: Prince George's County Planning Department



100-year floodplain



# WATERSHEDS

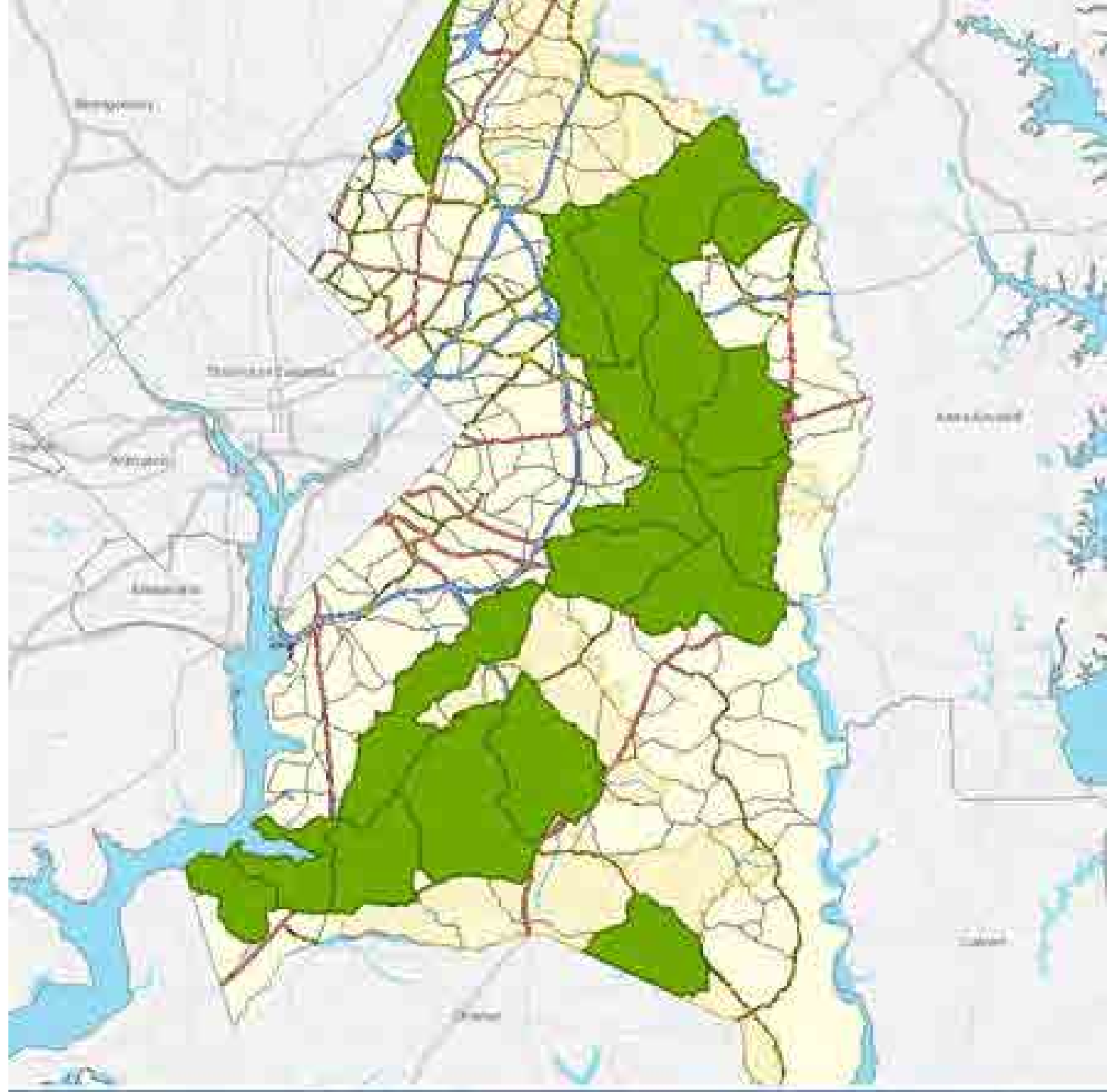


# TIER II AND STRONGHOLD WATERSHEDS

Layers

Environmental

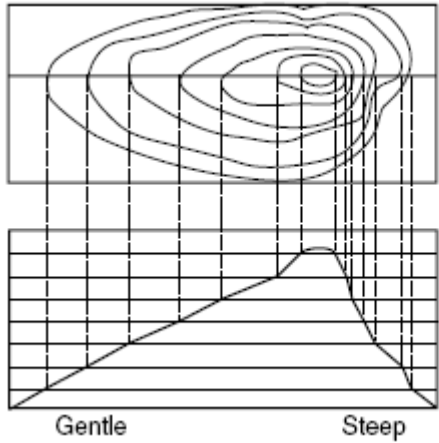
- Stronghold Watershed (DNR)  
■ 1; 2
- Tier II Catchment (MDE)  
■
- Tier II Stream Segment (MDE)  
■



# 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

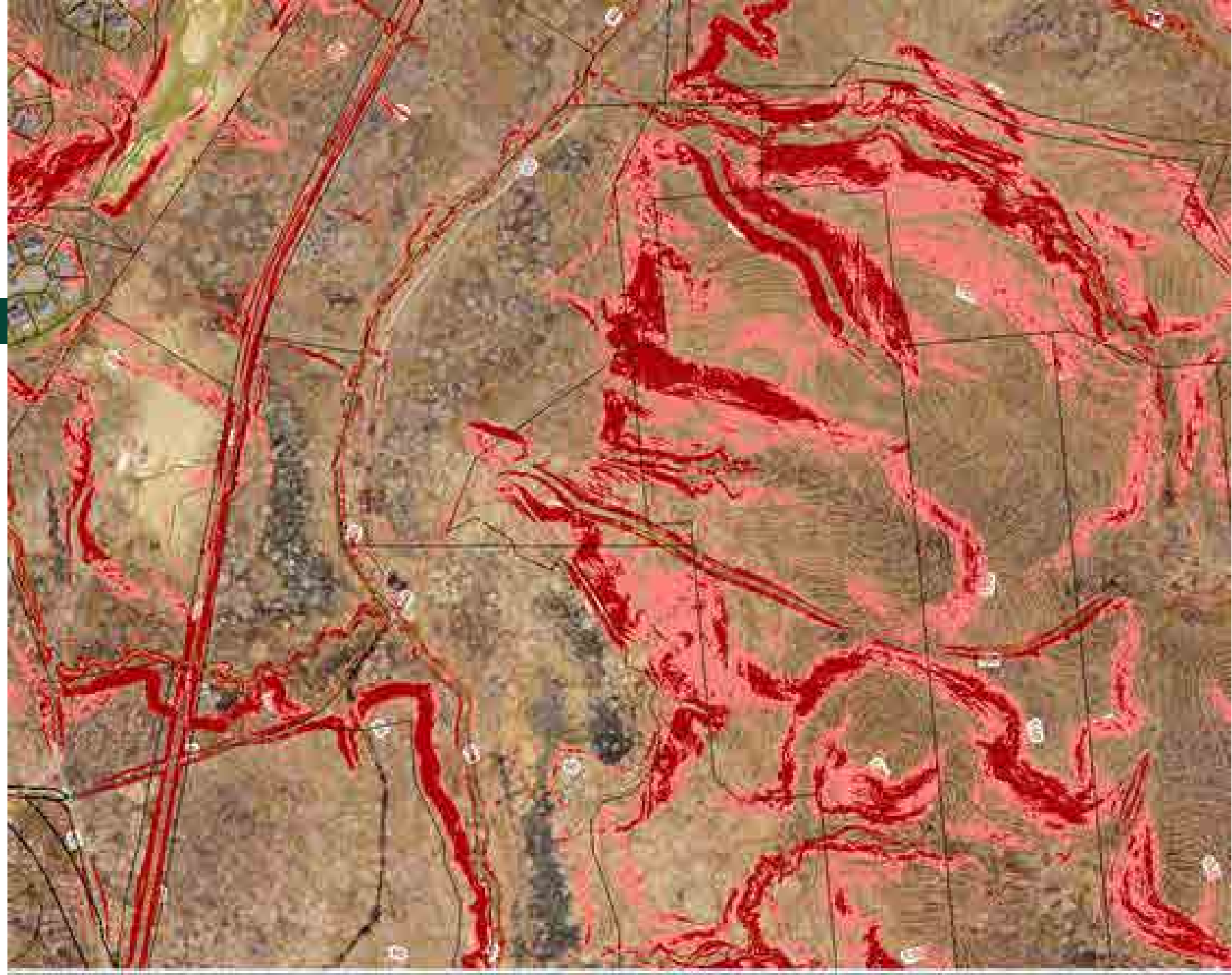
**Slope (2021)**

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

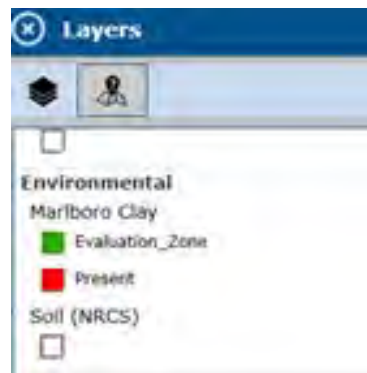
**Elevation**

**Contour - 2 Ft (2021)**

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



# SOILS



# TREE CANOPY COVER



Layers

Tree Canopy (2020)

A screenshot of a GIS software interface. It shows a 'Layers' panel with a close button (X) in the top left. Below the title bar, there are two icons: a stack of layers and a person icon. Underneath, the text 'Tree Canopy (2020)' is displayed next to a small green square, indicating that this layer is currently visible and active in the map view.

# FOREST INTERIOR DWELLING SPECIES HABITAT (FIDS)



# GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK



Map 1. 2017 Countywide Green Infrastructure Network

**Regulated Areas** represent a cumulative delineation of environmentally regulated areas, including riparian, wetland, stream, and other buffers, for the year 2017. The Areas show the general location of regulated features in the county. The delineation is not intended for use for any regulatory purposes. Approval of a federal license or permit is required for activities involving regulated environmental features (stream, wetland, floodplain).

**Evolution Areas** include specific areas showing critical riparian, stream, and wetland resources. These Areas show connectivity with riparian corridors. Areas of high value of wildlife habitat, riparian, and stream resources are shown. Evolution Areas are used to guide development in the county to protect and enhance riparian and stream resources.

**Mapping Units for Watersheds** delineated by the county for planning purposes:

1. Lower riparian
2. Upper riparian
3. Wetland
4. Stream

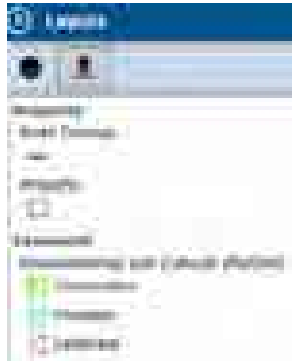


**Legend**

- Riparian Areas
- Evolution Areas
- Water Features
- Major Road
- County Boundary



# EASEMENTS



# ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS



 Natural Resources  
Inventory Plan (NRI)

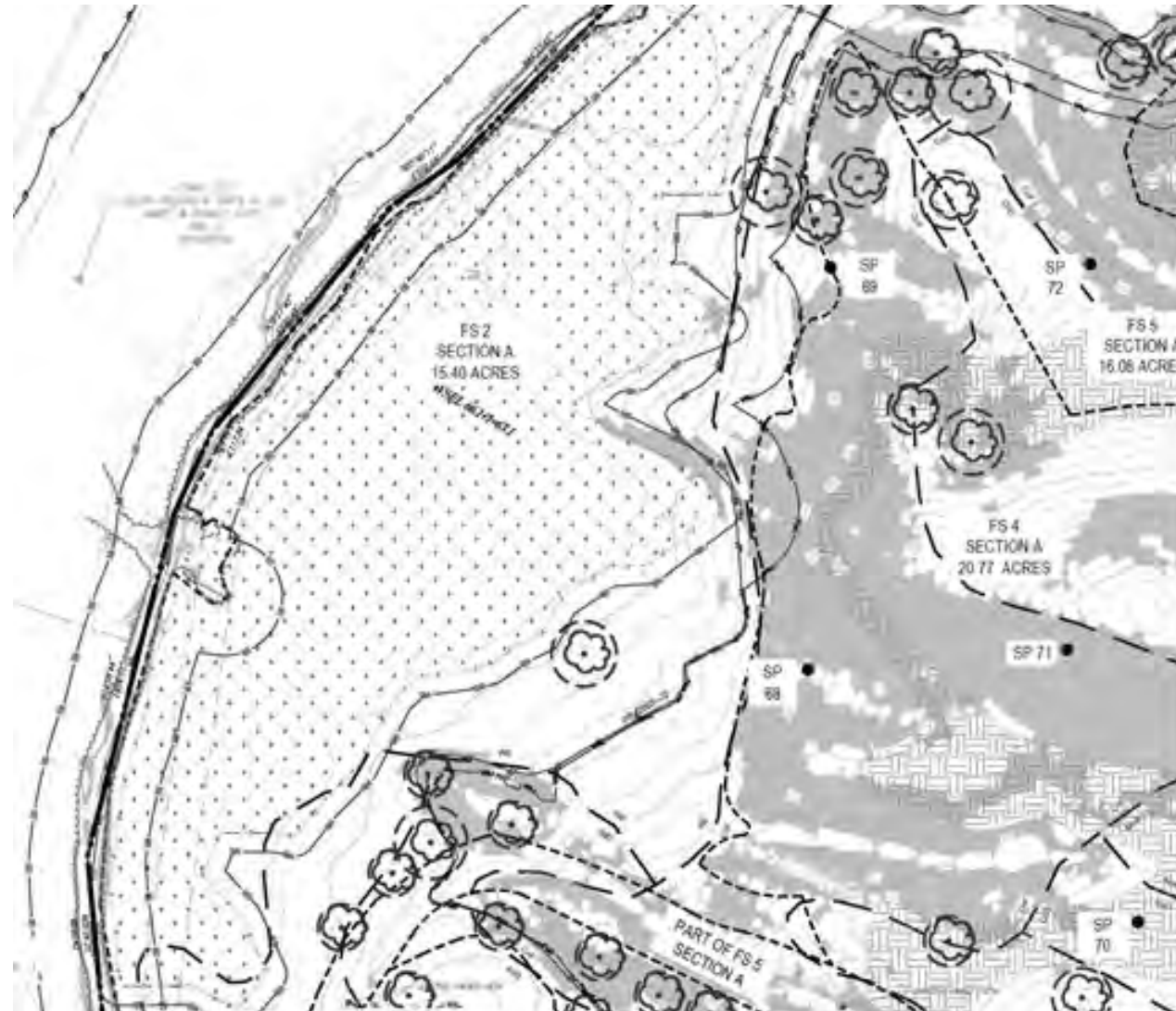
 Type 1  
Tree Conservation Plan (TCP1)

 Type 2  
Tree Conservation Plan (TCP2)

# ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS



## Natural Resources Inventory Plan (NRI)



MATCHLINE - SHEET 4

LEGEND	
SP 1	POINT SAMPLE POINT
---	TOGETHER PROPERTY
---	EXISTING 100' L&L
---	EXISTING 100' WITH FOOT END
---	ADJACENT WETLAND STREAM
---	PERMANENT STREAM
---	PERMIT MANAGEMENT AREA
---	STREAM BUFFER TO FOOT END
---	NON-THEAL WETLAND BUFFER
---	NON-THEAL WETLAND BUFFER (ADJACENT)
---	TOGETHER FLOOR/LIMITS
---	100' BUFFER W/ 100' L&L
---	100' BUFFER - BUFFER TO FOOT
---	WETLAND BUFFER
---	ADJACENT WETLAND BUFFER (ADJACENT)
---	WETLAND BUFFER AREA
---	PERMIT LOCATION

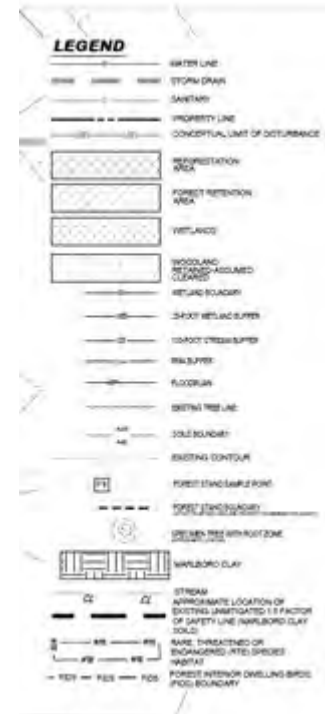
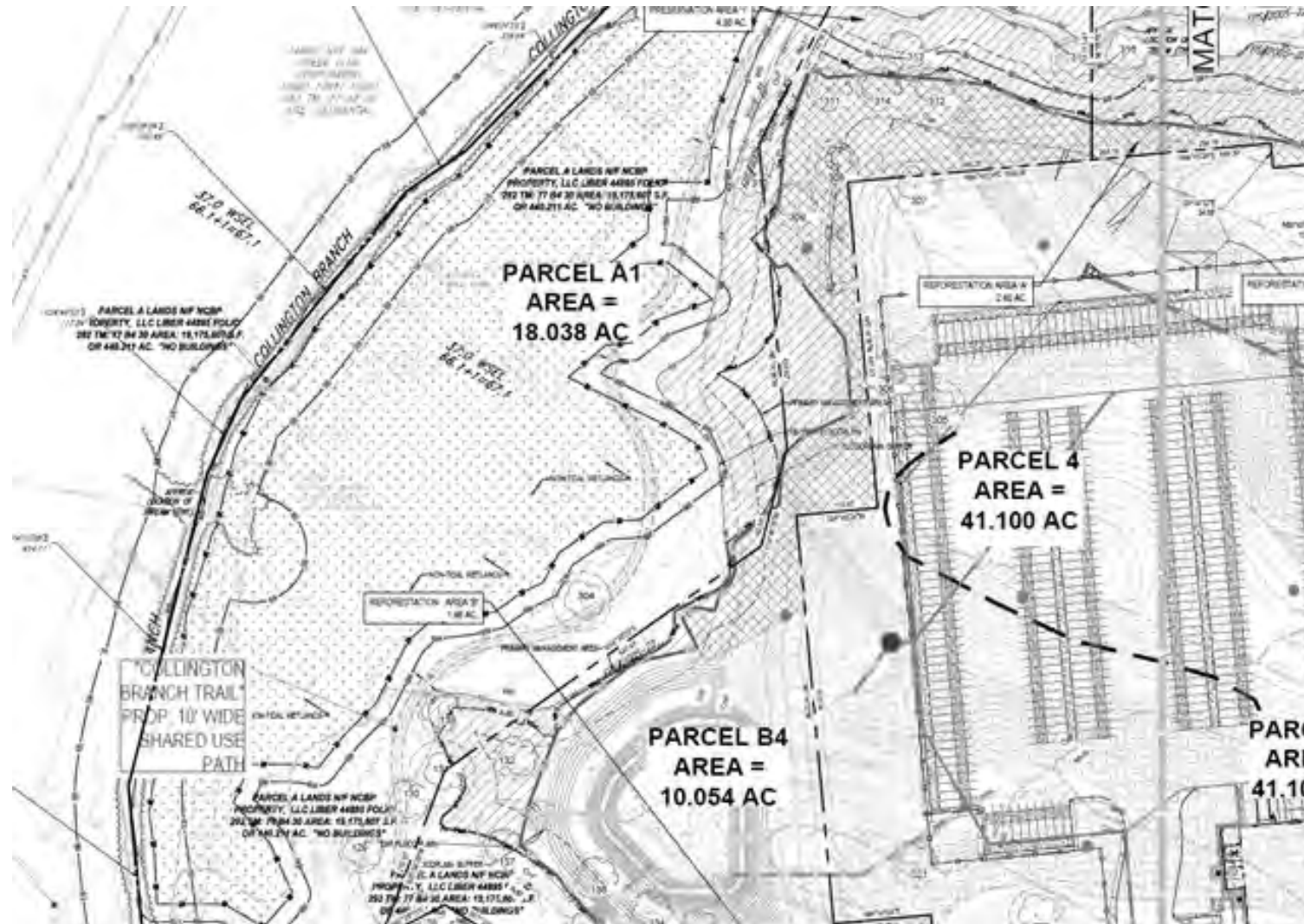
THE SATURNITE RIVER PRIMARY MANAGEMENT AREA (PMA) SHOWN ON THIS PLAN HAS BEEN REVISED TO ACCOMMODATE A 100 FOOT WIDE PROTECTION BUFFER FOR PAIR, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES FOR ALL STREAMS AND NON-THEAL WETLANDS ON THE SITE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CONDITION 22 OF FIGURE NO. 04-03 AND SECTION 2A-101 (107) OF THE SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE.



# ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS

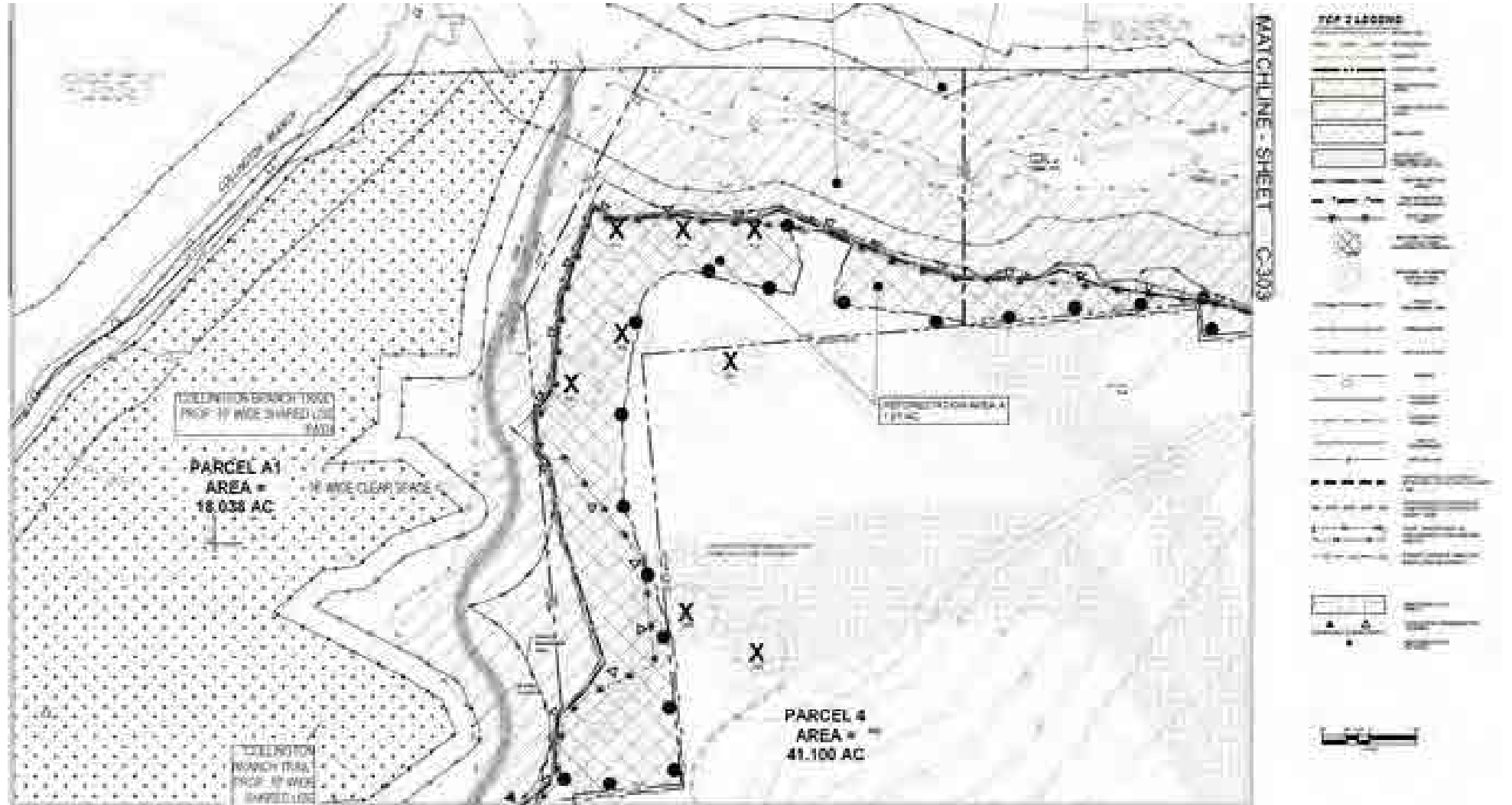


## Type 1 Tree Conservation Plan (TCP1)



# ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS

## Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan (TCP2)



Grading Operation  
and Tree Preservation  
(2023 Aerial)



# Grading Operation and Tree Preservation (Ground Level)



# Mitigation Techniques



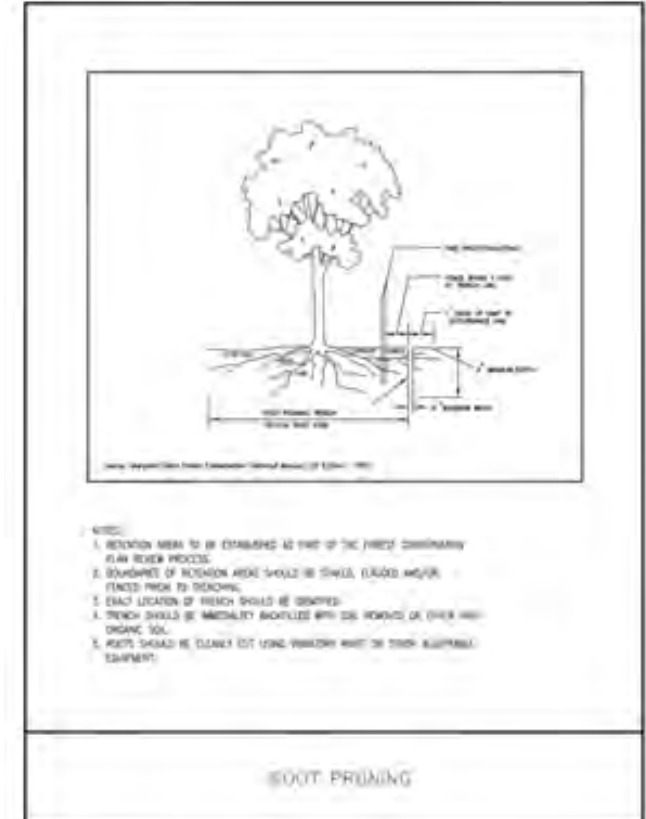
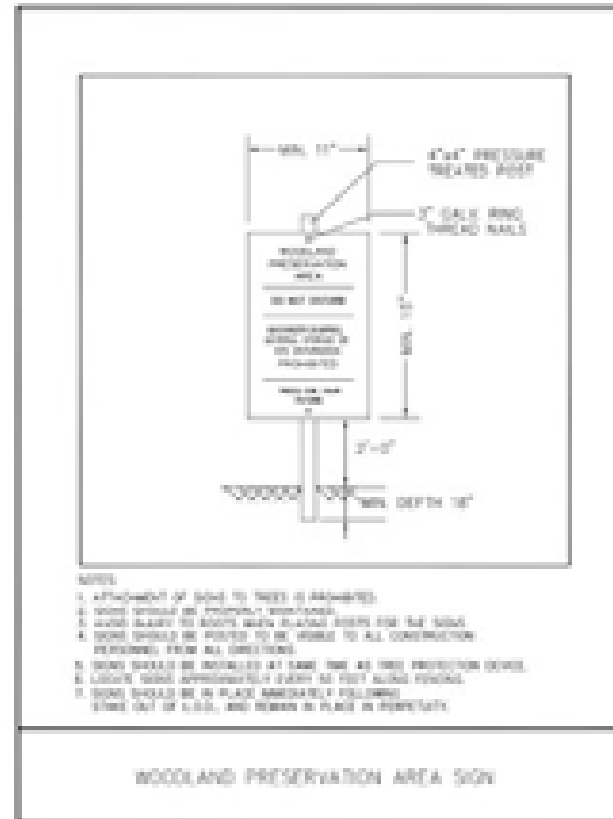


# 2018 Environmental Technical Manual



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  
Revised by Publications as of November 2018



# Permits & Violations



# Environmental Planning

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## LONG-RANGE PLANNING

# TYPES OF PLANS



Comprehensive Plan

1

Countywide



Functional Master Plans

8

Countywide

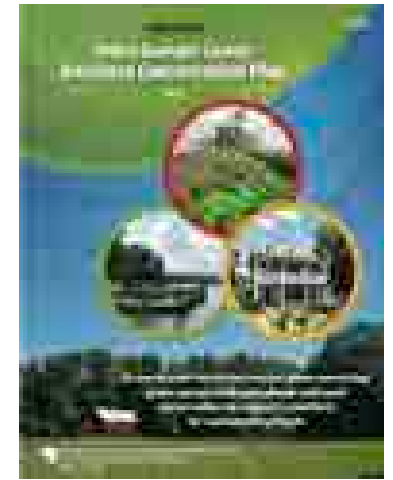
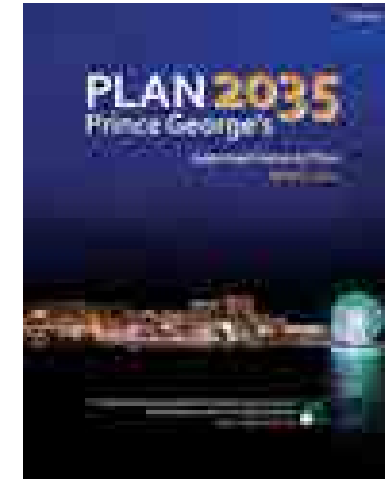


Area Master Plans

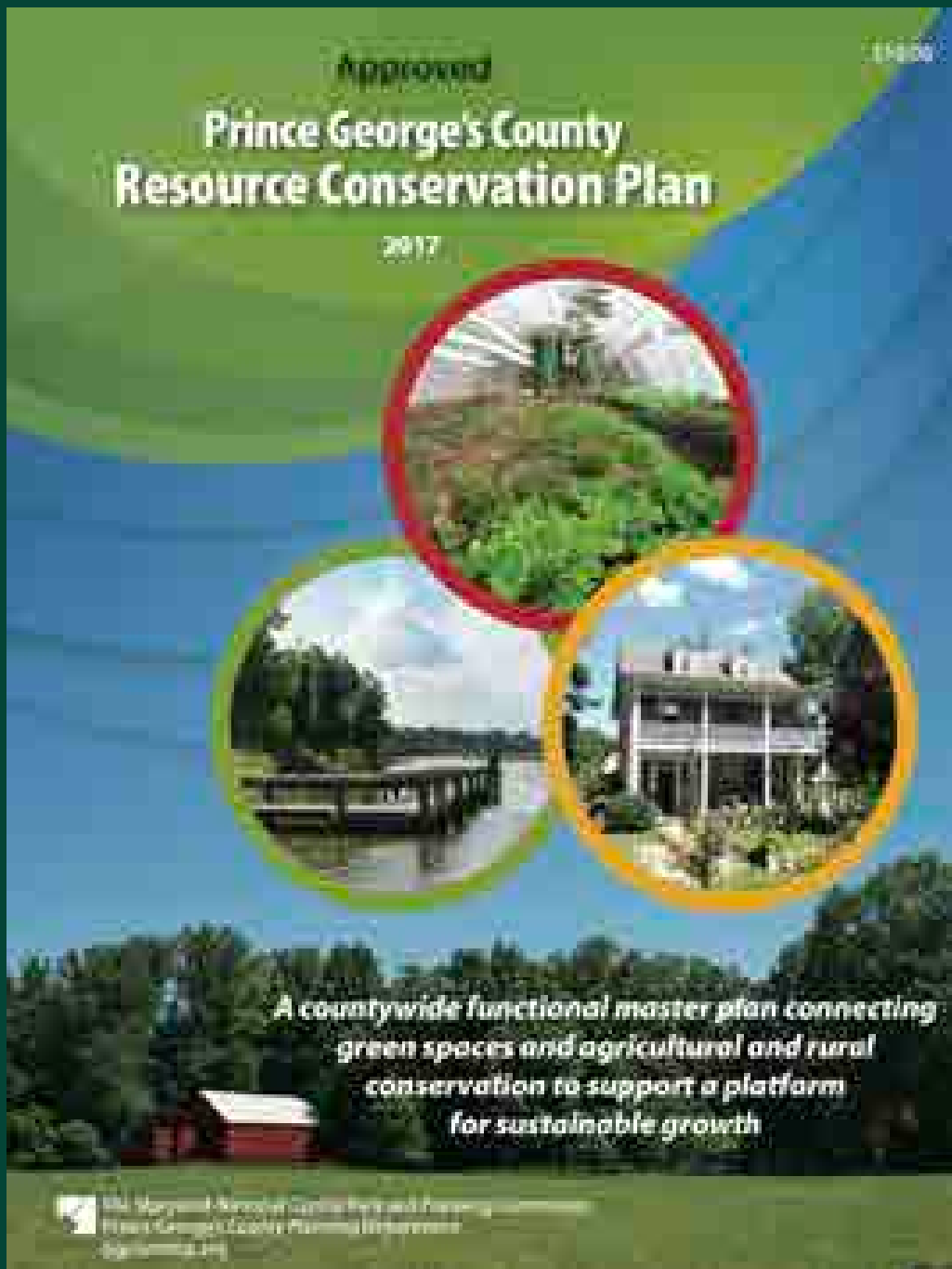
38

Specific areas

# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY VISION



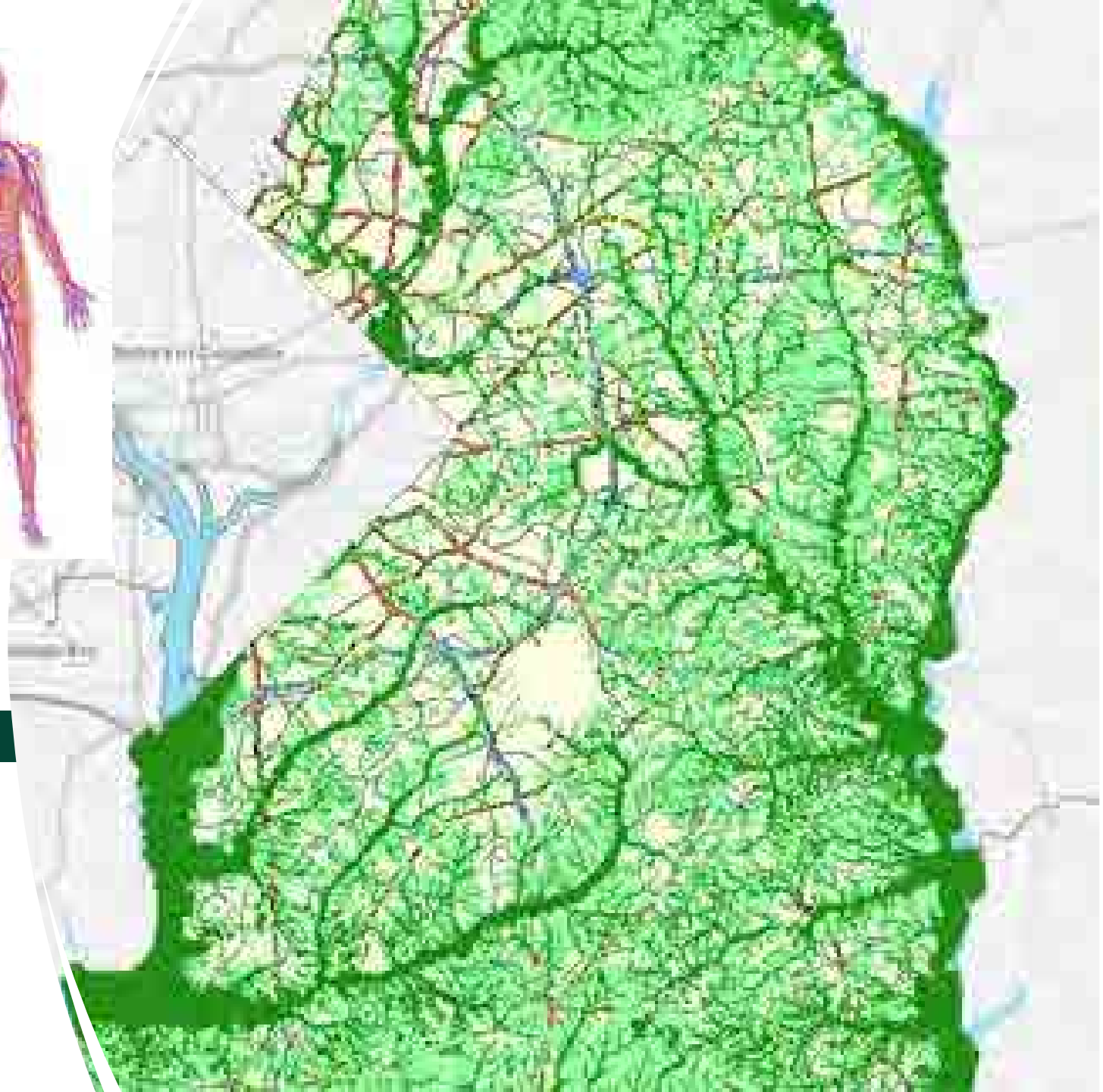
These plans outline the County's goals for conservation, emphasizing the importance of integrating environmental elements into all stages of planning and development.



# 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)

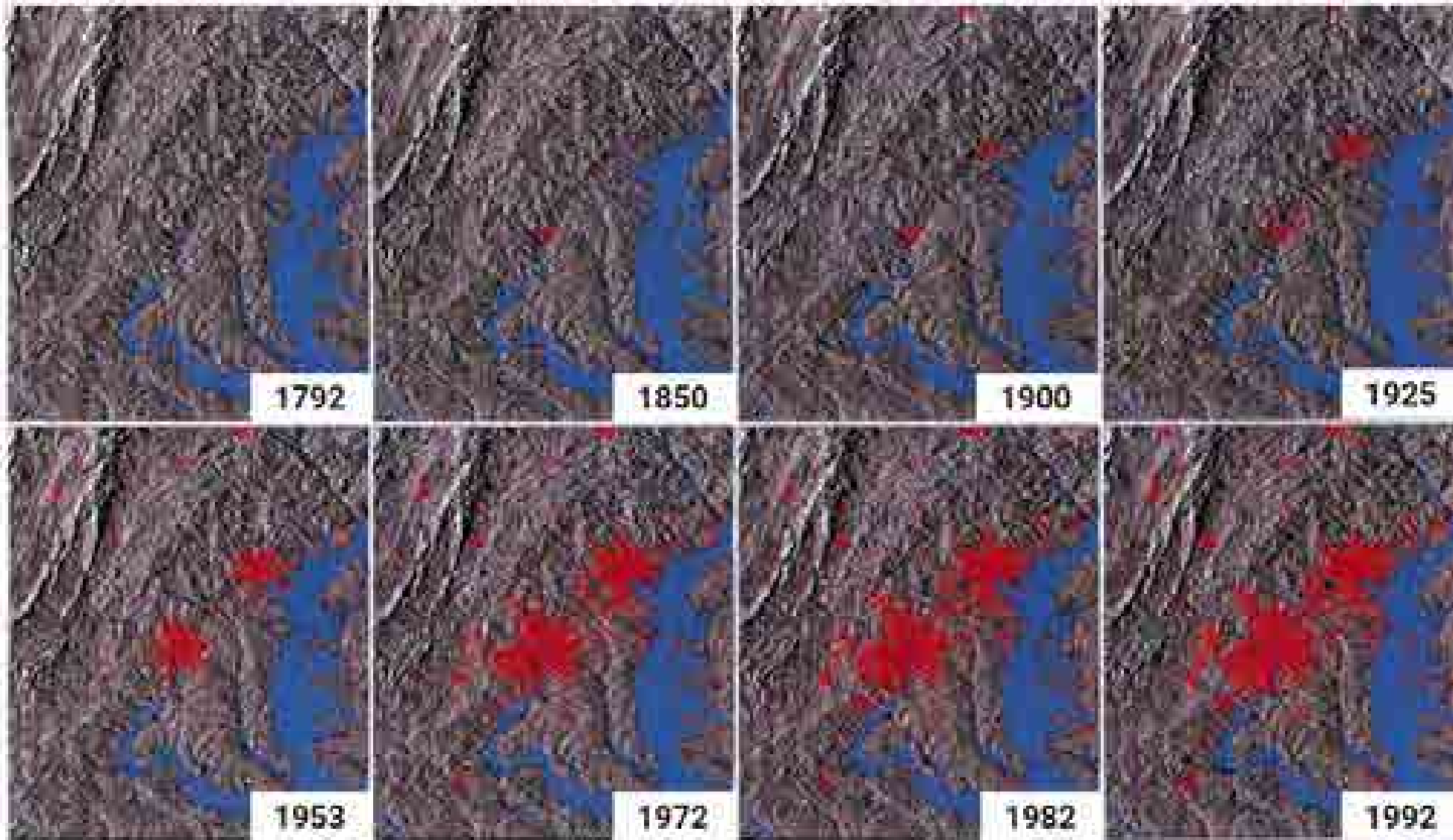


# WHY

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

DRAFT



Priority Woodlands for Retention  
Prince Georges County

Map Date: 12/15/2011  
Map Scale: 1:50,000  
Map Projection: NAD 83 UTM Zone 18N  
Map Contour Interval: 10 Feet  
Map Data Source: M-DCPPD  
Map Data Date: 12/15/2011

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

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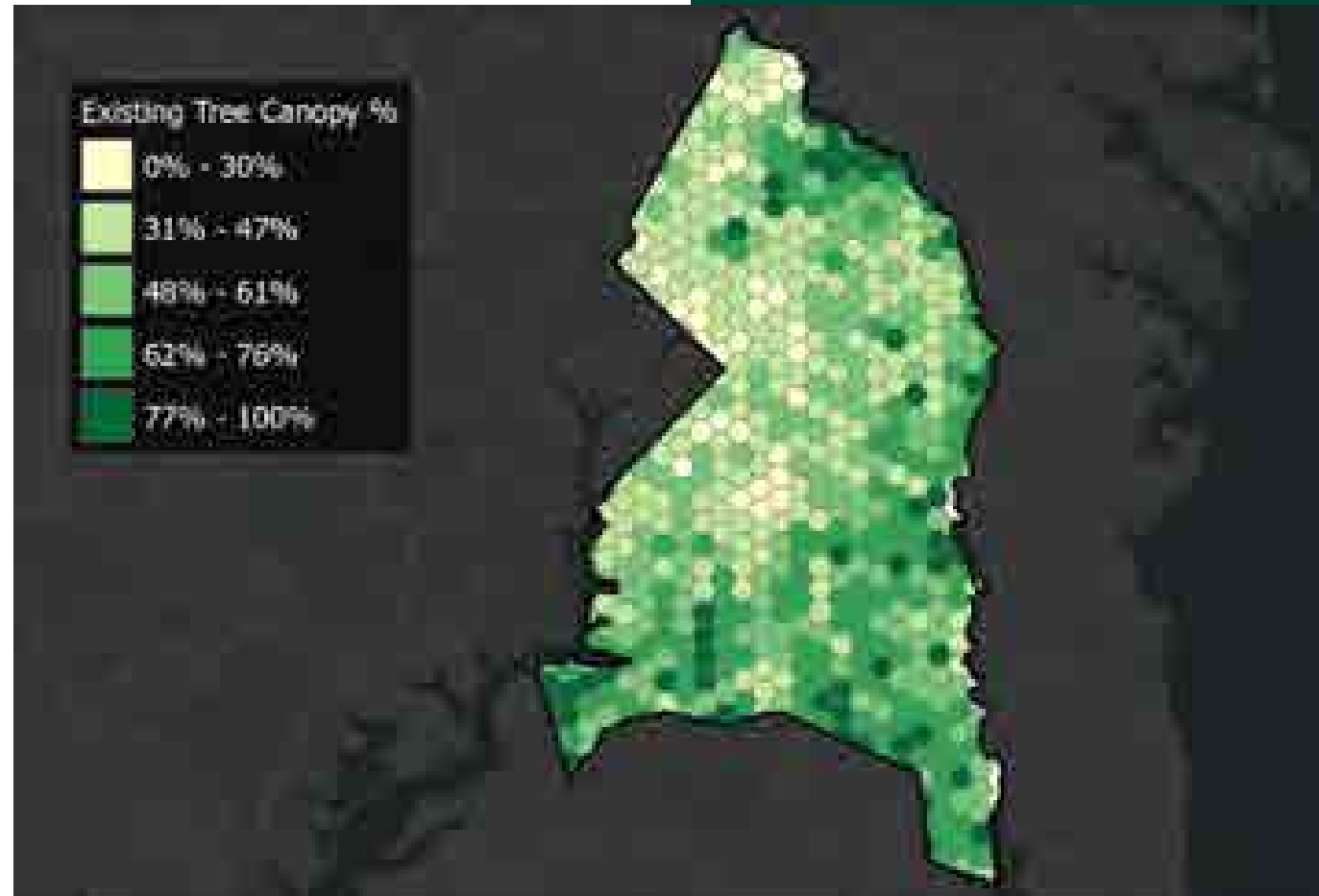


Prince George's County

# 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**

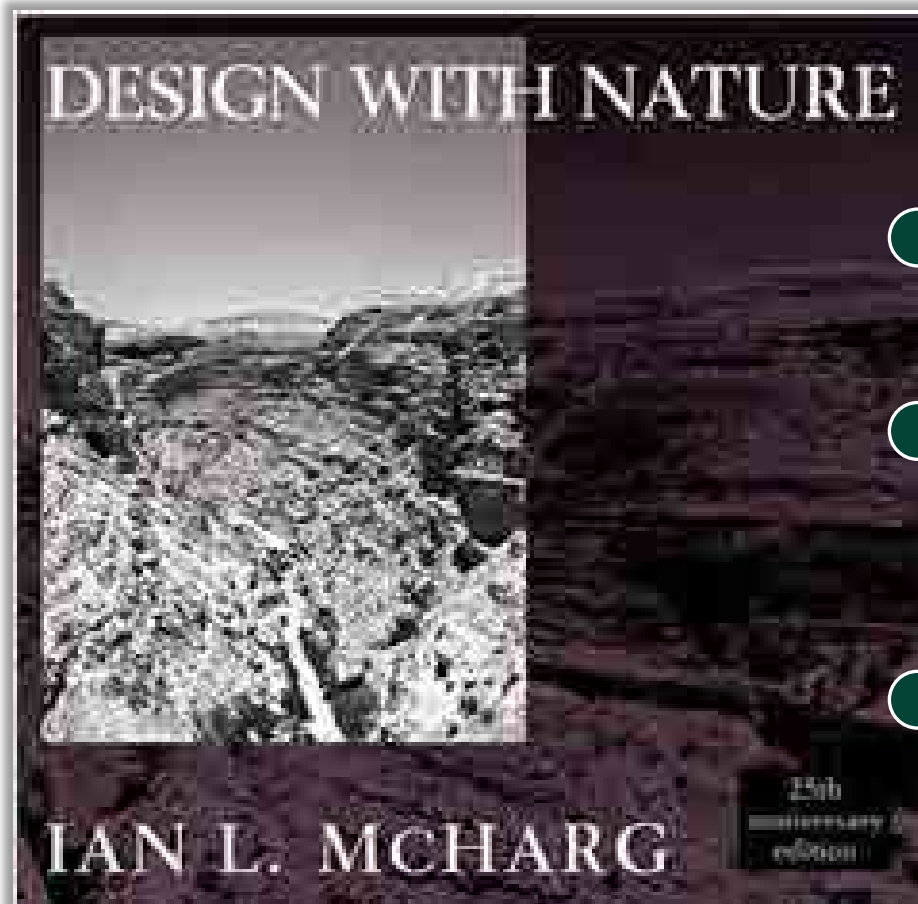
Estimated number  
of trees in the  
County in 2020

# QUESTIONS?

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# BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

# HISTORY OF PLANNING for people



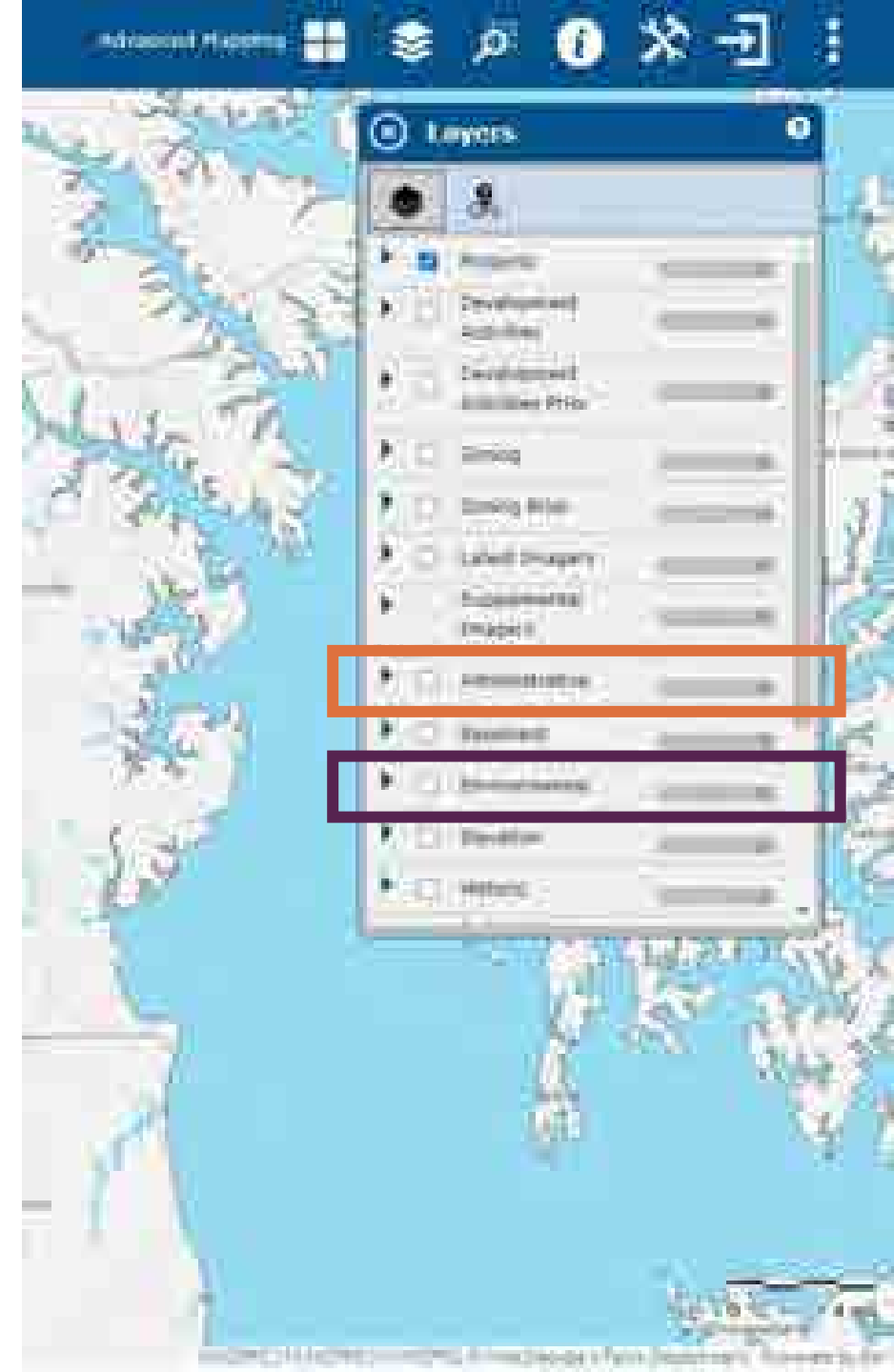
- Ecological Planning
- Nexus of Landscape Architecture, Urban Planning, and Policy
- “Sustainability analysis” that was a precursor to GIS, which involved layering maps over each other

# EXPLORING ENVIRONMENT IN GIS LAYERS

[www.pgatlas.com](http://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

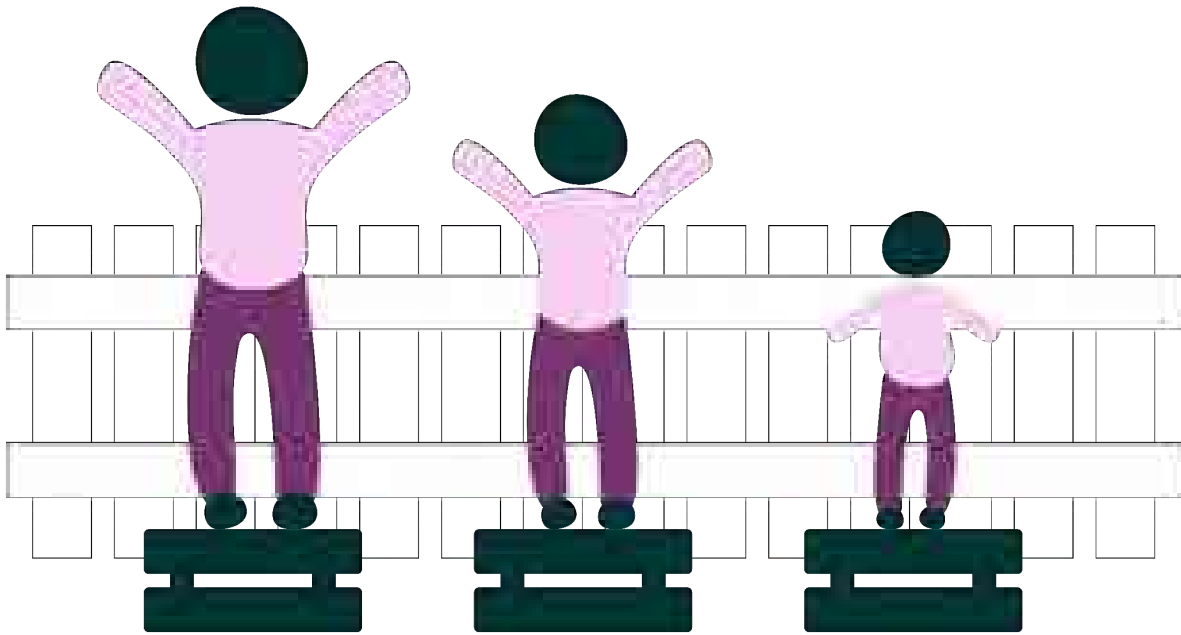


“Regardless of your age, race, religion, family situation, or level of ability, you have the right to choose the housing that’s best for your needs—with no outside preferences or stereotypes being imposed.”

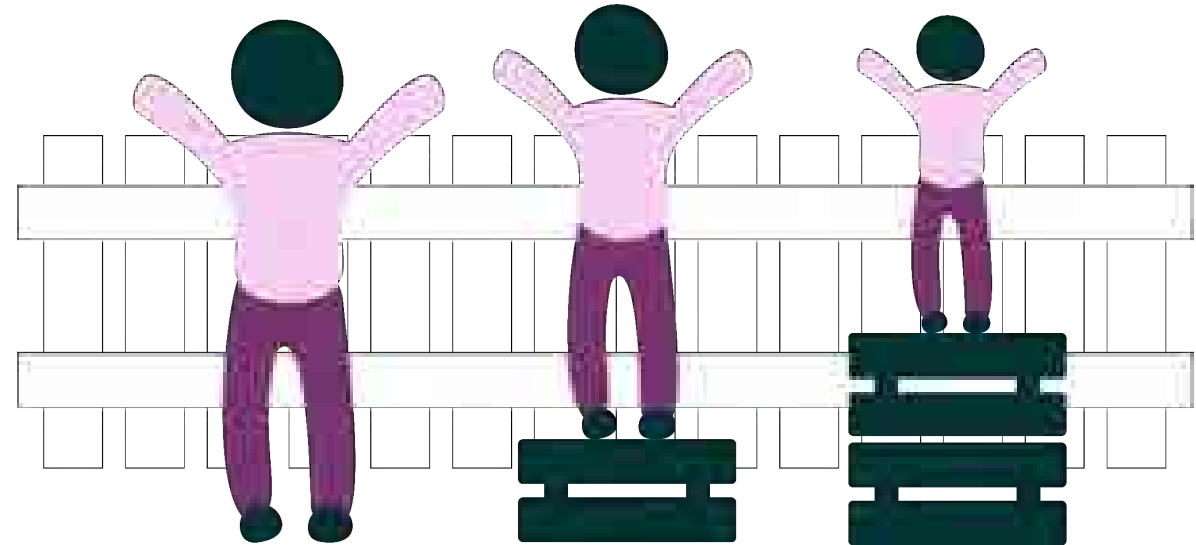
- *What Is Fair Housing? | FHCWM.org*

“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*

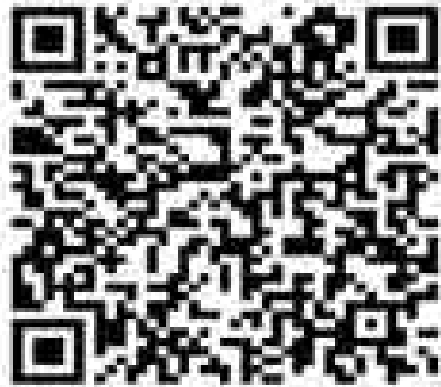
# SOCIAL: FAIR HOUSING

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



# SOCIAL: FAIR HOUSING

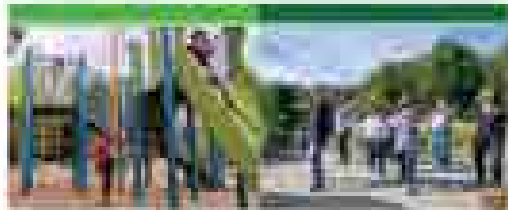
## HOUSING Programs



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



**2040**

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



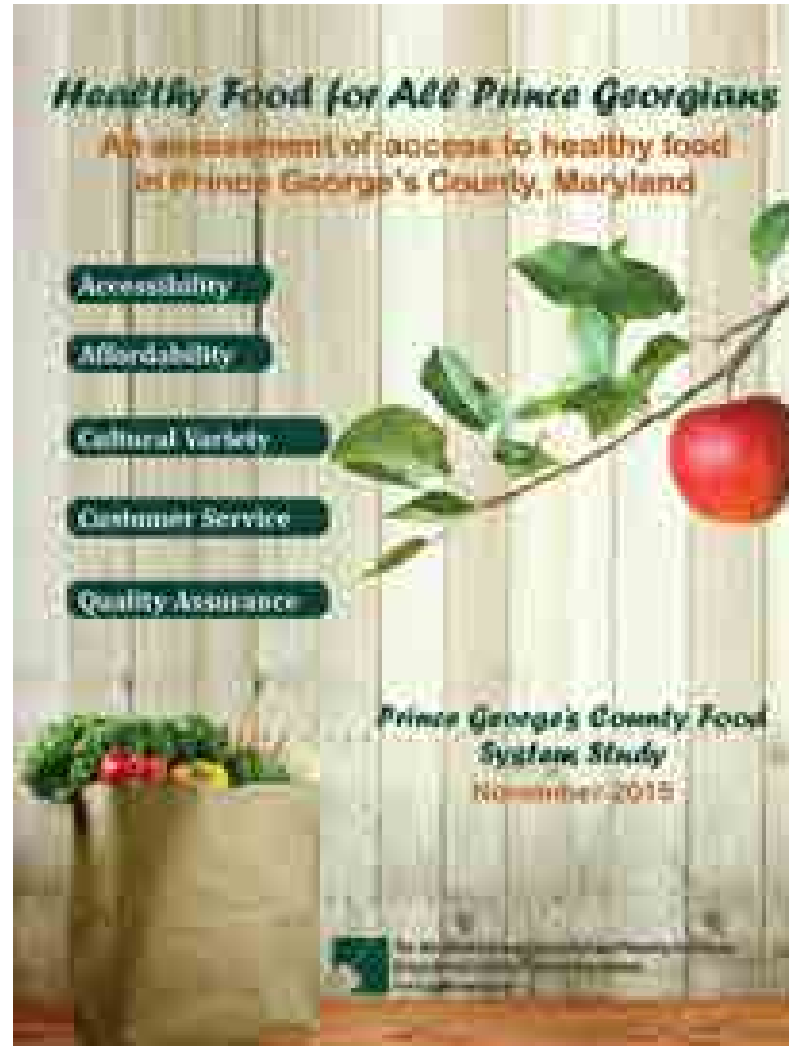
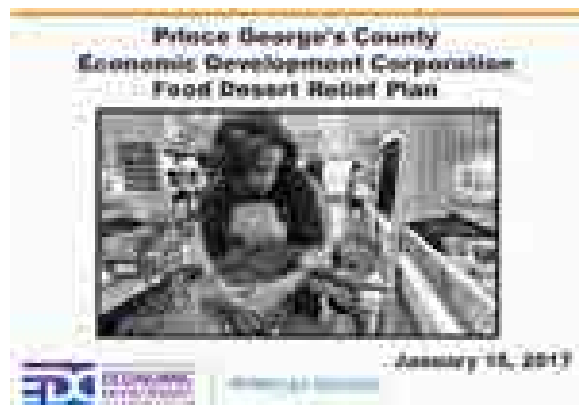
Find a class & Activity



Find a Facility



# AGRICULTURE PLANNING



# 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?

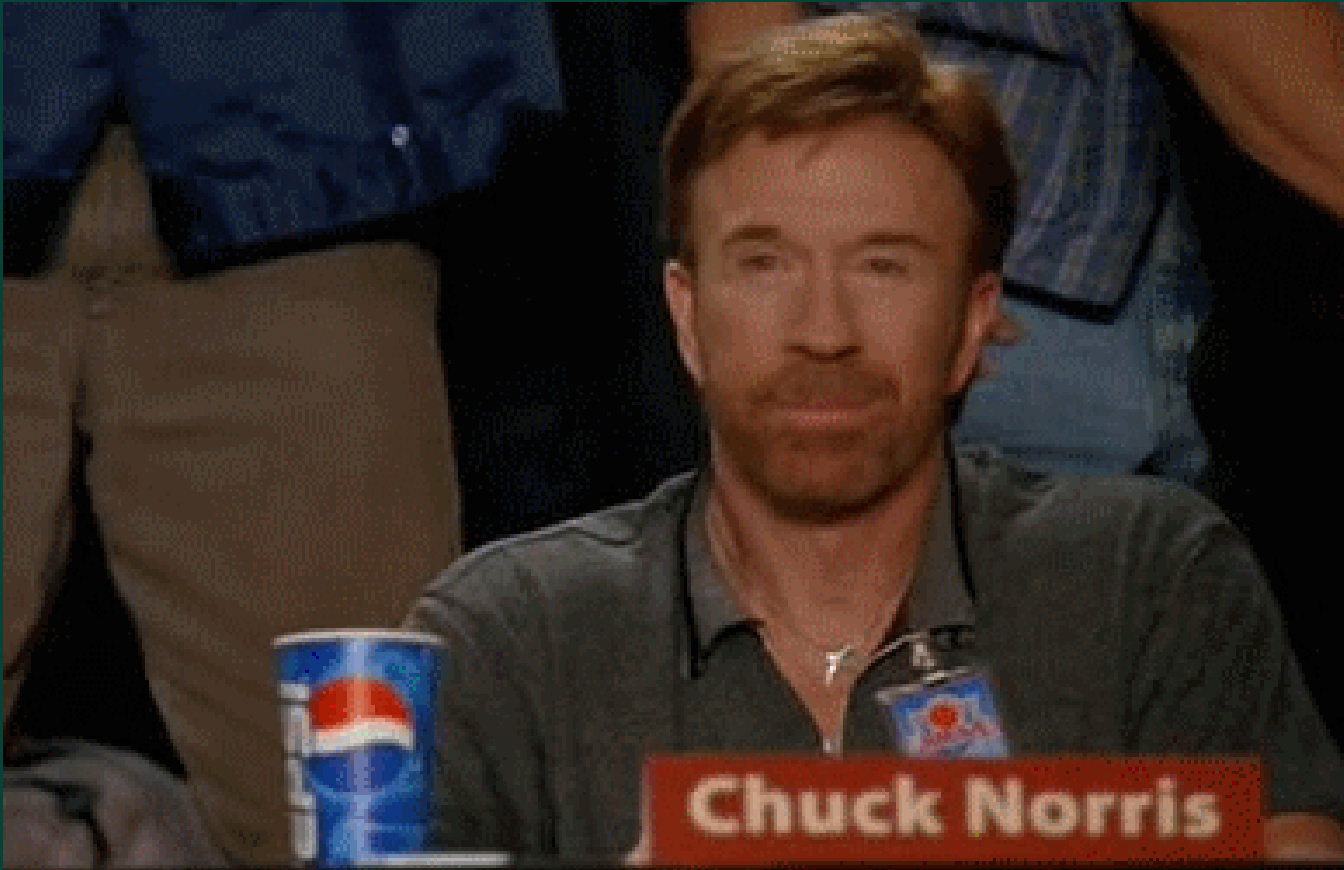
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# YOUR ROLE IN --- PLANNING

# YOUR ROLE IN PLANNING

- Subtitle 25 Update – Change regulations on woodland conservation and tree canopy by July 2024  
[pgplan.org/subtitle25](http://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](https://pgplan.org/record)
- Civic Association Registration at [pgplan.org/association](https://pgplan.org/association)
- Weekly Development Activity Notification at [notify.pgatlas.com](https://notify.pgatlas.com)
- Join our email lists at [pgplan.org/email](https://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](https://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](https://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](https://pgplan.org/sdrc)

# HOMEWORK

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# 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](http://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](mailto:PGCNPA@ppd.mncppc.org)



# Spring 2026 webpage

- [academy.pgplanning.com/spring2026](https://academy.pgplanning.com/spring2026)
- Password: NPAspring2026
- Email us at [PGNPA@ppd.mncppc.org](mailto:PGNPA@ppd.mncppc.org)

# END OF SESSION

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If you need assistance before our next meeting,  
email us at [PGCNPA@ppd.mncppc.org](mailto:PGCNPA@ppd.mncppc.org)