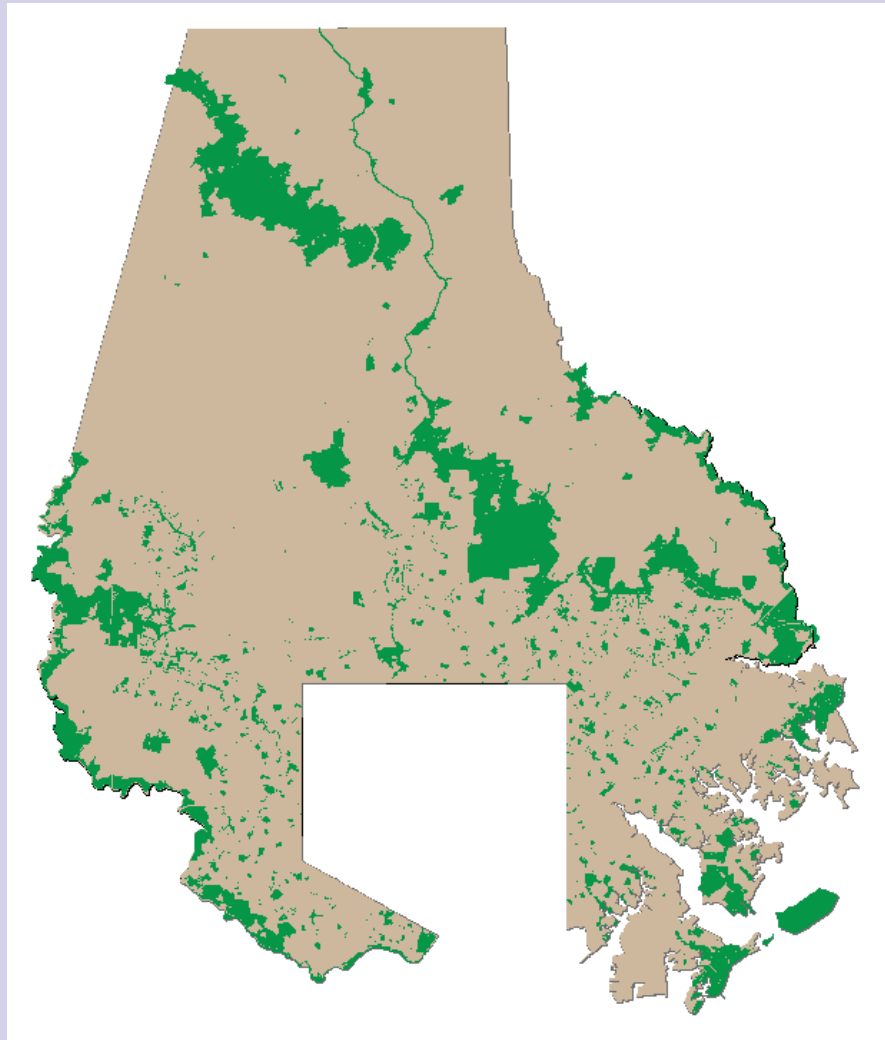




Baltimore County, Maryland 2017 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan



As Adopted by the Baltimore County Council June 5, 2017



COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND
Legislative Session 2017, Legislative Day No. 10

Resolution No. 55-17

Mr. Tom Quirk, Chairman
By Request of County Executive

By the County Council, May 25, 2017

A RESOLUTION to adopt the Baltimore County, Maryland 2017 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) as an addendum to the Baltimore County Master Plan 2020.

WHEREAS, the Baltimore County Council adopted the Baltimore County Master Plan 2020 on November 15, 2010; and

WHEREAS, the Baltimore County Council adopted the 2005-2006 Baltimore County Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan Update as a Baltimore County Master Plan 2020 addendum on January 20, 2015; and

WHEREAS, Title 5, Subtitle 9 of the Natural Resources Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland requires a local governing body to revise its land preservation and recreation plan every five years and submit the plan to the Maryland Departments of Natural Resources and Planning for review and approval; and

WHEREAS, the Baltimore County Departments of Recreation and Parks, Planning, and Environmental Protection and Sustainability worked cooperatively to draft the required 2017 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Baltimore County Planning Board approved the 2017 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan on April 20, 2017; and


WHEREAS, the Baltimore County Council has reviewed the amended 2017 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Council of Baltimore County, Maryland that the Baltimore County, Maryland 2017 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan, be and is hereby adopted and incorporated into the Baltimore County Master Plan 2020 to serve as a guide for meeting the recreation, park, and open space needs of the Citizens of Baltimore County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Maryland Departments of Natural Resources and Planning.

READ AND PASSED this 5th day of JUNE, 2017.

BY ORDER



Thomas J. Peddicord, Jr.
Secretary

ITEM: RESOLUTION 55-17

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This plan serves as an advisory master plan for the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks, particularly for strategic and capital resource planning. Local Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plans (LPPRP) are legally mandated through the State of Maryland Annotated Code, Section 5-905(b)(2) of the Natural Resources Article, as a requirement for counties to remain eligible for Maryland Program Open Space (POS) funding. POS is the primary State of Maryland funding program for the acquisition, development and rehabilitation of parkland and recreation sites, and thus the main emphasis of the LPPRP is parks and recreation. LPPRP guidelines require that the local plans be formally adopted by each county, with Baltimore County's planning process including formal LPPRP adoption by the Baltimore County Council as an addendum to the County's comprehensive (master) plan.

There are three primary aspects of land preservation/conservation that the State's guidelines require to be included within the LPPRP—Parks and Recreation, Natural Resource Land Conservation, and Agricultural Land Preservation. Of these three, the main focus of the LPPRP is Parks and Recreation, being that Maryland POS is a parks and recreation capital funding grants program. Content on the parks and recreation sections of this plan was prepared primarily by the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks (DRP), whereas the content on natural resource conservation and agricultural land preservation was formulated by two County agencies—the Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability (EPS), and Department of Planning (Planning).

The agriculture land preservation and natural resource conservation portions of the plan are largely presented in “reference and summary” format, outlining the existing policies, practices, accomplishments and goals for these components of the plan. Applicable content from *Baltimore County Master Plan 2020* and other existing documents is identified and presented. This reflects the fact that comprehensive efforts in the areas of natural resource conservation and agricultural land preservation are more thoroughly documented in other existing plans, reports, etc.

This plan describes the broad range of tools Baltimore County utilizes to effectively preserve land for a variety of purposes—to provide parks, to “green” urbanized areas through the dedication of open space and greenways, to preserve farmlands and rural landscapes, and to protect natural resources and habitats. These tools range from capital funding programs to environmental and development regulations. The County faces many challenges within its land preservation efforts. Continued population growth and a greater awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle increase recreational demands, and can challenge the ability of the County's existing recreational infrastructure to accommodate those demands. In certain communities, where additional park sites may be required for the construction of needed facilities, there may be a lack of suitable undeveloped or under-developed lands. Diversions to POS and reduced fiscal resources likewise challenge the County's ability to preserve sufficient parklands and agricultural and natural resources, to construct new recreational facilities, and to adequately maintain and rehabilitate the existing extensive inventory of parks and facilities. These factors highlight the need to prioritize the use of available capital resources, and emphasize the value of alternative means of land acquisition/preservation, park development, resource conservation, and site and facility management and maintenance. A number of these alternative methods are outlined within this document.

The land preservation and natural resource conservation chapters of this document summarize Baltimore County's vision and efforts to foster preservation of the working landscape while at the same time protecting the environmental services these areas provide. The County's land preservation program and growth management mechanisms have combined to protect the rural landscapes that are a defining characteristic of the County's heritage. Land preservation programs alone have preserved nearly 64,000 acres of farmland, woodland and environmentally sensitive areas. In a similar way zoning tools, development regulations, and capital programs protect natural resources such as the Chesapeake Bay, streams, wetlands, forests, and wildlife habitats through a variety of programs such as stream buffer easements, forest conservation easements, forest banks, stream restoration, shoreline enhancements, and reforestation. All of these efforts have collectively led to Baltimore County being recognized as a national leader in the realm of natural resource protection.

Baltimore County also enjoys a rich history as an innovator within the field of parks and recreation, stretching back more than 65 years to 1949. Long employed programs and practices such as the volunteer recreation councils, the joint-use agreement for school recreation centers, and the mandatory dedication of local open spaces and greenways within the development process have served as models for other jurisdictions. The Recreation, Parks and Open Space chapter of this document presents the County's existing parks and recreation policies, programs, goals and objectives. A number of key elements of the LPPRP are provided within the chapter, including an analysis of recreational supply and demand, an estimation of parkland and recreational facility needs, a list of current parks and recreation objectives, and a summary of the project priorities and recommendations.

This iteration of the LPPRP includes a major change to the processes utilized to estimate the need for additional parks and recreational facilities. In the time since the prior LPPRP, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources – after close consultation with the recreation and parks agencies from each of the counties and Baltimore City – came to the conclusion that some of the planning standards and processes employed in past LPPRPs had little evidence of being scientifically or reasonably justifiable. Chief among these long-standing standards and processes was the parkland acreage goal of providing 30 acres of parkland per thousand citizens. Despite exhaustive research, DNR found no basis for such a goal, nor any strong reason or explanation for why such a figure and method was devised. The 2017 LPPRP guidelines thus encourage the counties to employ alternative parks and recreation planning methods that best fit each individual jurisdiction. The Parks and Recreation chapter of this plan reflects this new level of flexibility being promoted and supported by DNR and other counties throughout the State.

The overall conclusion of this plan is that investment in land preservation, parks and recreation continues to be essential for a very wide range of reasons, and that Baltimore County continues to exert efforts in these areas in order to remain an attractive place in which to live, do business and visit, and remain a national leader.

CHAPTER ONE: PLAN INTRODUCTION

Maryland Program Open Space (POS) Law, as presented within Title 5, Subtitle 9 of the Natural Resources Article of the Maryland Annotated Code, requires each county to prepare a Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) every five years to maintain eligibility for funding through POS. This plan has been prepared to achieve that mandate, and to serve as a planning guide for the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks, particularly relating to the planning of capital projects including park acquisition, development and rehabilitation.

PROGRAM OPEN SPACE (POS) is the State of Maryland's pre-eminent funding program for parklands and recreational facilities. POS was established in 1969 through the enactment of a dedicated tax, the statewide real estate transfer tax (a half-a-percent tax on most property transfer transactions). Revenues from the tax are utilized for state, local and municipal parks and recreation capital projects ranging from the acquisition of park sites, to construction of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, to capital renovations of existing parks and facilities. Baltimore County has been allocated nearly \$130 million since the inception of local POS funding in 1970, an average of about \$3.25 million per year. The County's three largest annual allocations were received in fiscal years 2006 – 2008, when its net apportionments averaged approximately \$9.7 million per year. Since the downswing in the economy the annual POS allocations have been relatively small, with the annual net allocations averaging just under \$3 million from fiscal years 2009-2017. The reliability of the program on an annual basis has been deteriorated by State funding diversions, as POS and other land conservation programs have been frequent targets for State legislation that diverts/transfers transfer tax revenues in years when budget deficits need to be resolved. While some pay back of diverted funding has taken place, such legislation-enabled budgetary actions are often deferred from year to year, and "full funding" of the program remains elusive.

The prior Baltimore County LPPRP was adopted by the Baltimore County Council on February 18, 2015. That plan served primarily as an update to the 2005-2006 County LPPRP, repeating certain content from that plan and providing information on the progress that has been achieved towards its goals, objectives and capital project priorities. The prior plan also featured substantial references to Baltimore County Master Plan 2020 (adopted in 2010), reflecting the LPPRP's role as a master plan addendum.

It is important to understand the role of the LPPRP within Baltimore County's overall planning process. The LPPRP is just one of many planning tools and documents that help guide the County in its efforts to provide the citizens of the County every opportunity to have a high quality of life, all the while maintaining the delicate balance between preservation and development, for which Baltimore County has long been recognized as a national leader. Other notable planning tools are the Baltimore County Master Plan (including its water resource element), the dozens of adopted community plans from throughout the County, initiative-based planning documents such as the County's bicycle and pedestrian access plans, the County's development and growth management policies and regulations, and numerous environment-focused plans. All of these plans, including the LPPRP, support state and federal plans and initiatives, including the State of Maryland's LPPRP.

PLAN PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

This LPPRP serves as a planning document that outlines Baltimore County’s efforts in three general realms of land conservation—parks and recreation, natural resource conservation, and agricultural land preservation. The County has long been recognized as a national leader in land conservation, with its strong multi-tier approach of growth management, agricultural preservation, environmental policy, and park acquisition and development. Supporting the “greening” of the County are extensive land holdings of the State and Baltimore City, including the state parks, natural environment areas, reservoir properties, and City and State properties leased and/or operated by the County for parks and recreational purposes.

This plan provides a summary of the County’s land preservation and conservation vision, outlining what is in place, as well as what more is believed to be needed and/or demanded by the citizens. Associated goals, objectives, and implementation actions and strategies are likewise presented, and will continue to be pursued to best serve the residents and visitors of Baltimore County, and to contribute to the environmental wellbeing of the County’s lands, waters, flora, and fauna.

This LPPRP remains closely tied to the most recent Baltimore County comprehensive plan, Master Plan 2020 (MP2020). Throughout this document there are excerpts and references to MP2020, whose plan vision carries over to this LPPRP:

Create and maintain safe and sustainable communities, to achieve a sensible balance of economy, equity, and environment for people to reside, work, pursue careers, raise families, and enjoy the amenities in Baltimore County, Maryland.

It is important to bear in mind that the LPPRP serves as an advisory plan, and that the recommendations contained herein do not represent tangible fiscal commitments. The availability of capital funding resources, in particular, have a great bearing on the County’s ability to purchase land, construct and improve parks, and undertake capital rehabilitation and enhancement projects ranging from park renovations, to stream restoration, to shoreline erosion control measures. This plan instead serves as a general guide, and more comprehensive fiscal planning remains an ongoing process that eventually comes to fruition during the County’s capital budgeting process. Citizens and interested parties are encouraged to offer their input through the public input opportunities provided in conjunction with the capital budget – capital improvement program (CIP) processes.

DEFINITIONS USED IN THE PLAN

Community Conservation Areas: One of the designated land management areas within Master Plan 2020, community conservation areas (CCA’s) are established communities and commercial centers in urbanized areas of the County, generally adjacent to or in close proximity to Baltimore City. Targeted revitalization efforts seek to retain or enhance the areas’ attractiveness and functionality.

Greenways: Networks of open space and parklands, typically linear in form, which are utilized for preservation, recreation or both. Most greenways in Baltimore County are associated with stream

valleys. Some greenways include trails, including: the Cooper Branch, along which runs the Number Nine Trolley Line Trail; Red Run, along which the County's newest greenway trails were developed to serve the Owings Mills Growth Area; and Little Falls and Beetree Run, the streams along which the State's Torrey C. Brown (formerly North-Central) Rail Trail is situated. Greenways also serve as valuable wildlife corridors.

Local Open Space (LOS): Land that is dedicated as open space through Baltimore County's development process, which requires that open space be provided within residential developments. LOS ranges from usable spaces that are open and grassy, to more natural areas such as woods and stream valleys. These areas may be owned by the County, homeowner/condo owner associations, land developers, or management companies, with a relatively small number of LOS properties being improved with recreational facilities.

Recreation and Parks Regions: Major jurisdictional areas into which Baltimore County is split for the oversight of recreation services by the Department of Recreation and Parks. The agency reorganizes this structure on an occasional basis, with the County currently being divided into four regions. Each of these regions is administered by a "Regional Coordinator" who oversees Community Recreation Supervisors assigned to the communities and recreation and parks councils of the region. Staff in each of the regions works closely with local recreation and parks councils, who provide the majority of formal, organized recreational programming to the citizens of the County. It should be noted that not all parks or recreational facilities are managed as part of a region, and that regional and countywide parks and associated staff are managed in a different manner not directly associated with the regions.

Recreation and Parks Councils: A cornerstone of recreation in Baltimore County, these are citizen-based, non-profit volunteer groups that are responsible for the vast majority of organized recreation programs that take place at County recreational facilities. Each of the 45 councils has a formal charter, leadership structure and bylaw. DRP relies upon council volunteers to provide the recreation programs that serve the public, to raise funds to support those programs, and to provide input regarding local recreational facilities needs. The volunteers of the councils work hand-in-hand with DRP's field staff, who manage facilities on the County's and agency's behalf, and organize support staff such as field leaders and building attendants.

School Recreation Center (SRC): A site that is designed to function as both educational and recreational facility. In the case of Baltimore County, a "Joint Use Agreement" between DRP and the Board of Education ensures that all public schools with recreational facilities are available for recreation program use in addition to serving their traditional role as educational facilities. The costs associated with the acquisition and development of SRCs are typically shared between Baltimore County Public Schools and DRP. In some cases outdoor recreation facilities may be developed prior to school construction, allowing the sites to be used entirely as parks on an interim basis or until a site is deemed no longer needed or suitable for a school recreation center.



Sparks Elementary School Recreation Center

GEOGRAPHY AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

This section presents geographical background and context.

Baltimore County Geography

Baltimore County comprises approximately 608 square miles of land and inland waters such as the reservoirs, lakes, and non-coastal rivers and streams. The County boasts very diverse landscapes, from scenic Chesapeake Bay shorelines and vistas, to dense and bustling urban areas, to substantial forested tracts, to a vast network of streams and rivers, to the large and tranquil water reservoirs, to tens of thousands of acres of rolling hills, pastures, and farmlands. Approximately 80% of the County's land is situated within the physiographic province called the "Piedmont Plateau," which is characterized by rolling terrain, low ridges and distinct stream valleys. The remaining 20% of the County is located within the relatively flat to gently sloping "Coastal Plain" province. The physical character of these provinces greatly shape the County. A number of geographic features, growth management policies, and environmental programs likewise help to define and maintain the County's overall character.

The Chesapeake Bay and its Tributaries: A defining geographic feature of Baltimore County is the jurisdiction's approximately 232 miles of shoreline (source: Maryland Geological Survey). In addition to the Bay and associated rivers, streams, and wetlands being invaluable natural resource, the coastal waters provide a wide range of recreational opportunities including swimming, fishing, wildlife viewing, and recreational boating from sailing to motor boating to jet skiing, to canoeing and kayaking. Water-based recreational pursuits continue to evolve and grow, as witnessed by the

relatively new activity called standup paddle boarding. Lands adjacent to the bay and its tidal tributaries are largely protected through the Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Program.

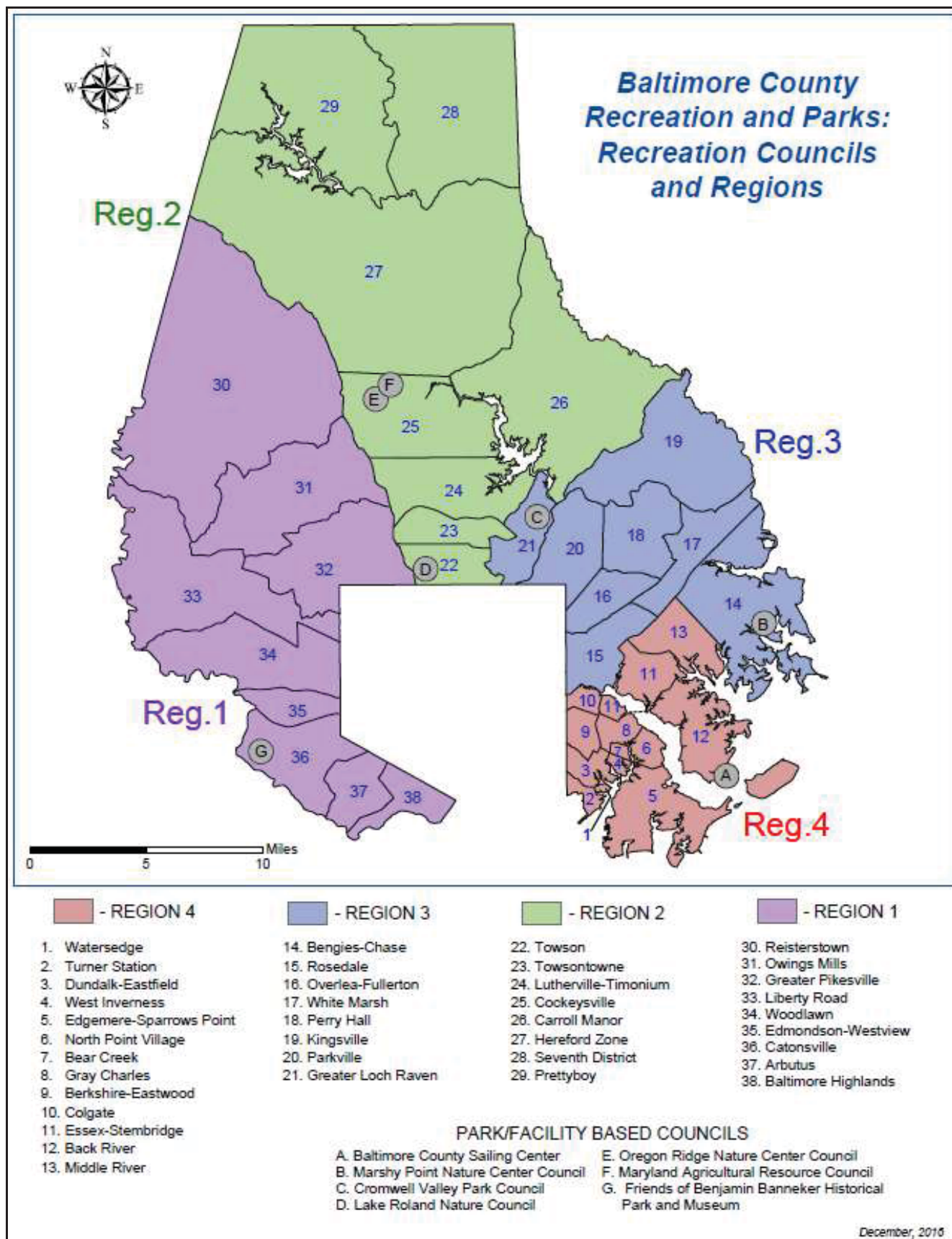
Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Program: Enacted by the Maryland General Assembly in 1984, this program established a 1000-foot area along the tidal influence of the Chesapeake Bay as a “critical area” in which development would generally be limited for the purpose of protecting the Bay. Categories of lands within the critical areas were created and defined-- intensely developed areas (IDA), limited development areas (LDA), and resource conservation areas (RCA). Land use and management criteria were formulated for each of the three classifications, and act as a key tool to manage and limit development within the 1000-foot area.

Forest Resources: More than one-third of Baltimore County’s land area consists of forest and tree cover. Vast publicly-owned forest resources may be found within Loch Raven, Liberty, and Prettyboy Reservoirs; Gunpowder Falls, Patapsco Valley, and North Point State Parks; the Soldiers Delight Natural Environment Area; and County owned/operated parks such as Oregon Ridge Park, Lake Roland Park, and Cromwell Valley Park. All of these public lands feature extensive trail networks that wind through woodlands, providing extensive recreational opportunities.

The Urban Rural Demarcation Line (URDL): The URDL delineates the division between the “urban” portion of the County in which development and government services are concentrated, and the “rural” areas that are more natural and far less developed and populated. About a third of the County, consisting of the areas immediately surrounding Baltimore City, are situated within the urban portion of the URDL. The urban area includes residential and commercial community conservation areas, employment centers, the Towson Urban Center, the Owings Mills Growth Area, and the Middle River Redevelopment Area. The rural portion of the County features agricultural preservation areas, resource preservation areas, rural residential areas, and two rural commercial centers—Hereford and Jacksonville. Parts of this rural section of the County preserve the County’s rich equine heritage that continues to this day, with the County having the largest equine population of any county in the State (source: 2010 Maryland Equine Census).

Recreation and Parks Geography

The Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks’ administrative geography has been modified on multiple occasions since the adoption of the prior LPPRP. As of December of 2016 there are 38 “traditional” recreation councils with distinct boundaries that incorporate one or more communities and/or neighborhoods, while another seven councils were dedicated to specific parks or facilities, with no defined service areas outside of the boundaries of a single park. See the “Baltimore County Recreation and Parks: Recreation Councils and Regions” map on the following page.



DRP's administrative geography relates primarily to the agency's mission of offering recreational services, primarily through the organized activities of the volunteer recreation and parks councils. Recreation Services field staff and their counterparts in the Agriculture, Nature, and Special Facilities Section are stationed throughout the County, each working in a community or special facility office that works with one or more council(s) and administers the parks and recreation physical resources within the bounds of their assigned council(s) or park. These offices and the associated councils operate cooperatively to try to meet the diverse recreational needs of the citizenry.

The recreation and parks council boundaries and geography have, in the past, offered a convenient means for assessing such factors as demographic trends and the need for parklands and recreational facilities. However, reorganization of and changes to recreational geography does not allow for a truly consistent regionalized analysis from plan to plan. The Parks and Recreation section of this plan addresses that conundrum, and employs a change in the approach to regionalized analysis that will hopefully allow for more effective comparative analysis between this and future LPPRPs. An introduction to the new planning geography follows.

Revised Planning Geography

A variety of "planning geographies" have been utilized in prior LPPRPs, most often associated with boundaries such as recreation regions and recreation councils. However, numerous changes have taken place over the years, with certain recreation councils merging, and regional or area boundaries being modified. Such changes in geography make it untenable to perform statistical comparisons from LPPRP to LPPRP, as the underlying geographies change. As an example, regional boundaries between Recreation and Parks Region 1 and 2, and between Regions 3 and 4, have changed since the prior County LPPRP.

This plan employs a new/different geographic basis for analysis, making use of the "Regional Planning Districts." These are defined by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) as follows:

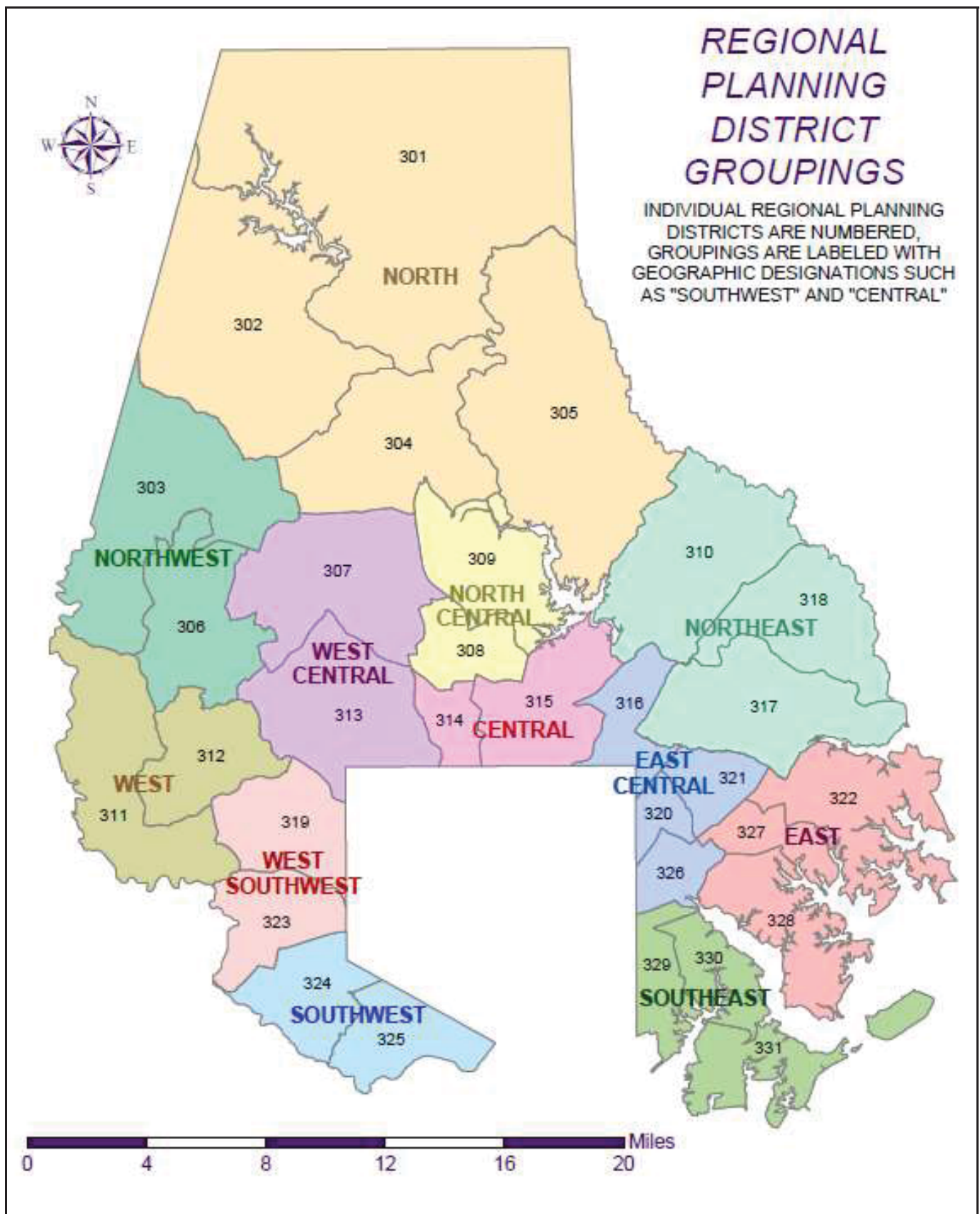
REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICTS are a somewhat larger district level of geographic detail used in transportation planning to summarize demographic characteristics and travel data for an identifiable area. RPDs follow census geography boundaries and contain one or more census tracts. TAZs nest within RPDs. RPDs are identified by 3-digit numbers: numbers beginning with 1 are in Baltimore City, with 2 in Anne Arundel County, with 3 in Baltimore County, with 4 in Carroll County, with 5 in Harford County, and with 6 in Howard County. There are 94 RPDs in the region. RPD boundaries have been kept essentially the same since they were developed in the early 1970's. This allows comparison of data over time for a stable geographic unit.

RPDs have also been used for other forms of planning within the County, over and above transportation planning. Further, the "TAZs" (Transportation Analysis Zones) mentioned in BMC's above description are used by the Baltimore County Department of Planning as the basis for population projections.

Within this plan RPDs have been grouped into twelve geographically designated “RPD Groups.” The following table identifies the groups and associated RPDs:

RPD GROUP	INCLUDED RPDS	INCLUDED RPD NAMES
Central	314,315	Ruxton, Towson/Loch Raven
East	322,327,328	Chase/Bowley's Quarters, Middle River, Essex
East Central	316,320,321,326	Parkville, Overlea, Rossville, Rosedale
		Hereford/Maryland Line, Prettyboy, Sparks,
North	301,302,304,305	Jacksonville
North Central	308,309	Lutherville, Cockeysville/Timonium
Northeast	310,317,318	Fork, Perry Hall/White Marsh, Kingsville
Northwest	303,306	Fowlesburg, Reisterstown/Owings Mills
Southeast	329,330,331	Dundalk/Turners Station, North Point, Edgemere
Southwest	324,325	Catonsville, Arbutus/Lansdowne
West	311,312	Harrisonville, Randallstown
West Central	307,313	Chestnut Ridge, Greenspring Valley/Pikesville
West Southwest	319,323	Liberty/Lochearn, Security

The map on the following page displays the above RPD Groups.



The RPD Groups represent a stable geography that correlates, to a fairly effective extent, with the Department of Recreation and Parks' geography as formed by the "building blocks" that are recreation council boundaries. The following table indicates which of the recreation councils are most closely associated with the various RPD Groups. In some cases a recreation council may be listed within multiple RPD Groups, reflecting the fact that substantial portions of the recreation council are situated within the bounds of multiple RPD Groups.

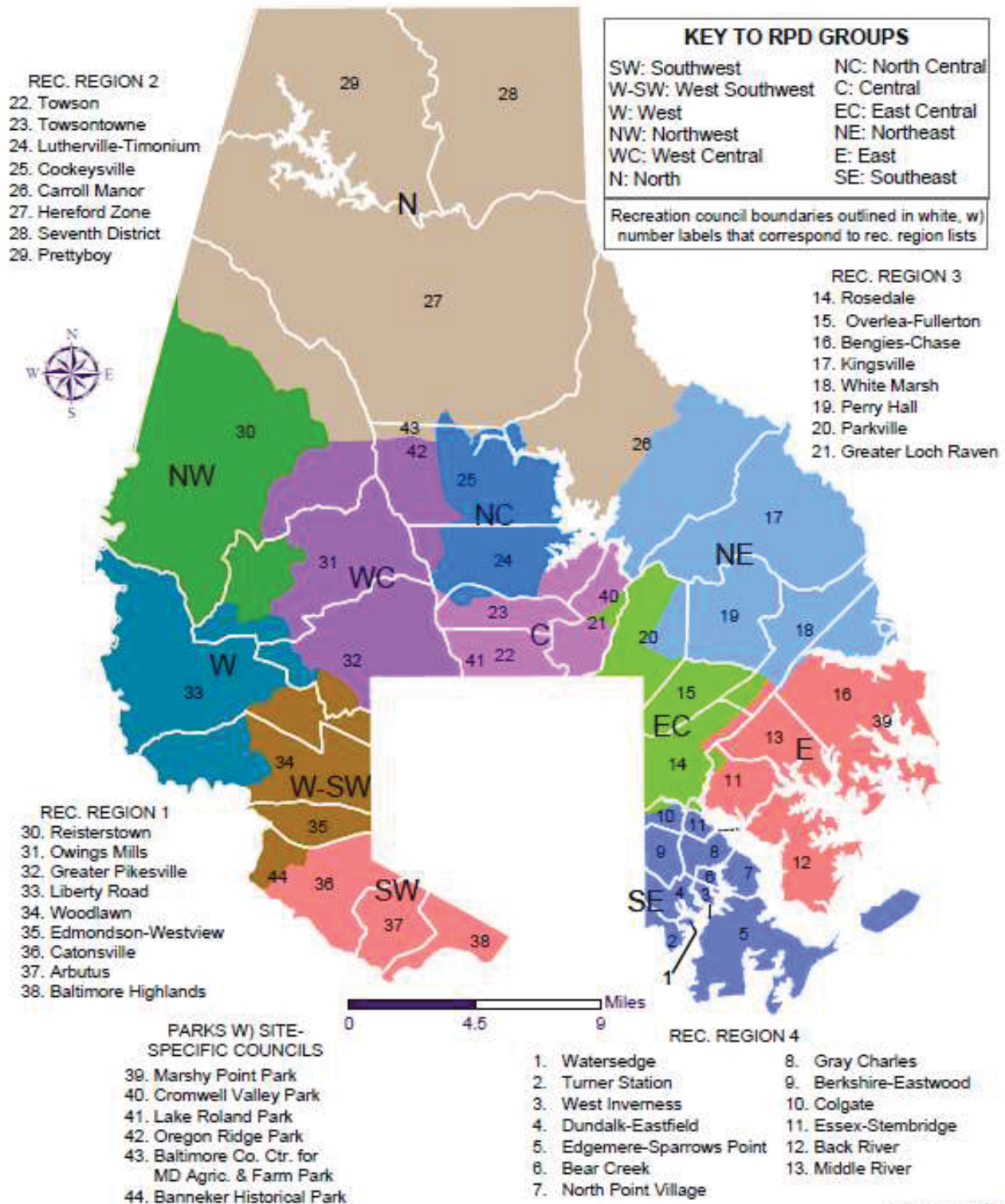
RPD GROUP	ASSOCIATED RECREATION COUNCILS*
Central	Greater Loch Raven, Towson, Towsontowne
East	Back River, Bengies-Chase, Essex-Stembridge, Middle River
East Central	Overlea-Fullerton, Parkville, Rosedale
North	Carroll Manor, Hereford Zone, Prettyboy, Seventh District
North Central	Cockeysville, Lutherville-Timonium
Northeast	Carroll Manor, Kingsville, Perry Hall, White Marsh
Northwest	Owings Mills, Reisterstown
Southeast	Bear Creek, Berkshire-Eastwood, Colgate, Dundalk-Eastfield, Edgemere-Sparrows Point, Gray Charles, North Point Village, Turner Station, Watersedge, West Inverness
Southwest	Arbutus, Baltimore Highlands, Catonsville
West	Liberty Road, Woodlawn
West Central	Owings Mills, Greater Pikesville
West Southwest	Edmondson-Westview, Liberty Road, Woodlawn

*- Some recreation councils are included within multiple RPD Groups

It should be noted that the recreation councils remain the functional entities through which organized recreation programs are provided for County citizens. Baltimore County Recreation and Parks' staff at the Community Recreation Offices continue to work cooperatively with the volunteers of the recreation councils. Each of the Community Recreation Offices work with one or more of the 38 recreation councils that existed as of the end of September, 2016. The number of traditional recreation councils (councils with a geography that extends beyond a single park, to one or more neighborhoods and communities) dropped by three since the prior Baltimore County LPPRP, with the lands of the former recreation councils being added to those of adjacent recreation councils.

The map on the next page shows the physical relationship between the various councils and the RPD Groups that are being utilized for analytical purposes within this plan.

RECREATION COUNCIL & REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT (RPD) GROUP BOUNDARIES

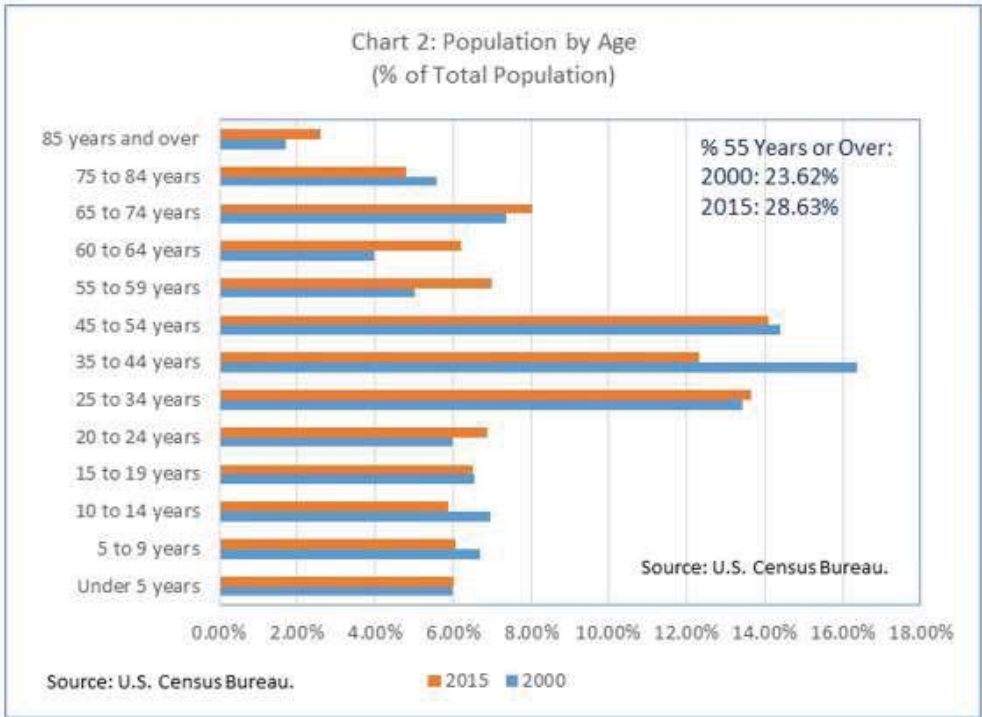
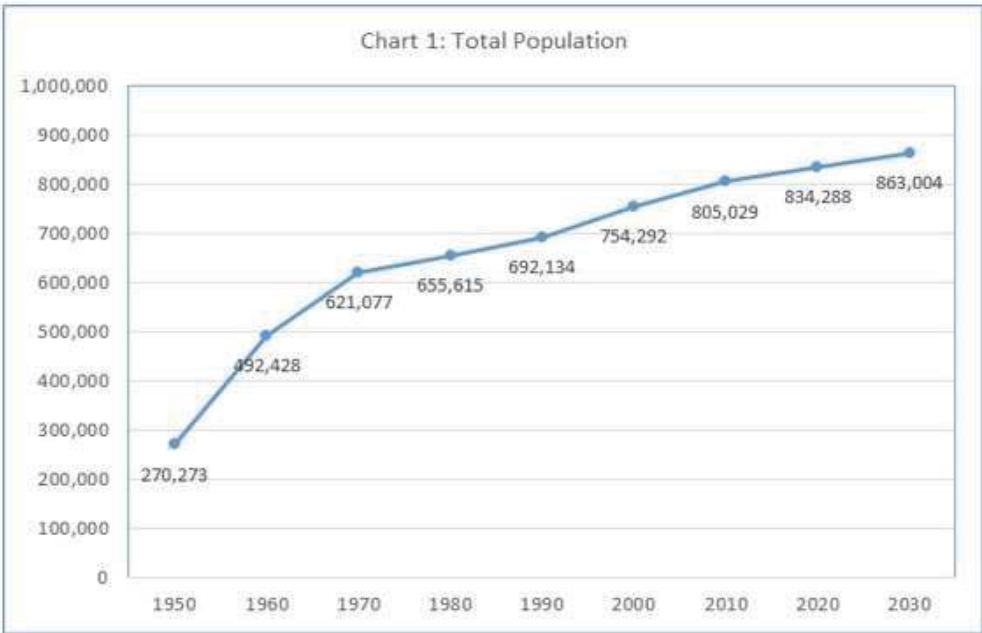


September, 2016

This new planning geography shall be used extensively within the parks and recreation section of this plan.

Demographic Characteristics

Following are a select series of charts and graphs that display various demographic information about Baltimore County. The chart numbers, deriving from a larger report, are not of significance.



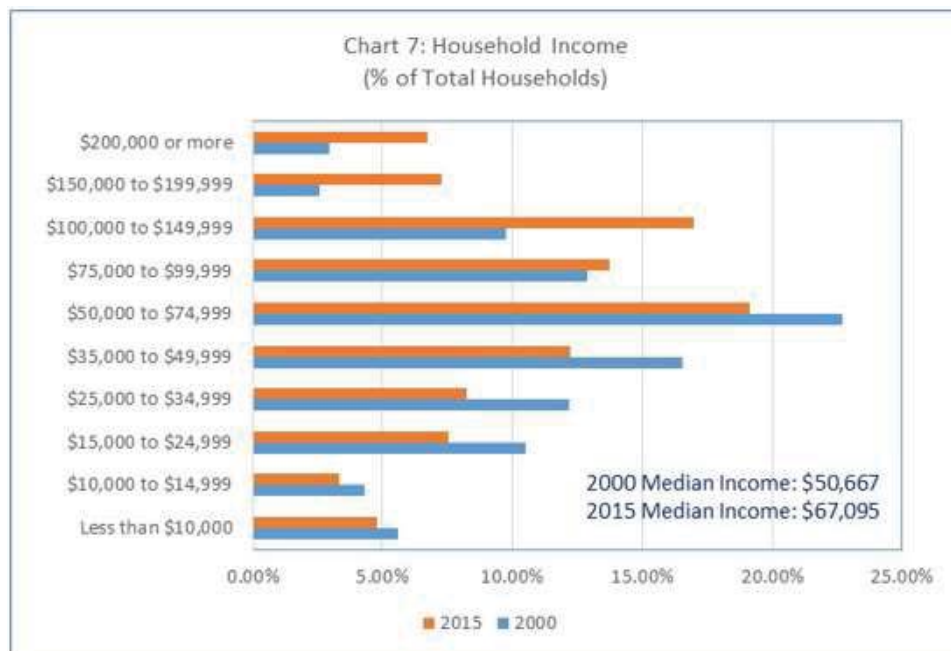
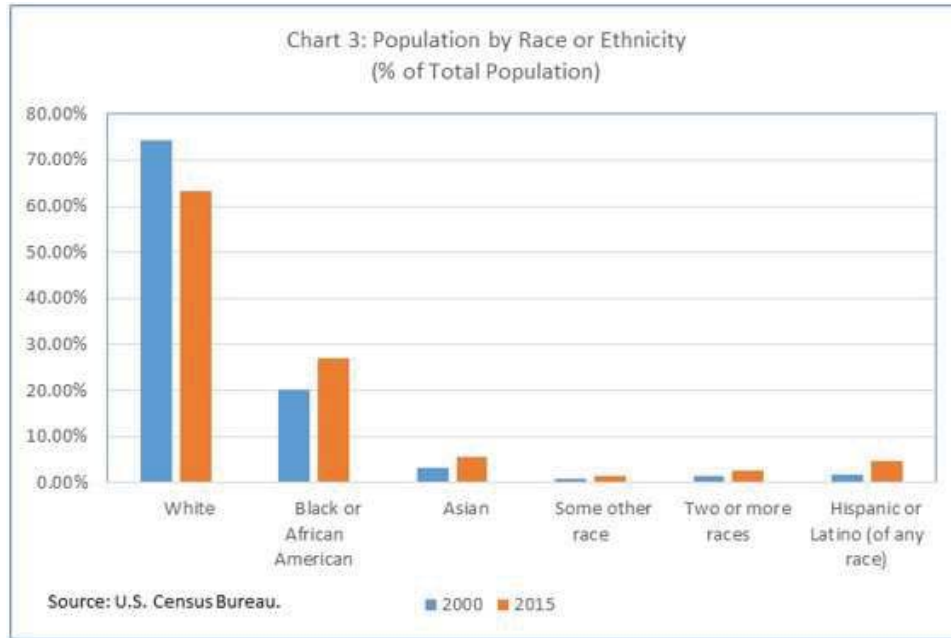


Chart 10: Housing Units and Tenure

Housing Type	2000	2015
Total Housing Units	313,734	336,682
Owner-occupied	202,579 (64.6%)	207,389 (61.6%)
Renter-occupied	97,298 (31.0%)	105,511 (31.3%)
Vacant	13,857 (4.4%)	23,782 (7.1%)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Chart 11: Housing Units by URDL Area		
Housing Type	2000	2015
Total Housing Units	313,734	336,682
Urban Units (and percentage of total units)	283,040 (90.2%)	302,604 (89.9%)
Percent Change '00-'15	N/A	6.9%
Rural Housing Units	30,694 (9.8%)	34,078 (10.1%)
Percent Change '00-'15	N/A	11.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Baltimore County Government.

The prior charts and graphs show that Baltimore County has a growing and diversifying populace. Both the racial and household types within the County have become much more diverse over the decades. Meanwhile, though the County's growth management policy and associated regulations and mechanisms such as zoning and growth tiers ensure that the vast majority of the population resides in the urban portion of the County, Chart 11 shows that the rate of growth in the rural part of the County was larger than that of the urban area between 2000 and 2015.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The LPPRP is just one of many advisory planning documents for Baltimore County. It does, however, have close connections to two plans in particular, one a County plan, and one a State plan. First the LPPRP is directly tied to the County's comprehensive plan, the most recent version of which was Baltimore County Master Plan 2020 (MP2020), and if and when approved by the County Council shall become an addendum to MP2020. The other plan to which this LPPRP is closely connected is the Maryland Land Preservation and Recreation Plan (LPRP). The LPPRP/LPRP of each county and Baltimore City are incorporated, to a certain extent, within the State's LPRP, which also features extensive content that pertains to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) planning doctrine.

Following are the key related goals of both the County's MP2020 and State's LPRP.

Primary Goals of Master Plan 2020

MP2020 features three principal goals, each with associated key actions. Many of the actions associated with the three goals are supported by or have impacts upon parks and recreation within Baltimore County. For example, the joint-use agreement whereby public schools serve as both educational and recreational venues directly supports the public school related action of goal one's bullet seven, while the stormwater runoff action of goal two impacts the manner in which parks and recreational facilities are designed and developed. The three primary goals and associated actions are as follows:

Goal One: Continue the Success of Growth Management

- Direct the future growth within the Urban-Rural Demarcation Line (URDL)
- Protect and enhance Community Conservation Areas

- Promote redevelopment with an emphasis on ailing commercial or industrial properties
- Develop compact, mixed-use, transit-oriented, and walkable neighborhoods
- Advance economic well-being by promoting a high quality labor force
- Provide a mixture of housing types for an emerging diversity of residents
- Support quality public schools to enhance communities
- Prioritize infrastructure improvements via the Capital Improvement Program to endorse sustainable development
- Protect the character and economic vitality of the rural communities

Goal Two: Improve the Built Environment

- Provide adequate open space and recreational opportunities and increase connections to nature by linking open spaces and parks
- Invest in public grounds by tree planting, buffer conservation and habitat restoration
- Expand and deliver multi-modal transportation services
- Reduce pollutant loadings of runoff with enhanced stormwater management
- Meet desire for green communities by providing regulatory incentives
- Ensure integration between regulations and sustainability programs such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)

Goal Three: Strengthen Resource Conservation and Protection

- Protect health of the natural environment and maintain a valuable biodiversity
- Restore ecosystems and encourage fair, efficient use of natural resources
- Preserve cultural assets to establish a tangible sense of community
- Nurture farming activities and importance of the agricultural industry
- Conserve rural characteristics and scenic vistas

State Goals

The following identifies various State goals pertaining to Recreation, Parks and Open Space, to Natural Resource Conservation, and to Agricultural Land Preservation. Some of these goals apply predominantly to the State and agencies such as the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of the Environment, Maryland Department of Agriculture, and Maryland Department of Transportation (the latter of which numerous programs for non-motorized forms of transportation such as bicycling and walking are administered). However, many of the goals are likewise applicable to the County, and in some cases pertain to cooperative efforts between the County and the State.

A. State Goals for Recreation, Parks and Open Space

- ❖ Make a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities readily accessible to all of its citizens, and thereby contribute to their physical and mental well-being.
- ❖ Recognize and strategically use parks and recreation facilities as amenities to make communities, counties, and the State more desirable places to live, work, and visit.
- ❖ Use State investment in parks, recreation, and open space to complement and mutually support the broader goals and objectives of local comprehensive / master plans.

- ❖ 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.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ Continue to protect recreational open space and resource lands at a rate that equals or exceeds the rate that land is developed at a statewide level.

B. State Goals for Natural Resource Land Conservation

- ❖ 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:
 - 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 incentives for resource-based economies that increase the retention of forests, wetlands or agricultural lands;
 - Avoidance of impacts on natural resources by publicly funded infrastructure development projects; and
 - Appropriate mitigation response, commensurate with the value of the affected resource.
- ❖ Conserve and restore species of concern and important habitat types that may fall outside of designated green Infrastructure (examples include: rock outcrops, karst systems, caves, shale barren communities, grasslands, shoreline beach and dune systems, mud flats, non-forested islands, etc.).
- ❖ Develop a more comprehensive inventory of natural resource lands and environmentally sensitive areas to assist state and local implementation programs.
- ❖ Establish measurable objectives for natural resource conservation and integrated state/local strategy to achieve them through state and local implementation programs.
- ❖ Assess the combined ability of state and local programs to achieve the following:
 - Expand and connect forests, farmland and other natural lands as a network of contiguous green infrastructure;
 - Protect critical terrestrial and aquatic habitats, biological communities and populations;
 - Manage watersheds in ways that protect, conserve and restore stream corridors, riparian forest buffers, wetlands, floodplains and aquatic recharge areas and their associated hydrologic and water quality functions;
 - Adopt coordinated land and watershed management strategies that recognize the critical links between growth management and aquatic biodiversity and fisheries production; and

- Support a productive forestland base and forest resource industry, emphasizing the economic viability of privately owned forestland.

C. State Goals for Agricultural Land Preservation

- ❖ 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:
 - Establish preservation area, goals, and strategies through local comprehensive planning processes that address and complement State goals;
 - In each area designated for preservation, develop a shared understanding of goals and the strategy to achieve them among rural landowners, the public-at-large, and State and local government officials;
 - Protect the equity interests of rural landowners in preservation areas by ensuring sufficient public commitment and investment in preservation through easement acquisition and incentive programs;
 - Use local land use management authority effectively to protect public investment in preservation by managing development in rural preservation areas.
 - Establish effective measures to support profitable agriculture, including assistance in production, marketing, and the practice of stewardship, so that farming remains a desirable way of life for both the farmer and the public-at-large.

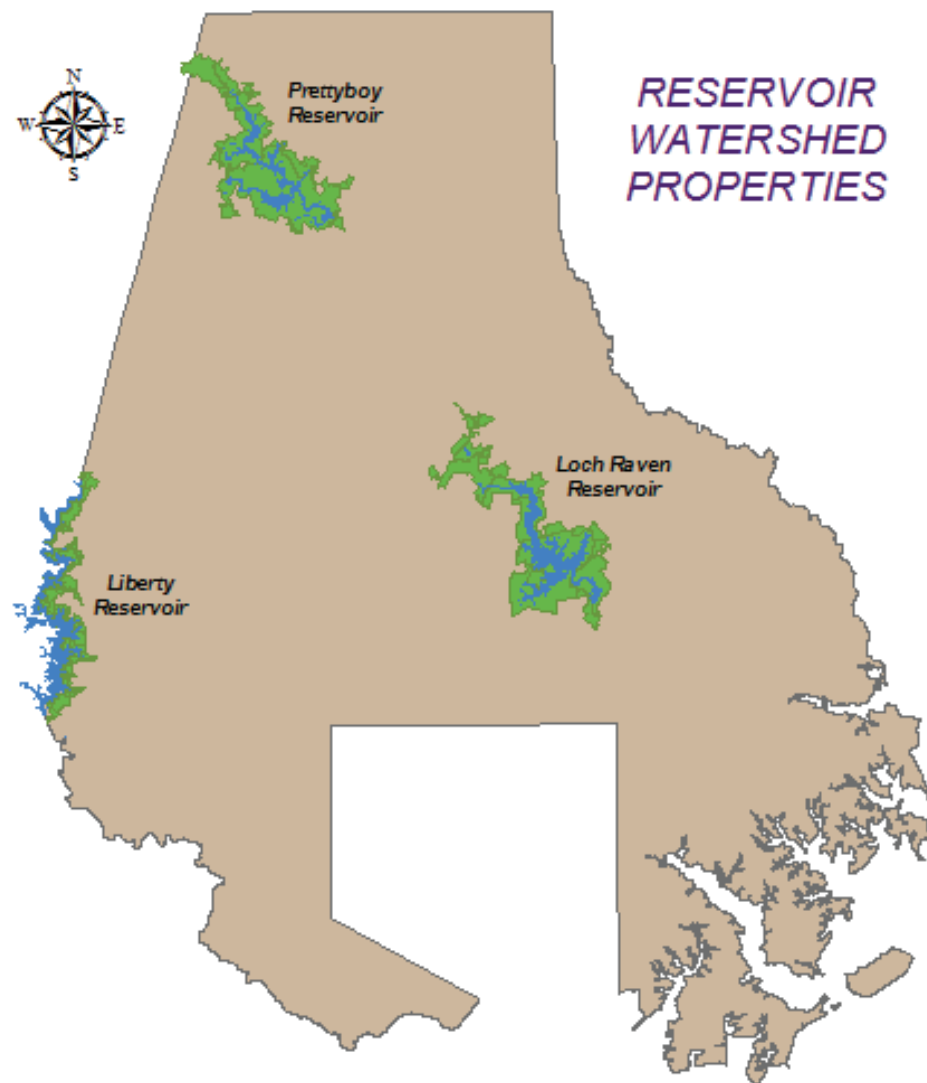
INTRODUCTION TO PRESERVED LANDS

Baltimore County is blessed with an extensive and diverse collection of preserved lands that greatly contribute to quality of life, health of both the natural environment and the populace, and character of both the rural and urban parts of the County as established by the Urban-Rural Demarcation Line (URDL). Numerous types of lands, owned and administered by a variety of entities, combine to form a substantial network of preserved lands. Such lands are the venues for virtually unlimited forms of recreation, provide places for communities and citizens to gather together, protect invaluable natural resources and greatly enhance the County's environmental health, preserve the character and heritage of the rural areas, and help to "green" the urban sections of the County while enhancing the visual character of the built environment. Following are brief description of the types of lands that are characterized as "preserved lands" for the purposes of this plan. At the end is a list

of other forms of preservation that have not been counted or displayed on the accompanying maps that follow the descriptions.

- **County Parks:** This category of preserved lands includes Baltimore County Recreation and Parks properties and leased recreation sites that feature some form of permanent recreational facility enhancement(s). The types of parks varies widely, from small neighborhood-serving sites of less than a half-acre with only a playground as the sole improvement, to the ~1,100-acre Oregon Ridge Park and its myriad recreational facilities. Leased sites include properties the County leases from civic organizations, churches, and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. The County's public golf courses, operated by the Baltimore County Revenue Authority, are included in this classification. One unique site included in this classification is the BeeTree Preserve in northern Baltimore County, for which a conservation and public recreation access easement was purchased from its owners, the Towson Presbyterian Church.
- **Public School Recreation Centers:** The vast majority of public schools in Baltimore County serve dual roles as both educational and recreational facilities under an established joint-use agreement between DRP and the County's Board of Education. The school recreation centers (SRC) provide invaluable indoor and outdoor recreation facilities that are typically heavily utilized by the programs of local recreation councils, and which many local residents regularly utilize when school is not in session. Many SRCs have been jointly funded by the Board of Education and DRP, and it is not unusual for DRP to fund site enhancements such as the highly popular and much demanded artificial turf fields at SRCs.
- **County-Owned Open Spaces:** This site classification includes local open spaces (LOS) deeded to the County through its development management process, park and school recreation center sites that have not been developed/improved, and other miscellaneous open space lands assigned to DRP's inventory. Such sites that have been improved have been reclassified as parks. This category also includes extensive undeveloped greenway lands along various rivers and streams throughout the County. The nature of open spaces varies widely, from open, gently sloping areas conducive for both passive and active recreational uses, to wooded tracts and stream valleys.
- **Other County-Owned Green Spaces:** In addition to DRP, Baltimore County's Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability (EPS) and Department of Public Works (DPW) administer substantial amounts of land dedicated to preservation and conservation. This includes publicly-owned lands such as forest conservation reservations and flood plain and drainage reservations. The latter are very similar to parks and open spaces along stream valleys. The primary role of these lands is to protect the natural environment, though public access remains permissible, and many citizens use such areas as nearby opportunities to "escape to nature." This category does not include storm water management ponds, nor forest conservation, flood plain, steep slope, or drainage easements.
- **City Reservoir Watershed Properties:** There are three City-owned and managed reservoirs either fully or partially within Baltimore County—Loch Raven, Liberty, and Prettyboy. While the primary role of the reservoirs is to hold the waters that serve the Baltimore metropolitan area's citizens, the extensive lands surrounding these water bodies contain sizeable networks of trails, with Loch Raven also housing a public golf course and a skeet and trap shooting range. The reservoirs themselves also provide recreational opportunities including boating (limited and restricted to protect the water quality) and fishing, with Loch Raven Reservoir featuring a fishing

center operated by Baltimore County Recreation and Parks. Various uses of the reservoirs and surrounding watershed property are guided by the Baltimore Watershed Agreement.



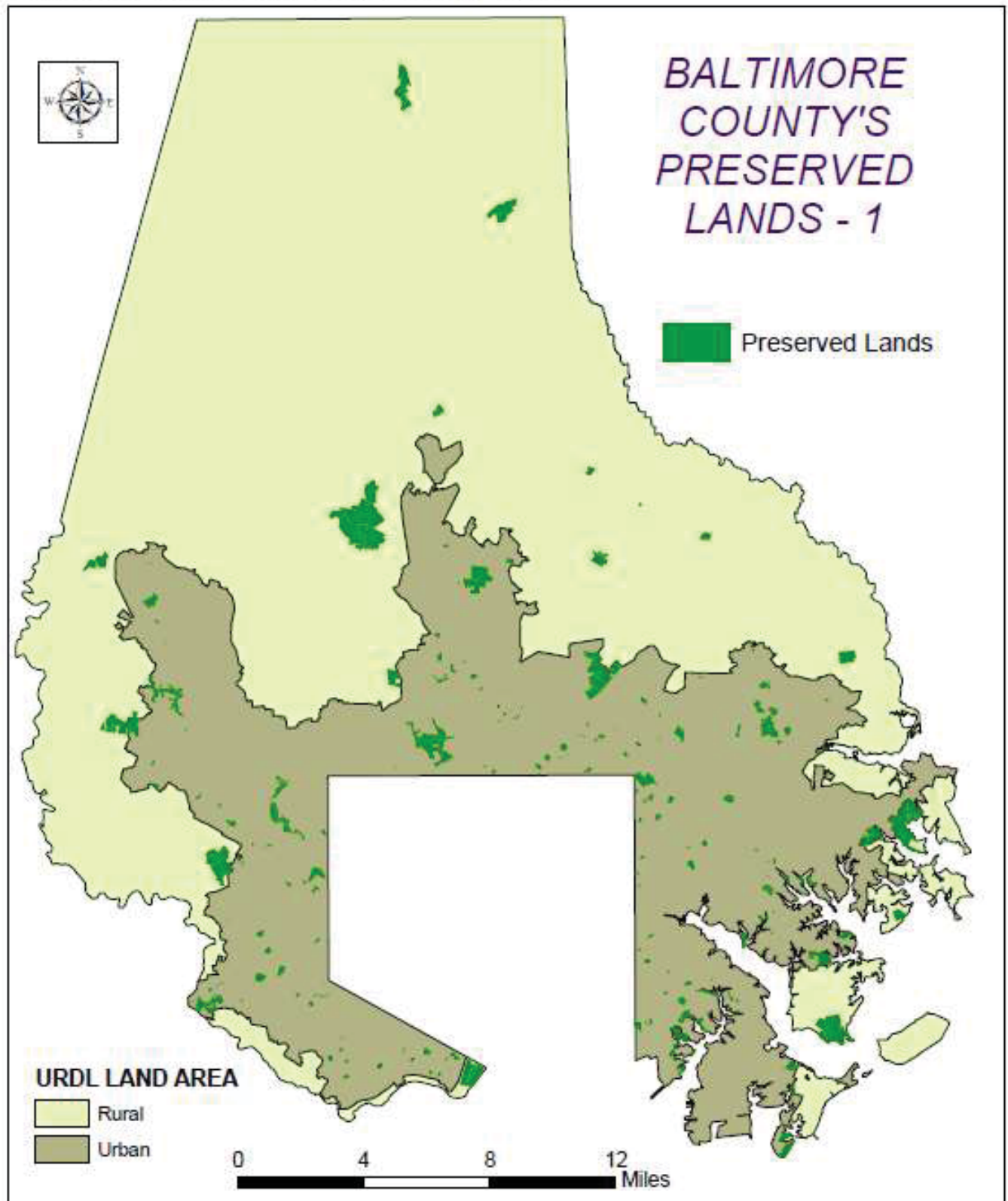
- State and National Parks: Baltimore County is fortunate to be home to six vast properties administered by Maryland DNR-- Patapsco Valley State Park (Maryland's first State Park), Gunpowder Falls State Park, Hart-Miller Island State Park, North Point State Park, North Point State Battlefield, and the Soldiers Delight Natural Environment Area. The first two of these sites extend for dozens of miles and cross into neighboring counties. The majority of public hiking trails in Baltimore County are situated within the State Parks and sites, which also feature a wide range of natural resource-based recreational opportunities such as picnicking, camping, fishing, boating, interpretive programs, and more. The County also leases portions of three State Parks, which it operates as individual parks (Kingsville Park/Athletic Fields, Millers Island Tot Lot/Park) or as part of a larger park (Cromwell Valley Park). The County is also home to the

Hampton National Historic Site, a property owned and operated by the National Park Service and which features a Georgian mansion and associated structures on a portion of lands once owned by one of the most prominent families in Maryland.

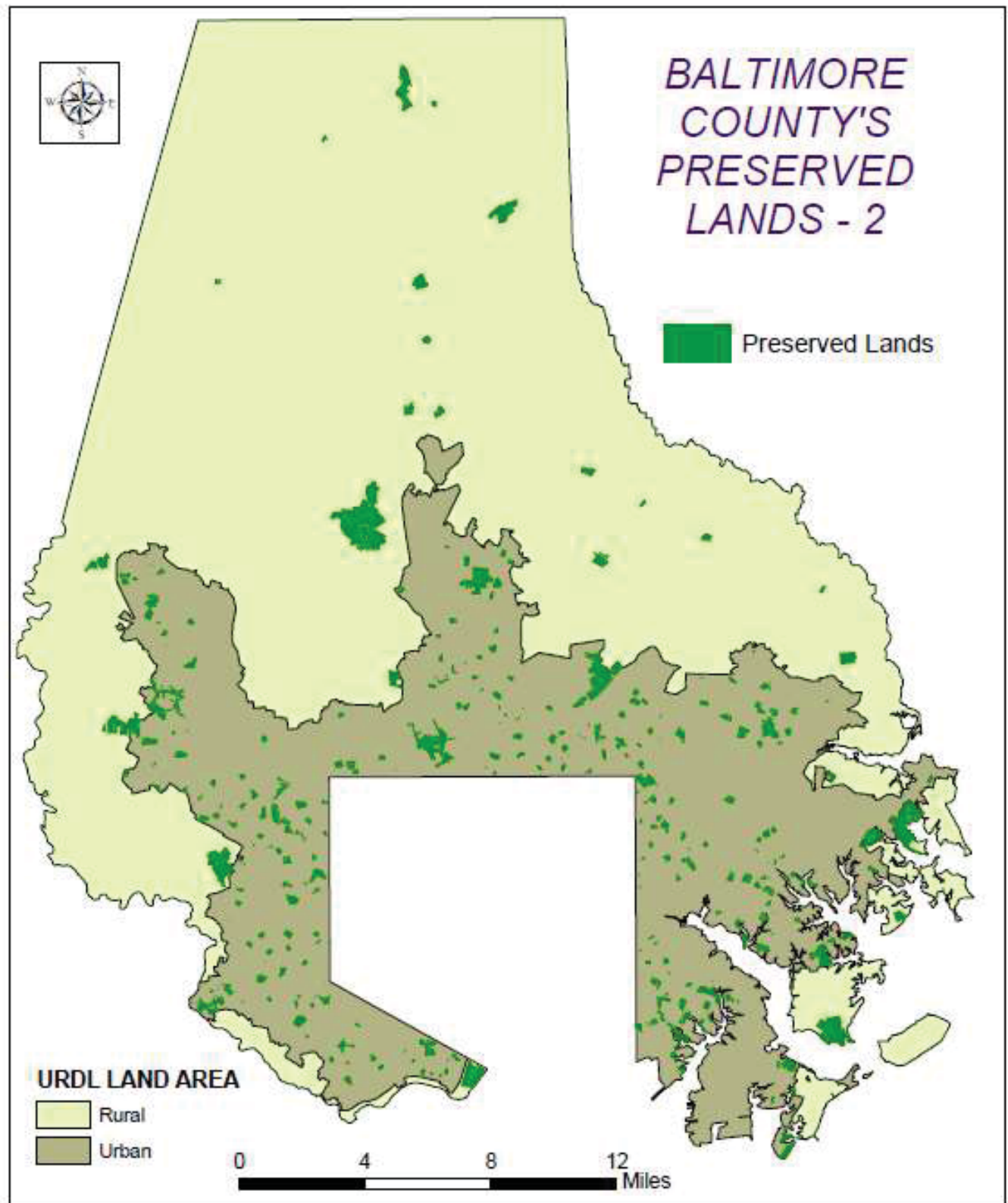
- **Private Open Space:** This category includes two overall types of open space. First and more extensive are open spaces preserved through the County's development process that have been deeded to entities such as homeowner and condo-owner associations. These spaces are much the same in nature as the County open spaces previously described, though not owned by the County. In some cases the sites have been improved with recreational facilities, and serve as local parks. The second type of lands within this category are the properties owned and administered by NeighborSpace of Baltimore County, an independent non-profit organization that works cooperatively with the County, and which seeks to preserve and sometimes enhance green spaces within the urban section of the County.
- **Agricultural and Conservation Easement:** The largest collection of preserved lands in the County have been protected under a variety of easement programs/entities including the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF), the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET), Rural Legacy, County agricultural land easements, the former Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP), and the County's mandatory conservation requirements within certain resource conservation (RC) zones. In some cases such easements were obtained on property later acquired to serve as public parkland or green space, in which case these lands are counted in other applicable classifications and excluded from this category (to avoid double-counting). The vast majority of properties preserved under these programs are not open for public access and use, with the primary emphasis being the conservation and preservation of agricultural and natural resources.

The eight pages that follow display the preserved lands described above in a series of maps that build from one to another. The maps do not include certain areas that also contribute to the preservation of certain natural resources, such as forest conservation easements, flood plain and drainage easements, greenway easements, or steep slope easements. These environmental easement areas exist on both private and public property.

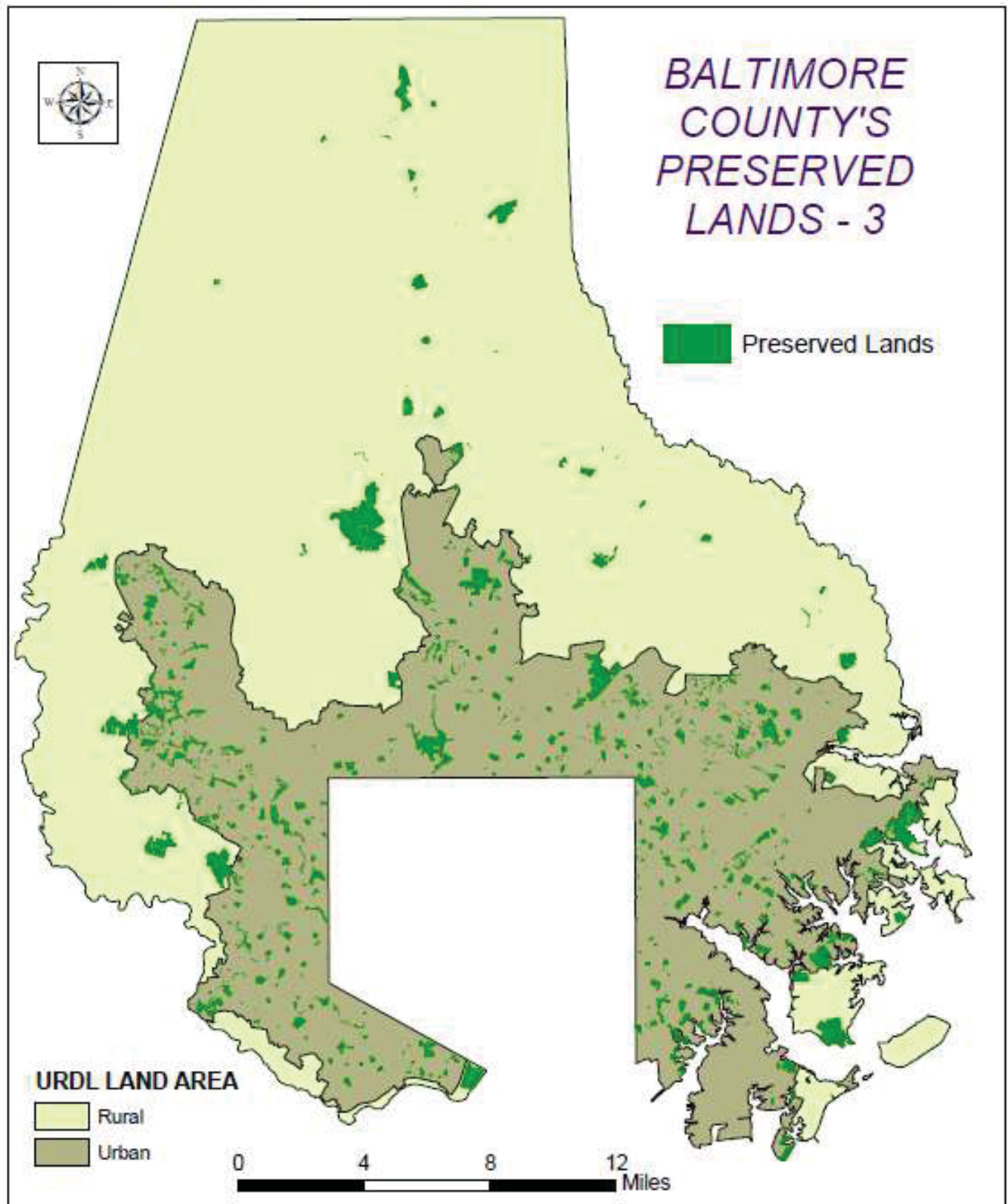
MAP 1: Preserved lands map showing only Baltimore County parks and sites secured for public recreation use by lease or other agreement



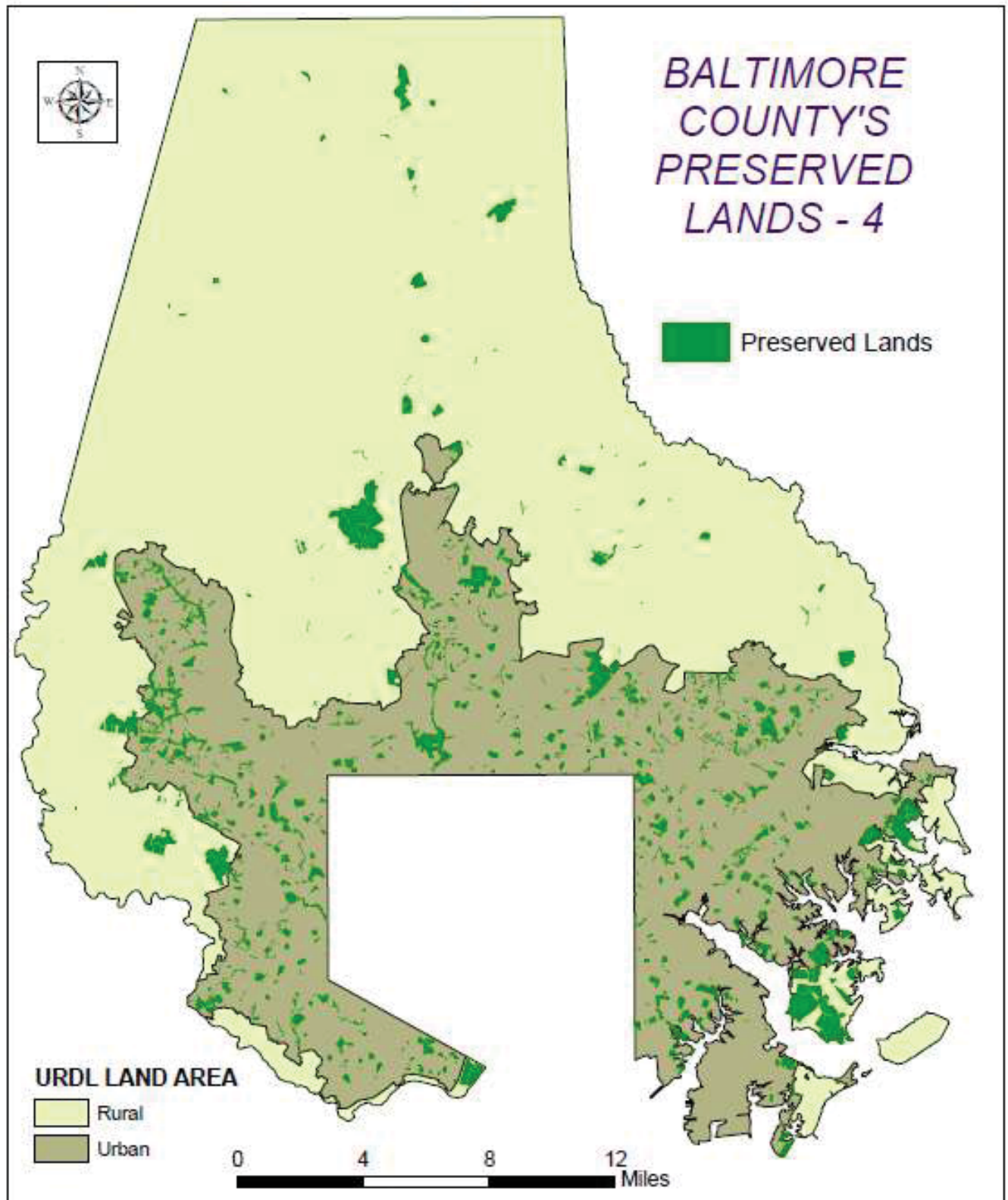
MAP 2: Preserved lands map after adding public school recreation centers with recreational facilities



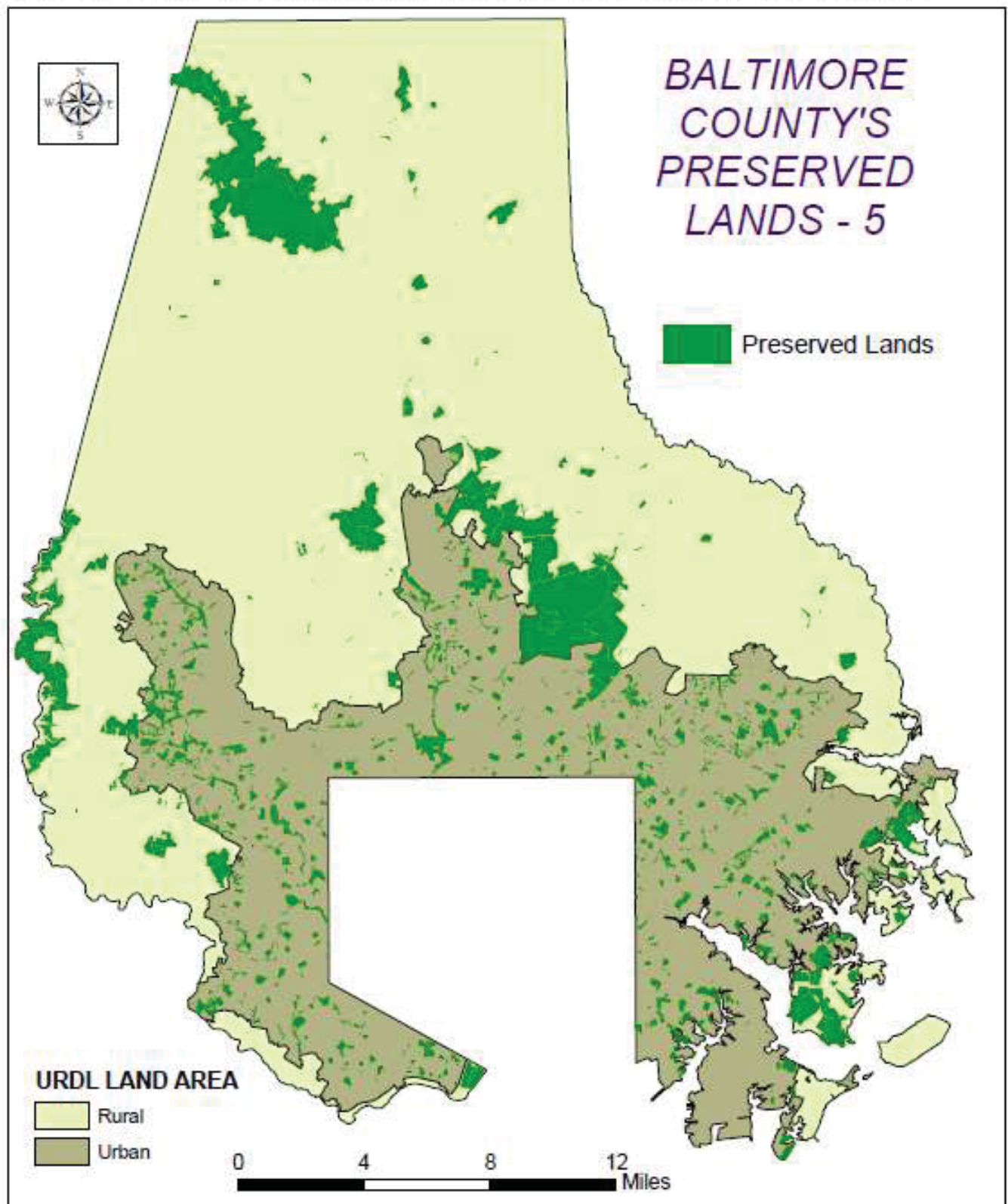
MAP 3: Preserved lands map after adding undeveloped County open spaces, undeveloped greenways, undeveloped park sites, and undeveloped school recreation centers



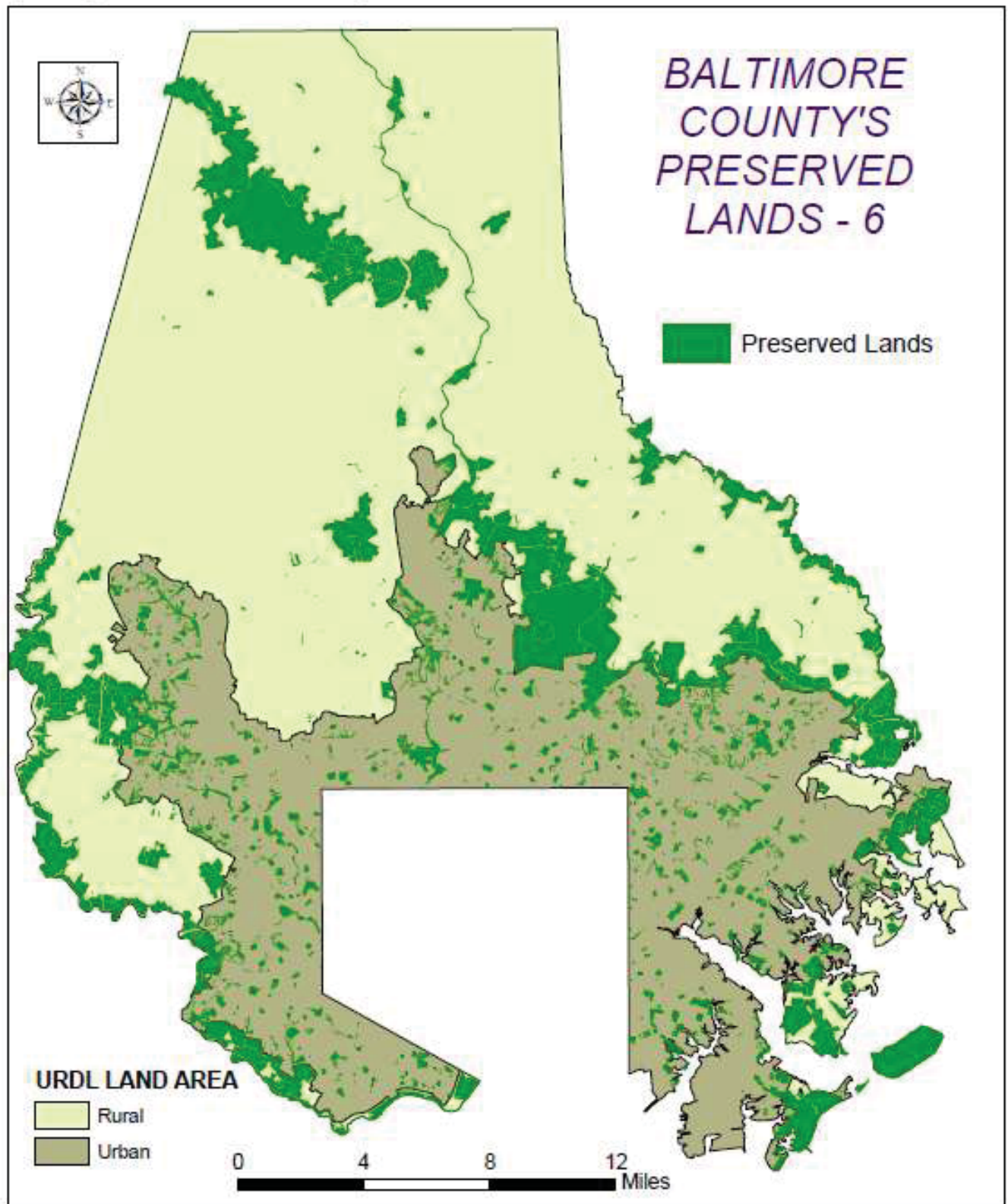
MAP 4: Preserved lands map after adding other County-owned green spaces such as flood plain, drainage, and forest conservation reservations



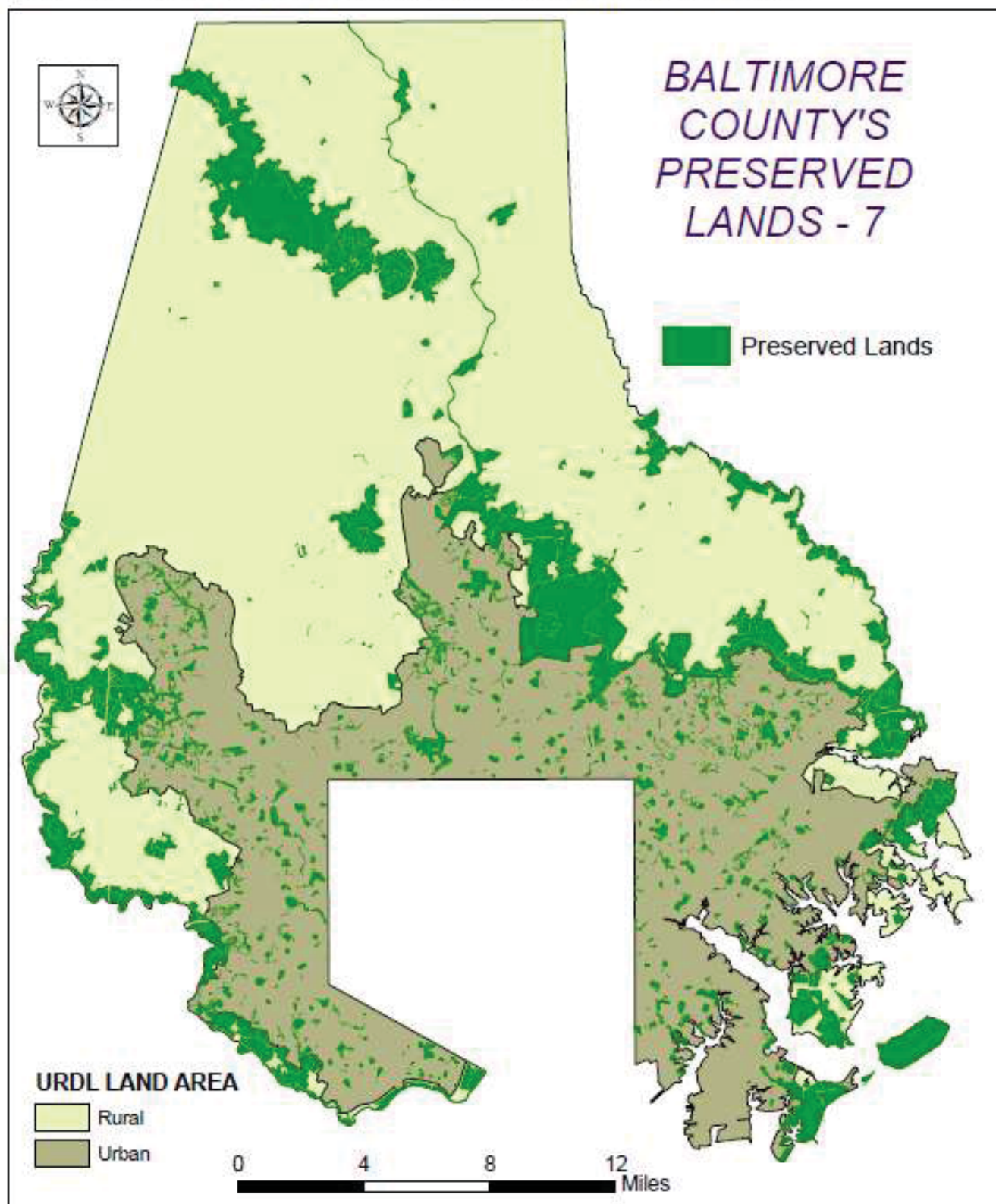
MAP 5: Preserved lands map after adding City-owned reservoir watershed properties



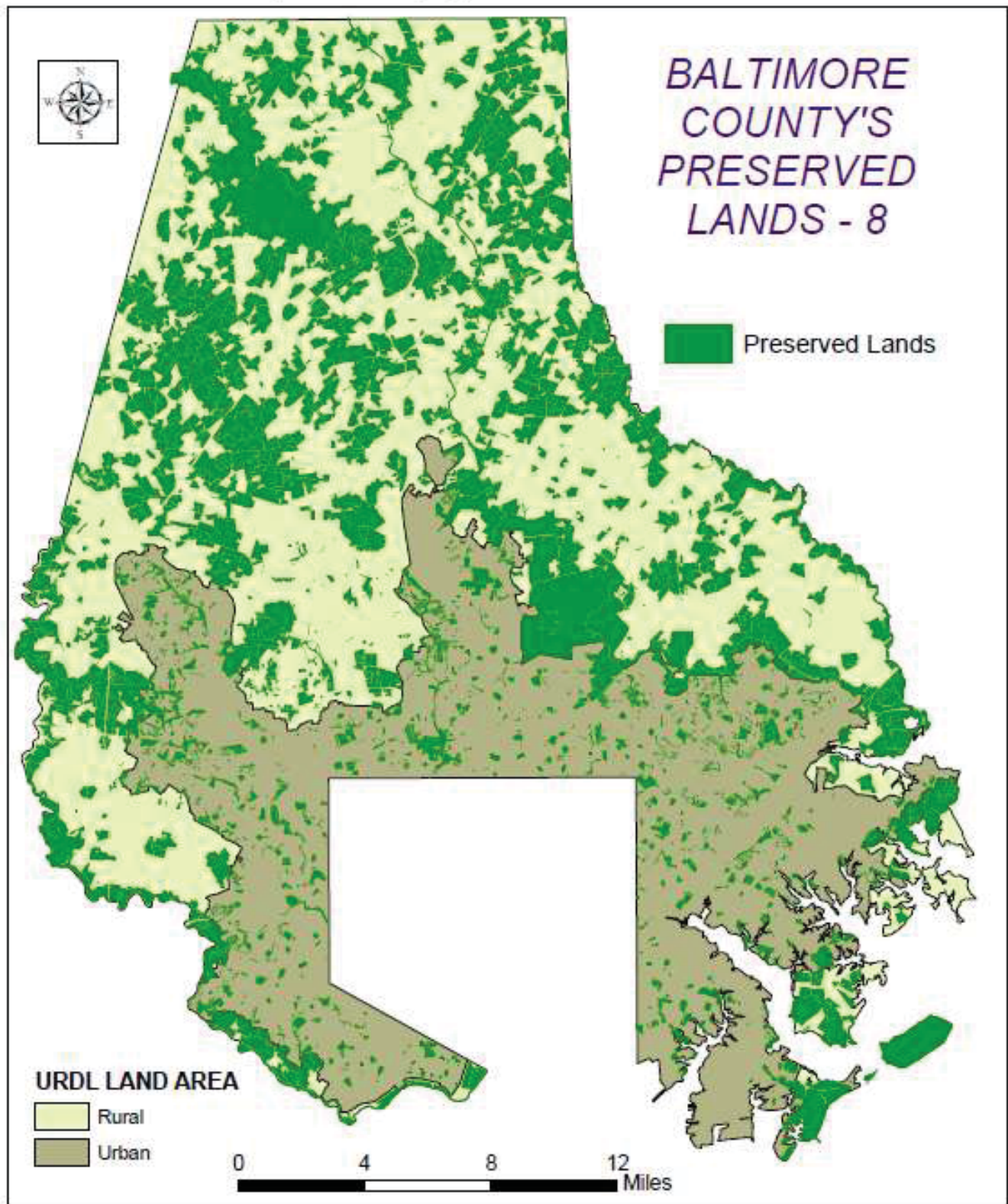
MAP 6: Preserved lands map after adding state and national parks situated fully or partially within Baltimore County



MAP 7: Preserved lands map after adding privately-owned open spaces



MAP 8: Preserved lands map after adding properties under agricultural land preservation easements and similar preservation programs



The last of the eight maps shows just how vast of an inventory of preserved lands exist within the County. The chart below breaks down the preserved lands by classification, listing the total acreage, the equivalent square miles, and the percentage the types of land amount to in comparison to the County's 608 square miles of land and inland waters.

TYPE OF PRESERVED LAND*	ACRES	SQ. MILES	% OF COUNTY LAND AREA#
County Parks	8,074	12.6	2.1%
Public School Recreation Centers	3,656	5.7	0.9%
County-Owned Open Spaces	3,323	5.2	0.9%
Other County-Owned Green Spaces	2,201	3.4	0.6%
City Reservoir Watershed Properties	18,180	28.4	4.7%
State Parks%	22,106	34.5	5.7%
National Park	62	0.1	0.0%
Privately Owned Open Spaces	1,163	1.8	0.3%
Agricultural and Conservation Easements	62,143	97.1	16.0%
TOTALS:	120,908	188.9	31.1%

*- See accompanying text on pages 21-23 for description of types of preserved lands
 #- Percentage of total County land area of approximately 608 sq. miles (including inland waters)
 %- Portions of state parks leased by county are counted under County Parks

The combined preserved lands summarized in the above chart account for nearly a third of the County's land mass. The amount and extent of such lands within the rural area display the effectiveness of the County's land and growth management policies, programs and efforts, as well as the efforts of partner entities. In addition to the vast conservation easement areas, the rural portion of the County features the majority of the reservoir lands and state parks. Large County parks including Oregon Ridge Park, the Baltimore County Center for Maryland Agriculture and Farm Park, Rocky Point Park, Marshy Point Park and Nature Center, several public golf courses (Graystone, Woodlands, Diamond Ridge, and Rocky Point), Mount Vista Park, and a portion of Cromwell Valley Park are also situated within the rural area.

Meanwhile, the majority of the urban areas in the County are well served by preserved lands that are typically of a smaller scale than the average preserved property in the rural area. Most of the larger pockets of urban lands devoid of preserved lands on the map are dominated by large scale properties dedicated to other land uses that may reduce opportunities for preservation. Examples include the industrial lands on the Sparrows Point peninsula, property within the Martin State Airport and adjoining Air National Guard base, and the part of the Dundalk Marine Terminal within Baltimore County. A number of universities and colleges situated within the County have large campuses, each of which also features at least some recreational areas and green spaces available predominantly to

students, teachers, and staff. These include: Towson University, the University of Maryland – Baltimore County (UMBC), Stevenson University, Goucher College, and Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) campuses in Catonsville, Dundalk, and Essex. Certain recreational facilities at the CCBC campuses are available for limited public recreation uses, primarily through the programs of local recreation councils.

An important aspect of Baltimore County’s preservation program is the emphasis that is placed upon preserving coastal lands and providing public access to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The maps show the success that has been achieved in this area, with vast tracts of public lands having been preserved, including State properties such as North Point State Park, Hart-Miller Island State Park, parts of Gunpowder Falls State Park, and County properties such as Rocky Point Park, Marshy Point Park, Fort Howard Park, the Rural Legacy acquisitions (especially on the Back River Peninsula), and dozens of smaller waterfront parks.



Marshy Point Park: View of Dundee Creek from canoe and kayak launch

The map that follows displays the various types of preserved lands summarized on the table on the prior page, with some types of similar lands grouped for the sake of simplicity.

BALTIMORE COUNTY'S PRESERVED LANDS BY TYPE

