

Guidelines

State & Local Land Preservation,

Parks and Recreation Planning

October, 2003

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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

There are numerous important differences between these and previous Guidelines for Land Preservation and Recreation Planning. The need for changes was identified through several means:

- The efforts of a joint State / Local Land Preservation and Recreation Planning Study Committee;
- Requests from the legislature's Joint Subcommittee on Program Open Space and the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation;
- Deliberations of the Task Force to Study the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation and a January 2003 report to the legislature;
- The framework for natural resource land conservation established by DNR's Maryland's Green Infrastructure initiative;
- Land preservation and supporting commitments Maryland and its jurisdictions made along with the other signatories of the 2000 Chesapeake Bay Agreement;
- Legislative actions during the past three years concerning the MALPF Program, POS, and State funding for land preservation and recreation planning; and
- Deliberations of staff and administrations at DNR, MDP, and MDA about these matters.

MDP prepared a January 2002 report for the Joint Subcommittee describing a general strategy to address many of these issues. Since that time, MDP, DNR, MDA, and members of the Study Committee have taken numerous steps to implement that strategy and address some of the other issues. One notable result is that the next round of local plans are due in 2005, and the next State Plan in 2006. Updates are now required every six years rather than every five, to better correspond to the frequency of comprehensive plan updates.

These guidelines are the next step in the planning process. The State and local plans are called Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plans (LPPRP) in these guidelines to better reflect these changes in the process. MDP and DNR staff will be available to meet with county recreation, planning, and natural resource protection departments to assist in development of local plans and a State Plan that reflects local needs and priorities.

PLAN SCOPE AND CONCEPTS

A. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

Program Open Space Law as most recently amended requires the 23 counties and Baltimore City to prepare local Parks, Recreation, and Land Preservation Plans every six years starting July 1, 2005. The State is required to submit a statewide plan that incorporates the county plans one year after the local plans are due.

Numerous and varied land preservation programs have been established by the State and locally since POS law was enacted in 1969. In addition to active recreation, most of these programs are focused on agricultural and rural land preservation, conservation of lands that support natural resources, including the State's biological communities and individual living resource populations, or all of the above.

Many of these programs benefit to varying degrees from the Real Estate Transfer Tax, which funds POS. Some rely primarily on other revenue sources, each of which has its own associated goals and objectives. The quality of the State's living environment has benefited tremendously from these diverse and, in most cases, complementary preservation efforts.

In light of this proliferation over time of desirable preservation programs and supporting revenue sources, a recent slowed economy, and associated reductions in many of those revenue sources, the over-arching purpose of the next round of land preservation and recreation planning is to develop a strategy that will best ensure good return on public investment in the objectives of these programs. To accomplish this, the planning process will:

- Review goals and objectives of State and local land preservation programs concerned with three types of land resource: parks and recreation, agriculture, and natural resources. Identify where they are essentially the same, where they are complementary or mutually supportive, and where they are simply different.
- For each type of land resource, evaluate the ability of implementation programs and funding sources to achieve the goals and objectives. Identify shortcomings in the ability of implementation programs and funding sources to achieve legislative goals.
- Identify and recommend to State and local legislatures and governing bodies changes needed to overcome shortcomings, achieve goals, and ultimately ensure good return on public investment.

B. PLAN ELEMENTS AND EMPHASIS

These guidelines focus on all three defined elements of land preservation and recreation planning: recreation and parks, agricultural land preservation, and natural resource conservation. Outdoor recreation includes land and facilities for outdoor recreation and historical sites. Agricultural land preservation and natural resource conservation concern lands that are, or should be, protected to maintain their natural resource features or capacity for agricultural production.

The approaches recommended in these guidelines for each of the three elements are quite different. This is especially so for parks and recreation versus agricultural and natural resource preservation. By their nature, parks and recreation are more driven by the changing needs of dynamic local populations and groups for recreational lands and facilities. Agricultural and natural resource conservation efforts must relate to existing resources: the location, distribution, and extent of resource lands and resource-based industries, and the current and prospective impacts of development.

The State Plan will place equal emphasis on all three elements. The guidelines for chapters III (Parks and Recreation), IV (Agricultural Land Preservation), and V (Natural Resource Conservation) describe the desired content from the County for each element in the County Plan.

For agricultural land preservation and natural resource conservation, it is not expected that counties will undertake comprehensive evaluations of agricultural preservation and natural resource conservation programs explicitly for the 2005 county land preservation and recreation plans. Most counties have made such evaluations to varying degrees, depending upon local priorities and resources, as part of their comprehensive planning process or a supporting activity. Counties should summarize information from completed studies, plans, reports, and data sources to address the guidelines for the chapters on

agricultural land and natural resources, and reference the appropriate document, report, or source. If the references are not typically provided to the State, copies should be submitted with the local land preservation and recreation plan.

Participation of local recreation and parks, planning, and natural resource agencies will be necessary to effectively address the three elements of the Plans. Each department is in a unique position to monitor and evaluate accomplishments in relation to goals, investment objectives, and procedures for land preservation. It is expected that each county will use its own evaluations and findings to support program changes and improve return on investment. Local evaluations and findings will also be used to supplement those performed by MDP, DNR, and MDA, and better inform the recommendations for changes to be made in the State Plan.

C. PLAN OBJECTIVES

In addition to the overall purpose of the 2005 – 2006 planning process, specific objectives include the following:

- Identify the needs and priorities of current and future State and local population for outdoor recreation;
- Achieve legislative goals of State and local land preservation programs;
- Ensure that public investment in land preservation and recreation supports and is supported by local comprehensive plans, associated implementation programs, State Planning Policy, and State and local programs that influence land use and development;
- Identify desirable improvements to policies, plans, and funding strategies, to better achieve goals and improve return on public investment; and
- Make recommendations to agencies, State and local legislatures, and administrations.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STATE AND LOCAL PLANS.

To achieve the desired purposes and objectives, the State and local plans must be mutually supportive. To this end, the State plan will both reflect the local plans and provide future direction for land preservation and recreation planning at a statewide level. Recommendations in the State Plan will be able to more accurately reflect local conditions, shortcomings, and priorities for change if counties provide supporting information through the local planning process. Changes in State funding sources and programs will best support local programs if the goals, strengths, and weaknesses of those programs are clearly understood. So informed, the State Plan will be more useful to counties seeking to advance these programs.

B. REQUIRED INFORMATION

The Guidelines describe the information required for each element in the next round of local plans, and how the State intends to incorporate local data and findings into the State plan. Information required according to specific formats, definitions, and/or in digital form is identified in appropriate sections throughout these guidelines. These specifications will facilitate compilation of necessary data to support statewide analyses and comparisons in the State Plan and to provide a coherent picture to the legislature and State administration.

C. LOCAL COORDINATION

The county POS liaison will be the primary point of contact for MDP and DNR during the planning process. The State, through MDP, DNR, and MDA will work with appropriate local government officials and agencies to facilitate their contributions to the appropriate elements of the plans.

D. RELATIONSHIP OF COUNTY PLAN TO LOCAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANS.

To ensure that land preservation and outdoor recreation investments are effective, they must be congruent with public plans, policies, and objectives that shape our landscape and communities. Local comprehensive plans and the associated implementation programs and investments are particularly important in this regard. These local processes affect the merits of alternative preservation and recreation strategies and investments, and therefore play an important role in the investment process.

These Guidelines stress the use of goals established in local comprehensive plans as a driving force behind investment in land preservation and outdoor recreation programs. Accordingly, the State will review local Parks, Recreation, and Land Preservation Plans as elements of the local comprehensive planning and implementation process. Formal adoption of the local plans as such by governing bodies will not be a prerequisite for plan approval, but must occur within the year following approval by the State. If adoption occurs after plans are approved by the State, changes to the plans that take place during the interim should be noted when the amended plans are submitted to the State.

E. NEEDS-BASED APPROACH TO OUTDOOR RECREATION.

MDP and DNR are placing a renewed emphasis on a needs-based approach to outdoor recreation planning and investment. These Guidelines describe recommended and required elements for demand analysis, inventory of recreational lands and facilities, and determination of needs for land acquisition, facility development, and facility maintenance and improvements.

Up to date information is important. The recently completed statewide surveys of participation and needs in outdoor recreational activities and public attitudes about land preservation, combined with MDP's online inventory system (see item G, below), completed by each county, should be used for these tasks, in addition to county specific information.

A needs analysis, per the guidelines in **Appendix B**, is required from all counties, including those who choose not to use it as a basis for acreage goals (see the following section F).

F. LOCAL GOALS FOR RECREATIONAL LAND AND FACILITIES.

Counties may use up to fifty percent of their POS funds for facility development. If they have achieved acreage goals for land acquisition approved by MDP and DNR, they may use up to 100 percent for development.

Procedures relating to local acreage goals have changed, consistent with the renewed emphasis on a needs-based approach. Each jurisdiction is being given the option of setting needs-based goals, using the state default acreage goal of 30 acres per 1,000 people, or another method that would need approval of MDP and DNR for their goal. Guidelines for the default state acreage goal can be found in **Appendix D**. The needs-based goal is discussed in the guidelines for Chapter III of the Plan.

Counties wishing to establish needs-based goals will be required to:

- Complete the needs analysis required from all counties; and
- Establish needs-based goals for land acquisition, development, and rehabilitation of recreational activities and fiscal needs to meet these goals.

G. MARYLAND ELECTRONIC (ONLINE) INVENTORY OF RECREATION SITES (MEIRS).

To provide an up to date picture of the supply of recreational land and facilities, each county and the State must update inventories of recreational lands and facilities using the State's interactive database (MEIRS). MEIRS is intended to ensure statewide compatibility of information; be an integral part of the needs analysis (supply of facilities versus demand); and serve other State and local needs for analysis, reporting, and public dissemination of information about recreation sites and facilities. Guidelines for MEIRS have been issued separately by MDP. Training has been offered to all counties and completed by most, and remains available to all upon request to MDP.

H. ASSESSMENTS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION PROGRAMS.

Many State, local, and private preservation and conservation programs have been created since Program Open Space law was established in 1969. To make the most effective use of State support for both land preservation and outdoor recreation, MDP, DNR, and MDA have embarked upon a comprehensive assessment of agricultural land preservation and natural resource conservation programs in preparation for the next State plan. The results of that assessment will identify ways to improve return on State investment, and to offer suggestions to agencies, the legislature, and local governments.

These guidelines describe the State's approach to the assessment that will be used in the State Plan, and on what is required in the local plans (see Plan Outline, Chapters IV and V) to support both local and State-wide assessments.

I. DATA SHARING.

GIS and other digital data support State and local ability to analyze and plan effective preservation and recreation programs. The State Plan will include an assessment of the status and progress of efforts among State agencies and local governments to produce, enhance, update, and share GIS data and analytical tools for these purposes, and recommend steps needed to move forward.

To assist local governments in plan preparation, the State will advise the counties regarding the analyses and databases the State agencies are using for statewide assessments. Local jurisdictions will be requested to describe their resources, completed analyses, and analyses they would like to complete in the future. All parties will be able to consider new or additional data sharing opportunities.

This effort will 1) facilitate effective and mutually supportive assessments for the next round of plans, 2) establish better procedures and inter-governmental agreements for digital data sharing of GIS data relevant to land preservation and recreation planning objectives, and 3) provide accurate information to support program evaluations, recommendations, and required reporting at State and local levels.

SCHEDULE AND KEY MILESTONES

A. LPRP WORK PROGRAM (2/1/04)

The county designated liaison for POS in each county and Baltimore City must submit for review to MDP and DNR a work program for completing their 2005 LPRP. The state will provide comments on the work program within 60 days of receipt. The work program should present the approach to be used for recreational needs analysis and the schedule for Plan preparation, review, and approval; staffing and funding; inter-jurisdictional and interagency coordination; plan content; coordination with related planning efforts; and public participation. The work program should include the following milestones.

B. STATE REVIEW OF PRELIMINARY COUNTY MEIRS DATA (2/1/04)

MDP will review the status of each county's MEIRS database. Counties will be asked to identify information desired in future reports. Layouts of preliminary reports that will be available to the counties through automated commands in the MEIRS system will be determined through consultation with the counties following the review of preliminary data.

C. COMPLETION OF (MEIRS) INVENTORY OF RECREATIONAL SITES AND FACILITIES (5/1/04)

The supply of land and facilities in the MEIRS inventory should be completed for use in the needs analysis.

D. FINALIZATION OF MEIRS REPORT LAYOUTS (6/1/04)

Layouts for reports that will be available to the counties through automated commands in the MEIRS system will be finalized through consultation with the counties following the completion of the MEIRS inventory.

E. NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR RECREATIONAL LAND AND FACILITIES (7/1/04)

The need for land, facilities, and program services must be determined. Needs for land acquisition, facility development, maintenance, and improvement of land and facilities to better meet public needs should be formulated. Deficits and surpluses will be identified. Guidelines for analysis of demand for recreational lands and facilities, the (MEIRS) inventory of recreational sites, and the needs evaluation are provided in **Appendix B**.

F. DRAFT PLAN SUBMITTAL TO MDP/DNR (1/1/05)

Draft local plans must be submitted to MDP and DNR for review and comment. State review comments will be provided within 60 days of receipt.

G. FINAL PLAN SUBMISSION (7/01/05)

Local governing bodies must submit final plans to MDP (three copies) and DNR (three copies plus sufficient copies for legislators) by July 1, 2005. The State will act on each final Plan within 60 days of completion of the legislative review period.

H. PLAN SUBMITTAL TO STATE LEGISLATORS (7/01/05)

Prior to State approval, DNR must send each final local LPRP to legislators from the districts within which any part of each county is located to provide an opportunity for their review and comment. Legislators will be provided a 30-day review period. DNR will send the LPRP's to legislators within one week of receipt.

GENERAL PLAN CONTENT- OUTLINE

It is recommended that the Plan be presented in six chapters and include an executive summary.

Chapter I	Introduction to the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan
Chapter II	Framework for the Local Plan
Chapter III	Recreation, Parks and Open Space
Chapter IV	Agricultural Land Preservation
Chapter V	Natural Resource Conservation
Chapter VI	Summary: Synthesis of three elements

CHAPTER GUIDELINES

Executive Summary

This should be an overview and brief summary of the Plan's main purposes, principal findings, policies, and implementation strategies.

Chapter I – Introduction to the Plan

This Chapter should briefly present the context and purposes of the local Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (the Plan).

A. PURPOSES OF THE PLAN

The purpose of this section is to explain why the Plan is being prepared. Include the overall purpose and specific objectives of the 2005–2006 land preservation, parks and recreation planning process. These are to:

- Review goals and objectives of State and local programs for three principal elements: parks and recreation, agriculture, and natural resources;
- Identify where these goals and objectives are essentially the same, where they are complementary or mutually supportive, and where they are simply different;
- Evaluate the ability of implementation programs and funding sources for each element to achieve related goals and objectives;
- Identify desirable improvements to policies, plans, and funding strategies, to better achieve goals and improve return on public investment;
- Recommend to State and local legislatures, governing bodies and agencies changes needed to overcome shortcomings, achieve goals, and ultimately ensure good return on public investment;
- Identify the needs and priorities of current and future State and local population for outdoor recreation;
- Achieve legislative goals of State and local land preservation programs; and
- Ensure that public investment in land preservation and recreation supports and is supported by local comprehensive plans, associated implementation programs, State Planning Policy, and State and local programs that influence land use and development.

B. LOCAL AGENCY PREPARATION OF THE PLAN

The Plan will address recreation, parks, and open space; agricultural land preservation; and natural resource protection. The Plan should identify the agencies responsible for each element of the Plan, and the County POS liaison, or designated staff, as the local plan coordinator.

C. THE PLAN'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

The Plan should be based on the goals and priorities of the most recent local comprehensive plan or a comprehensive plan. The date of the latest comprehensive plan should be presented. If the comprehensive plan is scheduled for completion by July 1, 2006, this plan should be used and the date and schedule for completion of the plan should be included.

State the relationship of the Plan to the local comprehensive plan (see Section D under General Considerations in the introductory text to these guidelines). The schedule for adoption of the Plan as part of a future, or an amendment to an existing, comprehensive plan should be presented. A future comprehensive plan is one scheduled to be completed within one year of the completion of the local LPPRP.

D. DEFINITIONS USED IN THE PLAN

This section is intended to improve understanding of local and technical terms used in the local Plan.

In this section, present local and technical definitions relevant to the Plan. The Department of Planning will provide a list of technical terms used by the State for this section in the future. The Department will provide these terms in a format that can be incorporated in the local Plan without editing. Additional local terms and their definitions should be added to this section as appropriate.

Chapter II - Framework for the Local Plan

This Chapter should summarize information about the county's current and projected land use, population, facilities, economy, and resources as relevant to the Plan. Information and maps from the Comprehensive Plan or other sources should be used, either by reference or reproduction, to the extent necessary to focus on the purposes of this Plan. The text should interpret the information in ways that are relevant to this Plan. The framework for land preservation as presented in the county's comprehensive plan should be briefly summarized.

A. COUNTY PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

This section's intent is to describe and present information about the physical conditions of the county to orient the reader of the Plan to the county's geography.

Identify significant natural features or resources and major centers of population present in the county that relate to the three elements of this plan.

Provide maps of delineated municipal boundaries, urban growth areas or demarcation lines, and other specially defined areas. Present base maps of features that relate to land preservation, parks and recreation in the county such as: land cover, wetlands, soils, steep slopes, unique natural features, wildlife habitats, forests, etc... These maps should be presented at an appropriate scale to adequately show the information. For instance, wetlands maps may be better presented at a larger scale focused on a smaller area, whereas land cover would be better presented at a countywide level.

B. CURRENT AND PROJECTED DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Present and discuss existing and projected population and population characteristics, with tables and maps, focusing on those parameters that are of particular importance to parks, recreation, and open space planning: age, sex, ethnicity, urban/suburban/rural, special populations, income, density, and distribution. The population projections should be the latest cooperative forecasts available from MDP and should be provided for the years 2000, 2005, 2010, 2015, and 2020.

C. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FRAMEWORK

The Plan will address three elements of land preservation: parks, recreation and open space; agricultural land preservation and natural resource protection. The purpose of this section is to summarize how these elements are integrated into the framework of the county comprehensive plan. It will assist interpretation of the following chapters that deal with individual elements of the Plan.

Summarize the overall framework provided in the comprehensive plan for land preservation, in context of the County's land resources and land use strategies. Summarize the relative importance of each element in the county's overall strategy.

Explain the general strategy of the county's programs that direct growth, development, infrastructure and community enhancements used to protect state and local investments in land preservation for parks and recreation, agriculture and natural resources. Strategies related to a specific element of the plan should be addressed in the appropriate chapter of the Plan.

Chapter III – Recreation, Parks, and Open Space

I. BACKGROUND AND CHAPTER CONTEXT

A. STATE GOALS FOR RECREATION, PARKS, AND OPEN SPACE

The State’s primary goals for recreation, parks, and open space should be incorporated in this Chapter of the County Plan:

- 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.

II. GUIDELINES

A. COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS

County priorities for parks and recreation should reflect and support the goals of the County comprehensive / master plan and the State goals established through these guidelines. Similarly, State land preservation and recreation initiatives will be coordinated with the county in which they are undertaken. Input from county land preservation and recreation programs will be solicited as early as possible, to ensure that such initiatives complement and support the county’s comprehensive and LPPR Plans.

The purpose of this section is to describe the ways in which County land preservation and recreation goals and procedures support the goals of the comprehensive plan and state goals for recreation, parks, and open space. This relationship between the comprehensive plan and the LPPRP will provide MDP and DNR the basis for their reviews of land acquisition and facility development plans and priorities, annual programs, and individual projects during the next six years.

1. Goals

What are the goals and policies of the County Comprehensive / Master Plan and other plans that guide recreation and parks programs?

Please begin by identifying goals and policies established in the County’s comprehensive / master plan or elsewhere (e.g., departmental/program policies) that guide or influence the County’s programs for recreation, parks, and open space. Include goals and policies for growth, development, populations, and

communities, including those that reflect the eight visions established as State Planning Policy (listed in *Appendix A*), which are required goals in comprehensive plans.

2. Programs

Describe County programs and procedures for recreation, parks, and related open space. Programs, policies, and procedures used to achieve goals for recreation, parks, and open space include the following: planning, land acquisition, and facility development; exactions and set asides under zoning and subdivision regulations; taxes and fee structures; policies and programs related to partnerships; specialized recreational programs provided at facilities; joint use agreements with public and private schools, colleges, or other institutions; greenways and trails; waterway access; facilities for particular populations such as youth, elderly, and disabled; environmental education; and integration with economic development and tourism. A county can also utilize information technologies to support recreation and parks and increase public awareness of recreational opportunities.

In this section of the LPPRP, the unifying theme should be “How are parks and recreation programs and procedures used to support local and State goals?” Specifically:

- How does the County invest POS funds in parks, recreation and open space to complement and support the broader goals and objectives of local comprehensive / master plans, including the eight visions of State Planning Policy (*Appendix A*). This should be a discussion of the county’s overall process, procedures and considerations for parks, recreation and open space planning and not a discussion of specific projects.
- How does the County attempt to ensure that recreational land and facilities for local populations are conveniently located relative to population centers; help to protect natural open spaces and resources; and complement community design and infrastructure?
- How does the County set priorities for recreational land acquisition and facility development to make existing communities and planned growth areas more desirable, thereby encouraging private investment in those areas commensurate with the priorities of the comprehensive plan?
- How does the County seek to ensure a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities are readily accessible to all of its citizens?

Note: Please do not discuss specific needs or goals for land acquisition (acres of land) and facility development (number / size / location of facilities) based on needs analysis here. This should be addressed in the next section of this Chapter. The same is true with respect to acreage goals the County wishes to establish for land acquisition in order to qualify for increased spending on facility development.

In addition, please describe the funding sources the county uses to support the parks and recreation programs. Describe which funding sources are used to support which aspects of the program, and the amount of funds typically involved.

B. NEEDS ANALYSIS AND COUNTY PRIORITIES FOR LANDS, FACILITIES, & REHABILITATION

County priorities for land acquisition, facility development, and rehabilitation should be based on a needs analysis and consideration of the identified needs in context of State and County goals.

The needs analysis is an evaluation which estimates the amount of land and facilities needed, over and above those currently available, to satisfy the demand for recreational activities or categories.

The section of the Chapter requires four parts:

1. Supply: An inventory of the supply of lands and facilities available to support specific recreational activities.
2. Demand: An assessment and estimates of the public demand for specific recreational activities.
3. Needs determination: A determination of needs for additional lands and facilities, based on a comparison of the demand for recreational activities with the supply of recreational land and facilities available to support those demands.
4. County Priorities: Priorities for land acquisition, facility development, and rehabilitation designed to meet the needs identified through the analysis in a manner that best supports achievement of State and local goals.

Each of these steps is discussed separately, in the next four sections. Additional details are provided in Appendices B and C.

In the sections on demand, needs, and priorities, three time frames are included: short (2006-2010), mid (2011-2015), and long-range (2016 and beyond). In these sections, estimates of short-range demand and need should be based on projected 2010 population and demographics; mid and long-range on projected 2015 and 2020 population and demographics. If current frequency and participation rates for certain activities are constrained by a limited supply of land and facilities, these rates may be modified accordingly to estimate future demand. For instance, there may be a waiting list for use of certain facilities, which would indicate higher participation and frequency rates for these activities than those estimated using recreational activity survey information alone. Present the rationale used to adjust local participation and frequency rates if they are to be modified for use in future demand and supply calculations.

1. Supply

The Maryland Electronic Inventory of Recreation Sites (MEIRS) system is the official reporting mechanism for County and State inventories of the supply of recreational lands for the 2005-2006 planning cycle. MEIRS was presented to the counties in January 2003 through a series of training session at the Maryland Department of Planning. MDP will offer additional orientation and training sessions as well as ongoing assistance upon request.

Counties should enter all lands and facilities maintained or leased by the county, and its municipalities, into the system. DNR maintains the inventory of State recreational lands and facilities. Therefore counties should not enter information in MEIRS for State lands in their jurisdictions. Private sites can be entered into MEIRS at a county's discretion if they make a significant contribution to meeting demands for recreational activities and are likely to continue to do so for the foreseeable future. For these sites, facilities will be counted and used in the needs analysis to the degree that they help to meet demand. However, because they are not publicly owned their acreage will not count towards acreage goals. As of July 2003, most counties are well into updating their records; some have completed their inventories. The state and counties should use the data in the system to report those inventories (below), and to compare the supply of recreational lands and facilities with demand by recreational activity, as part of the needs analysis (see Section 3, below).

What is the available supply of parks, recreation, and open space in the county?

Provide an overview and summary description of recreation and parks lands and facilities. To assist this summary, final supply reports will be provided through MEIRS, and should be included as an appendix to the local Plan. The contents and formats for these reports are being developed in consultation with the counties and Baltimore City, to assure Statewide consistency and meet as many county-specific reporting needs of local governments across the State as possible. These reports will provide a consistent way to summarize the existing supply of recreational facilities across counties using the data in the system.

There are already reports that can be printed in MEIRS. Once the content and layout of the supply reports have been finalized, the electronic report will be developed by MDP's MIS staff and added to MEIRS. The report will summarize available facilities within the county by the activities and activity groups used in the statewide activities survey, discussed below, to facilitate the needs analysis. This process is described in *Appendix B*. A preliminary report is provided in *Table B-1* of the appendix. The state will finalize these reports by June 2004.

Geographic information for each site is required in the MEIRS inventory (per MEIRS guidelines). In addition, if the county already has recreation facility data in a GIS, please provide these data to MDP either as an ESRI shapefile or coverage in NAD83 meters projection, if possible. The data can be sent in a county's projection system, if different than NAD83 meters, as long as it is specified. The data should include at a minimum: site name, site acreage, and type of park or facility type (e.g. – park, playground, gymnasium, etc...). If possible the data should also include acquisition date and acquisition funding source. Ideally, the data should be delineated at a minimum scale of 1"= 500' (1:6,000).

How does the county intend to keep the information in MEIRS up-to-date? Discuss how the county plans to keep their MEIRS inventory current. Yearly updates are desired at a minimum. If the County has its own, separate inventory system, please describe it and the process being used to maintain both systems.

2. Demand

Describe the sources of information used to determine demand for recreational lands and facilities in the needs analysis.

A baseline of demand information is being provided to the counties for use in the local Plans through two state surveys, *Participation in Local Park and Recreation Activities in Maryland* and *State Parks and Natural Resource Areas in Maryland: A Survey of Public Opinion*. These surveys provide information about levels of recreation activity and insights regarding regional attitudes about land preservation and management of growth and new development. A copy of the activities survey was sent to each Recreation Director by DNR in June. Electronic copies of the surveys are posted on DNR and MDP websites. At a county's request, the State will provide the raw survey data for county use. Due to the size of the databases they cannot be posted on the internet.

Survey results should be supplemented with other measures of demand available at the local level to provide a more complete picture of demand for recreation in each county. These sources may include local surveys, interactions and experience with participants in recreational programs, and other local

recreation statistics. The objective is to develop an estimate of the demand for each recreation activity to best represent the level of recreational opportunities needed to meet demand. This demand inventory can then be used to help estimate the amounts of land and improved facilities required for each activity.

Appendix B includes guidelines on how to calculate demand using the statewide surveys as a base of reference. Demand should be calculated based on the population in years 2010 and 2015 for the short and medium term periods. These are the end years for these two time periods. Population projections for the year 2020 should be used to determine long-range (2016 and beyond) demand. Using frequency and participation rates derived from the state surveys or other local information sources, the estimated number of demand occasions can be determined. A form is included in *Appendix B* and will be distributed by the Department of Planning in a digital form that explains how to compute demand occasions (Table B-2 in *Appendix B*).

3. Needs Analysis

What are the local needs for recreational land and facilities? Perform a needs analysis that compares the supply of recreational lands and facilities to estimated demand, to determine the additional land acquisition and facility development necessary to meet recreational demand.

Summarize the approach the county is using for the needs analysis. Guidelines are outlined in *Appendix B*. Although counties may deviate from these guidelines, the techniques used should parallel this general procedure.

The analysis is intended to not only identify county recreation needs, but also to determine who will provide for identified needs, and for the needs the county will address how the needs will be provided for by the County.

Two final products of the needs analysis are desired:

- A summary of surpluses and deficiencies in amounts of land and number of facilities relative to demand for recreational activities; and
- County priorities for acquisition, development, and rehabilitation, including a summary matrix (see *Appendix C*).

Both products should cover the three planning time frames defined for this plan: short, mid, and long-range. Both are intended for general planning purposes, and should represent a county's best estimates based on available information. Neither is intended to represent a specific level of detail or accuracy beyond that, especially for the mid and long-range planning horizons.

For example, mid-range priorities in one county may be very general approximations that may change considerably based on new information, actual changes in frequency and participation rates, inflation, or a variety of other relevant considerations by 2011. In another county, priorities identified for 2011 – 2015 may be relatively firm estimates of considerable specificity with regard to individual facilities. Both alternatives are acceptable; in all cases, it will be recognized that identified priorities are subject to change for a variety of legitimate and, in some cases, unpredictable reasons. This should be reflected in the footnotes to the matrix of priorities, as in the example matrix illustrated in *Appendix C*.

Surpluses and deficiencies in amounts of land and number of facilities relative to demand for recreational activities should be summarized in a table such as that provided in Table B-3 of *Appendix B*. The table at a minimum should address the County's needs for athletic fields, baseball diamonds, basketball courts and tennis courts. In addition to these the table should address the top ten needs identified by the County.

If any of the top ten identified needs will not be addressed through the County's CIP for parks and recreation, the County should articulate if and how the need(s) will be addressed. The top ten needs that will be addressed by the County's CIP should be addressed in both the Table (*Appendix B*) and matrix of county priorities (*Appendix C*). It is up to the County's discretion to measure supply and demand for needs that they will not address through their CIP.

For each type of facility or land and corresponding recreational activity, the table should include information on estimated short, mid, and long-range demand; reference to sources of information about demand, with accompanying explanatory narrative; supply; and the resulting estimates of surpluses and deficiencies.

As noted previously, private facilities entered in MEIRS should be used in the needs analysis if they make a significant contribution to meeting demands for recreational activities and are likely to continue to do so for the foreseeable future. For these sites, facilities should be counted against demand, but their acreage does not count towards the county's acreage goal (because they are not publicly owned). If private facilities are used in the needs analysis and are not entered in MEIRS, these facilities should be inventoried separately in an appendix to the Plan or in the needs analysis. The county must also discuss the rationale for using the private sites in the needs analysis.

Indoor recreation facilities, and state facilities entered by DNR in MEIRS, can be used in the needs analysis as well, at the County's discretion. The county must explain its rationale for using, or not using, these indoor facilities in its analysis, and state the assumptions governing the way they are included.

The counties will also have flexibility to determine 3 factors used in the calculation of needs. These are the season length for each activity, the daily capacity for each type of recreational facility and the acreage required for each type of facility.

4. County Priorities for Land Acquisition, Facility Development, and Rehabilitation

Discussion of County acquisition and development priorities and recommendations to meet recreational needs should include a summary of short (2006 – 2010), mid (2011 – 2015), and long-range (2016 – 2020 or beyond) plans for land acquisition and facility development. This information should also be presented in a matrix as outlined in *Appendix C*.

As in the table used for the needs analysis, the matrix should include information on the County's needs for athletic fields, baseball diamonds, basketball courts and tennis courts; and the top ten needs identified by the County that will be addressed the County CIP beyond these four. This will allow information to be aggregated at local, regional and State levels.

Priorities should be listed in the matrix either by individual facility (e.g. Meadow Park or Meadow Park baseball field) or activity type (e.g., baseball fields). Degree of specificity in this regard is at the discretion

of the County, as long as the other desired information is provided, and the type of recreational activity / facility is clearly indicated in either the “Project” or “Description” field. This will allow the data to be aggregated and presented consistently and with reasonable efficiency at both local and State levels.

The matrix of county recommendations should also include the following information for each record: location (i.e., County election district, town, or other small planning area); estimated total cost; acres to be acquired (if acquisition is or may be required); and estimated short (2006 – 2010), mid (2011 – 2015), and long-range costs for acquisition, capital development, and rehabilitation (whichever happen to be relevant). Please explain how the estimates were determined. Please make special note if developers will provide land or facilities under County subdivision or development requirements.

The information required in the matrix may be presented in a separate chart for each county planning area if desired, obviating the need for the “Location” field.

Earlier in this chapter, the guidelines call for a discussion of County programs and procedures for parks and recreation, and a description of the way in which they support achievement of broader goals of the County comprehensive plan and the State goals established in these Guidelines.

Similarly, County priorities for land acquisition, facility development, and rehabilitation should be based not only on the results of the needs analysis, but also by considering the degree to which the indicated needs support and are consistent with State and County goals for recreation, parks and open space.

Those considerations should be presented as part of the determination of County priorities in this section. At a minimum, please describe, discuss, or otherwise address the following in your presentation:

- How the County’s priorities for acquisition, facility development, and rehabilitation were established to complement and support the County’s comprehensive planning goals for recreation, parks, and open space and State goals established through these guidelines.
- The degree to which County priorities address the need to make a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities readily accessible to all of its citizens.
- How priority projects and their locations were chosen to be conveniently located relative to population centers; be accessible to the degree possible without reliance on automobiles; help to protect natural open spaces and resources; and complement community design and infrastructure.
- How the County’s recreational land acquisition and facility development strategy will help to make existing communities and planned growth areas more desirable, thereby encouraging private investment in those areas commensurate with the priorities of the comprehensive plan.

Finally in this section, summarize and discuss the total amount of funds the county will need to meet current and projected needs for recreational lands and facilities, as reflected in the priorities matrix. If there is a reasonable basis, provide estimates of the amount of funds needed to fulfill these needs and expected from established revenues sources, including and other than POS. Describe the basis for these estimates, and identify any potential shortfalls. Address the short, mid, and long-range planning horizons used for this plan as appropriate.

A county may present their short-term priorities for a shorter time period than the one specified for this plan if it is useful for county planning purposes. If the County does this, please include a summary for the

full short-term period as defined above, so your data can be aggregated with those of other counties statewide and by region.

Please summarize from the matrix data for each of the required following categories for each planning time frame:

- Field sports (athletic fields, multipurpose fields, football/soccer fields);
- Baseball/Softball;
- Basketball;
- Tennis;
- The top ten needs as identified by the county beyond these four.

Additional categories can be added at the County's discretion to ensure that the specific recreational needs of its residents are adequately addressed.

C. ACQUISITION (ACREAGE) GOAL

If the county wishes to be certified to utilize more than 50% of its POS allocation for development projects, pursuant to the Natural Resources Article §5-905 c (1)(ii), please state this intent in this section.

What is the county's approach to setting its acquisition goal?

Discuss the approach the County wishes to use to set an acquisition goal. There are three ways this goal can be set:

- A needs-based goal, derived from the needs-based analysis (discussed above);
- Using the default State recommended acreage goal of 30 acres of land per 1,000 persons; or
- Another County specific approach that is approved by MDP and DNR

Proposed acreage goals will be approved in conjunction with plan approval by DNR and MDP.

Needs-based Goals. Needs-based goals for acquisition must be based on the needs analysis, discussed previously in this chapter.

A needs-based acquisition goal would be the total number of acres of land needed to meet the demand for all recreational activities over the short-range (2006-2010) period covered in this Plan. If that amount of land has already been acquired, and if the land holdings are appropriate in nature and locations to meet the needs identified for recreational activities and areas covered in the period, the goal would be considered met. Note: Private recreational facility acreage cannot be counted towards a needs-based goal.

Default State Recommended Goal. Counties may choose to use the acreage goal of 30 acres per 1,000 persons that has been used for numerous recent land preservation and recreation planning cycles. Guidelines for counting acres of land toward such a goal generally remain unchanged and are summarized in *Appendix D*. If appropriate, private open space can be counted towards the default 30-acre goal (as part of the 1/3 of natural resource acreage) if the land is permanently preserved as open space; is accessible to members of the community in which it is located; and can be reasonably construed to help meet public demand for recreational open space.

County-specific Goals. A county may utilize another method to compute the acres of land needed to meet the demand for recreational activities. If a county chooses to use its own approach towards the acreage goal, the method must be approved for use by both MDP and DNR.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Describe the public participation process used in the development of the Plan. To qualify for Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund disbursements, the public is required to have input into the State Plan that serves as Maryland's State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). As the State Plan will utilize and draw heavily upon the county Plans to help formulate its parks, recreation and open space strategies, the local Plan should describe opportunities for public participation and input during Plan development.

What opportunities for public participation in the Plan were provided?

Describe the county's general approach to public involvement for parks, recreation and open space planning. Describe public outreach and participation activities made during Plan preparation and adoption. List the individuals and groups that were contacted during Plan preparation and how they were involved (i.e. meeting, survey). This can be done through a table similar to that provided in *Appendix E*.

The minimum requirements for public participation are the following:

1. Public meetings for each of the following:
 - Opportunities for the public to provide input to the County's recreation and parks planning process.
 - Opportunities for the public to review and respond to the draft County Parks and Recreation plan and to draft elements thereof.
2. Meetings with or within each municipality to provide:
 - Opportunities for public input to the County's recreation and parks planning process.
 - Opportunities for public review and response to the draft County Parks and Recreation element of the Plan and to draft elements thereof.
3. Other forms of public participation as appropriate, as determined by the County:
 - Meetings, or equivalent opportunities, with recreation councils.
 - Meetings, or equivalent opportunities, with individual sport or recreation activity user groups.
 - Meetings, or equivalent opportunities, with facility managers and, if private, owners.

Chapter IV – Agricultural Land Preservation

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

A. PURPOSE OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

As indicated in the introduction to these *Guidelines*, the purpose of the 2005-2006 State and local planning process for agricultural land preservation is to:

- Review goals and objectives of State and local land preservation programs for agricultural land preservation. Identify where they are essentially the same, where they are complementary or mutually supportive, and where they are simply different.
- Evaluate the ability of implementation programs and funding sources to achieve the goals and objectives. Identify shortcomings in the ability of implementation programs and funding sources to achieve legislative goals.
- Identify and recommend to State and local legislatures and governing bodies changes needed to overcome shortcomings, achieve goals, and ultimately ensure good return on public investment.

B. BACKGROUND

Based on experience in many counties in Maryland and elsewhere that have been subject to escalating development pressure in rural areas over the past several decades, the ability to achieve State agricultural land preservation goals is dependent on a comprehensive public implementation strategy that includes three elements:

- Public Commitment to Investment in Land Preservation
- Supportive Local Plans, Zoning, and Regulations and Procedures
- Stakeholder Support for the Preservation Strategy in Each County

The *guidelines* for this Chapter are intended to help both the County and the State determine the degree to which these elements are in place and effective, and how they must be improved to achieve State and local goals. This background section describes the roles of and relationship between these strategic elements. The balance of this chapter describes the four sections that should be included in this chapter of the County Plan: *Goals, Current Implementation Program, Evaluation of the Implementation Program, and Strategy for Future Program Development*.

Counties are not expected to undertake new planning initiatives and analyses to address the *guidelines* for each section. The expectation is that each county will base this chapter on established County goals, programs, policies, and procedures, and the status of County efforts to address the questions and issues raised. If the County has not considered or examined one or more of the issues addressed in the *guidelines*, it is appropriate to indicate that in the County *Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan*.

1. Public Commitment to Investment in Land Preservation

Adequate public investment in preservation is necessary to reassure rural landowners that there is a public commitment to protect their equity interests in land. This commitment ensures that each landowner's decision to permanently preserve their land is voluntary. Easements are generally acquired through public or private land trusts' purchase of development rights; donation of development rights to a public agency or private conservation group; and transfer of development rights from rural areas to development districts. Numerous other government-sponsored programs designed to provide financial and other incentives to landowners to permanently preserve their land are also used in Maryland.

2. Supportive Local Plans, Zoning, and Regulations and Procedures

Comparing preservation efforts and accomplishments in Maryland's metropolitan counties over the past thirty years suggests that, without development controls commensurate with increasing development pressure, development is likely to outpace preservation. Financial incentives for preservation will be very costly, and are likely to result in a patchwork quilt of preserved land that is highly interspersed with residential subdivision and an area that is compromised for agricultural production.

To protect public investment in preservation and achieve State goals, supportive local plans, zoning, and regulations and procedures for subdivision and development are essential, in conjunction with easement acquisition funds. Their role is to stabilize land use and control development impacts on land and agricultural production; provide time for easement acquisition to proceed and preservation of larger and more contiguous extents of agricultural land to occur; and protect the integrity of preserved areas for agricultural production.

Local governments and rural landowners often hesitate to embrace zoning and subdivision constraints, even if they are necessary to achieve preservation goals. They have legitimate concerns that land values may be reduced and landowner equity compromised. In addition, zoning restrictions are not voluntary. However, in the long-term, rural land values have not decreased and landowner equity has been preserved in all of Maryland's counties that have enacted more restrictive land use controls in rural areas in response to increasing development pressure, over the past several decades up to the very recent past (see *Appendix F* for examples).

In each of these instances, when more limiting zoning was enacted, the value of the land did not go down. Demand continued because some, albeit more limited residential subdivisions, were still allowed. In many of these counties, the land has also become more attractive over time to other markets, such as wealthier individuals wishing to own more rural land than provided by a residential subdivision lot. This has also helped to maintain and increase land values and protect the equity of rural landowners.

In essence, public commitments to fund easements and adopt supportive land use management techniques are essential to achieve State agricultural land preservation goals. Each of these two sets of tools do things the other cannot. Each makes the other more effective and, in the face of development pressures, makes good return on public investment possible. However, they cannot be achieved without the support, understanding, and commitment in each county of rural landowners, the public-at-large, and both State and local government.

3. Stakeholder Support for the Preservation Strategy in Each County

In order that rural landowners support a preservation strategy that they fear may threaten their financial interests in land, and the public at-large supports investment of their tax dollars in preservation, both parties must understand the objectives, how they will be achieved, and the implications for their interests. This requires some degree of consensus on each of the following:

- Goals, or what we are trying to accomplish. Is the goal to preserve enough contiguous or concentrated land, relatively free from intrusive development and capable of supporting a range of agricultural operations? Does the goal apply to all areas within the County's agricultural zoning district or just portions of it? The answers will determine the level of preservation tools (funding for easement acquisition, zoning, transferable development rights, and other management techniques) needed to meet the goals.
- Strategy, or how the objectives will be achieved. This means spelling out the specific roles and accomplishments expected from both easement acquisition and land use management tools.
- Implications. How will the strategy affect the interests of rural landowners and the public-at-large?
- Public commitment to funding and land use management. How much funding is needed over time to support the strategy, and where it will come from (State and local)? How will land use management be used to effectively protect the investment of public funds in the chosen goals?

II. GUIDELINES

A. GOALS

1. Background: State Goals

A variety of easement acquisition programs invest in agricultural land preservation in Maryland, for example: the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF); Rural Legacy; Green Print; the federal Farmland Protection Program; local agricultural land preservation programs, which may include programs to purchase and/or transfer development rights; local land trusts; the Maryland Environmental Trust; and the Maryland Historical Trust. Each program and associated funding source has its own specific goals, either articulated in enabling legislation or in supporting program statements.

In addition, the Maryland General Assembly passed a resolution in 2002 establishing a Statewide goal to preserve approximately 1,030,000 acres of productive agricultural land by 2020. The resolution recognized the productive agricultural land preserved through the combined efforts of MALPF, Rural Legacy, GreenPrint, and local easement acquisition programs.

The resolution was based on a goal of 1.1 million acres recommended by the MALPF Task Force in its August 2001 report to the Governor and the General Assembly. That recommendation, in turn, was based on the Task Force's consideration of the amount of land necessary to support a reasonable diversity of agricultural production throughout the State.

The expectation behind the 1.03 million acre goal is that it will provide a long-term frame of reference for funding and improving land preservation efforts by State and local governments. Counties are expected to formulate their own acreage goals based on considerations that include those behind the State goal:

how many acres of productive rural land, if preserved, will support long-term continued agricultural production in individual counties and regions of the State.

Overall, the state's goals for agricultural land preservation are the following:

- 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.
- Preserve approximately 1,030,000 acres of productive agricultural land by 2020.
- 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 areas, goals, and strategies through local comprehensive planning processes that address and complement State goals;
 - In each area designated for preservation, develop a shared understanding of goals and the strategy to achieve them among rural landowners, the public-at-large, and State and local government officials;
 - Protect the equity interests of rural landowners in preservation areas by ensuring sufficient public commitment and investment in preservation through easement acquisition and incentive programs;
 - Use local land use management authority effectively to protect public investment in preservation by managing development in rural preservation areas.
 - Establish effective measures to support profitable agriculture, including assistance in production, marketing, and the practice of stewardship, so that farming remains a desirable way of life for both the farmer and the public-at-large.

2. County Goals – Minimum Requirements.

At a minimum, please address the following in this section:

Describe the goals for agricultural land preservation that have been established by the County in the comprehensive plan and/or supporting plans. Describe the rationale for the goals.

Established County acreage goals should be included here. If an acreage goal has not been established, the status of County thinking about an agricultural land preservation acreage goal should be described.

How do County goals relate to the State's goals? At a minimum, please discuss the degree to which the County's goals encompass, extend beyond, or differ from the State's primary and supporting goals summarized in these guidelines. If appropriate from the County's perspective, refer in more detail to the specific goals of one or more of the relevant State programs.

The State's goals for agricultural land preservation should be incorporated as appropriate in this Chapter of the County Plan.

B. CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM FOR AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION

1. Background: Implementation Program Definitions

The implementation program as defined for purposes of this Plan is comprised of all of the programs and mechanisms currently operating in the County to achieve local and/or State agricultural land preservation goals.

The following are considered necessary elements of the implementation program. Each of the elements should be described explicitly in this section, per the guidelines that follow for this section:

- Designated Preservation Areas are areas identified and designated for agricultural land preservation by the County and established in the comprehensive plan, in which the county actively seeks to permanently preserve land.
- Easement Acquisition Mechanisms are the programs the County uses (local, State, and/or federal) to purchase and/or transfer development rights from agricultural land in designated areas or provide other forms of financial incentives to landowners to preserve their land.
- Funding for Easement Acquisition means the revenue / funding sources and amounts used to support the program.
- Land Use Management Authority refers to the land use management tools, including comprehensive and other plans, zoning, subdivision, and development ordinances and their related guidelines and procedures, designed and used by the county to protect agricultural land from subdivision and conversion to non-agricultural uses in designated areas.
- Farming Assistance Programs are programs designed to support productive agriculture, alternative production, marketing, sales, and other activities needed to realize success of farmers and the agricultural industry.

2. County Implementation Program – Minimum Requirements

a) Overview and Summary.

Please provide an overview and summary of each element of the County's implementation program, as defined above. The purpose of this description is to provide the frame of reference for the program evaluation in the next section of this Chapter. The evaluation is intended to assess the degree to which each element of the implementation program is doing its part to achieve preservation goals.

It is not necessary to include extensive detailed information. For example, it is not necessary to incorporate entire or lengthy excerpts from ordinances, plans, or other County documents. Instead, the information presented should be summary in nature, and more detailed sources should be referenced if appropriate.

b) State and Federal Programs.

With respect to State and federal programs that operate across all counties, it is desirable to characterize the degree to which these programs are active and effective in the County. However, it is not necessary to describe these programs. That will be done in the State Plan.

c) Geographic Context.

Please include a map to illustrate the comprehensive planning context for the County's goals and implementation program. The map should indicate the locations of:

- Priority Funding Areas,
- Designated preservation areas,
- Lands preserved through different means and programs,
- Subdivision and development activity outside of Priority Funding Areas, relative to designated preservation areas and preserved land, and
- Any other information relevant to the County's goals and implementation program.

d) Data Sharing.

One of the objectives of the 2005 – 2006 Land Preservation, Recreation, and Parks planning processes is to develop shared State and local data for planning, tracking, and evaluating land preservation programs and expenditures. The Maryland Department of Planning can provide data and other assistance to counties desiring it to produce the maps requested for the required map (above). If the County would like to incorporate State preserved land data in a Geographic Information System, MDP and DNR will provide their protected lands data upon request.

County GIS data should be provided to the Maryland Department of Planning either as an ESRI shapefile or coverage, or as an AutoCAD file in NAD83 meters projection if possible. At a minimum include information on site acreage and the identity of the easement acquisition program / easement holder. If possible, also include the acquisition date and cost. Alternatively, the data can be sent in a different projection system if it is specified. Ideally, the data should be delineated at a minimum scale of 1"= 500' (1:6,000). Appropriate metadata should also be provided

C. EVALUATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

1. Background for the Evaluation

The purpose of this section of the chapter is to evaluate the degree to which the county's implementation program is likely to achieve agricultural land preservation goals. For the State Plan, the objective is to combine insights from the Statewide and individual county evaluations, and use them to develop strategies for State programs, revenue sources, and expenditures.

The implementation program should be evaluated using the guidelines below. Please summarize and provide reference to any studies or assessments on which the County's evaluations are based.

The recommended assessment includes both qualitative and quantitative aspects. If a county does not have the data and/or resources to perform some recommended quantitative analysis, and would like to consider incorporating county-specific data from the State in its own Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan, the Maryland Department of Planning will provide assistance to that end. At a

minimum, please address the intent of the guidelines by providing the County's best assessment based on available information.

The State Plan will include a comparable assessment for the whole State and each county. It will be based on uniform sources of data available for all counties and information provided in this section of local plans by individual counties. What follows is a brief description of several components of the state's planned assessment to help inform the county's assessment.

a) State Assessment Measures.

Appendix G of these guidelines contains graphs of several of the measures the State is using for its evaluation. The Department of Planning plans to meet with each county to discuss different approaches counties may wish to suggest for the Statewide assessment, and to identify data and techniques that may be shared in these regards.

b) Land Use Management Tools.

As background for evaluation of land use management tools, we offer the following observations. They are intended to illustrate the importance of rural zoning as a means to protect investment in land preservation in Maryland. The observations are based on evaluations performed by the State for the Rural Legacy Board, the MALPF Task Force, and the Agricultural Certification Program. Graphs 1 and 2 in *Appendix G* provide a useful comparison of land fragmentation and recent development in different agricultural zones, particularly if one focuses on metropolitan counties that have been subject to high development pressure for comparable periods of time.

Generally, as development pressure intensifies, permissive zoning and subdivision procedures (i.e., those that allow major subdivisions and yield more than one lot per 20 acres of land) become increasingly ineffective in protecting agricultural land from development impacts. As the potential market for residential development has increased in rural areas, the development potential under permissive zoning becomes increasingly attractive to large markets, such as developers and individuals interested in the resulting products, which are moderate to large rural residential subdivisions.

More restrictive zoning results in fewer lots developed at lower densities. Relative to development under more permissive zoning, the resulting products generally preclude comparably large subdivisions and markets, but do appeal to wealthier individuals and developers focused on this clientele. This is generally a smaller market that is capable of paying for somewhat different and more premium development products.

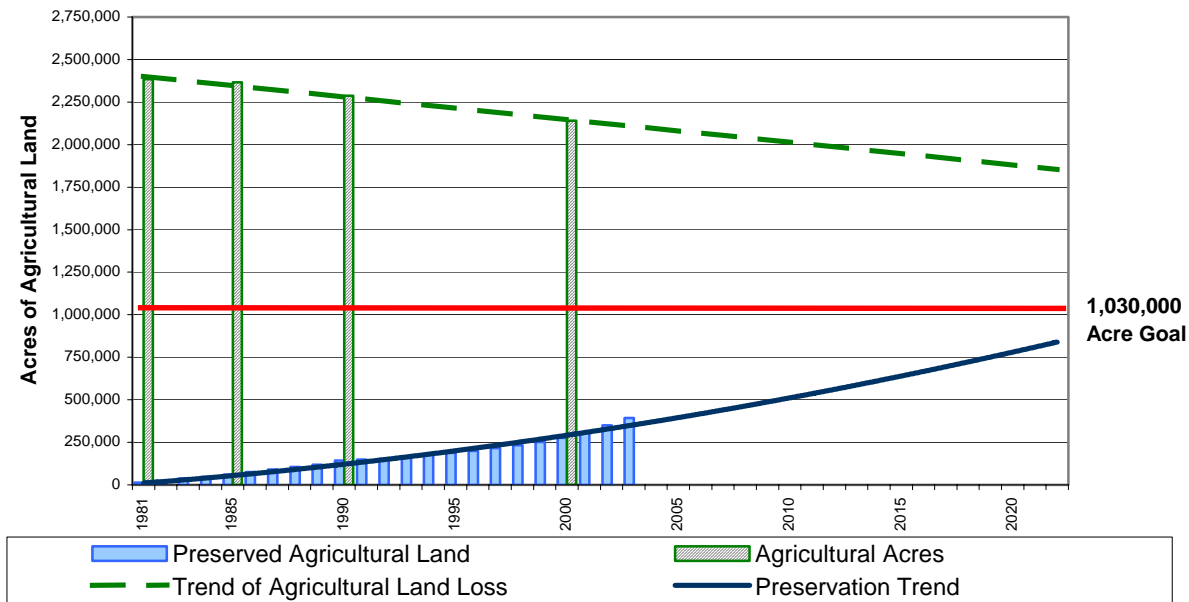
Rural land values and easement acquisition costs (see graph 3 in *Appendix G*) have become quite high in both cases, but the two scenarios yield very different outcomes. In areas with permissive zoning, the rates and extents of development and easement acquisition costs are considerably higher (graphs 1, 2, and 3), and easement incentives compete much less successfully with development interests. More information is available from the Maryland Department of Planning on considerations counties may wish to make for this part of the evaluation.

c) Combined Performance of Preservation Tools.

To help evaluate long-term potential for success, it is useful to examine the progress of preservation versus the rate of development of farmland in the County’s designated preservation zones, and to consider the implications relative to preservation goals.

A graph for the State of Maryland (below) is illustrative (some preservation data is annualized over the 1981 to 2003 period). The graph shows the amount of agricultural land preserved (by county PDR/TDR programs, MALPF, Rural Legacy, GreenPrint) versus the total amount of agricultural land remaining in the State by year. Both the rates of preservation and conversion of land are projected to the year 2022, by which time it is desired to achieve the State’s 1,030,000 acre goal for preserved, productive agricultural land (also shown on the graph). Based on this assessment, the State will not achieve that goal, and will require approximately an additional \$500 million to do so, above and beyond projected expenditures and accomplishments of the programs considered (MALPF Task Force, Interim Report For the 2003 Legislative Session, January 2003).

Farmland Preserved vs. Agricultural Land Lost In Maryland



In addition to a shortfall in Statewide ability to achieve this acreage goal, the MALPF Task Force determined that other State goals are not being achieved in many counties, specifically goals to control long-term impacts of development on land and the agricultural industry. The Task Force recommended that the State concentrate additional easement investment in areas protected by land use management authority and supported by local and other preservation funds (MALPF Task Force, Interim Report For the 2003 Legislative Session, January 2003).

2. County Implementation Program Evaluation – Minimum Requirements

In evaluating each element of the Implementation Program, please address each of the following questions or issues.

a) Overall Preservation Strategy.

Are preservation efforts sufficiently focused in areas with the best potential to achieve preservation goals? Consider and discuss the following:

- Have County goals that complement State goals been established in specific designated areas, such as Rural Legacy Areas or County agricultural zoning districts?
- Do landowners in designated areas share with local government and the public at-large in the County an understanding of preservation goals for their area, the strategy intended to achieve them, and the benefits of that strategy for them?
- Does the strategy include sufficient commitments of public (State and local) funds for easement acquisition to protect the equity interests of rural landowners in designated preservation areas?
- Does the strategy include zoning and development procedures that have stabilized land use in designated areas and are providing adequate time for easement acquisition tools to achieve preservation goals?

b) Funding.

How much State and local funds have contributed to preservation in designated preservation areas? How much has been provided through other financial incentives? What rates of easement acquisition have been and are likely to be supported by these commitments? Please discuss different areas in the County, if they exist, such as Rural Legacy Areas versus the County's entire agricultural zoning district.

c) Land Use Management Tools.

Are preservation investment and goals well supported by land use management tools? Please summarize and provide reference for relevant regulations and procedures as part of your evaluation. Address the following:

- Is continued practice of farming compatible with the amount and type of residential development allowed by zoning and subdivision procedures in the County's agricultural zoning districts?
- Do County subdivision and development regulations and procedures require developers to buffer agricultural production on adjacent or nearby farms from impacts resulting from the development? Are they effective in this regard?
- Do County zoning or subdivision procedures require clustering of residential lots and preserving remainder parcels when land is subdivided in agricultural zoning districts? If so, do the provisions require delineation of preservation remainders based on standards to ensure their capacity for agricultural use (e.g., size, productive soils with minimal soil limitations for production), before lots are delineated and lot yields determined? Or are remainders delineated after lots have been delineated to maximize lot yields?
- Are there other aspects of the way in which the County is using land use management authority to support preservation goals that should be evaluated? Please include the County's evaluation(s) here.

d) Combined Performance of Preservation Tools.

Each County is requested to make an assessment of the performance of preservation tools, comparable to the one outlined in the *Background for the Evaluation* section (i.e., C.1.c, *Combined Performance of Preservation Tools*). Please assess long-term efforts to achieve State and local goals in the County's agricultural preservation zone(s), based on the best information available. Please explain the data sources and assumptions used to estimate past and future easement acquisition performance and rates of land

conversion. Discuss the implications for State and local goals in the County's designated preservation areas.

e) Effects of Potential Development on Land Markets.

Please assess the degree to which zoning and development procedures may be affecting demand for development and the ability of preservation programs to succeed. Specifically consider effects on:

- Markets for land development in designated preservation areas;
- The cost of easement acquisition;
- Rates and extent of subdivision and development;
- The ability of easement incentives to compete with potential landowner income from developers or individuals in the market for residential lots.

What are the County's observations about the effects of past and current zoning and subdivision procedures on development markets? What are the potential effects of any changes the County is considering on residential development and markets?

f) Farming and Farming Assistance Programs.

Please summarize the status of the agricultural industry in your County / region, with emphasis on:

- The degree to which development is interfering with profitable agriculture, and
- Needs of farmers that are not being met by Farming Assistance Programs.

3. Summary of Needed Improvements in the Implementation Program – Minimum Requirements.

Based on goals, the implementation program, strengths and weaknesses identified in the evaluation, and any other assessments the County has made and incorporated, describe the conclusions of the County's evaluation of the ability of the implementation program to achieve local and State goals.

Please summarize both strengths and weaknesses of the implementation program. Identify where improvements in elements of the implementation program appear necessary to achieve State and local goals in the County.

D. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION

Based on the evaluation and needed improvements identified, describe the steps the County is taking to overcome weaknesses and achieve State and local preservation goals. Please be as specific as possible. Include recommended changes to State programs that would better support the County's program development strategy.

Chapter V – Natural Resource Conservation

I. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

As indicated in the introduction to the *Guidelines*, the purpose of the 2005-2006 State and local planning process for natural resource land conservation is to:

- Review goals and objectives of State and local land programs to protect natural resource lands and conserve the resources. Identify where they are essentially the same, where they are complementary or mutually supportive, and where they are simply different.
- Evaluate the ability of implementation programs and funding sources to achieve the goals and objectives. Identify shortcomings in the ability of implementation programs and funding sources to achieve goals and mandates.
- Identify and recommend to State and local legislatures and governing bodies changes needed to overcome shortcomings, achieve goals, and ultimately ensure success in conservation.

B. BACKGROUND

Based on experience in Maryland, where development pressure has been escalating over the past several decades, the ability to achieve State natural resource land conservation goals requires a comprehensive implementation strategy that includes the following:

- A framework and foundation for natural resource conservation goals in the local comprehensive plan.
- Adequate inventories of natural resource and environmentally sensitive lands.
- Measurable or other tangible conservation objectives for implementation programs.
- Public land acquisition programs for conservation.
- Public programs and funds to acquire easements and associated financial incentives to encourage sound stewardship of resources on private land.
- Land use and growth management plans, zoning, and development regulations and procedures that conserve resource lands and minimize impacts to resource lands when development occurs.
- Economic incentives for private landowners to conserve natural resources .
- Restoration of priority lands for ecological function, habitat, and water quality.
- Progress towards meeting appropriate Chesapeake 2000 Agreement goals.

The *guidelines* for this Chapter are intended to help both the County and the State determine the degree to which all of these elements are in place and effective, and how they must be improved to achieve State and local goals.

To the extent possible, existing planning reports and analyses can be used to provide the information requested in these guidelines. This information should be summarized in the local LPPRP; methodologies and more detailed information should be presented by reference. If existing studies

have not been completed, counties are not expected to undertake new planning initiatives and analyses to address these guidelines, as long as the minimum requirements are addressed.

C. RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM THE DEPARTMENTS OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND PLANNING

For counties that wish to use State information resources as part of this planning process, a variety of data are available from the Department of Natural Resources:

Green Infrastructure Assessment – County Green Infrastructure Maps, in digital form

Strategic Forest Lands Assessment – County Scale Maps

- Ecologically Important Forest Lands
- Economically Important Forest Lands
- Forest Land Vulnerability

Geo-spatial Data Available from DNR Data Download Site

- Floodplains
- Green Infrastructure
- Greenways
- Natural Heritage Areas
- Protected Lands
- Sensitive Species Project Review Areas
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation
- Watershed Boundaries
- Wetlands (DNR and NWI)
- Wetlands of Special State Concern

Digital Ortho Photo Quarter Quads (DOQQ's) – Color Infrared and Panchromatic

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area (not available for all counties)

DNR Technical Assistance in Data or Map Interpretation for Local Plan Development

MDP also has a variety of digital and other information resources available to counties to develop the 2005 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plans. Although most are not part of a natural resource land inventory, they may be useful in Plan preparation and other capacities. Most of the data can be provided by county and for smaller (sub-county) areas in some cases.

Inventories of parcels in rural areas

- Frequency distributions by size
- Measures of parcel fragmentation
- Measures of recent development activity on parcels
- Cumulative acreage of parcels meeting specific criteria

Inventories of development capacity (estimated number of potential residential lots)

Maps showing subdivided and recently improved parcels

Preserved land (including land preserved by counties in most cases)

Land use maps and statistics

Digital files of county zoning and sewer service

II. GUIDELINES

A. GOALS FOR NATURAL RESOURCE LAND CONSERVATION

1. State Goals

The State's goals for conservation of natural resource lands are to work with local governments and the private sector to accomplish the following:

- Identify, protect, and restore lands and waterways in Maryland that support important natural resources and ecological functions, through combined use of the following techniques:
 - Public land acquisition and stewardship;
 - Preservation and stewardship on private lands through easements and assistance; and
 - Local land use management plans and procedures that conserve natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas and minimize impacts to resource lands when development occurs..
- Focus conservation and restoration activities on priority areas within the statewide green infrastructure.
- Develop a more comprehensive inventory of natural resource lands and environmentally sensitive areas to assist State and local implementation programs. Accomplish this by synthesizing local inventories with DNR's inventory of green infrastructure in each county.
- Assess the combined ability of State and local programs to:
 - Expand and connect forests, farmlands, and other natural lands as a network of contiguous green infrastructure.
 - Protect critical terrestrial and aquatic habitats, biological communities, and populations.
 - Manage watersheds in ways that protect, conserve, and restore stream corridors, riparian forest buffers, wetlands, floodplains, and aquifer recharge areas and their associated hydrologic and water quality functions.
 - Support a productive forestland base and forest resource industry, emphasizing economic viability of privately owned forestland.
- Establish measurable objectives for natural resource conservation and an integrated State / local strategy to achieve them through State and local implementation programs.
- Preserve the cultural and economic value of natural resource lands.
- Encourage private and public economic activities, such as eco-tourism and natural resource-based outdoor recreation, to support long-term conservation objectives.

2. County Goals – Minimum Requirements.

Describe the goals and objectives for natural resource conservation that have been established by the County in the comprehensive plan and/or supporting plans. Present the rationale for these goals.

Incorporate the State's goals for natural resource land conservation as appropriate in this Chapter of the Plan, and discuss the degree to which the County's goals encompass, extend beyond, or differ from the State's goals.

B. CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM FOR NATURAL RESOURCE LAND CONSERVATION

1. Background

The implementation program as defined for purposes of this Plan is comprised of all of the programs and mechanisms currently operating in the County to achieve local and/or State natural resource land conservation goals.

The State Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan and the State's assessment of Green Infrastructure provide important parts of the framework for natural resource land conservation in Maryland. State level implementation programs include the following (additional information on these programs is available from the Maryland Departments of Natural Resources and Agriculture):

- State Land Acquisition Funding: Stateside POS, Rural Legacy, Heritage Conservation Fund, GreenPrint, and TEA21/POS Easements for Civil War sites (with assistance from Civil War Preservation Trust)
- National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (National Park Service/POS)
- North American Wetlands Conservation Council (NAWCA) (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Forest Legacy Program
- Maryland Environmental Trust: Conservation Easement Program and Local Land Trust Assistance Program
- Watershed Restoration Action Strategies (DNR)
- Maryland Agricultural Cost Share Program (MACS - MDA)
- Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP)
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Forest Conservation and Management Program (FCMP)
- Forest Stewardship Plans
- Woodland Incentive Program (WIP)
- Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program

2. County Implementation Program for Conservation of Natural Resource Lands – Minimum Requirements

For purposes of county Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plans, the implementation program for natural resource land conservation consists of the State and/or local programs and mechanisms currently operating in the County to achieve natural resource conservation goals. The following are considered important elements of the County's implementation program:

- The Comprehensive Planning Process as the framework and foundation for natural resource land conservation goals, policies and programs.
- Designated Conservation Areas, Inventories, and Maps of Resources. Areas identified as natural resource lands and environmentally sensitive areas and recognized in the comprehensive plan or other County plans, ordinances, or regulations, through maps, reference, or guidelines.

- Easement Acquisition and Assistance Programs. The programs the County uses (local, State, and/or federal) to conserve any of these resources through public land acquisition or preservation and stewardship on private lands.
- Funding for Easement Acquisition and Assistance. The revenue and funding sources and amounts (State and local) used to support easement acquisition and stewardship elements of the implementation program.
- Planning and Land Use Management Authority. County planning procedures and the land use management tools, zoning ordinances, and related guidelines and procedures used by the county to conserve natural resource lands and protect environmentally sensitive land from the impacts of subdivision, development, and other human activities or land uses.
- Economic Development in Eco-tourism and Resource-based Recreation. Programs designed to support or otherwise encourage private and public economic activity and support long-term conservation objectives through eco-tourism and other natural resource-based outdoor recreation activities.
- Other Regulatory or Management Programs that play important roles in achieving State and local conservation goals for natural resource lands and environmentally sensitive areas, such as sediment and erosion control and stormwater management.

Please discuss and present information each of the elements of the implementation program at work in the County, as discussed below.

In general, information should be presented in a summary form, with references to appropriate citations. It is not necessary to incorporate lengthy or detailed information from county programs, ordinances, plans, or other County documents.

With respect to State and federal programs that operate across all counties, it is desirable to characterize the degree to which these programs are active and effective in the County. However, it is not necessary to describe these programs. That will be done in the State Plan.

a) Comprehensive Planning Context and Map

Please summarize the framework provided by the County comprehensive plan for natural resource conservation. Include a map to illustrate the comprehensive planning context for the County's goals and implementation program. The map should indicate the locations of:

- Priority Funding Areas,
- Designated conservation / preservation areas,
- Lands preserved through different means and programs,
- Subdivision and development activity outside of Priority Funding Areas, relative to designated conservation areas and preserved land, and
- Any other information relevant to the County's goals and implementation program for natural resource conservation.

Note: An analogous map is requested in Chapter IV for agricultural land preservation. A single map can be used to address the purpose of the map for both chapters.

b) Data Sharing

One of the objectives of the 2005 – 2006 Land Preservation, Recreation, and Parks planning processes is to develop shared data at State and local levels for planning, tracking, and evaluating land preservation programs and expenditures. The Maryland Department of Planning can provide data and other assistance to counties desiring it to produce the maps requested for the required map (above). If the County would like to incorporate State preserved land data in a Geographic Information System, MDP and DNR will provide their protected lands data upon request.

County GIS data should be provided to the Maryland Department of Planning either as an ESRI shapefile or coverage, or as an AutoCAD file in NAD83 meters projection if possible. At a minimum include information on site acreage and the identity of the easement acquisition program / easement holder. If possible, also include the acquisition date and cost. Alternatively, the data can be sent in a different projection system if it is specified. Ideally, the data should be delineated at a minimum scale of 1"= 500' (1:6,000). Appropriate metadata should also be provided.

c) Designated Conservation Areas, Inventories, and Maps of Resources.

Designated conservation areas and other natural resources areas should be identified in the map presented in section a, above. In this section, please address the following.

Has the County completed a general or detailed inventory and assessment of natural resource lands and environmentally sensitive areas, i.e., green infrastructure, independent of or in addition to DNR's green infrastructure survey?

If the County has completed such an inventory and assessment, are there findings that can be shared with the State regarding information on the status of critical terrestrial and aquatic habitats and biological communities and the cultural and economic value of any of the inventoried resources to the County and the State?

d) Easement Acquisition, Funding, Planning, and Land Use Management Authority

Does the County have a strategy to map, expand, and better connect forests, farmlands, and other natural lands as a network of contiguous green infrastructure? If so, what is the status of the effort? Is the strategy an adopted part of the comprehensive plan? What implementation tools are being employed?

Does the County share the State's objective to support a productive, forest land base and forest resource industry, emphasizing economic viability of privately owned forest land?

Does the County have a systematic procedure to manage watersheds in ways that protect, conserve, and restore stream corridors, riparian forest buffers, wetlands, floodplains, and aquifer recharge areas and their associated hydrologic and water quality functions? Does the strategy involve the comprehensive planning process, zoning, and subdivision and development procedures on a watershed basis?

Has the County established measurable objectives for natural resource conservation it considers achievable? If so, please share them, and describe how they are pursued through local implementation programs.

e) Other Regulatory or Management Programs

What other regulatory and management programs does the County consider essential in protecting natural resource features of environmentally sensitive land on and around developing and developed parcels? Explain the roles these programs play, or should play, in the County's view.

f) Eco-tourism and Resource-based Recreation

Does the County have a strategy to use eco-tourism and natural resource-based outdoor recreation activities to generate private and public economic activity and support long-term conservation objectives? If so, please describe it.

C. EVALUATION OF THE NATURAL RESOURCE LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM

The purpose of this section is to evaluate the degree to which the implementation program is likely to achieve natural resource conservation goals. For the State Plan, the objective is to combine insights from the Statewide and individual county evaluations, and use them to develop strategies for State programs, revenue sources, and expenditures.

1. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Implementation Program – Minimum Requirements

Please evaluate the ability of combined State and local programs to achieve State and local natural resource conservation goals in the County. Identify strengths and weaknesses in all of the elements of the implementation program (including State roles, responsibilities, funding, and other resources) as defined for purposes of this plan, i.e.:

- The Comprehensive Planning Process.
- Inventories / Maps of Resources.
- Easement Acquisition and Assistance Programs.
- Funding for Easement Acquisition and Assistance.
- Planning and Land Use Management Authority.
- Other Regulatory and Management Programs.
- Eco-tourism and Resource-based Recreational Activities.

If a local jurisdiction has completed assessments of one or more elements of its implementation program, please summarize the results, conclusions, and recommendations as appropriate and provide citations.

At a minimum, address the following in this section:

Do available State and local maps and supporting information comprise an inventory of natural resource lands and environmentally sensitive areas adequate to identify these resources for planning and protection purposes?

Are State and local goals for natural resource conservation specific and measurable enough to serve as a basis for effective implementation?

What are the shortcomings in the ability of combined State and local programs to accomplish the following in the County?

- Protect and preserve a contiguous network of green infrastructure consisting of forests, farmlands, and other natural lands?
- Protect critical terrestrial and aquatic habitats, biological communities, and populations?
- Manage watersheds in ways that protect, conserve, and restore stream corridors, riparian forest buffers, wetlands, floodplains, and aquifer recharge areas and their associated hydrologic and water quality functions?
- Support a productive, forestland base and forest resource industry, emphasizing economic viability of privately owned forestland?

Are zoning, subdivision, and development regulations and procedures effective in their ability to protect environmentally sensitive areas on and around developed parcels? Please elaborate, considering resource lands at the level of the individual site and cumulatively for larger areas, such as contiguous forested tracts, biological communities, or habitats.

From a County planning and resource conservation perspective, are sediment and erosion control, stormwater management, and other regulatory or management programs considered important by the County in their natural resource land conservation efforts? If so, do these programs play effective roles in protecting important natural resource features of environmentally sensitive land on, around, and downstream from developing and developed parcels?

To what degree are the cultural and economic value of natural resource lands being preserved in the County? To what degree are private and public parties taking advantage of these values to generate economic activity and public revenues to support long-term conservation objectives through eco-tourism and natural resource-based outdoor recreation activities?

2. Summary of Needed Improvements in the Implementation Program – Minimum Requirements

Based on goals, the implementation program, strengths and weaknesses identified, and any other assessments the County has made and incorporated, describe the conclusions of the County's evaluation of the ability of the implementation program to achieve local and State goals.

Summarize both strengths and weaknesses of the implementation program. Identify where improvements in elements of the implementation program appear necessary to achieve State and local goals in the County.

D. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Based on the evaluation and needed improvements identified, describe the steps the County is taking to overcome weaknesses and achieve State and local preservation goals. Please be as specific as possible. Include recommended changes to State programs that would better support the County's objectives and program development strategy.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – The Eight Visions of State Planning Policy

The 1992 Planning Act established Seven Visions to provide growth management guidance for State and local plans, policies, and programs. The General Assembly added an eighth Vision (#7 below) in 2000.

1. Development is concentrated in suitable areas.

Parks with active recreational facilities should be located in or easily accessible to locally designated growth areas, PFAs, and existing population centers and villages in rural areas. Recreation facilities are as basic to community development and quality of life as water, sewer, and transportation infrastructure. These recreational lands and facilities meet recreational needs in proximity to demand, contribute to community revitalization, and minimize automobile travel. Parks, forests, natural wildlife habitat, and other open spaces can be used to create natural boundaries that assist in defining and enhancing growth areas as logical development centers.

2. Sensitive areas are protected.

Sensitive areas should be protected primarily for protection of natural and cultural resource values, such as water quality, wildlife habitat, archeological and historic sites, and aesthetic enjoyment. Steep slopes, wetlands, forests, cultural heritage areas, archaeological sites, high quality waterways, rare and endangered species habitat, and other sensitive natural and cultural resources must be protected whether they exist inside or outside of PFAs.

3. In rural areas, growth is directed to existing population centers and resource areas are protected.

Scattered new development in rural areas is costly to provide with public services and destructive to the rich historical, agricultural, and natural heritage that defines Maryland's character. However, within these rural areas there are existing population centers.

Parks with active recreational facilities should be located within, adjacent, or easily accessible to these rural villages or communities and should be designed to meet the identified recreational needs of the population in the immediate surrounding area. Land for these facilities may be acquired in advance of reasonably foreseeable population growth, though the facilities may only be constructed when the population exists. At the same time, in recognition of the needs of league sports, some recreation facilities that serve multiple small communities (similar to secondary schools) should be located in a way that they are accessible to, and can be supported by, several communities.

POS, in concert with other rural protection programs such as agricultural land preservation, Rural Legacy, and local zoning and other regulatory tools, plays an essential part in directing major growth away from rural areas.

4. Stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and the land is a universal ethic.

The 2000 Chesapeake Bay Agreement clearly recognizes the relationship between protecting the ecological values of the land and restoring and preserving the Bay. Under this agreement, each signatory jurisdiction (Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia) committed to permanently preserve 20 percent of the land area in the watershed from development by 2010, and to reduce the rate of harmful sprawl development of forest and agricultural land in the watershed by 30 percent by 2012. Under this agreement, all jurisdictions in the Bay watershed must bring all of their land preservation tools and resources to bear toward achieving these goals.

5. Conservation of resources, including a reduction in resource consumption, is practiced.

Locating active recreational facilities that do not require natural resources in close proximity to existing developed areas and growth centers strengthens these communities by providing recreational opportunities for residents in these centers. Use of green landscape and building designs for park development will contribute to meeting this Planning Act Vision. Land preservation, including the preservation of woodlands, stream valleys, coastlines and other natural areas within parks, conserves resources directly and helps achieve efficient development patterns.

6. To assure the achievement of 1 through 5 above, economic growth is encouraged and regulatory mechanisms are streamlined.

Land preservation and provision of readily accessible open space and recreational facilities contribute to a healthy environment and healthy social context, which are vital to attracting and retaining economic activity. A strong healthy resource base is also a major economic force in its own right, with billions generated from resource-based industries, tourism, and recreational activities. In urban and suburban areas, adequate and well designed open space and recreational facilities contribute significantly to the quality of life that is important in business location decisions. Clear local rules and procedures for setting aside recreation and open space land as part of the development process will facilitate attractive well designed communities.

7. Adequate public facilities and infrastructure under control of the county or municipal corporation are available or planned in areas where growth is to occur.

Adequate and accessible public land and recreation facilities are as critical to the proper functioning and quality of life of a community as water supply, sewerage, transportation, and public safety. Recreation and open space lands and facilities should have equal stature in local plans, programs, and capital budgets with all other types of public infrastructure.

8. Funding mechanisms are addressed to achieve this policy.

Effective and innovative funding strategies and partnerships are necessary to implement the Visions. Cooperation among the State, counties, municipalities, private non-profit groups, and

businesses is critical to assuring optimum use of financial resources for parks and natural resources protection.

Appendix B – Recreation and Parks Supply and Demand Analysis: An Approach

All counties are required to complete a needs analysis as part of their Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (the “Plan”). The needs analysis should be based upon several sources of information:

- The results of the two statewide surveys, *Participation in Local Park and Recreation Activities in Maryland* and *State Parks and Natural Resource Areas in Maryland: A Survey of Public Opinion*;
- County specific surveys or information on trends in recreational activities and emphasis;
- Population and demographic projections;
- Other county specific information on demand obtained through knowledge of and interaction with users and the public; and
- Other local insights concerning latent demand.

Information from these sources can and should be incorporated directly into the supply and demand analysis or used to adjust the results of it. In either case, the county should explain what information was used for the needs analysis, how it was used and the basis for quantitative assumptions used in the text of Chapter III of the Plan.

The needs analysis must utilize a set of mandatory activities common to most jurisdictions. A county should add additional activities at their discretion if they determine the activity is important to meet specific county or regional recreational needs. Indoor recreational facilities can be used in the analysis provided the rationale for using these facilities and the assumptions governing their inclusion are stated in the text.

This appendix describes a “recreation supply and demand” methodology as a means of providing a general, consistent platform for estimating outdoor recreation facility needs. The methodology is very basic and simplistic, relying on very few numeric factors and mathematical functions. Counties can determine factors for activities used in the needs analysis: season length, daily carrying capacity and acreage required for facilities. These factors will vary from county to county due to natural features and the design and amount of facilities present in the area.

The factors, all of which are necessary for completion of the analysis as designed, are listed below. For each factor, describe how each is estimated or calculated and the rationale and basis for its use.

1. **SUPPLY**: Supply is generally the total number of occasions/uses provided by the given recreational facilities in a single year. To determine existing supply, the quantity of a given facility, as determined through the MEIRS system, (such as ball diamonds) is multiplied by that facility’s “season length” and “daily carrying capacity.” The quantity of a given facility can be obtained by looking at the number of facilities reported in the system for a given jurisdiction.

Season Length is the estimated number of days per year that the facility is judged to be available for use. This factor often varies by region or jurisdiction in order to account for weather variations and differences in operational procedures. For example, let’s assume the statewide survey indicates the season length for baseball/softball is 190 days in a county’s region.

Daily Carrying Capacity is the estimated number of individual “uses” that a facility provides per day. For example, if a ball diamond is estimated to (on average) allow for three games per day, and we assume that a total of 18 individuals may play during each game, the daily carrying capacity for the diamond would be estimated as 54 uses per day (3 games times 18 uses/users per game). This factor, like season length, can be adjusted to better reflect each jurisdiction’s individual situation (e.g., instead of using 18 players per game, one could estimate a use of 24 players per game to account for the fact that more than the “starting nine” usually play in a game).

Using the above example for ball diamonds, and assuming an 190 day season length, each ball diamond would provide 10,260 uses per year (190 days * 54 uses/day). Next, this per-facility supply factor would be multiplied by the quantity of the given facility within the jurisdiction. For example, if the jurisdiction operates 30 ball diamonds, the total occasions/uses provided for one year would be 307,800 (30 ball diamonds times 10,260 uses/year).

Counties should perform a similar calculation for each type of recreation facility in their jurisdiction. A table template is provided in Table B-1. The mandatory activities must be used in the table along with other activities required to meet county needs.

2. **DEMAND:** Demand is estimated through the use of a recreation demand survey. The state has provided two surveys; *Participation in Local Park and Recreation Activities in Maryland* and *State Parks and Natural Resource Areas in Maryland: A Survey of Public Opinion*; to local jurisdictions to assist this portion of the analysis. These surveys provide information at regional levels and can be used to provide a baseline of information to the counties. However, a local jurisdiction may decide to supplement these surveys with their own surveys or other measures of demand. To calculate the overall demand for a certain activity, the survey collects two numbers— “participation rate” and “frequency rate.”

Participation Rate represents the percentage of the surveyed sample population that responds that they have participated in a given activity (such as baseball/softball) in the past year. For example, if 100 individuals are surveyed, and 18 indicate they played baseball or softball, the participation rate would be 18%.

Frequency Rate is the average (mean) number of times that the individuals who participated in a given activity did so in a twelve month period. As such, during a survey, if the respondent answers positively that he/she played baseball/softball in the past twelve months, they would then be asked to estimate the number of times they played. Based on the responses of all the surveyed individuals, the average (mean) number of times that each played/participated would be calculated to determine the frequency rate. As an example, the ‘93 State LPRP (p.31) indicates the “average number of times” the respondents played baseball statewide as 22.4 times.

Once both demand factors have been calculated based on the survey responses, they are multiplied by the jurisdiction’s total population to estimate recreation demand county/city-wide. Using the above example for a jurisdiction with a current population of 100,000, the total occasions/uses demanded for one year would be 403,200 (100,000 * 18% * 22.4).

Table B-2 shows how to present this information in a summary chart, as required in Chapter IV of the LPRP. The table covers future demand that can be determined by using population projections for 2010, 2015 and 2020. The mandatory activities must be used in the table along with other activities used in the supply table.

3. NEEDS DETERMINATION

The next step would be to subtract the occasions/uses demanded from the occasions supplied to determine if there is unmet current demand. In the above example, the result would be 95,400 occasions/uses of unmet demand (307,800 uses provided minus 403,200 uses currently demanded). The final step is to determine the additional number of facilities (if any) that are needed to meet the unmet demand, and to estimate the amount of land needed for those facilities. To do so, the occasions of unmet demand are divided by the facility's annual carrying capacity. For this example, the result would be an estimated need for approximate 9.3 additional ball diamonds (95,400 occasions of unmet demand divided by an annual carrying capacity of 10,260 uses/diamond). Then the county should use their best estimate of the amount of land desired per facility to determine the total need for additional land acquisition associated with the activity.

Table B-3 shows how these numbers calculated in the needs and supply table can be utilized to determine facility needs in a generalized way, as required in Chapter IV of the LPRP. The activities used in the chart must include the mandatory activities and the activities used in the previous charts.

TABLE B-1: Sample Supply Report

Activity*	Facility Types	Number of Facilities**	Season Length+	Daily Carrying Capacity per Facility+	Annual Carrying Capacity per Facility	Total Supply, All Facilities
Baseball/Softball		20	190	54	10,260	307,800
	Ball Diamond***	20				
	Ball Diamond, Lighted	10				
Field Sports						
Basketball						
Tennis						

- * This list of activities must include the mandatory list of activities as shown and those determined by the County to meet its recreational needs.
- ** Facility counts will be determined through MEIRS reports
- *** If private and indoor recreation facilities are used in the needs analysis, they should be included in this report.
- + Season length and daily carrying capacity should be estimated by each county

**TABLE B-2: Sample Demand Report
(Demand measured by demand occasions)**

Activity	Current Population	Participation Rate	Frequency Rate	Current Demand	2010 Population	2010 Demand	2015 Population	2015 Demand	2020 Population	2020 Demand
Baseball/Softball*	100,000			403,200	110,000	459,360	112,500	470,300	115,000	480,240
Baseball	100,000	9% (state survey)	22.4 (24.0)	201,600 (100,000* .09*22.4)	110,000	237,600 (110,000* .09*24.0)	112,500	243,500	115,000	248,400 (110,000* .18*24.0)
Softball	100,000	9%	22.4	201,600	110,000	221,760	112,500	226,800	115,000	231,840
Field Sports										
Basketball										
Tennis										

- * This list of activities must include the mandatory list of activities as shown and those determined by the County to meet its recreational needs.

TABLE B-3: Sample Needs Analysis

Activity	Current Supply	Annual Carrying Capacity	Current Demand	Current Unmet Need	2010 Demand	2010 Unmet Demand	2010 Unmet Need	2015 Demand	2015 Unmet Demand	2015 Unmet Need	2020 Demand	2020 Unmet Demand	2020 Unmet Need
Baseball,Softball *	307,800	10,260	403,200	9.3 Diamonds	459,360	151,560	14.7 Diamonds	470,300	162,500	15.8 Diamonds	480,240	172,440	16.8 Diamonds
Field Sports													
Basketball													
Tennis													

* This list of activities must include the mandatory list of activities as shown and those determined by the County to meet its recreational needs

Appendix C –Acquisition, Development, and Rehabilitation Priorities¹

TABLE C-1 Acquisition and Development Recommendations

Project ²	Location ³	Description of Land Preservation and Recreation Recommendation	Estimated Total Cost	Acres to be Acquired	Estimated Short-Range (2010) Cost			Estimated Mid-Range (2015) Cost			Estimated Long-Range (2015) Cost		
					ACQUISITION	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	ACQUISITION	Capital Development	Rehabilitation	ACQUISITION	Capital Development	Rehabilitation

¹ Priorities for mid and long range planning horizons are intended for general planning purposes only. They may change considerably based on new information, actual changes in frequency and participation rates, inflation or other changes in costs, or a variety of other relevant considerations.

² Projects can either be listed as individual parks or facilities (e.g., westpark baseball field) to meet demand for activities, or as facility types (baseball fields) to meet demand for activities.

³ If a county does not create a separate table for each planning area, please include this column and list either the town/municipality name, zip code, or county planning area for each project. In the text of the chapter please explain the planning areas used by the county, for recreation and parks, e.g., county-wide, election district, small planning area, municipality, etc.

Appendix D – Calculation of the Default State Recreational Acreage Goal

This appendix summarizes how to calculate the generic state recreation acreage goal of 30 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons and how to count local, state and federal lands towards this goal. This is one of the methods a county can use to set its recreational acreage goal. If a county does not set a needs-based acreage goal or use another system that must be approved by MDP and DNR, the goal described in this appendix will serve as the default goal.

There are three categories of preserved acreage that count towards this goal: local recreational acreage, a portion of local natural resource acreage, and a portion of qualifying State and Federal acreage. What types of land qualify under each category and how each category counts towards the goal are explained below in the appropriate section.

STEP 1: SETTING THE GOAL

Example: If a county has 150,000 persons its default state recommended recreational goal is 4,500 acres (based on the 30 acres per thousand rule).

$$(150,000 \text{ residents} / 1,000) * 30 \text{ acres} = 4,500 \text{ acres}$$

STEP 2: LOCAL RECREATIONAL ACREAGE PORTION OF THE GOAL

When counting public land towards the default acreage goal, it is important to note that a minimum of 15 acres per 1,000 people must come from locally owned recreational lands. The box below indicates what types of land may be counted as recreational lands.

Local Recreational Acreage

Consists of 100% of:

- Neighborhood Parks
- Community Parks
- City/Countywide Parks
- Metro/Regional Parks
- Educational Recreation Areas*

*60% of school site or actual community recreational use areas can be counted. A joint use agreement between the county and school must exist.

The local recreational acreage portion of the recreational goal can be determined through the equation below:

$$\text{Local Recreation Portion of Goal} = \frac{\text{Local Recreation Acres}}{\text{Population in thousands}}$$

If the county with 150,000 persons determined it owned 3,000 acres of recreational acreage it could count towards meeting the generic state acreage goal, it would have 20 acres per 1,000 persons of the 30 acre per 1,000 person goal (3,000 acres / 150).

As the county does not have enough locally owned recreational lands to meet its overall 30 acres per thousand goal, it may apply a portion of locally owned natural resource lands and qualifying state and federal lands towards the goal. The sections below explain how to compute the portions that can count towards the goal.

STEP 3: LOCAL NATURAL RESOURCES ACREAGE PORTION OF THE GOAL

In addition to local recreational acreage one third of the acreage of certain types of natural resource land can be counted towards the default recommended acreage goal. Lands that can be counted are indicated below.

The local natural resource acreage portion of the recreational goal can be determined through the equation below:

$$\text{Local Nat. Res. Portion of Goal} = (1/3 * \text{Local Nat. Res. Acres}) / \text{Population in thousands}$$

If the county with 150,000 persons determined it had 2,250 acres of natural resource acreage it could count 1/3 of this acreage or 750 acres towards meeting the generic state acreage goal. This acreage would add an additional 5 acres per 1,000 persons to the county's 30 acre per 1,000 person goal (750/150 = 5). The county would now have 35 acres of land per 1,000 residents of the 30 acre per 1,000 person goal.

Local Natural Resource Acreage

Consists of 1/3 of:

- Natural Resource Areas
- Historic Cultural Areas
- Private Open Space *

*Private Open space may be counted if the land is permanently preserved as open space, is accessible to members of the community in which it is situated, and can be reasonably construed as helping to meet public demand for open space.

STEP 4: STATE AND FEDERAL ACREAGE PORTION OF THE GOAL

If needed, up to 15 acres per 1,000 persons of State and Federal Lands present in the county, in excess of 60 acres per 1,000 persons, can be used to meet the default recommended acreage goal. State and federal lands that can be counted towards the goal are indicated below.

State Acreage

Consists of 100% of:

- State Parks
- State Forests
- Educational Recreation Areas

Federal Acreage

Consists of 100% of:

- National Parks
- National Seashores
- National Recreational Areas

The acreage of both types of land should be added together. The state and federal portion of the recreational goal can be determined through the equation below:

$$\text{State and Federal Acres per 1,000 persons} = (\text{State and Federal Acres}) / \text{Population in thousands}$$

Of the figure computed above only the portion above 60 acres per 1,000 persons can be used to meet the goal.

For example if there are 10,500 acres of state and federal acres in the county with a population of 150,000, the total calculated state and federal acres per 1,000 persons is 70 (10,500/150 = 70). Of this, the state and federal portion that can count towards the goal is only 10 acres per 1,000 persons (i.e. the 10 acres over and above 60 acres/thousand residents). Using this acreage, the county would now have 35 acres of land per 1,000 residents. The county has thus achieved the 30 acre per 1,000 person goal.

NON-QUALIFIED STATE AND FEDERAL LANDS

The acreages of certain lands under state and federal ownership cannot be used to meet the acreage goal. These are listed in the boxes below:

Non-Qualified State Acreage

DO NOT COUNT:

- Natural Resource Management Areas
- Natural Environment Areas
- Wildlife Management Areas
- Fish Management Areas
- Roadside Picnic Area
- Historic Cultural Areas
- Natural Areas

Non-Qualified Federal Acreage

DO NOT COUNT:

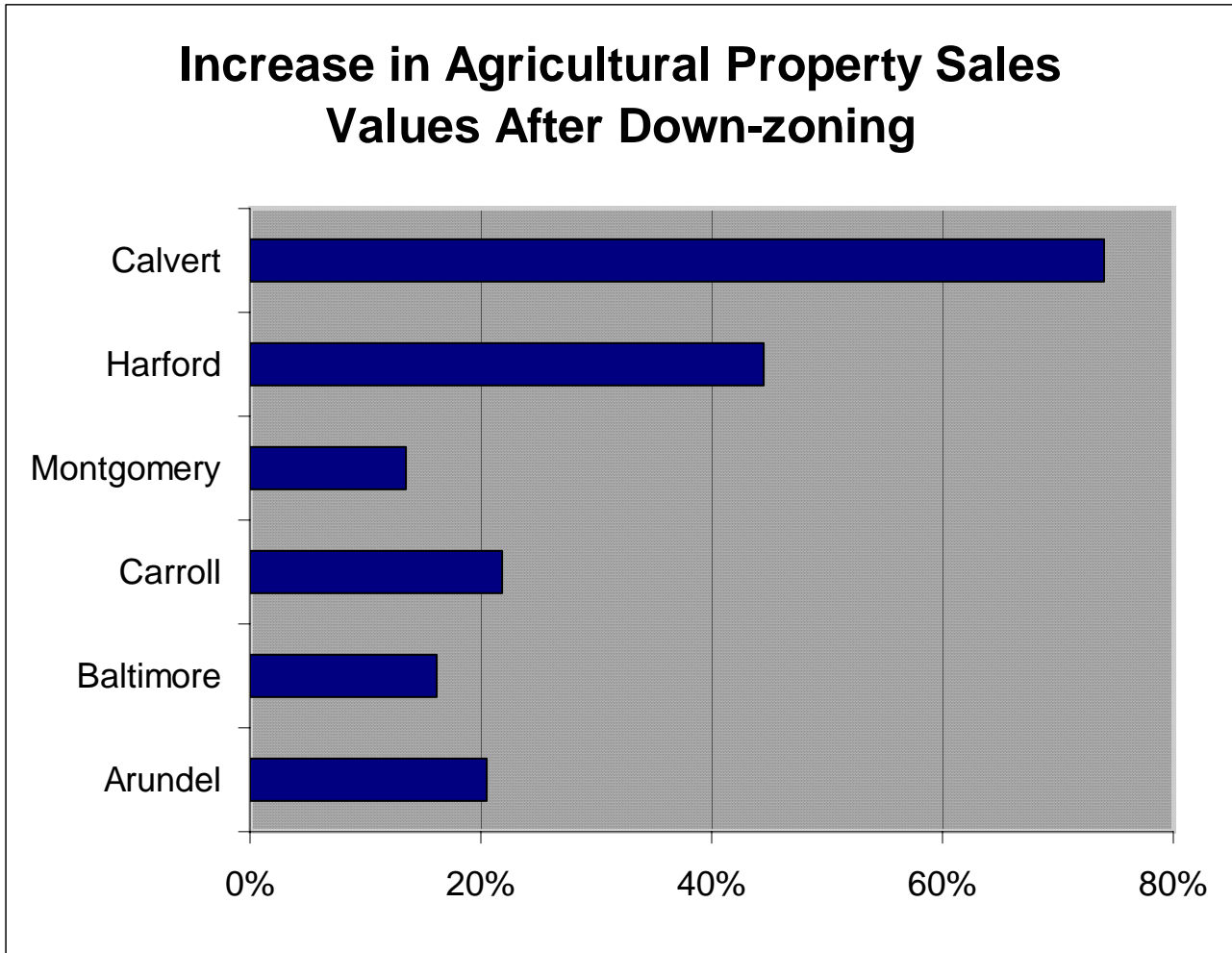
- Wildlife Area
- Wilderness Preservation Areas
- Parkways
- Historic Sites
- Cemeteries
- Natural Areas
- Battlefields

Appendix E – Public Participation Summary Table

TABLE E-1 Public Participation Summary Table

Group or Individual	Summary of Participation	Date	Specific Recommendations or Issues Raised
General Public	County Council Meeting for Plan review	2/15/03	Need for more skate parks identified.
Boat Ramp Users	Survey of ramp users	10/3/03 – 10/5/03	Need for more boat ramps. Generally ramps in good condition.
Municipality	Meeting with residents	11/15/04	Lack of basketball courts. Too many tennis courts. Should purchase land for off road biking.

Appendix F – Graph of Rural Land Values after Down-zoning



Sources:

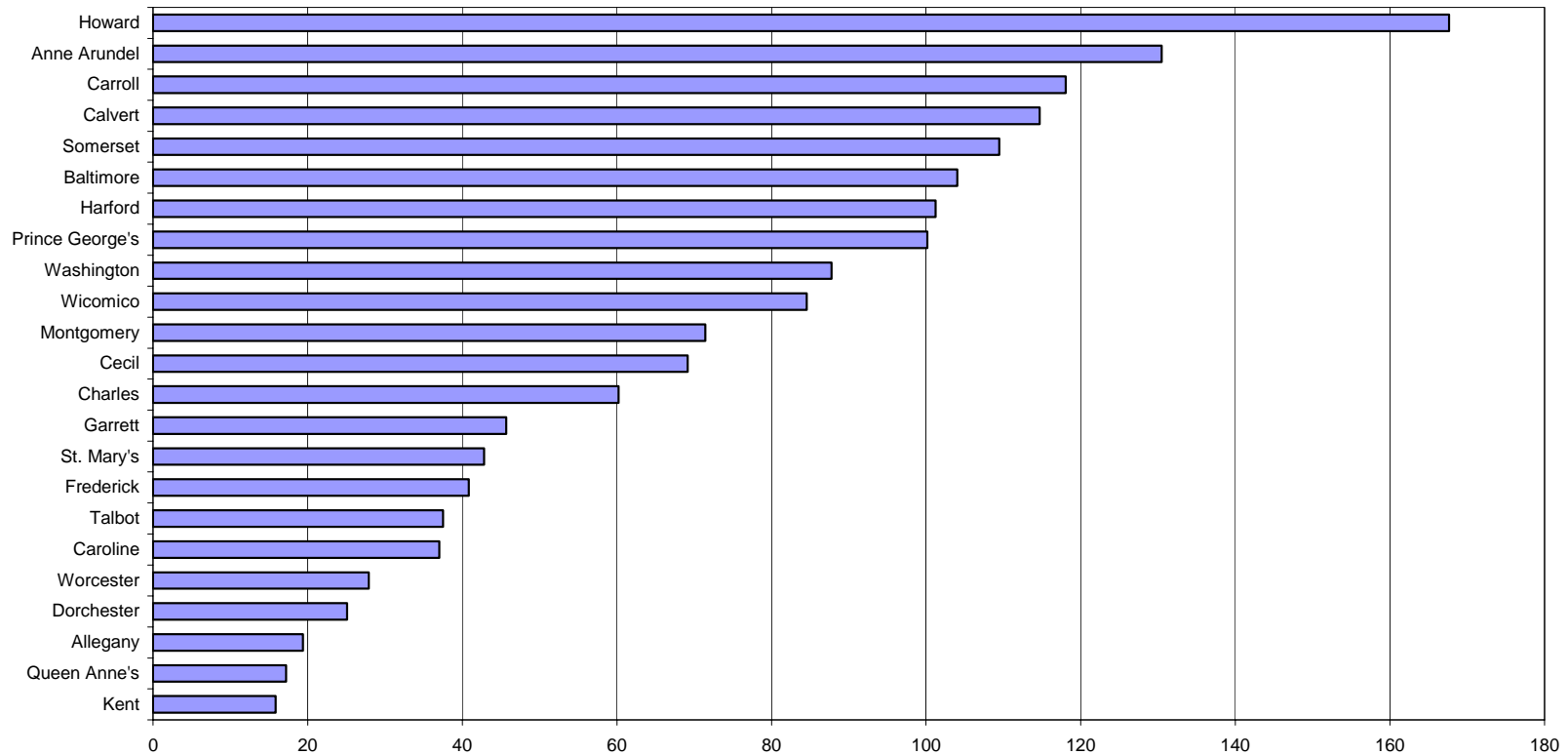
Calvert County data was provided by the Department of Planning and Zoning, and compares sales values in 2001 with sales values in the period 1995-1997.

Anne Arundel, Carroll, Harford, Baltimore, and Montgomery County data was provided by a 1991 report to the Maryland Office of Planning (*The Effects of Agricultural Zoning on the Value of Farmland*) comparing sales values of agricultural property for a period of 3 years before enactment of agricultural zoning, with the sales values for a 5 year period after the zoning change.

Appendix G – State Evaluation Graphs

Graph 1

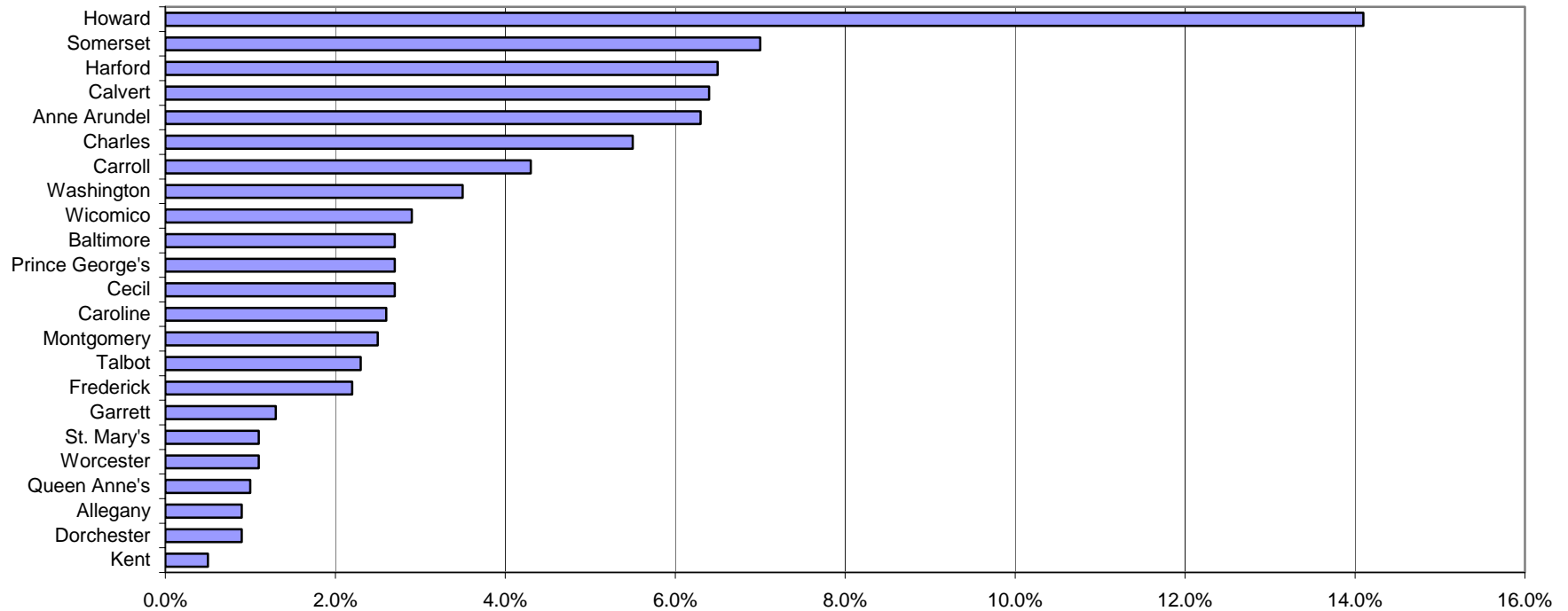
Fragmentation of Agricultural Land, 2000



The average number of parcels <=20 acres per 1,000 acres of unprotected agriculturally zoned land. Source: Maryland Department of Planning's Maryland Property View 2000 enhanced parcel data base.

Graph 2

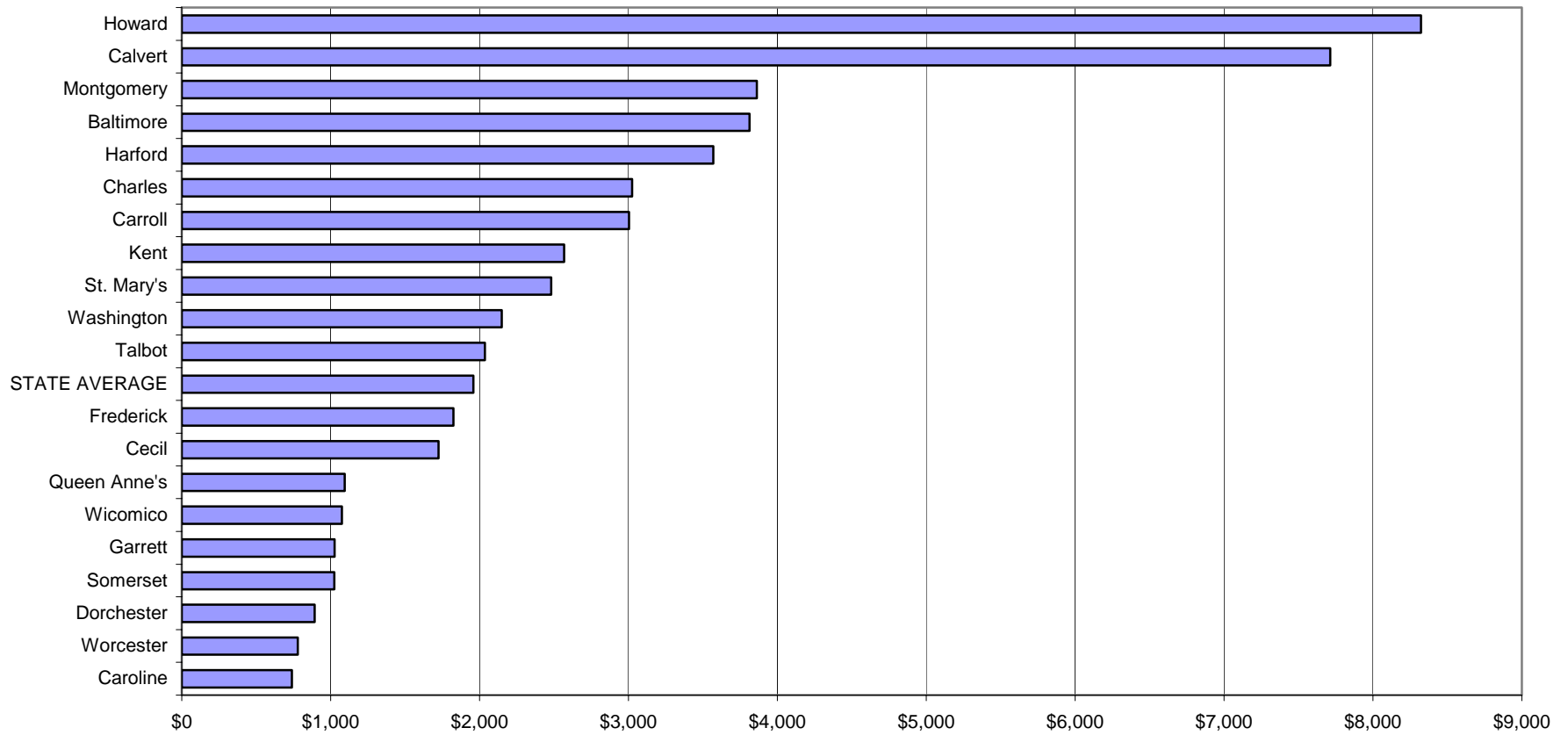
Agricultural Land Lost To Development, 1990-2000
Percent of Unprotected Agricultural Land
Developed in Parcels of 20 Acres or Less



Recent residential development pressure in agricultural areas is shown as the percent of unprotected agriculturally zoned land developed (improved parcels ≤ 20 acres) during the ten most recent years for which data is available. Source: Maryland Department of Planning's Maryland Property View 2000, enhanced parcel database, and County zoning coverages.

Graph 3

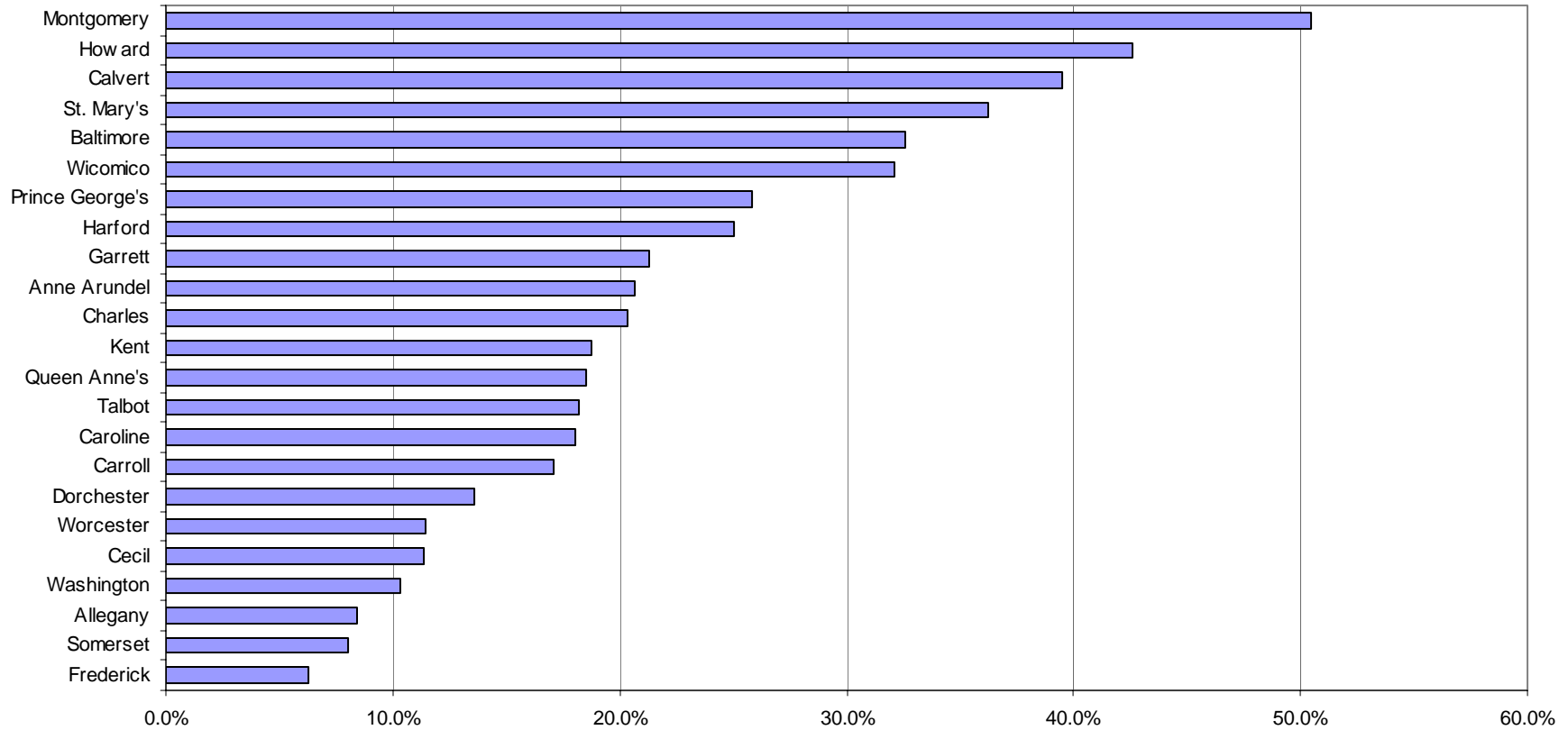
FY 2002 MALPF Easement Acquisition Cost Per Acre



Source: MALPF Annual Report 2002. Anne Arundel County had no local, MALPF or Rural Legacy Easements in FY 2002. Allegany and Prince's George's counties had no MALPF easements.

Graph 4

% of Agriculturally Zoned Land Protected



Source: Maryland Department of Planning's Maryland Property View 2000, enhanced parcel database, County zoning coverages, and County Protected Lands.

Graph 5

**Percent of Unprotected Agriculturally Zoned Land
Consisting of Parcels >20 Acres**

