

2023 Planning Commission Annual Report



Prepared by the Planning Division, Planning and Growth Management Department

CHARLES COUNTY GOVERNMENT 200 Baltimore St., La Plata, MD 20646

August 2024

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Purpose of Report

State law requires the Planning Commission to prepare and file an annual report with the County Commissioners¹. The report is available for public inspection and a copy of the report is provided to the Secretary of Planning for the State of Maryland. The criteria for the content of the report are specified as follows:

"The annual report shall **(a)** index and locate on a map all changes in development patterns including land use, transportation, community facilities patterns, zoning map amendments, and subdivision plats which have occurred during the period covered by the report, and shall state whether these changes are or are not consistent with each other, with the recommendations of the last annual report, with adopted plans of adjoining jurisdictions, and with the adopted plans of all state and local jurisdictions that have the responsibility for financing and constructing public improvements necessary to implement the jurisdiction's plan; **(b)** contain statements and recommendations for improving the planning and development process within the jurisdiction."

The Annual Report for 2023 has been designed to comply with Smart Growth Goals, Measures, and Indicators and Implementation of Planning Visions enumerated in the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland². The Annual Report is not intended to provide a comprehensive account of the activities of the Planning Division or the Planning Commission. Further, it should be noted that this Annual Report does not include data from the Towns of La Plata and Indian Head as these jurisdictions are also required to submit individual Annual Reports to the Maryland Department of Planning.

In compliance with the above-stated provision of the Land Use Article, this Annual Report was adopted by the Charles County Planning Commission on August 5, 2024.

Sources of Additional Information

Detailed information on other endeavors, projects, operations and/or the status of submittals is available directly through the following sources:

Planning and Growth Management: (301) 645-0692 or (301) 645-0627
County Attorney's Office: (301) 645-0555
Transit: (301) 645-0642

Charles County Government Web Site: <www.CharlesCountyMD.gov>

¹ Annotated Code of Maryland, Land Use Article, §1-207, §1-208

² Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resources Article §8-1808

Introduction

This Annual Report provides an opportunity for the Charles County Planning Commission to review development approvals for calendar year 2023. Actual development can then be compared to the overall vision for future development as articulated in the 2016 Adopted Charles County Comprehensive Plan (“the Plan”). The general “theme” of the Plan is that the County should continue to grow with a Smart Growth philosophy: balancing growth with strong environmental protection measures by conserving resources within the framework and guidance of the Plan. This Comprehensive Plan makes significant changes from the previous plans by reducing the Development District from 52,200 acres to 22,189 acres (a reduction of 30,011 acres), concentrating growth, protecting our natural resources, promoting historic village revitalization efforts, and supporting light rail transit for long term development. Previous Planning Commission Annual Reports have measured development inside and outside of the Development District. However, as of 2016, Annual Reports focus on the Priority Funding Areas (PFA) since the modified Development District now matches the PFA in the northern part of Charles County³. Additionally, the County is committed to protecting 50 percent of its overall acreage in open space.

Planning Commission Functions and Membership

The Planning Commission consists of seven members who are appointed by the County Commissioners. Members serve four-year terms, which are staggered. A chairperson is appointed annually by the Commissioners. The purpose and functions of the Charles County Planning Commission are stated in the Land Use Article, Charles County Code of Public Laws, and the Charles County Zoning Ordinance. Functions include:

- Prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for development of the jurisdiction, including among other things, land use, water and sewerage facilities, and transportation;
- Review and approve the subdivision of land of the jurisdiction;
- Reserve transportation facility rights-of-way;
- Review and approve adequate public facilities studies and mitigation measures;
- Approve and periodically amend the Site Design and Architectural Guidelines;
- Review and provide recommendations on rezoning requests for base zones, overlay zones, and floating zones;
- Review and make recommendations for amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Regulations; and
- Adopt rules and regulations governing its procedure and operation consistent with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

During CY2023, the Charles County Planning Commission conducted nineteen (19) regularly scheduled meetings.

Planning Commission Members (Current)

Kevin Wedding, Chairman

William Murray, Vice Chairman

Dawud Abdur-Rahman, Secretary

Maya Coleman

Jeffrey Bossart

Denard Earl

Semia Hackett

³ The Development District and Priority Funding Area are not contiguous nor singular. The Development District (or Districts) encompasses portions of Indian Head (267 acres), Bryans Road (1,087 acres), and much of Waldorf and St. Charles (20,865 acres). The Priority Funding Area (or Areas) encompasses multiple non-contiguous built-up areas of Charles County totaling 36,000 acres. See Charles County’s GIS Interactive map at (<https://charlescountymd.info/PGMGISINTERACTIVEMAP>) for clarification. Any reference to “Development District” or “Priority Funding Area” singular or plural in this report refers to the entirety of each district unless otherwise noted.

Growth Related Changes in 2023

This section provides an in-depth look at development that has occurred during calendar year 2023. A map is attached in the Appendix that demonstrates the growth-related changes including preliminary subdivision plans, final plats, site development plans, building permits, and zoning map changes.

Preliminary Subdivision Plan Approvals

A preliminary subdivision plan is the initial plan of subdivision consisting of drawings and supplementary materials that indicate the proposed layout of a subdivision. Approval of a preliminary subdivision plan establishes general consistency with the Charles County Comprehensive Plan, and compliance with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations that are known to be applicable during the preliminary review stages. Lots proposed within a preliminary subdivision plan may be for future residential, commercial, or industrial purposes. Preliminary subdivision plans are approved by the Planning Commission.

Preliminary subdivision plans are required in Charles County for all major subdivisions. A subdivision project is considered to be a major subdivision when the proposed subdivision will result in the creation of more than five (5) lots from a parcel that was in existence on June 15, 1976, or when more than seven (7) lots are proposed from a parcel, residue or remainder in existence on December 31, 2012; provided that any lot resulting from a recorded deed or subdivision plat prior to December 31, 2012, cannot be considered a parcel for purposes of Section 17 of the Charles County Subdivision Regulations.

Figure 1, below, provides a list of the preliminary subdivision plans that were approved in 2023, including revisions. Figure 2, also below, provides a breakdown of preliminary plan housing types.

Figure 1: 2023 Approved Preliminary Subdivision Plans

Subdivision Name	Total Number of New Lots	Acreage	Lots Inside PFA	Lots Inside PUD
Fischer's Grant, Revision #5	0	0	0	0
Waldorf Station	212	28.8	212	0
Bryan's Green, Revision #2	0	0	0	0
Myers Estates Parcel A, Revision #1	0	0	0	0
Net Total	212	28.8	212	0

Figure 2: 2023 Preliminary Subdivision Plan Residential Housing Types

Preliminary Plan Housing Types	Total
Single Family Detached	0
Townhouse	212
Apartment	0
Duplex	0
Total	212

Figure 3 below calculates the net density of residential preliminary subdivision plans. For residential uses, net density is calculated by dividing the total area of residential lots by the number of residential lots.

Figure 3: Net Density of 2023 Residential Preliminary Subdivision Plans

	Total Area of Residential Units/Lots	Total Number of Residential Lots	Average Lot Size
Countywide	28.8 Acres	212	0.13 acres
Inside PFA	28.8 Acres	212	0.13 acres
Outside PFA	N/A	N/A	N/A

Final Plat Approvals

A final subdivision plat establishes the official division of land that is approved by the Planning and Growth Management Department and recorded in the Land Records of Charles County. Final subdivision plats are approved and signed by the Planning Director. Final subdivision plats are prepared for both major and minor subdivisions. As defined in §278-17 of the Charles County Subdivision Regulations, a minor subdivision is a subdivision of land, which does not involve any of the following:

- The creation of more than five (5) lots from a parcel that was in existence on June 15, 1976, or more than seven (7) lots are proposed from a parcel, residue or remainder in existence on December 31, 2012; provided that any lot resulting from a recorded deed or subdivision plat prior to December 31, 2012, cannot be considered a parcel for purposes of Section 17 of the Charles County Subdivision Regulations.
- The extension of a public water or sewer system proposed as a part of a private development.
- The installation of off-site drainage improvements through one or more lots to serve one or more other lots proposed as a part of a private development.

Figure 4 below shows the distribution of final plat types that were recorded in 2023. Minor plats such as lot line adjustments, boundary surveys, forest conservation easement plats, etc. do not record any lots.

Figure 4: 2023 Final Plat Types

Final Plat Type	No. of Plats
Plats Recording No New Lots	13
Residential - Minor Plats	9
Residential - Major Plats	13
Commercial	0
Industrial	0
Total	35

Figure 5 below provides a list of final plat lots approved in 2023. Further, Figure 6 below provides the net density of the residential final plats.

Figure 5: 2023 Approved Final Plat Lots

Final Plat Type	No. of New Lots	Plat Area	Inside PFA	Outside PFA	Inside PUD
Residential Minor Plats	11	130.78 acres	1 lot, 65.5 acres	10 lots, 65.28 acres	0
Residential Major Plats	575	479.88 acres	551 lots, 460.8 acres	24 lots, 19.08 acres	355 lots, 341.56 acres
Commercial	0	0	0	0	0
Industrial	0	0	0	0	0
Total	586	610.66 acres	552 lots, 526.3 acres	34 lots, 84.36 acres	355 lots, 341.56 acres

Figure 6: Net Density of 2023 Residential Final Plats

	Total Area of Residential Lots	Total Number of Residential Lots	Average Lot Size
Countywide	610.66 acres	586	1.04 acres
Inside PFA	526.3 acres	552	0.95 acres
Outside PFA	84.36 acres	34	2.48 acres

Site Plan Approvals

Site plans are required for all commercial, multi-family residential, and telecommunication structures. There are two (2) types of site plans: major and minor. An application proposing detached single- and two-family dwellings, accessory buildings, additions less than 1,200 square feet for residential uses and change in use would be classified as a minor site plan. Any site plans other than those identified as minor site plan applications would be classified as major. Site plans are reviewed in house and are signed by the Planning Director. Site plans for projects located within the St. Charles Planned Unit Development (PUD) zone are required to obtain final approval by the Planning Commission. Additionally, any site plans that require an Adequate Public Facilities (APF) study to be performed are required to obtain final approval by the Planning Commission.

Figure 7 provides a breakdown of site plans approved in 2023 and Figure 8 provides the net density of commercial site plans countywide, as well as inside the Priority Funding Area.

Figure 7: 2023 Site Plans

Type of Use	Building Square Footage	Acreage	Inside PFA	Outside PFA	Inside PUD
Residential	552,578	91.835	552,578 sq. ft./ 91.835 acres	0 sq. ft / 0 acres	347,690 sq. ft./ 64.3 acres
Commercial/ Retail	321,193	343.737	314,825 sq. ft./ 126.18 acres	6,368 sq. ft./ 217.55 acres	175,997 sq. ft./ 54.659 acres
Institutional/ Church/School/ Public Use	9,563	16.96	2,300 sq. ft/ 10.76 acres	7263 sq. ft./ 6.2 acres	2,300 sq. ft./ 10.76 acres
Public Utilities (including cell towers)	1,367	858.725 ⁴	1,117 sq. ft./ 139.437 acres	250 sq. ft./ 719.288 acres	5 sq. ft/ 4.1 acres
Total	884,701	1,311.26	870,820 sq. ft./ 368.212 acres	13,881 sq. ft./ 943.04 acres	525,991 sq. ft./ 133.82 acres

⁴ It should be noted that cell tower projects in the rural areas are typically constructed on larger properties.

Figure 8: Net Density of 2023 Commercial Site Plans

	Total Area of Commercial Building Area	Total Area of Commercial Lots	Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
Countywide	321,193 sq. ft.	14,973,183.72 sq. ft. (343.737 acres)	0.02 FAR
Inside PFA	314,825 sq. ft.	5,496,400.8 sq. ft. (126.18 acres)	0.06 FAR
Outside PFA	6,368 sq. ft.	9,476,478 sq. ft. (217.55 acres)	0.001 FAR

Building Permits

In 2023 there were 880 residential building permits (880 new units) and sixteen (16) commercial building permits (16 new units) issued in Charles County. Building permits are issued for a variety of building related activities in Charles County including accessory structures, alterations, additions, pools, signs, etc. However, only new residential or new commercial structures are counted for the purposes of the Annual Report. Figure 9 below provides a breakdown of new residential building permits. Similarly, Figure 10 provides the breakdown of new commercial building permits.

Figure 9: 2023 Residential Building Permits

Building Permit Type	Total Number of New Units	Inside PFA	Outside PFA	Inside PUD
Single Family	309	156	153	74
Town House	265	265	0	141
Apartment	302	302	0	0
Duplex, Triplex, Quadriplex	4	4	0	4
Total	880	727	153	219

Figure 10: 2023 Commercial Building Permits

Building Permit Type	Total Number of New Units	Inside PFA	Outside PFA	Inside PUD
New Commercial	16	14	2	5

Other Commercial Building Permit Types:
Commercial Alterations and Additions: 92
Miscellaneous Commercial: 74
Change of Occupancy⁵: 97

Use and Occupancy Permits

In 2023, there were 889 residential Use and Occupancy (U&O) permits (889 new units) and nine (9) commercial U&Os issued (9 new units) in Charles County. Figure 11 below provides a breakdown of new residential U&O permits. Similarly, Figure 12 below provides the breakdown of new commercial U&O Permits.

Figure 11: 2023 Residential Use and Occupancy (U&O) Permit Units

U&O Permit Type	Total Number of New U&Os (in units)	Inside PFA	Outside PFA	Inside PUD
Single Family	391	187	204	125
Town House	492	492	0	221
Apartment	0	0	0	0
Duplex, Triplex, Quadriplex	6	6	0	6
Total	889	685	204	352

⁵A Change of Occupancy permit (formerly known as a Green Card permit) is issued to establish a Use and Occupancy for a commercial space when no construction to the space is proposed. Utilized at the change of ownership or change of tenant, this permit allows for a safety inspection of the proposed space prior to use.

Figure 12: 2022 Commercial Use and Occupancy (U&O) Permit Units

U&O Permit Type	Total Number of New U&Os (in units)	Inside PFA	Outside PFA	Inside PUD
New Commercial	9	7	2	1

Other Commercial Use and Occupancy Permit Types:

Commercial Alterations & Additions: 83

Miscellaneous Commercial: 31

Change of Occupancy: 91

Zoning Map Amendments

The following Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) was enacted in 2023.

Amendment No.	Summary	Effective Date
Bill 2023-03 Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) 22-01 Maryland Gardens	The purpose of this Zoning Map Amendment was a request to change the base zone of the properties shown on Tax Map 14 as Parcel 13A, and Tax Map 15, Parcels 43, 62, 206, and 537 from Residential Office (RO) to Community Commercial (CC) in accordance with Section 297-448 of the Charles County Zoning Ordinance.	April 18, 2023
Bill 2023-05 Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) 22-02 Bragg Property	The purpose of this Zoning Map Amendment was to amend the Charles County Zoning Map to change the base zone of the subject properties (shown on St. Mary's County Tax Map 01, Grid 16, Parcel 77 and Parcel 43) from Rural Residential (RR) to Community Commercial (CC) in accordance with Section 297-448 of the Charles County Zoning Ordinance.	September 19, 2023
Bill 2023-11 Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) 23-01 Dash-In Food Stores, Inc.	The purpose of this Zoning Map Amendment was a request to rezone a 1.748-acre portion of a 3.02-acre property from Rural Conservation (RC) to Community Commercial (CC). The property was "split zoned" with the smaller CC zoned portion being improved by an existing Dash-In convenience store and gas station, at the intersection of Mattawoman-Beantown Road and Leonardtown Road (Maryland Route 5).	November 28, 2023

Zoning Text Amendments

The following Zoning Text Amendments (ZTAs) were enacted in 2023:

Amendment No.	Summary	Effective Date
Bill 2023-04 Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 22-175 Standards and Procedures for Approval of Amendments to Master Plans and/or Conditions of Zoning Approval for Planned Development Zones	The purpose of this Zoning Text Amendment was to amend Article VII of the Charles County Zoning Ordinance to: (1) describe when a Planned Development Zone Amendment may be filed; and (2) describe the required elements of the Amendment application; and (3) clarify conditions of approval.	July 25, 2023
Bill 2023-10 Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 22-170 Watershed Conservation District	The purpose of this Zoning Text Amendment was to amend certain provisions of the Charles County Zoning Ordinance to correct inconsistencies between the Table of Permissible Uses and the text of the Base Zone Regulations, to reduce the minimum lot size required in the Watershed Conservation District while maintaining the density of one unit per twenty acres, to create flexibility for intrafamily transfers, and to eliminate conflicts between the Base Zone Regulations and the amended Comprehensive Plan.	November 14, 2023

Planned Development Zone Amendments

There were no Planned Development Zone Amendments (PDZAs) enacted in 2023.

Comprehensive Plan Updates

There are no comprehensive plan updates to report for 2023.

Consistency Analysis

While many developments and infrastructure improvements in 2023 were found to be consistent with the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, the Charles County Zoning Ordinance, as well as with all adopted plans of the state and adjoining jurisdictions, there were some noteworthy departures that will be addressed in more detail in the Growth Trends section of this report. In summary the percentage of preliminary and final plat lots within the Priority Funding area significantly exceeded the Comprehensive Plan goals of 75%, and the percentages of apartment units and townhomes far exceeded the Comprehensive Plan goals of 5% and 15% respectively.

Process Improvements

There are no process improvements to report for 2023.

Land Preservation

Land preservation programs continue to be very active in Charles County with growing landowner interest in preserving their farm and forest properties. The amount of land protected in the calendar year 2023 reflects this trend, with a net increase of 1,292.5 acres. The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) and the Rural Legacy Program contributed 1,655 preserved acres in 2023. These two programs rely heavily on a strong partnership with the County Government that includes staff time and local matching fund contributions. The County's Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program and Forest Conservation Act requirements contributed 123 acres of protected land in 2023.

Figure 13 below provides a detailed breakdown of protected lands in Charles County from all sources.

Figure 13: Protected Lands in Charles County through December 2023 (in acres)

	Type of Protection	Protected through 2022	2023 Data	Protected Through 2023
Regulatory	Resource Protection Zone (RPZ)	26,113	-518 ¹	25,595
	Forest Conservation Easements	9,863 ²	+73.3	9,936
	Stream Buffers in the Critical Area/Critical Area Buffer outside of the RPZ (IDZ and LDZ)	612		612
Federal	Federal Properties	1,674		1,674
State	State Owned Resource Land	21,884.2	+28.3	21,913
	State and Federal Owned Easements	3,657		3,657
	Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation Easements (MALPF)	13,863.3	+1,180	15,043
	Maryland Historical Trust (MHT)	257		257
	Maryland Environmental Trust (MET)	5,604		5,604
State/Local	Rural Legacy Easement Properties	5,629.3	+475.4	6,105
	Transfer of Development Rights Program	7,481.3	+50.5	7,532
	County and Town Parks	3,434	+3 ³	3,437
Other	The Nature Conservancy (TNC)	2,677		2,677
	Conservancy for Charles County (CCC)	342		342
	Joint MET & CCC Properties	1,501		1,501
Total Acres Protected		104,592.1	1,292.5	105,885

(1) Acreage decrease is due to overlap with some of the new 2023 protected lands.

(2) FCE figures do not include conservation easements within the incorporated towns of La Plata and Indian Head.

(3) State of MD DNR transferred 3 Acres of land to the County. (DNR HQ Building - Waldorf Site)

Local Land Use Goal & Comprehensive Plan Goals

Local Land Use Goal:

With continued adherence to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan and the 2022 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan⁶, several significant sustained efforts were made, including downzoning measures to protect the County's natural resources, and increasing the size of Priority Preservation Areas (PPA). The PPA contains 132,741 acres and includes three major rural parts of the county: the Cobb Neck area, the Nanjemoy Peninsula, and much of the Mattawoman Creek Watershed. Within the County's long-term goal to preserve 50% of county land, a key strategy is the protection of 80% of the remaining undeveloped lands within the PPA for agricultural and forestry uses. The adoption of the Tier Map in 2014, designated the PPA as Tier IV, which enabled the County to stabilize the land base in this area by limiting subdivisions on septic systems within the PPA to minor subdivisions.

In 2017 Charles County adopted the Watershed Conservation District zone and reduced the size of the development district considerably. This change allowed the County to limit the development of subdivisions dependent on on-site septic systems within priority preservation areas. The County has also taken steps to limit development density within the Watershed Conservation District, which contains the Mattawoman priority preservation area. Since 2017, a new Purchase of Development Rights program, which targets conservation easement funding opportunities within priority preservation areas, was adopted by the County. Following on from the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, voluntary interest in agriculture and forest land conservation programs has been high. Through the preservation programs of the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, the Rural Legacy Program, local transfer of development rights, and local purchase of development rights, the County estimates that an average of 800 acres of farm and forest land is currently being protected in priority preservation areas annually. Charles County's agricultural land preservation program has been certified by the Maryland Department of Planning since 2021 which allows the County to keep more locally-generated agricultural land transfer tax in exchange for creating effective local land preservation programs and continually evaluating and improving them.

Timeframe for achieving the goal:

The 2016 Comprehensive Plan is a ten-year planning guidance document. A Work Program is in place to prioritize implementation goals and set realistic timeframes to achieve changes to policies and regulations.

Resources necessary:

Resource needs are reviewed on an annual basis as a part of the County budget process.

Charles County Open Space Goal Acreage Analysis

Charles County has an open space preservation goal of 50 percent. Figure 14 below provides a summary of the County's preservation efforts through 2023 to meet this open space goal.

Charles County has utilized, and should continue to utilize, Program Open Space funds for regular improvements to County parks and recreation amenities, and strategic acquisition of land for future parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces. Additional recreation amenities at these sites will depend on further assistance from Program Open Space funding and will significantly contribute to satisfying long-standing recreation and land conservation goals of the state and county.

The County's current Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) clearly states that the demand for active recreation facilities continues to grow and that there is an immediate need to plan and develop such facilities. Athletic playing fields and hiking/biking trails have not kept pace with the County's rapid population growth. Additionally, the LPPRP calls for more open space acquisition and recreational facilities throughout the County.

⁶ In 2022, the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan was updated from its last version from 2017.

Recreational demands continue to grow in our area, specifically in the greater Waldorf and La Plata communities. Water access amenities continue to be a priority as well. The strategic enhancements of parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces that utilized Program Open Space funds are planned to help the County work toward achieving the goals of the Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan, as well as those of the County Comprehensive Plan, and State of Maryland.

Figure 14: Open Space Goal Acreage Analysis

Category	Acres	Comments
Total County land area	294,404	
50% overall open space protection goal	147,202	294,404/2
Protected through December 2022	105,885	72% of goal, 36% of County total Land area
<u>Additional needed to meet goal</u>	<u>41,317</u>	

Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance Restrictions

Charles County adopted an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) in 1992, which has been amended as needed since that time. Primarily, the APFO governs the approval of development based on the status of public infrastructure, which includes water supply, rural fire suppression resources, roadways, and schools. Through the APFO and related subdivision regulations, the County requires commercial and residential developments to provide necessary improvements to infrastructure (specifically roads and fire suppression water supplies) when the impact of the development is shown to degrade the level of service of the surrounding infrastructure. For schools, a residential development project must be granted an allocation of school capacity for each proposed lot or dwelling unit in order to receive approval of a record plat of subdivision.

The Charles County Commissioners currently allocate the available capacity of each school to pending new development lots based on the measurement of 110% of State Rated Capacity. In order to obtain allocations, capacity must be available in each of the three schools (elementary, middle, and high school) that students generated by the particular subdivision would attend. A school allocation granting is restricted by the most limited school capacity among the three schools serving the proposed community. Charles County Public Schools contains 38 schools, six educational centers, and 27,765 students including Pre-K. The County's total school attendance has stable over the last ten years, including an increase of 167 students between the 2022-2023 to the 2023-2024 school year head counts.

In the last few years, the Elementary school level has experienced stable enrollment figures. and increased the capacity for future growth with the construction of Billingsley Elementary School in the Waldorf area, along with the construction of the Margaret Jamieson Thornton Elementary School in St. Charles that will open for the 2025-2026 school year.

The Charles County Adequate Public Facilities Manual allows the County Commissioners to utilize the capacity of a new school or redistricting up to eighteen (18) months prior to completion. During the 2017 allocation cycle, the added capacity of each elementary school was determined through the School Superintendent's Comprehensive Redistricting process, and the County Commissioners allocated according to the policy. Since Billingsley Elementary was later delayed by one year, the Commissioners did not utilize this additional capacity for the 2018 allocation cycle but used it for the 2019 allocation cycle. The Charles County Board of Education's comprehensive redistricting of all Middle Schools went into effect at the start of the 2022-2023 school year, and work is currently underway to redistrict elementary schools in preparation for Thornton Elementary in 2025.

With regard to funding the local share of school construction projects, a School Construction Excise Tax is collected from the homeowner of each new home via their property tax bill. Since the enactment of the Charles County Excise Tax in 2003, the calculation was based on the Producer Price Index, which was not keeping pace with the actual cost of school construction. In 2015, the Maryland General Assembly passed a revision to the Charles County Excise Tax Legislation to tie the calculation of the Excise Tax to the “State’s Per Square Foot Cost of School Construction,” ensuring the tax assessment keeps pace with the costs incurred by the County. The Fiscal Year 2024 Excise Tax assessed for a single-family dwelling is \$20,330, for a townhouse is \$20,375, and for multi-family housing unit is \$17,996 which is amortized over a 10-year period in the property tax bill.

On December 15, 2020, the Charles County Commissioners adopted changes to the School Allocation Policy that are located within the Charles County Adequate Public Facilities Manual. These changes included but were not limited to: 1. Addition of the Priority Development Project (PDP) Allocation type, which encourages affordable housing, mixed-use development, and growth within the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (WURC) and 2. Addition of the Sunset Provision, which allows Development Projects that have been sitting on the School Allocation Waiting List for 6 years to receive 50% of their remaining allocations, and the remaining 50% on the 7th year.

Charles County Schools uses local growth and demographic data to inform their ten-year educational facilities masterplan. The school district’s five year capital improvement plan is coordinated with Charles County Government’s own CIP program which provides a local funding match to the state funding the district receives for construction projects. Expansion of school capacity must be approved by the State government, and the District must demonstrate existing overcapacity of adjacent schools as well as a seven year timeframe for filling the proposed school. Each year the County’s Fiscal and Administrative Services department as well as the County Administrators office meets with the school district to discuss their funding and construction needs. Each spring the proposed CIP budget, including school district requests, is submitted to the County Commissioners for approval.

Infrastructure Changes

The Charles County Department of Public Works (DPW) completed numerous infrastructure enhancements in 2023. These projects included roadway improvements, water and sewer improvements, and stormwater and drainage improvements associated with the County’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Permit. Specific projects are as follows:

- Completion of Phase II of the Piney Branch Interceptor Sewer upgrades, which increased sewer capacity to accommodate for the fully planned development of the sewershed.
- Completed the rehabilitation of the Settle Woods and McDaniels Road Elevated Water Storage Towers to increase the longevity of our water infrastructure and to ensure the continued delivery of high quality potable water to our customers.

Additional project updates from Capital Planning & Design:

- Indian Head Manor waterline petition – Project began construction in Fall 2023. This is a petition project in the Indian Head Manor community in the Bryans Road area with 39 homes to hookup to public water.
- Safety Upgrades to Middletown Rd at Billingsley Rd - The Department of Planning and Growth Management received an approval from SHA to begin project design in December 2023. The project involves the modification of the existing traffic control signal at the intersection of Middletown Road and Billingsley Road. The work is necessitated by the installation of a pedestrian crossing for Billingsley Road, Middletown Road is assumed to run in a north-south direction.

- Billingsley Rd at Bensville Rd Intersection Improvements - The Department of Planning and Growth Management received an approval from SHA to move forward with project design in March 2023. Currently, this is an unsignalized (4-way stop with flashing light) intersection in the western Waldorf area. The proposed project involves the installation of a new traffic signal at the intersection.
- 2023 Updates of the Charles County Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan and Category Maps – Documents were adopted by the Charles County Commissioners and approved by the Maryland Department of the Environment. The purpose of the plan is to provide an understanding of the County’s goals, objectives, and policies in relation to water supply and sewer planning.
- Pump Station Capacity Study – Began the study which includes a condition assessment and pump drawdown tests at all County-owned pump stations.
- Marshall Hall Rd/Strawberry Hills Waterline Extension – Design began May 2023. This project aims to enhance fire storage redundancy and ensure adequate water pressure in the Bryans Road area.
- Swan Point Drainage Assessment – The report update was finalized in early 2023. The report aimed to provide a Stormwater Management System Assessment for the Swan Point Community, encompassing an inventory and inspection of storm drain structures, pipes, and stormwater facilities, along with a cost estimate for projected repairs and maintenance.

New Schools or Additions to Schools

The County Government and Board of Education are part of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which is the state largest school contraction grant program, averaging at least \$280 million per year in recent years. The Program is governed by Title 5, Subtitle 3 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland and regulations promulgated by the Interagency Commission on School Construction in the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR). CIP funding can be used for major new, renewal, or replacement schools as well as for addition projects or capital maintenance projects (systemic renovations).

The board of education is scheduled to occupy T.C. Martin Elementary School in August of 2024. The school was modernized and expanded from 450 to 650 students.

Enacted into law in 2020, the Built to Learn (BTL) Act became effective on February 12, 2021. The BTL Act allows the Maryland Stadium Authority (MSA) to issue revenue bonds to fund school construction projects and provides for management of the projects by MSA. Charles County Public Schools received \$25,355,517 (1.25 %). MSA bonds were issued for three projects: J. P. Ryon Elementary School for a 9,000 square foot addition of four kindergarten classrooms and one pre-K classroom, Malcolm Elementary School for a 7,200 square foot addition of four kindergarten classrooms and an activity area for 88 students along with a renovation of 2,070 square feet of two classrooms to allow circulation to the addition. Additionally, CCPS will be adding capacity in the new fire/sprinkler tank and adding sprinklers to the entire building. Maurice J. McDonough High School is a renovation/addition project consisting of 12,927 square feet of new addition and 35,161 square feet of renovation. The La Plata HS Phase I renovation has received IAC approval but has not yet been approved by MSA.

The Capital Grant Program for Local School Systems with Significant Enrollment Growth and Relocatable Classrooms (EGRC) are distributed proportionally, based on local school systems with significant enrollment growth or relocatable classrooms. In FY2023, Governor Hogan increased funds for EGRC to \$36.5 million and CCPS received \$1’616’. This is the first time CCPS has qualified for this funding source.

Affordable Housing

The Planning Division, in cooperation with the American Planning Association’s Community Planning Assistance Team, completed a housing study titled, *Charles County Housing Initiative Project: Inclusion, Affordability, and Diversity Charles County, Maryland Final Report, May 2018*⁷ that provided several recommendations to facilitate the implementation of affordable housing in Charles County. According to the study, the County will need 1,823 additional affordable housing units serving households earning between 30 percent and 80 percent of the area median income by the year 2025, or 228 units per year for each of the next eight years. Figure 15 below shows the number of affordable housing units that were approved in 2023.

Figure 15: Affordable Housing Units Approved in 2023

Development Name	Total Number of New Units	Target Income %AMI	Rental or Owner-Occupied	Incentive Program
Wakefield Terrace – St. Charles (completed remodel of new affordable units)	67	<80%	Rental	LIHTC/Pilot
Magnolia Gardens – La Plata (under construction)	65	<80%	Rental	LIHTC/Pilot
Waldorf Station – Waldorf (SDP approved)	31	<80%	Rental	Development Agreement
Total	163			

Article XV of the Charles County Zoning Regulations outlines Moderately Priced Dwelling requirements, otherwise known as “inclusionary zoning” that would require developers to provide a certain percentage of affordable units in any residential development of a certain size. The 2016 Charles County Comprehensive Plan recommends this portion of the code be changed to a mandatory instead of voluntary program, but as of the writing of this report the program is still voluntary.

In 2023 an Affordable Housing Workgroup was formed comprising Planning & Growth Management staff as well as members of the Planning Commission. This group met eight times during the year to discuss policy recommendations for providing affordable housing⁸ across the County in line with Board of County Commissioner priorities as well as Governor Moore’s legislative priorities to Make Maryland More Affordable. The preliminary findings from the task force confirmed that the county has fallen far short of the levels of affordable housing required to meet the county’s anticipated demand as identified in the above report. According to available records, only 385 units have been developed by the end of 2023 as opposed to the 1,368 units the report projected would have been required at that point. In 2024 it is expected that the workgroup will seek public input to inform recommendations to the Charles County Board of Commissioners on policies to encourage affordable housing development. The recommendations to the County Commissioners will be further coordinated and vetted during the public engagement process for the comprehensive plan update that will take place by the end of 2026.

⁷ https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/publication/download_pdf/CPAT-Charles-County-Maryland-final-report.pdf

⁸ HUD defines housing as affordable to a household when it costs up to 30 percent of the household’s gross income.

Growth Trends

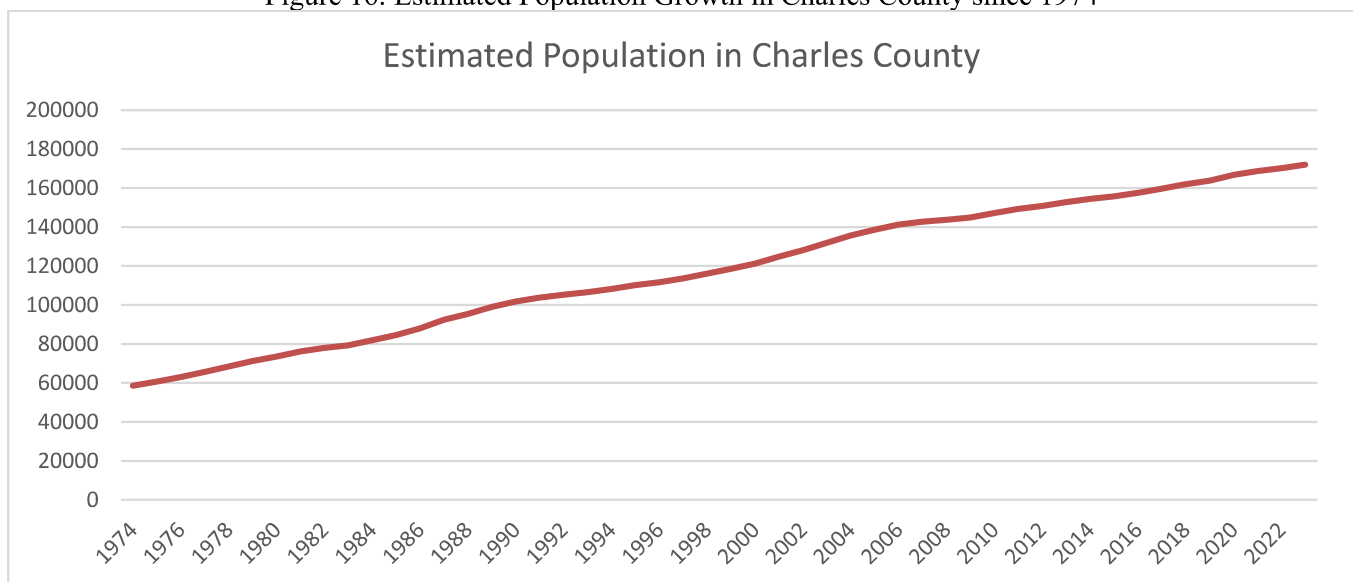
In order to understand growth trends in Charles County, it is important to consider that there are a number of factors that come into play. Charles County is part of the growing Washington DC Metropolitan region; and market conditions in this region affect how the County grows. These market desires for housing type and economic conditions greatly impact what type of development occurs and when.

While market conditions will always play a role, growth is also affected by current policies and regulations that are in place. In 2012, as part of the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act, a Tier Map was adopted countywide that restricts growth in the rural areas of the county to minor subdivisions. In 2016, the Comprehensive Plan was updated, which now calls for a target growth rate of approximately one percent, or less, per year. The years since the 2016 plan was adopted, the growth rates have been mostly on target with the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. There was a slight increase in growth rates in 2020 and 2021, which may be attributable to pandemic-related housing market trends, but growth between 2021 and 2022 slowed to less than 1%.

When considering growth in Charles County, and especially in the Development District, St. Charles accounts for a significant portion of development approvals. The Zoning Indenture known as Docket #90 authorized the Planned Unit Development (PUD) of St. Charles. Through village master plans, St. Charles is allowed to build more than 20,000 total units including single-family homes, townhouses, and apartments. In 2023, final plat approvals in the St. Charles PUD accounted for 64 percent of the final plats approved inside the PFA, and 61 percent of the total final plat approvals.

According to Figure 16 below, the population of Charles County is steadily increasing. While it may appear on the surface that the County is growing rapidly, the average annual rate of growth has decreased over the last several decades. Between 1970 and 1980, the growth rate was 4.32 percent. The growth rate between 1980 and 1990 decreased to 3.35 percent. Between 1990 and 2000, the growth rate dropped again to 1.8 percent, but did not change much between 2000 and 2010 at 2 percent. The population growth rate between 2014 and 2023 was 1.2 percent, which is a reduction of more than 3 percent since the decade between 1970 and 1980. The current population growth rate of 1.1% is generally on target with the 2016 Comprehensive Plan.

Figure 16: Estimated Population Growth in Charles County since 1974



Source: U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates

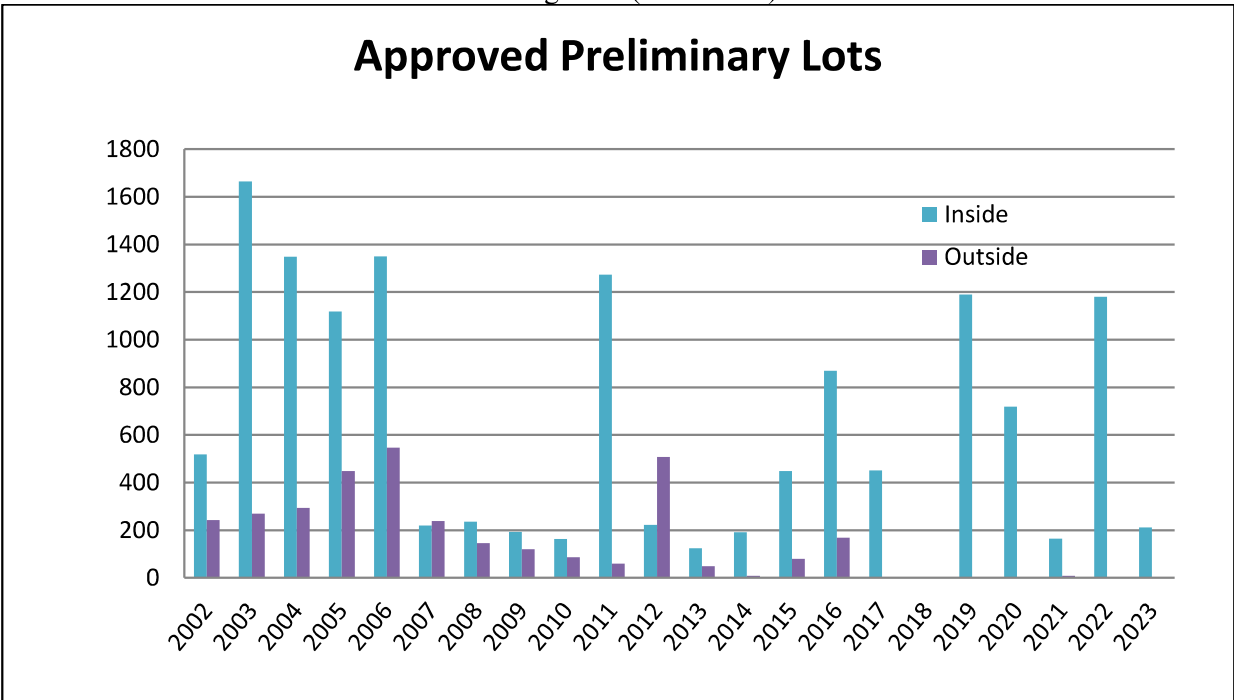
While population is one way to look at growth, there are other factors to consider that will have a direct effect on growth such as the approval of preliminary subdivision plans, final subdivision plats, and building permits. It should be noted, however, that preliminary subdivision plans should only be considered as an indicator of potential growth as they may not be built for several years, and some preliminary plans are voided before moving to the final plat stage. The recordation of final plat lots and the issuance of building permits signifies actual growth. Trends for each of these will be considered in the following pages.

Preliminary Subdivision Plans

Preliminary subdivision plans are required for projects with more than seven (7) proposed lots. As noted previously, preliminary plans that are approved can take years to be built, or they may be voided for a number of reasons. Therefore, while it is important to consider preliminary plan trends for forecasting purposes, final plats and building permits provide a more accurate picture of development in Charles County.

Figure 17 below indicates some clear trends in preliminary plans over the last twenty years, one of which is the ongoing diminishment in the number of planned subdivision lots outside of the Priority Funding Area. The number of annual preliminary plat lots has been inconsistent since the start of the mortgage and financial crisis in 2007, but the number of lots outside the PFA has steadily decreased over the same time span (except for the outlier of 2012). It should also be noted that there was an increase in preliminary lot approvals in 2016 as the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 required that preliminary plans in the pipeline be approved by October 1, 2016 in order to be grandfathered. Further, with the adoption of the tier map in 2012, there have been fewer preliminary plans in general, especially in the rural areas. The number of preliminary lots approved in 2023 is significantly lower than in 2022, and somewhat of an outlier since all the lots were part of a single plan.

Figure 17: Approved Preliminary Lots Inside and Outside of the Development District (2002-2015) and Priority Funding Area (2016-2023)



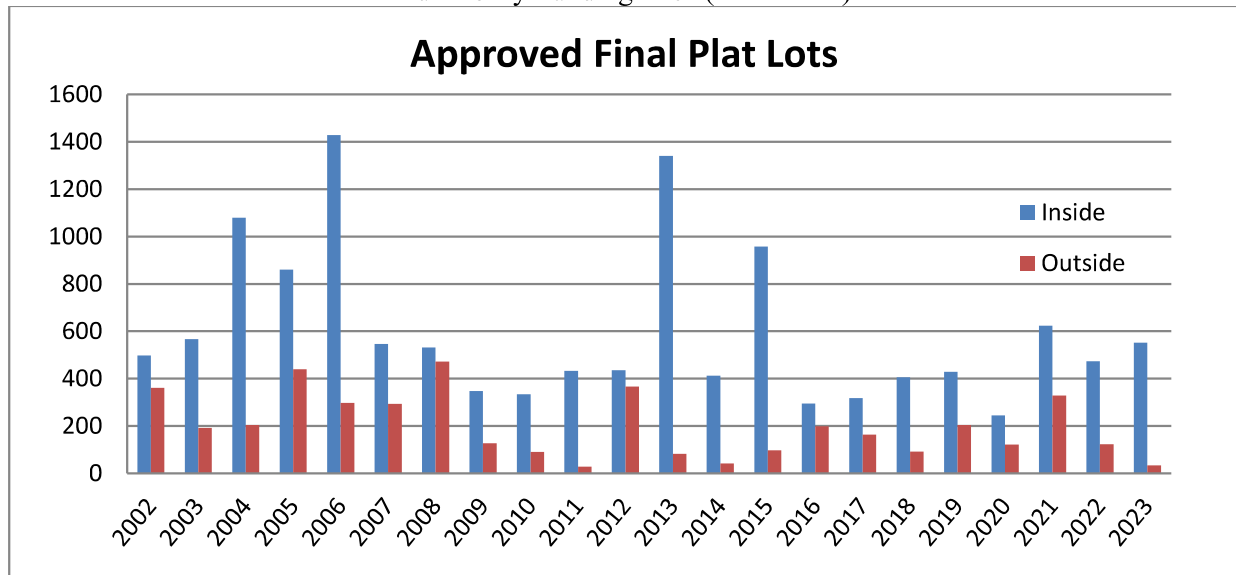
Source: Charles County Planning & Growth Management Department

Final Plats

In looking at trends for final plats in Charles County since 2002 in Figure 18 below, it should be noted that more final plat lots are being recorded inside of the Development District/Priority Funding Area than outside overall. With the exception of 2013 and 2015, the annual approvals of final plat lots have been subdued since the financial crisis that began in 2007/2008. It is noteworthy that the County Commissioners changed the policy on school allocations in 2016 and allowed for a small increase in recorded lots in 2016 and 2017. Since each lot/unit that is receiving a school allocation is required to be recorded in the land records, the increase in available school allocations allowed for some increase in recorded lots in districts that had available capacity at receiving schools.

Even with the recent increase in interest rates final plat lot approvals should be steady over the next few years within the Priority Funding Area as the approved preliminary subdivisions of the last few years are developed. However, as the St. Charles PUD continues to build out, the pipeline of large subdivisions with final plats to approve will begin to dry up and it's unclear whether the steady increase in annual lots will continue much longer.

Figure 18: Number of Final Plat Lots Approved Inside and Outside of the Development District (2002-2015) and Priority Funding Area (2016-2023)⁹



Source: Charles County Planning & Growth Management Department

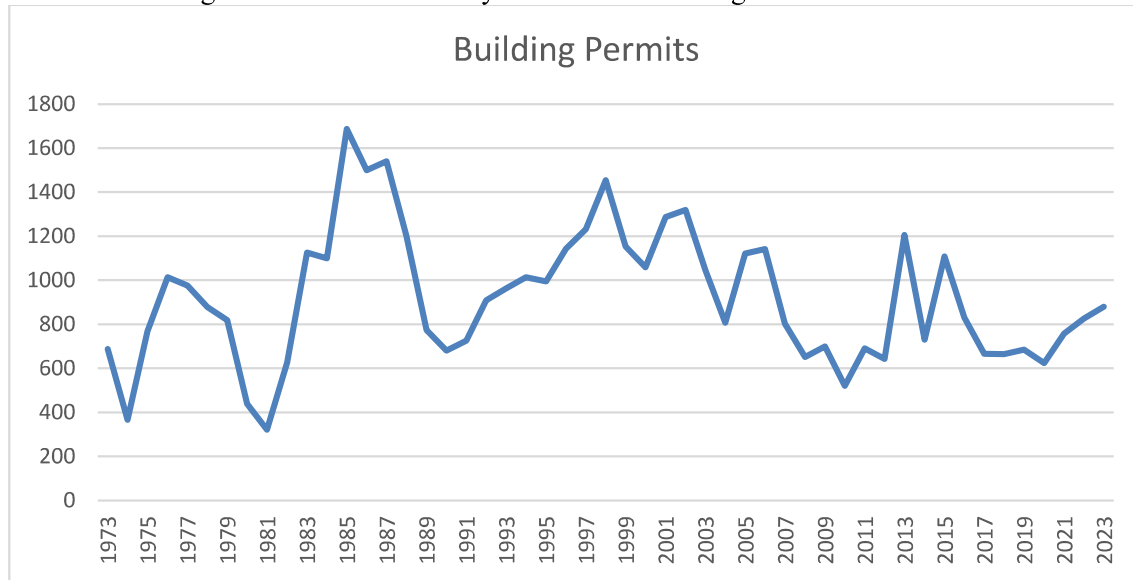
Building Permits

Building permit data is very important to track as it represents actual development that may have been in process for many years. Figure 18 below shows the distribution of building permits over the last 51 years. Between 1981 and 1986 there was a significant building boom in the county, with 1985 being the year with the highest number of building permit approvals since 1969 at almost 1,700 permits. The fifty-year building permit average is 923 permits per year. However, the average number of residential building permits approved in the last ten years is 777.

⁹ Final plat lot numbers in Figure 18 include apartment and multi-family (duplex, triplex, quadriplex) units, if applicable. Apartment units are not counted as individual lots on final plats; therefore, this information was extracted from building permit data and added to the appropriate plat year. In 2022, there were no building permits approved for apartment units.

An analysis of building permits since 1973 shows that the average annual growth rate over this 50-year period is 2.73 percent. This growth rate is understandable when considering that there were several years since 1973 where more than 1,000 building permits were approved, especially during the 1980's. However, the average annual growth rate for building permits over the last ten years between 2014 and 2023 is 1.33 percent. Further, the annual growth rate for building permits for 2023 is 1.43 percent.

Figure 19: Charles County Residential Building Permits since 1973



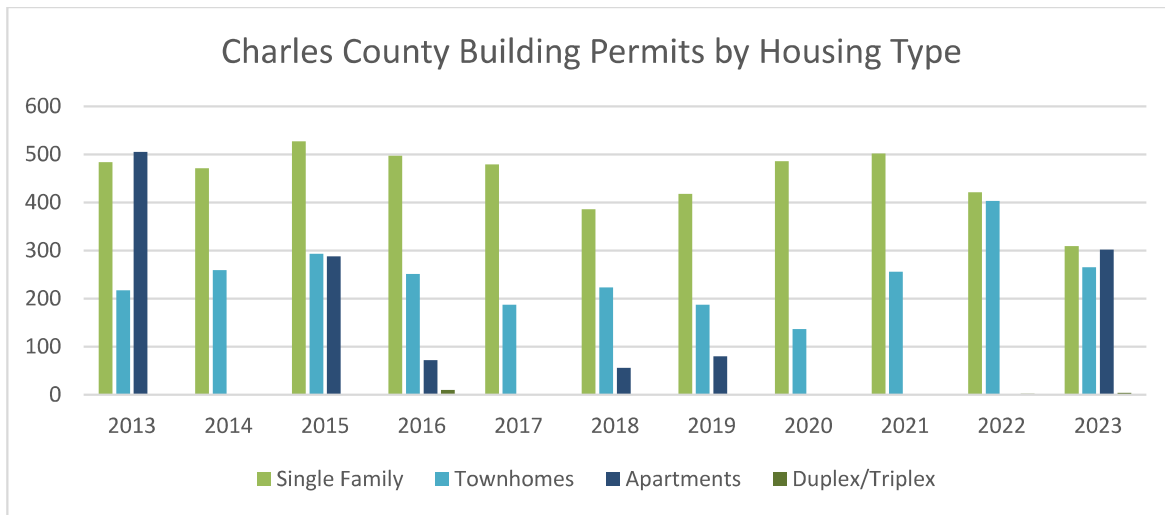
Source: Charles County Planning & Growth Management Department

Figure 20 below shows the ten-year trend for Charles County residential building permits. Similarly, Figure 20 below shows the distribution of building permits by housing type since 2013. Single-family dwellings and townhome approvals have been fairly consistent over the last ten years. Apartment approvals have increased when there is a market demand for this housing type. There has not been a huge market-driven demand for duplex/triplex/quadruplex units in general.

Figure 20: Charles County Residential Building Permits

	SFD's	Townhomes	Apartments	Duplex/Triplex/ Quadruplex	Total
2013	484	217	505	0	1,206
2014	471	259	0	0	730
2015	527	293	288	0	1,108
2016	497	251	72	10	830
2017	479	187	0	0	666
2018	386	223	56	0	665
2019	418	187	80	0	685
2020	486	137	0	0	623
2021	502	256	0	0	758
2022	421	403	0	2	826
2023	309	265	302	4	880
Total	4,980	2,678	1,303	16	8,977

Figure 21: Charles County
Residential Building Permits by Housing Types

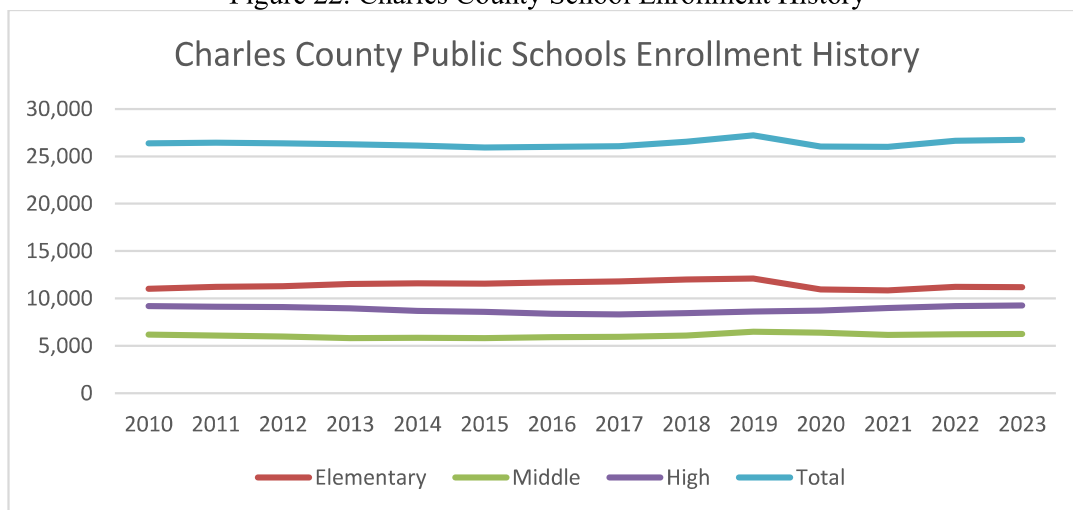


Source: Charles County Planning & Growth Management Department

School Enrollment

A key indicator of the impact of residential growth on public facilities is the effect on student population in the public schools. This indicator is a good way to measure how the increase in residential dwelling units translates into a secondary impact on the services provided by the state and local governments. Since 2012, Charles County has experienced an 18 percent increase in residential dwelling units. However, the overall growth in the public school population has been relatively flat according to Figure 22 below. Total elementary, middle, and high school enrollment in 2014 was 26,132 students versus a total enrollment of 26,731 in 2023 equating to approximately 2.29 percent growth in enrollment over 10 years, or 0.23% average growth annually. It can be expected that the general increase in population at the elementary school level will move on to the middle and high school levels, but the general lack of overall growth in total school enrollment over the last 10 years is noteworthy.

Figure 22: Charles County School Enrollment History

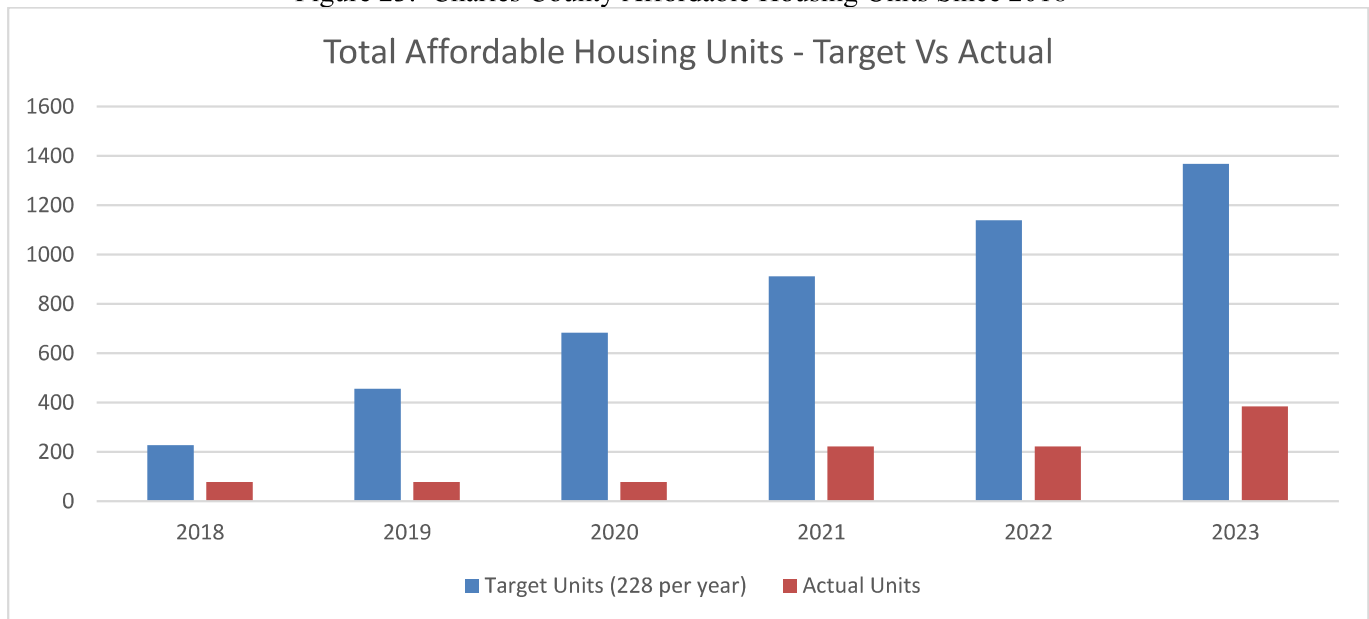


Source: Charles County Public Schools

Affordable Housing

Starting in 2018 Planning staff has tracked affordable housing development in Charles County. Figure 23 below highlights the progress that has been made to the overall goal of 1823 affordable housing units. In six years Charles County has seen a total of 385 affordable housing units reach an advanced stage of development, all of which took advantage of the LIHTC program for rental housing. No housing has been specifically developed for fee-simple purchase by lower income homeowners. An average 64 new units of affordable housing have come online annually since 2018, which is below the target of 228 annual units developed as part of the 2018 housing study.

Figure 23: Charles County Affordable Housing Units Since 2018



Source: Charles County Planning & Growth Management Department

What does this all mean?

When looking at growth in Charles County, there are multiple indicators to consider. Previous Planning Commission Annual Reports have calculated the average annual growth rate strictly on population estimates provided by the Census Bureau. The Comprehensive Plan also calculates the average annual growth rate based on Census estimated population data. When the Census Bureau updates their population estimates, they use current data on deaths, births, and migration. Staff also considers actual residential development approvals, and specifically building permits, as a way of considering the average annual rate of growth. Unlike population data, building permit approvals reflect actual development on the ground, which is a direct result of economic market conditions, as well as current policies and regulations that are in place. The annual growth rate for population for 2023 is 1.1 percent. In comparison, when using cumulative building permit data, the average annual growth rate is 1.43 percent.

It is important to note that building permit data does not include information on the number of persons per household. According to Census 2020, the number of persons per household is 2.79. While building permit data does not capture how many people will be living in new households that are built in the county, this is a more accurate way to capture actual residential growth in Charles County in any given year, which is also driven by economic market trends, as well as current policies and regulations. Further, it is important to point out that school enrollment figures have remained relatively constant at just over two percent growth over 10 years, and this trend is expected to continue.

Due to the significant changes made by the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, including downzoning measures to protect the County’s natural resources, and increasing the size of the Priority Preservation Areas, it is anticipated that the rate of growth will remain near 1 percent for the foreseeable future. Data from final plats, building permits, and school enrollment provide a more accurate indication of growth and development trends. These measures would appear to reflect a steady or low rate of growth.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Due to the significant changes made in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, and the fact that 65 percent of the County is mapped as Tier IV and limited to minor subdivisions, it is anticipated that the growth rate will remain near a 1 percent or less per year. Further, growth control mechanisms, especially zoning, water and sewer policies, and adequate public facility regulations, will likely continue to result in at least 70 to 75 percent of new growth occurring in the Development District and the incorporated towns.

Consistency with Comprehensive Plan

One of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan goals is to direct 75 percent of future residential growth to the Development District and to the Towns of Indian Head and La Plata as these areas will provide infrastructure to support growth, including water and sewer, schools and roads. As noted previously, the 2016 Comprehensive Plan reduced the size of the Development District from 52,200 acres to 22,189 acres for a total reduction of 30,011 acres. Figure 24 below demonstrates how Charles County’s development activity is generally consistent with the 2016 Comprehensive Plan goals.

Figure 24: Development Consistency with Comprehensive Plan Goals

	Comprehensive Plan Goals	2023	5-Year Average	10-Year Average
% Preliminary Plan Lots Inside PFA:	75%	100%	99.6%	95%
% Final Plat Lots Inside PFA:	75%	94%	74%	77%
Housing: Single Family	80%	35%	57%	56%
Housing: Townhomes	15%	30%	33%	30%
Housing: Apartments	5%	34%	10%	10%

In 2023, 100 percent of preliminary plan lots were located in the Priority Funding Area. An analysis of preliminary plan lots inside the Development District/PFA from 2014 through 2023 demonstrates that the County is exceeding Comprehensive Plan goals, averaging 95 percent over the ten-year period.

In 2023, 94 percent of the final plat lots were located inside the PFA. Further, an analysis of final plat lots inside the Development District/PFA from 2014 through 2023 demonstrates that the County is consistent with Comprehensive Plan goals, averaging 77 percent over the ten-year period.

The 2016 Comprehensive Plan identifies a goal for housing mix of approximately 80 percent single-family detached units, 15 percent townhouses and condominiums, and 5 percent apartments. Therefore, using building permit data for 2023 as an indicator, the County continues to exceed the goal for townhouses and while coming in below the goal for single-family dwellings. While 2022 saw zero apartment permit approvals 2023 numbers exceeded Comprehensive Plan goals thanks to the long-planned Waldorf Station multi-family development. It is expected

that apartment numbers should achieve a higher share of permit approvals in the coming years as the County continues to promote higher density residential development along the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor.

Per the state Smart, Green and Growing legislation, jurisdictions are to establish a goal toward increasing the percentage of growth within their PFAs while decreasing the percentage of growth outside. Priority Funding Areas are existing communities and places where State and local governments want to target their efforts to encourage and support economic development and new growth. Further, these locations are also where local governments want State investment to support future growth. The 2023 Annual Report map in the appendix includes the Priority Funding Areas.

The current growth policy of Charles County is aligned with the principles of the State legislation by encouraging, as a matter of policy, the majority of development into the Development District and the PFAs. Charles County has been supporting smart growth as a policy and concept as reflected in the Planned Unit Development (PUD) of St. Charles Communities for well over three decades. Additionally, the County is committed to having 50 percent of its overall acreage in open space. A large Priority Preservation Area has been established with an aggressive goal of preserving 80 percent of the remaining undeveloped land within these areas. The County's commitment to land preservation has resulted in over 1,000 acres protected annually since 2016, including the more than 1,200 net acres preserved in 2023.

Currently, the trend lines indicate development is within the level of tolerance. The County is currently preparing to begin the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan which was last approved in 2016. While overall development targets are in line with the existing plan it is anticipated that the new plan will focus on affordable housing and how to increase the number of housing units and types available in order to bring down overall prices. Additional supply coupled with anticipated changes to County policies and regulations by the Affordable Housing Workgroup could bring about changes in the development trends of the past decade in Charles County. It will be important to collect and track data related to affordable housing construction and include a housing element in the upcoming Comprehensive Plan update.

The Planning Commission is prepared to work collaboratively with the County Commissioners to review the Annual Report and to maintain a flow of information to inform future planning and land use decisions.

Appendix

- 1) Development Activity Map with Priority Funding Areas
- 2) Land Use Map from the Comprehensive Plan
- 3) Protected Lands Map
- 4) Tier Map
- 5) Priority Preservation Areas Map

IMPORTANT PLEASE NOTE: All publications located within the Planning and Growth Management section of the web site are believed to be accurate as of their posting date. However, they may not be accurate on the day you view them. To verify whether these documents are the most current official document, please contact the division associated with the document in question.

PLANNING COMMISSION OF CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND

BE IT RESOLVED, this 5th day of August 2024, by the Planning Commission of Charles County that the document consisting of text, maps, and charts, entitled “2023 Planning Commission Annual Report” and dated August 2024, is hereby adopted in accordance with the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

Kevin B. Wedding
Kevin B. Wedding (Aug 6, 2024 11:30 EDT)

Kevin Wedding, Chairman

ATTEST:

Amy Brachett

Amy Brackett, Clerk

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



CHARLES COUNTY
MARYLAND

LEGEND

- Development District
- Residential
- Watershed Conservation District
- Employment & Industrial Park Districts
- Commercial & Business Districts
- Mixed Use Districts
- Redevelopment District
- Suburban Large Lot District
- Rural Residential
- Agriculture Conservation District
- Rural Conservation District
- Incorporated Towns
- Incorporated Town Growth Areas
- Transit Corridor
- Protected Lands
- Major Stream Valleys
- Military or Federally Owned Lands
- Chesapeake Bay Critical Area

Villages

- Residential
- Commercial
- Mixed Residential & Commercial
- > 150 Acres
- 50 - 100 Acres
- < 50 Acres

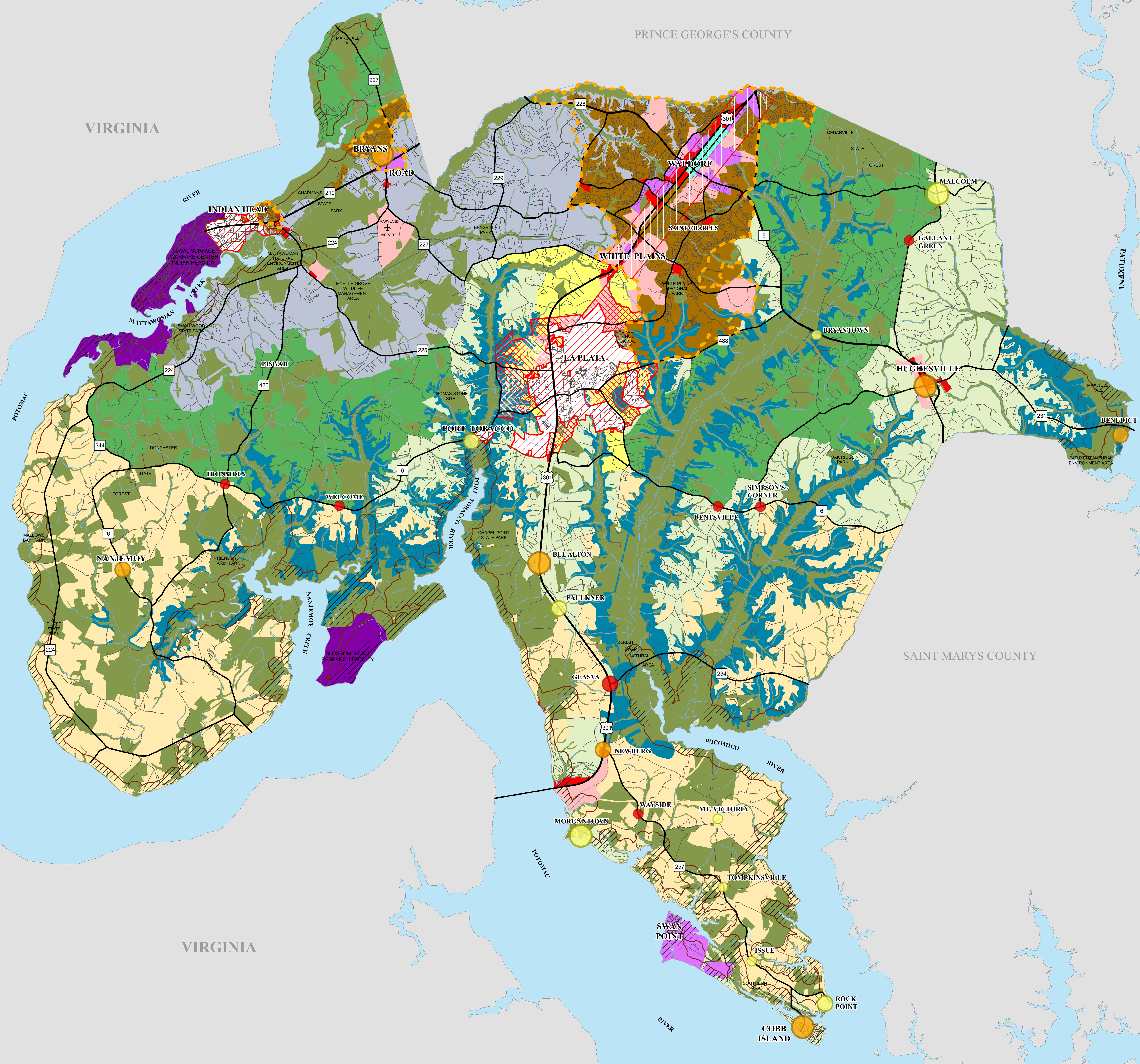
LAND USE PLAN

OCTOBER 19, 2021



CHARLES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

0 1 2 Miles



VIRGINIA

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

CALVERT
COUNTY

RIVER

INDIAN HEAD

BRYANS ROAD

WALDORF

WHITE PLAINS

BRYANTOWN

HUGHESVILLE

BENEDICT

POTOMAC

MATTWOMAN CREEK

PATENT RIVER

POTOMAC RIVER

PORT TOBACCO

BELALTON

DENTSVILLE

NANJEMOY

WELCOME

NANJEMOY CREEK

SAINT MARY'S
COUNTY

VIRGINIA

POTOMAC

WICOMCO RIVER

SWAN POINT

COBB ISLAND

RIVER

LEGEND

- MD AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION DISTRICT (5 YEARS)
- FEDERAL PROPERTIES
- STATE OWNED RESOURCE LANDS
- STATE / FEDERAL EASEMENT
- MD AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION EASEMENT (MALPF)
- MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST (MHT)
- MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST (MET)
- RURAL LEGACY
- TRANSFERRABLE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR)
- COUNTY PARKS
- TOWN PARKS
- THE NATURE CONSERVANCY
- CONSERVANCY FOR CHARLES COUNTY (CCC)
- JOINT MET / CCC
- FOREST CONSERVATION EASEMENTS
- RESOURCE PROTECTION ZONE
- DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS (2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN)
- RURAL LEGACY PROGRAM AREAS

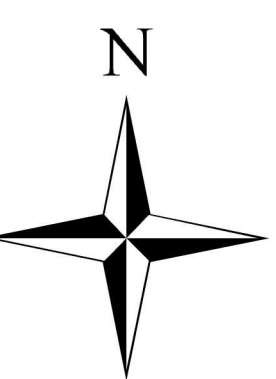
Category	Type	Total Acres
Regulatory *	Resource Protection zone (RPZ)	25,595
	Forest Conservation Easements	9,936
	Stream buffers in Critical Area	612
Federal State	Federal	1,674
	State Owned Resource Lands	21,913
	State Owned Easements	3,657
	Maryland Agricultural Land	0
	Preservation Easements (MALPF)	15,043
	Maryland Historical Trust (MHT)	257
	Maryland Environmental Trust (MET)	5,604
	Rural Legacy Easement Properties	6,105
Local	Transferable Development Rights (TDR)	7,532
	County Parks	3,246
	Town Parks	191
	Nature Conservancy	2,677
Other	Conservancy for Charles County (CCC)	342
	Joint MET and CCC Properties	1,501
TOTAL		105,885

NOTE: Acres protected represent the best available data for the number of acres under protection in each respective category through December 2022. Some categories are subject to change as better technology and data become available to quantify lands protected through regulation.
* The resource protection zone, forest conservation easements, and stream buffers in the Critical Area have been reduced by the amount of overlap with other categories of protected lands. For forest conservation easements, an overlap of 10% for on-site easements and 90% for off-site easements has been deducted from the total acreage. For all other categories, overlap was assessed through GIS mapping.

2024

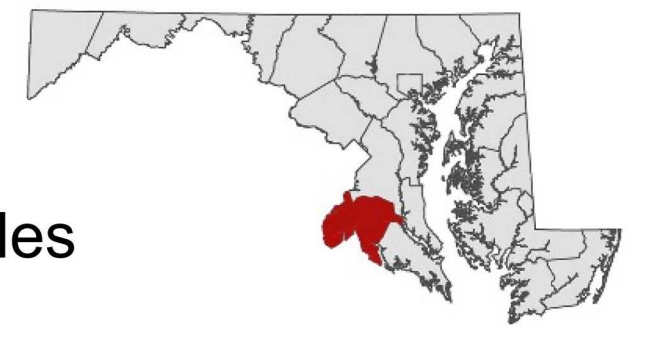
PROTECTED LANDS MAP

CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND

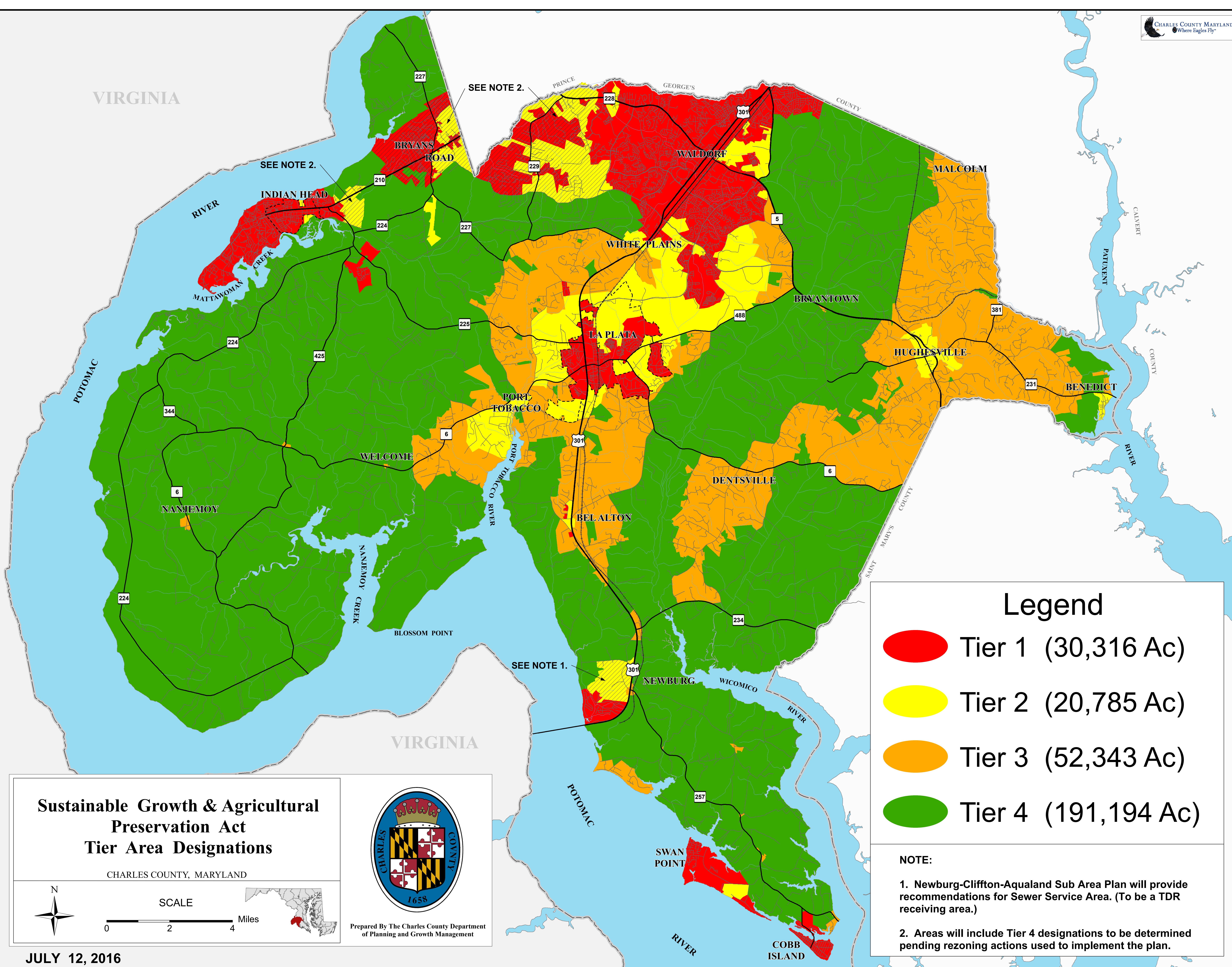


SCALE

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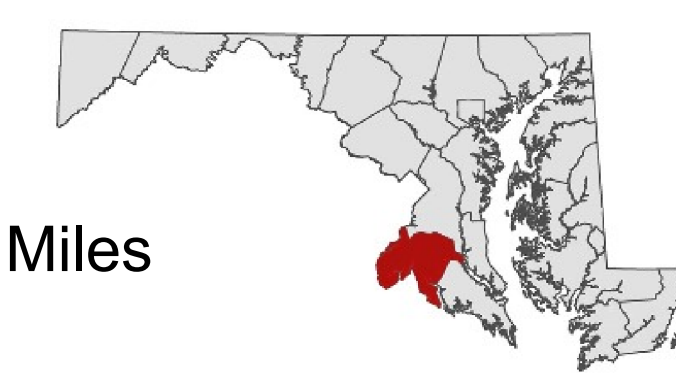
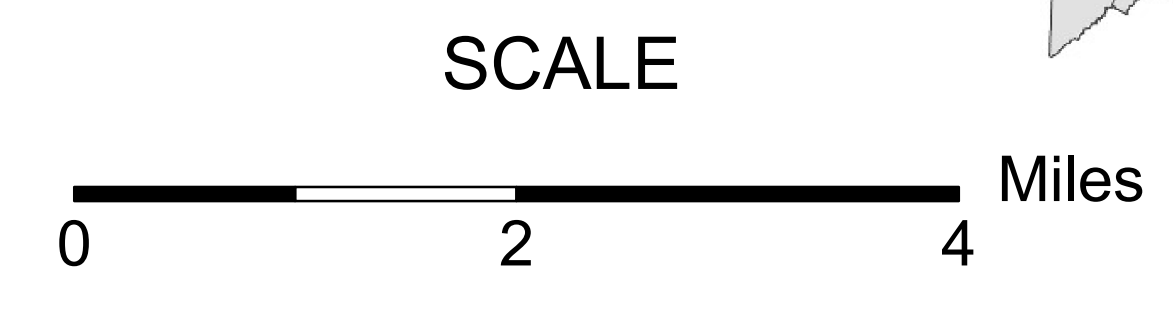
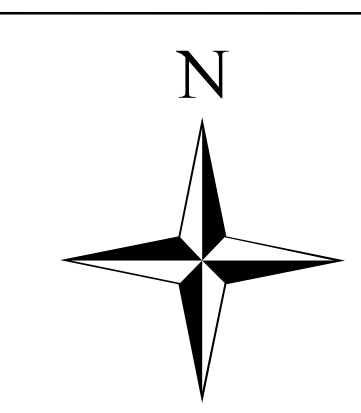


Prepared By Department of Planning
and Growth Management



**Sustainable Growth & Agricultural Preservation Act
Tier Area Designations**

CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND



Prepared By The Charles County Department of Planning and Growth Management

JULY 12, 2016

PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREAS

