
COMMUNITY SERVICES

To achieve a sustainable society, we should provide equitable access to all community services such as safety from perils, superior educational, recreational and health services, and adequate public infrastructure including water, sewer and transportation.



PUBLIC EDUCATION

Policy Framework

The world our children will inherit is facing major environmental, economic, political, and social challenges. Scientific and technological advances on a global scale have accelerated the rate of change affecting future generations. Regardless of class, ethnicity, language, or ability, all of our children will need to be prepared for success in the future.

Quality schools are fundamental in preparing future generations of county residents for full and productive lives. Schools are the focal point and a vital asset in the community. The location and function of public schools has an important role in forming stable, vibrant, sustainable communities. Maryland Smart Growth Principles, including walkability, cycling, reducing costs on new infrastructure, improving student health and safety, promoting social equity, and enhancing community cohesion have meaningful implications for school location and size.

The Baltimore County Public School system (BCPS) is the third largest in Maryland. Approximately 104,000 students are enrolled in 173 schools, centers, and programs. Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) are diverse in student population. Over the past ten years, the minority population grew from 13 percent to 52 percent of the total student population. Students served by the Free and Reduced Meals program increased from 10 percent to 40 percent. The percent share of students in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program rose from 1.4 percent to 3.2 percent. BCPS employs 17,000 faculty and staff members including 8,850 classroom teachers. Every year, BCPS graduates over 7,400 students, and about sixty-three percent of them pursue higher education directly.

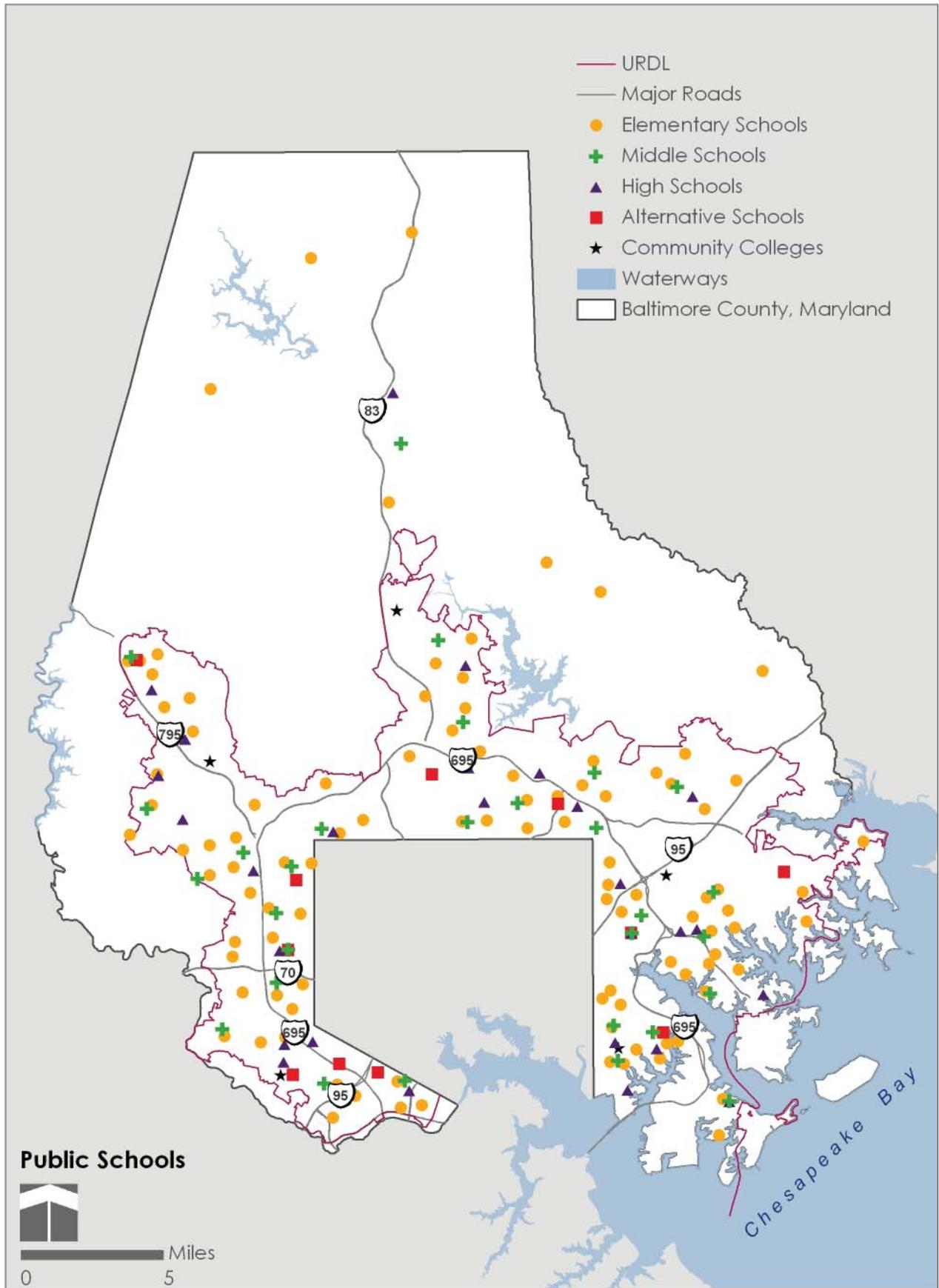
The BCPS *Blueprint for Progress* is built on a foundation of clear standards, quality instruction, and individual accountability. The County's public schools are committed to providing a quality education that develops knowledge, skills and positive attitudes so that each student may reach his or her maximum potential. The *Blueprint for Progress* complies with the Maryland Bridge to Excellence Act and serves as the framework for the Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP). The *Blueprint for Progress* also sets forth a number of performance goals with specific indicators for each goal, measuring student achievement and defining school system accountability for achievement. The *Blueprint for Progress* is updated periodically to incorporate new requirements and to make adjustments based on the system's progress.

The goals of Baltimore County Public Schools are: improving achievement for all students, maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment in every school, and using resources effectively and efficiently. A component of a quality educational experience includes providing resources to ensure schools are adequate for instructional purposes. The County must balance the needs between new school construction and the renovation of existing schools when providing adequate facilities to mitigate overcrowding, provide support for current program needs, and prepare school facilities for multiple and adaptive uses in communities. New school construction, to the extent possible, should occur within the Urban Rural Demarcation Line (URDL).

The efficient and appropriate allocation and use of classroom space is one of the greatest challenges facing public school systems nationwide. Each year, BCPS reviews capacities and enrollments to monitor and address facility needs at each school. It is critical to assess new growth and neighborhood turnover to balance expenditures. In accordance with state models and guidelines for growth management, school construction dollars focus on additions and renovations to existing schools within the Priority Funding Area (PFA) (closely corresponding to the URDL) including growth areas featuring higher density, mixed use development. New school construction shall also occur in the PFA. Decisions by the BCPS concerning renovation, expansion, or replacement of aging schools are based upon feasibility studies that ensure school buildings are safe, functional, and meet contemporary program requirements.

The plans for renovations, additions or new construction included in the EFMP should be consistent with *Master Plan 2020*. BCPS updates the EFMP annually to determine school facility needs and outline educational program policies for quality of education and community services. The Master Plan identifies the scope of issues and articulates policies in connection with public education to provide the guidance to the County Council in adopting land use strategies. *Master Plan 2020* likewise endorses a continued collaboration between the public school system and local government aimed at both school

Map 28: Public Schools



facilities planning and the County’s development and planning process.

Policy: Improve achievement for all students through continued development and implementation of the Blueprint for Progress.

Actions:

- (1) Include the vision, mission, belief statements, and performance goals of the *Blueprint for Progress* in the annual EFMP.
- (2) Provide effective instructional programs to enable all students to reach high academic standards in English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.
- (3) Strengthen public partnerships for education involving principals, teachers, staff, community stakeholders, parents, or guardians in educational and decision-making processes.

Policy: Use resources effectively and efficiently for renovation, addition, or construction.

Actions:

- (1) Coordinate with the public and private sectors to provide accurate data as the basis for short-term and long-term enrollment projections.
- (2) Maintain the accuracy in the long-range enrollment projections within 5% of those generated by the Maryland Department of Planning.
- (3) Fund the capital program to deal with critical infrastructure in schools, including Green renovation of facilities.
- (4) Improve the learning environment through the expansion of educational enhancement into all school renovation projects.
- (5) Support the Operations Preventative Maintenance Program along with the

implementation of the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan.

(6) Continue to align the Capital Improvement Program with the distribution of instructional programs.

(7) Continue to collaborate with the County Office of Planning to evaluate potential capacity issues and develop relevant solutions and adjustments.

(8) Establish a phased renovation plan to bring schools into compliance with applicable accessibility codes.

(9) Cooperate with the County agencies to examine policies regarding the template for new school sites in the site bank inventory.

Policy: Encourage community activities using public school buildings.

Actions:

- (1) Continue to expand the use of school buildings to serve as community centers for activities for residents from diverse backgrounds.
- (2) Foster positive links between public schools and communities.

The BCPS’ Site Bank Inventory is a collection of properties throughout Baltimore County co-owned by the Board of Education and Baltimore County Parks and Recreation. Since 1952, a Joint Use Agreement has facilitated the co-funding, co-use, and co-ownership of school sites. BCPS currently has 13 sites totaling 332.01 acres in the Site Bank. These are legacy sites holding the potential for future schools in areas of need. In regards to site holdings that are no longer viable as future school sites, BCPS seeks to exchange such “leverage” sites for more opportune sites that are capable of sustaining future schools in areas of future growth and need. All site purchases are approved and aligned through the BCPS and the County’s capital improvement process. Sites must meet state approval through the Interagency Committee for Public School Construction prior to use as a school site. Since many key sites in the Site Bank have transitioned to successful school facilities, the need to replenish the Site Bank emerges as a priority.

(3) Encourage community participation in decision-making in relation to the use of school buildings to ensure responsiveness to community needs.

(4) Explore viable shared-use and co-location opportunities among schools and agencies for the provision of services to schools and communities.

(3) Build on the initiative by the Baltimore County Manufacturing Training Consortium to recruit students for manufacturing careers and ensure that they are academically prepared for the positions available within the local manufacturing industry.

(4) Support regional workforce development initiatives and public/private partnerships to improve the regional workforce

Providing Workforce Development

An educated work force is essential for the success of economic and community conservation goals. Gainfully employed individuals contribute significantly to the tax base and the maintenance of their homes and communities. The skill level of the local work force is sometimes the critical factor in a company's decision to locate or remain in a certain area. Baltimore County businesses report that the quality and availability of labor are among their top concerns. Workforce education begins at the earliest stages and is based on a strong system of public education. Baltimore County provides numerous programs that address workforce education.

Policy: Continue to strengthen ties between business and educational institutions at all levels to bring about a coordinated system of basic and career education, training, and retraining for all parts of the work force. Encourage the joint development of specific internship and work-study programs by businesses and schools.

Actions:

(1) Coordinate education tracks with the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) on general education, basic skills instruction, arts and science courses, career education, employment skills training, and enrichment courses.

(2) Continue to incorporate the services provided by the Baltimore County Office of Employment and Training (OET) to provide county residents opportunities for job enhancement.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND HEALTH

A community depends on a safe and healthy environment to be sustainable. Threats from criminal activity, accidents, natural disasters, disease outbreaks, and terrorist attacks all require a strong and coordinated response by government, businesses and citizens. The Baltimore County Police Department, Fire Department, and Volunteer Firemen's Association and its member volunteer companies, work collaboratively with the Baltimore County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management to provide an appropriate, effective, coordinated response during emergencies. Other County agencies may



assist in these events, including the departments of Health, Public Works, Environmental Protection and Resource Management and Permits and Development Management. Public and environmental health is also protected through the routine inspection services performed by the County (food service facilities, public swimming pools, etc.). Assurance of public safety and health remains the highest priority for the Baltimore County Government.

The County will continue crime, fire and health emergency prevention strategies through local public participation efforts, educational awareness campaigns, and information exchange on a local and regional basis. Even with the county's prevention strategy, public safety emergencies will continue to occur. Furthermore, efficient, timely and coordinated responses to emergency events by appropriate government agencies will be ensured through improved communication, training, and continuous monitoring and evaluation of emergency response systems.

Law Enforcement

A combination of efforts is needed to fight crime, including local and regional cooperation on improvements to communication and information analysis and exchange. These efforts are greatly aided by the latest technology that can allow for faster responses to events and quicker analysis of crime trends.

The Department is committed to maintaining the partnership with Baltimore County Public Schools, helping to ensure a safe environment for students, faculty and staff, and providing positive role models for youth. Through a mentoring program, police officers can guide youth, supporting them, as they become responsible adults.

Additionally, traffic safety is an increasing concern. Every year, approximately 75 people are killed in traffic crashes in Baltimore County, many more than are killed in criminal incidents. Since vehicle miles

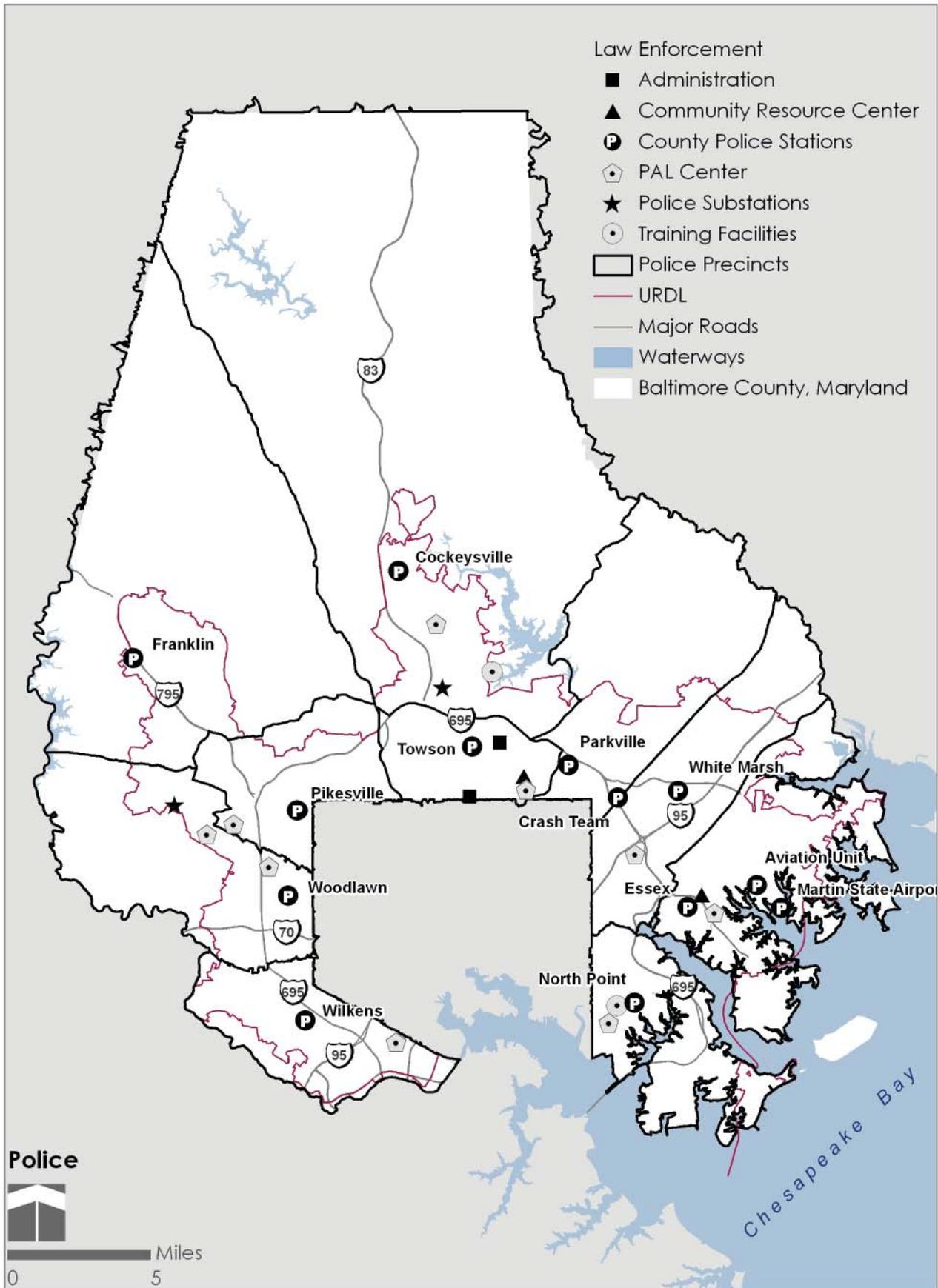
In order to provide and even higher level of Public Safety education that was already being delivered to

traveled (VMTs) are increasing at a rate far greater than the population, the Police Department needs to ensure that traffic safety is an organizational priority. The successful development of walkable communities and decrease in VMTs will help reduce the rate of vehicle accidents.

Policy: Prevent and reduce criminal activity through effective communication and cooperation on a local and regional basis, improved information compilation, analysis and assessment including use of the latest technology.

Actions:

- (1) Continue to work with first responders from across the region to improve interoperable communications, intelligence/information sharing, explosive device response capabilities, and equipping personnel with appropriate personal protective equipment and other specialized gear.
- (2) Create a Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) system to capture, store, analyze and effectively disseminate information reported by the public and agency members.
- (3) Strengthen existing partnerships, and initiate new collaborations among local, state, and federal entities to enhance regional incident response and recovery capabilities.
- (4) Identify critical infrastructure, key resources and other sensitive locations within Baltimore County and build mutually beneficial partnerships with stakeholders of these locations. Assist with vulnerability assessments and efforts to ensure protection and resiliency of these locations. Continue to expand the Automated Critical Asset Management System (ACAMS) critical infrastructure database to include operational response plans.
- (5) Gather and analyze timely, actionable intelligence and incident related information. Disseminate gathered information to the



appropriate individuals and/or agencies to best mitigate threats and risk while maintaining privacy, civil liberties and civil rights. Intelligence and information sharing infrastructure, systems and partnerships must continually be assessed to enhance performance in this area.

(6) Seek partnerships with government and private entities to expand responses to target areas, and promote a community-based approach.

(7) Continue to administer homeland security and emergency preparedness training and exercises.

(8) Continue to investigate improved technology in all areas of law enforcement.

(9) Continue to seek grant funding for needed equipment, training, and for assisting the private sector and non-profit organizations with target hardening (strengthening the security of a building to reduce the risk of attacks or thefts).

(10) Update technology for the Crimes Against

After September 11, 2001, the Baltimore County Police Department (BCPD) became one of the first in the state to create a Homeland Security Division. Together with the County Office of Emergency Management, the BCPD significantly updated the County Emergency Operations Plan to ensure a countywide comprehensive approach to preparedness planning, and response to all incidents, man-made or natural, in an efficient and effective manner. Personnel are assigned to the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center (MCAC) and the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) and hold leadership roles on the Maryland Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council (ATAC) and Baltimore Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI). The BCPD partnered with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the private sector to identify critical infrastructure within our jurisdiction, and completed vulnerability assessments to address target hardening. (Strengthening security of a building to reduce risks of attacks or thefts) Baltimore County is the first jurisdiction in the state, and one of the first in the country to implement the Automated Critical Asset Management System (ACAMS). This program is a web-based tool that collects information on critical assets, compiles the data, assists with vulnerability assessments, and generates a variety of reports.

Data-driven policing, particularly the Data Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS) model provides an opportunity to maximize the use of limited resources in areas with significant numbers of criminal and traffic incidents. Baltimore County is currently a national demonstration site for this approach.

Children and the Economic Crimes Units to improve their capability to monitor current “cyber crime” trends.

(11) Review all development and design plans of county facilities to ensure use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), as adopted in the Comprehensive Manual of Development Policies (CMDP).

Policy: Educational awareness, outreach efforts, and partnerships with the community assist in reducing crime and victimization.

Actions:

(1) Continuously improve community outreach, educational and awareness efforts as the first line of defense against a terrorist act in our community.

(2) Expand the education and outreach efforts of the Department to assist new and larger groups of non-English speaking people.

(3) Increase the coordination with ethnic community groups including use of social networking programs.

(4) Disperse multicultural aspects of inclusion, victimization and crime prevention to citizens, civic leaders and Department members utilizing presentation, referrals and intervention techniques.

(5) Provide enhanced comprehensive victim education to the elderly with improved programs regarding economic crime and home security.

(6) Use gang presentations to enlist the citizenry in both reporting and resisting gang

activity in their communities.

(7) Expand the Domestic Violence program to support all parties affected by incidents of domestic violence

(8) Increase the scope and level of service to encompass the children, family members and the abusers in the service delivery process associated with domestic violence. The lethality assessment tool will be incorporated into all high-risk domestic violence incidents.

Policy: Early intervention with juveniles helps prevent crime, and reduces the influence, activities, and recruitment efforts of gangs.

Actions:

(1) Continue support of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program into all schools, or at current schools based on need (increased population, juvenile crime, curriculum needs).

(2) Revise the SRO program to reintroduce the three School Programs Unit lesson plans (Stranger Danger, Gun Safety, Community Helpers Program) back into elementary schools.

(3) Identify new topics for all schools based on current crime prevention, personal safety initiatives and research-based programs.

(4) Grow and adapt current programs directed at youth (diversion, counseling and prevention), in response to data analysis available.

(5) Review the present substance abuse program “Drug Awareness and Resistance Education” (DARE) taught to middle school students to determine if it should move to other programs.

(6) Continue and increase the gang awareness training effort to inform all citizens regarding

the recognition of, and the dangers of gang activity.

Policy: Ensure that traffic safety is an organizational priority.

Actions:

(1) High visibility traffic enforcement will be emphasized as a primary countermeasure to reduce crimes and crashes and promote compliance with traffic laws.

(2) Fully implement and support the Data Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic (DDACTS) model as a primary method of operational deployment within the Police Department.

(3) Implement technology initiatives to improve the efficiency of police reporting (broadband capability in patrol vehicles) and data collection efforts (automation of traffic enforcement and reporting).

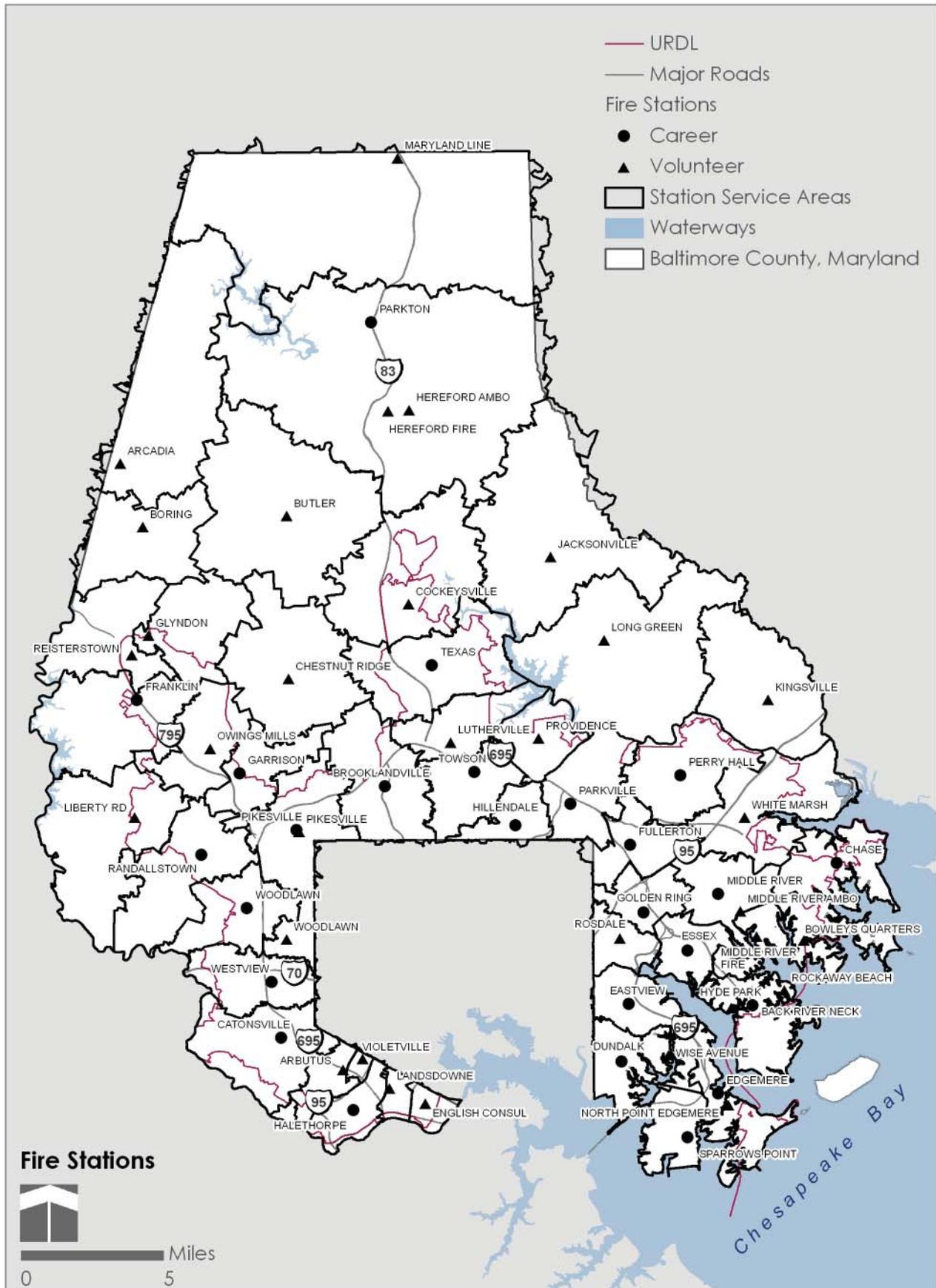
(4) Use new technology to improve upon analytical capabilities and deployment of resources according to crash/crime data.

Fire Safety

The Baltimore County Fire Department and Volunteer Fireman’s Association and its member volunteer companies provide fire protection, emergency medical and emergency rescue to the county’s citizens. Baltimore County maintains a high level of readiness to respond to natural and manmade disasters. Through

The Baltimore County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is organizationally located in the Fire Department and tasked with coordinating the county’s emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. The office supports the delivery of essential services by public agencies and private entities during major events that threaten public safety, plans multi agency drills and exercises, and promotes citizen emergency preparedness awareness and training. The office manages the allocation of state and federal homeland security grant funds and is the county’s liaison with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA).

Map 30: Fire Stations



a program of integrated emergency management, all departments, agencies, and many private organizations plan for mitigation of hazards, prepare for future emergencies, and assist the community in returning to pre-disaster conditions. In the past, public safety was considered primarily the responsibility of a limited group of public agencies delivering law enforcement, fire, rescue, and emergency medical services. Now, virtually every county agency has an emergency response role to play. County employees have embraced this concept. Employees from many agencies are NIMS (National Incident Management System) trained. This commitment to an expanded public safety role is demonstrated when agencies from a variety of disciplines work collaboratively to deliver comprehensive services to county residents during emergencies.

Baltimore County recognizes the importance of a prepared citizenry. The Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management presents “Neighbors Helping Neighbors”, an all-hazards training program, to residents several times a year at locations throughout the county. The program teaches residents how to help themselves and their neighbors during an emergency and in the first, critical 72 hours following an emergency. The office also conducts numerous emergency preparedness presentations for public and private organizations.

The Baltimore County Jurisdictional Planning Group (JPG) brings together consumers, advocates, service providers, government officials, and others involved with emergency preparedness planning who share information, and ideas to ensure that the interests of Baltimore County residents with special needs are represented and addressed.

Policy: Maintain a high level of preparedness for all types of emergencies, including natural disasters and terrorist acts.

Actions:

- (1) Coordinate the delivery of services before, during, and after an emergency to ensure effective mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.

- (2) Promote NIMS compliance and training of all appropriate county agencies.

- (3) Plan and coordinate multi-agency exercises to ensure readiness to respond to emergency events.

- (4) Promote emergency preparedness public education of all county residents, including those with special needs, by continuing citizen-training programs like Neighbors Helping Neighbors. Work with other agencies to support their emergency preparedness public education efforts.

- (5) Ensure effective use of homeland security grant funds to maximize public safety and preparedness.

- (6) Monitor changes in technology and recommend adoption of cost-effective technologies that enhance preparedness.

Interoperability

Interoperability between jurisdictions has always been an important part of public safety. Mutual Aid has, is, and will be a mainstay of response and incident mitigation. September 11, 2001 brought radio interoperability to the forefront. Baltimore County built a 20 channel, analog, 800mhz radio system in the late 1980's. Surrounding jurisdictions have followed with a mix of analog and digital systems. The nature of these systems made it difficult to accomplish the goals of interoperability. As technology moves forward, so have the capabilities of our radio system, thus meeting our needs.

Policy: State-of-the-art equipment with on-going maintenance and improvement is required for effective communication for emergency responders.

Actions:

- (1) Share system access with mutual aid partners allowing all radios to function on the same system.

- (2) Continue purchasing analog /digital radios that seamlessly change between system types.
- (3) Use the regional CMRC (Central Maryland Regional Communications System) as alternative regional communications channels.
- (4) Use the FMARS (Fire Mutual Aid Radio) high band radio.
- (5) Enable patching capabilities within Fire communications.
- (6) Maintain a cache of spare radios that can be issued to mutual aid agencies.

In order to provide and even higher level of Public Safety education that was already being delivered to the citizens of Baltimore County, it became necessary to institute a Fire Station based education and prevention program. This program trained personnel in the Fire Stations to administer educational safety programs to the public. Using all Fire station personnel to assist in this outreach resulted in a 126% increase in citizens' participation.

Policy: Safety education opportunities must be readily available to the public.

Actions:

- (1) Ensure that all personnel continue to deliver quality, comprehensive educational programs to our citizens.
- (2) Constantly re-evaluate the citizen base that is being reached and institute ways to reach groups that have special needs.

Outreach

A need was identified to provide better community outreach with the purpose of helping to make citizens aware of how to prevent home emergencies before they occur. As a result, the Safety Awareness for Everyone (S.A.F.E.) neighborhoods program was instituted. This program identifies, through various resources, neighborhoods with a high incidence of requests for emergency assistance (from various

county agencies). The Public Safety Education office in coordination with other County agencies identifies available resources that can help abate the need for emergency assistance. Afterwards, representatives from those agencies walk throughout the neighborhood talking to residents, addressing their concerns, and providing information on how to keep their homes and families safe.

Policy: Community outreach by the County will assist citizens to make their homes and neighborhoods safer.

Actions:

- (1) Walk through neighborhoods with appropriate County agency representatives to answer citizen's questions and concerns.
- (2) Provide and institute an educational community outreach program that teaches constituents how to keep their homes and families safe.

Fire Inspections

The Baltimore County Fire Prevention Code requires fire safety inspections of all structures and premises, except single-family and multiple family dwelling units. Under a comprehensive inspection program involving personnel in fire stations and the Fire Marshal's office, more than 25,000 annual fire inspections are conducted. These inspections greatly contributed to a low fire death rate in the County for many years.

Recently, more focus has been placed on inspecting places of assembly and providing additional supervision for patrons of these establishments through the "Crowd Manager's Program". The requirement of "crowd managers" for these occupancies has provided an additional means of safety and direction in the event of a fire emergency.

As more residential boarding and care facilities have emerged (assisted living facilities for the elderly, child care centers), fire inspections also increased to ensure safety for the different groups that populate these

facilities. Self-evacuation by some of these residents is often not possible, so it is critical that fire safety requirements be met.

Providing fire protection to the more rural areas of the County also continues. Working with the Baltimore County Volunteer Firemen's Association, there is a continuing effort to identify acceptable areas where rural water tanks and dry fire hydrants are needed. There are 117 tanks and/or dry hydrants installed in various non-metropolitan locations. This investment resulted in an improvement in the rating by the Insurance Services Office from a Class 9 to a Class 6.

Policy: Ensure building safety

Actions:

- (1) Ensure that proper time intervals are maintained between fire safety inspections for all applicable building uses and occupancies.
- (2) Monitor the building industry's technological advancements to ensure occupant and firefighter safety in the event of fire.
- (3) Continue to enforce and improve local codes, laws, and regulations.

Policy: Strengthen Volunteer Fire Service

Actions:

- (1) Continue to support volunteer fire companies through financial contributions, training, and technical assistance.
- (2) Assist volunteer fire companies with outreach and fundraising.

Policy: Provide water for fire suppression

Actions:

- (1) Work cooperatively with residents of established communities to locate or improve fire fighting water sources.

(2) Ensure that new residential communities comply with appropriate requirements for rural fire protection.

(3) Pursue new technology to transport and use water more efficiently in rural fire fighting efforts.

(4) Encourage the agricultural community to work with the Fire Department to locate and improve water sources on farmland.

(5) Continue to work with developers and builders to place large capacity (30,000 gallon) tanks strategically in rural areas. The Baltimore County Fire Code requires these tanks or alternatives.

(6) Continue identification of viable areas for additional rural water resources.

Non-Emergent

Emergency medical calls to 911 are absolutely necessary if a citizen is badly injured, or acutely ill with life-threatening injuries. There are many instances however, where if citizens are adequately trained, and injuries are not quite so severe, the patient may be treated and transported to a nearby medical facility. The number of non-emergent calls can be reduced if citizens could provide first aid for non-life threatening conditions at the scene. In cases of heart attacks, proper use of an automated external defibrillator (AED) can save a life, and/or prolong a life until help arrives. Availability and proper use of an AED when citizens are trained in first aid contributes greatly to reducing loss of life and further injury. Training in schools and nursing homes enables those personnel to gain the knowledge that may assist emergency medical technicians prior to their arrival.

Policy: Reduce non-emergent calls to 911; reduce injuries and loss of life through educational and training programs and distribution of certain medical equipment.

Actions:

- (1) Continue the expansion of Baltimore County’s public access defibrillator program, Project Heartbeat. This program provides businesses, community groups, and churches the ability to purchase AED’s, or automated external defibrillators, at a reduced price. AED’s, combined with early access to 911 and CPR, have proven to save lives of the victims of sudden cardiac arrest.
- (2) Continue to enable cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid Training to be available to all citizens.
- (3) Work with Baltimore County Schools to train all county school nurses in the handling of emergency medical incidents prior to the arrival of the paramedics and emergency medical technicians (EMT’s).
- (4) Develop a comprehensive training program for use in the county’s nursing homes. This program is designed to assist nursing home personnel in making the right decision regarding transport of ill and injured residents.

Health

Physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing are important predictors for the overall health of a population. The Baltimore County Department of Health is the agency charged with assessing the public health needs of Baltimore County residents and developing programs to address these areas. Persistent barriers to optimal health include access to primary and preventive health services, and knowledge about behaviors that can promote good health.

Currently, the core clinical services of the Department of Health are delivered in eight regional health centers across the County. The majority of these centers were established decades ago, prior to master planning efforts. Therefore, these centers are often not located near other County facilities where multiple services can be easily accessed. There exists opportunity to plan for the best locations to make health services most convenient for our citizens.

Policy: Increase access for all citizens to the County’s public health programs through strategic placement of Department of Health services.

Actions:

- (1) Collaborate with the appropriate County agencies to determine underserved communities and the specific public health needs of targeted neighborhoods.
- (2) Partner with County planners to explore opportunities for collocation of Department of Health services with existing and proposed government and community centers.
- (3) Continue coordination of public health and programs with local hospitals.

Unintentional Injuries

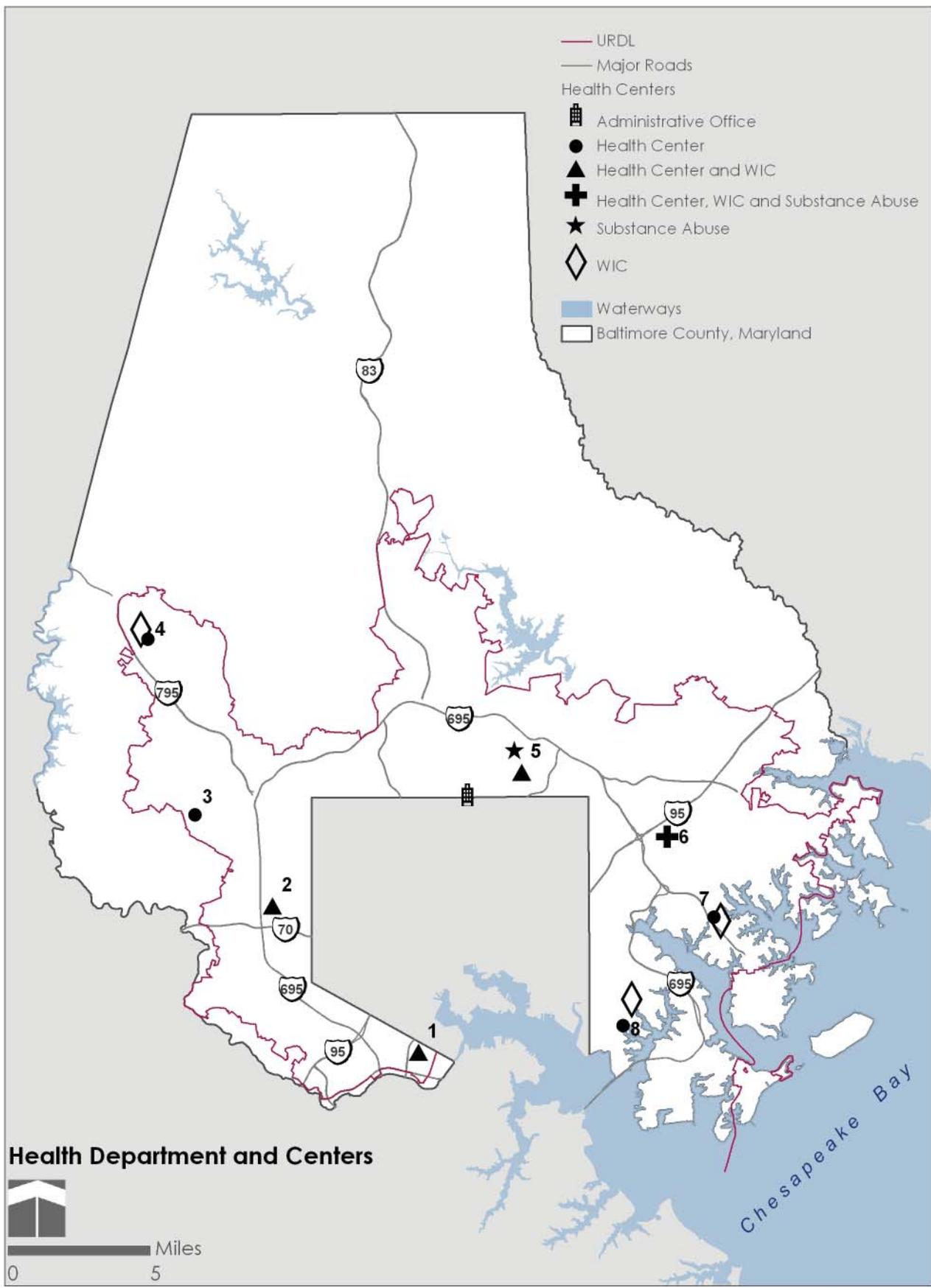
Unintentional injuries are a leading cause of illness, disability, and death both nationally and in Baltimore County. Commonly called “accidents,” unintentional injuries occur in every age group across the lifespan. The Department of Health maintains that unintentional injuries can be substantially reduced, by providing County residents with the appropriate information and other resources necessary for prevention.

Policy: Reduce preventable illness and disability resulting from unintentional injuries.

Actions:

- (1) Continually work with Baltimore County providers and hospitals to determine the leading causes of unintentional injuries and the groups that are most frequently impacted.
- (2) Develop injury prevention programs that are tailored to specific demographic groups, utilizing reliable data and best practices.
- (3) Monitor and report the impact of the County’s injury prevention efforts.

Map 31: Health Department and Centers



| HEALTH DEPARTMENT CENTERS | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1 | Baltimore Highlands-Landsdowne Health Center – 3902 Annapolis Road, 21227 |
| 2 | Woodlawn Health Center – 1811 Woodlawn Drive, 21207 |
| 3 | Liberty Family Resource Center – 3525 Resource Drive, 21133 |
| 4 | Hannah More Health Center – 12035 Reisterstown Road, 21136 |
| 5 | Towson Health Center – 1046 Taylor Avenue, 21286 |
| 6 | Eastern Family Resource Center – 9100 Franklin Square Drive, 21237 |
| 7 | Essex Health Center – 1538 Country Ridge Lane, 21221 |
| 8 | Dundalk Health Center – 7700 Dunmanway, 21222 |

Physical Activity

Chronic health conditions including diabetes, heart disease, and obesity are leading causes of death and disability nationally. The occurrence and severity of many of these illnesses can be prevented with physical activity. In recognizing the importance of safe, convenient, and accessible exercise facilities, the Department of Health will implement several actions to promote physical activity among County residents.

Policy: Promote outdoor physical activity in all regions of the County, in collaboration with appropriate County agencies.

Actions:

- (1) Determine existing facilities that are suitable for physical activity.
- (2) Identify facilities that can be enhanced and used for physical activity.
- (3) Identify resources, including land and funding, to enhance or create spaces that can be used for physical activity.
- (4) Support development of well-designed compact, mixed-use, walkable communities that encourage walking.

Community Environmental Health

The County has long recognized the need to promote and protect Public Health through disease control and protection of the food supply. It has become increasingly acknowledged, however, that Public Health also benefits dramatically from increased

environmental quality. Obvious relationships exist between enhanced air and drinking water quality and the need to respond to disease vector control issues in an environmentally responsible manner. There are also more subtle relationships between environmental conditions and both the personal and policy-derived quality of life standards the public has come to expect. The importance of environmental health is greater today due to changing lifestyles of citizens, as people increasingly consume food outside of their homes and travel for water recreation.

Food Safety

The focus of Baltimore County’s Environmental Health Programs and initiatives is to protect the vital resources necessary to ensure public health and provide information to the public regarding their safe and productive use of, and interaction with, those resources. This is achieved through planning, education, monitoring, and regulatory enforcement in the areas of Food Safety, Construction Plan Review, Community Hygiene, Recreational Hygiene, and Environmental Site Assessment. Baltimore County has over 3000 commercial food service facilities. State law mandates inspections of these facilities with regard to food safety practices. The inspections also allow environmental health personnel to evaluate waste disposal practices that may contribute directly to trash and offal contamination of streams, damage to sanitary sewers, and increased use of pesticides.

A professional staff of Registered Sanitarians routinely inspects these facilities and also responds to citizen complaints or requests from other agencies. DEPRM maintains a computer data base system that allows the comparison of environmentally related food service

facility issues with incidences of sanitary sewage overflows and pest control issues. This effort includes the maintenance of an informational web site and an on-going educational program for food service facility owners/operators.

Policy: Routine and complaint-based inspections will reflect any discernable relationships between facility operational practices and potential environmental impacts.

Actions:

- (1) Continue to inspect food service facilities on a regular basis to ensure that proper practices are being implemented.
- (2) Continue to prioritize complaint-based inspections.
- (3) Continue to develop better educational outreach.

Construction Plan Review

DEPRM is required by State and County codes to review the plans for any new construction, or significant renovation of commercial food service facilities and public swimming pools. While this function has been traditionally concerned with the facilitation of safe food handling in restaurants, and disinfection capability and safety in pool construction, more emphasis has recently been placed on how design and function affect environmental conditions.

The quality of waste generated at commercial food service facilities regarding the production of fats, oils and grease (FOG) is now recognized as a major factor in the restriction of flow, and eventual blockage of segments of the sanitary sewer system. Sanitary Sewage Overflows (SSO's) caused by grease blockages, especially along densely developed corridors, have resulted in significant pollution events that have created biological impacts and increased nutrient loadings in fresh and tidal waters. Baltimore County, the EPA, and the Department of Justice have entered into a Consent Decree that requires the County to address FOG.

The back washing of filter material at public swimming pools, and seasonal draining of chlorinated water, can also adversely affect nearby streams. The plan review process allows an opportunity to encourage, and in some cases require holding tanks or drain fields designed to reduce chlorine concentrations to minimal levels before the effluent reaches a watercourse.

Policy: Review of food service facility and public swimming pool plans will address potential environmental issues.

Actions:

- (1) Review food service facility plans to ensure compliance with proper food handling requirements.
- (2) Develop criteria for proper control of fats, oil, and grease.
- (3) Ensure that pool plans incorporate measures that protect downstream watercourses.
- (4) Provide educational material to the food and swimming pool industries, and the public, regarding food and pool safety.

Community Hygiene

Community Hygiene issues typically encompass the following: illegal dumping of trash, junk and debris, improper storage and disposal of some household-related hazardous chemicals, pest/disease vector control, pet waste accumulation, proper handling of potentially hazardous materials during the deconstruction of residential and commercial buildings, construction dust control, elimination of standing water, and poor maintenance of residential sewer laterals and septic systems. All of these issues may have both direct public health implications and may cause secondary environmental damage.

Policy: Continue to enforce community hygiene regulations.

Actions:

- (1) Investigate citizen complaints regarding community hygiene issues.
- (2) Provide web-based educational material and take advantage of promotional opportunities.
- (3) Promote community involvement in clean-up activities.

Recreational Hygiene

Recreational Hygiene is typically defined as the study and enforcement of effective means of promoting Public Health during associated recreational activities. As many such activities take place out of doors, good environmental quality is essential. Baltimore County recognizes this link and has actively taken measures to monitor conditions, especially in fresh and tidal recreational waters to help minimal public exposure to unhealthy conditions. The US EPA Beach Act of 2000 mandates biological and chemical sampling of County waters. This sampling is required to determine that minimum biological swimming standards are met.

Policy: Continue to implement a recreational hygiene program through a better understanding of environmental factors.

Actions:

- (1) Continue recreational sampling as mandated by the Beach Act of 2000 and provide accurate, timely information to the public.
- (2) Continue to explore how this program can practically interface with the goals of the 2006 Baltimore Watershed Agreement.
- (3) As feasible, increase sampling to collect broader baseline data on water quality.

SOCIAL SERVICES

The Department of Social Services, in partnership with state and county agencies, provides income support, housing and social work services to Baltimore County residents who are in need. The department provides families, adults, children, or adolescents with services, including rental subsidy, fuel and electricity payment assistance, adoptive foster parenting, shelters, abuse and negligence prevention, childcare services, self-improvement, caring for the elderly or disabled, employment assistance, mental health treatment, and financial support for food and medicine.

The County is facing a range of issues in providing social services for the underserved. The demand for affordable housing continues to increase. Fair market rents have risen, which contributes to an increase in the Housing Assistance Payments in the Housing Choice Voucher program. While sales prices in the County nearly doubled in the past years, incomes have grown less than one quarter. The County’s annual survey on homelessness showed that the homeless rate has grown by more than 25 percent from the previous year, resulting from lack of affordable housing, disabilities, eviction, or unemployment. In 2009, the County served 5,000 residents in its various programs to assist the homeless.

The rise in home heating/cooling costs due to increases in natural gas, electricity, has created a burden on many residents, particularly low and moderate-income households. Toxicity of environmental conditions contributes to illness, including allergies, asthma, bronchitis, and maladies. In addition, the County is experiencing an increase in foreign immigrants. This new demographic trend reinforces the need for a greater cultural sensitivity, and bilingual publications, programs, and services.

Transportation is also a significant barrier to receiving services and obtaining employment. Equally important is the need for job readiness, career preparation, and vocational training for low and moderate-income families or persons. These two issues combined with housing comprise the primary needs for low and moderate-income families or persons. The Homeless Roundtable’s needs

assessment identified housing, employment, and transportation as key elements to independence and self-reliance.

The County recognizes challenges and opportunities, and continues to strive to enhance community vibrancy for its diverse residents. The Consolidated Plan provides for the utilization of federal, state, and local resources and funds: the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), Emergency Shelter Grant Program (ESG) and other programs to create decent housing, expand economic opportunity, and ensure a suitable living environment for underserved families, persons, and communities.

Policy: Increase the availability of affordable, decent permanent housing to low and moderate-income families or persons.

Actions:

- (1) Provide direct assistance to tenants through the HOME funded Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA).
- (2) Direct the HOME funds to create and preserve rental housing for low-income households.
- (3) Continue to create the availability and affordability of homeownership opportunities through a strategic investment of the HOME funds.
- (4) Maintain the Single Family Rehabilitation Loan Program with CDBG funds to ensure a suitable living environment.
- (5) Invest resources and human capital for affordable housing using environmentally sound building techniques.
- (6) Offer mortgage financing for low and moderate-income persons at reasonable rates, using non-discriminatory lending practices.
- (7) Build partnerships with fair housing

advocacy groups, county agencies and neighboring jurisdictions to eliminate discriminatory practices.

Policy: Improve the supply of housing and services to persons with special needs.

Actions:

- (1) Utilize CDBG funds to increase the access to housing and public facilities for persons with disabilities.
- (2) Provide supportive services and transitional housing for people who are homeless, in the emergency shelter, or at risk of being homeless.
- (3) Provide grants for landlords to supply housing for persons with disabilities through the Housing Accessibility Modification Program (HAMP).
- (4) Apply governmental funds to create housing vouchers for persons with HIV/AIDS as part of the Housing for Persons with Disabilities Program.

Policy: Expand economic opportunities and provide adequate transit and public services for the underserved.

Actions:

- (1) Provide job opportunities and training for low and moderate-income persons to empower self-sufficiency and reduce generational poverty.
- (2) Assure provision of affordable housing opportunities close to job opportunities and services relating to employment.
- (3) Create linguistic resources and provide public services to meet health, safety, business, and educational needs of new immigrants.

(4) Improve public transportation and services transporting for the underserved to access employment opportunities and public assistance.

(5) Establish a transit-oriented development (TOD) overlay zone that promotes workforce housing near public transportation.

(6) Encourage development of new mixed-income, transit-oriented communities that are located near major employment hubs.

(7) Link neighborhoods, commercial corridors, and civic uses through bicycle trails and pedestrian paths.

(8) Continue to provide income support and social work services for County residents in need.



New technologies, services, resources, and collections provide opportunities for BCPL to meet the ever-changing needs and expectations of all segments of the population. BCPL continues to provide services, programs, and resources that support education, personal enrichment, community building, and business development for County residents, businesses, or visitors.

LIBRARIES

The Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL) is one of the best and busiest library systems in the nation. The library plays a unique role in our communities, providing active, positive learning experiences for all customers. Annually, there are 482,000 library cardholders and 5,833,000 visitors in 17 branches, using 5,000 BCPL programs. The library loans more than 10 million items annually. There are about 972,000 uses of public computers in BCPL branches. BCPL upholds a long tradition of excellent customer services. The library's overall customer satisfaction rating is 96 percent.

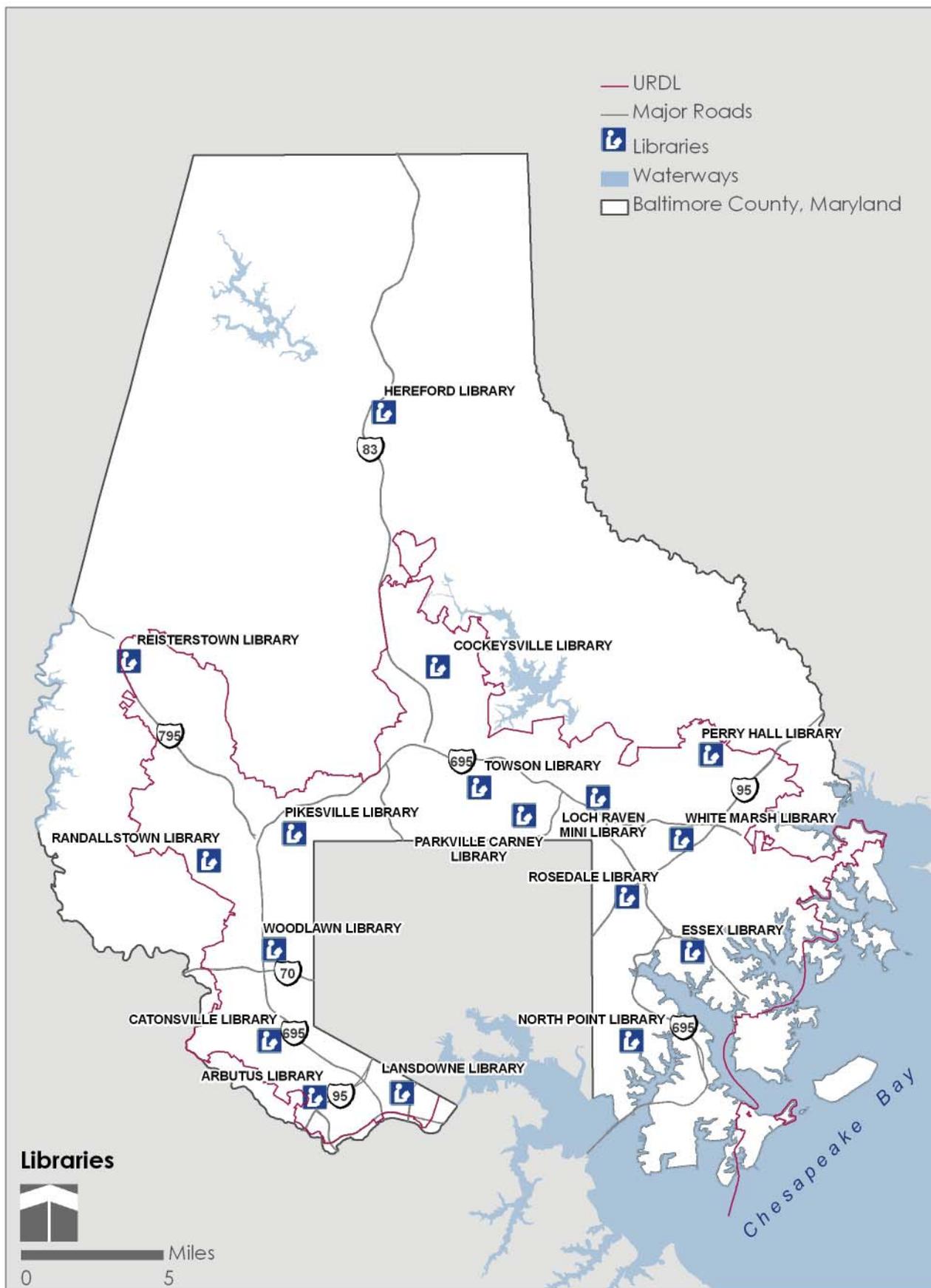
The current population of more than 800,000 is growing in diversity. There is an increasing number of people from the Hispanic or Latino origin, non-White races, senior citizens (65 years of age or older), foreign-born persons, adults with high school diplomas or advanced education, and those employed in professional and service occupations. BCPL is responsible to respond to the various needs of this evolving mixture of unique communities, and will reap many benefits from the broadening diversity.

Policy: Provide all residents with contemporary resources and services via various media and excellent customer assistance.

Actions:

- (1) Create young readers (age 5 or under) by promoting early literacy for reading, writing, listening, and learning.
- (2) Stimulate imagination among students with reading, viewing and listening for pleasure.
- (3) Assist students with homework in order to succeed academically.
- (4) Supply teens and adult customers with up-to-date materials for their life-long learning.
- (5) Offer an easy access for customers to information on programs, activities, and services of county agencies.
- (6) Connect customers to ever-growing resources and services via the high-speed Internet access.

Map 32: Libraries



Policy: Increase the operational efficiency through facilities maintenance and improvement, technology development, and collections acquisition and management.

Actions:

- (1) Upgrade or maintain library facilities to provide customers with a comfortable and safe physical environment.
- (2) Improve overall public services through the use of technology.
- (3) Develop and implement the Marketing Plans to support targeted BCPL programs and services.
- (4) Continue to acquire, maintain, or share collections useful and interesting to customers.
- (5) Include libraries with public meeting areas as part of civic space in newly designed Community Enhancement Areas, where feasible.

RECREATION AND PARKS

This section of the master plan, as well as other recreation and parks related information included or referenced within this plan, functions along with the most recently adopted Baltimore County, Maryland Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) as the key planning doctrine for the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks. The LPPRP, required by Title 5, Subtitle 9 of the Natural Resources Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, serves as a guide for meeting the recreation, park and open space needs of the citizens of Baltimore County. In preparing the *Master Plan 2020* parks and recreation content, the recommendations and mandates of several other documents and planning policies were likewise considered and incorporated. These include the *Baltimore County Master Plan 2010*, the existing State of Maryland Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan, various adopted Baltimore County community and special purpose plans, and the State’s recently



its citizens and visitors. Parklands provide venues for recreational facilities and activities, while at the same time preserving significant areas of natural resources that serve as integral green infrastructure. Parklands and recreational facilities also provide economic and social benefits, ranging from enhancing nearby property values, to promoting tourism and patronage of local businesses, to supporting community conservation. The County’s collection of parks, school recreation centers, open spaces, greenways and other recreational facilities is supported by vast areas of Baltimore City-owned reservoir lands and State-owned and managed parklands and natural environment areas that both preserve the natural environment and offer predominantly natural resource-based forms of recreation. The State and local parklands and recreational facilities complement one another, combining to form an invaluable network of public lands that, together with lands protected under other other land preservation and regulatory programs, help to make Baltimore County a recognized national leader in land conservation.

The recreational opportunities offered through Baltimore County’s parklands and recreational facilities are varied, and range from organized programs offered by the Department of Recreation and Parks through the efforts of 45 non-profit, volunteer-based recreation and parks councils, to free-time activities such as walking, visiting a playground and picnicking. Recreational activities promote physical and mental well being and provide a platform for social interaction and personal growth.

To adhere to State and County growth management policy, most parks and recreation resources provided by the County are and will continue to be concentrated within urbanized areas in which the majority of the population resides. However, Baltimore County recognizes its responsibility to serve all of its citizens, and will accommodate the rural population by providing strategically situated parks and recreational facilities.

Policy: Acquire a variety of parklands and recreation sites to achieve parkland acquisition goals and meet public recreation needs.

Parklands serve a variety of important roles. They are the venues for recreational facilities, preserve invaluable green space and help protect and preserve the natural environment, serve as a gathering place for the surrounding community, are proven to enhance nearby property values, support economic development, and contribute to public health.

Actions:

- (1) Utilize Program Open Space (POS) as a key funding source for the acquisition of parkland.
- (2) Strategically target all available parkland funding resources to areas of existing and projected future needs, whether these needs be acreage-based, facility-based, resource-based, or policy-based. Specific focus will need to be applied to the County's

proposed Community Enhancement Areas (CEAs), where population growth will be concentrated. Parklands and facilities needed for the CEA should be provided within and/or in close proximity to their bounds when possible to promote walkability and sustainability.

(3) Employ the Baltimore County development process to provide quality local open space, obtain fees-in-lieu where appropriate (to help fund park acquisition and development), and to secure vital greenway connections. Continue to refine the open space dedication process to ensure that local open spaces are deeded to the County, homeowners' association, or other appropriate party in a timely and accurate manner.

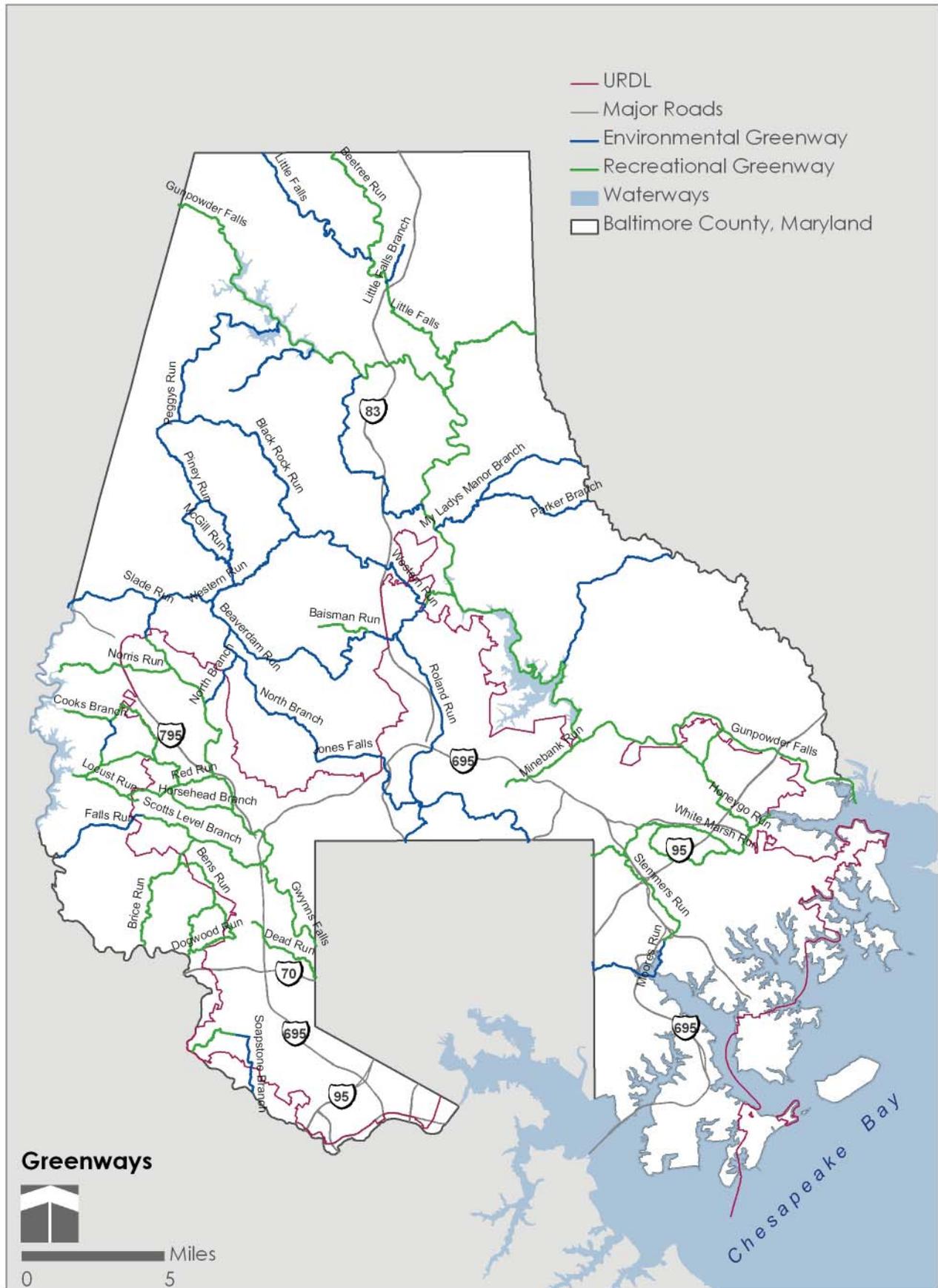
(4) Reinvestigate and update, as needed, the County's policies and regulations pertaining to Greenways. Continue to require the dedication of Greenways within the County development process and employ these lands to create trail and path networks such as those underway in and around the Owings Mills Growth Area. The Department of Recreation and Parks should work with the Office of Planning and other county agencies to add community plan recommended greenways and other appropriate linear land areas to the Greenway Map, which identifies land areas that must be preserved by dedication or easement.

(5) Exercise all means necessary for the acquisition of key prospective park sites, up to and including the powers of master plan conflict and eminent domain.

(6) Work with landowners to secure tax credits and similar agreements that will enable them to donate or sell their land at a reduced value to the County or local established land trust if such properties would be of sufficient public recreational or open space benefit.



Map 33: Greenways



(7) Continue support of the Neighborspace Program as a proven mechanism for preserving smaller neighborhood-oriented open spaces.

Recreational demands and preferences perpetually change, so that activities popular in one decade may not be in strong demand in the next. This impacts the types and quantity of recreational facilities that must be provided to meet the needs of County citizens. In some cases parks are retrofitted to replace no longer needed facilities with amenities that support activities that have increased in popularity. In other cases, new facilities not even envisioned until recent years (dog parks, for example) are being provided to meet widespread public demands. The County must remain vigilant of shifts in recreational demands, and be prepared to renovate and enhance existing parks, or create new parks to provide needed facilities.

Policy: Provide a diversity of recreational facilities and areas to meet the needs of citizens, and to serve the organized programs of the local recreation and parks councils.

Actions:

(1) Provide a sufficient quantity of traditional outdoor recreation facilities such as ball diamonds, athletic fields, sports courts, playgrounds, and picnic areas.

(2) Provide sufficient indoor facilities and access time to meet expanding demands for year-round recreation, to serve programs that require indoor space, and to facilitate use by community and civic organizations.

(3) Construct additional trails and paths to meet growing demands for linear-based forms of recreation such as walking, jogging, and bicycling. Work with County and State agencies to establish pedestrian and bicycle connections between parks, residential areas and other points of interest, in conjunction with the county's pedestrian and bicycle plans and community plans. Community

Enhancement Area standards and plans should include strong pedestrian and bicycle access components so as to encourage non-motorized forms of transportation and provide associated recreational opportunities.

(4) Provide appropriate service amenities such as restrooms, storage areas, parking areas, sidewalks and paths, and facility/security lighting.

The Department of Recreation and Parks has served the citizens of Baltimore County for over sixty years. The recreational facilities throughout the County's park system have widely varying ages, and there is an on-going need to renovate and retrofit park amenities so that they remain safe, functional, and attractive.

Policy: Renovate and rehabilitate parks to address the issues of facility aging and outdated recreational infrastructure.

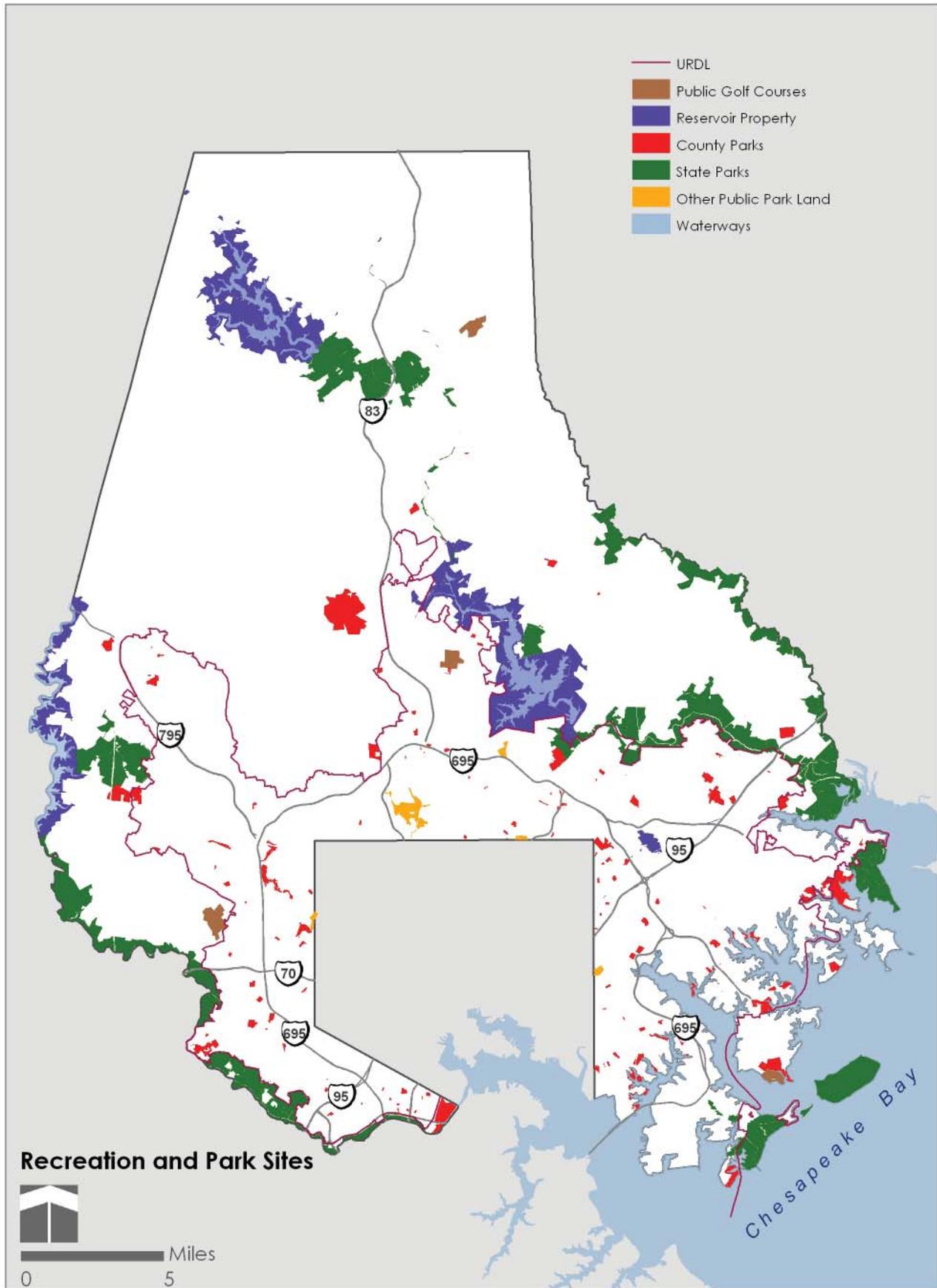
Actions:

(1) Evaluate the functionality and condition of the County's older parks, and conduct appropriate site redesign, rehabilitation, and improvement projects.

(2) Where appropriate continue comprehensive capital renovation programs, including existing programs for playground equipment, courts, fields, facility lighting, and parking lots; seek opportunities for the expansion of such programs to other types of recreational facilities and support amenities.



Map 34: Recreation and Park Sites





(3) Explore opportunities for reutilizing or retrofitting facilities for other recreational purposes if they are no longer needed or desired.

Parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities are vital to the form and function of the community. Baltimore County has utilized parks as a viable community enhancement and revitalization tool, and will continue to do so within new initiatives such as the Community Enhancement Areas.

Policy: Participate and play a vital role within community revitalization programs such as the County's renaissance initiative.

Actions:

- (1) Provide quality parks and recreational facilities within community revitalization areas and renaissance communities. Where appropriate, replace unsuitable or poorly functioning land uses with parks that will help to enhance the community.
- (2) Actively participate in community redesign processes, recognizing the important role that parks play in providing and maintaining attractive, healthy neighborhoods.
- (3) Maintain parks in older communities to ensure that these sites remain attractive and functional, and contribute to the strength of the community.

(4) Continue to require the provision of appropriate and adequate open space opportunities within or in proximity to the County's proposed Community Enhancement Areas. Evaluate the required local open space requirements to ensure that these remain adequate.

The Chesapeake Bay and Baltimore County's wealth of waterfront lands are invaluable resources that help define the County and region. Recognizing that the vast majority of the population resides in non-waterfront communities, the County is committed to providing all citizens plentiful opportunities to experience the Bay and its tributaries through public parklands. The County and State waterfront parks range from entirely natural and pristine sites to venues that provide amenities such as boat ramps, fishing piers and swimming beaches for public use.

Policy: Expand waterfront access to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Actions:

- (1) Provide an assortment of recreational facilities at the County's waterfront parks, ranging from water-specific facilities such as boat ramps and fishing piers, to general amenities including picnic pavilions, playgrounds and paths.
- (2) Utilize Marshy Point Park and Nature Center on Dundee and Saltpeter Creeks as a key platform for providing citizens of the region with opportunities to experience, learn about and gain an appreciation for the Chesapeake Bay and its ecosystem.
- (3) Evaluate all existing waterfront park sites to assure adequate use, while undertaking appropriate environmental conservation measures.
- (4) Participate in the National Park Service-led *Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail* initiative, employing the trail as

a tool for increasing tourism and park visitation.

(5) Designate viable water trails to connect waterfront parks and provide opportunities for canoeing and kayaking. Seek to establish an interpretive water trail on the North Point Peninsula as part of the county, state and federal efforts to commemorate the bicentennial of the War of 1812 and the Battle of North Point (1814).

Policy: Pursue alternative funding sources for park acquisition, development, capital improvements, recreational programs and special events.

Actions:

- (1) Aggressively pursue both public and private grant opportunities.
- (2) Solicit businesses and citizens for donations and expand the scope of existing sponsorship programs.
- (3) Enter into appropriate manage-lease and similar agreements to provide citizens with recreational opportunities that are outside the scope of what may feasibly be offered by the County.
- (4) Procure surplus State lands that are of recreation, parks, or open space benefit when these become available.

Parklands play a vital role in helping to preserve vast natural areas and protect and sustain the environment. Nearly 70% of the parks, open spaces, and recreation sites owned by the County are undeveloped, serving as green spaces that have environmental benefits ranging from protecting and enhancing water quality, to helping cool surrounding air temperatures through a proliferation of trees and vegetation. Parks, even when developed with recreational facilities, typically have less impervious surface and feature more preserved natural areas than most other forms of urban/suburban land use. Finally, the County's interpretive facilities and parks provide the venues

through which citizens, especially students and children, can experience and learn about nature first-hand.

Policy: Promote a greater appreciation for the natural environment through interpretation and hands-on experiences, and expand efforts to protect sensitive environmental areas within the County's parklands.

Actions:

- (1) Perform assessments of existing and future park sites to delineate sensitive environmental areas and to identify appropriate protective measures.
- (2) Promote environmental awareness through the use of interpretive signage and educational programs at both the County's interpretive centers and general park sites.
- (3) Work with DEPRM on such projects as stream and shoreline restoration, floodplain, reforestation, wildlife management, and forest health assessments.
- (4) Collaborate with County agencies and other partners to improve green design standards and enhance sustainability for recreation facilities.

The County and the Department of Recreation and Parks have long been committed to making recreational opportunities available to all citizens,



regardless of their abilities or disabilities. Adaptive facilities and programs provide a diversity of recreational options and ensure that no individual be denied the opportunity to enjoy quality leisure time experiences.

Policy: Enhance park and facility accessibility and provide quality recreational opportunities for individuals of all abilities.

Actions:

- (1) Continue to provide access from parking areas and park entry points to site amenities.
- (2) Ensure that new facilities are sufficiently accessible and meet Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines (ADAG).

The recreational tastes of individuals are as diverse. The County recognizes that artistic, cultural, and historical activities are also popular leisure pursuits that should be available. A broad array of arts programs, ranging from dance to pottery making, are offered through the local recreation and parks councils. Further, the County provides special facilities such as Banneker Historical Park and Museum, the Lurman Woodland Theater, and Holt Park and Center for the Arts as venues for programs and activities.

Policy: Expand opportunities for citizens to participate in and experience arts programs and events, and historically and culturally significant sites.

Actions:

- (1) Provide arts and cultural programs at local, regional and countywide levels.
- (2) Work with Baltimore County Public Schools to maximize the use of school-based arts facilities.
- (3) Help protect sites of cultural and historical significance, and provide applicable interpretive facilities, displays and programs.

- (4) Participate in special initiatives such as the historical trail efforts that are underway in preparation for the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 and the Battle of North Point.

Facility design standards and specifications change, requiring that the County adapt, whether for the sake of meeting new safety or environmental requirements, or for the purpose of providing better facilities.

Policy: Evaluate facility design standards as necessary to better meet recreational demands, enhance facility safety and functionality, and ensure that parks and facilities are sustainable, attractive community enhancements.

Actions:

- (1) Continue to investigate and implement methods for rectifying problems with the de-vegetation of athletic fields, whether through the replacement with synthetic field surfaces or other means.
- (2) Perform regular evaluations of facility specifications and make any necessary updates or modifications.
- (3) Revisit the design of recreation and community centers and make modifications, where necessary, to enhance functionality, maximize recreational and community use, and meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards.
- (4) Design parks and facilities to be compatible with and visually benefit the surrounding community.
- (5) Revise park design practices to meet current environmental regulations, including the new State requirements related to stormwater management.

Partnerships have served as a vital means for providing quality parks and recreation services throughout the County, and have formed the cornerstone upon which the Department of Recreation



and Parks was built. Two of the most long-standing partnerships—with the citizen volunteer-based recreation and parks councils, and with Baltimore County Public Schools—are essential to providing recreation programs and many of the recreational facilities at which programs take place.

Policy: Participate in various partnerships to maximize resources and efforts for the benefit of Baltimore County citizens.

Actions:

- (1) Partner with the volunteer-based recreation and parks councils to provide quality recreational opportunities.
- (2) Utilize the Board of Recreation and Parks as an integral link between the citizens of Baltimore County, the recreation and parks councils, the County Council, and Department of Recreation and Parks.
- (3) Work with Baltimore County Public Schools to maximize the effectiveness of the joint-use agreement for school recreation centers.
- (4) Work with other Baltimore County agencies such as the Office of Community Conservation, the Department of

Environmental Protection and Resource Management, the Office of Planning, and the Police to combine resources and meet public needs. The Police Athletic League (PAL) program is a particularly important effort, providing recreational opportunities that complement the traditional programs of local recreation councils while providing invaluable mentoring experiences to participating youths.

- (5) Participate in cooperative efforts with the State of Maryland, neighboring jurisdictions, and other recreation and parks agencies throughout the State and country.
- (6) Work and collaborate with non-profit, civic and community organizations, especially in cases where such organizations are in a position to support and supplement the County’s missions. Explore additional opportunities for groups and citizens to provide volunteer services.

Technology has revolutionized government services, including parks and recreation. Various technological tools, from computerized mapping systems to maintenance equipment that uses volcanic ash to eradicate graffiti, have streamlined and enhanced business processes.

Policy: Expand the use of technology to enhance agency operations, and to better meet the needs of the public.

Actions:

- (1) Seek further opportunities for using the Internet to better serve County citizens and to make the public aware of recreational opportunities and the park system.
- (2) Utilize technological resources to streamline and improve upon various agency operations. Procure modern technological resources that would enhance operations and allow the agency to better serve the public with sustainable technologies.