

## **RESILIENCE & SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS**

### **MARCH 2024**

**EARTH DAY 2024** - Monday, April 22. This year's National theme is "Plastics vs. the Planet". Messaging will go out via social media and options other than plastic will be posted on the City website. A stream clean up is being coordinated with the Spa Creek Conservancy by the Environmental Programs Coordinator, since plastic bags are a problem in waterways and along creeks and rivers. The plan is to release the City's Zero Waste policy for its buildings, operations, and internal events in April in time for Earth Day (see below). Information about the City's efforts to go zero waste and zero plastic (with previous campaigns such as "Plastic Free Annapolis" and "No Butts in the Bay") will be publicized through the national Earth Day campaign. DPW/R/S may be able to get two more buildings on board for food scrap collection (see below) by April 22. The City's beautiful Earth Day and Bird City banners will be on lamp posts on Main Street and around City Dock by the second week of April (the Book festival had a snafu on planning with the film festival and bumped into R/S's reserved space). The Bird City contest bird photographs will be on display in City Hall March - April (see below).

**Pollinator Habitat at the Solar Park** - A project summary has been developed and will be used as the basis for a request for submission of bids. Four landscape companies were identified as potential bidders. The bids will outline a scope of work for design of the project, identify the projected cost of the project and a maintenance plan. The plan will be shared with Novis Renewables to use in determining their financial participation in the project. The second phase of the project would be implementation of the design. How much of the available planting areas will become part of the implementation plan (at least initially) will be dependent on budget.

**City Green House Gas Emissions Updates** – 1) The last inventories for City facilities and the community were performed in 2006. Updates were planned for FY24 and the company that performed the work in 2006 was contacted to perform the update. This work was put on hold when Annapolis and Anne Arundel County agreed to participate, through the Resilience Authority, in a regional effort that has produced the March 2024 Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) based on a Greenhouse Gas Inventory (GHGI). This PCAP may satisfy some, if not all, of the City's GHG update informational needs.

2) The PCAP is a partnership between jurisdictions of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council- Baltimore City, and the counties of Baltimore, Anne Arundel, Carroll, Harford, Howard, and Queen Anne's (including Annapolis). The PCAP was funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) (non-competitive grant).

The purpose of the PCAP is to:

1. Improve understanding of current and future GHG emissions in the Baltimore region,
2. Identify priority strategies to reduce GHG emissions and to identify the potential other benefits, of those strategies, and
3. Engage a variety of stakeholders in an emissions reduction planning process.

3) Competitive Phase of the Grant due April 1 - the same Baltimore-Columbia-Towson Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), in which Annapolis is participating through the Resilience Authority, is preparing a grant application that builds off of the PCAP. Baltimore has the lead in this \$50M application that will outline strategies to reduce climate pollution in community-level emissions and in regional emissions focused on waste, climate financing, and fostering a climate-ready workforce. Other goals are to decarbonize municipal buildings, nature-based solutions, and carbon sequestration.

**Climate Change Litigation** – 1) On February 24, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, denied Defendants' motion to remove Plaintiffs' claims from state court to federal court. This was the eleventh such unsuccessful attempt. State court law is more favorable than federal law to the Plaintiffs' arguments, particularly the Maryland Consumer Protection Act. 2) Oral arguments on Defendants' motions to dismiss were heard on March 9 in Anne Arundel County Circuit Court. No decisions were made, but counsel felt that they made a strong case to defeat Defendants' motions to dismiss. 3) Following oral argument in Baltimore later this week, counsel for the City, Sher Edling, will provide an update on next steps.

**Zero Waste Policy** - A zero waste policy regarding use of material in City buildings for day to day needs and for special events by the City will be developed for release in April.

**Integrated Pest Management Policy** - An update to the City's IPM policy will occur in 2025. Research will be performed regarding IPM policies in other Maryland jurisdictions for comparison. R/S has consulted with the Maryland Pesticide Network regarding the harmful effects of pesticides on humans and wildlife.

**Plastic Bag Bans and Reuse Legislation** - A memorandum has been prepared by R/S regarding Maryland legislation concerning plastic bag bans and fees for the use of plastic bags or alternate bags provided by retailers.

**EV Charging Requirements for Residential and Commercial Parking Areas** - A memorandum is being prepared by R/S regarding requirements in other counties and cities, focused on Maryland, for including EV charging in homes, multi-unit dwellings, and commercial areas. Maryland enacted a law in 2023 that applies to new development (single family, townhomes, and duplexes permitted after 10/1/23) and there is current legislation in the General Assembly to extend this requirement to certain multi-family units. This memo will be available by the end of March.

**Solar Requirements for Residential and Commercial Buildings** - A memorandum is being prepared by R/S regarding requirements in other counties and cities, focused on Maryland, for including solar in new development and in redeveloped areas. This memo will be available in April.

**Food Scrap Collection/Composting** - In October 2023, the City DOT initiated a 6-month food scrap collection pilot in its break room and office area. DPW contracted with Annapolis Compost for weekly collections at \$79/month. Food scraps and paper are delivered to a local farm for composting. DOT considers participation high among employees. UPDATE: This program has been continued through the end of the fiscal year. DPW has agreed to add two or three more City buildings (possibly City Hall, Gorman, and Pip Moyer Recreation Center) to the program for FY25. This program is funded out of DPW's Special Projects line item, in its Solid Waste budget. Interest from each building will be

determined and a "captain" for each building must be identified to empty smaller receptacles around the building into the one larger receptacle for pick up on a weekly basis.

**Annapolis Electric Ferry Project** - \$2.95M Federal Funds (acquisition of ferry(ies), landing site improvements, infrastructure

1) A draft Preliminary Site Assessment and Due Diligence Report, Fifth Street Landing, Annapolis, MD was prepared by McLaren Engineering Group for DPW. This work was not prepared with DPW budget funds rather than Grant funds; there are restrictions on uses of grant funds before certain federal grant procedures have been met with regard to contracting services. This draft report, information from the draft VAAAC Chesapeake Bay ferry feasibility study, and other information gathered by staff will be used in producing a feasibility study for landing sites for the ferry. The other landing site will be City Dock, likely on the DNR dock. This dock will not require any additional improvements and can support loading/unloading of passengers and installation of charging infrastructure.

R/S has been working with Maryland Transit Authority (MTA) staff to provide information to continue to move along the Environmental Assessment to satisfy National Environmental Policy Act requirements that are triggered whenever federal action (dollars/project in this case) could have a significant environmental impact. The NEPA analysis is required to allow the City's RFP to be advertised.

City DOT is finalizing a packet of information required to obtain an letter of concurrence from MTA to allow the City's RFP to be advertised.

This project is being funded by a Low-Emissions and Electric Ferry Pilot Program Grant through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). While awards were announced in January 2022, funds were not available through MTA until June 2023, and a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendment had to be approved by the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (December 15, 2023) before the project could move forward. NEPA and other federal grant procedural requirements must be satisfied before the City can advertise the RFP for the vessel design and construction.

2) The Deputy City Manager for R/S spoke about the Annapolis E-ferry project at the March 12 Conference on Zero Emissions Ferries, hosted by Global Mass Transit in Arlington, VA. The Deputy Director of Transportation and Chief of Comprehensive Planning also attended the conference which covered working towards net zero passenger ferry systems, technologies, types of alternative fuel vessels, infrastructure, future plans, and case studies. Other speakers included local government transportation authorities and economic development corporations, ferry operators, vessel manufacturers, and regulators from New York, Texas, Florida, and California. City staff had the opportunity to meet many vessel designers and manufacturers that are interested in the City ferry.

**Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure** –Infrastructure for a supercharger has been added to the Visitor's Center and will be commissioned and available to the public probably by April. BGE advises that it can take some time to schedule. This will be the first supercharger in Annapolis. BGE obtained funding for the infrastructure from the U. S. Department of Energy. BGE is considering additional charging sites in the City, including the Maritime Museum's Back Creek campus parking lot (which is where parking will likely be designated for Carr's Beach users). City Dock presents opportunities for fast-chargers (focus on

business and park patrons) and Level 2 chargers (focus on longer stay and downtown residents). Street chargers are an option, particularly for neighborhoods where off-street residential parking is limited.

**Electric Vehicle Fleet Assessment and Recommendations** – Climate Change Consulting LLC draft report under revision; final report is projected end of March 2024.

### **Stormwater and Restoration Projects**

Hawkins Cove – The site assessment is complete and a 30% design plan and report are complete. The first phase of the project wrapped up in January 2024 with Baylands Consultants & Designers and their contract has been extended to continue with final design and construction. DPW is the project lead but DPZ has NFWF funding to expand the work beyond the original concept of the living shoreline and immediate shore side improvements. Stakeholder meetings with HACA, ECA, and other non-profit groups are being held and a public meeting is scheduled for March.

Anne Arundel County Watershed Restoration Grants/Chesapeake BayTrust (CBT) - The CBT Anne Arundel Watershed Restoration Grant Program 2024 grant application deadline was March 1, 2024. CBT will begin review with input from City DPW and R/S. Preapplication site visits ended March 1. Awards will be made in May 2024. The City funds projects by homeowners, communities, faith-based organizations, schools, and non-profit organizations. Watershed planning, maintenance, design, and shovel-ready construction projects are considered. \$300,000 is available for projects in the City.

Carr's Beach Restoration and Master Plan – Rec & Parks is moving forward with a Master Plan for the new park with the addition of the Moore property. DNR and Resilience Authority have a concept plan for the shoreline restoration of the Park. R/S will continue to work with Rec & Parks on environmental and resilience considerations of the site and ferry landing potential.

Severn River Watershed Restoration/Resilience Authority – An application was submitted through the Resilience Authority for funding through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for resilience building projects in the Severn River watershed, including (1) an expansion of Robert Eades park, doubling its size, and a realignment of Clay Street to improve traffic safety, (2) shoreline stabilization at Jonas and Katherine Green Park (AA County), and (3) the construction of a living shoreline at St. Mary's Church and school. NOAA has indicated that it will fund the first two projects, which includes Robert Eades Park. Funding should be available summer 2024.

New Mapping Tool in Development - The Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Sea Grant Extension, and Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative are developing a new web-based mapping tool to help visualize flooding from sea level rise in Maryland. DNR intends that this tool be used by local governments, state agencies, NGOs, private consultants, and others to support decision-making about future flooding and adaptation options. The DCM R/S was invited to participate in a focus group to help develop this tool.

**Leaf Blower Legislation** – Passed 2/12/24. A flyer has been developed in English and Spanish for distribution to suppliers of leaf blowers and landscape companies this spring. Information will be posted on the City website. Further public outreach will be developed for distribution to residents during summer 2024.

**Bird City 2024 Event** (required annually for Bird City certification) – a photography contest ran through February; photos will be displayed in City Hall March and April 2024. Divisions for elementary school age, middle and high school age, and adult (over 18). Local bird photographer, Jack Turner and Arts in Public Places will serve as judge(s) and ribbons will be displayed on winning entries. Retail store, Wild Birds Unlimited donated prizes for the contest giveaways. A short reception for the photographers and will take place before the City Council meeting on March 26. Recertification for 2024-2025 submitted at the end of February 2024.

**Resilience Information Sharing Invitation with the Military and Experts** - The Office of Local Defense Communities and Cooperation (OLDCC) invited Annapolis to participate in an OLDCC Collaboration Forum on resilience information and resource sharing, troubleshooting, and engagement. The goal is to bring together OLDCC grantees, the military, and expert stakeholders on a quarterly basis to enhance installation and community resilience efforts through knowledge transfer, tools, data, and resources. The DCM for R/S will be participating in the first meeting on March 21.

**Public Education Campaigns** – campaigns improve the City environment, educate the public, and earn points towards the City's Bird City, Sustainable Maryland, Tree City, and Wildlife Areas certifications. 2023 campaigns: Plastic Free Annapolis (July), Bee-Friendly Annapolis (pollinators) (August) 2024 planned: Pet Waste, Pollinator Habitat - FY25.

**Stray Electrical Current at Truxtun Boat Ramp** - A marine electrical contractor was retained by the City and has started work to trace the source of the stray electrical current in the vicinity of the Truxtun Boat Ramp. The measurements and analyses should be completed in the next few weeks and a report should be completed shortly thereafter. The report and recommendations will be presented to City Council this spring during a work session. The boat ramp remains open to boat launching. The goal is to remedy the situation so that paddlers may again use the area to launch paddlecraft. However, until recommendations have been made and the City has made a decision, the "no kayaking", "no paddling" signs will remain in place for the public's safety. The charge that has been measured in the water is far above what is considered safe for water contact. Information on the City's website can be found via this link: <https://www.annapolis.gov/2042/Electric-Current-at-Truxtun-Park-Boat-Ra>