

RESILIENCE & SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS

OCTOBER 2024

LED Street Lights – R&S met with BGE and the City’s street light manufacturer (Deporter Dominick & Associates) to discuss the feasibility of converting streetlights to LED, including in the historic district which poses challenges due to the leaf design on top of the streetlight. Subsequently, designs were provided to meet historic requirements. John Tower advised regarding design characteristics and the hue of the light that are required for historic guidelines. Discussed with BGE was whether it is more cost effective for the City to transfer ownership of the streetlights to BGE or whether the City should retain ownership and make the needed repairs. Once a decision on ownership is made, the City can decide on energy efficiency grants to pursue to make the energy efficiency changes. More information is needed to make decisions.

Green House Gas Emissions Inventory and action plan – UPDATE: An RFP was prepared July 31. Waiting for the Office of Procurement to finalize the RFT form and release the RFP. 2008 inventories (based on 2006 data) will be updated, likely using 2020 data in one comprehensive document for (1) City facilities emissions and for (2) community emissions. Accompanying this inventory will be (3) a greenhouse gas/ pollution reduction action plan to reach the goals set in the 2040 comprehensive plan. Firms have been contacted to understand the likely costs and create a scope of work which was used to draft an RFP, expected to be released this month. Several firms will be notified to provide the City with their best proposal within 30 days.

Pollinator Habitat at the Solar Park - A kick off meeting was held at the end of September with the City’s contractor, Larry Weaner Landscape Associates (LWLA). A site visit will occur October 21 with DPW. Soil samples will be collected. Subsequently, geographic areas for planting will be determined. This firm has extensive experience working on native meadows in Annapolis and is experienced in installing meadows above soil caps. The design proposal is estimated to cost \$24,950, and the firm has estimated later implementation costs will be about \$6000 per acre for the 20-50 acres available for pollinator habitat planting. The site will go through planting phases over multiple years. Current funding is sufficient for this fiscal year’s activities (FY25), updates on funding will be provided as they become apparent. Novis Renewables (the solar park operator) may provide financial support, once it reviews the design and maintenance plan. This will allow a greater area to be planted in the first year and subsequent years.

City Electric Ferry Pilot Project - UPDATE: Staff worked with the Procurement Office to answer all vendor inquiries by September 27. Bids are due to the City October 8. The City will select top candidates for best and final project proposal from which a vendor will be selected. A decision will be made by July 30. Landing sites: This summer, EPA determined that there were no significant historical or environmental impacts posed by the proposed landing sites for the ferry project; therefore the City was awarded an exclusion from the National Environmental Policy Act process, which can be very lengthy and time consuming. McLaren Engineering is working on the design for the 5th street landing site. The pilot project will run a ferry/or ferries across Spa Creek, with weekend service (Friday – Sunday) and then will expand to other locations and an expanded schedule depending on ridership and other user feedback.

Anne Arundel County Electric Ferry Grant- On September 16, the FTA awarded a Passenger Ferry Grant to Anne Arundel County. This grant supports ferry systems in urbanized areas and can be used for vessels, terminals and infrastructure. The County grant of \$3,895 million will be used to purchase vessels for new ferry service between Annapolis, Baltimore, and Matapeake Park (a public park where the former Chesapeake Bay ferry landing is located on Kent Island, Queen Anne's County). Existing terminals will be utilized. As part of the Maryland delegation trip to Sweden, the group toured the Candela hydrofoil factory in Stockholm. The County is considering using such a hydrofoil as part of the County ferry system.

The manufacturer of the Candela hydrofoil invited the City Manager and staff for a sea trial of one of its hydrofoils in Annapolis on October 8. The Deputy City Manager for R&S, Harbormaster Staff, and the Director of DOT will participate.

Conservation Easements -R&S is working with the Annapolis Conservancy Board to improve the accuracy of the conservation easement online resources. The Maryland Reentry Resource Center (MRRC) is organizing campaigns to reintroduce former inmates to civic environmental work (including clearing invasive plants) but became concerned about the status and access to properties encumbered by city conservation easements. Working with a Chesapeake Climate and Conservation Corps intern, MRRC compiled a comprehensive list of issues with easements based on the list of easements listed on the City's website. The Environmental Programs Coordinator commented on needed improvements and worked with the OOL, DPW and DPZ to find additional information on some of the easements. This information was provided to the Conservancy Board for further action in updating the information connected to easements such as deeds, plats, and GIS mapping.

Resilience Plan - R&S is developing an outline for a resilience plan based on the City's projects and plans that focus and touch upon resilience and the environment, including the comprehensive plan, the hazard mitigation plan, transportation plans, bicycling and pedestrian plans, and capital improvement plans. The outline will be shared with staff, the Environmental Matters Steering Committee and Environmental Commission before proceeding to drafting a resilience plan based on these projects, studies, and plans. UPDATE: We project his outline will be ready in draft form by mid-November.

Composting

1) PUMPKIN SMASH! Annapolis Compost is coordinating with DPW and Rec and Parks to conduct a November(on weekends) "Pumpkin Smash" - an event where residents can bring left over pumpkins to smash pumpkins on tarps. It's a fun way to encourage composting and reduce the burden on food scraps haulers by condensing the food scraps before pick up.

2) The Department of Public Works will extend composting to two additional departments, but a "champion" must be designated for each department that will coordinate with DPW/Annapolis Compost to ensure that receptacles are emptied and located appropriately for pick up. Gorman and City Hall may be candidates since they have designated break rooms that can house composting bins. R&S is gathering information to start this process.

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. Composting may be brought to other City

departments. DOT considers participation high among employees. Status: Building “champions” for City Hall and Gorman will be identified in the fall of 2024.

Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

Maryland Clean Energy Center (MCEC) - Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Round 2 application - Annapolis R&S has provided an analysis to MCEC in collaboration with BGE and VoltPost to submit 18 City locations for public L2 EV charging stations on street poles at no cost to the City by way of the USDOT Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) grant opportunity. Voltpost functions as the sub recipient of any award provided to MCEC. Sites submitted are light posts owned mostly by BGE and are street parking locations near multi-unit residential buildings without adequate parking, one on West Street, and none in the historic district. Awards will likely be announced in early 2025.

Department of Energy (DOE) and Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) Funds -

In late September, the City applied to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) for \$76,400 (allocated to Annapolis) of funding under a voucher program for energy infrastructure. Under this program, funds may be used for technical assistance, fleet purchases, charging infrastructure, and other energy related projects. Funding decisions will be made Winter 2024/2025.

Applied for voucher in the full amount for Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) at the Taylor Avenue Police Department, Pip Moyer Recreation Center, 25 Shaw Street (if acquired), 39 Hudson Street, and the Department of Transportation. The application will leverage BGE incentives for maximum return, and will include battery backups that can be used for emergency and other uses. If funds are not fully utilized, excess funds will go towards street light conversion from pressurized sodium or mercury to LED. R&S coordinated the application with the Directors of all participating departments.

R&S worked with department staff to assess current public charging and private charging to determine Department needs and public needs if funds are not used completely for City facilities.

Rapid Charger - The City’s first rapid charger (150 kilowatts) was added at the Visitor’s Center in July during a ribbon cutting hosted by BGE, VAAAC and the City of Annapolis. 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 stays and downtown residents). Street chargers are an option, particularly for neighborhoods where off-street residential parking is limited. BGE is interested in exploring utility pole charging with the City.

Electric Vehicle Fleet Assessment and Recommendations

Staff met recently with the City Fleet Manager and the Police Chief to learn where there are departmental obstacles to purchasing electric vehicles and plug in electric vehicles. The funding coming from the federal government through the state government, increased supply of vehicles, and lower prices of vehicles are helping the City achieve the transition of the City’s fleet to EV vehicles. The police chief is interested in supporting his police officers with EV vehicles and home charging infrastructure.

EV and Alternative Fuel Fleet Inventory and Recommendations - Climate Change Consulting provided a draft report in 2024. It underwent directed revisions. The consultant was ill for an extended period of time. R&S will complete the report this fall with the necessary revisions and updates.

Stormwater and Restoration Projects

Hawkins Cove – Baylands Consultants & Designers, Inc. is working on final design and construction documents. Additional funding has been applied for through FEMA and is being explored with DNR. Army Corps of Engineers permitting of the living shoreline may not be completed until 2026. Meanwhile, the City is moving forward with 100 percent design of the project AND with the design and permitting of the improved trail/boardwalk system through the upland area of the project to connect it to Primrose Street and Truxtun Park and the community around Harbor House. This trail work and activation of the upland area of Hawkins Cove, through removal of invasive plants and potentially some seating areas, should start to move in early 2025. The shoreline work will likely start in 2026. Currently, only \$75,000 is available for dredging; however, staff is researching potential sources of supplementary funding.

Anne Arundel County Watershed Restoration Grants/Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT)

Project Summary: The City provides \$300,000 from the Watershed Restoration Fund for CBT grant funded stormwater control and restoration projects on private property. The program is available to homeowners, communities, faith-based organizations, schools, and non-profit organizations. Watershed assessments, planning, maintenance, and construction projects will be considered. A CBT/City webinar for potential applicants was held in November and may be found on the CBT website. *NOTE: In 2024, \$322,118 was awarded. Some unused funds from 2023 were rolled over into 2024.*

Georgetown East Townhouse Community - Severn River Association, Inc. - \$26,157 for the implementation of micro-bioretenion cells in a residential *community* in Annapolis, Maryland. The primary objectives will be to reduce pollutant loads entering Back Creek on the Severn River, attenuate flooding within the community common spaces, and improve habitat for pollinators through the replacement of turf grass with native plants.

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay - \$50,000 for the development of a cost-share maintenance program to restore existing best management practices (BMPs) in communities within Annapolis, Maryland. The goal of this project will be to improve the functionality of existing best management practices (BMPs) across communities in Annapolis so they can qualify for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System credits. The project will involve collaborating with the Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council to restore existing BMPs and educating property owners, facilities staff, and community members on proper maintenance techniques to promote the longevity of their BMPs.

Wardour Community - Severn River Association, Inc. - \$245,961 for the implementation of a stormwater best management practice (BMP) in a residential community in Annapolis, Maryland. The primary objectives of this project will be to improve water quality in the Severn River, protect nearby oyster restoration reefs from runoff and siltation, and improve the Wardour community's resilience to climate change through the creation of a step pool conveyance system.

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.

Plastic Bag Ban – An informational web page has been created, R&S has requested sample reusable bags from potential providers and will begin an outreach campaign in October 2024 that will include giving away of City of Annapolis branded reusable bags. Potential partners for distribution of bags include community service providers, food pantries, and churches. Approximately \$5,000 from the Mayor's budget is available for this work.

Implementation of Gas powered Leaf Blower Ban - R&S has sent out mailers to all Anne Arundel landscaping/lawn care businesses companies about the legislation (about 80 businesses) with a QR code to the new website about the new ordinance. The City posted flyers in businesses that carry blowers within City limits and nearby County businesses, such as Ace Hardware in Edgewater and Cape St. Claire, Home Depot in Parole, and Bowens in Riva. We also reached out several landscaping companies for feedback on the transition adjustments and learned that the financial burden of equipment was the greatest concern. R&S performed additional research on financial incentives and implementation in other Maryland counties. At the request of the Environmental Matters Steering Committee, a memorandum was prepared regarding financial assistance programs to ease the financial burden on businesses and residents.

Building Performance Standards Grant Funding through DOE - An application was submitted by the City and the Resilience Authority for a grant to the Department of Energy (DOE) for technical assistance in drafting and implementing a Building Energy & Resilience Performance Standard (BERPS) model code. Existing Building Performance Standards (BPS) are designed to reduce the greenhouse gas footprint of the existing building stock, but only apply to larger buildings, not smaller buildings and residential buildings most prone to damage from natural disasters. This project seeks to address these policy shortcomings by designing and implementing BERPS for smaller buildings with an emphasis on jurisdictions with significant climate risk. This will not require the City to revise its code but will provide a framework and technical assistance to guide revisions to the City Code. (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Resilient and Efficient Codes Implementation (RECI)) Status: Waiting for DOE funding decision.

Climate Change Litigation, City of Annapolis vs. B.P. et al. - The lawsuit is in the discovery stage where parties request information from one another. This information will help each side determine whether the lawsuit should settle or proceed to trial. (The many motions by defendants to try to dismiss the over 25 cases brought by cities and counties throughout the U.S. or remove lawsuits from state courts to less favorable federal courts had all been unsuccessful until the recent dismissal of the Baltimore lawsuit in July. The last news was that Baltimore is considering an appeal.)

Case summary: This is a lawsuit brought by the City of Annapolis against fossil fuel companies and their trade association, the American Petroleum Institute, seeking damages and other relief based on the companies' alleged concealment of information about their products' contributions to climate change and climate change impacts.

Public Education Campaigns

Bioblitz! – In September, R&S collaborated with Parks and Recreation by hosting a September (month long) bioblitz via INaturalist. 281 observations were posted by 56 observers. Flyers were posted around the city dock area, at Truxton Park, and Acton’s Cove. Social media, and a press release were shared by Naptown scoop. A bioblitz is an activity to identify biodiversity in a particular area. Link to bioblitz: <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/parks-for-pollinators-annapolis-2024>

Walktober – October is WALKTOBER, a month where the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and other partner agencies promote pedestrian safety, health, and commuting options in current walk programs and initiatives. 1) R&S will provide walking trail and health benefits of walking information via the City web site and social media during October and 2) R&S has reached out to the City pedestrian and bicycling staff person (DOT Community Engagement Administrator) to coordinate a walking event.