



STAFF AND STAFFING IMPACT REPORT ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

To: Mayor Jared Littmann

From: Yolanda Lewis, City Manager

Date: June 15, 2026

Subject: O-16-26: Forest Conservation — Definitions, Afforestation, Retention, and Mitigation Amendments

Purpose of legislation

The purpose of this legislation is to amend Chapter 21.71 (Forest Conservation) of the Code of the City of Annapolis to meet or exceed changes to the Forest Conservation Program mandated by the General Assembly in 2024 with the passage of HB1511 (Forest Conservation Act - Modifications). Local governments are required to review and update their local forest conservation programs by July 1, 2026. The state legislation adds definitions for "Degraded Forest," "Forest Land," "Planted Green Infrastructure," "Qualified Conservation," and "Tree Canopy"; amends the definition of "Stream buffer"; adds stricter afforestation requirements, exemptions for linear projects but not solar photovoltaic facilities (the state exempts), shifts from "no net loss" to "net forest gain", and provides public notice and comment procedures for the clearing of priority retention areas. It expands reforestation mitigation options; updates forest conservation fund contribution requirements; amends forest mitigation bank credit provisions to authorize the use of qualified conservation; and amends the annual report requirement and submission deadline.

Impact of legislation on operations

The impact on operations will be minimal as this legislation will be incorporated into our current forest conservation review process. There will be some additional staff time required for the new notification requirements and justification for clearing in a priority retention area.

Impact of legislation on staffing needs

There is no impact on staffing needs.

Prepared by Jacqueline Guild, Deputy City Manager for Resilience and Sustainability and Brian Adams, Urban Forester, Department of Planning & Zoning