



STAFF REPORT AND FISCAL IMPACT NOTE

Ordinance: O-27-18

Title: Forest Conservation No Net Loss

Date: October 2, 2018

STAFF REPORT

The ordinance proposes to amend the Forest Conservation requirements under Title 21. The proposed ordinance removes any credit toward tree conservation when property owners have exceeded the required thresholds based on the proposed land use as established in 21.71.090 A. Forest Conservation Threshold.

The purpose of the Ordinance is to maintain the City's current tree canopy percentage by establishing the concept of "No Net Loss." The ordinance is intended to prevent the continued loss of urban forest and assist the City in attaining its 50% Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) goal by 2036. The current UTC is estimated between 41-43%.

The concept allows for the removal of forested acreage but requires the applicant to fully offset the area of forest that is cleared above the established land use threshold. However, it eliminates the credits granted for retention of existing forest above the threshold.

In our review, we noted that the whereas clause related to the effective date of the ordinance does not clarify whether it applies to preliminary or final Forest Conservation Plans. If the ordinance applies to preliminary Forest Conservation Plans, staff will have to reevaluate any preliminary plan applications to determine if any changes needed. We cannot determine the impact of the additional workload.

Prepared by: Pete Gutwald, Director of Planning and Zoning

FISCAL IMPACT

We cannot determine the fiscal impact of this ordinance. The credits granted to owners in 21.71.090 A.3.ii of the City of Annapolis Code reduce the amount of reforestation required as a part of the development. The proposed changes eliminate the credit; therefore, requiring the developers to reforest additional acreage or contribute more to the Forest Conservation Fund.

Prepared by: Jodee Dickinson, Finance Director