City of Annapolis

Signature Copy

R-40-25

Equitable Public Water Access Plan
For the purpose of adopting the City of Annapolis Equitable Public Water Access Plan.

City Council of the
City of Annapolis

Resolution 40-25

Introduced by: Mayor Buckley
Co-sponsored by: Alderman Gay

A RESOLUTION concerning:

Equitable Public Water Access Plan

FOR the purpose of adopting the City of Annapolis Equitable Public Water Access Plan.

WHEREAS, The City of Annapolis is inextricably linked to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, which provide a multitude of social, cultural, environmental, and economic benefits to the City; and

WHEREAS, Annapolis' public waterfront represents only a small fraction of the total waterfront of the city; and

WHEREAS, The benefits of water access are not equitably distributed to Annapolis residents: and

WHEREAS, The City's comprehensive plan, Annapolis Ahead 2040, which was adopted in July 2024, includes the goals "prioritize equitable public water access" and "expand park facilities and the connections to them, to create equitable access for all"; and

WHEREAS, The City Council, through Resolution R-46-20, established a Maritime Task Force charged with conducting a comprehensive review of the waterfront maritime zoning districts in the City of Annapolis and making recommendations to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, The Maritime Task Force recommended a "Citywide Public Water Access Study" as a short-term action in the Maritime Task Force Strategy Report issued in July 2021; and

WHEREAS, The Chesapeake Superintendent for the National Park Service served on the Maritime Task Force and provided funding for the "Citywide Public Water Access Study" as recommended by the Maritime Task Force; and

WHEREAS, The planning process for the Equitable Public Water Access Plan commenced in 2023 to address the recommendation of the Maritime Task Force; and

WHEREAS, The planning process included a thorough review and assessment of all existing public water access locations in the city, the participation of many residents, community partners, and other stakeholders through multiple public meetings, focus groups, and a community survey; and

WHEREAS, The Equitable Public Water Access Plan includes 123 recommendations for physical improvements to existing public water access locations for expanded public water access, and new or improved policies, programs, and procedures; and

WHEREAS, The FY26 Capital Budget includes 26 projects from the Equitable Public Water Access Plan, which will improve or expand public water access in the short term;

~~**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that the City of Annapolis adopts the Equitable Public Water Access Plan, and commits itself to pursue the Plan's goals and recommended actions.~~

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL that:

1. The City of Annapolis adopts the Equitable Public Water Access Plan with the following amendments:

   a. On page xii, in the last paragraph, strike the last sentence and insert the following:

   "Potential program partners include non-profit organizations such as the Annapolis Maritime Museum, Blacks of the Chesapeake, the Severn River Association, the Severn River Keeper, and Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB). The CRAB Adaptive Boating Center on Back Creek is a nationally recognized model of accessible water access, providing specialized programming for people with disabilities, wounded veterans, seniors, and underserved youth. Its inclusion underscores how mission-driven facilities can complement broader public access initiatives while advancing the City's equity and accessibility goals."

b. On page 12, under section 2.1 "Public water access success stories", insert the following paragraph:

> **"CRAB Adaptive Boating Center (Adaptive Boating Model)** — The CRAB Adaptive Boating Center, located on Back Creek, is a purpose-built, universally accessible facility featuring a raised floating dock, transfer lifts, boarding ramps, adaptive boarding equipment, an accessible learning center, and program boats that enable boating and therapy programs free of charge for people with disabilities, seniors, wounded warriors and veterans, and under-served youth. While most waterfront sites in the region remain inaccessible to many in these groups, CRAB stands out as a flagship facility—setting a new standard for inclusion and equal access to the Chesapeake Bay. Serving approximately 1,800 guests last year and partnering with regional nonprofits to expand opportunities, CRAB demonstrates the incredible strides Annapolis has made in providing truly equal public water access. The City's investments, alongside private fundraising, make CRAB not only a best-practice example for mission-driven, accessible water access, but also a community asset and a model for others to follow. Having such a premiere facility in Annapolis is a testament to our commitment to equity and the belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to experience the therapeutic and recreational benefits of the Bay."

c. Remove & replace the existing text for CRAB in 3.5, "Back Creek Sites" with the following:

> **Protect and strengthen mission-specific access at CRAB Adaptive Boating Center** — Recognize CRAB's lease, program purpose, and specialized infrastructure in site-specific recommendations. Prioritize coordination with CRAB on any Back Creek improvements, schedule a formal site visit for Planning staff and the Maritime Task Force, and ensure any public-access changes preserve CRAB's operational needs and reserved programming for priority audiences.

d. On page 42 (and page xii of Executive Summary), under the "goals" section, insert the following:

> **Goal 7: Preserve and support mission-specific accessible facilities**: Ensure Plan objectives account for facilities that serve priority audiences (people with disabilities, wounded veterans, seniors, underserved youth) and protect existing leases and program operations while expanding complementary public access options

e. On page 90, strike the existing CRAB action item and replace it with the text below:

> - **Administrative actions**: request a formal meeting and site tour for Planning and Zoning staff, the Maritime Advisory Board, and the new City Council.

2. The City Council commits itself to pursue the Plan's goals and recommended actions.

AND BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL that this resolution shall take effect upon passage.

ADOPTED this 27th day of October 2025.

Aye: 8 Mayor Buckley, Alderman Huntley, Alderwoman O'Neill, Alderwoman Finlayson, Alderman Schandelmeier, Alderman Gay, Alderman Savidge and Alderman Arnett

Absent: 1 Alderwoman Pindell Charles

THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL _____ Date: 11/10/25
Gavin Buckley, Mayor

ATTEST _____ Date: 11/10/25
Regina Watkins-Eldridge, MMC,
City Clerk