

Critical Area Commission

STAFF REPORT

February 25, 2026

APPLICANT: Worcester County

PROPOSAL: Mapping Mistake Map Amendment - 9537 Croppers Island Road

JURISDICTION: Worcester County

COMMISSION ACTION: Concurrence with Chair's Determination of Refinement

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Katie Hayden

**APPLICABLE LAW/
REGULATIONS:** Natural Resources Article §8-1809(j)(2)
Code of Maryland Regulations 27.01.02.03

DISCUSSION:

On November 18, 2025, the County Commissioners of Worcester County approved Resolution 25-29, to reclassify 30.7 acres of the County's Critical Area from Resource Conservation Area (RCA) to Intensely Developed Area (IDA) on the grounds of a mistake at the time the Critical Area was originally mapped. The property is located at 9537 Croppers Island Road in Newark MD (Attachment 1). Commission staff recommends concurrence by the Critical Area Commission with the Chair to process this map amendment as a refinement and further recommends that the Chair approve the map amendment as proposed.

Mapping Mistake Requirements

In order to justify a Critical Area mapping mistake, evidence must be provided that clearly demonstrates a mistake based on facts or factors at the time of original mapping.

Natural Resources Article 8-1809 (j)(2) states that a change to a Critical Area designation may be granted by a local approving authority if the proposed Critical Area classification:

1. Conforms to the State Critical Area mapping criteria;
2. (a) Is based on land uses or natural features in existence as of June 1, 2002 in the Atlantic Coastal Bays; or (b) For areas included in the Critical Area due to remapping, is based on land uses or natural features in existence at the time of the remapping;
3. Follows the local jurisdiction's documented mapping methodology for Critical Area classifications at the time of original program adoption; and

4. Is consistent with the purposes, policies, and goals of this subtitle and all criteria of the Commission.

COMAR 27.01.02.03 lists the State Critical Area mapping criteria for IDAs:

Intensely Developed Areas are those areas where residential, commercial, institutional, or industrial developed land uses predominate, and where relatively little natural habitat occurs. This land classification shall have at least one of the following features:

1. Housing density is at least four dwelling units per acre;
2. Industrial, institutional, or commercial uses are concentrated in the area; or
3. Public sewer and water collection and distribution systems are currently serving the area and housing density is greater than three dwelling units per acre.

Property Information

The proposed reclassification is currently part of a 151.3-acre property (Island Resort Park, Inc) that is used as an RV campground. This property was granted a special exception by the Worcester County Board of Appeals to be used as an RV campground in April of 2002. The County's Critical Area Program and maps were adopted later in June 2002. At the time of original mapping, other RV campgrounds in Worcester County located within the Critical Area were mapped IDA (Attachment 2).

Of the 151.3-acre parcel, 30.7 acres within the RCA were proposed for use as an RV park. The 30.7 acres exclude the Bassett Creek riparian areas, areas adjacent to single family residences, existing Forest Conversation Easements, and Wetlands of Special State Concern on site.

Based on the following evidence provided by the County, the 30.7 acres approved for use as an RV park were mistakenly mapped as RCA although it met the characteristics of an IDA:

1. Prior to the date of local program and map adoption (June 1, 2002), the Worcester County Board of Zoning Appeals granted a special exception for the property to support a commercial use (i.e., an RV campground);
2. Other RV campgrounds in the Critical Area were mapped as IDA at the time of the original Critical Area program adoption (Attachment 2); and
3. Mapping the 30.7 acres as IDA conforms with Worcester County's Critical Area mapping methodology at the time of program adoption.

Growth Allocation Total

This mapping mistake is one of three mistakes that will be presented before the Commission. If all are approved, the total growth allocation available within the Worcester County Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area will be reduced by 1.97 acres (5% of all acreage that will be converted from RCA to either LDA or IDA). This mapping mistake will contribute 1.53 acres to this total (5% of the 30.7 acres converted from RCA to IDA).

Recommendation

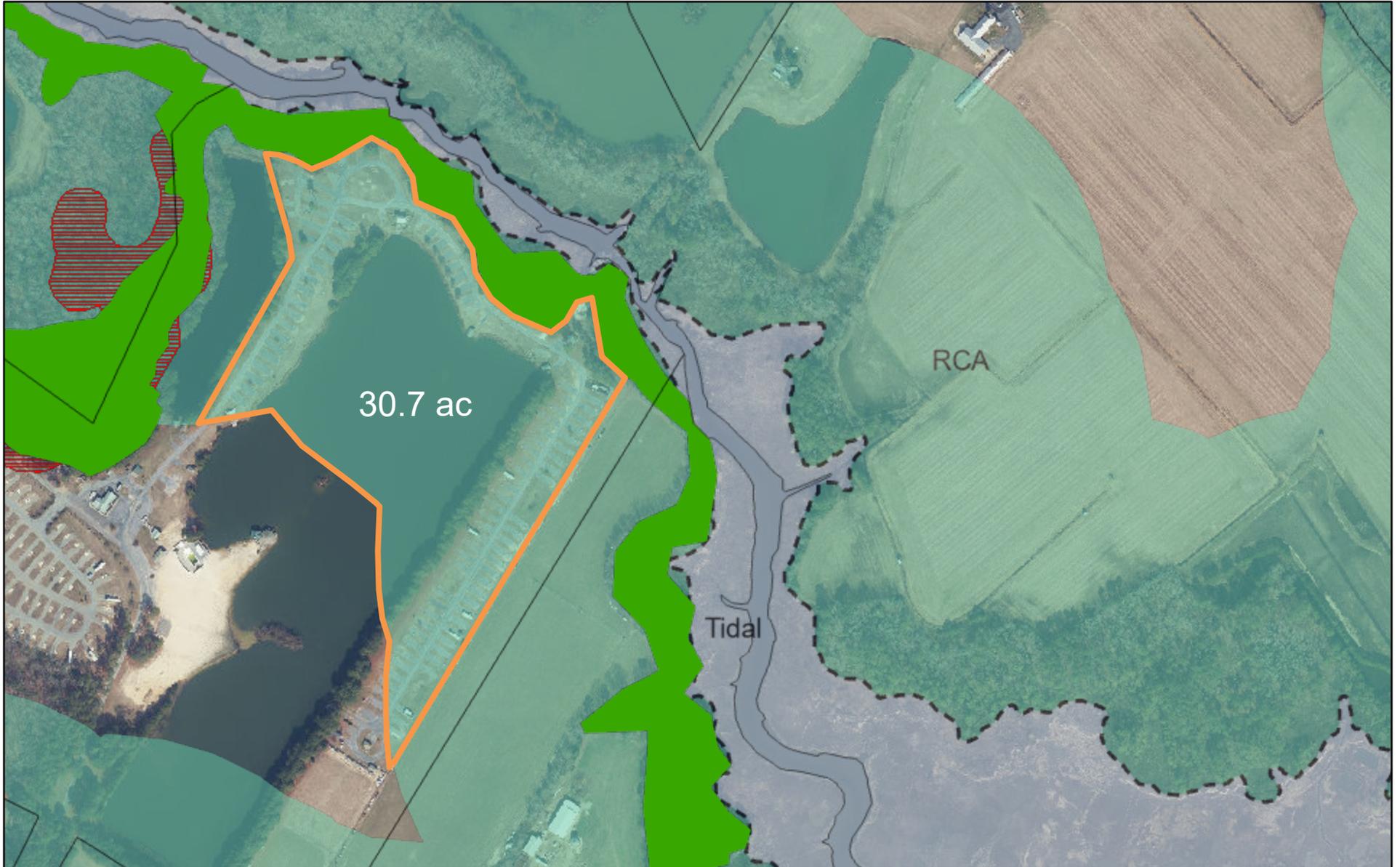
Given the above evidence, this mapping amendment is consistent with the purposes, policies, and

goals of the Critical Area Law and Criteria; therefore, Commission staff recommend that the Program Committee concur with the Chair's determination that this mapping amendment be processed as a refinement to Worcester County's Critical Area program. Furthermore, staff recommends the Chair approve the mapping amendment as proposed.

Attachments

1. 9537 Croppers Island Map Amendment
2. Worcester County IDA Campgrounds

9537 Croppers Island - Critical Area Remapping

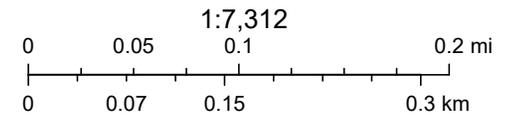


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- Override 1
- Property Lines
- Forest Conservation Easements
- Wetlands of Special State Concern

- Critical Area - MD Coastal Bays
- LDA - Limited Development Areas
 - RCA - Resource Conservation Areas
 - Tidally Influenced Areas

- 2024_Worcester_MG4_20to1_Mosaic_Feet.sid
- Red: Band_1
 - Green: Band_2
 - Blue: Band_3

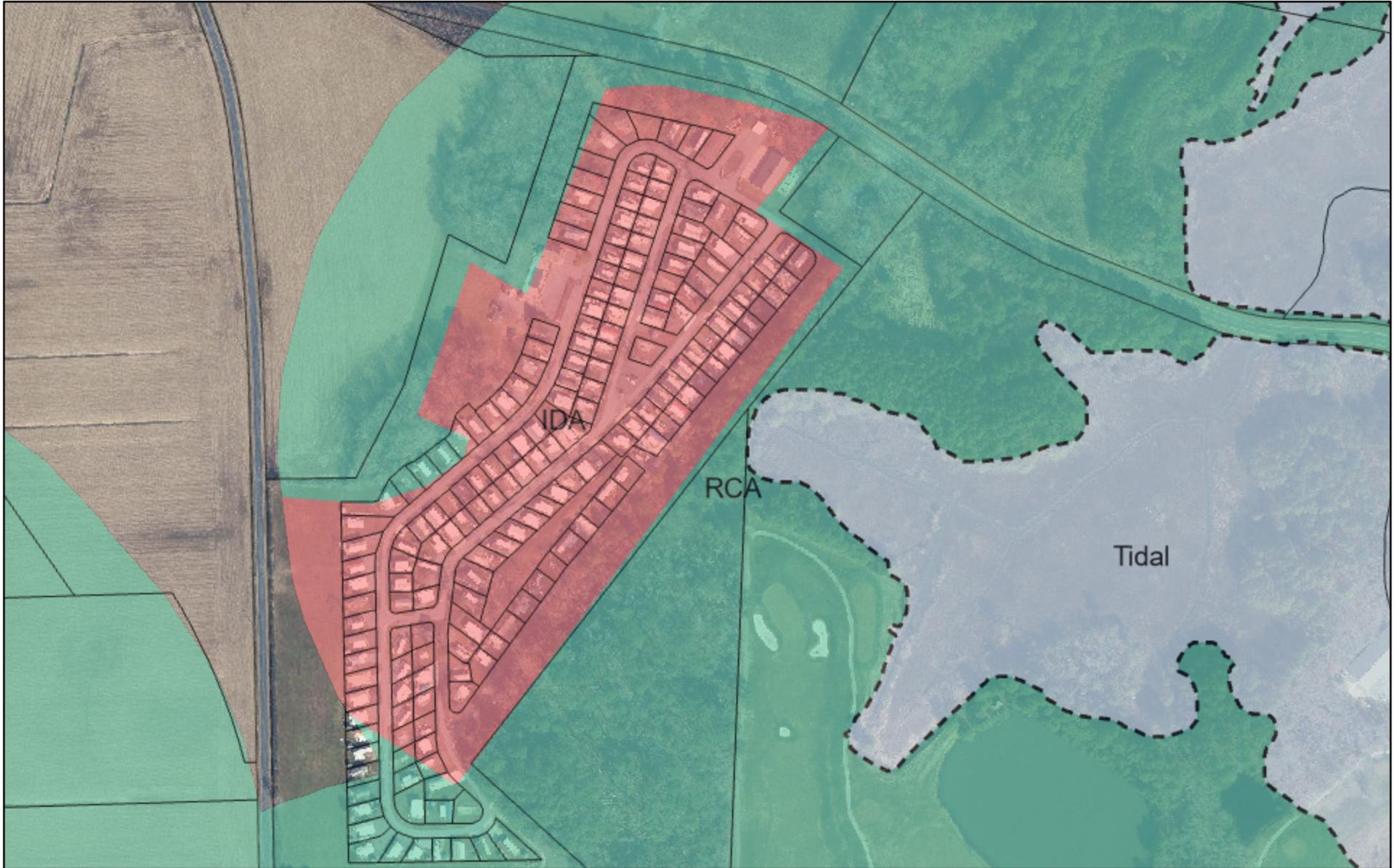


Originally, Spatial Systems Associates, Inc.
Worcester County GIS. Since receiving back from SSA, Worcester County

Attachment 4

Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS
This map is intended for planning purposes only and not for regulatory application.

Bali Hi Park - IDA

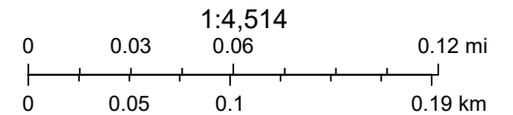


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- Property Lines
- Critical Area - MD Coastal Bays
- IDA - Intensely Development Areas

- RCA - Resource Conservation Areas
- Tidally Influenced Areas

- 2024_Worcester_MG4_20to1_Mosaic_Feet.sid
- Red: Band_1
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 - Blue: Band_3

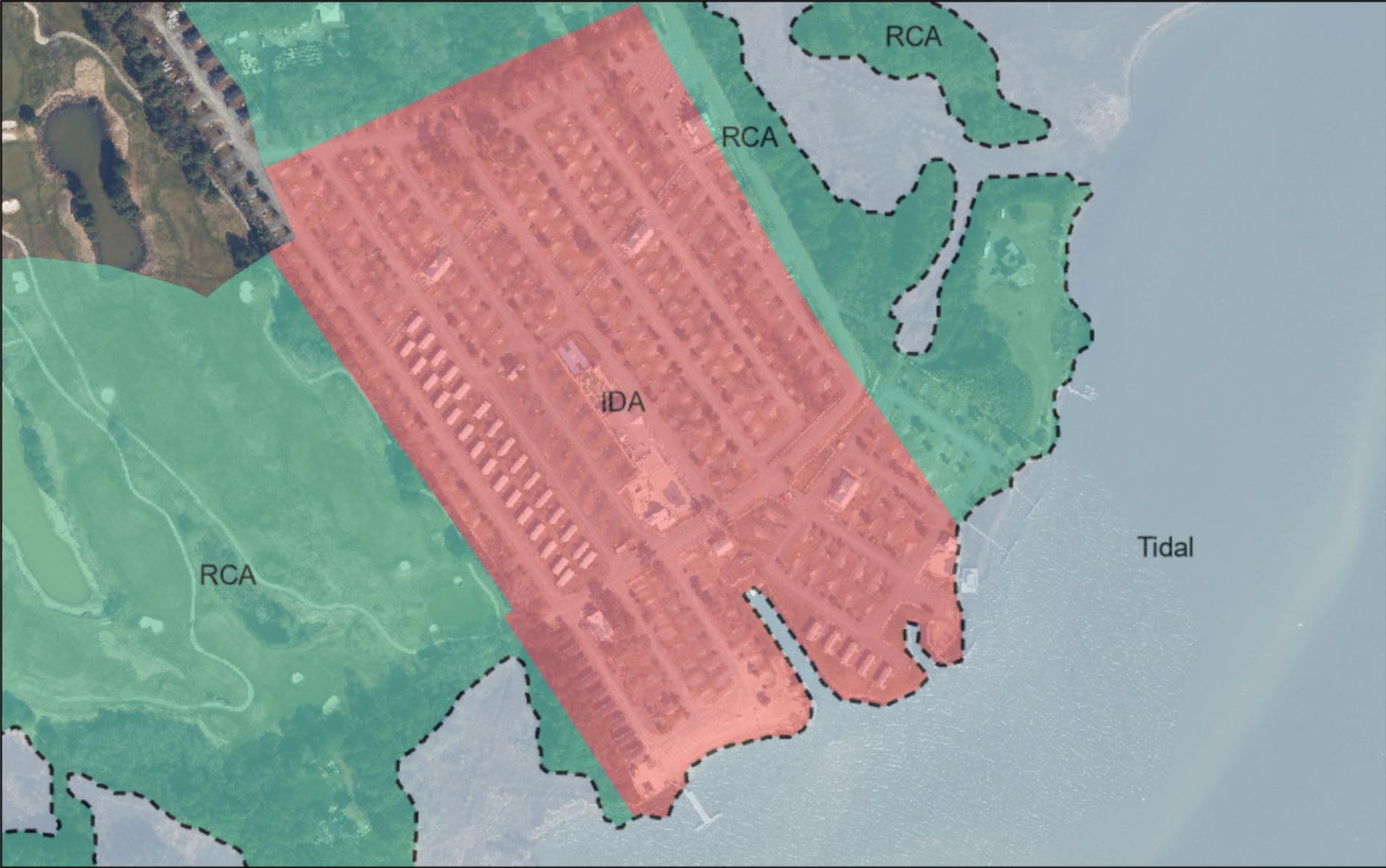


Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, NGA, USGS

Attachment 5

Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS
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Castaways - IDA

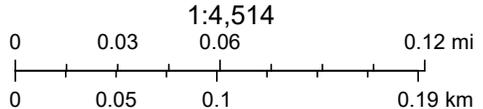


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- Critical Area - MD Coastal Bays
- IDA - Intensely Development Areas
- RCA - Resource Conservation Areas

Tidally Influenced Areas

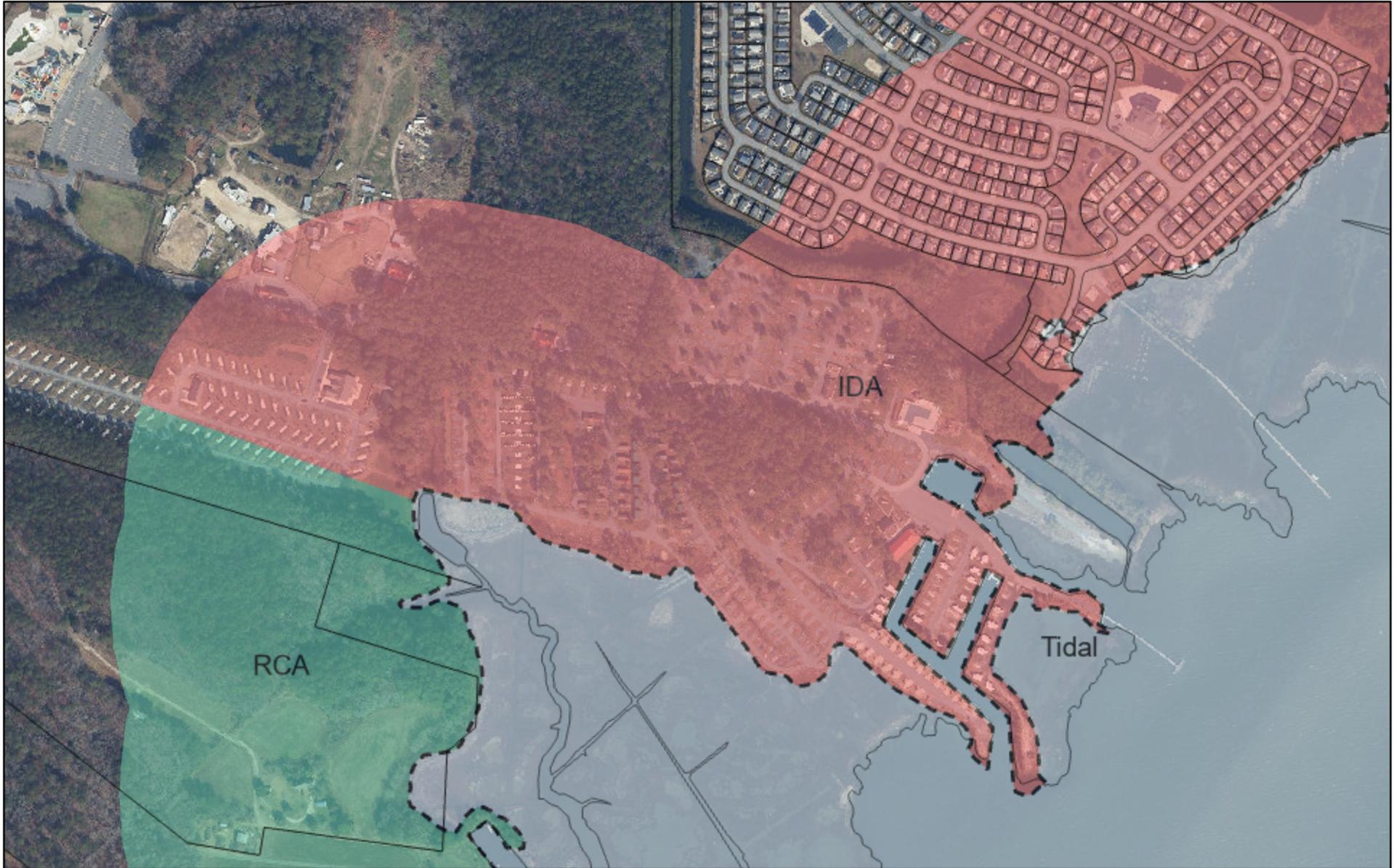
- 2024_Worcester_MG4_20to1_Mosaic_Feet.sid
- Red: Band_1
- Green: Band_2
- Blue: Band_3



Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, NGA, USGS

Attachment 6

Frontier Town - IDA



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Property Lines

Critical Area - MD Coastal Bays

IDA - Intensely Development Areas

RCA - Resource Conservation Areas

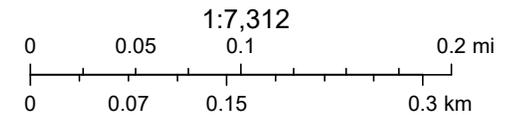
Tidally Influenced Areas

2024_Worcester_MG4_20to1_Mosaic_Feet.sid

Red: Band_1

Green: Band_2

Blue: Band_3



Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, Intermap, NGA, USGS

Attachment 7

Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS
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