Worcester County
Department of Recreation & Parks

Tom Perlozzo, Director

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410.632.2144 • Fax: 410.632.1585

June 16, 2020

Carrie Lhotsky
Tawes State Office Bldg.
580 Taylor Ave., E-4
Annapolis, MD 21401-2397

Dear Carrie:

Enclosed you will find the FY21 Annual Program for your review and approval.

In addition to the FY21 Annual Program, we have included four Additional Funding Applications. The applications and funding requests are below:

Northern Worcester Athletic Complex – Multi-Purpose Field & Parking Development – 6818-23-260 – Additional Funds $255,870

1. The following projects are to be closed and the funds transferred into this account:
   John Walter Smith Park – Tennis Court Painting – 6695-23-249 / $342.00
   John Walter Smith Park – Disc Golf Course Expansion – 6696-23-250 / $212.23
   John Walter Smith Park – Multi-Purpose Field Development – 6814-23-256 / $315.97
   Bishopville Water Front Park – Development #1 – 6815-23-257 / $80,000
   ($40,000 was already transferred to JWS – Field Upgrade & Lighting Replacement)
   The total for the above transfers is $80,870.
2. In addition to the aforementioned funds ($80,870), please encumber an additional **$175,000**. This will bring the total of additional funds to **$255,870.**

Newtown Park – Fencing & Fishing Pier – 6989-23-265 – Additional Funds - $275,000

1. Please encumber & transfer $275,000 from Worcester County's current development allocation.

John Walter Smith Park – Fencing & Landscaping – Additional Funds - $200,000

1. Please encumber & transfer $200,000 from Worcester County's current development allocation.

Showell Park – Bathroom & Concession Stand – Additional Funds - $155,000

1. Please encumber & transfer $155,000 from Worcester County's current development allocation.

The grand total to be encumbered is **$805,000.** According to our conversation today, as of July 1, 2020, Worcester County will have $934,590.59 available for development. Could you please encumber these funds $805,000 out of this available balance. After this request is approved the unencumbered balance will be $129,590.59.

I appreciate your consideration of this request. Thank you, in advance, for your assistance.

Regards,

Tom Perlozzo
Director

cc: Harold Higgins Hillary Bell Kelly Rados Lisa Gebhardt Bill Rodriguez

PART 1 – INTRODUCTION

The Worcester County Department of Recreation & Parks is designated by the Worcester County Commissioners to administer the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Program Open Space. Worcester County's priorities over the next five years, as determined by the 2017 Worcester County Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (Revised 2018), will be the acquisition and development of additional recreational lands in the northern part of the county, as well as, an emphasis on the modernizing and updating of existing facilities.

In addition to county sponsored development and acquisition projects, the Worcester County Commissioners are cognizant of the importance of open space throughout the County municipalities and have in the past-allocated funds, when available, to each municipality for parkland development projects for Worcester County citizens. In years where funds are available for allocation to municipalities, the Worcester County Department of Recreation & Parks department's representatives along with the Worcester County Recreation & Parks Advisory Board members may host a budget request meeting with the municipality representatives. After the Worcester County Program Open Space Liaison presents the proposed Program Open Space Annual Program, the Advisory Board along with the Director, who serves as the Worcester County Liaison to Program Open Space make recommendations to the Worcester County Commissioners for the Program Open Space Annual Program and the Program Open Space (POS) funding allocations. The commissioners make the final decision for the County POS Annual Program and the Worcester County and municipality park improvement and acquisition allocations.

The following items are provided to describe Worcester County's growth management procedures for parks and recreation programs. These items are:

1. Major Parks in Growth Areas.
2. Preserve and Protect Sensitive Areas.
3. Rural Area Park Development.
4. Environment Protection and Stewardship.
5. Natural Resource Conservation.
6. Parks and Recreation Contributions to Economic Growth.
7. Infrastructure.
8. Partnerships Create Financial Resources.

Major Parks in Growth Areas:

The Worcester County Department of Recreation & Parks successfully located their parks in planned population centers throughout the county. Through strategic planning, the larger county sports complexes have been positioned close to the growth areas and population centers. Additionally, Ocean City and Ocean Pines have public recreational facilities and programs that support recreation in these densely populated areas of the county. Concurrently, small parks are easily accessible to the rural areas and surrounding communities.

While parks are maintained throughout the county, the majority of the parks are located in the northern part of Worcester County where most growth is concentrated. Major park development has taken place at all county parks, particularly the parks located in the northern part of Worcester County.

Preserve and Protect Sensitive Areas:
The park planning and master planning process includes sensitive areas protection. Invasive plant species are managed to protect native flora. Where appropriate, parkland is managed to encourage natural habitat. Prudent stewardship will ensure that the county's parks and natural resources are protected for many generations to come.

Rural Area Park Development:
Through Program Open Space funding, the county has acquired and preserved open land in existing population centers in the rural areas. These smaller county parks located in the county's rural villages, such as Bishopville, Girdletree, Newark, Stockton and Whaleyville; help to maintain the rural quality of these less populated areas while also meeting the recreational needs of the citizens in the immediate surrounding areas. These parks fall within the limits of the established villages and can easily be reached with a minimal walk or bicycle ride.

Environment Protection and Stewardship:
The protection of the Chesapeake Bay has been an on-going priority of Worcester County. Protection of Maryland Coastal Bays has also been incorporated into Worcester County's long-term vision. Acquisition and protection of waterfront properties has been a high priority in the fast-developing northern portion of the county. Three bayfront parks have been acquired since 2003.

In 2003, the land for Homer Gudelsky Park, a passive beach park located on the Sinepuxent Bay was donated to Worcester County by the Gudelsky family. This park overlooks Ocean City and is locally known as an excellent fishing spot. In the agreement to convey this park to Worcester County, permission was granted to deposit spoil material from the Shantytown Channel onto the park. The park suffers considerable erosion throughout the year and the annual replenishment of sand is necessary for the park to maintain its existence.

Providing coastal stewardship was an essential factor in the decision of Worcester County to lease the Isle of Wight Park, as of July 2004, from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. This park is primarily surrounded by water that affords visitors the opportunity to participate in fishing, crabbing, clamming, kayaking and canoeing, along with picnicking and exploring this natural island on the Isle of Wight Bay.

The 2006 addition of a 574-acre parcel, Greys Creek Nature Park, located in northern Worcester County affords the County a unique opportunity to conserve one of the most ecologically significant properties along Maryland Coastal Bays. The property was purchased with $6,500,000 of State and local Program Open Space funds and titled in the name of Worcester County to be managed as a passive recreation park and environmental

education complex by the Worcester County Department of Recreation & Parks. Located at the top of Maryland Coastal Bays, the property offers views of Ocean City's skyline across the Assawoman Bay. This acquisition will protect coastal habitat and eliminate the threat of residential and commercial development on a property that sits at the center of one of the most biologically diverse areas in the mid-Atlantic region. This property is planned to serve as a base for environmental education programs, as well as a passive park with walking/hiking trails. Area schoolchildren will be able to utilize this site as a hands-on classroom for nature study.

Three intergovernmental programs – Chesapeake Bay Tributaries Strategies Implementation Team, the Ocean City and Vicinity Water Resources Feasibility Study, and the Maryland Coastal Bays Program – have been significant elements in the stewardship of our waterways. Worcester County faces a momentous challenge to protect these valuable water resources for all citizens of Maryland while also affording recreational opportunities.

Natural Resource Conservation:
Worcester County has strategically located parks in close proximity to existing developed areas and growth centers throughout the county. It is through this type of careful park planning that the county can continue to conserve resources while achieving efficient development patterns.

Since 2000, Worcester County has aggressively pursued funding for land protection in areas not targeted for growth, and over 8,500 acres have been permanently protected.

In March 2010, Worcester County was awarded $299,692 by the Maryland Energy Administration. These grant funds were utilized to provide engineering, construction, and installation of a complete Grid-Tied Photovoltaic System adjacent to the Recreation Center, which will supplement energy to the Recreation Center. This will help the County conserve energy.

Parks and Recreation Contributions to Economic Growth:
Worcester County understands the contribution of accessible recreational facilities to the economic growth of the county. The Worcester County Recreation Center opened its doors to the public on July 11, 2005, effectively creating a new base for all Worcester County Department of Recreation & Parks programming operations to be administered. In 2016, a 6,000 square foot addition to the Recreation Center was completed. This addition houses a multipurpose room, conference room, weight room, aerobic workout room, and additional bathrooms. These new areas provide more programming options to be provided to our participants. This facility is a major recreational facility drawing users from both within and outside of the county. The facility also provides an economic boost to both existing and new businesses in Snow Hill and Worcester County.

Land and water recreational programs provided by the county attract visitors who contribute to the local economy.

Infrastructure:
Worcester County has identified both supply and demand of recreation facilities and acreage to serve current needs and anticipated future needs through 2022. However, the county recognizes the "need" and has identified recreational lands in the northern portion of the county where growth is concentrated.

Partnerships Create Financial Resources:
Worcester County relies on effective and innovative strategies and partnerships. Support and collaboration from Program Open Space, the Worcester County Commissioners' capital improvement and park improvement funds, and additional grant funding are all financial resources that are critical elements in assuring optimum use of the financial resources that are available for parks and natural resource protection. In addition, it should be noted that Worcester County requires that new development include active and/or passive recreation and nature areas in support of the environment.

PART 2 – 2021 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

GREYS CREEK NATURE PARK – BISHOPVILLE, MARYLAND

Greys Creek Nature Park is a 574-acre parcel of land located in Bishopville, Maryland. The establishment of this park has protected significant coastal habitat and eliminated the threat of high-density residential or commercial development on a property that sits at the center of one of the most biologically diverse areas in the mid-Atlantic region. Preservation of this tract along Maryland's Coastal Bays provides an extraordinary opportunity to conserve natural habitat, safeguard wildlife habitat, and protect the water quality of Assawoman Bay. The property contains upland coastal forest and extensive sensitive non-tidal and tidal saltwater wetlands. The property is titled in the name of Worcester County and will be managed as a passive recreation park and environmental education complex by the Worcester County Department of Recreation & Parks. The following are planned for FY 2021:

1. Greys Creek Nature Park – Park Development– $188,486 is being requested for the initial development of Greys Creek Nature Park. The project will focus on the development of two parcels east and west of Swans Gut. The project scope will consider public parking, a trailhead and upland trails, and structural amenities necessary to further the environmental education/passive park experience. Th State is currently in the planning phase where developing water access and water trails are concerned. Both design solutions will be complimentary. Land Water Conservation requested using POS funds as a match.

NEWTOWN PARK – POCOMOKE, MARYLAND

Newtown Park is a 58-acre parcel of land developed as an athletic complex to serve the citizens of Worcester County, particularly in the southern end of the county. Newtown Park is located at the intersection of Stockton and Groton Roads in Pocomoke, Maryland. To date one senior league field, three little league fields, two softball fields; two soccer/lacrosse fields have been constructed. The senior league field, two softball fields, and one

soccer/lacrosse field have been equipped with lights. In addition to the athletic fields, a concession stand with bathrooms, an entrance sign, two parking areas, a pavilion, a sand volleyball court, playground, and other site amenities have been added. Several storage buildings have been erected on the site to accommodate the many programs administered in Newtown Park. The following are planned for FY 2021:

1. Fencing & Fishing Project – An additional $275,000 is being requested to replace the deteriorating conditions of our sports field fencing. In addition, this funding is to be used to construct a fishing pier on the existing pond to create more outdoor recreation opportunities for the citizens of Worcester County.

JOHN WALTER SMITH PARK – SNOW HILL, MARYLAND

John Walter Smith Park is an 80-acre parcel of land with approximately 50-acres developed as an athletic complex to serve the citizens of Worcester County, Maryland, particularly in the central section of the county. John Walter Smith Park is located on Public Landing Road in Snow Hill, Maryland, and was purchased with Program Open Space funding. The park was named after the late Governor of Maryland, John Walter Smith, who resided in Snow Hill. John Walter Smith Park is the home of the Worcester County Department of Recreation & Parks. On Monday, July 11, 2005, a state-of-the-art recreation center, which houses a climate, controlled 40,000 square-foot gymnasium with retractable bleachers, a walking track and courts that can be used for soccer, basketball, and a variety of sports opened its door to the public. The flooring system throughout the gym was designed for an increased return of energy that is highly efficient. Essentially, it provides the most "bang for the buck" for experienced runners and track participants. It also provides a shock-absorbing cushion that is ideal for walkers and joggers, particularly those who suffer from arthritis or have past injuries. Along with the Recreation Center, John Walter Smith Park has a senior league field, four little league fields, two softball fields, seven soccer fields, one Frisbee golf course, two tennis courts, two basketball courts, a sand volleyball court, a pavilion, a playground, a concession stand with restrooms and other site amenities. Several storage buildings have been erected on the site to accommodate the many programs administered at John Walter Smith Park. Through the contributions of the Worcester County Commissioners and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Program Open Space funding, this park was built to serve the citizens of Worcester County, Maryland and the regional areas. The following are planned for FY 2021:

1. Field Upgrade and Lighting Replacement Project – $240,000 is being requested to equip our new regulation Bermuda grass multi-purpose playing field with energy efficient field lighting. The project scope includes electrical upgrades, and the design and installation of light poles and fixtures in order to support evening recreational programming.
2. Fencing and Landscaping Project – Phase 1 – An additional $200,000 is being requested to address the deteriorating conditions of both our sports field fencing and traffic control/bollard poles. While the old fencing will be upgraded with new, 3,600 linear feet of bollard poles will be removed and replaced with a hedgerow.

NORTHERN WORCESTER ATHLETIC COMPLEX – BERLIN, MARYLAND

The Northern Worcester Athletic Complex is a 76-acre parcel of land located in Berlin, Maryland. This land was purchased specifically for constructing an athletic complex to serve the citizens of Worcester County particularly in the northern end of the County. To date, one senior league field, four multi-purpose fields, and one football field have been constructed. The senior league field, one multi-purpose and the football field have been equipped with lights. In addition to the athletic fields, an entrance sign and garden, service road, parking areas, a pavilion, and playground have been added. The most recent addition, at this site, was a permanent concession stand and bathroom facility that meets the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Several organizations use the permanent concession stand to serve refreshments and provide restrooms for patrons of the park. Program Open Space has played a significant role in the development of this park. The following is planned for FY 2021:

1. Multipurpose Field & Parking Development Project – An additional $255,870 is being requested to address multi-purpose field and parking deficits indentified in the 2017 LPPRP. The scope would include the development of new additional regulation, irrigated, Bermuda grass multi-purpose fields. This project would include irrigation on the new fields, sunshade, upgraded lighting and equipment to maintain the maintenance and upkeep of the parks. In addition, due to the anticipated increase in playing field surface, additional parking capacity will need to be address. It is estimated that at a minimum 32,800 additional square feet of parking will be needed in order to accommodate 100 additional parking spots.

SHOWELL PARK – SHOWELL, MARYLAND

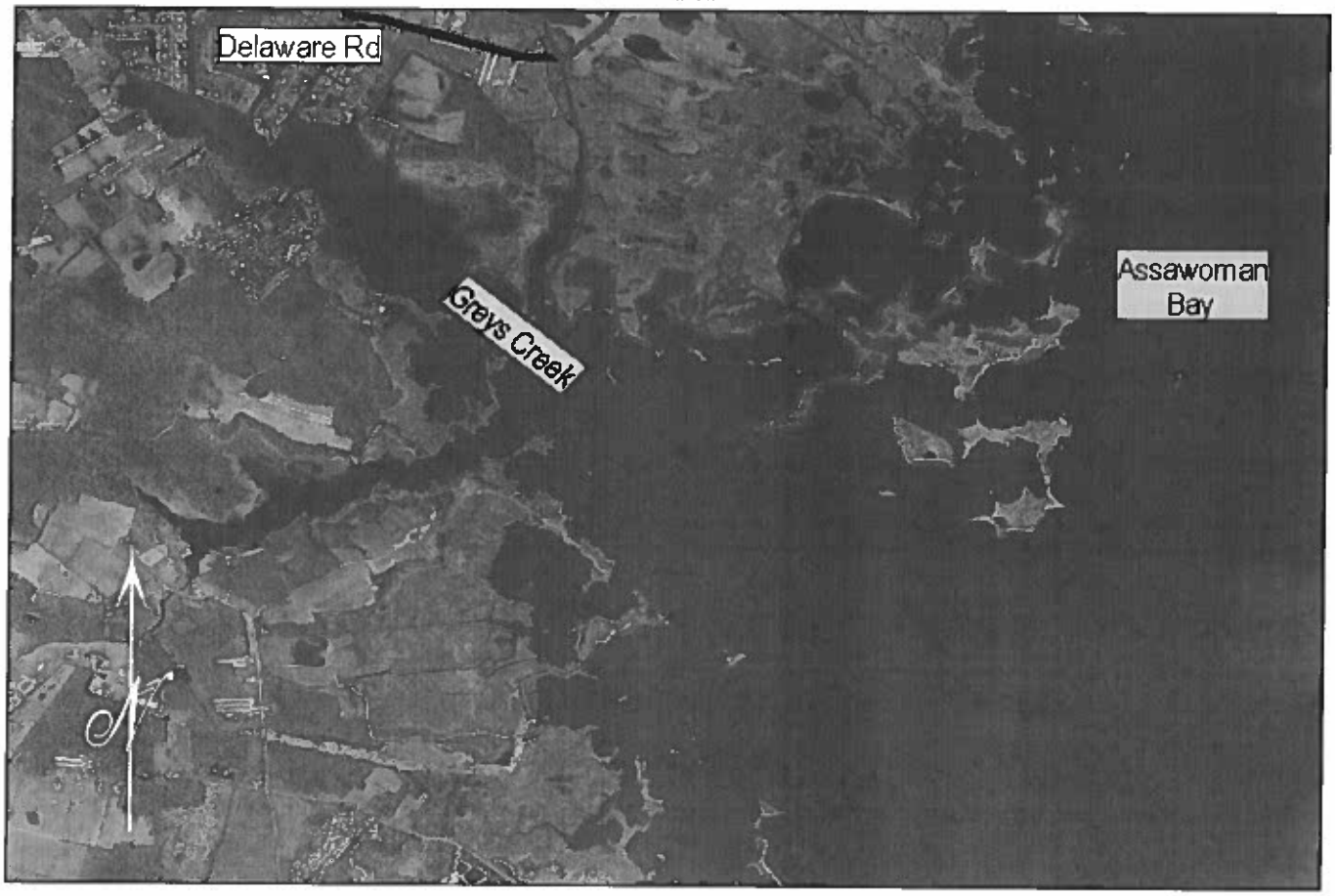
Showell Park is a 21-acre parcel of land located in Showell, Maryland. With three softball fields, two tennis courts, a pavilion, and two newly constructed playgrounds, this park serves as a gathering place for residents at the northern end of Worcester County. Due to its proximity to Ocean City, this park is often used in conjunction with the Town of Ocean City's softball complex at Northside Park for weekend softball tournaments. In an effort to continue to provide the growing population of Worcester County and surrounding areas with quality facilities, the following project is proposed in 2021:

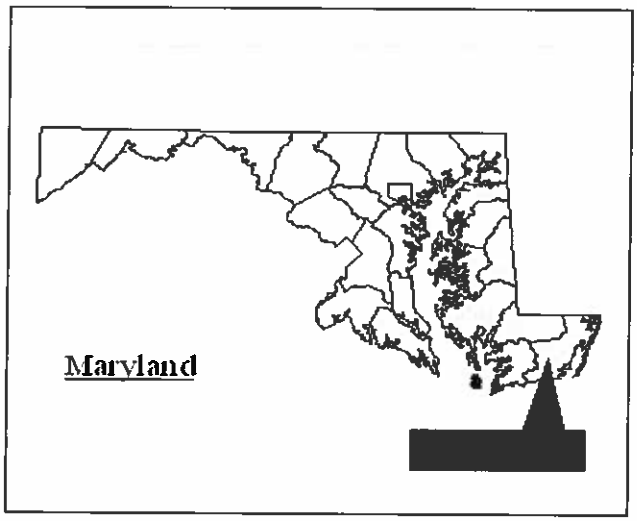
1. Bathroom & Concession Stand Project – An additional $155,000 is being requested to plan for the construction of a permanent concession/restroom facility on site. Showell Park, while heavily used, is the only of our larger parks not to have a permanent facility. These funds will be used to install higher fencing on the fields, closest to the concession stand, to insure the safety of citizens. The higher fences keep the balls into their contained area.

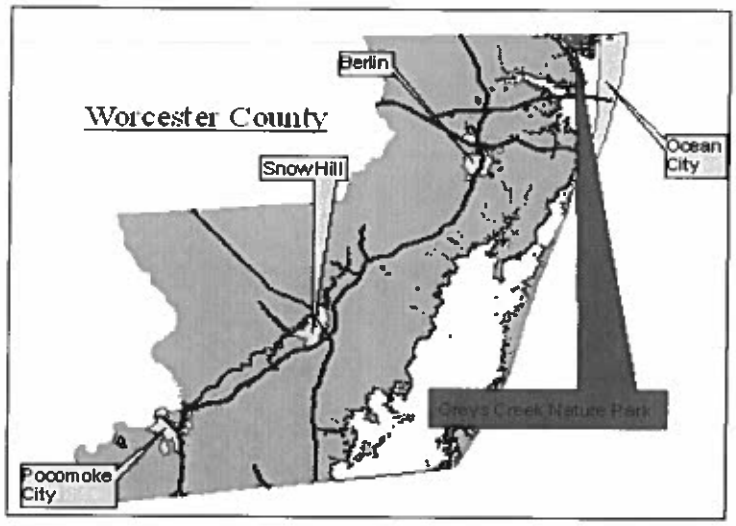
Sponsor					POS	
	Project Name, Project Description	Acreage	Total	Local Share	State Share	Federal
COUNTY	WORCESTER COUNTY					
	Greys Creek Nature Park – Park Development Project	574+	$376,972	$18,849	$188,486	$188,486
	Newtown Park Fencing & Fishing Pier	58	$416,667	$37,500	$375,00	
	John Walter Smith Park – Field Upgrades & Lighting Replacement	80	$266,667	$24,000	$240,000	
	John Walter Smith Park – Fencing & Landscaping	80	$333,333	$30,000	$300,000	
	Northern Worcester Athletic Complex – Multipurpose Field Development	76	$984,300	$88,587	$885,870	
TOTALS	Showell Park - Concessions/Restrooms Project	21	394,444	35,500	355,000	
			$2,772,383	**$234,436**	**$2,344,356**	**$188,486**

Revised: 6/10/20

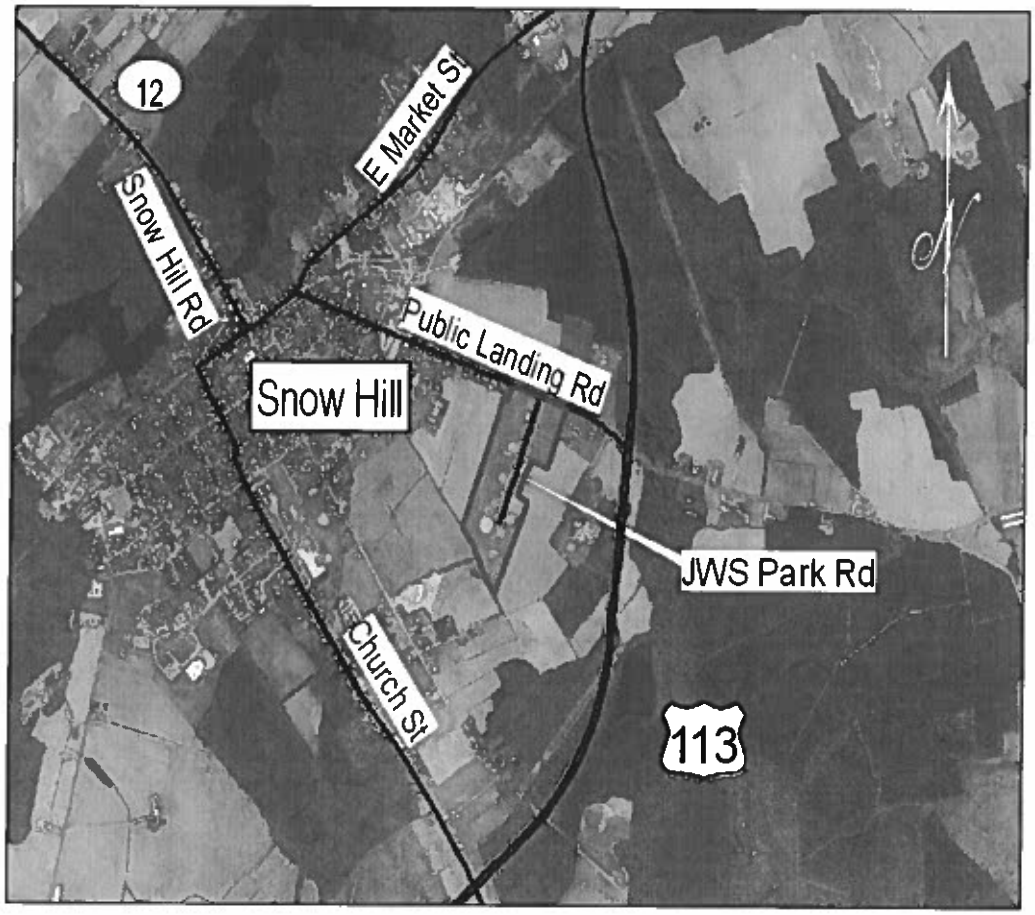
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Program Open Space
GREYS CREEK NATURE PARK
SPM 11, Parcel 2
574 Acres

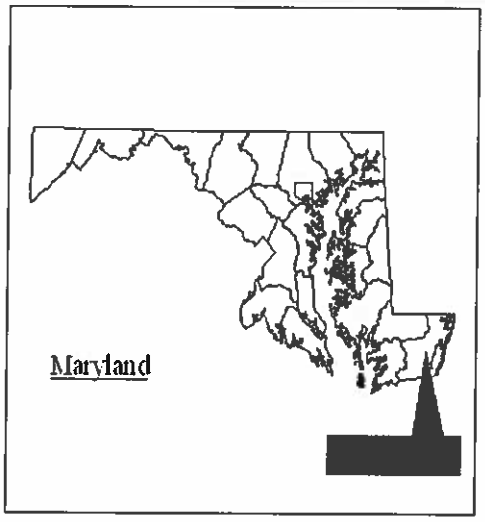


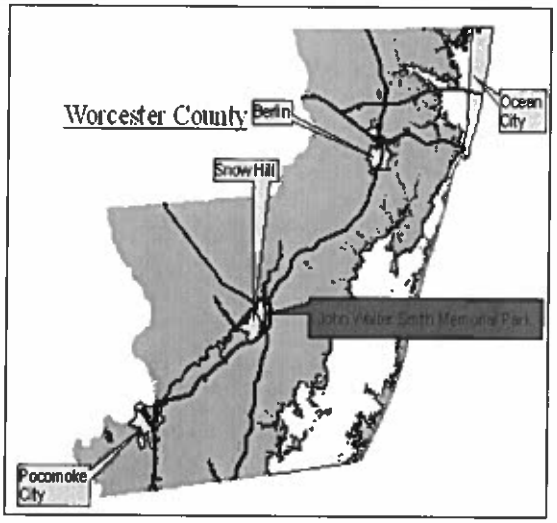




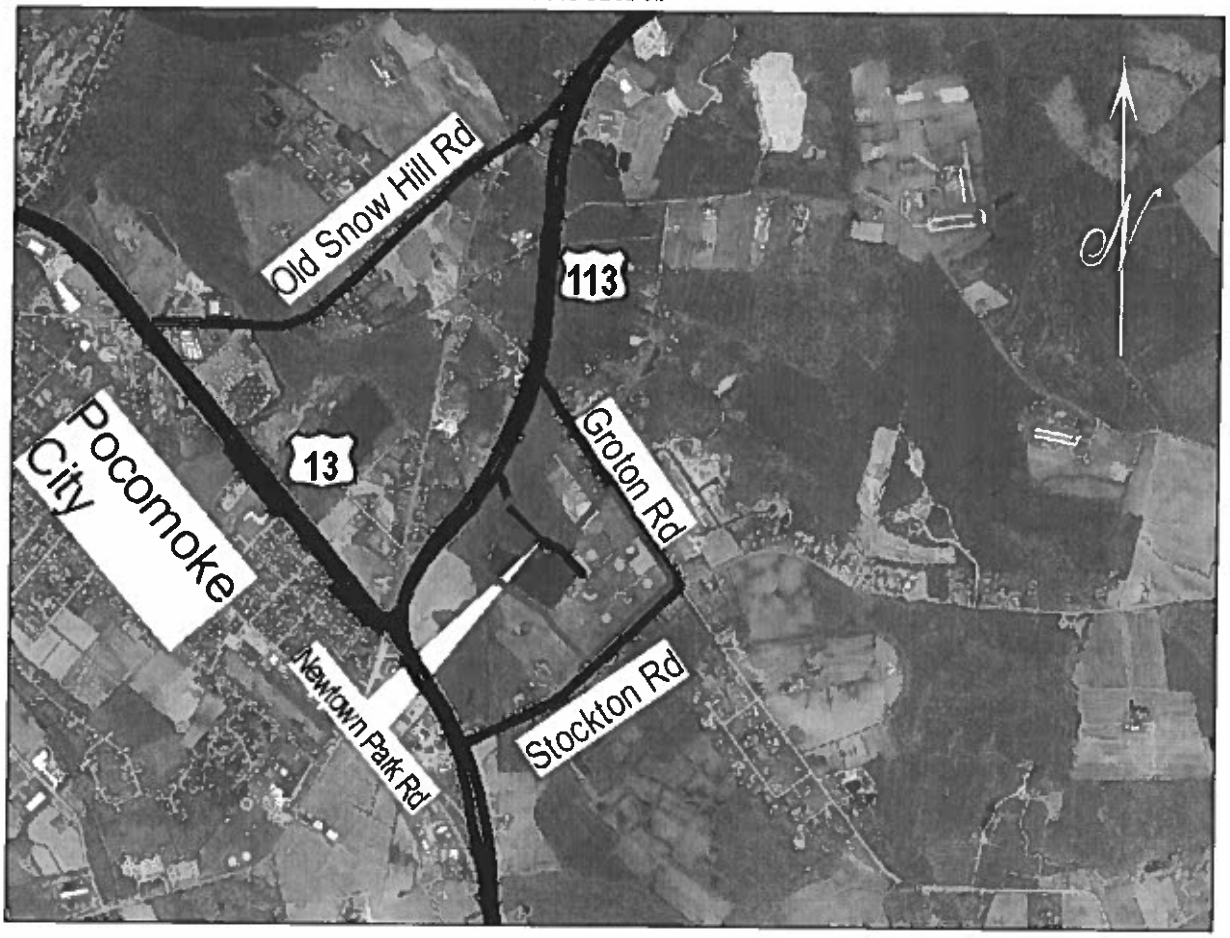
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Program Open Space
JOHN WALTER SMITH MEMORIAL PARK
SPM 63, Parcel 140
80 Acres

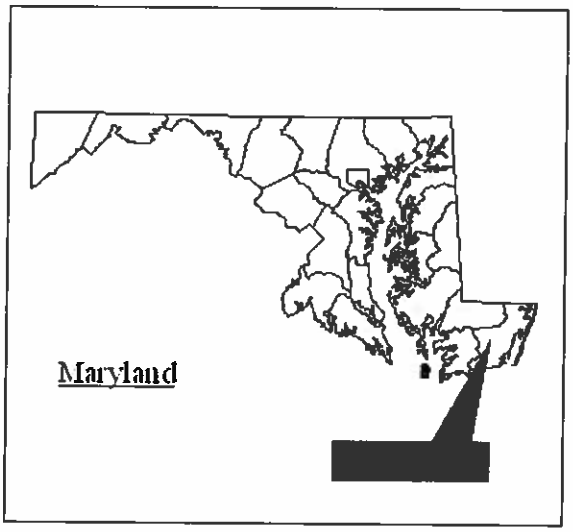


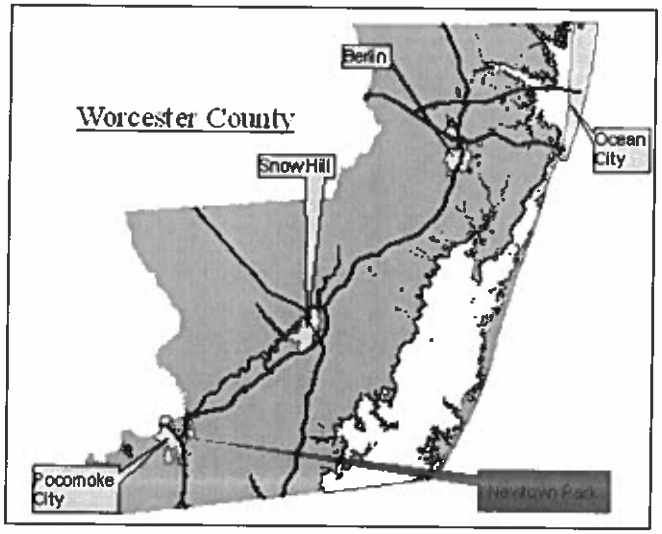




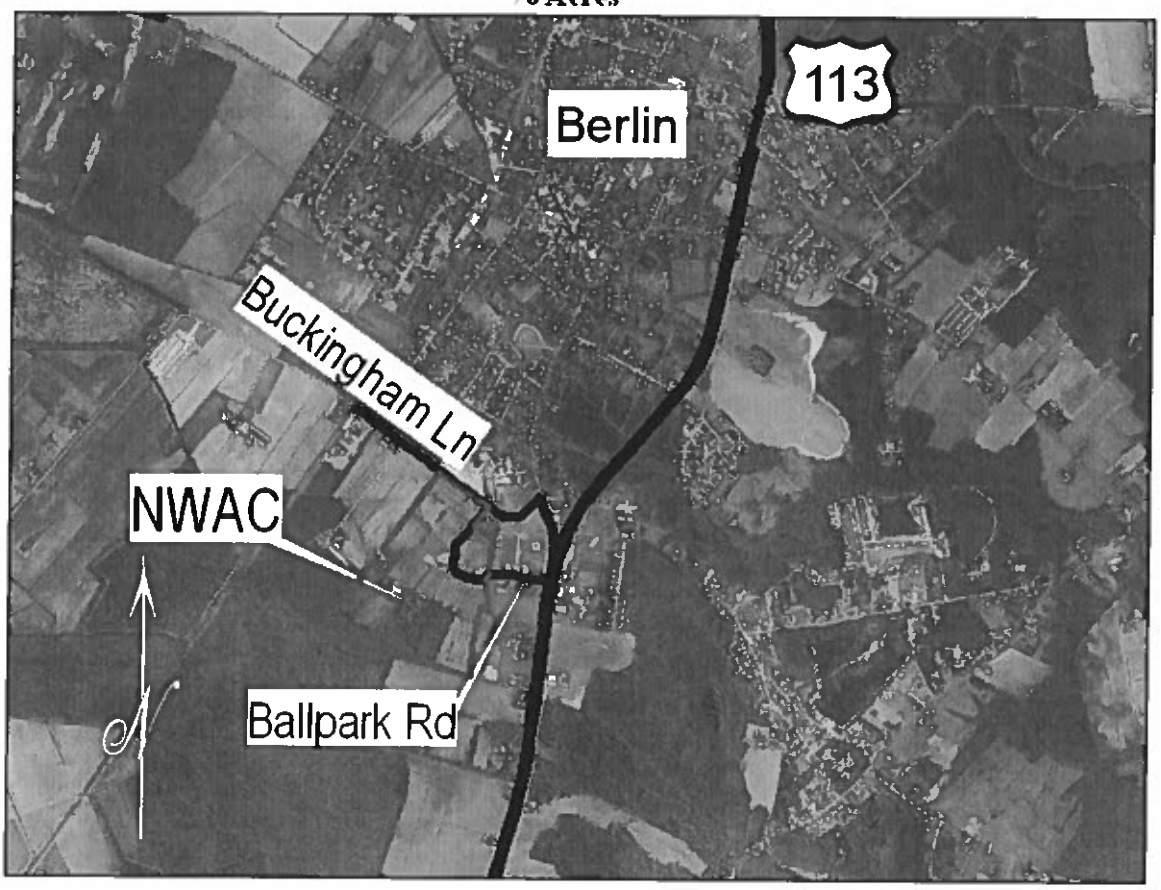
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Program Open Space
NEWTOWN PARK
SPM 84, Parcel 36
60.5 Acres

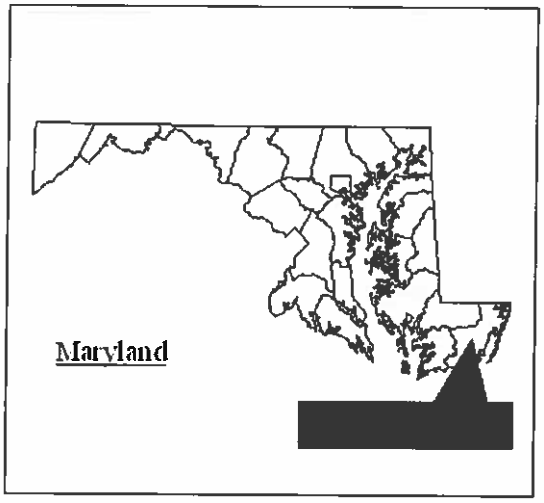


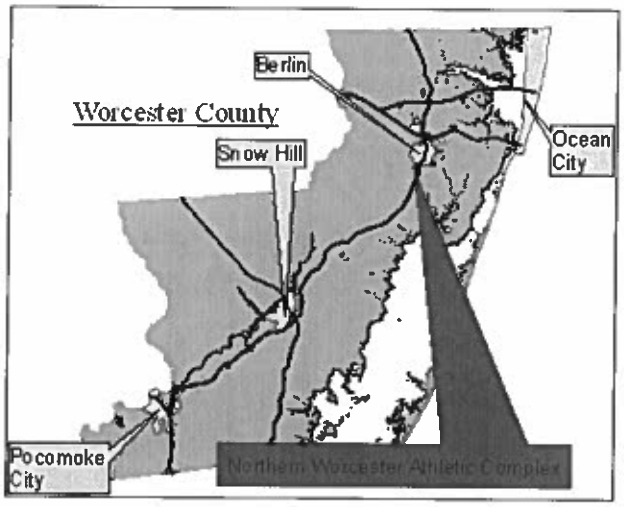
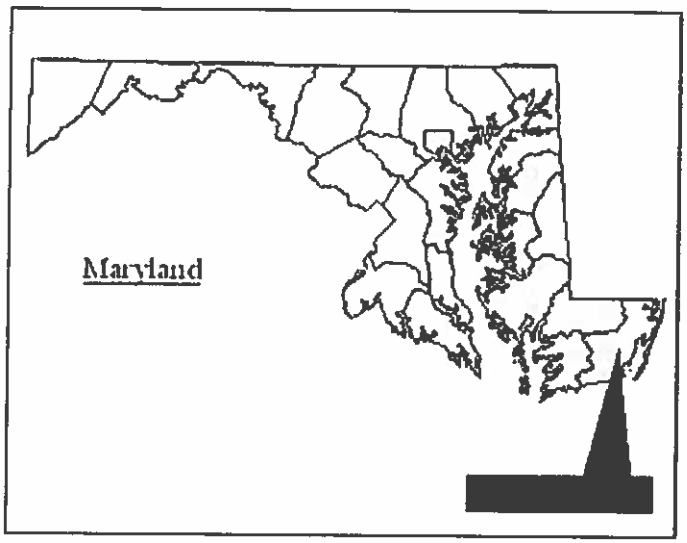
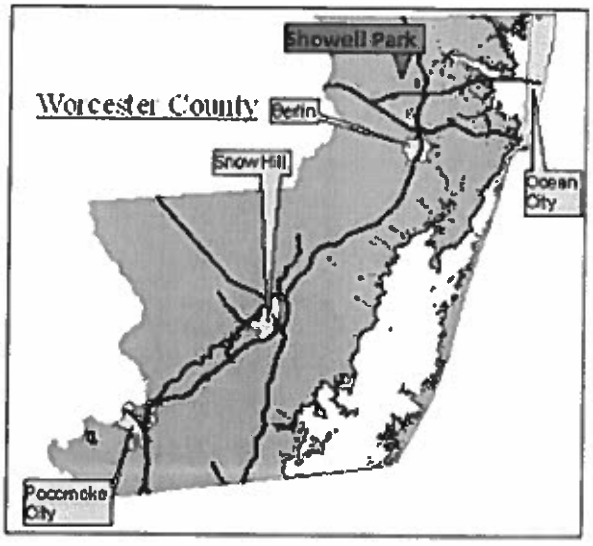




Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Program Open Space
NORTHERN WORCESTER ATHLETIC COMPLEX
SPM 32, Parcel 276
76 Acres







Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Program Open Space
SHOWELL PARK
SPM 15, Parcel 220
21 ACRES