



Parks and Recreation

June 20, 2025

Kate Mayberry, Administrator III
Land Acquisition and Planning
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Tawes State Office Building
580 Taylor Avenue, E-4
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Ms. Mayberry,

Enclosed you will find Kent County's Fiscal Year 2026 Program Open Space Annual Program. The projects proposed in the Program have been prioritized to meet the needs of Kent County, as well as the State requirements for use of Program Open Space dollars. In addition, the Program is consistent with the goals of the Kent County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan.

Thank you for your continued support of and assistance in carrying out Kent County's recreation goals. Should you have any questions or concerns related to the Annual Program, I can be reached at 410-810-5948 or jcoleman@kentgov.org. If you have any questions about the projects, please contact Carrie Klein, she can be reached at 410-778-1449. If you have any questions about project application materials, please contact Joanne McNamara, Grants Program Administrator, at jmcnamara@kentgov.org or at 410-778-7427.

Sincerely,

Jillyn Coleman, M.Ed.
Director

County Commissioners of Kent County, Maryland
Department of Parks & Recreation

FISCAL YEAR 2026 PROGRAM OPEN SPACE ANNUAL PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION:

The Director of the Parks and Recreation Department oversees the development and implementation of the Annual Program. This is the outcome of a collaborative effort involving various stakeholders, including the administrative staff of the Parks and Recreation Department, the Kent County Department of Public Works, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Kent County Board of Education, the Kent County Department of Planning, Housing, and Zoning and Planning Commission, local town municipalities, the State of Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and the Program Open Space state and regional offices. The final approval is granted by the County Commissioners of Kent County.

The Annual Program is consistent with the guidelines set forth in the County's Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) and the County Comprehensive Plan. All project requests and recommendations are submitted to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for review. It is the responsibility of the Board to prioritize and submit recommendations to the Kent County Commissioners who make the final approval for implementation of projects into the County's fiscal budget. The projects for the 2026 Annual Program are outlined below:

Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan Planning Grant Assistance - \$50,000

Professional assistance in planning and executing the development of the LPPRP is necessary for Kent County to ensure the Plan meets the established Department of Natural Resources Program Open Space Guidelines, contains all of the required elements, and to ensure that the Plan is submitted on time every five years. Kent County will continue its planning of the LPPRP in preparation for the 2027 Plan Update. The process will be facilitated by an experienced Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Planning consultant who will provide guidance and oversight in the development of the Plan and ongoing updates to land inventory, mapping, surveys, and public input. Maryland requires local governing bodies to prepare a local LPPRP under the Maryland Natural Resources Code, Title 5 Forest, and Parks. HB 717 (effective October 1, 2025) altered certain provisions of law regarding the use of POS funding, specifically Natural Resources Article § 5-905(b)(3) allowing local bodies to request a lump sum of \$125,000 over a five-year cycle instead of up to \$25,000 per year per five-year cycle. Kent County has already requested three annual allocations of \$25,000 during the current five-year cycle, leaving \$50,000 remaining for the 2027 LPPRP cycle.

Worton Park Enhancements – Dog Park and Dugout Improvements - \$97,689

Worton Park is Kent County's largest park, a regional park consisting of 97.7 acres and the center of recreational activities in Kent County. The project will enhance the park by adding in a fenced-in dog park area – the first dog park amenity at any of the County-owned and managed parks in Kent County – allowing a safe and dedicated recreation space for dog owners. Additionally, enhancements will add dugout covers to existing ballfields in Worton Park, providing sun and weather protection for players and coaches and their equipment, while enhancing the overall comfort and enjoyment of the baseball field experience.

These improvements will be welcomed changes by park and facility users that aid in enhancing recreational opportunities in Kent County and increasing visitors to its parks.

**PROGRAM OPEN SPACE
ANNUAL PROGRAM FOR ACQUISITION
FISCAL YEAR 2026 – KENT COUNTY, MD**

**PROGRAM OPEN SPACE
ANNUAL PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPMENT
FISCAL YEAR 2026 – KENT COUNTY, MD**

Kent County Parks and Recreation
FY26 Project Open Space
Attachment 1 – County Map Indicating Project Location





Source: Kent County Dept. of Planning, Housing and Zoning,
MdProperty View 2013. Map prepared November 2015.

1 inch = 500 feet



Department of Parks and Recreation
11041 Worton Road
P.O. Box 67
Worton, MD 21678
410-778-1948
info@KentParksAndRec.org

July 15, 2025

Kate Mayberry
Administrator III, Land Acquisition and Planning
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
580 Taylor Avenue, E-4
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Ms. Mayberry,

The County Commissioners of Kent County respectfully request approval to revert \$10,717.50 of approved FY23 Program Open Space project surplus funds from Project 7366-14-117 - Toal Park Lower Ballfield & Park Benches, as the County successfully completed this project under budget.

If approved, the County requests to utilize the surplus funds towards a new project at Worton Park. This project involves several key enhancements:

- **Installation of a Roof:** A former concession stand will be repurposed for storage, serving both the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Public Works.
- **Lighting and Exterior Upgrades:** Improvements will be made to the Park's restroom facilities, enhancing both functionality and aesthetics.

These changes aim to contribute significantly to the enhancement and beautification of Worton Park.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Should additional information be required, please do not hesitate to contact me at 410-810-5948 or jcoleman@kentgov.org.

Best regards,

Jillyn S. Coleman, M.Ed.
Director

County Commissioners of Kent County, Maryland

Department of Parks & Recreation

FISCAL YEAR 2026 PROGRAM OPEN SPACE ANNUAL PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION:

Development and implementation of the Annual Program is completed by the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department, resulting from a collaborative effort between the administrative staff of the Parks and Recreation Department, Kent County Department of Public Works, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Kent County Board of Education, Kent County Planning Office and Planning Commission, local town municipalities, State of Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Program Open Space state and regional offices, with final approval by the County Commissioners of Kent County.

The Annual Program is consistent with the guidelines set forth in the County's Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan and the County's Comprehensive Plan. All project requests and recommendations are submitted to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for review. It is the responsibility of the Board to prioritize and submit recommendations to the Kent County Commissioners who make the final approval for implementation of projects into the County's fiscal budget. The projects in the 2026 Annual Program, outlined below, have received approval in Kent County Government's fiscal year's budget.

Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan Planning Grant Assistance – Five Year LPPRP Cycle - \$50,000

Professional assistance in planning and executing the development of the LPPRP is necessary for Kent County to ensure the Plan meets the established Department of Natural Resources Program Open Space Guidelines, contains all of the required elements, and to ensure that the Plan is submitted on time every five years. Kent County will continue its planning of the LPPRP in preparation for the 2027 Plan Update. The process will be facilitated by an experienced Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Planning consultant who will provide guidance and oversight in the development of the Plan and ongoing updates to land inventory, mapping, surveys, and public input. Maryland requires local governing bodies to prepare a local LPPRP under the Maryland Natural Resources Code, Title 5 Forest, and Parks. HB 717 (effective October 1, 2025) altered certain provisions of law regarding the use of POS funding, specifically Natural Resources Article § 5-905(b)(3) allowing local bodies to request a lump sum of \$125,000 over a five-year cycle instead of up to \$25,000 per year per five-year cycle. Kent County has already requested three annual allocations of \$25,000 during the current five-year cycle, leaving \$50,000 remaining for the 2027 LPPRP cycle.

Worton Park – Install Roof on (former) Concession Stand and Provide Lighting and Exterior Upgrades to the Restroom Facilities - \$10,717.50 (Reverted Funds)

Worton Park is Kent County's largest and regional park and consists of 97.7 acres. Worton Regional Park/Community Center Campus is the center of recreational activities in Kent County and the largest active recreation park in the County. It is an essential component in recreation programming in Kent County. The campus boasts six baseball/softball fields, .6 miles walking path, 10 athletic fields, tennis courts, outdoor basketball courts, sand volleyball courts, playground, picnic pavilion, swimming pool, and restroom facilities. This project consists of installing a roof on a former concession stand to be utilized for storage by both the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Public Works. Additionally, the project will include lighting and exterior upgrades to the Park's restroom facilities.

Worton Park – Establish a Dog Park and Install Dugout Covers - \$97,689.00

This project consists of adding a fenced-in dog park area to the Worton Park amenities, which will include divided areas for large and small dogs, running water, shaded areas and benches, and various agility obstacles for the dogs. This enhancement will create the first dog park amenity at any of the County-managed parks across Kent and was identified as a specific need in Kent County's most recent LPPRP, with public input specifically noting the lack of any current County-owned parks offering fenced in park space for pet owners to safely allow dogs to run and play off-leash. This will also improve the quality of all other recreational fields at the park, as without dedicated dog park space, current dog owners utilize the recreational and athletic fields to exercise dogs which subject these recreational-use fields to dog waste and/or damage from this unintended use.

Additionally, the project will add dugout covers to the two most frequently used ballfields out of Worton Park's six ballfields, providing sun and weather protection for players and coaches and their equipment, while enhancing the overall comfort and enjoyment of the baseball field experience. These continued enhancements at Worton Park likewise align with Kent's 2022 LPPRP; these ballfields represent where the majority of youth and adult recreational baseball takes place in Kent County, increasing recreational experience and encouraging wider use for hosting tournament play. Worton Park, as the largest regional park in Kent County, serves residents across all Kent County ZIP codes and so this project will benefit residents County-wide.

The proposed projects will make enhancements to the existing Park; no change will be made to the park acreage.

**PROGRAM OPEN SPACE
ANNUAL PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPMENT
FISCAL YEAR 2026 - KENT COUNTY, MD**

Sponsor	Project Name/Project Description	Acreage	Source of Funds for Annual Program Only			
Kent County Parks & Rec	Worton Park - Kent County Community Center Campus/ Worton Park Enhancement - Roof & Lighting - REVERTING FUNDS from Project Number 7366-14-117	97.716 97.716 n/a	\$10,717.50	0	\$10,717.50	N/A

Attachment 2: Worton Park Project Site Plan - Areas to be Developed



Source: Kent County Dept. of Planning, Housing and Zoning,
MdProperty View 2013. Map prepared November 2015.

1 inch = 500 feet

County Commissioners of Kent County, Maryland
Department of Parks & Recreation

FISCAL YEAR 2026 PROGRAM OPEN SPACE ANNUAL PROGRAM – *REVISED*
12.17.25

INTRODUCTION:

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Betterton Beach Park – Replace Piling Ancillary to Support New Boardwalk Enhancements - \$50,000

Betterton Beach and Park is a 4.79-acre park located off of the Sassafras River. This public beach within Kent County's parks system consistently sees a high volume of use on a seasonal and annual basis. The beach is open to the general public with no admission fees. The beach attracts users not only from Kent County, but regionally, from neighboring counties and states. The current boardwalk is nearly 40 years old and made with wooden boards, many of which are warped, are otherwise in poor state, or showing significant signs of deterioration and which risk limiting accessibility for those with mobility issues and/or potential safety hazards. KCPR seeks

County Commissioners of Kent County, Maryland
Department of Parks & Recreation

to make ancillary improvements related to replacement of the Boardwalk by replacing the wooden pilings that will support the new structure, ensuring its structural integrity and contributing to the overall longevity and resilience of the Boardwalk improvements.

Worton Park – Install Roof on (former) Concession Stand and Provide Lighting and Exterior Upgrades to the Restroom Facilities - \$10,717.50 (Reverted Funds)

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PROGRAM OPEN SPACE
ANNUAL PROGRAM FOR ACQUISITION
FISCAL YEAR 2026 – KENT COUNTY, MD

<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Project Name, Project Description</u>	<u>Acreage</u>			<u>Source of Funds for Annual Program Only</u>			
		<u>Existing</u>	<u>Ultimate</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>State (POS Local Funds)</u>	<u>Federal</u>
KENT COUNTY PARKS & REC	2027 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan Planning Grant Assistance <i>Consultant Services to Facilitate Development of LPPRP</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$50,000	N/A	\$50,000	N/A

PROGRAM OPEN SPACE
ANNUAL PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPMENT
FISCAL YEAR 2026 – KENT COUNTY, MD

<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Project Name, Project Description</u>	<u>Acreage</u>			<u>Source of Funds for Annual Program Only</u>			
		<u>Existing</u>	<u>Ultimate</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>State (POS Local Funds)</u>	<u>Federal</u>
KENT COUNTY PARKS & REC	Worton Park Enhancements – Dog Park and Dugout Improvements	97.7	97.7	N/A	\$97,689	\$9,769	\$87,920	N/A
KENT COUNTY PARKS & REC	Worton Park – Kent County Community Center Campus <i>Worton Park Enhancement – Roof and Lighting REVERTING FUNDS from Project Number 7366-14-117</i>	97.7	97.7	N/A	\$10,717.50	\$1,071.75	\$9,645.75	N/A
KENT COUNTY PARKS & REC	Betterton Beach – Boardwalk Piling Replacement	4.79	4.79	N/A	\$50,000	\$5,000	\$45,000	N/A

Betterton Boardwalk Photos



Kent County Parks and Recreation

Attachment 1 – County Map Indicating Project Location



N



Amenity



Parking



Picnic Pavilion



Volleyball Court



Bathhouse
Open Seasonally



Public Beach



Boat Ramp



Grill



Loading and
Unloading Zone



Trailer Parking

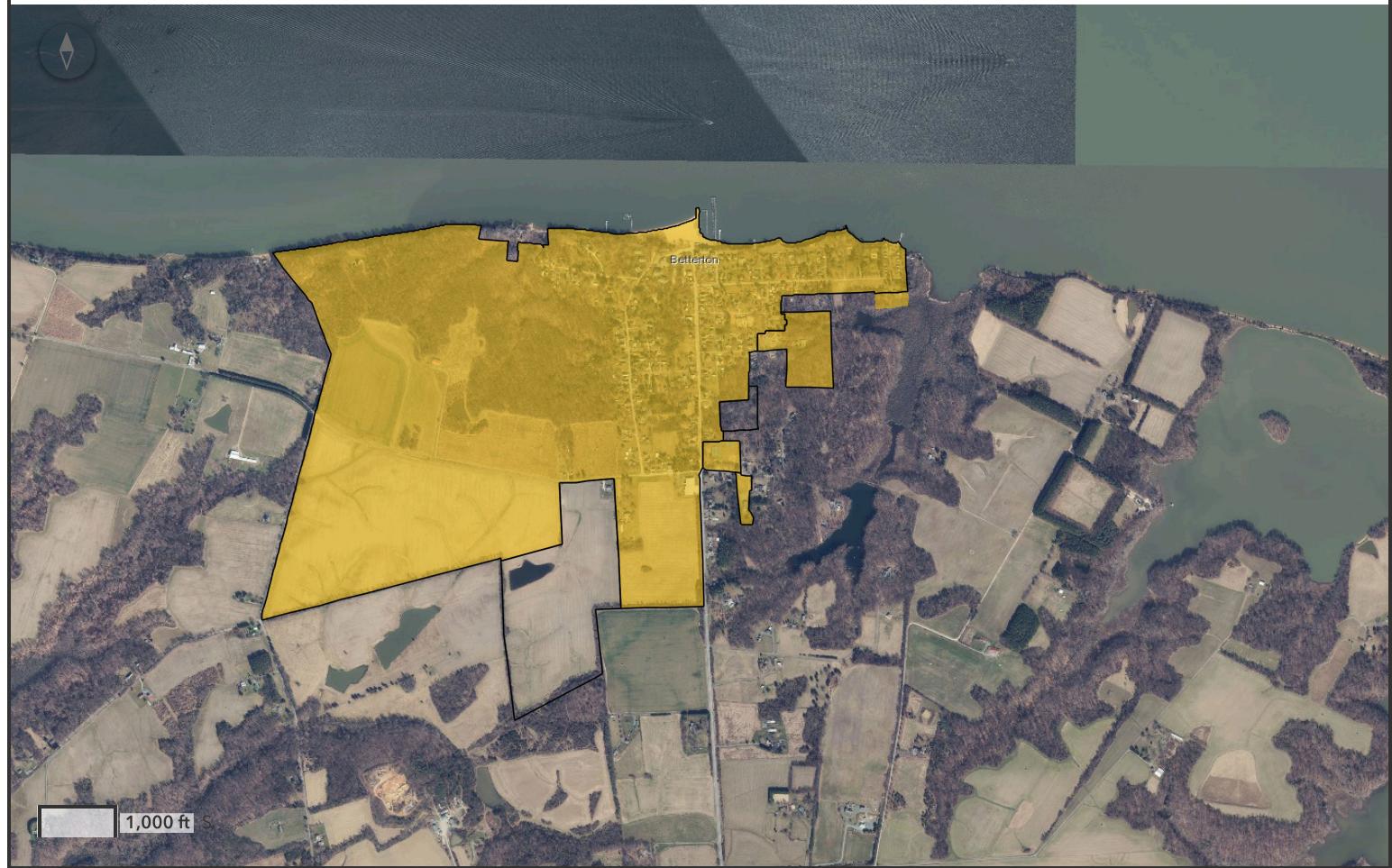


This map was developed by the Kent County Department of Planning, Housing, and Zoning. The data represented here are maintained to the best of the ability of the Kent County Government. Users assume any and all risks associated with decisions based on this data.





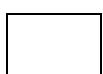
MDP Priority Funding Areas (PFA) S



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elle .mussma @mar la d.gov Meaga Fairfield-Peak meaga .fairfieldpeak@mar la d.gov | Mar la d Depar me of Pla i g MDP | MDP iMap | Esri ERE

Municipalities

Municipal Boundaries - Detailed



Rural Villages

Rural Villages



Maryland Priority Funding Areas

Heritage Area in Locally Designated Growth Areas

PFA

PFA Comment Area

6 Inch Imagery

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