



ST. MARY'S 2050

CHARTING OUR TOMORROW

**St. Mary's 2050: Charting Our Tomorrow
Comprehensive Plan Update Project
July 22, 2025**

Trends and Projections Report

About the Trends and Projections Report



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CHARTING OUR TOMORROW

About this Report



This report includes data on **existing conditions** in the county, and analyzes **projected future trends** to provide a common understanding of St. Mary's County as part of the St. Mary's 2050: Charting Our Tomorrow project.



As the comprehensive plan draft is developed, the Trends and Projections report will serve as a point-in-time reference to help inform development of the plan. New data continuously becomes available, so this report is a helpful snapshot of the county as it exists in 2025.



The Trends and Projections report is not meant to be an encyclopedia or history report with every data point about St. Mary's County—the goal is to inform development of the comprehensive plan and provide a common knowledge base for the community as the comprehensive plan moves forward.



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About St. Mary's 2050: Charting Our Tomorrow



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Comprehensive Plan Update



ST. MARY'S 2050
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St. Mary's County 2050: Charting Our Tomorrow is the planning process to update the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 2010.

Project Timeline



LAUNCH PROJECT

Fall 2024

Kickoff Meeting
County Tour
Internal Interviews
Project Website



ESTABLISH VISION AND GOALS

Winter 2024 - 2025

Community
Engagement
Window #1*



DEVELOP POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

**Spring –
Fall 2025**

Community
Engagement
Window #2*

Community
Engagement
Window #3*



PLAN ADOPTION

Winter 2025-2026

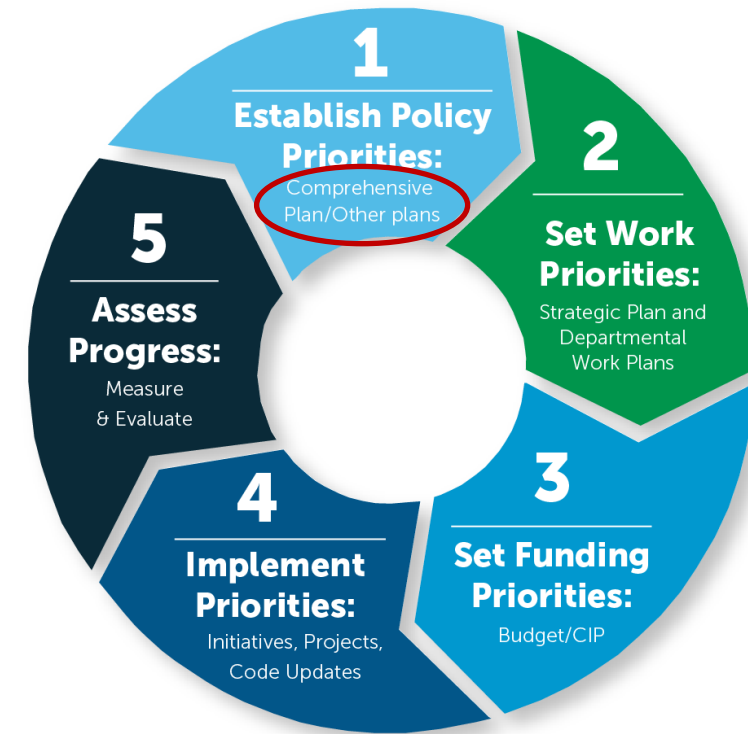
Public Hearings
Adoption

*** Includes PC Briefings**

PC = Planning Commission

About the Comprehensive Plan

- Required by Title 3 of the Land Use Article
- Long-range (20+ years) **policy guidance** focused on physical planning (land use, conservation, infrastructure)
- **Built from inclusive public engagement**
- **Guide to direct growth and support preservation** efforts
- Implemented through updates to Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, and other functional plans and ordinance
- Updated every 10 years
- The town of Leonardtown recently updated its Comprehensive Plan; Leonardtown's ongoing planning efforts will be taken into account when the draft plan is developed

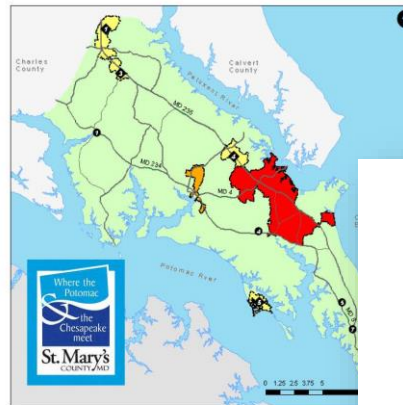


Community Planning Cycle

Currently Adopted Comprehensive Plan (2010)

- Trends
- Successes and Challenges
- Vision and Strategy
- Growth Management Element
- Resource Protection Element
- Priority Preservation Areas Element
- Water Resources Element
- Housing Element
- Economic Development Element
- Community Facilities Element
- Transportation Element
- Human Services Element

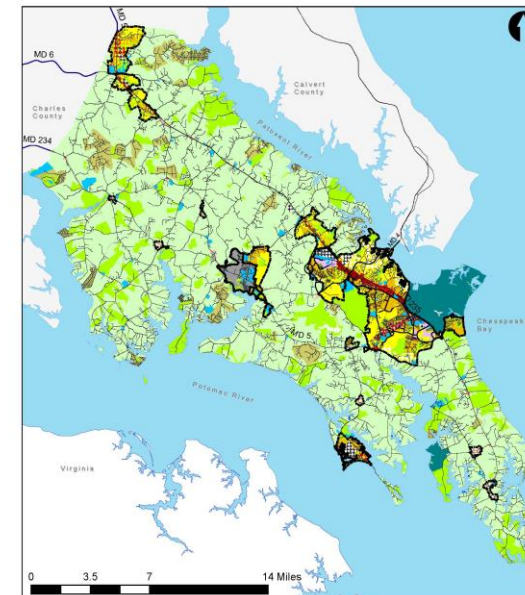
ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



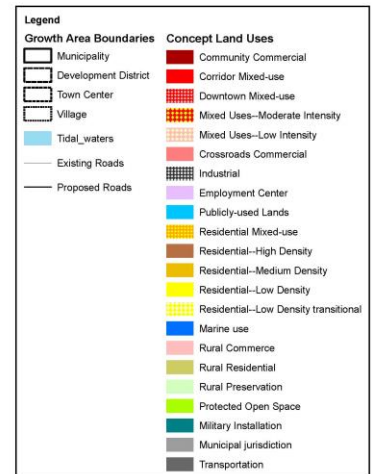
Adopted: March 23, 2010
Effective: April 6, 2010

QUALITY OF LIFE IN ST. MARY'S COUNTY
— A STRATEGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Prepared and adopted
in accordance with
Article 66B of the
Annotated Code of Maryland



St. Mary's County 2030 LAND USE CONCEPT PLAN



Project Kickoff & Key Planning Themes



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Project Kickoff

Interviews conducted with the following agencies:

- Commissioners of St. Mary's County
- Planning Commission
- County departmental leaders
- St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission (MetCom)
- St. Mary's County Public Schools
- Naval Air Station Patuxent River (NAS PAX)
- St. Mary's County Health Department (SMCHD)



Key Planning Themes



- Strong appreciation for, and a desire to preserve, the county's rural culture, agricultural landscapes, and scenic views
- Protecting vulnerable shoreline, wetland, and other natural areas from development
- Balanced land use that supports redevelopment and development in growth areas while protecting the county's rural heritage

Key Planning Themes



- More options for walking and biking to destinations and on trails
- More and improved public transportation options within the county and to outside destinations
- Improving the county's roadway network and addressing safety and traffic issues

Key Planning Themes



- The need for more affordable and attainable housing for people at all stages of their lives
- Providing a wider variety of housing options in growth areas is an important solution to help everyone, including critical employees, find a place to call home
- Action to address the need for better and expanded wastewater treatment options in certain areas of the county

Our Community



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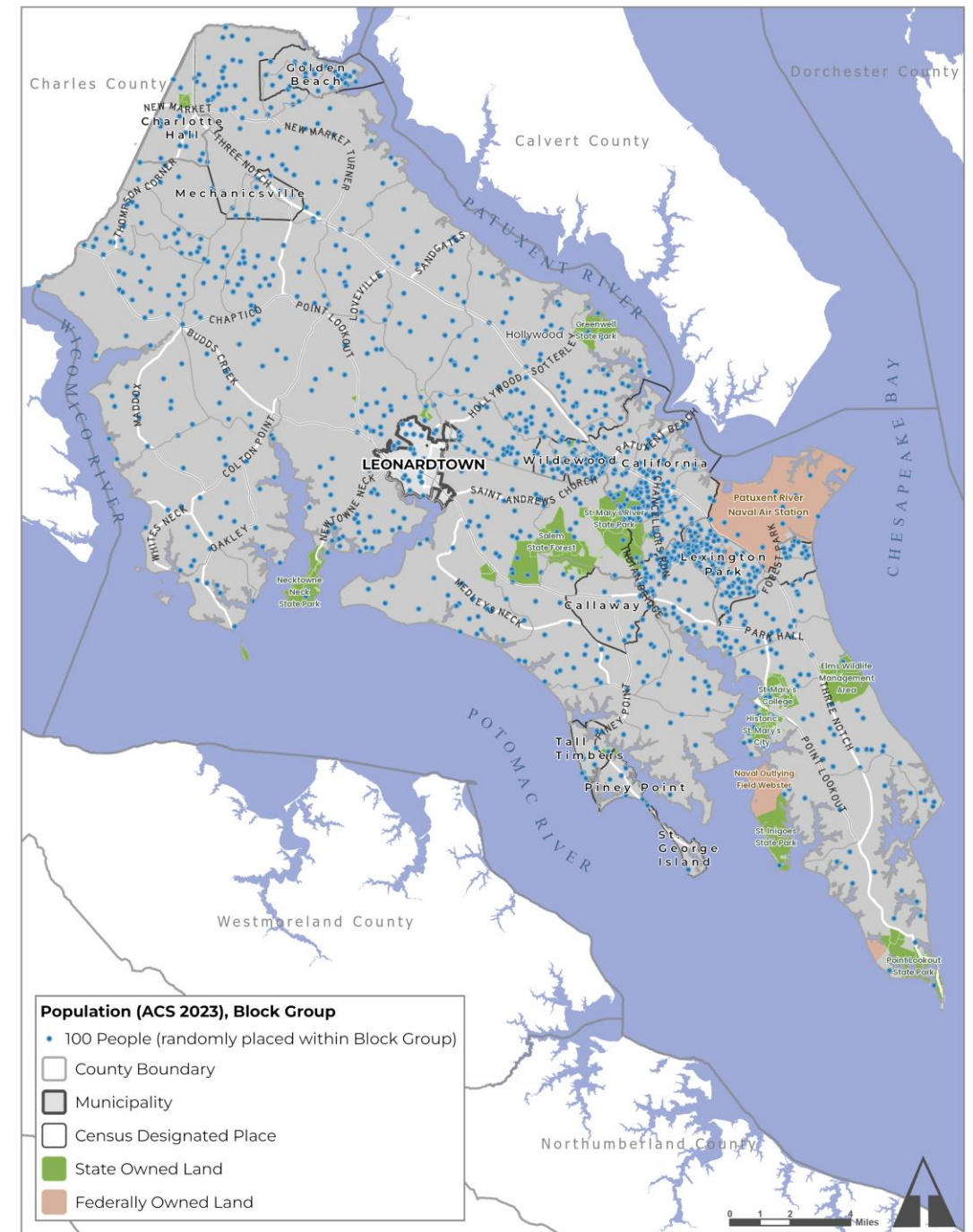
People & Households



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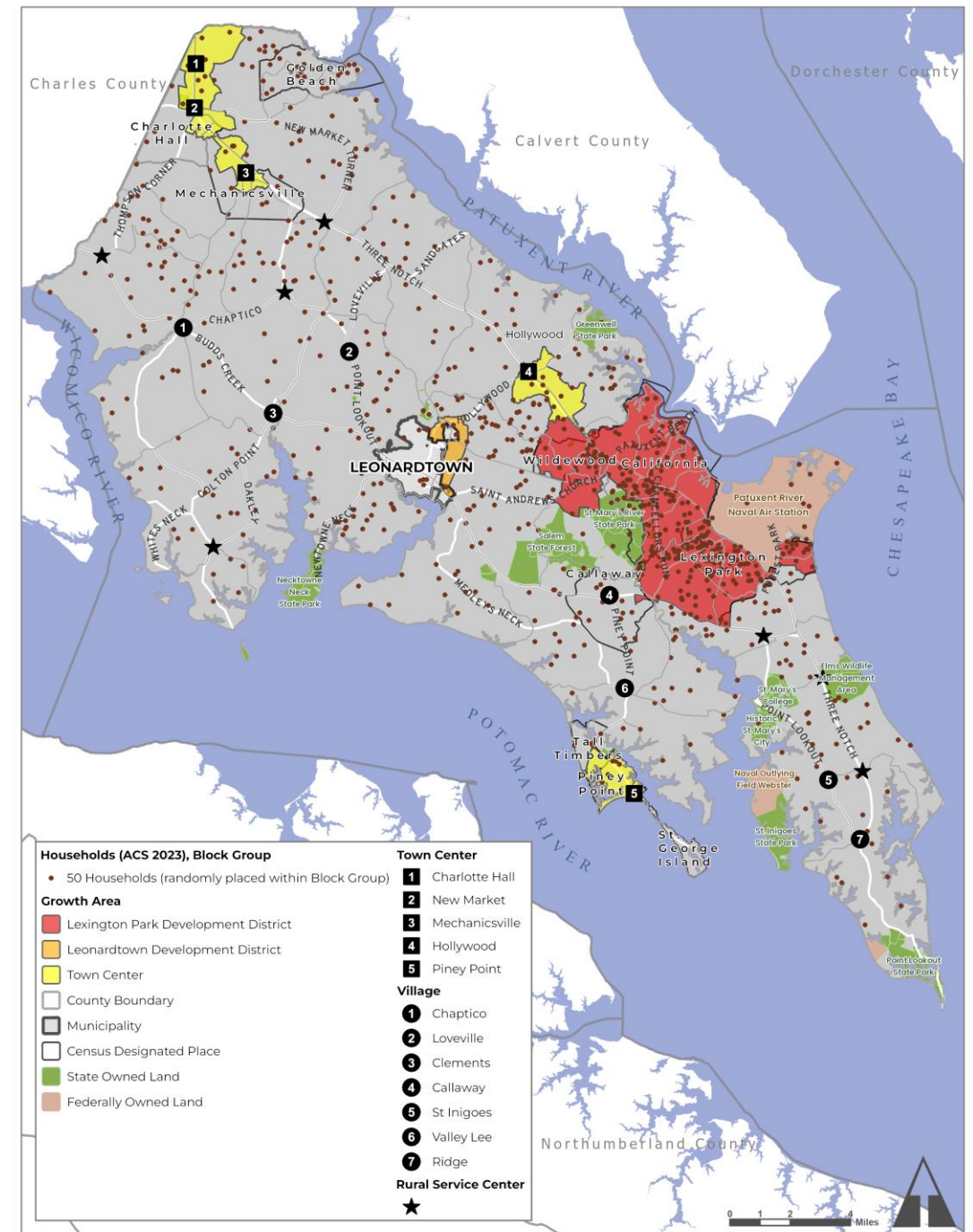
Population Dot Density Map

- Each blue dot on the map represents 100 people and shows the county's population distribution and density at a more detailed level
- Population is mostly concentrated in designated Growth Areas, namely the Leonardtown and Lexington Park Development Districts



Household Population Distribution

- A 'household' is each person or group of people who live in a given housing unit (single-family home, apartment, etc.)
- Household distribution aligns with population distribution
- Greatest density of households located in the Lexington Park-California area



A Growing Population

The County grew

45%

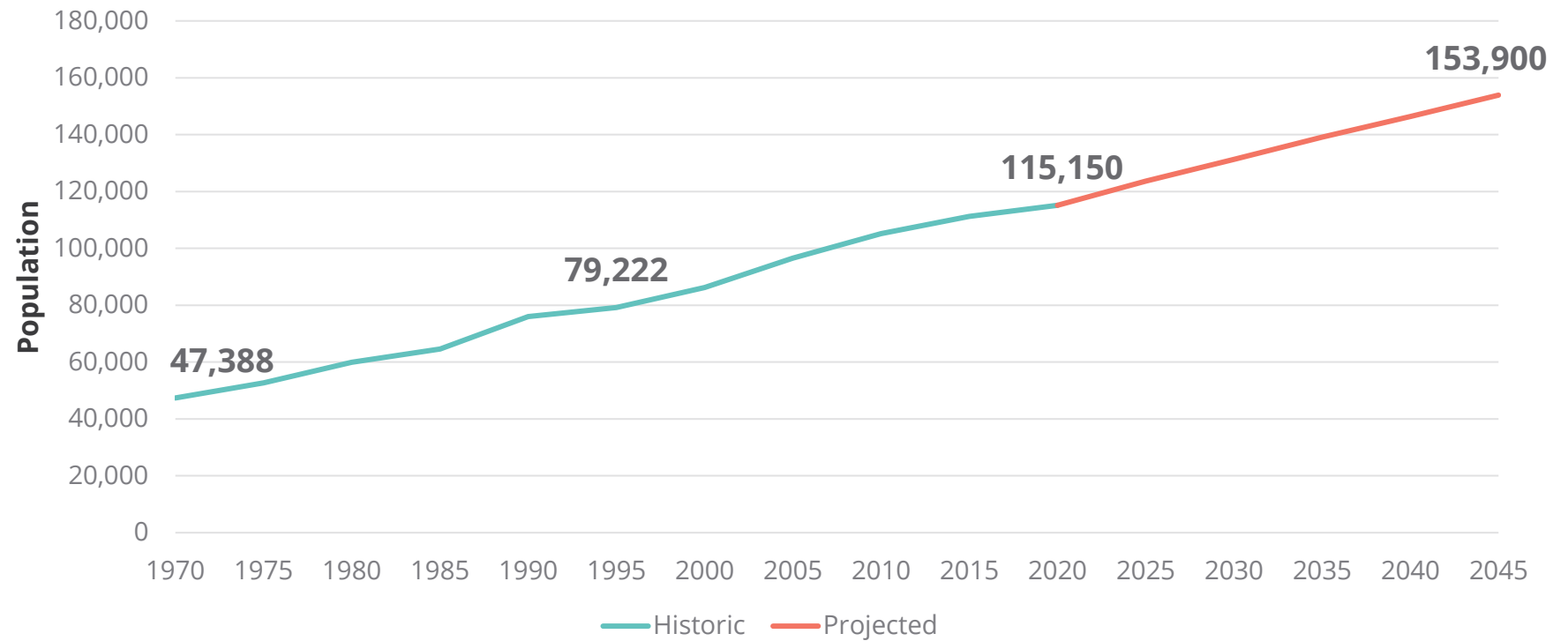
between 1995
and 2020,

and is projected
to grow

34%

between 2020
and 2045.

Population Projections for St. Mary's County



Sources: Maryland Department of Planning, Projections and State Data Center, December 2020; Annual Estimates of the Population via Federal Reserve Economic Data

Population by Jurisdiction

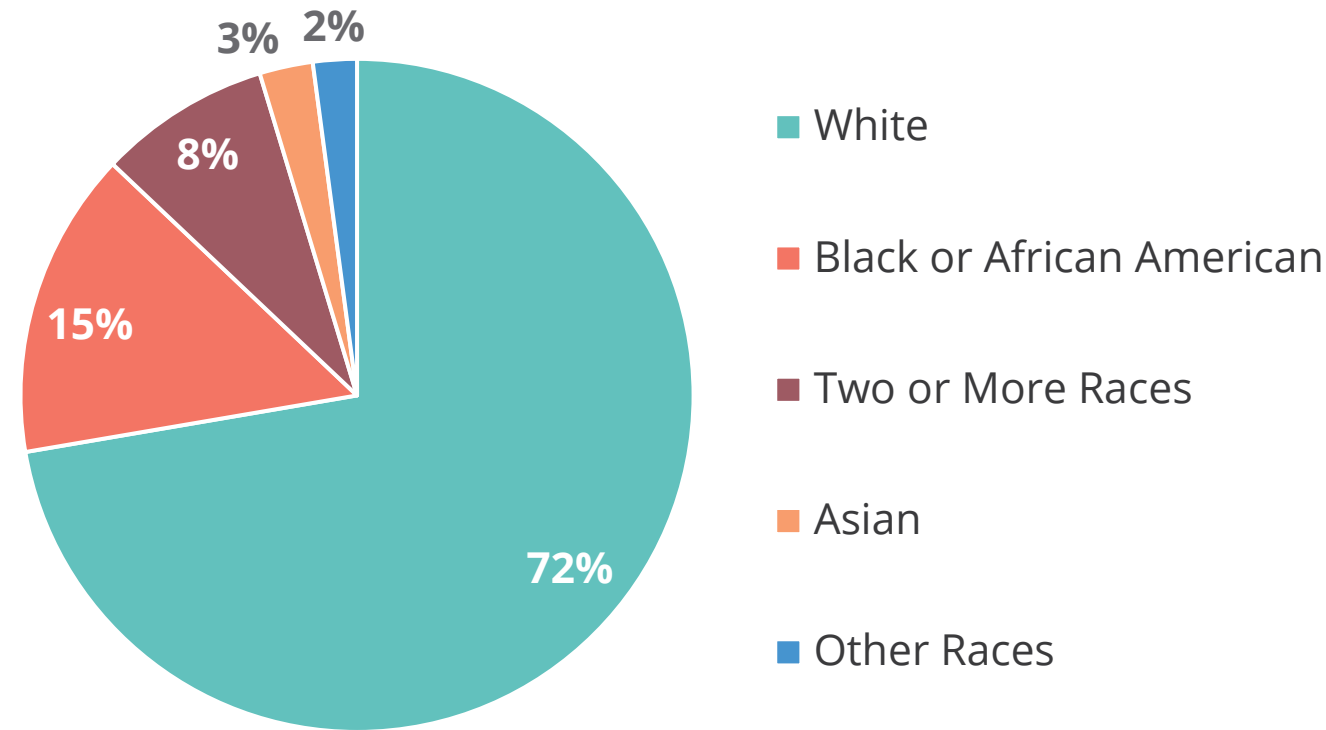
Community	2013	2018	2023
Leonardtown	3,127	3,678	4,712
Unincorporated County	103,952	107,853	109,660
St. Mary's County Total	107,079	111,531	114,372

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

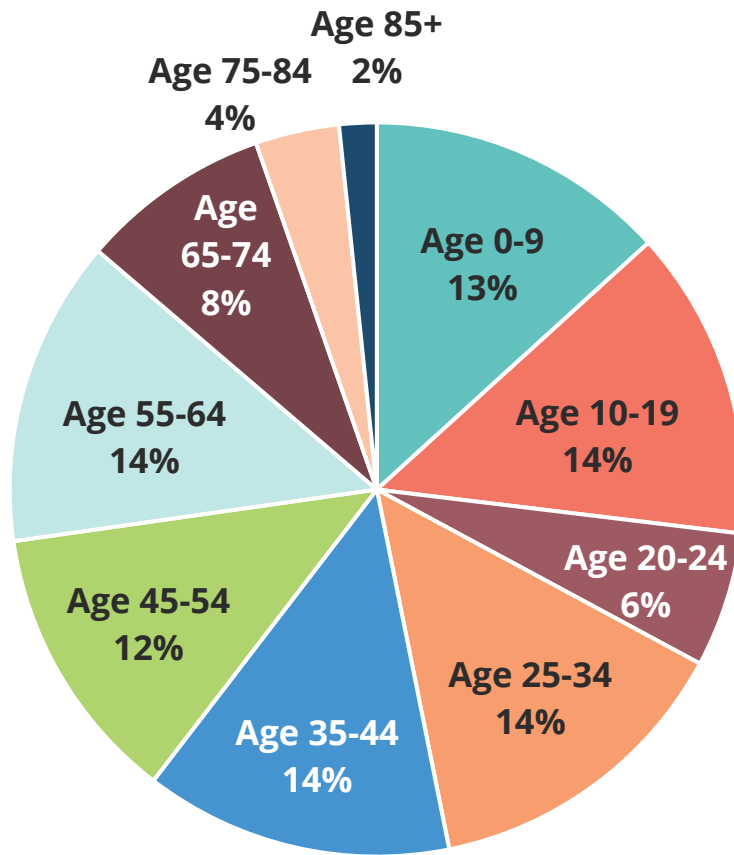
- St. Mary's County grew by about **7,000 residents** between 2013 and 2023
- The majority of County residents live in unincorporated areas

Race & Ethnicity

- Most of St. Mary's County residents identify as white, though numerous other races are also represented
- **15%** of St. Mary's County residents identify as Black
- **8%** of residents identify as belonging to two or more races
- **6%** of residents identify as Hispanic/Latino



Age Groups



37.0

St. Mary's County median age

39.3

Maryland median age

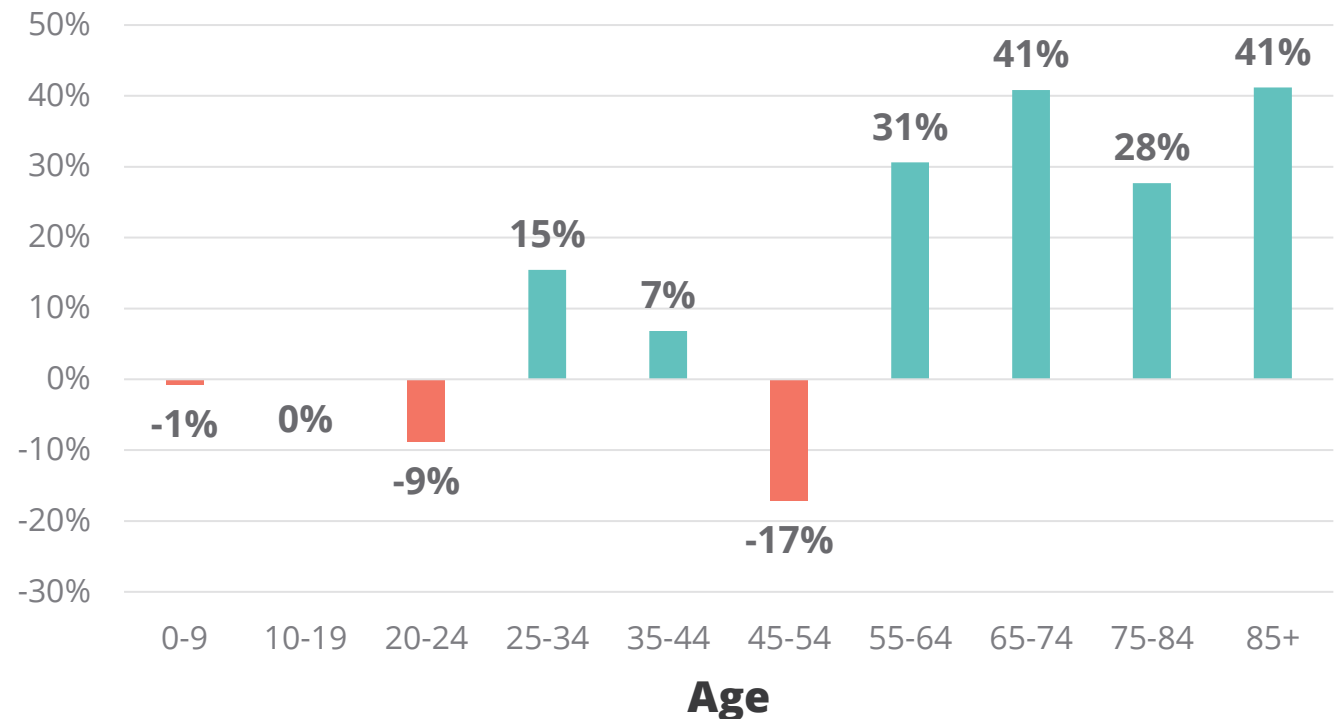
38.7

United States median age

An Aging Population

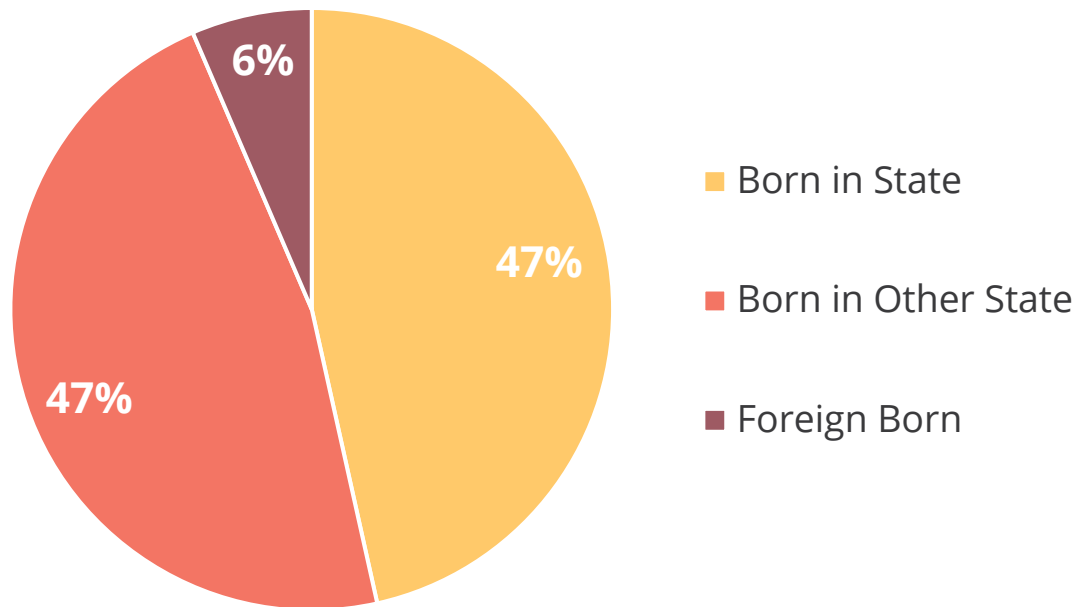
- Even as their *share* of the total population increases by 2% or less, **residents aged 55 and older are a growing demographic** in the County
- The median age in the county has increased from **36** in 2013 to **37** in 2023

Percent Change in St. Mary's County's Population by Age Group, 2013-2023



Place of Birth

Place of Birth



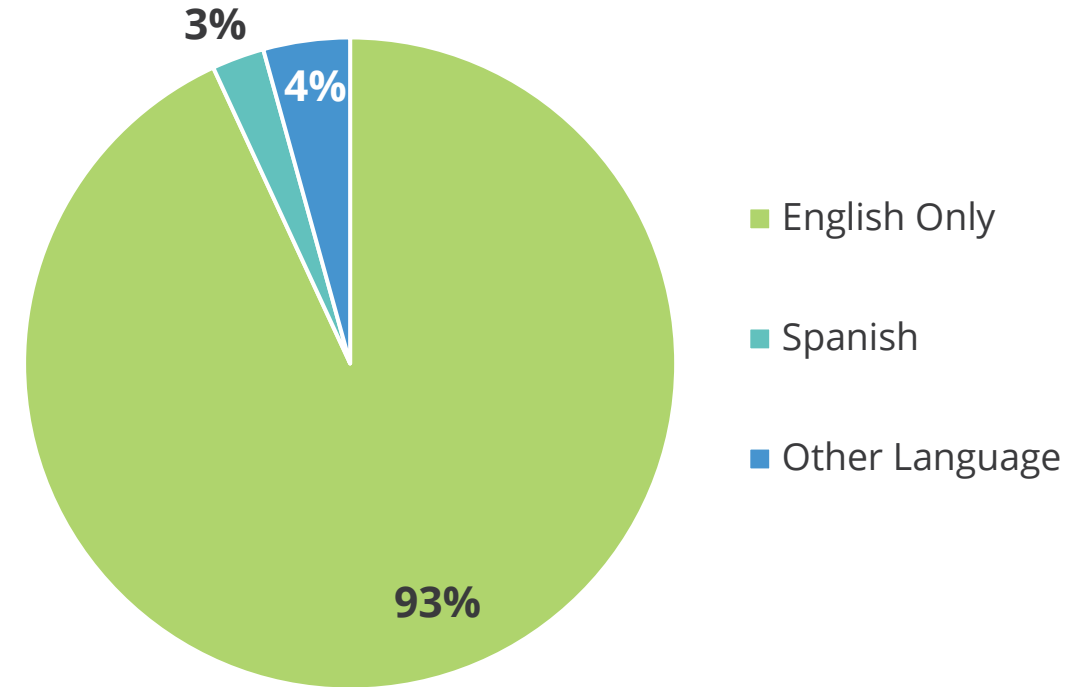
St. Mary's County residents are from many places — Maryland, other U.S. states, and even other countries.

Languages Spoken

2.6%

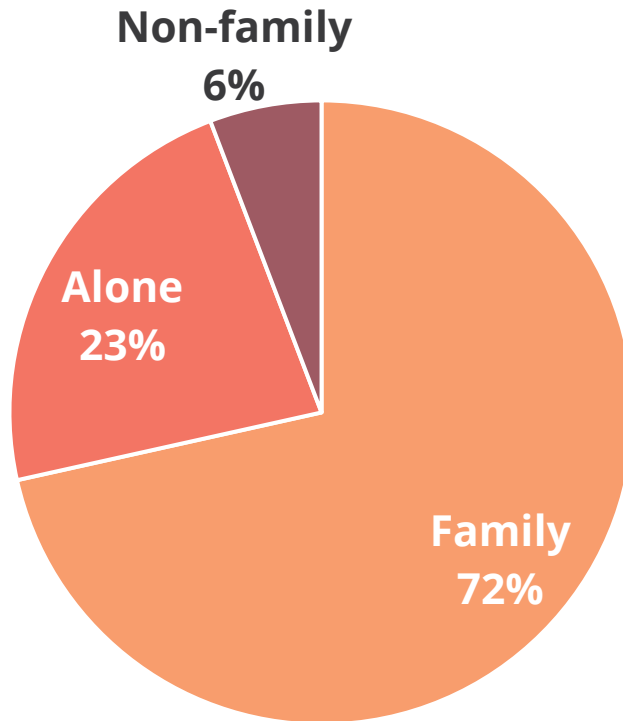
Speak English less than “very well”

Languages Spoken



Household Size & Type

Household Type



2.63

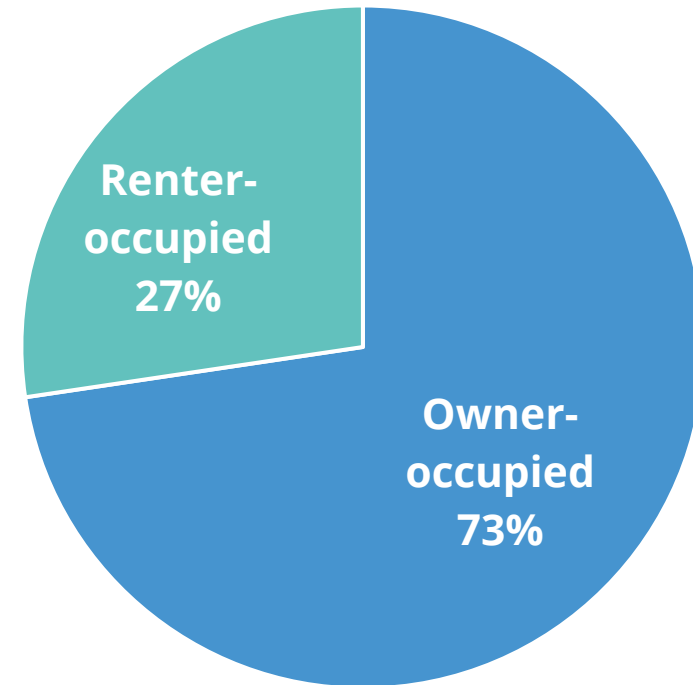
Average Household Size

The proportion of households that were family households decreased 3% since 2013 (75% in 2013).

Housing Tenure

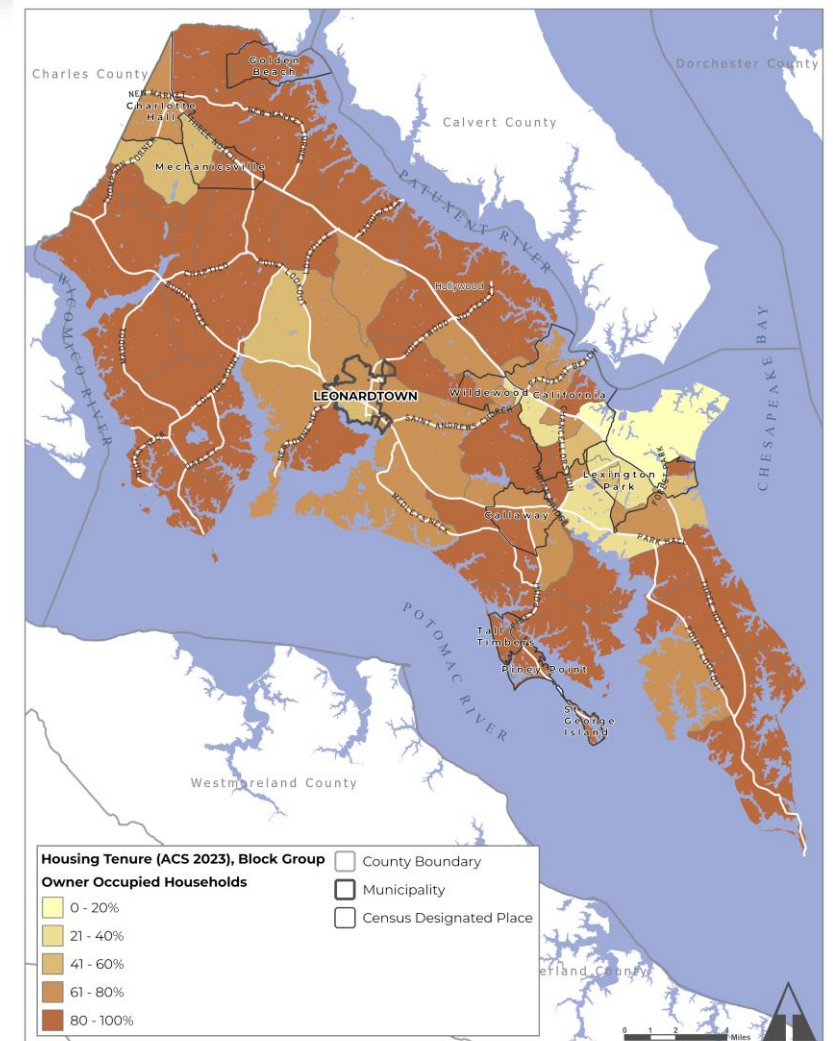
Most households own their home, but a sizeable proportion of the population rents their home.

Occupied Housing



Owner & Renter-Occupied Housing

- This map shows the percentage owner and renter-occupied housing throughout the county
- A clear majority of Census tracts in the county have predominately owner-occupied housing
- Renter-occupied housing is most present in Lexington Park and around NAS Pax, Leonardtown, Mechanicsville, and Charlotte Hall



Housing



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Housing Units

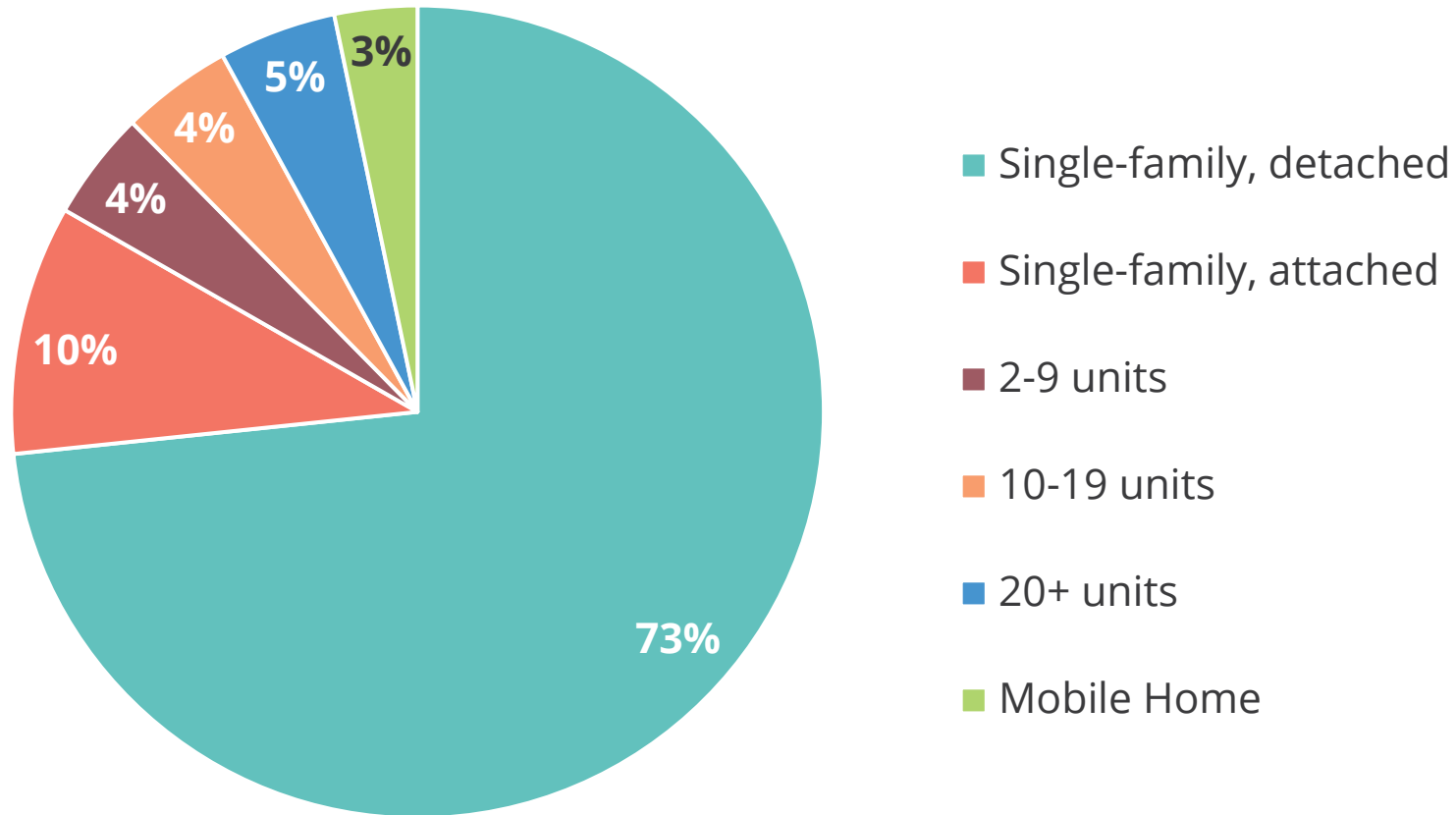
46,078

Total housing units, 2023

10%

Increase in total housing units, 2013-2023

Housing Type



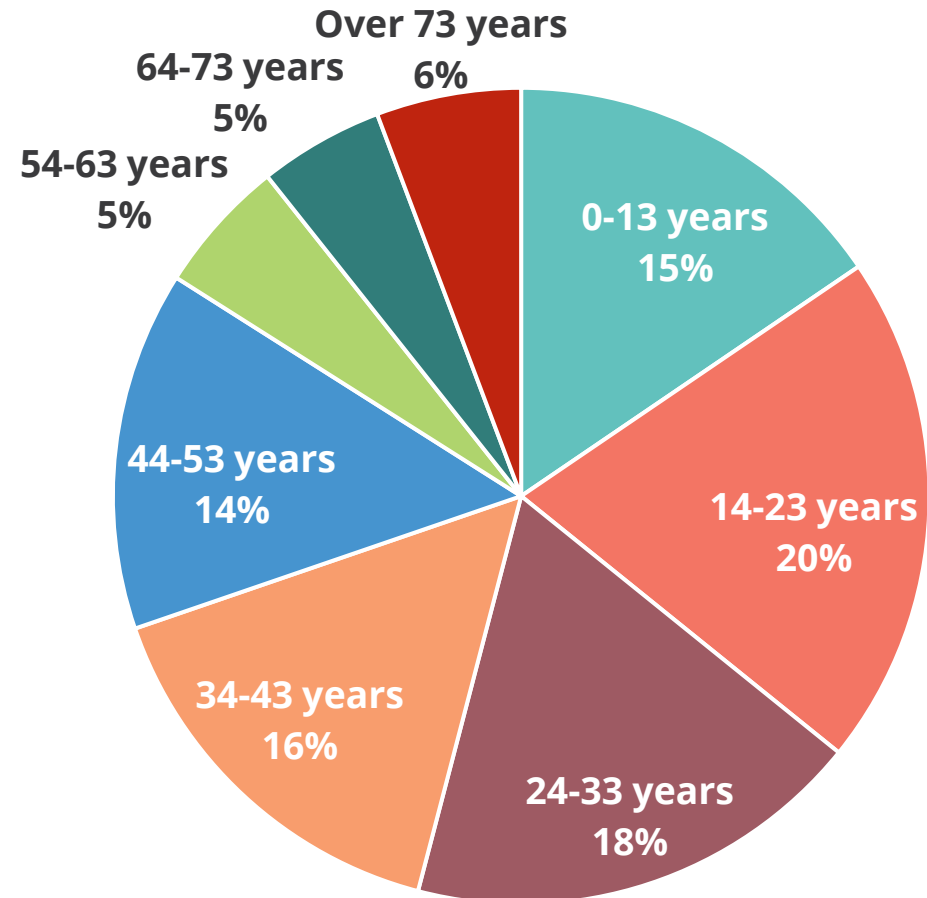
Age of Housing Stock

89%

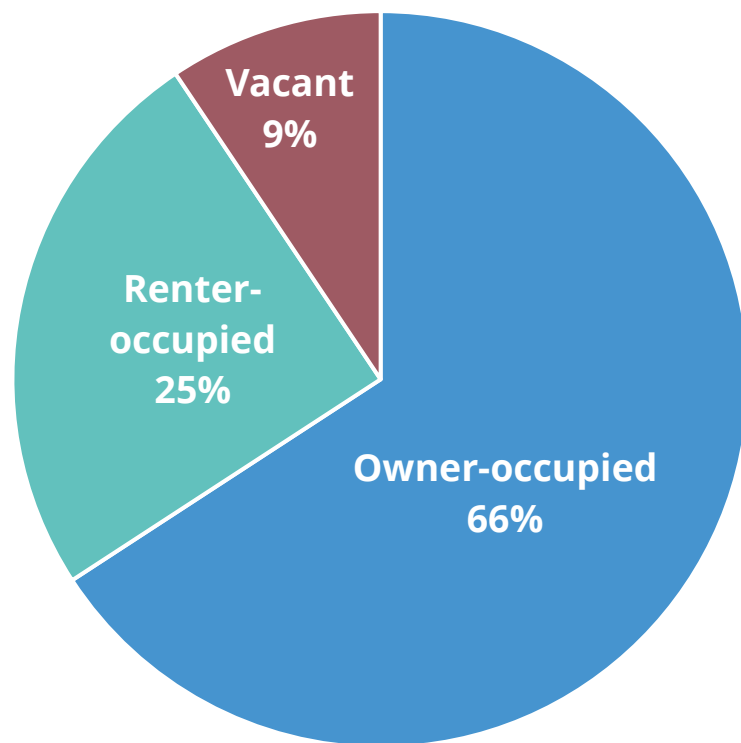
of housing in St. Mary's County
is under 53 years old

35%

of housing in St. Mary's County
is 0-23 years old



Vacancy & Seasonal Vacancy



2.5% of the county's total housing stock is seasonally vacant

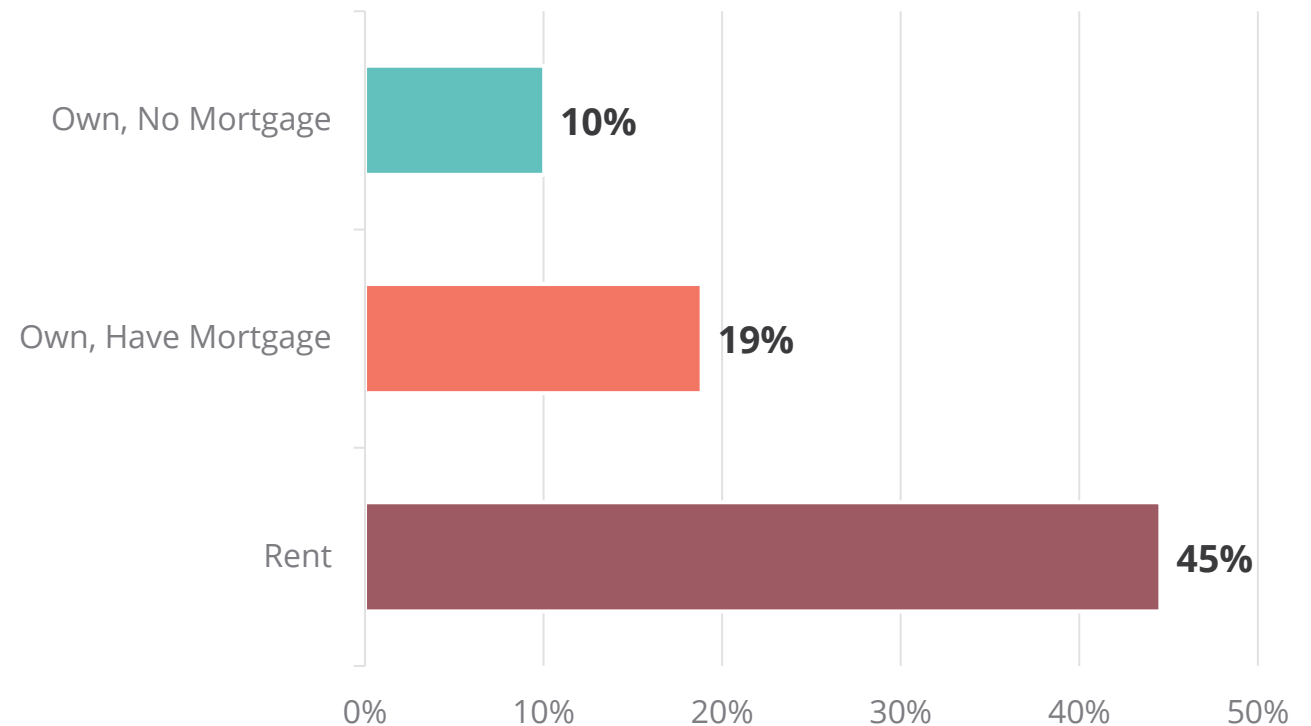
There are about **1,100** seasonally vacant units

Note: "Seasonal vacancy" refers to part-time residences like cabins, beach houses, timeshares, and other forms of vacation housing that are not occupied year-round.

Housing Cost Burden

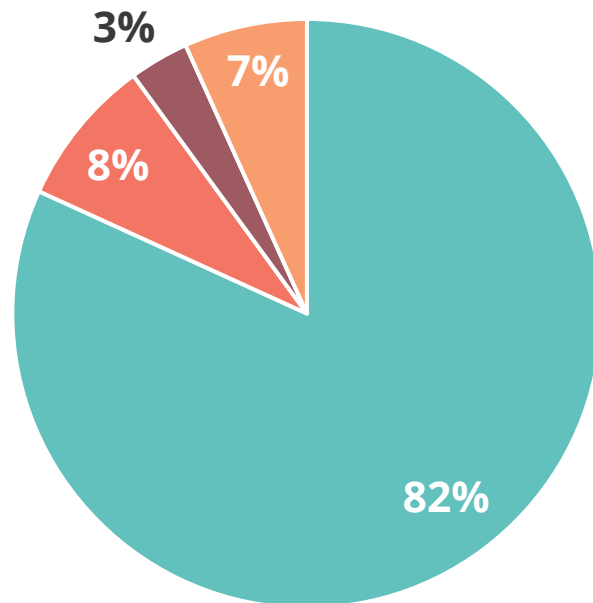
- **Almost half of renters are cost-burdened**
- Many homeowners also pay a high proportion of their income towards housing

Cost-Burdened (30% or more of income goes towards housing)

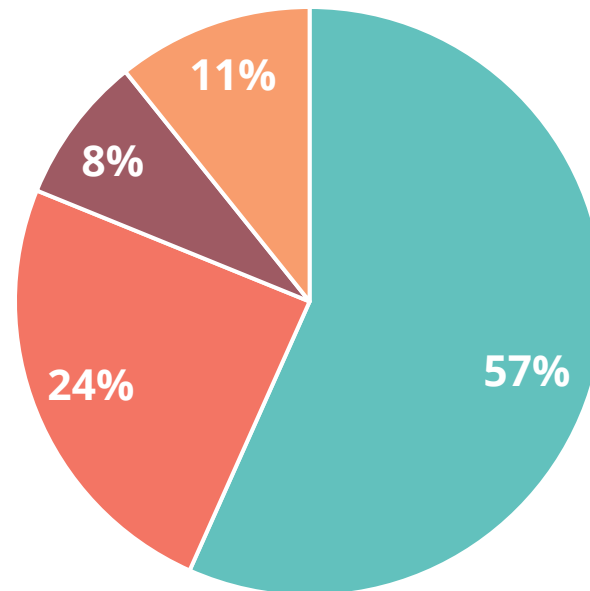


Cost Burden Detail

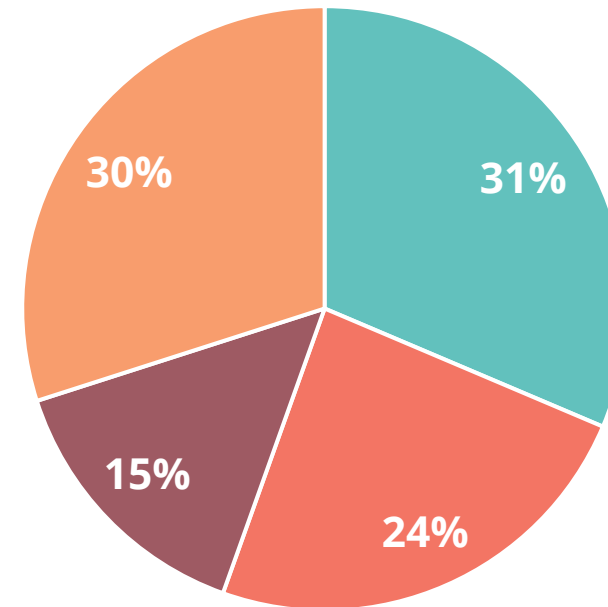
Own, No Mortgage



Own, With Mortgage



Rent

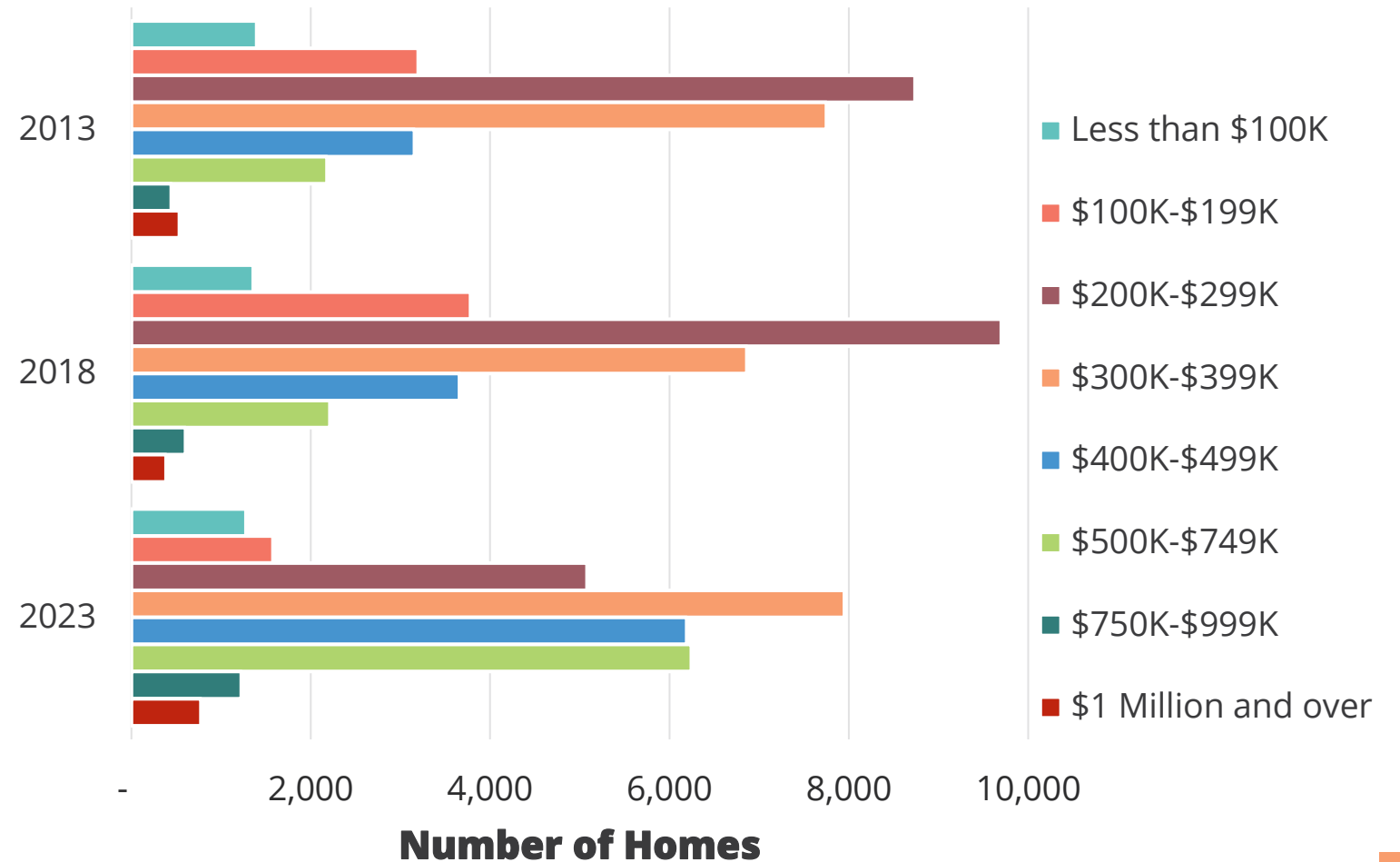


Percent of Income Spent on Housing

- Less than 20%
- 20%-29%
- 30%-39%
- 40% or more

Owner-Occupied Housing Value

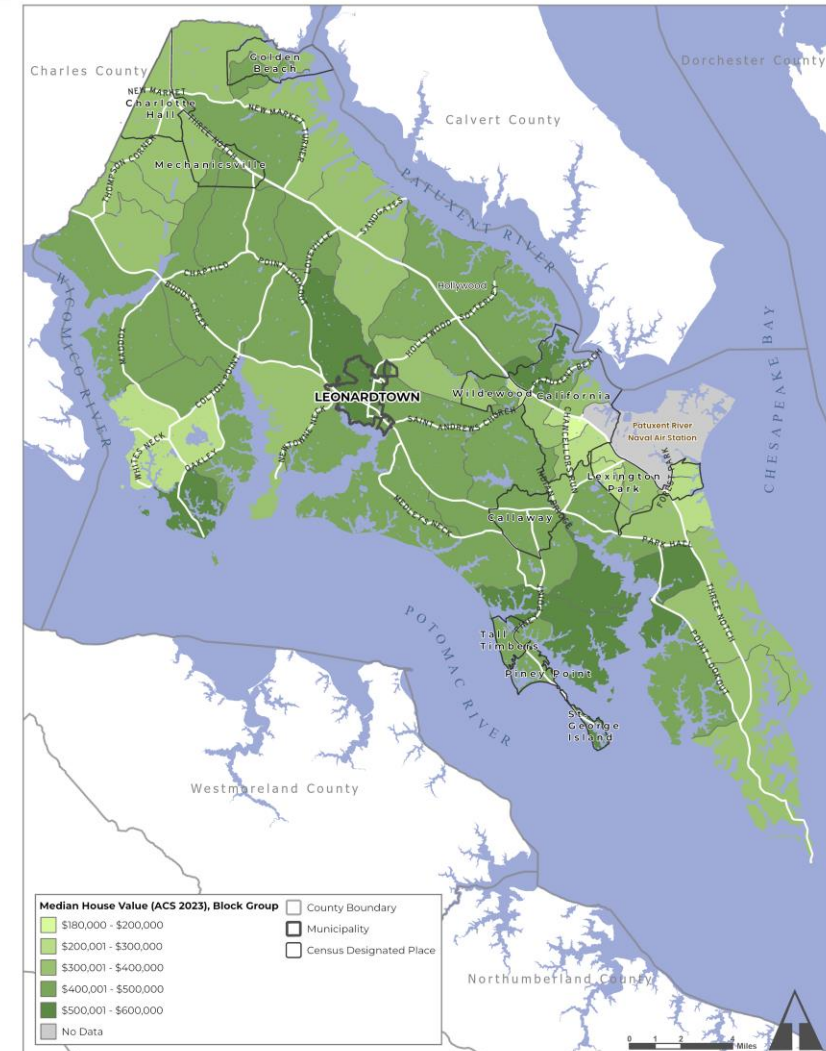
The median housing value increased from **\$305K** in 2013 to **\$391K** in 2023, a **28.3%** increase.



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2023

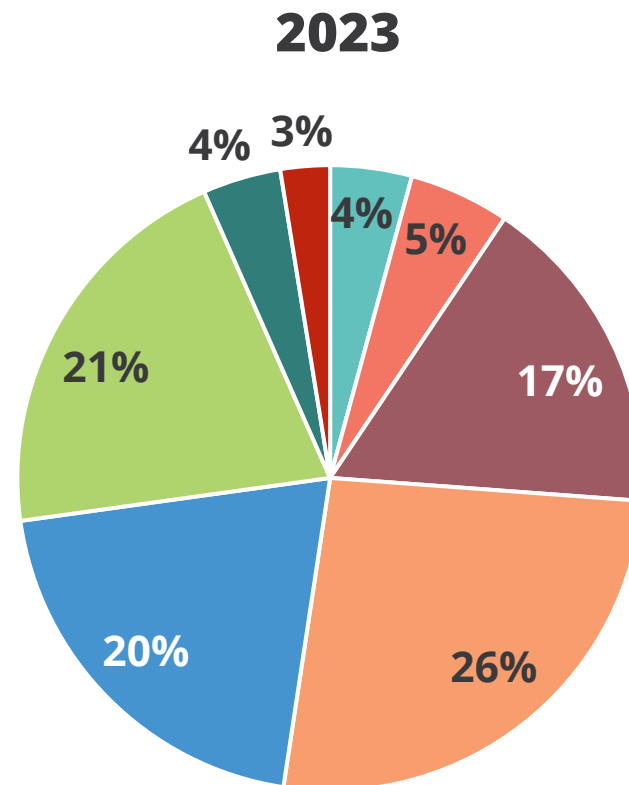
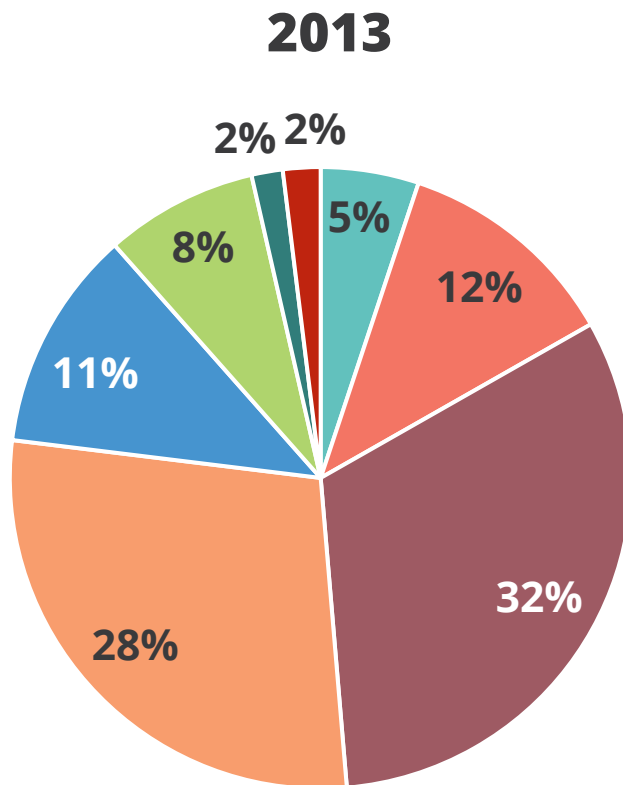
Owner-Occupied Housing Value

- Shown in dark green on the map to the right, median housing values are highest in the following areas: Myrtle Point, Leonardtown, Coltons Point, Valley Lee, Drayden, West St Mary's, St. James, St. Mary's City, and Dutchmans Cove
- Median values are relatively lower in parts of the 7th District and Lexington Park-California areas

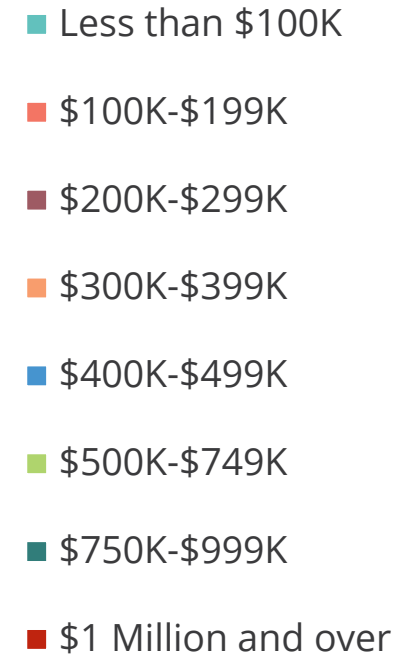


Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; St. Mary's County GIS Dept.; State of Maryland

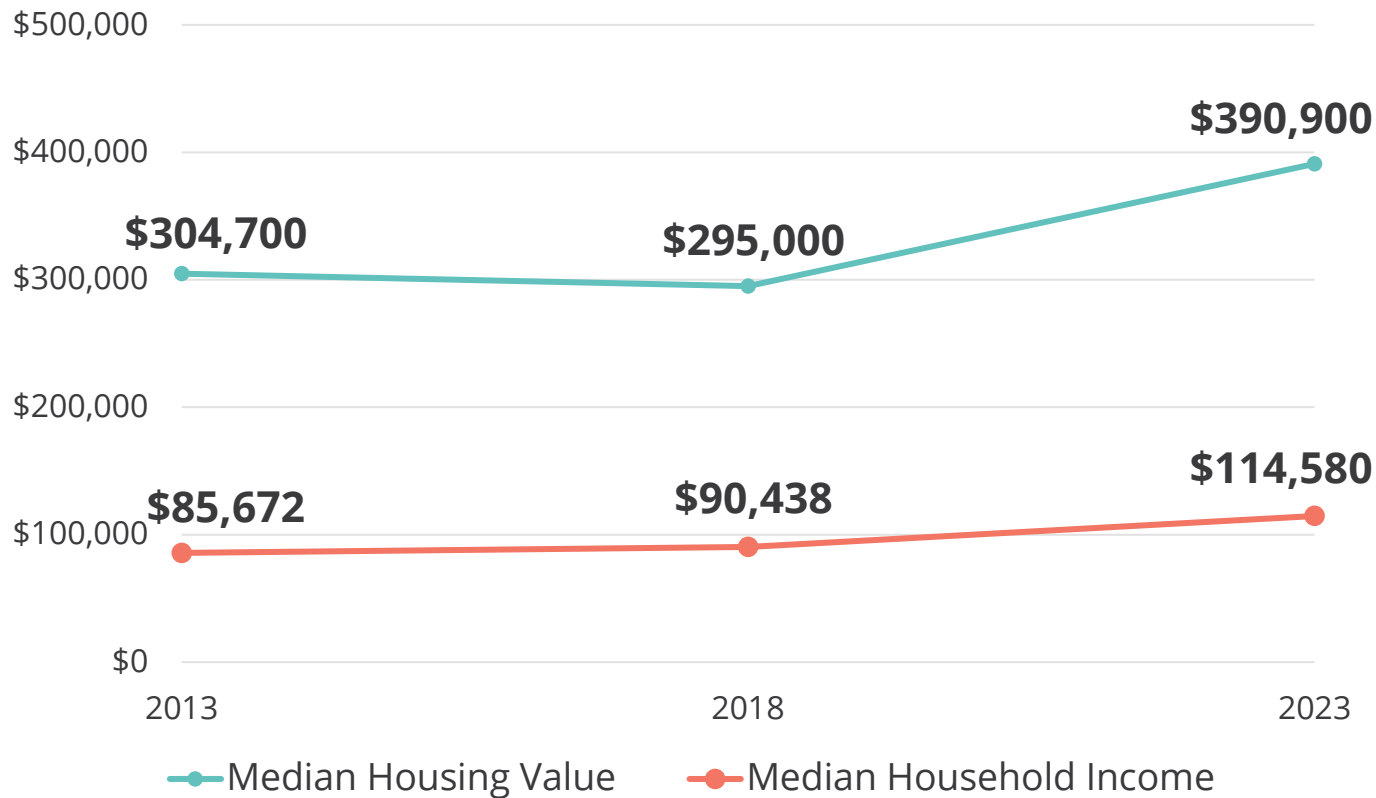
Fewer Homes Under \$300K



- From **2013 to 2023**, there was a **46% decline** in the number of homes available under \$300,000



Housing Value & Income



28.3%

Increase in median housing value, 2013-2023

33.7%

Increase in median household income, 2013-2023

29.3%

Median household income as a percent of median housing value

Economy

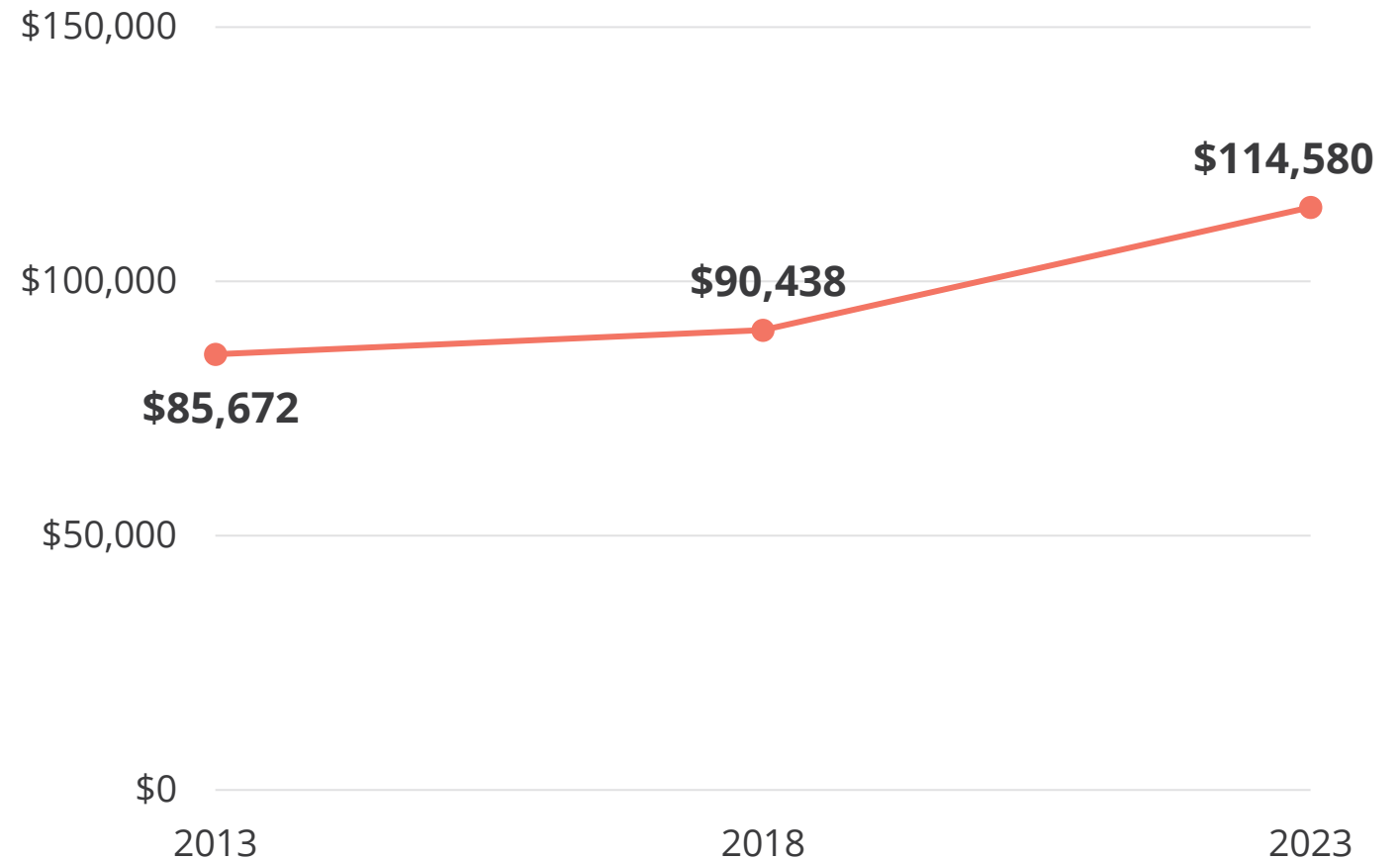


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Median Household Income

33.7%

Increase in median
household income,
2013-2023



Poverty Rate

7.4%

St. Mary's County poverty rate, 2023

9.3%

Maryland poverty rate, 2023

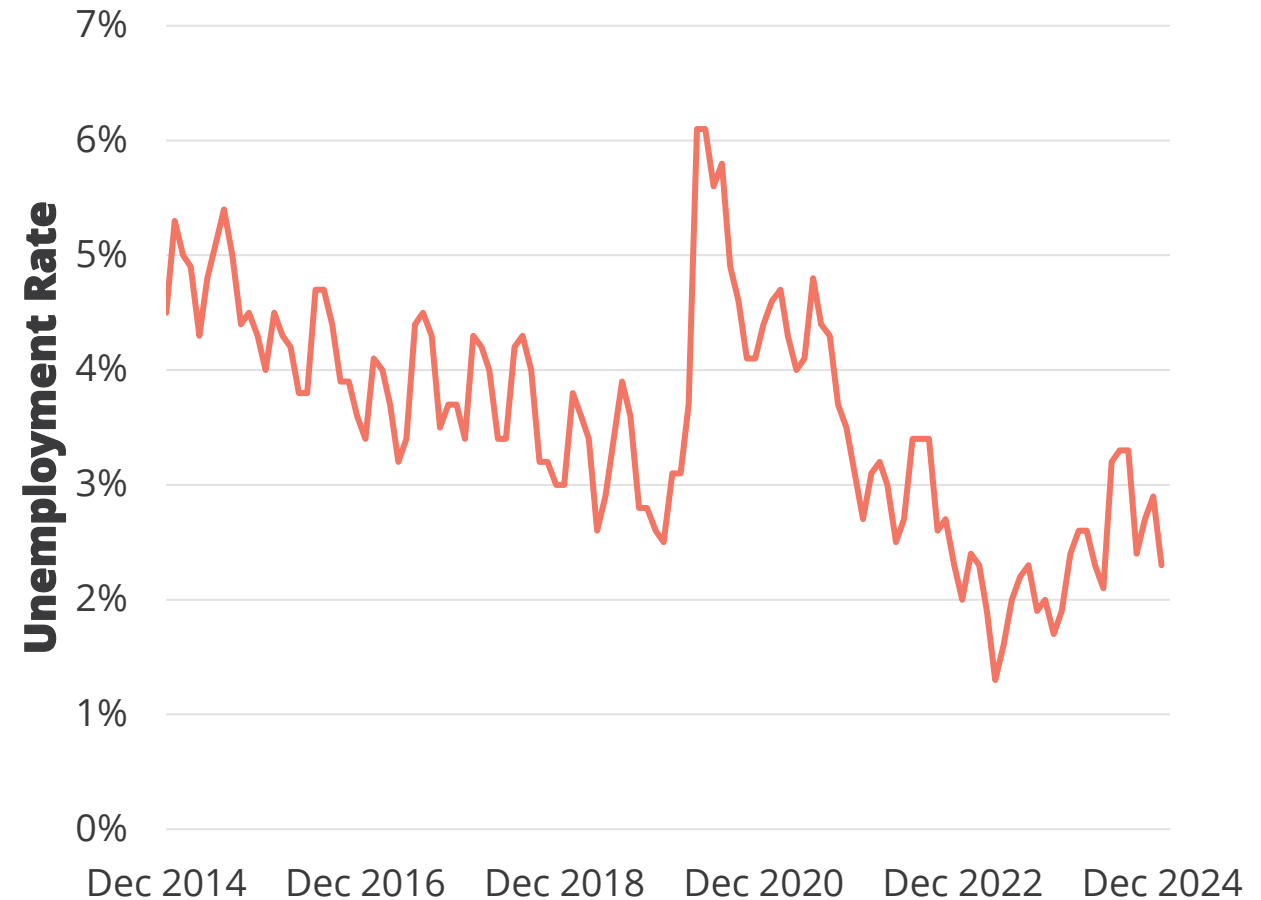
12.4%

U.S. poverty rate, 2023

Unemployment Rate

2.3%

December 2024
Unemployment Rate
in St. Mary's County



Commute Patterns: Inflow & Outflow

44%

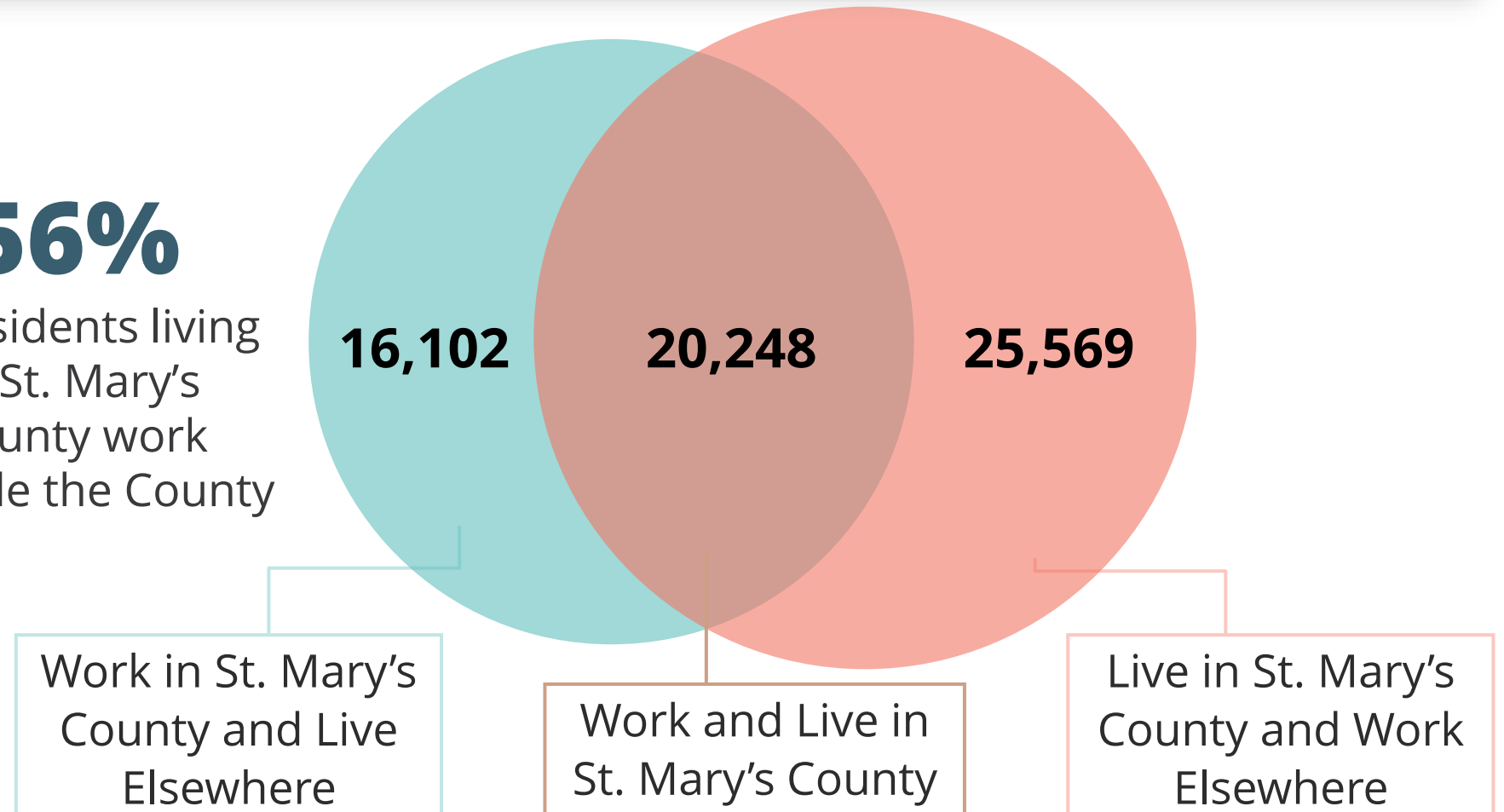
of people working
in St. Mary's County
live outside the
county

56%

of residents living
in St. Mary's
County work
outside the County

56%

of people working
in St. Mary's County
both work and live
in the county



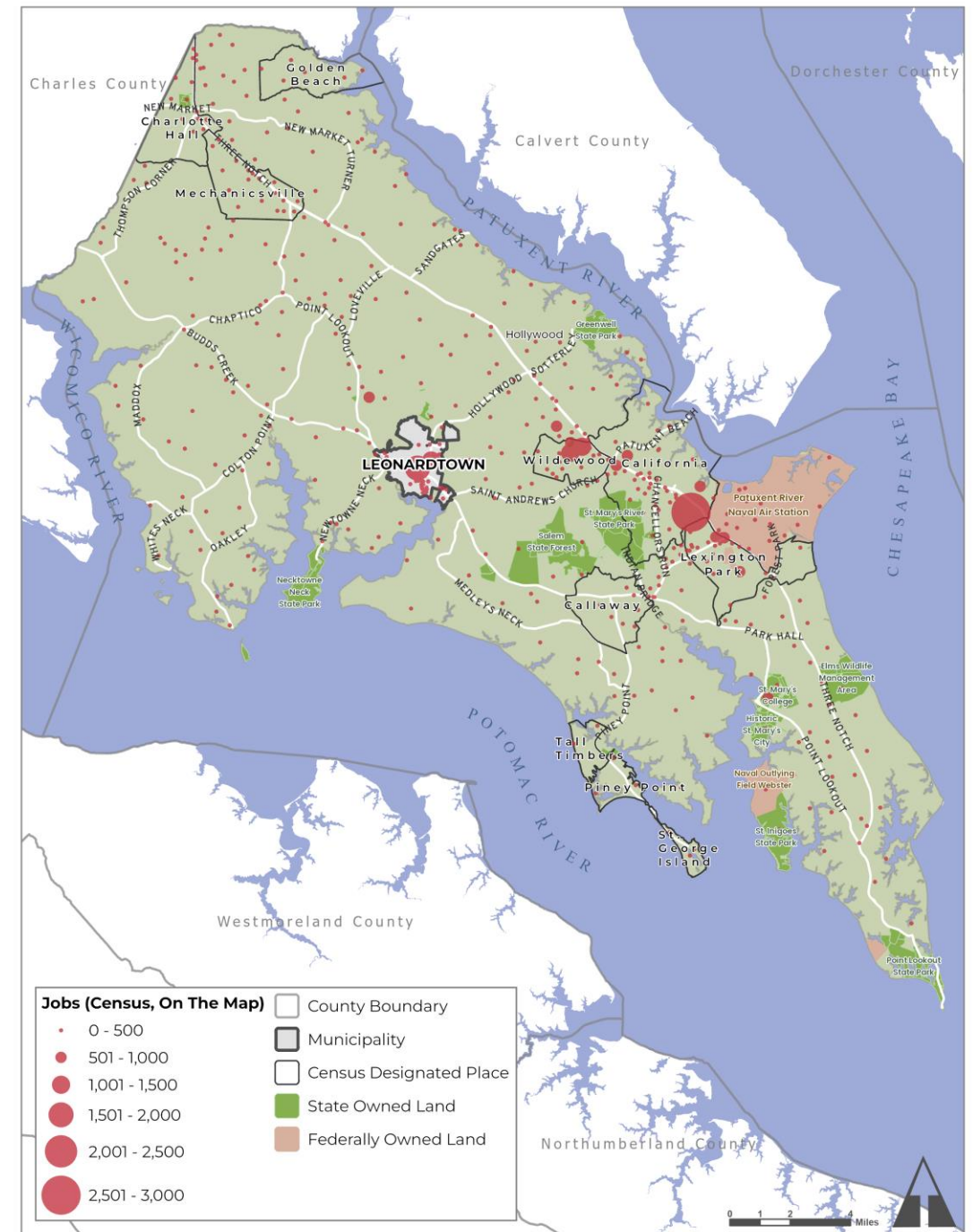
Job Locations & Density

- The county's **36,350 jobs** are primarily clustered in **Lexington Park, California, Wildewood, and Leonardtown**, with smaller clusters in **Charlotte Hall, Mechanicsville, and Loveville**, along with St. Mary's College
- The largest cluster of jobs in the county are Nas Pax-related



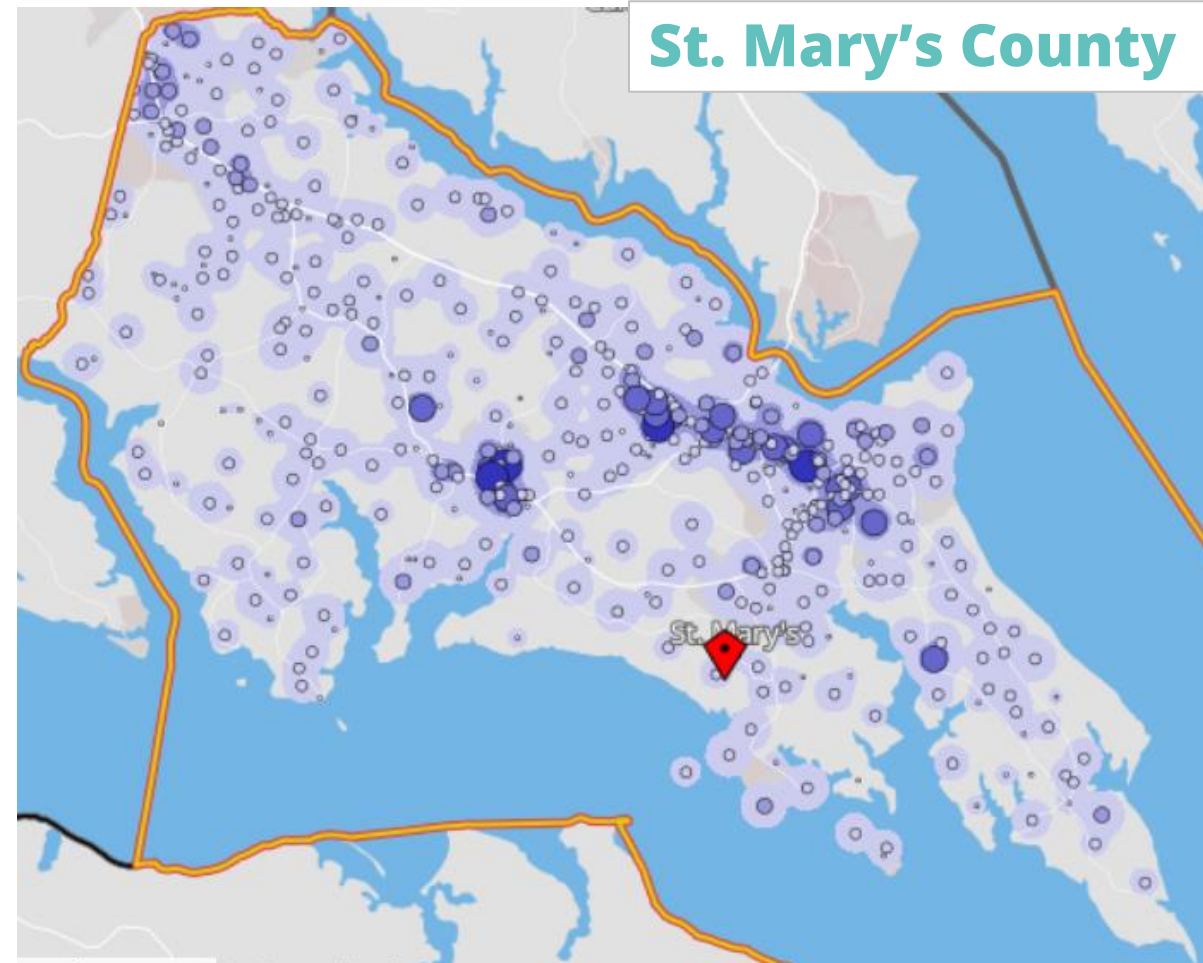
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Source: OnTheMap U.S. Census Bureau Tool, 2022 data; St. Mary's County GIS Dept.; federal datasets



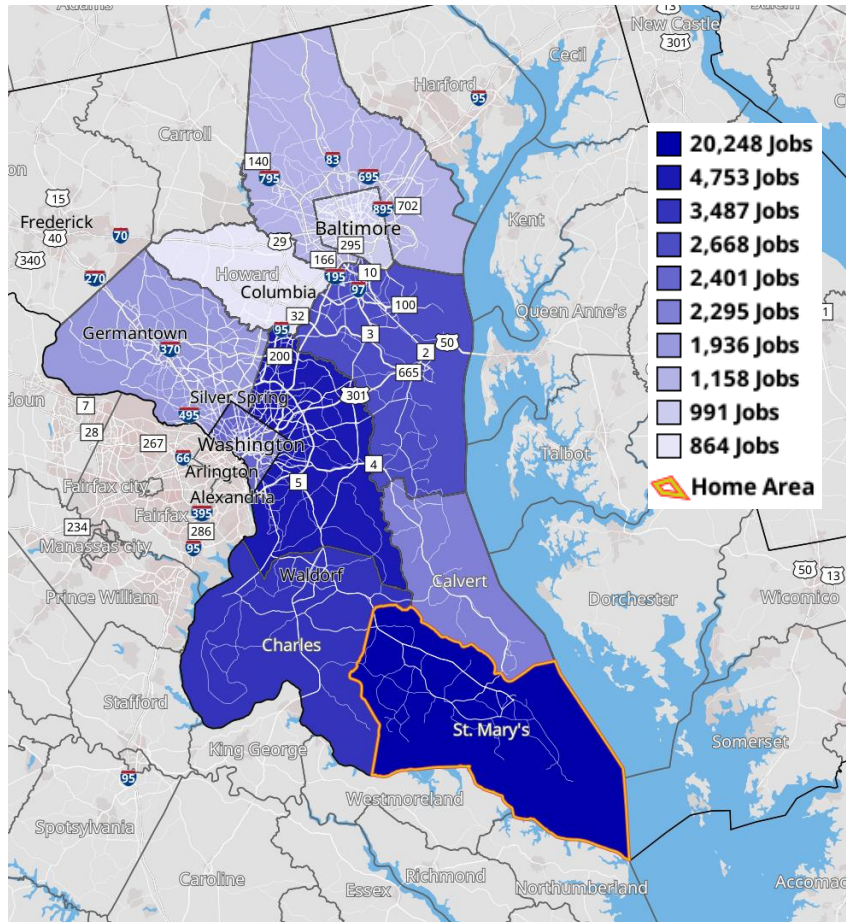
Job Locations and Density

- This map provides an alternate view of the job location and density data displayed on the previous map, emphasizing job locations with a different type of detail (jobs per square mile)



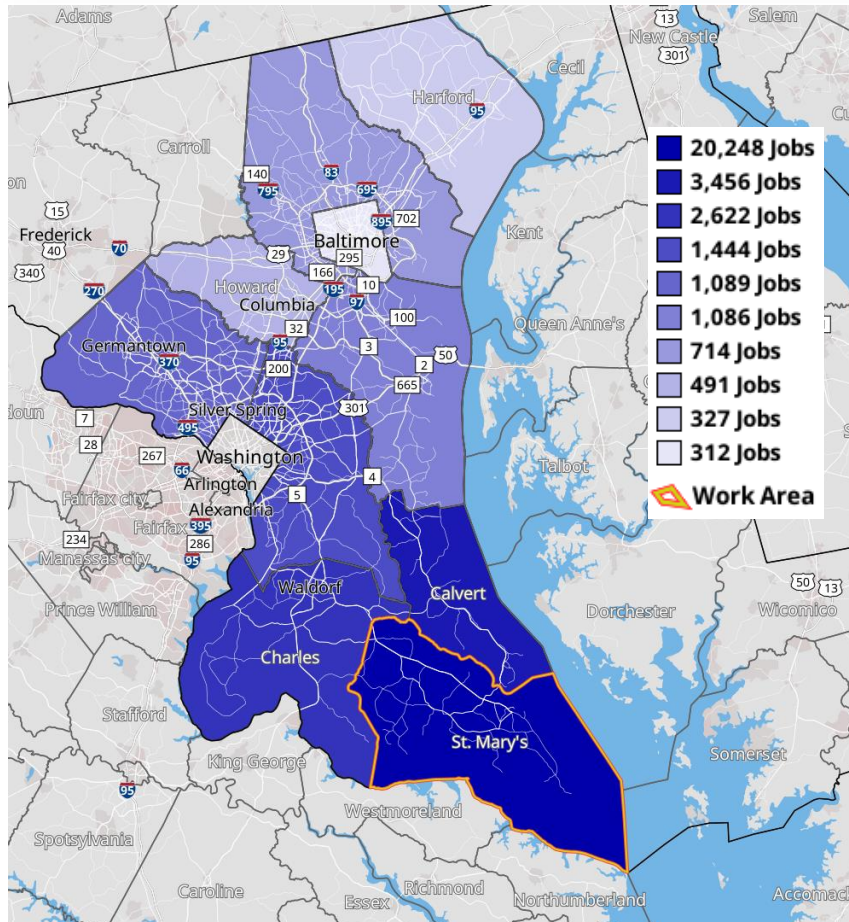
Note : Disregard red pin; not related to data. Pin signifies that St. Mary's County was analyzed.

Where County Residents Work



Job Location	Count	Share
St. Mary's County, MD	20,248	44.20%
Prince George's County, MD	4,753	10.40%
Charles County, MD	3,487	7.60%
Anne Arundel County, MD	2,668	5.80%
District of Columbia, DC	2,401	5.20%
Calvert County, MD	2,295	5.00%
Montgomery County, MD	1,936	4.20%
Baltimore County, MD	1,158	2.50%
Baltimore City, MD	991	2.20%
Howard County, MD	864	1.90%
All Other Locations	5,016	10.90%

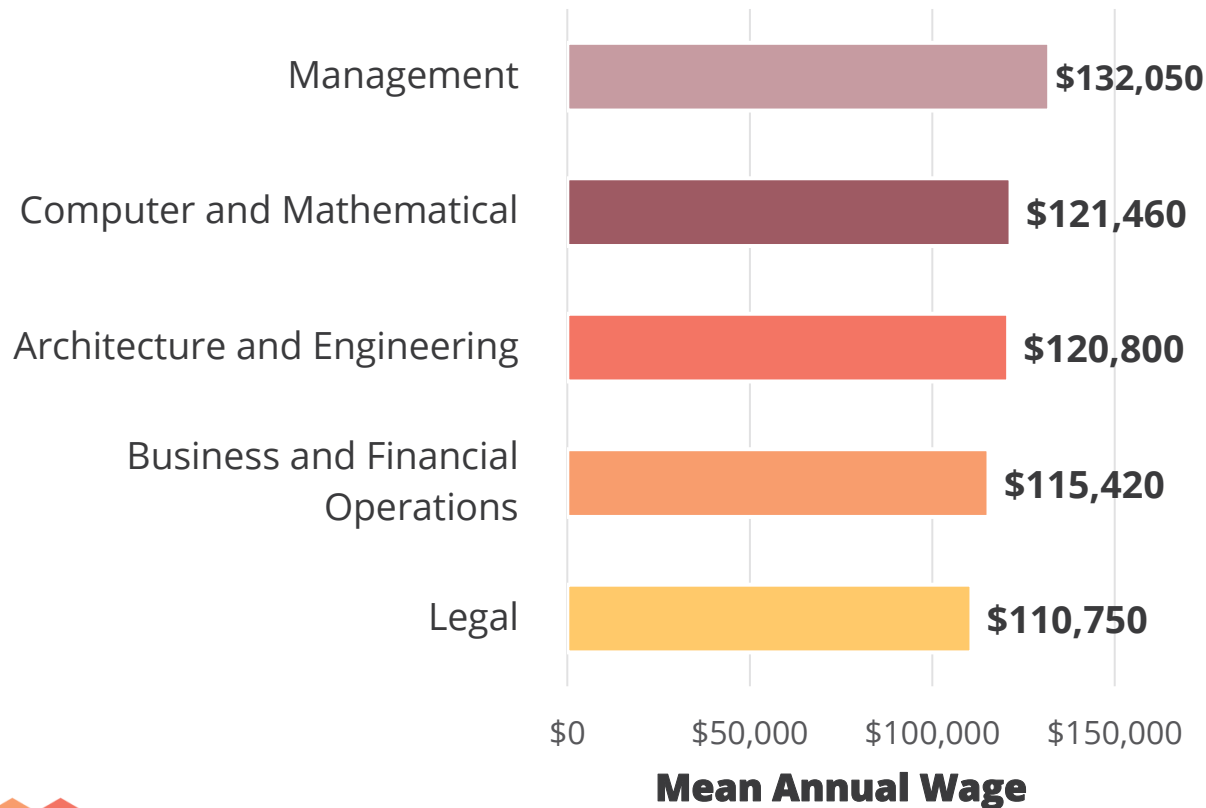
Where County Workers Live



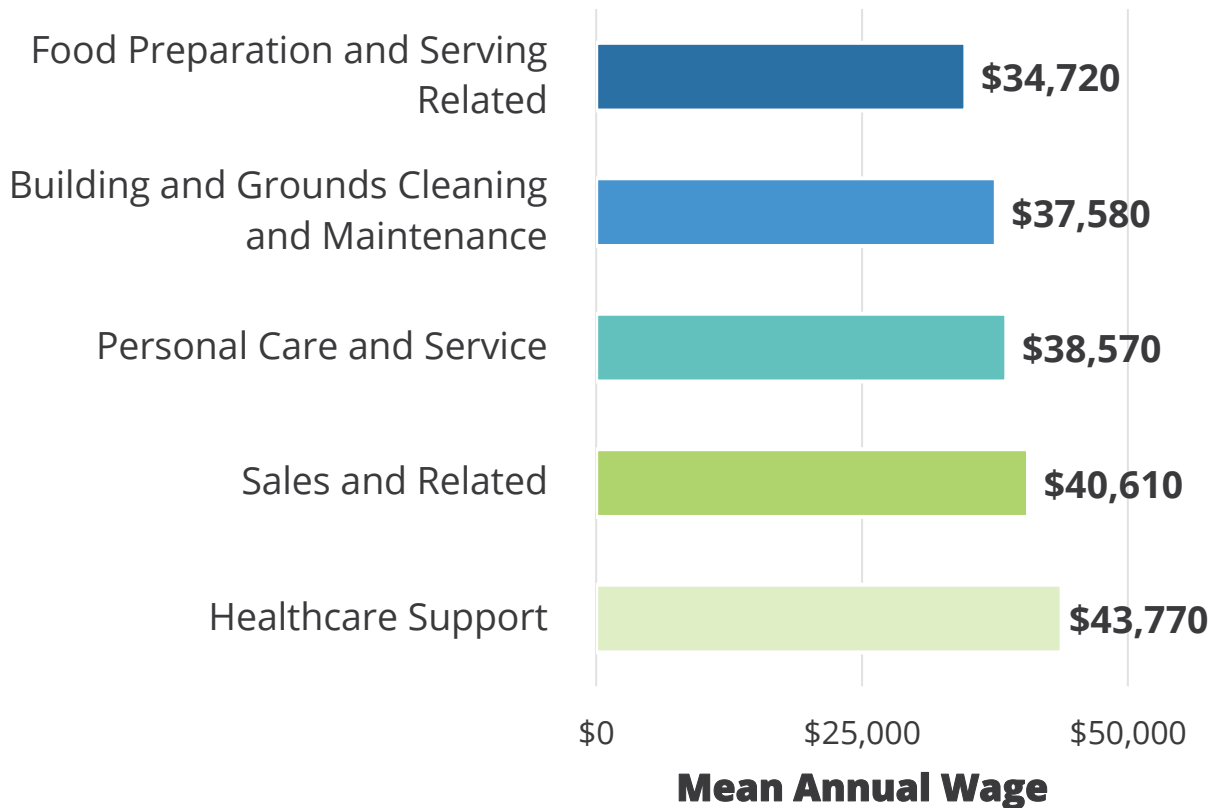
Residence	Count	Share
St. Mary's County, MD	20,248	55.7%
Calvert County, MD	3,456	9.5%
Charles County, MD	2,622	7.2%
Prince George's County, MD	1,444	4.0%
Montgomery County, MD	1,089	3.0%
Anne Arundel County, MD	1,086	3.0%
Baltimore County, MD	714	2.0%
Howard County, MD	491	1.4%
Harford County, MD	327	0.9%
Baltimore City, MD	312	0.9%
All Other Locations	4,561	12.5%

Annual Wages

Highest-Paid Occupations

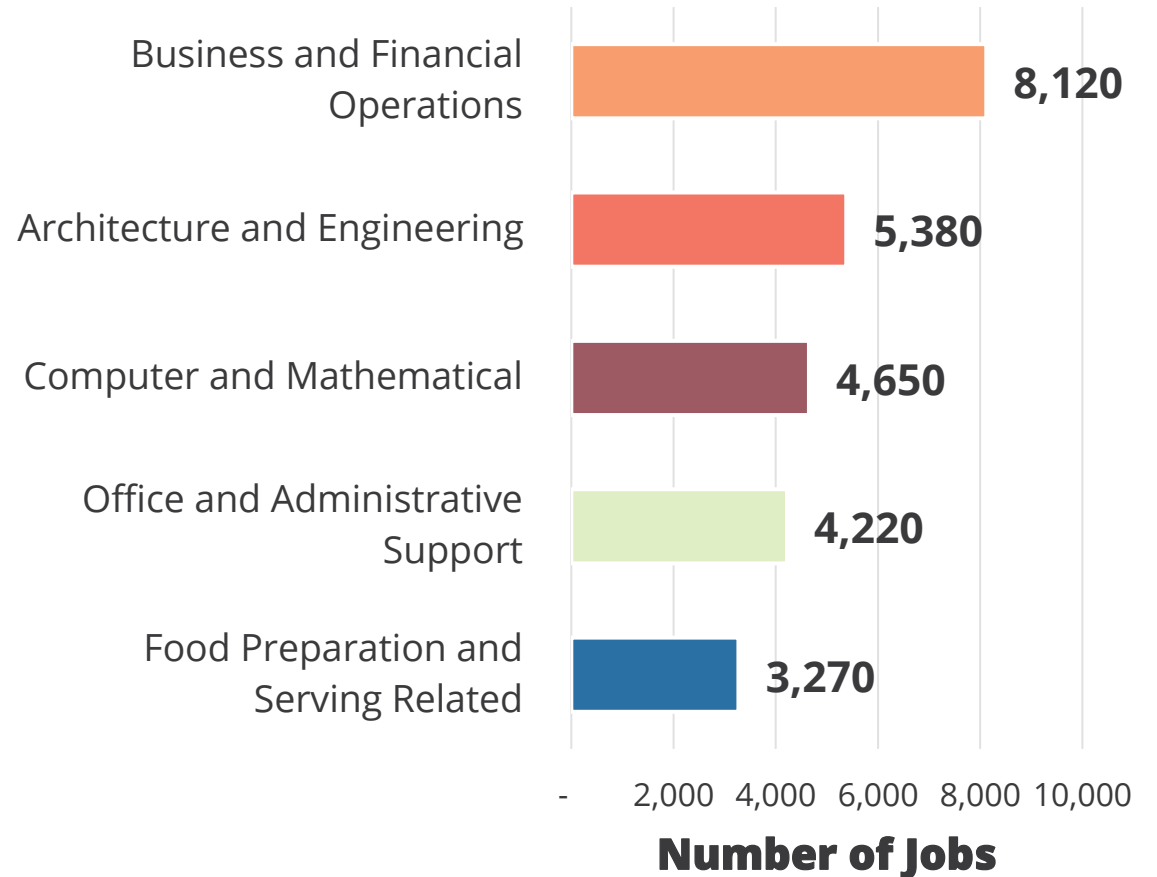


Lowest-Paid Occupations



Most Common Occupations

- The three most common occupations are highly-paid (Business and Financial Operations, Architecture and Engineering, Computer and Mathematical)
- The most low-paid occupation, Food Preparation and Serving Related, is also very common



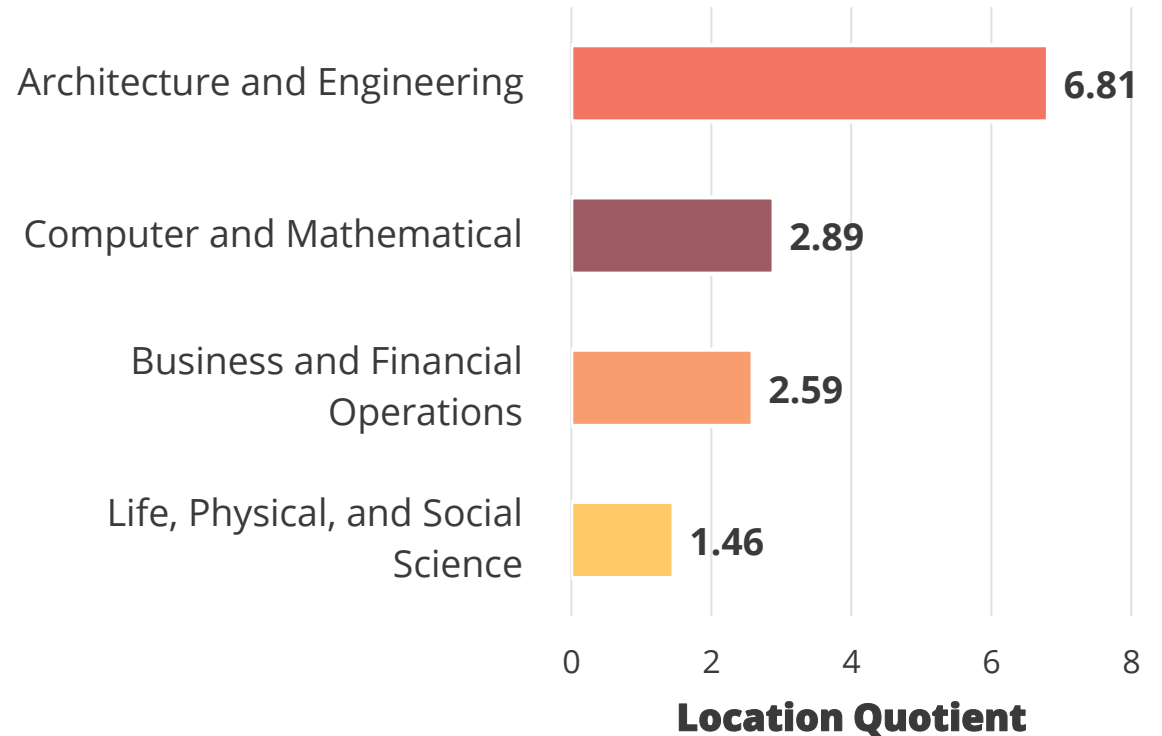
Industry Concentration

- Location quotient measures how much more (or less) concentrated an industry is in an area than the U.S. average. A location quotient greater than one is an above-average concentration

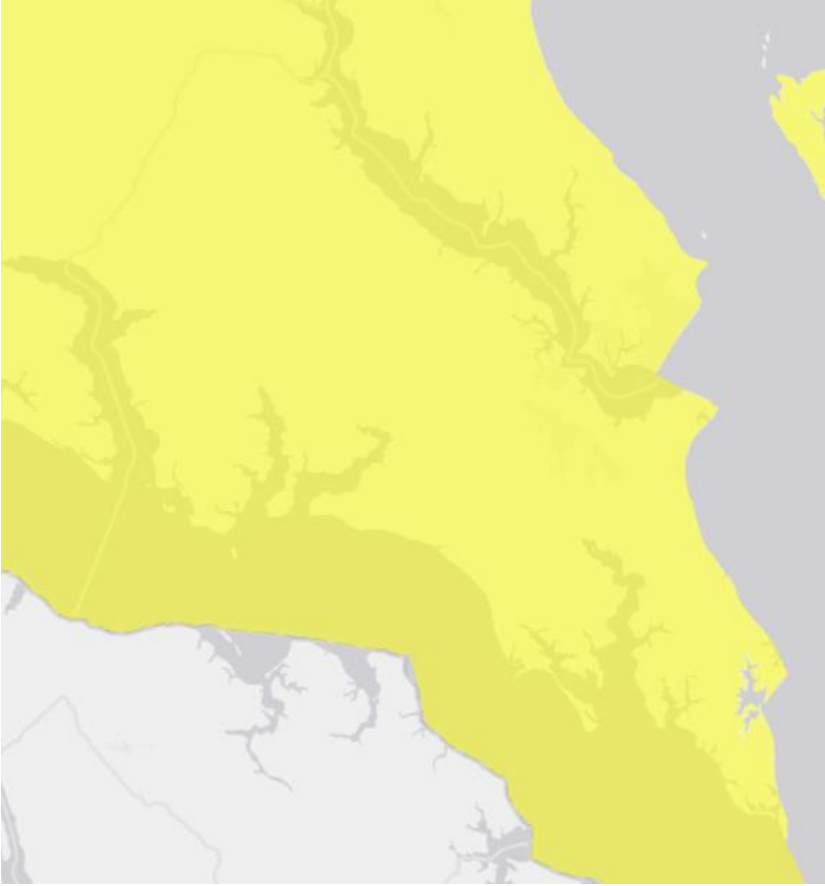
$$\frac{(\text{Concentration in area})}{(\text{Concentration in U.S.})}$$

- Three of the four occupations with an above-average concentration are in the top five most highly-paid (Life / Physical / Social science is #7 in mean annual wage)

Occupations with Above-Average Concentration (Location Quotient)



Broadband: Mobile Wireless



Mobile Wireless broadband is accessible across all of St. Mary's County.

Broadband: Fiber Optic



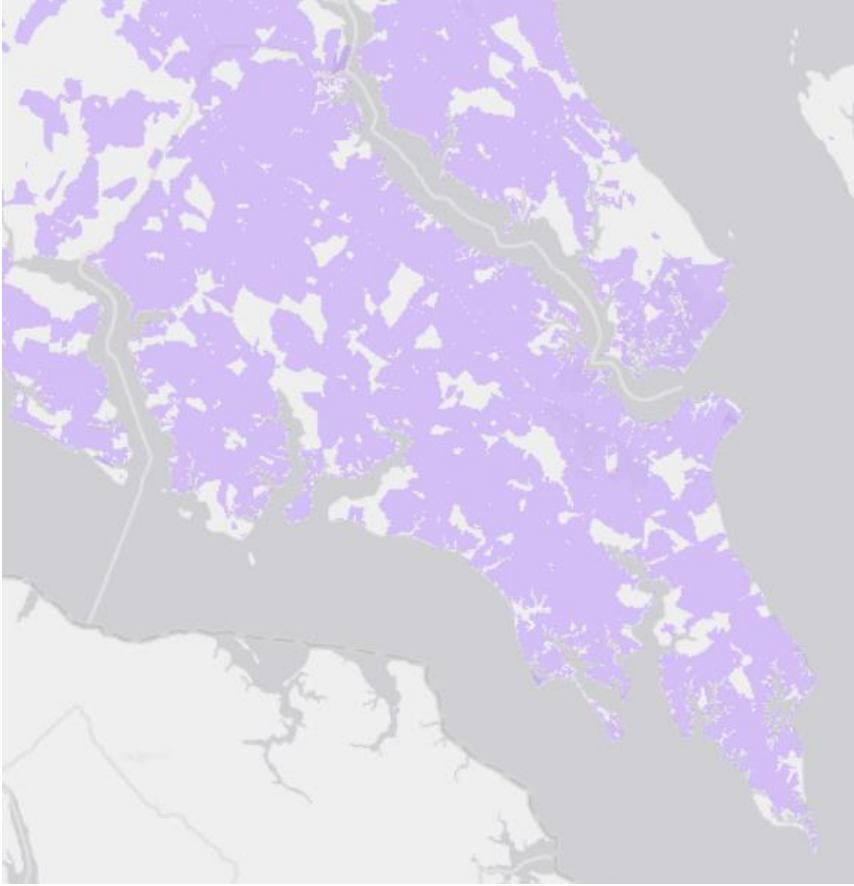
Fiber Optic broadband is only available in a few places in St. Mary's County.

Broadband: Cable Modem



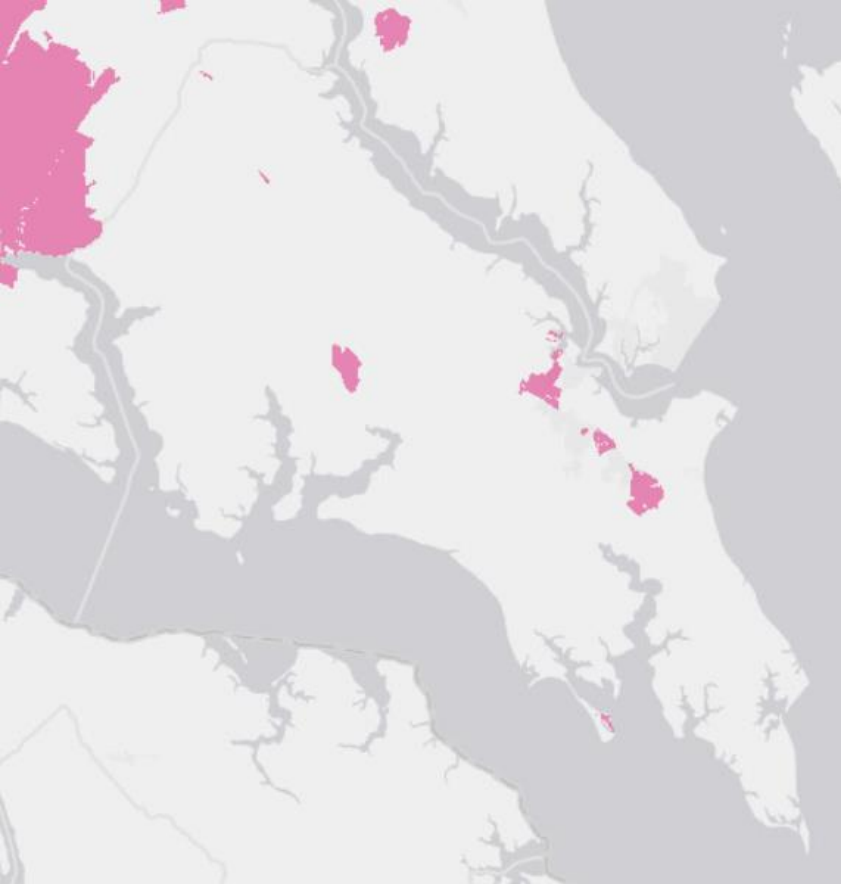
Cable Modem broadband is accessible across most of St. Mary's County.

Broadband: DSL



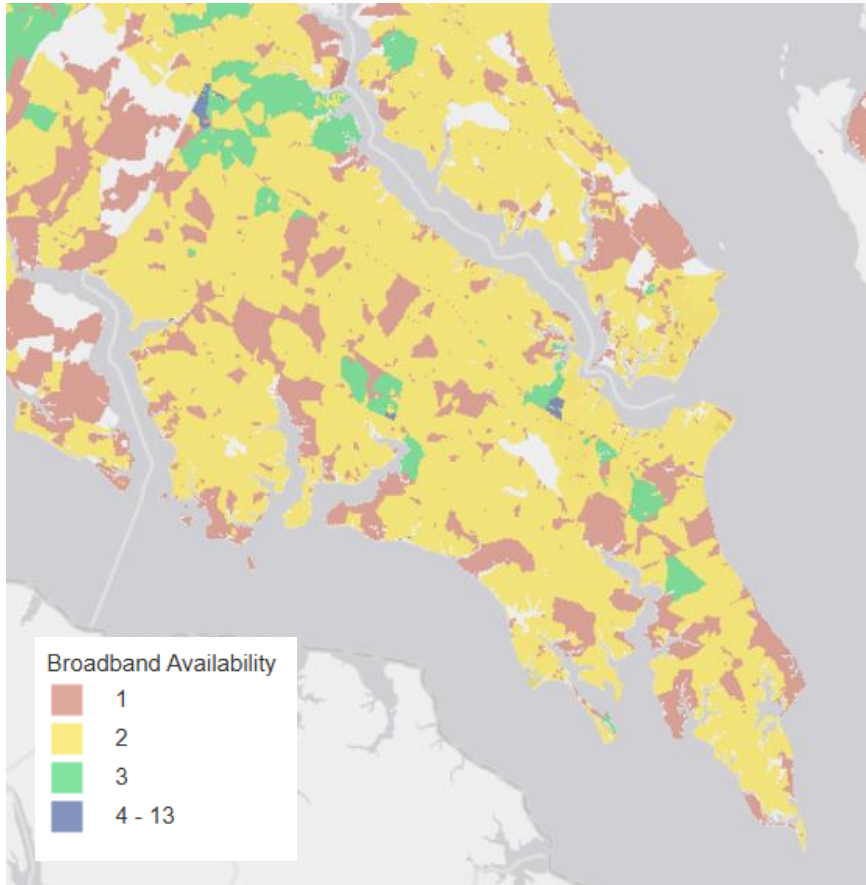
Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) broadband is accessible across most of St. Mary's County.

Broadband: Other Copper Wireline



Other copper wireline broadband is available in a few places in St. Mary's County.

Broadband: Number of Wireline Providers



- Nearly all of St. Mary's County has access to a wired internet connection
- Most of St. Mary's County is served by **at least two wireline providers**, and a few select locations have access to three or more providers

Social Vulnerability



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Social Vulnerability

Social vulnerability refers to a community's capacity to prepare for and respond to the stress of hazardous events, ranging from natural disasters (such as hurricanes) to human-caused threats (such as toxic chemical spills). The CDC's Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), described in detail on the next page, is a tool that identifies areas of social vulnerability.

What is the CDC Social Vulnerability Index?

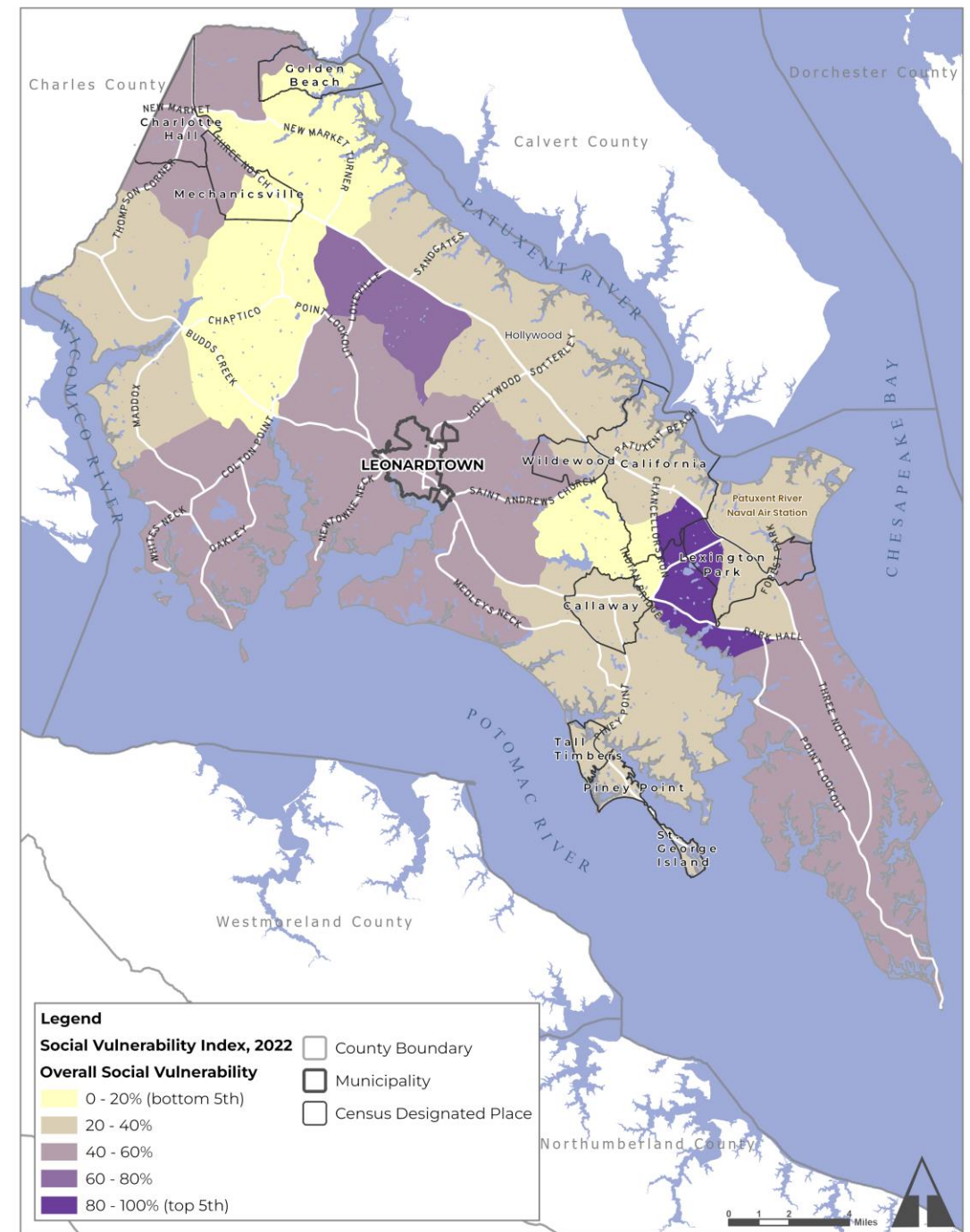
The **CDC Social Vulnerability Index (CDC SVI)** can be used to examine the social vulnerability of St. Mary's County using 16 factors from 4 key themes.

Census tracts are ranked by percentile social vulnerability, with 0 being the least vulnerable and 100 being the most vulnerable.

Socioeconomic Status	Racial and Ethnic Minority Status
Below 150% Poverty	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
Housing Cost Burden	Black or African American*
No High School Diploma	Asian
No Health Insurance	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander*
Unemployed	Two or more Races*
	Other Races*
	*Not Hispanic or Latino
Housing Type and Transportation	Household Characteristics
Multi-Unit Structures	Aged 65 and Older
Mobile Homes	Aged 17 and Younger
Crowding (More People than Rooms in a Home)	Single-Parent Households
No Vehicle	English Language Proficiency
Group Quarters	

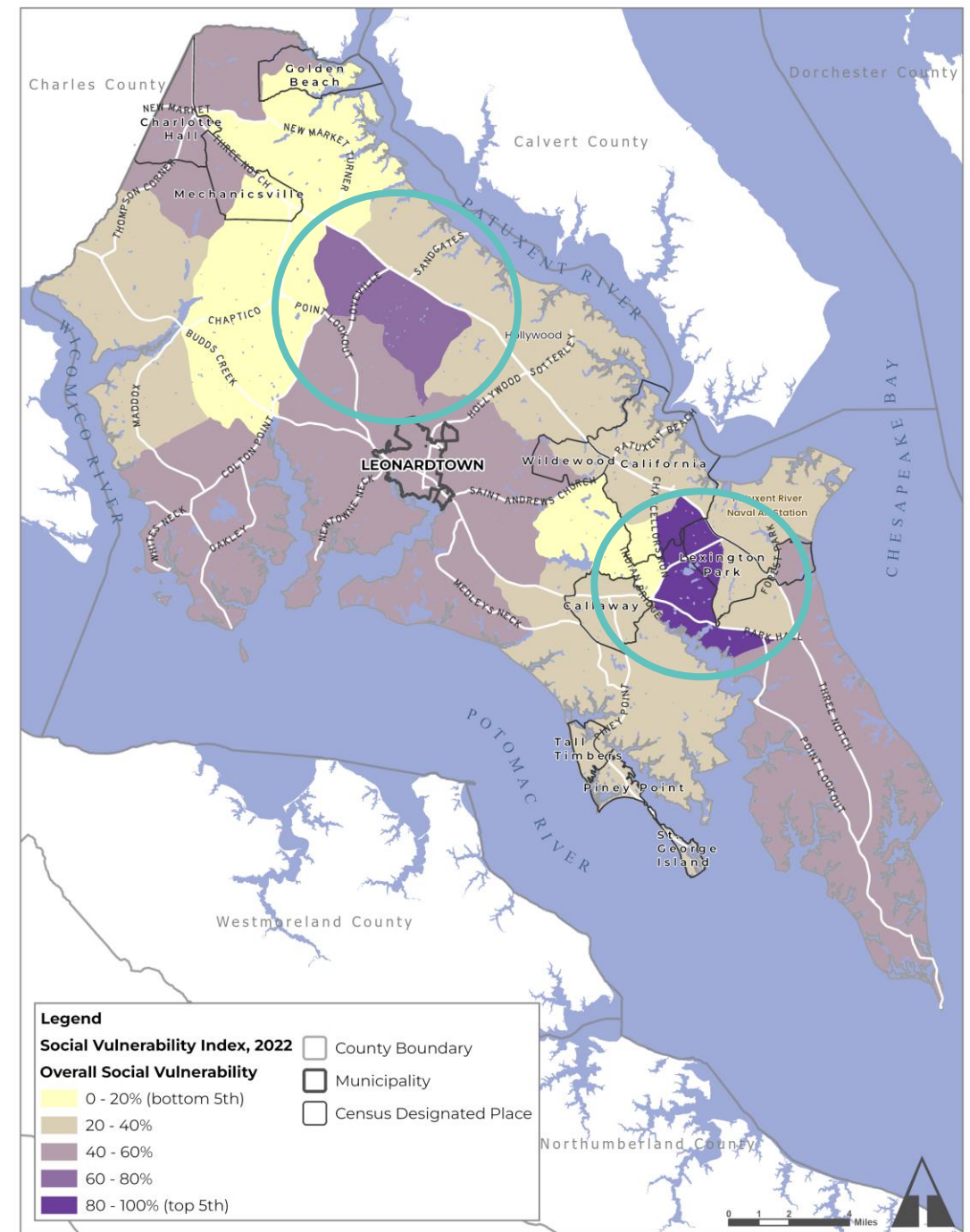
CDC SVI: Composite Index

- The CDC SVI helps planners identify and map the communities that will need the most help before, during, and after a hazardous event, and may have the least resiliency
- Considering all vulnerability factors, census tracts around Lexington Park and a tract in the Oakville-Morganza area are the most vulnerable
- Many tracts have low to medium levels of vulnerability



CDC SVI: Resiliency Areas

- Based on this analysis, three Census tracts in Lexington Park, and one tract in the Oakville-Morganza area were identified as potential **Resiliency Opportunity Areas**
- Due to being more vulnerable and having the least resiliency, these may benefit from **increased attention for hazard preparedness by the County and its partners**
- The identified tracts are circled in teal



CDC SVI: Socioeconomic Status

- The dark green Census tracts show areas of higher vulnerability based on socioeconomic status
- Being cost-burdened means spending more than **30% of household income on housing costs**
- Note: The highest percentile value in the county is 78%; residents not maximally burdened

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Social Vulnerability Index; St. Mary's County GIS Dept.; State of Maryland



Socioeconomic Status Factors

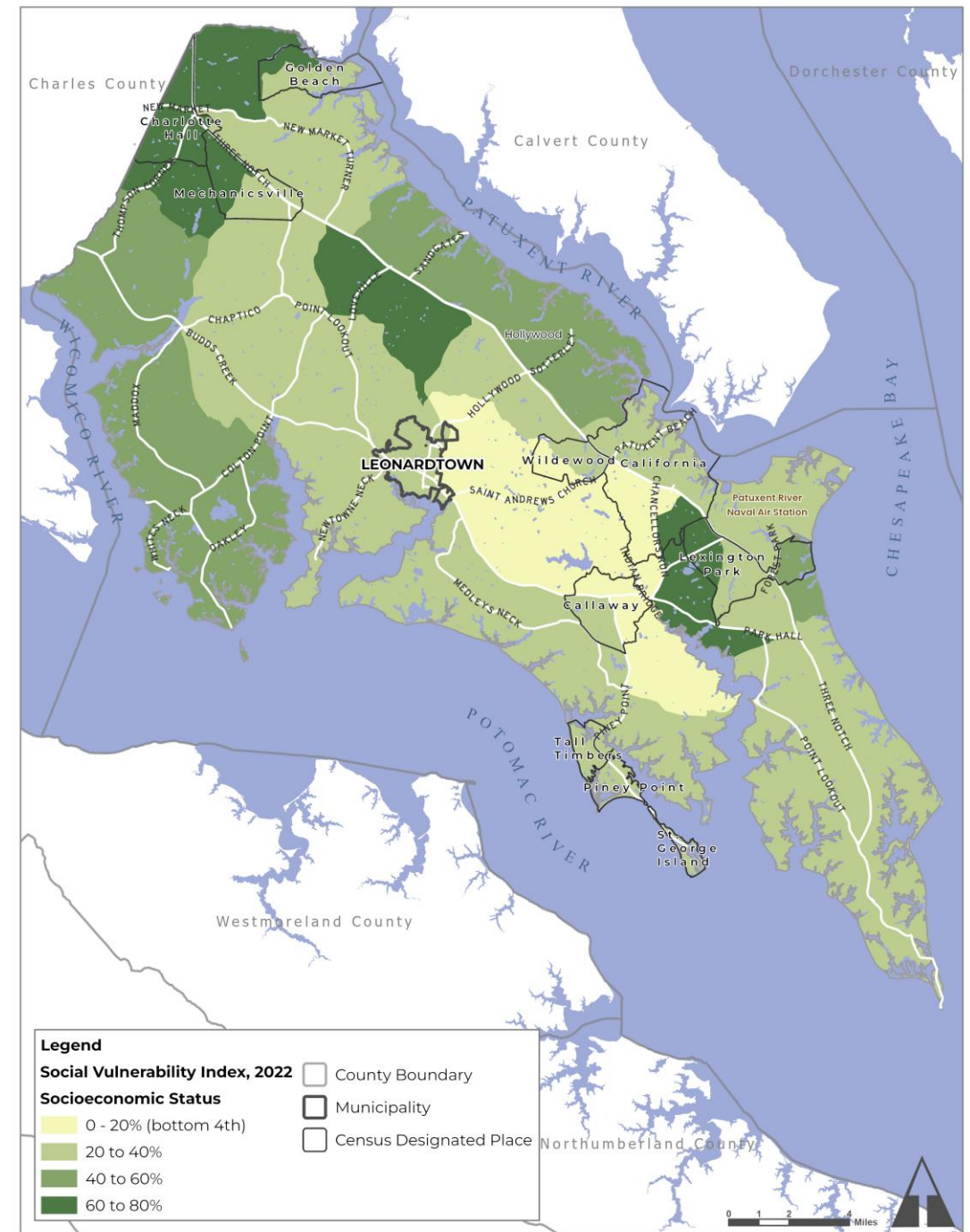
Below 150% Poverty

Housing Cost Burden

No High School Diploma

No Health Insurance

Unemployed



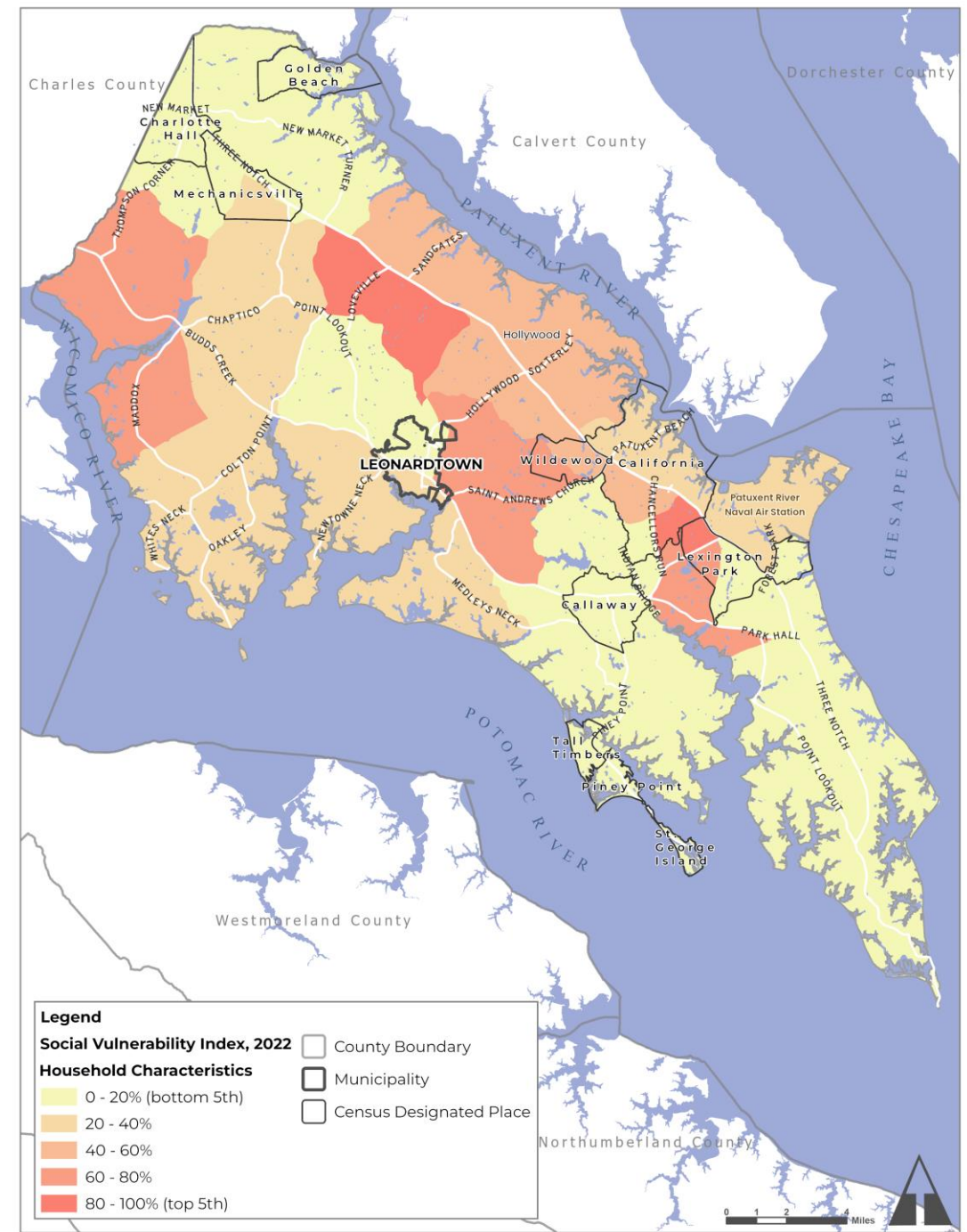
CDC SVI: Household Characteristics

- Certain demographic factors can also put individuals and communities more at risk, and are important to consider when considering vulnerability
- Census tracts with higher vulnerability are shown in darker pink-red
- Areas with this type of vulnerability are spread throughout the county

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Social Vulnerability Index; St. Mary's County GIS Dept.; State of Maryland

Household Characteristics

Aged 65 and Older
Aged 17 and Younger
Percent of Population with a Disability
Single-Parent Households
English Language Proficiency

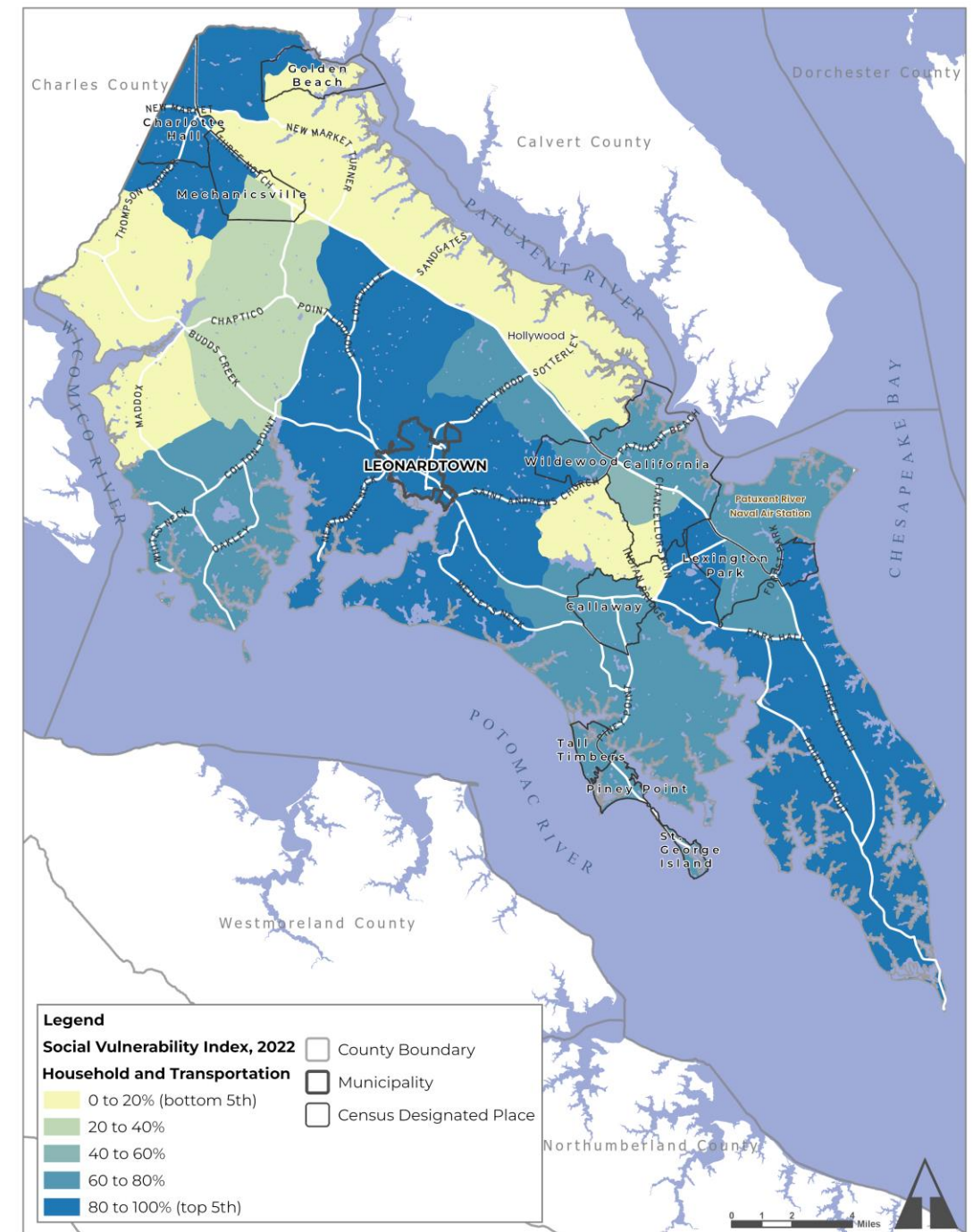


CDC SVI: Household and Transportation

- Inadequate transportation and certain housing types can contribute to vulnerability
- Dark blue census tracts are the most vulnerable
- Many areas of the county are vulnerable and have less resilience based on this metric

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Social Vulnerability Index; St. Mary's County GIS Dept.; State of Maryland

Housing Type and Transportation
Multi-Unit Structures
Mobile Homes
Crowding (More People than Rooms in a Home)
No Vehicle
Group Quarters

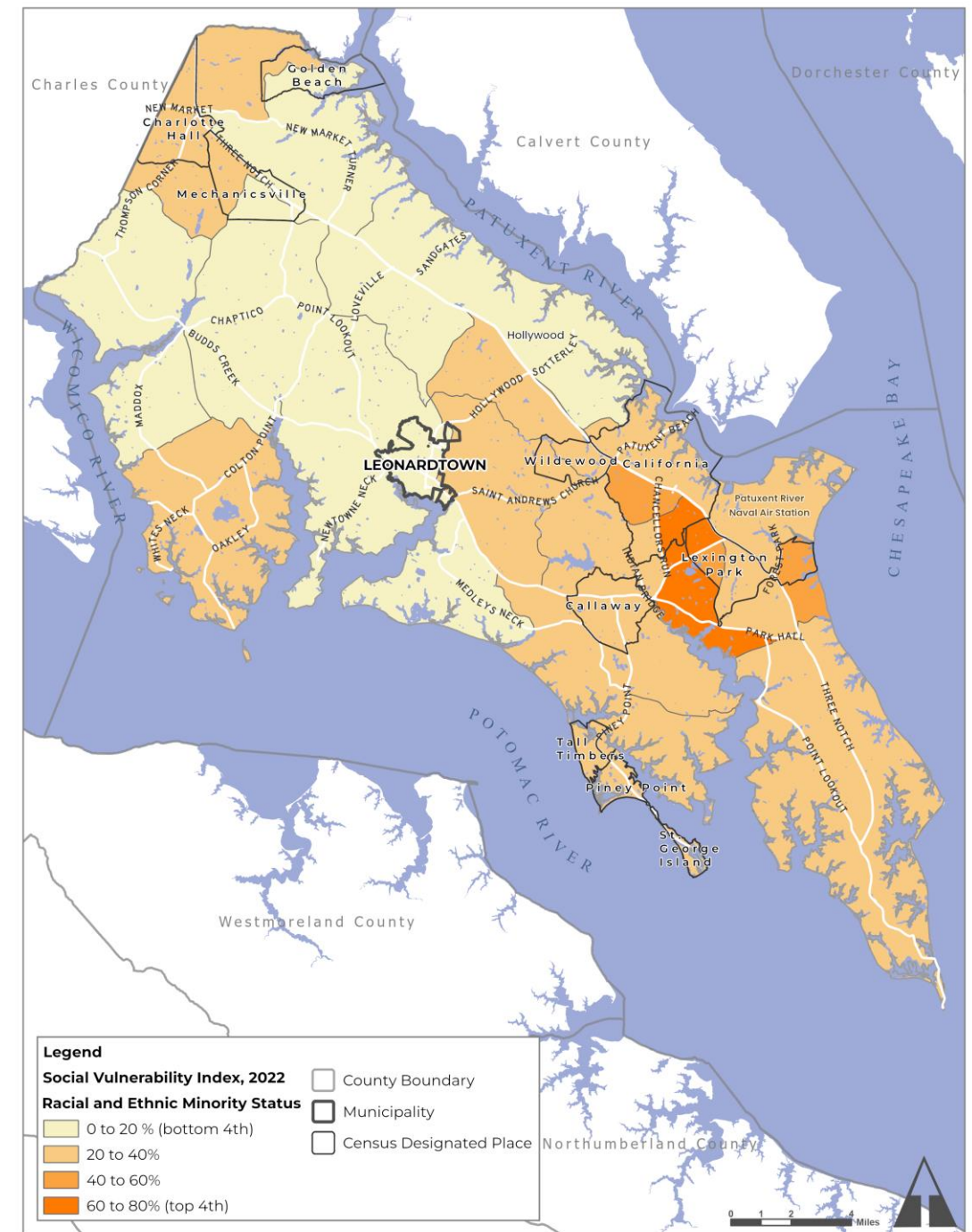


CDC SVI: Racial and Ethnic Minority Status

- This map gives us an understanding of where racial and ethnic minority groups may live, shown by Census tract on this map
- Note: The highest percentile value in the county is 65%

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Social Vulnerability Index; St. Mary's County GIS Dept.;
State of Maryland

Racial and Ethnic Minority Status
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
Black or African American*
Asian
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander*
Two or more Races*
Other Races*
<i>*Not Hispanic or Latino</i>



Environment & Natural Resources



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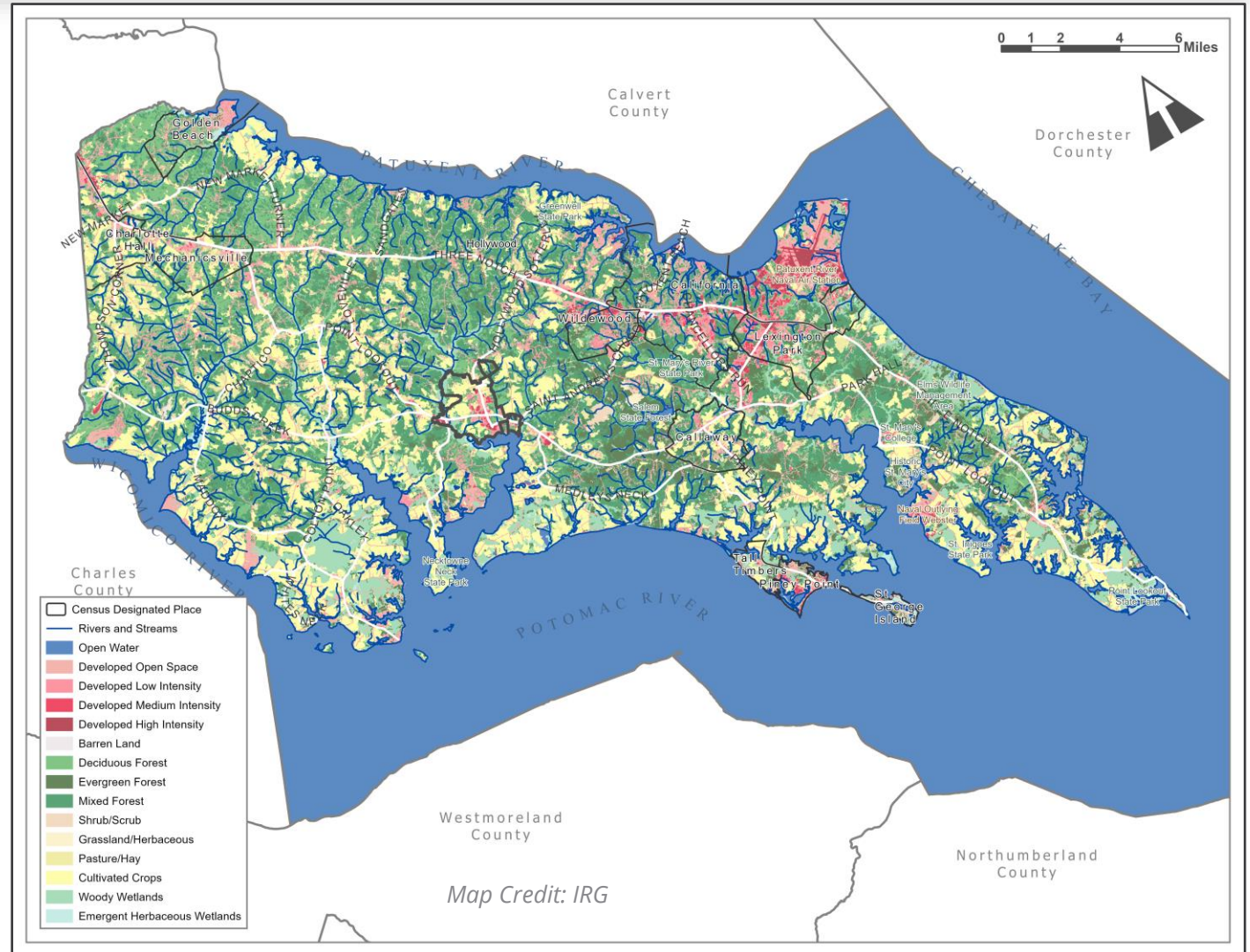
Natural Environment & Protected Lands



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CHARTING OUR TOMORROW

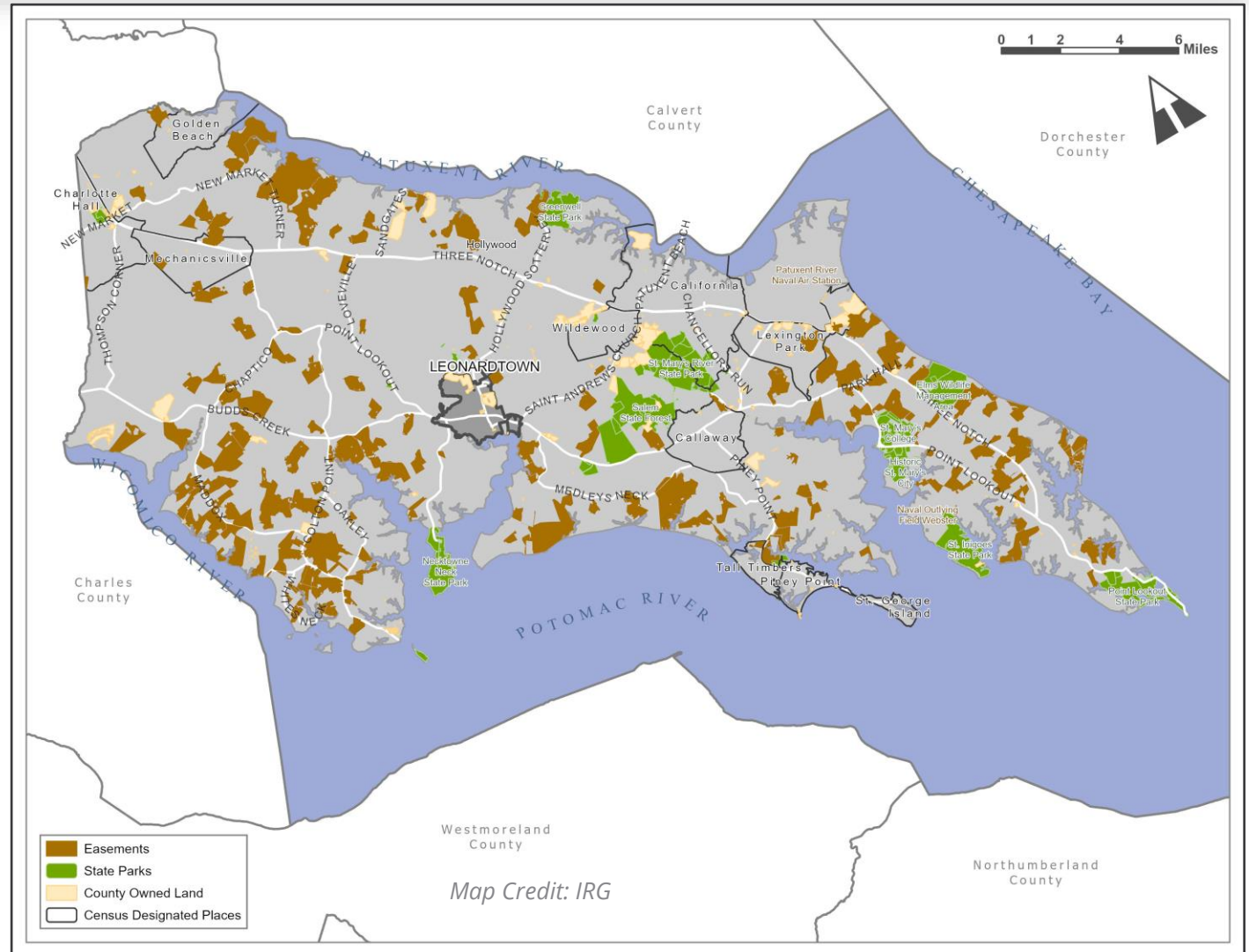
Forests, Wetlands, Streams & Land Cover

- The 2023 National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD) displays development, forests, wetlands, and agriculture and highlights development patterns and ecological areas for balanced growth
- The NLCD is a contiguous dataset to support the Comprehensive Plan's goals for conservation, watershed management, and sustainable land use planning



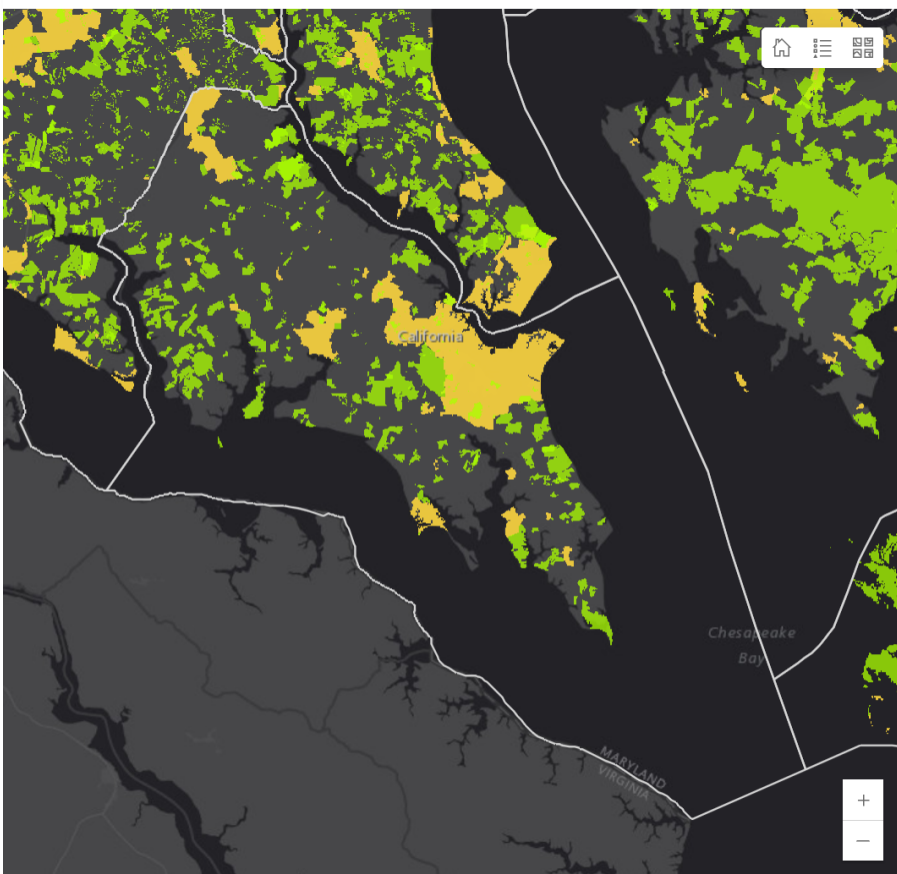
Protected Lands

- This map highlights protected lands in the County: conservation easements, state parks, and county-owned land, showcasing preservation efforts



Protected Lands

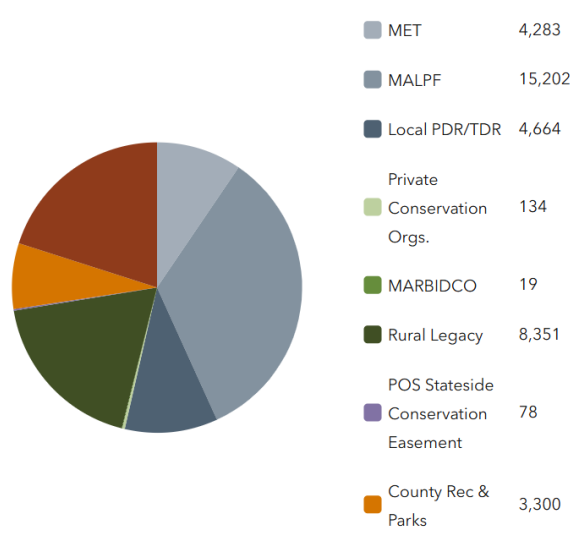
Protected Lands in Maryland



Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, EPA, NPS | MD iMAP, DNR, MDP: Maryland Department of Planning 301 W. Preston... Powered by Esri

Map

Protected Lands Acres by Category



Filter data with county filter
Best Available Data as of February 20, 2024

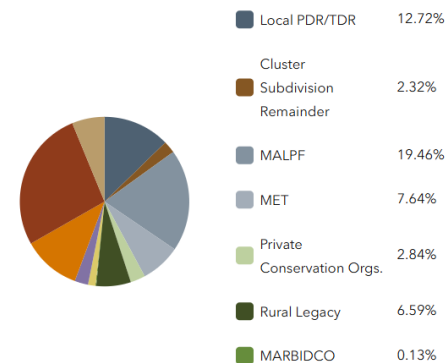
Land Protection Category Pie Chart

Total Preserved Acres

45,077

Filter data with county filter. Best Available Data as of February 20, 2024

Regional Preservation Percent by Category

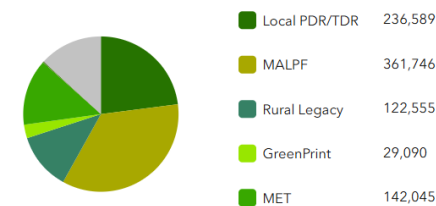


Filter data with regional filter
Best Available Data as of February 20, 2024

Regional Preservation

Statewide Preservation

Statewide Agricultural Land Preservation Easement Goal Breakdown



Total Acres Preserved **894,371 Acres** (86.8% of Goal).
Best Available Data as of February 20, 2024

Goal Breakdown

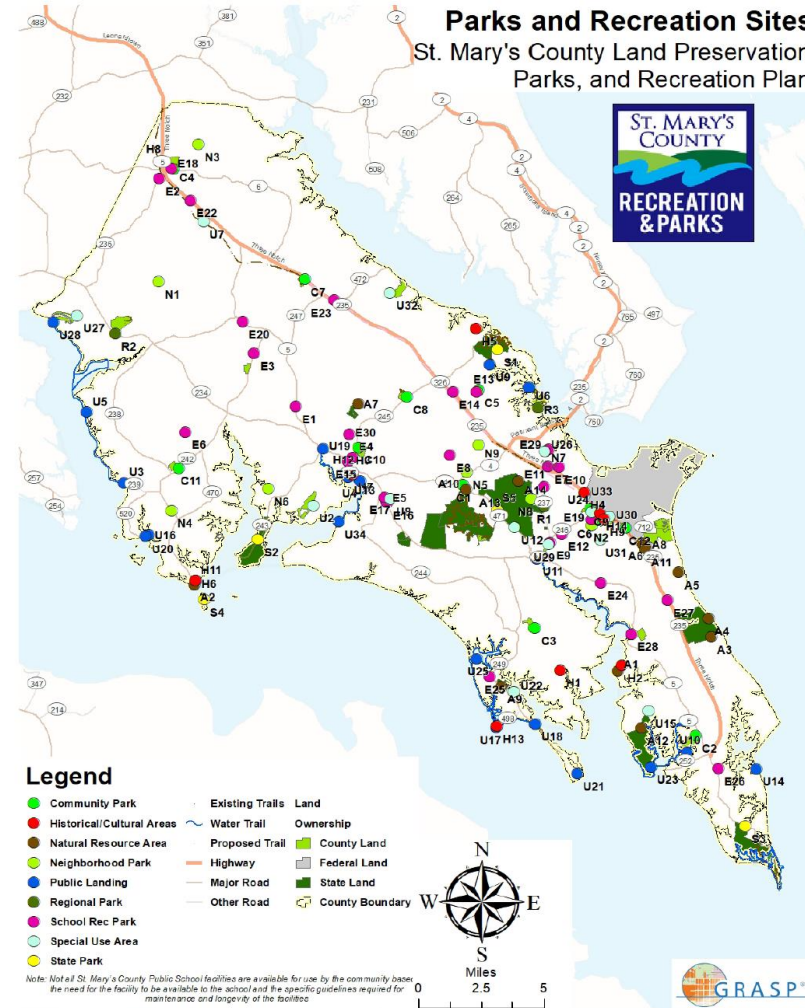


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Source: 2022 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan

Parks and Recreation

Figure 5: 2022 Public Parks and Recreation Network in St. Mary's County



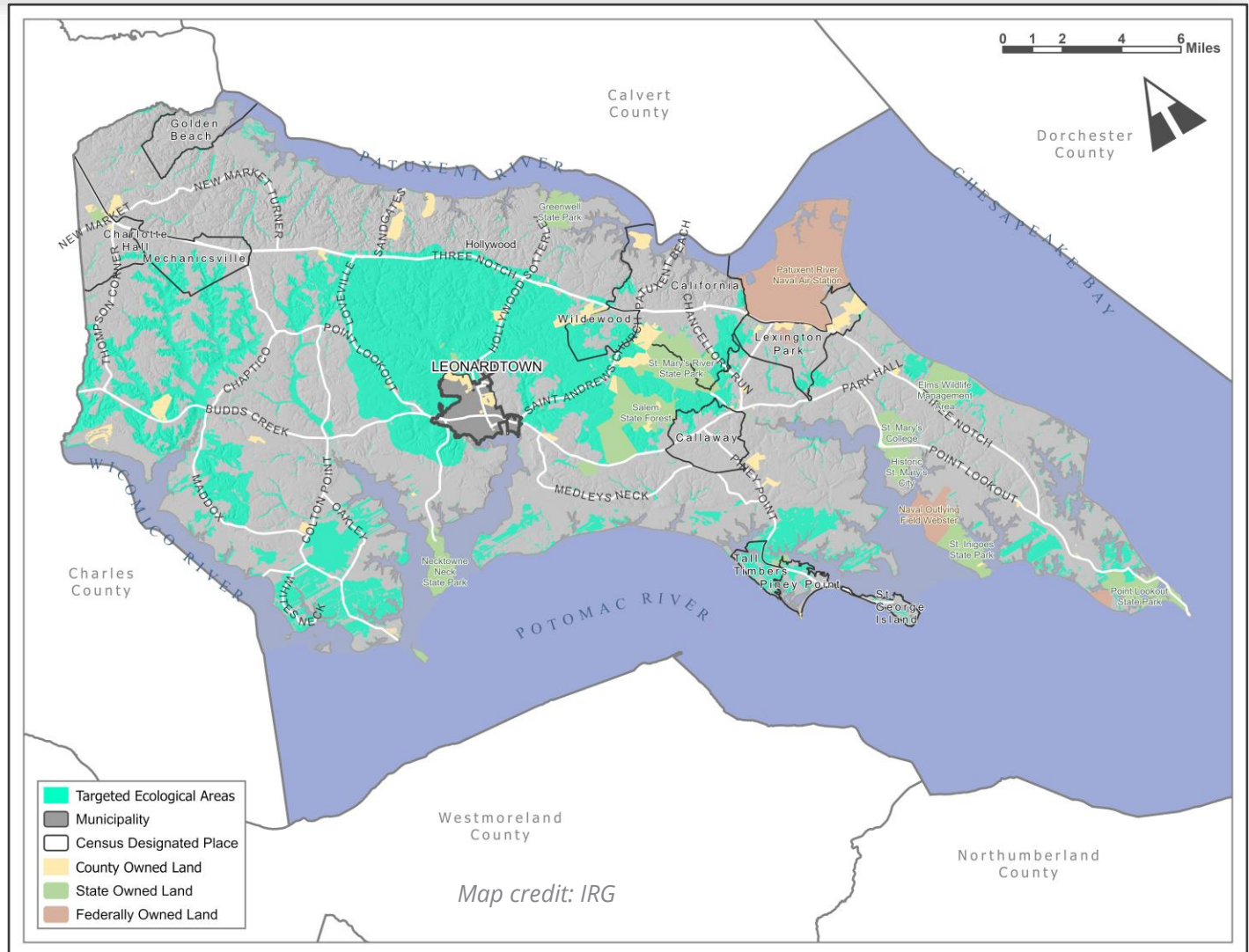
Parks and Recreation



Source: 2024 Park and Recreation Plan

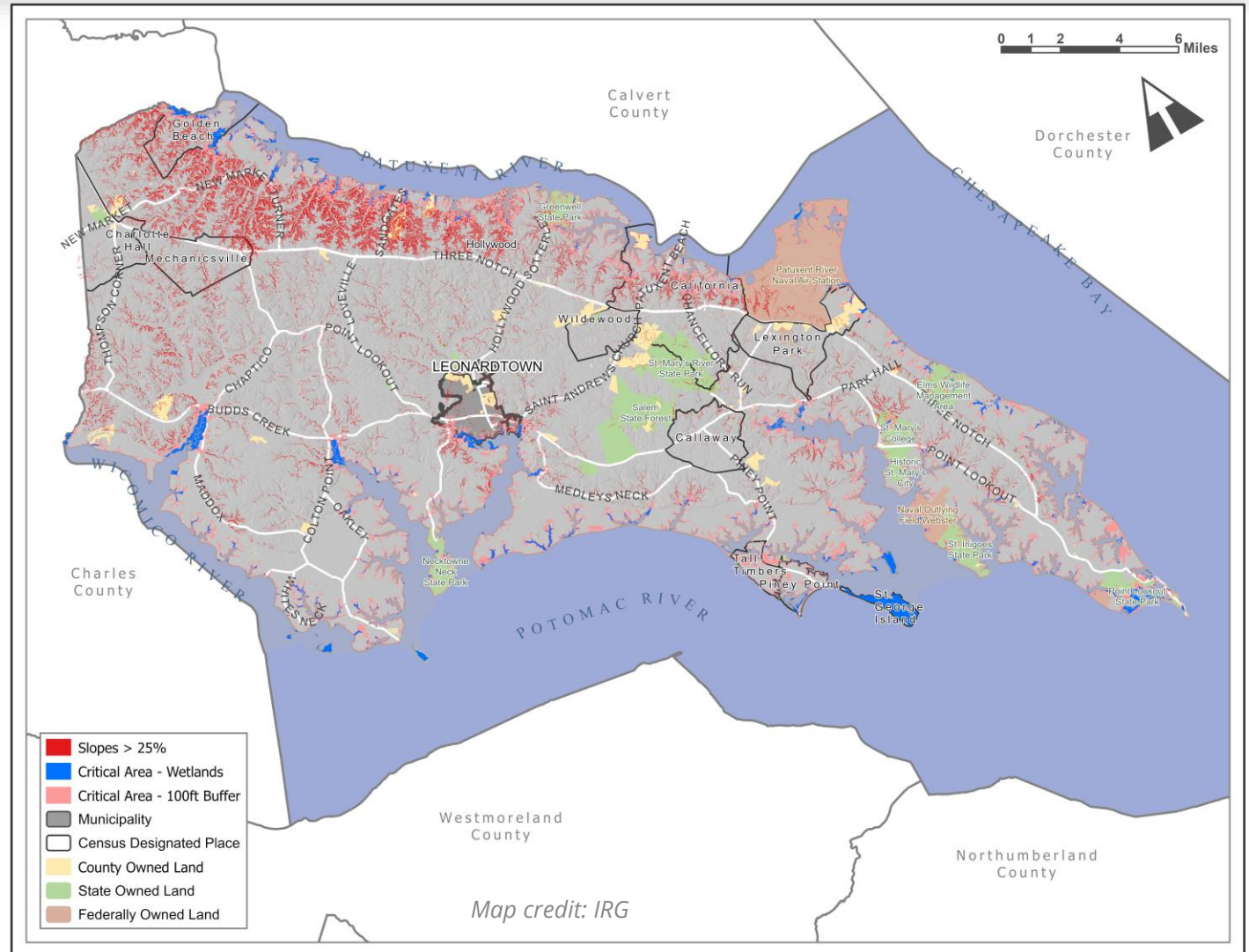
Targeted Ecological Areas

- Targeted Ecological Areas (TEAs) are lands and watersheds of high ecological value that have been identified as conservation priorities by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources for natural resource protection
- These areas represent the most ecologically valuable areas in the State: they are the "best of the best". TEAs are preferred for conservation funding through Statewide Program Open Space



Critical Areas & Steep Slopes

- In 1984, the General Assembly enacted the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Act to regulate development, manage land use, and conserve natural resources on land in those areas designated as Critical Areas
- The Critical Areas are land and water areas within 1,000 feet of the tidal waters' edge or from the landward edge of adjacent tidal wetlands and the lands under them
- The map also includes slopes that are greater than 25%



Working Lands



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Working Lands

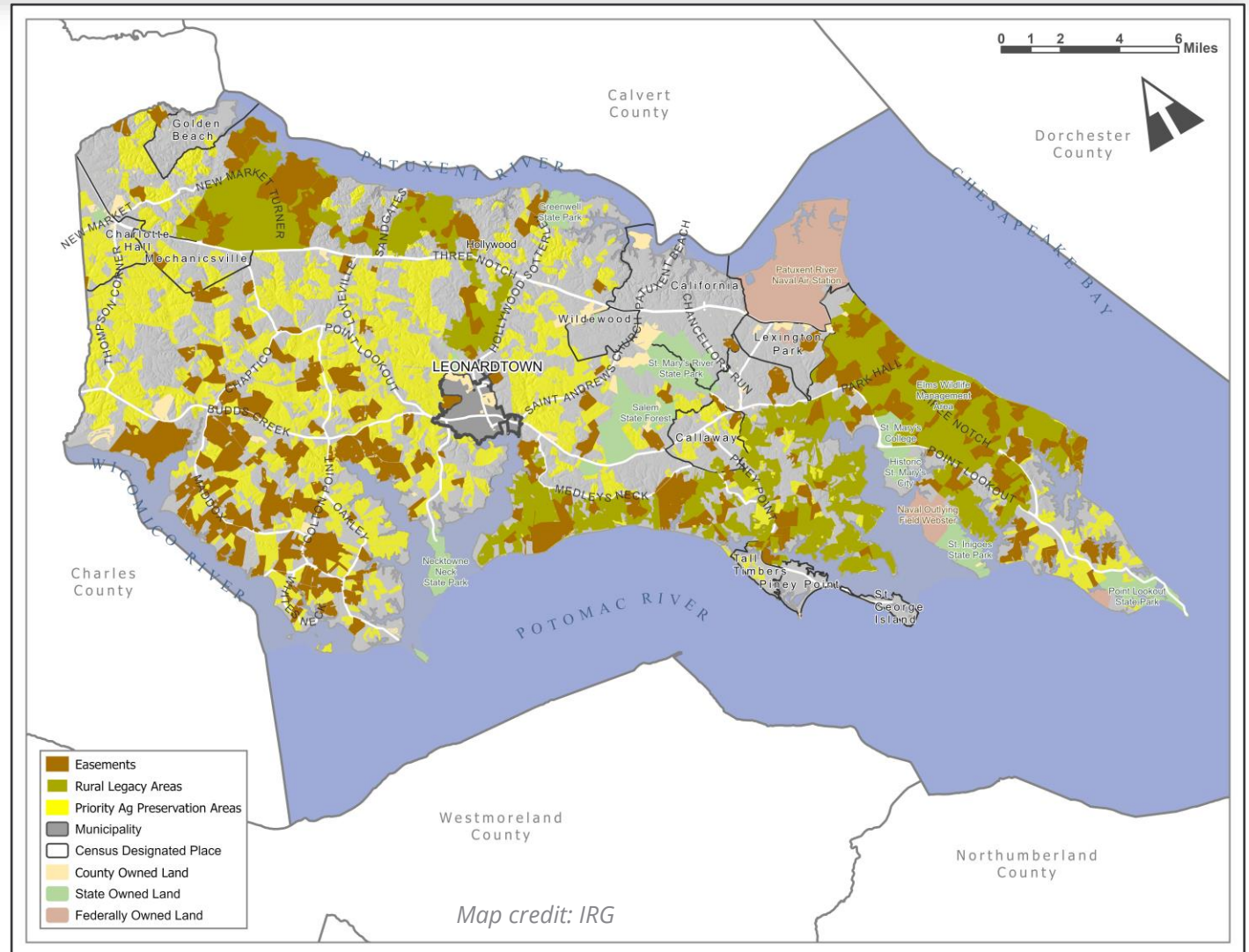
- St. Mary's County has a rich culture of Chesapeake Bay tidewater farming, fishing, and crabbing
- Agriculture represents one of the oldest facets of the local economy, and the industry continues to evolve
- As of 2022, according to the most recent USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service Census of Agriculture, the County had 64,380 acres of farmland and 656 farms (up from 615 in 2017)
- Market value of products sold was \$35 million (up from \$26 million in 2017), with 82.7% of sales from crops and 16.3% from livestock, poultry, and product
- The average per farm market value of agricultural products sold was \$53,759 in 2022, with an average farm size of 98 acres

Working Lands

- St. Mary's County has an aggressive Land Preservation Program. The County Commissioners make significant investments into the budget for land preservation annually
- The County utilizes two programs for agricultural land preservation:
 - 1) the Maryland Agriculture Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF)
 - 2) the Rural Legacy Area program
- Both programs allow landowners to receive funding in exchange for giving up future development rights

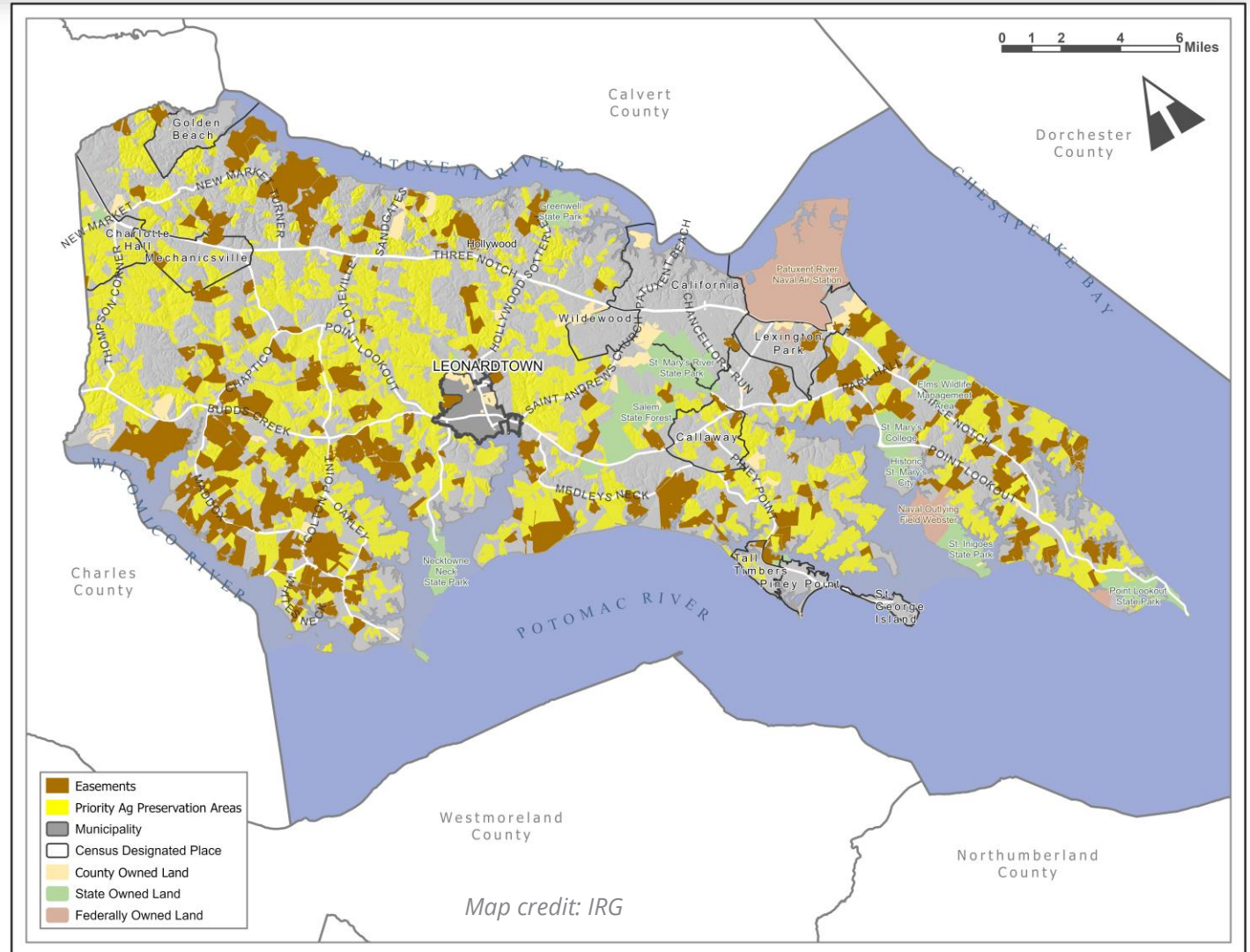
Working Lands

- This map includes Rural Legacy areas and agricultural easements, including Rural Legacy, Maryland Environmental Trust (MET), and Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF).
- The Priority Preservation Area (97,660 acres) is the focus of long-term investment by the County to ensure the ongoing retention of agricultural land uses and profitability of agricultural activities.
- The goal is to preserve 80% of 97,000 acres.



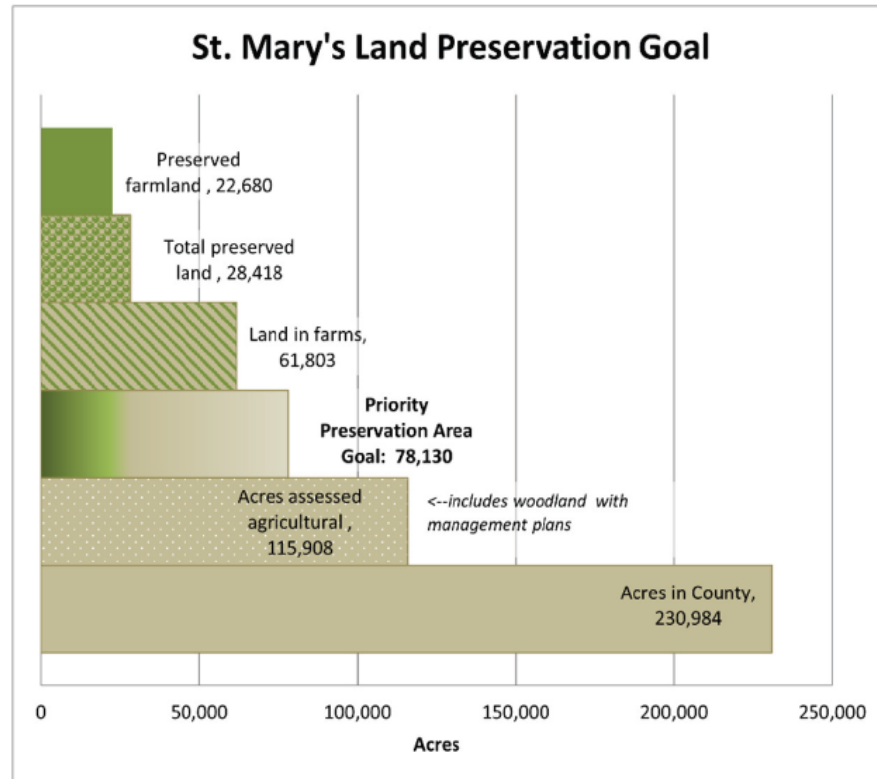
Working Lands: Cropland

- Farming represents a valued way of life. It is these farms and the extensive areas of forest which provide the rural character so valued by the visitors and residents of the County
- Amish and Mennonite farmers have a significant presence in the northwest portion of the county
- The County places a high priority on supporting and expanding its agriculture



Working Lands: Cropland

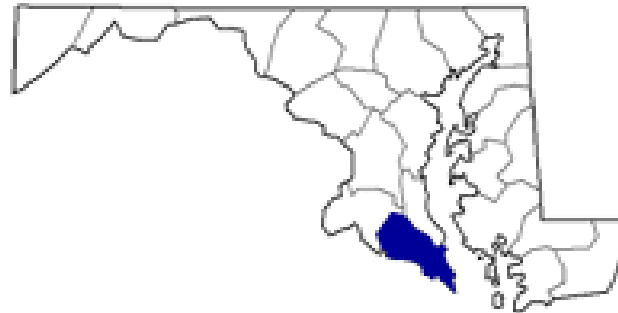
Figure 36: Land Preservation Goal



Source: St. Mary's County
2022 Land Preservation,
Parks, and Recreation Plan



St. Mary's County Maryland



Share of Sales by Type (%)

Crops	83
Livestock, poultry, and products	17

Land in Farms by Use (acres)

Cropland	34,917
Pastureland	4,232
Woodland	20,347
Other	4,884

Acres irrigated: 650

1% of land in farms

Land Use Practices (% of farms)

No till	27
Reduced till	14
Intensive till	21
Cover crop	27

Working Lands: Soil Conservation District

St. Mary's Soil Conservation District Long Range Strategic Plan 2020-2025

MISSION STATEMENT

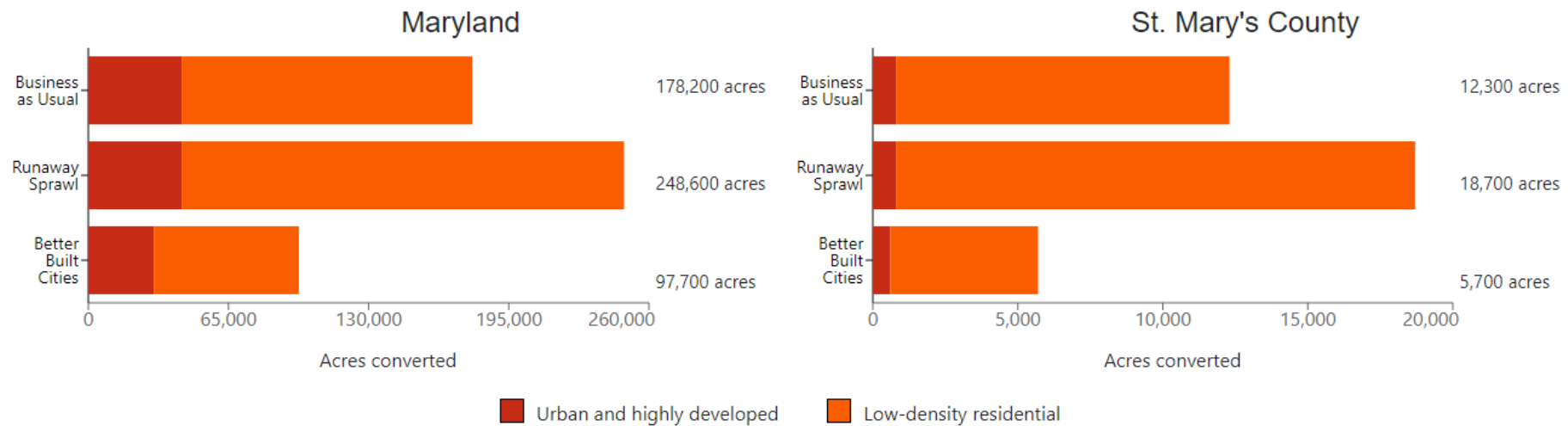
The St. Mary's SCD's mission is to promote practical and effective soil, water, and related natural resource programs and to provide assistance to all citizens on a voluntary basis through leadership, education, and cooperation.

Metrics of success

- Primary focus: Nutrient and sediment reduction goals of Watershed Implementation Plan III
- 234 Best Management Practices on 6,130.6 acres
- 69 Soil Conservation Water Quality plans: 6,808 acres
- Cover crop cost share: 4,751.6 certified acres
- Poultry litter transport cost share: 6,296 tons
- Forest harvest plans: 1,016.5 acres

Projected Conversion of Farmland

Projected Conversion of Farmland¹ from 2016-2040



Urban and highly developed (UHD) land use includes commercial, industrial, and moderate-to-high density residential areas.

Low-density residential (LDR) land use includes scattered subdivisions and large-lot housing, which fragment the agricultural land base and limit production.

¹Farmland includes cropland, pasture and woodland associated with farms.

Development threatens every state's best agricultural land: **54% of Maryland's conversion and 41% of St. Mary's County's conversion** is projected to occur on the state's best land² in our *Business as Usual* scenario.

Natural Hazards, Vulnerability & Resiliency

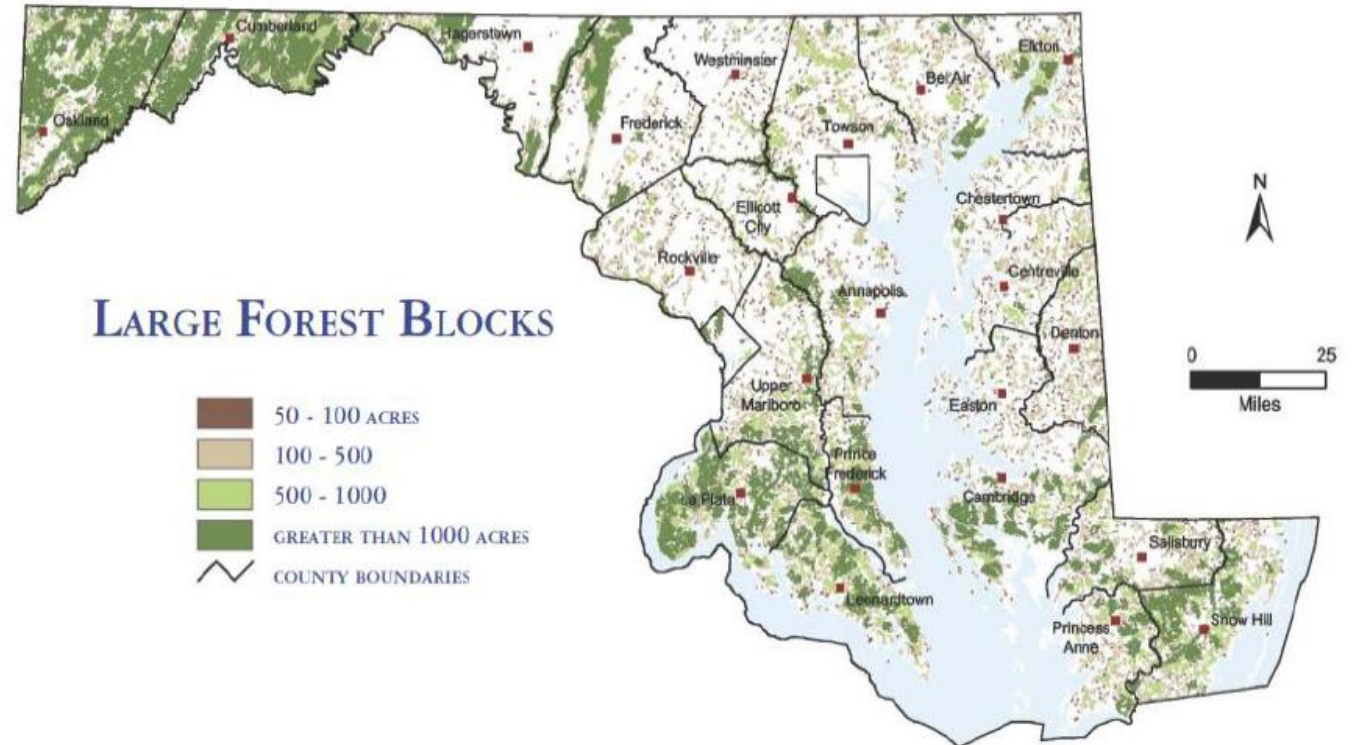


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Wildfire Hazards

- St Mary's County has numerous forest blocks > 1,000 acres
- St Mary's County has experienced fewer wildfire events in recent years, partly due to Open-Air burning regulations and public education on wildfires

Figure 3.13

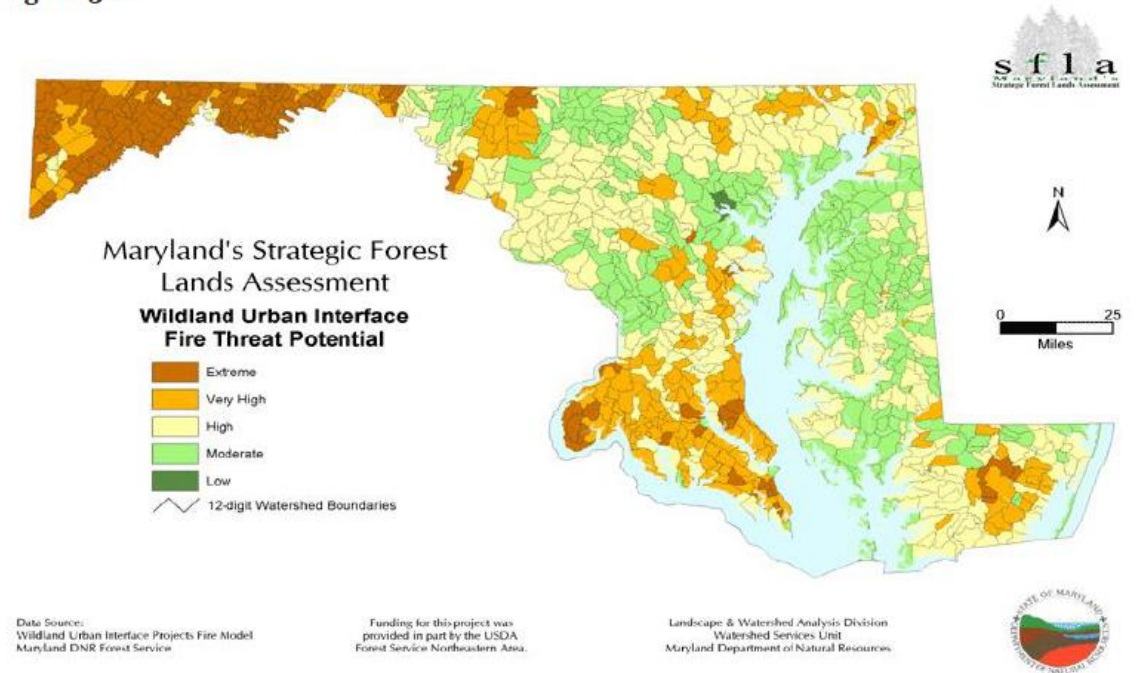


MARYLAND'S STRATEGIC FOREST LANDS ASSESSMENT

Wildfire Hazards

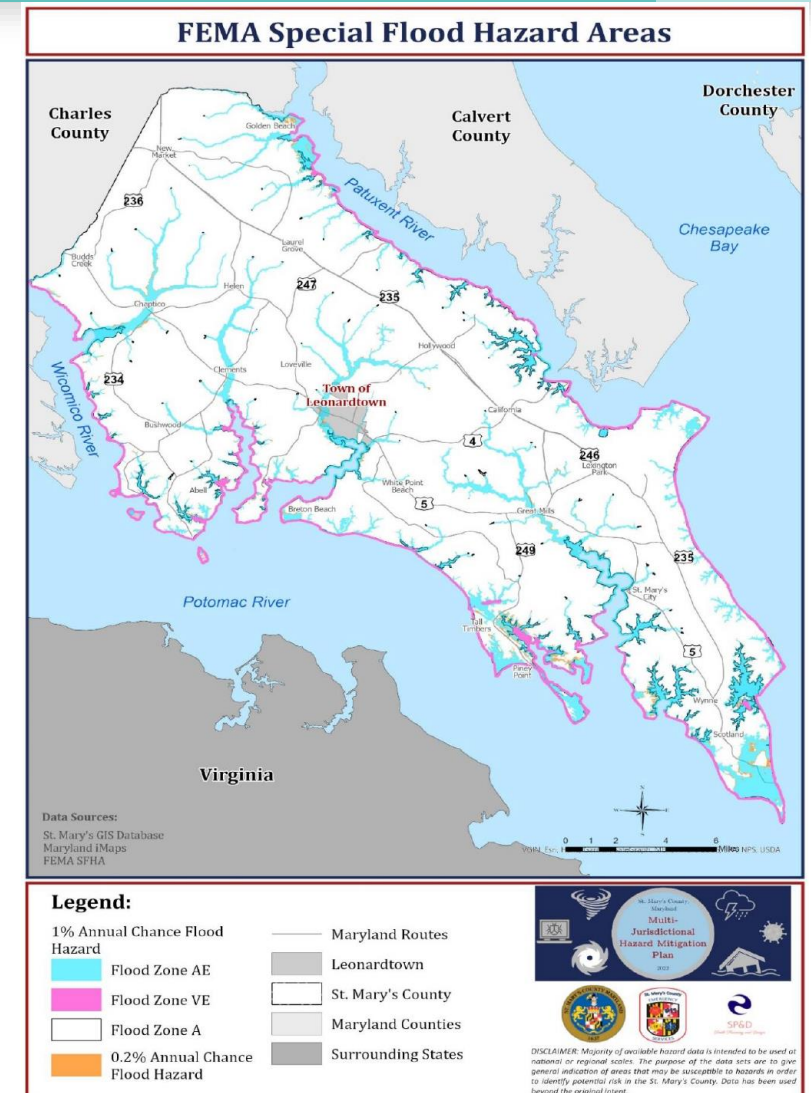
- According to the Maryland Strategic Forest Lands Assessment, the urban-wildland interface fire threat potential to St Mary's County forestlands is very high, due to the pressure to develop large tracts of open land
- The probability of wildfires increases with periods of prolonged drought when forests are more vulnerable to ignite from lightning strikes, from human carelessness, or from arson
- Other contributing factors include buildup of dead underbrush from fallen trees/limbs following severe storms, hurricanes, ice storms, and tornadoes

Figure 3.12



FEMA Flood Zones

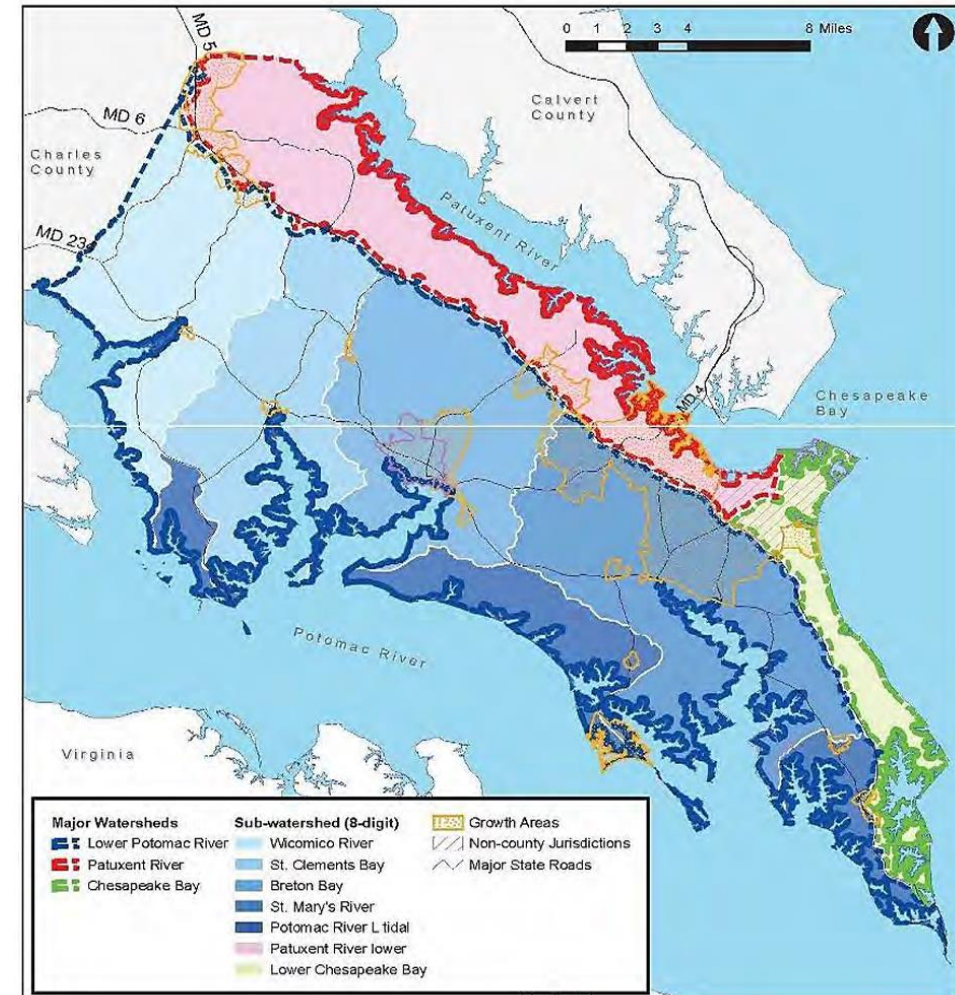
- A significant number of people live and work within or near the shoreline and riverine floodplains
- The probability of repeated inland flooding, inability to mitigate the existing drainage problems, and existing structure locations within the FEMA designated floodplains results in a high level of vulnerability to flood hazards
- Given the large number of people that can be affected by flooding, high economic costs and moderate response costs, the vulnerability to flooding is high in St. Mary's County



Watershed Boundaries

- St. Mary's County is encompassed by three primary watersheds, the Lower Potomac (shown in blue), the Patuxent Watershed (red), and the Chesapeake Bay (green)

Figure 1.0 – St. Mary's County Watershed Boundaries



Source: St. Mary's County 2010 Comprehensive Plan

Shoreline Erosion

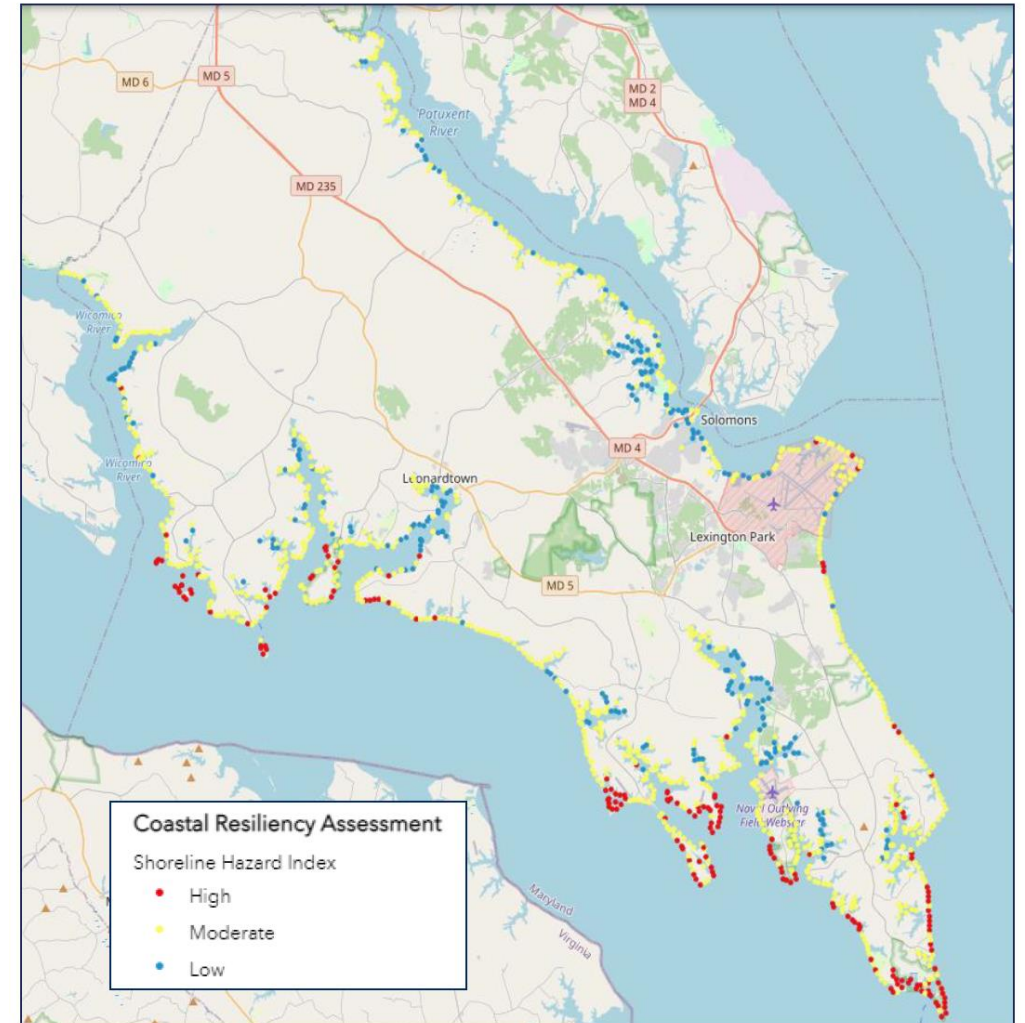
- Most of the southern and western shoreline areas of St. Mary's County are ranked as "high" hazard compared to other areas in the state
- While the Shoreline Hazard Index used six (6) variables for determine exposure rates, this map depicts "erosion rates only" for locations along St. Mary's County's coast, which is derived from the historic erosion rates for Maryland and makes up one factor of the overall shoreline hazard index
- 44% of St. Mary's County shoreline is experiencing erosion, compared to 21% of Maryland's overall tidal shoreline
- The western Chesapeake Bay cliffs and Patuxent River steep slopes are at significant risk due to high wave energy and landslides. High winds and extreme tides in fall and winter contribute to shoreline degradation and increased sedimentation.



Shoreline Hazards Without Habitat

- The Shoreline Hazard Index represents the relative exposure of each 250-meter segment to storm-induced erosion and flooding
- Inputs to the model included 6 physical variables (geomorphology, elevation, sea level rise, wave power, storm surge height and erosion rates) and 5 habitat types (forest, marsh, dune, oyster reef and underwater grass)
- Two scenarios of the model were run: one scenario incorporating the protective role of all existing coastal habitats and the other scenario simulating the complete loss of habitats.
- The difference between the two scenarios indicates the potential magnitude of coastal hazard reduction by habitats at each location

Figure 3.2 Shore Hazard Index Exposure Rates- Rankings without the presence of habitat



Source: [Maryland Coastal Atlas](#)

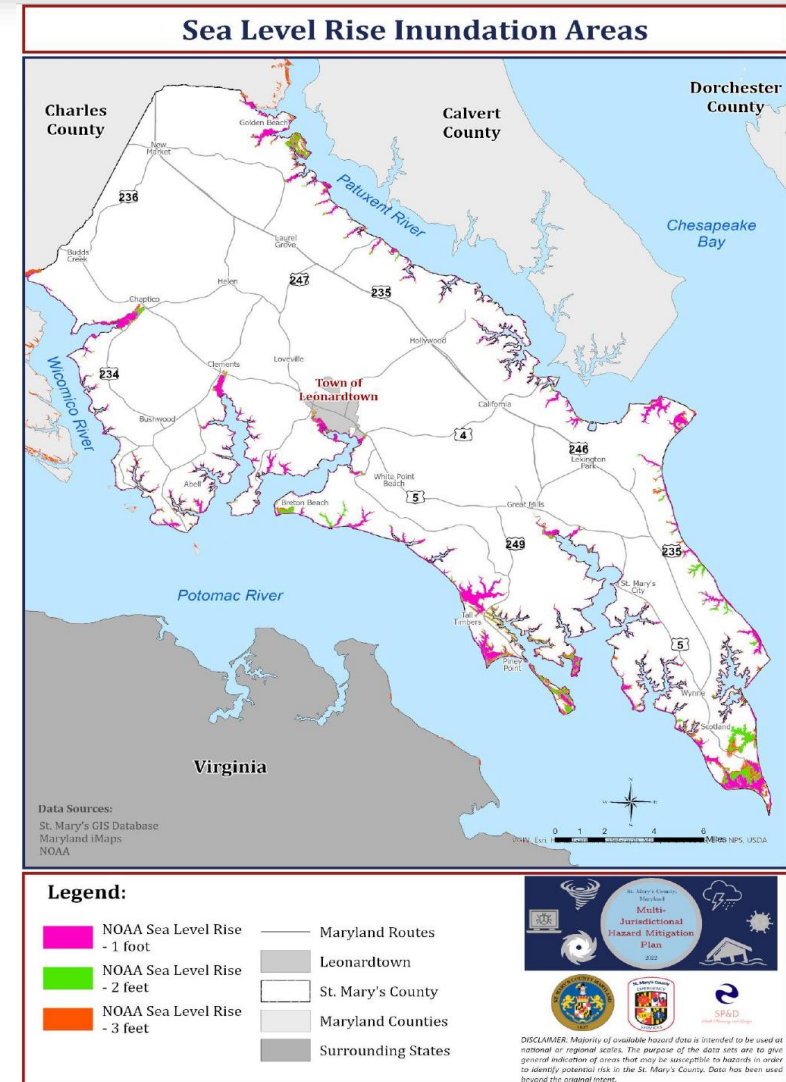
Storm Surge Inundation

- Storm surge can be modeled by various techniques; one such technique is the use of the National Weather Service's Sea, Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) model
- The SLOSH model is used to predict storm surge heights based on hurricane category
- This map depicts hurricane storm surge inundation areas based on hurricane categories 1 through 4
- The data depicts an overall footprint of the area that has some risk of storm tide flooding from hurricanes



Sea Level Rise Projections

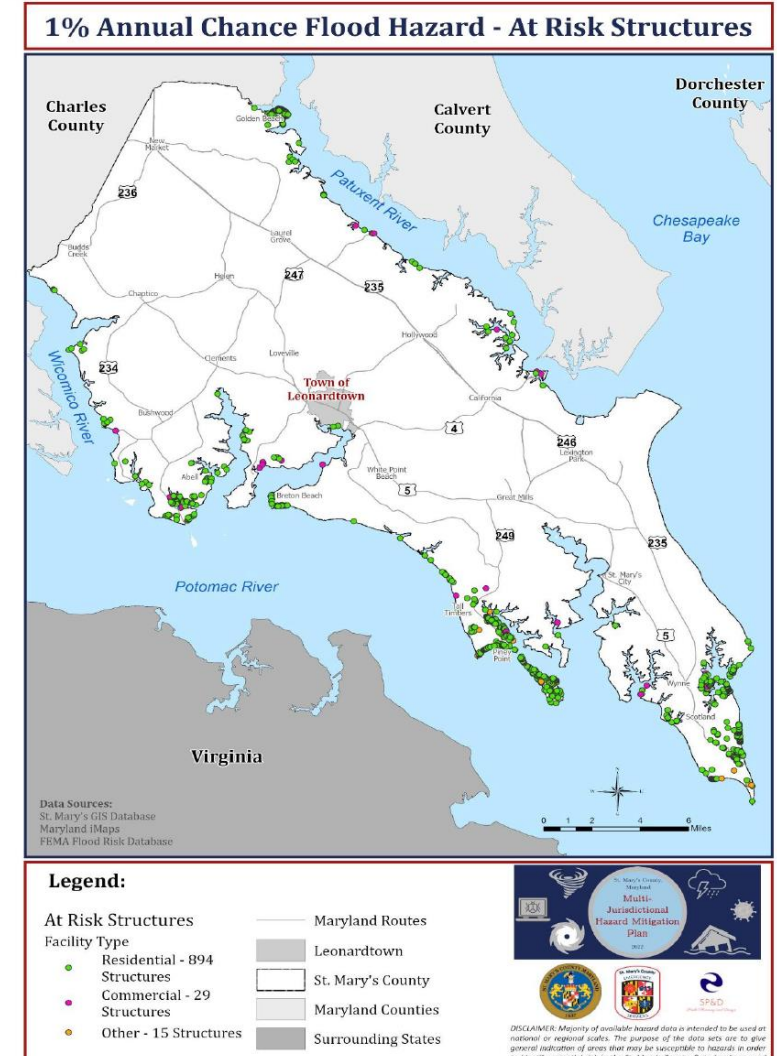
- By 2050, the likely sea level rise for Maryland is projected between 0.8 to 1.6 feet, with a 1-in-20 chance of exceeding 2.0 feet and a 1-in-100 chance of exceeding 2.3 feet
- Over the next century, if greenhouse gas emissions continue at high rates, Maryland's sea levels could rise 2.0 to 4.2 feet
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) 2019 sea level rise data shows permanent inundation risks for 1-3 feet of sea level rise in the county



Coastal Flooding

- This map depicts the coastal structures (green dots) that show the general extent of FEMA Flood Zones AE and VE

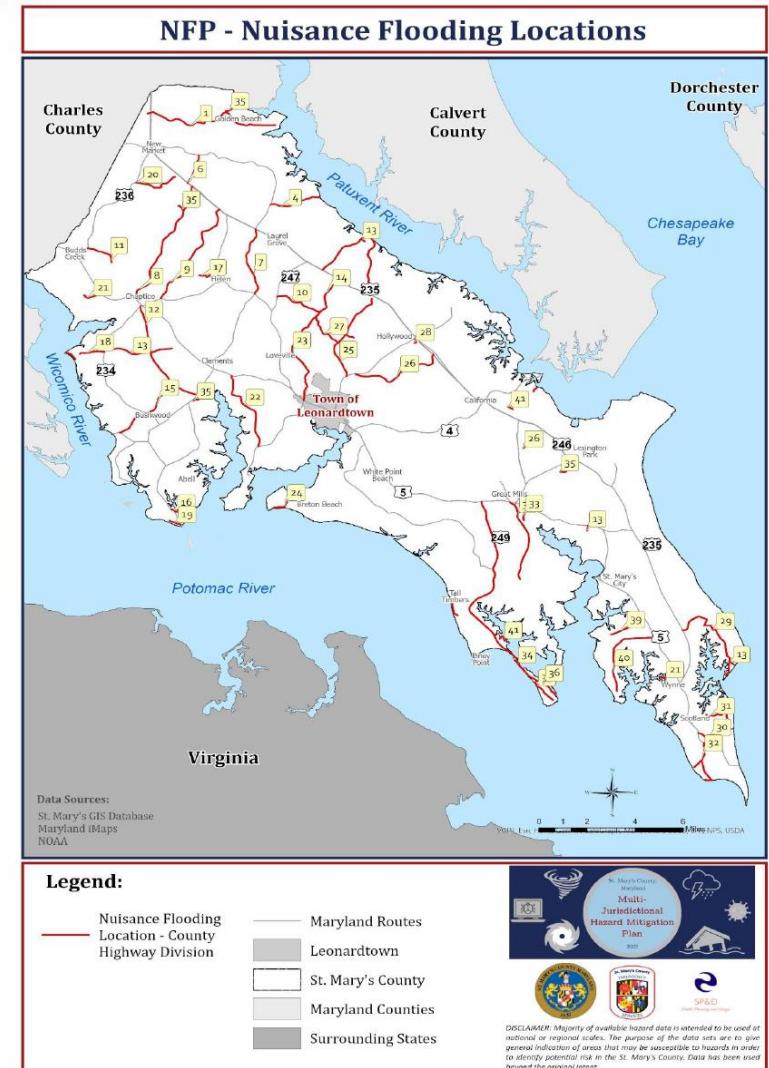
Map 3.8



Nuisance Flooding

- Roadways impacted by nuisance flooding can be significant stressors on the infrastructure, emergency response, and public health
- Nuisance flooding can disrupt daily activities through a variety of ways, such as the closure of roads due to high water, the inundation of yards and parks, and the impairment of engineered and natural drainage systems
- Currently, these disruptions typically occur for a period of several hours and then abate
- Roadways are also impacted by urban flooding, not tidally influenced flooding

Map 3.10



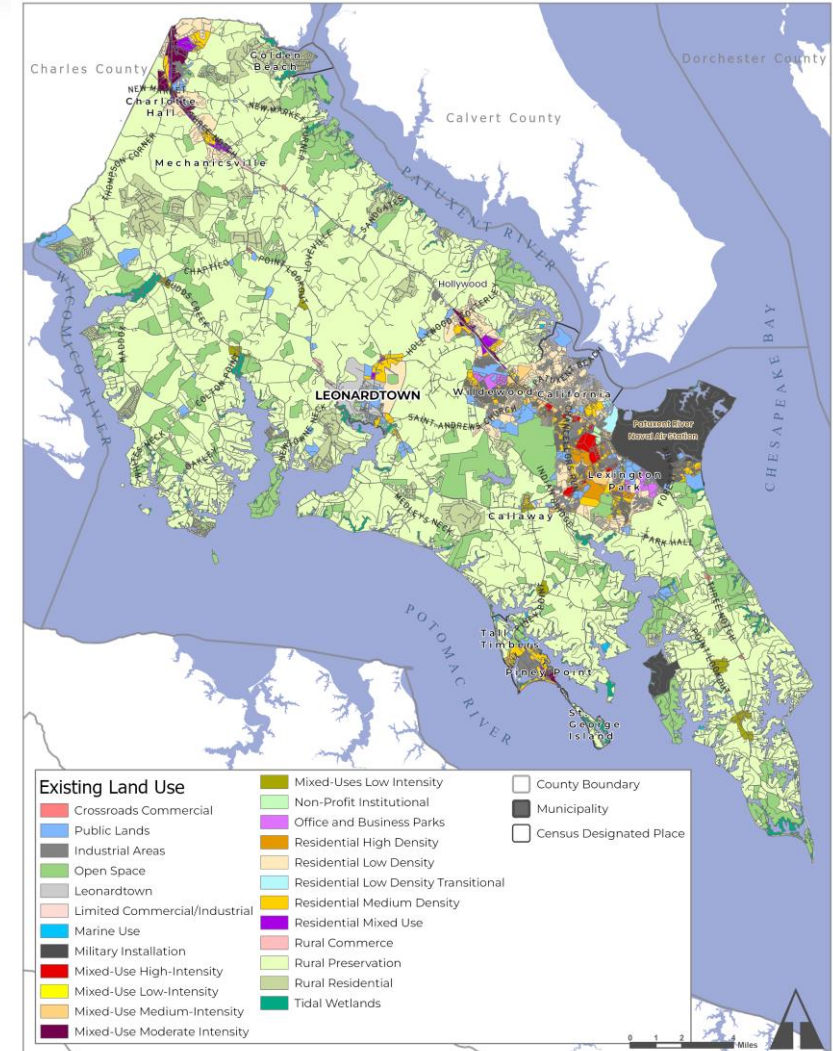
Land Use & Built Environment



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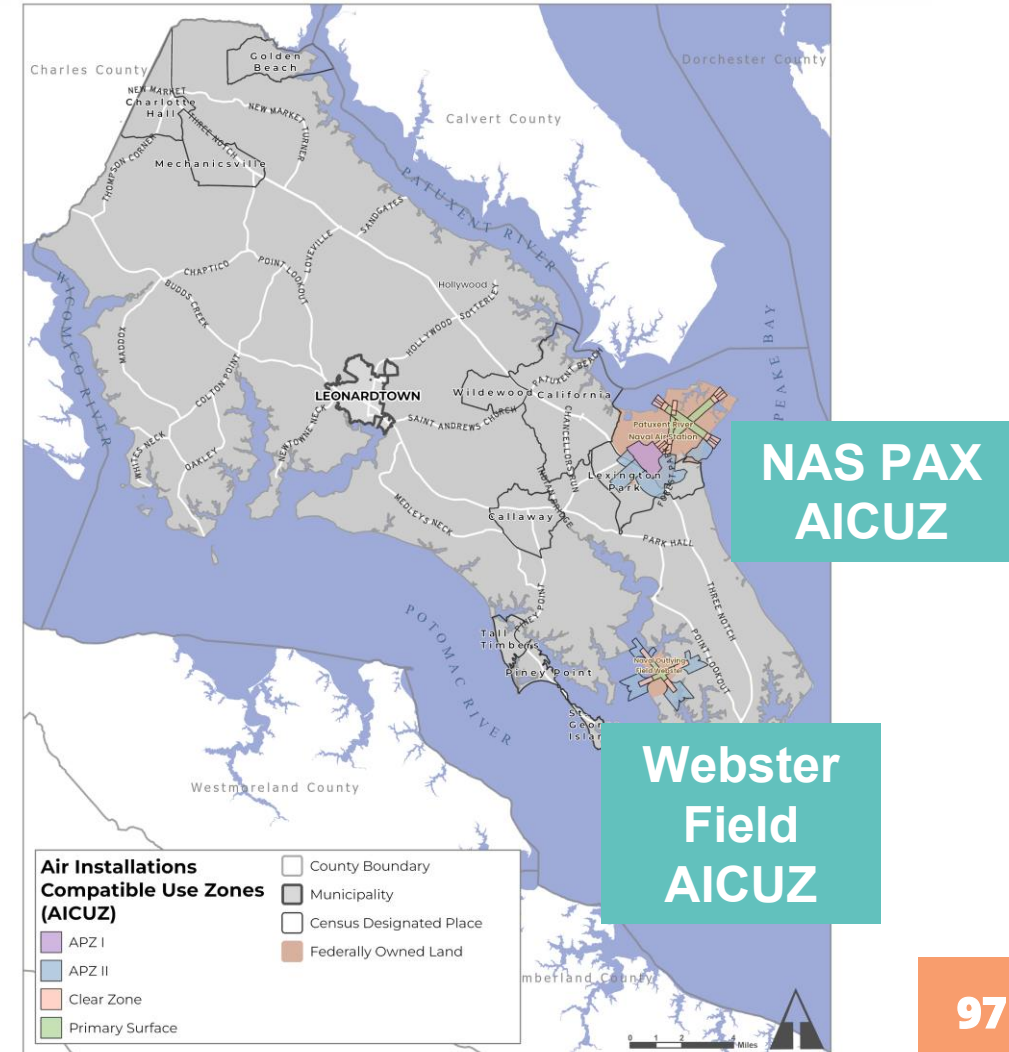
Existing Land Use

- Most land in the county is identified on the existing land use map as rural residential, rural preservation, or open space (includes parks)
- Mixed uses and/or medium to higher-density housing are allowed in very limited areas (development districts, etc.)



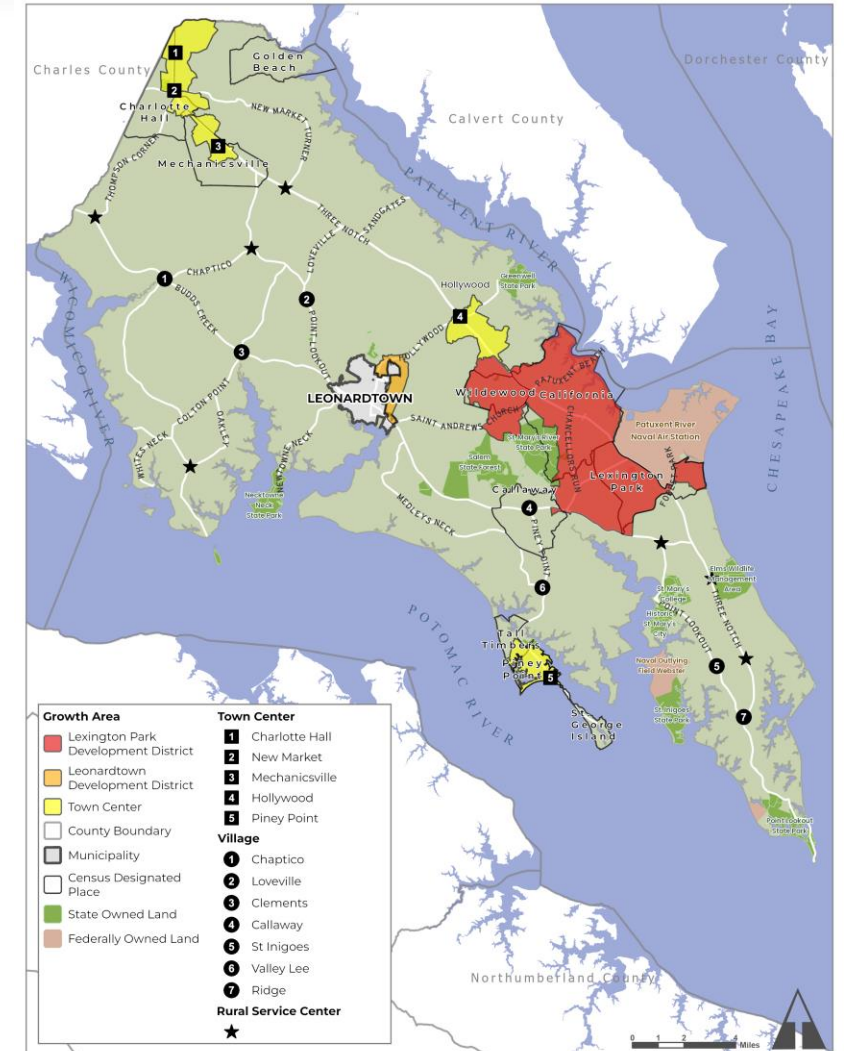
Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) Program

- AICUZ program is a Dept. of Defense program designed to promote development compatible with military flight operations
- AICUZ program affects land use through the County's adoption of compatible land use controls
- Protects the operational capability of air installations
- Updated AICUZ zones will be available in late 2025



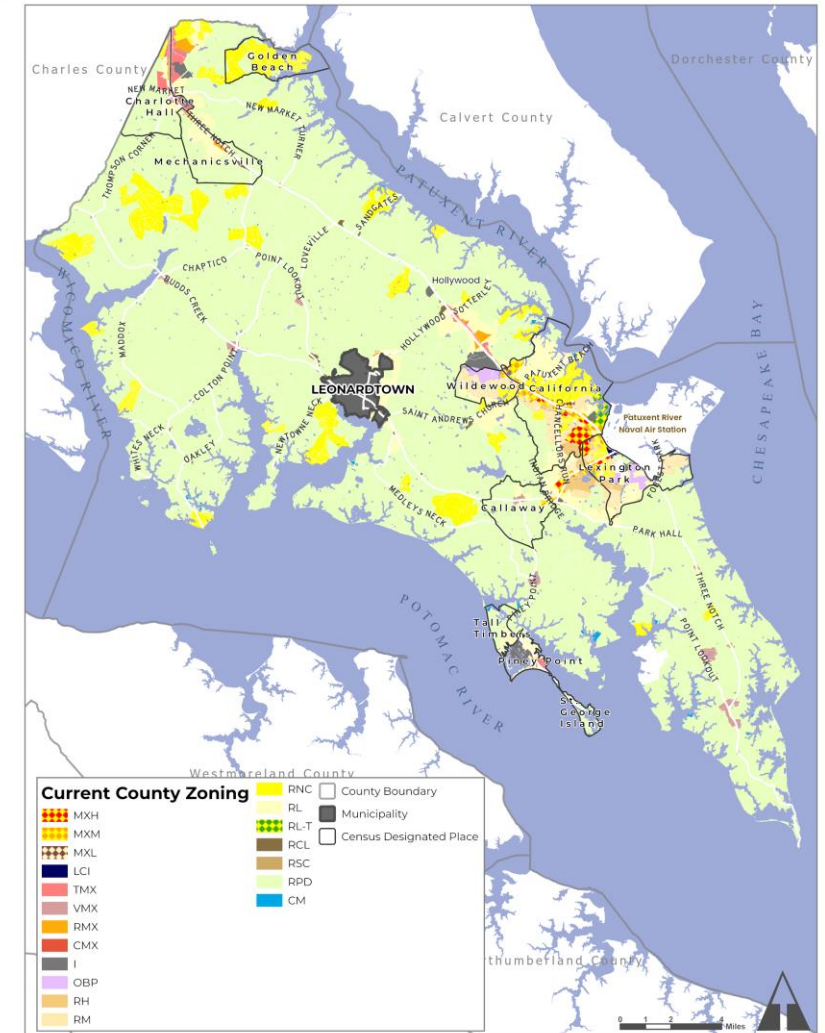
Targeted Growth

- In the 2010 plan, identifying **Growth Areas**, **rural areas**, and **protected areas** was the approach to planning the county's general areas for development
- **Growth Areas** include the Lexington Park and Leonardtown Development Districts, the **Town Centers**, and the **Village Centers**
- All other areas were guided as **rural** or **protected**: **Rural Preservation**, **Rural Service Center**, **Rural Commercial Limited**, **Resource Protection Area**, or **Neighborhood Conservation District**.



Existing Zoning

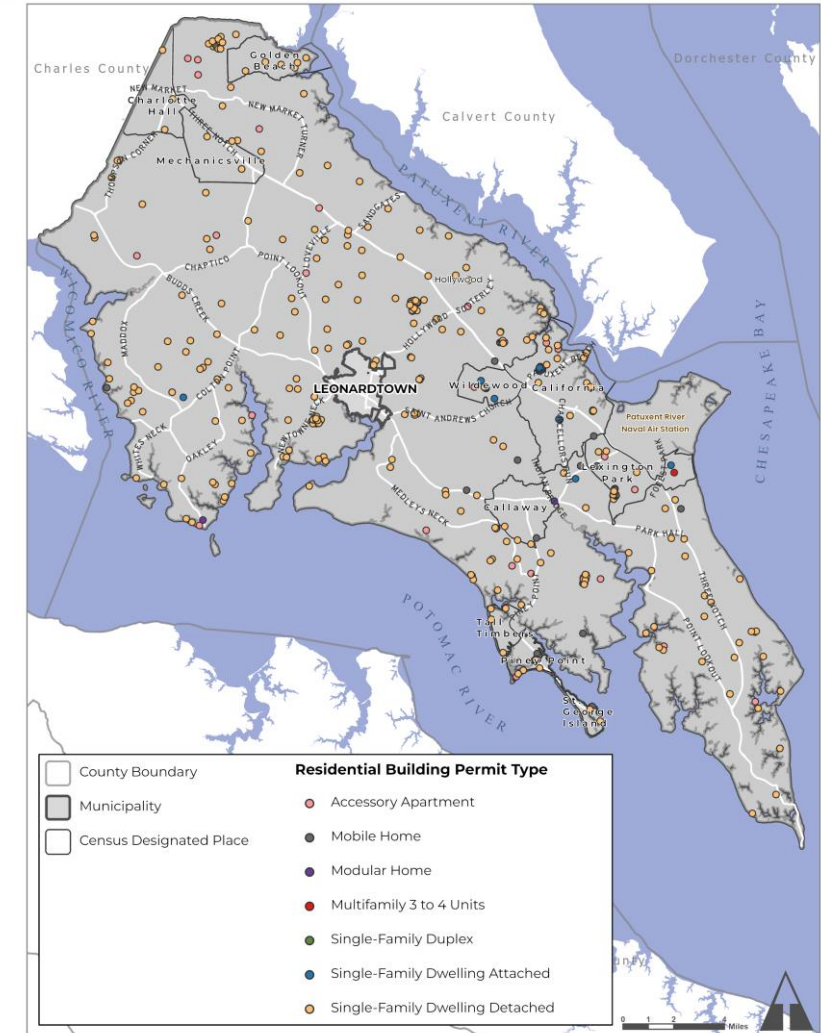
- The county's existing **zoning map** shows where different uses (residential, commercial, farming, etc.) are permitted
- The zoning map is updated when **rezonings** occur
- In many communities, the zoning map and **zoning ordinance** are updated to align with the updated comprehensive plan



Development Trends

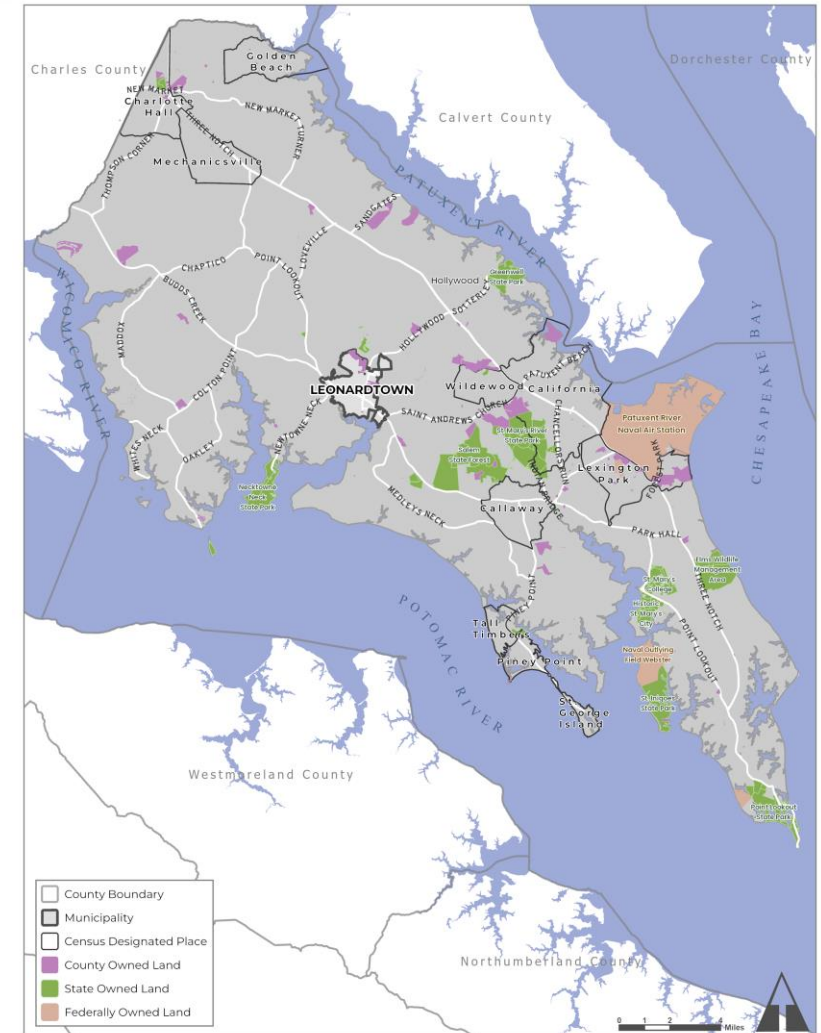
- This map shows all 586 **residential building permits** for new construction issued by LUGM from 2023 through Quarter 1 of 2025

Residential Building Permits Issued by Type, 2023 – Q1 2025	
Single-family detached	338
Single-family attached	191
Single-family duplex	2
Multi-family 3-4 units	1
Modular Home	1
Mobile Home	30
Accessory Apartment	23
TOTAL	586



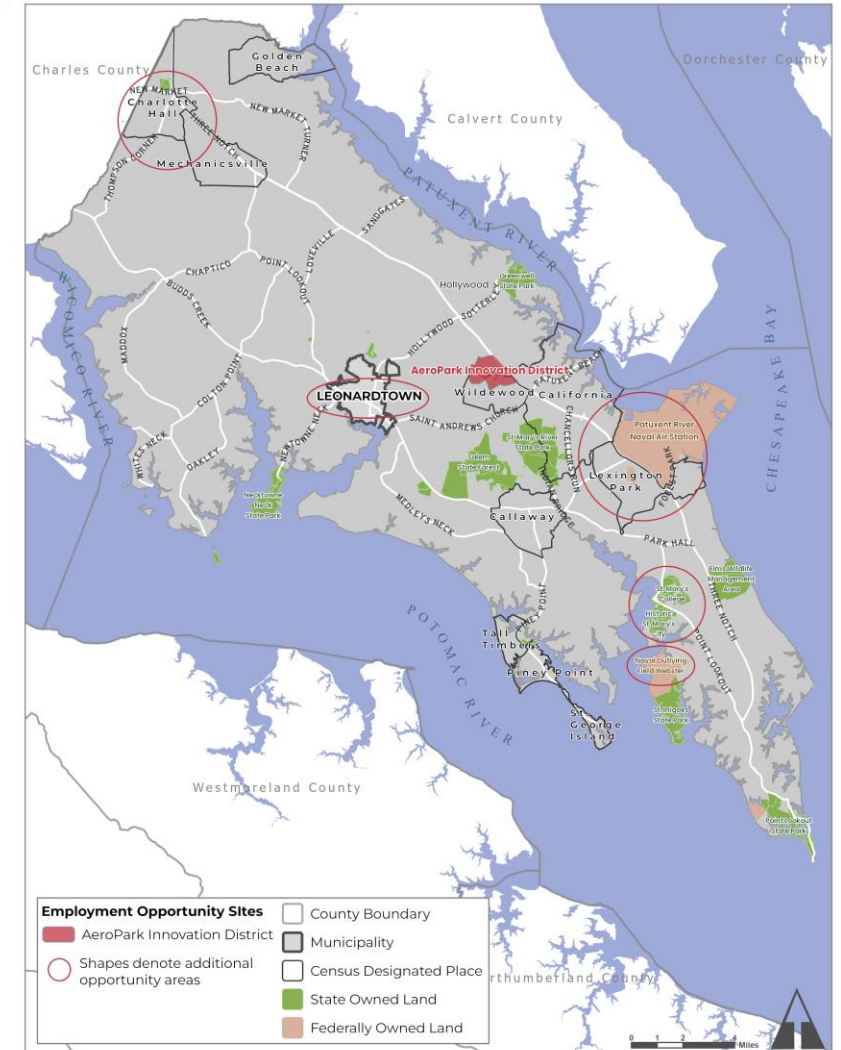
Publicly-Owned Land

- This map shows all county, state, and federally-owned lands in St. Mary's County
- Beyond the two military installations, publicly-owned land is concentrated in the southern half of the county
- County-owned land is more evenly distributed



Employment Opportunity Sites

- This map identifies potential employment opportunity sites
- The AeroPark Innovation District in the Wildewood area
- Other sites are based on existing assets and employment centers



Economic Development Strategies

- The 2022 St. Mary's County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy update identified a several key areas of economic development focus:
 - Grow emerging and heritage industries
 - Attract and retain a young, talented, and diverse workforce
 - Create a nurturing environment for innovation and entrepreneurship
 - Support and advance the mission of NAS PAX and tenant commands



Land Use Tax Base

- 85% of the County's tax base is comprised of residential properties, while 15% is comprised of commercial properties
- County relies heavily on its residential tax base



Infrastructure, Facilities & Services



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Water & Wastewater



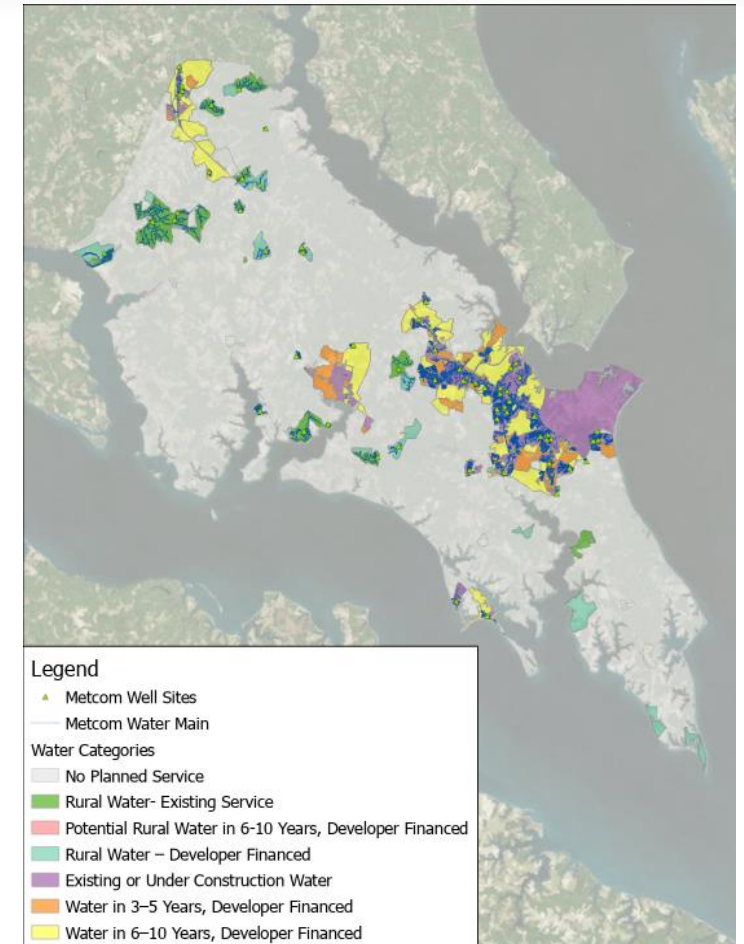
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Existing Service Providers

- St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission (MetCom):
 - Primary public water and sewer provider outside Leonardtown corporate limits
 - Owns/operates 7 wastewater treatment plants and 28 water systems
- Leonardtown Municipal System
 - Owns/operates its own water and sewer system within town limits
 - Has interjurisdictional agreements with MetCom for capacity outside the town
- Private and Community Systems
 - Small package plants (e.g., at schools, mobile home parks, private developments)
- Federal and State Systems
 - NAS Patuxent River and Webster Field maintain their own water and sewer systems
 - St. Mary's College operates its own water system
 - Wastewater from all these sites are sent to Marlay-Taylor Water Reclamation Facility (WRF)

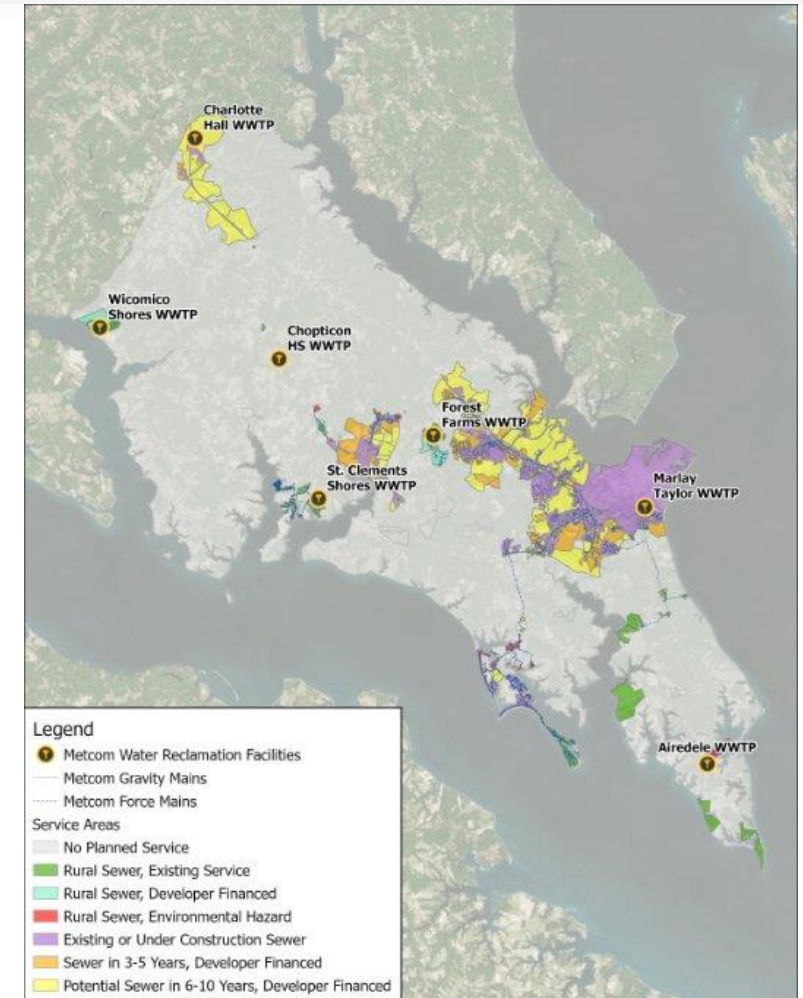
Public Water Service

- **28 Water Systems in 10 water service areas**
 - 52 Well Sites, 55 Water Pumping Stations, and 18 Water Towers
 - Delivers drinking water to over 16,000 customers
 - Source water is pulled from Aquia, Piney Point and Upper Patapsco aquifers
- **Key Public Water Systems**
 - Lexington Park System: Largest in the County, ~22 wells, multiple elevated storage tanks.
 - Leonardtown Municipal System: Four wells, three elevated tanks,
 - 0.75 million gallons per day (mgd) appropriation from the Upper Patapsco aquifer (plus older Aquia wells)
 - Smaller systems: Wicomico Shores, St. Clements Shores, Country Lakes, Charlotte Hall, and others



Public Wastewater Service

- **Ten sewerage service areas**
 - Consists of approximately 290 miles of gravity and pressure sanitary sewer lines, 3,700 manholes, and 70 wastewater pumping stations
- **Primary Public Wastewater Facilities**
 - Marlay-Taylor Water Reclamation Facility (WRF):
 - 6.0 mgd design capacity, average flow of approximately 4.2 mgd
 - Serves Lexington Park, NAS Pax River, St. Mary's College, and Piney Point area.
 - Leonardtown WWTP:
 - 0.68 mgd capacity (currently expanding to 1.2 mgd planned)
 - Serves Leonardtown and some unincorporated areas by agreement.
 - Wicomico Shores, St. Clements Shores, Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, etc. have smaller facilities, with Rapid Infiltration Basins (RIB) or spray irrigation



Water System Maintenance and Upgrade Plans

- **Water System Projects (FY 2025-2030)**

- **Water Lines**

- Southampton Water System Rehabilitation: Replaces old lines, improving pressure and reliability.
 - MD247 Loveville Road Water Main Replacement: Extends or upgrades mains to meet current demands.
 - Breton Bay and Town Creek Water System Replacements (Phased): Upgrading older distribution piping to address leaks, flow constraints, and fire-flow requirements.
 - Various Fire Flow Enhancements: Targeted upgrades to increase water main sizes or add hydrants where needed.

- **Wells**

- Well Rehabilitation and Inspections: Countywide program to replace or rehab aging wells, drilling new ones if needed for capacity.
 - Water Storage Tanks
 - St. Clements Shores Water Storage Tank: New or upgraded tank to improve local water pressure and storage.
 - Water Tank Inspections, Painting, and Replacement: Ongoing cyclical maintenance to keep elevated/ground tanks in top condition.

- **Miscellaneous Improvements**

- Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Upgrade: A new initiative to replace older water meters with smart meters for real-time usage tracking.
 - Generator Replacements (Water): Ensures critical pumping and treatment can continue during power outages.
 - Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System: Internal technology upgrade to streamline MetCom's financial and asset management.

Wastewater System Maintenance and Upgrade Plans

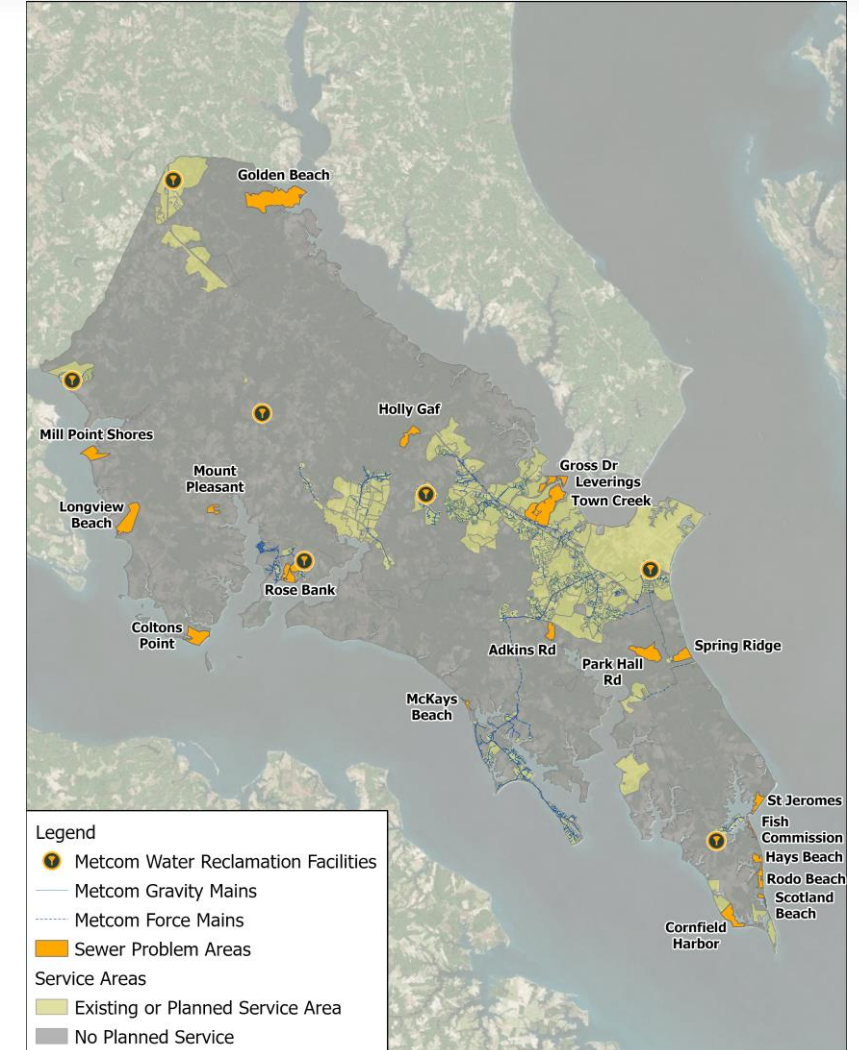
- **Wastewater System Projects (FY 2025-2030)**
 - Rehabilitation / Replacement
 - Various Rehabilitation at Marlay-Taylor WRF: Ongoing upgrades to improve operations and comply with ENR standards.
 - Piney Point Road Force Main Replacement: Major replacement project to improve reliability of the Piney Point pump-over system.
 - Inflow and Infiltration (I and I) Reductions: Continuous countywide effort to seal leaking sewer lines and manholes.
 - Southampton Sewer System Rehabilitation: System-wide upgrades (lining pipes, manhole rehab) to extend system life.
 - Pump Stations
 - Forest Run Wastewater Pump Station (WWPS): New or upgraded wet well and pumps to increase capacity and reliability.
 - Bradley Boulevard WWPS and Greenbrier WWPS: Planned rehabilitations or replacements to maintain operational readiness.
 - Piney Point WWPS Upgrade: Enhancements to handle current and future flow more efficiently.
 - System Upgrades / Expansion
 - Marlay-Taylor Expansion: Preliminary planning for future capacity expansion.
 - St. Clements Shores Sewer Area Extension: Proposed new public sewer extensions in currently unserved neighborhoods with failing OSDS
 - St. Clements Shores WWTP upgrade and expansion to Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR)
 - Grinder Pump Replacements: Ongoing program to swap aging grinder pumps in specific neighborhoods

Private Wells & Septic Systems

- Private Wells
 - Prevalent in rural preservation areas
 - Historically withdrawn from the Aquia and Piney Point-Nanjemoy aquifers
 - Challenges: Potentially declining water levels in the Aquia aquifer; new wells encouraged to use Upper Patapsco
 - Arsenic Standards: Some older wells in the Aquia or Piney Point aquifers may require treatment if arsenic exceeds 10 parts per billion (ppb)
- Septic Systems
 - Over 26,000 onsite sewage disposal systems (OSDS), prevalent in rural preservation areas
 - Challenges:
 - Numerous “failing septic” pockets (older, high-density subdivisions with high water tables, poor soils and limited available areas); need to address as listed in the CWSP
 - The increasing number of holding permits issued by the Health Department
 - Bay Restoration Fund: Grants for upgrading older septic systems with Best Available Technology (BAT)
 - County is investigating small package treatment solutions for older remote subdivisions with no feasible septic upgrades.

Areas for Wastewater Improvement

- **Problem Areas:**
 - Waterfront communities with little setback from tidal waters
 - High water tables and poorly draining soils that limit OSDS installation
 - Minimal lot sizes that are too small for modern OSDS or replacement systems
 - Aging or poorly maintained septic systems leading to septic failures
 - Topographic constraints due to steep slopes, wetlands, ravines, etc.
- **Potential Solutions (including those identified in CWSP)**
 - Land availability and citing of Package Treatment Plans
 - Connection to nearby public sewer (if feasible)
 - Change No Planned Service Area designations
 - Repair and rehabilitation of existing private systems
 - Transition to advanced nitrogen-removal on-site disposal systems
 - Public private funding opportunities (St. Mary's County Code)
 - Zoning designation changes



Stormwater Management



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Stormwater System Overview

- County operates under the Maryland Department of the Environment's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Discharge Permit for Phase II Municipal Separate Storm Sewers (MS4)
 - MS4 administered by Department of Public Works and Transportation
- Stormwater conveyance system comprises a mix of roadside ditches, culverts, natural channels and storm drains
 - The County's mapping identifies roughly 2,100 outfalls, ditches, and conveyances in urbanized areas
 - These outfalls are inspected under the County's Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) program
 - At a minimum, 100 outfalls are inspected yearly
 - Countywide, there are over 1,400 structural stormwater best management practices (BMPs)
 - These are inspected at least once every three years

Stormwater Management Regulations

- MS4 mandates a 20% impervious area restoration requirement in the urbanized area, IDDE, and six Minimum Control Measures (MCMs), which include:
 - MCM #1: Perform Public education and outreach;
 - MCM #2: Provide for Public involvement and participation;
 - MCM #3: Regulate and Establish methods to perform Illicit Discharges Detection and Elimination (IDDE)
 - MCM #4: Ensure Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control
 - MCM #5: Provide for Post Construction Stormwater Management
 - MCM #6: Establish programs for Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping
- County regulations incorporate the 2000 Maryland Stormwater Design Manual
 - Mandates Environmental Site Design (ESD) to the maximum extent practicable for new and redevelopment
- Construction General Permit: all construction disturbing one or more acres must obtain coverage under MDE's General Permit for Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity
 - Erosion and sediment control plans are approved by the Soil Conservation District

Areas for Stormwater Improvement

- Several of the County's watersheds (St. Mary's River, Breton Bay, and the Patuxent) are documented as having impairments for nutrients and sediment.
 - County is working toward compliance with federal and state total maximum daily load (TMDL) requirements
- Many older subdivisions and waterfront communities were built before modern stormwater and septic regulations, contributing to nutrient and sediment pollution
- County is evaluating establishing a stormwater utility or dedicated funding mechanism to address older developments lacking stormwater controls

Community Facilities & Services



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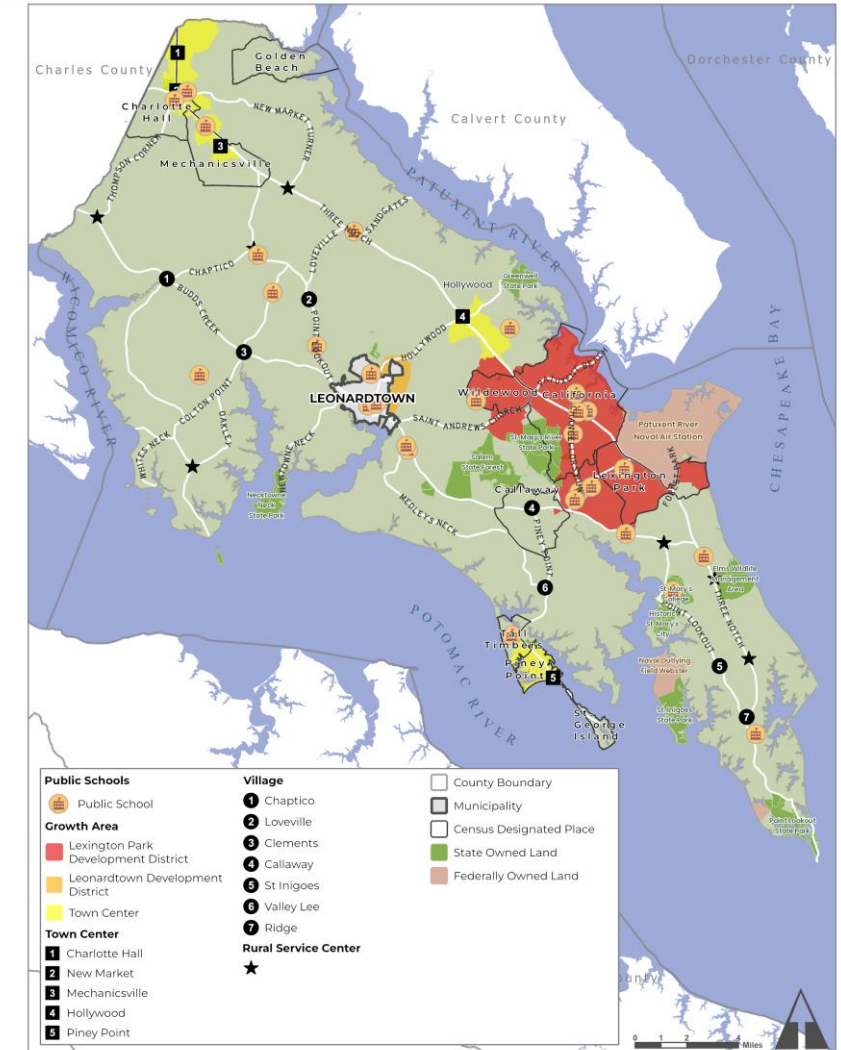
Community Facilities and Services

- Identifying the location and availability of public facilities and services is a required part of the comprehensive plan update
- Partner facilities (YMCA, healthcare, etc.) are also identified
- Location of facilities in relation to resiliency opportunity areas is analyzed



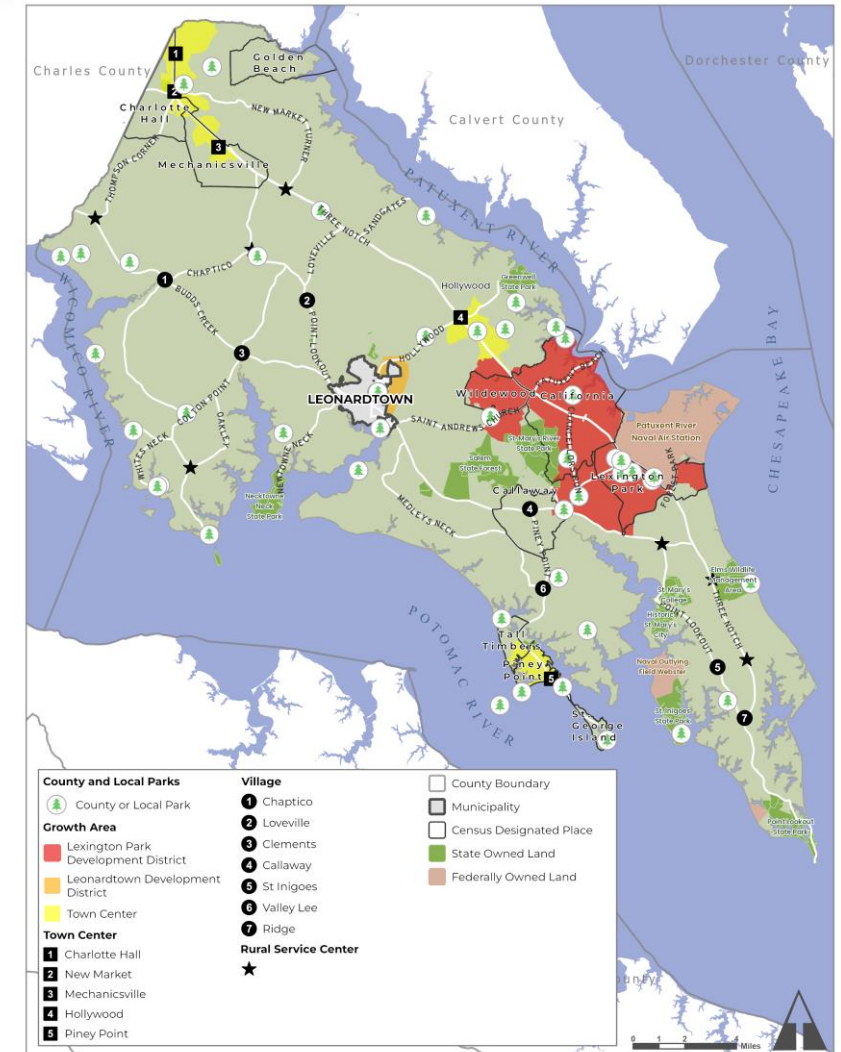
Education

- St. Mary's County Public Schools serves families across the entire county in 19 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, 3, high schools, and 1 career and technology center for high school students
- From 2021 to 2024, the system saw a slight decline in enrollment by 300+ students for a total of 16,370 students
- Some schools in certain areas, like Leonardtown and parts of California and Lexington Park, are **over capacity**
- A comprehensive redistricting analysis was started in the summer 2025 and will be complete by spring 2026
- **School building infrastructure is aging** and will need updating in future years



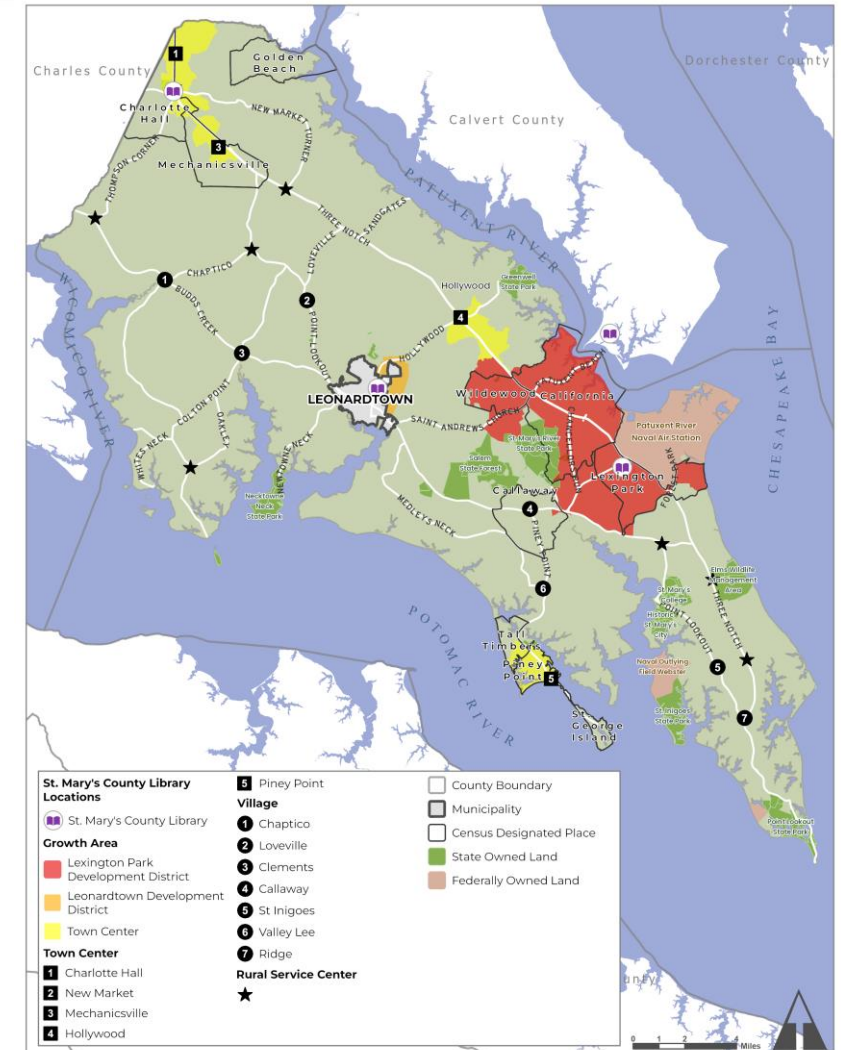
Parks and Recreation

- St. Mary's County Recreation and Parks maintains parks, trails and beaches, a golf course, museums, and facilitates recreational programs and facilities
- Many facilities are older and will **require investment** to maintain and expand services
- County has purchased more waterfront properties; public has expressed interest in additional public water access improvements



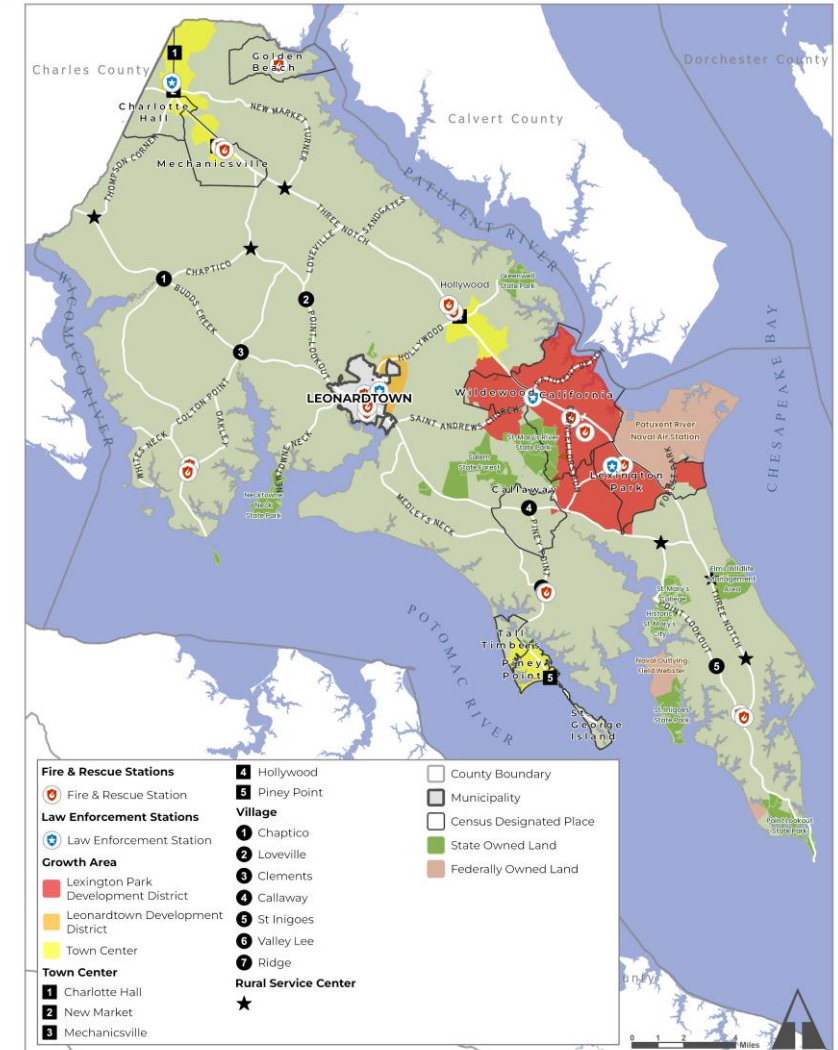
Libraries

- The St. Mary's County Library system operates three facilities in **Leonardtown, Lexington Park, and Charlotte Hall**
- The county's libraries serve as an important **community resource** and offer services and programming for the public, from homework help and technology instruction to makerspaces and notary services



Public Safety: Fire, Rescue, & Law Enforcement

- Fire services provided by **volunteer firefighters**; emergency medical services (EMS) primarily provided by volunteers, though recently supplemented with paid, professional positions
- **Law enforcement** includes St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office and the Maryland State Police
- Emergency Management coordinates resiliency-related services during coastal flooding and flood events and supports **aging populations** in isolated areas during disasters
- Emergency reserve water tanks to reduce fire risks and improve rural firefighting capabilities are being installed in a multi-year project



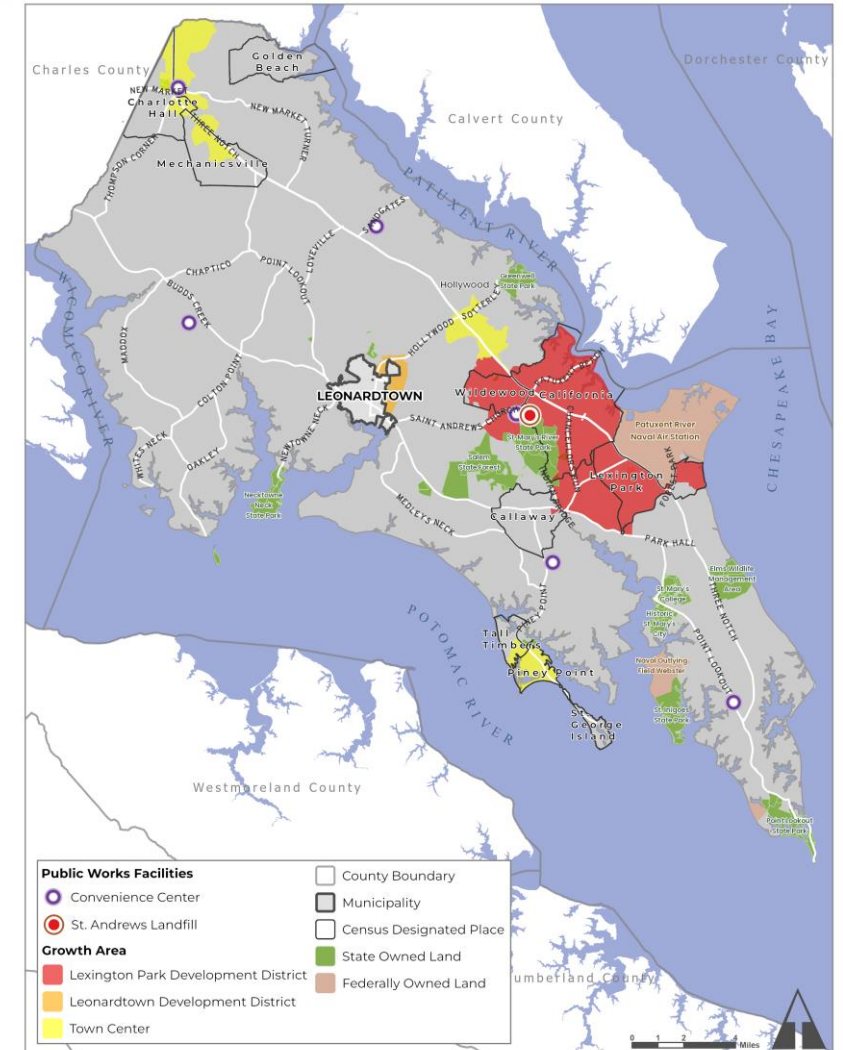
General Government Facilities

- County government invests in facilities in each fiscal year through the Capital Improvements Fund of the approved budget
- Investments are wide-ranging, from roads, trails, and sidewalks and the Great Mills YMCA, to recreation and parks improvements, the new Sheriff's Headquarters, and much more
- There is some interest in reexamining and strengthening the county's Adequate Public Facilities requirements in light of ongoing development in the county



Solid Waste

- **Six convenience centers** are located across the county for residents to deposit waste
- In addition to the **St. Andrews Landfill**, the county's one open and operating landfill, there are four closed landfills in the county



County Partners & Facilities

- Private facilities currently in direct partnership with the County include the new **Great Mills YMCA**, which is under construction
- **Private healthcare facilities**, including the MedStar hospital and other clinics, are important quality of life resources for the community and partner with several County Departments and local organizations on health initiatives
- The new **St. Mary's Marathon Health Center** in Leonardtown provides St. Mary's County employees, retirees, and their families with accessible access to healthcare



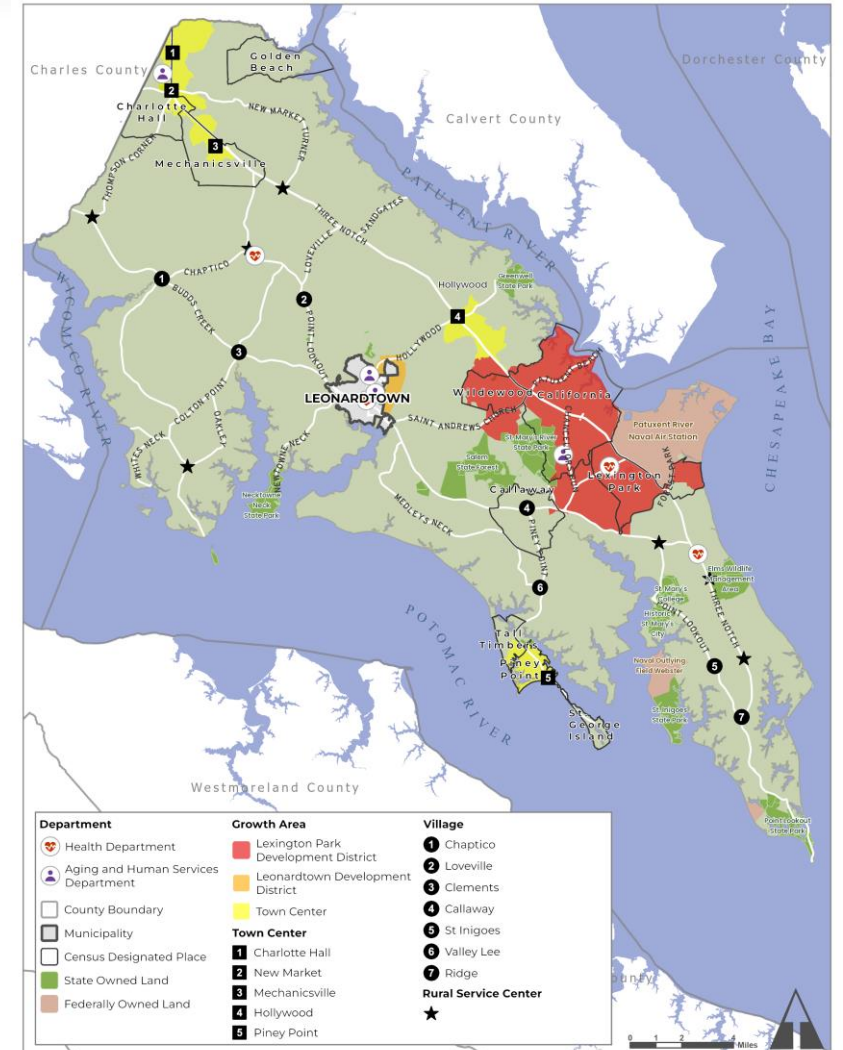
Human Services, Public Health & Community Resiliency



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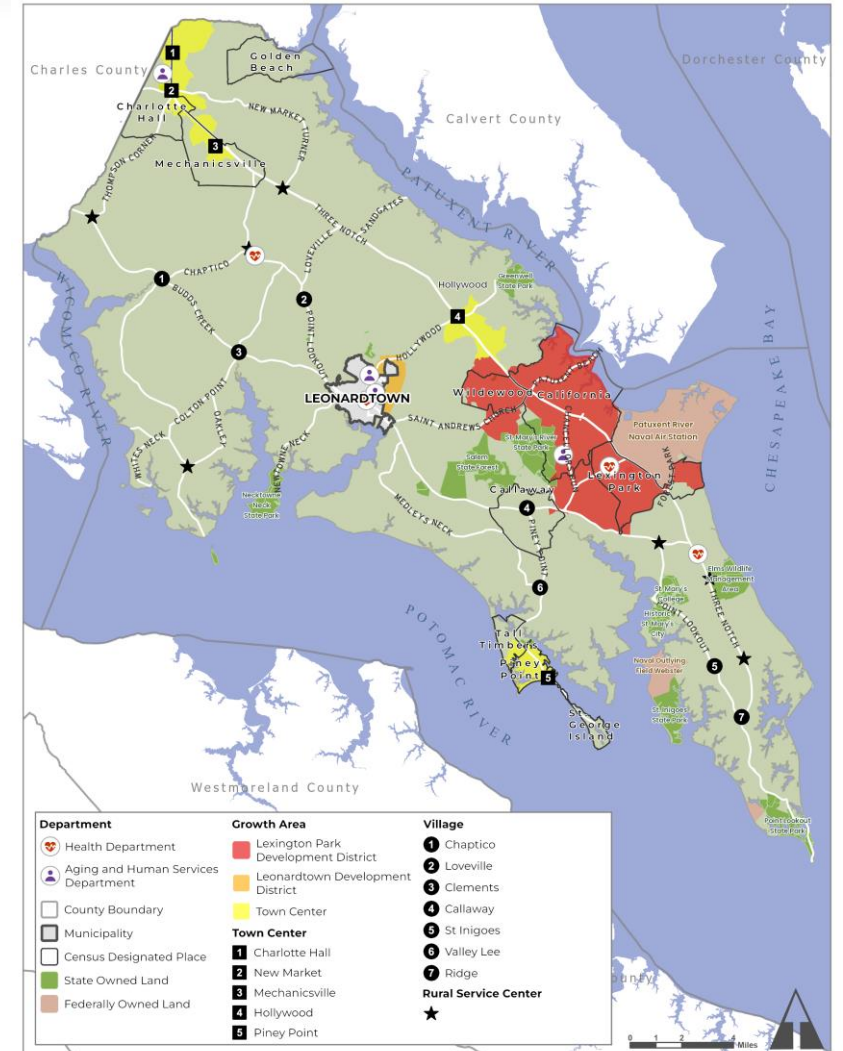
Public Health

- Failing septic systems can become an **environmental** and **public health** issue
- The Healthy St. Mary's 2026 Community Health Improvement Plan supports septic system maintenance and education, plus expansion of public sewer infrastructure and sewer connections
- Access to **adequate healthcare services** is important, especially with managing chronic diseases
- **Improving transportation and mobility** access through walking/biking and public transit improvements and raising awareness of existing programs can improve health outcomes
- Addressing **behavioral health** needs is also a priority, which also includes better transportation to services



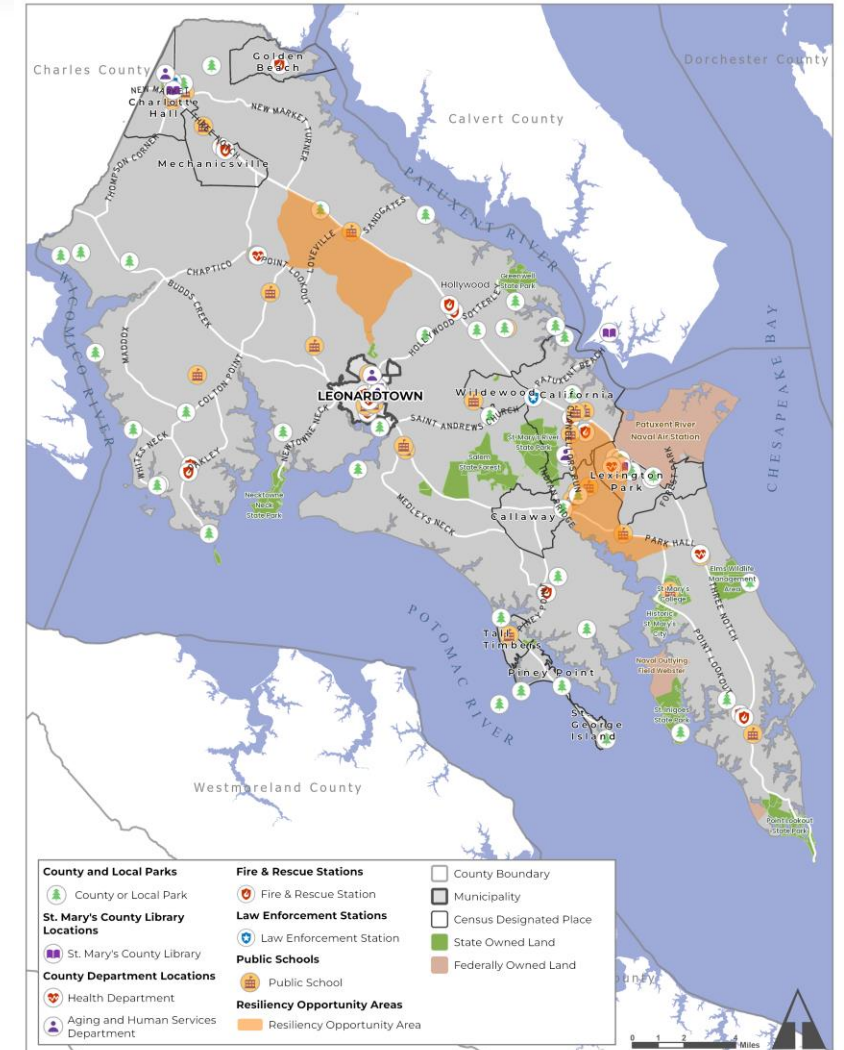
Aging and Human Services

- **Addressing the needs of county residents** with a wide variety of critical services, like meal delivery, caregiver support, social programming, in-home support, community outreach, volunteering, and information on housing, Social Security, and other benefit programs
- Through its programs and services, the Dept. of Aging and Human Services supports **older adults** (including the operation of three senior activity centers) including **those with disabilities, children, youth and families**, facilitates the Teen Court program, funds affiliated non-profits
- Increasing the visibility and utilization of services to support the county's aging population is key, while expanding services like transportation as feasible, and housing options, such as assisted living and affordable independent living



Resiliency Opportunity Areas

- The SVI mapping exercise identified **Resiliency Opportunity Areas** (ROAs) that may benefit from special attention and **investment from the County and its partners**
- Today, many County and other resources are **already located in or near the Lexington Park ROAs** due to the area's status as a major commercial, job, and recreation hub



Transportation



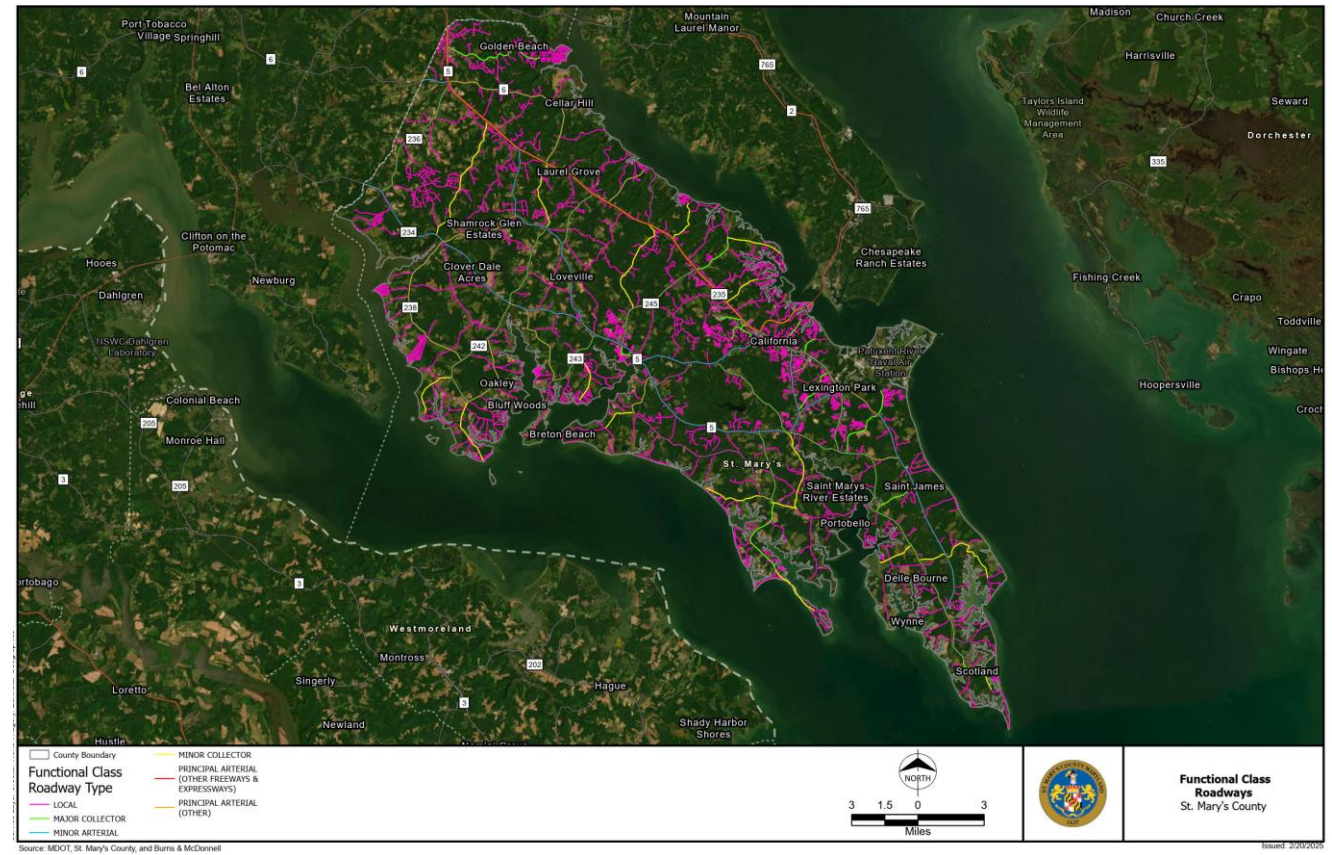
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Acronym List

- St. Mary's County Department of Public Works and Transportation
 - DPW&T
- St. Mary's County Land Use and Growth Management
 - LUGM
- Maryland Department of Transportation
 - MDOT
- Calvert-St. Mary's Metropolitan Planning Organization
 - C-SMMPO

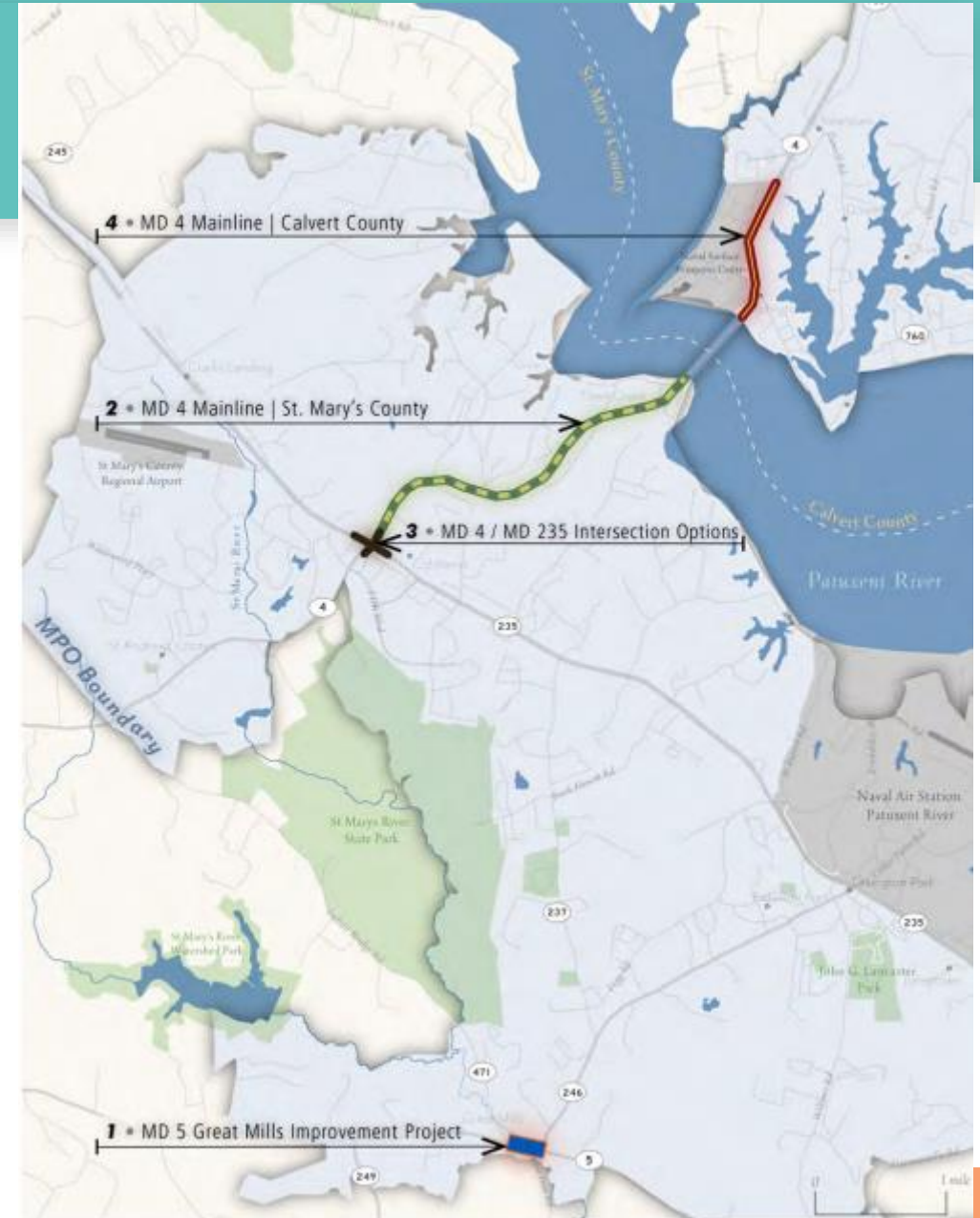
Roads

- St Mary's County is comprised of mostly local roads with some minor collectors and a few principal arterials that are the major N-S and E-W connectors
- Roads are primarily a function of the DPW&T with coordination from MDOT, C-SMMPO, and LUGM
- An update to the 2006 Transportation Plan is slated to be adopted in 2025



Roads

- Most recent C-SMMPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) adopted in 2024 included three projects slated for funding in St. Mary's County
 - MD 5 Great Mills Improvement Project
 - MD 4 Mainline (Thomas Johnson Bridge to MD 235)
 - MD 4/MD 235 Interchange
- Current trends have failing functionality at various intersections



Roads

- One of the major projects wrapping up is FDR Boulevard, which was constructed to alleviate congestion on MD 235



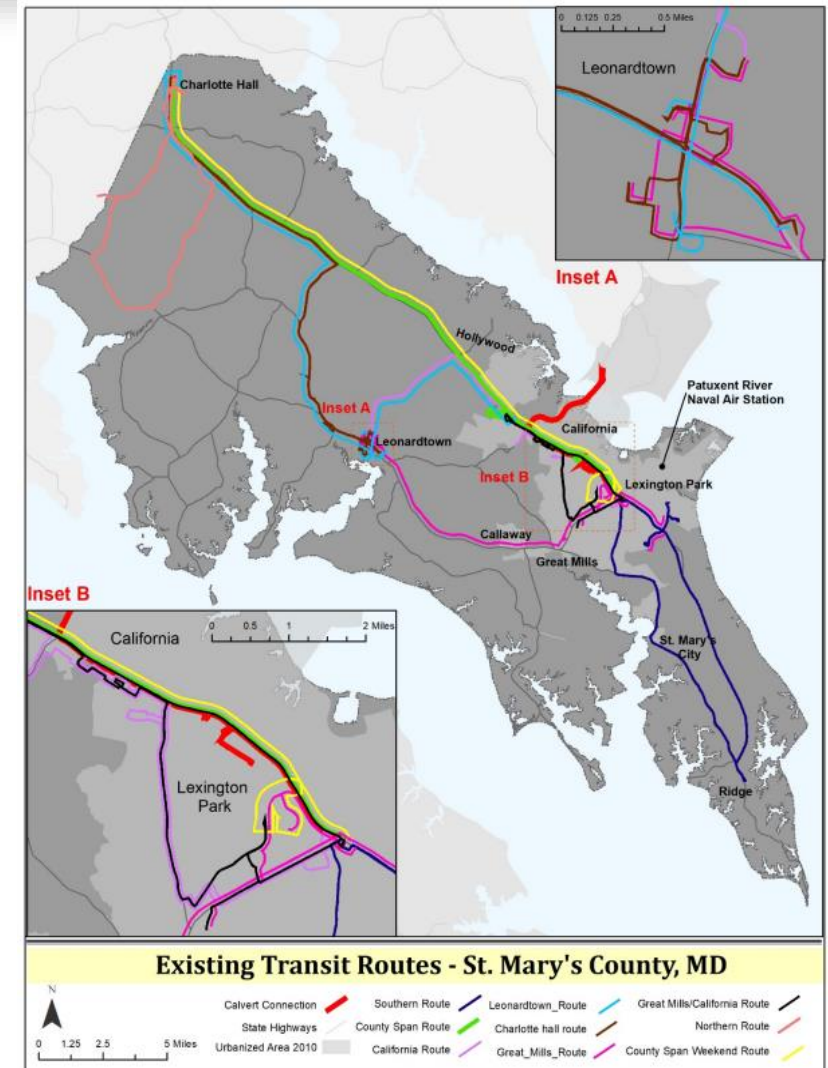
St. Mary's Transit (STS) Overview

- Department of Public Works and Transportation oversees St. Mary's Transit System (STS)
- Runs nine routes generally Monday through Friday with some Saturday Service and two routes with Sunday service
 - Feedback reveals a desire for additional routes and expanded hours, especially on weekends



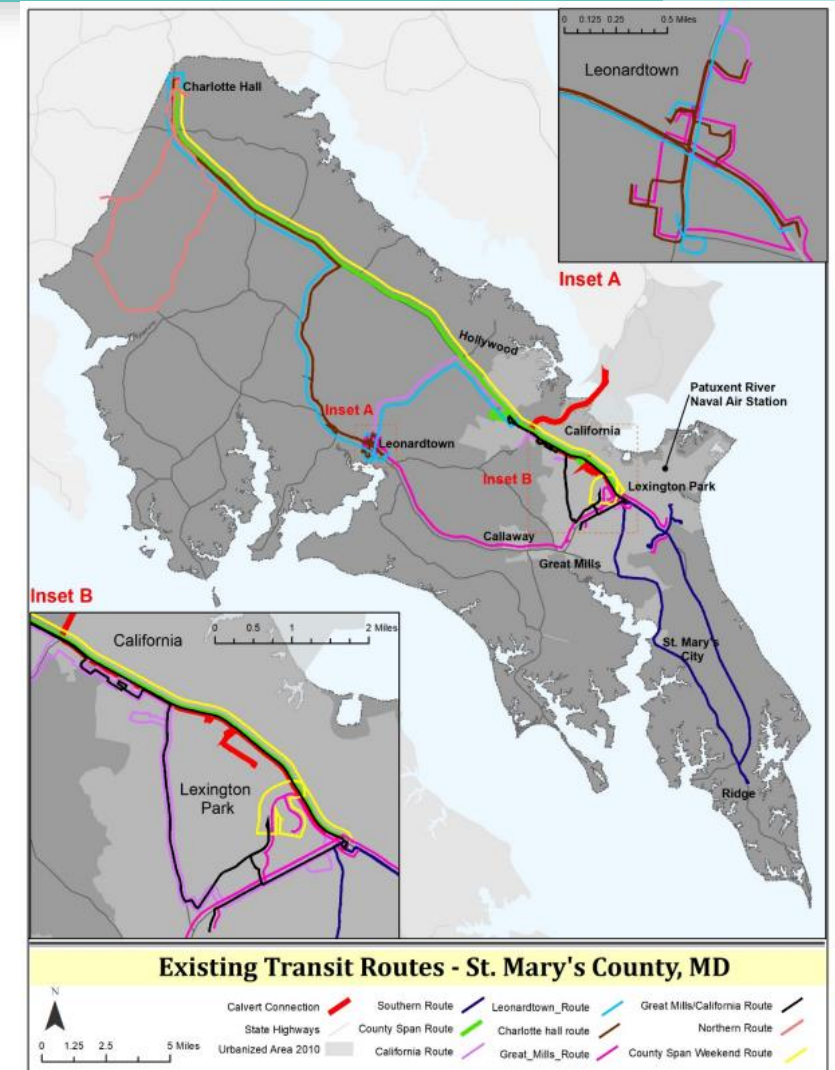
St. Mary's Transit (STS) Overview

- Additional services provided include ADA deviations within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the existing routes
- Major trip generators for routes include:
 - Multifamily housing
 - Medical facilities
 - Educational facilities
 - Major area employers
 - Shopping facilities/destinations



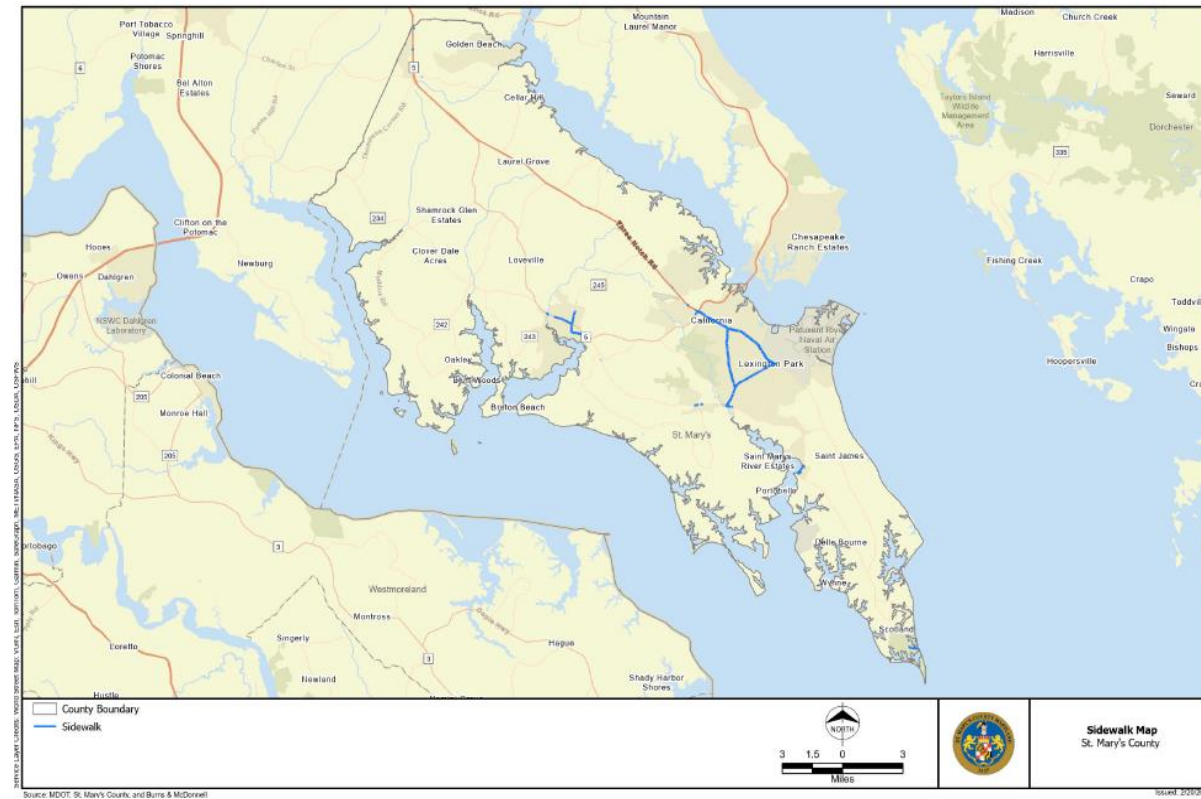
St. Mary's Transit (STS) Overview

- Based on the 2019 STS Transit Development Plan, ridership has remained relatively steady with ADA rides increasing
- Transit dependency expands outside of the current service routes, especially toward the northwestern portions of the County



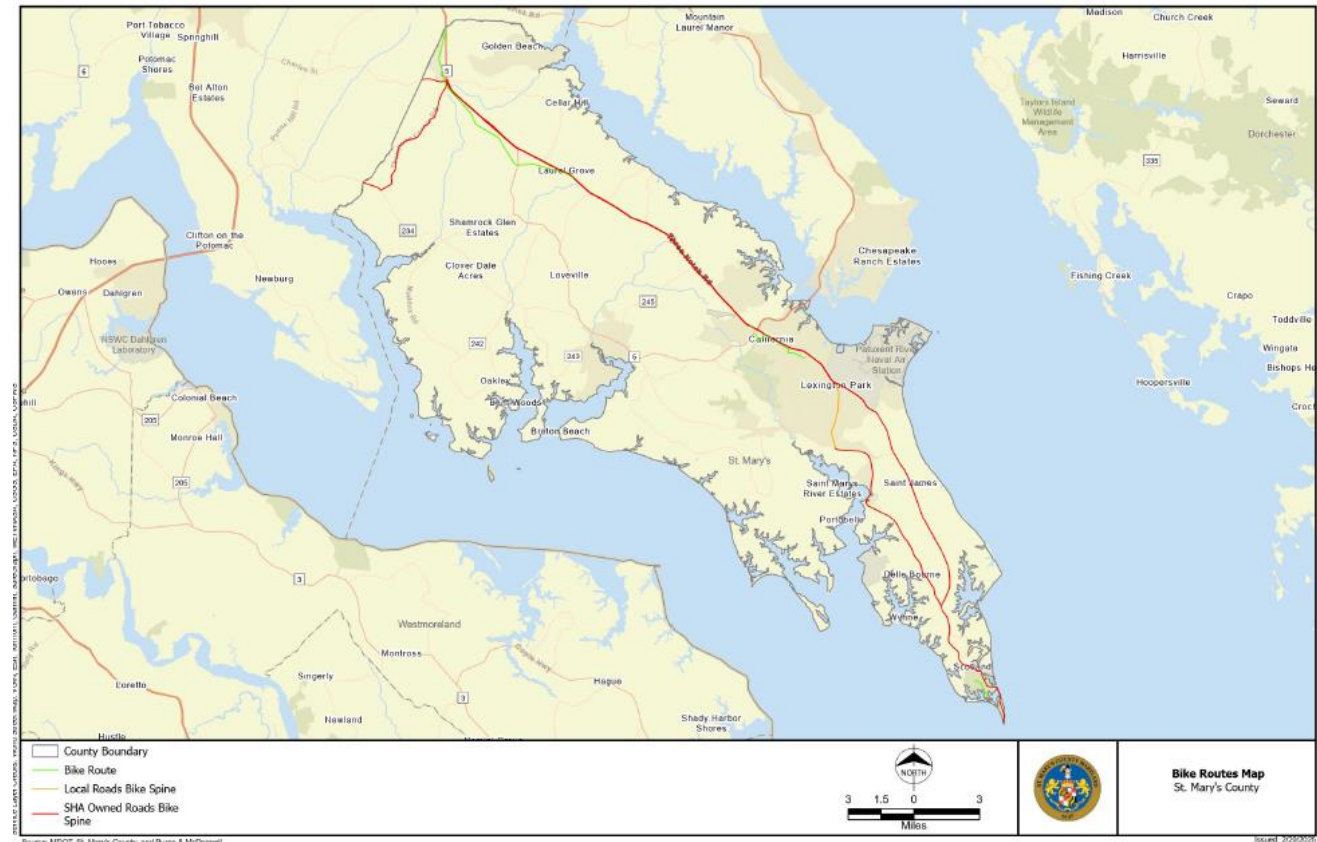
Bicycles and Sidewalks

- Sidewalks exist along some of the major road corridors within the County
- Sidewalks are disjointed in places and do not fully connect, even in places where sidewalks do exist in Lexington Park and adjacent areas



Bicycles and Sidewalks

- Bicycle routes are expanding and there are plans for connection of full routes



Conclusion: Charting the Next Steps to 2050



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Charting the Next Steps to 2050



- The data included in this report will be used to help inform development of the updated Comprehensive Plan along with community aspirations provided during the three rounds of community engagement.
- For updates on the project process, please visit the website:
www.stmaryscountymd.gov/StMarys2050