

## *Preserving Our County's Heritage Agricultural and Woodland Preservation Programs*

### Planning Framework

The County has three primary planning documents that establish goals and strategies relating to agricultural and woodland preservation. These include the General Development Plan, South County Small Area Plan, and 2013 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan. These plans are comprised of policies, recommendations, and strategies related primarily to promoting agriculture and forestry as a viable sector of the local economy; encouraging the use of best management practices, to reduce nutrient runoff, and promote healthy streams; discourage the loss of prime agricultural and forest land to development; and working cooperatively with State agencies and property owners to increase the amount of land protected through easement acquisition.

### Easement Acquisition Mechanisms

#### **1. Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF)**

The program is a purchase of development rights program. When the State of Maryland purchases your development rights, you voluntarily sell your right in perpetuity to develop your farm for residential, commercial, or industrial use. This means that, for whatever compensation mutually agreed upon by you and the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, you will preserve the land for agricultural use, subject to the Annotated Code and the Foundation's Regulations.

Anne Arundel County has participated in the MALPF Program since 1980. As of December 1, 2015, Anne Arundel County has a total of 5,118 acres are permanently preserved through MALPF easements. Click on the following link for additional information.  
[www.mda.maryland.gov/malpf/pages/default.aspx](http://www.mda.maryland.gov/malpf/pages/default.aspx)

#### **2. Anne Arundel County Agricultural and Woodland Preservation Program**

The County's Agricultural and Woodland Preservation Program was created in 1990 to supplement the MALPF program and to offer an alternative for agricultural preservation that recognized the County's small farms. This program is a purchase of development rights program where you voluntarily sell your right in perpetuity to develop your farm for residential, commercial, or industrial use subject to Anne Arundel County Code Article 17-Title 10. Permitted activities include any farm use of the land; operation at any time of machinery used in farm production or the primary processing of any ag products; any normal ag activities and operations, in accordance with good husbandry practices, that do not cause bodily injury or directly endanger human health, including activities that may produce normal ag related noise and odors; and the sale of farm products produced on the farm where the sales are made. As of December 1, 2015, a total of 6,118 acres have been permanently preserved through this program.

In 1999 an Installment Purchase Agreement (IPA) option was added to stimulate interest and add value to the program. An installment purchase agreement (IPA) is a contract between the County and the property owner selling his/her development rights. In the IPA, the County promises to pay the purchase price for an easement on specified dates in the future. The IPA also commits the County to pay interest on the outstanding purchase price between the time that the easement is given to the County (at closing) and the date that the purchase price is paid to the seller.

### 3. Rural Legacy Program

The Rural Legacy Program, developed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), consists of two concepts: first, delineating a specific geographic area of a county in need of focused land conservation efforts, and, second, acquiring easements from willing landowners within that area. Anne Arundel County's Rural Legacy Area (RLA) consists of approximately 37,381-acres and is contained entirely within the Priority Preservation Area as designated in the 2009 General Development Plan. The RLA covers an area south of Central Avenue, extending west to east between the Patuxent and the Rhode Rivers. The key goals of the Anne Arundel Rural Legacy Area are to complete a greenway of gently rolling farmland, preserving views from some of the County's most scenic and historic roads, and protecting multiple other scenic, historic and natural resources. As of December 1, 2015, approximately 1,460 acres were preserved through the Rural Legacy program. Approximately 16,179 acres (43-percent) of the RLA has been protected. For additional information, go to the DNR Resource Management/Land Conservation area at [www.dnr.state.md.us](http://www.dnr.state.md.us)

