The Planning Context

APA’s Research on Plans, Policies, and Best Practices

https://www.planning.org/nationalcenters/green/gbwc/
Overview

1. Inventory of Plans, Programs, Regulations, and Misc. Policies
2. Best Practices Framework
3. Discussion

https://www.planning.org/nationalcenters/green/gbwc/
Policy Inventory

1. What we reviewed
2. Key takeaways
What We Reviewed

- Plans and policy statements that strategically define networks of lands and waters providing multiple benefits and ecosystem values.
- Plans and policy statements that prioritize the use of green stormwater infrastructure practices to mimic natural functions at a site scale.
- Laws, regulations, and programs that help implement these plans and policy statements.

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<th>Regional</th>
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<td>Plans</td>
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<td>Programs</td>
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Key Takeaways

- The State of Maryland’s comprehensive planning, forest conservation, and stormwater management requirements have a large influence over local policy and action to protect or expand green infrastructure at multiple scales.

- 4 out of 19 localities in the study area currently have green infrastructure network plans.

- Localities in the study area generally meet but do not exceed state thresholds for protection of environmentally sensitive features.

- There is little evidence of ongoing or sustained regional planning for green infrastructure protection or expansion.

- While several hazard mitigation/climate adaptation plans in the study area recommend using green infrastructure to enhance resilience, there is no evidence of combined hazard mitigation–green infrastructure planning processes.
Best Practices Framework

• Strategies for Creating a Regional Green Infrastructure Network
  – Multi-Benefit Green Stormwater Infrastructure
  – Urban Forest Enhancement and Restoration
  – Critical Infrastructure Protection
  – Coastal Defense
  – Land Preservation
Best Practices Framework

• Supporting a Regional Green Infrastructure Network Through Local Policy and Action
  – Local Plans
  – Regulatory Tools
  – Other Policy Tools
  – Capital Investments
  – Programmatic Tools
Local Plans

- **Comprehensive Plans**
  - Howard County, MD, PlanHoward 2030

- **Green Infrastructure Plans**
  - Prince George’s County, MD, Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan

- **Hazard Mitigation/Climate Adaptation Plans**
  - City of Baltimore, MD, Disaster Preparedness and Planning Project Plan

- **Watershed Plans**
  - Baltimore County, MD, Lower Patapsco River Small Watershed Action Plan

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Regulatory Tools

• Conservation Zoning Districts
  – Town of Highland Beach, MD, “OS” Open Space District

• Natural Resource Protection Standards
  – Anne Arundel County, MD, “Natural Features” Standards

• Low Impact Development Standards
  – All stormwater management ordinances in the project area

• Urban Forestry/Landscaping Standards
  – City of Annapolis, MD, “Trees in Development Areas” Standards

• Site Design Standards
  – City of Baltimore, MD, “Sustainable Site Design” Standards
Regulatory Tools

• Wellhead Protection Standards
  – Town of Hampstead, MD, “Groundwater Conservation District”

• Conservation Subdivision Design Standards
  – City of Westminster, MD, “Residential Cluster Subdivision” Option

• Open Space Dedication Requirements
  – City of Laurel, MD, “Mandatory Dedication or Fee-in-lieu of Open Space” Requirements

• Transfer of Development Rights

• Green Infrastructure Development Incentives
  – Howard County, MD, “Green Neighborhood Allocations”
Other Policy Tools

• **Green Infrastructure Design Standards**

• **Development Design Guidelines**
  – Howard County, MD, Downtown Columbia Design Guidelines

• **Landscape Design Guidelines**
  – Prince George’s County, MD, Landscape Manual

• **Vacant Property Pattern Book**
  – City of Baltimore, MD, Green Pattern Book

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Capital Investments

• Land Acquisition
  – Montgomery County, MD, “Legacy Open Space” Acquisitions

• Purchase of Development Rights
  – Anne Arundel County, MD, “Agricultural Preservation” Acquisitions

• Stormwater Management Projects
  – City of Baltimore, MD, “Large Stormwater BMP” Projects

• Environmental Restoration Projects
  – Baltimore County, MD, “Watershed Restoration” Projects

• Tree Planting/Greening Projects
  – Montgomery County, MD, “Street Tree Planting”
Programmatic Tools

- **Land Conservation Programs**
  - Harford County, MD, “Harford Agricultural Land Preservation Program”

- **Forest Conservation Programs**
  - Baltimore County, MD, “Forest Sustainability Program”

- **Tree Planting Programs**
  - Montgomery County, MD, “Leaves for Neighborhoods” Program

- **Nutrient Trading Programs**
  - Maryland Department of Agriculture “Nutrient Trading Program”

- **Volunteer Restoration Programs**
  - Montgomery County, MD, “Stream Stewards Volunteer Program”

- **Technical Assistance Programs**
  - Montgomery County, MD, “Rainscapes” Program
Discussion

• Are there other types of local policies or actions we should include?
• Do you know of specific examples of those types of policies or actions?
• Our next step is to develop a toolkit of best practices, including examples from elsewhere in the country. What kind of toolkit would be most helpful to you?
American Planning Association

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