



HoCo By Design General Plan Update CHAPTER 9: SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE

DPZ Presentation to the County Council

June 7, 2023



Supporting Infrastructure – Chapter Overview

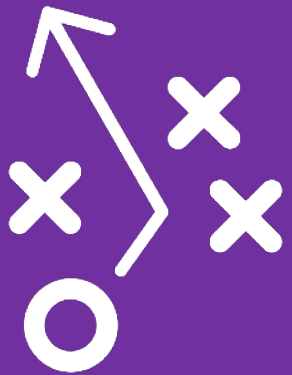
Supporting Infrastructure Topics	
Sustainable & Equitable Infrastructure	Equity in Capital Planning
Police Protection	Fire and Rescue
Recreation and Parks	County Facilities
Allied Agency Facilities (HCPL/HCC)	Drinking Water Supply
Wastewater Treatment	Solid Waste Management

**Presentation covers highlights from the chapter, including some, but not all, policies and actions*

What We Heard

- Residents value the amenities the County offers (**recreation, libraries, schools**) and want to see **continued investment** – especially in the Rt 1 Corridor
- **Wi-Fi access** in public spaces and buildings is desired
- There is interest in **flexible indoor and outdoor spaces** for community use
- There are both concerns about and support for **shared septic systems** in Rural West; however, small-scale development could be supported if new infrastructure models were explored
- It is important to maintain and invest in **wastewater treatment facilities** that protect the Bay and rivers





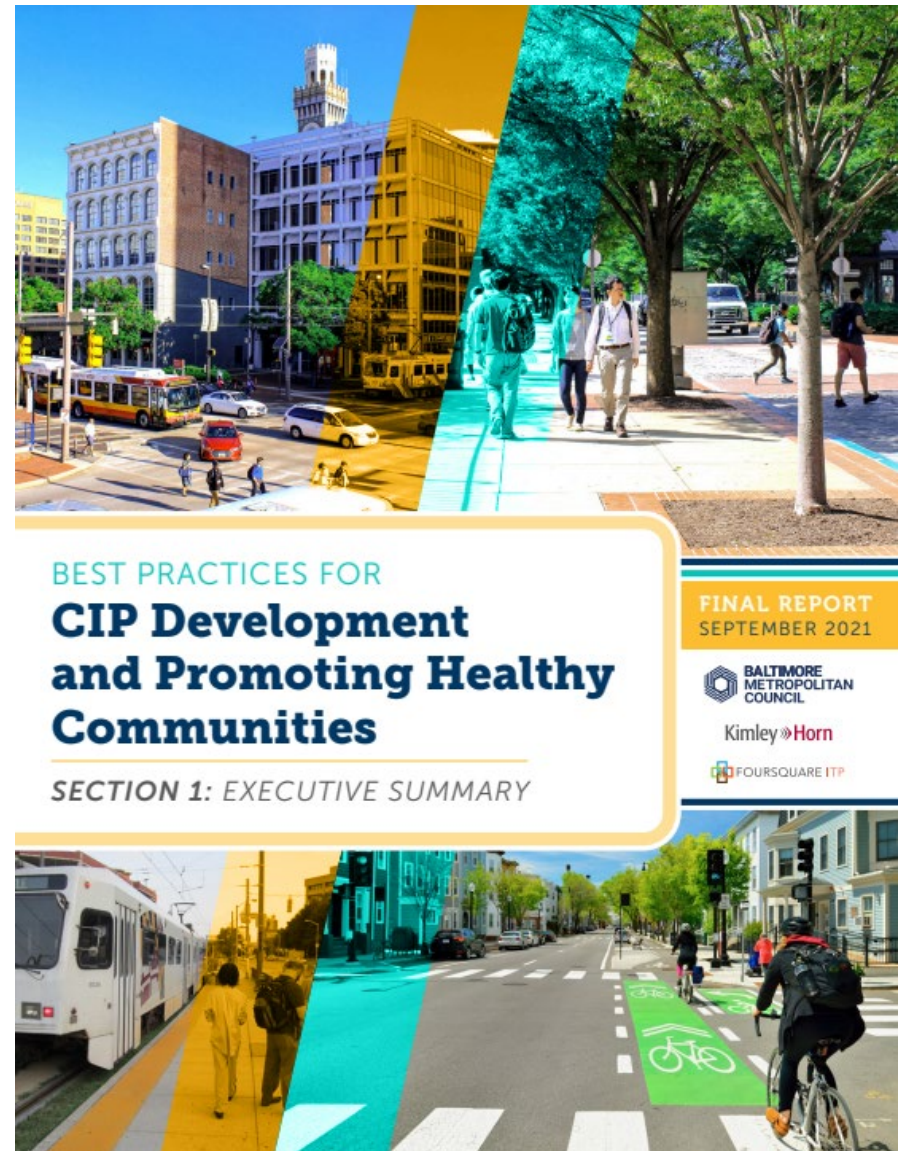
Sustainable and Equitable Infrastructure Equity in Capital Planning

Sustainable and Equitable Infrastructure

- Sustainability (Chapter 1): “shaping growth and preservation in a manner that... responsibly balances and grows our **fiscal resources** to deliver the **government services** that enhance our quality of life”
- Chapter 9 notes that Spending Affordability Advisory Committee (SAAC) recommendations have emphasized an increasing need to **maintain and rebuild** existing infrastructure, and to **prioritize** infrastructure needs

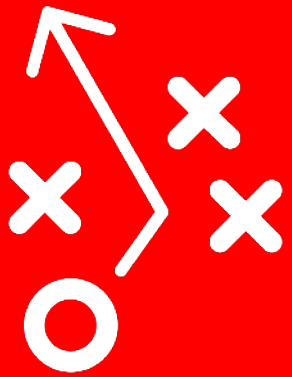
Equity in Capital Planning

- **Emerging practice** across the nation
- 2021 Baltimore Metropolitan Council report, “Best Practices for CIP Development and Promoting Healthy Communities,” offers **guidance for incorporating equity** in capital planning:
 - Engage “vulnerable” or **underserved communities** in decision-making
 - Develop an equity-based **approach to capital planning**



Policy Statements and Actions – Highlights

- **Policy INF-1:** Prioritize Capital Improvement Program requests that directly **implement General Plan** policies and implementing actions
 - **Action:** Make existing and deferred **maintenance** projects a priority (as recommended by the SAAC)
- **Policy INF-2: Prioritize equity** in capital improvement planning and programming
 - **Action:** Explore and implement **inclusive capital processes** (building on Howard County's existing participatory and transparent process)
 - **Action: Incorporate equity** in prioritization of capital projects

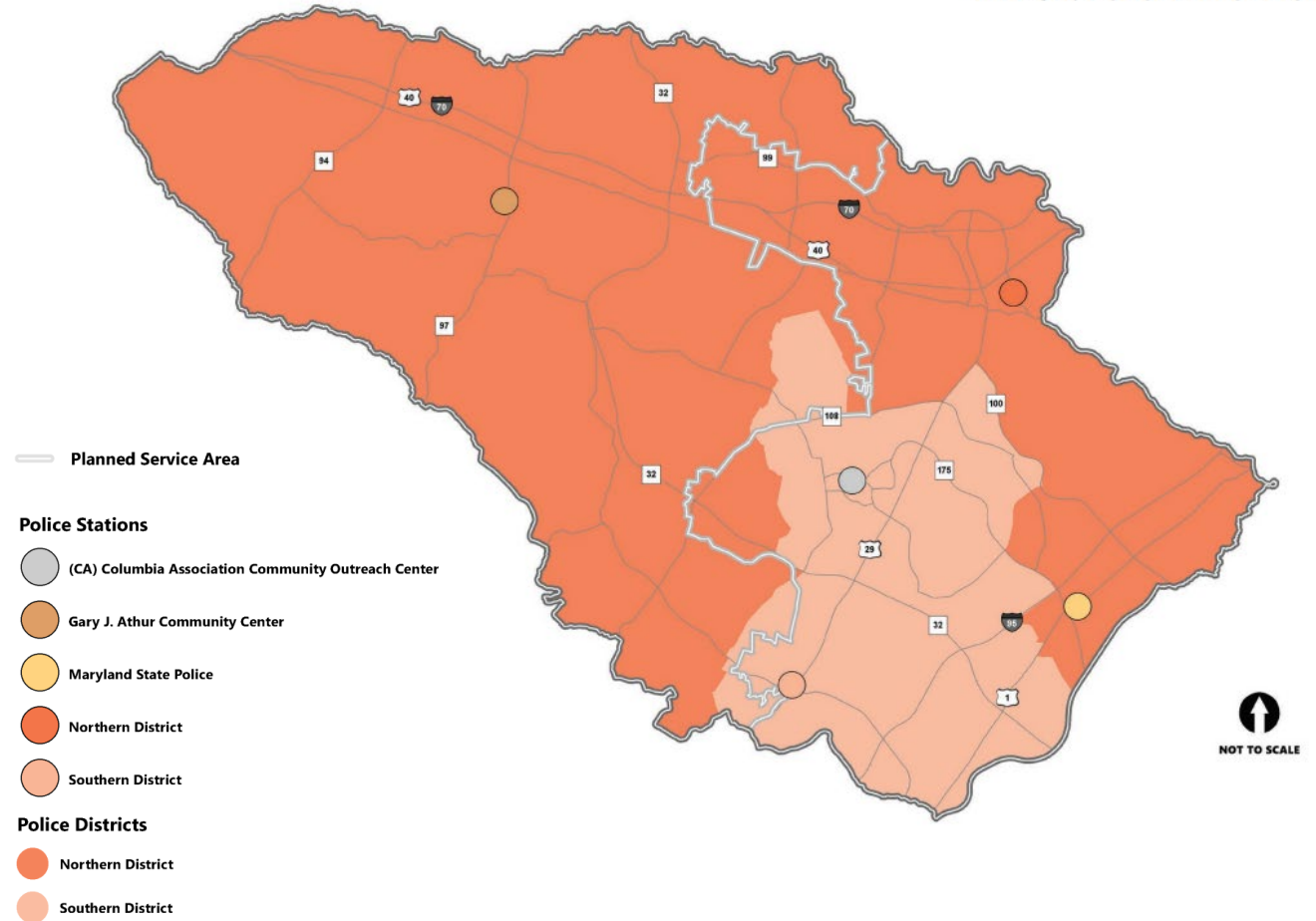


**Police Protection
Fire and Rescue**

Police Protection

- Currently **two patrol districts**:
 - Southern: Columbia and southeastern County
 - Northern: rest of County
- Call volume generally increases with **population growth**
- Generally, hiring new police **officers**, procuring new **patrol vehicles and equipment** is a priority for police departments
- However, there is a need for a physical presence in Downtown Columbia, so the County should explore a **third district**

MAP 8-1: POLICE PATROL DISTRICTS



**Only the district stations are staffed 24-7*

Policy Statements and Actions – Police Protection

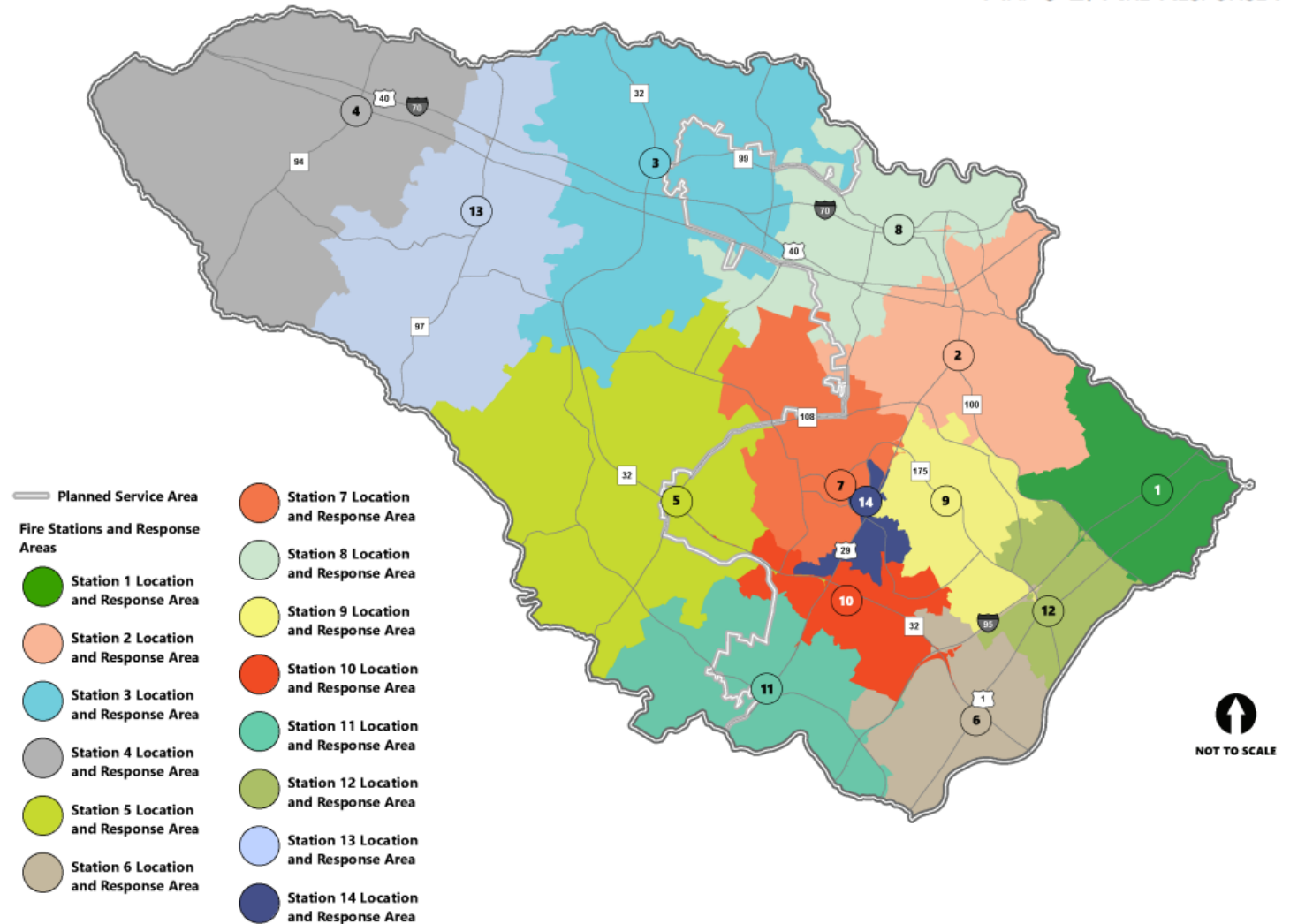
- **Policy INF-3:** Enhance police protection
 - **Action:** Evaluate the need for new/modified police **facilities** (including a third patrol district) and ensure **adequate staff and equipment**



Fire and Rescue Services

MAP 8-2: FIRE RESPONSE AREAS

- 14 stations
- 15th under design
- **Additional stations** may be needed in response to increasing call volume related to **employment growth, residential growth, and changing demographics**



Policy Statements and Actions – Fire and Rescue

- **Policy INF-4:** Minimize loss of life, loss of property, and injury due to fire or medical emergencies
 - **Action:** Construct and staff **new and replacement fire stations** in the Capital Improvement Program, and **renovate existing stations** as appropriate
 - **Action:** Continue to **construct underground cisterns** in the Rural West





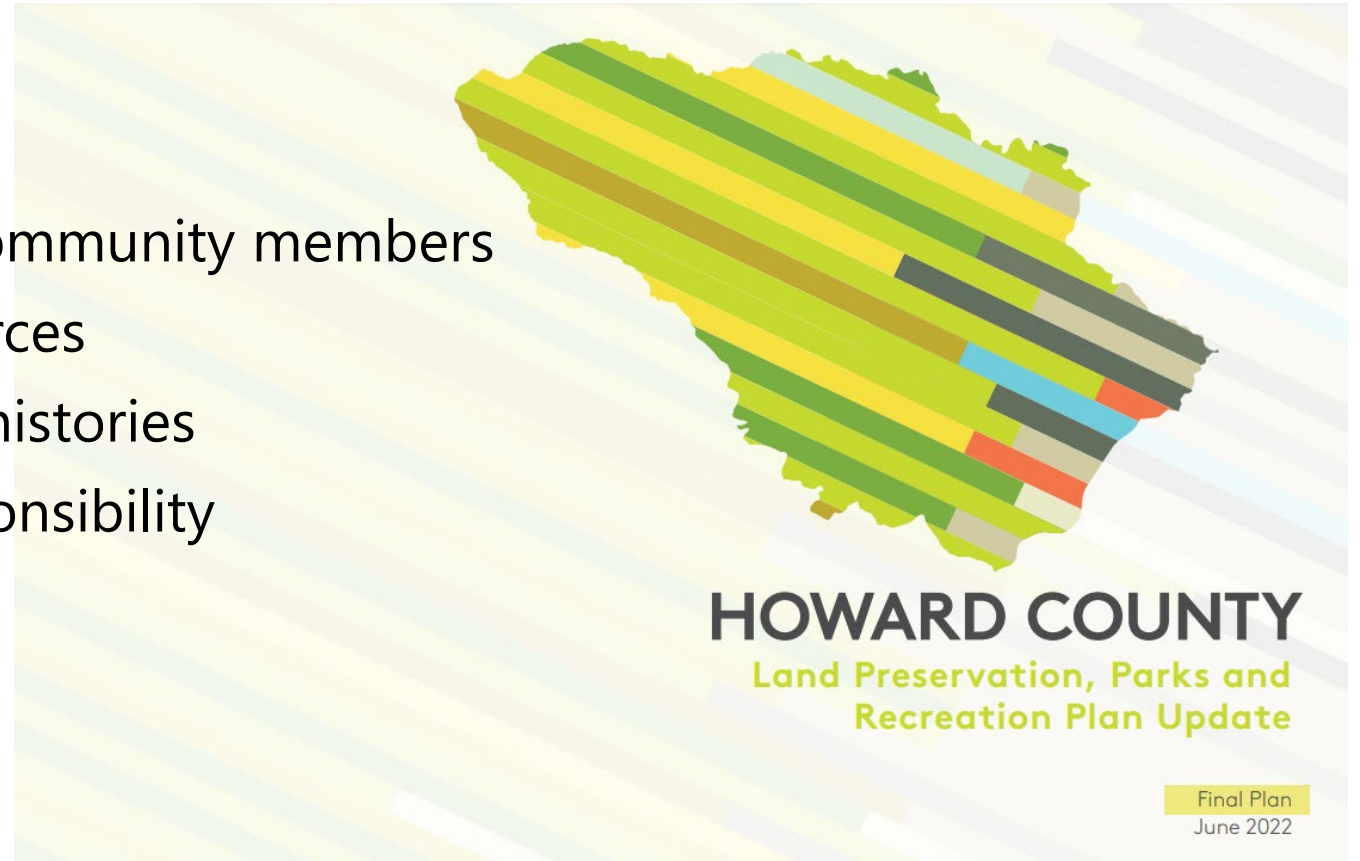
Recreation and Parks

Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan

Chapter discusses the LPPRP

2022 LPPRP has **five aspirations**:

- Deliver accessible experiences to all community members
- Be a trusted steward for natural resources
- Acknowledge and amplify all cultural histories
- Maintain functional and financial responsibility
- Maintain high-quality spaces



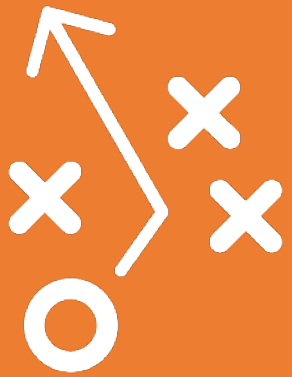
Expansion of County Parks and Recreation Facilities

- Increased population will lead to **increased demand** for parks and recreation
- LPPRP sets an **acquisition goal** of 25 acres of parks/open space/1,000 residents
 - Currently, there are 29.5 acres of parks/open space per 1,000 residents
- LPPRP uses **Maryland Park Equity Tool** to analyze access to parks/recreation facilities/open space
 - Analysis found **lower park equity** in areas of the **East**; LPPRP calls for prioritizing acquisition within census tracts with low park equity



Policy Statements and Actions

- **Policy INF-5:** Maintain and expand the County's parks, open space, and recreation offerings to **keep pace with future growth** and ensure **safe, convenient, and equitable** access to residents
 - **Action:** Establish **acquisition goals** in LPPRP and prioritize acquisition within communities with low park equity
 - **Action:** Use **flexible designs** for parks and open space in more urban areas



County and Allied Agency Facilities

County Facilities

- Planning for **renovation and maintenance** of county office space is ongoing
- There is opportunity to **evaluate the County's portfolio** of leased and owned spaces over the long-term timeframe of HoCo By Design (thru 2040)



Policy Statements and Actions

- **Policy INF-6:** Continue to invest judiciously to **maintain and enhance county facilities** and assess agency space needs against the **County's portfolio**
 - **Actions:** Determine whether it is in the County's best interest to continue all or some **leases**, and to continue to **own or surplus** various properties – while considering **finite land supply** and future **cost of acquisition**

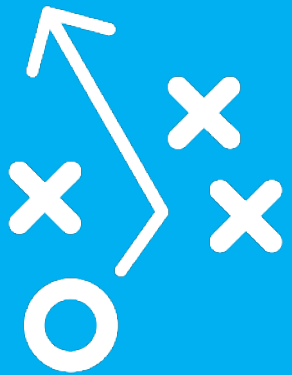
Allied Agency Facilities

- **Howard County Library System** and **Howard Community College** are allied agencies, each governed by a Board of Trustees; however, their **capital and operating budgets** are approved by the County each year
- Six branches in the library system serve as educational resources
- HCC plays a significant role in workforce development



Policy Statements and Actions

- **Policy INF-7:** Partner with the Howard County Public Library System to provide **training and resources** in the community
 - **Action:** Evaluate the need for **additional library capacity**, and enhance the design of libraries as **civic focal points**
- **Policy INF-8:** Continue to support Howard Community College's expanding abilities to provide higher education for **county residents and workers**



Drinking Water and Wastewater Treatment Solid Waste Management

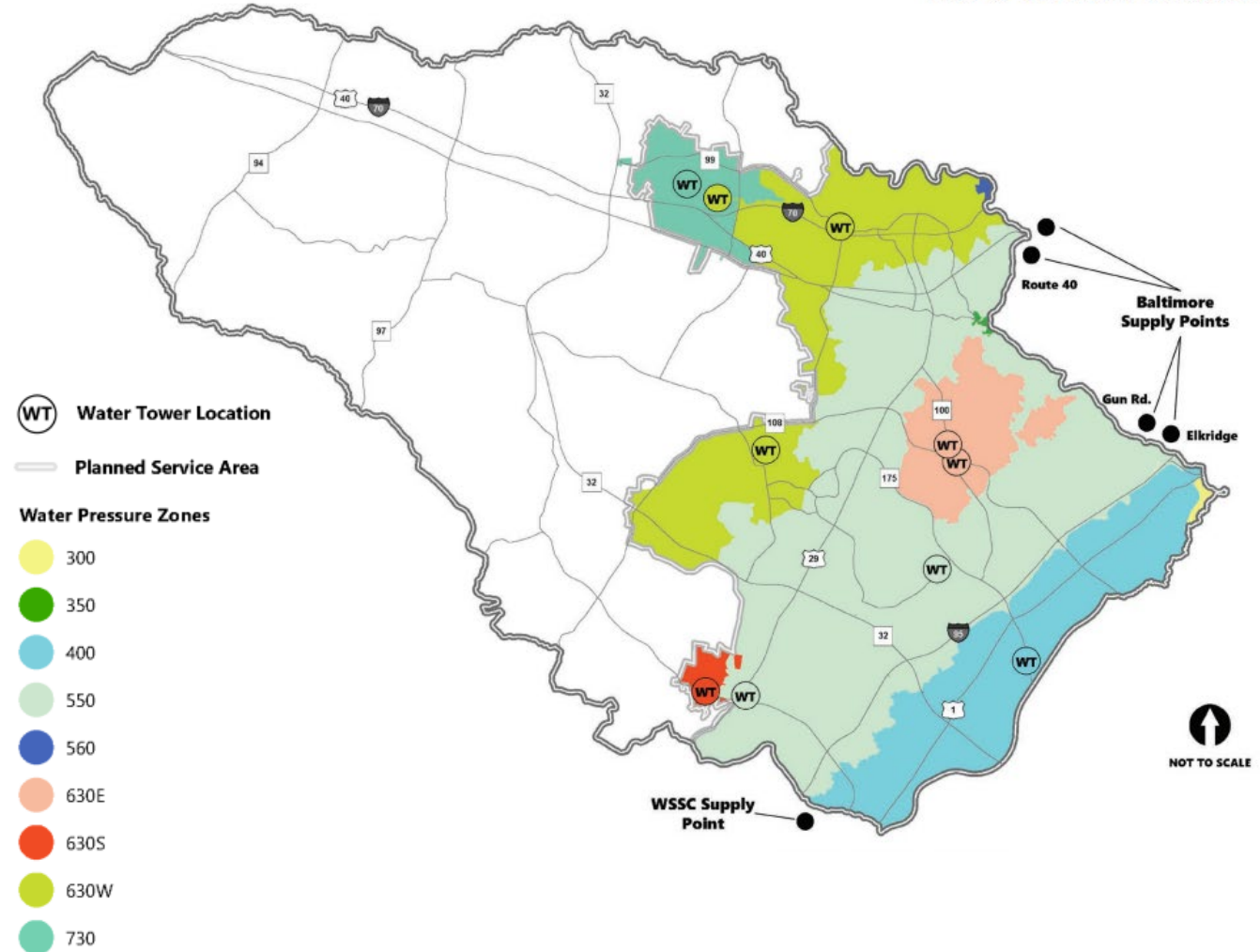
Planning for Public Water and Sewer Services

- County plans for provision of public water and sewer services in the **Master Plan for Water and Sewerage**
 - Must be consistent with the General Plan
 - Delineates service priority areas within the PSA
- **Water and Sewer Capacity Allocation Program**
 - The County assigns priorities for new connections during development review process
 - Ensures demand does not exceed available system capacity

Public Water Supply

- Serves **85% of County's population**
- Four connections to Baltimore City and one to WSSC
- Water is supplied by both sources via **legal agreements**
- Water/sewer capacity was **evaluated by DPW** based on projections associated with the Future Land Use Map
- **Available capacity** for public water supply not expected to constrain growth

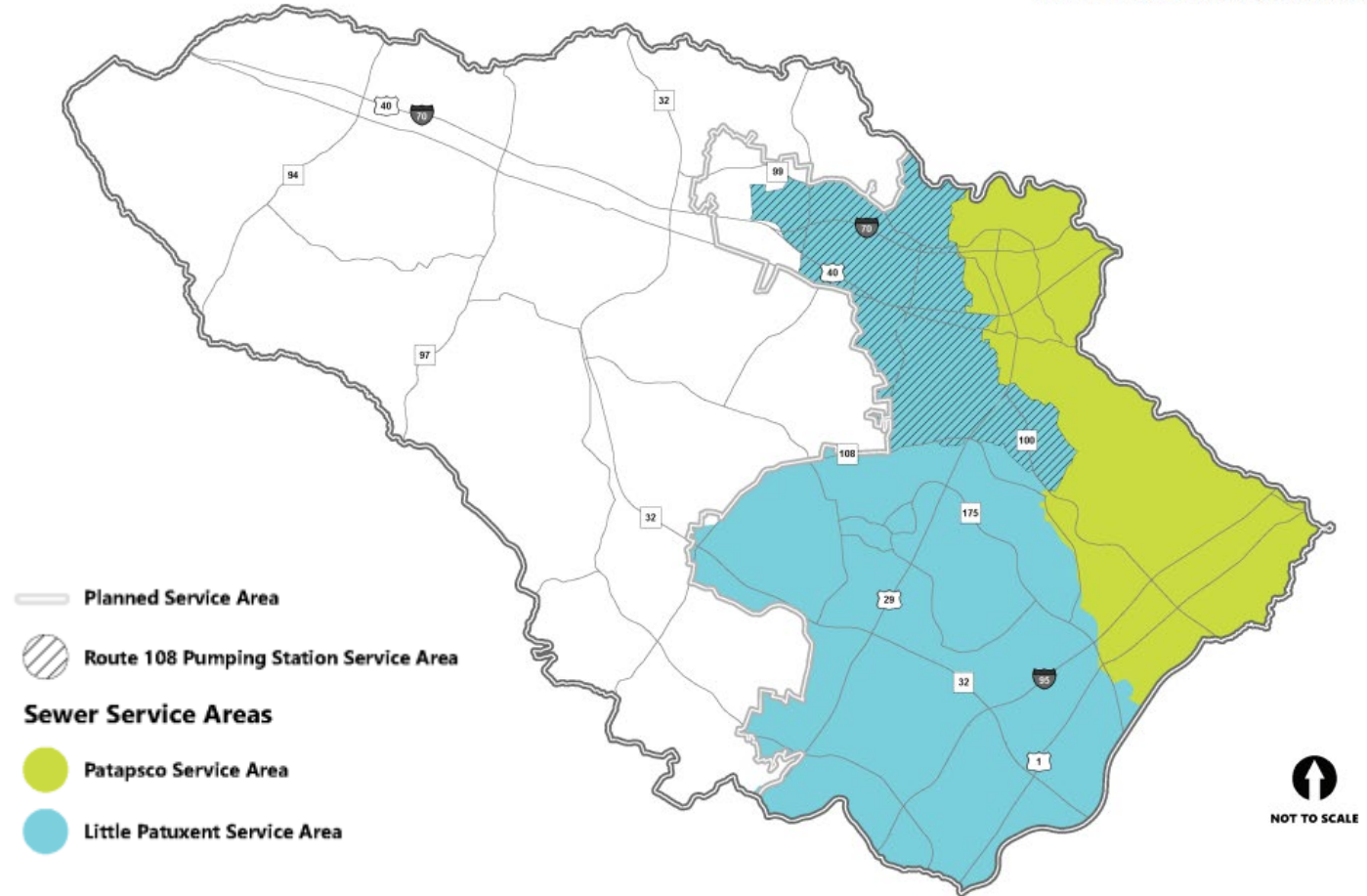
MAP 8-3: WATER PRESSURE ZONES



Wastewater Treatment

- Public sewer system serves **84% of the County's population**
- **Two service areas** follow natural topography of two watersheds (Patuxent and Patapsco)
- **Two treatment plants:** Little Patuxent in Savage and Patapsco in Baltimore City
- **Plant treatment capacity** adequate to meet future needs associated with FLUM thru 2040

MAP 8-4: SEWER SERVICE AREAS



Rural West: Wells and Septic Systems

Wells

- **Individual** wells serve single lots
- **Multi-use** wells serve a group of individuals on single lots (capacity greater than 1,500 gallons per day)
- **Community** wells serve two or more lots (new private community wells no longer allowed)
- Generally, there is an **adequate supply of good-quality groundwater** in the Rural West, even under drought conditions

Septic Systems

- **Individual** systems serve single lots
- **Multi-use** systems serve groups of individuals on single lots (capacity greater than 5,000 gallons per day)
- **Community** sewerage systems serve two or more lots (new private community sewerage systems no longer allowed – only publicly owned **shared systems** are allowed)
- Generally, soils throughout the Rural West **can support septic system drain fields**

Solid Waste Management

- County provides **weekly curbside collection** for most residents
- Waste diversion thru **reduction, reuse, and recycling** is a key goal
- Alpha Ridge Landfill is the sole operating landfill within the County's borders
- County is encouraging **new technologies**, like private construction/operation of bio-digester facilities (which convert methane from food to energy)



Policy Statements and Actions

- **Policy INF-9:** Ensure the **safety and adequacy** of the drinking water supply and promote water conservation and reuse
- **Policy INF-10:** Ensure the **adequacy** of the public wastewater treatment system
- **Policy INF-11:** Reduce **nitrogen loads** from septic systems
- **Policy INF-12:** Divert waste from landfills using a program that promotes **reduction, reuse, and recycling** materials within the County