

**COUNTY COUNCIL
OF
DORCHESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND**

BILL NO. 2026-6

AN ACT OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF DORCHESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND TO APPROVE AND ADOPT AN AMENDED CRITICAL AREA MAP FOR DORCHESTER COUNTY; PROVIDING THAT THE TITLE OF THIS BILL SHALL BE DEEMED A FAIR SUMMARY, AND GENERALLY RELATING TO THE CRITICAL AREA IN DORCHESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND.

WHEREAS, the current Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Ordinance of Dorchester County, codified as Chapter 68 of the Code of Dorchester County, was last comprehensively reenacted or amended by the County Council of Dorchester County (the "Council") on May 2, 2017, by Bill No. 2017-3; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Md. Code Ann., *Nat. Res.* § 8-1809, the Council is authorized to amend or repeal the County of Dorchester County's (the "County") Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program and boundaries; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Local Gov't § 5-202, the Council is authorized and empowered to pass ordinances to assure the good government of the County; protect and preserve the County's rights, property, and privileges; preserve peace and good order; secure persons and property from danger and destruction; and protect the health, comfort, and convenience of the residents of the County; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Md. Code Ann., *Nat. Res.* § 8-1809(g), the County shall review its entire program and propose any necessary amendments to its entire program, including local zoning maps, at least every 10 years and submit any amendments, refinements, or other matters regarding the same to the State of Maryland Critical Area Commission (the "CAC") for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, the CAC staff has identified numerous provisions of the County's Critical Area Program that are not in compliance with current laws and regulations; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED AND ENACTED by the County Council of Dorchester County, Maryland, that the Dorchester County Critical Area Program and its associated Official Zoning Maps are hereby amended, supplemented, and updated as follows:

SECTION 1. The Critical Area Map attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as Exhibit A, which is a composite map encompassing all the changes recommended by the CAC, is hereby approved.

SECTION 2. The official Critical Area Boundary for Dorchester County shall be as shown and delineated on the map designated as the "Critical Area Boundary Map of Dorchester County, Maryland, dated June 17, 2024 signed by the President of the County Council, and attested by the Council Administrator or their digital equivalent as certified by the Dorchester County Planning Department. This boundary reflects the 1,000-foot Critical Area boundary on the Statewide Base Map produced in accordance with Md. Code Ann., Nat. Res. § 8-1807, and shall serve as the official overlay district boundary for all purposes of Chapter 68 of the Dorchester County Code.

SECTION 3. In accordance with the procedural requirements of Md. Code Ann., *Nat. Res. § 8-1809* and COMAR Title 27, the Council Administrator shall forward this Act and the Map adopted herein to the Maryland Critical Area Commission for review and final approval. Upon such final approval by the Commission, the Map shall be designated and recorded as the Official Dorchester County Critical Area Overlay District Map and shall supersede all prior versions of the Critical Area boundary maps.

SECTION 4. The recitals to this Ordinance are incorporated herein and deemed a substantive part of this Ordinance.

SECTION 5. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion of this Ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct, and independent provision and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance, it being the intent of the Council that this Ordinance shall stand, notwithstanding the invalidity of any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion hereof.

SECTION 6. All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

SECTION 7. The title of this Ordinance, or a condensed version thereof, shall be deemed to be, and is, a fair summary of this Ordinance for publication and all other purposes.

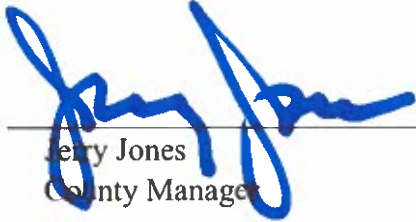
SECTION 8. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that this Act shall take effect following its approval by the Maryland Critical Area Commission. Within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the Commission's final written decision, the Council Administrator shall cause a notice of the Commission's action to be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the County. This Act shall be deemed effective on the date of such publication or sixty (60) days after the date of the Commission's approval, whichever occurs first.

PASSED this 21st day of July, 2026.

ATTEST:

COUNTY COUNCIL OF DORCHESTER
COUNTY, MARYLAND

BY:


Jerry Jones
County Manager

BY:


George L. Pfeffer, Jr.
President

Pfeffer – Aye

Detmer – Aye

Kramer – Aye

Nichols – Absent

Travers – Aye