



BILL SYNOPSIS

Committee: Land Use

Bill 20-0506

Baltimore City Critical Area Management Program - Critical Area Manual, Map, and Zoning

Sponsor: City Council President (Department of Planning)

Introduced: March 9, 2020

Purpose:

For the purpose of repealing the Baltimore City Critical Area Management Program and Document (2002 Edition) and approving and adopting a new Baltimore City Critical Area Management Program Manual (2020 Edition); repealing the Baltimore City Critical Area Program Map (adopted November 13, 2002) and approving and adopting a new Baltimore City Critical Area Program Map (2002 Edition); prohibiting certain additional uses and activities in certain areas of the Critical Area; defining and redefining certain terms; conforming, correcting, and clarifying Zoning Code provisions governing the Critical Area Overlay Zoning District; providing for a special effective date; and generally relating to the 2020 Baltimore City Critical Area Management Program, Map, and Zoning.

Effective: The later of (1) the date it is enacted, and (2) the date it is approved by the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission

AGENCY REPORTS

Planning Commission	Favorable with Amendment
Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals	
City Solicitor	Favorable

ANALYSIS

Current Law

The Baltimore City Critical Area Management Program and Document (2002 Edition) (As adopted by Mayor and City Council Resolution 87-107 and last amended by Ordinance 02-350); The Baltimore City Critical Area Program Map (adopted November 13, 2002); Article 32 - Zoning Sections 7-402(b)(2), (c)(2), (d), (e)(1), (f), and (g)(3), 7-403, 7-404, 7-405, 7-406(b)(2) and (c)(intro), 7-407(caption), and 7-408(caption) and (a). Baltimore City Code (Edition 2000)

Background

Baltimore City is required by the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Act to prepare and adopt a Critical Area Management Program to protect and improve the shoreline habitat and tidal waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. All land within 1,000 feet of the shore falls within the Critical Area. The total land area encompassed by the Critical Area in Baltimore City is 5,521.3 acres.

The City is required to differentiate sub-areas within its Critical Area according to land use types and densities that existed at the time of program development. These areas are subject to different guidelines and restrictions that govern development and use. The State Critical Area Regulations establish three land use classifications designed to accommodate growth in such a manner as to conserve habitat and protect water quality:

1. Intensely Developed Areas (IDA) – Areas of concentrated development where little natural habitat occurs.
2. Limited Development Areas (LDA) – Areas characterized by low or moderate intensity development, but that also contain areas of natural plant and animal habitats.
3. Resource Conservation Areas (RCA) – Areas characterized by natural environments or areas where resource-utilization activities (e.g. agriculture, forestry, fisheries activities, and aquaculture) are taking place.

Baltimore has no LDA. The vast majority of Baltimore City's Critical Area is designated as IDA. The IDA is further divided into Waterfront Industrial Areas (WIA) and Waterfront Revitalization Areas (WRA).

Bill Summary

The bill replaces the Baltimore City Critical Area Management Program Document and Critical Area Program Map adopted in 2002 with a new Baltimore City Critical Area Management Program Manual and a new Program Map. Significant changes in the new Program Manual

and Program Map are outlined in the Planning Staff Report. The draft Program Manual and Program Map are available at <https://baltimoreplanning.konveio.com/>.

The bill further amends Article 32 (Zoning), Title 7, Subtitle 4 (Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Overlay Zoning District) to update certain definitions, terminology, and references. It also conforms the Zoning Code to the changes in the Program Manual by creating Shoreline Conservation Areas (SCA) as sub-subareas within the WRA and by prohibiting new bulkheads or impervious areas within 30 feet from the mean high water line within the SCA. The new SCA encompasses 595.9 acres, or 46.5 percent of the total WRA.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Fiscal Note: None

Information Source(s): Reporting Agencies, Proposed Baltimore City Critical Area Management Program Manual and Program Map, Bill 20-0506.



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