



June 24, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: Prince George's County Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy and Environment Committee

FROM: Lakisha Hull, AICP, LEED AP BD+C, Planning Director
Natalia Gomez, AICP, Planner IV
Shaquan Smith, Planner IV

SUBJECT: **CB-23-2025**

The purpose of this memorandum is to offer the Planning Department's comments on the proposed CB-23-2025:

AN ACT CONCERNING WILDLIFE AND ANIMAL CONTROL for the purpose of creating a study and fee for protecting wildlife, general health, safety, and welfare of the citizens impacted by wildlife within the county, and the creation of a joint action plan to limit, control, and protect wildlife within the county.

The Planning Department requests the opportunity to meet with County staff to review the latest draft and ensure that expectations are met to effectively support this effort. For clarification, Prince George's County currently imposes requirements in the development review process to address the impacts that new development has on wildlife through the Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance (Subtitle 25 of Prince George's County Code). One of the purposes of Subtitle 25 is to ensure new development conserves and protects wildlife habitat (i.e., the "natural home or environment of an animal") by requiring site planning techniques and construction practices that prevent adverse effects on sensitive environmental features by ensuring the preservation of the woodlands in which animals live and addressing impacts before, during, and after construction and other land-disturbing activities. It would also be helpful to meet with the bill sponsor to provide further clarification on how the study will identify impacts that new development imposes on the County that are not already addressed by the existing law in the Prince George's County Code.

As previously requested by County Staff, a coordination meeting between MNCPPC's Planning Department and the Department of the Environment (DOE) Director would be beneficial to discuss roles and responsibilities as this effort is typically developed and managed by an environmental agency. For instance, the D.C Department of Energy and Environment developed and is managing its adopted Wildlife Action Plan, which is found here: <https://doee.dc.gov/service/wildlifeactionplan>, which is an equivalent agency to Prince George's County Department of the Environment.

The goal is for the appropriate agency to conduct the requested study on wildlife displacement, including the establishment of fees for the administration and funding of the County's Animal Control program, which falls under the purview of DOE, with assistance from the Office of Finance. CB-23-2025 aims to investigate the effects of new development on the County's wildlife population, with a primary focus on wildlife displacement. To ensure that this bill is able to get implemented correctly, it is essential to have the Department of the Environment take the lead as:

1. Any costs associated with new development and wildlife displacement, however, are incurred by the County, not MNCPPC.

2. The Planning Department does not have access to the required County data, nor the expertise to undertake a fiscal analysis related to information such as the Department of the Environment's Division's budget, employee salaries, staffing, work programs, and operational costs.

As a courtesy, proposed amendments to CB-23-2025, are as follows to ensure it is in accordance with roles, functions, responsibilities as administered by the Department of the Environment, per the adopted Code:

1. On Page 1, line 17 needs to be updated to replace the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) with the Department of the Environment.

a. Justification: Under the Definitions section of Article 3, the Animal Control Program shall mean that unit within the Department of the Environment designated by the Director to administer and enforce the provisions of this Subtitle under the direction of the Administrator of Animal Control. Additionally, under Section 3-102 (a) the County Executive establishes the program and designates a County director to administer this program. Under Section 3-10, the administrator is codified as the Chief Animal Control Officer, who has duties that follow under the direction of the Administrator, not MNCPPC's Planning Director.

According to its website, the Prince George's County Department of the Environment's Animal Services Division provides for the sheltering and care of homeless, abused, and neglected animals in the County and ensures the safety and welfare of the County's citizens. This Division also operates the Prince George's County Animal Services Facility and Adoption Center and provides field service operations and responds to calls from citizens and residents regarding numerous concerns including, among other things, animals running at large and carcass removal.

2. On Page 2, line 7 needs to be updated to replace the M-NCPPC Planning Director with the Department of the Environment Director.

a. Justification: See above-response under Recommendation #1. The County Executive has given the authority of the animal control program to the Department of the Environment Director, per Section 3-104, which is under Article 3, of Prince George's County Code.

3. On Page 2, Line 11, please strike-through in its entirety.

a. Justification: As the study is under the purview of the Department of the Environment, per Recommendations #1 and #2.

4. On Page 3, Line 12, 14, 24, 26 please replace M-NCPPC Planning Director with Department of the Environment.

a. Justification: As stated above, per the referenced Code Sections, the County Executive gives the authority for this work program to the Department of the Environment. Another agency's director, such as MNCPPC Planning Director, does not have the authority to adjust work programs administered by the County Executive or a subordinate in another agency's department. Additionally, the County Charter and fees are associated with the County Departments, in conjunction with the Finance Department.