

# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL

## COMMITTEE REPORT

2026 Legislative Session

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**Reference No.:** CR-039-2026

**Draft No.:** 2

**Committee:** PLANNING, HOUSING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Date:** 6/04/2026

**Action:** FAVORABLE  
WITH  
AMENDMENTS

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**REPORT:** Committee Vote: Favorable with Amendments, 4-0 (In favor: Committee Chair Blegay, Council Members Adams-Stafford, Dernoga, and Olson)

The Planning, Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committee met on June 4, 2026, 2026, to consider CR-039-2026.

The PHED Committee Director, Rana Hightower, summarized the purpose of the legislation and informed committee members about public comments and feedback received from agencies within Prince George's County.

As presented on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, Draft-1 of the resolution is for the purpose of creating a plan for the collaboration of various State, regional and local entities with the goal of promoting agri-tourism in identified areas within Prince George's County.

The resolution sponsor, PHED Committee Council Member Blegay explained that the resolution is in area where this is a special passion and is the result of meeting with numerous people in County Council district nine located in the County's rural tier.

Mr. David Noto, Legislative Budget & Policy Analyst, provided a policy and fiscal analysis of the resolution. Mr. Noto explained that Southern Maryland, and Prince George's County in particular, have seen a steady decline in the overall number of acres under tith, particularly since the Tobacco Buyout in 2000. The local farm economy has felt economic challenges like those faced by farmers nationwide, worsened by the increased living costs and land prices near the nation's capital. In addition, because of these pressures on the agricultural economy, there has been a steady trend towards alternative agricultural endeavors, also known as non-traditional agriculture, including processing of value-added products, community-supported-agriculture (CSA) and agritourism.

The adoption of CR-039-2026 could have a positive indirect impact on the County's tax base, as additional support for agritourism within the County could lead to additional tourism dollars spent in the County, thereby strengthening and diversifying the County's economy.

Mr. Noto also noted for PHED Committee consideration would be that there are additional organizations that could be beneficial to partner with to support agritourism such as the Prince George County farm Bureau, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission-Food Systems Planning Section, Destination Prince Geprge's and the Prince George's County Chamber of Commerce.

The Planning Department staff submitted written comments on the proposed legislation. The comments are as follows:

**1. No Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Requirements**

- The resolution does not require MWBE participation, disadvantaged farmer outreach, or equity criteria for fund allocation.
- Recommend adding language requiring adding language requiring the County's destination marketing organization (DMO) to prioritize MWBE-certified agribusinesses.

**2. Regulatory Barriers Are Named but Not Addressed**

- Both resolutions identify the SHA signage requirement as a burden and that manufacturing/retail/wholesale classifications don't fit integrated farm winery operations, but don't offer a solution or any agency to fix this.
- Recommend adding language for the collaborative partnership to inventory zoning and regulatory barriers and report recommendations to the Council and Planning Board, and in CR-40-2026 direct the DMO to include regulatory barrier findings in its final report, with zoning amendment recommendations.
- Include a definition of Agritourism, include the Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE) and Planning representatives and include that future economic development funding 2037 be tied to further promoting agritourism in the county and incorporated into economic development strategy to give it fair footing against other industries and staffing and resources.

**3. Planning Department Not Named as a Partner**

- The Planning Department is responsible for land use, zoning, and planning (also a priority of our Food Systems Program), but is not named as a partner.
- Recommend Planning as a named partner.

Ms. Phylcia Murray, Founder of Farm Experiences Collection, spoke in support of the resolution. Farm Experiences Collection is an agritourism platform which provides news, grants, workshops and conferences in agritourism. Ms. Murray is developing a platform that connects companies with farms in the metropolitan area to host corporate events. Ms. Murray spoke in support of adding the new DMO Destination Prince George's as a partner would be very critical.

Ms. Kim Rush Lynch, Urban Agricultural Conservation Planner and Program Manager for the Prince George's County Soil Conservation District, spoke in support of the resolution on behalf of Mr. Steve Darcy, the District Manager. She explained that, as outlined in the resolution, developing a collaborative plan with local and regional entities to enhance and promote the County's growing agritourism industry is vital to its growth and sustainability.

Ms. Amy McCurdy, Sales and Marketing Manager for the P.A. Bowen Farmstead in Brandywine, Maryland, spoke in support of the resolution. She explained that we want to preserve our agricultural area and heritage. Eagle Harbor is a Black Heritage site which is very important to that area.

We are interested in keeping open spaces preserved for the residents of the County.

PHED Committee Chair Blegay explained that we are sending a message that there are lots of things in the rural tier, there are wineries, and farms.

Council Member Dernoga thanked Council Member Blegay for allowing him to co-sponsor the resolution. He requested that timing for both CR-039-2026 and CR-40-2026 be tied together for a year.

Council Member Adams-Stafford explained that she has been researching food insecurity and that the new free grocery store located in the Fairmount Heights Branch Library obtains food from local farms. She explained there is an interest in taking residents to the farms to do their grocery shopping at the farm. Council Member Adams-Stafford asked if 4-H youth development program could be named as a participating organization. Ms. Rush Lynch explained that 4-H is part of the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Program so that group is already included in the resolution.

Vice Chair, Olson stated that is very supportive of agritourism.

Staff provided an overview of the amendments to the resolution. The amendments are as follows:

On page 1, lines 18 through 19, add “Destination Prince George’s and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission’s Food System Planning Section.” This amendment would require the list organizations to collaborate with the other entities listed in the resolution.

Lines 21 through 22 and page 2 lines 1 through 3, add “Be It Further Resolved that such collaborative partnerships shall contribute to the final report on the findings, outcomes, and recommendations of the Prince George’s County Agritourism and Winery Promotion Pilot Program established pursuant to CR-040-2026, which shall be provided by Destination Prince George’s to the County Council not later than ninety (90) days after the conclusion of the Pilot Program.” This amendment ensures that Destination Prince George’s provides a report on both agri-tourism resolutions.

On motion of Council Member Blegay, seconded by Council Member Dernoga the PHED Committee voted 4-0 favorably on the amendments mentioned above.

Next, on motion on Council Member Blegay, seconded by Council Member Dernoga the PHED Committee voted 4-0 favorably on CR-039-2026 as amended.