

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
2026 Legislative Session

Bill No. CB-064-2026

Chapter No. _____

Proposed and Presented by Council Member Dernoga

Introduced by _____

Co-Sponsors _____

Date of Introduction _____

BILL

1 AN ACT concerning

2 Weeds and Conservation Landscaping

3 For the purpose of amending the Housing Code of Prince George's County regarding the
4 definition of weeds and Conservation Landscaping; amending the property standards and
5 maintenance Code provisions regarding the definition of weeds and Conservation Landscaping;
6 amending the antilitter and weed ordinance regarding the definition of weeds and Conservation
7 Landscaping; providing for certain abandoned vehicles in a certain definition; and generally
8 regarding weeds and Conservation Landscaping.

9 BY repealing and reenacting with amendments:

10 SUBTITLE 13. HOUSING AND PROPERTY
11 STANDARDS.

12 Sections 13-118, 13-231, and 13-261,
13 The Prince George's County Code
14 (2023 Edition; 2025 Supplement).

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED by the County Council of Prince George's County,
16 Maryland, that Sections 13-118, 13-231, and 13-261 of the Prince George's County Code be and
17 the same are hereby repealed and reenacted with the following amendments:

18 **SUBTITLE 13. HOUSING AND PROPERTY STANDARDS.**

19 **DIVISION 1. HOUSING CODE.**

20 **SUBDIVISION 2. AMENDMENTS TO THE HOUSING CODE.**

21 * * * * *

1 **Sec. 13-118. - General Requirements; Section 302, Exterior Property Areas.**

2 (a) Section 302.1 is amended to read as follows:

3 "302.1 Sanitation. All exterior property and premises shall be maintained in a clean, safe, and
4 sanitary condition. The occupant shall keep that part of the exterior property which such
5 occupancy occupies or controls in a clean and sanitary condition. Except as otherwise
6 specifically authorized by law, the open storage on residential property of any household
7 appliance, motor vehicle parts, building materials, furniture, [weeds,] dead trees, garbage,
8 rubbish, or similar items or materials, or residue therefrom, is prohibited, regardless of age or
9 condition."

10 (b) Section 302.3 is amended to read as follows:

11 "302.3 Sidewalks, parking areas, and driveways. All sidewalks, walkways, stairs, driveways,
12 parking spaces, and similar areas shall be maintained free of unsafe obstructions or hazardous
13 conditions."

14 [(c)](c-1) A new Section 302.3.1 is added to read as follows:

15 "302.3.1 Lighting and parking lots and exterior passageways. All exterior walkways between
16 buildings, between parking lots, and between buildings and parking lots shall be illuminated with
17 no less than one and one-fourth (1 1/4) lumens per square foot."

18 (c-2) A new Section 302.3.2 is added to read as follows:

19 A new Section 302.3.2 is added to read as follows:

20 Low Impact Landscaping (also known as Conservation Landscaping) shall mean intentional
21 landscaping that looks either manicured or wild and conserves water, lowers maintenance costs,
22 provides pollution prevention, or creates habitat for wildlife. Examples of low-impact landscapes
23 are habitat gardens designed to attract wildlife, pollinator gardens designed to attract pollinating
24 insects and other animals, Maryland native plant meadows, rain gardens and other features that
25 use natural biological principles to return rainwater to the soil and to filter rainwater of excess
26 nutrients, and xeriscaping and other forms of landscaping or gardening that reduce or eliminate
27 the need for supplemental water from irrigation.

28 (d) Section 302.4 is amended to read as follows:

29 "302.4 Weeds. All premises and exterior property shall be maintained free from weeds or turf
30 grass [plant] growth in excess of twelve (12) inches. [All noxious weeds shall be prohibited.]

31 Weeds shall be defined as all noxious weeds listed in COMAR , invasive plant species prohibited

1 according to the 2024 Maryland Invasive Plant law, and plants that are not planned, intentional,
2 and well-maintained. [grasses, annual plants, and vegetation, other than trees or shrubs;
3 provided, however, that this term shall not include cultivated flowers and gardens.]

4 “Weeds” shall not include cultivated plants such as flowers, ferns, ornamental grasses, shrubs,
5 and trees; Maryland native plants; low-impact and conservation landscaping; vegetable gardens
6 and cultivated crops; native vegetation growing in wetlands or woodlands, including associated
7 native underbrush where those cultivated plants are planned, intentional and well-maintained.

8 No plant growth shall be allowed to impede or obstruct walkways, sidewalks, streets, adjoining
9 driveways, or the required letters and/or numbers which identify the address of the property."

10 (e) Section 302.7 is amended to read as follows:

11 "302.7 Accessory structures. All accessory structures on dwelling premises (including, but not
12 limited to, detached garages, storage sheds or buildings, steps, fences, and other constructed
13 appurtenances and facilities) shall be maintained structurally safe and sound and in good repair.
14 Exterior steps shall be maintained free of unsafe obstructions or hazardous conditions."

15 (f) Section 302.8 is amended to read as follows:

16 "302.8 Motor vehicles. It shall be unlawful for the owner or occupant of a structure used for
17 human habitation to utilize, or allow to be utilized, the premises for the storage of any motor
18 vehicle which is wrecked, dismantled, inoperable, or not currently licensed. This Section shall
19 not apply to any one (1) vehicle which is wrecked, dismantled, inoperable, or not currently
20 licensed, that is kept in a wholly enclosed garage. To be considered operable, it must be
21 demonstrated that the vehicle is capable of being driven under its own power for a minimum
22 distance of one hundred (100) feet."

23 (g) A new Section 302.10 is added to read as follows:

24 "302.10 Firewood. All firewood or other wood material intended for use in a stove or fireplace
25 shall be cut to lengths for final use and neatly stacked at least eighteen (18) inches above the
26 ground in open racks so that these materials will not afford a shelter or harborage for rodents, or
27 not less than six (6) inches from a weed-free surface on property improved by a single-family
28 dwelling."

29 * * * * *

SUBTITLE 13. HOUSING AND PROPERTY STANDARDS.
DIVISION 7. PROPERTY STANDARDS AND MAINTENANCE.

* * * * *

Sec. 13-231. - Definitions.

(a)The following words and phrases shall have the meanings indicated:

(1) Director shall mean the Director of the Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement.

(2) Garbage shall mean the animal and vegetable waste resulting from the handling, preparation, cooking, or consumption of food.

(2.1) Graffiti shall mean any inscription, drawing, painting, or other visual defacing that is written, marked, etched, scratched, painted, or engraved on or otherwise affixed to any surface of a building, structure, roadway, or natural feature that was not authorized by the prior consent of the owner.

(3) Maintenance shall mean acts of repair or other acts to prevent a decline in the conditions of grounds, structures, and equipment such that the condition does not fall below the standards established by this Division and other applicable statutes, codes, and ordinances.

(4) Owner shall mean any person as defined in Section 1-102 of this Code who owns, leases, occupies, or controls the property and any agent of such person.

(5) Property shall mean any land utilized or zoned for commercial or industrial purposes, or residentially zoned where the use is other than residential, and any improvement thereon.

(6) Public nuisance shall mean and include the following:

(A)The physical condition or use of any premises regarded as a public nuisance at law; or

(B)Any physical condition or use of any premises or its appurtenances which may reasonably invite or encourage trespassing and resulting injury to trespassers or others; or

(C)Any property which has unsanitary sewerage or plumbing facilities; or

(D)Any physical condition or use which would constitute an unsafe condition or structure under Subtitle 4, Building, or Subtitle 11, Fire Safety, Prince George's County Code;

(E)Any property from which the plumbing, heating, and/or facilities required by the Prince George's County Code or by other applicable laws or regulations have been removed,

1 or from which facilities have been disconnected, destroyed, removed, or rendered ineffective; or
 2 (F) Any property which is unclean, unsanitary, or which is littered with rubbish or
 3 garbage or which has an uncontrolled growth of weeds.

4 (7) Rubbish shall mean all solid waste consisting of both combustible waste
 5 (including, but not limited to, paper, cardboard, wood, cloth, bedding material, lawn and yard
 6 clippings not located in an established compost pile, and dead trees and limbs to include any
 7 hazardous or uprooted trees) and noncombustible waste (including, but not limited to, metals,
 8 glass, crockery, tin cans, junked appliances, abandoned vehicles, and any building and
 9 construction waste). For the purposes of this ordinance, abandoned vehicle shall mean any motor
 10 vehicle or trailer that is inoperable and left unattended on private or public property for more
 11 than forty-eight (48) hours, or does not display current license plates for that vehicle, is wrecked
 12 or dismantled.

13 (8) Tree shall mean a plant with a woody stem capable of achieving a height of at least
 14 twenty (20) feet at maturity.

15 (9) Weeds shall mean [grass, weeds, brush, and growth, excluding trees, ornamental
 16 shrubbery, plants, flowers, garden vegetables properly tended, cultivated crops, or woodland, not
 17 otherwise in violation.] all noxious weeds listed in COMAR, invasive plant species prohibited
 18 according to the 2024 Maryland Invasive Plant law, and plants that are not planned, intentional,
 19 and well-maintained. "Weeds" shall not include cultivated plants such as flowers, ferns,
 20 ornamental grasses, shrubs, and trees; Maryland native plants; low-impact and conservation
 21 landscaping; vegetable gardens and cultivated crops; native vegetation growing in wetlands or
 22 woodlands, including associated native underbrush where those cultivated plants are planned,
 23 intentional and well-maintained.

24 (10) Low Impact Landscaping (also known as Conservation Landscaping) shall mean
 25 intentional landscaping that looks either manicured or wild and conserves water, lowers
 26 maintenance costs, provides pollution prevention, or creates habitat for wildlife. Examples of
 27 low-impact landscapes are habitat gardens designed to attract wildlife, pollinator gardens
 28 designed to attract pollinating insects and other animals, Maryland native plant meadows, rain
 29 gardens and other features that use natural biological principles to return rainwater to the soil and
 30 to filter rainwater of excess nutrients, and xeriscaping and other forms of landscaping or
 31 gardening that reduce or eliminate the need for supplemental water from irrigation.

1 [(10)] (11) Woodland shall mean a perpetual biological community dominated by trees
2 and other woody plants covering a land area of 10,000 square feet or greater. This includes areas
3 that have at least 100 trees per acre with at least 50 trees that are 2 inches or greater in dbh
4 (diameter at breast height — means the diameter of a tree measured at a height of 4.5 feet from
5 the ground). This also includes areas that have been timber harvested where the stumps remain in
6 place for future regeneration. The terms "woodland," "forest," and "forest cover" are
7 synonymous and do not include orchards or other areas without multiple layers of woody and
8 herbaceous vegetation.

9 * * * * * * *

10 **SUBTITLE 13. HOUSING AND PROPERTY STANDARDS.**

11 **DIVISION 9. ANTLITTER AND WEED ORDINANCE.**

12 * * * * * * *

13 Sec. 13-261. - Definitions.

14 (a)Director shall mean the Director of the Department of Permitting, Inspections, and
15 Enforcement or his authorized designee.

16 (b)Garbage shall mean any animal and vegetable wastes resulting from the handling,
17 preparation, cooking, and consumption of food.

18 (c)Improved Property shall mean real property on which has been erected dwellings,
19 building, or other structures, whether inhabited or vacant, and all grounds appurtenant thereto.

20 (d)Litter, as used herein, shall mean garbage, rubbish, and refuse as defined herein, and all
21 other waste material which:

22 (1)Creates or tends to create a danger to the public health, safety, welfare, or property
23 to the extent and in the manner that a lot, tract, or parcel of land is, or may reasonably become,
24 infested or inhabited by rodents, vermin, or wild animals; or

25 (2)May reasonably cause disease; or

26 (3)Adversely affects and impairs the economic welfare or status of adjacent property or
27 the neighborhood; or

28 (4)May reasonably constitute a present or potential fire hazard; or

29 (5)Where the accumulation thereof is in violation of any of the provisions of Subtitle
30 21 of this Code.

31 (e)Person shall mean any person, corporation, association, partnership, firm, syndicate, joint

1 venture, or organization of any kind holding title to any land or lot in the County; lessees,
2 tenants, and principal occupants of any land or lot in the County or agent of persons holding
3 titles of such lands or lots, having care, custody, control, or management of the land or lot; and
4 fiduciaries holding title to or having the care, custody, control, or management of land or lots in
5 the County for others.

6 (f)Rubbish and refuse shall mean all solid waste consisting of both combustible waste
7 (including, but not limited to, paper, cardboard, wood, cloth, bedding material, yard and lawn
8 clippings not located in an established compost pile, and dead trees and limbs, to include any
9 hazardous or uprooted trees) and noncombustible waste (including, but not limited to, metals,
10 glass, crockery, tin cans, junked household appliances, abandoned motor vehicles, and any
11 building and construction wastes). For the purposes of this ordinance, abandoned vehicle, set
12 forth in Subtitle 26, Division 14, Section 26-162 of this Code, shall mean any motor vehicle, [or]
13 trailer, watercraft, or semitrailer, that is inoperable and left unattended on private or public
14 property for more than forty-eight (48) hours, or does not display current license plates for that
15 vehicle, is wrecked or dismantled.

16 (g)Subdivision means a lot, tract, or parcel of land which has been subdivided into two or
17 more lots, plots, sites, tracts, parcels, or other divisions for the purpose, whether immediate or
18 future, of rental, sale, or building development, and shall include resubdivision, but shall not
19 include a bona fide division or partition of land of exclusively agricultural land not for
20 development purposes, except as herein provided. For the purposes of this ordinance, a
21 subdivided lot shall be a plot, site, tract, or parcel containing an area of not more than one (1)
22 acre; provided, however, that when a parcel of land, whether subdivided or not, is contiguous to
23 a developed lot, plot, site, or tract of one (1) acre or less, then, and in such event, the provisions
24 hereof shall apply for a distance of fifty (50) feet equidistant from the common boundary line.

25 (h)Tree shall mean a plant with a woody stem capable of achieving a height of at least
26 twenty (20) feet at maturity.

27 (i)Underbrush shall mean shrubs, bushes, and small trees growing beneath larger trees in a
28 woodland or forest.

29 (j)Unimproved Property shall mean real property which is not presently improved although
30 it may have been improved at one time.

31 (k)Weeds shall mean [grass, weeds, brush, and any noxious growth excluding trees,

1 ornamental shrubbery, plants, flowers, garden vegetables properly tended, cultivated crops,
2 vegetation growing in wetlands, or woodland including associated underbrush, not otherwise in
3 violation.] all noxious weeds listed in COMAR, invasive plant species prohibited according to
4 the 2024 Maryland Invasive Plant law, and plants that are not planned, intentional, and well-
5 maintained. "Weeds" shall not include cultivated plants such as flowers, ferns, ornamental
6 grasses, shrubs, and trees; Maryland native plants; low-impact and conservation landscaping;
7 vegetable gardens and cultivated crops; native vegetation growing in wetlands or woodlands,
8 including associated native underbrush where those cultivated plants are planned, intentional and
9 well-maintained.

10 (l) Low Impact Landscaping (also known as Conservation Landscaping) shall mean
11 intentional landscaping that looks either manicured or wild and conserves water, lowers
12 maintenance costs, provides pollution prevention, or creates habitat for wildlife. Examples of
13 low-impact landscapes are habitat gardens designed to attract wildlife, pollinator gardens
14 designed to attract pollinating insects and other animals, Maryland native plant meadows, rain
15 gardens and other features that use natural biological principles to return rainwater to the soil and
16 to filter rainwater of excess nutrients, and xeriscaping and other forms of landscaping or
17 gardening that reduce or eliminate the need for supplemental water from irrigation.

18 [(l)] (m) Woodland shall mean a perpetual biological community dominated by trees and
19 other woody plants covering a land area of 10,000 square feet or greater. This includes areas that
20 have at least 100 trees per acre with at least 50 trees that are 2-inches or greater dbh (diameter at
21 breast height — means the diameter of a tree measured at a height of 4.5 feet from the ground).
22 This also includes areas that have been timber harvested where the stumps remain in place for
23 future regeneration. The terms "woodland," "forest," and "forest cover" are synonymous and do
24 not include orchards or other areas without multiple layers of woody and herbaceous vegetation.

25 * * * * *

26 SECTION 2. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that the provisions of this Act are hereby
27 declared to be severable; and, in the event that any section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph,
28 sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional by a court of
29 competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the remaining
30 words, phrases, clauses, sentences, subparagraphs, paragraphs, subsections, or sections of this
31 Act, since the same would have been enacted without the incorporation in this Act of any such

1 | invalid or unconstitutional word, phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph, subparagraph, subsection,
2 | or section.

3 | SECTION 3. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that this Act shall take effect forty-five (45)
4 | calendar days after it becomes law.

Adopted this ____ day of _____, 2026.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE
GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

BY: _____
Krystal Oriadha
Chair

ATTEST:

Donna J. Brown
Clerk of the Council

APPROVED:

DATE: _____ BY: _____
Aisha N. Braveboy
County Executive

KEY:
Underscoring indicates language added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate language deleted from existing law.
Asterisks *** indicate intervening existing Code provisions that remain unchanged.

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