

MEMORANDUM

To: Local Jurisdictions

From: Land Acquisition and Planning (LAP) Unit, Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

Date: May 2025

Re: Natural Resources – Public Lands – Acquisition, Staffing, Operations, and Funding
2025 Regular Session – House Bill 717 – Effective October 1, 2025

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform Local Jurisdictions of statutory changes to Program Open Space (POS) Local, as a result of legislation that passed the General Assembly of Maryland in 2025.

Summary:

[HB 717](#) altered and repealed certain provisions of law regarding the use of POS Local funding, specifically the following:

- Natural Resources Article §5-905(b)(3) – A local governing body may now request a lump sum of up to \$125,000 for any individual plan update within the required five-year cycle of the Local Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan (LPPRP), instead of up to \$25,000 per fiscal year.
- Natural Resources Article §5-905(c)(1) – If a local governing body has met its acquisition goals outlined in the current, approved LPPRP, and those goals have been certified by DNR and the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP), the local governing body may use **up to 100%** of its POS Local apportionment for development projects, instead of up to 75%. This applies to a local governing body's:
 - Apportionment not yet encumbered as of **July 1, 2025**;
 - **Fiscal Year (FY) 2026** apportionment; and
 - **Future Annual Apportionment**.
- Natural Resources Article §5-905(c)(3)(i) and (ii) – If the local governing body is unable to obtain federal or other state funds, other than the POS Local allocation, then POS Local shall provide:
 - 75% of the total development project cost, or
 - 90% of the total development project cost, if the local governing body's acquisition goals have been met and certified by DNR and MDP.

If the local governing body is able to obtain federal or other state funds, and total funding (including POS Local) does not exceed 100% of the total development project cost, the local jurisdiction shall match:

- 25% of the POS Local grant amount, or
- 10% of the POS Local grant amount, if the local governing body's acquisition goals have been met and certified by DNR and MDP.

Example: POS Local project where the total development cost = \$100,000

- If the project is being covered by POS Local funds only, with no federal or other state funds, the match is a percentage of the total project cost:

Local Match at 25% of Total Development Project Cost:

POS Local	\$75,000.00	75%
Local Match	\$25,000.00	25%
Total Project Cost	\$100,000.00	100%

Local Match at 10% of Total Development Project Cost:

POS Local	\$90,000.00	90%
Local Match	\$10,000.00	10%
Total Project Cost	\$100,000.00	100%

- If the project receives a grant from another state or federal fund source, such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), that covers 50% of the total project cost, and POS Local funds and local match is needed for the balance, the match is a percentage of the POS Local amount requested and not the total project cost (must list other grants received on application):

Local Match at 25% of the POS Local Grant Requested:

LWCF	\$50,000.00	50%		
POS Local	\$40,000.00	40%	POS Local Requested	\$40,000.00
Local Match	\$10,000.00	10%	Local Match of POS Amount	\$10,000.00 25%
Total Project Cost	\$100,000.00	100%	(25% of \$40,000 POS Local = \$10,000 local match)	\$50,000.00

Local Match at 10% of POS Local Grant Requested:

LWCF	\$50,000.00	50.0%		
POS Local	\$45,455.00	45.5%	POS Local Requested	\$45,455.00
Local Match	\$4,545.00	4.5%	Local Match of POS Amount	\$4,545.00 10%
Total Project Cost	\$100,000.00	100.0%	(10% of \$45,455 POS Local = \$4,545 local match)	\$50,000.00

Implementation:

The current POS Local apportionment and usage parameters will remain in effect until the bill becomes effective on **October 1, 2025**. Accordingly, the FY 2026 apportionment letter reflects the existing guidelines.

However, because there is a time gap between the Annual Program deadline of July 1, 2025, and the effective date of the new law, local governing bodies that are eligible to use up to 100% of their apportionment for development projects may prepare their FY 2026 Annual Program based on the updated rates with the understanding that DNR will not be able to schedule these projects for Board of Public Works approval until after the new law takes effect on October 1, 2025. Please plan accordingly and clearly indicate your intentions when the Annual Program and associated project applications are submitted.

For questions, please contact your Local Grants Administrator:

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