



MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY
PARK & RECREATION ADMINISTRATORS
(MACPRA)

SB56 Program Open Space – Local Plans and Programs

Requiring approval through legislation before any local annual or revised program under Program Open Space takes effect

January 21, 2022

MACPRA Position: OPPOSE

The Maryland Association of County Park and Recreation Administrators opposes SB56 creating a requirement for Maryland General Assembly approval before any local annual or revised program under Program Open Space (POS) takes effect.

At its heart, the proposed legislation would remove local control of the annual POS approval process. Under the current rules, each jurisdiction has its own internal processes for building its annual plans, allowing local governments to address local needs. MACPRA strongly opposes removing or altering this structure, as POS has been an effective program for over 50 years in Maryland and remains a national model.

In addition to removing local control, the proposed legislation would add significant amounts of time to approval processes. This problem would be exacerbated by also requiring Maryland General Assembly approval for alterations to an annual plan, which is necessary from time to time as local conditions change. The end result would include increased costs for local governments and fewer development and acquisition projects getting approved and completed in a timely manner.

While the administrative requirements proposed are not practical and would harm local governments, Maryland residents would be the ones most harmed as projects get delayed, postponed or canceled.

MACPRA urges the Committee to give an **UNFAVORABLE** report on this bill.

The Maryland Association of County Park & Recreation Administrators (MACPRA) is an affiliate of the Maryland Association of Counties and represents the Parks and Recreation departments of all 23 counties and Baltimore City – the professionals engaged in the delivery of Parks and Recreation services throughout Maryland.