



Natural & Cultural Assets Plan for James City County

Public Engagement Plan

This plan is a dynamic strategy to engage the community in creating a natural and cultural assets plan. It will be updated continually as new ideas for engagement are generated.

James City County is working with the nonprofit firm, the Green Infrastructure Center, to help the County identify, evaluate and prioritize the County’s highest value natural and cultural resources and identify opportunities to protect and restore them through a strategic plan. The project began in August 2021 and will take approximately one year to complete. Following are the ways in which the public – the broader community – of James City County will be engaged in shaping the plan. Perspectives from the recently concluded Comprehensive Plan update such as ideas and goals already generated concerning parks, open spaces, conservation or community character will be utilized to inform priorities. For a more complete overview of the project please see <https://jamescitycountyva.gov/3856/Natural-Cultural-Assets-Plan>

Natural Assets refers to all the natural elements that support the County including trees and forests, waterways, wetlands, agricultural soils and natural areas, such as parks and trails or areas of cultural significance to residents, such as scenic or historic areas. A natural asset network includes large blocks of intact habitats connected by corridors. The more connected the landscape, the more resilient it is and the more pathways there are for people, pollinators or plants! Cultural assets such as plantations, battlefields, cemeteries or other historic sites also add value to and are supported by the surrounding landscape.

There are multiple ways the public can engage in this project which is being undertaken to benefit all the citizens and businesses within the county as well as the wildlife, pollinators, fish and other aquatic life that depend on good land stewardship for their survival. See the process below.

Tasks	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
2021 – 2022													
Task 1: Assessment, Work Plan, Orientation	GIC												
Task2: Establish Data Needs and Obtain Information		GIC & TAC	GIC										
Task 3: Identify Current Natural Assets = Base Map Create a cultural Assets Overlay			GIC	TAC	MC								
Task 4: Identify Threats to and Opportunities for Natural Assets						TAC	MC BOS	TAC, Public Survey	MC				
Task 5: Strategies and Plan from Modeling and Prioritization										TAC	MC	Publ ic Mtg	Wrap up BOS

GIC = Project Consultants, TAC = County Staff, MC =Appointed Mapping Committee, BOS = Board of Supervisors

Engagement Process

Objectives: The following public engagement objectives will guide outreach efforts.

- Public input will build from input gathered during the 2045 Engage process.
- Public engagement efforts will inform and educate the community about the project.
- We will engage key stakeholders in natural and cultural assets and a diversity of residents.
- All input will be respected, well documented and used to help inform the project.

Natural and Cultural Assets Mapping Committee: (October 2021 – May 2022)

This group is appointed by the Board of Supervisors and is intended to represent the diverse interests and geographies that make up the county. The committee meets 4-6 times during the project. Their role is advisory only. The public can share perspectives with the members and also can attend the committee's meetings and offer comments during the public comment portions of the meeting. These meetings are noticed on the county's calendar. The committee will also recommend additional ways to engage with and understand community perspectives and will help publicize opportunities. Summaries of all committee meetings will be posted to the project website following the meeting. To be notified of upcoming meetings, contact the Assistant Director of Community Development Tammy Rosario tammy.rosario@jamescitycountyva.gov. All materials can be found at <https://jamescitycountyva.gov/3856/Natural-Cultural-Assets-Plan>

Surveys: (First - February 2022, Second – TBD if needed)

The project will launch at least one on-line survey for public comment concerning the maps and special natural or cultural assets to consider for inclusion in the plan. Members of the public can also view and comment on the maps and potential strategies during the survey(s). The first survey will be launched on the county's website in February 2021. This will be a self-reporting survey, meaning that it will not be a random sampling of residents views; it will be open to any county resident or business to complete. A second survey, if needed and desired, may offer an opportunity to follow up on ideas gathered during the first survey.

Public Meetings: (June – July 2022)

There will be one workshop towards the end of the project (likely in June 2022) where the public will be invited to attend and comment on the final maps and associated strategies. These comments will be utilized to finalize the maps and plan for consideration by the Board of Supervisors. The public may also comment during the public comment periods at the Board of Supervisors meetings to review the draft and final products.

Briefings of other boards/commissions or stakeholders: (ongoing, at milestones)

County staff will also periodically brief other appointed bodies of the county, such as but not limited to, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission or the Historical Commission. In addition, large landholders or those whose land is identified as a significant resource may also be contacted during the process for their input.

Website/Sending comments: (September 2021 – July 2022)

The public is invited to send comments at any time during the process. Follow the website for the latest maps and overview of where the project is currently and next steps. Comments should be sent directly to Tammy Rosario (see email above) and she will share them with county consultants. Note that all comments sent for this project become a matter of public record. All perspectives will be noted.