



Parks and Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting
April 9, 2025, 7:30 AM

Agenda

1. Call to Order

- 1.1. Attendees, please use meeting courtesy. Virtual attendees are asked to mute microphones when joining the meeting. Participants may be muted by the Town Clerk and meetings will be recorded.

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 257 240 514 172

Passcode: sd239Ky9

2. Matters of Discussion

- 2.1. Tilghman Lake Park Project Proposals (Tim Hutzley)

3. Matters of Information

4. Adjourn

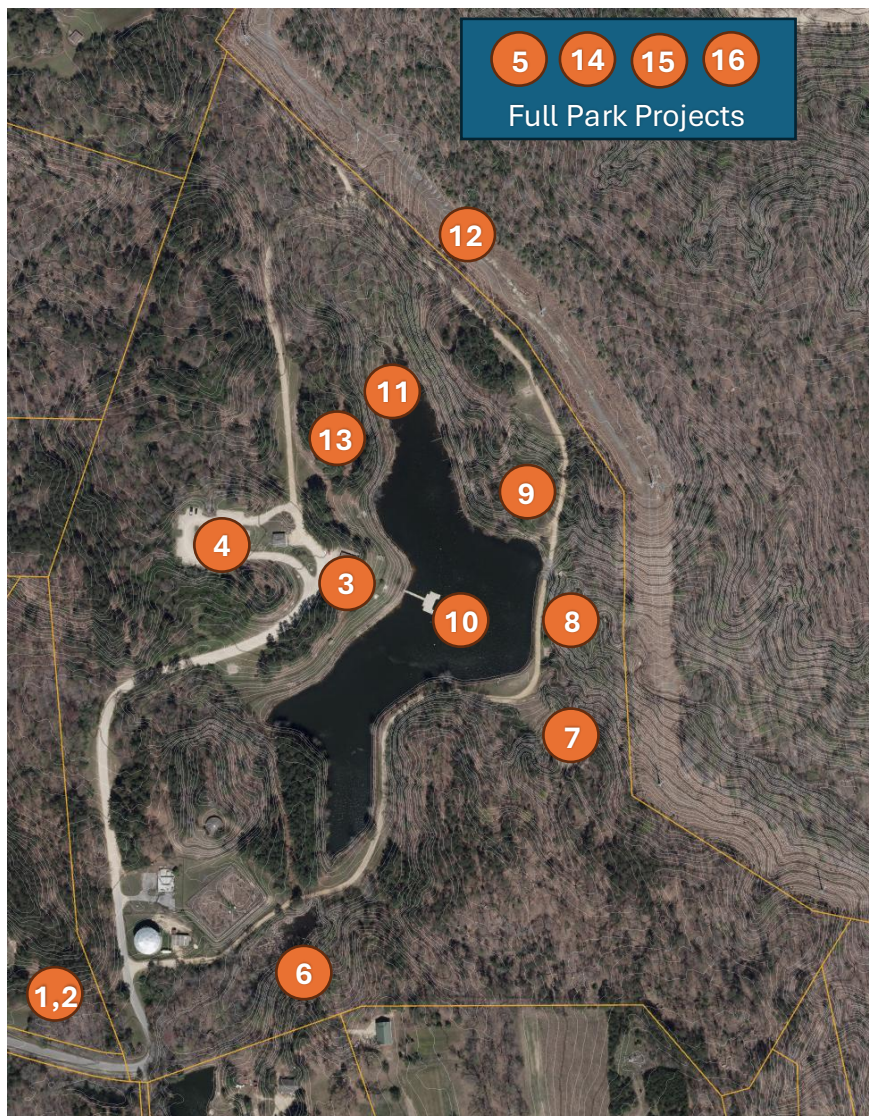
- 4.1. Adjournment

[MEET_FOOT]

Tilghman Lake Park

Tree Education Foundational Project Ideas

In 2023, the Town of La Plata made a meaningful investment in its green future by completing a comprehensive Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) Plan and Tree Inventory. These documents identify priority planting zones, existing canopy coverage, maintenance needs, and community engagement opportunities throughout the town. This recommendations plan represents the next step—transforming those findings into visible, actionable projects that support La Plata’s long-term goals for sustainability, public health, and quality of life.



At the heart of this effort is **Tilghman Lake Park**—an underutilized gem with the potential to become a flagship destination for environmental education, and community connection. These projects, designed by ISA Certified Arborists and Maryland Licensed Tree Experts, focus on enhancing the park’s accessibility, safety, and ecological value. They promote hands-on learning, volunteerism, and stewardship, while aligning with the goals outlined in the town’s canopy master plan.

The recommendations are laid out in a spatial order: beginning at the park entrance, moving through the parking area, and continuing counterclockwise around the lake. Each proposal includes a summary, detailed actions,

community benefits, and resources for implementation. The ultimate goal is to make Tilghman Lake Park a **safe, educational, sustainable, and desirable place to spend time in the Town of La Plata**—one that reflects the town’s commitment to green infrastructure and civic pride.

Table of Contents

Credits	3
1. Tilghman Lake Park Entrance Sign Redesign	4
2. Enhancing the Park Entrance Experience (Box Elder Road Corridor)	6
2A. Entrance Corridor Beautification (Box Elder Road Approach)	6
2B. Nature Center Redevelopment (State-Owned Buildings).....	7
2C. Water Tank Area Redesign & Trail Connection	8
3. Lakeside Tree Protection Fence	10
4. Continued Care of NatureFest 2022 Plantings	12
5. Curated Nature Trail with Bridge/Boardwalk Access	14
6. Pond Restoration, Boardwalk Access, and Viewshed Buffering	15
6A. Pond Restoration and Culvert Repair	15
6B. Pond Boardwalk and Observation Feature	16
6C. Evergreen Viewshed Buffer for Water Tank.....	16
7. Gravel Pit Rehabilitation and Amphitheater-Style Greenspace	18
8. Dam Safety and Visitor Risk Mitigation	20
8A. Dam Hillside Access Control	20
8B. Water Level Riser Protection and Safety Upgrade.....	21
9. Nature-Based Log Playground and Balance Course (North End of Dam)	23
10. Central Connector Bridge and Overlook Dock	25
11. Northern Wetland Enhancement and Habitat Restoration	27
12. Eastern Fence Line Cleanup and Native Replanting	29
13. Pine Stand Enhancement and Volunteer Camp Area	31
14. Tree Inventory and GIS-Based Tree Management Pilot.....	33
15. “Adopt-a-Grid” Cleanup Map and Volunteer Incentive Program	35
16. Forest Cleanup Delineation and Ecosystem Enhancement Plan	37
Grant Opportunities.....	39

Credits

This list of recommendations for Tilghman Lake Park was prepared for Kelly Phipps by:

Tim Hutzley

ISA Certified Arborist (MA-7277A)

Maryland Licensed Tree Expert (#2805)

MD/DE Master Logger (#412)

Certified GIS Professional (GISP #91843)

Wes Valcarcel

ISA Certified Arborist (MA-5099A)

Maryland Licensed Tree Expert (2225)

Forestry & Land Stewardship Professional

Chris Wagnon

Former Deputy Director Parks and Recreation Department at The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

1. Tilghman Lake Park Entrance Sign Redesign

To invite residents and visitors into a more engaging, family-friendly green space, the entrance to

While a small sign currently exists, its orientation and size make it easy to miss—especially when approaching from the north. A new, naturalistic entrance sign, designed to reflect the spirit of the Urban Tree Canopy Plan and the park’s role as an educational and community hub, will help establish the park’s identity and welcome people in.



Details

- Install a **custom chainsaw-carved log sign** featuring the park name designed and carved by a local club or expert
- Position the sign **parallel to radio station road**, readable from both directions—especially for those coming into town
- Clear or **prune surrounding vegetation** to increase visibility and reduce overgrowth around the sign area
- Consider **solar-powered lighting** or a reflective finish for visibility in low light
- Use **local or reclaimed wood** when possible to highlight sustainability
- Incorporate a small interpretive plaque nearby explaining the significance of the sign’s materials and design

Benefits

- **Improves visibility and access**, reducing missed turns and encouraging new visitors
- **Reinforces the park’s theme** as a space rooted in nature, education, and community involvement
- **Connects visually** with the mission of the Urban Tree Canopy Plan by using wood in a meaningful and symbolic way
- Creates an **Instagrammable landmark** to raise awareness and promote pride in public green spaces

Resources

- 2023 Urban Tree Canopy Plan: <https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>

- 2023 Tree Inventory Summary: <https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1003/La-Plata-MD-Tree-Inventory-Summary>
- Maryland Chainsaw Artist List (example): <https://www.carvingcolin.com/>
- Maryland Urban and Community Forestry Grant Info: <https://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/programs/urban.aspx>

2. Enhancing the Park Entrance Experience (Box Elder Road Corridor)

The approach to Tilghman Lake Park along Box Elder Road offers one of the most critical opportunities to shape visitor perception and build pride in this public space. Unfortunately, the current experience—from overgrown trees and abandoned buildings to the stark presence of the water tank—fails to reflect the park’s potential or the town’s investment in the 2023 Urban Tree Canopy Plan. This set of interconnected recommendations proposes a comprehensive transformation of the entrance corridor, aligning with La Plata’s goals for sustainability, education, and safety.

Together, these proposals create a clear, welcoming, and educational approach into the park: a tree-lined pedestrian zone with interpretive signage, a rehabilitated nature center built from existing structures, and a redesigned entry drive that better frames the visitor experience. By implementing these improvements, the Town of La Plata can turn an overlooked stretch of roadway into an engaging, mission-aligned gateway to the outdoors.

2A. Entrance Corridor Beautification (Box Elder Road Approach)

As visitors enter Tilghman Lake Park from Box Elder Road, the first impressions shape the entire park experience. This stretch currently holds promise but lacks cohesive design. Selective tree care, added plantings, interpretive signage, and rest areas will transform the roadside into a welcoming, educational corridor aligned with the Urban Tree Canopy Plan’s emphasis on tree health, biodiversity, and engagement.



Details

- **Prune and selectively remove** overgrown or poorly spaced trees along the right side of the road
- **Plant native trees and understory plants** to create a continuous green buffer
- Install **educational signage** along the existing sidewalk to share facts about native species, pollinators, and tree benefits
- Add **natural wooden benches** at intervals for passive enjoyment and learning stops

- Consider a **low-profile split-rail fence or native plant border** for visual continuity and safety

Benefits

- Enhances the **aesthetic quality** and ecological value of the park entrance
- Supports UTC Plan goals to **increase canopy cover and plant native species**
- Provides **accessible educational touchpoints** to engage residents of all ages
- Improves the **safety and appeal** of a high-visibility area

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Focus on Prioritized Planting Areas:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- Native Plant Selection Tool – MD Biodiversity Project:
<https://www.marylandbiodiversity.com/>
- Example interpretive signage:
https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5418043.pdf

2B. Nature Center Redevelopment (State-Owned Buildings)

Six vacant buildings located just off the park entrance hold incredible potential to become a transformative resource for Tilghman Lake Park. Acquiring and rehabilitating these structures into a **Nature and Education Center** would tie together La Plata’s environmental goals, historic character, and commitment to community learning. This space would become the public face of the park—a place for programs, exploration, and interpretation—all aligned with the town’s investment in the Urban Tree Canopy Plan and vision for sustainable public land use.

Details

- Acquire or lease the buildings from the Maryland Department of Health & Mental Hygiene
 - Property Info:
<https://sdat.dat.maryland.gov/RealProperty/Pages/viewdetails.aspx?County=09&SearchType=ACCT&District=01&AccountNumber=026747>
- Renovate buildings with timber-framed accents and log elements to reflect local Amish/Mennonite craftsmanship
- Create a Nature and Heritage Center with:
 - Displays about local flora and fauna
 - Interpretive exhibits on Tilghman Lake and La Plata history
 - Trailhead with educational signage and orientation map
 - Indoor classroom space for expert-led workshops, homeschool groups, and school field trips
- Design indoor and outdoor areas to be ADA accessible, and build with reclaimed or regionally sourced wood

Benefits

- Converts blight into a community and environmental asset
- Supports environmental literacy and civic pride

- Anchors the park as a destination, not just a green space
- Enhances perceived safety and investment in the surrounding area

Resources

- MD Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene Property Details:
<https://sdat.dat.maryland.gov/RealProperty/Pages/viewdetails.aspx?County=09&SearchType=ACCT&District=01&AccountNumber=026747>
- Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Grant Program:
<https://mhAA.maryland.gov/Pages/Grants.aspx>
- USDA Forest Service Nature Center Design Guidelines:
https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5112254.pdf

2C. Water Tank Area Redesign & Trail Connection

As currently designed, the entrance road passes directly by a large, industrial-style water tank, giving visitors the impression they are entering a utility facility—not a community park. This visual confusion undercuts the experience and discourages exploration. Redirecting the entrance drive and/or buffering the tank with plantings and improved signage can dramatically improve first impressions while creating new trail opportunities and reinforcing La Plata’s tree canopy goals.



Details

Option 1 – Full Re-route

(Preferred):

- Remove the existing road segment between 10550 Box Elder Rd and the water tank
- Let the area naturally reforest or supplement with native plantings
- Cut a new entrance drive to the east of 10550 Box Elder, leading to the new Nature Center
- Convert the old road bed into a walking trail that links to the existing trail south of the tank

Option 2 – Partial Re-route / Visual Buffer:

- Slightly re-align the road at the water tank to allow space for an evergreen barrier between the road and the water tank
- Plant native evergreen trees to screen the water tank and industrial structures
- Add wayfinding signage to reassure visitors they are on the right track

Benefits

- Creates a more inviting and natural entrance
- Improves safety perception and navigation
- Adds tree cover and habitat in a disturbed area

- Converts pavement into green infrastructure or trail space
- Provides a cost-flexible alternative (Option 2) if full re-route is not immediately feasible

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Reforestation Opportunities:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- Native Evergreen Species Guide – Maryland DNR:
<https://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Documents/Nursery/NurseryPriceList.pdf>
- Sustainable Trail Design Guide – American Trails:
<https://www.americantrails.org/resources/sustainable-trail-development-guide>

3. Lakeside Tree Protection Fence

As visitors near the lake, the road edge is frequently used as informal parking beneath mature shade trees. While convenient, this practice poses serious long-term risks to tree health, public safety, and the park experience. Installing a simple, natural-style fence along this corridor will protect these valuable trees, reinforce the park's design intent, and create a safer, more peaceful environment for all users. This action directly supports the 2023 Urban Tree Canopy Plan's focus on long-term canopy health and public education.

Details

- Install a **low wooden split-rail** along the lake-facing side of the road near the tree line, this will match the fence along the park entrance
- Use **natural, untreated wood** where possible to maintain aesthetics and minimize environmental impact
- Include small **informational signage** explaining why parking under trees is harmful (soil compaction, root damage, branch dieback)



- Retain **pedestrian access points** through the fence to encourage shade use without vehicle intrusion
- Evaluate existing soil compaction under key trees and consider **remediation (e.g., aeration)** if damage is evident

Benefits

- **Prevents soil compaction**, root damage, and premature tree decline
- **Protects public safety** by reducing the risk of limb drop (widowmakers) from stressed trees
- Reinforces the message that **cars belong in designated areas**, not in natural zones

- Enhances **peace and enjoyment** of the lakeside by eliminating exhaust fumes, engine noise, and vehicle movement
- Aligns with the Urban Tree Canopy Plan's focus on **preserving existing canopy assets** and encouraging educational signage

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Tree Protection and Maintenance Priorities:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- MD DNR Fact Sheet: Soil Compaction and Urban Trees:
https://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Documents/urban/SoilCompaction_UT.pdf

4. Continued Care of NatureFest 2022 Plantings

In 2022, the Town of La Plata and the Neighborhood Creative Arts Center were awarded a grant from

the Chesapeake Bay Trust to support NatureFest—a community event that emphasized hands-on learning about natural resources. As part of the initiative, redbud trees and swamp white oaks were planted to enhance the park’s natural landscape and build awareness around local ecology. These plantings now require consistent care to ensure they establish successfully and continue providing ecological, educational, and aesthetic benefits for years to come.



This recommendation supports the original grant’s intent and aligns with the 2023 Urban Tree Canopy Plan’s goal of maintaining and preserving planted trees as a long-term community investment.

Details

- Continue **watering and monitoring** young redbuds and swamp white oaks through their establishment phase (especially in summer months)
- **Mulch properly** (no volcano mulching) and replace as needed
- Conduct **seasonal inspections** to check for disease, pests, or structural pruning needs
- If not already installed, add **small interpretive signage** acknowledging the Chesapeake Bay Trust grant and describing the tree species
- Encourage local youth or volunteers to **“adopt” a tree** for ongoing community engagement

Benefits

- **Preserves the success** of a completed, publicly funded grant project
- Reinforces a culture of **long-term care, not just one-time planting**
- Supports local tree canopy growth in line with the Urban Tree Canopy Plan
- Promotes **youth involvement** and public education about native species
- Contributes to **stormwater and habitat benefits** for the Lower Potomac River watershed

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Tree Care and Maintenance Guidance:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- Chesapeake Bay Trust – Award Summary: <https://cbtrust.org/> (search for “Neighborhood Creative Arts Center NatureFest 2022”)
- Redbud and Swamp White Oak Care Guide (PDF):
https://extension.umd.edu/sites/extension.umd.edu/files/_docs/programs/hgic/Chapters/EB%20Tree%20Care.pdf

5. Curated Nature Trail with Bridge/Boardwalk Access

Tilghman Lake Park has a variety of beautiful natural features, but they are not fully accessible or connected in a meaningful way. A curated nature trail winding through the park would guide visitors past notable tree species, plant communities, and natural habitats, encouraging deeper engagement with the landscape. This trail would include the construction of a new **bridge or boardwalk** at the water inlet between the pine stands on the lake's southern end, making underutilized parts of the park accessible and inviting. This directly supports the Urban Tree Canopy Plan's goals for environmental education, equitable access to green spaces, and increased public interaction with tree canopy areas.

Details

- Design and construct a **natural-surface trail** that loops through the park's full extent, connecting existing paths with new segments
- Include **interpretive signage** identifying native tree species, seasonal blooms, and ecological relationships
- Build a **wooden boardwalk or bridge** at the water inlet between pine stands to safely guide visitors across wetland zones without disturbing sensitive habitat
- Install **wayfinding signage and trail markers** to clearly distinguish the nature trail from other park paths
- Consider ADA-compliant sections and access points where feasible
- Create opportunities for **guided walks, school field trips, and educational programming** along the route

Benefits

- Activates underused areas of the park and **encourages full-site engagement**
- Educates visitors on **native trees, plant communities, and habitat value**
- Enhances **trail connectivity and accessibility**, supporting long-term community use
- Supports La Plata's goals for a **sustainable and educational public park system**
- Encourages **physical activity and mental wellness** through nature immersion

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Priority Areas and Education Recommendations:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- Sustainable Trails Construction Guidelines:
<https://www.americantrails.org/resources/sustainable-trail-development-guide>
- Boardwalk and Bridge Design for Wetlands (USFS):
https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd508872.pdf
- Interpretive Signage Examples for Nature Trails:
https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5418043.pdf

6. Pond Restoration, Boardwalk Access, and Viewshed Buffering

Nestled between the nature trail and the eastern edge of the park, the pond near the culvert

presents a unique opportunity for **ecological restoration, visitor engagement, and aesthetic enhancement**. Once a functional drainage feature, the pond has become partially degraded—choked with debris, surrounded by standing dead trees, and bordered by views of the nearby water tank. These conditions present both a



challenge and an opportunity. This set of recommendations outlines a phased approach: restoring the pond’s natural function and appearance, creating a boardwalk to bring visitors into close contact with this rewilded space, and planting a natural evergreen buffer to improve the visual experience. Together, these improvements will create a **new ecological node** along the trail system—ideal for education, wildlife viewing, and peaceful reflection.

6A. Pond Restoration and Culvert Repair

A small pond along the proposed nature trail has experienced visible ecological stress due to **backups in the culvert** that connects it to the lake. As a result, the water level has risen and remained elevated, causing the **root systems of shoreline trees to drown**, ultimately killing them. These dead trees now pose a safety hazard to visitors. Additionally, the pond is filled with debris—a visible sign of past **mismanagement and human impact**. This recommendation proposes a comprehensive restoration effort: clearing debris, repairing the culvert, removing hazardous dead trees, and replanting the shoreline with appropriate native wetland-edge species. Once restored, the pond can become a biodiverse, low-lying education node along the nature trail.

Details

- **Remove visible trash and natural debris** from the pond basin
- **Inspect and repair** the culvert draining into Tilghman Lake to allow proper water movement and avoid prolonged high-water conditions

- **Remove hazardous dead trees** along the pond edge that have been killed by standing water
- **Replant** the shoreline with native water-tolerant trees, shrubs, and emergent vegetation to improve habitat and stabilize banks
- Monitor post-cleanup conditions to prevent recurring backups and maintain ecological balance

Benefits

- Improves **aesthetics, safety, and ecological health** of the pond area
 - **Reduces mosquito risk** by correcting stagnant water issues
 - Encourages return of **wildlife and beneficial pollinators**
 - Aligns with Urban Tree Canopy Plan goals of **native planting and sustainable water management**
 - Provides an opportunity for **education and public engagement** around restoration ecology
-

6B. Pond Boardwalk and Observation Feature

Following the pond's restoration, a low wooden boardwalk should be constructed to guide visitors across or along the pond edge. This structure would serve two purposes: it would connect segments of the nature trail, and it would offer a unique observation platform from which visitors can engage with the pond's native plantings, aquatic life, and bird activity. The boardwalk would act as an outdoor classroom space and add immersive value to the nature trail.

Details

- Build a **low-profile boardwalk** across or skirting the pond, designed to preserve natural flow and avoid compaction of root zones
- Incorporate **widened viewing sections or bump-outs** with simple benches or railing
- Include **interpretive signage** about the pond's restoration, native species, and water cycle
- Construct using **sustainable, non-toxic materials** such as pressure-treated wood or recycled composite lumber
- Design to **meet ADA guidelines** where feasible

Benefits

- Connects key areas of the nature trail with **minimal ecological disruption**
 - Provides a **safe, accessible vantage point** for observing restored pond habitat
 - Offers a **teachable moment** on the impacts of human activity and the value of ecological stewardship
 - Adds **trail diversity and interest**, making the park experience more memorable
-

6C. Evergreen Viewshed Buffer for Water Tank

To the west of the pond, a large water tank is currently in full view, disrupting the otherwise natural character of this peaceful area. The tank is a frequent visual intrusion for visitors trying to engage with the surrounding nature. This recommendation proposes a **staggered planting of native**

evergreen trees and shrubs to soften and **visually buffer the tank from multiple viewing angles**, while still allowing for maintenance access as needed.

Details

- Select a mix of **native evergreen species** of varying heights and growth habits
 - Examples: Eastern red cedar, American holly, white pine, and inkberry holly
- Plant in a **staggered pattern** to establish a layered natural screen
- Maintain adequate **spacing for access and airflow** to prevent disease pressure
- Consider adding **low understory shrubs** or native grasses at the base for slope stability and year-round interest

Benefits

- Improves **visual continuity and aesthetic experience** along the pond and trail
- Enhances the **seclusion and natural ambiance** of the restored wetland zone
- Provides **year-round cover and habitat** for birds and pollinators
- Supports canopy goals outlined in the Urban Tree Canopy Plan, especially for **strategic planting and viewshed improvement**

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Planting Strategy and Watershed Goals:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- Native Plant Selector Tool – Chesapeake Bay Native Plant Center:
<https://www.nativeplantcenter.net/>
- ADA Guidelines for Trail Structures: <https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/recreation-facilities/outdoor-developed-areas>
- Culvert Inspection and Maintenance Guide – MD NRCS:
https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/water/stormwatermanagementprogram/Documents/Culvert_Inspection_Maintenance_Guide.pdf

7. Gravel Pit Rehabilitation and Amphitheater-Style Greenspace



At the southern end of the dam lies a former gravel pit — a site that currently presents

environmental and aesthetic concerns, but also a rare opportunity. Nestled into a natural hillside with lake views, this area could be minimally rehabilitated into a low-impact amphitheater-style greenspace, offering a peaceful location for outdoor education, recreation, and community events. With limited grading, erosion control, and seeding,

the site could be transformed from a liability into a signature feature of Tilghman Lake Park, aligning with the Urban Tree Canopy Plan’s emphasis on sustainable land use and community-centered design.

If this new amphitheater is constructed and proves successful, the existing aging amphitheater near the parking lot—which sees little use and lacks natural integration—should be removed. This would help consolidate park programming around a more scenic and functional location and allow the former site to be restored or repurposed.

Details

- Stabilize slopes and address erosion through grading and native grass seeding
- Install grass terraces or low retaining logs to form natural amphitheater seating
- Use the site for:
 - Picnicking and informal gatherings
 - Outdoor homeschool or classroom sessions
 - Acoustic performances or community events such as “Bluegrass by the Lake” or a classical string quartet.
- Maintain a minimalist approach with natural materials to keep the space visually and ecologically integrated
- Add trash receptacles and minimal lighting (solar preferred) to support light programming without disrupting wildlife
- Decommission and remove the current aging amphitheater near the parking lot to reduce redundancy and visual clutter, and evaluate potential restoration of that site to green space or habitat

Benefits

- Eliminates an environmental concern by stabilizing exposed soil and reducing runoff
- Creates a unique, scenic destination for both informal and programmed use
- Provides a flexible venue for arts, education, and community-building
- Adds value to the park without extensive construction or infrastructure needs
- Promotes the UTC Plan goal of converting degraded spaces into green community assets
- Improves overall site cohesion by removing outdated infrastructure and focusing energy around a more compelling park feature

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Restoration and Multi-Use Green Space Strategies:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- MD DNR Erosion Control and Seeding Guidelines:
[https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Water/StormwaterManagementProgram/Documents/2011%20Standards%20and%20Specifications/MD Soils Erosion Control.pdf](https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Water/StormwaterManagementProgram/Documents/2011%20Standards%20and%20Specifications/MD%20Soils%20Erosion%20Control.pdf)
- Amphitheater Inspiration: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/natural-amphitheaters-and-their-uses.htm>
- Native Grass Seed Selection – Chesapeake Region:
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-10/nrcs144p2_021180.pdf

8. Dam Safety and Visitor Risk Mitigation

The dam infrastructure at Tilghman Lake Park presents two distinct but related safety concerns that require proactive attention. As new park features draw more visitors to the east side of the lake, the **dam hillside** and **adjacent water control riser** have become increasingly visible and accessible—especially to children and curious passersby. The hillside, while visually appealing, is not designed for recreation and poses risks if climbed or played on. Likewise, the water level riser sits just feet from the public trail, leaving a critical piece of infrastructure vulnerable to tampering and personal injury. These



recommendations aim to **deter unsafe access**, **preserve infrastructure integrity**, and **support a safe, family-friendly environment** in line with the park’s educational and ecological goals.

8A. Dam Hillside Access Control

The dam hillside at the south end of Tilghman Lake Park is an attractive spot for children and curious people to play, which poses safety concerns and threatens the long-term stability of the dam structure. The slope is steep, unstructured, and not intended for recreation. Without physical barriers or clear messaging, it invites inappropriate use. Installing fencing and signage will help deter access, encourage safe behavior, and protect this critical infrastructure—aligning with both park safety goals and dam management best practices.

Details

- Install a **split rail wood fence** along the trail where it borders the dam hillside
- Add **clear signage** at intervals to deter climbing or sliding on the slope
 - Signage should briefly explain the safety risks and the importance of maintaining dam integrity
- Ensure **removable or gated access** for maintenance crews
- Evaluate the hillside for **existing erosion or damage** and address with minimal earthwork if needed

Benefits

- **Dissuades unsafe use** of steep or critical infrastructure areas
- Helps **preserve the structural integrity** of the dam

- Reinforces the park’s mission of creating a **safe, sustainable environment** for families and youth
- Demonstrates proactive care of town infrastructure, consistent with the Urban Tree Canopy Plan's maintenance goals

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan: <https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- Maryland Dam Safety Program Overview: <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/water/damsafety/pages/index.aspx>
- Erosion Control Guidance (NRCS): https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-10/nrcs144p2_021180.pdf

8B. Water Level Riser Protection and Safety Upgrade

The water level riser at Tilghman Lake Park sits just feet from the main trail, making it easily accessible to the public. While a basic grate currently covers the intake, the **open top of the grate** invites tampering and allows objects to be thrown inside. This recommendation proposes a safety-focused redesign that maintains water level control while **detering misuse** and improving the overall safety of the lakeside trail area.



Details

- Replace the existing flat-top grate with a **raised enclosure** that:
 - Is **open only on the sides** to maintain water flow
 - Features a **closed, reinforced top** to prevent access from above
 - Uses a **domed or sloped design** to discourage climbing or standing on the structure
 - Is fabricated with **heavy-duty welded metal** and securely anchored
- Maintain current **inlet height** to preserve the lake’s water level
- Consider a **native plant buffer** or **low-profile safety barrier** around the riser to subtly guide people away from the structure
- Install **discreet educational signage** to inform visitors of the riser’s function and discourage tampering

Benefits

- **Dissuades unsafe behavior** near the water’s edge and prevents climbing or interaction with a critical structure
- **Prevents debris and litter** from being thrown into the riser, reducing maintenance and protecting water quality
- Maintains the **operational integrity** of the lake’s water level management system

- Demonstrates thoughtful infrastructure design consistent with a **family-friendly, safety-oriented park** experience

Resources

- Photo Reference: Existing Riser at Tilghman Lake Park
- Maryland Dam Safety Structural Design Standards:
<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Water/DamSafety/Documents/www.mde.state.md.us/assets/document/damsafety/NRCS/Structural%20design%20standard%20risers.pdf>
- National Dam Safety Resources – Open Channel Spillways: <https://damsafety.org/dam-owners/open-channel-spillways>
- NRCS Pond Design and Riser Standards (MD Code 378):
<https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3997/Maryland-Dam-Safety-Regulations-MD-378-PDF>

9. Nature-Based Log Playground and Balance Course (North End of Dam)



At the north end of the dam sits an aging picnic table in a relatively open and underused area of the

park. This space offers an ideal opportunity to introduce a **natural-style log playground and balance course**, designed to promote healthy outdoor play, physical coordination, and connection to nature. Using **locally sourced logs and natural materials**, this feature would blend seamlessly with the park's aesthetic and align with the Urban Tree Canopy Plan's goals for sustainable design and active community use of green space.

Details

- **Remove the old picnic table** and clear the area for safe play
- Install a **low-impact nature playground** with features such as:
 - **Balance beams** and stepping logs
 - **Low climbing structures** made from joined logs



- **Simple rope-web elements** for climbing or crawling
- **A-frame log swing set** with traditional and nature-themed swings
- **Monkey bars** integrated into natural frames
- **Kid-friendly zipline**, set low for safety but long enough to be exciting
- Use **woodchip or engineered mulch surfacing** to provide a soft landing zone
- Ensure structures meet safety standards (ASTM/ADA as appropriate)
- Build primarily with **locally sourced or salvaged logs** to support sustainability and regional character
- Include signage noting the natural construction methods and the role of play in child development



Benefits

- Adds an **interactive, nature-based play zone** for children and families
- Encourages **healthy, outdoor physical activity**
- Enhances the **aesthetic and ecological value** of the space by avoiding plastic or synthetic materials
- Reinforces the mission of the park as a **learning and wellness destination**
- Demonstrates a **creative reuse of space**, replacing aging infrastructure with high-use community amenities

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Recreational Use and Community Engagement:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- Nature Play Design Standards and Best Practices:
<https://www.natureplaywa.org.au/resources/nature-play-design-guidelines/>
- Low Ropes Course & Balance Park Inspiration (Natural Playgrounds Co.):
<https://www.naturalplaygroundsstore.com/>
- Playground Surfacing Safety Guidelines (Consumer Product Safety Commission):
<https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/325.pdf>
- <https://www.alexandriava.gov/parks/location/eugene-simpson-stadium-park> this

10. Central Connector Bridge and Overlook Dock

Summary

As new features emerge at the east end of Tilghman Lake Park—including the natural amphitheater



(Recommendation 7) and log playground (Recommendation 9)—visitors would benefit from **intuitive, scenic access** to these areas from the main parking lot. The current plastic dock is visually out of place and limited in both function and capacity. This recommendation proposes replacing it with a **wooden bridge and overlook structure** that both connects and elevates the visitor experience—aligning with the Urban Tree Canopy Plan’s emphasis on sustainable materials, connectivity, and public enjoyment of natural resources.

Details

- **Remove the existing plastic dock** near the parking area shoreline
- Construct a **wooden boardwalk-style bridge** that begins at the current dock location and extends out into the lake
- Incorporate a **mid-span rest and overlook area**, large enough to accommodate benches and multiple users at once
 - This area would serve as a **passive recreation spot** for birdwatching, enjoying lake views, or simply sitting over the water
- Continue the bridge from the overlook to the **south end of the dam**, connecting to the new amphitheater (Rec. 6) and nearby trails
- Design with **natural, durable materials** (pressure-treated wood or regionally harvested logs)
- Use **guardrails and gentle slopes** to ensure ADA accessibility where feasible

- Include low-profile **interpretive signage** about wetland ecology, bird species, and aquatic life

Benefits

- Provides a **critical pedestrian link** between parking and new park features
- Replaces a plastic dock with a **natural, aesthetic, and more durable alternative**
- Creates a **destination feature** in the park for relaxation and passive enjoyment
- Encourages **wildlife observation** and environmental appreciation
- Supports the UTC Plan's vision for **equitable access and sustainable design** throughout the park

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Connectivity and Passive Use Recommendations:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Recreational Trails and Facilities:
<https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/recreation-facilities/outdoor-developed-areas>
- Wetland-Friendly Dock Design Guide (USACE):
https://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Portals/39/docs/regulatory/Permits/NationwidePermits/Dock_Design_Guide.pdf
- Sustainable Bridge and Overlook Construction Inspiration:
<https://www.naturalstructures.com/products/bridges-and-boardwalks/>

11. Northern Wetland Enhancement and Habitat Restoration

The north end of Tilghman Lake has transitioned into a wetland area following the dam's reconstruction. With lower water levels and a consistent runoff source from several surrounding springs, this section has become a unique environmental feature—but also poses risks if left unmanaged. Without mitigation, **standing water in this area may increase mosquito breeding**, especially during warmer months. This recommendation focuses on **restoring native wetland function**, improving habitat value, and reducing nuisance conditions through thoughtful ecological intervention. It also presents a valuable opportunity to **engage local college students in environmental programs** for hands-on ecological work, supporting both education and stewardship.



Details

- **Remove fallen tree debris**, which currently clutters the area and obstructs healthy plant growth
- Install **native wetland vegetation** suited to the hydrology of the site to improve biodiversity and slow surface water movement
 - Species should include mosquito-repellent plants (e.g., swamp milkweed, sweet flag)
- Place **wood duck nesting boxes** in strategic areas along the water's edge
- Consider adding **pollinator-friendly species** to increase insect diversity and reduce mosquito dominance
- Strategically remove less desirable trees that riddle the area, this includes small Sweetgum, and an abundance of Tulip Poplar trees. This would open up light in the canopy to allow newly planted wetland friendly trees to grow and add diversity

- Work with **student volunteers or college programs** (ecology, forestry, environmental science) for planting and monitoring
- Add **discreet educational signage** explaining the function of wetlands and the steps being taken to manage mosquito presence and enhance habitat

Benefits

- **Reduces mosquito habitat** by restoring balanced wetland ecology and improving drainage
- Improves **aesthetic appeal and ecological function** of a currently underutilized park area
- Supports **wildlife diversity**, especially birds and amphibians
- Provides **educational and service-learning opportunities** for local students
- Aligns with the UTC Plan's goals for native vegetation, habitat restoration, and sustainable park management

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Habitat Enhancement and Vegetation Goals:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- Maryland Wood Duck Nesting Box Guide:
<https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/WoodDuckBox.pdf>
- Native Wetland Plant List for Maryland: <https://www.fws.gov/chesapeake-bay/resources/native-plants>
- Example Student Partnership Programs (for reference): <https://ser-ecologicalrestoration.org/>

12. Eastern Fence Line Cleanup and Native Replanting

The chain-link fence that separates Tilghman Lake Park from the adjacent transmission corridor on

the east side of the park is currently lined with **dead, broken, and fallen trees**, many of which are leaning on or entangled in the fence. This creates **safety concerns**, diminishes the visual character of the park, and interferes with future maintenance. While the exact cause of the die-off is uncertain, likely contributors include **soil compaction** from utility vehicle traffic, **root disturbance** during corridor clearing, and possibly **chemical weed control**. **Edge effect**—the exposure of previously interior trees to wind and sunlight following forest clearing—is another plausible contributing factor.



This recommendation includes coordination with the utility provider, hazard removal, and replanting of native trees to re-establish a healthy, resilient edge along the park boundary.

Details

- **Coordinate with the power company** (e.g., SMECO or PEPCO) to determine:
 - What vegetation management practices are currently used (e.g., mechanical vs. chemical clearing)
 - Whether they are responsible for or willing to assist with **clearing fallen and hazardous trees** along the fence
- **Remove all dead, dying, and broken trees** along the fence line, especially those affecting the chain-link fence
- Evaluate and document potential causes (e.g., compacted soil, visible root damage, evidence of chemical use)

- Replant the area with a **strategic selection of native trees and shrubs** suitable for edge environments
 - Consider species with high adaptability to disturbed or compacted soils
- Maintain a **vegetated buffer** that allows for utility access while supporting ecological function and screening

Benefits

- Improves **safety and aesthetics** along a highly visible park boundary
- Restores **buffer function** between the park and utility corridor
- Supports the Urban Tree Canopy Plan's goals for **strategic native planting** and **long-term tree health**
- Reduces the risk of future damage to infrastructure (fence) and improves public perception of the space

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Edge Planting and Maintenance:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- Maryland Utility Vegetation Management FAQ (PSC):
<https://www.psc.state.md.us/electricity/vegetation-management/>
- Native Trees for Tough Sites – Chesapeake Bay Region:
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/naspf/publications/planting-trees-tough-sites>

13. Pine Stand Enhancement and Volunteer Camp Area

Near the parking area, a stand of mature pine trees offers an underutilized space with potential for both **ecological cleanup** and **community use**.

This recommendation focuses on cleaning up hazardous trees or branches within the stand, and then

preparing the area to be used as a **designated camping and staging space** for volunteer groups. Organizations such as **Trail Life USA, American Heritage Girls, Scouts**, and other civic groups could use this space during multi-day park enhancement efforts, helping reinforce the values of service, stewardship, and outdoor education.



Details

- **Inspect and prune hazardous limbs**, remove dead trees, and clean up fallen debris within the pine stand
- Establish a **flat, lightly cleared area** for tent camping that avoids disturbing roots or soil structure
- Install **simple natural boundaries or markers** to define the space
- Add a **small bulletin board or kiosk** for posting park rules, safety notices, and volunteer info
- Consider a **fire-safe cooking area** or fire ring (if permitted) to support overnight or extended stays
- Clearly communicate availability and scheduling protocols with the Town for group use

Benefits

- Provides a **safe and shaded staging area** for volunteer projects and educational programming
- Encourages **youth participation and long-term community ownership** of park stewardship
- Enhances the **health and safety** of a visible stand of trees near the parking lot
- Aligns with the Urban Tree Canopy Plan's goals for **ongoing maintenance and civic engagement** in public green space

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Volunteer and Maintenance Frameworks: <https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- Leave No Trace – Frontcountry Camping Guidelines: <https://lnt.org/why/7-principles/frontcountry/>
- Trail Life USA – Service Project Resources: <https://www.trailifeusa.com/resources>
- Maryland DNR – Group Camping Best Practices: <https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/pages/groupcamping.aspx>

14. Tree Inventory and GIS-Based Tree Management Pilot

Summary

In 2023, the Town of La Plata invested in the development of a comprehensive Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) Plan, laying the groundwork for future planting, maintenance, and policy decisions. This recommendation proposes building on that investment with a **geospatial tree inventory focused within Tilghman Lake Park**. The park will serve as a **pilot location** for developing a town-wide tree inventory program, using GPS-based mapping and detailed data collection to manage the health, risk, and significance of trees within public spaces.

The inventory will focus on **high-priority and high-visibility trees**, such as those along trails, near parking areas, or near playgrounds and infrastructure—locations where tree health or failure could pose risks to visitors. It will also catalog **heritage trees, rare or notable species, and invasives marked for removal**, enabling strategic maintenance, public engagement, and informed decision-making.

Details

- Conduct a **field-based GPS tree inventory** using GIS-enabled mobile data collection tools
- Document trees based on the following attributes:
 - **Species** (Latin name)
 - **Cultivar/Variety** (if applicable)
 - **Common Genus/Species**
 - **Location**
 - GPS coordinates (stored in shapefile or geodatabase)
 - Street address (GIS field)
 - **DBH (Diameter at Breast Height)**
 - Measured to the nearest tenth of an inch
 - **Defects/Disease/Stump Removal Needs**
 - Notes on observed defects, signs of decay, or hazardous conditions
 - **Condition Rating**
 - Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, or Dead
 - **Inventory Date** (MM/DD/YYYY)
 - **Year Planted** (if known)
 - **Utilities/Obstructions**
 - Notes on overhead lines or nearby infrastructure that may impact tree health
- Use this project to establish **repeatable standards and workflows** for expanding the program across the entire town
- Integrate the tree inventory into the **Experience Builder dashboard**, allowing staff and the public to view tree health data and management priorities

Benefits

- Builds on the UTC Plan by creating an **active tree management program**
- Improves **public safety** by identifying and tracking trees near infrastructure and high-traffic areas

- Enhances **long-term maintenance planning** for both arborists and town staff
- Provides a framework for **town-wide GIS tree asset tracking and preservation**
- Supports education and community engagement around tree health, invasive species, and heritage trees

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Data & Mapping Strategy:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- Tree Inventory Field Collection Template (Esri): <https://solutions.arcgis.com/local-government/help/tree-inventory/>
- ANSI A300 Standards for Tree Risk Assessment and Inventory:
https://www.tcia.org/TCIA/Standards/A300_Standards.aspx

15. “Adopt-a-Grid” Cleanup Map and Volunteer Incentive Program

Summary

To encourage ongoing stewardship and community ownership of Tilghman Lake Park (and ultimately other pedestrian-friendly town spaces), this recommendation proposes a **GIS-based "Adopt-a-Grid" cleanup program**. Similar in spirit to "Adopt-a-Highway," this initiative would allow residents, school groups, scout troops, and other volunteers to **select small park grid sections for cleanup**, earn points, and have their contributions recognized through a public-facing dashboard. Participants would submit **before-and-after photos** as proof of work, and optionally report maintenance issues or concerns observed during their cleanup efforts.

This program could be piloted at Tilghman Lake Park and expanded across La Plata’s public spaces, creating a **low-cost, high-impact civic engagement system** powered by GIS.

Details

- Create a **gridded interactive web map** using Experience Builder and ArcGIS Online
 - Each grid (e.g., 25x25 or 50x50 ft) would be selectable by volunteers
 - When a grid is “claimed,” a form is filled out to **schedule a cleanup**
- Volunteers are prompted to:
 - Upload a **before and after photo** of their cleanup
 - Check a box confirming trash was removed and placed in appropriate receptacles
 - Optionally submit **observations** (e.g., broken benches, graffiti, damaged signs, fallen trees, invasive species, etc.)
- Grid is marked with a **timestamped cleanup badge** and credited to the user or group
- Build a **dashboard leaderboard** showing:
 - Top individual and group contributors
 - Number of grids cleaned per week/month
 - Total reported maintenance issues
 - Map of recently cleaned areas and active users
- Offer **recognition or incentives** such as digital badges, town mentions, certificates, or rewards for top contributors
- Promote the program in coordination with local schools, youth groups, and environmental clubs

Benefits

- Encourages **community ownership and volunteerism**
- Creates **routine upkeep** of public green spaces with minimal staff overhead
- Helps identify **maintenance issues quickly** via real-time public feedback
- Strengthens **pride and connection** to town parks and trails
- Supports UTC Plan goals for **sustainable maintenance and public engagement**

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Public Engagement & Volunteer Goals:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>

- ArcGIS Experience Builder + Survey123 Integration: <https://doc.arcgis.com/en/experience-builder/>
- Adopt-a-Spot Cleanup Toolkit (as a model): <https://www.kab.org/programs/adopt-spot>
- Esri Volunteer Web Map Example:
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/2fca64b8fbe848bc922a417c4642d0bc>

16. Forest Cleanup Delineation and Ecosystem Enhancement Plan

Summary

The wooded areas throughout Tilghman Lake Park offer tremendous ecological value, but many zones—particularly along fence lines and trail-adjacent slopes—are cluttered with **dead, fallen, broken, or overcrowded trees** that create hazards, suppress healthy growth, and limit desirable regeneration. This recommendation proposes a **mapped and phased cleanup plan** to guide structured volunteer involvement, professional instruction, and ecological improvement. The goal is not only to restore safety and tree health, but to create a model of **community-supported forest management** that integrates education, hands-on training, and strategic replanting of high-value native species.



Details

- Create a **GIS-based delineation map** identifying forest cleanup zones around the park, prioritizing areas with:
 - Dead or fallen trees along **fencelines or near trails**
 - Diseased, hazardous, or poorly formed trees
 - Overcrowded stands of less desirable or invasive species
- Coordinate with **University of Maryland Extension** or other partners to host a **Game of Logging** event at Tilghman Lake
 - This certified educational program provides safe chainsaw instruction and will bring the wood safely to the ground under trained supervision
- Following tree felling, schedule volunteer cleanup workdays for:
 - **Scouts, Trail Life USA, American Heritage Girls, and community volunteers**
 - Tasks may include log moving, brush piling, mulching, trail-edge replanting, and site prep for future plantings
- Focus replanting on **desirable native tree species** such as white oak, black gum, persimmon, or American hornbeam
- Offer **CE credit opportunities** for volunteers participating in the felling phase who are pursuing or maintaining:
 - MD/DE **Master Logger** certification
 - **Maryland Licensed Tree Expert (LTE)** credential

- **ISA Certified Arborist** status
- Encourage field documentation and skill-building as part of each work day (e.g., using diameter tapes, hazard ID, or species recognition)

Benefits

- Reduces safety risks and improves park aesthetics and infrastructure protection
- Encourages **structured, qualified forest intervention** rather than reactive removal
- Promotes forest resilience and **strategic biodiversity enhancement**
- Creates **multi-tiered volunteer opportunities** with meaningful educational benefits
- Supports certification holders and career-bound youth with **real-world training**
- Aligns with UTC Plan objectives around active management and community participation

Resources

- Urban Tree Canopy Plan – Forest Restoration and Volunteer Involvement:
<https://townoflaplata.org/DocumentCenter/View/1002/La-Plata-Urban-Tree-Canopy-Plan-2023>
- Game of Logging Program Overview (UMD Extension):
<https://extension.umd.edu/resource/game-logging-training-program>
- CEU Opportunities for ISA Members: <https://www.isa-arbor.com/Credentials/Continuing-Education>
- MD Licensed Tree Expert Program:
<https://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/pages/programapps/newtreeexpert.aspx>
- MD-DE Master Logger: <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/maryland-delaware-master-logger-program>

Grant Opportunities

To support this plan’s vision and build on past investments like the 2023 Urban Tree Canopy Plan, the Town of La Plata should actively pursue local, state, and federal grant opportunities. Many proposed improvements—such as native planting, habitat restoration, and community engagement—align well with existing funding programs. This section highlights relevant grants with timelines and funding details to help accelerate implementation and maximize outside support.

Grant Program	Focus Area	Application Period	Funding Level	Link
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	Outdoor recreation areas, park development	Opens April 1, 2025	\$50,000 – \$2,000,000	https://dnr.maryland.gov/land/Pages/LWCF-Grants.aspx
		Due June 25, 2025	1:1 match required	
Chesapeake Bay Trust – Outreach & Restoration	Community engagement + on-the-ground restoration	Rolling (varies by track)	Track 1: up to \$50K	https://cbtrust.org/grants/outreach-and-restoration/
			Track 2: up to \$75K	
			Track 3: up to \$100K	
			Track 4: up to \$125K	
Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants	Community-based watershed restoration	Due May 13, 2025	Varies by project scope	https://www.chesapeakebay.net/files/images/Small-Watershed-Grants-2025.pdf
		by 12:00 PM ET		
MD DNR Grants Gateway	Broad environmental & natural resource grants	Outcome 5: Due Sept 18, 2024	Varies by program	https://dnr.maryland.gov/ccs/Pages/funding/grantsgateway.aspx
		All others: Due Dec 13, 2024		
Chesapeake Conservation & Climate Corps Mini Grant	Environmental service & community leadership	Rolling: Aug 14, 2024 – Mar 7, 2025	Varies by application	https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Corps-Mini-Grant-Application-Package-FY25.pdf
NFWF Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund	Bay watershed restoration, pollution reduction, habitat, community engagement	Dates vary annually	\$40M–\$60M awarded across multiple programs per year	https://www.nfwf.org/programs/chesapeake-bay-stewardshi
		Check for current programs		