



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: Tuesday, April 7, 2026.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. Contact [Gage Harter](#) with any questions.

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Category: \_\_\_\_\_

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Windmill Point County Maritime Recreational Campus**

### **Executive Summary**

Westland Beach at Windmill Point was once home to a public beach and fishing pier, a vibrant hotel and restaurant, and the only marina with direct access to the Chesapeake Bay. Having experienced significant erosion at increasing rates in the decades since, the public beach, fishing pier, hotel, and restaurant have all disappeared into the Chesapeake Bay. The shoreline erosion at Westland Beach has been a subject of study at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in past years. As early as the year 2000 Lancaster County resolved to stabilize and restore the shoreline to protect public infrastructure, the marina, and The Landings condominiums.

In 2020, Lancaster County participated in the Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool (RAFT) organized by the Northern Neck Planning District Commission and conducted by the Universities of Virginia, Old Dominion, and William and Mary. During this resilience planning effort the County identified the project in its resilience action checklist. The actions/projects identified in the RAFT were incorporated as hazard mitigation actions in the 2023 Northern Neck Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). As part of an effort funded through the Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) in Round 2, the Northern Neck Planning District Commission and Lancaster County worked with DCR to incorporate resilience elements into the HMP that led to its approval and subsequent adoption as the County's Resilience Plan in October of 2023.

Concurrently, Lancaster County incorporated the project in its Comprehensive and Strategic Plans. In 2022, the County established the Access to Public Waters Workgroup and set them to task identifying opportunities to increase public access. The workgroup identified this project as top priority and the County prioritized the project in its capital improvement plans in 2022. The County included the project in the 2024 Virginia Outdoors Plan as a featured project.

Years of carefully organized and executed planning efforts led to the project's readiness for implementation and eligibility for funding. In 2024 Lancaster County applied to CFPF in Round 5 and requested funding assistance from Friends of the Rappahannock (FOR) and Rappahannock River Roundtable in an effort to finally see this much needed project come to fruition. The County believes that the project and the planning processes that brought about its inception exemplify the objectives and goals of the Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan and the Virginia Outdoors Plan.

### **Community Goals**

Lancaster County's Hazard Mitigation and Resilience Plans lay out clear mitigation goals to protect public and private property from the impacts of coastal flooding and erosion. Windmill Point represents one of the most vulnerable areas of the County to these impacts and as such made this project an obvious priority. The County's Comprehensive and Strategic Plans lay out clear community goals for increasing access to public waters and providing quality recreational opportunities to its residents to improve quality of life and provide for more active lifestyles. As such, the County established the Access to Public Waters Workgroup who are tasked with identifying public access opportunities to establish public-private partnerships to achieve our recreational goals. One of seven recreation and public access projects currently under

development, Westland Beach was top priority and was included in the 2024 VOP as a featured project.

### **Recreation Access and Experiences**

Lancaster County's Comprehensive and Strategic Plans lay out a clear impetus for advancing recreation access and outdoor experiences, which is improving quality of life through outdoor experiences and opportunities for more active lifestyles. Windmill Point County Maritime Recreational Campus provides recreational access and outdoor experiences for power boats, paddle powered vessels, beach goers, swimmers, bird watchers, recreational fishers, and more. Local businesses and educational institutions can utilize the sites to provide outdoor activities and experiences that showcase the Chesapeake Bay living.

### **Trails/Water Access**

Lancaster County's Comprehensive and Strategic Plans call for the creation of a wide array of recreational amenities to meet the needs of a wide demographic. Whether water access, hiking trails, multimodal trails, to public parks, sports facilities, disc golf and more. Many of these amenities are currently under development. Windmill Point County Maritime Recreational Campus provides myriad ways for residents and visitors to access public waters. Westland Beach provides beach access and a fishing pier, Frederick Adjointian Boat Ramp provides power boat access, and Windmill Point Canoe/Kayak Launch provides paddle vessel access. All three amenities are connected via the Little Oyster Creek Water Trail (<https://virginiawatertrails.org/northern-neck/>)

### **Open Space and Resources Protection**

Lancaster County's Comprehensive Plan calls for the preservation of open space and the protection of natural resources. The intention is to protect these for future generations and to ensure our economic sustainability. The County's four economic pillars are agriculture, aquaculture, silviculture, and tourism, all of which are dependent on the preservation and protection of our open space and resources. Windmill Point County Maritime Recreational Campus exemplifies this through the restoration of the beach and dune environment which once dominated the site and protected public and private property. The County purchased an oyster lease in order to install the fishing pier and is working with Friends of the Rappahannock on an oyster restoration project that includes another park facility. The County intends to restore a portion of the old lighthouse and install interpretive signage that shares the history of Windmill Point as a destination for oyster watermen and our heritage as a fishing community.

### **Leveraging Funds and Involving Partners**

Lancaster County and the Access to Public Waters Workgroup prioritized opportunities for public-private partnerships. With over 400 miles of shoreline and much of it under private ownership, leveraging private partnerships is essential to accomplishing our goal of proliferating access to public waters. As a small rural local government, the County is limited in its ability to fund large-scale recreation projects. As such, leveraging grant funds and private contributions is essential. Westland Beach exemplifies the ability to leverage partnerships and funding opportunities to bring well laid out plans to fruition.

The project was only made possible by the strong partnerships with neighboring landowners, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, the Army Corps of Engineers and the untiring work of the county Board of Supervisors, county staff and the Access to Public Waters Workgroup.

The primary function of the public-private partnership between Lancaster County, RL Properties, LLC, and The Landings Owners Association was to protect public and private property from ongoing erosion through the restoration of the beach and dune at Windmill Point. The secondary function was to create a public amenity that added to the existing public amenities at Windmill Point (Boat Ramp, Canoe/Kayak Launch, and Marina).

Expanding the only county public beach by 20 times thanks to a donation of a perpetual easement by RL Properties, LLC (Windmill Point Marina) creating the only premiere Chesapeake Bay public beach in the Northern Neck. Land for a 50-space parking lot and public restroom, thanks to a donation of a perpetual easement by The Landings Owners Association.

State funds: <b>DCR CFPF (\$1,623,383); DEQ IJIA BMP Implementation for MEB (\$300,000)</b>
Local funds <b>(\$2,876,617)</b>
Non-profit foundation funds: Friends of the Rappahannock
Other: <b>Federal Funds: NFWF (\$100,000)</b>

### **Accessibility and Barrier-free Recreation Experience**

With a predominantly aging and also a large low-income population, Lancaster County has prioritized accessibility and barrier-free recreation. As such, all recreational amenities provide full ADA compliant access at no cost.

### **Recreation Facilities or Amenities**

The benefits of the Westland Beach project include:

- 1) Expanding the only county public beach by 20 times thanks to a donation of a perpetual easement by RL Property, LLC creating the only premiere Chesapeake Bay public beach in the Northern Neck.
- 2) Land for a 50-space parking lot and comfort station, thanks to a donation of a perpetual easement by The Landings Owners Association.
- 3) A 450' long fishing and observation pier in the Rappahannock River complete with fish cleaning stations and a salt water fishing license.
- 4) Restoration and revegetation of the beach and dunes.
- 5) Dredging of the channel to the marina and public boat ramp, providing the majority of the sand to restore the public beach.
- 6) Reestablishment of the navigation marks at the channel entrance to provide safer access to the county boat ramp and Windmill Point marina.
- 7) Amenities and features of all county parks are compliant with the American Disabilities Act.

**Technical value and transferability**

The extensive and long-range planning, leveraging of public-private partnerships and funding exhibit what is possible when local governments, even rural ones, set out to provide quality amenities to residents for outdoor experiences and promoting active lifestyles. We hope that this project is replicable in other communities, in fact, we are currently replicating it elsewhere in our community.

**Economic Benefits**

Lancaster County conducted an ROI study that found Public benefits of \$3.22 in returns to each dollar invested.

**Figures:**



*Figure 1: Westland Beach Point 1965*



*Figure 2: Westland Beach at Windmill Point 2022*



*Figure 3: Westland Beach and Marina 2022*



*Figure 4: Westland Beach at Windmill Point 2025*



*Figure 4: Westland Beach at Windmill Point 2025*