

VISION FOR FUTURE USE

Hidden Lane Landfill Superfund Site Sterling, Virginia

DECEMBER 2019

Introduction

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VA DEQ) and Loudoun County are gathering community input on potential future use options for the Hidden Lane Landfill Superfund site to inform final cleanup, planning and potential redevelopment. The privately owned, wooded 149-acre property is situated along the Potomac River between two residential neighborhoods in Loudoun County, Virginia.

The Hidden Lane Landfill operated from 1971 to 1984 as a disposal facility. County and state officials identified contaminants from the site in the drinking water wells of homes in the adjacent Broad Run Farms neighborhood in 1989, and the site was added to EPA's National Priorities List (Superfund List) in 2008. Since 2008, federal and state agencies have been involved in investigating, monitoring and planning remedial actions to address potential exposure to site-related contaminants.

As EPA Region 3 approached completion of remedial planning in 2018, EPA Superfund Redevelopment sponsored a reuse planning process to support Loudoun County, the property owner, and the community to identify potential future use options for the site. Activities included:

- Engaging key stakeholders to identify preliminary future use goals for the property.
- Gathering input from community members and residents through a public meeting and an online survey.
- Analyzing site conditions that could inform the future use of the site.
- Developing a future use suitability map to identify areas for redevelopment.
- Summarizing information gathered in this vision report.

Purpose and Goals

The goal for reuse planning was to better understand the community's vision for interim use and a long-term use of the site. Overarching goals identified during the process include:

- Complete remedial activity and ensure ongoing maintenance, safety and protection to prevent additional contamination or risk.
- Ensure that surrounding neighborhoods' concerns, such as potential for increased traffic, parking, privacy, and protection of the remedy, are addressed in potential future use plans, including redevelopment and recreational uses.
- Maximize market value to increase value of surrounding properties.



Figure 1. Aerial photograph of the Hidden Lane Landfill Superfund site and adjacent neighborhoods. Source: Loudoun County Pictometry, 2017.



Figure 2. The October 2018 stakeholder meeting with representatives from surrounding neighborhoods, developers/builders, trails and recreation groups, Loudoun County, VA DEQ and EPA to discuss future use goals and site suitability.

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OVERVIEW OF SITE FEATURES

The future use opportunities for the Hidden Lane Landfill Superfund site are informed by site features and local land use policy and zoning. This section outlines key future use considerations.

Remedial Features

Monitoring wells and investigative areas are located on the site. As the investigation for the source of contamination continues, other remedial features might be identified. Anticipated remedial activities include installing a county water line for residences affected by the groundwater plume and addressing landfill cap areas.

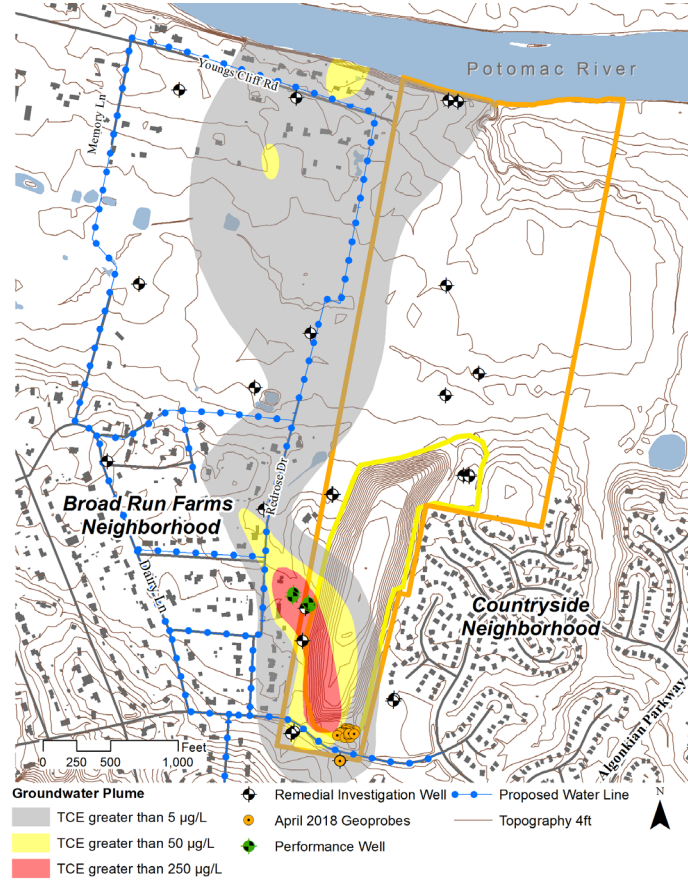


Figure 3. Map showing the groundwater plume and other remedial features.

Site Features

The northern part of the site is located in a floodplain and includes extensive wetlands. Most of the site is forested and supports wildlife habitat. The capped landfill area plateaus at an elevation of 280 feet above sea level. The historic Jenkins Cemetery is located on site behind the Countryside neighborhood.

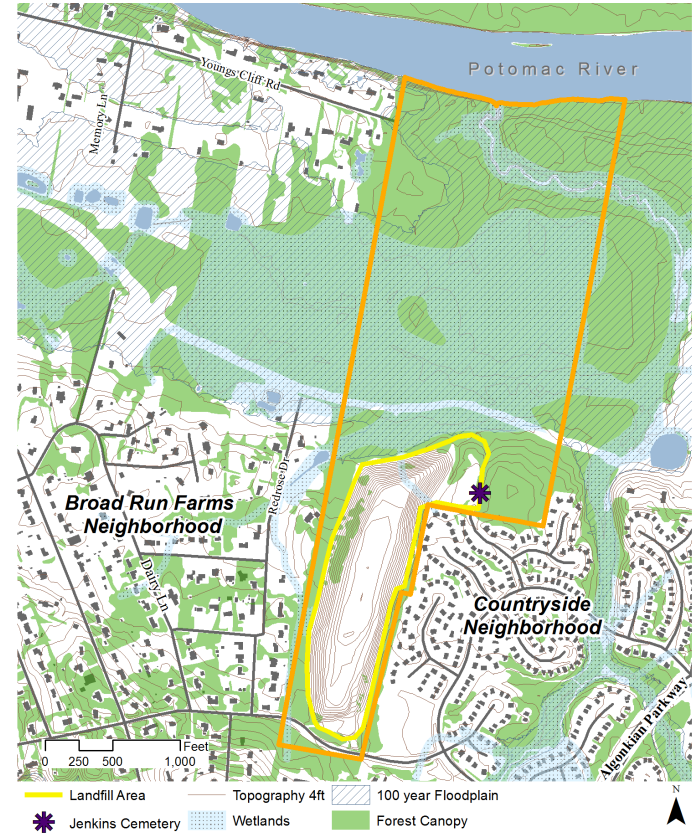


Figure 4. Map showing site features.

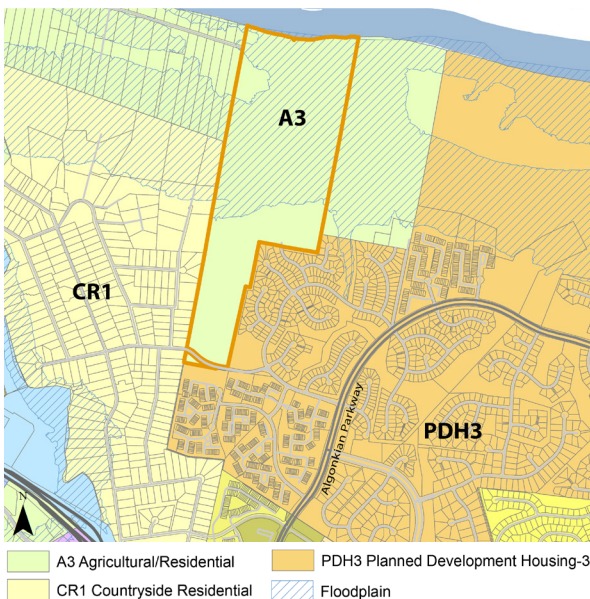


Figure 5. Map showing current zoning of the surrounding area.

Zoning

The site's existing zoning is A3 (Agricultural or Low Density Residential) with a minimum 3-acre lot size. Other uses are allowed by special exception. The Loudoun County 2019 General Plan identifies this area as the Suburban Neighborhood place type, which permits a residential density of up to four dwelling units per acre and up to six dwelling units per acre for infill development.

The floodplain overlay on the northern floodplain area restricts residential and commercial development. Development for recreation uses is allowed per Section 4-1505 of the Zoning Ordinance, including:

- Agriculture.
- Passive and active recreation (no more than 3% impervious surface).
- Certain utilities and roads.
- Parking areas and structures (not exceeding 840 square feet) that are accessory to permitted uses.

Development in a floodplain cannot change base flood level (unless exceptions are sought and approved according to code).

POTENTIAL FUTURE USE SUITABILITY

This map identifies potential future use zones based on site features, land-use policy and zoning considerations, which are described in more detail in the table below. Zone A includes the former landfill area and is likely most suitable for low-impact recreation use. Zone B includes areas outside the floodplain and landfill as potentially most suitable for infill development. See page six for additional considerations. The largest zone, Zone C, includes land in the floodplain that adjoins the Potomac River. This zone provides valuable wildlife habitat and could support passive recreation, agricultural or conservation uses.

Potential Future Use Suitability Zones

Zone A - Landfill Area

- Level ground (cap considerations)
- Steep slope (cap considerations)
- Buffer

Zone B - Potential Development

- Infill development (zoning considerations)

Zone C - Floodplain / Wetlands

- Limited passive recreation (floodplain considerations)



Figure 6. Map showing potential future use zones.

Zone	Size (approx.)	Remedial Considerations	Future Use Considerations
A Landfill Area	40-41 acres (9 acres plateau)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landfill cap must be maintained to prevent exposure. Load-bearing capacity is uncertain. Settlement and sink holes likely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely suitable for recreational uses that do not puncture the cap. Cap may present constraints for building structures.
B Potential for Development	16-17 acres (all) 1 - 0.8 ac 2 - 5 ac 3 - 8 ac	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas 1-2 are within the groundwater plume. Drinking water restrictions should be put in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas adjoin existing neighborhoods. Proposed zoning may permit higher density on buildable area due to floodplain acreage. Areas 1 and 2 may require access through the floodplain. Jenkins Cemetery requires access (Area 3).
C Floodplain/ Wetland	91-92 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable for agriculture, open space or passive recreation (trails, picnic areas) with minimal structures. Suitable for active recreation with approval. Changes to grade require special exception. Likely high-value habitat area, particularly in wetlands. Waterfront access (about 1,400 linear feet).

Table 1. Future use considerations.

POTENTIAL FUTURE USE OPTIONS

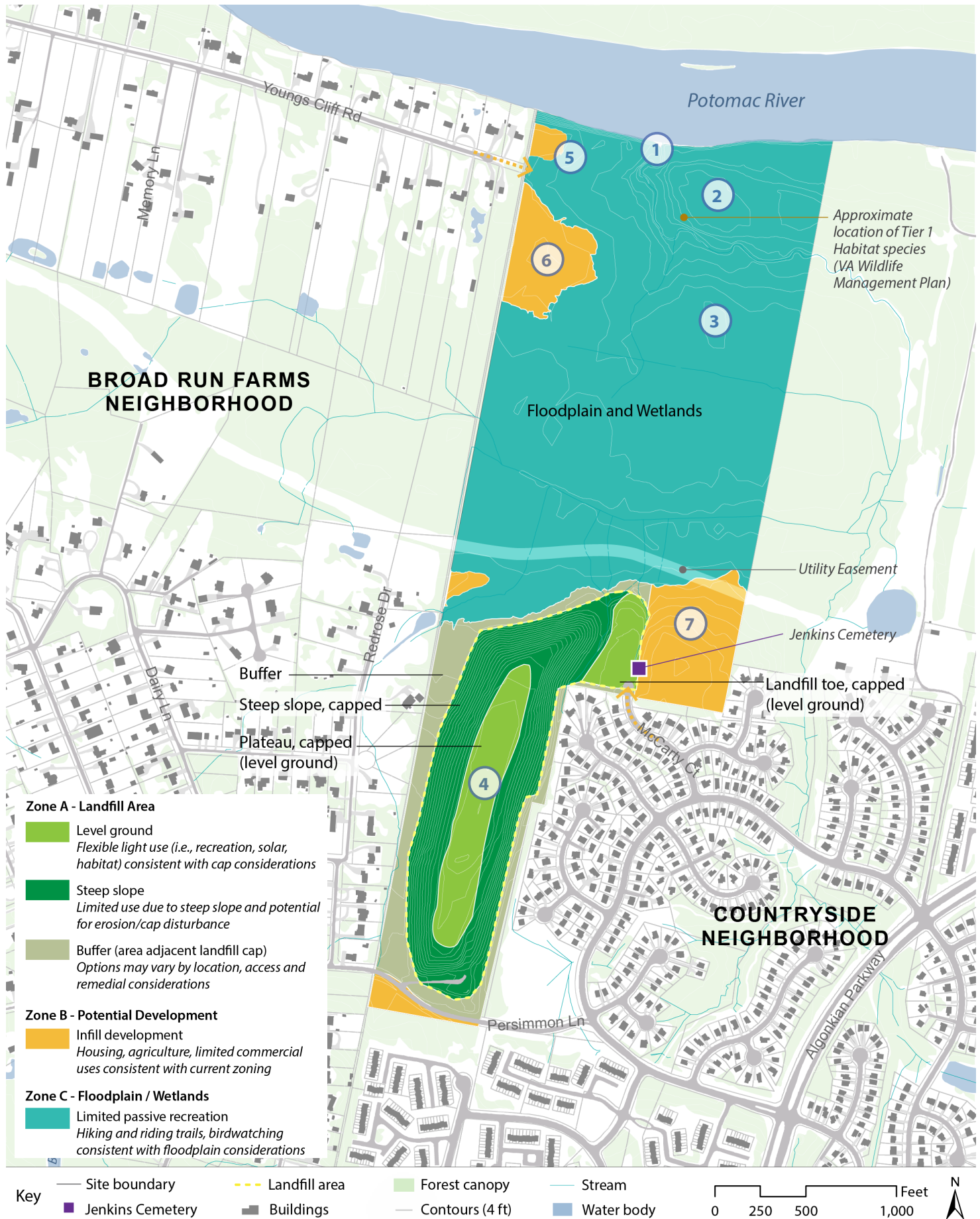


Figure 7. Map showing potential future use options.

Community members and stakeholders prioritized recreation and conservation, both of which are highly compatible future uses for the majority of the site, during public meetings and in the online survey. Participants suggested the following recreation and conservation uses for the site during the reuse planning process. The map on the left identifies areas on site that are suitable for the suggested uses based on physical features, regulations and land-use policies.

- 1 River Access**
Potential Potomac River access for kayaks and other non-motorized boats along the site's riverfront area.



- 3 Wildlife Habitat Conservation**
Potential to protect valuable wildlife habitat area. Suggestions included establishing a conservation easement and a designated wildlife refuge area.



- 2 Trails and Recreation**
Potential for a trail network (walking, bicycle and horseback riding trails) and passive or low-impact recreation (such as bird watching) in the floodplain and wetlands area of the site.



- 4 Landfill Plateau Options**
Potential options for the landfill plateau area include passive or low-impact recreation such as a wildflower meadow with walking trails, more active recreation such as playing fields, and community solar power to generate power for adjacent homes.



Potomac Heritage Trail

From the mouth of the Potomac River at the Chesapeake Bay to the Allegheny Highlands of Pennsylvania, the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail incorporates 710 miles of existing and planned trails managed by federal, state, local and non-profit entities.

An extension of the Potomac Heritage Trail along the riverfront and through the property has been proposed by the Potomac Heritage Trail Association to help create a significant connection to the Potomac Heritage Trail.



Figure 8. Map showing the site and the Potomac Heritage Trail.

POTENTIAL FUTURE USE OPTIONS

There are three non-contiguous areas where infill development is allowable under current local land use and zoning regulations (see Zone B - Potential Development in the Potential Future Uses map on page four). These three areas (labeled 5, 6 and 7) are outside the floodplain and likely accessible by public roads and suitable for agricultural or low-density residential use. The maps and zoning information below provide additional information about the type of infill development currently allowed. The *Loudoun County 2019 General Plan* identifies a residential density of up to four dwelling units per acre and up to six dwelling units per acre for infill development in this area. Any zoning change to allow other uses would require legislative process and approval.

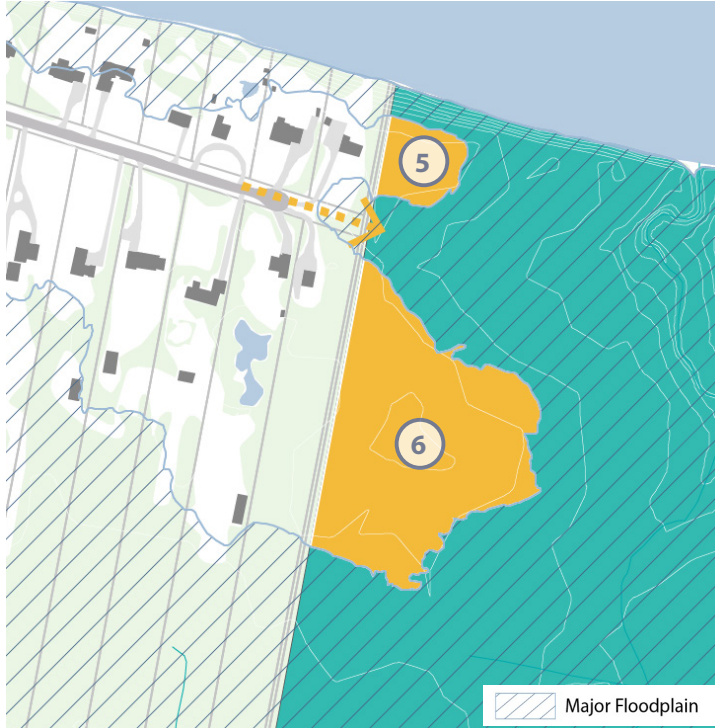


Figure 9. Map showing potential infill development areas on the northwestern portion of the Hidden Lane Superfund site.



Figure 11. Map showing potential infill development areas on the southeastern portion of the Hidden Lane Superfund site.

Potential Infill Development Areas 5 and 6

This area is accessed by Youngs Cliff Road and zoned A3 (Agricultural or Low Density Residential) with a 3-acre lot minimum allowed by right. A special use permit would be required for other uses not specified in the zoning ordinance.



Figure 10. View along the residential Youngs Cliff Road toward the site. Source: Google Maps.

Potential Infill Development Area 7

This area is accessed by McCarty Court and is also zoned A3 (Agricultural or Low Density Residential) with a 3-acre lot minimum allowed by right. A special use permit would be required for other uses not specified in the zoning ordinance. This area is also adjacent to the Countryside neighborhood, zoned Planned Development - Housing 3, which is a denser residential land use. The Jenkins Cemetery is located in this area and is accessed by McCarty Court.



Figure 12. View from the site entrance along the residential McCarty Court.

Following a public meeting to review future use opportunities for the site in April 2019, community members were invited to participate in a survey to provide input on potential future uses. Of the 186 survey respondents, 85% indicated that they live in Broad Run Farms or Countryside, the two neighborhoods adjacent to the site.

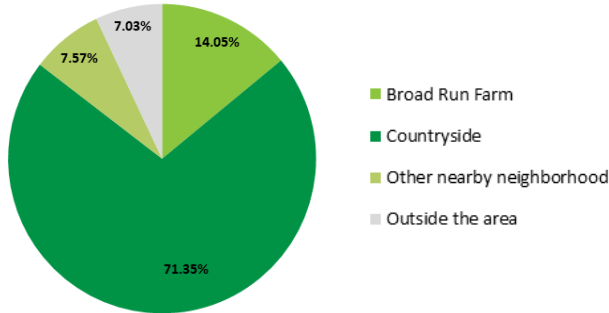


Figure 13. Pie-chart summary of where survey respondents live.

The survey results reinforced the feedback provided at the earlier public meeting, which focused on the following three themes.

Conservation and Recreation as Priorities

Over 75% of participants indicated that passive recreation and conservation are most compatible with the surrounding properties. Many participants supported both wildlife habitat and low-impact recreation on the property. Respondents noted that there are few places in Loudoun County that protect and provide access to natural assets. Most participants prefer passive recreation to active recreation. People were particularly interested in a trail network. There were also suggestions for a dog park, bike paths and river access for non-motorized boats.

Traffic, Noise and Safety

Survey participants expressed concern about future uses that might cause negative impacts related to additional traffic, noise, light pollution and safety in the surrounding neighborhoods. Participants value the privacy and quiet of their neighborhoods. Participants also shared that future use of the site should ensure the protection of human health.

Strong Opposition to Residential and Commercial Development

Most survey participants expressed strong opposition to residential and commercial development on the property. Over 75% of participants indicated housing infill is not compatible with the surrounding area. Many participants are concerned that additional housing could result in more traffic and disrupt the peaceful quality of their neighborhood. Several participants expressed their disapproval for development of any kind, including solar power generation. Over 30% of participants identified solar power generation as one of the most compatible future uses.



Figure 14. Community meeting held April 9, 2019 for the Hidden Lane Landfill Superfund site.

What types of future uses are most compatible with surrounding properties?

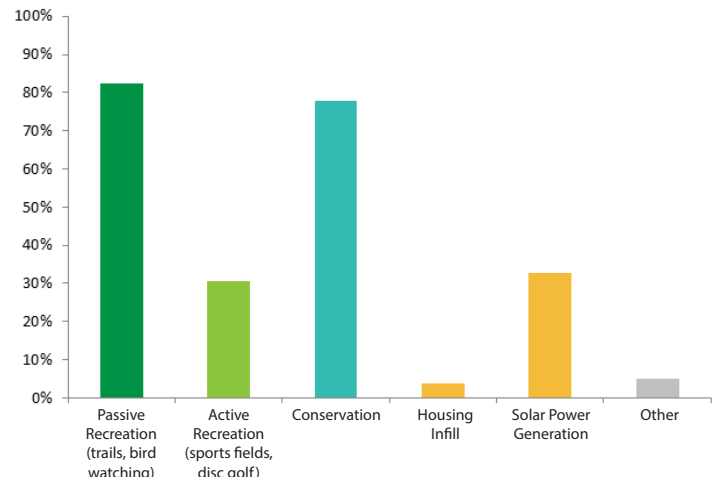


Figure 15. Summary of survey respondents' preferences.

Are there specific uses that are not compatible with the surrounding area?

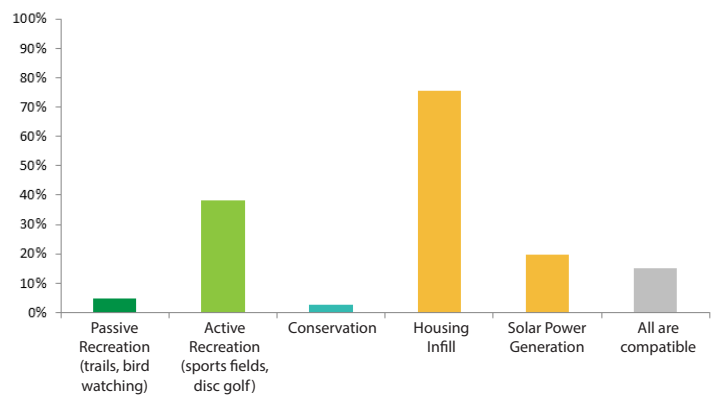


Figure 16. Summary of survey respondents' preferences.

The Hidden Lane Landfill visioning process identified suitable potential future uses based on site characteristics and local land use policy and gathered community input on future use goals and preferences. As with any property, any future use is subject to local land-use policy and zoning ordinances. Additionally, any future use will also need to be coordinated with EPA and VA DEQ to ensure any remedial features remain protective, including monitoring wells and the landfill cap.

The information gathered during the visioning process can help EPA and VA DEQ better understand the community's interest in future use when evaluating any potential future cleanup approaches. The outcome of the visioning process also provides Loudoun County staff and representatives with a clearer understanding of future use options and community interests.

Superfund Redevelopment

EPA does not decide or pay for the future land use of properties after a cleanup but supports the safe redevelopment of Superfund sites through tools and technical assistance. Sometimes, inclusion of property within a Superfund site is incorrectly perceived to limit reuse of the property; however, there are legal provisions available to successfully manage liability risk. Parties interested in purchasing or developing the property should contact the EPA Region 3 Superfund Redevelopment Coordinator or site team to better understand next steps for acquiring and developing the property and Superfund liability protections that are available (see For More Information for contact information).

Additional information for prospective purchasers is available online: <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/documents/top-10-ques.pdf>.

Loudoun County Planning and Zoning

Loudoun County's Department of Planning and Zoning can provide additional information about:

- The range of uses allowed under current zoning.
- The process for land development applications for rezonings and special exceptions.
- Assistance available to property owners for the management of historic, archaeological and agricultural/forestral resources.
- The recently adopted *Loudoun County 2019 General Plan*.

For more information, visit:
<https://www.loudoun.gov/123/Planning-Zoning>.

Acknowledgments

The future use ideas and considerations summarized in this report were provided by community residents, local stakeholders and organizations, and local government representatives from Loudoun County.

For More Information

For more information about the Hidden Lane Landfill Superfund site, please contact the EPA site team. Additional site information is available on the EPA site profile page at: www.epa.gov/superfund/hiddenlane.

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Superfund Redevelopment

For more information about tools and resources to support the redevelopment of Superfund sites, please visit: www.epa.gov/superfund-redevelopment-initiative

Or contact:

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