



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Maryland Department of Planning to Hold Listening Session in Howard County to Discuss *A Better Maryland* Development Plan

Citizens Encouraged to Attend Tonight's 7 p.m. Meeting at Howard Community College

(January 23, 2018) Baltimore, MD – The Maryland Department of Planning (Planning) is currently engaging local officials, staff, and residents in the new state development planning process, *A Better Maryland*.

Tonight's listening session will be held in Howard County at the Howard Community College Health Sciences Building (Room 114) at 7 p.m. Planning kicked off the listening session outreach last fall.

The purpose of the outreach and overall statewide dialogue is to connect with stakeholders and solicit feedback about the plan and how it can help local governments and state agencies better meet local planning needs.

"We look forward to hearing from Howard County citizens tonight to find out how the new state development plan can support economic development while preserving resources and improving quality of life," said Special Secretary of Smart Growth, Wendi Peters. "It is critical for the State to listen to local needs and view issues from their perspective; only then can we provide the most valuable assistance."

At the listening sessions, attendees view a short presentation and interact with planning staff and other stakeholders using an instant polling exercise and discussion questions.

The overall effort consists of a series of 24 outreach events in every Maryland county and Baltimore City through spring 2018.

As part of this initiative, the ABetter.Maryland.gov website was launched, where stakeholders can review the project purpose and methodology, find out about upcoming listening sessions, read summaries of session input, and complete a [survey](#) to participate in the *A Better Maryland* plan.

The survey remains open throughout this spring and is an excellent way for citizens to become involved if they cannot attend a listening session or they prefer to provide an online comment. The outreach is designed to provide convenient and frequent access to make engagement meaningful and consistent.

“We are excited about tonight’s meeting in Howard County so we can continue to hear local issues that impact every corner of the state,” said Acting Secretary of Planning, Rob McCord.

The next listening sessions include Kent County on January 30, Queen Anne’s County on February 13 and Caroline County on February 15.

For additional information, including meeting times and locations, please visit www.abetter.maryland.gov. The website also includes notes and discussions from the prior listening sessions.

A Better Maryland is a two-year project initiated by [Governor Hogan’s Executive Order 01.01.2017.18](#) in July 2017, with an anticipated completion date in July 2019. Planning is working closely with the public, local governments, state agencies and other stakeholders, the [Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission](#), the [Maryland Municipal League](#), and the [Maryland Association of Counties](#) to develop and maintain a productive dialogue throughout the effort.

For questions about ***A Better Maryland*** or to find out when Planning is visiting your community, please contact Chuck Boyd, Director of Planning Coordination, (chuck.boyd@maryland.gov) at 410-767-1401.

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