



# MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

2008 Municipal  
Smart Growth  
Survey Results



# Survey Response from Municipalities

33% Response Rate\*

- **Allegany** – Cumberland
- **Caroline** – Greensboro, Federalsburg
- **Carroll** – Hampstead, Mt. Airy, New Windsor, Taneytown, Westminster
- **Cecil** – Cecilton, Charlestown, Perryville
- **Charles** – Indian Head
- **Dorchester** – Cambridge
- **Frederick** – Brunswick, Frederick, Middletown, Myersville, Thurmont
- **Garrett** – Friendsville
- **Harford** – Bel Air
- **Kent** – Betterton, Millington
- **Montgomery** – Gaithersburg
- **Prince George's** – College Park, Edmonston, Greenbelt, Laurel, Seat Pleasant
- **Queen Anne's** – Sudlersville
- **St. Mary's** – Leonardtown
- **Somerset** – Princess Anne
- **Talbot** – Easton, Trappe
- **Washington** - Hagerstown
- **Wicomico** - Salisbury

\* The Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission is responsible for planning and zoning in 38 of the 46 municipalities in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties. Another 10 towns do not exercise their planning authority.

# Growth Trends & Perceptions over past 10 years

1. How has development affected your municipality's "quality of life"?

0%	Seriously Degraded
21%	Modestly Degraded
18%	No Effect
52%	Modestly Improved
9%	Seriously Improved

2. What level of growth pressure has your municipality experienced relative to past long term trends in your area?

0%	Much Lower
11%	Lower
24%	About the Same
49%	Higher
16%	Much Higher

3. What is the local attitude towards growth in general in your municipality?

5%	Very Negative
12%	Somewhat Negative
42%	Divided
36%	Somewhat Positive
5%	Very Positive

4. What is the local attitude towards Smart Growth specifically?

3%	Very Negative
3%	Somewhat Negative
33%	Divided
52%	Somewhat Positive
9%	Very Positive

# Implementation of Smart Growth Principles

## What are your municipality's most significant growth management challenges?

- 21% – Adequacy of Infrastructure
- 19% – Amount of Growth
- 18% – Type of Growth (land-use mix, density, etc.)
- 15% – Location of Growth
- 14% – Citizen Support for Growth Management Measures
- 13% – Political Support for Growth Management Measures

## How has your municipality done in implementing Smart Growth Principles?

- 13% Little or no progress
- 24% Slight Progress, additional effort needed
- 34% Moderate progress, improvement possible
- 29% Planning and growth completely based on Smart Growth principles



**What are the  
Major  
Impediments  
to  
Implementing  
Smart Growth  
in your City or  
Town?**

*Listed in order from largest to smallest  
impediments:*

- **Education of Citizens**
- **Citizen Opposition**
- **Education of Elected Officials**
- **Lack of Staff or financial resources**
- **Lack of sewer capacity**
- **Lack of water capacity**
- **Lack of Political Will**
- **Local land use codes & ordinances**
- **Approval of water/sewer master plan**
- **Education of appointed officials**
- **PFA designations**



# Effective Growth Management Tools



## Five most important tools in order of importance:

- #1- Comprehensive master plans, APFO, annexation plans, water & sewer allocation policies.
- #2 – Building/zoning codes & ordinances, infrastructure inadequacies, cluster development policies.
- #3 – Floating zones, downtown zones, county water & sewer plans, impact fees for education & public safety.
- #4 – Environmental/Stormwater management programs, local land use authority.
- #5 – Smart growth ordinance, Tax Increment Financing.



## Growth Management Tools: *Absent or Need Strengthening*

- Development should be prioritized where infrastructure exists, i.e. water & sewer, not well & septic outside PFA's
- More emphasis on regional transit.
- More funding from the state for planning activities.
- More regional cooperation between counties and municipalities in terms of water & sewer and transit plans.
- Development excise & impact fee authority.
- More flexible zoning ordinances to facilitate mixed use and infill development.



# Regional Planning Efforts

- Port Towns Sector Planning Committee
- Eastern Shore Regional Councils
- BRAC Planning Workgroups
- Joint Planning Meetings with County Planners/COG Meetings
- Municipal Planning within Counties
- Maryland Municipal League/Mayors Meetings



# State Smart Growth, Land Use and Environmental Laws

**What is the appropriate role of the State in land use planning?**

- 8% State should have no role
- 70% State should provide technical assistance & advice
- 22% State should exercise limited approval authority over comprehensive plans and land use decisions
- 0% State should have extensive control

**Do current criteria for designating PFAs as applied to annexed land further Smart Growth principles?**

- 75% Yes
- 25% No



**Does the current State aid system encourage new growth in PFA's?**

- 75% Yes
- 25% No

**Are State environmental laws and regulations properly integrated with Smart Growth principles?**

- 40% Yes
- 60% No

**Does the State provide adequate aid and technical assistance to help comply with State land use and environmental laws?**

- 55% Yes
- 45% No

## State Policies or Actions that are still needed...

- Revitalization and assistance from Office of Smart Growth.
- Policies to encourage development at transit centers.
- State funding for unfunded State mandates.
- A recognition on the part of State agencies that “one size does NOT fit all”.
- Direct State funding to local jurisdictions rather than directing funding to State agencies for programs.
- More infrastructure funding.
- Make Community Legacy Program a grant program again.
- Municipal Growth element is good but more help is desperately needed to develop element in time.
- Tools to determine and measure whether Smart Growth goals are really being met around the State.



# *Final Thoughts....*



- Mandates do not work without manpower and money
- Municipalities need a direct voice in obtaining State funding for needed infrastructure improvements in and around our cities and towns.
- If we can't make Smart Growth work, we are headed towards a Maryland built on one-acre residential lots on private wells and septic systems.
- “Smart Growth” must be synonymous with “Sustainable Development” as we head into the future.