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PRESS RELEASE



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STATE PLANNING UNVEILS BLOG ON GROWTH, PRESERVATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

“Smart Growth Maryland” the Latest in Agency’s Emerging Social Media Portfolio

BALTIMORE, MD (November 16, 2009) – The Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) today announced a new blog called Smart Growth Maryland that will be featured on its redesigned website, Planning.Maryland.gov. Subtitled “Encouraging a smart, green and growing future for the Land of Pleasant Living,” the blog will feature posts and links dealing with the topics that affect the future of growth and conservation in Maryland.

“This blog is part of an approach at MDP to enhance our outreach and our service to Maryland residents and growth stakeholders,” said Secretary of Planning, Richard E. Hall. “We intend Smart Growth Maryland to inform and to invite and prompt a broader discussion about planning, land-use policy and historic, agricultural and environmental resource protection in Maryland – beyond planners and policy-makers.”

The purpose of the Smart Growth Maryland blog is to answer questions, provoke thought and action and spur dialogue about issues that often don't get discussed day to day because of their long-term nature. These issues do have a profound impact on quality of life in Maryland in the present and the future. Readers are encouraged to comment on the blog and to become a part of the dialogue itself.

“We wholeheartedly invite visitors to comment on the blog as long as they are over age 13 and to do so within the bounds of taste and respect for others” stated Andrew Ratner, Director of Communications and Education at the department. “A major goal of the blog is to better develop the connection between the work of state, county and town planners and its effect on residents' lives and their communities.”

MDP will update the Smart Growth Maryland blog frequently with comments, photos and video from employees of the Department of Planning and others. The blog is the latest tool in a growing social media toolbox offered by MDP to the public. Other tools include social networking at www.twitter.com/SmartGrowthMD and www.twitter.com/mdcensus and photo-sharing at www.flickr.com/photos/marylandplanning.

Smart Growth Maryland can be linked to directly at planning.maryland.gov/blog.

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