

# Welcome!

# Sustainable Growth Network

*Virtual Meeting*

*September 4th 2025, 11:00am*

*Meeting is being recorded*

# Agenda

## Sustainable Growth Network Meeting

- ▶ Perspectives on Sustainable Growth in Maryland
- ▶ September Discussion Topic: Comprehensive Planning in Maryland
- ▶ MDP Updates
- ▶ Next Steps

*The Sustainable Growth Network (SGN) serves as a collaborative forum committed to advancing sustainable growth policy and practice in Maryland.*

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# **Perspectives on Sustainable Growth in Maryland**

# Perspectives on Sustainable Growth in Maryland

## Sustainable Growth Network – 05/29/25 Meeting Inputs

MDP suggested questions for the SGN to consider:

- ▶ A majority of the responses appear to be negative.
- ▶ Why has this direction occurred in Maryland? How does Maryland compare to other states?
- ▶ What policy has supported/limited this direction?
- ▶ What should the state do to reverse this trend?
- ▶ What should local jurisdictions do?

What word would you use to describe MD's growth pattern?

More compacted   Disconnectec  
Haphazard   No mixture  
Sprawly   Uneven   Piecemeal  
NIMBY   Suburban   Choked  
Slow   Sprawl   Unaffordable  
Sporadic   inconsistent  
McMansions   Not connected  
Inequitable

# Perspectives on Sustainable Growth in Maryland

## Sustainable Growth Network – 05/29/25 Meeting Inputs

### Topic Categories of Interest

- ▶ Roles – *who are the planners, implementers, influencers?*
- ▶ Planning – comp plans, zoning, master plans
- ▶ Implementation – Metrics
- ▶ Approaches – infill, connectivity, pilots
- ▶ External Forces – nimbyism

### Next SGN meeting topic

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Metrics and implementation

Pilot program    Comp plans

Infill development

Implementation

Zoning

Connectivity    Master plans

Nimbyism

Know your role

# Perspectives on Sustainable Growth in Maryland

## 2025 MDP Regional Planner Roundtables

- ▶ 6 regions, 82 participants over 2 months, followed by a survey with 49 responses
- ▶ Hot Topics
  - **Comprehensive planning should be simplified**, less rigid, supported by dedicated state agency resources and timely engagement
  - The **housing crisis demands interjurisdictional collaboration** across all levels of government
  - Local governments **cannot manage the pressure from solar development, data center proliferation, and sewer capacity limitations** *without support*



*Images from the Spring 2025 Regional Planner Roundtables*



# Perspectives on Sustainable Growth in Maryland

## Maryland Department of Planning - Role and Direction

### MDP Roles

- ▶ Develop State Policy
- ▶ Advise on Technical Subject Areas
- ▶ Prepare Guidance Documents
- ▶ Review Plans
- ▶ Provide Data & Mapping
- ▶ Convene & Facilitate

### MDP 2026 Priorities to Advance SG

- ▶ Facilitate Discussions on Land Use & Growth Issues
- ▶ Advance Best Practices & Policy
- ▶ Develop Implementation Guides
- ▶ Share Data & Analysis
- ▶ Understand Local Interests, Issues & Variability

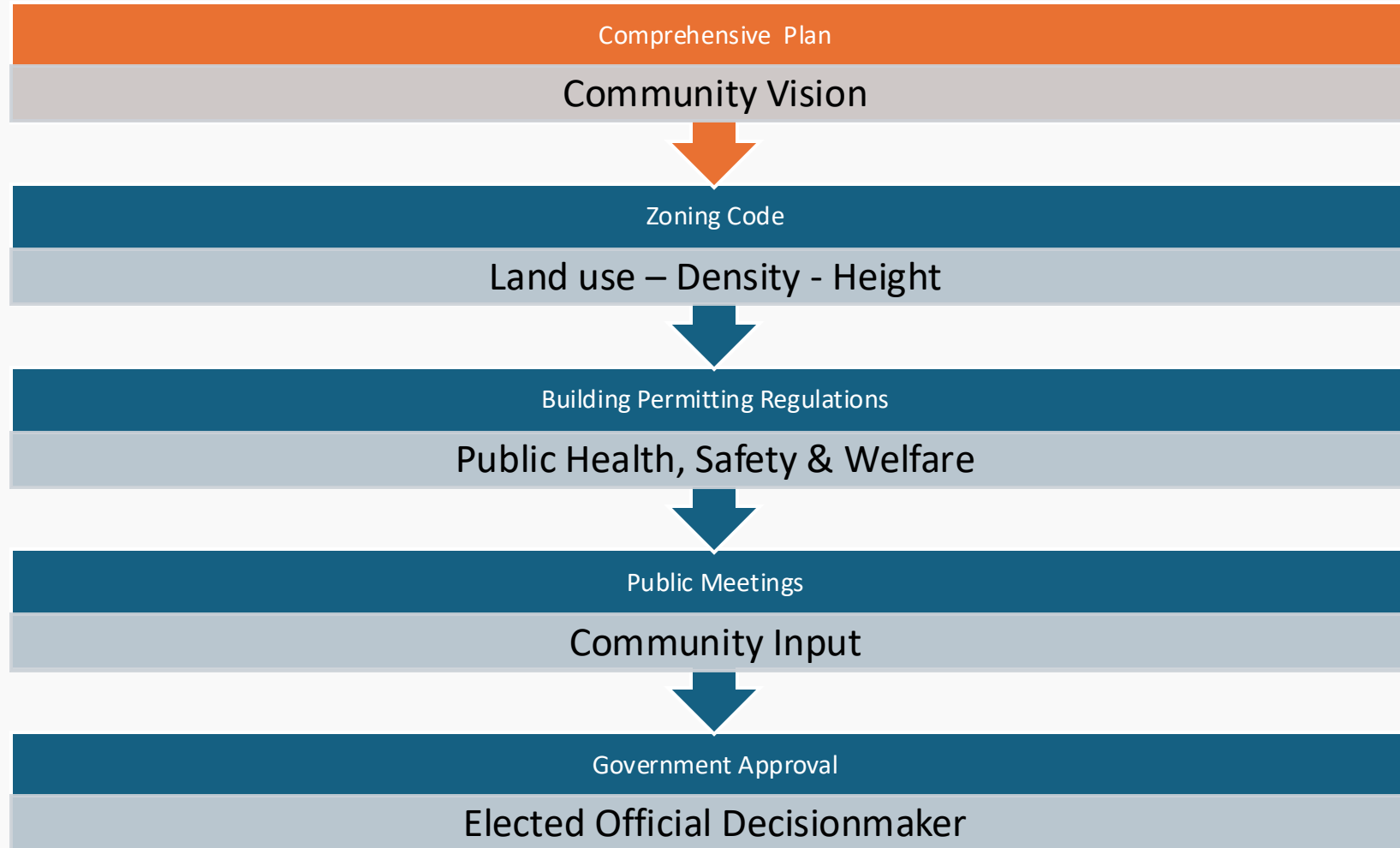
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**September Discussion Topic:**  
***Comprehensive Planning in Maryland***



# Comprehensive Planning in Maryland

## Public Review & Approval Processes



# Comprehensive Planning in Maryland

## Statute Required Plan Elements



Charter Counties	Non-Charter Counties and Municipalities
Development Regulations	Development Regulations
Housing	Housing
Sensitive Areas	Sensitive Areas
Transportation	Transportation
Water Resources	Water Resources
Mineral Resources**	Community Facilities
	Area Of Critical State Concern
	Land Use
	Goals and Objectives
	Municipal Growth*
	Fisheries**
	Mineral Resources**

\*Only municipalities

\*\*If criteria met

# Comprehensive Planning in Maryland

## National Inventory of Comprehensive Plan Elements

Element	Count of States Requiring Element
Land Use	24
Transportation	21
Housing	19
Sensitive Areas/Natural Resources	15
Community Facilities	15
Economic Development	11
Open Space/Recreation	10
Development Regulations/Implementation	10
Historic Preservation/Cultural Resources	9
Water Resources	8
Goals & Objectives	8
Intergovernmental Coordination	5

Other Maryland Required Elements	Count of States Requiring Element
Mineral Resources	3
Municipal Growth	2
Fisheries	1
Areas of Critical State Concern	1

*\*All 50 states have comp plan enabling statutes, 28 states articulate specific element components*

# Comprehensive Planning in Maryland

## Sustainable Growth Principles: Alignment with Comprehensive Plan Elements



### LAND

- Community Facilities
- Land Use
- Municipal Growth



### HOUSING

- Housing



### TRANSPORT

- Transportation



### ECONOMY

- Development Regulations
- Fisheries
- Mineral Resources



### EQUITY

*Public Engagement*



### RESILIENCE

- Sensitive Areas
- Water Resources
- Community Facilities
- Areas of Critical State Concern



### PLACE

- Development Regulations



### ECOLOGY

- Sensitive Areas
- Water Resources
- Fisheries
- Mineral Resources
- Areas of Critical State Concern

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# **Comprehensive Planning in Maryland**

## ***Discussion***

# Comprehensive Planning in Maryland

## Planner Hot Topics

**“Comprehensive planning should be simplified, less rigid, supported by dedicated state agency resources and timely engagement” – 2025**  
*Regional Planner Roundtable Report*

- ▶ What would “*simplification*” and “*less rigid*” look like?
- ▶ What are the priority “state agency resources” that would be of highest impact/benefit throughout the state?



# Comprehensive Planning in Maryland

## 2026 Proposed Statute Amendment – *exploratory*

MDP will utilize Planner Roundtable feedback and direct experience working with local jurisdictions to develop proposed amendments to the Land Use statute.

- ▶ Align Comp Plan Elements with Principles to create one holistic framework
- ▶ Engage local jurisdictions earlier in the comp plan process



**What else should MDP consider in any proposed amendment to the Comprehensive Plan sections of the code?**

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**MDP Upcoming Activity**

# Sustainable Growth Policy & Planning Principles

## MDP Implementation Guide – *in development*

- ▶ Guidance document – PDF downloadable
- ▶ Dashboard – SG Metrics & Tracking
- ▶ SG Web Page – online resource links & tools



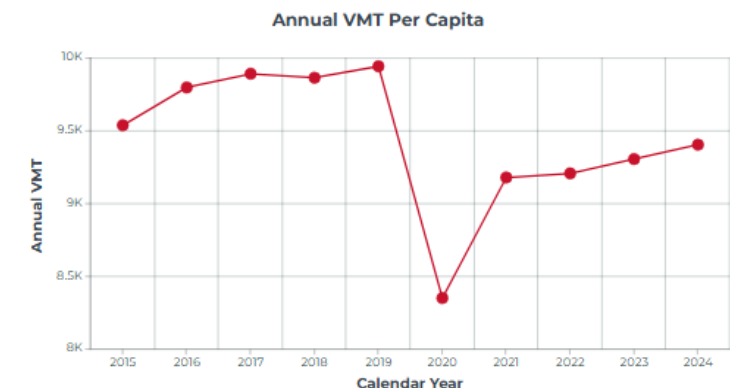
### Transportation

**Intent Statement:** Prioritize transportation networks that create energy efficient, affordable and reliable access to jobs, housing and services.

Maryland needs fully multimodal transportation networks that minimize energy consumption, support sustainable growth, and ensure people and goods can safely, easily, and affordably reach their destinations such as workplaces, homes, and services, with minimal disruption or inconvenience, thereby reducing reliance on individual car usage and its associated environmental, social, and economic impacts.

A fully multimodal transportation network integrates various modes of transportation, including, but not limited to, driving, walking, cycling, taking public transit, and carpooling. It offers a comprehensive and interconnected mobility system for all users regardless of their transportation preferences and needs. It aims to improve safety, reduce congestion, promote sustainable practices, and improve overall travel experiences.

### Vehicle Miles Traveled



Sample of the Story Map

# Sustainable Growth Awards

## State Level Implementation



- ▶ [Webpage](#)
- ▶ 2026 Season
  - [Nominations are open!](#)

### Leadership Category

- Recognizes **individuals and organizations** that undertake **advocacy, education or other outreach to advance** public support for sustainable growth methods.

### Project Category

- Showcases the application of **best practices in sustainable design and construction** of physical buildings, places, infrastructure or landscapes.

### Policy Category

- Features the **adoption and/or implementation of public policies, regulations and/or plans** supporting sustainable land use planning and development practices.

# Sustainable Growth Awards

## State Level Implementation

"**RESILIENCE** was the cornerstone of this project, with a focus on heavy **infrastructure upgrades** including water, electric, and fiber expansion."



"**LAND** productivity was optimized as this heavy infrastructure project **encouraged the adaptive, mixed use, reuse** of previously vacant historically significant buildings."





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# **Closing & Next Steps**



**How would you like to see the SGN engaged in the 2026 legislative session on land use related issues?**

# NEXT STEPS

Next Quarterly Meeting:  
January, 11am-12:30pm; Virtual

## ► Upcoming:

- Sustainable Growth Subcabinet Public Forum, Dec 19
- MDP Webinars for AICP CEU
  - Housing: Manufactured – 9/30/25
  - Transportation: Walkinars – 10/2, 9, 16, 23, 30
  - More being scheduled to be posted on MDP website along with outreach

## ► For further information contact:

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