

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH NETWORK

The Reality of Local Permitting: Differences, Challenges, and Opportunities

Virtual Meeting

Friday January 23rd 2026, 11:00am

Meeting is being recorded

Agenda

Sustainable Growth Network Meeting

- ▶ Panel: Perspectives on Regulatory Barriers and Permitting Processes
- ▶ Update on Maryland Coordinated Permitting Review Council (MCPRC)
- ▶ Interactive Brainstorming: State and Local Permitting Processes Across MD
- ▶ MDP Legislative Activity
 - 2025 Outcomes - Implementation
 - 2026 Session Proposals
- ▶ Upcoming
 - Spring Roundtable series
 - Next SGN

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

Sustainable Growth Network

Panel Discussion: Perspectives on Regulatory Barriers and Permitting Processes

Perspectives on Regulatory Barriers and Permitting Processes

Panelists



Rebecca L. Flora
MDP Secretary
Moderator



Dom Butchko
Director of
*Intergovernmental
Relations,*
*Maryland Association of
Counties (MACo)*



Lori Graf
Chief Executive
Officer,
*MD Building
Industry Association*



Haley Lemieux
Policy Director,
*Department of Housing
and Community
Development (DHCD)*



Stephen Rice
Deputy Secretary,
*Department of
Commerce*

[Watch the recording of the panel here!](#)

Perspectives on Regulatory Barriers and Permitting Processes

Questions from the Audience (Slido Activity #1)

1. Can you clarify are you conflating permits and the entire development review process? Plan review tends to be a distinct process from permit review and approval (4)
2. What role do state requirements such as stormwater management and Forest conservation play in the delay in the development review process? (2)
3. Has the state considered having a housing forum where local governments can come together and talk about housing issues (2)
4. How big a part does technology play in local government permit process improvement (1)
5. What can be done to consider coastal communities: sea level rise and short term rentals. (1)
6. Can you provide a little more detail on the San Diego policy you were talking about, On doing environmental reviews at a comprehensive planning level. (1)
7. Equitable, resilient, efficient housing that's affordable requires effective coordination; how are you ensuring permit quality throughout this process? (1)
8. Is there any discussion at state/local levels on incentives to streamline environmental reviews for innovative projects that provide environmental uplift? (1)
9. Any thoughts on form based codes versus current Euclidean zoning? Could simplify process and improve urban quality. (1)

Perspectives on Regulatory Barriers and Permitting Processes

Questions from the Audience (Slido Activity #1)

1. Can we get state to require International Res Code rather than International Building Code for buildings of 6 or less units? IBC more expensive and restrictive. (0)
2. Is the state looking at AI tools and platforms and providing a list of recommend tools to local governments. (0)
3. Can the state complete an analysis of all state and local permitting and plan review processes to identify necessary improvements and to then facilitate change? (0)
4. Maryland isn't friendly toward modular homes; is that something we can change? (0)
5. Can we differentiate between housing for residents and second homes for those who vacation here? (0)
6. Cars and schools is the primary NIMBY talking point every time!! Eliminate sprawl and maximize growth in existing centers. We have infrastructure in those area (0)
7. Make MD the leader in creating transit oriented, concentrated, mixed use communities at all urban, suburban and rural scales. (0)

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Maryland Coordinated Permitting Review Council (MCPRC) Update

Maryland Coordinated Permitting Review Council Update

Purpose

E.O. – D.2.: *“The purpose of the Council is to facilitate interagency coordination and efficient processing of approvals required to advance priority infrastructure and place-based projects within the State to bolster transparency, ensure predictability, and foster interagency coordination to grow Maryland's economy while safeguarding the health and safety of residents.”*

- Executive Order 01.01.2024.39

Council Members: MDP, Chair | MDA | DNR | Commerce | MDOT SHA | MDE | MEDCO | DHCD | MDSP, OFSM | DoIT | MEA

Ex-Officio: Governor's Office | MDH

Appointed Seats: Baltimore City | Montgomery County | Wicomico County | Town of Thurmont

GOVERNOR MOORE

Executive Order 01.01.2024.39 Strengthening Maryland's Business Climate to Bolster Economic Competitiveness, Section D. - MCPRC

MDP ADMINISTRATION

Chair MCPRC

Staff MCPRC

Reports to Governor

Web Site

Open Meetings Requirements

MCPRC

State Permitting, Review & Funding Agencies

Local Jurisdiction Representatives

Oversight & Accountability

WORKING GROUP

MDP Darius White, Chair

Agency Permitting Staff

MDP Pilot Project Liaisons

Commerce & Housing Project Advocates

TECHNICAL DESIGN

MDP Ellen Mussman, Chair

DolT Partnership

Agency Permitting Staff

MCPRC STRUCTURE

E.O. SUMMARY OF DELIVERABLES

- ✓ Form the Council and Structure
- ✓ Organize & Hold Public Council Meetings
- ✓ Establish criteria for selection of Pilot Projects
- ✓ Select Pilot Projects
- ✓ Support the Advancement of Pilot Project and Develop Feedback Loops for Deepen Understanding of Challenges/Opportunities
- ✓ Quarterly Reports to the Governor – FY25-Q4 & FY26-Q1, Q2 delivered & posted to web page
- ✓ Develop Internal Tracking Systems and Public Facing Dashboard – prototype created and live
- Final Report on Preliminary Recommendations to the Governor 6/30/26

MDP SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITY

- Local Permitting Case Examples - ongoing
- Developer Roundtables – Planned – planned
- Pilot Project Focus Groups – planned
- Assessment of Current State Permitting Systems – in process
- Full Coordinated System Buildout Options & Costs – in process

Pilot Projects Portfolio Updates

1. Pimlico Redevelopment, *Baltimore City*
2. SBY Market Center, *Salisbury-Wicomico County*
3. Loch Raven Overlook, *Baltimore County*
4. Quantum Frederick, *Frederick County*
5. Phase I at Bainbridge, *Port Deposit-Cecil County*
6. Burnt Hill Farm, *Montgomery County*

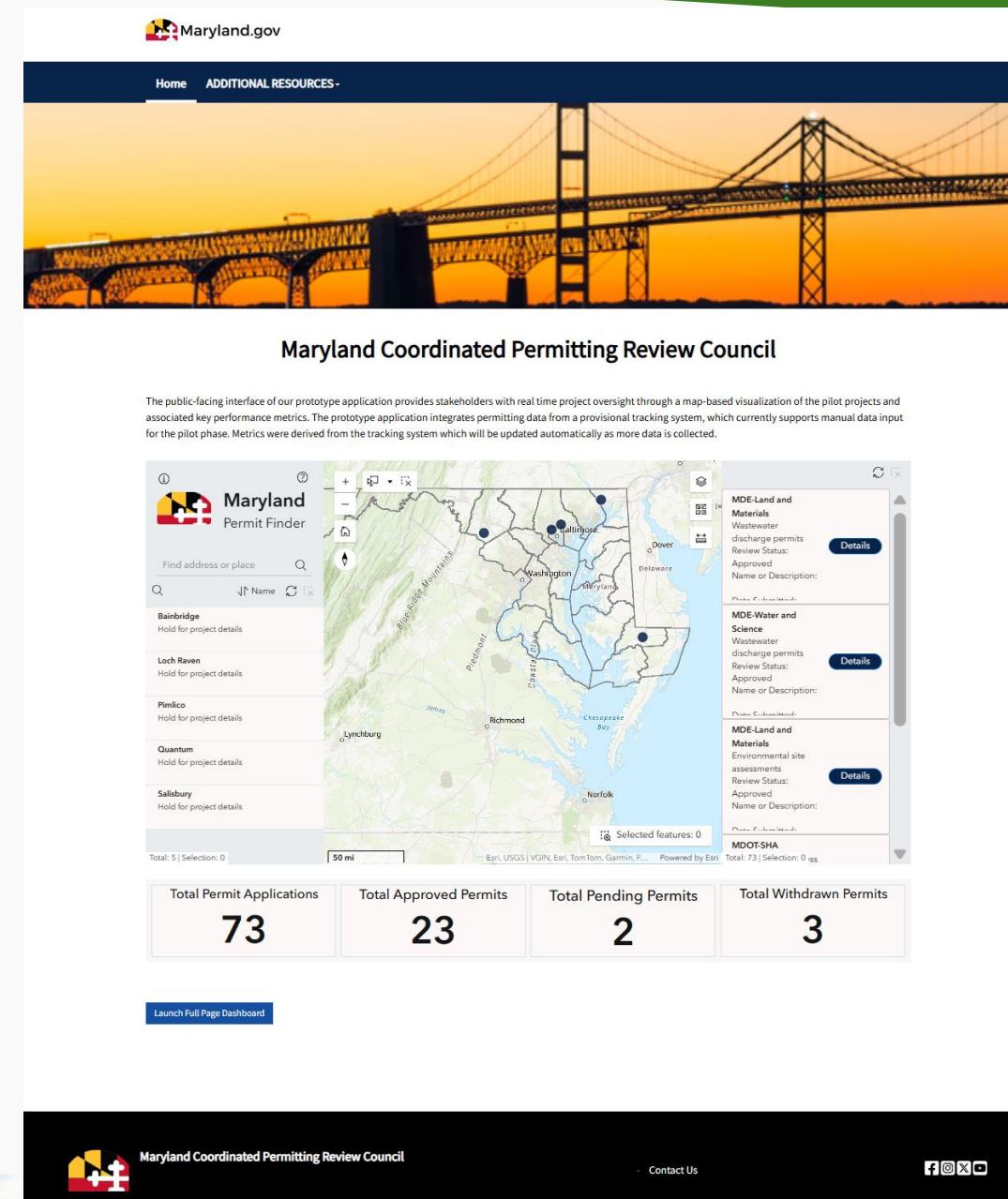


INTAKE SYSTEM & DASHBOARD

Prototype for Pilots Projects Only

E.O. - D.3.c.: *Council shall: "Develop an online internal intake system and a public facing dashboard for tracking project plan reviews and permitting processes to improve efficiency, transparency, and accountability for the timely response and determination of plans and permits."*

[Link](#) to prototype launched on 1/20/26 for testing and continuous improvement



Maryland Coordinated Permitting Review Council

The public-facing interface of our prototype application provides stakeholders with real time project oversight through a map-based visualization of the pilot projects and associated key performance metrics. The prototype application integrates permitting data from a provisional tracking system, which currently supports manual data input for the pilot phase. Metrics were derived from the tracking system which will be updated automatically as more data is collected.

Total Permit Applications	Total Approved Permits	Total Pending Permits	Total Withdrawn Permits
73	23	2	3

[Launch Full Page Dashboard](#)

INTAKE SYSTEM & DASHBOARD

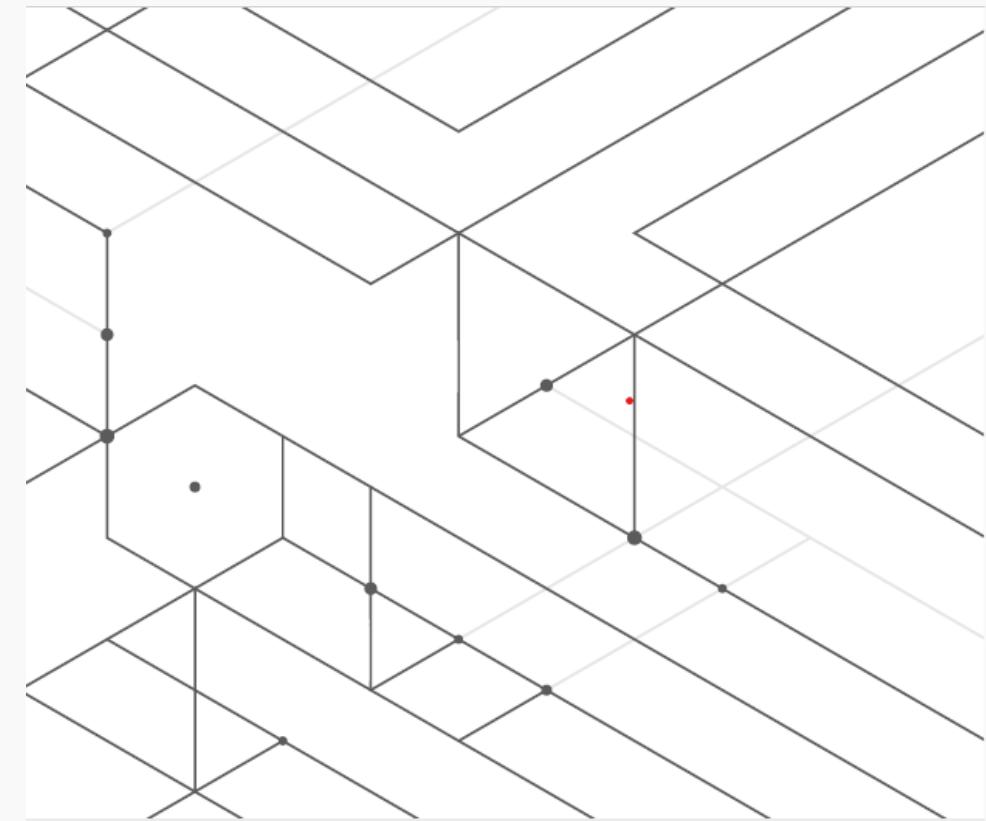
Prototype for Pilots Projects Only



DELIVERABLES: REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Quarterly Reports
 - ✓ Accomplishments
 - ✓ Pilot Projects Overview
 - ✓ Tracking System & Public Facing Dashboard
 - ✓ Timeline & Milestones
 - ✓ Council and Agency Team Members
- ✓ Presentations to Economic Competitiveness Subcabinet
- ✓ Presentations to the Economy Performance Cabinet

[Link to
Qtrly
Reports](#)



Maryland Coordinated Permitting Review Council
Quarterly Report to Governor Wes Moore
FY26 Q2

•••

Executive Order 01.01.2024.39

Strengthening Maryland's Business Climate
to Bolster Economic Competitiveness

E.O. DELIVERABLES

- Final Report to the Governor - 6/30/26
 - Recommendations – State Permitting
 - Internal Processes
 - Policy Approaches
 - Statutory
 - Technical
 - Tech System Solution Options & Budget
 - Local Permitting - Interim Findings
 - Council Structure – Future Use
 - Project Owner Teams – Summary of User Experiences in Maryland



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Local Permit Reporting

HB 131 (2024) and HB 1193 (2025)

Local Permit Reporting

HB 131 (2024) – Jurisdictions over 150,000 population are required to report on their development and building permit application processing

- ▶ Requires annual reporting of residential development and building permit applications:
 - Number of projects
 - Number of residential units
 - Application Review Time (Mean, Median, Standard Deviation)
- ▶ MDP worked with the impacted eight counties and Baltimore City to develop a [reporting template](#), which can be included as part of the annual local planning report

Jurisdictions Reporting

- Baltimore City
- Anne Arundel
- Baltimore
- Charles
- Frederick
- Harford
- Howard
- Montgomery
- Prince George's

Local Permit Reporting - HB 131

- ▶ Calendar Year 2024, 1st Year of report observations:
 - All nine jurisdictions submitted a report
 - Each jurisdiction has different development application review processes
 - building permit application reviews tend to be similar
 - Due to the vague provisions in the law, each jurisdiction interprets the reporting requirements differently, resulting in slightly different responses
 - Some jurisdictions have software that can track the application review process closer than others, such as the ability to track time associated with applicant's revisions

Local Permit Reporting - HB 131 for CY 2024

Summary Stats for all Jurisdictions		# of Units	Average Application Process Time (Days)					
			Average of the Mean Times		Average of the Median Times		Average of the Standard Deviation	
Residential Development Projects	5,171		273		218		217	
			Range		Range		Range	
		Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	
		53	737	20	670	58	632	
Mixed-Use Development Projects (Residential Component)	4,986		222		195		141	
			Range		Range		Range	
		Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	
		48	503	48	440	5	351	
Total Development Projects	10,157							
Building Permits	11,467		68		58		66	
			Range		Range		Range	
		Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	
		10.4	259	8	228	5.98	144	

Local Permit Reporting

HB 1193 (2025) – Jurisdictions over 150,000 population are required to submit residential building permit data to MDP; MDP is required to develop an interactive dashboard of permit data by 2027.

- ▶ Mandated permit reporting starts January 2027
- ▶ To date, seven of the nine required jurisdictions currently providing monthly data, working to incorporate data from the other two jurisdictions
- ▶ This law augments MDP's Statewide Building Permit Reporting System (SBPRS) Pilot Project:
 - Started in 2022
 - Four additional jurisdictions are participating in the pilot project
 - Each jurisdiction has its own permit process, requiring data generalization
 - Dashboard results are dependent on the quality of the local permit data, MDP does not validate the accuracy of the data.

Local Permit Reporting – HB 1193: Dashboard Prototype

 Maryland DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

Maryland Building Permits Dashboard

Filters:

Permit Issue Year	County
2025	All
Permit Issue Month	Permit Class
All	Multiple selections
Permit Type	Residence Type
Multiple selections	All

By County

Issue Year	Month Issued	County	# Permits	Permit Type	Permit Class	Residence Type
2025	January	ANNE	100	AAR		Nonresidential
2025	January	ANNE	391	AAR		Residential
2025	January	ANNE	4	NEW		Nonresidential
2025	January	ANNE	300	NEW	Residential	APT
2025	January	ANNE	33	NEW	Residential	SFD
2025	January	ANNE	40	NEW	Residential	TH
2025	February	ANNE	108	AAR		Nonresidential
2025	February	ANNE	383	AAR		Residential
2025	February	ANNE	1	NEW		Nonresidential
2025	February	ANNE	34	NEW	Residential	SFD
2025	February	ANNE	51	NEW	Residential	TH
Total						53364

Number of Permits **53.36K**

Construction Cost **9bn**

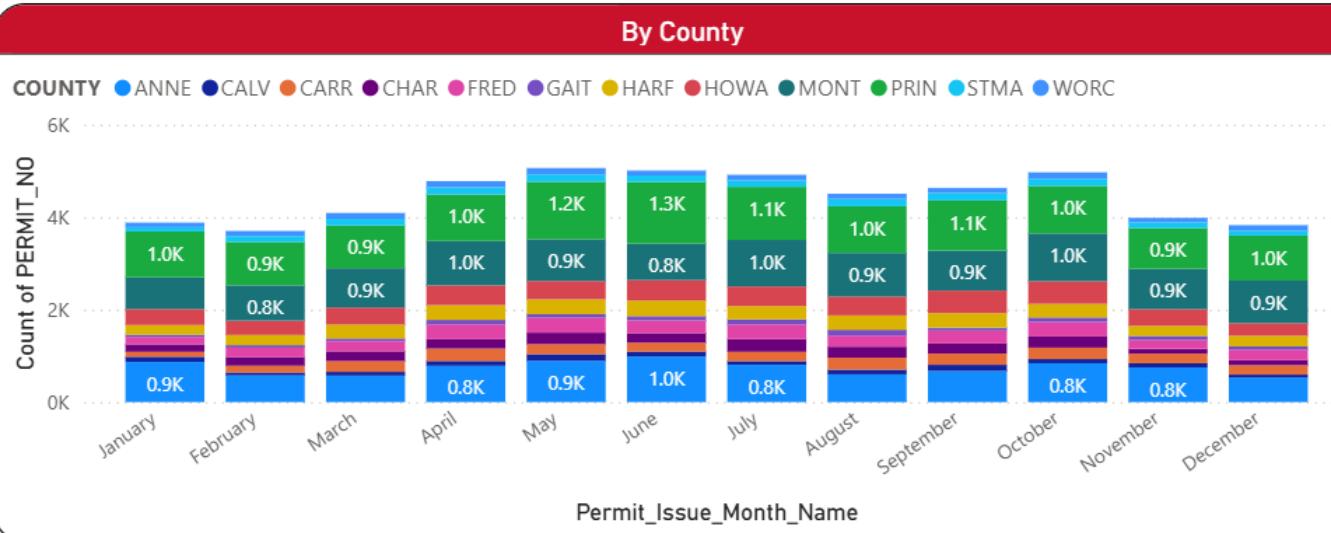
Active Filters

All Active Filters

Permit Issue Year: 2025
Selected Counties: ALL
Permit Issue Month: ALL
Permit Type: AAR, NEW
Residence Type: ALL
Permit Class: Nonresidential, Residential

By County

COUNTY: ANNE, CALV, CARR, CHAR, FRED, GAIT, HARF, HOWA, MONT, PRIN, STMA, WORC



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State and Local Permitting Processes Across MD

Discussion

State and Local Permitting Processes Across MD

Slido Activity #2

What local permits are the most challenging to garner?

Review answers 7

EDUs

Fire

Septic perc test approvals

Forest tree trees, bushes

Environmental issues

Fire-good urbanism

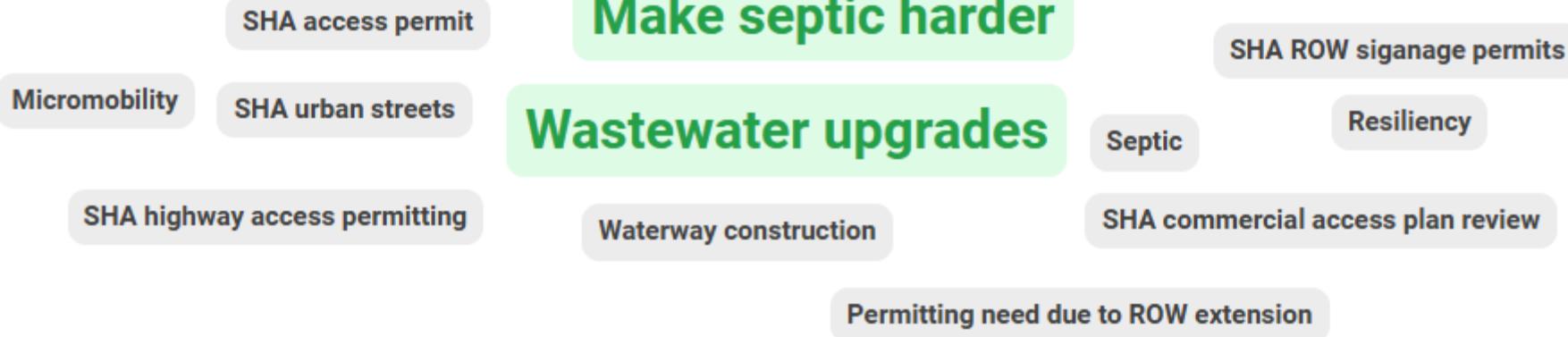
Fire related to complete streets improvements

State and Local Permitting Processes Across MD

Slido Activity #3

What are State permits are the most challenging to acquire?

Review answers 12





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MDP Legislative Activity

2025 Adopted Planning Principles Implementation

RESOURCES: MDP Guidance Materials

Sustainable Growth

Maryland's Sustainable Growth Planning Principles (Principles) were signed into law by Governor Moore on April 8, 2025, following MGA approval of House Bill 286. The Principles create a planning framework that emphasizes Maryland's land use and development priorities while also allowing flexibility in how they are applied by various users.

The Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) is creating resources to further support implementation, including the Sustainable Growth Implementation Guide (Guide), case examples, progress measures, and a resource appendix/index, which creates a central source for practitioners and policymakers advancing sustainable growth in Maryland.



Sustainable Growth
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Sustainable Growth
DASHBOARD

Sustainable Growth
CASE EXAMPLES

Sustainable Growth
RESOURCES

[Sustainable Growth Homepage](#)

2025 Adopted Planning Principles Implementation

ACCOUNTABLE: Measurable & Adaptable

- ▶ Track progress with a set of **sustainable growth** metrics
- ▶ Advance the benefits of sustainable growth through the themes of:
 - Human Well-being
 - Climate Mitigation
 - Economic Opportunity
- ▶ Adaptable to meet fast changing markets and other externalities
- ▶ Advance Best Practices that continuously evolve with new information and tools.



2026 - HB240: LAND USE - Notification Requirement

- ▶ **Title:** Local Comprehensive Plans – Guidance Materials and Notifications to the Department of Planning (MDP)
- ▶ **Sponsor(s):** Chair Valderrama, House Economic Matters (ECM)
- ▶ **Assigned Committee(s):** ECM - Land Use & Zoning Subcommittee/ Senate EEE
- ▶ **Purpose:**
 - Allows MDP and other agencies to engage early in the comp plan review process to connect local jurisdictions with current materials, resources and requirements.
 - Avoids end of the process issues and delays that are common with the current required 60-day notice at the end of the comp plan review.
- ▶ **Key Amendments**
 1. Requires local planning commissions to notify MDP upon beginning a review of local comprehensive plan;
 2. Requires MDP in consultation with other appropriate state agencies to develop and maintain guidance materials

2026 - HB243/SB197: LAND USE – Element Alterations

- ▶ **Title:** Comprehensive and General Plans – Alteration of Elements
- ▶ **Sponsor(s):** Chair Valderrama, House ECM / Chair Feldman, Senate Education Environment & Energy Committee (EEE)
- ▶ **Assigned Committee(s):** House ECM / Senate EEE
- ▶ **Purpose:**
 - Creates clarity and simplification for all by aligning 2025 adopted Planning Principles (former Visions) with comprehensive plan elements
 - Improves efficiency and enhances guidance resources through state-wide use of a unified set of priority planning related topic areas (Planning Principles)
 - Expands state data sharing to ensure localities have access to the most current state data for land use planning (MDOT, DHCD, Commerce, Labor, and MDE have new data sharing responsibilities. All current requirements of state agencies in the comprehensive planning process will not be changed.)
 - Removes duplicative requirements found in other sections of the code

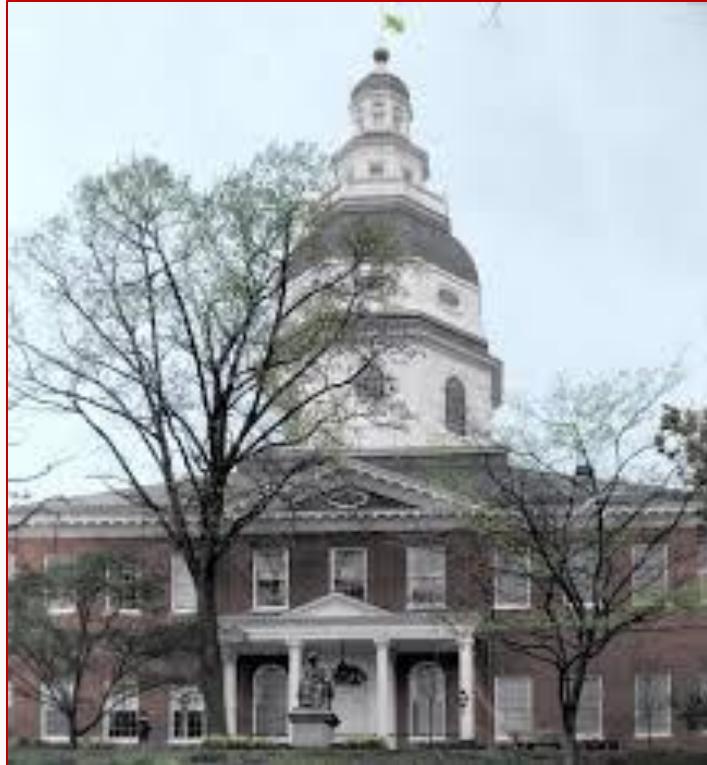
HB243/SB197: LAND USE – Element Alterations

► Key Amendments

- Integrates the adopted Planning Principles categories (Land, Transportation, Housing, Economy, Equity, Resilience, Place, and Ecology) as Comprehensive Plan Elements to create a unified framework.
 - Reorganization and reclassification of the current elements as sub-elements within the new Elements/Principles framework.
- Identifies state plans to be considered during the local comprehensive planning process and establishes various data sharing requirements of state agencies.
- Requires all counties and municipalities to implement the same elements and sub-elements (excluding municipal growth).
- Removes one current element in its entirety – areas of critical state concern - that is outdated and exists elsewhere in code.

Integration of the Planning Principles as a Framework for COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

CURRENT FRAME: Prescriptive – Inequitable – Outdated – Complex

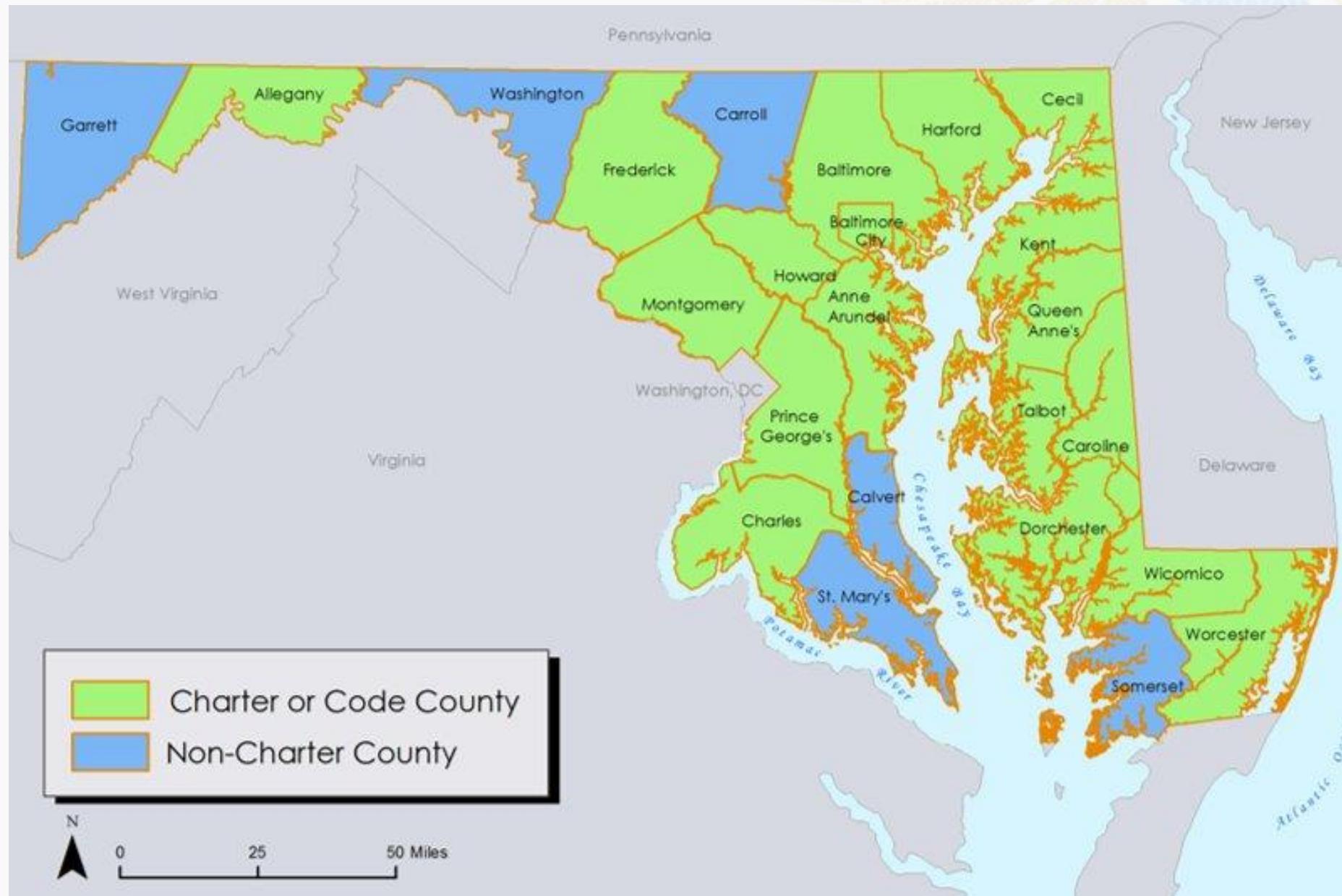


Charter Counties	Non-Charter Counties and Municipalities
Development Regulations	Development Regulations
Housing	Housing
Sensitive Areas	Sensitive Areas
Transportation	Transportation
Water Resources	Water Resources
Mineral Resources**	Community Facilities
	Area Of Critical State Concern
	Land Use
	Goals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

*Only municipalities **If criteria met

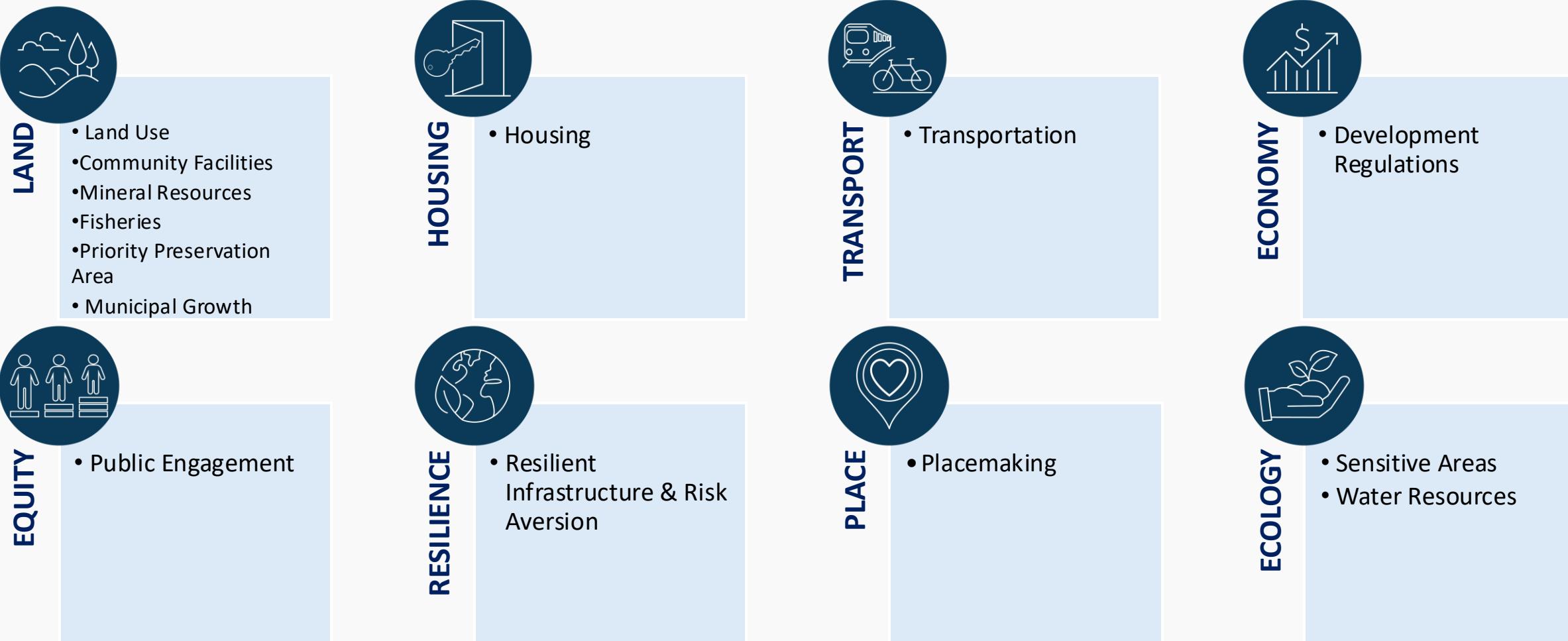
Integration of the Planning Principles as a Framework for COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

MD COUNTIES:
Varied Needs,
Capacity and
Requirements



Integration of the Planning Principles as a Framework for COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK: Common Core Elements Across the State w/Sub-Elements



“Goals and Objectives” is no longer an element nor has been made a sub-element. Instead, goals and objectives pertaining to each element are to be interwoven in the planning language of each core element.

Integration of the Planning Principles as a Framework for COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

APPROACH: Incremental over 3-4 years



Integration of the Planning Principles as a Framework for COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

APPROACH: Incremental over 3-4 years

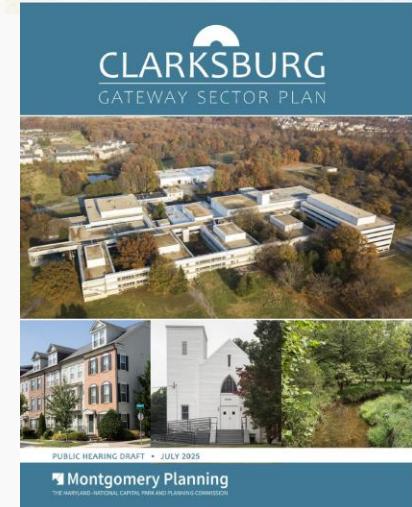
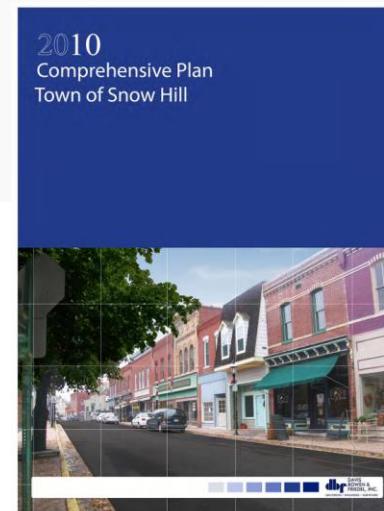
- ▶ MDP has identified through national research and Maryland stakeholder outreach the need to re-envision comprehensive planning in Maryland
- ▶ Plans are currently required to be “reviewed” every 10 years
- ▶ Establishing this new framework in 2026 that matches the 2025 adopted Principles allows communities to start implementing immediately (some are already integrating the Principles)
- ▶ Revisions to the current elements (proposed as being shifted sub-elements in this step) provides added time for stakeholder engagement in what of these should be adapted in 2027.

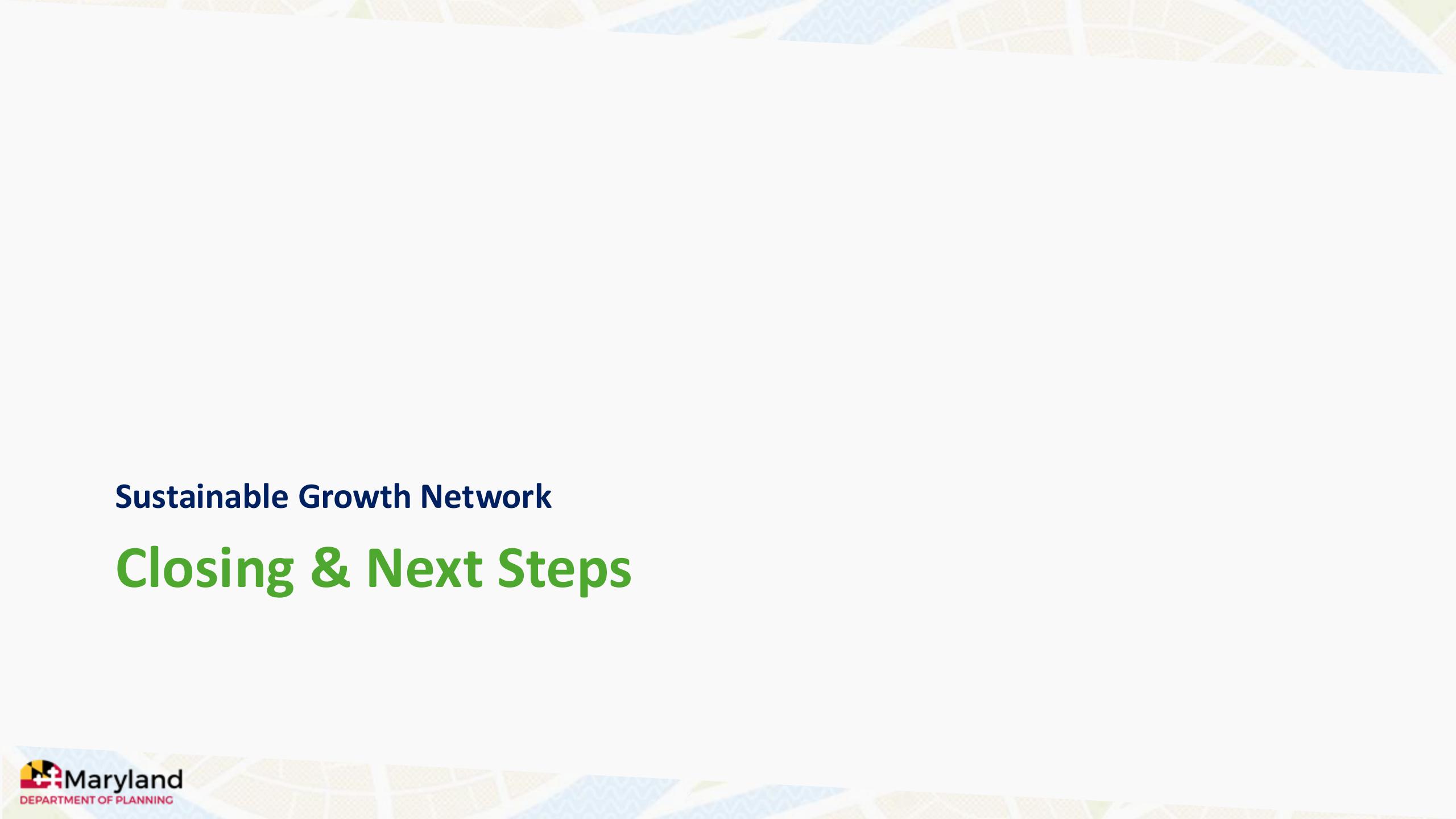


Comprehensive Plan: 2025
Town of Betterton, Maryland



Planning Commission
July 31, 2025





Sustainable Growth Network

Closing & Next Steps

NEXT STEPS

Next Quarterly SGN Meeting:

May 2026

- ▶ Upcoming:
 - Planner Roundtables – late Spring
 - MDP Webinars for AICP CEU
- ▶ For more updates, check the [**Sustainable Growth Homepage**](#)
- ▶ For more information contact:

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