



2018

Report of the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission



On the cover:
Downtown Silver Spring, Montgomery County (upper left),
Fair Hill Farms, Kent County (upper right),
Town of Friendsville, Garrett County (lower left),
Centre Theater, Baltimore City (lower right)

The Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission

Established by the Maryland General Assembly, the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission makes recommendations on growth and development issues and celebrates smart growth achievements throughout the state. Commission members, who represent state and local government, business, and nonprofit organizations, consider how to continue and improve on Maryland's implementation of laws and regulations concerning growth and development. Commission members also promote planning coordination and interjurisdictional cooperation.

The Growth Commission continued its first-hand examination of the growth challenges facing local governments, particularly in the rural parts of Maryland, through its bi-monthly meetings in different areas of the state. Each meeting featured a tour, followed by local officials discussing the successes and challenges they face. In addition to the meetings in Annapolis during the legislative session, meetings were held in Dorchester, Baltimore, St. Mary's, and Montgomery counties. Additionally, the bulk of the Commission's detailed studies are handled by its standing workgroups: Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO), Education, Reinvest Maryland, and Rural Economies.

A Better Maryland

Pursuant to Governor Hogan's Executive Order, the Commission spent 2018 working closely with the Maryland Department of Planning (Planning) to advise on the content and preparation of the new state development plan, ***A Better Maryland***. The Commission reviewed and commented on the strategies that are being considered in ***A Better Maryland*** and will continue to advise Planning and the Smart Growth Subcabinet as the draft plan is finalized.

The Commission also commented on the statewide planning efforts of the Maryland Historic Trust's *Statewide Preservation Plan 2019-2023*, the Maryland Department of Transportation's *2040 Maryland Transportation Plan*, and the Department of Natural Resources' *Maryland Preservation and Recreation Plan*.



Reinvest Maryland

The focus of much of the Growth Commission’s work this year has been completing the recommendations of *Reinvest Maryland 2.0: A Toolkit for Assisting Maryland’s Counties, Towns and Communities Accelerate Infill, Redevelopment and Revitalization*. The published report and the interactive website debuted at the Commission’s May meeting and were highlighted during the Maryland Municipal League’s Summer Conference. The Commission’s Rural Economies Workgroup is advancing some of the Reinvest Maryland 2.0 recommendations to improve rural reinvestment opportunities, while the Education Workgroup is working on a training module for “Overcoming Barriers to Infill and Adaptive Reuse” in collaboration with other professional organizations.

Reinvest Maryland 2.0 is a guide to accelerating infill, redevelopment and community revitalization. This important resource addresses all aspects of the redevelopment process, including: promoting reinvestment, regulatory reform, and financing tools and programs. It also includes a set of policy recommendations.

Reinvest Maryland 2.0 provides guidance for all levels of government to work together, strengthen collaborative efforts to support revitalization and reinvestment, and engage stakeholders in supporting Maryland’s communities to improve the quality of life. The report examines redevelopment in Maryland and identifies tools, case studies, and best practices that support revitalization in existing communities.

The website is built upon an interactive platform that enables the public to read about these redevelopment practices and click on maps and other media that illustrate these examples and provide links to contacts and other information.

Planning staff will continue to build on the website, adding material and enhancing its functionality as state agencies and local jurisdictions continue to provide examples of the best ways to create vibrant places with a range of housing, employment, and transportation options in Maryland.



2018 Sustainable Growth Awards

The Maryland Sustainable Growth Awards celebrate significant achievement by individuals, businesses, organizations, and local governments. The awards promote exemplary work that represents or inspires collaboration, innovation, conservation, community impact, and quality of life.

On May 18, 2018 the Commission held its sixth annual Sustainable Growth Awards ceremony in Annapolis. The event was held in the Governor’s reception room at the Maryland State House and featured addresses by Secretary of Planning Robert McCord and Special Secretary of Smart Growth Wendi Peters. The Commission recognized six individuals, organizations, and projects that have contributed to sustainability and smart growth in Maryland. Special Secretary Peters remarked that the recipients characterize the resourcefulness, imagination, and originality that makes Maryland a leader in cultural preservation, community and economic development, and environmental stewardship.

The Commission recognized the following for their 2018 awards:

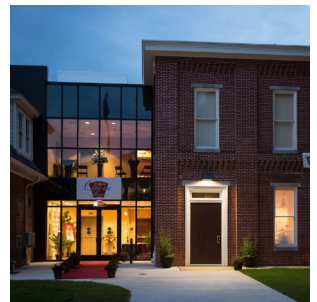
Brian Jones, Mayor of the Town of Rock Hall, received a Leadership & Service Award for his tireless commitment to revitalize Rock Hall. In three short years, Rock Hall Mayor Brian Jones has made a generational impact on the historic waterfront town of 1,300 year-round residents on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. Under his leadership the town has secured Sustainable Community designation, received Community Legacy funding for façade and streetscape improvements, funding for a working waterfront plan, and achieved Main Street affiliate member status.



Anacostia River Trail – Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens was presented a Sustainable Communities Award for the completion of the four-mile trail segment, which is made up of 10 to 12 foot-wide paved sections, raised walkways, and a total of five bridges over Anacostia River tributaries. This portion of the trail completes one of the longest metropolitan trail systems in the country and culminated more than 15 years of planning. Approximately 4,000 cyclists and pedestrians use the trail each week. In July 2017 alone, 17,300 cyclists and pedestrians used the trail.



The City of Havre de Grace Opera House Renovation received a Sustainable Communities Award for its adaptive reuse of an historic theater. This project represents a substantial investment in the historic core of Havre de Grace and has attracted visitors and investments to the centrally located Arts and Entertainment District while also being a catalyst for additional investments from both public and private parties for the library, middle and high school, and the nearby main street shops.





R House accepted a Sustainable Communities Award for the adaptive reuse of a former auto body shop into a mixed-use space with the first floor being dedicated to a food hall with 10 food stalls, 15,000 square feet of office space, and 10,000 square feet of dance and yoga studio space. The food hall has vendor space for local food entrepreneurs to test their concepts before committing to the fixed costs of a new stand-alone restaurant, thus taking some of the risk out of the process.



Stavros Niarchos Foundation Parkway received a Sustainable Communities Award for the rehabilitation of the theater and the support space for the Maryland Film Festival. The Parkway Theatre anchors Baltimore City’s Station North Arts and Entertainment District, and serves as the hub for art and community engagement, attracting energy and investment to central Baltimore.



Eco-City Farms was awarded the Preservation and Conservation Award for its organic urban farming operation. Eco-City Farms was established in 2010 with the mission, “We grow great food, farms and farmers.” Eco-City Farms grows its produce without chemical fertilizers, petroleum herbicides, pesticides, or fungicides, using composting and vermicomposting to help create healthy soil to produce the healthiest food possible.

Videos detailing each award-winning project may be viewed on Planning’s website at: planning.maryland.gov/Pages/YourPart/773/MSGC_Awards2018.aspx



2018 Sustainable Growth Challenge Winners

The Commission held its fourth Sustainable Growth Challenge this year to engage college students from across the state in planning, sustainability, and reinvestment issues. The competition enables students to conduct community planning exercises, analyze economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable growth, and develop creative community solutions. The winners of this year's competition presented their projects at the Commission's March meeting. The FY 2018 Challenge winners are:

Southwest Charter School, Baltimore MD Site Inventory by the University of Maryland Department of Plant Sciences and Landscape Architecture was the Sustainable Challenge winner for the detailed, analytical, and stunning design of an integrated outdoor exploration and learning area at a Baltimore City School.



Edgewood Fit Zone, Free to be Fit by Harford Community College was the Sustainable Challenge winner for the creative, structured, community involved, and implementable proposal to bring an outdoor, free gym to a public park.



Information about the 2018 Sustainable Challenge Winners can be viewed on Planning's website at: planning.maryland.gov/Pages/YourPart/773/sgchallenge-2018.aspx





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