



The Housing Workgroup reviewed and discussed the PlanMaryland document as it relates to housing needs and policies for the State. While there was a general belief that the Plan addressed the primary growth concerns, it was also felt that housing is neither central to the Plan nor a priority but only a consequence. Since the state is expected to grow by over 900,000 people in the next 25 years, housing must be a more central element in land use decisions.

We recognize that land preservation is critical to our future but so is the rationale location and support for housing for the range of people in our state. Housing must be sustainable, available for all incomes, those with disabilities, the elderly and for both renters and owners. The Plan's emphasis on either limiting or encouraging housing construction in certain areas does not seem to address the often conflicting policies and regulations that exist.

The Workgroup raises the following issues and concerns:

- Development in corn fields and green fields is not desirable but the barriers and obstacles to development of housing must be reduced in the existing areas in order to prevent or limit such development
- There is a lack of affordable housing throughout the state; it is not clear that Growth Print areas are necessarily the best places for such housing unless there is access to transportation and services
- Linkages to, and coordination with, local governments are essential to the creation of more affordable housing
- Mixed income housing needs to be supported and encouraged to ensure we do not reconcentrate poverty and do foster community
- Areas with strict APFO requirements may be stifling housing growth although these are areas with infrastructure which would support growth
- The preservation and stabilization of existing neighborhoods needs added emphasis although they may not be appropriate for future growth
- Neighborhoods and the housing must be sustainable which also means being efficient
- Foreclosures can cause communities to decline so that reinvestment in these areas is essential

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- Housing, and the need for a housing-jobs balance, requires a regional approach so that regionalism and multi-jurisdictional cooperation and collaboration must have a greater emphasis in the Plan
- Housing preservation and redevelopment must be a higher priority and this distinction from Growth Print needs better emphasis
- Wherever housing is built, green building requirements and energy efficiency must be integrated for sustainability purposes and for ecological reasons
- Housing must be part of local comprehensive plans, including strategies for inclusionary housing
- In order to direct or redirect development into areas with some infrastructure, resources must be added to those communities so they can absorb and manage the added growth

We hope that our observations and comments are valuable and will lead to adjustments in the PlanMaryland document so that the state's current and future housing needs can be met.

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