



Centreville, Maryland



PlanMaryland Progress Report

July 2011

**Maryland
Department
of Planning**

A Message from the Secretary



When we issued the draft of PlanMaryland in April, we said it was a draft meant for outside comment, and we meant it. And when we said we wanted your input to help us refine and improve it, we meant that, too. We met with more than 500 people at Open Houses throughout the state this spring. We met with probably 500 additional people during that time at meetings of local government officials and citizen advisory boards, at breakfasts with business leaders and at Urban Land Institute workshops with architects and builders. Nearly 5,000 people have gone online to visit the PlanMaryland website in the past 10 weeks alone since we released the draft plan. And dozens submitted their comments to us online, some running a few paragraphs, others running a dozen pages or more.

We didn't expect to get the draft PlanMaryland perfect out of the gate. But we're no less determined about our intention to work with you to achieve something that will help Maryland advance the progress the State has already made on smart growth. And we're more encouraged, not less, after our interactions with local officials and residents. The vast majority of people with whom we met feel that a State Growth Plan is long overdue. They also largely agreed that long-term matters of environmental and fiscal sustainability – from meeting infrastructure needs to addressing climate change to preparing for a million more Maryland residents during the next 25 years -- shouldn't simply be kicked to the next generation.

The pages that follow summarize some of the changes we're already making to PlanMaryland in response to what we've heard this spring. There will be other changes as we continue to hone PlanMaryland before it is delivered to Governor O'Malley in October. The O'Malley administration has demonstrated a firm commitment to advancing the cause of smart growth and limiting sprawl. That's evident from the ongoing work of the Sustainable Growth Commission, the Task Force on Sustainable Growth and Wastewater Disposal, the Phase II Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP), and the new FastTrack permitting process for target areas under the Maryland Made Easy program. I appreciate the hard work that numerous people have devoted to this effort so far, from my own agency to sister state agencies to volunteers serving on the Sustainable Growth Commission, its PlanMaryland Work Group and many others. I also appreciate the feedback we've received to date. It will lead us to a better outcome -- 37 years after the General Assembly passed the Land Use Act that directed such a plan be created.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard E. Hall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard Eberhart Hall, AICP
Maryland Secretary of Planning





What the Plan Is and What It Isn't

What we're hearing: PlanMaryland will take away land use and zoning authority from local jurisdictions.

PlanMaryland is not a substitute for local comprehensive plans nor will it take away any local planning and zoning authority. These facts will be stated clearly at the beginning of the Plan document.

PlanMaryland is a policy plan for how we can grow and preserve our state in the future. It is a framework plan to help guide state agencies in their decision making on programs and funding for growth and preservation. It will help local jurisdictions implement their comprehensive plans.

Who is the Plan's audience?

What we're hearing: "Is the Plan for planners or local official, the public or developers?"

PlanMaryland is for everyone who lives and works or owns or conducts a business in Maryland.

Its emphasis is on how the state, local governments and private citizens can work together to maintain a high quality of life that can be enjoyed by those who are here now as well as those who will live here in the future. The Plan looks at broad goals such as saving 400,000 acres of farmland and forest over the next 25 years and specific issues such as the need to improve coordination among state agencies.

PlanMaryland's relationship to local comprehensive plans

What we're hearing: "PlanMaryland has not taken into account local comprehensive plans and all the work that has gone into preparing these plans. PlanMaryland will require that local comprehensive plans be done all over."



Local comprehensive planning has been and will continue to be an important part of implementing the State’s planning visions and furthering smart growth.

Local comprehensive plans embody local land use policy through a collaborative, participatory process that involves a wide array of citizens, business people and other stakeholders. These plans get implemented through a combination of zoning and development regulations, capital budgeting and other tools. Jurisdictions that have recently completed comprehensive plans will have already identified areas for growth and preservation. PlanMaryland will help implement the existing plans through targeted state assistance and regulatory streamlining. Jurisdictions that are updating or contemplating updating their comprehensive plans will be in the process of identifying areas for growth and preservation. PlanMaryland will help identify areas for growth and preservation that can be targeted for state assistance and regulatory streamlining.

Designating Places in PlanMaryland

What we’re hearing: “PlanMaryland has already designated the places for growth and preservation and has not provided an opportunity for local input. When PlanMaryland is “complete” in October, there will be no opportunity for additional places to be added or changed if they are not already shown on the PlanMaryland map. The GrowthPrint areas shown on the PlanMaryland Map have left off some vital areas, like Enterprise Zones, which should be included as local growth areas.”

Not so. There will be no initial state-designated places in PlanMaryland. It will only include areas already established by localities and currently targeted by existing state and local programs, such as Sustainable Communities, Enterprise Zones and other areas targeted for assistance by State programs as shown in GrowthPrint. PlanMaryland Designated Places will be identified through

PlanMaryland Progress Report - what we’re hearing about the draft and how we’re responding

the local/state process described below that will occur after October 2011.

Enterprise Zones were inadvertently left off the initial map for the draft PlanMaryland but they are among the locally designated areas targeted for assistance by state programs. GrowthPrint areas are comprised of any one or more of the following locally designated areas within Priority Funding Areas (PFAs) supported by state programs: former Community Legacy Areas, former Designated Neighborhoods, Enterprise Zones, Sustainable Communities, including designated Transit Oriented Development areas (TODs) and Base Re-alignment and Closure zones (BRAC), and Targeted Investment Zones (within PFAs). The map showing GrowthPrint areas has been changed to reflect one or more of these existing areas.

GreenPrint and AgPrint are other existing state mapping tools that represent local areas such as Priority Preservation Areas (PPAs) that have been identified by local jurisdictions for assistance through state programs. These mapping tools will be used in the local/state process for identifying and designating places after October 2011.

The Plan will clarify that the “Prints” are GIS mapping tools that represent “Areas Currently Targeted” by existing programs. As shown in the Plan, these would be areas currently targeted through existing state and local programs for revitalization (GrowthPrint), agricultural and rural land preservation (AgPrint), and other natural resource conservation purposes (GreenPrint).



Timing and Procedure for designating places

What we're hearing: "There is no clear cut process for how and when places will be designated through the local/state process described in PlanMaryland."

As mentioned, there will be no initial state-designated places in the PlanMaryland document provided to the Governor in October 2011. Subsequently, when



PlanMaryland becomes an official growth and preservation policy framework and process document for state agencies, MDP will lead an effort to orient local jurisdictions as to what is included in the Plan and how they can benefit from designating areas through a local/state collaborative process.

Local jurisdictions will identify areas for growth and preservation in addition to the areas in the existing "prints." These areas, most likely, will emanate from local comprehensive plans. The state will work with local jurisdictions to identify ways in which local comprehensive plans are currently being implemented and to identify opportunities that are available for state assistance. This orientation/collaboration process will occur in approximately the first six to eight months after the Plan is completed. Within the first 18 months after the Plan is completed, every county and municipality in the state that has planning and zoning authority will have:

- Received an orientation on the Plan.
- Discussed with relevant state agencies ways in which their local plans are being implemented.
- Received information on additional ways in which local plans can be implemented.
- Opportunities to identify growth and preservation areas that may benefit from state programs targeting funding and/or regulatory streamlining.



Economic benefits of PlanMaryland

What we're hearing: "The economic and fiscal benefits and impacts of PlanMaryland are not adequately addressed in the Plan."

There are definite economic benefits to using **existing infrastructure to support revitalization and new development. The Plan needs to recognize and emphasize the importance of economic generators in the State, such as major airports, water ports, employment centers, farms, and other activity centers. Limited state**

resources need to be used more efficiently and effectively to get the biggest bang for the buck. The Plan will address this to a greater degree than it does now.

PlanMaryland's relationship to other state strategic plans

What we're hearing: "PlanMaryland does not adequately address its relationship with other major strategic state plans for major needs such as transportation, housing, and energy conservation."

State agencies in Maryland often prepare and update plans, programs and policies dealing with transportation, housing, climate change, energy and the Chesapeake Bay. PlanMaryland provides a consistent context, which has not existed in the past, for how and where these agencies can better target their resources to achieve broader state and local goals for growth and preservation.

It will also help inform state agencies as they update their functional plans and programs. MDP will work collaboratively with state agencies to review and update their plans, programs and policies. This collaborative process has already begun and will culminate in specific state implementation strategies. The details of the state implementation strategies – the incentives to get things done – will most likely involve ways in which the review, permitting, licensing, approval, and/or funding of requests that are submitted by local jurisdictions and private applicants can be improved, enhanced and accelerated.

Plan Implementation

What we're hearing: "PlanMaryland will be submitted to the Governor, but how will it be implemented? Will there be legislation? What role will state legislators have in implementing the Plan? Won't this create another level of bureaucracy?"

Legislation is not required to have state agencies re-focus, review and improve their own processes. Legislation that creates or refines incentives, or that places a greater emphasis on the Plan's goals, is possible in the future. The draft Plan does not currently contemplate any specific legislative actions. It operates under current rules and regulations. If, in the future, legislation is necessary, it will have to go through the normal channels involving the support of state legislators.

Implementation of PlanMaryland begins first with submission of the Plan to the Governor, as is required by statute. Since a large part of PlanMaryland has to do with how state agencies will focus their resources, one initial way in which the Plan will be implemented will be through incorporation of PlanMaryland into the work efforts of other state agencies. Through this collaboration, PlanMaryland's goals and achievements can be evaluated and assessed. One major tenet of PlanMaryland is to minimize bureaucracy and help move things along especially where there are clear benefits to the state and local jurisdictions. This has already begun with the Governor's introduction of FastTrack, a new state program designed



to streamline state review and approvals for projects that create jobs and support smart growth.

Plan Monitoring and Update

What we're hearing: "How will the Plan be monitored and updated? Who will be involved? What will local jurisdictions have to do if they want to change something in the Plan?"

There will be an annual review of PlanMaryland to assess how well the process is going with regard to:

- **Local jurisdictions' involvement and collaboration**
- **Changes in land use and other metrics (much of which is available through other reporting mechanisms such as local annual reports)**
- **Whether Changes, improvements or adjustments should be made to the Plan.**

In the short term, within the first five years or so, it is anticipated that most of the monitoring will be process oriented, and less so with regard to land use changes, which typically occur over longer periods of time. This information will be reported to two existing and established bodies – the Smart Growth Subcabinet (and its coordinating committee) and the Sustainable Growth Commission, and through them to the Governor and General Assembly. The Subcabinet and Growth Commission will review and provide feedback on these annual updates.

With regard to Plan changes, since the Plan is primarily a framework and process document, it is anticipated that there will be few substantive changes to the Plan document itself. Maps or policies that are referenced in the Plan may change based on the collaborative process of working with state agencies on strategic plans and policies and with local jurisdictions on designated places.

Regional Recognition

What we're hearing: "How will PlanMaryland recognize regional differences around the state, especially with regard to more rural areas?"

For the past three years, the outreach for PlanMaryland has been statewide - from rural to suburban to urban and back. It was important to do this to understand and be able to respond to the different needs of different areas around the state.

The Plan recognizes that land use, housing, economic development, transportation, and other characteristics vary depending on whether a community is located in a rural area, small town, suburban community or larger urban area. As part of the process for designating places, local jurisdictions will work collaboratively with state agencies to determine what level and intensity represented by these characteristics is most appropriate to their communities. The state in turn will help identify resources and/or assistance that can help implement local plans, (which will be based on their unique characteristics).

Past Efforts

What we're hearing: "Wasn't this attempted before, going back 40 years? The state and local governments have clashed over control of land use repeatedly. Why do this?"

Many challenges have become more critical since the General Assembly authorized the Secretary of Planning in 1974 to prepare a State Development Plan "to promote the general welfare and prosperity of the people of the State through the coordinated development of the State."

Maryland is the fifth most densely populated state in the nation. More than 5.7 million people live here now and by 2035, Maryland's is expected to grow by an additional 1 million people, with nearly 500,000 new households and nearly 700,000 new jobs. The impact on

quality of life from this anticipated growth will depend on the collaborative efforts of state, local and private sectors to ensure a sustainable development pattern. We can't treat the State's waterways and natural resources as infinite. The pattern of leaving behind our existing towns and cities is wasteful and inefficient, as is developing land at a pace that far outstrips the need to accommodate our population growth by historical measures.

Planning, growth management and development statewide is becoming ever more complex. Maryland has 23 counties and 120 municipalities with planning and zoning authority. There are

more than 15 state agencies that implement their policies and programs either through direct regulation of local government, regulation of sector development, capital spending or staff resources. At the local level, cities and counties vary in how they prioritize smart growth goals. Differences in local assessments of the costs of sprawl and of community interests induce local government officials to approach smart growth implementation differently. Divergent interests create a natural tension between maintenance of local autonomy and realization of the state's planning vision. The lack of coordination between state and local policies argues for a statewide policy response.





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Maryland Department of Planning
301 West Preston Street, Suite 1101
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
Tel: 410.767.4500 Toll Free: 1.877.767.6272
TTY users: Maryland Relay
or visit: Planning.Maryland.gov

*PlanMaryland
Progress Report*

This report was written by staff of the Maryland Department of Planning, with graphic design provided by the Communications Office.

Comments on the draft PlanMaryland should be sent in writing by September 1 to:
comments.plan@mdp.state.md.us



Smart, Green & Growing

Green.Maryland.gov

Martin O'Malley, Governor

Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor



Maryland Department of Planning

Planning.Maryland.gov

Richard Eberhart Hall, AICP, Secretary

Matthew J. Power, Deputy Secretary

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