

## Education Work Group Report March 25, 2013

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TO: Jon Laria, Chair, MD Sustainable Growth Commission

FROM: Calvin Ball, Chair, Education Workgroup

SUBJECT: Progress Report

DATE: March 21, 2013

We continue to make great strides to accomplish several of our goals. Below is our progress report.

### **Sustainable Growth Challenge**

We are continuing to make progress and are in the process of finalizing our rubric for scoring. In addition, we have completed an FAQ to complement our flyer sent to prospective institutions, attached for your review.

Several institutions have been contacted and expressed an interest; however, at this time only University of MD, College Park has confirmed.

By this summer, our plan is to identify regional issues at the local level that can have elements of environmental, design and economic impacts for the students to undertake. We kindly ask Commission members who are interested in participating on the panel or who have ideas that could be used in this project to please contact the Education Workgroup.

We have approached MDP about developing a website that will anticipate going live in mid-April.

Our projected timeline is still to confirm all registered institutions by August 2013 and launch in Fall 2013.

### **Collaboration with Realtors to Promote Smart Growth**

We have established several goals to collaborate with realtors which include:

- Exploring possible Classroom Style Education for the Real Estate Community which is approved by the Maryland Real Estate Commission for Continuing Education Credits
- Identify a Teacher(s) who is knowledgeable in Sustainable Growth and willing to teach a 1.5 or 3 hour CE class

- Create an outline of Sustainable Growth education content to submit for Continuing Education approval
- Schedule classes starting with the Howard County Association of Realtors group

Peter Conrad has a document that could be used as the basis for the outline that includes adult learning, theories, tools, classroom voting, etc.

We welcome suggestions from the Commission members on who may be interested and is available to be an instructor. This person would meet with Jim Hyatt to coordinate the outline that will need to be submitted to the Real Estate Commission.

### **Social Media Marketing**

Established a LinkedIn group, “Sustainable Growth Maryland”, to promote sustainable growth. This forum is open to all. There was a discussion of branching out to Facebook, Twitter and other social media channels; however, at this time, we felt other agencies had a good pulse and wanted to have this launched as our initial starting point to springboard from.

We are currently discussing the following:

- Can we approach the Commission about using the logo for our group?
- Appropriate content management including: how many posts do we want per week/month and who will be responsible for posting.

At this time, Bryce Turner will take the lead on managing the profile and posting relevant articles. Members are encouraged to join the group and post articles at their discretion.

There are currently 25 people following this group.

### **Review of the Education Requirements for Members of Planning Boards and Commissions and Boards of Appeals**

As part of our Commission’s legal charge, the Education Workgroup is offering feedback on the Planning Commissioner Training Assessment. The Workgroup will receive a draft for our review by early April so that we can complete our review and offer comments. We would like to present these recommendations to the Commission and will need to coordinate with the Chair for possible dates.

Preliminary results show that there are a wide variety of choices Planning Commissioners prefer for training. Prior to the April meeting of the Workgroup, Peter Conrad will prepare a package for questions of the members.

There hasn’t been a change to the report last given to the Commission; however below is synopsis.

### Laws and programs in other states

*Status:* 8 other states profiled, detailing requirements of their laws and implementation. Several successful nonprofit training groups are also profiled. Most research complete and section is nearly drafted.

*Overview:* Most states with laws required 4-6 initially and 3-4 hours annually. Topics covered in orientation and continuing education ranged from the basics (master plan, roles and responsibilities, development process, etc.) to the complex (watershed management, telecommunications infrastructure, etc.). Most states use a mix of local training, statewide nonprofits (such as MPCA), state agencies, and private trainers to provide training. Most states have some online content ranging from written materials to videos to interactive training platforms.

### MPCA Online Survey

*Status:* Online survey completed. 167 responses were recorded. Responses have been coded and tables constructed. Data is in the process of being analyzed and findings drafted. Surveys were also mailed to the remaining MPCA members and these results will be tabulated for the report.

*Preliminary Results:* The course topics considered my important were: Planning Law, Comprehensive Plans, Zoning Code, Variances and Special Exceptions. Most online respondents expressed a preference for self-study, particularly online. Fifty-four percent said online materials and webinars were the preferred delivery platform. Furthermore, seventy-one percent expressed both a comfort and willingness to complete trainings online)

### PDR survey results and comments

*Status:* Online survey completed. 52 responses were recorded. Responses have been coded and tables constructed. Data is in the process of being analyzed and findings drafted.

*Preliminary Results:* The course topics more recommend were: Zoning Code, Variances and Special Exceptions, Comp plans, Development Process. Sixty percent of planning directors reported providing some form of training. Most local trainings are ad hoc for new members or upon request. Planning directors frequently created courses in response to local or statewide legislative issues or for special development cases currently before the planning commission.

## ***Smart, Green & Growing:*** **A Proposed Marketing Campaign to Engage All Marylanders in Achieving Smart, Sustainable Growth**

Maryland's [Sustainable Growth Commission](#) can greatly enhance public understanding of and support for smart growth by developing an overarching public marketing campaign that reflects a consensus vision for Maryland's future.

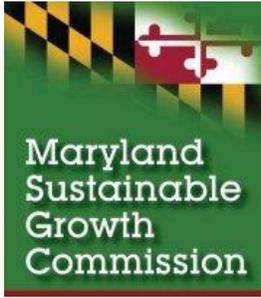
The campaign would distill the State's commitment into a set of clearly enunciated values, goals and strategies, reaching the broadest possible audience with a variety of media, events and activities over time. It would also strengthen public engagement by using the sort of everyday language that's needed to explain how particular state policies and programs promote sustainable growth, as well as their near-term and long-term benefits.

We propose the following framework for developing Maryland's [Smart, Green & Growing](#) marketing campaign in coming months, with a target for the official launch in December with the announcement of the first Smart Growth Challenge awards:

- We formally request that the Growth Commission identify up to three commission members to serve as liaisons to the Education Work Group in developing and implementing this marketing campaign. Our plan is to convene the group's first meeting in April, with the goal of reporting objectives and a timeframe at the Commission's May 13 meeting.
- The Work Group will consult state agency communications staff and other officials to develop specific messaging and a campaign strategy. Our goal is to present initial recommendations to the Commission for feedback at the July meeting. We will then incorporate recommendations in the draft strategic plan and messaging documents, which will be circulated to relevant state agencies for feedback. We'll use their feedback to make revisions for the Commission's final review and approval.
- We plan to ask the Commission for a final review of all messaging and marketing materials by the November meeting. That timing will allow the Education Work Group to roll out the campaign with the announcement of the collegiate Smart Growth Challenge awards in early December.

### **Timelines**

Calvin Ball requested Workgroup members to establish a formal timeline for all goals that can be used to generate a calendar of goals and objectives. This can be used to present to the Commission as we move forward. We will work on creating a point database where all members can access and update documents as needed.



## Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission Education Work Group

3/25/13

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### ***Smart, Green & Growing:*** A Proposed Marketing Campaign to Engage All Marylanders in Achieving Smart, Sustainable Growth

Maryland's [Sustainable Growth Commission](#) provides a statewide forum for stakeholders and policymakers to discuss growth and development issues, and to advance solutions. Commission members have spent the past two years interacting with state and local leaders, business and nonprofit groups, and the general public to find ways to address land use, transportation, economic development, farmland preservation, Chesapeake Bay restoration and infrastructure challenges sustainably.

The Commission can greatly enhance these efforts this year by leading the development of an overarching public marketing campaign that reflects a consensus vision for Maryland's future. The campaign would distill the State's commitment into a set of clearly enunciated values, goals and strategies, reaching the broadest possible audience with a variety of media, events and activities over time.

It's a compelling opportunity to help state agencies better integrate their programs and policies under shared goals and themes. The public marketing campaign would support state efforts to partner with local governments in promoting sustainable growth and it would demonstrate that the state is coordinating and leveraging its efforts.

The campaign also would strengthen public engagement by providing the sort of everyday terminology that's needed to explain how a particular policy or program promotes sustainable growth, using these same words to convey the near-term and long-term benefits.

Ultimately, the campaign's purpose would be to popularize the goal behind all of Maryland's Smart Growth efforts; that of creating, in the words of Governor Martin O'Malley, "a stronger economy, a healthier environment and a greener, more sustainable future for all Maryland families."

### **The Rationale**

- **Establish a clear context for sustainability.** As the State refines its existing Smart Growth programs and launches new initiatives such as the upcoming Smart Growth Challenge, it's important to link these efforts to specific themes within a historical context, drawing clear connections to ongoing programs and policies.

A strategic marketing campaign would use shared language to bridge the past, present and future of state policy, with messages that are straightforward and consistent.

- **The campaign must speak to all Marylanders**, whether they live in a city, suburb or rural area. Above all, it should create a well-defined, widely shared understanding of what the state aims to accomplish with sustainable growth policies and programs. Equally important, it must use a multi-media platform and everyday language to articulate the benefits of sustainable growth.
- **Build on *Smart, Green & Growing***. The framework for this public campaign has already been well developed with the launch of the [\*Smart, Green & Growing\*](#) initiative in 2009. The initiative's title itself provides a solid foundation for broad-based public education and engagement efforts that spotlight state and local sustainable growth policies and practices.

The rationale for this campaign lies in its ability to give Marylanders a clear association between specific state policies and programs and what's being proposed for and/or is happening in their own communities. When citizens hear "Smart, Green & Growing," it should translate to a real-world picture of quality of life improvements, new transportation options and/or other elements of sustainability in their own backyards.

The vehicle for the message can be anything from a new marketing plan for farmers' markets and Main Street programs, to the collegiate awards that will come with the state's first Smart Growth Challenge this fall. The Commission could turn to the *Smart, Green & Growing* marketing campaign to talk about any outreach or education initiative set to debut in coming months, including the Smart Growth Challenge and the newly revised Smart Growth Teachers Resource Guide.

## Getting Started

**The first step is to develop some basic messaging** and branding that will resonate with residents, municipal and county officials, nonprofit and business leaders, and other stakeholders, followed by the development of a strategic plan.

We seek the Commission's support of the Education Work Group's plan to begin developing a *Smart, Green & Growing* campaign, with the goal of finalizing language, strategies and some initial materials by late September and launching the campaign before the end of the year.

**A Timeline and Approach.** If the Commission would like our workgroup to move forward on this goal, the best way to start is by assembling a group representing key state agencies and stakeholders with relevant expertise and authority. Following is a proposed approach and timeline for developing the campaign:

- **Create a Marketing Campaign Group.** We request that the Sustainable Growth Commission identify up to three of its members by **April 8** to help the Work Group shape the development of the public marketing campaign, with plans to meet monthly (by conference call, if necessary.) The group aims to convene its first meeting by the end of April, with plans to update the Commission at its May 13 meeting on specific goals and

priorities for the Campaign and a timeframe for achieving them. The Education Work Group would provide an initial overview of state goals and priorities, models and success stories, and stakeholders who make up the audience for this campaign.

The Education Work Group also plans to consult key staff from relevant state agencies and/or local government and other stakeholder groups. The important thing is to ensure that the appropriate expertise and interests are represented.

- **Messaging.** With a title already in hand, it's important to begin developing the *Smart, Green & Growing* campaign by first building consensus around key values, goals and strategies for attaining sustainability. After defining those parameters in our first meeting, we plan to engage senior staff from relevant state agencies, including communications staff, to develop specific conceptual language – branding and messaging – that best explains and promotes Maryland's sustainability efforts.

The branding and message development can begin with a review of communications materials already in use, followed by a discussion of what's missing or contradictory. Recommendations on the campaign messaging would be made to the Commission for **discussion and decisions at its July meeting.**

- **Preparing to Launch.** After some initial decisions by the Commission on the branding and messaging recommendations, the marketing campaign strategy can be drafted and circulated with relevant state agencies by **late August**, with a request for feedback by mid-September. Simultaneously, the Education Work Group can draft a strategic plan and some initial materials for the Smart Growth Challenge initiative and/or other upcoming sustainability activities and events.

The Commission should plan to discuss the Campaign messaging and strategies at its **September 23** meeting, providing the Education Work Group with the necessary direction to prepare for a launch of the campaign. The Commission would be asked to complete its final review of the materials and launch strategy at its **November** meeting.

**The target date for the launch would be the first week of December**, when collegiate teams are scheduled to present their Smart Growth Challenge projects.

## Conclusion

The State's *Smart, Green & Growing* campaign would be designed to build on, rather than supplant, emerging and existing educational efforts. The idea is to raise the profile of state agency initiatives and clearly "brand" Maryland's smart growth efforts in ways that enable citizens across the state to see how these policies and programs can be tailored to benefit their own communities.

It's a matter of devising a common language to describe the challenges Maryland faces as it grows, as well as strategies and solutions that will yield more sustainable growth and quality of life improvements. It's about bringing diverse state education and outreach initiatives into the same communications framework, so that they all reinforce one other.

## Sustainable Growth Challenge

### FAQs

- Who is eligible to participate?

Any degree-granting institution of higher education in the state of Maryland is eligible to submit a team. Teams are to be comprised of undergraduate and graduate students – including those at community colleges – from any discipline connected with sustainability, including urban planning, architecture, public policy, economics, environmental studies and others.

- What type of deliverable is expected?

The final product may include renderings, presentations, websites or blogs, and written material detailing how the project meets and supports the State's 12 Planning Visions.

- Do the teams' approaches have to be inter-disciplinary?

Not necessarily; member selection is up to individual teams. In the real world, however, the planning and design process requires cooperation among diverse entities and stakeholders, so projects will benefit from an inter-disciplinary approach and representation.

- Can more than one team enter from an institution?

Yes. Competing schools have different student body sizes and it is not our desire to stifle the creative innovations that any group could contribute by limiting each school to only one team.

- Are teams required to have a faculty sponsor?

Yes. Faculty support will be important throughout the project's duration, from helping to identify projects to connecting with leaders in the community

- Can students who participate do so for class credit?

It is up to the institution and the faculty advisor to determine if these projects will earn class credit. Team members from different backgrounds might not necessarily share a single class.

- Are the projects defined or do teams find their own project?

Student teams and faculty members will be responsible for coming up with a project that must be pre-approved by the SG Commission, or they can get project recommendations from the Commission.

- Does the project have to focus on a real on-the-ground undertaking defined by an actual client, or can it be theoretical?

Both are acceptable, and the Commission can help by developing project lists for those who need suggestions and to serve as a liaison to the community.

- How will the projects be scored?

Project scoring will consist of four equally weighted criteria. Three quarters of the total score will be based on how well the project addresses the three elements of sustainability's triple bottom line (with economic growth, social equity and environmental stewardship each accounting for 25 percent of the total score). The remaining 25 percent of the project's score will be based on how well members execute the intended goals of the Challenge and the quality of their presentation.

- What are the 12 Visions and why do they provide the framework for scoring?

Maryland's 2009 Planning Visions law created 12 Visions, detailed [here](#), which reflect the State's ongoing aspiration to develop and implement sound, sustainable growth and development policy. The scoring for the Challenge has been built around these visions because they provide the overarching framework for how Maryland seeks to achieve sustainable growth, and because local jurisdictions are required to address the visions in their comprehensive plans and implement them via zoning ordinances and regulations.

It's important for each project to demonstrate how these elements relate to one another within a coherent whole, as represented in the graphic image below. The economic, environmental and social elements should be integrated, and each project should articulate an implementation strategy that links all three.

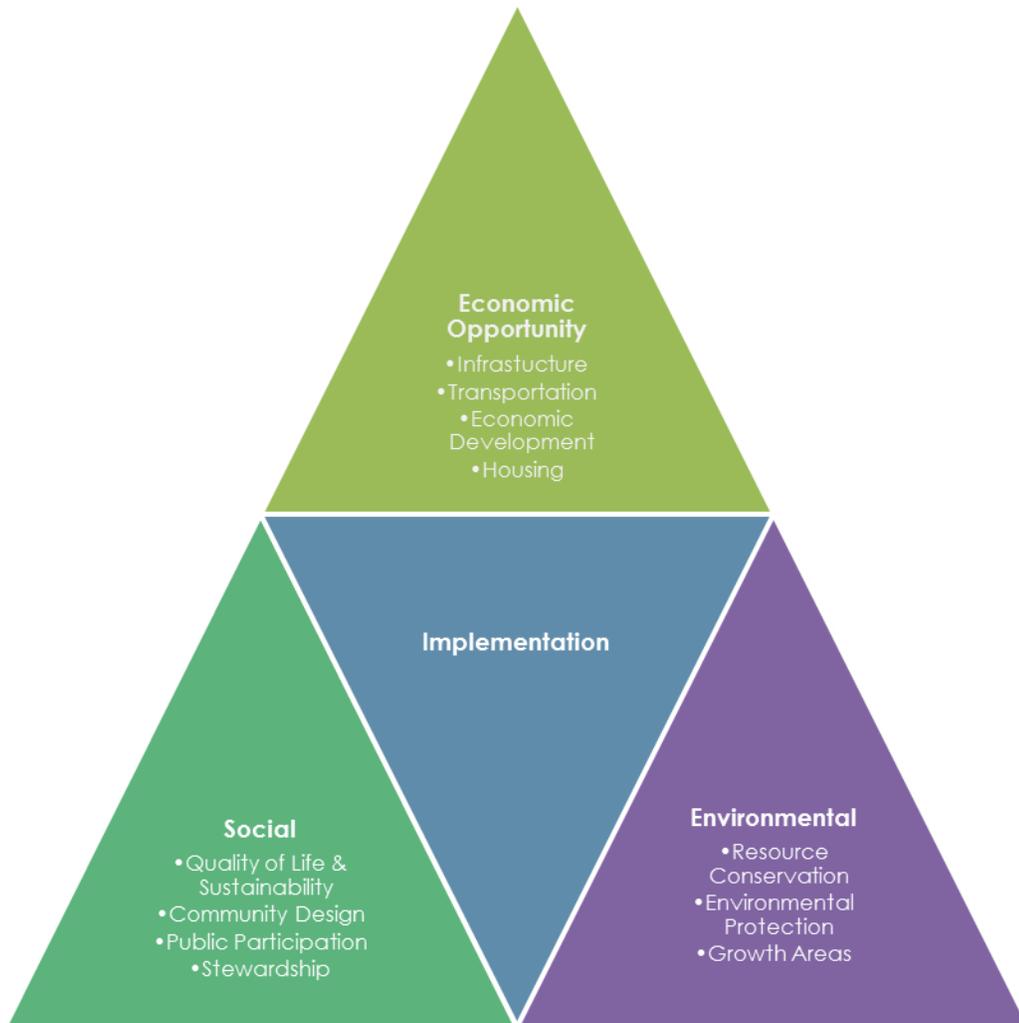
- When are the final projects due?

Hard copies of all materials must be delivered to the address below by Nov. 26 for preliminary review by the Sustainable Growth Commission. Presentations will be scheduled for the week of Dec. 1, at the Miller Senate Building (Christine – dates and location are tentative)

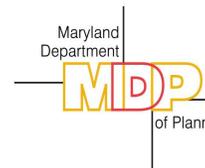
ADDRESS:

Maryland Department of Natural Resources

c/o Sustainable Growth Challenge  
Office for a Sustainable Future  
MD Department of Natural Resources  
580 Taylor Avenue  
Annapolis, MD 21401



# SUSTAINABLE GROWTH CHALLENGE



Sponsored by the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission

## Quality Of Life And Sustainability

Economic Development <sup>Housing</sup> Implementation <sup>Growth Areas</sup>

Community Design <sup>Stewardship</sup>

Environmental Protection

Public Participation  
Infrastructure  
Resource Conservation

Transportation

### WHO SHOULD COMPETE

- Undergraduate/graduate students pursuing degrees in planning, architecture, engineering or other sustainability-minded concentrations
- Example projects might look at redeveloping vacant lots in an urban core, conducting community charrettes for a local planning issue, coordinating a green infrastructure and public access plan, preserving agricultural land, or managing storm water runoff in a coastal community
- Teams will present their final proposals to the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission in Annapolis for judging by a panel of leaders in the sustainable planning field

### WHAT'S THE CHALLENGE?

THE Sustainable Growth Challenge is a collegiate level interdisciplinary exercise designed to engage students from across the state in local and regional planning and sustainability issues.

As part of an on and off campus studio exercise, students will analyze the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable growth and develop creative solutions for real community challenges. The competition will provide students the opportunity to interact with local leaders and engage in their own community planning processes.

The Sustainable Growth Challenge will be launched in the fall of 2013. To be eligible, a faculty-lead team will be established at participating universities. Projects will be defined by the students, but must address one or more of Maryland's Twelve Planning Visions (shown above) and sustainability's triple bottom line of economic opportunity, environmental protection and social justice.

The Challenge is being sponsored by the Education Workgroup of the Sustainable Growth Commission, and developed and managed by the University of Maryland, National Center for Research and Education and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

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