

Reinvest Maryland Curriculum Development (2-3 hours)

Topic Area: **Overcoming Barriers to Infill and Adaptive Reuse**

Subtopics

- Addressing Aging Infrastructure
- Density, Design, and Economic Viability
- The Role of Small Businesses

Intended Audience:

- Local Government Staff and/or Officials
- Developers
- Realtors
- Community Groups and/or Citizens
- Small Business Owners

Key Definitions:

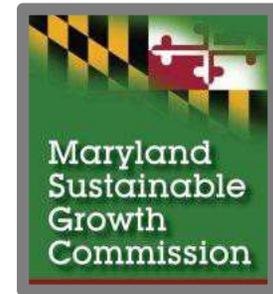
- **“Infill”** – the development of vacant parcels within previously built areas.
- **“Redevelopment”** – building or rebuilding on parcels that have been previously developed, with redevelopment aiming for a higher and better use of the area for the community.
- **“Revitalization”** – instilling new life and vitality into a community through infill and redevelopment or other activities, such as building reuse and renovations, façade improvements, beautification efforts, small business loans, and special events.

Notes:

- *The training will consider and note the distinctions between urban, suburban, and rural communities as related to revitalization barriers and strategies. Examples from a variety of different urban contexts will be used*

Discussion Question

Group Activity



Opening Discussion: Following introductions, the instructor should discuss the ideas of Revitalization, Redevelopment, and Infill with the class. In adult education, it is essential to connect with the previous knowledge and experiences of the students and to repeatedly build upon them.

- Why are you attending a class with this focus?
- What are the benefits of infill development and adaptive reuse? Provide examples
 - Instructor should elicit as many benefits (local, regional, state, etc) as possible
- What are the barriers to this kind of development? Provide examples
 - Instructor should elicit as many barriers (local, regional, state, etc) as possible
- Who are the different parties to this kind of development? What are their roles?
- Have you worked on such projects in the past? How did they go?
- What questions do you have about this topic?
 - Don't answer them, but rather have students note them on sticky notes and instructor saves them in a "parking lot". Some will be addressed through the course of the class; others can be answered at the end.

Objectives of the Training: *To learn the content of and how to apply...*

1. strategies and financial tools for upgrading and/or modernizing aging infrastructure
2. increased density and high quality design in overcoming public opposition to infill and redevelopment and ensuring the economic viability of projects
3. strategies that enhance the economic competitiveness of small businesses in redevelopment areas and make them partners in neighborhood revitalization

Reinvest Maryland Review:

The training is introduced with a review of the Reinvest Maryland Process and Product, to include:

- How and why it was crafted?
- How it has evolved?
- Themes
- Goals and Objectives

Subtopic Area 1: Addressing Aging Infrastructure

-Discussion Question: In DHCD's most recent Sustainable Communities trends assessment, 94 percent of designated Sustainable Community identified aging infrastructure as a challenge to becoming more sustainable. Why is this the case? How did we get here?

-Objective(s) of subtopic area 1: *To learn about ...*

- the history of the development of American and Maryland Infrastructure
- the current condition of infrastructure in Maryland and the barriers that aging infrastructure presents to revitalization efforts
- potential partnerships, both public and private, that can facilitate investment in infrastructure improvements
- state and local policies that can spur investment in infrastructure improvements
- infrastructure funding mechanisms

-Definition of subtopic area 1: *Incomplete*

-Breakdown of subtopic area 1: Aging Infrastructure

- History of Infrastructure
- Problems Caused by Aging Infrastructure
- Partnerships and Policies
- Funding for Infrastructure Improvements

-Content: *(The primary substance of each lesson. To be pulled from the Reinvest MD document and beefed up with outside content, examples, and best practices)*

History and Current State of Infrastructure

- Short lecture format with periodic "did you know?" type questions

Problems

- Problem Statement: Statistic about the condition of America's infrastructure
- Discussion question to class: Can you provide some examples from your jurisdictions?
- Conceptual explanation of problems from the instructor
 - Powerpoint slides

- Diagram
- Video
- Etc

Partnerships and Policies

- Discussion Question: What types of partnerships can overcome the barriers of aging infrastructure?
- The pitfalls of going it alone
- Best practices review
 - Evaluate the capacity and condition of roads, water, sewer, schools, and stormwater to accommodate projected population and employment growth
 - Marketing, outreach, and technical assistance
 - Coordinated economic development and community revitalization strategies at the local level
 - Public/private partnerships
 - Community development corporations
- Example(s) of good partnerships and policies (ideally in Maryland)
 - Written materials
 - Videos

Funding

- Discussion Question: What are some available funding sources for infrastructure improvements in Maryland?
- High costs of infrastructure improvements and common needs
- Best practices review
 - Existing federal and state funding sources
 - Discussion question: Have any of your jurisdictions, or development projects within your jurisdictions, accessed such funding? Describe it.
 - Leveraging and combining multiple funding sources
 - Potential Local funding mechanisms
- Example(s) of successful funding mechanism (ideally in Maryland)
 - Written materials
 - Videos

-Group Work: Break class up into four groups and provide each with a unique example situation of aging infrastructure that presents a complicated problem. They must apply information learned in the lesson to answer the following questions and present their solution to the class. A more robust version of something like this could also be used as a capstone project at the end of the class.

1. What is the problem in this situation?
2. What are the causes of the problem?
3. Put yourself in the shoes of a local planning department director. What process would you design to analyze and fix the problem?
4. Describe a potential partnership you would establish to successfully complete the project
5. Describe the funding structure you would put in place to successfully complete the project

Subtopic Area 2: Density, Design, and Economic Viability

-Discussion Question: What are some challenges that increased density presents to revitalization efforts? What are some benefits that it provides? How about high-quality design?

-Objective(s) of subtopic area 2: *To learn about ...*

- the economic benefits of density and the viability of a revitalization project
- addressing and overcoming the perceived problem of density
- the benefits of high quality design
- combining increased density and high-quality design

-Definition of subtopic area 2: *Incomplete*

-Breakdown of subtopic area 2: Density, Design, and Economic Viability

- Planning for density in Maryland's traditional communities
- Density's role in the economic viability of revitalization projects
- Opposition to density increases
- High-quality design and its benefits in Maryland's traditional communities
- Using high-quality design to overcome opposition to density and make projects work

-Content: *(The primary substance of each lesson. To be pulled from the Reinvest MD document and beefed up with outside content, examples, and best practices)*

Density

- Discussion Question: Does increased density support good planning? How? How does it support community revitalization efforts? What are some difficulties with increased density?
- Density in Maryland
- Best Practices review
 - Density, redevelopment, and infill
 - Local policies supporting density
 - Addressing public opposition to density
- Example(s) of density supporting revitalization (ideally in Maryland)
 - Written materials
 - Videos

Design

- Discussion question: What does high-quality design mean to you? Can you provide some examples from your jurisdictions?
- High-quality design in Maryland
- Best practice review
 - Place making
 - Design review and planning
 - Historic preservation incentives
 - Public engagement
 - Technical assistance opportunities
- Example(s) of good projects (ideally in Maryland)
 - Written materials
 - Videos

Group Work: Break class up into four groups and provide each with a unique example situation of an infill project that presents a complicated problem involving both density and design. They must apply information learned in the lesson to answer the following questions and present their solution to the class. A more robust version of something like this could also be used as a capstone project at the end of the class.

1. Is increased density needed in this situation? If so, how? If not, how can the project be made viable without it?
2. What are some potential problems involved with this project?
3. How can high-quality design be used to help facilitate the completion of the project?
4. What would your solution be? Provide in detail and include a visual (process, diagram, drawing, etc.)

Subtopic Area 3: The Role of Small Businesses

-Discussion Question: What role do small businesses play in community revitalization, redevelopment, and infill?

-Objective(s) of subtopic area 3: *To learn about ...*

- small businesses and their relation to Maryland's traditional communities
- the benefits of engaging small businesses in revitalization efforts
- local policies and planning practices that support small business development
- funding and other support mechanisms for small business development

-Definition of subtopic area 3: *Incomplete*

-Breakdown of subtopic area 3: The Role of Small Businesses

- Small businesses in Maryland (facts, figures, future)
- Small businesses role in supporting reinvestment and revitalization and how they benefit from it
- Planning for small businesses at the local level
- Support for small businesses

-Content: *(The primary substance of each lesson. To be pulled from the Reinvest MD document and beefed up with outside content, examples, and best practices)*

Small Businesses in Maryland

- Short lecture format with periodic “did you know?” type questions and statistics

Small Business and Community Revitalization

- Discussion question: What social and leadership position(s) do small business owners hold in a community?
- What small businesses can do on their own
 - Usually the most visible businesses in a traditional community
 - Job creation and entrepreneurship
 - Local business groups (merchant associations) advocating and working for revitalization
 - Support tourism
 - Diversify economy
 - Investing in and partnering with local community organizations
- Example(s) of good projects (ideally in Maryland)
 - Written materials
 - Videos

Planning for Small Businesses at the Local level

- Discussion Question: What does your jurisdiction do to support local small businesses?
- Best practice review
 - Adjust Zoning Codes to encourage small business flexibility
 - Facilitate walkability
 - Simplify local regulations for starting new businesses
 - Education and outreach
- Example(s) of good projects (ideally in Maryland)
 - Written materials
 - Videos

Support for Small Businesses

- Strategies for supporting small business growth
 - Develop a comprehensive business plan for target small business growth industries and specific companies
 - Expand contracting opportunities
 - Design workforce programs for small businesses
 - Coordinate resources and ease burdensome regulations
 - Upgrade revitalization area business environment
 - Resources for business expansion
- Example(s) of good projects (ideally in Maryland)
 - Written materials
 - Videos

Toolkit: Either at the end of each subtopic area or at the end of the entire lesson, direct students to the location of practical tools that will help them in the everyday use of the lessons learned during this lesson. Examples could include

- Reinvest Maryland Online Toolbox (ideally modified to reflect new document)
- Other online resources (revitalization organizations, community groups, higher ed, etc.)
- Sample ordinances and policies that could be applied locally
- Others as provided by the Commission

Taking this Home: As a final “assessment” of learning, students should write down a response to the following prompt and be prepared to discuss

- Describe a revitalization concern, issue, need in your [based on audience (locality, business area, etc)] and how you could use at least three of the strategies you learned today to facilitate redevelopment and/or infill.