

# PlanMaryland

Executive Summary



*Maryland Department of Planning*



*Smart, Green & Growing*

# PlanMaryland

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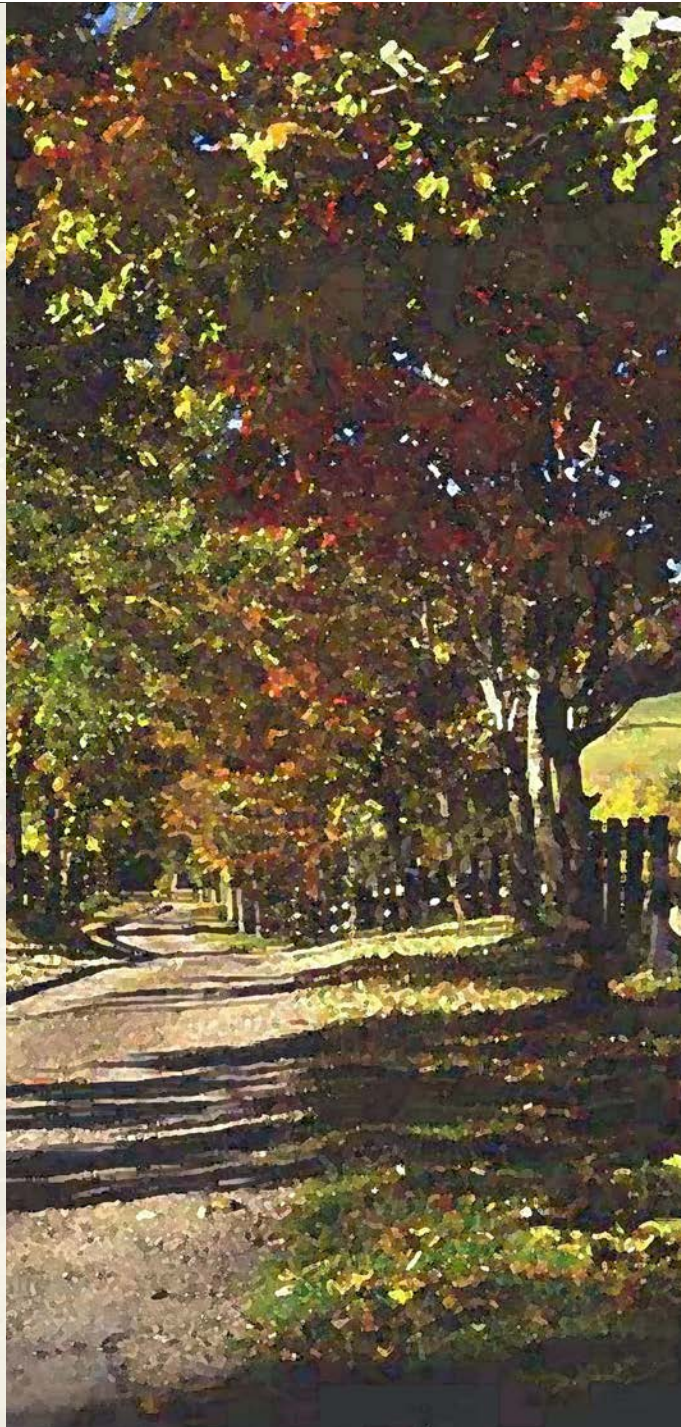
"We stand now where  
two roads diverge.  
But unlike the roads  
in Robert Frost's  
familiar poem, they  
are not equally fair.  
The road we have  
long been travelling  
is deceptively easy, a  
smooth superhighway  
on which we progress  
with great speed, but at  
its end lies disaster. The  
other fork of the road  
-- the one "less traveled  
by" -- offers our last, our  
only chance to reach a  
destination that assures  
the preservation of our  
earth."

Rachel Carson

"Silent Spring"

1962, Silver Spring,

Maryland



## Summary

Debate over the roles of state and local government, of government and the private sector, of urban and rural, in striking a balance for sustainable land use has been an energetic one for many decades now, and the stakes for Maryland have always been high. We must do a better job of protecting environmentally sensitive areas, such as wetlands, forest and productive farmland that have become fragmented and compromised by decades of sprawl. We want to promote growth in cities and towns where people can live, work, shop and play and be less car-dependent to do those things.

PlanMaryland will not remove local planning and zoning authority. It seeks to improve coordination between state agencies and local governments on smart growth because too often the actions of the State have been at cross-purposes to achieve a common goal of making existing communities stronger, healthier, cleaner and safer. Goals for planning, development, conservation and sustainable quality of life are interdependent; not the work of several agencies occasionally coordinating. Independent initiatives by the State or local governments won't achieve these goals.

### Why We Need It?

- To address the rapid pace of conversion of land for development, which since 1970 has grown at double the rate of housing and triple the rate of population.
- The resulting spread means we'll need \$29 billion more in road and school construction over the next 25 years than we would need under a "smarter growth" scenario -- much of that cost borne by local contribution.
- The impact of runoff from so much impervious surface on the Bay and other waterways will undercut the millions being spent or planned in the future by public and private sources to remediate pollution.

The plan is about achieving best practices in smart growth, protecting our environment, enhancing our communities and achieving the vision set forth by the legislature. It is about long-term prosperity for Maryland. We must make it easier for the development community to do the "right thing," which will strengthen us economically and environmentally in the long run. A plan that produces better alternatives will provide more choices and less impact. PlanMaryland provides a different choice – and a way to a better future for Maryland.

## **PlanMaryland is a plan to:**

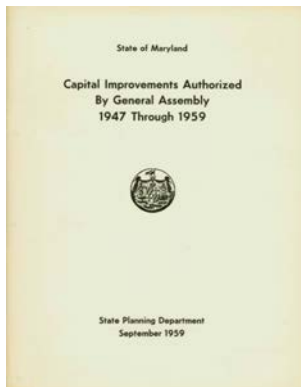
- Improve coordination between state agencies and local governments on smart growth because too often the actions of the State have been at cross-purposes to achieve the goals of smart growth.
- Stimulate economic development and revitalization in towns, cities and other existing communities that have facilities to support growth.
- Help accommodate a projected 1 million additional residents, 500,000 new households and 600,000 new jobs by the year 2035.
- Improve our existing and planned communities without sacrificing our agricultural and natural resources.
- Save 300,000+ acres of farmland and forest over the next 25 years.
- Save Maryland an estimated \$1.5 billion a year in infrastructure costs during the next 20 years through an effective smart-growth approach to land use.
- Address the rapid pace of land consumption, which since 1970 has escalated at double the rate of housing growth and triple the rate of population increase.

## What PlanMaryland Is not

### It is not a:

- Substitute for local comprehensive plans nor will it take away local planning and zoning authority.
- Top-down approach to force compliance with a statewide land-use plan.
- Silver bullet that will solve all of our problems, but it is a strategic plan to address issues such as community disinvestment, sprawl development and inefficient use of existing resources.
- “One size fits all” approach. PlanMaryland recognizes that different areas of the state have different characteristics, problems, issues and opportunities.
- Mandate to spend more. On the contrary, if PlanMaryland helps local governments implement their existing comprehensive plans, it will save billions of dollars by avoiding expenditures for unnecessary infrastructure and other costs.
- Conclusion. It's the beginning of a collaborative process between the State and local governments to address critical issues of environmental and fiscal sustainability.

# Road to PlanMaryland



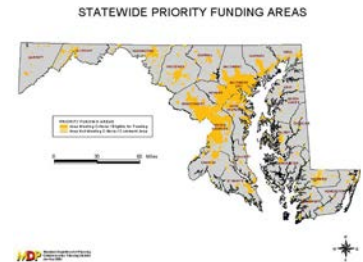
1959

The Maryland General Assembly requires preparation of a state development plan from the newly created Department of Planning: "The State Planning Department shall prepare, and from time to time revise, amend, extend or add to a plan or plans for the development of the State, which plan or plans collectively shall be known as the state development plan. ... Such plan shall be based on studies of physical, social, economic and governmental conditions and trends and shall aim at the coordinated development of the State in order to promote the general welfare and prosperity of its people."



1974

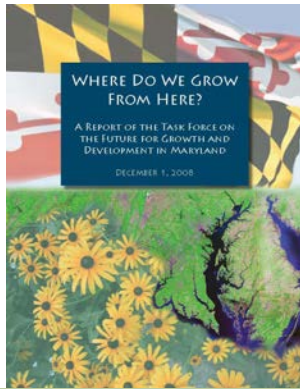
The Land Use Act reaffirms the requirement that MDP create a state development plan.



1997

Priority Funding Areas act establishes the concept of geographic focus to target state funds to promote growth in areas that are served by planned or existing infrastructure.





2007

The General Assembly creates the Task Force on the Future for Growth and Development and directs the Task Force to “determine the parameters for a state development plan, state transportation plan, state housing plan and determine how these plans work together with local land use plans.”



2009

Under the Smart, Green and Growing Legislation, the state legislature updates Maryland’s 17-year-old strategic planning visions. It requires local jurisdictions to include them as guiding principles in their comprehensive planning and zoning. Among the legislature’s new “visions”: more compact, mixed-use, walkable community design and greater planning integration across state and local government.



2010

The General Assembly creates the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission and directs the Commission to “advise on the content and preparation of the state development plan, state transportation plan, and state housing plan and the implementation of these plans, including the relationship of these plans with local land use plans.”

## Four Years of Outreach

- MDP held 3 rounds of large public meetings throughout Maryland in 2008, 2010 and 2011 to solicit public input on the state development plan.
- 3,000 people attended these public meetings and dozens of smaller meetings across the state.
- 50,000 visits to special Plan.Maryland.gov website since 2010.
- 300 written comments to first two drafts of plan during 6-month public comment period.
- MDP also received the advice of the Smart Growth Subcabinet, the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission, sister state agencies and local planning officials as it prepared the state development plan.

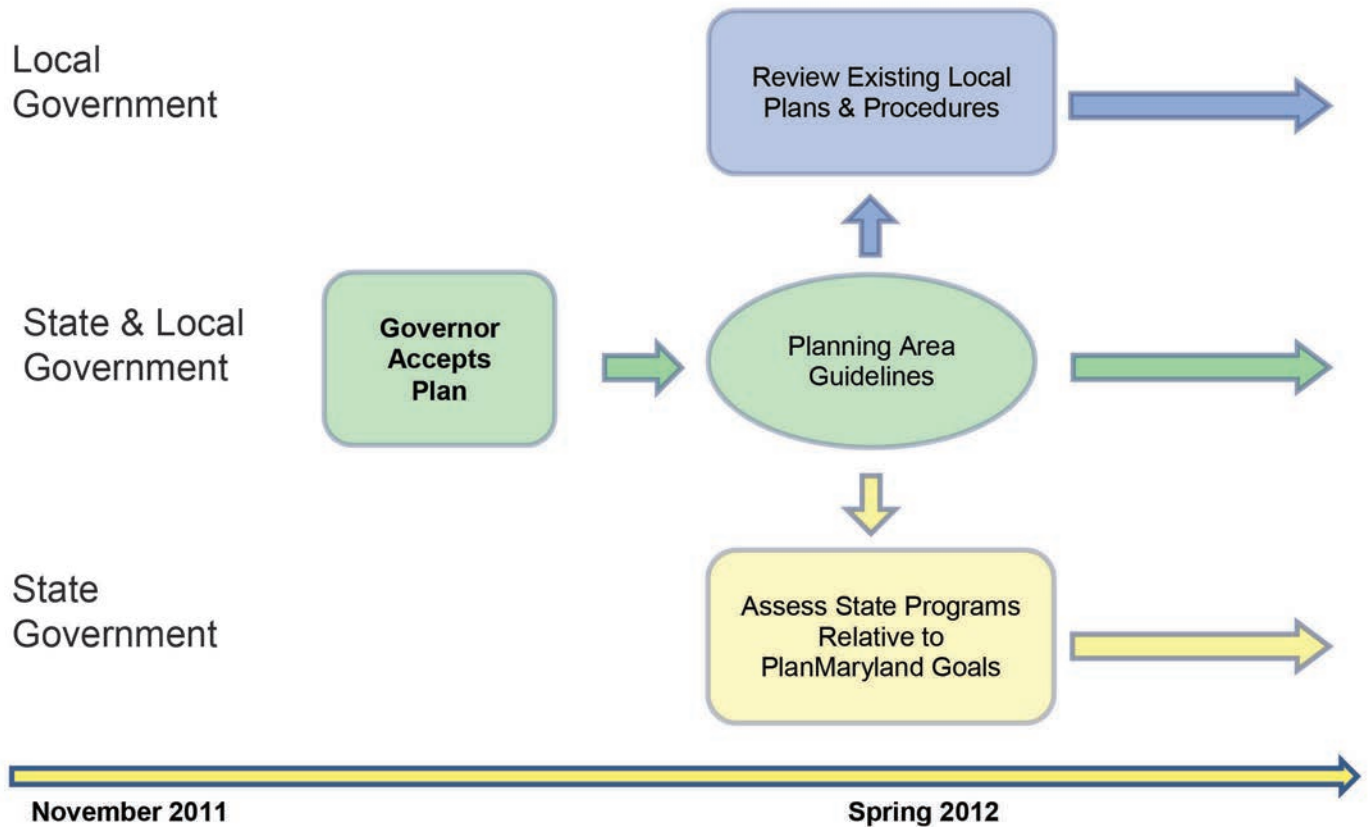
## State Legal Advice on State Development Plan

From 2011 letters of advice from the Office of the Attorney General on PlanMaryland:

- MDP has no authority over a local jurisdiction's land use decisions
- A plan adopted by the Governor could inform the Governor and state agencies on a myriad of state decisions that may affect local government and their zoning and planning activities. However, the plan could not usurp the delegation of the State's zoning and planning authority to local jurisdictions.
- A discretionary funding decision that uses a tool like GrowthPrint to prioritize projects is within the executive powers of the Governor and the cabinet secretaries that carry out the Governor's policies.
- Because the statutory provisions that govern the creation of a State Development Plan do not require legislative approval, the plan may be adopted by the Governor without legislative approval.
- If an implementation strategy within the plan can be accomplished through existing statutory authority, legislative approval of a particular strategy is not required.
- The age of a statute has no legal effect on the ability of a State agency to act under its provisions.



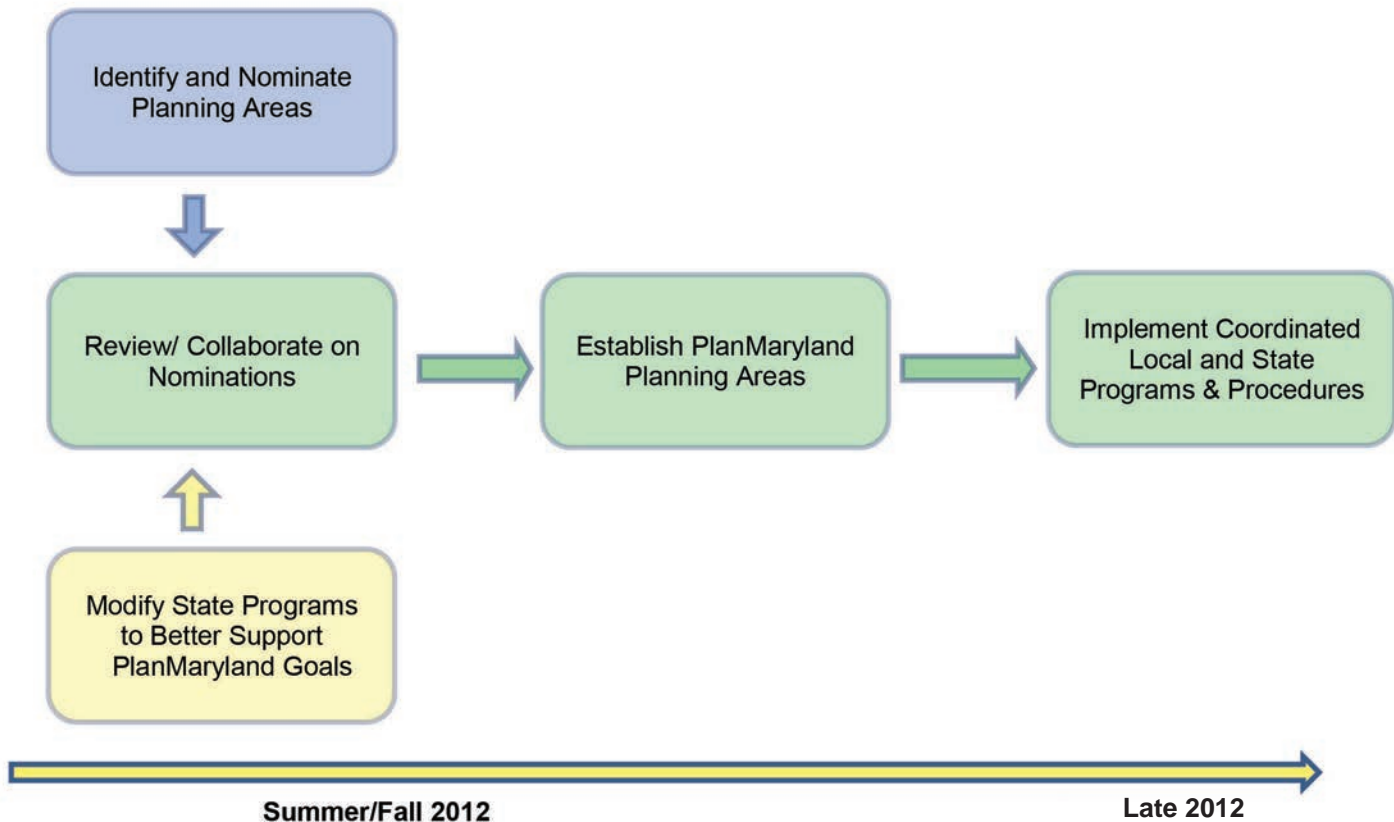
## PlanMaryland Process & Responsibilities



### How It Will Work

After the Governor accepts the plan:

1. Draft Planning Area Guidelines will be distributed to all Counties and municipalities for review and comment. The draft guidelines will describe the objectives for the planning areas. There will be a 120-day period to comment on the guidelines. MDP and other State staff will be available to explain the guidelines.
2. State Agencies will review their own programs, with the aim of determining changes that could better achieve the Plan goals and objectives.
3. At the same time, Municipalities and Counties will review their existing



comprehensive plans and regulations to see where and how they match up with the Planning Area Guidelines.

4. Municipalities and Counties will identify their own Planning Areas and provide mapping of these areas to MDP for review; MDP will coordinate the review of local mapping and provide comments and feedback.
5. Planning Areas will be established through this local/state review and collaboration process.
6. Existing State programs, policies and resources will be directed, and local efforts are encouraged to be directed as appropriate, to these Planning Areas to better achieve the goals for growth and preservation.

## Preparing Maryland for 2035

- Maryland will lose another 226,000 acres of farmland by 2035 at current trends, subtracting another \$256 million in wealth and well-being, according to State's Genuine Progress Indicator.
- Maryland is forecast to lose 176,000 acres of forested land by 2035 if current land use trends continue, valued at \$56 million.
- Over the next 25 years, new developments relying on septic systems are expected to account for 26 percent of growth but 76 percent of new nitrogen pollution.
- Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) are projected to increase from 56 billion to almost 84 billion miles per year by 2035. MDP estimates that over 15,000 new miles of roads will be constructed at a cost of \$110 billion to support these current trends.
- By implementing some basic smart growth principles, developed land could be reduced from a projected 400,000 acres to about 110,000 acres while accommodating the 1 million people and 600,000 new jobs projected by 2035.
- We can save Maryland an estimated \$1.5 billion a year in infrastructure costs during the next 20 years through an effective smart-growth approach to land use.
- Growing smart is not easy, but we must work together for jobs, housing, to protect agribusiness and the environment. That is important for today -- and for the Maryland where our children and grandchildren will live decades from now.





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[Green.Maryland.gov](http://Green.Maryland.gov)

Martin O'Malley, Governor  
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor



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