

FY 2023 Annual Report on the Status of Maryland Department of Planning Programs that Support the State's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Efforts or Address Climate Change

Maryland's 2030 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act Plan includes two planning-related programs - Reducing Emissions through Sustainable Growth and Land Use/Location Efficiency and Priority Funding Area Related Benefits. These programs are designed to minimize greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through the management of future land development by reducing vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) and shifting to non-single-occupancy-vehicle travel modes such as transit, walking, biking, and rolling. The Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) is the lead agency for these efforts, which involve the private sector, various agencies, and commissions at all levels of government within the state.

To promote sustainable growth and land use efficiency, MDP:

- Provides data analysis and forecasting as part of its technical assistance to local and state governments to promote sustainable growth and land use efficiency. This assistance utilizes a variety of data sets and analytical tools, such as MDP's parcel database, U.S. Census information, land use/land cover data, and development capacity analysis.
- Assists local planning departments and commissions as they prepare their comprehensive plans for orderly and compact growth of their communities, protection of their environmental and land resources, and addressing impacts of climate change.
- Supports local governments with infill and redevelopment projects in existing communities, utilizing various best planning practices to help revitalize and attract new development to these areas.
- Encourages local governments to integrate housing development, especially affordable housing projects, with enhanced transit, pedestrian, and bicycle connectivity to jobs and amenities.
- Contributes to various state, regional, and local transportation planning processes through plan and program development to promote integration of land use and transportation and multimodal transportation systems to help reduce GHG emissions.
- Coordinates with the Maryland Departments of Transportation (MDOT) and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to support transportation and community investments (e.g., complete streets programs, transit, transit-oriented development, and the Sustainable Communities Program) in placemaking and sustainable growth that foster transit and active transportation usages and shorter VMT for daily travel needs.
- Develops and maintains online tools, such as the Transit Station Area Profile Tool (TSAPT), created in partnership with MDOT, to facilitate local and business access to data and information needed to succeed with TOD activities.

- Participates in the State’s TOD Designation process and supports the implementation of HB 12 (2023) – Equitable and Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Act to help achieve successful TOD around transit stations.

MDP manages or administers the following existing programs to support this effort.

Smart Growth Subcabinet

- Makes periodic recommendations to the Governor regarding changes in state law, regulations, and procedures needed to create, enhance, support, and revitalize sustainable communities across Maryland.
- Facilitates interagency coordination to ensure successful statewide community reinvestments and compact development initiatives are integrated and balanced to achieve multiple benefits that advance equity, economic growth, and environmental regeneration.
- Supports and maintains the interactive Reinvest Maryland 2.0 website to illustrate how jurisdictions can promote compact development using sustainable growth tools offered by subcabinet agencies and demonstrates how others have used these tools to revitalize their communities.

Maryland Smart Growth Coordinating Committee

- Identifies regional growth and development issues for the subcabinet and advises on the local impacts of state policies and laws.
- Recommends ways to collaborate on planning between state agencies and local governments and coordinates growth and development among jurisdictions.
- Reviews statewide efforts to implement the state growth plan and the state plans for transportation and housing.
- Facilitates the review of state programs and development of tools and recommendations through the Reinvest Maryland 2.0 effort to assist Maryland’s counties, towns, and communities to accelerate infill, redevelopment, and revitalization.

Sustainable Communities Act of 2010

- Established the Sustainable Communities designation to strengthen reinvestment and revitalization across the state.
- Simplified the framework for designated revitalization target areas in the Community Legacy and Neighborhood BusinessWorks programs.
- Requires MDOT to consider Sustainable Communities as it annually prepares the annual Consolidated Transportation Program.

2009 Legislative Suite (HB294/SB273, HB297/SB280 and HB295/SB276)

This legislative package requires:

- Incorporation of the 12 planning visions in local comprehensive plans
- Development of local land use goals
- Consistency of local land use ordinances with comprehensive plans
- Submittal of local annual reports

Priority Funding Areas

- Maryland law directs the use of state funding for major transportation projects, water and sewer plants, economic development, and other growth-related needs toward Priority Funding Areas, recognizing that these investments are the most important tool the state has available to influence more sustainable growth and development.

Growth Tier Map Law

- The Sustainable Growth & Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 (the *Septics law*) limits the disproportionate impacts of large subdivisions utilizing septic systems on Maryland's farm and forest land, streams, rivers and Chesapeake and Coastal bays. It also provides a moderate and reasonable approach for planned development using on-site sewage disposal systems.

Program Objectives

By better managing growth, local communities can maximize the efficiency of their development patterns and contribute to a reduction in Maryland's GHG emissions. Sustainable growth promotes local decision making regarding compact, mixed-use development that maximizes mobility and housing choices. It also encourages new development and redevelopment in areas with existing or planned infrastructure. This helps preserve vegetated/forested lands, which sequester carbon, and protects agricultural land, while helping to increase the economic competitiveness and fiscal performance of local communities. It should be noted that many local governments in Maryland are increasingly implementing these kinds of land use policies and programs.

Implementation Milestones

The land use programs do not include specific implementation milestones. The estimate of potential emission reductions in Maryland as a result of the programs is based upon Maryland maintaining a goal of 75% compact development between 2024 and 2045. This annual report allows for a periodic check-in to determine if Maryland is on-track with achieving this goal.

The compact development statistic is derived through the following calculation: $A + (B \times C \times D)$, where A, B, C and D are defined as:

A - Share of year's multi-family housing in Maryland

B - Share of year's single-family housing

C - Percent of year's single-family housing on parcels within the Priority Funding Area (PFA)

D - Percent of year's single-family housing on parcels within the PFA that are 0.25 acres or less

Estimated Emission Reductions for CY22

Data through 2022 indicates that Maryland is continuing to achieve 75% compact development during the 2020s. For comparison, for the decade 2001-2010, Maryland achieved an average of 62.5% compact development, and for the decade 2011-2020, Maryland achieved an average of 75.1% compact development.

Table 1. Compact Development in Maryland 2022

	2001-2010	2011-2020	2021	2022
Multi-Family Share	23.6%	35.9%	37.2%	51.2%
Single-Family Share	76.4%	64.1%	62.8%	48.8%
Percent Res. Dev. Inside of PFA	77.8%	82.9%	81.6%	88.1%
Percent Single-Family Res. Dev. Inside of PFA	70.9%	73.4%	70.6%	75.6%
Percent Res. Dev. on <=.25 acres in PFA	80.3%	89.7%	90.6%	94.0%
Percent Single-Family Res. Dev. on <=.25 acres in PFA	71.8%	83.1%	82.7%	85.6%
Compact Development	62.5%	75.1%	73.9%	82.8%

The portion of GHG emissions prevented through calendar year 2022 is estimated to be 0.128 MMtCO₂e since one-fifth of the 2020s has passed with achievement of the 75% compact development goal for 2021 and 2022. If the goal of 75% compact development during the 2020s is achieved, then a total of 0.64 MMtCO₂e GHGs will be prevented.

Note: The method to estimate GHG reductions from compact development is based on best practice research entitled, "*CO₂ Reductions Attributable to Smart Growth in California*," Reid Ewing and Arthur C. Nelson, January 2010. Also, MDP is working to improve the data quality of the sources used to inform the compact development statistic, specifically by ensuring that more local governments update their PFAs to reflect all locally designated growth areas that meet the PFA criteria, and by working to obtain multi-family development data that reflects actual versus proposed construction.

Funding

MDP manages one existing land use program that requires direct funding and which has clear greenhouse gas reduction benefits, the Maryland Historical Trust's commercial tax credit fund. In FY 2023, there were five projects for which competitive commercial tax credit funds were encumbered. Total spending on the commercial tax credit program in FY 2023 was \$6,367,435.