



Partnership for Land Use Success

The Maryland Scenario Project Project Summary

THE CHALLENGE

There is broad agreement that Maryland is subject to market, demographic, political, and policy forces that will encourage and allow it to grow. That growth of people, jobs, and buildings has economic benefits for current and future residents and businesses. But it also has effects, many of which are negative, on environmental quality, mobility, cost of living, and many other aspects of quality of life in the state of Maryland.

Many of the problems of growth and development are regional in nature, but most of the capacity to deal with the problem is local. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (e.g., the Baltimore Metropolitan Council) can take a regional view, but their focus is transportation; they lack implementing and enforcement authority in the area of land development, economic development, and environmental quality; and they cover only a small percentage of Maryland's land area.

The state increasingly confronts issues and decisions of statewide significance: traffic congestion in the Baltimore-Washington corridor, rapid development in Southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore, and economic revitalization in Western Maryland. What would happen if further BRAC decisions continued to distribute jobs to the far corners of the state, if a second bridge connected Maryland's Eastern and Western Shores, or if commuter rail were connected and extensive between the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan areas?

THE RESPONSE

REALITY CHECK AND PLUS

The National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education (NCSGRE, or, the Center) has been working for the past two years to engage the public in a dialog about the future growth of the state. Where and how will the substantial growth expected for the state over the next 20 to 50 years be accommodated?

The effort began with Reality Check *Plus*, a statewide public participation exercise conducted in May and June, 2006. In that exercise, the Center partnered with 1000 Friends of Maryland and the Urban Land Institute to convene nearly 850 Maryland residents, in four locations across the

state, to express a vision for the future of the state using LEGOs® on a map. (See www.realitycheckmaryland.org for a copy of the report *Today's Vision, Tomorrow's Reality*, September 2006.)

But Reality Check *Plus* was just an initial step of a larger and longer program for research and engagement. For the next steps the partnership has been reorganized into a coalition referred to as PLUS: Partnership for Land Use Success. The principals in that coalition are the Center, the Home Builders Association of Maryland, 1000 Friends of Maryland, the Maryland Municipal League, and the Citizens Planning and Housing Association. PLUS sees the technical work described in this document as part of a larger effort to get agreement on direction for growth and on state and local policy to move it in that direction.

THIS PROJECT

Reality Check *Plus* identified how participants around the state *desired* growth to occur. But it only conducted a cursory evaluation of how *likely* that pattern would be. What forces support and constrain the desired pattern? What other patterns are likely? Which might public policy be able to influence? How and how much? Those are the questions this project will address.

The Center is now beginning Stage II of the scenario development and evaluation, and requesting your participation as part of an advisory group for the Maryland Scenario Project. You and about 20 other experts from around the state are invited to a series of workshops, to begin in March 2007, for developing and evaluating scenarios. The schedule is to have evaluation, discussion, and agreement on topics as follows:

- **Scenarios and broad evaluation methods (by June 2007).** This phase of the project will involve the advisory group in three workshops that will be designed and facilitated by Uri Avin of Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB), a national planning firm, who has worked for 20 years on similar exercises around the country:
 - **Workshop 1: March.** Purposes of project and definitions; scenario building concepts; factors that drive future growth and development; survey of participants on values.
 - **Workshop 2: April.** Staff follow-up to issues raised at Workshop 1; staff recommendations on driving factors; summary of “values” surveys; Advisory Group direction on themes for scenarios (a “theme” is a short text description of what values and driving variables make up a given scenario).
 - **Workshop 3: May.** Staff follow-up to issues raised at Workshop 2; staff recommendations on themes; explanation of transportation/land use models, and preliminary ideas about options that will be investigated in Phase 2; Advisory Group direction about themes of the scenarios, how to measure and evaluate those themes with data, and how to report the results.
- **Integrated models and evaluation details (Fall 2007, two meetings).** Scenario evaluation will have to address different impacts that people care about: transportation, energy, water quality, land use, economics, and so on. There are many options for using and adapting off-the-shelf modeling platforms, and developing *ad hoc* evaluation tools. Staff will bring information about the options to the advisory group for discussion and direction.
- **Preliminary scenario evaluation (Winter 2007/08, two meetings).**
- **Final scenario evaluation (Spring/Summer 2008, two meetings).**
- **Reports and other products for public distribution (Fall 2008).**

During the 18-20 months of this project, PLUS, in a parallel effort, will be working with elected officials, interest groups, and other stakeholders to prepare the way for policy change, which would, in turn, be built on and supported by the technical work with which we are asking you to assist.

SCHEDULE AND TIME COMMITMENT

The technical aspects of the project (data collection, modeling, and evaluation) cannot be completed well much sooner than the end of 2008. That is a long commitment.

To reduce the burden on participants, we are trying to schedule groups of 2 or 3 meetings at four different times during the project. Each meeting might require 1 to 4 hours of preparation (1 if you just want to scan the material we send; 4 if you want to respond and contribute additional information prior to the meeting). The meetings will last about four hours. They will probably be held in different parts of the state. Thus, with preparation and travel time, we think that every meeting will require 6 to 8 hours, on average.

The schedule on the previous page shows a total of nine meetings over the roughly 20 months of the project. We think that is a minimum. It is possible that the advisory group may decide to have another meeting to discuss either the preliminary or final evaluations.

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

SPONSORS (PLUS)

The National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education was established in 2000 and is affiliated with four schools at the University of Maryland: Agriculture; Architecture, Planning and Preservation; Engineering; and Public Policy. The Center is known nationally for its analysis of land use issues. With six part-time and full-time faculty researchers, a staff of two, two dozen affiliate faculty and as many as a dozen graduate assistants, the Center conducts a broad range of land use research locally, statewide, nationally and internationally. www.smartgrowth.umd.edu

1000 Friends of Maryland is a citizen-supported, statewide non-profit organization that fights poorly planned development to protect Maryland's natural areas and waterways, strengthen neighborhoods and restore once vibrant cities through education, technical assistance and advocacy. www.friendsofmd.org

The Home Builders Association of Maryland, chartered by the National Association of Home Builders in 1943, is dedicated to serving the building and housing industry and works primarily in the Baltimore metropolitan area. To improve the business climate for its members, the HBAM encourages and promotes the growth, strength and image of the building and housing industry by providing governmental advocacy, networking and social opportunities, education and information, and positive public relations; and the proactive development of laws, regulations, and standards that affect the building and housing industry. <http://www.homebuilders.org/>

The Maryland Municipal League was founded in 1936 and represents 157 municipal governments and two special taxing districts throughout the state of Maryland. MML is a voluntary, nonprofit, nonpartisan association controlled and maintained by city and town governments. MML works to strengthen the role and capacity of municipal government through research, legislation, technical assistance, training and the dissemination of information for its members. <http://www.mdmunicipal.org/mmlhome/index.cfm>

The Citizens Planning and Housing Association has supported informed citizen action on housing and other community quality-of-life issues in Baltimore and the surrounding region for the past 65 years. CPHA envisions a well-planned Baltimore region with equity among jurisdictions, where citizens respect diversity and have access to responsive government and quality housing in vibrant neighborhoods. To achieve this vision, CPHA mobilizes informed citizen action by training and organizing citizens and neighborhood leaders to be advocates, and by advocating policies and actions that prevent sprawl and improve the livability of existing neighborhoods. <http://www.cphabaltimore.org/>

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The NCSGRE will manage the project on behalf of PLUS. Gerrit Knaap will be project director. Jason Sartori will be day-to-day project manager. John Frece will assist with project organization, and coordination with other PLUS activities. Terry Moore, visiting researcher at the Center, will help the design of the project and the implementation of its first phase (Spring 2007) and graduate students at the NCSGRE will assist with various aspects of the project's technical and logistical work. PB's Uri Avin will have lead responsibility for the design of the first phase (Spring 2007) and for leading the technical exercises at the Spring workshops.

The Maryland Department of Planning has agreed to provide technical support for this project. Additional assistance has been solicited from the Maryland State Highway Administration. However, discussions are just beginning about the exercise's transportation evaluation component and SHA's role.